

# SECURING MR. BARKER.

By Henry Harris.

THE jurymen thought they had been of great assistance in rendering the plaintiff in his rights. The judge took no little credit to himself for having directed a verdict for the plaintiff and left the jury to determine only the amount of damages to be given. The spectators supposed that all the credit was due to the attorney for the masterly way in which he had presented his case for the plaintiff.

Those who really knew, however, were aware that the chief cause of the plaintiff's victory was the quick wit and persistence of a long-legged, awkward youth of eighteen, who at that moment was busily scraping spatterings of thick brown mud from the back and sleeves of a well-worn coat.

But I am beginning my story at the wrong end, and must go back to the events of five or six hours earlier and start anew.

The increased tinkling of telephone bells throughout the city indicated that the business of the day was fairly started. It was nearly 9.30. Mr. Hoff, the lawyer, was in his office looking over the memorandum and noting the items of the day's business. His finger dragged slowly down the page, pausing at each line.

He was mentally checking off the items that would demand his personal attention when the click and burr of the desk telephone announced that some one wanted to speak to him. He pulled the instrument nearer to him and called, "Hello!"

A strong, rasping voice came to his ear: "Hello! Is that Mr. Hoff?"

"Yes."

"This is Johnson. Our case is likely to be reached to-day, isn't it?"

"Yes," responded the attorney. "I think they will get to it this afternoon. You had better have your witnesses at my office by 1.30 this afternoon."

"That's just why I telephoned you," said the man at the other end. "You remember that man Barker I spoke about?—Hello, Central! Don't cut me off—I say, you remember I told you Barker was our main witness. I thought he was friendly and would come without subpoena, but I have heard that he was interested with Long in some matters, and I am afraid he will give us the slip. He knows his testimony will probably beat Long."

"So that's his game, is it?" said Mr. Hoff, pulling a pencil from his pocket. "Give me his address. I'll have him subpoenaed."

While he was writing down the address a loud shout from the instrument made his ear ring and betrayed the fact that his client was very much excited. "I say! Hello, there!"

"Yes; what is it?"

"Oh, I was afraid you had left the telephone. I wanted to say that your man will have to look sharp. Barker will avoid service if he can."

"All right. Good-bye."

Mr. Hoff hung up the receiver and pressed an electric button beneath his desk. In a moment a young man entered. His head was covered with a tousled mat of yellow hair. There was apparently an estrangement between his hands and the ends of his coat sleeves, and the bottoms of his trousers found a convenient resting place on the tops of his shoes. His appearance was not very prepossessing, but Mr. Hoff, who kept a watchful eye over his clerks, had, in the short time this young man had been with him, learned to respect him, and to know that an indomitable spirit lay behind his uncouth exterior.

"Carl," said his employer, "you know Mr. Barker, of the firm of Longshore & Barker, don't you?"

"Yes, sir. He lives up where I came from."

"Well, I want you to make out a subpoena for him in the case of Johnson versus Long for this afternoon. Be sure and get service on him. He will avoid you if he can, but I rely on you. Here is some money for his fees, and some that you may need for expenses. It is very important that you get him this morning."

"Yes, sir," was the only response, as the young man took the money and left the room.

Upon inquiring at the office of Mr. Barker for that gentleman he was informed that he was not in, and would not be in that day; that he was out at his home.

With many a boy this would have been the end of the matter. He would have returned, saying the man he sought was not in town. Carl remembered that Mr. Barker was expecting to be subpoenaed, and was probably keeping out of the way; in fact, he felt sure of it, for he had seen the angry glance the manager had given the bookkeeper when the latter told the whereabouts of his employer.

Carl thought for a moment and then hurried up the street. It was ten minutes before 10, and a train would leave shortly for the suburban town where Mr. Barker lived.

He caught the train, and an hour later was approaching the Barker residence when he saw that gentleman descending the front steps, satchel in hand. The long-distance telephone had evidently been used to warn him that he was being sought, and that he had better absent himself if he could, and meanwhile keep a sharp lookout for an overgrown boy with tow-colored hair and ill-fitting clothes.

"Mr. Barker! Mr. Barker!" called Carl, seeing that he was likely to miss his man, after all.

Mr. Barker heard quite plainly, but pretended not to know whence the voice came. He stared blankly about

for an instant, at the sky and the tops of the buildings, as if he imagined some one might be calling from there. Having succeeded in seeing no one he started rapidly down the street.

Presently he heard the pattering footsteps of some one running behind him. Would his dignity permit him to run? The idea made him blush, but he remembered that delay meant defeat for Long, and that defeat for Long meant dollars out of his own pocket.

A plan of escape presented itself. He hurriedly drew his watch from his pocket, glanced at its face, and made a pretense of realizing that he was in danger of missing his train. He took a firmer grip on his satchel and started on a run for the railway station. He had been an athlete in his day, and even now was no mean runner.

Dodging the people when he could and jostling them unceremoniously when he could not, down the street he fled. He could not, down the street he fled. He could not, down the street he fled.

Then they realized that the prominent citizen was not anxious so much to catch a train as to avoid being caught. Carl was shrewd enough to know that by calling to the man he would compel him either to stop or to give the impression of being pursued.

Passers-by who paused and watched the chase did not understand the cause, but enjoyed the spectacle.

"Well," ejaculated the Rev. Mr. Morrow, as he adjusted his silk hat after coming in violent contact with the fleeing man, only to have it tilted over the other way by the youthful pursuer, "the town seems to be on the move this morning; business must be pressing."

"Yes," replied a bystander, "Barker seems to be a little rushed this morning."

The chase was becoming exceedingly interesting. Shopkeepers rushed to their doors to learn the cause of the disturbance. Mr. Barker's face glowed with a brilliant red; perspiration stood out upon his countenance. Then he caught sight of a cab standing on the other side of the square, waiting for business. The business came with a rush.

Mr. Barker saw a way of escape. He dashed into the cab, ejaculated with his remaining breath, "Depot, quick!" slammed the door and sank back panting on the seat. The driver's whip hissed in the horses' ears, they leaped forward and Mr. Barker was off.

Here was another good excuse to present for not serving the subpoena, but Carl was not looking for excuses. For a moment he was puzzled and stopped short on the curb and gazed after the cab.

Near by was a group of jeering boys, among them some whom he knew, for, as he had told Mr. Hoff, this was his native town.

"Hey, legs," called one, "what you waiting for? Why don't you go on?"

Carl turned toward the speaker, who was leaning on a bicycle, and opened his mouth as if to make some sharp retort, but catching sight of the wheel, changed his mind and said, "Lend me your bicycle, Fox, will you?"

"Nope!" replied Fox, shaking his head. "I want it myself."

Carl watched the cab rolling down the street and rapidly increasing the distance between him and Mr. Barker.

"Here," he said, thrusting his hand into his pocket, "I'll give you fifty cents if you will let me use it."

"Put it there!" was Fox's brief but expressive answer, as he extended his hand for the coin.

Carl gave him the money, threw a long leg over the saddle, and was soon peddling down the street after the cab.

As soon as he was fairly started the boys set up a shout. Mr. Barker was wiping the perspiration from his ruddy face and congratulating himself that he had escaped from a very uncomfortable and trying situation, when the shout reached his ears. He glanced back through the little window in the rear and beheld that troublesome youth astride a wheel and pursuing him like fate.

"Dear me," he ejaculated, biting his lips with vexation, "how annoying! What a nuisance that boy is!"

He thrust his head out of the cab window and called to the driver, and at the same time handed him something which shone in the sunlight like silver.

The driver took it and immediately displayed an astonishing interest in his work. His horses, seeming to forget all city rules and ordinances, broke into a run. Behind, a wheelman rode like a professional trying to break a record. There had been a heavy rain the night before, and the streets were coated with greasy, slimy ooze, which flew up from the whirling tires like spray from a fountain of ink.

It covered the back of the rider's coat with a thick fern-leaf spatter-work of mud that extended up over his collar end on to his cap. The wheels of the bicycle looked like a pair of pinwheels throwing out muddy sparks. It was not a pleasant ride, but it was lessening the distance between Carl and the cab.

Mr. Barker was becoming nervous. By exchanging running for riding he had gained nothing except that riding was not quite so fatiguing to a "prominent citizen." The distance between the competitors had been nearly closed and the bicycle was following the cab almost as close as a racer follows his

pacings machine. Carl's head was bent low over the handle bars. The cab suddenly turned round a corner into another street. The bicycle turned also, but with disastrous results.

In his excitement Carl had forgotten the slippery condition of the asphalt, or he would not have tried to turn so sharp. As it was his bicycle wobbled and slid and fell, and he and it together whirled, a heap of wheels and legs, up the avenue, leaving a wide swath like the path of a street sweeper.

Mr. Barker heard the fall and leaned back comfortably against the cushions, muttering, "There, I guess that will settle that impertinent young chap!"

The horses were checked and allowed to continue at a gentle trot, for the race was over.

That is, Mr. Barker and his man thought so. As for Carl, he had not, as yet, had an opportunity to think at all. At length, however, he and his wheel came to a stop. The world ceased spinning around, and he arose with no bones broken, although he was plastered and smeared from head to foot, so that he looked like an animated clay model.

Here was a third excellent reason to present for not serving the subpoena. Surely he had done everything that could be done. But even while rolling along the street Carl's determination did not waver.

As he rose to his feet he paused but a moment, then he dragged the bicycle to a curb where he left and dashed into a narrow passageway between the buildings. He was familiar with the place, and knew that the cab, if it kept straight on to the station, would, after driving down the side of the block, turn into another street and pass the other end of the alley.

His guess as to its course was correct, for just before he reached the end of the passage he saw the cab trundle by at an easy pace. He crouched close to the wall until it was safely past, and neither Mr. Barker nor his cabman noticed him.

Then he darted out, seized the rear spring of the conveyance, threw his legs over the axle, and hanging down out of sight of the occupant, rode safely along with Mr. Barker, and at his expense.

Undignified, uncomfortable! Yes, but effective, and Carl was thinking only of results.

On they went. Mr. Barker and his man, ignorant of the boy under the cab, were quite at ease, and Carl, although very much cramped and jolted, was quite as contented as the others.

"Ha!" thought Mr. Barker, botching comfortably on the cushions, "I guess they will have to be a little sharper than that. It will teach them better than to send a boy after me."

"Ouch!" ejaculated Carl, shifting his weight to the other leg as an extra jolt bumped the axle uncomfortably under his knee. "I don't believe I like this kind of lower berth." Then, with a smile, "But I couldn't think of leaving Mr. Barker."

At length the driver pulled up his horses at the station. Mr. Barker, well satisfied with himself, stepped out of the cab. He closed the door, looked up at the driver and smiled a knowing smile. The driver smiled back at Mr. Barker. A muddy, bedraggled scarecrow of a boy got down from the running gear, stepped round the side of the cab, and seeing the exchange of glances between the two men, and observing that smiling seemed to be in order, also smiled.

From these smiles it might be inferred that everybody was perfectly happy, and that everything had turned out to the intense satisfaction of every one concerned, but when the driver saw the apparition in mud standing behind his customer he nearly toppled from his seat. His eyes grew round and the lines nearly fell from his hands.

Mr. Barker turned to learn the cause of the man's dismay, and found himself confronted with a paper held in an extended, dirt-begrimed hand.

Before he realized the situation he had taken the paper, and as he felt the touch of silver in his hand he heard a voice say:

"That is your subpoena and this is your fee, Mr. Barker. I would have given it to you sooner, but you seemed to be in a hurry."

That is how Carl won the verdict for the plaintiff in Johnson versus Long, for Mr. Barker's unwilling victim was sufficient to decide the case.—Youth's Companion.

Your Successful Old Playmate.

When you knew as a boy the man who has made a success—

You can remember that he never amounted to much in his youth.

You always have grave doubts whether his success is as great as reported.

You sometimes find it hard to be as pleased with his good fortune as an old friend should be.

When he appears to be glad to see you you cannot help being a little surprised.

When he does not appear to be overjoyed at meeting you it is recalled that he always was that way—and nothing to his credit.

It is difficult to avoid speaking of his "poor old father and mother" when his family is mentioned.

Altogether, it is a hard thing to regard his rise as an altogether creditable performance or to reflect upon its attendant circumstances without the thought that there are some things about them which you could have done better.—Indianapolis News.

Comic Papers Excluded.

Humorous papers which are illustrated in the colored supplement brand of deep red are now excluded from the public library at Cleveland, Ohio, because their "jokes" have a habit of reflecting on certain nationalities and races in a manner which many patrons of the library do not enjoy.

## THE GOOD-NATURED MAN.

Here's to the man who has nothing to do, who chatters and chuckles the busy day through.

He bothers your work and he hinders your nap, and if you get angry he cares not a rap.

He likes to come round in a casual way, with nothing to do and nothing to say. He tells you the story you don't want to hear.

For time that is precious has ruthlessly fled, and the family is waiting at home to be fed.

You wish him all joy that a lifetime can give, but you wish that he wouldn't make merry with you.

And he goes on his way with a look of regret, when your work has been spoiled and your plans are upset.

And because you're unmoved by his humorous prank, he says it's a pity you're such a sad crank.—Washington Star.

Flashes of Fun.

I've an utter contempt for riches, mind—for dollars, and bonds, and deeds. But, alas! my contempt is not the kind familiarity breeds.—Philadelphia Record.

"I believe," said the candidate, "that the State wants me." "Perhaps," replied his friend, "but the voters may refuse to honor a requisition."—Atlanta Constitution.

Nevvy—"I suppose you had a dog time keeping the wolf from the door that winter?" Uncle Wes—"Oh, I don't know! I don't think we had anything much to tempt him inside."—Chicago News.

Jimson—"I have heard that it is a sign of death if a dog howls beneath your window." Jester—"Beneath my window? You bet! I would kill any dog that would dare to do it."—Ohio State Journal.

Owens—"What's in a name, anyway?" Dunne—"Not much in yours, old man." Owens—"What do you mean?" Dunne—"Why, everything you've got is in your wife's name, isn't it?"—Town and Country.

His friends elected him again. The voting worked just like a charm. He never did much good, but then he likewise never did much harm.—Washington Star.

Antie (anxiously)—"Do you think you have had the proper training for a poor man's wife?" Sweet Girl—"Yes, indeed. Papa hasn't given me any spending money worth mentioning for years. I always get things charged."—New York Weekly.

Mrs. Jones—"Just think of it! That fellow came in and actually stole the clock right off the mantelpiece." Mrs. Brown—"And your dog was in the very same room?" Mrs. Jones—"Yes, but that didn't count. Fido is only a watch dog, you know."—Boston Transcript.

Lady—"I have made inquiries at your last place and your former mistress doesn't speak very flatteringly of you." Applicant—"No, I don't suppose she thinks any more of me than I do of her, but I hope I'm lady enough to keep my opinion of her to myself."—Boston Transcript.

"What soulful eyes you have!" she said to the innocent youth. "Have I?" he smilingly asked. "Yes," she murmured, in her gushing way. "Especially the left one. I could look into its liquid depths for hours." "I might leave it with you over Sunday," said the youth. "It's glass."—Tit-Bits.

Mamma (to Edith, who has been spending the afternoon with a little friend and has brought home a very pretty toy)—"Wasn't it sweet of Dorothy, dearest? Now, when she comes to see you can't you give her something?" Edith (eagerly)—"Oh, yes, mamma; I'll give her baby's doll."—Brooklyn Life.

How the Mighty Buffalo Has Fallen.

Thirty years ago the number of wild buffalo roaming the Western plains was more than 2,000,000, according to trustworthy estimates. In a letter to the Senate Secretary of Agriculture Wilson says the number of wild bison now in the United States is about thirty-three, or possibly thirty-five. The best that he can promise for this race of splendid animals is that its extermination may be delayed for a considerable period by prompt Congressional action.

Trade has been chiefly responsible for the wiping out of the great buffalo herds. In the single season of 1878-79 over 200,000 hides were shipped down the Missouri River. But purposeless hunters, men whose sole desire was to kill, have done their full share of the mischief. Commerce and "sport," in the reckless combination which has marked this as the age of extermination, have robbed the plains of the most majestic of American wild animals.—New York World.

The Humming-Bird's Long Flight.

There it may have the entire field to itself and escape the keen competition of hosts of tropical relatives for the nectar and minute insects in the deep-tuber brilliant flowers that please him best, that jeweled atom, the ruby-throated humming-bird, sole representative of his family east of the Mississippi, travels from Central America or beyond to Labrador and back again every summer of its incessantly active little life. Think what the journey from Yucatan even to New England must mean for a creature so tiny that its outstretched wings measure barely two inches across! It is the smallest bird we have. Wherein lodges the force that propels it through the sky at a speed and a height which take it instantly beyond the range of human vision?—Netteje Blanchard, in the April Ladies' Home Journal.

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