

A Very Rapid Youth.

THE STRANGE STORY OF ATTORNEY GENERAL WILLIAMS'
STEPSON—HOW HE WAS LED INTO CRIME AND INDUCED TO JUMP
THE COUNTRY BY GOVERNMENT DETECTIVES.

A perceptible shiver runs through society here to-night at what is supposed to have been a revelation by Whitley to the inquisition committee headed by Proctor Knott, of an especially scandalous incident concerning the family of ex-Attorney General Williams. The facts have been known only to a very few people up to this date, and the exact shape of them is not even now distinctly known to the vast majority of those who shudder as aforesaid. Attorney General Williams had once a stepson, a wild, graceless, dissipated young fellow, whose love for fast life and illicit pleasures would have driven him through more money than A.T. Stewart left, had such a sum been at his disposal. He lived a most ungodly life, and spent not only all the money he could get from his mother's husband, but all he could win or borrow, and still was always "short." His escapades were numerous and invariably of a most disgraceful sort, but until one evening he went over to Baltimore and stole the diamonds and jewelry belonging to a celebrated prostitute of that city, he had never run foul of the criminal laws. The exploit, however, got him into trouble. The female came to this city, made a great to-do about her loss, and demanded restitution. Whitley, whose headquarters were then in New York, was advised of the circumstances, and privately, with as little fuss as possible, brought the young thief home and compelled him to disgorge. His stepfather's position was such as to enable him to hush the matter up. Silence was enjoined upon all parties and with great difficulty the whole business was kept out of the courts and the papers. The boy was warned that no more of that sort of thing would be tolerated; and with that warning turned loose again. The only lesson he seems to have learned from the affair seems to have been that money could be raised more easily and in larger quantities by outright stealing than by the less open methods of swindling, to which he had been accustomed to resort, and this discovery he proceeded to profit by. It was not a great while afterward when he set up a job to

"CRACK" HIS STEPFATHER'S SAFE,

and carried it out successfully. He broke into the Attorney General's office, burglarized the vault, secured \$27,000 and fled at once with his plunder to New York. Here he stopped at a fashionable hotel and enjoyed himself for a day or two to the top of his bent, when Whitley, instigated by the old man, who had not been long in ascertaining who the criminal was, broke in upon him, put him under arrest, and upon making a search recovered all the money except \$1,200, which he had spent. He was taken again to Washington, and the hush-up process being once more brought

into requisition, he was for the second time set free. After this he involved himself in several other abominable scrapes, one after another, each worse than its predecessor, until Williams, in despair of him, and fearing the results should his rascalities leak out, determined to get rid of him. Whitley was sent for, and with his aid a scheme was concocted that worked admirably. The assistance of a prominent secret service official and of two detectives, one from New York and another Brooklyn, was brought into play to carry it out. The secret service man came to Washington, made the boy's acquaintance, ran about with him a little while, and then induced him to go to New York.

TO WORK A BLOKE

whom he represented as fairly leaking money, and actually inviting the skill of any lad of mettle who would relieve him of it. The little scamp took the bait at once, and the twain went to New York without loss of time. There they took rooms at a fashionable hotel, whence, shortly after their arrival, they strolled out and went to a restaurant, where they met the Brooklyn detective, gotten up as a countryman—the victim they were to shear. A few drinks and a half hour's chat preceded their retiring to the hotel again, accompanied by the bogus granger. Here the New York officer, by all understanding between the three, drugged the Brooklyn detective's liquor,—that is to say, poured some harmless powder into a glass. The Brooklyn man drank it and in a few minutes lapsed into feigned insensibility. Then the New Yorker told the lad to go in and rip his pockets,—take all the money he had and divide. At it he went, and in a remarkably short time had him cleaned out. He even went further than that, and, with the primest instinct of a natural thief, apportioned the ring, shirt-studs, cuff-buttons, and every other thing of value the “bloke” had on. The money had been furnished by the Government, it is claimed.

OUT OF THE APPROPRIATION FOR THE ATTORNEY GENERAL'S OFFICE,

but the jewelry was the personal property of the Brooklyn man, and that had to be (and was) paid for out of the same fund. On that afternoon, an account of the robbery was published in the papers, and a partial description of the robbers given. This part of the affair was inspired by the Brooklynite, and was genuine so far as the newspapers were concerned. From that day to this, nothing has been said to show that the crime was not a genuine robbery perpetuated by professionals. The New Yorkers showed the boy a copy of one of the papers, and frightened him with the statement that they must get out of reach or stand the consequences. They took the next train for Louisville, where their stay was brief. They traveled on the money through several Southern States to New Orleans. There they were overtaken by a circular purporting to have been issued by the Secret Service Department, and addressed to the police of all the cities, announcing

the robbery, describing the robbers, and offering a reward for their apprehension. Of course, the circular was part of the plan. It served its purpose. The young man, badly scared, was easily induced to take a steamer for Havana. Not long after reaching that port, the money gave out, and the detective contrived to give his companion the slip,

LEAVING HIM “BROKE” IN A STRANGE FOREIGN CITY,

and ignorant to the last of the real character of his friend. What became of him is not known. He had never been heard of. But the then Attorney General succeeded in clearing himself of a disgraceful connection, and the nation, having paid handsomely for it, was relieved of a two-legged pest. The boy was well known here in the social “society” that is shuddering to-night over what little it knows of the scandalous manner of his life and the thievish way in which his powerful relative cut him off. The vouchers on which the money for this business was drawn from the Treasury are, it is claimed, still on file in the Attorney General’s office.

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