ONE MAN'S MEAT

By Dorothy Canfield

One of the Evening Public Ledger's New Short Stories in the Series of Unpublished Fiction by the Best American Writers of the Day

THE first time I ever heard the threadbare saying about a square peg in a round hole was when my father used it in an attempt to excuse Aunt Emily. Up to that time I had never heard any one say anything of her except that she was a detestable woman, with the most infernal capacity for being perfectly wretched herself and making everybody else so. What a home she made for poor, mild Uncle Charlie, and for their three nervous, scrawny, rabbit-faced children!

You are not to think she neglected her home or her children. Indeed, no! She house-kept with a fanatical competence and expended on the upbringing of her children an extravagant energy which filled the house to its remotest corner, as a saw-mill is filled by the strident energy of the saw. Never were three children so brought up as my poor little cousins. Aunt Emily was determined that she should do her whole duty by them, that they should be perfect, and do everything exactly right. Of course, she knew much better than they what was right, and hence had never an instant of repose from her labor of pushing and shoving them into the way they should go.

Oh, how we hated to be sent on an errand to Aunt Emily's house. I spare you the description of what a meal at Aunt Emily's table was, with Aunt Emily teaching the children table manners. There are plenty of intolerable things in real life, without dragging into a story what happened when Uncle Charles spilled gravy on a clean tablecloth.

You notice, perhaps, that I say, "at Aunt Emily's table," and not "at Uncle Charles'"; and that sets me at another angle of their home life; what that home life meant to Aunt Emily's husband. He was known in America as a man "with no head for business," and yet there had never been anything but business in his life. He had been a handsome, dreamy-eyed, musical minded young accountant in Emery's Emporium when Aunt Emily, very young herself, had married him; married him apparently for the same reason that he was in business, because there seemed to be nothing else to do. But Uncle Charles was no money-maker, and imprisoned in a grinding round of petty economies and unescapable shabbiness, how Aunt Emily ate her heart out, and what a life Uncle Charles led! But not even Aunt Emily's terrible energy could put into her husband's gentle, artistic, uncommercial soul a single gust of the stormy ambitions which blew like a tornado in her harried heart. Uncle Charles hated all business desperately, and found the only pleasure in his life in his children.

MY MOTHER always said that those three Burton children would certainly just have wasted away, if it had not been for their father at this time. He had as great a gift for calming and cheering them as their mother had for damping the very life out of them. Whenever Aunt Emily was away from home for a few hours, and Uncle Charles was there with the children, what a good time they had in those short hours of respite, Uncle Charles in an easy chair, the children piled on top of him, his arms around them tight, while they had what they called a "visit." This meant a chatter of little voices, bird-like and free, which Aunt Emily had never heard in her life. Or perhaps they'd all sing together, for they had inherited Uncle Charles' gift for music.

If he had only time he would have given piano lessons to all the children. But, dear me, he had no time except for that account keeping, and they had no money to pay a professional music-teacher. Uncle Charles always looked ten years younger after such a visit with his children, whereas a rainy morning spent with the children in the house always made Aunt Emily look a thousand years old, "they wore on her so," "they upset so the perfect order of her wonderfully kept house." And yet they did their best not to wear on her, by keeping away from her as much as possible. They never went home from school until it was actually supper-time, and always played in our yard, not their own.

The result was that Aunt Emily was left quite to herself in a Sahara-desert of lonely housekeeping and desperate economies with the poor pittance which was all that Uncle Charles could earn. Her thin face grew grim and dark, as she mended and patched and turned and dyed and performed miracles on tough necks of mutton and cheap curtain materials. All of it she did with superlative skill, but burning and raging inwardly (and many times not so very inwardly) against the necessity of doing it at all, and crying out bitterly with many fits of hysterical tears that she was killing herself for her family, and nobody gave her a bit of credit for it.

Dorothy Canfield has so many successes to her credit and is so versatile a person that one despairs of chronicling even a small part of her achievements. When little more than a girl she had won two degrees, Ph. B. and a Ph. D., and it was not many years after that that she became famous as an author.

Her books are the type that live. To speak of her latest big success, "The Brimming Cup," calls up mention of her earlier work, and starts discussion of "The Bent Twig" or "The Squirrel Cage"; or away from her novels to her books on the Montessori Method.

She is the kind of person who lives into the lives of the people surrounding her, whether it be in France or her own State, Vermont. You feel this quality in all she writes, and her special interest in those things that are American, in a way that is rare, constructive and fine.

Oh, yes, everybody dodged when Aunt Emily hove in view, Father as much as the rest, in spite of all his extenuations. Whenever we did have to go there, on unavoidable errands, we children would stand in the doorway and assure her volubly that we wouldn't come in, because our feet were muddy. This brought about the desired result of being told severely to hurry along then, and not get the whole house cold, with that door standing open.

Then came the climax in their misfortunes, as if they were not already sufficiently singled out for misery. Uncle Charles fell on the stairs, and hurt himself terribly—threw several vertebrae out of position, I believe, so that he lay almost wholly paralyzed from the waist down. And not a penny of savings to pay the doctor, not even the grocer's bill at the end of the month. It was disaster, absolute black, irreparable disaster. Aunt Emily was stunned into silence, a dreadful gray silence, as of some one whose grudge against fate is rising to mania. I remember hearing Father say to Mother, after he came back from his turn at spending a night of care for Uncle Charles, "I'm afraid of the woman, I positively am. She looks as though she'd go mad." "Well, it's not out of sympathy for her poor husband, that's sure," Mother answered acidly.

WHAT do you suppose was the result of that terrific accumulation of emotion in Aunt Emily? What was the momentous, tremendous decision to reach which, in 1885, it was necessary for her to rise to that pitch of frenzy? Why nothing more nor less than this—and in those days it was a decision both momentous and tremendous for any married woman with children—she put on her bonnet—yes, bonnet, it was in the last days of bonnets, when only young girls wore hats—and marched down town to ask for work in Emery's Emporium.

She got it, of course. Even if it had not been Aunt Emily, the humane head of the firm would have felt under some obligation to the wife of a faithful employe of such long standing. And in addition to this, it was Aunt Emily—of course she got what she went after.

She was put—well, I don't know that I ever heard just in what small corner she was put at first, as an experiment; something easy and simple to suit her supposed inexperience of business and her supposed feminine incapacity for it. The life at home was organized somehow, anyhow, as best they could with different cousins taking turns to go in and help out with the work. Uncle Charles did not suffer any pain, and was quite himself as far as his head was concerned, his body like a log in the bed, but his eyes bright, his fine sensitive face pale, but calm and philosophic as always. He was quite able to direct the children as they dressed and undressed themselves and studied their lessons and learned to do the housework.

As Uncle Charles got better so that he could sit up in bed, things ran more smoothly. His bed was moved down to a corner of the dining-room, where he could look into the kitchen. He could work with his hands now, which he had always loved to do, and they were never still from morning till night. My father gave him a wheeled tray which was always piled with work, done or to be done. He did all the mending and darning and he and Phoebe did the cooking and the kitchen work together. The children all brought their school-books to their father's bedside, and "did" their lessons there, to a running accompaniment of such sympathetic, helpful comments from him as they'd never known before. By midwinter of that year, Uncle Charles was well enough to sit in a wheeled chair, which Aunt Emily bought out of the first raise in her salary, and presented proudly to him on Christmas Day. After this, he was all over the house at once, active and cheerful.

He always sat beside Phoebe, as she practiced her music lesson, to listen, to play the bass in a single duet, and to teach. My mother says she never saw a child get forward with her music as Phoebe did after her father began to teach her. In no time she was playing the accompaniments for his light, clear baritone, and then the little house rang with music like a shell with the murmur of the sea. We all used to love to go there, as soon as school was over to "have a concert." Sometimes they sang Scotch airs—the tears we have shed over "Loch Lomond," the zest for battle poured into us by "Scots wha' hae"; or it might be Irish,—how we have laughed over "Father O'Flynn," and yelled out the chorus of the "Cruiskeen Lawn:"—or Negro. There never was anybody who could sing "spirituals" like Uncle Charles. Oh, they were great concerts, we'll never forget.

AND what was Aunt Emily doing all this time? You know as well as I do what Aunt Emily was doing. She was rising like a rocket through every plane of the management of Emery's Emporium. She was passionately interested in her work, because she could use it to serve her ambition; and because she was passionately interested in it, she mastered it, and owned it, and put it in her pocket. Everybody in that line of business in that part of the country soon knew her; she was hail-fellow-well-met with all the traveling men, who liked her bluff manners and sharp tongue, feared her piercing eye, and respected her capacity always to get the better of them.

She was detested but admirably served by the staff of the store, who were bewildered by her really inhuman capacity for endless exactitude of detail, angry at the ever-lasting high tension of her demands, but placated by the growing fame of the store and by her instant recognition of business ability in a subordinate. "Business ability!" How Aunt Emily adored it! What a starved, wolf-like appetite she had for all that it stood for. How intensely she lived in her new life!

Before long she had developed a new line, advertising (this was before the modern science of advertising was dreamed of), and while I dare say it would be an exaggeration to say that she was the first to expand the present principles of psychological advertising I know a good many people who think she came very near doing so. Merchants from other cities came to see her window displays, and talked with her about advertising. Aunt Emily, who never did anything for nothing, soon saw that she had a marketable product there, and proceeded to put it on the market. She organized what I'm sure was the first advertising agency, and ran it in odd moments of her busy days.

I saw my Uncle Charles, walking nimbly and briskly without his crutches

She was up and off to work early, reading the morning paper as she ate breakfast, which Uncle Charles had seen to. Then they saw her no more till night, when she came home walking strongly in the door, looking very distinguished and chic in the beautifully cut tailor suits of the best material that money could buy. I am speaking now, of course, of the times after that difficult beginning. That period lasted, after all, only till she could get her bearings in the new world. Very soon, she was earning more money than Uncle Charles had ever dreamed of making. By the time Uncle Charles was around on crutches, there was a good competent girl in the kitchen. This left Uncle Charles more time and strength to give to the children, more leisure to perfect his own music and more energy to plan the thousand ingenious variations, on the theme of domestic life which made their home the most delightful one to visit in, you can imagine.

Aunt Emily fitted in it all very comfortably. She was always agreeably tired by night, and relieved of her surplus energy, she was astonishingly good-natured and easy to get along with. There was plenty of money these days for competent-help, which Uncle Charles managed smoothly; there was plenty of money for good clothes, and good food, and nice china, and pretty glassware, and fine linen, all of which Aunt Emily enjoyed with a hungry pleasure which was never blunted by ceaseless repetition. She was happy for the first time in her life, Aunt Emily was, and although she was by this time middle-aged and gray-haired, she was handsomer than she had ever been in youth. She grew and grew in acumen and business ability, and ripened with experience, till our small city was not big enough for her. She soared off to New York, carrying the family with her to an expenseive apartment, and from there to Paris, where they lived for many years, Aunt Emily being the Paris representative of a great New York department store.

To the day of his death Uncle Charles always kept the children close to his heart, and directed their growth just as lovingly and wisely as ever. Phoebe is a professional pianist now, well known all over America and Europe. For years she was usually companioned by her father, crutches and all. Charlie is a successful architect, with a lovely French wife and two babies. It was beautiful to see Uncle Charles with his grandchildren! Bobby would certainly have gone straight to the dogs if he had not had the most inspired handling at his father's hands. He was a wild, temperamental, unreasonable, warm-hearted, hot-tempered boy, who could not get on an instant with his mother. But Uncle Charles held to him through everything, made a man of him at last, for he is a noted field-worker for the New York National History Museum.

THIS story sounds as though it were petering out, doesn't it, and as though this was about all there was to it. But there is something else, something I never told any one but father. It was the great shadowy secret of my childhood, something father and I knew, and nobody else. But now that Uncle Charles and Aunt Emily are gone, I can tell it.

This is what happened. When I was nine years old (about three years after Uncle Charles' accident) I happened to stay at their house overnight. I had a bad dream, out of which I woke up with a start, and unable to get to sleep afterward, I got out of bed and wandered to the window to look out into the moonlight. And, there in front of the house, walking round the garden paths, what do you suppose I saw? You will never guess. I saw my Uncle Charles, walking nimbly and briskly without his crutches.

I went home the next morning in a maze of bewilderment and climbed up to my father's attic study. Speaking all in an excited hurry, I told him what I had seen. His first impression was one of utter amazement, "Your Uncle Charles walking without his crutches!"

And he fell into a long, thoughtful, brooding silence, looking over my head, and not listening to my rush of exclamations. Finally he glanced down at me, with a strange, anxious look and with a voice of deep earnestness, such as I had never heard addressed to me before, as though something of terrible importance depended upon me, he said urgently:

"See here, my darling, you must never, never, never tell anybody else what you have seen. Promise me you will never speak of it again, not even to me. Just put it right out of your mind, as if you had not seen it. Lift your hand and promise."

As soon as I could recover from my awe at the solemnity of his look, I lifted by hand and promised, and a silence fell between us.

Then I said, "Father, please I want to ask just one thing. If Uncle Charles doesn't need his crutches—" But I got no further.

"Doesn't need his crutches—what are you talking about," exclaimed my father, "he needs crutches! What in the world makes you think he doesn't need his crutches? He couldn't get along a minute without them."

I stared at him, beside myself with astonishment. My father went on "They are his only defense against the Inquisition."

"The Inquisition," I faltered. "Westward Ho" in my mind, "We haven't any Inquisition in America."

"Oh, yes, we have," said my father.

I struggled up through the overwhelming flood of my bewilderment, till I could get breath enough to speak, and protested. "But Father the only Inquisition I ever heard of is——you know, that thing that tortures people because they don't conform to the religion of the particular country they're in."

"Well, that is the kind we have in America, all right," said my father, "and if it weren't for your Uncle Charles' crutches, it would seize right on him and torture all his family, including Aunt Emily."

"I don't understand a word of what you're saying, "I cried out desperately."

"Well, maybe you will, some time," answered my father.

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JACK O' JUDGMENT

An Unusual Story of a Blackmailing Gang and a Mysterious Avenger, by the Author of "Green Rust," "The Daffodil Murder," "Clue of the Twisted Candle"

By Edgar Wallace

THE STORY SO FAR

COLONEL DAN BOUNDARY, a fat, coarse-grained but unusually clever leader of a gang of crooks, has become alarmed at receipt of a knave of clubs, signed "Jack o' Judgment" after several of his exploits, all of which are subtly devised to enrich him without risking the law's penalties. He tries to disarm suspicions gathering around him by complaining to

STAFFORD KING, of the London Criminal Intelligence Force.

PINTO SILVA, a sleek man about town, forces his attentions on an actress, who rebuffs him. She is

MAISIE WHITE, daughter of Solly White, one of the gang who wishes to retire. She is interested in Stafford.

LOLLIE MARSH, a doll-faced but clever girl, who acts as "vamp" of the blackmailing gang.

CROOK CREWE, once a gentleman, now a thief.

CHAPTER IV
Missing

COLONEL DAN BOUNDARY descended slowly from the taxicab which had brought him up from Horsham station and surveyed without emotion the domicile of his partner. It was Colonel Boundary's boast that he was in the act of lathering his face on the tenth floor of a California hotel when the earthquake began, and that he finished his shaving operation, took his bath and dressed himself before the earth had ceased to tremble.

"I shall want you again, so you had better wait," he said to the driver, and passed through the wooden gates toward Rose Lodge.

He stopped half way up the path, having now a better view of the house. It was a red brick villa, the home of a well-to-do man. The trim lawn with its border of rose trees, the little fountain playing over the rockery, the quality of the garden furniture within view and the general air of comfort which pervaded the place suggested the home of a presperous business man, one of those happy creatures who have never troubled to get themselves in line for millions, but have lived happily between the four and five figure mark.

Colonel Boundary grunted and continued his walk. A trim maid opened the door to him, and by her blank look it was evident that he was not a frequent visitor.

"Boundary—just say Boundary," said the colonel in a deep voice, which carried to the remotest part of the house.

He was shown to the drawing-room and again found much that interested him. He felt no twinge of pity at the thought that Solomon White would very soon exchange this almost luxury for the bleak discomfort of a prison cell, and not even the sight of the girl who came through the door to greet him brought him a qualm.

"You want to see father, colonel?" she asked.

Her tone was cold but polite. The colonel had never been a great favorite of Maisie White's, and now it required a considerable effort on her part to hide her deep aversion.

"Do I want to see your father?" said Colonel Boundary. "Why, yes, I think I do, and I want to see you, too, and I'd just as soon see you first, before I speak to Solly."

She sat down, a model of patient politeness, her hands folded on her lap. In the light of day she was pretty, straight of back, graceful as to figure, and the clear gray eyes which met his faded blue ones were very understanding.

"Miss White," he said, "we have been very good to you."

"We?" repeated the girl.

"We." The colonel nodded. "I speak for myself and my business associates. If Solomon had ever told you the truth you would know that you owe all your education, your beautiful home"—he waved his hand—"to myself and my business associates." His tongue rolled around the last words. They were favorites of his.

She nodded her head slightly.

"I was under the impression that I owed it to my father," she said with a hint of irony in her voice, "for I suppose that he earned all he has."

"You suppose that he earned all that he has?" repeated the colonel. "Well, very likely you are right. He has earned more than he has got, but pay day is near at hand."

There was no mistaking the menace in his tone, but the girl made no comment. She knew that there had been trouble. She knew that her father had for days been locked in his study and had scarcely spoken a word to anybody.

"I saw you the other night," said the colonel, changing the direction of his attack; "I saw you at the Orpheum. Pinto Silva came to me. We were in the stage box."

"I saw you," said the girl quietly.

"A very good performance, considering you're a kid," said Boundary. "In fact, Pinto says you're the best mimic he has ever seen on the stage." He paused. "Pinto got you your contracts."

"Sorry to break in on your reverie, Colonel," said Stafford King," but I've a warrant for your arrest!"

She nodded.

"I am very grateful to Mr. Silva," she said.

"You have all the world before you, my girl," said Boundary in his slow ponderous way, "a beautiful and bright future—plenty of money, pearls, diamonds"—he waved his hand with a vague gesture—"and Pinto, who is the most valuable of my business associates, is very fond of you."

The girl sighed helplessly.

"I thought the matter had been finished and done with, colonel," she said. "I don't know how people in your world would regard such an offer, but in my world they would look upon it as an insult."

"And what the devil is your world?" asked the colonel without any sign of irritation.

She rose to her feet.

"The clean, decent world," she said calmly, "the law-abiding world, the world that regards such arrangements as you suggest as infamous. It is not only the fact that Mr. Silva is already married——"

The colonel raised his hand.

"Pinto talks very seriously of getting a divorce," he said solemnly, "and when a gentleman like Pinto Silva gives his word, that ought to be sufficient for any girl. And now you have come to mention law-abiding worlds," he went on slowly, "I would like to speak of one of the law-abiders."

She knew what was coming and was silent.

"There's a young gentleman named Stafford King hanging around you." He saw her face flush but went on: "Mr. Stafford King is a policeman."

"He is an official of the criminal intelligence department," said the girl; "but I don't think you would call him a policeman, would you, colonel?"

"All policemen are policemen to me," said Boundary, "and Mr. Stafford King is one of the worst of the policemen from my point of view, because he's trying to trump up a cock-and-bull story about me and get me into very serious trouble."

"I know Mr. King is connected with a great number of unpleasant cases," said the girl coolly; "it would be a coincidence if he was in a case which interested you."

"It would be a coincidence, would it?" said the colonel, nodding his huge head. "Perhaps it is a coincidence that my clerk, Hanson, has disappeared and has been seen in the company of your friend, eh? It is a coincidence that King is working on the Spillsbury case—the one case that Solly knows nothing about—eh?"

She faced him, puzzled and apprehensive.

"Where does all this lead?" she asked.

"It leads to trouble for Solly, that's all," said the colonel. "He's trying to put me away and put his business associates away, and he has got to go through the mill unless——"

"Unless what?" she asked.

"Pinto's a merciful man; I'm a merciful man. We don't want to make trouble with former business associates, but trouble there is going to be, believe me."

"What kind of trouble?" asked the girl. "If you mean that your so-called business association with my father will cease, I shall be happier. My father can earn his living, and I have my stage work."

"You have your stage work"—the colonel did not smile, but his tone betrayed his amusement—"and your father can earn his living, eh? He can earn his living in Portland jail," he said, raising his voice.

"For the matter of that, so can you, colonel."

The colonel turned his head slowly and surveyed the spare figure in the doorway.

"Oh, you heard me, did you, Solly?" he said not unpleasantly.

"I heard you," said Solomon White, his lean face a shade whiter than the girl had seen it, and his breathing was a little labored.

"If you are thinking of sending me to prison," said White, "why, I think we shall make up a pretty jolly party."

"Meaning me?" said the colonel, raising his eyebrows.

"You among others. Pinto Silva, Swell Crewe and Selby, to name a few."

Colonel Boundary permitted himself to chuckle.

"On what charge?" he asked. "Tell me that, Solly. The cleverest men in Scotland Yard have been laying for me for years and they haven't got away with it. May be they have your assistance and that dog Hanson's."

"That's a lie," interupted White, "so far as I am concerned. I know nothing about Hanson."

"Hanson," said the colonel slowly, "is a thief. He ran off with three hundred pounds of mine, as I've reported to the police."

"I see," said White with a little smile of contempt. "Got your charge in first, eh, colonel? Discredit the witness. And what have you framed for me?"

"Nothing," said the colonel, "except this. I've just had from the bank a check for four thousand pounds drawn in your favor on our joint account and purporting to be signed by Silva and myself."

"As it happens," said White, "it was signed by you fellows in my presence."

The colonel shook his head.

"Obdurate to the last, brazening it out to the end. Why not make a frank confession to an old business associate, Solly? I came here to see you about that check."

"That's the game, is it?" said White. "You are going to charge me with forgery. And suppose I talk?"

"Talk?" asked the colonel innocently. "If by 'talk' you mean make a statement to the police derogatory to myself and my business associates, what can you tell? I can bring a dozen witnesses to prove that both Pinto and I were in Brighton the morning that checked was signed."

"You came up by car at night," said White harshly; "we arranged to meet outside Guilford to divide the loot."

"Loot?" said Colonel Boundary, puzzled. "I don't understand you."

"I'll put it plainer," said White, his eyes like smoldering fire. "A year ago you got young Balston, the ship owner, to put fifty thousand pounds into a fake company."

He heard Maisie gasp, but he went on.

"How you did it I'm not going to tell before the girl, but it was blackmail which you and Pinto engineered. He paid his last installment; the four thousand pounds was my share."

Colonel Boundary rose and looked at his watch.

"I have a taxicab waiting and, with a taxicab, time is money. If you are going to bring in the name of an innocent young man, who will certainly deny that he had any connection with myself and my business associates, that is a matter for your own conscience. I tell you I know nothing about this check. I have made your daughter an offer."

"I can guess what it is," interrupted White; "and I can tell you this, Boundary, that if you are going to 'frame' me, I'll be even with you, if I wait twenty years! If you imagine I am going to let my daughter into that filthy gang"—his voice broke and it was some time before he could recover himself—"do your worst. But I'll get you, Boundary! I don't doubt that you'll convict me. You know the things that I can't talk about, and I'll have to take my medicine, but you are not going to escape."

"Wait, colonel." It was the girl who spoke, in so low a voice that he would not have heard her if he had not been expecting her to speak. "Do you mean that you will—prosecute my father?"

"With law-abiding people," said the colonel profoundly, "the demands of justice come first. I must do my duty to the State, but if you should change your mind——"

"She won't change her mind," retorted White.

With one stride he had passed between the colonel and the door. Only for a second he stood, and then he fell back.

"Do your worst," he said huskily, and Colonel Boundary passed out, pocketing the revolver which had come from nowhere into his hand. Presently they heard the purr of the departing motor.

He went to Horsham station in a thoughtful frame of mind. He was still thinking profoundly when he reached Victoria station.

Then, as he stepped on the platform, a hand was laid on his arm and he turned to meet the smiling face of Stafford King.

"Hello," said the colonel, and something within him went cold.

"Sorry to break in on your reverie, colonel," said Stafford King, "but I've a warrant for your arrest."

"What is the charge?" asked the colonel, his face gray.

"Blackmail and conspiracy," said King, and saw with amazement the look of relief in the other's eyes.

"Boundary," he added between his teeth," you thought I wanted you for Snow Gregory!"

The colonel said nothing.

To be continued Monday

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A G'wan to Bed Story : The Horse Fly and the Flivver : —By J. P. McEVOY

ONCE upon a time, dear children, there was a dear little racketypackety flivver that bounced and jostled and shivered over the roads in the most charming manner imaginable. (Johnny, get off the piano.)

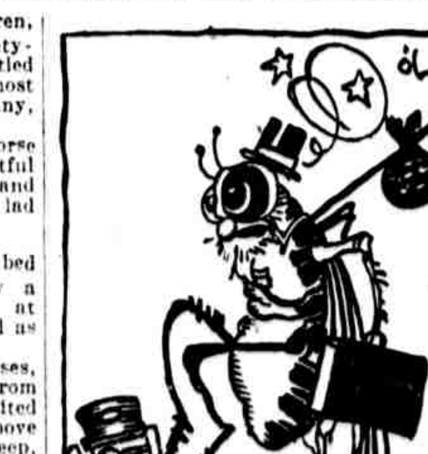
And, dear children, there was a horse fly named Aloysius, a most delightful chap, full of humor and whimsy and gay abandon, and a well-traveled lad in the bargain. He was so.

NOW, I wouldn't have you go to bed thinking Aloysius was merely a horse fly and nothing more. Not at all. He was not so narrow-minded as that.

He not only associated with horses, obtaining both bed and board from them, so to speak, but he also visited with the cows and he was not above making a delicate collation off sheep, opossums, giraffes and alligators.

To be sure his dentist forbade him to go with alligators much, his allegation being that their rather impervious epidermis was injurious to Aloysius' bridge-work.

BUT the fact was, dear children, that horses were getting scarce in little Aloysius Horsefly's world and he was forced to hunt far and wide for sustenance, where once it used to trotty-ot-trot up and down on every road. And one day as Aloysius was looking



everywhere for dinner along came the rackety-packety flivver bouncing and jouncing and shivering over the roads.

"What a curious little horse," said Aloysius Horsefly, "and how he rattles. He must have the rickets, or rather the rackets," and Aloysius chuckled at his joke, which he considered pretty good. It isn't so bad at that.

"I'm glad he came along," and Aloysius leaped on him and tried to sink his proboscis into the flivver's forehead. Wasn't he surprised when he found how tough the flivver's skin was? But Aloysius tried another place and another and sure enough his patience was rewarded and he found an opening in the radiator where there was a leak. But the first drink was enough.

"Bloody murder," he yelled, leaping back and dashing the boiling water out of his mouth. What a terrible hot-blooded creature this is. So he went around it and sipped at the gasoline tank.

"That's better," he said and then he found a small opening near the crank case and sampled some of the oil. "What a delightful beast," cried Aloysius and last of all he found another opening near the springs and got a generous portion of cup grease.

"THIS is indeed worth while," cried Aloysius. "I never found a horse before that had so many different kinds of juices. I think I'll just stay right with you." And he did, until one sad day the man put alcohol in the flivver's radiator and Aloysius got a royal snootful of it. That was the start of his downfall. He went to the dogs. And that's the end of the story. Gwan to bed.