

THE MAN AND THE BAG.

When I was a youngster I was a foolish harumscarum fellow, always getting into scrapes; and one of them led to the loss of my situation. I had been a clerk in a cotton-broker's office in Liverpool, and as I could not find another berth, I sank lower and lower till I got to my last half-crown. One winter's day I went over to Birkenhead in quest of work, and having failed to get any, I was returning to Liverpool a little before nightfall, hungry and miserable.

You know those big ferry-boats that ply between Liverpool and Woodside, with the glass houses on deck? Well, I was sitting in one of them during the crossing, when I noticed a slim young man, in a brown overcoat that looked too big for him, sitting near me.

Beside him on the seat was a black shiny bag, such as lawyers carry papers in. He seemed rather nervous, and noticed that he threw distrustful, apprehensive glances at a big, bushy-whiskered, red-faced man who was standing just outside the doorway and looking at the little man beside me from time to time.

As the boat moved off, the man in the brown overcoat sidled along a little nearer to me, and after a good look at my face—reassured, I suppose, by what he saw there—he said, with a half-smile—

"I beg your pardon, sir, but would you be willing to do me a favor?"

"That depends," said I, also smiling.

"Only, if you wouldn't mind going home with me."

"What are you afraid of?"

"To tell the truth, I am."

I laughed, rather impudently, I confess; but the little man was not offended.

"Afraid of that red-faced man out there?" He nodded.

"It's this way," said he. "I am a clerk in Paignton, Hughes, Paignton's, solicitors, in Castle Street. You may have heard of them."

I said I thought I knew the name of the firm.

"I have been attending a settlement over in Birkenhead—a settlement of a very difficult business, that we have had on hand for some months.

"That big man over there, Barlow, is our client's opponent. After a long correspondence, we got him to promise to sign the deeds we wanted him to sign, and a meeting was fixed for this afternoon.

"It's been an awful job! Barlow raved, and swore he would be revenged on some of us; and at one time I really thought he was going to murder our client. I was as nearly as possible rushing out and crying for the police.

"However, he gave in, and signed the deeds; but it had been known then what he knew five minutes later, he never would have done it.

"The papers were safe in my bag by that time, or I am certain he would have snatched them up and buried them. It would be—ah!—I daresay a thousand pounds in his pocket, if he could get hold of them now.

"You see, he has followed me down to the boat, and I don't know what he may do to me when get ashore.

"Why not take a cab?" said I.

"I have to take the deeds to Mr. Paignton's house, in Somerville Square. It is a good long way, and really I am afraid to go alone."

"It's the distance between the landing stage and the streets I am thinking of."

"Why not apply to the police?"

"They would only laugh at me. The man has done nothing I can charge him with."

"Oh all right," said I, contemptuously.

"I'll see you into a cab."

"Look here," he said, a moment later.

"You are a strong fellow, and have no call to be afraid of any man. What would you say to take the bag with the deeds to Mr. Paignton's yourself? I'll pay your cab fare and give you five shillings for yourself—it will come out of the office's petty cash for expenses. What do you say?"

"I have no objection," said I—for the five shillings would treble my capital; and besides, I thought I would walk, and save the cab fare.

By this time we were nearing the Liverpool side of the river.

"By the way," said my new acquaintance, "there are one or two papers in the bag which I shall want in the office to-morrow morning; I had better take them out. There's some money, too."

"Take that out as well," said I, sharply. But I thought none the worse of the young man for being careful of his employers' money in dealing with a stranger.

"All right," he said; "I'll be back in a moment."

So saying he disappeared into a lower cabin, and in a minute or two came back.

"Pass along the gangway first," he said; "take no notice of me, but grasp the handle of my bag when I put it into your hand, and don't you let it go till you give it to Mr. Paignton himself. Remember the address—59, Somerville Square."

"Trust me," I said.

He squeezed my hand, leaving three half-crowns in my palm; and I passed out of the glass deck-house, opposite the gangway.

As I was putting my foot on the gangway to go ashore, I felt the stiff handle of a brief bag pushed against my hand, without looking around I grasped it, and pushed my way through the crowd to the landing-stage.

When I reached it, I glanced back and saw the bushy-whiskered, truculent-looking fellow, with an expression of angry ill-humor on his face, close behind me, exchanging a word or two with a friend.

Big as he was, I felt that I was a match for him, so I walked on without heeding him, past the dock gates, across the dock railway, and up Water street, Lord street, and Church street.

Now that I had reached a quieter part of the town, I thought a sudden assault from behind might possibly be made, so I displayed more caution; and it was not long before I found out that I was followed by the very man who had been pointed out to me by the lawyer's clerk.

I quickened my pace. The man behind did the same; he did not offer to molest me until I had my hand on the door-bell of the lawyer's house. Then, it seemed to me, he screwed his courage to the sticking point, and springing forward, he gripped the handle of the bag with one hand and seized my arm with the other.

I let out from my shoulder, but he drew

back with wonderful agility, considering his size, and made another grab at me. In five seconds more the combat was at its height, but it did not last long. A policeman turned up as if by magic, and my antagonist had the audacity to give me in charge!

I wanted to deliver the bag to Paignton, but that they would not allow. We were taken to the nearest police-station, and there, in tones as dignified as I could command, I charged my late assailant with attempted highway robbery.

My words were followed by a perfect roar of laughter, in which the bushy-whiskered man himself, who was trying to staunch a bleeding nose with his pocket-handkerchief, heartily joined.

"The young cock fights well, don't he?" said one of the constables.

And, to my amazement, I was there and there charged with being an accessory to a burglary that had been committed on the previous night at Monkswood Hall. A large country house on the Cheshire side. The bag I carried was opened. It was found to be packed full of jewel cases all empty!

It was now my turn to laugh; and the woe-begone expression on the face of the big detective—as I now knew him to be—was enough to make a camel smile.

He rushed out of the room, crying out, "He can't have gone far off! Bell must have followed him!" and I was led below and put into a cell.

I was not seriously alarmed, for my character was good enough, and I could prove that I had been seeking work that very day; but I was anxious to avoid, if possible, an appearance at the police-court; and more than once during the evening I inquired whether there was any news of my friend in the brown overcoat.

There was no news of him. The hotels and lodging houses had been searched, and telegrams had been dispatched along all the lines of railway leaving Liverpool, but in vain. The man had got clear away; and it was evident that the police regarded my capture as a very poor equivalent for the disappearance of the jewels.

Suddenly a thought occurred to me.

I rapped at the door of my cell till a policeman came to tell me to be quiet.

"Tell me!" I cried, "what your man, Bell, wears. Is it a rough, brown tweed suit and a deer-stalker cap?" That was the dress worn by the man whom I had seen speaking to a friend on the landing-stage.

"I see you know him well enough," said the man, with a laugh.

"Was he on the look-out at the landing-stage this afternoon?" I asked.

"He didn't see anything of your pal, if he was."

"Oh, he didn't?—I say, policeman. I'll give you a sovereign when I get out if you will send off a telegram for me."

He laughed in my face.

"Why, the offices are all shut up long ago. Besides, it's against the rules."

"That's why I said I would give you a sovereign," said I. "You must have communication with all the large towns all night long; and your inspector will pass my telegram if he sees it. Get me a bit of paper, quick, man."

I got the bit of paper and in five minutes I had scribbled off a long "wire" to the Oxford police, telling them to search the four twenty-five from Birkenhead for a young man in a light-brown overcoat, with a pale face rather pimply, sandy mustache, shifty eyes, white hands.

You see, it was plain to me that the reason Bell had not "spotted" his man was that the rogue had stayed quietly on board the ferry-boat and, having started his pursuer on a false scent, doubled back. The chances were, I considered, that he would try to make his way to London by a round-about Great Western route, as the official on the direct lines would be certainly warned.

So I telegraphed to Oxford, fervently hoping that he would not take it into his head to leave the train at any town between Oxford and Chester.

The telegram was sent off; and some time in the middle of the night word came that my friend had been arrested at Oxford. The pockets of his brown overcoat were regular little diamond mines. He had simply emptied the jewel cases into his pockets when he was in the lower cabin, shoved the empty cases into the bag, and passed it on to me, in the hope that the detective would follow the man who, he thought, held the "swag."

The burglar's assistant—that was the little man's calling—grinned in my face when we met in the police-court. But he was good enough to admit that I was a perfect stranger to him—he did not then know who had caused his arrest—and I was discharged.

There was a reward of two hundred pounds offered for the recovery of the jewels, and the greater part of it came to me. I stood a champagne supper to my bushy-whiskered friend, and he fell to talking about the "force," as they call it, and advising me to join it.

So I applied, and on the strength of my sharpness in causing the arrest of the Monkswood Hall burglar, was admitted. Since that I have risen by degrees, till now I am a fairly well satisfied man.

Those Awful Gothamites.

"There is a freedom of manner and action among ocean steamship acquaintances which almost takes the breath away from a person who has never made a long journey on one of the big palace passenger boats," said a Philadelphiaian just back from a delightful Mediterranean trip. "Let me relate a little incident. I was sitting in the saloon cabin one morning. There were several others in the handsome apartment, among them the president of a well known local insurance company, and a right good looking young society woman from New York. The insurance man was about forty-five or fifty years old, hale and hearty. He was sitting on a long couch, a short distance from the young lady. They had met for the first time on the trip. We were all given an amusing surprise by the gentleman referred to loudly exclaiming: 'How I would like to kiss a pretty girl!' 'Oh, do kiss me!' was the prompt rejoinder of the New York girl. And he did it, in such a thorough way that we all saw and heard it. Then he went on to the most matter-of-fact style to say: 'Now I would like to have a good hug!' And at the same time the young lady coyly nestled up to him, and he hugged her in a manner that was evidently entirely satisfactory to both. Everybody laughed heartily; but that seemed the strangest part to me, there was not a word of comment about the strange occurrence."

DRY DOCKED ON AN ICEBERG.

The Mountain of Ice Rolled Over and Landed a Schooner High and Dry.

Strange stories of thrilling encounters with icebergs have been brought back from the Arctic by skippers from time to time, but they must all take a back seat now and bow low to Capt. Chester of the schooner Elwood. There have been tales of shipwrecked crews floating away with the tide on mountain lumps of ice; of polar bears and, in fact, of whole menageries being frozen in the centres of great ice floes, and of the sinking of the staunch craft afloat through coming in contact with the razor-like rams which form the jagged edges of icebergs. Being gored and tossed into the air by a berg as if by a maddened bull is a new tale, on the truth of which Capt. Chester says he is willing to risk his chances of reaching heaven.

The Elwood has just returned from her first halibut fishing cruise in the northern waters. She left New York on Jan. 24 in ballast but in order to pick up an honest dollar on the voyage put into Departure Bay and took on a cargo of coal for Juneau, Alaska. After discharging at the latter place, she headed for the Muir glacier, the purpose being to load with ice with which to preserve the fish to be caught later on. The vessel was passing through the icy straits, and was just off Hoonia, Capt. Chester says. It is fully ten times the size of a schooner, and appeared to be fast to a reef, which was known to exist at that place. The captain considered this a lucky find, for he could not get all the ice he wanted without having to go to the glacier, fully a day's sailing distant. The Elwood was headed for the berg, and when the vessel was within a few yards of it the anchor dropped. The schooner was then permitted to swing around until she came alongside the iceberg, to which she was made fast with lines.

The tide was at the full at the time and to all appearances the vessel was perfectly safe. A gangplank was thrown over to a ledge in the ice and the men set to work to break off huge chunks of the berg and hoist them aboard the vessel. All went well until long toward evening. About thirty tons had been deposited in the hold, and Chester encouraged his men to work a little faster, as he desired to get the entire load and leave as soon as possible. Meanwhile the tide had been falling, which caused the iceberg to settle heavily upon the reef beneath and then to gradually tip over toward the side opposite the vessel. The gangplank connecting the schooner with the iceberg began to rise in the air and had to be made fast to a ledge in order to keep it horizontal.

The iceberg continued to careen, and Capt. Chester began to suspect that all was not going to be well for him. He ordered his men to get aboard and was about to set sail when, with a grinding roar, the iceberg rolled off the reef and started to revolve. Immediately there arose on the starboard side of the vessel and beneath it a jagged spur of ice which, until then, had formed the bottom of the iceberg. With a crash the ice struck the keel. The next instant the astonished crew found themselves and their vessel lifted out of the water and resting in a sort of groove or cradle at the south end of the ice mountain. It was a panic-inspiring predicament, to say the least, and all hands began to pray for their lives.

The weight of the vessel arrested the revolution of the berg, but did not have the effect of turning it back again to its original position. The reef prevented that. Chester ordered his men into the boats, with instructions to get out of harm's way as fast as they could. Before abandoning the vessel the mate cut the lines which held her to the iceberg. The men then pulled away to a safe distance and anxiously awaited the fate of the Elwood. As if anchored held fast, and the schooner, as if realizing her plight and desiring to escape, tugged at the chain. The tide dropped a few more inches, the iceberg careened still further, and the Elwood rose still higher into the air. Although at first thought this seemed to render her condition even more desperate, it really proved the schooner's salvation. The tendency of the iceberg to roll and raise the vessel brought such an enormous strain to bear upon the anchor chain that something had to give way. Something did, and to the joy of the fishermen it was not the anchor or the chain. The iceberg lurched and the schooner was seen to slide several feet along the crevice it rested in. There was another lurch and another slide. Then the vessel reached a downward grade and the next instant shot off the iceberg and into the sea bows on, like a rocket. She shipped a heavy sea as the result of plunging her nose beneath the surface, but quickly righted, and, after stumbling over her anchor chain and tugging viciously to get away, settled down to her original state of tranquillity, to all appearance unharmed.

"So I have been to sea a great many years, and have had some queer experiences, but this one beats them all hollow," declared Capt. Chester this week. "I thought the vessel was doomed, and never looked for such a happy termination of our troubles. When the schooner started to slide there was no stopping her, and she bounded off like a thing of life. She looked just as if she were gliding down the ways of a shipyard on her launching day. I never saw anything prettier. The iceberg turned half over after Elwood left it, and the spur which had hoisted us into the air rose until it became the apex of the big frozen chunk.

"During the afternoon, while we were loading on ice, this spur was submerged, and we had no idea that we had anchored directly over it. You can rest assured that no happier mortals ever climbed aboard ship than were we when we pulled over to the Elwood. We hovered around the straits that night and when we took on the remainder of our ice cargo we took care not to approach too near the iceberg. We carried the chunks over in our small boats, keeping the schooner at a respectful distance."

Capt. Wyman, the owner of the Elwood, accompanied the vessel on her recent voyage and corroborates Capt. Chester's nar-

WASPS AS PETS.

A young woman residing near Monroe, La., has a pair of pet wasps, which are as interesting as they are antique in their way. She has trained them to perform a great many wonderful tricks, and it is indeed marvellous to what degree of intelligence and agility her kindly care and patient perseverance have brought them. As the young lady is an invalid, she manages to get a great deal of profitable diversion from her queer little pets.

Among other things, she has taught them to drink water from a thimble and to perform the skirt dance, as she calls it, by fluttering their wings as they rest in the palm of her hand. They will sing at her bidding, making a faint, almost inaudible "cheep," and seem to be passionately fond of music. The young lady is quite a musician, and when she plays a piano the wasps take up their positions on the music rack and never budge until the performance is over.

The wasps would seem to have quite a good deal of vanity, and nothing delights them more than to be allowed to walk about and inspect themselves in the little hand mirror which is kept for their exclusive use. Strange to say, the wasps have never been known to attempt to sting anybody, although they have free access to all parts of the house, and are seldom confined, even at night.

She Doesn't Like Flowers.

The Empress of Austria dislikes to sit in a room where there are flowers. When she last visited England, some few years back, the manageress of her hotel thoughtfully decorated her apartments with the choicest blooms and plants obtainable. When, however, the royal steward came upon the scene, he was horrified. "Pray take these things away at once, madam," said he, "and do not let the Empress see a single petal. She cannot endure flowers!" So the entire staff of the establishment had to set work to remove the adornments before the royal lady arrived.

PRESIDENT CLEVELAND IN THE STORM.

How much exposure can a person endure and not take cold?

It depends on circumstances. No, it doesn't either; it depends on the person. Here is an illustration that will make you open your eyes and put on your thinking cap.

On Saturday, March 4th, 1893, Hon. Grover Cleveland was inaugurated President of the United States of America, at the City of Washington. The weather was bad as bad could be. Snow, sleet, rain, with a cold biting wind, were some of its elements. The streets of the city were deep with mud and slush. No more abominable or beastly weather can be imagined. Yet Mr. Cleveland exposed himself to it *bareheaded for two hours*; half an hour in delivering his inaugural address, and the remainder of the time standing without head covering of any kind, on and open platform reviewing an immense procession. People watched him in wonder and amazement. "He will catch his death," "He will need the doctor to-night," they said. *They saw his face and his bald crown turn blue in the wintry gale.* Rheumatism, pneumonia, and gout seemed to flap their black wings over him, like death angels.

Yet he braved it out, hat in hand, went to a ball that night, arose next morning fresh and chipper as a schoolboy, and never suffered at all—not even from a common touch of the "snuffles." What on earth possessed him? Good luck? Special providence? Not a bit. Still he was protected; as anybody else might be, but usually isn't.

We all remember the epidemic of influenza in the autumn and winter of 1891-92. How it did mow people down, like a scythe swishing through the tall grass! Yet it prostrated, or killed, only those who were its natural victims. Take a case, in January, 1892, Miss Mary Jones, of Towers Buildings, Llandrinio, near Oswestry, had an attack of influenza. After this she never got up her strength. She remained languid and feeble. Palpitation of the heart, pain in chest, sour risings in the throat, dry and discoloured skin, loss of appetite, and distress after eating, were among the symptoms of her complaints. She grew weaker and weaker until she could walk only with great effort. Medical treatment brought no relief. After months of apparently hopeless illness, Miss Jones was at last entirely cured by a medicine recommended by a friend in Manchester. She states these facts in a letter dated January 26th, 1893.

"For over ten years," says Mr. Thomas Alford, of 1, Bedwardine Cottages, Quest Hill, Malvern Link, "I was ill. I always felt tired and weary, and had no life or energy. My mouth tasted foul, I constantly spat up a thick phlegm. After eating I had intense pain and oppression in the chest and sides, and a gnawing sensation in the stomach. Nothing that was done relieved me, until I used a medicine of which I heard by accident. Having taken this for a few weeks all pain and discomfort left me, and I was like a new man newly created." Mr. Alford's letter is dated January 13th, 1893.

Now, one moment, please, while we quote the words of a leading English physician. He says: "Unless a person already has the poison of disease in him, damp and exposure no more lead to illness than do the stars in heaven."

"The English people," says an American author, "can do anything when once they set their jaw and try." Quite so; and they can understand this illuminating truth from one of their medical lights.

We see the point, don't we? We see what protected President Cleveland from harm during his five hours' exposure on that dreadful day. It was pure blood. His bodily organs were sound and healthy. There were in him no seeds of disease for the cold to develop into illness and death. He was a live man all the way through, and could defy the snow, sleet, and wind. What would you give for that sort of insurance on your own life? A million—would you had it? Yes.

Well, it won't cost you so much. The medicine that cured the writers of the letters above named will do the same for anybody—Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. It expels the poison formed by indigestion and dyspepsia, and lifts between you and danger the shield of pure blood, enabling you to stand unscathed when others are falling like brown leaves in the blast.

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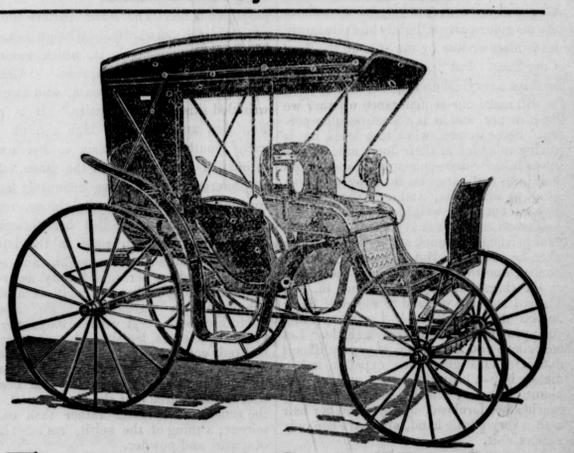
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