

Operator No. 13

Was It an Unlucky Number?

By CLARISSA MACKIE

Giles Ellwood, fresh from his native city of the progressive west, bounced out of his hotel bed and ran to the window. A clatter of hoofs on the asphalt, the clang of gongs, the swift rushing of electric vehicles, the glitter of arc lights on red and nickel, trailing plumes of black and white smoke, and the fire engines disappeared up the avenue.

The westerner sat down on the edge of the bed and yawned sleepily. At home in his own city a fire was first announced by the ringing of alarm bells that respectable citizens might be informed of the coming spectacle and be on hand to witness the conflagration. Inside his vest pocket was the list of box numbers at which he was in the habit of glancing when the bells in the towers brayed forth the alarms.

Here in New York it was different. The silent alarm system might have its advantages, but it certainly deprived interested strangers from witnessing that much advertised attraction—a three alarm Gotham fire.

Then, again, at home if he was without his trusty alarm card, all he had to do was to telephone to the central telephone office and ask where the fire was. Did he dare do that in New York? Yet possibly a three alarm fire was eating up dollars within a half dozen blocks of his hotel.

He snapped on the electric light, looked at his watch, saw that it was 2 o'clock and went to the telephone. There were two of these, one that connected with the hotel switchboard and the other a long distance instrument. He glanced at them and chose the hotel telephone.

"Number?" came in such sweet reply that Ellwood reddened with sudden excitement.

"Er—I don't want anybody—that is, will you please tell me where the fire is?" he stammered.

"Why, it is in the hotel here around on the Broadway side. There is no danger, it is under control now," said the voice sweetly, though rather wearily.

"Thanks, very much," said Ellwood earnestly, and he reluctantly hung up the receiver.

He crawled into bed, dazedly aware that something strange had happened. He could scarcely define the feeling that prompted him to earnestly go over in his mind his yearly income and wonder for the first time if he could afford to marry on it. It was the first time he had taken that into consideration.

Ellwood laughed at his own folly and fell asleep, feeling very light hearted over nothing in particular. When morning came and with it the business he had prescribed for the day he could not drive from his recollection the voice he had heard in the night. He made up his mind to talk with her again if possible.

After breakfast he holoebbed with the clerk and professed a desire to see the switchboard of the house telephone service.

A double row of straight backed figures with becoming black straps over their varicolored heads rewarded his curiosity. Then it was that he recollected that his particular voice must be on the night shift, for he had spoken with her at 2 o'clock that morning. He determined to wander hotelward in the wee sma' hours of the next morning.

Night came and with it the coveted opportunity to enter into some communication with the voice that had attracted him. He looked aimlessly from the window and wished for another fire. But fires are not made to order, so he took down the receiver, and his mouth settled into the lines of determination that had been graven on his face.

"Number?" came her adorable voice.

"Oh—can you tell me where the fire is?" he asked frantically.

"Fire? I didn't know there was one," she said rather wearily.

"Neither did I," blurted Ellwood. "I thought there might be one, you know."

"Oh!" she said crisply and cut the connection.

Ellwood leaned back in his chair, his hand over his heart. He was frankly worried. "I don't know but what I've got heart trouble," he muttered dubiously. "Can't be my dinner, for I ate carefully, and nothing but heart trouble could cause such shortness of breath and palpitation." He would call the house physician and have his heart examined at once.

His order was received and answered, and presently the doctor came to his room. He was a tall, fair, rawboned individual who scanned the face of his patient with a searching glance. "Good evening—or, rather, morning!" he said affably. "You are in need of a doctor?"

Ellwood sank down on the couch and placed a hand weakly on his heart. "It's here," he said. "I'm afraid it's my heart."

The doctor came over and sat beside him, and, taking one strong brown band in his delicate white one, he felt for the pulse.

"What have you been eating?" he asked bluntly.

"Nothing much," returned Ellwood impatiently. "not one indigestible crumb today."

"Been drinking anything?" queried the other.

"No, sirs," returned Ellwood. "I cut out that years ago."

The doctor was watching his face curiously, and a faint smile curved his thin lips.

"Who is she?" he asked quietly, and Ellwood had the grace to redder to his ears.

"I don't know," he said shortly.

"Find out and I'll guarantee a cure," assured the physician as he replaced his stethoscope in its case and tucked his fee in his pocket. "My advice to you is to keep as quiet as possible, eat carefully, continue to drink nothing and do your best to win that young lady. Good night."

The door closed after his form, and Ellwood threw himself down on the sofa and laughed silently, though happily. "By Jove!" he muttered. "It's going some to fall in love like that. What's that?"

That was the same clatter of hoofs and ringing of gongs he had heard the previous night. Ellwood flung himself into some clothes and slipped his overcoat over all. Then he dashed to the telephone and heard her voice once more.

"There is a fire now," he said urgently. "Will you please tell me where it is?"

There was a little silence and then a startled cry. "Why, it's in Ninety-eighth street. That's where I live. Oh, dear!" she ended in a little sob.

Ellwood thought rapidly.

"Can't you call them up and find out? Haven't your folks got a telephone?" he demanded.

"We just moved in today, and it isn't installed. Oh, dear!" Her voice was very low and sweet, and Ellwood could fancy he saw her wringing little white hands in helpless agony.

"Wait a little while. Don't you worry. I'm going to the fire, and I'll inquire about your people," he reassured her. "I'll have to have your name—just the last one, you know."

"Lane," she said gratefully, "and thank you so much, Mr. Ellwood."

"I'll let you know as soon as I find out," he said and was gone. In the street he jumped on a car and was borne northward to where a red glare shone against the sky. As he neared the scene the picture resolved itself into a flaming apartment house, streets crowded with pedestrians and onlookers, a fire line drawn sharply about the building and a horde of police.

Ellwood paused in a doorway and outlined a plan of action. How could he get inside the fire lines? He couldn't. Inquiring for the Lanes among the excited people who had been driven from their homes was much like searching for a needle in a haystack.

He noticed all at once that he was standing in the doorway of another apartment house, and he glanced hastily at the names over the letter boxes. There it was—Lane—the most beautiful name in the world. The Lanes were safe. She would be delighted. He took the number of the building and hastened to the nearest subway station and was dashed down to his hotel. He rushed into the office and spoke to the clerk.

"May I speak to Miss Lane, one of the telephone operators, on a matter of importance?" he stammered under that young man's polite stare.

"Against the rules," said the clerk.

"It really is important—I will guarantee that," urged Ellwood.

The clerk hesitated and, then relenting, sent Ellwood to the chief operator, who proved to be a good natured individual.

"Lane?" he queried. "Oh, that's operator No. 13." He picked up a receiver and spoke into the transmitter. "Send No. 13 to me at once."

"Unlucky number, eh?" he grinned at Ellwood.

"Oh, I don't know! Sometimes thirteen's a lucky number. It is for me," remarked Ellwood, with an enigmatic smile.

Just then the door opened and she came, deathly pale and trembling with anticipation of some ill news. She was all that Ellwood had dreamed—dark, petite and demurely lovely, with the sweetest contralto voice. Her brown eyes sought his face anxiously.

"It's all right," he assured her. "I've been up there and found the place where you live. The fire is across the street. I took the number of your house—1183. That right?"

"Oh, yes, and thank you so much, Mr. Ellwood," she breathed relievedly. "It was very good of you to take the trouble."

The chief operator was across the room intent on official business, and Ellwood had a brief instant in which to look down into the brown eyes that were rapidly reducing his incipient heart disease into a chronic ailment.

"I'd like to know you better, Miss Lane. I wonder if I presented credentials would your mother permit me to call."

"I think she might," said No. 13 gently as the soft color flowed back into her cheeks. "I will ask her. Of course you are not a stranger to the hotel people, Mr. Ellwood. Oh, I must go. Good night."

Ellwood held her little hand for the fraction of an instant, and she was gone. He floated down the corridor in an ecstasy of delight. Life was a radiant, beautiful thing.

The hotel physician brushed against him as he passed. "Feeling better?" he asked.

Ellwood nodded happily. "Fine as a fiddle, and yet my case is incurable," he said.

"Wait until you've been married as long as I have," croaked the doctor pessimistically as he hurried away.

"I don't believe a word of it," asserted Ellwood jubilantly. "It couldn't be in my—in our case."

Eccentric John Underwood.

John Underwood, who died at Whitesides, England, in 1733, left some odd instructions for his burial. His fortune of £8,000 went to his sister, provided that no bell was tolled at his grave, no relative followed his coffin and various other arrangements were carried out. Six men only were invited and requested not to come in "black," who received 10 guineas each for their services. Service over, an arch was raised over the green painted coffin, with "Nog Omnis Moriar, 1733," inscribed on white marble. The six men sang the last stanza of the twentieth ode of the second book of Horace. The deceased, who had been coffined fully dressed, had under his head "Sanadov's" "Horace," at his feet Bentley's "Milton," in his right hand a Greek Testament and in his left hand a small "Horace." The six on repairing to his house to a cold repast had to sing the thirty-first ode and drink a cheerful glass before retiring at 8 p. m. This done, directed the will, "Think no more of John Underwood."

Books in Ancient Rome.

It has been pointed out that in old Rome books were actually produced and sold more easily and quickly than they are in modern times. With his trained staff of readers and transcribers, it is contended, an ancient Roman publisher could turn out an edition of any work at very cheap rates and almost a moment's notice. There was, of course, no initial expense of typesetting before a single copy could be produced, no costly extras in the form of printer's corrections. The manuscript came from the author; the publisher handed it to his slaves, and if the book were of ordinary dimensions the complete edition could, it is said, be ready if necessary within twenty-four hours. The old Roman libraries were immense as well as splendid. Plutarch says that the library of Lucullus, who expended much of his money on books, "had walks, galleries and cabinets open to all visitors." It was proposed by Julius Caesar to open this library to the public.—Harper's.

Eating in the Fifth Act of Life.

The advice which Sydney Smith gave to Lord Murray on the subject of diet was probably sound. "If you wish for anything like happiness in the fifth act of life," he wrote, "eat and drink one-half of what you could eat and drink. Did I ever tell you my calculations about eating and drinking? Having ascertained the weight of what I could live upon so as to preserve health and strength, and what I did live upon, I found that between ten and seventy years of age I had eaten and drunk forty-four horse wagon loads of meat and drink more than would have preserved me in life and health. The value of this mass of nourishment I considered to be worth £7,000. It occurred to me that I must by my voracity, have starved to death fully 100 persons. This is a frightful calculation, but irresistibly true."

How a Woman Saved Nice.

It happened in August, 1543, and is recalled by Mrs. Walter Tibbits in "Cities Seen in East and West." Nice (then under the dukes of Savoy) was being besieged by Francis I. and Barbaraossa.

Catherine Segurine was a washerwoman whose creed was laborate et orare. She carried food to the defenders on the ramparts still left. The Turks had put up a scaling ladder. The captain led his party, and they were actually on the parapet. She rushed at the Turkish officer, wrenched the flag he was carrying from him, beat him back with the butt end and threw down the ladder on top of all this, rallying the soldiers, they threw open a postern, made a sortie and drove the Turks to the shore.

The Pitt Diamond.

A historical diamond is the Regent or Pitt diamond. In weight it is 136 1/2 carats, and in clearness it is unrivaled. Its form is nearly perfect, its diameter and depth are almost equal. It was found in India and brought to England by Mr. Pitt, grandfather of the famous Earl of Chatham, and sold by him to the Duc d'Orleans for £130,000. It afterward decorated the royal crown of France, and Napoleon used it to ornament the hilt of his sword.

New York's First Street Cleaner.

The Dutch housewives of old New York, ever noted for their housekeeping qualities, created the agitation which resulted in the appointment of the first public street cleaner in New York in 1692. He was Laurens Van der Spiegle, a baker. His daughter married Rip Van Dam, who afterward became governor of New York, an illustration of the democracy of that day.

Consolation.

"What made you so angry at the gentleman, dearie?"

"He said that I was a fool and that my hat was too big for me."

"Cheer up, darling. He was wrong about your hat. It fits you fine."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

The Three Possessions.

"I've a kitchenette in my flat. What's the feature of yours, Jones?"

"A cellorette. And of yours?"

"I've got a suffragette in mine."—The change.

A Free Thinker.

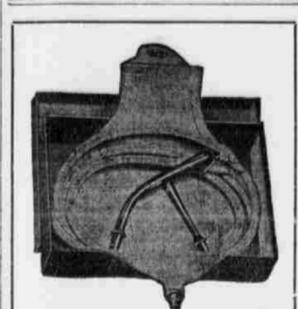
Tommy—Pop, what's the free thinker's Tommy's Pop?—A free thinker's free thinker is any man who isn't married. Phila delphia Record.

It is wise to save the first dollar that one makes in business, but the first dollar is the best to save the last.

Investment.

The best investment you can make is to have your automobile overhauled. Let us do it for you now. Until we get into our new quarters which will be the most complete shop and nifty garage between Omaha and Denver, work will be done in private garage in west part of town near my home. Work will be done by an expert of some eleven years experience who understands an automobile from A to Z and satisfied customers will be our best assets. Work fully guaranteed. Telephone Black 627 and we will talk it over with you.

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All rubber goods are guaranteed from one to three years.

We carry extra tubes and fittings for bottles and syringes. For mail or express add 25c.

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Notice for Publication.

To Hans Peterson non-resident defendant; you are hereby notified that on the 10th day of May, 1912, Sophia Peterson filed a petition against you in the District Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska, the object and prayer of which are to obtain a divorce from you on the ground that you have willfully abandoned the plaintiff without good cause for the term of two years last past. You are required to answer said petition on or before Monday 21st day of Jan., 1913.

SOPHIA PETERSON, Plaintiff.

By Muldoon & Gibbs, Her Attys.

Notice for Publication.

Patrick J. Conway and Mrs. Patrick J. Conway, his wife, and all parties claiming any right or interest in and to lots seven (7) and eight (8) in block twelve (12) of Miller's Addition to the city of North Platte will take notice that on the 6th day of November, 1912, the plaintiff, Charles P. Ross, filed his petition in the district court of Lincoln county, Nebraska, against said defendants, and each of them, the object and prayer of which petition is to have the title to lots seven (7) and eight (8) in block twelve (12) of Miller's Addition to the city of North Platte quieted and confirmed in him on the grounds and for the reason that said plaintiff has been in the open, notorious, exclusive and adverse possession of said lots claiming to be the owner thereof for more than ten years prior to the 6th day of November, 1912, and that by reason of said adverse possession said plaintiff is now the owner in fee simple of each and every part and portion of said lots seven (7) and eight (8) in block twelve (12) of Miller's Addition to the city of North Platte.

You and each of you are required to answer said petition on or before Monday the 6th day of January, 1913.

Dated this 25th day of November, 1912.

CHARLES P. ROSS.

By Muldoon & Gibbs, His Attorneys.

NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT.

The State of Nebraska, Lincoln county, ss. In the County Court.

In the matter of the estate of William L. Douglas deceased.

To the creditors, heirs, legatees, and others interested in the estate of William L. Douglas, deceased.

Take notice, that Robert L. Douglas, has filed in the county court a report of his doing as administrator of said estate, and it is ordered that the same stand for hearing the 31st day of Dec. A. D. 1912, before the court at the hour of 9 o'clock, a. m., at which time any person interested may appear and except to and contest the same. And notice of this proceeding is ordered given in the North Platte Tribune, a legal semi-weekly newspaper published in said county for three successive weeks prior to said date of hearing.

Witness my hand and the seal of the county court at North Platte, Nebraska, this 21st day of Nov. A. D. 1912.

JOHN GRANT, County Judge.

Estray Notice.

Taken up on section 24, town 11, range 30, in Lincoln county, by the undersigned, three mares, two sorrels and one bay branded NE on left hip, aged about six years; one bay stallion, 3 year old; one bay and one brown mare 6 years old, three bay geldings, 2 and 3 year old, one sorrel mare 3 year old, one yearling brown colt. Owner is requested to call, prove property, pay charges and take animals away.

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good farming or hay land, 50 cents per acre, six miles north of Wallace, Neb., twelve miles south of Sutherland. New 4-room house and barn for eight head, grainery 24x32, cement cave 12x18, good well, 10-ft Sampson mill, 30 ft. steel tower, 3 miles of fence, 150 acres in cultivation. Address W. R. Harding, North Platte, Neb.

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F. J. BROEKER.

Entrance north of the Nyal drug store.

NOTICE OF HEARING.

In the county court in and for Lincoln county, Nebraska.

In the matter of the estate of Andrew W. Francisco, deceased.

To all persons interested in the estate of Andrew W. Francisco, deceased.

Whereas Andrew W. Francisco, Jr. has filed in his office an instrument purporting to be the last will and testament of Andrew W. Francisco, deceased, late of Los Angeles county, California, together with a certificate of the probate court in and for said county of Los Angeles, state of California, and a petition praying to have the same admitted to probate, which will and testament relate to both real and personal property.

It is therefore ordered that the 17th day of December, 1912, at 9 o'clock, a. m., in said county court, be fixed as the time and place for proving said will, at which time and place, you and all concerned may appear and contest the probate of the same.

It is further ordered that said petitioner give notice to all persons interested in said estate of the pendency of said petition, and of the time and place set for hearing of said petition, and by causing a copy of this order to be published in the North Platte Tribune, a legal weekly newspaper published in North Platte, Lincoln county, Nebraska, and of general circulation in said county for three successive weeks previous to the day set for hearing, viz: December 13th, 1912.

In witness whereof I have hereunto set my hand and affixed the official seal this 16th day of November, 1912.

JOHN GRANT, County Judge.

Serial No. 01283.

NOTICE FOR PUBLICATION

DEPARTMENT OF THE INTERIOR, United States Land Office.

At North Platte, Nebraska, Dec. 4, 1912.

Notice is hereby given that Joseph A. Kimball of North Platte, Neb., who on August 30, 1907, received a patent, under Serial No. 04283, for all of Section 24, Town 19 N., Range 30 W., of the 61st Principal Meridian, has filed notice of intention to make final three month proof to establish claim to the land above described, before the register and receiver at North Platte, Nebraska, on the 6th day of February, 1913.

Claimant names as witnesses: Casper L. Swits, Edwin W. O'Neil, Herbert Schwalger and William L. Swits, all of North Platte, Neb.

JOHN E. EVANS, Register.

PROBATE NOTICE.

In the matter of the estate of John Franzen, deceased.

In the county court of Lincoln county, Nebraska, November 25, 1912.

Notice is hereby given that the creditors of said deceased will meet the executor of said estate before the county judge of Lincoln county, Nebraska, at the county court room, in said county, on the 31st day of Dec. 1912, and on the 30th day of June 1913, at 9 o'clock, a. m., each day for the purpose of presenting their claims for examination, adjustment and allowance. Six months are allowed for creditors to present their claims, and one year for the executor to settle said estate, from the 31st day of Nov. 1912. A copy of this order to be published in the North Platte Tribune, a legal semi-weekly newspaper published in said county for four successive weeks prior to December 31, 1912.

JOHN GRANT, County Judge.

NOTICE OF SETTLEMENT.

The State of Nebraska, Lincoln County, ss. In the County Court.

In the Matter of the Estate of Katie Hendy, Deceased.</