

down at his victim. His eyes showed alarm. He bent swiftly over and felt the heart of Dayless. Dayless, though unconscious, was alive. And now Minturn showed a brisk alertness very different from the methodical manner which seemed to belong to him.

From Dayless' pocket he drew a key ring. He walked directly to a huge safe in a corner of the great room.

The Englishman tried several keys. He was finally successful. The heavy door swung silently open, disclosing numerous compartments, each labeled. He attacked the compartment which bore the superscription "Jenny's necklace."

The third key which he inserted opened the drawer. He drew out a limp object wrapped in tissue paper. He opened it, glanced at the jewels that sparkled in the electric light, and thrust his booty into an inside pocket. He inserted another key into a lock above which were the words "Unset rubies." The lock did not yield to his pressure; he turned the key violently, and it broke in his hand.

The same thing happened with the next compartment which he endeavored to open. And then Dayless moved and groaned.

Like a flash Minturn crossed the room. He opened the door, passed through it, and closed it softly behind him. He walked along the hall to the great stairway that descended to the street floor. Leisurely he walked to the lower floor. There he encountered the footman who had admitted him earlier in the day. The man ventured a smile.

"Anything I can do for you, sir?" He recognized in Minturn that superior class which he so rarely encountered in America.

"No, thank you," replied the latest addition to the Dayless household. "I'm always a bit restless my first night in new quarters, and I thought I'd take a look at the avenue before I turned in."

"Quite so," said the servant. He fetched Minturn's hat and coat and assisted him in donning the latter. He opened the door and ushered Minturn out of the house. Across the street a man woke from watchful inactivity. He gained the front steps before the door was closed. But the footman smilingly reassured him.

"It's all right; this is Mr. Reginald Minturn, secretary to Mr. Dayless."

The outside guardian of the Dayless palace scrutinized the young Englishman carefully. He saw a plump-faced young man, whose hair was quite black, and whose tiny mustache was equally dark. He nodded respectfully.

"All right, sir; we have to be careful, you know," he said.

"And quite right, too," agreed Minturn. "If I were Mr. Dayless I'd keep an army here."

The man grinned. "Well, we don't need quite that." He was tolerant and affable in his manner. Evidently Dayless' new secretary didn't know that the Tryon detective agency was guarding this house.

"Where's the nearest entrance to the park?" asked Minturn.

"Sixty-fifth street," was the guard's reply. "But I wouldn't advise anyone to go strolling there this time of night. There've been too many holdups there lately."

Minturn laughed. "How exciting! I fancy I've nothing on me worth a footpad's time and trouble. And I wouldn't mind a little tussle."

"You could take care of yourself, at that," said the Tryon operative. He looked over the lithe figure of the secretary with admiration. "Still, don't look for trouble."

"I won't," promised Minturn.

"Nice chap," said the operative to the footman, who lingered at the open door.

"His uncle's the duke of Bourne-mouth," said the footman.

"I don't care; he's a nice chap just the same," said the free born American citizen. Then he walked across the street and ensconced himself on the low stone wall that guarded the park, hidden in the shade of a great tree. Motor cars were not yet returning from the theaters. In a quarter of an hour the street would be noisy, filled with bustle, but now it was quiet.

It did not remain so. Exactly seven minutes after Minturn had left the house the footman discovered his master, in a semi-conscious condition, on the library floor. Within three minutes after that, men on motorcycles were scouring the park in search of Mr. Reginald Minturn. They were exactly eight minutes too late. For two minutes after the secretary had left the footman and the operative, he had entered the Sixty-fifth street entrance to the park, stepped into a waiting limousine and sped away. A little later he changed to another car, which machine deposited him five minutes afterward in front of a house on Stuyvesant square whose recent renovation had made

it extremely suitable for bachelors. Mr. Minturn alighted from the car, bade a cheery good night to his chauffeur, opened the outer door with one latchkey, entered, and a moment later opened with a second key the door to a snug apartment on the second floor.

He awoke at 9 the following morning, rang a bell, and in 15 minutes, bathed and shaved and attired in a dressing gown, was attacking breakfast and the morning paper simultaneously. Glaring headlines leaped at him from the front page.

Dayless had consented to receive newspaper men shortly after the police had been summoned to his house. He was weak and pale, but emphatic in his belief that his secretary was an emissary of the Gray Ghost. His credentials had been flawless, but doubtless forgeries.

The reporters agreed with Dayless. Only the fact that the robber had been content with one bit of loot argued against the theory that the Gray Ghost had been responsible for the crime. For it was not the Gray Ghost's way to be content with a fraction of the whole, even though that fraction was worth half a million dollars. Still, the broken keys in the locks of the safe compartments tended to show that the robber had had but little time in which to effect his purpose.

Minturn smiled. Having breakfasted, he dressed leisurely, with extreme care, avoiding any article of apparel which had been worn in the Dayless household. Somehow, he seemed no longer an Englishman. He might have passed, minus the mustache which he removed, as an alert but indistinguishable broker or lawyer or certified accountant.

For a man sought by the whole city, he seemed quite confident in his bearing. He crossed Stuyvesant Square and turned to the west. He made his way to Broadway, and at Fourteenth street engaged a taxi, in which he drove to Maiden Lane. There he dismissed his driver, walked a block and darted suddenly into a shop on whose window were painted the words "F. H. Lewis, Diamonds."

A suave, olive-skinned youth greeted him. Minturn was brusque. "I want to talk with Mr. Lewis," he said.

The clerk looked at him doubtfully. "Mr. Lewis is busy," he stated. He glanced toward a door on which appeared the word "Private."

Minturn acted in a decisive fashion. He strolled by the clerk, reached the door, opened it, and entered the room. A bearded man, short and fat, looked up from the table at which he sat. A magnify-

ing glass that was screwed, monocle-fashion, into his eye fell to the table. He was a man of as quick decision as his caller. With the lightning motions of a prestidigitator his hand opened a drawer and reappeared holding a revolver. The unset jewels on the table amply justified his precaution. Also the clerk had followed the visitor into the private office, and he was armed.

But Minturn laughed. "Send your clerk out of the room," he said. "Keep your gun trained on me if you like. But do I look like a robber?"

Lewis motioned to the clerk, who promptly stepped across the threshold and closed the door.

"What do you want?" asked Lewis. His weapon was ready, and his small black eyes stared at his visitor.

"I am going to put my hand in my pocket, but I'm not going to produce a gun," smiled Minturn.

Lewis shrugged. "You won't if you're wise," he stated.

His visitor took the words as permission to go ahead. From the inner pocket of his coat he produced the tissue-paper parcel that he had taken the night before from the Dayless safe. He placed it upon the table and opened it. Lewis glanced at it; drops of moisture appeared suddenly upon his forehead. His tongue showed between his black lips, as he moistened them.

"My foot is on a button," he said. "All I have to do is press it, and in less than five minutes the police will be here."

Minturn smiled again. "But you aren't going to press it," he retorted confidently.

"Get to the point," snapped Lewis.

"These are the Dayless diamonds; you know that without my telling you. If you deliver me to the police, you may get \$10,000 as a reward. If you buy them from me, your profit should be a quarter of a million. You don't look like a fool."

"Do I look like a thief?" said Lewis.

"Do I?" countered Minturn. "I can't see that our appearances matter particularly. Do we do business?" He carefully rewrapped the necklace and placed it in his pocket. "Well?" he demanded.

"Come back this afternoon," said Lewis hoarsely.

Minturn nodded, and without another word left the office. He walked toward Broadway, but a few doors from that street he stepped into a taxi drawn up at the curb. So it was that, when the olive-skinned clerk emerged, a few moments later from the jewelry establishment, he was followed by a

taxicab whose driver, having some difficulty with his carburetor, could proceed only at a snail's pace.

The clerk was watchfully suspicious, but it never occurred to him that if he were followed it was by a person in an automobile. And Minturn's taxi man was clever. Although the clerk, entering an automobile near Park Row, dodged and doubled and retraced his course when at last he entered an apartment house in West End avenue, Minturn was close enough to note the number. He was then driven to Union Square. There he dismissed the taxi man, and walked rapidly toward the apartment which he had left a couple of hours earlier. He was whistling as he unlocked the door of his apartment. But the whistle died away as he entered the room.

For three men awaited him and were upon him. One of them was the Tryon operative who had conversed with him the previous night. Handcuffs were on his wrists before he could utter a word of protest.

"No so clever as you thought, Mr. Minturn," said one of the men.

Minturn held out his hands.

"Take these blasted things off," he ordered. "I'm Pelham."

One of the men ran his hands over his clothing and brought to light the Dayless necklace. "Sure you ain't the king of Spain?" he laughed.

Their prisoner gave up protest. "All right, rush me down to headquarters as fast as you can; I won't argue with you."

"Sensible man," said his acquaintance of the night before.

Now, detectives are ordinary human beings; it was not to be expected that having achieved so brilliant a capture, they should fail to inform the newspaper men whom they found loitering in the corridor outside the detective bureau of their triumph. By the time that important police officials had finally yielded to the urgent messages sent to them by the prisoner and had consented to see him, extra editions were upon the street proclaiming to an applauding public that the Dayless robber had been captured, and that he professed to be James Pelham of the Tryon Detective agency.

And when, released, Pelham sped, in a police automobile, to the address on West End avenue, he found that a hurried exodus had been achieved 15 minutes earlier by the tenants of an apartment on the second floor. And the description which the apartment house employees gave him of one of those tenants fitted the Gray Ghost perfectly.

"I'm sorry, Jerry," said Pelham, a little later in the day. "Here's what happened. The Gray Ghost had

written that he would make no effort to rob Dayless. I knew, from a hint dropped by one of the Gray Ghost's men, during the course of the third degree I put them through that Lewis was acting as 'fence' for the disposal of much of the Gray Ghost's plunder. I decided that if I robbed Dayless and showed the result to Lewis he would at once ask the Gray Ghost's advice—that Lewis could lead me to his hiding place.

"You see, when you left me that Sunday we talked about my going to Palm Beach, I saw two people. One of them was my cousin, Freddie Thurlow. He looks something like me, so I took the chance that there'd be no one at Palm Beach just now who knew either of us.

"Then I went to Dayless. I told him frankly what a fool he'd made of himself by his interview, and explained to him my plan. He's a roughneck, but a regular fellow, just the same. In fact, he insisted that I actually chloroform him so that there'd not be a suspicion aroused in the minds of the servants or detectives around the place. He went through with it like the good sport that he is. And then you, confounded your ugly face—"

"It wasn't me," said Jerry ungrammatically. "It's just that you didn't give due credit to our men. You see, I'd issued orders, after all that publicity, that if Dayless was robbed I'd fire the whole staff. And so every man in our employ was combed the city. It happened that a taxi man had seen the number of the car that waited for you in Central park. The driver of that car told of leaving you outside a hotel. The starter happened to notice you. Oh, the boys had luck, but even so it was slick work. If only you'd told me what you were doing—why didn't you telephone the minute you saw where Lewis' clerk went?"

"I wanted to be certain; I'd only suspicions. I intended waiting until afternoon, then calling again upon Lewis, making sure that he really did deal with the Gray Ghost—"

"But why the deuce," demanded Jerry in exasperation, "didn't you tell me what you planned to do?"

Pelham grinned feebly. "Hang it all, Jerry, you were so dead sure that I was on the verge of a nervous breakdown that I couldn't stand the gaff any longer. I wanted to show you how wrong you were."

"Much obliged," said Jerry dryly. Then he relented. "It's all right, Mr. Pelham, only I don't think you ought to forget again that we are partners."

"I won't," promised Pelham humbly.

Jerry sighed. "A fine laugh the Gray Ghost is having at us, and the whole city is joining in with him."

Pelham flushed. "He laughs best who laughs last," he reminded Tryon.

"I've heard that before," grunted Jerry. "But I think I'm getting a permanently cracked lip." (Copyright, 1923.)

BIRMINGHAM HAS BIG ILLITERATE COMMUNITY

London, Nov. 18.—A community of several hundred people who can neither read nor write is marooned in the middle of Birmingham.

They are in the midst of a wilderness of wharves and factories at the back of Bingley haff, where the network of canals connecting the Mersey and the Thames taps the great midland metropolis. They are canal workers, born on the towing path, the sons and daughters and grandchildren of watermen. They have abandoned for the time being their usual nomadic existence because of the canal strike.

The head man of this community holds sway largely because he is a "schollard" who can read and write. He sits in a barge and reads to a group of his fellow watermen.

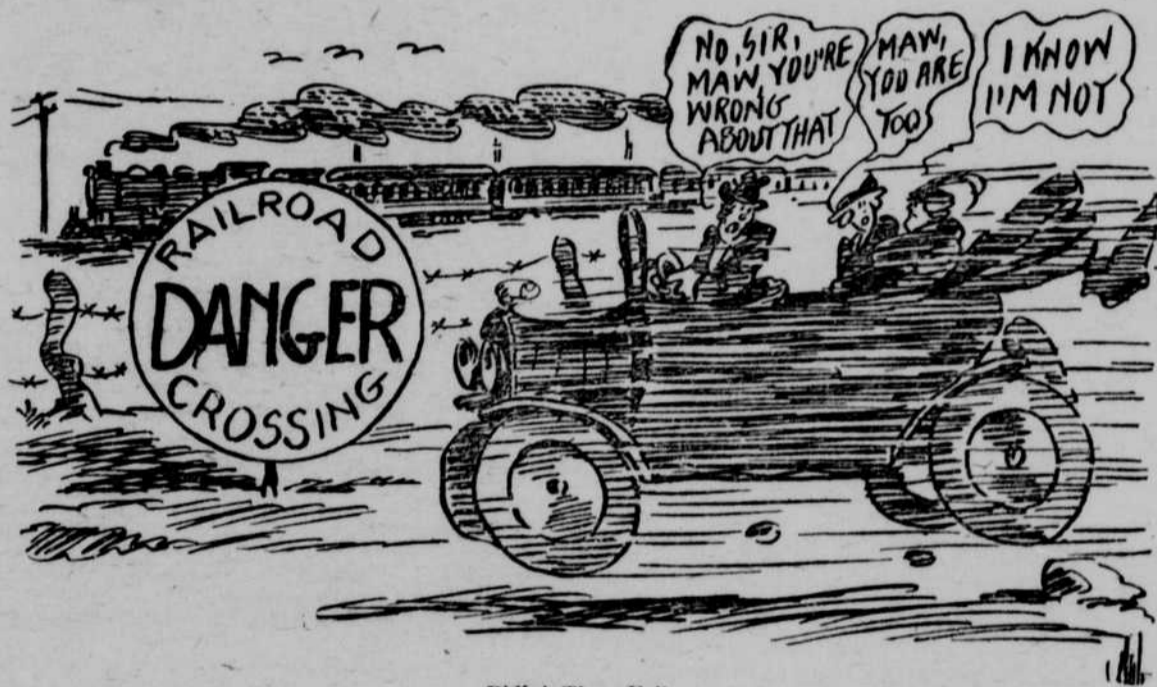
Large families are the fashion in the barges. Some of the watermen have six or eight or even 10 children. The cabins are only about 11 feet by 7, with a bed that folds up and all sorts of space-saving devices. The women folk are thrifty, and the interiors of their miniature homes are as clean as a new pin.

The children of the community are attending the board school nearby. It is the only schooling they are ever likely to have.

The American Society of Dancing Teachers is offering prizes of \$100, \$50 and \$25 for a dance to be worn by dancers to keep their heads in proper position and their bodies the correct distance apart.

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ABE MARTIN Gettin' Back from an Auto Ride



Ridin' T' a Fall

We had quite a talk t' day with Huckster Al Swallo about automobile accidents. Al drives a fast truck ever' day, week in an' week out, thro' towns, up an' down hills, over interurban an' steam railroads, thro' mud an' fresh gravel, an' along nice, well kept state roads. He says th' difference between gittin' where we're goin' an' gittin' killed, or th' difference between safety an' carelessness, varies all th' way from three minutes t' an hour, dependin' on whether we're takin' a little spin about town, or a 22-mile drive in th' country. Three minutes up t' as much as an hour allows for slowin' down at cross roads, little towns, an' corners, stoppin' an' lookin' at railroad crossin's an' goin' up an' down big hills in second speed. What's a few minutes or an hour compared t' th' joy o' livin', an' what difference does it make what time we git home Sunday evenin'? If ther's

anything drearier than gittin' home at 7 o'clock Sunday evenin' we don't know what it is. The right time t' git home Sunday evenin' is bedtime. Th' feller or woman that drives a car on Sunday shouldn't think o' nothin' but gittin' home, not at any particular hour, but jest gittin' home. No family ought t' start out on Sunday till all th' arguin' an' fightin' an' wranglin' has been taken care of. Whoever drives th' car should wear earmuffs an' keep out o' th' conversation. It's all right t' nudge a driver from th' rear occasionally an' call his attention t' danger signs, or an approachin' load o' hay, but don't ever hand him an apple. If drivers hain't careful they become absorbed in thought, especially on paved, or good level roads, an' fergit what they're doin', jest as we sometimes git absorbed while walkin' along th' streets an' pass th' place we're goin', or run against somebody. Never call a

driver's attention t' a extry fine litter o' pigs, or a particularly big punkin', as he's liable t' go off th' road. An auto driver has twice as much responsibility as a locomotive engineer, or a motorman, who's operatin' on a steel track, an' travelin' on a schedule, an' his own right o' way. City drivin' o' any kind is gittin' more an' more dangerous t' both car driver an' pedestrian. Fast delivery trucks hurryin' hither an' thither with freshly cleaned blue serge suits, or a mackerel an' some jello, or some dry goods, or somethin', cumber some movin' vans hidin' th' road ahead. Swift movin' limousines filled with powdered queens, little universal cars o' various designs wigglin' in an' out o' traffic like gold fish, darin' taxi drivers cuttin' th' corners— but th' only thing t' do is t' keep awake an' move with traffic, an' not try t' light a pipe till well out in th' country. (Copyright, 1923.)