

Then he looked at the story papers, and after that they read and discussed the British aristocracy ; and Mr. Hobbs smoked his pipe very hard and shook his head a great deal. He shook it most when he pointed out the high stool with the marks on its legs.

"There's his very kicks," he said impressively ; "his very kicks. I sit and look at 'em by the hour. This is a world of ups an' it's a world of downs. Why, he'd set there, an' eat crackers out of a box, an' apples out of a barrel, an' pitch his cores into the street ; an' now he's a lord a-livin' in a castle. Them's a lord's kicks ; they'll be a earl's kicks some day. Sometimes I says to myself, says I, 'Well, I'll be jiggered?'"

He seemed to derive a great deal of comfort from his reflections and Dick's visit. Before Dick went home, they had a supper in a small back room ; they had crackers and cheese and sardines, and other canned things out of the store, and Mr. Hobbs solemnly opened two bottles of ginger ale, and pouring out two glasses, proposed a toast.

"Here's to *him*!" he said, lifting his glass, "and may he teach 'em a lesson—earls an' markises an' dooks an' all!"

After that night, the two saw each other often, and Mr. Hobbs was much more comfortable and less desolate. They read the *Penny Story Gazette*, and many other interesting things, and gained a knowledge of the habits of the nobility and gentry which would have surprised those despised classes if they had realized it. One day Mr. Hobbs made a pilgrimage to a book store down town, for the express purpose of adding to their library. He went to the clerk and leaned over the counter to speak to him.

"I want," he said, "a book about earls."

"What?" exclaimed the clerk.

"A book," repeated the groceryman, "about earls."

"I'm afraid," said the clerk, looking rather queer, "that we haven't what you want."

"Haven't?" said Mr. Hobbs, anxiously. "Well, say markises then—or dooks."

"I know of no such book," answered the clerk.

Mr. Hobbs was much disturbed. He looked down on the floor,—then he looked up.

"None about female earls?" he inquired.

"I'm afraid not," said the clerk with a smile.

"Well," exclaimed Mr. Hobbs, "I'll be jiggered!"

He was just going out of the store, when the clerk called him back and asked him if a story in which the nobility were chief