## The Wisdom of Nicodemus

Railroad Brought to Terms by a Smart Dog.

By L. H. BICKFORD
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The Sunrise Limited swept past the lower pasture of Mrs. O'Hearn's Nebraka farm every afternoon at B o'clock, and Mrs. O'Hearn's dog, Nicedemus, sailed down to the fence and barked at it. He was an unlovely anismal of no breeding whatever, a canine outcast deserted by an emigrant, and his hostility to all railway movements was pronounced and even excessive, although his best effort and longest run were reserved for the flying vestibuled train that came so fleetingly out of the east and shot by him with contemptuous roar and shriek.

A year after Mrs. O'Hearn's bus band had been anatched from the field of toll she lost the companionship and nourishing daily gift of her only cow. That the double calamity distressed her was not phenomenal, but the departure of Michael O'Hearn was with the number of things reconcilable since the movements of Providence are to be accepted without question and are, indeed, but instances of the pected. Mrs. O'Hearn, a faithfully and notoriously religious person, re-signed herself to the simple hope that Michael was to be met in another country. The taking off of the cow left no such solace, since its spiritual

future did not concern her.
From the day the engine of the Bunrise Limited swept the animal in all literalness from the face of the earth fit had been rather foolishly investigating the nutritions qualities of cinders) Mrs. O'Hearn faced a world that appeared to be singularly unsympathetic. Where it had condoled with her in her first bereavement it merely smiled over her second. Obviously, in the eyes of the community, the least fitting place for a cow to browse was in the line of a lightning express. The station agent at Exeter intimated as much when Mrs. O'Hearn cailed upon him and depicted, with admirable detail, the circumstances of her misfortune. He would, he declared, lay the matter before the proper officials.

A week inter she came again, and ber visit left memories of life, color and action. She demanded to know whether the equivalent had been sent. The equivalent, she had somewhat exactly figured, was \$39.15, this itemination including \$80 for cow and 15 cents for the purchase of milk thrice weekly from a neighbor. Her following visit disclosed fully as close calculation, for the equivalent had mounted to \$39.30, and it was plain to the agent that her arithmetic carried with it rules of interest and equity that would never be accepted by the company even if it deigned to recognize her claim for the cow itself. On this occasion and on many occasions thereafter be, mentally convinced that his prevarication would not outlive his tenure of office, asserted that only the president of the road had authority in the matter of destroyed cows and, having made it clear to her that her claim had been duly forwarded, besought her to follow methods less spectacular and to exercise some patier

Having so frankly thrown himself on her mercy, he made a personal truce with the lady, but each week a new hill was presented with its accumulation of figures, together with verbal expressions of disregard for the president of the company and his lax methods of business.

At first the efforts of Nicodemus amused the freight crews, who threw lumps of coal at him. This was to the advantage of Mrs. O'Hearn, since coal was a luxury, and the daily perform ence resulted in a small measure of the precious fuel to add to her store of wood. She began to wish, indeed, that the attention of the passenger engineers might be equally attracted and that their resentment might take the some form. After a time, however, and from long familiarity the sport ceased to interest the passing train men, and but for an occasional missile the dog barked without purpose, although he never relaxed his endeavors. The flight of time brought no spirit of charity to overcast the bitterness of Mrs. O'Hearn. And it was quite by way of coincidence that on the day she had prepared her weekly statement-which now had \$1.80 added to the principal-something entirely unusual in railway equipment should en-gage, although tardily, the attention of Nicodemus. This was an abbreviated edition of the despised "flier," for the engine drew but two cars, the last a wonder of luxurious construction and painted a bright yellow.

The train had stopped, and around one of the sets of wheels stood three men variously engaged in drawing cotton from an aperture, poking it about with a stick or dousing water upon the steaming mess. A venerable gentleman who had descended from the gorgeous car to watch the operation finally strolled over to the fence and, attracted by some wild blossoms, somewhat awkwardly scaled the barrier and ambied pleasantly shout the green fields, lost in contempiation of

Micodemos came into action by a spring in the air, a shrill bark and a series of contortions that brought his haunches almost to his chin. When he fait the ground after the first dight he had made two yards, and his hair swept the wind as he rushed on. Here, so into

in his dog's comprehension, was some thing tangible, something not only to bark at, but to bits. The venerabl gentleman dropped the flowers he had gathered and turned unsteadily to the fence, but made such poor progress that Nicodemus, with terribly gleaming teeth and a bounce like a kangaroo, ran into his legs. There was then s fall of dog and man, with a singularly active display of man, considering age and lack of recent athletic training. and as the venerable gentleman came upright be did the only thing that ed to his bewildered mind of rational purpose. The fence was still a great way off, and the speed of the dog had impelled that animal on a few feet, but he was even now reversing himself. Nearer than the fence branched a tree. Two comforting knobs, within easy reach, projected from the trunk. And before he quite knew how be did it the venerable gentleman, with amasing agility, was senting himself on a lower branch of the tree, while the dog was making earnest and sav-

age efforts to reach his dangling legs. The incident naturally served to in terest the men at the car wheels. They came to the fence in a body, calling out to the dog to desist, and one braver than his fellows, mounted the ralis in an effort to distract Nicodemus from his prey. He put one foot down on the opposite side as if he would come into the pasture. It was withdrawn almost on the instant, for the dog, now animated by a desire to engage all comers, sprang at the would be intruder, and his white teeth closed on a boot beel. The man of courage, giving way to profanity, fell back into the arms of his companions. The three stood in doubt and conference, but made no new move, while Nicodemus returned to guard the tree with now and then sudden aportive excursions in

their direction. Into this excitement, after some minutes, came Mrs. O'Hearn, her arms bared to the elbows and a rolling pin in one hand. She waddled down, red and breathless, her flour smeared apron telling of baking day, her bearing that of ponderous surprise. She came to a halt just beneath the branch on which the venerable gentleman was perched, and the dog wagged her a welcome and made another dash for the fence describing, as he returned a circle. The man in the tree viewed her advent with positive pleasure. He at once connected Mrs. O'Hearn with the ownership of the dog, and he was also impressed that his position was absurd, so, although his tones were pleasant, chagrin was somewhere apparent.

He smiled genially, conscious that he had put the case concisely at least,



'SO IN AIRS THE PRISIDENT -UV THE

while Mrs. O'Hearn, with an authoritative, "be shut, now," forced Nicodemus to lie down, although his pody still quivered from the exertious of the chase and the consequent canine de Urium.

"Ye're bein' wan of these flower pickers that preserves them in schrap-books, mebbe," ventured the lady, in a spirit of conciliation, as she grasped Nicodemus by one ear and shook him roughly, "or p'raps wan of these professors that can till ye the varieties uv the posies by the schmell uv thim."

"I am not a botsnist," said the ven-

"I am not a botanist," said the venerable gentieman, preparing to descand, but eyeing the dog warily, "although you must confess that either a botanist or a railway president would appear equally out of place in a position such as I have found myself—a position," he added, to show that he had a sense of humor, "that I gever thought possible out of the pages of a corple weekly."

The manner of Mrs. O'Hearn changed, as changes the face of nature under the sudden burst of the tempest. Bhe released the dog, which sprang again at the tree trunk, and her utterance was one long inspiration.

terance was one long inspiration.

"Oh, ho-o-o-o-o" she emitted, with
a slight questioning infection, and her
hine eyes showed the glitter of steel.

"Oh, ho-o-o-o-o-o"

Arms skimbo, she looked up at him. "So ye aire the prisident uv the railroad?"

The venerable gantleman, reconsidering his determination to come down, cintched the tree branch firmly and called out a warning to the engineer, who had again sought to climb the fence and again found himself beast by Nicodemus.

"That," he answered, "is my office. Now"— He wondered why the women was so interested in this fact, but his af-

firmation, calculated to impress, was cut short by an exultant cry from the agent ferre beneath him.

squat figure beneath him.
"Thin ye aire the same was that's been kapin' me out uv the price uv a cow this tree months," proceeded

Mrs. O'Hearn. "Te"—
She cast about for an expression that would at once convey her contempt and anger.

"Ye murtherer?" she concluded,
The trio at the fence, now anjoying
the exclusive attention of Nicodemus,
since it was obvious that the woman
commanded the situation at the treeresorted to missile throwing. The
venerable gentleman looked perplexed
by about him.

"Upon my soul, my good woman," he ventured, "you surprise me. I know nothing of your cow. You have surely mistaken me for some one eise. I do not recall that I have ever before been in this locality."

"Ye'll remimber it, thin, from this l'yous dhay, for it's not from the place ye'll be sthirrin' till I've me equivylint an' me reshtitition for the evil ye've done me. 'It's the prisidint of the road,' says the station agent. 'that cousiderin' your claim, O'Hearn, an' it'll be all roight in toime but he's a very busy man. 'Ye're not so busy but ye can put your hand to yer pocket an' projuce the \$39 for the cow ye've murthered in cold-blood along uv your ig narant inline darivers an' she doin' no harrum to thim or anny wan. An' it's the extra money I want for the milk I've bought since me eresvement."

The situation seemed clears:
"You do not, then, accuse was of
driving off your cow?" asked the venerable gentleman.

"Dhrivin' her "off?" repeated Mrs.
O'Hearn, striving to compass her
scorn by raising her voice to its highest pitch. "It's makin' mincement uv
her an' wid no sthoppin' for an apology that I claim ye to be the ridhanded assassin ye aire."

"I do not run the engine," asserted the venerable gentleman uselessity. "If you have lost a cow, Mrs. O'Hearn, through any carelesaness of the employees of the road you may be sure your claim will receive due consideration. You can hardly expect to advance it, however, by keeping me here. And you have been misinformed. The president of the road does not adjust these matters that come out of the—the misfortunes of cows. Your claim has probably been delayed."

hirs. O'Hearn glared, while Nicodemus, rushing past her in gleefel pursuit of a rock thrown by the engineer, came wiggling back, licked the rolling pin and returned to the fence.

"Consideration!" exclaimed the lady.
"It's today that me equivyfint comes to forty dollars and eighty cints, an' it's in the three ye'll athay an' ye're hired murtherers lookin' on from the fence beyant like gorillas in a cage before I sthir from the sphot or call off me dog, an' luck to him for knowin' a thafe whin he sees wan."

The venerable gentleman started to partey, looked bewildered, alghed and fumbled in the breast pocket of his coat. He finally withdrew a somewhat worn pocketbook bulging with papers. From these he extracted two groenbacks. Then he searched as well as he could in personal safety the pockets of his trousers. He finally gave up in dismay.

"I am sorry to say that I haven't the amount you ask. If you will accept \$20 I assure you the remainder will be forthcoming." Mrs. O'Hearn raised the rolling pin.

Mrs. O'Hearn raised the rolling pin.
"It's the equivylint or not one cint,"
she declared.
"But as I have teld you I do not

"But, as I have told you. I do not possess the amount. I rarely carry with me any ready money," he added, with a shade of exasperation, as if Mrs. O'Hearn could have been previously acquainted with his habit in that regard.

"You can git it," easerted the amazon inflexibly.

The venerable gentlemen sighed again

and called out to the engineer;
"I say, Hawkins, do you happen to
have any money?"
"A few dollars, sir."

"I have a little change," supplemented the fireman, while the conductor reached into a pocket.

"If the three of you could make up a purse—the thing is absolutely absurd, but we cannot remain here arguing with this woman. I shall ask you to loan me \$20."

"An' 80 cints," interrupted Ers O'Hearn. "Exactly," acknowledged the vener

able gentleman, although not agreeably, "and 80 cents."

There was a search of overalls and blouses, and in the moment of suspense the president considered that it

blouses, and in the moment of suspense the president considered that it would not be at all unlikely that the ridiculous situation would be further complicated by the discovery that the combined wealth of the crowd did not make up the meager sum required.

He was consequently relieved when the balance was forthcoming to the final ten cent piece, a contribution from the porter. This, by direction, was thrown over the fence, to be guarded by Nicodemus. The two bills fluttered from the hand of the president, and Mrs. O'Hearn, picking them up, turned them over carefully. Then she moved over to the second collection, and, sattaffed with the accuracy of ber count. and she was not quick at coin values called the dog, grauped it by one er and ambled back toward the house with no concluding word. But she evidenced her faith by locking Nicodessus in the barn, whereupon the venerable gentleman descended. When the dog was released and shot off down the esture to renew the sport the special had gone. He sniffed at the tree and, presumably living over the late adventure in his imagination, barked in a paroxyum of joy. . J. . . .

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## The Oldershaw Mystery

Clever Lewyer Checkmates A Well Laid Plot

By CLARISSA MACKIE

"Harley & Rogers, Attorneys and Counselors at Law."

The gold lettered sign on the door gave no hint that the firm of young lawyers also engaged in the solving of mysteries, yet such was the case. In the beginning it had been a hobby to fill some of the too abundant leisure of an unknown law firm; now they had become well known as specialists in unraysilng mysteries of a delicate nature.

The stenographer laid a card on Dick

Harley's desk.

"Mr. Samuel Oldershaw," read Dick wonderingly. "I will see him at once, Miss Brown," he said to the young woman.

Presently a stout man was ushered

into the presence of the young lawyer and immediately sank breathlessly into a deep chair. "I'm in trouble, and I've come to you

for assistance," he said bluntly. "I understand that you undertake cases of a mysterious character."
"Occasionally such cases come our way, and we do not decline them,"

smiled Hariey.

"This is a very delicate matter and concerns a member of my household. I have an only daughter, Beryl," re-



"THIS IS THE PLACE WHERE THE GREE WERE HIDDEN," SAID MR. OLDERSHAW. Sumed Mr. Oldershaw. "My daughter is engaged to be married to a young man who is at present employed as my

private secretary.

"Gray Denison is a fine chap and as nearly worthy of Beryl as any man that I know, and my daughter is my rarest possession." His pale gray eyes glowed with feeling as he spoke, and Harley nodded understandingly.

"Yet there disappeared from my private museum on the top floor of my house my entire collection of rare gens. The collection was priceless; there is not another like it in the world. Gray Denison had charge of it. No other person had access to the safe wherein it was secreted. No one else knew that the safe was there."

"When did you discover your loss?" asked Harley.

"This morning. I was entertaining an English friend, Sir Morgan Tilbury, himself an ardent collector of gems. I went to the safe—the cases containing the gems had disappeared. Denison expressed bewilderment at the discovery—declared that he had seen them the previous evening. That is all. Where are my gems?" asked Mr. Oldershaw bluntly.

Harley pondered thoughtfully. "The servants?" he questioned.
Oldershaw shook his head impatiently.

"Above suspicion. All of them have served me for years."
"What did Sir Morgan Tilbury say regarding your loss?"

"Of course he sympathised with my disappointment, but his time was limited. I had sold him a mummy which he had long desired. I'm not especially keen on mummles, and I have a number, and he was more interested in closing the transaction and making arrangements to have the mummy removed from the museum. He sails day after tomorrow."

"You have known him for a long time?"
"Off and un for a dosen years. He

also is above suspicion. Suppose you accompany me home and look over the ground."

A half hour's swift ride brought them to the residence of Samuel Older-

shaw.

An old negro butler admitted them, and, following Mr. Oldershaw's lead, Harley went up two flights of stairs to

and, following Mr. Oldershaw's lead, Harley went up two flights of stairs to the museum, which was situated on the top floor of the house. Mr. Oldershaw produced a key and

Mr. Oldershaw produced a key and unlocked a great steel plated door.

Dick Harley glanced around at the rich collection of pictures that graced the softly tinted walls, at the rare porceising behind glass doors and the thousand and one objets d'art that games Oldershaw had loved to gather about him.

"Where is your safe, Mr. Older-shaw?" saked Harley.

The millionaire smiled and crossed over to an ancient Jacobean cheet that stood against the south wall. He bent over it, fumbled with the lock, and immediately the great place of furniture awang away from the wall and disclosed an iron door in the wall. A key unlocked the outer door of the safe, and after he had twisted the combination an inner door opened, revealing shelves and drawers crowded with treasures.

One compartment, the entire width of the safe, was empty.

"This is the place where the gens were hidden," said Mr. Oldershaw, turning to the young lawyer. 'They were removed from the tray, and the tray or drawer was concealed under the chest here."

"How many times has Sir Morga; Tilbury visited the museum?"

"Three times in the past week—the first time to renew his acquaintance with me, the second time to sound me regarding the purchase of the mummy and this morning to close the deal. He will send for the case this evening—he is auxious to have it boxed and sent aboard the ship."

"Pid you find Sir Morgan changed in any way?"
Samuel Oldershaw started and clan-

Samuel Oldershaw started and clap ped a hand on his knee.

"That's odd, Harley!" he exclaimed.
"I did find him changed in an indefinable way that I can hardly explain. He seemed a bit older for one thing, but that was quite natural, as I had not seen him for twelve years, but he appeared to be changed in other ways; his manners were coarsened, and he was decidedly off on many things relating to his especial bobby. I laid it to drink—he certainly gave evidences of it—as well as to some mental affection. Surely he was not the same courtly gentleman I had known in London."

"Is he a rich man?" asked Harley,
"Yes, beyond dispute,"

"Please point out to me the mummy which Bir Morgan has purchased," requested Harley. Mr. Oldershaw led the way to the

northwest corner of the from where the largest mummy case stood, a gorgeous mass of color against the monotone of the wall.

Mr. Oldershaw lifted a tiny hasp, and

the door swung wide open on well offed hinges. Inside was a smaller case, which opened at the millionaire's touch and revealed the shriveled form of a mummy.

Harley's keen eyes scanned the brown mummy with its stained wrap-

pings. Then he scribbled something in his notebook. He tore out the leaf and inclosed it in an envelope. "Please have this cablegram sent at once," he said. "I'll wait here until the

"But, my dear Harley, it may be hours"—
"Never mind; I will wait. Perhaps you will send me up a bite to est."

suggested Harley. "It is now 2 o'clock I should have a reply before mid night."
"Very good, Mr. Harley. Evidently you know your business," said Mr. Old

ershaw reluctantly. "If there is anything clas I can do"—
Harley whispered a few words in his car, and the millionaire went out, looking much dazed, but quite convinced that Harley was handling the case in a

highly satisfactory manner.

Harley sat down and read page after page of dry scientific reviews. Apparently he read them, but never once did his gaze wander long from the mummy case in the corner.

ase in the corner.

At 6 o'clock the butier brought him a delicious dinner, which he ate under the white glare of the electric ceiling lights. Then more hours passed while he waited.

he waited.

At 10 o'clock Mr. Oldershaw panted upstairs again.

"Well. Harley." he said expectantly.

"Well, Harley," be said expectantly.
"Sir Morgan's men have come to take
away the mummy case."

"Where is Sir Morgan?"

"They say he will come in later."

"Is he in the habit of appearing suddenly before you—or is he announced in the usual way?" was Harley's startling question.

"That's odd," cried Oldershaw, rubbing his hands nervously. "He called upon me yesterday, and while Amos, my butler, remembers admitting him he has not the slightest recollection of letting him out, although Amos was in the entrance hall all afternoon. And furthermore he does not remember admitting him this morning and even now protests that he hasn't seen him depart. I'm afraid Amos is getting old."

Hurley smiled and saked another question, this time in a low tone:
"Have the special officers arrived?"

"Outside the door."
Mr. Oldershaw pulled aside some tapestries, and at Harley's quiet signal six men glided like shadows into the room and rencealed themselves behind the tapestries.

"Amos has orders to bring my cable when it comes?" asked Harley. "At once. Shall I let Sir Morgan's men up now? I have no excuse for de-

tsining them."
"Yes—and Mr. Oldershaw," Harley followed him to the steel door and whispered, "do not be surprised if you suddenly discover that Sir Morgan Tibury is among us in the museum."

"Only that he is concealed behind the mummy case and has been since his call resterday afternoon. He will undoubtedly choose the proper moment and mingle with his men, trusting to the confusion to convince you that he has just arrived at the house."

When a mule be sure sign that he his hind legs and corrected proper moment and mingle with his men, trusting to the confusion to convince you that he private the house."

"My God, Harley, what do you mean to instructe?" asked Mr. Oldershaw breathlessly.

"Nothing more than—ah, here are the men?" Harley stepped back into the museum ag a slender, dark eyed young orb.

Strange Wills.

Many are the eccentricities to which wills have borne testimony from time to time. The Earl of Portariington left instructions that he should be buried with all his rings on his fingers. The late Earl of Orkney stipulated that he should be taken to the cemetery in an old fashioned hearse, so that the coffin could not be seen and that no flowers should be placed on his grave. He also left word that his coronet would be found by his nephew and successor "in a cellar" of his

A Vienna millionaire, who died recently, left a sum of money with which to defray the cost of twelve months' electric lighting, not only of his vault, but even of the very coffin in which he was buried. Less particular was the Frenchman who asked that his body should be thrown into

the sea a mile from the English coast.

He was, too, so disgusted with his own country that he would neither be buried there nor allow any of his reintives or fellow countrymen to benefit by his death. He left the whole of his money to the poor of London.—London Globe.

The Ship's Rut.
The black rat is the ship's rat, and is travels from country to country. The animal is found universally over the Monte Bello group of islands, even on the small outlying islets which are never visited, on which it occurs most abundantly. Its presence is attributed to a schooner which was wrecked some twelve years ago, for it is well known that this rat is a good swimmer. It is curious to find that this animal, which is now so rare in its native countries as to be looked upon as a great curiosity, should usually be one of the first species to populate new lands where it is comparatively free from competition. Driven from all civilized countries by the brown rat, it has taken to the sea, being better adapted for a life on board ship than its otherwise victorious rival.-P. D. Montague in Geo-

Curious Ball Play.

graphical Journal.

A ball club in a regular game made six hits in one inning, one of them a triple, and yet not a single run crossed the plate. This terrific bombardment with freakish result was pulled off in the first inning of the game. The first man to face the pitcher smashed the ball to the corner of the lot for a triple and was thrown out at the plate trying to stretch his hit into a home run. The second batsman swatted a single and, like his predecessor, tried to make an extra base and was heaved out at second. The third batsman and the fourth and fifth also singled. filling the bases. The sixth man at the plate hit the ball between first and second base, and the runner who had been on first was hit by the batted ball, retiring the side without a run scoring.-Chicago Tribune.

Her Game Blocked.

The timid looking little woman on the car noticed that her purse was not in her bag, where she had placed it. Instead it was hanging from her arm on a chain—hanging in full view where it would tempt the nimble fingers of the pickpockets assigned to that beat. With great forethought she picked up the purse and started to put it in the bag. But the purse didn't go in, because it was attached to the arm of the persimmony faced woman standing next to her. Of course the woman with the bag stopped right there and

dropped the stranger's purse.

"You'd better let that alone," spoke up the persimmony faced woman. "I've been watching you ever since you got on, and you needn't think I didn't see what you were trying to do."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Fresh Air.

There is throughout the civilised world an increasing knowledge of the value of sunlight and of fresh air. Benjamin Franklin in 1754 wrote: "Physicians have discovered that fresh air is beneficial to those who are ill. Perhaps in 100 years they will find it does not burt those who are well." It has taken over the century prophesiod by Franklin, but at last boards of health, bureaus of charity, trustees of schools, commissions on housing, intelligent bodies in all phases of civic life urge the need of securing all possible sunlight and fresh air. — Exchange.

Musical Calamity.

Mrs. Newricho—I believe our next door neighbors on the right are as poor as church mice, Hiram. Mr. Newricho—What makes you think so? Mrs. Newriche—Why, they can't afford one of them mechanical piano players; the daughter is taking lessons by hand.—

Calluloid Coment.
Calluloid articles can be mended with a cement made by dissolving bits of calluloid in acctone. It takes only a few minutes to make the cement, which is applied like give, the broken edges are pressed together, and in fif-

When a Mule Bites.

When a mule begins to bite it is a sure sign that he has rhoumatism in his hind legs and can't use them.—New

One Consolation, First Photographer—You were re-

jected yesterday, weren't you? Second Ditto-Yes, but I got a clear negative. —Columbia Jester.

Æ

the Art thou anvil, be patient; art thou hammer, strike hard.—German Proverts.