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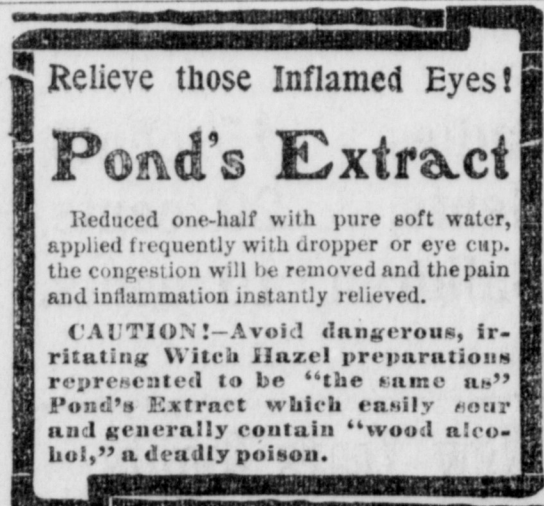
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## TOUCHED.

BY JAMES BARNES.

Mr. Charles Henry Lothrop was the youngest telegraph operator in the Union office at Troy. So far as he knew, he had not a living relative in the world. There was no one to object to the way in which he spent his pay, or to give advice upon how he should conduct himself in the eyes of the world. So he spent his money in carrying out his own particular ambition. His heart's desire was to be "stylish;" his hobby was "sport." He used to wear cheap shirts that astonished his fellow operators. They would exclaim "Whew!" and "Um-um!" when he took off his coat. Such shirts! Pink and blue and purple. He always wore rainbow neckties with a very imitation diamond pin thrust sideways through the corner. No one could excel him in the gaudiness of the ribbon that adorned his straw hat in the summer time, and no one could quite get the angle at which he used to wear his plum-colored derby in the winter. His silver watch had a fine gold-plated chain with a huge agate charm. Whenever he had a half-holiday he used to go to the trotting-track and walk around with a straw in his mouth. He knew half a dozen drivers and some stable men who allowed him to call them by their first names. He talked learnedly of records, sires and dams, and would make believe to take the time of the heats with an air of anxiety. If he had had anything to do with the financial part of the office his habits and habiliments might have excited his employers' suspicions. He had little part, however, with the crowd that shovelled their money over Schultz's bar on pay-day nights, and he was regarded as rather close, for what money he lavished he lavished on himself. They called him a "paper sport" behind his back. He had one vice that his companions had no part in, however—he was a systematic gambler on a very small scale. Every month he invested three dollars in Policy—never more, never less. He had a "Dream Book" and read it conscientiously. Two or three times he nearly caught a number. He knew three or four places where slips in the great unlicensed secret lottery were sold.

The doorkeeper at the Opera House was familiar with young Mr. Lothrop's face—he had seen him standing at the stage entrance many a time. But he had never known him to speak to any of the chorus girls. He liked to be there, that was all, to watch them come out. But the landlady from whom he rented his little hall bedroom could scarcely move about the eight-by-ten apartment without disarranging his gallery of photographs. Although he never indulged in athletics, pugilists shared the walls with the sirens of the footlights. He was quite an authority on fistiana.

Now, one day Mr. Lothrop struck it rich. His "gig" hit a divisional number in Policy—it was the "potato gig," 7-34 8. The man from whom he bought his slips in the back of the cigar store greeted him with a smile. "You caught it this time, young fellow," he said, and Mr. Lothrop flushed red and his breath went from him. But the man was right; he had caught it for once. Hurrying to his lodgings he counted out on the bed two hundred and sixty dollars in crumpled greenbacks.

He had long had his eye on a gray overcoat with a brown velvet collar. Visions of a silk hat and a "Prince Albert" coat made him shudder with delight. His ideas of good taste in dress had been gathered from the heroes in "society" plays.

The next night he adorned himself in his new ready-made apparel before the little looking-glass in his room, and then sat down to think.

It seemed almost a cruel waste to wear these things in Troy. True, he might go down to Albany and walk round on Sunday, as he had often done before (rather disturbed in his mind as to whether the smiles that he had caught were those of appreciation or amusement); but that would be tame employment for such effulgence. He searched in the top bureau drawer and under a tangle of gaudy neckties, drew forth the roll of bills and counted them. There were still one hundred and eighty-five dollars left. With a bound of his heart he remembered that the chief clerk had told him that he could take his week's vacation, beginning the following Monday, if he chose.

"New York!" The world flashed before him like a huge starred headline. There was it! He would have one fling in the properest, fastest way, if it cost him every penny in the world!

He had never been to the metropolis in the whole course of his life, but he had dreamed of it time and again. It had tempted him more than once, and now go he would.

Monday saw him at the station. He had forgotten to buy a travelling bag, so three extra-garish shirts and a few personal belongings he had tied up in a neat brown paper parcel. His caution, however, asserted itself when he bought a ticket; for he purchased it both ways and slipped a two-dollar bill into the envelope. The rest of the money he pinned inside his waistcoat pocket. That he

was determined to "blow," although he rather doubted in his heart of hearts his ability to get away with it. He placed the bundle beneath his seat and sat in the smoking-compartment, puffing away at a black cigar with a red and gold surcingle. There was no one else in the car with a silk hat on that he could see, and he felt quite distinguished. Two young chaps a seat or two ahead turned around and looked at him.

"The bride must be back in the other car," said one, and then both chuckled.

But Mr. Lothrop, unconscious of his wedding-day appearance, smoked serenely on. Twice he declined an invitation to join in a game of whist, and he moved his seat because a drunken man with a clay pipe insisted on brushing imaginary dust from his coat sleeve, and winking at the other passengers. He was trying to persuade himself that he was having a very good time. The presence of the brown paper parcel irritated him. He would get rid of that, and he would have his initials put on the bag, too.

It was two days before Christmas, but there was no snow on the ground. The sunshine was warm outside, and the blue, sweeping Hudson, upon which he looked out, was free from ice. He was rather glad it was warm weather, for the grey overcoat was a bit "springy," to tell the truth.

Suddenly the train roared through a deep rock cut. The engine at the same time began a series of sharp staccato whistles, and then, as the train emerged into the sunlight beyond, the brakes were put on with a quick, grinding jar. The train ran a few hundred yards and stopped. People opened windows and ran to the platforms. The fireman came trotting back and the conductor hailed him.

"What's up, Billy?"

"We hit him just as we left the cut; he was walking right down the middle."

"What's the matter?" asked one of the passengers.

"Killed a man," said the conductor laconically. "At least, I guess so."

The train was backing now up the track and the break man on the rear car could be seen running ahead with his little red flag. He did not look to the left or right, and disappeared in the cut. Mr. Lothrop, who was standing on the platform, felt sickish. The train ran along slowly and smoothly, and the river lapped in within a few feet of the embankment. Suddenly the breaks were applied again and the train stopped. Some people went farther up the track and, much against his first inclination, Mr. Lothrop descended from the platform to the ground. He could see nothing but the little crowd gathered along the side of the cars and the inquisitive heads thrust from the windows. He walked to the river-bank—only a pace or two—and there he paused and gasped.

On a little strip of sandy beach lay the body of a man, dead! He was big and young, and his face was unscarred. Animated by some impulse, Mr. Lothrop gave a shout and jumped down beside him, and then he gasped again with a peculiar little cry. Floating in the water beside the dead man was a child's Noah's Ark, the camels and leopards and rabbits dancing in the little waves that broke upon the beach. An empty cornucopia extended from the breast-pocket of the man's coat. But the crowd had now gathered on the embankment overhead.

"Come, bear a hand here, some of you," cried the conductor, who had jumped down and bent for a second over the body. "We've got to put him in the baggage-car. Help me; he won't hurt you! What are you afraid of?"

But no one moved.

"Here, young man, you give us a lift."

The conductor was addressing Mr. Lothrop. He felt his head swimming, but he would have obeyed had not, just at this moment, the fireman and one of the brakemen hurried up to help. The body was handed up the bank and placed on the floor of the baggage-car.

Lothrop stood on the shelving, sandy bank. To save his life he could not take his eyes off the crushed Noah's Ark, and the little bobbing wooden animals dancing in the water. For some reason he bent quickly and gathered them. A small and very naked doll with a china head he discovered also, and picked it up with the rest. Just as the train was moving he hurried up and placed the things he had found in the baggage car. No one seemed to see anything strange in his actions. The baggage-man pointed at the broken toys and shook his head sadly. Somebody said something about "Christmas" and the train started. It was too late for Lothrop to run forward and regain his seat in the smoking car, so he swung on to the platform and the baggage-man let him enter.

"Who do you suppose the poor fellow is?" asked one of the train hands.

"I don't know," responded the other.

"Phillips said he'd put it off at the next station; he probably belongs there."

"He's a dago, I think," interrupted the baggage man.

Mr. Lothrop did not join in the conversation. A sensation he had never felt before was welling up within him. He had forgotten about himself. The suggestion of the Christmas season, and the poor little Christmas gifts, had caused thoughts that were

new and paralyzing. His sentiments and imagination had been aroused. His pity was so great that it was as overpowering as the first awakening of a passion. He could think of nothing else but the fact that somewhere somebody was waiting for the man that had been, whose earthly part lay covered with the bit of rough sack on the floor of the car.

The train slowed up at the next station. There was a hurried consultation between the station-master and the conductor, and the body was lifted out and placed on a baggage-truck. When the train started Mr. Lothrop stood on the platform. Why he had stayed he could not have explained. He had not been able yet to get the idea of the waiting ones out of his mind—those people who lived somewhere and did not know. It seemed to him as if something were directing him to stay and try to help. He did not combat this feeling, he did not reason about it; he simply stayed.

The Coroner convened his little court in the baggage-room. A crowd of curious loungers had come to the station and the jury was picked from among them. Mr. Lothrop stood in the corner of the room. He had not looked at the dead man since he had first seen him. The toys were not brought in evidence. There seemed to be nothing but idle curiosity among the onlookers; the verdict was prosaic. Nobody knew the man.

"Unknown man, killed on railway track," pronounced the Coroner.

But why was he unknown? Surely somebody was waiting. Somebody must know him. Somebody would miss him. Somebody would never be told what had become of him. Lothrop spoke to the station-master:

"Aren't they going to find out who he is?"

"Don't think they'll take much trouble," said the station-master. "They may, but then things happen every day."

"Aren't they going to try to find out who it is?"

"My opinion," returned the station-master, "he's one of the Guineas workin' over to the aqueduct."

"Where's that?" inquired Mr. Lothrop.

"About five miles across the hills." Then the station-master's face lit up with an expression of understanding. "I know what you are now," he said, smiling; "you're a reporter. Goin' to make a story of this, hey? You should have been here last week. There was a fellow killed up by the quarry who had lots of papers on him proving that he was an anarchist."

"Could I get a rig to drive over to the aqueduct?" asked Mr. Lothrop.

"Why, certainly; Kelly'll take you over. Here he comes now—that fellow driving the white horse and the carryall."

The foreman at the works listened to Mr. Lothrop's story. He was an Irishman.

"Sure, I couldn't tell whether he's one of our men, or not," he said. "But there's a lot of them living with their families up in shanties near the woods. I'll have Tony go over with you. He speaks English. Where is the body?"

"I got an undertaker over in the town to look out for it," responded Mr. Lothrop. "I just wanted to—" he paused and then continued: "the man's folks to know what became of him."

Kelly, the driver of the carryall, once more made the trip over the hill. Tony, a little wizened Italian, descended with Mr. Lothrop in front of the undertaker's establishment. One glance at the dead man's face and he turned quickly.

"I know him; he gooda man; wifa an' fora children," and then, strange to say, Tony did what no one else had done so far—he began to cry. It was what Mr. Lothrop had felt like doing for the last four hours—but he hadn't. He turned to the undertaker:

"Now, you understand," he said; "a bang-up funeral."

"Certainly, sir," he responded.

Mr. Lothrop counted out twenty-five dollar bills. Then he turned to Tony: "For the wife and children," he said. He put a small roll in the Italian's horny hand. Then he walked to the station. A train bound up the line was coming in. Mr. Lothrop boarded it and settled himself in a seat. As he passed the spot where the morning's accident had taken place he closed his eyes.

The next day he was at his desk again with his instrument ticking before him.

"I thought you were going to New York, Hen," said one of his fellow-operators, "and was going to have a big blow-out."

Lothrop did not reply.

Another operator spoke to the first one in a low voice. "I'll bet I know how it was," he said; "he found it costing too much to see the town."

"Naw," responded the first, "I'll bet somebody touched him on the train for his pile before he got there."

"Maybe you're right," said the other operator. "I always said if he was worked right he'd be easy game."

But Mr. Lothrop's face told nothing, although it had a new expression on it that his fellows could not understand.

"He's taking life serious," said the first speaker.

And that was just it. — Saturday Evening Post.

## White Watery Pimples.

Five years ago my body broke out in white watery pimples, which grew so bad that the suffering was almost unbearable.

I took doctors' medicine and various remedies for two years but they were of little benefit, whenever I got warmed up or sweat the pimples would come out again.

A neighbor advised Burdock Blood Bitters, and I am glad I followed his advice, for four bottles completely cured me.

That was three years ago and there has never been a spot or pimple on me since.

James Lashouse,  
Brehm P.O., Ont.

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(QUEEN STREET STATION).

6.00 A MIXED—Week days—for McAdam, Jct. St. Stephen, St. Andrew, Fredericton, Saint John, Bangor, Portland and Boston. Pullman Parlor car McAdam Jct. to Boston. Palace Sleeper McAdam Jct. to Halifax.

9.05 A MIXED—Week days—for Aroostook Jct. and intermediate points.

11.32 A EXPRESS—Week days—for Presque Isle, Edmundston, and all points North.

3.35 P MIXED—Week days—for Fredericton, etc., via Gibson Branch.

4.35 P EXPRESS—Week days—for Saint John, Fredericton, St. Andrew, on Monday, Wednesday and Friday; Fredericton, St. John and East; Vancoeur, Sherbrooke, Montreal, and all points West, Northwest, and on Pacific Coast; Bangor, Portland, Boston, etc. Palace Sleeper McAdam Jct. to Montreal. Palace Sleeper McAdam Jct. to Boston. Intercolonial Sleeper McAdam Jct. to Halifax.

5.15 P MIXED—Week days—for Bath and intermediate points.

8.30 P MIXED—Week days—from Woodstock Jct. to Debec Junction and Houlton.

ARRIVALS.

10.25 A. M.—MIXED—Week days, from Bath.

11.32 A. M.—EXPRESS—Week days, from Saint John, St. Stephen, St. Andrew, Boston, Montreal, etc.

12.15 P. M.—MIXED—Week days, from Fredericton, etc., via Gibson Branch.

4.35 P. M.—EXPRESS—Week days, from Presque Isle, Caribou, Edmundston, etc.

5.50 P. M.—MIXED—Week days, from Houlton.

6.00 P. M.—MIXED—Week days, from Aroostook Jct.

10.15 P. M.—MIXED—Week days, from Fredericton, St. John and East, St. Stephen, St. Andrew, Monday, Wednesday and Friday; Boston, etc.

A. J. HEATH, D. P. A., St. John.