

THE FOURTH ESTATE

by

AMBROSE BIERCE

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MR. MASTHEAD, JOURNALIST

WHILE I was in Kansas I purchased a weekly newspaper—the *Claybank Thundergust of Reform*. This paper had never paid its expenses; it had ruined four consecutive publishers; but my brother-in-law, Mr. Jefferson Scandril, of Weedhaven, was going to run for the Legislature, and I naturally desired his defeat; so it became necessary to have an organ in Claybank to assist in his political extinction. When the establishment came into my hands, the editor was a fellow who had “opinions,” and him I at once discharged with an admonition. I had some difficulty in procuring a successor; every man in the county applied for the place. I could not appoint one without having to fight a majority of the others, and was eventually compelled to write to a friend at Warm Springs, in the adjoining State of Missouri, to send me an editor from abroad whose installment at the helm of manifest destiny could have no local significance.

The man he sent me was a frowsy, seedy fellow, named Masthead—not larger, apparently, than a boy of sixteen years, though it was difficult to say from the outside how much of him was editor and how much cast-off clothing; for in the matter of apparel he had acted upon his favorite professional maxim, and “sunk the individual;” his attire—eminently eclectic, and in a sense international—quite overcame him at all points. However, as my friend had assured me he was “a graduate of one of the largest institutions in his native State,” I took him in and bought a pen for him. My instructions to him were brief and simple.

“Mr. Masthead,” said I, “it is the policy of the *Thundergust* first, last, and all the time, in this world and the next, to resent the intrusion of Mr. Jefferson Scandril into politics.”

The first thing the little rascal did was to write a withering leader denouncing Mr. Scandril as a “demagogue, the degradation of whose political opinions was only equaled by the disgustfulness of the family connections of which those opinions were the spawn!”

I hastened to point out to Mr. Masthead that it had never been the policy of the *Thundergust* to attack the family relations of an offensive candidate, although this was not strictly true.

“I am very sorry,” he replied, running his head up out of his clothes till it towered as much as six inches above the table at which he sat; “no offense, I hope.”

“Oh, none in the world,” said I, as carelessly as I could manage it; “only I don’t think it a legitimate—that is, an effective, method of

attack.”

“Mr. Johnson,” said he—I was passing as Johnson at that time, I remember—“Mr. Johnson, I think it is an effective method. Personally I might perhaps prefer another line of argument in this particular case, and personally perhaps you might; but in our profession personal considerations must be blown to the winds of the horizon; we must sink the individual. In opposing the election of your relative, sir, you have set the seal of your heavy displeasure upon the sin of nepotism, and for this I respect you; nepotism must be got under! But in the display of Roman virtues, sir, we must go the whole hog. When in the interest of public morality”—Mr. Masthead was now gesticulating earnestly with the sleeves of his coat—“Virginius stabbed his daughter, was he influenced by personal considerations? When Curtius leaped into the yawning gulf, did he not sink the individual?”

I admitted that he did, but feeling in a contentious mood, prolonged the discussion by leisurely loading and capping a revolver; but, prescient of my argument, Mr. Masthead avoided refutation by hastily adjourning the debate. I sent him a note that evening, filling in a few of the details of the policy that I had before sketched in outline. Amongst other things I submitted that it would be better for us to exalt Mr. Scandril’s opponent than to degrade himself. To this Mr. Masthead reluctantly assented—“sinking the individual,” he reproachfully explained, “in the dependent employee—the powerless bondsman!” The next issue of the *Thundergust* contained, under the heading, “Invigorating Zephyrs,” the following editorial article:

“Last week we declared our unalterable opposition to the candidacy of Mr. Jefferson Scandril, and gave reasons for the faith that is in us. For the first time in its history this paper made a clear, thoughtful, and adequate avowal and exposition of eternal principle! Abandoning for the present the stand we then took, let us trace the antecedents of Mr. Scandril’s opponent up to their source. It has been urged against Mr. Broskin that he spent some years of his life in the lunatic asylum at Warm Springs, in the adjoining commonwealth of Missouri. This cuckoo cry—raised though it is by dogs of political darkness—we shall not stoop to controvert, for it is accidentally true; but next week we shall show, as by the stroke of an enchanter’s wand, that this great statesman’s detractors would probably not derive any benefits from a residence in the same institution, their mental aberration being rottenly incurable!”

I thought this rather strong and not quite to the point; but Masthead said it was a fact that our candidate, who was very little known in Claybank, had “served a term” in the Warm Springs asylum, and the issue must be boldly met—that evasion and denial were but forms of prostration beneath the iron wheels of Truth! As

he said this he seemed to inflate and expand so as almost to fill his clothes, and the fire of his eye somehow burned into me an impression—since effaced—that a just cause is not imperiled by a trifling concession to fact. So, leaving the matter quite in my editor's hands I went away to keep some important engagements, the paragraph having involved me in several duels with the friends of Mr. Broskin. I thought it rather hard that I should have to defend my new editor's policy against the supporters of my own candidate, particularly as I was clearly in the right and they knew nothing whatever about the matter in dispute, not one of them having ever before so much as heard of the now famous Warm Springs asylum. But I would not shirk even the humblest journalistic duty; I fought these fellows and acquitted myself as became a man of letters and a politician. The hurts I got were some time healing, and in the interval every prominent member of my party who came to Claybank to speak to the people regarded it as a simple duty to call first at my house, make a tender inquiry as to the progress of my recovery and leave a challenge. My physician forbade me to read a line of anything: the consequence was that Masthead had it all his own way with the paper. In looking over the old files now, I find that he devoted his entire talent and all the space of the paper, including what had been the advertising columns, to confessing that our candidate had been an inmate of a lunatic asylum, and contemptuously asking the opposing party what they were going to do about it.

All this time Mr. Broskin made no sign; but when the challenges became intolerable I indignantly instructed Mr. Masthead to whip round to the other side and support my brother-in-law. Masthead "sank the individual," and duly announced, with his accustomed frankness, our change of policy. Then Mr. Broskin came down to Claybank—to thank me! He was a fine, respectable-looking gentleman, and impressed me very favorably. But Masthead was in when he called, and the effect upon him was different. He shrank into a mere heap of old clothes, turned white, and chattered his teeth. Noting this extraordinary behavior, I at once sought an explanation.

"Mr. Broskin," said I, with a meaning glance at the trembling editor, "from certain indications I am led to fear that owing to some mistake we may have been doing you an injustice. May I ask you if you were really ever in the Lunatic asylum at Warm Springs, Missouri?"

"For three years," he replied, quietly, "I was the physician in charge of that institution. Your son"—turning to Masthead, who was flying all sorts of colors—"was, if I mistake not, one of my patients. I learn that a few weeks ago a friend of yours, named Norton, secured the young man's release upon your promise to take care of him yourself in future. I hope that home associations

have improved the poor fellow. It's very sad!"

It was indeed. Norton was the name of the man to whom I had written for an editor, and who had sent me one! Norton was ever an obliging fellow.

WHY I AM NOT EDITING “THE STINGER”

J. Munniglut, Proprietor, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

“STINGER” OFFICE, Monday, 9 A.M.

A MAN has called to ask “who wrote that article about Mr. Muskler.” I told him to find out, and he says that is what he means to do. He has consented to amuse himself with the exchanges while I ask you. I don’t approve the article.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to J. Munniglut, Proprietor.

13 Lofer Street, Monday, 10 A.M.

Do you happen to remember how Dacier translates *Difficile est proprie communia dicere*? I’ve made a note of it somewhere, but can’t find it. If you remember please leave a memorandum of it on your table, and I’ll get it when I come down this afternoon.

P.S.—Tell the man to go away; we can’t be bothered about that fellow Muskler.

J. Munniglut, Proprietor, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

“STINGER” OFFICE, Monday, 11:30 A.M.

I can’t be impolite to a stranger, you know; I must tell him somebody wrote it. He has finished the exchanges, and is drumming on the floor with the end of his stick; I fear the people in the shop below won’t like it. Besides, the foreman says it disturbs the composers in the next room. Suppose you come down.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to J. Munniglut, Proprietor.

13 LOFER STREET, Monday, 1 P.M.

I have found the note I made of that translation, but it is in French and I can’t make it out. Try the man with the dictionary and the “Books of Dates.” They ought to last him till it’s time to close the office. I shall be down early to-morrow morning.

P.S.—How big is he? Suggest a civil suit for libel.

J. Munniglut, Proprietor, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

“STINGER” OFFICE, Monday, 3 P.M.

He looks larger than he was when he came in. I’ve offered him the dictionary; he says he has read it before. He is sitting on my table. Come at once!

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to J. Munniglut, Proprietor.

13 Lofer Street, Monday, 5 P.M.

I don’t think I shall. I am doing an article for this week on “The Present Aspect of the Political Horizon.” Expect me very early to-morrow. You had better turn the man out and shut up the

office.

Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

“STINGER” OFFICE, Tuesday, 8 A.M.

Mr. Munniglut has not arrived, but his friend, the large gentleman who was with him all day yesterday, is here again. He seems very desirous of seeing you, and says he will wait. Perhaps he is your cousin. I thought I would tell you he was here, so that you might hasten down.

Ought I to allow dogs in the office? The gentleman has a bulldog.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper.

13 LOFER STREET, Tuesday, 9.30 A.M.

Certainly *not*; dogs have fleas. The man is an impostor. Oblige me by turning him out. I shall come down this afternoon—early.

P.S.—Don’t listen to the rascal’s entreaties; out with him!

Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

“STINGER” OFFICE, Tuesday, 12 P.M.

The gentleman carries a revolver. Would you mind coming down and reasoning with him? I have a wife and five children depending on me, and when I lose my temper I am likely to go too far. I would prefer that you should turn him out.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper.

13 LOFER STREET, Tuesday, 2 P.M.

Do you suppose I can leave my private correspondence to preserve you from the intrusion and importunities of beggars? Put the scoundrel out at once—neck and heels! I know him; he’s Muskler—don’t you remember? Muskler, the coward, who assaulted an old man; you’ll find the whole circumstances related in last Saturday’s issue. Out with him—the unmanly sneak!

Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

“STINGER” OFFICE, Tuesday Evening.

I have told him to go, and he laughed. So did the bull-dog. But he is going. He is now making a bed for the pup in one corner of your room, with some rugs and old newspapers, and appears to be about to go to dinner. I have given him your address. The foreman wants some copy to go on with. I beg you will come at once if I am to be left alone with that dog.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to Henry Inxling, Bookkeeper.

40 DUNTIONER’S ALLEY, Wednesday, 10 A.M.

I should have come down to the office last evening, but you see I have been moving. My landlady was too filthy dirty for

anything! I stood it as long as I could; then I left. I'm coming directly I get your answer to this; but I want to know, first, if my blotter has been changed and my ink-well refilled. This house is a good way out, but the boy can take the car at the corner of Cobble and Slush streets.

O!—about that *man*? Of course you have not seen hun since.

William Quoin, Foreman, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

“STINGER” OFFICE, Wednesday, 12 P.M.

I've got your note to Inxling; he ain't come down this morning. I haven't a line of copy on the hooks; the boys are all throwing in dead ads. There's a man and a dog in the proprietor's office; I don't believe they ought to be there, all alone, but they were here all Monday and yesterday, and may be connected with the business management of the paper; so I don't like to order them out. Perhaps you will come down and speak to them. We shall have to go away if you don't send copy.

Peter Pitchin, Editor, to William Quoin, Foreman.

40 DUNTIONER'S ALLEY, Wednesday, 3 P.M.

Your note astonishes me. The man you describe is a notorious thief. Get the compositors all together, and make a rush at him. Don't try to keep him, but hustle him out of town, and I'll be down as soon as I can get a button sewn on my collar.

P.S.—Give it him good!—don't mention my address and he can't complain to me how you treat him. Bust his bugle!

J. Munniglut, Proprietor, to Peter Pitchin, Editor.

“STINGER” OFFICE, Friday, 2 P.M.

Business has detained me from the office until now, and what do I find? Not a soul about the place, no copy, not a stick-full of live matter on the galleys! There can be no paper this week. What you have all done with yourselves I am sure I don't know; one would suppose there had been smallpox about the place. You will please come down and explain this Hegira at once—at once, if *you* please!

P.S.—That troublesome Muskler—you may remember he dropped in on Monday to inquire about something or other—has taken a sort of shop exactly opposite here, and seems, at this distance, to be doing something to a shotgun. I presume he is a gunsmith. So we are precious well rid of *him*.

Peter Pitchin, Editor to J. Munniglut, Proprietor.

PIER NO. 3, Friday Evening.

Just a line or two to say I am suddenly called away to bury my sick mother. When that is off my mind I'll write you what I know about the Hegira, the Flight into Egypt, the Retreat of the Ten

Thousand, and whatever else you would like to learn. There is nothing mean about *me!* I don't think there has been any willful desertion. You may engage an editor for, say, fifty years, with the privilege of keeping him regularly, if, at the end of that time, I should break my neck hastening back.

P.S.—I hope that poor fellow Muskler will make a fair profit in the gunsmithing line. Jump him for an ad!

CORRUPTING THE PRESS

WHEN Joel Bird was up for Governor of Missouri, Sam Henly was editing the Berrywood *Bugle*; and no sooner was the nomination made by the State Convention than he came out hot against the party. He was an able writer, was Sam, and the lies he invented about our candidate were shocking! That, however, we endured very well, but presently Sam turned squarely about and began telling the truth. *This* was a little too much; the County Committee held a hasty meeting, and decided that it must be stopped; so I, Henry Barber, was sent for to make arrangements to that end. I knew something of Sam: had purchased him several times, and I estimated his present value at about one thousand dollars. This seemed to the committee a reasonable figure, and on my mentioning it to Sam he said "he thought that about the fair thing; it should never be said that the *Bugle* was a hard paper to deal with." There was, however, some delay in raising the money; the candidates for the local offices had not disposed of their autumn hogs yet, and were in financial straits. Some of them contributed a pig each, one gave twenty bushels of corn, another a flock of chickens; and the man who aspired to the distinction of County Judge paid his assessment with a wagon. These things had to be converted into cash at a ruinous sacrifice, and in the meantime Sam kept pouring an incessant stream of hot shot into our political camp. Nothing I could say would make him stay his hand; he invariably replied that it was no bargain until he had the money. The committeemen were furious; it required all my eloquence to prevent their declaring the contract null and void; but at last a new, clean one thousand-dollar note was passed over to me, which in hot haste I transferred to Sam at his residence.

That evening there was a meeting of the committee: all seemed in high spirits again, except Hooker of Jayhawk. This old wretch sat back and shook his head during the entire session, and just before adjournment said, as he took his hat to go, that p'r'aps 'twas orl right and on the squar'; maybe thar war'n't any shenannigan, but *he* war dubersome—yes, he war dubersome. The old curmudgeon repeated this until I was exasperated beyond restraint.

"Mr. Hooker," said I, "I've known Sam Henly ever since he was so high, and there isn't an honest man in old Missouri. Sam Henly's word is as good as his note! What's more, if any gentleman thinks he would enjoy a first-class funeral, and if he will supply the sable accessories, I'll supply the corpse. And he can take it home with him from this meeting."

At this point Mr. Hooker was troubled with leaving.

Having got this business off my conscience I slept late next day. When I stepped into the street I saw at once that something

was “up.” There were knots of people gathered at the corners, some reading eagerly that morning’s issue of the *Bugle*, some gesticulating, and others stalking moodily about muttering curses, not loud but deep. Suddenly I heard an excited clamor—a confused roar of many lungs, and the trampling of innumerable feet. In this babel of noises I could distinguish the words “Kill him!” “Wa’m his hide!” and so forth; and, looking up the street, I saw what seemed to be the whole male population racing down it I am very excitable, and, though I did not know whose hide was to be warmed, nor why anyone was to be killed, I shot off in front of the howling masses, shouting “Kill him!” and “Warm his hide!” as loudly as the loudest, all the time looking out for the victim. Down the street we flew like a storm; then I turned a corner, thinking the scoundrel must have gone up *that* street; then bolted through a public square; over a bridge; under an arch; finally back into the main street; yelling like a panther, and resolved to slaughter the first human being I should overtake. The crowd followed my lead, turning as I turned, shrieking as I shrieked, and—all at once it came to me that *I* was the man whose hide was to be warmed!

It is needless to dwell upon the sensation this discovery gave me; happily I was within a few yards of the committee-rooms, and into these I dashed, closing and bolting the doors behind me, and mounting the stairs like a flash. The committee was in solemn session, sitting in a nice, even row on the front benches, each man with his elbows on his knees, and his chin resting in the palms of his hands—thinking. At each man’s feet lay a neglected copy of the *Bugle*. Every member fixed his eyes on me, but no one stirred, none uttered a sound. There was something awful in this preternatural science, made more impressive by the hoarse murmur of the crowd outside, breaking down the door. I could endure it no longer, but strode forward and snatched up the paper lying at the feet of the chairman. At the head of the editorial columns, in letters half an inch long, were the following amazing head-lines:

“Dastardly Outrage! Corruption Rampant in Our Midst! The Vampires Foiled! Henry Barber at his Old Game! The Rat Gnaws a File! The Democratic Hordes Attempt to Ride Roughshod Over a Free People! Base Endeavor to Bribe the Editor of this Paper with a *Twenty-Dollar Note!* The Money Given to the Orphan Asylum.”

I read no farther, but stood stock still in the center of the floor, and fell into a reverie. Twenty dollars! Somehow it seemed a mere trifle. Nine hundred and eighty dollars! I did not know there was so much money in the world. Twenty—no, eighty—one thousand dollars! There were big, black figures floating all over the floor, incessant cataracts of them poured down the walls, stopped, and shied off as I looked at them, and began to go it again when I

lowered my eyes. Occasionally the figures 20 would take shape somewhere about the floor, and then the figures 980 would slide up and overlay them. Then, like the lean kine of Pharaoh's dream, they would all march away and devour the fat noughts of the number 1,000. And dancing like gnats in the air were myriads of little caduceus-like, phantoms, thus—\$\$\$\$\$. I could not at all make it out, but began to comprehend my position directly Old Hooker, without moving from his seat, began to drown the noise of countless feet on the stairs by elevating his thin falsetto:

“P'r'aps, Mr. Cheerman, it's orl on the squar'. We know Mr. Henly can't tell a lie; but I'm powerful dubersome that thar's a balyance dyue this yer committee from the gent who hez the flo'—if he ain't done gone laid it yout fo' sable ac—ac—fo' fyirst-class funerals.”

I felt at that moment as if I should like to play the leading character in a first-class funeral myself. I felt that every man in my position ought to have a nice, comfortable coffin, with a silver door-plate, a foot-warmer, and bay-windows for his ears. How do you suppose you would have felt?

My leap from the window of that committee room, my speed in streaking it for the adjacent forest, my self-denial in ever afterward resisting the impulse to return to Berrywood and look after my political and material interests there—these I have always considered things to be justly proud of, and I hope I am proud of them.

“THE BUBBLE REPUTATION”

HOW ANOTHER MAN’S WAS SOUGHT AND PRICKED

IT was a stormy night in the autumn of 1930. The hour was about eleven. San Francisco lay in darkness, for the laborers at the gas works had struck and destroyed the company’s property because a newspaper to which a cousin of the manager was a subscriber had censured the course of a potato merchant related by marriage to a member of the Knights of Leisure. Electric lights had not at that period been reinvented. The sky was filled with great masses of black cloud which, driven rapidly across the star-fields by winds unfelt on the earth and momentarily altering their fantastic forms, seemed instinct with a life and activity of their own and endowed with awful powers of evil, to the exercise of which they might at any time set their malignant will.

An observer standing, at this time, at the corner of Paradise avenue and Great White Throne walk in Sorrel Hill cemetery would have seen a human figure moving among the graves toward the Superintendent’s residence. Dimly and fitfully visible in the intervals of thinner gloom, this figure had a most uncanny and disquieting aspect. A long black cloak shrouded it from neck to heel. Upon its head was a slouch hat, pulled down across the forehead and almost concealing the face, which was further hidden by a half-mask, only the beard being occasionally visible as the head was lifted partly above the collar of the cloak. The man wore upon his feet jack-boots whose wide, funnel-shaped legs had settled down in many a fold and crease about his ankles, as could be seen whenever accident parted the bottom of the cloak. His arms were concealed, but sometimes he stretched out the right to steady himself by a headstone as he crept stealthily but blindly over the uneven ground. At such times a close scrutiny of the hand would have disclosed in the palm the hilt of a poniard, the blade of which lay along the wrist, hidden in the sleeve. In short, the man’s garb, his movements, the hour—everything proclaimed him a reporter.

But what did he there?

On the morning of that day the editor of the *Daily Malefactor* had touched the button of a bell numbered 216 and in response to the summons Mr. Longbo Spittleworth, reporter, had been shot into the room out of an inclined tube.

“I understand,” said the editor, “that you are 216—am I right?”

“That,” said the reporter, catching his breath and adjusting his clothing, both somewhat disordered by the celerity of his flight through the tube,—“that is my number.”

“Information has reached us,” continued the editor, “that the Superintendent of the Sorrel Hill cemetery—one Inhumio, whose very name suggests inhumanity—is guilty of the grossest outrages in

the administration of the great trust confided to his hands by the sovereign people.”

“The cemetery is private property,” faintly suggested 216.

“It is alleged,” continued the great man, disdainingly to notice the interruption, “that in violation of popular rights he refuses to permit his accounts to be inspected by representatives of the press.”

“Under the law, you know, he is responsible to the directors of the cemetery company,” the reporter ventured to interject.

“They say,” pursued the editor, heedless, “that the inmates are in many cases badly lodged and insufficiently clad, and that in consequence they are usually cold. It is asserted that they are never fed—except to the worms. Statements have been made to the effect that males and females are permitted to occupy the same quarters, to the incalculable detriment of public morality. Many clandestine villainies are alleged of this fiend in human shape, and it is desirable that his underground methods be unearthed in the *Malefactor*. If he resists we will drag his family skeleton from the privacy of his domestic closet. There is money in it for the paper, fame for you—are you ambitious, 216?”

“I am—bitious.”

“Go, then,” cried the editor, rising and waving his hand imperiously—“go and ‘seek the bubble reputation’.”

“The bubble shall be sought,” the young man replied, and leaping into a man-hole in the floor, disappeared. A moment later the editor, who after dismissing his subordinate, had stood motionless, as if lost in thought, sprang suddenly to the man-hole and shouted down it: “Hello, 216?”

“Aye, aye, sir,” came up a faint and far reply.

“About that ‘bubble reputation’—you understand, I suppose, that the reputation which you are to seek is that of the other man.”

In the execution of his duty, in the hope of his employer’s approval, in the costume of his profession, Mr. Longbo Spittleworth, otherwise known as 216, has already occupied a place in the mind’s eye of the intelligent reader. Alas for poor Mr. Inhumio!

A few days after these events that fearless, independent and enterprising guardian and guide of the public, the San Francisco *Daily Malefactor*, contained a whole-page article whose headlines are here presented with some necessary typographical mitigation:

“Hell Upon Earth! Corruption Rampant in the Management of the Sorrel Hill Cemetery. The Sacred City of the Dead in the Leprous Clutches of a Demon in Human Form. Fiendish Atrocities Committed in ‘God’s Acre.’ The Holy Dead Thrown around Loose. Fragments of Mothers. Segregation of a Beautiful Young Lady Who in Life Was the Light of a Happy Household. A Superintendent Who Is an Ex-Convict. How He Murdered His

Neighbor to Start the Cemetery. He Buries His Own Dead Elsewhere. Extraordinary Insolence to a Representative of the Public Press. Little Eliza's Last Words: 'Mamma, Feed Me to the Pigs.' A Moonshiner Who Runs an Illicit Bone-Button Factory in One Corner of the Grounds. Buried Head Downward. Revolting Mausoleistic Orgies. Dancing on the Dead. Devilish Mutilation—a Pile of Late Lamented Noses and Sainted Ears. No Separation of the Sexes; Petitions for Chaperons Unheeded. 'Veal' as Supplied to the Superintendent's Employees. A Miscreant's Record from His Birth. Disgusting Subserviency of Our Contemporaries and Strong Indications of Collusion. Nameless Abnormalities. 'Doubled Up Like a Nut-Cracker.' 'Wasn't Planted White.' Horribly Significant Reduction in the Price of Lard. The Question of the Hour: Whom Do You Fry Your Doughnuts In?"