

# The FOOL-KILLER

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## ROOSEVELT AND ROME.

Some men can be scared. Some can be bulldozed. And some can be bought. But not the man you call Ted the Hunter. He does not belong in either of those classes. Ted hangs on like grim death to the thing he believes is right. The only way to change him is to convince him that he is wrong. If you want a permanent job you can have that one. I mean, of course, the job of convincing Ted. The reason he is so hard to convince that he is in the wrong is because he has a very troublesome habit of being always on the right side.

A few weeks ago that little tin god over in Rome didn't know all these things. But he knows now. And he is in a fair way to learn still more if he will just keep his ear to the ground.

I have never been any fool over Fairbanks. Fact is, to take him on the average, he isn't a man to enthuse over. But when he shook his fist in the face of that self-appointed "Vicar of God" and told him to go to Hel—ena, Montana, my enthuser began to leak over the top just a little.

And then when Ted the Terrible planted his number twelves in the Holy City there was more rattling among the dry bones of Roman Catholicism. The dose of mental salts that Roosevelt gave to the old dope-eating dago caused him to run off at the mouth just awful. He foamed and he fumed. He jumped up and down. He acted for all the world like a mad-dog with its tail in the fire and both hind feet in a steeltrap. And all because he couldn't dictate to a plain American citizen with a pair of eye-glasses and some teeth.

In the presence of Roosevelt the Holy Pappy was no more than a dry leaf in a whirlwind. The Lion-Hunter simply took the little old egotistical wart of humanity between his two thumb-nails and cracked him just like you would crack a flea, only a sight easier. It took Ted only a few minutes to make the fact known that there would be no strings on him. He would speak where he pleased and when he pleased, and if the Pope didn't like it he could lump it.

Three cheers for the man who isn't afraid—who refuses to sell his freedom for the privilege of kissing the Pope's infernal old hoof.

## ALL KINDS OF FOOLS.

I'll sing a little snatch of song  
About the fools that come along.  
There's many fools of many minds—  
The harmless fool and other kinds.

Most pitiful and most forlorn  
The fool in that condition born—  
The idiotic, staring fool,  
With brain as dull as any mule.

Poor man! 'Tis not his fault alone;  
In other lives the seed was sown;  
We should not laugh at such a man—  
No doubt he does the best he can.

You've seen the fool upon a limb,  
And sawing 'twixt the tree and him;  
Also the fool who thought it fun  
To blow into a loaded gun.

One other fool that I despise  
Believes that he is very wise;  
I have no doubt that you recall  
The tiresome fool who knows it all.

The business fool will scheme and plan

A thousand ways to cheat a man,  
And cannot see that in the end  
He'll die without a single friend.

Another place for fools to mix  
Is in the field of politics;  
They hate the truth and love a lie,  
And some sell votes and others buy.

Bless goodness, I must not forget  
The fools that form the social set;  
Of all the fools that sin has nursed,  
The fools of fashion are the worst.

They grab old Reason by the snout,  
And jerk him down and throw him out;  
And high on Fashion's rotten throne  
Old Mistress Folly reigns alone.

Religious fools of every kind  
It is not difficult to find—  
So many gods, so many creeds,  
That do not satisfy our needs.

The list is long, and yet they say  
New fools are sprouting every day;  
The Fool-Killer biffs 'em one by one,  
And yet its task is never done.

## REVERIES OF A FAMILY GHOST.

I am a family ghost. I live in the graveyard. Fact is, I don't live at all—I'm dead. I wouldn't be a ghost if I wasn't dead. But I stay in the graveyard. When I have nothing else to do I roost on a tombstone. I cannot be seen in the day-time, but at night I wear my long white shroud and am plainly visible. My name used to be Sam Simons. I was alive then. But my neighbors treated me cruelly and I died with a broken heart. Now I'm Sam Simons's ghost. My business here is to stand guard over the family graveyard and to scare people who wronged me in my life time. I've been here well nigh fifty years,

and have given the neighborhood no little amount of trouble. But my star seems to be sinking. People don't pass this way any more, especially in the night, and nobody ever comes here now to get buried. My, my! What a deserted looking place this is! Even the briars have grown so thick that I can't walk about without danger of tearing my shroud off. Now such a miserable place as this is not at all fit to be dead in. Any self-respecting ghost would protest against it, and I do think it is a pity that a fellow's people won't try to make him comfortable after he dies. Don't they know that this old grave of mine is all out of repair? Why, it leaks just awfully when it rains. Every time it rains I have to go down and "bail out" my coffin, using my skull-bone for a dipper. It just makes a fellow's shin bones rattle together to think of himself in such a plight as this, and if matters don't take a turn soon I'm going to pull up my tombstone and move to more respectable quarters.

## THE SUMMER HAT.

Holy smoke! Suffering Moses! Great guns! What nerve-racking and blood-curdling things we do have to put up with in this heathenish America! Is there no relief from the tortures of fashion? Is there no limit to the dimensions of the spring hat? Last year it was a buggy wheel trimmed with feather beds, and this year it is a hay-stack with roosters on it. It keeps getting worse. I used to see old nigger women tote water-buckets, washing-tubs and clothes-baskets on their heads, and I thought that was an awful stunt. But Lordy! That wasn't a circumstance. This summer our dear little perfumed and powdered society queens will go waltzing around with things on their heads that would break the neck of any nigger wench this side of Africa.

I can't understand it all. God knows these outlandish, overgrown, neck-breaking head-smashers don't look pretty. Or if God don't know it, I do. They are enough to frighten a flying machine or give an express train the blind staggers. How would a man look with such a thing balanced on his dome of thought? Gosh, Betsy, don't mention it. It would kill all the fruit in the neighborhood and run the cats crazy. Fur-

thermore, a man that would wear such a thing on his head ought to be cremated alive and then shot dead. And a government that would allow it ought to be thunder-struck with a mountain of mud.

But the women—well, that's different. Paris pops her whip and the procession moves on. And the hats, like the hole in an old coat-sleeve, get bigger and bigger. They are so big now that they have to be built like a folding bed in order to get in at the church door. And when they do get in, the preacher has to squat down and shoot his sermon under the benches in order to reach the poor sinful men.

A few years from now the women will wear church houses on their heads, and the preacher will hold meeting in a hat.

## PLENTY FOR HIM TO DO.

There is every indication that Theodore Roosevelt will not want for a job when he gets back home. He is wanted for nearly every purpose under the sun. The nation wants him for president. He is also wanted in congress and in the senate. He is wanted as railroad president, bank president and college president. He is wanted as editor of magazines and newspapers everywhere. He is wanted as a historian, and he is desired by hundreds of cities that want to feed him and listen to his after-dinner speeches. Amateur writers and budding poets want him to read and criticize about two tons of their trash every day. Ten thousand old-field school-house orators want him to write their speeches for commencement day. Rabbit hunters all over the South want him to add the weight of his personality to their expeditions against poor little Bunny.

In the political field, the insurgents want Teddy on their side, and the Cannonites want him on their side, and Taft is so rattled that he hasn't the least idea what he wants.

In the past it has been a problem what to do with our ex-presidents, but in this case we can rest easy. A man who can take care of himself in the wilds of Africa can certainly do so in America, and there seems to be enough in sight to keep the Lion-Hunter reasonably busy.

Read the Bible and The Fool-Killer.