

# A SAFE DEPOSIT.

BY THE REV. EDWARD EVERETT HALE, D.D.

## CHAPTER I.

Anthony Blake left the office of Rumrill & Co. a good deal disappointed. He was himself a shrewd and intelligent fellow. He had secured the patents on his new invention and was ready to proceed with the manufacture. He had carried the papers, the drawings, his model machine to Rumrill & Co., and they had them in consideration. They now offered him \$800 for the whole thing, if he would turn it all over to them. He had proposed one and another scheme by which he should go into business as a partner with them. These had been referred by the managing partner to the Mr. Jorkins behind the scene, who was an imaginary person created for the purpose of saying no when the managing partner was ashamed to. Practically all these schemes had been refused, and Anthony was now to take the \$800 or nothing.

This was not his first experience in such business. He knew by this time that if a person who brings things before the public, be they inventions, be they books or be they ideas, generally expect to be well paid for doing so, and he knew that the system of co-operation, which people are hoping for and praying for, was, by no means yet established. With some bitterness of feeling, it must be confessed, though he was a good natured fellow enough, he walked down the street of Tamworth considering whether he would take the \$800 and be done with it, or whether he would go to Pittsburg and see if there were better chances there.

Anthony Blake did not believe in debt, and he knew how to live on a very little money, but for all that he had very little money in store, and he certainly did not have the \$10,000 which would be necessary for him if he were to equip a little machine shop of his own and make his own automatic car compier. But as it happened, he was a person well esteemed in the whole community of Tamworth, as he deserved to be.

I should like to know, however, how much of this esteem he owed to one queer circumstance. While he had to start in life with absolutely no property, it happened that he did hold, as trustee, for his mother, some bonds, which he considered worthless, in the second issue of the Cattanagus and Opelonus Railroad. These bonds had long since been taken off all lists known to brokers, and it was long since any coupons had been paid. Still the Cattanagus and Opelonus existed, and there were sanguine people, among whom his mother was one, who supposed that at some time payment would be resumed. Anthony, being her trustee, had to keep these bonds somewhere, and he had been notified by legal advisers that he must keep them in one of the security vaults which are now established in all the considerable cities. He had hired a modest safe at the Amicable of Tamworth, and at the Amicable you have the facilities of a charming reading room, where are all the new magazines, where you can wash your hands if you need, you can make an appointment with a friend, you can write a note on the Amicable's paper. These facilities are thrown open to you because you have hired, perhaps for only \$10 a year, a safe in that bank. Anthony had found that here was by far the best club room in Tamworth. In that city they have what is known as the "Strangers Rest" well developed; you can go in and pay ten cents an hour for all the comforts of a club room, and then go out again. But Anthony found that, in the long run, \$10 a year was cheaper for him than the Strangers Rest at ten cents an hour, and what I should like to know is whether his standing in that community had not materially risen since the old dons and widows and railroad trustees and other such persons who had their safes there found that he was one of the habitués of the reading room of the Amicable.

He suspected himself that it gave him these advantages, and he was careful not to presume on them. He took care not to sit there writing letters in times when a business man would be at his counting room; he only looked in there at the hours when the most prominent of the dons were there; he took care not to appear to be at the only loafing place which he had. In proportion as he was cautious in these regards the dons began to respect him as one of themselves; that is to say, as a person who did not have to work very hard for his money, and who had in the chamber adjacent, the secret by which a quarterly revenue comes to the initiated, without much cracking of their finger nails or grating of their hands.

On this particular morning Anthony was obliged to break his rule. It was just the hour when he should not ordinarily have gone to the Amicable. It was seldom indeed that he had any occasion to look at his mother's bonds in his safe, for they were, as worthless one month as they were another. But to preserve the respectabilities of the place it had been his habit to have his safe opened for him once a quarter—about the 1st of May, August, and the corresponding quarters—which he observed to be "coupon quarters" for some very distinguished dons. He would retire into one of the little cells provided for the occasion, open his box and then carry it back that it might be deposited in his safe again. The last time that he had done this, Anthony had placed two fifty dollar bills in his little box, to guard himself from spending them. He knew that he should have enough money for his current expenses besides, and he had not cared to make a permanent investment of this sum. But if he were to go to Pittsburg he must have these two fifties in his pocket, and he walked down to the Amicable, gave the number of his safe, and his box was given to him.

## CHAPTER II.

It is possible that there are one or two of the humbler readers of this little story who are not acquainted with the careful machinery of a security safe company, and as the story hinges on that machinery, it may be well to explain it. You see you are to have the double combination patent, absolute security that is given to the largest corporation in the world—the Bank of England—and at the same time you, who are as poor as Anthony Blake was, are to have your own little separate cell, in which your own property is kept, and nobody else in the world may interfere with it. All this is arranged by a very ingenious system of policemen, attentive clerks, doorkeepers, gilt pickets of iron, iron floors below and above, so that fire cannot burn your securities, nor water drown them, nor thieves break in, nor rust corrupt them.

The most honorable and virtuous warders are selected by the most ingenious and highly approved competitive examinations. You present yourself at the gate, and you are personally known to the warder, who speaks to you cordially and opens the gate to you, as he would not do if you were one of those unknown loafers who have no safe in the security vault.

You pass through this prison gate joyfully, for you know it is no prison to you; you tell him that the day is fine, or that it is rainy, as it may happen, and pass on till you come to another gate and another warder. You tell him that it is fine, or that it is rainy, as before. He also calls you by name, and says that you are looking well, and you enter a second passage. This passage is provided with little catacombs or columbaria, precisely like those under or near the city of Rome, except that these are much smaller and that these catacombs have no doors, but in these security vaults each catacomb has a little iron door, and these doors are numbered.

You remember, by mnemonic processes known to yourself, what is the number of yours; the number of Anthony's was 427. You meet in this passage a smiling, gentle, friendly fellow who also calls you by name, expresses his hope that you are well, and tells you what the weather is. You also tell him these are not passwords, but they are the civilities of the occasion. You then mention to him, in a whisper, if you please, the number of your box. He affects to remember, does remember, perhaps, and with his key adjusts the lock of your catacomb. But, please to observe, he cannot open the catacomb because he has not your key. Your key has been given to you long since when you hired your catacomb. You then open the catacomb with your key, which key in the not do till he has first turned his key in the lock. In the catacomb you find a long, narrow tin box, unless you should be a very great don. In that case you have a large tin box, and you have a large tin box. But Anthony was a very little don, as the reader knows, and he had therefore a box not large enough for any coupon bond, but not large enough to contain many.

He drew out his box, thanked the courteous attendant, passed warder No. 2 again, who asked him if all was right, and then in the passage between Nos. 1 and 2 selected a little room like that in which you eat cysters in restaurants of some cities, when it is supposed that you are ashamed to eat oysters and wish to have a separate cell assigned for the purpose. You go into this cell, which you find lighted. There is a little table for you, with a pen and ink, and blotting paper and a pair of large scissors. These scissors are there that you may cut off the coupons from your bonds.

Observe with admiration that both the requirements, which have been referred to are fulfilled. You are here as lonely as Robinson Crusoe was before Friday came. All your wealth is in your hands; you can do with it what you choose. A minute before this wealth was in a safe which nobody excepting you could open, and a minute hence it will be in that safe again.

On this occasion Anthony Blake found some difficulty in opening his box. His key seemed to be out of order; but, being an ingenious person, it happened that he had a little skeleton key with him, and with this he threw open the lock of the box. He saw in a moment that it was not his box. The securities in it were those of the C. K. and W. C. B. and Q. B. C. and D. and "gilt securities, many of them, there edged" in the market of the moment. There were one or two United States bonds, and, in short, if a good fairy had touched his mother's bonds and changed them into bonds of the very best (he could not have done better for him than had been done here.

Anthony Blake was amazed and dazed. He lifted the bonds one after another to see by what process of evolution the Cattanagus and Opelonus had been thus changed, and with a vague feeling that he should find and with a vague feeling that he should find his two fifty dollar notes at the bottom, there was a little parcel of five or six manure, script notes tied up with a white ribbon. Anthony had no disposition to get at other people's secrets, but he did want to know how these things came into his box, and he looked at their addresses, as he could do without opening them. Three were to Evelyn Haddam. Three were to Fergus MacIntire. Anthony had never heard of either of these people. The letters were numbered, and the date of each was written on the envelope. Anthony observed that the last two were written on the same day, May 29. "It is a romance, I think," said he, and he thought so because of the ribbon. But clearly the most curious thing in the romance was that the letters were in his box.

## CHAPTER III.

If young Blake had gone at once to the head centre of the wonderful combination of warders, guardians, clerks and assistants who made up the hierarchy of the Amicable, this story would never have been written, and the reader would at this moment be seeking other occupation than that he has in hand. Before a strolcher, "there must," says Mr. Anthony Trollope, "be a story to tell." All that follows on these pages spring from Mr. Blake's aversion to take the head centre into his confidence, or indeed, any other of the guardians in the hierarchy.

In the first place, he knew none of them personally, though, as has been seen, they all knew him professionally. That is to say, it was the professional business of each of them to know Anthony Blake by sight and to see that he always had the box in No. 427 when he wanted it and that he never had any other box than his own. But all of them had been imported from New York to carry on the Amicable, which was a new enterprise in Tamworth, so that he had not made their acquaintance other than officially. In the second place, as occurred to him now for the first time, he should have gone to the head centre before if he meant to go at all. He should have gone when his little key did not open the bond box. He should not have poked the lock of a box, which, as he now knew, was not his, with his little skeleton key. In the third place, he was not sure whether he should best advance the ends of justice by going to the head centre. He could say that his \$100 were not in his box. But here were securities of three or four hundred times as much worth; and, as he well knew, there was not any one outside an idiot asylum who would any Cattanagus and Opelonus bonds. It might be that the head centre and some of the others were engaged in a common fraud, of which he had in his hands a little clear. These considerations passed through his

mind and determined him, wisely or not, to make no complaint to the head centre till he had taken the advice of a lawyer friend.

Meanwhile his first business was to go to Pittsburg and get the \$100 which he needed for his journey. There was no money in the box, and of course Anthony could not have taken it if there had been, seeing it was not his. "Greenbacks," says an eminent legal authority, "are the currency of thieves." But even had Anthony been a thief he had no opportunity to steal.

There were the six letters tied up with the white ribbon. Anthony did look at the addresses, as had been said. But at the moment his only wish was that his despised Cattanagus and Opelonus bonds were in his hands. He remembered, as he often had remembered before, the pathetic grief of Robinson Crusoe, when the great current of the Orinoco was sweeping him to sea in his canoe. Then poor Robinson looked at his retreating island—a prison land which he had always called a prison and wished that he might return to it, because it was his home. So poor Anthony, who had always despised the Cattanagus and Opelonus, now wished that he had them in his hands. In point of fact, he put back the box into the cell from which he had taken it, and he went at once to his lawyer's cousin. But the lawyer's cousin was not in. Anthony did not like to tell this queer story to a stranger; he therefore borrowed a hundred dollars from the lawyer's cousin's clerk and went that night on the train to Pittsburg.

## CHAPTER IV.

This is not one of those stories which torment the reader by refusing to tell him all the writer knows.

Once for all, let the reader understand that the bonds and the letters which Anthony Blake found in his box belonged to a very nice girl whose name was Edith Lane. How it happened that they were all in this box shall now be briefly told.

It was some six months before Anthony Blake found them that Edith Lane's father called her into his own room. He then explained to her that she was so old that she must learn to take care of her own affairs. "I do not mean," said he, "to turn over to you now the whole of your mother's property, but I do mean to turn over to you so much that you shall not have to come running to me when you want to buy a shoestring and a paper of pins. I have placed in this envelope a number of bonds; I am going to show you how to cut off the coupons from these bonds. You will have to do this twice a year; you will then have to carry these coupons to the Waverley Bank, where I have opened an account for you. When you want money you will write a check on the Waverley Bank, and you will go for the money yourself, or send for it. You can do as you please about keeping an account of these things. If I were you I would keep a little cash book, but I shall ask no questions. If you come to me at any time for money I shall then ask questions. But it is a great deal better that you shall learn to take care of your own affairs before I die."

Poor Edith was distressed and pained to hear her father talk of dying. She said as much; and she said that she knew nothing about business, and she had a great deal rather go on as they were. But he was flat. He told her that her precise object was to teach her to draw a check and to keep a bank account, and to teach her something of her interest in the community, not to say her duties in the community. He had begun with thirty or forty thousand dollars of her fortune, which he had put into these bonds.

Edith was frightened, and said she did not know where she would keep the bonds, and she was afraid they might be stolen. "That," said her father, "is the second thing that you are to be taught. You will keep these bonds; I do not keep mine. I have brought these this morning from my own safe to give them to you. I have ordered safe to give them to you. I have ordered you down to what is known as the Amicable Safe Company. I am going to hire a little safe there in your name, and you will keep your bonds in that safe. When you want to cut off the coupons you will go down to the Amicable, you will have the safe opened and you will cut off what you need."

This frightened Edith more than ever. She almost cried, but in her distress she referred to an old joke of the family, borrowed from "Georgia Sketches." It is the story of a young man, whose father was urging him to marry, and said to him, "Where would you be if I had not married?" The young fellow replied, between his sobs, "Yes, dad, but you married mother and I shall have to be put out to a strange gal." Edith said she did not want to be put out to any Amicable Safe Company or any Waverley Bank. She wanted her father to take care of her money and to give her what she wanted to spend.

But he was perfectly firm: the carriage came to the door, and Edith had to go up to put on her hat and sacque and gloves to go down for her first lesson. What she was taught the reader already knows. She was taken through the gates, she was introduced to the attentive warder, and she had assigned to her one of the smallest safes, exactly such a safe as Anthony Blake had, and as it happened the number was next to his No. 428. The reader now has a partial notion of what mistake had occurred.

In point of fact, about a month before Anthony Blake had met his disappointment, it had been ordered by those minor powers who, under orders, overrule this world, that he and Edith Lane went nearly at the same time to the Amicable. Anthony had gone simply to show himself, that he might keep up the reputation which he had acquired as a don among dons. Edith had gone on her second visit, to cut off some coupons, which she had done successfully, and which she had carried to deposit at her bank. But it had so happened that when she brought back her little box, to place it in her safe, Anthony Blake was already in that corridor of the columbarium and was opening his safe to put his box away. The lock made some little obstacle, and he had laid his hands on the floor that he might have both hands in handling the key. Edith had to wait a moment for the operations to be finished, and, as it happened, she laid her box on the floor as she stood by him, being, in fact, the reader is curious, putting on her gloves at the same moment. Anthony touched his hat to her, stooped, picked up the box, and put it into his own safe, without any thought that he had made a transfer. He passed out the door, saluted the warders and was gone. Edith put the other box into her safe, and as the reader sees, the change was completed without a thought from either party.

It was not till Anthony Blake was well in Pittsburg, dealing with the various sons of Tubal Cain, who make that city one of the richest and loveliest in the world, that Edith one day ordered the carriage, drove down to the Amicable, took out what she supposed to be her box and found in it Anthony's Cattanagus and Opelonus bonds and his hundred dollars.

Of course Edith knew she had made a mistake, and she instantly supposed, as she usually did, that everything which was wrong was her own fault. This, then, was the first result of her father's training her to business—that she had lost all her own property and had stolen some other property of vastly more value. For the girl knew nothing of the worthlessness of the Cattanagus and Opelonus, and it was easy for her to see that whereas she had left in her box only thirty or forty thousand dollars worth of bonds, she had under her hands two hundred and fifty thousand dollars' worth of the second issue of that unfortunate road.

She did not do what Anthony did, however. She took the whole parcel, hundred dollars and all, and put it into her little satchel. She put back the box into her safe, and as quickly as she could escaped the eye of the warder, all of whom she thought looked on her with suspicion, as if she were a detected thief already, she rushed to her little coupe and bade William drive her directly home. Her only thought was to tell her father all that had happened, and to confess that she was a fool.

Of course this would have been the true thing for her to do; but there was, unfortunately, a delay. Her father was in Chicago for two days, and Satan had all that time to inspire her with other counsels. Now, although Satan might have done his worst before he could make Edith Lane do anything wrong, it was easily in his power to make her do something very foolish. For, as Henry Kingsley well says, "when the devil cannot achieve his purposes by sending a knave he does the same by a much easier process and sends a fool. For the more she brooded over the matter the more the poor girl persuaded herself that she had better not, at first, speak to her father. Besides the feeling that she was a fool and had made a horrible mistake there was a little side trouble which increased and increased as she thought of it till it at last became a giant Ahrim, destroying all her peace. It was the recollection that she had put in her box the six letters which had been entrusted to her by her cousin Evelyn.

Now this Cousin Evelyn had had a horrible love passage with Fergus MacIntire. I have no right to call it disgraceful, though I am very glad that none of my readers was ever so compromised. It was a very bad business, and Evelyn had been pulled out of it only with great tact and difficulty. All the compromising letters had been brought together and should have been burned up. Instead of burning them Evelyn Haddam, when she begged Edith had a safe of her own, had second visit to the safe Edith had put these letters with her bonds. The reader knows what had become of them.

Now this was the only secret which our poor Edith had ever had from her father. She did not want to have these letters brought to light by any investigation which should be made. The poor child, instantly she fancied herself before a police court as a thief; she fancied the discovery of her box opened by a judge and these letters of Evelyn's and Fergus' read aloud and printed in all the Sunday newspapers. She cried over it; she wrote a note to Evelyn which she destroyed; she wrote another note which she destroyed also, and finally said to herself that she had rather lose all her own property which was in the safe than have any revelation made as to what was in the box. If she could only be sure that whoever had the bonds would burn those hateful letters, it seemed to her that she should be perfectly happy.

In all this, of course Edith Lane was quite wrong; but as the reader will see, she was in a false position, which she had stumbled into really from no fault of her own. Poor Anthony Blake is the person who deserves the most consideration and sympathy from the reader. He was most hospitably received by old friends whom he had known at the Polytechnic Institute. He saw all the marvels of gas distribution, of glass making, of iron founding and by Mr. Westinghouse's kindness, he was taken through the wonderful machine works from which that exquisite apparatus is produced which preserves every year the lives of I dare not say how many thousand people in this world. He saw some of the Tubal Cains whom he had gone to see, he showed them the plans of his machine, which were cordially commended. He had one and another suggestion made to him as to the ways of putting it upon the market. But it was clear to him, as it had been in Tamworth, that the destruction of the poor, in their poverty and that he was, in no way, to get any decent return for the very exquisite contrivance which everybody admitted he had in hand, unless he himself could invest \$10,000 or \$15,000 in the complicated machinery which was necessary for producing it.

## Watch Screws.

It is asserted that the smallest screws in the world are those used in the production of watches. Thus the fourth jewel-wheel screw is the next thing to being invisible; and to the naked eye it looks like dust; with a glass, however, it is seen to be a small screw, with 260 threads to the inch, and with a very fine glass the threads may be seen quite clearly. These minute screws are 41000-h of an inch in diameter, and the heads are double; it is also estimated that an ordinary lady's thimble would hold 100,000 of these screws. No attempt is ever made to count them, the method pursued in determining the number being to place 100 of them on a very delicate balance, and the number of the whole amounts determined by the weight of these. After being cut, the screws are hardened and put in frames, heads up, this being done very rapidly by sense of touch instead of by sight, and the heads are then polished in an automatic machine, 10,000 at a time. The plate on which the polishing is performed is covered with oil and a grinding compound, and on this the machine moves them rapidly by reversion.

## What he Could Do.

Pat (in gaping wonder at the letters on a Hebrew butcher's sign): "Here, Mike, 'tis yourself has the foin 'earin'. Can you make that now?" Mike: "I cannot; but if I had me fate here I believe I cud play it."

## STEALING FROM JOGGERHAUT.

A Curious Yarn Told by an Indian Army Officer.

The tale which I am about to relate was told to me many years ago by a distinguished officer of the Madras army. For obvious reasons the names have been altered, but to this day by the camp fires of the great festival held every year it is told with bated breath the terrible tale of the jewels of Juggernaut and of the vengeance of the great god.

"Many years ago," said my friend, "I was quartered at Fuzurabad, an important military station about 150 miles from the Madras coast. There were a large number of troops there of all descriptions, and certainly for half the year the life we all led was gay and high enough.

"Unfortunately, at the time I was there gambling and betting were much in vogue, and many men plunged and came to grief over their debts of honor. Of all that gay company nobody was more popular and better liked by both men and women than young Fitzroy; but, unfortunately, he lost money at the races, tried to recover himself at the wheat table, but failed, got into the hands of the Mawares, and got deeper and deeper into the mire of debt. You could see by his careworn and troubled expression of face that the poor young fellow was in a real bad way. I was not surprised, then, when one day he came to me and said, 'Major, I'm done for, I'm utterly broke. I can't get any more money in the bazaars, and they'll run me in unless I can get away for a bit. I must get to England and see if I can raise the wind there, but goodness knows, said the young fellow bitterly, 'how I can dare ask my poor old governor, Major,' continued he, 'I must get away; it's simply killing me. You were a great friend of my father, and promised to help me. I wish I had stuck to your advice, but it's too late now. Will you come away with me? Give out that we have taken ten days' leave for some shooting, and see me down to the coast. If I go off alone I shall be stopped by those cursed Mawares.'

"After some hesitation I agreed. He sent in his application for leave to Europe on private affairs, and I gave out that I was going on a ten days' shooting expedition. A week later, with a couple of tongas, we had started on our long and weary journey to the coast, where my poor young friend hoped to pick up a steamer to take him to Europe. On the second day out we met crowds of people tramping along—men, women, and children—and the next day still greater crowds. In reply to our inquiries we were told that they were returning from the great festival of Juggernaut held at Puri, now only some three days' journey from where we were. The tonga wallah kept us interested with a graphic description of the festival and of the great god, which was especially remarkable for the wonderful jewels it possessed—two emerald eyes of inestimable value, its lips formed of the finest rubies in the world, and a necklace of priceless pearls.

The sun was sinking as we neared the town of Puri, and we could see the pinnacles of the temples rise above the trees which surrounded the place. Half a mile, the other side of the town stood the Travellers' Bungalow, where we intended putting up for the night. During the last twenty-four hours my young companion had kept silence, and was moody and almost sullen whenever I tried to rouse him. A more uncomfortable meal I never ate than the dinner which was served up to us that evening, and I was quite thankful when the poor lad said he was dead beat and would go off to bed. My own room was on the other side of the bungalow, and I took my pipe and sat smoking on the veranda. The moon was just rising, when I thought I saw the figure of a European standing along the wall of the compound. Strange, I thought, and wondered what other European could be here at the same time. An idea struck me, and I went across to my companion's room. There was nobody in it; the bed was undisturbed. I threw down my pipe and rushed out into the moonlight.

A few seconds later I was out in the road, and I had instinctively in the direction of the town. Running down the road, I soon came to a sandy lane, which went outside the village walls in the direction of the temples, their pinnacles standing out clear and distinct in the moonlight. In the distance I thought I saw the figure of my poor lad, but soon the turnings and twistings of the lane, with its thick cactus hedges on each side, shut him out from my view. In a few minutes I was close by the big temple compound. Running up to the wall I looked over, and this is what I saw: An enormous courtyard of paved stone, on which were lying a number of priests, their white garments wrapped around their heads and bodies. In the background was placed temple after temple, but in the centre stood one solitary shrine raised on three separate flights of steps, and inside I could see the great black god raised on three other smaller flights of colored marble steps. The moonbeams shone directly on the god and lit up the emerald eyes and ruby lips, while the pearl necklace glowed on his huge black bosom. Not a sound was to be heard except some distant tom-tomming. The festival was over and Puri had lapsed into solemn silence. To my unutterable horror I saw my companion walking right across the courtyard.

"Not a living creature moved, until a parish dog rose up from near the wall, gave one howl, and then slunk away and crouched down again. Still no one stirred. My tongue clove to the roof of my mouth. I dared not shout even if I could have raised my voice. A ghastly horror took hold of me as the idea struck me that in his madness my poor friend intended to save his honour in the greater dishonor of robbing the idol. Speechless I saw him mount step after step, and the next moment I saw him enter the sacred shrine and cross the threshold which no other foot but that of the Brahmin has ever passed. Nine steps led up to the god—one, two, three, four, five, six. He paused. I tried to shout, but no sound would come. He raised his hand as if to tear off his pearl necklace. It was still above his head. His foot then touched the seventh. Can I ever forget the sight? In the moonlight flashed out two arms covered with a hundred—nay, two hundred—daggers and clasped the darling youth to the black god's breast. At the same moment the sound of a gong broke the stillness of the night, and in one moment the priests had cast off their coverings and were rushing to the shrine. Two minutes later I saw the amazed and horrified priests carrying out the lifeless body of the dishonored Englishman, and I turned and fled."