

**The Modern Fable of Self-Made Hezekiah and His Message of Hope to This Year's Crop of Graduates.**

By George Ade.

In Wayback Township, along in the thirties, there arrived a 12-pounder. When he was three days old he was exhibited to a Bunch in the Front Room by an Old Lady who had made a study of Colic. She was a Baby Expert, who always broke in to do considerable heavy standing around and calling off when there was a lift in the Population.

While little Ipsy-Wipsy was being inspected, he opened one Eye and spotted a Silver Half-Dollar that the Honorary Nurse wore as a Brooch. Immediately he closed in on it. They had to choke him to make him let go. In after Years it was remarked that this was the only time that he went after the Coin and failed to bring it home.

The Baby never had any Tantrums at Night because he had overheard them say that it cost \$2 every time Doc was called in. He would lie quietly in his Crib for Hours at a time looking up at the Ceiling and computing Compound Interest on the \$5 Gold Piece that had been put in the Bank, to be drawn out when he should be 21.

His Parents gave him a Biblical Name so as to make him a strong Come-On for Investors who belonged to the Pious Element. Hezekiah Hooper is what they christened him. They wanted a Name that would carry weight on a Letter-Head and reassure the Soft Mark who was about to sink his Funds in a Mining Venture with a Guarantee of 48 per cent Dividends.

At the age of 4 Hezekiah sat down and figured that if he devoted his Life to Physical Toil he might some day be the Owner of a six-room cottage fully protected by a Mortgage, whereas if he wore a White Shirt and kept busy with the Pencil he might be Rich enough some day to land in the Senate. So he went out looking for Work to hand to other People, thus becoming what the Campaign Orator calls a Captain of Industry.

If a man wanted the Weeds pulled from his Garden, then Hez would take the Job for 25 cents. He would buy 5 cents' worth of Stick Candy and place it judiciously, so that at Nightfall the other boys would have Blisters and the Stomach-Ache, while Hez would have 20 cents salted away in the Tin Bank.

When he was still a Young Man he made the Important Discovery that the honest Laborer who digs Post-Holes for 11 Hours at a Stretch gets \$1.25 in the Currency of the Realm, while the Brain Worker who leads out a Spavined Horse and puts in 20 Minutes at tall Bunko Work can clean up \$14.50 and then sit on the Porch all Afternoon, reading "The Lives of the Saints."

Also Hezekiah got into the Corral a Hold-Over whose Eyes refused to work as a Duet and whose Figure had all of the Graceful Ins and Outs of a Flag-Pole, but she owned half of the Land in the Township. Hezekiah said something about the Beauty that fadest even as a Flower and then he connected her with his Property.

When grim-visaged War showed its awful front, Hezekiah went down to the Court-House and hollered for the Union until he was black in the Face. He showed all the emotional Farm

Hands where to sign their Names and promised to keep them supplied with Blue Overalls, Beans, Navy Plug and Hard Tack until the whole Works had been saved. Every time there was a new Call for Men he took a fresh side-hold on the Commissary Department and began to gouge the Government in a new Place.

The Heroes who came home full of Malaria and Lead were met at the Station by Hezekiah, who had grown a Chin Whisker and was sporting a White Vest. He gave each one a card announcing that all of our country's Brave Defenders who had failed to become well fixed on \$13 per would get what money they needed at 2 per cent a Month, with Real Estate as Security.

By going through Bankruptcy, side-stepping the Assessor, working the Farmers for a Railroad Bonus, handling the Funds of denominational Colleges and putting the double Hammer-Lock on the Small Fry who had Notes falling due, Hezekiah accumulated a Wad that put him into the Millionaire's Division.

He and other old Gentlemen with pink Jowls and cold, fishy Eyes would occasionally meet in some Director's Room, finished in Mahogany. The Meeting would be opened with Prayer, after which they would discuss Ways and Means of putting the Inter-State Commerce Law to the Bad, squaring the Legislature without passing over any of the Stuff themselves and Handing the Public the Short End of it.

Having arrived at this Proud Eminence, Hezekiah was ripe to spring some Advice to Young Men. Any Patriarch who has slipped the Tail Mitt to the entire Universe and dealt from both Ends of the Deck is the Real Boy when it comes to laying down Rules of Conduct for the Pale Youth who wants an \$8 Job. So Hezekiah Hooper, the Eminent Financier, who never smoked a Cigar, never took a Drink and never asked anybody else to do either, was invited to address the Class of Naughty-Two at the Local Business College.

He sat at the Rostrum wearing Black Broadcloth, betokening Virtue, and in addition to his ancient Trade Marks, the White Shirt and the White Vest, he had a White Bow Tie. As he sat there in conscious Rectitude, wondering if the Congressional Investigation would harm the Beef Trust, it could be seen at a Glance that he would never take anything that was nailed down.

The studious Young Gentlemen who had been preparing themselves to go out into the Great World and draw Car-Fare as Book-Keepers and Stenographers, looked up at Honest Hezekiah and said, "This is where he puts us next to the Recipe for Getting There."

At last the Honored Guest arose and told the Class that the Young Man who wishes to succeed must be Upright, Frugal, Industrious and Patriotic. He considered it the Duty of every Young Man to accept whatever Compensation was offered him and be Content, for as soon as he began to earn more his Employer would come around and put it in his Pocket. Above all, he must love his Country and let Integrity be his Watchword, and remember that a Good Name is better than Riches, even if other People don't think so. Then he sat down without batting an Eye and every member of the Class of '02 knew just how to go out and pick up a Million.

MORAL: What's more, they believe it themselves.

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