

NO COMMON BURGLAR.

"Minnie, you cannot mean that! You are not in earnest?"

"Indeed I am, Raymond. I cannot marry you while my poor father needs me so much. You know I promised my mother when she was dying that I would never leave him. And you know how helpless he is."

"But he might—" a pause. "He might live with us, you know, Minnie."

The girl, who was very pale, shook her head without lifting her eyes from her work.

"It would not answer, Raymond. We could not live in comfort, he and ourselves, without a second sitting-room. We should all three be wretched."

Minnie could not trust herself to speak. A big tear dropped from her cheek to the work in her hands, but her companion did not see it. For some minutes he too sat silent. There was no more to say, and yet he could not rise and go. He could not bring himself to acknowledge that there was no hope of his winning the girl he had loved for the last three years.

The two were sitting in the front parlour of a very shabby little house in Brixton. The folding-doors which divided the apartment from the yet smaller sitting-room at the back were open, and the lovers had spoken almost in a whisper, for they did not wish to be overheard, and there were two people in the back-room. These were Minnie's father, Leonard Milburn, and his friend Mr. Lupton. They were both bending over a table which nearly filled the small apartment, and which was covered with models of typewriting machines, pieces of mechanism, and drawings.

Apparently they were too intent upon the wheels and levers before them to attend to what was passing within a few feet of them in the front parlour. Mr. Milburn, a nervous, eager man with iron-gray hair, and eyes that shone like stars, was busily explaining a model on the table, his thin fingers moving here and there, while the other listened with a languid, half-suspicious air. From time to time Mr. Milburn rose to fetch a drawing or a piece of apparatus, talking all the time.

"It will be the greatest invention of the day," he said. "Think of it! You sit down to your type-writer, and you produce, with the same key-action, not one, but a score or a hundred perfectly inked impressions. It is literally printing by hand, without the cost of printing."

"Printing! My good sir, you forget—only one set of type—limited to a hundred copies, too. Why, as a toy it seems interesting and ingenious, certainly; but looked at from a practical, business point of view, I fear there's not much in it. I may be wrong, but that's my impression."

The inventor listened, and his face became white. He had great faith in Mr. Lupton's practical sagacity and knowledge of business. Alfred Lupton was a financial agent, company promoter, and general speculator. As compared with Milburn he was a wealthy man; but his capital largely consisted of shares in various concerns, good, bad, and indifferent.

Milburn had asked him to call and look at his new type-writer, which was to print a hundred copies at once, in the hope that if he thought well of it he would find the money to bring the invention to a practical test. The failure of the financier to appreciate the machine struck the inventor with dismay, but he went on trying to explain his ideas by the help of the drawings and models.

Raymond had been silent for a few minutes, when Minnie glanced up at him as he sat beside her in front of the fire. He was gazing fixedly at the cracked mirror over the fireplace. Minnie felt surprised and hurt that he should be so occupied at such a time, when she observed that her lover was not contemplating the reflection of his own face, but the figures of her father and his friend as mirrored in the glass.

Shortly after this Mr. Lupton took his leave, and Raymond approached Mr. Milburn, who was sitting dejectedly in a corner of the back sitting-room, and asked what progress his invention was making. More than once Milburn had button-holed the young man, and compelled him to listen to an account of his achievements, his difficulties, and his hopes. But tonight he was despondent and irritable.

"Progress? None at all, seems!" he answered. "Those capitalists demand what is impossible. But I will do it yet; I will introduce the improvements Mr. Lupton suggested. He was quite right. The machine is not exactly perfect. It ought to be perfect. It shall be perfect before I had done with it."

And with nervous, bustling hands he proceeded to stow away the drawings and specifications, and the incomplete model, in one of the drawers of the table.

"Are you going to take out a patent, father?" asked Minnie.

"No," answered her father roughly. When I take out a patent it shall be for a complete, a perfect machine, as I hope this will be in a few months' time."

Raymond seemed as if about to speak but he changed his mind and held his peace. Minnie felt relieved by her father's answer: for in truth she did not know where the money for the patent-office fees was to come from; yet she sighed to think that the prospect of her father's returning to useful and remunerative work seemed as distant as ever. He was still under the spell of his great invention.

About three o'clock that morning, Robin, Minnie's little terrier, barked loudly in the front garden, and then suddenly held his peace. An hour later, a policeman pulled the door-bell of the house occupied by Mr. Milburn, and informed him that he had been chasing, and had just missed catching, a burglar, whom he had seen coming stealthily from the back of the house.

On going over the lower rooms, however, it did not appear that anything had been stolen. The French window opening into the back parlour was ajar; but Minnie acknowledged that she sometimes forgot to fasten it.

The policeman picked up a glove, which Mr. Milburn recognised as being one of a pair which Mr. Lupton had worn the night before; but that, of course, might have been accidentally dropped. It seemed certain that the burglar—supposing that there had been one—had been scared away by the policeman; and Mr. Milburn and his daughter went back to bed.

It was not till late in the day that Milburn discovered that the table drawer in which he had locked up his half-finished

model, with his drawings and papers, had been forced open, and was now empty!

The unhappy inventor was half-mad with grief and indignation. In his race he rushed off to the police, and accused Mr. Lupton of having robbed him; but as he had no better evidence to offer than the lost glove, the police declined to arrest that gentleman. They confined themselves to making careful entries in big, ledger-like volumes.

That same evening Mr. Lupton's office-boy called with a note from his master, asking Mr. Milburn to be good enough to hand to the bearer a glove which he thought he must have left behind on the preceding evening. Their demand staggered Mr. Milburn's belief in his friend's guilt, although it was just the sort of thing which a clever rogue might be supposed likely to do.

The next three days were spent by Mr. Milburn in an effort, which only half succeeded, to reconstruct the stolen model. On the evening of the fourth day, as he and Minnie were sitting at supper, a ring came to the door, and the postman delivered a bulky parcel, which to Minnie's bitter disappointment and her father's delight, was found to contain the whole of the stolen drawings and papers, together with the model.

Mr. Milburn did not trouble himself in trying to solve the mystery of their disappearance. He had recovered his treasures that was enough for him; and he set to work with renewed ardour to perfect the machine that had already cost him so many hours of labour.

III.

Six months went by, and the machine was still unfinished. The improvements which the inventor was aiming at, and which his friend had told him were an essential condition of success, seemed impracticable.

One morning Mr. Milburn was sitting at breakfast, hurrying over his meal that he might get to his workshop, and glancing meanwhile over a newspaper. Suddenly he gave a cry put his hand to his side, and fell back motionless in his chair as if he had received his death blow. Minnie sprang to him with a scream of terror; but it was not as she had feared. Her father had only fainted.

When he was restored to consciousness, his first thought was the newspaper. It was no dream—no mistake. There was a long advertisement about the formation of a company which was to bring out a type-writer that would produce a hundred copies at once—his own idea—the scheme he had brooded over for five years, and all but perfected.

The poor man's despair was dreadful to witness; but his grief changed to indignation when he discovered that his friend Alfred Lupton was the promoter of the company. He could not doubt that Lupton had entered the house in the night, and possessed himself of the drawings and model, for the purpose of stealing his ideas and afterwards taking out a patent for them in his own name. The rascality was evident; but proof of the burglary was impossible; and Mr. Milburn knew very well that the law does not recognize any right of property in ideas till they are patented.

The inventor was crushed and hopeless. He was pacing up and down his bedroom that evening, a prey to the bitterest thoughts that ever tormented the mind of living man, when he was told that Mr. Raymond Vine and another gentleman had called, and wished to see him. With some persuasion from Minnie he went down to them; and what they told him astonished him considerably.

"It was I, my dear sir," said Raymond, who stole your drawings. While I was sitting in the front parlour the evening that rascal Lupton was here, I saw in the mirror that he was secretly making notes in his pocket-book when you were not observing him; and I once caught a look on his face which told me that he meant to play you false.

"After he had gone you told us that he had persuaded you to add certain improvements, and that meantime you would not take out a patent. That decided me to act, for I knew I could never persuade you that your friend was a traitor. I put your drawings and model into the hands of a patent-agent, and obtained what they call 'provisional protection' for your invention the very day after I committed the burglary. The patents which Lupton is trying to sell to the new company are simply copies of yours; and this gentleman tells me they are absolutely worthless."

"Yes," added the lawyer, "I only want your signature, Mr. Milburn, to some papers I have here; and I think I can promise you that Mr. Lupton and his company will trouble you no more. If I am not mistaken, you will be a rich man in a very few years."

This prophecy was amply fulfilled. A new company was formed, with Raymond Vine as managing director, under other auspices than those of Mr. Alfred Lupton. It proved a great success. Minnie has no reason to complain that the house she lives in is not large enough to be a home for her father, as well as for her husband, her children, and her own small self.

Dancing of Pet Wasps.

A young lady living near Monroe, La., has a pair of pet wasps that she has trained to do various tricks requiring remarkable intelligence. Among other things she has taught them to drink water from a thimble 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 a musician and when she plays on the piano the wasps take up their positions on the music rack and never budge till the performance is over.

The wasps seem to have a good deal of vanity and nothing delights them more than to be allowed to walk about and inspect themselves on a little hand mirror, which is kept for their exclusive use. Strange to relate, 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.

Sit Up Straight on Your Bicycle.

There is absolutely no reason for stooping over the handles in either of the two ways so commonly seen—and there is no excuse for so doing—in ordinary road riding. It may be necessary for the "scorching," when engaged in "scorching" to assume the one or the other of these attitudes to sprawl with the body straight but almost

horizontal, and the head close to the handle bar, or to bend the upper part of the back as if trying to break it in the middle, and throw the shoulders forward as if desiring to make them meet across his breast. Even so—one who is not "scorching" does not need to make himself a hideous object to look at, and also to reduce the benefits of wheeling to a minimum, so far as its effect on the chest capacity is concerned.—Scribner.

WENT TO FIGHT A DUEL.

Extraordinary Conditions Under Which Two Men Met Each Other.

On the Island of Jamaica there was once a meeting between a Scotch captain and a noted creole duellist, named Henri d'Egville. The captain had gone ashore and was dining at a hotel in Kingston, where, as not infrequently happened the company indulged rather more freely in drinks than was wise in those quarrelsome days. All went well until Captain Stewart was requested by d'Egville to sing a song in Gaelic. Now, although a Scotchman, Stewart claimed that he knew no Gaelic, but the creole being persistent rather than give offense the captain sang "Auld Lang Syne," and supposed that the compromise was satisfactory. The company broke up and Captain Stewart returned to the ship accompanied by a friend. On their way back the friend mentioned d'Egville's reputation as a bully and expressed his opinion that he deliberately sought a quarrel for the purpose of engaging the captain in a duel. Captain Stewart then said:

"There is no more horrible practice of our time. Once and only once have I fought a duel. That was when I was a young man, and for the sake of a lady for whose hand my dearest friend and I were suitors. I killed him. Since I saw him lying dead at my feet I have never known a happy day. I thought to-night that fate had overtaken me and I should be challenged to give up my life for an offense more trivial than that for which I took the life of my friend."

Arrived at the ship the captain stood leaning against the bulwarks watching the lights fade out as dawn came over the town, when he saw a small boat coming toward his vessel, which was lying at anchor. As it drew near, he recognized an officer in the Columbian service, a friend of d'Egville. He boarded the vessel and going up to Captain Stewart said:

"I had come from d'Egville with a challenge for the insult of substituting an English song for Gaelic and thus attempting to make him a laughing stock for those of the company who knew better. Stewart turned to his friend and said, 'My forebodings were right after all.' He tried to explain to d'Egville's messenger that no offense had been intended and to point out the absurdity of a duel for such a cause and at last flutly refused to accept the challenge. A few days afterward Captain Stewart met d'Egville and as might have been foreseen was instantly assailed as 'coward' and, what was worse, was struck across the face with a horse-whip. This was more than the Scotchman could stand so he sent the message d'Egville so much desired and at the time appointed took two of his sailors with him to the rendezvous. The men carried a pickaxe and a spade.

Stewart ordered them to dig a grave sufficiently deep to receive two bodies and to d'Egville's astonishment insisted that they should both stand in this grave, holding a pistol in one hand and in the other the diagonal corners of a handkerchief, which stretched taut would regulate the distance. The creole, thus cornered, had no choice but to accept the conditions. The two men stepped down into the grave and Captain Stewart flung grasped the handkerchief, saying, 'The world will be well rid of a scoundrel, and also of a miserable man.' The seconds drew lots for the word of command. Meanwhile d'Egville tumbled with his corner of the handkerchief, dropped it and picked it up again. His face was as white as the piece of linen, and before the word 'Fire' had passed his lips the man whose duty it was to give it, he fell forward in a dead faint.

Captain Stewart looked down on him for a moment, then, with a look of disgust, kicked him, scrambled out of the grave and made his way back to the ship.

AN ILLINOIS SENSATION.

A Lady of Union County recovers her Health in a Marvellous Manner.

ANNA, Illinois, June 17—A very interesting case of recovery from a complicated form of kidney trouble has taken place here and the details are gradually being made public. The sufferer was Miss M. T. Loomis, who for a long time has been a victim to severe pains in all parts of the body. She consulted a number of doctors and was treated for a great variety of complaints, the diagnosis all proving faulty. At length she determined to try Dodd's Kidney Pills, having read and heard much of their efficacy and found her expectations justified in a complete cure.

FOND OF THE CHINESE.

Tigers Relish a Native Served up Now and Then as a Cold Bite.

Miss L. E. Ramsey, of Dublin, Ireland, a missionary of the English presbyterian church for five years among the densely populated and ignorant natives of Chin-Chew, China, has been giving some facts to the San Francisco Examiner. Miss Ramsey and her friend, Miss Graham, of London representing the English presbyterian church, are the only white missionaries in that part of China.

The dangers they endured were from both the prejudiced natives and the wild Chinese tigers, which roam all through the country. Tigers even come in from the mountains and infest the towns. In this way one winter, so Miss Ramsey says, over a hundred persons were killed.

The Chinese esteem the tigers as sacred animals," said Miss Ramsey, "and for this reason have never made any attempt to kill them. The practical tiger killers down about Amoy, moreover, have never penetrated that region, so they have increased and are now there in large numbers and

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Took Him at His Word.

A well-known American clergyman, according to Harper's Round Table, went into a barber-shop one morning, and being somewhat of a joker, said to the barber, "My friend, you may cut my hair as short as you would like my sermons to be."

The barber immediately got out his razor and proceeded to shave the doctor's head. "Hold on!" cried the doctor. "Are you going to take it all off?"

"You told me to, doctor," said the barber. "I don't want any of your sermons."

Just as He Expected

"Are you having any more trouble with your corns, Emily?" weekly enquired Mr. Winterbottom.

"No, they haven't hurt me for the last day or so," replied his good wife. With a patient sigh Mr. Winterbottom put his best razor back in its case, and tried another. It was as he had suspected.

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