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**Some Breaches of Promise**  
 BY M. QUAD.

Hiram Spooner was the homeliest baby ever born in the state of Ohio. If you are inclined to doubt, there are scores of doctors yet living who saw him and will swear to the fact. The baby was put on public exhibition, and hundreds of men and women went to the hall to see him. When Hiram was ten years old he was the homeliest boy in any two states of this Union. Affidavits can be procured to that effect.

When he was sixteen the residents of the village of Marysville tried to get a court order restraining him from coming into town from his father's farm.

When the young man was 21 years old he had the face of a baboon. He was almost baldheaded. He had teeth more like an animal than a human being. He had a voice that squeaked. Both shoulders loped, and his ears stuck out like a mule's. He had the feet of a giant and the hands of a boy. His homeliness had increased with age and growth.

One day, after looking at him a long time his father said to him: "Hiram, what in thunder is going to become of you anyhow?" "I'm thinking it over," was the reply.

"Guess it will take a heap of thinking."

"Mebbe so. You don't blame me, do you?"

"No-o-o, only I can't see why you weren't born either a jackass or a boy like other boys!"

"Nor I can't, but I've got to make the best of things."

After thinking things over for a while, and having a very serious talk with a fruit tree agent, Hiram announced on Monday morning that he had mapped out a career for himself, and half an hour later he drove away from the farm with a hired horse and buggy.

Within a radius of ten miles were twenty-three widows. Fifteen had been made such on one and the same day by the falling of a highway bridge. Not one of the women was poor, while some had a bank account. All had seen Hiram Spooner several times over. Hiram had prepared a list, and he began his calls according to card system. As he drove up to a house he wriggled out of his buggy and wriggled up to the door, and when it was opened to him and he was invited in he began: "Widow Blank, I am trying to do something to make a living."

"Yes?"

"You can see that I am in bad shape physically."

"Yes, poor boy."

"Did you know that you can grow two crops of the Oklahoma cucumber?"

"No, I never heard of it."

"I sent and got some of the seeds. Here they are. I shall charge you but little more than for the ordinary seeds and you can have two crops in place of one."

"Well, I will buy them to help you along."

"That is kind of you. I need money, but there are times when I fairly long for a word of sympathy."

"I know you must, and for years I have wanted to tell you how very, very sorry I was and am. There is no one in the world I pity as I do you. If you have anything else to sell bring it here."

Hiram had tears in his eyes as he left the house, but before climbing into his buggy he took out his memorandum book and made some entries under the proper date. He was grinning as he finished.

It took over thirty days for him to get around to the last widow, but he finished his business in good shape. Half a dozen times his father had demanded:

"See, here, boy, what kind of a game are you up to with the widows?"

"I'm picking out the best of the lot to propose to," was the reply.

Soon after the last widow had bought some Oklahoma cucumber seeds to help Hiram Spooner along with his laudable ambitions and to raise a double crop of cucumber pickles, the first one called on receiving a note from the cripple. It stated that his heart had been deeply touched by her kind words and being sure in his own mind that it was a case of love at first sight, with both of them, he had decided to accept her generous offer and hoped that it would be no sacrifice on her part.

At what date should the wedding take place? Was the betrothal to be announced at once or later on? What minister did she prefer? How many and what guests should be invited?

The widow read the note over the first time with wonder. The second time she was amazed, and the third she gasped out:

"Why, what can the crazy donkey mean?"

It did not take long to conclude that he meant matrimony, and that he had put her in the position of having popped the question. Hiram had called but once. Had she spoken kind words? Yes, she had said she was sorry for him. Any words of love or hints about matrimony? Not by forty long rods! If the homely young man had got her mixed up with some other widow then he was trying to be humorous.

The widow sat down and wrote a note repudiating everything, even to the Oklahoma cucumber seeds. These seeds had been fed to the chickens just before the note was written.

"There I guess that will take some of the conceit out of him!" she said as the note was sent on its way; but she was mistaken in the man.

Hiram came back with a written statement that she had deceived him, and crushed his young and crippled heart. She had led him to believe that she loved him, and in turn he had given her all his affections. To be thrown down now would be a blow that he could never get over. No money could ever heal his feelings, but she must requite him to an extent as a moral lesson to her not to



As "Luana" in Oliver Morosoff's beautiful production of "The Bird of Paradise," at the Grand on Thursday, April 9th.

**PROSPECTING FOR OIL**  
 English Concern is Negotiating With Holders of Rights  
 Ottawa, April 6.—The prospective successful outcome of negotiations between holders of petroleum rights in the remote townships of Northern Alberta and a strong company in Great Britain is officially stated to be the reason for the passing of an order-in-council extending the period for the payment of the year's rental for these rights. It is stated that the English company, if the negotiations succeed, would be willing to spend over two millions in a systematic and exhaustive search for petroleum in Northern Alberta, and by so doing set at rest the question as to whether petroleum exists in paying quantities in that part of the province.

**WIFE WANTS DIVORCE**  
 Says Husband Disappeared After First Week of Married Life  
 Hamilton, April 6.—Mrs. George Hill, before her marriage Miss Pearl Raphael, announced to-day that she was going to Cleveland to reside, and sue for a divorce. Her husband, it is said, mysteriously dropped out of sight here five months ago and has not been heard from since. Mr. Hill had only been married a week.

**Gigantic Steel Column Fell**  
 New York, April 6.—Five men were seriously injured, three probably fatally, when a gigantic steel column, weighing between twenty and forty tons, fell while being hoisted into place in the new Equitable Life building here Saturday afternoon.

The steel column was being swung into place by a derrick. It was suspended in the air about 150 feet above nine or ten men who were working on the framework of the second floor of the new building. The chains holding the huge column snapped and it plunged downward. Five men in its course were crushed, and the heavy column continued its descent crashing through the steel work of the lower floors and on down to the basement.

A man who is good chiefly on the surface is no good.

**FED BODY OF WOMAN**

PIECE BY PIECE TO FURNACE, SAYS MURDERER  
 Chinese Boy Admits Killing Mrs. Millard, of Vancouver, B.C.—He Choked Her to Death  
 Vancouver, B.C., April 6.—Jack Koenig, the seventeen-year-old Chinese boy suspected of the murder of Mrs. Charles J. Millard, confessed on Saturday that he committed the crime.

The boy told the police that at breakfast Wednesday Mrs. Millard had found fault with him. He struck her with a chair and stunned her, and then choked her to death, he said. Later he took her body to the basement, where he cut it up and placed it in the furnace piece by piece. He hid the clothing in order to convince Mr. Millard that his wife had gone out in the morning. She was the wife of C. J. Millard, C.P.R. ticket agent.

The skull and other bones have been found in the chimney, beyond the furnace, the police said.

The police had established clearly enough the fact that Mrs. Millard had been killed by her Chinese servant, and the police assert that the furnace in the basement of the Millard home contains what they claim to have been human bones, but there were still a great many objections to the theory that the Chinese boy actually cut up the body and fed it into the hot furnace until only a few scraps of the body were left.

The crime is presumed to have occurred at nine on ten o'clock on Wednesday morning, for the husband had left for Victoria only the night before.

Mrs. Millard had been doing her spring housecleaning, and the morning working dress is the only one of her garments now missing. Her husband came home at 11 o'clock at night, and believing his wife to be away at his sister's, went straight to bed.

The only possible trace of blood found was the wet spot under the carpet of the dining-room of the little home, and it was at this the Chinaman was working when Chief McGrae arrested him on Thursday morning.

The axe found Friday in the basement is alleged to have been the instrument used to cut up the body. Mr. Millard himself, weeping and heart-broken, talked to the boy at the police station at two o'clock Saturday morning, but could get no real information from him. At the time the young Chinaman, dressed in her house wrapper, stepped out of the house at ten o'clock Wednesday morning and he did not see her again. Later the confession was made.

**MRS. HUDSON WINS AGAIN**  
 Awarded \$1,300 Damages for Stepping on Live Wire  
 Perth, Ont., April 6.—In the case of Hudson v. Smith's Falls Electric Power company, at the assizes before Justice Falconbridge, the jury returned a verdict in favor of the plaintiff, awarding the same damages as the first jury did, namely, \$800 for Mrs. Hudson and \$500 for her husband.

The case dates back to 1910. It has been once tried, appealed, and a new trial ordered. The action was for \$5,000 damages for injuries alleged to have been sustained by Mrs. Hudson from stepping on a live wire in Smith's Falls belonging to the defendant company, which, she alleged, had fallen from a pole to the walk.

The company claimed that there was no wire down at the time the plaintiff claimed to have been injured, and further, that if there had been it could not have caused the injuries she sustained.

**MILITANT FIREBUG CAUGHT**  
 Found Secreted in Cupboard When Police Raided Mansion  
 Glasgow, Scotland, April 6.—The caretaker of a large vacant mansion near Rutherglen, three miles southeast of Glasgow, captured a militant suffragette found hiding in a cupboard in the cellar of the mansion. The woman was locked up by the caretaker, who telephoned the police, who arrested her. The police arrived too late, however, to prevent the escape of several other suffragettes in the building, who in their hurried flight left their cloaks behind them.

Search of the mansion disclosed bottles containing paraffin and also cotton wool and matches and other inflammable material, which had been placed evidently with the purpose of starting fires.

**Old Fishery Claim Heard**  
 Washington, April 6.—Claims amounting to \$40,000 owing to the seizure by Canada in 1877 of the seines and seine boats of the Gloucester fishing schooners Argonaut and Jonas H. French were heard by the British American Pecuniary Claims commission. It was charged that the fishermen were working within the three-mile limit off the coast of Nova Scotia. In defense it was claimed the boats and seines had drifted beyond the limit laid down by law.

**Had a Good Time**  
 A few ex-Pictonians met at Mrs. Edward Reburn's, Toronto, to have a game of card and a cup of tea with Mrs. Reburn's aunt, Mrs. Caniff, and her cousin, Mrs. McManus, of Edmonton. Mrs. Dagg, Mrs. William Reburn and Mrs. Henry Reburn looked after the tea things, and most fortunately the winner of the prize was Mrs. Caniff. The house was prettily adorned with daffodils in brass baskets and vases.

An unluckily and particularly sad death occurred at the home of Mr. and Mrs. Michael O'Coin, Bogart Road, on Friday last, when their two-year-old daughter succumbed to poisoning resulting from eating cathartic tablets containing strychnine, which had unconsciously been left within her reach.

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