

JACKIE'S BURGLAR.

The garret was squalid to a degree. It was dark, dirty and wretched, and the thin streaks of light which filtered in through the tiny, dust-choked skylight only seemed to heighten the darkness and increase the misery of the place. It was a small, square room, with no furniture, except a couple of broken chairs, a grimy table, and a broken packing case, and it seemed a place scarcely fit for habitation. Yet on the floor were three coarse straw mattresses, and on one of them, with his weary face turned up to the dismal skylight above, lay a boy. He was only a small boy, but his face was like an old man's, and his limbs were shrunken and dwarfed and thin. He lay looking up into the face of a man who bent over him.

"I shall be all right by and by, dad," he said, in a weak voice. "I shall be all right as soon as the sun creeps up a bit and I can get out. Don't worry, dad. P'raps I shall be able to do something soon. P'raps I could make some boxes or something if I could sit up a bit."

Two big tears coursed down the man's cheek and fell on the boy's hand. He turned away hurriedly and began walking to and fro across the garret.

"I must get the doctor to you somehow," he said, more to himself than the boy on the bed; "if I fetch him by force he must come. It's no good putting it off any longer."

"No, no," said the boy, with the thoughtfulness of an old man; "wait a bit. I may be all right tomorrow."

The man plunged his hand into his pocket and sighed. With twopenny between them and starvation, what was the use of fetching a doctor who would order eggs and milk for this boy? What was the use of anything except to sit and stare at the starlight and starve?

John Endleton was a man who had once been in a good position. Only a year ago he had believed himself to be out of the reach of want; but misfortune had overtaken him, his bank had lost money in a hundred different ways, ill-luck had followed him, and he had fallen from bad to worse, until he at last found himself, with his 10-year-old son, in an East End slum, penniless, heart-sick, hopeless, with sickness overtaking them, with no prospect of anything better than a hand-to-mouth existence, and with a criminal—a jail bird—a common convict for a companion.

John Endleton was a proud man. It was his pride, perhaps, that had led him to refuse good berths that he would have been thankful for now, and he hated the man who shared their garret. If he could have afforded it—he could only have made sure of the necessary pence—he would have rented the entire room in order to keep his boy from contact with the man; but he had reached such a hopeless state of his existence that he was thankful if he found himself able to provide for one decent meal a day, and he was obliged to tolerate him, although his very presence seemed poison.

He hated his coarse ways, his bad face, his evil breath, and the thought that he was within almost a yard of his son made him shudder.

Jem Brooker was the leader of a gang. There was no better known criminal in the whole of London than he, and he was proud of his reputation, proud of his wickedness, and proud even of the time he had 'done' in Portland Prison. He was foul mouthed, bad tempered and had been convicted of numberless crimes; but for some strange reason little Jackie Endleton interested him.

In the early morning, when he staggered up to the garret half drunk, the sight of the thin, white face on the dirty mattress sobered him. The touch of the boy's hand dragged back his memory through a thousand dirty byways to the fresh country, where, when he was a small lad, he had played with his sisters in green fields under blue skies. Something in the boy's eyes recalled his mother, something, too, in the droop of the little lips reminded him of hers as he had seen them last when she had been dying with shame for her son. And the big, gaunt man, whose heart was black with crime, who had resisted the overtures of missionaries and sneered at prison chaplains, found himself suddenly overcome by a 10-year-old boy who was dying of starvation in a miserable garret. He scoffed and swore at himself as he did it, but it became a regular thing for him to bring oranges and sometimes grapes on his return to the garret at night.

And John Endleton hated it. He resented it fiercely, and shrank back when Jem Brooker approached the bed and looked down at Jackie's face.

As the winter passed into the spring Jackie seemed to grow weaker instead of stronger, and at last, with a solitary shilling in his pocket, John Endleton set off in desperation for a doctor. If anything happened to the boy he would have nothing to live for, and the thought seemed to choke him. But he knocked at the doctor's door without success. The doctor was busy—too busy to attend to him until night, and when night came he had forgotten all about it, and Jackie lay in a half fever, moaning and tossing restlessly from side to side while Endleton sat over him with rage at his heart.

When, toward morning, Jem mounted the creaking stairs in his usual half-drunken fashion and staggered into the garret, he found Endleton sitting by the side of the mattress with his face in his hands. A pale moon sent a shaft of light on the sleeping boy's face, and it looked white and drawn and cold, as if already the shadow of death lay upon it.

Jem stopped in drunken surprise. A stupid grin crossed his face. He stared and waved his hand wildly in the air. He tried to speak, but his voice was hoarse with brandy, and the figures of the boy and his father danced before his eyes by the dozen.

He muttered some words indistinguishable and meaningless, and, collapsing suddenly, he tumbled down on his mattress and huddled himself together in a drunken sleep. When he awoke a gray dawn was

peeping slowly in through the small square of glass in the roof, and everything in the dingy garret appeared unreal and lifeless. The boy on the bed seemed scarcely to breathe.

Jem raised himself on his elbow and looked round, and some remembrance of the last night's scene began to pass through his mind. He looked, and it seemed to him John Endleton had never moved. The moonlight had gone from the boy's face, and the dawn had come instead; but John Endleton was still sitting there, huddled up on the floor with his face buried in his hands.

Jem lifted himself slowly from his mattress, and stretched himself with a big yawn. Then he looked again at the two in the corner, and after a minute got up and went toward them.

"Ain't the little 'un well?" he asked, clumsily. "Wot's up with 'un?"

John Endleton stirred impatiently. The sound of the ex-convict's voice seemed to rouse all his hatred and disgust. He looked round with repulsion upon his face, and Jem, seeing it, shrugged his shoulders and sneered.

"Oh, well, if ye're so mighty independent and 'aughty, why don't yer tak' lodgin's in th' 'Grand'? A course if yer don't want no 'elp I don't care. Only I thought, he added brutally, 'as th' chap's a-dyin' like, as yer might want somethin' for 'im.'"

John Endleton started and looked down at the boy, with his wan face, his thin hands and faltering breath. For a moment it seemed to his excited imagination that the boy had ceased to breathe, and he leant forward hurriedly and with trembling fingers pulled back the sheet.

"He's all right. He's not dying," he exclaimed, eagerly. But, at the same time, it was borne in upon him that unless he had nourishing things to eat, and those quickly, there would be no hope of ever pulling him round again, and the thought stung his heart with sudden bitterness.

He turned to the burglar. It was possible that Jem could help him. Jem might know where to get help or work, or even charity; but Endleton's pride still stood up in arms, and with a determination to have nothing to do with him, he turned away.

Jem, with a fierce sneer on his lips and a burning hatred in his heart against Endleton, turned away, too. Not a finger would he lift—not an inch would he stir—not if the boy was dying fifty times over!

As he turned, he caught sight of Jackie's pallid face lying on the dirty pillow.

"Oh, lor! wot a little bloke it is," he thought; and then he went out, mumbling down the stairs, swearing to himself—a man apparently without the faintest hope of a better life, without knowledge of anything except things evil, and yet with one clean spot in his black heart.

Detective Hartly, prowling through the East End in search of such thieves and transgressors as he might with dignity escort to the lock-up, was turning a corner, when he suddenly became aware that on the opposite side of the street a familiar and not exactly pleasing figure was ambling along at a rapid rate with something peculiar in the bulgy appearance of his coat.

"There's that Crooked Jem again," said the detective to himself. He cast a suspicious eye at Jem's pockets, pulled at his eyebrows—which was a way he had—and then beckoned to a policeman to follow him.

When he was within an inch or two of the said pockets he suddenly clapped the unsuspecting Jem on the shoulder—so suddenly that Jem's jaw fell, and he made an abrupt, half-undecided movement as if to flee from the wrath of the law.

"Now, then," said Hartley, severely, "none of that. On with the handcuffs. And Smith, you come here and take his arm."

Jem looked from one to the other in something like dismay.

"I ain't done anything," he expostulated. "Well, we'll see," said the detective; "and you'll remember, if anything is found on you, there are three years off that last job that you've got to finish."

Jem's face grew dark. His hands fidgeted strangely under the handcuffs, and it hadn't been that he was a hardened, hopeless criminal, one might almost have fancied that his under lip trembled.

"Well, I'm blowed if I ever tries ter cheat th' gallows agen," was his vague and ungrammatical remark, and then they marched on to the police station.

There, inside the bare room, with its wooden benches and square desks, with the dingy green ledgers and musty papers, Detective Hartly proceeded to turn out the unhappy Jem's pockets. As he did so his eyes first opened in astonishment, then screwed up in bewilderment, and, finally, he looked as if he had suddenly been confronted with the riddle of the Sphinx.

Out of the depths of Jem's capacious pockets he turned on to the table a chicken a tin of soup, some eggs, a packet of sweets, a sticky piece of candied peel, and last, but not least, a bottle of port.

"What's the meaning of this?" said the detective, sharply, feeling vaguely that some trick was being played upon him. "What is it? A picnic, a card party, or what? Apparently you're in a new line."

"Oh, yes," said Jem sullenly, "I've stole 'em all."

And after that he made no remark. He sat staring at the stone floor, with his coarse hands clasped together by the handcuffs and with a strange, almost baffled, expression on his face.

"I'll tell yer wot," he said, raising his head suddenly, "if yer'll come wif me I'll show yer the bloke that put me up ter this job. It's str'ight—no kiddin', and I swear as if yer does I'll cum back quiet—I swear I will. Yer can bring Snaitz with yer an' some more coppers if yer like—I don't care."

The detective looked at Jem in silence for a moment. Something about the case struck him as peculiar. It was not like Jem Brooker to steal eatables when better things were to be got with the same risk.



and he felt a desire to know what it meant. So with a fine disregard of the rules and regulations of her Majesty's prison he bundled Jem and Snaitz into a cab, and with another policeman on the box, they were driven to a small and filthy court a short distance away.

There they all three mounted the dreary stairs to the dingy garret where John Endleton sat with shaking shoulders watching his dying son.

At the sound of footsteps he raised his head and looked round. With sudden astonishment he saw that Jem was handcuffed. He saw the policeman and the detective, and then Hartly stepped into the middle of the room.

He looked round expectantly. "Well," he said, "whos now?" He had expected to find perhaps half a dozen roughs. He had hoped that Jem might have given him some valuable information—some clue that he had been unable to pick up himself; and now all that was to be seen was a man and a sick boy.

"What do you mean by this?" he demanded, turning to Jem, and the thief pointed with his manacled hand to the bed. "There's the little cove as started me on this," he said; and Hartly snorted impatiently.

"Look here, Jem Brooker," he said, "you won't make things any better for yourself with trickery. Now, what's the reason for this fool's errand?"

Jem stood up. "That's th' meanin' of it," he repeated, still pointing to the bed. "It's the little bloke there as set me on it—'im as is dyin' for things to eat. There 'e is. S'elp me, that's wot I done it for."

Hartly turned around sharply and looked at the boy. Then he stepped across the room and peered down at the wan face that was blue with cold and pitiful with hunger, and all at once he became aware that there was a strange silence in the room, and when he looked again he saw the father staring breathlessly into the boy's face.

He saw it only dimly before him, and then it faded away to a picture of his son. Some vague astonishment at Brooker's behavior passed through his mind—he had never expected to find a heart under the man's rough exterior—and then he strode suddenly across the room to the top of the stairs.

"I say, Harris—Harris," he shouted, "Go back to the station at once and get those things that are on the table there. Hurry up, now. Bring the port and the soup, and you'll find a cup and saucer in the cupboard. Be quick. You'd better take the cab, and, oh, I say, bring a corkscrew!" Then he went back and calmly unlocked the handcuffs on Jem's wrists.

To-day Detective Hartly is not quite such a hard man as he was. He has a great belief in the human nature, and even the tender-heartedness, of the greatest of criminals, and sometimes he will cite the instance of a man whose heart, cankered with evil and hedged in by vice, was reached only by the small fingers of a child.—Tit-bits.

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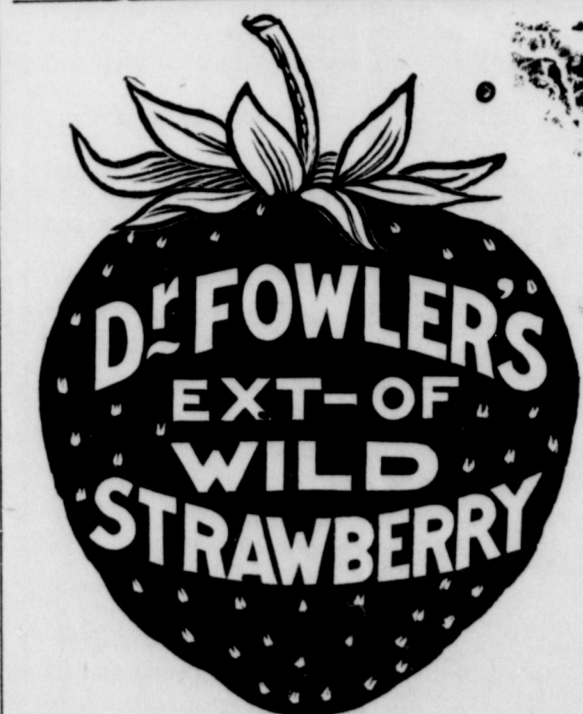
Pieces and Wholes. Proprietors of stores where musical instruments are sold say that many people seem quite unable to discriminate between such establishments and those in which printed music is dealt in.

As an instance, it is related that a young man came into a piano store and asked:

"Do you sell piano pieces here?"

"No," answered the salesman, "nothing but pianos whole!"

The intending purchaser opened his eyes in a wide and puzzled way, and went out apparently wondering whether the salesman thought he wanted a fragment of a piano.



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THE TRAIN DISPATCHER.

A Mistake Made by Him Might Have Horrifying Results.

The train dispatcher, says the Detroit Free Press, is an important functionary of a railroad. Everybody knows all about the conductor and the engineer, of whom so much has been written, and who are supposed to be the ones in whose hands they trust their lives when they enter a railway coach. But the train dispatcher is seldom heard of unless he makes a mistake in his orders to trains, and has a collision resulting in the death of several passengers. All train dispatchers are necessarily telegraph operators, and the position is filled from the ranks of the operators on the line as their capabilities for increased responsibilities indicate their fitness for a position in the dispatcher's office where they will "copy" train orders as sent on the wire by the train dispatcher, and underscore each word in the order as it is repeated back by the operators at stations where trains addressed receive the order. After the operator has filled this position four or five years and demonstrates that he has ability and coolness and nerve to meet all emergencies and acts promptly in case of accidents, he is promoted to the position of "extra" dispatcher and works in the absence of the regular dispatchers until a vacancy occurs in the force, when he is appointed to the regular staff.

The working hours of the dispatchers are divided into "tricks" being from 8 a. m. until 4 p. m. That the dispatchers may know where each train on his division is every moment of the time he is on duty he has before him a chart called a "train sheet," which is about four feet long and eighteen inches wide, upon which in the centre, are printed the stations of the division. The list of stations on the train sheet is the dividing line for trains in opposite directions; that is, the west bound trains are kept on the right hand, and the west bound trains are kept on the right hand, and the east bound trains on the left hand side of the sheet, and as many perpendicular lines are ruled on either side of the sheet, as are required to provide space for every train or light engine running over the division. No train can leave a terminal of the division without first reporting to the dispatcher for orders and when a train is to be started the operator at the terminal calls the dispatcher and says: "No 47, engine 575, Engineer Smith, Conductor Jones, has 35 loads and 11 empties." This information is recorded at the top of the train sheet in the spaces provided for it, and if any orders are necessary the dispatcher will send them at once, if there are no orders to be given he directs the operator to give the conductor a "clearance card" stating thereon that there are no orders for his train.

Trains upon a division are numbered with odd numbers for east bound, and even numbers for west bound trains, or vice versa, and, therefore, trains starting out from the eastern terminal begin their run at the bottom of the dispatcher's train sheet, while the west bound trains start from the top of the sheet. Each operator at the stations on the division reports to the dispatcher the time of arrival and departure or the time a train passes his station and the time is recorded on the sheet by the dispatcher, and as they progress over the division he can readily note that they are approaching each other and that he must provide a passing or meeting point for them, and to do this he must be familiar with the topography of his division as regards grades and stretches of track where fast time can be made, and he must be able to figure to the fraction of a minute how long it will take a train to run a certain number of miles to meet another train without delaying itself or the opposing train.

Trains on the time table are classified with regard to their priority of rights to the track, trains of the first class being superior to those of the second and all succeeding classes of trains. Trains in a specified direction have the right of track over trains of the same or inferior class running in the opposite direction. An inferior class train due to meet a superior class train at a certain station must necessarily remain at the time table meeting point until the superior class train has arrived no matter how late the latter train may be, unless the dispatcher comes to the aid of the inferior class train with an order to meet the delayed superior class train at another station. This order is sent simultaneously to the superior and the inferior class trains, and to the operator at the station where they will meet, and they

must at once display a red signal and not remove it until the trains meet.

In addition to the important duty of moving trains without delay or accident, the dispatcher has other duties to attend to, such as picking up cars at way stations on local trains and reducing the number of cars per train for freights, or increasing the number as the weather conditions warrant.

One false movement by a dispatcher in moving his trains would result in the loss of human life and the destruction of thousands of dollars in rolling stock, and the strain upon his mind soon wears out the strongest constitution. It is an unwritten law upon all railroads that a dispatcher cannot work more than eight hours at a time. The railroad managers know the exact limit of endurance of all their machinery, and dispatchers and engines are alike given a rest after that limit is reached. Locomotives "live" the longer in harness, however, as dispatchers rarely last more than ten years, at the end of which time they are replaced by younger men and are either promoted or laid aside as a back number. Luckily for them, railroad managers recognize the fact that the experience gained by a dispatcher fits him for better paying though less responsible positions, consequently there are many dispatchers in the ranks of general managers and superintendents.

Nothing Ails the Air of Canterbury.

The doctor gave it as his opinion that the air of Canterbury was too relaxing for Mrs. Caroline Boys, an old resident of the place.

His judgment was based upon the fact that in July 1891, she began to feel weak and ailing. Presently she looked as badly as she felt. Her skin and the whites of her eyes turned yellow, and she went feebly about her work, as one who works because she must, not because there is any comfort or pleasure in it. She says her mouth tasted badly, her appetite fell away, and the little she ate caused her "awful pain in the side and chest."

She had a constant noise or ringing in the head, and the nerves of her face twitched dreadfully. "After a time," she says, "my breathing got so bad that, on occasions, I had fairly to struggle and fight to catch my breath. At night I got little or no sleep, and during the day I felt so wretchedly nervous that I knew not what to do with myself. Then all the strength appeared to be going out of me; it was all I could do to walk even a short distance."

"If I raised my eyes to look upwards my head swam round, and I would reel as it about to fall. It was about a year I was in this condition, and the doctor said the air of Canterbury was too relaxing for me. But neither his medicines nor the medicines I had from the Dispensary did me any good. My first real encouragement I got from reading one of Mother Seigel's almanacs that somebody had left in the house. It described my symptoms exactly, and said my ailment was indigestion and dyspepsia. So, believing what I read, I went to the stores and bought the medicine—Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup. When I had taken half a bottle I felt great relief. My breathing was better, and soon, by continuing to take the Syrup, I was rid of all the pain and noise in the head. I found I could eat too; my appetite returned and strength with it. Now if I ever feel that I need medicine I take the Syrup, and it puts me right directly. (Signed) Caroline Boys, 148, Northgate Street, Canterbury, January 4th, 1894."

The outcome of this case proves that it was not the relaxing air of Canterbury, but a temporary collapse of her digestion that gave Mrs. Boys so unpleasant and menacing an experience. Many a person has tried the favourite prescription, "change of air," for that trouble, and always fruitlessly. What is needed is something that will drive the impurities and poisons—the "dirt," as a great doctor calls it—out of the blood and thus set the stomach, liver, &c., at good, honest work again. When that is done, as Seigel's Syrup does it, the Canterbury air, or almost any other air, is plenty good enough. At all events this lady is content with the atmosphere Providence gives her to breathe, ever since she found out the real nature of her malady and the cure for it.

Another respected correspondent, Mrs. Dora Binne, Provision Dealer at 54, Farnley Street, Leyton, near London, writes under date of January 9th, 1894: "For fifteen years I suffered from indigestion and dyspepsia. I was subject to spasms which gave me intense pain. At such times I would be completely doubled up and remain helpless for half an hour or so. For weeks together I would suffer from diarrhoea. The doctor's medicine lost all power even to relieve me even for a time. Last July I got a bottle of Mother Seigel's Syrup from Mr. Doe, Chemist, High Street, Leyton, and in a few days it relieved me. Continuing to take the Syrup I am now perfectly well."

(Signed) Dora Binne. Now, let the reader please note these facts:—First, that people who are ill are in no proper state of mind to judge intelligently of what ails them; second, that in the vast majority of instances—no matter how perplexing the symptoms—the actual disease is indigestion and dyspepsia; third, that they often suffer much and long before lighting upon the true remedy; fourth, that when they find it (as seen in these and other cases) its name is almost certain to be Mother Seigel's Curative Syrup.

Cuba's Great Forests.

According to a recent consular report, Cuba, although its entire area is only about equal to that of the State of Pennsylvania, contains 13,000,000 acres of primeval forests, "where the woodman's ax has never been heard." In these forests, which cover nearly half the entire surface of the island, are found among other timber, mahogany, cedar, redwood, logwood, ebony, lignum-vitæ, and a tree with extremely durable wood called caiguaran.