

the worst lesson you've got since Hector was a pup!"

Sandy didn't wait for words to blossom into deeds. Shaking the snow out of his sleeves, he arose to quit the spot. The roll in the snow had acted on him somewhat as a cold plunge. Except for the fact that his spine felt as though it were boring through the base of his brain, he was all right, and so he turned away from the railway tracks and started off.

All about him the sun shone painfully upon glittering white snow, and his tortured eyes shrank from looking further. Vaguely he wondered how he came to be in one place last night and somewhere else the next morning. These thoughts were vague, but within him there was one real sensation: his immediate need of drink. His ragged nerves clamoured for alcohol, as one dying of thirst clamours for water. Nothing else mattered to him, but whiskey he must have.

He was on a road now. A hard, snow-crusted road, with deep sleigh tracks upon it. Something within seemed to tell him that it would lead to what he needed. He looked neither to right nor left, but plodded on, with head bent and eyes half closed, to shield them from the glare. And yet, though he gave no glance to his surroundings, something seemed to tell him he was passing old, familiar places. The very grind of the snow beneath his feet seemed to say, "You have trod this road before!" Maybe he had, too, he reasoned; he had trod many roads in his day.

At times the jingle of bells warned him of an approaching sleigh, and without looking up, he would step aside. And so he went, and sure enough the instinct, or whatever it was, guided him correctly.

Arriving at an intersection in the road, Sandy looked up. Across the street was a small, country hotel. He was saved!

Sandy made for the bar, straight as the crow flies. Luckily he had plenty of money. In return for a bill, he received a satisfyingly large bottle. The obliging bar-tender drew the cork and placed the medicine in his shaking hands. There were ejaculations from among those gathered around the bar as Sandy quenched his thirst. To put away raw spirit as he did, without the flicker of an eyelash, was something to marvel at. The look he cast about him after completing this feat, was that of the true artist in a gathering of amateurs. So, restored somewhat to his former self-assurance, he lurched to the door and out into the sunlight.

Pox Sandy was himself again. He stood swaying on the door-step, calculating what to do next. He could face the glare of the sun better now, and the fact that the surface of things appeared dotted with tiny specks of yellow and blue flame, bothered him not at all.

Objects that he focussed his eyes on seemed to recede from his view, to shoot up to a great height, and again to dwindle until he couldn't make them out at all. The trees swayed naturally in the breeze, and so did the sidewalks and lamp-posts, and even the little shop across the street. The shop worried Sandy. He felt that somewhere, some time, he had seen it before, and knew some interesting things about it, if he could only think. During his life he had tramped through nearly every Province in Canada, and so it was not unlikely that wherever he was, he had been there before. However, the place refused to anchor itself and settle down, so he gave it up.

He found himself on the road again, walking. This was foolish, he thought, because he might just as well have gone back to the little bar-room, where it was warm. Still he continued, with eyes half closed as before; and, as it were, followed his own feet. He was soon on the open road, with the little village far behind. He knew that, because the wind was getting a better sweep at him across unbroken fields. And as he went he was still conscious of that feeling of familiarity. Always with eyes down, he would catch occasional side glimpses of the things he passed, snow-covered posts and fences, wind-swept trees—once he crossed a little bridge; and all these things seemed to cry out that he had known them at one time.

Once only did he raise his eyes, and brave the glare of the sun. Looking afar, he saw a little gable-roofed cottage. It had a cosy, warm look; smoke curled lazily from the one chimney, vaguely suggesting cheer within. Snow covered every up-turned plane of it, smooth and untrammelled, making the thing appear like some Christmas miniature. Sandy's gaze for one instant caught the little cottage as a picture, accurately focussed. Then it was lined in rainbow lights, it expanded, wavered, shrank and dissolved into a blur of fiery specks.

"You're gettin' them, Pox, ol' fella," muttered

the wanderer. "You're seein' things what ain't there at all, they ain't. You need—nother drink—brace y'up—"

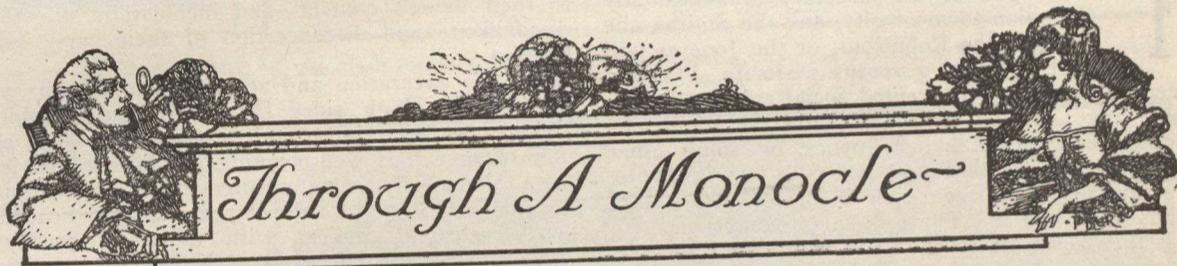
Once more the bottle was employed and on he went. As though on familiar ground his shuffling feet led him over the roadside ditch at the only point where there was a plank bridge, although buried from view. Through a break in the rusty hedge they went, finding a path on the far side. Down a long lane he trudged, as one who knew the way, around a bend, up a snow-covered gravel walk, and so on to a cottage door.

SANDY opened his eyes and beheld the door. He swayed on his heels wondering why he had come, and lurched heavily against it. Suddenly the door was opened and he almost fell inside. Then he recalled his wits, here was a game he had often played and he knew how to proceed.

"Lady," he whined, "can yu give—poor man, sumpun t'eat? Ain't had nuthin' fer two days—out of work. Can't turn 'um away at Chrish—sh—time, lady?"

The girl, who had opened the door, bade him come in and immediately left him.

"There is the most awful tramp you ever saw,"



Making the Law Useful

WE all remember the classic case of the man who was hanged for stealing a sheep. The punishment was such as overwhelming misfit for the crime that it defeated its own purpose. Juries would not condemn sheep-stealers, no matter how clear the evidence, when they knew that a condemnation meant that a fellow-being must suffer death for theft. That classic case—with some others—did its work; and punishments were moderated. The list of capital crimes was greatly reduced. And even to-day we have more capital crimes on the statute-book than we ever see on the gallows. Hanging for rape is practically repealed—though, even if I am not a suffragette, I should like to see some of these charges tried before a judge and jury of women. But it seems to me that that classic sheep-stealer did more than save the necks of his imitators—he has so frightened us off the idea of severe punishments that we fail to use them where they are quite proper and sorely needed.

THE result is that in a community which tries to leave everything to the LAW—and is mightily proud of this predilection—we seriously shorten the arm of the law and hinder it from reaching a number of offences which can only be prevented by making the risk greater than the profit. Moreover, we do worse—we frankly and supinely allow criminal acts to remain uncondemned by the law, because, we say, it would be utterly impossible to enforce any law against them. For instance, the other day I was discussing the abuse of cold storage. I was impressed by a statement from an "expert" that many articles of food, after they have been a certain time in cold storage, though they may look all right and smell all right, are in reality either non-nutritious or positively poisonous. This expert said that, in time, a cold-storage chicken ceased to be a chicken and became a mummy. I quite agreed with him; for I had myself been served roast mummy at restaurants more than once when my innocent order had been "chicken." And, in my wrath, I exclaimed—"The law should prevent this sort of thing."

"BUT how?" asked the party of the other part to this conversation; "you cannot very well brand a chicken with the date of its burial in the ice-house." "You might mark the box," I replied. My friend shook his head. "Too much room for fraud," he said. "You would need an army of inspectors to enforce such a law." To which I retorted by saying that if our old friend, the classic sheep-stealer who was unfortunately hanged, had only died in his bed, we could easily enforce laws of this salutary sort without burdening the community too heavily with the cost of an intricate system of inspection. All we had to do was to employ a few inspectors—or none—but make the

she said to the old man and woman seated before the fire. "He's out in the hall. He wants something to eat, say's he's had nothing for two days."

The man looked across at his wife.

"Get something ready for him," she said to the girl. "And ask him to come in here by the fire."

And so Sandy was ushered into the room, where he slumped down in a chair by the fire. The two drew away from where he sat, for he was an awe-inspiring sight. Sandy promptly went to sleep in his chair and slept until his host roused him to say his dinner was ready.

The wanderer was really hungry. He realized this more and more as the true excellence of this Christmas dinner forced itself upon him. He presided in solitary grandeur at the square table, while the old couple sat and marvelled at his stupendous greed. Sandy ate like a pig—no other simile will do. Everything placed before him was bolted down as though he never expected to see food again. He made no effort at conversation. Speech would have been as an insult to such a feast.

That dinner would stand out as a landmark in a hungry existence, and he meant to make the most of it. He succeeded, too. When he finally called

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punishment for every proven case so heavy, that no cold-storage man would dream of taking the risk. You say, for instance, to a retail butcher who keeps chickens in cold storage—"You must sell them before they have been chilled for a fixed time. If you keep them longer than that, and we catch you at it, we will fine you ten dollars and costs, and keep your name out of the papers." The cold-storage butcher will then sell them in time if he can; but he will be very much tempted to mix the labels or do something else, if he finds a lot of them on his hands after the end of the legal term—all looking fresh and fit. He thinks the law is a "fool law." The chickens are "all right." He eats them himself. And he can better afford to pay an occasional fine than to throw hundreds of dollars worth of good chickens in the discard.

BUT you go to Mr. Butcher and tell him—"If we catch you selling chickens which have been mummified, we will confiscate your entire stock of meat, or we will send you down to the Pen. for a year, or we will shut up your shop for six months, or something of that sort with 'boiling oil' in it"—and you will have no trouble in enforcing your law. The butcher would simply not dare break it. His very employees would get too dangerous a power over him if they could prove him guilty of a penitentiary offence. You would need very few inspectors to get respect for a law like that. It would almost enforce itself. The community would receive ten times as much protection as it could from an army of inspectors and a trivial fine; and it would not cost us one-tenth as much. Why not do it? No reason but the swaying carcass of that ever-lasting sheep-stealer. Yet here is an offence against the public health which can hardly be measured. How many people die mysteriously—how many people find themselves strangely weakened and so exposed to the inroads of deadly disease—what an immense amount of harm is done to-day by this "denatured food" which all who live at public eating-houses must put up with, more or less? Here is a serious, if unintentional, crime if there ever was one. The chap who sold "alum and chalk and plaster to the poor for bread" was a twin brother of the man who either adulterates food to its hurt or keeps it so long that its health-giving qualities are lost.

I HAVE taken this deterioration of food as an example; but there are a dozen other "crimes" which will occur to you, and which we either do not try to punish at all, or fail in trying, because they are so difficult to watch and detect. We pretend, for instance, that we cannot get honest dealing over the counter in goods regarding which the average customer must take the vendor's word for it. How are you going to find out?—we ask. Is every customer to take his purchase to a testing office? It would cost more than the whole thing is worth; and your vendor could afford to pay a