

Circumstantial Evidence

Mr. Robert Jinx was in a temper. As he stamped about in his study waiting for the dinner-gong he reviewed the situation. Steven Collier, his agent, was coming to dinner, and had sent a little note ahead, asking for a private chat. Jinx suspected that both his wife and Betty knew of the request.

But he had determined that Betty was not for his agent. Collier was capable enough, he had to admit that; but he was a younger son, with his own way to make. Betty, going to marry a title, and give them all a lift. That had been his idea from the day he had given up brewing and bought the estate.

"Where was the fellow's note?" The muttered exclamation left the squire's lips as he jerked open a drawer. For some seconds he stood staring into it, as if he doubted his eyesight; then slowly he placed his fingers in his waistcoat pocket and drew out some gold.

At sight of the coins his expression changed from amazement back to anger. Here was matter for explanation. His hand went out to the electric bell-push.

"When Mr. Collier arrives show him in here!" he ordered.

"He has just come, sir," returned the butler.

Steven Collier strode into the room with a smile on his fresh-colored, good-looking face.

"Shut that door!" commanded the squire. "You were working here this morning after I left."

"Until twelve-thirty," Steven replied frankly.

"And since?"

"I caught the two o'clock train to London to keep an appointment with Merryweather."

"When I left here this morning there were ten sovereigns in this drawer," said the squire slowly.

"They've vanished!"

"Is that so?"

"Steven was not smiling now. 'Amongst them was an Australian coin, rare enough to be remarkable.'"

"Yes."

"Look at this!" The squire held a coin in his fingers. "Grimes, the station-master, gave me in change for a note this evening."

"That's Sydney Mint right enough. You think it's the same coin?"

"The coincidence struck me as strange. Grimes told me it was tendered in payment of a fare to-day by you!"

"You think—"

Steven started forward at the implication, to pull himself up short as if shot, while gradually the color died in his face, and a curious look came into his eyes.

"Well?" The tone was harsher still. "Will you explain how you got the coin?"

"I cannot."

The older man's face was purple with wrath.

"Very well," he snapped; "you will hand me your keys, and get out of this as quick as you can. I've no use for an internal rogue!"

His outburst was cut short by the sudden opening of the door and the entrance of Miss Betty, a delight to behold.

At the sight of the mottled face of her sire and Steven's strained expression, the laughter died in her roguish eyes. She guessed that dad, who was invariably bad-tempered after his turn on the Bench, had evidently anticipated the talk which should have come after the coffee and cigars.

Steve had palpably been warned off; but she would soon alter that.

"Quite tragic!" she said, in her usual airy manner. "You mustn't take him seriously, Steven. He's always bearish while waiting for the gong. There it is now! He'll be perfectly happy presently."

The squire puffed out his cheeks at the flippancy.

"Come on, Steven," she went on, slipping her hand through his arm. "For once you shall take me in in style."

"One moment!" Her father threw out a clenched fist. "Collier will not line; I don't choose to sit down with a thief!"

"Thief!" Betty swung round and faced him with flashing eyes. "Are you quite mad, father, or can't you see that this gentleman is Steven Collier?"

The storm burst at that. In a few sentences she had the facts.

"I've given him the chance to explain," raged the irate autocrat. "Ask him; perhaps he will answer you!"

Wide-eyed, the girl gazed from the coin in her hand to the set, white face of her companion.

"You think—you think that Steven would take—Qh, it's infamous!" she cried.

"The coin was with the rest. It was presented by him."

"Infamous!" she repeated. "Tell him so, Steven."

Her hand went out again to rest on the young man's arm. He made no move. For some seconds she remained staring at his unsmiling face; then, with a little forced laugh, she turned to her father.

Her quick wit had divined that, if Steven could not explain, there was good reason for his silence.

"I cannot allow Steven's loyalty to

put him in a false position," she said. "Fact is, father, I paid him back a sovereign I'd borrowed. You've got to apologise."

"You!"

The squire's fists came down on the desk with a thud, while he stared at her as if she had suddenly gone demitted.

"You! Do you know what you are saying?" he roared.

"My monthly allowance has such a way of melting, and I haven't forgotten the last time I approached you between pay-days," she laughed.

"I say, you people, d'ye know you're keeping us?"

Bob Jinx, a reckless young fellow, shot out the protest from the hall. It tailed off into a whistle as he flung open the door and noted the signs of disturbance.

"What's the shindy?" he inquired.

"Oh, nothing of much consequence," returned the girl, with an ironic laugh. "Dad has simply charged Steven, here, with being a thief."

"Rot!" ejaculated the graceless Bob. "Come on and feed."

Again the tale was told by the furious magnate.

"The coins were in that drawer—ten pounds," persisted Mr. Jinx. "They vanished."

The scamp coolly held out his hand for the coin.

"You really think Steven would take your beastly money, guv'nor? This is unworthy! Old Steve? Good lor!"

"I tell you he was the last man to begin Betty."

"I should think so!" Ready-witted Bob had sized up the situation. "As a matter of fact, guv'nor, I gave Betty a couple of sovs. this p.m.—been owing for some little time. We both seem to have been discharging our debts."

"You!"

"Old Steve knows you'd kick up no end of a row if it came to you that either Bet or I had been obliged to borrow. There you have the explanation!"

"You! Do you know what you're saying?"

The lad shrugged his shoulders.

"We may have incorrect ideas of common property in our family," he said; "but the second generation is sound enough on honor."

Again the opening of the door cut into the outburst.

"Now, what in the world is the matter with you all?" The portly, jolly-looking lady came into the room with her two hands upheld. "Bob, didn't I tell you? Why, Robert?"

Her gaze had been held by the purple visage of her frenzied lord.

"It's just as well you've arrived, mater," drawled the scamp. "The guv'nor has given old Steve the kick-out!"

"Steve is a thief!" put in Betty.

"Pinched ten pounds from that drawer this mornin'—among 'em, this," added Bob. "The guv. gets in change from Grimes this evening. Grimes tells him Steve tendered that identical coin for a ticket this afternoon."

"Steve won't explain," Betty interjected.

"And the worthy magistrate says he's guilty," Bob threw in.

"He doesn't believe that I gave Steve a sovereign this afternoon," stated Betty.

"And he won't have it that I paid Bet two pounds I'd borrowed," asserted Bob. "Not likely, is it? Old Steve here is a thief!"

"What nonsense are you talking?" gasped the lady. "Robert, what is it all about?"

Again the angry man told his story of the missing money, of Grimes' story and Steve's silence, and then of the tacit confessions of both Betty and Bob. But at the finish, he dropped into a chair with his mouth still open.

The wife of his bosom was laughing.

"What a to-do about nothing!" she said. "I needed some ready cash to pay a—"

"You?"

"The mystified man jumped up from his chair as if he had found a bent pin.

This was too much. First Betty had led him to think that she had taken the missing money. Then Bob had gone a step further and insinuated that he had "borrowed" it to pay a small debt to Betty.

And now his wife came forward calmly, and suggested that she was the culprit. It was beyond him.

At last he regained sufficient self-control to splutter:

"You, Maria—you took this money?"

"The drawer was opportunely not locked," returned the lady cheerfully.

The gaze of the squire travelled from one smiling face to another, until it finally rested on that of Steven.

"I owe you an apology," he jerked out savagely. "But, hang it, sir, you will admit the circumstantial evidence—"

"Say no more, sir, I beg," said Steven.

"I shall say something if you don't come to dinner," laughed the squire's lady. "Steven, your arm!"

"I believe you wished a little—er—chat?" observed the squire an hour later.

Graceless Bob flicked the ash from his cigar and lifted himself.

"Leave you to it," he said.

"Mother, you're a real brick!" he jerked out, as he strode into the drawing-room.

"Why did you do it?" she asked, with a tenderly reproachful look.

"Positively had to have some oof to-day," he stated. "Promised to clear a debt. Asked Steve to oblige until pay-day. Said he hadn't it on him, but would be pleased when he got back from town. No good to me."

"While he was out of the office I found the drawer. Seemed an easy thing. Thought I could slip it back when Steve stumped up, before the guv. missed it. Asked old Steve to change me a sov. just before he sprinted for the train. He got the Sydney Mint; and that explains it. He wouldn't give me away. But what I want to know is, why the dickens you had to butt in, Bet?"

"Steve looked like losing his dinner," confessed Betty demurely.

"And something else," bantered Bob.

"Not at all," she laughed. "As it happens, this has probably prejudiced the case in his favor, don't you think?"

"Bet you they stroll in arm in arm," laughed the scamp, as he dropped on the piano-stool, and proceeded to rattle off "The Wedding Glide."

The performance was interrupted by the opening of the door.

"I win!" he said, with a grin. "Chorus repeated fortissimo!"—London Answers.

A PARADISE FOR ANIMALS.

Ignore Man Because Natives Do Not Kill or Eat Them.

Pierre Loti, in his book on "India," repeatedly describes the fearlessness of animals in that country. He says: "My room was never closed, neither during the day nor the night, and the birds of the air made their home with me; sparrows walked on the mats that covered the floor without even heeding my presence, and little squirrels, after an inquiring gaze, came in, too, and ran over the furniture; and one morning I saw the crows perched on the corner of my mosquito net."

Describing the enchanted wood of Oodeypore, where are wild boars, monkeys and a number of birds, flights of turtle doves and droves of parrots, he says: "Flocks of superb peacocks strut up and down among the dead trees, running with outstretched tails, the wondrous sheen of which looks like a spirit of green and incandescent metal. All these animals are free and unrestrained, yet their demeanor is not that of wild animals but of birds, for in these lands, where they are never slain by man, the idea of fight does not animate them as it does at home."

This respect for animal life is not confined to the Buddhists or Jains; the sentiment is of much more ancient origin. Pierre Loti tells us that the horrors of death and slaughter, the sickening display of carcasses of animals are nowhere to be seen, for the people of Brahma do not eat anything that has ever lived. "In the place of such exhibitions we see heaps of roses plucked from their stems, which are used in the making of essences, or simply to be woven into necklaces."

HIGH PRICES IN ITALY.

Many Food Staples Dearer Than in France or England.

The high cost of living and particularly the price of coal is becoming a subject of grave concern in Italy as other war winter approaches. Due to continued excessive freight rates by sea many staple food articles are dearer in Italy than either France or England. Despite a special treaty with England for cheaper freight rates to be obtained by the loading of ships, sugar is selling at 20 cents a pound and can be bought only in small quantities for household consumption from day to day. Coffee sells at 50 to 70 cents a pound, according to grade.

Though Italy is a heavy producer of wines, a table wine that once sold at six cents a quart now sells for 14 cents and is inferior to the old six-cent grade. Beer is sold at 14 cents a quart; milk at 10 cents. Good butter is 55 cents a pound.

Coal that before the war sold at \$10 per ton now sells at \$50 and the price may go higher as winter comes. Last winter it was \$30 to \$40 per ton. Italy hopes to import 750,000 tons from the United States for industrial uses this winter.

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THE POLICE REPORTS SHOW AN IMPROVEMENT.

"No Treating" Is the Feature of the Prohibitory Rules Enforced.

It is now possible to form some notion of the results of the measure adopted in the British Isles to prevent excessive alcoholism from reducing the national efficiency in the prosecution of the war. At the outbreak of the war an effort was made to accelerate the progressive reduction of the number of licensed vendors of alcoholic liquors, by an amendment to an old law of 1904. By the end of 1914, however, the number of "saloons" had been reduced by only 623, leaving Great Britain and Ireland still 111,000 licenses, to which must be added about 9,000 clubs, many of which existed chiefly for alcoholic purposes. Meanwhile convictions for public drunkenness had actually increased, especially among women.

It was not till it was seen that a further imposition of excise tax upon the trade would merely meet with violent opposition without accomplishing the desired result, that the central liquor control board was established to apply the amendment to the Defense of the Realm Act, of May 19, 1915, which empowered the government to control the sale of liquor in all districts where munitions are manufactured, troops stationed or in transit. The first duty of the board was to define such areas, and by a process of trial and error they gradually extended their boundaries until by the end of February, 1916, some 30,000,000 of the population of the islands had begun to live under the new restrictions.

Restrictions on Traffic.

The restrictions imposed are:

1. Limiting the sale of spirituous liquors to two and a half hours, 12 to 2.30 p.m., on five days of the week and prohibiting it entirely on Saturday and Sunday.

2. Limiting the sale of malt liquors and wines to the five or six hours between 12 and 2.30 p.m., and 6 and 9 or 9.30 p.m. the week round, practically the hours coinciding with the midday and evening meals.

3. Forbidding the sale of liquor to be taken off the premises, entirely on Saturday and Sunday and after the middle of the afternoon on other days. This last applies only to saloons; "liquor stores" may sell for "off" consumption in accordance with rules 1 and 2.

4. Absolute prohibition of treating; this is enforced even in the bona fide clubs.

5. Extension of all the above measures to clubs generally, in order to make impossible evasion of the law by the mushroom variety of such institutions.

6. Forbidding the sale of spirits less than 25 per cent. under proof and allowing the dealer to dilute to 50 per cent. under if he wishes.

Temperance Restaurants.

The board has established a large number of temperance restaurants convenient for munition workers, and has encouraged the saloons in establishing facilities for the sale of eatables and non-alcoholic beverages, by allowing them to sell these during the hours prohibited for strong drink. But it is by pushing the establishment of canteens in the factories themselves that the board has done most to establish the habit of rational refreshment among the working classes.

The board is empowered to acquire either temporary or permanent possession of any saloon in the area under its control, and it has been deemed advisable to do this in the case of about fifty. Compensation is usually arrived at by amicable agreement with the licensee. This system has been found less efficacious than the establishment of industrial canteens.

Drunkenness on Decrease.

As to the general result of all the above methods of control the board has called attention to the following figures. In London and vicinity the daily average of convictions for drunkenness, which was 1,301 in 1914, had fallen to 1,077 during the first half of 1915, and to 603 during the first eight weeks of 1916. For the whole of England and Ireland the

average of 2,034 for 1914 had fallen to 940 by March, 1916. In Scotland the average of 1,434 for 1915 had become 794 by the same date.

But the board does not attach more than a relative significance to such figures, realizing that they are merely indicative of a tendency, rather than conclusive as to the efficacy of the various phases of control that have been applied more or less tentatively, and always first and foremost for specific and immediate war purposes. As to what has been accomplished in this particular direction the testimony of the Admiralty, the Army, the Council, the Board of Trade, the commission of police in various districts throughout the country, and of the medical profession and manufacturers generally—in fact, all those in close contact with the industrial life of the nation—agrees that the controls adopted have been marked in their effect on the public health and industrial output of the nation.

GERMAN EMPIRE LOSES HOPE.

Food Shortage and Prolongation of War Depresses People.

The London Times prints a narrative of conditions in Germany by an educated woman of German birth, recently allowed to join her husband in England, who says that the food shortage in Germany is not really serious in the country, but that in the cities and towns the problem grows more difficult.

"Life there is very hard," she writes. "The very poor and many in better circumstances have been compelled to draw on their savings. There is some jealousy in the towns because the country population gets better and more varied food."

"If rations are further reduced, I do not know what the poor people will do. Those with little money get bare enough to eat now. When I left Germany there was no general alarm over the war, although everybody was eager for peace. It was never believed in the early days that the war would go into its third year. The dragging war and the food shortage together are having a depressing effect."

"The belief that Germany cannot be defeated is not yet seriously shaken, but there is no longer any real enthusiasm for the advertised victories. The people are getting suspicious. The Jutland battle and the entry of Rumania produced a gloomy effect, for the people had been told continually that Rumania would join the winning side."

"People in Germany realize that the Somme is worse than any previous battle and what they hear from soldiers home on leave makes them very anxious. The soldiers speak of the terror caused by the British artillery and also say that the English and French flying men give them no rest. A German officer was even permitted to say in a German newspaper 'flesh and blood cannot stand the bombardment of the allied batteries much longer.'"

The narrator was in Germany when the Zeppelin was brought down at Cuffley. She heard little discussion about it and says that it was firmly believed in Germany that great damage was done in London. The more intelligent Germans, however, now discount what they read in the newspapers about the raids. They are convinced that the British do not always admit everything and feel that the German reports of the damage done by the raiders are often only surmise.

THE ORKNEYS IN PAWN.

Were Transferred by Denmark to Scotland in 1468.

The Orkney Islands, says Pearson's Magazine, do not really belong to Great Britain in the sense that they were ever ceded by treaty or acquired by conquest. They were simply transferred by Denmark to Scotland in 1468, in pledge for the payment of the dowry of the Princess of Denmark, who was married to James III., King of Scotland. In the deed of transfer, which is still in existence, it is specially mentioned that Denmark shall have the right to redeem them at any future time by paying the original amount of the dowry with interest to date.

There is no likelihood, however, that Denmark will ever attempt her right of redemption, because sixty thousand florins, the original amount of the dowry, plus compound interest for 448 years, would amount to perhaps a million pounds, and that is a bit more than the islands are worth.

We haven't much use for misers, but it is far better to freeze on to your money than burn it.

PATROLLING IS DANGEROUS SPORT

THE WORK CAN ONLY BE CARRIED OUT AT NIGHT.

Sometimes a Scout Officer Gets Mixed Up With Exasperating Results.

Patrolling plays a prominent part in trench warfare. The sporting instinct peculiar to nearly every Briton causes him to undertake this dangerous work with unbounded enthusiasm. Indeed, so seriously do some divisions apply themselves to it that they would be grievously offended if one spoke of the ground separating their own trenches and the hostile ones as "No Man's Land." They regard it as their own particular territory.

Owing to the proximity of the opposing trenches patrolling can only be carried out at night, and when very dark great difficulty is experienced in preserving a right sense of direction. The trenches twist and turn so deceptively that when certain landmarks are invisible it is very easy to lose one's bearings (says a writer in the London Daily Mail). On such occasions it is well-nigh impossible to distinguish the enemy's lines from our own.

Consults His Compass.

Information of a certain nature being required about the enemy's trench an officer volunteers to scout the position.

"Going down on all fours he creeps cautiously along, frequently skirting shell-holes which he is now able to locate with his hands. Though he has endeavored to keep in the right direction, after a time he begins to wonder whether he has not lost his bearings and decides to consult his compass. He is saved the trouble, however, by a Very light, rocketing some distance down the line, which shows the faint outline of a trench about fifty yards ahead."

Not a sound comes from the trench, and the fleeting glimpse which the flicker of a far-away flare gives him shows no movement either. If only he can get through the wire unseen he believes he can crawl unheard up to the parapet.

"Halt! Hands Up!"

Desperate though the undertaking is, he grips his revolver and crawls to the wire. With difficulty he wriggles under the outer strands and creeps forward inch by inch. With every movement forward his hopes rise higher. Then his quick ear detects a movement in the trench, followed immediately by a gruff challenge.

"Halt! Hands up!"

The wire prevents him lifting his arms, but, able to use his tongue, he pronounces a certain word—as only a Briton can—with such extraordinary gusto that it probably saves his life.

With natural exasperation he forces his way through the remaining wire and enters his own trench.

"One should always—er—creep under one's own wire when—er—returning from a patrol," he remarks naively to his men. "It's—er—good practice."

Not Many Checks in France.

In France the checking system so well known in this country is hardly used at all. Practically all transactions are settled by passing bank notes from hand to hand. Now the Banque de France is urging a more general use of checks.

Trouble is never particular about hitting below the belt.

TO END CATARRHAL DEAFNESS AND HEAD NOISES

If you have Catarrhal Deafness or head noises go to your drug-gist and get 1 ounce of Parmit (double strength), and add to it 1 pint of hot water and 4 ounces of granulated sugar. Take 1 tablespoonful four times a day. This will often bring quick relief from the distressing head noises. Clogged nostrils should open, breathing become easy and the mucus stop dropping into the throat. It is easy to prepare, costs little, and is pleasant to take. Any one who has Catarrhal Deafness or head noises should give this prescription a trial.