

Pipley, the Policeman.

(CONCLUDED.)

John Pipley was naturally good-natured. He knew, too, the value of aid in a row; how often the law was glad to appeal to a civilian for help in the capture of some ugly customers. So, without a moment's hesitation, he slipped off his gloves, seized one end of the little barrel, and with a swing it was safely deposited in the cart.

'A little furdur, old un,' said the man; 'now, then, both together. There's summat else to come.'

A vigorous push sent the firkin right forward beside the other.

'Now this here,' said the man, 'and then there's the price of a pint,' as he stepped up to an egg box lying close under the window.

'All right,' said John; 'but just tell your people as it aint safe to have these things out like they do; there's been a good many robberies about.'

'Well, I told our foreman as it wasn't safe,' said the man; 'but he called me a fool for my pains. Now, then.'

John Pipley pocketed the money offered to him, got his fingers under one end of the straw-packet case, the man got his under the other; the box was rested on the tail of the cart, leisurely thrust in, the tail-board rattled up, pins and chains secured, the man climbed into the cart, a mutual nod of good-fellowship was exchanged, the reins were shaken, the horse flicked, and away it rattled, while Pipley slowly replaced his gloves, looked eagerly round for scoundrels and went on his way.

'Luck's dead against me,' he said—'dead as dead; but I'll have 'em yet. If some one would only do some thing. If I'd any luck at all, I should have nobbed some one after them butter kegs. Heigho! nothing never falls in my way.'

All through the afternoon, like a law-preserving and intelligent officer, did Pipley wander about his beat, longing to get a shot at some rascal or another; but everything was quieter than usual, and the time for relief coming. Pipley returned to the station.

'Another robbery on your beat this afternoon, Pipley,' said the captain. 'Strange thing! Most mysterious! But it must be stopped. We can't go on like this. I must put another man on.'

'No, sir, don't, please; I'm down on 'em first chance,' said Pipley; 'but what is it this time—another time-piece out of a carriage?'

'No; a'

'Not a coat from a hall?'

'No; a shop-door robbery.'

'And I told 'em to be careful about them there rolls of carpet,' said Pipley.

'I don't want to be harsh,' said the captain, 'and I suppose you were watched out of the way. A man can't be everywhere at once, nor yet be all eyes, as the press seem to think.'

'What was it this time, sir?' said Pipley.

'Oh, a very daring affair—butter firkins and egg chests, just delivered. Two firkins and a chest taken from the grocer's door directly after.'

'Were they outside the shop, sir?' said Pipley, rubbing his gloves softly together.

'Yes, outside at Chedderby's. The fellows must have had a cart. I'll put on a couple of plain clothes men, for this sort of thing must be stopped. The super will be furious.'

'They're sharp uns, and no mistake,' said John Pipley, with a peculiar look of his eye; and then, being dismissed, he slowly returned to his lodgings, grinding his teeth, doubling his fist, and biting a bit of straw into the smallest possible fragments.

'It won't do to say how I've been sold,' he muttered at last, as he sat down to the tea table; 'for I have been sold, and no mistake. Looked as innocent as a lamb, he did; and me not to see as he was the lamb of black sheep. An me, after eight years in the force, not to have the perception to take a note of the name upon the cart?'

John Pipley might have spared himself all trouble about that; for the name had been most carefully removed.

It was in Paris.

An elegant lady goes out shopping. While she is engaged, there is a heavy fall of rain. The streets are flooded, and, to add to her distress, her carriage stands on the far side of a large, open square, which has become a lake. She signals to the driver, but his horses, being young, will not face the water. She stands on the edge of the curb, stamping her little feet, and not knowing what to do. A gentleman passes and takes in the situation at a glance. Throwing his cigar aside, he steps up to the lady, seizes her by the waist, delicately, plunges into the tide, and lands her safely on the lower step of her carriage door. Recovering from her astonishment, she turns around and mutters, 'Insolent!' The gentleman loses no time, but steps back to the lady, seizes her by the waist, delicately, plunges into the tide, and lands her where she stood before. He then takes off his hat, bows politely, and walks away.

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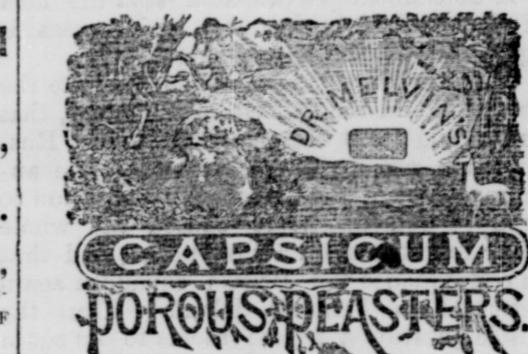
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