



THE BURGLAR AND THE PUBLIC HOUSE.

"A fine public house," said Blanco Watson, the humorist. "Yes," I replied, looking at the building we were approaching, "but a strange position—away from the highroad, and surrounded by villas."

"A very strange position. We will rest in the public house, and I will tell you how it came to be built in such a very strange position."

I smiled, and followed him into the saloon bar. We sat at one of the tables, and were silent for a time, he thinking and I watching him.

"The story begins," he said presently, "with a burglary committed by a certain Bill Jones one night long ago."

"Bill was a young member of his profession. Hitherto he had not attempted anything very big, but continued success in small things had made him bold. On this night he broke into the country house of a well-known actress in the hope of carrying off her jewels."

"He succeeded in getting the jewels and was leaving with them when he found that the slight noise he had made had attracted attention. A servant girl met him at a turn of the stairway and began to shriek. He rushed by her and to the window through which he had entered. As he passed through it again he heard doors being opened, and knew that the house was fully aroused."

"I understand," I said. "Bill escaped. The actress employed a detective. The detective built this public house in an out-of-the-way place, hoping that Bill, as an out-of-the-way young man, would call in one day for a drink. Curiously enough, Bill did."

Blanco Watson frowned.

"This is an intellectual story," he said, "and it does not depend on coincidences."

"I will continue," Bill avoided the first pursuit by a long run across country, and then walked toward his home, not daring to use the railway. He kept to the by-roads as much as possible, and at the close of the next day had reached the neighborhood of London."

"A spade lying inside a field gate suggested to him the advisability of hiding the jewels until he had arranged for their sale. After making sure that he was not observed, he entered the field and picked up the spade. A tree of peculiar growth stood just beyond him. In the manner of a fiction, he counted twenty steps due north from the tree, and then dug a deep hole, placed the jewels in it, and filled it up again."

"He arrived home safely that night, but was arrested in the morning. The servant girl had given an accurate description of him to the police, and they had recognized it."

"In due course he was tried. The evidence against him was very strong. The servant girl swore that he was the man she met on the stairs; some of the villagers swore that they had seen him near the house previously to the burglary. He was found guilty, and sentenced to seven years' penal servitude."

"Good," I said. "the jewels under the field. Bill in prison."

Blanco Watson nodded.

"Bill," he continued, "had always asserted his innocence, and the police had not been able to obtain from him any information as to the jewels. After the trial they formed the theory that he must have worked with another burglar who was known to be a friend of his and who had recently disappeared."

"When the theory was mentioned to Bill he confessed that it was correct, and no longer asserted his innocence. He had broken into the house, he said, while the other burglar watched outside. He had been captured, and the other burglar had gone to America with the jewels."

"Good," I said. "the jewels under the field, the other burglar in America."

Blanco Watson nodded again, and continued:

"Bill behaved very well in prison, and at the end of five years was released on a ticket-of-leave. He decided to wait until the ticket had expired, and then to get the jewels and leave the country. But a day or two after his release he walked out to look at the field."

"There was no field. During the five years he had been in prison the estate of which the field was part had been built upon. He wandered about the houses in despair. But, as he turned the corner, he saw something which suggested hope. Behind some railings was a tree of curious growth."

"It was the tree twenty steps due north of which he had buried the jewels. He recognized it immediately, and ran toward it. Again he was in despair. A yard or two north of the tree was a chapel, and the jewels were under the chapel. He leaned against the railings, covering his face with his hands."

"It happened presently that the head deacon of the chapel, a kindly old man, came down the road. He saw Bill standing like one in trouble, and stopped and asked what was the matter and whether he could help."

"For a few minutes Bill did not know what to reply, but then he spoke well. He said that once he had been a burglar, but that he had learned in prison that burglary is wrong; that now he was trying to live an honest life, but that, as he had no friends, it was not easy."

"The old man was touched. He had found Bill leaning against the chapel railings, and Bill had said he had no friends. Was it not his duty as head deacon of the chapel to be a friend to Bill? Clearly it was."

"He took Bill home with him; he was a bachelor, and there was no one to restrain his benevolence. They had supper and talked together. The deacon found Bill intelligent and fairly well educated, and offered him employment. He was a builder in the neighborhood, he explained, and had a vacancy in the works. Bill gratefully accepted the offer, and began his new career on the following Monday."

"Months passed. Bill had changed wonderfully. He had forgotten his old habits and learned new ones. The deacon was delighted. Not only was Bill the best of his workmen, but he was the most regular attendant at the chapel. Bill longed for the jewels, and he worked hard because he knew that money would help him to get them. He at-

tended the chapel because while there he was near the jewels the seat he had taken being just twenty steps due north from the tree. At first he had meditated digging through the floor one night, but the chances of detection were great, and he had given up the idea."

Years passed. The deacon had become an invalid, and Bill practically managed his business. He was an important man at the chapel, too, and was often intrusted with a collection-box. One day the deacon died. Soon afterward it was known that, having no near relatives, he had left his property to his friend, William Jones."

"I see!" I exclaimed. "Bill!"

Blanco Watson shook his head.

"Bill was Bill no longer," he said. "He had become a man of wealth. At the next election of deacons he was one of the successful candidates. In future we must refer to him as Mr. Jones, and not as Bill."

"Mr. Jones was a most energetic deacon. He introduced new members, and he persuaded old ones to attend more regularly. He started a Young Men's Literary Society and a series of Saturday entertainments. He made the chapel the most popular in the district, and then, at a New Year's business meeting, he struck boldly for the jewels."

"The chapel was too small, he said, in the course of an eloquent speech. They must erect another on a larger site. There was but one such site in the neighborhood. They must secure it before others did. He himself would undertake the building operations, charging only what they cost him. He would also purchase the old chapel. The net expenditure need not be very great."

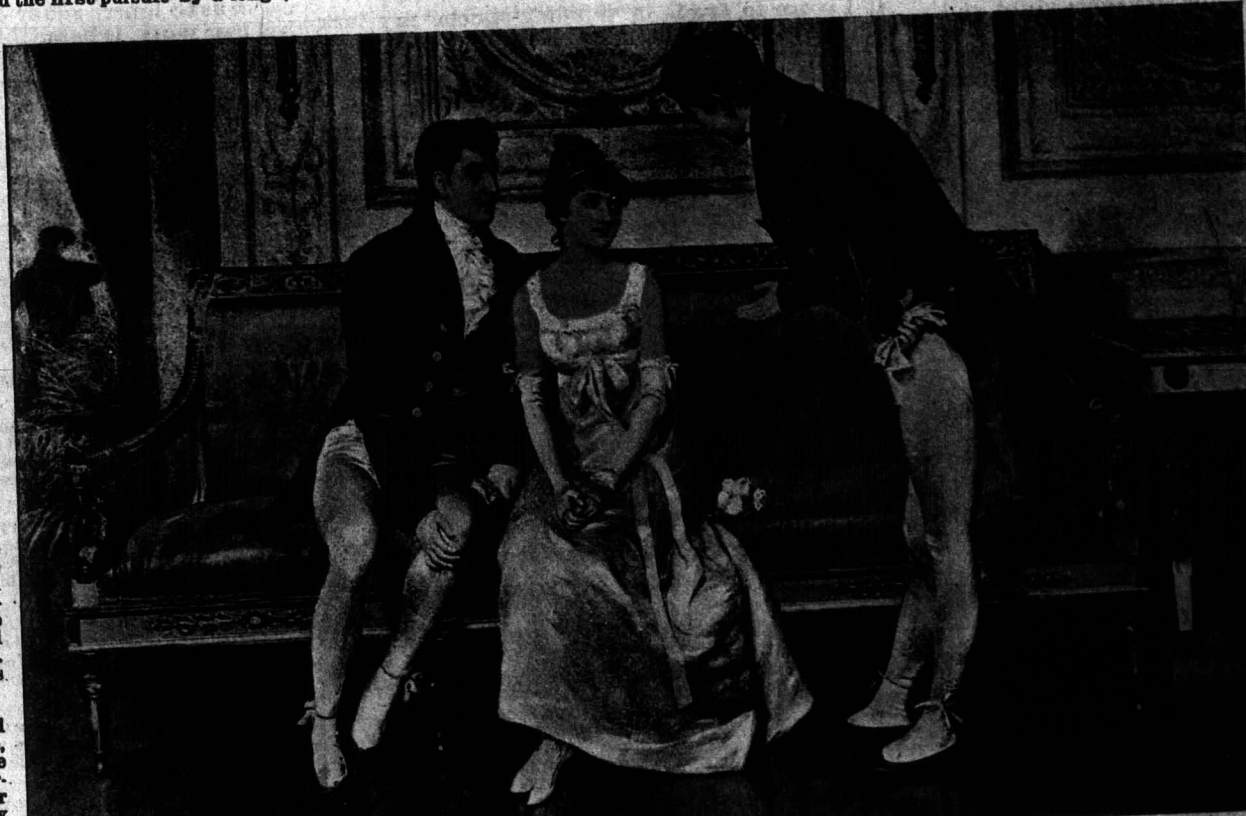
"The proposal was well received, and a committee, with Mr. Jones as chairman, was appointed to consider the details."

The Last Dance.

Just one more dance! This is the last.
The happy hours have fled.
Which shall it be—the maiden feels
A sudden thrill of dread.

Why should it mean so much to her?
The dance will soon be done.
What can it matter which she takes?
Her choice must fall on one.

Gay Harold pleads with easy grace,
"Fair lady, dance with me."
He talks so well and looks so bright,
He must succeed with me.



Yet Laura looks up in his face,
And feels, with instinct keen,
That words and manner are assumed
To hide a nature mean.

Poor Ralph, in eager, wishful tones,
Pleads tremblingly his cause.
She knows his heart is sound and true,
What need for her to pause?

The choice is made, a final choice,
For honesty and truth
Win trust and love, when falsehood fails.—
Young Ralph's the favored youth.

Their report was very favorable, and at another business meeting it was decided to carry out the proposal.

"The necessary funds were subscribed or guaranteed. Contracts were made with Mr. Jones. In the spring of that year the building operations were commenced, and by the autumn they were finished. The congregation removed to the new chapel. Mr. Jones purchased the old one at a high price, and entered into possession."

"And then," I said, "I suppose he got the jewels?"

Blanco Watson laughed.

"No," he said, "he did not. He broke up the floor himself, counted the steps due north from the tree again, and dug deeper. He did not find them. Then he tried other places; but, although he kept on until he had tried everywhere beneath the floor, he never found the jewels."

"Why, what had become of them?"

"I cannot say. It is possible that when the foundation was being laid a workman had discovered and appropriated them. Again, it is possible that there were two trees of similarly curious growth, and that the one outside the chapel was not the one Mr. Jones first saw. Again—"

"And what has the story to do with the public house?"

"But I can guess."

"Of course you can. Mr. Jones was very angry with the chapel members. He considered that, by false pretenses, they had led him into buying the old chapel dearly and building the new one cheaply. He resigned his deaconship, and in the new one he was to be revenged on them. He found one, then sought a way to be revenged on them. He built a public house—this on the site of the old chapel he had at so long."

"Too long," I remarked, after a pause. "Let us continue our walk."

"Yes," said Blanco Watson, rising from his chair, "we will."

Who knows but that we may come across the other tree of curious growth?"

"Or," I said, "a chapel member wringing his hands at thought of the public house."

"And," added Blanco Watson, as we passed out, "in the background Mr. Jones laughing at him."—*The Sketch.*

Correct Solution of the "Great Canadian Puzzle"

1. Canada.
2. Hudson.
3. St. Lawrence.
4. Tecumseh.
5. Hurons, Algonquins.
6. Newfoundland.
7. London.
8. Farmer's Advocate.
9. Lumber.
10. Picton.
11. Tadoussac.
12. Evangeline.
13. Natural gas.
14. Laurier.
15. Niagara Falls.
16. Lord Aberdeen.
17. Fresh water.
18. "The man who makes chaff of himself will be eaten by crows."

We regret very much that none of our subscribers have succeeded in winning the fifty dollars which was to be awarded to the contestant who sent in a full list of the correct words in our Canadian puzzle. Several sent in as many as seventeen numbers correctly solved. These lists were sent to Mr. West-

tervelt for him to judge their merits, the names being previously cut off. He has decided that the list sent by Albert McArthur, Atkin P. O., Ontario, was the best, and that those sent by Miss Flora Swain, Morris, Manitoba, and Mr. Francis Tuckey, Ferguson, Ontario, were the next best, being equally good. We consider that each is entitled to a silver watch. The gold watch is therefore awarded to the former and silver watches to the two latter, to whom we shall forward them with much pleasure. All those who are entitled to receive pins, and to whom they have not yet been forwarded, will receive them in the course of a few days. One of our correspondents wrote that he found the proverb a "sticker." We fancy others were of the same opinion, as more failed in answering it than any other number. We were struck

with the applicability of the proverb when we saw it in *The Princess* magazine of December 18th, 1897, published in London, England, but never had any idea that it would prove the most difficult. Most of the lists sent in were very creditable, neat, and well written, and although they may have been the source of a little trouble, we hope it was not unaccompanied with pleasure and profit.

Following are extracts from some of our letters referring to the gold-plated pins:

Please accept many thanks for the pins which my sister and I have received; they are very pretty. *Grand Valley, Ont. JESSIE BOURN.*

I am in receipt of your "pin." Accept my thanks. *Bristol Mines, Que. JOHN ROSS.*

Gentlemen.—Many thanks for the beautiful pin received this morning. I did not expect such a beauty. *Halifax, N. S. CHARLES McDONALD.*

We are pleased with the lovely pin you forwarded so promptly. *Kingston, Ont. MAUDE BARNARD.*

Why are there so many Smiths? Here is the explanation. At the time of the adoption of surnames every artisan whose work required the striking of blows on metal was known as a smiter or smith, and the community therefore had its blacksmith, whitesmith, goldsmith, silversmith, arrowsmith, and several others of the same character. The number of Smiths of the present day may therefore be readily accounted for, when we remember that each of the different kinds of smiths was as much entitled to the use of his trade name for a cognomen as any other artisan. John the blacksmith and John the coppersmith were both known as John the smith, an appellation which naturally resolved itself into the family name of John Smith.