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From *Our Blade*.

A MOOTED QUESTION.

"HARRAGO."

FRIEND of mine, named Blinkers, called on me the other day, and some of his remarks were so peculiar that I feel justified in presenting them to the readers of *OUR BLADE*.

Blinkers is, I regret to state, somewhat addicted to "the ardent;" and on this particular afternoon he was about half-seas over: sober enough to walk and talk straight; sufficiently inebriated to be eccentric in conversation.

Entering my room he sank into a chair, took admirable aim and squirted a torrent of tobacco juice into one of my boots, and remarked agreeably:—

"I called in to get your opinion concerning the length of the tail of Mary's lamb."

I replied that I knew nothing whatever of the matter beyond what was expressed in the song.

"Well," said Blinkers, "I really believe that unless ere long I ascertain something definite concerning this thing, I shall go crazy. I shall, indeed. Just look at my condition. Here I am, appointed by the government to find out the length of that quadruped's tail; and, as questions of the gravest importance depend upon my ascertaining the fact, I resolve to do it or die."

"First, I go to the Union Geographical Society for particulars, and they fool 'round for two or three days and finally say that the tail was amputated at a very early stage of

the lamb's existence, according to the ancient archives."

"So I get ready to make my report to the government, therein stating that the lamb's tail was undoubtedly short, when I receive a letter from a man by the name of Hunks who lives in Arizona; and Hunks goes on to state that he was acquainted with the Mary who used to own the lamb, and that she said that the lamb's tail was *long*. And Hunks adds that the proprietress of the animal ought to know more about it than all the bald-headed and idiotic geographers in this temperate zone."

"This seems plausible, so I alter my report and decide that the caudal appendage was *long*. At this juncture General Brown meets me, and says that I am mistaken, as the lamb's tail was *short*. I say to Brown, says I, 'How do you know?' Brown says to me says he, 'I saw the lamb, and its tail was *short*.'"

As Brown is a man of veracity this seems to settle the thing, so I revise my report, and am about to hand it in when a one-legged man calls on me and says that his name is Rufus Gumbs. And he goes on to show that the lamb's tail was *long*, and he that says otherwise is, according to Rufus Gumbs, a liar and a knave. 'For,' says Rufus G., 'there was once a fire in the house in which Mary resided, and it so happened that the lamb was locked up in the midst of the conflagration. Its cremation seemed imminent, but in the nick of time a heroic fireman reached his hand in and pulled the little beast out by the tail.'"

"From this incident," went on Rufus