



### THE KIND OF POT IT WAS.

SANSO (entering)—“Playing poker, boys?”

JINKS—“Yesh (*hic*). We’ve jes’ opened a (*hic*) jag-pot.”

### THE TALE OF AN ANCIENT MARINER.

“DARN it, Cap., why don’t you git some of those writin’ chaps to dress up your yarns? Blamed if I don’t think but you’d make a good thing of it. I’ve seed worse things than yourn in print, and well thought of, too.” And Farmer Green replaced his pipe in his mouth, after bestowing on the little group of bar-room loungers a wink full of literary acumen.

“Captain” Joe, the old hostler, whose yarns had earned this encomium, finished with lingering gusto the glass of beer furnished by another admirer, and then, re-seating himself in a big, round chair, he replied to the speaker with grave deliberation.

“Thet tale you’ve jest heard hez been in print.”

“What,” said Pete Twiggs, the little, red-headed huxter, who aspired to be a wag; “be you a writer for the papers, Joe? Not but what you should ought to git on at it, for I’ve seed you make yer mark with the pen.”

“Captain” Joe proceeded to light his pipe without deigning to notice this sally, or the laugh that followed. But after a few silent whiffs had demonstrated the utter contempt with which he regarded such insinuations about his literary limitations, he condescended to explain.

“Yes, boys, thet story’s been in print, and I’ll tell you all about it. It was about ten year ago, when I was bummin’ round a tavern in Chicago, same as I’m doin’ now. I was spinnin yarns in the bar-room one day, when I seed a dudish like chap listenin’ with both ears open as a corn crib. Thinks I, you’re some sort o’ reporter or suthin’, and think yourself pretty smart, but I’ll jest show you a thing or two. And I jest happened to remember some ‘strordinary reckleckshuns jest then, and heaved ‘em in right an’ left. W’hen I got through, an’ went to the stables, this young chap follered, an’ sez he—‘Mister, if ye want a nice, easy job, with big pay, I can give ye a pinter.’ Wall, I lowed I was in for anythin’ of that natur, an’ told him so. ‘Well,’ sez he, ‘you jest come to my lodgin’s, three days in the week, and spin me some of your yarns two hours at a time, an’ I’ll pay you well for it.’

“So the upshot was thet me an’ him struck a bargain. I was to go an’ chin for him three nights in the week for ten dollars, while he writ it out for the papers. I got five dollars down to bind the bargain, an’ three square drinks to wet it.

“Wall, I went an’ spun thet young man the very yarn you’ve jest heerd, only I reeled it out fifty times as long you bet. I gave him the particklers, ‘thout bein’ over partickler as to the facts, an’ he was mighty tickled with it too. But whenever I ast my pay, he allurs put me off with one excuse or ‘nuther. An’ when I’d been back’ards an’ forrards for weeks, an’ was gittin’ near the end ‘o my yarns, it came into my head all of a sudden thet I hadn’t got but five dollars for all the ‘chin grist I had peddled about so long. So I made up my mind not to tell another word until I had got my back pay.

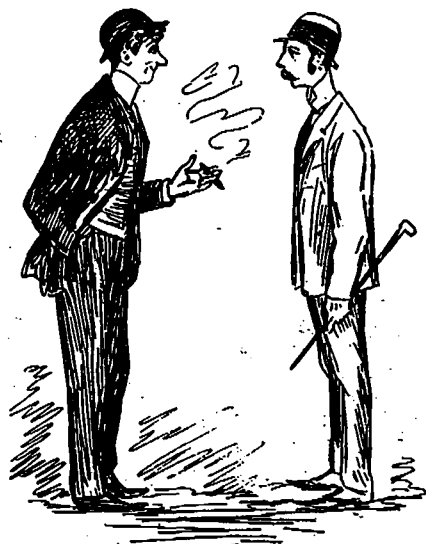
“Wall, next time I came to his boardin’ house he was gone. The landlady couldn’t tell me nuthin’ about him, neither. So thar I was euchred out o’ fifty dollars by that ink-spiller.

“I couldn’t do nothin’ jest then, but I sez to myself, ‘hold on, my hearty, till old Joe gits in your wake, an’ then mebbe it would be his turn, I’ll jest lay low for a bit.’

“I dodged about the newspaper offices a good while, listenin’ to the gab goin’ on. And though I can’t read myself I knowed some newsboys who could, an’ by givin’ ‘em a little ‘backy now an’ agin, I kep myself pretty well posted as to what was in the papers. An’ by an’ by I got track of a blood an’ thunder yarn that was runnin’ in one of the papers, an’ makin’ a great noise. I got a newsboy to read it to me, an’ what should it be but my own yarn, dressed up in course, an’ names changed, but the same idees.

“So I jest goes to thet newspaper office an’ lays low. An’ one night I sees my gentleman comin’ outen the office, an’ it didn’t take me many seconds to collar him.

“‘Ha, ha,’ sez I, after I had shook him up a bit to enliven his memory, ‘mebbe you think you know all



### “BUSINESS.”

SPACER—“I understand that Miss Sharply got off something very sarcastic at your expense last night.”

LINER—“Yes; so she did. But I can stand it if she can. In fact, I wish she’d do it some more, as I sold that one this morning to one of the comic papers.”