

## ONE OF LIFE'S QUEER STORIES

It was Huntington who first made Falby known to us. He came in one day, with the old man in tow, and dined with him. He was, it appeared, an old-time friend of Falby's. He had known him in youth. He had known Falby in the latter's days of prosperity.

Falby was a type of man that is only too familiar in New York. He was the degenerate, the man of ruined fortunes. He looked almost pitiable as he walked along, screwing up his prematurely wrinkled face whenever he wished to concentrate his mind upon any topic. Troubles of the past had unlined his mind slightly, and he wandered at times when he spoke. His hands trembled, he shuffled in walking and his shoulders stooped.

Some of the younger men used to joke fun at Falby. He took it good-naturedly. He seemed not even aware that he was somewhat ridiculous. He was quite harmless.

He had one peculiarity, and that was his admiration for beautiful buildings. "You may speak of your stocks and bonds," he used to say. "Of your bank accounts, your investments. But give me a large and handsome building, a block of business houses. There is property for you. There is a fortune, safe, secure."

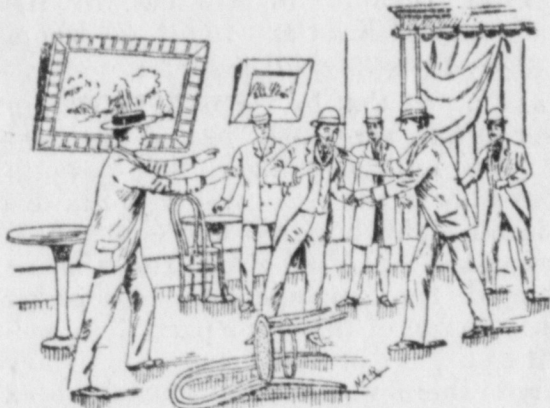
Whenever some notable example of architecture was in the course of construction on lower Broadway or the adjoining streets Falby was sure to haunt the vicinity. Day after day then you could see him patrolling the neighborhood, shabby and reflective, prying out all that he could glean concerning the building and its owners.

Some one once happened to mention in his hearing that Deerford was the possessor of a certain block of warehouses fronting on North River. Ever after that he took a vivid interest in Deerford. He seemed to have the man's footsteps. "There's a lucky man," he used to say. "There's a man to be envied. A prosperous man; a man of fortune."

After a time he began to wink and twist his head whenever he followed Deerford. He intimated that he knew more concerning Deerford's property than Deerford did himself. None of us, however, paid much attention to his hints and insinuations. Falby was tolerated on account of his amusing peculiarities.

One memorable day Deerford received the shock of his life. I shall never forget that day, nor the peculiarly dramatic scene that disclosed it to us. A number of us had congregated in Wheeler's. It was a day of congratulations for Deerford, for it had just become known that he was engaged to the daughter of a wealthy manufacturer. He was in his cellars, he had just emptied his glass and had turned toward us with a smile.

"This is one of the happiest days of my life," he cried. "There's not a single thing to cloud my horizon. There's not a care weighing upon me. I have no business worries. They are all being



"BURNED TO THE GROUND!" HE CRIED, taken care of by my father's old partner, By George, I am a lucky dog. I have health and means. I am surrounded by my friends. I'm going to marry the dearest girl on earth. To-morrow there shall be—"

At this moment the door burst open and a disheveled figure entered the place. It was old Falby. But it was not old Falby as we were used to him, low-voiced, humming and screwing up his wrinkled face into ludicrous expressions. He was a changed being. He seemed almost maniacal. His dim, blue eyes were rolling with frenzied excitement. His hat had fallen off, and his gray hair was tossed wildly about his head. He waved his trembling arms frantically.

"What's the matter, Falby?" cried a dozen voices.

With a stuttering tongue the old man shouted some unintelligible words.

"What is it?" we cried, as we seized upon him and tried to plant him in one of the chairs to calm himself. But he refused to be calmed. He tore himself away from our hands and ran forward until he stood before Deerford.

He lifted his lean fingers. "You are ruined, ruined!" he almost shrieked. "Flames and smoke!" shouted Falby. "Fire has ruined you, destroyed you. Everything is lost. Every wall is burned to the ground."

"What?" cried Deerford, with sudden attentiveness. There seemed at last some meaning in the old man's words.

"Yes, burned to the ground," repeated Falby. "The whole of your property is lost. Your block of buildings on North River is a column of flame. Not a thing is saved, man. I saw it with my own eyes."

"What? What?" stammered Deerford. He rose from his chair; his hand went to his head. I shall never forget the look of sudden terror that grew upon his face. His disheveled eyes viewed Falby as an apparition. His trembling lips muttered unintelligible words. He started backward a few steps, and then fell as though stricken.

"Yes, yes," continued Falby excitedly. "The fire is surrounded by engines by this time, but they can do no good. The flames seem to have broken out in the northwest corner of the block. The warehouses were stored with all manner of inflammable material. The wind sent the flames shooting over the roofs in six directions and had reached the uttermost limits of the block."

"Where you present at the fire, Falby?"

"Yes, I tell you," cried the old man. "I live in the neighborhood, I heard the alarm. I have been dreading this affair for weeks. I told you I knew every thing concerning Deerford's property. I knew its unsafe condition. When I saw the column of smoke in the distance I knew that it was the smoke of his ruinous fortune."

"The flames roared. Two of the walls fell in as I stood watching. The blaze was brighter than the sun. I am off to see it again. I will see what can be saved," cried Mr. Falby suddenly, as he

made for the door of the cafe. Then he stopped for a moment to cast a pitying glance at the stricken man. "Poor fellow," he said in a tone of sorrow. "He is ruined, irretrievably lost."

"Why?" cried one. "Were the buildings not insured?"

Falby shook his head. The next moment he was gone. Three of the others followed him.

Those who remained behind sought to arouse Deerford. He lay there pale and almost lifeless. He breathed with difficulty. The sudden revulsion from his light-hearted happiness to the tragic despair was horrible to witness.

After a time he opened his eyes. He smiled faintly, but could scarcely speak. "It's all up with me, boys," he said. "I will never get over this blow. I am no man of business, pluck and enterprise. I can never retrieve the loss I have sustained."

At this moment Huntington came hastening into Wheeler's. His countenance plainly showed that he was distressed.

"Oh, my prophetic soul!" he groaned, as he caught sight of Deerford lying prostrate. "Tell me what has occurred."

The situation was hastily explained to him.

He sank into a seat and wiped the perspiration from his forehead. Then he arose and approached Deerford.

"My poor boy," he said, placing his hand on the other's shoulder. "This is all my fault. The blame rests upon my shoulders. I should have warned you."

Deerford looked dully into the other's face, as though he did not comprehend his words.

"Come, arouse yourself," continued Huntington reassuringly. "You are not ruined. You have no cause to be broken in spirit. It is all false. There has been no fire."

Cries of surprise arose on all sides. Deerford remained unmoved and incredulous.

"Falby," continued Huntington, "is a distant relative of mine. He was a different man before his misfortune came upon him. It would be wrong for me to desert him in his period of adversity, and so I have, in a manner, taken him under my care. That is the reason why I occasionally brought him here."

"Eight years ago, Falby was just such a prosperous man as you have seen him express his admiration for. All of his efforts were centered in the erection of an immense apartment house in the northern part of the city. It was called the Zenith. And it was, indeed, the zenith of his hopes and ambitions. He was not yet a capitalist, so that the construction of this great building hampered him considerably. He had overwhelmed himself in debt to complete it. According to the plans outlined, it was to be the finest building of its kind in New York."

"During its construction there was some difficulty about getting it insured. Unfortunately one night a fire broke out, and the entire unfinished structure was consumed. In the morning, Falby was found wandering about the smoldering ashes, shouting and crying. He was ruined, penniless. All of his years of labor were made useless by this one night's work. He had grown insane from his overwhelming grief. For some years he was kept in an asylum, and then eventually he was discharged as cured."

"But he can never be wholly cured. He remains a monomaniac upon the subject of his own misfortune. The only thing in life to which he takes an interest is the ownership of property. He has an insatiable thirst for knowledge on that subject. Whenever he meets a man who is in those prosperous circumstances in which he once found himself he acquaints himself with his whole affairs. He ferrets out the condition of his finances, of his buildings, and his entire circumstances. Whenever his insane mind has come upon him, he strikes his blow as he has struck this one. Then he gloats over his victim, undergoing the acute suffering that he experienced himself."

"I am always in fear that he may some time set fire to some buildings; but he has never attempted that. He has, however, played this game upon me and other men to my knowledge. One of them, a wealthy tradesman on the east side, he so frightened by his announcement that his buildings had been burned, that he had an attack of heart disease from which he has not yet recovered."

"But Falby will never come around to face you again."

Huntington had scarcely finished his story when those men who had supposed the illustration returned indignantly, with the announcement that the buildings were intact, and that the whole story was a lie.

The Water of Lake Geneva.

Geneva water we know to be soft, and to possess mineral salts in a proportion entitling it to every hygienic use. As to the quantity of gas dissolved in it, we find from analyses made at Geneva and Olney that on the surface, at a temperature of 5 degrees C., it is equal to, oxygen, 7.3 cubic centimetres; the litre; nitrogen, 13.6 cubic centimetres; and carbonic acid, 0.6 cubic centimetre. Generally speaking, the water of the lake of Geneva may be described as good, the surface water being, however, inferior to that of the depths. Analyses further made at Geneva show that the organic matter dissolved in the water of the lake contains but one-fourth of the limit admitted by hygiene, that limit being fixed at 50 milligrammes the litre. As to microbes in the same water, Drs. Foil and Dumont in 1884 determined their number to be 96 microbes to the cubic centimetre. The spring water at Batolettes, near Geneva, numbers 50 microbes to the cubic centimetre; the Arve 115 to the cubic centimetre; the best spring at Zurich 115, the worst 2,750, microbes to the cubic centimetre.—Lancet.

The Australian Aborigines.

The New South Wales Government spends an average of about £45,000 a year for the comfort of the blacks, but, nevertheless they are rapidly disappearing. The census returns of the aboriginal population of the colony showed that during the twelve months ended October 15, last, there was a decrease of 280 in the number of full-bloods, and an increase of 94. The total now stands at 7,255, as against 7,346 in 1892. In Victoria, where the total number of aborigines was 732, the sum voted by Parliament on behalf of the aborigines for the current year was £5,600, or £7 13s. per head, against an actual expenditure of £15,258 14s. 1d., or £21 2s. per head, in New South Wales last year. On the last day of the year 1,614 aborigines were being supplied by the board.—London Exchange.

## MAKING CHARTREUSE.

THERE IS A PROFOUND SECRET ABOUT ITS MANUFACTURE.

Only the Carthusian Monks of France Know It, and the Proceeds of Its Sale Are Given to Charity—Three Kinds, Yellow, Green and White.

Chartreuse, or La Grande Chartreuse, as it is called to distinguish it from other establishments of the Carthusian order of monks, is situated in a cup-like valley 4,298 feet above sea level, and a group of chalky mountains near Grenoble, in France.

It was founded in 1084, but the first convent was not built till fifty years later, and most of the present edifice is but little over two hundred years in age. The retreat of the monks is extremely difficult of access, and few visitors care to climb up to their eyrie. For centuries the holy fathers were undisturbed, but the revolution was no respecter of persons or proprietary rights. In 1793 the domain of Chartreuse was declared confiscate to the State, and the monks were sent into exile. France, however, allowed them to return in 1816 to the monastery and to have the use of their buildings and right of pasturage on payment of a nominal rent, but the splendid forests, chiefly the results of the careful selection and cultivation of their predecessors, were not restored to the present monks.

At their laboratories, hear which they also have a sawmill, some forges and a fine dairy farm, the monks manufacture various pharmaceutical preparations that have a large sale in France, though but little known in this country—for instance, an elixir vitae and a mineral saline called Boule d'Acier, besides, of course, a vast quantity of the rich, resinous cordial which bears their honored name.

The monks are famous far and near for their active benevolence. The sales of their cordials go to the establishment of churches, schools and hospitals in the neighboring villages, so that any one who drinks a taste of Chartreuse may justly feel that he is helping indirectly in a constant work of philanthropy and human brotherhood. Their elixir is considered a valuable antidote to fevers, and during the passage of the Asiatic cholera over France it was extremely valuable in checking the ravages of that dread disease.

The chemical composition of all the things made by these monks has been kept a profound secret, but it is known that into the manufacture of their delicate liqueurs, cordials, absinthium and the young buds of the pine tree enter largely. The nearest railway station to the monastery is Voiron, a pretty little town of 16,000 inhabitants, on the Lyons and Grenoble line. Here the monks have their commercial and shipping establishment. Their elixir famous for its stomach-soothing virtues—a few drops in many cases will cure sea-sickness instantly—and their Boule d'Acier, which contains iron in a soluble form joined with certain herbs, they have made for centuries, but their famous cordial is an invention of this age, and has only been on the market about twenty years. There are several grades of it, differing in color and strength, but only two have found favor in this country.

The yellow, which is the most luscious is naturally the most popular, and this is the kind which the monks most affect for their own use. Indeed, it is their daily beverage, generally diluted with twice as much pure water, and to its hygienic properties they attribute the wonderfully youthful complexions which they possess, men of seventy looking not more than fifty, and feeling they say, much younger.

Green Chartreuse, which is drier in flavor, more aromatic, and chemically stronger, is drunk in New York to a considerable degree, but only about an eighth as much as the yellow. The white is almost unknown here.

The proper place for the green is before meals, as an appetizer. A thimbleful or pony, as it is frequently called, will succeed where a cocktail fails, giving a gentle desire for food and the ability to digest it easily. No one who has tried this will be likely to return to the insidious and perfidious cocktail. The yellow is used either pure, as a liqueur, after meals, or diluted with effervescing or ordinary water at any time.

It is a great mistake to drink more than two small glasses in succession. Those who drink bottles of Chartreuse as they drink milk make asses of themselves, for, though it would take a load of Chartreuse to produce intoxication, the exceeding sweetness cloy the stomach and clogs the digestion, which in moderation it markedly helps.

As with many excellent things that gain success, the preparations of the Carthusian monks—the cordial especially—have meted the aversion of principled traders, and the market at one time was drugged with vile imitations. In 1875 the attention of the order was called to this impious villainy—impious in more ways than one, because in addition to the benevolent institutions maintained by the brethren, a large portion of the income of the Pope is derived from Carthusian contributions.

So, through his attorney, Rowland Cox, Marcel Marie Grouzet, Procureur of the Convent of the Grande Chartreuse, brought suit in the Circuit Court of the Southern District of New York and obtained a perpetual injunction against the frauds who had been using the Chartreuse trade mark. The imitations made here and abroad are probably still somewhat current, and they were so slightly done that only in the lower part of the label, where the registered mark of the United States Patent Office should be, could they be detected from the original.

Things Worth Thinking of.

A rack of fresh linen in a damp cellar absorbs moisture and prevents malarious fevers.

Stand a wet umbrella on the handle to drain, otherwise the water collecting at the center will rot the silk.

Half a teaspoonful of sugar scattered over dying fire is better than kerosene, and has no element of danger.

Ivory knife handles that have grown yellow with age or care as use may be whitened by rubbing with sandpaper.

A large rug of new crash placed under the sewing machine will catch threads, clippings and cuttings and save a deal of sweeping and dusting.

Kid gloves may be cleaned when slightly soiled, with a small piece of oil-silk wound tightly about the finger, and rubbed vigorously over the surface of the glove.—Good Housekeeper.

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