THE GENTLE GRAFTER

BY O. HENRY.

The Octopus Marooned.

Copyright, 1907, by S. S. McClure Co. in United States and Great Britain.

"A trust is its weakest point," said Jeff Peters.

"That," said I, "sounds like one of those unintelligible remarks such as: 'Why is a policeman?'

"It is not," said Jeff. "There are no relations between a trust and a policeman. My remark was an epitogram—an axis—a kind of mulct-em in parvo.

"What it means is that a trust is like an egg, and it is not like an egg. If you want to break an egg you have to do it from the outside. The only way to break up a trust is from the inside. Keep sitting on it until it hatches. Look at the brood of young colleges and libraries that's chirping and peeping all over the country.

"Yes, sir, every trust bears in its own bosom the seeds of its destruction, like a rooster that crows near a Georgia colored Methodist camp meeting, or a Republican announcing himself a candidate for Governor of Texas."

I asked Jeff, jestingly, if he had ever, during his checkered, plaided, mottled, pied and dappled career conducted an enterprise of the class to which the word "trust" had been applied. Somewhat to my surprise he acknowledged the corner.

"Once," said he. "And the State seal at New Jersey never bit into a charter that opened up a solider and safer piece of legitimate octopussing. We had everything in our favor—wind, water, police, nerve, and a clean monopoly of an article indispensable to the public.

"There wasn't a trust buster on the globe that could have found a weak spot in our scheme. It made Rockefeller's little kerosene speculation look like a bucket shop. But we lost out."

"Some unforeseen opposition came up, I suppose," I said.

"No, sir, it was just as I said. We were self-curbed. It was a case of auto-suppression. There was a rift within the loot, as Albert Tennyson says.

"You remember that I told you that me and Andy Tucker was partners for some years. That man was the most talented conniver at stratagems I ever saw. Whenever he saw a dollar in another man's hands he took it as a personal grudge if he couldn't take it any other way.

"Andy was educated, too, besides having a lot of useful information. He had acquired a big amount of experience out of books and could talk for hours on any subject connected with ideas and discourse.

"He had been in every line of graft from lecturing on Palestine with a lot of magic lantern pictures of the annual Custom Made Clothiers' Association convention at Atlantic City to flooding Connecticut with bogus wood alcohol distilled from nutmegs.

"One spring me and Andy had been over in Mexico on a flying trip during which a Philadelphia capitalist had paid us $2,500 for a half interest in a silver mine in Chihuahua. Oh, yes, the mine was all right. The other half interest must have been worth two or three hundred thousand. I often wondered who owned that mine.

"In coming back to the United States me and Andy stubbed our toes against a little town in Texas on the Rio Grande. The name of it was Bird City; but it wasn't.

"The town had about 2,000 inhabitants, mostly men. I figured out that their principal means of existence was in living close to tall chaparral. Some of 'em were stockmen and some gamblers and some horse speculators and plenty were in the smuggling line.

"Me and Andy put up at a hotel that was built like something between a roof garden and a sectional bookcase. It began to rain the day we got there. As the saying is, Juniper Aquarius was sure turning on the water plugs on Mount Amphibious.

"Now, there were three saloons in Bird City, though neither Andy nor me drank. But we could see the townspeople making a triangular procession from one to another all day and half the night. Everybody seemed to know what to do with as much money as they had.

"The third day of the rain it slacked up a while in the afternoon, so me and Andy walked out to the edge of the town to view the mudscape.

"Bird City was built between the Rio Grande and a deep, wide arroyo that used to be the old bed of the river. The bank between the stream and its old bed was cracking and giving way when we saw it, on account of the high water caused by the rain.

"Andy looks at it a long time. That man's intellects was never idle. And then he unfolds to me a instantaneous idea that has occurred to him. Right there we organized a trust, and we walked back into town and put it on the market.

"First we went to the main saloon in Bird City, called the Blue Snake, and bought it. It cost us $1,200. And then we dropped in, casual, at Mexican Joe's place, referred to the rain, and bought him out for $500. The other one came easy at $400.

"The next morning Bird City woke up and found itself an island. The river had busted through its old channel and the town was surrounded by roaring torrents. The rain was still raining and there was heavy clouds in the northwest that presaged about six more mean annual rainfalls during the next two weeks. But the worst was yet to come.

"Bird City hopped out of its nest, waggled its pin feathers and strolled out for its matutinal toot. Lo! Mexican Joe's place was closed, and likewise the other little 'dobe life saving station. So, naturally, the body politic emits thirsty ejaculations of surprise and ports hellum for the Blue Snake. And what does it find there?

"Behind one end of the bar sits Jefferson Peters, octupus, with a sixshooter on each side of him, ready to make change or corpses as the case may be. There are three bartenders and on the wall is a ten foot sign reading, 'All Drinks One Dollar.'

"Andy sits on the safe in his neat blue suit and gold banded cigar, on the lookout for emergencies. The town marshal is there with two deputies to keep order, having been promised free drinks by the trust.

"Well, sir, it took Bird City just ten minutes to realize that it was in a cage. We expected trouble; but there wasn't any.

"The citizens saw that we had 'em. The nearest railroad was thirty miles away, and it would be two weeks at least before the river would be fordable. So they began to cuss amiable and throw down dollars on the bar till it sounded like a selection on the zylophone.

"There was about 1,500 grownup adults in Bird City that had arrived at years of indiscretion, and the majority of 'em required from three to twenty drinks a day to make life endurable. The Blue Snake was the only place where they could get 'em till the flood subsided. It was beautiful and simple as all truly great swindles are.

"About 10 o'clock the silver dollars dropping on the bar slowed down to playing two steps and marches instead of jigs. But I looked out the windows and saw a hundred or two of our customers standing in line at the Bird City Savings and Loan Company, and I knew they were borrowing more money to be sucked in by the clammy tendrils of the octopus.

"At the fashionable hour of noon everybody went home to dinner. We told the bartenders to take advantage of the lull and do the same. Then me and Andy counted the receipts.

"We had taken in $1,300. We calculated that if Bird City would remain an island for two weeks the trust would be able to endow the Chicago University with a new dormitory of padded cells for the faculty, and present every worthy poor man in Texas with an improved farm, provided he furnished the site for it.

"Andy was especially inroaded by self-esteem at our success, the rudiments of the scheme having orginated in his own surmises and premonitions. He got off the safe and lit the biggest cigar in the house.

"'Jeff,' says he, 'I don't suppose that anywhere in the world you could find three cormorants with brighter ideas about downtreading the proletariat than the firm of Peters, Satan and Tucker, incorporated.

"'Well,' says I, 'it does look as if we would have to take up gastritis and gold or be measured for kilts in spite of ourselves. This little turn in bug juice is, verily, all to the Skibo. And I can stand it,' says I. 'I'd rather batten than bant any day.'

"Andy pours himself out four fingers of our best rye and does with it as was so intended. It was the first drink I had ever known him to take.

"'By way of a liberation,' says he, 'to the gods.'

"And then, after thus doing umbrage to the heathen diabetes, he drinks another to our success. And then he begins to toast the trade, beginning with Raisuli and the Northern Pacific, and on down the line to the little ones like the school book combine and the oleomargarine outrages and the Lehigh Valley and Great Scott Coal Federation.

"'It's all right, Andy,' says I, 'to drink the health of our brother monopolists, but don't overdo the wassail. You know our most eminent and loathed multi-corruptionists live on weak tea and dog biscuits.'

"Andy went in the back room a while and came out dressed in his best clothes. There was a kind of murderous and soulful look of gentle riotousness in his eye that I didn't like. I watched him to see what turn the whiskey was going to take in him.

"In less than an hour Andy's skate had turned to an ice yacht. He was outwardly decent and managed to preserve his aquarium, but inside he was impromptu and full of unexpectedness.

"'Jeff,' says he, 'do you know that I'm a crater—a living crater?'

"'That's a self evident hypothesis,' says I. 'But your're not Irish. Why don't you say 'creature,' according to the rules and syntax of America?'

"'I'm the crater of a volcano,' says he. 'I'm all aflame and crammed inside with an assortment of words and phrases that have got to have an exodus. I can feel millions of synonyms and parts of speech rising in me,' says he, 'and I've got to make a speech of some sort. Drink,' says Andy, 'always drives me to oratory.'

"'It could do no worse,' says I.

"'From my earliest recollections,' says he, 'alcohol seemed to stimulate my sense of recitation and rhetoric. Why, in Bryan's second campaign,' says Andy, 'they used to give me three gin rickeys and I'd speak two hours longer than Billy himself could on the silver question. Finally they pursuaded me to take the gold cure.'

"'If you've got to get rid of your excess verbiage,' says I, 'why not go out on the river bank and speak a piece? It seems to me there was an old spellbinder named Cantharides that used to go and disincorporate himself of his windy numbers along the seashore.'

"'No,' says Andy, 'I must have an audience. I feel like if I once turned loose people would begin to call Senator Beveridge the Grand Young Sphinx of the Wabash. I've got to get an audience together, Jeff, and get this oral distension assuaged or it may turn in on me and I'd go about feeling like a deckle edge edition de luxe of Mrs. E. D. E. N. Southworth.'

"'On what special subject of theorems and topics does your desire for vocality seem to be connected with?' I asks.

"'I ain't particular,' says Andy. 'I am equally good and varicose on all subjects. I can take up the matter of Russian immigration or the poetry of John W. Keats or the tariff or Kabyle literature or drainage and make my audience weep, cry, sob and shed tears by turns.'

"'Well, Andy,' says I, 'if you are bound to get rid of this accumulation of vernacular suppose you go out in town and work it off on some indulgent citizen. Me and the boys will take care of the business. Everybody will be through dinner pretty soon and salt pork and beans makes a man pretty thirsty. We ought to take in $1,500 more by midnight.'

"So Andy goes out of the Blue Snake and I see him stopping men on the street and talking to 'em. By and by he has half a dozen in a bunch listening to him, and pretty soon I see him waving his arms and elocuting at a good sized crowd on a corner.

"When he walks away they spring out after him, talking all the time, and he leads 'em down the main street of Bird City with more men joining the procession as they go. It reminded me of the old legendemain that I'd read in books about the Pied Piper of Heidsieck charming the children away from the town.

"One o'clock came; and then two; and three got under the wire for place; and not a Bird citizen came in for a drink. The streets were deserted except for some ducks and ladies going to the stores. There was only a light drizzle falling then.

"A lonesome man came along and stopped in front of the Blue Snake to scrape the mud off his boots.

"'Pardner,' says I, 'what has happened? This morning there was hectic gayety afoot, and now it seems more like one of them ruined cities of Tyre and Siphon where the lone lizard crawls on the walls of the main portcullis.'

"'The whole town,' says the muddy man, 'is up in Sperry's wool warehouse listening to your sidekicker make a speech. He is some gravy on delivering himself of audible sounds relating to matters and conclusions,' says the man.

"'Well, I hope he'll adjourn sine qua non, pretty soon,' says I, 'for trade languishes.'

"Not a customer did we have that afternoon. At 6 o'clock two Mexicans brought Andy to the saloon lying across the back of a burro. We put him to bed while he still muttered and gesticulated with his hands and feet.

"Then I locked up the cash and went out to see what had happened. I met a man who told me all about it. Andy had made the finest two hour speech that had ever been heard in Texas, he said, or anywhere else in the world.

"'What was it about?' I asked.

"'Temperance,' says he. 'And when he got through every man in Bird City signed the pledge for a year.'"

HEINE STATUE TO VEX KAISER

WILLIAM II. UP AGAINST ONE OF HIS PET PREJUDICES.

Temple to the Poet of Loves and Woes Feature of the Empress Elizabeth's Villa in Corfu Which the Emperor Has Bought—And He Doesn't Like Heine.

The fate of the beautiful Villa Achilleion on the Island of Corfu, the favorite retreat of the Empress Elizabeth of Austria, having been settled satisfactorily to the court of Vienna through its purchase by Emperor William of Germany the question arises: What will become of its most distinctive and interesting ornament the statue of the German poet Heine?

Emperor William seems to be pursued by a troop of statues of the poet of loves and woes As the head of the official and aristocratic classes of the empire he has so far succeeded in keeping them all out of Germany. One of these memorials was received in New York a few years ago after having been rejected by several cities, among them the poet s bithplace, mustard making Düsseldorf. Here it is still in seclusion

Heine had a playful way of seeing the Prussian spiked helmet and mailed hand in a thundercloud and of venting his most bitter sarcasm upon Prussian policies and politicians Therefore, after many years of opposition to Heine statues, it is hardly to be expected that the chief of the Hohenzollerns will be particularly proud of the ownership of the Corfu statue. He is reported to have ordered the statue removed from the grounds of the villa.

This statue of Heine was the special pride of Empress Elizabeth To a woman of her idealistic and somewhat fantastic temperament his poetry made a strong appeal. Unlike the strenuous William, she cared little for his politics or sarcasm

"Heine," said one who knew her, "was an expounder of loves and woes and his lyrics were permeated by a tone of melancholy which seemed to suit her own feelings.

"When the project for the fountain that met such an unhappy fate both in Germany and in New York was proposed in Germany she gave it her earnest support and countenance. She even authorized a subscription, but this authorization was withdrawn at the request of Emperor William, who wrote to her, it is alleged by Heine's admirers, that a contribution to such a cause was an acknowledgment of the injustice of monarchical institutions, and of the Hohenzollern rule in particular.

"In all of her travels she took with her a copy of Heine's 'Buch der Lieder' and she slept with the precious volume under her pillow."

When she planned the villa it was her purpose to have there a temple consecrated to her favorite poet. She chose the most picturesque spot on the grounds and had erected a white marble canopy supported by white columns and surmounted by an angel with a wreath of laurel. The position commanded the superb entrance to the grounds and the temple was reached by flight after flight of white steps that rose from a magnificent fountain by the roadway.

Beneath the canopy she had placed the Ilfelike statue. It was done by the Danish sculptor Louis Hasselriis, who was himself a great admirer of the poet.

The poet is represented seated in an armchair, his knees covered with a blanket. The face is shown worn and creased with lines of care and sorrow, the head is sunk upon the breast, and the eyes, which appear filled with tears, look out upon the blue sea and the far reaching purple mountains. In one hand is a pencil and in the other a scroll upon which is written one of the Empress's favorite verses from "Die Heimkehr":

Was will dir einsame Thräne?
Sie trübt mir ja den Blick;
Sie blieb aus alten Zeiten
In meinen Augen zurück.

In the background were ancient cypresses and gigantic olive trees and against their dark green shade the white of the temple and statue stood in added beauty and grace. From no other part of the island was the view of mountain and sea so charming and from none were the violet tints of which the old Grecian poets sang more discernible.

In the enjoyment of this scene the Empress took great delight and often at night when her maids missed her from her apartment they would find her alone beside the statue.

The Villa Achilleion was of Elizabeth's own designing and it was for this reason as well as the poetical regard with which it was always held by her, that Emperor Francis Joseph was loath to part with it after her death. It became the property of her eldest daughter, Princess Gisela, with the usufruct to the Emperor.

When it became known that the place was no longer to be occupied by members of the Austrian royal family the Privy Purse was fairly deluged with offers for the property. It was reported several times that it was to be turned into a sanitarium and still later came the announcement that a syndicate had bought it with the intention of converting it into a gambling resort something after the pattern of Monte Carlo. All these projects failed when the Emperor announced that he would not consent to any proposal that aimed at making money out of the venture.

Emperor William visited Corfu two years ago and conceived the idea of buying the villa. The suggestion met with instant favor, for the German Emperor had always been a great admirer of Empress Elizabeth and it was believed that he would keep the property with the same care that she had. There was at the time a discussion regarding the disposition of the statue of Heine, but it is not known what agreement was reached. It is known that Francis Joseph made a request that it be allowed to remain where the Empress placed it.

Elizabeth was dearly loved by the people of the island and by the fishermen and laborers she was called the "Lady of the Achilleion." She used to spend a great deal of time wandering about the island and she frequently talked with the peasants she met. She studied Greek assiduously.

She was attracted to Corfu as far back as the early '60s, when as convalescent she stopped there on her return from southern Spain. The villa is in pure antique Greek style, but in the interior several styles are represented, the dining room being Italian Renaissance, the smoking room Pompeiian and the chapel Byzantine.

The first floor was reserved for the use of the Emperor, while the second floor she made her habitation and there kept her art collection. The rooms of her apartment were in accordance with the description of those said to have been occupied by Penelope and Helena.

The bedstead, which stood only eight inches from the floor, was shaped according to the description contained in the ancient epic, the four posts were adorned with smiling wood nymphs and rich silk draperies were thrown carelessly over the white sheets and spreads. She had an entrance of her own so that she might, as she was wont to do, wander about the park and grounds at night without disturbing any one else in the house.

She had constructed a number of fanciful caves and set up at frequent intervals through the grounds statues of nymphs and satyrs. Two bronze athletes modelled after those found at Olympia, in the act of running a race, stand on one of the terraces. The largest piece of statuary in the gardens is that of Achilles.

It is a colossal piece of white marble showing the hero with a look of torture on his face trying in vain to pull the fatal spear from his wounded heel. One of the legends of the place is that it was a wound in her own imperial heart that suggested the statue and likewise the name of the villa.

Corfu is considered the most beautiful of the Ionian Islands. It is a land of legends and of stories. The island was never conquered by the Turks, and for this reason it is said that the modern Corfiotes more closely resemble the ancient Hellenes and are the purest Greek blood of any of King George's subjects.

Corfu, in spite of its beauty and fascinating history, has gained the reputation of an ill omened island for royalty. A residence at Corfu, where there is a royal Grecian palace, is always considered an unfortunate precedent by the rulers of Greece.

King Otho and Queen Amalia were returning from a visit to Corfu when on anchoring at Piræus they were prevented from landing. In their absence the leaders of the Parliament at Athens had taken away their throne. King George, who succeeded to the crown, seldom occupies the palace at Corfu.

It was while Elizabeth was at Achilleion that she received word of the death of her most loved kinsman, Ludwig II. of Bavaria, and it was there that she went to mourn the death of her son, Archduke Rudolph, after the Meyerling affair.

It was to Corfu that the late Czar of Russia and the Emperor Frederick of Germany were about to go in the hope of recovering their health. Both died before they could carry out the plans.

The murder of Empress Elizabeth by an anarchist at Geneva occurred just after she had left Corfu. What this island may have in store for Emperor William or if the removal of the mournful, sad faced statue of the poet Heine will end the line of royal misfortunes remains to be seen.

THE BEST MAN REWARDED.

A June Wedding at Which Only the Attendant Received a Gift.

All protests had failed.

"It's all very well for you to talk like that, old man," was the answer to all the varied objections, "but I'm going to marry Edna this afternoon. So as a good friend, I want you to be my best man."

A telephone call that he was going to get married on that day had brought the best man up early from business. Still he was reluctant to get on the job. Jack had been married before and his wife had divorced him. Edna had been on the stage.

"I'm going to telephone the little girl now," said the bridegroom-elect, "to meet us down at Martin's. We'll have a bottle of wine down there and then get busy."

There seemed no use protesting and the two awaited in the restaurant the arrival of the bride. They drank up the champagne, had another bottle and then left in a motor to find a preacher or a justice of the peace. The starter at the door when he heard the circumstances advised the best man to try Hoboken.

"The first wife, the divorce and all that you know," he added as a friend of the parties. "I wouldn't try that hotel man."

He spoke a word to the chauffeur, who started off in the direction of the Christopher street ferry. They did not have to trouble at all to find the man. The starter had given the chauffeur thorough instructions and the justice with a German accent had married them and pocketed his $20 before they realized that the trick was really done. They were soon back at Martin's, where the starter smilingly awaited them.

"Good man, isn't he," he observed. "Sent several of my friends to him. Quick, and then it's outside the State, you know."

The three were soon seated again at the table they had left a short time before. The waiter had brought the glasses and was off in search of the champagne.

"Funny, a wedding with no presents," said the bride. "Sort o' flat for the others. Of course Jack has already given me enough."

"Don't you mind, Jim," said the new husband; "I'm not going to forget your kindness in standing by me to-day. I'm not as flush now as I will be; but I'm thankful to you and I'm going to show it."

He drew a gold cigarette case out of his pocket.

"Helen, my first wife, gave me that. It was the last present before she got her divorce," he said contemplatively. "You see the initials are marked on one side. They're J. G. B. Now yours are J. G. R. It won't take anything but a few curlycues to make it all right. I want you to take the case, old man, and keep it."

Then it was handed over the table in spite of the protests of the best man. The waiter was just putting the second bottle there.

"Come on and drink this up," observed the bride, "for I want to go home. I've a present there for Jim myself. It's a gold cigarette case. Fred gave it to me last week. It's marked, but it's not much marked, and it goes fine with that one. You know Fred thought we were going to get married."

So the wedding was not so informal after all. The best man got two presents, even if they were monuments to episodes in the earlier lives of both parties.

BEER DRIVES OUT ABSINTHE.

France Takes More of the Former and Less of the Latter.

The consumption of beer in France has increased by more than 40 per cent. during the last five years. In 1906 it reached the imposing total of 317,040,000 gallons.

It does not appear that the increased use of beer has diminished in the slightest degree the consumption of wine and cider. But Consul Mason is quoted in Bonfort's *Wine and Spirit Circular* as saying that, as the consumption of beer increases, that of alcohol, especially in the perilous form of absinthe, is slowly but steadily decreasing.

The statistics of 1904 show that during that year the amount of absinthe sold for drinking purposes in France fell off more than 130,000 gallons, or 2.8 per cent. This is not a sweeping or conclusive reform, but statistics seem to show that the maximum danger point has been passed.

Much of the beer is imported (or purports to be so) from Pilsen and Munich, though most of the leading breweries in other German cities have Paris agencies and distribute their beer to retailers. This entails high prices to consumers, as there is a heavy import duty. Under the stimulus of this protection the brewing industry of France has developed rapidly both in respect to quantity and quality of its product.

Mountain Climber's Narrow Escape.

From the London Evening Standard.

A young baker who was returning with a companion after an ascent of the Plan Aiguille near Chamonix was caught by the branch of a tree after falling nearly 300 feet, and suspended by his braces, to the strength of which he owes his life.

His companion fell 2,000 feet and was picked up with nearly every bone in his body broken.

"TAKE MY SEAT," THEY SAID.

Unprecedented Politeness in a Car Under Distressing Conditions.

The approach of the storm did not terrify her. Even if she did get the pleated skirt wet she would not have to sit down in the street car and so disperse those pleats as only that process can when they have once been wet. Nobody ever got up to give her a seat. So she raised her umbrella without fear, although the modish skirt was the only one to her name and had taken economy to acquire.

Naturally, she did not escape the rain in the dash for the car, but even that circumstance did not alarm her. Pleated skirts might get never so wet provided only they were not sat on.

When she got on board and wedged herself through the crowd she felt that nothing worse could happen. It was then that misfortune came as it had never before on her journeys home.

Often she had hung on a strap and wondered in her fatigue if no man would ever offer her a seat. No man ever had. Now when there was every reason in the world why she should not sit down here was a polite little man smirking in front of her and pointing to a few inches of space on the seat.

In vain she protested. She must take it. After all, the thing might be possible. If she sank slowly downward and looked as if she were sitting he would be satisfied. Then the beloved pleats would not be crushed and mussed and otherwise so disguised that the skirt might never be itself again—with a long summer's wear ahead of it, too.

With these thoughts to encourage her, she sank slowly between her two neighbors. There she crouched, the precious pleats touching the seat at no point.

It was not pleasant, but they were saved. It grew less pleasant as the car stopped and was again jerked into motion. It was not easy to be suspended midway between a strap and the seat, but it was on her mind that the pleats must not be crushed while wet, whatever the cost might be.

It was just when her situation was most uncomfortable that the car stopped and an old woman got on. She jumped so promptly out of her place that the passengers stared at her suddenly. They had never before seen such respect to old age.

"Take my seat, please," she said with a sigh of relief.

The old woman sank into it. Never before had the owner of that pleated skirt so appreciated a strap. It was delightful to swing on it and see the pleats fall straight and unimpaired with no necessity for crouching in that horridly uncomfortable position. She even smoothed them down carelessly.

It was incautious on her part to glance down the car in observing that she was now the only person standing. Her eye caught that of the same polite old gentleman who had given her his seat at first. He was on his feet in a minute motioning her to take the vacated place.

Again there was no getting out of it. Slowly she let herself down into the same crouching attitude that had made the strap seem such a comfort.

This time it did not last so long, for the car stopped to let another old lady aboard and the pleated skirt had surrendered the few inches of room in a second. Now it seemed there could be no more politeness to get her into trouble.

Again she was on the strap and again she cast down her eyes to reassure herself that the straight fall of the pleats had not been put out of drawing. They had been saved so far and she vowed that nothing would persuade her to put them in jeopardy again. Then it did not seem possible that anybody else would be so perversely courteous as to ask her to have a seat again.

As she had settled this she felt a touch on her shoulder. A man had arisen.

"Take my seat, lady." He pointed to the ample space he had just vacated.

There could be no shamming about taking that seat. It was large enough for two of her. She would have to sit right down without any hope of saving those damp pleats which had been preserved with such a struggle.

The man stood for her to take his place. His neighbors were also watching her. Outside the rain was still falling.

"Thank you," she said heroically, clutching her umbrella. "This is my street. I get out here."

It was some ten blocks ahead of her point for alighting, but it meant positive destruction to that skirt if she sat down and the sacrifice did seem too great after she had made such a brave fight so far. So she courageously climbed out.

To this day she has never been able to understand why men were so polite to her that night—the only night when she really would have preferred to be let alone on her comfortable strap.

CAPTURED AT LAST.

After Many Years Mr. Phligtilby Finally Falls to the Filter Man.

"We never had bought any filters, and, said Mr. Phligtilby, "I didn't think we ever should.

"I know there are snakes in the water and walruses and hoppertoads and animalculæ and all manner of wonderful living things, but we had never seen any of these things ourselves, and we'd been drinking this water with the aquatic menagerie swimming around in it all our lives, and it had never killed us yet, and we didn't see any signs that it was going to right away, and so we never bought any filters, though they were offered to us every other day. But the man that came along to-day got us.

"'I have a filter here that I'd like to show you,' he said, and we told him that we didn't want any filters to-day, but he said he'd just like to show us this filter that he was offering, that we didn't need to buy at all if we didn't want to, but this was a filter that he'd like to have us look at, and he was a nice, pleasant man, and we let him just to please him.

"He screwed one of his filters on a faucet in the kitchen sink and started the water running through it, and then he says:

"'Um—m, have you a saucer handy? a white saucer?' and we did have a white saucer and we handed him one, which he partly filled with water from the other faucet and set on top of one of the set tubs.

"And then he turned off the water from the faucet that he had screwed the filter to, and unscrewed the filter and turned it upside down and shook it over the water in the saucer. Then he sort of casually took a big magnifying glass out of his pocket and handed it to us, saying:

"'Will you just take a glance through that?'

"And we just took a glance through the magnifying glass, and there, swimming around in the saucer, was a whale as big as a house; a regular whale, jumping and darting around in the water.

"We shifted the glass away from in front of our eyes, and then the whale seemed to have disappeared; but we could see him again, by getting down close, a tadpole-like little creature of infinitesimal proportions. And then we tried the glass on him again, and the whale came back.

"And that was the impression that remained. We could stand for snakes in the water, and walruses, and hoppertoads, and animalculæ and that sort of thing, small things, but not for whales; and so to this filter man we fell."

Pigeon's Long Flight.

From the Chicago Tribune.

A pigeon taken to Florida five months ago by Master in Chancery William F. Cooper has returned to a ledge on the Merchants' building, La Salle and Washington streets, where it was hatched. Mr. Cooper from his office has studied City Hall pigeons for fourteen years.

Last December he took twelve homing pigeons and one of his City Hall pets to Florida. The homers returned at once, but it was not until yesterday that the other was seen the first time after its return.

2,000 PATIENTS WHO DON'T PAY

DR. BLAIR'S JOB AT BRONX ZOO FULL OF EXCITEMENT.

Answers Hurry Calls From Bengal Tigers and Alligators—Pulls the Teeth of the Python—Manicures the Elephant—Treats Birds, Beasts and Reptiles.

The doctor who has perhaps the largest and most difficult and varied practice of any in the city is up in The Bronx. He has more than two thousand patients who have come from all parts of the world, and he has never received a fee from one of them. He is Dr. W. Reid Blair, who is responsible for the health of all the animals, reptiles and birds in the New York Zoological Park in Bronx Park.

Not until Dr. Blair began to make a systematic and statistical study of diseases, together with their causes, among animals and birds did the managers of other zoos think it worth while to do so, though they were annually losing thousands of dollars worth of valuable animals. The benefits of the study and the work of Dr. Blair soon became apparent, and now the zoological parks of London, Berlin, Washington, Philadelphia and other cities are also pursuing the same line of investigation. Many theories of long standing have been dispelled by ascertaining the actual facts and the animal death rate has been greatly reduced.

Dr. Blair is fond of all his patients and interested in his work. He is a mild looking man, even tempered, a close student, and from his appearance one would not suspect that he constantly associates with the wildest of animals and birds.

His patients never visit his office, but he treats them all at their homes. He finds many stubborn and puzzling cases to deal with, for frequently when his patients need him most they make it hardest for him. Lately some of them have become accustomed to his treatment and take their pills and medicines without its being necessary to conceal the drugs in their food.

The difficulties of this doctor's practice may be judged when it is taken into consideration that when he receives a midnight call his patient may be a Bengal tiger, an African elephant, a wolf, an ostrich or a deadly snake from the jungle or a hungry alligator from the tropics. Many men would not care to take chances with a lion or a tiger even if the animal were under the influence of ether, for he might wake up and then there would surely be trouble for some one.

Dr. Blair has been treating animals in the park for seven years and has not yet met with a mishap. In many instances he has had hard fights and only succeeded in accomplishing his purpose with the aid of a dozen strong men. He has pulled the teeth of the twenty-seven foot regal python; operated for appendicitis on an orang-outang, removed an eye from an ostrich, cut a nine pound corn from the foot of an elephant and performed other difficult operations upon a buffalo, hippopotamus, kangaroo, &c. He is just now curing Gunda, the elephant, of a skin disease.

Dr. Blair understands his patients as few other people understand animals. He spends all his time among them. He has various kinds of animal babies to take care of.

In the equipment of the Zoological Park is a laboratory and a drug store. There will shortly be added an animal hospital that will contain an operating room and private and public wards, fitted with up to date appliances.

When any animal seems to be ill the keeper makes a report to the doctor and a record sheet is filled with the name of the animal, date and diagnosis, daily respiration, pulse and temperature, together with the diet and treatment. In case of a death there follows an autopsy. A record is made of the condition of all the organs.

A sample block of each organ is hardened, with paraffin and sliced into very thin sections by the microtome. The section is mounted on a glass plate, stained with aniline dyes and studied under the microscope.

Thousands of such records are filed away, forming an invaluable record. There are also kept many microscopic samples of the blood of living animals showing diseased states.

This year Dr. Blair has been making a special study of pneumonia among his patients, as this is the most deadly disease, especially among the primates and hoofed animals. When a new animal comes to the park the doctor first places it in quarantine until he is convinced that it is not suffering from any contagious disease. Altogether Dr. Blair has one of the most interesting practices in the city of New York.

A TRADING STAMP SNAP.

New Industry by Which Prizes Are Obtained Easily.

The rage of collecting tobacco and other kinds of trading stamps has given rise to a new industry. The way in which it is worked is shown by the following incident.

A young girl dressed with a cheap attempt at the smartness of the season entered an apartment in a flat house of a grade a degree above the best tenements. A woman in the kitchen looked up from the stationary tub at which she was working.

"If you've got any trading stamps," said the intruder, settling with a gesture her mushroom hat on her pompadour, "I'll give you things for them that you can't get at the central stores downtown."

Her presumption that there were trading stamps to be found in that house was entirely justifiable. It is in such flats that they are collected with the greatest ardor.

"I've got all sorts of household things on my list," the visitor went on. "Things you never could get anywhere else."

Then she read a written list of kitchen and other articles for housekeeping. They were of a kind wholly different from the usual prizes.

There were no silver berry dishes, nor were there tobacco jars and cut glass cracker jars. There were flat irons, saucepans, ironing boards, match boxes, cooking spoons and similar necessaries that appealed very strongly to the housewife.

Then they were much cheaper. They could be had for a comparatively few certificates, while the ornamental articles require a great many.

Naturally, this woman went to her place of safe deposit behind the spice box on the shelf in the kitchen, counted her certificates and selected a pair of flatirons which were to be brought to her the next day, when she would give up the certificates.

"All us girls do it now," the young woman explained, "and we get all the beautiful things we want downtown by this plan.

"What we buy costs very little. The women get sick of waiting so long to collect enough certificates and are willing to give us a lot of tickets for what we give them. We don't buy these things until we know what the women pick out. Then we go off and get the cheapest we can find.

"Every girl chips in and we divide the certificates we get. Why, we've got more umbrellas, side combs, parasols, breastpins and such things in that way than you could shake a stick at. And they cost us very little."

This is the latest development of the trading stamp mania. It is now so far advanced that there is a regular house to house visitation going on in upper Manhattan and The Bronx.