

way, tired with the monotonous treading of the sleepers and with crouching in perilous niches to let the trains go by.

She stood watching at the window, as he had known that she would stand, her hands raised to her face, her figure cut out against the warm light of the room.

He stood still a moment and looked at her, hidden in the shadow of the street, thinking his own thoughts. The publican in the old story hardly entered the beautiful temple with more humble step than he his home that night.

She sprang to meet him, pale with her watching and fear.

"Worried, Annie, were you? I haven't been drinking; don't be frightened—no, not the theater either this time. Some business, dear; business that delayed me. I'm sorry you were worried, I am, Annie. I've had a long walk. It is pleasant here. I believe I'm tired, Annie."

He faltered and turned away his face.

"Dear me," said Annie. "Why, you poor fellow, you are all tired out. Sit right up here by the fire and I will bring the coffee. I've tried so hard not to let it boil away, you don't know, Jack, and I was so afraid something had happened to you."

Her face, her voice, her touch, seemed more than he could bear for a minute, perhaps. He gulped down his coffee, choking.

"Annie, look here." He put down his cup, trying to smile and make a jest of the words. "Suppose a fellow had it in him to be a rascal and nobody ever knew it, eh?"

"I should rather not know it if I were his wife," said Annie, simply.

"But you couldn't care anything more for him, you know, Annie."

"I don't know," said Annie, shaking her head with a little perplexed smile. "You would be just, Jack, *any now.*"

Jack coughed, took up his coffee-cup, set it down hard, strode once or twice across the room, kissed the baby in the crib, kissed his wife and sat down again, winking at the fire.

"I wonder if He had anything to do with sending him," he said, presently, under his breath.

"Sending whom?" asked puzzled Annie.

"Business, dear, just business. I was thinking of a boy who did a little job for me to-night, that's all."

And that is all that she knows to this day about the man sitting in the corner, with his hat over his eyes, bound for Colorado.—E. S. Phelps, in *Men, Women and Ghosts.*



There is very little need to say who he is, since there is no figure more familiar to Toronto citizens, especially the down-town ones, than that of Police Constable Redford, the permanent officer in charge of the King and Yonge intersection, the busiest crossing in Toronto.

At any and every hour of the day you may find him in his place, usually in the street center, standing on a small section of the much-bisected roadway, with a ceaseless whirl of

wheels and clamor of gongs all about him.

It is two years or more since this finest "one of the finest" was given permanent appointment at this busy corner. Before that, it was guarded by various members of the police force, as change of duty directed; but the results were not satisfactory.

What was needed was a trustworthy permanent officer, who would learn the daily features of his work and grow to have a personal interest in it, a man strong, kindly, courteous, with quick eye, steady nerve, and inexhaustible patience.

There are plenty such men on the Toronto force; yet if there were a preference, possibly public opinion would give it to P.C. Redford.

He's a splendid-looking fellow, with a world of comfort in his strength, for timid women and mothers. Those blessed baby carriages! however would they get over that crowded thoroughfare at busy hours without the uniform to protect them.

He looks formidable in size and strength, this big officer, but there is a twinkle in the blue eyes and two irresistible dimples half hidden in the bronze beard that women are quick to discover, and that tell their own story.

Constable Redford's duties are not easily defined, since they cover a variety of offices, from controlling the traffic to helping the aged or infirm over the crossing; from stopping a runaway to clearing street corner loungers.

He won't talk when on duty, save to answer queries, although in holiday season these are constant; and he won't talk when off duty, if there is even the edge of a notebook about. It requires considerable diplomacy to coax a little chat out of the big, kindly officer; but, when we succeed in getting him off guard, he can tell amusing things of the characters who become familiar to him as they pass and repass day by day at the busy corner.

There's the blind tuner, who recognizes his slightest touch; the infirm man, who waits to catch his watchful eye before venturing from the pavement; the nervous woman, who looks wildly about, then dashes across with a do-or-die expression; and the numerous aged ones, who are anxious for his safe conduct.

There are the interrogation points also—people who ask questions, then dart off without waiting for the answers; and others who know before they ask.

There are the strangers also, who pour in at Exhibition time, during the summer days, or at special holiday seasons. Our kindly officer is a whole directory in himself concerning the sights to see and institutions to visit.

"I put them on a belt-line trolley, and tell them to stay on until they get around to me again; then I give them a second start off somewhere else," he says, with a laugh.

During ordinary seasons Friday is the worst day he has, being "bargain day" in the larger stores. "My! but the baby carriages are terrible on that day," he declares, with a sigh.

During the two years of his charge, Constable Redford has seen many narrow and remarkable escapes and not a few accidents at this busy corner; but in no instance has there been loss of life, or even serious injury, which fact speaks well for his vigilance.

"I couldn't count the number of bicycles I have seen smashed at this corner in the past two years," he says. "Yet the riders have all escaped with slight injury, or none at all."

He is decidedly of the opinion that bicyclists should walk their wheels over or around this busiest crossing in the city. It would be much safer both for the riders and pedestrians; "and I ride a wheel myself, so I am not against them," he adds, merrily.

A Dominion statute demands slow driving over street crossings; how the law is disregarded in this respect, even in our city business thoroughfares, we all know.

At this corner, however, the officer insists that all vehicles shall move at walking pace. The enforcement of this means an occasional arrest, but not as many as when he first took charge.

The street cars have right of way; but, inasmuch as they do not care to run over a man, Constable Redford checks them when necessary for the passing of women, children or infirm folk, by standing in front of them or crossing with the latter.

"They won't run me down," he says, with a laugh.

Again, windows of corner stores must not be blocked; and it is his duty to insist that citizens waiting for cars shall stand upon the edge of the pavement. The corners must also be kept free from habitual loafers, and congestion prevented.

The duties of the position appear easy, yet they require much of tact and judgment. Besides, it is a monotonous and trying thing to stand hour after hour, the center of such a bewildering of rattle and wheels—the only relief being in pacing the square formed by the street corners.

Let any man try it and see whether he can keep brain clear, nerve in tone and patience in stock for even a brief quarter hour, and he will realize something of the tax of permanent duty. A woman would go frantic in five minutes.

But there is a measure of reward in the good-will and confidence given to the officer who serves so well and faithfully at this busy corner.

Not only would the aged and infirm, the burdened mother and the thoughtless little ones miss him; but a thousand citizens, who, crossing and recrossing the thronging square, gain an almost unconscious sense of safety as they mark the stalwart form and note the genial face, the kindly watchful eyes of Constable Redford.

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