

IN SWELL SOCIETY.

It was midnight, and a few of the boys employed on the editorial staff were sitting around telling stories until the rest of the fellows had finished their copy and were ready to go to bed. The conversation drifted to some of the experiences the boys had had in securing exclusive stories and how in many instances duty overcame all other scruples, and a story was written with the hand and brain, while the heart cried, "No—no." The society reporter had been listening attentively to some of the experiences related, when he said:

"I will tell you one of my experiences in that line, which would have made a most elegant story, but would have wrecked her whole life. One afternoon, some time ago, I was about 5 o'clock, and I had one more place to go, and that was to a reception given by Mrs. Thrane Mower, at her beautiful home on the swell street of our city. As I was ascending the steps the door was opened by a colored servant and I entered. The rooms were entirely deserted, and I thought probably some mistake had occurred, and that there was no reception to be given. I was greeted with the odor of flowers, with which the house was redolent, and then I noticed the arrangement of the furniture and saw that guests were expected. I gave my card to the servant and asked him to give it to Mrs. Mower, and to say that I would only detain her a moment."

"When he returned he said that Mrs. Mower would see me in her private sitting room upstairs. I followed him down the long hallway, whose polished floor was covered with rich Oriental rugs, and then mounted the stairs, the surface of which shone like glass. At the head of the stairs was Mrs. Mower's room, and the moment I entered I knew that something was wrong, and I eagerly wished that there might be so that I could have a good story. Mrs. Mower, arrayed in an elegant gown of shimmering white satin, embroidered in silver, was standing in the center of the room, her face as white as her gown, and her eyes shining as brightly as the diamonds she wore. She tried to appear at ease, and when I entered she motioned me to a chair, and she seated herself on a divan. It was an effort for her to remain quiet, for her foot was beating a nervous tattoo, and she was tearing her delicate lace handkerchief to shreds. Impatiently she asked:

"What is it you wish?"

"Have you not issued cards for a reception to be given between the hours of 4 and 6 o'clock?"

"She tremblingly bowed her head in the affirmative."

"Where are your guests?" I inquired.

"She pointed to a heap of letters that were nearly all the same size, and it could easily be told that they were regrets. I was determined to get at the bottom of this strange freak of society, and still I was touched by the despair of that beautiful woman. She looked at me appealingly, and said:

"I know you are wondering what is the cause of this, and that you, as a newspaper representative, will find out the reason, and my name will be on everybody's lips before twenty-four hours have passed. The only reason I wished to see you for was to plead with you to be merciful. I have no one to turn to. The three ladies who were going to assist me in receiving are my guests from out of the city, and I know they are together discussing me and wondering why society has suddenly turned a cold shoulder to me. No one in this whole world. The Four Hundred are all your friends when the horizon is glorified by the light of the sun, but the moment the sun is hidden under clouds society turns her back. Alas! my sun is concealed, and I am an outcast from society of contempt for society women and their ambition. So have I, I feel sorry for that beautiful woman, who lived only for society, who probably had never done a deed of kindness in her life, and I argued with myself whether she would not be a better woman if she had something to live for besides social triumphs."

"Tell me about it, Mrs. Mower," I said, "and I promise you I will help you in any way I can. It is as you say, if you won't tell me, one of your invited guests will."

"I know it," she answered, "and for that reason I will tell you the truth. I thought my position in society would warrant me in many liberties that others would not dare to take. Last summer, while in Europe, I met a handsome young man, to whom I became quite attached, and after I returned home I announced to Mr. Mower my intention of inviting him to visit us. My husband asked me what I knew about him, and I told him that I knew nothing whatever of him, but that he was travelling the same as I was and that he came from a good family. I considered that quite sufficient. My husband and I never crossed each other and never quarrelled. I dispatched my invitation, and he accepted with alacrity, arriving a few days after his letter of acceptance. He went everywhere with me, and, as you know, hardly a week passed that I did not entertain him, giving musicales, teas, dinners, "at homes" and receptions in his honor. Of course, I could not explain to my friends how I met him, and merely said his family and mine had been friends for years. He always seemed to have plenty of money and the most exquisite flowers were placed on that table, and it needed no card to assure me that they were from R. Reginald Thorne. Mornings we would drive or go shopping or calling, and sometimes remain at home. He said he was passionately fond of jewelry, and he would sit for hours looking at my jewels. I would bring my jewel box in here and laugh at his interest in my jewelry. I had several sets of diamonds and rubies that belonged to my mother. The settings were old fashioned, and I never wore them, but thought that some day I would have the stones reset."

"There seemed to interest him immensely, and he used to say, 'Don't ever have these reset—you have plenty of others—keep them as they are for heirlooms.' One afternoon at a reception we attended a lady lost her pocketbook. She had laid it on a stand in the hall while she adjusted her hat, which had become disarranged in the crush. When she turned to pick up the pocketbook it was gone. No one had been near her except her society friends. She quietly went to the hostess and told her

what had happened, and also said she lamented the loss of the book, as she had four \$100 notes in it, and had intended doing some shopping that afternoon at a jewelry store. The pocketbook had contained a very valuable diamond ring that she desired to have fixed, as the setting was loose. The hostess was nearly ill at the occurrence. She begged that nothing be said of the affair, and promised that detectives would be hired to ferret out the culprit. The other ladies began to miss bracelets, pendants, hair ornaments and fans and expensive handkerchiefs. There was a great deal of excitement over the theft, and every one was frightened to fear the newspapers would hear of it. Detectives were hired, out of no avail. Reginald was terribly shocked, and said that he was surprised that anything of that sort should occur. At a tea about a week ago Reginald seemed ill at ease and complained of not feeling well. There was a stranger present who mixed with the guests, and still no one seemed to know him. The hostess told me he was a mixed detective which she had hired to protect her guests from the thefts that had occurred so often. Several ladies had whispered to me that they had lost a card and pocketbook case, a diamond pendant, a gold watch and one tortoise shell comb set with an emerald of great value. That comb has been the envy of many ladies, and the owner naturally felt grieved at losing it. As usual, when the thefts occurred there was an under-ripple of excitement, and the detective was very closely watching Reginald, who was conversing with some ladies. Reginald soon came to my side and said, "Really, Mrs. Mower I am fearfully ill, and it you have no objection we will go." I looked at him and saw that he was very pale. As we were leaving the room I saw him stagger, and before I could cry for help he had fallen to the floor. Several ran to his assistance. One gentleman removed Reginald's tie and another unfastened his vest.

"As the vest fell back several ladies screamed, and no wonder. In the lining of his vest could be seen the edges of two handkerchiefs that had been stolen that afternoon. The gentleman who had opened his vest I had not noticed in the excitement, but I saw he was the detective. His top of his hand in the lining of the vest—the lining had been fixed like a large pocket—and from its depths procured all the stolen articles of the afternoon. Merciful God! I shall never forget the agony of that day. However, no one wanted him arrested on account of the scandal it would cause. There was nothing left for me to do but to have him carried to my carriage. He was unconscious when we arrived home, and my cookman and hired man carried him to the house and to his room. After restoratives had been applied he regained consciousness. He came to this room shortly after and as he looked at me he said, 'I know it all up. Are they going to arrest me?' I answered no, but that he must leave immediately, before my husband arrived, or I would not answer for the consequence. In a couple of hours he returned from his packing, and, standing by the door, said, 'Good-by, Mrs. Mower. I am a wretch, but I cannot go without saying farewell. I have told you the truth about my parentage, so that will never cause you grief.' I did not say good-by, and with one long look he turned and a few moments later I heard the front door close, and I knew that R. Reginald Thorne and I would probably never see each other again. My jewel box stood open and I hastened to see if my jewels were still safe. I carried some of them to the light, and saw that the stones had all been substituted for others that were not worth their weight in brass. He must have taken them one at a time and had the stones removed and others put in their places, knowing well that I would never miss them. In his room a telegram was found dated New York, saying: 'Have sold everything that you sent for a good price. Have kept half the proceeds and send you checks for balance.' Then I understood what he was doing. He frequently sent to a 'friend' in New York. But the most horrible part of it all is that society blames me. What shall I do to regain my old position?"

"What do you think of that, boys? And do you know what we did? When people send regrets they simply enclose their card in an envelope. We took the cards out of the envelopes and carried them to the card tray downstairs. We heard a carriage and then another. Some guests were arriving. She sent for her friends, and although the guests acted coldly, you would never think that Mrs. Mower suspected there was anything wrong at all. The ladies who were assisting her in receiving were leaders of society in other cities, and they chatted and laughed gayly with the guests. More guests arrived, until probably fifty were in the rooms. One way to procure the names of the guests present is to copy the names on the cards. I picked up the tray that was full of cards and walked toward the reception room, as if I were going to ask Mrs. Mower's permission to use the cards. When I was quite near her I dropped the tray, as though by accident. As the hundreds of cards fell to the floor the amazement expressed on the faces of the guests was laughable. I knew they were astonished at the many cards, and could not account for them. I begged Mrs. Mower's pardon, and gathering them all up put them back in the hall. Mrs. Mower appeared indignant, and refused to allow me to copy them at all."

"It was then about 6 o'clock, and the guests were preparing to depart, and every one of them would stop a moment at the card tray and look at some of the names on the cards, thinking, of course, that the person left the card personally. I hurried to the office, determined to keep the story to myself and help Mrs. Mower further. The city editor asked how the reception had been. I answered, 'Out of sight.' I wrote one of the most elaborate descriptions of a reception I had ever written. I described the beautiful floral decorations, the gowns of the ladies who received, and closed by saying that there were fully three hundred cards left during the afternoon. It's always the way with society boys—it only needs a leader and all the rest will follow. Realizing this, I knew that when they read that so many had called, those that had called would think they had done as others had done after all. A few days later I received a note from Mrs. Mower asking me to call. I did so, and you ought to have seen her. She called me 'an angel,' and her gratitude knew no bounds as she showed me a pile of little notes expressing sympathy for the way she had been duped—they all said he was a monomaniac, poor fellow! She is

all the rage now, and perfectly contented, and I must say this much for her—she has never forgotten that day, and although she never speaks of it, no matter where she is, she will stop to have a few pleasant words with me, and a slight pressure of the hand always assures me she never will forget that I befriended her at one time."

SHARKS WITHIN SOUNDINGS.

Large Man Eaters Are Caught Close to the Coast of Connecticut.

Sharks are plentiful in Long Island Sound all along the Nutmeg strand, says the New York Sun. Three big ones have been caught in the past three weeks. One a huge blue fellow, harmless, off Westport, well up the Sound; another, a wicked man-eater in the peaceful waters of Niantic Bay. The champion shark of the season, though, was hooked, a day or two ago, by a retired old whalman, Antone Joseph, now boss cook of the Cornfield Lightship, which bobs monotonously at its rusty anchor chains, all the year round, in the shallow waters off this sleepy old Connecticut town. Little or nothing ever happens aboard the clumsy, sheltered, old Sound hulk, and a pile of time hangs heavy on Antone's hands when they are not busy cooking, for he was used to a free and breezy life, with thrilling experiences. So he is ever on the watch, peering over the bulwarks, for something livelier, in the way of incident, than the ebb and flow of the yellow tide in the mouth of the Connecticut and the unending but lifeless procession of vessels up and down the Sound. A member of the lightship's crew, reciting the storey of Joseph's surprising adventure:

"Why, you see, Antone had been staring over the rail all the forenoon, studying the current, looking for something to turn up, as usual, and pretty soon something did turn up, for a fact. And that something was a shark. It was only just a flippin' on the top of the sea, for an instant, after all, then just a thin, sharp, knife-like triangular blade, skimming through the water, cutting it neatly as you please; and round and round it went, making not a splash under the lightship's quarter. But Antone spotted it quicker'n you could think; seen such things before, you see; and without saying anything to anybody he slid across deck and into the hold in a jiffy. He was back in a moment, though, and he was backing along the ship's big sharking tackle—you see, we mean to keep it ready all the time for such critters. And he had, too, a whole round four or five pounds, of Uncle Sam's fattest and whitest salt pork. With a jerk, and a flirt and a heave, Antone had baited the shark hook—it was a tempting bait—and let it go overboard with forty or fifty fathoms of heavy rope tied to it; and, then just as quick, he took a couple of turns of the rope about an iron cleat."

"So! That lump of salt junk had no more than gone keelhaul into the middle of the circle, where the shark had been dancing around, when there was a tremendous explosion, the water opened, and we had just time to get a look at a yard and a half of teeth, with jaws like a crocodile's, and the show was gone. The jaws came together like a click, and disappeared like a flash, with a splash and a bang, and the shark was gone. The round of pork went with them. Then there was a circus. There was no chance for the shark, big as he was, to get away, you see, and so Antone just played him to suit his taste but all the while the show was on he stirred up the water of Long Island Sound about the same as if a crazy hippopotamus was loose there. The rope was good and strong, and the iron cleat wasn't going to let go unless part of the ship went with it, and after about thirty minutes the big fellow got tired of seeing and prancing at the end of his anchor rope. So he finally rolled over on his side, showing his white belly, and all hands took hold with a will, and so reeled him in slowly. Once in a while, though he'd make a farewell break, and then we had to give him a little more rope, but in the end we pried him up close to the vessel's side, and Antone got in a blow on his skull that stiffened him. Then we put the gaffs to him, and half a dozen more clips on the head did the work for him, and he lay still there; next we rigged up a tackle and all hands took hold, and we lifted him on deck."

"He was a tremendous fellow—the biggest one, probably, that was ever taken in Long Island Sound. He was just 14 feet 7 inches long, and weighed 500 pounds. He was an ugly devil, and it was no fault of his that he was unable to make a meal of one man on the ship."

"The queerest thing about the whole performance, though," added the sailor, "was that the shark was no more than dead when Antone quickly sliced off his sirloin steaks and laid 'em one side for his supper. Then we tipped the man-eater overboard again, and then cooked the steaks, or part of one, for his meal, and said it was as sweet and tender and juicy as lamb. One or two of the crew took a bite of it, too, and though they said they weren't bad, they didn't want a whole meal of them, all the same."

The Coral Trade.

Owing to the depression in the coral trade, the Italian government forbade coral-fishing on the Sciacca banks in 1891. Manufacturers have thus been working their old stocks out. The finest coral still commands its price, but unless new banks are discovered its quantity must decrease from year to year, the Messina banks being practically exhausted. Some years ago a new bank was discovered not far from Malta, but the fishermen did not take the bearings of it with sufficient accuracy, and, although her Majesty's government at Malta gave a reward, the bank has never again been found.—London Daily News.

Napoleon and the Barber.

Napoleon's smooth face was a sure evidence of his dislike for a beard. In some anecdotes of the Russian campaign there is a story told of the great Emperor and a poor, but witty barber, who had occasion to shave him.

Napoleon had made a rather lengthy detour from the line of march with a detachment of officers. Arriving at a small village they refreshed themselves with good meal and baths, Napoleon, wishing

to be shaved, the village barber was called in. While the poor fellow stropped his razor and passed it industriously over the great Emperor's chin, he remained silent and seemingly melancholy, although performing his work with amazing rapidity and smoothness. When he had finished, Napoleon complimented him, remarking: "But, man, why do you wear such a melancholy face? You should be happy to have the privilege of shaving an Emperor."

"I am doubly happy, your majesty," "Then what is it that troubles you?"

"Alas, your majesty, when I think of the kings upon kings and emperors that have died without knowing what it was to be shaved by me, I am sad and melancholy."—Harpers Round Table.

MINES UNDER THE SEA.

Visitors May Hear the Booming of the Ocean Over Their Heads.

There is a striking example of man's boldness in searching for wealth, and his skill in securing it at Bettalock near Cape Cornwall. Bettalock is a bold headland composed of huge masses of hornblende, masked by walls of slate, against which the Atlantic surges are constantly dashing. The persevering efforts of man have at this point been more powerful than those of nature. The Alaska Mining Record says that the gloomy precipices of slate, which unnumbered ages of sea storms have been unable to displace, are here cut in twain by the miner, whose complicated machinery clings to the cliff at places where it would seem almost impossible for an engine to be fixed. Powerful steam engines, stamp mills, and all the heavy machinery required in modern mining are perched on what at first sight seem inaccessible situations, so that from a distance they look as if growing out of the crags. All is noise and bustle, which contrasts strangely with the placidity of the seaward view.

"Kibbles" descend fathoms beneath the sea, and ascend again with copper or tin ores which are wheeled away to larger haps, where women, boys, and girls separate various qualities with the systematic industry of workers in a factory. Everybody and everything—rocks, platforms and paths—are smeared with the prevailing red hue derived from a slight mixture of iron with copper or tin ores, and these the very muddy stream flowing from the stamp mill to the sea has imparted to the beach, the breakers, and the foam the same ruby tinge. If ore is coming up plentifully and of good quality, everybody is pleased, and far down in the gloomy depths of the mine, which Cornish legends people with spirits, the news that a new "bunch" of copper has been struck, or that this old hole is growing richer, fills the workers with professional joy.

As the visitor creeps along the passages into which the light of day has never entered, he hears comparatively little, until, having become accustomed to the darkness, he is suddenly illumined by the flicker of lamps, he daily distinguishes the stalwart gnomes at work. Coming from the upper world amid the din of heavy stamps and measured gush of pumps, the clang of machinery above and the surge of the sea below, the rattle of wagons on tramways, and the crowds of men and boys climbing up and down paths which seem to be too steep for a goat, the midday silence of the level strikes one as unnatural.

In places, however, the guide may ask the visitor to listen to a curious sound. It is the booming of the waves above and the grating of the stones on the sea bottom. Then he is told, to give him courage, that in some of the recesses of the first level the ore has been cut away until a roof not more than six feet thick has been left. First work is done on the face of the cliffs only, the mine descended, level by level, until the excavations extended for more than six fathoms under the sea and for long distances inland, while the greatest depth to which it had been sunk is about 2,000 feet.

Freshening Sea Water.

A well-known Austrian engineer, R. M. Pister, is stated to have discovered a remarkable property of the trunks of trees, namely that of retaining the salt of sea water that has filtered through the trunks in the direction of the fibres. He has consequently constructed an apparatus designed to utilize this property in obtaining potable water for the use of ships' crews. This apparatus consists of a pump, which sucks up the sea water into a reservoir, and then forces it into the filter formed by the tree trunk. As soon as the pressure reaches one-fifth to three-fifths atmosphere the water is seen—at the end of from one to three minutes, according to the kind of wood used—to make its exit from the other extremity of the trunk, at first in drops and then in fine streams; the water thus filtered being potable—freed, in fact, from every particle of the usual salts taste which is such a drawback to the water obtained in the ordinary manner.—Railway Review.

No Danger of a Thaw.

One exceedingly warm day in July, a neighbour met an old man, and remarked that it was very hot.

"Yes," said Joe; "it wasn't for one thing, I should say we were going to have a thaw."

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