

CLAIR OR MAUD?

Now, which of these shall be my wife? 'Tis hard to choose between them—

A BURGLAR TRAP.

As a member of the "special staff" to whom is entrusted the duty of dealing with telegraph business at race meetings and other events of irregular and itinerant occurrence, I have visited most towns of any importance in England, and have been a spectator of, and in some cases a participator in, some curious incidents, one of which I propose to relate here.

Many of the most successful meetings from a racing man's point of view, are those held at places otherwise of very little size or importance. As an example, it will be sufficient to mention Epsom. It was a town in the Midlands ordinarily containing about 6,000 inhabitants that I, with five colleagues, including a supervisor, was ordered in the autumn of 187—

The event was a two-day race meeting. The first day was fine, with occasional showers; the racing was good; and as a large company was present, we had enough to do not only at the grand stand, but also later in the evening at the town office, whence we despatched a large quantity of press-work by means of a "Wheatstone," which had been sent for the purpose. It was 11 o'clock before we finished, and we then had a good half-hour's walk to our lodgings.

The second day was awful. Rain fell in torrents the whole afternoon. Of course the program was carried out; but, beyond official results and "received" messages, we had very little to do. It is the only day I can remember during which our boss did not stir out of the office. He generally contrived to have some business to transact outside about the time fixed for each race.

This day, however, the persistent downpour was too much for him. After the third race, he sent me to one of the reporters on some business. I found my man in the weighing room, a small temporary wooden shed at the back of Lattersall's ring.

When I entered, the jockeys were being weighed in, and there was apparently some difficulty or dispute, as the process was an unusually protracted one. I waited, leaning against the back wall of the shed, and as I did so, became conscious of voices whispering outside.

I caught the words, "A bloke with a big red nose and one ear," and my attention was arrested at once, for this was the description of our counter-clerk. I listened attentively and with increasing astonishment.

The voices were those of two men; an the gist of their conversation was, that a plot had been formed to rob our office of the cash-box on the previous day had failed, owing to the fact that Harper, our counter-clerk, had taken the box into town early in the afternoon, instead of, as was the practice, at the conclusion of the racing.

I had, however, been closely watched, and was seen to place the box in the local postmaster's safe at the town office. The safe was in the room in which we worked in the evening, and was an old-fashioned, almost obsolete contrivance.

All our movements must have been very diligently followed, as the men knew not only the exact position of the safe with respect to the doors and windows, but also at what hour we closed the office, and the whereabouts of our lodgings. They had also ascertained that no one remained during the night in or near the room where the safe was.

The upshot of the conversation, which occupied less time than it has taken me to relate it, was, that the town office was to be entered that night as soon after we had gone as would be considered safe. Entrance was to be effected from the backyard, through the window of a small room adjoining the larger one in which we worked.

Further details I failed to overhear, as the dispute at the weighing-chair, which had been gradually growing warmer, now waxed loud and furious. Taking advantage of the noise, I slipped out and hurried to the office.

"You say they watched us leave last night," he went on, "six of us. What will they think if only three leave to-night?"

I was nonplussed. "I rather like the idea," resumed the boss; "but I think we should have help. Suppose we get a couple of Schinken's men?"

Sergeant Schinken was a kind of semi-public, semi-private police officer with a staff of men, who were largely employed by race committees in the task of preserving order in the enclosures, and excluding bad and doubtful characters. They traveled about to meetings like ourselves, and in this way a sort of intimacy sprang up.

"Oh, they'd just be as bad as the locals," I said. "They'd want to boss the whole affair, and very likely spoil it. I'll tell you what: I'll ask three young fellows I know to come and have a game at cards at our diggings to-night. I'll tell them to call for us at the office half an hour or so before we close. At closing-time we can make some excuse, and send them off with our own three men, whilst you, Harper, and I remain."

He still hesitated. I could see he was again more than half inclined to let the police deal with the matter. Of course his responsibility was heavy; and should anything go wrong, he would certainly be severely censured. I had, however, the utmost confidence in my plan, and would or could see no possibility of failure; so that, eventually, I succeeded in gaining his consent.

This done, I was only anxious for the racing to conclude, that we might get down to the town and prepare our surprise party. At 5 o'clock the final race was run; and an hour later we were hard at it in the town, wiring full account of the day's doings.

Only the three of us already mentioned knew of the projected attempt, and our counter-plan; and we, convinced that we would be overlooked, assumed to the best of our abilities an ordinary manner and bearing.

Harper produced as usual his cash-box and sheets, counted and balanced his account, telling the money, which amounted to about eighty pounds, out on the counter before him. Finally, he replaced it in the box, which he handed to the boss, who placed it in the safe, closing, but not locking, the door.

Meanwhile, I had, quietly and unobserved, procured a box very similar to Harper's, and after partly filling it with some odd pieces of metal, I fastened one end of a long wire to its brass handle. I prepared another similar piece of wire. Ostensibly for working purposes, I had gathered all the batteries at our command underneath the counter, and when the work was over, I quietly knelt down and joined them altogether in series.

At the same time I fastened one end of my spare wire to the negative pole of this monster battery; and then, standing up and leaning over the counter, succeeded, unnoticed, in attaching the other end of the wire to a narrow brass rail which ran along the top edge of the counter. I must explain, that in order to reach the safe from the pantry door, as we called it, it was necessary to pass almost the entire length of this counter, and of course to re-pass it in returning.

The hour for closing arrived: My three friends had been waiting some time. Everything being ready, the boss sent our colleagues home, saying we would follow shortly. The three guests went with them.

It was still raining, and they hurried off. The gas was immediately turned off, and I at once opened the safe and removed the cash-box, which Harper put in a place of safety, and substituted the one I had prepared with the length of wire. There was plenty of slack wire, which we brought round the back of the safe, over the other end of the counter, fastening the free end to the positive pole of the battery.

All was now ready. We hid behind the counter and waited. Harper, who was very bitter against the thieves, on account of their unflattering description of himself, took up his place close to the Wheatstone transmitter, a clock-work machine driven by heavy weights, and capable of attaining a very high speed.

An hour passed. It struck twelve. The rain was still beating against the windows. I was stiff and cold and weary, and was beginning to wish we had called in the police, when I heard something a trifle louder than the rain at the pantry window.

There was a quick scratching sound like a nail drawn across a slate, and immediately after we heard the window-latch slipped back and the sash raised quietly. The men were certainly expert at their work.

Had we not been alert and expecting them, we should not have heard their operations. In a few moments the pantry door opened with a gentle creak, and the marauder was in the room. We held our breath.

continually and all at once. We could hear the cash-box thump and rattle against the floor or the counter as the current jerked his arm spasmodically to and fro.

At this point Harper quietly turned on the transmitter and pushed the lever over to top-speed. Any one who has heard an instrument of this description set in motion at its maximum speed knows what a sensation coming disaster is given by the rapidly increasing revolutions of a score of wheels, which gather speed and force and noise until it seems as if the whole machine will burst up by excess of velocity.

Imagine the effect this had on the nerves of the man already in the grip of some mysterious, unlightable agony. Of course he jumped to the conclusion that the noise indicated some fresh increase of his torments.

He began to scream for mercy. "Oh-h-h! Help me. Murder! Oh gentleman, stop it! Don't kill me. Help! Help!" He writhed and struggled, fell on his knees, and by an enormous effort, tore the rail from its place; but the battery wire still held on.

For a time his cries and struggles redoubled; but at last he lay exhausted on the floor. I then turned off the current, and we turned on the gas. There lay our man, his face gray and distorted, as though he had a fit. He was quite young. After he had somewhat recovered, he begged hard to be let go, gasping out: "You've done it hard enough on me."

After some hesitation, the boss decided to let him go. I fancy he was not quite at his ease as to how his action would be regarded by the department. Another reason was that the second man had got clean away. He had been waiting outside; but on hearing the disturbance and his pal's cries, had fled and left him.

The man was grateful for his release, and walked slowly and heavily away. He was evidently severely shaken, and I should scarcely think would ever try to rob a telegraph office again.—Saturday Evening Post.

The Story of the Kill. The Felle-brecaun, or belted plaid, which was the plaid and kilt in one piece, is the recognized upper garment of the ordinary ancient Highlander, but it may be new to some that the Fellebeag (philabeg) or little plaid—the kilt, in short, as it is known at present—owes its existence to the ingenuity of an English regimental tailor, and it is not over two hundred years old.

Soon after the year 1713, attracted by the profusion of fuel in Glengarry, an English company established an iron foundry in the midst of the extensive birch woods near the Bridge of Garry, and a small canal was cut from Loch Oich to Loch Lochy to facilitate the conveyance of the metal to the sea. The manager of the works was an Englishman named Rawlinson, and as his residence was a convenient stroll between General Wade's garrisons at Maryborough and Inverness, he was frequently visited by officers and men passing between the two posts. One of these was a soldier and regimental tailor named Parkinson, to whom, having recently come to the country, the novelty of the dress was an object of curiosity.

While he sat by the fire, observing a Highlander who entered remaining in his wet belted plaid, he inquired why he did not put off his "cloak." His disapprobation on hearing it was, the only upper garment under the cot-a-gorrid was increased on being told that it was plaited under the belt every time that it was put on; and, prompted by his trade, he suggested the improvement of sewing the folds in the required disposition, and separating them from the rest of the plaid, by which the mantle part might be laid aside any time.

The expedient being repeated to Rawlinson, who himself wore the Highland dress, he detained the tailor to execute his design; and two days after the manager appeared in the little kilt. The new garment immediately attracted the notice of Ian Mac Alas, dair Mhic Raonnel of Glengarry who caused a second to be made for himself.

Excavating for History in Tunis. It is announced from Tunis that excavations are now being made in the famous two-headed hill mentioned by Virgil, which hill is situated about eight miles from Tunis. Many interesting remains have already been unearthed, and it is confidently hoped that better will follow. A temple of Baal Saturn, which has been almost entirely laid bare, is attracting particularly the attention of the French archaeologists because of its peculiarly interesting statues and bas-reliefs. The building is situated at an elevation of over 1,600 feet; and this is another proof that the Carthaginians practiced their religious ceremonies on hills. On all the statues of the gods to which the temple is dedicated the names Baal and Saturn are found together, which would seem to indicate that to flatter their Roman conquerors the Carthaginians had added to the name of their chief god that of the highest Roman deity.—Chambers' Journal.

What a Pity? The American Hebrew says that a minister, while visiting a farmer in the neighborhood of Glasgow, was invited to partake of some fine fruit.

The good man not only declined the proffered dainties, but announced the remarkable fact that he had never tasted an apple or any other kind of "green fruit."

The company looked much surprised, and an old Scotchman remarked in a dry tone: "It's a peety, but had ye been in Paradise there might nae have been any fa'."

MISS PRISCILLA PRUE.

Little Miss Priscilla Prue, With her eyes of clearest blue, And her cheeks of rosy hue, Lived in Boston, long ago; And the village people said That this charming little maid Was enough to turn one's head For she smiled and dimpled so.

Miss Priscilla's yellow gown Was the wonder of the town, Where the leading shade was brown, In the summer long ago; Ah, her dainty tripping feet, With their high-heeled shoes, peeped, Made the dustiest hearts to beat, Tho' they clad her dancing so.

Young and old alike she swayed, This smiling little maid, Though she was not a trim and staid, Every youth from far and wide, Longed to win her for his bride, But Priscilla only sighed, And demurely answered "No."

But at last there came a day, When her heart was charmed away, Where the leading shade was brown, To a scholar, long ago; So her brave eyes, clear and blue, And her red lips, sweet and true, Answered him with a smile to one, "Yes, because I love you so!"—Household Companion.

ALL ABOUT A SKULL.

"I presume that a man of your sceptical mind and iron nerve has a great contempt for people who believe in ghosts or in other supernatural terrors?"

"I had such a contempt once but I was completely cured of it years ago."

"You surprise me. May I ask whether you healed yourself or employed the services of some other physician?"

Dr. Weymouth caught the humor in the remark of the young medical student who was questioning him, and laughed.

"I was cured by something worse than a physician," he replied. "What was it?"

"A human skull."

Your story must be a strange one."

"It is; but I will not tell it to you unless you will solemnly promise not to repeat it."

"Why so much secrecy?"

"It is not necessary to satisfy your curiosity now. My reason will be plain to you when my narrative is ended."

"Very well, I promise."

"To give you a thorough understanding of my singular experience, it is necessary for me to recall a series of events which preceded the supernatural horror which I shall describe."

committed but one offence. He had opened the desk and scattered the papers that he had found in it, but he had stolen nothing. The mystery was great until the prisoner confessed that he had entered the house for the sole purpose of furnishing Mrs. Godwin with evidence that her husband was untrue to her. His intimacy with Godwin had enabled him to discover where his friend kept the respectable love letters, and then he brought out the mean plot by which effected the scattering of the letters, so that Mrs. Godwin, for Mr. Godwin he knew was away, would be unable to discover them the next morning. Of course the natural supposition would be that the house had been entered by a common burglar, and that before he had been frightened away by some noise. But in view of his precautions, the photographer failed to conceal his guilt, and a part of what he desired happened. The divorce was brought out, but Callahan's hope that he might subsequently marry Mrs. Godwin, and derive benefit from the large fortune which she held in her own right, was blasted. He had cultivated her husband's acquaintance for years, for the purpose of finding an opportunity for the gratification of his evil desires. The opportunity had at last come, but in his attempt to use it, he had been thoroughly thwarted.

"Although he had stolen nothing, the act of breaking into the house constituted burglary and he was sent to prison for a few years. It is here interesting to note that the man who brought ill-luck to Callahan brought good luck to me. Soon after he went to prison, I married Mrs. Godwin and have since lived happily with her. During his imprisonment the photographer brooded over his troubles, and when he was released he was in a murderous mood. One evening, while my wife and I were walking in a thinly settled district of the city, we were startled by two pistol shots fired in rapid succession by some one behind us. I turned around and running a few feet back grappled with our assailant. I threw him upon the ground, and succeeded in holding him there until two men who happened to be in the vicinity hurried to my assistance. The villain was Callahan, who had secretly followed me and my wife until there was a favorable opportunity for him to attempt murder. He cursed me in a frightful manner when he found that he was a prisoner. A second time he was punished by being incarcerated. Three years later, knowing that he had a disease that would soon end his life, he bequeathed his remains for anatomical purposes to the physician of the prison, to whom he had taken a great liking. I was well acquainted with this doctor, and as a token of his esteem he presented me with Callahan's skull, he being well aware that I was at that time engaged in making a choice collection of skulls of all sizes.

"The skull was placed in my collection, which was kept in a closet connected with my office, and I thought no more about it until one day I was seized with the desire to see how the skulls would look when arranged so that they could all be seen at once. Accordingly I placed them in three rows on a broad table in my office, Callahan's being in the centre of the front row, being accorded, as it were, the place of honor. I had just seated myself in a chair for the purpose of gazing at the array in an admiring manner when a messenger arrived and asked me to visit a patient whose symptoms had suddenly become alarming.

"It was late at night when I returned to my office. I lighted a gas jet, but turned on so little gas that the flame was small. I seated myself in the chair which I had left when disturbed by the visitor and gazed at the skulls which were about ten feet distant. They looked uncanny, unearthly, perhaps, is a better word, in the dim light. I had always prided myself on not being superstitious, and had frequently laughed at friends who stood in awe of the supernatural. But somehow as I gazed at that ghastly array of grinning skulls, listened to the solemn tick of a great clock that rested on top of a desk, felt that I was alone and that all of the people in the city except a few watchmen were sleeping, I felt a chill run down my back and my heart began to thump as the thought came to me that those skulls might move against me. Might not Callahan, who had tried to kill me, who had hated me intensely during his second term of imprisonment, be able to introduce his troubled spirit into his skull, marshal the spirits belonging to the other skulls, each as a horrid death's army, so to speak, swoop upon me and quickly batter out my brains. It was a fantastic, an utterly absurd idea, but it was nevertheless the kind of idea that disturbs a person when the nerves are shaky.

"I soon recovered myself, however, and smiled with contempt for my momentary weakness. But the next instant a frightful fascination compelled me to stare at the skull of Callahan. There was a slight noise in it and it actually moved a little. The lidless eyes appeared to glare and the jaws about the gasping mouth to move up and down. I sprang to my feet and grasping the back of the chair with both hands, raised it in readiness for an attack. The skull moved again, more decidedly than before, and I trembled all over. There was a loud rattle, a big movement of the skull, it crashed to the floor and bounded to my feet. I jumped so high that my head grazed the ceiling, and as I came down, the skull shook violently, turned over, and out sprang a big rat that scampered across the floor and disappeared.

"I felt sheepish enough, but I had been frightened like a child, and I speak of the occurrence to the best of the doctors at the city hospital, cause them to overweigh ridicule. Remember you for if you should reveal what I told you, my reputation as a man who has an iron nerve would be forever.—Household Companion.

Caused a Coolness. It is often noted by railroads that the friendship existing between Passenger Conductors John M. Smith and "Willie Billie" Smith, Lake Erie and Western, is of long standing. Yet on one occasion did almost come to blows and speak to each other for nearly a week. Though working for different companies their trains ran over the same track between Indianapolis and Kokomo. One dark and stormy night "Willie" pulled out of this city and did not go far until it was discovered that the engine was not running, and could hardly pull a hill. A hill was reached, and the engine stalled, and the train was stuck. A hill was reached, and the engine stalled, and the train was stuck. A hill was reached, and the engine stalled, and the train was stuck.

Southern Women. Mr. Thomas Nelson Page, the author of "The Old South," has said in praise of the wives and daughters of the old regime. The man of the plantation, he says, might shift the responsibility upon a tenant overseer, but the mistress, such means of relief. "She was a woman, manager, doctor, counsellor, seamstress, teacher, house-keeper, all at once." Such a woman was by her husband that one of the was broken. "Well, my dear," answered, "if I could sew it with a needle and thread, I would do it for you."

In another place Mr. Page says some years ago he was shown a faded letter, written on old federate paper with pale blue ink. It had been taken from a breast-pocket of a dead private of a Georgia regiment after the battles around Richmond.

It was from his sweetheart, must have been plain and simple people, for it was badly written and badly spelled. In it she told him she loved him since they had school together in the little school house in the woods; that she was sorry she had always treated him badly, and that now, if he would marry her, she would be his.

Then, as if fearful that this station might prove too strong for her, she scrawled a little sheet across the blue paper.

"Don't come without a letter for if you don't come home, I won't marry you."

A Dilemma Task. For many years it has been an aphorism worn threadbare, that all threads in a cloth are threads in a web. The ball is very uncertain. The thread that saw is emphasized by the fact of every companionship. It was illustrated in the last issue of the newspapers in Chicago.

Spring offered \$250 to the man who should first place the name of twelve League clubs in a list to the office. Naturally a large prize brought out the efforts. It took the work of a sized force of clerks several days to examine the guesses which in, and of the entire lot there was one correct prediction.

It seems that the gigantic of the New York and Chicago upset the talent badly. Thousands who tried got twelve right, but missed eighth, and his effort was to succeed of any made. However, the task of clubs is not so easy. It is imagined at a rough estimate are more possible combinations of arrangement of twelve clubs than you have hairs on your head when we say "you," we are dressing any of the occupant first row nearest the ball.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.

Door-Openers. An electric door-opener and lock, by means of which a door can be locked in winter, is the fact, has been brought to the attention of the public for the use of shop-keepers of a suspicious haste to leave part of the standing by a brought up customer, who is locked instantaneously, while the door is closed.