

THE WRONG BAG.

How It Changed the Prospects of Mr. Cranley.

(W. R. Rose in Cleveland Plain Dealer.)

It was the end of the battle. Ezra Cranley was going home defeated. He had come to the city with high hopes. He was going home worsted in a measure discouraged. He was not the man to give up completely. There was too much of the Puritan stock in him for that. But he was defeated in his first battle and admitted it without question.

He had tried hard to succeed. The great trouble was that he hadn't succeeded fast enough. He had found employment, but at wages that were scarcely sufficient to maintain him. He had striven hard to please—to make himself useful—but his efforts were not rewarded.

He finally told himself that it was the lack of opportunity that kept him down. Without opportunity his severest efforts availed nothing. Opportunity might confront him at any moment. It might never come.

It was a good thing that Anna Lincoln had written and advised him to come home. Anna was his sweetheart, and it was Anna who had been his incentive. He wanted to win fortune for Anna's sake. He had gone to the big city cheered by her love.

Anna's letters cheered him when he felt the bluest. But finally she had written him in another strain. "Ezra," she wrote, "I want you to come home and take a rest—or at least enjoy a change. I can see that you are not in a frame of mind to do yourself credit. You need enlivening. You need mental relaxation. Besides, the tenants on your farm require attention. They are taking advantage of your absence. And I want to see you, Ezra. Come home."

He was glad to receive this call. He wanted to see Anna. He felt that he needed the tonic of her cheering words.

The next morning he drew the little money that was due him from his employer, his week being up, and bought a present for Anna in one of the big department stores, and after eating his modest luncheon from a long counter, went to his boarding place and paid his landlady and packed his bag with his simple belongings and started to walk to the ferry. It was a long walk, but he enjoyed it. Perhaps this enjoyment was increased by the fact that he was nearing home and Anna.

The sky was cloudy, and as he boarded the ferryboat a drizzling rain was falling. The train shed was dark and gloomy and the rain fell heavily on the roof as Ezra reached the waiting train. He boarded the smoking car and put his bag on an empty seat. As he entered the door he was jostled by two men who were on the platform. He paid no attention to them, merely noting that one was dark and that the other was tall and slender. After putting down his bag he suddenly remembered that he hadn't made sure he was on the right train. It was a road that frequently changed its schedules.

He stepped back to the platform and met the two men just entering the gate. They looked at him sharply, he remembered.

"Does this train stop at Millville?" he called to a uniformed official.

"No," was the answer. "This is the express. The way train follows in twelve minutes."

A gong clanged sharply. "All aboard," a voice shouted.

Ezra turned and ran back into the car. It was quite dark, but he discerned the form of the smaller man, who had jostled him in the aisle, leaning forward and intently staring through the nearest window as if expecting to see some one. The other man was not in sight.

The train was moving as Ezra lightly caught up his bag and turned and hurried back. It had gained considerable headway when he dropped to the station floor.

Nearly four hours later he left the way train at Millville and bag in hand started up the main street. As he looked around at the familiar scenes he sighed. This wasn't the way he had hoped to come back.

He was going to stay at the old cottage where he had boarded when he read law in the village. He would pass the home of Anna on the way.

The sky had cleared, the moon was shining, the evening was warm and pleasant. As he neared Anna's home he saw her standing on the porch. She ran down to greet him.

"I knew your figure," she cried and put out both her hands.

She drew him into the little sitting room and took his hat.

"I don't think I could have come home if the thought of this welcome hadn't drawn me," he said. "I'm a failure, and you know it."

"I know nothing of the sort," she cried. "You expected to climb 'too fast—that's the trouble. And because you found that the rounds in the ladder were far apart you became discouraged. That isn't fair."

"I have been standing on the same round for a year or more," said Ezra, grimly. "I began to think I had grown fast to it. But there," he cried, "let me forget all this. How are you, dear, and how is old Millville?"

"Both of us quite the same," she smilingly answered, "and both getting older."

He flushed at this and would have said something, but suddenly checked himself. The thought that she was growing old waiting for him hurt Ezra, but he knew she would think it unkind if he told her so.

"I've brought you a little reminder of the big town," he said. He stooped over the traveling bag, and then suddenly drew back. "Why, this isn't my bag!" he cried.

The girl arose and came to him. "That's funny," she said with a slight laugh. "Are you sure?"

He was staring at the bag confusedly. "The color is exactly the same," he said, "but the handle and the lock are different. I've taken somebody's bag by mistake."

"Or somebody took your bag—which is much more likely. The big city is full of wicked men, you know."

"Whoever took my bag," said Ezra, still staring at the strange handle, "did not get much."

"You forget my little present," laughed the girl.

Ezra drew a key from his vest pocket. It failed to fit the lock.

"What a delightful mystery," said the girl. "Who knows what fate may have concealed in this mysterious hiding place?"

"I'll soon find out," said Ezra, a little grimly. He didn't see any humorous suggestion in the exchange. He drew out his knife and opened it.

"Wait," said the girl. "Use the universal handy tool." And she gave him a hair pin.

He straightened the wire and pried at the lock, while the girl knelt beside him. For several minutes he worked without success.

"Fate keeps her secret stubbornly guarded," he presently remarked.

"Yes," said the girl. "I don't think I ever was quite so near the verge of a mystery. I feel an assistant burglar."

Before he could reply the lock suddenly yielded. Ezra loosened the clasps and pushed the bolt aside. Then he opened the bag. A newspaper was spread over the contents. He lifted this and suddenly stood up.

The girl gave one scared look and then crossed the room swiftly and turned the key in the door.

The bag was filled with bank bills in packages!

Ezra drew a quick breath. "Rather a heavy dose of the unexpected," he said, meekly.

The girl, her face drawn and pale, came near him and put her hand on his.

"Better cover it, Ezra," she said. "It scares me."

"Not yet," he answered. "I'm going to count it, and at the same time look for a clue to the owner."

He stared at the money as if fascinated. He breathed hard. "There's a lot of solid enjoyment in that," he muttered.

"Ezra," said the girl, sharply. "He started suddenly and began taking out the packages. Each was wrapped with a slip of letter paper, the '500' being written with a common lead pencil.

Ezra counted the packages aloud as he placed them on the floor.

"Fifty-eight," he murmured. He rubbed his forehead confusedly. "I've

almost forgotten how to divide," he added. "It's \$29,000 isn't it?"

"Yes," the girl replied. "And you find no clue?"

"No."

They both stared at the treasure.

"What do you think, Ezra?" He divined what she meant.

"I think it's stolen money," he replied.

"It makes me feel uneasy," said the girl. "Put the money back."

He replaced the packages hurriedly. Suddenly he stopped and held one up. A card had been slipped through the band that wrapped it.

Ezra pulled out the bit of paste-board and read the few penciled words on it aloud:

"Be at Francis Garrison's office at 2 o'clock, Tuesday."

That was all.

Ezra turned the card over. It was blank on the other side.

"Francis Garrison is one of the leading lawyers of the city," said Ezra. "I have often heard his name."

"What is his reputation?" "I fancy it must be very high."

The girl put her hand on Ezra's arm. "You will see him tomorrow morning, Ezra."

"Yes," he said. "Francis Garrison may know nothing of the loss of this money, but he will advise me what to do."

The girl put her arm around his neck and kissed his cheek.

"Spoken like my Ezra," she murmured, and kissed him again.

The young man stooped and closed the bag.

"There," he said, "I'm glad the stuff is hidden from sight."

"And now," said the girl quickly, "I'll take charge of this. I think it will be safer with me. Besides, I'm going to put a leather dressing on it that will restore the color and disguise it so that wicked eyes will never recognize it. Good night and pleasuredreams, Ezra dear—and come as early as you like in the morning."

Ezra Cranley gave his name to the trim young man at the door of Francis Garrison's office.

"Mr. Garrison has a client with him," said the trim young man. Ezra seated himself on the long settee near the door, with the precious bag between his feet. The trim young man regarded him with some interest.

"If you will write your business on a card," he presently said, "I will take it to Mr. Garrison."

Ezra drew a card from his pocket and wrote: "Mr. Ezra Cranley desires to ask the advice of Mr. Francis Garrison concerning the recent loss of a considerable sum of money."

The trim young man took the card and entered the inner room. Almost immediately he returned.

"Mr. Garrison will see you in a few minutes," he said.

Presently he opened the door and Ezra picked up his bag and entered the inner room. He heard the click of a telephone receiver falling into its hook, and the gray haired man at the broad table near the window straightened up. There was another man in the room, a tall man whose back was turned and who was staring down into the street through the most distant window.

The gray haired man had Ezra's card in his hand.

"Sit down, Mr. Cranley," he said. "I am Mr. Garrison."

Ezra bowed as he took the nearest chair. The lawyer seemed waiting for him to speak.

"Mr. Garrison," he said, "I have come to you in the hope that you may know something about a large amount of money that was lost, or possibly stolen, yesterday. I think. A slight clue led me to believe that the owner might be one of your clients. If you do not know him, then I want your advice."

The gray haired man looked at him steadily.

"And why do you hope that I know the owner?"

"So that the money may be returned to him."

The gray haired man continued to study Ezra's face.

"And you have come here to open negotiations?" he slowly said.

Ezra flushed.

"No," he answered.

"Mr. Garrison," he said, "may I ask you to act as a witness while Mr. Dermot examines his property?"

The tall man stared from Ezra to the lawyer.

"Well, what do you think of that?" he muttered.

Ezra opened the bag.

"This is your bag, Mr. Dermot, although you may not recognize it. A friend thought it well to restore the original color for fear the bag might be recognized by the persons we supposed stole it."

"Then there is someone else who has knowledge of this—this loss?" said the lawyer.

"Only one other person," Ezra answered. He flushed a little. "The person is the lady I expect to marry," he said.

"And she advised you to hunt up the owner of the money?" said the tall man.

"Why, yes," Ezra answered.

"Fine," muttered the tall man.

He turned abruptly and shook the packages from the bag and hastily counted them.

"The money is all here, Mr. Cranley," said the lawyer.

Before Ezra could speak the door opened and a slender man with a smooth shaven face suddenly entered.

"Oh, Ridley," said the lawyer, "glad to see you. I thought something interesting was about to happen when I called you over. Detective Ridley, Mr. Dermot, Mr. Cranley. That money has been found, Ridley."

The slender man, threw a swift glance at the packages of bills on the lawyer's table. Then he looked at Ezra.

"Found by Mr. Cranley?" "Yes," replied the lawyer.

"Perhaps," said the detective, "Mr. Cranley wouldn't object to letting us hear his story—if agreeable all around."

It was the eminent lawyer who took Ezra in hand and drew the story from him. Ezra skillfully guided, told of his hardships in the great city, of his defeat and return, of the momentous journey, of the short, dark man and his companion.

"One moment," interrupted the detective. "I fancy I am the engrossing object that your dark man was watching so intently. I happened to be in the station on other business, however. Go on."

So Ezra finished and the detective came forward and shook him by the hand.

"Glad to know you, Mr. Cranley," he said. He looked across at the lawyer. "The parties who sneaked the bag are the ones I suspected, Mr. Garrison. They must be getting a lot of enjoyment out of Mr. Cranley's collars and cuffs. Good day, gentlemen," he laughed, noiselessly, as he passed out.

The tall man had made a little pile of money packages on the table.

"I think that ten of these belong to you, Mr. Cranley," he said.

Ezra's face grew red and he drew back.

"No, no," he murmured.

"As your legal adviser," said the lawyer, gravely, "I strongly recommend that you take this gift from Mr. Dermot. The amount will not cripple him—he is a man of wealth—and I am sure he would not rest easy if he could not testify in a practical way to his high regard for you."

"That's right," broke in the tall man. "And another thing—to get this money back is like finding it in the street. I never expected to see a blamed dollar of it again. And, say, when will that wedding take place?"

Ezra suddenly smiled.

"There'll be no reason for postponing it now," he said.

"Fine!" cried the tall man. "I'd like to meet the lady. See here, Cranley, how would you like to come out to Southern California as my secretary? I'm looking for such a man. Good pay, plenty to do, and a glorious climate. What do you say?"

Ezra's head swam. Opportunity was crowding him hard.

"I say yes, and thank you," he replied.

"Make it your wedding tour!" cried the tall man, "and we'll all shake hands on the compact."

GOLDEN WORDS.

"The trouble with the average young man who starts out to make his mark in the world of business is that his sole aim is to begin at the top. He is not willing to begin with the rudiments, the drudgery, depending upon industry, loyalty, economy and absolute rectitude of purpose and practice. He does not seem to realize that hard work, faithfulness and thrift will always win recognition that will be lasting and of the best."

"So that the money may be returned to him."

The gray haired man continued to study Ezra's face.

"And you have come here to open negotiations?" he slowly said.

Ezra flushed.

"No," he answered.

"Where is this money?" the lawyer slowly asked.

"Here," and Ezra pushed forward the bag.

The man at the window suddenly turned around. He was a broad shouldered man with a kindly face and keen blue eyes.

The lawyer looked around at the tall man.

"Mr. John Dermot," he said, "let me make you acquainted with Mr. Ezra Cranley."

Ezra and the stranger shook hands.

Fame

By Ellis O. Jones



TO be famous is not necessarily to be great, and to be great is not necessarily to be famous. In the vernacular, to be famous is to "make a hit." The next question to be decided by the authorities, self-appointed or otherwise, is whether the fame is deserved. That invariably starts an argument. No fame was ever unanimous.

Fame, therefore, can be taken only at its face value. Just as soon as we attempt to subject it to the critical analysis of different viewpoints, we are embarked on the stormy sea of disputation without compass or quadrant, without destination or starting-point, doomed forever, like the Wandering Jew, to float on and on to nowhere.

Buffeted thus aimlessly is the shade of Poe. In the ordinary acceptance of the term, he was and is famous, and the effort of his detractors to make out otherwise only serves to increase his fame. Whether he is justly or deservedly famous or not, is quite another question, a question which is both irrelevant and indeterminate. It is irrelevant because fame is objective rather than subjective. If it is to be qualified, it takes its quality from the contemplating public and not from the man under consideration, bringing us to social introspection and there we stick until some arbitrator plenipotentiary leads us out. Hence the question is also indeterminate, since arbitrators plenipotentiary disappeared with the "divine right" bubble.

The matter of Poe's going into the Hall of Fame depends and should depend upon those having the Hall of Fame in charge, whether they be Anthony Comstock, Battery Dams, John L. Sullivan, or other gentlemen who may have happened to become famous in their chosen sphere. Others should keep hands off.

Whatever the outcome, the Hall of Fame merely reflects the opinion of those who have it in charge. No matter how much public discussion there may be, no matter how much outsiders may engage in controversies in which they have none but a bellicose interest, the governors will still use their own judgment, and we will be supposed to infer that their selections were deservedly famous. There is no danger of any one's deliberately starting a Hall of Unjust Fame.

The only other way would be to decide it by referendum. If we should vote him in and his fame was still undeserved, then, of course, it would prove that we were a bad lot.—From Lippincott's Magazine.

Training for What?

By Cora S. Day.



LET little things annoy him. He gave way to outbursts of anger, when a moment or two of firm self-control would have carried him safely past the crisis. He rather prided himself upon his "quick temper," so unruly, so easily roused, and so hard soothed. Then came the climax, when one day he flew into a passion, and almost before he realized it, he had committed a crime which by a narrow margin escaped being murder.

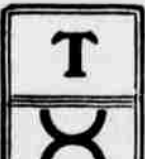
His neighbor was a quiet, pleasant young fellow whom everybody liked and respected. He was never even suspected of owning the naturally quick temper which he kept as sternly under control. He made it a point to be master, and he succeeded. When the first young man went to prison for his attempt upon the life of another, the second accepted a position of trust, of honor, of large responsibility, where his self-control and calm poise of spirit amid vexations was invaluable to himself and his employers.

Neither of the young men would have believed, years before, that they were in training then for the positions each came to occupy. Yet so it was in truth; for had not things gone before which fitted the one for honor, the other for crime and disgrace, the results would not have been what they were.

Juvenal says: "No man becomes a villain all at once." Equally true is it that no man becomes a saint all at once. Training goes before both; and that training is a matter of individual choice. Your temper, your taste, your faults and your virtues, all are your own, to train as no one can train them for you. For what are you training then?

Outrages of the Telephone

By Minna Thomas Antrim



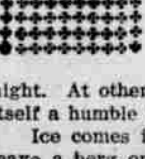
THE Drunken Sailor's fate having been satisfactorily settled, what shall be done with the Telephone Fiend? This distressing problem is agitating more than one long-suffering soul. The Fiend is petticoated, rarely trousered, who holds you up until you are ready to hurl anathemas upon the very inventor. Where is the specialist who will conquer this disease of the wire—disease that is working such wholesale havoc, rifling husbandly purses, stealing Time bodily, breaking the needed rest of invalids without a quail, and robbing the "party" at the other end of all surety of peace? For all else seem we to have found a quietus, but for the "caller up" at any old time or place, no remedy seems forthcoming.

That the telephone has blessed many a man, saved many lives, and helped pile up fortunes, is true; but has it not cursed some women, ruined more lives, and hastened domestic misfortune? It has. Has it not become the favorite pastime of the woman with nothing to do? It has. Does it not accelerate gossip? Did the flirt and the wayward, constantly? It does. Self-indulgent women waste their husbands' money by ordering food over the too handy telephone, rather than bother to dress for the street, thereby losing both their wholesome morning exercise and their chance thrifflily to secure the best there is for the price at market or at stores from which the family larder is supplied. The time wasted by women in foolish phoning can never be offset by time gained by forehanding men in business,—for what shall it profit a man if he gain the whole world if his "world" is lost through folly?

Telephoning from a habit finally becomes a vice, and a menace to the courtesies. It has destroyed a fine art of social correspondence. It has crowned Haste with Courtesy's laurel.—Lippincott's Magazine.

Ice

By Thomas L. Masson



ICE is used as a handy medium for conveying microbes from the interior into large cities, where the inhabitants can indulge in them freely.

In the winter, when it is not needed to cool the air, the Hudson River is filled with chipped ice, which disappears as soon as the weather gets warm enough to make it an object.

Ice fills many uses, but its highest mission is in the early morning, when it floats up to a man who has been out all night. At other times it may do some good, but this is where it truly shows itself a humble instrument in the hands of Providence.

Ice comes in bergs and lumps. In the early morning the ice man will leave a berg on your door-step, charging for it by weight. But when you get it, it is a lump. This is due to its shrinking nature. Packed in refrigerators, it gradually pines away, until on Sunday afternoon, when it is most needed, it has silently disappeared, leaving naught but germs behind. A refrigerator, by the way, is an invention of science to melt ice in the quickest manner.

Ice is used in drug-stores and Wall Street. When placed conveniently around cornstarch and sugar and vanilla, it makes ice cream. No "Uncle Tom's Cabin" is complete without it. It forms on lakes and mill-ponds, and is used to sit down on by people learning to skate, or to fall through by young boys who have wandered away from home. It also comes in rinks.—From Lippincott's.