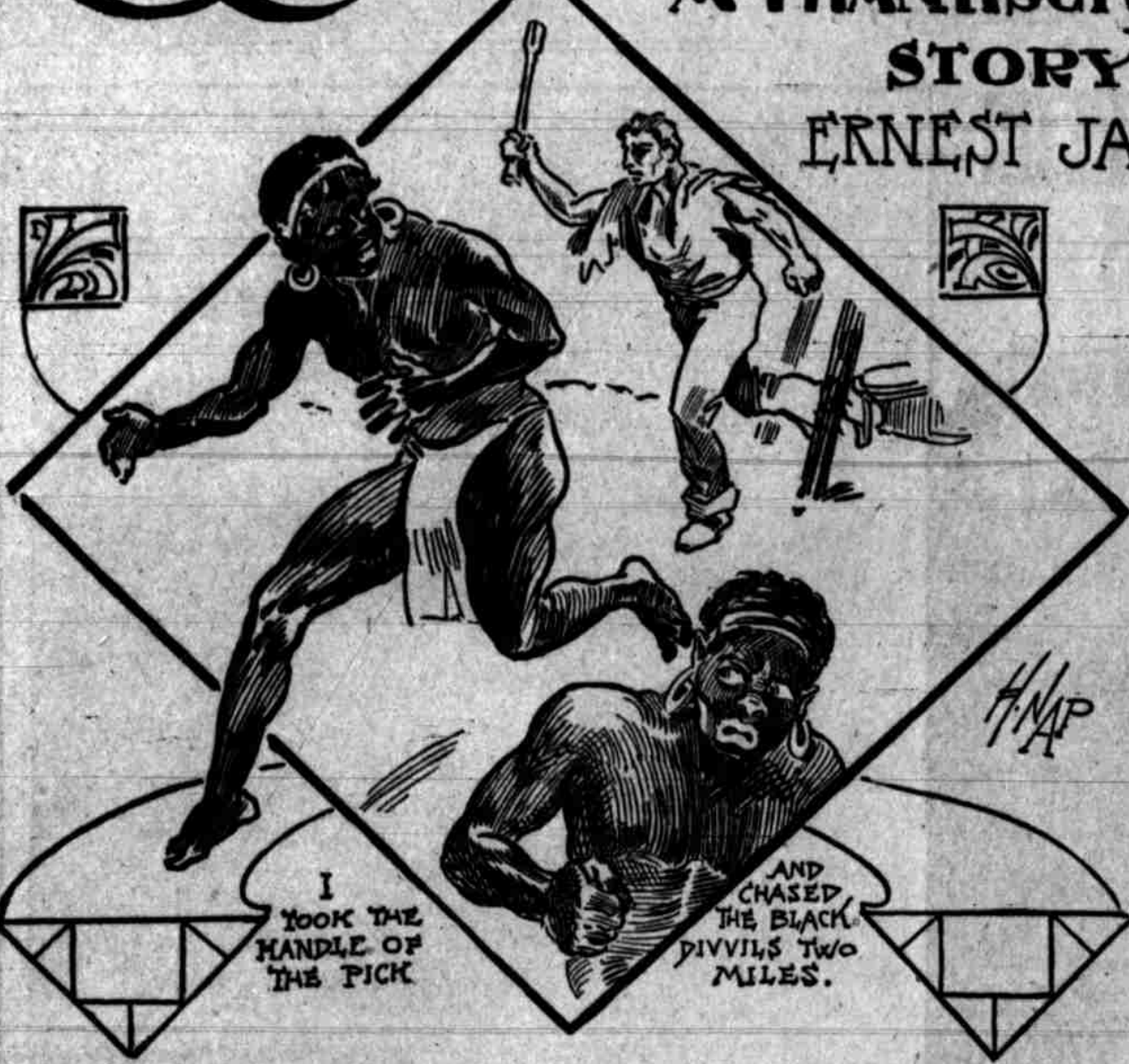


# QUICKER THAN DYNAMITE

## A THANKSGIVING STORY. BY ERNEST JARROLD



**S**LATTERY piled Flaherty's plate with boiled codfish, mashed potatoes and turnips.

"It is sorry I am that I cannot give you a turkey's wing or a piece of the breast," said he. "But I lost so much time on account of the Ironworker strike that I cannot afford to pay 20 cents a pound for turkey."

"What talk have you," replied Flaherty, the talker; "you ought to be glad you're alive and have your health on this beautiful Thanksgiving day. Many a man as strong as you is in the poorhouse or in jail."

"Of course, it's thankful I am that I'm no worse off than I am," replied Slattery, "but I'm making no fuss about it."

"No, you ungrateful baste," responded Flaherty, cynically. "You have the three greatest things that the good God gave to a man—health, strength and a good appetite—and still you are unhappy. I suppose you're pinin' for a divil-wagon now, eh, to be runnin' over old women and little children?"

"No, I wouldn't want one of them machines," replied Slattery, "but I would like to have some of the things that the sibs have to eat, like lobsters and patty-de-foy grass and mushroom soup and divviled kidneys. I often thought when I was lying awake nights that I'd like to ate some o' them things. Now, we'll say, how would you like to have some calfs' foot jelly? I never tried it, but I'd like to see how it tastes. It sounds nice. I'm thinkin' that kind o' jelly would roll off a man's tongue like dewdrops off a rose. I'd be real thankful if I had a taste o' calfs' foot jelly."

"I'm ashamed to hear you always talkin' about somethin' to ate," said Flaherty. "Let me ask you, were you ever rare thankful for somethin' that happened you besides what you could put in your mouth?"

"Yes, wanst," replied Slattery.

"What happened you?"

"I was driven through a hole in the ground on top of six bustin' sticks of dynamite."

"You were in the explosion?" asked Flaherty, cynically. "Where?"

"In the Kimberley mines in South Africa," replied Slattery.

"Now, don't be tellin' any lies," said Flaherty warningly. "You were never outside of the fourth ward in your life. But if you were, where were you doin' in Kimberley?"

"I was diggin' for diamonds," replied Slattery stoutly.

"Why didn't you say you were diggin' for diamonds?" asked Flaherty. "There might be some fools who would believe you. Diamonds!" added Flaherty contemptuously.

"The hole I was diggin' was a hundred feet deep," resumed Slattery with conviction.

"Then you were blown out of the top of the hole and not through the bottom of it," said Flaherty.

"It was continued Slattery, "and if you don't believe me, I'll show you the hole in me leg."

Here Slattery rolled up his trousers and displayed to Flaherty's doubting eyes a deep indentation in the flesh just below the knee where an old wound had evidently been made.

"Well," said Flaherty, cynically. "I suppose I'll have to take your word for it. I don't have no affidavit in your pocket."

"Ain't the affidavit in me leg enough to prove it?" said Slattery angrily.

"'Twould be just like you to be making that hole in your leg with a brick, so that I might believe your story," said Flaherty with a grin.

This taunt rendered Slattery almost speechless with rage. He gasped and spluttered. Then he arose, took off his coat and challenged Flaherty to mortal combat. Said he:

"Get up, you dog! You have been makin' fun of my veracity long enough. I don't want to hit you with a brick, but what I'll get up for!"

"What will I get up for?" asked Flaherty, leaning on his elbow and lighting his pipe.

"'Cause I'm goin' to throw you out of my window," said the enraged man.

"I wouldn't do that," said Flaherty, coaxingly, "because there might be some one passin', and if I fell on them from

a window fifty feet from the ground and killed them it would be the hurry-up wagon for you, and the electric chair. You see, 'twould be murder in the second degree—killin' one man with another."

Slattery grinned at the ingenious reply. Then he resumed his coat and his chair. He resumed his interrupted story with a caution to his friend regarding any reference to his truthfulness because it was dangerous to trifle with an honest man. But Flaherty broke in with another question:

"Slattery, would them diamonds you were diggin' out glass?"

"They were sharper nor your tongue," retorted Slattery. "If you don't stop bully-raggin' me, Flaherty, I'll never come to the Thanksgivin' part of my story."

"I'll say no more," said Flaherty with apparent contrition. "You were sayin' that them diamonds were bigger nor pigeons' eggs, and what else were you goin' to say?"

"If you will keep your mouth shut long enough," said Slattery, "I'll tell you that we got no diamonds. We were diggin' for them, but we didn't get 'em."

"You were in a poor place to get them," said Flaherty; "the proper place to look for diamonds is in a jeweler's window."

"If you're tellin' the story I'll let you tell me," said Slattery sullenly. "But if I'm to tell it I'll say that about twenty years ago I worked me way on a sailing vessel from London to Cape Town. Every man on board the ship was crazy about the diamond fields; but 'twas a weary march up country from the sea, and when I got to Kimberley I was nearly dead from the heat and the hunger. There was plenty of work in the big diamond mines, but you had to work with a lot of Kaffir nagurs in a hole so hot you'd think the doors of the bad place were open and the fires o' torment blowin' on you. After I was in Kimberley, a week I met a Yankee that had a concession from one of the big companies, and was sinkin' a shaft six feet wide and six feet across. He worked

toward his instrumental equipment utterly failed him.

"Then came the telescoproscope, by the use of which the new principles could be applied, and now our astronomers are rapidly gaining a knowledge of the motion of all the more important stars in the heavens. With that knowledge has come to us the interesting fact that our own solar system—our sun, our earth and our sister planets—are moving through the universe at the rate of 1,800,000 miles in 24 hours, or about three miles a second. In the direction of the constellation of Hercules.

"It was but yesterday we heard of a new star whose brilliant light burst forth in the heavens, not when we first caught a glimpse of it, but maybe 100 years ago, and it is so far distant that its light, flashing across the stellar depths at the rate of 184,000 miles per second, may have taken all these years to reach us.

"Placing the slit of our telescoproscope upon the new star, we observe the awe-inspiring phenomenon of a sun in flames." Our inference is that there has been a collision between two stellar worlds somewhere in the universe, and now we witness the elements melting with fervent heat perhaps a hundred years after the awful catastrophe has taken place. A year later the light of that brilliant star has faded from mortal vision, but the astronomical camera, penetrating far deeper into the stellar depths than the human eye when aided by the telescope, reveals to us the story of a disintegrated world—now a mass of nebula—ready to go through its long evolution, possibly in countless millions of years, to become a star again."

Mr. Brashear took from his desk drawer some photographs of these very things, and they told me of some things he has done in the realm of astronomical research. Then I gave vent to my amazement over his ability to deal successfully with such infinitesimal figures and such impalpable things—for the final polish of a lens is rubbed on by hand with rouge—yes, the very kind our fair friends sometimes use to make themselves more fair.

"Why?" he exclaimed. "The day will come when such figures as we now deem large shall look rude. As to the small ones, let me tell you something. We learn from the physicist that an atom of hydrogen can be broken up into nearly a thousand corpuscles; an atom of mercury into 200,000 corpuscles; that the atom of radium has stored within it

"I was that freckened that I couldn't light the fuses," said the story-teller. "When I had the first fuse lit me hand would be shakin' like I had the palsy, and when I had the third fuse lit I couldn't light the fourth fuse, and I jumped into the bucket and yelled to the nagurs to be twistin' me up before the blast went off."

"Well, see you got to the top in time," said Flaherty. "You're still here."

"Faith, I am," replied Slattery, "but that's because I made an invention of my own invention, that saved me life. When I had the hole down 90 feet I took two candles, sixes, and cut them into three pieces each; then I put each piece of candle down fernst each piece of fuse; then I lit the candle and pulled each piece of fuse over into the flame of the candle. You'll mind, Flaherty, that it would be a little while before the flame of the candle would be burnin' through the fuse, and by that time I'd be yellin' to the nagurs."

"You certainly are a great inventor," said Flaherty, admiringly. "I think you must have saved at least ten seconds by your quick brain."

"Are you making game of me again?" said Slattery, suspiciously. "One second would be enough to save my life, if I only had it to spare."

"You were quicker than the dynamite," said Flaherty.

"Faith I was," replied Slattery. "But the explosion nearly got me a week

later, and it was on Thanksgiving day, too. The reason I remember was that the Yankee that hired me said it was a habit in Boston where he came from to eat all you could stuff down, and call it a day of thanks. As I was sayin', I had the candles lit and the fuse pulled over in the flame of the candle, and I yellin' to the black nagurs. 'Twast ye divvils ye, twast,' and they had twisted up ten feet when they stopped twistin'."

"You were certainly in a nice, warm, comfortable place then," said Flaherty. "I suppose you could see the fireworks below and hear the cheerful fuses singin', eh?"

"I could," replied Slattery with conviction. "The fires of hell were roarin' beneath me, and there was I sittin' in the bucket and hearin' the cheerful fuses singin'. You must understand, Flaherty, that when you are in a hole like that it is all the same as if you were in a well in the daytime. And there was I lookin' up at Arcturus and Neptune and O'Rion and wonderin' which one of them I'd be blottin' out when the blast went off."

"But for you, Slattery," said Flaherty, "Vaynus and Callippus and the milk way would be skeddaddled for home if you were loose in the heavin'."

"Yes, yes," replied the delighted Slattery, charmed by this cordial appreciation of his inventive genius. "Did you ever hear of the man that was strapped to the mouth of a cannon and another man standin' at the bunghole with a

lighted match in his hand? That's where I was, only I was inside the cannon! Thin what did I do, Flaherty?"

"I suppose you prayed to the Powers above to pa-ardon you for the many lies you have told," said his listener.

"No, I didn't," said the exultant Slattery. "I grabbed the rope, and here was I goin' up the rope hand over hand, kickin' at the side of the hole until I reached the top. Then I threw myself on me face and the blast went off, and there was a rain of blast, mud and clay and rocks for ten minutes. The earth trembled and all the little birds flew away to a safe place. There was a tuksin in me ears as if made by a thousand bees, and the sweat of fear was on me. And while I was layin' there with me mouth full of sand, I was sayin' to myself, 'I am dyin' melord, dyin'.' When I thought of them haythin nagurs Kaffirs, and a black rage took hold of me. I climbed out of the pile of dirt that covered me and kicked the head of off a pick."

"And did you stop to say a word of thanks for the salvation of your life?" asked Flaherty.

"No," replied Slattery. "I hadn't time. I took the handle of the pick and chased the black divvils two miles, and I had every one of their legs and arms broke, only they ran too fast for me."

"Then you were not at all thankful?" said Flaherty.

"Nothin' to speak of," was the reply, "but I think the Kaffirs were."

## The Man Who Has Uncovered Mysteries

(Continued from first page of this section.)

which, in turn, sent them back to that opening the size of the point of a cambric needle, and not one solitary ray of light fell outside its tiny circumference!

Have you ever tried to conceive absolute justice or absolute truth or absolute anything else? Then you can appreciate how I felt as I stood there in the presence of absolute perfection of one sort! It was trifle unanny, and somehow I felt as if I ought to bare my head.

Nor was that feeling diminished when Dr. Brashear told me about that concave lens. To begin with, the rough piece of glass from which it was ground was stored away in a vault ten years before a grain of emery touched its surface. This was to give the molecules time to settle! Did you ever think of glass being composed of a countless multitude of minute particles which cannot get comfortably settled in their seats for a number of years, and even after that they are so upset by the least change in temperature or the least vibration as to be lawfully upset? Well, that is just what you have to think of if you want to give the molecules time to settle, and as you have always imagined it to be.

So, after this particular lump had been settling itself for ten years, the grinding was begun, and now it is invaluable for testing other delicate optical surfaces, for its concave surface represents a perfect section of a globe 100 feet in diameter, and this makes it invaluable as a testing piece.

But the first time they tried to use it for testing Dr. Brashear was troubled.

Something seemed to be wrong. The tiny ray of light that should have gone into the needle point hole wavered and ran ragged around the edge of the opening! And all this in spite of the fact that he had waited until 3 o'clock in the morning to make the test!

That is about the hour at which such tests are always made. At that time no one is stirring, and even the outer air is more still than at any other period,

and all these things have to be taken into consideration.

But something was vibrating! The rays quivered, as if frightened!

A search was made. After while Dr. Brashear found a small bit that had been left by one of the mechanics on a crossbar of the mirror support. It was removed, and there was no more trouble!

You have heard of hair splitting, but hair splitting is as rail splitting, when compared to this!

And now, having entered the realm of the infinitesimal, let us really see something of the country. Let us take a look at a piece of shining metal, which has in its center a space about an inch wide and two inches long. This space looks as if it had just barely escaped being polished to as high a degree as the rest of the metal. Now the reason for this appearance of dullness—and it is hardly fair to call it dull—is a small matter of 30,000 distinct and separate lines cut side by side in that two inches of length. Ten times this many could be cut, but what's the use?

The surface upon which these lines have been traced by a diamond point is absolutely flat and an nearly absolutely smooth as any metal surface can be made. And the only place in the world where this metal is thus prepared is in this little workshop on the hill, Europe has tried it, but failed.

The actual cutting of the lines is now done there. And when these lines have been carved, the light of a star falling on that surface is changed to a ribbon of seven primary colors, divided perpendicularly by dark lines of varying width, and denoting which indicates the constituent elements of that star.

This is the heart of the telescoproscope that has long since taken the place of the prism for many critical studies in spectrum analysis. In the workshop of the Brashear shop the doctor showed me the tubular form of a telescoproscope 25 feet long, which he is making for his latest—the new-observatory of the West—our university of Pennsylvania, that can be seen from the show windows, and is now in use, though not fully equipped.

There is no telling what may be learned with this instrument when it

is in working order. Imagine, if you can, the feelings of the observer who first uses this giant. It will be like knocking at the doorway of eternity and waiting for some one to let you in.

It does not now seem strange that the man who has done these things should have dreams of what may be in store for this world, does it?

It does not seem the least strange, after having seen such evidence of his rare gifts, to hear him talk about the sun growing cold. With all the great scientists of the age, he knows the sun is growing cold, and he thinks that in 10,000,000 years it will have lost most of its heat and, therefore, all its light.

"The last quarter of a century has revolutionized astronomy," he said, as he juggled with giant figures in the great hall. You have pondered a piece of lead into a small ball and felt how hot it got as you kept on pounding. Well, that is our present belief as to the heat of the sun. It is contracting all the time, and this contraction generates an enormous amount of heat, which burns up all the metals of which the sun is composed exactly as if they were the most inflammable of materials.

"I believe the day is coming when we will gather this energy of the sun just as it comes to us in direct rays and store it up and use it to run our mills and factories. The solar engine has never been given a fair trial, for the simple reason that there is plenty of fuel in the world as yet. But when the supply runs short, as it must some day, the energy of the sun will cause the desert to blossom as a rose, for it is on this desert that the sun shines hottest. How we see the working of the great law of compensation in everything.

"And take the stars. Our medieval astronomers taught us the stars were all fixed—immovable—in the heavens. The doubting student came along in later years and with his instruments of precision soon discovered there were no fixed stars. He could readily measure their movements across the line of sight, but when moving away from or

Parisians Consider Us Without Manners

Doubtless there are Americans who are refined and educated; doubtless there are American women who are charming and without vanity. But it must be confessed that far too many individuals among these bustling "trans-Atlantic" are ostentatious, supercilious, satisfied with themselves and their country, their dollars, their strength, their hurry and their skill.—Ernest Daudet, in Libre Parole.

By Ella Wheeler Wilcox.

**C**OMMENTS like the above appear constantly in the French press, and they indicate the exact attitude of France toward America.

Never was a country more universally hated than our own. When not actively hated it is regarded with critical amusement.

an energy of which our older science did not dream.

"Furthermore, our advanced physicists, or at least some of them, have relegated matter to a new field and tell us that negative electricity is matter—i. e., that electrons and matter are interconvertible terms.

Lord Kelvin says of the atom: 'If we raise a drop of water to the size of the earth and raise the atom in the same proportion, then will it be some place between the size of a marble and a cricket ball.'

"If you fill a tiny vessel one centimeter cube (about three eighths of an inch) with hydrogen corpuscles, you can place therein—in round numbers—525 octillions of them. If these corpuscles are allowed to run out of the vessel at the rate of 1,000 per second, it will require 17,000,000,000,000 years to empty. Such a computation seems almost like trifling with science—indeed, apparently trifling with the human intellect, but it is with these subtle theories that our physicists are delving into the innermost chamber of the infinitely minute."

"What are we coming to?" I asked.

"Who can tell? Brooks has said: 'It may be some day we shall be able to construct a living organism by the combination of the proper elements.' Dare I say that some day we may know the food value of a thought?"

## Parisians Consider Us Without Manners

ment. At the same time our financial success and our material progress arouse a spirit of jealousy and envy, so that all the evil emotions seem to be brought to the surface in the European mind at the mention of the word America.

The Europeans do not want our prosperity at the cost of having our methods of our manners. But they would like our wealth, as they are universally an avaricious people and lovers of wealth for what it can procure.

The Parisians are wholly unostentatious; they despise a showy exterior, and some of their most palatial homes are almost shabby on the outside.

Our display of opulence offends their sense of refinement, but they are ravenous for the means by which this display is made, and their only tolerance of us in their midst is that we may dispense some of our superfluous dollars where they may profit by them.

Parisians are quite justified in regarding Americans as vulgarians, if not barbarians, since the opening of the American section of the exposition of 1889.

American friends who were present on that occasion have related to me what occurred to their humiliation and chagrin.

These friends had been present at the receptions given by the Chinese, the Japanese, the Russian, French, German, and, in fact, all the other departments of the exposition.

All invitations were issued by card, and all the foreign receptions were distinguished by quiet elegance.

When my friends presented themselves at the entrance of their own national department they found a mob in possession. Elegantly attired women were showing guards and officials away from the post of duty and forcing their way into the reception-rooms without cards.

"We are Americans and free people, and we have a right to go in! No foreigner has a right to keep us out of our own country's department!" was their cry. And in their zeal, before the eyes of astonished and disgusted officials placed on duty to keep order and receive the cards of the invited.

When refreshments were served a

scene even more disgraceful occurred. It was an absolute onslaught, a raid of the mob toward the tables. My friend's gown was nearly torn from her body as she tried to escape.

And, mind you, these were not the poor and hungry people of America, the "bread line" of New York's poor districts; they were people of wealth and supposed position, handsomely attired and passing as the representative citizens of America. And their numbers justified the supposition.

Not one, not ten, not twenty Americans were guilty of this conduct, but a mob of hundreds.

It has never been forgotten in France, and never will be.

The foreign papers rang with ridicule of Americans for weeks, and no wonder. "Heathen" Chinese and Japanese officials shrugged their shoulders when the name of America was mentioned. And France continues to think of us as vulgarians, and hungry ones at that, fighting for an entrance to a reception to which we are not bidden, and fighting our way to the food after we get in.

It is the fault of Americans in Europe that such comments as the one quoted above appear continually in the French press.

Standing at one of the "Louvre" counters waiting for an overtaken salesman to find time for me, I heard an irritable voice at my side complaining of his lack of attention.

The young man replied politely, saying she must wait her turn.

As I glanced at the woman, she said in English: "You are an American, are you not?" (I wondered whether it was my "type" or my poor French she recognized.) Then the woman proceeded to bad American shops and decried the Paris stores, and for five minutes I was forced to listen to her tasteless and unjust harangue before I could make my escape.

There are hundreds of such Americans abroad.

Surely it is no wonder the French people do not love us!

When a Frenchman wishes to pay you a sincere compliment he tells you that you are wholly "unamerican." Once he says that you may believe he really accepts you as an individual worthy of consideration.

When refreshments were served a