



TRIBULATION.

QUIGLEY—"Money's gittin' so skurce, n' they'sa-puttin' so much water in the whiskey these days that a man can't git drunk, try as he will. It's awful."

MIGLEY—"Thet's so. It's almost ernuf to drive a feller to temperance."

SAMJONES' BAD BREAK.

"I HAVE often wondered, Samjones," said Borax, "that you do not turn your undoubted literary talent to practical account."

"That's just what I should like to do, Borax, but somehow I could never manage it. Did I never tell you of the bad break I made last time I tried it?"

"Not as I remember."

"Well, it was as thus. A few months ago I conceived the idea that there must be a good many persons in the world who would be willing to pay a moderate sum for the privilege of enjoying my jokes at first hand—wealthy invalids and such, whose time hangs heavy on their hands—to whom the receipt of a periodical letter embellished with original humor would be a pleasing break in the monotony of the sick room."

"Good idea, Samjones."

"I thought so myself. I brooded over it in the still watches of the night—still watching, as it were, for a chance to make a little money. I perfected my scheme, and finally inserted an ad. in a New York paper to the effect that a humorist of continental reputation, having a large assortment of well-selected jokes on hand, was prepared to undertake correspondence with invalids or others suffering from *ennui*, in the hope that he might divert their minds from their immediate surroundings

and impart a new interest in life. Well, I got one answer in a short time. It was from the private secretary of J. Bixley Pemberton, a millionaire living near New York, who stated that his employer, having retired from active life, had become listless and hypochondriac, and fancied that he was going to die. "He wants something to rouse him up," said the letter, "and to drive away these morbid fancies and induce more cheerful views of life." I took the contract. I was to send him a weekly letter containing at least a dozen jokes at \$5 per letter. That wasn't so bad, you know."

"Well, how did it work?"

"Um—my style didn't seem to please him. And yet I did my best. But some people are so unreasonable. Here is a copy of the first and only letter I sent him:—

"TORONTO, CANADA, Feb. 2th.
(Biting cold weather.)"

"J. Bixley Pemberton, Esq., Bankersville, N. Y."

"DEAR SIR,—Your secretary has apprised me of your weakly condition and suggested that a weekly letter would be appropriate. I regret to learn that you are so infirm. Does it not strike you that in case you should die and get duly buried, with a pile of granite on the top of you, you will then be in-firm? What mau-soleum thought could occupy the mind than that of our approaching end? I suppose you have your sepulchre all nicely arranged for by this time and a plan drawn out—a sort of die-agram, as it were. See?

"Probably you may be interviewed by reporters sometimes seeking material for a first-class obituary notice. I would be a-bit wary about encouraging them, if I were you. Of the whole dire-tribe of evils which can befall our earthly career, what can be worse than the diarribes of a venal press? Really, you know, Bro. Pemberton, when you look at it from the right point of view, this thing of deadness is not so bad as it seems. The difference between diseased and deceased don't amount to much. All men must dye—save perchance the bald-headed. They say that though there is much display of



ANSWERED.

SMITH—"What would you take to go down town just as you are?"

JONES (promptly)—"A covered cab."