

HOW THE VAULT WAS ENTERED

By EDWIN R. STONE.

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A policeman stepped into the office of Messrs. Weller and Stone, importers, and asked to see a member of the firm. Having been shown into Mr. Weller's private room, he said:

"I have hit on some information to-day, sir, that is very important to your firm. It didn't come to me in the line of duty, sir, so I haven't turned it in. I just thought I'd come to you with it."

"Well, what is it? I won't buy a pig in a poke, but if your information turns out to be correct I'll pay you what it is worth."

"Your vault is to be entered tonight, sir."

"By burglars?"

"Well, sir, they be professional, but the story I got, sir, was that they was to be helped by some one in your employ."

"In that case we must not appear to expect anything, but be on the watch. How did you get this information?"

"One of 'em blowed on the rest."

"What time is the work to be done?"

"Along o' 1 o'clock, sir."

"All right. What's your name?"

"Tom Murphy, sir."

"Well, Murphy, come in tomorrow and if our safe has been robbed I'll give you a good tip."

"You mean if it hasn't been robbed?"

"Yes."

"Would you mind lettin' me look over the ground, sir?"

"No."

He tapped a bell, and a clerk appeared.

"Jenkins," said Mr. Weller, "let this policeman see the vault and its surroundings."

The clerk led Mr. Murphy to the vault, and while the cop was examining the approaches, looking up at the ceiling to see how a burglar could come down, and down at the floor to see how a burglar could come up, he busied himself shutting up, for it was after 8 o'clock in the evening, and the employees were going home.

When Mr. Jenkins was ready to go away himself he looked about for the policeman. Murphy was nowhere to be seen, but the clerk noticed that the vault door, which he thought was shut, was standing ajar. He pushed it in until it clicked and then continued his search for Murphy. Not finding him, Jenkins concluded that he had gone down in the cellar to investigate whether the vault could be approached from that direction. It was rather dark, and Jenkins called. No answer. Returning, he looked over the office in all its departments, but as there were no signs of Murphy he concluded that he had finished his examination and gone away.

About 12 o'clock Mr. Weller met several of the employees at the office and after telling them that he expected the vault to be entered placed them in positions where they could watch without being seen. Then the lights were put out, and the watch began.

Mr. Weller had a sofa in his private room. On this he laid himself to wait. He fell asleep. When he awoke it was broad day. If the vault had been entered during the night he had not been awake to see. Fearful of having been robbed without knowing it, he went out to observe the condition of his watchers. He found every man sound asleep, and one of them was snoring loud enough to waken the dead. Mr. Weller glanced toward the vault. There was no evidence that the door had been drilled or opened. He awoke the sleepers, and each man as he rapped his eyes looked heartily ashamed of himself.

"You're a pretty lot," said Mr. Weller angrily. "I was informed that the burglars were to be assisted by one of our office force. It looks very much as though they had been assisted by every one of you. There's no easier way to assist a burglar than to go to sleep when he's burgling. The door hasn't been drilled or blown open, and there isn't any necessity for opening it that way when the man who wishes to get in knows the combination."

While Mr. Weller was thus delivering himself he was shaking up his watchers. When they were all thoroughly awake he went up to the safe, examined it critically, then, applying the combination, turned the knob and pulled open the door.

There was surprise on the face of Mr. Weller and on the faces of all his watchers. A scattered brazen glitter was first visible, filling the interior of the vault; then it developed into a uniform policeman. But surprise was converted into amazement when the figure of Thomas Murphy, policeman, slipped from the inclosure. He was pale from an all night confinement without sufficient air and had a shaggy expression on his face. It was plain to all that he had been locked in the vault. He tried to explain how it happened, but his looks belied his story.

"Our vault has been entered, as you professed," said Mr. Weller, "and you have earned your reward. But since you are the man who entered it I shall investigate you."

He stepped to the telephone and called for the police. When an officer appeared and saw Mr. Murphy he opened his eyes.

"Well, if there ain't 'Slippery Jim' in uniform!"

"Slippery Jim" had played a shrewd game and if Jenkins hadn't noticed the vault door standing ajar might have succeeded.

There Was No Other Course.
The New England boiled dinner and other dishes like pork and beans, boiled codfish and pumpkin pie best appealed to the appetite of Chief Justice Melville W. Fuller. It was said in Washington that the Fuller Saturday night dinner was baked beans and nothing else, and this story is told "One evening the chief justice, possibly forgetting that it was Saturday, asked a distinguished English jurist home to dinner with him. When the beans came on the Englishman promptly declined them. Mrs. Fuller showed some embarrassment, whereupon the Englishman amiably said: 'Never mind. I'll make it up in the next course.' But, good Lord, exclaimed the chief justice, 'there isn't any other course.' And there wasn't."

In addition to being a very small eater the chief justice was a moderate smoker of modestly priced cigars. He was said to smoke the same kind of cigars, as far as they were obtainable that he smoked when he was struggling hard to establish a living law business in Chicago in the old days. He said he was attracted to these cheap cigars by des of sentiment and tender recollection and that nothing else would taste so good to him. —Springfield Republican.

"Pins and Needles."
After being for a long time in a constricted attitude a peculiar numbness and pricking are often felt in the arm, leg or foot. This is caused by some interruption to the circulation and normally is removed by rubbing or exercise. The reason of the sensation which is decidedly uncomfortable while it lasts is that pressure for a certain length of time deadens the sensibility of a nerve. When this pressure is suddenly removed, as straightening out the leg after sitting with it doubled underneath the body, sensibility gradually returns to the nerve, and as each nerve fiber composing the trunk regains its normal condition of sensibility a pricking sensation is felt, and these successive prickings from the successive awakenings of the numerous fibers have not inaptly been called "pins and needles."

The Prayer That Hurt.
A member of a certain Massachusetts parish prominent for his thrift and personal consequence was also notorious for his overbearing assumptions and pompous airs. Under the distress and fright of a dangerous illness he "put up notes" on several successive Sundays, and after his recovery according to usage, he offered a note to be read by the minister expressive of his thanks. The minister was some what "large" in this part of his prayer, recalling the danger and the previous petitions of the "squire" and returning his grateful acknowledgments with the prayer that the experience might be blessed to the spiritual welfare of the restored man. He closed with these words:

"And we pray, O Lord, that thy servant may be cured of that ungodly strut so offensive in the sanctuary."

Law and Geography.
From the half column paper written at a recent term examination "Some of the chief inventions of the last 100 years are having an act so that no person under fourteen years must go into the public house. Another act was so that no person under the age of sixteen years must smoke cigars, pipes, and cigarettes, and no person under that age can be served with any. My brother Bill is now all right for this invention. He was sixteen last week. Here is a geography answer. The river system of Canada is what you might call very good, but sometimes they shoot the rapids, and unless you are a red Indian, this is very troublesome at times, especially when you get stuck under like Captain Webb." —Manchester Guardian.

The Earliest Cigars.
The earliest mention of cigars in English occurs in a book dated 1734. A traveler in Spanish America named Cookburn, whose narrative was published in that year, describes how he met three friars at Nicaragua, who, he says, "gave us some cigars to smoke, these are leaves of tobacco rolled up in such manner that they serve both for a pipe and tobacco itself; they know no other way here, for there is no such thing as a tobacco pipe throughout New Spain."

Sure Sign.
"What is the sign when a man parts his hair in the middle?" said the old fellow in the front row of the orchestra to a friend loud enough to be heard by the young man behind them. "It's a sign that he's not baldheaded." replied the young man, leaning forward. —Yonkers Statesman.

Hard Luck.
"Poor man, your life must be full of hardships!"
"Ow true yer words are, hidy! Only 'other day I picked up a ticket for a ball an' couldn't use it cos I hadn't got a evenin' suit." —London Ideas.

A Tragic Crisis.
Cholly had put on his necktie and was looking over his supply of hosiery. "I wonder, now," he said, turning pale, "whether the socks have to match the tie or whether the tie has to match the socks." —Chicago Tribune.

Mr. Great Grief.
Cholly—May I have the next waits? Widow—Yes, but dance slowly, as I only recently have gone into mourning. —Club Fellow.

Lots of alleged golden opportunities wouldn't stand the acid test.

Ben Hicks' Mirth

By F. A. MITCHEL.

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"Howdy, Jim?"
"Howdy, Ben?"
"Whar y' been?"
"Down to the Corners fer to buy some goods fer the store."
"Been away some time, haven't ye?"
"A matter o' four days."
"Who did y' leave in charge o' yer store?"
"Wilkins' boy."
"Y' find it kind o' lonesome cavortin' around here without any o' yer family, don't y'?"
"You bet. I been tryin' to make enough to bring my wife a twy out but had debts beat me."
"Hard lines."
"I'm goin' to start out on a new principle. I'm not goin' to trust any one."
The other cast a melanchooly look at Jim Murphy but didn't say anything. Ben Hicks was a short, thickset man or rather boy. Some was quite sure whether he was man or twy. He wore a vest and a pair of trousers much too large for him and no coat. No one had ever seen him smile.
"Yer too late, Jim," he said at last. "Whar d'ye mean?" asked Jim eagerly.
"Yer store's been entered."
"Entered?"
"Yes, the day after you left there was two of 'em come down on Wilkins' boy turned him out in tuk possession. Jim was heartbroken. He cursed the day he had come west to a country where there was neither law nor order. He lamented having separated from his wife and child, for fate seemed to decree that he should remain separated from them. Now, since robbers had come down on his stock of goods he could not get back to them nor bring them to him.
"Have they carted the stuff away?" he asked.
"Dunno, reckon not."
"Suppose they jist gutted it, carryin' off what they wanted and ruined the rest. That's the way these jayhawks cros do."
Ben Hicks made no reply to this. He looked as if he was going to cry. Indeed, he seemed so melancholy that Jim didn't like to show any more de sympathy at the loss of his stock, it seemed to have so lugubrious an effect on his sympathetic friend.
"Oh, well," said Jim, "such things can't be helped. What we have to do in this world when we get knocked down is to get up agin and go ahead. If authin' had happened Cheer up, Ben. I'll bring it all around right in time."
"Whar y' goin' to do with 'em?"
"With the robbers?"
"Yes."
"You don't mean they're there yit?"
"Yes, I do. They're makin' their selves at home."
"In my house, with my things?"
"Yes."
"And not a neighbor has raised a finger to turn 'em out?"
"Nary finger."
"Do you suppose you and I together could tackle 'em?"
"Reckon I could fit the smaller of the two."
"And the other?"
"You kin manage t'other. I reckon."
"Whar was they doin' when you left?"
"Reckon they war fightin'."
"Don't y' know?"
"Well, I'd got quite a ways from 'em when I heard a yell. I looked back and the little man was a kinkin and a bolterin' in 'other one was a hittin' of him."
"Whar then?"
"I come away then."
Jim Speers carried on this dialogue with his friend while he walked along homeward, the other walking beside him. When they came in sight of the house Jim's eyes lighted a little.
"At any rate," he remarked, "they've not burned it. Whar y' goin'?"
"Reckon you kin tackle 'em alone."
"Fraid?"
But Ben made no reply to this intimation on his courage. Jim went on. A three-year-old boy playing on the premises was all that appeared. A woman came out of the house and was about to take the boy in when she espied Jim. Shading her eyes with her hand, she gazed on him for a moment, then ran to meet him.
"Why, Moll, how did you git here?"
"Made the money sewin'."
"And the kid?"
"There he is."
She pointed to the boy before the house. Jim sprang away from her and, running to the boy, took him up in his arms and covered him with kisses. When the wife came up Jim turned to her, took both her and the boy in one embrace and said:
"By thunder, I never had such a change from trouble to happiness in my life. It was all that Ben Hicks' doin's. He tole me the store had been entered, the boy I left in charge fired and let me believe robbers had done it."
Later when the Speers family were celebrating their reunion with a good supper a neighbor came along.
"Whar's the matter with Ben Hicks, Jim?" he asked. "I seen him goin' along chucklin' about sumpin. No one ever saw him do that before. He's solemn as an owl. I asked him whar he was chuckin' about, and he tole me I could find out from you."
Jim explained the source of Ben's mirth.

CARMENCITA, JALEO ESPANOL.

A. FRENCELLI.

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