Modern Fables.

THE MODERN FABLE OF THE BOSTON BIOLOGIST AND THE NATIVE WITH THE BLUE HARDWARE.

BY GEORGE ADE.

Down in the Ague Belt there was a town called Miasma. It needed Paint, Side Walks, Tooth Brushes, and Bibles. As for General Debility and good, keen spitting Tobacco, it had a Daisy Sufficiency and then some more.

Fastidious People who wear silk Traveling Caps and buy H. Rider Haggard's Works of the Train Boy used to look at Miasma while the Train was stopping

no longer than it had to, and exclaim, "Just think of leaving Little Rock and coming out here to Live!"

But the town that is Small and Ratty is just the Town that supposes itself to be the sure-enough Essence of Gazams. Everybody in Miasma believed that the Sun rose just in the edge of Widow Clevison's Hog Lot and set over on yon side of Nubbin Ridge. While the Residents were Standing around on the warm side of the General Store, so as to get shut of the Daily Chill, they would feel sorry for Folks that had to put up with Brooklyn and Old Point Comfort.

Now, it happened that a Boston Biologist had been in those Parts collecting Amphibious Fauna. The Natives called them Varmints and Sarpentile Insects.

One day the Biologist sat on a long-waisted Truck at the Station Platform and waited for the Train that was to carry him to some Place where he could get Beans properly cooked. He had his Satchel between his Legs and was reading the Numbers on the Freight Cars in order to entertain himself.

Presently a Native appeared and walked back and forth in front of the Boston Man. The Native had a Saffron Complexion and wore high-heeled Boots. Every time he stepped there was a muffled Castanet Effect caused by the Quinine Pellets. Every one in Miasma took Quinine, except the Boston Biologist, and he took Quin-een.

The Native wore on and about his Per-

son and somewhat exposed to View a .48-Caliber Cannon, a Bowie Knife large enough for spading the Garden, and several rows of Cartridges.

"I reckon we've got the purest Climate and the noblest People in God's Green Footstool," remarked the Native, pausing in front of the Biologist. "Don't say Different, or I may have to Gallop right through you."

"Life is very sweet to me," said the Boston Man. "I am just getting my Golf Score below 120. So I will not Contradict you. Only, I would like to ask."

"Come on with it," said the Native.

"I would like to ask, Who held you while they strapped all those Chatelaine Effects on you?"

"I wear these Weepins in order to protect my Honor," replied Mr. Janders, for such was his Name.

"Your Honor must be hard pushed if you have to tote such an Extensive Kit with which to defend it," observed the Boston Man.

"Well, I've got a Reputation that reaches up and down the Road," said Mr. Janders. "I've never been Curried below the Knees. I'm Long and Woolly. I've got seven or eight Fiery Nostrils and holes bored for more. I'm Pizen Ivy and can't be handled. I hate to talk about myself, but I must say I'm a Brave Little Man."

At that Moment the Train pulled in and

the Boston Biologist hurried aboard, resuming the Conversation as he leaned out from the open Window of the Car.

"You say you are a Brave Man?" he asked.

"You heerd me," replied the Native, picking his Teeth with the Bowie.

"What is your Definition of a Brave Man?" asked the Biologist.

"A Brave Man is one who is not afeerd to Die," answered Mr. Janders.

"Therefore I take it that you are not afraid to leave Miasma and take your Chances," said the Biologist. "How long have you lived here?"

"Twenty-seven Years," was the reply.

The Boston Man looked across the Street at the dun-colored Hotel propped up by a comatose Livery Stable. Near at hand was a Pool of Green Water within which the Bacilli were croaking loudly. The Sky Line was a row of red clay Hills pin-feathered with Saplings. A brackish Odor of Moonshine Whisky tingled in the warm Air, and over the whole dejected Landscape lay a soft Pall of the real, red Simon-Pure Malaria—the kind that can be put Up in Tins and sent from Place to Place.

"You have lived here twenty-seven Years and you are not afaid to Die," said the Boston man, reflectively. "I don't blame you. If I had lived here for twenty-seven Years I would not be afraid to Die, either. In fact, I think I'd be downright Anxious to Die."

But the crafty Biologist did not release this Body Blow until he was good and sure that the Train had started to move.

The infuriated Native had to take his chances with a moving Target, so instead of plunking the Man from Boston, he made a Wing Shot on a State Senator who was riding on a pass.

Still, it was taking an Awful Chance.

Moral: Home is where the heart is.

STORY OF THE HOMESICK SOLDIER AND THE SUSPICIOUS NATIVE.

A lanky United States Volunteer Hiker came upon a little Googie hid in a Cocoa-Nut Grove and Nailed him. He took the splayfooted Tagalo by the Scruff of the Neck and fanned the air with his Pompadour.

"Why can't you Behave?" asked the Big Fellow in Khaki. "Don't you think I've

been playing Hide and Seek with you sawed-off Brownies about long enough? Do you think I can afford to run Foot Races in the Tropics for Sixteen Sixty-Six per? As we sit here in the shade of the Bim-Bam Tree, you look me in the Face and tell me you are an Amigo from away back. You have on your snow white Knickies and your spotless Shirt of Cheese Cloth, and what with the bluff smile of Brotherly Love, you have the Dove of Peace put to shame. At the same time I am laying Ten Dobe Dollars to a Dollar in Money that as soon as I release you you will vamoose to your little old shack and dig up a pair of Red Pants, a smokeless Mauser and a hair edge Bolo. Then tomorrow Morning, if one of the Boys happens to wander beyond the Outpost to pick Wild Flowers or Chickens, you and about forty others will be waiting in the Jungle to Slice him. As a stand up Fighter you are about as Game as a Clay Pigeon, but as a Lightning Change Artist and all round Pest you are the Money. Why don't you Let Up? Go and turn in your Shooting Iron for Thirty Dollars Mex and then go out next Saturday Night and Blow the Money like a Civilized White Man? If you'd do that, then Us Fellows could go back to the Snowdrifts and the Buckwheat Cakes."

"I am afraid to tackle your Programme," replied the Insurrecto. "I hear that as soon as you get me Right you are going to Americanize me. You have Something ribbed up for us that you call

Benevolent Assimilation. Perhaps I will have to read all of the Ten Cent Magazines and be jerked by the Trolley cars, and have to march in a Campaign Club and put Crayon Portraits in the Front Room and save Soap Wrappers so as to get Useful Prizes and buy Tickets for Amateur Shows and trim the Shade Trees and put in a Telephone and run a Lawn Mower and save up for a Horse and Buggy and Maintain a Cup at the Barber Shop and get tied up with the Special Assessment Game and be sent to the Store to match Dress Goods and Quarrel with my Neighbors about Christian Science and sign Petitions and hide Property from the Assessor and serve on Juries and wear heavy Black Clothes on Sunday and have to learn the Names and Records of all the Pugilists and Clean House every Spring."

"But you see only the Dark Side of the Picture," said the Hiker. "You seem to forget that you will have Dollar Excursions, Street Fairs, Shooting the Chutes, Lyceum Entertainments by Male Quartets, and Readers, to say nothing of the Jack-Straw Parties. Have you no Social Aspirations?"

"None to speak of," replied the Native. "I am half Savage and half Child. I have never even sat for a Tin-Type in a Tent."

"I suppose you never saw a Watch Chain made out of real hair?" asked the Volunteer.

"I never did," replied the Googie.

"I can see that you are Unfit for Self-Government," said the Volunteer. "We will have to stay over here a few Years longer and take care of you."

Moral—It is expecting too much of a Simple-Minded People.

Trying to Glorify Garlic.

From the New York Sun.

The large, soft eyes of the Italian peasant woman is said to be a result of their fondness for garlic and onions and their habit of appeasing that appetite without thought of the consequences. Parsley is said to have some effect in this same direction, although as a means of improving the beauty of the eyes it is not nearly so effective as the stronger onion and garlic. But its greater suitability for mixed society may compensate for any inferiority. The Italian women are said by this authority to acquire another beauty through one of their popular articles of diet. Lentils are said to give them the abundant glossy black hair which is one of their noted features. They eat lentils more than any other vegetable and attribute their glossy, thick hair to their effect. Women with beautiful hair and eyes are always to be admired. But it is doubtful if men would demand them as the result of a diet of garlic or onions.

THE ELEVATOR BOY.

Some Personal Experiences as Related by Himself.

When Mr. Mosswell came to our skyscraper as a tenant, I thought that he was one of the most fatherly men I ever met in my adventurous elevator life. His desk had hardly been put into room No. 237 when he sent for me and said:

"Sammis, my boy, the owner of this building I do not care to know, and I shall pass the agent by with a cold nod. The janitor and the engineer will be naught to me, but I wish for the good will and friendship of the elevator boy. I hear that you are fatherless. Let me be a father to you. I hear that you are trying to pay off a gigantic mortgage on your widowed mother's little cottage. Take these $5 as freely as they are offered. Let us be father and son—comrades—friends."

That's the way he talked, and he won my young and innocent heart at once. I started right out to make life worth living for him. He was agent for a smoke consumer, and I told everybody who got into the elevator that it beat anything ever invented and ought to be in every respectable family. When a girl came looking for a situation as typewriter, I told her how benign and fatherly Mr. Mosswell was, and that if he employed her she ought to be glad to work for $3 per week and pay for his ginger ale besides. I stole lemons and mint from Mr. Rasher, the agent, and carried them up to room 237 on hot days, and when collectors came around with bills I lied to them and said Mr. Mosswell was out in California to develop a $3,000,000 gold mine. No elevator boy on the face of this earth ever set out to do more for a benign tenant. For four weeks the harmony existing between us was the next thing to love. We got to be known around the building as Damon & Co.

When about a month had passed and our bond of friendship seemed to be growing stronger every moment, Mr. Mosswell called me up one day and said:

"Sammis, have you observed the pale faced, careworn woman in No. 235?"

"You mean the red cheeked, jolly-looking stenographer?" I said.

"Do not argue with your adopted father, Sammis. To me, at least, she looks pale and careworn and something tells me that she is not long for this world. Her salary must be very low, as old Banks is known as a stingy man, and should she want to buy flowers to lay on her sister's grave she must spend it for bacon and potatoes instead."

"Did her sister die?"

"Ask no questions. She has probably lost a sister by the grim destroyer, as others of us have. She shall have flowers to lay on the grave. Here is a bouquet. When she is out at lunch to-day, I want you to leave it on her table. There is no card attached. Other bouquets will follow and eventually she will get to know the name of the donor and sympathizer."

I couldn't make things out. Miss Jared, the only woman in room 235, had cheeks like roses and was always laughing, and she could beat me at jumping over chairs. I took the bouquet, however, and had just placed it on her desk when old Banks came out of the inner room. As soon as he saw the flowers he grabbed me by the hair and yelled:

"You young villain, but what masher has dared send my niece flowers? Give me his name, or I'll twist your neck."

"They are for her sister's grave," I said.

"You young liar! She never had a sister!"

"Then they are because she looks pale and careworn."

"That's another lie!"

Then he shook me about till I told him who had sent the flowers. I didn't want to, of course, but I thought Mr. Mosswell had been mistaken, and it would do no great harm.

"Oh, it's that old, bow-legged burdock, eh?" sneered old Barks, as he let go of me. "All right—I'll toy with him. Come along and see the fun."

He entered room 237, and he grabbed Mr. Mosswell by the neck, and slam-banged him for ten minutes, while Miss Jared stood in the door and clapped her hands. When my adopted father had become a wreck, he was flung under the desk, and the wrecker took his departure. It took twenty minutes of "first aid" on my part to revive Mr. Mosswell, and the first thing he did after getting his breath back was to yell at me:

"You scum of the earth, but I'll burn you at the stake for this!"

"But what have I done?" I asked.

"Given me away!"

"But what was there to give away? Can't anybody send a pale-faced, anxious woman, working on starvation wages, a bouquet to lay on her sister's grave?"

"Rats!" he whooped as he made a grab for my hair.

I had to leave him. His benignness had fled, and he was no longer my adopted father. He might help other elevator boys to pay off the widow's mortgages, but he had no more plunks for me. I went downstairs with heavy heart, and that was out last meeting. I got the janitor to go up as a mutual friend. But Mr. Mosswell threatened to brain him with a chair. Two days later he moved out of the building. Old Banks wanted to give him a parting kick, and Miss Jared chuckled to see him go. In the elevator, as I took him down, I started to express my sympathy, but he tried to cross his right and find the point of my jaw as a reward. I am grieved and sorry, but I cannot blame myself. There are wild adventures and strange mysteries in all lives, but in none more than in the life of

SAMMIS,
The Elevator Bay.

The Canteen Question.

From Harper's Weekly.

To condemn the canteen without having seen its practical workings is an injustice of which no thinking man will be guilty. In this, as in most other matters in life, the majority of us must accept the opinion of those qualified to judge. If we are sick we do not go to a merchant to be told what is the matter and to obtain treatment. So in this canteen question why should we accept the perhaps sincere but misguided opinions of those who really know nothing about it, when we can get the judgment of those who have every means of knowing the truth about the matter, and who are perfectly capable of forming and expressing professional or expert opinion? No army officer derives the least benefit from the canteen, except indirectly as it aids discipine. And the majority of our nation are to-day ready to admit that the discipline which means efficiency, the welfare, and the well-being of the men is the first thought of all regular army officers. It is these very officers who say that to abolish the canteen means to encourage drinking and the breaking of regulations, and is a direct blow at the efficiency of the whole army—an efficiency which has been tried and proved not wanting.

Mrs. Emmons Blaine's School Open.

From the Chicago News.

Thoroughly equipped as a school for students of all ages in all branches of learning taught in primary, elementary, academic, and pedagogic schools, the Chicago Institute has opened its doors and received several hundred pupils from all parts of the country. Mrs. Emmons Blaine, the founder of the school, arrived early and was present at the morning opening exercises.

One of the remarkable inventions belonging to the institute is the epidiascope or opaque projector, secured in Germany. This instrument is valued at over $1,000. It is the only one of its kind in this country. Prof. C. W. Carman has charge of it and will instruct the students of science by the use of pictures thrown on a screen by this powerful machine.

A night school is being planned by the faculty.

Quite Contrary.

BY MRS. GEORGE E. PICKETT.

"Mistress Mary, quite contrary,
How does your garden grow?"

"My name is not Mary."

"Sylvia would not rhyme. You must allow something for poetic license."

"Strangers call me Miss Linton."

"There is where your friends have the advantage, Sylvia being not only much prettier, but also nearer the requirements of poetry."

Sylvia's gaze did not wander from Old Baldy, looming purple in the distance.

"I admit that Old Baldy is somewhat larger and more majestic than I am, but he will probably stay there till to-morrow, and you can look at him then. This is your last chance to look at me for a long time."

"Will you enter a monastery, or do you intend to wear a mask when you go into society?"

"Neither. I am going to San Francisco."

"Laid away in the catacombs. Live people stay in Los Angeles."

"When did you become an agent for a Southern road?"

"About the time that you were relegated to a collection of geological specimens and catalogued for San Francisco."

Having reached this crucial point they were silent for a moment, she still gazing at the bare summit of Old Baldy in the distance, he looking at her sun-crowned head, so near, and yet so immeasurably out of reach.

"I'd like to know what makes you so cross."

"I'm not cross. I am wretched."

"Then I am still more concerned to know the cause."

"Oh. I live in such a world of misfortune. Look at that!"

She stretched her arms tragically toward a long row of China's sacred lilies.

"I don't see how anything so pretty can be looked upon as an irretrievable calamity."

"That is just like your shallowness. You never look at the roots of things. If you did you would see—gophers."

"Oh!"

"I can stand like a stick and say that myself."

"Sticks do not make remarks."

"Other wooden things do."

Another silence, interrupted by the approach of a tall young Mexican with a dark, brilliant face, lit by a pair of flashing black eyes, and shaded by a wide sombrero, which he removed with a wide sweep as he bowed low.

"Oh, Ramon, see my beautiful lilies; they will all die."

"The gopher is sacrilegious," said Ramon in his slow, soft southern way. "He has no respect for the sacred flower, nor—what is far more wicked—its beautiful mistress. He deserves to be condemned. See me catch him as we do in Mexico. You must not move or breathe."

The young Mexican put his handkerchief over the hole where the gopher had entered upon his path of destruction and lay upon the ground. After a moment of unbroken stillness he began to whistle a soft, soothing, seductive air that was stiller than silence and yet it seemed to fill all space with music. It struck the rose tree against which Sylvia was leaning and was reflected softer and sweeter than when it first trembled on the air. It lost itself in the wilderness of scarlet geranium hedge around the garden and came back heavy with bloom and fragrance. It floated over to the nasturtium that crushed the trellis with bewildering masses of scarlet and gold and returned in a deeper tone. It drifted to the bird-of-paradise tree and flew back as if it had borrowed the ruby and amber blossom wings that seemed lifted in flight as they poised quiveringly on their stems.

The broken hillock that had been crumbling up toward the lilies ceased to lengthen. The movement of the earth indicated that the gopher was retracing its path. In a few moments the handkerchief began to rise and Ramon's hand closed around the neck of the marauder. He wound the handkerchief about the gopher and put it into his pocket.

"Oh, Ramon!" cried Sylvia. "You have saved my lilies and my life!"

"I am most happy to have performed two such beneficent actions. A Dios, senorita."

Sylvia's gaze followed him admiringly.

"How very handsome Ramon is, and how good, and what a brilliant intellect he has."

"All for catching a gopher. I would scorn to make a gopher-trap of myself."

"It wouldn't do any good if you did. You could no more catch a gopher than you could catch an idea."

"Good bye. I may not come back soon."

"Oh, they never come back from San Francisco. They just turn into paleozoic vestiges and stay there."

She watched him until he passed out through the dark Italian cedar arch above the gateway and disappeared under the pepper trees. Then she looked straight at the drooping branches of the eucalyptus just outside the garden hedge.

"I do not see why people want to plant eucalyptus trees. They are just the gloomiest trees in the whole world. Folks say they are healthful. The idea that people are improved in health by living under a tree so dismal that all it needs to be a tombstone is an illusive epitaph reciting the imaginary virtues of a departed one. It always makes me want to cry to see a eucalyptus."

As Sylvia was much in the habit of doing what she wanted, she sat in the rose arbor and cried.

That was just before the hurricane visited San Francisco. The city of the Golden Gate does not expect hurricanes. She has never been taught by experience to look forward to such events and prepare for them. When a hurricane strikes San Francisco she is as much surprised as a politician the day after election. Many a person was astonished quite out of the little circle of human oscillations by the hurricane that dashed against San Francisco a few days after Jack had said good-by to Sylvia in the little garden.

Sylvia was watering the lilies which had been so happily rescued from destruction. What a pity it was about all those poor people in San Francisco. What if Jack!—oh, Jack was not in the storm. Jack never was around where things happened. He was too slow ever to catch up with a hurricane.

A newsboy threw the evening paper over the hedge as he ran past. She took it up and glanced at the headlines.

"One of the victims from Los Angeles! Jack Moreland killed——"

She threw down the paper and sank upon the ground under the rose tree, covering her face with her hands. As she sat weeping the soft voice of Ramon drifted through the darkness that seemed to have fallen over her.

"Why do you cry, Senorita mia? Will you not tell me?"

"Go away! I hate you!"

"That is a reason that I should cry, not you."

She threw out her hand passionately. If it had not been for him and his hateful gopher she might not have been so bad to Jack the last time she could ever see him.

"What made you come around with your old gophers, making me wretched? Go away! I don't want you!"

He looked at her with eyes filled with woe.

"I am sorry! I did not know that you loved gopher. I know where there are many gophers. Oh, muchedumbre! I will catch them and turn them all loose in your garden. You shall have heaps of them higher than San Bernardino."

"I don't want gophers. I hate them and you, too."

"You will not let me comfort you? But I am very sorry for you. Remember, you have always a friend in Ramon."

She would not look at him as he went sadly away.

The sun dropped like a ball of fire behind a distant mountain and its reflected rays struck amethystine sparkles from Old Baldy and his brother peaks, but she did not see. A silver star twinkled out of a rose-tinted cloudlet and looked down softly and sympathetically, but it met no gaze of grateful admiration in return.

Suddenly the handkerchief was plucked from her face, and she looked up to meet the eyes of Jack.

"Oh, Jack, I knew you would come back to me even if you are dead."

"But I'm not dead, Sylvia."

"Oh, yes, you are. I have read that—they do not know it at first. Sometimes it takes several days. But you are dead. The paper said so."

"Then the reporter killed me. I can't blame him. He has to make a living. I lived such an exemplary life when I was in flesh that I could better afford to die than he could. Besides, I am rather obliged to him for killing me. Otherwise I should not have found out that you loved me so much."

"I don't love you, Jack, of course. But I suppose I'll have to spend the rest of my life in looking after you. You couldn't take care of yourself, even when you were a live man, and of course you can't now that you are a ghost."

"If I had known how delightful it is to be a ghost," said Jack, taking her in his arms, "I would have become one long ago."

(Copyright, 1900, Daily Story Publishing Company.)

OLD ZEB WHITE.

He Tells How He Went for Whisky and Found a Bear.

"Jest befo' the revenue fellers captured the last moonshine still around yere," said the old 'possum hunter of Tennessee, "we had fo'teen kegs of whisky in the shaft of an old iron mine on the side of the mounting. That shaft was twenty feet deep and grown about by bushes. Arter the whisky had staid thar over two years it was planned fur me to take it out and sell it and divide up the money. The old woman knew of the plant, but I wasn't goin' to say nuthin' 'bout my gettin' the kegs out. She was reckonin' all along that some one else would do that. One arternoon I driv the mule and cart as nigh the place as I could, and 'long 'bout two hours arter nightfall I says to the old woman:

"'If yo' don't consider to object, I reckon I'll go over and see Dan Skinner this evenin'. Dan is feelin' peekish and

"The B'ar Was Thar."

lonesome, and likely we'll hev a game of checkers to brighten him up.'

"'But I do object,' she says. 'I was reckonin' to sing some hymns to-night while yo' played the fiddle. I also want to talk to yo' 'bout Noer and his ark.'

"'I've got a sore thumb and can't fiddle, and, as fur Noer, he will keep till some other time. Nothin' rushin' 'bout Noer.'

"With that she turns on me and looks me squar in the face, and arter a minit she says:

"'Zeb White, don't yo' go to foolin' with Noer and his ark or suthin' powerful bad will come out of it. Dan Skinner may feel peekish, or he may be dyin', but what we wants to know is how all them critters found their way into the ark. How did it happen that the hens didn't eat up the tater bugs while they was walkin' together?'

"'Dunno.'

"'Why didn't the foxes eat all the hens?'

"'Dunno.'

"'Why didn't the b'ars eat the pigs?'

"'Dunno.'

"'Of co'se yo' don't, and that's why I want yo' to squat right down yere with me and try and figger it out. I shan't never be satisfied to die till I find out how the elephants and hosses and cattle managed to git into that ark without treadin' on the sarpints and bugs.'

"I seen that her jaw was sot fur a row," continued Zeb, "but I had sold that whisky and must git it out that night, and so I told her I'd go along over to Skinner's and put in the next two nights with her on Noer. She looked at me ag'in, but didn't say nuthin' till I was on the doahstep. Then she p'inted her finger at me and said:

"'Go right along, Zeb White, but if the Lawd don't dun git yo' into a heap of trubble over it then I don't know chestnuts from punkins!'

"I hurried off without sayin' anything back and half an hour later was bringin' up the kegs. It was dod rotted biziness. I had to slide down a rope, hitch on to a keg and then climb up and pull the keg arter me. Ought to had a nigger to help me, but thar wasn't one around to trust. I'd got up fo' kegs all right and was comin' up to pull the fifth one up when sunthin' happened. Jest as I was nearin' the top of the hole I heard a growl and a 'whoof' and a big b'ar made a stroke at my head with his paw. I was that durn skeered that I jest let go and drapped to the bottom of the shaft and got a jar that made my bones aches fur a week.

"What they calls the situashun was this: I was down in a hole and a b'ar was waitin' fur me to come up and do bizness with him. Yo' kin see that the pesky varmint had all the advantage. He could smash my skull with one blow of his paw as my head come within reach. I yelled and hollered at him, thinkin' to skeer him away, but he looked over the edge of the hole at me and growled and sniffed and seemed minded to fall on top of me. It wasn't five minits befo' I wished I was home talkin' about Noer, but wishin' was no good. I kept quiet fur two or three hours and then started to climb up. The b'ar was thar. He was thar at midnight and sunrise, and I'm tellin' yo' that he was thar at noon and at fo' o'clock in the arternoon. The shaft was as dry as a bone, and I was thirsty 'nuff to drink swamp water. The way things was fixed that b'ar could keep me down thar till I perished, and when he appeared as if he was like to do it I felt that I hadn't used my old woman right and wanted to ask her to furgive me. 'Bout fo' o'clock, while I was keepin' mighty quiet, I hears a rifle shot above, and directly arterward a human face looks down on me. It was the old woman's. She drawed the rope up beyond my reach and then called down:

"'Is anybody down thar visitin' Dan Skinner, who feels peekish and wants to play checkers?'

"'If yo'll lemme up, I'll ax yo'r pardon,' says I.

"'Mebbe that voice belongs to Zeb White?'

"'She do.'

"'An' mebbe his sore thumb has got well so that he kin fiddle?'

"'She has.'

"'Then we'll have some fiddlin' and singin'.'

"And with that she lowers the fiddle by a string, and as soon as I got tuned up she began singin' and kept it up fur an hour. Then she calls down:

"'Zeb, what about Noer and his ark?'

"'I'm willin' to talk,' says I.

"'How long will yo' talk?'

"'All the rest of the fall and winter. 'Peared to me when yo' spoke of it jest evenin that I didn't keer much 'bout Noer and his ark, but I'm findin out that I take a heap of interest in 'em. I'm willin to sit up all night and try to figger out 'bout the hens and tater bugs.'

"'Then mebbe yo'd better come up,' says she, and she draps the rope fur me to climb by. I never felt so glad in my life as when I got out and seen a dead b'ar thar. I wanted to gin the old woman a kiss, but she waves me off and says:

"'Don't yo' be in sich a hurry, Mr. White. Arter yo' hev ate and rank and slept, and arter we've put in 'bout fo' weeks niggerin' on Noer, we'll see 'bout the kissin' bizness. Chuck them kegs back into the hole, load up the b'ar, and we'll go home.'"

"By Order of the Board."

BY M. QUAD.

For seven years old John Fosdick had been paying teller of the First National Bank of a Western town. Previous to his taking the place he had been a private banker and merchant and had played in hard luck. He had secured the place through having the friendship of the president, but there had been a "ring" against him in the bank. The place had been promised to a relative of the cashier's, and old John was looked upon as an intruder. Without the president behind him, even after he had held the place for three or four years, he would have been fired by those in authority. He was a man who said but little and rendered faithful service. As he grew old they tried to make his age a point against him, and, not succeeding in that, it was hoped that he might get caught up on a forged check or some other act of carelessness. He went his way without fighting back. If he lost his place it meant poverty to himself and wife in their old age. He was prompt, careful, and systematic, and the plans of his enemies were defeated.

The seventh year was drawing to a close when old John was caught up. A stranger presented a check which he hesitated to pay and about which he consulted the cashier. Later on the cashier stated that he had ordered it to be held pending examination. Old John said that he had been ordered to pay it at once. The check was paid, and, being spurious, the bank was $800 out of pocket. It was a question of veracity between cashier and teller, and it was decided within the bank that the cashier had the better of it. Just then, too, old Fosdick slipped in a wrong figure in making up his day's account, and, though it made only a difference of 7 cents in the total, it seemed to prove that old age and carelessness had unfitted him for his position. The president being in Europe, the board took the case under advisement, and "by order" the old man was fired out into the world to begin life anew. There were resolutions, of course, and one of them was to the effect that the bank presented him with the sum of $100 for long and faithful services. He put on his hat without protest, and he left the bank without taking the money. At his humble home an old and anxious wife met him and, wifelike, gave him sympathy and encouragement first of all.

"Never mind, John; never mind;" she kept saying. "We have a few dollars ahead, and you are only fifty-five years old, and something good is sure to turn up. You have fought too long to give up now."

But the weeks went by, and nothing turned up. The business world has very little use for an old man who has no capital. John Fosdick's savings were gradually used up, the generosity of his few friends exhausted, and there came a day when the question of food and fuel became a serious one. He was not one to sponge or turn beggar. If the world would not let him earn his food, at least he would go out of it and hope that his going would open the hearts of men toward his widow.

After pondering for an hour he started out with the firm intention of drowning himself in the river. It was a blustering November day, and as he passed the bank with bowed head, bent shoulders and well-worn garments, even those who had deprived him of his place felt a touch of sympathy. He was making for the suburbs and a highway bridge and wondering how long it would take to drown and what men would say of him when dead, when he caught sight of men and horses skulking behind an abandoned factory. It was singular, bound on such a mission as he was, that he should have seen or wondered and speculated on why those men and horses were there, but he had scarcely passed the old factory when he suddenly turned about and ran for the business part of the town with speed that astonished himself.

In the vaults of the First National Bank was a sum close upon $300,000, deposited there temporarily by a railroad company. Outside the vault was a big safe containing $25,000 more. It was a quiet afternoon, with few people moving about. Over 100 of the men living in town had gone over to the new town of Prairie Flower at an auction of real estate. There hadn't been a better opportunity for years to make a dash at the bank. It was a civilized young city, but within striking distance of No Man's Land and a hundred desperate outlaws. Of a sudden old John Fosdick, bareheaded and his gray hair flying, burst into the bank. He was speechless with his running, but he did not try to use his voice. He dashed open the gate and seized the heavy doors of the safe and closed them with a bang. Several employes tried to seize him, thinking he had gone crazy, but he shook them off, and just as firing and yelling were heard on the street he slammed the doors of the vault. He had only turned from it when four border ruffians dashed into

"Gentlemen, This Bank Is Closed."

the bank, each with a pistol in hand, while three others remained outside and fired at every pedestrian in sight.

"Hands up and money out!" shouted one of the three who entered the bank, and in an instant every official and employe was covered.

The cashier wilted, and the others followed suit, but old John Fosdick stood up gamely under the deadly revolvers and quietly said:

"Gentlemen, this bank is closed for the day."

"Open the safe and vaults or I'll blow your brains out!"

"I have a key to neither."

"You liar! Take that!"

The old man sank with a bullet in his brain, and the white-faced cashier would have opened safe and vault with his own hands but for the arrival of assistance. A few citizens had gathered and killed one of the watchers and wounded another. This caused a stampede on the part of the deperadoes. They did not even grab the money packages in sight, but hastened to get away as fast as possible. John Fosdick had not drowned himself, but he lay dead. He had been discharged on account of old age and carelessness, but his speed and acumen had saved the First National Bank from being cleaned out. He wondered what men would say of him after death. They said he was a hero. He had hoped men would have pity on his aged widow. When he had been laid away, the bank voted her a life pension, the citizens and the railroad company made up a public purse, and she wanted for nothing the rest of her life.

MR. BOWSER'S TRIBULATIONS.

He Leveled All Distinctions and a Tramp Leveled Him.

Mr. Bowser had come home not exactly mad, but he was in that state of mind known as "techy." He found Mrs. Bowser so pleasant, the dinner so good, and the house looking so well that he couldn't find fault with anything until he sat down to his evening paper. He hadn't been reading over five minutes when he burst out with:

"By George, but I have always said it would come to this, and here it is!"

"Has another King been assassinated?" asked Mrs. Bowser without much interest.

"No, there hasn't, but there has been an attempt to assassinate the Constitution of the United States—to murder equality, to stab our democratic republic in the back. A Chicago millionaire who took a street car for a short ride found himself alongside one of his employes. What do you suppose he did?"

"Bowed to him and offered to pay his fare, probably."

"He did, eh? That's all you know about it. It so happens that he called the conductor and had the employe bounced off

"My Friend, You Are a Man."

He said he didn't propose to ride along with the riff-raff. By hen, but I'd like to have been there! Because the man had accumulated a few thousand dollars he looked upon common humanity as so much dirt. He wouldn't even ride in a street car with a man who had to earn his daily bread by the sweat of his brow."

"It was silly for him to make such an exhibition of himself," said Mrs. Bowser, "but there is no call for you to get a stroke of apoplexy over it."

"But don't you see the attempt to create an aristocracy in this country—don't you see it?" he shouted as he waved the paper on high and brought the cat out from under the lounge to see what the row was about.

"Well, what of it? Why should you care?"

"I care because all men were born free and equal; because one man is as good as another; because money don't make the man. That's what ails the poor man today. We are trying to class him with the animals of the field. It's this shoddy aristocracy drawing its skirts away from the laboring man that makes socialists and anarchists. Because we happen to have a few thousand dollars in the bank are we better than our washerwoman or the man who takes out the ashes?"

"I haven't heard of your inviting them to dinner or sitting down to tell stories."

"Then, by thunder, but you will, and this very night, too!" he roared as he kicked over a chair and went stamping around. "The people of this country want to know who are the snobs. I'll soon prove to which class I belong!"

He started for the front hall and had his hat on before Mrs. Bowser could ask him what he was going to do. Without replying to the question he passed out of doors, and from the parlor window she saw him halting by the gate. He didn't have to wait there long. A tramp who had been loafing on the corner below and striking a score of persons in vain for bed money soon came shuffling along. He was debating whether to strike or not to strike when Mr. Bowser observed:

"My friend, you are a man."

"I expect I am," was the reply.

"And as a man you are just as good as I am. Because I happen to be better off in this world's goods than you are I have no right to look down on you."

"Say, old man," remarked the tramp, as a grin spread over his face, "unless you are drunk you are talkin' straight from the shoulder. I like to hear it."

"I am neither drunk nor a snob," continued Mr. Bowser. "I say you are a man, born free and equal. As a man, you are entitled to my respect, whether you are a millionaire or a laboring man."

"And you don't set yourself up as bein' above me?"

"No, sir."

"And I'm as good as you are?"

"Just as good."

"Shake, old man! You don't know how you encourage me. If I'm as good as you are, then mebbe—mebbe——"

"Come right in and have dinner, and after that we'll talk. There'll be no aristocracy built up in America if a man of my size can prevent it."

"You ain't goin' to git me in there to give me the boot?" asked the tramp, as he hung back and wondered over his good luck.

"I am going to use you as an equal. Come along."

The man was taken into the basement and the cook ordered to give him his dinner at the table. She looked in wonder and astonishment and demurred, but Mr. Bowser insisted, and she reluctantly complied. When the fellow had got well at work, Mr. Bowser went up stairs to explain what he had done and what was to follow, but Mrs. Bowser had gone to her room. He was minded to call her down and ask her to play the piano, but on second thought he decided not to rush the business too much at first. After twenty minutes he went down, but the tramp was still heaving it in with knife and fork. He had asked for something to "wet it up," and the cook had put on a bottle of claret, with which he was making free. Mr. Bowser winced a little, but gave him fifteen minutes more. At the end of that time there was still a piece of the second loaf of bread left, and it was about ten minutes more before the tramp had finished. A barrel of food and a bottle of wine had restored the gall of the "equal" to its pristine glory, and, shoving back from the table at last with a sigh of contentment, he pounded on the board with his knife and called to the girl:

"Hey, slavey, bring hither one of the old man's perfectos and let the wrapper be speckled!"

"How dare you talk that way to me?" demanded the indignant cook.

"A perfecto, pot wrestler, or out you go!"

Mr. Bowser heard from the head of the stairs, and his hair began to rise. Running down, he said:

"Look here, but ain't you rather overdoing this thing?"

"Not at all, old bird," was the smiling reply. "We are both men and equals. You have the dough, and I'm dead broke. It's your business to divide. How are you heeled for cash?"

"I'll show you how I'm heeled, sir! There is the door. I want no more of your society!"

"But you can't turn me down that way, old man—oh, no! My name is Jim the Sticker. When I gets a good thing, I hangs on. Don't go back on what you said about all men bein' equal."

Mr. Bowser again ordered him out, but as he refused to go he was taken hold of to be assisted. He didn't propose to drop the equality business without a struggle, and there was a row in which the dining-room was almost wrecked and Mr. Bowser was badly pummeled. By the time the cook had brought a policeman and Mrs. Bowser and the cat had got down stairs the tramp had filled his pockets with knives, forks, and spoons and got away. Nothing could be said to the man left lying on the floor on his back. He had leveled all distinctions and been leveled himself.