

The Professor's Son

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The London matters were not brought up again. Whatever the cause of Mrs. Braslock's intense emotion, she was not inclined to allude to her husband's family again.

There was a tremendous thinking on the part of the Longwoods, but they kept their thoughts to themselves. Bryan was completely mystified by the conversation and the strange manner of his mother. The two portraits on the wall evidently meant something, but he could not explain anything that he saw or had heard. He knew that his father had been a sporting man in London, and that he had thoroughly reformed his life after he came to Boston. In fact, he knew all that his mother had stated, and he could not imagine what had so deeply affected her.

At six o'clock dinner was served, but an unexplainable embarrassment had grown up between the principals of the two families.

The Longwoods could not have been more hospitable and considerate if they had been dining the most aristocratic party that could be gathered on the Back Bay, but something had come in to put a kind of restraint upon their conversation.

At ten o'clock the widow thought it was time to go home. Mr. Longwood insisted upon sending for a carriage.

"Is there anything I can do for you, madam?" he asked, when he had sent his man for the carriage.

"Nothing. I thank you, sir," replied the widow, with more firmness than the occasion seemed to demand.

"Or for you, Bryan?" turning to the son.

"Yes, sir," replied Bryan, to the astonishment and dismay of his mother. "I believe you have not filled the place of Lambert Stryker in the store."

"I have not, and I am looking for a good boy," answered Mr. Longwood. "perhaps you know of one."

"I do know of one, but I am sorry to say that he is under a shadow." And Bryan proceeded to tell the story in full of Tom Lynch, in which he kept nothing back. "I believe he is as honest today as I am, and I am willing to vouch for him."

The gentleman shook his head, but Bryan made an eloquent plea for his friend. He would be responsible for Tom's honesty. If he took anything from the store, he would make it good to his employer.

Mrs. Braslock was interested in her poor neighbor, and she said a good word for the disgraced boy.

"Say no more, Bryan. I will take Thomas, and hold you responsible for his good conduct," said Mr. Longwood; laughing in a very dignified way. "But I would not take such a boy on the recommendation of any other person. He shall have a chance to redeem his character." He may come tomorrow morning, if he likes.

"I am ever so much obliged to you, sir; and you shall never have occasion to regret what you have done," said Bryan.

The news was good enough to warrant Bryan in waking the Lynch family from their slumbers; and Tom wept tears of gratitude when his friend told him what he had done.

CHAPTER XXXII.

BRYAN had promised to go to the store with Tom Lynch and introduce him at nine o'clock, for neither Mr. Longwood nor Mr. Brill would be there at an earlier hour.

Bryan told his friend that he had become responsible for him; but he had no doubt Tom would be honest and faithful to his duties.

He would propose him at the next meeting of the B. S. L. Bryan believed that the lodge would exercise a strong influence over him, as he could not see how it could help doing over all its members.

This was the first time Bryan had been to the store since the attempted burglary, and he was to go that day to the court to give his evidence at the examination of the culprits. He went in at the back door, followed by Tom Lynch, whose heart was in his mouth all the time, for he expected some trying ordeal.

The moment the clerks saw Bryan, they all clapped their hands, and made a considerable demonstration, which brought Mr. Longwood and Mr. Brill out of their offices to ascertain what had happened. But neither of them objected to the reception given to the hero.

Bryan blushed, and did his best to turn attention from himself by presenting Tom Lynch as his friend.

For the hero's sake, if for no other reason, the new employe was very cordially received.

gulist among the "lightweights." He was hand and glove with the fast men of the city, and had recently taken part in a sparring exhibition in New York. He appeared to have a great many friends, and if such a thing could be, the "fraternity" were scandalized by the fact that one of their number had been arrested on a very grave charge.

Bryan stopped to look in at the window of a picture store. The man who was following him did the same. Neither of them looked at the pictures, for each was watching the other.

The professor's son obtained a fair view of his follower. He was a well-dressed person, but carried with him an appearance of coarseness.

Bryan did not wish to have the man follow him home, though his residence had been given in the court room, and the stranger

was seen him pass the entrance to it three times, as though he was looking for him.

Quite satisfied with the result, he made his way to the street in the rear, and by that he reached Rover and Medway streets. He saw nothing of the man on the way, and believed he had got rid of him.

At home Mrs. Braslock wanted to know all about the examination, and her son proceeded to inform her in regard to the proceedings. He did not tell her about the stranger who had followed him, for this might worry her. But he had not half finished his narrative when the bell rang—the one leading to the attic floor, which the widow had caused to be put in since she leased the lower part of the house.

Bryan went down to answer it, and found at the door the very person he had been at so much pains to elude. He was sorry enough to see him, but he was not so uncivil as to shut the door in his face. The man smiled blandly, and he looked so friendly as though he had been a member of the lodge.

"Ah, Mr. Bryan Braslock!" said the fellow, in the most conciliatory of tones. "I am glad to see you. I saw you in court today, and that is how I happen to know your name. Allow me to introduce myself as Mr. Barney Bilch, of New York."

Mr. Bilch seemed to think he had said something that ought to produce a sensation, as perhaps it would in some cases, but Bryan bowed slightly, and did not say a word.

"I listened to the case in court, and that gave me a desire to make your acquaintance added, Mr. Barney Bilch."

Bryan nodded, and said nothing. "I have a little business with you, Mr. Braslock, and I desire to beg you the favor of ten minutes' conversation with you," continued the man, not much encouraged by his progress so far. "I hope you will not refuse me."

Bryan had some curiosity to know what the man could possibly want with him, and he came down from his "high horse" far enough to write Mr. Bilch to walk in, thus intimating that he condescended to grant the request. Without any apology for his home, he led his unwelcome visitor up the two flights of stairs to the front room, where he had left his mother.

The stranger bowed very politely to her as they entered the apartment, and made a remark about the weather. The widow gave him a chair by the stove, and seated herself in another part of the room.

"I should like to see you in private, if you don't object," suggested Mr. Bilch.

"If you will excuse me, I do object. I don't keep anything from my mother," replied Bryan, stiffly.

"Just as you please, Mr. Braslock," said the visitor, though the reply evidently did not please him. "As I said before, I listened to the case in court today, and I have made some inquiries in regard to you. I am entirely familiar with all the details of your remarkable fight with Mr. Lon Blinker."

Mr. Bilch paused to note the effect, but Bryan only nodded.

"I learned with intense surprise that you get but five dollars a week at the place where you are employed, and where you rendered such extraordinary service. I made up my mind to offer you twelve hundred dollars a year, and I am sure you will be worth all of that to me."

"I am much obliged to you, sir, but I decline the offer," answered Bryan.

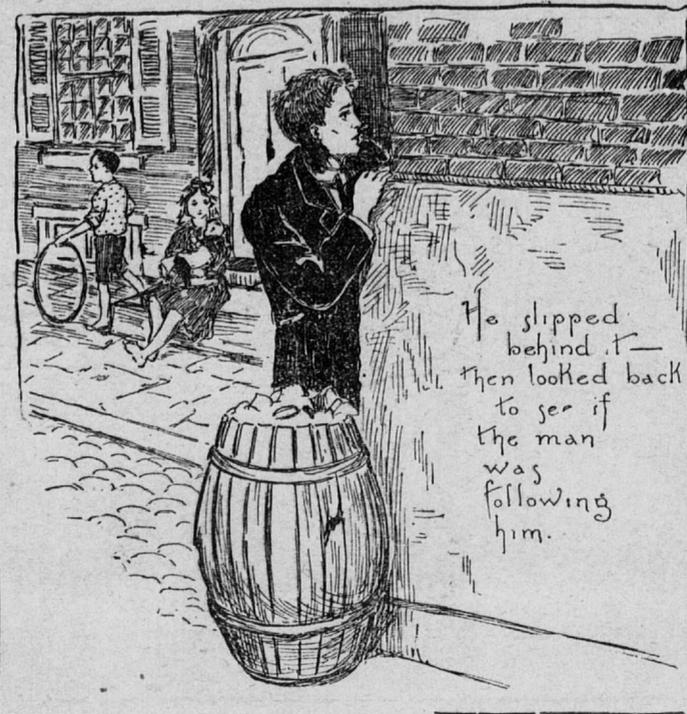
His mother looked at him, with a nod and a smile.

"I offer you nearly five times as much as you are getting now," said the man, insinuatingly. "I shall increase your salary as—"

"If you make the offer twelve thousand, instead of twelve hundred, I shall decline it," interrupted Bryan.

Mr. Bilch was utterly astonished, for he believed "money will do anything."

(To be continued next Sunday.)



He slipped behind it then looked back to see if the man was following him.

Con Wright was called up from the basement, and his assistant was properly introduced to him. Tom had been informed that the porter was a colored man, but he made no complaint on this account, and Bryan was pleased to see that they were excellent friends before he left.

Bryan, his employer and the chief clerk spent nearly the whole day at the court room, waiting for the case to come on. The burglars were defended by a couple of able lawyers; but they were finally committed to await the action of the grand jury.

As soon as he was released from duty, Bryan started for home; but he had not gone far before he was conscious that he was followed.

At the court room he had noticed a great number of men who were said to be sporting characters.

Lieutenant Bates informed him that Lon Blinker had a considerable reputation as a

could have found it if he had wished.

He continued his walk toward home, and the "sport" continued to follow him. Very likely he did not care to accost him in the throng on Washington street, and was waiting for a more favorable opportunity. If there are any alleys, by-ways, short cuts or out-of-the-way places in his locality, the average boy knows them.

The stranger was a couple of rods behind him, and the street was crowded with people. Bryan watched his opportunity when he came to an alley by which he could reach a street in the rear of the great avenue, and dodged into it. He made sure that a group of ladies was between him and his pursuer, and when he entered the passage, he ran with all his speed, till a friendly corner offered him shelter. He slipped behind it, and then looked back to see if the man was following him.

The dodge had been successful; the stranger had not seen him slip into the alley, and

A GREAT FOREST

PAUL B. DUCHAILLU, the celebrated explorer, writing about the great equatorial forest of Africa says:

"As the mariner approaches the western coast of Africa, above the River Campo, situated two degrees north of the equator, and sails southward along the land as far as the Garboon estuary, or river, the southern shores of which run in a parallel line with the equator and only a few miles north of it, he beholds all the way, reaching down to the water's edge, a dense, unbroken forest, and far inland, several mountain ranges covered with trees to their very tops.

"These mountains are known under the name of Sierra del Crystal. They are gradually lost to sight as one nears the Gaboon. This immense wooded country forms the outskirts of the gigantic equatorial forest which

I was the first to explore and which has been entered, and in part traversed further inland by the heroic Stanley.

"The outer or western limit of this belt of forest-clad region is the very sea itself, for the roots of its trees spread to the beach.

"A grand and magnificent sight greets the traveler as he finds himself in this woody wilderness. I was awed by the majesty of the scene and lost in admiration of the wonderful vegetation which is exhibited.

"The silence of this forest, as one travels through it, is something appalling. Mile after mile is traversed without even hearing the chatter of a monkey, the shrill cry of a parrot, the footstep of a gazelle or antelope. The falling of a leaf, the murmur of some hidden rivulet, the humming of insects, and here and there the solitary note of a bird, only come to give life and bring relief in the gloom of the vast solitude that surrounds you. The feeling which seizes you as you move along in the silent path is indescribable.

"Once in a while the silence is broken by the heavy footsteps of the elephant, the grunt of some wild boar, or the light footsteps of some other wild animals.

"Gigantic trees, rising to a height of two or three hundred feet and even more, tower over the sea of everlasting foliage like giants of the forest, ready to give the first warning of the coming tornado or tempest which is to break the tranquility of their domain.

"Under these enormous trees other trees of less size grow, and under these again others still smaller, of all sizes and shapes, and finally a thick jungle.

"What a jungle it is! Often the eye tries in vain to pierce through it even a yard or two. Lianas, like gigantic snakes, stretch in profusion from tree to tree, and twine themselves round the stems or hang from their branches; thorny creepers, malacca-like canes,

with their hook-like thorns resting on the edge of the leaves; grass with edges as sharp as razors cling to your clothes, or cut deep into the flesh if they chance to touch any exposed parts; or at times pineapples run up the bark of trees hang, in large festoons, vast masses of orchids.

"Trees covered with flowers, often of brilliant color and beautiful shape, relieve at certain seasons of the year the monotony of the dark green. Other trees and plants bear a bountiful crop of nuts, fruits and berries of various sizes, colors and shapes.

"This forest, so rich in berries, nuts and fruits, is well adapted for the home of the ape. These vines the most powerful of all apes—the gorilla—a giant of strength, who roams to and fro in the great solitude as the king of the forest.

"The male comes and attacks man fiercely and without fear when disturbed in its haunts. One of my hunters was killed by one of these monsters, which, in its rage, bent the barrel of his gun, and then left him to die.

"Besides the gorilla, there are other varieties of apes, or chimpanzees. One may form an idea of the age and continuity of this great forest when one reflects that such apes as are found there are only the survivors of numerous species of a far past age.

"The insect world is very abundant, scorpions and centipedes, mosquitoes without number, and also species of gnats, perhaps more troublesome than the mosquitoes. The butterflies are at times extremely numerous, flitting along the path; their flight is as still as the forest itself.

"Of snakes there is a great abundance: a few are harmless, but a bite of most of the species is deadly. There are tree, land and water snakes.

"There are a great many species of ants, some of which are found in vast numbers. The most remarkable and most dreaded of all is the bashikouay, and is a most voracious creature, which carries nothing away, but eats its prey on the spot.

"It is the dread of all living animals of the forest—the elephant, the leopard, the gorilla, and all the insect world—and man himself is compelled to flee before the advance of these marauders or to protect himself by fire and boiling water.

"It is the habit of the bashikouay to march through the forest in a long, regular line, about two inches broad or more, and often miles in length. All along the line larger ants, who act as officers, stand outside the ranks, and keep the singular army in order. If they come to a place where there are no trees to shelter them from the sun, the heat of which they cannot bear, they immediately burrow underground and form tunnels. It takes often more than twelve hours for one of these armies to pass."

A Funny Man

A business man of Detroit has just discharged a clerk for being too facetious. It is to be hoped the lesson will be heeded by other young men inclined to be funny. The employer sent out to purchase a blue lead pencil. When the boy returned with the pencil, the clerk remarked, gravely:

"That expense might have been spared, sir."

"By what means?" demanded his employer.

"Any ordinary pencil can be made to write blue."

"Indeed," said the gentleman, becoming interested, "how would you manage it?"

"By simply writing b-l-u-e."

BITS OF NONSENSE.

—African travelers say there is no animal that can be so easily shot on the spot as the leopard.

—Charley—"I see that the paper prints M. D. after Dr. Swim's name. What does it mean, pa?"

Pa—"Many deaths, I guess! Don't bother me."

—"I am not well," said the Glass Eater.

"What's the matter?" asked the Ossified Humorist. "Got a pane in your stomach?"

—Prison Visitor—"Why are you here, my poor man?"

Convict—"Because I can't get out! That's why I'm here."