

A HELLISH PLOT EXPOSED

DARK SECRET GANGS OF FIREBUGS EXPOSED IN NEW YORK.

Many Innocent Lives Exposed—Babies Burned to Death and Hundreds Made Homeless—Little the Conspirators Cared so Long as There Was Insurance Money to Divide Among Them.

One of the most gigantic, cold-blooded, unlawful plots to make money which has existed for the last few centuries in a civilized community was unearthed in New York city when the "Dark Secret" gang of firebugs was finally broken up through the exertions of the District-Attorney's office and Fire Marshal Mitchel.

It is estimated that the profits of these firebugs amounted to \$1,000,000 in one year. Loss of life was considered as a minor detail, while insanity and suicide were accepted as natural results of the infernal plot. It was only natural, they argued, that the mental pressure of the unlawful business would prove too much for some of the conspirators, while the innocent victims of the incendiary fires they started should have known enough to escape in time.

BACKBONE BROKEN.
The backbone of the "Dark Secret," however, is broken. A number of the gang are on their way to prison, and incendiary fires will in all probability not be heard of here for a time, at least, so frequently.

Years ago, say twenty-five or thirty, incendiary fires were not the exception, but their authors when caught were invariably found to have committed the crime for spite or on their own premises, in order to cover a financial difficulty. It was different with the firebugs recently unmasked.

They were thoroughly organized, and burned up property as systematically as the big insurance companies protected the owners of the property against loss. They went so far as to drum up trade by showing weak-minded business men the advantage of being burned out in order to get the insurance money, and then talking them into signing the contract for the work, just as a reputable commercial drummer would talk to a possible customer.

MADE MONEY FAST.
This sort of thing has been going on for the past five or six years, and the members of the gang made money hand over fist. The "Dark Secret" was made up of insurance adjusters, fire adjusters, a policeman, and, it is said, employees and officials of insurance companies, a man in the District-Attorney's office, a woman and a few outsiders known as "mechanics," who did the dirty work, such as actually starting the fires.

For months Fire Marshal Mitchel has been positive that the gang was doing a land-office business, but until the arrest and confession of Samuel Milch, a fire insurance agent, the real method of doing business was not known.

Milch's confession is a very lengthy affair, and as sensational as it is long. It confirms the evidence previously obtained against the members of the "Dark Secret," and adds many more startling facts, implicating men of previous unblemished character and detailing events which, if seen on the stage, would have been criticised as interesting, but quite impossible.

SCATTERING OF FIREBUGS.
When Informer Milch was arrested several weeks ago there was a general scattering of firebugs. A number whose names have not yet been disclosed have disappeared. Glueckman fled to Berlin, but was trapped into returning by Hirschkopf and Detective Frank, of the District-Attorney's office. Holt tried to get away, but Detective Sergeants Reilly, Trainer and Von Gerichten were too quick for him, and then when he found himself a prisoner he attempted to throw a pious cloak about his deeds, but it failed to cover them up. A dozen or more of the minor conspirators are being closely watched, and will be arrested just as soon as the evidence against them is sufficiently strong to insure their being held when arraigned in court. The first incendiary fire in which Milch was interested was in the big tenement house of No. 99 Willett street. It was crowded with men, women and children, and was fired in the dead of night when all were asleep. It had been fired by Glueckman, and although no one was killed a panic followed the discovery of the flames, and a number of women and children were injured. Several families were made homeless, but the firebugs reaped the harvest when the insurance companies paid up.

LEADER OF THE GANG.
This encouraged the gang and they set fire to buildings right and left, one of the most heartless jobs being the burning of the tenement No. 129 Suffolk street at 3 o'clock on the morning of May 31, 1894.

The building was simply packed with human beings. With possibly two exceptions all were asleep. The firebugs started the fire with an explosion in the liquor store on the ground floor.

When the firemen arrived the flames were shooting out of the store windows half way across the street, and before they could be controlled had crept up the air shafts to the floors above, bringing the panic-stricken tenants down the stairs clad only in their night robes, which in many instances amounted to nothing at all. It was a most successful piece of work from the firebug standpoint, as the firemen were unable to control the flames until the entire building was gutted.

BABY BURNED TO DEATH.
When it was all over, one of the children living on the third floor was missing, and an hour or so later the charred body was found in the ruins. Another child had been so badly burned that it died the same day. But the firebugs hardly gave this detail of the successful fire a thought. They were too busy figuring out the division of the insurance money.

BECAME TOO BOLD.
Finally the members of the gang became so bold that they frequently made Police

Headquarters their place of rendezvous. On one occasion, when Louis Gordon's shirt manufactory, at No. 21 Walker street, was fired, last July, Milch and some of his gang met there and calmly waited for the alarm to come in. Then they walked leisurely to the scene of the conflagration, where they found Gordon rushing about like a crazy man, even if he was in the conspiracy. It was a big job, and "Mechanic" Glueckman, who started the blaze, was congratulated for his "good work." The insurance in all amounted to \$53,000, and was divided between ten or twelve of the conspirators. Glueckman only received \$750 for his share, although he protested, saying he had taken all the chances of being caught.

The destruction of L. Cohen & Co.'s shirt manufactory was another big job in which Milch and his gang were interested. They realized \$28,000 from the insurance companies, and divided the proceeds as usual.

TWENTY MINUTES LEERAW.
Usually the candle used was long enough to burn about twenty minutes before the blaze would spread to the stock and wood-work, although in starting tenement house fires a much shorter piece was generally used, so as not to give any honest person an opportunity to discover it and spoil their plans. Explosives were considered dangerous, although frequently resorted to in order to start the fire. They were considered dangerous not because they endangered the lives of the unfortunate who happened to be in the vicinity, but because a fire resulting from an explosion was liable to cause the Fire Marshal to make a more thorough investigation, which might result in a report which would make the insurance companies hesitate about paying the policy holders.

WANTED A WIDER FIELD.
These firebugs did not confine themselves to New York City as a field of labour, but extended their operations all over the country. New York was merely the headquarters, from which members of the gang started out on regular trips to drum up trade. They located merchants who were not doing a very lively business, and explained to them the advantage of having a "real nice" fire.

As yet these out-of-town fires have not been fastened on the members of the "Dark Secret" to an extent which would warrant the publication of the details, but it is said that in time the entire system will be exposed, and more alleged honorable Christian citizens will be singled by incendiary fires, caused by their own desire to make money quick.

At least two-thirds of the fires in New York for the past few years have been the work of greedy firebugs, according to insurance experts. In conclusion of the conclusions arrived at by these experts the rates of fire insurance have been raised as a matter of self-protection, while in some sections of the city the companies refuse to accept any risks. Their refusals are not only limited to persons whose honesty might be doubted, but to reputable men, simply because they reside or do business in a neighborhood which the firebugs have picked out as a safe ground for their fiendish operations.

NOT ALL PUBLIC YET.
Only a portion of Milch's confession has been made public, and it is said that the portion retained includes the names of a number of other "honest" men, who would spend a whole wagon load of money to escape being even suggested as having had dealings with the firebugs now under arrest. It is said that the Fire Marshal will not stop until he has landed every guilty person behind prison bars, even if the offenders happen to be men of great wealth, merchants, or high insurance officials.

HOME-MADE BAROMETER.

Simple and Cheap Contrivance by Which Anybody Can Weigh Air.

There is one atmospheric phenomenon about which there is a wide misconception. When the smoke lies close to the surface of the earth, instead of moving upward, as it generally does, many people think it is because the air is heavy. The same people will tell you, perhaps, that damp air is heavier than dry air, for it is on days that the air is damp that the smoke lies close to the earth. On the contrary, damp air is lighter than dry air, and it is because the air is damp that the smoke does not ascend. It is purely a question of gravity, of weight. If the lower stratum of air is heavier than the smoke the latter will go up; if it is lighter than the smoke the smoke will not go up so readily. The barometer is the instrument used by the scientists to determine the relative weight of the air. As usually made, it consists of a cup of mercury, with which is connected a graduated glass tube. From the upper part of this tube the air has been exhausted, thus forming a vacuum, and the height of the column of mercury in the tube denotes the weight of the atmosphere.

The explanation of this is quite simple. The pressure of the atmosphere upon the mercury in the cup forces the mercury up into the tube, where it meets no resistance, because the empty part of the tube is a vacuum. Hence the column of mercury will rise or fall in the tube as the pressure is greater or less.

Everybody is familiar enough with weather reports to know that we have "high barometer" on clear, dry days, and "low barometer" on damp days; that the first indicates good weather, and the last stormy weather. But "high barometer" means that the column of mercury is well up in the tube, and "low barometer" that it is down. We know, therefore, that as dry air bears down more heavily upon the mercury in the cup than damp air, it must be heavier than damp air. A very simple and serviceable barometer may be made at home, without cost. The only things needed are a wide-mouthed glass jar—a pickle bottle will do—a clean Venetian oil flask, and half a pint of plain water. Pour the water into the jar, letting it come to within one-third of the top, and insert the oil flask upside down in the jar, so that the neck of the flask will just enter the water. That is all.

If the atmospheric conditions are favourable to clear, fine weather, the water will rise in the flask; if, on the contrary, a storm is in prospect, the water will fall. The air affects the water just as it does the mercury in the tube.

PETROLEUM WON A RACE.

BEAT STEAM AND ELECTRICITY IN THE CONTEST IN FRANCE.

Made an Average of Fifteen Miles an Hour—A New Method of Propulsion Which May Revolutionize All Travel on Roads and Streets—Description of the Motor.

The second annual race for motor vehicles finished at Paris on June 13 and 14, was an event of international importance. Electricity, steam and petroleum contended for the supremacy, and petroleum scored a triumph, exceeding the most sanguine expectations of its adherents. Every one of the prize winners used this type of motor, while the steam and electric carriages were compelled to abandon the race soon after the start, or came limping in, vainly trying to overtake their fleetest rival.

Last year's race, from Paris to Rouen and return, hardly afforded a satisfactory test. The distance, sixty miles, was not great enough, nor were the conditions of road and grade as varied and difficult as a motor vehicle in general service would encounter. Steam and petroleum were the chief competitors then, and the honors were divided about equally between them. The ponderous steam wagon of Count de Dion arrived first at the destination, while the petroleum motors, though second in point of time, secured the first prize because of their superiority for light pleasure use.

The race of this year was over a much longer and more difficult course, the distance from Paris to Bordeaux and return being 750 miles. The grades and other obstacles to be surmounted were such as to subject a motor vehicle to

THE SEVEREST TEST.
There were forty-three entries in all, classified as follows: Thirteen steam vehicles, nineteen petroleum vehicles, six electric carriages, one steam bicyclette, six petroleum bicyclettes, one petroleum tricycle and one steam quadricycle. Of these only about twenty actually took part in the race, including two bicyclettes.

The heaviest vehicle entered was the ponderous steam omnibus Boilee, which weighs five tons and has been in use and around Paris since 1880. The lightest was the petroleum tricycle of Count de Dion, which weighs less than one hundred pounds and was regarded as a mechanical wonder by the spectators. It was said that this tricycle had been driven ten thousand miles without showing signs of wear.

Special prizes amounting to 6,000 francs were offered for bicyclettes on condition that they accomplished the distance of 750 miles in less than one hundred hours. They attracted a good deal of attention and it was thought by many that they would be formidable rivals of the petroleum carriages. These expectations were not realized. The pace was too hot for them. Hot boxes and the grinding dust of the road made short work of them.

Parisian engineers have with few exceptions under estimated the petroleum motor from its inception, and have persistently discouraged the inventor's efforts. They pinned their faith to steam and believed that the big road wagon of Count de Dion, which finished first last year, would show

A CLEAN PAIR OF HEELS
to the lighter petroleum motors. In experimental test it has made forty-five miles an hour, and its powerful boiler was capable of developing twenty horse-power, whereas the maximum capacity of the petroleum motors was three horse-power.

The vehicles were started off at intervals of two minutes. Each vehicle was required to carry its full seating capacity, or dead weight sufficient to make up the difference. In other words, a two-seated carriage was expected to convey four passengers from start to finish, or, if only one person rode besides the conductor, a quantity of iron, lead some other heavy substance, equal in weight to two average persons, was loaded into the vehicle.

Contestants were permitted to change conductors, but all repairs incident to the journey were to be made by the conductor of each vehicle, without outside assistance, and with tools and material kept in the repair kit of the vehicle.

The carriage first to arrive at the starting point, winning the time prize, was the one-seated petroleum motor of Panhard & Levasor, which made the round trip in forty-eight hours and fifty-three minutes, scoring an average of about fifteen miles an hour, notwithstanding the stops which were found necessary. Eleven hours afterwards three other petroleum motors came in, having met with no unusual delay or accident. The other three petroleum motors, which used the same system as the winners, drew up to the judges' stand later, but in the case of the other entries, steam, petroleum and electric breakdowns, hot boxes, broken axles, lack of fuel, and too heavy cargoes tell the story. It was a long distance race between mastiffs and greyhounds. The heavier vehicles were unfitted for the ordeal, and their inherent weaknesses were soon apparent.

THE CHIEF PRIZE
of 40,000 francs was awarded to the four-passenger petroleum carriage of Peugeot Freres, which accomplished the distance in a little less than sixty hours. Panhard & Levasor's one-seated petroleum carriage, having finishing first, received the second prize.

The victory of the four petroleum carriages was due entirely to the compactness and power of the motor, to a new and improved cooling device which prevents overheating of the cylinder, and to the small supply of fuel required. The motor is constructed in three parts, a reservoir containing ordinary petroleum, a carburetor, and an engine with one or two cylinders. The reservoir will carry petroleum enough for a journey of nearly two hundred miles. In the carburetor the air is drawn through petroleum and then passes through a sort of filter which prevents the passage of any liquid. The gases from the air and the petroleum are then rapidly compressed and exploded in a capsule and made red-hot by flame. The motor works smoothly at a constant velocity of 700 revolutions

per minute, and actuates the hind wheels through a friction gearing and a train of wheels that permits of running at four different normal speeds of 3, 5, 7 and 10.5 miles an hour.

Intermediate speeds are obtained through the sliding of a friction socket manoeuvred by the driver by a pedal. In cases of emergency or on steep slopes the wheels are acted upon directly by means of a block brake within reach of the driver's hand. A 12 per cent. grade can be surmounted without difficulty, and the vehicle can go forward or back at pleasure.

The weight of a one-seated petroleum carriage, in running order, is about 1,340 pounds; of a two-seated one, 1,700 pounds. The power of the first is 1,740 foot pounds per second, and that of the second from 2,030 to 2,175 foot pounds. Most of these vehicles are fitted with ball bearings and rubber tires like bicycles. Over five hundred of them had been sold in Paris previous to the race.

CUBAN HATE OF SPANISH RULE.

Seven Outbreaks by the People in the Last Half Century.

In the present revolt, as in the six considerable uprisings that have, again and again lunged Cuba into turmoil since 1829, the Cubans and the Spaniards are arrayed against one another. Many people have very hazy notions as to the distinction between the Cubans and the Spaniards in Cuba. The terms are by no means interchangeable. When a Cuban speaks of a Spaniard on his island he means a man of Spanish blood who was born in Spain. If his sons are born in Cuba they are Cubans. In the course of one or two generations they become thorough Cubans in sentiment, and hate the Spaniards as bitterly as though their ancestors had lived on the island a couple of centuries. We can hardly realize the cordial hatred with which these two peoples regard one another. Associated in business, speaking the same language, attending the same churches, meeting a hundred times a day, they never commingle as one people. They scarcely ever form mutual friendships, and in society, if not in business, each goes his own way. It is a disgrace for a Cuban girl to marry a Spaniard. Her mother will not invite a Spanish youth to her house unless she is certain he has become a Cuban in sentiment.

The world does not present a stranger anomaly than the relations between these two kindred peoples.

THE EXPLANATION

is not far to seek. It is found in the abnormal political relations of the two classes. The Spaniard goes to Cuba to make what he can out of the island, and then, as a rule he goes home. Cuba has been Spain's oyster for centuries. Most of the thousands of Spanish incomers are Government officials, employes, and soldiers, whose business is to make all possible pickings for Spain, and incidentally to line their own pockets well. The Cuban stands no chance except in the industrial and commercial lines. There is no field for him in the liberal professions or in the public service. If he is shrewd and lucky he may grow rich in commerce or planting, but he can take no part in public affairs, he cannot worship as he pleases, he has few rights worth mentioning, and he is taxed to death. If he owns real estate he pays 30 per cent. of its income into the captain-general's treasure box. If he kills an ox he must pay a dollar. It costs him \$15 a year to own a carriage or even an ox cart. He cannot engage in any sort of business without buying official permission. He cannot sell a horse or build a wharf without paying for a Government permit. The Spanish agents, from captain-general down, have almost absolute authority. Some of them have been honest men who have tried to deal justly. The names of many of them have been loaded with infamy. They have bought their offices with the distinct understanding that they were to use official place as a means of acquiring wealth. No wonder a deadly hatred exists between the native Cubans and the mass of Spanish incomers; all of whom are regarded as being, directly or indirectly, the agents of Spain for their impoverishment and abasement.

Back Yards Are Wasted.

An old gardener says that the most wonderful thing about city folks is their ignorance of what they could do with the little strips of ground surrounding their houses and especially with their back yards. "They are not big enough for lawns," said he, "so most people just use them to walk on, but if they had some gumption they could enjoy many a garden delicacy of their own raising. A strip twenty feet long and a foot wide against the wall would furnish enough grapes for two people to eat. The next foot would supply them with peas; the next with beans; the next with radishes and turnips and lettuce; one bush in each of the four corners would produce plenty of gooseberries; another foot in width would supply all the strawberries; another foot raspberries; another, blackberries; another, a month's supply of potatoes; another, sweet potatoes; another with several fine messes of corn, and so on. There are ten feet planted, but give what I have named twenty feet, as almost any city backyard could do, and they would grow wonderfully. A back yard twenty by twenty would raise plenty of small truck for two people, yet how many back yards are wasted!"

Where Mamma Was.

Papa—Where is your mamma?
Little daughter—I fink she has gone to Mrs. De Fashion's four-o'clock tea.
Did she say so?
No, but I heard her say she wished Mrs. De Fashion was in Halifax, an' she went out about five.

A Close Observer.

She—It can never be. All I can promise you is a mere acquaintanceship.
He—Then accept my offer of marriage. It will drift into mere acquaintanceship fast enough.

A STORY FOR MOTHERS.

Which May Save the Lives of Daughters.

A Young Lady at Merrickville Saved When Near Death's Door—Her Life Brought About by Allments Peculiar to Her Sex—Only One Way in Which They Can Be Successfully Resisted.

From the Ottawa Citizen.

Perhaps there is no healthier people on the continent of America to-day than the residents of the picturesque village of Merrickville, situated on the Rideau river, and the reason is not so much in its salubrious climate as in the wise precautions taken by its inhabitants in warding off disease by a timely use of proper medicine. The greatest favorite is Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and many are the testimonials in regard to their virtues. Your correspondent on Monday last called at the residence of Mr. and Mrs. H. Easton, and interviewed their daughter, Miss Hattie Easton, a handsome young lady of 20 years, who is known to have been very low and has been restored to health by the use of Pink Pills. "Yes," she said, "I suffered a great deal, but I am so thankful that I am once more restored to health. You have no idea what it is to be so near the portals and feel that everything in life's future is about to slip from your grasp and an early grave your doom. I was taken ill four years ago with troubles peculiar to my sex, and which have hurried many a young woman to her doom—an early grave. I have taken in all about twenty boxes of Pink Pills, and I am only too glad to let the world know what these wonderful little pellets have done for me, hoping that some other unfortunate young woman may be benefited as I was. When sixteen years of age I began to grow pale, and weak and many thought I was going into decline. I became subject to fainting spells and at times would become unconscious. My strength gradually decreased and I became so emaciated that I was simply a living skeleton. My blood seemed to turn to water and my face was the color of a corpse. I had tried different kinds of medicines, but they did me no good. I was at last confined to my room for several months and hope of my recovery was given up. At last a friend strongly urged the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and after using a few boxes I began to grow slightly stronger. I continued their use until I had used about twelve boxes, when I found myself restored to health. I know quit using the pills and for six months I never felt better in my life. Then I began to feel that I was not as regular as I should be and to feel the old tired feeling once more coming on. Once more I resorted to Pink Pills, and by the time I had used six boxes I found my health fully restored. I keep a box by me and occasionally when I feel any symptoms of a return of the old trouble, I take a few and am all right again. I cannot find words of sufficient weight to express my appreciation of the wonderful curative qualities of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills and sincerely hope that all who are afflicted as I was will give them a trial and I am certain they will find renewed health."

The facts above related are important to parents as there are many young girls just budding into womanhood whose condition is, to say the least, more critical than their parents imagine. Their complexion is pale and waxy in appearance, troubled with heart palpitation, headaches, shortness of breath, on the slightest exercise, faintness and other distressing symptoms which invariably lead to a premature grave unless prompt steps are taken to bring about a natural condition of health. In this emergency no remedy yet discovered can supply the place of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, which build anew the blood, strengthen the nerves and restore the glow of health to pale and sallow cheeks. They are certain cure for all troubles peculiar to the female system, young or old.

A Liberal Education.

The late Prof. Huxley held this opinion as to what constitutes a liberal education:—The man has a liberal education who has been so trained in youth that his body is the ready servant of his will, and does with ease and pleasure all the work that, as a mechanism, it is capable of; whose intellect is a clear, cold logic-engine, with all its parts of equal strength and in smooth working order, ready, like the steam engine, to be turned to any kind of work, and spin the gossamers as well as forge the anchors of the mind; whose mind is stored with a knowledge of the great and fundamental truths of nature and of the laws of her operations; one who, no stunted ascetic, is full of life and fire, but whose passions are trained to come to a halt by a vigorous will, the servant of a tender conscience; who has learned to love all beauty, whether of nature or of art, to hate all villainess, and to respect others as himself. Such a one, and no other, has had a liberal education.

The Poet.

The poet's crown of sorrow
Is remembering happier things;
And his solace, when he borrows
Small amounts on what he sings.

One Drawback.

Jimson—How are prices at that restaurant you patronize?
Jameson—Everything is cheap excepting the waiters.

On the Veranda.

Dora—Who is that gentleman Carrie is with?
Clara—I don't know, but I presume, from her actions, that he is one of the men she is engaged to.

For twenty-five years

DUNN'S BAKING POWDER
THE COOK'S BEST FRIEND
LARGEST SALE IN CANADA.