

THE WESTERN HOME MONTHLY

Vol. VI. No. 4.

WINNIPEG, CANADA, APRIL, 1905.

PRICE { 5c. per copy.
50c. per year

TRAPPED



Written for The Western Home Monthly by Percy Ellsworth.

A few years ago, an event happened near the town of Minnedosa, which has not yet passed from remembrance, even amid the whirl of business in that vicinity.

One Sunday morning, when the Williams family, where George Allison was spending his vacation, returned from church, they found to their grief and consternation that their pet and watchdog, a large, beautiful collie dog, lay dead within a few feet of their door.

This unhappy affair caused many surmises as to the cause of his sudden death. They all knew that he had been well and in good spirits before they left for church. Then, they reasoned, what could have been the matter with him?

While each of the family were talking about the event, George, a no less interested observer, was scanning closely the region about the dog, and also cautiously looking at him. He made two discoveries; 1st, that the dog had struggled in his death agonies, which proved that he had not died naturally; 2nd, that the roof of the dog's mouth and its tongue were black. This he knew to be the effect of poison.

It was a very quiet meal that the people of the farmhouse partook of that day. An attempt was made to talk of something else, but the subject inevitably returned to the dog.

During the week that ensued, the household had seemingly settled down to the ordinary routine of life, and the event had faded into an unhappy remembrance.

Not so with George. His mind was almost constantly dwelling on that Sunday morning, and trying to solve the problem of the dog's death. He reasoned that surely not one was base enough to poison a dog unless some motive of gain was backing up the deed. Could it be that someone wished to have the undisputed right of the premises for a time? If so, what could their intent or business be?

George resolved to keep his own counsel for a time at least, and await coming events. He had a room to himself upstairs, the window of which faced the road. Looking out he could see the public road over which was a great deal of traffic each day. Two lanes turned suddenly in from the road to the farm; one with a border of trees on each side led to the house, the other led to the barn, near which was piled an indefinite quantity of stove wood.

One evening, after he had repaired to his room and had been busying himself with a "chemistry," he casually glanced out of the window. At that moment the whole mystery dawned upon him.

In Minnedosa George had a staunch friend and also a congenial spirit in a man as full of strength and vigor as himself. He glanced at his watch, and the next minute he had donned a bicy-

cle suit, and having left word that he was going to town, set off at a fair rate of speed. The journey was made in a short time, and entering one of the fashionable avenues of the town, he knocked at the door of a house. Soon

fifteen minutes, I'll be back here for you. I have some business down town."

Harry said "all right," and George started for the hardware store. Entering he asked for fifty yards of light but strong fishing cord and a small bell. Having received these articles, he sallied forth and he and his friend were soon on the road to the farm.

"Now, George," said Harry, "do, for land's sake, tell a fellow what's up. One would think by your face that you were a police detective."

George laughed a little and said, "Well, I'm not quite so important as that yet, but now we're out of hearing I'll tell you what I surmise. From



IN EASTER'S DAWN.

after he was shaking hands with his friend.

"Say, Harry, can you spend a few evenings in the country? I have what you may call a "wild goose chase" on hand, and I want you to help me out. The fact is, I expect some rare sport at the farm soon."

George then narrated in a few characteristic words the dog's death and his own observations. Harry was delighted with the thought of a "lark," as he called it.

"Why, I'll only be too glad to help you out, old man; I've been aching to have some sport, for things go slow in town, you know."

"Then, if you can be ready in about

what I saw to-night, I have good reason to expect that we will be visited to-night by thieves and I want to be ready to receive them. The second gate, as you know, opens in from the road, and then the wood pile stands to view. I mean to attach one end of this line to the gate and suspend the other with the bell attached to it through the window. Then if the gate is opened the bell will fall and—well you can see that the rest is with us."

Harry gazed in astonishment for a moment at George, and then burst out high in his praise. "How in the world did you think of it?" he exclaimed.

"Oh, that's simple," George said. "I

merely added two and two and found that the result was four."

By this time they had reached the house, and in silence they constructed the system of telegraphy which George had devised. Then when all their arrangements were complete, they lay down for some rest, none of the household being any the wiser of their movements.

Shortly after midnight, they were both awakened by the bell going "thump" on the floor. They jumped up and noiselessly donning their outer garments, stole from the house.

The scene which met their eyes on creeping cautiously into view was certainly harrasing. One (to them large) man was standing at some distance from the other with a shot gun in his hand, acting as guard. The second one was dexterously loading the wood.

George and Harry, though naturally brave, were inclined to frighten off the thieves. On second thought, however, they decided to risk a hand-to-hand encounter, so the two divided. George in silence crept around behind the man who was acting sentry. Then Harry deliberately walked up to the man that held the gun and said: "Say, mate, let me hold your gun for you, and you will have your wagon loaded sooner."

The effect of these words can hardly be estimated. The man dropped his gun and would have ran had not George suddenly advanced and thrown his arms around him.

"Grab the other fellow, Harry. I have this chap," George shouted, but when Harry turned to see where the "other fellow" was, all he could see was the dim outline of man, horses and wagon quickly disappearing in the darkness.

The victors then interviewed their captive and found that he and his colleague were bachelors who lived about four miles away. Their prisoner was so scared and rattled by his capture, that they were sure he told the truth. They drew some more very interesting facts from him, and then giving him some sound advice, allowed him to go, which he speedily did.

That morning the Williams family were greatly surprised by seeing Harry enter the breakfast room with George. Their astonishment was much greater on learning of the event of the night.

Mr. Williams did not put the case into law. The story, however, eventually leaked out, and after a few attempts of the thieves to deny the truth of it, they left the country for other parts.

As for George and Harry, they still have in their possession the only trophies of the evening, a string and a bell.

□□□□

In Japan the well-to-do have almost always in their houses one room called the "chamber of the inspiring view." Its essential is a beautiful view, but taste is catholic in Japan, and the delightful view may be a blossoming cherry tree, a glimpse of a river, a miniature garden, or only the newly fallen snow. In this delightful country they get up parties to visit the maple trees in the glory of autumn color, or the fresh, untrodden snow, as in our country one gives theatre parties and dinners.

WHEN WRITING ADVERTISERS PLEASE MENTION THE WESTERN HOME MONTHLY.