

## The Joker Club.

## "The Pun is mightier than the Sword."

## MR. SPOOPENDYKE'S ACCIDENT.

'Why, what's the matter, my dear?' cried Mrs. Spoopendyke as Mr. Spoopendyke limped into the room and dropped into a chair. 'What on earth has happened to you?'

'I fell down and killed myself,' moaned Mr. Spoopendyke.

'How, where?' asked Mrs. Spoopendyke, bustling around him, all nervousness. 'How did you do it?'

'Slipped on the ice, and broke my arm from head to foot,' sighed Spoopendyke faintly.

'Great gracious!' ejaculated Mrs. Spoopendyke, 'whereabouts? Where did it happen?'

'Out doors, dod gast it! Where d'ye s'pose I did it? Think I brought the ice in the house and then laid down on it? Oh, dear! I'll never get my clothes off again. I've got to sit here and die,' and Mr. Spoopendyke leaned back in the chair and closed his eyes with resignation.

'I'll help you off with your hat and overcoat,' said Mrs. Spoopendyke, tenderly. 'Let me help you.'

'Be very careful about taking off my hat,' said Mr. Spoopendyke, rousing up. 'Take it off easy, or you'll hurt my elbow. Pull the left arm of my overcoat down, so it will slip off. What ye doing? Trying to skin me? That sleeve is full of broken bones, I tell ye. Now help me into a chair. I knew I must go sometime, but I never expected to die so suddenly as this,' and Mr. Spoopendyke lifted his sprained arm and dropped it again to see if there was any animation left in his system.

'Can't I do something for you, dear?' asked Mrs. Spoopendyke, with tearful eyes.

'If you could sing a hymn without starting up the cats, it might make my last minutes more peaceful,' replied Mr. Spoopendyke, putting his feet on a chair, and composing himself for dissolution.

'You'd better let me attend to your arm,' recommended Mrs. Spoopendyke. 'If it is badly sprained, you ought to have something on it.'

'Didn't I tell ye it was broken? Just got a curiosity to see it, haven't ye? Can't wait for the post mortem, can ye? Go ahead. Do what you please. In a little while I'll be beyond pain. Just take it and do what you like with it.' And Mr. Spoopendyke stuck the maimed arm out straight, and waved it around like a ham.

'If you'd let me rotate it a little, and then bind it up with arnica, you'll be all right in an hour,' cooed Mrs. Spoopendyke affectionately.

'Rotate it, then,' murmured Mr. Spoopendyke. 'I don't suppose it will make much difference to my estate. Take it down in the kitchen and rotate it. You might—hold on, dod gast it! What d'ye think I am, a pump? Got an idea I'm a clock? Let go that arm, will ye? And Mr. Spoopendyke pranced around the room. 'Oh! you're a surgeon, you are. All you want is a bucksaw and a broken balustrade to be a medical college. Going to pull it out by the roots? S'pose that's a tooth? It isn't; it's an arm, and it's busted like a torpedo!' And Mr. Spoopendyke, who had been brandishing the injured member, began to stroke his shoulder and sympathize with himself.

'Let me bathe it in arnica,' said Mrs. Spoopendyke. 'That's the best thing in the world.'

'Yes, dear,' replied Mrs. Spoopendyke.

Mr. Spoopendyke regarded his wife with one eye, and grunted feebly.

'And you'll put on a silver plate with my name and ego, and get a few flowers? You don't want many. I shan't miss 'em if there ain't more'n six. Will you attend to it?'

Just let me turn up your shirt sleeve and I'll fix it in a minute.'

'Very good,' said Mr. Spoopendyke. 'I don't suppose it will do any harm to hurry matters. Is my dress suit all brushed? Have I got a pair of socks that my immortal soul won't shine through the toes of? 'Cause if I haven't, you'd better use some of your measly arnica on my clothes. If you think I'm going into the tomb all covered with grease, and my shirt flapping around me like I was clothes-line, you're mistaken, that's all.' And Mr. Spoopendyke eyed his wife gloomingly while she prepared to lave his sprained shoulder. 'Will you put me in a casket?' he moaned, and she began operations. 'Yes,' answered Mrs. Spoopendyke. 'I'll see that you have lots of flowers and a big fu

'I don't want any big funeral. S'pose I'm being cut off in the midst of my usefulness just because funerals are cheap? Have you got a clean handkerchief to put in my pocket when I'm dead?'

'Certainly, dear,' replied Mrs. Spoopendyke, and having thoroughly bathed the arm, she bandaged it carefully. 'Don't you feel better?'

'Perhaps if it were amputated in time I might get well,' rejoined Mr. Spoopendyke, hitching his arm around to see if he could find a pain anywhere. 'What kind of a cravat have I got to wear in case of—in the event of—the worst?' And Mr. Spoopendyke approached the climax of his question as becomes a man who shrinks from the inevitable.

'The one you've got on will do, won't it?'

inquired Mrs. Spoopendyke.

'No, it won't, either. Is that all I've got? Expect I'm going to be buried among strangers in a dod gasted necktie that won't hold together four days longer? Calculate that I'm going to the promised land as though I was hunting for a job? Want me to prowl around among the other late lamented as though I'd hustled up in business? Think I'm a measly tramp?' And Mr. Spoopendyke tore off the tie and stamped on it, and then dove into bed.

'Can't you bring up my breakfast?' demanded Mr. Spoopendyke the next morning. 'My arm's so lame I can't go down stairs.'

Mrs. Spoopendyke brought it to him, and an hour later, when dressing, he asked for his necktie.

'I wish you'd look for it,' said he querulously, 'You know I can hardly move.'

'Here it is, dear,' said Mrs. Spoopendyke. 'You tore it off last night with your sprained arm.' And she left for down stairs without waiting to hear his remark about 'measly wives, who only need a long beard and comic song book to be a Solomon.'—*Brooklyn Eagle*.

## A National Poet at Last!

It is with great pleasure that Mr. GRIP gives to his tens of thousands of critical and cultured readers a few selections from a patriotic poem shortly to be published, sent to him by a valued contributor, the author, MR. GUSTAVUS STASINUS, of Tamaracville. Mr. GRIP withholds the criticism asked for, as the selections from the different cantos are somewhat fragmentary, and occasionally rather abrupt in their endings, preferring to leave it to a "generous public" to judge for themselves of the intrinsic worth and manifold beauties of the composition. The poem is entitled

## THE VALLEY OF HOPE.

## Canto 1.

This is the prairie primeval, the far famed Saskatchewan Valley,  
The new home of plenty and peace, thereluge of Europe's starved millions;  
For those who had supped on burgoo, in the bleak heathery highlands of Scotland,  
Or lived on potatoes and salt in the Boycotted bogs of old Erin;  
For the clod-chopping, swiping chaw-bacon, who followed the slow-tail in Albion,  
The dreamy, big pipe smoking Dutchman, much given to pretzels and saur kraut,

The yellow-haired, ruddy-cheeked Dane, son of the valiant old Vikings,  
The swarthy padrone with his fiddle and harp from his sunny Italia,  
The lantern-jawed Yank from the States, with plenty of check and as brassy  
As the "off-side" of Cartwright's famed shield, that he showed to the folks in old England,—  
All can have plenty and peace in the noble Saskatchewan Valley.

Lo! see the train from the east, and mark now the courteous conductor,  
Blue are his cap and his coat, gorgeous he is and brass buttoned.  
Onward he goes with the punch, and smilingly puncheth the tickets,  
Through twenty-five first-class coaches, and seventeen palace and Pullmans,  
Crammed full of fares for the West, for the famous Saskatchewan Valley!

## Canto 2.

Can this be the land where of yore, Bub Walsh and his mounted policemen  
Scoured the wide plains for the "Rum Fiend," that is, for the Yanks who sold whiskey  
To "Lu," who would hang up his blanket and rifle to get *Scenta-saur-bon*,  
(Thus contravening the statute, in such case made and provided),  
The land of the Cree and the Blackfeet, and Sioux who with bovine Recumbent,  
Crossed from the Yellowstone canons, and squatted around here promiscuous?  
Confound the old varmint  
But this has got nothing to do with the fertile Saskatchewan Valley.

The bleak, biting blizzards that blew their blasts from the Boreal boulders,  
Now never visiting the land with its teeming and dense population  
The breeze that the settler gets, from the mouth of the stumpy politician,  
Furnishes wind in abundance, for all of his modest requirements.  
The caribou, coyote, and crane, the buffalo, blackfly, and bison,  
Have all fled away to the Rockies, from the land of new civilization,  
Leaving the yeoman in peace, as by his fire side in the autumn,  
He looks on the festoons of pumpkins on strings, decorating the rafters,  
Smoking his pipe in content, he thinks of his barn and out-houses;  
Replete with the golden-hued corn, the products of the fertile Valley.

## Canto 3.

The yeoman now londesth his grain, to send by train to the seaboard,  
And smilingly perched on the top, he driveth down unto the station.  
Joyously now he dismounts, and walketh straightway to the agent,  
"Tell me, oh agent," he sayeth, "tell me your rates to the seaboard?"  
"What you charge on my wheat and my corn, my pork and my fowls and my garden sass,  
"So that I may kalkilate how much I can make off my clearing,  
"And stow it away in the bank, to provide for my years fast declining?"  
The agent he taketh a pencil, and ciphereth long on a paper.  
High-toned and haughty the agent, his style of the *nil admirari*,  
"We will charge you," he sayeth, "let me see—railways are doosid expensive,  
"And as we have no competition, we'll charge you just what it will "carry."  
"But after you've paid the through freight, you still will have five cents a bushel,  
"And reflect what is better than all, you have your fine home in the Valley."  
The farmer he museth and museth and —

An article in an exchange is headed, "Meteor by Daylight." If there are any prying eyes in the neighborhood he will prefer to "meet her by moonlight."—*Norristown Herald*.

Did you ever notice how formal a man becomes after he holds a situation a year or so? Still, it's but natural a fellow should get stiff after being in one position a long while.—*Baltimore Every Saturday*.

"Now I understand," remarked Oldenborg with a sigh, after vainly trying to get a view of the stage over the bonnet in front of him; "now I understand what they mean by their 'height of fashion.'"—*Boston Transcript*.