



AMONG THE FOUR HUNDRED.

MR. JONSON (*with exquisite gallantry*)—"Accep' my cha'r, Miss Snowflake."

MISS SNOWFLAKE (*blushing*)—"O, I'm sorry to deprive yo' of yo' seat."

MR. JONSON (*most politely*)—"Not ertall; no depravity whad-evah, I assuah you!"

FUN WITH THE TELEPHONE.

"BACK in ten minutes," eh? That means he won't be in for half an hour yet, I'll bet. Hello! he's eft the office door unlocked. Billiams always was a careless fellow. Guess I'll just sit down and wait for him. Want to see him particularly.

Ah, I see he's got a telephone put in. Guess I'll call up somebody and have a chat just to pass the time away till he comes. Let me see, who'll I ring up? Say No. 265. Haven't the remotest idea who 265 is. No matter, as I've no special business, he or she, as the case may be, will do as well as anybody else. "Hello, Central, hello! put me onto 265, will you?"

"Hello, 265, is that you?"

"Yes."

"Ah, how the devil are you, anyhow? Nice morning, ain't it?"

"Yes. Who are you?"

"It's only me, you know. How's things? Still living on your mother-in-law, I suppose? By the way, I think you really ought to buy a new hat. I heard a man say the other day that this was going to be a hard winter."

"You've made a mistake, I guess. Have you any business with me?"

"Business? Oh, not at all, dear boy. Just rung you up for a quiet chat. By the way, what do you think of the present aspects of the Behring Sea difficulty?"

B-r-r-r-r! Blamed if he hasn't gone off mad. He don't seem to be conversationally inclined. It's really most discourteous to cut the conversation short in this fashion without replying to any of my questions. Never mind. I'll try somebody else. Hello, Central, give me 193."

"Hello, hello! 193, I'm delighted to make your acquaintance. I feel at home already with you. I want to talk to you for a few minutes."

"What name?"

"Name? Oh, never mind the name. 'What's in a name?' says Shakespeare—'the rose by any other name,' etc.—I presume you are familiar with the quotation. I say, old man, how about that mash you made at the matinee last Saturday? Oh, the boys are onto you."

"Sir, it's a lady that's speaking. I don't know what you mean."

"Oh, I beg pardon, miss. 'Twas but a *lapsus linguae*, which, I may explain, is Latin. Do you not think that the tongue of the ancients possesses a forcefulness and significance superior to our own language? Which reminds me I heard a good story the other night about——"

B-r-r-r! She's rung off. Interrupted me right in the middle of a sentence. Now that's what I call downright rude. Wouldn't even hear what I had to say. I must say that social amenities are at a low ebb in this community. However, let's try somebody else. Central, give us 54.

"See here, 54, this is a strange world, isn't it? Funny things always happening."

"Who's speaking, and what do you want?"

"Now, don't get excited and impatient. Who said I wanted anything? Can't you converse calmly like a rational being? I was about to observe that this Stanley exploration business seems to be creating more or less excitement, don't it? When do you think Sir John will bring on the general election?"

"* * * * *"

!! taking up a business man's valuable time with your foolery !!!"

Well, well—he's like all the rest. What right has he to insult me in this fashion merely because we're talking over the telephone instead of face to face? It's positively outrageous. Business man, is he? Ah, that explains it. This eager race for wealth—this sordid and soul-destroying greed for gain is ruining men's higher faculties and shrivelling up the finer feelings which differentiate man from the beast which perisheth. These money-grubbers take no pleasure in the intellectual delights of quiet social converse. I'll just try one more—there's luck in odd numbers, so I'll ring up 333.

"Hello! Central, 333, if you please."

Ah! no answer. "Hello! hello, Central! Give me 333!"

Can't get anything from them. Guess they must have cut off the wire. Perhaps some of those fellows have been mean enough to complain. Well, it don't matter to me. Guess I'll hardly wait for Billiams—he may be quite a while yet. So I'll just write "Liar" on his fraudulent "Back in ten minutes" card and quietly make my sneak.

SENT US FOR REVIEW.

"THE Rich Man's Fool," by Robert C. Givins, published by Laird & Lee, Chicago, is a decidedly sensational novel, though it can hardly be said to be a powerful one. The story turns upon the impossible incident of a surgical operation, whereby the brain of a sane man is transferred to the skull of a lunatic, and the complications which result owing to the change of character effected. Mere impossibility is no bar nowadays to the success of a novel, provided it be clever, but this book is not clever. The style is faulty and slipshod, and the characters badly drawn. It is just such a book as any fair-to-middling newspaper writer could turn out.