

# STORIES OF THE FAKIRS

By J. P. JOHNSTON  
Author of "Twenty Years of Husling," "What Happened to Johnston," Etc.

## JOHNSTON OUTWITS TWO GRAFTERS.

"Cross-Roader" Accosts Him on Business Street—Invites Him to Inspect Some "Rare Old Mexican Slippers"—Tries to Work "Top and Bottom" Game in Saloon—"Victim" Disconcerts Gang and Is \$5 to the Good.

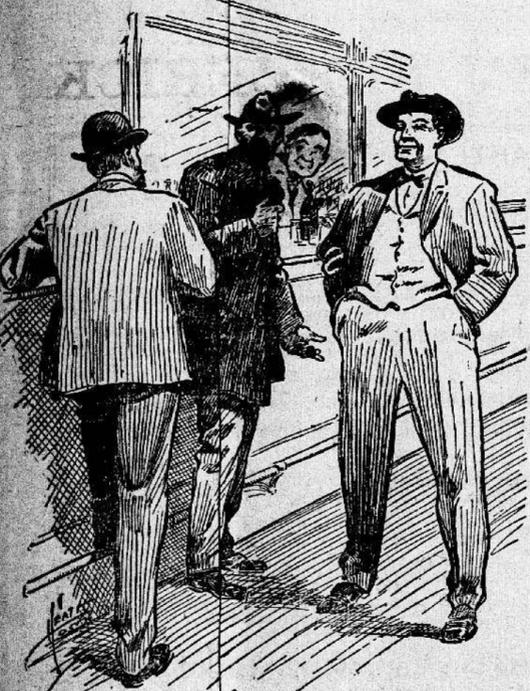
(Copyright, 1905, by Joseph B. Howles.)  
Some years ago I went on a business trip to Toledo, O. The noon of the day I arrived I took a stroll down Summit street, and coming to a large dry goods store, with an elegant display in the show window, I stepped up to the window to look at a particular silk dress pattern. While wondering whether I should buy it for my



"THAT'S RIGHT, I LIKE TO SEE A MAN SPEND HIS MONEY ON HIS WIFE."

wife, I was suddenly approached by a quick-witted man.  
"That piece of silk certainly is a beauty, isn't it?" he said.  
My first glance at him convinced me that I had struck a "cross-roader" and at once I determined to let him take me "the limit."  
He was a man 55 or 60 years of age, with silver hair and whiskers cropped closely. He was well groomed, wore a derby hat, patent leather shoes, and in fact had every appearance of a well-to-do business man.  
In answer to his question I said:

river there stood, to the right, a brick building with a saloon sign in front, and when even with the door he said:  
"Let's step in here and get a fresh glass of beer."  
"That will just suit me," I replied.  
We stepped up to the bar. He called for two beers and laid down a ten-dollar bill.  
That instant a tall, angular man, with jet black hair and whiskers completely covering his face, and a big slouch hat, arose from a card table. Stepping up to my newly made acquaintance, he said:



"WAL YOU CERTAINLY HAVE TWEENER AN 'EASY MARK' UP AGAINST ME THIS TIME, HAVEN'T YOU?"

"Yes, it is a beauty, and I think shall go inside and buy it for my wife."  
"That's right," he answered in a jovial sort of way, slapping me on the shoulder; "I like to see a man spend his money on his wife, and I'll go in and see how much it will cost you."  
After buying the dress pattern I remarked that I would take it to my home.  
"What hotel are you stopping at?" he asked, when I told him, he said: "I am going in that direction and will accompany you."  
He immediately began telling me of a most delightful trip he and his wife had recently had through Mexic. One

"No, no," insisted my acquaintance; "I shall do nothing of the kind; you can pay for your own drinks."  
"Wal, then," said the southerner, "I'll shake you the dice to see who pays for the drinks."  
My acquaintance agreed, and as he shook the dice and turned them over with the dice under it he said to the southerner: "I'll bet you ten dollars that I can guess nearer to the number of spots on top and bottom than you can."  
"All right," came the quick reply, and bringing out a big roll of bills, he murmured: "Gosh! 'Spec I'll squander all the money I got fer them cattle afore I get out of this blamed town."  
When the money was put up my friend whispered to me: "You are in with this."  
The box was raised and my acquaintance, of course, had won.  
The cattle dealer said: "By Gosh! you win this time, suah. Jes' wait till I get a seegar and I'll try that ag'in."  
He took plenty of time, during which my friend showed me that the fellow was a "greeny" and didn't understand that a man couldn't throw over a certain number. Handling me the ten-dollar bill, he said: "I know if I had lost you would have stood for half of it, so half of this is yours."  
The moment they had begun their play I recognized their game as one of the very oldest, known as "Top and Bottom." It was a game that had been played all over the west 25 years before by two men named Stoneburner and Munson, and while I had never met either of these grafters, I had heard of them.  
Knowing well that my friend's particular reason for dividing with me was to see how much money I had, I took pains to show my roll, consisting of a bunch of money, and after handing him a five, I placed the ten with the rest, then carelessly shoved it into my pocket. The cattleman, having purchased and lighted his cigar, returned to the bar.  
My friend said: "Do you want any more of this, stranger?"  
"Wal," he replied, "I'd kin' a like to win back that ten dollars, anyhow."  
"Then," said my friend, "we'll again bet you that I can guess nearer than you can the number of spots on top and bottom. My friend and I have plenty of time and we'll bet you once more."  
Of course that remark, "plenty of time," was a tip to the cattleman, as he quickly comprehended that the "sucker" had plenty of money and to offer to bet accordingly.  
After toying with the dice a moment he placed them back into the box (making a quick change, which I was supposed to know nothing about) and, turning the box over, he said:  
"How much do you want to bet now that you can't guess them nearer than I can?"  
"I'll bet you anywhere from \$100 to \$300," replied the stranger, "that there are not more than 24."  
Turning to me, my friend whispered: "I showed you that it's impossible to turn less than 23. How much shall we bet him? Let's bet him a couple of hundred? I'll put up all I have."  
I began laughing very heartily, as though I had heard something very funny. This old game amuses me, I said, "and I have been wondering if you fellows would make your last 'joint' for the money the same as poor old Stoneburner used to 'joint' when he and Munson worked 'top and bottom' together."  
Turning to my Mexican slipper friend with a look of disgust, the southern cattle dealer said: "Wal, you certainly have steered an 'easy mark' up against me this time, haven't you?" And then, addressing me: "Did you know Stoneburner and Munson?"  
"Yes," I replied, "and Kelley, and Burley and Steward and Haynes, the Three Card Monte gang. I have met nearly all of them."  
The "steerer" then told me that as I wore a slouch hat, he had sized me up for a western stock raiser, or possibly a western doctor, and as he had long since discovered that business and professional men were more easily grafted than any other classes, he had tackled me.  
"Well, men," I said, "I guess I can afford to buy the cigars." Then I thanked them for the delightful entertainment they had provided me and, shaking my friend's hand, I added: "I am sorry that we didn't have time to get those Mexican slippers, as I should have liked a pair of them."  
"By the way, Johnston, you are not going to give me the worst of it on that five dollars, are you?" he asked.  
"Well," said I, "I am always out for the 'coin,' and though I never try to get it on anything but a straight business proposition, when I once get it I never give any of it back. Your proposition to give me five dollars was perfectly agreeable, for which I thank you most sincerely. Good-by."  
With that I left the saloon and two very disconsolate grafters.

Size of Limerick.  
The Irish town of Limerick has a population of 38,000, and the distance from one end of the city to the other is two miles. Cabs charging a generous fare have heretofore been the only means of conveyance. A recent project for a street-railway line was rejected. On the evening of the corporation meeting bands paraded the streets to emphasize the objection of the citizen and the working community in general to the innovation.  
Complexion in Danger.  
Unconsciously have some negroes shown humor. As an example witness the following case of motherly solicitude: A little colored child, very dark suggestive of polished ebony, ran out of a small house. A moment after the window was thrown open and a woman of color called after the child: "You, Martha Washington, come here and sit on your yellow sunbonnet, or you'll be tanned as brown as an injun."  
Devouring the Flocks.  
The most remarkable movement of our times is said to be that "the world is eating up its sheep." In Germany the flocks have decreased over 50 per cent, since 1875, and this is only an extreme instance of what is going on elsewhere. The increasing price of beef is given as one reason of the eating up of the sheep, "the dread of tubercularis is another

INTERRUPTED DEATH SCENE  
"Little Eva" Displayed Her Veatility Before Taking Final Flight.  
The introduction of songs and dances into plays in which they have no legitimate place is not a new practice by any means. It dates back to much earlier days of the drama. And there have been instances when the interpellations were of a somewhat startling sort. A number of well-known actors were discussing this subject when one of the oldest of the party said: "Boys, let me tell you that the tendency is not a new one. It is older than most of you, and no example of it that I have seen lately has been as startling as a case I saw in southern Illinois years ago. We were out with a one-night-stand piece, and after a long jump had landed in a small town very tired and very anxious for excitement. The manager told us that there would be no afternoon rehearsal as an 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' company had the house for a farewell matinee. This was a lively song and dance act, and decided to attend in a body. The show proceeded in the usual way up to Little Eva's death-bed scene, and a great light and angel heralded the entrance of Eva. 'Tell me what day, de singin', honey,' says Uncle Tom. Then little Eva descended from her deathbed and executed as lively a song and dance as could be asked for. When she had finished and acknowledged the thunderous applause of the audience, she returned to her couch and the death scene continued."

CONVINCING EVIDENCE.  
Winthrop, Cal., Nov. 20th. (Special)—A pictorial straight forward story is always the most convincing. And that is what has impressed us most in reading the testimonials in regard to Dodd's Kidney Pills. The testimonial told by Davis Lewis, of this place, bears the ring and stamp of truth upon it. He says:— "I was troubled for six months with dull, heavy pains in the small of my back, sometimes it passed into my stomach, at other times up between my shoulders. When it was in my stomach, I was sick for the pain. I was advised to take all kinds of remedies, and did so, but without getting any relief. Then some one told me to try Dodd's Kidney Pills. I got a box and began taking them. The first few doses gave me relief; by the time I had finished them all the pain was gone and I have been well ever since."  
Not a Lightweight.  
"You've made a mistake in your paper," said the indignant man, entering the pictorial sanctum, "one of the competitors at that athletic match yesterday, and you have called me 'the well-known lightweight champion.' Well, aren't you the editor?"  
"No, I'm nothing of the kind, and it's awfully awkward, because," you see, I'm a coal merchant."—Stray Stories.

Cures Rheumatism and Catarrh—Medicine Best Erec.  
These two diseases are the result of an awful poisoned condition of the blood. If you have aching joints and back, shoulder blades, bone pains, crippled hands, legs, feet, swollen muscles, rheumatism, biting pains, and that tired, discouraged feeling of rheumatism, or the hawking, spitting, blurred eyesight, dizziness, sick stomach, headache, pain in the head, mucous throat, discharges, decaying teeth, bad breath, belching gas of catarrh, take Botanic Blood Balm (B. B. B.). It kills the poison in the blood, which causes these awful symptoms, giving a pure, healthy blood supply to the joints and mucous membranes, and makes a perfect cure of the worst rheumatism or colic of catarrh. Cures where all else fails. Blood Balm (B. B. B.) is composed of pure Botanic ingredients, good for weak kidneys. Improves the digestion, cures dyspepsia. A perfect tonic for old folks by giving them new, rich, pure blood. Thoroughly tested for thirty years. Druggists, \$1 per large bottle, with complete directions, or come to our complete and prepaid by writing Blood Balm Co., Atlanta, Ga. Describe trouble and special free medical advice sent in sealed letter.  
Men in the swim frequently make their escape by the water wagon.—Indianapolis News.  
Taylor's Cherokee Remedy of Sweet Gum and Mullen is Nature's great remedy—Cures Coughs, Croup, Whooping Cough, Asthma, and all throat and lung troubles. At drug-gists, 25c., 50c., and \$1.00 per bottle.  
The joyous seasons of life are mighty short.—N. Y. Press.

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CARTER'S LITTLE LIVER PILLS.  
Positively cured by these Little Liver Pills. They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect remedy for Headaches, Dizziness, Nervousness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.  
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Address: Ladies' Advisory Dept., The Chattanooga Medicine Co., Chattanooga, Tenn.

UNAPPRECIATED ELOQUENCE  
Maiden Speech of Young Lawyer Has a Most Unhappy Conclusion.  
It is well for a speaker to know where his peroration is going to end when he begins. I heard a young lawyer make his maiden speech. It was in defense of a fellow who was half-witted, arrested on the charge of stealing a hog, the young attorney having been appointed by the court.  
His defense was that his client was an idiot, and unable to distinguish between right and wrong. He closed a flowery speech with this peroration:  
"Gentlemen of the jury, look at my client. That low, receding forehead, those lusterless eyes, portend that he was depraved by nature of the power to distinguish right from wrong, ignorant of the distinction which exists between his own property and that of others. To him, as to the two-year-old child, what he wants and can reach belongs to him. He knows neither why it does not why it does not. But, gentlemen of the jury, such are the institutions of this, our free and glorious country, that my client, idiot though he is, stands for trial to-day by a jury of his peers."  
The culprit got the full penalty of the law.

GRATEFUL TO CUTICURA.  
For Instant Relief and Speedy Cure of Raw and Scaly Humor, Itching Day and Night for Many Months.  
"I do wish you would publish this letter so that others suffering as I have may see it and be helped. For many months awful sores covered my face and neck, scabs forming, which would swell and itch terribly day and night, and then break open, running blood and matter. I had tried many remedies, but was growing worse, when I started with Cuticura. The first application gave me instant relief, and when I had used two cakes of Cuticura Soap and three boxes of Cuticura Ointment, I was completely cured. (Signed) Miss Nellie Vander Wiele, Lakeside, N. Y."

When a man grows rich there is an indisposition to asking questions as to the methods which were used in the process.—Philadelphia Bulletin.  
Piso's Cure cannot be too highly spoken of as a cough cure.—J. W. O'Brien, 322 Third Ave., N. Y., Minneapolis, Minn., Jan. 6, 1900.  
"Actuary," a person who gets \$25,000 a year for guessing.—N. Y. Sun.

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But Found a Cure After Fifteen Years of Suffering.  
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