



Playing the Hermit

By LAWRENCE ALFRED CLAY

Bascom Hayes was missing. His sister and her husband, with whom he lived, said he was—his club friends said the same thing—the public press announced that he had vanished off the face of the earth without leaving so much as a trail of dust behind.

And who was Bascom Hayes to be missing and have whistles blown and horns tooted and private detectives set on edge? Just an old bachelor with a comfortable income, complacent in his nature and lazy and unambitious by nature.

Missing! No clew! Last seen sitting in a public park at midnight. Had a despondent air and was so pre-occupied that when a "vag" called him "Cully" and struck him for a quarter he neither answered to the name nor handed over the shiner. Poul play, perhaps, as he was known always to carry enough with him to pay his taxi fare, no matter how much the chauffeur meddled with the clock. No reason known why he should climb to the top of the Singer building and leap off. His laundry account was paid up to the last cent, and he was three cigarette packages ahead of the game. No reward, but the grateful thanks of a sister for information.

No reward, but still a score of private detectives called and expressed their willingness to take up the case for the prestige it would give one. He would have been but for his voice. Striking an attitude he hoarsely whispered:

"In love—got the skate—jumped from one of the bridges! He had reached that age when a turn-down is fatal to a man. His body will be found washed up on Staten Island! I go to keep watch!"

"But Bascom was not in love," protested the sister. "He has never loved. A thousand times he has declared he would never marry."

"Sly dog—sly dog!" whispered the detective. "He was simply putting you off the scent. Listen to me. On the last night you saw him I was walking on Madison avenue, following the trail of a murderer. Of a sudden the front of door No. 4,000,000 opens and

"Now that you are married," said the experienced minister to the young couple, "you will have to stop using the church Bible for home study. Oh, yes, I know how it is. You get attached to a certain Bible, and you study better with that right under your nose, and would willingly pack it back and forth for the inspiration it affords. I've been through it. Used to do that very thing myself, but after half a dozen Yells and a pair of gloves and some little lacey things that I shall not attempt to specify flashed down from the pulpit on Sunday mornings in view of the astonished and amused congregation, I accustomed myself to two Bibles. The women folk will put things into the Bible to press. It is a habit you can't break them off, and the first thing you know these feminine knick-knacks go sailing away to humiliate you."

That night the curate turned the pages of his Bible carefully. A veil and a scrap of lace fell out. He sighed. The next day he began to cultivate an affection for a second Bible.

Diary of a Fly-Killer. Monday—My attention was called last night to a statement that house flies are bearers of disease and should be destroyed as soon as possible. I began my crusade against them this morning. It was a little discouraging, because there was only one fly in the house and it was quite agile. I escaped me. I broke two vases and a photograph frame.

Tuesday—I nearly killed three this afternoon, but the lamp got in the way. It was a \$7 lamp.

Wednesday—I saw a fly on the outside of the fly screen and raised the screen so I could hit it. Seventeen flies flew in. I missed it.

Thursday—There was a sluggish looking fly on the window with closed wings. I stole toward it cautiously, but it flew up just as I let the blow fall. Then I knew it wasn't a fly. It was a wasp. My nose began to swell at once.

Friday—My nose is a sight. Drat the flies—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

A Trifle Withered. In his native tongue no one could have made more graceful speeches than Monsieur Blanc, but when he occupied compliments in English he was not quite so successful.

"Have I changed in the five years since we met in Paris?" asked the elderly woman who desired above all things to be thought younger, much younger, than she was.

"Madame," said the courtier, his hand on his heart, "you look like a rose of 20 years!"—Youth's Companion.

In Seclusion. "Is your mistress at home?" "Are you the manœuvre lady?" "No, indeed!" "Then she ain't at home, mum."

The Flavour of Post Toasties. Is so distinctly pleasing that it has won the liking of both young and old who never before cared much for cereal food of any kind.

Served direct from the package—crisp and fresh, and— "The Memory Lingers" Postum Cereal Company, Ltd., Battle Creek, Mich.

just why he was missing, but she wasn't chasing around to volunteer information. Widows know when to keep quiet. Besides, after several days had gone by she received a letter from a friend in the country containing news that relieved her mind considerably and brought a smile to her face and a plan to her mind.

"I wish you were here," wrote the correspondent. "There's an old log house in the woods half a mile down the road. It has not been occupied for years, and is sadly out of repair. No old rags! No venerable whiskers! Middle-aged and decently dressed, and they say he spends most of his time mooning and sighing. Lives mostly on turnips, I guess, and sleeps on a brush bed. Uncle Jim was over here yesterday, but could not get much out of him. Seems to be some one who has been disappointed in love, and thinks the world has gone to smash. Hurry down and help us to solve the mystery by finding the guilty party who gave him the shake."

The widow smiled and nodded as she read the letter. She even said to herself: "Yes, that would be just like him." Then she went to packing so as to leave for the country sooner than she had planned for. She started, arrived, and was welcomed. She had scarcely hugged her friend when she was greeted with:

"The hermit is there yet. We heard him crooning a love song last night, after stealing onions and turnips for his supper."

"Some escaped lunatic, probably." "Oh, no, he can't be. He's just breaking his heart over some woman. What a wicked wretch she must be to drive him out of the world in this way!"

"Y-e-s. And what a nippy he must be to have been driven."

"Now, then, hurry up and change and get lunch and we'll go over to the hut. Perhaps we can encourage and console him."

An hour later the widow announced that she was going to see the hermit. She might or might not know him, but she had an idea she did. There was considerable argument about her going alone, but she prevailed, and got directions and started off. It was an ideal place for a hermit. The woods and brush were dense, the old house almost roofless, and a more lonely spot could not have been found for ten miles around. From the shelter of a brush the widow took a long look. Only a woodpecker was to be seen and heard, and he was certainly a dejected looking bird. After a time an advance was made to the gaping doorway, and the hermit of the wilderness was made out to be seated in a dark corner with his head on his knees.

"Bascom, come out!" The figure never stirred. "Come out, I say!" "Who—what?"

"Come out and don't play the nippy." "Is it you, Nina?" was asked in a mournful voice as a disheveled figure arose and came to the door.

"Of course it is. Come along!" "It's too late!" "Too late, nothing!"

And she, took the hermit's hand and led him to a little garden and sat him down and seated herself beside him and said:

"All I said that night was that a man with your money and brains ought to do something to make your self known to the world, and you became angry and took your departure."

"But you—your ultimatum—"

"Yes, but that's all passed. You have done something, and that's all I asked. You are in all the papers. You are the talk of the town. You are being searched for. Bascom, no woman wants to marry a nonentity. You are not one. You have made a fool of yourself and we'll be married as soon as you wish!"

How to Cook a Loon. Bill Crozer, a guide for fifty-two years at Charleston Lake in Ontario, Canada, has a novel receipt for cooking a loon. He was rowing a couple of Somerville, N. J., councilmen a few weeks ago and when a loon came in sight the strangers asked Bill if they were good to eat.

Bill replied in a rather evasive way, and one of the fishermen then asked and the detective in mousing around had seen a man leave the house at a late hour. He didn't know whether the man was the widow's grandfather, father, uncle or brother, but he called him Bascom Gray. The little widow also knew that Mr. Gray was missing. She heard of it orally, and she read in the papers. She also knew

felt confident that he could be king if only he could reach Paris, but he had no money. He explained the situation to General Neville, who advanced a few hundred dollars. Philippe insisted on leaving a pear-shaped ring as security.

Philippe went to France by way of New Orleans, was made king, and repaid the loan, asking that General Neville keep the ring, and also urging him to come and visit the king in Paris. The ring was inherited and valued by several descendants of General Neville, until it came to Miss Strong, who, as a matter of caution, has been rather reticent about its history.

"The ring consists of a pear-shaped diamond, set in black enamel and gold, and is rather odd looking in these days of fashionable jewelry."—Washington Post.

Some men are so unscrupulous that they would actually rather play solitaire than poker.

WOMAN ESCAPES OPERATION

Was Cured by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound

Elwood, Ind.—"Your remedies have cured me and I have only taken six bottles of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I was sick three months and could not walk. I suffered all the time. The doctors said I could not get well without an operation, for I could hardly stand the pains in my sides, especially my right one, and down my right leg. I began to feel better when I had taken only one bottle of Compound, but kept on as I was afraid to stop too soon."—Mrs. SADIE MULLEN, 2128 N. B. St., Elwood, Ind.

Why will women take chances with an operation or drag out a sickly, half-hearted existence, missing three-fourths of the joy of living, when they can find health in Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound? For thirty years it has been the standard remedy for female ills, and has cured thousands of women who have been troubled with such ailments as displacements, inflammation, ulceration, fibroid tumors, irregularities, periodic pains, backache, indigestion, and nervous prostration.

If you have the slightest doubt that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will help you, write to Mrs. Pinkham at Lynn, Mass., for advice. Your letter will be absolutely confidential, and the advice free.

CONTAGIOUS.



Gayboze—When my wife saw the condition I was in when I got home from the club last night it just staggered her! Martini—I'm not surprised. You know you drank enough for two, old man!

HAVE YOU SUSPECTED YOUR KIDNEYS?

Thousands suffer from backache, headache, dizziness and weariness without suspecting their kidneys. Mrs. Joseph Gross, Church St., Morrilton, Ark., says: "For weeks I was all doubled over with pain. I became so dizzy I had to grasp something to keep from falling and my ankles were swollen to nearly twice their natural size. None of the doctors understood my case and I felt myself sinking lower day by day. I improved rapidly through the use of Doan's Kidney Pills and at last was entirely cured."

"When Your Back is Lame, Remember the Name—DOAN'S." For sale by druggists and general storekeepers everywhere. Price 50c. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

Order of Independents. Larry O'Neil had no love of discipline save as he administered it. When he decided to "fine the parade," he breathed defiance with every order issued by the military leader.

"Here, you! Look out for yer feet!" muttered the man next him. "Keep shtep, can't you?" "Get along wid yer shteps," said Larry, turning on him. "I've a shtep o' me own, an' I'll take it or lave the parade to get on Widout me."—Youth's Companion.

Forebodings. Webster had made his great speech in reply to Haynes. "Some day, I suppose," he mused, "it will devolve upon Henney Cabot Lodge or Winthrop Crane to squelch Ben Tillman, and I'm not so blamed sure they can do it!"

Proper Treatment. "I have a terrible cold," he complained. "My head feels all stopped up." "Have you tried a vacuum cleaner?" she queried sweetly.—Judge.

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Do you ever have Headache, Toothache, or Earache? Most people do. Hamline Wizard Oil is the best household remedy and liniment for these everyday troubles.

A mule seldom kicks without cause, but a man is different.

INDIGNANT AT THE INJUSTICE

Scholars Would Not Stand to See Much-Loved Teacher Not Getting Her Rights.

The following incident told of a public school teacher of cheery manner and marked ability, noted for her success in lending backward or unwilling pupils along the rocky road to knowledge.

In laboring with an especially trying class she was wont to encourage the members by such confident remarks as "Of course we can do it!" "Of course we can learn this lesson as well as other people, if we try!" As examination time drew near and the little ones became more nervous, she changed her tune to "Of course we're going to pass!" The children did pass, duly, but, natural pleasure in the unexpected success having evaporated, were sulky and disagreeable almost beyond belief. It took their new teacher a long time to get at the root of the misunderstanding, over which they whispered in corners and because of which they treated her like a bitter enemy. At last, however, she drew from the most pliable youngster this indignant: tearful admission.

"We ain't a-goin' ter study no more in this darned old school. Here, we come up from Miss Blank's room, an' she stays down there all alone, when she knows so much more than we do. It's a plum shame that they didn't let her pass, too!"

A Matter of Creed. "Two men were disputing over their respective churches," says the Slater News in reviving an old story which is still good. "One was a Baptist and the other a Presbyterian. Finally one of them called a neighbor who was passing and asked his opinion as to which was the better church in which to be saved. 'Well, neighbor,' he said, 'son and I have been hauling wheat for nearly forty years. There are two roads that lead to the mill. One is the valley road and the other leads over the hill, and never yet has the miller asked me which road I came, but he always asks, 'Is the wheat good?'"—Kansas City Times.

Left Him Far Behind. Childish standards of greatness are interesting—perhaps because they are at once so like yet so unlike the standards of grown folk. Many an adult, for instance, has been proud with no more reasonable basis than that which little Johnnie displayed in attempting to "top" the boasting of a juvenile comrade.

"I've got a real railroad train, with an engine that goes, an' a real, live pony, an' a really, truly gun, an'—"

"That's nothing!" interrupted the lad's disgusted listener. "Once I knew a boy that sat up until 11 o'clock twice in one week!"

Important to Mothers. Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, a safe and sure remedy for infants and children, and see that it bears the Signature of *Chas. H. Fletcher* in Use For Over 30 Years. Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

An Unsleeping Youth. "What business do you think your son will adopt?" "Can't say," replied Farmer Corn-tassel, "but judging by the hours Josh keeps, I should say he was naturally cut out to be a milkman."

The Hero's Lament. Achilles lamented his vulnerable heel. "It means my wife will always make me wipe my shoes off when I come in the house," he cried.

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Grand Opera Pianist. Advertisement of a London employment agency: "Expert grand opera pianist; male or female. One speaking French preferred."

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A woman isn't self-made just because she makes her own complexion.

WINTERSMITH'S CHILL TONIC. NO CURE NO PAY. A Fine General Tonic. Contains no arsenic or other poisons. Leaves no bad effects like quinine. If your Druggist or Merchant can't supply it, write to ARTHUR PETER & CO., Gen. Agts, Louisville, Ky.

PUTNAM FADELESS DYES. Color more goods brighter and faster colors than any other dye. One lb. package colors all fibers. They dye in cold water better than any other dye. You can dye any garment without ripping apart. Write for free booklet—How to Dye, Bleach and Mix Colors. MONROE DRUG COMPANY, Quincy, Ill.

Don't Expect Kindness. There are six sorts of people at whose hands you need not expect much kindness. The narrow minded think of nobody but themselves, the lazy are too indifferent, the busy have no time to think, the rich disregard appeals for kindness, the poor have neither spirit nor ability, and the good natured fool is not capable of serving you.—Home Notes.

One of the Many. Hewitt—What did you do when he wouldn't give you credit? Jewett—I gave him a bad check, just to show him that I could pay cash.

Mrs. Whalow's Soothing Syrup for Children teething, softens the gums, reduces inflammation, allays pain, cures wind colic, &c. a bottle.

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