

dashing into those flames, taking those two children, and tumbling out. I didn't know I was hurt till this morning."

"What are you going to do with your little venture at the mines?"

"Make the best of it. My claim is worth something, and I'll hang on. I've just a thousand tucked away in my little hole. I want you to send it to me. It's in the corner, under the big stone. I think I'll speculate while I'm lofin' round. They say there's lots of chances."

"Plenty of 'em, no doubt," said Charlie, "as blackberries; but, instead of plucking, you'll get plucked. You might as well fling your money into the sea."

"I'll try it," said Dick. "I may be a millionaire."

"I hope so," said Charlie. "I suppose, next to making money, the best fun is to lose it."

"What's it good for, if it don't keep a-flying? It's no better than old rags to stow away; while, on the go, it helps somebody. Lose today, we win tomorrow."

"All hail, my hero," said Paddie, striding up and giving Dick a hearty grip. "You are famous now. Fortunate man to be in everybody's mouth, without being a fool or a knave; but simply a man, that and nothing more, which consigns so many to obscurity and poverty. I've labored for fame, and could never get it, and here at one stroke you have beat me. However, as you have taken to the fire, I'm going to take to the quill; and by being a goose, I hope to win fortune. I am a member of the press. Tomorrow, I begin to take notes and manufacture public opinion by shrewdly following it. It's a splendid trade to learn, if I can only get the hang of it."

"Shall we lose you too? Golden Throne will have to shut up shop, draw curtains, and put out the lights. It has no orchestra now, nobody to fiddle."

"And, therefore, nobody to dance," said Paddie. "I'll bestow all my ability to Gooch. I'll give him my fiddle and pumps. He'd make a good clown, if he was only rid of his religion."

"But he isn't rid of it, and so he plays the rascal. He smells too much of brimstone. How did it happen that you stay here? Indeed, you look gay, a brand new suit of clothes and a stove-pipe hat."

"Well, I'm respectable now, and can sin to my heart's content and not be wicked. I met an old chum here. We were at school together at Dublin. He is one of the most successful editors in the city, and has a fat income. He has just the place for me—a position whose duties are to furnish facts alias imagination; and I can do that to charm. I shall enjoy it watching the solemn public devouring my

fancies as solid realities. People do so like to be gulled, and there's millions in it."

"I congratulate you," said Charlie, "and I congratulate the public. I am sure you won't hurt them; for your nimble fancies shoot no arrows of poison, and a straight fancy is better than a twisted fact. Feed people on fancies until they know how to take facts. I guess that's the wisest course."

"It certainly is," said Paddie. "The way to rule the world is to gull it. I can't revolutionize; but I'm going to make people happy, even if I had to stuff a lie down their throats, unless it happens to be a theological lie, and that I can't stand. But I believe the best way to fight theology, and all such gloomy humbugs, is by telling people nice stories that are untrue and yet true. Such is the function of the poet, and the poet on the daily press is the coming power."

"I'll bet on your success," said Charlie. "Make folks laugh, and you'll win. Wit is truth in disguise, wherein it makes its sharpest thrust. Hullo, Sol, you've got some new boots on. Are you going to give us the shake?"

"Sorry to say it, but I am," said Sol. "I've another chance, and my friends want to run me. There's a split in El Dorado County; and things are pretty well mixed up, and I may slip in. I shall run on the Independent Civil Service Reform platform."

"What do you mean by the Independent Civil Service Reform platform?"

"Well, by Civil Service Reform, I mean gettin' the offices and hangin' on, making 'em a life tenure, through thick and thin, no matter whose out or whose in. The old cry, To the victor belong the spoils, is wrong. The new cry is, Get your mouth to the public crib, and keep it there."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

\$1000 Reward.

Friday's question to Robinson Crusoe, "Why God no kill Debbil?" has never been answered. The best attempt at a solution of the conundrum is probably the guess that his adversary is logically necessary to uphold God's own existence. At any rate, it will be a bad day for sky-pilots when it is universally allowed that there is no Devil. This is, perhaps, why they fight shy of him. There is, however, some man in America who means to bring him to close quarters. He advertises in a journal published at Peru, Illinois, that he will pay a reward of \$1,000 to the sheriff of anyone of the 102 counties in Illinois for the arrest of the "Devil," if he can be found in the state. Chicago is popularly said to be a suburb of hell, so there should be a chance for some enterprising police officer. —Freethinker.



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