

"WHO'S AFRAID?"

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Courage, brother! there is nothing in the world to be afraid of... Still be true to man and woman...

MR. CRADLIF'S BURGLAR.

At eleven o'clock one summer night, Mrs. Cradliff nudged her sleeping consort and as he turned on his pillow...

"Did ye lock up the granary?" "No," he replied. "I suppose Cyrus did; he always tends to that."

"But he went off so early I don't believe he thought a word about it. I'll get up and see if he has left the key on the sink shelf."

She groped her way to the kitchen in the dark and passed her hand over the shelf, but found no key. As it was left in the granary lock during the day...

"Then I suppose I must get up and go and tend to it," grumbled Moses Cradliff. "How could he be so careless?"

The man seemed to know where the wheat-bin was, and he was moving straight toward it in the dark...

It was a starlit night, and approaching the barn-door, he was surprised to find it open about far enough to admit a man.

He crawled into the barn, and reaching up, found little difficulty in arming himself with the bar. He then glided almost noiselessly in the dark...

He met with no adventure until he put out his hand and felt the door, which was open a few inches. Then he heard a man breathe not more than half a yard away.

Still holding the club in one trembling hand, and carrying away the key in the other, he shut the barn door after him and ran to the house...

In a few minutes he stood panting at the door of the house where Cyrus had gone to watch with his sick friend.

"I'll bet a cent I've locked up Cy!"

If any person had been present, rash enough to accept Mr. Cradliff's not very heavy wager, that person would certainly have lost.

It was some seconds before, in his excited state of mind, he was able to reason out the actual fact of the situation.

"No use of calling now," he said to himself. "I ought to have done it before."

He settled himself to wait as patiently as possible for his release, and was sitting comfortably on a bag of meal in his dungeon...

It was, in fact, the real barn-breaker this time; advancing to his work without the slightest suspicion that a member of the family he was going to rob was locked up in the granary.

The man seemed to know where the wheat-bin was, and he was moving straight toward it in the dark...

Mrs. Cradliff had risen and dressed herself, and was awaiting anxiously her husband's return in her little kitchen.

"We shall want more help," he said, taking up the lantern. "I'll run over through the woods and get Joe Ferris. Tell father to wait till I come back."

Cyrus, lantern in hand, was soon knocking at Joe's door, and calling him loudly by name. It was some time before he got any response...

"No; what's wanting of Joe?" said a trembling female voice. Cyrus did his errand briefly; he had caught a robber, and wanted Joe to help take him out of the granary.

"Joe, he ain't well. He ketched cold going a-fishing Saturday, and he's down with a fever. 'Twouldn't be safe for him to go out to-night, no ways in the world! Besides, two of the children is sick."

The head was drawn in at the window; and as Cyrus and his lantern went on in the direction of the Dunfry house, poor Mrs. Ferris, regardless of her sick husband and ailing children, ran out of the back door muffled in a hood...

Meanwhile Mr. Cradliff had returned home, and so sure was he that it was his own son Cyrus whom he had shut into the granary, that he went straight to let him out, without stopping to inform Mrs. Cradliff of his blunder...

"Is it possible," murmured the father, "that he has got out of that bit of a window? Or could it have been all my imagination, that there was somebody in the granary? Cyrus! boy?"

He paused a moment in the silence that ensued, then moved cautiously forward. He touched somebody crouching in a corner of the bins, and recoiled with a start of fear.

By the time he reached the door in pursuit, he found it shut and fastened, with him on one side and the burglar's fast-flying heels on the other.

"I've already called for Joe," he said, as he returned with them in haste toward Ferris house. "But he's down with a fever and can't go."

"Down with a fever?" cried Bill Dunfry incredulously. "That can't be, for I saw him splitting wood by his back door at sundown. I'll find out about that!"

For the truth is, Joe's clothes were on already, all but his coat, which he had taken the precaution to pull off before showing himself at the window.

"In Cradliff's granary?" he asked, with pretended incredulity. "It don't look possible!" And Cyrus, on the way, had to relate his adventure, which he did to Joe Ferris's seemingly intense amusement.

"Will you come out peacefully and give yourself up?" he demanded. "No reply from within."

It was a moment of thrilling expectation when Cy turned the key in the lock and suddenly threw back the door. No burglar burst forth to encounter Joe's fists and the Dunfry boys' brandished clubs.

Cy, who had taken a step backward as he opened the door, now advanced, holding his lantern above all their heads and throwing its full light into the granary.

"Hold your lantern!" cried Reub, excitedly, while Joe Ferris gripped with his own secret thoughts.

Cy was hugely chagrined, and the result was a puzzle even to Joe, who might have told something of the real burglar's escape, but could not guess how his substitute had got out.

The elder Cradliff had not been long in his dungeon when he heard a shuffling noise, as of some person groping in the barn, and presently a hoarse, half-whisper, demanding—

"Whereabouts are you? Speak!" These words, uttered in a strange voice, added greatly to the mystery, which, however, they promised to aid in clearing up; and not knowing just what reply to make, Moses Cradliff maintained a breathless, expectant silence.

"Joe, are you here?" the voice spoke again, evidently in great hurry and agitation, now quite near the granary door.

"Oh, Joe!" he exclaimed the voice outside; "Cy come to our house and told me he had locked up somebody—I know who! I've brought a hatchet to break the lock and let you out."

"Oh dear! dear! let me go!" she pleaded, overwhelmed with confusion.

"I don't know what I'm here for—I must be crazy! Do let me go!" "I shan't hinder you," replied the farmer.

He led her, reluctant and beseeching, to his own house, and into the kitchen, where good Mrs. Cradliff was marvelously amazed at seeing such a visitor at such an hour.

"Come in! come in, all of you!" he cried. "There are some things that need explaining."

"When I went to let you out," said the father, "he knocked me over and got away, shutting me up."

And in the shame-faced creature hiding in the corner Joe Ferris recognized his own devoted Jane. He had missed her on his way home, where he had just arrived and learned of her absence from their oldest girl, when he was called out by Cyrus and the Dunfry boys.

The tone of his forced and brazen laughter changed with surprising suddenness, and thrown off his guard, he made no attempt to deny his guilt.

It was in the north of China that we first saw the thrashing-floor of the East and of the Bible. When we were traveling to some out-stations in Manchuria, the road bounded on both sides by endless fields of gigantic millet.

Another form of thrashing was the stone roller, which was drawn over the ears by oxen or mules; and there was another still, where a flat board furnished with some projections, was drawn in the same way, the driver or children, sitting on the board, to lend it additional weight.

The whole thing is rigid and stiff-looking, and to the observer who has to do with the external aspects of locomotives it is unprepossessing and unlovely.

ordered that after a given date no barber's shop should be kept open on Sunday morning. There was no appeal from their mandate. The fatal last Sunday arrived; the customers of the esteemed Benjamin Blanchard, whose shop was at the upper part of Essex street...

There are in Paris 3,600,000 of human beings who work hard from morning to evening, and who do harm to no one. There are besides in this country 300,000 rascals who rob and murder, and who pass by the name of the army of crime.

With regard to the 3,600,000 of Frenchmen, nobody pays any attention to them, but the other 600,000 are the object of the most careful solicitude on the part of the governing classes.

There is no way of making a permanent success in this world without giving an honest equivalent for it.

The lazy boy fears that if he once begins to earn his own living he will always be expected to do it.

An English Train.

The first impression which an American who is experienced in railroad traveling in his own country derives from the exterior aspect of an English train is unfavorable.

The cars, as he must necessarily call them, seem to be small; they lack, apparently, the weight and solidity of the American passenger coach; the compartments are narrow, the ceilings low, the ventilation apparently doubtful.

The cars are smaller—there is no doubt of it. They are narrower and they are shorter, and to the American eye they look even shorter than they really are, because they have no projecting platform at the ends, no overhanging roof or hood, but are buckled close up to each other, and their contact controlled by small metal buffers, the springs of which allow a play of from eighteen inches to two feet and a half between car and car.

The wheels are fitted with brakes, and the trained eye notes a rubber hose connection between the carriages, quite different in its application to that known at home, but which, nevertheless, betokens the air-brake.

His final contemplation is perhaps devoted to the engine, and if he has ever given any of his attention to the American locomotive it fills him with a deep concern. He recalls the imposing splendor of the latter, its comfortable and lofty cab of oiled and polished wood, its gay brass bell, the soul-stirring whistle, the noble head-light, and the cow-dropping pilot, the great cinder-consuming smoke-stack which is a hard coal burner, in which case that feature shrinks to moderate proportions, the powerful drivers and compact cylinder, the eccentric connecting rods, and all its parts radiant with the glitter of polished steel or unburnished brass, or decked with appropriate vermilion or emerald green.

In all these matters the English locomotive compares with it much as a lawn-mower does with a New York fire engine. It is a humble, awkward, green or mono-chromatic machine. It has neither polish nor decoration about it. There is no cab. The engineer and fireman—that is to say, the engine driver and his stoker, as they are styled in England—perform their duties with only such shelter as is offered by a board screen in front of them, pierced by two round apertures filled with stout glass, technically known as "spectacles." The smoke-stack is short and thick; there is an unsightly green hump on the back of the boiler; the cylinders are under the front of the latter, instead of on each side before the drivers; the wheels are all large, and the body of the engine is perched high above them and looks top-heavy and dangerous.

The whole thing is rigid and stiff-looking, and to the observer who has to do with the external aspects of locomotives it is unprepossessing and unlovely.

Jack's trouble began where Robert's ended, for his mind was of a different order, and now Robert was able richly to repay all his kindness.

"But, I've got enough of languages now," said Jack, after two or three years of blundering among moods, tempers and roots. "I'm worse at classics than ever you were at figures, and a man can be a man without Latin and Greek, although he can't very well without arithmetic. So go your way, old fellow—bump up the learning and come out a grand scholar. I'm going to dive down into one of those grimy, noisy, whizzing, buzzing machine-shops. But we can help each other just the same."

In years after when Robert became the pastor of a large, struggling, working church, Jack a successful engineer, was his right hand in every cause for good. And the two often laughed as they recalled the days spent behind the barn.

Help each other, boys. Hold out strong, willing hands to the weak and stumbling, and with cheery heart and voice encourage them. Keep them side by side of you in the battle of life, and then rejoicingly mark how their successes will shed a light on all your pathways, which will shine more and more unto the perfect day.

Dr. Johnson defined genius as a mind of large general powers determined to some particular direction.

A man's sow should never be kept penned up, but should have free access to the ground and grass.

Learn to say no. It is not necessary to snap it out dog-fashion, but say it, firmly and resolutely.

A Fighting Hand.

"If you cannot keep up with this class you had better go into a lower one."

The country schoolmaster spoke harshly, and Robert Gates's heart sank lower than before, if that were possible. He was the biggest boy in the class now, and how could he bear the shame of going among the boys still smaller?

So Robert, whose talents did not lie in figures, was having just the hard tug at school which, if well endured, wise men tell us, gives the discipline which makes the best and noblest men.

"Come on, Jack Brand," shouted half a dozen voices, he replied. "I can't come now," he replied.

"We're going to make up the baseball club, and you'll lose your place. We're going to put you in for pitcher. 'You'd better go," said Robert. "I hate to have you miss the fun."

"Never mind," said Jack heartily. "I've plenty of time for fun yet. You see now—let's go out behind the old barn and cipher away at your examples for awhile."

They settled themselves on a grassy slope in the quiet of one of the rare days of early June, and Robert opened his book with a heavy sigh.

"It's a perfect tangle to me," he said with a rueful shake of the head, thinking of the days in which he had watched the slow placing and working of the examples on the blackboard. The why and wherefore of the curved lines had never dawned upon him, the guessing how many times it would "go" and then setting down a figure, and the long, straggling column of figures gyrating off to the right and finally ending in nothing, so far as he could see, was a fearful piling of mysteries. "Why," he went on, "I can't even remember which is divisor and which is dividend when he questions me about the rules."

"Oh, that's easy enough if you think a moment," laughed Jack. "The divisor's a thing you do something with. This way now—mower, a thing you mow with; reaper, a thing you reap with; a divisor, a thing you divide with—don't you see?"

"Why, yes, of course I do, now you give me something to remember by."

Then they bent themselves resolutely to conquer the difficulties of the process between them, and it is fortunate that Jack was blessed with the gift of patience, for days past before Robert could see anything except a huge and frightful puzzle. The shouts of the boys at play came to them from a distance, but no sound more disturbing than the soft whisper of the summer wind or the pert inquiring "keechee? keechee?" of robin or wren disturbed the droning murmur with which Jack untiringly went through the lesson over and over again, little dreaming that he was securing for himself a valuable exercise in patience and self-denial.

"I see it," at last exclaimed Robert, springing up with a shout of triumph. "I never expected to see daylight through such a muddle, but I do. Now, let's be off and have a glorious play. But," he added very earnestly, "I can never pay you up in the world."

"Never mind that," said Jack. "But," he added, "maybe you can some time."

And his words came true years later. When the boys went to prepare for college under the mild teachings of the village pastor—a strange contrast to the old schoolmaster—Latin and Greek came to him almost as a pastime. He revelled in the line of study now opening before him with all the delight which comes of finding something in the world of learning exactly to his taste.