John Henry's Country Cop

By GEORGE V. HOBART

Bunch Jefferson's country house I had borrowed for a day to present to Clara J. and then take back, was hard to pry loose from wifey's loving care. Poor Bunch in desperation had played burglar to scare her out, but Tacks, my scamp brother-in-law, had caught him in a cellar trap, and he was in the hands of the village police force, even now en route for the cannery, with me trailing along.

Ahead of me, plodding along the pike under the moonlight, were Bunch and his cadaverous captor, the former bowed in sorrow or anger, probably both, and the latter with head erect, haughty as a Roman conqueror.

Bunch's make-up was a troubled dream. Over a pair of hand-me-down trousers, eight sizes too large for him, he wore a three-dollar ulster. On his head was an automobile cap, and his face was covered with a bunch of eelgrass three feet deep. He was surely all the money.

As I drew near I could hear Mr. Diggs expatiating on crime in general and housebreaking in particular, and I fancied I could also hear Bunch boiling and seething within.

"Mr. Bugglar," Harmony Diggs, the police force, was saying, "I don't know just what your home trainin' was as a child, but they's a screw loose somewhere or you'd a' never been brought to this here harrowful predickyment, nohow. I s'pose you jest started in nat'rally to be a heenyus maleyfactor early in life, huh? You needn't to answer if you're afeared it'll incrimigate you, but I s'pose you took to it when a boy, pickin' pockets or suthin' like that, huh?"

"Oh, cut it out, you old goat, and don't bother me!" snapped Bunch, just as I joined them.

"A dangerous maleyfactor," said Diggs to me, as he tightened his grip on Bunch's arm; "but they ain't no call for you to assist the course of justice, because if the dern critter starts to run I'll pump him chuck full of lead. He's been a-tellin' me he started on the downward path to predition as a child-stealer."

"I told you nothing, you old tadpole," shrieked Bunch, unable to contain himself longer.

"Very well," said Harmony, soothingly, "they ain't no call for you to say nothin' that'll incrimigate you before the bar of justice. Steady now, or I'll tap you with this here cane!"

"Brace, good old sport; I'll get you out of this in a jiffy," I whispered to Bunch at the first opportunity, and he gave me a cold-storage look that chased the chills all over me.

Presently we arrived at the little brick structure which Jiggersville proudly called its calaboose, and after much tumbling of keys, Mr. Diggs opened the jackpot and we all stayed.

The yap policeman was for taking Bunch right back to the donjon cell in the rear, but with a $5 bill I secured a stay of proceedings.

My forehead was damp with perspiration, so I took off my hat and laid it on the bench in the little court room where Bunch sat moodily with bowed head.

Then I coaxed the rural Vidocq over in the corner and gave him a game talk that I thought would warm his heart, but he listened in dumbness and couldn't see "no sense in believing the maleyfacto, was anythin' more'n a derned cuss, nohow!"

"I have every reason to believe that we have made a mistake," I said to Harmony in a hoarse whisper. "From an envelope dropped by this party in my house I am led to believe that he's a respectable gentleman who entered my premises quite by mistake."

The chin whiskers owned and engineered by Diggs bobbed up and down as he chewed a reflective cud, but he couldn't see the matter in my light at all.

I had used all kinds of arguments and was just about to give up in despair when a voice in the doorway caused us both to turn.

There stood Bunch Jefferson, the real fellow, looking as fresh as a daisy!

"What's the trouble, John?" he asked, smiling benignly on Diggs.

While I was talking to the representative of the law, Mr. Slick saw his opportunity and grabbed it by the hind leg. He had quietly reached the door, and once outside the sledding was excellent.

Bunch had his business suit on under the burglar make-up. It didn't take him two minutes to work the shine darbies over his hands. He then peeled off the ulster and the tuppenny trousers, and throwing these and the Svengalis over the fence, he was home again from the Bad Lands.

The transformation scene was made complete by the fact that Bunch was now wearing my hat.

In answer to Bunch's question, the redoubtable Diggs smiled indulgently and said with pride-choked tones, "A maleyfactor, sir, caught in the meshes of the law and hauled before this here trybune of justice by these hands!"

The eagle eye of Diggs was now triumphantly sighted along the arm and over the bony hand to where the criminal was supposed to be, but when the gaze finally rested on an empty bench the expression of pained surprise on the old man hunter's map was calculated to make a hen cackle.

Diggs rushed over to the bench, turned it upside down, looked behind the chairs, and then, emitting a roar that rattled the rafters, he hustled back to see if by any chance the prisoner had locked himself up in a cell.

Bunch gave the old geezer the minnehaha and yelled, "Say! you with the me-ya-ya's on the chin! Did somebody give you the hot-foot and make a quick exit?"

Diggs was now in full eruption and heavy showers of Reub lava rose from his vocal organs and fell all over the place, while he thrashed around the calaboose in a frenzy of excitement.

"Maybe you're sending out a general alarm about human meteor that passed me on the pike a few minutes ago?" Bunch suggested.

Diggs turned and eyed him in open-mouthed silence.

"A mutt with a pink ulster and one of those pancakes on his head like the drivers of the gasoline carts wear," Bunch suggested.

"It's him; it's the maleyfactor!" exclaimed Harmony, tightening his grip on the night stick; "which way did the derned cuss go?"

Bunch pointed to the southeast, and with a howl of rage Diggs sprang forward and bounced down the pike like a hungry kangaroo on its way to a lunch counter.

I began to wrap my enjoyment and send it forth in short gurgles of merriment until Bunch pressed the button and the scene was changed to Greenland's Icy Mountains.

"Funny, isn't it?" he sneered. "Regular circus, with yours truly in haste, Bunch Jefferson, to do the grand and lofty tumbling! I'm the Patsey, oh, maybe! It was a fine play, all right, but I didn't expect you to stack the cards!"

"On the level, Bunch, believe me, it wasn't my fault," I spluttered.

"Not your fault!" he snapped back; "then I suppose it was mine! I suppose I fell down the elevator shaft just to please mother, eh? Maybe you think I dropped into the excavation just to pass the time away? Have you an idea that I dove down into the earth because I wanted to get back to the mines? Wasn't your fault, indeed! Maybe you think I fell in the well simply because I wanted to give an imitation of the old oaken bucket, yes?"

I tried to tell him all about Tacks and the ghost story, but he wouldn't stand for it.

"You should have been waiting for me on the stairs," he argued, unreasonably, rubbing one of the bruises in his choice collection. "Didn't you catch me early in the evening being chased from pillar to post by everything in the neighborhood that has legs long enough to run? When I tried to hide in the corner of a farm, over there, a bull dog came up on rubber shoes and bit his initials on some of my personal property before I could crawl through the fence. Every time I showed up on the pike that human accident that breathes like a man and talks like a rabbit chased me eight miles there and back. The first time I tried to approach the infernal house I fell over a grindstone and signed checks in the gravel with my nose. Hereafter, when you want a burglar, pick somebody your own size. I'm going to hunt a hospital and get sewed together again."

I put on all steam and tried to square myself, but Bunch only shook his head and said I was outlawed.

"You can't run on my race track," he exclaimed, as he started for the depot; "that last race was crooked and you stood in with the dope mixer."

I watched him down the hill until he disappeared in the station, then sad at heart, I trudged back to the old homestead that had caused all my trouble.

It was now broad daylight, but nowhere within my line of vision could I get a peep of the doughty Diggs.

No doubt he was still cutting across lots trying to head off the "maleyfactor."

(Copyright by G. W. Dillingham Co.)

Diggs Turned and Eyed Him in Open-Mouthed Silence.

"I S'pose You Jest Started in Nat'rally to Be a Heenyus Maleyfactor Early in life, Huh?"

FOREIGNERS FAVOR "HOT AIR"

Use of Superheated Atmosphere for Cooking Is Attracting Considerable Attention.

"Hot air" is to be turned to a good end, according to the foreign cooks, and at the same time a great waste in fuel in the preparation of meals is to be eliminated. The use of superheated air for cooking purposes is attracting considerable attention from the domestic economist. The process is said to be quite simple—as simple as the "fireless cooker," in fact. The steam from an ordinary kitchen boiler is conveyed by pipes to the "superheater," where, by means of a series of coils above a coke fire, its temperature is raised to 1,000 degrees. The pressure is not increased, which eliminates danger of bursting the pipes. Hollow rods surround and lie underneath the griller, and through these rods the superheated air is permitted to rush, quickly making the griller as hot as desired.

The enthusiast predicts an early departure of the blazing coal, coke, or gas fire in the kitchen. When any special dish is to be cooked it is to be placed on a certain part of the griller, fed by a certain pipe from the superheated air reservoir. A valve is turned to let just the proper amount of heat under the griller, and the work is done without fumes, without the waste of any heat, and without the loss of any good nature. The air, after being used to broil your beefsteak, can be turned into the heating radiators and used to keep the dining room warm.

Gethsemane as It Appears Today.

It lies at the base of Mount Olivet, over against Jerusalem. It is almost a square, 160 by 150 feet. It is inclosed by a high white stone wall. Inside are eight venerable olive trees, thought by some persons to be the same trees that were there in the time of Christ. The roots may be the same, as the emperor Titus had all trees cut down when he conquered Jerusalem in A. D. 70, but yet these may have escaped. The olive trees in Gethsemane are hoary with age, and their cracked trunks are reinforced with stones. They are surrounded by a light paling fence and between them are sweet flowers growing. They are tended by monks, who present each visitor with a small bunch, for which they expect to receive a franc (about 20 cents). All around the inside of the white wall are shrines in niches with painted figures representing the stations of the cross. Fastened to the wall and extending high above it is a large cross, which is covered with carved representations of the instruments connected with the crucifixion.—Christian Herald.

Furnishes Milk for Babies.

The Morningside Presbyterian church of New York City has conducted a milk route for the benefit of the babies of the poor for two years. A bequest of $20,000 enabled this charity to be founded. It is reported that some of the parishioners—happily a minority—are now objecting to the milk route on the ground that it is not a business of sufficient dignity for a church to be engaged in. Some years ago the parishioners of a Massachusetts church objected to their pastor selling milk on the ground that it was not a dignified avocation for a clergyman.

For Pen-and-Ink Workers.

If you have to draw a straight line with pen and ink, and have not the necessary beveled ruler or line instrument, place an ordinary ruler on a blotter, with their edges exactly parallel and touching, and hold the pen so that its side projections touch the blotter. There is then no danger of an ink-smeared line, but the pen mark will be clear and smooth, and the paper clean and unblotted.

Cents Made by the Million.

The Philadelphia mint coined 146,000,000 cents last year, and is expected to exceed the 160,000,000 mark this year.

Rise Above Circumstances.

The most thankful, joyful, and glad-hearted people we come across are often those who have least in this world to make them happy.

British Vital Statistics.

The birth rate in 76 great towns in England, in 1909, was 25.7 a 1,000. The death rate averaged 14.7

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Aromatic Spirits.

Mrs. Tarr—Sistah Lobstock has jest got a divo'ce fum her husban'.

Mrs. Wombat—Don' say? How much ammonia did de cou't done grant her?—Puck.

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If you keep the windows closed you don't get fresh air; if you keep them open you cannot quickly reheat the room. The

PERFECTION SMOKELESS OIL HEATER

Absolutely smokeless and odorless

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