

Beasley's Christmas Party

By BOOTH TARKINGTON

VI—Continued.

"From the Despatch, hay?" Mr. Peck gave me greeting, as he wound a knit comforter about his neck. "That's good. We'd most give you up. This here's Mr. Grist, and Mr. Henry P. Cullop, and Mr. Gus Schulmeyer—three men that feel the same way about Dave Beasley that I do. That other young feller," he waved a mitted hand to the fourth man—"he's from the Journal. Likely you're acquainted."

The young man from the Journal was unknown to me; moreover, I was far from overjoyed at his presence in the group. "I've got you newspaper men here," continued Mr. Peck, "because I'm goin' to show you some'n' about Dave Beasley that'll open a good many folk's eyes when it's in print."

"Well, what is it?" I asked, rather sharply. "Jest hold your horses a little bit," he returned. "Grist and me knows, and so do Mr. Cullop and Mr. Schulmeyer. And I'm goin' to take them and you two reporters to look at it. All ready? Then come on."

He threw open the door, stooped to the gust that took him by the throat, and led the way out into the storm. "What is he up to?" I gasped to the Journal man as we followed in a straggling line. "I don't know any more than you do," he returned. "He thinks he's got something that'll queer Beasley. Peck's an old fool, but it's just possible he's got hold of something. Nearly everybody has one thing, at least, that they don't want found out. It may be a good story. Lord, what a night!"

I pushed ahead to the leader's side. "See here, Mr. Peck—" I began, but he cut me off.

"You listen to me, young man! I'm givin' you some news for your paper, and I'm gittin' at it my own way, but I'll git at it, don't you worry! I'm goin' to let some folks around here know what kind of a feller Dave Beasley really is; yes, and I'm goin' to show George Dowden he can't laugh at me!"

"You're going to show Mr. Dowden?" I said. "You mean you're going to take him along with us on this expedition, too?"

"Take him!" Mr. Peck emitted an acrid bark of laughter. "I guess he's at Beasley's, all right."

"No, he isn't; he's at home—at Mrs. Apperthwaite's—playing cards."

"What?"

"I happen to know that he'll be there all evening."

Mr. Peck smote his palms together. "Grist!" he called, over his shoulder, and his colleague struggled forward. "Listen to this: even Dowden ain't at Beasley's. Ain't the Lord workin' fer us tonight?"

"Why don't you take Dowden with you," I urged, "if there's anything you want to show him?"

"By George, I will!" shouted Peck. "I've got him where the hair's short now!"

"That's right," said Grist.

"Gentlemen"—Peck turned to the others—"when we git to Mrs. Apperthwaite's, jest stop outside along the fence a minute. I reckon we'll pick up a recruit."

Shivering, we took up our way again in single file, stumbling through drifts that had deepened incredibly within the hour. The wind was straight against us, and so stingingly sharp and so laden with the driving snow that when we reached Mrs. Apperthwaite's gate (which we approached from the north, not passing Beasley's) my eyes were so full of smarting tears I could see only blurred planes of light dancing vaguely in the darkness, instead of brightly lighted windows.

"Now," said Peck, panting and turning his back to the wind; "the rest of you gentlemen wait out here. You two newspaper men, you come with me."

He opened the gates and went in, the Journal reporter and I following—all three of us wiping our half-blinded eyes. When we reached the shelter of the front porch, I took the key from my pocket and opened the door.

"I live here," I explained to Mr. Peck.

"All right," he said. "Jest step in and tell George Dowden that Sim Peck's out here and wants to see him at the door a minute. Be quick."

I went into the library, and there sat Dowden contemplatively playing bridge with two of the elderly ladies and Miss Apperthwaite. The last-mentioned person quite took my breath away.

In honor of the Christmas eve (I supposed) she wore an evening dress of black lace, and the only word for what she looked had suffered such misuse that one hesitates over it: yet that is what she was—regal—and no less! There was a sort of splendor

about her. It detracted nothing from this that her expression was a little sad; something not uncommon with her lately; a certain melancholy, faint but detectable, like breath on a mirror. I had attributed it to Jean Valjean, though perhaps tonight it might have been due merely to bridge.

"What is it?" asked Dowden, when, after an apology for disturbing the game, I had drawn him out in the hall.

I motioned toward the front door. "Simeon Peck. He thinks he's got something on Mr. Beasley. He's waiting to see you."

Dowden uttered a sharp, half-coherent exclamation and stepped quickly to the door. "Peck!" he said, as he jerked it open.

"Oh, I'm here!" declared that gentleman, stepping into view. "I've come around to let you know that you couldn't laugh like a horse at me no more, George Dowden! So you weren't invited, either."

"Invited?" said Dowden. "Invited where?"

"Over to the ball your friend is givin'."

"What friend?"

"Dave Beasley. So you ain't quite good enough to dance with his high-society friends!"

"What are you talking about?" Dowden demanded, impatiently.

"I reckon you won't be quite so strong for Beasley," responded Peck, with a vindictive little giggle. "when you find he can use you in his business, but when it comes to entertainin'—oh no, you ain't quite the boy!"

"I'd appreciate your explaining," said Dowden. "It's kind of cold standing here."

Peck laughed shrilly. "Then I reckon you better git your hat and coat and come along. Can't do us no harm, and might be an eye-opening for you. Grist and Gus Schulmeyer and Hank Cullop's waitin' out yonder at the gate. We've havin' kind of a consultation at my house over some'n' Grist seen at Beasley's a little earlier in the evening."

"What did Grist see?"

"Cabs! Cabs drivin' up to Beasley's house—a whole lot of 'em. Grist was down the street a piece, and it was pretty dark, but he could see the lamps and hear the doors slam as the people got out. Besides, the whole place is lit up from cellar to attic. Grist come on to my house and told me about it, and I begun usin' the telephone; called up all the men that count in the party—found most of 'em at home, too. I ast 'em if they was invited to this ball tonight; and

"Look at that!" Peck turned to Dowden, giggling triumphantly. "What'd I tell you! How do you feel about it now?"

"But where are the cabs?" asked Dowden, gravely.

"Folks all come," answered Mr. Peck, with complete assurance. "Won't be no more cabs till they begin to go home."

We plunged ahead as far as the corner of Beasley's fence, where Peck stopped us again, and we drew together, slapping our hands and stamping our feet. Peck was delighted—a thoroughly happy man; his sour giggle of exultation had become continuous, and the same jovial break was audible in Grist's voice as he said to the Journal reporter and me:

"Go ahead, boys. Git your story. We'll wait here for you."

The Journal reporter started toward the gate; he had gone, perhaps twenty feet when Simeon Peck whistled in sharp warning. The reporter stopped short in his tracks.

Beasley's front door was thrown open, and there stood Beasley himself in evening dress, bowing and smiling, but not at us, for he did not see us. The bright hall behind him was beautiful with evergreen streamers and wreaths, and great flowering plants in jars. A strain of dance-music wandered out to us as the door opened, but there was nobody except David Beasley in sight, which certainly seemed peculiar—

—for a ball!

"Rest of 'em inside, dancin'," explained Mr. Peck, crouching behind the picket-fence. "It'll be the house is more'n half full o' low-necked wimmin!"

"Sh!" said Grist. "Listen to Dave Beasley."

Beasley had begun to speak, and his voice, loud and clear, sounded over the wind. "Come right in, Colonel!" he said. "I'd have sent a cab for you if you hadn't telephoned me this afternoon that your rheumatism was so bad you didn't expect to be able to come. I'm glad you're well again. Yes, they're all here, and the ladies are getting up a dance in the sitting-room."

(It was at this moment that I received upon the calf of the right leg a kick, the ecstatic violence of which led me to attribute it, and rightly, to Mr. Dowden.)

"Gentlemen's dressing-room upstairs to the right, Colonel," called Beasley, as he closed the door.

There was a pause of awed silence among us.

(I improved it by returning the kick to Mr. Dowden. He made no acknowledgment of its reception other than to sink his chin a little deeper into the collar of his ulster.)

"By the Almighty!" said Simeon Peck, hoarsely. "Who—what was Dave Beasley talkin' to? There wasn't nobody there!"

"Git out," Grist bade him; but his tone was perturbed. "He seen that reporter. He was givin' us the laugh."

"He's crazy!" exclaimed Peck, vehemently.

Immediately all four members of his party began to talk at the same time; Mr. Schulmeyer agreeing with Grist, and Mr. Cullop holding with Peck that Beasley had surely become insane; while the Journal man, returning, was certain that he had not been seen. Argument became a wrangle; excitement over the remarkable scene we had witnessed, and, perhaps, a certain sharpness partially engendered by the risk of freezing, led to some bitterness. High words were flung upon the wind. Eventually, Simeon Peck got the floor to himself for a moment.

"See here, boys, there's no use gittin' mad amongs' ourselves," he vociferated. "One thing we're all agreed on: nobody here never seen no such a dam peculiar performance as we jest seen in their whole lives before. Thurfore, ball or no ball, there's some'n' mighty wrong about this business. Ain't that so?"

They said it was.

"Well, then, there's only one thing to do—let's find out what it is."

"You bet we will."

"I wouldn't send no one in there alone," Peck went on, excitedly, "with a crazy man. Besides, I want to see what's goin' on, myself."

"And so do we!" This declaration was unanimous.

"Then let's see if there ain't some way to do it. Perhaps he ain't pulled all the shades down on the other side the house. Lots o' people fergit to do that."

There was but one mind in the party regarding this proposal. The next minute saw us all cautiously sneaking into the side yard, a ragged line of bent and flapping figures, black against the snow.

Simeon Peck's expectations were fulfilled—more than fulfilled. Not only were all the shades of the big three-faced bay-window of the "sitting room" lifted, but (evidently on account of the too great generosity of a huge log-fire that blazed in the old-fashioned chimney-place) one of the windows was half-raised as well. Here, in the shadow just beyond the rosy oblongs of light that fell upon the snow, we gathered and looked freely within.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Cat an Important Personage. In Holland a wet wedding day means that the bride has forgotten to feed the cat. In Germany, we are told, the peasants who desire fine weather for their washing day, must pay special

Live Ones Only Need Apply. Ad in a New York Paper—Book-keeper for factory of Christian concern; good opportunity for advancement for conscious worker.—Boston Transcript.

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The AMERICAN LEGION

(Copy for This Department Supplied by the American Legion News Service.)

TO HELP COMBAT ILLITERACY

American Legion Auxiliary Called Upon by National Chairman to Aid in Educational Work.

Under the leadership of Mrs. J. E. Baird of Lincoln, Neb., thousands of members of the American Legion Auxiliary assisted the Legion in its American Education week program, December 3 to 9, inclusive.



Mrs. J. E. Baird. 200,000 members, Mrs. Baird made the following statement:

"We, who gave our sons, brothers and husbands to battle for the enlightenment of the world, are deeply interested in the Legion's efforts to combat illiteracy and ignorance which have been revealed as one of our principal sources of national danger.

"The war draft tests, showing that our men from twenty-one to thirty years of age were six per cent illiterate and the subsequent discovery that the United States stands eleventh among the great nations in point of literacy have alarmed the good women of this country and they are eager to remedy this deplorable state of affairs."

Mrs. Baird also pointed out that 22.4 per cent of those examined for the draft were found to be physically unfit and urged that the relatives of veterans assist the Legion in its program to install playgrounds and to establish facilities for physical exercise among school children.

Among the principal activities of the auxiliary women during American Education week was a campaign urging the importance of regular visits to the schools.

LEGION MAN TRAINS PIGEONS

Stuart Cohen of St. Paul, Minn., an Expert in Teaching the Feathered Messengers.

Training homing pigeons is the hobby of Stuart W. Cohen, a member of the American Legion in St. Paul, Minn.

A pigeon lover since childhood, Cohen has been training the birds since 1910. His pupils have flown successfully at all distances up to 1,400 miles. A number of pigeons trained by Cohen are now assisting forest fire prevention work at a post established at Tower, Minn.

Cohen sent a carrier pigeon to Virginia, Minn., recently, where a message was attached to it to return to St. Paul. Worn out, its tail drooping and its big feathers singed, the pigeon came back to St. Paul. The message was gone. In place of the little packet was a severe scratch and wound. The feathers were singed and ruffled, indicating it had encountered forest fires in the northern part of the state. Cohen estimated that the pigeon must have gone two or three hundred miles out of its course when the smoke of the forest fires confused its sense of direction.

Cohen spent most of his army service at Camp Forest, Ga.

MACNIDER AS BUCK PRIVATE

Former National Commander Promised to Tell Buddies How It Feels to Be Back in Ranks.

Hanford MacNider, past national commander of the American Legion, has promised to write an article in the near future for his Iowa buddies telling how it feels to be a buck private in the Legion ranks again.

"Reports that MacNider might locate in the East after his term as national commander expired were absolutely without foundation," the Iowa Legionnaire states. "He has returned to his old job at Mason City, Iowa, and taken his place as a buck in the ranks of Clausen-Worden post. That he will show up at Legion meetings here and there over the state from time to time is certain. He will be the same old 'Jack' MacNider, for Iowa is his home and his heart is here with his gang."

"MacNider may think he will continue to be a buck, but the service he has given this country is far too distinguished and he has impressed too many people with his caliber to long remain as a buck or private citizen. There are too many big jobs he can do better than any other man for him to long remain down here with us ordinary mortals."

TO CARE FOR MENTAL CASES

Government Is Seeking Young Physicians to Undergo Special Training for Veterans' Bureau Service.

Dr. Frank F. Hutchins, clinical director of the United States Veterans' bureau, in Washington, D. C., recently visited national headquarters of the American Legion upon request to explain the new step taken by the Veterans' bureau to provide better trained doctors and nurses in the care of neuro-psychiatric World war veterans.



Dr. Frank F. Hutchins.

The government is looking for 50 young doctors of medicine to compose an initial class for special training in the treatment of mental cases, Doctor Hutchins said.

"Neuro-psychiatry is perhaps the most difficult of all the veterans' ailments," he said. "Almost anyone knows that tuberculosis is caused by a definite germ. Almost everyone knows what kind of treatment and care should be given a tubercular patient. This mental disease, however, may be the combination of many other physical ailments. Hardly two of them are exactly alike. It is a difficult problem, and doctors handling these cases need special training. They must have all the patience in the world."

Doctor Hutchins said it is impossible to obtain the required number of specialists in nervous and mental diseases, and that it has become necessary for the government to instruct a staff of its own for this line of work.

"The policy of the bureau is to provide medical attention for the disabled veterans so that everything possible may be done to restore them to health and proper status in civilian life," he said.

A systematic and comprehensive course in neuro-psychiatry has been outlined. It consists of 176 lectures and demonstrations and some 446 hours of clinical and laboratory work. Three courses are to be given. The first, which will last four months, is the academic. The next is a post graduate course of six weeks and the third consists of one or two conferences a year lasting three or four days, where ideas and experiences are exchanged.

The accepted candidates will receive \$166 a month during the school work, and after graduation will be passed assistant surgeons in the reserve corps of the United States public health service, or eligible for employment as class "B" physicians under the United States civil service commission and assigned to duty with United States Veterans' bureau. These salaries range from \$3,000 a year upward.

The first class started work January 4, and at the same time schools for graduate nurses, social service, occupational-therapist and physio-therapist work began.

BONDY GETS RED CROSS CALL

Member of Peers-Williams Post of St. Louis Is Appointed Director of War Service.

Robert E. Bondy, a member of Peers-Williams post of the American Legion at St. Louis, has recently been appointed to the important office of director of war service of the American Red Cross.

Mr. Bondy has had a wide range of experience with the Red Cross since April, 1919, when he came to the organization from the social service bureau of the chamber of commerce of Columbus, O., where he organized one of the first large war chests of the early war days, raising \$3,250,000 in that city in one drive.

He served as secretary-treasurer of the public welfare section of the Ohio conference of public welfare in 1917 and during the war was an enlisted man.

Mr. Bondy is a native of Minnesota, and received his education at Chicago university. For a time he was a reporter on the Chicago Tribune. His many duties have thrown him in contact with the work for ex-service men. This, combined with his camp experience and his training as a social service executive, peculiarly fits him for his new duties.

Representing the Red Cross, Mr. Bondy spoke at the recent national gathering of Legion state adjutants held in Indianapolis.

Chance to Profit. Rafferty of the Old Sod, and MacPherson, a Scot, were miners together. One day Rafferty accidentally emptied his pipe on a keg of powder and when he came down it was on the installment plan. Mac's grief was genuine, but finally he dried his tears and went off to notify Mrs. Rafferty.

"Is this the Widow Rafferty?" he asked when a woman appeared at the door.

"Tis Mrs. Rafferty I am, but no Widow Rafferty," she snapped. A businesslike gleam came into MacPherson's eye.

"An' how much will ye bet?" he demanded.—American Legion Weekly.

DOCTORS WANTED TO OPERATE

Mrs. Quillon Tells How Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Saved Her from an Operation

Muskegon, Michigan.—"After doctoring for eight or nine years with different physicians without any relief at all, they said at last that medicine would not reach my case and I should have an operation. I had heard of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and often saw it advertised in different papers where some women had suffered just as I did and got well and strong again by taking the Vegetable Compound. I decided to see what it would do for me, and before I had finished the fourth bottle I was much better, the weakness stopped, and the severe pains in my sides left me. I am now much stronger and do my own work and work in the factory besides. I am still taking the Vegetable Compound and give it all the praise."—Mrs. NELLIE QUILLON, 17 Morris St., Muskegon, Mich.



Women should heed such warning symptoms as bearing-down pains and weakness, for they indicate some female trouble, and a persistent and faithful use of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound will seldom fail to help.

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MAN'S BEST AGE

A man is as old as his organs; he can be as vigorous and healthy at 70 as at 35 if he aids his organs in performing their functions. Keep your vital organs healthy with

LATHROP'S GOLD MEDAL HAARLEM OIL CAPSULES

The world's standard remedy for kidney, liver, bladder and uric acid troubles since 1896; corrects disorders; stimulates vital organs. All druggists, three sizes. Look for the name Gold Medal on every box and accept no imitation.

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50 GOOD CIGARETTES 10¢

GENUINE "BULL" DURHAM TOBACCO

Nothing to Eat. My most embarrassing moment came when I had dinner with a friend who put out a most beautifully served and appointed meal, with gorgeous service and artistic settings, but with little food. I was duly impressed with the beauty of the meal, but equally depressed by the lack of food, and with both these feelings in mind I blurted out to the hostess on leaving: "You must come and dine with us soon. I can't promise you a more artistic dinner than yours was, my dear, but you may be sure it will be more substantial."—Chicago Tribune.

Relative Rewards. "Do you know," said the earnest person, "that there are men renowned in literature, art and science whose annual incomes are not large enough to give them the ordinary comforts of life?"

"I don't doubt it," said Mr. Gawker, "but if nature gave them sound bodies to start with and they've enjoyed reasonably good health, it seems to me that it's their own fault if they haven't gone in for athletics and acquired proficiency with a pair of eight-ounce gloves."—Birmingham Age-Herald.

Children's handkerchiefs often look hopeless when they come to the laundry. Wash with good soap, rinse in water blued with Red Cross Ball Blue.—Advertisement.

A rich bachelor uncle has matters made as pleasant for him as a rich grandpa.

Nature has its spleens and pays for them a good deal as human nature does.

Refreshes Weary Eyes. When Your Eyes Feel Dull and Heavy, use Murine. It instantly Relieves Irritation, Redness, Makes Clear, Bright and Sparkling. Harmless, Sold and Recommended by All Druggists.

MURINE FOR WEARY EYES