

Telltale Finger Prints

By Walter Joseph Delancy

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The Stevensons were rich and unhappy. Their next-door neighbors, the Martins, were desperately poor, yet life was to them a radiant dream. The Stevensons lived in a big ten-room house, luxuriously furnished, and had lots of money. David Martin toiled as a laborer at a town iron mill, and his frugal wife counted over every penny twice before it was invested, thus close they were forced to live.

But the Martins had a treasure—Vinnie, their adopted niece—and her presence made the humble home glow with sunshine and laughter whenever she was within its precincts. She worked at a store in the village as cashier, but home talent was paid for cheaply, and her contribution to the household fund was quite small.

"Not very genial neighbors, these Stevensons," observed Mr. Martin, coming home from his work one cold December evening.

"I fancy they don't consider us their kind," returned his plain, practical wife. "Mrs. Stevenson has nodded to me once or twice, but only at a distance, and then quite sourly."

"Stevenson himself came out of the gate of his house just as I passed," continued Mr. Martin. "I spoke, but he didn't answer me, although I think he really was so abstracted in thought that he didn't know me."

"I think you are quite right, father," added Vinnie, in her kindly, charitable way. "I have heard that they have a great sorrow—a runaway son. He left them after some trouble he got into three years ago. A year since, I have heard, they learned that he was one of a number killed in a cyclone in New Mexico."

"Oh, dear, that is sad!" spoke up Mrs. Martin, quickly and sorrowfully. "They have their cross to bear, indeed—a lost son, a lonely home," and she came up to Vinnie and enfolded her in a loving clasp and kissed her tenderly.

An unhappy home, indeed, was that of the Stevensons. They had lost their only child, a bright, promising lad, who, when he came of age, had



Became a Wanderer and a Fugitive From Justice.

developed a tendency to sow wild oats. Puffed by his father, idolized by his mother, Warren Stevenson had sadly disappointed his parents.

In a fight in a gambling resort, he, an onlooker only, had paid the penalty for being in such a place by receiving a bullet wound that stripped off the top of three of the first fingers of his left hand. This seemed to teach him a lesson for a time. Then he fell from grace again. He drifted into the company of a desperate burglar. Innocently Warren was involved in a case where a man was killed. He played the part of the craven and became a wanderer and a fugitive from justice. Within a year the real murderer died in prison, shouldering the entire responsibility for the crime and completely exonerating Warren.

His parents had then sought for him everywhere, but their quest had proved unavailing. The news of his death in the cyclone was the final grief that broke their hearts. Bereaved, broken down by sorrow and regret, no marvel was it that they became cynical, isolated and uncompanionable.

One evening a neighbor came into the home of Mr. Martin on a brief call. In the course of conversation he brought up the subject of the unocial neighbor, with the remark:

"Friend of mine told me that this Stevenson objects mightily to your burning soft coal, Martin."

"Why, is that so?" queried Mr. Martin, surprisedly.

"Yes, he says that whenever the wind is from the north it blows the soot in regular flakes against his

house. It's just been painted white, and it's spoiling it. Of course, you can't help that. You're hardly able to afford anthracite at ten dollars a ton, eh?"

"Maybe not," responded Martin, seriously, "but I can be just, even if it costs me something. I never thought of it before."

When he came to look at the side of the Stevenson house, Martin saw that the soot had, indeed, marred and defaced it. Especially up under the eaves, the clapboards were grimed with feathers of soot. Acting on a generous impulse, he halted his neighbor, who just happened to be coming into the house.

"I say, Stevenson," spoke the blunt, honest fellow, "I've just found out that my soft coal is hurting your property. I shall use coke through the rest of the winter, and first holiday I'll get a ladder and give the side of the house a good scrubbing."

"Why—thank you—I must say you're thoughtful and kind—yes, thank you," and Stevenson acted as though this unusual courtesy of a stranger fairly overcame him.

Before the opportunity to remedy things came about, however, some startling events transpired. One morning Martin came out into the yard to find a ladder taken from his shed standing against the side of his neighbor's house. The window of an upper room was open. Mr. Stevenson was under a great strain of excitement. He declared that the house had been burglarized.

"Was anything taken?" asked Mr. Martin.

"Why, not much," explained his neighbor in a bewildered sort of a way. "The room the burglar got into is the one my poor dead son occupied. We have left it just as it was when he went away. Whoever broke into the house opened a drawer where Warren kept a few trifling trinkets. A watch, a revolver and some gold cuff links are missing, but nothing else was disturbed."

"That is singular," observed Martin thoughtfully, and he went up the ladder a step or two. "Why, say, Mr. Stevenson," he called down to his neighbor, "there is something queer."

"What is that?" was asked.

"In getting into the window the burglar has left some hand marks around its frame."

"Why, yes—I can see it from here," replied the owner of the despoiled home.

"Right among that troublesome black soot of mine," continued Martin, rather apologetically. "And say—why, hello! Whoever the fellow was he's left a clue."

"What do you mean?"

"Hand prints show that he had three short fingers on one hand—why, sir! What is the matter?"

Quickly the speaker descended the ladder. With a sharp cry of enlightenment, Mr. Stevenson had started back.

"Three short fingers!" he gasped out hoarsely. "Then—it must have been Warren. Oh, he is not dead, but alive! Mother! mother!" he shouted, rushing into the house and seeking his wife, and leaving the stupefied Martin standing staring after him, unable to comprehend the meaning of his strange actions.

What the father surmised turned out correct, a little later. His son was indeed alive. He had stolen back home, poor, homeless, ill. It would be no robbery to take his own. Shamed at his mistaken past, he had hurried away, after taking the price of a few needed meals, but his father, with the aid of the police, soon located him.

It was a joyful moment when the recovered son was told that the dreaded hand of the law had been removed.

"All because of that blessed soot of yours—all honor to soft coal," the delighted Stevenson had told his neighbor.

And a true neighbor he made of him, and naturally Warren Stevenson met Vinnie. Closer and closer grew the ties of true neighborliness, and of love, and then the natural sequence of a happy wedding.

Ivory Carvers of Canton.

There are in Canton, China, about forty shops in which articles of ivory are made and sold. Each shop is small; it consists usually of a showroom that opens to the street, and a back room where the cutting is done. The industry falls into two stages—cutting and carving, says an English paper. Tusks imported from Siam constitute the raw material. These are first cut by a saw into shapes that are suitable for the carvers to work on. The cutting apparatus consists of a wooden block or vise, a saw and a tub of water. The workman fixes the ivory firmly in the vise, moistens it with water and cuts it to the desired thickness.

After the cutting is finished, the workmen carve the pieces into shape with knives of many different kinds. All of them, however, have short blades and long handles made of bamboo. The carvers also use saws made of wire and a gimlet worked by a twirling apparatus of leather.

There are only a few expert ivory workers in Canton; in fact, there are said to be only six of them. An expert carver seldom works in the shop that employs him. He generally works in his own house, and can earn about thirty dollars a week in Canton currency.—Youth's Companion.

More Pressing Needs.

"I need shoes."
"Then why don't you buy some?"
"It is evident that you know nothing of family life. My graphophone needs records and my wife needs dancing lessons."

MEADOW LARK EATS MANY FARM PESTS



Meadow Lark (Sturnella Magna.)

Prepared by the United States Department of Agriculture.

May is the month when the meadow lark does some of its best work in aiding the farmer, for that is when the cutworms begin their career, and this little bird devours them by thousands. It also eats many caterpillars, and in the same month these creatures form over 24 per cent of its whole diet. Caterpillars which are ground feeders are often overlooked by birds which habitually frequent trees, but they do not escape the meadow lark. Ants, wasps, spiders, and chinch bugs are other harmful pests eaten by this feathered friend of humanity.

In 1,514 stomachs of the meadow lark examined, animal food (practically all insects) constituted 74 per cent of the contents and vegetable matter 26 per cent. As would naturally be supposed, the insects were ground species, as beetles, bugs, grasshoppers and caterpillars, with a few flies and wasps and spiders. A number of the stomachs were collected when the ground was covered with snow, but even these contained a large percentage of insects, showing the bird's skill in finding proper food under adverse circumstances.

Of the various insects eaten, crickets and grasshoppers are the most important, constituting 26 per cent of the food of the year and 72 per cent of the food in August. It is scarcely necessary to mention the beneficial effect of a number of these birds on a field of grass in the height of the grasshopper season. Of the 1,514 stomachs collected at all seasons of the year, 778, or more than half, contained remains of grasshoppers, and one was filled with fragments of 37 of these insects. This seems to show conclusively that grasshoppers are preferred, and are eaten whenever they can be found. Especially notable is the great number taken in August, the month when grasshoppers reach their maximum abundance.

Next to grasshoppers, beetles make up the most important item of the meadow lark's food, amounting to 25 per cent, about one-half of which are predaceous ground beetles. The others are of harmful species.

Forty-two individuals of different kinds of May beetles were found in the stomachs of meadow larks, and there were probably many more which were past recognition. To this form and several closely allied ones belong the numerous white grubs, which are among the worst enemies to many cultivated crops, notably grasses and grains, and to a less extent strawberries and garden vegetables. In the larval stage they eat the roots of these plants, and being large, one individual may destroy several plants. In the adult stage they feed upon the foliage of trees and other plants, and in this way add to the damage which they began in the earlier form. As these enemies of husbandry are not easily destroyed by man, it is obviously wise to encourage their natural foes.

Among the weevils found in the stomachs the most important economically are the cotton-boll weevil and the recently introduced alfalfa weevil of Utah. Several hundred meadow larks were taken in the cotton-growing region, and the boll weevil was found in 25 stomachs of the eastern meadow lark and in 15 of the western species. Of the former, one stomach contained 27 individuals. Of 25 stomachs of western meadow larks taken in alfalfa fields of Utah, 13 contained the alfalfa weevil.

The vegetable food consists of grain and weed and other hard seeds. Grain in general amounts to 11 per cent and weed and other seeds to seven per cent. Grain, principally corn, is eaten mostly in winter and early spring and consists, therefore, of waste kernels; only a trifle is consumed in summer and autumn when it is most plentiful. No trace of sprouting grain was discovered. Clover seed was found in only six stomachs, and but little in each. Seeds of weeds, principally rag-

weed, barnyard grass, and smartweed, are eaten from November to April, inclusive, but during the rest of the year are replaced by insects.

Briefly stated more than half of the meadow lark's food consists of harmful insects; its vegetable food is composed either of noxious weeds or waste grain, and the remainder is made up of useful beetles or neutral insects and spiders. A strong point in the bird's favor is that, although naturally an insect eater, it is able to subsist on vegetable food, and consequently is not forced to migrate in cold weather farther than is necessary to find grounds free from snow.

The eastern meadow lark is a common and well-known bird, occurring from the Atlantic coast to the great plains, where it gives way to the closely-related western species, which extends thence westward to the Pacific. It winters from our southern border as far north as the District of Columbia, southern Illinois, and occasionally Iowa. The western form winters somewhat farther north. Although it is a bird of the plains, and finds its most congenial haunts in the prairies of the West, it is at home wherever there is level or undulating land covered with grass or weeds, with plenty of water at hand.

"Some Common Birds Useful to the Farmer" is a new Farmers' Bulletin (No. 630) of the United States department of agriculture, which describes this and other interesting and valuable birds.

FOREIGN BODIES AND CATTLE

More Care Should Be Taken to See That Animals Do Not Eat Nails and Pieces of Wire.

(By I. E. NEWSOM, Colorado Agricultural College.)

The average person does not seem to realize how many good cattle die from foreign bodies such as nails and pieces of wire that pass from the second stomach forward in the heart sac. More cattle, particularly those which are kept up around the cities, pick up foreign bodies in their food and these are nearly always deposited in the second stomach. This stomach lies just back of the diaphragm, whereas the heart lies just in front and on the opposite side of this partition. Consequently, if one of these sharp bodies starts forward, owing to the movements of the stomach, it is very apt to pierce the heart sac. This carries infection and the heart sac fills with pus; finally after some weeks or even months the animal shows symptoms of disease and dies, even without the owner knowing the real cause of the difficulty.

Prevention is not easy, but more care should be taken to see that the cattle do not eat out of the mangers or in feed lots where there are many nails and pieces of wire. It is not at all uncommon to find twenty-five or thirty nails in the stomach of a cow.

FOR SUCCESS WITH TURKEYS

Young Poults Should Be Penned Up for First Week or Two—Give Old Ones Free Range.

There is no doubt but grown turkeys must have free range to make any success with them, but I believe that the young poults should be penned up for the first week or so, as the mother turkey hen always starts out too early in the morning, when the dew gives the young ones a chill and as a consequence many of the poults are lost.

So many advocate, "there's nothing like giving the turkeys free range with their poults." This may be entirely all right in a dry season, but the morning dew and sudden rain showers are apt to catch you any time and a number in my vicinity lost over half of their free-range poults last year on account of the sudden rains and heavy dew during the hatching season.

DANUBE IN HISTORY DRAMA OF THE SEA

River Has Always Been Great Highway of Commerce.

Dardanelles Has Ever Been Looked Upon as the Real Mouth of the Great Waterway of Eastern Europe, With Reason.

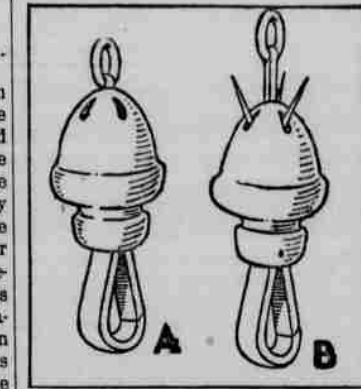
Probably most Americans know more about the Danube as the subject of a popular waltz than as a historic highway of commerce and a strategic frontier. Perhaps some of our readers were astonished to learn that the allied fleets are "opening the mouth of the Danube" by forcing the Dardanelles. They know that the Danube empties into the Black sea and cannot understand the statement. Technically, they are correct, but, the Philadelphia Inquirer says, from time immemorial the Dardanelles has been looked upon as the real mouth of the great river of eastern Europe, and for the best of reasons.

In his will Caesar Augustus expressed a wish that Roman conquests should never proceed north of the Danube. He had succeeded in making that river a strategic frontier by adding a chain of forts which extended to the Swiss Alps. Behind this barrier were unknown hordes of savages and barbarians who were certain at some time by economic pressure or by a restless spirit to assault the integrity of the empire, and Augustus foresaw that any extension beyond this frontier would be dangerous. Unhappily, his advice was not accepted, although the reasons for a forward movement seemed excellent at the time. The Imperial legions crossed the Danube, and the name Roumania remains as a relic of their forward movement. It proved a fatal mistake, for pretty soon the Danube became the danger spot of the empire and the seat of the government was transferred to Byzantium, the modern Constantinople. Gradually the Roman empire divided and fell under the oncoming rush of Goths, but the struggle along the Danube has continued to this day. Hun and Turk entered Europe along this great highway and were with difficulty turned back at Vienna. Since that time the Balkan question, with its control of the great river, has been dominant in European politics, and never was more important than today.

TO FOIL THE PICKPOCKET

Barbed Guard is an Old Device, but It is Guaranteed to Hold the Watch Secure.

Though patented so long ago that the patent has run out, the device for holding a watch secure from pickpockets, which is illustrated herewith, is so ingenious and so little known that it deserves to have attention called to it. It consists of a little acorn-shaped bulb between the hasp and the ring to which the chain is attached, and in this bulb three slender, sharp spikes that protrude the instant the chain is pulled. The spikes stick into the lining of the pocket, from which the watch cannot possibly be pulled. As soon as the pull is released the



A, the Watch as it Rests in the Pocket. B, the Same When the Chain is Pulled.

spikes drop back into tiny holes. The owner of the watch has to take hold of its ring and not of its chain when he wants to take it out.

Would Leave Bullet in Body.

"The mere presence of a bullet inside the body will of itself do no harm at all. The old idea that it will cause infection died long ago. . . . We now know that, provided they are clean, we can introduce steel plates, silver wires, silver nets, into the body without causing any trouble at all, and a bullet is no worse than any of these. It is a matter in which the public are very largely to blame, for they consider that unless the bullet has been removed the surgeon has not done his job. Unless he has some specific reason for it, I know that the surgeon who removes a bullet does not know his work.

"It may be the mark of a Scottish ancestry, but if ever I get a bullet in my own anatomy, I shall keep it."—"A Surgeon in Belgium," by H. S. Souttar, F. R. C. S.

E Pluribus Unum.

Dribble—Hello, old boy! What are you doing now?

Scribble—Writing for the magazines.

Dribble—Don't you find it rather thankless sort of work?

Scribble—On the contrary, nearly everything I write is returned with thanks.

"Neptune's Daughter," a Thriller of the Films.

Annette Kellermann, the Heroine of Popular Production—Al Fillion in Play That is Destined to Have Long Run.

"Neptune's Daughter" is a phantasy of the sea. Annette Kellermann, known the world over as a swimmer and diver, is the star of the play, which is given in seven reels and 500 scenes.

The pictures were made last winter on the picturesque coast of Bermuda, with its rugged rocks, sandy beaches, dark caves, turbulent waters and semitropical verdure. It took three months to complete the pictures and the cost was enormous.

The story of the play, in brief, is this: Annette is the daughter of Father Neptune, and he and his 40 other daughters are seen disporting themselves in the water. Annette and her little sister, Angela, are caught in a net. Annette escapes, but Angela is dragged ashore, hidden in seaweed, and is wounded on the rocks. Annette finds her dying and swears vengeance on the fishermen. Obtaining a charm which will transform her into a girl, she sets out to punish those responsible for her sister's death.

After a long series of adventures, in which the king who rules over the fishermen falls in love with her, she loses the charm and has to remain a girl and becomes the queen of the handsome young king who, with the help of Annette, has overthrown a usurper to his throne.

Dramatic Escape.

Mlle. Gabrielle Robinne was once called upon to make a dramatic escape from a castle in which she had been imprisoned, for a film. The castle, surrounded by a moat, was searched for a small window which would suit the purpose. At last one was found and the actress assumed her position within for the rehearsal. The boat of rescuers put off across the moat, the rope ladder was thrown up and the hooked end duly caught upon the sill. In due course, the heroine appeared at the window, bent upon her escape. The bars, which had been improvised for the purpose, were removed, and the prisoner thrust her shoulders through the aperture. But she became wedged half-way. One of the party below scaled the ladder and endeavored to assist her from the strange predicament, while on the inner side two other actresses lent assistance. Mlle. Robinne was unable to extend any personal assistance, being convulsed with laughter. At last, after considerable prizing, pushing and tugging, she came through with a bewildering suddenness. The man on the ladder was precipitated into the moat, while the actress tumbled unceremoniously into the waiting boat, the trio below breaking her fall slightly, though she struck one of the seats somewhat violently.

Where He Made His "Hit."

When a large and agile lion escaped at the Selig Jungle-Zoo several months ago, Leo Morris, an extra, garbed as a bold knight, sizzled through the ambient atmosphere of the grounds for the distance of a half mile. He found the lion there when he arrived. Thereupon Leo turned around and went right back again, breaking the world's record which he had established but a few seconds before. Manager Thomas Persons laughed so hard they had to resuscitate him with a pail of water. He engaged Morris as a regular member of the comedy company immediately. This explanation will enlighten the comedian, for the first time, as to the real reason for his engagement.

Strong Cast in "Hearts and Masks."

With Kathryn Williams in the title role, and Charles Clary as Galloping Dick of MacGrath's delightful "Hearts and Masks," the multiple reel special is on its way for a big run, according to indications. Director Colin Campbell has double braced every portion of the photo play structure. Wheeler Oakman plays the other victim of the ten-spot of hearts while Eugene Besserer, the French emotional actor, portrays Mrs. Hyphen-Bonds. The film fairly sparkles with rare comedy, while there is an all-pervading mystery hanging over it from beginning to final denouement.

"Sands of Fate" Strong Film.

Dorothy Gish is featured in "Sands of Fate," a strong two-reel drama produced by Donald Crisp. An act of self-sacrifice on the part of a husband when he empties his water bottle on a burning desert so that he will not be in the way of his wife marrying the man of her choice is one of the features of this production. Robert Harron, R. A. Walsh and Cora Drew are principals in the cast.

Identified With "Mether" Roles.

Rose Tapley, well-known Vitagraph screen performer, plays primarily "mother" roles. During her film activity she has played such roles over a thousand times.

New Comedy in Preparation.

"The Mysterious Black Box" is the title of a novel comedy written by W. E. Wing and now being produced at the studio of the Selig Polyscope company.