

Getting at A Secret

By JOHN TURNLEE

Betty and I were at the piano. I was handing her sheets of music, which she would play or try to play. Presently I tired of this and said to her:

"I heard something about you the other day."

"What did you hear?"

"I'm not going to tell you."

"If I had really heard anything about her I might have teased her for awhile, then told her; but, since I had heard nothing, I had drawn down discomfort on my head."

Every now and again I would admit something in which there was not a grain of truth, and every time I did so I sank deeper into the mire.

"Did you hear it from a man or a woman?"

"From neither." This was about the only truth there was in all my answers.

"Did you see it written?"

"No."

"Printed?"

"Certainly not."

This ended this series of questions, and after some thought I bet went on another tack, in which, of course, it was as easy for me to run her on the rocks as before. At last I said to her:

"Really, Bet, there's nothing in what I heard, or, rather, I heard nothing at all. I said what I did only to tease you."

"You didn't do any such thing. You heard something that I am sure I should know. There is an enemy against whom I should be on my guard. It is your duty to tell me who she is."

"She?"

"Yes, I'm not afraid of a man. Men have no interest in injuring women, and if they had they wouldn't know how. They'd blunder, and it would all react on themselves."

"Didn't I tell you that what I heard was complimentary?"

"And don't I know how to injure a rival by pretending to praise her?"

"How would you do that?" I asked, hoping to divert her attention from the subject in question.

"You may as well tell me who this she devil is and what she said about me."

"There is no she devil, and she has not spoken a word against you."

"Has she red hair?"

I gave a shrug, but no reply.

"This is ridiculous!" said Bet. "Just as if I didn't know who had been saying disagreeable things about me!"

What a fool I had been! And by my folly I had doubtless caused her enmity toward some innocent woman to burst into a flame. At any rate, this is the way I looked upon the matter. I must try a bluff. I scowled fiercely and, rising, went into the hall, opened the door of the coat closet, stepped inside and was taking down my hat when I heard the door shut behind me and the key turned.

Here was a pretty how-d'y-e-do. Bet had me locked in the dark and would doubtless keep me there until I told her what had no existence even in imagination, much less in fact. I waited, expecting to hear from her. I waited in vain. I rapped on the door.

"What is it?"

"Let me out." I assumed an angry tone.

"Tell me what you heard about me."

"I would if I could, but since I heard nothing I can't."

"Then you admit that you are untruthful?"

"Yes, anything you like."

"And you heard nothing said about me?"

"Not a thing."

"Perhaps you have forgotten it?"

"Perhaps I have."

"Very well; stay where you are till you remember it."

I did not propose to remain in a dark closet where there was no room to stand except bolt upright. I would break down the door in preference. But this would make a disturbance in the house. Bet wouldn't care, but I would. I must find some other expedient.

"There is a confession I have to make here. I was quite gone on this tantalizing creature and had been deterred from proposing to her because I had two years in college yet before me and three more in the study of a profession."

"Bet," I called.

"What is it?"

"I give in; I crawl; I leave."

"Are you going to tell?"

"Yes, I am. You have forced it from me."

"Well, tell it."

"Not while in here. Let me out and I'll make a clean breast of it."

It was a long while before I could convince her that I would keep my word. When I did I went with her into the library, where we had been before, and, drawing a small sofa to an open fire, we nestled ourselves side by side.

"I told you I had not heard this thing from a man or a woman. It was told me by a little bird."

"What did the little bird say?"

"The little bird said, 'You are in love with Bet.'"

There was a long pause, after which Bet asked in a low, soft voice, "And what did you say?"

"I said, 'Little bird, you're right.'"

We celebrated our tin wedding recently. I called my wife's attention to the manner of my proposal.

"Humph!" she said. "I knew the secret all the while. I was determined to make you say it."

What a Ragamuffin Did on Christmas Morning

By F. A. MITCHELL

Dr. Tourniquet, the famous surgeon, was sitting before his desk on Christmas morning looking over his accounts, though his principal work was making up his bank account. When the door was opened a little ragged boy entered.

"How did you get in here?" asked the doctor.

"The door was open and I walked into the house. Then I opened the next I came to."

"Well, what do you want?"

"Me madder is next door to dyin'. Me fadder sent me for a doctor. I seen the sign and came in."

The doctor pushed aside the pile of checks before him and, swinging around in his chair, said:

"Your father didn't tell you to come to me?"

"No, sir. He said to go to any doctor I could find that would come. I've been to three before yous. They axed me if I had any money to pay, and when I said no they showed me out."

The doctor continued to gaze at the boy meditatively, then took up a phone transmitter and ordered his car brought to the door. Telling the boy to "come along," he got into the car and directed his chauffeur to drive to the address the child gave. He found a wretched home, wretched on account of poverty, on account of the woman being ill, but especially wretched to the doctor, whose patients usually lived in luxurious homes. He pictured houses he had visited the day before and the preparations for Christmas he had seen.

The woman was in a state of collapse, but a little treatment brought relief, and she was told that her trouble would disappear and was not likely to return, though the doctor left some medicine for her to take. This done, he took up his cases and was going out when the boy stepped up to him and, holding out a handful of coppers and nickels, said:

"Here's yer pay, doctor—me savin's for Christmas. I reckon I'll have to let Christmas go till next time."

Again the prosperous man looked at the ragged boy. What was the doctor thinking of? Was he picturing children of his clients who were loaded down with gifts on that Christmas morning, denied nothing, while this poor boy was handing him his savings for that anniversary which children love best? Did he take in his mind's eye the pile of checks he had left on his rosewood desk in his office? Did it occur to him that he was going back to his home to finish getting ready those checks to send to the bank in the morning, to dine sumptuously, leaving this family without a morsel of Christmas comfort?

Diving into his pocket, the doctor brought out a roll of bills and without counting them said to the invalid, her husband and their boy:

"Why it is that I am given so much and you so little is one of the great mysteries of the world. Take this," handing the boy the roll, "and buy whatever you need for your mother, your father and yourself. Remember this is Christmas morning. It's late to provide, but do the best you can."

"Oh, doctor," exclaimed the sick woman, "how good you are!"

"Good! Don't call me good. You don't know me. I'm selfish and mean. I live on the top wave of prosperity. I visit only those who are prosperous as myself. I'm not called on by the poor. I am considered too high and mighty. Had not some one left my front door ajar your boy would not have effected an entrance to my respectful presence. Had he rung the bell my butler would have turned him away."

"We must all take care of ourselves, doctor," said the man. "If we don't nobody will take care of us."

"Some of us who have more than we need are in duty bound to take care of those who are suffering. I take care of no one."

"But you are kind and generous with your children, doctor."

"What credit is that? I once shot a bear's cub. The mother bear showed as much grief at the death of her offspring as I ever saw in any woman, and I have seen hundreds of parents at the deathbeds of their children."

"But you have begun to be good to the poor this Christmas day and will!"

The doctor turned away and went out without hearing what he would do in future. He knew he would do nothing. He believed it was his duty to do that which he and the world considered practicable. Suppose from that moment he should devote his time to those who could pay nothing for his services. Where would he be by next Christmas? His children were growing up in luxury. There must be a sudden cutting down of the family expenses. They must move out of their palatial residence. If he told the world why he made these changes, it would consider him demented. If he did not, the world would infer that he had lost his grip. He would no longer be called to the homes of the rich. He would lose caste with his fellow medical men. In time not only he, but his family, would be reduced to poverty.

Nevertheless the ragamuffin's visit made a change in Dr. Tourniquet. "If I can't do these things myself," he argued, "there are others who can." After that the doctor was a liberal giver to those associations that do the work of ministering to the poor.

A Skating "Accident"

By OSCAR COX

"Jim," said Charlie Bates excitedly, "what do you suppose has happened to Alec Winston?"

"What?"

"Fell on the back of his head on the ice and has been unconscious for two hours."

"That's strange. Alec is a splendid skater."

"It wasn't his fault."

"Whose fault was it?"

"Billie's."

"You mean Wilhelmina Ripley's."

"Yes, she's the liveliest girl in town. She's an imp of mischief. Her principal object in life seems to be to make trouble."

"You mean among the fellows. Why, they stick to her like flies to molasses."

"If report says correctly you are one of the biggest fools of the lot. But how did Miss Ripley injure Alec Winston?"

"You see, they were skating together, Alec skating backward, Billie forward. For some time she had been trying to stir up bad blood between Alec and Horace Farrar by exercising that diabolical smile of hers."

"Whatever you like to call it. Anyway, she first encouraged one, then the other. She was skating with Alec. He, having his eyes in the front instead of the back of his head, couldn't see Farrar skating behind him with Josie Emerson. Both men being back to back, Billie thought it would be a fine thing to steer Alec against Horace. When they struck Alec's feet went up in the air, and he went down on the back of his head."

"That's too bad. I hope he didn't crack his skull."

"The doctor says not. He says there's a concussion of the brain."

"Was Billie hurt?"

"Hurt! No. Such persons never get hurt. They are protected by Satan, whom they serve. Billie went down, but forward, not backward, and fell partly on Alec."

There was a pause in the dialogue, at the end of which James Bates said to Charlie Bates:

"Charlie, this is a serious matter for all you fellows who have gone daft on Miss Ripley."

"What do you mean?" asked Bates, looking at his friend anxiously.

"Why, she'll be badly broken up at the serious result of her innocent playfulness."

"Call it devilishness."

"She'll inquire a dozen times a day after Alec, sending him spoon fodder and flowers. As soon as he gets well enough to see her she'll go to him, cry a little, wonder if he'll ever forgive her, and the result will be that he'll take her in with no more resistance on her part than a jellyfish."

"He'll be a fool if he does!" cried Bates excitedly, and, crumpling his hands down into the bottom of his trousers pockets, he strode up and down the floor.

"You seem averse to Alec's being roped into the meshes of this imp of a girl," remarked his friend.

"Naturally. I've been there myself," replied Bates.

"Where?"

"In Billie's good graces."

"Oh! You have, eh? How long did you stay?"

"An evening."

"And the next day?"

"I was reduced to the ranks and Alec was promoted."

"I should think that you'd covet revenge on Alec."

"Oh, Alec is an inoffensive sort of a fellow. He was quite a smart boy before he had that fever. I don't blame him. My wrath is all for the girl."

"You'd better keep it hot."

"What hot?"

"Your wrath. Suppose it should cool and Billie should take hold of you again. Where would you be?"

"Do you take me for an idiot?"

"I take you for what we men all are in the matter of women. So long. I must be moving on."

A week later the two friends met again.

"I say, Jim," said Charlie, "you were all wrong about how that matter between Billie and Alec would turn out."

"How is that?"

"Alec was only stunned. He was up and about the next day."

"How about Miss Ripley?"

"The thing sobered her."

"How do you know?"

"How do I know? Why she told me so."

"When?"

"Last night."

"At what hour?"

"At what hour? What's that to you?"

"Tell me the time you left her last night and I'll explain."

"I didn't exactly leave her last night. It was this morning. I think it was about half past 1."

"No explanation on my part is necessary. I knew very well when you were telling me about the accident that you were fired by jealousy. You didn't care what happened to Alec, unless perhaps you hoped death would take him out of your way. When you told me you had left your fiancée—"

"My fiancée! How did you know that? It isn't out yet."

"I guessed it. Lovers just engaged don't leave their girls at 10 o'clock in the evening, or 11, or 12. It's more likely to be 2 or 3 in the morning."

"How do you know all that?"

"I've been there."

J. L. Mitchell

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Sheriff's Sale.

By virtue of an order of sale issued from the District Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska, upon a decree of foreclosure rendered in said Court wherein Florence M. Hershby is plaintiff and Oliver A. Ridenour et al are defendants, and to me directed, I will on the 29th day of December, 1916, at 2 o'clock p. m., at the east front door of the Court House in North Platte, Lincoln County, Neb., 1916, sell at Public Auction to the highest bidder for cash, to satisfy said decree, interest and costs, the following described property, to-wit:

South Half (S½) of Section Ten (10) and the North Half (N½) of Section Fifteen (15), Township Eleven (11), North of Range Thirty-three (33), Lincoln County, Neb.

Dated North Platte, Neb., Nov. 27, 1916.

A. J. SALISBURY,
n25429 Sheriff.

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Sale Under Chattel Mortgage.

Notice is hereby given that by virtue of a chattel mortgage, dated on the 20th day of September, 1916, and duly filed in the office of the County Clerk of Lincoln County, Nebraska, on the 23d day of September, 1916, and executed by P. H. Lonergan and Lucy Lonergan, husband and wife, to Julius Hahler, to secure the payment of the sum of \$957.50 with interest at 8 percent per annum from date thereof, and upon which there is now due the sum of \$973.45, default having been made in the payment of said sum, and no suit or other proceedings at law having been instituted to recover said debt or any part thereof, therefore I will sell the property therein described, viz: two symplex moving picture machines with stands and equipments complete, all electric wiring, wires, lights, bulbs and sockets, together with all chandeliers, and electric supplies and fixtures, all chairs, stoves, piano and all musical instruments, pictures, paintings and their frames, all stage curtains, stage fixtures and appliances, all electric fans, all opera chairs, being 248 opera and 100 folding slat chairs, and all other personal property and fixtures owned by us or either of us and now used in and about the Pat Theatre in running and operating the same, situate and being in the two story brick building on lot 14, of the Lutheran Subdivision of Lots 7 and 8 in Block 115 of the original town of North Platte, Lincoln County, Nebraska, at public auction at the front door of the said described premises, known as the "Pat Theatre" in the city of North Platte, Nebraska, on the 23d day of December, 1916, at 2 o'clock in the afternoon (central time) of said date.

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Notice to Creditors
Estate No. 1438, of Bertha Hocquel, deceased, in the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska.
The State of Nebraska, ss: Creditors of said estate will take notice that the time limited for presentation and filing of claims against said estate is June 8, 1917, and for settlement of said estate is October 7, 1917; that I will sit at the county court room in said county on December 8, 1916, at 9 o'clock a. m. and on June 8, 1917, at 9 o'clock a. m. to receive, examine, hear, allow, or adjust all claims and objections duly filed.

GEO. E. FRENCH,
n7d1 County Judge.

Notice.
Edgar Johnston will take notice that on the 6th day of November, 1916, P. H. Sullivan, a justice of the peace of North Platte Precinct No. 1, Lincoln County, Nebraska, issued an order of attachment for the sum of \$13.35 in an action pending before him, wherein Mrs. Nellie Potter is plaintiff and Edgar Johnston defendant; that property consisting of money in the sum of \$10.55 in the hands of the Union Pacific railroad company, a corporation, has been attached under said order. Said cause was continued to the 28th day of December, 1916, at ten o'clock a. m.

Dated Nov. 18th, 1916,
n21-48 MRS. NELLIE POTTER, Plaintiff.

Notice of Petition.
Estate No. 1446 of Claus Gruenau, deceased.
In the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska.
The State of Nebraska. To all persons interested in said Estate take notice that a petition has been filed for the probate of an Instrument, purporting to be the foreign will of Claus Gruenau and the appointment of Louisa Gruenau, as Administratrix, with Will annexed in said Estate, which has been set for hearing herein on December 15, 1916, at 9 o'clock a. m.

Dated Nov. 17, 1916.
n21-412 GEO. E. FRENCH, County Judge.

Notice, Decree of Heirship
Estate of Sophia Meyers, deceased.
In the County Court of Lincoln County, Nebraska.
The heirs, creditors and all persons interested in said Estate, will take notice that on the 11th day of November, 1916, Jack Palmer, claiming title by mesne conveyance from Sophia Meyers, decedent, filed his petition herein, alleging that the said Sophia Meyers died intestate on or about Feby. 21, 1883, a resident of the city of Washington, D. C. and that at the time of her death she was the owner of, or had an Estate of inheritance in fee simple title in and to Lots 7 and 8, Block 64 city of North Platte in said Lincoln County Nebraska, and that no application has been made in the said state for the appointment of an administrator. That she left surviving her Minnie Oberst, over the age of 21, residing at North Platte, Nebr., a daughter, Mary Reagon, over the age of 21, residing at Washington, D. C., a daughter, Fred Meyers, over the age of 21, residing at Washington, D. C., a son, Sophia Federhoff, over the age of 21, residing at North Platte, Nebr., a daughter.
That all the debts of said decedent have been paid, and praying that regular administration be waived and a decree entered barring creditors and fixing the date of her death and the degree of kinship of her heirs and the right of descent to said real estate. Said petition will be heard December 15, 1916, at 9 o'clock a. m. at the office of the county judge in said county.

GEO. E. FRENCH,
n21-412 County Judge.