

THE GRAND SCHEMER.

HE PLANS A DEVICE THAT WILL TAKE THE PUBLIC BY STORM.

Major Crofoot Originates the M. W. B. Company, Filling a Long Felt Want, and Incidentally Takes in a Lawyer Friend.

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The grand promoter sat at his desk in his office with a wandering look on his face and 40 cents in change spread out before him. He had been counting that change over and over and figuring how many times the \$28 he owed his landlady, the \$12 he owed his tailor, the \$4 he owed his hatter and the \$75 he owed various other people would go into that 40 cents. He was still about it when he heard a step on the stairs. It was the step of an aggressive man. As it came nearer it betokened the step of a determined man. As the door was burst open without preliminary warning the major recognized the fact that he was face to face with a circumstance. For one brief second his knees weakened, and he caught his breath with a gasp. Then he was on his feet with hand outstretched and a smile on his face and said:

"Bless my soul, but if you had been two minutes later I should have been on my way to your office! Come in; come in."
"I didn't know as you would remember me," dryly replied the visitor as he looked around the office.
"What! Not remember Thompson of Thompson & Thompson, attorneys at law! You must be joking. My dear

man, Major Crofoot never forgets the face or name of a friend. You more than any other man in the world have been in my thoughts for the last three days, and, as I remarked, I was about to start for your office. Thompson, shake hands again."

"I haven't time," replied Thompson. "Look here, major, bills against you to the amount of \$200 have been put into our hands for collection. You promised to pay that old board bill two months ago. I want to know what you are going to do?"
"Do, my dear Thompson? Why, I'm going to give you a check in about ten seconds for the whole indebtedness. You could have had your money long ago if you had given me the slightest hint. Major Crofoot has a good memory, but how can you expect him to keep track of shillings when he is dealing in thousands of dollars."
"I heard you were promoting a little," said the lawyer as he waited for the check.
"Ten companies formed in the last three months, my boy, and the eleventh just ready to be incorporated. Grand aggregation of over \$300,000,000 capital thus far, and every company bound to pay at least 30 per cent dividend. What do you suppose I've got on hand now?"
"I can't say, and as I'm in a hurry you may fill out that check."
"The biggest scheme of all—the ne plus ultra!" whispered the major with a flourish of his right arm. "I expected to stop at ten, but this scheme came pushing along and I had to take it up. It's the richest of them all. I'll pay 100 per cent profit from the very start. In a week from now the Standard Oil company won't be on earth."
"But I'm here about those bills."
"My dear Thompson, walk with me. When I was hard up, you were one of the few who did not lose confidence in my integrity. The man or woman who trusts Major Crofoot never regrets it. I might not have picked up this eleventh scheme but for you. I wanted to let you in. I wanted to reward you for your faith in me. Thompson, my boy, sell out your law business—give it away—get rid of it before night."
"I want to know about those bills," said the lawyer as he came to a halt.
"The last and best scheme of all," continued the major as he got hold of his arm again, "is the Musical Washboard company, organized on a capital of \$20,000,000. The idea is strictly original with me. Washboard runs a music box while you rub. Music box can be placed in the laundry, parlor, kitchen or even the next house. May arrange later on to have 'em connected with drug stores, kindergartens and public schools. Twenty-four tunes in the box, evenly divided between sad and lively. As the washerwoman rubs away at one of your colored shirts the music box strikes up 'Comin' Thro' the Rye.' She changes off to a sheet or pillowslip, and you have 'Home, Sweet Home,' with variations. Thompson, shake hands!"
"I won't do it. I came here to notify you that these bills must be paid at once or you will be haled into court."
"It's a hummer, my boy—it's a success from the start. Costs nothing extra for the music, you know. While you are hiring a woman in the laundry



for a dollar and a quarter a day she's furnishing music for the parlor free gratis. Put a bedquilt on the washboard and you can hear the strains of 'The Old Onken Bucket' from garret to cellar. Let the woman tackle a tablecloth, and everybody goes dancing to the tune of 'Maggie Murphy's Home.' Drug stores can have it at a slight cost for their patrons, and public schools needn't pay a cent. Rub-a-dub-dub! Music by the box! Thompson, don't miss it. Don't throw a good thing over your shoulder. I want to take you in. I have taken you in. You are to be secretary of the M. W. C. at \$20,000 a year."
"That's all wind," blantly exclaimed the lawyer, "and it won't work. Will you draw me a check for \$200?"
"Isn't it a wonder that somebody else didn't strike on the idea?" whispered the major as he patted Thompson on the shoulder. "The washboard has been known for 200 years. What was easier than to make friction run a music box to soothe the sorrowful, lull the ailing or enthrall the discouraged? It would have saved thousands of lives annually, prevented thousands of suicides, and yet no one thought of it. Thompson, shake hands! It's the secretaryship at \$20,000 a year for you, and I'll give you \$50,000 worth of stock at ground floor figures. Months ago, when I was hard up and couldn't pay a bill of \$7, you put your hand on my shoulder in a brotherly way and said you had every confidence in my financial integrity. Do you imagine I've forgotten that, Thompson? Not by the grave of my grandfather! I never think of it without the tears coming to my eyes."
"Do you want to be sued for these accounts?" demanded the lawyer when he could get in a word.
"And your reward for trusting me is this," continued the major—"the salary of \$20,000 is only a starter. I'll double it after the washboards get into the market. The \$50,000 in stock will pay you \$25,000 a year in dividends at the very least, and perhaps double that, and there you are. You can safely put your first year's income down at \$65,000. Is that enough, Thompson? If not, just say the word, and I'll add \$20,000 to it. Meanwhile—"

"Meanwhile I want no more of your wind!"
"Meanwhile, my dear secretary of the M. W. C., I owe \$200. You have the accounts to collect. Just mark 'em collected,' and I'll pay in the \$200 to hold your stock. Always have to have a deposit as evidence of good faith, you know. If it was anybody else, I'd demand a certified check for \$10,000. Thompson, go home and throw your lawbooks out of the window."
"I'll be hanged if I do! I want to know—"

"Throw your lawbooks out of the window, dissolve the partnership, and then take your position as secretary. No hurry for a day or two, but don't wait too long. I want to get the articles of incorporation through as soon as possible and patent the idea. Good-bye, Thompson, goodbye."
"But I want that check!" protested the lawyer as he was pushed out.
"And the washerwoman rubs and the box plays on," replied the smiling major. "We'll have 50,000 washboards playing 'Yankee Doodle' and 'Home of My Soul' before the month is out, and if you want \$15,000 in advance on your salary and profits send your boy around and I'll fill out a check. Good-bye, Thompson, goodbye, and remember to keep mum till our patent is secured."
The door was shut and locked, and there was grim silence for five minutes. Then the major heard threats and vows and mutterings, and some one went slowly down stairs.

Q. QUAD.
Growing Matches.
The Belgian artisan spends his leisure in a very curious manner. He keeps a special cock for growing, and the bird which can outgrow its fellows has reached the highest pinnacle of perfection. The mode of operation is to place the cages containing the roosters in long rows, for it appears that one bird sets the other off growing. A marker appointed by the organizers of the show is told off for each bird, his duty being to note carefully the number of crows for which it is responsible in the same fashion as the laps are recorded in a bicycle race. The customary duration of the match is one hour, the winner being the bird which scores the highest number of crows in the allotted time. A great number of these competitions have taken place in the Liege district, and in some cases heavy bets have been made on the result.

Radishes.
Radishes originated in China, where they have been cultivated for many centuries and sometimes grow as big as a man's head. In Germany the old fashioned country mothers cure hoarseness and cough with radish juice mixed with sugar candy. The radishes of today have no flavor, no character. Formerly they sharp, biting taste made them palatable.

A Jury Room Gem.
A gem from the records of a Missouri court, given in an address by Hon. William H. Wallace, is the following lucid verdict in a lunacy case: "We, the jury, impealed, sworn and charged to inquire into the insanity of Hezekiah Jones, do occur in the affirmative."

Soap as a Germ Killer.
It has been shown by Koch and others that soap is a microbicide, or germ killer, and, according to Professor Serafini, soda or potash soap is quite a good disinfectant, not only because of the alkalis, but the combination itself. Heating the water favors the effect. Resinous soaps are not the best disinfectants. Marseilles soap is very good. A solution of 3 or 4 per cent kills the most resisting microbes.—Washington Times.

Iodine's Celebration of Washington's Birthday.

By Julius N. Jorgensen.

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Iodine Brown sat in a big nest of grey moss which he had made in a fence corner outside the peanut field, and he muttered and mumbled and scolded. Occasionally he would argue with an imaginary opponent, using all the gestures with which he had seen Elder Berry deliver his sermon on "Kasslin Wid de Sperrit."
"Now, yo' knows well 'nuff," said Iodine to his adversary, "dat yo' ain't n-treatin' o' me right. I done drub dem haws out'n de fiel' mos' eber sense de

chaser of the helmet began to search for the money. A careful survey showed that the directions pointed to a spot in this wild corner of the old master's plantation, and holes were dug at a distance of 32 feet north-northwest from every tree and stump within ten acres around the indicated spot. Finally the search was abandoned. When Velvet offered to buy some land from his former master, this wild corner was sold to him. He had done a deal of digging for the treasure, but had long since given up the search. Iodine became interested in a small hole which had been made by some animal in the side of one of the excavations, and he began to probe into it with a stick.



IODINE PREPARES TO CELEBRATE. Goobas wuz planted, 'n I ain' le'm git a gooba, standin' all de times dey's braked de ole fence down, 'n now, when Wash'n'm's budday com 'n ole mauss le's all he nigga's go down t' S'van t' see de sogers a-ma'chin 'n de drums a-drummy 'n de boom-bangin' o' de cannons, 'n yo' all's gwine 'n take Marine 'n Looeyer 'n Tadgum 'n Boots, 'n yo' all up 'n sez, 'T'dine, we can't gib ole mauss' haws no Wash'n'm's budday doin's in we's gooba patch, 'n yo'll ha'ter stay 'n keep'm out.'"

"Now, wha' fur I done taken dat wuk' a'ter Tadgum done le'm root up leben hills? Jes' so! I c'd stay home on Wash'n'm's budday, I s'pose. Well, I sez 'tain' no fa'h, 'n yo' all knows 'tain'."
The time was long 'befo' de wah. Little Iodine Brown was a slave, as were his mother, sister and brothers. His father, Velvet Brown, had been enabled by a stroke of good fortune to purchase his own freedom and 20 acres of ground, and his wife Blissful and her five small children were permitted by the old master to live in Velvet's cabin. Blissful worked at the mansion each day and returned to the cabin at night, while the children worked for their father to pay for their keeping. Velvet had a little hoard of money, which was growing slowly, to be used when a sufficient amount was saved for the purchase of Blissful's freedom. After "mamma" was freed a fund was to be started to purchase one of the children. Marine, the eldest, and all her little brothers shared Velvet's labors and worked early and late. Iodine, the youngest, was but 6 years of age, and his only task was keeping the old master's hogs from breaking through the brush fence into the peanut patch.

The big red razorback, called by Iodine "Old Brick," made many attempts to get into the peanut patch, and his persistence was almost a match for the boy's vigilance.
Hot tears had coursed in shiny black rivulets down Iodine's face in the morning as he stood on a stump gazing after Velvet and Blissful, who were trudging down the lane toward the old master's mansion, followed by Marine, Lucifer, Tadgum and Boots, on their way to Savannah to witness the celebration of Washington's birthday by the military company of the city. When the disappointed boy knew that his father was well out of hearing, he shook his fist and stamped his bare foot upon the stump and shouted: "Yo'r mean! Yo'r mean! Yo'r mean!"
But the guardian of the goobers could not spend much time in hurling invectives from the stump. Soon he saw Old Brick emerge from the scrub pines, followed by a dozen shotes, and then there was work for Iodine to do. It seemed to him that the hogs were never so persistent and bold as they were that morning. They gave it up after an hour's effort, however, and wandered back toward the mansion.
Having then a respite from his labor, Iodine went over to the three acre lot where Velvet's cow and pigs were kept. This was a peculiar piece of ground. There were hundreds of depressions in the earth where deep holes had been excavated and partly filled.

Many years before a box of strange and old fashioned clothing, armor and weapons was received at the Savannah custom house. The owner never called for it, and it was sold at auction. In the box was an iron helmet, upon the inside of which was engraved a full description of the location of gold and silver money which had been buried by a shipowner who was supposed to have been a pirate, and as there was a tradition that the treasure had been buried in the vicinity the pur-

chaser of the helmet began to search for the money. A careful survey showed that the directions pointed to a spot in this wild corner of the old master's plantation, and holes were dug at a distance of 32 feet north-northwest from every tree and stump within ten acres around the indicated spot. Finally the search was abandoned. When Velvet offered to buy some land from his former master, this wild corner was sold to him. He had done a deal of digging for the treasure, but had long since given up the search. Iodine became interested in a small hole which had been made by some animal in the side of one of the excavations, and he began to probe into it with a stick.
The boy had been an interested spectator at the blowing up of stumps with gunpowder, and he thought as he peeped and poked into the hole that he could make a noise and celebrate Washington's birthday by exploding a charge of powder in the burrow. He ran to the cabin and brought out Velvet's old powderhorn and began the preparations for his celebration. Iodine knew he would probably have to suffer punishment, but no matter. He must do something to celebrate the day. He poured into the hole a copious charge of powder, and then putting in a small cane which had been bored out for pipemasters he filled this with the explosive also. Then he pounded the earth about the cane until the cavity was tightly closed.
After several feints he touched the lighted match to the top of the reed and ran. He had not taken more than three steps when the explosion came. He was thrown to the ground by the concussion and was nearly covered by the shower of dirt that fell upon him. He was uninjured, however, and turned his attention to the hole in the ground. There was a little yellow streak in the loose dirt at the bottom of the hole, and with a stick he uncovered the object, which proved to be a dead chipmunk.

"Mus' he mo' eh'munks 'n dis'n in de hole!" said Iodine as he began again to scratch away the dirt. Soon he struck something hard, which made a peculiar hollow sound, and he took away more dirt and uncovered a brown, scaly iron object. The urchin's curiosity was aroused, and, lying flat upon the ground, he used stick and fingers to uncover more of the iron. He saw that it was a large, round object, with three little horns sticking out like the "wrops" of hair on Marine's head, and then he knew what it was.

Old Brick came out of the brush, closely followed by the spotted shotes, sniffed the air suspiciously and then trotted straight to the peanut field fence. Alas for poor Velvet Brown! His bright dream of the big crop of "White Lady goobers," which he expected to market in the summer, was soon to be shattered.
"I gwine t' git dis k'il out'n hyah fo' my mammy," muttered the boy, forgetful of his trust and all unconscious of the raid upon the field. He was soon able to move the kettle, and a poor and badly used up kettle it was. Iodine soon realized that his prize was of little value. Then he bethought him of the other chipmunk and turned again to the hole. His eyes bulged out with surprise as he saw another kettle, smaller than the first, standing upright in the ground. It was not empty like the other, but was filled with yellow and black pieces of money.

"De pi't's money!" shouted Iodine. He tried to lift the kettle from the hole, but he had not strength to move it. Running to the well, he brought the drinking gourd, filled it with gold and carried it to the house. Trip after trip he made, often saying, "Now we c'n buy mammy, now we c'n buy mammy 'n ole mauss!" until he had all the gold and silver piled in a heap upon the bed. A big yellow piece tumbled from the pile, and Iodine struck it back and said, "Gib back dar, Ole Brick." And then he thought of the peanut field and the old red razorback and the shotes, and he rushed out of the house and around to the hog pasture. Faint and sick at heart, he saw the hogs in the ruined field.
Casting aside all thought of Wash-

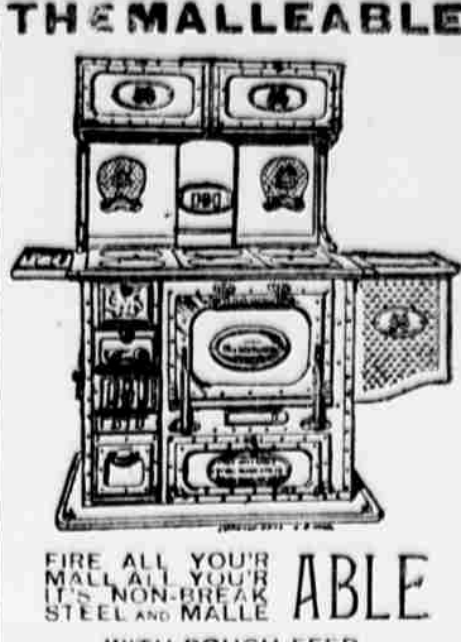
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ington's birthday and the pirate's gold, Iodine seized his club and made war upon the hogs. His work done, he threw himself into his mossy nest and wept and vented upon the hogs all the abusive words his tongue could frame. In no other way could he relieve his conscience and the fearful apprehension of what would take place after Velvet returned.
When the sun had gone half way down the western sky, he saw Velvet and Blissful and the children returning. His heart almost stopped beating, and he could not banish from his thoughts the big black strap which hung upon the cabin wall. As his father and mother came up the lane to dine ran out to meet them, with tears streaming from his eyes.
"Oh, pappy," he cried, "de haws dun got in de gooba patch, 'n dey c't up mos' all de bills. I cou' n' hope it, pappy. I cou' n' hope it. But I dun foun de pi't's money. Yo' ain' go'u' t' whoop me, is yo', pappy?"
Velvet looked into the field, and a storm of wrath swept over his face.
"Yo' triflin' raspocillon!" he shouted. "Wha' fur yo' dun go diggin' rou'n fur pi't's money 'n le' dem haws eat up my goobas? Go in de house dis in stumps. I'll show yo' how t' dig fur money 'n my rabsa strap!"
The irate father strode into the cabin, unmoved by Iodine's tears and entreaties. Blissful lingered by the peanut field. Her heart bled for the little truant. Hearing no outcry, she soon began to wonder if the strap could have been lost. Presently Velvet appeared in the cabin door and shouted:
"Blissful! Blissful! Cum heah, honey! Yo's free! Yo's free! I'dine dun foun de pi't's money, sho' 'nuff! Cum in heah, chilum, 'n gi' down on yo' knees 'n frank de Lo'd fo' his unsselfish probidensulums!"
Blissful rushed into the cabin, closely followed by the children. They felt of the money and held it up in handfuls and poured it back upon the bed in heaps of freedom and comfort and joy. Their ears drank in the sounds of its sliding and rolling and clinking as they would have drunk in music from the harps of paradise.
Old Brick led the herd again through the brush fence, and they rooted and smacked their jaws over the feast of nuts, but they were all unheeded, for to the Brown family the day of Jubilee had come.
In a short time a black procession was on the march from the cabin to

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