

An Adventure with a Burglar

Few of us have lived long in the world without numbering among our friends a man with a tale. The delight of our youth, he becomes the hero of his one experience, that he never loses an opportunity of inflicting it upon every new acquaintance, regardless of the fact that all the other occupants of the room have heard it all before.

I am never likely to have another adventure; an unadventurous age and country is not favorable to extraordinary experience, and it would be as unfair as in this case all to allot to one individual the privilege of a second adventure. Perhaps when I have disburdened my mind in print, the temptation to play the part of the family bore may be lessened, and so I here set forth my story once for all.

Some few years ago, when I had just taken my degree, and was deluding myself with the notion that I was doing great things by a course of private reading, I had taken up my abode in the temple, and I am free to confess I often found it dull. A man can not always be reading. You know London has its amusements, but they are expensive, especially to him who is not well posted in its ways. So it was with no little satisfaction that one afternoon I found on my table a telegram from an old friend which said, "Come and dine to-night and stop to-morrow. Want you particularly." It is something to a very young man to feel he is wanted; it is also something to dine comfortably and not at a restaurant; it was even more to me at that moment to have a reasonable excuse for closing my books and putting off reading to a more convenient season.

A very short time then passed before I found myself in the southeastern suburb, where my friend, whom I will call Mrs. Barton, lived with her two sons and one daughter. On arriving at the well-known house I discovered that the reason of the urgent invitation which I had received was that Mrs. Barton's two sons were to be away from home for a day or so and that she was afraid to be left in the house without any masculine protector. For her dreams were haunted by the terror of waking and finding an armed burglar in her room, and of late her usual state of apprehension had been increased tenfold by an unexampled series of successful burglaries in the immediate neighborhood of her house. As I well knew from experience gained by staying in the house for months at a time as a child, every precaution against burglars had been taken. Every door and every window was provided with its socket, and every night before retiring to rest a solemn procession was made throughout the house, and a bell was fixed in each socket to warn the sleepers should the dreaded thief enter. Besides this, a huge mastiff slept in the yard. Fortified by this knowledge, though I could not but admit that burglaries both many and daring had but recently been perpetrated, I did my best to dissipate my friend's fears, and was particularly gratified by the confidence she showed in my presence. She believed in me; I did not believe in the burglar scare, and so all parties dined, and went to bed in good spirits.

About 1:30 in the morning, however, I was awakened by an agitated knocking at my bed-room door, and the maid's trembling voice bade me get up, as her mistress was quite sure that a burglar was in the house. I fear I only woke to anathematize all feminine fears, and set down the alarm to an attack of nightmare on the part of Mrs. Barton, whose dreams had taken the shape which might have been expected, considering the nature of her daylight thoughts. A lady's "I'm quite sure" so often resolves itself into "I am quite sure," I thought. Still, as in duty bound, I arose, hastily put on some garments, with an alacrity to cover deficiencies, went into one of the son's rooms, which contained a regular armory of weapons of all sorts, selected a heavy Cape constabulary revolver and a light sword and strode down-stairs to investigate. The agitated faces of the ladies peered out from their bed-room doors; a hurried whisper told them to shut themselves in and keep quiet, and I descended to the first floor, where, notwithstanding my intimate local knowledge, I soon succeeded in making a horrible noise, shaking first one bell and then another, and giving ample warning to any nocturnal visitor that it was high time to be off, for the household was astir. All seemed right there, so I descended to the basement; there, too, search as I might, I could find nothing amiss, till a happy thought struck me, why was the mastiff so quiet in spite of all the noise? I unlocked a door and looked into the yard; there he was, fast asleep, alive evidently, for I could feel his breathing, but a kick in the ribs failed to stir him. The only conclusion to come to was evidently that he had been drugged. This spurred me on to fresh investigations. Even the most intimate acquaintance is not perfectly at home in the lower regions of a friend's house. I tried every door I could see, and at last found one which led into a little pantry cupboard which had a window. The window was open, and one pane had been carefully removed. There had been a man at work! What had become of him?

The house was one of the ordinary large villa type, semi-detached, with a large, long garden in the rear, the garden being on a level with the basement, one room of which, facing the garden, was handsomely furnished, and went by the name of the breakfast room. Over this breakfast room was the drawing room, with its large bow window opening in to a verandah, from which a flight of steps descended to the garden, against the wall which divided our premises from those of the next neighbor's. Under this outside staircase there was naturally a triangular recess which had been fitted with a door, and was used as a storehouse for garden tools.

I could not find my man, and thought that he had most probably gone, disturbed by the noise which I had made. Still I hardly liked to go to bed, the extracted window glass and the drugged dog counselling watchfulness, so I strolled into the breakfast room, opened a case which I knew was the home of some excellent cigars, took one, lighted it, and repaired to the garden, leaving my sword on the table, but taking the loaded pistol with me. The cigar was a large one, and 2 a. m. is not the warmest hour of the night, albeit the month was July. But I had resolved to stay up till that cigar was finished, and finally, after pacing to and fro for some time, I went and leaned up against the door of the tool shed under the drawing-room verandah. There I remained for at least ten minutes or a quarter of an hour

and the cigar was burning very small, when suddenly, without any warning, I was forcibly propelled forward 2 or 3 yards into the midst of the garden by a kick from behind, while the pistol went off as I came with a crash on my nose. My unlooked-for assailant bounded past me and over the wall into the next garden ere I realized what had happened. Smarting with rage, and not much the worse for my fall, I rushed to the wall and saw the man going over the wall beyond. A shot from me was followed by a cry of pain and a crash, and I was just in the act of getting over the obstructing wall to see what mischief I had done, when the enemy returned my fire, and a bullet through the bowler hat I was wearing testified to the accuracy of his aim. Thoroughly infuriated by my narrow escape, from my perch on the wall I fired all my remaining three chambers at the now retreating burglar, as he topped each successive garden wall. But the distance, the uncertain light and the excitement sent every bullet wide of its mark. In a general way I make no pretensions to pluck, and, in fact, to put it mildly, prefer to keep out of harm's way. But the burglar's bullet roused every fighting instinct, and the desire to shoot overcame the fear of being shot. I imagine this must be the case in battle; a man's thoughts as to what his feelings are likely to be in danger, are rarely his actual feelings when the danger comes.

The sound of my fusillade sent up the shades all over the neighborhood, and the heads of frightened men and women in all kinds of eccentric costumes appeared at the windows while a tremendous knocking at Mrs. Barton's front door announced that Policeman X. required to know the why and wherefore of so much unseemly noise. A few words put Policeman X. in possession of the facts; a few moments were lost while I arrayed myself more suitably for a night trip, and I conducted the Policeman over the wall to the place where the burglar fell. There we found not a little blood, and then the hitherto phlegmatic and apparently incredulous officer quite brightened up, and turning to me said: "He's hit, sir! We'll catch him, sir." I professed myself ready, and we easily traced the course the man had taken until the gardens ended in a cross road, where more blood marked the pavement; an occasional drop of blood told us we were on the right track for another 120 yards, at which point an enormous piece of waste ground covered with refuse heaps ran along the side of the road, and beyond this lay the open country.

The officer now sprang his rattle, and in a short time a second policeman joined us, and with this additional force we commenced to search among the heaps, and at last found the spot where the man had sat down and banded his wound, for we found some torn and blood-stained linen. At this moment one of the officers cried out, "That's him," as a figure crossed the sky-line at the top of the hill in front of us. Off we started again, and from the top of the hill we distinctly saw him get into a field; all three of us ran our best, his wound and a heavy plow crippled the burglar and I was able to gain rapidly upon him, and before he succeeded in making a thick wood for which he was aiming, I had reduced the distance between us to some 50 yards, the heavy policeman being some way behind. However, the enemy reached his wood in safety, and we all thought it was folly to enter it after him, as he could easily shoot us without being seen, or giving us a chance of retreating. So we contented ourselves with standing guard as best we could all round the copse; but alas; he never came out, and when daylight came to our aid and we drew the copse, he nowhere appeared.

Thus the chase ended, and we had to retire discomfited, and I had nothing more exciting to do than to return and give a description of our midnight visitor as best I could at the police station. Oftentimes have I reflected upon the worth of police descriptions of similar criminals. I know mine was all wrong. It is not easy to make out the points of a man in the dark or in an uncertain light.

And here the personal element, which must have already wearied my readers (if happily I should have any), comes to an end. We heard no more for some fifteen months or a year and a half, but we then read in the papers that a certain notorious burglar had been captured, and then that he had been condemned to suffer the last penalty of the law for murder committed in one of his nocturnal expeditions. While the man lay under sentence of death (whether by way of reparation or from a mere whim who shall say?) he seems to have desired, where he could do so, to restore the property he had stolen. At any rate, he caused to be forwarded to Mrs. Barton's house a small clock, the only thing he had taken from the breakfast room, with a note to the following effect: "With Mr. Peace's compliments to the only gentleman who ever hit him. I did you by going straight through the wood and out the other side."

I have heard since that mine was not a solitary instance of stolen property restored by him at the last. Much as we thought of his wound at that time, it turned out that it was a mere scratch of the arm, which accounts for the speed he was able to maintain in his flight.

Most stories have a moral, except when they narrate real incidents. Mine being of the latter class has none, unless it be in the shape of a warning, that when it comes to shooting, two can play at that game.

Drunkenness in Belgium

Belgium still holds its own as the most drunken country of Europe. On an average each man, woman, and child consumes yearly 240 quarts of beer and thirteen quarts of spirits. It may be that Bavarians drink more beer than that, and Russians more spirits, but taking both together the Belgian record is unrivalled. The government is at last aroused to a sense of the evils of the situation, and some restrictive laws are to be put in force. The right to collect by legal process debts incurred in drinking houses has been abolished; it is forbidden to sell drink to persons under 16 years of age, and to sell any liquor until he is drunk is made a crime. The effect of these laws will be looked for with interest. It can scarcely fail to be for good.

Mrs. Testy (looking up from the paper)—"Isn't this strange? A certain gentleman after a fit of illness was absolutely unable to remember his wife, and did not believe she was the one he married." Mr. Testy—"Well, I dunno. It's pretty hard work sometimes for a man to realize that his wife is the same woman he once went crazy over."

BROUGHT HIS BLACK WIFE HOME.

A Dusky Belle Suddenly Transferred from Savage Africa to Paris.

Mr. Crampel, one of De Brazza's assistants in the French Congo territory, has just surprised all his friends by bringing to this country a young black woman who was presented to him as a wife during his recent explorations east of the Ogowe River. She is a young savage of rather pleasing features and graceful form and carriage, who still feels decidedly queer in dresses and regards witc open-mouthed astonishment about everything she sees.

When Mr. Grenfell married a native of Africa a while ago his choice was a coast girl who had been nurtured for years at a mission station, and who was a civilized and Christian young person. But the dusky flower that Crampel has brought home with him was plucked from the depths of savage Africa. Neither she nor any of her people had ever seen a white man before.

Crampel started eleven months ago with thirty carriers to make a journey through the unknown region northeast of the Ogowe. After weeks of travelling he reached a great forest region directly east of the district explored by Du Chaillu, where no white man had ever been before. This is the country of the M'fanga, whose language differs so greatly from any with which the explorer was acquainted that he had the greatest difficulty in communicating with the natives. The M'fanga, however, gave Crampel a hospitable reception, and he spent several weeks with them. When he was about to go away one of the chiefs came to him, leading a very dark and nearly nude belle of the tribe. He told the white man that he liked him, and as a mark of his esteem he wished to present him with one of his own daughters. He said she had been made a slave, but if the white man would take her for his wife he might have her. Offers of this sort are often made to African explorers, and they usually decline with thanks the delicate proposal. Crampel, however, said he would take the girl as his wife, and that young person, nothing loth, set out with the explorer for the sea, and has probably bid a last farewell to her native forests.

It is not known whether Crampel's choice is approved by his relations, but he seems to be satisfied, and of course he will take the girl back with him to Africa when he returns.

Among the interesting discoveries made by Crampel is that of a large dwarf tribe, who are doubtless identical with or allied to the O Bongo dwarfs discovered by Du Chaillu.

He Would Wait.

Customer—"I see you advertise 'Umbrellas recovered while you wait.'"

Shopkeeper—"Yes, sir."

Customer—"Well, I lost an umbrella a year ago last Fall, and I guess I'll sit down here while you recover it for me."

A Retort in Kind.

A propos of turned up noses, in more senses than one, the American colony in Paris has a story of an airy parvenue who, to plain "Mrs. Jonathan Smith," added on her cards "nee Montmorenci." One of these she had occasion to send with some message to a gruff old Englishman, who returned his; "Capt. John Jones, nez retrousee."

A Boston Girl in Toledo.

Scene: A well-known drug store in Summit street. George—"Will you have some soda water, Clara?" Clara—"No, thanks, George; I will try some of the chastised cream." George—"Two glasses of whipped cream, please."—[Boston Commercial.]

A Needful Caution.

Alice—No. George; you must not put your arm around my waist. George—Be careful, Alice. Alice—Careful! What do you mean? George—Why, haven't you heard that wilful waist makes a woful want?

An Even Score.

"Are you going to the game to-day, Browne?" asked a traveling man of a friend. "No; there's no reason why I should." "Why not?" "I've got a bawl match at home. Twins five months old and an even score up to the present time."

Confusion of Terms.

"Laura," said the young lady's mother not unkindly, "it seems to me that you had the gas turned rather low last evening." "It was solely for economy, mamma," the maiden answered. "There is no use trying to beat the gas company, my daughter. I have noticed that the shutting off of the gas is always followed by a corresponding increase of pressure." "Well that lessens the wait, doesn't it, mamma dear?" replied the artless girl. And her fond parent could find no more to say.

Too Much for the Baby.

Gushing Visitor—"Oh, oo little teeny weenty tootie ootie sing! Tum here and ee mee tise ite little turly tootie-wootie, oo itty pitty sing!"

Boston Baby—"I really beg your pardon madam, but owing to what perhaps is a foolish prejudice on mamma's part, I have not been allowed to commence my language studies. I am very sorry, but I will have to ask you to address me solely in the English language."

Plenty of Spirits Present.

At a recent seance in the house of a well-known Prohibitionist in Pennsylvania, a person supposed to be worthy of confidence, but a proverbial joker, was chosen as accomplice and placed in the cellar below the seance room. The company being gathered and the raps being heard, the question was asked: "Are there any spirits present?"

"There are 1" came in response, in a semi-sepulchral tone.

"Will you please to make them known to us?" continued the medium.

"Gin, whisky, Jamaica, Santa Cruz, schnapps, cognac and about all the varieties you can think of," was the reply.—[Yonkers Gazette.]

IMPERIAL FEDERATION.

No Set Scheme but a Natural Development Like the British Constitution.

Lord Herschell, in the absence of Lord Rosebery, presided at the annual dinner of the Imperial Federationists in London, and his principal speech is thus reported in "The Colonies and India":

The chairman, Lord Herschell, on rising to propose the toast of the evening—"Imperial Federation"—was received with loud and prolonged cheers. He said there were not a few persons who regarded the Imperial Federation League with derision and contempt, and who looked upon it simply as the embodiment of an idea. Well, it was not at all a mean or insignificant idea of which the league was the embodiment, that these great nations, of whom it had been said that England was the august mother, instead of drifting further apart, should be drawn into closer and more intimate relationship. (Cheers.) To believe that with this closer relationship there would be an increase in unity of the entire Empire was an idea which could well be described as a grand one. It differed from his friends who had previously spoken on the subject of a practical scheme of federation, for he rejoiced that adhesion to the league involved the acceptance of no scheme. If it did its members would probably be much less than they now were. (Hear, hear.) He trusted, moreover, that the league would never have a scheme which could be called the scheme of the league until that scheme had an almost certainty of immediate realization. (Hear, hear.) The subject was of immense importance and difficulty, and there were some who said that any scheme was an impossibility. For the league, therefore, to pin its faith to one particular plan would be to retard rather than to advance the object they had in view. It was only by ventilation and discussion, and after the matter had been thoroughly threshed out and considered, that we should ever arrive at a scheme affording a reasonable opportunity of success. (Hear, hear.) He doubted, too, whether the time had yet come for the summoning of such a conference as has been suggested, for men would come to it with their minds not made up, with schemes crude and undigested, and if the conference were to part without any practical result the scheme of Imperial Federation would be a great deal further off realization than at present. (Hear, hear.) A desire for such a conference must come from the colonies, and when that desire was once manifested he trusted there would be every wish on the part of those who had the management of colonial affairs in this country to meet the desire. (Hear, hear.) He was, however, by no means sure that the scheme would be realized at the outset as a set symmetrical scheme, applied at once to all the colonies, for such a scheme, however complete and brand new, would be out of harmony with the character and scope of the British constitution. All the developments and changes which that constitution had undergone had been the result of natural growth, and he believed that Imperial Federation, if it was to be realized, would come about in the same way—by slow degrees and in different forms as regarded the individual colonies. Whatever the character and the degree of the federation of the future might be, the subject was surrounded with difficulties, and it was the duty of the league to encourage discussion and to foster interest in the question both at home and in the colonies. Already, in four years, it has done much. The day had gone, he believed for ever, when the colonies were regarded as an encumbrance, or even with indifference—(hear, hear.)—and its disappearance had been accelerated by the action of this league. (Hear, hear.) The league was keeping alive the idea of closer union, and it had brought home to the mind of our colonial fellow-subjects that we do care for them, and that we do desire a closer union. (Hear, hear.) He trusted the day might never come when any one of the colonies would desire to separate from us; but if ever there should be a nearly unanimous wish in any one of them to part company, we should not be mad or foolish enough not to let that separation take place with good will. Separation, however, would be a loss, no less to the Mother country than to the colony—perhaps even more to the latter than to us. The union which existed involved no serious burden on the colonies; it did not hinder their free and natural development, but it gave them a tie with the historic past. It made them subjects of the British Empire, whose good name and noble traditions were as much theirs as ours; and to break themselves from that continuity, to detach themselves from that historic past, would be to them a great loss which would be likely to dwarf their ideas and aspirations, and to make them less, great than they would otherwise be. (Cheers.) He desired to see this bond of common interest, affection and good-will made stronger, firmer and more vigorous even than it was to-day; and it was because he believed that the Imperial Federation League did much to stimulate and render active this community of sentiment, and interest and regard, that he declared that even if its practical results were as small as its enemies predicted they would be, it would yet have well justified its existence. (Applause.)

The toast was drunk with enthusiasm.

How to Wash Fannel Shirts.

Yes, we have had a good deal of complaint from customers about the shrinking of their shirts. All material will shrink some; we generally allow half an inch for fannel, and if it be properly washed there is no reason why it should shrink perceptibly after that. The proper way is to soak the garment in hot soap-water—never rubbing it—and put it repeatedly through a wringer. The garment should never be wrung with the hands and never put in cold water.

The Shah's Presents.

"The court functionaries at Berlin and St. Petersburg have been direfully disappointed," says London Truth, "by the presents which the Shah distributed on leaving those cities. Diamond snuff-boxes, watches, rings, and jeweled swords were confidently expected, but, lo and behold! the Shah contented himself with giving away a number of photographs of himself, enclosed in silver gilt frames of very moderate value."

A Russian nobleman has recently paid 1,200 roubles (\$630) for a pair of nightgowns that are said to render delightfully various national melodies.

Sweetness and light: An underweight pound of sugar.

Redly the firelight shines through the room, Chasing away all the shadow and gloom; Light-hearted children are prattling in glee; Father is as happy as can be, For the wife and mother who suffered so long, Is getting her health back and soon will be strong, And who is so happy as she is to-night, As the thinks of the shadow that's taken its flight—

The shadow of disease that darkens so many homes, and makes the life of wife and mother one of terrible suffering. How pleased we are to know that at last a remedy has been found for all those delicate derangements and weaknesses peculiar to women. It comes to cheerless homes with "glad tidings of great joy." Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription has done for women what no other remedy has done, or can do, and it is not to be wondered at that women who have been cured by it are so enthusiastic in its praise. It is the only medicine for women sold, by druggists, under a positive guarantee from the manufacturers of satisfaction, or money returned.

The great trouble with the pug as a professional beauty is that his skin is made to fit a shorter dog.

When everything else fails, Dr. Sage's Catarrh Remedy cures. 50 cents, by druggists.

It is evident that the earth is feminine, from her persistency in refusing to disclose her age.

Man wan's but little here below, But wants that little strong.

This is especially true of a purge. The average man or woman does not precisely banker for it, as a rule, but when taken, wishes it to be prompt, sure and effective. Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Purgative Pellets leave nothing to be desired in point of efficacy, and yet their action is totally free from any unpleasant symptoms, or disagreeable after-effects. Purely vegetable, perfectly harmless.

Fish are not weighed in their own scales, simply because fish scales are not built that weigh.

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Among the hereditary jewels belonging to the Duke of Cumberland are Queen Charlotte's pearls, valued at \$750,000 and about which for twenty years Queen Victoria and the Hanoverian King quarrelled with majestic dignity. The Queen maintained that they belonged to right to England. The King insisted that they should have been sent to Hanover in 1837, on the death of William IV. The other jewels belonging to the Duke are valued at \$2,000,000. His gold and silver plate weigh twelve tons.

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