

lip, and hair the exact colour of the little orphan's (afterward discovered to be the earl's daughter) in one of Mr. Blaney's plays. His trousers were corduroy, his coat short-sleeved, with buttons in the middle of his back. One bootleg was outside the corduroys. You looked expectantly, though in vain, at his straw hat for ear-holes, its shape inaugurating the suspicion that it had been ravaged from a former equine possessor. In his hand was a valise — description of it is an impossible task; a Boston man would not have carried his lunch and law books to his office in it. And above one ear, in his hair, was a wisp of hay — the rustic's letter of credit, his badge of innocence, the last clinging touch of the Garden of Eden lingering to shame the goldbrick men.

Knowingly, smilingly, the city crowds passed him by. They saw the raw stranger stand in the gutter and stretch his neck at the tall buildings. At this they ceased to smile, and even to look at him. It had been done so often. A few glanced at the antique valise to see what Coney 'attraction' or brand of chewing-gum he might be thus dinning into his memory. But for the most part he was ignored. Even the newsboys looked bored when he scampered like a circus clown out of the way of cabs and street-cars.

At Eighth Avenue stood 'Bunco Harry,' with his dyed moustache and shiny, good-natured eyes. Harry was too good an artist not to be pained at the sight of an actor overdoing his part. He edged up to the countryman, who had stopped to open his mouth at a jewellery store window, and shook his head.

'Too thick, pal,' he said critically — 'too thick by a couple of inches I don't know what your lay is; but you've got the properties on too thick. That hay, now — why, they don't even allow that on Proctor's circuit any more.'

'I don't understand you, mister,' said the green one. 'I'm not lookin' for any circus. I've just run down from Ulster County to look at the town, bein' that the hayin's over with. Gosh! but it's a whopper. I thought Poughkeepsie was some punkins; but this here town is five times as big.'

'Oh, well,' said 'Bunco Harry,' raising his eyebrows, 'I didn't mean to butt in. You don't have to tell. I thought you ought to tone down a little, so I tried to put you wise. Wish you success at your graft, whatever it is. Come and have a drink, anyhow.'

'I wouldn't mind having a glass of lager beer,' acknowledged the other.

They went to a café frequented by men with smooth faces and shifty eyes, and sat at their drinks.

'I'm glad I come across you, mister,' said Haylocks. 'How'd you like to play a game or two of seven-up? I've got the keards.'

He fished them out of Noah's valise - a rare, inimitable deck, greasy with bacon suppers and grimy with the soil of cornfields.

'Bunco Harry' laughed loud and briefly.

'Not for me, sport,' he said firmly. 'I don't go against that make-up of yours for a cent. But I still say you've overdone it. The Reubs haven't dressed like that since '79. I doubt if you could work Brooklyn for a key-winding watch with that lay-out.'

'Oh, you needn't think I ain't got the money,' boasted Haylocks. He drew forth a tightly rolled mass of bills as large as a teacup, and laid it on the table.

'Got that for my share of grandmother's farm,' he announced. 'There's \$950 in that roll. Thought I'd come into the city and look around for a likely business to go into.'

'Bunco Harry' took up the roll of money and looked at it with almost respect in his smiling eyes.

'I've seen worse,' he said critically. 'But you'll never do it in them clothes. You want to get light tan shoes and a black suit and a straw hat with a coloured band, and talk a good deal about Pittsburg and freight differentials, and drink sherry for breakfast in order to work off phony stuff like that.'

'What's his line?' asked two or three shifty-eyed men of 'Bunco Harry' after Haylocks had gathered up his impugned money and departed.

'The queer, I guess,' said Harry. 'Or else he's one of Jerome's men. Or some guy with a new graft. He's too much hayseed. Maybe that his - I wonder now - oh no, it couldn't have been real money.'

Haylocks wandered on. Thirst probably assailed him again, for he dived into a dark groggery on a side-street and bought beer. Several sinister fellows hung upon one end of the bar. At first sight of him their eyes brightened; but when his insistent and exaggerated rusticity became apparent their expressions changed to wary suspicion.

Haylocks swung his valise across the bar.

'Keep that awhile for me, mister,' he said, chewing at the end of a virulent claybank cigar. 'I'll be back after I knock around a spell. And keep your eye on it, for there's \$950 inside of it, though maybe you wouldn't think so to look at me.'

Somewhere outside a phonograph struck up a band piece, and Haylocks was off for it, his coat-tail buttons flopping in the middle of his back.

'Divvy? Mike,' said the men hanging upon the bar, winking openly at one another.

'Honest, now,' said the bartender, kicking the valise to one side. 'You don't think I'd fall to that, do you? Anybody can see he ain't no jay. One of McAdoo's come-on squad, I guess. He's a shine if he made himself up. There ain't no parts of the country now where they dress like that since they run rural free delivery to Providence, Rhode Island. If he's got nine-fifty in that valise it's a ninety-eight-cent Waterbury that's stopped at ten minutes to ten.'

When Haylocks had exhausted the resources of Mr. Edison to amuse he returned for his valise. And then down Broadway he gal-livanted, culling the sights with his eager blue eyes. But still and evermore Broadway rejected him with curt glances and sardonic smiles. He was the oldest of the 'gags' that the city must endure. He was so flagrantly impossible, so ultra-rustic, so exaggerated beyond the most freakish products of the barnyard, the hayfield and the vaudeville stage, that he excited only weariness and suspicion. And the wisp of hay in his hair was so genuine, so fresh and redolent of the meadows, so clamorously rural, that even a shell-game man would have put up his peas and folded his table at the sight of it.

Haylocks seated himself upon a flight of stone steps and once more exhumed his roll of yellow-backs from the valise. The outer one, a twenty, he shucked off and beckoned to a newsboy.

'Son,' said he, 'run somewhere and get this changed for me. I'm mighty nigh out of chicken feed; I guess you'll get a nickel if you'll hurry up.'

A hurt look appeared through the dirt on the newsy's face.

'Aw, watchert'ink! G'wan and get yer funny bill changed yerself. Dey ain't no farm clothes yer got on. G'wan wit yer stage money.'

On a corner lounged a keen-eyed steerer for a gambling-house. He saw Haylocks, and his expression suddenly grew cold and virtuous.

'Mister,' said the rural one. 'I've heard of places in this here town where a fellow could have a good game of old sledge or peg a card at keno. I got \$950 in this valise, and I come down from old Ulster to see the sights. Know where a fellow could get action on about \$9 or \$10? I'm goin' to have some sport, and then maybe I'll buy out a business of some kind.'

The steerer looked pained, and investigated a white speck on his left forefinger nail.

'Cheese it, old man,' he murmured reproachfully. 'The Central

Office must be bughouse to send you out looking like such a gillie. You couldn't get within two blocks of a sidewalk crap game in them Tony Pastor props. The recent Mr. Scotty from Death Valley has got you beat a crosstown block in the way of Elizabethan scenery and mechanical accessories. Let it be skiddoo for yours. Nay, I know of no gilded halls where one may bet a patrol wagon on the ace.'

Rebuffed again by the great city that is so swift to detect artificialities, Haylocks sat upon the kerb and presented his thoughts to hold a conference.

'It's my clothes,' said he; 'durned if it ain't. They think I'm a hayseed and won't have nothin' to do with me. Nobody never made fun of this hat in Ulster County. I guess if you want folks to notice you in New York you must dress up like they do.'

So Haylocks went shopping in the bazaars where men spake through their noses and rubbed their hands and ran the tape line ecstatically over the bulge in his inside pocket where reposed a red nubbin of corn with an even number of rows. And messengers bearing parcels and boxes streamed to his hotel on Broadway within the lights of Long Acre.

At nine o'clock in the evening one descended to the sidewalk whom Ulster County would have forsworn. Bright tan were his shoes; his hat the latest block. His light grey trousers were deeply creased; a gay blue silk handkerchief flapped from the breast pocket of his elegant English walking-coat. His collar might have graced a laundry window; his blond hair was trimmed close; the wisp of hay was gone.

For an instant he stood, resplendent, with the leisurely air of a boulevardier concocting in his mind the route for his evening pleasures. And then he turned down the gay, bright street with the easy and graceful tread of a millionaire.

But in the instant that he had paused the wisest and keenest eyes in the city had enveloped him in their field of vision. A stout man with grey eyes picked two of his friends with a lift of his eyebrows from the row of loungers in front of the hotel.

'The juiciest jay I've seen in six months,' said the man with grey eyes. 'Come along.'

It was half-past eleven when a man galloped into the West Forty-seventh Street police-station with the story of his wrongs.

'Nine hundred and fifty dollars,' he gasped, 'all my share of grandmother's farm.'

The desk sergeant wrung from him the name Jabez Bulltongue,

of Locust Valley Farm, Ulster County, and then began to take descriptions of the strong-arm gentlemen.

When Conant went to see the editor about the fate of his poem, he was received over the head of the office boy into the inner office that is decorated with the statuettes by Rodin and J. G. Brown.

'When I read the first line of "The Doe and the Brook,"' said the editor, 'I knew it to be the work of one whose life has been heart to heart with nature. The finished art of the line did not blind me to that fact. To use a somewhat homely comparison, it was as if a wild, free child of the woods and fields were to don the garb of fashion and walk down Broadway. Beneath the apparel the man would show.'

'Thanks,' said Conant. 'I suppose the cheque will be round on Thursday, as usual.'

The morals of this story have somehow gotten mixed. You can take your choice of 'Stay on the Farm' or 'Don't write Poetry.'

XLVIII

The Thing's the Play—

BEING ACQUAINTED WITH a newspaper reporter who had a couple of free passes, I got to see the performance a few nights ago at one of the popular vaudeville houses.

One of the numbers was a violin solo by a striking-looking man not much past forty, but with very grey, thick hair. Not being afflicted with a taste for music, I let the system of noises drift past my ears while I regarded the man.

'There was a story about that chap a month or two ago,' said the reporter. 'They gave me the assignment. It was to run a column and was to be on the extremely light and joking order. The old man seems to like the funny touch I give to local happenings. Oh yes, I'm working on a farce comedy now. Well, I went down to the house and got all the details, but I certainly fell down on that job. I went back and turned in a comic write-up of an east side funeral instead. Why? Oh, I couldn't seem to get hold of it with my funny hooks, somehow. Maybe you could make a one-act tragedy out of it for a curtain-raiser. I'll give you the details.'

After the performance my friend, the reporter, recited to me the facts over the Würzburger.

racking, petitionary music of a violin. The hag, music, bewitches some of the noblest. The daws may peck upon one's sleeve without injury, but whoever wears his heart upon his tympanum gets it not far from the neck.

This music and the musician called her, and at her side honour and the old love held her back.

'Forgive me,' he pleaded.

'Twenty years is a long time to remain away from the one you say you love,' she declared, with a purgatorial touch.

'How could I tell?' he begged. 'I will conceal nothing from you. That night when he left I followed him. I was mad with jealousy. On a dark street I struck him down. He did not rise. I examined him. His head had struck a stone. I did not intend to kill him. I was mad with love and jealousy. I hid near by and saw an ambulance take him away. Although you married him, Helen—'

'Who are you?' cried the woman, with wide open eyes, snatching her hand away.

'Don't you remember me, Helen—the one who has always loved you the best? I am John Delaney. If you can forgive—'

But she was gone, leaping, stumbling, hurrying, flying up the stairs toward the music and him who had forgotten, but who had known her for his in each of his two existences, and as she climbed up she sobbed, cried and sang: 'Frank! Frank! Frank!'

Three mortals thus juggling with years as though they were billiard balls, and my friend, the reporter, couldn't see anything funny in it!

XLIX

A Ramble in Aphasia

MY WIFE AND I PARTED on that morning in precisely our usual manner. She left her second cup of tea to follow me to the front door. There she plucked from my lapel the invisible strand of lint (the universal act of woman to proclaim ownership) and bade me take care of my cold. I had no cold. Next came her kiss of parting—the level kiss of domesticity flavoured with Young Hyson. There was no fear of the extemporaneous, of variety spicing her infinite custom. With the deft touch of long malpractice, she dabbed away my well-set scarf-pin; and then, as I closed the door, I heard her morning slippers pattering back to her cooling tea.

When I set out I had no thought or premonition of what was to occur. The attack came suddenly.

For many weeks I had been toiling, almost night and day, at a famous railroad law case that I won triumphantly but a few days previously. In fact, I had been digging away at the law almost without cessation for many years. Once or twice good Doctor Volney, my friend and physician, had warned me.

'If you don't slacken up, Bellford,' he said, 'you'll go suddenly to pieces. Either your nerves or your brain will give way. Tell me, does a week pass in which you do not read in the papers of a case of aphasia — of some man lost, wandering nameless, with his past and his identity blotted out — and all from that little brain-clot made by overwork or worry?'

'I always thought,' said I, 'that the clot in those instances was really to be found on the brains of the newspaper reporters.'

Dr. Volney shook his head.

'The disease exists,' he said. 'You need a change or a rest. Court-room, office and home — there is the only route you travel. For recreation you — read law books. Better take warning in time.'

'On Thursday nights,' I said defensively, 'my wife and I play cribbage. On Sundays she reads to me the weekly letter from her mother. That law books are not a recreation remains yet to be established.'

That morning as I walked I was thinking of Doctor Volney's words. I was feeling as well as I usually did — possibly in better spirits than usual.

I awoke with stiff and cramped muscles from having slept long on the incommodious seat of a day coach. I leaned my head against the seat and tried to think. After a long time I said to myself: 'I must have a name of some sort.' I searched my pockets. Not a card; not a letter; not a paper or monogram could I find. But I found in my coat pocket nearly \$3,000 in bills of large denomination. 'I must be someone, of course,' I repeated to myself, and began again to consider.

The car was well crowded with men, among whom I told myself, there must have been some common interest, for they intermingled freely, and seemed in the best good-humour and spirits. One of them — a stout, spectacled gentleman enveloped in a decided odour of cinnamon and aloes — took the vacant half of my seat with a friendly nod, and unfolded a newspaper. In the intervals between his periods of reading, we conversed, as travellers will, on current

affairs. I found myself able to sustain the conversation on such subjects with credit, at least to my memory. By and by my companion said:

'You are one of us, of course. Fine lot of men the West sends in this time. I'm glad they held the convention in New York; I've never been East before. My name's R. P. Bolder — Bolder & Son, of Hickory Grove, Missouri.'

Though unprepared, I rose to the emergency, as men will when put to it. Now must I hold a christening, and be at once babe, parson and parent. My senses came to the rescue of my slower brain. The insistent odour of drugs from my companion supplied one idea; a glance at his newspaper, where my eye met a conspicuous advertisement, assisted me further.

'My name,' said I glibly, 'is Edward Pinkhammer. I am a druggist, and my home is in Cornopolis, Kansas.'

'I knew you were a druggist,' said my fellow-traveller affably. 'I saw the callous spot on your right forefinger where the handle of the pestle rubs. Of course, you are a delegate to our National Convention.'

'Are all these men druggists?' I asked wonderingly.

'They are. This car came through from the West. And they're your old-time druggists, too — none of your patent tablet-and-granule pharmashootists that use slot machines instead of a prescription desk. We percolate our own paregoric and roll our own pills, and we ain't above handling a few garden seeds in the spring, and carrying a sideline of confectionery and shoes. I tell you, Hampinker, I've got an idea to spring on this convention — new ideas is what they want. Now, you know the shelf bottles of tartar emetic and Rochelle salt Ant. et Pot. Tart. and Sod. et Pot. Tart. — one's poison, you know, and the other's harmless. It's easy to mistake one label for the other. Where do druggists mostly keep 'em? Why, as far apart as possible, on different shelves. That's wrong. I say keep 'em side by side so when you want one you can always compare it with the other and avoid mistakes. Do you catch the idea?'

'It seems to me a very good one,' I said.

'All right! When I spring it on the convention you back it up. We'll make some of these Eastern orange-phosphate-and-massage-cream professors that think they're the only lozenges in the market look like hypodermic tablets.'

'If I can be of any aid,' I said, warming, 'the two bottles of — er —'

'Tartrate of antimony and potash, and tartrate of soda and potash.'

'Shall henceforth sit side by side,' I concluded firmly.

'Now, there's another thing,' said Mr. Bolder. 'For an excipient in manipulating a pill mass which do you prefer - the magnesia carbonate or the pulverized glycerrhiza radix?'

'The - er - magnesia,' I said. It was easier to say than the other word.

Mr. Bolder glanced at me distrustfully through his spectacles.

'Give me the glycerrhiza,' said he. 'Magnesia cakes.'

'Here's another one of these fake aphasia cases,' he said, presently, handing me his newspaper, and laying his finger upon an article. 'I don't believe in 'em. I put nine out of ten of 'em down as frauds. A man gets sick of his business and his folks and wants to have a good time. He skips out somewhere, and when they find him he pretends to have lost his memory - don't know his own name, and won't even recognize the strawberry mark on his wife's left shoulder. Aphasia! Tut! Why can't they stay at home and forget?'

I took the paper and read, after the pungent headlines, the following:

'DENVER, June 12. - Elwyn C. Bellford, a prominent lawyer, is mysteriously missing from his home since three days ago, and all efforts to locate him have been in vain. Mr. Bellford is a well-known citizen of the highest standing, and has enjoyed a large and lucrative law practice. He is married and owns a fine home and the most extensive private library in the State. On the day of his disappearance, he drew quite a large sum of money from his bank. No one can be found who saw him after he left the bank. Mr. Bellford was a man of singularly quiet and domestic tastes, and seemed to find his happiness in his home and profession. If any clue at all exists to his strange disappearance, it may be found in the fact that for some months he had been deeply absorbed in an important law case in connection with the Q. Y. and Z. Railroad Company. It is feared that overwork may have affected his mind. Every effort is being made to discover the whereabouts of the missing man.'

'It seems to me you are not altogether uncynical Mr. Bolder,' I said, after I had read the despatch. 'This has the sound, to me, of a genuine case. Why should this man, prosperous, happily married and respected, choose suddenly to abandon everything? I know that these lapses of memory do occur, and that men do find themselves adrift without a name, a history or a home.'

'Oh, gammon and jalap!' said Mr. Bolder. 'It's larks they're after. There's too much education nowadays. Men know about aphasia, and they use it for an excuse. The women are wise, too.'

When it's all over they look you in the eye, as scientific as you please, and say: "He hypnotized me."

Thus Mr. Bolder diverted, but did not aid me with his comments and philosophy.

We arrived in New York about ten at night. I rode in a cab to an hotel, and I wrote my name 'Edward Pinkhammer' in the register. As I did so I felt pervade me a splendid, wild, intoxicating buoyancy - a sense of unlimited freedom, of newly attained possibilities. I was just born into the world. The old fetters - whatever they had been - were stricken from my hands and feet. The future lay before me a clear road such as an infant enters, and I could set out upon it equipped with a man's learning and experience.

I thought the hotel clerk looked at me five seconds too long. I had no baggage.

'The Druggists' Convention,' I said. 'My trunk has somehow failed to arrive.' I drew out a roll of money.

'Ah!' said he, showing an auriferous tooth, 'we have quite a number of the Western delegates stopping here.' He struck a bell for the boy.

I endeavoured to give colour to my rôle.

'There is an important movement on foot among us Westerners,' I said, 'in regard to a recommendation to the convention that the bottles containing the tartrate of antimony and potash, and the tartrate of sodium and potash, be kept in a contiguous position on the shelf.'

'Gentleman to three-fourteen,' said the clerk hastily. I was whisked away to my room.

The next day I bought a trunk and clothing, and began to live the life of Edward Pinkhammer. I did not tax my brain with endeavours to solve problems of the past.

It was a piquant and sparkling cup that the great island city held up to my lips. I drank of it gratefully. The keys of Manhattan belong to him who is able to bear them. You must be either the city's guest or its victim.

The following few days were as gold and silver. Edward Pinkhammer, yet counting back to his birth by hours only, knew the rare joy of having come upon so diverting a world full-fledged and unrestrained. I sat entranced on the magic carpets provided in theatres and roof-gardens, that transported one into strange and delightful lands full of frolicsome music, pretty girls and grotesque, drolly extravagant parodies upon humankind. I went here and there at my own dear will, bound by no limits of space,