John Henry's Burglar

By GEORGE V. HOBART

The country place I had promised Clara J. and which I had mentioned to a day from Bunch, hadn't been so easy to give back. Clara J. liked ghosts, and I had been able to stall her with the haunted-house yarn. She still thought it was mine.

When finally I located Bunch and told him the bitter truth he acted like a sea-sick boy in a wheel house.

Laugh! Say, he just threw out his chest and cackled like a hen, fairly bit its way through my anatomy.

Every once in a while he'd give me the red-faced glare and snicker. "Oh, you mark! You Cinderella! You to the seltzer bottle—fizz-fizz! The only and original whoopee puller, not. You're all right—backwards!"

Then he'd throw his ears back and let a chortle out of his throat-cover that made the neighborhood jump sideways and rubber for a cop.

"What are you going to do? he asked me generally when his head grew too tired to hold any more wrinkles.

"Give me the count," I sighed; "I'm down and out."

"Have you no plan at all?" inquired Bunch.

"Plan, nothing," I said; "every time I try to think of a plan my brain gets baddid and hides. There's nothing in my noddle now but a headache."

"Well," said Bunch, "I'll throw a wire at my sister and tell her not to move out to Jiggersville until day after tomorrow. I'm sure Christine we'll have to get a crowbar and pry your family circle loose from my premises. Nothing doing in the ghost business, eh?"

Leaning Over the Yawning Cellar Trap-Door, I Yelled, "Who's Down There?"

"Nothing," I answered mournfully. "I couldn't coax a sliver."

"Wa-oooo-w!" yelled Bunch. "I have to burglarize!"

"Burglarize!" I repeated, mechanical fashion.

"Sure! It's a pipe!" Bunch went on with enthusiasm. "You will play Spike Hennessy and I'll be Gonshaw Charlie. We'll disguise ourselves with whiskers and break into the house about two o'clock in the morning. We'll assume the sleeping Indians, shout our bulletholders in the ceiling once or twice and hand them enough excitement to make them gallop back to town on the first train. Do you follow me, eh, what?"

I sighed and looked as helpless as a nut under the hammer.

Bunch laughed again. "Oh, very well," he said. "I see I'm the only life-saver on duty, so I'll do a single specialty and pull you out of the pickle bottle."

I grasped my rescuer's hand and shook it warmly in silence.

"Leave a front window open," Bunch directed, "and somewhere around two o'clock I'll squeeze through. I'll give an imitation of the best little amateur crackman that ever swung a jimmy and left the train out and hang around until it's time to ring the curtain up. On the way, are there any revolvers on the premises?"

"Not a gun," I answered, "not even an ice-pick. Uncle Peter won't show fight. All he'll do is wake up a whole night-gown cutting across lots to beat the breeze. Aunt Martha will climb up the attic. Clara J. will be busy doing a scream solo, and Tacks will crawl under the bed and wait for the all clear sign. There'll be no interference, Bunch; it's easy money."

With this complete understanding we parted and I hustled back to Jiggersville.

About six o'clock Uncle Peter waded into the sitting room, flushed and happy as a school boy. "I've just left the garden," he chortled.

"No, you haven't," I said, glancing at his shoes; "you've brought most of it in here with you."

I never heard Mrs. "John" he said, "this country life is great. Early to bed and early to rise, makes a man's stomach digest mince pies—how's that? Notice the color in my face? How I am all pink and bracing? You ought to go out and run a mile, John."

"I'd like to run ten miles," I answered truthfully.

"Exercise, that's the essence of life, my boy!" he continued. "I firmly believe I could run five miles today without straining a muscle. I found a sword hanging in the wall in the hall today and I've been practicing a few swings.

A vision of Uncle Peter running a rusty sword into the interior department of the disguised and disguised Bunch rose before me, but I blew it away with a laugh.

"He laughs best who laughs in his sleeve," chuckled Uncle Peter. "I'll bet that we're out in the country all of us should learn to handle a sword or a pistol. It gives us self-reliance, a very different from living in the city. I tell you, a tramp is the lookout is worth two in the kitchen. I shot at a mark for an hour today."

"What with?" I gasped.

"With a bow and arrow I bought for Tacks yesterday directly I learned we were coming to the country. I hit the bulls eye every time. Of its times. An ounce of prevention is worth two hundred pounds of policemen, you know. Tacks practiced, too and drove an arrow through a stranger's back overalls and was chased half a mile for his skill in marksmanship; but, as I said before, prevention is worth big money."

"Where do you keep this bow and arrow?" I inquired, with a studied assumption of carelessness.

"Tonight I'll keep it under my pillow. Hoot! said quit uncle Pierce, which means evil be to him who meddles with Uncle Peter," he added solemnly. "Tomorrow I'm going to town to buy a bulldog revolver, maybe a bulldog and a revolver, for a dog is the mascot and the guardian angel of them all."

I could see poor Bunch scooting across the lawn with a bunch of arrows in his ramparts and Uncle Peter, behind, prodding his crinoline with a carving knife.

I began to get a bunch that our plan of campaign was threatened with an attack of bunk I Uncle Peter, and I had just about decided to remove his door key and lock the old man up in his room when Tacks, came to announce dinner.

Aunt Martha and Clara J. had evidently laboured on the dinner and it was a success. I was so nervous I couldn't eat a bite, but I pleaded a rowbarke so they all gave me the sympathetic stare and passed me up.

About midnight a rifle in the neighborhood began to hurl forth a series of the most distressing bow-bows I ever heard. I jumped out of the silk slow and looked out.

I saw a tall man with a bunch of whiskers on his face and a bludgeon in hit pursued by a black and tan, pop, which escaped nobly early at the sun heels and seemed determined to eat him up if ever the rather stopped long enough.

I left the room and bounce down the lead as fast as I could, and I sighed pretty and went back to bed.

I must have dropped into an uneasy sleep for Clara J. was tapping me on the arm when I started up and asked the answer

"There's somebody in the house, she whispered, not at all startled by my surprise and dismay. Maybe it's only the ghost you told us about—what a lark!"

"Somebody in the house," I muttered, going on the stage blindly to play my part, "and there isn't a gun in the cache."

"Yes there is," she answered joyfully. I faintly remember brought father's revolver over yesterday and made me put it in my bedroom. I said we would feel safer at night with it in the house. Do let me shoot him; I can aim straight and I can stay. Why, John, what makes you tremble so?"

"I'm cold," I said, "you goose!" I snarled; "I can't find my shoes, that's all. Suppose I should drop to live in a joint like this with ghosts and burglars all over the place?"

Just then an alarming yall ascended from the regions below, followed by a crash and a series of the most picturesque, sulphur-lined oaths that mortal man ever gave vent to.

It was Bunch. His trademark was on every word. I could recognize his brimstone vocabulary with my eyes shut.

But what dire fate had befallen him? Surely, not even an amateur crackman would put himself and the whole snag away unless the provocation was great.

Lights began to appear all over the house. Aunt Martha in a weird make-up come out of her room screaming, "Who's down there?" I was followed by Uncle Peter and his trusty bow and arrow.

Clara J. was ready to rush down to investigate, Tacks came bounding up stairs, two steps at a time, right on by his nightie.

"Up the stairs, rebel rous! The nerve of that kid!

"Who's the prize sister?" he yelled. "I caught the ghost! I caught him!"

"What do you mean?" I said, shaking him.

"Tacks grinned from ear to ear. "You know they's a trap door in the hall sou to get down to the cellar and I left it unlatched and this evening I took the door up and laid heavy paper on it to go through, and he did, and I get the prize, don't I, sister?"

"Go goofed down to the scene of the explosion, followed by my excited household.

Leaning over the yawning cellar trap door I yelled, "Who's down there?"

"Oh," we heard in answer, came back the voice of the disguised Bunch, whereupon Aunt Martha almost fainted while Peter loaded his bow and arrow and prepared to sell his life dearly.

Great Scott! what a situation! The man who entered to rob, came nursing his bruises in the muddy cellar while the bunch of interlopers above him clamored for his life.

While I pondered my dizzy think-factory for a way out of the dilemma there came a terrific knock at the door and Tacks promptly opened it.

"Have you got him? Have you got him?" inquired the strangest and badaverous specimen of humanity who burst into the hall and stared at us.

"I seen him early this evening a hanging around these here premised and I ups and chases him twice, but the skunk outran me." the newcomer panted in a voice suggestive of a gladiator's billy the size of a fence rail.

Then I seen the lights here and says I, they has him! Perduce the malefactor! I ups and runs to the lock up," and with this the union of the law rolled up his sleeves and prepared for action.

"I presume you are the chief of police?" inquired Uncle Peter, with an affable smile.

"I'm all the police there is and my name is Harmony Higgs, and they's no bourgeois livin' can get out a my clutches once! I gits these here on duty," the stranger continued, waving an antiquated pair of bandcuffs evidently in the air.

"I caught him!" Tacks cried in exultant tones when the village copper subsided long enough to gasp out

"Down there, eh?" snorted the compy Harmony, shoving his head and peering into the depths, but just then Uncle Peter fired a handful of shot out which located temporarily over Harmony's left eye and put his optic in the black.

With the other eye, however, Mr. Higgs could see plenty of every-thing, and he immediately lowered his head, and with a bellow of a bull, flung looking revolver from his pocket commanded Bunch to come up or be shot

Bunch decided to come up. I didn't blame him, for I knew Uncle Peter's face it took him about seven sixteenths of a second to get the drop on Bunch.

As the criminal slowly emerged from the cellar the spectators stood back, spellbound and breathless. Aunt Martha with a long tin dipper raised to an article of crockery, Clara J. Potter with the bow and arrow ready to shoot, and I.

Bunch looked at me reproachfully, I gave him a wink, and he knew I were there was a dead game sport, Bunch Jefferson is the answer.

He dialed a number, and when the village Hawkshaw snapped the brass, he said, "Come right around, Mr. Mr. Inspector. This brave a fine specimen of a burglar I have here. Mr. Inspector, then I ain't no gunman, I ain't no bad man, I ain't good to you one and all, that there boy th. Mr. Inspector, he shot me in the back wanded nice."

"Shot you?" I said morrifully. "Mr. Higgs led the suffering Bunch away to the hastile

"I've got to tell you that villain landed in a cell," I said to Clara J. as the village copper left with his prisoner quished.

"Oh, John!" she answered, "but don't be too hard on the poor fellow. You can't tell what temptation may have led him astray. I certainly am disappointed, for I was sure it was the ghost. I wish I knew what kind of whiskers the ghost's didn't have" she continued, as she was grabbing my coat, rushed away to interrupt Bunch and ask him to lend her a lock.

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CORNER OF THE JUNIORS

GREAT AID TO PENMANSHIP

New Jersey Man Invents Apparatus That Brings Ease to Artist and Angers most an Impossibility.

There is no further excuse for bad penmanship. A New Jersey man has invented an apparatus which makes really bad writing an impossibility. The first principle taught by writing instructors is to hold the pen or pencil in the proper position and write with a movement of the forearm. Bringing about this end angers still. When this knack is acquired the battle for legible chirography is won. The device here shown virtually forces this movement. A wire support runs down along the inside of the forearm to a point at the lower end of the wrist. A coil passes around the wrist. Another branch of the support runs up to the base of the thumb and three rings hold the pencil in the most advantageous position along the outside of the hand at the

Must Write With Forearm.

base of the forefinger. With the pencil thus held firmly it plays no nervous griping or twiddling of the fingers can move it and it cannot be affected by an independent movement of the wrist on any other part of the hand. The use of the apparatus generates a habit of correct writing and it can then be dispensed with.

TINY BOYS TO BE SCULPTORS

Victor Salvatore to Open Class in Modeling at Home Garden Settlement, New York.

Victor Salvatore, the sculptor, will open a class in modeling at the Home Garden Settlement, 305 East 116th street, New York. Eight children who have shown artistic promise have been selected from a list of more than thousand who attend this settlement.

None of them will be over 12, and three boys are only 5 and have so far confined their efforts to the sand pile. This class is to be weeded out constantly and added to, so that the small Italians who have shown a desire to display any talent and have the benefit of an hour's work in the Salvatore studio. Joseph H. Thompson Jr. who knew Mr. Salvatore at Rome, is backing the financial backers in the experiment

"This old fellows began young," said Mr. Thompson, "and I think that his studio in Sedbergal alley, 'mone of the most interesting in Rome. Each one of my ideas is that when these boys are 10 years old they will be professionals. When they are 14 they ought to be able to work as helpers in a studio. It is the idea of the grantmar school and then the college. They must be professionals. I am backing the decision, and side thoroughly they can create a profession.

"The room in the settlement will be just like a studio. Each one will have his own table and clay. I want them to learn to make good skeletons for their work. I want them to get and marble too. Nowadays people start in to be sculptors and they get the mechanical side of the art so.

"I'll ask the boys to come only one evening in the class, but one of the college boys is to be there every evening. I'll be there. There will be no school discipline, but when they see an older boy working, I think they will do so too. I did not mean to take any girls, but one of them has shown so much promise that I have decided to try them out.

School Day in Germany

Hours of work have been reduced in many of the schools of Germany. By the new arrangement 45 minutes is the maximum time for a subject, thus allowing the treatment of six subjects in the school day. It is expected that the increased hours at school be made up in home study and that as little school work as possible be done outside the school proper. "The child derives more benefit," the educators think, "from its play and from its home life than from colosnarly than it does from cramming. Self-imposed mental work is of the greatest value to the growing child, and the attainment of this is possible only when there are several hours daily of absolute leisure."