

HE HAD A DREAM

HAYFORS LODGE, NO. 11002,
CROSS-CUT CITY, July 1, 1879

I wrote in my last that when I went to the lodge in December I would ventilate that picnic business, but I believe in taking Time by the forelock. Accordingly, I attended the next meeting I rapped for admission, when a member whom I did not know asked me to give the pass-word. I said, "Who are you? I don't remember ever seeing you before." And he answered, "I have been an officer of this lodge for six months, and cannot say that I have the pleasure of your acquaintance." Just then a smart young lawyer of our city, who had been elected dictator, came out, and said: "This is Bro. Doolittle. I am right glad to see you. Come in." "This I to myself, "You will not be so glad when you know what I am here for." There were more members than I ever saw in the old times, and they acted as if they were right under the thumb of that young lawyer. He asked them to come to order, and said the lodge would be declared open when Bro. Doolittle removed his hat and put his cigar in the cuspidor. Then the guide came around for the password. I gave it to him, and he said, "That is four years old. Go to the dictator." I was so awfully frustrated that I had forgotten to pay my assessment; but I sat still and listened to the calling of the roll and reading of the minutes until I got tired, and when the dictator called out communications, bills, etc., I thought it was about time to get in my little communication, so I got up and said, "Bro. Dictator, there was a little balance left over from that picnic." Confound that fellow, he said I was out of order, and would hear from me later on.

Well, I kept my peace, intending that he *should* hear from me later on; but things ran on until they came to the "good of the Order," when a grand dictator from somewhere made a long speech and the members clapped and laughed until I thought they would burst. But I don't care for such foolishness, so I just shut my eyes and got awful drowsy, and the last thing I remembered was his telling a story about St. Peter, then I went fast asleep.

I don't know how it was, but I must have dreamed that I was dead and St. Peter invited me through the gates of Heaven. "Bro Doolittle," says he, "did you pay up all your assessments to your lodge, and did you do your duty to your fellow members as you obligated yourself to do before you left your mortal body?" "Well, St. Peter," said I, "I did owe a few months' dues and assessments, but the boys are all good fellows and would not let me be suspended on that account." Just then St. Peter opened a window, and I seemed to see what was too real to be a picture. In one room of a tenement house in a large city sat a woman dressed in black, a girl was tossing with fever on a wretched bed, and a boy in ragged clothes was begging pennies on the sidewalk. The woman looked up with a haggard face and sorrowful eyes, and—by gracious!—if it wasn't Marie, and my girl was sick, and my boy begging on the streets! I wanted to get right out of that window and go to them, but St. Peter closed it and opened another, and said: "Bro. Doolittle, when you married that woman you made a solemn vow to cherish and protect her; you made her believe that if you should pass away you had made provision for the care and comfort and education of your children. You neglected your duty, but I never forget mine. Look again." I did look, and saw nothing but a deep, densely black pit. With that I woke up, and, sure enough, I thought I was in that pit. The lodge room was as dark as a coal mine, and I rushed for the door, upset the altar, fell against the organ, which emitted an unearthly wail, knocked over chairs, stumbled over cuspidors and a hundred other things, while thunder rolled and goblins laughed in devilish glee, which sounded almost like the boys, but I knew better. I jumped out of the window and slid down an awning post and got home double quick, scared to death.

"Nony, where have you been, and are you alive?" asked Maria. "Your face is black with ink and your clothes are mud from head to foot. You look as if you had been buried." "Well, Maria, I have been dead but now I am alive. We had an interesting meeting and I was the subject of special regard, and I want you to pay my assessments with more promptness hereafter." "All

right," she says, "I will send it up to the lodge next meeting." "No you won't," says I. "You will go up to the reporter's house in the morning and sit on his front stoop until he gets up." There is not going to be any more procrastination about paying up on the part of Anonymous Doolittle. Life is short, and I don't feel well myself, and I don't know whether I shall live until the dinner bell rings; but if I do I am going to be a good lodge member hereafter. —Anonymous Doolittle, in *K of H Reporter*.

Hardly a day passes that we do not receive the prospectus of some new association that has entered the field as a competitor for public patronage. In the years gone by these new associations confined themselves to paying a stipulated amount at death and based their claims upon some assumed superiority in their plans. Gradually, however, the area has been widened until to-day these newer associations seem to vie with each other in their endeavors to enlarge the field of operations. It would be almost useless to endeavor to name all the varied schemes now being tried and tested, but the prevailing idea in many of them is the attempt to convince the uninitiated that something may be obtained for nothing or comparatively so. It ought to be unnecessary to say that every man must give value for value received, and he who expects to get something of value for a small outlay is quite likely to be taken in and sadly disappointed in the end. It has been said that "figures will not lie." This may be true as an abstract proposition, but the theoretical results that look so very nice on paper do not always materialize when reduced to actual practice. The difficulty lies in the fact that actual experience produces factors that were not anticipated when the theory was formulated, and, as a consequence the result is failure and disappointment. We do not urge this as an argument against all experiments, that would be unwise. It is only by experiment that results can be reached, but we do urge it as an objection to the very many immature schemes that are brought to our notice day after day. When a necessity arises then experiments may be safely tried and in such a case they are likely to yield good results. Far from being the outcome of necessity they are more often the product of designing minds in which the factor of personal gain on the part of the originators is the prime motive.

We insist therefore that it is each man's duty to thoroughly investigate every scheme presented to him before he identifies himself with it, and to look with suspicion upon any proposal plan that professes to assure large returns for little or no outlay. It is a safe rule to have little or nothing to do with any organization that proposes to give something for nothing, for the chances are that the expenditure, though small, will net zero from a financial standpoint if it does not result in pecuniary loss, and even if no pecuniary loss ensues there is that loss of personal influence and respect that inevitably results from identification with ventures that result in failure. Every man, therefore, should be conservative in such matters, and like Davy Crockett, be sure he is right before he goes ahead. There are enough societies that time and experience have tested which men can join and in such a case the danger of pecuniary loss or a weakening of personal influence and respect is not likely to follow. —*Michigan Herald*.

"Any one who will take stock in a building and loan association, says the *National Economist*, and deposit a small sum weekly, will be surprised to find how soon the littles accumulate and develop into considerable amounts. 'Many mickles make a muckle' is an old Scotch proverb, which is amply demonstrated and practically applied in this association. Almost every day a remark like this can be heard from some member: 'I have nearly one hundred dollars on my pass-book to my credit, and I have not missed what I deposited. Had I not put it in there it would have been spent in trifles.' —*Mutual Underwriter*.

"MALAKIA" said the landlady. "Well no; we havn't got it. Folks hain't asked for it; but we'll get it for your family."