

Sir Oliver Lodge says he has really talked with spirits. Spirits make lots of men talk.

Pres Castro defying the United States looks a good deal like a jackass defying the lightning.

Older people must learn to speak the baseball language if they wish to associate with their sons.

Naturally no Spanish experts have ventured to contribute anything to the criticism of the American navy.

The Oneida, N. Y., woman who concealed \$2,500 in a mattress could at times be said to be fairly rolling in money.

Kitchener is keeping his pitching arm in training among the Afridis. He'll have them called the Afraldis shortly.

A Pennsylvania man who looked into a mirror was scared to death. He evidently hadn't had the lifelong practice of most men.

A copper half-cent minted in 1825, and very rare, has just been sold for \$51, the record price for a coin of that denomination and date.

The report that King Edward does not wear a night cap does not materially affect our civilization. Night caps are out of style anyhow.

This country is importing very few diamonds but it is getting ready to use all of those now on hand which are of the baseball variety.

One man has thrown up a \$250,000 a year job just because of ill-health. It looks a bit strange that a man making all that money finds time to get sick.

The little boy out west who tried the effect of a lighted match on a keg of powder would, no doubt, have become a boat-rocker anyhow, had he grown up.

A company has been organized to extract silver from sea water. It is not being capitalized by the same people who undertook to get gold from sea water.

A Brooklyn school-teacher has been frightened by a "Black Hand" letter. Ordinarily, you can't scare the city school-teacher with the black hand. She's used to it.

With two such languages why don't the Japanese and the Chinese make it a war of words? Chunks of speech thrown at each other certainly would inflict sufficient damage.

A St. Louis preacher says girls should not object when young men wish to hold their hands. Naturally this leads to the suspicion that some St. Louis girl has been objecting.

Charles M. Schwab has shocked London by wearing a top hat with a short coat, but we are assured that he has never appeared anywhere with tan shoes and a clawhammer.

Two thousand errors were found in the books of a California bank by the examiners. The bookkeepers in that institution must be in the habit of playing baseball during the summer.

When the New York school board decided that teachers should not lambaste the pupils it should also have made a regulation forbidding pupils to make faces at the teachers.

Naval critics tell us that a battleship is in a bad way when her armor belt is too low. Of course, not being human, she can't hike it up and anchor it with a safety pin.—Philadelphia Press.

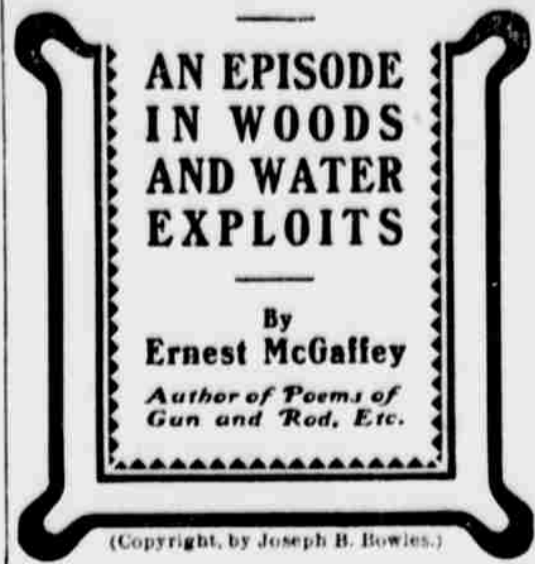
That New York woman who stole \$20,000 worth of jewelry in order to maintain her social position gives one a rather poor impression of what it takes to maintain one's social position in New York.

Prosperity must be sitting around picking its teeth in Argentina these days. During the season Argentina wasn't doing a thing but raising wheat and how that the crop is being marketed it cannot but be cheerful.

Australia has many dogs and no rabies, no hydrophobia. If it were possible to discover how a century of absolute immunity has been brought about in that vast island continent, the world might learn a lesson worth knowing.

The New York man who wants to be "Olerized" because he is out of work and because chemical experiments have "destroyed" all his vital organs save his lungs, takes a wrong view of matters. Without any digestive organs he is in no need of a boarding house and ought not to care whether he has work or not. He is really in an enviable position for these hard times.

# The Buck Coon of Shadow Lake



As soon as I heard that the ducks had begun to come in I packed my grip for Sowders, and sent Dib Sowders a telegram. That night I reached his farm, and the next night we were at camp. Everything was ready, feed for the live decoys, the boats overhauled and caulked, plenty of wood for the old-fashioned fire-place in the camp shanty, shells loaded, and general preparations complete for a ten-days' shoot. I had taken a 44-caliber old-style cap and ball revolver into the timber with me that fall, just because I was charmed with its phenomenal accuracy. It would throw a bullet exactly where you held it, and loaded with a pinch of powder only it did not jar nor throw up as so many revolvers do. I had a notion I would take a turn in the woods after fox-squirrels with it if the duck-shooting was so poor as to warrant it, or so good that it would get monotonous. Early the next morning I skipped

to his place for a fish-net he'd forgotten, according to a note he left. Along about sundown he showed up, and I had the ducks done to a turn by that time and some corn-meal dodgers hot on the pan, and black coffee a-plenty. After we had supper I showed Dib the coon, and he says: "He's a strappin' big fellow, ain't he? The biggest one I ever saw except that old buck coon on Shadow lake. And he was a giant. This lad ain't a rat alongside of him." "Did you kill that one, Dib?" said I. "No; but he came pretty near killing me," was Dib's response. "How was it, Dib?" says I. "There must be a story to that coon somewhere." "Well," says Dib, "I reckon there was a sort of tale to it. It'll kill a little time, and I don't mind telling you about it. "You recollect old man Parrott? The man I introduced you to down at the depot last fall. Heavy-set fellow, big brown eyes, nose hooked like a chicken-hawk's beak, all the time smiling. Well, old Wib is the boss coon hunter anywhere along these bottoms. At that time he had the most surprisingest coon-dog that'd ever hit these parts. He got him from Kaintucky, though the pup's daddy was from Georgia, original. This here dog, Leander, was about the purest strain of a dog that could be had. On his daddy's side, I mean. The bitch that dropped him, though, was half wolf and half bulldog, I heard old Wib say, and wasn't that a pizenous mixture? "But the old man he allowed it was just the cross he wanted. Pure hound for the scent and following the trail, part wolf for cunning, and bull for hold-on. When that pup was only a few weeks old he came swimmin' after a skiff the old man and a fellow from Saint Looey was in, and the fellow

big limb that slanted across this here pond. I allowed I'd climb up and shake him down, and one of the boys gave me a hist and up I went. When I got out to where he was I couldn't jar him loose. "But finally all of a sudden he clawed loose from the limb and down he went into the pond with about a bushel of bark and grape-vine and splinters around him, and the minute he lit Leander and some more of the dogs flew out to where he was. I squirms around on my perch, about 40 foot from the water, to get a look at the fight, and just as the buck coon and Leander has arranged to ketch holts, whack goes my limb and down I come before I could holler, 'Look out below.' "Well, the best thing me and the limb could do was to come ka-whallop right across old Leander and bury him down in the mud at the bottom of this shallow pond. Two of his ribs was stove in, and he was otherwise damaged, includin' breakin' his back. I reckon I might have kicked the coon in the face with one of my spare feet as I lit, but I ain't certain about that. Of course I was knocked senseless, and the boys run in and got me out on the bank and poured vinegar into me and finally brought me to again. Old Wib had left me cold as soon as he sensed how bad Leander was hurt, and at last I gets my bearings again, shakes myself and find I'm all right, no bones broke, and just jarred some. Leander and the water had busted the force of the fall, you see. "I goes over to where the boys had built a fire and, say, I was plumb sorry for old Wib. This here Leander was layin' out on his belly and every once in awhile he'd let out a yelp. I says to the old man, 'I'm terrible sorry, Wib,' and he says, 'I don't blame you, Dib. It was that blasted limb.' He didn't cuss any, for old Wib was a church member. He says, 'What is to be happens. Put him out of his misery, boys. I can't do it.' So Dad Oliver swung an ax, and I don't reckon old Leander knowed what hit him. "Put him in the sack," says Wib. 'I'll give him a Christian burial, coffin and all. There's all that's left of the best hound that ever nosed a trail or h'isted a bristle.' It was a mighty solemn thing to old Wib, lemme tell you. 'The Lord gives, and the Lord He takes away,' says the old man, 'blest be the name of the Lord.' Why they said around Slabtown that he thought as much of that Leander dog as he did of his own wife and family, and he was a good husband and father, too." Dib paused and snaked a live coal out of the fireplace with the end of a shovel, and deftly shunted it into the bowl of his pipe with a segment of hickory chip. Then he puffed reminiscently. "What became of the buck coon, Dib?" was my query. Dib stretched his massive legs out so as to get the full blaze of the logs on them and said: "Oh! that pesky critter? Why, he just naturally got away durin' the excitement."



THE LIMB AND ME COME KA-WHALLOP ACROSS OLD LEANDER.

out by myself to try a few ducks before we got things settled down so as to hunt together, and I found a likely-looking spot in among the willows after paddling a couple of miles from camp. I rowed in to some drift and willows, put out five live decoys, built up a little "blind," and had my duck "call" handy. The live decoys splashed and dove for smart-weed, and pretty soon a pair of mallards came over and saw them. They sailed around a couple of times over the willows and then came in grand. I salted both of them, and waded out and gathered them. After that I didn't see anything for a couple of hours, but a few flocked away to the north. Thinks I to myself, I'll pull up and get into camp, and we'll lay out our plan of campaign for to-morrow. It was a warm, bright day, and the ducks weren't stirring around much. There was a big log about 30 feet from the "blind" that run out from the butt of a half-sunk sycamore. This sycamore was a whopping tree, and was connected with the shore on one side by a catch of drift-wood. Well, I heard a noise and turned around towards that log, peeking quiet out of the "blind," and there on that log sat the biggest raccoon I ever laid my eyes on. He was squatting there listening. I took the 44, slipped it through a crack in the willows, and aimed for the juncture of his neck and shoulders. I touched the trigger, and the coon melted off that log like a dew-drop from a lily-pod. I got out and went around the log and there he laid as dead as Pharaoh. I paddled back to camp, and Dib had gone back

says, 'What's his name?' And old Wib says 'I hain't named him yit.' 'Call him Leander,' says this here fellow. It seemed like a good mouth-fillin' name and so Wib christened him Leander. The fellow told him Leander was the best swimmer that ever happened before he got drowned. "Well, they was a monsterr coon down on Shadow lake that had whipped all the dogs that was ever brought against him. He wasn't no ordinary coon, but nearly as big as a young bear, and every ounce bone and muscle. He'd get out into a little pond or piece of marsh and when a dog'd tackle him he'd souse the dog's head under water a few times, contributin' a few bites at the same time to make it binding, and after about baptism number four there wasn't any dog they had tried would go in after him again. Nobody'd shoot this coon, for they was all waiting to get some dog that could lick him in a fair fight. They called him the buck coon. "Old Wib hears of this coon, and he comes over for me, and a big crowd of us goes down to Shadow lake one moonlight night. Well, you know that country. Pucker-brush, swamp-holes, briars, dead logs, the worst ever. We got the trail of this big fellow easy enough, for he used to prow down around Hogeye bend most all the time, and in about half an hour Leander barked 'treed.' 'Now we'll get him,' says old Wib. 'Leander! walk his log fer him.' "When we got to where it was, the coon had got out on an old basswood that stood in a little pond where we couldn't well use the axes, and we could see him away up and out on a

THEY "PASSED THE BUTTER."  
Brakeman's Happy Inspiration Met with Deserved Success.  
"When I was connected with a certain western railway," says a prominent official of an eastern line, "we had in our employ a brakeman who, for special service rendered to the road, was granted a month's vacation. "He decided to spend his time in a trip over the Rockies. We furnished him with passes. "He went to Denver, and there met a number of his friends at work on one of the Colorado roads. They gave him a good time, and when he went away made him a present of a mountain goat. Evidently our brakeman was at a loss to get the animal home with him, as the express charges were very heavy at that time. Finally, however, hitting upon a happy expedient, he made out a shipping tag and tied it to the horns of the goat. Then he presented the beast to the office of the stock car line. "Well, that tag created no end of amusement, but it served to accomplish the end of the brakeman. It was inscribed as follows: "Please Pass the Butter. Thomas J. Meechin, Brakeman, S. S. & T. Ry."—Harper's Weekly.  
About Babies.  
"Babies are 'creatures of habit.' Half the trouble of child-rearing is caused by allowing them to become creatures of bad habits instead of good ones. You deserve a gold medal, my dear young lady, for your management of Marjorie." "Well, her papa deserves one, too!" cried Marjorie's mother proudly. "He had every bit as much to do with her management as I had!" "No, I had to do with the theory, you with the practice." "Well," said the doctor, "both theory and practice are needed for the successful management of children. You have combined both, and the consequence is you are rearing a fine child, and I most heartily congratulate you on the way you have reared Marjorie during her first and her second year."—Illustrated Sunday Magazine.

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