CUPID'S CLERICAL UNDERSTUDY TO VISIT AMERICA

Rev. W. J. Gomersall, the London Minister Whose "Social Circles for Eligibles" Have Given a Big Boost to Matrimony in Britain, Is Anxious to Cross the Atlantic

By Maynard Evans.

LONDON, Jan. 19.—"Cupid's Successor," as he has been dubbed here, is contemplating a visit to the United States. He is the Rev. W. J. Gomersall, a Presbyterian clergyman of London who declares that the little chap with the bow and arrow has been loafing lately, and thereby renders necessary some organized scheme for promoting matrimony. A while ago, accordingly, Mr. Gomersall founded the so-called "Eligible Social Circles," of which there are now three in London. And as he has read in the American cables that organizations modeled after his are about to be started in New York and Boston, he wants to go across and give them a start in the right direction.

Besides being the originator and organizer, Mr. Gomersall is the presiding genius of the "Eligible Social Circles." Ostensibly these circles are formed to provide social evenings for lonely bachelors, widowers, single women and widows. One has to be either one of these four to pass the hospitable portals of the "Circles." But Mr. Gomersall and his wife, who is the official hostess, frankly admit that the encouragement of matrimony is the chief end they have in view. They are doing all they can to lay out an enticing pathway leading to the hymeneal altar, and interspersed at intervals with whist, drives, country walks, dances and tete-a-tetes over cups of coffee, (for Mrs. Gomersall has evolved the unique theory that coffee is a love philter).

First Eligibles Club.

The first of the Eligibles clubs was formed a year ago, the second six months later and the third has just been launched. The three have a combined membership of 500, despite the thinning of their ranks by the retirement of those who have formed matrimonial partnerships.

To become a member one must belong to one of the four classes mentioned above, be able to furnish two references, and fork out seven shillings and six pence—just 12 cents short of $2. That entitles one to look the Eligibles over for about four months with an eye towards a possiblue mate, or with an impersonal eye, just as one chooses.

According to Mr. Gomersall, the conventionalities of society prevent marriage. He aims, he says, to remove these barriers. As he expressed it to me, he brings his people together like a flock of birds and provides them with a little entertainment. Mrs. Gomersall plies them with her special brand of coffee, which is supposed to unloose the gentle passions and presto, they are billing and cooing like a lot of doves. The plan has its drawbacks, (especially in the eyes of Mrs. Grundy), but Mrs. Gomersall points to 50 marriages within the last year for vindication.

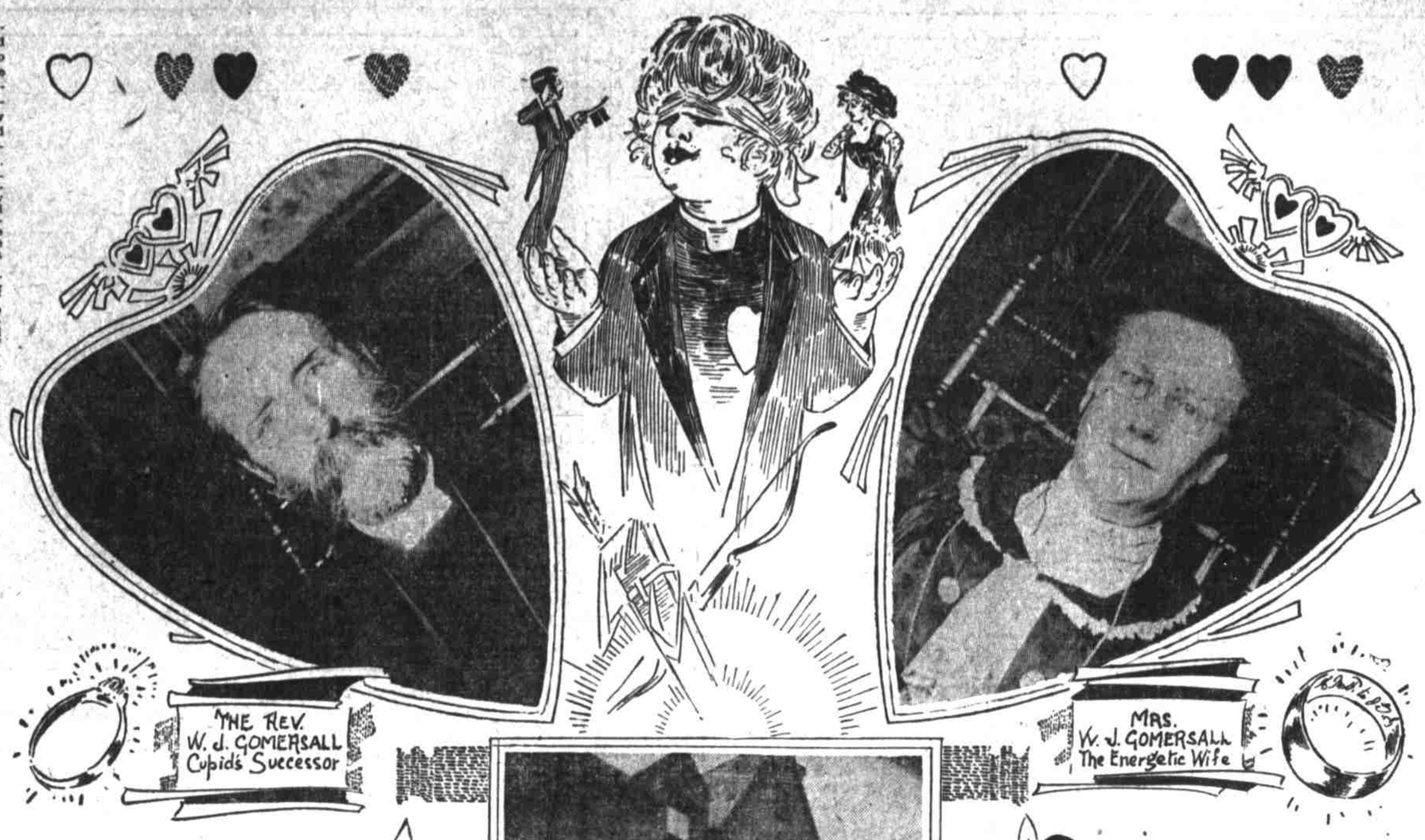
No age limit exists among the Eligibles. One member is 72 years old, and in his eagerness to get properly mated he has not been satisfied to join one circle but is a member of all three. There is another member of 71, and it is a race between the two to see who will meet his affinity first. Several are in the sixties, more on the sunny or shady side of 50 (it's hard to tell which when a man or woman is looking for a wife or husband), and still more from 30 to 40.

System is the strong point of the Eligibles clubs. Nothing is left to chance. Upon coming into the organization the men confess themselves to Mr. Gomersall, tell him their incomes, their prospects and just about what they want in the way of a wife. The women make Mrs. Gomersall the custodian of similar confidences, and the husband and wife exchange information. The course of true love is then macadamized by Mrs. Gomersall, who says: "Mr. Smith, will you see Miss Snicker home this evening?" knowing that Mr. Smith has an income of $25 a week and that that is just about what Miss Snicker longs to get her hands on. But should Miss Snicker by any accident allow Mr. Jones to take her home, Mrs. Gomersall says to her: "You must not allow Mr. Jones to go any further, Miss Snicker; he gets only $20 a week; and in this way matrimonial disappointments are prevented.

Out for Coin.

But big as London is, it is too restricted for the matrimonial activities of Mr. and Mrs. Gomersall. They have formed what they call a correspondence circle at a guinea ($5) a head. This fee entitles one to send in two photographs with some personal information, and a statement of their virtues and accomplishments that the desired life partner must possess. One of the photographs is passed around the circles with requests for bids, and the other is sent to some other correspondent who seems specially fitted to fulfill the requirements of the original. Should success attend the efforts of the marrying parson and his wife, no extra fee is demanded, "although," as Mrs. Gomersall told me, "it is the custom for the couple when they are married to make us a present." Also it is the custom for the couple to come to London and be married by the Rev. W. J. Gomersall.

Mrs. Gomersall confided to me, in a tone of voice which suggested that walls have ears, that whereas the middle class were their principal customers, of late even the peerage had fallen victims. From the same lips and in the same tone of voice, I learned that a countess was now communicating through them with a doctor in Boston and "only this week," confided Mrs. Gomersall, "I received a letter from a vicar in Philadelphia with a fine income, asking me to find him a suitable wife." So great has been the demand among the peerage, says Mrs. Gomersall, that they are considering the advisability of establishing a circle in the exclusive west end of London. Here American heiresses can look the eligible peers over and take their pick at something like $50. This scheme is bound to prove popular.



Rats Grind Off Their Teeth.

From the London Graphic.

A curiously marked stone has been found at Colebrooke, Devonshire, in the middle of a wheat rick, and geologists who have seen it express the opinion that the markings on the stone were caused by rats using it to grind their teeth, which otherwise grew to an inordinate length.

Some rats have been even known to starve owing to their teeth getting too long.

FAMOUS CHURCH LEADERS

REV. DR. ADOLPHUS SCHAUFFLER.

FOR two reasons the Rev. Dr. A. F. Schauffler is one of the most widely known of American church leaders. He is an expert along two distinct lines of Christian effort. One is city mission work and the other Sunday school. His influence rests upon no denominational lines, for although his ecclesiastical connection is Presbyterian, and he was ordained in a Congregational church, he has been for 35 years in undenominational work and his opinions are sought for throughout the evangelical denominations.

It was A. F. Schauffler who made one of the earliest successes in this country along the lines of institutional church work. As the head of Olivet chapel, on New York's east side, an institution maintained by the New York City Mission and Tract society, he developed a veritable bee hive of Christian activity. Clubs, classes and other forms of social effort were inaugurated, the Sunday school became a model to which visitors went from all over the country, and in what would have been accounted a very unpromising neighborhood for a church, Dr. Schauffler built up an organization of almost a thousand members.

When he left Olivet chapel it was to superintend all the work of the City Mission society. The experiences which he has added during the years to those obtained as pastor of a mission church have brought Dr. Schauffler to the front in what has come to be generally known as the "east side work" in great cities. Hardly a day passes but there will be found in Dr. Schauffler's office some man from a western or southern city, seeking light on the great problem of reaching and aiding the people in congested neighborhoods and in the lower walks of life. With all his work it is a marvel how Dr. Schauffler has time to devote to all these seekers after knowledge; but no man ever goes away from that office without a substantial addition to the sum of his knowledge of mission work.

In Sunday school circles Dr. Schauffler is equally influential. For a number of years he has been the secretary of what is known as the international lesson committee. It is this committee, which has members both in this country and in Europe, that prepares the schemes for the international Sunday school lessons, which are used by thousands of Sunday schools all over the world. It goes without saying that the lessons are criticised. No person or committee could prepare work for so wide a field and have every Sunday school superintendent and teacher perfectly satisfied. So here Dr. Schauffler comes in for his share of the criticism. But nobody doubts his deep knowledge of the subject, his sincere interest in it, or the self-sacrifice that leads him to put so large an amount of work on it. In methods of teaching Dr. Schauffler is also an authority. He is not to be found in this regard standing by the side of those who claim that the principles of pedagogy and psychology are the only ones that should govern the methods of the Sunday school, but rather with those who take the middle ground that the older methods were effective, but that they should be supplemented by what may be gained from scientific study of the child mind; not supplanted by the newer science.

A. F. Schauffler was born in Constantinople, Turkey, about 60 years ago, when his father was a missionary there. He came to America when quite young in years and received most of his education here. He was graduated from Williams college and received the degree of doctor of divinity from the University of the City of New York.

Great Southern Dish.

From the Baltimore American.

"I wonder why it is," said Edward R. Gay of Macon, Georgia, "that when you get as far north as Washington or Baltimore, both really southern cities, the people seem to know little and care less about what I in common with thousands of my countrymen regard as one of the greatest dishes of earth—cornbread. After you get on this side the Potomac nobody seems to care for it, nor will you see it on the tables of private families or in hotel dining rooms. Every true son of the south swears by corn bread; he was brought up on it, and wants it three times a day, steaming hot from the kitchen.

"The kind of old fashioned 'corn pone' and delicious golden 'egg bread' that I knew from my infancy was the most palatable and the most nourishing of all the varieties of the staff of life ever set on a table, and if I had a million dollar hotel I'd hire an old fashioned black mammy from a southern plantation who would do nothing else but produce it just to educate the rising generation to an appreciation of its glories."

Soldiers' and Sailors' Bank Deposits.

From the Cleveland Plain Dealer.

"It's odd, the different sources of bank deposits," remarked George Lomnitz. "For example," he said, "we receive thousands of dollars every year from Cleveland men in the army and navy. The amounts range from $5 a month from privates to $30 or more from some of the officers.

"Most of this is sent to us direct by the paymaster of the army or navy as the case may be. Just now we are getting a lot of money from men in the navy on this cruise to the Pacific. The paymaster makes out a list of the various deposits and sends along a check to cover the total amount. Thus the men draw their pay and deposit it without ever seeing it. Their pass books, in a good many cases, are left right here."

COUNTY JAIL SOCIETY AS RUEF FOUND IT

Schmitz Ignores His Fellow Prisoners—Dalzell Brown Suffers Considerably—George D. Collins is the Philosopher *of* the Jail

Pauline Jacobson in San Francisco Bulletin.

RUEF was bulling the market strong on county jail-human-interest-experience. The previous day the quotation was listed at $1,000 for each of the three days of his imprisonment. When I saw him, however, the price had gone sky-rocketing and you couldn't buy in his three days for less than $25,000, notwithstanding that Ruef with his hyper-keen perceptions must be suffering far more acutely the physical horrors of the situation than any other of the higher-ups—"gray souls," as Ross dubs them in his "Sin and Society."

As for Schmitz with a far longer residence, I doubt if he knows such a human-interest gold mine exists. He ignores his fellow-prisoners, the "black souls," utterly, and they are touchy over the fact, far preferring that he should abuse or even swear at them. Schmitz' disregard is not due to his being overwhelmed in his own deep misery. For from a physical standpoint Schmitz seems far more insensitive to his noisome surroundings than even the very phlegmatic Dalzell Brown. I had a look at Schmitz' cell while he was at court. The cot was still unmade, but the sheets were almost as smooth as when first got into, no wrinkles or mussed-up look as of one who tosses sleepless. Schmitz' lack of concern is because the "black souls" are not in his range of vision. They are too far beneath him. I saw Schmitz later walking the grounds and in the corridors. He walks apart in isolated grandeur, towering big in dethroned dignity, speaking only to a few select friends. In his mind's eye he is still robed in the royal purple of his office as his honor the mayor of a great city. If Schmitz did graft it could be no crime with him, as a king can do no wrong. To Schmitz he is a Charles the First or a Louis Sixteenth waiting guillotine for no other reason than that republicanism became fashion and the greatest crime was that they were kings.

As for Dalzell Brown in his phlegmatic way he suffers considerably. His is a low-keyed, nervous organization which registers impacts slowly. But that he is inwardly moved is evidenced by his continual smoke, smoke, smoke, his short curved meerschaum pipe never being absent from between his lips. When I saw him first at the city prison he was ashy-blue under the eyes and he paced behind the bars like a caged Bengal tiger. Brown in whatever light you view him always causes you to associate him with something in the line of the genus Felis.

Jail No. 2 is a red brick building devoted to the men prisoners. The cells are shut off from the front by a high semi-circle iron gate and a large draughty corridor or lobby. The front as you go up the stone steps has to the right the superintendent's office and an occasional anteroom, leading to a private dining-room. To the left are two large rooms devoid of everything save dust and dirt and an old battered library table. These four rooms, the grounds and the corridors are all the privileges the pampered "gray souls" have now, since the installation of Larry Dolan as sheriff. By eight even this is denied and they are locked in their evil-smelling cells and the iron doors clanked on them the same as the "black souls." It was in one of these dusty bare rooms that I came upon Dalzell Brown in confab with his lawyer. No more like a Bengal tiger, but in the glint of the afternoon sun lighting up his improved color, his well-curried silken beard and fine cloth dress, he looked like a soft silken puss, his hands soft, warm padded paws, and his gait a soft, stealthy panther's grace. I remarked upon his improved appearance.

"At least," he said, "here we have something between us and the floor. We have a punk to sleep on. In the city prison in the men's department we had not even a mattress. We had to sleep on the bare cement floor. It was washed out every day and never got a chance to dry, so that it was practically damp all the time. And with the smells and the noise! That city prison is a disgrace to any city. And I had twelve days of it! When people send a man to prison they little think what they are sending him to."

Even here, though, Brown gets downhearted spells and it takes all the philosophy of George D. Collins to buoy him up. When I tell Brown that Bowen, Collins' old cellmate, tells me that Collins is the most self-controlled man that ever went into prison, Brown draws himself up, saying quietly: "If Collins can be self-controlled, why should not I?"

Collins, because of this stoic's wisdom, has earned from Brown the title of "philosopher of the jail." And Collins, swinging airily from the battered library table points to himself chestily, laughing: "And I am glad to be the possessor of such a proud title." But if Collins can slap Brown on the shoulder and say, "Cheer up, old man," and if he can instill into Glass and Treadwell or Schmitz words of consoling wisdom, even Collins' constant light banter withdraws and is still and respectful before the profound suffering of Bartnett. By the most casual visitor the melancholy of Bartnett is remarked. The "black souls" call him the "man of mystery." For Bartnett will sit apart, huddle in a chair deep in reading. Suddenly he springs up to run wildly back and forth, nervously thrusting his fingers into his long shock of hair. As suddenly he subsides to huddle down with a book again. And he keeps this up for the most part of the day.

It is noticeable that in the cells of the business men higher-ups you find not a single book. The only article is a bottle of medicine in the immaculate cell of Glass. But on each of the shelves of the three lawyers you find books. Barnett's contains such literature as Jones' "Love and Loyalty" and "Character Upbuilding," and Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress." As for Collins, his cot is literally strewn with books, the guards informing me he often reads way into two and three in the morning. And with what a strain to eyesight, for even with the sun shining direct into the cell, to see one must read close to the iron grating. And when the sun has gone to the other side the cell is pitch black as a dungeon.

Collins with his two years' imprisonment states he has come to but one conclusion and that is "To shut human beings behind bars like wild animals in a menagerie is a relic of barbarism; that instead to redeem the criminal it throws him on release on society a more vindictive and worse criminal." And Collins talks glowingly and intelligently that crimes for the most part are "errors of judgment," and that the greater percentage of criminals could be reformed if more humane methods of punishment were instituted, such as the reform sytem in the state of New York. But when I ask if on a possible chance of his release he will take up this reform here he draws back hurriedly: "I wasn't constituted a reformer. Besides, it is not for one individual. It is a duty of the state."

Not so Ruef. Biff! What a breeze on his entrance. It was close on to six before his return from the city. The front hall had a morgue draughtiness, as I stood in desultory talk with Glass and Brown, with the dim flickering gas jet overhead casting on the faces of all of us the ghastly death blue of mortification. Chug, chug, an automobile. Biff! like a summer breeze, up the steps rushes Ruef all life, sparkle, action, animation. A thinner Ruef than when I saw him last, a year ago. The eyes have lost their small bloodshot shiftiness. He glances you long, clear, direct, and gives you time, as he never did before, to note their color—green. And his talkativeness is not "gabbiness," as some would have it. It is the pitiful part about him. Always a fluent talker, yet heretofore it was with command and at his own will. Now he talks as a man whose nervous system has been seriously impaired and who, once he gets started, must go on for lack of the nervous will to apply the brakes. Six is the withdrawal hour for visitors. And pathos, this exmighty boss once carried on the shoulders of the mob, petitioning now a captain of the guards for five minutes' grace.

And how full he is of prison affairs in those five minutes. In his short stay he can tell you the history of almost every "black soul" in his wing, the unstriped ones awaiting appeal, some years, and in the far wing, the striped ones short termers. He knows just when each short termer is to be released, and he is there with offers of assistance and money: "I offered one man $5. He held out for only 50 cents. I finally prevailed upon him to take $1. Now a man cannot be very criminal, can he, who refuses to take all the money that is offered him?"

And Ruef is Man Bountiful of the jail. He came in that evening loaded down with boxes and packages of all sorts, containing coffee, milk, cheese, tobacco, matches. He never returns empty handed. "They're waiting now," he said, "anxiously my return to see what I have brought them. And when I get out of here I shall bend every effort toward prison reform if it takes one man to do it and I'm to be that one man.

"Do you know what those cells are like? When I get out of here I shall either go before the board of supervisors or indict the city officials before the grand jury for keeping such a place. The cubic air ordinance provides for 500 cubic feet for one person. These cells have 208 for two persons. And 7 cents a day for the food of an able bodied man! The beds are narrow, filthy, children's cots. The walls are black and thick with the exhalation of prisoners for years. I brought some of the prisoners, condensed milk. They get none for their coffee. Their tin cups were so dirty the milk soured immediately. And where do you suppose they washed those cups?—in the toilet. Each cell has one connected with every other by a main drain. From these the prisoners take their drinking water, their water to cook, to wash their dishes, their hands and face. Some have done this for years. At night you must have your head either up against this foul smelling drain or sleep to the grating, where there is a constant draught, as the windows of the corridors are kept always open to permit the heavy gases and odors of the cells to escape."

Ruef is the only one of the "higher-ups" who has provided himself with bedding from the city. As you make your rounds the eye is caught by the dainty silkoline spread and clean mattress. Glass and the rest content themselves with the gray prison blankets. And Ruef is the one exception who has not a prison cell. Ruef is a Benedictine monk, self elected to go within his narrow confines for the development of his soul. "And has not some of the greatest literature been written in cells, 'Pilgrim's Progress' and the like? And as soon as I have ordered some benedictine I shall be a fully established monk."

Suddenly Ruef's eye lit on the little red book I carried with me, Ross' "Sin and Society." He picked it up.

"You're in there," I said laughingly.

"I?" in surprise.

"Yes, you. Ross calls you higher-ups 'gray souls,' 'criminaloids.' Turn to that chapter and you'll see yourself there."

Ruef began reading, mystified. "But I don't see myself mentioned.

"But read," I insisted.

And he read aloud:

"The criminaloid prefers to prey on the anonymous public. He is touchy about the individual victim. * * * In some relations he is more sympathetic and generous than his critics. * * * The type is exemplified by the St. Louis boodler who was a "good fellow." The corrupt boss of another city is reported to be a "charming character," possessing "goodness of heart" and "personal charm" and loved for his "genial, hearty kindness." He shrank from robbing anybody; he was equal, however, to 'robbing everybody.'"

Ruef hastily slapped the book to with a shiver as if coiled in between the leaves lay an asp, or a dagger, pointed square at his heart.

WHEN THE BLOCK SHOWS RED—Look Out, Friend, There Is Danger Ahead

By John Anderson Jayne.

STOOD you ever by the side of the track of a splendidly equipped railway system at a country station and saw the trains whiz by?

How you admired the massive engine, the magnificently equipped train, the man at the engine, who, through the shadows of the night or through the long hours of the day guided the train and brought it to its desired terminal, right on time.

Thought you ever of the perfection of the signal system, that from time to time says to the engineer, "All's well ahead, the line is open, there are no trains in this block, you have the right of way?" Thought you ever of that?

Then you looked down at the track and, connected with the joining of the rails you saw a piece of loose wire, hanging limp, not stretched taut, but just lying there with apparently no meaning or purpose.

Yet that piece of wire is a part of the great block system used on the majority of American railroads. And on the successful working of the currents of electricity in that wire depends the safety of the train you are watching or riding upon. As the train passes over it, it sets in motion the subtle fluid, and the fluid, dashing through the wire and running along the track, leaps high in the air and automatically sets in place the white light of safety or the red signal of danger, and speaks to the oncoming engineer, telling him "now is your opportunity to make up your time," or "now you must go slow, for there's danger ahead."

When the block sets red, go slow. Stop unless you see the white light show; that's what the signals mean to the engineer, and, obedient to the call of the signal, he guides his train, with its priceless cargo of souls, into the yawning mouth of the terminal.

There are times when you see the white light set on the track of your life and you know that all is well.

But sometimes, out before you without a moment's warning, there is the red light showing, and you know that you must slow down, perhaps stop, or disaster will be the result.

You are worrying today over the little routine things in your life. You are not quite sure that you left your desk at night in just the condition it should be; you worry whether you set the combination of your safe; you wonder if you have locked all the windows in the house; if you did turn off the water. To satisfy yourself you go over all the mental processes leading up to the act, and at the end there is the great question mark, and the interrogation: "I wonder if I did?" Then you go all over the work again, making sure this time you have done the routine things, things it would be wellnigh impossible for you to forget. And at the end again there is the same interrogation, "I wonder?"

Look out, friend! There's danger ahead. The red light shows. Physicians tell you that you need a rest; that your nerves are jangling and out of tune; that the failure to remember whether you have performed the routine work is a sure sign of brain rag, leading, unless checked, to insanity and death.

You are cross with your wife; you say things to her that you'd be ashamed to say to anyone else, or be skittish about saying to any save her who is your best friend and homemaker: you are ugly with the children; you haven't any patience with "Tom," you don't see how "Mary" can do as she does; the baby annoys you. Look out! The red light in the block is showing.

Wouldn't it be better for you to stop and take a rest while you can? Business will get along without you when you are dead. And when you are dead you'll be a long time dead. You can't come back from the grave to make apologies or straighten up this, that or the other tanglement. Better go slow before you run into something far down the track that will wreck your train and bring disaster to many.

You were out with the boys last night. You didn't intend to take more than one drink, not that, perhaps, but the crooked steps of your homeward way are each of them so many red lights saying, "Danger ahead, danger ahead!"

Watch your red lights! Obey them! And then when the white lights show on the block arm, go ahead, knowing there's a clear track! And the terminal at last!

Watch, therefore, when your block light shows red, and wait until the light shows white—and then go ahead.

A Jubilee Joke.

Lady Randolph Churchill in the Century.

Everything that year was dubbed "Jubilee," from knights and babies to hats and coats. "God Save the Queen" was heard ad nauseam on every conceivable occasion, until the tune became an obsession. This led to a practical joke at the castle, which caused much amusement. One morning, speaking of the jubilee craze, I pretended that I had received as an advertisement a "Jubilee bustle," which would play "God Save the Queen" when the wearer sat down. This, of course, created much curiosity and laughter. Having promised to put it on, I took my hosts into my confidence. An aid-de-camp was pressed into the service, and, armed with a small musical box, was made to hide under a particular arm chair. While the company was at luncheon I retired to don the so-called "Jubilee wonder," and when they were all assembled I marched in solemnly and slowly sat down on the arm chair where the poor aid-de-camp was hiding his cramped limbs. To the delight and astonishment of every one the national anthem was heard gently tinkling forth. Every time I rose it stopped; every time I sat down, it began again. I still laugh when I think of it and of the astonished faces about me.

Fifty Years of Steel Making.

From American Industries.

In 1857 the United States made 1,000,000 tons of pig iron. This year's output will be about 25,000,000 tons. Fifty years ago the largest cargo of iron ore taken down the great lakes was 340 tons, and pig iron, foundry No. 2 sold at $31. Better iron is sold today at $16.

This season the steel corporation's ships brought down cargoes of from 12,000 to 13,000 tons each, and discharged them at lower costs and in one sixteenth the time required to unload the lake vessels of 50 years ago.

Fifty years ago the learned Sir Lowthian Bell, one of the great ironmasters of Great Britain, gave it for his opinion that the Lake Superior iron ore deposits would not be a factor of importance in less than a century. This season's down take of iron ores from Great Lake ports will aggregate 40,000,000 tons, which is within 8,000,000 tons of the total export and import tonnage of the ports of London and Liverpool.

Delaware Boy's Birth Record.

Dover correspondence Philadelphia Inquirer.

Edwin Sheppard Gardner, son of the Rev. Edwin Gardner, celebrated his eighth birthday in Dover.

This child, born at Cheswold, this county, was born on the last hour of the day, the last day of the week, the last week of the month, the last month of the year and the last year of the century. If he can live to be 100 years and one minute old he will have lived in three centuries.