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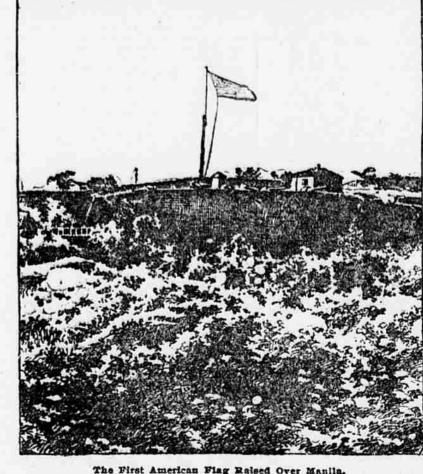


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Reduced from an illustration in "On to Manila."

### AFJER THE FACT.

#### By W. PETT RIDGE.

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) that as it may, this bag contains presents (Copyright, 1899, by W. Pett Ridge,) "This is first-class," said Miss Parley in a for 'em. I've got to get out at Waterloo." "Waterloo," said Miss Parley, "is the warning tone.

station before you get to Charing Cross." "If you're third, miss," replied the man "You do know something," remarked the with the clumsy bag, blundering into the man admiringly. He took off his neckercompartment, "you'd better hop out quick."

The 6:56 p. m. started, and having put his chief and fixed on a collar, high and rather bag in the corner, he turned, leaning half of white. The change altered his appearance his body out of the window and holding his greatly. "I've got to get out at Waterloo; bowler hat with one hand. Miss Parley, well you're goin' to Cherring Cross. Now, do you mind leaving this bag for me in the cloak dressed in furs, with a demure bonnet approroom there under-say your name and a priate to her age and manner, glanced number? Miss Parley contracted her forethrough the window at the face and shivered. head momentarily and pursed her lips.

"Ho's lost it." remarked the man, turning to her and looking out again, swore softly at "Otherwise," he went on, earnestly pathetically, "otherwise six little 'cads 'll lay the rushing wind. When the train had said good-bye to the Chiselhurst houses and had 'emselves down on their white pillers toentered into the tunnel he brought himself night, crying 'emselves to sleep: six little in and stumbled back to the corner, where 'eads, all curly ones, 'll be full of sorrer and he sat near to the awkwardly filled bag, half gnathin' of teeth; six little 'eads 'll-" covering it with his coat. "For the sake of the dear little children."

"I never had a pal yut," he said, as the said Miss Parley, "I will do as you wish. train went clamorously, "what I could Here is my card; I'll put a number upon it. trust. What number shall I write?" "I beg your pardon," said Miss Parley with

courtesy. "I say," he repeated, raising his voice, "that I never yut come across the man what I could say to 'You're as good as what I am.' There isn't a single one of 'em but what's got some fault."

"Few of us here below are perfect," said Miss Parley sententiously. "Sin comes natural to us poor mortals, and-

"I can't 'elp your troubles," interrupted the man. "What I want is a bit of your as-Bistance."

"I am strongly opposed," said the middleaged lady, with great decision, "to indiscriminate charity. I will give you a note to the secretary of the-"

"I know your sort," he remarked acutely, "Give away every bloomin' thing except might be put to-" gifts. Find out what poor people want and see they don't get it. Ho, yes! I've met crowds like you. Fortunately I don't want sake of the dear little ones I would take your 'elp, as you understand it. All I want almost any trouble."

is a bit of common courtesy." "I trust," she said, politely, "that I am said, "by a woman friend. In fact," he

not wanting in that." "I 'ope, too, that you're pretty well sup-

woman I'm engaged to, if you must know, The train came out of the tunnel plied." into the open evening mist, and the clouds ;

disappeared from the windows. "See this widower." Mins Parley trembled a little; the man yer bag?" Miss Parley adjusted her pince-nez and in- muttered to himself a reproof for his care-

spected it. It was an old bag, with a leather lessness of speech. The train slowed up at handle at each hand; the cintcats bulged it Waterloo and he opened the door and put unevenly; the surface bore some European his head out. Instantly he turned, and labels which it seemed might have been re- rushing toward the other door, and growling

stick with confidence. must confess that I do see that bag." "Ah," remarked the man, ironically, "now dusk by the side of the train.

"I am," replied Miss Parley.

"and naturally I have no luggage." generously, "It makes your work all the moment she screamed.

masier. This bag contains- Are you fond of kids?" ne asked suddenly. affrightedly.

"I adore children."

air. youngsters."

"Have you many children ?" "Tons of 'em." said the man.

platform before Miss Parley had time to "You ain't scen 'em," he said grimly. "Be recover her breath.

"No, no," she panted, hastening after him. man "Right you are, lady," he said, cheerfully. 'You want to leave it in the claok room?" It occurred to Miss Parley's heated, per

turbed mind that this perhaps would be the most convenient course to pursue. To summon the chief inspector, to become the center of a suspicious, critical ring of

passengers, to explain that she had accepted the care of a bag containing, as the momentary glance had assured, silver goods of value that had evidently been stolen, this for war. Having reeled off these statements was really more than she could bear. Mr. with indiscreet haste, and thus exhausted bis evening's stock, Morlingham appeared to Morlingham would be here, too, in a few minutes, for it was near to 7:30. Mr. Morlingham, who was a serious-minded stockholder of Copthall court, neither young nor in tune with that of Miss Parley. Mr. Mor- women who filled the body of the hall. They frog's march. lingham was no man for such an emergency as this; he would only reprove her gently for having taken such grave responsibilities. A disclosure meant police court proceedings,

Old Bailey attendance-"'Ere we are lady!"

"Going to take a ticket for it?" asked the man on the other side of the counter. "I'll leave it." she said, determinedly,

A CAKELESS CAKE WALK.

"It has-it has something heavy inside," she stammered.

> "Ah," remarked the cloak room man, a he affixed a label. "that accounts for it." Mr. Morlingham brought news that the night was fine, that the hall was but the

distance of three minutes' walk, that things were looking ominous in the east, that the only way to keep peace was to be prepared

'Please stay where you are." find himself on arrival at the hall, so to speak, beached and unable to move in conversation until the tide returned with some middle-aged, but betwixt the two, who had similar remarks. They found seats on the known character, should the hall humorwooed Miss Parley with great respect for crowded platform, neither in the mood for ously, and a perfect terror in the lane. Take years, and had, for hobby, the restraint of talk. Miss Parley checked a sigh now and her off to Bow, begged the hall, and if she crime and a general view of life that was again as she looked at the strange men and became violent, why, give her the good old

were mainly criminals, or, at any rate, affected to be so for the purpose of this meeting, and Miss Parley felt that, strictly speak-"what is the sentence usually given foring, her place was among them. Mr. Mor- for-

"No, no. For what do you call it?" heart, content also to see in his hat the notes of a speech which he felt contained some thoughts that came near in his opinion lifting, madam."

BARC,

Shake yo' choc late feet, Amandy, Walk yo' very bes', I ain't got no cane or 'nothin'. Yo's got no fine dress.

All I ask yo', dear Amandy, Give yo'self a shake, Jes' let's walk fer love of walkin', We don't want no cake.

"Excuse me," she said presently. The said the inspector glibly. He passed his chairman and the principal speaker, a judge, hand over his chin. "Let me see now, suggested Morlingham. He walked along were coming on to the platform; the hall madam, what shall we say for the average? with the train. "Make it less-" rose to its feet and cheered as though the What do you say to three years?" Miss Parley went blindly back to her seat dearest wish of its life was at length being

gratified. "I wish to speak to the police inspector." "Can I take a message, Jane?" asked Mr.

Morlingham. "No," said Miss Parley with brusqueness.

out of the difficulty, and this was fortunate; The inspector, seeing Miss Parley's atti- but it made one tremble to think that one tude of appeal, met her half way on the should be ever within sight of a fate so terrible. The obvious exit was never to allude platform. The hall, amused at this, and to the incident to any one. That dreadful having finished its applause, called on the man would send for it; the bag would thus inspector to lock her up. SLe was a well disappear; no one need know the part that she had taken in the affair. The old judge was getting on with his speech, with an oc-

casional joke of moderate strength that made the hall roar with cestatic appreciation, and Miss Parley nerved herself to put "I wish to ask you," said Miss Parley, in a low voice, unconscious of the badinage,

"Murder?" prompted the inspector. lingham, content to be near the lady of his-"Oh." said the inspector, "you mean shop-

to being epigrams, sat with folded arms and ] "I mean nothing of the kind," she replied

able later life, but that she might finish in the type of the dreadful woman who was if we go on like this." just then shouting, "Hooray fer Patsy Maguire!" Pursuing this cheerful vein, Miss Parley succeeded, as the old judge resumed his seat, tearful at his own affecting peroration, in accepting with fair equanimity a

sentence of penal servitude for life. "Would anyone in the audience," asked the chairman, "care to give their experience? I can spare five minutes before calling upon Mr. Morlingham."

that she might never lead a sedate, comfort-

plorable old woman in the front row stood straps!" up, then a dozen others started to compete Nevertheless, Mrs. Maguire confessed with ing." tearfulness, but withal something of pride, to a life of wrong-doing that included crime old woman; the first step was fatal. Becoming interested, she declined to regard the chairman's call to order, and had eventually to be removed from the hall. Morlingham in his epeech took advantage of this and

spoke severely of mistaken tolerance. Wrongdoers, said Mr. Morlingham, wrongdoers must be shunned. Any one participating

to marry," she said wearily.

"But," urged Morlingham, "I do." with consideration in her tone. "The train is just starting."

Write to me," he begged. "It will be the same letter."

"Alter the wording slightly this th "Stan' away, sir; stan' away!"

\*\*\*\*

The alert young porter, scarlet-faced and as the chairman rose to introduce the judge excited, pushed Morlingham aside, opened to the meeting, a proceeding that was in the door, jerked from his shoulder the some part superfluous. Three years! One, large lumpy bag down into the center of two, three; she had never before thought of the compariment, closed the door again. "You'd a' forgot it, lady," he gasped three as a large number. There seemed a way breathlessly, "if it 'adn't been for me."

There was no escaping it. Mirs Parley would have lifted it up and dropped it out of the window, but it was too heavy. At Chislehurst she stepped down briskly, closing the door, and the guard discovering the bag, sent it after her to the cab by two men. As she drove home she could, by closing her eyes, see everything. Capture of the burglar, his full confession, the bag traced, a preposterous explanation on her part that would be accepted by nobody. She would bury the bag at the end of her aside the terrifying thoughts that oppressed lawn that night. It would be impossible to her, with partial success, partial failure. A sleep, feeling that it remained in the deplorable old hag sat in the front row be- house.

low, interrupting the proceedings now and "I'm so sorty, miss," said the maid, again by demanding cheers for herself; the meeting her in the hall. pleasing thought occurred to Miss Parley

'What have you broken now, Lambert?' "Nothing broke, miss," said the maid regretfully. "Won't be nothin' left to break

"Will you give the man some help with the heavy bag?"

The two lugged it into the hall. "As I was saying, miss-"

"Get me a spade, Lambert, and go off to bed, quickly. Has cook gone?"

"Miss, you must please listen. There's been a burglary, and the best of your beautiful plate's gone, and-"

"Lambert," cried Mies Parley with sud-Nobody rose at first, but when the de- den excitement, "help me to undo these

"Why," said the mald with great railef for the honor. The old woman, called upon by the chair, said that she was as good as "you took, 'em, miss, then?" Miss Parley any other woman in Sardinia street, and that loosened her cloak, took off her hat and if anybody dared to say a word against her felt inclined to dance. "And we've been public of her private character she would- frightened out of our lives nearly for noth-

"Very absurd of you Lambert."

"All the same, miss," remarked the maid from bird-faking to highway robbery. It as she took out the contents, "all the same, was all the fault of the first step, said the my opinion is-how badly they've packed 'em-my opinion is that there ought to be no 'ouse without a man in it."

Miss Parley glanced thoughtfully at herself in a slip of mirror.

"I think perhaps you're right, Lambert. I shan't want a spade now. I'll write a letter instead."

Wrongdoers, said Mr. Morlingham, wrong-doers must be shunned. Any one participating in crime should not be recognized by decent folk. Wrongdoers must be estracized. The other men on the platform coughed doubt-fully at this, the argument being precisely opposed to the intent of the movement. Miss Parley sighed. "Sure, you are not out of sorts, Jane? That place was very close." "I am quite well," said Miss Parley dole-fully. She was in the Chishchurst train to start anxious to get away from nearness to the terrible bag. She would have given some-thing to have known if it had been called for. "But I - I am just a little worried." "Tell me, said Morlingham, with his hand to his ear. "I can't," she answered. "Not now, at any rate." "I have often told you that I do not want to marry," she said wearily. "But," urged Morlingham, "I de."

Dr. H. H. Haden, Summit, Ala., pays: "I Stand away from the carriage." she said think Kodoi Dyepepsia Cure is a splendid medicine. I prescribe it, and my confidence in it grows with continued use." It digests what you cat and quickly cures dyspepsia Thank and indigestion.

"Thought so. Got no luggage, 'ave ycu?" the purse six bright shillings; loosened with

lumpy has together, opened the bag and

"Good gracious!" exclaimed Miss Parley

"How charming!"

moved from other luggage, for they did not an earnest warning to her, partly jumped and partly fell out on the ballast. Miss "I," said Miss Parley, with caution, "I Parley looked out as she pulled this door to and saw him hobbling cauliously in the I can tell I'm dealing with a smart person. "I thought." she said with great shrewd-Now I know that I can rely on you for doing ness, "that he was not really first-class." what I want you to do in a 'ighly intelligent. Then Miss Parley took out her plump

manner. Are you going to Charing Cross?", purse and prepared to do something of an extremely ingenious nature; extracted from

"I am only going to a meeting," explained some difficulty as the train went once more Miss Parley, stroking the fur of her muff. across the Thames, the straps that held the

"Put ten sixty-six," he said, leaning across

interestedly, "Date that good old blooming

"Ten sixty-six," she repeated as she

wrote. "There, my man: You can send

for it with that card, and the dear little

"Bless their 'carts," he said, taking the

When the train rattled presently across the

bridge into Cannon street, the man gave a

very fair imitation of paternal feeling. He

dabbed at his eyes with a white speckled

blue handkerchief; he shook his head pa-

thetically. As the train backed out of the

station he lifted the heavy bag to the side

"Any slight expenses, miss, that you

"Don't mention that, my man. For the

"It'll be called for about 11 p. m."

added, with a burst of frankness, "the

"O!" he said readily, "I'm an adjective

Wellington won the battle of Waterloo.'

children will not be disappointed."

where Miss Parley was sitting.

"But the children-

card.

"I'm not blamin' of you." said the man slipped the silver coins within. At that same

She made all haste with fingers that trem-"Very well, then," he said, with a relieved bled to refasten the straps, and had scarcely

"This bag contains presents for my done this when the train arrived at Charing Cross; there an active young porter who

knew her by sight jumped in, shouldered the heavy bag and was trotting along the