

BEHIND ASYLUM BARS.

The Mystery of the Unknown
Insane Girl.

Remarkable Story of the Successful
Impersonation of Insanity.

How Nellie Brown Deceived Judges, Re-
porters and Medical Experts.

She Tells Her Story of How She Passed at
Bellevue Hospital.

Studying the Role of Insanity Before Her
Mirror and Practising It at the Tempo-
rary Home for Women—Arrested and
Brought Before Judge Duffy—He De-
clares She is Some Mother's Darling and
Recommends His Sister—Committed to the
Care of the Physicians for the Insane at
Bellevue—Experts Declare Her Deceived—
Harsh Treatment of the Insane at
Bellevue—"Charity Patients Should Not
Complain"—Vivid Pictures of Hospital
Life—How Our Esteemed Contemporaries
Have Followed a False Trail—Some
Needed Light Afforded Them—Chapters of
Absorbing Interest in the Experience of
a Feminine "Amateur Casual."

A DELICATE MISSION.

I
On the 24th of September I
was asked by THE WORLD
if I could have myself
committed to one of the
Asylums for the Insane in
New York, with a view
to writing a plain and
unvarnished narrative of
the treatment of the pa-
tients therein and the
methods of management,
etc. Did I think I had
the courage to go through
such an ordeal as the
mission would demand?

Could I assume the char-
acteristics of insanity to such a degree that I could
pass the doctors, live for a week among the insane
without the authorities there finding out that I was
only a "chick among 'em takin' notes?" I said I
believed I could. I had some faith in my
own ability as an actress and thought I could assume
insanity long enough to accomplish any mission
intrusted to me. Could I pass a week in the insane
ward at Blackwell's Island? I said I could and I
would. And I did. My instructions were simply
to go on my work as soon as I felt that I was
ready. I was to chronicle faithfully the experi-
ences I underwent, and when once within the walls
of the asylum to find out and describe its inside
workings, which are always so effectually hidden
by white-capped nurses, as well as by bolts and
bars, from the knowledge of the public.
"We do not ask you to go there
for the purpose of making sensational
revelations. Write up things as you find them,
good or bad; give praise or blame as you think
best, and the truth all the time. But I am afraid of
that chronic smile of yours," said the editor. "I
will smile no more," I said, and I went away to
execute my delicate and, as I found out, difficult
mission.

THE PRELIMINARIES.

All the preliminary preparations for my ordeal
were left to be planned by myself. Only one thing
was decided upon, namely, that I should pass under
the pseudonym of Nellie Brown, the initials of
which I agree with my own name and my
mother's, and there would be no difficulty in keep-
ing track of my movements and assisting me out of
any difficulties or dangers I might get into. There
was no getting into the insane ward, but I
did not know them. I might adopt one of two
courses. Either I could feign insanity at the house
of friends and get myself committed on the de-
cision of two competent physicians, or I could
go to my goal by way of the police
courts. On reflection I thought it wiser not to in-
trust myself upon my friends or to get any good-
natured doctors to assist me in my purpose.
Besides, to get to Blackwell's Island my friends
would have had to feign poverty, and, unfortun-
ately for the end I had in view, my acquaintance
with the struggling poor, except my own self, was
only very superficial. So I determined upon the
plan which led me to the successful accomplish-
ment of my mission and to which the bulk of
the following narrative will be devoted. I suc-
ceeded in getting committed to the insane ward at



NELLIE FRANCHISES INSANITY AT HOME.
Blackwell's Island, where I spent ten days and
nights and had an experience which I shall never
forget. I got upon myself to enact the part of
a poor, unfortunate crazy girl and felt it my
duty not to shrink at any of the details to realize
that goal. I became one of the city's
black-boards for that length of time, experienced
much and saw and heard more of the treatment
of the insane than any one of our population,
and I have seen and heard enough of my release
to promptly secured. I left the insane ward with
pleasure and regret—pleasure that I was once
more able to enjoy the free breath of heaven;
regret that I could not have brought with me
some of the unfortunate women who lived and
suffered with me, and who I am convinced are just
as sane as I was and am now myself. But here
let me say one thing: From the moment I
entered the insane ward on the island I made no
attempt to keep up the assumed role of insanity. I
talked and acted just as I do on ordinary life. Yet
strange to say, the more sanely I talked and acted

the crazier I was thought to be by all except one
physician, whose kindness and gentle ways I shall
not soon forget.

PREPARING FOR THE ORDEAL.

But to return to my work and my mission. After
receiving my instructions I returned to my board-
ing-house, and when evening came I began to
practise the rôle in which I was to make
my debut on the morrow. What a difficult task, I
thought, to appear before a crowd of people and
convince them that I was insane. I had never
been near insane persons before in my life and had
not the faintest idea of what their actions were
like. And then to be examined by a number of
learned physicians who make insanity a specialty
and who daily come in contact with insane people!
How could I hope to pass these doctors and con-
vince them that I was crazy? I feared that they
could not be deceived. I began to gain my task,
however, one day had to be done. So I drew to
the mirror and examined my face. I remembered
all I had read of the doings of crazy people, how
first of all they must have staring eyes, and so
I opened my eyes as wide as possible, and
started unblinkingly at my own reflection. I assure
you the sight was not reassuring, even to myself,
especially in the dead of night. I tried to turn
the gas up higher in hopes that it would raise my
courage. It succeeded only partially, but I con-
soled myself with the thought that in a few nights
more I would not be there, but locked up in a cell
with a lot of lunatics. The weather was not cold,
but nevertheless when I thought of what was to
come wintry chills ran across my face and down
in very mockery of the operation which was
slowly but surely taking the curl out of my bangs.
Between times gazing before the mirror and
picturing my future as a lunatic I read snatches of
improbable and impossible ghost stories, so that
when the dawn came to chase away the night I
felt that I was in a fit mood for my
mission, yet hungry enough to feel keenly
that I wanted my breakfast. Slowly and anxiously
I took my morning bath and quietly laid farewell to
a few of the most precious articles known to mod-
ern civilization. Tenderly I spat my tooth-brush
aside, and when taking a final rub of the soap, I
murmured, "It may be for days and it may be for
longer." Then I donned the old clothing I had
selected for the occasion. I was in the mood to
look at everything through very serious glasses. It's
just as well to take a last "fond look," I mused,
for who could tell but that the strain of playing
crazy and being shut up with a crowd of mad
people might turn my own brain and I would
never get back. But not once did I think of shirk-
ing my mission. Calmly, outwardly at least, I
went out to my crazy business. I walked down
Second avenue. It had been arranged that I
should enter one of the many temporary home-
or shelters for females, and that once in I should
do the best I could to get forwarded on my
journey to Blackwell's Island. The place selected
was the Temporary Home for Females, a second
avenue.

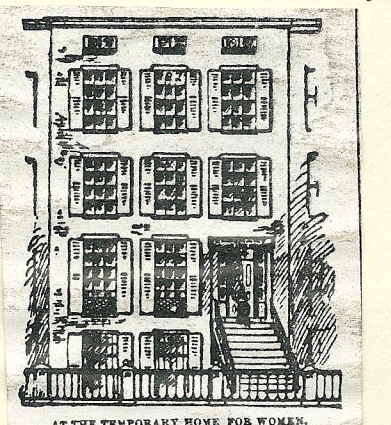
IN THE TEMPORARY HOME.

I was left to begin my career as Nellie Brown,
the insane girl. As I walked down the avenue I
assumed the look which maidens wear in pictures
entitled "Dreaming." I passed through the little
paved yard to the entrance of the Home. I pulled
the bell, which sounded loud enough for a church
chime, and nervously awaited the opening of the
door to the home which I intended should ere long
cast me forth and out upon the charity of the pol-
ice. The door was thrown back with a vengeance
and a short, yellow-haired girl of some thirteen
summers stood before me.

"Is the matron in?" I asked faintly.

"Yes, she's in," she replied. "Go to the back par-
lor," answered the girl to a loud voice, without one
change in her peculiarly nurtured face.

I followed these not overkind or polite instruc-
tions and found myself in a dark, uncomfortable
back-parlor. There I awaited the arrival of my
notices. I had been seated some twenty minutes



AT THE TEMPORARY HOME FOR WOMEN.

at the least, when a slender woman, clad in a plain
dark dress, entered and, stopping before me, ejacu-
lated indignantly: "Well?"
"Are you the matron?" I asked.
"No," she replied; "the matron is sick; I am
her assistant. What do you want?"
"I want to stay here for a few days, if you can
accommodate me."
"Well, I have no single rooms; we are so
crowded, but if you will accept a room with
another girl, I shall do that much for you."
"I shall be glad of that," I answered. How much
do you charge?" I had brought only about 70 cents
along with me, knowing full well that the sooner
my funds were exhausted the sooner I should be
put out, and to be put out was what I was working
for.

"We charge 30 cents a night," was her reply to
my question, and with that I paid her for one night's
lodging, and she left me on the plea of having
something else to look after. Left to amuse my-
self as best I could, I took a survey of my surround-
ings. By the time I had become familiar with my
quarters a bell, which rivalled the door-bell in its
loudness, began clanging in the basement and
simultaneously women went trooping downstairs
from all parts of the house. I imagined, from the
obvious signs, that dinner was served, but as no
one had said anything to me I made no effort to
follow in the hungry train. Yet I did wish that
some one would invite me down, and I was glad
when the assistant matron came up and
asked me if I did not want something to eat.
I replied that I did, and then I asked
her what her name was. "Mrs. Steuart," she said,
and I immediately wrote down on a notebook
had taken with me for the purpose of making
memoranda, and in which I had written several
pages of utter nonsense or inquisitive questions,
my name and address. But my
dinner-wait, I followed Mrs. Steuart down the
un carpeted stairs into the basement, where a large
number of women were eating. She found room
for me at a table with three other women. The
short-haired slavery who had opened the door now
put in an appearance as waiter. Placing her arms
akimbo and staring me out of countenance she
said:

"Botted mutton, boiled beef, beans, potatoes,
coffee or tea?"

"Beef, potatoes, coffee and bread," I re-
sponded.
"Bread goes in," she explained, as she made
her way to the kitchen, which was in the
rear. It was not very long before she returned
with what I had ordered on a large, badly battered
tray, which she banged down before me. I began
my simple meal. It was not very enticing, so
while making a feint of eating I watched the
others. After dinner I went upstairs and returned
my former place in the back parlor. I was quite
lonesome and uncomfortable and had fully made up my
mind that I could not endure that sort of business
long, so the sooner I assumed my insane persona
the sooner I would be released from the longest day I had
known. Ah, that was indeed the women in the
ever hired. I listened as they talked and occa-
sionally called out mildly, "Georgie," without lifting
her eyes from her book. "Georgie" was her
over-pretty boy who had more noise in him
than any child I ever saw before. He old
everything that was rude and unmannerly,
and the mother never said a word
unless she heard some one else yell at him.
Another woman always kept going to sleep and
waking herself up with her own snoring. I really
felt wickedly thankful if the women sitting re
awakened. The majority of them were a few who made
lace and knitted successfully. The enormous

of the evening world"

door-bell seemed to be going all the time and so did
the short-haired girl. The latter was besides one
of those girls who sing all the time snatches of a
few songs and hymns that have been composed in
the last fifty years. There is such a thing as ma-
tyrdom in these days. The ring of the bell had
brought more or more who wanted another for the
night. Excepting on women who was from the
country on a day's shopping expedition, they were
working women, some of them with children. A
few drew towards evening Mrs. Steuart came to
and said:

"SEE BEGINS TO SHOW SIGNS."

"What is wrong with you? Have you some sor-
row or trouble?"
"No," I said, almost stunned at the suggestion.
"Why?"
"Oh, because," she said, womanlike, "I can
see it in your face. It tells the story of a great
trouble."
"Yes, everything is so sad," I said in a naive
and way, which I had intended to reflect my con-
fession.

"But you must not allow that to worry you. We
all have our troubles, but we let our troubles
go by. What kind of work are you trying
to get?"

"I do not know; it's all so sad," I replied.
"Would you like to be a nurse for children or
wear a nice white cap and apron?" she asked.

"I put my handkerchief up to my face to hide
my smile and replied in a muffled tone, "I've
worked; I don't know how."
"But you must learn," she urged; "all the
women here work."
"Do they?" I said in a low, thrilling whisper.
"Why, they look horrible to me; just like crazy
women. I am so afraid of them."
"They don't look very nice," she answered,
sentimentally, "but they are good, honest work-
ing women. We do not keep crazy people here."
I again used my handkerchief to hide a smile.
I thought that before morning she would at least
think she had one crazy person among her flock.
"They all look crazy," I asserted again, "I
am afraid of them. There are so many of them
people about, and one can never tell what they
will do. Then there are some who would like to
murder, and the police never catch the murder-
ers, and I finished with a sob that would have bro-
ken up an audience of blue critics. She gave a sud-
den convulsive start, and I knew my first mis-
deed had gone home. It was amazing to see what a
markable she had taken her to get up from her
chair and to whisper hurriedly: "I'll come back
to talk with you after a while." I knew she would
not come back, and she did not. When the door-
bell rang I went along with the others to



NELLIE'S FIRST MEAL AT THE HOME.

basement and parlor of the evening meal. The
was similar to dinner, except that there was
smaller bill of fare and more people, the women
who are employed outside during the day,
having returned. After the eating of
we all adjourned to the parlors,
each sat or stood, as there were
chairs enough to ground. I watched two women
who seemed of all the crowd to be the most
able, and I selected them as the ones to whom
my conversation, or more properly speaking, my
descent and conviction. Expressing my interest
saying that I felt lonely, I asked if I might
join their company. Their gleaming con-
science with my hat and gloves, and they
asked me to sit and talk and down and listen
to their wearisome conversation, in which I
no part, merely keeping up my sad look,
"Yes," or "No," or "I can't say," to their
observations. Several times I kept them from
everybody in the house looked crazy, but
they were slow to catch on to my very
final remark. One said her name was
King and that she was a Southern woman.
She said that I had a Southern accent. She
blasted if I did not really come from the South.
I said "Yes." Then the other woman got to
talking about the Boston boats and asked me if I
knew about the time they left. For a moment I for-
gote of my insanity and answered her question
about the boats. She then asked me what
I was going to do or if I had ever done any.
I replied that I thought it very sad that there were
many working people in the world who
did come to New York, where they
worked at correcting proofs on a
cal dictionary for some time, but that
he had given way under the task and that
was now going to Boston again. She
seemed to tell me to go to bed and remarked
that she was going to bed. She then
said, and again ventured the question to
the women in the house seemed to be crazy,
nurse insisted on my going to bed.
"No, for every one in the house would
be crazy." Finally I allowed them to take
a room.

A KIND SOUL DISCOVERED.

Here I must introduce a new personage
into my narrative. This woman was
a proof-reader and was about to return to
She was a Mrs. Cain, who was a
she was good-hearted. She came into my
parlor and talked with me a long time,
sat and talked with me a long time,
my hair with gentle words. She tried to
me to address some letters, but I refused
to do so. During this time a number
inmates of the house had gathered around
expressed themselves in various ways.
"lool!" they said. "Why, she's crazy
enough to be in the same ward with
being in the same ward with
said before morning." One woman was
y a policeman to take me away at once
all in a tremor and real state of in-
wanted to be responsible for the fact
who was also to contribute for the fact
"No, for every one in the world would
for all the money of the Vanderbilt
that Mrs. Cain said the world
held her. I would like to have had

A KIND SOUL DISCOVERED.

Here I must introduce a new personage by name into my narrative. It is the woman who had been a proof-reader and was about to return to Boston. She was Mrs. Caine, who was as courageous as she was good-hearted. She came into my room and sat and talked with me a long time, taking down my hair with gentle ways. She tried to persuade me to address and go to bed, but I stubbornly refused to do so. During this time a number of the inmates of the house had gathered around us. They expressed themselves in various ways. "Poor loon!" they said. "Why, she's crazy enough!" "I am afraid to stay with such a crazy being in the house." "She will murder us all before morning." One woman was or sending for a policeman to take me away at once. They were all in a terrible and real state of fright. No one wanted to be responsible for me, and the woman who was to occupy the room with me declared that she would not stay with that "crazy woman" for all the money of the Vanderbilt. It was then that Mrs. Caine said she would stay with me. I told her I would like to have her do so. So she was left with me. She didn't undress, but lay down on the bed, watching my movements. She tried to induce me to lie down, but I was afraid to do this. I knew that if I once gave way I should fall asleep and dream as pleasantly and peacefully as a child. I should, to use a slang expression, be liable to give myself dead away. I had made up my mind to stay awake all night. So I insisted on sitting on the side of the bed and staring blankly at vacancy. My poor companion was put into a wretched state of unhappiness. Every few moments she would rise up to look at me. She told me that my eyes shone terribly brightly and then began to question me, asking me where I had lived, how long I had been in New York, what I had been doing, and many things besides. To all her questionings I had but one response—I told her that I had forgotten everything, that ever since my headache had come on I could not remember.

Poor soul! How cruelly I tortured her and what a kind heart she had! But how I tortured all of them! One of them dreamed of me—as a nightmare. After I had been in the room an hour or so I was myself startled by hearing a woman screaming in the next room. I began to imagine that I was really in an insane asylum. Mrs. Caine woke up, looked around, frightened, and listened. She then went out and into the next room, and I heard her asking another woman some questions. When she came back she told me that the woman had had a hideous nightmare. She had been dreaming of me. She had seen me, she said, running at her with a knife in my hand, with the intention of killing her. In trying to escape, she had fortunately been able to scream, and so to awaken herself and scare off her nightmare. Then Mrs. Caine got into bed again, considerably agitated, but very sleepy. I was weary, too, but I had braced myself up to the work, and was determined to keep awake all night so as to carry on my work of impersonation to a successful end in the morning. I heard midnight. I had yet six hours to wait for daylight. The time passed with excruciating slowness. Minutes appeared hours. The noises in the house and on the avenue ceased. I kept thinking about the past events of my life. I began at the beginning and, after living over again fifteen or twenty years of my existence, found I had only spanned over a space of five minutes. Failing to find anything more to think about of the past I turned my thoughts bravely to the future, wonder-

ing, first, what the next day would bring forth, then making plans for the carrying out of my project. I wondered if I should be able to pass over eventually an inmate of the halls inhabited by my mutually wrecked sisters. And then, once in, what would be my experience? And after that how to get out. Bah! I said, they will get me out.

I looked out towards the window and hailed with joy the slight shimmer of dawn. The light grew strong and gray, but the silence strikingly still and my companion slept. I had still an hour or two to pass over. Fortunately I found some employment for my mental activity. Robt Bruce in his captivity had won confidence in the future and passed his time as pleasantly as possible under the circumstances by watching the celebrated spider building his web. I had less noble vermin to interest me. Yet I believe I made some valuable discoveries in natural history. I was about dropping off to sleep in spite of myself, when I heard something crawl and fall down upon the counterpane as with almost insensible thud. I had the opportunity of studying these interesting animals very thoroughly. They had evidently come for breakfast and were not a little disappointed to find that their principal part was not there. They scampered up and down the pillow, came together, seemed to hold interesting converse and acted in every way as if they were possessed of the intelligence of some leathery fly. After one consultation of some length they finally disappeared, seeking victims elsewhere, and leaving me to pass the long minutes by giving my attention to cockroaches, whose size and agility were something of a surprise to me.

SYMPATHY IN TROUBLE.

My room companion had been sound asleep for a long time, but she now woke up, and expressed surprise at seeing me still awake and apparently as lively as a cricket. She was as sympathetic as ever. She came to me and took my hand and tried her best to console me, and asked me if I did not want to go home. She kept me upstairs until nearly everybody was out of the house, and then took me down to the basement for coffee and a bun. After that, partaken in silence, I went back to my room, where I lay down, moping. Mrs. Caine grew more and more anxious. "What is to be done?" she kept exclaiming. "Where were your friends?" "No," I answered. "I have no friends, but I have some trunks, where are they? I want them." The good woman tried to pacify me, saying that they would be found in good time. She believed that I was insane. Let I forgive her. It is only after one is in trouble that one realizes how little sympathy and kindness there are in the world. The women in the Home who were not afraid of me had wanted to have some amusement at my expense, and so they had bothered me with questions and remarks that had been unkind. Only this woman was among the crowd, pretty and delicate Mrs. Caine, displayed true womanly feeling. She compelled the others to cease teasing me and took the bed of the woman who refused to sleep near me. She protested against the suggestion to leave me alone and to have me locked up for the night so that I could harm no one. She insisted on remaining with me in order to administer aid should I need it. She smoothed my hair and bathed my brow and talked as soothingly to me as a mother would do to an ailing child. By every means she tried to have me go to bed and rest, and when I refused towards morning she got up and wrung a blanket around me for fear I might get cold; then she kissed me on the brow and whispered, compassionately, "Poor child, poor child!" How much I admired that little woman's courage and kindness. How I longed to reassure her and whisper that I was not insane, and how I hoped that if my poor sister should ever be so unfortunate as to be what I was pretending to be, she might meet with one who possessed the same spirit of human kindness possessed by Mrs. Ruth Caine.

THE ADVENT OF THE POLICE.

III.

But to return to my story. I kept up my rôle until the assistant matron, Mrs. Stanard, came in. She tried to persuade me to be calm. I began to see clearly that she wanted to get me out of the house at all hazards, quietly if possible. This I did not want. I refused to move, but kept up ever the refrain of my lost trunks. Finally some one suggested that an officer be sent for. After awhile Mrs. Stanard put on her bonnet and went out. Then I knew that I was making an advance towards the home of the insane. Soon she returned, bringing with her two policemen—big, strong men—who entered the room rather unceremoniously, evidently expecting to meet with a person violently crazy. The name of one of them was Tom Bockert. When they entered I pretended not to see them. "I want you to take her quietly," said Mrs. Stanard. "If she don't come along quietly," responded one of the men, "I will drag her through the streets." I still took no notice of them, but certainly wished to avoid raising a scandal outside. Fortunately Mrs. Caine came to my rescue. She told the officers about my outcries for my lost trunks, and together they made up a plan to get me to go along with them quietly by telling me they would go with me to look for my lost effects. They asked me if I would go. I said I was afraid to go alone. Mrs. Stanard then said she would accompany me, and she arranged that the two policemen should follow us at a respectful distance. She tied on my veil for me, and we left the house by the back door and started across town, the two officers following at some distance behind. We walked along very quietly and finally came to the station-house, which in good womanly assurance was the express office, and that there we should certainly find my missing effects. I went inside with fear and trembling, for good reason.

BEFORE CAPT. M'CALLAGH.

I remembered the police station well because only ten days before I had been there and had seen Capt. McCallagh, from whom I had asked for information in a case which I had written as a reporter. If he were in, would he not recognize me? And then all would be lost so far as getting to the island was concerned. I pulled my sailor hat as low down over my face as I possibly could, and prepared for the ordeal. Sure enough there was sturdy Capt. McCallagh standing near the desk. "Are you Nellie Brown?" he asked. I said I supposed I was. "Where do you come from?" he asked. I told him I did not know, and then Mrs. Stanard gave him a bit of information about me—told him how strangely I had acted at her home; how I had not slept a wink all night, and that in her opinion I was a poor unfortunate who had been driven crazy by inhuman treatment. There was some discussion between Capt. McCallagh, Mrs. Stanard and the two officers, and Tom Bockert was told to take us down to the court in a car.

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IN THE HANDS OF THE POLICE.

are they?" I asked, and my companions looked upon me with expressions of pity, evidently believing I was a foreigner, an emigrant or something of the sort. They told me that the people around me were working people. I remarked

[Continued on next page.]

BEHIND ASYLUM BARS.

[Continued from 25th page.]

more than I thought there were to many... Beckert eyed me closely, evidently thinking that my mind was gone for good.

SEARCHING FOR LOST TRUNKS. We came to a low building, and Tom Bockert volunteered the information: "Here's the office. We shall soon find those trunks."

There was a great many people seemed to have been looking for trunks. "Yes," he said, "nearly all the foreigners are looking for trunks, too."

"Send her to the island," suggested one of the officers. "Don't!" said Mrs. Starnard in evident alarm. "Don't! She is a lady and it would kill her to be put on the island."

I dreaded them, so I said something about not wishing to stay there any longer to be gazed at. Judge Duffy then told Policeman Bockert to take me to the bank office. After we were seated there Judge Duffy came in and asked me if my home was a Cuba.

REPORTER INTERVIEWS HERK. Just then an officer came in with a reporter. I was so frightened and thought I would be recognized as a journalist, so I turned my head away and said, "I don't want to see any reporters; I will not see any; the Judge said I was not to be troubled."

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I stood at the door and contemplated the scene before me. The long, uncarpeted hall was scrubbed to that peculiar whiteness seen only in public institutions. In the rear of the hall were large iron benches and a number of willow chairs were the only articles of furniture.

There was a general smile at this, and some murmurs of "she's not so crazy on the food question."

"Poor child," said Judge Duffy. "she is well dressed and a lady. Her English is perfect, and I would stake everything on her being a good girl. I am positive she is somebody's darling."

"I mean she is some woman's darling," he snidely amended the Judge. "I am sure some one is searching for her. Poor girl, who is dead."

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trunks. I wanted to go home. He wrote a lot of things in a long, slender book and then said he was going to take me home. The Judge told him to take me and to be kind to me, and to tell the people at the hospital to be kind to me and to let me go if I could for me. If we only had more such men as Judge Duffy the poor unfortunates would not find life all darkness.

IN THE AMBULANCE WAGON.

I began to have more confidence in my own ability now, since one Judge, one doctor and a mass of police officers pronounced me insane, and I put on my felt quite gladly. My mind was so full that I was to be taken in a carriage and that afterwards I could go home. "I am so glad to go with you," I said, and I meant it. I was very glad indeed. Once more, escorted by Policeman Bockert, I walked through the little crowded court-room. I felt quite proud of myself as I went out a side door into an alleyway, where the ambulance was waiting. Near the closed and barred gates was a small office occupied by several men and large books. We all went in there, and when they began to ask me questions the doctor interposed and said he had all the papers and that it was useless to ask me anything further, because I was unable to answer questions. This was a great relief to me, for my nerves were already feeling the strain. A rough-looking man then stepped into the ambulance, but I refused him as so decidedly that the doctor and policeman told him to get out, and they performed that gallant office themselves. I did not enter the ambulance without protest. I made the remark that I had never seen a carriage of that make before and that I did not want to ride in it, but after a while I let them persuade me, as I had right along intended to do. I shall never forget that ride. After I was put in I sat on the yellow blanket the doctor gave me and sat near the door. The large gates were swung open and the curious crowd which had collected swayed back to make way for the ambulance as it backed out. How they tried to get a glimpse at the supposed crazy girl! The doctor saw that I did not like the people gazing at me and considered they put down the curtains, after setting my wigs in regard to it. Still that did not keep the people away. The children raced after us, yelling and shouting and making noise as they tried to get a peep under the curtains. It was quite an unenviable drive, but I must say that it was an extraordinary one. I felt so, only I was not much of a driver. I felt so, only I was not much of a driver. I felt so, only I was not much of a driver.

IN BELEVUE HOSPITAL.

At last Bellevue was reached, the third station on my way to the island. I had passed through successfully two obstacles at the home and at Essex Market Police Court, and now felt confident that I should not fail. The ambulance stopped with a sudden jerk and the doctor jumped out. "How many have you?" I heard some one inquire. "Only one, for the partition," was the reply. A rough-looking man came forward, and catching hold of me attempted to drag me out as if I had the strength of an elephant and would resist. The doctor, seeing my look of disgust, ordered him to leave me alone, saying that he would take charge of me himself. He then lifted me carefully out and I walked with the grace of a queen past the crowd that had gathered curious to see the new unfortunate. Together with the doctor I entered a small dark office, where there were several men. The one behind the desk opened a book and began on the long string of questions which had been asked me so often. I refused to answer, and the doctor told him it was not necessary to trouble me further, as he had all the papers made out, and I was too insane to be able to tell anything that would be of consequence. I felt that it was so easy to feel faint for want of food. The order was then given to take me to the insane pavilion, and a muscular man came forward and caught me so tightly by the arm that I could not get through me. It made me angry, and for a moment I felt through me. I turned to him and said, "How dare you touch me?" At this he loosened his hold somewhat, and I shook him off with more strength than I thought I possessed. "I will go with no one out surgeon," I said, pointing to the ambulance. "The Judge said that he was to take care of me, and I will go with no one else." At this the surgeon asked me, and so we went arm in arm, following the doctor, who had at first been so rough with me. We passed through the well-cared-for grounds and finally reached the insane ward. A white-capped nurse was there to wait here for the boat. "The young girl is to wait here for the boat," said the surgeon, and then he started to leave me. I begged him not to go or to take me with him, but he said I wanted to get his dinner first, and that I should wait here for him. When I insisted on accompanying him he claimed that he had to assist at an amputation, and it would not look well for me to be present. It was evident that he believed he was dealing with an insane person. Just then the most horrible insane cries came from a yard in the rear. With all my bravery I felt a chill at the prospect of being snuff up with a fellow-creature who was really insane. The doctor evidently noticed my nervousness, and the carpenters make. "Telling to me he offered me explanation to the effect that new buildings were being erected, and that the noise came from some of the workmen engaged on it. I told him I did not want to stay there while he supposed I was to be promised soon to return. He left me and I found myself at last an occupant of an insane asylum.

SOME INTERIOR ARRANGEMENTS.

I stood at the door and contemplated the scene before me. The long, uncarpeted hall was scrubbed to that peculiar whiteness seen only in public institutions. In the rear of the hall were large iron benches and a number of willow chairs were the only articles of furniture. On either side of the hall were doors leading into what I supposed were bedrooms. Near the entrance door, on the right-hand side, was a small sitting-room for the nurse, and opposite it was a room where dinner was dished out.

nurse in a black dress, white cap and apron and armed with a bunch of keys had charge of the hall. I soon learned her name, Miss Ball. An old Irishwoman was mind of all work. I heard her called Mary, and I am glad to know that there is such a good-hearted woman in that place. I experienced only kindness and the utmost consideration from her. There were only three patients, as they are called, I made the fourth. I thought I might as well begin my work at once, for I still expected that the very first doctor might declare me sane and send me out again into the wide, wide world. So I went down to the rear of the room and introduced myself to one of the women and asked her all about herself. Her name, she said, was Miss Anne Neville, and she had been sick from overwork. She had been working as a chambermaid, and when her health gave way she was sent to some Sisters' Home to be treated. Her nephew, who was a waiter, was out of work, and being unable to pay her expenses at the Home, had had her transferred to Bellevue.

"Is there anything wrong with you mentally as well?" I asked her. "No," she said. "The doctors have been asking me many curious questions and confusing me as much as possible, but I have nothing wrong with my brain."

"Do you know that only insane people are sent to this pavilion?" I asked. "Yes, I know; but I am unable to do anything. The doctors refuse to listen to me, and it is useless to say anything to the nurses."

AMONG THE INSANE PATIENTS.

Satisfied from various reasons that Miss Neville was as sane as I was myself, I transferred my attentions to one of the other patients. I found her in need of musical aid and quite silly mentally, although I have seen many women in the lower wards of the insane hospital who were never questioned, who were not any brighter.

The third patient, Mrs. Fox, would not say much. She was very quiet, and after telling me that her case was hopeless she refused to talk. I was in need of some one to feel sorry for my position, and I determined that no doctor should convince me that I was sane as long as I had the hope of accomplishing my mission. A small, fair-complexioned nurse arrived, and, after putting on her cap, told Miss Ball to go to dinner. The nurse, Miss Scott by name, came to me and said, rudely: "Take off your hat."

"I shall not take off my hat," I answered. "I am waiting for the boat and I shall not remove it." "Well, you are not going to any boat. You might as well know it now as later. You are in an asylum for the insane."

Although fully aware of that fact yet her unwashed words gave me a shock. "I did not want to come here, I am not sick or insane and I will not stay," I said.

"It will be a long time before you get out if you don't do as you are told," answered Miss Scott. "I was in need of some one to feel sorry for my position, and I determined that no doctor should convince me that I was sane as long as I had the hope of accomplishing my mission. A small, fair-complexioned nurse arrived, and, after putting on her cap, told Miss Ball to go to dinner. The nurse, Miss Scott by name, came to me and said, rudely: "Take off your hat."

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POSITIVELY DEMENTED.

After many more questions fairly as useless and... After the I began to have a smaller regard for the ability of doctors than I had had before.



AN INSANITY EXPERT AT WORK.

Later in the afternoon a boy and a woman came. The woman sat down on a bench while the boy went in and talked with Miss Scott. In a short time he came out, and just noddling good-by to the woman, who was his mother, went away.

Just as the gas was being lighted another patient was added. She was a young girl, twenty-five years old. She told me that she had just gotten up from a sick bed.

ANOTHER REPORTER TURNS UP.

I had hoped to get some rest on this my first night in an insane asylum. But I was doomed to disappointment. When the night nurse came in they came to see me and to find out what I was doing.

A HANDSOME DOCTOR.

He was a handsome young man. He had the air and address of a gentleman. The air he wore was somewhat nervous. He came in and seated himself at the foot of my bed, and put his arm around my shoulders.

TESTS FOR INBANKITY.

With this I was led away and another patient was taken in. I sat right outside the door and waited to hear how he would test the sanity of the other patients.

PRAYER OF THE REPORTERS.

The reporters were the most troublesome. Such a number of them! And they were all so bright and clever that I was terribly frightened lest they should see that I was sane.

THE GOAL IN SIGHT.

V.

At 5 o'clock on Sunday morning, Sept. 25, the nurses pulled the covering from my bed. "Come, it's time for you to get out of bed," they said, and opened the window and let in the cold breeze.



ON BOARD THE ISLAND BOAT.

After this a handsome young doctor made his appearance and I was conducted into the sitting-room. "Who are you?" he asked. "Nellie Moore," I replied.

WHO IS THIS MAN?

"If I take you out will you stay with me? Won't you run away from me when you get on the street?" "I can't promise that I will not," I answered.

He asked me many other questions. Did I ever see faces on the wall? Did I ever hear voices around? I answered him to the best of my ability.

"Do you ever hear voices at night?" he asked. "Yes, there is so much talking I cannot sleep." "I thought so," he said to himself. Then turning to me, he asked: "What do these voices say?"

"Well, I do not listen to them always. But sometimes, very often, they talk about Nellie Brown and then on other an facts that do not interest me half so much." I answered truthfully.

"The cold is almost unbearable in here, and you will have some cases of pneumonia if you are not careful."

TESTS FOR INBANKITY.

With this I was led away and another patient was taken in. I sat right outside the door and waited to hear how he would test the sanity of the other patients. Without little variation the examination was exactly the same as mine.

PRAYER OF THE REPORTERS.

The reporters were the most troublesome. Such a number of them! And they were all so bright and clever that I was terribly frightened lest they should see that I was sane. They were very kind and nice to me, and very gentle in all their questioning.

the nurses and their heavy walking through the carpeted halls. On Monday morning we were told that we should be taken away at 1.30. The nurses questioned me unnecessarily about my home, and all seemed to have an idea that I had a lover who had cast me forth on the world and wrecked my brain.

LEAVING BELLEVUE.

Soon came. I grew nervous as the time approached to leave for the island. I dreaded every new arrival, fearful that my secret would be discovered at the last moment. Then I was given a shawl and my hat and gloves. I could hardly put them on, my nerves were so unstrung.

When we reached the wharf such a mob of people crowded around the wagon that the police were called to put them away, so that we could reach the boat. I was the last of the procession.

The small windows were closed, and, with the smell of the dirty room, the air was stifling. At one end of the cabin was a small bunk in such a condition that I had to hold my nose when I went near it.

The door was guarded by two female attendants. One was clad in a dress made of bed-ticking and the other was dressed with some attempt at style. They were coarse, massive women, and expectorated louscon juice about on the floor in a manner more skilful than charming.

One of these fearful creatures seemed to have much faith in the power of the glance on insane people, for when any one of us would move or go to look out of the high window, she would say, "Sit down," and would lower her brows and glare in a way that was simply terrifying.

The boat stopped and the old woman and the sick girl were taken off. The rest of us were told to sit still. At the next stop my companions were taken off, one at a time. I was last, and it seemed to require a man and a woman to lead me up the plank to reach the shore.

"What is this place?" I asked of the man, who had his fingers sunk into the beam of my arm. "Blackwell's Island, an insane place, where you'll never get out of."

With this I was shoved into the ambulance, the spring-board was put up, an officer and a mail-carrier jumped on behind, and I was swiftly driven to the Insane Asylum on Blackwell's Island. Of my ten days' experience there I have yet to tell.

NELLIE BLY.

THE NELLIE BROWN MYSTERY.

Her Story as Told from Day to Day by the City Newspapers.

[From the Sun, Sunday, Sept. 25.]

WHO IS THIS INSANE GIRL?

SHE IS PRETTY, WELL DRESSED AND SPEAKS SPANISH.

SHE WANDERED INTO MATRON STEWARD'S HOME FOR WOMEN AND ASKED FOR A PISTOL TO PROTECT HERSELF—IS HER NAME MARINA?

A modest, comely, well-dressed girl of nineteen, who gave her name as Nellie Brown, was committed by Justice Duffy at Essex Market yesterday for examination as to her sanity. The circumstances surrounding her were such as to indicate that possibly she might be the heroine of an interesting story. She was taken to the court by Matron Irene Steward, of the Temporary Home for Females, at 84 Second avenue. The matron said that Nellie came to the Home alone about noon on Friday, and said she was looking for her trunk. She was dressed in a gray flannel dress trimmed with brown, brown silk gloves, a black straw sailor's hat trimmed with brown, and wore a thin gray flannel veil. The closest questioning failed to elicit any satisfactory account of her. During the night she frightened the minister by insisting that she should have a pistol to protect herself. She said that she had had money in a pocketbook, but somebody took it away from her. Her voice was low and mild and her manner refined. Her dress was neat-looking. The sleeves were of the latest style.

The girl had in her pocket thirty-three cents wrapped in white tissue paper, and a black memorandum book, in which there were some rambling and incoherent writings. One sentence was: "Jay Gould sent a people to Siberia." Justice Duffy took a good deal of interest in the girl, and telegraphed for an ambulance. A physician from Bellevue Hospital, who came with the ambulance, talked with the girl and could get no definite information from her. He expressed the opinion that she was demented. She was taken to the hospital, under a commitment for five days for examination as to her sanity. It is pronounced insane she will be committed permanently to the insane asylum. All officials who have seen her are of the opinion that she has come from comfortable surroundings. Justice Duffy expressed the opinion that the girl was under the influence of some drug and that she had been ill treated. He said that he was deeply interested in the girl. She was a Cuban, he thought, and had been walked upon by slaves. She called them in Spanish. She probably intended to go to the ocean.

In court Nellie was not even terrified into giving any account of herself when informed that she was committed with insanity. She was perfectly quiet and went willingly with the matron. The burden of her tale, in reply to many questions put to her by the matron and Justice Duffy, was this: "I have no father. He is dead. He is my mother. I had a mother, but he is dead. I don't know where I came from. I am going to New York. I want to get my trunk. I have got nice clothes in my trunk. The hat is not mine. I was trying to get my trunk, but the maning where I came from, I have forgotten how to speak Spanish. Oh, how many questions they ask me. Why should they ask so many questions? I want those men to go away. That man is a madman. He is crazy. He is trying to do with me. I want to find my trunk. I came on a railroad. That is the way I always go. I don't know why my trunk should be made public. I came in to try and get work. But I do not see how I can find it. I want to do something, but I don't want to work at that. They used me very well yesterday, but they don't cook well there. I don't remember where I came from. I am going to New York."

Matron Irene Steward, of the Temporary Home for Women at No. 84 Second avenue, said yesterday: "Nellie came here perfectly rational. She said that she could remain over night and what the charge would be. I paid 50 cents. She wanted to see the matron, but told her to wait until she was released in the evening. She ate her dinner without exciting our suspicions in the least. After leaving the table she took a seat in a corner of the back parlor and remained there all the afternoon. About 5 o'clock I approached her and noticed that she looked queer. I surmised that she had been taking alcohol or morphine. She began showing symptoms of insanity by telling me that she would kill me if she could get the right drug. Then she said that people in the house were conspiring to kill her, and asked for a pistol. I noticed that when she heard a name spoken she would write it down in a little book she carried. The book was full of names. One sentence was: 'There are so many wicked people in the world.' First she said her name was Marina, and then she said it was Brown. Brown, she explained, was a good name for a working girl. She said that she had tried to go to work, but being at typewriting, I assigned her to sleep in a room where there were two other girls. She refused to go to bed, and sat up all night with her hat and gloves on."

The matron thinks, from Nellie's conversation, that she was educated at the convent of the Sacred Heart, near New Orleans; that she had been wandering for at least two weeks, and that she had not seen during that time. When she came to the Home she wore a rag, but she threw away. She carried a small yellow handkerchief when she was

[From the Herald, Sunday, Sept. 25.]
HER MEMORY CLOUDED.

THE INSANE GIRL ON BLACKWELL'S ISLAND WHO HAS NO RECOLLECTION OF HER PAST.

It is a sad case.

A young lady of eighteen years, nicely attired, showing in her speech and bearing every evidence of having been well educated and tenderly reared amid refined associations, becomes insane, without any identification whatever, and is to-day an inmate of the female asylum on Blackwell's Island. This is the tale of Nellie Marina, or Nellie Brown, as she indifferently calls herself, who, on Friday last, asked permission to stay over night in the Home for Women at No. 84 Second avenue.

The matron of the institution thinks she was sane when she came there, and that her "uncy suddenly developed a few hours later." Dr. Bralsted, in charge of the insane pavilion at Bellevue Hospital, who studied the case with much interest after the girl came under his charge, thinks she had a lucid interval when she entered the home. Even after entering the hospital she was apparently sane and logical in conversation the greater part of the time, except when the subject of her chief delusion—a belief that people were seeking to kill her—was brought up, or when any persistent effort was made to learn something of her antecedents.

If she has any friends they have not presented themselves. "The one series of statements to which she is faithful in her various conversations with us," said Dr. Bralsted, "is that her father and mother are dead, and that after their death she lived with her grandmother and had a maid." Her grandmother, she told the doctors, died recently, and the girl thinks she remembers having a fine watch, an extensive wardrobe and a large sum of money. She does not know how she came here, and quietly declines to believe she is in New York. "She never seems to be restless," said Dr. Bralsted. "Her delusions, her dull apathetic condition, the muscular twitching of her hands and arms and her loss of memory all indicate hysteria."

A commission consisting of Drs. Bralsted, Field and Fitch yesterday adjudge her insane and she was committed to the asylum on Blackwell's Island.

There is no evidence that she has been treated with any violence nor that she had been involved in any unfortunate love affair. For at her own conduct has been marked with any moral improprieties. With much tact and delicacy she was closely questioned on these points by one of her own sex without exhibiting the least indication of anything but surprise.

[From the Sun, Monday, Sept. 26.]
HER MEMORY STILL GONE.

NO ONE CLAIMS THE PRETTY CRAZY GIRL AT BELLEVUE.

Nellie Brown is still in Bellevue Hospital. The doctors are not certain that she is insane. She says continually that men are going to kill her and that she would kill herself if she only knew the name of the poison she wants to take. She has lucid intervals, when she talks sensibly enough about what is going on around her, but she appears to remember nothing of the past. Dr. Bralsted, the physician at the insane pavilion, takes no stock in the theory that the girl is suffering from the effects of drugs. His opinion is that she is suffering from hysterical mania, but he is not certain that she is not romancing. He admits that her case is a puzzle that will take several days to solve.

The girl is probably a Cuban, and as far as can be inferred from what she said on Saturday it is believed that she lived in New Orleans. She walked into the nurse's room in the pavilion, with a heavy shawl wrapped around her neck and shoulders, to see a sun reporter yesterday afternoon, and complained of the cold. She said nothing, but stood staring until the reporter spoke.

"Where are your relations?" she was asked. "They are dead," she answered, sadly. She appeared to have forgotten even the events of the day before, and said that she had never been at the home in Second avenue or at the Police Court. Then her eyes sparkled and she said appealingly to the reporter: "I want to leave this place; will you take me?" "Where do you want to go?" "Nowhere," she said, mournfully.

An the nurse took her back to her apartment the girl said: "I never saw such a lot of crazy men as there are around this place." "They are not crazy men," said the nurse; "they are reporters." "They must be crazy to question me," she answered.

There's not a mark of any kind on the girl's clothing. Her shoes are high-topped, with French heels—wood covered with leather. They are of American make and are 2 1/2 in size. She has probably been travelling very lately, for she often speaks about her trunk. She is unable to tell where they are, but says she has plenty of nice clothing in them.

[From the Evening Telegram, Monday, Sept. 26.]
THE BEAUTIFUL WRECK.

UNABLE TO TELL HER NAME OR ANTECEDENTS.

The mysterious and beautiful young woman who wandered into the Home for Women, at No. 84 Second avenue, last Friday and from there was sent to Bellevue Hospital, is still there in the insane pavilion, but will leave this afternoon for Blackwell's Island. Dr. Bralsted, who is in charge of the pavilion and who at first thought that she was suffering from hysterical mania, said to the Telegram man to-day that she was undoubtedly insane. She is about eighteen years old, of medium height, with dark brown hair, hazel eyes, delicate features and has evidently the air and tone of a well brought up girl. Her clothing consists of a dress of light-gray fashionably made material trimmed with black lace; her shoes are of fine material and No. 2 1/2 in size. There is not the slightest mark on her clothing by which she can be identified. Dr. Bralsted thinks that she is a native of a southern country, probably Cuba. "I have not been able to learn anything of her antecedents or past history," said Miss Scott, the experienced head nurse. "I speak to her sometimes in French, and at lucid intervals she seems to understand what I say, and evidently at first made a mental effort to answer intelligently. She has evidently been properly raised and well educated. She complains of the quality of the food and the size of the cups and saucers and wants to be waited on. The same is the case in dressing herself, she evidently expecting some one to perform that duty. At one of her lucid intervals she said that her parents were dead, and at another time she spoke of travelling on the ocean with her grandmother; but she could not remember her name, and, in fact, her mind as to the past is a complete blank. No one has called to inquire for the girl, and Dr. Bralsted said that she would be sent to the Blackwell's Island Insane Asylum late this afternoon."

From the Sun, Wednesday, Oct. 5.]
NELLY MARINO OR BROWN.

SHE TELLS A LITTLE ABOUT HERSELF, BUT IS A MYSTERY YET.

Nelly Marina, who also calls herself Nelly Brown, the pretty crazy girl who was sent from Bellevue to Blackwell's Island a week ago yesterday, and about whom there is believed to be a romance, has not yet been claimed. Her case is diagnosed as melancholia and Dr. Ingram considers it a very hopeful one.

"Am sane or insane?" is a question she frequently asks Dr. Ingram. She speaks French, Spanish and English perfectly. She is travelled and is very familiar with Southern customs. She says her parents are dead. Her mother was a Cuban and her father an Englishman. She once lived in New Orleans, she says, but she is careful not to reveal anything that might lead to her identification. She promises that she will tell all about herself.

Emile Vottier, of Toulouse and Bourbon streets, New Orleans, wrote to the Sun to ask the girl if she was Lottie Peters. Lottie Peters, Vottier wrote, was a friend of his who had disappeared from New Orleans, and about whom he was greatly troubled. Nelly said yesterday that she was not Lottie Peters, and that she knew no girl of that name or no man named Vottier.

Morena is Spanish for Brown. The hospital authorities could easily have written Marina for Morena, so that the girl's giving two names may be merely additional corroboration of her story instead of a suspicious circumstance.

[From the Sun, Friday, Oct. 7.]
FRIENDS CLAIM NELLY MORENO.

Nelly Brown, or Nelly Moreno, has been released from Blackwell's Island Insane Asylum. On Tuesday Lawyer Peter A. Hendrick, of 50 Nassau street, satisfied the authorities of the asylum, and under a bond that the girl would be properly cared for, he was permitted to take Nelly away. The people who have taken charge of Nelly are Americans living in this city. The girl made her home with them, her parents being dead. She has an income derived from an estate left by her father, who lived in the South.

sent to Brooklyn, but she came to the Home empty-handed. "There is certainly a mystery," said the little page, "but I don't know any more." "The case is a mystery," said the matron, "but I don't know any more."