

SQUIRE RUFUS SANDERS.

The Portly Sage of Rocky Creek Still Lives.

And Tells Charming Stories From Backwoods Life—Andy Lucas With His Head Done Up in a Red Rag—“Pison, Fights Mad” and Crazy for the Weed—Some News From Down on Panther.

(Copyright, 1903.)
With his turkey-red bandana looped and tucked and tied and twisted all around his throat and forred in the regular nigger fashion—with his breeches in his boot legs and a pair of Texas spurs on, which kept up a scandalous rattlin—with his shako an’ rideder shirt on, givin fresh signs of tobacco, likewise also some few blood stains—with his left eye bunged and shut up, and the other bruised and cloudy, come the natural-born horse trader, come the onliest Andy Lucas.

Fresh From the Hill Country.
Andy he had went on a trip some-where over in the hill country to see if he couldn't lay claims to some stray hogs, and in the main time he had been “a havin a little fun with one of the boys.” On his return back home he rid by to give me the general facts in the case before the news could leak out in the settlement.

“Listen to a man what knows the road and has covered all the ground and traveled all the gait, Rufe,” says Andy as he laid one finger alongside of his nose. “Don't you never start off to take no long trips ridin of a blamed old mule by the name of Beck without good tobacco and plenty of it in your breeches. That's what's the matter with you side partner this evenin. That's how come my noble forred done up in a red rag, as it were, and that's the meanin of these wounds and scars, these gay and gauzy colors on my gentle countenance.

“I had tobacco, two or three plugs of it, and that which was good, some-where around the place, but in the general hurry and confusionment of the trip I had to swap breeches and I went off without a crumb in my clothes. I thought about it over here at the first creek, but I didn't want to stop and turn around and come back and break my luck. I was headed for the hill country, where everybody uses the weed, and I reckoned as how I wouldn't have to wait and suffer long. So I rid on, wantin tobacco so bad till I was spittin white right then. Somethin like a half mile further on I met up with a pale, sickly-lookin, tallow-faced boy drivin one ox and goin to mill. He looked to me like a boy as mought maybe use tobacco, so I popped the question to him. But he loved he didn't use it, and I says to him, says I Well, young man, if you don't use tobacco you ought to put a little salt in your dirt.

“So I rid on. A mile or so further down the road I saw a yaller nigger pickin cotton close to the road, and now, thinks I to myself, thank the Lord I will get some tobacco. I went at him kind and famillous like, and called him Bill, and then brought up the great and growin question of tobacco with him.

“Yasser, I uses it,” says he—“dat is I uses it whenever I can get it, but there ain't narry crumb in my breeches today, boss. I done tuck and turned my pockets this mornin.”

“So I popped the spurs to old Beck and rid on. But by this time, Rufe, blamed if I want weak and sick and nervous as a cat. I tried chawin some perlimon back, but whilst it made me spit free and spit yaller it wouldn't sorter half way do for tobacco. The more I rid and the further I went the worse I got.”

Got Pison, Fights Mad.
“But now presently that sick feelin kinder wore off, and then I commence gettin mad—rile moan, pison, fightin mad. Rufe, did you ever feel mean enough to hit your own body and rob your old grandmoother? Well, now that was me to a nat's heel. When I got way over there in Murder Creek swamp I couldn't stand it no longer. So I dismounted and got down, I did, and cut me a good hickory stick and lit into that old mule Beck. Man sir, I give her the dad-blamdest most allermost buntin that any one mule ever had to tote out of them woods.

“But got still at the same time that didn't bring in no tobacco, Rufe, and tobacco was the mainest thing with me at that time. As your friend and fellow-servant, I do hope and trust you never will live long enough to want anything as bad as I wanted tobacco. By gattins, I was waterin at the mouth and slobberin worse than any steer calf roped off from his mammy for the first time. But I rid on, and I didn't meet nobody till I got way over there in the old Staggers lane. Terocely I saw a man comin up the road ridin of a mule like me, only he was ridin in a walk and me goin in a full gallop. By this time I reckon I must of been about three-thirds crazy as well as foam in mad. I was cussin old Beck at the top of my voice and plovin up ber sides with my spurs at every jump.”

He Heard the Cussin Part.
Soon as ever I got in hearin distance of the man comin up the road I lit into cussin him and callin for tobacco with every breath. He heard the cussin part, and by the time I rid up to him, he was down on the ground, with his mule hitched and his coat off, ready for a fight. And nothin else would do him but a fight. I then got down to argify

the case with him, and blame if he didn't light onto me whilst I had one foot in the stirrup. So we had it right there in the big road, up and down and over and under for a few rounds, but he had got in the first lick and he made it count. And then, Rufe, I was so scandalous weak and nervous till I couldn't fight much nohow. The truth is mighty even when it hurts, Rufe, and the naked, unwashed truth is that the stranger give me a blame good boatin. I found a tremendous big pile of difference between whippin a blamed old mule name Beck and lickin a man by the name of Weaver, which the stranger give me that as his name.

“When it was all over with he wanted to know what in the thunderations was the matter, and all I could say was tobacco—to-bacco—to-bacco. Well, sir, nobody would of thought it, but blamed if he didn't pull out a plug of the bul-list store-bought stuff I have flopped a lip on in many a day, and cut me off a full square. Inside of three minits I had come to my senses, and we shook hands and parted friends.

“But remember what I tell you, Rufe. Don't you never start off to take no long trips on a blamed old mule by the name of Beck without plenty of tobacco in your breeches.”

Some News From Panther Creek.
Ann Nancy Newton driv by one day last week on her return back home from Bunk Weatherford's. She tarried and remained over long enough to take a social family smoke with me, and when she went away she left a big bundle of news from down on Panther Creek.

“The folks in our settlement are mostly God-fearin people, Rufe,” says the dear delightful old soul between the puffs of blue smoke from her pipe, “and they are multiplyin and replenishin the earth accordin. Right along in durin of the last three weeks thirteen new babies have come into our midst to face the trials and troubles and tribulations of this vain and featin world, as it were. Miss Strickland—Dunk's wife—she was the first one to show down, and as you and Bler and Andy would say, she helt a pair of jacks, which is to say, two boys. Next come John Andrew Newton's wife—Sallie Stringer as she use to be—and she likewise also laid down a pair, but they was queens. Then Will Tom Pickense's wife—Rosebud Buckaloo that use to be—and she jest naturally took the rag and pulled up the bush by comin across with three at one trip—two boys and a girl. That's seven. Well, then, first one of the neighbors and then another had log-rolls at their house till there was five more babies in the settlement. And that's thirteen.

“They are all mighty poor down there, Rufe, in regards to this world's goods. But they don't mean no harm by that, and they walk upright and blameless in the commandments as best they can. If it want for the children all the goodness in the human race would soon wash out anyhow, and whilst I ain't in that branch of the business, it makes my old heart glad to see the carib multiplied and replenished reglar and frequent.

“What's past belgin should be past weepin, as the old sayin runs, but I do wish in my soul the whole thirteen was mine and I could live long enough to see 'em all grown and married and settled off in thirteen different homes.”

The “Happiest and Most Luckiest.”
Old man Shade Walton is now about the happiest as well as the ugliest and most luckiest man in our settlement. Aunt Nancy went on presently.

“The old man went up to the county fair the other day and when he come back home he had a five-dollar bill in gold hid away in his sock. Henceforward after that he aint done a blessed thing but traps around the settlement showin everybody his new money and tellin how he got it. He never win it and he didn't find it, but whilst up there seein of the sights he met up with a man from some-where over in Georgy, which he was a rank blank stranger to old man Shade.

“My friend, says the man from Georgy soon as ever he clapped his eyes on Shade Walton, I have got five dollars in gold which belongs to you. It was giv to me forty years ago by my grandfader, and he told me if I ever met up with a man that was uglier than me I must pass it on down the line. The money is yours. Here it is. Take it and be happy.

“Well, naturally of course, old man Shade he took the money. He couldn't do nothin else convenient. And I reckon by rights it belongs to him, cause he is the serriest lookin man I have ever saw, and bless gracious he is ugly enough to wear a mule coat.”

When Thanksgiving comes I will have a heap of things to be thankful for. But I will return particular thanks to the good Lord that my Aunt Nancy Newton ain't gone nowheres.

LODGES AND CHURCHES.

Remarks of a Chicago Divine Discussed by Sam P. Jones.

Why the Secret Society Is More Popular with the Men Than the Church—Need of a Warmer-Hearted Brotherly Love.

Copyright, 1903.
Rev. Mr. Minna, a Congregational pastor of Chicago, is reported by one of the Chicago dailies as having uttered the following:
“Many men who are antagonistic to the church will not unite with it because they feel their religious wants better satisfied in the lodge. Who is at fault that women constitute 80 per cent of the church membership? In Chicago there are 200 churches and 1,200 lodges with an average membership of 200 men. We cannot say women are more superstitious than men and hence unite with the church. The rabid social democrat extols the religion of Christ, though denouncing the church of to-day. But lay not the blame to the religion of Jesus Christ. It is charged that the pulpit of to-day emphasizes the sovereignty of God and has absolute knowledge concerning the world beyond, and loves to denounce the sins of Cain and other ancients, but dare not raise its hands against the vices of to-day. Yet who dared to face Tammany, but the churches of New York? Christian charity has assumed an official air, and the philanthropy of the church has become the distribution of alms. The church must return to the apostolic days in the care of her sick and the providing of her gifts. The society man does not regard his charity to be taken care of. He has paid his assignments and his dues. His visitors come not as paid secretaries or as official clergymen, but as brethren. Lay off the authoritative robes, and let heart touch heart. The democratic spirit which predominates in the control of affairs in the lodges is in marked contrast with the ecclesiasticism of some of the churches. All men desire authority, and in the lodge every man exercises his authority. In the lodge men know their widows and orphans will be taken care of. They have no assurance of this in the church. Yet it is in Christian countries that we find orphan homes and asylums. The ideal secret societies are manifest or dormant in the Christian churches, and to the external must be added the relation of the soul to its God. Let the church claim her rights and exercise them. Let her live the life of her Master, and she will fulfill not only the demands of the lodge, but also lead men to satisfaction of the yearnings of their hearts.”

Without approving or disapproving, without agreeing altogether with or differing altogether from Rev. Mr. Minna, there are many suggestions to a mind which thinks in the questions above which I have given from his sermon. In my periphrasies over this country I find the lodges in most quarters flourishing, with large and growing memberships and with constant interest spurring them along. The masons, the odd fellows, the Knights of Pythias, the Shriners, the Order of Jed Men, and so on and so on, flourish almost everywhere. The interest in these secret societies seems to be abiding. It is not an unusual thing to attend a masonic fraternity on a Tuesday night and find 200 men present; and then attend the average Wednesday night prayer-meeting at a church and 40 in a full house, 60 is a perfect jam, and nine-tenths of these are women and children.

Does the pastor forefend give the reason for such a state of things? Like the reverent gentleman from whom I quote, I belong to several of these secret societies myself. Men get very close to each other in a lodge. Having touched each other in the lodge they walk closer to each other on the street. Their words and signs and grips keep them close together; and yet it is in a Christian land that secret societies flourish most. The light of the Gospel, the truth of the Bible makes it possible for brotherhood to exist and closest affinity to work. Do men get closer together within the house of God? Are they more in touch with each other next day because they were together in a church the day before? A church without its Christ, though it may have its Bible and its preacher, is colder than a lodge, and there is less fraternity than we find in a lodge. What brethren in the same church look after each other in sickness and in distress? Do they care for the widow and orphans of their brethren in the church as they do in the lodges? Have the lodges enough of the spirit of Christ to make them brotherly and generous to the widow and orphan? And yet the church, which ought to embody the Christ, is charged with neglect to a brother in need and a widow and orphan in want. If the clergy and officials of the church put the church above Christ and make the church bigger than Christ, this is the state of ecclesiasticism which drives men to the secret orders and makes them feel that at the lodge I meet my brethren; at the church I am a stranger among strangers.

Do men meet more on a level in a lodge than they do at the church? What lodges ever have rented pews and a place set apart for the Sunday school? Does a member of the lodge ever feel that his clothes are not good enough to wear to the lodge, or by reason of poverty he would not be welcome among them? I know it is not so in this Christian land for secret orders to prosper and the church drag its length along from year to year. It is not so in the lodge, where 100 or 200 men should gather in the lodges almost any week night, and not more than a dozen men will gather at the stated weekly night prayer-meetings in the church. It is not so in the lodge, where the side of eternity should care for the sick and provide for its poor better

than the Church of God. With all due consideration for secret orders of all kinds the Church of God is broader and better and truer in all the relations of life than all of them put together. If the spirit of Christ is embodied in the church, if Christ is bigger than the church, I owe more to the church than all institutions combined. I would do more for the church than all other institutions combined. I am jealous of her name, of her honor, of her integrity, of her life.

It is well enough to discuss these things. We cannot turn them aside with a sneer or scoff. Facts must be met, and facts must be answered whether we will or not. If we do not meet and answer them they will meet and answer us. I love the ministry, and love them as brethren; and yet how much of the blame, if blame should attach, is to be credited to them I will not say if the church has not the warmth, the sympathy, the brotherly feeling far beyond any secret order known to men.

This much I know: Men will go and go again and keep going where hearts touch their hearts, and where men will be their brethren indeed.

SAM P. JONES

LINCOLN AND BOOTH.

The President Died on a Bed Booth Had Occupied a Few Hours Before.

“I once came within an ace of being hung,” was the statement made the other day by Mr. Lloyd Moxley, the Washington city bill poster, to a reporter.
“Yes, sir; I firmly believe that I came as near to being hung as any condemned criminal with the death watch set upon him. It was when Lincoln was shot by Booth. I had been in the theatrical business as a manager, and in this way became acquainted with Booth. On that eventful evening I was standing just outside the president's box, on the right-hand side of the door, when Booth came by. He stopped, and I had no suspicion of the dreadful deed he was about to commit. He stayed there with me, talking and chatting in a low tone for about 20 minutes, and in that time about half a dozen persons who knew both of us came by and saw us. I knew everyone who came by so well that they scarcely looked at me, and in that lay my safety, for had I been recognized by anyone I would have been arrested as one of the conspirators.

“It was only after Booth had fired his shot that I realized what might follow. As soon as I could do so unnoticed I left the theater and hurried home, expecting to be arrested every moment. How I escaped is a mystery to me, even now, and for weeks I remained at home, never daring to leave the house for fear I might meet some one who had seen me that night, and thus revive my impression in his mind. I did not feel safe until the trial was over and the conspirators hanged.”

“Another strange thing that happened the evening of the crime is one of those coincidences which happen so often when we least expect them. The Peterson house, on Teah street, where Mr. Lincoln died, was a boarding house for actors at the time of the tragedy, and I have it on reliable authority that both had a room in the house during his stay in the city. About three o'clock in the afternoon he came in and went direct to his room and tried to sleep on the bed. Now here is the strange part. The very room that he had was the very one that Mr. Lincoln was carried to after the shot, and the very bed on which Booth tried to sleep before the commission of his crime was the bed upon which his victim died. So far as I know this has never been made public, but that it is true I have not the slightest doubt.”—Washington Post.

TWO LIFELONG LOVERS.

A Sentence Accidentally Overheard in the Street.

Tired by a long day's work and feeling a bit “blue” over some matters which had gone counter to my hopes, I was walking down Broadway one night last week, on my way home. It was after ten o'clock and the downtown streets were almost deserted.

As I turned through 16th street I noticed an old lady and an older gentleman walking slowly, arm in arm, evidently husband and wife. He was apparently about 70, she perhaps five years younger.

They seemed very fond of each other. There was just the least inclination of the head of each toward the other, and they were strolling along so slowly as to suggest the thought that their pace was regulated not so much by the infirmities of age as by the desire and pleasure of being alone together. They were talking earnestly.

It had rained earlier in the evening and the sidewalks were still wet, so that I had put on my rubbers before leaving the office. Consequently my approach was noiseless. Just as I overtook and passed the old people the man turned to his wife and said, as if in answer to some remark she had made: “But, my dear, I like to think God sent you to me.”

From a lover to his sweetheart or from a young husband to a young wife the words might have sounded commonplace, but from a husband of three score and ten to a wife of 65 they had a weight and dignity which made them sweet to hear and wholesome to recall. Here was the whole story of two lives told in a sentence. Here was the answer to the old question about marriage. For them it was surely a divine success. Here, at least, was proof that the writers of fairy tales and of old time novels spoke truly when they said that “they were married and lived happily ever after.”—N. Y. Herald.

An Improvement.
Preacher—Yes, my brethren, there is only one thing more beautiful, more important, than to have faith in humanity, and that is—

Wealthy Stock Broker (in a whisper)—To get humanity to have faith in you.—Truth.

All the More Reason.

He had met with serious losses in business, and added to that his wife, whom he adored, was snatched away by death. He could neither eat nor sleep, and his friends were alarmed about his condition. One of them said to him: “You ought to consult a doctor.” “What's the use? Life has lost all charms for me and I want to die, anyhow.” “You want to die? All the more reason for calling a doctor.”—Texas Sittings.

Used to It.

A man who was out walking in the suburbs a day or two ago came across a chubby, well-fed boy and girl riding in a wagon pulled by a small-sized but sturdy goat.

“That's a pretty strong animal, isn't it?” he said.

“Yes,” replied the little girl, “but we don't mind it.”—Chicago Tribune.

A Dangerous Man.

Mr. Nimrod—I am going out hunting this afternoon, and I'll bet I bring down something.

Mrs. Nimrod—But the dog you shot last time ain't well yet.

“O, I'm not going to have any dog with me this time.”

“No dog? For heaven's sake, Henry, what do you expect to shoot?”—Texas Sittings.

A Sure Cure.

Mrs. Flatby—You can't imagine what a time I have to get my cook up in the morning; it's positively wearing me out.

Mrs. Backlog—I had the same trouble, but have entirely overcome it.

Mrs. Flatby (tenderly)—How?

Mrs. Backlog—By having the baby sleep in her room.—Bay City Chat.

Chrysanthemums.

Chrysanthemums are in it. And they go off with a rush. But we're forced to say the finest seem to need a comb and brush.—Detroit Free Press.

Got There at Last.

He failed in selling groceries—he couldn't run a farm: The way he ran the college filled the schools with alarm: The law was not his business—wasn't built upon that plan: If he didn't hang the jury, he was sure to hang the man! But now he's making money—he is sweeping through the States And capturing the dollars in financial, big debates! —Atlanta Constitution.

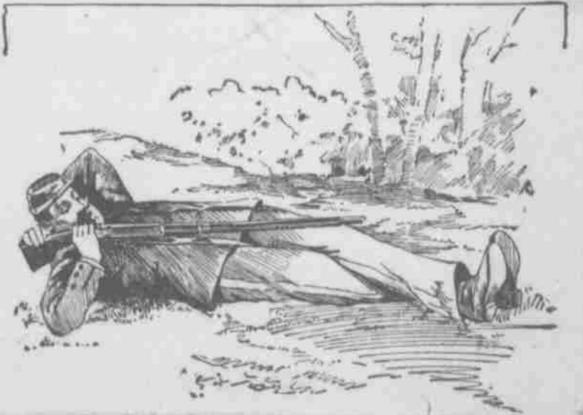
GRATITUDE.



Once Dr. Quack, out for a jaunt, Was thanked, at its conclusion, By tall solemnity, attired In opulent profession. “Who are you, sir? I know you not,” Replied this philter-maker: “Permit me, then”—he gave his card: “Twas Plant, the undertaker.” —Lippincott's Magazine.

At the Temperance Meeting.
The Worker—I am shocked to see you in such a condition. Why, you are the man who came in here a few nights ago and signed a pledge not to drink for a year.

The Alleged Backslider—If zat's so, m' fren', you mus' have taken advantage of me sometime when I was under th' influence of liquor!—Bay City Chat.



THE “TEXAS GRIP” METHOD OF FIRING AN ARMY RIFLE. The Position from Which the Army Has Been Testing the New Krag-Jorgensen Rifle That Has Been Found Defective.

Professional Cruelty.

“The trouble with this tooth,” said the dentist, probing it with a long, slender instrument, “is that the nerve is dying.”

“It seems to me, doctor,” growled the victim, “you ought to treat the dying with a little more respect.”—Chicago Tribune.

Foreigners Nowhere.

Foreign Sultor—I lay at your feet a coronet and a castle with a long retort. I am sure you cannot do better than to accept.

American Beauty—You flatter yourself, sir. One of my suitors in an American who sells coal in winter and ice in summer.—N. Y. Weekly.

In Training.

She's training for the ring, but yet No toughness round her boyers; The kind of ring she's training for Is that part put on by lovers.—N. Y. Recorder.

HAD BEEN ROASTED BEFORE.



His Satanic Nibs—You appear to be perfectly comfortable.

New Arrival—Yes, tolerably. You see, I was a baseball umpire.—Judge.

Marked Improvement.

Strawber—Dr. Probe has been treating my rheumatism for the past six months.

Singerly—Are you any better?

Strawber—I should say so. When he came with his bill yesterday, I was able to run like a deer.—Harper's Bazar.

Couldn't He Doze.

“I have decided to withdraw from the race,” said the politician decidedly. “You can't do it,” returned the voter promptly.

“Why not?”

“You were never in it.”—Chicago Evening Post.

Very Much Changed, Indeed.

“Has marriage changed McManus any?”

“Changed? I should say so!”

“In what way?”

“You know how he used to take Miss Bluet to the theater and back in a carriage? Well, last night, I saw them walking home in the rain.”—Chicago Record.

A Happy Thought.

Herr X. (to a beggar in the street)—I'll give you five cents if you'll lend me for half an hour your board with the inscription “I am deaf and dumb.”

Deaf Mute—All right. What do you want it for?

Herr X.—I am going to the barber's over the way to get a shave.—Feira-bend.

Where Men Fall.

A woman takes a small valise, and in it very neatly stores

A half a dozen dresses, wraps and sundry trifles, scores on scores.

But give a man a trunk to pack, and one thin suit, a pair of hose.

A shirt, a collar and some cuffs will fill it up too full to close.—L. A. W. Bulletin.

Realistic.

Assistant—I think we could use that play. There is a horse race on the stage in the last act.

Manager—That isn't new.

Assistant—No, but the playwright suggests that we change the winning horse every night and sell pools on the result.—London Answers.

Old vs. New.

What sort of a woman my wife may be I haven't expressed an opinion yet. That is, in her hearing—for fear that she in a state of mind at my phrase might get. She's not a New Woman it's safe to say. For to term her that I would better fare than if, on some ill-starred, fatal day, To call her an old one I should dare.—Bay City Chat.

His Natural Inference.

“I'm taking lessons on the violin from Prof. Scrape.”

“Is he a good master?”

“I should say so; last night I heard him play four times on one string.”

“Really? Well, you ought to be able to play one tune on four strings!”—Chicago Record.

In Good Shape.

“Yes, sir,” said the promoter, “the railroad is assured. The company has been formed, the stock subscribed and the receiver appointed. Oh, we are hustlers.”—Detroit Tribune.

Met the Enemy and Won.

“That new trunk of yours came through all right. It must be very strong.”

“Yes. The baggage man is wearing his arm in a sling.”—Detroit Free Press.

A Durable Variety.

Cokeley—“You can't eat your cake and have it, you know.”

Crokeley—Evidently you never ate any of my wife's cake.—Brooklyn Life.