The Gentleman Grafter is Here

"With all the modern improvements" is the catch line used in advertisements of dwellings, railway traffic equipment, dollar clocks and universities.

Let some "light-complected" colored man open a new tonsorial parlor, or some man of millions found a hospital, and each will use the term quoted above in describing his particular project.

Walter Wellman will make a dash for the pole—"with all the modern improvements;" Sergius Witte is striving to bring forth a Russian Empire—"with all the modern improvements;" Pat Chappell, the enterprising little negro, is running his Rabbit Foot show—"with all the modern improvements;" and the latest news from the Philippines conveys the information that our brave soldier boys are killing the savages—"with all the modern improvements."

With all lines of human activity showing signs of the yielding to the popular demand for doing things different from the way they were done in other days, it is not surprising that the ubiquitous, irrepressible FAKIR and the conscienceless, ever-present GRAFTER should be presented in a new dress with up-to-date methods of fooling the people.

So, we introduce by means of the cartoon on this page, THE GRAFTER WITH ALL THE MODERN IMPROVEMENTS.

We are told that Esau was "an hairy man," therefore, when his brother Jacob coveted the parental blessing that was his brother's by right of deserving, he covered his hands with sheep wool, which the blind Isaac mistook for the hairy hands of the good brother, and gave to Jacob the blessing that was earned by Esau.

Laban, in his turn, wishing to settle his daughters in life, fooled Jacob with the "weak-eyed" Leah instead of the beautiful Rachael for whom he had served for seven years, and got another seven years' work out of Jacob.

Methods like these would have been considered crude even by those gentlemen who hid the little ball somewhere else and asked the mystified countryman to guess which of the three walnut shells covered it.

Shell game men, bunco steerers, gold brick sellers, and all others belonging to the great army of graft, have worked the public long, industriously and faithfully; but the public has grown wise, and can spot one of these types by the clothes he wears, by the pomade on his hair, by the false diamond in his shirt.

So familiar did this type become that times became exceedingly hard and money very scarce with those who carried the usual signs.

But though its former devotees are decadent, graft is such a subtle thing, the game of getting something for nothing is so fascinating, faking is such an easy way to acquire money, that it could not perish from the earth, while the inventive genius of man was present to keep it alive.

THE GREAT AMERICAN GAME OF GRAFT IS STILL BEING PLAYED.

It is the PLAYERS who have changed.

THIS IS THE AGE OF THE GENTLEMAN GRAFTER.

He is found on the bench, in legislative halls, on church boards and in places where the money of widows and orphans is guarded.

The brazen-throated barkers who short-changed side-show patrons have been pushed aside by the EMINENTLY RESPECTABLE BUSINESS MAN who short-weights his customers.

Loud waistcoats and varnished, square-toed shoes are no longer to be seen when a grafter is spotted. The PERSONS who wore these have been forced to give way to the GENTLEMAN in plain black ties and modish business suits.

When the great graft game is worked nowadays the workers can point with pride to a successful business career.

When the call to graft is sounded in these modern times, it is answered by conservative, progressive citizens who bring their cloak of respectability along with them as they jump to their places at the table spread for them.

The old line grafters ARE STILL IN THE GAME, but they are now used as pawns to prevent the checkmate of the KING GRAFTERS.

Those of the past, in snare-spreading, are STILL WORKING, but they now serve the BIG BOSS for a regular wage, and look with bulging eyes at the huge spoils which they never dreamed were possible to be gathered.

This is the age of progress, and modern methods will tell when results are counted.

Oh! gentlemen grafters, we pronounce you the worst of this hell litter.

Jacksonville being a city—"with all the modern improvements," has all things that other live cities have, and numbers among its inhabitants the gentleman grafter.

Here's Two Roads for One

Sometimes an idea comes to us. Some that have come to us, we believe, are of useful type while others are not highly esteemed—yet we always have a welcome for one of merit coming from anyone of our friends.

We have one now that has floated to us from Mr. Allan Rogers, a road-builder of many years' experience, and we hope that his idea will be put into practice in the construction of hard roads in this county, and more particularly the one from this city to Pablo.

The plan of Mr. Rogers provides for two roads in one, or rather a right and a left-hand roadway each ten feet wide and separated by a four-foot strip, in which a hedge would be planted and also trees at intervals of twenty feet. He states that this would cost only about $20 a mile more, while its value to the road would be many times that sum annually.

First, it should be noted that in adopting this plan of division that the wear on the highway would be greatly lessened on account of the traffic being divided. It is well known that teams travel on the middle of the road, and a road so built as to divide the traffic would last twice as long as one built in the customary way.

Then, by this arrangement, the road would not become a speedway for automobiles. This annoyance would be spared the driver of horses and danger of accident would be avoided, as the automobilist would be obliged to reduce speed in order to pass by vehicles going in the same direction on the ten-foot roadway.

If the money of all the people is spent on road-building, all the people should receive the full benefit of the road. Speedway's are good things to have, but they should be built with private funds.

The value of the intervening hedge and shade trees, aside from the useful purpose served, should be considered from the point of beauty added to the highway.

It is a good idea in every respect and we pass it along to the County Commissioners of all the forty-six counties in Florida.

The Governor Chose the Best

Some persons may have wondered why Governor Broward should have chosen THE SUN as the vehicle to present his side of Everglade drainage to the public, when he was invited in an open letter to use the columns of each of the Jacksonville dailies.

There is no mystery about it whatever.

The Governor knew that THE SUN was interested in the matter from a news standpoint. We had been collecting data on the subject for several months in order to talk to our readers about it in an intelligent manner.

We wished to give all the information possible. Besides printing the data collected and illustrating by maps, we sent a representative to the point where dredging was to begin that we might have a story containing local features of the drainage work.

On learning that this publication was to be made, Governor Broward ordered extra copies of the paper. He has since offered articles for publication and purchased extra copies for distribution.

He chose THE SUN for the purpose because it was enterprising enough to print all it could find of value bearing on the subject, and at the same time in a manner free from bias.

He evidently did this for the above-mentioned reason alone, because his project has not been favored editorially. In fact, we have strongly disagreed with him on one point—that of taxing the people BEFORE THE BENEFITS FROM THE PLAN WERE CERTAIN.