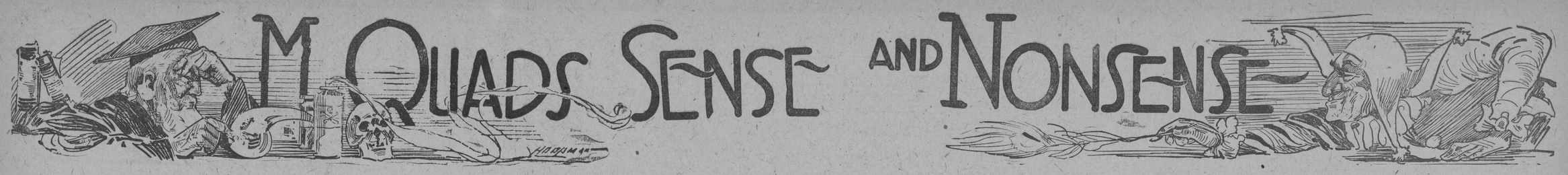

Bowser's Busy Evening---He Has Several Talks Over the Telephone

AT 2 o'clock in the afternoon when the sky grew dark and it began snowing, Mrs. Bowser sighed and hoped it would soon cease

At 3 o'clock the snow was coming down for fair, and she shook her head in a solemn way as she looked out of the window.

At 4 o'clock there were sleighs kiting along the streets, and Mrs. Bowser realized that she was in for it.

At 5 o'clock it was blowing and drifting and turning into a blizzard, and the cook said to Mrs. Bowser:

"Mr. Bowser hates snow, and there'll be something doing when he gets here."

"Yes," was the hopeless, helpless reply.

"Couldn't we hire a lot of boys to shovel?"

"There hasn't been one along."

"We might get some of it cleared off ourselves."

"It would blow right back again."

Mr. Bowser lives in the eighth house from the corner where he makes use of the trolley car. There would be no walks cleaned off between him and the corner. He must plow his way through the drifts.

He would plow about five feet and then begin to mutter.

At 10 feet he would begin swearing.

At 20 feet he would lay it to Mrs. Bowser.

Half-way down to his gate he would decide to raise the biggest row ever heard in North America.

At 6 o'clock Mrs. Bowser was watching from the window, and she soon caught sight of the plower. He found the gate blocked with a drift and kicked at it like an army mule out for exercise. The gate finally opened. It had to or leave town.

It was a struggle from the gate to the steps, and up the steps, but Mr. Bowser is a desperate, dangerous man when facing snowdrifts.

"Isn't this something just awful!" exclaimed Mrs. Bowser as she reached out and pulled him into the hall.

He didn't say.

"It is lucky you didn't have far to walk. Let me brush you off."

He took off his overcoat and hat without waiting for her, and the family cat looked up at her with sympathy in his eyes. If there had been a shred of hope it must be abandoned now.

Still without a word, Mr. Bowser led the way down stairs and seated himself at the dinner table.

"No boys came along to shovel off the snow," said Mrs. Bowser.

"Humph!"

"Looks as if the storm would last all night."

A grunt.

"I thought the snow would make the car late."

A sniff of contempt.

"But you are home all right, and I am glad of it."

Not even a sniff.

Mrs. Bowser gave it up and drew a long breath and prepared to die game. She made no further effort at conversation, and as soon as the meal was finished they went up stairs and Mr. Bowser walked directly to the telephone. A Mr. Jacobs lived on the corner, and he was called for. He promptly answered:

"Yes, what is it?"

"It's about the snow on your sidewalk. It's six feet deep, and you are leaving the blame stuff there for people to wade through!"

"But it's storming yet."

"Makes no difference. Jacobs, you are a durned mean man!"

"How about your own walk? You tend to your affairs and I will tend to mine!"

Then Shoemaker was called for, and Mr. Bowser said to him:

"All last winter I had to wade through the snow on your sidewalks because you were too durned lazy to clean it off, and too durned stingy to hire it done!"

"Well, I didn't stop you, did I?" was the reply.

"I shan't do it again this winter!"

"Going to fly over it or tunnel under it?"

"I'm going to get the police after you! If they won't bring you to time then I will."

"Don't threaten me, you old crank?"

"What! What! Say, you get out there and begin to toss snow! If your walk isn't cleaned off when I come along in the morning I'll punch your selfish old head!"

The next man was Stevens. Mr. Bowser got him and said:

"What about the snow on your walk?"

"And what about yours?"

"I want you to understand that there is an ordinance about snow, and that you have got to heed it."

"Oh, I have? And how about you?"

"My walk is always clean, but you pay no attention to yours. You have got to do it after this, however."

"Been made the czar of this country, eh?"

"Never mind the czar business. There's a new deal on this winter."

"Then you go to blazes! I'll clean my walk when I get good and ready!"

The next was a Mr. Darcy. He had a squeaky voice and never used the telephone. His wife answered the call and heard the words:

"A nice sort of a man you are! Why in thunder aren't you out cleaning off the seven feet of snow on your sidewalk!"

"Who dares call me a man and swear at me!" demanded a voice.

"I do—Bowser."

"I might have known it was you. What do you want?"

"I want you to clean your walk of snow, and don't be a week about it, either."

"How dare you talk to me like that?"

"Say, Darcy, don't go to giving me any bluffs. You are the meanest man on the block about snow."

"You are a liar, sir!"

"What! What's that! You say that again and I'll come over and break you in two!"

"You are not talking to Darcy, but to his wife. However, if you think you can break me in two, come along and try it! What are you grouching about, anyhow?"

"You haven't cleaned off the snow yet!"

"Nor you, either. It's none of your business about our sidewalk, anyhow."

"Then I'll make it my business!"

"You come chinning around here and I'll hit you a clip over your bald pate."

"Woman, I"——

"Save that for Mrs. Bowser!"

The next man on the list was Mr. Shard. He was playing cards with his wife, and had just ordered up a hand when his telephone rang and a voice wanted to know:

"Say, Shard, what kind of a man are you?"

"Who is that?"

"Bowser. I want to know why you are toasting your lazy shanks at the fire instead of being out cleaning your walk?"

"Don't you talk that way to me! When I came home past your house the snow was up to my chin. Get out and do some shoveling yourself!"

"Are you going to clean your walk?" was demanded.

"None of your business! I don't propose to be dictated to by no old horse-fly like you are!"

"Horse-fly, am I? Horse-fly because I'm going to make you obey the snow ordinance, the same as I have to. Say, Shard, you be at your gate at 8 o'clock in the morning and I'll make you eat every ounce of snow on your walk!"

Then the Widow White was called up. She had just tripped over the cat and fallen downstairs, and was very nervous as Mr. Bowser said to her:

"Mrs. White, have you got anybody cleaning your walk?"

"Mercy, no."

"Why not?"

"I have just fallen downstairs!"

"That's nothing to do with the snow."

"Hasn't it? Dear, dear me!"

"I want to know when the walk is to be cleaned."

"Dear me, again! You say your name is Bowser?"

"Yes."

"It isn't Towser nor Howser?"

"No, it isn't. What about that walk?"

"Dear, dear me! So nervous, you know! Tell the cat—I mean tell the stairs—I mean tell Jowser to tell Bowser I'll have it all cleaned off by next Fourth of July!"

And Mr. Bowser hung up the receiver and turned to Mrs. Bowser with a triumphant smile to say:

"There! They know that Bowser is on the job, and I'll bet that some of them will shovel snow all night!"

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Just Jeems

HAVING heard that my side partner, Dandy Jim, had been arrested and given 30 days as a suspicious character, I hied me along to the Pennsylvania town where he grieved in durance vile.

I may say of Jim that he had been taking a course with a correspondence school, and had gone to the Keystone State to take practical lessons in making the Monongahela River run uphill. He is a good young man, and has been known to repeat the Lord's Prayer while a railroad train on which he was a passenger was going down an embankment.

On my arrival at the town I made for the leading hotel and secured the best room in the house and handed the clerk a wad of $800 to care of for me.

"How's your father, John D.?" he asked as he took off his hat in the most respectful manner.

"He still runs the old United States," I replied.

"Shall we have a private fire escape put in for you?"

"Oh, no."

"Serenade by the band?"

"I can do without."

"Special meeting of the common council?"

"I think not."

"Free ticket to the moving pictures?"

"No-o-o-o."

"I will at least raise the American flag over the hotel in your honor."

And as I stepped out on the street the flag went up and all the corporation lawyers in town swung their hats and cheered.

A block or two down was a jewelry store, with a large show window. I halted for a quarter of an hour to gaze at the fine display.

Then I went inside and looked at a $200 diamond ring, but did not purchase.

Then I did various other things, and all the time I knew that a detective was piping me off. At the end of an hour the officer asked me to take a promenade to headquarters with him. I replied that I had a great curiosity to see a chief of police in his office, and we trotted along.

The chief was not benign.

"Suspicious character!" he roared, after looking me over. "Of course he is! A stone dog could tell that. Away with him to a dungeon!"

"Just a minute," I protested. "Of what am I suspected?"

"Of everything! Of thievery, robbery, burglary, hog stealing, embezzlement, bigamy and arson. Away with him!"

I "awayed" to a cell till the next morning. My cell was not a parlor car. No divans or quail on toast. No Shakespeare to read, and no piano with the latest songs.

Next morning I was brought into court to plead to the charge of being a suspicious person. I elected to be my own lawyer. At the age of 10 years I was studying the volume entitled, "Every Man (and Boy) His Own Lawyer," and at 12 I had it down pat.

"What caused you to suspect me?" I asked the detective, when he had told his story.

"Your looking into the jeweler's window," he answered.

"Didn't you ever do the same?"

"Y-e-s."

"Doesn't the jeweler expect people to look?"

"I 'spose so."

"Well, how was it suspicious in me?"

"You went in and priced a ring and didn't take it."

"Does everybody buy a ring that prices it?"

"Mebbe not."

"Well?"

"You stopped in front of a clothing store and peeked and peered."

"Was I peeking and peering to see if a friend was inside, or to see if it was safe to grab a second-hand pair of trousers and run?"

"I dunno."

"Well, go on."

"You passed the Second National Bank twice."

"So I did, but didn't I pass a grocery twice also?"

"When I asked your name," continued the officer, who didn't seem to like his job very well, "you said it was just 'Jeems.' You said you didn't have any other name.

"And was that suspicious?"

"Yes."

"You have heard of the prophets Moses and Elijah, haven't you?"

"Yes."

"What were their other names? There was Jonah. Jonah who? There was Daniel of the lions' den. Daniel who or what? Were they suspicious characters?

"But—but"——he wriggled.

"Anything more?" I asked.

"You asked a man if there was a gambling house in town?"

"What of it? I saw by the papers a while ago that seven of your biggest business men were arrested in a raid on a gambling house. And didn't I ask a second-hand man how many churches the town boasted of?"

"You had less than a dollar in your clothes when arrested," said the officer as he brightened up.

"Yes; but did you go to the Blank House clerk and ask if I had $800 in the safe?"

"No."

"That's enough," said His Honor, arrest was made on the most flimsy pretext and was entirely unwarranted. The officer might as well have arrested the mayor. Prisoner, you are honorably discharged."

As I left the courtroom I was told that the chief of police wanted to see me. I went down to pay him a call. I found him in savage mood.

"Don't think this ends it!" he shouted at me.

"I don't!" I replied.

"Lou are a crook, and I know it!"

"And you are an ass, and I know that!"

"And I'll get you yet!"

"And I'll get you!"

"Away with you; Get out of town!"

"I'll go when I get ready!"

"Say, I'll punch your head!"

"And I'll punch back!"

He could order me out of his office, and he did so. I went as far as the first law office. There I stated particulars and asked:

"Haven't I got a case for false arrest?"

"A bully one," replied the lawyer.

"Then you see the chief and tell him its $250 or a suit for $5,000 damages."

"I'll have him locked up again!" shouted the chief.

But he didn't. On the contrary, he counted out the long green and took a receipt in full.

My side partner had to serve his sentence, but I had $250 to ward him with when he came out, and an officer of the law had been taught that there is a higher power than his official word.

Virtue isn't always rewarded as it should be, but there's 100 per cent. dividends when they do come.

Having committed no offense against the law, you are suspected and locked up. Having robbed a bank you can use the money to buy into a trust and become an eminent citizen.

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He Was Glad.

He had turned away from the front of a newspaper office, when he found a man at his elbow smiling at him, and, after a feeling of anger, he also smiled and said:

"I see you have got on my curve. Yes, I turned aside to look at the baseball score, forgetting that the games were over for the season. Force of habit, you know. Been doing the same thing for months and months."

"You were an enthusiast?" queried the other.

"Say, I lived on it! I ate and slept with it. Every morning I made a bet and every evening I found I had lost it. When the games began last spring I had a hundred friends. When they closed I hadn't one. I had called them all liars and horse thieves over baseball, and they couldn't stand it."

"It gets in the blood."

"You bet. I couldn't think of anything but baseball all day, and at night I dreamed of it, and cried out in my sleep. My wife refused to discuss the game, and the relations between us were strained. Our servant girl refused to argue, and I discharged her. My father-in-law said there was no game like poker, and I insulted him. On Sunday, when there was no game, the day seemed a week long to me. The boss offered to raise my wages $5 a week if I would cut it out, and I told him he was no patriot."

"But it's all over now."

"Yes, and I'm glad of it. In another month I can get over thinking about it and turn to something else, and before the winter is over perhaps I can get interested in Shakespeare or history again. I may have to get out into the back yard and yell now and then as a safety valve, but I shall do it as gently as I can, and without threatening to knock the other fellow's head off."

OLD PAP PINKHAM

MY Dear Mr. President-elect:

I respectfully forward the enclosed petition:

"To the President-elect—We, the undersigned, who are citizens and taxpayers of the young and thriving town of Jericho (boom sure to come in the spring), humbly and respectfully petition you as follows:

"That your first official act after taking the oath of office be to reappoint Old Pap Pinkham as postmaster of this town.

"That in so doing you nail him down so that he can't get away if offered another job.

"That you make Mrs. Pinkham his assistant, at a liberal salary.

"That your attitude to both be one to encourage them to strive to reach higher heights.

"That Old Pap be allowed a day off now and then to go duck shooting without having his wages docked.

"In the midst of golf and the crash of arms you may not have formed the acquaintance of Old Pap. We who have hoed corn and played poker with him for years know him through and through, and we take great pleasure in testifying:

"That he rents an expensive pew in church.

"That he pays for the same. (Special note.)

"That, as a grocer, he allows the clergy 10 per cent. off. (And tacks it on to sinners.)

"That he will trust a feller for a 2-cent stamp.

"That he has never been known to swear at anyone through the general delivery window.

"That his postoffice keeps hard cider on tap and the same is free to all. This fact alone brings customers for 10 miles around.

"That nine times out of ten Old Pap can hold a four-flush and fill on the draw.

"That he is the best man in the county to tell a horse's age or the best remedy for a sore-backed cow.

"That as grand marshal on Fourth of July he is simply immense and a credit to the country that calls him son.

"That he is trying to solve the high cost of living by selling bottles of horseradish at a cent below any other grocer in the state.

"That for two years he was advising Mr. Taft, and had that advice been accepted and acted on you would not today be Johnny on the spot.

"That he invariably divides his winnings at poker with the heathen of New York city and Boston and Chicago.

"That the only expletive he makes use of when he kicks an old hat on the first of April is: 'By heck!'

"That he is the quickest political flopper on record. Up to four minutes before the polls closed on election day he was strong for Taft, as was proper, and betting ten cents to seven that he would carry 47 states. Then he got a telegram that sent him running to the polls bareheaded and his coat tails flying. At the same time he shoved a straight Democratic ticket and announced that you were the only man that could save the country.

"That since election day he has been such a strong Democrat that a fox can smell him a mile off.

"That he has already begun working up public sentiment to give you a second term. Anyone not agreeing with him is promptly called a liar and a hog thief.

"There are many other reasons we could name, but the above seem sufficient. And we will ever pray.

"300 CITIZENS OF JERICHO."

There it is, Mr. President-elect, and it is left for you to decide. A hundred more names could have been secured to the petition, but they were not needed to show the drift of public opinion.

You have announced through the public press that you will call a special session of Congress in March to revise the tariff. Far be it from me to offer advice, but it seems to me that you ought to know the sentiment of Jericho on this great question. It is a saying that as goes Jericho so goes the presidency, and it has proved true five successive times.

Absalom Davis, who runs mostly to scarlet cabbages, wants the tariff reduced 20 per cent. to show his patriotism. His loss in competing with imported cabbages from Germany will be $50 a year, but he don't care a dum. He wants to live in the hearts of his countrymen.

Judeah White wants a higher tariff on cucumbers. He raises them by the acre, and is just teaching the public that the high cost of living can be reduced one-half by eating cucumber puddings three times a day. He isn't grasping, but he wants protection against the foreigners. Lower the tariff and he's busted.

Anthony Primrose has a hog in the pen that he is going to make pork of next fall. He hasn't exactly made up his mind on the tariff question, but if the figures are left where they are he is sure that codfish ought to come down a little.

Aaron Wigfall, who never stops to put a second "a" in his name, has a cow that gives six quarts of milk a day, and his wife makes about a pound of butter per week. He says that a lower tariff on butter will discourage the cows of America at least a quart of milk daily for each. He is a true patriot, as all cow-owners are, but if driven to the wall he may become desperate.

Abel Johnson wants a higher tariff on red peppers, and the money goes to pay his pew-rent and buy undershirts for the heathen of Africa. If foreign competition comes in he will have to stay away from church, and the brethren will have to take it out in shivering.

Mordecai Jones has 14 hens and a rooster, which he says is the proper proportion, and, by paying close attention to industry, his family manages to make a living from the sale of eggs. On good laying days they have bacon for dinner; on bad ones they have 'raw turnips. Mordecai thinks the tariff on eggs should be a dollar a dozen, and that every egg admitted should be stamped in plain letters: "Machine made instead of hand-picked. May be filled with dynamite, and blow you all to thunder!" Mordecai rings the bell for prayer meetings, bosses all the campmeetings held hereabouts, and is a citizen that should be deferred to.

Pardon Williams is not a man to beg anyone's pardon, as his name would imply. On the contrary, he makes the other feller do the begging when there is any to be done. He says that bi-carbonate of soda must be admitted free of duty. Several years ago he swallowed a frog while drinking at a swamp, and has been bothered ever since with wind on the stomach. The only thing that will belch it off is the bi-carb. It costs him about a dollar a week as it is, and he wants to get the expenses down to 50 or 60. When asked why he doesn't go at it and kill the frog he replies:

"I've got a friendly feeling for the durn thing and don't wont to hurt his pride!"

The last on the list is Elijah Poole. He controls the votes of his four hired men and can talk the leg off a calf. He wants plug tobacco put on the free list. He says he don't care to die for his country, and that the heathen can go to, but he chews two plugs a day and the government has got to help him out or he'll do his best to smash it.

The general sentiment of Jericho, as I gather it, is for a downward revision of the tariff. Champagne and 10-cent cigars can go upward, but look out for butter and beans. If we can get mutton from Australia and coal from Wales cheaper than from Chicago and Pittsburgh, let us have it thus. All Americans love the flag, but they love the dollar just as fervently.

As I was writing the above Silas Peabody dropped in. When told that I was writing you he said:

"Pap, you know that I raise five acres of pop-corn every year?"

"You do, Silas."

"You tell the fellers down to Washington to boost the tariff on pop-corn a foot higher or I'll knock the party colder'n a wedge next 'lection! I'm no trust, but my great-grandfather fell at Lexington, my great-grandmother at Bunker Hill and all my great uncles and aunts fit skunks and Injuns when the kentry was new, and I'll make 20 per cent. on my pop-corn or bust the biler of the whole United States of North America!"

Mr. Wilson, the tariff is going to have a hard time of it, but this is a country where everything pulls through in some fashion, and the people are ready to whoop up the next Fourth of July.

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GRANDMA'S MONEY

GRANDMA PHELPS was a woman over 60 years old, who lived alone in the outskirts of the village of Grafton. She was not poor and she was not without friends. She was a bit eccentric, and she lived that way because she preferred to. She was well liked by all and her life was passing smoothly along wher there came an adventure to turn things topsy-turvy.

Grandma Phelps sold a piece of land in the West she had owned for many years and received $4,000 for it. There was a bank in the village, and one would think that the woman would have deposited her money there. She didn't, however. She would not lend it or bank it or turn it over to a relative to safely keep. She announced that she would keep it in the house. The whole town came to know of her decision, and everybody predicted that something would happen. After six weeks something did happen. Grandma ran out into the street one morning and cried out that she had been robbed of her money during the night.

"I told you so!" said everybody to everybody else; and then an investigation began.

The village constable took charge of the case, and the fun was on. A peddler who called at the house the previous forenoon was arrested 10 miles away and brought back.

A farmer who had halted his team at the gate to inquire where Mr. Barnes lived was arrested and warned that the case against him was very strong.

A boy 10 years old who had gone to the store for Grandma about midafternoon was collared and told that he would be sent to prison for life.

Even Deacon Graham, who had called over the line-fence to ask the old woman how her cucumbers were getting on, was under suspicion. There might have been other arrests if Grandma hadn't remembered that she had the money all safe when she went to bed, and if the sheriff hadn't come over from the county seat and taken charge of the case.

No door or window had been forced during the night. Grandma was a light sleeper, but had no one around. The money was under her pillow, and she was sure no one could have got it without awakening her. Well, then what? The peddler, the farmer and the boy had to be turned loose with apologies, and the case became a puzzle.

It was a sure thing that grandma had lost her money, but how? The sum was in big bills, and was wrapped in a cloth and carried in the bosom of her dress. She could not lose it in walking about. She had not been out of her own yard for three days previous to missing the money. The sheriff worked on the case a week, and then made up his mind that the old woman was a little off in her head and had not lost the money at all, but simply wanted to create a little excitement and be talked about. There are such people, and the officer was not so stupid in thinking he had come across one. His belief was strengthened by the woman's words and demeanor. After the first outcry she took things very calmly, and finally even laughed over the loss and said:

"Oh, well, let it all go. No use in keeping the whole United States upset about a little thing like this."

The case was dropped, so far as any officer working on it, but, of course, the talk didn't cease. It was surely a matter to wonder over, and it furnished talk for three months. Even the children had theories about it. There was just one single person among the hundreds interested who went at that case to solve it in a common sense way, and that person was a boy 14 years old. His name was Tom Henderson, and his father was the village blacksmith. The boy has since become the head of a detective agency in the West, and it was that case that shaped his career.

Grandpa Phelps had offered no reward for the return of her money. She had been advised to on all sides, but had obstinately refused. The boy Tom had half a dozen theories while the case was hot, but, after things had cooled off, he sat down to have a good think. Let us see how he reasoned. Grandma could not have lost the money about the house or yard, for a dozen searches had been made. She was certain that she had not been robbed. The sheriff had also said that the house had not been entered. The money had disappeared, but how? Everybody got that far, and then said something silly—that grandma had sent it away secretly to an orphan asylum—that she had given it to the minister of her church—that she had burned it up with her sweepings.

Tom Henderson rejected all these ideas. The woman had neither been robbed nor sent her money away. She would have been worse than stupid to have burned it. The boy had known grandma for five years and had often run errands for her. She had told him that she believed in dreams, and that if she was worried about anything her sleep was broken. That was the point he started from. An old woman with $4,000 in the house and everybody talking robbers to her must naturally worry. She must think more or less of being robbed, and, perhaps, murdered. Hence, she would be apt to have bad dreams. Go a step further, and say that she might get up in her sleep and change the hiding place of her money.

Now you've got the key of the mystery. Looks easy, doesn't it, and yet a thousand people passed it by. Tom Henderson wasn't sure he was right, of course, but that view of the case seemed to be the only one to explain things. Grandma had been sleeping with the money under her pillow. She had got up in her sleep and put it elsewhere. Where? If a robber had got into the house he would search all about. The woman would have reasoned that out. The safest place for the money would be outside. There was no cellar, but there was a woodshed and a hencoop. In the shed was always standing a barrel of hen food. When the contents got low the barrel was refilled. He had often brought a bag of the stuff from the mill. A wad of greenbacks shoved down into the feed would be as safe as in a bank. Would a sleep walker select the place?

Don't think Tom worked this out in half an hour. It was two weeks before he got to it, and then he couldn't say he had a sure thing. It simply seemed a reasonable theory. When he started out one day to test his theory he was perspiring in his excitement. As he arrived at grandma's cottage, he was hailed with:

"Say, Tommy, I hear that the mill is going to shut down for several weeks and I guess I'll have the hen-feed barrel filled up."

"How much have you got left?" asked the boy in a trembling voice.

"Oh, maybe a third of a barrel."

'Grandma, weren't you afraid of robbers all the time you had that money in the house?'

"Yes, toward the last, when everybody said I'd be murdered for it."

"And you didn't sleep well?"

"I should say I didn't! I didn't sleep an hour at a time. Something funny happened to me that last night. I had counted the money over and put it under my pillow when I thought I heard someone under the bedroom window. That started me to worrying. I thought someone might have been looking in and seen where I put the money."

"Did you tell the sheriff of this?"

"No. No one got in."

"But what was the funny thing?"

"Why, I went to bed and to sleep, and the next thing I knew I had fallen over a chair in the middle of the floor. I must have walked in my sleep."

The boy beckoned grandma to come out into the shed with him, and when they stood by the barrel of feed, he said:

"Dig down into it!"

In less than a minute she had her $4,000 in her hands!

"Now, isn't that queer!" she gasped. "I remember of thinking one day what a safe hiding place that would be if there were no rats around."

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Right Off the Ice

WHEN, having laid an Egg, set up such a Cackle that presently the whole Barnyard was in Confusion and, the Farmer came running out to see what was going on.

"What is it?" he demanded as the Hen cackled louder than ever.

"Why, I've laid an Egg!"

"An Egg! Why, a single Egg isn't worth but 2 cents at the present market price."

"Yes, I know; but if I didn't do 2 shillings' worth of cackling over every 2 cents' worth of egg the world would soon forget me."

MORAL.

Send a bundle of old clothes to an orphan asylum and then interview a reporter.

THE MAN WITH THE ACCORDION

A Peasant, having saved up a sum of Money by hard work and peeling his potatoes close, went to the nearest Village and invested in an Accordion. On his way home he began playing the air of My Grandfather's Clock, but scarcely had the echoes reached the Forest when out came a Chopper, who cried out:

"Man! Man! For heaven's sake hang up on that. You will kill us all with your Racket!"

"Can't help that," replied the Peasant, as he pulled away harder than ever. "If what tickles me all over is Death to you that is not my lookout. I will now give you The Empty Cradle, with variations."

MORAL.

If our neighbor doesn't want our smoke, let him move away.

CARELESS PEOPLE.

A couple of Rats who were prowling around a strange house came upon a Jar of N. O. Molasses which could be reached from the shelf. One of them at once leaped into the sweet substance, and after a brief struggle to get out again he sank out of sight.

"Really now," mused the other, as he hastened away from the dangerous neighborhood, "the person who left the cover off that Jar should be prosecuted for criminal neglect."

MORAL.

Of course, the Cook didn't discover the Rat until she was pouring out the last of the Molasses.

THE PHILOSOPHER'S ADVICE.

A Merchant who found that he must either increase his sales or close his doors and beat his Creditors, hunted up a Philosopher and asked him what course he should pursue.

"Have you lived long in the Town?" asked the old man.

"Yes, for years."

"And you know everybody?"

"Every man, woman and child."

"Are the people all at peace with each other?"

"They are, O wise man. There has not been a word between families for years."

"Then you must return home and slyly provoke quarrels and hard feelings. Do as I say and your trade will increase fourfold."

The Merchant wonderingly obeyed the injunction, and in a week there was scarcely two families in the Town on speaking terms. Mrs. A. gave a card party and did not invite that stub-nosed Mrs. B., and Mrs. B. gave a coffee and left Mrs. A. to drink cold tea at home along with her monkey-faced daughter. Mrs. C. suddenly ceased to lend to Mrs. D. and Mrs. D. discovered that Mrs. E. was wearing dresses sent her by a rich sister in Boston.

The result was as the Philosopher had predicted. There was a sudden demand upon the merchant's stock of coffee mills, flatirons, axes, shovels, groceries and other things, and one woman ordered a set of cups and saucers and an eight-day clock and $10 worth of knives and spoons with the explanation:

"Being that one of my neighbors has started the story that I had to hire my husband to marry me, and the other has affirmed that we are so stingy that we starve a dog to death every six months, I will now show my independence by neither borrowing nor lending. You may also send me some quilt frames, a new teapot, two stove kettles, a steamer, a dozen fruit jars and a dishpan."

Then the merchant had to hire two extra clerks, build an addition and speculate in mining stocks to get rid of some of his money, and drummers traveled hundreds of miles to see him, and the Commercial Agencies rated him good for a million.

MORAL.

The howl of a neighbor's dog is unnoticed until the owner refuses to lend his wheelbarrow.

COULDN'T TELL A LIE.

A Fox who was being Pursued by the Hounds came upon a Hare sitting in the bushes and called out: "If anybody inquires for me please say that you haven't seen me for a month past."

"Oh, I couldn't do that," replied the Hare—"that would be Lying."

"Very well, then, suppose you take a run across to yonder fence and back and tell me if there is any snow on the other-side."

"With pleasure," answered the Hare, and away she sailed.

The hounds got sight of her as she sped along, and directly the whole pack were hard at her heels.

MORAL.

"That comes of being too good," chuckled the Fox, as he saw her finally overtaken. "The skin of a Hare who died for Trust isn't half as valuable as the pelt of a Fox who lives to Lie!"

THE OLD UN'S ESCAPE.

A Wolf who had grown old and gray and could no longer move about like a Farmer's Boy in front of a Bumble Bee, saw with Regret and Sorrow that his Son looked upon him as a Burden and wished him Bounced from the Cabinet. He was one day wiping his Tearful Eyes on a Sheepskin when the Son entered the Cave and remarked:

"Dear Father, how would you like to take a walk with me this fine day?"

"Do you really want me to?"

"Of course I do. Your health is very dear to me, and I have been Pained for some days past to see how pale and careworn you looked."

The Old Man felt as tickled as a hired man with the Boss gone and both Oxen too lame to Work, and the pair set out with smiles galloping across their faces. When they had penetrated the Forest a long distance a Lion suddenly appeared, and the Son called out:

"King of Beasts, I have brought you a Dinner! Eat him and tally one for me!"

"Stay!" roared the Lion. "This chap seems old and tough, and I am not the sort to eat poor meat when better can be had. You are the dinner I want to get hold of!"

MORAL.

"Well, well!" mused the Old Wolf as he trotted homeward alone. "If it is sad to be old and tough, it is likewise dangerous to be young and tender, and, after all, I will make the best of my lot. William Henry didn't get more than a rod ahead of me on that deal—not if I can see straight!"

WHY HE PROMISED.

A Fox who had gorged himself with three Fowls was sitting in a fence corner with disgusted look on his Face when along came a Peasant, who said:

"The only thing I have against you is that you steal my fowls."

"If that's all we can be Friends," replied the Fox.

"How?"

"Why, I am ready to promise that I will never again disturb the peace of your Hen-Roost."

"Honest?"

"Honest Injun," said Reynard, as he laid his paw on his stomach.

Two days afterward the Peasant was crossing his fields when he suddenly came upon the Fox devouring one of his finest hens.

"Ha! but it is scarcely 48 hours since you promised to let my Fowls alone!"

"Yes, I know," replied Reynard, as he gulped down a leg; "but just then I was stuffed with Chicken and could hold no more."

MORAL.

Don't expect that what a man promises on a full stomach will be carried out on an empty one.

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Utopia in Iceland.

[From Temperance.]

Iceland has no jails, no penitentiary; there is no court and only one policeman. Not a drop of alcoholic liquor is made on the island. Its 78,000 people are total abstainers, since they will not permit any liquor to be imported.

There is not an illiterate person on the island, nor a child 10 years old unable to read; the system of the public schools is practically perfect. Much of the improvement is due to the abolition of the liquor traffic and prohibition of all alcoholic beverages in this compact little island of the north.

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