

AN EXPLOSION OF GRAY MATTER

By Charles Curtz Hahn

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It was two weeks after the terrific explosion in Dr. Wainwright's office, which had injured six men and nearly killed the doctor. Just how it had occurred was a mystery not only to the public, but also to Dr. Wainwright's brother physicians, who, after carefully examining the wrecked office, could find no sufficient cause for such an appalling disaster. The doctor himself was laid up in St. Joseph's hospital, and his man, who had given the alarm by shouting from the second story window of the doctor's office, had been until this day, when he began his narration, confined in the Presbyterian hospital and unable to give an account of what he knew.

"Ye see," said Mike to the half dozen doctors around his bed, "the doctor was diggin' away at his books an' his skeletons an' cuttin' away at dead bodies



MIKE TELLING HIS STORY.

until he began to think that he knew all about a man an' could come as near makin' one as the Creator himself, God forgive me for sayin' it. But he didn't care to do that, for he said there were entirely too many men in the world now. What he did want to do was make a brain, an' after three years av hard study an' practicin' he did so. I can't tell ye what he made it av, but he knew himself. Sure, he used to be putterin' around in the office all hours av the night, kapin' me awake when I naded rest, for I slept in the little room behind the office.

"Well, after the doctor had studied the ingredients av a man's brain until he knew just what it was made av, he went to work moddin' one. An' I helped him, may God forgive me! He had studied some phrenology or other an' knew how to fix the bumps, too, so that his brain would be benivolint, an' when it was done it was as near like me own as two peas, barrin' the difference in size. Ye know what influence one mind has over another? Well, this was the principle on which the doctor was workin'. He intended to work on other men's minds by this big brain av his'n.

"Ye'll be wonderin' how he set it goin', an' that is something I'll not tell ye, either, for I don't know, but he figured an' figured wid electricity an' the powers av the air until he rigged up a machine that did the business, an' when he wanted to set the thing a-goin' all he had to do was turn a little crank, an' the brain began sendin' out its influence, an' as it was a dozen times bigger than a common man's brain he figured that he could make any man do what he wanted him to if he once got him under the influence av it.

"Ye mind owd Lawyer Skinner, him as wint crazy a year ago an' deeded away all his money to hospitals an' churches an' colleges? Av coorse ye do. Faith, it was the doctor as did it. May the saints presave us, yis, the doctor! As I told ye, this brain av his'n was made benivolint, like me own, wid a great bulgin' for head. We experimented on a number av animals before we came to Lawyer Skinner—ye know what a close fisted man he was an' the riches av him? Well, one day when I see the doctor toolin' him up the stairs I wondered what was in the wind, but the doctor had everything ready for him unbeknownst to me; had a checkbook an' a lot av writin' paper an' deeds an' conveyances on the cinter table in the room where the brain was, an' pen an' ink too.

"Just step into the next room," the doctor said, all so pleasant as pie, 'till I look at some papers an' thin I'll join ye."

"Well, the doctor seen the lawyer seated at the table an' thin he turned

the crank, which was out in the room we were in, an' thin we stood an' watched him through the glass top av the door. First the owd fellow began to squirm around in his chair as if something was hurtin' him. Thin a peaceful exprossion came over his face, an' he reached for the checkbooks. He filled ivry one av them for poor people an' churches an' hospitals, an' when they were all used up the doctor turned the power down a little an' wint in an' got thin. Sure, an' he was a cute one,

was the doctor, for he sint me out to deliver him all before he let the owd miser out av the room. Next day he wint around an' tried to git his money back, but the most av it was drawn out, an' he couldn't.

"But this did not satisfy the doctor, an' so he tore the great brain to pieces an' began moddin' another one—the exact opposite av the benivolint gentleman. He picked up a low fellow from a saloon, who was all fight an' niver spoke a peaceful word in his life.

"When it was done, he set it up an' we began experimentin' again, first wid animals an' thin wid men, an' at last came the diligation av preachers which caused the trouble.

"Ye know thin. There was Parson Whitely av the Presbyterians, Mr. Wesley av the Methodists, Rector Engsign av the Episcopalians, Mr. Strang av the Campbellites, Dr. Duple av the Baptists an' one or two others, but their names has slipped me mind.

"As soon as they were seated in the back room an' the current was turned on thin preachers began arguin' an' thin after awhile to fightin'. After watchin' thin for a few minutes the doctor became frightened at what he had done an', forgittin' all about the crank, ran in to separate the rivrind gentlemen.

"There be no nade av me tellin' ye what happened thin!

"The influence caught him as soon as he got into the room, an' he pitched into the fight worse than any av them. Begorra, but it was a fine fight! Och! How me heart jumped wid joy as I watched thin peltin' one another an' breakin' the furniture into kindlin' wood!

"Sez I to meself, 'Wid such pious min settin' the example there can be nothin' wrong in a few whacks,' so wid a whoop I grabbed me stick an' rushed in.

"Be the Donnybrook fair, but it was a swate time we had! But it was too fine to last. What should that Baptist do but swing a chair over his head, thryin' to kill Dr. Whitely, an' instead av bringin' it down where he should he hit the glass jar on the shilf an' knocked the great brain to the floor an' broke it into a million pieces.

"Thin how cristfallen an' ashamed thin preachers was when they came to themselves an' saw what they had been doin'.

"Av coorse the doctor would not explain, an' so the preachers began beggin' him not to tell on thin, which he promised.

"But I didn't.

"Thin the story wint around that there had been a terrific explosion in the doctor's office, an' him an' I were taken to the hospital. Whist, there comes the nurse wid the gruel!"

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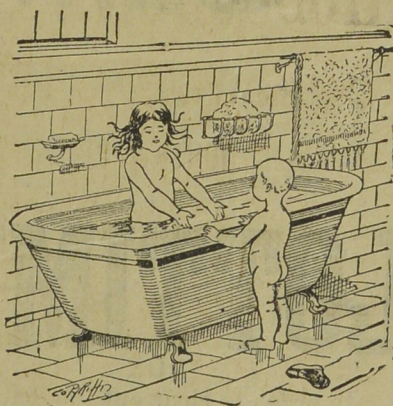
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