

# An Independent Reporter

Paul Frederick stood in front of a Park row cafe usually denominated the Second Press Club. He was smoking a huge cigar that with the cocktail he had just purchased within had consumed his entire capital. The fact that he was absolutely without funds did not detract from his appreciation of the aroma of the Havana. The situation lacked the charm of novelty. Frederick was too independent to submit to the petty rules governing the office. This was his third "vacation" in four months. Now, with his money all gone, he looked down the street at the Globe office and wondered whether Carson, the city editor, was ready to take him back.

As he looked two men came out of the entrance to the Globe. One ran round the corner in the direction of the Press Club. The other started up the street also on the run. When the latter saw Frederick, he stopped abruptly. Then he came forward slowly, Paul taking no apparent notice of his approach. He ranged alongside with an evident effort to appear unconcerned. "Hello, Paul!" he cried. "Have a drink?"

Frederick looked up with an air of surprise wholly at variance with the interest with which he had regarded the approach. "Why, hello, Harrigan!" he cried cordially. "No, thanks. I don't want a drink; just had one." He blew a cloud of smoke in Harrigan's direction and mentally congratulated himself that he had been able to afford a good one.

Freddy Harrigan sniffed appreciatively, and his face fell. "Say," he remarked casually, "if you don't want a drink I can give you a tip. You go see Carson quick, and I think he'll take you on. He needs a man, and I'm glad I saw you."

Frederick grinned cheerfully. "I believe you are glad you saw me, Freddy," he said patronizingly, "also I appreciate the value of your tip. You run back to the office. Tell Carson you found me smoking a perfect. I'll be here in front of Oscar's for the next twenty minutes. Now, scoot."

"Oh, I say," retorted Harrigan, "you needn't be so independent. Here, out of the goodness of my heart, I offer you a drink and give you a tip. Then you turn round and call me a messenger boy."

Frederick patted him on the back. "You're a good copy reader, Freddy, but you're too poor a liar to make a good reporter. You and Johnson came out of the door with much haste. Johnny sneaks around to the Press Club. You start up here, but break to a walk when you see me. You make a casual play. You've got the price of two high balls and want to blow it. If you've got a quarter this late in the week, Carson gave it to you for a bit. If he staked you, he wants it, and wants me bad. Now, run on and don't forget to tell him I'm still smoking up."

Harrigan went briskly back to the office. Frederick went on smoking, concentrating his gaze upon the crowd idling in the June sunshine and watching the tunnel workmen in city hall park.

The smoke served as a barometer to Carson, who came up the street. Frederick could smoke anything from cutty to the best of Cuban leaf. Between the two lay a hundred shades of financial expression. When he smoked a pipe, he was tractable. The better the cigar the less amenable was he to discipline.

Carson clapped him on the back. Frederick turned. "Hello, Carson!" he exclaimed. "So you did want me, eh?"

Carson stamped impatiently. "Don't waste time fencing. I need you or I would not have come after you. Do you suppose I can chase the rod every time I want a new man? How much money have you?"

"Enough to buy smokes with. What more can I want?"

"The St. Paul leaves in forty minutes. Get on board. J. H. Philbrick, the head of the new copper trust, is on the ship. It is supposed he wants to get English capital. If you can get the story, Fenton, our London man will meet you at Southampton. Have the story ready for cabling. You do that, and I'll see you get your job back. Now, run for it. Pay your fare, and Fenton will make good."

"Haven't got the fare, only expenses," said Frederick.

Carson looked blank.

"Sneak it!" he said, brightening.

"Use my card and tell the purser I will make it all right with the steamer people."

"All right. Send it by Fenton, so I can square up before I leave the steamer. They might hold me in pawn, you know."

Carson laughed. "All right, but for heaven's sake get away. You'll miss the steamer."

Frederick's whistle woke a sleepy cabman under the city hall trees. As he came across the car tracks Paul turned to his companion. "Got any small change for the cab?" he asked. "All I have is one fifty dollar bill."

Carson thrust a small wad of bills at him and bundled Paul into the vehicle. "American line pier double quick. Goodby, Frederick."

Within the cab Frederick smoothed out the bills. There was \$9. Two for the cab left a capital of \$7 for the trip. He was sorry he had boasted of that fifty.

About 4 o'clock that afternoon the purser of the Ft. Paul was working over his passenger list when Paul sauntered in.

"I want to introduce myself as Paul Frederick of the New York Globe," he announced. "No," as the purser picked up a passenger list, "you won't find my name there. That's why I'm here. Mr. Carson, our managing editor of the evening edition, found it necessary that I should sail on this steamer. As I saw him on the street and we had no time to go back to the office, a man will meet me at Southampton with my passage money. Now, I want a good berth and, if possible, a seat at the table with Philbrick. You fix me out, and I'll give you a send-off in the Globe that will make your hair curl like a kid glove on a hot stove. Have one?"

The purser bit off the end of the proffered cigar as he reached for the plan of the dining saloon. Presently he looked up with a smile. "I guess we can fix it," he announced. "I can put you at the right of Miss Philbrick. Here is your card and I will instruct the table steward. By the way, I can give you a stateroom near the Philbricks on the promenade deck. No, no thanks. I'm only too glad to oblige the Globe. Drop in on me any time. I can give you plenty of good stories."

Paul went back on deck with a self-satisfied smile. He was only sorry that his table seat was next the daughter instead of the father, but she might be a good way of reaching the old chap.

At dinner he quite forgot to be sorry. Miss Philbrick had bewitching blue eyes and a smile that made copper trusts seem of small importance. He congratulated himself that here was the chance to combine business and pleasure.

That night in the smoking room he borrowed \$5 from the purser and won forty. The next day success still favored him.

"I could make a nice little pile this trip," he said to himself, "for I am staying in luck, if I did not have to give so much time to Philbrick and his daughter."

Whether the latter occupation was business or pleasure he did not trouble to explain, even to himself.

All was bustle in the Globe office. It was just after 12, and the night editor was standing by the telegraph desk. Fenton, the head of the London office, had cabled that the St. Paul was due at her dock by 1 in the morning. Allowing for the difference in time, the story, if Frederick had secured it, should be coming in. At the adjoining table the operator was reeling off small paragraphs. Suddenly he looked at the editor.

"Here it comes," he said quietly. "The cable office is calling." And he reached for a fresh pile of paper.

The night editor leaned over his shoulder then to read the first few sentences. Then he rushed to the speaking tube leading to the mechanical department. "Save two columns on the first page," he called to the makeup man. "Frederick's story is coming in full." Then he lit a cigar and went back to the telegraph desk to see that the cable got away quickly to the copy readers. Rapidly the operator took down the long dispatch, which told in condensed form much of the plans of the copper magnate.

It was the first full story that had been printed. Finally the operator marked the tailpiece which indicated the end of a story. Then he laughed as he reached for a fresh sheet, and this is what he wrote: Carson, Globe, New York:

Story scoop. Am guarding Philbrick from other boys. Got story and won the girl. Engaged to Miss Philbrick. Smokes on me.

"Well," laughed Carson the next morning as he read the dispatch, "I guess Frederick made a double scoop."

### Superstition on Farms.

"Superstition is more prevalent among the American people than is generally supposed," said a book agent, "and even the intelligent farmers are, to a certain extent, afflicted with it."

"I remember asking a farmer 60

years old, a man of more than ordinary intelligence, the owner of 1,000 acres of fine land, well stocked, and who had several thousand dollars in bonds and other securities, why he did not build himself a better house. The one he lived in was old, small and dilapidated, a relic of the days when he was poor.

"'Afraid to,' was the reply. 'Afraid of what?' I asked. 'Well, you see, I have always heard that when an old man builds a new house he never lives long to use it.'

"I laughed, but he was perfectly serious, and I found that in that neighborhood the superstition was generally believed in.

"Another saying was common in the same locality, 'The man who plants a tree lives to enjoy its fruits.' The belief in these sayings was shown by the number of poor farmhouses and the number of fine orchards in that neighborhood.

"'Seed corn shelled at night generally grows best,' is another saying frequently used in the corn belt. A farmer's son suggested that it was invented by the old men as an excuse for making the boys work at night.

"'Things planted by the dark of the moon produce the best roots,' is so generally accepted as true that vegetables like potatoes, turnips, beets, carrots and onions, are planted by the light of the moon by few people. Many scientific people believe in this superstition.

"The farmer who refuses water to a traveler's horse will see his own live stock suffer from thirst before the end of the year' is a belief so common in some localities as to insure courteous treatment to all travelers.

"Some farmers will wring the neck of a hen if she crows. They say a crowing hen brings bad luck to the farm, and, as I heard one old farmer remark, 'sets the wimmen folks a bad example.'

"'Borrowed eggs always hatch' is a saying probably invented by some stingy man as an excuse for borrowing, but it is so generally believed in some neighborhoods that a regular system of borrowing and lending is carried on.

"These and hundreds of other superstitions are so generally believed in that they govern the customs of communities to a surprising extent."

### Seguin Falls Homicide.

Parry Sound, March 27.—A report of a serious affair which occurred near Seguin Falls a few days ago has reached here. A lumberman named Samuel Cooper, who has been working near Seguin Falls during the winter, some time ago showed signs of being demented. He has, however, been considered a harmless character.

Lately his case became more pronounced, for he went around amongst the farmers of the neighborhood under the delusion that he had purchased large timber limits, and was making a tour of inspection. After walking around all night he went to the house of Thomas Hooper, with whom it is said he had had some little trouble before. At Hooper's house, it is alleged, he attempted to go upstairs. Hooper told him his wife was ill, and wished him to go out of the house. Cooper then said he was God, and if he but touched her she would recover. Persisting in his efforts to get upstairs, it is said Hooper attacked him with an axe.

Two other men who were present, whose names are given as Clair and Bannister, took part in the fight. It is said that six or seven serious wounds were inflicted on Cooper, the insane man, and that he was also shot in the leg. The following day he was taken to the hospital at Huntsville. A telegram from there yesterday stated that Cooper was dead. District Constable Hanna, at the instance of Crown Attorney Haight, has been despatched to Seguin Falls to arrest Hooper and the others who took part in the affair.

### Concerning Pope Leo.

Paris, March 22.—The news is regarded here as significant that F. Marion Crawford, who is writing the official life of Pope Leo XIII., has established himself in his Italian home at Sorrento and has made no plans—as in former years—to visit America during the summer months.

All France, in common with the rest of the Christian world, rejoices to hear that Pope Leo XIII. enters upon the twenty-sixth year of his pontificate in the enjoyment of his full mental powers and of physical health far superior to what was intimated from the Vatican early in the winter.

At the same time those who are in communication with the Pope's household have small hopes that the Holy Father's release from the pains

of rapidly increasing decrepitude is more than temporary.

During his labors Mr. Crawford has had several audiences with the Pope. The archives of the Vatican have been open to him and all the other resources of the church, and its leaders everywhere have been at his disposal. Accordingly, the entire Catholic world, when deprived by death of its beloved and venerated head, will expect to find in this biography a full and authentic account of the life and works of Leo XIII. and the history of the church during his time.

Paris is always interested in incidents in the Pope's daily life. The celebration of the twenty-fifth year of his reign and the gratifying improvement in his health have caused anecdotes concerning his daily life to circulate more widely than ordinarily.

### Could Happen in Dawson.

"Aha-a-a," growled the man, slapping his forehead at the lights. "I have her in me power at last. Aha-a-a!"

This was the cue for the heroine to enter and give a start of horrified surprise at discovering him with the history of her past life in his hands. But she did not enter.

"Aha-a-a!" repeated the villain once more, while he looked anxiously off the stage.

Still no heroine.

"Aha-a-a!"

At this point the stage manager slipped into the wings and hoarsely whispered: "You'll have to aha-a-a four or five times more, Bill. The star has mislaid her shoe horn and ain't dressed to come on yet."

Job printing at Nugget office.

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