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CONTINUOUS PERFORMERS

BOWSER CAN'T HELP IT

POLITICS HOLD A CHARM FOR HIM

During the dinner hour the other evening Mrs. Bowser knew that Mr. Bowser had something on his mind that she was trying to hide for the time being. He was cheerful and untroubled, but Mrs. Bowser was absent-minded and thoughtful, and she talked and thought. When a beggar rang the basement bell he gave a start and was very curious for a moment, and when the letter-carrier blew his whistle next door Mrs. Bowser saw him flush red and pale. She was full of curiosity, and yet she repressed it, and it was not until dinner had been finished ten minutes that Mr. Bowser gulped two or three times and then said:

"I might as well tell you, Mrs. Bowser, that I am expecting a few gentlemen here this evening."

"What sort of a game?" she queried.

"No, my dear, it isn't," he answered, in louder tones than there was any need of.

"Just going to call to talk about the weather?"

"They are going to call to talk about the salvation of the American nation, if you want to know. Even though you are a woman, you've read and heard enough to know that something has got to be done very soon, or this country will go to the dogs."

"And you are going to do something?"

"By the seven spotted bulls owned by the seven cross-eyed men, I am! I have been keeping out of politics for years, but for the last year, but I can resist the pressure no longer. I have been asked, Mrs. Bowser--"

"You have been asked to take a nomination for Alderman and save America," she finished, as he hung on to his words.

"Not by a darned sight! I am not in the Alderman business. If I take a nomination it will be for Governor, at least."

"Oh! And these--these men who are coming here this evening are going to tender you the nomination?"

"That's what you are going to run on--Democracy and Republicanism."

"Neither one of them," he said, "is a new party ticket; it has been conclusively shown that neither of the old parties can save the country. A new one is demanded by a majority of the honest electors of the country, and a new one we shall have. We meet this evening to decide on the name."

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"I see it will. Have you wine and cigars in the library?"

"I will see to that. You will go up to your room, I suppose?"

"Yes, you man don't think our sex advanced enough for you to give you political pointers?"

"Just then the bell rang and a boy related that some one wanted to see Mr. Bowser on the corner. The new party candidate for Governor looked a bit anxious as he put on his hat, and took up his case, but he got off his front steps in good shape with the wheel horses. In fact, it was the man who had discovered the crying need of a new party. He discovered it in Onoshak and brought it home in his grip.

"I am coming in a little later, Bowser," he began, with easy familiarity, "but I wanted to see you alone first for a moment. The fact is, my board is a couple of weeks behind, and my landlady is kicking. I told her that we were going to have a plank in the new party platform to oblige butchers to sell the best beefsteak to landladies for seven

of the gross receipts than to undertake to bamboozle him.

A great many people came to see Jackson & Co. Texas oil stocks were booming. Some of them winked at us as they asked for the number of the room, and others looked solemn and anxious. It didn't take me over four or five days to catch on a tenant may hang out a sign that he is in the Ohio grindstone business, and he may have a boy turning a grindstone at his door, but he can't fool the elevator boy more than a week. Jackson & Co. rode up and down with me, but our relations were strained. I did not congratulate him on the scores and scores of people he was Texas oiling, and he did not mention the improvement in my complexion nor ask where I was going to take my Summer vacation. On the contrary, he glared at me and I looked back with curling lip. He thought he had me under his thumb, and he was figuring out a little plan. I did not suspect him, but one day when I had seemed to scorn him he said to me:

"Boy, I'm a bad man to fool with."

"The elevator boy who fools with me is sooner or later discovered lying dead with a broken neck."

"Yes, sir."

"One of my customers who wanted a million shares of the Gushaks Gusher the other day said that you dalled on the way up and carried a sneer on your face. Don't do it again. Look out for Jackson & Co. I was the red headed man in No. 115. I asked questions about me yesterday."

"He was asking if I ever saw any oil around your office."

"And what did you tell him?"

"That you kept it locked up so that the flies couldn't get at it."

"Next man who inquires should be told that the name of his business is Bear in mind every hour in the day and every day in the week that Jackson & Co. are not people to be looked with."

"One day I might have been seen in consultation with a freckled faced man. The freckles were painted on his face to deceive. For the same reason he wore a red wig and had his hair dyed a terra cotta shade."

"Sure, Mike!"

"Hist! Keep mum! Don't tell it

DER GERMAN COBBLER

HE USES A GANDER TO CATCH GEESE.

One day when I don't have no customers and no work, and it seems like der Dago cobblers vass getting all der custom, an old bum comes along and wants a patch on his shoe. He don't have no money, but I don't charge him anything. When I vass through he says:

"Hans, it vvas all in knowing der American peoples."

"If dey don't come in my shop, how shall I know em?" I says.

"Make em come in."

"Yes, sir, shut get a novelty. We vvas der peoples who want somethings new all der time. Notthings in fashion over a month in one year. It vvas somethings new, new, new. I have in one year more we shall have der beer saloons in our gravels yards, to see how it seems. Novelty, Hans--look in der window," I says.

"We haven't got but one in der country, and he vvas too busy. You vvas kind to der old bum, and now he talks to me five minutes, and I goes by der market and buys an old gander. Next morning he vvas in my show window, and I have a sign ready: 'Guess what it vvas.'"

"It don't seem five minutes after my shop vvas open before a woman comes in mit a pair of shoes, and says:

"Cobbler, I don't patronize you before, because you have only one leather around. Now you have some novelty. I think I can guess what sort of a bird dot vvas. I have read in a book der history. He vvas der abtrotts."

"You vvas an awful smart woman, I says, mit a smile.

"Oh, but I used to teach school! He says, 'Der bird vvas der abtrotts, and history says dot he can fly two thousand miles mitout resting. He breeds on islands in der ocean, but he is made prisoner by never singen, and he is made prisoner on one leg and looks solemn, der same as if his heart vvas broke. All der school children ought to come here and study natural history.'"

"She goes out mit a smile on her face, and another woman comes in. She vvas a little woman mit a sharp voice, and she brings in a pair of her husband's shoes to be fixed up."

"Now, dis vvas somethings like," she says, as she looks at der solemn old gander. "Dis vvas somethings like whipcord, and you know, 'Guess what it vvas?' Cobbler, do you believe you can fool a woman like me on dot bird?"

"I have travelled all over Europe, and I have seen too many stories to be mistaken. I bet you one dollar dot you send to Amsterdam for dot stork. Come, now."

"I don't believe you vvas so sharp a bird," I says.

"By I could tell what sort of a bird it vvas clear across der street. Many and many a night when I vvas in Amsterdam der storks sung me to sleep. He has a note somethings like 'whipcord, you know.'"

"Yes, I know, but I bet not two adder womens in dis city can say der same ash you did. I shall be glad to have you come in often, and you can invite your friends, too."

"Thanks, you vvas vvas ahead of der Zoological Gardens, and der peoples ought to know it. Dot bird vvas der biggest novelty for ten milles."

Der next customer vvas a man. He vvas der undertaker around der corner. He takes all his work to der Dagogs, and never looks at my shop

must be a chump not to know him at once. He vvas a flamingo, of course--ha, ha, ha!"

"I thought you would spile him. A man who has travelled like you have cannot be deceived. A friend send him to me. I don't know if he sings or not."

"Sings? Why, man, he vvas sing like derst, as soon as he vvas over being domesticated. I have der flamingoes of Florida singing so sweetly dot my heart vvas softened up. I almost feel like taking off 20 per cent der profits of a funeral. You have got a prize mit, a novelty, and if one thousand peoples don't come by your shop I vvas disappointed. Flamingo, sir, and one of der finest specimens I ever saw."

"I must have time for a two quiet smile before a girl comes in mit a pair of shoes and says:

"Say, Hans, my mudder vvas past here a little while ago, and she comes home and says you had der goose in der window. I come now to look at it."

"Vhell, dere she vvas. Your mudder vvas very much of a lady, but maybe she vvas mistaken. I know der goose. Vhat do you say? I know you have been to school and vvas all posted up about birds."

"Vhell, I can't blame mudder for saying it vvas a goose. If I vvas across der street I think so, too. Dot bird vvas a white crane. He vvas found in all States south of der Ohio River, and is occasionally to be met with in Ohio and Indiana. He is a long-lived bird. He is of sedentary habits. His diet consists of roots, fish and frogs. He stands on one leg to sleep. He sings only when he feels death approaching, and den his song makes peoples weep. Dot's about all."

"Vhell, by golly, if you don't be de smartest girl in dis whole State!" I says.

"Thank you, Hans. Dot vvas sweet of you. Now I run back home and tell mudder dot she vvas mistook."

Der next sewing machine man comes walking across der road. He never patronize me in his life, but now he has a pair of children's shoes to be fixed up, and as he comes in he laughs and says:

"Hans, vvas kind of a game are you playing mit dot old gander?"

"Do you say it vvas a gander?" I asks.

"Why, of course she vvas. Any boy can tell you dot. It's a gander, and he's fifty-three years old at that. Vhat's der trick?"

"Mr. Williams, you vvas in a pessony mood. Folks say you vvas a very sharp man. Now look at dot bird closely and tell me if you don't see somethings like him when you vvas making your law to trace him, back you change your mind to two minds."

"Um! Um!" he goes. "Vhell, at first I believe he vvas an old gander, but now I believe it vvas a goose. 'Don't you say der birds like her in Ireland?'"

"Um! Um!"

"Don't you see Irish swans when you vvas over der sea?" I asks.

"By George, of course! I must be color blind. I saw hundreds of them, and yet took this for a gander. Say, Hans, you needn't mention it no more."

"Not a word. Bring in your shoes and I try to please you."

I keep dot gander in der window for two weeks and get more work than I can do in a month, and every body believes it vvas a goose. Even der policemen who make me take her out says to me:

"Oh, a sorry, Hans, but she vvas against der law to shut some Mexican eagles up in a cage."

DER GERMAN COBBLER

DER GERMAN COBBLER

MR BOWSER HAD HIM AGAINST THE FENCE

cents a pound, but she wants her money just the same. If you could lend me \$15 for a few days I could do my share of the work more enthusiastically."

"I can only spare \$10 to-night," she hesitatingly replied.

"Well, that will keep her quiet for a few days. I'll hand it to her, and then come along to the meeting. You are going to be the next Governor as sure as you're born."

"Mr. Bowser didn't smile over it as he walked back to the house. On the contrary, he looked very solemn for a candidate as he sat down on the steps and hoped that Mrs. Bowser would not come to the door and ask questions. He had been sitting for ten minutes when another boy came up. His message was the same--a second man wanted Mr. Bowser walked on the corner. Mr. Bowser looked at the boy and another wheel horse of the new party. He was the man who suggested four of the platform planks already adopted. He had taken him a whole week of constant brain work to bring them forth.

"Say, Governor," he observed, after shaking hands, "I wanted to see you for a minute alone before the meeting opened. Owing to me being so busy on the platform I have let

THE ELEVATOR BOY

THE TENANT WHO WOULD NOT CONFIDE IN HIM

After loving her for ten days I had asked the little golden-haired stenographer on the tenth floor of our sky-scraper to be mine. In reply she called me "bub" and advised me to try food for infants. While my fancy was palpitating about my elevator waiting about, Mr. Rasher, the agent of the building, came along and kindly gave me three days' vacation. It was during this interval that the firm of Jackson & Co. moved into our building.

When I could face the cold and cruel world again and felt that I could turn up my nose at golden-haired, I called up to see the new tenants. It is the duty of a tenant when moving into a building to send for the elevator boy and announce a life of conduct, but where this is overlooked it is not considered derogatory to the boy to make the first call. I found Jackson & Co. to be a fat, short and pompous man, who claimed to be in the Texas oil business.

"You please, sir, I am Sammis, the elevator boy," I said by way of introduction.

"Well?" he replied.

"I am a fatherless boy, working for \$7 per week to support a mother and pay off a gigantic mortgage on the home. Father put the mortgage on to bet on the favorite at the Suburban, but the favorite didn't win. It was the mortgage that won."

"Well?"

"I have called this afternoon to say that I hope our relations will not only be pleasant, but confidential. You can confide in me to any extent, and now then I may want your friendly advice."

"Well?"

"The fact is, I need a father--an adopted father--some one to sympathize with and encourage me, and tell me that life is worth the living. It so happens that you want a son--an adopted son--"

even the walls. Boy, Sherlock Holmes isn't in it with you. When you get your friends together, my lip shall have you on the force."

The pull came on the next afternoon. About a hundred people had gone up to buy oil wells of Jackson & Co. for \$100 each, and they were all there to see him for his sake alone. They bustled their way in, to find a policy shop in full blast. Jackson & Co. tried to explain that the boys were having a little party of his Texas wells to keep up the boom, but it didn't do. He did, however, and so did the rest of his crowd. I was going to scold over him as he went down in my elevator, but he hooked me on the elbow and quietly said:

"Sammis, I know that I owe this to you, but I ain't blaming you for it. I thought Jackson & Co. could run their business without any of your help, and that the best plan vvas to bulldoze you. I am going away, Sammis, and may never never return. I would like to want you to take my place if you forgive me."

I turned and held out my hand. It may be the way of some folks to jump on a man when he's down, but that is not the way of the

ARIZONA KICKLETS.

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IF YOU PLEASE, SIR I AM GAMMIS

"How let me tell you somethings."

He now comes in and says he shall have two cement patches on his shoes, and den observes:

"Does anybody come in here who can't guess what dot bird is?"

"Der first time. He vvas a gander."

"My dear mans, everybody always says dot you vvas a smart and educated man, and I vvas proud to have you in my shop. Vhen did you last see a gander?"

"Vhell, maybe it vvas twenty years ago. Let me look a little closer. Um! Ha!"

"Can you name her now?" I says.

"Of course--ha, ha, ha! I guess I vvas near-sighted. Vhen me and my wife vvas at der Ponca de Leon Hotel, Florida, last winter, paying \$20 a day for our room and board, I see a hundred of such birds around."

THE HUNCHBACK

BY M. QUAD.

In the year 1868 there landed in London from New Zealand a hunchback named George Melville, aged twenty-four. He was not only a hunchback, but there was a cast in one eye, he was almost bald and his voice was as harsh as a raven's. When they came to trace him, he could find out very little about him. He had been born and reared in a back township and he had such an ugly temper that men feared him.

How Melville became possessed of a large sum of money was another matter that was never fully explained. It was believed by some that he and his father were highway robbers for years. His arrival in London was one of the most brazen things a man ever did. He had a dozen forged letters, and giving out that he was immensely wealthy he rented a large house and installed himself and began to mingle in society. He could write his own name fairly well, and he could read print after a fashion, but in a general way he was as ignorant as a backwoodsman. But for the story of his wealth he couldn't have got a barmoid to look at him. As it was, he was called "delightfully eccentric," his gross ignorance was termed "picturesque" and inside of a month he had the run of three or four clubs and had been taken up by society.

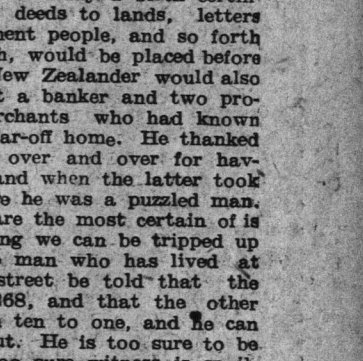
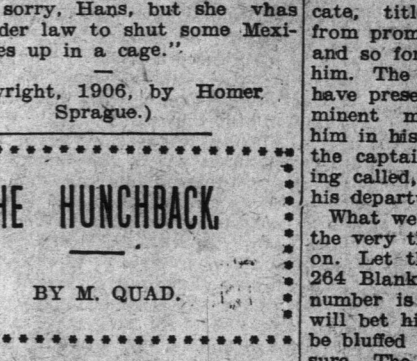
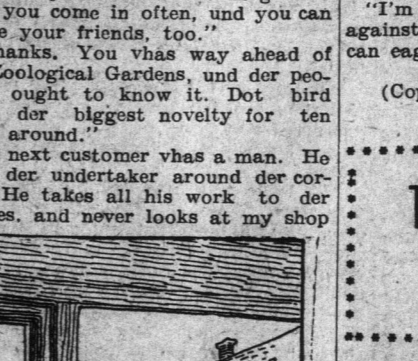
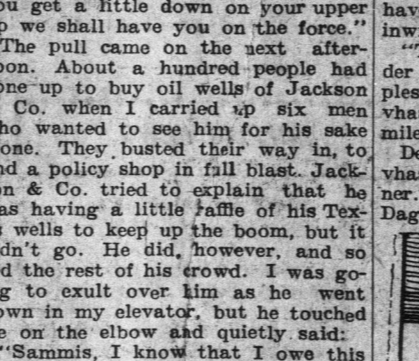
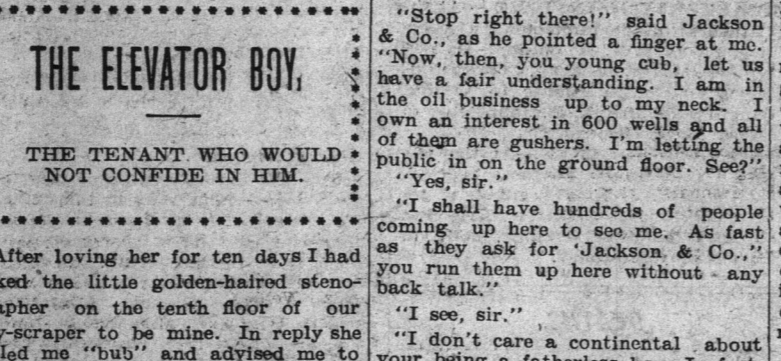
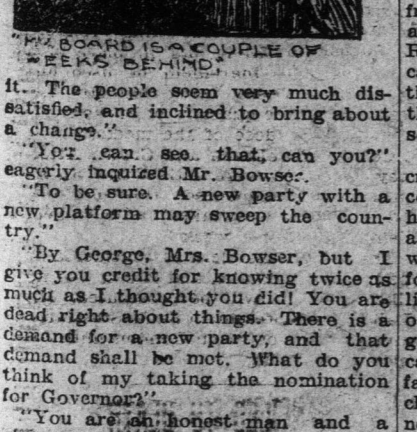
The physical appearance of the man was enough to make a woman shudder and his coarse and brutal nature was repelling, and yet--for many weeks he was the fad. He had more introductions during that time to handsome young women than any other two men in London.

A certain widow, not yet thirty years of age, had set her cap for Melville, and when she had made sure that she had lost him she deter-

should attempt to strike back, but went almost at once and secured an interview. He was graciously received and he felt that he had made no mistake in the identification. The boy of fifteen who had held a rifle within ten feet of his head, and the trigger and eyes blazing, and simply become ten years older and changed his squatter's dress for fashionable clothing.

There is no doubt that the so-called Melville also recognized the officer. This the latter had not counted on. He gave not the least sign, however. The captain had plenty of moral courage, and as soon as he could bring it around he boldly charged Melville with being an impostor. His charges were met with smiles. Instead of being offended the hunchback said that he was only natural that the officer had come to him. If there was the slightest doubt in the mind of any one that doubt must be set at rest. He would welcome the fullest and closest investigation. Captain Burton would call at a certain hour next day a birth certificate, title deeds to lands, letters from prominent people, and so forth and so forth, which he had with him. The New Zealand would also have present a banker and two prominent merchants who had known him in his off-home. He thanked the captain over and over for having called, and when the latter took his departure he was a puzzled man.

What we are the most certain of is the very thing we can be tripped up on. Let the man who has lived at 264 Blank street be told that the number is 268, and that the other will bet him ten to one, and he can be bluffed out. He is too sure to be sure. The too sure to be sure. The too sure to be sure.



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THE HUNCHBACK

BY M. QUAD.

In the year 1868 there landed in London from New Zealand a hunchback named George Melville, aged twenty-four. He was not only a hunchback, but there was a cast in one eye, he was almost bald and his voice was as harsh as a raven's. When they came to trace him, he could find out very little about him. He had been born and reared in a back township and he had such an ugly temper that men feared him.

How Melville became possessed of a large sum of money was another matter that was never fully explained. It was believed by some that he and his father were highway robbers for years. His arrival in London was one of the most brazen things a man ever did. He had a dozen forged letters, and giving out that he was immensely wealthy he rented a large house and installed himself and began to mingle in society. He could write his own name fairly well, and he could read print after a fashion, but in a general way he was as ignorant as a backwoodsman. But for the story of his wealth he couldn't have got a barmoid to look at him. As it was, he was called "delightfully eccentric," his gross ignorance was termed "picturesque" and inside of a month he had the run of three or four clubs and had been taken up by society.

The physical appearance of the man was enough to make a woman shudder and his coarse and brutal nature was repelling, and yet--for many weeks he was the fad. He had more introductions during that time to handsome young women than any other two men in London.

A certain widow, not yet thirty years of age, had set her cap for Melville, and when she had made sure that she had lost him she deter-

