

A PUMPKIN EPISODE

By M. QUAD

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If at any time during the year 1903 you had arrived in the village of Grafton in a certain middle-state you would have found a careful, peaceful place. No one rushed about. No one talked politics. No one argued over Jonah and the whale. There were no quarrels among men or dogs. If you had asked Deacon Somers what thrilling event had happened in Grafton in the last twenty years he would have taken five minutes to reflect and then slowly answered:

"Well, I can't think of nawthin' 'cept the Baptist church being struck by lightning!"

In that same year a man traveled over a good part of Indiana and Illinois buying pumpkin seeds of farmers. He offered 15 cents a pound for all they would send him in the fall to a certain address in Chicago, and if a farmer wanted some money in advance to protect himself he got it.

It was the same man that had bought the seeds several hundred miles away that appeared in Grafton early in January of the next year. He had come to herald the fact that a great medical discovery had been made by accident, as most great things are. It was that the seeds of a certain pumpkin grown nowhere else except along the Lybian desert were a sure cure for indigestion, liver troubles, kidney ailments, nervousness and a dozen other things. They would positively prevent consumption and cancer and all sorts of fevers.

Mr. White had a few of the seeds with him. They were chocolate colored instead of the yellow-white. They could be had only in Chicago, and no order exceeding a peck would be filled. Just hold a seed in the mouth for five minutes and then chew it down. Grafton woke up. Bell country woke up. Other counties woke up. A full page ad in the local papers woke the editors up. Talk about boom, and a raise of 20 per cent in real estate. Why, here was a gold mine, and every body owning an acre of ground was going to become a millionaire inside of two years.

Did the confiding public send away to Chicago for the Lybian seeds? You bet they did. They got 'em by the hundred, the pint, the quart and the peck. Some men made the trip there and back that they might plead in person for a larger quantity than the circular allotted. The letters going west averaged thirty per day for months.

The editors said that Mr. White was an honest man and the crying need of the country was more like him.

Mr. White himself didn't say much. He was too busy signing contracts to do much gabbling. What he did say, and with much feeling, was that he hoped the people would not forget him after he had departed.

They haven't yet and probably never will. The village of Grafton had four pretty fair doctors. At the beginning of things they called Mr. White a liar, a faker and a fraud. His reply was that when Harvey discovered the circulation of the blood men wanted to mob him for a charlatan. The doctors denied the curative properties of his Lybian pumpkin seeds. He replied that for years and years the medical fraternity had fought shy of quinine.

No, they didn't get anything on Mr. White to scare him out of town between two days. He was right on the job all the time, and the doctors suffered in prestige instead of gaining. It was probably one of the four that wrote a letter to Washington that brought an inspector to Grafton to see if the postal laws were being broken. He came and saw and went away. He said that somebody had to get the money of the Uncle Rubes of the country and he could see no difference between Mr. White and the brokers of Wall street.

As spring approached and the snow began to go and the people to get ready for pumpkin seed planting there came to Grafton one day a professor from the State Agricultural college. He had heard of the seeds and wanted to see them. They were shown him, and he promptly identified them as the seeds of American pumpkins.

"But they are not a yellow-white," was protested.

"That's because they have all been dyed."

"But these surely came from a desert."

"How do you make that out?"

"They feel sandy."

"Couldn't sand be sifted over them?"

"Sir," said Mr. White to the professor in a quiet even voice, "are you prepared to substantiate your allegations in a court of law?"

"Yes, I say they are American pumpkin seeds."

Action of a Comedian.
In "The Autobiography of Mrs. Judith" the author, a famous French actress, tells the story of Bouffe, the comedian, who, it appears, was fond of displaying his versatility in the street. On one occasion he said, "You just wait a minute, Judith, and I'll make you laugh."

He went to the edge of the pavement, and, with head bent back, hunched up shoulders, puffed features, head shaking pitifully and tottering gait, he had suddenly become an old man. A transformation, he tapped on the pavement with his stick, tottered to the edge of the road, made a few trembling steps to cross it and then, seeing a carriage coming, started back and feebly endeavored to step up on the curbstone again.

Finally when a little work girl compassionately helped him, remarking, "Poor old fellow, your dancing days are a long way off," Bouffe of a sudden turned head over heels, after which he pirouetted several times, made the girl a low bow and left her simply petrified with astonishment.

Sabbath Morn in Glasgow.
It was Sunday morning, and the conductor as his bus rattled along was perhaps not so wide awake as usual. At all events he didn't observe the small boy who dashed out of an empty piling, "Hi, there; stop!" and it was only when the stout old gent next the door had prodded him in the leg that the official became aware of the pursuing figure. "Stop the bus for the boy, conductor," observed the prodder. The conductor looked disparagingly at the chasing boy, but, seeing that he was holding up a penny, decided he must be a passenger and stopped the bus. "Now, then, shaver, hop on," he said when the boy panted up. "Who are you callin' shaver?" inquired the youth scornfully. "An' what d'yer mean by runnin' away from yer customers? 'Er; mother wants two'apences for this penny. She's goin' to church."—Glasgow News.

Pollitness Paid.
A striking example of the value of politeness is told by a woman who was asked to support herself and her child and who had never had any business training. Her husband had had an income of several thousand dollars a year, but it had all been spent on good living. After his death the wife applied for employment to a firm with which she had had an account.

"What can you do?" she was asked. Partly in jest she replied she could write a polite note. To her surprise she was taken at her word, for the firm was badly in need of such a person. She was told that it was difficult to find some one who could answer complaints in such a way that the friendship of the customer was retained. For several years she supported herself and her child by writing polite notes.—Detroit Free Press.

Smoking in Winter.
A physician writing to the Family Doctor (London) says that smoking has a worse effect on most people in winter than in summer, and he advises all smokers who find their health and mental faculties impaired in winter for no apparent reason to accept tobacco as the explanation and to cut down their smoking during the colder months. Tobacco, he says, is a powerful drug and cannot be consumed in large quantities without producing a certain effect on the heart. It must be remembered that during the winter the heart has a great deal more work to do than in summer, for the cold causes the blood vessels to become small and pinched. It is thus less able to bear the extra strain put upon it by smoking.

The Kickoff.
With bated breath the mother rushed across the football field to the emergency hospital. "What tidings," she faltered, "of my son?" They looked upon her with compassion. "Well, you see," explained the captain of the team, "he lost his head when we tried the flying wedge."

Shrieking wildly, she sank to the door.
"They told me it was only a broken arm."—London Saturday Journal.

Unfortunate.
"They say that Mrs. Waddington's little boy is ambidextrous," said Mrs. Oldcastle.

"Land akes," exclaimed Mrs. Gottalotte. "Is that so? Ain't it too bad? They expected he was goin' to be all right after they got his tonsils cut out."—Chicago Record-Herald.

No Answer.
Tommy—Pop, a man's wife is his better half, isn't she?
Tommy's Pop—So we are told, my son.

"Then if a man marries twice there isn't anything left of him, is there?"—London Telegraph.

Pertinent Question.
An English juror once asked the judge after the verdict was returned whether the fact that he differed from his eleven brethren justified their knocking him down with a chair.

Natural Result.
Muggins—Whatever became of that friend of yours who used to have money to burn? Buzzkins—He's sitting the ashes.—Pittsburgh Record.

Easily Pleased.
Gabe—What is an optimist? Steve—An optimist is a cross-eyed man who is contented that he isn't looking straight.—Chicago Record.

An Insufferable Nuisance

By MARTHA B. PARKER

David Mathews, a very young and fashionable bachelor, who drove in his auto all by himself, was turning a corner at the rate of twenty miles an hour when he spied another machine, driven by a young lady, coming to ward him. He slowed down at once and swung far around to his right. The young lady lost her head and swung to her left. There was a crash, and the girl lay in the middle of the street motionless.

David, who was uninjured, gave a leap and, landing beside her, picked her up. She opened her eyes and looked at him in a dazed fashion, as if wondering how she happened to be lying in the street in the arms of a handsome young man. Then the propriety of the situation came over her, and, disengaging herself, she stood on her feet and looked about her. The first object that attracted her attention was a heap of rubbish, which she recognized as the wreck of her auto. The fact that she had narrowly escaped death was of no importance whatever beside the fact that a brand new, spick and span machine, with all modern improvements, including an electric starter, had been smashed to minute fragments.

"Well, I declare!" she exclaimed. "The gentleman who had caused all this trouble was nutely thanking God that the automobile had been smashed instead of the girl."

"Are you sure you're not hurt?" he asked.

"Oh, my goodness gracious! was the irreverent reply. "It can never be put together again in the world."

"All the information relative to how far she had been injured, she gave it by falling in his arms in a faint. He carried her to his auto and placed her on the back seat.

"Confound a woman!" he exclaimed. "You never can tell what she's going to do!"

He was fanning the unconscious girl with his hat, wondering what to do next when she revived again and, seeing a crowd gathering and gaping at her, she made a dive for the door of the auto.

"What in thunder are you going to do?" cried Mathews.

"I want to go home."

"Stay where you are till I find out if my machine will go, and if it will I'll take you home."

All this happened within a few minutes. The machinery of Mr. Mathews' auto was still running (but not clutched like a five story floor mill. Jumping into the front seat, he put on the clutch and the car moved forward leaving the gaping crowd behind. Then the girl forgot the latter and remembered her car!

"My auto, my poor auto! I've got going to leave it there in the street."

"Confound your auto," muttered David between his teeth. But instead of saying it to the girl he turned in his seat and said solemnly:

"Now, stop this confounded nonsense and tell me whether to take you to a doctor's or home."

"You better think!"

She showed signs of another collapse and Mathews was beside himself to know what to do. Looking up and down the street, his eye caught a doctor's sign, and, pulling up beside the curb, he jumped out, opened the car door and leaned forward to take the girl in his arms with a view to carrying her into the house. But she suddenly revived.

"What are you stopping here for?" she asked impatiently.

"For a doctor."

"I don't want a doctor. I won't have a doctor. Take me home!"

Mathews slammed the door and resumed his seat. "Will you kindly tell me where you live?" he asked.

"What's going to become of my new auto?"

"It's going to a junk shop."

"Oh, dear!" she moaned. "Papa gave it to me only yesterday."

"For heaven's sake do tell me where you live. Of course I'll replace your auto and give enough to get rid of it."

He paused to avoid being rude.

The Fly Book

The smaller manuscript in the Bodleian library—where it has lain for more than two and a half centuries—measured three-quarters of an inch in length and three-quarters of an inch in breadth. It is bound in black leather with silver corners and it is attached to a chain and kept in a red leather box. The pages are covered with very minute shorthand. An enthusiastic stenographic expert, according to Notes and Queries, has identified it as a sermon transcribed by a famous seventeenth century preacher of the art, Jeremiah Rich, who boasted that he could write so small that his pen could scarcely be seen to move.

These feats were more common in those days than in our own. It appears that the same person presented Charles II. with another specimen of his skill—a copy of the same sermon, written on the paper bound in crimson "with silver clasps and corners," the book and its cover being "less than the nail of his little finger." The location of this curiosity is unknown.—London Globe.

Rats to Four.
Some of the West African rats are monstrous. The largest variety of rat—the giant rat—attains alarming proportions. These giant rats would give the most enormous cat bad dreams, and it is rough time on her were to encounter one of them on her navigating expeditions.

A. J. Klein, taxidermist, Nairobi, who is collecting local specimens for an American museum, has some half a dozen examples. The rat varies from two feet to over thirty-two inches in length. The body, which is half its total length, is the color of an ordinary mouse, but is as large as that of a cat.

The tail is sometimes an inch and half and more in circumference at the base and varies in length from six inches to a foot long. These rats frequent the bush and are to be found in fair numbers in Nairobi, Kenya and other localities.—Pottersfield Budget.

Records That Endure.
A banaglow builder in California has upon a new idea when in 1881 he painted a little book to mark impressions of his little hands in the wet cement of the wall before the door was stamped and lines which are still perfectly clear and which will always remain as dainty souvenirs of the boy's play days.

"It is just such touches of sentiment as this," says the Strand Magazine, "that produce the difference between a house and a home."

True, very true, but nevertheless it seems to us that such outside decorations are concrete work is superfluous, for never did we visit a dwelling where children had been reared without finding many sweet mementoes of them on the white enamel paint in the form of enduring finger prints, which neither soap nor sand nor time can ever erase.—Boston Globe.

A Lesson in Color Effects.
John Dwyaman, the celebrated contemporary English artist, was considerably famous as a portrait painter. His method of drawing on very thin paper is black chalk with stamped shadows, brightening the drawing with stains of color, mostly applied on the back of an old, worn, water-stained drawing, was developed quite by accident. Soon after his return from his sea he happened to leave one of his black and white drawings wrong on a table with his hand and side painting materials. One of his children got hold of a paint brush and daubed color over the paper back of where the face was drawn. Dwyaman, finding his drawing spoiled, started to throw it away, but was arrested by the effect of the color showing through the thin paper and afterward adopted this treatment.—New York Times.

A Trick With Numbers.
Choose any four consecutive numbers, such as 50, 51, 52 and 53. Multiply them together, and the product may be you so long. Somehow that day comes divided by 24. This will be found to hold true for any four consecutive numbers we may choose unless one of that a life of hoarding makes it a life the numbers is 24 or a multiple of 24, which is 48, 72, 96, etc. In the same way any five consecutive numbers multiplied together may be divided by 120 unless one of the numbers is 120 or a multiple of 120.—Exchange.

Good Reason.
"By Jove, Dobbers!" said Chumpelph. "You don't mean to tell me that a nice girl like that, the only daughter of a charming widow worth \$7,000,000, doesn't interest you?"

"Not in the least," said Dobbers. "I'm interesting myself in her mother."

Harper's.
Traveler—Will there be time to get a drink, quard?
Quard—Yes, sir, plenty of time, sir. Traveler—What guarantee have I that the train won't go without me?
Quard (generally)—Well, I'll go on an' have one with you.—Sydney Bulletin.

White and Black Lies.
"What's the difference between white lies and black lies?"
"White lies," answered the home grown philosopher, "are the kind we tell. Black lies are the kind we hear."—Chicago News.

Indeed He Has.
"It is rude for a man to fall asleep while his wife is talking."
"But, good heavens, a man has to sleep some time!"—Birmingham Age-Herald.

The most violent storm the sea ever knew.
It is over.—Boston.

An Easter Morning

By DOROTHY CLARRING

It was Easter Sunday morning, and a train stopped at a little station. A single passenger alighted. The train went on and the man stood looking down upon a broad valley dotted with farms. The sun shined forth a genial warmth, the air was clear and chirping birds were singing along among the trees at which the birds were strutting, the scene appeared bursting their hearts.

Twenty-five years have passed since the man thus a boy of fifteen, had looked upon that valley, in which he had been born and up to that time had lived. During those five and a half decades it had not remained the same. There was a house which had gone up since his departure, but he could not more than half a dozen of them. Down there to the left was his father's farm, the same as he had left it, except that it had lost its poplar and sycamore appearance. The apple trees in the orchard had grown, and under their leafy boughs had been planted wheat which he had seen to be planted by his father. The well, the poultry house, the woodhouse, were there, but they looked dingy.

The man seemed to hesitate at leaving the station. As a boy he had been grasping and had quarreled with his father because that father would not give him what money he wanted to get money of his own. From that day to this he had ignored his parents but he had not all the money he required and much more. From that time he had as far as possible from his heart he had left no affectionate and pleasant memory to make them a visit and the passion of money getting had put him in its clutches, and he always deferred his visit to a more convenient season.

Just at this time a companion of his father had been a doctor upon whom he had not experienced before. He had visited the city of Boston, and had seen the great middle life and looked down into the valley of old age. They he remembered his home, and it came dear to him. He had accumulated so much money that he didn't know what to do with it. A stamp came to him at remembering how he had treated his parents and his neglect of them since.

At last he descended from the station platform and took a winding path through the trees that came with him had brought children had been reared without finding many sweet mementoes of them on the white enamel paint in the form of enduring finger prints, which neither soap nor sand nor time can ever erase.—Boston Globe.

Have you come back—no may? I fall the old man.
"I've chosen this Easter Sunday father, to come back to ask your forgiveness for leaving and neglecting them together, and the product may be you so long. Somehow that day comes divided by 24. This will be found to hold true for any four consecutive numbers we may choose unless one of that a life of hoarding makes it a life the numbers is 24 or a multiple of 24, which is 48, 72, 96, etc. In the same way any five consecutive numbers multiplied together may be divided by 120 unless one of the numbers is 120 or a multiple of 120.—Exchange.

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The most violent storm the sea ever knew.
It is over.—Boston.

Family Dog.
A certain family dog, whose name was not mentioned, was very fond of his master. One day he was playing with the children in the street when he was suddenly bitten on the neck by a dog belonging to a neighbor. He was taken to a veterinary hospital, and his owners were very anxious that he should recover. His condition improved, and he was able to go home after a few days. His owners were very pleased that he had recovered, and they were very kind to him. He was very fond of his master, and he was very kind to his children. He was very fond of his master, and he was very kind to his children.

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