

will be the better for the Latter-day Saints that are in it; for where the Latter-day Saints go, though they may not be perfect, yet there is a spirit and an influence with them that will attract the world. We are told indeed of prominent men in the world who are looking to Utah with a view of coming here to make their homes, having the idea that their children can grow up in purity here as they cannot in the rest of the world. Oh! that this be true—that the Latter-day Saints may be pure, and that the pure of the world may come in upon us, who desire to preserve their families in purity, and be welcome among us; and we will teach them the truth, and if they do not want it, if they cannot live it, then let them square their lives by the very best doctrines and principles that they can receive and live up to.

This is my testimony before this vast assembly this morning. May God bless us, and bless this conference and the labors of the Elders, past and future; that we may be fully fed, thoroughly instructed and advised by our Heavenly Father in regard to the principles that are necessary for us to give more careful attention to in the future than we have done in the past, so that we may be indeed Latter-day Saints, full of faith, and worthy of the favor and blessing and protection of the Lord. I ask it in the name of Jesus Christ. Amen.

Written for this Paper.

THREE FAMOUS FUNNY FELLOWS.

(Copyrighted by Frank G. Carpenter, 1895.)

WASHINGTON, November 9, 1895.

Eugene Field dead!
Mark Twain ruined!
Bill Nye overworked!



THESE ARE RE-
cent items of
news about men
whose wit and
pathos have made
the world most
laugh and cry
during the past

decade. The stories of the lives of funny men is often full of sadness. It requires hard knocks to develop the genius of such souls, and behind the poetry and humor may be found trouble and the heart-breaking which has enabled them to know the human heart, and by their pens to play the saddest and the merriest of strains upon its strings. How few geniuses are appreciated when they are young! Eugene Field's father was a celebrated lawyer, but he evidently had no idea of the literary ability of his son. The boy, almost spoiled by the fortune left him, drifted into newspaper work, and thence, step by step, climbed into the literary niche which he will now hold in American history. Mark Twain's father and himself, according to his own statements, were always on the most distant terms when Mark was a boy, and he says that a sort of armed neutrality existed between them. His father had no appreciation of his humorous antics, and the stories which are related in Tom Sawyer were largely based upon incidents of Mark Twain's early life which had no charm for his father. The

old man could not see the humor of jumping off a two-story stable, and when Mark at a circus gave the elephant a plug of tobacco, and the hubbub which followed was by no means with the approval of the old man, who had gone along to take care of the boy and look at the animals. At another time Mark pretended to be talking in his sleep, and got off a portion of a very original conundrum in the hearing of his father. The elder Clemens reproved him in a way which he does not like to remember to this day. In speaking of it Mark asks his friends not to pry into the results of the experiment, usually concluding with the sorrowful remark, "It was of no consequence to any one but me."

It was the same with James Whitcomb Riley. His father never appreciated him, and I doubt whether he ever realized the greatness of Riley's genius. A short time ago Riley and one of his newspaper friends were talking about the days of their boyhood, when Riley said:

"They never thought I'd amount to much at home. My father was a country lawyer, and he believed in facts. Facts were all he cared for, and he thought that the boy who couldn't learn arithmetic wouldn't amount to anything. My brothers were a good deal like him. They had an aptitude for mathematics, and they stood well in their classes at school. As for me I couldn't learn arithmetic. I never liked the blanked crooked things called figures, and I couldn't see the sense of working at them. As for reading, I got along with it very well. I usually read the books through for the stories before the class had mastered one-third of them. But I couldn't make it in arithmetic. The result was that the whole family pitied me. I was told again and again that I would probably have to be supported by the rest, and when I ran off and went away with a circus one day to stand at the door and extol the virtues of the sideshows, it did not make a sensation. My mother perhaps wiped her eyes and thought that I might come back some day, some way; but with the rest it was settled with the phrase 'I told you so.' I don't think my father ever understood me. I shall never forget one thing which estranged me from him.

"It was when I was quite a little fellow. We were just commencing a new reader, and, as usual, I had finished it before the class had read ten lessons. There were several pieces of poetry in the book, and one of these I read over and over again. It was very pathetic, and I always had to cry when I read it. At last the class came to it. The day we were to read it I sat in my seat and figured just what verses I would have to read. I knew where I stood in the class, you know. Well, I saw that I would have to read those verses where I always cried. I knew I couldn't read them before the class without crying, and I wasn't going to bawl in public. There was only one way out of it, and that was to run away. Just before the class was called and while the teacher's back was turned I slipped out. I had hardly left the school house before I met my father. He asked me what I was doing away from school. I had just been reading the life of George Washington, and I concluded that I would tell the truth, saying, 'Father, I

didn't want the boys to laugh at me, and I knew it would make me cry.'"

"Well, I see if I can't make you cry," said the old gentleman, and he picked up a switch and gave me one of the best whippings I have ever had. I don't blame him now. His nature was such that he could not appreciate the situation. He probably thought my answer was merely an excuse to get out of the school, but the injustice of it was such that it was a long time before I felt close to my father again. After going away from home, I drifted about here and there, and finally turned up at Indianapolis in the Journal office. I began to write poetry, and in time became rather notorious for that. The people of Indianapolis made a good deal of me, and now and then rumors of my reputation reached the little country town where my father was living. He couldn't see what the people saw in those things of mine to be worthy so much money, and he finally gave up trying to understand it.

"I went down to see him frequently, and one day I persuaded him to come up with me to Indianapolis. When we arrived in the city I asked father to come with me to a clothing store. He was pretty well dressed for a country lawyer, but not quite as well as I thought he ought to be for Indianapolis. I bought him a new outfit from shoes to hat, and then took him home to my hotel. I told the landlord that we wanted the best rooms in the house. I took him about the city with me, and everywhere he went he was pointed out as Jim Riley's father. I tell you that did me good. It was the proudest day of my life."

"I wish you could have seen Riley when he said that," the newspaper man went on. "Triumphs of that kind are really great triumphs of one's life. We like to have the world speak well of us, but it is only the praise of the people at home that we really care for. Now, take Bill Nye. His experience was much the same as that of Riley. We were talking about it the last time I saw him. The Nye family came from Vermont, and of the whole tribe they thought that little Edgar Wilson would amount to the least. He was rather sickly, and when he started west to go just as far as he could go, there was not much grieving. The rest of the family, matter-of-fact people, were doing well, and two of the boys, who, like Riley's arithmetical brothers, knew something of figures, had gone to Minneapolis to practice law. Bill Nye went as far as Wyoming before he stopped. He made a reputation there in connection with the Laramie Boomerang, and then came east and increased it. He now gets more than the salary of the chief justice of the United States out of his newspaper work alone, and his lecture business is equal to the interest on a good-sized fortune. He has almost entirely recovered his health, which has been temporarily deranged from overwork, and with a little care he will come out all right. He is, at any rate, practically independent. His father still lives on his Vermont farm. He and Bill correspond now and then, and not long ago the old farmer wrote his boy that he believed he would sell his farm. He said it was heavily mortgaged, and it was all he could do to pay the interest. He had written to Bill's brothers in Minneapolis, they didn't seem to be able