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Barrington's Convert

The Effort Was Discouraging, but Succeeded at Last

By JOHN Y. LARNED

Bob Barrington was one of those youngsters who are dead set against a humdrum life. Bob's father, when the boy was fifteen years of age, secured him a position in a friend's counting room, but the friend soon told Mr. Barrington that Bob was not fitted for a commercial life.

"What's the trouble?" asked the parent.

"Well, the life's too cramped. What we want are young fellows for cog wheels. They should go through the same routine every day, never ask questions or make suggestions, but do what they are told to do and no more. If they see anything that looks to them a bit—well, shrewd, they're not to dare up and call it dishonest. Our business is a machine, and every part must fit into every other part."

"I see," said Mr. Barrington. "Bob is not in your line."

Bob was withdrawn and asked what he wished to do. He said he thought he would like to get a breath of fresh air, which, being explained, meant that he would like to go where natural instincts had a fuller play. To state the case more definitely, he proposed to go west and be a cowboy. His father, thinking that if his son had some experience in herding sheep during a blizzard he would be glad to come home and go to work in a civilized way, assented. Bob was well outfitted, being given a thousand dollars, which he was told must last him a year. He told his father that he didn't want any more than enough to take him to his destination and he wouldn't call on him for any more. So he handed back all but \$200 and started on his journey.

The new life suited him exactly. He made a cowboy of himself for awhile, but, having displayed considerable nerve in several fracas, he was elected sheriff, at which calling he made a success.

One of his exploits during his term of office was the hunting down of a notorious desperado named Donohue. The outlaw came into the region over which Sheriff Barrington had jurisdiction and commenced a series of robberies that terrorized every one. Barrington made it his business to capture the man without killing him. Not that

stuck a shiny box was objectionable to him. Indeed, his constituents would have much preferred that Donohue should be taken dead, for, in that case, the territory would be spared the expense of a trial. The truth was, Barrington never quite succeeded in eradicating civilization from his system and felt a repugnance against making an executioner of himself.

One day the sheriff was missed, and nothing was heard of him till one day he reappeared, with Mr. Donohue in a wagon, bound hand and foot. A meeting of citizens was called and, after a vote of thanks to Sheriff Barrington, decreed that a committee be appointed to hang the prisoner. Bob claimed the captive as his own and insisted that he be turned over to a court for trial. This excited much opposition, on the ground that there was no evidence that Donohue had murdered any one. Consequently he could never be hanged.

However, it could not be denied that the prisoner belonged to Barrington, and, since he would not consent to the hanging, the man must be sent to a place where there was a court. Here, too, Barrington stood in the way of justice. Certain persons who knew of murders committed by the accused of which there were no eyewitnesses kindly consented to perjure themselves that a proper punishment might be inflicted. The sheriff would not consent to this, and when the judge proposed to give the convict all the imprisonment the law allowed Barrington stood out for two years. The judge, being a staunch supporter of the sheriff, acceded to his wishes.

One would suppose that saving a man's life and cutting down a term of ten years at hard labor to two would touch the heart of the subject of this magnanimity. Instead, when Donohue was taken away to serve his term he said:

"Sheriff, if ye hadn't sneaked up on me and got the drop when I wasn't lookin' for you you wouldn't 'a got me. Howsomer, I'll git out o' jail in two years from this yere present time, and I'll be you as'll have to look out for me."

"Thank you kindly for mentioning your benevolent intentions," replied Bob. "I'll try and be in a position to congratulate you on having attained your freedom and keep from getting holed at the same time."

When Bob had been in the west a year his father asked him if he didn't wish to return and take up civilization again. Bob wrote that there was too much of a mixture between the good and the bad in civilization; he preferred the two separate, as they were in the west. The better class of people in the west made no pretense to culture, but they treated one another like Christians. When a man was bad he was bad all over and didn't pretend to be anything else. The consequence was that there was no mistaking either the good or the bad.

When Donohue had served some eighteen months of his term Bob's mother wrote her son that his father was ill and begged him to come home. Bob sighed, tumbled into the fine clothes he had worn when he reached the west and started for home. He had not worn a boiled shirt for a long time and felt in one now as if he were being garroted. He found his father in very bad health, and his continued presence at home was necessary. He therefore yielded to his parents' request and determined to remain with them.

When Donohue was released to recommence his preying upon the world the first person he proposed to prey upon was ex-Sheriff Barrington. Bob during the administration of the duties of his office had received a great many threats, none of which had materialized. When the two years of Donohue's term had rolled around Bob had forgotten all about it. Besides, he had left his old stamping ground and did not conceive it possible that a desperado in the west would take the trouble or have the means to travel a couple of thousand miles to hunt him up.

Donohue was a man with considerable pride, which had it not been misdirected might have been of advantage to him. He had made a statement at the time of his conviction and he proposed to carry it out at any cost. He had not been out of jail long when he had accumulated sufficient valuables and cash to pay his expenses east, and having obtained Barrington's address set out to find him and take his threatened revenge.

On reaching the city of his destination he realized that he would not have the same advantages in killing a man as in the west. It was possible there to do the deed, light out, seek other fields, and there was a chance of never being called to account for his crime. Not so in a city. To start gun play on a street would be to collect a crowd, followed by an officer, and there was no chance of escape except by the law's delays, and even then funds were required for the purpose. These imperfections in legal justice did not make it less desirable for honest persons than the code of the revolver or Judge Lynch.

Donohue therefore decided to steal up on his enemy as his enemy had stolen up on him. But this was not so easy in civilization as in a new country. Bolts separated him from the map he

wanted, and he was not used to this way of getting at a man. However, he saw no other way and resolved to effect an entrance into Barrington's home at night and do the job there when Bob was asleep.

When Barrington had returned to his home he had tossed his revolver into a bureau drawer, and there it remained. One night Bob awoke suddenly. He did not know what it was that awakened him. During his term of service as sheriff, when he had many enemies, he had been a light sleeper, and the slightest sound would rouse him. Believing now that there was some cause for his broken sleep he listened and soon heard what turned out to be the raising of a sash on the main floor with a jimmy. Springing out of bed he seized an electric light he kept in his room and remembering the revolver in the drawer took it in his other hand. It had not been reloaded since his homecoming.

Going out into the hall he heard a sound as of some one lighting on a floor after getting in a window. Stepping in his stocking feet down the stairway he went into the living room and encoined himself behind the door. His position was admirable. He could shoot through the crack made by the door and the wall. He had not been there long before by the dim light coming from the street lamps without he saw a figure coming through the hall. When it was about to turn to go upstairs Bob flashed his electric light with his left hand while with his right he thrust the muzzle of his revolver through the crack of the door.

"Hello, Donohue!" he said. "Is that you? Hands up! Quick, or I'll fire!"

Donohue, blinded by the bright light, was completely at his enemy's mercy. He raised both hands at once. In his right hand was a revolver.

"Put your weapon on the stairs," said Bob. "Be quick about it, but don't make a noise."

Donohue had no choice but to do as he was told. He laid his revolver on a stair about as high as his head.

"Now back away from it. That'll do. Stay where you are till I come."

Leaving his fortification, Bob went into the hall and drove his man into the dining room. There he turned on a light.

"I saved your life," he said, "and cut your time down to two years. This is your gratitude. I'm going to give you what you deserve. It won't be less than ten years."

The man looked the picture of despair. Ten more years in stripes! The prospect was too much for him.

"I'd rather have you settle me with a little lead," he groaned. "You must at least give me credit for sayin' that I was goin' to do it."

"That's something in your favor, and you have shown a perseverance in following me up which if exerted in a better cause would have brought you comfort. Have you ever been married?"

"Yes; to a woman I don't deserve. She left me long ago, takin' the kids with her."

Donohue's voice trembled.

"Suppose I help you to retrieve your past."

"You couldn't do that."

"I can, with your help."

An hour later a plan was arranged by which Donohue should start afresh. He made good, with Barrington's assistance, and a time came when he was reunited to his wife and children.

He and they worship the ground Bob Barrington treads.

TREES IN BOOKS.

Probably the Most Curious Collection of Volumes in the World.

There is perhaps one of the most curious collections of books in the world to be found in a small town on the continent of Europe, says the London Tit-Bits. It is really a botanical collection. Outwardly each volume presents the appearance of a block of wood, and that is what it actually is. But an examination reveals the fact that it is also a complete history of the particular tree which it represents.

At the back of the book the bark has been removed from a space which allows the scientific and the common name of the tree to be placed as a title for the book. One side is formed from the split wood of the tree, showing its grain and natural fracture. The other side shows the wood when worked smooth and varnished. One end shows the grain as left by the saw and the other the finely polished wood. On opening the book it is found to contain the fruit, seeds, leaves and other products of the tree, the moss which usually grows upon its trunk and the insects which feed upon the different parts of the tree. These are supplemented by a full description of the tree. In fact, everything which has a bearing upon that particular tree secures a place in the collection.

THE RUINS ON THE HILL.

Where Richard of the Lion Heart Dwelt in France.

Perhaps the loveliest spot in all the winding miles of beauty along the river Seine between Rouen and Paris is Petit Andely. Ragged and shattered looking, the stony hills rear proudly up above the placid river and sleepy town, and squarely upon its crest looms the

castle. A great, burst keep and a few bits of massive wall. Once the castle flaunted its menacing leopard standards against the blue and white and gold of the Frankish skies, but that was before Philippe Auguste stormed and smashed it and smashed the townfolk while he was doing it.

Now, ghostly and wren, the stark ruin shimmers upon its hill, with never a single spear to glisten from keep or battican. The spears are still growing far below—the stout young poplars on the river bank and bland sentinel through golden days when the river is gleaming jade; in the fiery sun sets, when it mirrors back every sturdy limb and feathery frond, and all the silent blue nights, when the stars bend crackling down to whisper and coquette and the ripples chuckle softly against the rich brown banks.—Arthur Stanley Riggs in National Geographic Magazine.

The Parson Bird.

Among the feathered inhabitants of New Zealand there is a bird called the parson bird, or tul. It is about the size and shape of a blackbird, but has a pair of delicate white tufts at its throat and is a glossy dark green otherwise, which looks black in the sun shine. It can be taught to crow, to speak, to whistle, to sing, and besides these tricks, it has a repertory which is not often equaled by any other feathered songster. At vesper it has a note like the toll of a bell or the clear, high note of an organ. It can imitate every bird in the bush to perfection. It will break off in the middle of an exquisite melody and in a strange melody of sounds which are impossible to describe, but if you can imagine "the combination of a cough, a laugh, a sneeze, with the smashing of a pane of glass," it will be some approach to the idea.

From Medicine to the Drama.

The earlier part of Victorien Sardou's career was beset with many trials and difficulties. His parents wished him to take up a medical career, and he began his studies with some zeal. The love of the drama, however, was far greater than the love of the pill box, and in the interval of the other work Sardou was busy upon a play. Life was a struggle for him, for he had little money though he managed to get journalistic work to supplement his more slender income. His first play was a failure, and Sardou rushed from the theater vowing never to enter one again. He fell seriously ill, was nursed back to health by Mlle de Breceourt, an actress who lived on a floor below, and from that time his fortune was made.

Ship of the Desert.

For safety and endurance in traveling in desert regions the camel has been found unequalled by any other animal. Its foot is a soft cushion, peculiarly well adapted to the stones and gravel over which it is constantly walking. During a single journey through the Sahara horses have worn out three sets of shoes, while the feet of the camel, traveling over the same course were not even sore.

Not Grasping.

"What a grasping fellow you are, Hawkins! You've bothered me about this bill fifty times in ten days."

"You wrong me, Jarley. I'm not grasping. I've bothered you about the bill, I admit, but I haven't been able to grasp anything yet."

Cholera.

Cholera was first recognized by the Portuguese in India as far back as the middle of the sixteenth century. It has the peculiarity of following a well-defined route, with progress just equal to that of an average journey on foot.

Mean.

"It's so hard to buy for a man."

"Yes. I've noticed when you women are doing it you look as though it hurts."—Detroit Free Press

Well Fitted.

"Yes, grandma; I am to be married next month."

"But, my dear, said grandma earnestly, "you are very young. Do you feel that you are fitted for married life?"

"I am being fitted now, grandma," explained the prospective bride sweetly. "Seven gowns!"—Kansas City Journal

More Than the Average.

Mrs. Wayup—How much sleep do I need, doctor? Doctor—Well, the average person needs about seven hours. Mrs. Wayup—Then I shall take about fourteen. I consider I am much above the average. Judge.

A Plain Heroine.

"This is refreshing. The author says his heroine isn't beautiful."

"It will be refreshing to see the pictures of the heroine come up to the print."—Louisville Courier-Journal

Many Sided Woman.

Man thinks he is going to solve the mystery known as woman after he is married. And then the plot thickens. Toledo Blade

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