

THE CES OF A MASTER THIEF.

Utilizing the Women to Escape the Generous, and Setting a Trap for Car Fares.

It was a cheerful morning. The boss crook leaned languidly against the door post of a saloon on West street, and eyed with the look of a connoisseur the crowd emerging from the gates of the Pennsylvania ferry house. The assistant crook leaned, not quite so languidly, against the door post of a saloon a little further down the street. His expression was also that of a connoisseur, but it lacked the implicit self-confidence of the boss crook's. There was a little anxiety in his look, as though he were afraid something of importance might escape his view. Vigilance was not such a matter of course with him as with the boss crook. His eyes covered the exits of the New Jersey Central ferry. It is not hazardous much to say that between the boss crook and his assistant not one of the countrymen with fat wallets who might at any time, while the crooks stood sentinel, enter New York from these termini of two great railroads, could escape the vigilance of these apparently unassuming individuals. They operated with good judgment and on a system. There is no better stand for the business in the city, and joining forces insures accuracy.

As the reporter, who had been to New Jersey, crossed the street, he caught the boss crook's eye, and the boss crook recognizing him, became hilarious.

"I've got a new racket, and I guess you'll think it's a funny one," exclaimed the crook.

"If it's new, hadn't you better keep it awhile?" exclaimed the reporter in an unguarded moment of simple generosity.

"Well," was the reply, "it's been going about a fortnight. It is one of those, though, that pays handsomely while it's going on, but busts in about two weeks. This one's been running just long enough. I'm going to call it in, can't, and keep it in stock for future use. You see a racket that's old enough to be forgotten is about as good a commercial article as a brand new racket. But even if I weren't going to call it in I wouldn't mind telling you. It's a most wonderful thing, but publication don't seem to hurt our business. Our game's about the only thing I know of that don't suffer from exposure. You newspaper men might publish something every day about the antique racket of calling a man by a wrong name, finding out his real name, and having your pal come up to him later and address him correctly. Just as many would walk into the trap. Folks would read about it, call the victims fools, and feel confident they'd never be caught. But the most confident are the first caught. You see, it's confidence against confidence. We play on a man's biggest bump—his greed for money. But, as I was saying, this racket's just about up now, and it's never been given away, 'cause it's never been worked before. I'm the inventor and sole patentee. I'm especially proud of it, because it helps solve the problem of what to do with our superfluous femininity. It enlarges the sphere of woman's work."

"And how did this noble and philanthropic idea originate?"

"In a very simple manner, my dear fellow. One day I was strolling down Broadway. Near Wall street two Sisters of Charity passed me. I've always admired Sisters of Charity. I'm serious now. I think that they're about the luckiest women there are. I've seen them out in the storm rain or in a freezing winter's storm when strong men kept at home, either visiting some abode of the poor, to bring good cheer, or some rich man's home to get something to give to the poor. So they generally draw my attention. Well, one of these did specially. She was quite young with an oval face and brown eyes. I tell you, a painter who'd put her on canvas would turn out the prettiest picture of the year. I thought to myself that the stoniest heart would melt before her. It was an easy matter to follow her into a law office—ask for some one else in the building, you know, and have the managing clerk give you directions that sounded like the descriptions of property in a mortgage. Well, sir, I saw one of the hardest looking skinflints I ever laid eyes on shell out a five. And then the idea came to me.

"My girl's not only pretty; she's ambitious. She'd be bothering me all along to take a hand in the game. But somehow the idea didn't strike the other fellows. You see co-operation's the life of our trade, and I couldn't well kick against them. But when I saw that five coming out I thought to myself, why couldn't my moll draw out a five, too? Well, sir, I told her about it, and she was just wild over it. It was all I could do to get her to wait till I could get an outfit for her and her sister, who was to work with her—co-operation again, you see. You should have seen her when she was fixed up. She looked as if her lips never moved to anything but paternosters. One morning they started off, and when I came home they were counting over a much money as I'd bring home in a week. Well, things went on that way till about three days ago—nearly a fortnight. They came home and said they hadn't found folk so willing, and they'd been pretty hard pressed by some. I knew then it was time to shut down on the racket, and it's off you see, the different charity organizations try not to interfere with one another, and go different routes. They are sure to find out, sooner or later, any one trespassing over their respective routes. I knew it wouldn't be pleasant for my girl to be found out, so I shut right down."

"By the way," he said, as the reporter was going, "things are getting dull here, and I'm starting to-morrow for a trip up the river."

"Going to play any game from there?"

"Only an old racket. I'll put a personal in a morning paper, sign a female name, and there'll be plenty of bald-headed fools who'll send me the car fare from wherever I am to New York."

Marine Disaster.

"Yes," he said, "we were out sailing, and noticed a yacht some distance off flying signals of distress, and when we came up with her we found affairs in a fearful state."

"What was the trouble?" asked his friend; "was she sinking?"

"Worse than that—all their liquor had given out."

"Indeed! Well, that was terrible."

The Umbrellas and Chairs of Lulu Hurst.

For several months Southern papers have been describing the wonderful performances of a young girl known as Lulu Hurst. These reports have stated that she possessed a unique and extraordinary "force."

We were pleased, therefore, to receive recently a very careful and conscientiously written account of this phenomenon from Dr. Seth N. Jordan, of Columbus, Ga. Dr. Jordan states that, in company with Drs. George Grimes and Carlisle Terry, he examined Miss Hurst, and that they all agreed that she is not a fraud, but possesses some extraordinary and occult power. He writes that she is fifteen years of age, five feet four inches high, weighs one hundred and twenty five pounds, is of moderate muscular development, in good general health, has menstruated regularly, is of an intelligent and amiable disposition. She first became aware of the possession of her "force" last September, and it has continued ever since, with the exception of a brief interval when she had a "cold."

Drs. Jordan, Terry, and Grimes, having purchased a new umbrella, experimented with her for four hours in the room of a hotel. The phenomenon developed was somewhat as follows: Two or three scientific persons take hold of the handle of an open umbrella, and hold it fast; Miss Lulu then touches it with her open palm, when, presto! the umbrella is turned inside out, or snatched away despite every effort. Meanwhile other persons find that no muscular contractions have taken place in Lulu's arms.

Three strong and scientific men lift up a chair, and hold it in the air. Lulu places her hand upon it, and it sinks to the floor despite every effort. Dr. Jordan and others took hold of a long stick, the phenomenon touched the other end and it rapidly revolved, or pulled the three experimentalists roughly about the room. Miss Hurst's "force" seems to have a peculiar "penchant" for umbrellas and canes, so that she cannot carry the former article at all, the mystical something snatching it away and leaving her out in the wet.

With the exception of the production of knocks and raps, the above are the chief phenomena exhibited and described.

We fully believe that Dr. Jordan has described them correctly, and that Miss Hurst is a remarkable girl. But there is one feature in her performance which no one, not even Dr. Jordan, seems to have noticed, or at all events carefully studied. This is, that all the exhibitions of her wonderful force are exhibited in opposing voluntary muscular effort in others. This force has no power over dead matter, but only over living, conscious, muscular exertions. This fact explains, we believe, the mysterious energy which the Georgian phenomenon appears to develop. It is the experimenters, not the subject, who knock themselves and umbrellas about. At any rate, the matter ought to be investigated from this standpoint. It will probably be found that Miss Hurst's exhibitions are only another phase of the hypnotic phenomena.—*Medical Record.*

SONGS OF THE PEOPLE.

Famous Popular Pieces that Sell by the Hundred Thousand.

Stephen C. Foster, the author of 'Old Dog Tray' and 'Old Folks at Home,' was a genuine American, a farmer's boy, who had but limited opportunity for musical instruction: still his 'Old Folks' fully 1,000,000 copies have been sold, and of his 'Old Dog Tray' 600,000. Besides these his 'Uncle Ned' and 'Susanna' are favorites. The reason of the popularity of Foster's songs lies in their easy flowing melody, the adherence to plain chords in the accompaniments, and the avoidance of intricacy in the harmony or embarrassing accidentals in the melody. I was present when they buried this sweet singer in Pittsburg in 1846, to the strains of his own song, 'Come Where My Love Lies Dreaming.' It is the simplicity and sweetness of the tune that makes the popular singer, and the same conditions hold good to-day. Henry C. Work, a newspaper man, lately deceased, is the author of 'Come Home Father,' and 'Grandfather's Clock'; of each over 200,000 copies have been sold. The famous 'Silver Threads among the Gold,' with as large a sale as the two former together, is by H. P. Danks, an organist. Will S. Hays, another newspaper man, wrote the Songs 'Evangeline,' 'Nora O'Neill,' and 'Shamus O'Brien,' each having a sale of over 100,000 copies. 'Shoo Fly, Don't Bother Me,' 'Pat Me In My Little Bed,' and 'Come, Birdie, Come,' are composed by C. A. White, and have been published by the author. Of each of them fully 150,000 copies have been sold. 'Don't be Sorry for Darling,' and 'Lorena,' are by J. P. Webster, a simple country music teacher, and 'Gathering Shells by the Sea Shore' is by W. S. Thompson, each song having a sale of over 300,000. 'Leaf by Leaf the Roses Fall,' and 'Pretty as a Picture' are by T. B. Bishop, a musical broker, who has the satisfaction of knowing that over 100,000 copies of his songs have already been sold, and an equal number will be sold before they die out.

'Of John Howard's Payne's wonderful air over two million copies must have been sold and the publishers will grow rich from the work of the singer who died away from the home he so passionately loved. To this same class of popular songs belongs Thomas Moore's 'Last Rose of Summer,' of which 1,500,000 copies sold in this country, and it has, therefore, a place among American songs. O 'Kathleen Mavourneen,' by F. N. Crouch, 500,000 copies have been sold, and it is still in much demand. Crouch's Englishman, who has been in this country since 1848 'Sweet By and By' is by J. P. Webster, and its sale will soon reach 500,000 copies. Then come Joe Emmet's 'Sweet Violets,' W. J. Scanlan's 'Peek-a-Boo,' Frank Howard's 'When the Robins Nest Again,' and Ben William's 'A Boy's Best Friend is His Mother.' I could give no figures as to the sale of these songs, but they will all reach the half-million stage."

A writer in England says that the number of country houses where lawn tennis is played on Sunday afternoons is large and is growing larger. He tells of a house that could not be let last season because the owner wished to make it a condition of the lease that the tennis courts should not be used on Sundays. Even billiards are played on Sundays, he says, and almost everything except card games. But notwithstanding this relaxation of the rules of Sunday observance, it would be regarded as something unpardonable not to appear in a black coat on Sunday morning.

Rice Culture in the South.

A pound of the best rice in the New York market costs eight cents. It has a pearly, transparent glint, a beautiful polish and lustre; yet very few who use this very attractive article of food are aware of the labor and expense required to place it before them in this perfect state. As an article of food it is second alone to wheat, and is the grand natural cereal upon which at least four hundred millions, or nearly one-third of mankind, mainly subsist.

Almost incalculable areas of it are raised in India and China, the various varieties seeming endless. On the island of Ceylon alone no less than 161 varieties are known; but the finest is raised in the States of North and South Carolina and Georgia, where those vast expanses of low-lying swampy lands and heavy vegetable soils render its cultivation comparatively easy and profitable.

The great fields lying low along the river banks are divided into sections, and trunks and canals carry the water to each separately by smaller ditches, by which they are flooded whenever desired. The rice is frequently sown on the water, covered with soil, where it quickly germinates, covering the fields with a beautifully delicate green grassy carpet, which turns a lighter and yellow tinge as it ripens.

As most of the fields have been reclaimed from the river near which they lie, they are continually subject to sudden overflows, the utmost vigilance being required to guard against this enemy, which often in one night rains the fruits of months of labor. Some of the larger plantations cover two or three hundred acres, and employ several hundred men, women, and children.

From 1720 to 1740 the export of rice from the Carolinas was 143,986 tons. For 1740 alone 90,000 barrels were shipped. At the outbreak of the war 1,000,000 acres were under cultivation in South Carolina alone. In 1860 the production was 187,162,032 pounds, but the war almost ruined this immense industry, and in 1870 the combined productions of the two Carolinas, Louisiana, and Georgia was reduced to 59,000,000 pounds. A steady improvement, however, toward the old time prosperity is now seen by comparing the productions of latter years with that of 1866, when it had dwindled to the comparatively insignificant amount of 12,002,080 pounds.

Very few besides Chinese and negroes can be kept on the plantations as workers, and owing to the intensely trying nature of the climate in summer, with its accompanying marsh fevers, the question of labor supply is a very serious one to the planters; but while the old-fashioned method of cutting, sowing, and transplanting still prevails on most plantations, numerous labor saving machines and improvements have been introduced with marked success in the various milling processes.

Many large mills are to be seen on the low shores of the Mississippi, in the vicinity of New Orleans, but those at Charleston and Savannah are perhaps the largest and most complete in the appointments. Many are lofty buildings of brick or iron, their many storeys crowded with the latest improved machinery for hulling, dusting, cleaning, burning, and packing the grain ready for shipment. Situated at the water's edge, their tall chimneys pouring forth heavy columns of smoke, their derricks lifting the rough grain from the decks of the river craft, while the elevators, with long-armed spouts, dip deep into and fill the great holds of sea-going steamers with milled grain, the clouds of drifting chaff dust, the whir of machinery, and hurrying of boats and tugs, all present a most charming picture, and unmistakably indicate the rapid revival of one of the most valuable of the Southern industries.

A SLY SAURIAN.

And His Struggle with a Bull-Headed Beetle.

An alligator not more than six inches long is securely housed at 190 West Seventh street. He was born an orphan last winter in New Orleans, and during last spring came North to spend the summer in an aquarium. It is only within the last few days he has become reconciled to the climate of Cincinnati, and begun to develop an appetite for things terrestrial, such as flies, diminutive bugs, and other objects of interest to entomologists.

Early last Saturday an enormous beetle flew into the house where the alligator is being entertained, and fell to the floor. One of the occupants of the house scooped up the intruder on her fan and flung it off into the aquarium. The water in this ornamental vessel is very shallow, so much that when his alligatorship stretches his six inches along the bottom his back and tail are not submerged. Luckily for the beetle, he landed well up on the alligator's tail, high and dry, so high that the 'gator couldn't double up and nab him. The reptile lashed the water, and in his contortions described nearly all the curved letters of the alphabet, but to no purpose; the beetle hung on and appeared to enjoy the ride.

During a moment when the alligator was at rest the rider appeared to let go his hold to secure one more suitable, when quicker than lightning he was shaken off, and was floundering in the water. Instantly the 'gator twisted to get his prey, when his tail again touched the drowning insect, and again there was a passenger aboard elated over his narrow escape. Not contented with the perilous position from which a moment before he had been thrown, the beetle began crawling up the back of his enemy to what looked like more secure quarters. With the sagacity of the fox the reptile now lay quiet, evidently biding the time when the death walk would be sure to end. Slowly the beetle crawled, fastening his feelers one by one into the youthful scales of his enemy. The 'gator moved not a muscle. He did not even breathe, while his eyes shot forth the malignant hatred of a basilisk.

The beetle finally reached the ugly-shaped head, which was held well up out of water. In a twinkling the head was ducked, the beetle was again in the water, and in another instant the incipient teeth of the reptile had crushed down through the stiff covered wings of the bug, and the struggle was over. The alligator made no effort to devour the elephantine bug. He simply held on to him, half of the corpse in his mouth and the other half in the water, and not until an hour or two after daylight yesterday morning did he spit out the mouthful and evince a desire for his usual breakfast of half-dead flies.—*Cincinnati Enquirer.*

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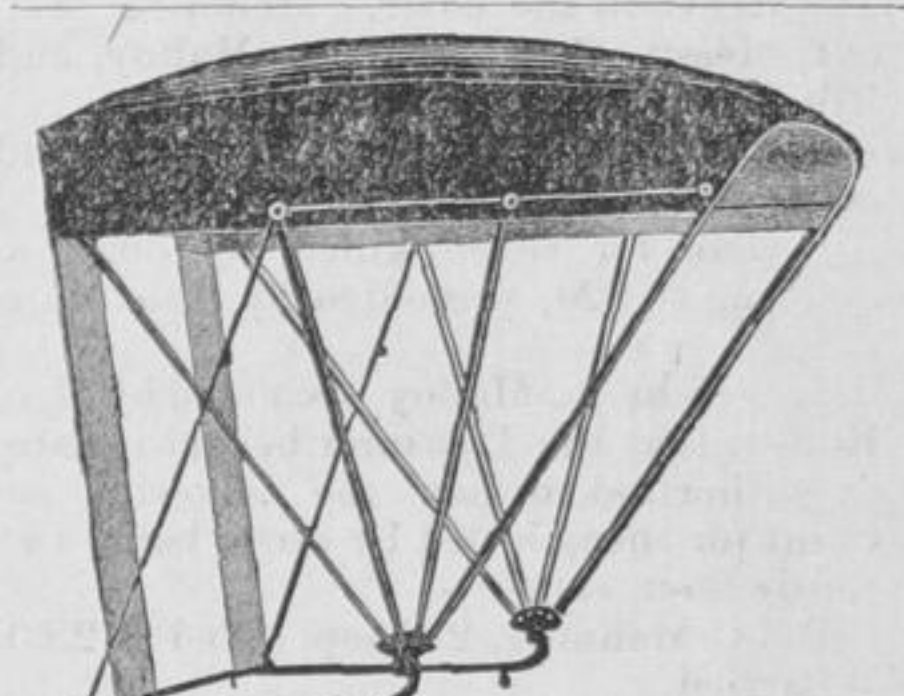
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