



## An Eighty Year Boy

No, I didn't come over on the Mayflower. But I've met a man whose ancestors did... He said he could trace his ancestors back three hundred years—I thought that was pretty good considering that police court records were so very unreliable a hundred years back—even so.

He was carrying water for the gang so I readily entered into conversation with him, neglecting some important tamping I was supposed to be doing for the bait money the kindly Kommissary Kompany was in the habit of disbursing...

Being a poor sort of a conversationalist at best, I thought—seeing as how every man is interested in his work—it would be best to talk shop. So I asked him if his illustrious forefathers too had been water boys, and was that noble trade handed down from father to son?

"I'd have you know, I'm an American," he snapped.

"Compose yourself, dad, we know you are an American or you wouldn't be carrying water for 'hunkies,' as you call us; no one but an American would be trusted with such an exalted office—excuse me, dad, if I have another dipperful, you know a new man on the job always drinks more—So your forefathers came over on the Mayflower! I'm sure glad to hear it and I'm proud to know you—Here shake, I've always wanted to meet a pure blooded American.

"As you say . . . there were no foreigners aboard the Mayflower when it landed; they wasn't fugitives from the law of England that were permitted to embark upon that shaky old tub—the crown being convinced that that was the best way to get rid of them—seeing as how they wouldn't abide by the laws of the land . . . I see . . . Your ancestors weren't foreigners like mine. Mine, you know, came over on the Thingvala Line or was it the Allan Line and naturally my blood isn't as blue as yours. My grandfather told me that he tried to book passage on the Mayflower, but he was told that it wasn't running any more, so naturally he came over on the next best boat.

"He wasn't a very good American for that reason and said the only reason he stayed here was because he couldn't get back—money matters, you know; he never could understand the American currency. He also said, and I was going to ask you dad, if it is true that the original forefathers that came over on the Mayflower stayed here because they had no boat to get back with—But, of course, I don't expect you to know about such minor details—It's enough that you're an American and you can trace your ancestors back three hundred years to the cold inhospitable shores of Great Britain.

"Of course, dad, you ain't quite three hundred years old—I don't mean this as a joke—but would you mind telling me your age—Say dad, this water is surely fine... How's that! Eighty-two years of age? Can it be possible? You don't look a day over seventy-six. Now I know you are a 100 per cent patriot. No one but an American could have the stamina to carry water at the age of eighty-two. Trot along, dad—the boys are beginning to call for you. They sure appreciate your services—trot along."

P. S. From life; no bouquet!

### "TOO MUCH" MADE PLAIN

It may not be common knowledge to the reader that I am "well off," well to do, if not exactly a man of wealth. Nevertheless, I think I am the richest Wob in this country. (It is easy to write when one has no financial troubles).

At this writing, I estimate, I am worth over \$40,000. Nice piece of jack. Of course I don't carry it around with me as I go, because there is still so much wickedness in this world in spite of the fifth or seventh conundrum. Someone might roll me—in fact, this \$40,000 is in the form of *backpay* I got coming for a matter of 30 or 20 years hard labor I have done; being convicted of innocense in the 1st, second and 13th degree.

Investments, too, are so risky nowadays so I think I will just let that money lay where it is until such a time as the last crook is hung. An honest man like myself (myself included) hain't got no show in this world no more—and no more than a jack-rabbit has with a mudturtle in a running high-jump—if the purrfessors can be believed—which they can't. Honesty is the best policy when everything else fails.

Thus it is that—it isn't as if a poor man was writing these truths—my words carry weight with the working class. But, even so, my fame hasn't spread as far as it should and repeatedly when I ask a man if he knows T-bone Slim, he gives me a cruel unseeing stare and says: "No, thanks, I'm just after biting on one—what's the joke?" I ask him if he knows what a polecat is. His face brightens up, "Sure," he says, "he's a tramp lineman." Such is fame.

Now, if I were to say: No man has a right to advocate slowing down on the job—The Literary Template, The Independent Prevaricator and the Miscellaneous Mandrell would carry extra special supplements in rainbow colors announcing to the palpitating world that "our own T-bone Slim, 140 per cent American, once a poor boy, has now conquered the literary world (single handed) and Stands today at the peak of his profession in the full glare of the envious eyes of such great writers as H. G. Wells and H. Bell Wright.

T-bone Slim, the giant of letters, in answer to the question, "Well, what do you say?" Replied, "Save your syllables and the sentences will do the rest."

Yes, if I said no man should advocate slowing down, they would name their cigars and streets after me. But, I am not going to say it. Instead I am going to say: No Man Has A Right to Advocate Speeding Up On A Job. No Man Has A Right To Say Hurry Up. If it is wrong to say, "Slow down, Gabe;" it surely must be wrong to say, "hurry up, Jack. Woe is me—no rainbow supplements—I never could tell a lie and tell it well.

A Dutchman once't said, "Too much is too much," which proves Heine was a profound student of "bulk." Too much IS too much. Too much Abundance is as bad as surplus of want. Recently the hardware dealers editing the daily press have worked themselves into a frenzy yowling, "Abundance means prosperity."

Bring out your best type, Stumpy . . . We'll close debate. Never has there been a shortage of abundance in these United States. Rather, it has been a case of too much abundance—and, "too much" is not "enough." Too much is too much (just what it says) and enough is less than too much. Too much is more than enough and enough is never too much. Sufficiency isn't too much, but it is enough, so you can see yourself, enough is enough and too much is too much. Abundance is too much and not enough; hence it is a very ambiguous quantity to monkey with. Better stick to sufficiency—be it ever so elegant.