

THE FAMILY STORY

A SINGULAR GUEST.

HENRY APPS of Hexton completed the fixing of the wires on the lawn of Hasleigh court. He looked up at the dim light in the dressing room and chuckled softly as he bent the last yard of wire.

"A trip in time," said Mr. Apps, "saves nine."

He threw the rope ladder gently in the air, and at the first effort caught the projecting nail.

"Once on board the lugger," quoted Mr. Apps, facetiously, as he mounted the rope ladder, "and the gurl is mine."

He opened the window very gently and soon stood inside the dressing room. Near the table in the corner of the room was an iron safe.

"Well, I'm jiggered!" exclaimed Mr. Apps. He loosened the flaps of his fur cap and wiped his brow with the back of his hand. "Well, I'm jiggered! If they 'aven't been and left the key in it for me."

"I might 'ave sived myself a lot of trouble if I'd a-knowned."

Mr. Apps swung open the heavy door of the safe and listened to the music downstairs. Young Lady Staplehurst was giving (as Mr. Apps very well knew) a dance, a fancy dress dance, on her return from the continent, after her term of widowhood.

"I'll just see, first of all," he said, "that the coast is clear, and then—then for a bagful."

Henry Apps stepped out into the broad passage. He slouched with his jimmy sticking out of his capacious side pocket a few steps toward the stairs. Suddenly a girlish figure turned the corner.

"Bless my 'art!" cried Mr. Apps.

"Why, how do you do?" said the young lady, stepping forward.

She gave a soft laugh that was very pleasant. "Do you know that I recognized you at once in spite of the costume?"

She held the hand of Mr. Apps for a moment, causing that gentleman to gasp for breath, and called one of the maids.

"Just bring me a pencil and a card," she said. "I must arrange for a carriage to take Captain Norman back to his hotel in the morning. I wasn't sure that he would come."

"I can walk," remarked Mr. Apps, with restored self-possession.

"I won't hear of it. When shall we say, now?"

"Say in an hour's time," said Mr. Apps. "I can go upstairs again alone, change my fogs and do all I want to."

"And can't you stay longer?"

She gave the card to the maid and ordered it to be despatched at once.

"I've got a busy night before me," urged Mr. Apps, exclaimingly.

He thought of his dog waiting on the lawn, and feared it might give an inopportune bark. Besides, the safe was still open and the diamonds were waiting for him. He had noticed with satisfaction that Lady Staplehurst was wearing none.

"You were always an active man, captain."

"Always a-doing something," agreed Mr. Apps. "If it isn't one thing it's another."

He shook his head reflectively. "I often wonder I don't write a book about it all."

"I don't believe you will know anybody here, Captain Norman," she said, as they walked downstairs, "but I couldn't help sending you a card, seeing how friendly we were on the Pechawur. Do you remember those evenings on deck in the Red Sea?"

She was really a very fine young woman, and in her costume she looked extremely well.

"Do I not?" said Mr. Apps, with much fervor. "Shall I ever forget 'em?"

"And then the Journey from Brindisi, you know; and the funny little German—you remember him?"

"He was a knockout, that German was."

"And the girl who played the banjo, and—"

"It was great," agreed Mr. Apps, "great."

The large ballroom was very full. A small covey of brightly dressed young people flew toward the young hostess to complain of her temporary absence from the room, and a broad-shouldered gondolier shook hands with her and took up her card with something of an air of proprietorship.

"I thought I had left the key in the—excuse me." The young hostess took back her card from the gondolier. "I am engaged to Captain Norman. You don't know him? Allow me."

"Pleased to meet you," said Henry Apps. "Ow's the world using you?"

"That's an original costume of yours,

Captain Norman," remarked the gondolier. "I don't know that I've ever seen anything so daintily real before."

"Well, wot of it?" demanded Mr. Apps with sudden aggressiveness. "Wot's the odds to you wot I like to wear? You needn't think you are—"

"Captain Norman," interrupted the young hostess laughingly, "you mustn't overdo the card. Look here, I've put your name down for this waltz, but if you like we'll sit it out—that is, if you promise to keep up that diverting east end talk. I like it. Do you think we can manage to do so?"

"Ra-ther," said Mr. Apps.

"And it is a capital make-up, Captain Norman," she went on. "Do you know that at first, just for one moment, I thought you were a real burglar?"

"Fancy that, now," said Mr. Apps. He was relieved at seeing an obvious way out of his difficulty. "There's nothing like doing the thing in proper, strifeforward w'y."

"And," said Lady Staplehurst, with her fan on her arm as she walked across the room, "you have got the east end accent capitally."

"Tain't so dusty, is it?"

She beckoned to the gondolier.

"Captain Norman and I are great friends," she said, in an explanatory way. "He has not been long home from abroad, and he knows scarcely anyone."

"Not a blessed soul," echoed Mr. Apps. "You must let me show you around a bit, Captain Norman," said the gondolier, with determined gentility. "Can you come around to my club one night this week?"

"Whaffor?" demanded Mr. Apps suspiciously.

"Why, to dine. Say, Thursday."

"Evens knows where I shall be on Thursday," said Mr. Apps. "I don't."

"You must consider me at your disposal if you require any introductions. I know a lot of good people, and to any friend of Lady Staplehurst—"

"Oh, come off the roof," said Mr. Apps, with much discontent. "W'at's the use of torking."

"Isn't it capital?" asked Lady Staplehurst of the gondolier delightfully. "How much more interesting it would be if everyone would only talk to me in their character."

Lady Staplehurst arose with something of haste in her manner and spoke to Henry VIII.

"What regiment do you belong to, Captain Norman?" asked the gondolier.

"Find out," said Mr. Apps.

"Am I too curious? I know very little of the army, I am afraid." The gondolier was resolved to be agreeable to Lady Staplehurst's friend. "I always dodge the army nights in the house. I suppose you know several of the service members?"

"I know as many of them as I want to know," said Mr. Apps, evasively. "A man in my position in life 'as to be a bit careful who he mixes up with."

The hostess returned from Henry VIII.

"I can make nothing out of this man," whispered the gondolier to her, as he arose. "I think he's silly."

"If you knew his qualities you wouldn't speak of him like that." She resumed her seat by the side of Henry Apps.

"Well, blow me!" said Lady Staplehurst, screwing her pretty mouth in her effort to imitate the cockney's accent; "blow me if this ain't a fair take, I mean tike dahn," she laughed. "It's of no use, Captain Norman, I can't talk as you can."

"It's a gift," said Mr. Apps, "that's what it is."

"You don't want to be introduced to anybody here, I suppose?"

"Not me."

"You have heard—"

"All I want to."

"He's really making a big name in the house, you know. I watch his career with great interest."

"Thinks a jolly lot of himself."

"Oh, I think a lot of him, too," remarked Lady Staplehurst pleasantly. "And is that a jimmy sticking out of your jacket pocket? This is indeed realism. You don't know how it works, I suppose?"

"Well, I've got a kind of hidea," said Mr. Apps. "Looksee 'ere. You put this in and—"

Mr. Apps found himself getting quite excited in the explanation that he gave. It was a new sensation to meet one who showed an intelligent interest in his profession, and he could not help feeling flattered. Looking up, he saw the gondolier gazing at him.

"E don't look 'appy, that chap," said Mr. Apps.

"Will you excuse me for one moment?"

"Wot are you up to, miss?" he said apprehensively.

"I want to speak to him."

"Oh" (with relief). "I don't mind that."

While Lady Staplehurst was making the gondolier resume his ordinary expression Mr. Apps thought and thought. The couples promenading after the waltz looked curiously at him.

"It's the rummiest show you was ever in, 'Enry," said Mr. Apps; "you're 'aving 'em on toast, you are; but you'll be glad to get upstairs agen. You want them diamonds, that's wot you want. Time means money to you, 'Enry."

Lady Staplehurst hurried toward the doorway. A murmur of amusement went through the room as the guests saw a new arrival in the costume of a police constable, accompanied by a man in plain clothes. Mr. Apps, thinking over his exploit, gazing abstractedly at his boots, regretting their want of polish, did not see them until the plain clothes man tapped him on the shoulder.

"What, Apps again?" exclaimed the man.

"Yus," said the burglar, disconcertedly. "Yus, it's Apps again, Mr. Walker. And verry glad you are to see him, I've no dought."

"Always a pleasure to meet a gentleman like you," said Mr. Walker, cheerfully, as he conducted him toward the doorway. "I've wanted to run up against you before."

Much commotion in the ballroom at the diverting little scene. General agreement that Lady Staplehurst was a perfect genius at entertaining.

"But, loveliest girl," said the gondolier confidently to Lady Staplehurst, "isn't this carrying a joke rather too far? That's a real detective."

"I know," said the loveliest girl, trembling now a little. "That's a real burglar, too."

"A real—"

"Yes, yes. Don't make a fuss. I don't want the dance spoiled. Take me down to supper, like a good fellow."—London Tit-Bits.

What Franklin Accomplished.

Lord Jeffrey wrote of the American inventor and philosopher, "He never lost sight of common sense." Philip G. Hubert, Jr., in a sketch of Franklin in his recent book, "Inventors," says: "Nothing in nature failed to interest him," and a catalogue of his achievements, showing his activity and resource, is conclusive proof of the truth of both statements:

Franklin inspired and established the Junto, the pleasantest and most useful American club of which we have knowledge.

He founded the Philadelphia library, parent of a thousand libraries, which marked the beginning of an intellectual movement of endless good to the whole country.

He first turned to great account the engine of advertising, indispensable in all modern business.

He published "Poor Richard," a record of homely wisdom, in such shape that hundreds of thousands of readers were made better and stronger by it.

He created the postoffice system of America, and was the first champion of a reformed spelling.

He invented the Franklin stove, which economized fuel, and he suggested valuable improvements in ventilation and the building of chimneys.

He robbed thunder of its terrors, and lightning of some of its power to destroy.

He founded the American Philosophical Society, the first organization in America of the friends of science.

He suggested the use of mineral manures, introduced the basket willow, promoted the early culture of silk, and pointed out the advantages of white clothing in summer.

He measured the temperature of the Gulf Stream, and discovered that northeast storms may begin in the southwest.

He pointed out the advantage of building ships in water-tight compartments, taking the hint from the Chinese, and first urged the use of oil as a means of quieting dangerous seas.

Besides these great achievements, accomplished largely as recreation from his life-work as economist and statesman, Benjamin Franklin helped the whole race of inventors by a remark that has been of incalculable value and comfort to theorists and dreamers the world over. When some one spoke contemptuously of Montgolfier's balloon experiments, and asked of what use they were, the great American replied in words now historic, "Of what use is a new-born babe?"

Ink Stains.

It is said that when ink is spilled upon a carpet or anything made of woolen the spot should immediately be covered with common salt. When this has absorbed all the ink it will, carefully take it off with an old knife or spoon and apply more salt. Keep doing this until the ink is all taken up.

Cut flowers will keep very fresh if a small pinch of common saltpeter is put in the water in which they stand. The ends of the stem should be cut off a little every day to keep open the absorbing pores.

GREAT WINTER SPORT

ICE BOATS SKIM THE NORTHERN FROZEN LAKES.

Go Faster than the Wind, and Because of the Great Speed Are Difficult to Manage—Danger Lies in Cracks and Obstacles.

On Wings of Wind.

With winter comes the ice, and there is nothing that affords more sport than a well-constructed iceboat in the hands of an experienced person. Ice boating is not as dangerous as some other sports on the ice, but one must always be on the lookout for cracks in the ice, logs of wood and other obstacles. The iceboat, under favorable conditions, travels nearly ten times faster than does the ordinary sailboat, and therefore it is more difficult to handle. They have

many times over, is well illustrated in the case of the Comstock silver mine, which, according to the Age of Steam, was much troubled with water, although situated in a mountainous country. The engineers suggested that driving a tunnel through the hill would only could the mines be drained, but the troublesome overflowing water was utilized. A tunnel was acc made, the overflowing waters and the joining stream were diverted down a shaft to the bottom of the mine, and 1,700 feet under the level, and in chamber excavations at the bottom of the shaft were placed several pelton wheels, against which this heavy flow of water was directed. The wheels drove electric generators, which in turn, by an electric cable running in the shaft, drove electric motors, and in this way all steam machinery was dispensed with, the expensive cost of all fuel avoided and the entire pumping machinery done away with. But, more than this, the entire mines can now be



SPEEDING BEFORE THE GALE.

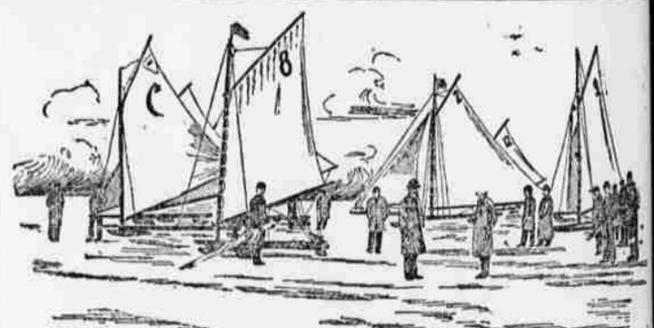
been known to attain a speed of nearly 100 miles an hour, while it is no uncommon thing for an ordinary iceboat to jog along at a speed of fifty miles an hour. While flying at a high rate of speed the least turn of the tiller may cause the boat to change its course, capsizing it, or, perhaps, running it into some obstacle.

Like sailboats, iceboats are of various designs, each having some particular advantage, but invariably the owner will tell you that his is the best possible method. The momentum of a boat depends largely upon its size and the breadth of its sails in proportion to the dimensions of the boat. Nearly all standard boats are rigged alike, or nearly so, but the cheaper boats are more for experiment and are often arranged differently. Most people imagine that after the first heavy fall of snow ice boating must be dispensed with, but such is not the case. The iceboats are so constructed that they will plow through a foot of snow, the skates being attached to a flange which raises the

worked by water power at a great financial saving.

A Glimpse of Rosa Bonheur.

Mr. Vanderbilt and Mr. Avery went down to By one morning to see Mrs. Rosa Bonheur at her country place at the outskirts of the Forest of Fontainebleau. Her well-appointed trap met them at the station, and carried them to the house in time for luncheon. Mrs. Bonheur poured out their wine for them herself, and they talked of the forest and the beautiful surroundings of her home. "Yes," she said; "but I hear them cutting down trees in the forest sometimes, and every blow of the ax hurts my heart." She had met Mr. August Belmont, and had received commissions from him to paint two pictures when he was United States minister at The Hague. She had told him that she was exceedingly busy and couldn't paint them very soon, and he had said, "How long must I wait? One year—two years? I am getting old, and I want them soon." She asked him how



ICE YACHTING ON LAKE WINNEBAGO.

body of the boat about eighteen inches above the ice.

An iceboat is simple in construction, being in the shape of a triangle. There are three skates under it, two of which are at the front. The fore runners are generally much heavier and larger than is the hind runner, for the reason that they bear a larger proportion of the weight. The tiller is at the extreme end of the boat, so that it requires little force to steer the boat. The average head of the iceboat is from 12 to 18 feet long, and from 5 to 8 feet wide. The spar is at the bow of the boat and the sail projects half way over the bow. Most of the boats have only one sail, which consists of about 50 yards of canvas, but in many instances a jib, foresail and topsail are used. All sails may be reefed.

There will be a greater variety of iceboats this winter than ever before. They range from the small boy's boat, which may be considered a toy, to the larger ones which carry nearly as much canvas as do some of the large schooners.

Worked by Water Power.

The importance of employing good engineering skill, where, although the first cost of professional fees is large, the amount may ultimately be saved

old he was, and when he said, "Seventy-one," she replied, "That is my age, too." So she shook hands with him, and told him she would paint the pictures for him at once. Mrs. Bonheur related this incident to her visitors, and added: "Mr. Belmont is a great Democrat, isn't he? When will he be elected President of the United States?" She evidently thought his chances were very good, but Mr. Vanderbilt told her he thought they were about as good as his own, and his he considered painfully small; so Mrs. Bonheur was enlightened on American politics. "At this time," says Mr. Avery, "she did not seem at all old. She had a refined, womanly face and a very sweet voice. Her temperament was bright and gay, and her manner charming."—Century.

Chinese Tea Shops.

The tea shop in China is an important institution, for it serves as a news depot where people go to hear the latest gossip; it is, moreover, a business house, where men buy and sell, discuss the financial situation and otherwise make it serve the purpose of a club.

Born on Christmas Day.

On Dec. 25 there were born Sir Isaac Newton, William Collins, the English poet; Richard Parson, the great critic, and classical scholar.