

The FOOL-KILLER

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WAR.

I am War, the Desolator, final arbiter of earth,
And I make the earth to tremble with my tread;
I rejoice exceeding greatly when a man is given birth,
But I cannot rest contented till he's dead.

Ah, the smell of blood and powder—this is what my nature craves,
And I love the pallid beauty of the slain;
All a thousand men are fit for is to fill a thousand graves,
Or to lie, a mass of carnage, on the plain.

From the ancient crude devices by which Gaul and Roman died,
I have taught men how to fashion mighty guns;
How to build the awful Dreadnaughts that are every navy's pride—
Fathers heaping up destruction for their sons.

Ah, to me it matters little if men arbitrate for peace,
When, behold! their swords are gory to the hilt;
And I laugh in loud derision when they cry that war shall cease,
While they order greater navies to be built.

I am War, the Desolator, and I point with savage pride
To the seas of human gore that I have shed;
And I hold as less than nothing all the armies that have died,
And the hearts that have been broken for the dead.

THE WIDOW.

Did you ever stop in your wild scramble for wealth and fame long enough to let your mind rest in mingled fear and admiration on that paradoxical piece of heterogeneous humanity sometimes referred to as a widow? Fearing that you have overlooked this important case, I feel that it is my duty to call your attention to it.

I have adjusted the set-screws of my imagination so it will exactly fit the case, and now I propose to set down a few timely and opportune facts in regard to the widow. My intellect, as you may have observed, is built on the plan of a monkey-wrench. It can grasp and squeeze the succulent juice out of a small subject; or, if need be, it can open out and embrace a

subject of any size, not even, excepting a fat widow.

A widow is what a married man leaves behind when he dies, to squander his life-insurance and provide his children with a step-father.

Widows may be divided into two general classes—the old reliable relic of a masculine corpse, and the ex-wife, or grass widow. The latter variety is the most fashionable in this enlightened age of divorce courts and alimony. A grass widow is the female section of a matrimonial knot that has come untied. The word "grass" is used to denote that both parties to the contract were green or they wouldn't have had each other at the start.

After she is cut loose from her husband, a grass widow sometimes dries up, but she never hushes up. It is more often the case, however, that she takes a second growth and weaves her tendrils around some poor simple-minded man who has never really done anything to deserve such punishment.

A sure-enough widow most always dresses in black for the first year after the death of her hubby. She does that to show how sorry she is that she can't get married again right off.

Philosophers have studied the widow ever since she first came in fashion, but they have never quite understood her. She is the problem of the past, the mystery of modern times and the rebus of the rising generation. She is the young girl's rival, the old maid's envy and the bachelor's best friend. Her smile is seasoned with the sop of experience, and they say her kiss isn't any amateur affair.

The average widow is not subject to any rules or customs. She is a law unto herself, and in most cases she is also a law unto the man she takes a liking to. She throws her lasso over his head and ropes him in before he has time to yell or get out of the way. Then, a little later, if she takes a notion she would like to be a widow again, she can apply to the divorce court or the drug store and get something that will produce the desired result.

Most all widows would like to be wives, and some wives are of the opinion that there is no earthly condition so blissful as that of the widow. I know of a man who

couldn't please his wife better than to wander off into the indefinite whence and leave her a widow. My notion is she would soon select another man to help her enjoy her loneliness.

I think this is enough information about widows to last you for a spell. If you want more, drop me a card.

AN APOLOGY.

This issue of The Fool-Killer is far from being what I had intended to make it, and I must here explain the reason for its many shortcomings. I had sharpened my pencil, fished a pad of paper from my desk and was just ready to begin operations, when—lo and behold!—the announcement was made that the Measles had come to spend a few weeks with us. I never like to work when we have company, so there was nothing to do but lay aside the work of killing fools and entertain the visitors.

By the time all the victims of measles got out of bed so I could get my tinkery to work again, the month of March was nearly gone and I have been compelled to fill this issue with a very cheap line of stuf. And it is going to be a tight squeeze to get this issue ready to mail before March is gone. Hereafter I hope to be on hand earlier in the month and with a better quality of gab.

Get all your neighbors to subscribe—tell them The Fool-Killer is the whole world of hot mustard boiled down and put on a plaster for the old sores of society, church and state.

Hip! Hurrah!

THE TOWER OF BABEL.

One time there were some people who wanted to go to heaven, and they got impatient waiting for their wings to sprout; so they held a convention and agreed to build a tower with steps to it, so they could climb up and jump in at the back window of heaven while Saint Peter wasn't looking.

Well, they bought a big red hillside not far from the river Euphrates, and they built a brick-yard at the bottom of the hill. It was the biggest brick-yard I ever saw—and, come to think about it, I never saw that one. But they employed hundreds of hands and made great piles of brick. Then

they leveled off a big piece of ground two or three miles square and begun to lay the foundation. They got the foundation done by and by, and started to build on up toward heaven, but they didn't get more than four feet the first year. At that rate it seemed that their wings would be ready for use before the tower would. But they kept right on making brick and mixing mortar, and the tower kept rising inch by inch.

As soon as one generation of masons and hod carriers had died out, the next generation would take up the work and carry it along. In a few hundred years they had got it nearly as high as the Washington Monument.

Saint Peter looked out at the windows of heaven and saw those fellows on the tower coming right on up. He left his post of duty and gave the alarm. When the Lord saw what the people on earth were trying to do, He was not much afraid they would ever break into heaven that way, but He thought He could save them a good deal of useless work by going down and putting a stop to it all. So the Lord told the stable boy to saddle His best horse, and He came galloping down through the rifted clouds and confounded the language of the people. That is the reason some races of people have to use such a confounded language even to this day.

After the Lord had confounded their language, it was funny to see those people try to work. When the masons wanted more lime the waiters would carry up a bucket of sand, and when brick was wanted they carried up a load of scaffolding planks. Then the masons would take their trowels to the hod-carriers and knock them off the tower, and they would yell and fall fifteen or twenty miles and light on their heads.

The misunderstanding got so bad that the workmen couldn't get anything they wanted without coming down after it, and then they would forget what they came after, get them a chew of tobacco and go back to the top, only to be cussed at in some foreign language by the other masons.

That looked like mighty slow progress toward getting to heaven, but it was about as good as most people are doing to-day.

Everything that appears in this paper was written by the editor.