John Ainsley, Master Thief

BY Arthur Somers Roche

LEGERDEMAIN

BEGIN HERE TODAY.

John Ainsley, a man of education and breeding, whose war wound left him unfit for manual labor, returns hungry to his shabby boarding-house. To pay his landlady the week's rent for his room—$1—he is compelled to pawn an ivory miniature of his mother. At the pawnshop he is puzzled at the sight of a prosperous-looking, fur-collared man dickering with the broker.

After leaving the shop, Ainsley hurries to a little restaurant to get food. He is stopped in the entrance by the fur-collared individual, is taken to the man's home, and is revived with hot soup. As he eats, Ainsley tries to take stock of his host and his surroundings.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY.

The man unquestionably was not a gentleman. His clothing was too garish, his jewelry too blatant. His speech, too, was coarse and sloven, and he used phrases that betokened an unfamiliarity with polite speech. His apartment, moreover, was furnished badly. The pictures on the walls clashed violently with the furnishings. I would have set him down immediately as a parvenu, possibly one of the recent species of profiteers, but for a furtiveness of manner. Moreover, I had first seen him in a pawnshop.

Why had he followed me What was he? Well, I could wait for the answer. And so, forcing myself to be slow, to chew each morsel carefully, I waited for him to direct the conversation, for I said practically nothing. He delivered a monologue, based for the most part on places he had visited, events, mostly of a sporting nature, which he had witnessed. I began to think that he was probably a gambler, perhaps a follower of the race-track.

Then, having decided that I had eaten all that it was well for me to take at this time, I followed his example and walked with him into the next room.

"Smoke?" he asked.

Perhaps I had suffered almost as much through the abstinence from tobacco as through the lack of food. Certainly his question aroused memories of sufferings that had seemed unbearable. With the first dizzying inhalation of the cigaret he gave me, I felt my own man once more. I had been the sport of circumstances, bit of flotsam on the city's tide. Suddenly I felt master of my own destiny.

"Drink? Cocktail? Highball? Champagne?" he asked.

I shook my head. "Never touch it," I said. "And I thought in these days no one but millionaires had such a variety."

"Who said I ain't a millionaire" he demanded.

"I beg your pardon," said I, marveling at the queer vanity of him.

"It's all right," he said. "I suppose, having seen me talking to Weinberg you thought I was busted."

"I didn't think anything about it," I replied.

He laughed in a peculiarly harsh, joyless tone. "I guess you were beyond thinking about anything. I took a look at you, and says I to myself: 'This baby's about due for the morgue'."

I felt myself color. "I do look pretty badly," I admitted. "And on top of what Weinberg had been telling you about me, it was easy to guess that I wasn't a millionaire."

His eyes, hard blue, narrowed. "You see things, don't you? Tumbled right off to Weinberg wising me up about you, eh? Well, I knew right off that you were no boob. I thought you were the lad I needed; now I know it. Like a little dough?"

I laughed. Odd, how a few ounces of food change the whole world. "What do you think?" I countered.

"I'd say that you were ready to do anything to make a stake," he said.

"Almost anything," I amended.

"Fussy?" he asked.

"I'm a gentleman," I told him. The words sounded grandiloquent, absurd.

"Yes, I suspected as much," said my host. "Starvation hurts a gentleman's insides just like it does an ordinary roughneck's, don't it? Are you proud?"

"Suppose you explain," I suggested.

"Make it snappy, eh? All right, I will. I take it you have no friends in particular. You wouldn't be starving if you had. Am I right?"

"Go on," I said.

"If you got a chance to make money, real money, important money, you'd jump at it. Am I right?"

"Go on some more. You interest me," I smiled.

"There's a lot of money lying around this town waiting for a good man to pick it up," he said.

"Show it to me," I suggested.

"Suppose I do? Have you got nerve enough to grab it?" he demanded.

I reached for another cigaret, then drew back my hand empty. The conversation had taken a turn that mystified me. I was not sure that I wished to place myself under further obligation to my host.

"I don't think I understand," I told him.

He put his hand into a pocket and withdrew it. I don't think that ever in my life I had seen so much actual cash as he placed on a table beside him. Certainly there must have been fifteen or twenty thousand-dollar bills, and as many more of lesser denominations ranging from fifty to five hundred.

"Understand those?" He pointed to the wad of bills.

I managed to lift my eyes from the money and looked at him.

"Go on," I said again.

"I'm in business," he said slowly. "It's a new business, and there's lots of money in it. People don't lose their thirsts simply because other people pass a law."

"Bootlegging?" I suggested.

"Bright boy," he said. "Other things, too."

His eyes were almost hidden between their lids now; yet I knew that their pupils studied me intently.

"How far would you travel with a man who could toss you a bunch like that on the table?" He pointed at the wad of bills. "I need a man like you, a man that can look and talk and act like a gentleman. I got ideas, but I ain't always able to put them over. You see, I know my own limits. It doesn't matter how much of a front I wear it don't fool the people that I want to fool."

I understood him. "My face is my fortune. Is that it" I laughed.

He nodded. "You can make it your fortune. It hasn't made much of a

"Understand those?" he pointed to the bills.

one for you yet. Anyone can tell that you have been educated, and used to good things and all that, but where's it got you?"

"Here in your apartment, accepting charity," I replied.

He waved a disclaiming hand. "Not charity—business," he corrected me.

"Thank you," said I. "I'm glad you put it on a business basis. How much do you think the food I ate was worth?"

"What you mean?" he asked.

"I mean what I told you awhile ago. I'm a gentleman," I said, "—not a bootlegger or a crook."

His thin lips curled in a sneer. "I suppose it's better to be a gentleman and starve than a wise guy and get rich."

"I think so," I told him.

"There's still other ways of making money," he said. "For instance, you could run to the police, give them my address, and tell them what I've told you."

"You know that I won't," I replied. "Will this cover the cost of what I ate?"

I admit that it was ungracious, even to a confessed criminal. But after all, he had insulted me. I placed two dollars upon the table—how pitiful the amount was when laid beside his huge wad of bills—picked up my hat from the chair on which it had been dropped at my entrance, nodded to him and started for the door.

"Wait a minute," he said. "When you think this over, you'll change your mind. You'll want to find me. I won't be here. This place is rented for the night. Just go to Weinberg and tell him you want me. That's the kind of a man I am—no hard feelings."

"None here, either," I told him. "But I hardly think we'll meet again."

"You're belly's filled now. Wait till you're hungry again."

"I will," said I. And with that I walked from the apartment to find myself a moment later in Washington Square. I looked at the great clock on the Judson Tower. I could still keep my word to Mrs. Gannon. I did. Then, with two dollars left of the five I had received from Weinberg, I climbed more easily this time than last, to my room.

I sat down upon the bed and reviewed the last hour. And as I thought of how a cheap criminal had carried me to his lodgings, fed me, patronized me and insulted me, I was sick with shame. A man of my education and breeding, who had sunk so low in the social scale that he was open to such an insult, who was as unable to cope with the elementary facts of life as I was, was unfit to live.

It was a harsh judgment which I rendered against myself, but a just one. Incompetents clutter up the path of progress. Society, in making civilized life difficult for the incompetent, is enacting natural decrees; for nature, before society began, destroyed the incompetent. A sudden determination came to me. I had parted with the last possession that had a marketable value. Of course, I had my overcoat, but freezing was not preferable to starvation.

* * * *

But why starve or freeze when there was an easy alternative? That is, the alternative would be easy if I were in full possession of my faculties. But if I became hungry to the point of starvation again, my faculties would be impaired, my will be gone. I could see myself begging of passers-by, even possibly, rummaging in refuse-pails for a bone or a crust, like any famished dog.

The alternative, of swift and simple self-destruction, was infinitely preferable to such degradation. I would eat again—already my stomach cried for more food, so long had I gone hungry—then walk to the waterfront and rid society of one of its unfit.

(To be continued.)

Women of 1928

We look back with amazement and pity at the woman of 1828, it is said, but we look with admiration also, for it is out of their dreaming and striving that our freedom has come. So writes "A Modern Girl" in the London Daily News, who says that women are standing untrammeled on the threshold of 1928, a year that will probably bring to Englishwomen, with an increased franchise, even more freedom than they have now. A hundred years ago, it is recalled, the ladies of the land sat in stifling idleness. There were no professions open to them, we are reminded, and if they were so unfortunately placed that they must earn their own living or starve they could only hope for employment as a "companion" or as a governess. We are then offered this picture of "poor Miss 1828," which shows a startling contrast between the young ladies of that day and those of to-day:

"Look at her standing there in her stuffy thick clothing, her hideous frilled 'pelisse' with its puffed sleeves, her face hidden by an ungainly flapping bonnet 'as large as an umbrella.' She has been grounded like Amelia Sedley in the principles of religion and morality. Her head is stuffed with Mangnall's questions, her fingers are sore with working 'samplers,' her body is stiff with that strange cult known as 'deportment.' She is just sixteen years of age and ready to 'come out' to a life of social and domestic inanition. When she dances, it is to pace soberly through the measures of a minuet or the quadrilles, for she has not yet been introduced to the 'sprightly polka' or the glamorous waltz. Little wonder that she breaks the monotony of her days by occasional fits of hysterics or a graceful swoon.

"She had her vanities, poor dear—her looks were one of her few interests. She was as frightened of corpulence as is her modern sister. Rosy, fresh cheeks were considered common, and she deprived herself of adequate food for fear of growing fat and 'material.' A pale and tired gentility was her creed. She moved of necessity in a small and circumscribed circle traveling no further than her feet, or the slow, lumbering coach, would take her, for the revolution of transport had hardly begun, and railways were not yet familiar."

Of all the changes the swiftly moving hundred years past has brought about, none is more dramatic, thinks "A Modern Girl," than the improvement in the status of women. Not only their own destinies, we are told, but the destinies of nations, "lie in the hands that a little while ago were pale and weak with idleness."

Bank of France Branch Has Disappearing Floor

Paris—A fortress with a most guards the gold of the Bank of France.

"Even the American bankers admire it," say officials of the bank.

Deep in the cellars of the last-built branch of the bank, is an old, aristocratic palace, there is always an armed sentinel with orders to let no one but the chief director enter. The entrance to the strong room is a metal safe-door seven feet thick. Inside the gold is stored in other supposedly burglarproof boxes.

The moat, sixty-five feet deep, has a swift ten foot flow of water in it, diverted from an underground river.

Should some master cracksman reach the big steel door he would be in a smooth steel corridor, the floor of which would disappear from under him once he began operations. Below him would be the swift stream and all about him polished steel surfaces offering no grip.

What devices there are to cause the floor to vanish are secret. Officials are so certain of the safety of their treasure that they are willing that burglars should know where France keeps her billions.

Engineer Killed But Stops Train

Brakes Set as Lackawanna Pilot is Struck by Pole Near Kearny, N.J.

Was Leaning From His Cab

An engineer of a Lackawanna Railroad passenger train, struck down in his cab recently, probably saved the lives of a number of persons when, even in death, his hands closed on the emergency brakes and stopped the speeding train.

The engineer, David Bowen of North Bergen, N.J., was killed in one of the most peculiar accidents in Lackawanna records.

Earlier two freight cars of the Pennsylvania Railroad were derailed on the meadows just outside Kearny, N. J. The cars crashed into an electric light pole and bent it in such a way that it projected slightly over the Lackawanna tracks paralleling those of the Pennsylvania.

When Bowen's train approached, three hours later, the engineer leaned out of his cab. The bent pole struck his head, crushing it, and physicians who examined him later said he must have died almost instantaneously. Nevertheless, the train jerked to a stop, and trainmen found Bowen's hand clenched over the set emergency brake.

Too Busy to Live

(Commended to Persons Afflicted With Hurryitis.)

He hadn't time to greet the day,
He hadn't time to laugh or play;
He hadn't time to wait a while,
He hadn't time to give a smile;
He hadn't time to glean the news,
He hadn't time to dream or muse;
He hadn't time to train his mind,
He hadn't time to be just kind;
He hadn't time to see a joke.
He hadn't time to write his folk;
He hadn't time to eat a meal,
He hadn't time to deeply feel;
He hadn't time to take a rest,
He hadn't time to act his best;
He hadn't time to help a cause,
He hadn't time to make a pause;
He hadn't time to pen a note.
He hadn't time to cast a vote;
He hadn't time to sing a song,
He hadn't time to right a wrong;
He hadn't time to send a gift,
He hadn't time to practise thrift.
He hadn't time to exercise.
He hadn' time to scan the skies;
He hadn't time to heed a cry,
He hadn't time to say good-by;
He hadn't time to study poise,
He hadn't time to repress noise;
He hadn't time to go abroad,
He hadn't time to serve his God;
He hadn't time to lend or give,
He hadn't time to really live;
He hadn't time to read this verse,
He hadn't time—he's in a hearse.

—Grenville Kleiser in the Detroit Free Press.

ANTI-JEWISH STUDENTS ON STRIKE IN HUNGARY

Protest Against Bill in Parliament by Closing and Guarding Universities

Budapest.—Nationalist sympathizers in the Hungarian universities succeeded in keeping all students from attending classes as a protest against a bill with numerous clauses, now before Parliament, which would allow an increase in the number of Jewish students attending these institutions.

The same bill when first introduced last November was the cause of the anti-Semitic riots at Budapest University, during which a score of Jews were injured and the schools were closed for several days.

The Nationalists occupied all the entrances and refused to allow any of the students or Faculty to enter. They were not molested by the police because an old regulation prohibits police from entering the property of universities.

The bill being debated in Parliament, though it would increase the number of Jewish students very little, is bitterly attacked by the Nationalists, many of whom belong to the party of Count Bethlen, whose Cabinet presented it. The bill will probably be passed this week, when there is danger of fresh outbreaks among the students.

Kaiser's Old Home Decays

Berlin—The threatening decay of the "Neues Palais" near Potsdam, the ex-Kaiser's former residence, was reported by government building experts on their annual round of inspection. As the work of restoration called fo prompt action, this historical landmark of the Potsdam environs has been temporarily closed to the public.

Pullman Service for Germany

Berlin.—The running schedule for Germany's first Pullman train, which will be put into service on May 15, has been made up. The train will leave The Hook of Holland and make stops at Rotterdam, Amsterdam, Utrecht, Diusburg, Dusseldorf, Cologne, Mainz, Mannheim, Carlsruhe, Baden-Oos, Freiburg and Basle.

Caretaker: "This room, sir, is supposed to be 'aunted by a man in a kilt." Prospective Tenant: "I'll soon get rid of him. I'll fix up a collecting box!"

"Did you marry that girl of yours, or do you still cook your own breakfast and mend your own clothes?" "Yes."

Wild Geese

I hold to my heart when the geese
are flying—
A wavering wedge on the high, bright
blue—
I tighten my lips to keep from crying:
'Beautiful birds, let me go with you!'

And at night when they honk—and
their wings are weaving
A pattern across a full gold moon—
I hold to a heart that would be leaving
If it were freed to fly too soon.

I hold to my heartt that would be
going—
A comrade to wild birds of the air,
As wayward as they—and never
knowing
Where it is going—and never care—

I hold to my heart—for here lies duty,
And here is the path where my feet
must stay—
But O, that quivering line of beauty
Beating its beautiful, bright-winged
way!

—Grace Noll Crowell.

Wilson Publishing Company

A NEW BLOOMER DRESS.

This charming little bloomer dress has a square neck, and short kimono sleeves, or long sleeves attached and gathered to narrow wrist-bands. A shirred set-in frill in the front provides for the necessary fulness, and the back is in one piece. Both views are trimmed with an attractive cross-stitch design. The bloomers have elastic run through the top and leg casings. The dress is No. 1550 and is in sizes 2, 4, 6 and 8 years. Size 4 requires 2 yards 36-inch material, or 1½ yards 54inch. Price 20c the pattern.

The Transfer Design No. 1163 has two strips of cross-stitch border, each 15½ inches long, two narrow borders 28 inches long. Blue or yellow. Price 25c the pattern.

Our Fashion Book, illustrating the newest and most practical styles, will be of interest to every home dressmaker. Price of the book 10c the copy.

HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS.

Write your name and address plainly, giving number and size of such patterns as you want. Enclose 20c in stamps or coin (coin preferred; wrap it carefully) for each number, and address your order to Pattern Dept., Wilson Publishing Co., 73 West Adelaide St., Toronto. Patterns sent by return mail.

Get Ready For Chicks

Literally and figuratively, the world will seem a cold and cruel one to baby chicks which emerge from their shells during the earliest weeks of spring. Perhaps the cruelty can't be helped, but at least a little of the chill can be taken off, if the poultry grower has seen to it that the brooder house equipment is in good order when the chicks are ready for it.

February is designated as a good month to: Examine and overhaul the brooder stove, replacing any broken or worn out parts; test the thermostat with heat to see that it operates the air intakes and checks; replace any broken or rusted sections of stove pipe; secure plenty of good grade coal, such as was very hard to get last year when it was wanted; start the stove a couple of days before the chicks are put in the brooder house; test fuel pipes and wicks of oil stoves.

Comfortable quarters in the very earliest days means much in the future development of chicks and the profit which they will return to their owners.

Little Mary, who had fallen ill, begged for a kitten. It was found that an operation was necessary for the child's cure, and that she must go to the hospital. The mother promised tht if she were very brave she should have the very finest kitten to be found. As Mary was recovering from the influence of the anaesthetic the nurse heard her muttering:—"It's a rotten way to get a kitten."

Salesman: "We have a car that will climb any hill." Motorist: "I don't doubt it. The one you sold me last year was over-ambitious and tried to climb a tree."

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"SALADA" GREEN TEA 299

More Home-Made Candies

To make stuffed prunes select large prunes, wash thoroughly and let soak in cold water for two hours. Remove the stones and dry the prunes on clean cloth. Fill centres with nuts only, fondant and nuts, candied fruit or preserved ginger. Roll in granulated sugar.

Stuffed Figs.

½ pound dried figs, ½ cup orange juice, 2 tablespoons sugar, 1 teaspoon lemon juice, Maraschino cherries, Pecan meats. Mix the orange juice, lemon juice and sugar and cook the figs very slowly in the liquid, turning and basting them often, until they are tender. Drain, cool, open and stuff each fig with two maraschino cherries cut in halves and five pecan meats, broken. Close, press into shape and roll in powdered sugar.

Date Sweets.

1 pound dates, ½ cup walnut meats, 2 tablespoons candied ginger. Stone the dates and put them through a food chopper. Add the walnuts and ginger, coarsely chopped. Knead the mixture on a sugared board and shape into a roll. Cut in thin slices with a knife and roll the slices in powdered sugar.

Chocolate Dates.

Stone choice dates and steam them for five minutes. Remove from the steamer and when cool enough to handle close each date firmly. When cold, coat with sweet chocolate. As a variation the centres may be filled with a quarter of an English walnut or with a bit of candied ginger.

French Date Bonbons.

Stone large dates and steam them for five minutes. When they are cool stuff them with fondant. Cut pistachio nut meats in halves and press two or three pieces into the fondant of each date so that the nut meats show. Almonds, blanched and toasted, may be used in other dates. Place each date in a paper bonbon cup.

Chocolate Prunes.

Wash choice prunes thoroughly, cover with cold water and soak overnight. Bring to the boiling point, remove from the fire and drain. Remove the pits and allow the prunes to dry. Fill each prune with a salted pecan meat and dip in melted chocolate. Let stand until the chocolate has dried and then wrap in waxed paper.

There is an almost infinite variety of combinations possible in dipping candies from plain nuts to elaborate centers of creams and nougat. These recipes are for simple centres but they make very attractive confections.

Chocolate Delights.

½ cup butter, 1½ pounds confectioners' sugar, ¾ ounces (about 1 1/3 cups) cocoa. Wash and cream the butter, add the confectioners' sugar gradually and then add the cocoa which has been sifted. Shape into balls, coat with melted sweet chocolate and roll in cocoa.

Mocha Chocolates.

¼ pound butter, ¾ pound confectioners' sugar, ½ cup cocoa, 2 tablespoons coffee extract. Cream the butter—use unsalted butter, if possible—and add the confectioners' sugar gradually. Then add the cocoa and the coffee extract. Add [illegible] if necessary to make the mixture stiff enough to handle and shape in balls. Coat with sweet chocolate.

Pistachio Chocolates.

Flavor fondant with pistachio extract made by combining lemon and almond extracts and mix in one-fourth cup (one ounce) of blanched pistachio nuts. Roll into balls, coat with sweet chocolate, sprinkle the top of each candy with [illegible] as soon as it is coated.

Almond Acorns.

Blanch the desired quantity of almonds. Melt a little sweet chocolate over hot water. Wet the tips of the fingers, dip the almonds in the chocolate, coating more than two-thirds of the nut. Dip them immediately into chopped pistachio nuts. Place on a paper to dry.

Grilled Almonds.

Blanch one cup of almonds and dry them thoroughly. Boil one cup of sugar with the same amount of water until it reaches 224 degrees or threads on the tip of a spoon. Add the almonds and let simmer, stirring frequently, until they turn a yellow brown color. Remove from the fire, and stir vigorously until the almonds are covered with a paste.

Honey Fruit Squares.

[illegible] pound desiccated coconut, 1 cup strained honey, [illegible] raisins, milk. Cover the raisins with milk and let it stand [illegible] hours. Cook the honey until it [illegible] add the coconut and [illegible] until it is very thick. [illegible] in the currants and pour into a tin. When cold, cut into bars.

Saved the Day!

Loss of Trousers Threatened Beecham During Concert There

London.—To be directing a vast orchestra vigorously before a critical audience, and thus employing both hands, and to do all this with an unpleasant consciousness that one's suspenders had broken and his trousers were coming down—that was not a nightmare but the actual experience of Sir Thomas Beecham at Carnegie Hall in New York during his recent American tour.

According to what he told friends, Sir Thomas was putting all his wonted fire into a fortissimo passage when suddenly he heard a rending sound and felt his trousers beginning to sag dangerously at the knees. What was he to do, be man or musician? He decided to be musician to the last, and so he bravely carried on. His bravery was rewarded.

The tremendous finale was followed by an outburst of applause, under cover of which Sir Thomas was able to hobble from the platform with one trousers leg sagging over his shoe but with his honor both as man and musician narrowly preserved.

Would Put Farming On Business Basis

"We are as far below in the business end of farming as in any other phase of agriculture," affirmed Hon. John S. Martin, Minister of Agriculture for Ontario, in an address made at a meeting of the University of Toronto Commerce Club recently. "The farmers must learn to manage their affairs in a businesslike way," he continued, "and the old system of everybody rushing his produce on to the market at once, and thereby causing a glut, must come to an end. Co-operative marketing is the ideal toward which all energies should be directed, and the importance of this is, I think, beginning to be realized, for the United Farmers of Ontario have established a co-operative school, and are working in harmony with the Government in bringing about an improved state of affairs."

Air-Liners With Diners

[illegible] air-liners built for the British Imperial Airways service from London to India will carry cooks and waiters to prepare and serve meals en route, we are told in Popular Mechanics. These new planes, giant three-motored flying boats, have all the latest travelling conveniences, we are told, and are expected to land on the sea, if necessary.

We read:

They are to be used on the final stage of the England-to-India journey, crossing Persia and the sea. The flying boats are of all-metal construction with a wing-span of ninety-three feet and weigh nine tons loaded. They have seats for fifteen passengers in a single cabin, and carry a crew of five including the pilot and a relief pilot who will take turns at the controls and supervise the navigation, and the cook-steward. Each seat is fitted on its back, with a folding tray that can be raised to serve the passenger in the next seat to the rear. The passengers will recline against air-cushions back against air for both seats. The cushions are of rubber, inflated. They are so arranged that in case of an emergency landing at sea, the passengers can rise, don his seat cushion and be fully equipped with a life preserver. The flying-boats have a speed of 1[illegible] miles an hour with their three engines, totalling 1,500 horse-power, and carry enough gasoline to make 600 miles at cruising speed.

The London-to-India air-line is the first link in Great Britain's projected air service to Australia. Because of the enormous distances covered, the weeks consumed in steamer passages, and the fact that much of the route is over land, the service is expected to pay from the start.

[illegible] sale time, which means that the large store was crowded, and that the assistants were very busy. Come up to one of the counters hands a fluffy woman with something of the nature of an overall in her hand. Pushing it in front of the assistant, she demanded: "What are you asking for this thing?" The assistant examined it. Then she replied: "That doesn't belong to us, madam. You must have torn off some other lady."

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