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RUSSIA'S POLICE TRAPS.

The System That is Most Dreaded by the Secret Societies.

One of the favorite devices of the detective department of Russia is the police trap. It is a method known to all criminal investigation departments.

The plan as practiced in Russia is to enter the house of the suspected person at an early hour in the morning and remove him to the police headquarters.

The officers in charge of the trap have one inviolable order—to arrest and hold everybody who enters the house.

Stories abound of the efficiency and also of the absurdity of these police traps.

Of all the systems used by the Russian detective centers the police trap is the most dreaded by the secret orders.

In the pursuit of their distinct and independent objects individual men hold the same relation to the great purpose of God which the separate workmen upon a complex and magnificent structure do to the original design and ultimate effect of the whole.

No Free Advertising. A Chicago violinist who gives concerts was bitterly disappointed with the account of his recital printed in one paper.

A Keen Watcher. It was the third act in a third class drama, and the wife was standing over the dead body of her murdered husband.

Mecca of the Buddhists. Tibet lies between the latitude of Rome and Cairo, yet, owing to the fact that it is nearly all one series of lofty tablelands, its climate is purely arctic.

An Infamy. Some years ago we remember meeting at the door of a second-hand bookshop an excited Irishman.

Making a Bridal Gown

There Was a Change Before It Was Finished.

By LITTELL M'CLUNG

When Mamie Wilson's aunt, the seamstress, passed away to happier realms, leaving Mamie and her ten-year-old sister well nigh penniless, everybody in Christiansburg was sympathetic.

Dry eyed, a sigh of distress buried deep in her heart, Mamie left the seminary six months before diploma day and took up the urgent task of supporting herself and keeping her sister at school.

So the weather worn sign that had swung for many years from the lattice-work of the little ivy covered veranda disappeared, and in its place appeared a fresh, new board, on which was painted, "Miss Mamie Wilson, Dressmaker."

Mamie knew that she could sew as fine a seam as ever went into a gown, and she hoped that her more fortunate girl friends in Christiansburg would give her lots of work to do.

But she was doomed to disappointment. After the sympathetic stage had passed friends became politely critical. "What an ordinary vocation for such a bright girl!" commented one. "I doubt if she can sew, anyway," said another.

"It's an outrage," he declared, "that every woman in this burg doesn't give Mamie something to do! Why, I bet she could make a Parisian gown if it came to it!"

His opportunity did come, but in a way he least expected. A few mornings later his father announced at the breakfast table that his sister Lelia was going to marry the leading lawyer and politician of the place, who was on the eve of being nominated for congress.

Lelia said nothing, but looked fixedly at her plate. Harold gasped several times and then entered a protest against such a sudden decision. But Randolph senior was a man of immense determination.

"Why, I shall telegraph to New York for my dressmaker to come at once," she answered without showing much interest.

"Well, as one final favor you'll do nothing of the kind, sis," he supplicated. "Lelia, for the sake of family, don't go through the agony of having a New York tailor down here. Why not let Mamie Wilson make your costume?"

"Mamie Wilson!" exclaimed Lelia Randolph, a suspicious light in her eye. "The idea, Harold! You surely don't think Miss Wilson could fashion the kind of gown that I want?"

"I don't think anything about it," declared Harold with emphasis. "I know she can make any sort of dress to a queen's satisfaction. She's an expert with the needle, and she has excellent taste. Besides, if I'm any judge, she's exactly your height, and she doesn't weigh five pounds more or less than you do. Why, she could model a dress over her own figure and give you a perfect fit!"

"There'll be no tailor from New York, Miss Wilson shall make my wedding gown!"

When she learned that she was to fashion Miss Randolph's bridal robes Mamie was the happiest girl in town. She knew this stroke of fortune meant for her other valuable orders, and she concentrated her efforts to produce the finest costume ever seen at a Christiansburg marriage.

Two weeks later a filmy glory of silk and lace was evolving rapidly from under the deft fingers. The bride to be was delighted, and her brother was as happy as the prospective bridegroom.

He stopped frequently to inquire as to the progress of the gown. Each time he was met by smiling eyes that held genuine gratitude in their dark depths, for the little dressmaker could not help suspecting that Harold had been directly instrumental in her being given the piece de resistance of the trousseau.

But all Mamie's bright hopes were doomed to sudden blight. One morning Christiansburg awoke to hear the startling news that Lelia Randolph had eloped with a penniless though talented young mining engineer who had been prospecting in the neighborhood.

"Cheer up, all of you!" he said to his frightened mother and sisters. "This fellow sis has chosen is all right. I'm glad, I can tell you, that she had the good sense to favor him over the other chap and the courage to take him! Lelia will bring him back in a few days, and father will deed them a house; you'll see! Dad will roar for awhile, but in the end he will give him a good job with a good salary attached, and everything will work out O. K. Don't you see it will?"

This optimism finally cleared the atmosphere of some of its gloom. When calm returned once more Harold got down to business. He made out a check payable to Miss Mamie Wilson for the full amount that was to be paid for his sister's wedding outfit. His mother signed it without a word.

Then the young man made a bee-line for the dressmaker's. Mamie answered his ring and smiled as she invited him in, but there was a suspicious mist in her eyes.

"Oh, I'm dreadfully sorry it's happened," she ventured sympathetically. "Don't let it worry you, Mamie," replied Harold lightly. "It'll turn out all right. I came down to pay for the dress; here's mamma's check."

"Yes, but you're going to finish it," he protested kindly. "Certainly, if you wish it," she answered. "Then your sister will have use for it in some other way, after all?"

"Lelia have use for it?" he repeated. "Certainly not. It's for another girl now!" "Another girl!" she echoed, her eyes sparkling. "Why, it wouldn't fit just any girl, I fear."

"Yes, there is one girl it will fit," said Harold slowly, "for she's just Lelia's size. I do hope she would like to wear it for me. Do you think she would?"

He was looking steadily into Mamie's eyes now, and his lips were compressed. She returned his gaze, and as she divined that he was earnest her heart beat joyously.

"I'm afraid she would, very much," she whispered weakly as he nestled in his arms.

Shrewd Retort. Sir Robert Ball, the famous astronomer, a keen humorist, was never loath to recount a joke at his own expense.

Big Success. Mabel—Was your bazaar a success? Gladys—Yes, indeed. The minister will have cause to be grateful. Mabel—How much were the profits? Gladys—Nothing. The expenses were more than the receipts. But ten of us got engaged, and the minister is in for a good thing in wedding fees.—St. Louis Post-Dispatch.

OUR FIRST PHOTOGRAPHS.

Head Tongs, Long Exposures and the Ordeal of Looking Pleasant.

An event was the taking of the first photographs in the olden days, when photography was still hampered by pitchforks and long exposures. There are few good baby pictures of our fathers. The fond mother and father sit bolt upright, frozen or petrified, while between them is a very starched little dress surmounted by a very blurry little spot which represents a composite of several partial likenesses of the hopeful.

But it was with the child of ten or twelve years that the old time photographer succeeded best, the child that has reached the age capable of feeling the tremendous responsibility of having a picture taken. Every old album, such as used to grace the center table in the front, parades before you a long array of these conscientious young people undergoing the terrible ordeal of "sitting." Loving mothers spent hours combing those smoothly plastered locks tightly back and binding them uncompromisingly behind the irreproachable ribbon bows.

At the last moment, after the operator has screwed the iron fork tight up behind the trembling head and has pushed the huge camera here and there, ducking in and out under the black cloth in a most awe inspiring manner, mother has slipped into range and given just one more pat to the starched skirts and one more tug at the big sleeves.

Then there came the awful command, "Look pleasant," which the victim did by a remarkable effort of will, usually attaining somewhat the expression which comes over the face of a strangling cat. Five minutes later the "artist" announces that "that will do," and the family feels the same relief that comes to friends with the announcement that the patient has survived the operation and is resting comfortably.—Exchange.

Quill Pen Economies.

As an instance of the economy of the quill pen the story is told of Dr. Warner, who was in a Strand stationer's when some one came in and bought a hundred quills for 6 shillings. The doctor afterward decried against such extravagance and stated that he had written his "Ecclesiastical History" (two volumes) and "Disquisition on the Common Prayer," both first and corrected copies, all with one single quill pen, and that an old one before he commenced the work! He was soon known as Single Pen Warner, and it is related that a certain countess begged the pen from Dr. Warner, placed it in a specially made gold case, had its history engraved outside and added it to her cabinet of curiosities.—London Chronicle.

A Serious Defect.

A woman crossing in a ferryboat told a deck hand that she wanted to see the captain when the boat reached the slip and make a complaint. When the captain came the woman said: "I want to make a complaint about those life preservers in the deck ceiling. Just look at them!" "Well, what in the world is the matter with 'em, madam?" asked the captain, as he looked at them. "Matter with them?" echoed the woman, "don't you see that they're dirty? They ought to be washed. If a woman with a nice dress on had to put one of those dirty things on over it it would never be fit to wear again."

Six Cents and a Dollar.

A young man once went with a millionaire to buy a pair of suspenders. "We'll have to cross the street," said the millionaire. "We can buy them 6 cents cheaper over there." "Cross the street to save 6 cents!" exclaimed the other. To which the millionaire replied by taking out a silver dollar and twirling it. "Young man," he said, "do you know that one of the hardest things in the world is to make that dollar earn 6 cents in a whole year?"

Somewhat Confusing.

"And how is grannie, Brian?" asked the kind friend. "Oh, she's better," replied Brian. "The day before yesterday the doctor said that she might get up the day after tomorrow, and yesterday was tomorrow, and today is the day after tomorrow. So she's up today!" Collapse of kind friend.—Exchange.

Our Jury System.

The jury system with twelve men comes down to us from the time of viking invasions of England, those people customarily dividing their lands into cantons, and each canton into twelve portions under twelve chiefs. These passed judgment on the more serious criminal and civil cases, and the custom has outlasted all the intervening centuries.