

BURGESS BEDTIME STORIES

By THORNTON W. BURGESS.

Where beauty is there you will find the envious to mopey blind. Old Mother Nature. Danny Listens to a Sad Tale. "I am very glad to meet you, Egret."

there are only a few members of your family left, but I don't quite understand what those wonderful plumes you tell about have to do with it. Egret drew his head back down between his shoulders, and into his eyes came a look of great sadness. "It is very plain to see that you are a

stranger down here," said he. "Yes, sir, that is very plain. Everyone who lives down here knows the sad, sad story of my family." "Tell me the story," begged Danny. Egret sighed. "I don't like to tell it," said he. "I don't like to even

think about it. It is too dreadful. Yes, sir, it is too dreadful." Danny waited quietly a few minutes, and Egret continued to gaze off across the water with that sad look in his eyes. At length Danny ventured to speak a wee bit timidly.

"Did you say it was because of plumes," asked he. "Yes," replied Egret. "What are plumes?" asked Danny. Egret gave Danny a funny, side-long glance as if he suspected Danny of asking a foolish question just for the sake of talking. But when he

saw how eagerly Danny was waiting for his reply, he knew that Danny really was seeking to learn something. "Plumes," said he, "are beautiful feathers."

coat collar turned up and his cap pulled down came in shaking from alcoholic excesses. It was long after midnight but he was just up for the quick day. He drank four or five silver shots of whiskey and left a silver watch for payment. Then he departed. "The kid ain't got far to go," said one of the pesty faced girls. "He'll soon be out of this rotten world."

"So I did. So I did," replied Egret. "Of course, you know that most birds wear brighter, handsomer coats in spring than they do later in the year. My coat, being all white, cannot be made any brighter or more beautiful in itself, so in the spring Old Mother Nature gives me some extra feathers. They are wonderful. They grow out

"Tell me the story," begged Danny. "From my back and are long and silky and reach beyond my tail. They are wonderful and beautiful and everybody admires them. Alas, that is the trouble!"

"What is the trouble?" Danny asked, looking a little puzzled. "They are admired too much," replied Egret. "They are admired too much by those terrible two-legged creatures called men. There was a time when there were so many Egrets down here in the Sunny South that there would be one or more nests in every tree and bush in certain places, and now there are so few of us left that I am often fearful that the time is close at hand when there will be none at all. And it is all because of those beautiful plumes. Yes, sir, it is all because of those beautiful plumes. Once I was very proud of them, but now I wish they would never grow out again. Yes, sir, I do so. I dread the coming of spring and the growing of those new plumes. The happiest day in all the year for me is when the last one of those wonderful plumes drops. Men are terrible creatures."

The next story: "Egret's Awful Story."

The police here carry lanterns at night. The lantern is the law. You see the lanterns at every mid-town street corner and mostly the policeman is asleep in some doorway. You may talk back to the officer but touch his lantern and you go to jail. There are no patrol wagons. Prisoners are walked to prison. They told me of an American who came down here once on a spree and in a prankish moment gathered up 32 police lanterns and took them to his hotel.

One of the most delightful breakfasts was had at the Cafe Cologne on the Paseo de la Reforma. The cafe is glass enclosed. In the light atmosphere peculiar to Mexico was the perfume of fragrant flowers. More than 50 mocking birds in cages about the veranda trilled their dulcet notes. Yes, outside, newshy were crying their extras. Someone had been kidnapped and assassinated. A new political upheaval was brewing.

At the noon hour just before all the stores and shops close for the siesta the streets are filled with vendors of street food. Clerks patronize them generously. They may buy an appetizer from one, a sandwich from another and a soft drink from the third. The vendors are filthy in appearance but it is noticeable the containers for their food are spotlessly clean.

The amusing little carryalls with perhaps a big horse and a tiny mule offer the poor wife an opportunity to go to market with some show of splendor. The carryalls are four-wheeled with a half canopy top and one may ride all over town for 10 cents. The drivers are hard looking brigands who sleep all the time they are not carrying a fare.

St. Louis Bank \$500,000 Short

St. Louis, Mo., Dec. 21.—The Chipewa bank in the southern part of the city closed today and a report reached prosecuting officials that the shortage may reach \$500,000. Gottlieb Weyermann, president, issued a statement that the cashier, John S. Carr, confessed that he was short in his accounts and returned \$34,000, but that the exact shortage has not been ascertained.

Greek Regent Sworn In. By Associated Press.

Athens, Dec. 21.—Admiral Coundouriotis has assumed the regency of Greece. Colonel Plastiras of the military directorate administered the oath this evening in the presence of the Holy Synod and members of the cabinet.

It is possible that a republic may be proclaimed soon if the movement begun by General Pangalos, military governor of Athens and the extremist leader of the republican party, continues to gain headway.

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