



"WAIT FOR IT."

F SIR JOHN.—"Glad to see you round again, Ed. Coming back to the leadership, I suppose?"

E.B.—"No; I'm holding myself free to enjoy *Grip's Comic Almanac* which comes out on the first of December."

THE FAKIR IN ENGLAND.

THE-HOG-ON-ICE TAVERN,
MANCHESTER.

BELOVED GRIP,—Since I last wrote you I've been working the lecture racket for all it was worth. I had a good time while it lasted, but it don't go any longer. It was all very well in the small places, but when I began to tackle city audiences there was always a lot of fellows who had been in America, ready to give the snap away. In Liverpool my Indian and buffalo stories wouldn't go down at all, and I had to make a sneak and look out for a new career.

I've struck a good deal better thing, however. I've originated, or at least adapted a scheme which is calculated to secure the support and co-operation of every lover of humanity and beer. You will at once see the connection when I mention the Liberal Temperance Union, of the English branch of which I am now secretary-treasurer and general organizer.

It happened this way. I was stopping at the Hog-on-Ice public house in Manchester, and got into conversation with Mr. Beeribloke, the genial and popular landlord. He was bewailing the degeneracy of the times and the growing prevalence of temperance opinions.

"You'd 'ardly believe it," said Mr. Beeribloke, "but there's a lot of people 'ere as hactooally wants to close up the public 'ouses on a Sunday! Now that's what Hi calls the worst kind of despotism. To deprive a free-born Hinglishman of 'is beer! Wy, the Spanish Harmada and the Hinqquisition warn't nothing to it! Talk about the 'orrsors hof the French revolution and the sufferio's of the hearly Christians wen Napoleon Bonaparte an' that lot throwed 'em into the lions. They aint

in it, sir. Wy, it's opposed to the principles not honly of British liberty but of our 'oly religion! But these temperance people are hall hinfidels—"

Here the speaker paused and drew himself a fresh mug of half-and-half to calm his agitation.

"The worst of it his," he went on, "that we 'ave no horganization. 'Ere's the Good Templars an' the Sons of Temperance an' the Alliance, an' I don't know 'ow many more, stirrin' up the people against us, and nobody to speak up an' say a word for the public 'ouse, exceptin' a parson now an' then. We ought to do somethink to counteract 'em."

The idea came to me like a flash of inspiration. "What's the matter with starting a *Liberal Temperance Union*?" said I. Emphasis on the "Liberal."

"What?!!" said Mr. Beeribloke, whanging down his pewter pot on the table with such violence as to inflict a considerable dent on the wood. "Why, what d'yer mean, man?"

The word "Temperance" seemed to act on this worthy but excitable gentleman like a red rag on a bull. I hastened to assure him that it wasn't the objectionable kind of temperance that this organization had in view. Quite the contrary, in fact. I gave a brief account of the objects and working of the Toronto Liberal Temperance Union.

"Don't you get the idea?" said I. "That word 'Temperance' is just put to draw the wool over the eyes of the public. It catches the goody-goodies and respectable folks that wouldn't touch a Licensed Victuallers' Protective Society, or anything of that sort with a ten-foot pole. We get in a few dignified old chumps to make it respectable and beat the temperance folks at their own game. See the point? It gives us influence and money, which we use to fight the fanatics and keep up the license system. We claim to be the real Simon Pure temperance men, and all the while we're working to keep up the whisky business."

I talked to him in this strain for some time, and though he seemed to fight shy at first, when I told him of how the Liberal Temperance Union had killed off the Scott Act in ever so many counties, and described how they made temperance legislation unpopular by filling up all the old drunks around town with cheap whisky, as they did in Toronto after the last reduction in the number of licenses, Beeribloke grew enthusiastic.

"I wish to goodness we 'ad that kind of a temperance society 'ere," he said, "wot would stand up for the rights of a Hinglishman to drink as much beer as 'e wants. If you start one you may put me down for a quid. You can meet in my parlor 'ere hif you like."

"Generous, noble-hearted man," I cried, "this is indeed liberal."

"Not at all," replied Beeribloke. "In course I expects as 'ow the members 'll drink pretty freely for the good of the 'ouse."

He handed me a few shillings for preliminary expenses, and I got to work at once. We called a meeting at the Hog-on-Ice, which was attended by about a dozen publicans and the local brewer. We organized provisionally, with Beeribloke as temporary chairman and myself as secretary-treasurer. The brewer and the leading victuallers put up their dust like little men as soon as the scheme was explained to 'em. Of course I told them that it would not do for their names to go to the public as being the organizers, and that we should have to lay low till we got a few respectable figure-heads to the concern. I have written to a lot of dukes, bishops and other high toned personages, many of whom have shares in joint-stock brewing companies, asking for their