His Missing Likeness.

The day was raw, wet, and altogether unseasonable for Narragansett in August. A thick sky, and a cold wind that rolled up a stormy looking surf in front of the lifeboat station, had been preparatory to a series of rain squalls that drove every one indoors. The little apartment at the Tecumseh House, which was nominally the smoking room, was in high favor for the afternoon, and the men of business who consoled themselves there day in and day out with the New York papers and a quiet smoke, found themselves temporarily put in the background by the crowd of cigarettes, cigars, and carefully cultivated pipes that had invaded their domain. A small wood fire, which suffered from a back draught, was striving to make headway at one side of the room, and before it was standing a tall, somewhat studious looking and thoughtful faced young man. He had settled himself in a meditative pose, and seemed to be speculating on the fate of the fire. The subjects that most occupied his thoughts were a young lady and a photograph. He had not come to the Pier to meet Mabel Langley, but having met her he was unwilling to go away. She was certainly a charming girl, not so handsome, though, as a dozen others that he saw at every Casino dance, and he was at loss to explain the impression that a neat figure, a correct taste in dress, and a face prettier than the average, had made on his usually unresponsive feelings. He had no recollection of the number of waltzes, tennis matches, and drives that they had been partners in for the last fortnight, but he knew that there had been a great many, growing more enjoyable with the progress of their acquaintance. It was impossible, he thought, that he, Quincy Attleton, after passing unscathed through three years of college flirtations should be hard hit by a summer boarder at Narragansett Pier. But he did not recall any of the other girls that he knew at all well who had such a fascinating combination of dark hair and blue eyes as Mabel. Possibly that was the key to the situation; that and her good sense in showing herself appreciative of his attentions. He felt that he was too prejudiced to be able to give an intelligent judgment at present. He decided to stay away from the hop at the Casino that evening, and try the effect of absence, which as the lady boarded at the same hotel need not be enforced if it became too trying; but on second thoughts, remembering that Mabel's cousin from New York, a fellow who made his relationship an excuse for monopolizing her company, would be at the dance, he concluded to go. As by this decision the settlement of the main question was put off until another day, he turned his thoughts to the question of the photograph. The photograph was his own, or had been until the day previous, when it had passed into the possession of some person or persons unknown. He had missed other articles from his room before, and had charged their loss either to his own carelessness, or the dishonesty of some of the servants. Whatever had been taken was of small value, and he had not cared to make any investigation which might be disagreeable in a small hotel, where personal affairs soon became public property. He had looked after his belongings more carefully of late, however, putting his valuables in a place of security, and locking his room whenever he left it for any length of time.

The thefts from the beginning had been of small amount. First a cigar-case, which he had left upon the table one evening, had been taken, then a silk muffler had vanished, to be followed shortly after by a black domino which he had worn at a masquerade party where he and Mabel had penetrated each others' disguises early in the evening. These losses, which were annoying, if not serious, occurred always at night, so far as he could ascertain. About the photograph there was no doubt. It had been taken by a friend who belonged to the army of amateurs who held the Pier and its sojourners at their mercy. The picture had been snapped on him as he was emerging.