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PHŒBE'S EXPLOIT.

BY FRANCIS LYNDE.

SHE was the daughter of John Artley, whose run on the Western division began and ended at Orival Junction. The junction consisted of a round-house, the railway station, a few shanties, a dreary boarding-house and a choice collection of future possibilities; but Phœbe, being motherless, spent much of her time on her father's engine, or in her uncle's office at the station, and so got a larger view of life than the junction itself could give.

At fourteen she had two ambitions. One was for her father, reaching out to the time when he should have a smart "eight-wheeler" and a passenger run. The other dated from a trip to Cheyenne with her father when he was a member of the grievance committee.

"You'll have to put in your time around the hotel while I go to the meeting," he had told her; and Phœbe betook herself to the parlor, where a smartly-dressed young woman was playing upon an ancient and somewhat "tin-panny" piano. The music was of the kind called "popular," and the performer played as the Irishman blew the cornet—by main strength and awkwardness—but Phœbe went back to Orival Junction that night with a conviction that life was scarcely worth living without a piano and the ability to play it.

She said something of the kind to her uncle the next day when she was helping him on the coal report, and he laughed at her.

"I thought you were beyond such things," he said. "A girl who can run a locomotive, figure bills of lading and telegraph the arm off half the operators on the line to be wanting such a fine lady's plaything as a piano!"

"Oh, but, Uncle Tom, you just ought to have heard her! She played and played till I forgot who I was and where I came from. You can't think how beautiful it was!"

"Yes, I can. I was night operator at Cheyenne once, and I actually lived in the house with that piano for six months. And I hope everybody who kept me awake with it when I was trying to catch up on my sleep will be forgiven," he added, taking the "Freight Forwarded" book from the safe.

"Don't you like music, Uncle Tom?" she asked, getting the bunch of abstracts to call off to him.

"Oh, music, yes—but that's different. We used to have music back at the old home in Ohio; your Aunt Phœbe played the organ in church, and we sang in the choir, first and last."

"Did ma play?"

"Yes."

"Well, I mean to learn, and I mean to have a piano, too, sometime. I wish pa could get a run so we could live in a town; then I might hear music once in awhile anyway."

"But what would become of me? I couldn't get along without you."

"You'd come, too. As if I didn't know that you keep this job just so's to be with us!"

That was the fact. Tom Norman had transferred his love for his favorite sister to her child, and he had followed John Artley's shifting fortunes from one desolate division station to another, for the sole purpose of watching over and caring for Phœbe.

"Do you believe pa ever will get a good run?" asked Phœbe, when the

"GIMME THAT TIME TABLE!"

freight forwarded had all been entered.

"Oh, I hope so. We'll go on hoping so to the end of the chapter, too, won't we? Answer that call, will you, Phœbe?"

Phœbe sat down at the telegraph table, snapped the key, and wrote "ce" "ce" "ce," signing "oj." Then she dipped the pen and took down the message:

"Large gangs of tramps are moving eastward on freight trains. Denver reports that more have left there to meet Californias at Orival. Watch incoming east-bound freights and report promptly any unusual number of tramps at your station."

"What's that—more trouble?" asked Norman, catching a word here and there in the message.

Phœbe sighed wearily. "Oh dear, yes, it's more tramps; and it'll be just pa's luck to catch them out of here on 201 to-night."

Norman read the message and shook his head dubiously. "I've been afraid of that all summer," he said. "There has been a bigger crowd than usual from California this season, and, now the Leadville excitement is dying down, they'll be pouring out of Denver by the carload. I hope they won't make trouble here; it wouldn't take more than twenty-five or thirty of them to take the town and everybody in it."

Phœbe bit the end of her penholder and thrust out her chin in a way that made her look very much like resolute John Artley. "I know one thing they won't do," she said, with a defiant little nod. "They won't make pa pull 201 unless he has orders, like they did Mike McGaffey last spring."

The afternoon wore away without incident, and there was nothing to report until seven o'clock, when the two sections of 201 came in fairly alive with tramps. Twenty minutes later the time freight from Denver arrived, bringing another contingent. The conductors reported that there had been no violence, but that was because the train crews had been so far outnumbered as to put resistance out of the question.

Norman wired a full report of the situation to the dispatcher, and while he was waiting for instructions the tramps began to straggle into the waiting-room by twos and threes. In the absence of orders to the contrary, train No. 201 had been made up and pulled out on the main line ready to go east. Norman knew this, and as neither Artley nor the conductor had come in for orders, he began to get uneasy.

"You go over to the boarding house, Phœbe, and stay with Mrs. Hannah," he said. "This is no place for you to-night."

"Please let me stay," pleaded Phœbe. "They won't hurt me, and I should go crazy over there by myself, and not knowing what was happening to you and pa. Besides, I'll be a good deal safer here with you."

Norman was going to insist, but the wire called him. He answered and took the message rapidly:

"Hold 201 for orders. Use all means to prevent tramps from seizing train or engine. Special with sheriff's posse will reach you about eight-thirty p. m."

Phœbe heard the message as it clicked through the sounder, and looked at the station clock. It was now nearly eight—if the men would only keep quiet for half an hour!

It was a vain hope. Two minutes later there was a scuffle on the platform, and Artley and the conductor were dragged into the waiting-room. One of the tramps—a big, burly fellow with red whiskers and flaming eyes—acted as spokesman.

"You shet up," the spokesman was saying to her father. "You hain't got nothin' to say about it. W'en you git orders you'll pull that train, 'r we'll chuck ye into yer own fire-box. See?"

Phœbe heard the threat in wild-eyed horror.

Norman for five minutes rattled away at the key, writing an endless string of unmeaning dots and dashes, to fill up time. Then the red-bearded man interrupted him.

"Gimme that time-table," he said, pointing to the sheet hanging over the operator's desk.

Norman hesitated, obeying finally at the point of a pistol. The man ran his grimy finger up and down the columns of figures until he found what he wanted.

"It's all right, boys; we don't need no orders. Fust meetin'-point's fifty miles down the road. Mister lightnin'-slinger, you come out from behind there—we'll take you 'long, an' then you won't be gittin' a switch turned ag'in' us at the fust side track."

Norman held back and tried to gain more time by arguing the case, but the pistol came into play again, and he had to go, without so much as a word to Phœbe, who was pale with indignation and fright.

When Norman surrendered, the man spoke again: "Now then, git a move on that ingine-driver, an' we'll go."

Phœbe's first impulse was to rush out after them to plead for her father's life; then she suddenly remembered that the special train was coming from the east. Supposing her father yielded; or, what was more likely, supposing they put him on the engine and made him responsible for his life and theirs, while one of their number ran it? Phœbe threw herself down at the table and began to call the first station east of Orival with frantic eagerness. If she could only raise the operator at Little Butte in time to have them warn the sheriff's special!

Again and again she wrote "lu" "lu," signing "oj" at every fourth repetition, but there was no answering break, and the angry voices on the platform grew louder and more threatening. At last, knowing that death-messages take precedence of all others, she wrote "ceth" "deth" "deth" between the signatures, and then the operator at Little Butte broke in and answered. Phœbe began to tremble nervously through her message, but he broke in again:

"West bound special passed here five minutes ago," was what came clicking back; and then she knew that if 201 left Orival there would be a collision.

The mere thought of it made her sick and faint, and the lights in the office seemed to be going out. Then she gasped and came to herself with a little jerk when the crowd began to move down the platform, and she heard the leader say: "All right, my covey; we'll put you on the ingine an' go anyway."

Before the crowd was fairly in motion, Phœbe had snatched the switch-key from its nail on the wall, and, darting out of the back door, she skirted the mob and flew through the darkness toward the forward end of the long freight train. As she ran she prayed that the engine might not be beyond the end of the siding, and she nearly cried with thankfulness when she could see the red eye of the signal-lamp peering around the front end of the big mogul. In ten seconds more she was at the switch-stand, the red eye flashed to the east, and the two lines of rails glistening under the mogul's headlight swerved to the side track. Knowing that there was a chance for failure if she tried to start the heavy train, Phœbe darted back and pulled the coupling-pin between the tender and the first car, running forward again to climb into the engine just as the first stragglers of the crowd began to come up. They gave her but a moment, but that was enough. Engine 399 had an easy throttle, and Phœbe had opened it more than once. The vanguard of the tramp army saw a flutter of skirts on the footboard, heard a hissing of steam in the cylinders and two or three sharp coughs from the exhaust, and then the big mogul dropped from the end of the open switch and plowed into the ties, blocking the track as effectually as fifty tons of iron and steel could do it.

Phœbe did not wait to see what would happen afterward. She had done her part; there would be no collision; and they could not blame her father for something that he had no hand in. She was safe in Mrs. Hannah's kitchen by the time the special whistled for the station; and when the train rattled up and the sounds of the fray floated across the tracks to her refuge, she hid her face in Mrs. Hannah's apron and cried as any other girl might whose father and uncle were in the thick of a battle.

"There, there, Phœbe, girl; don't cry, dear; they'll be all right," comforted Mrs. Hannah, and she was still trying to console Phœbe when Tom Norman ran in.

"Where is she? Where's the little girl that's got more sense and sand than all the rest of us put together?"

Phœbe looked up quickly. "Oh, Uncle Tom, where's pa? Is he hurt?"

"No, he's all right; only they're about to smother him with praise. Mr. Johnson's over at the station, and he wants to see you."

Five minutes later a shy little girl with a tear-stained face was led into the presence of the superintendent, who sat at the telegraph-desk sending messages right and left. He rose and took Phœbe's hands in his in a way that made the little group of trainmen forget for the moment that he was the stern "old man" of the division.

"And this is the little girl who ditches our engines, is it?" he said. "What put such a thing into your head, my child?"

"Oh, it didn't have to be put in; I knew there would be a head-ender if I didn't do something quick, and I couldn't think of anything else."

Mr. Johnson smiled at the ready relapse into railway phrase, and said: "It

SHE WAS AT THE SWITCH STAND.

was a bright thought; it has saved us a good many dollars, and probably some lives, too. Now, if the company were a good fairy, like those in the story-books, what would you ask for a reward?"

Phœbe had a sudden inspiration. "Oh, Mr. Johnson, there's one thing that would make me happier than anything else; if pa could only have a good run, so we could live in a real town!"

Mr. Johnson looked around at the circle of friendly faces. "I think your father has earned that for himself," he said, quietly. "Is that the only thing you want?"

"Oh, no, indeed," replied Phœbe, candidly; "but, you see, if we lived in a town, perhaps I could get some of the other things. We might happen to get acquainted with somebody that had a piano, and then, maybe, I could learn to play, and—" Here Phœbe suddenly realized that she was chattering—actually chattering to the man of whom everyone on the division stood in awe, and she shut up like an oyster that had been caught napping with its shell open.

The superintendent laughed at her confusion and sat down to finish his telegraphing. "When the general manager hears that, I'm sure he'll be sorry that the company doesn't run a piano-factory," he said; whereat the men laughed, too.

Mr. Johnson had a little private conversation with Artley and Norman that night after Phœbe had gone back to Mrs. Hannah, and several things came of it. For one, the engineer got his smart "eight-wheeler" and a passenger run with the promptness that characterizes western railway promotion when the head of a department makes up his mind; and, at the same time, Norman found his way smoothed for a transfer in a most miraculous manner. A third event growing out of the same talk concerned Phœbe, but she knew nothing about it until one day, after they were settled in a comfortable cottage in the "real town," a van drove up to the door with a piano. It was a gift from the railway company to Phœbe; and on a silver plate just above the keyboard was the inscription:

> To Miss Phœbe Artley:
> For meritorious services
> on the night of September sixth,
> at Orival Junction.
>
> —Outlook.

That Settled It.

Dick—And you will not marry me?

May—Naw!

"That settles it. If you had said 'No,' I might still hope; but 'Naw!'—good-by forever."—Truth.

STEEPED IN INIQUITY.

A Commune of Vice Which Thrives in Washington's Parks.

Spots Which Are the Delight of Women and Children During the Day Become Hotbeds of Crime at Night.

[Special Washington Letter.]

When the sun has given the placid waters of the Potomac his brilliant good-night kiss, and touched with gold the tall treetops on the warm tinted heights and hills; when the aluminum tip of the Washington monument and the bronze goddess on the capitol dome have cast their last shadows, it is pleasant to roam through the public parks and stroll in the twilight along the Mall, to commune with nature in the midst of a wilderness of architecture and artificial human existence.

The perfume-laden botanical gardens, near the western wall of the spacious capitol grounds, are surrounded with a

WITH GLEAMING HATCHET UPLIFTED.

high iron fence, the gates are closed, and the poor people of the republic can only gaze through the bars and sniff the incense of nature, vainly longing for closer contact with the rare exotic beauties which the public servants withhold from their sovereign rulers. The great Bartholdi fountain is playing its crystal streams beneath electric lights; but children, women and men may view it only between the interstices of the rails, and wonder why the bars are there. But, even under these circumstances, we can enjoy the beauties and fragrance of the place which millions of our countrymen would gladly view, and who must envy us as favored and pampered people.

Between these gardens and the white house grounds, south of Pennsylvania avenue, for nearly a mile there is one continuous verdure which includes the arsenal, national museum, Smithsonian, agricultural department and monument parks, overspread with the branches of ancient trees in which the swallows, robins and other aerial inhabitants twitter, chirp and sing until lulled to slumber by their own music. These places belong to the people, but when the shades of night are falling fast they are usually forsaken by ladies and children because the Ishmaelites congregate there; the men whom circumstances and conditions have rendered homeless, friendless and, therefore, not wholly amiable. They are the men whose hands are against every man, and who feel that the hands of all mankind are raised against them. They people the Mall at night, just as the birds people the trees. Whence they come or whither they go matters little, for they are small factors in the multiples of a great city, and not one of their integers commands personal care or attention. It is only when they violate law and order that they are taken into custody; but in the meanwhile they are objects of suspicion and dread, so that the timid and frail forsake the Mall when the stars and moon are overhead.

There are long benches in these continuous parks which are occupied dur-

HE WAS DANCING WITH THE OTHERS.

ing the day by mothers and nurses, while children gambol on the grass beneath the splendid umbrage of the great green arms of the gigantic trees. At night they are occupied by many a weary wanderer who is harmless, but homeless. They are not disturbed by the rude command to "move on," which blue-coaled peace guardians in other cities harshly utter to similar sons of man. But before they take complete possession of these places at midnight to seek "tired nature's sweet restorer, balmy sleep," they look like dangerous marauders, and some of their number may well be feared. In the Smithsonian grounds many an unwary man has felt the weight of a club in the hands of a tramp, to awake from a swoon and find his watch and purse gone, never to be recovered.

As I walked through the park near the Union depot, between the botanical and arsenal grounds the other night, there was a cry of "police" to the left near "Tincup alley," followed by a shrill repetition of calls for "help." Hastily turning in the direction of the sound, and fearing a stray bullet in the dark, I came upon an old man with gleaming hatchet uplifted over the head of a burly fellow who had fallen upon his knees. From the opposite side came a park watchman who grabbed at the uplifted arm. The old man shouted: "Let me alone, and take that thief."

The watchman grasped the burly fellow just as he rose to run away; and then the old man said: "Take his revolver. He dropped it there where I was standing. I am a clerk in Blank's store. I bought this new hatchet, and was walking along home with my hands behind my back when this fellow stopped me with a demand for my money. I swung my hatchet aloft, and he dropped his pistol. There it is.

It was true. The highwayman of the park had assailed an apparently helpless old man, and was surprised with the suddenness of his capture. He will probably spend a term of years in the penitentiary. But that will produce no reformation. He will come forth as he entered the jail, a natural-born Ishmaelite, to resume a life of lawlessness. Before he undertakes to assault another old man, however, he will warily watch him and ascertain whether or not he has a tomahawk concealed about his person.

Nobody would expect to find Patagonia or Abyssinia in the vicinity of the center of learning, statesmanship, science and progress of the western hemisphere. The most vivid imagination would not be likely to conjure up visions of Fiji islanders in all their crudity and nudity within sight of her majesty, the Goddess of Liberty, on the dome; but here, beneath the blue canopy of heaven, with the light of the stars for tapers, and the moon for a lantern, in a by-path leading from the park to Maine avenue, which is near by toward the south, haw-haws and guffaws of loud and discordant laughter attracted attention, and there, like unkempt denizens of the Pacific wilds, a group of men and women were found dancing and howling in aboriginal glee.

The women were from a contiguous quarter known as Louse alley, and the men were from everywhere. They were blacker than the night, shamefully indifferent to their conditions. They were black women of sin and black men of wickedness. Iniquity is their portion and crime their pastime. They were apparently not disturbing the peace of the neighborhood, and police interference was not thought of by any of them; nor by me. For our Washington police force is composed of humanitarian philanthropists who never interrupt orgies of any sort, unless some tragedy results, and then they make arrests as a matter of necessity. These people were hilariously full of five-cent whisky, or three-cent gin; but there seemed to be no law violated, and no reason on the statute books for the prevention of their degradation, nor of the contamination of their influence. You will not wonder that I said above that women and children cannot enjoy these parks of the Mall after the shadows of nature fall, because then the shadows of crime stalk forth and permeate even the atmosphere.

The only man in the crowd of half-civilized savages who was decently clad were the blue uniform of a sailor in the navy of the United States. He was dancing with the others, out in the night within a mile of the navy yard, as wildly and frantically as any of the foul and wretched beings about him. No man can doubt the stories of demoniacal possession which the Scriptures narrate after having witnessed such a scene. All of these creatures were bereft of true reason, and were entirely under the influence of the demon of the still. Through the trees I could see the gleaming spire of the Metropolitan Methodist church, where Bishop Newman preached so long, and beneath whose eloquent ministrations tens of thousands of dollars had been contributed to send abroad for the support of the missionaries in foreign lands.

Within five minutes' walk, in the direction of any point of the compass, a man might come to the door of some Christian sanctuary where other tens of thousands of dollars have been raised for a similar purpose, and yet, we have heathen so near home. Why is it that the eyes of sanctity so often look over the heads of these creatures of God and stretch and strain their visual power to see a necessity for proselyting in countries far away, while in our midst is a lower order of civilization, a thriving commune of crime which never heard the story of Calvary, nor ever dreamed that they have a Father who is the same Father to whom the white men and women clad in purple and fine linen pray, and for whose worship they build houses of worship too fine for our home heathen to enter?

Still the stars were shining, and the moon was beaming, and the southern breezes were rustling the leaves overhead as I continued a ramble which developed other scenes which deepened and emphasized the reflections which have been written above. All along the Mall there were groups of men with bottles of liquid damnation which they passed from lip to lip until stupidity or quarrelsome dispositions resulted. Profanity polluted the pure air of the sylvan place and ribald songs which cannot be quoted were sung by the depraved human beings who know not truth and right, but dwell in sin without the light of life. And all these things were seen and heard between the capitol and the monument, on the Mall which has been provided for the enjoyment of the pure and innocent. And yet, professing love for God and man, and with intent to preach the Gospel "to every creature," we will continue to absolutely ignore these whom He called "My brethren," forgetting that inasmuch as we have thus shamefully neglected the fallen at home we have done it unto Him.

SMITH D. FRY.

Not Unusual.

Watts—Did you ever know of anyone dying for love?

Potts—Once. I knew a fellow who starved to death after being refused by an heiress.—Indianapolis Journal.

HOME HINTS AND HELPS.

—Yankee Dried Beef: Chip beef very thin, parboil, pour off the water, add milk and thickening, and a lump of butter.—Western Rural.

—Stuffed Beef's Heart: Stuff a beef's heart with dressing, as made for turkey, pour over one cup of water and roast until tender.—Chicago Record.

—Pineapple Compote: Cut pineapple into small dice, stew slowly in a rich sirup, take one fruit, add to the sirup one-third of a box of gelatine previously dissolved in half a cup of hot water. Strain all over pineapple. Serve cold.—Prairie Farmer.

—Broiled Sardines on Toast: Select fine, firm sardines; arrange them in a double broiler and broil for two minutes on each side over a very brisk fire. Place on fresh toast, pour over a little maitre d'hotel sauce, garnish with lemon and parsley.—Chicago Record.

—Cocoanut Pie: Soak one and one-half cupfuls of shredded cocoanut two hours in one pint of sweet milk, then add one cupful of granulated sugar, the well-beaten yolks of three eggs, flavoring to taste. Put in a deep tin with an under crust and bake at least thirty minutes. Use the whites to frost it.—Prairie Farmer.

—Hard Sauce: Beat one cupful of sugar and half a cupful butter to a cream, add the whites of two eggs beaten to a stiff froth, and a tablespoonful of lemon or any flavoring to taste. Beat all together a few minutes; pile lightly upon a dish, grate nutmeg over it, and set it on the ice to harden until needed. — Boston Budget.

—There is nothing more unappetizing than the ordinary boiled potato, and nothing daintier and more palatable than potatoes served as they may be served. Potato croquettes are delicious. Boil and mash thoroughly four or five potatoes, add cream, butter and salt. Cream them and add the white of one egg beaten to a froth. Make into oblong rolls with the hands and dip into the yolk of the egg, and then into cracker crumbs. Put in a wire basket and fry in deep hot lard until a nice brown.—N. Y. World.

—Gooseberry Jelly: Green gooseberries are one of those good fruits that one can not make too much of, and yet the cooking of them in most households is exceedingly monotonous. Stew a pint of green gooseberries in a quart of water with sugar, allow them to get cold, and then heat them again, for this will make the fruit a nice pink color. Dissolve an ounce of gelatine in water, add to it a quarter of a pound of sugar and place it in the juice of the fruit, which should be carefully strained and clear, add sufficient water to make a pint and a half in all. Pour into a wetted mold, and when cold serve.—Leed's Mercury.

—Spanish Cream: One-quarter of a box of gelatine, one-quarter of a cup of cold water, the yolks of four eggs, three tablespoonfuls of sugar, one-half a saltspoonful of salt, one pint of milk, the whites of three eggs, one teaspoonful of vanilla. Soak the gelatine in cold water until soft, then dissolve it in boiling water. Make a custard with the yolks of the eggs beaten and mixed with the sugar and salt. Pour on the hot milk and cook in the double boiler till it thickens. Add the strained gelatine, water, vanilla and the whites of the eggs beaten stiff. Mix all well and turn into molds wet in cold water. Place in ice-chest. When hard serve.—Chicago Record.

FRUIT LUNCHEONS.

How to Prepare a Palatable Warm Weather Repast.

As the fruit season comes again, all good housekeepers who like to entertain are fond of making plans for dainty little luncheons, to which they may invite their very dearest friends. An orange luncheon has already been described, and a strawberry and banana luncheon is well worth a few notes. It may be said just here that a fruit salad composed of strawberries, bananas and oranges is one of the most delicious things imaginable. It is not difficult to get up fruit luncheons, provided one has some dainty china, fine table linen and a small amount of cut glass and silver. Oranges should be prepared in the morning, cut into slices and sprinkled with sugar and set in the ice-box. The bananas must be left until the last moment, as they turn black when cut any time before using, but they may be laid in the ice-box if one likes them very cold. Strawberries may be hulled immediately on their receipt. This is best done by dropping them for a few moments into cold water, whirling them gently around, then lifting them out one by one, picking off the hulls and placing them carefully on a dish. These in turn may be set into the ice-box, but under no circumstances should they come in contact with the ice; strawberries lose their most delicate flavor once they are chilled. If kept perfectly cold until time to serve them, they will be exceedingly fresh and crisp. A few fresh strawberry leaves may be placed around the edge of the dish in which the berries are served. A portion of them may be mixed with the bananas and oranges, or they may be served into the same dish if the guests prefer. Strawberry ice-cream and strawberry short-cake are the usual accompaniments.

Among the most appropriate decorations are hawthorn blossoms, if the season admits. There are also many wild flowers that closely resemble the strawberry, quite enough so, at least, to pass as a decoration. Roses are allowable, and there should be an abundance of green, of which there is no lack in strawberry time. Strawberry leaves, properly handled, are very effective in decorating the room when mixed with other greens.

Sandwiches of boiled tongue are very nice and delicate. The bread should be cut very thin, and the butter must be of the finest quality. Nothing is so disappointing as a sandwich in which the butter is not satisfactory.

Iced tea and lemonade, with oranges and strawberries, or claret punch, will be found most satisfactory beverages. —N. Y. Ledger.