SKETCHES AND BOWSERISMS.

By M. QUAD.

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Zeb White's Possum Hunt.

"One November night," said the old 'Possum Hunter of Tennessee, as we sat smoking before the big fireplace in his mountain cabin, "I had a dream 'bout 'possums. 'Possum pelts was then sellin' for 70 cents apiece, but I had never known the varmints to be so skass. I'd been out for three days and not seen hide nor hair of one. On this night I dreamt of bein' out on the mountain, and seein' over 200 'possums in a drove, and of killin' the hull lot. That was of a Saturday night. Next mawning I dun reckoned to go out and see if that dream would come true, but the old woman says to me:

"'Zeb White, th'ar gwine to be preachin' at the skule-house to-day—powerful preachin'—and we-uns will go over."

"'I'm gwine out fur 'possum,' says I.

"'But I want to hear that powerful preachin,' says she. 'If you go arter 'possums on the Lawd's Day, when thar is preachin' sunthin' mighty bad is bound to happen to you.'

"If it hadn't bin fur that dream," said the old man to me, "I'd hev gone to the skule-house, but them drove of 'possums was so plain in my mind that I felt I must look up the spot. The old woman got mad about it, and when I was ready to go she says:

"'Mark my words, Zeb White. When a critter dun prefers 'possums to preachin', the Lawd is gwine to fetch him up with a twist, and you'll be mighty sorry for this befo' sundown!'

"I went my way arter 'possums, and she put on her bonnet and started for the skule-house. I felt kind o' mean about huntin' on Sunday, and as I traveled along I didn't mind much what was befo' me. That was my undoin'. Jest the day befo' I had set a b'ar trap on a path up the mount'in. It was a whoppin' big steel trap, all nicely kivered over with leaves and dirt. Whatever made me furgit about that trap I never shall understand, but I'm tellin' you that I jest ambled along and stepped right into it. This right foot hit the pan, and the jaws flew up and closed above the knee. Lawd bless you, sah, but I dun thought I had bin grabbed by five or six b'ars all to once, and the yell I let out orter bin heard seven miles! If you was niver cotched in a b'ar trap you can't imagine the pain. It's like tryin' to saw a man's leg off with a piece of broken glass. How many times I yelled I dunno, but purty soon the trees begun to dance and whirl and I fainted away. When I cum to I was lyin' on the ground with the teeth of that trap nippin' into the bone of my leg. I reckoned to spring the jaws and git loose, and I went to work at it, but I had an awful time. It took me a hull hour, I reckon, and I never did holler so loud in all my life befo'. I finally got the trap loose, but over I went in a faint and was as good as dead. When I cum to I was a long time makin' out whether I was dead or alive. I found out I was livin', and then cum a new punishment.

"You saw a fat bear near at hand?" I suggested.

"No, sah—didn't see no b'ar 'round," he replied. "It was 'possums—'possums by the hundred. It was 'possums runnin' over my body and squealin' in my ears that brung me out of the faint. I had dreamed of droves of 'possums, but I looked around to find the woods alive with 'em. 'Peared like every 'possum in the State of Tennessee had met in convenshun. Thar' was old and young and middle-aged. Thar' was fat and lean; thar' was long-tailed and short-tailed. They was on the ground, and they was hangin' by their tails from every limb, and the smell of the varmints mighty nigh choked me. Wall, you see how it was. I had my rifle along, but I was too weak to use it. Dozens of them 'possums walked over me and played circus around me, but I couldn't raise a hand. It was a punishment sent by the Lawd, and I had to take it. Drat my ole hide, sah, but it was tough on me to figger out that thar' was ten thousand 'possums around me, with every pelt wuth seventy cents, and I dun broke down and had no mo' grit than a woman. I reckon them varmints played circus fur two mortal hours, and then they formed in a line two deep and walked over my body and disappeared in the bresh. It was arternon then, and I begun to holler fur help. I hadn't yelled over twenty times when I lost my voice. From that on to purty nigh sundown I was half-dyin' and half-livin'. Sometimes I'd laugh, and sometimes I'd cry, and that leg o' mine was growin' to the size of a bar'l. It was gittin' darkish in the woods when I heard footsteps, and as I tried to call out the old woman stood befo' me. She figgered things out fur herself and said:

"'Zeb White, mebbe you've bin considerin' 'bout the Lawd's day?'

"'Mebbe I hev.'

"'Mebbe it's a good day to go over to the skule-house and hear a powerful sermon, and mebbe it's a god day fur huntin' 'possums. What's your idea 'bout it?'

"'I'm fur the skule-house and the sermon.'

"'And how 'bout dreams—'possum dreams?'

"'I've dun got through with 'em.'

"'And hev you sort o' made up your mind, 'Zeb,' she went on, calm as could be, 'that I've got any rights around the cabin, or do you still think you boss the roost and most of Tennessee besides? And you might figger a little and decide whether b'ars and coons and 'possums is of more consequence than a wife. Fur the last three or four y'ars I've had to play second fiddle to the varmints, and it's time fur a change.'"

"And you promised all she asked?" I queried as the old man hitched around on his chair and turned his face away.

"Reckon I did, sah," he slowly replied. "Yes, reckon I promised, and she got help to bring me home, and when I was able to hobble about agin I found she was bossin' things. She's never let go her grip and never will. Jest runs things to please herself, and if I don't like it I kin go out and chaw roots. Powerful tough, sah, but she's got the Lawd and that b'ar trap on her side and I can't fight 'em."

'Jest Fussin' and Shootin'."

At a ford of the French Broad River in Tennessee I came upon a native seated on a stone by the roadside with his pipe in his mouth, and after resting beside him for a quarter of an hour and holding a general conversation I got up to go and asked him if he was traveling my way.

"Yes, I'm goin' that way," he replied, "but you'd better git a mile the start before I leave yere. Thar's a critter named Job Williams behind the rocks on 'tother bank waitin' for me. In shootin' at me he might hit yo'. Job and me hev bin tryin' to plug each other fur a y'ar back."

I was peering across the stream to see if I could make out the hidden man when the one beside continued:

"Job might miss us both and sneak away home, but if he did thar's the old man Rivington. He's suah to be waitin' up at the turn of the road with a shotgun. Reckon yo' don't keer fur no buckshot 'bout this time o' day! Mebbe old man Rivington would fire too high or too low, but thar' would be them two Hopewell critters further on. Likely they've heard that I was goin' to town and will be on the watch fur me. Sam ain't much of a shot, but Bill kin hit an apple as fur as he kin see it over the sights."

"You must have made a number of enemies around here," I said, as I looked him over.

"Wall, about half a dozen," he laughed. "If we got past the Hopewells we'd cum to the Thompsons, and arter them would be the Coggeswells. Yes, thar' ar' several critters around yere who want to pop me over right bad."

"You don't look like a quarrelsome man."

"Reckon not. No, I don't never quarrel with nobody, sah. Folks all allow that I'm as humble as a rabbit."

"Then why all this shooting."

"Oh, that ain't quarrelin'. It's jest fussin', sah—jest fussin' over polyticks, religun, the new skule-house, taxes, moonshine whisky, and hoss races. Lawd save yo', but I never did quarrel in all my life. It's jest a leetle fussin' and jest a leetle shootin', with somebody gittin' popped over now and then, and yo' jest go right along by yo'self and don't mix in!"

Mr. Bowser with Skates On.

When Mr. Bowser reached home the other evening there was an air of blandness about him which told Mrs. Bowser that he had bought stock in a rain-producing company or was going into goat-farming, and he kept her guessing until after dinner. Then he said:

"You know how I've been bothered with rheumatism this fall? Well, I was talking to a doctor to-day, and he gave me a remedy for it."

"Your rheumatism?" she replied. "Why, I haven't heard you make a single complaint for a year."

"Strong men never complain. Mrs. Bowser. They suffer on and die. There have been times when I thought I was being cut up alive, but not a word has passed my lips. I should not have mentioned my sufferings now, only that I have a cure for them."

"I don't believe you've got rheumatism," she bluntly exclaimed. "You've simply met somebody who has put a new fad into your head and probably sold you a gallon of nauseous dope for $10 or $12. It's a wonder to me you don't kill yourself."

"Let me ask, woman, if you are addressing yourself to me?" queried Mr. Bowser, as he drew himself up with the dignity of a governor."

"Of course I am."

"Then I will remind you that I am your husband and the boss of this house. When I say that I have rheumatism—that I suffer excruciating torture—that I have a remedy, it is not for you to call me a liar."

"But you are so full of fads," she protested.

"Never had a fad in my life. On the contrary, I have always kept clear of them. Perhaps you are hoping that my rheumatism may strike my heart and leave you a widow?"

"Well, what is the cure?"

"Ah! That is more sensible. It's as simple as A B C. It's to exercise an hour every evening."

"How exercise?"

"On roller skates, up in the garret. I brought a pair home with me this evening."

"You on roller skates!" gasped Mrs. Bowser, as she glanced at his bulk.

"The same, madam, and should my glide be displeasing to your royal highness you are at liberty to leave the house. I am not going into roller skating to get up a willowy motion, but as a cure for rheumatism. Have you any further impudence to offer."

It was useless for her to say another word, and she maintained a discreet silence while Mr. Bowser got his skates from the front hall and climbed to the garret. He had never had a pair of skates of any sort on his feet, but his self-confidence was wonderful. He hadn't the slightest doubt in the world that he could put on those rollers and cut all sorts of pigeon-wings and Greek crosses right off the reel.

"Singular how that woman opposes me," he mused as he made ready. "If I was dying for the want of water she'd call it a fad. Let's see how this thing goes. I must first stand up sort o' carelessly on both feet. Then I shoot out the right foot—then the left, and away I go. It won't take me over two minutes to get the hang of it."

Mr. Bowser started to get out of his chair, but something happened to his legs which warned him that it was safer to creep over to the nearest post and pull himself upright. He felt a weakness and a wobble in his knees after he was on his feet, and he was a long time casting loose from the post. A big doubt had begun to creep into his mind, when he suddenly fought it back and made a start. His right foot moved without the slightest trouble. It seemed to him that it moved five yards before the left one started to follow. Then he felt the house fall down on him and partly lost consciousness. He was trying to make out whether he was down cellar, upstairs, or on some vacant lot, when he heard Mrs. Bowser's voice asking:

"Does that go in free gratis with the remedy?"

Mr. Bowser had sat down. One of his feet was away off to the right, the other away off to the left, while all his teeth seemed to be loose and his heart in his mouth. He looked at Mrs. Bowser in a stupid, puzzled way, and just as he had made up his mind that he had seen her somewhere before she disappeared. It took him another five minutes to rally. Some men would have kicked off the skates and defied the rheumatism to do its worst, but Mr. Bowser was game. He hadn't given up the bike until he had gashed his scalp, broken three ribs and lost three front teeth and nothing had happened yet to discourage his skating.

"I see how it was," he whispered as he crawled to the post again. "I made too long a stroke with my right foot. I'll try a sort of gentle glide to start with this time until I get the hang of the thing."

He didn't wait for any doubts this time. The fact was, he couldn't. For some reason or other his feet began to move away with him, and he instantly decided that it would be a good plan to have his body follow after. Unknown to him, Mrs. Bowser was looking through the door, and for a minute her heart stopped beating. Mr. Bowser went backward a few feet and then took up gymnastics. He clawed the air with both hands, jumped clear of the floor, and made the most tremendous efforts to catch up with his feet. When he found he couldn't do it, he began yelling "Police!" but at the third yell his feet shot up and his head shot down and he landed on the back of his head. After a few minutes the rest of his body came down with a crash, and he knew no more. In a dim, uncertain way he realized that anarchists had blown up the house to wipe him off the face of the earth, but he was powerless to lift a finger. Ages seemed to pass before he heard the voice of the family cook saying:

"Why, ma'am, it was such a jar that the pots and pans in the kitchen jumped all about! I always said he'd kill himself, and now he's gone and done it. It will take four policemen to get the body down stairs."

Wheels began to whirl in Mr. Bowser's head, and as they grew larger and whirled faster he smelled camphor and felt water strike his face, and he opened his eyes to find Mrs. Bowser kneeling over him. When she saw that he had recovered consciousness she quietly asked:

"Do you feel better of your rheumatism, dear?"

"Who stuck a broom-handle between my feet and flung me down?" he hoarsely whispered.

"No one, dear. You were practicing the glide all alone when your feet got away from you. Can you tell how many bones are broken?"

"But some one surely kicked me!"

"Only the skates. Shall the cook and I drag you down stairs now, or do you want some more of the remedy?"

He choked and gasped and stuttered and pointed for them to be gone. When they had disappeared he sat up and found that his skates had been removed. He did not fasten them on again. After awhile he got up with grunts and groans and painfully made his way down to the bedroom, and two hours later Mrs. Bowser found him in bed and fast asleep. There were no bones broken, but even in his sleep he was muttering: "Police!" and had the look of a man falling over a precipice to his death.

Hunting Down a Pirate.

In the year 1870 a pirate named Whang-Ha made his appearance in the China Sea. He was officially known as an opium smuggler, but that was a thin disguise. Instead of buying, running, and selling the drug, as plenty of other men did, both Chinese and foreigners, he lay in wait for opium crafts and robbed them of cargo or specie. When business in that line was dull he turned his attention to merchant vessels. He was stepping high and carrying things with a rough hand when he put his foot in it. That is, he tackled a private yacht belonging to an English gentleman named Rossiter. The yacht, with a party of about twenty people on board, and carrying a crew of thirty men, had been making a tour of the China Sea, and one night while lying at anchor at the Paracel Islands she was captured by three junks. There was little or no fighting. When Whang-Ha found that she was English he did not carry out his intention to murder every soul, but he did rob crew and passengers and take from the craft everything he wanted. He also disabled her machinery so that it was four days before she could weigh anchor.

As soon as the yacht got under way she proceeded to Hongkong and laid the matter before the British consul. He didn't lose an hour in raising a row about it. There was more or less official correspondence, and the governor of the province finally agreed to pay Mr. Rossiter the sum of $20,000 as damages, and also gave him authority to wipe Whang-Ha off the face of the sea. The governor at Hongkong couldn't order out a warship, but he aided Mr. Rossiter in finding, chartering, and equipping a brig, and gave him written orders to board, sink, and destroy any craft which might even be suspicious. The name of the brig was the Dunbar, and she was owned in Liverpool. Four eighteen-pounders were mounted on her decks, an outfit of small arms laid in, and for a crew she picked up forty men of various nationalities, but mostly English and Americans. She was commanded by Capt. Wharton, a belligerent Englishman, and of the fourteen Americans in the crew, five of us had deserted from the Boston ship Union. No secret was made of the expedition, and Whang-Ha was doubtless posted long before we sailed. There were fears that he would hide among the islands or go out of the pirate business, but he was a Chinaman who wouldn't take a bluff, and instead of hiding he added another junk to his fleet. This gave him four, with about two hundred men at his back, and there was no doubt he would fight if encountered. The brig had steam as an auxiliary, with a smokestack which could be lowered on deck, and a propeller which could be lifted up when not in use, and we calculated we had a big advantage over the clumsy junks.

Our first move was to drop down to a quiet anchorage and drill the men at the great guns. As we had ten men in the crew who had served in various navies we got along very smartly, and at the end of a week the anchor was raised and we proceeded on a cruise. We ran down to the Paracel Islands, and were hunting among them for four or five days, but no news was obtainable. Nearly all the islands were inhabited, but the people either couldn't or wouldn't give information. In stretching across to Manila we encountered a trading junk which seemed to stand in fear of us, and she was chased and brought to. Among our crew was one from the yacht, who had been brought along to identify Whang-Ha and his officers in case we found them. Among the crew of the trading junk he thought he detected a fellow who had been very forward in the work of plundering the yacht. It was vigorously denied that he was the man, but when put under pressure he owned up to it, and also gave us valuable information regarding the pirate.

Whang-Ha had gone around into the Sulu Sea, and was dodging among the islands to the south. The junk and the men were bound to Hongkong to pick up information about us. A week later they were to be met by Whang-Ha and his fleet off the island of Mindoro. We had no need to go hunting for the old pirate. Give him a few days and he would come to us. The crew of the trader was taken off and the craft sent to the bottom of the sea, and then we bore up for the island and found a safe and quiet anchorage and had nothing to do but wait. For six days the crew were daily exercised at the guns and made ready for what was to come. Just at dark one day we got news that Whang-Ha's fleet was beating up toward us. He had his four junks and his 200 men. He knew nothing of our presence, but was making for the appointed rendezvous in order to hear from the junk. Before 10 o'clock at night the four junks were lying at anchor in a bay only two miles to the south of us. We had few preparations to make, and notwithstanding the excitement, I think most of the men slept soundly that night. We were astir at daybreak and had breakfast, and then the captain made us a speech. No quarter was to be asked or granted. He intended to run around into the bay and attack the junks as they lay at anchor, and like Nelson and other great heroes, he expected every man to do his duty. With daybreak came a soft land breeze. We could not have worked out and maneuvered under it, but we had steam to do it with, and the battle was half won before a shot was fired. The fellows had no suspicion of our presence until we were off the mouth of the bay and bearing down on them at full speed. The bay was about two miles deep and a mile across, and the junks were anchored about a mile from its mouth. As the tide was running in they were bows on to us, with a space of about 200 feet between them. There was yelling and confusion as they caught sight of us. As they were bows on they could not use a single gun, and it did not take them two minutes to realize that they were in a box. With never a cheer from a man, but with every man at his post and every gun loaded with a stand of grape on top of solid shot, we swept broadside as we passed. Their decks were crowded with men, and a few fired at us with muskets, but the lightly-built junks were simply blown out of the water by the contents of the big guns. I was one of the small armed men and stationed on the port quarter. I saw the full effect of the port broadside, and it was something to be remembered. The junk flew into a crowd of splinters, and what was left of the hull below the water line went out of sight like a stone. It was the same with the junk on the starboard side.

The brig ran for half a mile and then turned. During this time the junks were making every effort to get under way. Cables were cut and sails spread to the light air, and while one made for the shore, the other drifted out to sea. As we began overhauling the one which hoped to beach herself, the fifty or more pirates on her decks began yelling in defiance and despair. As they saw that we would pass them to port they got out four big oars, hoping to run us aboard, but they were too late. The brig ran down so close that you could have tossed your cap aboard, and the junk was given the starboard broadside. Fragments of her were scattered for a quarter of a mile around. The last junk was overhauled at the mouth of the bay. It was suspected that she was the pirate flagship, and that Whang-Ha was aboard of her. I think Capt. Wharton's idea was to capture her and carry the men to Hongkong, to be dealt with by the governor. We ranged up alongside and demanded a surrender, but that was the last thing to be thought of. The junk had four small cannon, and she began peppering away at us with these, and her crew cheered and yelled as if certain of a speedy victory. The first few shots flew high, but after a few minutes a ball came aboard which killed one man and wounded two others. "Put solid shot into her hull and sink her!" was the order, and ten minutes later the junk filled and went down.

We had two boats ready to lower, and they were soon picking up the survivors. Of the 45 or 50 men we saved 11. Among the captured was Whang-Ha, and he fought like a demon against being pulled into the boat. He was one of the most evil-looking men you can imagine. He was a giant in size, but bow-legged and lop-shouldered. His naturally homely face was badly pock-marked and covered with scars, and all his teeth were gone except three yellow fangs in front. He was sulky and defiant when brought aboard, and was placed in double irons to meditate. As to the others, who were all sulky enough and ready to take any chances, they were brought up one by one and questioned as to the loot taken from the yacht. One was selected for "pressure," and after the soles of his feet had been blistered he was ready to talk. He said the loot was buried in one of the Paracel Islands, and he offered to guide the captain to the spot. Then Whang-Ha was taken to the cabin and the same tests applied, but he refused to open his lips. He wou'd have let them roast him alive first. When it was found that he was obdurate he was given his choice between hanging at the yard arm or being taken to Hongkong. He preferred to be hanged, as did all the others when questioned, and that afternoon they were swung off in succession. The last man of Whang-Ha's fleet was the coward who had confessed. He had told the truth about the loot. We found it buried on an island, and he was turned at liberty as a reward.

Travels of Pilgrim Joe.

I was driving along the highway between the towns of Never Despair and Lost Hopes, seated on my tin-type wagon and having my bottled grasshopper beside me, when I met up with a sorrerful-lookin' man who had a bundle on his shoulder and was limpin' on his left leg.

"Without the corner-stone of Integrity to sustain us we must fall like a house of sand," says I, as we stopped to greet each other.

"And without Truth to uphold us we should wither like weeds at the wayside," says he.

I saw that he was a critter with poetry in his soul and I was glad, and I got down from the wagon and took his unwashed hand in mine and continued:

"He who lacks Faith is but a cucumber of the ground. Faith strengthens the heart and puts springs under the heels of the wayfarer."

"That's kerect," says he, "and with Ambition one surmounts the hilltops and reacheth his goal. Kin I take it that you are a critter with a missionary mishun?"

"You kin. I am speakin' kind words as I travel and seekin' to make humanity better. Dost hunger for consolation?"

"I dost," says he. "I want you to take a square look at me and tell me what you think of my personal shape. I don't claim to be no Jim-dandy, but when my feller-critters pint the finger of ridicule at me it is like a knife at my heart."

"How long since you've seen yourself in a looking glass?" says I.

"Twenty years, Pilgrim," he answers. "Vanity hath no place in my heart. Humanity maketh a man friends, but Vanity is a bar trap lying in wait."

"I'll take your tin-type and let you behold yourself."

And thereupon I asked him to posture himself with his back to a tree and a smile on his face, and I got down my camera and proceeded to business. In a quarter of an hour I had his picture ready. It was a faithful counterfeit of the homeliest lookin' critter in the enthusiastic West, and as I handed it to him I said:

"Man that is born of woman is not always purty, but the world will judge him by the integrity of his character.

"Is that my picture?" asks the old man after gazing at it for awhile.

"It's you to a dot."

"Can't be no mistake about it? The cog-wheels and linch-pins and piston-rods didn't git mixed up while you was takin' the picture?"

"Not a mix. It's you to the life."

Then the old man fell to weepin', and I leaned up agin the wagon and felt sorrer in my heart. I was about to speak words of comfort to him when he says:

"Pilgrim, I knowed I wasn't purty, but this is too much! If I am the critter this makes me out to be it's no use livin' any longer. If you was a man with a soul you'd have cheered me up instead of castin' me down, and you shall perish with me!"

Thereupon he flung down his hat, lifted his arms and sailed into me. He was an oldish man, but his muscles were hard and his sand was plentiful. I fit him according to the rules of John L. Sullivan, but I was a-weary before he reposed on his back and announced that he had had enough. Then I lammed him for the sake of his mother, and chugged him in the cause of morality, and I cuffed his ears and bade him remember that honor was a bulwark which could not be overcome. By and by he stood on his feet and went his way, but the spring of enthusiasm was not in his heels, nor was there a well-spring of happiness in his heart. When he was far away I mounted my wagon and drove on, and as the old hos jogged and the grasshoper bunted his head agin the cork in the bottle I found myself exclaiming:

"It is not the wealth we lay up in bank that brings happiness, but a clear conscience maketh a man to glow in his soul."

And also:

"It is better to argue than to quarrel, but if the other feller refuses to argue then swing your right for his jaw and put him to sleep."

And also:

"Humility becometh a man at all times, but don't be so humble as to let every old critter get away with you."

And when he had jogged a mile or more we came to the sodhouse of a pioneer, and sitting on the grass by the door was a woman whose eyes were red with weeping.

"Woman, what is thy sorrer?" I asked as I halted my outfit.

"I am a widder woman;" she replied, as she wipes her weepin' eyes.

"How long is it since you laid the partner of your bosom away?"

"Seven years or more."

"Then you ought to have got over weepin' by this time. I believe most of 'em cease to weep after the first year."

"But I'm not weepin' for my old man," says she, as she braces up a bit. "What fills my heart with sorrer is the fact that no second husband comes along. Other widder women are gettin' married every week, but no one seems to want me. I'm livin' here all alone and workin' this claim with my own hands."

Then I looked at her a long time, and I noticed that her shoulders was lopped, her nose turned up, and her mouth was cut on the bias. There was no beauty about her, but she was good-hearted and sorrered to become an ivy clingin' to a sturdy oak. I therefore got down my camera and posed her as picturesquely as possible, and took her tin-type. As I handed it to her the rapture of her soul was revealed in her face. There was smiles and laughter and rejoicin', for she had discovered that she was beautiful to look upon.

"And I will do yet more," I said, as she heaped blessings upon my head. "Whenever and wherever I meet a lone critter as I go my way I will show him one of these tin-types and bid him make haste and secure the matrimonial prize before all others."

She wept again, but this time it was because of her great joy and gratitude. Thus I left her to jog along again and the lengthening shadders of the summer afternoon, and as I jogged I reflected:

"Had I bin rich I should not have met ole Guyasicutis and thumped higher and nobler thoughts into his mind.

"Had I bin great I should not have been in the tin-type bizness, and the widder woman would still be weepin' and lamentin'.

"Therefore, aim not at riches and strive not for greatness, but by the aid of Integrity and Humility lift up your fellerman and add to the happiness of the world."

"The Loss of Gold Is Great;

The loss of health is more." Health is lost by neglecting to keep the blood pure, but it is regained by purifying, enriching, and vitalizing the blood with the great health restorer, Hood's Sarsaparilla. Thousands who thought health had been permanently lost have been made perfectly well by taking this great medicine. Your experience may be the same.

Hood's Pills are gentle, yet always effective. (4)

AUSTRALIAN UNION.

Is Being Formed as an Integral and Enduring Member of the Empire.

From the New York Tribune.

Before the end of this waning century the United States of Australia—it is a pity we cannot yet say "of Australasia," but that will come with time—will be an established fact. That now seems to be assured beyond all reasonable doubt. Five colonies have now definitely committed themselves to the scheme. These are New South Wales, Victoria, South Australia, Queensland, and Tasmania. On a popular vote each has given a decisive majority for union, and now their legislatures are adopting and forwarding to the Queen—that of New South Wales has already done so—addresses praying for royal assent. This latter will of course be promptly granted. And so a few months hence at latest will see the Federal government organized and a new nation of five flourishing States will be developed for the glory and might of the British empire.

For it is as an integral and enduring member of that empire that the United States of Australia is being formed. There is, so far as can be discerned, no thought of making this a step toward separation from the mother country. On the contrary, there seems to be a general feeling that united together the colonies will be more firmly united with the rest of the empire than they have been in their separate condition. The union is a step toward closer and more indissoluble union with the mother country. Nor is that in the least illogical. Precisely the same thing has occurred in Canada. Despite all the talk there has been about annexation of Canada to the United States, the sober fact is that to-day the Dominion is more British than ever before, and is far more inclined to remain British and far less inclined to seek admission to this Union than were the separate provinces prior to 1867. The interprovincial animosities which used to prevail were forces that tended not only to separate the colonies from each other, but also to separate them from the mother country. The centripetal force which now holds them together in one nation also holds them close and fast to the mother country, just as the force which holds a planet as an integral mass on its own axis is akin to or identical with the force that holds it in its orbit round the sun.

There is no cause for us to regret this loyalty of Canada to the British empire, nor will there be to regret the like loyalty of the United States of Australia. On the contrary, it is in each case a distinct benefit to us and to the world. The British empire as a world encircling whole is a more potent force for progress and for peace than would be the half dozen independent nations into which it might be divided. It is practically a self-evident truth that the fewer independent powers there are the fewer are the chances for war. A few great powers are far more likely to keep the peace than are many small ones. Thus we may reckon the German empire a positive force for peace. If it had not been formed in 1871, and if all the German states had remained separate in their international relations, there would probably have been half a dozen wars in Europe within these last twenty-eight years. So on that one ground of the maintenance of peace, as well as on others of comparable importance, the preservation of the British empire is earnestly to be desired. Its dissolution would be one of the greatest catastrophes the world has known in a thousand years.

The establishment of this new nation in the South Sea is of peculiar interest to this country. That is partly because of our own great territorial possessions and our great and growing commerce in that quarter of the globe—circumstances that will make Australia as close a neighbor to us as Canada now is. It is also partly because the United States of Australia is modeling its organization and its institutions after our own more closely than any other nation in the world has done. That Canada did just the opposite, avoiding our example as far as possible, was only natural, seeing that the most potent element in her political and social constitution was composed of those, or the immediate descendants of those, who left the United States in 1776 and in 1812 rather than be separated from or placed in antagonism to Great Britain—a not only negatively but positively anti-United States element. With Australia the case is otherwise. There has never been there any antagonism toward this country, but quite the contrary; and so, naturally, the United States of Australia is being made as much like the United States of America in fact and principle as in name. In its consummation we may well wish it all success, and hope, too, that the adjoining West Australia and the distant but not too remote New Zealand will soon decide to join the union, making its members seven instead of five, and making it the United States, not merely of Australia, but of Australasia.

Oldest Race on Earth.

From Ainslee's Magazine.

What a sight! Could anything be more like fairyland! There stood half a dozen little denizens of the dense primeval forest, sturdy and strong, and yet standing under four feet in height, dark tan-colored skin, with eyes like coal-black diamonds, sparkling in their sockets. Here were the Pygmies! Perhaps the oldest race of people to be found anywhere on God's earth, here stood before me, descendants of those who, 3,500 years B. C., were known to the ancient Egyptians. No wonder we looked with awe upon so wonderful a race, and very naturally I began to long to find out whether they were really human beings or a lower form of creation. I had not long to wait in suspense, for upon questioning this very strange little visitor, who, by some extraordinary chance, could speak the Toro language, known also to myself, I found a very keen intelligence. He told me the approximate number of his tribe in the following manner: Picking up a piece of dead stick, he broke it into many pieces and placed these in a long row one by one, saying as he did so: "That is a chief like myself." Having put a great number of these bits of stick on the ground, I asked him how many men each little chief had, and these he indicated in a similar way, only making each bit of stick refer to ten men, and then I was able to find that the number of his tribe was about 10,000. In other ways he showed his intelligence and keen appreciation of a joke. The strains of music that proceeded from my English concertina particularly charmed his savage little breast. Indeed, all the Pygmies stood with wide-open mouths listening to the strange sounds. One of them was carrying a tiny wooden whistle, and I asked the chief to tell him to blow it. This he did, making a most piercing sound. When I asked its use he laughed, and then proceeded to tell me that it was used for one Pygmy to call to another, and it appears that at great distances they can make themselves understood according to the note and the number of notes played.

Would Be Too Much.

From Tit-Bits.

"The codfish," said the professor, "lays considerably more than a million eggs."

"It is exceedingly lucky for the codfish that she doesn't have to cackle over every egg," said the student who came from the country.

Deadly Cancer

J. N. Murdock, 279 Snodgrass Street, Dallas, Texas, says: "My son had a terrible Cancer on his jaw, for which the doctors performed a painful operation, cutting down to the bone and scraping it. The Cancer soon returned, however, and was more violent than before. We were advised to try S. S. S. The second bottle made an improvement; after twenty bottles had been taken the Cancer disappeared entirely, and he was cured permanently."

S.S.S. For The Blood

(Swift's Specific) is the only remedy that can reach Cancer, the most deadly of all diseases. Books on Cancer and Blood Diseases mailed free by Swift Specific Company, Atlanta, Ga.

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PROGRESS OF ZIONISM.

Gigantic Scheme to Return the Jews to Palestine.

I. Zangwill, in the New Lippincott.

It was in Philadelphia, the City of Brotherly Love, that the first piece of work for modern Zionism was achieved. For here, in Baldwin's world-famous works, was turned out "a Mogul locomotive engine, having three pairs of coupled wheels and a two-wheeled swing bolster truck, for the Jaffa and Jerusalem Railroad."

The whistle of that engine is the keynote of the new movement. Palestine is no longer the mystic dream-place of angels and prophets, the land whose very soil Jewish thought figured as animated with a holy abhorrence of murder, licentiousness, and idolatry. It is a country like any other, only worse. The electric cars whizz past the medieval peace of Milan Cathedral, and Zion's Hill is no longer safe from the Funiculaire. The world's childhood is passing, with all its charming and fantastic visions of fairies and fiends, and even in Jerusalem, Whitman's "years of the modern, years of the unperformed" must have their tardy turn.

And, in harmony with this modern Weltanschaung, comes the prospectus of "Zion, Limited," the conception of "The Jewish Colonial Trust," with its capital of two million pounds in one pound shares, for the regeneration of Palestine and its ancient people.

But no one in the world has a harder row to hoe than the Jewish idealist, mocked by an unbelieving generation, libeled by antagonists, harassed by coadjutors, zealous or jealous, his sanity questioned by his foes and his originality by his friends. "What filth I must wade through!" he writes to me pathetically. It may be the real founder of modern Zionism was the pious Rabbi Mohilewer of Russia. But what is the use of quarreling over the glories of an unaccomplished movement, or distributing the laurels ere the day is won? It is enough for the moment that under Herzl's leadership the cause of Zionism has made vast strides, that since he began his propaganda organs have been created or captured for Zionism in almost every capital of Europe, as well as in the United States, and that the joint-stock scheme for raising the sinews of peaceful war—Herzl's individual conception—has already attracted enough—one-eighth—of the two million pounds demanded by the Prospectus to justify going to allotment. If the children of Israel have not yet gathered from the four quarters of the world, they have at least sent their shekels. The applications for shares would gladden the heart of a collector of stamps.

When the steamship was first launched a son of Philadelphia and the projector of an American Jerusalem, Mordecai Manuel Noah (whose fame Noah's Times and Weekly Messenger yet preserves), prophesied that it was the steamship which would ingather the Jews from the four corners of the earth. And who can doubt but that steam and electricity—which have given our earth a nerve system—must transform the problem of Israel?

The object of Zionism is not, however, to ingather Israel or to fulfill the prophecies. No great wave of national emotion, of longing for a theater in which to work out national or religious ideals, has passed across the globe, like some wireless message, finding rapport in the Jewish soul everywhere. Jerusalem has been indeed a goal of Jewish pilgrimage; but the aspiration has been to die there, not to live there; or, if to live, then in that sequestered student life which is only a shadow of living. Religious and racial emotions are indeed enkindled by Zionism, but they do not enkindle it. Zionism is not the outflaming of the nation's spirit. Israel has been too cowed and crippled to be capable of active energizing, and had not Pharaoh become too outrageous, Israel would never have dreamed of going. Zionism is not spontaneous combustion; it is the flame of the hammered explosive.

There are nearly thirty colonies in Palestine and Syria, and if the majority do not pay, they will. If the Rotschild and Hirsch colonies have made such little headway, it is because they have been philanthropic schemes, not the outcome of self-sustaining enthusiasm. "I started colonies, not to promote Zionism," Baron Edmond de Rothschild told me, "but to give work to the Jews I saw starving in Palestine, and also to disprove the notion that Jews could not be agriculturists." All honor to the noble pioneer, but his millions have naturally impeded the work they have made possible, and, sustained and weakened by this boundless reservoir, his colonies have had more officials than laborers, while rumor hums with far graver instances of maladministration. Baron Hirsch was even less a Zionist. His object was not to integrate Israel, but to disintegrate it; to break up the vast congestions of Jews in Galicia and Russia. He was less Moses than the Destroying Angel, who, according to the Talmud, is also a messenger of love. The report of the Hirsch Colonization Association—with its beneficent activities all the world over—is a pathetic record of a heroic effort to roll a rock up a mountain. It may be prophesied that whatever portion of the Herzl two millions goes to persuade Jews to be what they are naturally inclined to be, will be as profitless in the first generations at least. It is a waste of force to yoke a winged creature to the plow; and if twenty centuries of artificial selection have made of the Jew an organizing and impatient brain, one must await the equally slow processes of reversion to the rural temperament by force of the new life in the open air.

It is impossible to believe that the Jewish commercial genius should fail even in Palestine. Already several factories are running profitably; a tobacco plantation has been established, mulberry-trees have been planted for the rearing of silkworms, the tolerable cognac and claret of the colonies are selling in Europe, and with the further opening up of the European market Palestine could export not only the cruciform flowers, the mother-of-pearl mementos, and the olive-wood carvings of the holy bazaars, but also olive and sesame oil, soap, conserved fruits, sweets, perfumes, &c. The Turkish rule may be corrupt, but the Jewish trust could farm the taxes. The Turk at least has not persecuted the Jew, perhaps because the Jew, especially in his Oriental embodiment, is religiously akin to the Mohammedan; both are monotheists; a service in a mosque is very like a service in a synagogue. And if the Turk is a religious cousin, the Arab is a racial cousin. Dr. Herzl's willingness to make the "Holy Places" of Jerusalem extraterritorial, like the Vatican of Rome, suggests a possible compromise with Christendom. The chances of a new crusade the Jew would have to take, like the eel, he is used to being skinned alive. Should he himself establish an inquisition, the Jewish heretics could fly to more Christian lands. Turkey's present embargo on the Jewish immigrant really plays into Dr. Herzl's hands. As for the official expression at Washington that Turkey will not sell Palestine, it is only a theatrical death-blow to Zionism; the dagger-blade slips back into the haft. To buy Palestine is not quite the scheme, and even if it were, the Sultan's mind is not a fixed quantity. Sultans' moods come and go—and so do sultans. We cannot, perhaps, remove the Alps, but who ever heard of a finality in politics, even when fixed in a treaty? Besides, as one who has bargained for hours in Oriental bazaars, I am not to be impressed by the vendor's opening statement. Meantime the word of the Lord goes forth from Zion, and the Sultan's from Washington.

It is saddening to say—after the honest efforts of noble-minded Christians to give the Jew the favor of a fair field—that there is no country in the world in which it is not a disadvantage to be a Jew. Max Nordau exaggerates but little in asserting that a Jew must be three times as clever as any other man to win equal success in the battle of life. "Justice for the Jew" has never yet been the spontaneous instinct of the masses or even of the classes. The nations have been hurried by wise legislators into codified compassion and formulated fair-dealing, but even their own laws have not completed their education. "Liberty, equality, and fraternity" have never been more than a glow at the heart of the great and a formula on the lips of the little. Even in the universities of Europe—where, if anywhere, sweetness and light should