

OUR BOYS AND GIRLS.

A STORY OF INVENTIONS.

Google Hennessy's first day in the uniform of an American District messenger boy was eventful. In the morning he visited three of the principal clubs in town, made the acquaintance of a millionaire, from whom he received his first tip, a dollar, and also made an impression on all with whom he came in contact by reason of his bright, clean, honest face, which was a contrast to the weary, dull-looking countenances of some of the boys who had been longer in the business.

In the afternoon he posed for a celebrated artist for twenty minutes and had his features hastily sketched in a painting of streeturchins which afterward became famous and was exhibited abroad. He carried parcels from a fashionable caterer's to a house on Fifth avenue, where an awning stretched across the sidewalk indicated that a reception was in progress. Then there were notes and flowers to deliver, a cab to be called and sundry small journeys that toward evening caused his feet to burn, for his mother, being anxious that her son should make a fitting debut in business life, had sent him forth in the morning wearing a pair of cheap brand new shoes, adapted to Google's new profession. The result was that he suffered much from this item of his attire, which, strangely enough, played an important part in his eventful day.

Google went home limping. When he reached the three tenement rooms where he lived with his mother, his first proceeding was to remove the offending shoes. His feet were swollen and burning, aching in every joint. Mindful of the evening's work that awaited him he admonished his mother that there was no time for doctoring, and he attempted to get on his old shoes, but his inflamed feet absolutely refused to enter the discarded footwear. Here was a dilemma.

To fall to return to night duty on his first day meant certain dismissal from a place that he had waited nearly a year to obtain. For it was about twelve months before that Google's teacher at night school promised to get him a place as a messenger boy. He was then selling papers and reaping a very small profit with very hard work.

Now he looked hopelessly at his feet and his heart failed him and his lip trembled. What should he do? It was then the wisdom of Google's mother proved equal to the emergency. She stepped into the bedroom and returned with a pair of her own knelt by Google and slipped them over his stockings. They went on softly and easily, and the boy sighed with relief as she but toned the cloth tops gently around his ankles.

He stood up smiling. His feet still pained him, but the anguish was over. He seized his cap and with a look at the clock hurried down stairs. This time he did so with a look at the clock, now pink, now green, now opal, but above all a clear exquisite blue, which it seemed to retain steadily for several seconds before it glanced off into other colors. Google advanced unconsciously nearer and nearer, his softly shod feet making no sound. His breath was held at a tense, almost suffocating, pressure. Suddenly the professor raised a white hand, the tiny bubbling light went out, and the thousands of bulbs flooded the wall broke into a magnificent flood of glory, every one drew a deep breath and then there was a general burst of laughter as the guests became conscious of the boy standing transfixed upon the floor, his eyes almost protruding from his head.

The professor smiled, showing white teeth. Then he advanced and took the box from Google, reading the inscription. "Now, here is another curious thing," he said. "I suppose you have all seen the ammonia gun made for the use of bicyclists in case of an attack by dogs? This fellow has improved on the original ammonia gun until he has contrived to have a weapon that is as effective in its workings, but as efficacious as a deadlier gun in rendering an opponent suddenly helpless. It is a contrivance, in short, by which you can knock a man down without hitting him."

The professor opened the box and took out a queer black rubber tube slightly trumpet shaped at one end. "This is different in construction from the bicycle gun," he said, "but it is admirably simple. A child can manipulate it and any woman could use it successfully, for it does not require any perfection of aim. The inventor of this says that in time this gun may be one of the best means of defense against footpads and tramps. He thinks that our police may be armed with them in time. Just step back a bit and I'll show you how it works."

The guests drew their pistol fashions and took aim into space. There was a click and a puff, then a flannel-shaped mist of ammonia that in a moment made the air so dense with its fumes that the women coughed and a window was opened. The men drew around the empty gun with interest. Google stood transfixed. He was living in an enchanted world and had forgotten all about his other existence. Suddenly he felt the touch on his arm, and looking up he saw the smiling face of Mr. Ozden, his benefactor at the club.

"Hello, my young friend," said the millionaire, "you are wide awake to things, aren't you? And you are hungry, I'll wager. Frank, this young man has been neglected."

He read the word laboratory, wondering what it meant. Then his eye caught an inscription in the corner. It read: "Oae doctm ammonia guns."

Here was a mystery. Like all boys he was interested in guns. But he had never heard of ammonia guns. He watched the package in a fascinated way. The man called the transfer station and he got out and climbed on the blue cross town car.

He asked the conductor about the location of the number and was surprised to find that the man seemed to know Mr. Frantz Thayer quite well and called him "Professor." He left the car before the gloomy looking building the conductor designated. Business houses were on each side of it, all closed up for the night. The lower floor of the building itself seemed like some sort of shipping place. Two cabs, the horses blanketed, stood at the door. One of the drivers told Google to push in the door. He did so half afraid, and confronted a man reading a paper beneath a flickering gas jet. Google showed him the package.

"Get in," said the man, pointing out a small box like elevator; "I'll take you up; it's on the fourth."

Google stepped in and the man started the car upward. There were dim lights burning on the floors they passed. When the car stopped with a jerk the man slid open the door and Google became conscious of the odor of flowers, the faint tinkle of mandolins and the sound of voices talking and laughing. It seemed rather like a dream to the boy when a man who looked like a waiter came forward and told him to sit down for a minute.

From the little circle where Google sat down, wondering much, he saw a picture that looked almost as though it had been taken from a fairy tale. There was a great high ceilinged room beyond the partition, along which a table was spread. Flowers and plik candle shades indicated that a feast had been in progress. Most of the guests had deserted the table and were gathered about a thin young man at one end of the room, who to Google looked like a magician.

A vast net of wires was stretched across the ceiling and there was throbbing somewhere of dynamos. The wall directly opposite the boy was studded with what seemed to him to be hundreds of incandescent globes that burned dimly now, so that the gorgeously gowned women and the men in evening dress clustered about the professor—for Google was sure the pale young man was the professor—might see a wonderful flame which he seemed to be creating and which riveted the attention of all as though fascinating them. The music of the mandolins tinkled from the distance, while the engines throbbed like an accompaniment of mighty cellos.

The professor was speaking. His voice, cultivated, clear and musical, was heard plainly, for every one was silent now, leaning forward in the half darkness to see the wonderful flame which danced upon a small table, behind which stood the professor. This flame, it seemed to Google, was more of a light than a flame—a bubbling, gleaming light, now pink, now green, now opal, but above all a clear exquisite blue, which it seemed to retain steadily for several seconds before it glanced off into other colors. Google advanced unconsciously nearer and nearer, his softly shod feet making no sound. His breath was held at a tense, almost suffocating, pressure. Suddenly the professor raised a white hand, the tiny bubbling light went out, and the thousands of bulbs flooded the wall broke into a magnificent flood of glory, every one drew a deep breath and then there was a general burst of laughter as the guests became conscious of the boy standing transfixed upon the floor, his eyes almost protruding from his head.

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The professor nodded to a servant, who placed some dishes before Google. But the boy still hung entranced on the professor's words. He crumbled a macaroon in his fingers as he heard the women saying what an admirable weapon the gun would be for maids or nurses who took their young charges through the park.

"There would always be time to secure aid," said a pretty woman in black. "Yet one can't ask a nurse maid to carry a revolver."

"Think of a thief in the night," said the professor. "A woman wakes and sees a burglar bending over her jewel case. Few women would have nerve enough to fire a loaded revolver. But this gun is comparatively noiseless and for the time as deadly as a pistol."

The pretty woman in black shivered as the cool air swept the last drifts of the ammonia away.

"It is frightfully cold," she said, "and I have only brought a cloth cloak."

"We can send for a warmer one," said Mr. Ozden. "I'll telephone to the house."

"The telephone is out of order," said the professor. "I'm sorry; but let me send one of the men."

"No," said Ozden; here is the boy he can take a note up to Mrs. Ozden's maid to send her fur cloak by the coachman when he calls for us."

Several pairs of eyes turned upon Google just as the mandolin music sounded again, and some of the guests began to walk back into the shadows of the great laboratory. Google rose to his feet as Mr. Ozden handed him a card with an address across it.

"You know where that is," he said, giving him a coin, "and I know I can trust you to deliver that message to Mrs. Ozden's maid."

"And here," said the professor, still smiling at the boy, "I saw that you were interested in the gun. I know that I can trust you with one also."

He handed one of the tissue wrapped tubes to Google, who bowed and went out on his soundless shoes to the elevator. He spoke not at all on his way to the street, but jumped on a car that was passing, having forgotten the pain of his swollen feet. Another transfer and he was walking up the steps of the house to which he had been sent.

The man who let him in read the card and said to the boy: "Step up to the next floor and give this to Mrs. Ozden's maid."

Google passed through a maze of marble armor and wonderful hangings the like of which he had never even dreamed of. He glided up the stairs like a wraith and paused irresolutely on the landing, looking about him undecided. Then he heard a clock chime softly and went in the direction of the sound. It seemed to the boy as though his feet were frozen to the rug upon which he stood as his frightened eyes caught the sight disclosed through the door.

The room was dimly lit and was like a great pluk sea shell, the walls and ceiling being tented over with soft silk. In one corner, bending over a dressing table, stood a man that Google had no difficulty in recognizing as a thief. From the table and its various receptacles the burglar was dexterously lifting jewels that shone in the pink light much as to the boy's bewildered brain, the magic light had done in Professor Thayer's laboratory. From below came a burst of laughter. The servants' hall was enjoying a party while the master and the mistress were away.

Google was never quite able to explain how he came to think of the gun safely reposing in his inside pocket. He had never been a particularly brave boy nor had he ever been a coward. The strange and unwonted events of the day and the night had keyed him up to a pitch of intense excitement that was hysterical. But through his youthful brain came the first signals of duty, duty to his new career as he saw it, for all day long he had been keenly conscious of a sense of responsibility. He did not know it at the time, but he was seizing an opportunity, and guided by some courage born of something within him he advanced on his soft shoes, the gun clutched in his cold hand.

The man was bent over a lower drawer in the dressing case. As Google reached his shoulder he looked up and in the mirror saw the boy's gleaming eyes, eyes that looked, as Big Leary afterward said, like those of a panther. With an oath he looked over his shoulder, and then the new invention had its first practical test, a test that made it afterward famous, for the boy and man fell over on the floor, the boy yelling as he saw the burglar's livid face looking up gasping from the carpet.

The maid, who had been asleep in the next room, sounded an alarm that rang through every corner of the house. It reached the party in the hall down stairs, where the private watchman and every servant in the house, except Mrs. Ozden's maid, had been decoyed by the ruse of a confederate and a case of champagne sent as a gift to one of the girls. The police appeared and Big Leary, one of the cleverest of thieves, who never touched anything but big hauls like this, was soon safely behind the bars.

It is true that Google's part in the transaction did not come out in the public reports. It was some time before that story was told, for Google was taken to the hospital with pneumonia the next morning, and he raved incoherently of blue and pink lights, magical guns and burglars. When the story finally was made clear and

Ozden, the railroad king, realized that the small boy with the big eyes was the hero of it he laughed and said he saw it in the boy's face when he came into the smoking-room of the club.

And the "New York Sun," which prints this apparently veracious story, adds that Google is no longer in the service of the District Messenger company. He has doffed his uniform and is learning to be an electrician in the laboratory of Professor Franz Thayer, the inventor. He had his choice of several careers, but the magical blue light still danced before him and showed him the way to his future.

CHATS WITH YOUNG MEN.

Our lives would present a grand record if we lost no opportunity to do good. "Some one has said never delay to do the duty which the moment brings, whether it be in great or small things. For who doth know what he shall do upon the coming day? Then let us try to do our best, for the very longest life is but a drop in the ocean of eternity, so let us live and love together while here on earth."

How to Attain Success in Life. There are many mistakes. Many are in the wrong place. Some are on the farm who should be in the counting-room; some are behind the counter who should be with the clergy.

Friends advise, but their counsels do not always harmonize. Ask God. The earlier the better. Thousands are like driftwood, moving without purpose or direction. God has a work and a place for every one. If you would make life a success, find it.

Needed to be Cut and Polished. "Alas!" cried a diamond to the wheel upon which it was being cut, "here I have been tortured for the last three days. What a misfortune it was that I ever came your way!"

"Say not so," replied the wheel in encouraging tones. "The last stone that came to me was so rough and dull that you could scarce tell it was a diamond; but when I had done with it, it was placed in a king's crown."

"A king's crown!" exclaimed the astonished stone, "and do you think that I shall ever adorn the brow of a king?"

"It is quite possible; but if not allowed to enjoy so great an honor, you may find some other exalted and brilliant position; but you will never see the glories of a royal house unless I do my utmost for you."

"Then grind away," said the gem, as it nerved itself to endure the trial. "I'll stand it if it means an increase of beauty and promotion."

The Cigarette Habit. The cigarette habit is growing day by day with the young. In fact, in now-a-days it is a rare thing to see youngsters even at the ages of six, seven and eight, who can't smoke the poisonous things. Many of them can smoke them with a certain air of independence and boldness that would quite astonish older heads.

In New York City a few days ago two boys were arrested for stealing thousands of cigarettes from a tobacco store. On being brought before the judge, one of them was asked the following questions:

1. What possessed you to rob all the cigarettes in the store? We wanted to have a smoke, as we had not one for several days, and as we have a craving for cigarettes, we thought it better to put up a supply for the future.

2. About how many packages do you smoke each day? Each of us smokes ten packages. This last answer, no doubt, must have set the judge thinking. In a few years these two youths will wind up by being sent to an insane asylum. Do you see what habit made them do? Boys, you who are given to the dangerous cigarette, break yourselves off from such a bad practice, and add to your vitality instead of taking away from it.

The Conrage. We make an unfortunate mistake if we let the failures and disappointments of the past cloud our horizon. Many lives are like century plants; they burst into bloom only after a long and tedious interval. The hard work, the patient endurance, the courage in bearing losses and trials, at length on some favored day bring forth their results. The man is suddenly overwhelmed at the transformation of his life in the fruition of long-cherished hopes. No one of us can tell when we are standing on the verge of such a crisis. Many a man, like Saul at Goliath, has become discouraged just too soon and lo! a little after he has committed himself to a false and weak policy the prophet has come and he finds that he has missed the prize that was almost within his grasp. No matter how dark and discouraging the outlook may be, have faith in yourselves and in the good providence of God and may this year bring you the fruition of your hopes, the transformation of life, which is as wonderful and yet as possible as the change which comes to the earth in May, when the warm rains and the mounting sun suddenly work the miracle of the spring time, when the cold and barren earth, as in response to the touch of an invisible wand, blooms with verdure.—Watchman.

Heroes or Valets? There is a world of sound sense in the reflection that "the utmost a weak head can get out of experience is an extra readiness to find out the weaknesses of other people." The critical

faculty as applied to others is frequently accepted as a sign of superior discernment. Most men are too ready to assume that the fault-finder really knows what he is talking about while, as a matter of fact, his sharp criticism often conceals the most superficial acquaintance with the matter. It is sometimes one's duty to criticize, and to criticize sharply; high standards, sound methods, and common honesty make frankness of speech imperative. But this kind of occasional criticism is a very different matter from the chronic habit of commenting on the weaknesses and failings of others into which too many people fall. This detestable habit brings its own penalty with it; for the critic who is always at fault loses his effectiveness, and the man or woman who gives it expression ceases to count save as a grumbler and cynic. Moreover, there is nothing so wearisome as the constant questioning of people's motives and the constant condemnation of their acts. A little criticism of this kind goes a long way; a very little more converts the cynic into a bore, a role than which there is no more humiliating known among men. There would be very much less of this kind of censoriousness if, instead of being accepted as evidence of keen discernment, it was regarded as evidence of shallow perception. For shallow perception is generally in the man or woman who is always seeing the weakness of others; usually an egotist—one who cares more for himself than for others, and whose moral nearsightedness prevents him from seeing anything more of the sun than the spots on its surface. "It is said," writes Goethe, "that no man is a hero to his valet. That is only because a hero can be recognized only by a hero. The valet will probably know how to appreciate his like—his fellow valet."

Rest and Recreation. That all work and no play makes Jack a dull boy is a proverb that has come to be applied only to children, for the reason perhaps that Jack is referred to as a boy, but it is true of adults as well as children, though not perhaps in the same sense. The tired business man needs change of occupation rather than rest or even play to enable him to recuperate. As astonishing amount of work is performed by men who find relaxation in some line entirely different from their ordinary occupation. The serious student whose brain grows weary with deep study may find relief in a light work of fiction or at the play. The popularity of some of the lighter forms of entertainment—farces, vaudevilles shows and comic operas—is doubtless due to the fact that they demand no thought, but help to drive away dull care and afford amusement and rest for a few hours. The serious drama, the lecture studies of art or of science afford similar relief, though of a different kind, to those whose daily work is mechanical and who feel the need of mental exercise. That which is work for one man becomes play for another. There is danger to the nervous organization where one persists in a single line of mental activity with no rest or relaxation except during the hours of sleep. To be mentally healthy business men should exercise in widely different things and exercise all his faculties. Business is of the first importance, and the daily task being done, everything at all related to business should be set aside for something entirely different—mechanical work, if the business is one that employs only the mental faculties; outdoor sports, light literature, amusements of any good kind.

Fortunate is the man of affairs who develops some kind of sad with which to occupy his mind in his leisure hours. It may or may not be useful in the ordinary sense of the term, but it will be useful to him if he shall do nothing more than keep him in mental health by affording him diversion from the cares of business.

Playing constantly upon one string wears it out sooner than if one plays upon a number, and there are many men who have worn themselves out when they should be in their prime by devoting their minds to one subject—usually money getting. Their program is to amass a fortune quickly and then enjoy life, but it is very seldom carried out. They may succeed in amassing the fortune, but find themselves broken in health or incapable of enjoying life except in the drugery of the counting-room. They have been rendered dull boys, in one sense of the term, because they have had all work and no play. It is better to make sure of the enjoyment of life while prudently taking care at the same time of one's business interests. And the way to do that is to seek rational rest and relaxation from business cares in widely different fields of mental activity when the office is closed, in-stead of carrying home one's books or papers for work over time.

Individuality in Business. Individuality counts for a great deal in business. Just as there are lots of people who can talk fluently who can not sit down to write anything without immediately becoming some one else and expressing thoughts, aims and ideas that are entirely foreign to their true nature, so there are in the commercial world many who do not do themselves justice for the same reason. Every business that rises above the ordinary portrays in many of its features the individuality of the governing spirit back of it. Somebody connected with the business has cared what other manufacturers or merchants in the same line thought about running such a business, but has followed his

own best judgment with implicit confidence that if the result wasn't successful it would at least be such as to suit his ideas as to how it should be conducted. The great trouble with the average man who copies the methods of others is that he very often gets poorer ideas in this way than he has himself, if he only sets his own mind in motion along the proper lines. After all, why should any one copy after some other fellow when he can create methods for himself which are more appropriate, more natural; that are more a part of himself? Of course, it is all well enough to look about you and try to learn by observation, but learning and copying are entirely different. Probably no shoe manufacturer who copied the styles of another ever made as good a copy as the original was, and the great trouble is that, after all, it is only a copy, and as such advertises the goods of the originator of the style more than itself.

There is room for originality in every department of a business. What if somebody else or a whole army of people have been in the habit of doing things a certain way, that doesn't make it the right way, or the only way, by any means. A business man should strive after correct originality as he would to find a priceless treasure, because it attracts the attention of the buying public as nothing else will. Originality in every sphere of life is at a premium, and though people may criticize it, they still pay homage to it. The men who have made great successes in business have been the originators. They have broken away from the shackles of conventionalism and have set themselves apart from the great mass of humanity, who are followers and not leaders.

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