

SELBY'S SAFE.

WHENEVER I get a new job that seems like a gold mine," observed Selby. "I immediately begin to look around for the drawbacks."

"Kicking Bill, as usual," remarked his friend Eggleston. "By George, I believe you'd kick in heaven because your wings were like a swan's instead of a peacock's. What in the world have you got to grumble about now?" "It's just like this," replied Selby. "You see, I have some very large collections to make every Saturday night, which I have to keep in the house until Monday. I don't like the responsibility. It's wearing on my nerves. I haven't a peaceful moment while the money's in the house and scarcely get a wink of sleep. There isn't a place I can put it and feel that it's secure."

"Well," suggested Eggleston, "my advice is, first to take a nerve tonic, and then to buy a safe."

"That's what I'll have to do," assented the other, "buy a safe. The expense is somewhat heavy, but I can't stand the strain any longer. Look here, Eggleston, suppose you meet me tomorrow noon at Devron's and help me to select one."

"Glad to do it, old man," answered Eggleston, "but I'll charge you a fee not only for my professional knowledge of strong boxes, but also for the advice I have given you to-night."

The next day the two met at Devron's. It was evident that the epithet of "Kicking Bill" which his friends had long ago bestowed upon Selby was not a slander. According to him there was not a suitable safe in the whole establishment. One was too large, another too small, a third not strong enough, a fourth had too easy a combination. After a couple of hours' examination of the whole stock, and when the weary salesman, having vainly extolled the merits of his wares with all his trader's eloquence, at length despaired of making a sale, Eggleston came to the rescue.

"Come now, Selby, this is all nonsense. Here's one that fills the bill."

Selby protested; but Eggleston insisted, and in the end carried his point.

The safe was installed in the library, which adjoined Selby's bedroom. Like a child with a new toy, he spent the first few hours after its arrival playing with the combination until he could almost work it with his eyes shut.

The first Saturday after his purchase he brought home a fat wad of greenbacks, which he carefully deposited in the inner compartment of the safe, locked the door, put the key in his pocket, closed the outer door and twisted the combination back and forth for five full minutes; then opened it again to make sure he had locked the inner compartment, and repeated the whole process.

He went to bed that night with the key to the inner door tied to his wrist. Nevertheless, sleep was as difficult to induce as ever. If the floor in the hall creaked he imagined that some one was stealing into the library, and a thorough investigation had to be made. But physical and mental exhaustion finally won the upper hand.

When he awoke the next morning his first act was to feel for the key. It had not been removed from his wrist. Next he hastened into the library. No dynamite had been at work on the safe, which stood as if gazing at him in silent disdain at his anxiety. He quickly opened the outer door, and, with trembling fingers, inserted the key into the lock of the inner compartment. A twist, a pull and its door was open. His heart leaped violently to his throat, then dropped exhausted and seemed to cease its beating altogether. Only gaping, mocking, hopeless, awful emptiness met his searching eyes. Not the slightest vestige of the treasure remained.

But who had extracted it, and how? He reported the matter to the police, and detectives were sent to the house. As is their wont, they immediately suspected the servants. Impossible! They had been in the family for years, and even if they were dishonest, how could they have gotten into the safe, especially as the key had never left his possession for a single instant, and the dealer had assured him that there were no duplicates.

What—but no, it could not be! Yet Eggleston had insisted rather determinedly upon his taking that particular safe. No, he would not believe it of his friend. Still, such branches of friendship were not unheard of. Could it be that Eggleston and the clerk were in collusion, and that Eggleston had obtained a duplicate key? But how could he have gotten into the house? Perhaps he had bribed one of the servants.

Although he doubted him, neverthe-

less these suspicions made Selby very uncomfortable. However, he did not communicate them to the detectives, who were utterly at loss for a clew.

Another Saturday arrived without any hopeful developments.

After much hesitation Selby again placed his collections in the safe, and personally examined every door and window before retiring. Not content with these precautions, he arose at various intervals during the night and examined the contents of his treasure box. All was well. In the small hours of the morning he fell into a deep sleep, from which he was awakened some time after daybreak by a knock at the door. It was one of the servants. As he was never aroused from his slumbers on Sunday morning, he surmised that something was wrong. In response to his inquiring glance the maid stated that between three and four o'clock she had heard footsteps descending the attic staircase, that she had remained awake and listened attentively, but heard nothing more, and that she had only at that moment dared to venture out of her room.

Selby's first thought was of the safe. Rushing into the library, he hastily opened its two doors. Again it was empty!

Next he climbed the attic stairs. He found no trace of the thief up there. The windows were not only all nailed shut, but none of the dust-covered cobwebs which sealed them had been disturbed. The scuttle to the roof likewise was fastened on the inside. A search through the rest of the house revealed nobody in hiding, nor was there any visible means of exit, all the doors and windows being locked from within.

The servant who had awakened Selby was put through a rigid examination by the police, who were of the opinion that she was implicated in the theft and had concocted her story to divert suspicion from herself; but she was either an expert twister of the truth or innocent, for the ferrets of crime, with all their skillful questioning and cross-questioning, could find no flaws in her testimony.

Saturday came round again, and the detective in charge of the case had made no progress. Although it was not probable that a third robbery would be committed, still he was going to try the only method remaining to solve the mystery—namely, conceal himself in the library that night. Selby alone was apprised of his intention and admitted him to the house after the servants had retired. When they had both made sure that the contents of the safe were thus far intact, Selby locked the iron doors and went to his room.

But he was ill at ease. His nerves, unstrung by the worry of the past two weeks, excited his imagination to the wildest vagaries. He became distrustful even of the detective. What if he should be an accomplice! The corruption of the police force was notorious. Might not this man be one of the most corrupt? Reason dispelled these fears in part, but it was several hours before sleep visited him.

Suddenly he was roughly brought back to consciousness by a shake from a powerful arm. He struggled frantically to free himself.

"Calm yourself," said a voice, which he instantly recognized as that of the detective. "What's the matter? Everything's all right."

Everything all right! How happened it then that the detective was in his room and how had an entrance been effected, for he was sure he had locked the door before retiring? How—but his thoughts abruptly changed their direction. His wandering eyes had gradually regained the power of seeing concrete things, and he all at once realized that he was not in his room. But where was he? Before him stood the detective holding a flickering candle.

"Are you awake now, sir?" asked the latter.

"Yes," answered Selby.

"Look down at your feet, then."

Selby did as bidden. A loose board had been removed from the flooring and in the hole thus uncovered were three wads of greenbacks. Memories of childhood came back to him. How often when a small boy had he hidden his youthful valuables beneath that very board, but he had long since forgotten its existence. In an instant he comprehended the situation. It was an odd case of somnambulism. His ever-vigilant distrust had stolen a march on his sleeping consciousness.—New York News.

Equally Tough.

Landlady—White meat or dark?
Boarder—It doesn't matter; I'm color blind.—New York Times.

OUR MINISTER TO VENEZUELA.

Herbert W. Bowen Admirably Adapted for Any Emergency.

Herbert Wolcott Bowen, United States Minister to Venezuela, has been qualified by twelve years in the diplomatic and consular service of the nation to deal with the contingencies which may arise in the distracted South American republic. He went to Venezuela in 1901, succeeding Francis B. Loomis. Prior to that he was Minister to Persia, having been appointed to that post in 1890.

But it was in Spain, before the outbreak of hostilities between that country and the United States, that Minister Bowen gained the especial experience which will stand him in good stead in the Venezuela imbroglio. He first went to that country in 1890, being appointed consul at Barcelona by President Harrison. In 1895 President Cleveland made him consul general. Barcelona was the scene of manifestations of hostility toward the United States in March, 1896. The feeling was aroused by the passage by the Senate of the Morgan resolution, which recognized the Cuban insurgents. A mob of several thousand persons gathered in front of the United States consulate in Barcelona, and with shouts and execrations demanded the destruction of the building and the death of the occupants. Consul General Bowen appeared at the entrance and defied the mob, which dispersed in a short time without harming anyone, and doing little damage to the edifice. Mr. Bowen was the last representative of the United States to leave Spain at the time of the actual outbreak of hostilities. After the close of the Spanish-American war he was preparing to return to his post at Barcelona when made Minister to Persia.

Minister Bowen was born in Brooklyn in 1856 and is distinguished as a literary man of excellence and a poet of considerable power. He is six feet and three inches in height, of athletic build and great personal prowess. He speaks French, Spanish, German and Italian fluently and is thus well equipped for his present post.

URGED TO GROW NATIVE SILK.

State Biologist of North Carolina Distributing Mulberry Trees.

There is a new chapter in the awakening movement for growing native American silk in the South, begun by Gerald McCarthy, biologist of the North Carolina Department of Agriculture, at Raleigh, N. C. The State is arranging to furnish free mulberry trees to farmers who will experiment in raising silk. All over the State of North Carolina Mr. McCarthy is scattering this circular:

"The first season's experience in silk growing in North Carolina has proved a most gratifying success. It has demonstrated that the women and children of the State may, by light and interesting work during six weeks of early summer, earn, without interfering seriously with their ordinary duties, at least \$30. Those who can devote more time to the work may earn much more.

"To place silk growing upon a permanent basis we must increase the output of silk cocoons to a volume which will attract to the silk reeler and weavers, thus creating a home market for the product of the silkworm. The first and most necessary step is to increase the available supply of silkworm food. We must plant mulberry trees until each farm suited for this kind of work has at least 100 trees. Every farm having dry soil, lying between Goldsborough and Statesville or Asheville, can successfully grow silk.

"In order to encourage the planting of the mulberry the State Department of Agriculture will distribute among the farmers of North Carolina in lots of fifty and one hundred rooted seedling trees of the varieties best suited for feeding the silkworm. Not more than 100 will be sent to one person.

"Silk growing will prove valuable as nature study and a remunerative art in schools and is well worth the attention of all who have supervision over educational institutions. It is also well adapted for charitable institutions. Public institutions which wish to experiment with silk growing will be supplied with trees."

North Carolina is only one of the possible States for the growing of silk, this scientist says, according to the New York Times. He expects a wide range for its production before many years, far beyond the confines of the Southern belt.

The Shade Trees of Paris.

The city of Paris, France, spends about \$50,000 every year in maintaining its trees. There are about 87,800 trees in the city, and they grow in rows along the sidewalks. This number, however, does not include the trees in the parks.

Women patients are more popular in hospitals than men patients. They are easier to get along with, and complain less. But men are more popular than women in boarding houses.

Wanted a Year's Guaranty.

"It's almost impossible, dear, to lease a house for a shorter term than one year, nowadays," he said, "so, to protect myself, I must ask you—"

"Ask me what?" interrupted his bride-to-be.

"To agree not to seek a divorce until the expiration of the first year's lease."—Catholic Standard.

Quite Consistent.

Miss Mainchant—I suppose you've heard of my engagement to Mr. Jenks?

Miss Ascott—Yes, and I confess I was surprised. You told me once that you wouldn't marry him for a million dollars.

Miss Mainchant—I know, dear, but I discovered later that he had two millions.

Their Only Hope.

"I believe," said Mrs. Oldun, sharply, "that there should be a law against bachelors."

"Nonsense!" exclaimed Peppery; "why, the only hope of some women are the bachelors, for the widowers are too particular."—Philadelphia Record.

To Break in New Shoes.

Always shake in Allen's Foot-Ease, a powder. It cures chafings, damp, sweating, itching, swollen feet. Cures Corns and Bunions. At all druggists and shoe stores. Don't accept any substitute. Sample mailed FREE. Address Allen S. Olmstead, LeRoy, N. Y.

How the Fall Has Fallen.

Patience—I understand Mr. and Mrs. Styles are just going away now for their vacation.

Patrice—Yes; they remind one of Adam and Eve when they were leaving the garden of Eden, don't they?

"What an idea?"

"Well, you see, they, too, are going away for the fall."—Yonkers Statesman.

For forty year's Piso's Cure for Consumption has cured coughs and colds. At druggists. Price 25 cents.

One Explanation.

Judge—Winters are not so cold as they used to be.

Fudge—Oh, yes, they are. Only now chronic liars have such a variety of things, like auto, records, etc., to lie about, that they can't devote so much attention to the weather any more.—Baltimore Herald.

Exactly Alike.

First Rooter (shivering on bleachers)—Why is a football "fan" like one of the palm-leaf varieties?
Second Rooter—"Cause it never shuts up.—New York Times.

Mother

"My mother was troubled with consumption for many years. At last she was given up to die. Then she tried Ayer's Cherry Pectoral, and was speedily cured."
D. P. Jolly, Avoca, N. Y.

No matter how hard your cough or how long you have had it, Ayer's Cherry Pectoral is the best thing you can take. It's too risky to wait until you have consumption. If you are coughing today, get a bottle of Cherry Pectoral at once.

Three sizes: 25c., 50c., \$1. All drug stores.

Consult your doctor. If he says take it, then do as he says. If he tells you not to take it, then don't take it. He knows. Leave it with him. We are willing.
J. C. AYER CO., Lowell, Mass.

Doting Dotage.

Miss De Spite—I just dote on George, I understand he threw you over.

Miss De Sweet—Yes; in dotage one is liable to do almost anything.

Tough On Him.

"Miss Strong is exceedingly masculine, isn't she?" remarked Miss Acum.

"Most atrociously so," remarked young Mr. Sissy, with some heat.

"You seem to speak from experience?"

"Yaas, I do. She got into the elevator with me in the Skyscraper building one day and when she saw me she deliberately removed her hat and held it in her hand until I got off."

Didn't Wait to Hear.

Hewitt—Gruett says that you are afraid of him.

Jewett—Afraid of him! Why, it was only yesterday that I called him everything that I could think of.

Hewitt—What did he say?
Jewett—I came away from the telephone as soon as I said all I had to say.—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Insanity in Berlin.

There are 300 new cases of insanity in Berlin every year. A new asylum is under construction, and the Tagblatt says two more ought to be begun at once.

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