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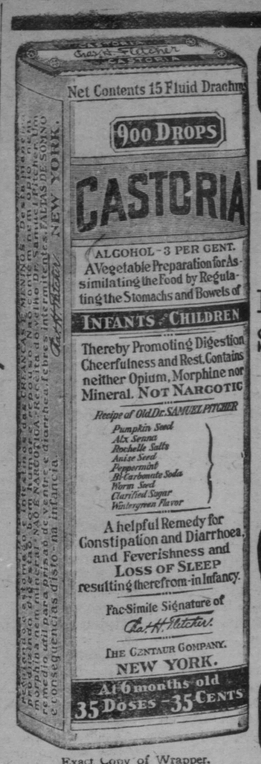
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THURSDAY, FEBRUARY 28th

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However, under the influence of a choice cigar almost anyone thinks he could run the war better than it is being done.

A Benevolent Burglar

By Ruth Alden Hayes

(Copyright, 1917, Western Newspaper Union.)

Noiselessly the man with a bent wire opened the gate of a rear court, cautiously he crossed the stone-paved yard. He glanced up at the handsome mansion looming before him. It was dark and deserted looking. The intruder fumbled for a tool in his pocket, pushed back a door and was within the house.

Burglar Bill Dorsey, if you please—reformed. It did not look that way, but, while the old crafty tricks were brought into force and professional skill exerted to the utmost, he was innocent as a child as to the notion and purpose in view in thus breaking into the house of rich Seth Payne.

Bill groped his way without a misstep, down a corridor and up a flight of stairs, for he had pursued that course only a week agone—and had got away with the swag! In his pocket at the present moment lay that same plunder, a diamond-jeweled wrist watch, a pearl necklace, two valuable rings. He could see a light coming through a keyhole.

"Thunder!" Bill expressed voicelessly. Then he took another peep. He could have guffawed, for the man within his view, kneeling in front of a safe, had on the floor beside him a hammer, a chisel and a screw driver. Bill could not refrain a chuckle at the sight of this kit.

"A rival," he muttered—"but an amateur. Being sincerely reformed, it is my duty to lead this novice out of the downward path. Hello, pal!"

With the hearty salutation, Bill pressed open the door and stepped into the room. The other, a young, handsome man of perhaps twenty-five, made a dive for a coat pocket. Bill put up the hand of vigorous remonstrance.

"Don't draw a gun, pardner," he submitted, "I'm a yegg, too."

"But I am not," declared the other.

"What are you doing here, then?" interrogated Bill pointedly.

"I am trying to get into that safe."

"I see—but you won't, with those carpenter's tools."

"Can you?" pressed the other.

"Rather," asserted Bill promptly. "That's nothing but a cheap old box. I can open it on the combination alone."

"Do it and I will pay you any price you ask," urged the young man.

"Do you belong here?" asked Bill.

"Not at all."

"Broke in, like myself?"

"Yes—there was an open window, so you might say that."

"Sorry," said Bill, shaking his head slowly, "but, as I told you, I've reformed. I've promised Kate, the sweetest girl in the world, to never turn a trick again and I mean to keep my promise."

"Then what are you doing here now?" amazedly inquired the other, who was Arthur Ridgely, and a respectable member of society, and an honest man, and free from guile as a child, but he did not tell Bill this—yet.

"Well," exclaimed Bill bluntly, "I came here to return what I took away a week ago," and he exhibited the packet. "It was my last raid. Kate said she'd never marry me unless I put it back where I found it, we'll say as evidence of my good faith in reforming."

"I see, I see," murmured young Ridgely slowly, as if struck by the oddity of the situation. "You are a good man and I see the hand of destiny in my thus meeting you. I came here like a thief in the night, I made myself amenable to the penalty for housebreaking, but influenced by a pure and holy motive."

"I hope so," said Bill dubiously. "Can you prove it?"

"Yes, I can. If you will open that safe, in the left-hand pigeonhole of the upper row you will find a green envelope. It is of no value, but immensely harmful to innocent, suffering victims. To get that paper means the freedom, perhaps the life of a reputable citizen, the happiness of an innocent, beautiful girl just budding into womanhood. Man, glorify the reformation you boast of, by doing a deed that will bring you blessings your whole life through!"

"Why, you talk like a story book," said Bill. "Say, I'm interested. A regular romance."

"And a tragedy—unless I get that paper."

"All right," nodded Bill definitely, after a moment of thought. "I'll help you out. Here's the bargain. I open that safe. I take out a green envelope, nothing more. You are not to touch a single thing. We leave here and you convince me that you need that envelope for a good purpose before I part with it."

"Agreed—oh, gladly! gladly!" spoke the young man with eagerness.

"Stand aside and keep quiet," and Bill got on his knees before the safe. The other watched him with mingled anxiety and admiration. Bill, expert that he was, focused his acute senses of touch and hearing upon the combination disk. Click!—the tumblers grated, the steel door moved. Bill pulled it open. There was bold, bank notes, bulky securities in view, but both passed them by as dross. Bill located the pigeon hole indicated and pulled it open.

"Is that it?" he questioned, drawing out a green envelope.

"Yes, it must be," said Arthur Ridgely.

"Gather up your truck, then, and let us get out of here while the getting is good," observed Bill tersely. He closed and relocked the safe. He placed the restored fruits of his former visit in the cabinet where he had originally found them. Bill led his companion from the place and left no traces of the double nightly visitation behind them.

"Now, then, for a confab," he observed, as they finally reached the street.

"Where shall we go?"

"Oh, some quiet restaurant," said Bill, "anywhere except a drinking joint. Those are the traps that led me to become what I was. Now, then, let's have the dope," he added ten minutes later, as he and the strange new friend he had made were seated in a secluded corner of an eating room.

"I am Arthur Ridgely," spoke Bill's companion promptly, "reasonably well off and engaged to marry a beautiful young lady. The man whose house we visited tonight admired her, demanded her hand in marriage. Her father was an old business associate. The other held a great power over the father of—oh, I will speak her name, Angela. The possession of a document in that green envelope enabled its holder to disgrace, perhaps imprison Angela's father. To evade the same, broken heartedly she turned me adrift, sacrificing herself to save her father."

"The father had gone wrong, eh?" submitted Bill bluntly.

"Not in a criminal sense. In order that a large but failing business might be reorganized, he took upon himself the risk of an irregularity. He saved the business and no real wrong was done. That was years ago. I learned the truth from his lawyer, who has visited the wretch who held the document, saw it, noticed where he put it in the safe. Now his fangs are drawn, and oh! the relief, the happiness for those I love."

"Take it," said Bill impulsively, and handed the green envelope to Arthur Ridgely.

"I want your address," said the latter, fairly trembling with emotion.

"My city one changes tomorrow, for I am going to get married and leave for a pretty little place in the country," and Bill gave the details as to name and location.

One month later Bill was whistling a cheery tune in the rear yard of his new home, and his happy-faced wife was singing as she bent over the washtub under a flowering cherry tree. Abruptly an automobile turned from the road, halted and Arthur Ridgely sprang out.

"Dear friend!" cried the exuberant young man, seizing Bill's hand in a fervor of joy. "We haven't forgotten you."

"My wife," spoke Bill proudly, nodding to the smiling lady at the clothesline.

"Two brides! Angela," called Ridgely, and she alighted from the machine.

"Good friend, indeed!" she cried to Bill. "You darling!" she directed at Mrs. Dorsey, as she threw her arms around her neck and kissed her.

"You look very happy here, Mr. Dorsey," observed Ridgely.

"Happy!" cried his buxom wife. "He's whistling at his work all day long and I have to sing to keep from crying for joy."

"It's just paradise," declared Bill. "We've got a lease on the little place for ten dollars a month and a promise of the use of five acres adjoining."

"You needn't pay any more rent," said Ridgely, and he extended a folded document.

"What's that?" questioned Bill.

"It's a deed to the house and lot and the five acres, free and clear—a belated wedding present, Angela's and mine," was Arthur Ridgely's reply.

Can't Beat the Kiddies.

Children are the original keepers of the shrine of humor, says a writer in the Washington Star.

I have an intellectual friend, who has analyzed h-u-m-o-r from h to r, and knows more about it than real philosophers. He says humor is based on cruelty, or incongruous happenings and a lack of reason.

The reason children are always saying funny things is because they are often cruel and do not reason, he says.

I don't believe all humor is summed up so, but certainly the following scrap of conversation overheard the other day would tend to bear out his statements:

Two small girls were "playing house" in an apartment house hall.

"Good morning, Mrs. Jones. I just came over to see you," said Mrs. Smith (seven years old).

"Oh, I'm so glad to see you," replied Mrs. Jones (eight years old). "How are you?"

"Oh, Mrs. Jones, I'm in such trouble," sighed Mrs. Smith. "Mr. Smith just died."

"That's too bad," commiserated Mrs. Jones. "Poor Mrs. Smith!"

"But the funeral isn't until three o'clock," said poor Mrs. Smith, "so we've plenty of time to go to the movie show."

When He Quit.

A woman having occasion to go to a small cleaning and dyeing establishment, where she had not been for some months, was surprised to find the store occupied by an entirely different line of business. Going inside, she asked the new shopkeeper why Schmidt had moved away and where he could be found. "Schmidt?" he replied. "Oh, he died and went out of business two months ago."

The original geometrician was Mother Nature. Observe her work in the making of crystals. Each kind of gemstone crystallizes on a certain pattern of its own, perfectly symmetrical; it is the same way with metals when they form crystals, says a writer.

If a cupful of salt and water be allowed to evaporate slowly in a cool place, the salt will take the form of ever so many cubes, each one of them perfect.

One mineral in crystallizing will invariably take the shape of an octahedron, another of a dodecahedron. Yet another will assume the form of a multitude of cubes, perhaps half an inch on an edge, with a chip accurately cut off of each corner. It seems like a joke.

Gold and silver crystallize as cubes. A crystal of iron sulphide resembles in shape a wild rose. Water has its own crystalline forms, like any other mineral. Ice, of course, is a kind of rock—as much a rock as granite—but is remarkable for its low melting point. This is lucky for us, because this rock, in a molten condition, furnishes us with drink.

SANDYVILLE

Owing to the drifted roads and rough weather the Mite Society did not meet last Friday at the home of Mrs. L. W. Caple, but will meet at a later date.

The weather has been severe with about 20 inches of snow on the level. Tuesday was the coldest day this winter, 10 below zero in the early morning. The roads drifted to such an extent that a number of trucks and automobile stuck in drifts Monday night by Mr. Deuton Leister's and had to be shoveled out the next morning. The traveling has been worse than for many years.

On Sunday, Monday, Tuesday and Wednesday, about 130 army trucks passed by here. Notwithstanding their rough, delayed trip, they looked bright and happy. They also got stuck in the drifts near this place.

Miss Grace Yingling was taken to Maryland University last Saturday and was operated on for appendicitis Monday morning, which was a success. She is getting along very well. Her many friends wish her a speedy recovery.

Measles, mumps and whooping cough have been prevalent in this community among children.

Mr. and Mrs. Wilson Zepp entertained a number of friends on Thursday night of last week. Music, games and social conversation were indulged in.

Mr. and Mrs. Luther Brown entertained some friends one night last week.

A sled load of young married people went to Mr. and Mrs. Raymond Shillings on Friday night and had a very pleasant time.

Miss Lottie Caple returned home last Friday after having spent a month in Philadelphia and two weeks in Baltimore, visiting relatives.

Miss Myrle Caple spent several days in Baltimore last week.

Evidently the ground hog saw its shadow Saturday.

CHARITY BEGINS AT HOME

The Fort Wayne News calls attention to a press telegram from Cleveland, Ohio, dated January 19th, which stated that the Garfield family—of which the national fuel administrator is a member—would sell a part of their private stock of 32 tons of coal in the bins of their summer home at Mentor, Ohio, to "persons in need". All they would have to do would be to haul it from the cellars of the three big houses there. These 32 tons of hard coal had been delivered ten days before to heat the empty houses of the fuel administrator's family, a time when people all over the country were being limited to ton deliveries, and after the coal seizures of Governor Cox. The fact that a doctor rarely, if ever, prescribes for members of his own family didn't seem to bother Dr. Garfield in permitting his family to have plenty of coal while the rest of Mentor shivered.

FUEL CONSERVATION NOTICE

The continued alarming shortage of fuel for domestic consumption and for industrial plants is a matter of grave concern and all conservation measures for saving fuel are highly important. Coupled with this of course is the necessity for saving heat, light and power, in order to avoid waste of fuel.

Ferdinand A. Meyer, Federal Fuel Administrator for Maryland, is co-operating with Mr. F. W. Besley, State Forester, other State officials, and with County Chairmen and members of local fuel committees in every county of Maryland, so that through increased use of wood for fuel, distress may be avoided. Coupled with this is the work of disseminating information as to soft coal, so that when this is available it may be used economically and best results obtained, thus releasing to a pronounced degree the continued heavy demands on Anthracite coal for places where soft coal cannot be burned.

TO STOP LOSS OF 150,000,000 EGGS

Over 150,000,000 eggs will be lost to the food supply of the United States if the old practice of sending hens to market at this season is continued. Figures compiled by the poultry specialists of the United States Department of Agriculture show that more than 5,000,000 laying hens, each capable of producing 30 eggs, are sent to market from the Southern States in the winter and early spring.

Every effort, therefore, is being made to encourage farmers to keep their hens until after the spring laying season, thereby getting a dividend for keeping the hen through the winter. The specialists point out that when a hen is sold for meat early in the spring, the farmer gets no egg return for feeding and keeping her through the worst months of the year.

Moreover, the hen in May is marketable as poultry after she has produced her spring eggs. Poultry in May may bring 2 cents a pound less than it does in February, but, they point out, the 30 eggs produced by the hen, largely from wastes, more than offset any reduction in the price offered for live poultry.

An energetic egg-saving campaign to prevent early slaughter of the hen that "lays the golden egg" is now being conducted throughout the Southern States. North of the Ohio River, farmers have long appreciated the advantage of getting the spring crop of eggs and marketing their hens after the laying season or in the fall. They believe that adoption of this plan by southern chicken raisers will be profitable and will materially add to the food supply of the Nation.

The people who complain that poultry raising does not pay, frequently find that nothing else pays.

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