

A LESSON IN HONESTY

Mr. Ronald Curzon examined the pad of rings closely.

"I want something simple, yet charming," he said to the manager of the famous jewelry establishment of Sanderson & Co. "It is for a young niece of mine. It is her seventeenth birthday to-morrow."

The manager had not the least suspicion of the urbane, elderly gentleman before him. He only wondered what in the way of old stock he could work off on him. He knew that elderly gentlemen with pretty nieces were an easy prey.

"For a very young lady turquoise would perhaps be most suitable," he said, in deferential tones.

"You think so?" said Mr. Curzon. "Ah, what is that? Ten guineas! Let me look at it in the light."

"Certainly, sir—certainly!" replied the manager. Even if he had suspected the kindly old gentleman, he knew that the establishment was adequately protected. A commissioner was stationed on guard in the doorway, and with one touch of an electric button on the counter the doors were automatically locked.

Mr. Curzon examined the turquoise ring in all lights. His interest in his purchase seemed extreme. Little did this charming old gentleman know that the points of the establishment. He had observed the disposition of the wires which rang electric alarm bells directly the window-cases were forced open. He knew precisely how and where to cut them. His shrewd eyes had noticed that the door leading from the office to the shop was merely of wood, and not even iron-lined. He moved back a step or two to get a better light, and saw that the office window was only protected by iron bars.

"That will look on a yard at the back," thought Mr. Curzon. He had completed the arrangements for a little nocturnal visit to Messrs. Sanderson & Co. He had nothing more to do now.

"Very pretty," he said to the manager—"very pretty. I'll take this little ring. If it should be too large—my niece has very dainty hands—you will alter it?"

"With pleasure, sir."

"Ten guineas, I think you said." As Mr. Curzon produced the money he noticed that the manager was absorbed in watching a customer at the other counter. For one moment Mr. Curzon thought of annexing a ring or so, but he instantly put the idea from him. For the contents of the shop he might risk his liberty—that was another matter; but Mr. Curzon's great moral principle was this: "Never steal anything that isn't worth four figures."

The lady at the other counter was exquisitely dressed. For a moment Mr. Curzon was puzzled about her identity. Then he remembered that he had seen her dining at the Ritz. She was the Countess of Montford, the wife of an exceedingly wealthy peer.

"That is Lady Montford, is it not?" he whispered to the manager.

"Yes, sir. Her ladyship always deals with us," replied the manager, still intently watching the aristocratic customer. She was examining necklaces, and one of the heads of the firm placed string after string of pearls and diamonds before her.

"Immensely valuable stock you have here," said Mr. Curzon casually, as he waited for his receipt. "I wonder how you dare leave them at night—even in a safe."

"All the best goods are moved to the safe deposit down the street every evening," replied the manager. "That is the only place for valuable articles."

This was a sore disappointment for Mr. Curzon. He felt that it would not be worth his while to risk his liberty just for the commonplace stock.

"Ten guineas thrown away," he was meditating, when he saw something which, cool hand as he was, made him gasp with astonishment. Very dexterously—in fact, Mr. Curzon could not have bettered the ease of the action himself—the Countess of Montford slid a diamond necklace into her muff.

The head of the firm, who was attending to her, betrayed no consciousness of the action. The manager glanced down at Mr. Curzon, saw that he had seen, and whispered:

"Hush!"

"No," said the countess, in a disappointed voice, "there is nothing here that will suit me—nothing at all."

"I am exceedingly sorry, your ladyship," said the deferential partner.

"When you have anything new in the way of pearls or really good stones, you might let me know. But I am disappointed with your stock. There is nothing here that interests me to-day. Good-morning!"

The partner preceded Lady Montford to the door, bowing as politely as if she had spent a thousand pounds with him. With intense deference, he saw her into the waiting motor-car, and then returned to the shop. When he came back the

manager whispered a few words to him.

Instantly Mr. Sanderson came forward, and said:

"My dear sir, would you oblige me by stepping forward into my private office for a moment?"

Mr. Curzon, having a clear conscience and much curiosity, was nothing loth.

"Pardon me," said the jeweller, when they were alone, "my manager has hinted to me that you were a witness of a rather distressing episode."

Mr. Curzon's face assumed a mournful expression.

"I was horrified—quite taken aback!" he murmured.

"Unfortunately, I must let you into a sad domestic secret of one of our most aristocratic families," said the jeweller confidentially.

"Lady Montford is a confirmed kleptomaniac. We know it well, of course. It is a most distressing weakness. When she needs anything in the way of jewellery, she always patronizes us, and I regret to say—well, you saw for yourself what happened. We take no notice, but simply invoice the goods to her lordship. He invariably pays for them without the slightest demur."

"How very painful for the poor earl!" exclaimed Mr. Curzon.

"It is. Now, my dear sir, chance has made you the possessor of this very sad secret. May I ask you, as a gentleman, never to say a word about it?"

"I pledge my word of honor," said Mr. Curzon, "that no one else shall know of it through my means. It would be shocking if such an occurrence were generally known."

"You are indeed right. Our aristocracy is the bulwark of the State," replied the jeweller. "I thank you very much for the honorable way in which you have acted. I assure you that I am indebted to you for the great delicacy with which you have behaved. I hope that you have been suited with what you bought?"

"Your manager was most obliging about the small purchase I was making—merely a trifling ring for a present to a young niece. In fact, it was almost too small a purchase with which to trouble a firm of your standing."

"We shall be always delighted to do business with you, sir, however small the transaction. The firm is under an obligation to you. Good-morning, and many thanks!"

"And I am under an obligation to the firm," meditated Mr. Curzon, directly he was outside the shop.

He walked briskly along the side streets till he came to a small printing establishment.

"He turned into the shop."

"I want fifty cards at once, please. I'll wait for them. It's most annoying to be without a single card upon one. Ah, the name! Well, 'Mr. James Sanderson,' in the centre, and in the bottom corner put 'Sanderson & Co., Bond Street.'"

"We could send a boy round with them—it's not far," said the printer.

"No, I'll wait. I've got to make an important call, and I must have a card."

He waited till his cards were printed, paid for them, and then took a taxi to Berkeley Square.

He stopped the taxi outside a great mansion there, told the driver to wait, and then said haughtily to the footman who answered the door:

"Her ladyship at home! I wish to see her at once on most important business."

The footman looked condescendingly at Mr. Curzon.

"There is my card," said that gentleman; and with the card he slipped a sovereign into the servant's hand.

"I'll see, sir, if her ladyship is at liberty," said the footman politely.

"I thought she'd be in," reflected Mr. Curzon. "If I know anything of women, she'd go straight home to try the necklace on."

In a moment the footman returned with a stately butler.

"May I ask, sir, what your business is? Her ladyship sees no one without a definite appointment."

"Pardon me," said Mr. Curzon, drawing the butler to one side.

"You see that I am Mr. James Sanderson, of Sanderson & Co., the jewellers. By an unfortunate error, her ladyship has been given a necklace of inferior quality. I wish to apologize, and correct the error."

He slipped a sovereign into the butler's hand as he spoke.

"Another when I have seen her ladyship," he murmured.

The butler seemed unconscious of the coin. It almost seemed to be absorbed into him, rather than taken by him.

"In such a case," said the butler solemnly, "I might take the liberty of showing you up. Will you kindly step this way, sir?"

He led Mr. Curzon solemnly through a number of passages, and tapped at a room door.

"Mr. James Sanderson, your ladyship, of Sanderson & Co., Bond Street, on most important business."

Mr. Curzon bowed deferentially to the countess.

"I must apologize for this intrusion, your ladyship, but my partner, Mr. Charles Sanderson, has made an almost inexcusable error. The necklace you purchased from us

this morning is not genuine, your ladyship."

"I bought nothing this morning," said Lady Montford angrily.

"By an error which I can't excuse, but only regret, a necklace of imitation stones was placed amongst our stock of genuine ones. That necklace, I regret to say, was sold to your ladyship this morning."

"I tell you that I bought nothing at your shop, Mr. Sanderson."

"Your ladyship forgets, no doubt. I cannot wonder that so trifling a matter should have slipped your memory. But the good name of our firm is involved. I tremble to think what the Earl of Montford would say if he knew that we had sold what it purported to be. I could never look his lordship in the face again."

"I have told you twice that I bought no necklace to-day."

"May I point out to your ladyship that I allude to the necklace you took—on approval?"

Lady Montford paled as Mr. Curzon made a significant pause at the word "took." She tried to face his steady gaze, but failed.

"Oh, that!" she said carelessly. "I forgot that."

"I am so glad that your ladyship recollects it, if you will kindly return it to me, I will send the genuine necklace around immediately."

Lady Montford left the room, and in a moment or two returned with the necklace.

"I am deeply indebted to your ladyship," said Mr. Curzon, bowing low. "I hope you will pardon my intrusion, but I had to consider the reputation of our firm. The correct necklace shall be sent this afternoon."

"You need trouble to send nothing," replied Lady Montford angrily.

"I trust that your ladyship is not offended. I am indeed deeply mortified that this misfortune should have happened. On receipt of a telephone message, we should be delighted to send round anything from stock."

And, still apologizing, Mr. Curzon bowed himself out of the room.

"This must be worth two or three thousand," he thought as he seated himself in the taxi. "I'll get across to Rotterdam with it to-night. I wonder whether the earl will pay up as usual when he gets the invoice from Sanderson & Co. I wonder whether he will believe his wife or the jeweller when she swears she sent the necklace back again! Well, well, it's a comfort to have given a charming lady a lesson in honesty, and incidentally to have made a little profit for myself!"—London Answers.

TOO GOOD TO USE.

A Fireman's Wife Would Not Let Him Use Uniform at a Fire.

Before a justice, in a small English town of the south coast, there appeared, not long ago, a wife who accused her husband of assault and battery. The man admitted that he had seized her and thrown her down, perhaps roughly, yet not without making sure she would fall upon a soft place. But he had done so, he declared, in defense of his person and his honor. He was a fireman, and she had tried to keep him from going properly appareled and equipped to a fire.

The fire company of his village, he explained, was composed chiefly of volunteers, whose uniforms were kept in their homes and kept in repair by their wives, a task that no wife performed more faithfully than his own; in fact, she was too careful of it. When a night alarm was given for a fire in the quarter between the glue factory and the wharves, and he had jumped up to dress, she had positively refused to allow him to put it on, declaring that smoke and cinders were bad enough, but when it came to salt and glue and fish-scales as well, it was beyond all reason: his oldest trousers, and a pea-jacket were plenty good enough. He had remonstrated and she had vituperated.

"But I didn't lay a finger on her, your honor, not till she 'eaved a little at me 'ead when I grabbed for me boots," he protested, "and then it come to me 'twas no less than a public juty to chuck 'er on 'er bed where she couldn't hinder; and what I sees to be my juty I ups and does. So I chucked 'er."

Were duckings still the accepted punishment for vixenish wives, she might have been awarded poetic justice at the nozzle of a hose. As it was, the case ended amid general laughter, in the discharge of the aggrieved husband, and a reprimand to the too careful wife.

In our own country, and in a community by no means rustic, a little incident but a few days ago proved that it is not only the better halves of firemen who can be too finicky.

The fire-wagon, responding to a still alarm for a chimney fire, was met by the son of the house, who eagerly snatched an extinguisher, while the firemen were unreepling the hose. But the eagle eye of the chief was upon him.

"Here, here!" he cried, authoritatively. "Don't meddle with that extinguisher, young man. Why, it's only just been polished!"

Idria, a small town in Austria, has a feminine fire brigade, who wear uniforms and helmets.

HOME

PTOMAINE POISONING.

In some foods bacteria in the early stages of their action leave no disagreeable or unhealthy effects, so far as yet proved. Meat is in some measure ripened by bacterial action, and the "gamey" taste given meat by "haaging" comes in part from the same cause, though in both cases the changes are chiefly due to the action of ferments normally present. It is not easy to draw the line between the harmless ripening processes and the bacterial changes classed as decay, but if the bacteria are allowed to grow without hindrance the time comes when the food, either animal or vegetable, attacked by bacteria breaks up into a loathsome mass.

The food may become dangerous even before it shows outward signs of decomposition, for the bacteria may, as they feed upon the proteins, give off substances known as ptomaines, hardly to be recognized without laboratory apparatus, but some of which are very poisonous to man. Certain apparently mysterious cases of illness have been traced to such causes, and milk, fish, meat, cheese, baked beans, ice cream, and other foods have all been found responsible for "food poisoning."

It is no uncommon thing to hear that a large number of the persons attending a banquet were taken violently ill within a few hours after, all with very similar symptoms. In some cases the illness has been of brief duration, in others it has continued for days, or even resulted in death. In one instance the offending food may have been lobster salad, in another cold-storage chicken, in still another ice cream. These severe cases of wholesale poisoning generally occur in the summer and after a very heated term.

It is not known under what conditions these peculiar poisons are developed in foods; we know only that they are the result of bacterial action not so advanced as to give warning to the senses. It is a safe rule to eat very sparingly of foods which are liable to such changes in hot weather, and especially where the methods of preparation are not known.

WITH LEFTOVER FATS.

Fats that are derived from the cooking of bacon, ham, chicken, beef and other meats should be kept, each in its own receptacle, to be used for different purposes.

Home rendering of both suet and leaf lard has its advantages, because the product is generally superior to what can be bought for the same price.

Both suet and leaf lard require cooking in order to loosen the fat from the tougher membrane that holds it. For this purpose the material is cut in small pieces and covered with water and allowed to cook slowly for some time until no more water remains and the scrap has turned to a light brown.

A better method for suet is that used by German housewives, who economize on butter by the use of beef fat more than do Canadian housekeepers. The suet is cut in small pieces and covered with water, in which it is allowed to soak for a day, the water being changed once in the time. It is then drained and put into an iron kettle with one-half tea cup of skim milk to every pound of the suet. It should be cooked very slowly.

When it has partly cooled it should be carefully poured off. This fat has no unpleasant taste or odor, and in many recipes may be substituted for part of the butter. Some cooks add a pound of leaf lard to four or five of the suet; this makes a softer fat, as lard has a lower melting point than beef fat.

An old-fashioned method of clarifying fat from the soup kettle, or from cooked meat, so that it may be used in the kitchen, is to add the cold fat to a liberal quantity of cold water, then heat slowly and let cook for an hour or more. When cold, the cake of fat is removed and the lower portion, which will contain the small particles of meat, etc., should be scraped away and the white, clean fat saved. If the flavor or color of both are not satisfactory the process may be repeated several times. Another method which is often recommended is to cook a number of slices of raw potato in the boiling fat.

When an ice chest is used, fat in small quantities may be easily kept sweet for cooking purposes. If lard is rendered at home in quantity sufficient for a long time, it should be kept covered in tins or earthen jars, in a cool, dry place.

SOME GOOD RECIPES.

Coffee Cake—Half a yeast cake dissolved in a half pint of water; two tablespoonfuls of sugar, a pinch of salt, flour for stiff batter. Beat all together well and set to rise in.

WHITE FLOWER FETES.

How Large Sums Are Secured for Fight Against Consumption.

On different days and dates, according to the choice of the local committees, the "white flower fetes" instituted in support of the national campaign against the white plague (tuberculosis), and commencing about the middle of April, are held in all the cities, towns and townships of the empire. The white flower fete held here realized a sum of 40,000 rubles, or about \$2,500, writes the St. Petersburg correspondent of the London Standard.

The public sale of the white flowers, chiefly artificial, is entrusted to young women and girls of attractive appearance and address, all clad entirely in fashionable white costumes. Each fair flower seller is accompanied by a gentleman, who carries binoculars, a looked, sealed and slotted money receptacle and a reserve supply of white flowers.

To each flower is attached a pin, and this enables the lady to attach the floral decoration quickly and deftly to the breast lapel of the donor's coat or to a lady's corsage. It is difficult to resist the sweet blandishments of many of the charming flower sellers, and often, indeed, they do not proffer the flowers but nimbly and smilingly step up and attach the decoration to a gentleman's coat. This is done so frequently that one saw quite a number of persons with coat breasts adorned profusely with a dozen or more white flowers.

Other fair flower sellers slowly traversed the streets in florally decorated equipages or motor cars, and here and there were special and very ornate kiosks for the floral distribution. To me it seemed that the citizens of both sexes regarded it as a matter of duty and honor to wear the white flower decoration. To be sure, the day was well chosen, as it was the birthday fete of the Empress Alexandra Feodorovna, and everybody was holiday making afoot. In an hour's stroll through the chief thoroughfares and along the Nikolai boulevard I did not observe one person—man, woman or child—who was not buttonholed with the white flower.

In Russia half a million people die every year from consumption. In St. Petersburg, Moscow, Kiev, Odessa, Kharkoff and about a score other centres in which the "white flower fete" has already been held this season an aggregate sum of about \$50,000 has been realized.

DIAL WILL MAKE SEA SAFE.

New Device Will Show Object Within Eight Mile Radius.

Samuel Spitz, a ship fitter employed at Mare Island, California, bids fair to become famous as an inventor, as he has patented an "aerial dial" which he asserts will show at night any vessel or object at sea within a radius of eight miles.

The objects, according to Spitz, are thrown on the dial by means of aerial waves. Spitz has been experimenting with the so-called "aerial dial" for months, and says that when he has the apparatus perfected he hopes to be able to see even into the hold of a vessel by means of the radio apparatus.

The inventor has one of the dials and a wireless apparatus erected at his home in his city, and has been able to "look around a corner," so to speak, and discern objects in his basement while seated in his laboratory.

LOGIC STUDY.

The Professor—"Richard said: 'A horse, a horse, my kingdom for a horse!' What does that suggest?"

Bright Pupil—"If he'd give that much for a horse, what would he give for an automobile?"



WHAT HO!

First Wanderer—"Sav, Willyum, what yer done to yer thumb!"

Second Wanderer—"Smashed it shutting the planner this morn."