

A MYSTERIOUS LODGER.

"You say he never sleeps here, Mrs. Allen?" said young Mr. McCandless, who had lodged and boarded with that worthy woman for seven years, and was much esteemed by her for his knowledge of the world.

"Well, I never find the bed disturbed, although the counterpane is sometimes soiled by his muddy boots in the morning," replied the landlady, smoothing the wrinkles out of her apron with her pudgy hand.

"Ahem, that is curious," mused McCandless, removing his glasses and wiping them with his handkerchief.

"And he never spends the whole night here," pursued she.

"You don't mean to say he leaves before daylight?"

"That is just what I do mean to say, and I can't make up my mind that he's a respectable man," said the landlady severely. "Just tell me when he comes and when he goes, and all you know about him, Mrs. Allen."

"Well, let me see. About a month ago—shall I describe him?"

"Yes, yes, go on; omit nothing."

"He's a slim young man with a very thin face—a batchet face, I should call it—very small, piercing, black eyes, and just a bit of a dark mustache."

"Then he is rather a mysterious looking man?" put in McCandless, compressing his lips.

"He is, indeed," returned the landlady, "but not half as mysterious as his doings."

"And how was he dressed?"

McCandless had taken out an envelope and was busily making notes on the back of it.

"His clothes were shabby," said the landlady, "and he always carried a rough oak stick. Well, as I was saying, about a month ago he rang the door bell one afternoon, and I went to the door. He was pale and worried and—"

"Sort of a hunted look?" queried McCandless.

"That is just what I thought," cried Mrs. Allen.

"There may be something in this," said her lodger darkly; "but go on, Mrs. Allen."

"Where was I? Oh, yes, he asked in a low, broken voice if I had a room to let."

"The side room on the top floor was the only one vacant, and I told him so with misgivings, for I didn't think he was good pay. He asked me the rent, and I said \$2 a week. Looking up and down the street in a queer way, he said he'd take it."

"Did he appear to think he might be followed?" asked McCandless, wiping the perspiration from his brow, for he had been trying to take down Mrs. Allen's statement in long hand.

"I don't know what he thought, but he seemed to be nervous and uneasy. Well, I took the \$2, which he offered me, and asked him when he wanted to move in, and where his trunk was. He stammered out that he had no trunk, but would it matter so long as he paid in advance? I said I didn't care, if he paid me regularly."

"Don't you think you ought to have asked him for references, Mrs. Allen?"

"I never expect references for ball bedrooms, Mr. McCandless, especially when they're on the top floor."

McCandless coughed uncomfortably and his landlady went on.

"When I asked him how soon he was coming, he said he would be here the same night, upon which I gave him a latchkey on the usual condition—payment of a quarter. Just as he was going down the steps I inquired his name and he turned red and mumbled something."

"By George!" Mrs. Allen, it looks peculiar. I have a theory. But you insisted upon knowing his name, of course?"

"Yes, I put the question again, and he said I might call him Peterson."

"Plainly a nom de guerre. I mean a fictitious name. When did you see him again?"

"That's the surprising part of it," said Mrs. Allen, who was now all of a flutter with excitement. "I didn't see him for three days, and then he came after dark, passing me in the hall without so much as a 'How do ye do?' That night—it must have been two in the morning—I heard a foot on the stairs and opened my bedroom door to look out. Who should I see but Mr. Peterson going down. Then I heard the front door slam."

"Was carrying anything out?" demanded McCandless.

"Oh, you may be sure I thought of that. No, he had nothing in his hand but the oak stick which he always carries."

McCandless looked disappointed and the landlady continued her story:

"He came the next night and departed just as mysteriously, but the queer thing about it was that he always banged the door when he went away."

"Hem! I don't know that that was anything more than low cunning, Mrs. Allen. He may have wanted to give some body—the police, for instance—the idea that he had a right to come and go unmolested. Now, I think that was a more suspicious circumstance than if he had closed the door after him noiselessly."

The landlady looked at McCandless with admiration written on every feature.

"Well, you have a head full of ideas, Mr. McCandless. Nobody could fool you."

"You flatter, Mrs. Allen," said her lodger, flushing with pleasure, "but I may say to you that some of my best friends are connected with the Central Office, and they tell me that I ought to be one of them. I come by my detective talent naturally, for my father was a park policeman."

"Have you ever seen Peterson carry anything upstairs?"

"I have," returned Mrs. Allen impressively.

"State what it was."

"I cannot, except to say that it was a bundle which he held tightly under his left arm."

McCandless was perplexed.

"Did you ever find anything in Peterson's room on any morning following his

occupancy of it?" he said, after a pause for reflection.

"Nothing; absolutely nothing."

"This is one of the most singular cases I ever heard of," said McCandless decidedly.

"What do you think of it?" ventured the landlady.

"Think of it? I think Peterson is a suspicious character who will bear watching. He may be a counterfeiter, a forger, a fugitive from justice."

Mrs. Allen was distressed and frightened.

"What am I going to do about it?" she asked.

"Leave everything to me," said McCandless reassuringly. "I will make it my business to clear up this mystery. Peterson shall be kept under surveillance."

Several days passed during which McCandless was very taciturn at his meals and went to and fro in a brown study.

When interrogated by Mrs. Allen he merely said: "I may have something for you in a day or two."

Sure enough, on Saturday morning McCandless asked with a non-committal air to see Mrs. Allen in the parlor.

"By the way," he began in a thick voice, "I will see that you have a check for my account in the course of a few days, but I wanted to talk to you about a much more important matter. I think I have run Peterson to earth."

McCandless said this in a grave, confidential tone.

"You don't say so, Mr. McCandless. What have you found out about him?"

For answer McCandless drew from his pocket a thick paper, which he slowly unfolded, showing a poster printed in very black ink with a cut of a man's face at the top.

"Read it, Mrs. Allen," urged her lodger huskily.

This is what the landlady read: "Look for Thomas Gallagher, alias David Moffatt alias Morton, alias Geoghegan. Wanted for highway robbery. Height 5 feet 8; weight 147 pounds. Spare face, dark eyes small mustache. When last seen wore a brown slouch hat, dark coat mixed trousers and gaiters. One thousand dollars reward shall be given to any one giving evidence which shall lead to his conviction. Thomas Binns, Chief of Police."

"Now, I want to ask you, Mrs. Allen, whom that picture resembles?"

The landlady studied it hard.

"Does it not bear a strong resemblance to Peterson, Mrs. Allen?"

"That's what I was thinking myself, Mr. McCandless. I can't swear to it but it looks a good deal like Mr. Peterson."

"When I think of the way he hides himself in your house, Mrs. Allen, comes in the night and goes in the night, I could almost swear Peterson is Thomas Gallagher. But I won't rest until I prove it, and I'm going on his trail tonight."

The following morning McCandless came down to the breakfast table red-eyed from the want of sleep, but in high spirits.

"Could I see you in the parlor, Mrs. Allen?" he whispered as he slipped away from the table.

The landlady excused herself as soon as she could and made her way upstairs with all the speed her embonpoint would permit. She tingled with curiosity to hear his fingertips.

"I have made a great discovery," McCandless burst out as soon as she had shut the door behind her.

"Yes, yes?"

"Peterson is living a double life, and he is probably the man Chief Binns is looking for. The reward is almost within our grasp."

"How do you know? What have you found out?" said the landlady, her generous boom heaving in her excitement.

McCandless spoke rapidly, evidently carried away by his discovery.

"Last night Peterson left the house at 2 o'clock and I followed him, wearing gums. He walked at a quick pace towards Washington Square—so fast, in fact, that I had difficulty in keeping him in sight. Crossing the square, he entered a house near Sixth Avenue with a latchkey. There was one lighted window on the second floor of the house. In a moment I saw his shadow on the curtain and by his figure. A woman came and stood beside him. Suddenly there was the cry of an infant, loud and shrill. The woman disappeared. Her shadow fell on the curtain again, and she had in her arms a child. She held it out to Peterson. He removed his slouch hat and took the child. For an hour he carried it to and fro in the room. At length its cries ceased, the woman took it. Peterson began to undress, and the light went out."

McCandless stopped from sheer want of breath.

"But what has all this got to do with the reward?" asked Mrs. Allen, with a woman's doubts.

"Give me time. One minute," said McCandless. "There is plenty of evidence. I marked the house with a piece of chalk. This morning I was round there early and pumped the colored servant, who was sweeping the sidewalk. She told me that the occupant of the second floor front was named Andrews. From her description there could be no doubt he was identical with Peterson. I asked her about his habits and she said that he was often absent until the small hours of the morning. The woman was his wife, and they had an infant two months old. They had been in the house about five weeks, which would correspond with the time Peterson has occupied your hall bedroom on the top floor."

McCandless looked at Mrs. Allen triumphantly.

"What do you think of that for detective work?" he said.

"You were right," returned the landlady admiringly. "Peterson is a suspicious character, probably a criminal, as you supposed."

"He is the very man the police are looking for. Of that I am convinced," said McCandless. "Just read that from the Morning Post."

Mrs. Allen put on her spectacles and read aloud as follows:

"The police have reason to believe that Thomas Gallagher, alias David Moffatt, alias Morton, alias Geoghegan, who is wanted for highway robbery, and for whose apprehension a reward of \$1,000 has been offered, is in hiding in this city. They hope to trace him through his young wife and child who are living somewhere on the West side."

Can there be any doubt of it, Mrs. Allen? I am going to communicate with my friends at the Central Office at once. The reward is as good as secured, and when we get it, Mrs. Allen, I'm going to put a question to you."

The buxom landlady blushed and cast down her eyes.

"You're a gay deceiver, Mr. McCandless," she said.

That night McCandless let Burke and Roache of the Central Office into the house at 10 o'clock and concealed them in the basement. Peterson had not come, although it was of the night when he was accustomed to visit the house. McCandless was on tender hooks, fearing his prey had escaped them. About 11 o'clock the rattle of a latch key was heard in the front door. A click, and it opened. McCandless looking through the parlor portieres recognized Peterson. At the end of half an hour McCandless and the officers mounted noiselessly to the top floor. There was the sound of a voice in Peterson's room, sad and labored, as of some one in deep affliction. They listened intently.

"R-morse burdens my spirit," they heard the voice say, "Harder as I am in crime, I have some conscience left. Perhaps it is the still small voice which tells me I am not a lost soul. Oh, could I but atone for this last damning crime by giving myself up to the officers of justice! I would gladly do so if the act would not involve others. Oh, my God, how shall I atain to that peace which passeth all understanding?"

Then the voice fell and silence followed, so profound that McCandless could hear his heart thumping. He whispered hoarsely to Burke and Roache: "It is your man; break in the door."

"I guess we're safe," said Roache to Burke. "It's a go, if you say so," said Burke.

Roache, a heavily built man, without another word threw his shoulder against the door, the lock gave way and the Central Office men rushed in with leveled pistols, McCandless at their backs with a sword cane.

"The game's up," cried McCandless, dramatically.

A pallid and very much scared young man rose from a chair at a table covered with sheets of paper. He was in his shirt sleeves, and his hair was tousled.

"What is the meaning of this intrusion?" he demanded. "Do you want to kill me?"

"No, only to lock you up," said Roache. "My God, gentlemen, it's a mistake."

"There's no mistake about it," shrieked McCandless; "your name's not Peterson, and you know it."

The young man looked confused and was silent.

Burke made a rush at him overturning the table and sending a bottle of ink spilling in all directions. In a twinkling he had a pair of handcuffs on Peterson's wrists.

"We must go round and take the woman for a witness," said Roache.

They pushed and halt carried Peterson down the stairs to the street, Peterson was hurried along across Washington Square, protesting that it was a mistake and that he could explain.

"This is the place," said McCandless, ascending the steps of a house on the corner of Six Avenue. He pulled fiercely at the bell, and when the door was opened, McCandless led the way up to the second floor, Burke and Roache hustling Peterson up before them.

"Knock at the lady's door," suggested Burke, politely.

McCandless knocked.

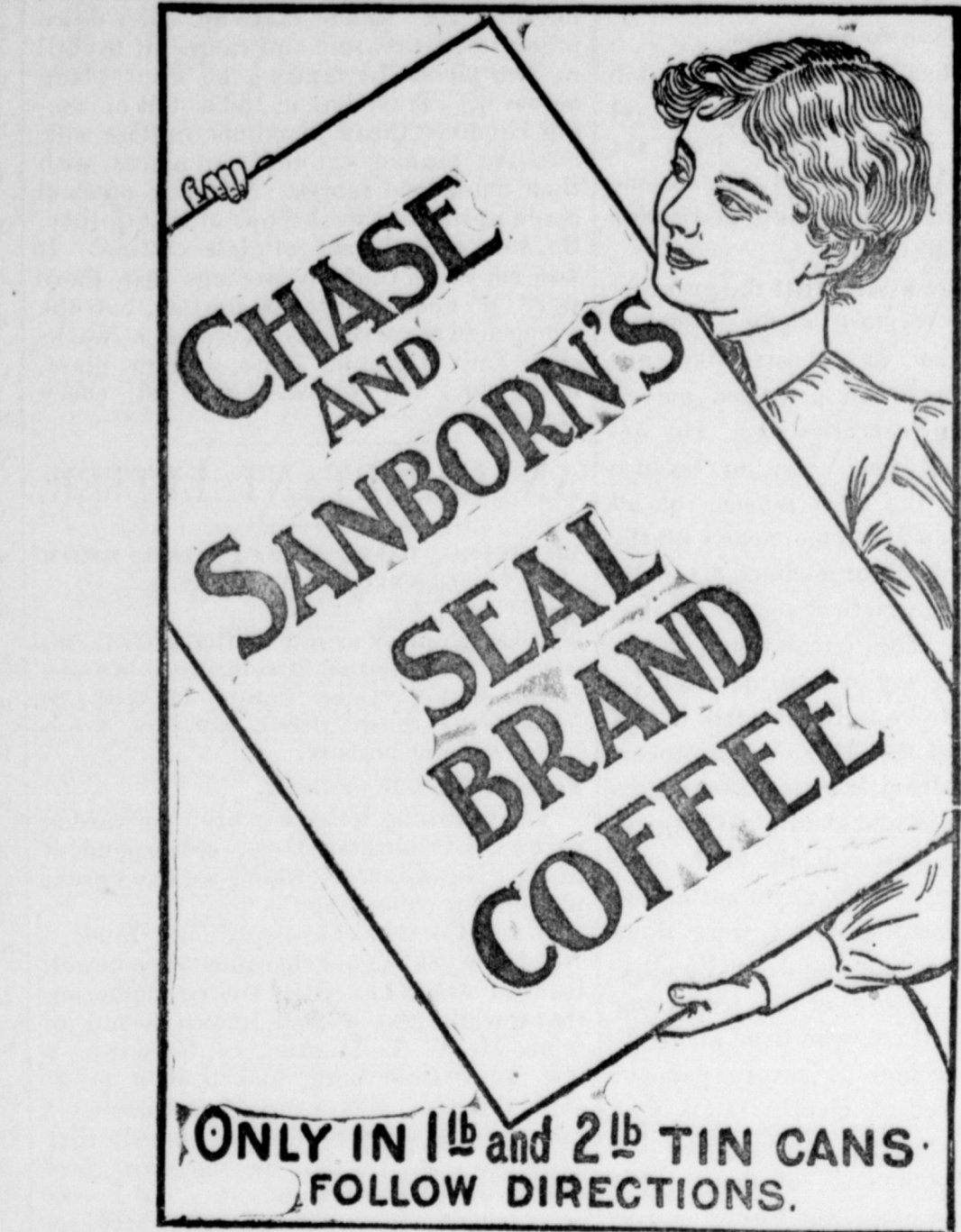
A young woman in a dressing gown appeared on the threshold. When she caught sight of Peterson in the grasp of the two officers of the law, with his hands bound together in front of him, she uttered a cry of fright.

"Oh, Henry, what have you done? What is the meaning of this?"

"It is an outrage, a police outrage," shrieked Peterson.

"Ha! ha! that's an old story," said Burke and Roache simultaneously.

"I was arrested on suspicion of something round in the other room," said Peterson.



son. "Tell them about it. They won't believe me."

A light broke on the young woman.

"This is surely a mistake," she said sweetly. "I am Mrs. Andrews, and that is my husband Henry, who is a writer of plays. We have a baby as you see. There he is in the crib. My husband found he could not write at home, the baby cried so much. So he hired a room somewhere else, and there he went several nights each week to write in peace, coming home when he was tired."

"That is what I was doing when those scoundrels arrested me," said Peterson indignantly.

"What was that you were saying about remorse burdening your spirit before we broke in?" demanded Roache suspiciously.

"I was reading from my play, 'The Atone-ment of Blood,'" answered the young man.

"Oh, look here, this won't do," broke in McCandless. "Why did you tell Mrs. Allen your name was Peterson?"

"My name is Henry Peterson Andrews," said the young dramatist, "and I gave her my middle name because it was as good a one for her as any other, since I didn't want to live in her room or explain to her why I rented it."

"Henry wouldn't be a dramatist if he wasn't a little mysterious," said the young woman, with a charming smile.

Burke unlocked the handcuffs from Peterson's wrists.

"Anyone can see that this lady isn't a crook's wife or this gentleman a crook," said the detective. McCandless, I think your ass. Come Roache, let's be going. Madame, for my side partner and myself I want to say that we've been victimized and hope you'll overlook our zeal. We're awfully ashamed of ourselves, Mr. Andrews. If you'll forgive and forget we'll be your everlasting friends. Don't report us at the Central Office or we'll be ruined."

"I won't do that," said Peterson grimly. "I'll do better. I'll put it in a play."

Burke and Roache shook hands and bowed themselves out. McCandless stumbled after them, sheep-faced and shrunken.—New York Sun.

"To my Life's End."

Old age brings many aches and pains which must be looked after if health is to be maintained. This depends more than anything else on the kidneys. "I am 85 years old," writes A. Duffin, farmer, Aultsville, Ont., "and have had kidney trouble five years. My son advised Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills, and I obtained immediate relief. I shall use them to my life's end."

You will find Chase's Pills equally effective for that lame back.

His Threat.

A little colored boy, the grandson of an old servant in a New England family, is a constant playmate of the boy of the house whose parents are particularly anxious that their child shall treat his colored companion with gentleness.

They are so anxious, in fact, that the little negro has acquired a habit of running to playmate's mother with any trouble which may have befallen him, sure of her protection.

One day the two boys were snowballing, and in some way or other the negro received an especially damp and "Sassy" snowball in his face, though it had been aimed at his back.

"You better look out, William Percival," he cried, turning a snow-plastered face, from which gleamed two small but wrathful eyes, on his playmate. "If you don't say you won't do that again, I take dis count'nance right in and show it to your majes' as it is!"

Catarrrh of Long Standing Relieved in a Few Hours.

It is not alone the people of our own country, and prominent citizens like Urban Lippe, M. P. of Joliette, Que., and other members of Parliament, who, having used Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder, pronounce it the most effective remedy they have ever known, but people everywhere are expressing their gratification at the effectiveness of this medicine. C. G. Archer of Brewer, Maine, says: "I have had catarrh for several years. Water would run from my eyes and nose, days at a time. About four months ago I was induced to try Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder, and since using the wonderful remedy I have not had an attack. I would not be without it." It relieves in ten minutes.

"Plugging Out."

The Louisville Times seems to have found a relative of the city girl who thought it must be cold work harvesting the winter wheat.

The young woman of whom the Times has heard belongs in the West, and was lately talking with a Kentuckian about tobacco and tobacco-raising.

"I should like ever so much to see a tobacco-field," she said, "especially when it is just plugging out."

Lillian Nordica to Women.

Health-giving Paine's Celery Compound the Best Spring Remedy.

Mme. Nordica has the distinction of being the first prima donna born in the United States.

She testifies to the wonderful health-giving effects of the greatest product of medical science—Paine's Celery Compound.

Not since Christine Nilsson has there been a Marguerite to be compared to Nordica's splendid impersonation.

All her achieved successes had for a foundation the most unrelaxing study and effort. No one knows better than the applauded prima donna what such severe work means to the nerves and strength.

The following letter from Lillian Nordica to Wells and Richardson Co. must be gratefully read by hosts of women:

"It certainly gives me great pleasure to testify to the health giving effects of Paine's Celery Compound. I truly believe it to be the best of all spring remedies."

If the winter has left you weak and languid, Paine's Celery Compound will restore strength to your nerves, will purify the blood and make you well. Don't allow nervous debility to go on. Take warning from dyspepsia, nervous headache and sleeplessness. Guard against that tired, played-out feeling that so often appears as spring approaches. Neuralgia and rheumatism—awful enemies—must be conquered.

Paine's Celery Compound is the world's true disease banisher, renovator of the system, and a life-giver at this time of year.

It quickly furnishes nutriment for the innumerable nerve fibres; it arouses the organs of digestion and assimilation to brisker action; it enables the wasted body to build up flesh and muscle, and dissipates every fearful and apprehensive feeling.

Paine's Celery Compound is truly the medicine for women when weakened or burdened by work and home cares. It gives them fresh new blood, vim, energy and activity, and a new lease of life. Try it, and when you go to your dealer for Paine's Celery Compound, see that you get it; no other medicine can take its place successfully.