

The Biggest Fish.  
Yew never heard me tell  
About that monster? Well  
He wuz the biggest on  
I ever seen, I swun!  
When I describe his size  
I can't believe my eyes;  
An' I don't 'spect that yew  
Kin skurcely b'lieve it tew.

Down Lizzard Crick one day.  
I fished an' fished away,  
An' here I wanter state  
I had the proper bait,  
An' ev'rything wuz clear,  
My head an' hands and gear,  
When I felt, nigh the bank,  
A mos' tremenjus yank.

My cork went aout o' sight,  
My pole bent double quite;  
The crick she b'iled an' b'iled,  
An' got all rough an' f'iled.  
I straightened like a bull,  
An' fetched a mighty pull,  
An' would yew b'lieve it? Say,  
He—well, he got away!  
—Joe Cone, in the New York Sun.

## The Mayfair Mysteries.

All Londoners were horror-stricken and indignant when they learned through the newspapers of a series of extraordinary crimes, in some respects similar to the notorious Jack the Ripper murders.

The first of the series was the murder of a boy in the maze of mews and stables lying between Jernyn street and St. James' square; a week later a similar crime was committed on the south side of Oxford street. This time the victim was an elderly shape.

In each case death had come swiftly and without a struggle. In each case the crime was committed during the earliest hours of morning. All the victims when found showed the same external injuries.

They had been struck once, and only once, a heavy, crashing blow behind the left ear with some heavy, blunt instrument, and it was on this fact, first of all, that the police placed much reliance as a likely clue. Yet the fifth crime of the series found them as much in the dark as ever. Marshall Third, the Vigilant, had been following up the cases in the papers eagerly.

So far, in spite of extra plainclothes patrols and a hastily organized vigilance committee, the police had only made one arrest to which serious importance could be attached. At one time it had seemed practically certain that a conviction would have been obtained, but two circumstances placed the man's innocence beyond all doubt. The first was the extremely able and convincing defense set up by Lawson Hood, the great criminal barrister; the second, which was conclusive, was the fact that the third crime was committed on the evening of the police court proceedings.

Lawson Hood was personally known to the Vigilant, and the two had met on several occasions in connection with various causes celebres. He was the author of two standard works on criminology, and though comparatively a young man, had already climbed to the top of the tree. On the Vigilant's desk lay a note in his handwriting accepting an invitation to come around that evening.

He arrived punctually to the minute. He was a tall, slim-built man, broad of shoulder, with a keen, clean-shaven face.

"I was glad to get your note, Mr. Third," he said, taking a seat. "I particularly wanted to have a chat with you. I must confess, these murders utterly puzzle me, and I want to hear your theory. Needless to say, a child could have seen that the poor wretch I got off the other day was innocent."

"It is a peculiar case—a very peculiar case," said Third. "I think I am not exaggerating if I say it is the most peculiar which I have ever concerned myself in."

"Now as to essential points. First and foremost, all the crimes have been confined to an area bordered on the north by Oxford street, on the south by Pall Mall. Not one has been committed east of Piccadilly circus, nor further west than Half Moon street; that was the case of the young American returning from a supper party after the theatre, you will remember."

Lawson Hood nodded.  
"From that fact I deduce that the murderer is in all probability a homicidal maniac of good position, a frequenter of those parts. It is a region particularly free from loafers and no-er-do-wells. We may reasonably assume that the murderer is a man, and since there is an absolute lack of motive, a maniac with an occasional irresistible desire to kill."

"The next fact is that he is probably a tall man, for, according to the reports in the original case of the messenger boy, the blow was struck in a distinctly downward direction, though he was tall for his age—five foot three, to be precise. The American stood a shade over six foot, yet, according to the medical evidence, the blow was a circular sweep, indicating that the murderer's shoulder must have been as high as his victim's."

"Therefore we have a tall, respectable dressed man, liable to attacks of homicidal mania, who steals out late at night and stalks his victim through the silent streets—never before midnight; never after three in the morning, and never, so far, out of the

locality indicated. You follow me?"  
"Perfectly! Of course, such curious cases are by no means uncommon in criminology."

The Vigilant nodded.  
"Quite so! It is possible to conceive, for instance, a man of that stamp living, it may be for months, it may be for years, innocently among people who have perhaps spoken to him, perhaps dined with him and thought him no better and no worse than themselves. Now I come to think of it, there is an almost parallel instance set forth with exceptional ability in your book of the criminal."

"The case of the Frenchman, Lasselle," assented Lawson Hood. "It struck me as typical at the time. He committed no less than eleven crimes yet in private life he was a most kind-hearted and respectable tradesman. By the way, what sort of weapon do you think has been used? The point was raised at the trial."

Marshall Third stretched out an arm and picked up a heavy life-preserver from the table.

"One similar to that?"

The great criminal barrister took it and balanced it in his hand.

"Yes," said he thoughtfully; "yes, that might do it. The man would choose his victim and track him down, waiting a favorable moment, then creep up directly behind him, so directly that even if the poor wretch turned he would scarcely see him, and a sweeping back-handed blow would do the rest."

"And account for the wound always being on the left side," interrupted the Vigilant. "But I have not yet dwelt on the most curious feature of the whole case. In each of the five cases the victim was suffering from some minor injury of a trivial character, but sufficient to draw blood. The messenger boy, for instance, had cut his finger sharpening a pencil just before starting out on the errand that was to prove his last. It is well known, of course, that the sight of blood has a most exciting effect on many madmen."

Lawson Hood nodded.  
"I have," said the Vigilant, "been watching these cases step by step. There will be no more of these crimes. Had I only been more certain a few days earlier I could have saved the American's life."

"You know! Man alive, do you mean to say that you have discovered the criminal and done nothing? Who is the man? What is he? You know you can trust me not to speak."

"Yes," said the Vigilant slowly; "but the secret is not mine." And he clasped his hands for Kioto, the Japanese servant.

"The whisky and soda," he said curtly.  
Lawson Hood glanced at his watch.  
"Good heavens, I had no idea it was so late. I must go."

"You will have something to drink first," said the Vigilant; "you look over-tired."

"Thanks, yes! I had a long day at the courts."

Marshall Third, unnoticed took up an open penknife from the table and deliberately slashed himself across the back of his left hand, giving vent to an exclamation of annoyance as he did so. He dropped the knife and his hand bled freely.

Lawson Hood turned quickly.  
"What on earth are you doing?" he cried.

"I've clumsily cut myself. I'll let it bleed a little. I fancy there was poison on that blade. I use it for scientific work sometimes and it may have—"

The sentence was never finished. A curious change had stolen over the barrister's face. In place of the calm, self-reliant, intellectual look, his features seemed to become suddenly convulsed. His eyes, riveted on Third's slim hands, glared wolfishly; his lips drew back, showing the gums.

Suddenly he leaped up with arm raised to strike.  
As he did so the small brown servant who had been standing motionless and unobserved in a corner also sprang.

It was all over in a second. There was a click, a horrible gurgling cry, and the now raving madman was held down helpless.

By the Vigilant's side was a small vial half filled with colorless liquid. He pulled out the cork, emptied the contents on a handkerchief and threw it to Kioto. With a quick movement the latter jerked it over the madman's mouth and nostrils, and the sweet, stinky odor of chloroform tainted the air. After a few moments the tension of the muscles relaxed. The Japanese looked up again. Third nodded.

Through the quiet night hours they watched.

When the sleeping man woke, for a short time he lay staring about him not fully conscious, then he struggled into a sitting position.

"What is it? Where am I? Have I been ill? Third, is that you? What's happened?"

"You have been ill," said the Vigilant gravely. "I have much to tell you. Are you well enough to listen?"  
The great criminal barrister's face was haggard and drawn, and he was feeling deathly sick and weary. But his mind was clear.

"I am ready," he said simply.

Without preface, without comment, in plain, bold language the Vigilant told him exactly what had happened. When he had finished there was a moment's tense silence, broken by a choking sob. Lawson Hood sat with his face buried in his hands.

Suddenly he sat up.  
"What other proofs are there? What suggested the possibility to you?" he demanded fiercely, the fighting in-

stincts of the trained lawyer roused in his own defense.

The Vigilant shook his head.

"More than enough for you and me. First, as to what suggested it. I have shown you that I was convinced that the criminal was a man of good position and intellect. I also remembered reading a week or so prior to the first of the murders that you had been suffering badly from insomnia due to overwork and brain fatigue, and that you had been ordered to rest. I noted those two facts and I reread your own works. I have them there on the shelves. Your account of the Frenchman Lasselle was a miracle of insight of sympathetic comprehension. Sympathetic—that's the word—you depicted that man's sensations with marvelous reality. I asked you to come here—the rest you know. Any lingering doubt I had you yourself dispelled the moment you took the life preserver in your hand, and described how the blow might have been struck, backing up your argument with a sweeping gesture.

Lawson Hood was very white, but he had himself well under control.  
"I shall go," he said, rising. "Thank God I never married. Good-by. The case presents some extremely interesting points, as you said."  
The Vigilant's eyes dilated suddenly and shone with extraordinary brightness as he held out his hand.  
"There are few men who could take it like that. The pity of it!"  
They shook hands gravely.  
"It is a pity," said Lawson Hood, with a sudden catch in his breath. "Good-by."

The next afternoon a boy messenger brought to Marshall Third a small, heavy parcel to be handed to him personally. Inside was a battered life preserver.

The late editions of the evening papers had a short paragraph headed: "Strange Suicide of a Well-Known Criminal Lawyer."

He had shot himself!—London Answers.

## "WATER BELLS" IN BELGIUM.

A Weather Sign Whose Accuracy is Called in Question.

A paragraph has been going the rounds of the papers recently which says that when certain church bells, situated about five miles from Lebeke, Belgium, are heard in that city rain is pretty sure to occur next day.

With this statement is coupled the explanation that the sound of the bells is enabled to travel further than usual when the air is pretty well loaded with water vapor. At the government Weather Bureau in Washington they have a way of picking up such announcements and commenting on them. In the latest issue of The Monthly Weather Review this matter received attention.

Some doubt was evinced as to the accuracy of the alleged revelation. It was pointed out that the distance to which sound is heard depends very largely on the direction of the wind.

If the sound of bells should be recognized further away from them than usual and the phenomenon was followed by rain, the natural inference would be that the wind came from a rainy quarter. The Washington experts believe, moreover, that neither dampness nor warmth help the conductivity of the air in respect to sound unless these qualities are distributed pretty evenly through the atmospheric mass.

The transmission of sound and the agencies which promote or interfere with it have been studied carefully by lighthouse officials in this country and Europe. Lighthouse boards, it may be remarked, are charged with the duty of providing fog signals for the benefit of shipping. More than one collision or other marine disaster has resulted from the strange behavior of the blasts emitted by foghorns. These warnings have repeatedly failed to serve the proper purpose at the distance of only a mile or so. It was once suspected that a lighthouse keeper whose business it was to give signals had been negligent. When positive proof to the contrary was produced, as was the case in a few instances, it was perceived that an important mystery remained to be cleared up. The investigations which ensued tended to show that if the temperature and humidity of the intervening air were uniform a signal could be heard to great advantage. If, on the other hand, dry masses were mixed with damp ones, or warm air and cold air were found in proximity to each other, the movement of sound would be seriously affected. The sound would be diverted upward or downward, often leaving a spot not very far from its source.

Huxley's Larger View.

Jas. Hannay, once a member of the staff of the Pall Mall Gazette, was a typical man of letters. And Huxley, as everybody knows, was a typical scientific man.

Hannay had been a midshipman when Huxley was a naval surgeon. Years after the two met each other on the steps of the British Museum. "Huxley," said Hannay, "I care nothing for man except as a creature of historical tradition."

"Nor I," answered Huxley, "for him except as a compound of gas and water."  
"But," he added, "if we were each of us better educated men than we are we should know how to respect each other's studies more."

Sikhs are beginning to invade British Columbia, which is certainly not like India. Three thousand of them are in the province, and more are coming.



## VIRGINIA RECIPE FOR CURING HAM.

Put the ham into pickle made by putting into one and one-half gallons of water one-half pound of brown sugar, one-half ounce of saltpeter and two and one-quarter pounds of salt. Boil this mixture for half an hour, skimming frequently; then set aside to cool and pour over the ham. Leave for two weeks; remove the ham; wash it in fresh water; dip it, still wet, in bran, and coat thickly with it. Now take to the smokehouse and hang, hook end down, in smoke from hickory chips and sawdust for four weeks. Brush off the bran, wrap in brown paper, and hang up until needed.—Pittsburg Dispatch.

## RHUBARB.

Select fresh, firm stalks of the fruit. Wash and skin carefully; cut into one-inch pieces and pack solidly into mason jars that have been properly fitted with rubbering and top. Then take clear, cold water and pour over the fruit in the jars. Then take a case knife and run around inside the jar to be sure that there is not a bubble of air left. Then pour more cold water over the top, and while it is running over place the top on and screw on as securely as is done in canning boiling fruit. Small, ripe tomatoes carefully washed and the blow taken off without breaking the skin, may be preserved in the same manner.—New York World.

## TUTTI FRUTTI.

For convalescents who are allowed to eat fruit there is nothing more dainty or refreshing than the following recipe for tutti frutti: Take one box of blackberries, one-half pound of cherries, peel and cut up four bananas and powder with sugar to taste and mix thoroughly. Do this early in the morning and set on ice to get good and cold, then serve. When a variety of fruit can be had, this can be changed to suit the invalid's taste. For instance: Mix peaches, bananas and strawberries; huckleberries and currants; raspberries and currants; pineapple, oranges, strawberries, cherries or raspberries.—New York World.

## SPICY CARROTS.

Scrape new carrots, cut in inch lengths, then into lengthwise slices and finally in matchlike strips. For a pint put in a saucepan a heaping tablespoonful of butter and a quarter of a teaspoonful of salt; when hot turn in the carrots, shake well, cover and cook very slowly, adding a spoonful of water if they are inclined to burn. When barely tender sprinkle with a half teaspoonful of flour and turn through well. Just before dishing add a pinch of powdered cloves, the grated rind of half a lemon and a tablespoonful of chopped parsley.—Newark Call.

## VEGETABLE STEW.

Parboil two pared potatoes, one turnip, one carrot and one onion. Drain and cut in half-inch dice. Chop fine two square inches of fat, salt pork; put in a kettle and cook slowly until well tried out. Skim out the pork fragments, stir in one tablespoonful of flour and brown slightly, then gradually add one pint of good beef stock, or, failing that, boiling water. Season well with salt and pepper, add the diced vegetables with a cupful each of shelled peas, lima beans and corn cut from the cob. Simmer together until all are tender, add a little chopped parsley and serve.—Newark Call.

## HOUSEKEEPING HINTS.

Starched muslins, laces and prints will look nicer and iron more easily if dampened with hot water instead of cold.

To impart extreme stiffness to starch add to one quart of starch a teaspoon of gum arabic and the same of baking soda, dissolved in a little water.

The contents of the inner vessel of a double boiler will cook much more rapidly if the water in the outer compartment is salted in the proportion of half a cup of salt to two quarts of water.

Soak new brooms in strong hot salt water before using. This toughens the bristles and makes the brooms last longer.

If jelly has been set away to cool in an earthen or agate mold, set the mold in a dish of very hot water and count three, then it will be ready to turn out on a plate.

Always wash red linen tablecloths in water in which borax has been dissolved.

Soap and candles should be bought in quantity as they last longer and are more effective when used.

Meat will keep sweet for several days by covering it entirely with milk. Sour or buttermilk will answer the purpose as well as sweet milk.

To remove stains from the fingers, caused by peeling onions, rub well with a lemon.

To clean a gold chain plate for a moment in a cupful of ammonia and water, using three parts of water to one of ammonia. Polish finally with a clean chamois leather.

To save incandescent mantles, when lighting turn on the gas for a few seconds, then hold the match one inch above the chimney. It is through applying the match too quickly that so many mantles are destroyed.

A grasshopper can jump 200 times its own length.

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## A Vacation Cut Short.

By A. B. LEWIS.

After the sporty-looking chap had breakfast at the little hotel in the Catskills, where he had come for a few weeks' vacation, the old farmer who ran the place called him aside and said:

"I understand ye gave my boy a big roll of money and some jewelry to put in the safe."

"Yes; I thought that was the best place for them. You don't mind keeping the stuff for me, do you?"

"Great snakes, no!" replied the farmer, as he rubbed his hands and chuckled. "The boy says ye brung three purty heavy trunks with ye."

"Yes; I always travel with plenty of clothes, tennis-rackets, fishing-lines, etc. You've no objection to so much baggage, have you?"

"Not a bit of it, sir—not a bit of it! I wish ye had brung 'leven or twelve with ye. It's kinder funny ye ain't recognized me yet."

"No; I don't remember to have ever seen your face before," said the new arrival.

"Well, maybe my whiskers be a little longer or sunthin', but ye orter know my voice. We had quite a talk one day in Noo York."

"In—In New York?" stammered the sporty-looking chap as he turned pale.

"Yep. Don't ye recollect 'bout me handin' ye \$100 fer that gold-brick? I knowed ye the minnit I seen ye on the wagon last night. Snakes! but that was a most bewtiful swindle ye worked on me, son."

"W—what are you going to do about it?"

"Oh, nuthin'. I never raise no fuss unless there's a good occasion fer it. The boy says ye jest went wild over the scenery comin' up on the wagon, an' maybe ye'd like to walk down to the depot an' git some more views on the way. The next train to the city passes there a 'leven-thirty, an' if ye start now, while I'm lookin' fer the constable, ye'll jest about ketch it. An' don't do no worryin' 'bout that cash of yours, son, as I'll take the best of care of it."

It was a ten-mile walk to the depot, but when the eleven-thirty for New York came along it carried away a foot-sore and dusty-looking individual, who scowled and muttered and shook his fist through the car-window as the train started off again.—From Judge.

## NATURAL DEDUCTION.

Actyn Barnes—"I see that in the new version of 'Uncle Tom's Cabin' there are no bloodhounds."

Mac Booth Rantington—"Aha! I knew it wouldn't be long before Eliza would be chased over the ice by a sixty-horse-power turing car!"—Puck.

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