Did Not Want Liberty

By JAMES BLACK

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"YOU'RE a free man, 3925. The governor has pardoned you."

The trowel fell from the old convict's hand. The warden's face wavered before his eyes. His hopes of thirty years—come true at last!

Thirty years had passed since his sentence of death had been commuted to one of life imprisonment. He had killed in hot blood—over the woman he had married, who had proved faithless to him. That was why they commuted his sentence. And for thirty years he had dreamed of this day.

For ten years past he had been a trusty, in charge of the penitentiary greenhouse. He had done wonders with it, made it an asset to the penitentiary. He had forgotten it now.

"I don't know who'll look after the greenhouse, Blake," said the warden.

"Blake!" Yes, he was Blake. He had almost forgotten that.

"What are you going to do?"

"Get a job, I suppose." What difference did it make to him? He had no one left now—no one.

On the following day Blake, attired in a new blue suit, with a considerable sum in his pocket, departed for his old town.

But it had changed beyond recognition, the whole quarter where he had lived had been pulled down, everything was different. He stared in astonishment at the high buildings. And the motor cars—they went so fast!

They went so fast that the end of the day found him an inmate of the town hospital, with a crushed rib and dislocated shoulder. As he had money, he was given a private room. A month later, when he was discharged, he found he had just nine dollars in the world. All the rest had gone for the room and attendance.

With the nine dollars he took a ticket back to the penitentiary town. That was more like home to him. For three nights and days he roamed the streets. Who would give work to an old man with wild eyes and disjointed speech?

And then the great resolve was born in him. The penitentiary greenhouse, which was barred on the inside at night, projected out of a corner of the grim building, so as to catch the sunlight. And Blake knew all about that structure of steel and glass.

It was only to get a foothold on the brick base and pull up the catch of the side window that admitted air.

The next night found him inside the place. The moon was shining brightly. He uttered a cry. It was all going to ruin.

Nobody had watered any of his flowers since his departure. The begonias were shedding their leaves, those poinsettias which he had been raising for the warden's wife were all drooping. The ferns were dying in the dried pots. And ruthless hands had cut away all the flowering African lilies that he had prized so much.

Forgetful of everything else, Blake set to work. He attached the hose, he sent streams of water over all the pots. He made cuttings and planted them in a little of that fine, soft sand that still remained. He pruned, he gathered dead leaves and piled them in a corner to make compost.

The sun came up and found the old man hard at work. He labored on, forgetful of the passage of time. Now those peonies, in which he had taken such pride—

The warden and the chief keeper found him kneeling in a pool of muddy water, busy at work. A glance at the open window told them all.

The warden stepped forward and touched the old man on the shoulder. Blake looked up and uttered a startled cry.

"For God's sake don't send me away! I couldn't get work. I felt like committing another murder to get back here!"

"Blake, this is lucky for both of us," the warden said. "The commissioners were talking of trying to get a man from outside to take charge of the greenhouse. None of our men are able to. How would you like the job?"

A slow smile dawned over old Blake's face.

"Like it?" he stammered. "Warden, I believe I'll have some better poinsettias for your wife than ever."

Swimming by Machinery.

An ingenious apparatus designed to carry even persons unskilled in swimming has been devised by a French engineer. Th apparatus consists of an air-filled cushion fixed on the back of a person, which, by supplying the desirable floating capacity, prevents him from sinking. Fastened to the chest by means of leather straps is a shield fitted in front of the head for protecting the nose and mouth against the impact of the waves. This, as well as another shield, likewise fastened to the chest, carries the propelling device proper, consisting of a small screw which moves to and fro on a worm shaft.

The propeller is actuated by a hand-driven lever system. Both hands seize the end of a long lever arm to produce the reciprocating motion, resulting in the rotation of the propeller on its worm shaft. The invention is held to be useful for sport as well as for life saving.

Thus Many Will Swear.

Bishop (visiting Sunday school class)—"What is the chief evil of gambling?" Boy (who knew)—"Losing, sir."—Exchange.

The Old Man's Secret

By MORRIS SCHULTZ

(©, 1924, Western Newspaper Union.)

SELDOM, if ever, had such a bombshell been thrown into the little town. Selvington had always been proud of its ancient origin, and of the impeccable character of its leading citizens. And now its honor lay in the hands of this little old, bent man who could sweep all the pride of the leading families into the dirt.

How had he come there—this little old man of eighty years, with the hump, and the high-pitched cackle, this man whom everybody feared? It was said that he had entered Selvington as a common tramp. He had called on the mayor, and made himself known. He had been born in Selvington years before, and his father had left him papers. So long as he could work he had no desire to use them, but now—well a man must live.

And the name he whispered in the mayor's ear was not the name he went by; but it made the mayor glance at him with sudden apprehension.

Next morning the news was all over town. The banker heard it and went to see the mayor. So did Judah Grainger, the noted lawyer, one of the lights of Selvington. And Mrs. Emily Baker—she had good reason to fear the little old man with the hump.

What was going to be done for him? A subscription was quickly made up, under the pretense of charity, but it far exceeded any charitable subscription raised for a single person at any previous time in the history of Selvington. The little old man was assigned the best room in the house of the Widow Parkes.

There he sat all day long, sorting his papers, and it was known he always worked with a loaded pistol beside him.

The banker went to the mayor. "If ever murder was justified," he said, white with passion, "it is now."

And Mrs. Emily Baker—it was said that she had gone secretly to see the little old man, had gone down on her knees to him.

And the attempted burglary at the Widow Parkes' house—who had staged that? Was it a genuine burglar who hobbled off, leaving a trail of blood behind him, as the result of a wound from the little old man's pistol?

How the little old man cackled when he went to call on the mayor next day.

"The papers are no longer in my possession," he said. "I have given orders that if I die by accident, they are to be published. There is no newspaper in the land but would pay fabulously for the news."

The mayor's stenographers in the next room heard the little old man's cackle. And the mayor's broken answer.

He was exacting, too, the little old man. Blackmail, that is what it was—blackmail was paid him by the whole town.

"I'll keep the secret," he assured interrogators. Half the town knew it. But not one of them was brave enough to tell it to his neighbor. Half knew, half didn't.

"I'll keep the secret, and it'll die with me if you treat me white," said the little old man.

His whims! He took it into his head to eat roast goose in April, and the countryside had to be scoured for a mature bird, who was parboiled for hours before it was edible. Then there was that time at the county fair, when the little old man insisted on riding back in the mayor's carriage.

And that awful time when he made Mrs. Emily Baker tear off her wedding ring in the street and fling it away!

And not a soul dared speak. No one dared to resent it.

One of the people not in the secret was the reporter for a metropolitan daily. He got wind of affairs at Selvington, and came out to see the little old man. The little old man was very sick, lying propped up with pillows. The mayor called every day to ask for him. Mrs. Emily Baker nursed him with her own hands. How the little old man cackled.

"Tell me the secret," pleaded the reporter. "We'll pay you five thousand dollars."

Avarice shone in the little old man's eyes. "I gave my word," he mumbled. "But—if I was to die—d—n 'em. D—n 'em! I'll make 'em pay!"

A fit of coughing interrupted him. "The secret is—" he gasped, coughed again, and died.

Loss of Sleep Impairs Memory.

Insufficient sleep causes impairment of memory, according to recent researches on the subject of sleep by Professors Engelen, Frerichs and Weygandt of Berlin, Germany. The memory becomes unreliable even if the shortage of sleep has occurred for only a short time. Eight hours is the average needed for sleep, but brain workers sometimes require more. A reduced period of slumber may be partly made up for by increased intensity, a short period of deep, undisturbed sleep having the same effect as a longer and lighter one.

The investigators also conclude that brain workers need a month of rest every year and that even longer vacations do not cause a lessening of acquired abilities but rather an intensification of them.

Some Do Let Go.

Almost every man thinks he has a wild ungovernable nature "if he would let himself go."

Announcement!

Having purchased the interest of Mr. George W. Hoff in the late firm of Klee & Hoff, which was dissolved by mutual consent, I hereby announce to the public that I will continue the business at the same place under the name of

"THE SQUARE DEAL GARAGE,"

where I shall be glad to meet my friends and customers.

Thanking the public for past favors and soliciting a continuance of the same, I am,

Respectfully,

Charles W. Klee.

7 E. Main St. Phone 286. Westminster, Md.

MELROSE

Recently we saw in a back yard a discarded evergreen Christmas tree, without roots, planted in a pitcher. No doubt some child poured a generous supply of water in the pitcher to keep it in a green, growing condition. On Sunday night, the temperature being down to near zero, the pitcher burst in several places, no doubt discouraging the efforts of the amateur gardener.

Mr. and Mrs. Harvey Yingling, living north of here along the Hanover and Baltimore Highway, happened to remember that they had passed over eighteen years of married life, decided to take an outing, as a remembrance in later years. They signalled the bus, enjoyed a beautiful scenic ride to Reisterstown, changed to a street car, the twenty miles, from there to the city being no less interesting. Having plenty of relatives and friends in the city, they were taken to Washington, our Capitol city, a distance o. about 45 miles, in an automobile. Arriving in the "City of magnificent distances," they were taken around to see some of the interesting as well as the beautiful places. Of course, the White House was visited, not forgetting the "Blue Room," but the president and with chief executives of the nation, were nowhere to be seen. To get some breaths of pure air they went to the top of Washington's monument, 555 feet high, getting also a good view of the vast country around them, including the ocean and Potomac river; but the most interesting place visited was the Treasury building. They had the pleasure of seeing money made and counted, even if no one offered them a sample as a souvenir.

The play, by home talent, entitled, "On Board a Slow Train in Missoury," given in Odd Fellow's hall, Manchester, on Wednesday evening of last week to a full house, was a decided success, drawing closest attention and round after round of applause from the well pleased audience.

The bus, connecting us with Reisterstown, making six round trips each day, being convenient to church-goers on Sunday, is gaining in favor, as more people are taking advantage of the comfort and convenience of this new enterprise. Negotiations are going on with officials, pending the permission to cross the Mason and Dixon line, going to Hanover, which will soon be a reality.

One evening last week, Dr. Tracy, of Tracy's drugstore, Hampstead, gave a free exhibition with one of his celebrated radio sets, from the top story of the Meeks Milling Company's plant. It was a great success, causing people to hear and enjoy a fine program all over Hampstead, even being plainly heard by people at Greenmount and points within a radius of two miles or more.

He is able to get the best concerts at the scheduled time of each.

Not everyone finds it convenient to take scientific gymnastic training, but anyone can purchase a bucksaw.

Congress has not passed many bills yet, but a large number have been introduced and pigeonholed.

Among the complaints of indigestion are those of the voters who can't stomach the political platforms.

The farmers are urged to hold their heads high, but they should not hold them so high as to hit the top of the barn door.

After Stock Taking Sale.

Odd lots of groceries and household goods will be sold below cost. Following is one of the many items to be had at this sale.

GLASS BOWLS

25 glass fruit bowls. Very special 15c.

LOUIS SUGAR,

Main and John Sts. Westminster, Md.

AFTER LONG WAIT, BALTIMORE WILL SEE "LIGHTNIN"

"Lightnin," the classic of laughs and heart throbs that gave Broadway a new record with its run of three years at the Gaiety Theatre, will be presented at Ford's, Baltimore, beginning Monday, January, 28, with Thomas Jefferson, son of the late Joseph Jefferson, in the role of Bill Jones, created by the late Frank Bacon. Bessie Bacon, who appeared in her father's support for more than two years, is also prominent in the cast, which is said to be the most brilliant now in existence.

Due to a combination of circumstances, one of which is the refusal of John Golden to send out duplicate or "No. 2" companies in his comedy success, Baltimore has waited more than four years to see "Lightnin." The three years' run of the record-smasher in New York, followed by nearly two years in Chicago, have kept it beyond the reach of other cities. Early inquiries and a rush of mail orders indicate that the play is enthusiastically awaited and there is no doubt that it will duplicate its usual feat in playing to capacity audiences throughout the engagement."

"Lightnin" is described as a typical red-blooded American comedy-drama, with a blending of laughter, thrills and gentle pathos that puts it in the same class with "The Old Homestead," "The Music Master," "Way Down East" and a few others that have lured to the boxoffice millions who seldom attend the theatre. It has a courtroom scene that reaches new heights in heart throbs and clean fun.

Mail orders for "Lightnin" will serve as the best protection for out-of-town people. Orders accompanied by addressed, stamped envelopes and remittances including ten percent tax payable to Ford's Grand Opera House, will be filled before thebox office sale, which opened on Thursday, January 24. Prices: Nights,

Orchestra, $2.50; Balcony, first 3 rows $2; next 3 rows, $1.50; balance, $1; gallery, 50c. Saturday Matinee, Orchestra, $2; balcony, six rows, $1.50; balance, $1; gallery, 50c. Popular prices will prevail at the Wednesday matinee, with the entire orchestra scaled at $1.50; the entire balcony, $1 and the gallery, 50c. It should be borne in mind that these prices do not include tax, for which ten per cent should be added to remittances.

The importance of radio in the production and marketing of agricultural products is brought out in a special survey of about 1,200 representative farmers, just completed by the United States Department of Agriculture. More than 50 per cent of the 1,200 farmers replying reported that they owned tube sets employing three or more tubes, while approximately 50 per cent of the farmers reporting having homemade sets ranging from simple crystal detectors to tube sets.



The great road maker's convention in Chicago is over. The exhibitors have taken their machinery and materials and departed. The Coliseum, which for a week demonstrated the wonderful progress which road making has had, is empty of all that pertains to highways.

But the results of the exhibit remain. Never before was so remarkable a gathering of educational material regarding highways put beneath one roof. Never before has it been possible for anyone, within the space of a few hundred feet, to gather so comprehensive an idea of what roads are, how they are built, what they are built of, what they cost, how they should be used, how they should be financed.

It is very certain that the educators, builders, engineers, county and State officials, teachers, students, and the general public which thronged this great exposition, took away with them much information, the results of which will be apparent for many years to come. The little leaven, leavens the whole lump; the educated man spreads knowledge about him. Those who have learned of roads, not as a theory but as they are, will talk; those they talk to will be interested; a greater and greater degree of sentiment will be created regarding the necessity of more, many more, good roads in this country.

In its special educational field, the road exposition undoubtedly did a great deal, but its greatest achievement unquestionably is its showing forth to the Nation the state of the art of highway building, and educating road makers, users and buyers alike, in its boundless possibilities.

More than $2,000,000,000 of business was done by farmer business organizations in 1923, according to estimates made by the United States Department of Agriculture. The estimates are based upon reports from 6,639 organizations which did a total business of $1,200,000,000. Reports have been received from 8,313 associations and additional reports are yet to come in from approximately 2,000 organizations.

In the feeding of pigs an acre of clover or alfalfa pasture will save 1,149 pounds corn and 468 pounds of tankage as compared with dry-lot feeding, research in the Animal Husbandry Division of the United States Department of Agriculture shows. Pasture feeding is also advantageous because of the fertility added to the soil by the growth of legume hay.

Announcement

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