

Ezra Fitch's Idees on New Year Resolootin'.

SOME men are natural born rilers—got horns all over 'em, thet jags everybody they tech. Course we've got to believe thet the Lord made all of us, an' knowed purty close to what He wuz doin' at thet. But jedgin' from how et is aroun' here in Farwood, it do appear to me thet He does create a most uncommon powerful lot o' muskeeters an' deekins.

Well, t'other day Deekin Brumby ast me, in a kinda insinooatin' way: "Ezry, what resolootin' air ye goin' to do fer the new year?"

By gol', but thet did rile me. The ol' Deekin is a most aggervatin' cuss, with thet paternizin' smirk on his face. I turned aroun' square at 'im, and sez I: "Well, Deekin, sence the Lord hez put you in high places to jedge us ornery critters, ye might tell me about what kind o' resolootin' ye think would do the most good fer ol' Ezry." I said this kind o' 'umble-like, leadin' 'im on.

"Well," sez he; "I don't jest know what yer most besettin' sin might be, Ezry. Every man knows his own wickedness best; but it does a man a power o' good to draw in the reins purty tight onct a year and take a new start, just to show the Lord he *means* right anyhow."

An' then I into 'im, an' I sez: "Deekin Brumby, ef I sot myself up in the 'amen corner' every Sunday, an' looked so pious as ef eatin' blackberry jam ud be a wickedness I'd never stoop to propergate, I'll be hungswuzzled ef I'd go out an' cuss my innards out, an' lick my horse for trampin' the lines in the mud caze I wuz too dasted lazy to tie 'em up afore I went into church! Didn't know ez anybody wuz on t'other side o' the shed, did ye? er ye mighta done yer cussin' in a leetle more scriptural langwage. Well, thet ain't all yit. Ef I hed any resolootin' to do, an' hed fifteen cows good ez yourn, I'll be durned ef I wouldn't resoloot to let Deekin Jackson's widder hev a quart o' milk a day without astin' her to pay fer it out o' the hard-earned mite she

gits fer takin' in washin' from them ez never were her equals—an' you a brother deekin with him, too. Eh, think I'm gittin' kind o' personal, do ye? Well, them ez pokes ther noses into other people's bizness is allus liable to smell sumpin' other people wouldn't 'a' shoved up to 'em ef they'd a-kep' themselves busy on the beams in ther own eyes. I allus take notice thet the man what's all the time worryin' about his neighbor not doin' right, spends mighty little time keepin' the kinks out o' his own hair an' conshuns.

"There's a power o' men writin' religious books what orter stick to keepin' diaries; an' more folks ud git religion ef they didn't know the orneryness of some men what the preacher can't keep out o' the 'amen corner' on Sundays. Good resoloooshuns is all right; but the man what only makes 'em onct a year hez got ter be mighty pertickler what day he picks out to die on, er the Angel Gabriel might fergit what his intentions wuz before election. This thing o' promisin' the Lord what yer goin' to do, only shows Him ye know what's right, but thet ye'd rather hev coppers in yer stockin'-toe here, than start an account fer a corner lot in heaven; an' thet ye'd rather scratch the itch o' yer human depravity, than lay awake nights tryin' to think how to do some good thet would coax St. Peter to let ye through the pearly gates.

"Ef there's any resolootin' ter be done, the 29th o' December's a durned sight better'n the 1st o' Janooary, er the resolootin' ain't wuth shucks." Course the Deekin wuz away down the road by this time; but I hed my talk out anyhow; an' he'd heerd enuff not to come any more resolootin' talk aroun' me.

Ef a man knows he's doin' what he hedn't orter, the time fer resolootin' is quick ez he finds et out. Ef ther's any one sin too mean an' sneakin' fer the Lord to fergive, et's the swearin'-off spree thet some men take jest 'fore ther spell o' New Year resolootin'.