

DURING THE NIGHT.

A Lodger Wakes and Smells Gas. Nobody in the House and a General Mystery.

BY NEIL WYNN WILLIAMS.

I have an affinity for awkward predicaments, and to submit to what is popularly known as an "experience" is, if not exactly my daily lot in life, my very frequent fate.

'Twas a November day; the time, 9 o'clock in the evening. I was in a London street and had just viewed to my satisfaction a bow window in which was hung up a card with "Apartments to Let" printed upon it.

It was dark, so dark that the curtained window of my room offered but the faintest suggestion of the fog swathed light without.

With a wave of my arm I threw the bedclothes to one side and with an eager leg placed a foot to the floor. Then I stood up and hesitated.

Then thought lapsed into instinct, and action supervened. I crept quietly to the door and, turning the key in its lock with the caution of a thief and drawing the door into the blackness of my room, faced the blackness that vaster lay outside it.

No answer, but again the dog howled, and again I felt a nervousness come over me as I entered the room to feel for the bed and found it empty.

Down and down through the darkness, the ghost of light in a hall glass, with here a stumble and there a stumble to the basement, warm and odoriferous with kitchen odors tainted with gas.

With a rush I fought my way up step by step to the hall above and groped toward the dim light shining pallidly through a narrow glass window above the door.

"Anything wrong, sir?" And with the words came a broad flash of light which, settling momentarily on my face, dropped as quickly to my bare feet and back again.

"Who've gone? What's their name?" the constable interrupted abruptly.

The mad lady—the landlord—the daughter. I don't know their names, but look here, constable, and I proceeded to give my late "experience" to him in a wof of words.

The man evidently did not know what interpretation to place upon either me or my story, and small wonder, I hardly knew myself, but extinguishing his lantern proposed that we research the house together.

But to make a long story a short one, there was nobody in the house. Not a living thing, with the exception of a dog chained up in the back yard, which was surrounded, so far as we could see, by high walls.

To the right and back and then to the left went that constable. Rata-tat, tata-tat! went the knockers. Up went windows; out came heads. "Who's there?" "What d'ye want?"

At the station I told the inspector on duty all about myself quite like a little boy. But he did not appear satisfied and muttered some word to himself that sounded to me like "suspicious" and which resulted in my seclusion.

A WARNING TURQUOISE

When Trouble Threatened Its Owner, It Turned Pale.

If it had not been that every other bed in the hotel was occupied, I certainly would not have consented to share a double bedded room with a stranger.

Not that there was anything in John to which I felt inclined to take exception; on the contrary, he struck me as a very neat, prosperous looking and presentable specimen of the American commercial traveler.

By the time we both felt ready for bed John and I had become pretty good friends, and I really thought he must have told me all the stories, good, bad and indifferent, that he had to tell, but there I was mistaken.

He was making a somewhat elaborate toilet before retiring, that being, as he told me, indispensable to his getting a good night's rest, and in the course of his ablutions his arms were left entirely bare.

Half way between the elbow and the shoulder John wore a superb specimen of goldsmith's work. It was a bracelet, in fact, exquisitely chiseled in Persian characters, very massive and containing a turquoise which must have measured, I suppose, two inches one

way and an inch and a half the other. He noticed my astonishment and laughed.

"You never saw a drummer wearing a gold bracelet before?" he said. "No; it was not given to me by a lady. If it were not so late, I'd tell you all about it."

There was no denying that the hour was rather late to begin another of his stories, so we went to sleep soon after this, John sleeping with the turquoise and massive gold still on his arm.

"The person who gave me that bracelet," he said, "was not a lady, but very far from it. It was given me by a poor, broken down devil who had sold or pawned everything else to buy drink, but would not part with this while he lived."

"I needn't tell you his name. We met out west, and I had several easy opportunities of giving him a helping hand. But he was one of those cases where a helping hand can't help. The man was utterly broken down by drink."

"When death came—after a magnificent spree, ending in a fight in which a bullet intended for some one else clipped short the little span of life that drink had left him—he insisted on having me with him, because, he said, I was the only human being left who cared whether he lived or died. Then he said that I must take the bracelet and wear it, just as he had done ever since he got possession of it in Afghanistan in 1878."

"He had been an officer of an Indian cavalry regiment then and might have risen high in the army if he could only have let the brandy bottles alone."

"One of his native troopers took the turquoise bracelet from the arm of an Afghan warrior whom he had killed in a hand to hand fight. You know, a bracelet on the arm is a common ornament for an Asiatic swell to wear. And then there is a superstition in the east that a turquoise with a text of the Koran cut into it, as this has, is a charm against all sorts of evil."

"But the eastern legend also says that when you wear a turquoise on your left arm you can always trust the stone to warn you of any evil that may be threatening you."

"It was only when he was dying that this poor fellow told me how he believed the turquoise had served him well, and I think that his taking that view of it showed there must be some good still left in his nature."

"When he went to England on leave of absence after the Afghan war, he said, he had made a strong resolution never again to touch intoxicating spirits. He found himself among a number of old friends whom he had known at different times, and they were all a very convivial crowd, so he allowed himself to join in their carousings to a certain extent—just to be sociable. But one day as he was dressing he noticed that the turquoise looked very pale. That, he knew, was the sign of danger coming to him. He thought the matter over and concluded that the danger which threatened him was neither more nor less than the temptation of drink, which had always been his bugbear, and so, without a word of warning of farewell to his jolly friends, he took the train and went off to another part of the country, where he could live among associations that would not expose him to anything like the same danger. Then, he told me, the color of the turquoise deepened again, and he felt himself quite safe."

"But it was after that that he said the turquoise saved him from something that would have been the greatest calamity of his life."

"He was very much in love with a cousin of his, a beautiful girl, he said, who lived in the north of England. She cared very little for him, as I understood, except as a cousin, though her parents would have been glad to see them marry. Well, he pressed his advantages—his military reputation and all that—as much as he could for a long time, but there was another suitor whom the girl seemed to prefer, and he—as this poor fellow told me—was at least a decent man—had held the field all to himself before my man appeared."

"However, he was beginning to think that, with the help of the girl's parents and one thing and another, he would end by winning her. Then the turquoise warned him again. It was turning pale once more."

"You see, he couldn't interpret it that he was going to lose this girl whom he loved, because he hadn't won her yet. So he came to the conclusion that the paleness of the turquoise must mean so great a calamity that he could not guess at. And that led him to give up the girl and leave her to his rival. He could not bear the thought, he said, of taking her with him into trouble. Don't you think it was a splendidly unselfish thing to do?"

"Well, his cousin married the other man soon after, and my poor fellow actually congratulated himself that his cousin would be happy, no matter what became of him. But I believe that the evil that threatened him was simply his old enemy—drink. Perhaps, in the bottom of his heart, he dreaded making her the wife of a drunkard."

"After that he went back to India, and, being, I suppose, heartbroken really and despondent, he was turned out of the army in spite of all his good service in the past. Then he drifted to Singapore and from there to Hongkong, where he got a mercantile position. When the demon of drink still pursued him relentlessly in the east, he came to this country."

"But the remarkable thing about it to me—outside of the poor chap's congratulating himself that he had been saved from making his cousin's life wretched—the remarkable thing was that the turquoise always kept pale—never got back color after he ran away to avoid marrying his cousin and then

got into trouble in India. I believe that the paleness of that confounded stone was what bounded him to ruin."

"When my chance acquaintance told me this, I could not help asking him whether the turquoise had regained its color since he got it. I asked the question in mere jest, but what was my surprise when I saw plainly by his manner, though he tried to conceal the fact, that he, too, was touched with the turquoise superstition."

"Well," he said, laughing, "it is odd that the stone should have always been a fine deep blue ever since it came into my possession, isn't it?"

"Still more odd," I said, "if an American business man should believe in such curious Asiatic fables."

John and I never lost sight of each other after that, and once at least a thing happened that might have served him as an argument for the truth of his fantastic belief."

We had met, partly by chance, at Baltimore and were once more occupying the same room in a hotel. John was to have taken a train that morning for Pittsburg, but while he was dressing I remarked to him as I still lay in bed: "Something's going to happen to you. Your turquoise is getting pale."

"I tell you what," he said, "I won't go to Pittsburg today."

He put off the journey, and that evening the papers told us of a landslide which had caused the wreck of the train John had intended to take. Several lives had been lost, and more than a score of passengers had been seriously hurt.

"If I had been on the train," said John, "I should have been killed. You may say what you like, but the self sacrifice of that poor fellow has left a blessing on this turquoise."—Pittsburg Press.

PLANTING CHESTNUTS.

An Eastern Horticulturist's Success After a Number of Failures.

Three years ago I came into possession of practically an abandoned farm, 150 acres in chestnut and pine and 100 in tillage, with many hillsides and places which could not be cultivated. I wished to get trees growing on these places; how to make them grow from the seed I did not know, nor could I find anyone who did; so I went to work planting chestnuts in different ways, to see which would succeed, writes a contributor to Country Gentleman.

I first took a six-tined fork, forced it into the turf two inches deep and say four inches forward, threw a chestnut under and drew out my fork. I saw that one man was working at a disadvantage, so calling a man, I did the lifting of the turf and he threw the chestnuts. The result was that every chestnut grew, and they are now two feet high. I then plowed a half-acre, dropped a chestnut every two steps and stepped upon it. Not one of the chestnuts grew. I plowed a furrow on another piece, every four feet, dropped a chestnut every four feet on the edge of furrow, and back-furrowed against this. Not 20 trees started on the whole piece; those which did start were where they were covered lightly and nature's conditions were complied with. It is so simple and quick to plant a seed with man and fork, that I shall do more of it in the future.

Raising the Dairy Calf.

To make a good cow from a good calf two things must be guarded against, and they are, a lack of food to make a proper growth, and the use of such food as will fatten instead of building up the frame and muscular system. The skim milk fed calf will usually make a better dairy cow than one that is allowed to suckle the old cow, if sufficient pains is taken to give the skim milk at the right time and of proper temperature, for two reasons: it does not put on so much fat while young, and it does not feel the change so much when the milk is taken away, and it is made to live upon grass or hay. The latter fact, however, in part due to the fact that, as the skim milk is thought of little value for other purposes, its use is generally continued until the calf is three or four months old, when it is well able to eat and digest other food, while those who let the calf continue sucking its mother, feel that it is costing too much, and want to wean it at six weeks old, or sooner.

If the calf lays on fat while young, it seems to acquire in some way the peculiarity of the digestive organs changing all the food to fat, and when it becomes a cow it cannot be fed liberally for the purpose of increasing the milk without fattening up at once and giving less milk than before. In this respect at least the overfed calf is likely not to make as good a cow for milk as the one that has been underfed. But the latter is likely to be underized, and with digestive powers weakened by the course of starvation, and it is only by a long course of judicious and careful feeding that it can be brought to the form it should have had.

Powerful Road Engines.

Mr. John G. Thornycroft, an English authority on steam engines, recently maintained before the British Association that road steam engines, by a slight alteration of the laws, can be so constructed as to be of the highest value to trade. He affirmed they could be made to carry loads of 12 tons at four miles an hour, and that with tires of 18 inches width they would not injure the roads more than horses do, as they would act as steam rollers. Mr. Thornycroft expressed no doubt of the practicability of his plan and claimed that it would work a revolution in agriculture, as it would allow of the free transmission of lime, manure and heavy timber to points where they might be needed. The only unsettled point in the problem is the substitution of some other material for rubber in the tires, as rubber costs too much. It is believed, however, that this can be done by some different treatment of wood.

LIFE'S POSSIBILITIES

(Concluded from last week)

much in her life. But now the struggle is over, and I can give her about what she wants, thank God. I tell you, Ned, it's a pity you let one disappointment spoil your life. There's nothing so sweetens existence as the companionship of a good woman."

"And nothing poisons it like a bad one," said Frink bitterly.

"But surely the good ones outnumber the bad. Forgive me, Ned, but isn't it rather narrow to let one woman prejudice you against the whole sex? Of course I don't know your story."

"It's not pleasant," said the other man, knocking the ashes from his cigar with nervous fingers. "It all happened the year I left college. I met a girl in Denver. She was beautiful and clever, and you're right about my being sentimental, Teller. I fancied because her eyes were pure and bright as the stars in heaven that she must be an angel. She was poor too. Her father was a drunken, good for nothing fellow, and she was very unhappy, and I pitied her. Ah, I was very far gone indeed. We were going to be married when I had made money enough, and meantime I was happy as—well, as happy as a fool."

"And then one day as we were walking down the street together we met a man, a low fellow, with a dyed mustache. I knew him. He was a shoe-string gambler who came down sometimes from the mining camps and as vile a cur as ever breathed. To my amazement he stopped and spoke to me. 'What are you doing with my wife?' he asked angrily. I supposed he'd been drinking and was about to brush him aside when I happened to look at her, and what I saw told me all. She was covering before me at least, with every vestige of color gone from her face and her eyes fastened on his with such a look that in a flash I knew that her fear of him was no new thing with her."

"Great God, Lucy," I cried, "tell me this isn't true!" But she only gave a little moan, and so I turned away and left them there. I never saw her again."

There was a moment's pause. The orchestra from its perch on the landing of the marble stairway was playing an air from "La Boheme," repeating the refrain over and over again with passionate insistence.

"Isn't it possible there was some mistake?" asked Teller at last, a little awkwardly.

"No," said Frink in a hard voice. "Her father came to see me afterward. She was getting a divorce quietly, he told me, and they had agreed to keep me in ignorance of the whole affair. Of course the black-guard threatened to shoot me if I didn't marry his daughter, but when he saw I was not afraid of him he let me alone. They came east after that, I believe."

"Perhaps she wasn't as much to blame as he," observed Teller thoughtfully. "Perhaps—she was very young. But such training in deceit doesn't turn out the women who make good wives, and divorced women are hardly in my line. No, there was no excuse for her, and it was only my luck. You fell in love with the right woman, and I fell in love with the wrong one—that's all."

A woman came down the corridor as he spoke the last words, a tall, elegant woman, in a modish gown, whose gleaming folds clung closely to her slender figure. A boy of 8 or 9 years held her by the hand, and both looked out on the world with the same eyes, great, beautiful, gray eyes, at once proud and sad.

As the woman's eyes met Frink's they dilated suddenly, and he started with a sharp pain at his heart that caught his breath.

"How had she come there just then—the very woman of whom he had been talking? As he started up Teller glanced around and then rose also with a happy smile.

"Ah, Lucille," he cried, "I have met an old friend, Ned Frink! He must be your friend also. Ned, this is my wife."

The joyous pride in his friend's voice made Frink wince inwardly as he bowed ceremoniously.

"I'm very glad to meet Mr. Frink," she said calmly. How well he knew her voice.

"You'll dine with us, I hope, Ned?" called Teller over his shoulder as he started on with the boy.

"Thank you, no. I leave for Denver in half an hour," replied Frink.

Then a sudden surge in the crowd brought some one between them for a moment, and the woman turned to him abruptly.

The pitiful appeal in her eyes went straight to Frink's heart, and he felt his own eyes grow dim with tears.

"He does not know," she said simply.

"He never shall," cried Frink.—Chicago Herald.

Awakening of Conscience.

First Tramp—Look, Tom, this is the minister's house. The window's open and all the folks are at church, and they don't keep no dorg, so that we couldn't have a easier job. Second Tramp (with suppressed emotion)—The minister's house, do you say? Ah, Bill, I have been a bold, bad man, but I have never yet robbed the clergy. They are a hard workin' lot, an' their pay is small; besides, some of the tenderest recollections of an inner-cent boyhood is coupled with my Sunday school (wipes away a tear). But, Bill, you haven't got the same feeling in the matter I has, an' if yer've made up yer mind to enter the place, why, I'll stay outside an' keep watch, an' I'll give a whistle if I see any one comin'—London Telegraph.

A TRYING EXPERIENCE

A Nova Scotia Farmer Suffered for Fifteen Years

CONSULTED FOUR DOCTORS, BUT ONLY RELIEF THEY GAVE HIM WAS THROUGH INJECTIONS OF PHINE-DR WILLIAMS' PINK PILLS RESTORED HIM TO HEALTH AND ACTIVITY.

From the News, Truro, N.S.

Mr. Robert Wright of Alton, Colchester Co., N.S., is now one of the hardiest working farmers in this section. But Mr. Wright was not always so with perfect health; as a matter of fact some fifteen years he was a martyr to what appeared to be an incurable trouble. He appeared to be an incurable trouble, Mr. Wright said: "I am indeed glad that the trouble which bothered me many years is gone, and I am quite able to give you the particulars for publication. It is a good many years since my first severe pain, slight at first, but later first began pains in the back. Usual pains attacked me when working, but often when not at work; at all every attack the pains seemed to worsen, until finally I was confined to house, and there for five long months bed-ridden, and much of this time not move without help. My wife used to stay with me constantly, and I was nearly exhausted."

During the time I was suffering was attended by four different doctors. Some of them pronounced my trouble lumbago, others sciatica, but they cure me, nor did they give me any say by the injection of morphia. I suffered thus, sometimes confined to bed, at other times able to go to work, but always suffering from pain until about three years ago when a new lease of life, and a freedom from pains that had so long tortured me, at this time that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People were brought to my attention and I got two boxes. The effect was marvellous and I got six boxes more before they were all used. I was a healthy man and free from pain about three years since I was attacked during that time I have never attack of the old trouble, and I can fore strongly testify to the sterling of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. She did such good work for me I have mented them to several people for ailments, and the pills have always successful."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure to the root of the disease. They build up the blood, and strengthen nerves, thus driving disease from system. Avoid imitations by that every box you purchase is on a wrapper bearing the full trade name, Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People.

WRITTEN ON BIRCH BARK

The legend is that once upon a time Upon his magic flute, the forest trees Were so charmed of the melodies They gathered round him charmed and But the trim birch, in sober suit arrayed Deeming a finer dress would better fit Withdrew, and, while she tarried, on The lute's last echo vanished from the air.

Expectant still, she patiently waits In silver silence through the long days Those wonder wavers of harmony await But, ah, the gods, with their impetuous hates, Their joys, their cares, their tumults Are gone forever from the paths of fate.

Tommy Spoke. Minister—If any one please show cause why this couple should become man and wife, let him now or forever hold his peace. Tommy—I kin, mister. My aunty's only 25, and she's a State Journal.

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