



The Camel's Last Gasp

By

Richard Griffin

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FRONTISPIECE



Portrait of the Author (1931)

The Camel's Last Gasp

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INTRODUCTION

Richard Griffin was born in 1857 on New York to a family of English extraction. When he was a child, they moved to a cranberry bog in New Jersey. At the age of sixteen he started work as a clerk in New York City. In his spare time he was involved in amateur theatrical productions, subsequently becoming a professional actor and touring extensively throughout the United States and abroad. He served in the Spanish-American war of 1895. According to his own account, he also served in World War I as an intelligence officer, and arrested a German spy after a punch-up. Before and after this service, he lived in Greenwich Village and other parts of Manhattan, and wrote poetry which he self-published. From internal evidence it seems likely that at some stage he spent time in a mental institution. His date of death is unknown but was subsequent to 1931, the date of his last book.

His works have a certain quirky charm which reminds one somewhat of the Dada and Surrealist poetry, and show maybe even closer connections to the movies of the Marx Brothers, W. C. Fields, and the Ring Lardner of nonsense plays like *The Tridget of Greva*. They have a style and charm of their own which has given him a certain cult following. An acquired taste, maybe -- but one well worth acquiring.

WEDGES

You will find various notes pasted throughout this book. These notes are called wedges, are fraught with big wisdom and are very instructive. The wedges are invariably printed just like this. Don't miss them.

THE PROPHECY 1650 A. D.

When the Earl of Lanark's heir,
Climeth up the rocky stair,
What will he behold when there?

When the monkey is at play,
Hiding all the ropes away,
Oh beware, take care I say.

When the camel climbs the hill,
Shade of Ketch, oh take thy fill!
Gulp thy fascinating pill.

When the fiends of Hell take aim,
When the beast each tongue doth maim.
Let the mountain change its name.
And don't forget the armadillo.

Many years have passed away since the prophecy above quoted.

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NOTICE

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER ONE

CHAPTER TWO

CHAPTER THREE

CHAPTER FOUR

CHAPTER FIVE

FINIS

NOTICE

April 1850. Lost one camel.

Escaped from the Jake Jink Circus. Last seen wandering about the shipbuilding yards up the river near Dumbarton. The camel was seen rushing about, a crazy beast breaking the framework of many ships. The workmen all fled in terror, but not before the camel had killed and eaten seven children. The camel answers to the name of Alice. The finder will be liberally rewarded by returning said camel to the manager, Mr. Jake Jink, Circus Tent, corner of Darnley Street and Bothwell Avenue, Greenock, on the Clyde, and please treat the beast kindly. She meant well. And for goodness sake don't punish the poor camel. Don't hit it with a split hog. Observe some show of humanity.

NOTE—Split hog is a Jersey term for a half worn out iron shovel. A rope is a fat string and a blicky is a tin pail. This is what is known as a Zazu Jag.

CHAPTER ONE

THE banks of the river Sax. From the shore on which I stood I gazed across the narrow stretch of water. On the opposite shore the rocky cliffs of the Elsa Craig rose up in towering majesty, casting many grotesque reflections in the thick inky water beneath. Many boats of all shapes and sizes were drawn up on the shore. I was impatient, my friend H—— was also impatient. We were rubbering for a boatman to take us over to the Craig. A cracked voice spoke, "At your service, your honour." I looked in the proper direction and saw the replica of the ancient mariner. "Can you take me across to the Craig, can you row the boat?" Answering, the man spake. "No sir, I cannot row the boat, but my brother John has a large black dog." "You and your brother John be jiggered." "Yes sir." "Go to the devil." "Yes sir." And he turned slowly and walked away. I stood pondering. The whole matter was very shortly cleared up. One man and one dog soon appeared. The dog was black. The man spake, "I will take you over sir." We all jumped into the boat. There was a small arrangement of a machine at the stern of the boat. The dog hopped over to the machine and began to turn a crank. The boat moved slowly and headed for the Elsa Craig. When we were half way across we suddenly heard low dull rumbling sounds which were soon succeeded by sharp crackles. The dog yelped. The man spake, "Hear that sir?" Those rumbles, those tumbles. The Pocket of the Tumbling Bump. Look up at the cliffs of the Elsa Craig. I could see a dark big lump of rock rolling down the cliff. There was a flash through the air, a peculiar whiz, then a hollow crunch. Black smoky dust blew up. The boatman spake, "There will be another tumble shortly. We always have plenty of bumps here whenever a comet happens to strike the earth. We were visited by a comet last night. The fiery visitor was particularly plucky, must have been on the war path, actually hit against the top of Ben Nevis. The whole thing looks portentous. I hope we are not going to have the crack of doom just now; I mean the general conflagration. I was married last night sir, my fifth adventure. One more wedding and I will be the equal of Henry the Eighth." And thus the garrulous guy kept on. Hark! another rumble, another bump. "Another County heard from," said the boatman. Another moment we drew up to the landing. The dog wagged his tail. We stepped ashore. I gave the boatman the exact fare. The boatman muttered something blasphemous. The dog licked my hand. The boatman kicked the dog. Says I, "My friend, do you wish to go to perdition?" "Yes," said he. "All right then, go to Hell." The boatman gave a sign to the dog. The dog began to work the machine. The paddle began to turn, and the boat began to recede from the shore. One last glimpse of the boatman. He was shaking his fist at me and kicking the dog. He was going through with a species of double action. We turned away from the landing. We were confronted by a sign tacked on to a tree. "Private estate of his Grace the Laird of Nax." "We are on the correct path now," said my friend H——. Then answering I says, says I, "This Laird of Nax, last year he was just plain Ivan Van Scrubb, Taxidermist, otherwise stuffer of quadrupeds, bipeds, fish, snakes and insects." There was a stone archway, and on the keystone overhead some irreverent ribald had rudely traced in chalk. Abomination of desolation. Beyond the archway the zigzag path led up the slopes of the craggy Elsa Craig.

WEDGE 1

Be sure to lamp all the wedges in this book. The wedges are very important.

CHAPTER TWO

We entered through the gate and in another moment were climbing, up, up and still up. We were now on the last lap of our journey to the far-famed Valley of Nax. As everybody knows, the Valley of Nax is a depression in the land up on the very summit of the Elsa Craig. I and my friend H—— proceeded up the steep path. We had to steady ourselves by grabbing on to the bramble bushes on either side. We caught a glimpse of many a snake crawling in among the rocks. At one place a big rattler sat on a rock and looked down on us. He was a beauty. He had horns. I did not know then, that there has always been a species of horned rattlesnake that thrives on the Elsa Craig. Soon after the snake incident we found ourselves seated on the edge of what we will call a stone basin, a natural basin of rock. I should judge the rocky basin was about nine feet deep by fifteen in diameter. The Pocket of the Tumbling Bump. I sat on the edge of that basin and I looked down into that basin. The basin was so nice and clean. I wondered what became of all those rocks that slide down the mountain and land in the pocket. I was soon to learn all about it. On the opposite side of the pocket—could it be possible—sitting quietly and looking in a hand mirror—a beautiful maiden? No, a large Mandrill Ape, a monstrous ugly monkey with an iridescent snout, reflecting all the colors in the paint box. The Mandrill suddenly began to chatter. The Mandrill looked over its shoulder and growled; the Mandrill looked up. The Mandrill heard something, heard it before we did. At last I heard it—a rumbling—high up. The rumbling of the tumbling bump. The Mandrill ran away shrieking. Then came the tumbling bump, a large rock as big as—well I should judge it was a rock weighing about five thousand pounds. Down it came, like a terrible monster. Down it came—crash against a tree. The tree was uprooted. The rock shot down into the basin. I could feel the breeze caused by the falling rock. The rock with a whiz missed me by six inches. The rock fell in the basin. The rock bounced up out of the basin. The rock made a little jump one side, and then—the rock fell over the cliff. The rock disappeared forever in the yawning gulf below. Thump. I stood awestricken. The strike was disturbed by the chattering Mandrill. He had been swinging on the very oak that had been just cut to bits. The Mandrill went through a few dancing steps, and then jumped over a waterfall and disappeared. I and my friend then resumed our battle with the zigzag path. Up we went, and still up. The moon came out. The stars looked down. The Mandrill glanced sidewise. The wild honeysuckles sent forth their fragrance. The whistle from a coaling scow wafted in with queer smells mixed. The trees grew thinner, the ground flat. The light from the moon, stars, Milky Way, and comet's tail, furnished brilliancy. And what about the brilliancy reflected from the iridescent flashes from the snout of the Mandrill ape? The ape had found an umbrella, had torn it to bits, fashioned the silk into a sort of dress. He was now doing a first class skirt dance.

My friend H—— looked scared. His face, always light, seemed of a lighter texture, actually silver color—a pale face inoculated with apprehension. And well he might be thus—but of all this—later. We stood on the edge of a large opening in the forest, a circular flat about three hundred yards in diameter. The trees on the flat were short and scrubby, but the trees beyond were tall and thick. A regular labyrinth—plenty of bushes, plenty of brambles. And high up above the trees appeared the tops of six stone towers. The baronial chateau of the house of Nax. There were two palfreys tied to a hitching post. Without the least hesitation we mounted the chargers and started at a gallop across the enclosure. We entered the labyrinth. We went poking along the edge of a box hedge. Again the crickets chirped; again the katydid began to coo. Then came another sound, a strange muffled murmur. Human voices, soft, dulcet. We both

listened. One voice spake, "You led me into the depths of the labyrinth, but why do you say my ears don't match?" The answer was a low murmur—so low as to be quite inaudible. Perfect silence. We could feel ourselves all apprehension. But still no sound. The pungent aroma of the dew laden Wasium entered our nostrils. My friend H—— peeped over the hedge. He quickly withdrew his head. He turned to me, paler than ever with the lateral lines, the shade of shimmering silver. He leaned forward and whispered: "Proctors. Flat hats, gowns, tassels." Then leaning over the hedge he spake, "Hi you professors. Quick! Run! Skip! Skidoo! Skidoo! The Wasium laden boulder has exploded. Save your lives." The two learned eavesdroppers let out one yell of consternation. They made a bolt in the opposite direction. Horror! They had overturned a beehive. I caught a hurried sight of them as they rounded the curve of the Wasium coated rock boulder. An angry flock of bees were in close pursuit. Bees and Proctors both disappeared in the bushes. There were many yells of pain. The bees were getting in their work. It was a great relief to myself and friend H——. Then something happened. I hardly know how to describe it, it seems so terrible. My friend H—— stepped too near the edge of a cliff. The edge of the cliff gave way. Down went H——. It was all over instantly. I rushed to the edge just in time to see poor H—— disappear through a bunch of bushes growing out of the side of the cliff half way down. The next instant I heard a sickening thud. All was over—Poor H——. Poor old slop dobber. I stood, dazed. I reached for my faithful trusty hip flask—one big swig. I sat down on a stump to compose myself. With half shut eyes I composed myself. I took another swig. I heard a munching sound. I looked up. The two palfreys were close by, munching grass. I took one more swig. I dove my hand deep in the pocket of my lumberjack. I produced a small silver whistle. One long sharp toot. My palfrey left off munching and trotted nimbly to my side with a pleasurable neigh. I mounted, settled myself in the saddle and drove quietly into the labyrinth. We were passing through a vista of beautiful rose trees and many thorn bushes and clinging cactus. I heard a sort of nimbling patting trot. It was the other palfrey, the palfrey of my friend H——. There was a rider on the saddle. Could I believe my eyes! The rider! It was the grinning mandrill. The swigs I had taken kept up my courage, I looked calmly at the mounted mandrill. He looked at me, he saluted; a military salute. He then gave the horse a slap on the neck. The horse darted forward, crashed through the brambles and disappeared. By this time I was in a pretty big state of mind. I spoke to the horse. "Nice horsey, pretty horsey, start ahead, skip." We once more carefully continued our trip through the labyrinth. The rose trees grew thicker. We stopped under one particularly fine horticultural specimen. One large rose dangled overhead. I decided to secure that rose bud, hanging overhead, I reached up my hand. I grasped the flower. I smelt a strong aromatic odor. I tugged at the flower with my right hand. I felt a sharp pain in my index bicep. I was stung. By a bumble bee. No. By a vinegerone. Of all things a vinegerone. A vinegerone is about the most perfect angel maker this side of Painted Post. I let out one yell. Oh, the pain! Then I recollected myself. I tied a cord loosely about my wrist. I thrust a stick through the cord. I twisted the stick. I twisted the stick more and more until the cord about my wrist was so tight—so tight the cord sunk deep in the flesh all around the wrist. I dug the spurs deep into the sides of the horse. The beast darted forward. We dashed through the valley at the rate of two forty on a plank road. Presently I saw lights ahead. We flew across the drawbridge. We entered under the portcullis grating. All that happened is now all in one big mix through my cosmos. I can remember how I sprang from the horse yelling, "Where's the Laird? The doctor! Help! Help! The vinegerone! The bite!" The Hoff Marshall began to yell. The Laird rushed in all excitement. He comprehended the mess instantly. The Laird grabbed my wrist; he thrust my wounded hand down on the oaken

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table. The Laird seized the hatchet. Whiz chop! The sharp edge cut across the outer edge of my bitten bicep index digit. Oh the pain! Oh the blood! The red, red blood! "Isn't it lovely?" said the Laird. He then spoke to the Hoff Marshall. "Fetch me the box of lint, fetch me the adhesive tape, fetch me the Pond's extract." My life was saved. The angel-making vinegerone came in second best. The vinegerone was cheated of his prey. Next came a goblet of milk with a stick of the right stuff. Half an hour afterwards, I found myself and my friend Ivan, the Laird of Nax, seated before a fire of blazing logs. A jug of rum stood on the table between us. The cat frisked about on the floor having the time of its life with the dead vinegerone. Six German Indians dressed in the uniform of beefeaters stood at attention. The Laird slept.

When Bang! Something happens.

Look, look at that rat hole. What is it?

One small armadillo enters from the rat hole.

The armadillo looks at me.

The armadillo nods his head sadly.

The armadillo hops up on to a divan.

The armadillo winks at me and then crawls in under a red velvet pillow.

And this is the end of the armadillo incident for the present. Alas, only for the present. The Laird awoke.

The Laird seemed lost in meditation: one moment biting his nails, another cracking his joints. The Laird reminded me of an over-tired possum wrestling with an extra ornery hickory nut. The Laird rang a bell. The benevolent ironmonger entered. The Laird spake. "See to it that the thumbscrews are in perfect order. See to it that the locks on all the cell doors are well oiled. Have all the manacles ready for instant service. I feel an itching under my left ear. That always means one thing. There will be much correcting, great severity. Woe be to those who deserve my wrath. Begone!" The ironmonger vanished. I shivered. A peculiar chill shot up through my spinal fabric.

The two upper housemaids, Laudanum Liz and Morphine Maggie entered. They served us with pork tenderloin and iced mead.

All was quaint quietness, weirdly disturbed. The only sound was a queer sound from one of the windows. We both rose and went to the window. Ah ha! It was a large vampire bat fluttering about. He flapped and fluttered, and then—sneak—he vanished. We continued standing at the window. We looked down upon a rock formation—it was a long streak of rock—one end of rock just under the window—the rock stretched out across the lawn—a sort of a natural path. The further end of the rock path terminated at the edge of the cliff, where the rock stood out over the cliff. This rock formation went by the name of "Jake's leg." The Laird spake. Says he: "Let's go down and out on that rock." "Right-O," says I. We crawled through the window, and then by the aid of a rope ladder, descended to the lawn beneath. The reader may wonder why we troubled ourselves over a rope ladder when the house was furnished with many staircases. Well—let the reader keep on wondering. The whole thing is a riddle. Let it go at that. We climbed down the rope ladder. We stood on the lawn. We crossed the lawn. We now stood on the projecting rock. The rock called "Jake's leg." We were confronted with the mandrill ape. He stood with both arms extended. In one hand he grasped a squirrel. In the other hand he grasped a rabbit. He swung both the little animals on high.

Then he flung both the little animals over the cliff. Down they fell, down, down, down! Out of sight. The work was done, the tragedy consummated. Poor little animals; poor little pets! Poor little dears! The little squirrel will never climb my shoulder for peanuts. The little rabbit will never go out on a dark night looking for Tom cats. Poor little animals; poor little dears. We turned sadly away. We walked slowly toward the house. We climbed the rope ladder. We reached the window. It was locked. The Laird used his diamond ring as a glass-cutter, cut out a pane of glass, thrust in his hand, unlocked the catch, and opened the window. The Laird and myself took hands. We jumped through the window together. Smash! Kerflunk! We landed in a bowl of soup. The bowl containing the soup was fifty-nine inches in diameter. What a mess! Servants came running from all directions. They carted us to the pump. We were washed. Our clothes were washed and hung out to dry. We were wrapped in bath robes. We then returned to the banquet hall. We were served with hot rum punch. The Laird rang a bell. The Hoff Marshall appeared. The Laird blew a whistle. The two housemaids appeared. The Laird spake. "Marshall, these two housemaids were careless. They left the bowl of soup on the floor. This calls for punishment dire. Conduct these two dames to the tapestry chamber. Exercise great severity. Give them both fifty strokes of the kanchuka." The Laird turning to the housemaids spake. "You have heard the sentence. Follow the Hoff Marshall. Submit to your punishment. Remove the necessary raiment. You will both receive a good fat spanking. Begone!" The two housemaids were led away. We heard screams. I sat pondering. What kind of an establishment was this? What kind of people have I run against? Bugs, bugs, bugs! oh, had I but known all that was in store for me! Next came a skip and a hop. Two lovely Persian kittens sprang on my lap. They both began to purr. Such lovely kittens. They live with their parents; so the Laird tells me. I'll take his word for it. I was much too anxious for any argument. What kind of an establishment was this; what kind of people have I fallen amongst? I could hear the ironmonger singing in the distance thus:

Maggie Maloney
Rode on a pony,
Over the mountain to Ausable Lake,
Maggie Maloney,
Lop sided—bony,
Gobbles the cruller,
That dough nutty cake.

The two housemaids, Laudanum Liz and Morphine Mag, entered—both had a meek look in their bright eyes. I have frequently noticed that after a spanking the party that got the spanking has a gentle expression in their eyes. The Laird began scolding. I picked up a dream book. I pretended not to hear the conversation. But no use. I happened to be provided with ears. The Laird was scolding the two housemaids, Laudanum Liz and Morphine Maggie. Said he, "You two jades. I overheard your remarks. You voiced your adverse opinions as to my mentality. Give me strict attention. Learn what happens to those who backbite me. Last year the celebrated banker Pugdumper had the temerity to remark that I, the Laird of Nax, was crazy as a bedbug. Now note well what followed. It was noticed that the banker mixed fried potatoes with his coffee. A fine breakfast for a banker. That same banker now occupies cell seventeen in the nearest nuthouse. Look to it you two jades. I may order my butler to throw you both off the cliff." The two maids ran shrieking from his presence. Ha ha, he he!

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laughed the Laird. He then became grave. He picked up a scrap of paper. He spake,
"Read that; an old prophecy. It makes me shiver."

When the scaly armadiller
Sneaketh underneath the piller,
When the camel swims the biller
 Oh beware the ax.
Sneak away thou cringing bloke,
Yes, the time has come to croak.
Let the crushing granite choke,
Killing the Laird of Nax.

WEDGE 2

Laudanum Liz and Morphine Maggie. their appetite is big. They expect three meals a day. You can't feed them on oats. They are not even satisfied with dog biscuit.

CHAPTER THREE.

High up on a beam loomed the head of a bull moose. Large spreading antlers extended far out on either side. From the antlers there hung a rope fashioned into a sort of trapeze, and swinging to and fro on that trapeze sat the mandrill ape. He cut all sorts of capers, sometimes hanging by one hand, and then again he would swing by his tail with his head hanging down, all the time shrieking and all the time showing his teeth. The whole proceeding was a most diabolical tableau. As he swung to and fro, his incandescent variegated brilliant snout shot forth sparks of uncanny light. My friend Ivan and myself now fell into an engrossing conversation. Bang! We were interrupted time and again by the rumble I now know so well. "Ah," said Ivan. "The tumbling bump is active. Guess we are going to have a storm. I have a plan to write up a poem all about the Pocket flump of the Tumbling bump. See here, take the paper. That paper contains a list of words that rhyme with the words Tumbling bump. Look!" I read the words "pump, lump, shump, lump, plump, trump, jump, hump, clump." "There now" said Ivan. "Half the work is done when you have the list of proper words." We were now rattled by a yelp, half like a dog and half like a kangaroo. The mandrill ape had dropped down on the floor and went capering about at a great rate. One time as he passed me I held out my wounded hand and said: "Nice monkey, pretty monkey," and amazing to relate, the ugly beast came to me and laid his head down on my lap for me to caress him. Then he continued his dancing about the room. Every time he capered in front of us he grinned. But I noticed that every time Ivan turned his back on the mandrill, the beast would shake his fist at my friend. I mentioned this to Ivan who replied, "Nonsense, the beast loves me, even if I do have to punish him rather severely once in a while. Here Pluto." The mandrill advanced and then stood still. "Open your mouth." The mandrill opened his mouth. "Stick out your tongue." The tongue was forked like a snake. "There! Look!" said the Laird. "I did that. I had been told that if the tongue of a bird is slit that bird can speak. Now this monkey here, this four-legged bird, is so smart, I thought I could make him speak by slitting his tongue, but the scheme did not work. Pluto, begone!" Pluto gave a military salute and departed. Reaching the door, the big devil of a monster turned, threw a kiss to me, showed his teeth to Ivan and made his exit with a very odd wink. "That monkey gets queerer and queerer every day," said Ivan. "It is high time I treated him to a good fat thrashing. But it is getting late, and as we have had a strenuous day we had better retire." Ivan struck the triangle. The Hoff Marshall appeared followed by the ironmonger of the estate. The two men lifted me into an invalid chair on rollers. "Good night," said the Laird. "Breakfast at nine, and be prompt. The buckwheat cakes wait for no man." The attendants rolled me out the door, rolled me along the passage, and then rolled me through an open doorway. Then they bowed and left the room. The room was lighted by one large candle projecting from a tall silver candle stick. The room was a wonder. Talk of decorations. I got up from my chair and crossed to a table, taking up a curious circular plate of chased metal. I had to pick it up very gingerly with my left hand. The plate dropped from my hand and fell on the floor with a clang. I felt startled. I heard footsteps. The door opened. The ironmonger stood before me. "Did you ring, sir?" "No—the gong fell from my hand." "Oh, yes sir. I see, sir. You don't look well. You are as pale as a penguin." The man's presence quite restored me. He was so kindly. I later learned that he was known by the title of the benevolent ironmonger. He was an old codger past ninety. He spake: "Better let me mix you a hot drink, sir." He did so. He placed the steaming mug before me. He entreated: "Drink it down quickly and go to bed. For sir," said he, "don't be so shaky. Don't believe all the yarns you have heard about this room, even though it is true. I mean the murder

of the old Countess." "Countess?" says I. "Yes sir, but don't yer mind that sir; all that happened long ago, fifty years this fall, even tho' the blood stain on the floor looks so fresh." As he spoke he pointed to the floor directly in front of him. Sure enough. There were the stains—dark and terrible. The ironmonger continued. "It was a terrible night. Dark and stormy. The retainers were all huddled in the servants' hall below. The room directly beneath, sir. We were frantic with terror. There was a fight going on in the room overhead. We all crowded about the table. The struggle upstairs continued. Furniture was overturned. There were crashes of broken glass. Then all was still. The table in front of us was covered with a white cloth. We heard the sound dropping, dropping, dropping. Dark spots began to appear on the white table cover. Someone lighted the candles. The dark spots began to turn red. There was dripping through the ceiling. Red, red blood dropping on the white table cover. Think of that, sir; think of that. This happened fifty years ago. I found the knife that did it. I still have that knife. But—my poor man, you seem all gone of a heap. Take another drink. Here sir, drink it down." It was brandy this time. "Good night" said the monger. I could only nod, and he left the room. I felt dazed, but managed to stagger over to the bed and lay down. My brain was in a muddle. This lasted an hour. My brain cleared, and I soon took in everything in the room. Two large candles were lighted. I was all perked up to a strange state of mind, but from where I lay I could take in a fair view of everything in the room. The room was one big curiosity shop. My friend Ivan was a great traveller. He collected curios from all parts of the globe. Ivan had one peculiarity. In whatsoever country he happened to be, he bought curios that originally came from some other place. When in Denmark he bought silk from far off India. When in Paris he sought out a pair of dancing grizzly bears from Moscow, and finally, when in Spain, he secured a peanut stand from Yonkers. And there you are. And now as I lay on the four-poster you can easily guess the variety of bric-a-brac I gazed upon. And my bed room was all full of harlequin effects. The ceiling was painted bright crimson. The walls were fiery orange. And the orange walls were all spotted with blue polka dots, and in the middle of each dot was one silver star. Directly overhead on the ceiling there was painted a dragon's head, with wide open mouth grinning down at me. I closed my eyes, perhaps it was the brandy. I went fast asleep. I dreamt I was standing on the banks of the Nile. Egypt's Queen floated in all her glory. The lovely Cleopatra skipping along in her barge, driven by silk sails, whilst beautiful maidens plied the oars. At least, they might have been beautiful, but each maiden had a harelip. Six pages painfully warbled a soft symphony. One extra cute little page struck a false note. I winced; then dozed. And then a change came o'er the menu of my dream. I thought I was in Hell. I think it must have been that hot unmentionable place. I stood looking down into a deep pit. I could see my friend H——. He was all on fire. He was chained to a rock. I felt so painful I awoke. Cold beads stood on my brow. The drops trickled into my eyes. I dried out each eye with the rag tied about my finger, the finger bitten by the vinegerone. My eyes cleared. My brain cleared. What is that looking at me, looking through the window at me? It was the mandrill ape. When he saw I was awake he grinned showing a row of teeth, kissed his hand and disappeared, with a succession of wild yelps. What a pleasant night I was having. I decided there was no sleep for me. I leaped from my bed. The bell in the tower rang out five o'clock and a distant voice said, "All's well, but I'm sorry I lost the broom."

I decided to take an early walk. I opened the door. I went out. The passage way was dark. I poked away as best I might. There were several turns and several ups and downs, and several bumps. At last I spied in the distance an opening from which shone a light. I followed up the cue and found myself in the study of my host, the Laird of Nax. Ivan lay back in his armchair fast asleep. I stood enthralled! Directly in front of

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and facing my old friend stood the mandrill ape. The monster flourished a knife. He was chattering, showing his fangs, and thrusting out his forked tongue. The ape hated his master. No doubt of it. But what could I do? I had already warned Ivan and he had disregarded my warning. When the mandrill saw me, he placed the knife on the table, went to the door, saluted me with military precision, turned away from the door, sprang out the window and was gone. Heaving a sigh of relief I turned away and now found myself confronted with the Hoff Marshall. He was a sight to behold, all dressed up like a drunken shoemaker. He was in full regalia. He wears a toupee and plays the accordion. He carried the instrument under his arm. He looked at the sleeping Ivan, and then invited me with a gesture to follow him. When we got outside the Hoff Marshall spoke, "Sir, if you will follow me to the sunken garden you will be rewarded. But we shall have to go by way of the kitchen." We passed into the kitchen. The cook had evidently been preparing apple dumplings. There had been some kind of a spill, for the hashed-up apples and uncooked pastry were strewn all about in confusion. "Someone has been raising hell in the kitchen," said the Hoff Marshall. We picked out our way over the dumpling-laden floor, slid back a panel and emerged into the sunken garden. It was a beautiful place, sunk about six feet below the surrounding level. There were flower beds a-plenty and many cabbages were cultivated for the pet rabbits. Then there were six nanny-goats, one named Valentine, another Neptune. Most extraordinary! And the cats! There were seventeen cats, all black and bobtailed—that is, with almost no tails. The Hoff Marshall, looking at the sundial, let out a yell and ran away screaming: "It's after milking time!" I sat down on a stone bench, lit my pipe, and contemplated the cats. I love cats. One particularly cute kitty, jumping up on my right shoulder started in to caress my left ear with its teeth. The cats seemed to know that I loved cats. The cats crawled over me purring away to beat the band. I felt a nudge. I turned in the direction of the nudge. It was the benevolent ironmonger.

"I see, sir, that you like cats."

"Yes," says I.

Then we sat down. Lots of cat talk. The monger made a learned speech. "Look, sir. Please observe that all these cats have bobbed tails. Do you know the reason why all these cats have short tails? I will tell you why. They all have short tails because we cut off their long tails. Cruel? No, not at all. The cats are much happier without their tails. The Laird has a guillotine upstairs. Look there, sir." The monger pointed up to a window on the second floor. "There, sir. That's where the master keeps his guillotine. Up there. That's where we marched the cats the day we cut off their tails. And the whole thing has been a paying investment. The seventeen tails. We saved every one of those amputated tails. We fitted those seventeen cats' tails with seventeen ivory handles. We shall never want for dusters for glass lamp chimneys."

The gate opened. The Hoff Marshall entered with a bucket of milk. When he saw us he frowned. He spoke reprovingly to the monger. "Say you, can't you find something better to do than to talk twaddle about a lot of cats? Take this bucket to the cook and be quick about it." The benevolent monger meekly took the bucket and carried it to the kitchen door. The door opened and he disappeared within. The Hoff Marshall turning to me, remarked: "I suppose that old dodder has been boasting to you about those tailless cats. The truth of the matter is, he was so broken up he sneaked away and left me to shoulder all the responsibility. I attended to all that cat cutting personally. I rejoice in cruelty. I am a sadist." Just then we heard a sort of giggling. A rustic face peered over the gate. "Please sir, some of the village children are here. They want to

play here in the garden." The Hoff Marshall drew himself up. He yelled, "Kick the children down the stairs and shut the gate." The gate was shut. More giggling. The rustic reappeared. Again he pleaded: "Please, sir, the children. Let them—cute childish ways—"

The Hoff Marshall yelled: "Shut up! All their little childish ways inspire but one thought, one wish, the desire to beat them." That settled the matter. The Hoff Marshall, puffing like a cobra, made a dive through the kitchen door. I could hear him beating up the cook. By this time I needed a change. I made a bolt for the grated gate. Peering through the bars, I could see the benevolent ironmonger. He was standing on his head. He was surrounded by a flock of geese. They were flapping away and hissing away with wild delight. The benevolent ironmonger looked at me whilst remaining standing on his head. He delivered this remarkable speech: "Say, Mister, can you twist? I can't twist, but I have a nephew, and he can twist." I turned away, muttering "Poor guy; poor old dodderer." I heard a stir, and looking about I beheld a most remarkable figure in the act of jumping over the gate. He was a lad of about fifteen. He had a shock of yellow hair so arranged that a big bunch stood out on each side and another bunch protruded from the top of his head. He was dressed in the uniform of a Bavarian colour sergeant. He immediately began to cut capers. He jumped handsprings. He turned all kinds of funny twists. I thought he would turn himself inside out. He finally gave a leap over the grated gate. He disappeared. There was a rattle sound in the corner. The benevolent ironmonger's head popped out, nothing but his head. The ironmonger spoke, actually hissed: "Didn't I tell yer so? I told you I had a nephew who could twist." The ironmonger disappeared. Says I to myself, says I: "Whatever kind of people am I travelling with?"

I could hear the tinkling of bells. Four rustics appeared bearing a sedan chair. They were come to conduct me to the breakfast room. I took the chair, and in a few moments found myself seated at table with my friend Ivan. The breakfast consisted of buckwheat cakes, pork chops and iced mead. During the meal Ivan seemed wrapped in deep melancholy. As he swallowed the last sip of his mead Ivan brightened up sufficiently to remark, "We will spend the forenoon in the museum." Then he struck the triangle. Immediately the page entered bearing a large brass key. "Alfonso," said the Laird, "you will attend us to the museum, and kindly remain. You will serve us with drinks. Come, proceed." We passed through many corridors and by way of a large anteroom we found ourselves in the museum. The walls were ornamented with heads of horned animals, skins of huge wild cats, shells of small turtles and quills of large porcupines. One side of the room was devoted to portraits in oil. The witch of Endor looked down, hostess of the entire scene. One large tier of shelves displayed arms of all kinds, swords, daggers, guns, arquebus stocks, arrows, bows, and last, yet best of all, the veritable cross gun that caused the tragic end of that glorious hero, the lion-hearted King of England. Then there was the skin of the eel that caused the fatal sickness of the first Henry, not to mention the pillow that smothered the two little princes in the Tower.

My friend led me from curio to curio. The page enters. We are served with a drink. Ivan speaks: "I am about to show you my greatest treasure, but first—we drink to that great man, Cagliostro." Ivan leads the way to an alcove. We are followed by page, holding a tray. On a table stands a half size model of a French guillotine. "There," said Ivan. "The guillotine. It has many names—the maiden, the red widow, and I know not what. All I know is that it works true, no mistakes, no trouble, none at all; no dust, short hours, and very amusing. This model here is only half size, but you can get as much comfort out of a small guillotine—as much as from a full size model." Ivan beckoned to the page. We took another drink. Then Ivan resumed the same old subject.

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"This guillotine, though small in size, is firm in action, and true, true blue steel. Though small in size, this guillotine could easily take off the head of a goat, or a child or a dog. Feel the edge of that knife, true and blue; keen as a blade from Damascus." This kind of talk must have disturbed me. Ivan noticed it. "You look upset," said he. "Have another drink." The page again approached with the tray, and again we drank.

As we emptied our glasses, there was a big rumble that seemed to come in from the window. "Ah, ha! The Pocket of the Tumbling Bump." We arrived at the window just as the last rumble stopped rumbling. From the window where we stood we had a good view of a big tree with a spreading branch. At the very tip end of the branch sat the big ape Pluto, the mandrill. The branch swung up and down carrying the great ape up and down to his rapture and joy. He yelped with delight, and his yelps mingling with the rumbling of the tumbling bump, reverberated back from the far off cliff of the Mull of Galloway in the far distance. Leaving the window, I tried to lead my friend to another part of the room. Ivan grabbed me by the arm saying, "Not yet, my friend." He then led me back toward the alcove of the guillotine. We passed an open doorway. We stopped. What a vision of contorted monstrosity! The Hoff Marshall in a bathing suit. The man is troubled with hives. His arms and legs are covered with blotches. Many red hairs vegetate over legs and arms. He is without his toupee. The dome of his bald head is studded with four miniature wens, and he carries his accordion under one arm and a cheese sandwich under the other. He is on the way to the swimming pool. He nods and passes on. Cupid on stilts. We pass on to the alcove. We have to pass the window. We have a view of the Hoff Marshall crossing the lawn. He stops a minute to throw stones at the mandrill ape. One stone hits the mandrill full on the forehead. He howls and shakes his fist at the Hoff Marshall. The Hoff Marshall laughs and proceeds on his way, taking the path that leads down the hill to the river. The mandrill looks steadily after him, then leaps to the ground and slowly, steadily follows him.

"Well, well, well," said Ivan, "we are wasting too much time. All this nonsense is taking us away from our old friend the guillotine." Crash, crack, bang! "Ah," said Ivan. "One more flump flopping rock. But don't neglect the guillotine." He dragged, actually dragged me to the guillotine. Ivan threw his arms about the guillotine, actually embraced it. Ivan waxed enthusiastic. Ivan spoke. Said he, "Listen, and give me your full attention. I am seventy years old. When I was eight years old I knew a very old man who had lived in Paris during the first French revolution. He told me how he witnessed the execution of seventeen little girls. Every one of those little girls had red hair. Seventeen little red heads, and all those heads cut off. And when all those red heads were set up in a row there were seventeen little red necks. Think of that." Ivan laughed. Ivan shouted with glee. He actually fell over on the floor and shouted in ecstasy. He was in a beastly state of intoxication. A sudden gust of wind caused all the doors to bang. Ivan cursed the doors, cursed the wind, cursed himself. The page entered with more wine. Ivan took another drink. There came a clap of thunder. Ivan staggered back against the wall with both arms outstretched. His eyes glared wildly. His teeth chattered. Ivan began to howl like a wild beast. We had all risen—we stood confounded. Ivan still stamping and frothing pointed at us screeching, "You whitened sepulchres. The old Countess indeed, that hag witch of a countess—fifty years—I was there, you were there—you cursed backbiters." Another flash of lightning. One terrible crack of thunder. The outer doors blew open, the wind blew in, the lightning played about Ivan's head. We could see his eyes bulging, his teeth gnashing. He continued raving, "Fifty years ago this very night. I was there, you, you! You saw the blood—I saw the blood—dropping—dropping from that ceiling—up there—you know—you curs—you

cowards! You saw the blood, the red, red blood, oozing—oozing through that ceiling and dropping down—down on that very table, and now—what do you want and why do you stare? Are you scared? Am I scared? Ha ha! you cowards. Do your worst—get to Hell and the devil, the whole bunch of you. I defy you all—I defy the devil your master, not mine—he he, hi hi, hell hell. I love the blood, the dark red blood—the blood—the blood—oozing through that ceiling. The blood—the blood—dropping—down on that table. Oh, horror! Oh, Manasses Ephraim! Ephraim Manasses!" Another clap of thunder. Another flash of lightning. Ivan flops through the open door—out on to the lawn. Ivan stands alone. The lightning flashes all about him; he curses fiercely. Another peal of thunder. All is black darkness. Then comes the blue lightning. Ivan's form is visible. He shakes his fist at the heavens, then another flash of lightning. Ivan utters one piercing curse—throws up both arms, and sinks down through the earth out of sight.

CHAPTER FOUR

We rushed forward with torches in our hands. Ivan was gone. Naught but a blotch of charcoal marked the spot where he had just stood. And now he was gone, gone forever. "It is a dreadful thing to fall into the hands of the living God."

CHAPTER 4½

I made a dive for the cliff. Heard a plaintive cry - back of a bush. Thought it was a cat. Alas! It was only a child; the nasty little thing. I turned away disgusted. I ran, I stumbled. My one idea was to get away, far far away from the gang. There was about as much privacy here as the privacy enjoyed by a magpie in a cage on a center table.

CHAPTER FIVE

With brain in a daze
I cried and I sighed.
With head in a blaze,
Like a heifer half fried,
In a barb wire maze,
I thought I'd have died.
But I didn't

There was no moon. All was dark. I stumbled from the scene, reached the edge of the steep descent and started down. My only idea was to reach the bottom of the Craig, jump in a boat and get away to the main shore. I plunged down the hill and had only taken a few steps when I took a fall, went down taking a sort of involuntary somersault. I came to a short stop and found I had landed on a flat rock. I got out my flashlight. I was safe enough. On one side of the flat surface there was a small structure. It looked very much like a dog kennel. Upon further scrutiny it turned out to be an Egyptian sepulchre. I entered, holding my flash light in front of me.

The place was empty, and gloomy, but it was a protection from the rain, so I resolved to spend the night here in this strange lodging. I lay down, but being in a bad state of mind could not sleep for some hours. I could see a small object shimmering in the moonlight. I grabbed at it. Eureka! A bottle of Bushmills whisky. One long deep glorious swig. Oh joy, oh, rapture! Another glorious swig. And then ditto, ditto, ditto. Then I half fainted away into a sort of a fuddlesome dream. Yet sleep I did—tired nature forced that. I first slept, then half slept—then woke with a weight on my chest. It was a human hand all bone pressing me down. I grasped the hand. I lifted up the hand—it was a withered hand, attached to a forearm, and—nothing more. I flung the hand away. The hand struck against the wall of the sepulchre, broke into pieces. The pieces scattered about—then fell clattering over the floor. One small piece actually clattered into my mouth. I blew it out.

With queer uncanny creeps I staggered from the sepulchre. The bright sunshine dazzled me. All creeps—one crumpled crooked crab I slinked away. So I crept out. All ready for my trip down the Craig. I started down at once. By hanging on to the bushes I managed very well. I had gone but a short time when I found myself stumbling along one side of a ravine that ran down the Craig for some distance. On the other side of the ravine there was a small cottage, and seated before the door were two old gentlemen. They looked at me with malignant expressions of countenance. I recognized them as the two gents who had upset the beehive two days before. They evidently blamed me for the mishap. One of the dear old gentlemen gathered rocks and began to heave them at yours truly. I ran away down the path lickerty splickerty, but before I could gain a safety zone, one sharp stone got in its work; gave me a nasty little clip on the side of the chin. I got away O.K. The path soon became zigzag. The trees now grew thinner. I could see the beach far below, and I could also see the boat at anchor. The very same boat that had brought me here two days since. I hurried on. There was a seven hundred foot trip still ahead. I rushed down the zigzag path and in a few moments reached the edge of the rock basin, the pocket of the bump. I sat down to get my breath. Just then I observed on the opposite side of the rocky basin—could I believe my eyes? There as plain as the daylight was the Hoff Marshall, bathing suit and all. But he was not alone. He was in company with the mandrill ape. They were going through a performance.

The big monkey held the man firmly with one hand. With the other hand he was stuffing poison ivy down the man's throat. The man did not like to have the poison ivy stuffed into his mouth. But the mandrill ape persevered, and got in his work. Just then a rumbling sound. I knew what it meant. The huge ape knew what it meant. I stepped back to give the falling rock its right of way. But did the monkey budge? Not a bit. The mandrill ape remained on the spot. He held on firmly to the collar of the Hoff Marshall. Look—that five ton rock—there just above and shooting down on him—but look—the monkey monster—gauges his time. Look, he swings on high the struggling Hoff Marshall—then swift as lightning he flings his victim down—down to the bottom of the stone basin. The Hoff Marshall lies quivering face down. The five ton rock descends, striking its prostrate victim full between the shoulders, crash—crunch, various dismembered parts of the human anatomy protruded out from all sides of the big rock. Whiz go poppo! What's that red object? It is a shattered bleeding human liver. The Pocket of the Tumbling Bump had claimed its living victim—all cut to pieces. The mandrill ape had gotten in his vengeance. I turned and fled in sickening horror. I tore down the slopes of the Craig like some wounded frenzied wild beast. I ran faster and faster till I fell fainting from sheer exhaustion. I lay panting, helpless. I had taken no food since the evening before. I had a hip flask. Brandy. I slowly got out the flask. One good swig—two good swigs. I felt better though my head was all in a whirl. From where I sat I could look below, about six hundred feet down. The boat was still at anchor. I could see the faithful black dog, seated at the bow—waiting—waiting for me. The events of the last few days had so confused me—I hardly think I thought at all. I simply had a general idea that I must get down the hill as soon as possible. I floundered along. The path was now not so steep. After one of the turns in the path I found myself on the banks of a stream all bubbling. The stream went bubbling down the hill at a great rate. I could see the entire course of the stream which ended in a waterfall which dashed into the sea far below. Once more I started on my downward trip—was feeling my way carefully. I heard a human voice. One word. "Hello!" I looked in the proper direction—across the stream. A solitary stranger stood there leaning on his staff, one regular old man of the mountain. I thought I had seen the old codger before. Upon closer scrutiny I recognized my boatman of two days ago. I says to him, "Neighbour, can't you take me over to the mainland. I see your boat is all ready down below at anchor." To my dismay the boatman answered, with a grin. "Nothing doing, I remember the tip you failed to give me. I don't want your trade." I tried hard to remonstrate—No use. The man refused. "Well then," says I. "I am going to use your boat, hog or no hog. I will get to your boat before you can. I will help myself to your boat. Your boat will take me to the mainland."

Then began the race. I rushed down the road on my side of the stream. The boatman rushed down the other side. Whoever got to the shore first would take the boat. As far as speed was concerned, the boatman and I were about equal, what they call a fair match. I thought quick. There lay a big log on the bank of the stream. Half in and half out of the water. I seized the log, pushed it out into the stream, jumped in myself, got astride of the log and away we went sailing at a great rate. The boatman on the other side of the stream seeing that he was getting the worst of it gathered rocks and began pelting me. His shots went wild. The log carried me away from him down down that stream that went foaming down to the sea. We were now nearing the bottom of the hill. We were just over the waterfall. Down we went, splashing, turning round and round, and at last bumping against a boulder. I hung on to the rock. I was wrenched away from the rock. I sank to the bottom. I felt I was losing consciousness. I opened my eyes. What is that dark object floating in the water? It draws nearer. I am seized and dragged up, then dragged to the boat and then pulled into the boat. It is the big black dog. The dog

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that works the ferry boat. I lay panting at the bottom of the boat. The dog springs to the machine. The paddles begin to turn and the boat starts away on my return trip. In a few moments I recovered my equilibrium. I sat up on the seat and looked about, after making sure the boat was going in the proper direction. I now looked at the receding shore. High up on one of the crags of the Craig I could see the ancient boatman. I think things must have irritated the gentleman. He went through all sorts of gyrations. Perhaps he thought I might annex the boat permanently. The dog seemed happy, continually wagging his tail while he worked the boat. We arrived at the landing. I wrapped the exact fare in a handkerchief—no tip—and I tied the same about the dog's neck. I then left. The black dog yelped, licked my face, and howled in disappointment. He wanted to adopt me. I gave the dog a lamb chop that I happened to have in my pocket. One more lick from the dog. But I could not linger. My driver stood waiting at the landing stage. There was no help for it. One more pat for the dog—one more lick for myself. Then I—jumped into the ox cart. After a three hours' trip to Greenock just two miles distant, I put up at the sign of the Sprightly Ibex.

Last chapters are always supposed to be exciting, a sort of climax. I have just received a letter from the benevolent ironmonger. He informs me, that all the retainers of the late Landgrave have been handsomely pensioned. He then informs me that "all the cats are well." He encloses an essay on cats which I enclose for the benefit of those who love cats.

From your old friend,
Guy Barnabas Bone.

Letter from Ironmonger to G. Barnabas Bone.

Sad news. Big black dog died. Went to Heaven yesterday. Dog thought he needed a bath. He took a bath. I never do. Dog jumped in river. Dog good swimmer. Trouble! Dog attacked by hellbender. Nasty hellbender. Dog died hard. Dog tried to escape—no use. Hellbender held on like Hell. Soon all was over. Hellbender swam away licking lips. Remains of dog floated about—in two parts. The parts sunk. Am convinced the dog must have died. How sad! But, the cats are well.

Yours truly,
The Ironmonger.

From Ironmonger to Guy Barnabas Bone.

Elsa Craig, May One.

Dr. Mr. Bone,

Uncle John to be hanged Wednesday. Execution private. How sad! Was in hopes we might have taken in the ceremony. It will be a fine execution. John is an ideal subject for a hanging. Thin body. Thick neck. His contortions are sure to be wonderful. It inspires me. I have given orders that all the servants are to receive fifty strokes of the kanchuka.

Yours truly,
The Ironmonger.

From Guy Barnabas Bone to Ironmonger.

May Third.

Mr. Ironmonger,

Dear Sir:

Received yours. Am glad you are not troubled with apprehension. Am sorry about the poor dog. I might have expected it. Whilst crossing the straights yesterday I noticed many hellbenders on the lookout. It is too bad that execution cannot be public. I know an old lady in Glasgow. She tells me that when she was quite young, her Popper often said to her, "Now Maggie listen, if you are a good little girl Mommer and I will take you to see the hanging Friday." Then, when Friday arrived little Maggie would be all dressed up. Little Maggie would be taken to see the hanging as a reward for being a good girl. I remember when quite a small child being given a present of a martyr being roasted alive on a gridiron. They gave me the picture as a reward for being a good boy. The picture frightened me into a fit. Regarding public executions, the idea is good. As I have observed before, the public are entitled to some measure of happiness.

Yours truly,

Guy Barnabas Bone.

From Ironmonger to Guy Barnabas Bone.

May six.

Dear Bone:

Yours received. Glad you are sensible. Have common sense myself. Remains of dog floated ashore, two parts. Pitiful! They all wept. Wept myself. New job—next week. Cake bakery. Clean work tho' sticky. Sifting powdered sugar on doughnuts. Next month another chance. Want to join me? Head Keeper in a bug house. Nice job. Violent ward, dangerous cases. Sad news. Cats all died. The kanchuka has been a success. I notice that all the chairs in the servants' quarters are unoccupied. Yes the kanchuka has been a success. Not enough mantelpieces to go around. And to pacify me they clubbed together and sent me a flute box and I don't play the flute. hell, HELL, HELL!
The Ironmonger.

Guy Barnabas Bone to Ironmonger.

May nine.

Dear Sir:

They call me a grumbler. Well—what of it? I have to grumble or else I'll stumble. What do you think happened while I was away on my visit? The doctor next door called. He brought six lepers along with him. He gave those lepers a bath in my bathroom. He scrubbed down those six lepers with my scrub brush, scraped off their scales with my safety blade, sponged them with my sponge and then gave them a rubbing down with my bath towel. When I returned home, without knowing of the doctor's visit, I took a bath, using the brush, safety blade, sponge and towel. I now begin to itch, or is it only imagination. I'll let you know later if I catch it. In the meantime, for your own safety—burn this letter and then—go wash yourself. Enclose treatise on cats.

Yours truly,

Guy Barnabas Bone.

Letter from the cook to Guy Barnabas Bone.

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May thirteen.

Mister Bone, kind Sir:

Write to inform you news. Old boatman, erstwhile owner of white dog—old enemy—new business—sells fish. Made a sale—to us. Hellbender steak. Poor man—old guy—hard work. Arrived here O.K. Climbed cliff—climbed up—Never climbed down—You know—took a tumble. You can guess—Monkey ape—wicked mandrill—Unlucky man. Poor boatman—you know. Same old story. Man took a tumble—pocket—Tumbling Bump. Great excitement—Whose turn next? Heart too full for utterance. Porcupine missing. Pray for us. The two Housemaids acting queer. Have not been themselves since they received the fifty strokes of the kanchuka.
The Cook, Berdie Goodgut.

IronMonger to Guy Barnabas Bone.

May fifteen.

Kind

Sir:

We are in a terrible state of mind. Last evening six of the retainers disappeared. Horribly scared. The mandrill acting strangely. All the time stealing bits of rope. What can it all mean? Mandrill no longer friendly. The two housemaids. You know—Laudanum Liz and Morphine Maggie, walk the floor nightly. All they do is to howl. Food giving out. Nothing but half grown turnips. The crashing and the grumbling worse than ever. Am afraid to go near cliff. During last hour have heard strange noises. Two housemaids can't be found.
In sorrow, the Ironmonger.

Sequel

By Guy Barnabas Bone

I have escaped from many past horrors. I am enjoying a well-earned tranquillity. Have settled down in my own little shanty on the summit of the "Devil's Bit Mountain." I consider it my duty to inform the reader of the concluding events which clear up the foggy filament of my story. I left Glasgow on the first of last June. I was seated in cabin of the steamer "Adder." It was late in the afternoon. We had just left the mouth of the Clyde. On the larboard bow the high cliffs of the "Elsa Craig" rose up out of the sea in majestic dignity. In the cabin all was luxury, gaiety and pathos. The young German Indian princess was seated at the Piano. She warbled forth a lullaby. Her song ran something like this.

The Queen of Patagonia
Is troubled with pneumonia.
The Doctor from Pavonia
Revives that Queen, much bonier
Than any skinny—

Look, look look! Voices were out on the deck. The "Elsa Craig," the "Elsa Craig." We all rushed to the deck. Sharks and sea serpents! Everything was hurry scurry. The Captain stumbled over the first mate's wooden leg. The powder monkey tripped up the lobsouse boy, sending him scooting into the scupper. The barber fell down the air shaft. The stoker threw the cook overboard. The headwaiter took a tumble and landed in his own slop bucket. I beat it quick. I reached the deck. The view over the port bow set my heart all a flutter. The "Elsa Craig" rose out of the sea in all its

grandeur. The sea gulls flew high above. And next—the wild geese flew in droves from the mountain to feed from my hand. I supplied them with left-over pancakes from the lazaretto. Then came the turkey buzzards. Such buzzards! I could hear their screeches of triumph as they scooped down to the surface of the sea and then scooped up again. Each bird had captured a large eel. The eels were squirming and squeaking. No wonder everybody yelled "sea serpents." The steamer now drew nearer to the mighty rock. The soft slopes of the "Elsa Craig" are covered with a beautiful growth of grapevines, intermingled with another growth, the clink arbutus of Memnon. The air was impregnated with the mysterious aroma of baccharis and nard. About midway up the slope I could see a moving object. I got out my field glasses. All was clear. I could see a camel plodding up the slopes of the "Elsa Craig." I rubbed my eyes. I looked again. Yes—sure enough—a real live camel. The camel seemed all wrapped in ecstasy. The camel's gaze was fixed, bent on six weird objects. I dusted my field glass. I took one look. Six dark objects hanging from a cliff. See them Wiggle! All was now clear. Those dark objects were six human bodies hanging by their necks. Horrible! A black murky mist seemed to flop before my gaze like flaps from many bats. The pungent aroma from the baccharis and nard deprived me of all consciousness.

I found myself fettered in darkness: riveted to a pillar of contrariness. As I slowly came to my senses, I heard a voice which spake. "Stir him up, give him a poke in the ribs." I felt a poke. It was no joke. Yelps of brutal laughter. Another poke! This time with a sharp object. Next came a kick accompanied with more yelps of brutal laughter. Another poke. Oh my slats! My slats! One jump and one yell—one gasp. I opened my eyes. I found myself lying on the front platform of an abandoned tram car on the outskirts of Port Rush. I was surrounded by a mob all laughing and poking me with their walking sticks and umbrellas. Well—the whole affair amounted to this. A big policeman burst through the crowd, looked down on me, and blew a whistle. The prisoner's van arrived, or rather a substitute—a wheelbarrow. I was tumbled into an ash can—the ash can was tumbled on board the wheelbarrow. Then we started off—quite a parade! The cavalcade was led by the policeman. Next came a conscripted chimney sweep trundling the wheel barrow. We were followed by a yelling crowd of street cleaners, early risers and all night bums. We arrived at the jail. Such a nice large fat comfortable jail. I was locked in a cell. The cell was furnished with one stool, one loaf of bread, one jug of water, and one not over clean bed with a million fleas. That afternoon I was taken to the courthouse. The Judge was my grandfather's law partner. He gave me a lecture. He said I was a disgrace to an honourable line. I was fined three pounds. To raise the tin I had to pawn my watch. I had to pay a big tip to the court attendant who followed me to the hock shop to see that I did not abscond without paying my fine. I was in a terrible mess. I sank down in the gutter in despair. I heard a voice exclaim. "Hello! Hi there you Guy." I looked up. I recognized the speaker. He was the pound keeper from my native village. I was carted to the pound, the refuge for lost dogs. The keepers took great interest in me. After I had washed up and slept up and dressed up, everything was O.K. I am now settled in my cute little hovel on the summit of the Divils Bit mountain. And now I have news. We will read this last letter together.

Guy Barnabas Bone.

The Camel's Last Gasp

Mayor of Scone to Guy Barnabas Bone.

Dear Bone.

Am writing to inform you of several most extraordinary mishaps. Last week I thought I would visit my old friend the Laird of Nax. I read in the society news columns that the Laird was still at his country residence. I embarked in my yacht early in the morning. The wind was fresh from the north. My boat pitched ahead at a great rate and in about two hours we landed at the base of the Elsa Craig. Dismissing my boatman with instructions to call for me later I proceeded up the steep slopes. When half way up I heard a crunching in the bushes far below me. From a rocky eminence I could see the path far below where I stood. I was being followed up the cliff by a large camel. I rubbed my eyes. I looked again. Yes, as sure as I live, a camel was plodding up the hill at a snail's pace. After refreshing myself from my hip flask I continued up the path. I now stood on the ledge just below the cliff top that crowns the summit. On the cliff above were six trees. Each tree thrust one branch over the edge of the cliff. From the end of each branch hung a rope. At the end of each rope dangled a human form. Hanged by the neck. From the open mouth of each victim protruded a long red tongue. Just think of it—Six human forms hanging by the neck, six open mouths with six long red protruding tongues. The sight fascinated me. I felt a nudge. I looked over my shoulder. Lo and behold! The camel. I drew aside and flung myself into a small cave—too small for the camel to enter. That did not faze the camel—not much. With a disdainful snort the camel turned right about face and proceeded up the cliff. Filled with curiosity I kept my mind on that beast of the desert. The camel was now standing on a level with the six men hanging by their necks. The camel looked at the six hanging victims with the six protruding tongues. The camel walked up to the nearest hanging victim. The camel thrust forward his head—one sniff, one bite. The camel had bit off the tongue. One gulp. The camel swallowed the tongue. The camel snorted with delight. The camel took one step nearer the next victim. Snap—chew—How nice it must taste. Gulp—one more tongue is disposed of. By this time the camel is actually cackling with glee. The camel advances one more step. Crunch! The last tongue is bitten, the last tongue is swallowed. My eyes are glued to the sight. What a sight! Six swinging victims. Six bleeding mouths. I shrank in horror from the sight. I staggered up the mountain. I arrived at the summit. I sank exhausted in the clump of bushes. I heard the gurgling of water falling. I turned my head in the proper direction. One bubbling spring—one tin cup. One gulp. I felt refreshed. I heard a sound—a slight rustle on the other side of the bushes. I thrust my head through the bushes.

What a spectacle! Eureka!

I had a full view of the entire surface of the valley of Nax. Oh what a beautiful valley. In the centre of the valley stood a large rock. One large flat rock. On this rock stood the Camel. The camel stood erect, but only for a moment. With one convulsive shudder, the camel let out one piercing wail. The camel sank down. The camel lay flat upon the rock. One more convulsion. And then—the camel lifted his head. The camel looked sadly about. The camel gave one gasp, bowed his head and died. His ending was like the falling of a mighty oak.

(Signed)

J.

Brixton

Scrubb,

Mayor of Scone.

FINIS

THE rocky hill long known as the Elsa Craig has been given a new name. It is now called The Mountain of the Camel's Last Gasp.
Guy Barnabas Bone.

Note:

The foregoing tale being true should be properly authenticated. I attended to the matter last summer whilst on a visit to the Isle of Man. I repaired to the County Town Peel. Such matters in the Isle of Man are always attended to in the open air. Peel Castle was the place. When I arrived I was ushered into the Courtyard of the Castle. I was told to be seated. I was left alone. I seated myself on the edge of Saint Patrick's Purgatory. I soon heard the click of bolts. Directly in front of me stood a flat crisket rock. On the rock hung a picture. The martyrdom of Saint Bartholomew. The saint was represented as he appeared five minutes after he was skinned alive. Very harrowing! We will avoid particulars. The gate opened and then there entered, three men, one nigger and a horse. The names of the witnesses are inserted below, every member sworn in. J. Brixton Scrubb. Peter Clink. Angelo Van Gink. Daniel Dumper. Filmore Flumper. Pedro Von Stick. Johnny Snow.

Immediately after the signing of the signatures we all heard a creaking sound. The iron door of a tomb flew open. Two Irish Roman Lictors entered. They were rolling in a barrel labelled Bushmills.

They set up the barrel on a sawed-off Druid Column. And then—the barrel—they rapped it, they tapped it, we sipped it. Superb! I prefer the open plumbing every time. And then—that chattering sound. The armadillo enters. The armadillo looks at me. The armadillo winks at me. The armadillo beats a hasty retreat. Let the reader look between lines. It will be easily seen that the armadillo plays a very important part in this narrative. Many people hate the word ,goodbye. I don't. It is the old English for God bless you.

RICHARD GRIFFIN.

WEDGE 3

Oh where is the western breeze?
Oh where is the western breeze?
 I cannot sneeze,
 I'm full of fleas.
Oh where is the western breeze?

"SALLY LUN"

How I love you Sally Lun,
Better far than any bun,
Better far than raisin cake
Those that mother used to bake,
Don't be foolish any one,
Don't indulge in any pun,
Close yer face. Don't act so silly
Father's pants will soon fit Willie.

How I love you Sally Lun
Other cakes are on the run
Muffins, toast and griddle cakes
Fade away poor stupid fakes
Even butter-scotch seems meek
Multitudes of lobsters sneak,
Close yer face. Don't act so silly
Father's pants will soon fit Willie.

How I love you Sally Lun,
We are having lots of fun
Many pies skip out of sight
Many puddings vanish quite
Fish we fry with mutton fat
Ember days attend to that
Close yer face. Don't act so silly
Father's pants will soon fit Willie.

KING OF THE SPRING

Dedicated to Alfred Lord Tennyson

WHEN in the gloaming Tilly dear
 I sweetly sleep, be rough
Fight like a spunky chanticleer
 Don't let my sleep be tough.
Stand me upon my shaky legs,
 Don't let me flop my knee.
Carry me to the whiskey kegs,
 There will I howl with glee.
Willy nilly let's be silly,
 Skipping the nifty fling
I'm to be King of the spring, Tilly,
 I'm to be King of the spring.

I had a toothache yestereve
 No Doctor could be found
Therefore I called on faithful Steve,
 The keeper of the pound.
The pain was fierce. Oh, how I swore
 When first I felt the wrench
That monkey wrench tight on my jaw.
 Oh hell, excuse my French.
Willy nilly, let's be silly
 Skipping the nifty fling.
I'm to be King of the spring Tilly
 I'm to be King of the Spring.

Another spring has had its fling
 My brain is all afloat,
Scraped by a wheel I hear a squeal
 The bleating of a goat.
I'll grin through all this mental itch
 Polishing up my snout.
Effie that darling little witch
 Inspires me to shout.
Willy nilly let's be silly
 Skipping the nifty fling
I'm to be King of the spring Tilly
 I'm to be King of the spring.

Another year has gone to hell
 And yet alive I be
Here in this jail locked in a cell
 I'm bitten by a flea.

That nasty bug severe and smug
 Is crawling up my spine
Making me itch, in spite of which
 I sing to thee and thine.
Willy nilly let's be silly
 Skipping the nifty fling
I'm to be King of the spring,
 Tilly I'm to be King of the Spring.

Today they bolstered up my chin
 And then I had a shock
Tilly arrived with heaps of tin,
 She got me out of hock.
Effie brought roses by the peck,
 Also one daffodil.
They strung the flowers round my neck.
 We all began to trill.
Willy nilly let's be silly
 Skipping the nifty fling
I'm to be King of the spring, Tilly
 I'm to be King of the spring.

They tell me I'm a bigamist
 Ain't that an awful slam
Enough to make a nigger twist.
 This Guy don't give a damn.
None of my teeth are aching,
 My nettle rash has left,
Effie does all the baking,
 Tilly's accused of theft.
Willy nilly let's be silly
 Skipping the nifty fling
I'm to be King of the spring Tilly
 I'm to be King of the spring.

I think I'll plant a whipping post
 Under the linden tree.
I've never made one idle boast
 With me you must agree.
Better to shame, yes, spank each dame
 Than let them sin too much.
I'll have my spree at the linden tree
 In the shade of the rabbit hutch.
Willy nilly let's be silly
 Skipping the nifty fling.
I'm to be King of the spring, Tilly,
 I'm to be King of the spring.

The Camel's Last Gasp

Last night whilst eating venison
Feeling quite debonair
I thought of Alfred Tennyson
Also his maiden fair,
That dear sweet child whose memory
Is ever in my mind.
And no rough scraping emery
Can scratch away nor grind
Out of the gears of my two ears
That lovely roundelay.
"I'm to be Queen of the May, mother
I'm to be Queen of the May."

By RICHARD GRIFFIN.

DROPSICAL HIPS

In a circus I a Ringmaster am
Master am!
Master am!
They say I'm a dandy, I know I'm a clam.
I've given myself to a flirt.
As in the ring she tumbled
So cute, so slim, so pert.
My heart—my how it stumbled.
I've fallen in love with a skirt.

CHORUS

As round the ring she skips
Doing her flopperty flips,
She's one dandy ace
With a smile on her face
In spite of her dropsical hips.
Dropsical hips,
Dropsical hips. Har har!

The Lady's name is Mademoiselle,
Mademoiselle
Se El Estelle
Her proper name is Nancy Bell.
McDermody De Lorme
She really is so graceful,
She's taken the town by storm.
You'll always find the place full
When she is to perform.

CHORUS

As round the ring she skips
Doing her flopperty flips,
She's one dandy ace
With a smile on her face
In spite of her dropsical hips.
Dropsical hips.
Dropsical hips. Har har!

Fill up the glass and give me a drink.
Give me a drink!
Give me a drink!
My sweet heart put me on the blink,
And now I'm on the bum.
While in the tent I tarried

The Camel's Last Gasp

She treated me like scum
She ran away and married
The fellow that beat the drum.

CHORUS

As round the ring she skips,
Doing her flopperty flips
She's one dandy ace
With a smile on her face
In spite of her dropsical hips.
Dropsical hips,
Dropsical hips. Har har!

The monkey she married is full of bugs,
Full of bugs!
Full of bugs!
One measly fellow addicted to drugs,
He only has one leg.
And yet she loves that lazy
Black son of a gun of a yegg.
You bet, she is one daisy,
Loving that rotten egg.

CHORUS

As round the ring she skips,
Doing her flopperty flips
She's one dandy ace
With a smile on her face
In spite of her dropsical hips.
Dropsical hips
Dropsical hips. Har har!

She wanted me to go to the Devil.
Go to the Devil!
Go to the Devil!
Instead of the Devil I'm quite on the level
Snapping my jumble jigs.
Now let the loving twain dive,
Deep in their sticky figs.
May Nancy and her swain thrive,
Happy as little pigs.

CHORUS

Richard Griffin

As round the ring she skips
Doing her flopperty flips,
 She's one dandy ace
 With a smile on her face
In spite of her dropsical hips.
Dropsical hips.
Dropsical hips. Har har!

NOTE—The words "Har har" at end of each chorus are meant to represent the chords of a ukelele.\$

DON'T

Don't eat the over seasoned sausage,
 Don't be a silly crab,
Don't steal your mother's silken corsage,
 Lest we your jugular jab.

Don't sneak away with mother's mittens,
 Don't be a nincompoop.
Don't rob the cat to help the kittens,
Don't tumble in the soup.

Don't yank the leg of rancid mutton,
 Don't shake the loaded dice,
Don't be a horse's collar button,
 Don't be a cake of ice.

Endeavour to be white, not yellow.
 Don't wear a hat too high,
But rather be a right good fellow
 Helping the other guy.

NOT A HERO

"Willie, do not be afraid. It won't hurt because you are seven years old." (That's what we told Willie.)

Willie sits in the big chair. The Dentist thrusts the turn key in Willie's mouth. One twist to the right, two twists to the left. Oh Lord, oh Lord! Poor Willie, that yell! The tooth is out. Willie howled. Willie did not bear up bravely. Willie is not a hero. No one will give Willie a box of tin soldiers.

THE NIMBLE ARTISAN

What a majestic portico. What a beautiful staircase descending to the courtyard below. In the centre of the courtyard there is a table. On the table there is a cage. Inside the cage there is one gander, one wolf, one mud hen, one skunk, one jack-rabbit and one child. What a strange mix-up of prisoners.

What a happy family.

But they won't be happy long. Look at that strange creature at the head of the staircase. It is the nimble artisan. The nimble artisan steps down, he descends the staircase. He carries a coffee pot in one hand and a jewelled match box in the other. The coffee pot is not full of coffee—oh no—it is full of gasoline. The nimble artisan now stands close to the cage. The nimble artisan raises the coffee pot on high, pouring the entire contents into the cage. The inmates of said cage are all sprinkled with gasoline. The gander, the wolf, the mud hen, the skunk, the jack rabbit and the child are saturated with gasoline. The nimble artisan now produces a match. He strikes the match. It immediately lights. How strange. The nimble artisan thrusts the flaming match through the bars of the cage. The wolf's tail ignites. The fire spreads and soon the entire happy family are in flames. They are no longer happy. They refuse to be tranquil. They voice their disapproval. What a howl, what a racket! And the smell. What a smell! Especially the skunk. Yes—the air is getting pungent. We had better retire. This way please, the atmosphere is fresher outside. We are now on the balcony. The nimble artisan soon appears with a tray. We are served with iced mead mixed with barley corn juice, so very refreshing.

From the distant cage we hear faint murmurs. They die out. Now all is well. Selah.

WEDGE 4

I'm Flim the flammer.
I'm quite a slammer.
I raised the hammer.
All on the bat.
I smashed the bed bug.
That nasty red bug.
Now it's a dead bug.
I squashed it flat.
I squashed it flat.
I squashed it flat.
That nasty bed bug.
I squashed it flat.

HIVES

Bella, Berlinda, Jane and Lucinda
Wonderful models of wives,
 Busy with patching,
Can't stop their scratching.
 All the bunch troubled with hives.
Troubled with hives
Troubled with hives
 All the bunch troubled with hives.

Bella big bouncing
Sings while she's trouncing
 Both of her children. She strives
Vainly like birdie
Th' linnet so sturdy
 To smother the fact she has hives.
Fact she has hives
Fact she has hives
 Smother the fact she has hives.

Burly Berlinda
Opens the winder
 Calls the dog: when it arrives,
Ere she can tub it,
Ere she can scrub it,
 She is attacked with the hives.
Tacked with the hives
Tacked with the hives
 She is attacked with the hives.

Jane the absconder
In her cell yonder
 Tries to escape from the gyves
No, she can't make it
Not even fake it.
 She is aflame with the hives
Flame with the hives
Flame with the hives.
 She is aflame with the hives.

Fairest Lucinda
Burning like tinder
 Scratches away, then she dives
Out from the casement
Into the basement
 Where she sits nursing her hives

Nursing her hives
Nursing her hives
 Where she sits nursing her hives.

All of these ladies
Broiling in Hades
 Look like inflammable wives
Scratching away like
The Devil—but "Say Mike
 Let us fight shy of the hives.
Shy of the hives
Shy of the hives
 Let us fight shy of the hives."

THE SUSQUEHANNA TUB

Whilst wandering with Sally
 I met the dusty miller.
He lives up Hogan's alley
 Not far from Unadilla.
 We motored to that thriller
The valley of Black Scrub.
 My head began to spin
 I drank a glass of gin
 And then I tumbled in
The Susquehanna tub.

The eastern breeze don't seem to please
 Whirling about the sibyl.
The fortune teller quite a yeller
 Screeches, "Ich kabibble?"

If you go to Unadilla
Keep away from Jack the miller
Lest he take you to that thriller
 To the valley of Black Scrub
Where each horse kicks every mare
Where each rabbit bites each hare
Seeking supremacy down there
 Deep in the mystic tub.

The Sibyl spake "Make no mistake
 I'm shaky at the knees.
My sword I'll sell, oh Hell oh Hell,
 Where is the western breeze?"

The gander and his wife the goose—
See them trying to break loose.
Diving thru the leaky sluice
 Into the pit of Scrub.
See the wise man and the fool
See each rabbit bite each mule
Bathing in that swimming pool
 The Susquehanna tub.

"Sour wine is a lucky sign"
 (This was the sibyl's cry)

"But—wind from the west is far far best
Verily so say I."

Climbing up the hickory tree
Sally the silly fool
Waving her hand to you and me
Flings herself in the pool.
Down she sinks in the sticky mess
Close to the squirming chub
Mixed with the fragrant water cress
Deep in the mystic tub.

The Sibyl fried the fish. We cried
"We know a nice go-getter."
The Sibyl said, "You're off your head
The western breeze is better."

Hark! we hear the thunder rumble
Silly Sally see her stumble
While the bunch of bathers grumble
As their skin they rub
Thumping bumping in a jumble
Kicking scratching as they tumble.
Silly Sally, see her crumble
Dead in that sticky scrub
The Susquehanna tub.

The Sibyl bowed her head, the crowd
Shook like a twisting snake.
Poor silly Sally from the alley
Cannot win the cake.

The evil eye can't terrify
The valley of Black Scrub,
Forevermore I must adore
The Susquehanna tub.

NOTE—High up on the hill, just above the Tub there is a small plateau on which stands a beautiful morgue where the coroner sits daily during the summer season. Regarding the Sibyl, take my advice, have no dealings with fortune tellers. Also shake all ghost mediums. Table tappers are rather undesirable. I myself believe in the Devil, and my advice is, leave him alone. I have seen him.—RICHARD GRIFFIN.

DON'T PICK IT

The Mayor of Teck
 Had a boil on his neck
Look out Mr. Jicket don't flick it.
 Rub kerosene oil
 On the point of your boil,
Be careful, don't let the dog lick it
 Now don't be a freak,
 Just brace up your beak
Coddle your pimple, don't stick it
 It's too near the bone
 Just leave it alone
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

'Twill never get well if you pick it.
'Twill never get well if you pick it.
 It's too near the bone,
 So leave it alone
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

 I knew a man, once
 One horrible dunce
He always kept scratching that dimple
 Upon his left knee.
 The bite of a flea
Evolved itself into a pimple—
 So painful so red,
 He scratched it—it bled.
I cudgeled my logic to save him.
 And yet that cross patch
 Continued to scratch
Despite the advice that I gave him.

'Twill never get well if you pick it.
'Twill never get well if you pick it.
 It's too near the bone
 So leave it alone
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

John Doe is infected
Completely dejected
 Tho' once he was quite a high stepper.
Poor boy, he's all beaten
Yes thoroughly eaten.

They tell me the lad is a leper.
Now my earnest advice
Is, go feed upon rice.
Regarding that tumor, don't nick it,
Remember, it's catching,
,Refrain from all scratching,
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

'Twill never get well if you pick it.
'Twill never get well if you pick it.
It's too near the bone
So leave it alone.
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

Dear friend you seem throttled,
With leprosy mottled.
Go lock yourself up in the garret
Be one dandy freak
Just skip away, sneak
Don't slide on your ear like a parrot.
Don't do what that guy did.
That scab on your eye lid
Looms one degree north from your shoulder.
Don't dig it, don't dent it
Don't live to repent it,
Before you grow very much older.

'Twill never get well if you pick it.
'Twill never get well if you pick it.
It's too near the bone
So leave it alone
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

That lipstick so base
Is quite hard on the face
They call it one obstinate corker,
The cat with nine lives
Is troubled with hives
The ostrich from Fez is no balker.
He gave Jake one claw
On the side of his jaw
As he peacefully slept in the thicket.
That carbuncle red
On the top of your head
Will never get well if you pick it.

The Camel's Last Gasp

'Twill never get well if you pick it.
'Twill never get well if you pick it.
 It's too near the bone,
 So leave it alone,
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

 Don't fret overmuch
 Behave like the Dutch
Just fill up that pipe, Mr. Jicket.
 One scratch of the match
 And then with dispatch
You'll be fast asleep in the thicket,
 That arbor of roses
 Where Venus reposes
Far far from the sting of the cricket.
 So please do not scratch
 Your little red patch,
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

'Twill never get well if you pick it.
'Twill never get well if you pick it.
It's too near the bone
So leave it alone
'Twill never get well if you pick it.

NOTE—Many a cancer has been developed by over scratching. Leave pimples alone.
What's the use?

THE CHIMNEY CORNER

INTRODUCTION

(By the Father)

I often thrash my eldest son
He says, "Thy holy will be done."
 And then I grease the strap with lard
 And spank him, oh, so very hard!
I spank him, "Easy?" "oh, dear, no!"
That method would not be a go
 It would not have the right effect,
 It hardly could be termed correct,
It would not be the wiser course.
I come from Norway, I'm a Norse.
 And, now, regarding naughty Jim,
 I leave the narrative to him.

NARRATIVE

(By the Son)

On a bright September morning,
Father spanked me, without warning,
 Laying me across the table,
 Spanking me upon my gable.
How engrossing! how compelling!
Father loves to hear me yelling,
 Blistering the proper landing.
 I must eat while I am standing.

See the pretty oaken ruler,
Color of the coffee cooler.
 Such an ever-slapping toiler,
 Yes, one perfect, stinging broiler.
Father's method is uplifting,
Ever searching, never drifting,
 Never swerving, ever landing,
 I must eat while I am standing.

Yes, I fear that I must ever
Eat while standing. Father's clever,
 Handles well the strap, outflinging
 With full justice. Oh, the stinging!
Oh, the smarting, oh, the Devil!
Father's on the proper level.
 Oh, the blistering, the branding!
 I must eat while I am standing.

The Camel's Last Gasp

See where they arrange the dinner
For the chimney corner Sinner—
 Absolutely true, no fable,
 See where they arrange the table.
See the mantelpiece all ready,
I've no use for Mother Eddy,
 She will never ease the branding,
 I must eat while I am standing.

One day Father lost the ruler,
Color of the coffee cooler,
 While we quietly were strolling
 Through the meadow near the rolling
Banks of the Euphrates River.
Father made me totter, shiver.
 Like some ghastly, cruel Werner,
 Father grabs the pancake turner,
Flourishing the tin utensil,
Marking me as with a stencil,
 Oh, the slapping, scorching, branding!
 I must eat while I am standing.

Father is so captivating,
Ever spanking, no abating,
 Tingle, shingle,* ever frightful.
 Yet uplifting, how delightful!
No reprieve, not on yer kidney,
Father spans his little Sidney,
 Slapping me in two-four time,
 In a sort of Tuscan rhyme.
Father is so persevering,
No side tracking, perfect steering.
 Daddy is King pin at branding.
 I must eat while I am standing.

*Shingle: A small, oblong bit of cedar wood made for covering roofs. Shingles are also very frequently used for purposes of youthful correction.—THE AUTHOR.

WEDGE 5

Berlinda Ann
 stood meddling
With pickled
 prickly pears.
The Casey clan
 kept treadling
That tread-mill
 set with snares.
The sailor man
 kept peddling
Horse collars
 made for mares.
Horse collars
 made for mares.
Horse collars
 made for mares.
The sailor man
 kept peddling
Horse collars
 made for mares.

THE RAZOR BACK PIG

WHERE was Moses
 When the goose said quack?
Where was Moses?
 Why does he turn his back?
Is he washing down a snack
Of pork with apple jack?
 Where was Moses
When the goose said quack?

Devils galore take a swig,
Look at them delving their dig
Doing their stunt with a jig
On the spine of a razor back pig.

On the spine of a razor back pig,
On the spine of a razor back pig.
Seventeen devils may jig
On the spine of a razor back pig.

Not far from that village called Yale,
Men frequently ride on a rail.
 In the jail, all those farmers,
 Wear yellow pajamas,
That nightie without any tail.

Where was Ikie
 when the beer went flat?
Where was Ikie,
 whatever was he at?
Was he climbing Ararat
With Casey at the bat?
 Where was Ikie
When the beer went flat?

We will lash Tubal Kane with a rope,
But first rub the rope with soft soap.
And after that dope we will jig
On the spine of a razor back pig.

On the spine of a razor back pig,
On the spine of a razor back pig.
Seventeen devils may jig
On the spine of a razor back pig.

Not far from that village called Yale,
Men frequently ride on a rail,
 In the jail all those farmers,
 Wear yellow pajamas,
That nightie without any tail.

Where was Jakie
 When his teeth fell out?
Where was Jakie
 And what was he about?
Was he trying to catch trout?
Was he polishing his snout
 Where was Jakie
When his teeth fell out?
Seventeen venomous devils
Devils from various levels
Dance on elliptical bevels
Enjoying their rollicksome revels.

On the spine of a razor back pig,
On the spine of a razor back pig.
Seventeen devils may jig
On the spine of a razor back pig.

Not far from that village called Yale,
Men frequently ride on a rail,
 In the jail all those farmers,
 Wear yellow pajamas,
That nightie without any tail.

Peter got it
 in the neck, neck, neck.
See the slip knot
 Strangling the geck.
Kick the chair away
See the body sway.
 Peter got it
In the neck, neck, neck.

We'll gather those bright, yellow docks
At the end of the lane on the rocks.
Where the fox had a pain near that box.
Of jewellery Tubal Kane hocks.

The Camel's Last Gasp

On the spine of a razor back pig,
on the spine of a razor back pig.
Seventeen devils may jig
On the spine of a razor back pig.

Not far from the village called Yale,
Men frequently ride on a rail.
 In the jail all those farmers,
 Wear yellow pajamas,
That nightie without any tail.

Where was Nimrod
 when he ate the rat?
Where was Nimrod
 how did he get so fat?
Is he chucking down his hat
Over Paddy Duffy's cat?
 Where was Nimrod
When he ate that rat?

Come, let us enter that drain
Deep in the mud near the lane
There where the fox had a pain.
That's where we'll smash Tubal Kane.

On the spine of a razor back pig,
On the spine of a razor back pig.
Seventeen devils may jig
On the spine of a razor back pig.

Not far from that village called Yale,
Men frequently ride on a rail.
 In the jail all those farmers
 Wear yellow pajamas
That nightie without any tail.

AUNT JANE

AUNT JANE with a dash
Just worshipping cash
 Looks carefully after her bubble.
She says she will sell
Me out. I'm in Hell,
 Aunt Jane is one horrible trouble.
I owe her a bill
It's a terrible pill,
 I don't feel one dandy bit funny.
With impudent cheek
She gave me one week
 To pay her the big pile of money.

We'll strangle Aunt Jane near the stable
We'll strangle Aunt Jane near the stable.
 As well as we're able
 We'll get out the cable
We'll strangle Aunt Jane near the stable.

With a Hinkety kinkety toodle,
With a hinkety kinkety toodle,
 With a hinkety kinkety
 Blinkety flinkety
Hinkety kinkety toodle.

I've just got a note
I know it by rote
 Dear Auntie is troubled with demons.
She's off on a spree
My cry soon will be
 She's got the delirium tremens.
I'll pay her, like Hell!
I'll make that bill smell
 Not far from the banks of the Liffy.
I'll fix her, by heck!
With a rope round her neck
 We'll swing her aloft in a jiffy.

We'll strangle Aunt Jane near the stable
We'll strangle Aunt Jane near the stable.
As well as we're able
We'll get out the cable.
We'll strangle Aunt Jane near the stable.

The Camel's Last Gasp

With a Hinkety kinkety toodle,
With a hinkety kinkety toodle,
 With a hinkety kinkety
 Blinkety flinkety
Hinkety kinkety toodle.

The lamplighter's light
Is ignited so bright
 The lamplighter works like a flunkey
My foxy Aunt looked
Like a partly uncooked
 Sick antediluvian monkey.
She's such a mean beast,
We all held a feast
 We strung my Aunt Jane with a razzle.
And then—I'll be durned,
The frankfurters burned.
The lobsters were cooked to a frazzle.

We strangled Aunt Jane near the stable.
We forced her to stand on a table,
 With her neck in a cable
 Now this is no fable.
We strangled Aunt Jane near the stable.

With a Hinkety kinkety toodle,
With a hinkety kinkety toodle,
 With a hinkety kinkety
Blinkety flinkety
Hinkety kinkety toodle.

ENVOY

It's time for my nap,
I'll pull down my cap,
 I'll close both my eyes with a flutter.
I'm weak as a mouse
Or a flexible louse
 Without any salt in my butter.
I think of queer things
Whilst mysterious rings
 Go whirling about with a splutter.
Six devils all red
Dance jigs through my head
As I peacefully sleep in the gutter.

As I peacefully sleep in the gutter
My heart gives a jump, then a flutter.
 I dream of meat cake
 Made of poisonous snake,
As I peacefully sleep in the gutter.

With a Hinkety kinkety toodle,
With a hinkety kinkety toodle,
 With a hinkety kinkety
 Blinkety flinkety
Hinkety kinkety toodle.

NOTE—The last verse of above poem is in conformity with my general rule of having one verse in every piece on an entirely different subject from the rest of the poem.—
THE AUTHOR.

SPRINGTIME IN RUSSIA

WE tread the path of discontent
 I told you not to sup the grout.
Meander not on mischief bent,
 I am compelled to thump your snout.
It is my most sincere lament
 That I must swing the bloody knout
I'll trice you up with leather mesh
I'll crack your bones, I'll tear your flesh

One year ago, here in this fold
 I bid lubricate your snout.
It was a pleasure to behold
 The way your snout became so stout.
But now your fault, so very bold
 Must be corrected by the knout.
I'll trice you up with leather mesh,
I'll crack your bones, I'll tear your flesh

My bonny lad we must retrench,
 We'll have to lubricate your snout.
We'll strap you firmly on the bench,
 We'll crack you with the whip so stout.
We'll carve you up and also drench
 With bloody gore the useful knout
I'll trice you up with leather mesh
I'll crack your bones, I'll tear your flesh

We'll lacerate your skin, we'll wring,
 We'll bathe each mangled part throughout
With salt and pepper. Will it sting?
 You bet it will, yes you will shout.
The picnic will be mine. I'll sing
 All praises to the bloody knout.
I'll trice you up with leather mesh,
I'll crack your bones, I'll tear your flesh.

The sunbeam on the plate of hash
 Breaks into colored bric-a-brac,
One perfect rainbow with a dash
 Of sausage gravy. Hear that quack.
The flock of ganders with a splash
 Jump in the river of Hackensack.
They reach the shore in time to see
The first act of the jubilee.

ENVOY

The knout it wiggles with a crunch
And crackles at the dippy bunch.
I'll rip you up until you swell,
Until you feel like merry Hell.
I'll drag you out upon the porch,
I'll burn you with a flaming torch
And when I think you have suffice,
I'll roll you up in broken ice.

THE NICE FAMILY

THE ten members of the Hopkins family are certainly the most noted criminals known to fame, a remarkable tho' an unworthy bunch. I had a complete story of the entire ten.

The story was all in verse. The greater part of the verses were lost in the San Francisco earthquake. I preserved only the verses relating to the two Hopkins, five and ten.

One of those degenerates actually buried his wife alive. He threw her into soft mud and stamped her down. Her troubles were soon over. I will give you the list of the others in rotation. Number One—Confidence man known as Grand Central Pete. Number Two—ditto, whose nom de plume is Hungry Joe. Number Three—a very clever second storey man. Number Four—known as Nimble Nell, the cutest little pickpocket that walks Broadway. Number Six—a rather indifferent sneak thief—always in trouble. Numbers Seven and Eight—dope peddlers. Number Nine—runs a place called Dr. Ramscars, non-sectarian home for senile delinquents. The Doctor has just been arrested for feeding his guests on mule flesh. The poor mule had died a natural death. The Doctor purchased the carcass cheap. The Hopkins bunch remind me of the talkative barbers, brothers in the thousand and one nights. Blood poison wholesale.

Most of the poems describing the Hopkins family have been lost. The papers had been deposited in a Chinese pagoda that stood on the edge of the Golden Horn. Then came the earthquake. The pagoda toppled into the sea. The manuscripts were lost. And sad to relate, those missing Hopkins' poems were even more sublime than the two Hopkins' poems inserted.

HOPKINS NUMBER FIVE

Hopkins number five
Buried his wife alive,
Because she stole one spud.
He hit her just one thud,
Then stamped her in the mud,
Mud, mud, mud,
He stamped her in the mud.
Hopkins number five
Never could survive
The shame he felt (poor chump)
When wifie made one slump
Being in need of cash.
Hopkins made one dash.
He gave her nose one smash
Smash, smash, smash,
He gave her nose one smash.

Hopkins number five
Buried his wife alive.
He never could resist
Vengeance. He raised his fist

And gave his wife one thud,
Because she stole that spud,
Great sin which called for blood
He stamped her in the mud
Mud, mud, mud,
He stamped her in the mud.

HOPKINS NUMBER TEN

Hopkins number ten
Coddles his painful wen
Beneath one shoulder blade—
it breaks apart,
Bursting his marrow pith;
We know he's troubled with
Fatty degeneration
Of the heart.

We fear his goose is cooked.
Quite certain he is booked
To cross the river Jordan
in a trice.
He'll bump against the rocks,
We'll pack him in a box
Entangled with the
necessary ice.

Hopkins number ten,
Rejecting Nicky Ben
Smiles gently on the demon.
He don't grumble
But peacefully doth writhe.
Old Whiskers with his scythe
Won't give the guy another
chance to tumble.

We buried him with pomp,
The Devil cannot romp.
No picnic now for
foxy Nicky Ben.
Fetch me my hellebore.
None of his fiends galore
Can ever trouble
Hopkins number ten.

The Camel's Last Gasp

Hopkins number ten,
Coddled that lumpy wen,
 That inartistic wen
 beneath his shoulder.
In spite of pains and aches,
In spite of seeing snakes
 He died before he lived to
 be much older.

ENVOY

The members of his flock
Tumbled a chunk of rock
 Over the bones of Hopkins—
 poor slob dobber!
Now with low muffled cries
Heaving a load of sighs
 Dejectedly we drop chins,
 also slobber.

EXPLANATION TO "HOUSE OF MYSTERY"

HANK the drover croaked all over.
Dicky wore the yellow robe.
Ike the geck arrived in Dover.
Every goldfish broke its globe.
Therefore I must beg a dreg
In the cellar from the keg.

Naughty Magdalena giggling.
Grabs the razor, thinks it's fun,
Cutting Isaac's throat; dread wiggling.
One last kick, the deed is done.
Fry that pie called Sally Lun,
Then her nose will never run.

In his box, serenely snuggled—
Isaac sleeps, poor wretched Hun!
Now this narrative quite juggled
Actually pleases none.
I must hurry to the stump
On the hill top near the pump.

Jacob's teeth were all extracted
Yester eve at set of sun.
Soon the last act was enacted.
My ambitions are undone.
Never shall I mount that stump
On the hill top near the pump.

See that dark mysterious gilding
On that dome close to the tarn.
No it's not that ugly building
Uncle Peter's old red barn
Where we brought the socks to darn,
Also where I wrote this yarn.

That dark structure is the house of
Horror, an abode all strife.
That same house in which that mouse of
Vengeance took the bishop's life.
When he died he left one wife.
Soon she'll wed the Duke of Fife.

ENVOY

The Camel's Last Gasp

See that island in the river—
 There I edited this tale.
Hop aboard my pretty flivver.
 Soon we'll taste the prickly kale
Flavored with narcotic liver
 Sprinkled o'er with poisoned ale.
In my thumb there sticks a sliver.
 Oh be still thou painful flail.
Can't you see it makes me shiver?
 Open up that lock called Yale.
 Heaping up my treasure trove
 On the table near the stove.

NOTE—Having read the above poem carefully you will positively understand the story that now follows.

HOUSE OF MYSTERY

THE storm had lasted three days. The wind then abated. We rode on a fierce wave. The graceful ripple kicker was driven toward a rocky shore; the noble faithful ripple kicker struck against the rocky rock. Myself and the gink gaze from the upper deck down on the rock beneath. We enter a large basket and by the aid of a rope, a chain and a winch we lower ourselves. At last we stand on the firm rock, Eureka! We behold a cleft in the rock, we enter and find ourselves in a narrow passage, dark and twisting. The rocks on each side are plastered with a thick coating of gorse all soaked with wasium. The air is weighted with wasium tinged with the smell of musk. We twist through the cleft and after many angular turnings we emerge on a beautiful parapet of sandalwood studded with brass tacks. We gaze across the valley of Geddo and there at the nearest edge of the valley of mushrooms, behold our goal. This is the wonder of the ages, the structure of that and thus. This is the house of mystery. There is a barrel of cider in the attic. What a queer place to keep the cider. "Wouldn't you like to drink a glass of cider?" said my friend, the gink. (He is the son of a Moravian sea-cook.) He is a thirsty soul. How extraordinary!

When he told me about the barrel in the attic, I told him I would greatly enjoy a glass—two glasses of cider, nice hard cider, all kick. My friend, the gink, expressed great joy and proposed we go at once to the attic. The attic—what a strange place to keep cider. But this is a house of mystery and anything is likely to happen in a house of mystery. Everything is topsy-turvy in a house of mystery. That is the reason why they keep the cider in the attic. My friend, the gink, proposed we go at once to the attic. My friend, the gink, takes the key from where it hangs over the faithful Seth Thomas clock. Then we both start for the door. There is a rich Turkey rug in the middle of the floor. In crossing the room we have to cross over the rug. As we step on the rug there is a big explosion. We are both shot up in the air. We hit our heads against the ceiling—we break a hole in the ceiling—we shoot through the hole in the ceiling—myself and the gink shoot through into the room above—we are propelled with such force we continue—we bump through the ceiling above that and so on—up, up we go and still up. Up, up—yet sidewise—now edgewise, yet up, up. At last we are in the cellar. How extraordinary!

What a nice cellar with a large bay window on one side. A rich velvet carpet covers the cellar floor. This is the first time I ever ran across a velvet carpet on the floor of a cellar. There was no furniture only one washtub and one pendant skep hanging up on the wall. The washtub was full of cider. We grab the pendant skep—we dip the skep deep in the washtub and we drink deep—nice hard cider—we gulp. When myself and the gink have finished with one gulp we cross the cellar to the window. Velvet curtains are over the cellar window. We draw aside the cellar curtains. We look out. We look up—sky—nothing but sky. We look down. What an entrancing view.

Everything on edge. How extraordinary!

From the cellar window we look down—down on the summit of the Matterhorn far beneath. There is a small flat plateau on top of the Matterhorn, and on the plateau is seated the Princess Bridget of Madagascar. How stout. She is much stouter than when we last met. She is suffering from fatty degeneration of the heart. She is seated on the southern slope where the mountain descends rapidly—the scene is beautiful. I cannot describe the scene that has already been described, but I could see what I did see, and what I did see is this. Here goes.

The Camel's Last Gasp

The summit of the Matterhorn is a high cliff. Looking down I could see a valley descending gradually toward the south. In the distance I could see the plains of Lombardy, and beyond that the steeples of Genoa sharply outlined against the hills of far off Yonkers. I was enthralled. When I was able to shift my gaze I took a second look down on top of the Matterhorn where I could see the Princess Bridget. She was playing checkers with our old friend, the Scandinavian, son of a rat catcher. They both gaze intently over the game—for a moment. Then for a moment raise their eyes, glancing up at the cellar window far, far, up above. They now see the gink and myself looking out and down at them. They resent our intrusion. The Princess and the Scandinavian pick up rocks. Glancing up at us with looks all hatred, they fling the stones at me and my friend, the gink. They object to my looking down at them from the cellar window. That is why the Princess Bridget and the Scandinavian son of a rat catcher take up rocks and throw them at me and the gink.

I got a thump in the eye—the gink got a thump in the kisser. Myself and the gink found ourselves staggering back from the window. Staggering back. That trap door, that open trap in the floor of the cellar. It invites us. It compels us. We stagger—we fall down, down through the trap door, that trap door in the middle of the cellar floor. We fall still lower down, straight down sidewise—yet on edge—down, still further down, down. At last we are in the attic. How extraordinary!

We go down to get to the attic. Such a nice attic. The attic, the windows open, all the windows open. Wind blowing. Wind everywhere, wind in all directions. Myself and the gink try to steady ourselves—no use. The wind gets the best of us. Out the window we go. We land in a tree. We slide down. We look about. We find ourselves in a beautiful garden. I sink down on a grassy bank all dazed. My head swims comfortably—all is dark before my eyes—black darkness with yellow clouds flitting here and there. Now all is darkness. I sleep. Deep undreaming sleep. How long the sleep lasts I know not. When sense returned I thought I heard the murmuring of many waters—then voices—then curses—then blows—then curses mingled with blows. Then all was still. Soon I heard a madrigal of sweet voices. I opened my eyes. My friend, the gink, was standing close by, looking at me with a sad smile. He was a sight—he was all covered with honey. He told me he had overturned an abandoned bee-hive. How lucky the beehive had been abandoned. Had the hive been inhabited, the bees certainly would have given us merry Hell. The honey. We both of us are sticky with honey. How uncomfortable—how very uncomfortable. We look around for cleansing accommodations. Ah there! My old friend the pump. We both tackle the pump—the pump answers the purpose. We both rapidly clean up. Then we light our pipes and sit down to rest. We hear faint jingling sounds. Music, faint at first, then louder, a regular Turkish patrol, drums, fifes, banjos, trombones, accordions, etc. At the further side of the green enclosure we see advancing seventeen Macedonian horsemen, richly caparisoned and drawn up in battle array. They are led by an officer who rides proudly in advance. Who do you think it is? No less a personage than that great character, Philip of Macedon, the conqueror of Greece. He is all dressed up like a drunken shoe-maker. That handsome young officer at his side is his son, Alexander. Next in the parade march seventeen vestal virgins, dressed in plain white cheesecloth. Each and every one of them swing along with thumbs down. They carry lighted candles. Then follow the steel clad mass of soldiers, all brisk and eager. There is a sound from the other direction. We rubber our necks to the left, and behold another army is charging up the slopes of the Matterhorn. Banners waving, drums beating, mingled with the battle cry of anticipation mixed with apathy.

This second army is led by the Princess Bridget and her able Captain, the Scandinavian, son of a rat catcher. The two armies meet in a deadly clash. Drums rattle. Trumpets blare. Accordions wail. Shouts of triumph. Howls from the wounded. Groans from the dying. The sounds of battle echo from cliff to cliff. The sounds reverberate from the summit of Mount Rosa to the tall bleak walls of an abandoned brewery. I feel something at my throat. I am seized, grappled with, drawn down, down now sidewise, yet on edge. We are drawn into a cavern. Myself and the gink find ourselves in a cave, a large grotto. Two big dimpled dodos sit on their haunches, glaring at us with hungry eyes. The hungry looks are interwoven with benevolent gleams. The gink is all smiles. He knows the dodos well and the dodos know the gink. They are old chums. The dodos remember many donations of peanuts. The two dodos now arose, went to a dark corner and presently returned with two plates of poached chipmunks and a bottle of brandy. After covering the table with a cloth white as snow, the dodos placed the refreshments thereon and bid us eat. We did. As the last mouthful disappeared down our gullets we suddenly heard distant sounds. Sound of battle. Yells of triumph. Howls of despair. Quiet soon reigned once more. Then we fell off into a deep slumber. What a wonderful thing is a long dreamless sleep. I awoke refreshed. I know not how long I had slept. My Ingersoll had run down. The Ingersoll that made the dollar famous. As I awoke I must have started. The gink grabbed me. The gink said "Hush." The gink held a bottle of household ammonia in one hand and a rolling pin in the other. We were still in the cave. The two dimpled dodos had retired and were sleeping in a dark corner. They were snoring away to beat the band. The bottle of brandy is on the shelf. We take down the bottle and each of us take a swig—two swigs. The gink and myself feel like a couple of four year olds on a Jewish holiday. The gink spoke saying "The battle is over. Let's take time by the forelock. The field outside is strewn with dead and wounded. I propose we rob the dead. The dead are nit—the wounded helpless. Their pockets are full. We will empty those pockets." I always thought the gink was an energetic man. He proposed that we go outside, pilfer to our hearts' content, and then seek the seclusion of the nearest fence, sell our spoil and with full pockets become useful members of society. I consent to his plan. We sally forth, the gink leading the way. We found the night well advanced, clear and beautiful. The moon well up. The silver light made everything look beautiful. Seventeen spavined hyenas skulk away leaving their unholy feast untasted. The slain lay about in all kinds of quaint postures. My sad soul sickened at the utter folly of it all, ambition, greed, race hatred, spite, revenge. My meditations were broken by the gink, the foxy gink, the prudent far seeing gink. "Get to work," said the gink. "Make the work thorough. Our silent benefactors are ready. We ourselves are ready. So hustle." We get busy. We work. We move silently, yet swiftly. We turn each pocket inside out—we rifle each purse, we annex every finger ring, and place the hand of greed on the various wrist watches, gold chains, link buttons, etc. As we look about for still more plunder, our ears are greeted by faint blowing murmurs. The blowing grows louder. The sound now resembles the whiz of a buzz saw, seventeen buzz saws added to the clarion notes of seventeen Portuguese magpies and as many chirping nightingales. Now comes a wind, first gentle, then ungentle, then fierce and still fiercer. The wind becomes a whirlwind, a typhoon, a cyclone. We are caught, in the vortex, lifted up whirled round and round. Our pockets open, the watches and rings fall out. As we whirl about, every twist causes more exit of property. As we whirl high up and round about we feel ourselves becoming lighter and lighter as watches, purses, loose gold coin, bracelets, etc. fly from our pockets and descend in shower to the fields of Lombardy far below.

As we look downward we see the country all filled with a vast multitude, men, women and children. They are all holding baskets, boxes, etc. and all trying to catch the

The Camel's Last Gasp

valuables as they drop from the sky. We even see several quartets holding on to the four corners of sheets. The sheets are piled up with valuables. The multitude grab everything absolutely regardless of the knowledge that the goods are not theirs. I am shocked at such dishonesty. Now something happens—something ends all this rush, all this push and pull. The wind ceases, that's all. The wind puts the kibosh on the whole business. No more wind—no typhoon—no cyclone to keep us up. Result—down we go, down we flop. Quick as the flashing lightning myself and the gink fall—fall with a thump. We glide, we sink down, down, now sideways, yet edgewise. Down and still down. We reach the ground—bump—thump.

We fall into an abandoned pigsty. The pigsty is in a meadow on the outskirts of Hoboken. We sink into oblivion. Myself and the gink sink into oblivion. The oblivion lasts only a very few moments and then both the gink and myself wake up to the tune of soft fiddling. No blare of trumpets, no fanfare, no thrilling flutes, only fiddling. Can it be that we are in Fiddler's Green? The fiddling is so entrancing it separates my brain from my cosmos and casts a shadow over my brilliancy. I sleep, yet conjecture while I float through oblivion. How long in oblivion? How can I tell? All I know is that when I awake I find myself back in the pigsty. The pigsty has been long abandoned. It is all overgrown with beautiful flowers. I am reclining on a bed of American beauty roses. The gink is sitting, sitting close by, smoking his pipe. We hear a familiar voice. I look in the direction of the familiar voice, then I see a familiar face. Handsome, Grecian, hooked nose, crooked mouth all on the bias, ugly yet benevolently wise. He was dressed up like a drunken shoemaker.

My old employer. The head of the cigar factory. He speaks. He speaks to the gink and myself. He speaks, says he "Say you two boobs, it's time you both got to work again. I now have the agency for two night lunch wagons. I'll put you both to work. You can take charge of my extra wagon. You can run the business very nicely. Divide up your time to suit yourselves. When you are at work the gink sleeps. When you sleep, then the gink works. Of course, you will both have to be on hand during the rush hour. Now look sharp and be around by five o'clock sharp." The toast and tea, waffles and hot dogs wait for no man.

Then he turned on his heel and left. I could hear him grumbling to himself like a wolf with a sore nose. He certainly made a mistake in his calling. He would have made a fine piano tuner. He ought to receive a good fat spanking. I intend to give him one myself. When I get through with him he won't have a headache.

Richard Griffin

WEDGE 6

He that beateth
not his wife,
Loveth not his
spouse.
Angelo Van Gink.

THE GALLOWS GOES BEGGING

THERE was a gentleman awaiting execution. The gentleman had killed his wife and four small children. He used a hatchet. The gentleman hid his wife's body in the hope chest. He stuffed the four children up the chimney. The poor little dears! Murder will out. The gentleman will be hanged. Mr. Van Hise the executioner had his face all fixed for the ceremony.

So far so good. When, presto! The state changed its mind. The gibbet was substituted to the electric chair. Mr. Van Hise hastened to Trenton, N. J., where the Senate was in session. Mr. Van Hise, an eloquent speaker, spoke. The speaker spoke thus:

All in vain! Wasted energy!

THE VAN HISE APPEAL

Before the New Jersey Legislature in an effort to prevent the adoption of the electric chair.

Gentlemen, I feel certain that you all know me. I have grown grey in the service of the state. I am a faithful servant of justice, I am an artist of the noose, an artisan of the trap. And now there is a movement on foot to deprive me of my livelihood. Is it possible? Can the community be so ungrateful? Will they level all my hopes with one fell swoop? Am I dreaming? What more can I say, gentlemen? What more can I say? Have I not done my work faithfully? Have I ever made a mistake? And I might have saved more money. Only I wanted to be an ornament to the community. You all know what I have done lately, started a fund to supply poor cripples with better cork legs. Ah, your honour, I see you are stirred. I see everybody is stirred. See the judge nod his head. Oh good kind judge, it's so nice of you to nod your head. And more gentlemen, more. I have two sons, two worthy young men. They have assisted me in my work. They can drop off a guy almost as skilfully as I can. Stand up James, stand up William. There your honour. Behold those two young men, my offspring. They have assisted me in my work and have expected to follow in my footsteps when my honourable career shall have ended. Will you deprive them of their livelihood, will you crush all their hopes? And the people. Good kind appreciative people. You weep. I weep myself, and the Judge, even the stern staid Judge rubs his eyes. Don't let my art die, don't let the art of Ketch explode. Does your honour want to see the art of Ketch explode? Does anybody want to see the art of Ketch explode? I rest my case.

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The matter was then put to vote. The result was a unanimous decision in favour of the electric chair.

PATAGONIAN CHICKEN PICKING

WE left the sequestered hamlet of W—— early in the month of ——. I and my friend H——. We rode steadily on our steady palfreys. Toward evening we crossed a bridge over the bubbling river J——. Shortly after, we entered the town of X——. We put up at the inn where we were made welcome by the landlord, Mr. F——, an old acquaintance. He was formerly a shop keeper in the town of N——.

Early the next morning whilst resting in the gutter we were suddenly startled by the sound of military music. The parade marched down the street. What a fine galaxy of personages, stately statesmen, noble ladies, twisted acrobats, potent nabobs. They were all going to witness the Patagonian chicken feathering. We all know what picking a chicken means in this country. It is a simple affair. First cut off the head and then feather the chicken. But the Patagonian chicken feathering is somewhat modified. Everything is reversed. Grab the biped. First feather the chicken, afterwards cut off its head. The whole affair is remarkable. What a spectacle!

Agatha grabs the chicken. Lucinda sits directly in front of Agatha. Agatha holds the chicken. Lucinda does the feathering. On the floor near Lucinda's chair is a jar—an earthen jar—full of ashes. From time to time Lucinda dips her fingers in the ashes. Then she continues feathering the chicken—that same chicken held so firmly by Agatha! This all seems simple. But, oh, no. It is not at all simple. The chicken being alive naturally objects to being feathered. It is not a pleasant process—not for the chicken. The chicken screeches, the chicken shrieks. The chicken struggles. But the two girls are firm. They show great fortitude. You have all heard how the barber kept on shaving. Well, the girls kept on feathering. What shrieks of pain from the chicken. What struggles. The chicken is now almost denuded of feathers. The chicken's body is all one quivering mass of bleeding flesh. The last feather is plucked. The work is done. The chicken being now feathered it is time to cut off its head. Quick, Johnny, don't get your gun. Johnny, get your hatchet. The boy comes scampering along laughingly, grabs the bleeding chicken, rushes same to the chopping block. Chop! Chop! Johnny chopped nervously, therefore it took several chops before the chicken's head dropped down. Another spell of bleeding, another convulsive struggle from the chicken—a regular dance. The chicken actually went through a lot of fancy steps minus its head. The head rested on an adjacent stump. The head opened its mouth, grinned and seemed to enjoy the whole business. The jar of ashes is almost empty. Lucy collects all the feathers into a heap. Agatha strikes a match. She lights the heap of feathers. The feathers are soon reduced to ashes. The ashes are placed in the jar. The ashes will be reserved for the next feathering. It is easy to feather a bird when the fingers are dipped in ashes.

After this, my friends., I think it is far better, before we feather a chicken, to cut off its head.

As for singeing the chicken, it is positively cruel to singe a chicken while it is alive. Don't do it. First cut off its head.

Patagonia is a large peninsula directly southeast of the Island of Juan Fernandez.

WEDGE 7

At the end of the lane
Where the fox had a pain
We will strangle Aunt Jane
Thus spoke young Donaldbaine.

THE HIGHWAYMAN'S LAMENT

THE butcher hid the rat
Underneath his old felt hat
 The butcher made a terrible mistake
The hat was so obscure
The butcher felt quite sure
 Grandiloquent like any other rake.

Grandiloquent like any other rake
The jumping butcher did the shimmy shake
 But mother's eyes were sharper
 Than any Irish harper
She pounced upon the rat, that foxy snake.

The butcher hid the rat
Underneath his old felt hat
 The butcher's hat deep in the ice box lay.
My mother stole the rat
From underneath the hat
 And with the butcher's rat she ran away.

The day my mother stole the butcher's rat
I felt a strange sensation through each slat
 And then an awful shiver
 Went shooting through my liver,
The day my mother stole the butcher's rat.

The butcher full of spleen
Grabbed my mother by the bean
 My mother screaming, tumbled in the moat.
The butcher yanked her out
By the sharp end of her snout
 And then the butcher cut my mother's throat.

The jumping butcher cut my mother's throat
He licked his lips, he was a clever bloat.
 I drank a glass of licker
 It really made me snicker
The day the butcher cut my mother's throat.

Oh, how I grit my teeth
I took to Hampstead heath,
 Joining that famous highwayman Jack Sprat,
And now I am a thief

The Camel's Last Gasp

Fallen upon a reef
It's all the fault of mother and her rat.

The day my mother stole the butcher's rat
I felt a strange sensation through each slat
And then an awful shiver
Went shooting through my liver
The day my mother stole the butcher's rat.

By RICHARD GRIFFIN.

WANT A CAT?

If you want a cat, go out early in the morning. Scrutinize all the ash cans. Don't select the first cat you see. Take time, walk slowly. Keep your eyes open. When you see a cat you just adore, stand still. Speak softly. "Nice Kitty, puss puss." Then when the cat comes to you, reach down, grab the cat gently, oh so gently. Fold the cat to your heart. Walk slowly. Meanwhile, breathe forth soft endearing words to the feline. Walk slowly home, a home to be shared with the feline. How wonderful! Give the cat a saucer of cream. Repeat the donation of cream at frequent intervals. The more frequent the better. The cat will love you, the cat will remain with you. You will soon realize the big difference, between a house with a cat and a house without a cat. I once knew a man who had a friend in Brooklyn who had a cousin who could play the flute. He loved cats. He fed cats. He fed cats all they could stuff. It is impossible to give a cat too much milk. The richer the better. It is always well to feed the cat from a full bottle and always select a bottle that has stood on a shelf for some time. The cream will be all collected near the top. Lift the bottle carefully, oh so carefully! Then the cream won't be disturbed. Lift the cap from the top of the bottle. Then pour out the milk quickly into the saucer. Give it to the cat. The cat will be pleased. Do this for a few weeks and there will be a marked improvement in the cat. It will be fatter. Its fur will be thicker. Its eyes brighter. It's not the cat's fault that it is not an Archbishop. I love cats.

RICHARD GRIFFIN.

WEDGE 8.

QUESTION

Dear Mr. Bone:

I am a young man, twenty-four. Good figger with yellow hair hanging down the back and I play the accordion. And yet with all these attractions I never seem to catch on with the girls. They all give me the go-by. Please tell me what to do.

Yours truly,

Benvolio

ANSWER

Dear Ben:

Why don't you try being a window cleaner? That would give you an entry to many homes. You might attract the girls as you stood on a chair scraping away at the top-most pane.

Good luck to you.

GBB

THE END