



THE HONEST BURGLAR.

By N. HODGE.

I AM in the burgling business, and I maintain that it can be conducted as honestly as any other.

Perhaps I am mistaken, but I certainly have raised it to a much higher level than it was when first I selected that means of livelihood.

My motto: "Honesty is the Best Policy—See," is neatly engraved on all my professional tools and my title of "The Honest Burglar," will go on my tombstone in due time, and when my strictly honorable exploits can be safely mentioned with pride by my relatives and friends.

I always make a point of seeking a foe man worthy of my steal. Never do I enter a house—no matter what inducements its contents may offer—which has not the very latest scientific burglar protections.

Ordinary locks and bolts I positively refuse to attack, and carelessly left open doors and windows I disdain to make use of.

I leave those tidbits for dishonest burglars who have not the professional pride that I find so high-toned and profitable and so encouraging to one's self-respect.

Now that I have properly introduced my honest self I'll tell a story.

A wealthy chap who had made his millions in a way I despise had erected a grand mansion with all the finest electrical burglar alarms known to date.

Every door and window was doubly protected so the slightest touch after the wires were set would jangle numberless bells and turn on the lighted gas all over the house in a brilliant illumination.

In addition to all that melodious display there were bell-tale steps on each staircase and tempting bits of silverware, connected with wires to the main battery, left in plain sight by the safe in the dining-room.

All these imposing preparations, so expensive and troublesome for their owner, gave me a glorious delight, and I looked forward to attacking them with all a small boy's Fourth of July enthusiasm.

At last the battle night came, and with it Mr. William Mummer, my active partner in the business.

Mr. Mummer was highly respected in the profession. Like myself, he never stooped to conquer, and was equally noted for his gentlemanly ways and sturdy honesty.

Only once in his busy life was he ever taken in and done for, and I couldn't blame him a bit, either.

You see, he was making a professional call on a rich bachelor, and while putting things away in the handsome room he was painfully surprised by the sudden arrival of his host with some gentlemen friends.

Not willing to seem intrusive, Mr. Mummer quietly slipped under the bed to await an opportunity for departing pleasantly.

From his snug retreat Mr. Mummer beheld six well-polished boots spread themselves comfortably on the Turkish rug, evidently in shape to stay awhile, despite William's anxiety to catch the train for home.

Soon the jolly gentlemen lighted cigars and commenced telling funny stories, ending each one with a chorus of hearty laughter.

William, who understood the proper etiquette of not mixing in where he wasn't wanted, kept a beaming smile until a funnier story than usual was told, and then, after an agonizing struggle to choke down his unfortunate mirth, he exploded with a tremendous "haw-haw-haw" which frightened the gentlemen shamefully.

It is needless to say that Mr. Mummer had ample time afterward to enjoy the joke, while taking a little vacation from business in the state laundry.

But he soon recovered my respect for his sterling qualities by a trick he played when cornered in a fashionable boarding house one night.

While the landlady was ringing the bell and the alarmed boarders were searching for him with guns, Mr. Mummer entered a deserted room and promptly went to bed with his boots on. There, with the blankets neatly tucked under his handsome chin, he lay yelling as loud as the loudest and grandly ordering the bold warriors with guns from his room when they rushed in to see if he was being murdered. 'Twas lucky his bed belonged to a terror-stricken maiden lady who had sought refuge elsewhere.

We knew the place well, for both Bill and myself had managed to secure work there when the house was being remodeled. Through a side hedge and across the large lawn from tree to tree we cautiously advanced, pausing frequently to observe and listen.

Not a sound, save the uncanny shriek of a screech owl and the blustering, chilly wind sighing among the evergreens and creaking the bare treetops, fell on our eager ears.

Thanks to the supposed superior protection of electricity, dogs were not on hand to interfere with our pleasure—though had there been we had a patent way of winning their friendship.

When we got close to the house we made a circuit around it and, finding everything safe and comfortable, we prepared for business. Instead of attempting a guarded door or window, or even cutting a hole through the clapboards into the parlor, as we might have done, to avoid the wires, our plan was to enter through the unprotected roof.

Taking from my bag an arrow with a coil of fishing line attached, I placed it in a bow (which had been my cane while traveling) and neatly shot the line above and over the house, so that it fell clear of windows or obstructions.

In a few minutes a signal tug on it told me that Bill had found the arrow on "borders" side of the house. Then I tied on a heavier line, light but strong enough to hang two ordinary men, and signaled Bill to haul away. Next I fastened on a well-greased, high-power pulley block, on which was the flexible rope for our ascent and gave the signal to haul away again and make fast.

Soon Bill did so and, joining me, we got ready to go aloft.

I went first, of course, being the senior partner in the concern and chief manager of my unpatented invention.

Comfortably sitting on a wooden cross piece I pulled away on the endless rope attachment (one pound pull lifting four), and easily raised myself to where I could reach and mount upon the broad eaves of the shingled sloping roof.

In a jiffy Partner Bill performed the same circus act and was at my side.

Like two cats we quickly clambered, with the help of the cross line, to the scuttle, and then, with no trouble at all to such artists as we were, the bolt was forced and Fort Electricity was taken, with its garrison blissfully dreaming of the safety afforded by the latest burglar alarms.

Softly creeping down the scuttle ladder we gained the garret floor and there, by the cheery light of our dark lanterns, we donned our working suits, consisting of long white nightgowns and caps, and which, I am proud to say, I invented for occasions like the present.

Being an honest burglar, I never considered it square to needlessly startle a sleeping person. The ladies especially suffer from nervous shock and fright and either faint dead away or scream so loudly that it is annoying, to say the least.

The men are apt to waken out of humor or scared to death, and in both cases are generally beyond reach of argument.

But in our handsome ruffled nightgowns and caps we fearlessly glide in and out of bedrooms, make half-awake men turn over on their pillows so we can get their watches or pistols, with no more than a sleepy grunt at being disturbed, and even get in bed beside them if there's danger of actual discovery.

You see our boldness and appearance naturally cause them to take us for members of the family and treat us accordingly.

This surely is much pleasanter than burning sulphur matches under their noses or blinding their eyes with the rays of a dark-lantern, or giving them a pointed revolver bluff or a billy creak on a defenseless bald head. Put yourself in their places and I guess you'll fully agree with me.

Well, Bill and I, like two white-robed Santa Clauses, came downstairs and went straight to our work, Bill taking the rooms on one side of the dimly-lighted hall, and I the others.

Here let me say that snoring, which is usually offensive to the listener, becomes in our business a most melodious and soothing sound.

Like Sancho Panza, I bless the man who invented sleep, and thrice bless the woman, perhaps, who invented the sweetest snore, though I never do it myself, not having time at night like other folks.

Breathing these blessings, I entered the main room, where the old general of the fort lay snoring for all he was worth.

First I tackled his trousers and got his well-stuffed wallet, then picked up a young jewelry store from the bureau, then fished for his watch under his pillow. But the old snorer lay on it hard so it wouldn't come. Shoving him gently by the shoulder I whispered, "turn over."

Half-opening his eyes enough to see my white robe, he gave the usual grunt and obeyed. In a moment his interrupted snore began louder than before, and the ticker was mine.

To the next room I went and as easily helped myself.

The third room, which was the guest chamber, I visited with equal success, and then, not intending to upset the electrical arrangement on the first floor, I sneaked out in the hall to find Bill and to skip out for good the way we had come.

A dimly-burning gaslight made the darkness visible, and shortly I saw Bill's noble ghostlike figure emerge from a room and, without looking in my direction, walk toward the far end of the hall.

In one instant I noiselessly reached him and, touching his arm, whispered: "Come, Bill; it's time to git!"

The form turned around—but it wasn't Bill. The fierce mood in-law of the establishment stood before me, burning me with her eyes. Ere I could hide my surprised face and modestly retreat—so she might do the same—she got onto my nightgown racket and like a tigress she grabbed my whiskers with both hands and shrieked bloody murder and "thieves!" "robbers!" "help!" etc., till she made me tired. I never felt so queer in all my life.

At once yells and screams and howls of fear came from all over in a mad chorus; off went the burglar-alarm bells and the rattles and up flashed the gas till the whole lower part of the house was brilliant. Luckily I had captured the pillowed pistols, or they'd have gone off, too.

At the instant a stalwart figure in white bounded out of another room and flew to my assistance. "Bill!" I gasped. "Quick! For your life! Pull her away!"

He gently but firmly embraced the old lady's waist and pulled while I tried to bite her worse than tiger's claws. "Tie her, Bill!" I groaned, seeing the pull didn't work. That fetched her. She lost her grip—retaining, however, half my beard, and went for Bill. But he was too quick

to be caught. Neatly dodging her terrible talons, he pushed her in a room, and before the terrified household dared show themselves we had escaped through the scuttle and were on the roof.

A slide down the rope and our safety was assured, but we had not a second to lose.

Hastily we tried to find our only means of flight. Like great lizards we crawled about in the darkness, but our efforts were in vain. The rope was gone.

"What's up now, Bill?" I whispered.

"We are, Tom," he answered, grimly; "we've been shadowed from outside and they've cut the rope. Nice trap for two old rats like we."

In spite of myself I shivered. "Well, what's to be done, Bill? No use praying for a balloon, is there?"

"Not much, pard," said William, as cheerfully as he could, "and no use trying the front door. There ain't a lightning rod, either, to slide down on, and we can't reach the water leader. I wish I was a bird."

"Well, we'll both be birds—jail birds—Bill, if we don't do something, think quick."

Now guns were beginning to shoot from the windows and we heard answering shouts from without. Evidently the house was being surrounded.

"Tom," whispered Bill, "I've thought. We must jump."

"Up or down?" says I, not relishing the job.

"Down, of course," grinned brave William, "into the big evergreen tree by that chimney. Now, Tom—come on."

Bill skinned to the roof's edge like a monkey, I after him. When over he leaped into the blackness and I heard the branches break, but no sickening thud on the ground, as I feared. Giving him time to get out of my way, I followed, and also held on the bending boughs. In a trice both of us reached the grass, and before we could start to run a dozen excited men with pitchforks and guns were around us, the light from the windows showing us to advantage.

But luckily we had forgotten to remove our nightgowns. "Quick now!" cried Bill with wonderful presence of mind. "Save our folks in the house. The robbers are murdering them. They chased us out the windows. Smash in the front door and save their lives. Don't you hear them scream?"

Off rushed our captors and with axes they broke the door and entered to the rescue.

Bill and I, dropping our robes de nuit, took the opposite direction, gained the road, and laughed all the way home.—Detroit Free Press.

The Outcome of a Rash Vow.

"Why do she refuse him?" "He thought too much of himself."

"That is better than thinking too little of himself. I shouldn't think she would have refused him for that."

"Well, you see, he thinks himself the best man in the world, and she had said she wouldn't marry the best man in the world."—N. Y. Press.

The wild goose and, some other aquatic birds are able to admit air between the skin and the body, and are thus protected against cold by an almost impervious air cushion.

HOUSEHOLD BREVITIES.

Squash Pie.—A cupful of cold squash is sufficient for one pie. Beat into it half a cupful of sugar and two eggs and add enough rich milk to fill the pie plate. Flavor with a dusting of nutmeg on top. If the squash has not been salted add a pinch of salt. Bake in one crust until the egg is fully set.—Orange Judd Farmer.

Salted Almonds.—Shell, blanch and dry half a pound of almonds. Lay them in a clean tin pan with a couple of teaspoonfuls of butter and put them in a roaster hot oven. Shake the pan frequently that the almonds may color equally. When of a uniform light brown take them out, drain them in a colander on brown paper and sprinkle them lightly with salt.—N. Y. Ledger.

Stewed Shoulder of Mutton.—Bone a nice shoulder of foreign mutton and lay it flat on a board. Flatten it with a knife and lay a layer of veal stuffing over. Roll round and round, and bind into place with wide tape. Stew it slowly till tender in good stock, flavored with an onion stuck with cloves and two or three long peppers. After about two hours' careful stewing, or longer, if it is a large joint, wipe it carefully, brush over with well-beaten egg, scatter crumbs over and brown it nicely in the oven. Serve with a good gravy and red currant jelly. This joint goes much further than an ordinary roast shoulder of mutton and is far more delicately flavored.—Leeds Mercury.

Oyster Salad.—To a two-pound can of oysters beat with four eggs half a teaspoon of cream, rather more of vinegar, a piece of butter larger than an egg, one tablespoonful of celery seed, half a teaspoonful of cayenne pepper, one tablespoonful of Coleman's mustard, some salt, black pepper and a suspicion of sugar. Put all on the fire in a saucepan over a vessel of boiling water. Stir constantly until the consistency of thick cream, then add a dozen rolled and sifted crackers, drain the oysters, place in a dish layers of oysters and dressing; garnish with parsley and sliced eggs hard-boiled. Warm the vinegar before adding it, as it will otherwise curdle the dressing.—St. Louis Republic.

Stewed Galf's Liver.—Choose a nice fat one, rather white in color, lard it through with bacon in a pan. Fry a quarter of a pound of bacon in a pan, when crisp add a tablespoonful of flour, keep stirring until a nice, yellow color, then put in the liver whole, turn around now and then until it is a little firm, then add a pint of broth or water, a bouquet of parsley, thyme and bay leaves, a little salt, pepper and an onion chopped. Simmer one hour. Take off the fat, remove the bouquet, dish the liver. If the gravy is not thick enough add a little cornstarch mixed smooth in a very little cold water, let it boil up for a few minutes, pour over the liver and serve. If a little gelatine is added to the sauce, and the liver with the sauce strained, put into a round basin and pressed down and left until cold, it will make a nice dish for supper or luncheon. If required to be rewarmed cut into slices, put it in a sauce pan with a drop or two of water added to the gravy.—Boston Budget.

HORSES IN ARGENTINA.

Efforts to improve the native breed by crossing with imported stock.

The Argentine Republic has lately issued a pamphlet entitled "The Horse, the Ass, and the Mule." It contains a great deal of information about the horse of that country. The Argentine Republic occupies the third place in the world so far as the breeding of horses is concerned. Russia comes first, while the United States holds second place.

The horse has been an important factor in the civilization of the South American people, as it formerly constituted their chief means of transportation. All journeys were made on horseback, several remounts being made by each rider. Only when heavy and bulky merchandise had to be carried did the people use carts drawn by oxen. They also used pack mules.

Fifty years ago horses lived in a wild state and managed to draw away to their wild life small herds of domesticated animals. They had increased in a most extraordinary manner. The country was not very prosperous at that time, whole ranches were abandoned by their owners and on some deserted cattle farms there were as many as fifty thousand wild horses. At present most of the herds are domesticated.

The common breed of horses in the republic are crivollas. They were the original breed, but of late years breeders have been crossing them with imported stock from England and this country. The horses are of fair size, fourteen to fifteen hands high. They are strong and healthy animals possessing great power of endurance. They don't require much feed, as they are content with the pasture they find in the fields. In the country districts owing to the sandy nature of the soil the horses are never shod.

In the province of Montes Grandes, the horses are famous for their size. They are bigger and stronger than the ordinary crivollas. By the last census there were four million, two hundred and sixty-two thousand, nine hundred and seventeen horses in the Argentine Republic.—N. Y. Sun.

Drapery Ties.

A pretty device for catching up the drapery over a low and arched doorway was seen the other day. The drapery itself was one long breadth of very short-napped plush of an ashen-roses shade. In the center it was carried through a large brass ring, held in the mouth of a lion's head. This head, about the size of an orange, was also of brass. At the sides the drapery was caught up by several rings, without the head. Novel curtain ties from the East Indies are of clear beads about the size and shape of a pecan nut. These ties are of pale and dark green, of sapphire blue and dark red alternating, or all of one color. A pale-green curtain embroidered in gold thread and looped back with one of these necklaces in emerald green is a happy combination.—N. Y. Post.

OF GENERAL INTEREST.

Circleville, O., was so named because it was originally situated within one of the Indian mound circles.

Along with the Napoleonic revival has come an interest in the furniture of the first empire. The dealers in old furniture have never of recent years despised this embossed and ornate style but they are now giving it special consideration. Vastly uglier things in veneer sell well, perhaps because they have the heaviness of the other.

Dotting the shores of Peconic bay and eastern Long Island sound are numerous old wooden cabins or fish houses now fast going to decay. They are relics of the days, which continued up to a very few years ago, when the Long Island farmers were dependent upon fish for fertilizing material. They contain big fire-places and bunks, and the farmers used to spend the night in them and draw the nets early in the morning.

The United States has not a particularly large military establishment—in fact, it is regarded as meager for such an extensive territory, neither has it many posts from which the sun is saluted at morning and evening. Still it costs the government twenty thousand dollars annually for ammunition for the morning and evening gun, which figures out the expense at fifty-four dollars and seventy-nine cents for each of the three hundred and sixty-five days in the year.

One manufacturer in New York makes wedding cake boxes in fifteen styles of eight sizes, which are sold at from \$3.75 to \$36 a hundred; a box at \$4.50 a hundred is one of which the greatest number are sold. Sometimes boxes of one style and another are made more expensive by greater elaborateness of finish, perhaps by hand painting, by the stamping of a monogram, and so on. For one wedding in another city there were sold 600 satin boxes at \$30 a hundred, all of which were hand painted.

It looks as if watch-case engraving might afford occupation to some of the engravers driven out of their trade by one or another photo-engraving process. Some good and interesting work of the kind is now done upon watch cases, and elaborate designs are executed upon gold and silver. Sometimes a design upon gold is set into the back of a silver watch. This is a very delicate and pretty device, and after the watch has been carried a few years even a crudely executed bit of engraving wears down to a pleasing delicacy.

A great town meeting was held in Dorchester, Mass., on May 23, 1776, to decide what stand should be taken in supporting the actions of the continental congress. This was at best a mere formality, as Dorchester had made it evident that any measure which tended toward liberty would receive its unqualified support. However, the sentiment of the meeting "that if the continental congress should think it best to declare an independence with Great Britain, we will support them with our lives and fortunes," settled any doubts which might have existed. When the declaration of independence was made, six weeks later, it was transcribed in full on the town records.

Two relics of Abraham Lincoln of very exceptional interest have just been added to the museum at the house in which he died, 516 Tenth street, Washington, D. C. The first is the Lincoln family Bible, owned by the president's parents, and having his name on the inside of the cover in a childish, scrawling hand. It is of a rare edition of 1799. From this book Mr. Lincoln derived that wide and accurate knowledge of the Scriptures that marks all his speeches and state papers to an extent unequalled by any other American public man. The book bears the evidence of much use, but it is in a good state of preservation. The second relic is a deed, all in Mr. Lincoln's hand, bearing date the 25th of October, 1841, and in a perfect condition as to legibility. This is one of the most interesting autographs of Mr. Lincoln in existence. These articles have become the property of the Memorial Association of the District of Columbia, through the generosity of one of its members, Mr. Gardiner G. Hubbard.

THE WORLD'S MONEY.

France Has More Per Capita Than Any Other Nation.

It is interesting to know that while the United States is one of the richest countries in the world its stock of gold and silver money is not by any means so large as that of France, which has more metallic money than any other nation.

The gold coins of the world are equal in value to \$3,582,605,000, and the silver coins to \$4,041,700,000, while the paper money has a face value of \$2,635,873,000.

Of this vast amount France has \$800,000,000 worth of gold and \$700,000,000 worth of silver; the United States \$601,000,000 worth of gold and \$615,000,000 worth of silver, and Great Britain \$550,000,000 of gold and \$100,000,000 of silver. Germany has \$600,000,000 worth of gold coin and \$211,000,000 worth of silver, while Russia, with a much larger population, has \$250,000,000 worth of gold and \$80,000,000 worth of silver coin. She has, however, \$500,000,000 worth of paper money, while South America keeps in circulation \$900,000,000 worth of the United States, \$412,000,000 Austria, \$290,000,000 Italy, \$163,000,000 Germany, \$107,000,000 France, \$81,000,000 and Great Britain, \$59,000,000.

If the gold coins of the United States were divided into equal shares, each person would have about \$9. Following the same plan, every Englishman, woman and child would have about \$14.50, every German about \$12, every Russian about \$2.25 and every Frenchman about \$20.

The ratio for all kinds of money would still leave the Frenchman the richest man in the world, for if all the gold, silver and paper money in France were shared equally he would have \$40.50, while the citizen of the United States would have \$21.50, the residents of Austria, Belgium and Holland a little more, the Englishman \$13.50 and the Russian only \$7.16.—Chicago News.

Double the Quantity, Same Price.

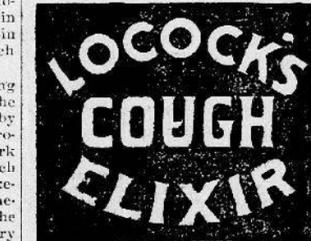
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