

Confession of a Burglar

By FRED L. YOUNG

I always worked single handed and had no confidants, confining myself to opening safes. You see, I got into the business while working for a safe and lock company. I became so familiar with the construction of locks that I could do almost anything I liked with them. It was the miserable pay I got that broke up my honesty. One winter my wife and children were all sick and I had to hire a nurse to take care of them besides running up a big doctor's bill. I got all balled up and it occurred to me to take what I needed for the time being from the safe of a rich cousin and put it back when times were better with me. I took what I had to have, but as to putting it back that was another matter. Persons who take for the first time what don't belong to them usually expect to replace it, but the law that necessitates the taking prevents the return. However, I was not fitted for a burglar, and my wife getting wise as to how I made up the family deficiencies it nearly broke her heart. Then I was suspected and lost my legitimate job. Of course I couldn't get another one in my line of business without first class references from my last employers, and this threw me into the burglary line exclusively. One night when I had got into an office where there was one of the safes I had helped construct, the lock of which I knew as well as I knew my own fingers, I laid my tools down before me and, taking up the one I intended to begin with, was starting in when I heard a voice behind me say: "If you can pick that lock right off I'll give you \$100."

Be Careful When You Laugh.

Few people know what dangers lurk in excessive laughter. When we laugh our regular breathing is changed, coming in quick, short respirations because the throat muscles are contracted. It is for this reason that when laughing very heartily at some good joke, we have often to gasp for breath. At times we are obliged to hold our sides on account of the pain a hearty laugh causes us, owing to the partial suffocation of the lungs through the cutting off of their proper air supply. Every muscle in the body becomes contracted during a continued fit of laughter. Often the blood vessels in the face become congested, causing it to turn red and even purple. Should this congestion continue for any length of time apoplexy resulting in death might well occur. It is better in these circumstances to laugh until we cry, for the shedding of tears relieves the congestion of the brain. Tears caused by grief do good in the same way, and that is how, after a great sorrow, many people have been saved from brain congestion and madness by the timely shedding of a few tears. -London Tit Bits

A DEACON'S REMEDY

By M. QUAD

When Philetus Smallman and Eunice Carter were married Deacon Roberts rubbed his hands together and said to his wife. "A happy match, my dear—a very happy one."

"Both are religious," answered the wife. "Very religious. Neither has skipped a sermon or a prayer meeting for years."

"But he didn't swallow." "What! You doubt it?" "I must say I do."

"I've often wondered whether they did or not." "Then away went Philetus to Deacon Roberts to relate the incident and said: "It will be a dreadful thing if it turns out that I have married an unbeliever."

"Ob, I guess Eunice is all right," drawled the deacon. "It's a woman's way to kinder doubt. Even my wife, who got religion when she was seven years old, seems to be a leetle shy on some things. Eunice is purty sure of going to heaven when she dies."

"What's the matter with your husband, auntie?" said the sympathetic mistress. "Did you say he was a victim of senile debility?"

"I dunno 'bout the other part," answered Aunt Dinah sharply, "but he's got de debil in him all right." -Buffalo Express

Romance of a Gainsborough.

A great dealer, now dead, once told me that sauntering into an auction room he observed the portrait of a boy in a hat, ascribed to Gainsborough. He had that power of eye which can pierce through superposed paint, and looking deep down into that picture, he felt certain that the hat was an addition and the boy a girl. He bought the portrait for a song, to find that his dream had come true. It was a true Gainsborough, and the likeness of a beautiful girl. What had probably happened brings a drama before us. Some old Quaker Western had disinherited an eloping daughter, had pulled the Gainsborough down and sent it to a country dealer for transformation. "Dash his wig and buttons" (only the oath was worse) if he would ever look on the unfortunates, ungrateful baggage again. The picture had cost good money and must be kept, though had she had proved. It should be a boy. -Walter Stichel in T. P.'s Weekly of London.

Going Upstairs Backward.

Walking upstairs backward is urged by a London physician as a useful practice in cases of heart weakness, and as helping in a more equal distribution of muscular wear and tear. "Firstly and most important," he says, "walking upstairs backward would prevent any tendency to hurry. No matter how inveterate a 'stair rush' a man might be, he would have to moderate his pace if going backward. This enforced deliberation would, of course, be of great value in heart disease. The second effect would be to relieve the strain from the ordinary walking and climbing muscles (those on the front of the thigh) and to press into service those on the back of the leg, which ordinarily do no work in climbing stairs. The total result, therefore, might be a saving in muscular wear and tear through a more economical distribution of effort. This, of course, would also be of value in cases of heart weakness." -London Mail.

Just Being Human.

Whatever else I may be ashamed of, let me not be ashamed of being human. I may well blush for my little store of knowledge, for it might have been greater, and for my imperfect wisdom, which might have been sounder, for my sins, that might have been fewer, and for my righteousness, which is paltry enough. For excesses, lacks and want of balance I may be justly blamed, but for any genuine human feeling I have no right to bang my head. So I dare say frankly that I love to eat and to drink, I love woman and the child, I love my slipped ease and a chat with good company, I love adventure and the shining sail, I love a rousing book, a clever play and a fair fight. And whatever pride or joy is built upon the contempt of others, I hate. The best part of the heritage the twentieth century brings me is the privilege of being wholly human and not ashamed of it. -Dr. Frank Crane in Woman's World.

Loubet Surprised Constans.

In spite of his imperturbability M. Constans admitted that one man had succeeded in astonishing him. Emile Loubet, afterward president of the republic, did this. "When I left the ministry of the interior," said M. Constans in telling the story, "I handed over to my successor the key of the safe containing the secret service money. It was then the beginning of March, and I had a nice little sum, more than a million, in bundles of 10,000 francs. M. Loubet did a thing which I should not have believed possible."

His Own Medicine.

A medical practitioner on board an American liner administered rather freely sea water among the patients who were ill. No matter what their ailments were, a dose of the briny fluid was quickly handed to them, and they were told to drink it up. One morning the physician fell overboard, which caused quite a consternation among the passengers. The captain came on the scene and inquired the cause. "Oh, it's nothing, sir," answered one of the sailors, "only the doctor has fallen into his own medicine chest." -Exchange.

Cautious Hiram.

Two farmers met in a certain town a day or two after a cyclone had visited that particular neighborhood. "She shook things up pretty bad out at my place," said one, stroking his whiskers meditatively. "By the way, Hiram," he added, "that new tractor you got hurt any?"

No Evidence.

"They tell me that fellow Whiggles is a man of letters," said Joram. "I've heard so," said Snippe, the tailor, "but I can hardly believe it. I've written to him ten times about a little bill he owes me, and nary a letter can I get out of him." -Harper's Weekly.

Describing It.

"How do you like this chowder, Mr. Starboarder?" asked the landlady. "It is cold, but not clammy," replied Mr. Starboarder. -Philadelphia Record.

Mountaineer Tales

By M. QUAD

"I've had many a fout in my time," began old Zeb White, the possum hunter, "but that has never been but one occasion when I was willin' to admit that I was a licked man. The ole woman was to blame for that. She used to be in the habit of sulkin' around without any cause for it as fur as I could see, and it allus ended in a row of some kind."

"One afternoon I cum home from town to find my ole woman in the sulks. She used to get that way now and then and I knowed what to expect. When she began to jaw I began to whistle but arter half an hour I got mad 'd gone out and slept in the woods."

"I didn't say nothin' to that, and purty soon she fell back and went to sleep agin. Mebbe fifteen minits had passed when the cry come ag'in and sent a shiver over me and brought the ole woman out of bed."

"Befo' the Lawd, but what kin it be? she gasped. "A woman hootin' for help, sez I. "It can't be. No woman would be hootin' around yere this time of night."

"Then it may be an owl." "Her callin' me a fule riled me up, and though I was purty sartin that it was the scream of a wildcat, I determined not to giv in."

"Shoo! It's one o' them Davis gals lost in the woods!" "Then you don't know sugar from sand! Listen to that! Does that sound like the hoot of a woman?"

"Just exactly. I'll bet my ole gun agin a coonskin that it's a woman. I'll open the doab so she kin see the light and then call to her."

"Zeb White, I'm tellin' yo' it's a wildcat and not a woman. If yo' hadn't almost got to be a fule yo' d know by the sound. No woman ever yowled that way, no matter how skeert she was. What yo' gwine to do?"

"Open the doab, of co'se." "Was, if yo' open that doab sumbody's gwine to get clawed and bit, and yo' take my word for it."

"That fild me sum mo', and I was bound to open that doab or bust. I could even h'ar the critter prowlin' around, but I wadn't gwine to let the ole woman bluff me down. I riz up and was listenin', when she sez: "This yere cat is arter meat fur shore!"

"With that I crossed over and opened the back doab, and as I did so the ole woman made a dive fur the bed and kivered up her head. I had just swung the doab back and opened my mouth to hoot when sumthin' knocked me clean across the cabin and uttered an awful scream. It was a sure enough wildcat, and a mighty big one at that. He fust jumped on the bed and scratched at the clothes, but as I got up he turned and tackled me. I was took so sudden that the critter had all the advantage at fust, but himsey I got hold of a stool and sorter held my own. He kept me mighty busy, but I saw the ole woman sittin' up in bed arter a bit and heard her say: "Zeb White, if that's one o' them Davis gals, then she's powerfully changed about since last Sunday. Why don't yo' ask her to take her bonnet off and stay all night?"

Noise.

Noise was not invented by the American people, but they have done more to develop it than any one else. If you doubt this go to a dinner party given by an American society woman. The manufacture of noise in most countries is produced by natural causes. In America it is the work of specialists. There are more people making a living out of noise in this country than anywhere else on earth. Scientists are constantly trying to invent new noises. We depend as much upon new, fresh noises as we do upon new novels, new plays and new advertisements. Noise consists of vibrations, arranged in the noisiest way. A loud noise is not to be despised, but the test of all noises is the one that is different from any other we have ever heard. Huge factories are devoted to the production of noise. It is canned, metallized and string on wires. Nothing succeeds like noise. When we reach the millennium we shall live on noiseless noise. Hasten the day! -Life.

Genial Matthew Arnold.

In his "Memories" Hon. Stephen Coleridge draws this picture of Matthew Arnold: Of the poets I have known in the flesh he was by far the most interesting and charming. Full of humor and geniality, with a blend of the Olympian manner that was perfectly delightful to all who understood him: Children were never afraid of or shy with him, and he would discourse with them magnificently about their toys, assigning startling qualities to them with a twinkling gravity till the children discovered new wonders about the familiar playthings never before suspected.

He persuaded my son Johnnie, when he was about three years old, that he was about three years old, that he, Matthew Arnold, was his horse and kept up the joke at succeeding visits and sent him books with inscriptions, "Johnnie, from his affectionate horse."

Tiny German States.

While it is well known that some of the German states are of ill-proportioned size, few persons are aware that it is quite possible to visit seven of them, including two kingdoms, two duchies and three principalties, in an easy walk of four and a half hours. A good walker, starting from Steinbach in Bavaria, will arrive in half an hour at Lichtenhagen, which is situated in Saxe-Meinigen. Thence the road proceeds in one and one-half hours to Rauschengesees (Reuss, Elder Branch), after which in a few minutes Gleina, in Schwarzburg-Rudolstadt, is reached.

Half an hour's walk brings the pedestrian to Altengesees (Reuss, Younger Branch). An hour farther, on the east stage is another hour's stroll, finishing up at Saaltal, Saxe-Altenburg. -Exchange.

Unexpected Answers.

The French government, wishing to obtain definite statistics on points relating to certain Turkish provinces, sent blanks with questions to be answered to the provincial governors. The replies received from the pasha of Damascus are worth quoting: Q.—What is the death rate in your province? A.—In Damascus it is the will of Allah that no should die. Some die young and some die old. Q.—What is the annual number of births? A.—God alone can say. I do not know and hesitate to inquire.

Q.—Are the supplies of water sufficient and of good quality? A.—From the remotest period no one has died in Damascus of thirst.

General Remarks as to the local sanitation; Man should not bother himself or his brother with questions that concern only God.

Killed by Light.

Those who have studied the strange inhabitants of the Mammoth cave in Kentucky say that the celebrated blind fish from that cavern when placed in illuminated aquaria seek out the darkest places, and it is believed that light is directly fatal to them, for they soon die if kept in a brightly lighted tank. The avoidance of light seems to be a general characteristic of the sightless creatures dwelling in the great cave. One authority to avoid the light and animalcules from the waters of the cavern hiding under a grain of sand on the stage of a microscope. It is thought that the light in these cases is in some manner perceived through the sense of touch. -Exchange.

The Difference.

A certain capitalist said bitterly, apropos of a dishonest liquidation where in he had been caught: "There are pessimists who say that marriage is a failure, but between a marriage and a failure there's this difference: "In a marriage the wife takes the husband's name, while in a failure the husband takes the wife's name." -New York Tribune.

Rescue de Luxe.

"Hurry up and save that girl!" bawled the fire chief. "Why don't yo' hurry up?" The fireman bent over and whispered down three stories: "I'll have her on the ladder in a min ute, chief. I'm waiting for her to curl her hair." -Washington Herald.

Corrected.

Little Margie-Mamma said for you to send up a pound of coffee. Grocer—All right. Ground? Little Margie—No; third floor front. -Chicago News.

A rash man provokes trouble, but when the trouble comes he's no match for it. -Chicago Proverb.