

called Parnassus, in a distant part of the jungle, the chief seat of the Solomon mice, and there ask advice of Apollo, the acting representative of Kosmos, the imperial omnipotent and ancestor of the Solomon mice and of all living things; energy of the world, power invisible.

Coming to "the Stra," or porch of the temple, Apollo, that wisest of all the Solomon mice, the eldest son of the omnipotent Kosmos, met the embassy and knowing their wishes—knowing himself he knoweth all things—said: "Most worshipful seniors, representatives of the only self-maintaining and honorable inhabitants of the jungles of the world, be ye not alarmed; ye are in no serious danger; much good will come from this alarm in that it hath removed the veil from your minds and made you, and your respective tribes, aware of the fact that you cannot live without one another; for, he who consumeth his own body soon dieth for want of fuel. That which now threatens your peace and disturbs you in your daily vocations is an old danger, well known to your ancestors of by-gone ages. Though often attacked, your presence here, the strength and prosperity of your respective organizations, is all-convincing evidence that you alone are best fitted to survive all the inhabitants of the jungle of the omnipresent energy. The Solomon mice are fully acquainted with this danger. We have been quietly observing the movements of the wolves, the jackals, and the hyenas and even the dynamitic polecats have not escaped our attention. This danger has been known in history and tradition as the invasion of the silver maggots.

"As I never leave the temple, I will place at your service that most wise and distinguished statesman in the realm of the Solomon mice, Solon, once of ancient Athens, who, since its downfall, hath joined the chief members of our tribe in this our ancient grotto at Delphi, who will accompany you home to your own people and there instruct you as to the nature of this threatening danger and the best means of circumventing it."

Having accompanied the ambassadors to their part of the jungle and refreshed himself, Solon, the statesman of the Solomon mice, thus addressed the convention:

The Advice of Solon.

"Most illustrious assemblage: The principle of self-preservation is the inalienable necessity to all that lives. The inevitable result of that necessity is struggle, battle, warfare. The survival of the fittest is the result of this struggle. In you I behold the natural evidence of such survival. Self-defence is an inevitable result of the struggle. In order to meet a danger we must first know its nature. You know there is danger and yet know it not, The Solo-

mon mice have known of it and seen it coming for a long time. The history of the world is theirs for, more than all others, they have made it. It is to the wisdom of the Solomon mice that the institutions of the world owe their origin and maintenance. Our grotto at Delphi, in the mountain called Parnassus is the mausoleum in which we have preserved the wisdom of the ages. The Solomon mice have not only made the wisdom—they have recorded and preserved it. The Solomon mice are the incarnated representatives of the omnipotence of the omnipresent energy—the Kosmos, the matrix of all that was, is, and is to be. It is well, therefore that you have come to us in your troubles.

"Let not your hearts be troubled. The Kosmos has upheld you through the inalienable energy born with you. Yet all are not so born. There be many weak ones among you. Many more have departed from you and joined the ranks of the night-roamers and disturbers of the peace of the jungle, the wolves, the jackals, and the hyenas. Ye have well named these weak-kneed ones the 'pops.' The sloths alone remain with you. Many will die in the coming conflict from their own unfitness. It is the inevitable necessity. The discontents and malefactors have been with you since the beginning of the world. At times they seem to multiply and swarm like the bees. Like the bees they have to be taken care of to be at all useful. Discontent is their chief characteristic. The Delphian motto is unknown to them. They know not themselves. They much resemble those ancient Athenians of whom that honorable member of the Solomon mice, Paul of Tarsus, said 'they are always seeking after new and unknown gods, and giving steady allegiance to none.' They can never be depended upon in any emergency. Therefore it is well for you that these malefactors have 'popped out.' For a time they may run after these silver maggots and make a god of them. Fear not this threatened invasion of the silver maggots. They have no independent and lasting strength on account of the corrupt and corrupting nature of their bodies. Those who now think they shall find strength in attaching themselves to the silver maggots will soon find that they are like a drowning man grasping at a straw. These silver maggots much resemble the swarms of locusts of which ye have read about in history. They come in swarms. They devastate the jungle of all that seems fresh and vivifying. They disappear again and all soon blooms in pristine freshness.

Origin of the Silver Maggots.

"The silver maggots developed in the valley of the mountains termed Rocky, on the western confines of the jungle of civilization. It may be for this reason

that those who look to the silver maggots for salvation generally have such a 'rocky' time of it. These pests have a tough, hard shell, having a peculiarly attractive glance; hence their name silver maggots. Their bodies are so weak and full of corruption that, of themselves, they have but little value. They would either die out or develop very slowly were it not that to the fastnesses of these mountains there has retreated, from the jungles of civilization, a small number of powerful, hardy, more or less unprincipled, at least extremely selfish, creatures, a remnant of the robber-knights of the days of chivalry, known as the Ingot Barons. They are not only a stiff-necked, but a wily and smooth-tongued generation.

"Being renegades from your illustrious organizations and well acquainted with the 'pops' and their many weaknesses and insatiable greed, as well as gross ignorance, and the deceitful and rebellious nature of the wolves, hyenas and jackals, the Ingot Barons determined to organize an army of silver maggots and invade those parts of the jungle of civilization inhabited by the hard-working and honorable Behemoth, the brainy lions and industrious tigers.

"In connection with this purpose the Ingot Barons have sent a special envoy, an agitator of much persuasiveness, to the convention of the wolves, the hyenas and the jackals and the dissenters from your own bodies, to lay before them the charms and usefulness, especially their ability to save men from severe labor, of the silver maggots. This envoy is an individual of peculiar character. He is very much opposed to any other labor than the use of his voice, which is of a dangerously fascinating nature to those not having the ability to distinguish the vacuity behind it. The Ingot Barons discovered this peculiar, and to them, useful creature in an island called 'green' in the dark recesses of the jungle. He belongs to the species called naked Amphibia, and the family called Bufo, and genera Viridis, in other words the green frogs, noted for their musical voices. He has a smooth and pleasing appearance and is noted for the characteristic termed 'unctuous.' The name of this peculiar green frog is

"Brian-go-Bray."

"As you may have noticed, your camp has been entirely free from those offensive nuisances, the polecats, since the news of the convention of the hyenas, the wolves and jackals become spread abroad in the jungle. It has come to the knowledge of the Solomon mice that these anarchists of civilization, the polecats, have all gone off to meet this unctuous orator, the king of frogs called green, and are now escorting him with great display of red flags, and much noise of squibs and bombs to the convention of the united pop-outs from your honorable body, and those