

**THE BLESSED BURGLARS.**

BY GEORGE A. WESTLEY.

"My first burglary," remarked Uncle Bob suddenly, as Dicky and he sat on the piazza together, "was committed when I was a boy of twelve."

"What! You committed a burglary—you, Uncle Bob?" cried Dicky in dismay. "Oh, that was an awful thing to do!"

"Not such a very awful thing the way we did it," said Uncle Bob, calmly. "Listen and I will tell you about it."

Teddy Gordon, my school chum, was the swiftest runner in Pokostilla. One Fourth of July he captured no less than fifty dollars in prizes. Next morning I met him coming down the road.

"Hello, Teddy," said I, "decided what to do with your money yet?"

"Yes," he replied, "I'm going into the burglar business."

"Ted Gordon, have you clean gone out of your senses? What on earth do you mean?"

"Exactly what I say," replied Ted, calmly. "I've got my eye on an easy house to begin on, and look here, Bob, I'm going to take you into partnership."

"Well, not if I know it," said I, my eyes opening wide with amazement at Ted's conduct.

"In the first place it's dead wrong, and in the second it's very dangerous."

"Oh, I guess you will join me in this enterprise all right," responded Ted with a smile. "Now listen."

Looking cautiously about to see that there was no chance of being overheard, Ted unfolded his plan.

"Why, it's splendid scheme!" I broke out presently. "Of course I'll join you. And look here, Ted, the old lady hasn't got any bulldog or anything, and I don't believe she even looks her door nights. Come along now, and let us get together our things."

And arm in arm we strolled down the street, maturing our plans as we went.

Miss Judith Brown, or "Aunt Judy," as she was often called, lived in a somewhat dilapidated little cottage about half a mile down the road. The poor old lady had recently fallen upon evil times. The hundred-dollar income with which she had for years managed to keep body and soul together was suddenly cut down to one-half that amount. And to make matters worse her eyes began to fail her, so that she could no longer add to her small income by her sewing and fancy work. So, altogether, matters were looking about as black and gloomy as they well could.

The carpet in her little sitting-room was very threadbare, the chairs old and rickety, and as for the table, it could scarcely support the few cracked dishes her frugal meal required her to put upon it.

Occasionally Aunt Judy had a lady visitor, and then with what mortification the poor woman was compelled to set before her caller chipped cups and saucers, and to warn her not to bear too heavily on the chair upon which she was sitting, only a few of her acquaintances knew.

"Tilly," she said one evening to the little colored girl she kept more for company than anything else. "Tilly, to-morrow when you go down to the grocer's, see if he won't give you another soap-box. We must save the chairs for our callers."

This evening after the Fourth she was feeling very down-hearted indeed. It looked as though she would have to openly appeal to charity, and this she had never been driven to before. It was so hard to do it, so hard.

A little after eight she and Tilly retired to their chamber up under the eaves, and soon they were fast asleep.

About ten o'clock when all was dark and still, a wagon drove up, and turning out from the road stopped on the other side of Aunt Judy's back yard fence. Here it lay completely hidden both from the house and from the street.

Three minutes later Ted and I poked our heads above the boards, and seeing that no one had been disturbed we climbed lightly over and crept up to the back door. As we expected, it was only on the latch, for if there was anything that Aunt Judy had no occasion to fear, it was the midnight thief. Once inside the house, we drew down the blinds and lighted our bull's-eye lantern. The old cat looked up at us in surprise from the kitchen hearth, and then, evidently considering the idea of burglars too absurd to entertain for a moment, again dropped off to sleep.

In the kitchen we quietly removed our shoes in true burglar fashion and crept forward. The scene of our operations was the sitting-room.

"Hist!" whispered Ted; "gently, now. If we are discovered we are found."

The situation lent the old chestnut a fresh pungency. And it was as much as we could do to keep from bursting into a roar of laughter. We got our risibles under control, however, and set to work.

Gathering up as many chairs as we could bear off without noise we carried them to the door back. After that we took the table, then with much difficulty we lugged off the rickety old sofa. Next we took a couple of armfuls of odds and ends, and finally plucking up the threadbare carpet by the roots we bore it off, checking to ourselves, for we had completely denuded the room.

Pulling on our boots we now carried our booty out to the wagon, and then—well, half an hour later Ted and I were well along the road on our way back.

"Hal! hal! hal!" I roared, as soon as we were out of earshot, "that's the greatest lark-out. Oh, but won't the old lady be surprised, though?"

Ted was more serious. He evidently felt it his responsibility as originator and leader of the affair. "I say, Bob," he whispered, "what do you suppose the old lady will do?"

"The only thing I could think of was

other scream of laughter. When Tilly came down in the morning to light the fire her eyes almost popped out of her head with amazement. As soon as she had recovered herself she rushed upstairs. On reaching the first flight, however, she paused as an idea entered her mind and stood leaning against the banister. Then, with a broad grin, for her decision seemed to amuse her greatly, she ran up and burst into Aunt Judy's room.

"Oh, Missie! Missie!" she cried. "It's all gone, missie! The robbers have taken all your furniture. It's all gone, missie, even to the carpet and spoons and everything!"

Poor Aunt Judy's face was a sight to behold. In trembling haste she threw on her wrapper and hurried downstairs.

Pushing open the parlor door, the excited old lady received a shock which well-nigh took her off her feet. There before her was a brand new set of furniture, chairs, sofa and table, the latter spread with a nice white table cloth and with bright new knives and forks and spoons, and pretty cups and saucers upon it, the like of which she never expected to see in her little home again. In the center of the room was laid a nice large rug, and stuck up in the corner was a roll of handsome carpeting sufficient to cover the border of floor that was yet exposed.

With a quick glance the astounded woman took it all in, and then she dropped on her knees and sobbed aloud. For some minutes she remained thus, her head buried in her hands, and then rising, her face greatly brightened, she said simply: "Make some tea, Tilly; we must christen our new teapot."

As Tilly lifted the cover of that article, something green flashed to her eye from the inside. She shook it out.

"Oh, look, missie," she cried, "look here. Money! See! Ten, ten, five—twenty-five dollars. Oh, missie, this is just great. The Lord is good, isn't He?"

"Yes, child," replied Aunt Judy—and then the old pride coming suddenly upon her, she said, "but we'll have to find out who did it and send them back. We mustn't keep them, Tilly. It's too much like charity."

A little later, when the minister was going by, she called him to advise her. No matter what his arguments were, he had well-nigh persuaded her to accept the gift without question, when Tilly clinched matters.

"Sides, missie," she said offering her speech as a supplement to the minister's, "the burglars got your furniture, hasn't they? Time enough to give up the new things when they bring back the old ones."

"I will keep them," said Aunt Judy, smiling, and so the thing was settled.

"Were you ever found out, Uncle Bob?" inquired Dicky.

"Yes, the newspapers got hold of the affair, and pretty soon Teddy and I were known all over town as 'The Blessed Burglars.' But before this happened the minister, at Aunt Judy's request, had inserted this little item:

"REWARD OFFERED.

"Any person giving information concerning the burglars who entered the premises of Miss Judith Brown, on the night of July 5, will receive a thousand thanks. As for the burglars themselves, Miss Brown would be greatly pleased to have them call upon her some evening while she is awake, to receive the gratitude their kindness and consideration deserve."—Inter Ocean.

**GREAT YOUNG MEN.**

CHARLES JAMES FOT was in parliament at nineteen.

The great Cromwell left the university at Cambridge at eighteen.

GLADSTONE was in parliament at twenty-two, and at twenty-four was lord of the treasury.

LOUIS BACON graduated at Cambridge at sixteen and was called to the bar at twenty-one.

HENRY CLAY was in the senate of the United States, contrary to the constitution, at twenty-nine.

PEEL was in parliament at twenty-one, and Palmerston was lord of the admiralty at twenty-three.

WASHINGTON was a colonel in the army at twenty-two, commander of the forces at forty-two, president at fifty-seven.

MOSES, of Saxony, died at thirty-two, conceded to have been one of the profoundest statesmen and one of the best generals Christendom had seen.

NAPOLEON at twenty-five commanded the army of Italy. At thirty he was not only one of the most illustrious generals of the time, but one of the great law givers of the world. At forty-six he saw Waterloo.

WILLIAM PITT entered the ministry at fourteen, was chancellor of the exchequer at twenty-two, prime minister at twenty-four, and so continued for twenty years, and when thirty-five was the most powerful uncrowned head in Europe.—Young Men's Era.

**THE AMERICAS.**

COAL costs \$23 per ton in Venezuela, but there few people need fires.

The first printing-press ever used in America was run in Mexico, about 1550, and the second at Lima, Peru, about 1585.

CHILI is unfortunate enough to number among her population more poets per capita than any other nation in the world.

VENEZUELA has fifty-six holidays every year. On these days the people close their stores and enjoy themselves in chicken fights.

Wild turkeys are plentiful in the southern Mexican states. As many as half a dozen varieties can be seen in a short hunting trip.

The streets of Caracas, the capital of Venezuela, are so narrow that the street cars that were imported had to be sawed in two in order to allow them to turn the corners.

The growth of the Argentine Republic in the past thirty years has been remarkable. According to recent statistics the population of the republic is

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**THE LEBANON EXPRESS.**

**Notice of Administration.**

Notice is hereby given, that, by order of the county court of Linn county, Oregon, the undersigned has been duly appointed and now is the duly qualified and acting administrator of the estate of Nancy Marks, deceased. All parties having claims against said estate are hereby required to present the same, properly verified, within six months from the 12th day of July 1895, the date of the first publication hereof, to the undersigned at the office of Sam'l M. Garland, Lebanon, Oregon.

JOHN H. MERR, Administrator.

Sam'l M. GARLAND, Atty. for Adm'r. Estate of Nancy Marks, deceased.

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