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traffic, and made for one of the great arteries that lead from London. In a matter of twenty minutes or so he was upon the Great North Road.

So far, so good. Up till now he had been so occupied with what he had been doing that he had no time for other thoughts.

But now he realised that steps may have been taken to acquaint the police of the theft, and already information by telephone might be buzzing round to the various police stations.

Suddenly he flashed past a garage. Immediately he let out his clutch and braked up. Then, turning the car, he drove back and stopped.

Jumping out he was about to enter the garage when a mechanic in overalls came out.

"Why, it's old Blitherington!"

"Hallo, old man!"

It was Grigsby, a former colleague of his when he had been in the Army.

The two shook hands.

Scarcely had he done so when Grigsby stared at the car with bulging eyes. He ran up to it and rapidly examined it.

"Great Scot!" he exclaimed. "Did you bring that car?"

Blitherington nodded.

"You lucky beggar! How did you get hold of it?"

"I—I—" Blitherington floundered helplessly.

"It's all right, old man," said Grigsby in a reassuring voice. "You needn't be afraid to tell me. I only asked out of curiosity. I'll take you along to the gov'nor in a minute. The reward's yours all right."

"The reward—"

"Yes, the fifty pounds!"

Blitherington stared at his friend in amazement. Fifty pounds! What was Grigsby talking about?

The latter caught him by the arm, and led him into the garage, where he found himself confronted by a keen-looking, heavily built man of fifty.

"The stolen car's turned up, Mr Soward," said Grigsby.

"What, the Daimler which was stolen from our Ilford branch?" exclaimed the garage manager, in startled tones.

Grigsby nodded assent.

"Just brought back by this gentleman, who has come to claim the reward."

In a flash Blitherington saw it all. The car he had annexed was a stolen one. By the curious working of Fate he had driven it with the idea of selling it to one of the very garages owned by the company to whom it rightly belonged.

The next few sentences of Mr Soward confirmed his deductions. Asked how he came to get hold of the car, Blitherington explained that he saw it standing outside a house, and just took it—an explanation which delighted both Grigsby and Mr Soward.

They both thought, of course, that Blitherington had seen the advertised description of the car and the reward offered.

"The thief will be pretty sick," chuckled Grigsby, "when he finds out how he has been done!"

"You'd have looked sick yourself, though," said the garage manager to Blitherington, "if you'd got hold of the wrong car by mistake. Anyway, I'll just satisfy myself that everything's in order, and then I'll give you a cheque."

Half-an-hour later the would-be motor bandit was walking to the railway station richer to the extent of fifty pounds, a cheque for which he carried in his pocket. Yet he wasn't satisfied.

"Hang it!" he complained. "It's no use. When I try to be bad good comes of it. What's the good of fifty pounds to me? Without Vera life is a hollow sham! I shall commit suicide—it's the only way out."

But he didn't commit suicide for when he saw Vera again and told her of his experiences, and mentioned the fifty pounds, she came to the conclusion that he wasn't so bad as she had thought.

So instead of continuing on his road to ruin and going to the bad, Blitherington became engaged instead, which his men friends told him was worse—much worse.

But when a man is in Love he does a lot of foolish things.

The End.

A new furnace which has just started work at the Ebbw Vale steel works in South Wales, took over three years to build, and cost £1,000,000. When working at full blast it will produce 3000 tons of steel a week, or enough to build an Atlantic liner every month. The first fires were started on July 4, and now they will never be allowed to go out. When the second giant furnace is completed the twin engineering wonders of South Wales will produce 300,000 tons of steel every year.

WILL SCOTLAND GO DRY.

(From the "Daily Telegraph," London, August 17, 1920).

After the United States, Scotland! An active campaign in favour of prohibition is being conducted north of the Tweed as a result of the Act which was passed seven years ago. The measure is known as the Temperance (Scotland) Act, 1913, and under the first section it is provided that its powers shall become operative "on the expiration of eight years from the first day of June, 1912," which brings us to the present year of grace. Ten per cent. of the electors of any ward—with not fewer than 4000 electors—of a large borough may make an effective demand for a poll on what is usually known as "the drink question." The same right can be exercised in any smaller burgh or combined small wards or country parish. Such requisitions will be handed in during next month all over Scotland, and if the provisions of the Act have been complied with the local authority has forthwith to give notice of a poll by ballot, which will take place either in November or December. The electors will have submitted to them three choices—first, no change in the existing licensing facilities; secondly, a reduction of one-quarter in the number of certificates for the sale of excisable liquors; and, thirdly, complete prohibition, except as regards inns, hotels, and restaurants, the main business of which consists of the supply of meals. That, in simple language, is the range covered by the ballot paper; there are the two extremes and what may be called the "half-way house." It is laid down that "if 55 per cent. at least of the votes recorded are in favour of a no-license resolution and not less than 35 per cent. of the electors for such area on the register have voted in favour thereof, such resolution shall be deemed to be carried." Each elector will have, of course, only one vote; but it is ingeniously arranged that if "the whole-hoggers" fail to get the requisite proportion of their side, all their votes shall be regarded as being in favour of "the limitation resolution." If, when this transfer from the extreme temperance wing to the platform of moderation has been made, it is found that there is a majority of "the half-way house," and that that majority represents 35 per cent. of the electors, then the hatchet will fall on at least one-quarter of the licenses in that particular burgh, ward, or parish. Finally, should a bare majority be obtained for "no change," or should neither of the other resolutions be carried, there will be peace for a period of three years, when the same process of polling may be repeated. It will be seen, therefore, that under this Act the strict teetotallers and the moderate reformers, each holding their separate points of view, may, in the event of the former failing, find themselves in the same fold. The provision opens up a double possibility to those who would entirely extinguish the retail trade, for if they do not sell all they desire their votes will go to swell the demand for 25 per cent. reduction in the number of licenses. Should the poll go in favour of either prohibition or limitation, the resolution will become effective on May 23 next.

As long ago as 1880 the House of Commons passed an abstract resolution in favour of the principle of local option, and repeated its affirmation in the following year, and again in 1883. On the last occasion 264 members supported the proposal, and only 177 were against it, but, nevertheless, no legislative action was taken. The subject came up once more when the Local Government Bill of 1888 was discussed, but as a good deal of objection was raised to the proposals for compensation the licensing clauses were withdrawn. Now, for the first time in the United Kingdom, public opinion is to be tested on the issue—"wet" or "dry," to borrow the American phraseology. The experiment is being tried, not in England, with its traditional devotion to beer, but in Scotland, famous throughout the world for its whisky, and possessing over 100 distilleries, some of them of large size. The beverage, with a varying amount of dilution, is not only consumed throughout the United Kingdom, but constitutes one of Scotland's principal exports. Though some people may have forgotten that the liquor issue was to be raised in Scotland this year, preparations for the campaign have been in active progress for a long time. Operations may be said to have really opened when a large number of "missionaries" representing the Anti-Saloon League of the United States, flushed with victory, crossed the Atlantic last spring. The friendly invasion of these well-intentioned Americans followed very shortly upon the visit to these shores of Mr Johnson, "Pussyfoot Johnson," as he was nicknamed. He is, it is reported, again coming among us, and will probably go northwards in order to assist his

compatriots who are advocating prohibition. But in the meantime the native supporters of this measure have been marshalling their forces all over Scotland; a National Citizens' Council, representing the Protestant churches and the various temperance organisations, has been at work for some time surveying the field. Meetings are being held and "literature" is being distributed far and wide. Now that the matter is shortly to be put to the test of the ballot, opposition is taking shape; a veto defence fund has been formed, public gatherings arranged, and more "literature," putting the other side of the case, is being sent broadcast throughout the country. In short, Scotland is in the throes of one of those domestic agitations with which, in various guises, we were familiar before the war clouds descended on us, diverting attention from questions of internal politics and submerging the familiar party barriers. Whatever may be the arguments for and against local option and prohibition, it is, perhaps, no bad thing that we should be lowering our eyes from the wide range they have been taking of late years, and directing them on home problems. There was a time when contempt was expressed for "parish pump politics," but during the past six years we have been forced to go to the other extreme; every man, whatever his degree of ignorance has fancied himself as something of an expert in foreign affairs, and has been tempted to forget questions under his very nose. The agitation in Scotland over the drink trade, which may spread to this country, is an indication that the pendulum is swinging back again. It is a strange circumstance that in such a domestic political movement "back to the home," advanced temperance advocates from the United States should be taking a prominent part. Whatever their attitude to the League of Nations, a section of Americans are themselves interesting in the future of the people of the United Kingdom. The progress of the American-Scottish campaign which the Act of 1913 has rendered possible will be watched from this side of the Tweed with lively interest, for it may be that the issue will prove of intimate concern to us. If Scotland were to go "dry," that event would certainly react on England, and any day we might find ourselves also involved in some campaign of the same character.

IRISH WIT AND HUMOUR.

An Englishman and an Irishman, happening to be riding together, passed a gallows.

"Where would you be," said the Englishman, "if the gallows had its due?"

"Riding alone, I guess," said the Irishman.

Groceryman: "Pat, do you like apples?"

Pat: "Shure, sor, Oi wudn't ate an apple for the world."

"Who, how is that?"

"Ough! didn't me culd mother die av apple plexy?"

"Now, Pat, you see the disgrace these low politicians have brought on the city, why don't you cast your vote for honest, respectable, men? Now, if Mr Rutherford Stuyvesant were put in your district, would you vote for him?"

Patrick: "Pasant, sor? Where does he kape his saloon?"

Patrick O'Mars, a private in the 9th. regulars, went to the colonel of his regiment and asked for a two week's leave of absence.

"Well," said the colonel, "what do you want a two weeks' furlough for?"

Patrick answered: "Me wife is very sick, and the children are not well, and if ye don't mind, she would like to have me at home for a few weeks to give her a bit of assistance."

The colonel eyed him for a few minutes and said: "Patrick, I might grant your request, but I got a letter from your wife this morning saying that she didn't want you home, that you were a nuisance and raised the devil whenever you were there. She hopes I won't let you have any more furloughs."

"That settles it. I suppose I can't get the furlough, then?" said Pat.

"No, I'm afraid not, Patrick. It would not be well for me to do so under the circumstances."

It was Patrick's turn to eye the colonel, as he started for the door. Stopping suddenly, he said:

"Colonel, can I say something to ye?"

"Certainly, Patrick; what is it?"

"You won't get mad, colonel, if I say it?"

"Certainly not, Patrick, what is it?"

"I want to say there are two splendid liars in this room, and I'm one of them. I was never married in me life."

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