

The Robe of Peace

BY O. HENRY

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Mysteries follow one another so closely in a great city that the reading public and the friends of Johnny Bellchambers have ceased to marvel at his sudden and unexplained disappearance nearly a year ago. This particular mystery has now been cleared up, but the solution is so strange and incredible to the mind of the average man that only a select few who were in close touch with Bellchambers will give it full credence.

Johnny Bellchambers, as is well known, belonged to the intrinsically inner circle of the elite. Without any of the ostentation of the fashionable ones who endeavored to attract notice by eccentric display of wealth and show, he still was an asset in everything that gave deserved luster to his high position in the ranks of society.

Especially did he shine in the matter of dress. In this he was the despair of imitators. Always correct, exquisitely groomed, and possessed of an unlimited wardrobe, he was conceded to be the best-dressed man in New York, and, therefore, in America. There was not a tailor in Gotham who would not have deemed it a precious boon to have been granted the privilege of making Bellchambers' clothes without a cent of pay. As he wore them, they would have been a priceless advertisement. Trousers were his especial passion. Here nothing but perfection would be noticed. He would have worn a patch as quickly as he would have overlooked a wrinkle. He kept a man in his apartments always busy pressing his ample supply. His friends said that three hours was the limit of time that he would wear these garments without exchanging.

Bellchambers disappeared very suddenly. For three days his absence brought no alarm to his friends, and then they began to operate the usual methods of inquiry. All of them failed. He had left absolutely no trace behind. Then the search for a motive was instituted, but none was found. He had no enemies, he had no debts, there was no woman. There were several thousand dollars in his bank to his credit. He had never shown any tendency toward mental eccentricity; in fact, he was of a particularly calm and well-balanced temperament. Every means of tracing the vanished man was made use of, but without avail. It was one of those cases—more numerous in late years—where men seem to have gone out like the flame of a candle, leaving not even a trail of smoke as a witness.

In May, Tom Eyres and Lancelot Gilliam, two of Bellchambers' old friends, went for a little run on the other side. While pottering around in Italy and Switzerland, they happened, one day, to hear of a monastery in the Swiss alps that promised something outside of the ordinary tourist-beguiling attractions. The monastery was almost inaccessible to the average sightseer, being on an extremely rugged and precipitous spur of the mountains. The attractions it possessed but did not advertise were, first, an exclusive and divine cordial made by the monks that was said to far surpass benedictine and chartreuse. Next a huge brass bell so purely and accurately cast that it had not ceased sounding since it was first rung three hundred years ago. Finally, it was asserted that no Englishman had ever set foot within its walls. Eyres and Gilliam decided that these three ports called for investigation.

It took them two days with the aid of two guides to reach the monastery of St. Gondrau. It stood upon a frozen, wind-swept crag with the snow piled about it in treacherous, drifting masses. They were hospitably received by the brothers whose duty it was to entertain the infrequent guest. They drank of the precious cordial, finding it rarely potent and reviving. They listened to the great, ever-echoing bell, and learned that they were pioneer travelers, in those gray stone walls, over the Englishman whose restless feet have trodden nearly every corner of the earth.

At three o'clock on the afternoon they arrived, the two young Goths stood with good Brother Cristofer in the great, cold hallway of the monastery to watch the monks march past on their way to the refectory. They came slowly, pacing by twos, with their heads bowed treading noiselessly with sandaled feet upon the rough stone flags. As the procession slowly filed past, Eyres suddenly gripped Gilliam by the arm. "Look," he whispered, eagerly, "at the one just opposite you now—the one on this side, with his hand at his waist—if that isn't Johnny Bellchambers then I never saw him!"

Gilliam saw and recognized the lost glass of fashion.

"What the deuce," said he, wonderingly, "is old Bell doing here? Tommy, it surely can't be he! Never heard of Bell having a turn for the religious. Fact is, I've heard him say things when a four-in-hand didn't seem to tie up just right that would bring him up for court-martial before any church."

"It's Bell, without a doubt," said Eyres, firmly, "or I'm pretty badly in need of an oculist! But think of Johnny Bellchambers, the Royal High Chancellor of swell-togs and the Magna Carta of pink teas, up here in cold storage doing penance in a snuff-colored bathrobe! I can't get it straight men."

in my mind. Let's ask the jolly old boy that's doing the honors."

Brother Cristofer was appealed to for information. By that time the monks had passed into the refectory. He could not tell to which one they referred. Bellchambers? Ah, the brothers of St. Gondrau abandoned their wordly names when they took the vows. Did the gentlemen wish to speak with one of the brothers? If they would come to the refectory and indicate the one they wished to see, the reverend abbot in authority would, doubtless, permit it.

Eyres and Gilliam went into the dining hall and pointed out to Brother Cristofer the man they had seen. Yes, it was Johnny Bellchambers. They saw his face plainly now as he sat among the dingy brothers, never looking up, eating broth from a coarse, brown bowl.

Permission to speak to one of the brothers was granted to the two travelers by the abbot, and they waited in a reception room for him to come. When he did come, treading softly in his sandals, both Eyres and Gilliam looked at him in perplexity and astonishment. It was Johnny Bellchambers, but he had a different look. Upon his smooth-shaven face was an expression of ineffable peace, of rapturous attainment, of perfect and complete happiness. His form was proudly erect, his eyes shone with a serene and gracious light. He was as neat and well-groomed as in the old New York days, but how differently was he clad! Now he seemed clothed in but a single garment—a long robe of rough brown cloth, gathered by a cord at the waist, and falling in straight, loose folds nearly to his feet. He shook hands with his visitors with his old ease and grace of manner. If there was any embarrassment in that meeting it was not manifested by Johnny Bellchambers. The room had no seats; they stood to converse.

"Glad to see you, old man," said Eyres, somewhat awkwardly. "Wasn't expecting to find you up here. Not a bad idea, though, after all. Society's an awful sham. Must be a relief to shake the giddy whirl and retire to—contemplation and—er—prayer and hymns, and those things."

"Oh, cut that, Tommy," said Bellchambers cheerfully. "Don't be afraid that I'll pass around the plate. I go through these thingum-bobs with the rest of these old boys because they are the rules. I'm Brother Ambrose here, you know. I'm given just ten minutes to talk to you fellows. That's rather a new design in waistcoats you have on, isn't it, Gilliam? Are they wearing those things on Broadway now?"

"It's the same old Johnny," said Gilliam, joyfully. "What the devil—I mean why—Oh, confound it! what did you do it for, old man?"

"Peel the bathrobe," pleaded Eyres, almost tearfully, "and go back with us. The old crowd'll go wild to see you. This isn't in your line, Bell. I know half a dozen girls that wore the willow on the quiet when you shook us in that unaccountable way. Hand in your resignation, or get a dispensation, or whatever you have to do to get release from this ice factory. You'll get catarrh here, Johnny—and—My God! you haven't any socks on!"

Bellchambers looked down at his sandaled feet and smiled.

"You fellows don't understand," he said, soothingly. "It's nice of you to want me to go back, but the old life will never know me again. I have reached here the goal of all my ambitions. I am entirely happy and contented. Here I shall remain for the remainder of my days. You see this robe that I wear?" Bellchambers caressingly touched the straight-hanging garment: "At last I have found something that will not bag at the knees. I have attained—"

At that moment the deep boom of the great brass bell reverberated through the monastery. It must have been a summons to immediate devotions, for Brother Ambrose bowed his head, turned and left the chamber without another word. A slight wave of his hand as he passed through the stone doorway seemed to say a farewell to his old friends. They left the monastery without seeing him again.

And this is the story that Tommy Eyres and Lancelot Gilliam brought back with them from their latest European tour.

The Term Philosopher.

The word "philosopher" is said to have originated with the celebrated Pythagoras, who was born about 570 B. C. The word means a lover of wisdom. Pythagoras must have been a very remarkable man, for it is certain that he made a profound and lasting impression upon his time. He was the originator of the idea that nature is a harmony, and that its varied phenomena are all brought about by unerring and universal laws, and are an expression of nothing less than the universe itself. True to the name he gave himself, Pythagoras is said to have devoted his whole life to the acquisition of knowledge, to the end that he might impart it to others, without money and without price. He was one of the noble influences of antiquity, and the effects of his unselfish labors are still visible among men.

Micro-Organism Causing Infantile Paralysis Found.

Dr. Samuel Dixon, Secretary of Pennsylvania Board of Health, Makes Remarkable Find—Hope of Final Cure Seen.

Topeka, Kan.—Dr. S. J. Crumbine, secretary of the Kansas Board of health, has received a letter from Dr. Samuel Dixon, secretary of the Pennsylvania board of health, explaining in detail what is believed to be the discovery of the micro-organism which causes infantile paralysis. Dr. Dixon does not definitely assert that he has found the germ, but he has found an organism in the blood of persons and animals which are afflicted with the disease and the organism does not appear in the blood of normal persons or animals and it is not described in any of the treatises of germs.

Infantile paralysis has been epidemic in parts of Kansas for two years. Last year there were 189 cases and forty-seven deaths reported from this disease and the year before there were eighty cases and eighteen deaths. Scientists are working hard to isolate the germ which causes the disease and to work out a treatment to prevent or cure it. Thus far no cure has been discovered and the germ has not been entirely isolated. The discovery of Dr. Dixon is a great advance and it may lead to the discovery of the cause and a treatment for the disease.

Dr. Crumbine and the physicians connected with the state board of health and the university medical school are watching with great interest the tests being made by Dr. Dixon.

In his letter Dr. Dixon says:

"In examining the blood from acute cases of poliomyelitis (infantile paralysis) in human beings and also in monkeys, in which the disease was produced experimentally, an organism was found, different in morphologic character from any heretofore described, which may or may not, on further investigation, prove to be the etiological factor in the causation of the disease. Blood smears being fixed in methyl-alcohol for one minute and stained with carbol-thionin, the organism appears as faintly stained blue rod, with regular cell wall about ten microns long and about eight-tenths of a micron in width, curved at an angle of 60 to 75 degrees at one end, occasionally at both ends. At times the curved end is bulbous. Some of the organisms appear to have a very finely granular protoplasm when the highest amplification is employed."

Dr. Dixon then describes the microscopes which gave the best re-

HOME FOR AN AMERICAN AMBASSADOR

FOR the first time in the history of the United States a permanent home has been provided for an American ambassador at one of the large European capitals. Late in last session a bill was passed through congress providing for the purchase of diplomatic residences in foreign capitals. But already the new system was inaugurated at Berlin last fall when Ambassador Hill moved into the embassy on the Drake strasse. The change is an important one, since under the old system it was impossible for any man of moderate means to accept a mission in Europe.



The American Embassy in Berlin

GERM IS DISCOVERED

sults in the examination. Continuing, he says:

"The bloods examined were from ten different cases of acute poliomyelitis in children and were taken during the epidemic last summer, and from thirteen cases of the disease in the acute stage, which had been produced experimentally in as many monkeys."

"Blood smears from three normal human beings were carefully examined and, although the search for these organisms was diligently made, none was found. Smears were made from the blood of thirteen normal monkeys with negative results. After inoculation with the virus these same monkeys give positive results."

"Smears from the cords and brains of paralyzed monkeys and from one human case were examined, but none of the organisms was found. Defibrinated blood, three weeks to two months old, from two paralyzed monkeys, increased numbers. Cultures made from the blood of a paralyzed monkey in various forms, examined after being inoculated three weeks, showed the presence of the organism in increased numbers. Success in isolating the organisms has not attended our efforts as yet."

"A \$50 betting proposition was put over, and Ward said it was a shame to take the money, but he would win that bet. The other night the fried eggs against time match was pulled off."

"Ward won the money in a canter. He ate eighteen eggs in fourteen minutes, going three eggs over the mark in one minute less than the stipulated time."

"Then he said: 'I'm kind of hungry. Just bring me a half dozen more fried eggs and a pound of cheese. And better bring a cup of tea, too. Water is kind of flat with the eggs.' Then he finished his meal."

"With the eggs, the cheese, the tea and the money, Ward strolled home."

MANY TRAMPS IN NEW YORK

Count at Gotham Municipal Lodging-House Shows Alarming Increase in Numbers Over Year Ago.

New York.—From the count kept at the municipal lodging-houses of the homeless who seek shelter there it is deduced that vagrants have doubled in number in New York recently. During the month of April 16,000 persons were sheltered there, as compared with 7,750 in April, 1910. This year's figures are five times the record for April, 1907.

Officers of the charity organization say that the increase is not confined to the city but is noticeable all over the country.

"Records show that the vagrancy evil is assuming alarming proportions," says a statement by Superintendent Blatchley. "The only remedy in sight for this condition is the establishment of farm colonies where the labor of these men may be utilized to meet the expense of their maintenance."

RAM'S HORN BROWN

The man who is not a friend will often need one.

The appearance of evil often helps the devil more than the real thing.

A man with a thinker has done more for the world than the man with a gun.

Giving us bad health is nature's way of standing us up in a corner for doing wrong.

There are too many folks who stop believing the Bible when things begin to go wrong.

The man who never learns anything from his own blunders couldn't learn anything in any college.

The man who runs his shoes down at the heel never blames the right man for his own bad luck.

The man who blows into an old gun to see if it is loaded, generally leaves his widow unprovided for.

If there is a heaven for fools, the man who expects to get through on his wife's church membership will be there on a front seat.

JUST JOTTINGS

While the exports of human hair from China are very large, it is denied that any comes from corpses.

Fifty-eight millionaires died in France during the year 1909, two of whom left estates of over \$10,000,000.

Someone who thinks he knows claims that the excessive cost of living is due to the reckless slaughter of birds.

Ten cents a day is the amount actually required for food to sustain a human. The remainder of the money is spent for flavoring.

The fastest and longest non-stop railroad run in England is 225½ miles, from Paddington to Plymouth, made at 54.8 miles an hour.

There is an asbestos mine at Lowell, Mass., which produces a fine grade of material and is said to promise an output of 100 tons per day.

Japanese merchants are troubled over the fact that German goods are supplanting theirs in the Chinese markets. They are seeking the reason.

An English cruiser which had been in the water for seven years was recently relieved of forty tons of barnacles, mussels and vegetable growth.

In Great Britain there are eleven daily express trains, making runs of from 50 to 118 3-8 miles without a stop, whose average speed is from 51 to 59.2 miles an hour.

SAYS THE OWL

The fool's money has other affinities.

He that gives freely expects but little in return.

Often a handsome man can make a living despite it.

To the fat lady life should be anything but a dreary waist.

It takes more than a daily bath to keep a man's record clean.

The best of men are sometimes worsted—and that's no idle yarn.

A close student of human nature seldom lends money to his friends.

A prude is a girl who always knows a lot of things she shouldn't know.

A woman's idea of tough luck is to have a gentleman call when she's washing her hair.

Fashion plates come and go, but fortunately it isn't possible for a woman to look like ne.

The average man has but three ambitions: One is to become rich and the other two are to become richer.

THE SIX RULES.

This is a fast age, with a few slowdowns and many wrecks.

Although a graduate earns his sheepskin, he pays ten dollars to get it.

They are called divorce suits because nothing but a divorce seems to suit.

Suffragists believe that the world owes every man a living and every woman a vote.

In the school of experience everybody pays his own tuition, and nobody ever graduates.

In school we learn the rule of three; in courtship the rule of two; in marriage the rule of one.