

An Eventful Episode

By EDWARD T. STEWART

I came home from business and sat down in my room for a brief rest before dressing for dinner and fell into a doze. I opened my eyes upon a young lady who lived next door looking down upon me in wonderment. I had often seen her going out of and coming into her house and had admired her. She had long known me by sight, and nothing but the absence of an introduction had kept us from an acquaintance. But what was she doing in my room? From me she looked about her wildly and, having evidently become convinced that she had got into the wrong house, was about to take to flight when, hearing the front door open and shut, she stopped short.

"What shall I do?" she cried. I took in the situation at once. Her house and mine were exactly alike. She had come into mine thinking that she was in her own. On me depended the question as to whether or not she should escape the consequences of being caught not only in a man's house, but in his room. My mother had gone out, and I had been told on my return that she was expected home any minute. When I returned in the evening she invariably came at once to my room for a brief chat. My mother was an impulsive person, and I knew that if she had come in and found a young lady in my room she would be a very hard person to manage.

Within half a minute of the closing of the front door my mother stood on the threshold of my room, looking at the young lady and me standing like two guilty creatures before her. The girl cast an appealing look at me. "M-m-mother," I stammered, "this young lady has made a terrible mistake."

"I should say so," snapped my mother. "What way to stick to the truth—at any rate, for the moment? I must find some way of legitimizing the girl's presence in my room and confess the truth later, when I could get my mother alone and convince her that there was no criminality in it."

"Mother," I said, "let me introduce my wife."

"Yes, mother. I have kept this from you, expecting soon to put through a deed which would enable me to acknowledge my dear Susie as my wife. It was absolutely necessary that she should see me for a few minutes about a very important matter, and she ran in for the purpose. Your coming upon us thus suddenly has simply resulted in your obtaining a knowledge of our relationship a trifle earlier than you would have otherwise received it. Mother, congratulate me."

I went to her, put my arms about her, and she suffered me to kiss her. "Do you mean to tell me," she said, "that you are really married?"

"There was no escape for the moment. Leaving mother, I went to the young lady, put an arm about her and said, 'Yes, I am married to the dearest girl on earth, one you will be proud when you know her, to call your daughter.'"

"And you have married my son?" asked mother of the girl.

"My supposed bride, doubtless to escape the gaze of one to whom she was constrained to tell a lie, hid her face on my breast, but made no reply."

"Oh, Arthur," said my mother to me in a pained voice, "it was bad enough to introduce this person into your mother's house without—"

"Yes," cried the poor girl.

"My mother stood looking from one of us to the other without speaking. Backing against my room and not twenty feet from it was an apartment house facing on another street. My window and one directly facing mine in this house were both open, and an elderly woman was looking in upon this episode with an expression of intense interest. My mother caught sight of her, and whatever of discretion there was in her came to the surface. She gave me a hasty kiss, then went to my supposed bride and repeated the performance.

"Better go downstairs to the library," she said. And while we obeyed her command she went to the window and drew down the shade.

"Oh, heavens!" cried the girl when we were alone. "We are undone. That horrid woman in the other house saw and heard the whole thing!"

"You're right," I replied.

"Now we have another to explain to."

"An explanation will do no good. I could have explained to my mother, but this other person hearing me acknowledge me as your husband makes a great difference."

"What difference?"

"We are legally married."

"The girl covered her face with her hands. I went to her and, putting an arm about her, removed her hands."

"Marriage is a lottery," I said. "How do we know but that this mistake of yours may bring us great happiness? I propose that we let fate work it out for us. For the present let us do nothing. Your good name, at least, is safe. What we may do hereafter let us decide hereafter. Meantime we have been promoted to an acquaintance and an engagement at the same time. A real simon pure marriage may follow if we both come to desire it."

She was quiet with this and went home. A brief courtship followed. Before we were married I told my mother the truth, and she believed me.

In a pound of some coal there are 8,000 heat units.

The Japanese make an imitation of silk from hemp.

One out of four Australians has a substantial bank account.

Salted whale meat is regarded as a delicacy by the Japanese.

December is the wheat harvest month in New South Wales.

The people who are looking for trouble get to be very farsighted.

Cynical Shaw.

In this world if you do not say a thing in an irritating way it is just as well not to say it at all, because people will not trouble themselves about anything that does not trouble them.—Bernard Shaw.

She Was His.

"I wonder why Flubdu always alludes to his wife so unctuously as 'my own.'"

"Well, she is his own. Everything else about the place he is acquiring on payments."—Kansas City Journal.

A British Treasure.

In the jewel house of the Tower of London, the place where the crown and other royal insignia are kept, there is a book bound throughout in gold, even to the wires of the hinges. Its clasp is two rubies set at opposite ends of four golden links. On one side there is a cross of diamonds; on the other the English coat of arms set in diamonds, pearls and rubies.

Turn About.

"Papa says if I give up my stinging lessons he will present me with a pair of diamond earrings."

"You have never worn earrings, have you?"

"No; I should have to have my ears pierced."

"Ah, yes! I see his idea. He wants to pay you back in your own coin."

Carved on the Tomb of Ingalls.

This extract from Ingalls' essay on "Grass" is carved on the glacial boulder which marks his last resting place: "When the fitful fever is ended and the foolish wrangle of the market and forum is closed grass beats over the scars which our descent into the bosom of the earth has made, and the carpet of the infant becomes the blanket of the dead."

River Banks.

To place the right or left hand bank of a river face in the direction in which the river is flowing; the bank on your right is the right hand bank. The west bank of a river flowing south is the right bank; the south bank of a river flowing west is the left hand bank, and so on. Pongkeepsie is on the left bank of the Hudson, Albany on the right bank.—New York Sun.

A Biting Retort.

Lady Wortley Montagu, one of England's most brilliant women, incurred Pope's undying hatred in the following manner: The poet, who was deformed and very dark and addled to questioning everybody, once asked her to define an interrogation mark. She defined it as "a little crook backed thing that asks questions."

Long Boiling For Cereals.

In the diet of young children Drs. Erich Klose and Heinrich Bratten prefer thick gruels made from cereals boiled at least three-quarters of an hour. In the Medizinische Klinik they write that they have the advantage over thin gruels made with brief cooking, and their starches are so altered in form as to be much more readily digested and assimilated.

Ancient Lighthouse.

One of the most beautiful of the early lighthouses and the first tower in a sea swept position was Cordouan, light on the coast of France at the entrance to the river Gironde. It was built in 1611, and although it has been remodeled, some of the original structure is still there, more than 200 feet high.

Japan's Language.

There was no written language in Japan till Chinese characters were introduced into Japan from Korea in the reign of the Emperor Ojin, in 285 A. D. The inconvenience caused by Chinese characters led afterward to the invention of katakana and hiragana, the Japanese syllabary, which contributed much toward improving the national language.

When the Moon Is Eclipsed.

A curious feature of a total eclipse of the moon is the fact that although the earth's shadow is larger than the moon—though smaller than the earth—the silver rim of the eclipsed planet may be seen at total eclipse. This is due to the fact that rays of sunlight are refracted, or bent in, by the earth's atmosphere until they curve back to the edge of the moon.

Pottery of the Amazon.

An interesting tribe of the upper Amazon has been discovered which in its division of work is reminiscent of the guilds of the middle ages. One portion makes clothing and nothing else; another is purely agricultural; another devotes its time and labor to the construction of weapons, and so on. Their pottery, however, is the most notable of their productions. Some of these jars are extremely large, but very thin, although strong and durable. Some of the smaller vessels are almost as thin as paper.

The Turquoise.

Among the early Mexicans turquoise was regarded as emblematic of success, and was worn to preserve health. The peculiar property of the turquoise, of becoming dirty green in color as it gives up its moisture, led to a belief that its change in color foretold misfortune, and hence the oriental proverb that the turquoise pales when the well being of the giver is in danger. It was believed in the orient to be a remedy for all diseases of the head and heart, and in cases of poisoning or snake bite it was given with wine.

MEDITATION.

Meditation, serious and earnest, is the great storehouse of our spiritual dynamics, where divine energies lie hid for any enterprise and the hero is strengthened for his field. All great things are born of silence.—Martineau.

When the Sleeper Walked

By M. QUAD
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Mr. Samuel White kept a general store in the village of Hazleton. It was a small village, and the trade was mostly with the farmers around it. Mr. White was an energetic, pushing sort of man, and there came a time when he overdid it. His nerves gave way, and there was fear among his friends that he was going to break down.

Mr. White's only clerk was an old bachelor named Penfold. He had been in the store since its opening and could be trusted to the utmost limit. He had a room at the back of the store, and it was his custom after the doors were locked to sit and read for a couple of hours.

Mr. White's nervous strain had not bettered itself when, one night as the clerk sat reading, he heard a key rattle in the front door, and a moment later a man walked in. Penfold's door was open, and his light was so placed that he could see the length of the store very plainly. The man stood for a moment looking around him. His figure was that of Mr. White, but he had a mask over his face and false whiskers. He stood for a minute as if finding himself in a strange place and then walked toward Penfold's room, turned to the right and passed around the counter.

The man was behind the counter for perhaps two minutes, and then he reappeared, and without a look toward Penfold, walked to the front door and out of it, turning the key after him. The clerk had heard him moving the jar in which the money was kept and at once investigated. The money it contained amounted to about \$200, for there had been some heavy sales during the last three days. It was gone! Not a bit remained!

As soon as daylight broke Mr. White was notified, and he at once flew into a violent temper. He charged his old and trusted clerk with having taken the money and would not hear the story of a strange man.

Mr. White was alone in the store that day, and he made no explanations to any one except to his brother-in-law, named Carson. Mr. Carson at once volunteered to take Penfold's place at night until he had solved the mystery. He did not believe Penfold guilty, but there was a mystery to be solved. When night came he was on hand, and he had a shotgun for a weapon. He did not pass his time in reading, but in listening, and about midnight he heard some one approach the front door. Then the key was turned in the lock and the door opened. There stood the stranger. He had the figure of Mr. White, but he also had the mask and whiskers that Penfold had told about. He acted just as the man had done on the previous night. He walked to the counter and around it, and robbed the jar of about \$75. He came within ten feet of Carson, but did not seem to notice him.

"Well," said the latter to himself when the stranger had passed out and departed. "I think I have solved this mystery, but I want another night to make sure of it."

Mr. White was told of the second robbery, and he related a little to ward Penfold. The affair was as great a mystery to him as to the two others. It was proposed to him that Penfold should pass the next night with Carson, and he readily consented.

On this day the sales amounted to \$120. It was placed in the jar. Penfold was on hand when the store was locked up that night, and he, too, had brought a gun. If the stranger came again he was to be captured at all costs. The time wore away until about midnight, and to the stranger appeared just as he had twice before. His actions were the same. He was allowed to pass behind the counter and get possession of the money before he was interfered with. He was leaving the store when the men grabbed him. To their surprise, he made no resistance whatever. One of them seized his whiskers and the other his mask and pulled them off, and Mr. White stood there before them! He was very much dazed, and it was half a minute before he could say:

"Why, men, what is this? What are we all doing here? This is the store, isn't it?"

"You have been robbing yourself, Sam White," replied the brother-in-law. "You were at the money jar five minutes ago, and I bet the roll is in your pocket."

He inserted his hand into a pocket and pulled out the money. At the same moment his wife arrived and gave him explanation.

"You see," she said, "that I have suspected for a week past that Sam walked in his sleep, and I remained awake tonight to convince myself. I know that he was sound asleep when he got out of bed and dressed himself. I followed him downstairs and saw him head this way. Then it came to me that he was the robber, and I hurried after him."

"But what have I done with the money I took from the jar?"

The two men accompanied her home, and a search was made, and in a bureau drawer where he kept his shirts and cuffs was found every cent of it.

Mr. Penfold went back to his situation. The brother-in-law had a hearty fit of laughter, and Mr. White went west for a vacation that lasted a month and up to date the old jar has safe duty as a fire and burglar proof safe.

Feminine Versatility.

A girl's versatility is such that she will telephone the society editor some item about herself and then be surprised almost to death when she sees it in the paper next morning.—Ohio State Journal.

Cutting Herbs.

The active principle of all plants is strongest just when the flowering process is going on, but before seeds are actually formed, and this is, therefore, the best time for cutting and drying herbs.

The Purpose of Reading.

Books are for the scholar's idle times. When he can read God directly the hour is too precious to be wasted in other men's transcripts of their readings. But when the intervals of darkness come, as come they must—when the sun is hid and the stars withdraw their shining—we repair to the lamps which were kindled by their ray, to guide our steps to the east again, where the dawn is. We hear, that we may speak. The Arabian proverb says, "A fig tree, looking on a fig tree, becometh fruitful."—Emerson.

She Got Acquainted.

She is a sociable little girl of six, but her first day at school gave her little opportunity to meet the other children she did not know. The second day she came home at recess with a black eye. She had fallen from the "teeter totter," at school. Her first thoughts were of the pain, but soon she surprised her mother by saying: "As soon as I fell all the other children came right up. It was the quickest way of getting acquainted with all of them."—Indianapolis News.

Artificial Snow.

A curious instance of the formation of artificial snow was witnessed at night on one occasion in the town of Agen, in France.

A fire broke out in a sawmill when the temperature was 10 degrees below freezing point. The water thrown upon the fire was instantly vaporized and, rising in the cold, dry air, was immediately condensed and fell as snow. With bright starlight and a strong northwest wind blowing, the whirling snow above and the raging fire below, a brilliant spectacle was presented.

How Vessels Touch Bottom.

Vessels often touch bottom in harbors where there is apparently water enough to float them with several feet to spare. The government some time ago made experiments touching this matter, and its report says that such a vessel makes "equal" and "more so" in shallow water than in deep. This suction makes all the way from a few inches to three feet difference in the draft of the vessel. It must be taken into account in dredging harbors.

And the Dish Too.

Domitico, a famous harlequin of Paris in the seventeenth century, going to see Louis XIV. at supper, fixed his eyes on a dish of partridges. The king, who was exceedingly fond of his acting, saw the look and said, "Give that dish to Domitico."

"And the partridges, too, sire?" asked the harlequin.

The king smiled at the artfulness of the question and replied, "And the partridges, too."

"The dish that held the partridges was of gold."

Sickroom Use of Old Clock.

A journal devoted to therapeutics makes the following suggestion about the use of old clocks: If a clock is beyond repair do not throw it away. An excellent idea is to set it aside to be used in case of illness. It will be found just the thing to place in the sickroom to indicate the next time for taking medicine. As each dose is given to the patient turn the hands to the hour when the following dose is to be given. In this way all danger of errors is eliminated.

Insomnia Only a Habit.

One of the reasons why insomnia is so much dreaded is that it is wrongly conceived by many of the laity to be a disease. There is no such disease, and in its simple form, where there is no positive disease in the background, it is merely a bad cell habit, kept alive by some fault in the manner of living, some breach of brain discipline or some disturbance in the functions of the body that result in insistent messages being sent to the brain centers during sleep or while we are trying to sleep. Trying to sleep is a pathetic and futile task, and much better results usually can be obtained by not trying to sleep.—World's Work.

What Is Fun?

"I don't see what fun it can be for you to go on these fishing trips with your husband," said her best friend.

"That's because you don't know anything about fishing," she replied.

"Do you?"

"Indeed I do. I can sit in the stern of the boat and give advice to the best of them. And when a big fish gets away nobody can beat me telling how it ought to have been or might have been landed."

"I shouldn't think that would be much fun for you."

"Shouldn't you? Well, that's because you don't know how mad it makes my husband. You don't know what fun it is."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

TROUBLES.

Troubles are things the average man is much inclined to magnify. Troubles are a great deal like that little thing you got in your eye the other day. It hurt as if it were as big as a peanut, but when you got it out you found it was almost invisible.—New York Sun.

Experience Teaches.

Spiffy I have often wondered at your brilliancy, your aptness at repartee, your... Whether it's more than a dollar, old top, I can't do a thing for you. I'm nearly broke myself.—New York Times.

Better Way.

Steepe—I never borrow an umbrella. Coupe—It's a good rule. Steepe—I make it an absolute rule to buy my umbrellas. By the way, would you mind lending me the price of one?—London Telegraph.

The Runaway's Return

By ETHEL HOLMES

Ned Barringer ran away from home when he was fifteen and did not communicate with his father during an absence of ten years. His was a case of stepmother. The second Mrs. Barringer was one of those women who when they marry a man propose to appropriate him and everything that belongs to him to themselves. The young person, except herself, for whom her husband had any affection was his son and on this account she hated the son. Ned, who was of a rising generation, concluded to take himself away.

But there came a time when Ned, having made a strike, concluded to go back home and see his father. Possibly he might add to the old man's comfort, though he doubted his ability if the second Mrs. Barringer were living. The homesteader reached at 10 o'clock at night the town where he had spent the first fifteen years of his life.

On reaching the house he saw lights within, but heard no sound. He rang, but received no answer. He tried the front door and found it locked. He walked around the house, looking through the windows, but saw no one. Standing below the window of what had been his own room, he looked up at it. There was the trellis that he had so often gazed at night and ascended in the small hours of the morning. Yielding to temptation, he put a foot on it and went up almost as spry as when a boy. There was no light in the room, so he could see nothing. He tried the sash, and it went up. Softly, stepping inside, he was heading for the place where the gas fixture had been when suddenly there came a flood of electric light. A girl stood with a finger on a button beside the door, while in the other hand she held a revolver pointed at Ned's head.

"Come, lower that gun," he said. "It might go off. I'm no burglar. Why didn't you answer my ring?"

The girl had no voice for reply, and Ned went on.

"I'm Ned Barringer. Is my father alive or dead?"

The weapon dropped from the girl's hand, and she showed signs of keeling over. Ned started toward her, but she shrank back. By an effort she controlled herself and finally said:

"Your father is living."

"Where is he?"

"In a hospital. He has just submitted to a dangerous operation. He needs something to pull him through. I hope your return will do it."

"I will go to him at once."

"Not tonight. I have just left him sleeping."

"Did you just come in?"

"Yes, by the front door."

"That's how I missed you. Is the old still living?"

"The second Mrs. Barringer."

"She died three years ago."

"And you are—"

"Your cousin, Margaret Curtis."

"Ah, my mother's sister, Aunt Margaret's child?"

"Yes. When Mrs. Barringer died uncle asked mother if I might not come and live with him."

Ned approached the girl, put an arm around her, drew her gently to him and kissed her.

"Somebody has been doing," he said, "what I should have done—taking care of father."

"How fortunate that you have come back! He has been pining for you for years."

"How about his wife?"

"That is a sad story. She was horrid to him."

"So you think I'd better not try to see him tonight?"

"Certainly not, and only tomorrow if the doctor advises it."

"Well, cousin, I've had nothing to eat since noon. I think I'll go down to the sideboard, where mother used to keep nice things to eat. She kept it locked to prevent my getting them, but I had a way of taking out a top drawer and reaching down through the opening."

"You don't need to do that now."

Margaret started to lead the way downstairs, but Ned stepped up beside her and insisted on going down hand in hand. Having turned on the lights in the dining room, Margaret brought out some substantial refreshments from the refrigerator and some delicacies from the sideboard. Then she sat on the table, and Ned proceeded to make himself at home as he had not done since the advent of his stepmother. When he had finished he lighted a cigar and he and his cousin sat on a sofa in the living room till midnight. Then Ned went up to the room he had entered earlier in the evening by the window and went to bed.

One thing Ned was sorry to see in his old home. The place had become dilapidated and the furniture worn. All this indicated that the owner was in straitened circumstances. But in another respect it pleased him. He had plenty of money for repairs.

The next morning the invalid was informed by her niece that his son had returned, and after this preparation Ned was admitted to his father's presence. Ned's return was quite enough to cheer the old man, but Ned held up to him a picture of comfort to follow that hastened the old man's recovery.

Ned put the homesteader in order, married his cousin, and they all lived happily together.

In the Game Early.

Little Elsie—Mamma, I must have a new dress for my doll. Mother—Why, dear? Elsie—Cause I quarreled with her, and now that we've made up I must give her a new dress.—Boston Transcript.

The Patient's View.

"I'm afraid," said the doctor calmly, "that I shall have to operate."

"Afraid?" growled the patient. "Afraid you'll have to operate! You know darn well you're hoping you'll have to."—Detroit Free Press.

The Nile of America.

The lower Rio Grande looks like a small Nile, behaves like the Nile, is like the Nile. It flows through a flat alluvial region which it has made and which its periodical overflows keep green. Just as the fellahs along the Nile have for centuries, in dry seasons, supplemented the river's flow by primitive methods of lifting its water up on to their lands, so the Mexicans on both sides of the lower Rio Grande have irrigated their small farms with muddy Rio water.—World's Work.

Force of an Oil Well.

Oil has been ejected from the Baku wells with such force and accompanied with so much sand that steel blocks twelve inches thick placed over the mouth of the well to deflect the flow were perforated in a few hours and had to be replaced. The casing with which the wells were lined was often torn to shreds and eventually collapsed, and hundreds of thousands of tons of sand which accumulated in the vicinity necessitated the services of large bodies of workmen.—London Mail.

The Great Unanswered.

Lloyd George has throughout his whole career shown an extraordinary aversion to letter writing, according to Isaac F. Marcossion in Everybody's. "He became known in parliament," says Mr. Marcossion, "as the 'great unanswered.' He used to say, and still does, that an unanswered letter answers itself in time. This led to the tradition that the only way to get a written reply out of Lloyd George was to inclose two addressed and stamped cards, one bearing the word 'Yes' and the other 'No.' More than once, however, when friends and constituents tried this ruse they got both cards back in the same envelope!"

High Pews.

During the reign of William and Mary in England a worthy bishop complained to the ladies of the court were wont to fix their eyes on their neighbors rather than on him during his discourses. It apparently never occurred to the divine that the fault might lie in the sermons themselves. By consent of the queen high pews were introduced to prevent wandering eyes. "As for the young ladies for whose spiritual welfare they were devised," says a writer, "their indignation was only surpassed by the rage of their admirers." From that time high pews were commonly placed in churches.—London Opinion.

Wrote of Scenery He Never Saw.

The most notable instance of a novel dealing with a country which the author had never seen was Shorthouse's "John Inglesant."

The second volume of that remarkable romance deals in the most detailed way with Italian manners and Italian scenery. Many of the descriptions—that of Umbria at night, for instance, and the scene in the pavilion in the forest—are charged with the very atmosphere of Italy, and Florence during the plague lives horribly before our eyes. Yet Joseph Henry Shorthouse had never been in Italy. Enthusiasm and the genius for assimilation evolved it all in a quiet house at Edgborough.—London Chronicle.

Handkerchiefs.

The words "pocket handkerchief" have a curious history. The syllable "ker" is short for the French "couvert," to cover, and "chief" is nothing else but "chief," the head. Handkerchiefs were used also for the neck, and that made them neckerchiefs. Finally when they became what they now are and were carried in the hand they expanded into handkerchiefs. Then when pockets were invented and worn in the time of Queen Elizabeth the term pocket handkerchief came into use. The word "pocket" is nothing but a form of the old Saxon word "poca," a bag or pouch combined with the diminutive "et."—New York World.

Crude Mining Methods.

Mica mining in the Nellore district, India, though a highly profitable industry, is carried on practically as it was by the natives a hundred years ago. The mica vein is followed up by underground stoping, which results in the production of tortuous, wormlike holes sometimes extending to a depth of 300 feet below the surface. The mica excavated is brought to the surface by a string of coolies working hand over hand on rudely constructed bamboo ladders. On account of the accumulation of water during the night when work ceases all sinking operations are delayed each morning for an hour or more while the water is being dipped out with buckets by coolies.

BE KIND TODAY.

If you've smiles to give, give them today. Living eyes are often hungry. Though their gaze be seemingly so calm and mayhap so proud, the smiles may be a touch of heaven for them. If they are closed in death, tomorrow your fondest smile would matter naught. If you have a helpful, hopeful, loving word to say, say it today. It may keep some heart from breaking, some soul from falling.</