

**THERE AND BACK,
OR A LITTLE TRIP TO
HUMORVILLE**

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There and Back, or A Little Trip to Humorville by George Niblo

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GEORGE NIBLO

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By

GEORGE NIBLO

Author of

"What's Your Hurry?" "Step Lively!"
"B'Gosh!" etc.



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There and Back

THERE AND BACK.



GRACIOUS! Don't crowd! Don't crowd! Take it easy and let me tell you one or two little things that are all to the good. Here's a word for the housewife—a good way to skim milk is to let the chalk settle, then drain the water off!

My! This reception tickles me to death. I feel like an Elijah IV. But I'm glad to see you. Hope you've all brought your Bibles and your pocketbooks. They go together, don't they?

There's two things ought to be abolished; the collection plate in church and the waiter's tip in the restaurant.

What's that? A waiter tipped for being obliging? Nonsense. Who ever heard of an obliging waiter?

But stop! I know of one who's not only obliging but absolutely considerate.

Would you believe it, yesterday while I was partaking of my little noonday refreshment I saw this paragon of a waiter hurry to a table next to mine as though summoned with authority.

It was an indignant patron who sat there.

Why his face was as red as a turkey cock, and he held something up on his spoon.



"Look here, waiter, what's this?" he said, indignantly.

"Looks like a shoe lace, sir."

"It is a shoe lace, and it was in my soup."

"Beg pardon, sir, but would you mind lowering your voice? Don't let the gentleman at the corner hear you. He's dined here regular for two years and we've never thrown him in anything extra yet."

Now, that's what I call considerate.

Fancy how hurt that regular customer would have been, had he learned that all the prizes were going to new customers, while his long suffering went for naught.

I had a little experience myself with a chap in the same eating house

He was of Celtic origin and had not left his Irish wit behind him when emigrating to the friendly shores of America.

On this occasion I had decided to treat myself to a favorite dish.

• Ox-tail soup always tickles my palate.

It was a long time showing up.

My companions suggested that they were running the ox to earth, but I scorned such tales.

Seeing my chance I grabbed the waiter as he was whisking past.

"Say, how about that ox-tail soup," I asked anxiously.



"Sure it'll be along, sor, in a half a minute," he made answer.

"Bless your soul how slow you are," I remarked.

"That's the fault of the soup, sor," says he. "Ox-tail is always behind."

This same Hibernian waiter who was so ready with an excuse makes me think of another hailing from the same blessed Green Isle.

In this instance he was the proprietor himself, who was summoned to a certain table where I sat with a frown of displeasure on my face.

"What is it, sor," he asked, "don't the service suits?"

"Suit," I exclaimed. "Look here, I thought you said your eggs were all fresh laid by your own hens? Smell that, and look at it. Why, what should be the white is positively green."



"Sure, it's all right," he said, blithely. "That's the natural color ov it. It's an Oirish hín Oi brought over myself that lays them wid the green whites; an' she'd lay thim wid green yolks, too, if she could, begorra."

I've got a little Irish blood myself—at least one of my remote ancestors I believe used to pull corks.

But listen:

When I was younger I worked in a cloth factory.

It was the custom in those days to fine an operator for turning out bad work. Those fines made me sick.

One day I brought a piece of cloth to be examined and our lark-eyed manager discovered two little holes about an inch apart. He then showed these to me and demanded a quarter for each hole, that being the fine.

"You say it's a quarter?"

"Yes," said the manager.

"And is it the same for every hole—big or little?"

"Yes, exactly the same," said the manager. "Well, then, I'll save a quarter," and putting my fingers in the holes I quickly made the two into one.

I gave up my job about that time.

You see the manager said he was sure I had missed my vocation, and that I could make better jokes than cloth.



Now, I met an old friend down in Wall Street to-day.

He is connected with the government in some way, and has traveled extensively over the world.

But he looked forlorn, and I knew something had happened to cloud his usual bright spirits.

"Well, colonel, what's gone wrong—lost your job?" I asked.

He shook his head and smiled sadly.

"It isn't a death in the family?" I suggested.

"Not at all. You couldn't guess in a year. Listen!"

It was a harrowing tale he unfolded, and under cover it was stamped with the wing of truth.

During his travels he had rubbed elbows with a