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D. B. SNOW, Editor and Publisher.

Miscellaneous

The Burglar's Alarm.

BY HENRY WARD BEECHER.

I have been in my house. The battery is snugly hidden in a closet upon the chamber floor. Wires run out from my sleeping room, connect with the sash in the attic, with the front and rear windows, and down the basement and cellar stairs, and with every window that can be reached by a prowling, climbing thief.

I said that the wires run out from my sleeping room—say, rather, that they all run in there. There are so many post roads along which bad news is to travel. For after the "alarm," is set, the opening of any window, door or scuttle, starts off a bell, against which is a lever hammer, plays with an incredible fury. One may have heard fire bells, and ship's bells, and church bells, and engine bells, and break-

fast bells, and college bells—first bells, second bells, and last bells—but he might as well have heard nothing at all, if he has never heard my Burglar Alarm go off in the night.

My experiences may amuse others more than they did me. Among the first fears which it performed, soon after it was erected, was to rattle out an unexpected greeting to a caller. The machine had been set for the night. It was to be sure, early, not yet on clock, but we were to be off on an early trip in the morning. A neighbor rung the bell—a moment's errand. The girl opened the front door. Away went the alarm, as if it were shouting. Burglar! burglar! at the rate of five hundred times a minute. The visitor stood astonished; the girl more so, and I—right alongside of the outrageous clatter, forgot to turn off the attachment, and so stop the bell—commenced shouting at the head of the stairs, "Shut that door! shut that door! Will you shut that door?" The neighbor, astonished at such a reception, stepped hastily back, as if very much ashamed of having thrown the family into such commotion, and the door was shut, and the bell also at that time "shut up."

"Bridget," says the Chief of Staff one evening to her servant, "it is time to close everything below and go to bed. You know how hard it is, Bridget, for you to get up mornings."

"Yes, ma'am, we are just going up stairs now." Will you see that everything is fast, Bridget, the furnace arranged? Cook has put her bread in sponge?"

"Yes, ma'am, we are just ready."

Now, one of the glories of a burglar alarm are its gifts of ward and discipline. After it is set, at night, no door or window can open without being uproariously reported in the mistress' bedroom. The little box screwed against the wall, containing the apparatus, and the bell, which is a very virago's tongue, is a perfect spinster in the matter of boasting and enjoining, and all the little honeyed interviews which transform the area and basement door, in the imagination of Bridget into towers of ivory, suckle and jossamim. Ah! those fluent tongues from the green isle! What exquisite pleasure it must be to be courted by a gossamer, well-souled Irishman! Our phlegmatic Saxon temperament does not relish married life. It takes several years for some people to get kindled, so as to get up a wedding heat. The Saxon courtship is grave and serious. It is a matter of consideration. I have known a proposal of marriage to be stated like a—let us calmly argue for or against, with far less warmth than father would have felt in debating a thesis. Indeed many courtships are like attempts at kindling fires with green wood. Of course a fellow has to go down upon his knees, a few staring coals are heaped together, a mere spark dances in and out upon the inhospitable charcoal, and disappears on one side as it appears on the other. But by no means of shoving and hits of paper-mary trinkets, as it were, and little-four-a-shillings time is got up, which strikes with doubtful prospect to convert the smoke into flame. The bellows are called in. The fire is fairly driven up to its work. The green sticks begin to sizzle at either end; and though, at last, when heat triumphs the fire is large and lasting, the poor fellow that kindled it had to work for it.

I was always forgetting to turn off the alarm. Some one rings at midnight. I put my head out the front chamber window to see who's there; but the first thing that the rash goes up off goes the alarm. "Hang that bell; mother, do stop it."

But all these are mere trifles to the way I was served on two occasions. In the dead of night, without just reason in magnetism, or electricity, the alarm started off, and I started, too. Testing it, I found the open place, and repaired it in preparation for conflict. But all was still. The windows fast, the doors fast—also scamped away as I came, showing that nothing had happened there to alarm them. Nothing had been opened. That alarm had got asleep, and dreamed that burglars were about, and went off at them! Dogs often hunt in dreams, and wake up barking. Burglar alarms do the same thing. The fact is, I never had a quiet night after I got the alarm in my chamber. For I soon found that while it had a trick of going off in a kind of soliloquy, when every thing was tight shut, so it was dumb as a turtle, when certain of the doors were wide open, keeping up a sort of average of fidelity without being particular as to circumstances. The way I have bounced out of bed, the furious state of mind into which I have been thrown, in preparation to dispute with burglars and intruders, the fact is, I have been sent upon my knees, and told me that my instrument should be called an "Ounce's Alarm."

Burglars are the only parties that have a happy time. The householder is that is driven crazy with midnight alarms. I have let my battery dry up, for the more I had the concern put to rights, the worse I got. Either it or I had to leave the house. My health was good, but wouldn't stand so much broken rest, as the nursery bath it. For two years I have had peace. No burglar has come near me, or else they have heard what luck that fellow had who once broke into my house, and found all my secrets exposed to his hand, and pass on with haste.

But if ever one has a disease of lethargy or is losing health by over sleep, or is quite too much at ease in bed, or has an enemy whose life he would insidiously wear out without breaking the law, let him procure a Burglar's Alarm to be put up in their respective houses! It will cure the one and kill the other! My word for it.

The Specked Apple.

Mr. Arden had two daughters, Jane and Martha—one twelve years old and the other thirteen—at the time of the incident we are about to relate.

A little girl named Mary, about the age of Martha, also named one of the family of Mr. Arden. She was the orphan child of a friend, and had been received by Mr. Arden when quite young, and treated with all the kindness that marked his conduct towards his own children.

Mr. Arden was a man who understood very well that all the unhappiness in the world has its origin in selfishness, and that the true way to find happiness was to seek the good of others. He often explained this to his children, and taught that in preferring one another, in little as well as in great things, they would find real delight than in selfishly looking to their own indulgence.

But this he found a very hard lesson for young minds to learn. Especially was it hard for Mary or Martha to prefer Mary to anything to themselves. They loved her because she was a gentle, sweet-tempered girl, and therefore, they could not help loving her; but they loved themselves better.

One day late in the winter, at a time when fruit was scarce, Mr. Arden, on coming from his office, brought home with him three large mellow pippins. They were intended for Jane, Martha and Mary. While at tea, Mr. Arden mentioned the fact that he had three large apples in his coat pocket for the girls.

"Oh, give me mine!" said Jane eagerly.

"Give me mine, papa!" said Martha.

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the word was trembling on the lip, you wake. How hateful is the waking out of imaginary bliss into dull reality. As I was saying, I had just reached the bounds of Elysium; its fragrant dew were falling upon me as upon some round sunflower, when—"fury and thunder—what's the matter now?" That bell was ringing, as if fifty thousand burglars were at the other end. What is it? I rush to the dial, turn the test keys to see what has broken loose. It is the front basement door! Of course it is. There is Bridget and her cousin, standing sweetly there quite unconscious, in the joy of that which was going on at the end of the wire, of the roaring row that was going on at the other end.

We rushed to the head of the stairs, for getting, of course, to turn off the bell, which went on clamoring with admiral's wind and bottom, and only after shouting and running down to the head of the next pair of stairs, could we make Bridget shut the door. As she descended to her room, the Chief of Staff, in a decisive way, said:

"Ma'am, as is innocent as a dove."

"Bridget, I thought you were asleep."

"What was the door open for?"

"Indeed, ma'am, it took me longer to take care of the fire than usual, and just as I was coming up I thought I smelled something. Maybe, says I, there's fire in the ashes in the arse. Sure enough, when I opened the door there was sparks enough."

"Oh," says the appeased Chief, "did you put them out and make all safe?"

"Yes, ma'am, you may be sure I did," adding in an undertone as she went up stairs, "and shut the door after him."

"Bridget is a treasure," said the Chief; "I always feel safe when she's about. I'm always bound to say a good word for Bridget, if she is Irish."

"At any rate," said I, "one is glad to see that a door can't be opened without knowing it."

Now we are early risers at our house. We seldom lie abed after six, even in winter, and of course the girls must be up, for early breakfast business. And yet, while we are abed, how grateful are the morning slumbers! It is the fatter hours of the night, if at all, that a healthy man dreams; and if he is a member of the temperance society, and, like Mr. Arden, never smokes, never takes late suppers, his dreams will be like the visit of fairies. We are not enough grateful for dreams. Dreams are a kind of foretaste of the disembodied state. There is the most charming freedom. We move without walking. We see impossible things without wonder. We fly in the air and walk upon the water, and creep like flies along the ceiling, and talk with birds and beasts. We find hats full of gold in the road, and gardens full of peaches, and nightingales sing to us as we sit under the drooping palms of Jamaica, and whisper just as the silver edge of moonlight tips, etc., etc. Dreams therefore are the relief of promise life. They are a soft and gentle mockery of the cares and perplexities of our daytime life. Who would not go far to see such things, awake, as every morning he may lie still and see in his dreams? Dreams are proof that things which are not are mightier than things which are.

Down come girls in the morning at five o'clock, filled, perhaps, with the romance of early rising. With nimble feet they throw open the shutters, unroll the doors, and at the milkmaid's hideous yell, they open the door, in rushes the clear, sweet, fresh air of morning, down there, and up in my room the burglar's alarm is going off with a fury that shows how much refreshed it too was with a night's sleep.

What! what time is it? It is midnight! I test the dial plate, and find that the entrance being effected at the basement door. Shuffling on my pantaloons, and suspenders buttoned, with arms and munitions of war, I rush to the entry, to see Bridget sweeping out the hall and to learn that I had forgot to wind up the clock attachment to the alarm, by which ingenious contrivance the servants can open my door at five in the morning without starting the alarm.

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"Oh, give me mine!" said Jane eagerly.

"Give me mine, papa!" said Martha.

But Mary said nothing, although she looked pleased.

"After tea you shall have them," replied Mr. Arden; "but let me tell you there is something about these three apples that will be to some extent, your characters."

"How can that be, papa?" asked Jane.

"We shall see," replied Mr. Arden smiling.

"No doubt they will test our love of apples," said Martha, who was a merry little girl.

"Not the least doubt of that in the world," said the father; "but take care, Martha, that, in receiving your apple you do not lose your appetite for eating it."

"I shall if it is very sour, or has a poor flavor."

"That you will not find to be the case. They are as fine apples as I have seen for a long time."

"What a mystery papa makes about these apples!" said Jane. "I am really impatient to see them."

"You shall both see and taste them, dear, after tea. But don't forget that there is something about these apples that is going to try your characters."

After they had risen from the tea-table, and the tea-things had been cleared away, Mr. Arden brought out his three apples and laid them upon a plate. They were, indeed, tempting to look upon; they were nearly equal in size, but one was less beautiful in shape than the others, and had been specked, or slightly decayed, on one side of the stem. This defect, though small, was quite apparent.

"They are very beautiful," said the mother, taking the plate in her hand, and examining the fruit; "I think father has neglected me."

"Oh, you shall have half of mine," said Mary quickly.

"And papa shall have half of mine," said Martha.

"And to whom, then, shall I give half of mine?" asked Jane. "Oh, I know! I will divide the half of mine between papa and mamma."

"By which means we shall get the largest share," said Mr. Arden; "so mother, we shall not only fare as well, but better than the rest."

"And that will be all for, for you ought to have the largest portion always," said Mary, while her eyes expressed the warm affection that was in her heart for her kind benefactor who had been to her all that her own father and mother could possibly have been.

"Now, Jane," said Mr. Arden, handing the plate towards her, the plate which held the fruit, "take your apple, dear."

Jane, without pausing a moment, took an apple from the plate.

"Here Martha," and Mr. Arden presented the plate to his youngest daughter, who took with a smiling lip and sparkling eyes, the large golden apple her kind father had bought her.

"They have left the specked apple for you, Mary," said Mr. Arden, in a slightly disappointed tone. "But never mind, dear, the ripest and richest fruit is nearest to decay. I have no doubt that the superior flavor of your apple will more than make up for its slight defect."

The two sisters, who perceived in a minute from their father's remarks and the

tone in which he spoke, that they had acted selfishly in choosing the best apples for themselves, and that he had noticed it, immediately offered to change with Mary; but she said, with a pleasant smile:

"No, no! I am perfectly satisfied; I should have taken this one, if I had been offered the first choice."

As she said this she took a knife from the table, remarking as she did so, that half of it belonged to Mrs. Arden.

While she yet spoke, she pressed the knife into the apple, but something hard towards the center prevented the blade from going through.

A slight pressure broke the apple in halves, and revealed, brightly gleaming in the centre an elegant little brooch!

"Why, papa!" exclaimed Jane, who understood in an instant what this meant.

"Jane, we are justly punished for our selfishness in taking the best apple and leaving Mary the worst," said Martha, the tears starting to her eyes, even while she made this confession. "These apples, as father said, have indeed tried our characters."

But let me look at your beautiful present, Mary."

Martha took the brooch, and while examining it, perceived that there was an inscription on the inside. She read it aloud: "To the least selfish."

"It is yours by right, Mary," said Jane—frankly owning to what was daily seen by all to be true—"for you are the least selfish here."

Mary said nothing, but her eyes were full of tears.

"My children," said Mr. Arden, "this is a little matter, but it has shown you something of yourselves. I am rejoiced to find that Jane and Martha bear their disappointment in such a generous spirit, for it tells me that the lesson has done them good."

Mark Twain on Scaffold Heres.

Mark Twain, in a recent letter to his friend the Buffalo Express, thus cleverly satirizes the too prevalent disposition to make martyrs and heroes of men sentenced to death. He visited a fortune teller, who began his revelations as follows:

"Young man, summon your fortitude—do not tremble. I am about to reveal the past."

"Information concerning the future would be in a general way more."

"Silence! You have had much trouble, some joy, some good fortune, some bad. Your great grandfather was hanged."

"That is a—"

"Silence! Hanged, sir. But it was not his fault. He could not help it."

"I am glad you do him justice."

"Ah, grieve, rather, that the jury did. He was hanged. His star crosses yours in the fourth, division, fifth sphere. Consequently you will be hanged also."

"In view of this, should I—"

"I must have silence. Yours was not, in the beginning, a criminal nature, but circumstances changed it. At the age of nine you stole sugar. At the age of fifteen you stole money. At twenty you stole horses. At twenty-five you committed arson. At thirty, hardened in crime you became an editor. Since then your decent has been rapid. You are now a public lecturer. You will be sent to Congress. Next to the penitentiary. Finally happiness will come again all will be well—you will then be hanged."

"I was now all in tears. It seemed hard enough to go to Congress, but to be hanged—this was too sad, too dreadful. The woman seemed surprised at my grief. I told her the thoughts that were in my mind. She then comforted me—this woman recognized me, made me contented, even happy."

"Why man," she said, "hold up your head—you have nothing to grieve about. Listen. You will live in New Hampshire. In your sharp need the Brown family will succor you—such of them as I like, the assassin, left alive. They will be benefactors to you. When you shall have grown fat upon their bounty, and are grateful and happy, you will desire to make some modest return for these things, and so you will go to the house some night and brain the whole family with an axe. You will borrow funds from the deceased, and disburse them in riotous living among the rowdies and courtesans of Boston. Then you will be arrested, tried, condemned to be hung, thrown into prison. You will be converted—you will be converted just as soon as every effort to corrupt pardon, commutation or reprieve has failed—and then! Why then, every morning and every afternoon the best and purest young ladies of the village will assemble in your cell and sing hymns. This will show that assassination is respectable. Then you will write a touching letter in which you will forgive all those recent Browns. This will excite the public admiration. No public can with stand magnanimity. Next, they will take you to the scaffold with great relish, at the head of an imposing procession composed of clergymen, officials, citizens generally, and young ladies walking piously two and two, and bearing bouquets and immortelles. You will mount the scaffold, and while the great concourse stand uncovered in your presence, you will read your happy little speech which the minister has written for you. And then, in the midst of a grand impressive silence, they will swing you into per—Paradise, my son. There you will not be a day on the ground. You will be a hero! Not a rough there but will cry you. Not a rough there but will try to emulate you. And next, a grand procession will follow you to the tomb—will sweep over your remains—the young ladies will sing again the hymns made dear by the sweet associa-

tions connected with the jail, and as a last tribute of affection, respect and appreciation, they will walk two by two around your bier and strew wreaths of flowers upon it. And lo! you are canonized. Think of it, son—legate, assassin, robber of the dead, drunken brawler among thieves and harlots in the slums of Boston one month, and the pet of the pure and innocent daughters of land next! A bloody and hateful martyr—a beweped, bewailed and sainted deity—all in a month! Fool—so noble a fortune and yet you sit here grieving!"

"No, madame," said I, "you do me wrong, you do indeed. I am perfectly satisfied. I did not know before that my great grandfather was hanged, but it is of no consequence. He has ceased to bother about by this time—and I have not commenced yet. I confess, madame, that I do something in the way of editing, and lecturing, but neither crimes you mention have escaped my memory. Yet I must have committed them—you would not deceive an orphan. But let the past be as it was, and let the future be as it may—these are nothing. I have always felt that I should be hanged some day, and some-

show the thought has annoyed me that I should not be hanged in New Hampshire."

"Not a shadow of doubt!"

"Bless my my noble benefactress!—excuse this embrace—you have removed a great load from my breast. To be hanged in New Hampshire is happiness. It leaves an honored name behind a man, and introduces him at once into the best New Hampshire society in the other world."

I then took leave of the fortune teller. But seriously, it is well to glorify a murderer slain on the scaffold, as Pike was glorified in New Hampshire a few weeks ago? Is it well to turn the penalty for a bloody crime into a reward? Is it just to do it? Is it safe?

The Congressional Library.

"Ask Spofford!" is one of the proverbs of Washington life, frankly confessing to a limited familiarity with books and occasionally plugging the inquirer in the shortest and surest path to knowledge.

The Librarian to Congress is an index to his library. He knows the contents of his books. And that is a great thing to know; for he has charge of 185,227 volumes. He is one of the few Federal officials we are acquainted with, born for his office. And all his life he has been training for it. The value of such a man—the comfort of having such a man—cannot be measured. Hundreds of members of both branches of Congress have in the last seven years unreservedly testified to it by "asking Spofford."

A member of the Pacific Railroad Committee wants to know how much timber and water there is on the Gila route, and what is the climate, and what are the soil and productions of the Sackatchewan valley. In five minutes of time he has in his hand a pencil memorandum of the books, which contain the information he needs, accompanied by the inquiry if he will have them sent to his committee room or to his lodgings. In a moment Spofford can set the Congressional financier down among the historical facts and logical necessities of the resumption of Special Payments by the Bank of England after the Napoleonic wars—and he can assure his study against error by telling him what authorities are recognized and what are doubtful. Charles Sumner wishing to proclaim for the purchase of Alaska—this Librarian can walk him around with every book, pamphlet, and magazine or newspaper article under the Capitol roof bearing on the geography of Russian America. For Jerry Black, hasty to make a plan for the Baltimore owners of Alta Vista, this Librarian can in a minute indicate all the literary and hydrographic connections with the property in dispute.

Mr. Spofford, in his brief annual report to Congress, shows that the institution under his care is developing well in every direction. The addition to the Library in 1899 was 11,262 volumes. The printed catalogue of subjects, so long in progress, is complete—two large volumes in double-column type, embracing more than 1,700 pages. The character of this catalogue, fortunately, is to be popular—"It being the judgment of the undersigned, founded upon experience, that this is the best catalogue, which furnishes the reader with lead of references to all readers, whether learned or unlearned." A selection from the catalogue of subjects, comprising the titles of works on Political Economy and the Science of Government, has been printed in extra copies to the number of five hundred, for the immediate use of Senators and Representatives.

But it is the recommendations of this report which give it special interest. It will surprise most people to learn that the Congressional Library cannot be used at night though it has existed for years in the midst of night sessions. There are no means of lighting it. It has to be closed at dusk, from the mere inability to read the titles of the books. Mr. Spofford wisely urges the introduction of gas into the Library. The Washington world thanked this gentleman when, five years ago, he cut through the restriction that had been imposed upon the use of the books to alternate days of the week in the recesses of Congress, and the interval between the hours of 9 A. M. and 3 P. M., and threw open the rooms to the public, every week-day in the year, and from nine in the morning to four in the afternoon. Mr. Spofford now recommends that the library be thrown open to the public in the evening as well as in the day. This would confer a service of questionable worth upon the employees of the Government, the perma-

nent residents of Washington, and the numerous visitors who at certain seasons throng the capital. Mr. Spofford's concluding suggestion is to consolidate the various Department libraries with the Library of Congress. He truly says: "The expense of separate maintenance might be saved and the apparent waste of means involved in the duplication of numerous imperfect libraries at the seat of Government might be exchanged for the broader object of forming one truly great and comprehensive library, worthy of Congress and the nation."

Ex-Secretary Stanton's Religious Character.

Now that Mr. Stanton is dead, many people are unsealing their lips with incidents of his life, which his desires and wishes have heretofore kept concealed. Few people who met him in ordinary business knew to what extent he was literally a God-fearing man, and to what extent he believed in prayer. Rev. Dr. Gray, late pastor of the 15 Street Baptist Church of Washington city, related in the course of a sermon delivered at Washington on Sunday, the following interesting personal incident: About two years ago, while Mr. Stanton was holding possession of the War Office and a voluntary prisoner therein, Rev. Dr. Fulton, of Boston, came on, and while here requested me to accompany him on a visit to Mr. Stanton. We went, and were very cordially received by him. Mr. Fulton addressed him and said: "I have made you a special subject of prayer and have regarded you as the saviour of our country, and I believe God has heard prayer on your behalf." After congratulating him on the noble stand he had taken during the war, the services he had rendered his country, and also the stand he had taken at that time, Mr. Stanton said: Gentlemen, I believe in God and I believe in prayer, although I am not a professor of religion in the common acceptance of the term; and when, during the war, I received discouraging despatches from the army, I would lock the door, spread out the despatches, and kneel down and pray to God to save my country, and then go and talk with Mr. Lincoln. Mr. Fulton then said: "Mr. Stanton, this is an interesting incident in the history of the war; am I at liberty to repeat it?" He replied: "Not now. Were this statement to be made public under existing circumstances, my enemies would regard it as a bid for the sympathy and support of the praying portion of the country. Wait till I am dead, then, you may tell it." Just as they were about to leave, Mr. Stanton rose and locked the door, and said: "Gentlemen, I would like to have you spend a few moments in prayer." Mr. Fulton prayed most earnestly for him. During prayer Mr. Stanton wept like a child.

Most politicians, one would suppose, know the origin of the term "gerrymandering." Yet we find Gov. Ashley of Montana Territory, in a recent message, writing about "gerrymandering," with an initial J instead of g, thus entirely misrepresenting the derivation of the word. Some sixty years or more ago, Elbridge Gerry, the grandfather of our distinguished fellow-citizen and lawyer, Elbridge T. Gerry, Esq., counsel for the Sun in John Russell Young's libel suit, and for Daniel McKeen in his opposing trial for murder—was the leader of the old Democratic party in Massachusetts. To perpetuate the power of the party in the state, Mr. Gerry and his associates in the Legislature rearranged and divided the state into districts, so as to insure as far as possible democratic majorities in the election districts; and in so doing had little respect to the symmetry of the outlines of the districts, or natural geographical boundaries.

A colored map, showing these new districts, was hung on the wall of Mr. Gerry's office, and at a distance a portion of the State accidentally presented the image of a sprawling lizard. One day a stanch Federalist friend came in, and exclaiming this map exclaimed, "Why, what sort of animal is that there?" "Oh, that is a salamander," good-humoredly. "A salamander!" replied his friend, who in the meanwhile had examined the map more closely, and from his knowledge of local politics had seen what the effect of the redistricting would be; "you had better say a Gerry-mander." The witicism was repeated by Mr. Gerry, and thus it came to pass that "gerrymandering" (with the g hard) became a slang expression for the political device practiced by Mr. Gerry and his friends.—New York Sun.

POLYGYNY SLAUGHTER.—The Corinne, Utah, Reporter, after copying an item from the New York Evening Post relating to the mortality among the Mormons, offers the following remarks:

We are sorry to say that the Post's information is too true in regard to the mortality among Mormon children. It is not, however, very well informed, or else wishes to draw it very mild, for instead of some of the bases of large barons like Heber Kimball, burying only fifty-eight children, we can show the Post polygamous graveyards of one family, as they call them here, that will foot up nearer one hundred and forty-eight. As this is certainly the healthiest climate known to tourist and explorer, equalized and modified as it is, the year round, by the salutary influence of the Great Salt Lake, it is a very matter to point to this mortality evil—it is polygamy, and nothing else.

Alluding to children, Mrs. Clever said: "A girl now seems all head." "Yes, till you talk to her," growled Mr. Clever.

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