

Experience of an Actor

"Which I think I may say without you that. But—go—right—away—

...one-eighteenth of a cubit from—Kansas—City. Don't linger. Go now. They've had me here on the lard caravan for a month—and look at me—don't ask me what I've got on underneath the duster! But you go. Just pass me nine—eighty—don't look the other way, I know it's on you—and take the next caboose."

"Then one of the other disinterested ones 'ud beat this one down with a cobblestone in each hand, and pass me about the same. When they got through telling me what great notices they'd read of my work with the Denver stock and asking me if it was true that I had signed to play leads with Sir Henry, I had moulted just \$42.50 in lignum-vitae cash, which made my remaining hundred look as if it had sprung a leak in midair."

"Now, I had been carrying for a long time until it was almost frayed a letter from a Denver friend who was fixed right to a Kansas City passenger agent, telling him to push me along to New York over his lines whenever I happened to his Kansas City. I did a prow for this passenger agent with my letter. I found him on his annual—er—no, not pass, but drunk."

"He'd been that way for four days, I was told, and was due for four more. He couldn't see me at all without putting a hand over his left lamp, and then he asked me if my name wasn't Larkins, and if he hadn't played shiny with me in St. Louis twenty-four years and six months ago."

"I told him no, that I had a letter of introduction to him. He was drinking the noisy Gallic liquid and he invited me to share a bottle with him. He wanted to tell me about Larkins."

"I had to come back on the bottle stunt and follow suit, and when I figured it up, four hours later, I found that it had cost me \$24 to try to dig that little ride on my letter from Denver—and then I didn't get the ticket. The man went to sleep on me while I was talking to him."

"By this time I was just about thirty-five dollars' worth, and there wasn't any Manhattan Beach in that for me. I was studying it over, wondering whether I hadn't better line for Chicago and take a think there before I got myself in shape to join that linen duster bunch, when the fourteen swooped upon me again."

"No, they didn't have axes or hand grenades with them, but they might just as well have. They shredded me down to a ten-spot, and then I didn't care much whether I ever saw the girls with the red handkerchiefs tied around their hair swimming out to the rafts down at the Beach. It wasn't in the ten, anyhow, and so for four days I just stayed in Kansas City and forgot and let go—and when I came to I had on a linen duster and was one of 'em."

"Then it was me for the works. I knew a man who ran a bum burlesque stock in Kansas City, and I gave him the garrote and told him that if I didn't have the make-up on in his house that night I'd burn the town down."

"He asked me about how much per calendar week was my idea. I told him one hundred and fifty, and six the piastre less. He offered me fifteen, and I ate it up and went right to work."

"The wraith didn't perambulate in full or anything like it, at the end of my week. The proprietor of the house gave me \$2 and this con: "Business has been bad. But I'll tell you what I'll do with you. Can you tend bar?"

"I asked him if he hadn't read my works on the subject of mixing drinks."

"Well, will you tend bar?" he asked me.

"I told him I'd handle a dog-catcher's net for the price of a ride to New York."

"Then he went ahead and spied me that the State Fair was beginning in Kansas City a couple of days later, and that the town 'ud be jammed up, and offered me \$3 a day to tend bar in the saloon next door to his theatre. I put an apron on and went to work with the shaker, and at the end of three days I went to this smoothness of a theatre and ginmill proprietor and hit him up for a little dough for immediate personal expenses—he owed me \$22."

"Well, he had it all fixed, and he took me to his safe and pulled up one of those paper packages containing \$2 worth of nickels. He told me almost with the brine in his windows that every cent that had been taken in at the theatre and over the bar for a week had been pushed toward the payment of a mortgage that was threatening to ruin him."

He Knew General Grant

"Un—huh," said I, and I took the \$2 worth of nickels.

"It was right then that I went to placer mining. I could see that it was me to browse on Jimson weed if I didn't, and I haven't got any excuses to make. From that hour when a juniper 'ud paste a silver dollar down on the bar for a drink, I'd hand him his change and then the dollar 'ud fall into the glass-washing sink—there wasn't any cash register. At night I'd drain the sink, and work the rocker, and the amount of pay dirt that 'ud glimmer in that dampness always struck me as being exceedingly odd."

"I got \$3 in dimes from the boss, together with a harrowing narrative, when pay-day arrived again, but I accepted the same with much grace. At the end of two weeks I went to him and told him that I thought the late hours were affecting my kidneys and recommended him to get a new boy."

"He was very sorry, he said, and handed me two silver dollars, saying that a note that had just fallen due that very afternoon had stripped him of every dollar he had in the world—except those two."

"Oh, well," said I, telling him to keep the two and get himself a pair of shoes with it, 'never mind. I've had a pretty good time, and we split. As I went out I could see that he was following me with a whole lot of studiousness in his dormers."

"But, with such delvings as \$90 in fractional currency, I couldn't help the way he gazed at me. I already saw the place where the music plays down by the sobul strand that's meant by the 'Swept by Ocean Breezes' sign, and I started for it, via Chicago."

"Nearing Chicago, I got to thinking that, after all, \$90 wasn't any kind of a bundle wherewith to make the boys standing in front of the New York agencies jealous, and so I stopped off there to confer with some persons who resided on South Clark street in that city. These persons were silent male individuals who wore straw hats with holes in the top of them, winter and summer, as they sat behind little tables, and toyed with small silver boxes. I conferred with them just \$90 worth, and—"

At this point Ex-Tank No. 12 suddenly broke off and resumed his seat.

"Well?" inquired the Chief Ex-Tank, rising, gavel in hand, and with a surprised expression on his face.

"Well?" said the whole club, in chorus.

"That's all," said Ex-Tank No. 12, calmly.

"Is it possible that you have concluded your narrative?" inquired the Chief Ex-Tank, severely.

"It is," was the reply of Ex-Tank No. 12.

"But you have not explained how you accomplished your return to New York," said the Chief Ex-Tank, with great asperity.

"I did not return to New York that summer," said Ex-Tank No. 12. "I drove a lumber wagon until the leaves began to fall."

"I invite," solemnly said the Chief Ex-Tank, "any member of the Harlem Club of Former Alcoholic Degenerates to submit a motion for the expulsion of Ex-Tank No. 12 for having joined the club under false pretences, in that at one time in his life he essayed to make New York without making it, and particularly in that he lingered in Chicago on that occasion. Such a course, so unusual to all precedent in the individual histories of members of this club merits the most instant and the most severe action."

The motion was submitted and was being debated when this report closed at which hour the head of Ex-Tank No. 12 was in imminent danger. — New York Sun.

New Fish Hatchery.

Tupelo, Miss., March 23. — Hon. George M. Bowers, fish commissioner of the United States; John W. Pitcomb, chief of the fish culture division, and George Van Mayer, engineer and architect of the fish commission, who have been here for some time, have selected a beautiful spot comprising thirty acres, near this city, for the new government fish hatchery.

The government officials left tonight to inspect the hatcheries at Neosho, Mo., and San Marcos, Texas.

Union Given Discretion.

New Bedford, Mass., March 23. — At an executive committee meeting of the National Loom Fixers' association the principal business transacted was to vote to authorize the Loom Fixers' union of Lowell to use its own discretion in the matter of striking.

Small-Pox Dying Out

Special to the Daily Nugget. Toronto, April 7.—The small-pox outbreak throughout Ontario is subsiding.

if that gentleman is obstinate he will not do as the latter did a week ago and kick down the doors.

In making his demand he will present a copy of Justice Gaynor's decision. If Mr. Dike does not surrender Mr. Guden says he will wait until the court of appeals shall pass upon the controversy.

Mine to Close Down.

Colorado Springs, Colo., March 24. — J. F. Burns, president of the Portland Gold Mining Company, has announced that the mine will be closed down April 1 owing to a disagreement with the smelter trust. The Portland is finishing its own mill at Colorado City and expects to have it in operation by the first of June. Over 900 employes will be affected by the order.

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