

A THIEF DETECTOR.

One Man's Employment in a New York Store.

A Private Detective who Mingles with the Throng of Shoppers.

A tall haughty young woman, wrapped in furs, with large diamond earrings, moved lazily through the throng of shoppers in an uptown dry goods establishment the other day. She viewed with indifference the great variety of objects exposed for sale, and chatted gayly with a young and stylish dressed companion, casting haughty looks of displeasure at the more vulgar shoppers whenever, as frequently happened they were rude enough to jostle against her. A handsome Japanese leather shopping satchel swung from her left arm, and in a harder jostle than any she had yet received, the spring snapped and the satchel swung open. Inside lay a purse, some loose greenbacks, and odd change temptingly exposed to view. The fair owner continued her elegant walk utterly oblivious of the danger threatening her purse.

A stylish young fellow who had been darting hither and thither in the throng suddenly rested his eyes on the open satchel. They twinkled for a moment, and then he became very earnest and apparently very anxious to reach the street. He forced his way up to the satchel, dexterously hid it from view, and slyly stole his hand into its depths. He was about to withdraw it again, when he met with a sudden and unexpected shock. A stout, heavily built man, with his overcoat buttoned up to the ears, who had been moving slowly with the crowd, apparently indifferent to everything and everybody, had suddenly taken a violent interest in the dapper young man, and it was his hand which had arrested the thief just as he had started to remove purse and money from the open satchel. The young lady turned around with a slight scream, much disturbed, and there was a commotion in the immediate neighborhood.

"Keep your satchel closed, Madam," remarked the stout man calmly, and before she had recovered from her fright he had disappeared with the thief in his custody.

A reporter for the Sun, who had watched the foregoing, followed the two men into a private office at one end of the second story.

"I should think that you would know enough to keep out of here," said the stout man angrily to the thief.

The latter laughed carelessly and submitted to being searched without a murmur.

"What's the odds," he returned with a grin.

"The bosses won't have us arrested, so we run no risks. Once in a while we strike a duffer when you're off gallivanting with the daisies. That was a pretty lay you spoiled just now, though," he added regretfully. "Won't you come out and have something?"

"Not just now," replied the stout man ironically, "but I'll see that you get out." "I am the house detective," he said a little later, after having conducted his charge out of a side door. "I have been a detective nearly all my life, and I owe my present place to the fact that I know by sight every professional thief and pickpocket in the country. I get a large salary for doing nothing but walk up and down through the store all day, and am entirely my own master. I have several assistants also, but I am responsible for all. If a pocketbook is lost, an article taken from a counter, or a clerk knocks down, I am held to answer, so that I am obliged to keep my eyes wide open all the time.

"People are very careless. A dozen times at least every day I have to warn ladies that their shopping satchels are open, or that they have laid their purses on the counter while examining goods.

"It is a rule of this house to avoid publicity as much as possible in the matter of arrests. If I find a thief, even in the act of stealing, I simply take away his booty, search him carefully for other stolen goods and then put him out. If I find him in the crowd, even when he is not plying his trade, I search him just the same and put him out. I use no disguise. The thieves know me and I know them. They submit to search rather than arrest, and in that way we keep from the public the fact that thieves frequent this place. There is no doubt that they do come here in large numbers as well as to every other large store. Some of the biggest criminals in the country have been in this store. They frequent the stores very much, for there they have a chance to make rich and unsuspecting acquaintances.

"Besides watching for thieves from outside, I have to keep my eyes on the employees. I am supposed to know what they all do, inside and out of the store, from the superintendent down to the scrub woman. If the superintendent is a drinking man or the cash girl eats more candy than her wages would pay for, the firm wants to know it. If the young clerk there spends his nights going around town, I am expected to keep my eye on him. I take orders from no one but the firm itself, and, although I believe I am popular with the employees, I also know that I am feared by them, for an

evil report from me would be immediately followed by the delinquent's discharge. The firm trusts me, and I am proud of it, but it's a trying and responsible place all the same."

The reporter watched the detective as he slowly moved away, apparently seeing nothing but his little piercing eyes taking in everything within their range of vision.—New York Sun.

A Level-Headed Brakeman.

A number of years ago a stubby young man with a big mouth and solid-looking head was taken on the Galesburg division of the Chicago, Burlington & Quincy Railroad as a freight brakeman. He seemed to pay no attention to the sports indulged in by his fellow brakemen when off duty, but spent most of his time around the shops learning how to run engines and picking up information about the machinery of railroading. One day a tall, clerical-looking man was riding in the caboose of the train on which this young man was employed. The tall man seemed to take a kindly interest in the young brakeman, who answered his questions courteously, but did not permit the passenger to interfere in the least with his duty. Finally the train came to a standstill, and it was found that it had met another freight train at a station where the side track was not long enough to hold either train. The problem presented was: How were the trains to get by each other? In this day that would be solved very easily, but it so happened that at that time, when railroading was a very different matter, neither conductor had encountered such a condition of affairs and both supposed that one of the trains would have to back up to a station with a longer side track. As the conductors were discussing this the tall passenger and the young brakeman came up to them. When the young man understood the situation he said to his conductor, respectfully:

"You can get by."

"How, I'd like to know?" said the conductor.

The young brakeman picked up a stick and marked out in the mud what is now known to every railroad man as "sawing by." The trains were saved and went their way. The next day the young man was called to the division superintendent's office, where he met the tall passenger—Superintendent H. H. Hitchcock—and was taken into his more immediate employ, where he learned telegraphy and became a train despatcher. In a short time the office of master of transportation was created, and the young man was given that place. From that day he has grown rapidly, and now the man who rides over the Chicago & Alton Railroad on the general manager's pass reads that young brakeman's name at the foot of it. C. H. Chappell, general manager.—Chicago News.

General Butler's Hand-Organ.

The Washington correspondent of the Cleveland Leader has heard the first true version of the monkey and hand-organ story which has been privately told in army circles, now and then, but not always correctly. A treasury official said to Butler: "Well, General Butler, I have no doubt these accounts are all right, and if you will explain satisfactorily one other item I will pass them. Here is a charge of \$50 for a hand-organ and a monkey. Now, what possible use a hand-organ and a monkey would be to the United States Government, or to you as its General, I cannot see."

General Butler then told the following: "It was the hottest time of my campaign about Baltimore. The Confederates were very close-mouthed, and I could get no inside news of their doings. One day I saw a great crowd gathering round a man with a hand-organ who had a very large monkey. As I drew nearer I noticed that the man playing the organ looked very much like a smart Irishman whom I had among my soldiers. I said nothing, but went back to my headquarters, and calling up the Irishman, in whom I had perfect confidence, I gave him some money and told him to go and buy out the musician. He did so. He bought the hand-organ, the monkey and the musician's clothes, and paid \$50 for them. Dressed in these I sent him out as a spy. He travelled all the surrounding country and gave me some very valuable information. This information was worth thousands of dollars to the United States Government, and," concluded General Butler, "you can thus see why it paid the United States to pay \$50 for a hand-organ and a monkey."

It is needless to say that the explanation was satisfactory.

Doubly Unfortunate.

Clara—Well, Henry, this is pretty good. Mother was here to supper and you never made your appearance.

Henry—Very sorry, my love—couldn't help it. Met Boojum—would have me go to the theatre.

Clara (suspiciously)—Indeed! What was the play about? You know I always like to hear.

Henry—Sorry I can't oblige you. Boojum talked to me so that I didn't hear word.

Clara—What did you see?
Henry—Nothing. Boojum's sister and her hat sat in front of me.—Philadelphia Call.

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