

The Grand Promoter

A Stranger Plays Him a Low Down Trick
By M. QUAD
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There was some one outside of Major Crofoot's office-door.
"A knock, knock, knock."
"Come right in!"
"I'm looking for the Major Crofoot that has all sorts of good things to invest in," said the caller.
"Then you have come to the right place. Have a chair."
"Thanks. Now, then, I don't wish to take up your valuable time. Have you got anything good on hand? I want something perfectly safe that will return 9 or 10 per cent on the money."
"My dear sir, I have got half a dozen of the best things going. When you speak of 9 or 10 per cent dividends it makes me smile. I don't deal in such small fish. Anything I take hold of must pay 30 per cent or I drop it."
"Good Lord!" ejaculated the caller as he sat up.
"Thirty per cent at least, sir. What would you say to stocks paying dollar for dollar?"
"But I'm willing to take 40 per cent," replied the man. "Gee whiz, but what man can ask for more than that?"
"Very fair, very fair," loftily replied the major, "but nothing to brag of. Being you have come direct to the office I want to pick out something extra. Let me see. The Universal Glass Eye company paid 60 per cent dividends two years ago, but last year dropped down to 30. It will be still less than that this year on account of hard times. Lots of one-eyed people stick a patch over the eye and let it go at that. If you'd come in a month ago I could have let you in on the ground floor of the Magic Hat and Mouse Destroyer. The stock went like wildfire, and the last was sold at \$200. We figure it will pay 400 per cent dividends for the next twenty years."
"And I can't get in. Thunder, but why didn't I know about it? But you must have something for me," insisted the caller in anxious tones.
"Let me see. Let me see. How about the one-eyed man? Just as you knocked I was making up the incorporation papers for my last and best scheme. It's one that'll lay over all others. I was saving it to begin the year on."
"Good, good! What is it?" By George, old fellow, if you put me on to something good you shall lose by it."
"You know what delicacies turtle soup and turtle steak are considered?"
"I do."
"And you know the high price frogs legs bring?"
"Yes."
"Well, that's the basis of the Great Western company, just organized. We are going to rent nine square miles of Lake St. Clair flats and raise our frogs and turtles and can them on the spot. They will be canned in champagne, and the labels on the cans will be handsome enough to frame and hang in any one's parlor. Three turtle steaks and two dozen frogs' legs every can. Killing and canning take place every day. We shall control the market of the world."
"What dividends do you figure on?"
"Well, last night I was figuring on a straight 100 per cent, but this morning I thought I ought to make a little allowance. Many turtles die of home sickness, you know, and a certain per cent of the frogs are bound to jump the wire fences and get away. To be very safe and conservative I have put the dividends at 95 per cent. I think that is a rather neat figure, don't you?"
"Great! Great Scott, I've been lending money at 6 per cent!"
"How—how much were you thinking of investing?" asked the major in a voice that trembled in spite of himself.
"Twenty thousand dollars perhaps."
"And you—will you pay something down to secure the stock?"
"A hundred dollars. Here's a check. I'll endorse over to you, and I'll come in tomorrow and pay the balance and get the stock. By George, but I'm in luck! Just think of getting hold of something paying 95 per cent dividends! Why, my wife will think me crazy when I tell her about this. You won't let Morgan buy the whole thing up and freeze me out, will you?"
"No, you shall have the stock."
"And I'll remember you. I'll buy you a pearl pin out of the first dividend. If you want, when you get started, I'll show you how to catch frogs for canning. There's a peculiar way of getting hold of them by one hand leg. Ninety-five per cent! I can't help but dwell on it!"
"Yes, it's a good thing," replied the major as he shoved the folded check into his vest pocket in a careless way.
"You will be in tomorrow?"
"Sure, Mike! It was a Frenchman I'd kiss you for—luck—but as I'm not we'll shake hands and I'll say ta, ta, tomorrow! Ninety-five per cent! Whoop!"
When he had gone the major walked up and down to calm his raging heart. It didn't seem possible. He couldn't credit his good luck. Then at last he took the check from his pocket and looked at it to see what bank it was drawn on. His eyes opened wide, and he uttered a moan and staggered to a seat.
It was drawn in favor of "A. Sucker," endorsed by "Another Sucker" and signed by "Uncle Rube."
Then the light went out, and the grand promoter bowed his head and knew the bitterness of the green parchment.

Muscle Born of Sorrow.

There is no nation naturally musical, according to Henri Bidou, critic and historian. If a nation is musical, he says, it is because it has passed through such tribulation that it has been driven to express its sorrow and anxiety in its airs and compositions. Bach, he declares, is the culminating expression of sufferings induced in Germany by the Thirty Years' war, fifty years before Bach's time.
"People sing 'like cowards,'" he continues, "to keep up their spirits in bad moments, and he finds that the real countries of music are nearly all frontier provinces exposed to external vicissitudes."
England he finds exempt to a large extent from the occasions in which poets "learn in suffering what they teach in song" because it is protected from invasion by the girdle of the seas. Music, then, he argues, is not an art of peace, it originates in strife and anxiety, not in tranquillity and concord. The overprosperous countries, he discovers, "not only have no history; they have no music!"—Chicago Inter Ocean.

By the Author.

Rubindrath Tagore, the Indian poet, who gained the \$40,000 Nobel prize for literature, is a well-known figure in London society, and to a London correspondent he said recently:
"In India the little children huddle worse at the age of five or six. We are not like you. With you, if a full grown man or woman suddenly manages to write a few lines the thing is deemed almost a miracle."
"I sat in a magazine office the other morning while the editor opened his mail. He tossed a letter to me."
"That's the sort of thing I'm continually receiving," he said.
"The letter ran:
"Dear Editor—The poem enclosed is original in me, and I had no help in thinking out some of the words. I wrote it myself, and there is more where it came from if I had any inducement to think same out. You may say 'Original' at the top of same, for every word is by me."
"THE AUTHOR"

When Soldiers Were Flogged.

It would have needed a very alluring form of advertisement indeed to attract men to the English army a hundred years ago. Writing of that period a writer says: "Flogging was almost universal. The maximum number of lashes were gradually reduced from 1,500 to 300, but the notion that discipline could not be maintained without summary punishment continued to be believed, and Wellington himself dealt with flagrant cases by lashing the culprits upon trees in the public roads. One result was that only men belonging to the lowest classes would join the army." In 1771 a sentinel in the guards was flogged in St. James' park so severely that he subsequently died raving mad. His offense consisted of saying that "there was no more encouragement for a good soldier than for a bad one."

Too Much Cavity.

One afternoon an esteemed citizen went into a barber shop to have his hair shaved, but no sooner had he taken a seat in one of the chairs than he dropped off into heavy slumber. Apparently the shave artist was having his own troubles in manipulating the customer, and after making several attempts he thoughtfully paused.
"Excuse me, sir," said he, gently shaking the man in the chair, "but would you mind waking up? I can't shave you while you are asleep."
"Can't shave me while I'm asleep," exclaimed the victim, with a wondering expression. "Why not?"
"Because," explained the barber as softly as possible, "when you fall into slumber your mouth opens so wide that I can't find your face."—Philadelphia Telegraph.

Easy Time.

The man who learns many languages does not always enlarge his mind. A porter in a Swiss hotel who spoke many languages with equal facility and inaccuracy was once asked what was his native tongue. He replied that he did not know, but that he spoke all languages.

Lacked Tact.

"A fellow told me today," confided Mr. Diddle, "that I didn't know enough to pound sand. He said that I was the blindest idiot he ever saw. Now, what do you think of that?"
"I think it was dreadfully tactless of him," exclaimed Miss Keene indignantly. —Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Considerate.

"And would you marry me if I were a poor girl, working for a living?" asked the betrothed.
"Darling," responded the accepted suitor, "it wouldn't be fair. You'd be doing enough in supporting yourself."—Philadelphia Ledger.

The Forbearing Waiter.

"That waiter didn't thank you when you gave him a quarter?"
"I didn't want him to. I was grateful to him for holding the coin up so that every one in the room could see it was only a quarter."—Washington Star.

Sure Protection.

Customer (trying on dress suit, jokingly)—I hope I'll never be mistaken for a waiter. Tailor—When in doubt, keep your hands in your pockets!—Judge.

It is well to learn to work intensely.

Charles W. Elliot.

The Last Shot In a Feud

By F. A. MITCHEL

A girl about seventeen years old, in calico dress, sunbonnet and cowhide boots, was walking through a wood in Kentucky on her way to a spring for water when, making a short cut in a bend in the path, she came upon a man asleep. He was young, but there was a hunted look on his face that made him look older.

There was a feud of long standing between the Griggses and the Backuses, and a few days before Abel Griggs had been shot and killed by Josh Backus. Since the killing all the Griggses had been looking for Josh in order to cut another notch on their rifles to make up for the latest Backus notch, said notches denoting the number killed.

The girl was Mahulda Griggs, and she looked down on Josh Backus. He had been driven by a cordon of Griggs men, who were closing in on him, to the wood near Mahulda's home. He knew there was no escape for him and had thrown himself on the grass in despair. Having been long without food or sleep he had fallen into a slumber.

He awoke with a start and saw Mahulda looking down on him. Each knew who the other was, though they had never met before. Josh sat up and, handling his gun stock foremost to Mahulda, said huskily:

"You're a Griggs, I reckon, and I might as well own up that I'm Josh Backus as killed Abel Griggs. I'm sure to be taken and shot. I'd rather be killed by you than any of the Griggs men, and I'll be obliged to you if you'll put a bullet into me where it will kill me quickest."
The girl took the gun.
"Reckon I ort to kill you," she said. "Seein' you killed one of the best of us Griggs people."
"Put the ball thar," said the other, rising to his feet and tapping his heart with his finger.
"What did you kill Abel for?"
"To match the killin' of Jim Backus."
"Reckon you'll be killed to match the killin' of Abel, and then another Griggs'll be killed to match the killin' of you."
"That's the way of it. Come, do the shootin' like enough, some one'll come along."
"I don't want to kill you," said the girl, bringing the gun to her shoulder.
"It's the best thing you kin do for me."
She aimed at him, then lowered the gun.
"I might hide you."
"Hide me! You, a Griggs, hide a Backus?"
"Reckon."
"Ef your people would find it out they'd kill you for doin' it."
"Sartin."
"Well, what you goin' to do?"
"Hide you, I reckon."
He stepped up to her, took her hand in his and looked intently into her eyes, where she saw a struggle between pity and self sacrifice on the one hand and revenge and possible death for herself on the other. And he saw, too, the moment when the decision came.
She took off her sunbonnet and handed it to him, then divested herself of her dress, which she also gave to him. He understood and put them on. When he was in her outer garments she put on his woolen shirt, trousers and hat.
"You go down the path to the spring," she said. "It's on the edge of the clearing what you kin see across. Ef you don't see nary one go over, Ef you're in danger I'll show myself till you git clear of 'em."
"But they'll shoot you for me."
"Reckon not. Ef they do they'll have to hit me."
"Mayn't I have a kiss before I go?" he asked with a trembling voice.
"Reckon."
She received the kiss passively; then they parted to go in different directions, the man taking the bucket, the girl the gun. When he reached the spring he filled the bucket, at the same time casting his eye over the clearing. He knew that one of the cordon of Griggses was not far away; but, seeing no one, he started across. He hadn't gone far before he heard a voice:
"Hello thar! Yo' Mahulda! Whar you goin' to?"
He kept on without replying. Presently he heard the same voice say, "Mahulda, ef that's yo', yo' come yere or I'll shoot at yo'!"
Backus kept on without reply. Then suddenly he saw a sun flash on a rifle barrel, and for a moment he hesitated. Then came the rifle's crack, but no bullet came near him. He shuddered, for he believed that Mahulda had shown herself and had received the fire.
Hearing no further sound he ran to the wood beyond the clearing.
The Griggses, who had been supposed to be at Backus and seen him fall, ran up to him. There lay Mahulda, pale and bleeding.
Quite likely the bullet that hit her saved her life. Her own people could not kill her, and the sacrifice she had made filled their hearts with compassion. When she recovered a meeting was called among the Griggses, and Mahulda was sent to the Backuses with a proposition to end the feud. There she met Abel Backus, who had little difficulty in persuading his people to agree to drop the killing.

Some months later a mingling of Griggses and Backuses celebrated the wedding of Josh Backus and Mahulda Griggs.

Dazed the Crank.

David P. Barrows, while acting president of the University of California, one day received a queer visitor. Lean and terribly earnest, the man broke into Barrows' study.

"I am the prophet Micah," he announced, "and I have a need for your service. The world is soon to come to an end. Could you not spread the tidings through the university?"

Dr. Barrows shook his visitor by the hand, collected his thoughts and replied: "I believe that at no time was there such a crying need for prophets. But, unfortunately, prophesying is an art with which I am unfamiliar. I am not even in close sympathy with it, and, as I am unable to comprehend what you have accomplished, I confess inability to participate as a prognosticator."

Whether it was the unexpected reply or the quick fire of so many words that dazed the visitor will never be known. Certain it is the man bucked to the door and uttered the inadequate reply, "Yes," San Francisco Chronicle.

Gentlemen of Leisure.

One of the upper ten thousand, once visiting America, accepted the hospitality of a gentleman in New York. When taking farewell of his host the latter asked him what he thought of the American people.

"Well," answered the nobleman, "I like them immensely, but I miss something."
"What is that?" asked the Yankee.
"I miss the aristocracy," replied the Englishman.

"What are they?" naively asked his host.
"The aristocracy," said the nobleman in a somewhat surprised tone of voice. "Why, they are people who do nothing, you know; whose grandfathers did nothing, you know—in fact, the aristocracy."
"Here he was interrupted by the American, who chimed in with, "Oh, we're plenty of them over here, but we don't call them aristocracy—we call them tramps."—Exchange.

Washington's Only Joke.

The only admirable quality in which Washington was deficient was humor. One of the very few jests he ever made—perhaps the only one has descended to posterity on the authority of his old biographer, Colonel Humphreys.

General Washington rather prided himself on his riding, so the colonel one day when they were out hunting together dared him to follow over one particular hedge. The challenge was accepted, and Humphreys led the way. He took the leap boldly, but to his consternation found that he had mistaken the spot and was sunk up to his horse's girth in a quagmire. The general, who knew the ground better or had suspected something, for, following at an easy pace, he relined up at the hedge and, looking over at his engulfed aid, exclaimed, "No, no, colonel, you are too deep for me!"

Messaged With Nettles.

Nettles are said to be an almost certain proof that man has lived on the spot. One British species, the so-called Roman nettle, is said to be found only where the Romans have been. Coles, the seventeenth century herbalist, explains, "It grows both at the town of Lidde, by Romney, and in the streets of the town of Romney, in Kent, where Julius Caesar landed, with his soldiers, and abode there a certain time, and for the growing of it in that place it is reported that the soldiers brought some of the seed with them and sowed it there for their use to rub and chafe their limbs when through extreme cold they should be stiff and numb, being told before they came from home that the climate of Britain was so extreme cold it was not to be endured without some friction."

Tail of the Iron Duke.

The Duke of Wellington, if he did not confer commissions in the army upon little boys, went one better in the way of promise. It is Grant Duff who tells the tale in his diary. "Dined with the Spencer Walpoles. She told a story of playing as a child in the gardens of Apsley house. The old duke came out, and the children stood in a row while he passed. He stopped and said to one of them: 'You are a very nice little fellow. When you are old enough I will give you a commission in the guards.' 'But I am a girl, Mr. Duke,' said the child."

Not a Magnet.

"Let me sing the old songs in your parlor," begged the girl who thought she was a prima donna.
"Please don't," begged the landlady.
"But your boarders will be carried away by my singing."
"That's just the trouble. The last time you sang they were carried over to the next boarding house."—National Monthly.

Poured.

"I have poured every day this week at some function or other," remarked the vivacious girl.
"Well, well," murmured the old gentleman who overheard her. "Now I know what is meant by the term 'a pouring belle.'"—St. Louis Republic.

Frank About It.

Shoe Store Salesman—What size would you like, madam Miss Jarlin?—I'd like a No. 2, but there's no use talking about that. You may as well show me your No. 5's.—London Telegraph.

No Recall For Him.

Mike—Do you believe in the recall of judges, Pat?—Pat—That I do not. The last time I was up before his honor he said: "I recall that face. Sixty days." I'm agin the recall of judges."—Life.

Kidnaped

By EUNICE BLAKE

There was trouble in Captain Carr's little home on the New Hampshire coast. The captain had received his title from the fact that he owned a sloop in which he fished in winter and took out pleasure parties in summer. She was both a motor and a sail boat and was named the Frederica from his wife.

The occasion of the trouble was that his daughter, Fannie, a comely girl of eighteen, had the night before been kidnaped. She had gone to visit her aunt a mile down the beach. It was early spring and the weather was mild. A half moon gave some light. Just before sunset a steamer about fifty feet from stem to stern dropped anchor in the bay not far from the house where Fannie Carr was visiting, and about 9 o'clock a boat was seen moving from the ship toward the shore. A party landed, went to the house, took the girl to the boat and pulled her to the schooner.

The captain suspected that his daughter had been carried away by one whom he had forbidden her to marry. This man was Jack Austin, a sailor, without means, but with nothing else against him. Carr didn't seem to know whether his daughter wished to marry Austin or not. Sometimes he thought she did and sometimes he thought she didn't.

I got wind of the matter early in the morning, and, seeing Captain Carr going to his boat with a wheelbarrow load of provisions and a carboy of water, I went down to the dock and without asking him where he was going—for I knew that he was bent on bringing back his daughter—I asked him if he didn't wish me to go with him. He said he did, and before we started Ned Beam came down, and the captain took him along too. We knew there were three on the other boat, and since we were three, there was an even match.

The captain had been told that the boat we were after no one had seen her name had turned her nose northward after leaving the bay. So he steered in that direction. Every now and again when we met a boat Carr would describe to those on her the one we were after and ask if they had seen her. Some had seen her and some hadn't, but we got enough information about her to satisfy us that we were on her track. We followed her all day, and when the captain found we couldn't possibly reach her before dark he was discouraged, for he felt sure the fugitives were making for Casco bay, where there are islands enough to conceal a whole fleet.

After passing Portland we got in among these islands and lost all track of what we were following, but after meandering among them for four days we were sailing past Seguin light when the captain spied something near the main island moving westward that answered the description of the craft we wanted. We followed her down past Orr's Island and saw her go through the narrow gut between Orr's and Baileys Islands.

That's the last we saw of her for several days, when one evening, rounding a point of Cliff Island, we saw her anchored in a cove no great distance from us. We made for her, expecting to see some one preparing to receive us, but as we neared her not a human being could we see aboard of her. We anchored near her, and the captain and Ned Beam got into the tender and went aboard her.

After awhile the captain pulled back and said that they had found her deserted. Her name had been painted on the stern, but they could see the white letters underneath—Rowena. She must have been laid up for some time, for her fires were out and the furnace only warm. His idea was that something had gone wrong with them, and they had been obliged to lay up. Probably they had seen us and had left their craft and gone up into the island, though they could have got away from there, since the little steamers were stopping at the dock on the other side a number of times a day.

Captain Carr told me that he had left Beam on the Rowena, and I was to stay on the Frederica while he went up on the island to find out if any one had seen anything of the party we were after. He did so and returned disappointed, for he had found no one who had seen any such party.

Leaving Ned on the Rowena, the captain and I turned in at 9 o'clock and turned out again about 6 o'clock. The captain went on deck and called to Ned, who did not appear. Getting no reply he went aboard the Rowena, to find her not only deserted by her crew, but by Ned as well. The captain was mystified and so was I. Not knowing what to do, we did nothing.

About 10 o'clock we saw several men coming toward us, headed by Fannie Carr herself. She asked her father to come ashore to her and told him that Austin had kidnaped her, but that during the trip she had forgiven him. The boiler of the Rowena having given out they had been obliged to give up their fight. When the captain and Beam had gone aboard of their boat the men of the party, except Jack, had gone ashore, and she and Jack had hidden in the furnace.

After a long powwow, the captain gave in, consented to the match, and we all went back on the Frederica, leaving the Rowena.

Ashes of the Great.

The city republic of Florence gathered her famous dead at Santa Croce, save "the all Etruscan three," Dante, Petrarch and Boccaccio. England has made Westminster abbey the burial place of such men as Chaucer, Spenser, Newton, Darwin and Tennyson, besides a baker's dozen of kings. But in America the ashes of the great are scattered far and wide. Washington rests at Mount Vernon, Va.; Lincoln at Springfield, Ill. The tomb of Paul Jones is an inspiration to students in the naval academy at Annapolis. Poe sleeps at Baltimore; Mark Twain at Elmira, N. Y.; Alexander Hamilton in old Trinity churchyard, surrounded by lowering skyscrapers which embody his philosophy of life and government. Is not America's way the best? England and Florence make things handier for the tourist, but is he the chief person to consider? Since our heroes come from all the land is it not best that their ashes return to the soil from which they spring, till youth in every neighborhood has some reminder of public service and noble work?—Chicago Journal.

The Torment of Cold.

I think heaven that I know what it is to be cold, to be cold from the crown of the head to the sole of the foot, to be cold from the cuticle in to the heart, and from the heart to the soul. I thank heaven for it, because, knowing this, I have a new revelation of the possibility of suffering, and I am able to find a paradise in a common wood fire.

Knowing this, I declare to you there is not a more pathetic sight in the world than a poor man who is thoroughly cold, from week to week. It is the refinement of torture.

It does not gnaw like hunger, which presently becomes a sort of insanity and relieves itself. It is a dead, unrelenting, icy torment. I used to see men in the army whose silent endurance of cold brought more tears to my eyes than all the hunger and all the wounds.—Sidney Lanier.

A Candidate's Revenge.

French electors occasionally have some home truths thrown at them by candidates who fail to secure enough votes. At one general election M. Albert Normand, a chemist and druggist, who was a candidate for deputy from Montague, received only six votes and issued an address thanking "the six electors who showed their confidence in me. They are the only solvent citizens in the constituency, and I beg to assure them of my esteem. As for the others, I hereby give them notice that in future all attempts to obtain credit at my establishment will be relentlessly refused. During the last nine years they have robbed me of about 3,000 francs in bad debts, which I have taken no steps to recover. Yet when an opportunity is afforded of showing their appreciation of my leniency I meet with the basest ingratitude."

Carlyle and London's Noises.

No one has ever inveighed against the noises of London with such picturesque emphasis as Thomas Carlyle. When Augustus Hare met him for the first time at a dinner given by Lady Marlan Alfred most of Carlyle's conversation ran upon the sufferings attached to a London residence. "That which the world torments me in most," he moaned, "is the awful confusion of noise. It is the devil's own infernal din all the blessed day long, confounding God's works and his creatures—a truly awful hell-like combination, and worst of all is a railway whistle, like the screech of 10,000 cats and every cat of them as big as a cathedral." Against this din he may be set the fact that Carlyle spent the last forty-seven years of his life in London without any compulsion to live there.

Helping His Temper.

The sun was blinding, clouds of dust were blowing everywhere, and Jones was most decidedly off his game. It really "put the lid on it" when, just as he was struggling to play his ball out of a quarry, a benevolent old lady passed by with a companion. She halted in evident surprise and pointed with her umbrella at the earnest golfer. "Dear me, my love," she remarked in audible tones, "what a very respectably dressed man that is breaking stones!"—Argonaut.

He Admired Her Judgment.

She—Oh, Fred, dear, you are so noble, so generous, so handsome, so chivalrous, so much the superior of every man I meet, I can't help loving you. Now, what can you see in plain little me to admire? He—Oh, I don't know, dear, but you certainly have very good judgment.—London Tit-Bits.

She Knew.

The teacher had given the class a talk on household pests.
"What, now, is the greatest foe the housewife has?" he asked.
Up went one little hand.
"All right, Mary, what is it?"
"A husband," came the quick reply.—Philadelphia Ledger.

Away From Home.

"He is one of those near vegetarians."
"What is a near vegetarian?"
"He never eats meat except when he is invited out."—Pittsburgh Press.

Force of Habit.

"Why did she want to set her husband's will aside?"
"Merely because it was her husband's and she had got in the habit of setting it aside."—Houston Post.

We must not take the faults of our youth into our old age.

For old age brings with it its own defects.—Goethe.