

The Professor's Son

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"I'm sure I don't know," replied Bunker. "But there is a young man tied to a post in the front of the store, who says he is a clerk in the establishment. I suppose he and the boy who is hurt slept here."

"Why didn't you release the clerk?" "He has so much line about him that I didn't want to do it after I heard you at the door. That's what's the matter!" exclaimed Bunker, as the party came in front of the safe. "They were making a hole in the iron door."

The lieutenant and Bunker went behind the counter; but the hole made by the drill was all they saw at the safe. The point of the drill had just passed through the door, and in half an hour more would have made the aperture large enough to receive the powder or dynamite. They walked toward the front of the store, and presently came to a valise on the floor.

It was opened, and a considerable quantity of the less valuable goods had been packed in it. The officer closed it, and on the outside he found the name "T. P. Hunter."

It was evident that Peach had gone back to get something he could carry off, after they reached the store with the other valises.

Lon Blinker, in the absence of the officers, had renewed his efforts to break his bonds, but he ceased to do so as soon as the party approached again. Peach Hunter was pointed out to the lieutenant as the clerk.

"Then the burglars moored you to that post, did they?" asked Mr. Bates, as he went to work on the cord that bound the miserable watchman.

"He lies if he says so!" exclaimed Lon Blinker, who did not seem to be overladen with magnanimity in his fallen condition; but possibly he thought the clerk had "gone back on him."

"Then you did fasten him to the post?" said the lieutenant, as he suspended his operation of releasing him.

"No, I didn't," protested Lon. "All right, then, we won't hurry to get him out of the scrape till we understand the case better," replied the lieutenant. "Now, where is the other one?"

"That's what I don't know," said Lon, thinking the question was addressed to him. "He disappeared in the twinkling of an eye, and we have not been able to find him."

"What do you mean by 'we'?" asked Mr. Bates.

"Peach Hunter and I."

"Who is Peach Hunter?"

"The fellow tied to the post," replied Lon, malignantly.

"Then you are one of the robbers?" said the lieutenant, turning to the fallen clerk.

"I haven't anything to say," muttered Peach, prudently.

"Do you know anything about the other burglar?"

"Not a thing! If you ask Bryan, very likely he can tell you where he is," answered Peach, who would have given some of the silver spoons he had packed in the valise to know just what had become of Morl.

"Who is Bryan?"

"The fellow that slept in the store with me," replied Peach, who had not pluck enough in his despondency to keep his own counsel, as he had first intended.

"That must have been the boy that was hurt," suggested Bunker, beginning to understand more of the situation.

"We can't ask him now," reminded Mr. Bates. "We will go down to the basement, and see what we can find."

Taking Bunker with him, the officer left the other two in charge of the prisoners. In the basement they lighted the gas, and made their way to the street end of it. As soon as they came near the front they heard suppressed groans.

"Do you hear that?" exclaimed the lieutenant. "There is another person in trouble somewhere here."

The boy that was hurt said there was one of the burglars in a box down here," replied Bunker, as he removed the lid of case in which Bryan had placed the insensible form of Morl. "Here he is! In a box, too!"

"There have been queer proceedings in this store during the night," said the lieutenant, as he bent over the form of the burglar in the box. "That boy up stairs must have been a tough customer to handle, and he can't be over sixteen. At any rate, he seems to have whipped out the crowd."

The officer proceeded to examine the man in the box. Morl had only partially recovered consciousness. It was plain to the officers that he was badly hurt, though they were unable to ascertain the nature of his injuries. Lifting the box, with the burglar still in it, they bore it to the store above.

Carrying it into the private office, they took the half-conscious man from the box, and placed him on the carpeted floor, with a cushion under his head.

Bryan had begun to show some signs of returning life, and the fireman was increasing his exertions, with this encouragement. The policeman who had been sent for a doctor soon returned with one. The physician was about to give his attention to Morl, on the floor, when the fireman interposed, and insisted that he should look at Bryan first.

He examined his patient carefully, but there appeared to be no broken bones, and no very serious injuries. From the account of Bunker and the fireman, he concluded that the boy had fainted from exhaustion. Before he completed the examination, Bryan opened his eyes, and was soon able to speak. When asked if he had any pain, he said that he "ached all over," but his arms troubled him more than his head. The doctor dressed the abrasions made by the rope, and he was soon made more comfortable.

On the back of Morl's head was a very large bruise, and it was possible that his skull was fractured by the fall. While the surgeon was at work on his two patients, the lieutenant had sent one of his men to inform Mr. Longwood, whose residence was found in the directory, what had happened at his store.

Before the doctor had finished his examination of the injured burglar, Bryan had fully

recovered his consciousness. But he felt rather weak and sick.

He was somewhat ashamed of himself for fainting, and said so to the fireman, declaring that he had never done such a thing before.

"You have been hammered enough to make any fellow feel sick," replied Meeker, the fireman, who had been the most faithful of nurses. "I don't blame you for fainting."

"I had a smart brush with the fellow outside, and there was no let-up till he was knocked out, as I should have been in half a minute more."

"How do you feel, my lad?" asked Mr. Bates, coming into the private office, after a further examination of the premises.

"I am a good deal better, sir; and I shall do first rate now," replied Bryan, struggling to get the better of his ill feelings.

"Do you feel able to tell me something more about this affair, for you seem to have been

had finished there was another arrival. Mr. Longwood entered the office, followed by Mrs. Braslock.

Filled with fear and anxiety, the poor mother knelt beside the lounge, embraced her darling boy, and wept as though her heart would break.

CHAPTER XXVIII.

Mrs. Braslock was almost overcome with grief and terror.

Officer Bunker had been sent in a carriage to inform Mr. Longwood of the attempted burglary at his store.

The honest fellow did not give any of the details of the battle, for he had none to give; and he judged of its fierceness wholly by the condition of the combatants.

But Mr. Longwood got the impression that

and the poor woman continued to sob over her injured boy.

"You must be calm, madam," said Mr. Longwood, with all his accustomed dignity. "I am afraid you will harm the boy by your grief. He does not appear to be dangerously injured."

"I will try to be calm, sir; but Bryan is the best boy that ever lived," replied Mrs. Braslock, wiping away her tears, and making an effort to keep down her emotions.

"I am all right, mother. I feel as though I could walk home. I should have been up if the doctor had not made me stick to the lounge," said Bryan.

"Don't be at all alarmed about him, madam," interposed the doctor. "He will be as well as ever in a few days. It was the excitement and the exhaustion that overcame him and not his injuries. He merely fainted away."

"That's the truth, mother," averred Bryan, sitting up on the lounge. "I feel ever so much better."

"You have had a hard time of it, Bryan," said Mr. Longwood, seating himself by the side of the injured youth. "It appears that Peach Hunter is a rascal."

"I never was in a fight in dead earnest with a man before," and the burglar understood the science," answered Bryan. "I am glad they did not get into the safe."

"They certainly would have got into it if it had not been for the pluck and skill of this young man," remarked the lieutenant. "The point of the drill was through the iron, and half an hour more would have finished the job."

"I have not yet heard the particulars of the affair," said Mr. Longwood. "I should like to hear them from Bryan, as he seems to be better informed than any other person in regard to them, if he is able to do so much talking."

"I am all right now, sir," assured Bryan, "and if I had a cup of coffee and a piece of bread, I should be able to do my day's work."

The doctor felt his pulse again and looked him over a little.

"He is doing very well now; his pulse is better, and his condition is greatly improved. But I should recommend a week's vacation for him," said the doctor.

"Don't try to get along too fast, my son," said Mrs. Braslock, who was in good spirits by this time. "I will go out and get a cup of coffee for you."

But the fireman volunteered to do this. Bryan got on his feet again in spite of the protest of his mother, and declared that he felt able to go about the store and basement, and tell all the history of his night on watch.

The fireman soon returned with a cup of coffee and a roll, of which Bryan partook, and then said he was as good as new.

He began the narrative of the exciting events of the night by stating that he had seen the rear watchman come out of one liquor saloon and go into another, in company with the two burglars, whom he had recognized as soon as he saw them.

He rehearsed his difficulties in regard to telling tales out of school, and his attempt to warn Peach Hunter, when he found that he was intoxicated. He then led the way to his berth under the counter, and moving from place to place as the scene of the events changed, he told the story from beginning to end.

"I didn't strike the blow that hurt Morl so badly," said Bryan to the doctor, who was sufficiently interested in the case to follow the party. "I simply knocked him over, and he fell into the basement through that trap door—which one of the officers had opened—striking his head against the timber as he went down."

The party went down into the basement by the stairs, and examined the boxes in which Bryan had bestowed himself and his prisoner.

The faithful watchman continued his narrative till he came to the fine light in the store, and his description of this event was quite exciting. Mrs. Braslock was almost as much alarmed as though the contest had been in actual progress before her.

It was still dark when the narrative was finished. The lieutenant sent the three prisoners to the station, with their arms secured behind them with handcuffs. There were four officers in charge of them, and they were not likely to escape. The lieutenant remained to look out for the store till the clerks arrived.

"Now, young man, I must advise you to keep quiet for a week," said the doctor, as he was about to leave. "You are still laboring under considerable excitement, which makes you feel a great deal stronger than you are. You have undergone a terrible strain, you have gone through a scene which has taken more out of your vitality than a year of hard work would have done. Keep him as quiet as you can for a week, madam," he continued, turning to Mrs. Braslock. "You need not confine him to the house, but he had better keep away from his work."

"You had better go up and see him tomorrow, Doctor Hartman, and send your account to me," said Mr. Longwood, as the medical gentleman departed.

"I don't believe I need to be doctored, sir," said Bryan, when his employer returned from letting the doctor out.

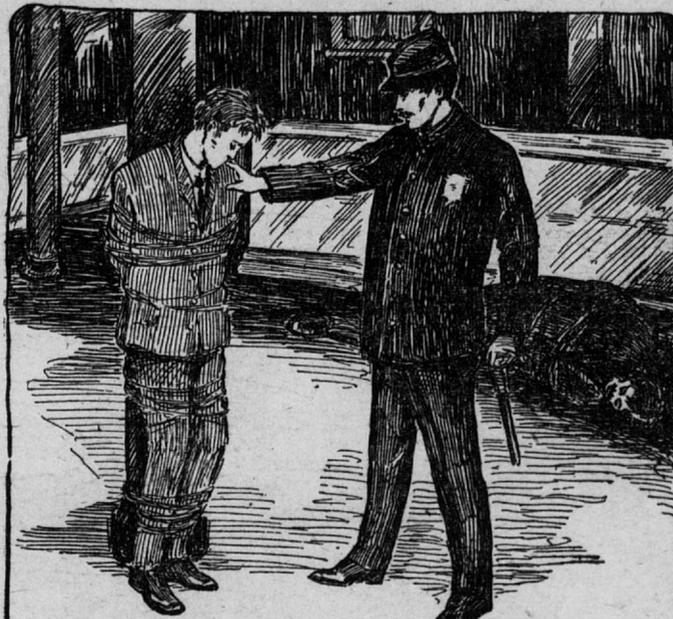
"Think the doctor is right," agreed Mr. Bates. "The boy must have fought like a tiger. In a first fight with a desperate man, he has done what seems to me to be a miracle, for I never heard of such a thing before. I could never have believed that a boy of his weight could have whipped a full-sized man, fighting for life and liberty."

"I won't deny that it was a hard fight," replied Bryan, "but it would not have turned out as it did if Lon Blinker had not been nearly used up by his hard work on the safe."

"It was wonderful under any circumstances. These fellows are known to the police of New York, and we have had an eye on them since they came to Boston."

The party waited till Con Wright and some of the clerks came, when Mr. Longwood called a carriage and went home with Bryan and his mother.

"TO BE CONTINUED NEXT SUNDAY"



"You don't look like a very savage burglar," said the patrolman.

a principal actor in the transactions of the night?" asked Mr. Bates.

"I can tell you all I know about it, and by putting this and that together, I believe I have got at all there is of it," responded Bryan, making a movement to rise from his reclining posture on the lounge.

"He is as weak as a half-drowned rat, lieutenant," interposed the fireman. "Don't let him get up yet."

"No. Keep him as quiet as you can," said the doctor. "But he can tell you what he knows."

"In the first place, I want to know about Peach Hunter," said the lieutenant. "He claims to be a clerk in the store, but the burglar out there says he is one of them."

"Peach Hunter is the clerk who was to sleep in the store with me last night; but he opened the back door and let the burglars in!" declared Bryan.

He told the story in full. By the time he

Bryan had fought three persons at one time, and thus saved his property. Naturally, his admiration was not a little excited by the courage and prowess of his new employee.

Bryan's victories over Lamb Stryker had already proved that he was a bold and brave champion. He was sorry that the young fellow was so badly injured as Bunker represented, and he concluded that his mother would be the most welcome visitor to the disabled hero.

He went in the carriage to Medway street, where the anxious mother did not keep him waiting long.

"Don't be frightened, mother," said Bryan, when he was folded in the trembling arms of his mother. "I am not badly hurt, though I got some hard digs in the face."

But this was assurance that did not assure,

How Indigo Is Grown

Copyright by James Elverson

THAT portion of the Nicaragua which stretches to the northeast from the shores of Lake Managua is known as one of the best indigo-growing districts of the world. The climate is cooler than that of the plain of

Leon, and continues growing so as one gradually ascends the grade until he finds himself on the plateau of Segovia, where the days are always pleasant and the nights cold enough for fires.

But a few leagues from Leon, on every side of the trail and as far as the eye can reach, a rich green undergrowth covers every cleared space, which much resembles the tender sprouts of the locust tree, and is what the natives call "jiquilite," or the indigo plant.

In planting it the richest soil is carefully cleared and burned over, trenches are dug two and three inches deep and about a foot apart, into which the seed is thrown and lightly covered with earth. The planting is done in May, at the close of the dry season, and the shrub is ready to be cut in August.

The young bushes have to be carefully weeded to prevent any other plants from springing up and mixing with them, which would injure the quality of the indigo. About the middle of August the leaves present a rough surface and appear as if covered with a green sand, when the stalk is cut off by the gatherers a few inches above the ground, leaving a few sprouts remaining, which produce a second crop that is gathered about two months later.

The first year's result is usually small, that of the second year much greater and the third year's is immense, after which the crop diminishes again until the seventh year, when the fields have again to be cleared and planted.

The cut plants are tied in bundles, like wheat in the United States, and carried to the fermentation vat, where enough water is allowed to run in to cover it; then the swelling mass is weighted down to steep and ferment.

The only skill required in the manufacture is to be able to check the fermentation at the proper moment, and natives competent to do so receive from five to ten dollars per day.

When the solution of indigo has a peculiar green color it is drawn off into another vat, where it is incessantly agitated and beaten by revolving fans until it changes from its original green color to a dark blue, and the coloring matter commences to precipitate.

The water is then drawn off, leaving a granulated soft blue clay, which is drained in bags, then dried in the sun, carefully selected as to quality and packed for export in packages of one hundred and fifty pounds each, or "ceroons."

Forty or fifty years ago Nicaragua produced from nine thousand to ten thousand "ceroons" of indigo per annum, but now it may be doubted if the total annual product exceeds two thousand.

Most of the fine "haciendas" of the high country are now commencing to graze cattle, and, though many still remain where labor is cheap, the indigo farms are gradually disappearing, and cattle, coffee and cacao fields are taking their place.