

THE NEW YEAR.

Let us walk softly, friend;  
For strange paths lie before us, all untrod;  
The new year, spotless from the hand of God,  
Is thine and mine, O friend!

Let us walk straightly, friend;  
Forget the crooked paths behind us now,  
Press on with steadier purpose on our brow,  
To better deeds, O friend!

Let us walk gladly, friend;  
Perchance some greater good than we have known  
Is waiting for us, or some fair hope flown  
Shall yet return, O friend!

Let us walk humbly, friend;  
Slight not the heartease blooming round our feet;  
The laurel blossoms are not half so sweet,  
Or lightly gathered, friend.

Let us walk kindly, friend;  
We cannot tell how long this life shall last,  
How soon these precious years be overpast;  
Let love walk with us, friend.

Let us walk quickly, friend;  
Work with our might while lasts our little day,  
And help some halting comrade on the way;  
And may God guide us, friend!

—Exchange.

The K. and L.  
Express Robbery

BY W. BERT FOSTER.

One of the most peculiar cases that ever came under my notice, said Captain Spink, was the K. and L. express robbery, which occurred when I was a member of the old steamboat squad. My work consisted mostly in investigating river piracies and keeping a sharp eye upon that small but exceedingly active fraternity of smugglers who operate in New York harbor.

The K. and L. Express company had an office on Long wharf, at the foot of Jones street and doing a foreign business only, as they did, their storage rooms were on the wharf too.

The storage shed was a two story building of brick. The office which adjoined it, was at the extreme end of the wharf. It was built of wood and corrugated iron.

Craft were passing the end of the wharf all night long. There was a ferry slip near by. Every vessel at the dock had its keeper, and the property of the company was watched by an old and trusted watchman. Besides, the gates of the wharf were locked at 7 o'clock in the evening, and if a lighter had left the place it would have been spied by one of the police patrol boats which ply up and down the river all night long.

Yet that shanty was broken into, and out of it was removed a safe weighing a couple of tons and containing money packets and valuables to an amount that made the entire downtown police department wake up with a decided shock.

The K. and L. people were wild, and well they might be. The chief took hold of the matter himself, and I was one of the men selected to go down to the scene of the robbery with him. And I tell you frankly I was sorry to be put on the job, for as soon as I heard the circumstances surrounding this break it looked to me like a blank wall that would be mighty hard either to climb over or dig through.

The first report we got was that the two story office had been blown half to pieces by the force of the charge of dynamite which the robbers had used to try to force the safe. And yet nobody along the water front had heard the explosion!

That was bad enough for a beginning. And when we got to the wharf we learned that, despite the wreck of the building, the burglars had evidently been unable to force the safe and had finally carried it away with them.

The corner of the structure was torn away, and as soon as the chief learned that the safe in question had stood right there where the floor was gaping and the walls blown out he declared it to be his belief that the force of the charge used to open the safe had blown the iron box clean through the wall and that it was at the bottom of the river. He was so sure of this that he sent over to the Navigation company's offices for a diver to go down and poke about in the mud near the dock.

It was between 7 and 8 o'clock in the morning when we had first been informed of the mystery, so the job was not many hours old. The company's watchman was already in custody and was scared blue. It seemed that he had been sitting up daytimes with his sick child for the better part of the week, and he had just keeled over on this night and slept like a log in the storage building, was sleeping, in fact, when the longshoreman came to work. He swore the robbery could not have been committed before midnight. He had made his regular rounds until after that.

Then I made the discovery by talking to the first clerk who had arrived on the scene that the door of the office building had been locked the same as usual, nor had there been a window unfastened. Therefore, added to the rest of the mystery, was the question How had the robbers entered the office and mounted to the second floor, where the safe was kept? But the chief was as confident that the safe really had not been stolen, only blown through the wall and had fallen into the water, that he would do nothing until he heard the report of the diver.

But I looked over the wreck again. The

force which had carried the safe away must have been irresistible. Chairs were smashed; one desk was a mass of wreckage. I picked up in a corner what I supposed to be a piece of picture frame, for one side of the stick was heavily gilded.

"Where's the rest of the picture?" I asked the head clerk, and I showed him the bit of gilded wood.

"Why, there wasn't a picture on the wall," he declared. "I don't know where that came from."

Now, that was a little thing, but it was too odd to be overlooked. I set my mind to work upon that broken piece of wood.

As it was not a picture frame and there had been nothing in the office that was gilded, I could not understand how it got there. As I stood in the wrecked room and looked through the ragged hole in the wall which gave me a clear view of the river my eyes rested upon a big vessel being towed into her dock.

It was a clear day, and the sun flashed from her brass work and trimmings and glittered upon her massive figurehead. And the light sent an illuminating ray into the fog of my mind.

The diver had arrived with a truck load of paraphernalia, but I took a trip along the docks, going aboard each vessel in the neighborhood and interviewing as many of the watchmen or sailors who had been in the vicinity during the night as I could find.

I learned several things. First, there had been a heavy fog during the evening and for at least two hours after midnight. Then the wind changed and the sun had risen clearly.

It was quite true that nobody seemed to have heard such an explosion as must have occurred when the safe of the K. and L. company was blown through the office wall. But one watchman on a cattle ship two slips from the express dock had heard a noise between 2 and 3 o'clock which he had not attributed to the mystery of the lost safe, however.

"There was no explosion, officer," he told me. "That'll be willin' to swear to."

"What did it sound like?" I asked. "Sure, 'twas more like a heap o' lumber fallin' down. I thought 'twas in the lumber yard on the next block."

"Was anything going on out in the river at the time?"

"Sure, iv'rything was quiet. I'd gone below to light me pipe at the cook's lantern when the noise came to me."

I telephoned the ship news office down on the Battery, and soon I had jotted down the list of the vessels that had gone to sea since 6 o'clock the previous evening. Among them was the Rotterdam of the Bremen and New York line, and, although she should have sailed earlier, I learned by calling up the office of the company that, owing to the fog, she had not started for the Narrows in charge of the tug Charles B. Goodwin until after midnight.

By this time it was midforenoon, and the early editions of the afternoon papers were being cried on the street with elaborate accounts of the robbery of the K. and L. safe. One enterprising sheet had even "faked" a picture of the diver going over the edge of the dock into the river to hunt for the lost safe.

Nevertheless I believed that that bit of gilded wood I carried around with me was the clew to the true explanation, so I called up the towing company that owned the Charles B. Goodwin and discovered where the tug would be likely to land upon her return from her trip outside with the Rotterdam. I was on the wharf when the tug came in.

I went aboard and saw the captain. "Mister," I said "I've come to hear about it. Have you got the safe?"

"What safe?" asked he, looking wise.

"The one your tow happened to carry away from the K. and L. dock this morning," I said.

Then he laughed and showed me the safe and several bits of broken office furniture, which he had covered with a tarpaulin up forward. And his story was interesting as I supposed it would be.

When the fog showed promise of lifting and the wind changed the tug had pulled the big steamship clear of her dock and started down stream. But they kept inshore, and just off the K. and L. Express company's dock a ferryboat ran out and got in the way of the Goodwin.

"We had to slack our engines," said the captain of the tug, "and of course the tow-line dropped. The tide swung the bow of Rotterdam plumb into the end of the dock."

"By hokey, you should have seen it! Her bowsprit punched a hole in one of the express company's buildings like a spear into a fat hog. We steamed ahead quick, and that yanked the ship's bow out before it did more damage. But the corner of the shanty came with it, and I reckon a good deal of what was in the office clattered down on the old Rotterdam's for'ard deck. The Bremen and New York line will have to pay a nice little sum for damages, I suppose. But it warn't our fault."

"When we got down the harbor the captain of the Rotterdam told me that along with the other wreckage which had fallen on his



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—MRS. FRANK BEYER, 22 S. Second St., Meriden, Conn. — \$5000 forfeit if original of above letter proving genuineness cannot be produced.

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deck was the safe yonder, and I took it aboard before I left her outside.

"Thought they'd been burglarized, did they? Well, I reckon it was about as queer a case of piracy as ever happened along this river front."

And he certainly was right. A queerer thing never happened under my notice, nor did I ever evolve a theory from a more unpromising clew than from that bit of gilded wood which, as I suspected, had been broken off the figurehead of the outgoing vessel.

Hard-Times Victims.

The tale goes that once upon a time a traveller passing from Cairo to Alexandria in Egypt met the shrouded figure of Cholera going in the contrary direction.

"Oho, Cholera," said he, "where are you going?" "To Cairo," was the reply, "where I am going to slay 10,000 people."

The traveller felt saddened at such terrible tidings, but went on his way.

A year later he retraced his path and again met Cholera.

"Alas, Cholera," was his greeting, "I hear that a hundred thousand people have died in Cairo; yet you told me you were only going to kill ten thousand."

"Sir," returned Cholera, "I have kept my word; I slew only ten thousand—fear did the rest."

Moral.—Hard Times is a ruthless destroyer, yet the fear of coming depression is a very potent factor in bringing the Hard Times here.

The Governor's Dilemma.

Governor Van Sant of Minnesota arrived one day in New York and went to an hotel. Shortly after a former resident of that State called and was shown up to his room. He found the Governor sitting in a chair surveying with a gloomy countenance a trunk which stood against the wall.

"What's the matter, Governor?" asked the caller.

"I want to get a suit of clothes out of that trunk," was the answer.

"Well, what's the difficulty—lost the key?"

"No, I have the key all right," said the Governor, heaving a sigh. "I'll tell you how it is. My wife packed that trunk. She expected to come with me, but was prevented at the last moment. To my certain knowledge she put in enough to fill three trunks the way a man would pack them. If I open it the things will boil up all over the room and I could never get half of them back. Now, what I'm wondering about is whether it would be cheaper to go out and buy a new suit of clothes or two additional trunks."

Piles

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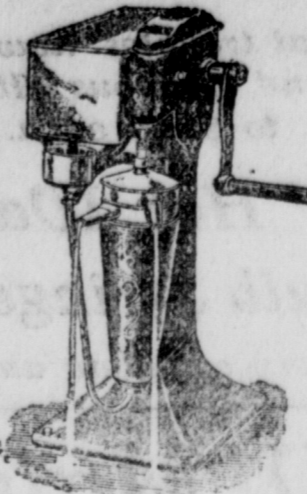
Dr. Chase's Ointment

Didn't Like the Form.

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Caller: "Well, no, not in that way."

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