

"By Way of Restitution"*Continued from page 24*

"Come over to the table," commanded the man and the burglar obeyed, his arms still pointing to heaven.

"Put your gun on the table. I have you covered, remember," he said sternly. "I know it," muttered the other, laying his automatic on the table.

"Now, sit in that chair," indicating a chair on the side of the table opposite him.

The burglar complied and the man took a chair, facing him, his gun hand dropping to his side.

From the moment the light had shown him the man in the door of his study he had recognized him as the figure under the street lamp in the early part of the evening. The light showed him his face now, clean shaven, square jawed; sinister mouth and eyes. Not too far sunk, he thought.

The burglar was eyeing him, resenting the scrutiny and evidently puzzled by his manner.

"Well?" he prompted.

"Well," returned the other. "This is a pleasant visit to give a man at this hour of the night. But perhaps you didn't expect to find me at home to you."

"Humph; D'y' suppose I walked into the trap with my eyes open," he sneered. "Yer got me, all right. What are yer goin' to do about it?"

"Just keep still and answer a few questions."

"I'll be blown if I'll sit here and answer your fool questions," exploded the other. "Whatever yer goin' to do, shoot it, quick."

"Well, if you are in a particular hurry, all I have got to do is ring up the police station," indicating the telephone at his elbow.

The burglar glared at the telephone and then back again at the man. Once his eyes sought the gun on the table.

But the man's mind was working. Clearly before his vision stood out another scene. A young man kneeling before a safe picking at the lock with nervous fingers, a board creaking behind him and his horrified glance around, visions of police and handcuffs dancing before his brain. He could see yet, the gray haired man standing there, without a gun or a weapon of any kind, regarding him with grave eyes. Somehow his own eyes had dropped and his face had flushed as he met that look and he made no movement to touch the revolver at his feet. Then a hand had fallen firmly on his shoulder and a voice had said, "You are no thief. Here is the money you want. Take it with an honest hand. What you want is a start. You'll make good. You have the makings of a man in you."

That money had doubled, trebled, increased a thousand fold and always he had had the desire to pay it back but had never done it. Then the chance to repay it had been removed for ever.

Now, with his eyes on the hostile face of this burglar, he asked quietly, "How long have you been out of work?" The other eyed him suspiciously. "Tree month," he said laconically.

"Is there nothing you could get to do but this dirty trade, nothing honest?"

"Aw; Its easy for yer to talk honest work with your soft business and your tree squares a day, but if yer tramped the streets all day with an empty stomach, turned down everywhere, no help wanted, same answer all the time, mebbe yer'd understand why a fella's got ter live somehow," said the burglar, sullenly.

"How long is it since you've had money?"

The other laughed harshly.

"I guess yer got me there."

"Well, it's money you came after here to-night. Here is money," said the man, pushing a roll of bills across the table toward him.

"Take it and make a clean start. I believe it's in you."

The burglar stared at him incredulously.

"Aw, what are yer givin' me?" he scoffed.

"Just what I said."

"Dyer mean yer givin' me this money?" he began in a bewildered way.

"Yes, it's yours."

"And 'ain't yer goin' to call the cops?" "No. I'm all the cop you need. Quit the dirty work to-night and keep straight. Do you get me?" asked the man, eyeing him steadily.

The look of astonishment on the other's face was giving way to understanding. He fingered the bills gingerly.

"I get yer sir," he said, and paused. A strange spasm crossed his face.

"Yes and I swear t'God I'll do it too. Straight. Clean, yer said. That'll be me or I'll be hanged," and his eyes met the other man's as steady as steel.

"That's talk," said the man quietly, and obeying an involuntary impulse, he held out his hand.

The other looked at it for a moment and then gripped it.

"Well," he muttered, "But you're a white sort."

THE WORK CURE

"Little Miss" was waiting for John to come and spade her flower bed early one beautiful spring morning. After waiting until her patience was gone, she began her own spading, in a most determined and provoked manner.

It was not long until old John appeared, with an amused smile on his old black face, and his tattered hat in hand, bowing and apologizing most humbly. In reply to Little Miss's inquiries as to what had made him so late, he said:

"Well, Little Miss, it's jes' this way: Ez I wuz comin' by Miss Harney's, she said, 'John, can't you come in and fix this flower bed for me?' And I jes' went in and resisted her a minute, and come right on. And, Little Miss, as I gits in sight, and sees you a-spadin' and a-rakin', I says to myself, 'John, ef mo' high-bawnd ladies struck a hones' sweat, they wouldn't be so much of this heah nervous perspiration. They sholy wouldn't.'"

AS RUTH SAW IT

Of course little Ruth should have been able to answer more precisely when the teacher asked her to describe a frog, says the Public Ledger. But she gave a description that at least is picturesque when she replied:

"A frog, teacher, is a big green bug with warts all over it. And it keeps its mouth open all the time, and—and—it's always sitting down behind and standing up in front."

OUT OF HIS PROPER PLACE

While traveling on a steamboat, says the San Francisco Star, a notorious card sharper who wished to get into the good graces of a clergyman who was on board, said to the reverend gentleman:

"I should very much like to hear one of your sermons, sir."

"Well," replied the clergyman, "you could have heard me last Sunday if you had been where you should have been."

"Where was that, then?"

"In the county jail," was the answer.

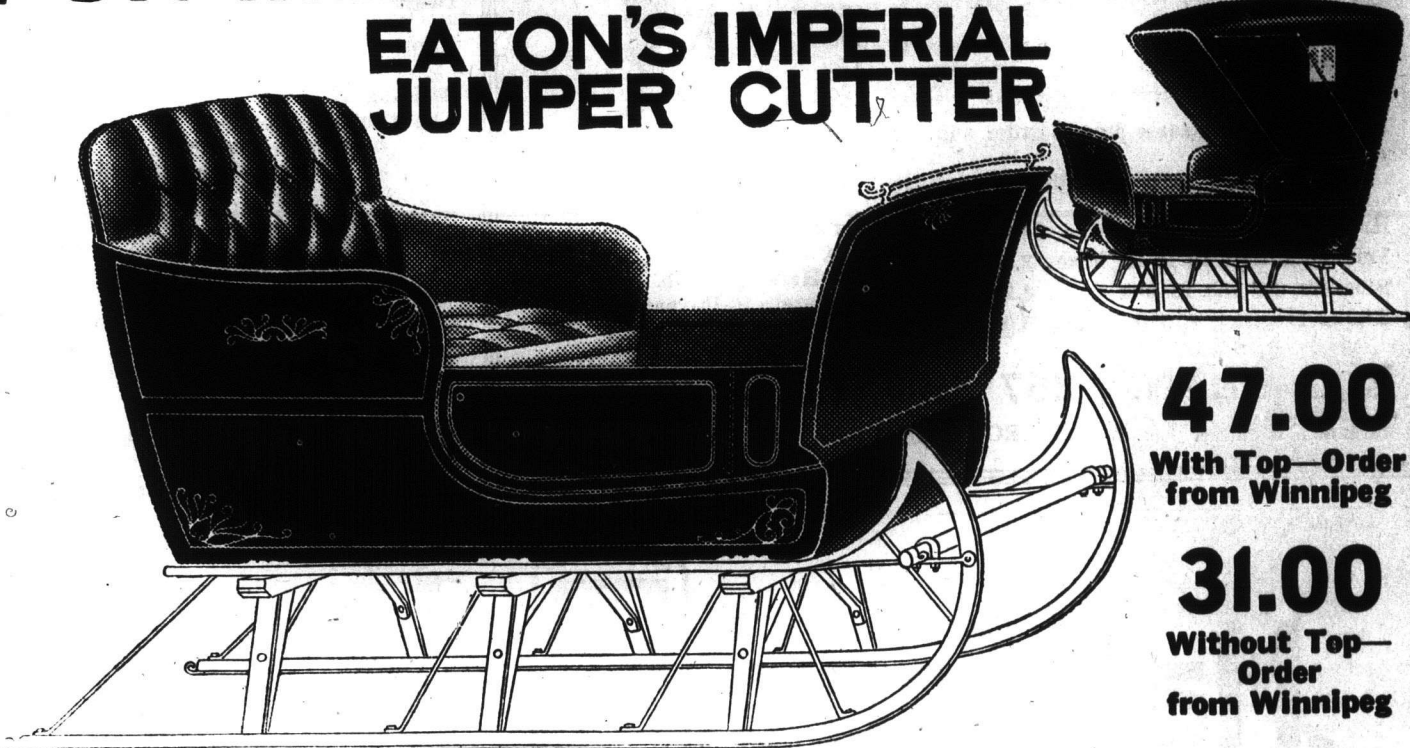
BUT SHE LIKED IT

Very strong peppermints are grandfather's favorite confection. One day, says the Christian Herald, he gave one to four-year-old Marjorie, and waited slyly to see what she would do when she should discover the pungent flavor of the candy. A few minutes later he saw her take the partly eaten peppermint from her mouth and place it on a table beside an open window.

"What's the matter?" he asked.

"Don't you like the candy?"

"Oh, yes," replied Marjorie, "I like it, but I thought I'd let it cool for a little while."

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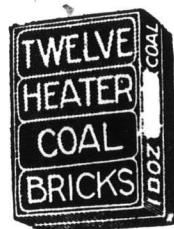
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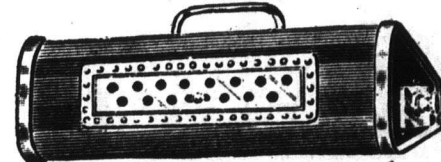
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