

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



"I WANT TO TAKE YOU IN."

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 keeping 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 Onion 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," bluntly 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-by, 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-by, 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.

M. QUAD.

Crowing Matches.

The Belgian artisan spends his leisure in a very curious manner. He keeps a special cock for crowing, and the bird which can outcrow 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 crowing. 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 their 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, impeached, sworn and charged to inquire into the insanity of Hezekiah Jones, do occur in the affirmative."

Soap as a Germ Killer.

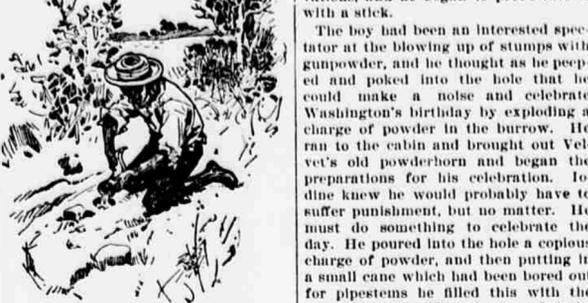
It has been shown by Koch and others that soap is a microbicide, or germ killer, and, according to Professor Serafini, soda or potash soap is quite a good disinfectant, not only because of the alkalis, but the combination itself. Heating the water favors the effect. Resinous soaps are not the best disinfectants. 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.

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 "Rasslin' Wid de Sperrit."

"Now, yo' knows well 'nuff," said Iodine to his adversary, "dat yo' ain' a-treatin' o' me right. I done drub dem hawgs out'n de fiel' mos' eber sense de



IODINE PREPARES TO CELEBRATE.

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 pipestems 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' be mo' chi'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 Brickly 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 f'm 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, "G' back dar, Ole Brickly." 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-

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 hawgs dun got in de gooba patch, 'n dey e'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'n t' whoop me, is yo', pappy?"

Velvet looked into the field, and a storm of wrath swept over his face. "Yo' triflin' rasspation!" he shouted. "Wha' fur yo' dun go diggin' roum fur pi't's money 'n le' dem hawgs eat up my goobas? Go in de house dis in stumps. I'll show yo' how t' dig fur money 'n my razba 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, chillum, 'n g' down on yo' knees 'n frank de Lo'd fo' his unselfish 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 Brickly 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

the mansion. At the rear was Boots, preceded by Tadgum, Lucifer, Marine and Blissful. In the lead was Velvet, wheeling a barrow in which were piled the silver and gold and the kettles, while crowning the heap sat Iodine, with sparkling eyes of living jet and a row of white teeth visible from ear to ear.

The amount of money taken from the ground by Iodine was a little more than \$10,000, a great fortune to this humble family. Blissful and the children were purchased from the old master, a good rookey house was built and more land added to the farm. Good, stout fences were built about the place, and Old Brickly needed watching no more.

A red letter day—greater than Washington's birthday or the Fourth of July, a day to be marked by the Brown family with a white stone—was that upon which the old master drove to Savannah in his finest carriage, accompanied by little Iodine, whose bosom swelled with pride as he thought of his importance and contemplated his beautiful suit of store clothes. They drove to a bank, and there the master invested \$2,000 in government bonds and deposited them to the credit of Iodine and his guardian.

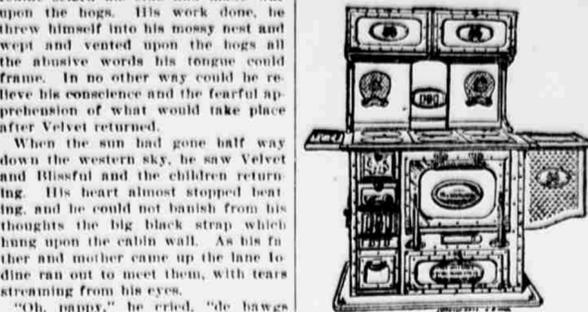
On the banks of the Ogeechee, near Eden, lives a prosperous colored man, the owner of a large farm and the father of a bright family of girls and boys. Among his most treasured possessions is an old kettle, on which the following words have been painted, "Washington-Iodine."

Sanitation.

Was it Lord Beaconsfield who, as Mr. Disraeli, was once twitted with being the exponent of a "policy of sewage?" According to Sir William Preece, no loftier subject can occupy the attention of man, and, according to him also, an ancestor of the great premier—Moses, to wit—was "the greatest sanitary engineer the world had ever known," and the book of Leviticus was "a treatise on hygiene."

The Jew was the healthiest and longest lived type of humanity, and the doctrines of Moses could be summed up as the objects of sanitation today—namely, (1) pure air, (2) pure water, (3) pure food, (4) pure soil, (5) pure dwellings and (6) pure bodies. Pure air, he said, was to be found in public asylums, jails and workhouses. But not in our churches, theaters, railway carriages or dining rooms—even the dining room of your "dearest friend."—Chambers' Journal.

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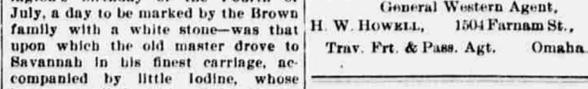
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