

## How Thompson's Watch Cost Him a Wife.

BY WILLIAM BLOSS.  
(Copyright, 1902, by Daily Story Pub. Co.)  
"Gentlemen of the leisure class don't carry watches, nowadays," said our host, Thompson, dogmatically, pausing to light a second cigarette. "James, since Captain Barry wishes to be exact, you may look at the library clock and tell him what time it is."  
"It is striking eight o'clock, sir," replied James, respectfully, as he quietly filled the Captain's glass.

There was a snug party of six lounging over their wine and tobacco after dining regally at Thompson's bachelor board. Barry had to catch a train for St. Paul at 9 p. m. He wanted to stay just as long as possible before summoning a cab to take him to the depot, and upon consulting his watch for the hour had been seized by forebodings as to the accuracy of the hands. His inquiry as to the "right" time had led to the host's remark.

Barry flushed a little as it fell. The assertion seemed to his mind supercilious and barbarously un-American. Barry himself was a man of the people, and was proud of it. So, too, was Thompson, or had been, once.

"What do you mean by gentlemen of the leisure class, you gray-haired fraud," he demanded, in half anger. "Do you mean to say I am no gentleman because I carry a watch and like to know what time it is when I have a train to make?"

"Certainly not," replied Thompson, with placidity. "Of course not. You are a gentleman because you are a man of education, intelligence, good-breeding and some ancestry."

"Huh!" grunted the mollified Barry. "What then?"

"But you are not," continued the host, "a gentleman of the leisure class, because you busy yourself with your commercial affairs and even at your age continue—"

"At my age! I'm full five years younger than you are."  
Thompson waved the interruption aside as irrelevant. "I was going to say that if you quit business and became a loafer—"

"As you have."

"Yes, as I have, then you might account yourself a gentleman of the leisure class."

"When I was a young person," continued Thompson, "just beginning life on the Board of Trade, after leaving Ann Arbor, my Uncle Jackson Thompson, who had sent me to school and had in fact reared me from boyhood as his own son, with much ceremony one day presented me with a timepiece known as the family clock, and told me, with moist eyes, to cherish it as the apple of my eye; always to be as exact and reliable, as true to duty, as honest, as industrious, as it was itself."

"Tom," said he, "you know how much we Thompsons think of this watch. It belongs to your great grandfather. He bought it in Liverpool before the revolution, and it has been in the family—and running, too—most of the time, ever since. Take it, my boy, and remember to live up to its principles."

"I was much affected, naturally, for I knew Uncle Jackson regarded that watch as his chief treasure. I made all sorts of protestations of good behavior and careful solicitude for the ancient horologue. Uncle Jackson went back to his Michigan farm—and I went to work among the bears and bulls here in Chicago, on the old board."

"The watch, as you remembered, Carroll, was an enormous 'bull's eye,' and weighed half a pound, easy. But I wore it, and laid aside my own more modern timepiece. The boys used to laugh at it a good deal, and got in the habit of asking me what time it was, just to see me lug it out, and

"I found Uncle Jackson with the fingers of death at his throat, but his mind was clear enough. 'Have you brought the watch?' he gasped, sternly, as I bent to embrace him."

"I was about to murmur some maudlin excuses, but he checked me sharply. His lawyer was present. They were awaiting me, it seemed. My uncle called for his will. Under it was a clause leaving me \$50,000 of his modest fortune. He grimly directed the cutting down of this neat sum by the excision of a cipher. The will then gave me \$5,000 instead of \$50,000. The \$45,000 bite thus taken from my plum was given to Ethel, on condition that she marry my cousin Charlie, whom I hated with true cousinly rancor. Uncle Jackson calmly signed the altered will; then he turned his face to the wall and quietly departed for a better world."

The story-teller ceased, and once more raised his half-filled glass with a gesture of invitation.

"What in the world do you suppose became of the old watch, anyway?" demanded Cusack, who possessed an inquisitive mind.

"Huh!" answered Thompson. "When I got home again a saloon-keeper sent me word he had my watch in his safe, waiting for me. He had taken it away from me one night in fear I would lose it while on that costly spree. He knew its story and wanted to protect me."

"And then?"

"Then? As soon as I got my hands on it again I walked deliberately to the Wells street bridge, and a second time consigned it to the Chicago river. It's there yet, I hope."

"Liquid Air Test."  
A report of the test of the Hampson liquefier for making liquid air, by Prof. Frank Allen, at Cornell University, states that the expenditure of one horse power continuously for one hour produces just enough liquid air to produce, when utilized in a perfect machine, one-horse power for one minute.



"Have you brought the watch?" he gasped sternly.

have you lie to me. Don't do it again, my son. Remember the old watch. It never told a lie in all its life."

"He went home that very afternoon, wearing a severe countenance. I was full of gloom. All my worldly prospects hung upon Uncle Jackson's good will. That night, out of the pure perversity which makes a man do the wrong thing when he should be pursuing only the right one, I began a wild spree, the first and last one of my life. It lasted a whole week. When it was over my watch had disappeared and I had no knowledge of its whereabouts."

"At my lodgings, when I returned, I found a telegram, two days old, from Uncle Jackson, summoning me to Michigan." It was brief, but sufficiently pointed:

"Am taken with pneumonia. Come at once. Bring the watch."

"Now wouldn't that have given you a chill? There was another communication as well. It was from Ethel. Ethel was the girl I was going to marry. She said she had become acquainted with my reckless conduct, that she perceived my indifference, and that our engagement, sir, was at an end forever. You can imagine I was sufficiently dispirited, as I hurried with my aching head and wretched, debile body to take a Michigan Central train for the other side of the lake."

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## Fillbusters.

BY FRANK H. SWEET.  
(Copyright, 1902, by Daily Story Pub. Co.)  
A group of Spanish officers were standing in front of the mess quarters at Bahia Honda. They had just come in from Havana and on the morrow were to start across the mountains toward Cristobal on special service. It had been a long, hard march, and they were hungry and tired. In spite of all that was behind and of what might be ahead, their one thought was of the meal whose savory odors were issuing from the hastily improvised mess quarters. The sun was not yet down, but the shadows of the date palms lay thick about their feet. They watched them listlessly, waiting for the mess call, and then ready to seek the low thatched building where they were to sleep. From the shadows of the same date palms a group of ragged, emaciated boys watched them keenly. They, too, were mindful of the odors that came from the mess quarters, for they sniffed eagerly, and from time to time they whispered to one another and pointed toward the building or the officers. Presently a boy of nine or ten, with keen, snapping black eyes, stole to a palm tree that was but a few yards from where the officers stood. In the shadow of this he waited until his companions had circled round to the shelter of a clump of bamboos on the other side, and very near to the entrance of the mess quarters. There they paused, as though for a signal.

And it was not long coming. With a sudden wild whoop the boy with the snapping eyes sprang forward into the very midst of the officers, swinging his arms and dancing about as though he were mad. In an instant almost, and before they had recovered from the surprise of the unexpected onslaught he had snatched a sword from one of the scabbards and bounded away. At the same moment a cry of consternation came from the mess quarters.

But the officers did not notice that. They were too amazed, too angry at the audacity of this ragamuffin, who had stopped a few yards away and was now brandishing the sword defiantly in their very faces. With exclamations of anger they sprang forward to a man, and the ragamuffin, instead of trying to escape, dodged this way and that, under the outstretched arms of one, behind another and almost between the legs of a third, all the time taunting them and daring them on.

He was like an eel that squirmed out of their hands even after they caught him; or a flea that was anywhere except where they thought it. Five minutes passed in exasperating dodging and doubling before they succeeded in dragging him back, struggling and grinning to the mess quarters. And it was not until afterward that it occurred to them that he had made no real effort to escape.

As the excitement of the chase and capture began to subside they noticed for the first time that their mess cook and his boy assistant were shuffling about wringing their hands.

"What are you doing here, Garcia?" one of the officers demanded impatiently. "Go back and hurry up supper."

But Garcia continued to wring his hands.

"There is none," he wailed. "No meats, no breads, no fruits. Oh, seniors! oh, seniors! What shall we do? Me and my boy Jose were finishing a beautiful supper—oh, so beautiful!—and a horde of wild creatures rushed in and threw flour into my face and tripped Jose, and when we recovered there were no meats, no breads, no fruits. Oh, seniors! oh, seniors!"

Two or three of the officers rushed into the mess room. When they returned their faces were blank.

"Garcia's right," they said, "the place is stripped as clean as though visited by locusts."

Then they stopped abruptly, as

snatched a sword from one of the scabbards and bounded away,

though making a discovery, and glanced at the captive. "You are responsible for this," one of them declared.

The boy grinned. "Si, senior," he said composedly, "why not?"

They stared at him and at each other. Was the boy mad? If so, it was a madness that must be punished. "Shooting is too easy for a thing like that," scowled the one who had lost his sword. "It's a case for hanging."

"No; hanging's too easy," declared another, gloomily. "You don't know how hungry I am. But there goes the pursuit," as they saw soldiers scattering among the palms. "Perhaps the supper will be recaptured."

thousand men couldn't find the boys now. They know hiding places your soldiers never dreamed of."

The officer in command looked at him curiously.

"There is something behind this," he said thoughtfully. "You are old enough to understand the consequences of such an act, and too wise to throw away your life for a little meat and a few loaves of bread."

The boy's eyes began to flash and for the first time his face lost its grinning derision.

"I have risked my life for a little meat and a few loaves of bread," he declared quickly, "and I do understand just what the consequences are. But what is life when my mother is sick and starving, and when my sisters and grandfather and grandmother are all starving. I would risk it, and lose it, too, a hundred times. The boys have food enough now to last them a month," his voice ringing with exultation. "You may kill me if you want to. But you haven't soldiers enough to get the food back. And it wasn't stolen, either. You have destroyed our crops and taken our cattle and fruits, and they would pay for this a thousand times over."

He threw his head back and looked squarely into their eyes.

"There is another thing I don't mind telling you," he went on sturdily; "my father's away fighting, and I would be away fighting too, if I were old enough. As it is, we boys look after the family." Here the grinning derision returned to his face. "The horde of 'wild creatures' your cook tells about were just my three brothers and two of my cousins, the oldest only thirteen. They'll look after the family now, and when this food is gone, they'll find some way to get more. Now kill me if you want to. I'm not afraid."

A curious expression had been coming into their eyes. Above all things a soldier respects bravery.

"Come, gentlemen," said the officer in command gruffly, "we must settle this at once. Camp will be broken early, and there will be no time then. The case is a flagrant one, and calls for severe punishment. But I will leave the sentence to you, De Guise, to the officer whose sword had been taken; 'as the most aggrieved of us; the first vote belongs to you. What punishment is adequate to the offense?'"

The officer scowled. "I would condemn him to perpetual banishment from us," he answered harshly.

"And you, Bourmont," to the officer who had confessed he was hungry.

"De Guise is too mild, too mild," this officer said, scowling also. "I would add that in addition to his sentence the condemned be made to carry away a sack of flour as large as himself—as large as a man can lift."

"And you," "and you," to the other officers.

"I consider the sentence just, and recommend it," said one.

"And I," "and I," said others. "With perhaps a little more added to the burden," finished the last judiciously. "A prisoner of this kind should be crushed."

"Very well, gentlemen," said the officer in command, "you will see that the sentence is carried out to the letter. And you," turning severely to the wondering boy, "let this be a lesson. Never do a thing unless you are ready to do it with your whole heart. If you had shown a white spot, I would have had you shot."

Did Not Sound Right.  
The rural choir in one of the up-country villages, which has become somewhat of a summer resort, had been a success for many years. But this season, in order to impress the "city folks," it was determined to introduce some improvements. The older members of the congregation opposed this, but the young people won a partial victory, and it was decided that one song at least should be sung in up-to-date fashion. All would have gone well had not the choice of the hymn been unfortunate. In this particular hymn the line occurs:

"And bow before Thy throne." According to what the conservative members called in disgust "new-fangled notions," the tenor and soprano were to hold the notes on this line until the rest of the choir came in on the alto and bass. The result was that the line was sung in this rather startling manner:

"And bow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow-wow before Thy throne."

Somehow the effect on the congregation did not seem edifying. The choir has gone back to the old-fashioned method of singing.

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