

A Death Shadow

By F. A. MITCHEL

An officer of the Belgian army was summoned before the king. They were in Flanders, and the Belgians constituted the tip of the left wing of the allied army.

"Captain," said the king, "I wish you to carry a message to the commander of the nearest British troops south of us. Go on foot and on the beach. The distance is short, but is full of danger. You will be as safe on the edge of the water as anywhere. We are not in touch with our allies, but there is no fear of any force pushing into the gap for our rear is defended by the channel. Your danger will come simply from any reconnoitering or other small force that you may happen to meet."

The captain took the message, rolled in a ball the size of a small pill, put it in the lining of his hat, saluted and departed. The hour was dusk. In the eastern sky was a moon in the first quarter. The beach was broad, and the officer walked midway between the line of foam and the dunes.

Was that his shadow down at his left and a trifle in advance of him? No. A shadow must lie in a line with the light interrupted. This one formed an obtuse angle with his body and the moon.

Was it a shadow? It was so faint that he could not tell.

There was a moaning sound to the west that was washing over a bar not far from the shore. The wind was chilly, and the captain felt a corresponding chill in his heart. He did not like that dark spot or shadow or whatever it was. He looked down at the sand and to his left. It was there, barely distinguishable, but surely there.

He looked up at the moon. The dark spot surely could not be made by the moon, for it would be behind him, whereas this was slightly in front of him. He looked at the planet Venus and saw that it was covered at the time by a haze. He cast his eyes again down at his feet, hoping that the dark spot had disappeared. It was still there.

To the south were the lights of a camp; how far he could not tell. That camp was his goal. He wished himself safely there. At night one cannot readily measure distance, and he could not tell whether the lights were far or near. He longed to reach them to escape that intolerable loneliness which weighed upon him.

He knew that at any moment he might receive a shot in the back or from the front. If it came it would come from the dunes on his left, not from the water. He cast occasional glances in the former direction, turning his head to the rear to see if he was followed. He thought he saw a dark something like the figure of a man against the sky line behind him. If it was a man he was soon in hiding. He it passed into the dark dunes.

He edged down to the verge of the water and walked almost in the foam. The sand was wet and reflected the light of the moon. Beyond were the lights, slowly growing more distinct as he advanced. Usually there was at night dusky string, not so far from the shore but that it could be heard. Tonight there was absolute silence of waves on the bar, with their near rustle on the beach. This was all.

But that dark spot. It would not go away. The captain tried hard to convince himself that there was no such thing there. He could not. He saw it. Of that he was sure. But it was so faint that he could not always see it. At any rate, he looked at it, concentrating his gaze upon it, till it seemed to fade away. But when he had rested his eyes and looked again there it was, and now the lights of the camp are so near that he looks for danger had faded, and that rise there was had faded. The sky line was visible, and he could have seen a crouching figure. But he saw none. A breeze stirred some low weed or bush and came his heart to beating, but in another moment he saw that it was not a man.

A short distance from the camp he came to a place where reefs grew out of a marshy spot just above the foam line. He must go to the left of them. Seeing danger wherever there was a possibility of lurking, he gave it a wide berth, passing a hundred yards to the left of it. After leaving it behind him, looking down, he saw that the black spot was directly in line with the reefs. It seemed to him as he walked that the spot advanced, keeping in line with his body and the reefs. Suddenly he felt his legs giving way under him. He fell headlong on the sand, gasped and died.

A figure with a rifle rose up from among the reefs and advanced toward the body. Turning it over with his feet, he looked down into the marble blue and upon the uniform and, muttering "Belgian," turned away and sought a German camp not far inland. At the same time a dark cloud covered the moon.

Was what the captain saw the shadow of death? Who can tell? There are more things brought out by war psychology, when men's minds and nerves are strained to the utmost, than we can tell. Many a man who meets his death in the red horror of battle has a gruesome foreboding of his approaching fate. This has been proved in many former wars.

SELF RESPECT.

It is a mistake to associate pride or foppishness with self respect. The one rises from a judicious consideration of what we are, the other from an arrogant notion of what we are not. The one is true, the other is false, and both cannot exist together. A man that respects himself cannot be proud, and a proud man does not respect himself.

Pretty Good Amendment.

A certain famous statesman is a continual prey to the "antigraph fiend," and, like most famous people, he is not fond of giving away his signature to collectors.

On one occasion, however, when asked to write in a friend's album, he consented to do so. He noticed that someone before him had written in the book the words: "Do right, and fear no man."

Without a moment's hesitation the statesman wrote underneath it: "Don't write, and fear no woman!"

A Happy Discovery

By RUTH GRAHAM

John Mason, a young man of fortune, devoted a great deal of his time and money to charitable work. He visited hospitals and not only inquired into things needed, but sat down beside patients, asked what he could do for them and occasionally chatted with one familiarly.

Mason was a man of liberal education and literary tastes. There was an old gentleman named Gorham in whom the young man became interested. Gorham having been in his younger days a publisher when magazines were exponents of literary productions and not advertising mediums. Gorham had published the writings of literary lights who flourished in the earlier part of the nineteenth century and had many interesting stories to tell concerning authors. To these Mason listened with great relish.

Gorham had in those days been wealthy and at the time of his greatest prosperity had ridden to and from his office. He had a good wife, but one thing he had not, children. The husband was so engrossed in his business that he did not miss the absence of offspring so much as his wife, who longed for a child and would not be comforted without one. Finally with her husband's consent she went to a founding asylum and took therefrom a baby boy.

The clothing in which the child had been received was of the finest texture, and there was every indication that he had been born of refined parents. He was adopted by the Gorhams and brought up as their son, taking the name of his foster father, Henry Gorham. He became the idol of his foster mother, who lavished every attention upon him.

When the boy was becoming old enough to be of still more interest to the Gorhams he suddenly disappeared. His nurse one morning left him on the porch in front of the house for a few minutes and when she returned he was gone. The foster parents spent no end of money to find him, but received no trace of him. The blow almost killed Mrs. Gorham. Her husband begged her to adopt another child, but she would not. Little Harry had wailed himself around her heart and she would not, or rather felt that she could not, replace him with another.

In time misfortune came to the Gorhams. Henry Gorham, not content with his success in the publishing business, launched forth in various speculations. For a time he was successful; then several of them collapsed at once. His publishing business was carried down with them, and from affluence he and his wife fell into poverty. Then came old age, when men have neither the strength nor daring to begin anew. And lastly Henry Gorham fell ill with a lingering disease.

An old friend, an author, whom Gorham had launched on a successful career by his appreciation of his literary works and who had accumulated a small fortune provided an income for the old couple, which was barely sufficient to keep them in a small house and provide them with food and clothing. When Gorham fell ill he needed medical attendance and nursing, which he could get only at a hospital. He was removed to one, and his benefactor paid the additional expense.

One day John Mason on calling at the hospital found his old friend in great mental misery. The man who had been paying his way had died suddenly, and his widow had refused to continue his benefaction. Mason offered to stand in the place of the benefactor. His offer was a great relief to the invalid, who asked him to go and see his wife and tell her the good news.

Mason had not happened to meet Mrs. Gorham when she had called to see her husband. He acceded to the old man's request and, visiting the lady in her humble abode, begged her not to worry, assuring her that he would continue the income she and her husband had been receiving.

From the moment Mason entered Mrs. Gorham's presence her eyes were fixed upon his with a singular expression. He accompanied his offer with a smile, which intensified this look on the old lady's face. Throwing up her hands and her eyes at the same time, she exclaimed:

"Oh, heavens, how like Harry!" Naturally Mason asked who was Harry and was told for the first time the story of her lost foster son. Mason listened with an interest far more intense than might have been expected. At the end of his recital he said impulsively:

"Can it be possible that—?" He paused and on being asked to finish said that his mother had married without her father's consent. When a baby had been left at a founding asylum. His grandfather, after his father's and mother's death, which had occurred in quick succession, had traced him to the home and from there to the people who had adopted him. Fearing that he would not be given up, the grandfather employed persons to kidnap him.

Mason had no sooner told his story before he was clasped in his foster mother's arms. The next day there was a great change in the condition of the Gorhams. They were removed to John Mason's home, where they received every comfort, attention, and luxury. For John Mason had inherited a large fortune from his grandfather, which he lavished on them without stint.

The Checkerboard Man

By WILLIAM CHANDLER

A stagecoach was bowling along over a road on "the plains," they being that portion of the continent lying between the Missouri river and the Rocky mountains. There were half a dozen passengers inside the coach, half of whom were ladies, and five men outside. Four of the outsiders were of the roughest element of the region, which in those days was not at all smooth. On the seat with the driver sat a man in a checkerboard suit.

The four men in his rear were talking to a vein not at all appropriate for the ears of ladies and so loudly that they could easily be heard in the coach below. The man in the checkerboard suit upon hearing a very coarse remark turned and looked at the man who made it, but said nothing.

"My young friend," said the man looked at, "do you see anything to admire in my appearance?" "I don't see anything to admire in your language."

The man hitched a revolver around from his hip, saying, "What d'ye think of that?" "I have no use for firearms; never carry 'em myself."

The other clinched his fist. "What d'ye think of that?" "Oh, that's something I can understand. I carry those tools myself."

"Well, then, if you find anything more about me you don't like you'll get it behind the ear."

The checkerboard man made no reply to this, but when the other launched forth another coarse remark, accompanied by an oath, the former turned and said to the man who had just spoken:

"I say, my friend, you want to talk in a way that is unpleasant to my sensitive ears. We can't both have our own way. How would it do for us to stop the coach, get down and have a friendly set-to to settle the matter?"

"What! A little whippersnapper like you fight a six footer like me! I'd spoil your clothes."

"Oh, that won't matter. I can take them off above the waist."

"Go him, Jim," said one of the other men. "Go him! Why, if I'd hit him real hard I might break him. He's too puny to be smashed like a piece of china."

Jim's companions were anxious to see a mill and insisted upon his accepting the challenge. The coach was halted. The two principals walked a short distance from it, followed by most of the men inside and outside, while the driver remained on the box and the ladies crowded to the window. The checkerboard man threw off his coat and vest, while his antagonist remained in his coat and trousers tucked in his boots. One of the men reached him of his revolver, while another drew a ring with the point of a dirk knife on the ground. When all was ready the principals started for the center of the ring.

The spectators were looking for the fight to begin when they were started at seeing Jim lying on his back. His antagonist had planted his fist under his jaw so quickly that ordinary eyesight was incapable of following the action. Jim sat up and looked about him, indicating that he scarcely understood what had happened. Then he rose to his feet, but before he could square himself on his legs he was down again.

He began to get rattled and, jumping up with fair agility, went for his enemy like a bull, aiming a blow at his cheek. But his enemy was not there, and before Jim could aim another blow an arm was around his neck, and he was receiving a quick succession of taps on his nose, bringing a stream of blood, which trickled on the virgin soil of Colorado. He struggled desperately to free himself, but that crooked arm was like iron and was choking him. When both eyes were closed and his nose reeled a beet he was released and stood tottering and groping. One of his party went to him and led him back to the coach.

Every one understood what the fight was about, and all united in a shout of triumph. The conquered man was helped up on to the coach by his friends. The checkerboard man resumed his coat and vest and climbed to his seat by the driver. When all were aboard the driver chirruped to the horses and the coach rolled on. It had been stopped just seven minutes.

At the next relay was an eating house, where dinner was served. All left the coach and before dining gathered around the checkerboard man, offering him congratulations, the ladies of the party being especially complimentary in their remarks. The four men who had done the lord talking kept by themselves, but when the conqueror was granted a respite his victim shuffled up to him and put out his hand.

"Stranger," he said, "what did you learn how to handle yer fists?" "Oh, that's my profession. I run a school for boxing in Chicago."

"I don't mean it!" With that the fellow slunk away, and when the coach started up again neither he nor any of his friends was with it. They had received so many marks of disfavor from the passengers that they did not care to finish the journey with them. As for the checkerboard man, he had the satisfaction of being a hero for the rest of the ride, and at the parting every lady gave him some trinket as a memento of her gratitude.

Telegraphing With Cannons. When the first vessel completed the passage of the then new Erie canal in 1825, there being no such thing as a telegraph in those days, the news was communicated to New York and to Buffalo by cannons placed within hearing of each other all the way along from Albany to each of the other cities. The signal was passed along in this way from Albany to New York city and back again to Albany in fifty-eight minutes. The experiment was a costly one, but was a success in every particular.

Out to Repel a Night Attack

By OSCAR CON

In the early part of the German invasion of Belgium, when the French were gathering near the border, there was one fortification on the line of French defenses somewhat separated from the rest. The colonel commanding, expecting an attack at any moment, arranged for the distance of every gun on the outer parapet at once by means of electricity. The electric key was set up in the quarters of Major Moynoux, who was entrusted with its guardianship, that the guns might be fired at the approach of the enemy and might not be fired prematurely.

The commandant, Colonel Du Perris, was a nervous little man whose principal military maxim was getting ahead of the enemy. He was sufficiently educated as a soldier to know that a favorable hour for surprise in war is 2 o'clock in the morning, when the party to be attacked is wrapped in slumber. Anticipating that the works entrusted to his care might be stormed at that hour, he had arranged a method by which such a terrific onslaught of shot and shell should be poured upon an attacking force as to cause it to recoil, thereby giving time for the gathering of its defenders, who would be roused by the simultaneous firing of so many guns.

Liege had been captured by the Germans and they were sweeping through Belgium. Colonel Du Perris was very nervous. He had his pickets out some distance from the fort, but an enemy stealthily advancing may seize a picket before he can give an alarm, and the colonel was relying principally on his firing device.

One night the colonel turned in so apprehensive of attack that he did not get to sleep till after midnight. Just before dawn he was awakened by a din that could have been caused only by the firing of many cannons. Starting up he hurried on his outer clothing, and buckling on his sword ran out on to the open space behind the guns, ready to command in the defense. He was met by hundreds of his men, some of whom were taking position at the pieces, some were hurrying for ammunition, while others were forming in line behind the works.

The breeches of the outer tier of guns that had been fired were opened and shells put in some, solid shot in others. As to the inner guns, they were already loaded. In a few minutes the activity ceased, and all stood ready for the coming fray. The colonel, surrounded by his staff, stood on one of the parapets, peering down into the darkness, endeavoring to catch sight of the enemy.

The strain on the men waiting for an attack is hard to bear. Once in the fray action takes the place of suspense, and the latent bulldog in a man's nature enables him not only to bear up, but often perform deeds that are accounted heroism by others. In the present case this strain was prolonged. Ample time elapsed for the garrison to take position, reload the empty pieces and collect ammunition where it was needed. And yet no enemy appeared.

"Captain Le Fevre," said the colonel, "go down there and see what trickery the enemy are up to or whether they have been so discouraged at the reception they have received that they have withdrawn."

The captain saluted, jumped down from the parapet and disappeared in the darkness. The minutes, which seemed hours to the colonel, ticked slowly by, yet there was no sound from beyond the works. Too impatient to stand still, he walked back and forth within a dozen paces, stopping often to listen and expecting every minute to be greeted by a shower of missiles. "Lieutenant Morant," he said presently, "go after Captain Le Fevre and see what has become of him. He may have been taken in by a lurking enemy."

Down dropped Lieutenant Morant, and he, too, disappeared in the darkness. He had scarcely gone when Captain Le Fevre returned out of breath and reported that he had sent a skirmish line out some distance and had not heard a shot. It was not possible that an enemy could be near the fort. A suspicion that there had been some mistake about the firing of the guns entered the colonel's brain.

"How far has the skirmish line advanced?" he asked. "Quite far enough to demonstrate that no enemy could have been seen from our works," was the response. "Where is Major Moynoux?" asked the colonel. Then, without waiting for a reply, he turned and stalked off toward the major's quarters.

He found that officer engaged in a work that, considering the occasion, was trying to the colonel's temper. The keeper of the firing key was engaged in chasing a rat around the apartment, striking at him with his sword.

"Major!" thundered the colonel. "Colonel," responded the major, pausing from the chase. "Who fired the guns?" "That rat. He jumped on the electric key."

The men were returned to their slumbers, and in another ten minutes the fort was again silent. What passed further between the colonel and the major is not known. But certain it is that Major Moynoux was relieved from the charge of the firing room, and a rat trap was placed there near the key.

How a Parrot Effected a Match

By LOUISE B. CUMMINGS

"Lucy," said Mrs. Arnold to her niece, Lucy MacKnight, "how about this affair between you and George Horblin? George has been attentive to you for six months and so far as I know nothing has come of it."

"What can I do, Aunt Rebecca? I can't make him propose."

"My dear," said the old lady in a kindly tone, "I have a suggestion to make."

"What is it, Aunt Beck?" "Get a parrot."

"A parrot?" "Yes, a parrot. But you'll understand me better after I have told you a story. When I was your age a number of young men at different times showed me a good deal of attention, but any one who would do me such a favor as to marry me must furnish all the expenses which I would live for."

"I don't see what your aunt means," said Lucy. "There's many a splendid girl who has remained a maid for a reason. A prudent young man will look back because the girl he has chosen will furnish nothing to his family support."

"But a young man had been devoted to me, but when each had been come convinced that he must shoulder the whole load if he married me he withdrew. One day at the beginning of the summer a friend of my mother's came in and said that she and her family were going to the country and asked if we would take care of her parrot while they were gone. Mother said she would be happy to accommodate her, and the parrot they called him Roger—was brought over. He was a queer looking bird—all parrots are—and was very amusing. The way he would climb about his cage, muttering to himself, made us all laugh. To me he seemed like an alderman in a red waistcoat."

"We put Roger on the porch, which was always fitted for summer lounging, and usually left him there all night, except when it stormed. In the evening we sat there ourselves, at least I did, for I found it a very convenient place to receive my friends."

"That spring I had met a young man who seemed to be as much pleased with me as the others had been, and by the time summer came he was giving me the usual devotion. But he was a clerk on something like \$1,200 a year salary, with nothing laid up in prospect, and I expected that when September came and those away for the summer returned I should be left out in the cold again."

"During August there was scarcely any one in town, and my admirer had no place to go except to our house, and he was there four or five evenings a week. The truth is, this fact of his having nowhere else to go was the principal reason for his coming so often to see me. He never said a word about love or marriage, though I admit—but I am getting ahead of my story."

"Well, Jack, as I have said, spent nearly every evening during July and August at our house. Sometimes my mother used to sit with us, but mother was afraid of the night air, and since we always sat on the porch she didn't trouble us very much. Jack used to apologize for being at the house so much, saying that if we could stand him till his mother and sisters came home he would give us a rest. I knew very well that he said this to prevent my considering his attentions serious. Of course I told him he was quite welcome and since all our friends were out of town I was as useful of his company as he was of mine."

"On the 1st of September Roger's owner returned to the city and the same evening came around for her pet. Jack was there, as usual, and mother and the lady came out on to the porch for the parrot. Jack rose and was introduced to the lady. He did not reseat himself, but stood on the step where he usually stood when I bid him good night on his leaving me."

"Roger was evidently quite pleased to see his mistress again and strutted about, whistling his beak on his perch and showing off all kinds of antics. When Jack said that he would bid us good evening the parrot suddenly exclaimed: 'Goodby!'

"Every one laughed, and doubtless this excited the parrot to further remark."

"Give me another, Beck," cried the bird.

A MYSTERY

By F. A. MITCHEL

Billings was a commercial traveler. Troubled with insomnia, he would get out of bed in the middle of the night and walk the streets. One night he was walking thus in a quiet street in New England. There was a house in the place fully 200 years old. Billings was an educated man and appreciated the antiquity about him. He fancied one house to be the old tavern and that the bar was still there concealed by a curtain. Another house must have been that of a mansion for the front door was elaborately made.

Billings wandered about in the moonlight wondering about the different places and occurrences that might have taken place in them. Apart from the rest was a house which both from its construction and tumbledown appearance must have been older than any he had yet passed. Whether it was occupied or not he could not tell, for all the rest of the houses it was dark. Billings stopped before the front door to admire it. Its side lights, its arched lights above and the antique knockwork on it, wishing that he could move it and use it on his own lawn in his home city.

Suddenly the door opened. There was no sound from the old hinges and it seemed that the door moved of itself. But in another moment a face appeared in the opening, the face of a young girl, though since she was in shadow Billings could not see her distinctly. She beckoned to him, but did not speak. He drew near her and she whispered:

"A tragedy has occurred here. A man has been stabbed. I and my mother are alone. I wish you would come in and help us."

Billings had no inclination for what was asked of him, but the girl's voice was so soft, a nearer view showed her so comely, that he entered the vestibule. There was no light, and when the door was closed behind them it was pitchy dark. The girl took Billings' hand to guide him, and a cold chill followed her touch, which was icy cold.

"Will you strike a light?" he asked. "Oh, no. I would not attract the attention of the watch for the world."

Billings would have retreated, but was obliged to do so. Besides, the cold grip on his hand would not be easily shaken off. He stepped himself to be led through a spacious hall and up a winding staircase. On reaching an upper hall the girl opened a door and led the way into a bedroom.

The windows were open, and the moon, which was an hour high, cast a flood of light into the room, illuminating with its pale light a four post bedstead with canopy overhead and valance beneath. Beside it knelt a woman, and on it lay a man, who appeared to be dead. The light of the moon gave a ghastly hue to his features, and he was stiff and stark.

It seemed to Billings that the costumes of both the women corresponded with the antique furniture. Both wore white caps on their heads and kerchiefs around their shoulders and across their bosoms. Billings stood looking on the scene in wonder and horror.

"We must remove the body before day," said the girl.

"Why not?" asked Billings, scarcely knowing what he said.

"He was killed. He who killed him was a near relative. He has fled, but should the tragedy be discovered he would be pursued, and if captured we should have to endure another death. Feeling that we must have a man to help us and seeing you from the window about to pass the house, I stepped down and called you. You will not betray us, will you?"

"Certainly not, but—"

"Oh, don't say that you will not help us. We are two women with no man in rely on. You and I can carry the body to a secret closet. We can put it in there for the present, and it can be removed later."

Billings brain was in a whirl. The girl went to the bed, drew away the woman kneeling beside it and, taking the lower part of the body, motioned to Billings to take the heavier part. Then the two carried it to an adjoining unwatched room. The girl touched a spring in the wall. A panel rolled aside, revealing an empty space. They threw the body in, closed the panel and left.

The next thing Billings remembered was standing without the door of the house, hanging on to an iron railing. He seemed to have awakened from a dream. He staggered into the street and looked up at the house. It was dark and silent. Then he ran as if to leave his frightful experience behind him. On reaching his hotel he went to his room and threw himself on the bed. In the morning he awakened, feeling as if all his strength had oozed out during the night.

During that day he made inquiries about the house he had visited and was told that it was called the Herwick house, from the family that had lived in it a century or more before. It had been empty for years.

Billings related his experience to several persons and persuaded them to go to the house with him and force an opening to the closet where he had helped deposit the body. They did so and found the skeleton of a man.

What the tragedy had been no one knew, nor had any one ever heard. Evidently it had been concealed. There was, however, a tradition of one of the Herwick family who had mysteriously disappeared.

Tommy's Answer. Teacher—Tommy, you may define the difference between "a while" and "a time." Tommy—Why, when pa says he's going downtown for awhile ma says she'll bet he's going for a time.—Boston Transcript.

Results. "That woman is so ill tempered that she seems to reflect it in everything about her housekeeping."

"Yes, I've noticed even her bread is more or less crusty."—Baltimore American.

A SOLDIER'S DOUBLE

By M. QUAD

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About thirty days before Grant broke through Lee's lines at Petersburg and the beginning of the end came a portion of my regiment captured seven Confederates and brought them into line camp. My own company was a part of the Federal force, but as I was so detached duty that week I was not with them. The first I knew of the capture was when I heard the story that I had deserted to the Confederates and been recaptured and would be shot. I visited company headquarters to ascertain what the talk meant and there met with a strange reception. I was there, wearing a blue uniform, and yet I was in the guardhouse half a mile away wearing the butternut. I had been on duty at division headquarters, and yet I had been captured on the advance lines. I was at once placed under arrest, and it was an hour or more before the mystery was solved. Then it was found that one of the Confederate prisoners was my double and that his name was Wakefield.

I had not yet recovered from my surprise when the suggestion was made that I go into the Confederate camp as a spy on the strength of the wonderful resemblance. I was given three days in which to pump Wakefield. He was a ready talker and had a good memory. When I was quite ready I took his suit of clothes complete and he was given another. Then I was taken down to the front and made a bolt for it. In other words, one of the Confederate prisoners escaped and dashed across the space which separated the opposing lines. Not half a dozen men were let into the secret, and as I ran I was fired upon by half a regiment.

I ran at full speed straight for the Confederate lines, and on dashing over a breastwork I found myself in the midst of a Louisiana brigade of infantry. A colonel questioned me as to my name, regiment, when captured, etc., and I answered so promptly that I supposed everything all right. It wasn't, however. Federal spies had played the game before, and Confederate wit had become sharpened. I was sent to the headquarters of General Mahone, who was subsequently celebrated in Virginia and national politics. He asked me the same questions which the colonel had put to me and many others in addition. I saw that he was suspicious, and braving all at one stroke, I requested that my captain be sent for. The Alabama regiment to which I was supposed to belong was stationed two miles away, and it was about 9 o'clock before the captain arrived. Previous to his appearance I had been asked his name, which I gave correctly, and had also described his person. When he reached headquarters I was sent for, and as I stood before him and two or three headquarters officers General Mahone asked:

"Captain Thorn, this man claims to belong to your company. Is he a member or not?"

"Yes, sir," was the prompt reply.

"What's his name?" "John Wakefield, sir."

"When was he captured?" "Four days ago along with several other men."

That settled it. There were about forty men in Company D. They all gathered around me as I appeared and gave me a welcome. My orders were to ascertain Lee's strength on a line about four miles long. How I was to accomplish this after entering the Confederate lines was left for me to decide. Wakefield told me that he had a cousin in the Seventh Virginia, a young soldier named John Winslow. I got permission of my captain to visit him, and in hunting up the Seventh Virginia I took care to miss it and cover the whole front and have a look at guns and fortifications. I found Winslow at last, but his greeting was far from cordial. The two had evidently quarreled about something on which I was not posted. He was so sulky and unfriendly that I was about to cut my visit short when he gave me a searching look and exclaimed:

"Why, you are not John Wakefield at all!"

I laughed at him in a good natured way, hoping I would find him in better humor when I called again and started for my regiment, but I had not gone a quarter of a mile when I was overtaken and put under arrest and an hour later was once more in the presence of General Mahone. I was followed to his tent by Winslow, who boldly proclaimed that I was not John Wakefield. Then all the officers and half a dozen men of the company, including my tentmate, were sent for, and the general heartily entered upon the work of trapping me.

I had pumped John Wakefield so thoroughly, and so plainly remembered everything that I believe I passed the examination fully as well as or better than he could.

My two arrangements before General Mahone made me an object of curiosity and gossip in my company, and when I returned it was to find all the men anxious to quiz me and two or three of them seemingly suspicious. The captain called me into his tent and questioned and cross questioned me until he declared that nobody but a fool could have taken me for any one else. I put the men off for any one else, and by pretending to be angry, and three nights later, as we held a breastwork at the front, I slipped away in the darkness and re-entered the Federal lines.

Tommy's Answer. Teacher—Tommy, you may define the difference between "a while" and "a time." Tommy—Why, when pa says he's going downtown for awhile ma says she'll bet he's going for a time.—Boston Transcript.

Results. "That woman is so ill tempered that she seems to reflect it in everything about her housekeeping."

"Yes, I've noticed even her bread is more or less crusty."—Baltimore American.