

## HORSE-RADISH JOE

By Harry B. Kennon.

STOP! LOOK! LISTEN!" was the cry of watery-eyed "Horseradish Joe," as he held up a long, dirt-encrusted, green-crowned, yellow root. "Stop! Look! Grind him while you wait."

Like Saul of Tarsus, Giovanni Marcus was a Jew, a Roman citizen and a Christian; like Saul, he suffered a change of name with change of country; like Paul, he insistently claimed the attention of Jew or Gentile within sound of his voice. Here similarity ceased, for Giovanni was neither saint nor tent-maker—he lived in Chicago and he peddled horse-radish. "Giovanni" was too much of a mouthful for his customers, hence Joe.

Day after day, rain or shine, Joe's little push-cart stood backed up to the greasy pavement, just beyond that section of Maxwell street where the dismantled Oliver Goldsmith school presents boarded-up windows, like blind eyes, to the constantly moving throng below. The handsome, rust-eaten iron fence in front of the dismal building is festooned from end to end with men's clothing, gleanings from back doors without number; depressing stuff as is all men's second-hand wear, no matter how furnished; depressing and priceless, since the sum of money for which it shall change hands is a deep mystery to buyer and seller. Frequently when trading reaches the beseeching "How much will you give?" point, the potential purchaser walks away, leaving the sad garments to gather more and more of the dust and smell of the market, not to mention the profanity of the defeated merchant.

For speech is nothing if not direct in Maxwell street and, though languages there spoken are many, cursing is generally delivered in pure, unvarnished United States—a possible tie that binds, since the most insulting epithets are exchanged in a spirit of brotherhood; just hot air. Though the district is known to Chicagoans as the "Ghetto" market, it is, strictly speaking, no more than is the widely celebrated Loop district—that notices Maxwell street not at all—where any number of great Jewish firms do business; from a human standpoint it is vastly more interesting. Really there is no Ghetto in the city of Chicago, Jews are to be found everywhere; but probably no other five or six blocks in the world can so clearly demonstrate the chameleon-like taking on of national characteristics by the Jews as Maxwell street. Here are to be found Jews from every country of Europe, France possibly excepted, living and trading with other Russians, Poles, Hungarians, Bohemians, Italians and what not, all labeled Jews from their preference for flocking together. Like Giovanni Marcus, many of these people are baptized Christians; like Giovanni, many have a drop of Semitic blood in their veins that tells in their forms and faces. Environment and commingling have much to do with the general racial aspect of the crowds. To a superficial observer all shoppers in the Loop look alike.

Everybody in Maxwell street is a trader; first prices to customers and merchants alike are but points of departure to lower levels—declensions that are thrills. The shopkeepers thrust their wares out on the pavement pretentiously, reserving the rear portions of their stores for dwellings. From these dark and odorous interiors emerge many smeary children and shawled women—many pregnant women—to swell the multitudes. All along the outer edge of the pavement, wedged in as closely as may be, crowd push-carts, and the narrow way between these and the piled up stocks of the shops is jammed with sweating, vociferous humanity. The stocks in trade are as amazingly diversified as are the people; sometimes one small push-art will boldly display a variety of goods to rival a department store.

That, however, is not usual, as the street merchants apparently prefer the handling of one class

of merchandise. Fish, some swimming in tanks, others needing all the lusty endorsement of freshness that they get, are all up and down the market, fish that fondly cling to the nostrils. Here a cart is piled high with scraps of old carpet, which the merchant, watching his chance, spreads out on the asphalt for inspection—as carts and wagons continuously traverse Maxwell street the entente cordiale is constantly being shattered. Here another cart is decorated with pyramids and towers of men's hats—such hats! Here shoes furnished with new soles, more and more men's clothing, nuts, underwear and hosiery, odds of china, strawberries at five cents a box in April, dress-good remnants, sentimentally soft tomatoes, women's print wrappers, negroid bananas, brass candle-sticks and candles, greenish-cheeked, malarial lemons; live poultry, hitting the pace with fish for popularity and smell, mortified oranges, lace curtains—and horseradish, ground while you wait.

Joe is by no means the only vendor of horse-radish in the market, for, like every other trader there, he has his competitors. But then he has been long a fixture of the market, and he has a certain run of trade; then, too, that "Stop-Look-Listen" cry, picked up somewhere, counts. Little his customers know of horseradish deftly tossed up with whipped cream into a delicate relish; the root boiled with beef is more to their unsophisticated taste—and it isn't half bad. As for Joe, he grinds the raw stuff, dirt and all, with tears in his eyes.

And the price of each portion is so pitiful! No wonder he weeps. How in the world has the old chap been able to grind a living out of horse-radish? In what rat-hole of the quarter does he sleep? What keeps him going, and what has he to look forward to but a potter's field finish? What gives him the power to continue handing out his ground roots with a smile behind tears bred of the grinding? His proud brother merchants of the Loop might well take a lesson in endurance of Giovanni Marcus. But what should they know of Horseradish Joe? What prospect exists of his ever claiming one second of attention from the humming, majestic Loop?

Stop!

A police officer of the dandy Loop squad advances with upraised arm; all traffic east and west of State street comes to a restless standstill. The same incident is repeated at every intersections of travel throughout the Loop.

Look!

A body of men with mute wind instruments marching to the sound of muffled drums; an open landau carrying two richly silken, crepe-swathed, furled flags of size, the one of Italy, its companion the Stars and Stripes. More carriages follow, some fifteen in number, from whose windows swarthy, dark-eyed men look out. Some of the men are smoking. Then comes another landau containing flowers distorted into set pieces and so disposed that a surmounting white dove catches the eye—a hearse—two carriages with fast-drawn shades—some twenty or more men, marching. The procession moves slowly, none crossing the solemn advance. It is the noon hour when the Loop teems with hurrying humanity. Here and there one bares his head.

Listen!

"What's the jam!" asks an impatient automobilist of the officer.

"You won't be held up long," is the answer.

"But what is it?"

"A dead guinea getting planted by his society."

"Let me push through, can't you? I'm in a hurry."

"So's the dago. Wait!"

The dull, rhythmic beat of the drums ceases; the musicians bring the brasses to their lips.

"Why, it's Chopin!" exclaims a gay young woman shopper. Chopin it is; the poignant sweetness of the melody fills her eyes with tears.

The great Loop district has paused for a moment in recognition of Giovanni Marcus of Maxwell street.

Horseradish Joe has passed.

## SPICE

In desperation he tried to join his local defense corps, but they wouldn't have him there, because, they said, he completely spoiled the look of their parade. And when Jones expostulated and urged that the question of appearance was a matter of individual taste, and that for his part he would be ashamed to be found dead wearing a face like that of the commander of X Company, they fell upon him with eager hands and drill toughened feet and threw him out yet once again. Then, having done his best, Jones went back to his business. A few days ago a friend met him, to whom he related the foregoing experiences. "But I've found a way to help," he concluded, "and it's a help which they can't refuse, however over-aged, undersized, weak-eyed, and false-toothed I may be." "Taking a course of elementary surgery at one of the hospitals?" he was asked. "No." "Making recruiting speeches?" "No." "Putting in overtime and Sundays at the arsenal?" "No." "What then?" "Something I've never done before," said Jones, a little shamefacedly. "—I—I'm returning my income tax form to the assessors with the correct amount of my income filled in." —San Francisco Argonaut.

Angrily the policeman on traffic duty stopped the little motorcar which had tried to sneak past. "Didn't you see me holding out my hand?" he demanded sternly of the driver.

"I—er—I must confess I did," replied the motorist meekly.

"Then why didn't you stop?" said the gentleman in blue coldly.

"Well, I lost my head," said the motorist sadly. "I had just spent half an hour in getting this little brute of a thing to start, and it seems a pity to stop her so soon!"—Philadelphia Public Ledger.

Dr. C. L. Rion, the well-known dentist, has a beautiful home, surrounded by several acres of land, at Lake Forest park. And out in that section there are tramps a-plenty, for they follow the line of the railroad along the lake.

One Saturday afternoon Dr. Rion was sitting on his front "gallery," admiring the beauties of lake and mountain when he was approached by an unmistakable hobo.

"Say, Mister, can you give a fellow some work so that he can eat?"

The doctor gazed at the tramp a moment, and then his eye lighted on a shovel which was sticking in a near-by flower bed.

"Can you do anything with a shovel?" he asked.

The hobo's face looked blank for a moment, and then gradually a look of intelligence spread over it.

"I could fry a piece of ham on it," he replied. —Seattle Argus.

He—I love you.

She—But I haven't a cent in the world.

He—Excuse me, you didn't allow me to finish. I love you not—

She—So! I only wanted to try you. I have a fortune of \$50,000.

He—Yes, but you interrupted me again. I love you not for your money's sake.

She—Well, I'm so glad, for that was only a joke about the \$50,000.—Boston Transcript.

The Italian press wonder why we don't go to war with Germany. Why doesn't Italy?—Columbia State.