Flesherton Advance.

"TRUTH BEFORE FAVOR."—"PRINCIPLES NOT MEN.'

VOL 31, NO 44 Flesherton, Ont., Thursday, May 9, 1912 W. H. THURSTON EDITOR and PROPRIETOR

An Adventure With London Crooks

Confidence Men and Their Shady Methods

How a Canadian Assisted in the Capture of Two of These Gay Deceivers—A Tribute to Lendon Detectives.

A "confidence man" is a sharper who appears to be a gentleman. You meet him casually, and slowly and naturally become acquainted. Each finds the other a decent chap, and soon you are fast friends. You go around together a good deal, then accidentally meet a third man, who appears to be a stranger to both of you. The result of this meeting is that, through some simple story, you are induced to part with all your gold and the two newly-found friends are also gone. It is a common story—so common that one would think it ought to be worked out; but the game still goes on, and there are without doubt people who are falling victims to it in many parts of the world to-day, and more who will be next year, in ten years, and in a hundred years from now. These criminals are very numerous in London, England, and even the splendid British detective service is unable to keep confiding country visitors from parting with their wealth.

A few weeks ago I was admiring the window display in the G. T. R. offices in London, when I noticed an old gentleman near me looking in the same window. He asked me the name of some flax which was shown in the window, and in that manner we entered into conversation. Neither of us had anything special to do, so wandered along looking at things of interest which we saw. My new acquaintance, who called himself Carter, was a well-educated gentleman of about 75, but looked much younger. He had been a dry-goods merchant, but having made enough to keep him comfortably, had now retired and was taking a well-earned rest. We spent a couple of hours looking through Westminster Abbey with its tombs and ancient cloisters, and I thoroughly enjoyed the old gentleman's company, for he was a mass of information in himself, and seemed to take pleasure in explaining everything to this Canadian visitor whom he was so fortunate in meeting. I did not intend to leave London for several days, and Mr. Carter said he would be glad to see some more of me, to which I agreed., so we arranged to meet three days later, a Tuesday morning. In the meantime he had learned that I had a fair amount of money with me, and which would be worth working for. After leaving Westminster Abbey we walked around for some time longer, then shook hands and parted, I jumping on a motor 'bus bound for the National Portrait Gallery.

A few minutes later as the 'bus was winding its way along the crowded street a tall gentleman sat down beside me and in a low voice said, "I'm a Metropolitan Police agent; you've been with an old gentleman for the last hour or so; now I know that chap." Then he told me the man's real name was Cartier; that he was a notorious gentleman crook, and that if I cared to go to Vine Street police station he would show me the man's photograph and record. Upon learning that I was to meet Cartier on the following Tuesday, the detective, whose name was Sergeant Smith, told me what would happen—as mentioned in the first paragraph. That evening I again visited the police station and met two other detectives, Sergeant Hill and Detective Curl. At the same time I saw my friend Cartier's record—seven terms in prison, the first being eight years, and the others varying from three to thirteen months. The three detectives talked over the plans for the following Tuesday, and arranged that I should keep my appointment with the old man and go wherever he suggested, and that the detectives would follow us until the third man showed up, a short time after which the two would be arrested. Just here I might mention how Sergeant Smith had found Cartier and myself. He had jumped off a motor 'bus near his home, and in order to get there had to pass close to us. Immediately he recognized Cartier, and seeing my camera under my arm, knew I was a visitor whom Cartier was attempting to "string up." Therefore he shadowed us for nearly an hour until we separated.

The following Tuesday morning I was early at the appointed meeting place, and soon after my friend Cartier showed up, with his charming manner and gentlemanly bearing. The three detectives were in the vicinity, and when Cartier and I started on our walk they followed, and the chase was on. We walked a short distance, then climbed on top of a motor 'bus bound for East London. Later I learned that when we got on top Cartier's two pals got inside, and thus followed us every place we went. The detectives took a taxicab to follow the 'bus, and shortly afterward one of them got inside with the two pals. After travelling several miles on the 'bus, we got down and explored a considerable territory of the city on foot. My companion knew every point of interest and a highly paid guide could not have explained the sights better than he did; moreover, he insisted on paying all expenses. After this we took another 'bus going still farther east, having decided to go to Greenwich; and in order to get to that part of London by the shortest route, we left the motor 'bus and took a horse 'bus through the Blackwall tunnel, which goes under the River Thames, and is a mile or so in length. Cartier and I were on top again and his two pals, who were following all the time unknown to me, again got inside and rode through the tunnel on the small 'bus. When the detectives realized where we were going they decided to get through ahead of us, so as not to lose the trail; and, since it was necessary to keep out of Cartier's sight, they had to run the mile through that hot tunnel with their overcoats on. Their feelings at the end of the run can be better imagined than described.

I had now been with Cartier for several hours and was becoming impatient for the third man to show up. Also, in that time I had not seen a single sign of the detectives and was afraid they might have been thrown off the trail by our many twists and windings. However, London police officers are not easily thrown off trails, and soon I saw a most welcome face. We had gone into an old church, and upon coming out I had just a glimpse of Detective Curl as he turned quickly and left the churchyard, just in time to escape being seen by Cartier. Our next visit was to Greenwich seamen's hospital. This used to be a home for aged seamen, but is now mostly a Mecca for tourists. It contains a fine naval portrait gallery, with paintings of many famous admirals and some of Britain's famous sea fights, also a number of relics of Nelson, including the uniform he wore when killed at the battle of Trafalgar. In another building are a great many models of battle ships of many nations and various periods of the world's history. On the whole, this seamen's hospital is well worthy of a visit from any one who happens to be in London, and my crooked friend and I thoroughly enjoyed it. Later I learned that while we were in the portrait gallery Sergeant Smith was in the same room with us, although we did not see him.

Upon leaving the hospital Cartier's thirst got the better of him, and he suggested that we drop into a restaurant, so we went to a small private room and sat down.

THE THIRD MAN APPEARS

A few minutes later another rather elderly gentleman came along and inquired if the vacant chair beside me was occupied, and then if we would mind him using it. That did not seem unusual, but a moment later he remarked, "How congested the traffic is around here;" and immediately I realized that the third party had arrived. My hand was trembling with excitement, but I hid it as well as possible so that the two crooks, one on each side of me, might not see the nervousness. Both Cartier and I agreed with the stranger that the traffic was congested, upon which he added, "I wouldn't want to live around here for anything." Cartier then asked, "Don't you live here, sir?" to which the stranger replied, "Oh, my, no! My home is two hundred miles from here." Knowing I was expected to talk and tell all about myself, like the simple visitor will, I said, "That's strange; I'm rather a long way from home too—three or four thousand miles," but the newcomer did not ask where I lived, so the information was not volunteered. We continued talking for some time, discussing London and the superior advantages of living in fresh country air, etc., and soon became quite well acquainted. The stranger a short time later remarked that he would like to take a ride on a tram car, but was so nervous he scarcely dared to cross the street alone. Immediately we invited him to come with us, but he was afraid he would be intruding, and it was necessary for us to assure him about four times that we would be delighted to have him with us, as three are so much better company than two. Finally he consented to join us, and we decided to go to Woolwich, a very interesting place several miles from Greenwich. All this time I had been enjoying myself immensely, laughing "up my sleeve" at the farce we were playing so seriously. My two friends were working for tainted money—I was working for a term of imprisonment for both of them. They were very careful in their game, for a slight indiscretion might scare the victim away; I was very careful in my game, for a wrong word or look might tell them I was wise to the dodge, and they would be off and away from the toils of the law.

Leaving the restaurant, the three of us crossed the street, with the stranger (who called himself Harris) in the centre, so that Cartier and I could protect him from danger in the "congested traffic." The detectives had seen the latest move but were anxious to know where we were bound for, and in order to learn this Sergeant Hill, who is rather handsome, played a smart trick. He spoke to a lady on the street, telling her who he was, and asking if he might carry her bundles for her; then he took the bundles in one arm and the lady on the other, and the two of them walked directly behind us, so that the Sergeant could hear all we said and get the information he wanted. The crooks and I then boarded a tram car bound for Woolwich. Things were getting exciting now, and I was anxiously awaiting the story that was to induce me to part with all I had, but alas! it did not come. My friends had scarcely sat down, and I had not yet had time to, when two arms were roughly thrust out on each side of me and grabbed my friends by the collars. It happened so quickly that one could scarcely wink before it was all over. In all my life I have never seen two men more surprised than those crooks. For a whole morning Cartier had trailed me over London, with Harris behind, and in that time we had covered about twelve miles, yet to them everything seemed to be running smoothly and they thought that now there could not be a hitch in their plans—then to be caught by the collars in this manner! The detectives invited them to come along to the nearest police station, and we started off. The procession consisted of the two crooks, three detectives, a uniformed policeman and myself. Curious onlookers stared at us, and one man came up and wanted to know why they had arrested "that innocent old gentleman," referring to Cartier.

At the police station the two were charged with "loitering in the vicinity of Nelson street, Greenwich, for the purpose of committing a felony." Then they were searched and a most interesting assortment of goods came to light. Cartier had only four pence in cash left; also, an imitation gold watch case on the end of an imitation gold chain. Inside the watch case there was a pair of imitation diamond ear-rings. Harris had more money—about 27 shillings—but his watch was only a door key on the end of an imitation gold chain. Each of them had a number of "Bank of Engraving" notes in their pocket books. These are paper notes engraved exactly like Bank of England notes, and are a splendid imitation, but the wording is altered so that they cannot be charged with having counterfeit money in their possession. These are shown to the confiding visitor in a casual manner to let him see how wealthy his crooked friends are; and when held at a slight distance I have seen bank tellers pronounce them genuine, so well is the engraving done. The fact of having these bills in their possession was of itself a serious piece of evidence against my two friends. After seeing Cartier and Harris safely stowed away in separate cells the detectives and I went back to the centre of the city and had a good dinner to celebrate the successful ending of the chase. That was an amusing dinner. At frequent intervals we would break out into a laugh at the thought of Cartier's remaining four pence, or of Harris' nervousness, or of the imitation jewelry, or the "bank notes." I don't know what onlookers thought of us, but we enjoyed it.

Next morning we met at the Vine St. police station, and the four of us left for Greenwich police court, where the trial took place. After a number of drunks and disorderlies, and the usual police court batch had been disposed of, Cartier and Harris were led in, looking rather solemn. I mentioned above that Cartier had seven previous convictions. Harris had nine. The charge was now read to them and each pleaded "not guilty." Sergeant Smith then took the witness stand and told the story as outlined above, after which I told how I had met Cartier and of our very interesting trips together. The Court found my Canadian accent quite amusing, for it must be remembered that in England a Canadian is as funny as an Englishman with a broad accent in Canada. Sergeant Hill then told his story of the chase, and altogether the evidence looked pretty black against the prisoners. They were remanded for a week for sentence, bail being refused, and our part of the work was then completed. After another dinner to celebrate the trial I parted with my detective friends. They had worked hard, but it is a mystery how they succeeded in keeping Cartier and myself in sight so many hours, with two of his pals also behind us keeping guard and watching for just such followers. Only the smartest men could have done it without being seen, and it seems to me that these London detectives deserve all the credit that is ever given them. It is only owing to their eternal vigilance that a far larger percentage of visitors to London are not separated from their pocketbooks, large or small.

I sailed for Halifax a few days later, before my friends were sentenced, but upon arriving home I learned in the daily papers that each received twelve months' hard labor. They are at it now, but Cartier at least will not serve many more terms. He is an old man now, and will soon be getting feeble and unable to practice his chosen profession. I might add that his last term in prison was also the result of trying to "do" a Canadian, but in that case the Canadian turned him over to the police without any help from the detectives. Hereafter, even if he does continue the game, possibly he will keep clear of Canadians and let them pursue their way in peace. —A.M.T.

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Eugenia Paragraphs

Born—At Mount Albert, to Mr. and Mrs. Walker Sloan, on March 17th, a daughter.

Mr. Wes. Cooey is visiting at Eugenia at present. Miss Alice Lawlor of Maxwell is visiting her grandmother, Mrs. Carr, this week.

Miss Ruth Paul of Flesherton visited Eugenia friends for a couple of days the past week.

Miss Mary Jamieson visited in Flesherton, the guest of her sister, Miss Genoe.

Mr. Morgan was surprised on Wednesday last by a presentation of a leather bound hymn book by the ladies of the Presbyterian congregation.

Miss Jean Graham has returned home from Bridgeport to attend her brother Wellington, who is still very ill.

Mr. McNab of Owen Sound took Mr. Milligan's work here on Sunday last.

Miss Theresa Armstrong and Lizzie Osborne visited friends at Flesherton the past week.

Mr. Chas. and Mary Turner spent Sunday at Portlaw.

Mr. and Mrs. Wes. Jamieson of Toronto are the gusts of the former's sister, Mrs. McMaster.

Messrs. John and Frank Cairns and sister Pearl of Ceylon, were the guests their uncle, Mr. H. Cairns here, the past week.

We are glad to see Miss Ducket able to be out again.

Mr. Ducket is busy burning a fresh kiln of lime this week.

Judge J. P. Mabee, Chairman of the Dominion Board of Railway Commissioners, died at St. Michael's Hospital, Toronto.

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Proton Station

Intended for last week

Mr. J. Hodgins and family arrived from the West recently and now reside on the farm purchased from J.C. Wright.

Miss Mildred Lyons is on an extended visit with friends in Markdale.

Miss Mabel McLean, daughter of D. C. McLean, is very ill at her home here. Her many friends wish for her speedy recovery.

Miss R. M. Trelford accompanied Miss McComb to the latter's home in Durham on Friday and spent the week end there.

Mrs. Robert Acheson and daughter, Emily, spent Sunday with friends in Dundalk.

Mr. and Mrs. J. W. Lyons and family spent Sunday with Mrs. Quigg.

Two persons were killed and fifteen injured by the collapse of a wall at the Willam Neilson, Limited, factory, Toronto. The cause of the accident has not been learned.

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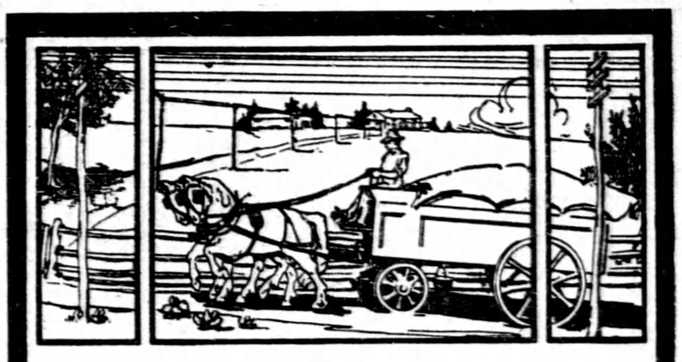

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