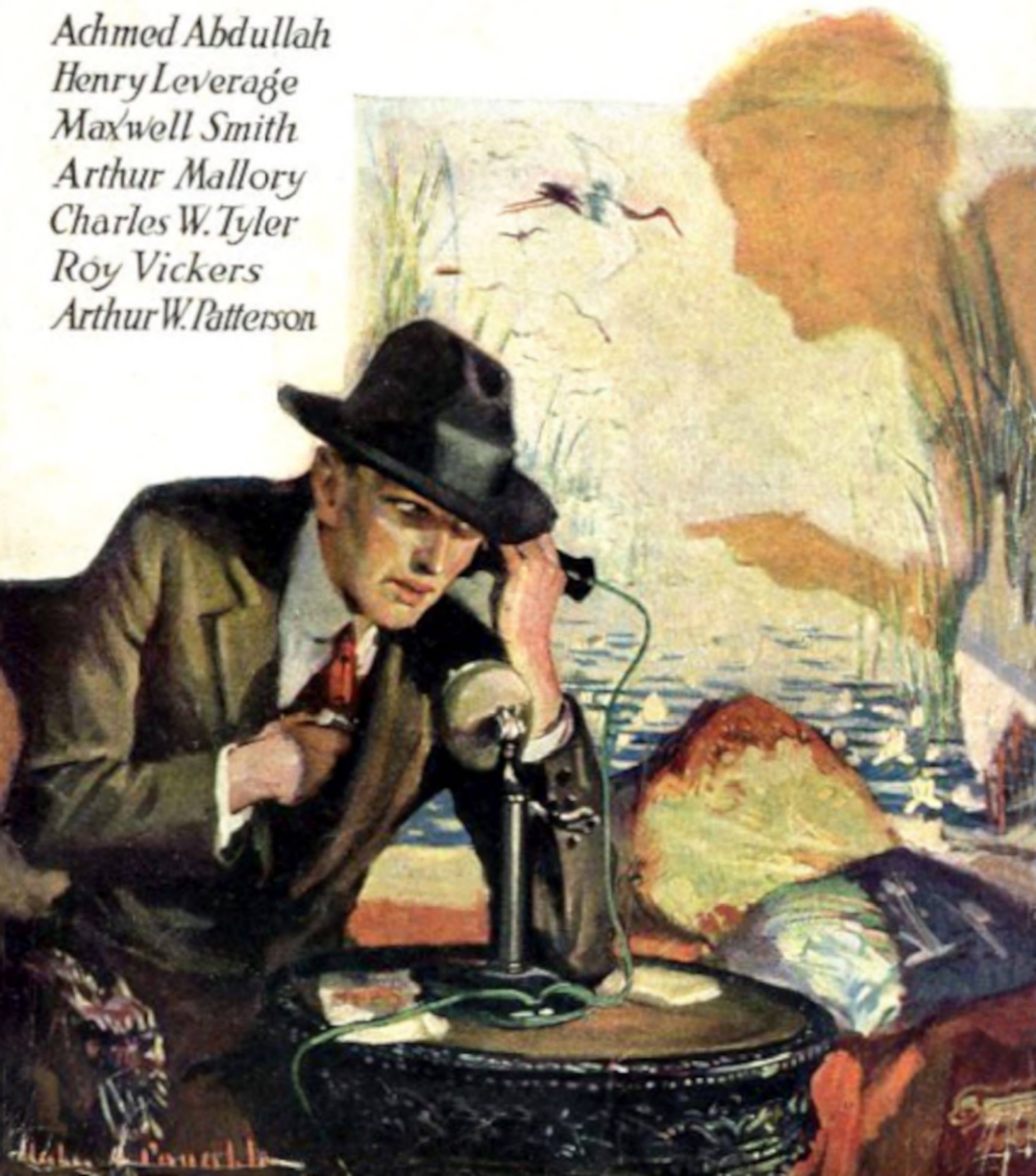
APRIL 16, 1921 15 CENTS

DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE EVERY WEEK

Achmed Abdullah
Henry Leverage
Maxwell Smith
Arthur Mallory
Charles W. Tyler
Roy Vickers
Arthur W. Patterson



Who Is This Man?

A Little Finger Print Gave Him Away

"Red" O'Brien was a clever cracksman. Daring and resourceful, always playing the game single handed, he had eluded the police net for months, but at last he made a fatal slip. Like every other criminal, he reckoned without the unexpected—and the unexpected in this case was John Hartray, the noted finger print expert.

The heavy steel safe in the offices of the Polk Manufacturing Company had been looted. The payroll—$11,050 in gold and bills—was gone. As soon as the loss was discovered, the cashier telephoned immediately for Hartray.

To the eyes of the casual observer there was not a single clew. But for Hartray it was only the work of a few moments to find four tell-tale finger prints on the polished steel handle of the safe.

The Closing Net

The finger prints were carefully photographed and taken to police headquarters, where it was found that they tallied exactly with those of the crafty "Red," who had been finger printed under suspicion two years before. Immediately Hartray jumped into a waiting taxicab, drove to his apartment, changed to workman's clothes and started for a survey of the city's underworld. Within twenty-four hours he had located his man and shortly afterward had seen him safely lodged behind the bars. "Red" had been crafty but he had reckoned without the unexpected.

Hartray spent only two days on the case but his reward was $300. How would you like to earn money like that?

Be a Finger Print Expert

Why don't you get into this fascinating profession where the field and salaries are unlimited? Police headquarters, detective agencies, government departments, hospitals and industrial plants are constantly in need of finger print experts. You will have a chance to travel, meet big men and become an important factor in a highly respected vocation. It isn't hard to learn. All you need is common sense and the knowledge which our trained specialists can give you.

Learn at Home in Spare Time

You don't need to leave your present position or go away from home to learn the secrets of this fascinating game. Our special system of home study teaches you everything in your spare time. Just a few minutes each day and before you realize it, you will be ready for your first case. And best of all the cost is only a few cents a day—less than you spend for cigars.

Our students receive FREE for a year "The Detective," the official police publication giving description of criminals wanted, rewards offered, etc.

Write for FREE BOOK

Without any obligation on your part we will be glad to send you our FREE, illustrated book "Finger Prints" and details of our FREE offer of a Secret Service Library and Finger Print Outfit. Send for the book and read about the great opportunities that await you in this big field. See what nationally known finger print experts say of the Dunlap School. Clip and mail the coupon today.

DUNLAP SCHOOL OF FINGER PRINTS
Dept. 524
1029 South Wabash Avenue, Chicago, Ill.

Dunlap School of Finger Prints
Dept. 524 1029 S. Wabash Ave., Chicago. Ill.

Gentlemen: Without any obligation on my part, please send me your FREE book, "Finger Prints," and details of your FREE offer. I am interested in finger prints as applied to Commercial ☐ work. Detective ☐ work. (Indicate preference by cross.)

Name .....

Address .....

City ..... *State* .....

DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE

EVERY WEEK

Vol. XXXIX Contents for April 16, 1921 No. 5

ONE COMPLETE NOVEL

TWO SERIALS

FIVE SHORT STORIES

ONE SPECIAL ARTICLE

DEPARTMENTS

MISCELLANEOUS

Publication issued every **week** by Street & Smith Corporation, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York City. ORMOND G. SMITH, President; GEORGE C. SMITH, Treasurer; GEORGE C. SMITH, JR., Secretary.

Entered as Second-class Matter, September 4, 1917 at the Post Office at New York, N. Y., under Act of Congress of March 3, 1879. Canadian subscription, $7.50. Foreign, $8.50.

YEARLY SUBSCRIPTION, $6.00 ***SINGLE COPIES, 15 CENTS***

Among the Features You Will Find in Next Week's Issue Are:

Smooth Stones

A NOVEL

By ARTHUR MALLORY

Mr. Clackworthy Studies Politics

By CHRISTOPHER B. BOOTH

Stopped in Transit

By ALBERT ALWING

The Purple Brick

By KENNETH DUANE WHIPPLE

AND OTHER SHORT STORIES

Further Installments of the Serials,

"On the Fifth Green" and "The Stoat."

DETECTIVE STORY
MAGAZINE
EVERY WEEK

Vol. XXXIX April 16, 1921 No. 5

Framed at the Benefactors Club

by Achmed Abdullah

Author of "The Honorable Gentleman and Others," "Fear," "The Red Stain," etc.

CHAPTER I.

WHERE THINGS HAPPEN.

ACTING on a headlong impulse, he called on Martyn Spencer. His motive was typical of Blaine Ogilvie's character and life as he had lived it these last ten years, since he had left college. Marie Dillon, Spencer's distant cousin, had told him of the latter's return to New York, a few months back, after a decade spent away from America, and had given him his address.

"Marie," Ogilvie had said, "he's the very man for me."

"To do what?"

"To help me."

"Do you really need help as badly as all that?"

Ogilvie wasn't a very good liar. He tried his best, though.

"Really, dear," he said, "don't you worry. I am all right. I——"

"Please, Blaine! Be truthful with me! That's our agreement, you know—the truth—always—be it pleasant or unpleasant."

Ogilvie sighed. "The truth is always unpleasant! Fact is—I am not starving yet!"

"I don't like that 'yet.'"

"Nor do I, Marie!" Ogilvie laughed. But, deep down, he was serious and just a little frightened. Life, financially, had not been kind to him of late. "That's why I have to do something—something that pays. And, too, after we're married, I don't want you

to wear summer hats all during the winter!"

"Of course not," she replied with a smile. "But why appeal to Spencer?"

"Why not? I've tried all the men I know. But there isn't a chance. Business is rotten, and they're discharging people right and left. But Spencer was always a regular whirlwind at getting the coin. And he and I used to be friends."

"All right, dear, ask him. It can't do any harm."

"Indeed not. Press your darling little thumb for me. D'you mind?"

He found Martyn Spencer much the same man he had known at college: debonair, yet with an undertone of acrid sarcasm, quick of speech and repartee, yet curiously lumbering of gesture, direct in his opinions, yet at times with a queerly footling manner of commenting on life and life's problems. This was the Spencer he had known at college, and this was the Spencer whom he saw again to-day, in his wainscoted, cigar-flavored office, on top of the Macdonald skyscraper. Now the man was surrounded by a perfect array of steel filing cabinets, safes, noiseless typewriters, switchboards, marceled stenographers, and relays of private secretaries in immaculate, sober, pin-striped worsted, with an almost episcopal unction of voice.

The man's face, too, was as it had always been: massive jowled, dead white, and with an exaggerated beak of a nose, the smoke-blue eyes set close together beneath hooded, fleshy lids. If there was a change in him, Blaine Ogilvie did not notice it at first. Of course he had heard rumors about Spencer, but he had dismissed them. Not that he disliked gossip, since he had the average healthy male's appetite for the intriguing cross sections and cross currents of conflicting personalities.

But the rumors that had drifted through occasionally, via commercial traveler, returned globe-trotter or explorer, missionary on sabbatical leave, or rust-spotted freighter's skipper, from the exotic lands where Spencer was said to be piling up a shocking total of millions, were both too grim and too fantastic for the prosy twentieth century. Romance in business had died with Dutch patroons and Spanish privateers, Ogilvie used to say, and he would dismiss the tales with an incredulous laugh, as did the rest of New York that had known Martyn Spencer in the old days.

Ogilvie laughed now at the very thought.

Spencer had always been congenitally a money getter, nothing else, even at college. He seemed to have reached the height of his ambition. The man breathed moneyed success, a very surfeit of it.

Ogilvie, who had announced his coming over the telephone, had been civilly inspected and scrutinized by the private secretary in the outer office, by another private secretary—the first's twin brother as to well-cut clothes, pompadoured hair, and straw-colored mustache—in the inner office, and then Martyn Spencer greeted him with a hearty handshake and a fat, crimson-and-gold banded Havana.

"Ten years since we have seen each other, eh, Blaine?" he asked.

"Every day of it, Martyn!"

A rapid gathering-up of broken threads and college gossip, inquiries, as perfunctorily polite as perfunctorily answered, about the fortunes, marriages, and divorces of Tom "This" and Mabel "That" followed. Then suddenly, characteristically, Ogilvie came to the point.

"Martyn," he said, "I want a job."

"Why?"

"Simplest reason in the world. I need it."

"Broke?"

"Well—bent all out of shape! Don't you need a handsome, industrious, and intelligent junior partner—or office boy?"

"I don't need as much as a scrub-woman."

"I beg your pardon!" Ogilvie said stiffly.

"Come, come. Don't fly off the handle. I am sorry, but honestly I don't need anybody."

"Seem to have a lot of affairs here?" Ogilvie pointed through the glass partition at the humming outside office.

"Affairs is right, but I am winding them up. I am going to retire from business."

"Rather young to do that, aren't you?"

"At times I feel seven years older than the hills!" Spencer passed a pudgy hand across his round, dead-white face. The hand trembled a little.

The other rose. "Sorry I bothered you, old man."

"Don't go yet. Perhaps I can help you."

"I wish you would. Really—I need it."

"What sort of a job do you want?"

"Anything—anywhere—where I can earn a decent living."

"What do you know? What can you do?"

"I've been to war. I can drill a company and——"

"I know, I know!" Spencer interrupted impatiently. "You can kill people according to the most scientific and up-to-date methods. But there's nothing to that. The world is still groggy. That last round lasted too long. What else do you know?"

"I have a smattering of languages—French, German, Spanish——"

"Which means that you can order a dinner without precipitating a riot between the Alsation chef and the Polish head waiter, and that you can get the point of a joke in a French comic paper. Nothing to that. One can get any number of bright young Europeans at eighteen per, who can stenog and talk fluently in half a dozen languages. What else can you do?" he continued inexorably.

Ogilvie considered for quite a while.

"I am reckless," he replied.

"Hardly a paying quantity. What else?"

"Nothing."

"Well—marry money."

"But——"

"I've an aunt in Chicago who'll introduce you to the right sort of girl. Marrying off people is her particular avocation."

Ogilvie shook his head. "Marry—nothing!" he said with a laugh. "I asked you what I am going to do with myself, not with somebody else's daughter. Besides, I've the girl all picked out."

"Who is she, may I ask?"

"Marie Dillon, your cousin."

"Oh! What the deuce did you want to fall in love with her for? The Dillons haven't a blessed cent!"

"I'm contrary by nature, I guess."

"Ah——"

"Well—what do you advise, Martyn?"

"Serious, are you? Really need the money?"

"Yes."

Martyn Spencer was silent for several minutes. He turned slightly in his swivel chair and looked out of the window. It was winter, with a bitter, hacking north wind that rode a wracked sky and drove harshly across the roofs of New York. Tiny, sharp points of frozen snow rattled the panes and moaned dismally in the chimneys.

Ogilvie gave an involuntary shudder. His overcoat, though fashionably tailored, was a thin spring garment, and his gorgeously striped silk muffler was arrestingly ineffectual. Spencer's heavy

ulster, lined with Russian sable, was tossed carelessly across a chair. He stared at it enviously, and the other noticed it out of the corner of his eyes.

"Peach of a coat, Blaine, isn't it?" he asked.

"I'll say so!"

"Unique coat, too!"

"Oh!"

"Yes. Imperial Russian sable—priceless—not another like it in America."

"Where did you get it?"

"Grand Duchess Anastasia Michailovna gave it to me."

"Know her?" came Ogilvie's casual question.

"Ran across her in Moscow."

"I thought you were in Africa."

"I've kicked around all over."

"I see."

They were both silent. Then Spencer looked up. A vertical wrinkle cleft his forehead sharply and drew apart his close-set eyes as if he had been thinking deeply.

"Blaine," he said rather sententiously, "there are two types of man. One is the type, like myself, which goes after things, and the other the type which waits for things to happen. I think you belong to the latter."

"You do?"

"Right. You see, I've offered you an introduction to my aunt in Chicago—the finest matchmaker in seven counties—who would have shuffled the right girl, the rightly rich girl, out of the marriage deck for you. In other words, I asked you to go after things so that you might be able to achieve man's real object in life—a silk-hatted, patent-leather-shoe state of genteel vagabondage. You tell me that you are engaged to Marie Dillon, who is as poor as a church mouse. Very sentimental and honorable and charming and all that, I grant you, but hopelessly impractical. Very well. I see that you aren't the pushing sort. Therefore you've got to wait for things to happen to you."

Ogilvie rose impatiently.

"Wait!" came the other's smooth voice. "Things—to happen to you!" he repeated with a queer smile. "And—you said you are reckless?"

"You know I am!"

"Yes, yes." Spencer mused, smiled again, and continued: "Now, in all the world, there are exactly three places where a man can wait for things—things to happen. A man of your sort——"

"Meaning a reckless man?"

"Meaning a fool!"

"Sure I am?"

"Positive. I knew you at college."

"Thanks awfully. And where are these three mysterious places?"

"One is a small and very smelly caravansery near the Kabool Gate in the city of Lahore, in India. One is the northern end of the great bridge at Constantinople——"

"Too far away—both of them—particularly for a chap who's broke."

"It'll cost you a nickel, and, perhaps, an extra two cents for a cross-town fare, to reach the third place."

"Oh——"

"Yes. It is right here in New York." Spencer pointed vaguely through the window, where the houses were running together in purple and gray spots beneath the sweep of oncoming evening.

"Really?" Ogilvie looked up, interested.

"Familiar with the slums of New York?"

"Quite. I had money once and used to dine there, eating beans at fancy prices, when we went slumming."

"Know Meeker Street?"

"I've been there—during my years of affluence."

"Know where Meeker and Commerce Streets come nearly together, in a sort of a triangle, pointing toward Seventh Avenue?"

"Yes."

"Remember a crooked little side street, rather an alley, nearer Commerce Street, which runs in the general direction of the river, like a drunken man?"

"I've a shadowy recollection. What's the name of the street?"

"Braddon Street."

"Oh, yes, I recall now. Funny old brick houses, with Georgian columns and deep-set windows!"

"Exactly, Blaine."

"Well—what about this street?"

"Go there—to No. 17."

"What for?"

"If you want things to happen to you!"

"Do I?"

"I don't know, Blaine, I'm sure. But, at No. 17, you'll find a queer, old-fashioned restaurant, dating back to the days when Aaron Burr dreamed largely about empire and made a sorry mess of it. There's the place"—he slurred, stopped, went on—"the place for——"

"Things to happen?"

"Yes."

"Thanks for the tip, Martyn. I am going there."

Spencer smiled lopsidedly. "I repeat," he said, "that you are a fool!"

"Thanks!" the other interjected.

"What I told you about the Braddon Street place is straight. It isn't a very nice place, Blaine."

Ogilvie laughed. "Oh, yes—you told me things happen there, didn't you?"

"To some people."

"Shall I carry a gun?"

"Heavens, no! Even the slums are well policed these decadent days. Only—well, I warn you. The beginnings and the ends of many things have been brewed in that restaurant—things which men do not speak of except in whispers behind closed doors."

Ogilvie looked up sharply. "As you are talking in whispers—right now!" he said, with a purring laugh. "As your door is closed—right now!"

"Exactly!" came the even, passionless reply. Spencer hesitated. "Blaine," he went on, "if I were you I would not go!"

"Why—you've made me quite anxious to see the place, old man. I guess I shall go."

"When?" came the quick question.

"The sooner the better. To-night's the night!"

Martyn Spencer studied the other's face for a few tense seconds. Then he gave a forced laugh.

"All right," he said. "I see that you have decided." He coughed, mused, looked at Ogilvie from beneath hooded eyelids. "If you get there after ten in the evening," he said very slowly, "you will find the place closed."

"That so?"

"Yes. But you can still get in."

"How?"

"By knocking at the door. Two short knocks—a pause—then a double knock. A pause—then again a short knock."

"Seem to know all about the place and its habits, Martyn?"

"I've never been there in my life."

"Ah—tell it to the marines!"

"Never in all my life," Spencer repeated. "I'm speaking the literal truth."

Again both men were silent; they were studying each other sharply, unwinkingly.

Then Blaine Ogilvie asked a sudden, brutally direct question: "Why do you want me to go there?"

The other gave a start. "Wh-what?" he stammered. "What d-do you mean?"

"Just exactly what I said!"

Spencer flicked his cigar ash. "Go," he said, "and find out!"

Ogilvie smiled. "Don't want to tell me the reason," he said, "but you do want me to go! Is that right? Of course it is, old man! No use denying it!"

"I'm not saying anything."

"Sure you aren't. I know. Didn't we play stud poker at college, and didn't you always have a high pair back to back? Question is—to put it bluntly—how much is it worth to you if I go—to-night—after ten?"

"I believe I told you that you're a fool?"

"And I believe I told you that I'm broke? Well—how much?"

"Name your own price!"

"A thousand dollars?"

Martyn Spencer laughed. "Blaine," he said, "I am a poor business man, for I'll give you more than you asked. Twenty thousand dollars—how'd that strike you?"

"Splendidly!"

"It's a bargain? To-night after ten, and you go alone—and tell nobody?"

"Right!"

Spencer walked to the safe, opened it, and drew forth a thick sheaf of high-denomination bills. "Here you are!"

"Thanks!" Ogilvie crammed the money into his inside pocket. "So long, Martyn!" He made for the door.

"Wait!"

"What is it now?"

"You'll catch your death of cold with that thin coat of yours."

"I'll invest part of the twenty thousand in a new coat on my way down Broadway."

"It's after six, and the stores are closed. I'll lend you my coat."

"But——"

"I am going to work for an hour or two and then I'll telephone to my valet to bring me another ulster. Better take this. It's terribly cold."

"I may hock it, old man. You told me it's priceless—and didn't you say something about a grand duchess who gave it to you—tender souvenirs, eh?"

"Not quite as tender as you imagine!" Spencer laughed disagreeably. "Come!" He helped the other on with the warm, soft sable-lined coat. "Bring it back when you're through with it."

"Sure—and thanks." He opened the door to the outer office, when he heard Spencer's voice:

"Blaine!"

"Yes?" The latter turned. "What is it?"

"Oh—nothing, nothing—never mind."

"All right. Au revoir, Martyn!"

"Au revoir!"

And Blaine stepped out of the office into the street, not quite sure if the pleasantly warm feeling that suffused his body was due to the fur coat or to the twenty thousand dollars that nestled in his inside pocket.

It was still snowing hard that night, with a bitter wind piping across the roofs of the city, a little before ten, when he left his modest hotel in the West Forties, after agreeably surprising the desk clerk by calling for his overdue bill and settling it in full.

"Stroke of luck, Mr. Blaine?" asked the clerk, familiar with the ups and downs of the Rialto.

"Luck—or the opposite; I'm not exactly sure yet, Tommy."

He felt a prey to a tremendous, voiceless excitement as he turned down Seventh Avenue. He preferred walking, thinking that the touch of the cold, snow-wet wind on his forehead would clear his mind. He had been reckless all his life, and usually he had come through with flying colors in the occasional small adventures such as he had run across in the streets of New York and in the Adirondacks and the Maine woods. Besides he had come out of the war unscathed. But the unknown adventure upon which he was embarking to-night—and he realized that there was a reason for it all, for Martyn Spencer was not the type of man to give away twenty thousand dollars, nor any part of twenty thousand dollars, without demanding full value—the unknown adventure upon which he was embarking to-night made him uneasy.

As he thought about Spencer, as he reconstructed the scene in the office, he remembered the man's nervous hands, the occasional look of fear which had come into the other's smoke-blue eyes, the suddenly lowered voice, the interrupted sentence when he had left. Doubtless the other had meant to warn him, and had then reconsidered and said nothing. He remembered, too, the vague, fantastic tales as to the origins of Martyn Spencer's wealth that had drifted into New York.

He went unarmed, for Spencer had told him that he would not need a gun. And the very fact that there was thus no prospect of physical danger made him yet more uneasy. He was a very sane and normal man, with sane and normal reactions, preferring physical contest, even physical danger, to the twisting, gliding struggle between soul and soul or intelligence and intelligence.

"I guess I'm a fool," he thought. "But—I am in love."

Obeying the suggestion of the last thought, he stepped into a telephone booth and called up Marie Dillon.

"I saw Spencer."

"Yes?"

"It's all right. He's giving me a chance, Marie!"

"I'm so glad, dear."

Then a few strictly personal remarks which caused listening-in central to make a sentimental aside to the girl at the next switchboard, and the receiver clicked down. The steely sound jarred Ogilvie unpleasantly. It seemed like an ending to a chapter of his life.

He walked down Seventh Avenue, and by short cuts into Meeker Street and toward Braddon, down through the evil, sodden alleys of that part of town, prurient with dirty memories of the past, slimy with refuse stabbing through the mantle of snow. Foul invectives in English, Yiddish, Greek, and Sicilian cut the air, while garish posters outraged the faces of the buildings.

Braddon Street leaped out of the snow with a packed wilderness of secretive, red-brick dwellings, with stealthy, enigmatic back yards, skulking gables, and furtive, reticent side entrances.

No. 17 was just beyond the corner. It assaulted the night with a flare of yellow lights. He consulted his watch. It was twenty-three minutes after ten. He knocked at the closed door, according to Spencer's directions: two short knocks, a pause, a double knock, another pause, then again a short knock.

The door swung open, and he entered.

CHAPTER II.

NO. 17 BRADDON STREET.

A MOMENTARY hush of expectancy fell like a pall over the company gathered at No. 17 as Ogilvie entered. Spencer's sable coat was wrapped about him in loose, luxurious folds, with the light of the swinging kerosene lamp, in the doorless, octagonal outer hall, stabbing tiny points of gold into the russet-black fur as the draft from the entrance door jerked his coat apart and exposed the lining. He noted in passing the man with the bulbous nose, the great hairy hands, and the exotic, spade-shaped red beard behind the cashier's desk, who looked at him and then turned away. Immediately—the hush of expectancy had lasted only a few seconds—the talk that filled the place like the droning of bees broke forth again; it even rose to a higher note as the hat-check boy—a snobbish anomaly for this part of town, Ogilvie reflected—took the ulster and handed it to a brown-eyed, high-colored, sweet-faced girl who presided over the clothes rack that stood beyond the outer hall, with a rapid stream of clipped, metallic Balkan jargon.

Ogilvie did not miss the strange, almost pitying look in the girl's fine brown eyes as she took the coat, seemed

to finger it for a moment as if enjoying the soft feel of it, and then said to him in guttural, broken English:

"Check, sir! Yes, sir—right check!"

Ogilvie held out his hand. "All right," he said, "let's have the check!"

"But"—the girl shook her head and glanced over at the man with the red beard as if appealing to him—"you have the check, sir!"

"I have not, my dear!"

The girl seemed flustered.

"S'bog s'bogjie," she exclaimed, calling on some Slav deity for help; "you have, you have——"

Blaine Ogilvie laughed. He had always been an easy-going man, had always disliked arguments and quarrels.

"All right, all right," he replied, "have it your own way. Anyhow, that coat is valuable, and I want it back, check or no check. I have witnesses, eh?" He smiled at the red-bearded man, who smiled back with a flash of small, even white teeth.

"Yes, sir," said the girl dully, rather hopelessly. "Oh, yes, sir——"

He tried to dovetail these impressions, between the moment he entered and the moment he sat down and asked for a drink—into a compendious whole—tried to riddle out their keynote.

His first reaction was emphatically tame. He felt disappointed. He had been keyed up to expect something, if not thrilling or bloodcurdling, at least startlingly unconventional or intriguing, and all he saw was an old-fashioned restaurant, harking back, as Spencer had told him, to the days of Aaron Burr and the young Republic. It seemed like an archaic "saloon bar" of colonial days, with its two or three dozen oaken, strong-backed chairs, that stood against the farther wall, each fitted with an occupant, its black settle near the bar, redolent of a former generation when, doubtless, it had been filled by a pompous landlord holding forth, clay pipe in hand, on the comparative virtues of king or parliament. There was the neat, sanded floor, the small, round window high up on the wall with a wheel ventilator in one of the panes, a few quaint pictures in flat mahogany frames, a gayly painted Hadley dower chest, and quite a collection of Spode plates and old English flip glasses.

Altogether a charming, peaceful place—redolent, Ogilvie thought smilingly, of lavender and lace and potent rum toddies. As the outer door clicked in the lock he felt as if the New York that he knew, the brassy, hustling New York of motley, cosmopolitan throngs and hooting motor drays and elevated cars booming along their steely spider's web had been shuttered off, had been sucked back into an air pocket of time.

A purse-mouthed, crane-necked waiter—fully as much of an antique as the rest of the place, with his gray Dundreary whiskers and green baize apron and elastic gaiters—hovered about. Ogilvie gave his order, and, after he was served, lit a cigar and settled comfortably in his chair. Then, unhurriedly, he turned to study the occupants of the restaurant.

The latter were now paying no attention to him. They seemed the pleasant, bromidic folk of the neighborhood, small tradesmen and chauffeurs and skilled mechanics, talking in undertones unexcitedly, without gestures, sipping their innocuous drinks and puffing at well-blackened brier pipes and ten-cent cheroots. Some were playing checkers.

Among them only a few men stood out as types rather out of the ordinary. Thinking of Martyn Spencer's cryptic remarks, of the twenty thousand dollars, the unknown, mysterious reason for his being here, thinking finally of the signal code of knocks which had opened to him the outer door, Blaine Ogilvie studied these men more closely.

He tried to classify them logically in his coolly observant brain—for fu-

ture reference, as he put it; although he added to himself that he would give a good half of the twenty thousand dollars to know what exactly this reference might eventually point to—the reference, the explanation, and the end, the solution——

What end? End of what?

As the moments passed he became conscious of a queer, eerie sensation, like a clay-cold hand gently caressing his spine. It was uncomfortable. He tried to convince himself that it was a draft, the wintry wind booming through the cracked old walls. But he knew that he was lying to himself; knew that it was fear—fear of the unknown—the grayest, most tragic fear in the world! He watched his left hand that held the cigar. It trembled. Then he shook the feeling off suddenly, physically, with a jerk and heave of his broad shoulders, as a cat shakes off raindrops. He turned again to study the few people who seemed to stand out from among the rest of the crowd.

There was, of course, the man behind the cashier's desk, with the spade-shaped, flame-colored beard and the bulbous, large-pored nose. He seemed slightly nervous, shuffling with his finger tips the pages of the ledger in front of him, occasionally looking up in the direction of the door as if waiting for somebody to come. There was also the brown-eyed girl—doubtless belonging to some Slav race—who presided over the clothes rack. She gave a little guilty start as her glance crossed Ogilvie's. Then she turned her back on him and slumped down on her stool, facing the door. The boy in the outer hall, too, was staring at the door, standing quite motionless, tense, like a pointer at bay.

For a second or two Blaine Ogilvie felt fascinated by the grouping of the three figures; it seemed both tragic and incongruous, like a tableau out of some cheap melodrama.

Then he looked away from them and toward the other occupants of the room whom he had decided to observe.

Not far from the black settle by the bar a party of three were sitting around one of the oaken tables, framed on either side by other groups, prosy, uninteresting, small tradesmen or mechanics, as Ogilvie had decided. But these three men were of a different stamp. They sat very quietly, very silently. There was something inhuman about their quietude. One seemed like an elderly roué, handsome in a way, yet amorphous, washed over by the pitiless hand of time and vice. He was smoking a straw-colored cigarette in a ten-inch holder of clear green jade. At his left was a tall, thin man with extraordinarily long arms, the cleaver-like sharpness of his face emphasized by the supercilious upsweep of a heavy black mustache. The third was a youth, not over twenty, dressed in an expensive but foppish manner, with his bench-made brogues, buckskin spats, and a hairy, greenish Norfolk jacket opening over a Tattersall waistcoat of an extravagant pattern. The canary diamond in his purple necktie, if genuine, was worth a small fortune.

In the center of the room, paying not the slightest attention to the click of the counters at the next table, where some men were playing checkers, a man sat alone, a little hunchback whose pear-shaped head just protruded above the table rim. His face was distinguished by an immense hooked nose, a grave brow curving over a tragic, portentous gaze—the look of a mad prophet—and his dome was surmounted incongruously, ludicrously, by a cap in a check of violent magenta and pea green, set far back on the perspiring head. There was something about him that reminded Ogilvie of the Old Testament; not racially, but rather civilizationally—something like the bitter, pitiless logic of the ancient Hebrew annals.

And, finally, at Ogilvie's elbow were two men. One was tall, with a bald, pink head; the face itself, through a trick of the flickering shadows of the swinging kerosene lamps, was indistinct, wiped over with brown and ruby and muddy orange, all but the eyes that, beneath curiously straight and heavy brows, stared hard and shiny blue into vacancy arrestingly expressive of a certain contempt, tinged by a certain pity. The other man would have escaped Ogilvie's notice had it not been for his companion. For he seemed just an average New York business man, spotlessly neat from the exact parting in his honey-colored hair to the gray, herring-bone tweeds that fitted him without a wrinkle. His face was round like a baby's, with a nose inclined to be snub, and his fingers, drumming delicately on the table, were plump and excessively well kept.

There appeared to be nobody else in the restaurant worth considering or studying. Ogilvie tried to determine what these men were whom he had picked out, what they represented—socially, financially, or politically—in the vast macrocosm of New York. Presently, as he watched and thought and weighed, it became clear to him that there was between these men, from table to table, an undercurrent of mutual understanding, expressed by an occasional glance, a faint gesture, even the ghost of a cough. And then suddenly—and it was this which caused fear to rush back upon him—he seemed to notice, to feel more than notice, that all the other people in the room, whom he had dismissed as harmless denizens of the neighborhood, were also involved in this baffling, silent network of mutual understanding, of waiting for something to happen—what—and to whom?

What were these people expecting? Why had they admitted him? What was Martyn Spencer's connection with it all? The three thoughts tumbled over each other, then drew together, blended, crystallized into a third: Why was he here? Because Martyn Spencer had paid him twenty thousand dollars. The answer was obvious. But obvious, too, was the fact that he had earned it. For he had come here, and there was nothing in the agreement between him and Spencer that he had to remain here any specific length of time.

Very well, he thought, the next thing for him to do was to leave the place. He got up unhurriedly, and was about to cross to the entrance hall when the little hunchback in the checked cap spoke two words slowly, without the slightest emphasis:

"Don't go!"

"Why not?" Ogilvie turned and stared at the speaker.

"Because it would be so very useless, wouldn't it?"

The words were quite simple, quite gentle. The hunchback had not moved, nor had any of the other occupants of the room, who continued to converse in low undertones, playing checkers, sipping their drinks, puffing at their pipes and cigars.

But, somehow, through the mists of Ogilvie's apprehension, floated down the knowledge that he was standing on the brink of a catastrophe, a catastrophe of which he knew neither the beginning nor the end. Somehow, he knew that, whatever the reasons for their keeping him here, they would not let him go until their object, whatever it was, had been attained. It seemed inevitable, like fate, and a curious, helpless lassitude swept over him. He realized instinctively that it would do no earthly good to argue with these people. He had never seen them before, nor had they seen him, as far as he knew. And yet they were evidently acting according to a carefully preconceived plan. Too, he sensed that, for all the hunchback's gentle voice, for all the general

air of excessive quietude and peace that pervaded the room like a subtle, insidious perfume, it would be useless to bluff, as useless to show fight.

The odds were against him, and he felt more than ever sure of it when, out of the corner of his eye, he noticed that half a dozen men had risen and were approaching him very quietly, very unobtrusively, one stepping close up to him and asking him in flat, low accents to kindly sit down again.

Ogilvie obeyed. He sat down with a little bow in the direction of the hunchback.

"Very well, sir," he said and lit his second cigar. "I fail to see, however, what——"

"It's really quite useless," said the hunchback.

"Quite, quite useless," echoed the red-bearded man with a curious sigh.

"No use arguing—you mean—asking questions?" suggested Blaine Ogilvie.

"Exactly!" replied the hunchback. "Isn't that so?"

He turned to the company, gathering eyes like a hostess, and there came a rumbling, affirmative chorus:

"Yes—yes——"

Blaine Ogilvie shrugged his shoulders. His thoughts were in a daze. The whole situation seemed unreal and negative. Momentarily he wondered if it were all a dream, from which he would awaken presently to find himself in bed, with the young sun streaming in through the window.

He smoked on in silence. When, a few seconds later, there was the roar of an automobile outside, followed by the code signal of knocks at the street door, he was more conscious of relief than of heightening fear. He looked up curiously as the door opened and admitted two men. One was short and stocky and rather ordinary, assisting a second man who seemed ill. The sick man was walking with evident effort, leaning heavily on a rubber-tipped stick, the feet dragging haltingly and painfully, the bent body huddled in a thick coat, the hat pulled down over the forehead.

He stood still for a second, blinking short-sightedly against the yellow light. A thin smile curled his bloodless lips.

"Is this the place, Hillyer?" he asked, turning to the man who was with him.

"Yes, Monro," replied the other, helping him off with his overcoat.

"And—when—do you suppose——" commenced the first man rather anxiously. "Though I really don't hope that——"

"Now, please! Sit down first, Monro! You need rest," interrupted the other, assisting him into a chair not far from Ogilvie's.

The latter felt completely mystified as well as disappointed. It was all so quiet, so well bred, so unexciting and unhurried. He was steadily becoming less intrigued than frankly bored. A faint suspicion came to him that the whole thing was nothing except a well-staged hoax, a practical joke of sorts.

He turned in his chair and motioned to the green-aproned waiter. The latter approached at a dignified, shuffling run.

"Yes, sir?" he inquired civilly.

"Bring me another——"

Ogilvie did not finish the sentence.

For there came with utter, dramatic suddenness a crimson flash and a grim, cruel roar—a high-pitched cry cut off in mid-air—the dull sound of a falling body.

Instinctively he turned in his chair. Startled, frightened, he rose and stared wide-eyed.

"Oh——"

Through the pall of silence that had dropped over the restaurant, Ogilvie's choked exclamation cut with extraordinary distinctness.

There, curled up like a sleeping dog, in front of his chair, one arm flung wide, the other stretched up and out,

with the fingers bent stiffly, convulsively, as if trying to claw at life, to snatch back the breath of it from the black abyss of oblivion, lay the second of the two men who had come in a few moments earlier, the one who had seemed ill. Something trickled slowly from a neatly drilled bullet hole in his left temple, staining his cheek, his chin, his collar a rich crimson. He was dead. There was no doubt of it.

Murder—thought Blaine Ogilvie. And, if premeditated murder, why had they kept him here? What was supposed to be his connection with it, or, if not his personally, Martyn Spencer's?

CHAPTER III.

BLUECOATS AND A CARVING KNIFE.

EVEN at that tragic moment, Ogilvie could not rid his mind of the incongruous impression that the whole thing was unreal. For there was no such excitement as is generally supposed to follow the witnessing of a violent deed. The majority of the occupants of the restaurant had indeed risen, but there were no cries of horror and indignation, no hysterical exchange of comments and counter-comments. All seemed quiet, orderly, and well bred, as if murder were a commonplace, rather negligible occurrence.

Ogilvie himself had only turned after he had heard the shot fired. He had turned quickly enough, but even so he could not tell who was the assassin. There seemed to be no weapon in evidence, no telltale, guilty attitude.

Still there could be no doubt that some of the other people in the restaurant must have looked in the direction of the newcomers at the time, must have actually witnessed the killing. Yet there was no sign of it: no pointing, accusing hands reached out, nobody gave way to the natural impulse of those who have witnessed a revolting crime—to hurl themselves upon the criminal, to strike him or do him injury.

The short, stocky man who had accompanied the murdered man was still sitting at the table, looking down upon the dead body, his face singularly unexpressive of any emotion whatsoever. He had not even dropped the cigar which he was smoking. The party of three whom Ogilvie had noticed earlier in the evening—the man who looked like an elderly roué, the one with the cleaverlike profile, and the youth in the foppish clothes—had got up, as had the party of two—he with the bald, pink head and the staring, contemptuous eyes, and the one who looked like an average business man. The five had joined and moved forward in a compact group in the direction of the door, talking in undertones to each other and looking not toward the murdered man, but—Ogilvie realized with a start—toward him.

The red-bearded man was still casually shuffling the pages of the ledger with his hairy fingers, while the brown-eyed girl at the clothes rack sat slumped in her chair, perfectly oblivious to everything, apathetic, and the boy in the outer hall leaned against the door jamb, hands in pockets, staring vacantly at nothing in particular.

Subconsciously, yet with the instantaneous fidelity of a photographic lens, all these physical details impressed themselves upon Ogilvie's brain, as did the fact that the hunchback was standing in a clear space, halfway between his and the murdered man's table. For a second, straight through the confusion in his mind, Ogilvie imagined that the latter must have been the assassin, judging from his position. But he dismissed the idea almost immediately, because he recalled that the man had a cigar in his left hand and a glass in his right. He must have risen, just as he was, the moment he had heard the shot or had seen the actual killing.

Presently, very calmly and unhurriedly, the hunchback crossed the room, exchanged a whispered word in passing with the red-bearded man, and stepped into the outer hall. The girl handed him his coat—Ogilvie noticed that it was next to his own, which was swinging from a peg at the near end of the rack—and the man stepped out into the night. The next moment there was the roar of a motor car gathering speed, then fading into the memory of sound.

And still the people in the restaurant remained as they were, quiet and orderly and unexcited. Only the group of five men had moved a little closer toward Blaine Ogilvie.

The latter was speechless. His thoughts were bunched into too violent a turmoil and commingling for immediate disentanglement. It was the first time in his civil life that he had seen death, and it appeared to him singularly undignified, singularly drab and commonplace. Even war gave it a certain dramatic mise en scène. Yet the shock of it had cut deeply into his inner consciousness.

That thing there on the floor—with the crimson stain slowly trickling down and thickening blackly—the stiff, convulsive fingers—useless, hopeless, weakly ineffectual—and it had been alive a few minutes earlier—had smiled, breathed, talked, acted——

It was beginning to affect Ogilvie physically, and he felt slightly ill. The feeling increased, grew to a choking, nauseating sensation, gripped his chest, his throat, caused him to cough violently. Instinctively he turned from the table in the direction of the washroom, whose sign he had noticed on entering at the left of the outer hall.

He had hardly taken a step when quickly, yet without a word, the group of five men advanced toward him in a solid phalanx, threateningly barring his way. The youth in the Norfolk suit gripped his arm, and it was this physical contact which cleared Ogilvie's brain and caused him to act. Whatever the reason for Martyn Spencer's strange bargain with him, whatever the cause of the murder or the personality of the murderer, whatever the beginning and problematical end of it all, it became suddenly clear to him that he must get away as rapidly as possible. Remembering football tactics on the college gridiron, where he had been fully as famous for the almost African power of resistance of his skull as for the sturdy speed of his legs, he bent almost double and made a flying leap in the direction of the door, head well forward and down, like a battering-ram.

The youth tried to stop him. Ogilvie caught him full in the pit of the stomach with his head. The youth dropped, with a funny, squeaky little noise of pain, while, at the same moment, the other four hurled themselves upon Ogilvie, their fists going like flails. Ogilvie kept his presence of mind and gave a short laugh. He had taken part in a few rough-and-tumble fights and knew that when a number of men turn against one they usually interfere more with each other than they hurt the man whom they attack.

He fought well, careful to step back a little, with his back to the wall, at his left a table where, a few moments earlier, the waiter had carved a beefsteak.

He dodged and danced and grappled. His breath came in short, violent bursts. At one and the same time he was trying to land blow, to parry blow, to sidestep kicking feet and crashing elbows, and to make a dash for the door, the night, safety. The odds were against him. A rough knuckle caught him on the left temple, an open palm hit the point of his chin, the man with the bald, pink head dodged within the very crook of Ogilvie's powerful right

arm and grappled, while the others, joined by the youth, who had revived, closed in the next moment like hounds pulling down a stag.

Ogilvie felt himself seized about the chest under the armpits by a bearlike grasp. He reached back, his fingers closed, something ripped, tore, like cloth. He had no time to think what it was. For a moment he felt as if his ribs were crushing in his lungs. His temples throbbed. Blue wheels whirled in front of his eyes. The roof of his mouth felt parched.

Straining, cursing, he fell to the floor, one of the attackers on top of him, another booting him in the ribs, a third dancing about on the outskirts of the mêlée, watching his chance for a knock-out blow. Bending down, he shot his fist to Ogilvie's jaw, but the latter jerked his head back in the nick of time, and the next second, with a sudden, hard crunching of muscles, he pinioned the arms of the man who was on top of him to both his sides, spread his strong legs, bridged his massive body, and tried desperately to pull himself up. He was succeeding in this when suddenly the first man, with a wolfish snarl, sank his teeth in his ear.

"Curse you!" exclaimed Ogilvie in rage and pain.

Then, with a great jerk and heave, he freed himself, sending the first man crashing into the second, the second into the third. Jumping back, he saw the curved, razor-sharp, old-fashioned carving knife, which the waiter had left on the table, and reached for it.

He did it instinctively, unthinkingly. Hitherto, by the token of his class and training, he had been fighting according to the unwritten code, had still been playing the game. Now his prejudices and inhibitions danced away in a mad whirligig of rage and resentment, and the carving knife leaped to his hand like a sentient thing, catching the rays of the kerosene lamp, so that the point of it glittered like a cresset of evil passions.

He used the knife like a rapier, with carte and tierce, with thrust and counterthrust and quick, staccato ripost, pinking here a leg, there a hand, and ripping through cloth as with the edge of a razor, stiffening or crooking his arm as he lunged to the attack or estrapaded sideways or feinted to parry clumsy, ineffectual blows and kicks. Some of the other people in the room had rushed up and were joining in the attack, but, as before, they only served to interfere with each other. Somebody threw a chair. It failed of its mark—Ogilvie's head—and hit the youth in the Norfolk suit, who dropped, *hors de combat,* this time for good. Another threw a bottle, it jerked high, crashed against the lamp, and the light guttered out. The room was plunged in coiling, trooping shadows, except for the few haggard rays that stole in from the lamp in the outer hall.

"Careful! Careful!" somebody warned. In the semidarkness friend was hitting friend. At this moment the street door opened, and by the side of the hunchback two policemen entered, nightsticks readily poised. One of them flashed an electric torch, and the hunchback took in the situation at a glance.

"Quick!" he said to the bluecoats. "There he is—trying to get away——"

"Who?"

"The man I told you about—the murderer!" And he pointed straight at Blaine Ogilvie.

The latter's mind worked with the instantaneous precision of a photographic shutter. He saw the trap—he, the murderer—with a dozen witnesses against him! He acted even as he understood. He danced back from the attacking crowd, then forward suddenly, knife in hand. He catapulted himself through the mass with a sort of breathless, sullen audacity. He was too excited probably to feel ordinary fear at that mo-

ment. If he had time to think at all, he considered that he had no chance, in spite of his knife, to give battle to the two muscular, solid policemen who stood there on broad-planted feet, sticks ominously raised, ready to fell him.

He ducked very suddenly, before the two policemen had a chance to realize what was happening, before they had time to put the brake on their brawny right arms. Down came the night-sticks, and they hit each other, temporarily putting themselves out of commission instead of hitting Ogilvie.

With a triumphant little laugh he straightened up again, and, before anybody knew exactly what was going on, obeying some subconscious impulse which reminded him that the night was cold and the coat expensive, he tore Martyn Spencer's sable-lined ulster from the rack, flung it about his shoulders, and was out of the door and into the street.

The automobile which had brought the murdered man and which the hunchback had used a few minutes earlier was still in front, purring invitingly. He jumped into the driver's seat, and the chain-protected tires gripped the snow-crusted pavement. Momentarily the machine seemed to pause, to quiver, as if taking in a great lungful of breath, and a deep, expectant whine rose from its steely body. Then it plunged forward enthusiastically, like a being with a heart and a soul, making naught of the grimy, sticky, slushy snow puddles; and Blaine Ogilvie, who belonged to that new generation which is as alive to the personality and the idiosyncrasies of machinery as the older generation were to horseflesh, rode the steering wheel as he had never done before.

Gradually he increased the speed, sucking every ounce of strength and energy from gasoline and engine, as he heard the voices that poured from the restaurant increase, then diminish, and fade away, bending low as a revolver bullet whistled over his head. He made a corner at nearly a right angle, as if he were trying to lift the car along the pavement by sheer strength of muscle. Taking another corner on two wheels, shaving a lamp-post, evading gesticulating policemen, twisting past top-heavy motor drays, scattering a crowd of homing theater-goers, he finally turned into the Avenue that rose out of the snow-blotched darkness between parallel curves of warm, lemon lights.

At Fifty-first Street he turned east until he reached a little house that seemed rather out of place, framed as it was on both sides by tall, pretentious apartment buildings. Small it was, compact, almost pagan in its Greek simplicity. Ogilvie stopped the car, jumped out, ran up the steps, and pushed the electric bell.

A moment later a white-haired serant opened the door.

"Yes, sir?" he inquired, blinking short-sightedly. Then a smile overspread his wrinkled old features as he recognized the late visitor. "Why—Mr. Ogilvie—come in, sir! Please come in!"

"Is the big chief at home?" asked the other, stepping past the servant into the vestibule.

"He hasn't come in yet, sir."

"Very annoying."

"Won't you wait, sir?"

"I guess I will." Ogilvie threw off his fur coat. "By the way, will you go outside and drive my car into the garage, if you don't mind, Tompkins?"

"Right, sir."

"And—Tompkins——"

"Yes, sir?"

"All the other servants asleep?"

"Yes, sir."

"Good! Don't mention to any of them that I'm here—that you've seen me to-night—I have my reasons."

"Very well, sir."

And Tompkins bowed with the imperturbable calm of a British butler and withdrew, while Ogilvie entered the next room, occupied himself for a few seconds with a bottle of Bourbon and a syphon that were awaiting their master's return, chose a comfortable chair, and stretched himself luxuriously.

Presently he dozed off.

CHAPTER IV.

IN HIS POCKET.

HE was awakened—he did not know how much later—by a pleasant, laughing voice at his elbow.

"Hello, old man!"

Ogilvie sat up and yawned and looked at Gadsby, a tall, lean man with a square, angular jaw, thin, sensitive lips that subtended a quixotic nose, and dreamy brown eyes.

"Quite comfortable?" asked Gadsby with a smile.

"Like a bug in a rug, Bob. And"—he paused a little—"quite safe!"

He had given the last word the emphasis of a suddenly lowered voice, and Gadsby frowned perplexedly.

"What do you mean—quite safe?" he inquired.

"Aren't you the police commissioner?" came Ogilvie's counter-question.

"I have that distinction. What about it?"

"Well, I hardly imagine the police will look for me here in your private residence. Nor will they look for the car—which, incidentally, I swiped—in your immaculate garage."

"What are you talking about?"

"Nothing much. Only—well, your flat-footed minions are after me, hot on my trail."

"What have you done?"

"I was just a plain idiotic fool."

"That's nothing new," Gadsby returned ungraciously. "What else have you done?"

"Nothing—I told you, didn't I? But the police have an idea that I committed——"

"What—for the love of Mike?"

"Murder!"

"Good heavens!"

"And that isn't all, Bob. They've a couple of bakers' dozens of witnesses, all cocked and primed to swear to it!"

Ogilvie lit a cigar while the police commissioner collapsed weakly into a chair.

Robert W. Gadsby was that curiously paradoxical and curiously effective combination: a materialistic idealist. He was both a doer and a dreamer; both a politician and an honest man; both a reformer and a sane man who saw people and conditions as they were, without the lying help of rosy-tinted, psychic spectacles.

Of fine old New York stock and immense wealth, and with a slightly provincial civic pride which had its roots in the days when New York was New Amsterdam, when people imported their liquor from Holland, when wild turkeys flopped their drab wings between Broadway and the Bronx, and when the Gadsby's had their country estate in the eventual neighborhood of Sixth Avenue and Twenty-ninth Street, he had gone in for local politics on leaving college as a simple matter of duty, because, as he put it, he was an American, a New Yorker, and a rich man. He had run for various offices, had been elected repeatedly, and when, at the last city election, the swing of the pendulum swept his party into the seats of the mighty, he had been given his choice of several appointments. Unhesitatingly, believing detection and prevention of crime to be the backbone of good city government, he had chosen the office of commissioner of police.

He was making good. Even his political opponents, in their newspapers, found it increasingly difficult to con-

coct and correlate statistics misleading enough to prove that crime had increased during his administration. Nobody could accuse him of corruption and graft, for he was a millionaire; nobody could ridicule him as an unpractical visionary and congenital reformer, for Scotland Yard had sent over experts to study some of his methods and innovations; nobody could suspect him of too great political ambition, for a higher office than this would have been his for the asking.

He and Blaine Ogilvie were old friends—the sort who do not see each other with mathematical regularity, but who can continue a conversation, even after an absence of half a year, just about at the point where they had broken it off.

Gadsby looked at his friend. "Of course you are only joking?" he asked.

"I wish I were," came Ogilvie's reply.

"B-but——"

"I'm telling you the plain, unvarnished, rock-bottom truth, Bob!"

"Really?"

"Abso-tively!"

"Great Cæsar!" Gadsby walked up and down excitedly. "Let's hear the whole story—every detail—omit nothing."

And Ogilvie told him. "What do you make of it?" he wound up.

"That you're in a pretty mess!"

"I am aware of that myself. What else do you make of it?"

Gadsby shook his head. "I don't know," he said slowly, dully. "I don't know!" He slurred, stopped, went on: "Of course you've come here to give yourself up, I suppose?"

"Don't you go supposing things that aren't so, Bob, and you'll save yourself many a disappointment."

"Why—I don't understand!"

"If I had wanted to surrender, I wouldn't have made that rather sensational get-away, would I?"

"But, Blaine——"

"Well?"

"You are suspected of murder. There are witnesses—didn't you tell me?"

"A whole mob of them—they're all hand in glove—I see that now. What's that got to do with——"

"I must arrest you. There is my sworn duty."

"Forget your sworn duty, man! Didn't I hear you give a long spiel during the last campaign that the unwritten duty is fully as important as the written?" Ogilvie smiled. "I voted for your chosen party. Come on! Make good on your election promises!"

"But—my duty——"

"There you go again! You're becoming tiresome. You've duty on the brain. It's your duty—since you insist on arguing about it—to catch the guilty man, not a poor innocent sucker like myself."

"You're under suspicion until you've proved your innocence, Blaine."

"I know. Three cheers for the logic of jurisprudence! But, don't you see, old man, that I can't remove the suspicion until——"

"Well?"

"Until you've found and convicted the guilty party—the real murderer."

"Exactly! That's where I come in. I will——"

"You can't, Bob. First of all, why should the police trouble? Haven't they a number of witnesses to swear to my guilt? Do you want any more direct evidence? Why should the police trouble to look farther afield since they've got me?"

"I'll make them! I am the boss!"

"A fat lot of good that will do you and me. Don't you see? There are no other witnesses except those who will testify against me."

"You had no revolver!"

"They'll swear that I had one. I tell you the whole gang will stick together."

"But why?"

"I don't know why, but I do know they will. The whole thing was a most ingenious trap. Everybody played a part in it—even the girl at the hat rack and the waiter—everybody except myself and——"

"Who?"

"The murdered man! They got him there under some pretense. Bob, if you arrest me the district attorney's office will try me, and I won't have a chance in the world. It's a cinch that I'll decorate the electric chair."

There was a pause. Ogilvie poured himself another drink and tossed it down neat.

"Bob," he continued, "you're up against something brand-new. You will have to let me go—a man accused of murder, guilty by every last particle of direct evidence. You'll have to let the accused go, so that he can play detective and find the real murderer."

"What about Martyn Spencer?"

"I don't know yet. Haven't had time to think. But he must have known why he sent me there. Didn't he give me the twenty thousand dollars? And —that crowd didn't seem to know Spencer personally—otherwise why did they frame me up? No! Whatever his reasons, I don't think that Spencer will say much. Of course, I'll try and make him come through. But I haven't much hope. He's a business man, and he made a bargain with me—paid me—and—well, I lost."

"I'll put my own detective force on the job."

"What clews can they find? I am more liable to find them than they."

"Why, Blaine?"

"Because I am rather vitally interested in the affair."

"But I must arrest you. I'll do anything else I can. I'll hold up the case——"

"You can't for any length of time. The opposition papers will make it hot for you. They'll discover that you and I are friends. They'll influence public opinion. They'll force your hand. They'll make the district attorney try me and convict me in record time. And, if your detectives should find the real murderer—why, by that time I'll be buried in a prison cemetery. Bob, you'll have to forget your sworn duty for once."

Ogilvie turned and walked to the end of the room. Gadsby sat down, and his troubled face betrayed his preoccupation. Finally he looked up. "I'll do it," he said in a low, clear voice.

"Bully for you!"

"On one condition."

"Name it!"

"Any time I want you, you must come in and surrender."

Ogilvie laughed. "No need for that, old man!"

"Why not?"

"Because you'll have me under your personal surveillance all the time."

"How so?"

"You have a spare bedroom, haven't you?"

"You—you mean——"

"Right!" continued Ogilvie with calm effrontery. "You're going to have a guest—oh"—he laughed—"a paying guest—for I still have Spencer's twenty thousand dollars——"

"But—listen——"

"Your house is the only safe place for me. The police won't hunt for me here. Tompkins has known me since I was a kid in knickers—he worked for your father, didn't he?—sort of inherited him, British accent and 'yes, sir,' and 'thank you, sir,' and all. I've already slipped him a word of warning —all you'll have to do is to swear him to secrecy. As to your other servants——"

"Only one—Tompkins' wife. That part's all right—but——" Gadsby shook his head. "It's very unusual," he commented weakly.

"Very!" agreed Ogilvie. "Here am I, accused of murder, guilty by every last bit of direct evidence—playing my own detective and hiding in the private residence of the head of the police department. It's the most unusual thing I have ever run across." He rose. "We'll talk it over to-morrow. I'm too tired to-night, what with all this excitement and that potent Bourbon of yours. Where did you get it, Bob? I thought the country was dry!"

He poured himself a liberal good-night cap, and fifteen minutes later was comfortably stretched out in one of the police commissioner's best four-poster beds, dressed in a pair of the police commissioner's silk pajamas, and reading the police commissioner's favorite volume of French poetry. Half an hour later he was fast asleep.

Tompkins awakened him with an appetizing breakfast tray, a newspaper, and an embarrassed cough.

Ogilvie sat up in bed and laughed. "Don't look like a conspirator, Tompkins," he said.

"But—oh, sir——"

"Mr. Gadsby told you, I take it?"

"Yes, sir," came the despondent reply.

"All right. Forget it. I'm as innocent as a new-born lamb."

"Oh—thank you, sir!"

"Two pieces of sugar—that's right—a little more cream." Ogilvie sipped his coffee. "Want to do me a favor, Tompkins?"

"Yes, sir."

"Call up Miss Marie Dillon—Spring 43789—and tell her——" He was puzzled. "What are you going to tell her?"

"Leave it to me, sir," replied Tompkins, a wintry smile lighting up his features. "I've been married thirty-nine years."

"Gosh! And I never knew you had a sense of humor!"

"Thank you, sir."

"Don't thank me—thank your Creator. And now, the newspaper, please!"

"Here you are, sir. You'll find the headline quite interesting, sir."

And Ogilvie did. For, smeared across the front page of the *Morning Sentinel* in screaming, extravagant three-inch type, he read:

SENSATIONAL CRIME.

Stranger Kills Well-known Philanthropist Guest at Benefactors Club. Assassin Makes His Get-away.

"Assassin will have another cup of the police commissioner's excellent coffee," said Blaine Ogilvie, and suited the action to his words.

The newspaper account related that No. 17 Braddon Street was a little restaurant, dating back to pre-Revolutionary days, which closed its doors to the general public at ten p. m. After ten, the article went on, it served as a nightly meeting place for an organization which called itself the "Benefactors Club," which was composed of business and professional men, who met there to discuss art, politics, science, literature, religion, and other live topics.

The report gave a list of the club members. They had simple, prosy names and simple, prosy addresses: from Thomas W. Robinson, 22456 West Seventy-eighth Street to Doctor Jerome McNulty, 44589 Riverside Drive, from J. J. Mulrooney, 15826 East One Hundred and Eighty-third Street to Donald Kayser, somewhere on the French Boulevard—altogether, on the face of it, an apex of Gotham's civic virtues, a very epitome of all the upper West Side's, the Bronx's, and Chelsea's stout, burgess respectability.

It appeared that occasional late vis-

itors, unfamiliar with the early closing hour of the restaurant proper, were usually turned away by the boy at the door or by the proprietor, who presided behind the cashier's desk and who was also a member of the club—the man with the spade-shaped red beard and the bulbous nose, Ogilvie added mentally as he read—but that last night a stranger had made his appearance around half past ten, evidently a well-to-do man about town, judging from his superb, sable-lined ulster.

Here followed an excellent description of Blaine Ogilvie.

This stranger had explained that he had lost his way, that he was tired and cold and hungry, and finally he had been allowed to come in and had been served with food and cigars.

Shortly afterward one of the club members, a certain Doctor Hillyer O. McGrath, of 11921 West Eleventh Street, had driven up in his automobile, accompanied by a friend not a member of the organization, Mr. Monro Clafflin, the well-known retired merchant and philanthropist. A few minutes later, the report continued, without giving either reason or warning—in fact, without saying a word—the stranger had pulled out a revolver, fired point-blank at Mr. Clafflin, killing him instantly, and had made his get-away in Doctor McGrath's car, after a sensational fight.

Here followed a fairly accurate description of Ogilvie's battle and escape. It seemed that he had thrown the revolver away, and that it had afterward been picked up by Mr. Montross D. Clapperton, the president of the Benefactors Club, who—the hunchback, came Ogilvie's silent comment—had run out, a few minutes before the stranger's get-away, to fetch the police. Several of the club members had received minor injuries. Mr. Cornelius van Alstyne had been hit by a chair; Mr. Leopold Fischer had a black eye, besides having his clothes torn; while Captain Jeremiah Blount, Mr. Holister Welkin, and Mr. Audley R. Chester—addresses given in each case—had been wounded by a carving knife which the assassin had picked up.

Ogilvie smiled when he considered that here, doubtless, he had a list of the different men whom he had observed and scrutinized shortly after he had entered No. 17; and he smiled again when he read, in the last paragraph of the article, that the police so far had not discovered either the name or the whereabouts of the assassin, but that, given the accurate description, they expected no trouble in putting their hands on him within the next twenty-four hours—"thanks to the marvelously up-to-date and efficient methods of our police commissioner, Mr. Robert W. Gadsby."

"Bob," Ogilvie said to the latter, after he had shaved and bathed and dressed, pointing at the last line, "the newspapers are handing you a bouquet."

"They'll hand me a brickbat," said the other, "when they learn——"

"Please! No more 'duty' stuff! We had all that out last night. Now—for the real murderer."

"How are you going to discover him?"

"By looking for the motives."

"And how are you going to find his motives?"

"By investigation and elimination. First of all, here's a list of names and addresses I culled from the morning paper. These are the people I specially noticed last night. Have your department look them up. See who they are, what they do, their reputation, and all that sort of thing, you know."

"Yes," said the police commissioner as he tucked the list of names away. "What else?"

"Get a general survey of the other

members of the club. You'll find their names and addresses in the *Morning Sentinel.* Here—"

"What about Martyn Spencer?" asked Gadsby.

"I haven't much hope there. But get a line on him, whatever you can. See if you can make head or tail of any of the fantastic tales that used to be afloat about him."

"All right. I'll try."

"And—oh, yes—find out about Clafflin, the murdered man, you know, and that Doctor McGrath, who brought him and——"

"Pardon me, old man," came the police commissioner's ironic interjection, "what are you going to do? I had an idea you were going to play detective."

"I can't leave the house—at least not yet—can I, you chump? I am going to do my bit at long distance. I am going to correlate and eliminate and dovetail. Let's have a look at Spencer's ulster now. I told you—didn't I?—how the girl felt the fur and said something about my having the check—'the right check'—and how she looked over at the red-bearded man as if to appeal to him."

"Are you sure she didn't give you a check?"

"I am positive, Bob."

The police commissioner took out his cigar case. "Care for a smoke?" he asked.

"Thanks. I will."

Ogilvie took the cigar and groped in his left coat pocket for a match. Then he gave a little, startled exclamation.

"Hello! What's that?" He drew his hand from his pocket.

"Well? Found the check after all?" inquired Gadsby.

"No. I found this!"

Ogilvie opened his hand. It held a ragged bit of gray, herring-bone tweed, evidently, judging from the buttonhole, torn from a man's coat lapel.

"The gray suit—the fellow with the round, babyish face who looked like a typical business man—what's his name?" Ogilvie consulted the morning paper. "Oh, yes—Leopold Fischer—had his eye blackened and his suit torn——"

"What are you saying, Blaine?"

"I remember. I reached back of me in that rough-and-tumble fight. I felt something rip and give. Must have dropped it into my pocket without thinking. Here it is—and—oh—look, Bob!"

And he turned over the torn shred of tweed and pointed at a small, round metal disk which was fastened to it.

"Bob," he said, "the investigation begins right here."

And he bent closely over the little metal disk, while the other entered the next room to telephone to headquarters.

CHAPTER V.

PLAIN FOOLS OR IDEALISTS.

THE disk was round and flat, a third of an inch in diameter, with a narrow, well-beveled edge, and no marks of any sort on it except a number—17—deeply engraved in the center. Ogilvie was still examining it when Gadsby returned from the next room, where he had had a lengthy telephone conversation with headquarters.

"I have sent some of my very best men out on the case," he said. "Detective Sergeant Miller is going to get a line on Martyn Spencer. O'Neale will investigate the murdered man and his connection with Doctor McGrath. And Campbell and Wimpflinger and a couple of others are going to see what they can find out about the different club members."

"That's bully."

"What do you make of that disk?"

"Oh, nothing much. I guess it's the badge of the Benefactors Club."

"Sounds fairly reasonable."

"There's only one thing about it that's puzzling me," continued Ogilvie.

"What?"

"Here!" Ogilvie gave the round bit of metal to the other. "See for yourself, then we'll compare notes. In the meantime I'll take a look at friend Spencer's luxurious ulster."

While the police commissioner examined the club badge, Ogilvie took the sable coat from the rack in the outer hall and scrutinized it narrowly.

Presently he got up and put on the coat.

Gadsby looked up. "Not dreaming of going out, are you?" he asked, alarmed.

"Heavens—no! I'm just going to reconstruct the scene in No. 17 when I entered. Look here a moment, will you?"

"Certainly."

"That's the way I came in. I took off my coat and gave it to the boy—like this. The boy gave it to the girl—this way. Watching?"

"Yes, yes. Go on."

"The girl——" Ogilvie puzzled, then continued: "Wait! I remember! Yes. First she fingered the coat as if she liked the feel of it. And afterward—afterward, Bob—she made that funny remark about my having the check—'the right check'—and exchanged looks with the red-bearded man."

"Well, I fail to see——"

"Question is," said Ogilvie, "did she feel something which caused her to make that remark? Let me see if I can recall the scene. She took the coat with both hands—this way. No, no—wait—the other way! Her right hand like this—while her left hand slipped beneath the fur collar—here—watch—this way!" He suited the action to the words. "Now, what did she feel? Or what did she find?"

He turned up the fur collar, looked close for several seconds, and smiled.

"Bob," he said, "let's have that badge for a moment."

"Found a clew?"

"I think so."

The police commissioner came nearer. "Another such badge?" he inquired.

"No, but the marks of one. Look here! See where the fur has been rubbed off? Now watch!" He put the disk over the place he had indicated. "The disk fits it exactly—isn't that so?"

"Right. And——"

"It's quite clear. There was a badge fastened here when the girl took the coat. And—by jingo—Spencer knew it when he forced the coat on me!"

"Where is the disk now?"

"I haven't the faintest idea. The girl took it, or I lost it. 'The right check'—the disk she meant! And it was this disk, combined with the signal code of knocks at the door, which gave me the right to enter, or perhaps"—he slurred, then went on, instinctively lowering his voice—"the duty to enter?"

"What do you mean by that?" came the other's puzzled query.

"Just that."

"But——"

"Listen!" said Ogilvie. "Wasn't Spencer afraid of No. 17?"

"Doubtless."

"Would he have been afraid unless it had been his duty to go there? If it had only been his right—why, man—he needn't have gone! That's clear, isn't it?"

"Yes."

"And, furthermore, didn't he slip me twenty thousand dollars of the realm to go in his place? Weren't they expecting——"

"Not Spencer!" interrupted Gadsby. "Otherwise they wouldn't have framed you up, since they didn't know you—had no reason to——"

"Well, they were expecting somebody

—somebody who was going to get it in the neck, for some reason or other. That's the knot we'll have to solve."

Ogilvie was silent for a few moments. He walked up and down, thinking deeply, presently turning to answer Gadsby's question what the puzzling thing was which he had noticed about the badge.

"Just this!" he replied. "What metal is it made of?"

The police commissioner looked at it again. "I don't know," he admitted finally.

"Nor do I. Of course I am not an expert metallurgist. But I know enough to tell that it's neither gold nor silver——"

"It isn't platinum, either."

"And it isn't steel or bronze or any other metal I am familiar with. Bob, please send Tompkins over to some jeweler on the Avenue and have him examine the thing."

"We've an expert assayist at headquarters—one of my innovations," said the police commissioner rather proudly. "He'll give us a report by to-night."

"Bully!"

The day crawled on leadenly. Gadsby left to attend to his duties at headquarters, and Ogilvie fell a prey to certain violent reactions from his cheerful, jesting mood. He became nervous, fidgety, even afraid, as he stared out into the street, well hidden by the window curtains.

Day died, with a white, purple-nicked pall of snow, pierced by the crimson and gold lights reflected on innumerable windowpanes, and the dull, lemon glow of the street lamps, and melting, farther out, into a drab cosmos where the brown, moist haze from the Hudson drifted up, twisting and turning to the call of the river wind.

Night was coming. Night—thought Ogilvie, with just a trace of bitter self-pity—night, over on Broadway, with food and light phrases, with the festive hooting of motor horns and gayety and laughter and the tuning-up of the orchestras and the clapping of white-gloved hands! And here he was—suspected of murder—in hiding.

"Mr. Ogilvie! Please, sir!" Tompkins interrupted the other's gray reveries.

"Yes?"

"I telephoned to Miss Dillon, sir. I met her and talked to her."

"Oh—good!" Ogilvie smiled as he regained his poise. "What particular lie did you tell her?"

Tompkins hesitated for a few moments. Then he spoke up straight: "Beg pardon, sir, but I told her the truth."

At first Ogilvie felt enraged. "What the mischief——" Then quite suddenly he smiled and shook the butler's wrinkled hand.

"Tompkins," he said, "you're an A Number One peach, and—take it from me—you do know women. Miss Dillon's the sort of girl one just naturally has to tell the truth to. You were right and I was wrong. How did she take it?"

"Well, sir, she took it very bravely. But then, of course, she had had a sort of a warning——"

"Warning! What do you mean?"

And, urged on by the impatient Ogilvie, the stoical old Englishman told him how he had telephoned to Miss Dillon, how suddenly he had decided not to trust his message to the telephone wires, but had made an appointment with her. He had met her in front of the public library. "Yes, sir," he added with a little smile, "I felt quite like I used to forty years ago; asked her to wear a red rose so I'd recognize her." Then he had related to her what had happened to her fiancé. She, on her side, had given him also some rather startling news to communicate to Ogilvie. For late last night—she was living

alone in a tiny flat—a messenger had brought her an envelope. She had found in it a check for a hundred thousand dollars, drawn on the Drovers' National Bank, and made out by Martyn Spencer, with a note which she had given to Tompkins to bring to Ogilvie.

The latter read:

DEAR LITTLE MARIE: I haven't seen you since you were a small girl in short skirts and I quite a big boy, just out of college, up at Grandmother Ryerson's old farm in Vermont. But I haven't exactly forgotten you. I have made a lot of money these last few years, and so—please—accept the inclosed check with all my very best cousinly wishes. Don't be a silly little proud fool and refuse it. After all, we are cousins, and you may need the money; or, if not you, then the man you are engaged to marry, Blaine Ogilvie. And criminal lawyers are expensive. Don't call me up or write to me, as I am leaving the country to-night, and not even my office force has the faintest notion where I am bound for. Yours very cordially,

MARTYN S.

The news of Spencer's having left the country was confirmed a few moments later by the police commissioner, who came in filled to the brim with the different reports he had received from his picked detectives, as well as from his expert assayist.

All the reports, according to the police commissioner's system, were in writing, and Detective Sergeant Miller's was explicit:

Martyn Spencer left last night for an unknown destination. I don't know yet whether by train, boat, or automobile. I questioned some of his employees, the help of the Hotel Stentorian, where he has taken a suite by the year, rent paid in advance, his valet, and the elevator starter in his office building. They are all new people whom he has hired since his return to New York, a few months back. They have orders to carry on the work which he has mapped out for them, mostly the selling of various parcels of real estate in the Bronx, and which will take them easily twelve months. Mr. Anthony Hicks, his private secretary, has been given power of attorney over whatever local business Martyn Spencer has in New York, with orders to transmit all money realized to the credit of Martyn Spencer with the branch of the British Linen Bank in Glasgow, Scotland. He has also been intrusted with a large sum banked with the Drovers' National Bank to pay the salaries of the office force and of Spencer's valet for the next eighteen months, as well as for overhead expenses and incidentals. I have started inquiries as to Spencer's former life and shall make a further report to-morrow.

"Found out quite a lot, didn't he?" complimented Blaine Ogilvie.

"Right," agreed the other. "Miller has a persuasive way and X-ray eyes. Oh—wait"—turning over the typewritten sheet. "Here's a postscript;" and he read:

I have furthermore found out that the Bronx real estate which Martyn Spencer has given orders to sell was only acquired by him during the last few months, after his return to America.

The police commissioner shook his head. "I don't see what good that particular bit of information will do us," he commented.

"Don't you?" asked Ogilvie softly.

"Do you?"

"You bet!" came the other's reply. "In fact, I think that, taken in conjunction with the other business details, it's the most interesting and illuminating part of the whole report. I believe it constitutes that mysterious and romantic thing which you fellows of the police call a clew."

"Mind explaining?"

"Not a bit." Ogilvie leaned forward in his chair. "There's been a sudden and tremendous slump in business these last few months, hasn't there?"

"Yes," admitted the other rather sadly. "All my own investments——"

"Everything," interrupted Ogilvie, "has come tumbling down like a house made of cards, and chiefly real estate. There has been no building going on in Manhattan for over three months, isn't that right?"

"Perfectly. And——"

"Why, then, should Martyn Spencer

—who is a business man, a mighty shrewd one and as rich as mud—take, for instance, that hundred thousand dollars he sent to Miss Dillon and the twenty thousand he slipped to me—sell at this moment, when prices are down to bed rock, instead of holding on and waiting for a rise? Furthermore, why does he, the wary, careful, farsighted financier, leave his local affairs in the hands of a recently hired office force and give his power of attorney to a youthful and recently acquired private secretary?"

"Well, why? What's the answer?" asked Gadsby impatiently.

"Spencer got away in such a hurry that he didn't care, hadn't time to care, what happened to his business here. And, by the same token, it's evident that he does not intend to return to New York. On the other hand, when he came here, he took a long lease on his office space and on his suite at the Hotel Stentorian—which proves that originally he did intend to make a lengthy stay, perhaps to settle here for good. Therefore, he made up his mind to leave in a hurry, regardless of everything except——"

"His safety?" interjected Gadsby.

"Exactly! Clew, eh?"

"Clew is right!" said the police commissioner, and turned to the next report, O'Neale's, which dealt with the murdered man, Monro Clafflin, and his connection with Doctor McGrath.

O'Neale, too, had worked with efficiency and dispatch. Via the gliding gossip of the back stairs and the pantry and with the help of his honeyed Irish tongue, he had ascertained that Doctor McGrath—the same McGrath, he added incidentally, who had invented the famous McGrath pulmotor—had been Clafflin's physician for a number of years, that practitioner and patient were intimate personal friends, that the latter had been suffering for a long time from a complication of organic diseases, and that—here O'Neale had attached a verbatim report by Miss Maisie Heinz, nurse—he had not been expected to live the year out. For the last eighteen months Clafflin had been in almost continuous pain.

The report wound up:

For the last few weeks Mr. Clafflin appeared a little more cheerful. Once he mentioned to Josiah Higgins, his butler—whose verbatim report I attach—that there was a possibility of his recuperating, as Doctor McGrath had spoken to him about a remarkable young physician whom he wished to consult about the case. Last night Mr. Clafflin left in the doctor's car, coughing badly and evidently in pain, but cheerful and laughing in spite of it. The butler overheard the last conversation between the two. "Monro, old man," had said the doctor, "there's a pretty good chance that you'll be rid of your sufferings for good and all tonight!" "Rather quick cure?" Clafflin had replied, with a smile. "But possible!" had come the doctor's final words.

The police commissioner put down the report, and Ogilvie looked up.

"Bob," he said, "Doctor McGrath's prophecy came true, didn't it?"

"How so?"

"Well, Monro Clafflin did get rid of his sufferings for good and all last night, didn't he? He died!"

"That's one way of putting it," said the police commissioner, and added that he had met O'Neale coming up the Avenue on his way home, and that the latter, in the meantime, had made further investigations about Doctor Hillyer McGrath.

"Did he find out anything interesting?" asked Ogilvie.

"No. He called on the doctor—under some professional pretext, sore throat or something like that—and found him at home. He tells me the doctor lives in an extremely modest little apartment and seems to be a poor man.

"Funny!" commented Ogilvie.

"You mean—because Clafflin, his friend and patient, was rich?"

"No. But I would have imagined that the pulmotor he invented must have brought him in quite a lot of money."

"Perhaps he didn't have it patented," said Gadsby, and turned to the next report.

Detectives Campbell and Wimpflinger had been sent to investigate the hunchback, as well as the five men whom Ogilvie had particularly noticed at No. 17 and with whom he had had the fight.

It was pithy and succinct, and read as follows:

1. Montross D. Clapperton. Studied in Boston, Paris, and Freiburg. Forty-three years of age. Excellent reputation. Quiet, kindly, charitable. Engineer by profession. Inventor of the Clapperton automatic cream separator and the Clapperton self-adjusting tube wrench. Lives alone, in a modest two-room flat, without servants.

2. Cornelius van Alstyne. College man. Twenty-four years of age. Good reputation in his neighborhood, except that his landlady and the small shops where he trades complain that he is very slow pay. Chemist by profession. Was instrumental in separating and classifying a new metal, called rhizopodin, which may eventually revolutionize and cheapen the entire manufacture of electric globes.

3. Leopold Fischer. Studied at Berlin and Vienna, his native town. Thirty-nine years of age. Engineer by profession. Well liked by his neighbors, though he went into bankruptcy last year. Inventor of the Fischer piston pump, the Fischer water gauge, and said to be at work now on a new gyroscope.

4. Holister Welkin. Fifty-seven years of age. A native of England. Earlier life unknown. Came here twenty-odd years ago. Lives at Gordon Hotel, evidently in very straitened circumstances. Is a recluse, and nothing could be found out about him except that—according to the proprietor of a hardware store in his neighborhood—he was quite famous, twenty years ago, as the inventor of Welkin's electric windlass.

5. Audley P. Chester. Sixty-four years of age. Belongs to the well-known Chester family of Portland, Maine. Very rich, though he lives in a modest hotel of the west forties. Is said to be a miser. The same Chester who was so viciously attacked a year or two ago by certain newspapers for his refusal to contribute to any of the war charities.

Gadsby folded the report and gave them to his friend.

"Here you have all of it."

"What about the disk?" queried the other. "Did your assayer examine it?"

"Yes. It's made of rhizopodin——"

"Oh, yes—that new metal, which our friend Van Alstyne of the green Norfolk and the buckskin spats separated. I might have known it. What about the other members of the club?"

"Oh, just a repetition of this special list. A few doctors and business men, but mostly engineers with a sprinkling of skilled mechanics."

"All rather poor?" suggested Ogilvie.

"Yes, with the exception of Chester. And all have excellent reputations. We looked up the records as much as we could, and not a single one of them seems to have ever been convicted of a crime or a misdemeanor, not even suspected or accused. And here they go and commit murder and frame you up."

He stopped, then continued:

"I wonder why they call that organization of theirs the Benefactors Club?"

"I don't wonder," replied Ogilvie. "I am beginning to understand."

"Oh—sort of ghoulish self-irony, you mean?"

"Not a bit of it. They are quite sincere—quite, quite sincere! The Benefactors Club! The very name for it!"

"Why?" asked the police commissioner.

"I'll tell you presently," replied the other, and added with cool arrogance, "just as soon as I have cleared up the rest of the case."

Gadsby gave a crooked smile. "The rest of the case?" he repeated in mockery.

"Exactly!"

"Pretty cocksure, aren't you?"

"Yes," said Ogilvie. "Fact is, after I get out of this pickle——"

"If you get out of this pickle!"

"I repeat—after I get out of this pickle, I shall apply to you for a job with the detective force. My boy, I am finding no fault with your methods, your elaborate system——" He pointed at the voluminous reports.

"Thanks!" the police commissioner said dryly.

"But," Ogilvie continued unabashed, "it takes a man like myself to use the information they contain, through a thing called applied psychology."

"And which," interjected the police commissioner, "might with equal truth be styled applied poetry."

"By the way," said the other, "do you happen to know anybody in Washington, in the patent office, some big bug, I mean?"

"Yes."

"Do you know him well enough to get him on the long-distance telephone this time of night and have him look up certain records?"

"Well, yes. In my capacity as police commissioner I can cut a couple of miles of official red tape. Why do you ask?"

"Because I want you to get your Washington party on the wire as quickly as possible. And I want you to introduce me to him over the wires as your confidential assistant—which, I repeat, I am going to become as soon as I'm out of this mess."

"More clews, I suppose?" asked Gadsby ironically.

"As right as rain!"

"But—in Washington?" queried Gadsby, seeing that his friend was serious.

"Yes. You see, I am curious to find out why all these people"—he pointed at the detectives' reports—"are so poor in spite of all their inventions. I want to find out if all of them neglected taking out patents for their brain children—if they are all plain fools or——"

"Or?"

"Idealists, Bob," said Ogilvie; "members of the Benefactors Club!"

CHAPTER VI.

OGILVIE STATES HIS CASE.

IT was nearly three hours later—night had dropped like a veil, secret, mystical, netted in the delicate silver mist of the drifting snowflakes and with the sleepy voice of the city whispering through the heave and sough of the wind—that Blaine Ogilvie, after three long-distance conversations with Washington, finally slammed back the receiver and announced triumphantly:

"That little matter is settled!"

He entered the next room.

"Good thing," he said, "that Spencer slipped me that twenty thousand. Those toll charges to Washington are going to cost me a pretty penny."

Then he noticed that Gadsby was fast asleep in his winged chair in front of the open fire, and shook him awake.

"Bob," he said, "leave off sawing wood and listen to the words of Baruch, the son of the priest."

"What is it?" asked the police commissioner, sitting up and rubbing his eyes.

"I have found out what I expected to find——"

"Namely?"

"That Doctor McGrath, Mr. Clapperton *et alias* are——"

"What?"

"Are not plain fools—unless you call idealists fools!"

"Would you mind being less philosophical and more explicit?" suggested Gadsby.

"That friend of yours at the patent office did a whole lot of tall hustling and doubtless disturbed the slumbers of half a dozen assorted Uncle Sam servants, working all of five hours a

day and five days a week for thirty per of the taxpayers' hard-earned simoleons, but he roused them. He hustled and made them do likewise. He looked up dusty files and ledgers and card indexes and cross-reference books and loose-leaved records—and——"

"For the love of Mike! Come to the point!" exclaimed the police commissioner, exasperated.

"I am at the point! They looked up the records of the patent office—— Bob—it's really tremendous news!"

"What, what?"

"Not one of the members of the Benefactors Club—neither McGrath nor Clapperton nor that green-tweed addict—failed to take out patents for their various inventions and discoveries. And they are all poor!"

"All except Chester."

"Right," agreed Ogilvie. "But he didn't invent anything!"

"Don't forget Martyn Spencer!"

"Who disappeared," commented Ogilvie, "but who did belong to their club just the same."

"I can't make head or tail of what you are intending to prove, Blaine."

"Intending to, did you say?" asked the other. "Boy, I have proved——"

"What?"

"That here is an organization of people who all have most excellent reputations——"

"Except, perhaps, Spencer——" suggested the police commissioner.

"Who disappeared. Let me resume. This organization is largely composed of engineers and mechanics, many of whom have invented extraordinary devices, others of whom have doubtless helped with the perfecting and working out of these inventions, still others of whom—here's where I take a shot at the blue—are working at inventions and discoveries. They are not fools. But they seem to be idealists. For they have protected their brain children by patents—by the way, Bob, it takes money to get the right, waterproof sort of patent—and they have not made money out of their inventions, since they are all poor."

"Except two."

"Exactly—Chester and Spencer! As to the latter, allow me to repeat that he disappeared suddenly, scared to death, sacrificing a mint of money in doing so, while the former—well, Bob, I have an idea on the subject and I am going to find out presently if I am right."

The police commissioner lit a cigar.

"And still I fail to see," he objected, "how all these undoubtedly very interesting details will help you sidestep the electric chair?"

"Don't be so brutally realistic. Also, if you can't see, I can—chiefly after you have called in some of our best New York physicians and have them make another autopsy of Monro Clafflin's body."

"What for? The man was shot. A bullet pierced his brain. There's no doubt of it."

Ogilvie smiled.

"Perfectly correct," he admitted. "The man was shot—and a bullet did pierce his brain."

"Then——"

"Just the same, please do what I tell you, do you mind?"

"Well, if you insist on being mysterious——"

"I don't insist," replied Ogilvie. "But, first of all, there are your professional limitations which would keep you from understanding anything new and a little unorthodox."

"Thanks awfully!" came the dry rejoinder.

"Don't mention it. Secondly, I am dog-tired. I am off to bed." He rose, yawned, stretched himself. "Lend me a book, do you mind?"

The police commissioner crossed over to his bookshelves. "I don't see," he said, "how a man in your predica-

ment can read frivolous French poetry. Why—it's positively uncanny."

"I'm not going to read any French poetry to-night," replied Ogilvie. "You have quite a complete library, haven't you?"

"Fairly representative."

"I want you to find me a book—oh—a sort of encyclopedia, all about inventions and discoveries."

"Going to join the Benefactors Club?"

"Possibly. I want a book about the inventions and devices people used to know centuries ago, but which have been forgotten—like the use of the pyramids and the tempering of copper and that sort of thing."

"More clews?" came the ironic query as Gadsby hunted among the shelves.

"You've guessed it first time, old man."

"Here's the kind of book you mean, I suppose," said Gadsby, taking out two volumes—" 'Forgotten Discoveries' and 'Valuable Inventions Not Yet Made.' "

"That's the dope!" replied Ogilvie, taking both. "By the way, think it'll be safe to telephone to Miss Dillon?"

"Quite. The police haven't yet discovered that the escaped murderer's name is Blaine Ogilvie and that he is engaged to her. Feel in a sentimental mood and want to phone?"

"No—in a scientific mood."

And he went upstairs to bed and read for a while. Finally he seemed to have found what he was after. For he made a note, called up Marie Dillon on the telephone which stood on his night table, talked for quite a while, then switched off the electric light and fell into dreamless, untroubled sleep.

He came down to breakfast fairly late to find the police commissioner impatiently awaiting him. The latter looked up rather angrily as the other entered with a bright "Good morning!" For, like most men of average honesty and average dyspepsia, he had occasional, spasmodic attack of antagonism even against his best friends—chiefly before breakfast.

"Heavens!" he exclaimed. "I could hear you snore clear down here. Detective Sergeant Miller asked me if I had a walrus visiting me."

"Oh! Has he been here?"

"Yes—confound his soul!" came the heated rejoinder. "He came an hour ago—before breakfast! Called me out of bed!"

"What did he want? Anything that bears on my case?"

"Yes. He found out quite a little more about Martyn Spencer."

"Let's hear it," said Ogilvie, neatly slicing a muffin in two, buttering it generously, and commencing breakfast with a hearty appetite, which Gadsby seemed to take as a personal affront.

Detective Sergeant Miller was the old-fashioned policeman, the sort whose sources of information are diversified, patchy, and often—if the truth be told—slightly muddy. The tale he had told his chief, and which the latter was now relating to Blaine Ogilvie, was a mosaic gathered here and there, partly by bullying and partly by cajoling, from a number of people, including two taxicab drivers, a Sicilian fruit vender, a Russian cobbler in a cellar on Charles Street, the head waiter of a Broadway restaurant, three sardonic and elderly reporters, one youthful and enthusiastic cub reporter, and the intoxicated mate of a disreputable Liverpool tramp ship that had just docked, after a smelly and uneventful voyage out of some West African port. The sum total of this information was that a man, closely resembling Martyn Spencer, had been seen going up the gangplank of another, equally smelly and equally disreputable Liverpool freighter, outward bound, dressed in the rough clothes of a deep-sea sailor, that he had been

greeted by the captain of the ship with: "So glad to see you, sir. Please, sir, won't you——" And that he had interrupted roughly with: "Cut it out, you poor fool! I am Tom Higgins, able-bodied seaman, and that's all you know——"

"Disguise and change of name," said Ogilvie, a little disappointed. "But nothing new—it really only corroborates my theory that Spencer is scared clear out of his wits."

"Yes," agreed the police commissioner, "but Miller also did a bit of cabling over to London—to Scotland Yard."

"What results?"

"He found out how Martyn Spencer made his money," said the police commissioner with pompous impressiveness.

Ogilvie laughed. "Why," he said, "I know how he made it."

"Oh—you do—you——"

"Yes," Ogilvie cut the other's words short.

"How?" asked Gadsby with satanic suavity. "Let's hear how clever you are."

"I am not clever. I only know that two and two makes four—and, at times, five," he said. "And chiefly in detective work—naturally so. For, since crimes are an extraordinary, and not an ordinary, thing, one must apply extraordinary, and not ordinary, logic and arithmetic."

"After which philosophic interjection——"

"After which philosophic interjection," said Ogilvie with a laugh, "I rise to maintain that Spencer, since he left New York, did a heap of traveling in the wilder places of the earth—Africa, Central Asia, Western China, South America, certain regions of Russia. Why there? Because, since he was out after new, exotic, and expensive minerals difficult to obtain, he specialized in mineral regions that had not yet been exploited. Why did he need those minerals? Because the gentlemen of the Benefactors Club needed them for their new inventions, discoveries, and devices. So he kicked around a whole lot and bought up mining claims and concessions. Often he had to use a great deal of pull—pull which, on the other hand, cost him a great deal of money. With West African chiefs, for instance, and Manchu mandarins and Tartar Khans—and—oh, yes"—smiling reminiscently—"Russian grand duchesses who, if extra well paid, extra well bribed, might throw in a priceless sable coat as a commission. Isn't that so?"

"Absolutely!" admitted the other just a little grudgingly. "But I fail to see how——"

"I repeat," said Ogilvie, "that two and two make five—and occasionally seven!"

"Don't be so supercilious!"

"Really, Bob, I didn't mean to be. Let's get back to Martyn Spencer. He was well paid for these voyages and these mining claims he accumulated the world over—by whom do you think?"

"Chester?"

"Move to the head of the class, sonny! By the millionaire who did not see fit to contribute to the war charities, but who, according to his own light, is quite a public benefactor. But Martyn Spencer was not rich. You see, you can work out your liver, but you simply can't become really rich on a straight salary—until rather more recently. Am I still right, old man?"

"Quite. That's what they cabled to Miller from Scotland Yard." Something like admiration had crept into Gadsby's accents.

"Perhaps," continued Ogilvie, "our friend only started making real money during the last year or eighteen months. Then he made it hand over fist."

"How?"

"By selling the foreign rights to various patents which were registered in his name."

"What patents?" asked the police commissioner.

"Oh—for instance, Doctor McGrath's pulmotor and the Clapperton automatic cream separator and the Fischer piston pump. He either sold them for cash or took a certain amount in the stock of the new foreign corporations founded for the exploitation of these various patents and devices."

"Perfectly correct," admitted Gadsby, consulting a London cable which Miller had decoded and read:

"Martyn Spencer, chairman of the board of directors of Pulmotor Limited, Rhizopodin Produce Limited, Clapperton——"

"Cream Separator Limited," interrupted Ogilvie, "and a few more Limited!"

To the other's question if he thought that the Benefactors Club, angry at having been cheated, had tried to frame up Martyn Spencer, getting Ogilvie into the trap by mistake, the latter replied that it was something like it, but not exactly so.

"That's just what Martyn Spencer thought," he added, "and I have an idea, yet to be proved, that he was a fool for thinking so, a fool for running away scared to death, when all he had to do was to keep his nerve and stand pat, when all he needed was a little knowledge of applied psychology. You see, it is clear that these people did not know him by sight, isn't it?"

"Quite," said the police commissioner, "or they would not have mistaken you for him."

"Yes. I imagine the club has a number of foreign members and corresponding members in Europe."

"Indeed," agreed Gadsby, consulting the cables from Scotland Yard. "There are half a dozen belonging to it in London——"

"And doubtless in Paris and Rome and other parts of the world. Spencer, though an American, joined abroad. It's easy enough to figure out how. He must have made some small invention. He was poor then. His family, fine old American stock, knows the Chesters. Followed a correspondence between him and Audley Chester, the financial backer of the club. Gradually the correspondence became more intimate. Eventually Chester made him a proposition, and Spencer accepted it and joined. Then, when the club needed a man to pick up mining claims for them here and there, they naturally thought of Spencer. He proved clever and valuable, until in the course of time he became their confidential man, all the foreigns rights to the patents being registered in his name. Spencer kicked about from pillar to post these last years, without coming home; and these people never went abroad, because they were too poor and too much wrapped up in their Utopian dreams."

"Utopian?" echoed the police commissioner.

"Exactly! I'll explain all that presently—after I've made quite, quite sure—with the help of——"

"Who?"

"Marie Dillon, I guess. I'll tell you later. Let's get back to Spencer. He and the members of his club here in New York never saw each other, that's quite clear, isn't it?"

"I guess so. But why did he return? Home-sickness?"

"Not a bit of it. Indirect, upside down, negative, vicarious fear!"

"I don't get you!"

"Listen, Bob!" Ogilvie went on. "When Spencer first decided to use these patents for the benefit of his own pocketbook—well, he just did it. He was money mad—he made up his mind—and that's all there was to it! He expected a big row, perhaps a civil or criminal action. He had prepared for these eventualities, had retained beforehand the best legal talent in New York and Europe, felt quite safe. But the

members of the Benefactors Club did——"

"What?"

"Nothing, Bob! And that's what first made him afraid."

"Why should it?" asked the police commissioner.

"Because Spencer knew them. He knew what sort of people they were—idealists, terribly sincere, of single-track minds—and they did nothing. And, I repeat, he became frightened, nervous, uneasy. Do you know the old adage about the murderer who always returns to the scene of his crime? I guess it applies in Spencer's case, too. He grew more and more fidgety as the club remained silent, and so he decided to come to New York, perhaps to force their hand, to brazen it out, or to get it over with, once and for all. And still, even after he returned here, the club did nothing. They surrounded Spencer with a wall of complete, inhuman silence and inaction, and he became more and more uneasy—he imagined that this wall of silence would presently topple over and crush him. Then, one day—perhaps the very day I called on him or a few days before—he received a notification from the club to come to No. 17.

"By this time he was absolutely scared stiff. He imagined that they would either kill him or make such a scene that somebody would lose his head; in the latter case he thought there would be a fight, he would find himself in a minority of one, battling for his life, and then in self-defense, but with a number of witnesses to deny it, he would draw a weapon. This part of his reasoning——"

"If he reasoned that way," sardonically interrupted the other.

"This part of his reasoning," Ogilvie continued, unheeding, "was remarkably lucid. You see, Spencer is no fool."

"If he isn't, why did he go to No. 17—make up his mind to go there at all?" demanded the police commissioner.

"Because he was getting crazy with that complicated and illogical emotion called fear. Because he had arrived at that stage where he preferred anything, even death, to waiting for something to happen. All right. I dropped in on him. We talked. He saw that I was stone broke. Right then, suddenly, he decided not to go, but to send me instead. He must have reasoned very quickly, must have said to himself that the only thing for him to do, now that the club was on his trail and had sent him notification to appear at their meeting, was to disappear under a different name, and there was that Liverpool freighter in port which doubtless belonged to him.

"He argued that the club members would pounce upon me quickly and kill me before I had a chance to explain that they were making a mistake, that I was not he, but an innocent party. Or, if they gave me time to explain, he thought they would calmly point at the club badge—which must have been fastened to the nether side of the lapel of the fur coat, remember—might even point at the sable-lined ulster itself, a quite extraordinary and priceless garment of whose acquisition by Spencer, in the course of some mining deal with the grand duchess, they may have heard—yes—they would have pointed at the club badge and discounted my denial that I was Spencer by a sudden desire on my part to bluff them, to fool them, to get away with a whole skin. Finally, he reasoned, if they did believe me, it would take a long time before they did. Either way, by the time I was killed, or got into the pickle into which I actually did get, or even persuaded them they had made a mistake, he would have escaped. Incidentally let's give the devil his due. He tried to be decent. He warned me against carrying a gun. But, not sure if I would take his ad-

vice, he sent that thumping big check to Marie in case she needed money for herself or me.

"At all events, as to the club members, he underestimated their intelligence, or he overestimated their brutality—it comes to the same thing. I repeat, all he needed was a little knowledge of applied psychology——"

Ogilvie interrupted himself.

He said that terribly idealistic people—and in his own mind he was convinced that those of No. 17 belonged in that category, from the hunchback down to the check boy and the brown-eyed girl—were also, when occasion seemed to warrant it, terribly cruel and shrewd and vindictive. It was as if, he added, the Creator did not want human virtues to run to extremes, for fear that they might run amuck. "Nature," he said, "always tries to strike a logical balance between good and bad. If we let our virtues overwhelm us we cease to feel sympathy and pity and tolerance for others less virtuous than ourselves. No, no, Bob," as the other made an impatient exclamation, "I'm not shooting off at a tangent. I am just trying to show you what a confounded fool Martyn Spencer was for being afraid."

"Seems to me, the way it panned out, that he had mighty good cause to be afraid," replied the other. "I agree with you that excessive goodness often leads to cruelty. Aristotle was right, virtue is the mean between two extremes. Witness the cruelty of the medieval reformers."

"But you must not forget that these people at No. 17 are removed from sixteenth-century fanatics by several hundred years of human development—call it increased moral weakness, if you prefer. They are men of the twentieth century who have forgotten the clean, fearless brutalities of the Middle Ages. When their slightly hectic, idealistic virtues turned into the gall of hatred through another's—Spencer's guilt—they were weak enough or careful enough—it comes to the same thing—to stop short of murder. You see, they might have killed Spencer, but they didn't. So why, logically, should I assume that they killed Clafflin?"

"Well—if you didn't kill him, and if they didn't, who did, for the love of Mike?"

"Must, necessarily, anybody have killed him?" came Ogilvie's counter query.

"You don't mean to say suicide?" asked the police commissioner.

"I don't indeed!"

"Or accident?"

"Nor accident!"

"Well, what other possibility——"

"Beg pardon," interrupted Tompkins, who had come in. "Miss Dillon to see Mr. Ogilvie."

CHAPTER VII.

"NEITHER BY MURDER, SUICIDE, NOR ACCIDENT."

DIRECTLY on the butler's heels Marie Dillon entered.

"Oh—Blaine! Blaine, dear!"

She threw herself into Ogilvie's arms and held him tight, quite disregarding the presence of the police commissioner, who after a moment or two, when a discreet, twice repeated cough had seemed to have made no impression on the girl, moved in the direction of the door with a rambled word that he hated to be in the way.

She turned. "Please, Mr. Gadsby," she said, "forgive me, won't you?" She smiled, and he smiled back at her.

"There is nothing to forgive, Miss Dillon," he replied, "except that instead of falling in love with a perfectly proper and perfectly respectable police commissioner——"

"She wastes her young affections on a reckless idiot who is going to become said police commissioner's chief assist-

ant and confidential clerk," Ogilvie interrupted.

The girl laughed and kissed Ogilvie again.

She was small and strong, with russet, short-cut hair. You could tell by looking at her rather large, firm, well-shaped hands, her short, softly curved nose, and the straight black eyebrows which divided her gray eyes from the broad, low forehead that she had imagination and claims to independent ideas.

"Have you any influence over Blaine?" asked Gadsby in a martyred voice.

"How?"

"To make him less fresh!"

"I'll try to," she said, "after we're married."

The next moment she was serious and turned to Ogilvie. "Blaine," she said, "I did what you asked me to do last night over the telephone."

"Already?"

"Yes, dear. I got up early."

"Succeed?"

"I guess so," she replied.

And, in answer to Gadsby's questions, Ogilvie explained that he had telephoned to Marie Dillon last night, after he had hunted through the two volumes on forgotten and not yet discovered inventions.

"I hesitated a long time," he said, "between the absolute, fool-proof gyroscope, the tempering of copper, and a self-adjusting linotype machine. Finally I decided that no woman takes an interest in that sort of thing, and that it might make the whole thing look fishy. Woman, I thought, housewifely duties—sewing machine! And so, in my poor male brain, I studied it. I decided that what the world needs is a new device which will sew on trouser buttons by a simple twist of the wrist—something like that. I wrote it all down—a lot of stuff—enough to fool a chap who isn't an engineer, but only a rich visionary—prompted Marie across the wires, and she went there this morning—didn't you, honey?"

"Yes," replied the girl.

"Went where?" asked the exasperated police commissioner.

"Where do you think? To Audley Chester! To whom else?"

It appeared that the Chesters and the Dillons were old friends, as were the Chesters and the Dillons' cousins, Martyn Spencer's family. And so, asked Ogilvie, wasn't it perfectly natural that Marie Dillon, being poor, should go to her family's rich friend, Audley Chester, to ask him for advice and help with that marvelous invention of hers; and too, perhaps, though without saying so since she was not supposed to be familiar with Chester's connection with the Benefactors Club, indirectly, by mental suggestion, get the idea into Chester's brain that, as a budding inventress, she might be promising material for a member of the club which, added Ogilvie, had at least one other woman member—the brown-eyed Slav girl who presided over the hat rack at No. 17?

"Good heavens, man!" exclaimed Gadsby. "You certainly drew a long bow! How did you imagine you'd get away with it? Didn't you consider that Chester, chiefly since the Clafflin murder, might suspect a trap?"

"Not in the least," replied Ogilvie. "Marie and I talked it all out over the telephone last night, point for point, logically and psychologically. We figured out the exact part she was going to play. An idealistic young enthusiast—can't you see her, with those wide gray eyes of hers? All for giving the benefit of her brain, her work, her invention, to the public, the world at large, long-suffering, long-overcharged humanity—and not so as to line her own pockets with gold! You see, these last forty-eight hours I've been considering what sort of people the gentry at No. 17 are—chiefly Audley Chester.

So I couldn't very well go wrong, could I?"

"And you didn't," said Marie Dillon. "Chester was awfully kind and considerate and patient. He listened to me. Told me he would be glad to back me financially if my invention turned out feasible, that he knew very little, though, about mechanical details, and would therefore find me some expert engineers and skilled mechanics to go over my plans, report on them, and help me, if practicable, with working them out and perfecting them——"

"Don't you see, Bob?" interrupted Ogilvie. "That's where the club members come in."

"Yes, yes," came the other's slightly impatient rejoinder. "You needn't cross all the t's nor dot all the i's. Once in a while, when a thing is as plain as a pikestaff, I can see it—even though I am only the police commissioner."

"Stop your quarreling, both you children!" said the girl. "Chester was delighted when I told him that I wanted to give my idea to the world, that I did not wish for any personal remuneration——"

" 'Except the satisfaction of a decent thing decently accomplished'—did you get in that line, Marie?" asked Ogilvie. "Remember—we rehearsed it last night over the telephone."

"I did," replied Marie Dillon, "and I improved on it on the spur of the moment. I said something to him about poverty not mattering as long as I knew that the rest of the world found life a little more easy to bear through my invention."

"Like the rest of the benefactors," commented Ogilvie. "Their idealism! That's what kept them so poor, and that's just why they are so terribly vindictive against Martyn Spencer. It wasn't really because he cheated them, stole money from them by appropriating their patents for his private use, but because he stole it, as they figured, from the public, the world, humanity at large."

Marie Dillon went on to say that toward the end of the interview Audley Chester, carried away by her carefully rehearsed, girlish enthusiasm, had become even more confidential. He had told her of the existence of an organization composed of people—as he expressed it—trying to do social uplift work not, as usually attempted, by giving money, thus pauperizing those whom they were trying to help, but by using their inventive brains and faculties so as to reduce the cost of living and to make life easier for the masses.

"If somebody invents, for instance, a new mangle," he had explained, "which reduces time and effort of labor by fifty per cent and incidentally does not ruin the linen or cotton which it rolls and smoothes, such an article, ordinarily, would cost the price of manufacture plus the overhead, plus the profit to the company which manufactures it, and plus the royalty to the inventor. We cannot always regulate the profit which the manufacturing company demands. But we can always influence it by giving our invention to a company which is more reasonable, and we always do cut out our own royalties, reducing the cost by just that amount to the poor woman who needs the mangle. We, as an organization, make therefore a gift to the people at large, not of money—no, no, no! We don't believe in that—but of our brains, our talents. We are the world's real benefactors!"

At the next meeting of this organization, he had gone on, he would mention the matter to the other members, and they would talk it over together. He had added that they had to be very strict and careful about whom to admit to their circle, because, on the very face of it, they had to rely absolutely on the honesty of each individual member. "Mutual trust is our motto," he

had wound up, "and the moment anybody breaks this trust——"

"What happens then?" Marie Dillon had asked casually, but with enough of a shade of feminine curiosity to make the question appear natural.

And Ogilvie had smiled disagreeably. "We rely on fate to punish him," he had replied. "Fate—possibly helped by —oh—deputy fate!"

"Deputy fate?" she had queried.

"Yes," had come Audley Chester's slow reply. "After all, even fate is more or less man-made. And—don't forget—we have in our organization some very great inventors, some very great physicians and surgeons and biologists!"

"Such as Doctor Hillyer McGrath," commented Blaine Ogilvie, "who had been Clafflin's physician for many, many years and knew all about the state of his health."

"What gets me," said the police commissioner, shaking his head, "is how any member of the Benefactors Club, be he the very cleverest physician, surgeon, inventor, or biologist in the world, can stage manage a death, clearly caused by a revolver bullet, since Clafflin's temples were pierced, which is neither due to murder nor to suicide nor to accident—to believe you," and he turned to Ogilvie.

"You'll believe me all right after your expert doctors at headquarters get through with the autopsy on Clafflin's body," replied the latter, "or I lose my bet."

"What bet?" asked Gadsby.

"Oh—long odds! My life against the district attorney's wits! For, of course, I realize that you can't keep me in hiding forever."

"Oh—please—please—Blaine!" exclaimed the girl, suddenly nervous and frightened.

"Don't worry, honey!" Ogilvie said. "I'm not worrying. Let's see—one hundred thousand bucks Martyn Spencer sent you. That'll get you a peach of a trousseau." He interrupted himself and turned to Gadsby.

"Look here, Bob," he said. "Show a little delicacy and leave the room when an engaged couple talk about intimate details. Too, you might run down to your office and see how that autopsy came out!"

It was quite late in the afternoon when the police commissioner returned, accompanied by two men, whom he introduced as Doctor Elliot and Doctor Griffith, and—"Miss Dillon—and Mr. Blaine Ogilvie—the man who——"

"The commissioner told us about you," said Doctor Elliot, shaking hands with Ogilvie.

"Did he blacken my reputation?" demanded Oglivie with a twinkle in his eye. "Did he tell you a long sob story of how I, a fugitive from justice, a supposedly crimson-handed assassin, took refuge in his house and caused him to be false to his sworn duty?"

"He did," said Doctor Elliot with a laugh.

"Heavens! I'm surprised he tried to put that one across!" said Ogilvie.

"But he has reformed," interjected the other doctor. "Mr. Ogilvie, let me be the first to tell you the good news. You are a free man. You can come and go where and as you please. You are no longer under suspicion."

"Which means you finished the autopsy and you found out——"

"Well, what did we find out?"

"That the revolver bullet which pierced Clafflin's temples was fired after the man had died," said Ogilvie. "That he died by natural causes, neither by murder, suicide, nor accident!"

"How did you figure it out?" asked the police commissioner with admiration.

"Why, you chump, I was trying to tell you straight along! Simply by figuring out the psychology of the case—

the peculiar psychology of the gang of idealists at No. 17—Clapperton and McGrath and——"

"Incidentally," cut in Doctor Elliot, "it's that same McGrath whom you have to thank for the fact that you are free from all suspicion."

"Oh," asked Marie, "he confessed?"

"We didn't see him," said Doctor Elliot, "nor would he have had anything to confess. But Mr. Ogilvie has to thank McGrath for another of his marvelous medical discoveries, namely an instrument which, used during an autopsy, registers almost automatically to what cause death has been due. If death apparently has been due to more than one cause, it decides between them and points at the right one.

"It's the most delicate instrument you ever saw. You lay people wouldn't understand it. It looks rather like a tiny barometer, with a number of needles composed of a new metal. This metal has a great deal to do with the success of the instrument, since it has a peculiar, almost uncanny, power over blood circulation and blood pressure. It can, so to speak, catch the reflex action of blood even after death. The metal is called rhizopolin.

"We used the instrument," continued the doctor, "and we discovered that death was due to heart failure, while the heart failure, in its turn, was due to a complication of organic troubles which had ravaged poor Clafflin and had sapped his vitality for a number of years."

"Exactly," said Ogilvie. "And McGrath had been Clafflin's physician for a long time. He could read the state of his health—marvelous physician that he is—with the same ease as I can read a simple book. He took him to No. 17 that night. Everything had been minutely prearranged, minutely dovetailed. They were sure that Spencer would come. Perhaps Spencer telephoned or wrote them that he would, and, beforehand I mean before arranging for the date of Spencer's coming, McGrath had mathematically figured out that Clafflin would die that night—perhaps, though I don't know, kept him alive with powerful drugs until that very night."

"Medically quite possible," commented Doctor Griffith.

"He got Clafflin out of the house," went on Ogilvie, "under the promise—remember the testimony of Clafflin's nurse and butler—that he would meet a remarkable young physician who would cure him. All right; they came. I, whom they supposed to be Spencer, was there. Clafflin died suddenly—McGrath, the great physician, and absolutely, intimately familiar with the man's state of health, saw it at once, gave the signal, when I happened to be looking the other way. Then the shot, either fired by McGrath himself or by somebody else—it makes no difference—and there you are."

"Except," said the police commissioner, "that I believe you have a clear case against the Benefactors Club for trying to frame you up. In fact, I think it is really my duty to——"

"Forget your duty!" interrupted Ogilvie. "After all, they are idealists, public benefactors, and they can't and shouldn't be measured with the ordinary yardstick of police morality. Just you go down there, Bob, to No. 17 some night and throw a good scare into them. By the way, how about that job as assistant something-or-other with your detective force you promised me?"

"I didn't promise," said Gadsby, "but you're on, old man."

"Thanks!" Ogilvie turned to Marie Dillon. "Shake hands with my new boss, honey," he said, "and smile at him. I need all the pull I can get in my new profession. My first job will be to trace Spencer and hand him the accumulated dividends of the Benefactors Club."

Author and Realist

by Henry Leverage

Author of "Mighty Near Disappointment," etc.

IT was the mention of the name, Fannie Dare, that caused Chester Fay, a prematurely gray-haired and alert young man, to turn and glance across one corner of the Café l'Avenue at two crooks whose heads were very close together.

"She makes thirty thousand a year writin' novels, Mac."

"An' she lives at Scarcliffe, Dick."

"Th' papers say she's got some Chinese vases wot cost ten thousand bills each. Me for them."

"When do we pull th' trick?"

"To-night. Th' moll is alone in a big house."

The silver-haired young man gathered by this chance-caught conversation that Canada Mac and Dick Nugent, both slightly known to him, were up to their usual tricks.

They were house prowlers and second-story men. Both had done time in prison. Canada Mac's disposition was aggressive. His red hair was brushed straight up from a slanting brow. Dick Nugent was surly and dangerous.

Fannie Dare, the young lady mentioned by the crooks, was a name often seen on billboards, magazine covers and motion-picture films.

Chester Fay was far more interested in Fannie Dare, than in Canada Mac and Dick Nugent. Although he had never met the young writer, he had read all her books and followed her career closely.

The Café l'Avenue was a crook's hang-out seldom molested by the police. Men of Dick Nugent's stripe or Canada Mac's aggressiveness were not welcome. They had come in somehow and talked far too loudly for safety to themselves.

Fay ran his fingers through his silver-gray hair, sipped at his coffee, and watched the two house prowlers. They were drinking cognac and getting up nerve for the robbery of Fannie Dare's country place at Scarcliffe—not a difficult thing to do, for it would be one girl against two thugs.

Before the coffee was finished, Fay decided on a course of action. There was an unwritten code in the underworld that was best boiled down to: "You shall not squeal."

He could not inform on Canada Mac or Dick Nugent. There was no stopping two such hard-headed prowlers. A phone call warning Fannie Dare, provided she were at home, would be unethical. The novel writer would surround her estate with country marshals and have the thugs arrested on suspicion.

Fay followed Canada Mac and Dick Nugent from the café! He allowed them to pass from his sight when they started walking in the direction of the railroad station. He knew a quicker

way to Scarcliffe and Fannie Dare's country place. A fast taxi took him out to Broadway, where inquiry at Rosebud Centers, near Yonkers, showed the right road to the river and an old manor house nestled within high hedges and great elm trees.

Fay dismissed the taxi a hundred yards above the house where the road wound over a hill.

An ardent reader of detective fiction would have recognized in Fannie Dare's country house the locale of two or three of her novels. It was most certainly featured in "The House of Adventure" and some of the action in "The Haunted Hostel" might have taken place amid the hedges and tree clumps surrounding the ancient estate.

Fay had read these two novels. He recalled certain passages and guided himself to a path and a well-described stone wall that reached to the Hudson River.

His plan of action, born through a sense of justice and chivalry, was simple. He decided to wait near the estate, frighten Canada Mac and Dick Nugent within an inch of their lives, and send them scampering back to New York without Miss Dare being any the wiser. It was going to be a little matter between two cheap thugs and one of the cleverest criminals in the game who did not stoop to house prowling in order to make a living.

As Fay waited, deep within the cover of a box-wood hedge, he saw that his plan would have to be modified. A dense fog drifted through the trees and swung from over the river. Dew showed on the leaves like tiny emerald drops. The grass was sopping in places.

The box-wood hedge was too far away from the house. Fay had no means of knowing from which direction Canada Mac or Dick Nugent would come. The prowlers might wait until two or three o'clock before closing in on the estate. There were other disadvantages in remaining near the river and away from sight and sound of the manor.

Fay felt his way through the fog, dodged from bush to bush, and came, in a long stalk across the lawn, up to the ivy-cloaked wall of the north wing of the house. He saw, for the first time, a dim light burning in the front room on the second floor.

The shades were drawn down in this room. There was no other light visible in the front of the house. A driveway wound under a porte-cochère. Two long L's extended from the sides of the manor. Barns, garages, servant's quarters and summer houses loomed through the river's mist.

Fay leaned against the ivy-clad stones and considered the situation. The fog would make it difficult to discover the approach of Canada Mac and Dick Nugent. Both of these men, with all their drinking and carelessness, would creep upon the house with professional skill. They might enter any one of twenty windows.

Their object in robbing the manor was undoubtedly the peach-blow vases and whatever else was contained in the great front room on the lower floor. Fay recalled a magazine article wherein was stated that Fannie Dare did all her writing on a typewriter in this room. It was filled with art treasures. Fannie Dare's photo in the same magazine article was that of a resolute girl with steadfast eyes and a firm mouth.

Fay pulled out a thin, hectagonal, radium dial watch and consulted the time. It was one-fifteen. The fog had thickened to a pea-soup consistency. No sound came from the house or the servants' quarters.

He decided, with quick intuition, and impelled by the dampness, to enter the front room and wait for the prowlers. They might arrive by way of a pantry window or the kitchen door.

Carefully pulling on a pair of thin-

skin gloves and buttoning his coat, Fay moved along the stones and examined the sashes of the two windows. Both were locked as he expected.

There was a third window that opened into the front room and library of the manor house. This window could best be reached from a small porch which was draped with wisteria vines.

Fay climbed over the railing of the porch, tried lifting the sash with the palms of his gloved hands, and turned his head so that he could watch the lawn and dripping trees at the north side of the estate.

The window was locked. He proceeded to enter it in a manner best adapted to prevent noise or any chance of a "bug" wire being closed-circuited.

Long practice in bank robbery had given him experience in this operation. He drew out a gold-handled knife, with a surprisingly strong blade, and cut the putty away from the window frame near the lower sash. It was some time before he succeeded in pinching out the large sheet of glass and laying it on the small porch. A slight gust of warm air came from the library. Curtains stirred and rustled.

The opening was large enough to crawl through. There was no chance that an alarm bell would ring in the house if the sash was undisturbed. Fay, after a final keen glance at the fog and dark foliage, crept through the window frame, doubled, and sat down on the floor between the curtains and the sill. He listened for vibration—some announcement that Fannie Dare or an upstairs servant might be stirring. He heard nothing save the slight rustling of the curtains and the moisture dripping on the planks of the tiny window-porch.

Satisfied that he was not detected, he proceeded to do those little professional things which make for safety in house prowling. First, he rose, parted the curtains, and stepped noislessly into the center of the room. A thick Turkish rug cushioned his feet. He whipped out a fountain-pen flashlight, glided across the library and entered an alcove draped with silky portiéres. He slowly opened the catches of two windows. He crossed the room and opened another catch. He found the door leading to the back of the house slightly ajar. This he blocked with a heavy mahogany stool.

Assured that he could escape in any one of four directions in case of discovery, he shielded the flashlight with the palm of his hand and snapped it on.

There was a wealth of luxury in that splendid room—ivory-legged stools, teak-wood chests, mellow-tinted oils, tapestries, brass andirons, gold-brocaded cushions, low divans, set with mother-of-pearl around their edges, Dresden clocks and, in one corner, farthest from the door, was the object of Canada Mac's and Dick Nugent's proposed expedition.

Fay moved the faint glow of yellow light upon two large vases set within an antique mahogany cabinet. They were of peachblow, riper and fairer than any peach. Their color was the purplish pink found in the best of Oriental pottery. Both had dragon handles curved around the necks.

Hesitating for a moment, Fay mapped out a course of action in case Canada Mac or Dick Nugent came through any of the library windows. He lifted each vase and stepped with it to the curtains that draped over the small alcove. There were hooks on top of these curtains where they hung to a slender pole. Fay reached upward and placed the vases on the pole, so that they were concealed by the curtain headings.

The other objects of art in the room, although valuable, would bring but little money from an art fence. Dick Nugent and Canada Mac were foiled. Fay sat down on a low stool, thrust his long

legs in front of him, and waited. He counted the ticks of the tiny clocks in the room. He consulted his watch.

Yawning slightly behind his gloved right hand, he rose and felt his way toward the bay window within which reposited a mahogany table with great dragon-claw legs and ornate edge work.

A gold-plated typewriter stood on the table. At one side was a pile of scented linen paper. At the other side lay seven or eight sheets of double-spaced manuscript, with here and there a correction between the lines.

Fay shielded his flashlight and started reading the manuscript. The heading on the lowermost sheet read: "Chapter IV. The Robbery in the Night."

Fay grew interested. He recalled some of Fannie Dare's peculiar statements concerning criminals in her former books. Now here was another in process of being written.

He finished the first page with a frown. He started the second page and read halfway down the double-spaced lines. The frown deepened to a V-shaped cut across his forehead. Suddenly he smiled and laid down the manuscript. He picked it up again and went on reading:

Yardley Thorpe, alias The Ferret, climbed the outer wall of Shadow Slopes, and five minutes later was kneeling before the safe. Rapidly he sandpapered the tips of his fingers, felt the door open after he had twirled the knob from left to right, and, with practiced touch, he started counting the bank bills——

Chester Fay came very near swearing. He tossed down the sheet of paper and sighed. He wondered, as he waited in the silence of the library, how Miss Fannie Dare got away with it. He was considered the second or third cracksman living. The police rated him above all safe-robbers in this country. He had opened fifty or sixty strong-boxes in his checkered career. None of them had given up their spoil through sandpapered finger tips. Most had been difficult to crack. Special tools, a highly skilled technical training, and a good working knowledge of steel and its alloys were necessary to combat successfully the science of modern safe building.

He listened a minute, glided over the Turkish rug, peered through the curtains, studied the yellow fog, and came back to the desk. He sat in Fannie Dare's favorite chair, propped his fountain-pen flashlight so that the rays spotted on the typewriter, inserted a clean sheet of scented paper, slowly and almost silently and wrote:

Yardley Thorpe, alias The Ferret, weighted down with blue-chip drills, brace, chain, center punch, sectional jimmies, inside tweezers, battery, bulb, a coil of silk-covered wire, collodium for finger tips—instead of sandpaper—a forty-four automatic under his left arm pit, a——

Fay suddenly snapped off the fountain-pen flashlight, rose, dodged to one side, glided part way toward the alcove window, then stood still.

A click sounded. A soft dome of fire sprang into view. Beneath this dome, with her slender left hand on a snap switch and her right hand extending a very businesslike silver-plated revolver —stood Miss Fannie Dare.

Chester Fay had been in tight situations before, but none was more surprising than Fannie Dare's unexpected stratagem.

The novelist wore, over her bedroom robe, an opera cloak, evidently hurriedly thrown on, for one of her shoulders was exposed. Her wide-set and determined brown eyes contained the true glint of a lady about to shoot.

"Be careful," said Fay. "That gun looks as if it were loaded."

Fannie Dare showed no surprise over Fay's well-modulated and assuring voice. Had she encountered a thug of the first water she would not have been more careful.

"Stand just where you are," she or-

dered. "Put up your hands. Drop that fountain pen. Quickly now!"

Fay dropped the tiny searchlight. It rolled to the hardwood floor at the edge of the Turkish rug. He kept his eyes on Fannie Dare's revolver and raised his hands until they almost touched the frosted dome from which a pale light streamed.

This light was sufficient to reveal the fact that the businesslike revolver in the novelist's hand was fully loaded, cocked, and as rigidly pointed as a bar of polished steel.

"Now," said Fannie Dare, "who are you? What were you doing at my typewriter? And," she added after a hasty glance over the room, "where are my peach-blown vases?"

Fay had thought, for the fractional part of a second, to take advantage of Fannie Dare's momentarily lapse of guard and close in on her before she could pull the trigger of the gun. It was, however, rather more of a chance than he cared to take.

He remembered the instructions of an old second-story man and house prowler: "Look out for a moll with a gun—you never can tell when they will shoot."

"Answer my questions!" said Fannie Dare. "Answer them at once. Who are you?"

"My name is Canada Mac."

Fannie Dare looked pleased, if a girl could look that way covering a burglar with a vicious little gun.

"I'll remember that," she said. "I have a book of crooks' names, which I use in my stories. Canada Mac sounds desperate."

Fay lowered his hands an inch or more. "Rather tiring, this," he said. "Suppose you take my word I won't harm you and let me hold my hands at my sides."

"Keep your hands up!"

"Really," said Fay, "you haven't got me covered right, at all. A western stick-up would keep one arm—usually the left—far in front and above the revolver. Then there would be no danger of having the gun struck from your hands."

Fannie Dare changed her weight from one slippered foot to the other and kept Fay's breast covered. The distance between the muzzle of the revolver and the cracksman was not more than twenty feet. Fay decided it could be crossed in four long strides. He was somewhat blocked, however, by the heavy stool which the girl had shoved from the door before she snapped on the electric switch on the molding near the knob.

"You haven't answered my second question," said Fannie Dare.

"Repeat it?" asked Fay.

"What were you doing at my typewriter?"

"Making a few corrections."

"Corrections?"

"Yes. You've got an awful lot to learn about opening safes."

Fannie Dare's professional pride was touched. She glanced at her typewriter, then steadied the revolver and raised it slowly toward Fay's twinkling eyes.

"You're a bold young man," she said. "You came in here, robbed me of my vases, which I suppose you intended selling to some receiver, sat down at my typewriter and had the nerve to revise my manuscript."

"It needed revising."

Fannie Dare flushed scarlet. She stamped one foot. Her hair tumbled around her shoulders. She hitched the opera cloak, buckled it at the neck, and took one step toward Fay.

"This gun," she intonated, "was given to me by a detective. I shall keep you covered until you phone for the village constables and call them here to arrest you. Hold your hands up and turn around."

Fay caught sight of the telephone intrument when he turned. It was standing on a tiny mahogany table at the end

of a divan. He raised his hands, heard Fannie Dare's soft step behind him, and then, while a cold circle of steel was pressed to his neck, her fingers touched lightly his pockets.

"You may turn now," the girl said. "Turn and face me. Lower your hands. You have no weapon. How careless!"

"I never carried a revolver," Fay said almost sadly. "You see, you've got me in a deuce of a trap. I really think you better let me go. I don't want to do time for house robbery. Entering an inhabited dwelling after sundown calls for a big sentence in this State."

"You should have thought of that before you came for my vases. I'm going to turn you over to the police. Think, young man, what an advertisement that will be for my books."

"It might help the sales but it won't help me."

"It will help the sale wonderfully. Consider—Fannie Dare, the well-known writer of mystery-detective stories, captures, single-handed, in the dead of night, Canada Mac, a desperate burglar who has probably served many prison sentences."

"Sounds bad for me," admitted Fay. "You see," he added, "I should have let your typewriter alone. But I really had to do something to that story you are writing. It's all wrong. Your crook doesn't act like a crook acts. He couldn't open a safe that way."

Fannie Dare studied Fay's engaging personality. She shook her head after a long minute of silence.

"You know better!" she declared. "Why, you're dressed like a gentleman! You have fine features—but hard. I believe you could be reformed after, about—ten years in prison."

Fay winced. The situation was, after all, somewhat desperate. A convulsive movement of Fannie Dare's pink finger might send him into eternity. He did not want to chance striking the girl with a book or stool, swiftly thrown.

He remembered that Canada Mac and Dick Nugent were to be expected at any moment. Those two prowlers would blunder into the soft-lighted room and complicate matters. They were very likely to blackjack the novelist if they got half a chance. They would certainly torture her if they did not find the peachblow vases.

The gleaming revolver was a reminder that something would have to be done quickly if he wanted to escape from the room. Fay said after thought: "You see, Miss Dare, I came here, entered this room, took your vases—all on account of a feeling that you were in danger from two thugs who have marked this house as an easy touch."

"Go on talking," said Fannie Dare. "I'm getting new crook words for my novel."

Fay closed his lips in a straight line. He realized the uselessness of fencing with the truth. He would not be believed. His trump cards, if he had any, were either the arrival of the thugs or the-to-be-expected dropping of Fannie Dare's guard sufficient for him to take possession of the revolver and escape.

He studied the distance across the room. He saw, without directly looking at the stool on the floor or a near-by table, that the girl was almost secure from attack providing she did not move from her position or lower the revolver.

A flash of what was passing Fay's mind came to Fannie Dare. She steadied the revolver, lowered her dark brows, and said commandingly:

"Walk over to that telephone, lift the receiver and ask central for Scarcliffe 109."

Fay temporized by asking: "What is 109?"

"Police headquarters!"

"And you want me to telephone for some one to come over and get me?"

"I do."

"Suppose I refuse."

"Then I'll shoot you. I have a right to kill a burglar in my own house."

"But suppose I came here to protect you?"

"I don't believe it. You could never convince me of that. Never!"

Fay realized that Fannie Dare was thoroughly in earnest. He walked slowly toward the telephone.

"Scarcliffe, 809," he said sitting down.

"No—109!"

Fay glanced at the leveled menace of the revolver. There was no getting away from it. He pressed down the receiver's hook slyly with a finger of his right hand, lifted the receiver and pretended to ask for central. Then he nonchalantly rested the elbow of his left arm on the receiver while he removed the finger of his right hand from it.

His right hand strayed across his coat. He slowly reached within his vest where was swung, in a soft leather holster, a .38 automatic.

"You're not trying to phone!" exclaimed Fannie Dare.

Fay rose, replaced the receiver on the hook, turned and thrust forth the automatic. He clicked the safety trigger on one side. He faced Fannie Dare and smiled.

"You see," he said, "I am armed. You are checkmated. If you fire I will fire. If you don't shoot I won't shoot."

The fearless girl was on the point of pulling the trigger of her polished revolver. She wavered slightly. Fay stepped to a table, all the time keeping her covered.

"It's professional against an amateur now," he said. "You notice I hold my gun notched between your eyes. They are rather pretty eyes. Any change of expression will warn me when to shoot. You have much to learn, Miss Dare, regarding crooks, hooks, prowlers, second-story men, gunmen, stick-ups, box workers and yeggs. You can't fire at me without telegraphing your intention. It usually comes in the eyes seconds before the actual pulling of the trigger. A good marksman keeps his or her glance on the target."

Fannie Dare's face grew white. "I will shoot!" she exclaimed. "I don't care what you do."

Fay drew a chair toward the table with his foot. He sat down and rested his elbow on the edge of the table. His eyes never left the girl's. The two guns were held steady beneath the dome of soft light.

A minute, two minutes passed in silence. There came then the soft grating of sanded feet on the front porch. A low voice warned another not so low. A window creaked as it was jimmied upward. A man started climbing over the sill.

Fannie Dare did not change her position. Fay remained steadfastly staring at the girl. A cold breeze swept through the library. The portiéres, which had hidden the soft dome light, swayed in the front alcove. A bushy shock of red hair, beneath which two baleful eyes gleamed, came into view.

Canada Mac received the surprise of his life. He stared from Fay to Fannie Dare. His jaw dropped at the sight of the two businesslike weapons. They were not pointed at him, but he did not notice this fact.

He turned, jerked back his head, and dived for the open window. He rolled over the porch and fled across the lawn closely followed by Dick Nugent. Fay heard the two prowlers crashing through a hedge.

"I told you," he said, "that I came to protect your vases and yourself. Those men were thieves bent on obtaining anything of value you had in the house."

"I believe they were your confederates, come to see why you did not report progress."

"Why did they run away?"

"They thought I would fire at them."

"Didn't they see the revolver in my hand, Miss Dare?"

The novelist shook her head. She steadied her aim and took one sidestep toward the telephone. She took another. Fay leaned over the table and watched her. He closed his lips in a hard line.

Fannie Dare, still keeping him covered with her revolver, snatched up the phone, knocked off the receiver with her left hand, and spoke excitedly into the transmitter. She asked for Scarcliffe 109. She waited and started talking to a police officer.

"Come quick! Bring three or four men. This is Fannie Dare, yes—the novelist. Come to my house. There's a burglar. I've got him cornered in the front room."

Fay slowly rose. He edged toward the door through which the girl had entered the library. He stopped when she dropped the telephone instrument and came menancingly toward him with the revolver clasped in her two hands.

"Don't move!" she exclaimed. "I shoot!"

"I've no doubt of that. But," Fay added, "I must be going. I don't like the police."

"If you start to go I will shoot you!"

Fay's eyes grew quizzical. "Sorry," he said, "but I have an engagement elsewhere."

"Get away from that door."

The air of the library grew tense with things about to happen. Fay measured the distance his position and the thoroughly-in-earnest authoress. He mentally calculated the number of strides necessary in order to reach the door that led to the back of the house. He remembered the conversation he had heard in the café that there would be no servants in the manor.

A plan came to him. He had too much regard for Fannie Dare to try to shoot the revolver from her hand, although such a shot was possible. He was a sure marksman with an automatic. The range was not more than twenty feet.

"I'll tell you what I'll propose," he said.

"I want none of your proposals! I want you to stand still until the police come."

Fay bowed politely, lowered the automatic, and faced the revolver in Fannie Dare's steady hand.

"You see," he said, "I give you all the advantage. You have the drop on me. You could kill me in one shot. I came here to protect you. You don't believe it. All right—I'll prove that I told you the truth."

"We'll let the police prove it!"

Fay rested the automatic across his breast. It pointed toward the door's moulding. He changed his position slightly. His finger touched the trigger.

"The difference between theory, such as you write in your excellent stories and fact is considerable, Miss Dare. You have acted all wrong according to detective standards. You think you have your man cornered. You haven't!"

Fannie Dare's eyes flashed dangerously.

"You haven't," continued Fay. "I'm watching your eyes. You won't fire until a signal is flashed to your brain to fire. The time required to send this signal is, perhaps, a second. That second will allow me to escape."

"I'll shoot if you move one inch toward me or the door."

Fay closed his right hand slowly, without changing the position of the automatic. His life depended on a steady aim.

"The police are now at the lodge gate," she said. "I hear them. They will come up the gravel walk. They are coming."

"Don't move, sir!"

Fay closed his constricting grip on

the automatic's trigger. A funnel of flame darted toward the door's moulding. A report, followed by a cloud of acrid smoke, filled the library. The lights went out in the frosted dome over Fannie Dare's head. The room was plunged in darkness.

Viciously the novelist's revolver spoke six times as she fired wildly toward the door. She heard a chair overturned. A stool crashed against a cabinet. There followed a rustling sound somewhere in the gloom.

Clearly there came to the determined girl a sound of a voice—almost behind her. She turned and attempted to see through the darkness. She coughed from the powder fumes.

"I'm going," said Chester Fay. "Good-by, Miss Dare. I had to take that chance shot at the black button on the door moulding. It was, as I presumed, the snap-switch that put out the lights."

Fannie Dare dropped her empty revolver on the Turkish rug.

"I have every regard for you," continued Fay, "but I must insist on leaving. I came in this way. I'm going out this way."

"I hope the police catch you!"

Fay raised the window sash and stepped out on the tiny porch. He thrust his automatic under his vest where a soft leather holster hung.

"I don't think they will," he said glancing toward the lodge gate. "They're coming up the gravel road with lanterns."

Fay lifted a leg and threw it over the railing of the porch. The fog was thicker than when first he had crossed the lawn toward the manor.

"Miss Dare," he whispered.

"Well, what is it?"

"You'll find your vases lying on top of the curtain-pole. I placed them there—out of danger!"

BRUTAL CRIMES TERRORIZE SOUTH

SIX series of murders, in all of which an ax was the instrument used to inflict death, has roused the citizens of Louisiana and Mississippi to indignation. Judge Moody Price, sixty years old, is the latest victim of the ax wielder.

Some person or persons entered his home and killed him in the presence of his wife. All the lights in the couple's room were turned on when Mr. Price's son-in-law, hearing a scream, rushed from his chamber upstairs to learn the cause of the disturbance. Mr. Price lay dead on the floor beside his bed; his wife had fainted. The ax with which the crime had been committed was left in the room by the murderer. Mrs. Price suffered a severe nervous shock.

The first of these "ax" murders occurred in May, 1918, in New Orleans. Joseph Maggio and his wife, who kept a little grocery store, were killed. Louis Besumer, a grocer, and a woman were attacked the following month in New Orleans, and the woman died from the effects of her wounds. Then Joseph Romano, a barber, was murdered two weeks later. He also was a resident of New Orleans. In a statement made before he expired, he said that he had no idea who attacked him. Six months later Charles and Rosie Cortimiglia, grocery proprietors, and their two-year-old daughter were assaulted. The baby was killed, and the parents' lives were saved only after physicians had worked on them for a long time. John Orlando, an Italian grocer, of Lake Charles, and his family were the next victims. When found, all were unconscious and in a critical condition from their wounds.

These crimes bear certain similarities one to another. In every instance the perpetrator escaped. He left behind him the ax with which the deed had been done. An insane ferocity marked all the attacks, which, it is believed, were those of a madman.

Fool's Fury

by Arthur Mallory

Author of "Burglars Three," etc.

THE buzzer sounded, and Patrick O'Brien, notebook in hand, entered the inner office. Dudley van Ness sat squarely in his chair, his broad, capable hands spread flat upon his empty desk. His big, clean-shaven face wore a look of whimsical annoyance.

"Pat," said he, "women are the deuce. Sit down—never mind the notebook."

Still holding his immobile pose, Van Ness slanted a humorous look at the red-headed youth. "I gave you a start in criminal practice the other day, in that blackmailing scheme of Groat's."

Pat grinned. "Criminal is right. Blackmail versus bribery and burglary."

The lawyer moved one hand a little. "I haven't asked how you recovered those letters," he pointed out. "But this is more of the same. Patrick, I am about fed up with the Endicott Miles family. Is mine a police court practice?" He shrugged, with his habitual air of amused tolerance. "As soon as Mrs. Miles got her letters back and safely destroyed them, she had to tell friend husband all about it, 'to clear her conscience!' I repeat, women are the deuce! Now, Miles has gone out looking for Aubrey Wynne. Mrs. Miles just called up and tearfully told me all about it. She's afraid Endicott will kill a poet. I've no objection to that, if he'd do it privately, but he won't. When it gets into the papers, there'll be a scandal—and I promised Alicia I'd look after it. Why, oh why, did I ever give up corporation law to play bear leader to fools with money? Why do women write to poets? And why are poets?"

Patrick grinned. "To furnish work for deserving attorneys," he suggested demurely.

"Humph! Just for that, young man, I'm going to pass the buck. Go out and tie up Endicott Miles, or kill Wynne yourself. You won't be missed, if they do send you to the chair. But keep 'em apart, one way or the other."

"I don't think I know Endicott Miles."

"He's big and black, with a face like a wooden Indian. Seven feet high and four feet wide—played center on his college team for three years."

"Oh," said Pat, blinking. "In that case, I think I'll begin by looking for Aubrey Wynne."

"Well, get going. Frame something, my son, with your facile and unprincipled imagination. Here's five hundred dollars, if you decide to hire a gunman or anything like that."

Patrick rose obediently and took the money. He and his employer understood each other very well, and the latter's confidence in his private secretary was not without foundation.

"Miles is hunting through Greenwich Village," said Van Ness. "He doesn't know where Wynne lives, his wife says."

"Well," declared Patrick, "I think I know where to find out."

He went swiftly out and took a taxi to the office of Oliver Groat, east of Chatham Square.

This Groat was a lawyer of very questionable practice, who had been Aubrey Wynne's agent in a blackmailing scheme, based upon indiscreet let-

ters, which Mrs. Endicott Miles had written to the poet. Climbing the dark, dirty stairs to his office, Patrick grinned to himself at the memory of his recent burglarious ascent of those same steps.

Then he reached Groat's door and entered. The lawyer's black-haired stenographer looked up from her work, facing him level-eyed and mute.

Patrick grinned at her rather wistfully, but she only waited for him to speak, her face almost forbidding. It was, thought Pat, with a queer little tug at his heart, as though she steeled herself against him. He wondered briefly if this were the same girl who had helped him to steal those letters from her employer.

"Is Mr. Groat in?" he asked.

Still mute, she gestured toward the inner room.

Patrick sighed and turned away. He found Oliver Groat alone, hunched over his desk, his feet in a litter of torn papers. The man caressed a long, blue chin, as his beady eyes glinted watchfully. A black bottle stood at his elbow. Wrathfully he turned on the intruder.

"You've got a nerve, young fellow," he began, in a husky half whisper, "coming back here after that yegg job the other night!"

"I don't understand," replied Pat innocently. "Have you been robbed?"

"Yahr! Don't get funny. If I could hang it onto you, I'd have you sent up for a million years. Whaddaya want now?"

Patrick took two swift steps forward and leaned over the untidy desk. "Are you calling me a thief?" he asked sweetly.

The beady black eyes shifted. Groat reached for his telephone. "Going to strong-arm me now?" he asked, half fearfully. "Get out, before I call a cop!"

"Just a minute, now! Aubrey Wynne telephoned my chief this morning, offering those letters for twenty-five hundred dollars."

Groat stared at him, open-mouthed, his restless eyes full of suspicion. "What! Why didn't you come back next day?"

"Why," explained Patrick smoothly, "we couldn't raise the money in time, so I thought it was no use. We've been watching Mr. Miles's mail, instead." And to himself he said, "That's a pretty good lie to think up in a minute, eh, Pat?"

The lawyer's mouth closed slowly. "Why, the dirty, thieving poet!" he exclaimed. "I thought all along you had 'em." He rose hastily. "Got to go now. I got business in—eh, in court."

"Just a minute. Wynne didn't give his address. I want to take him the money and settle this thing up to-day. Where does he live?"

"Don't know. Can't stop. I'm in a hurry."

Pat gripped his shoulder viciously, but his voice was mild. "I think you can remember it, if you try," he suggested. "And," as the beady eyes shifted, "be sure it's the right one—or I'll be back!"

The other's sallow face turned pasty white, and moisture stood on his forehead. Oliver Groat was a rank physical coward, as Pat had already discovered. He weakened beneath the cold threat of the boy's blue eyes.

"Why—why—he lives over in the forties, near Fifth Avenue. Got a little bachelor apartment at the Manchester." He mumbled an address, twisted free, and darted out of the room.

"The swine!" said Pat disgustedly and followed.

He had almost reached the outer door when a small voice called him back.

"M-mister O'Brien?"

Pat turned joyfully. "Yes, Miss Black? I thought you'd entirely forgotten me."

Below the girl's high cheekbones a

hint of dusky color showed for a breath. Her black eyes were oddly soft, but she ignored the remark.

"Mr. Groat told you the truth—part of it," said she. "But Wynne never goes to those rooms until afternoon. He really lives over on Avenue A, with his wife. He keeps the other place for show—to give teas for empty-headed women who think he's single. His real name is Winowitz—Andriev Winowitz." She gave him an address. "You'd better hurry, or Mr. Groat will get there first and scare him away. What has he done now?"

"You're awfully good," said Patrick gratefully. "Miles is looking for him to take him apart. I only hope Groat does scare him out!"

"You must hurry," she repeated. Then, relenting at Pat's grieved look, "I'd like to hear about it all—later. I leave here at five o'clock every night."

"I'll be back!" cried Pat enthusiastically and hurried out.

His taxi was waiting and he gave the Avenue A address and climbed in. "Between Groat and me," he reflected, "we ought to be able to make that poet listen to reason!" He chuckled at his own finesse.

The cab stopped before a typical slum tenement, a dingy, ill-built pile of dirty brick, whose fire escapes were as crowded as the house itself. Flower pots, pillows, tubs—each platform was differently decorated. "Some mansion!" said Pat, as he entered a dark, littered hallway.

Above him stretched the dark well of the staircase, redolent of garlic, garbage, boiled cabbage, and unwashed humanity. Neglected children raced up and down and slid on the stained, greasy banisters. From open doors came a shrill jargon of overworked housewives, scolding in many tongues, with now and then a heavier, masculine voice.

Andriev Winowitz, he learned from a voluble janitress, lived on the fourth floor back. Patrick labored up the dingy stair, stumbling at landings, whose blackness was scarcely relieved by tiny, flickering gas jets, until the breath wheezed in his lungs.

At last he reached the fourth floor and knocked upon a warped, ill-fitting door. From within sounded a monotonous, meaningless mumble, a senseless iteration: "La um de da um, de da——" At his knock the chant ceased, and there was dead silence for a space. Then the same dull mumbling began once more: "La um de da——"

Patrick knocked again, vigorously.

"Yes, I come," said some one within and laughed foolishly. "La um de da um——"

The door opened a little, and through its cracks peeped a face. It was a woman's face, of the broad, flat-cheeked Lithuanian type, and it mouthed and twitched grotesquely, with some spasmodic nervous tic.

"Ho!" remarked this vision, on a broad, jerky grin. "You want something, yess?"

"I came to see Mr. Wynne—Winowitz," explained Patrick rather uneasily. He felt the instinctive repugnance of the healthy for nervous disease.

The woman grimaced at him for a moment, muttering under her breath, "La um de da um," then swung the door wide, displaying a stout, slatternly figure. Arms, legs, and head moved, as by their own separate volition, in strange, disorganized jactitations, like the movements of a jumping jack.

"For Andriev Winowitz," she repeated vacuously, with the same witless grin. "You come in."

Patrick entered a cluttered, odorous kitchen. Its one window was tight shut; on the red-hot stove simmered some ill-savored concoction, filling the air with steam. The poet was not visible.

"Is he here?" asked Pat.

The woman shook her head jerkily, scarcely deigning to stop her mumbling iteration. "Not here," she answered.

"Where is he?"

She made the stiff, wide-armed gesture of a marionette. "Gone away—gone away," she answered vaguely.

"Don't you know where?" demanded the boy impatiently. "You're his wife, ain't you?"

"La um de da," said the woman, grimacing convulsively. "His wife? Andriev's wife? Yess, I guesso. But I t'ink he got annuder womans, mebbeso." She gave an empty laugh and walked to a corner table, moving at a queer, uneven gait, like a horse with string halt. "He send her letter, I t'ink. You read me—I no un'stan' Eeenglis'."

She held out a half sheet of yellow paper, which rattled and shook in her unsteady hand.

Patrick took it, wondering. It held half a dozen lines of big, sprawling script, unevenly arranged.

"You read!" insisted the woman.

"'The Fires of Love,'" read Patrick aloud. "Huh! Must be poetry."

> I am filled with a flame;
> roaring,
> raging,
> consuming,
> Ever renewed.
> Furnaces; molten metal flowing
> always toward you, my own.

"You see," nodded Mrs. Winowitz. "Andriev, he make love writings to annuder girl as me. Yess?"

"It does look like it." Here was another chance to keep Aubrey Wynne occupied, thought Pat.

The woman's face distorted itself into new and terrifying grimaces. "Hah!" she cried, stamping a broad foot. "Those fire of lofe, she burn my Andriev, for who? You tell me, boy—for who?"

Patrick flinched from her ferocious, maniacal glare. "How should I know?" he said evasively.

The light died out of her blank, staring eyes, and she nodded with the mechanical movement of a Chinese mandarin toy, over and over, while her arms tossed, as though jerked by a hidden string.

"Ol-right," said she. "I feex 'im—la um de da um—— You go now. Get oudt, see?" She opened the door and made to push Patrick out.

"But," protested the boy weakly, "I've got to see Wynne—Winowitz. I've got to warn him—to get him away. He's in danger!"

The woman still nodded, up and down, up and down, as though her head hung on a pivot. "Danger," she repeated vaguely. "Danger? Yess, I guesso. Danger! La um de da um, de da—— You go now, meester. Goo'-by!"

Gesticulating senselessly, she dragged him bodily out into the hall. "You go," she repeated. "Pretty soon, Andriev, he come. Those fire of lofe, she are nice fire, yess? Goo'-by!"

And she slammed the door.

Descending the stairs, Patrick met Oliver Groat coming up. The lawyer glared and would have passed, but Pat stopped in front of him.

"Why, Mr. Groat! How odd to meet you here!"

"Think you're smart, don't you? I suppose you've got it all fixed up, huh?"

"Why, no—not yet." And then he added craftily, "If you find Aubrey Wynne before I do, Mr. Groat, you'd better hide him, or I'll beat you to it. You can't bid against us, and he won't give up those letters again, except for cash. You overplayed your hand the other day, trying to hold him up, and us, too."

With a vicious mutter, the lawyer pushed past and went on up the stairs. Pat O'Brien, grinning to himself, descended them.

Back in the taxi he hesitated for a moment, wondering what to do next. Then he gave Wynne's other address.

"If I draw blank there," he reflected, "I'll hunt for Miles, and see if I can't have him pinched or something."

A big red roadster was drawn up in front of the Manchester Apartments, its engine running. Patrick looked at it dubiously, then entered the building.

Some one—a large young man, black-browed and scowling—was interrogating the hallboy.

" 'Big and black, with a face like a wooden Indian'—it's him!" decided Patrick, with a tiny thrill.

"Naw, suh, Mist' Miles, I cain't say whah at, suh. Mos' ingenally Mist' Wynne, he go to Little Bohemia for luncheon, suh. Yas, suh; thank you, suh!" The boy pocketed a bill. "An' Mist' Miles, if he ain' thah, you ask for Mist' Robin, th' managah. Mos' like he c'n tell whah at to look."

The big man turned on his heel, giving Patrick a glimpse of a most vindictive close-up, and hurried out. Pat thrust another bill into the negro's hand.

"Here, boy, get me the Little Bohemia on the phone—quick!" When the connection was made, "Page Mr. Wynne—Aubrey Wynne." During the agonizing wait, Patrick drummed a devil's tattoo. At last, a smooth voice, faintly gutteral, spoke: "Yes? This is Aubrey Wynne."

"You, Wynne," said Patrick, "beat it quick! Endicott Miles is coming there after you. He's wise."

A smothered gasp, a click, and the receiver at the other end of the line was hung up. Patrick grinned. "He'll make tracks quicker than a fox with a hound at its heels."

Then he went out to his cab, revolving plans to divert Endicott Miles from his purpose.

"Little Bohemia, now—speed!" And he handed the chauffeur a bill.

The red speedster stood in front of the restaurant. Entering, Pat discovered Endicott Miles in conference with a foreign person of ultraimmaculate garb. As though seeking a well-placed table, he walked right up to them, in time to see the passing of a yellow-backed bill.

"Very important and to his advantage," said the restaurateur. "Why, in that case——" He lowered his voice carefully, but Patrick caught, "Avenue A."

"Oh, good gosh!" the boy exclaimed, as he ran out, fumbling in his pockets.

"See that red car?" he asked his taxi driver. "Owner coming out now. Get in his way—block him—let him run into you. Here!" He held out a hundred-dollar bill and one of Dudley van Ness' cards. "Another like that, and we pay all damages. He may fight—are you game?"

The driver was a blocky, hard-faced youth, with a tin ear. He pocketed the money with a slow, pleased smile. "Fight? That big cheese? Let's go!"

Patrick stood back. Miles had already climbed into his big speedster. As he slipped in the clutch, the taxi backed and swung awkwardly. Miles tooted his horn impatiently, as the cab made to swing out from the curb. The big man, in a tearing hurry, tried to slip by on the right. Pat saw his driver's pleased grin, as he twisted his wheel. Then came a grinding crash. Caught in the trap, Miles had rammed the cab.

Pat's driver descended deliberately. His raucous voice rose high above the sounds of traffic. "You big stiff! Whaddaya mean, tryin' t' pass me on th' wrong side, hey? I'll push in y'r mush!"

Miles also climbed down, but in silence. At the look of him, Pat trembled for his accomplice. But as a policeman approached, he was relieved to see the position of the two cars seemed to show plainly that the red speedster's driver was at fault.

"Oh, good boy, good boy!" said Pat exultingly. "That ought to hold him for a while. I hope he swings on you—

once. They'll put him in the cooler, then—and I expect it'll take two reserves to do it. Our dear Endicott seemed annoyed!"

Without waiting for the denouement, he signaled another taxi and had himself driven back to Avenue A at top speed.

Once more he labored up the four flights of dirty stairs and knocked at Winowitz's door. This time it was opened promptly, and the same woman popped out into his face like a Jack-in-the-box, grinning her silly grin. Her face was flushed, and her strange eyes were glassily bright. She seemed full of some strange inner tension.

"Ho!" said the woman, mowing and chuckling, throwing her thick limbs about. "Ho! It is the boy—to see Andriev Winowitz—la um de da um—Andriev, stealer of hearts—la um de da——"

The words and the meaningless syllables wove themselves into a barbaric chant. The woman's eyes gleamed brighter and brighter, and her straggling hair moved to the jerkings of her head, while her thick limbs writhed strangely. The boy stared at her in astonishment.

"Come! You want see Andriev, yess? La um de da—— Come, I show you somet'ing!"

With a vacuous laugh, she plucked him by the sleeve and led him through the untidy kitchen. Through the kitchen she went, Patrick following reluctantly, and to the door of an inner room.

On a tumbled bed within lay Andriev Winowitz—Aubrey Wynne, erstwhile poet—or what was left of him. Here and there the bedding on which he lay still smouldered, and at the foot stood a five-gallon kerosene can—empty.

"Good Heavens!" exclaimed Patrick O'Brien.

"Ho!" jabbered the woman at his elbow. "Andriev Winowitz, my man! La um de da um de da—— Full with and those fire, she burn 'im up, yess—— La um de da——"

Choking, horrified, Patrick turned and fled, pursued by that dreadful, jeering voice: "Those fire of lofe, she's a hot fire, mebbeso, I t'ink. She burn Andriev good—— La um de da——"

As the boy fumbled blindly toward the stairhead, a heavy hand fell upon his shoulder, turning him halfway about.

"Where's Wynne live?" demanded a deep, angry voice. "Where's that infernal poet?"

Patrick blinked up into the face of Endicott Miles. "How'd you get out so quick?" he asked dully.

The man's lips opened, but from behind him came another voice, a husky half whisper: "Did you find him?"

"Why, yes, Mr. Oliver Groat," answered Patrick deliberately.

Miles whirled, raging. "Groat? Groat! You were in it, too!"

He reached out a long arm for the lawyer, and Patrick slipped quietly down the stairs.

"I'd no instructions to protect Groat," he reflected. "I hope Miles kills him!" And he laughed hysterically, for he was much shaken.

WOMEN TO PROSECUTE WOMEN

BELIEVING that women understand better than men the problems of the female delinquent, Robert E. Crowe, State's attorney of Chicago, Illinois, will employ one or more women as assistant attorneys in Cook County to prosecute feminine offenders. Mr. Crowe thinks that there will be less chance of injustice being done women accused of crimes, if the prosecutor is one of the same sex.

On the Fifth Green

by Arthur W. Patterson

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

WHEN the caretaker of Sunny Harbor clubhouse hears "a horrible shouting" at night on the edge of the golf links near Cliff Cottage, he telephones to Arnold Culberson, the agent of the cottage. With Will Reed, Doctor Pierson, and Mr. Neston, Culberson starts for Cliff Cottage, which two days before had been rented to Joseph Richards, of Newton, Massachusetts, for the fall and winter. Near the hedge of the cottage, on the fifth green of the golf course, they find the dead body of Richards. He had fallen, while running hard, as if in deadly terror of a pursuer. Fear had stilled a weak heart. In his hands are clutched an Indian arrowhead and a stone pipe bowl. At the cottage they find Howard Jackson, the butler, and his niece, Olive Clements, a maid, who arrived only a few hours before the tragedy. Sheriff McGuire, County Attorney Thompkins, and Detective Jones are summoned to handle the case. Before the inquest, which yields nothing, Reed goes down into the cellar to investigate a noise and, in the glare from a match, thinks he sees Jackson. When he returns upstairs he beholds Jackson coming from the second floor in his night clothes. Reed and Jones suspect Jackson is much more than a butler, but, in spite of the Clements girl's beauty, her voice and speech would seem to stamp her a maid. Jones discovers that the first owner of Cliff Cottage was a Revolutionary adventurer, whose first wife was an Indian princess, but Culberson declares the cottage contained no Indian relics. Jones decides to remain at the cottage and invites Reed to join him. Between them they intend to continue their investigations, not forgetting Jackson and Olive Clements.

CHAPTER VI.

MAN OR MONKEY.

FOR the third time we had examined the cellar of Cliff Cottage and learned nothing new. The cellar was a T-shaped space, with the head of the T running under the wings of the house and its stem beneath the main building. The masonry of the walls under the wings was comparatively recent, as was that part of the main cellar which had been extended to run beneath the L, behind the main house. But the stonework of the walls in the cellar, underneath the main building, had been there a long time—in fact we believed this portion of the cellar to have been beneath the mansion that the first Hatherle had built to replace his original log cabin in the days when Sunny Harbor was still a wild settlement and the country a part of a British colony.

"Look at those old walls," exclaimed Hollister Jones admiringly. "You don't see work like that in these days, my boys; that was done in a day when men knew their trade. It was a master mason, indeed, who squared those rocks and laid them up. They haven't given an inch in the frosts of a century. Of course when this part of the house was built there were no skilled workmen in Sunny Harbor, and Hatherle probably sent for them, perhaps, even to England. The rocks were not quarried in these parts, and he probably brought them here in a vessel—an expensive business, no doubt."

I glanced at the sills of the house, above the old stonework, and the great beams of the structure. Hewn out by hand were these, in the day when great trees were to be had—massive beams, twice as big as those that can be obtained nowadays. They were free still from any speck of rot, so far as I could

tell. No wonder that Cliff Cottage had stood so long upon such a steady foundation, as strong almost as the cliff from which the house took its name.

"They certainly built strong houses in old times," I remarked.

"And the gentry of the new country, for it was only the rich who built great houses, followed the great houses of the old country in plan," said Jones. "That was the day in which each house had its secret room, and each desk its secret drawer or cabinet. Furniture makers had the same ideas as house builders."

"You're thinking of secret passages," I exclaimed, smiling.

"I am," said Jones, unabashed. "I've been thinking of such things ever since I first heard your story. I passed rather a queer night in this house myself last night. But I've a pretty good idea of the plan of a house, and practically all the space in this place is accounted for. I've taken measurements and checked them carefully. There isn't room in these walls of Cliff Cottage for concealed passages that anything bigger than a rat could pass through, I'm positive."

"You say you passed a queer night here," I said. "What do you mean?"

"Oh, nothing in particular. Queer sounds and noises, for which I could not account. But there's a reason, of course." The little man bristled suddenly. He strutted for the moment like an angry little rooster. A small man's anger may be a fearful thing, but it usually is amusing, not impressive.

"What do they think I am?" he demanded. "A credulous fool, who believes in spooks! Not much—they've picked the wrong man to scare. And yet," his voice dropped, "something frightened Richards to his death. I cannot believe he was a superstitious man."

"He had a weak heart," I said. "Besides, we've no means of knowing that whatever frightened him was connected at all with Cliff Cottage." Then I dropped my voice to a whisper. "Jackson was overanxious to remain here, I thought. What do you make of that?"

"Nothing or much," said Jones. "It seems strange at first, but, after all, what better thing could he do? He knew the authorities must keep an eye on him and his niece until things are cleared up. He realized he would be no more under surveillance here than in any other place. If Cliff Cottage was to remain open he might as well stay here as at any house in town; in fact he might not be overwelcome in other lodgings. It's convenient for me, for I've made arrangements with Jackson and the girl to look after me while I'm here—cook my meals and all that. They'll do as much for you, now that you are my guest."

"It gives him a good chance to be on the scene, if there's any funny business on foot," I suggested.

"Yes, that's to be considered, of course. But we've the same opportunities to watch him that he has to watch us. Oh, yes, we won't overlook Jackson and Miss Clements in digging into this case. But there are a good many features of it that can't very well be connected with them."

It was nearly six o'clock, and we went up to supper. It was not a very good meal, neither well cooked nor very well served. I made no comment, but I could not help thinking that had Jones made other arrangements he would have obtained better meals, for almost any housewife in Sunny Harbor could have prepared a better supper than the one we ate. However, I remembered that Jackson had said that his niece was not a cook and that when Richards took the house he had intended to engage a woman of the town in that capacity. A vein of economy that comes down to me from thrifty New

England ancestry, has always throbbed hardest when I see good foodstuffs spoiled by an unskilled cook.

It was shortly after supper that Culberson called me on the telephone. Jones had had an instrument installed at Cliff Cottage.

"I've been trying to locate you all the afternoon," he said. "Just heard to-night that you'd turned detective and were hard at the task of solving mysteries. I'm going out to East Eddington to-night to a corn husking, and didn't know but what you'd like to go along."

I hesitated, receiver in hand. Culberson had promised all fall to take me to an old-fashioned country husking bee, and I wanted very much to accompany him to-night. At the same time I did not want to go back on Jones, and it was the first evening since I had accepted his invitation to stay at Cliff Cottage.

"What's the matter?" asked the little man, noticing my hesitation.

"Culberson has asked me to go to a corn husking," I said. "But I don't like to leave you."

"Go ahead," said Jones. "Probably I'll be sitting up when you get home. I'm not very much of an early-to-bed fellow."

It was probably twelve o'clock when Culberson's runabout turned into the road that bordered the golf course on our return from the husking. The powerful lights of the car gleamed far ahead upon the narrow way, occasionally shining for a second on the fields to one side or the other as the road curved. Thus the beam swept the high hedge in front of Cliff Cottage as we rounded the turn before approaching it and rested for one instant on the green at the foot of the hedge where the unfortunate Richards had fallen. Both Culberson and I, looking ahead, exclaimed at the same instant.

A gray, huddled shape, moving very swiftly, flashed across the fifth green and out of sight. Whether man or beast we could not tell, the thing went so swiftly. Almost directly afterward came the sound of a pistol shot, and instinctively we ducked our heads, though it was not probable that the shot was aimed our way. A minute later we were at the gap in the hedge, and the headlights streamed upon the gray front of Cliff Cottage. From an upper window leaned Jones in his shirt sleeves, holding a revolver in his hand. I gasped with relief, for he appeared unhurt, and evidently it was he who had fired the shot.

"Did you see it?" he cried excitedly. "Your lights shone full upon the thing as it bounded across the green. I fired over the top of the hedge, but I guess I was a second too late."

"What was it?" demanded Culberson.

"Couldn't you tell?" returned Jones disappointedly. "I was hoping you got a better view than I. Hold on a moment—I'll be down."

He appeared presently, thrusting his arms into the sleeves of a coat.

"It was quiet as a church all the evening," he said, coming out upon the porch. "I read until I was tired, and finally thought I'd go up to bed, leaving the door unlocked for you, Reed. Jackson and his niece went up hours ago. I was just undressing when I heard the roar of a car, coming in the Cliff Cottage road, and I walked over to the window, thinking of course it was you. When your lights flashed over the green as you made the turn I saw the thing. My revolver was on the table. I snatched it up, and took a pot shot just a second too late."

At that moment there was a low step in the hall behind us, and we all turned quickly. It was Jackson, coat and trousers pulled over his night attire, glancing about curiously.

"What's the matter?" he asked. "I thought I heard a shot."

"Well, your ears didn't deceive you then," said Jones. "Did it wake you from a sound sleep?"

"It woke me, certainly," answered the man. If he noticed Jones' sarcasm he did not appear to resent it. "I may not have slept very soundly—one doesn't in this house, I think. But who fired and at what?"

"I fired," said Jones. "At what—well, that's another matter. Apparently I missed, whatever it may have been. Let's take a look out here and see what we can see."

We approached the green, Jackson bringing up the rear. I had my electric torch, and Jones possessed one also. But there was nothing to be seen on the green, no sign that the soft grass had been recently disturbed by the tread of either man or beast.

"Well, something was here certainly," said Jones at length. "We weren't all mistaken; you two saw it as well as I. Too bad we couldn't one of us tell what it was."

"It looked like a big monkey to me," said Culberson. "That was all I could think of as the thing went across the green in the instant my lights were upon it."

"But there are no monkeys in Sunny Harbor," put in Jackson from the rear. "I didn't see the thing, of course, but isn't it more probable that it was a dog? A stray dog now might very likely be prowling about the links at night."

My light, turning here and there, at that moment flashed upon his face, and I thought I detected the faint trace of a smile about the man's lips. I might have been mistaken, of course, for, had it been there, it was gone the next instant.

"Yes, it may have been a dog, of course," agreed Jones. "I hardly supposed, however, the dogs in Sunny Harbor bounded upon their hind legs. I will admit that, even so, one would be more apt to see a dog out here than a big monkey."

"Well, whatever it was, it has gone now," said Culberson. I think my friend was a trifle annoyed. "And, if I can be of no more use here I think I'll be off home and to bed."

He climbed into his car, which stood facing the cottage, and backed the machine around so that it faced in the direction of the village. As the lights of the automobile flashed again across the green I cried out. The headlights, covering a wider circle than our comparatively feeble pocket torches had done, shone upon something that lay on the golf course, just beyond the edge of the green. I stepped over quickly and picked the thing up, while the others crowded about me to see.

It was the wooden stem to the Indian pipe, the bowl of which had been clutched in Richards' dead hands. At least that is what I took the long, rudely carved stem to be. How it came to be here upon the grass we could only conjecture. We could only surmise that the mysterious figure which three of us had seen bounding across the green in the light of Culberson's powerful headlights had dropped the pipestem there.

"Maybe the thing was hunting for the pipe bowl," said Culberson. He had sprung down from his car, and now returned to the machine again. I was the only one near him for the moment.

"Better hop in and ride down to the village with me," he said in a low voice. "I'll put you up for the night—things are happening out this way that I don't fancy digging into."

"No, I think I'll stick," I returned. "My heart isn't weak, and I'm more curious than frightened."

"Suit yourself," returned Culberson grouchily. "I'll confess that since I saw that cursed, uncanny thing go hopping across this green I've been more frightened than curious. I can

see just how that poor devil looked the other night." He clicked into gear and drove down the road.

We went into the house, taking with us the pipestem, and Jones brought out the bowl of red stone which had been left in his custody. The wooden stem fitted, and there before us, on the library table, lay an Indian pipe, all complete—an interesting relic under any circumstances, but a provoking one under those in which it had come to our attention.

As we looked at the thing under the strong light of the library lamp there was something about it that interested us more than the finding of the pipestem itself. Jones did not mention the discovery until Jackson, with a last curious look at the pipe on the table, had gone shuffling back to bed. Then he pointed a finger at the stem we had picked up on the green. It was smeared with reddish clay and looked as though it might have lain, trodden underfoot, in a bed of the clinging stuff.

We were puzzled. There was no red clay near Cliff Cottage certainly, the soil being sandy. But I had found it in the upper hall on the night of my weird experience at the cottage, and here it was upon this wooden stem of an old Indian pipe, apparently dropped near the fifth green, by that mysterious figure which had bounded across the links and disappeared in the direction of the shore a few minutes before. On that green we had found the body of poor Richards clutching in one hand the bowl of that stem and in the other an arrowhead of flint stone. It seemed no wild conjecture that the gray, bounding figure we had glimpsed might well have had something to do with his death. Culberson had been reminded of a great monkey in his second's view of that shape, and, from the glimpse I had had, I could think of no description more apt. But there were no beasts like that in Sunny Harbor, and an animal would not have been likely to carry Indian relics about on nocturnal journeys.

"Well, let's go to bed," said Jones finally. "We'll sleep on the problem and see what we can make of it in the morning. Bright and early we'll take a look along the shore."

I agreed, but I did not expect that our search along the beach in the morning would give us anything of value. It was true that the thing that had pursued Richards had evidently come from the shore, and the gray, bounding shape which we had caught a glimpse of to-night had gone toward the shore. Man or beast, it had a habitation somewhere, but I was positive there was not a hole in the cliff or among the rocks along the shore where anything bigger than a sea otter could hide. It might have come over the water, but, without the aid of a powerful searchlight, no small boat could be seen on the dark waters of the bay to-night. In the morning, if had there been a boat, it would have disappeared without a trace.

A weird idea occurred to me. Was it possible that the gray shape we had seen—the thing, perhaps, that had frightened Richards to his death—came from the sea, a horrible, unknown monster of the depths, pursuing some unholy occupation at dead of night? Improbable, of course, yet to-night I was more than ready to believe the improbable. Then I shook the idea from me—monsters of the deep do not cavort about on dry land, nor do they carry Indian relics, things rarely seen except in museums or collections.

I was ready to get into bed when a soft rap came on my door. I opened it, and Jones came into the room. He seemed a trifle excited and held out, in the palm of his hand, a bit of moist red clay that might well have come from a man's boot. I stared at the bit of earth.

"Just thought I'd look round a bit," said Jones, "and I found this in the hall that leads to Jackson's room. I could swear almost that he hasn't been outside this house to-night until we went out to the green."

CHAPTER VII.

LINKS BUT NO CHAIN.

AFTER Jones left my room I could not sleep. Finally I got out of bed, and in a bath robe took my seat by the window with a pipe. Except for the flickering ash in its bowl, there was no light in the room, and I looked out upon the dark lawn, bordered toward the golf links by the high hedge, and on the cliffside by the fringe of pines. I sat pondering over the events of the last few days, my eyes gradually growing accustomed to the darkness without. Presently a dark figure crossed the lawn under my window, going in the direction of the links. My first impulse was to arouse Jones, but it would take some time to reach his room, and in the interval the figure might disappear. At that moment I was so determined to find out anything that might clear up the mystery that I did not stop to consider how foolhardy it was to go out alone. In less than a minute I had slipped on trousers and a sweater and drawn on my shoes.

If I left the house by the front door its creaking would certainly bertay me. A strong gutter pipe swung close to my window, and by its aid I could easily reach the top of the window below, and from there drop to the ground. Against the dark background of the house I was practically invisible. In a very few seconds I stood upon the lawn, shivering, for the night air was bitter. So hastily had I left the room that I had forgotten the little electric torch in the pocket of my coat, but the revolver that Jones had advised me to carry was in the hip pocket of my trousers, and the little weapon gave me confidence.

The figure had disappeared through the gap of the hedge, and I followed quickly. When I came out upon the links I saw the dark shape descending the path that led toward the beach. It was a person unquestionably that stole across the grounds of Cliff Cottage at this hour of night—no uncanny being, but a person—whether man or woman I could not tell. Of one thing I was positive—nobody had any business in this vicinity at this time that could be of a lawful nature.

I crossed the fifth green and the corner of the links, and went cautiously down the path to the shore. Though I had lost sight of the figure, there was but the one way to the beach, so I could not be on the wrong track. Presently I stood among the dunes, great banks of sand whipped by the winds into heaps that rose higher than my head. I followed the twisting path between them until I stood in the shelter of the last sand bank, with the narrow strip of beach in front that led down to the bay, and the cliffs, gloomier than ever now, stretching away upon either hand. Beyond the shadow cast by the cliffs it was comparatively light, and, as I looked out around the heap of sand that sheltered me, I saw the figure that I had followed.

It was closer than I had expected—only a few yards away, in fact—and crouched upon the ground, apparently searching for something along the beach. I stared, mystified. Presently a circle of light gleamed from a small torch that the figure carried. The circle swept the ground at its feet, here and there in a narrow arc, as though something had been lost which the figure was trying to find. Uncertain as to what was best to do, I waited, taking less advantage of my sheltering sand dune than I should have done had I observed perfect caution.

Something, I know not what, betrayed my presence. Probably the instinct that tells us when somebody stares at us from behind conveyed a hint to the kneeling figure. It sprang up suddenly, and the small but powerful torch was thrown my way. Its strong beam cut the intervening yards of darkness and blinded me momentarily. Then the light was cut off. I blinked once or twice, and when I looked again the figure had gone.

It had disappeared in a moment. I ran forward, but nothing lurked in the shadows of the cliff. Nowhere else along the beach was there a hiding place into which the figure might have darted. It had been there unquestionably, kneeling on the shore at the base of a thick, flat rock that some old glacier had hurled centuries before hard against the foot of the cliff. The beam from the light had dazzled my eyes for a second, and in that time the figure had disappeared absolutely, as though dissolved into thin air. A weird and uncanny thing surely. I was not frightened, but I was startled and surprised without question.

What had the figure been searching for upon the beach? I was annoyed to think I had not brought my light, but I knelt upon the spot where the figure had crouched, stretching out my hands here and there over the sand without expecting to locate anything, however. But luck was with me; my fingers touched something that I held up before my eyes with an exclamation of wonder.

It was a small bracelet; that much I could tell in the darkness. There were matches in my pocket, and I scratched one and examined my find by the dim light. A golden coil, very delicately worked and twisted in the shape of a serpent, turned back upon itself so that its mouth gripped its tail. A cunning bit of workmanship that made an attractive ornament despite the despised reptile it was modeled after. Bracelets are worn by women in this country at least, and this coil was too small, in any event, to have circled the wrist of a man. Now the only woman at Cliff Cottage was the maid, Olive Clements. This bracelet was a costly trinket, as even my inexperienced eyes could tell, and not an object that one would expect to find in the possession of a servant. But, even did it belong to Olive Clements, and had she lost it upon the beach, she would not have chosen this hour to come looking for it surely. More likely that the bracelet had been dropped by the figure when it discovered my presence, and I could not tell whether that figure had been a man or a woman. But if the figure had not looked for the bracelet, what had it groped for upon the sand? And where on earth had it disappeared in the moment when my eyes had been blinded by that powerful little torch which had shone full into them?

Finally I turned back to the path that led up to the links. There seemed nothing else to wait for on the beach—the little waves that lapped the shore, and the stern cliffs that looked down upon it, would tell me nothing. I slipped back to the lawn beneath my window, not caring to arouse the house by thundering on the front door. It was more trouble to get up to my room than it had been to descend, but, by aid of the friendly gutter pipe, I finally succeeded. Then I went down the hall very softly to Jones' room and knocked. After a short interval the detective opened his door.

"What on earth——" he began as I slipped in and motioned him to shut the door. The little man was half asleep, but he woke up fast enough as my story unfolded and listened with eager ears. When I had finished he made no comment, but examined the bracelet carefully while I stood by the table.

"Hm!" he observed finally. "Rather a nice piece of work—that. I know something about such things. It's a genuine antique—old Egyptian work. Several hundred dollars that little bracelet cost, if a penny. And you say you couldn't distinguish whether this figure you saw was a man or a woman?"

I shook my head. "Sorry, but I couldn't. It was just a shape in the night."

"Hm!" said Jones again. "It was a shape in the night at which I fired a few hours ago."

I nodded. "But this shape was a person unquestionably," I answered. "This shape walked upright like a human being, and did not bound close to the earth like a beast."

"A man might run close to the earth if trying to deceive," said Jones.

"Then, if you thought it a man, I wonder you fired. Even an officer of the law has no right to shoot a person except in self-defense or to check an escaping criminal if I understand the law."

"Right enough," said Jones. "I had no intention of hitting that figure, if you must know—only intended to stop its flight, if a shot would frighten it enough for that. It appears it did not. Quite possibly the person you saw may be the same shape the three of us saw—the thing that dropped the stem to the Indian pipe near the green of the golf course."

"That thing bounded toward the shore," I said. "The figure I saw came from beneath the shadows cast by this house when I first saw it on the lawn. I can't say it came from inside the house, but where did it disappear to in a flash on the beach? I'm positive there is no crack in the rocks into which it could have run, and it was light enough for me to see, had the figure gone up or down the beach."

"Well, I can't tell you," said Jones. "Any more than I can see the connection, if any, between an old Egyptian bracelet and the pipe of an American Indian. The one dates back thousands of years—the other but hundreds at the most. Yet both seem connected in some way with the mystery that envelops Cliff Cottage. In any event, don't show this bracelet to the girl Olive Clements."

I suppose I looked my surprise.

"Unlikely that it belongs to her, of course. But, suppose it did? She would deny all knowledge of it. But perhaps, if we hid the thing on the beach again, its owner might come looking for it."

"To vanish into thin air again if onlookers were detected," I remarked.

"Bosh!" said Jones. "People of flesh and blood cannot do that, and I've refused all along in this case to believe we were dealing with ghosts. I'm too essentially a practical man to let even the mysteries of this matter convince me of the supernatural."

The first thin white line of morning was edging the eastern horizon. We could see it from Jones' window. I waved my hand in that direction and yawned.

"Well, I guess nothing more will happen to-night. I'm beginning now to get sleepy—time for a few winks before breakfast."

I went back to my room, leaving the bracelet with Jones. I dropped into bed and only awakened when the sun of the morning came streaming over my pillow through the half-opened window. Then I put on some clothes and hastened to the detective's bedroom, but he was not there. The front door in the hall was unfastened, and I hastened out across the links to the beach path. As I expected, Jones was on the beach. He came toward me, smiling.

"I was wondering when you'd appear. I've been on the beach since

early light. I rather expect I found what your mysterious figure was searching for last night."

"What was it?" I asked.

"Nothing much; just an ordinary gold cuff link."

He held it out in the palm of his hand, an ordinary gold cuff link, bare of any design that might serve to identify its owner.

"Very likely a dozen people in town are wearing cuff links of exactly this pattern," went on Jones. "Your own, for example, are very similar, and for that matter so are mine. Neither of us has lost a cuff link, however. Jackson was wearing a pair like this only yesterday. If he lost one of them last night it would show us at least that he had been upon the beach for some purpose and that he didn't want it known that he was here because he came back to look for the missing link when you disturbed him."

"It would seem more likely to me that the cuff link was dropped by the figure I saw when it sprang up so quickly just before it disappeared," I answered.

"I think not, and here is my reason. The bracelet is a much larger object than the cuff link. You found it in the dark, and the person you saw had been searching the beach with a light. Had that person been looking for the bracelet he could hardly have escaped seeing it. But a cuff link is a different thing to look for; this morning, by daylight, I had to grope for several minutes before the elusive little object came to light. It seems to me that the cuff link had been dropped upon the beach by some man last night bent on business that he did not wish discovered. What that business was I of course cannot tell, but it seems to me that it must have some connection with the case we are trying to solve. Discovering the loss of his cuff link and suspecting it might have been dropped upon the beach, the man came back to look for it. You saw the dark shadow stealing out from Cliff Cottage, followed, and frightened the man away. As he leaped from your sight he dropped this bracelet. How he happened to possess such a thing as the bracelet and where he disappeared in the moment your eyes were blinded by the light are questions we cannot answer. But if we find that Jackson has lost a cuff link, together with the fact that the person whom you saw stealing down to the shore most evidently came from Cliff Cottage, then it seems to me we have added another link to the chain of evidence that is being slowly forged about this man."

Jones tapped off his points upon his long white fingers.

"Take them in order: First, the man is superior to his station. Whatever he is, he is evidently more than a servant. Second, his very coming to Sunny Harbor suggests a mystery—he knew enough about the place to know where Cliff Cottage was located and to suggest to the boatman who brought him that he could be landed direct on the beach. Yet he was clever enough to have it appear that the boatman made this suggestion. Third, the horrible shouting on the night Richards was killed was loud enough to alarm Old Jimmie at the clubhouse on the links, more than a quarter of a mile away. Jackson was in this house, on his own admission, within a stone's throw of the fifth green and the beach, yet he claims to have heard nothing. Fourth, on the night after the tragedy, when you remained alone in the house, you thought you heard a step in the hall, passing your door. You heard the noise of some one in the kitchen, and later in the cellar. You followed, and by the light of a match saw Jackson's pale face very distinctly. As you ran upstairs, after finding no one in the cellar when you flashed on your light,

you thought you heard the clang of a closing door. The front door was locked, but there was a smell of fresh air in the hall, as though it recently had been opened. Almost immediately Jackson comes down the stairs. How he did it I cannot tell, but he got from the cellar outdoors, and from there into the house again, in time to come downstairs, saying he was just aroused from sleep. Fifth, you see a person, Jackson more likely than any one else, stealing from the house in the direction of the beach. When you follow you find the person searching on the shore, from which he disappears as mysteriously as Jackson disappeared from the cellar. The certainty that this cuff link belongs to him would establish almost conclusively the fact that he was the man whom you saw on the beach. And why might he not be also the figure I fired at on the green, bounding and stooping low in the effort to disguise himself, but dropping that pipestem for the double purpose of perplexing and terrifying us?"

"He was in the house when you fired that shot," I reminded Jones. "The man came downstairs a few seconds after you did. How could there be any connection between the thing that fled toward the shore and Jackson upstairs in Cliff Cottage? Where would Jackson find the pipestem that belonged to the bowl clenched in Richards' dead hand? Why, assuming all your points to be proved, should Richards run in such deadly fear from his servant—fear that was largely the cause of his death? I'll admit that all you say is logical, and you omitted one thing—the red clay that has twice been shaken from some one's foot in the upper hall and traces of which showed on the pipestem. That red clay was found in the upper hall, at the far end of which is Jackson's room. But all these things serve to deepen the mystery instead of clearing it up. What motive is there for this crime, if crime it really was? Where do Indian relics, such as a pipe and an arrowhead, come into it? Or an ancient Egyptian bracelet? How can a man of flesh and blood disappear in an instant from a cellar as solidly walled as a prison, or from a beach through cliffs like these?"

"My answer is an old one," said Jones. "'Find the woman!' By the way, there is Olive Clements calling us to breakfast now."

CHAPTER VIII.

MRS. KENNEDY'S ACCOUNT.

I ACCOMPANIED Jones that morning to the little town library, and, while he prowled about in the stack-room looking into old books and asking questions of the efficient young woman who served as librarian, I read an old magazine in front of the cheerful fire in the reading room. I presumed that the detective was digging deeper into the early history of Cliff Cottage and its builder, the original Hatherle, first white settler in Sunny Harbor, who had married an Indian princess as his first wife.

These old traditions are interesting, but I was skeptical as to what benefit they might be in the solution of this mystery. Jones was endeavoring to find a reason for the Indian relics that played so strange a part in Richards' tragic death. But I doubted very much if the precious old documents in the files of the Sunny Harbor library would be of much help.

"Well," said Jones, coming up to me finally, "how about leaving your warm fire and taking a walk with me into the country this morning?"

"Where to?" I inquired.

"Out to a farmhouse a mile or so up the river, where an old lady lives whom the librarian has just told me about. A woman who, if she lives until spring, will be one hundred years old.

Think of it, Reed, a life of nearly a century lived for the most part in this village! Why, this woman's memory goes back ninety years, when Sunny Harbor, as a settlement, was less than seventy-five years old."

"You are still following up the history of Cliff Cottage, I see," I answered, smiling. "Well, no doubt the old place has its secrets, but how to connect them with the doings of these strangers who are concerned in the Richards' case I scarcely see."

"No more do I at present," confessed Jones. "Nevertheless, I want very much to talk with old Mrs. Kennedy. The librarian tells me she is a remarkably well-preserved old lady—a trifle deaf, which is not surprising, and confined to her room, but with her faculties remarkably keen."

Mrs. Kennedy lived with her great-grandson, a prosperous farmer, whose place on the river road had a splendid view of river and bay. The farm had been in the family for more than a hundred years, rather an unusual thing in a community where most of the real estate had changed owners several times in that long period. The farmer's wife recognized my companion—proof that the township was very much interested in the Richards' case—and when she found that he wished to interview her husband's great-grandmother, the good lady's surprise was great.

"You can see Grandma Kennedy, of course," she said. "But what on earth you want to see her about I don't know. She hasn't even been told about that man found dead near Cliff Cottage last week, and if we told her she wouldn't be interested. The dear old lady thinks mostly about things that happened before we were born."

"Naturally," said Jones. "It is about things that happened long ago that I want to consult Mrs. Kennedy. I shall not even mention the matter of the present tragedy if you do not wish."

Mrs. Kennedy was a frail little creature in black, with traces of snow-white hair showing under the edges of a lace cap, but I should not have taken her for a woman of a hundred years. This sweet-faced old lady, glancing at us with eyes not so terribly dimmed by time as to obscure their sight, had been a woman grown when the Civil War was fought—old enough to have had two sons in the Union army. One of those sons, a boy of seventeen, had fallen on the field of honor; the other had come back a veteran to Sunny Harbor, where he married and lived out a long and honorable life. His son, in his turn, had lived out a full life on the little farm near Sunny Harbor, and at his death had left his son, in turn, to carry on the old Kennedy place. And this woman, bowed in her comfortable chair by the open fire, had outlived children and grandchildren and now bade fair to round out a full century, tenderly cared for by a great-grandson and his wife, whose babies—two great-great-grandchildren, now played upon the floor at her feet.

Very deftly Jones swept the conversation back to old times. He represented himself as a man interested in the early history of Sunny Harbor. As such he was seeking firsthand information from one who had known the place when some of its early settlers must still have been alive. Alexander Hatherle, for instance, bold founder of Sunny Harbor, was in these days little more than a myth. Yet, in Mrs. Kennedy's early days, though the first Hatherle was not then living his family was prominent in the community, and doubtless she knew much about its history.

Madam Kennedy's face lighted up, and in one minute she had carried us back to her childhood days. Yes, she knew of the old Hatherles; they had been the aristocrats of Sunny Harbor in her girlhood. In their big house

above the north beach—all the land about it was part of the estate in those times—they had lived in almost feudal state, and woe betide the mechanic's son or farmer's boy who dared to trespass upon the acres of the lordly Hatherles.

"Class distinctions were more pronounced in those days," went on the old lady in her quavering, sweet voice, "but even then some folks sneered at the airs of the Hatherles, though behind their backs, you may be sure. Old Alexander Hatherle married an Indian woman, Winona, daughter of Moxus, chief of the Tarratines, who lived in this part of the country when Sunny Harbor was first settled. His son, the second Alexander Hatherle, was half Indian. His Indian mother died when he was a baby, and his father afterward married the daughter of Captain Caleb Adams, and the second wife brought the boy up, along with several sons and daughters of her own. But the oldest son was half Indian, nevertheless, and showed it in his face. I can remember him well, though he was an old man when I was a little girl, but straight as an arrow, with a dark, stern face. His children were not proud of the fact that their maternal grandmother was an Indian, even though an Indian princess; they preferred to regard Priscilla Adams, their grandfather's second wife, as their grandmother."

"Were there Indians living here when you were a girl?" inquired Jones, apparently deeply interested.

"Oh, no," replied the old lady. "The tribe went away from Sunny Harbor within a few years after the white people came. It used to be said that the first Hatherle did not want them around after he married his second wife, and through his efforts the Indians were sent away from the coast into the northern forests. Moxus, the last great chieftain of this branch of Tarratines, died soon after his daughter, and after his death the Indians went away. It was never known even where Moxus was buried or where Hatherle buried his first wife, the Princess Winona. He wanted people to forget, I suppose, if they would, that he had married an Indian in his wild, young days."

The day of the Hatherles' glory, in Sunny Harbor at least, had been before the Civil War. A Hatherle, we learned, had commanded the little company that went out from Sunny Harbor in the first months of that struggle. After the war, when the old coast towns began to go down, the Hatherles had been less prominent. Piece by piece the great estate had been parceled out and sold, until now only Cliff Cottage and the land immediately around it was the property of the Hatherles.

"And now," said Mrs. Kennedy, "I'm told no Hatherle has been in Sunny Harbor for years; that their place is let to summer folks for a cottage. Things have changed in Sunny Harbor; most of the old families are gone. Likely I wouldn't know the village—it's twenty years since I've set foot off the farm."

We made our excuses presently, and left, no wiser than when we had come so far as I could see. True, Mrs. Kennedy had confirmed the old tradition of the first Hatherle marrying an Indian, so that Indian blood flowed in the veins of the family's descendants to this day. But the fact did not help us in the investigation of the Richards affair. Jones was trying to learn something that would explain the Indian pipe and the arrowhead, but old Mrs. Kennedy's story, though interesting, helped us not one jot in that connection, so far as I could see. Jones, however, seemed in great good humor as we walked back to Sunny Harbor, and finally I turned upon him.

"I can't see for the life of me, Jones, that anything the good old lady told us is of any help to your case."

"No?" said Jones, idly switching the tall grass of the roadside with the stick which he had picked up.

"You're trying to find out where the Indian pipe and arrowhead came from, I suppose, but the fact that the first Hatherle married an Indian princess a hundred and fifty years ago doesn't explain them."

"Not at all," said Jones. "For that matter, I knew the first Hatherle married an Indian before I talked with Mrs. Kennedy. The old documents in the village library tell us that. But, nevertheless, Madam Kennedy said something that gave me an idea."

"Good!" I exclaimed. "What was it? All I gathered was that these old Hatherles were an aristocratic race, not overpopular in a new and democratic country, and that they were mightily ashamed that their ancestor had married an Indian woman. They even tried to cover the fact up so far as they were able. Perhaps that is the reason no Indian relics were treasured in the family mansion."

"Exactly," said Jones. "No Indian relics were treasured in the family mansion, certainly not in recent years. Your friend Culberson, agent of Cliff Cottage, testified that he had never seen such things there. Yet we find an Indian pipe bowl grasped in Richards' dead hand, and a flint arrowhead in the other. Last night somebody drops the stem to that pipe bowl upon the fifth green, where the body was found. These relics have some connection with this mysterious tragedy unquestionably, but what? Solve that puzzle and we are well on our way toward a solution of the crime."

"Of course," I said impatiently. "But what on earth did old Mrs. Kennedy say that was any help?"

"Why, she said that it was never known where Hatherle buried his first wife, the Indian princess Winona, or even where her father, Moxus, last great sagamore of the Tarratines, was buried. The first Hatherle evidently hustled the Indians out of the country after he married his second wife, but he would not carry the bodies of Winona and Moxus away. He saw to it, no doubt, that the remains of the mother and grandfather of his son, Indians though they were, should be treated with respect. They were buried, no doubt, in the fashion of that wild race, with the weapons and utensils that they had used in life about them. I believe such a burial place is near Cliff Cottage."

I stared. The little man had hit upon an explanation of the Indian relics perhaps, but how had Richards, a stranger to Sunny Harbor, discovered such a place? Suppose he had stumbled upon an Indian burial mound, who would drive him from it so vengefully that the man had dropped dead in his flight? The thing was farfetched. Even suppose the first Hatherle had buried his Indian princess and her chieftain father near Cliff Cottage, there was no person in Sunny Harbor to-day to resent an intrusion upon the tomb of the dead, and the ghost of old Moxus had surely not risen in wrath, either to frighten Richards to his death or to terrify others by dropping the stem of the pipe near the place where the man's dead body had been found.

"Well," remarked Jones as if following my chain of thought, "is the hypothesis too incredible? At least it gives us something to work on."

I said nothing. We were right in the village now and had turned from the river road into the main street. We walked into its little business section—the stores deserted and dreary now that the busy season of their year was over. Clerks lounged in doorways or looked out of windows listlessly. The old town looked as if it was about to fall into its long winter sleep.

Suddenly, in the upper window of

Culberson's office over the drug store, we saw a figure beckoning. It was Culberson, and my friend seemed excited. We turned into the narrow hall that led to his flight of stairs and mounted slowly, stumbling in the darkness. As we reached the top Culberson flung open his door.

"I've had a wire from the Hatherle agents in New York," he exclaimed, "in answer to my letter about this affair. Hatherle is abroad, but they will try to get in touch with him at once. For it's more than the death of a stranger who happened to be renting the house of which he is the owner. The dead man, Joseph Richards, was a cousin of the Hatherle who owns this house. It seems to me there must have been a reason for his coming down here to Sunny Harbor to take the place, eh? I mean that he was not down here merely to try a winter on the coast—he must have had graver business than that."

"It proved grave business for him surely," said Jones slowly. "So Richards was a cousin of the present Hatherle—one of the family? Then he must have known the old family traditions. Though, hang it all, what motive would he have in coming down here to open a graveyard, and who would want to kill him for it, even if he did so?"

"To open a graveyard!" Culberson stared at Jones. "What on earth, man, are you talking about?"

"Reed and I were just discussing an hypothesis," said Jones. "He doesn't fully accept my assumption, but I was trying to work out a reason for the Indian relics. I'm not so sure but I'm more than half right. Let us suppose that the Hatherles possessed a burial tomb somewhere near the old house that could be reached from the cellar, say, and perhaps from the shore by the bay as well. Some underground place that Jackson could have disappeared into the night Reed saw him in the cellar, and into which the figure on the shore last night might have fled." In a few graphic sentences he described my experience of the night and went on to relate our conversation with Mrs. Kennedy. Then he held up the Egyptian bracelet which I had found on the beach.

"This little trinket suggested the idea of tombs," he explained. "They dig them up in such places over in Egypt, you know. Then it struck me that Indian relics would more likely than not be found in an Indian tomb. The first wife of the original Hatherle was an Indian; was it not possible that she was buried in some secret tomb near the site of Cliff Cottage? Then Mrs. Kennedy told us that it was not known, even in her girlhood, where Hatherle had buried his Indian wife or where Moxus, last chief of the Tarratines, and father of Winona, slept his last sleep. So you see——"

"No, I don't," broke in Culberson. "You'll pardon me, Mr. Jones, but I think you're assuming things that can't possibly be so."

"Very well," said Jones, not in the least offended.

"I formed an impression of Richards in the interviews I had with him," said Culberson. "He struck me as being a cold man, to whom the material side of life would make the strongest appeal. He did not come down here and hire Cliff Cottage to investigate the secrets of a family tomb, provided there is any such place. Indian relics would not be of interest to a man of his type."

"Ordinarily not," said Jones. "Yet we find him clutching such things in his dead hands. And neither do we know the type of man he was; your impression may have been entirely erroneous. If it pleases you better, I will throw aside assumptions and stick to cold facts. Richards was a cousin of the owners of Cliff Cottage. He had

a motive for coming here, then, that must have some connection with a secret of the place. On his first night there he was found dead, clutching Indian relics in his hands. Since his death some mysterious person has dropped the stem to the pipe bowl upon the green, near the cottage. It is reasonable to think, at least, that this mysterious person knows something about Richards' death. I propose, if possible, to catch that man."

CHAPTER IX.

OLIVE DROPS HER MASK.

GOING into the post office on the afternoon of the day that we had called on Mrs. Kennedy I met Doctor Pierson just coming from the stamp window. He drew me into a corner.

"I say," he began, "there's something wrong up at the golf club. Old Jimmie has disappeared."

Old Jimmie, the wrinkled and aged caretaker, was a well-known figure to every golfer.

"Disappeared!" I exclaimed. "Why, I saw him—let's see, when was it?—day before yesterday, I'm sure."

"Yes, I saw him then myself," said Pierson. "He was pottering about the locker room the last day I was at the club, which was the day before yesterday. This morning, when the milkman made his rounds, he found the pint bottle of milk that he left for the old chap yesterday morning on the back porch untouched. It struck him as funny, and he mentioned the matter to me, thinking the old man might be sick or something. I went up first chance I had. Couldn't raise anybody, and finally climbed in at a window. Old Jimmie was nowhere around, and his bed had not been slept in last night. Nobody around town has set eyes on him."

"Oh, well, he's probably gone out of town for a day or so," I remarked.

"What, Old Jimmie? Why, he hasn't set foot outside Sunny Harbor in years."

"Well, it is strange, then. Still, he'll probably turn up all right. I wouldn't borrow trouble about it, Pierson."

"I'll not," said the doctor shortly. "Still I've known Old Jimmie rather well ever since he's been custodian of the clubhouse. A plodding, peculiar old chap, rather queer, like all old fellows who live too much alone, but steady as the seasons. In the last few days, since this Cliff Cottage business, it strikes me he has been rather off his base, now I think it over. You know it was he who heard the noise over near the cottage the night Richards was killed, and he reported the matter to Culberson."

"I remember," I returned. "He testified at the inquest."

"Yes," said Pierson, "but since that time Old Jimmie hasn't been his usual self, now I think things over. Now the old fellow disappears as though the earth had swallowed him up."

I had not known the old caretaker very well. A gruff sort of fellow he had been, doing his duties faithfully at the club, but decidedly offish in manner. I recollected, too, now that Pierson had spoken to me that when Old Jimmie testified at the inquest he had seemed very nervous. No one had thought that strange at the time. The old man was not used to appearing in public, and it was not strange that he should have been shaken by the tragedy, having heard the horrid screams that in all likelihood had been made by Richards.

"Perhaps he has gone away for a little while to get the thing out of his mind," I suggested.

"Perhaps," said Pierson. "The old chap's disappearance has set me to mulling things over, however. I remembered for the first time that when I was a lad, before I went off to college

and medical school, Old Jimmie used to work at Cliff Cottage—sort of a gardener or something. He's been at the golf club so long that I'd quite forgotten it."

The information gave a different look to the matter. Had Old Jimmie, once a servant at Cliff Cottage, been drawn into the sinister mystery that seemed to envelop the place? It seemed improbable. His going off so suddenly was peculiar, of course, but certainly it could have nothing to do with the dead man on the fifth green or the things that had happened subsequently at Cliff Cottage.

I returned to Cliff Cottage in the twilight, which fell at this time of year about five o'clock. I had taken the short cut across the links, and, just as I came over the low hill before reaching the fifth green, a figure came through the gap in the cottage hedge and headed in the direction of the path to the beach. It was a woman who went down the path to the shore, and I followed. In the sand of the beach my feet made no sound, and the girl, who knelt upon the shore, did not hear me until I stood almost over her. Then she sprang to her feet with a low, startled cry. As I had expected, it was Olive Clements who faced me, a frightened expression upon her face.

"Oh, it's you, Mr. Reed!" she exclaimed after a second of silence. "You came along so quietly that you quite startled me."

"Have you lost something?" I asked. "You seemed to be searching along the beach as I came up."

"Oh, no," she answered quickly. "I had a few minutes before supper and came down on the shore to watch the waves. Why, what would I lose?"

I remembered Jones' caution.

"Why, I don't know," I replied. "I merely fancied you were looking for something on the beach just now." At a loss for what to say next I spoke the first words that came into my mind. "Rather a lonesome spot down here on the shore after the sun has gone down."

She glanced out across the gray waters to where a stray light or two had begun to twinkle in the blackness of the far shore.

"Oh, I don't know," she answered. "I prefer it infinitely to that sinister, gloomy house behind the pines——" Suddenly she broke off and bit her lips. Taken by surprise down here upon the beach, she had forgotten for one moment the part that she had played so successfully in the last few days. She was dressed in a maid's costume, but, whatever else she might be, she was certainly no ignorant servant slurring her words in a voice unnaturally shrill, and her quick look at me told her that I recognized the fact. For an instant I thought she intended to spring away along the beach, then quite abruptly she walked close up to me and put her hands upon my sleeve.

"My dear sir," she said appealingly, "hasn't there already been trouble enough at Cliff Cottage? We want no more tragedies. Why not go away and meddle no more with matters here?"

"Meaning that things here are no concern of mine," I replied after a moment of astonishment. "Well, granting that they are not, that hardly applies to Jones, who is an officer of the law. He has asked me to help him. And really the killing of Joseph Richards is a matter that concerns every citizen until those responsible for it are caught and given their deserved punishment."

"Suppose I assure you that neither Jackson nor I had anything to do with that matter," she said earnestly.

"I certainly should be glad to hear that," I answered. "But can you assure me that you know nothing about it at all?" And as she made no answer I hurried on. "If you and Jackson had nothing to do with Richards' death,

which Heaven knows I am only too glad to believe, it certainly is your duty to help the authorities, not to hinder. Yet you have been passing as a servant —very cleverly, too, for you kept us all guessing whether you were or not —and Jackson, your uncle, is just as much of a servant as you are. Why not tell Jones what your real business is? It will be much the better way."

"Your advice is well meant," she answered quickly, "but you don't understand the situation at all. Much of it I don't understand myself. I do know that my uncle is acting for the best, and I could swear that he knows no more of Joseph Richards' death than I know. We were in the house and in bed when it happened, and knew nothing of it until Mr. Culberson rapped at the door after you discovered the body. Why, Joseph Richards never knew even that we were here——" Again she stopped abruptly. I was astonished, and no wonder. This girl surely seemed to be speaking the truth, and her story was entirely different from the one which Jackson had told at the inquest. Yet she assured me that neither she nor her uncle knew the facts of the tragedy.

I had not noticed the man who came softly along the beach, and when Jackson's low-pitched voice sounded just behind my shoulder I whirled in surprise.

"Supper is served, sir," said Jackson respectfully to me. To the girl he said simply: "I've been looking for you, Olive; you're needed at the house."

With a frightened, appealing look at me she turned and fled along the shore. I did not know what to say. How long perhaps had Jackson been standing behind us in the darkness and how much of our conversation had he overheard? From the man's manner nothing could be learned. He walked behind me to the cottage.

I found Culberson at the house. He had been there some time, talking with Jones, and from the conversation at the table that had to be in snatches when Jackson was not in the dining room I gathered that my friend was fast being won over to the little detective's theory. I did not see Olive Clements, who probably was in the kitchen, and during the meal I spent most of the time in wondering how I could meet the girl to continue the conversation that had been broken off so abruptly by Jackson's arrival. Thus the disappearance of Old Jimmie was driven from my mind, though I had intended to speak about it to Jones. After supper, when we went into the library to smoke, I excused myself and went up to my room to think things over. Until I had another talk with Olive Clements I did not wish to confide in Jones.

The faint, elusive smell of some vague perfume came to my nostrils the moment I opened the door, in spite of the half-open window and the odor of many dead pipes. As I turned on the light I caught sight of a slip of paper pinned to the pillow of the bed. In the clutter of books and old letters on the table it is quite possible that I might have missed that little scrap of white paper if it had been left there, but I could not have helped seeing it on the pillow when I got into bed, though it was mere chance that called it to my attention now. I unpinned the slip, my heart beating rather rapidly. There was one short sentence written upon it, unsigned, but in a flowing, feminine handwriting:

I must see you on the beach at eleven.

On the beach at eleven. That would be only a few minutes after the time we usually retired. I knew who had written the message, for there had been no other way for her to send word to me. While her uncle was in the dining room Miss Clements had slipped upstairs and pinned this little note to

my pillow. Even did I not come to the room before bedtime she had known that I must see it then.

When I went downstairs Culberson was just going away, and the lights of his car shone strong down the driveway and the gap in the hedge, out to the brown links beyond the road. I followed Jones into the library, where he filled his pipe and flung himself into a chair in front of the roaring blaze. At length he glanced at me and chuckled in dry fashion.

"Well, I've brought your friend Culberson around to my views."

"All right," I answered carelessly. "But suppose this burial tomb—I presume that's what you're talking about—actually exists, with a secret entrance from the cellar, say, and from the beach. How much better off are we? We don't know how to get into it, and, even if we did, how much nearer would we be to finding the people responsible for Richards' death?"

"I'll confess that I don't know," answered Jones. "But we can't sit here twirling our thumbs forever, and now I've got something definite to go on at least."

"Well, we can't accomplish anything sitting here."

"Only make Jackson, for example, think we are doing nothing," said Jones. "Why, man, do you think I've been asleep all day? I've got two of the best men in the county seat over to watch the beach to-night. And Culberson is coming back with Doctor Pierson, and they will hide in the hedge, where they can watch not only the cottage but the top of the beach path. As for me, I'm going to get down into the cellar as soon as I'm sure that Jackson and his niece are in their rooms."

This was interesting news for a man who had an appointment on the beach at eleven. How was Miss Clements to get there without being seen? And, suppose I eluded Culberson and Pierson, I would be seen by the two county detective whom Jones had stationed upon the beach.

"Here's what I want you to do," went on Jones, not noticing my perplexed expression. "After we're sure that Jackson is in his room I'm going to slip down to the cellar. Then you go upstairs and shout 'Good night!' to me down the corridor, just as though I had gone to bed as usual. I don't think it's absolutely necessary, but better play safe. Then keep your ears open and await developments. I can't tell you what to expect, for I don't know what's going to happen, but we must be prepared for whatever breaks. And by watching in this way we stand a chance to get an insight upon some of these things that are upsetting the peace of Cliff Cottage."

"Not if the folks we're trying to get know they're being watched," I answered. Then, as if disgruntled, I said: "You haven't picked me for a very important part."

"I couldn't," said Jones. "You're in the house, and we can't both of us go into the cellar. One of us must go up to bed at least and try to make it appear that both of us have gone."

"You suspect Jackson, of course," I went on.

"I do," said Jones. "There may be others in the business, too, whatever it may be—his pretended niece, of course, for one."

I wondered what Jones would say did he know that at eleven of this very evening I had an appointment with Olive Clements on the shore. I was in hopes of getting information that would definitely start us on a path that led somewhere, and I had not the faintest idea that Jones and his watchers would learn anything. Jackson was too clever a chap to be caught in any such fashion, provided that Jackson was implicated in these mysterious happenings.

After what the girl had said, I did not know what to think. The man certainly had some reason for being at Cliff Cottage other than his pretended service, but I was open to the belief that his business was legitimate and that the man was no criminal.

Shortly after nine o'clock Jackson came in with wood for the fire. But Jones motioned him to put it down.

"Don't build up the fire any more," he said. "I'm going up to bed in a few minutes."

"And I, too," I chimed in, stretching. "Tramping in this cold air all day makes a man sleepy."

Jackson put down the wood beside the hearth, and presently we heard him shooting the bolts that locked the front door in the hall. Then his feet sounded on the stairway, the footfalls growing fainter as he passed down the upper corridor until we failed to hear them altogether. Presently a door slammed very faintly.

Jones immediately tiptoed toward the kitchen. He had his flash light and pistol. It was cold in the cellar, as I knew from experience, and I did not envy him his vigil. Following his instructions, I had a part to play, and I went upstairs to do it, first snapping off the library lights. I tried to play it well, though I felt exceedingly foolish. I banged the door to Jones' room and shouted a good-night down the hall. Then I went into my own room and slammed the door. It was half past nine, and I must put in an hour of waiting before venturing out. Presently I turned off my light and took my seat by the window. Out there, beyond the hedge, Culberson and Pierson were probably on watch at this minute, but the gutter pipe, by which I would leave my room, was hidden from their view by the corner. It was doubtful if I could be detected, anyway, against the blackness of the house on such a dark night.

I never knew that an hour could be so long in passing. When I judged it to be about half past ten I prepared to descend my water pipe. My plan was to creep along the side of the house and intercept Miss Clements, who would probably leave the house by the rear and come creeping along in the shadow of the building as the dark figure of the previous evening had done. I waited at the corner of the main house for a long time without seeing anybody. Finally, the town clock, down in the distant village, struck eleven strokes.

The hour of my appointment had come, and perhaps Olive Clements was waiting now upon the beach. I turned back, and walked to the front of the house, where I stopped uncertainly. If Culberson and Pierson were hiding in the hedge they would most likely see me when I stepped away from the shadow cast by the building, and, even should they miss me in the darkness, the detectives from the county seat, hidden somewhere near the beach path no doubt, would not be apt to miss me. If I were held up what excuse could I make for being out here at this hour? It was perhaps unlikely that the girl had gone to the shore, but it was possible that she had reached it from the house without being seen, for the night was very black. In any case, whether Jones' watchers caught me or not, I determined to go down to the beach.

I took a few steps toward the gap in the hedge. In a moment I would be out upon the links. Then suddenly I nearly went headlong, for I had stepped full into something waist-high in the shadows of the hedge—something that moved and bounded swiftly away, for I could hear the soft padding of feet. My hands, as I tripped, had reached out into blackness and touched soft fur; it was as though I had fallen over the back of a cat, but a cat of gigantic

size that stood nearly as high as my waist. I pulled out my torch and pushed the button, but the thing into which I had bumped was gone. A rush of feet sounded from the hedge, and I found myself staring into the faces of Culberson and Doctor Pierson, more surprised to see me than I was to see them.

"Did you see the thing?" I cried. But they had seen nor heard nothing until I had turned on my torch and cried out.

CHAPTER X.

"THE HORRIBLE BEAST."

"WHAT did you see?" asked Culberson. "And what are you doing out here, anyway? Jones said you would be in the house."

I ignored the last question.

"I didn't see anything, but I nearly fell over something that crouched here under the hedge. My hands touched fur, and it was some big animal."

In the cold white light of my torch I could see the incredulous look on Doctor Pierson's face. But Culberson's expression was different. He had seen the bounding thing that crossed the links swiftly on the night that the pipe-stem was found, while Pierson had not.

"What kind of an animal?" he asked quickly.

"Why, I had the impression of a giant cat."

"Hm!" said my friend slowly. "There are wild cats in the woods a mile or so from town, though I never heard of one this close to the village. But even a large one wouldn't measure up to that." I suppose he was thinking as much of the thing of which we had caught a glimpse on the fifth green as of what I had just said.

Before I could answer there came a sharp cry from the beach, followed immediately by the report of a revolver. On the crisp night air the report rang sharp. One of the detectives on the shore had fired evidently, and it was with sudden alarm in my heart that I started toward the path down to the beach. Suppose Olive Clements had kept her appointment upon the shore. The shot that had just set the cliff echoes to resounding might possibly have been aimed at the girl. I went pounding down the beach path, my torch lighting the way, and Culberson and Pierson were hard on my heels.

Standing at the edge of the dunes were two men, hard-faced fellows, who looked as though they might be accustomed to rough work, and one of them was holding a revolver.

"What did you fire at?" I asked.

The chap with the revolver made no answer, merely looked me over curiously by the light of his own electric torch.

"Where did you spring from?" he said after a second.

"Oh, he's all right," put in Culberson impatiently. Evidently he had seen the men before. "This is Reed—the man who is staying with Jones in Cliff Cottage."

"Well, I don't envy him his job," cried the man. "What was it I fired at, Mike?" he addressed his companion.

"Blamed if I know," said the other, a startled look on his face. "It looked like some big animal in the glimpse I caught of it that ran on its hind legs."

"Ran on its hind legs!" we all exclaimed.

"That's what I said," returned the other. "Not standing up straight, but crouching on its hind legs. We heard it bounding down the path, and I got my light on the thing for just part of a second. Then Tom shouted out and let go with his gun."

"Where is the thing now?" said Doctor Pierson.

"Search me," said the man, shrugging. "It was pitch dark on the beach, and it bounded out of the light of my torch. When I turned the light upon

the shore the thing was gone—disappeared just like that!" He clapped his hands sharply.

I thought of the figure that had disappeared the other evening. Was it possible that Jones was right in his conjecture that some hidden cavern or underground passage opened upon this beach?

We swept the shore with our lights, but there was nothing out of the ordinary. Merely the sandy beach, its edge lapped by rippling water, and the black cliffs staring down. Then Culberson darted forward with a sharp exclamation and picked something out of the sands.

It was the sheath that had once held a knife, a strong-made thing of buckskin, one side covered with wampum —those curious little shell beads of white, black, purple, and brown that served an earlier race for money as well as ornament. A thong with a loop had once held the sheath to a belt.

"See!" exclaimed Culberson, holding it up and pointing. "Your animal, Reed, drops a knife sheath to-night; the other night it was an Indian pipe-stem!"

"Wonder where the knife is that this thing was made to hold," put in one of the county detectives. "Maybe we're some lucky that one of us didn't get it in the back this dark night."

"Animals don't use knives," said Pierson.

"No, sir," agreed the man, "they don't; that's a fact. Nor run on their hind legs much, outside of a circus or a show. I know what I got a glimpse of to-night, though; outside of that I wouldn't swear to a thing."

"A baboon might run on its hind legs," said Culberson in a musing voice, "or a gorilla."

"Yes," said one of the detectives, glancing curiously at my friend. "Such beasts aren't overplentiful in this section, however—at least to my knowledge. Well, I reckon our job's done for to-night; if we've seen what we were looking for that's all we've done. Guess we better go up to the house and report to Jones."

The man was right. There was nothing more to do on the shore. We went slowly up across the links to the big front door of Cliff Cottage. While Culberson banged the brass knocker I thought of the first time I had come to this door at night. Then the body of Richards, face twisted in its look of horrible fear, had crouched upon the fifth green of the links, and the mystery of his death was no clearer to-night than it had been then.

Presently our summons was answered. Steps came slowly down the staircase, the hall lights were clicked on, and there came the noise of bolts being withdrawn. The door was opened, and there stood Jackson, his bath robe thrown over his night attire and looking upon us with eyes that, though sleepy, were not surprised. It was as though the man had said, "I am ready for anything now." Opening doors at midnight to people whom he might have supposed in their beds was perhaps becoming an old story. He said nothing, though his glance swept us all, including the two county detectives, before he stepped aside. Then his glance went beyond us, out into the darkness, in the direction of the links, as though he looked for something out there in the night. Perhaps he was looking to see if Jones brought up the rear. Then a voice came sleepily out of the library, even as somebody in that room turned on the light. It was Jones, stretching and yawning and glancing at all of us in sleepy surprise.

"Hello," he said to me. "I couldn't get to sleep upstairs and came down to read in front of the coals. Then I guess I dropped off in my chair." He stretched again and smoothed his rumpled hair. He was pretending for the

benefit of Jackson. I had seen him tiptoe in the direction of the cellar, and the others had known he was to watch there. Even now, in the back of his eyes as he looked at me, I could fancy a glint of astonishment, as though he said: "Where on earth have you been? I thought you were upstairs in bed."

I said nothing. There seemed to be nothing for me to say. Jackson, in the background, seemed to have a sort of sardonic look about his mouth, as though he glanced in malignant gayety at this crestfallen crowd of watchers while waiting to hear the explanations.

I do not know who would have spoken first or what would have been said. For suddenly, from out on the links, rang a loud cry, a cry that came from one in fear, and a cry made by a woman's voice. For the fraction of an instant we glanced at each other with clenched hands, a question in each man's eyes. Then action came. I had recognized that frightened voice, and so had Jackson. Quick as I was, he was quicker. He jerked open the door and ran for the links, his bath robe flapping behind him grotesquely. I was close after him, and the others streamed after me. We went through the gap in the hedge, to meet, in the light of a torch that some one had clicked on, a swaying shape that ran our way and fell exhausted into Jackson's arms. It was his niece, Olive Clements, bare-headed, a blue cloak covering her maid's dress, and with an expression of dire fear upon her face. Even as she crumpled into her uncle's arms we all heard her say, "Oh, the horrible beast! The horrible beast!"

I caught the look on Jackson's face. Surprise was in it certainly—he had not known then that his niece was outside her room—and tenderness as he looked down upon her and gathered the slim figure into his arms. There was a look of anger also, and, though perhaps I fancied it, an expression of fear. He swung the girl into his arms and turned toward the house, while the rest of us, remembering her cry, glanced in the direction of the beach, from which she had evidently been running. Then we ran down toward the shore, though I think every man of us knew it would be useless. As we went I saw Culberson, besides Jones, showing the detective the knife sheath and evidently telling the events of the night.

There was nothing to be seen on the shore. The place might have been deserted, so far as any sign showed, since the first Hatherle had last walked upon the sands by the bay, more than a hundred years ago.

"What time were you chaps on the beach to-night?" asked Jones rather sharply of the Hancock detectives.

"Just nine o'clock," answered McLaughlin, commonly addressed as Mike. "You told us to be hiding in the dunes near the path at that hour, and we obeyed instructions."

"Yet you saw nothing until this animal, as you say, came down the path from the links—the one Thompson shot at?"

"Not a thing, sir. There wasn't so much as an insect stirring anywhere along the beach."

"Yet the thing, whatever it is, must come from somewhere on the shore," mused Jones. "Here's where it disappeared when Thompson fired—it ran this way when I myself took a shot at it the other night. It must be the same; there can't be two of 'em, surely. And you actually had your hands on it to-night?" He looked at me.

"I nearly fell over something," I said, "and my hands touched fur."

"Then something chased the girl," went on Jones. "She was running from this direction, too, with the thing after her."

"She cried out, 'The horrible beast!'"

exclaimed Culberson, "before she fell into Jackson's arms."

"No bluff about it, either," said Doctor Pierson. "Did you get a look at her face? The girl was in deadly fear of something. I ought to go back to the house now—I may be needed professionally."

He turned back toward the path and went up over the links in the direction of Cliff Cottage. As the rest of us followed I heard Jones say to Culberson: "Now, how the devil could that girl get from house to shore without being seen by you and Pierson or my detectives? Man, it's clean impossible, unless——" His voice died away. I suppose he referred to his underground-passage theory. Well, I was not so disposed to doubt that now myself—without in the least comprehending how such a thing could exist or where it might be located.

As we came into the great hall of Cliff Cottage, Jackson descended the stairs. The man was white, and great beads of moisture still stood upon his forehead, showing the strain he was under. But he said quietly that his niece did not require Pierson's services when the doctor spoke to him.

"Thank you, sir, but it's not necessary. Olive is quite herself and in bed now. She was badly scared by what I fancy must be a big dog running loose in these parts at night, it seems. Very likely the creature you took a shot at last night, Mr. Jones."

"Perhaps," said Jones dryly. "I'm very glad she's feeling all right again. But she ought not to be out alone, anyway, at this hour of night."

"Quite right, sir," said Jackson gravely. "My feelings exactly; I'm afraid I was rather cross with Olive just now, sir. But she suffers from hay fever at times, and awoke to-night filled up and gasping for air. So she slipped on some clothes and went out the back door for a breath of night air, not thinking, as she says, that anything like this would occur. It won't happen again, sir."

I wondered whether Jackson believed that. I had seen his look when Olive's first frightened cry sounded, and surprise had certainly shown upon his face. I did not believe he had known she was out of the house before that. I thought I understood why she had left the house, but how she had reached the shore without being seen was a puzzle to me. I had missed the appointment through no fault of my own, and Olive Clements, waiting for me on the dark beach, had been chased by this creature, whatever it was, with fur like an animal, but running on its hind legs, and which had dropped the pipestem on the fifth green and the knife sheath upon the beach. "The horrible beast!" she had called it as we ran to her rescue; she must have had a fairly close look at the thing which had so frightened her. Was it that same thing which had pursued Joseph Richards and sent him to his death not so very many nights before?

I shuddered as I thought of the possible fate of the girl had not assistance been close by. Horror was not my only emotion. I was forced to admit that it would have meant very much to me, indeed, had anything happened to Olive Clements. She was here in this house under suspicious circumstances, upon some illegal business, as common sense told me to believe, and yet I knew that I was in love with this girl, of whom I knew not so much as even her name.

Another thing puzzled me, too. The girl could not have been on the beach at eleven, else the detectives would have seen her. Shortly after that hour we had several of us been on the shore after McLaughlin had shouted in surprise and after Thompson had fired his pistol at the mysterious beast, if beast

it was. Olive Clements had surely not been in the vicinity then. Yet, only a few minutes after, she had rushed from the shore with that same horrible thing, if we guessed rightly, in pursuit. When, then, had she gone to the beach, and how?

"I'd like to put you men up for the rest of the night," said Jones. "Two of you could double in with us, but I'm afraid we've hardly accommodations for four."

"We'll get down to the village," said Culberson hastily. I think my friend had had enough of Cliff Cottage and vicinity for one night. Doctor Pierson expressed his intention of going along with Culberson. The two detectives from Hancock spent the rest of the night at the Sunny Harbor hotel. I felt sorry for Jones; his plans, carefully laid, had not gone at all as the man could have wished. But he showed no faintest sign of annoyance. And presently Culberson, Doctor Pierson, and the two county detectives started down the road that bordered the links. They were four strong men, without nerves, but I noticed they kept together, and who could blame them?

"Quite an exciting evening," said Jones as their footsteps died away. "If you'll lock up once more, Jackson, I think I'll go up to bed."

As I followed him up the stairs I expected that he would ask me why I had gone outside. But he asked no questions, even when we were out of Jackson's hearing—just said good night and went into his bedroom. I went into my own room and a few moments later I heard Jackson pass along the corridor on his way to bed also.

I undressed and got into bed, but sleep would not come. I lay with eyes wide open, staring into the blackness and thinking over the night's events. After what seemed an hour or more, some one tapped lightly on my door. I slipped into my bath robe and opened the door softly. To my surprise—I had expected to see Jones—it was Olive Clements who stood in the hall outside. She whispered her message.

"I must see you downstairs. Will you dress and come down at once?"

To be concluded in next week's issue of DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE.

A NEW KIND OF REVOLVER

A BAND of five burglars, recently rounded up by detectives of Paris, France, used, in their raids, a weapon new to the Parisian police. It was a revolver, loaded not with bullets, but with a charge of gas which put its victims into sound sleep.

With this instrument Señor Alfred Ayulo, commerical attaché of the Peruvian legation in Paris, and his wife, were rendered unconscious, while the thieves stole more than one million francs in cash and jewelry from them. Apparently the couple suffered no unpleasant after-effects from the drug.

Kusaka, a Japanese servant in the Ayulo household, was one of the band. Jean de Jong, Antoinette Staverman Raat Girardas Schilte, who are Dutch, and Adduse Hassan, a Turk, were the others.

The police were put on the trail of the robbers by a servant in a wealthy family. This man told the authorities that he had been asked to coöperate with De Jong's band in robbing his employer, and that he had led the crooks to think he would do so. When the plans for the crime were complete and the names of the criminals known, the police stepped in and arrested all of them.

Big-nose Charley at the Policemen's Ball

by Charles W. Tyler

Author of "77 and a Wink," etc.

"TH' lips uh knowledge are a presh'us joo'l," Big-nose Charley quoted. And then confided, dropping his voice: "Di'munds, prob'ly—heh?"

Charley has always considered that gem, which alone is composed of pure carbon, as the wonder mineral of the earth. "From the earliest ages," Wodiska begins his book, "jewels have powerfully attracted mankind." This applies to our silver-haired friend of the underworld in particular. Diamonds he has studied and admired and coveted for a great number of years.

He delights to roll them gently across his palm, beneath a bright light, that he may feast his eyes on their flashing, prismic hues. He loves the touch of them; he gloats over their adamantine luster, high refraction and dispersion of light. He speaks to them in the language of the lapidary. He will tell you with droll assurance that the specific gravity is 3:52; hardness, 10; he will point out that the crystalization is isometric; cleavage, octahedral and perfect.

He can ripple off the names and weights of all the famous stones and ramble on as to where they were found, and where they are, at the present time. It is his ambition to one day possess a really great diamond. He has whispered in my ear, his eyes alight and his voice tense, that the Great Cullinan diamond weighed 3253¾ carats in the rough stone, and that it was cut into a number of smaller wonder stones at Amsterdam in 1908, while some of these gems were added to the British crown, which contains over two thousand eight hundred diamonds, two hundred and ninety-seven pearls, beside many other jewels. Yes; Charley can jog right on with the history of the Great Mogul, the Excelsior-Jubilee, the "Taj-e-mah," the Kohinoor, the Star of South Africa, and other famous diamonds, until vast sums of money have dimmed your senses, and the old crook himself is watering at the mouth.

Concerning Charley himself, the old-timer is by no means without a certain amount of brilliance, both as to raiment and intellect. Much has been written at one time and another anent our friend's vesture; much more could be chronicled, and we would still be entirely eclipsed, so far as doing the subject justice. One might as well attempt to depict the colorings of the Painted Desert; they are always changing—and so is Charley.

However, by his garments shall you know him—on the Avenue. Few would suspect, from a contemplation of his

innocent gray eyes, or the placid, almost simple expression that at times played across his countenance, that he was possessed of a keen, resourceful brain, deep beneath the exterior, pliant veneer of him.

A savage would have fallen down and worshipped and then arisen and offered half that was his for Big-nose Charley's vest. The house of Shultz & Marks had a customer of no mean caliber in Charley. He wore their latest, and when the last thing was a corset coat of checkered goods, with chamois gloves and a cane to set it off, why, the old-time gopher man was decked out in something a little more than ordinary. Cap the creation with a straight-sided, high-crowned derby, foot the sketch with huge pointed shoes, that had featured an advertising exhibition, and you have the illustrious Charles, as he appeared to the naked eye, when he pushed through the door of a small jewelry shop, on a fussy little street, away downtown.

Big-nose Charley felt that there was still something lacking. He needed a "headlight" in his scarf and a sparkler on his finger. Being fastidious by nature and cautious by force of necessity, he had selected a small shop, far removed from those blue-blooded and entirely too respectable uptown jewelry houses. The gentleman had several diamonds that had come to him through certain channels, not entirely blessed by the shining rays of the reward of righteousness. He desired to have the largest of these stones set in a suitable ring. He would seek the services of this humble specialist of the trade.

Charley sidled through the door, as meek as Moses and twice as innocent.

"Happy New Year," was his greeting as he minced forward, twiddling his cane. "'S' nice weather f'r Janoroory."

Apparently the little man behind the glass show case was not entirely sure whether he was being joshed, or just had run afoul of one of those spontaneous nuts who wax flippant with king and peasant alike. Hyman Butter was more or less distrustful of his fellow men. He was a jeweler by trade, and a "fence" because it was good business.

Mr. Butter was a smallish, bead-eyed, rolly-poly man, with an egg-shaped head that was practically nude. He gazed at Charley with a mixture of suspicion and natural antipathy. However, after a careful survey and consideration of the fineness of the texture of the garments which the resplendant old rascal wore, the merchant thawed slightly and advanced a tentative feeler in a modulated:

"Vell?"

"'S well as yuh' expect t' find a ol' man," rejoined Charley, resting his arms on the show case, after draping the crook of his cane across his sleeve. "How's the mamma?"

"Vat can I do for you?" Mr. Butter wanted to know a trifle sharply, ignoring the inquiry anent the welfare of his sharer of profits and sorrows.

Charley began picking at his finger tips, as he worked off his chamois gloves. He eyed Mr. Butter benevolently, a kindly light that was almost fatherly beaming from those gray depths.

"M-m," he said at last. "Nice li'l' place yuh has here."

"Shoor, shoor!"

With great deliberation Charley fished from a pocket of his vest several diamonds and held them balanced on the palm of his hand. He cocked an eye at Mr. Butter. The latter stared, then blinked unbelievingly. The stones were possessed of beauty and of a size to awaken instant cupidity in the heart of the jeweler.

"You vant to sell them?"

Big-nose Charley wagged his head slowly backward and forward, while he

contemplated Mr. Butter with mild reproval.

"Them is waluable t' me because uh ol' association," explained Charley. "No; I j'st wants t' get that nice big one set int' a ring."

Mr. Butter's eyebrows went up.

"Oh!" Deep in his eyes there was a sudden strange glitter of anticipation. The simple-looking old sport yonder wanted this big diamond in a ring. That was different. Nothing would give Mr. Butter greater pleasure than to accomodate Mr.—Mr.——

"Mister Claude Asaph Pritchett," supplied Charley grandiloquently.

"Very glad to know you, Mr. Pritchett," said the jeweler, beaming, at the same tme extending his pudgy right paw. "You haf' some very pretty stones there. Shoor, I can show you some fine bargains. I buy me at the collateral auction exactly one that fit you. I show you. V'at you buy from me you buy right. I take that ring and clean it and size it and fix that diamond just so—all for two dollars und a half. That ring I let you haf' for just what I bid it in for. You see that nice Belcher. Here, let me show you. You try it on. Yes; just a fit. I take that stone out. No: too big? Vell, I make it right. Fifteen dollars. Fourteen carat. You could do no better. Now listen, Mr. Pritchett, let me make you a proposition. Maybe you like that diamond. Yours, let me see—" adjusting a glass to his eye—"ah, a small flaw, third quality. I vas afraid. For a very little money I trade you this diamond ring for your stone. You get a better value—a fine investment. I vouldn't do it, but a nice gentleman is in your face.

"Now you take it that diamond you got on, like it belongs to your style. A fine diamond you should not be ashamed anywhere. I take your stone, and you pay me two hundred dollars, and I lose money, but for a good customer I take a chance. I got me no call for so big a ring like that. Your stone with a little flaw I can sell cheaper. I got me a sale right avay. Hold it up. So! That Edison star don't shine so bright. Now, Mr. Pritchett——"

"Adm'r'l, yeh—yeh don't understan' meh," pleaded Charley, interrupting desperately. "This di'mund has got a intrickit walue. Meh great gran'maw picked ut out uh th' eye uh th' great god Bud in Rooshia or some place, 'n' she give ut t' me on 'er dyin' bed. Th' ol' lady who gi'me this di'mund, bein' th' last uh th' generootion, on me ol' woman's side, why, why—well, I wouldn't j'st feel right partin' with ut. Th' ol' lady hit th' weed an' she allus ke'p' this di'mund in her ol' T. D. Would yuh believe meh, yeh can smell th' t'baccer on ut yet. Nope; I—I'd allus feel like I done wrong t' part with ut."

Mr. Butter had his own ideas in the matter, but he said nothing.

Big-nose Charley completed arrangements anent the setting and size of the ring, and the setting and style of the pin, all the time beaming on the jeweler in the most idiotic fashion. A fool with money, was Mr. Butter's final summing up, minus even a child's intellect.

When would Mr. Pritchett want to call? Wednesday would be too soon; better to make it Thursday. Thursday would give Mr. Butter ample opportunity to fix the gentleman up right—do the gentleman up brown, to phrase the thing in the words of popular idiom.

"F'r yuh see," explained the old-timer, working on his gloves, at the same time lowering his voice dramatically, "I'm goin' t' a party, 'n' meh bein' a honoroory member uh th' Charlie Adams!"—East Cambridge jail—"Veterans, why, prob'ly they'll want meh t' lead th' gran' hike. Mos' pop'l'r hombre yuh ever see. Oh, my, yea-ah. Allus somebody lookin' fer meh t' go

some place 'n' spend th' night or suthin'. Well, ta-ta, Mister Margarine. See yeh Thursd'y."

Big-nose Charley went out, and Mr. Butter fell to contemplating the two diamonds before him. He examined them and toyed with them.

Mr. Hyman Butter, employing no assistants, was free to retire at once to the little cubby-hole at the rear, where he was wont to perform certain delicate tasks. He began carrying out that detail, which had popped into his head, the instant that his greedy eyes settled on the diamonds that Big-nose Charley had fondled in his palm.

II.

Inspector Dorsey swarmed around the corner, his hands in his overcoat pocket, and his head bent into the wind, that whisked past Boston's windy corner. Mr. Dorsey's lids were squinted half shut, as he attempted to keep as much dust as possible out of his eyes, but suddenly something crossed his range of vision that could not be denied. It was Big-nose Charley in a pinch-back overcoat, and further adorned by a scarf, one end flapping free, that could have been seen three miles off through a dark and stormy night.

"Criminy," said Mr. Dorsey. "Again?"

He came up abruptly, jostling a lady and prodding a prompt oath from a gentleman on the right of him, who had been coming from the other way. The personage from headquarters fell in behind Charley and trailed that individual industriously up over Beacon Hill. The veteran of the underworld entered the lobby of the Massachuetts Hotel, received his room key, and moved toward the elevator.

"Now who is he, or who does he think he is making somebody believe he is?" ruminated the inspector, nodding at the clerk and then bending over the register. "Ah"—after a brief inspection of a page or two—"I think I recognize that writing. I'll lay a bet it's our friend. Claude Asaph Pritchett, New York." He said to the clerk: "Was that Mr. Pritchett who just got his key?"

"Yes, sir."

"Thought I recognized him. Thanks."

Immediately thereafter Mr. Dorsey dropped over the brow of the hill and went into executive session with his superior.

"Just for once I'd like to be able to get that old shyster right in the corner, with jam all over his hands."

"And you'd want the jar there, too," put in the chief. "I've seen Charley a number of times with syrup on his fingers, and so far as we were concerned it could have been dew. When you bring that fellow in, you've got to have the goods right on him, and four witnesses to prove it. All right, if you think there is the possibility that this is your opportunity to jug him. Fly to it—more power to you."

Mr. Dorsey went out chewing savagely on the ragged end of a cigar butt. Would he get that old false alarm? Would a crow pull corn? Yes; he'd work alone; he'd just naturally camp on Big-nose Charley's trail, and sooner or later he would hang the Indian sign over that long-legged devil's mascot, whatever it was.

Now it happens that Mr. Dorsey had set out to "tail" Charley, just at a time when that gentleman was well supplied with funds, and it was against his religion to live "on the cross," except as dire necessity arose. A person must live; he must eat; he must have a place to sleep; he must dress as became his station. When a man had money, what need was there to exert himself dishonestly? However, when money became tight, why, of course, one must be about.

Big-nose Charley had long since limited his appropriations to those gentry, who themselves obtained the long green in a manner that allowed of reasonable doubt concerning their sincerity. In other words, our friend considered it no sin to steal from a fraud, a crooked gambler, certain manipulators on State Street, a fence, or any of a long list which was on file somewhere in his silvered old cranium.

Charley's last venture in the City of Culture had been successful to a marked degree. At the present he was distinctly a gentleman of leisure. And then two things happened, the same day, to disturb the tranquility of the scheme. In the first place he dropped into Mr. Butter's store, with the honest desire for additional splendor, which set in motion a little plot in the fertile brain of friend Hyman. In the second place, when the veteran of the underworld glanced back from the confines of the ascending elevator cage at his hotel, he glimpsed the familiar figure of Inspector Dorsey, of the front office, studying the register.

Big-nose Charley had been making the Massachusetts Hotel his headquarters for several days, previous to the entrance of Mr. Dorsey and Mr. Butter. He had met there several very sociable local gentlemen, with whom he had wiled away pleasant hours at billiards and poker. From one of these new friends he had obtained a small white envelope, with a police shield adorning its front surface.

"I've got an extra ticket to the Policemen's Ball," the gentleman had remarked. "Cop friend of mine gave it to me. Perhaps you'll get a chance to drop up; I won't."

Later, in the privacy of his room, Charley examined the bit of cardboard. He gazed at it long and earnestly. A dull twinkle slowly began to take light in his somber eyes. The bit of cardboard was an invitation, a complimentary ticket. It read:

THE POLICE RELIEF ASSOCIATION
Presents its compliments
And requests the pleasure of your company with ladies at its
ANNUAL CONCERT AND BALL
At Mechanics Building
On Thursday Evening, January the 20th

The president's name was printed at the bottom, while on the back was the stamped signature of the general manager.

"R'quests th' pleasure uh your company," murmured the old-time resident of Kerry Village. "Th' cops wants Char-leh t' come t' their li'l' jass party. 'N' now wouldn't ut be a shame t' disap'int 'em? Prob'ly I'll meet a lot uh ol' frien's. Yeah, prob'ly. M-m. Tch, tch."

This thing was deserving of serious consideration. The hoofers and the dicks and the old man and all the gang would be there. Yes—a lot of them would be there with dress suits, and there would be music and a drill and a grand march, and everything. Charley liked music; he would be tickled to death to see the hoofers step it out in column and four, with their badges glittering and their brass buttons shining. Fine!

Charley stood erect, pulled down his coat, straightened his violent tie and stood before the mirror, contemplating himself.

"Han'some ol' cuss, at that," he mused. "Guess when I get all togged out in meh glad harness, with a di'mund on meh finger an' a di'mund in meh cr'wat, there won't be none of 'em got nothing in on Char-leh."

III.

Thursday, a little before noon, Bignose Charley wended his way toward the small, much-placarded jewelry store of Mr. Hyman Butter. He was

greeted by the proprietor, who was radiating warmth like a plasterer's salamander.

Mr. Pritchett's ring? Mr. Pritchett's pin? Yes. Mr. Butter rubbed his palms together. He beamed across the show case and up at the saintly-faced personage, who purred like an overfed cat.

"Lov'leh weather f'r Janoroory," murmured Charley. "Looks like a open winter."

Mr. Butter made his way to a safe at the rear of the store. From a small drawer in the inner compartment he selected a small brown envelope, across the top of which was written the name, Pritchett. He brushed back the flap and shook out a huge diamond ring and a resplendent diamond scarf pin onto a little felt mat, on the show case top.

Big-nose Charley's eyes dropped to the glittering trinkets. Mr. Hyman Butter shot a quick glance at the man beyond, a swift, shrewd examination of the other's face, in one flash from beneath lowered lashes. If the jeweler had harbored any sense of apprenhension concerning the possibility that Claude A. Pritchett would discover the fraud that had been practiced, it was instantly dispelled by the idiotic expression of bliss that radiated from the face of the customer.

Mr. Butter felt a little thrill of satisfaction, as of one who has performed a task so well. He resumed scouring his palms, while he canted his little fat head slightly to one side and awaited Mr. Pritchett's commendation. Mr. Butter had outdone himself when it came to giving the gentleman his money's worth—so far as artistic settings were concerned. There, however, the trademan's part concluded, and the crook's began.

"Tch," said Charley. "My, ain't they purty? Yuh done well, Mister Button. Oh, my, yea-ah."

Mr. Pritchett tried on the ring and then held it at arm's length, twisting his hand this way and that; then he dropped it to his side and peered down at it from this new angle. After a little he removed the diamond from his finger and fell to contemplating it fondly. He picked up the pin and held the two ornaments side by side, his chin pulled back and a foolish light of satisfaction shining in his eyes.

Thought Mr. Butter:

"The silly dolt! I should find some way to get the rest of his diamonds. Glass pleases the idiot as well as fine stones."

The instant that Big-nose Charley glimpsed the supposed jewels, he knew them for the fraud that they were. His lids narrowed, and a little steely glitter smouldered for an instant, deep beneath the mask of his eyes.

"You are satisfied?" Mr. Butter wanted to know after a time. "You could do no better in Maiden Lane. My customers alvays come again."

"I should suspect they would," said Charley. "Oh, yes."

"With that ring and that pin you make a grand appearance," said the jeweler. "You should be ashamed nov'ere."

"I won't," said Mr. Pritchett.

"Maybe, I vould buy some of those diamonds you showed me," remarked Mr. Butter, putting out a feeler.

But Charley shook his head.

"Them has all got a intricket value, too," he explained.

"Vell, sometime you come to see me again," invited Mr. Butter. "Always you bring me your trade you get treated right."

"Sure, I know," affirmed Charley, peeling a bill of large denomination from a considerable roll and tendering it in payment for work completed. "Yuh're a nice sociable li'l' ki—li'l' gen'l'mun, 'n' prob'ly I'll drop in t' see yuh ag'in a li'l' later. M-m."

Mr. Butter spread the change on the

counter, while Mr. Pritchett adjusted the pin, slipped on the ring, and strutted out.

Big-nose Charley turned the corner, and Inspector Dorsey dodged into the jewelry store. As a fence, Mr. Butter had always been careful to keep his hands clean, so far as the police were concerned. He had no record at headquarters and had no intention of having one there, if he could help it.

Mr. Dorsey got down to tacks at once. He introduced himself by showing his badge.

"What did that fellow want who just went out of here?" he demanded.

"That was Mr. Pritchett," said the jeweler, his eyes getting big and glassy. "He vanted some diamonds set in a ring and a scarf pin."

"You fixed him up?"

"Shoor."

"Well, let me put a little tip in your ear, my friend," stated the inspector, tapping the glass show case to emphasize his words. "That guy is Big-nose Charley, and he's a crook from the word go, and a slick one. You want to watch out for him, or he will have the gold out of your teeth. You're mighty lucky he didn't clip you on your head and trot out of here with a few thousand in money and jewelry. I'm just giving you warning."

"Oo-h!" exclaimed Mr. Butter. "A crooker! A t'ief!"

"You said it. A darn slick one, too. I've got my eye on him, and if he comes 'round here again we'll bait a nice little trap for that old shyster, and, the first thing he knows, he'll be riding up to the front office."

"From me a crooker don't get nothing," asserted Mr. Butter. "I vatch—all the time. I got me a shooter and inshoorance."

Inspector Dorsey made a grimace and went out. However, he was determined to keep an exceedingly close watch on Big-nose Charley. Never had the silver-haired old rascal gone soft-footing about town, looking as innocent as a snowflake, but sooner or later something happened.

The detective was determined that if there were any irregularities scheduled to appear in the wake of this resplendent rogue, he would be close enough to the heart of the plot to step on it quick and, at the same time, grab Charley, with not only jam on his fingers, but his fist in the jar, as well.

IV.

Big-nose Charley had dined. He had partaken of rich food and soft drink. Also, he had dressed. He had attired himself for the gods to behold. Nothing had been omitted. A luminous sparkler radiated its splendor from a stiff, white shirt front. Charley was wearing his stick pin as a stud. A great stone flashed from his finger. Charley wore a topcoat that was in itself a creation worthy of attention, which was accorded it by the populace, and a shiny hat, a regular Hi-Henry.

All dressed up and going to the policemen's ball.

Inspector Dorsey, slouched down in a huge leather chair in a corner of the hotel lobby, where he could command a view of both the stairs and the elevator, choked, sputtered and very nearly betrayed his presence by an undue desire to cry aloud to the people in the high places. Ye gods, what next? Big-nose Charley in a dress suit! Well, that was one fine, large joke. Evidently there was to be no funny business to-night—or was there?

"There is a place in th' Good Book which says suthin' about preparin' uh th' way," Big-nose Charley has informed us.

One of the best things that our friend does is to prepare the way, and that he may be in a position to do this his eyes are never idle. He had observed that

Inspector Dorsey, from headquarters, had suddenly exhibited a most unusual, though not unnatural, interest in him. It was enough. Yea, verily, more than enough. So long as he was indulging in no undue familiarity with other individuals' worldly possessions there was little need for caution, but the instant that he elected to waver from the straight and narrow, at once there was urgent need to arrange his path in devious ways, that were wondrous to behold.

Now there was Mr. Butter, for instance, who had grievously wronged an innocent, not to say innocuous, old soul. Perhaps Mr. Butter had never heard of Solomon. There was a literary treat in store for him, a fund of wisdom.

But to get back to Charley, leaving the Massachuetts Hotel, with Detective Dorsey hot on the trail. Money is a wonderful adjuster. Earlier this day the silver-haired veteran of Kerry Village had subsidized certain gentlemen before the portals of the hostelry, to a certain refined extent. The result was that when he entered a waiting car, at exactly ten minutes past eight o'clock, there was a second closed automobile, standing just beyond and abeam, so to speak, of the first taxi.

A very brief period elapsed between the moment when Big-nosed Charley entered car number one and the moment when he sidled out and into number two, beyond. The first machine purred away down the hill, while the other buzzed up past the State House and went wending its way toward Park Street. In the whirl of transpiring events, Mr. Dorsey missed out on this fine bit of byplay.

The result was obvious.

About the time that Big-nose Charley was drifting through the door of Mr. Hyman Butter's jewelry establishment, the police inspector in car number three was following determinedly the shimmering red tail light of car number one —and the general direction was West Boston bridge.

After making sure that there were no customers bothering the roly-poly merchant, Charley instructed his driver to wait just around the corner. He would join him there shortly, and they would then wend their way to the policemen's ball.

Hyman's under jowl suddenly sent thick rolls of fat bulging out over the edge of his collar, as his mouth sagged open slightly. He licked his lips, and edged back toward the rear of his small store. His greeting was not effusive, and it lacked something of both sincerity and warmth.

"How—how—— V'at do you va—— V'at can I do for you, Mr. Pritchett? Good evening. Nice night."

"Same t' you, Mister Oleo," said Charley, smiling reassuringly.

"Mr. Butter," corrected the jeweler, with some asperity. "You always get me mixed up with somebody else."

"Puddin' meh, Mr. Peanut," apologized the old-timer.

"Butter!" reiterated Hyman angrily.

"Peanut butter," murmured Charley. Suddenly he swung to a new tack: "Yeh know ol' Solomon says: 'Meh son attend unt' meh wisdum, 'n' lift yeh lug to meh understandin' that yeh may regard d'scretion.'"

"You mean Solomon Levenstein?" demanded Mr. Butter. "I got me no dealings with that man."

Charley shook his head, slowly, sorrowfully. Here was ignorance that was sublime.

"Tch, tch," he said unbelievingly. "An' yuh don't know ol' Solomon, th' son uh David? Ain't that awful? Yeh know he wuz one wise hombre. Now, f'rinstance, there is a place in th' Good Book where 'e says: 'Devise not evil ag'in' yuh neighbor, seein' he dwelleth s'curely by yeh.'" Charley paused a moment, then went on, translating ac-

cording to his own version: "He sure scorneth th' scorners, but 'e giveth j'ools t' th' lowly."

"V'at you mean, jewels?" exploded Mr. Butter.

"You dewised ag'in' me," accused Cha-ley sorrowfully, unheeding the other's interrogation. "An' ol' Solomon says: 'Strive not with a guy without he tried t' play yeh f'r a sucker.' "

"I don't know v'at you saying," wheezingly declared Mr. Butter.

"Lis'en," admonished the old-timer, advancing. "About these di'munds"—exhibiting the ring and indicating the glittering stud, née scarf pin. "They is wery purty, adm'r'l—but they ain't th' swell rocks I brought in here—they're glass!"

"Imbossible!" said the distraught jeweler. "I myself did that work."

"An' you yerself are a fine li'l' crook," pronounced Charley dispassionately. "Me, I'm a reg'l'r di'mund art's'n. I f'rgot more about di'munds than you ever knew."

Mr. Hyman Butter turned pale. "Oi, oi!" He wailed and wrung his hands. "I'm an honest man. You're a crooker! You're a t'ief! You Big-nose Charles! Go vay from my place! Go vay before I call the policeman."

Big-nose Charley made as though to obey the injunction to depart. He moved toward the door, then in a flash pulled down the shade over the glass panel and flicked up the catch on the precautionary extra lock, that Mr. Butter had installed. A thin partition, with little sliding doors, separated the show window bay from the store proper. In the present moment this afforded a most accomodating screen.

Mr. Butter gazed wildly about him. In another minute he would be entirely at the mercy of a lavishly attired crook, who now had a most peculiar look in his innocent gray eyes. There was a revolver in the drawer of a small table, just beyond the safe. The jeweler made a dash for the weapon, his eyes like two protruding electric light bulbs. He snatched the drawer open and fumbled for the weapon.

At that instant a long angular gentleman, in a high hat, topcoat, and dress suit, angled himself around the corner and through the frail swinging gate at the end of the counter. The awkward swiftness of this individual was disconcerning, to say the least.

Mr. Butter struggled valiantly to perforate Mr. Pritchett, but, before he could get in touch with the proper gadgets, the opposing forces had reached out and smitten him in more or less vulnerable portions of his anatomy.

Slightly groggy and dispossessed of his revolver, the proprietor dived under the counter and lay very still, lest he accumulate for himself further unpleasantness.

Big-nose Charley, after returning an empty revolver to the drawer, turned his attention to Mr. Butter's handy cash and diamonds. Less than five minutes after his equipage had drawn up before Mr. Hyman Butter's store, our friend was meandering, not too swiftly, nor yet with undue deliberation, around the corner of the block.

The stolid-faced gentry behind the steering wheel climbed out and held the door open, and Charley stepped within. The starter hummed, the engine caught the spark, there was a soft purring note from beneath the hood, and a moment later the big closed car was gliding away down the street.

Charley lifted the speaking tube.

"George," he said, "yeh may now drive meh up t' South Huntin'ton Avernoo. I'm agoin' t' th' coppers' ball."

V.

Big-nose Charley liked the hunting song and applauded vigorously. It was fine when the musicians sang, "A hunting we will go." Charley felt that, pos-

sibly, it was quite appropriate, too. Without a doubt there were distraught individuals associated with the police force who were, quite probably, hunting for him at this very moment.

Cop Nelson, from Station 2, sang a song called "Dreams." It was fine. Charley applauded again. He had never stopped to consider bulls in a social light before. After all they were quite human. The old-timer settled himself for an evening of enjoyment.

As he looked about him he glimpsed many familiar faces. There were gentlemen in full dress suits from the front office; there were hoofers in uniform. One very gentlemanly traffic officer in harness escorted him to a seat. Charley's heart warmed.

The drill of the eighty odd coppers was a thing of beauty and precision. Every order was executed like clockwork. The captain in charge was a clean-cut, military gentleman, stately and magnificent. Once more Charley found himself enthusiastically patting his palms, as the formations changed from fours to columns, and so on.

Then boomed the voice of the chief marshal:

"Those desiring to enter the grand march take their places at the right of the stage."

Big-nose Charley got up and sauntered toward the designated position. He had already checked his hat and topcoat and was right in line for festivities. His eyes searched the assemblage nearest him. He must find a partner. He was not a flirt and had the utmost respect for the female of the species, but this was his day off, and it was but natural that he should wax a trifle gay.

A carefully gowned and pleasant-faced matron, apparently without escort, stood chatting with a friend near an entrance to the floor. Charley approached. He bowed graciously.

"Pardon meh," he murmured, "f'r bein' s' bold, but may I have th' honor?"

The old girl herself was not without daring. She promptly called the gentleman's bluff. Apparently this individual was somebody. She would be delighted. She did so want to be in the grand march. She took Charley's arm quite girlishly.

The line formed. The celebrities were mustered up forward, the lesser lights were toward the rear. Big-nose Charley, possibly because of his stately manner and the fact that he was in full evening attire, was crowded into a place immediately back of the guests of honor.

The music broke into march time, and the parade began circling the hall. Down the side and up the center, and then two to the right and two to the left. Down again and up the center in fours. Once more the line divided, four to the right and four to the left. The next evolution brought the grand march across the hall in eights. Each lady linked the gentleman who swung in beside her.

Head erect and very pompous in his evening regalia, Inspector Moylan marched beside the queen of his home. The officer had eyes to-night only for familiar faces along the route of the promenade. His wife, however, saw everything, quite as her sisters have for the past few hundred years or so.

Columns of eight were proudly strutting down the center of the big hall. Mrs. Moylan was linked with her husband on the left and with a tall, silver-haired fatherly-looking old soul on her right.

From the tail of his eye, Big-nose Charley was studying the face of Inspector Moylan. The latter had been associated with Mr. Dorsey on several occasions, when he, Charley, had occupied their attention. Not so long ago Mr. Moylan had sought for the gray-haired veteran of the underworld in the vicinity of the Boston Public Library, but that was of the past. The inspector

had nothing on Charley now, however much he might suspect.

Mrs. Moylan squeezed the arm of her better half. Friend husband inclined his ear.

"Look at that wonderful diamond the gentleman on my right is wearing," she said.

Inspector Moylan shot a glance in the direction indicated—and did not drop dead because of his strong heart.

"Great Ned!" he said in amazement. "Big-nose Charley!" And then to his wife, very low: "Holy Jumbo, hang on to your jewelry! That silver-haired old shyster is one of the slickest crooks in ten States!"

Mrs. Moylan was inclined to doubt this, because the gentleman had such a "nice" face, and was so "innocent" looking, but she held her peace.

The grand march was completed and at once evolved into the first waltz. A large part of the promenaders left the floor. Inspector Moylan and Big-nose Charley were included among the latter. The man from the front office brushed Charley into a corner and entered into earnest conversation with that celebrity.

"Hello Charley."

"Evenin', of'is'r. Quite a follerin'."

"What are you doing up here?"

"J'st dropped in t' see meh ol' frien's, 'n', mebbe, shake meh leg a trifle. Yeh're lookin' good, Mister Moyl'n."

"You've got one whale of a nerve, butting into the policemen's ball. Say, where did you get that diamond? I'm telling you, right here, that it looks like a big stone that was stolen at our Four Hundred Acre by a gentleman whom they have been referring to as the Lone Wolf."

"Sh," admonished Charley, putting his finger to his lips and glancing around him. He plucked at the inspector's sleeve and drew that gentleman closer. Then, he whispered: "Ut's a phony. Ut's glass."

Inspector Moylan was wearing a small diamond, himself. He slipped the ring from his finger and touched the great stone that Charley was wearing. It left a fine scratch. The man from the front office ran the fingers of his right hand across his forehead and breathed a fervent oath. Yet he was not satisfied.

"Charley," he said, "just step out back a minute, I want to frisk you. You look as innocent as daylight, but I could swear there is a little bit of deviltry in your old gray eyes. Will you behave quietly, or will I have to ask for help?"

"Adm'r'l, lead th' way—this ain't no place t' get in wron' with th' coppers."

But Big-nose Charley had absolutely nothing on his person of an incriminating nature. He even offered his high silk hat and topcoat for the officer's inspection. Mr. Moylan shook his head and grunted.

"You win. But watch your step; I may change my mind any minute and come looking for you. My head is a little bit dizzy yet. How you come to be up here and waddling in the grand march, with an inspector's wife, to boot, is altogether too deep for me. Now if you will take a little tip you'll beat it out of here before you get in wrong. Do you get me?"

"Oh, my, yea-ah," said Charley. "Thank yeh. I wuz a goin' t' toddle along in a few minut's, anyways. Well ta-ta, kurn'l. Tell Inspector Dorsey I was astin' f'r 'im. Goo'-night."

VI.

One mistake Mr. Butter made, and that was when he went yodeling into the street in search of police assistance. It was a grievous error of judgment.

Odious comparisons brought to light the fact that jewelry in the possession of Mr. Hyman Butter answered the description of certain articles set forth

in circulars posted in every police station in the city. It developed that the roly-poly gentleman was entirely in wrong. Without a doubt he had been robbed, and there was no question but that Big-nose Charley, alias Mr. Claude Asaph Pritchett, was the celebrity who had performed this dastardly deed.

Of course, the police would have liked to have got hold of Big-nose Charley. But, having failed in this, Mr. Butter was acceptable as a substitute. From nooks and corners of the latter's premises much jewelry was discovered that friend Hyman could not readily account for.

In a hotel not far from the Back Bay Station, Big-nose Charley reclined in a huge easy-chair, beside a window on the third floor and looked out on the world. His chauffeur of the night before had returned to the Massachuetts Hotel and procured Charley's traveling bags, which were packed and waiting.

The loot from the store of Mr. Hyman Butter had, at the last minute, been slipped from a little slit in the upholstery and transferred to Charley's pocket. He had been driven to a hotel, where he had dismissed the car. Next he made a change from his evening clothes and, an hour later, meandered leisurely several blocks to the westward and registered at the third hotel as Mr. Jerry Ridlon, of Syracuse, New York.

At the front office, Inspector Moylan encountered Inspector Dorsey. A brief summing up of Charley's activities, in connection with Mr. Butter, during the early part of the past evening, followed.

"Big-nose Charley?" asked Mr. Moylan.

"Yes, Big-nose Charley," said Mr. Dorsey. "And, believe you me, we combed this town right for that condemned crook last night."

"You were looking for him?" queried Inspector Moylan.

"You bet your life we were looking for him!" said Inspector Dorsey.

"Ye-e gods!" exclaimed the gentleman who had attended the affair on South Huntington Avenue. "Big-nose Charley was in the grand march at the policeman's ball, with your wife, last night."

SINISTER MYSTERY STILL UNSOLVED

FOR the fourth time, it is reported, the body of Richard S. Lawrence may be exhumed and examined by officials of Madison, Wisconsin. Sinister mystery surrounds the death of this jewel connoisseur, who died about three years ago.

Lawrence disappeared from his cottage on the shores of Lake Michigan on the night of March 21, 1918. He had little faith in banks and kept his valuables about his home or his person. Collecting jewels was his hobby, and among the gems in his pockets at the time of his disappearance was an "orange" diamond valued at one hundred thousand dollars.

Early on March 21st he went to Madison to consult an attorney about including provision for his stepdaughter in his will. That night a man's body was found on the railroad tracks near Madison. It was identified by Edward J. Lawrence, a nephew, as that of his missing uncle, and was buried.

Later, at the request of Mr. Lawrence's widow, the grave was opened. Then it was seen that the body found on the railroad tracks had been taken from the grave, and that of the real Lawrence had been substituted. Examination of the body led medical men to the conclusion that the jewel connoisseur had died as the result of a blow on the head. All his gems had disappeared.

Deep mystery still shrouds the whereabouts of the jewels and the circumstances of their owner's death.

Poisons

Mysterious Drugs Which Deal Death

by J. R. Russell

III—Prussic Acid and Its Allies

IT was in one of the recesses behind the Temple of Ammon that prussic acid was invented by the Egyptian priests. There is little doubt that far before the time of the Pharaoh of the Exodus, the priests of the Egyptians had discovered the art of distillation, and made use of it in the preparation of their herbal medicines. Experimenting thus, they set to work to make an extract of the leaves of the peach tree and of the cherry laurel, the smell of which had attracted their attention. From the extract they found that a clear liquid could be distilled, which smelled strongly of almonds, and which had a distinct medicinal value. This led them to make further experiments with the kernels of peach stones, and from them they distilled a much more potent liquid, which rapidly acted fatally on those to whom it was administered. The new poison was set apart to be drank by traitors, and thus it is that we find in the celebrated Louvre papyrus mention of the "Penalty of the Peach." Certainly it was a humane method of killing the traitor, and as such was commented on by later writers, who, however, had no knowledge of the composition of the deadly peach water.

Regarded from a scientific point of view, the peach water was nothing more than a diluted preparation of hydrocyanic acid or prussic acid. As schoolboys one learned of the dreadful potency of the acid, and believed implicitly that the mere smell of the poison was attended with instant death. That, however, is one of the fictions of youth. The smell is certainly injurious, but it is not fatal.

Prussic acid, to retain the more familiar term, is a limpid clear liquid, smelling strongly of almonds, for, indeed, it is a minute trace of the acid which gives to the fruit its characteristic flavor. It is very volatile, more so even than alcohol, but it is very easily absorbed by the tissues.

The symptoms of poisoning by prussic acid are very simple.

There is great prostration, commencing as soon as the drug has been swallowed, followed almost immediately by death, which is caused by paralysis of the respiratory center and of the heart. Should death not ensue at once, there is some hope for the patient, and many eminent toxicologists are strongly of the opinion that if life could be supported for half an hour, no case would be fatal. There is a good deal of reason for this opinion. We have said that the acid is very readily absorbed by the tissues. It is as readily eliminated, and from what cases have come under the care of medical men it may be said fairly that once the preliminary paralysis has

passed off, no evil effects are left. Since Doctor Loebe discovered the effect of electrical currents on the body as life-giving factors there has been no case of prussic acid poisoning to which doctors had access sufficiently rapidly to try his treatment, and it would be in the interests of science if the government of the United States put a murderer at the disposal of the doctors for the experiment to be made. The criminal would have a chance of life, and if he succumbed, his death would at least be less painless than hanging.

There is an antidote to prussic acid but it does not always act with sufficient speed to be effective. If injected immediately after taking the poison, atropine will counteract the effects of the drug. The antidote is purely a physiological one, and depends for its activity on the fact that it has exactly the opposite effect on the heart that the fatal acid has. It has also been freely stated that immersion in ice-cold water prevents the poison from doing its deadly work, and the following case shows that when applied immediately this antidote is effective.

Being weary of a life overshadowed by deep sadness and disappointment, a chemist determined to commit suicide. From his shop he took a bottle of hydrocyanic acid, and walked to the banks of the Kennet and Avon Canal. Arrived there he wrote a note on a small piece of paper and placed it on the bank of the canal. Then he swallowed the contents of the bottle, and, to make assurance doubly sure, sprang into the canal. He had forgotten, however, that the prussic acid stocked in chemists' shops is not pure, but a solution does not act immediately.

Consequently, he was not dead when he touched the water, and the very means which he took to make most sure of leaving this world proved the means by which his life was saved, for he was rescued, and in due course made his appearance in the dock at the police court to explain why he wished to murder himself.

In modern times prussic acid has not found much favor with the murderer, but in the Middle Ages there can be no doubt that "elixir of almonds," as the drug was then called, played an important part in regulating the affairs of the secret poisoner. Till comparatively lately, however, prussic acid was a great favorite with suicides on account of the rapidity and painlessness of its action. All sorts of excuses were trumped up to persuade chemists to sell the acid, the favorite being that the applicant had a pet dog which he wished to destroy. Now chemists listen sympathetically, and they say that if the person will bring the dog they will poison it themselves. In consequence of this care, prussic acid poisoning is on the wane.

But if prussic acid has gone out of favor owing to the wise precautions which attend its sale, its salt, cyanide of potash, has taken its place. The cyanide is largely used in the arts, and is to be found in the developing room of almost every photographer, and, therefore, there is great difficulty in restricting its sale.

Cyanide of potash looks very much like lump sugar, and on more than one occasion has been mistaken for it, with fatal results. It is one of the most deadly poisons known to the chemist. Its action is almost identical to that of prussic acid, and the symptoms are the same, save that there is no smell of almonds. Its effect is, however, modified by the state of the patient. I will cite this case.

The victim, a physician, had long been suffering from neuralgia, and had contracted the habit of taking large quantities of morphia to relieve his pain. When circumstances led to his being put in medical charge of a boat running up the Persian Gulf, he aban-

doned morphia for Persian opium, which he used to obtain surreptitiously. Seeing that he was incapable of taking medical charge of the ship, he was kept under restraint. Still he appeared to be always under the influence of opium, and it was only on leaving Bushire that it was discovered that he had a cigarette case full of light Persian opium, covered with papers, and in every way resembling cigarettes. After a very heavy bout of opium eating the doctor lost his reason entirely and had to be kept under strict surveillance.

An American missionary and his wife kindly assisted in watching him, for on account of the intense heat it was then impossible to confine him in his cabin. When off Jask, Persia, early one morning, the missionary had just been relieved after an entire night's watching, and had gone below to bathe, when he was called up on deck in great haste. The doctor had swallowed the contents of a bottle which he had managed to secrete in his bedclothes, and had attempted to jump overboard. The unfortunate man was lying on the deck unconscious, breathing stertorously; his face was livid, and small blue spots could be seen coming out on the skin. The pulse instead of being weak and fluttering was fairly strong. There was no doubt that he had taken cyanide of potash, although the symptoms were not entirely in accord with poisoning with that drug. Active remedies were applied, including injections of atropine. The poor man lingered in an unconscious state for about twenty minutes and then died. Subsequent examination showed that he must have taken at least half an ounce of cyanide, or enough to poison four hundred persons, and death should have been absolutely instantaneous.

Cyanide of potash has a slightly bitter taste, and at first produces a feeling of coldness in the mouth, which is succeeded by a burning sensation, and an intense heat in the throat. A quarter of a grain has proved fatal, though a grain is usually considered to be the minimum lethal dose. After death it is very easily detected, although, like prussic acid, it readily decomposes in the body. Prussic acid has been found long afterward in the tissues, and this is a point that is well to insist on, for people imagine that, inasmuch as it is so volatile, it will leave no trace of its presence after a short time.

MOTION PICTURES AND "SAFETY FIRST"

MOTION pictures are to be used by the chief of police of Paris, France, to impress residents of that city with the necessity of caution in crossing the streets. M. Raux, the chief, is said to be the author of the scenario, the plot of which is a simple one.

The daughter of a wealthy manufacturer is uncertain about which of two suitors she should choose to be her husband. Her father suggests that she marry the one who is less likely to be reckless. One suitor ignores traffic regulations and is run down by an automobile. He is taken to a hospital. Until his broken bones knit together, there he has to stay. Meanwhile his careful rival has full opportunity to woo the girl and does so, with the result that he wins her as his bride.

Collisions and other traffic accidents are portrayed vividly. The weaving of a plot around the traffic scenes adds to the ordinary observer's interest in the picture.

The Darker Thread

by

Maxwell Smith

Author of "Submerged Evidence," etc.

HE understood that the matter had dissolved into a simple question of what Fairchild would do about it. For himself, Torrance knew there was no way of saving his face. He granted that he had reached the end.

The natural thing for Fairchild to do was to cause his arrest. But Fairchild did not always do the natural, the normal thing. Besides, there was Fairchild's own position to be considered. The arrest of Torrance would bring out facts equally ruinous to Fairchild. He would lay himself open to prosecution, because there is a law against bucketing in stock transactions.

Thus, while Torrance realized that he was done, he still had a hope that he might escape the penalty. Probably that was what had made him hang on so long—what now allowed him to face his partner so easily.

For his own sake, it seemed reasonable that Fairchild would be content to kick Torrance out and let it go at that. He'd be foolish to put himself behind bars, just for the satisfaction of seeing Torrance punished. So Torrance looked at it.

In any event, the money could not be recovered. Torrance had dumped that into the maw to which he had steered so many others to be swallowed. He had bucked his own game—the game he well knew was poison—and lost. He had lost not only his own, but his partner's, money; which latter he had stolen with, worst of all, that of their customers.

Yet the manner in which Fairchild brought up the subject did much to encourage Torrance. There was no angry outburst, no recrimination. In the most casual way Fairchild intimated that he had discovered what Torrance had so successfully concealed for months.

Torrance consequently was standing in his partner's little private office. Quietly he had been invited in. Entering, he had known exactly what was coming, though there was nothing in Fairchild's bearing to suggest the crisis, when he made that careless nod of invitation from the outer office. Torrance met the implied accusation evenly, because he had known it could not be postponed much longer. He had seen that he had no earthly possibility of coming back.

"I've been looking over some of these accounts on which we've lost heavily," began Fairchild, as he leaned back in his chair, expressionless eyes on his partner. He waited for the other to speak.

Torrance dropped into another chair. "Yes?" he queried.

"Over and into them," said Fairchild.

Even that more explicit and insinuating statement drew only a nod. Tor-

rance was quite undisturbed. In his heart he did not believe Fairchild would prosecute him. Fairchild himself had too much at stake. A charge of bucketing could be proved. If he were lucky enough to escape prison, he certainly would be put out of the brokerage business.

Torrance lit a cigarette and through the smoke looked at his partner interrogatively. There wasn't anything he could say, if Fairchild had been examining into these accounts. There couldn't be anything that Fairchild did not already know. He thought it better to leave the lead to Fairchild. It was so purely a question as to what the latter intended to do about it.

Fairchild did not press him to answer. He understood Torrance's attitude thoroughly.

"We won't talk about it here," said Fairchild. "Better not. There are ears which might hear. And we seem to be——" He finished with a slow, sweeping gesture, which told as much as any words he could have spoken.

Torrance nodded again. "That's true," he said reflectively.

An onlooker would not have supposed that Torrance was speaking of something vital. He seemed hardly interested. He put a question between puffs at his cigarette: "Where?"

"At my house—to-night," said Fairchild. "We'll be free from interruption there. About eight. All right?"

"Right!" Torrance got up and stretched. "Nothing else you want to talk about just now?"

Had Fairchild not known his man the inquiry would have sounded as sheer, impudent bravado. He took it at its value, but he smiled faintly—a wisp of a smile. He was really sorry that Torrance had thrown him, for there had been occasions when Torrance's nerve had helped them over rough spots.

"No, nothing else just now," he said. "I'm—er—thinking."

"I'm going uptown," said Torrance. "I won't be back here. Eight—at your house."

In turn, as he left the office, Torrance felt sorry for Fairchild. It was unfortunate that he should have been carried down. But Torrance himself had not expected to go under. Much to the contrary. Had things turned out right he'd have split with Fairchild, and they'd have laughed over it.

The movement he had been let in on had been big. It had been extended, too, a cagey manipulation, to keep up with which he had been compelled constantly to find more money. Fairchild had refused to go in, predicted that there were breakers ahead. Torrance hadn't believed that—he had inside information. Wherefore he had fixed things to get the necessary cash to protect himself.

Fairchild, of course, had been correct. The pool, on the fringe of which Torrance had operated, had been smashed. Torrance admitted that he had been a sucker at his own game.

Still, it had been essential that he protect himself, while affairs appeared to be moving right. Just as he had to protect himself, now that Fairchild was wise—if he could.

II.

The result of Fairchild's further cogitation, as expressed that evening, was a surprise and a shock to Torrance. But he gave no evidence of his decision when he received his visitor.

Torrance had been a number of times at the house, out Hastings way, on the Hudson. Fairchild's wife knew him, also the servants. None of these observed anything out of the ordinary in the meeting of the two men.

Both partners were well schooled in controlling expression. Their business demanded that quality. There was nothing, therefore, in the manner of

either to hint that a grave change was taking place in their relationship.

"We're going to be very busy," said Fairchild to his wife, as she exchanged greeting and small talk with Torrance. "You'll see we aren't disturbed?"

"I'm going out, but I'll tell the maids to tread softly." Conferences like this had taken place at the house before. "And—oh, Mr. Torrance," she said, as the men headed across the hall to the study, "see that you and hubby think up a truly wonderful scheme. I saw the darlingest little sedan to-day and a whole bundle of hats and gowns that I want."

Torrance laughed—but not with her. He laughed at the irony of her injunction, considering that they were about to discuss the fact that he virtually had wiped out Fairchild.

It was typical of both men that they went into this session without outward hostility. Not even when they were alone, behind a closed door with none to see, was there any display of rancor. Their voices never rose above their accustomed level tones. They smoked from the same box of cigars, which Fairchild set out, sipped their high balls, and passed the siphon and bottle to each other, like cronies.

In twin leather chairs they sat for several minutes, silently appraising. On the surface there was nothing hair-triggerish about the situation. But it was loaded with dynamite—that slumbering frozen dynamite which goes off unexpectedly.

Fairchild took up the conversation where they had left off that afternoon.

"I looked into some of these accounts that have been taking us," he repeated, "and I found—as you know—that they were fictitious."

Torrance made no effort to deny the bald statement. There was no use. He hadn't a leg to stand on. Over the rim of his glass he nodded agreement.

Fairchild's gray face was just a trifle grim. Torrance could see that he was taking it hard, though his emotion was admirably controlled.

"It's partly my fault, I suppose," said Fairchild, and the other man read a second meaning into that. "I shouldn't have tied myself up so completely in getting that Western business and left you to run things. However——"

Torrance made a little grimace. As he interpreted the speech, Fairchild was not actually sharing the blame for the peculations. What Fairchild meant was that he should not have trusted Torrance to conduct the business, without supervision. Being engaged in the shadiest methods of the brokerage world, they heretofore had exercised a check on each other, which was tacitly understood.

After another period of meditative silence, Fairchild looked up.

"You were in with the crowd that got smashed on B. T. & K., of course. I don't suppose you've anything left? No. I'll give you credit by saying I believe you. I don't think you'd take my cash to salt it away and leave me flat."

Torrance moved so the light did not shine on his face. At the moment he felt uncomfortable. He would have preferred a burst of vituperation. The way Fairchild phrased it made him feel like a sneak thief. He was being chided like a schoolboy.

"It's tough the way things broke," remarked Torrance, to fill the gap. "But," he shrugged, "you know how they go."

"I know," said Fairchild softly.

Abruptly Torrance's abashment departed, and his brows fell. Where the deuce did Fairchild get off to talk to him as if he were a kid? That was what he was doing. No more had been done to Fairchild than Fairchild had done to hundreds of others. The only difference was that, in getting their money, Fairchild had been protected by

law, when he played them on the level in the market—protected by their belief that he was square, when he bucketed them.

"I don't see there's much of anything can be done about it," said Torrance. He might as well call the turn and get it over. "I'm clean as a whistle. You ought to be able to hang on" —but he doubted that.

Fairchild contemplated him woodenly. "No," he said, "I don't think I can. You see," he was gently chiding again, as he related what Torrance suspected, "I got hit myself, recently. I haven't enough left to hold up the shop. Not if I sell everything and leave my family broke—we crash, all right."

"I'm not so sure," disputed Torrance.

"We can't get through without going into bankruptcy," insisted Fairchild. "We owe about ninety thousand dollars. Some of these folks, whom you closed out to get their cash into the phony accounts, are going to yell pretty soon. That will end us. We have about twelve thousand. How d' you make that fit against ninety thousand?"

Torrance pursed his lips contemptuously. "Dope out something that'll wipe them out," he said. "What's been done once can be done again."

"That's so," said Fairchild mildly, as though the idea never had occurred to him. His tone did not rise, but a harsher note crept into it. Torrance got a feeling that he was being played with.

"Perhaps," said Fairchild, "you'll be able to cook up something better than that." His lip drew back in a thin smile, the first break in his aloof pose. "You'll have nothing but time on your hands—time you might use to find a way."

The barely perceptible inflection made Torrance sit up. His eyes flickered wide for a second.

"What d'you mean?" he demanded quickly. His skin was prickling.

Pausing in the act of squirting the siphon, Fairchild glanced at him. His eyes were colder, but deep in them was a pale light of amusement. He finished filling his glass.

"Just what I said," he answered deliberately. "You'll have nothing but time—in jail!"

"Jail!" Torrance gaped. That was so utterly unexpected. How could Fairchild threaten him with jail? Wouldn't he put himself in the same boat? He couldn't be idiot enough to sacrifice himself.

Torrance laughed. "Let's not talk about being in jail," he returned. He poked the ice in his glass with a tentative finger. "They'll get you, too, for running a bucket shop, if you go fussing with the police and the district attorney. You've thought of that? I'd let these birds alone."

It was a threat and, from Torrance's point of view, mighty good advice. But Fairchild was not impressed.

"They can't worry me," he remarked quietly. "We—er—had a fire in the shop this afternoon after you left. Nothing serious. No great damage done. Only," a sardonic flavor crossed his face, "some books happened to get the worst of it."

For a moment Torrance sagged. Why hadn't he thought of that? He could have taken the books and held them over Fairchild's head. He had missed the best chance there was of protecting himself. He saw that he had been right in feeling that Fairchild was playing with him for the last hour. The realization angered him more than the fact that he was wholly in Fairchild's hands, when he had figured there was a loophole.

Only a tenseness at the corners of his mouth and a drooping of the eyelids, however, reflected his state of mind. While he affected to take the turn of events lightly, his nerves jangled. Fairchild was clever enough, with those

books destroyed, to keep his own skirts sufficiently out of the mud. They would be soiled, of course, but not enough to ostracize him altogether.

That thought brought resolution to Torrance. Some means had to be found of stopping Fairchild. At that point Torrance determined that he was not going to prison.

"That was a good play—getting rid of the books." He smiled evenly. "I wish I'd——"

"Yes," interrupted Fairchild, "you should have. But," he echoed the other's earlier words with a return of that elusive, amused inflection, "you know how things go. Something most always goes wrong. The littlest item overlooked may spoil the program."

"I guess that's so." Torrance puffed and frowned—smiled crookedly, with a gesture of seeming resignation. "You understand that I thought B. T. & K. was a ten-strike, don't you? It was going to make a killing for—us. You know how I looked at it——" He talked on, half rambling, while his brain worked at top speed along an entirely different line. Fairchild had to be stopped, was the refrain in the back of his head.

Fairchild let him talk, although he knew that it was only a play for time. He could see that Torrance was thinking—thinking hard, but not on what he was saying. Occasionally he nodded, and his gray face twitched, as he repressed a smile. He didn't bother to listen particularly, but he noticed one thing of which he approved: Torrance said no word which might in the vaguest way be considered a plea for mercy. That was like Torrance. He always had nerve.

"You're not any sorrier than I am that the works went smash," concluded Torrance. "But—there's no use talking about that. Do I sleep in my own bed to-night or"—he grinned—"or have you a cop waiting for me?"

Fairchild shook his head. "You'll keep until morning, won't you?" he said with a tinge of raillery. "That'll give you a chance to get bail."

There he was, doing the abnormal thing. Torrance could be many miles away, under cover, by morning. Fairchild took it for granted that he would not flee. Or was he giving him the opportunity to get away? Torrance was not sure which. Either way, he knew that he would have to stand the racket. If he bolted, it would not help him much. He would only become a fugitive, likely to be captured any time. His going would not prevent Fairchild laying charges. Fairchild had to do that to get himself out of the mess which would come when the firm collapsed.

"Fair enough," said Torrance. He offered no thanks for the consideration accorded him, as he rose to his feet. There was only one way out that he could think of, and he was going to see if it could be worked. "I'll be at the shop in the morning," he added. "We can go over to the district attorney, together. You don't want to make anything spectacular out of it?" he queried good-humoredly.

"Nothing spectacular," said Fairchild. He also arose. "We'll do it as decently as possible."

The situation would have amazed any but themselves. There was still no evidence of bitterness, though one of these men had looted the other and was about to be sent to prison for doing it. Their understanding was complete. They remained as coldly friendly as ever, to all appearances.

"I'll run along, then," said Torrance. "Might as well take in a roof to-night. I may not have another chance for a while."

"Oh, I wouldn't say that," said Fairchild, with a shrug. "You can get bail. Have another drink before you go?"

"Shoot," said Torrance, and they had it, automatically raising their glasses to each other.

They passed out of the study together, and Torrance opened the outer door, himself. Fairchild stood a couple of steps back.

"It's a tough break," he said regretfully, as Torrance gave him good night. "I guess I'll read a while and forget it."

Torrance followed his glance toward the door of the library. "That's what I'm going to do—until morning," he remarked. "'Night."

"'Night," returned Fairchild.

A maid, crossing the hall, saw them nod in friendly fashion. She saw Torrance step out and close the door behind him. As she went upstairs, she saw Fairchild walk toward the library.

Half an hour later his wife found him there, his skull crushed with a heavy china Buddha.

III.

The murder of Fairchild was laid to a burglar. There were fresh scratches on a small safe in the library.

When the maid told of having seen him enter that room, immediately after the departure of Torrance, it was assumed that he had surprised the burglar at work. That there were no finger prints strengthened the belief that he had been the victim of a professional criminal.

An open window, on the sill of which was a dusty, smudged footmark, indicated the means of entrance. It had not been locked.

The failure of Fairchild to make any outcry was explained by the plausible theory that, when he and Torrance crossed the hall, the burglar ceased operations and moved to the library door to see what the prospects of discovery were. That would have put him in a position to fell Fairchild without warning.

In the morning Torrance hurried out to the house to express his horror and condole with Fairchild's wife. He went as soon as he got the morning paper, and, in the minute for which he saw the prostrated Mrs. Fairchild, he assured her, with an air of splendid sympathy, that she must not hesitate to call on him.

"We were more than partners, you know," he reminded her gently. "We were friends. I don't believe there was any one closer to your husband than myself."

"Thank you—thank you," murmured the widow, and, since she was so utterly in collapse, Torrance tiptoed from the room, leaving her to the ministrations of the maid.

Of course, the police talked with Torrance. But they did so only because he had been the last person to converse with Fairchild, last to leave the house before the murder. The last person, apparently, aside from the maid, to see Fairchild alive. They did not expect to gain information from him.

On one point alone had they the least hope that he could be of help: Had he seen any one when he left the house?

"No," Torrance replied in the negative somberly. "Not a soul until I was several blocks from here—almost at the railroad station."

The detectives had not expected any better answer. It had been dark, past nine o'clock, when Torrance departed. There were shrubs in the strip of ground around the Fairchild house. A prowler could readily have hidden until Torrance went by. Moreover, it was more probable that the murderer had been in the house when Torrance went out than that he would have entered the library while Fairchild was there.

No, there didn't appear to be any doubt that Fairchild had been struck down, as he went into the room, by a burglar who had suspended operations

to see what the movement in the hall portended.

Torrance smiled thoughtfully to himself. He was satisfied. With Fairchild out of the road, the menace of prison was past. Now he had things his own way. And—it was an added satisfaction since it saved him the trouble of doing likewise—Fairchild had helped wonderfully by causing the destruction of the books.

Torrance saw how he could turn that to his own advantage. He proceeded to shift the responsibility for the firm's bankruptcy to Fairchild's shoulders.

The need of doing so was precipitated the day after the murder. Several of the customers whose accounts he had juggled called for settlement. Other brokerage houses, with which the firm had dealings, asked that commitments be closed out. These were follow-ups, natural enough on the death of Fairchild.

Torrance, however, had hoped that he would be given a little time. He did not want to be put into the position of accusing his partner, almost before the body was cold. But developments allowed him no other course.

Before the day was over it was known that Fairchild & Torrance were broke; the whisper went abroad that Fairchild had lost heavily in a Western venture, and the firm's money was known to have been buried under the débris of the B. T. & K. pool.

With seeming reluctance Torrance related that the conference at Fairchild's home the previous night had to do with the firm's affairs. He had just discovered, he said, that Fairchild had been using funds wrongfully for speculation on his own account. Fairchild, he added, had said that he could make good if given a few days to realize on his property, and, with that understanding, Torrance said, he had left him.

The fire in the office was cited to substantiate these statements. It had been caused by a cigarette left in the vault by Fairchild. No one had been in the vault from the time he left it until the flames were observed. There was no question about that.

At the time it had appeared an accident—an accident due to thoughtlessness, carelessness. In the light of Torrance's statements it became significant. If Fairchild knew that he was being caught in thievery, wasn't that sufficient reason to make him do all he could to cover his tracks?

The burning of the books would do that. If he could make good, as Torrance said he had maintained he could, there would be no evidence against him without the books. If he could replace the money, he was clear.

The fire, therefore, apparently told its own story, in corroboration of Torrance. Once more Torrance had demonstrated his quick ability to adapt circumstances on short notice. He was stepping out from under in good shape. The only thing he regretted was that he had been forced to reveal the financial state of affairs so early. Not that he feared it would prove a boomerang. But—well—well, he regretted it, that was all. He just disliked seeing the story of Fairchild's alleged misappropriation woven into that of the murder. He'd have preferred a space between.

IV.

The nearness of the incidents to one another set another mind revolving. There was no suspicion that Torrance had killed his partner. Why should there be? There was no suggestion that they had quarreled violently, notwithstanding the condition which Torrance professed to have uncovered. During the conference at the house no loud word had been heard between them. So far as could be learned, they had parted the best of friends—the maid testified to that.

Had their situations been reversed—that is, had Torrance been killed, there might have been some occasion to suspect Fairchild. But, since Fairchild was portrayed as the guilty person in the misuse of the firm's money and that of customers, there was nothing to direct attention to Torrance, even though it were not so indisputable that he had left the house prior to the murder.

Torrance was as free as air from suspicion—yes. And yet there was one among the man hunters, searching so vainly for the murderer, who fell to wondering contrarily. He let his imagination run away with him, and it ran so far that he laughed at himself. Severn didn't have to be a detective to know that there was no limit to the flights of the imagination. He didn't have to be a detective to know that a mind case can be made against almost any one who was in the vicinity of a mysterious crime. He also knew that the law won't listen to imaginings, but demands material proof.

Nevertheless, Severn couldn't shake off upside-down theory. It took him back to the Fairchild house to reëxamine the ground. No clew had been found. Perhaps there was something he could turn up. Anyhow, he couldn't waste his time any more than he was wasting it looking for a burglar-murderer of whose appearance or direction they had not the slightest inkling.

Going to the house the second day after the murder, Severn noticed that it was about an even ten-minutes' walk from the railroad station. That inspired him to ask the maid what time Torrance had departed. To be truthful, he advanced the question idly, helplessly, for lack of anything else to say.

"About nine-twenty," the girl replied.

That wasn't encouraging, but he had not anticipated that the information would be of any value. Torrance had caught a train to the city at nine-thirty.

"You saw him go out?" he asked furtively. She had said so a score of times and she nodded again.

"And the next person to come in was Mrs. Fairchild"—something else which the girl had told him repeatedly.

She nodded again.

"Did you let her in?" Severn was just groping. What difference could it make who had let Mrs. Fairchild in?

"No," said the girl. "She found the door unlocked."

"Found it unlocked?" repeated Severn, with a gleam of interest. "Why do you put it that way? Was it unusual for the door to stand unlocked?"

"Yes," admitted the girl. She hadn't thought, especially, of its being unlocked when Mrs. Fairchild returned, however. She attached no importance to it now.

Severn snatched at the straw. "Torrance came to the house soon after eight, didn't he? Who let him in?"

"I did."

"Was the door locked then?"

The girl pondered. "Yes."

"How do you know?"

"Because," she said positively, "because a few minutes later I went out on the porch and got locked out."

The detective experienced a quickening interest. He felt that he was reaching—reaching for something intangible which was almost within grasp. He kept on with his interrogation regarding the unlocked door, because that was the only point he had not heard before, and because, somehow, it brought him back sharply to his arbitrary imaginings.

"Mrs. Fairchild went out soon after that?" he asked.

"Yes; within five minutes."

"And who came in or went out between then and the departure of Torrance?"

"Nobody."

"Sure of that?"

The maid was certain. "I was back

and forth downstairs all that time," she added. "The other maid was upstairs. No one came to the house."

The detective admitted the possibility that Mrs. Fairchild herself had released the lock so it could be turned from the outside. He asked to see her, but the maid replied that she was very indisposed.

"Ask her, then," instructed Severn, "whether she left the door unlocked."

The maid returned promptly. "No, sir," she reported.

There was only one other explanation—two! Severn took the first:

"Did Mr. Fairchild unlock it when he let Torrance out?" Fairchild might have done that if he knew his wife would soon arrive.

"He didn't," said the maid. "He didn't go quite to the door. He was a few steps from it when he said good night to Mr. Torrance."

That left but one explanation: "And Torrance—— Did he let himself out —open the door himself?"

"Yes."

Severn's eyes widened with a trace of excitement. He looked gravely at the girl.

"I want you to think well before you answer my next question," he said. "I want you to be positive in your answer."

"Yes, sir." The maid was impressed by his earnestness. She was all attention. Suddenly she comprehended that something pregnant might lie behind this seemingly inconsequential matter of the unlocked door.

Severn offered his inquiry slowly: "Do you remember whether Torrance hesitated at the door? Or did he simply pull it open and walk out?"

"He hesitated," declared the girl. "After opening it, he turned to Mr. Fairchild, and they spoke a few words —I didn't hear what was said. Then they said good night, and Mr. Torrance went out."

"While they were speaking," urged Severn quietly, "how did Torrance stand? I mean, was he in the doorway or had he gone into the hall?"

"Why—why——" The maid considered. She viewed the scene in her memory. "He leaned against the door," she announced. "His arm was behind him, as though he still had hold of the knob. Like this"—going to the door, she opened it, lounged against its edge, while she turned to face him.

"Why didn't you tell us that before?"

She stared at him with hurt surprise. "Nobody asked me. I never even thought of it—that it could mean anything. Does it?" She was tingling over being led, perhaps, into the heart of the mystery.

"Never mind, never mind," said Severn soothingly. "Don't talk about it to any one. But—don't forget it." He eyed her thoughtfully. "I might want you to remember more than you actually did see," he said. "Could you do that?"

"I might," she replied eagerly. "What is it?"

"I'll tell you later if I need you," said the detective. "After I've had another look at the library and tested out one more thought."

There was a revived briskness in Severn's step as he made for the murder room. With unrepressed excitement the girl followed his every move. Having practically been assigned a part in what possibly would be the closing scene in the mystery, she trembled to think that he might stumble on some clew that had been overlooked.

But an hour's careful inspection revealed nothing.

Severn came again to the window by which, it was believed, the murderer had made entrance and exit. He opened it without purpose. His glance fell on the maid, and he grinned ruefully at her expression of intense disappointment.

"Thought we were going to find it all written out here?" he commented frivolously to hide the keenness of his own chagrin. He had expected to come upon something.

"Um," said the maid lugubriously. She brightened. "You said there was another idea you had to test," hopefully. "Maybe that will help out."

"Maybe," echoed Severn absently. He scowled around the room and again at the open window.

Suddenly his roving gaze became fixed. His scowl faded as his eyes distended with the light of discovery.

The window was up to its extreme height. On a splinter high up on the casing his eyes riveted. Audibly he inhaled, as he reached, then stopped to take out and open his penknife. With that he eased the splinter and extracted from beneath it a single scrap of woolen thread!

"What is it?" The girl bent forward breathlessly. "Oh," she looked from the scrap of wool in his palm to his face, "I thought you'd found something."

He smiled tolerantly at her. "Perhaps I have. What color is it?"

"Black," she declared, but corrected herself: "No, it's brown."

"Brown," agreed Severn, "dark brown."

The girl couldn't find enthusiasm. "That won't help find the murderer," she scoffingly replied.

Unconsciously the detective paraphrased one of Fairchild's last remarks. He wrought it into the vernacular:

"Doesn't take much, sometimes, to blow the works." He fired a hasty question: "What color is Torrance's coat? Isn't it brown?"

"Not brown like this," asserted the girl. "His coat is a light shade. This thread is nearly black."

The detective's face puckered. "I guess you're right," he conceded grudgingly. "His coat is—is——"

"Nut-brown," supplied the girl, as he floundered for the name of the shade. "The thread there is a black brown. They're four shades apart."

The detective grunted. That appeared to dispose of the bit of wool. Yet he stowed it carefully in an envelope in his pocket. The idea that it belonged persisted. So did the vision of Torrance, standing against the open door, with his back against it, a hand behind him. Moreover, Torrance had a brown coat, although it was nut-colored and, therefore, four shades from a black brown.

"I'll tell you, girlie," he said frankly, "I did think I'd picked up a scrap worth while, and I'm not convinced, yet, that it isn't. So you hide the fact away behind your little ears, along with the dope about Torrance at the door. I'm going down Wall Street way, and may stop in and see friend Torrance."

V.

Severn, however, did not call on Torrance that day or the next, which was the day on which Fairchild was buried. He did take time off from his investigation in the financial district to attend the burial. Unnoticed among the group of mourners, whom he joined at the graveside, he watched Torrance narrowly throughout the service. The effort gave him no result. Torrance seemed to be suitably grief-stricken over the loss of his partner, but no more. Seeing Torrance go through the ordeal, the detective remarked to himself, as Fairchild so often had done, that Torrance had nerve. For Severn's labors around Wall Street had not been barren. He had learned that Torrance had lost heavily through the disaster to the B. T. & K. pool.

On the fourth day after the murder, Severn stepped into Torrance's office, near the hour for lunch.

Torrance received him cordially, but

cautiously. He recalled having met Severn at the Fairchild house.

"I was down this way on another case," said Severn, "and thought I'd stop in and give you the news. Haven't heard it, have you?"

"News?" Torrance edged forward on his chair. "You don't mean there's some development——"

"That's what," interrupted Severn. "We got a line on a burglar, who was seen up Hastings way, the other night —an ex-con. It's only a question of time now till he's caught. There's a line on him, down on the East Side. Wish they had let me stick on the case," and he wagged his head dolefully. "There'll be a bunch of credit for the man that gets him."

Torrance didn't hear the detective's closing lament. He was too engrossed with the information just given him. Amazing! How his luck was holding up! A known burglar seen in the neighborhood the night Fairchild was killed! An ex-convict! Torrance wanted to laugh, for he had no reason to doubt Severn. It was well within the bounds that a known criminal should have inadvertently thrown himself open to suspicion.

"That's the best news I've heard in a long while!" exclaimed Torrance. "Where was he seen? Who saw him?"

"A fool cop just took it into his fat head to remember having seen this bird on the train," said Severn disgustedly. "Some awful mutts wear uniforms."

While Torrance listened avidly, Severn gave him further details. He was letting his imagination work again, but he did not overdo it. But, as he spoke, his eyes rested frequently on Torrance's brown coat, hung on a chair beside his desk. Regardless of the difference in the shade of that coat and the shred of wool in his pocket, he had a vast curiosity to examine that coat.

When he moved to leave, Torrance also got up.

"Have lunch with me," Torrance said. "I was just going to start when you came in."

"I don't believe I can," said Severn. "I have to report back and then shove up to Albany to get papers signed to bring back a prisoner from Connecticut."

"Sorry," said Torrance, as he got into his coat. He didn't notice the swift scrutiny Severn gave the garment. Turning his back an instant to put some papers from the desk top into a drawer, he did not notice Severn reach forward toward him. He felt nothing as Severn touched the slack of the coat.

They were leaving the office, when the detective said casually, "Better get that rip fixed before it gets any bigger."

"Rip? Where?" Torrance glanced quickly down at the right-hand side of his coat.

"On the other side," said Severn. "There! It looks like a clean cut. It'll mend so you can't notice it."

Plainly puzzled, Torrance studied the two-inch slash as if it were some rare species of bug. He didn't say so, but he decided that some one was maliciously intent upon ruining that coat. Only two days ago he had found a rent on the right-hand side. That had seemed like a tear. This clearly was, as Severn said, a cut.

"That's funny," said Torrance. He raised his eyes to the detective. The latter was looking on with no apparent interest.

"Some fancy joker on the subway, likely," suggested Severn. "Queer how anybody can get fun out of slashing other folks' clothes in the crush."

"That's probably where it happened," agreed Torrance. Every now and then, he was aware, there was an epidemic of wanton clothing slashing in the subway crowds, although usually women were the victims. "I'll have to leave it at the tailor's aga——" He caught himself up on "again." He

didn't know why, but he had a hunch not to mention the tear of a couple of days ago.

When they were parting outside the building, he reverted to the arrest which Severn predicted.

"Let me hear as soon as they get him—— Oh, I forgot, you're going out of town."

The detective fingered the razor blade in his pocket. He calculated that it had done good work.

"I'll see that you hear," he promised rather dryly, "the moment he's caught."

Two hours afterward, Severn stood beside the tailor to whom Torrance had sent the coat to be repaired. The tailor remembered having mended it before. With some pride in his skill, he pointed out the spot to Severn and produced a magnifying glass, without which the darning could not be located.

The shred of black-brown wool taken from the window casing at the Fairchild house lay on the nut-brown background made by the coat. Severn was chuckling

VI.

When he reached the Fairchild home, Severn enlisted the helpful maid.

"We're making out," he told her buoyantly. "We'll have a prisoner tonight. You can lend a hand by phoning Torrance that, if he isn't too busy, Mrs. Fairchild would be obliged if he'd come out this evening. She needs some immediate advice. You're phoning for her because she is still unable to leave her room. Understand?"

"Yes! Is"—she could not stay the question—"did Mr. Torrance kill him?"

"He did," said Severn.

"Is that bit of thread going to help prove it?"

"Yes."

"But it isn't the right color," she objected.

"My dear girl," he interrupted, "if you want to see this through, you'll have to quit asking questions. Go phone Torrance. Ask him to come straight out. It'll take him an hour."

Severn stood beside her while she phoned. She was excited over talking with a man accused of murder, but she enacted her part well.

Torrance replied that he would answer the summons at once. He supposed the rush had to do with some attachment on the estate, obtained by a swindled creditor.

The district attorney, called by Severn, arrived while the girl was receiving further instructions. She was being told what she was to add to her recollection of the scene at the door when Torrance had bade Fairchild good night.

Another detective accompanied the district attorney and a clerk from his office. Severn coached the clerk, a mild-mannered little man, then went to see the widow.

Mrs. Fairchild, weak and suffering from shock, was resting on a lounge in an upper room. After apologizing for the further intrusion, Severn partly explained it.

"What we have to do," he said, "can best be carried out at the scene of the —crime. We are going to arrest the" —he avoided the harsher word—"criminal."

A flush came to her cheeks, but fled immediately, leaving them a more dead white.

"You are bringing him here!" She remonstrated at the horror of it. "No, no! Don't! I cannot bear——"

"Please, madam," said Severn, with quick sympathy. "We won't remain long. I wouldn't have informed you, were there not the possibility of—er—a little trouble. If you hear a commotion, please don't be alarmed."

Presently she had herself in hand. "I want him to be caught, of course," she said. "I shall listen—for the com-

motion which will let me know you have him."

All unsuspecting that he was walking into a charge of murder, Torrance strode briskly to the house. Severn saw him approaching and prepared for his entrance. The maid showed him into the library.

On the threshold he halted with a start. A man was lying on the floor, just out of sight of any one passing in the hall. That was all of the picture that Torrance got at first. But it was enough—grisly remindful.

"That's the way he lay," sounded Severn in cheerful voice.

Torrance started again, and his gaze jumped to the detective. What was Severn doing there? He had said he was off the case, going out of town.

"Oh, hello," Severn greeted him. The district attorney was rising from his undignified position on the floor. "Wait a minute," called Severn hastily. "Lie still a minute. I was just using the district attorney as Fairchild's body," he explained to Torrance, "to freshen my mind on the lay-out. That's about the way he lay, isn't it?"

Torrance's lips opened to say "Yes," but snapped shut. His back felt cold—a chill dew burst out on his forehead.

"I don't know," he said. "I didn't get here till—next morning."

"That's right," said Severn.

The district attorney got to his feet. He had agreed to give Severn a free hand. The detective played it freely.

"I promised you I'd let you know the minute an arrest was made," said Severn affably. "I'm doing that now. You're it, Torrance!"

The crashing suddenness of it made Torrance recoil. He bumped into the second detective, who had lined up behind him. The contact, with the sensation it gave him of being trapped, brought him to his senses. He collected his nerve to fight.

"There isn't much to it, Torrance," said Severn. "Want to hear?"

A hard smile on his face, Torrance nodded. "Under the circumstances, I don't appear to have any choice."

"Sure you have. But, since you look interested, I'll tell you. See that girl?" Severn indicated the maid, who had come to stand just inside the door. She evidently was not anxious to draw any nearer Torrance than was necessary, though she regarded him with wide, fascinated eyes.

Torrance raised his brows as he looked at her.

"Naturally I see her." What could she tell?

"She was in the hall when you left Fairchild," declared Severn. "She saw you release the lock on the door!"

Torrance's gaze darted back to the girl. He had believed the maid a witness on his side, because she had seen him go.

Her voice came to him in an awed, husky whisper as she bore out Severn: "I saw him!"

"See," went on Severn, before Torrance could recover, "we've had that on you right along. But it wasn't until we found him," he jerked his head toward the district attorney's clerk, "that we could establish the fact you came back into the house. He saw you come out, turn right around, and go in the front door. Couple of minutes later he saw you running for the station. You had to run for the train?"

Torrance did not reply, but remained rooted, fists knotted, and the muscles bulging on his jaw. Two witnesses! And one had seen him reënter the house!

"You went at it head-on, Torrance—the right way," said Severn. "You took the chance of getting to Fairchild without any one seeing you. Had you been seen it would have been easy to talk with him and get out again. That wouldn't have meant anything. But

your biggest mistake, Torrance, was in being careless when you went out the window. That nailed you."

"You're an interesting romancer," retorted Torrance.

"Not half so good as you on romance," retorted Severn. "Things broke right for you when that little fire took place in the office, didn't they? We know, of course, that you got hooked badly on B. T. & K. Where'd you get the money? Your bank accounts don't show anything like you lost. We've looked 'em over. If you can show where you got the money, it'll help you just a little—but not much. Because," he harked back to the exit by the window, "when you crawled out of here that night, you left a sample of your coat. Huh? I watched the tailor mend the cut, which I made in it this afternoon, Torrance, and I learned something. He gave me the dope on a point that had me stalled."

Torrance swayed slightly. The recital followed his movements with such exactitude that he was mute. His judgment, too, advised him to be silent. The case appeared to be built around him like a fence. He waited to hear what had stalled Severn, how the tailor had eliminated the snag.

"There's a splinter at the window, there, that tore your coat," continued the detective. "But the scrap of thread I found in it wasn't the color of your coat. It was what they call a black brown. Your coat is nut-brown. That had me stopped, Torrance—until you led me to your tailor to-day. Know why I couldn't match that thread with your coat?"

Torrance fell back on sarcasm. He moved his shoulders lazily. "I can't imagine. You seem able to do anything."

"You'll see at the trial, when we make an exhibit of the coat," said Severn. "You should have burned it. You would if you'd known where it got torn. Now, here's why the thread I found didn't match the coat and had me stopped a while: It's from the warp—that's the strand that runs lengthwise on the loom, you know. And it's the woof—the thread the shuttle carries across the warp—which gives the shade to the goods. Get me? The warp is what you might say is lost in the weaving. Except in real coarse goods, it's just the strings that hold the woof together, and so its color is neutralized. The warp——"

Severn was warming up to his exposition on weaving, when, out of the corner of his restless eye, Torrance caught sight of Mrs. Fairchild, leaning heavily in the doorway. The fearful loathing on her white, hollow face struck him harder than the indictment Severn had drawn against him. His head sank forward between his shoulders, as he stared at her. His arms bent, as though he would fend her off. He backed a step.

Then she broke the spell.

"Murderer!" she said. "Murderer!"

That was all, but it galvanized Torrance, and his nerve gave way. He leaped again for the window, through which he had gone four nights ago, after killing Fairchild. He leaped, but Severn's partner was on his back, bringing him down.

BRIDE INDUCES ESCAPED CONVICT TO SURRENDER

ACCOMPANIED by his seventeen-year-old bride, James McElevey, who escaped from the prison at Joliet, Illinois, last May, recently returned to the prison and gave himself up. His wife's influence impelled him to take this step.

"I've got the squarest little girl in the world," he said. "She'll be waiting for me when I get out, and we'll live straight."

The Stoat

by Roy Vickers

Author of "The Second Mrs. Rawton," etc.

SYNOPSIS OF PRECEDING CHAPTERS.

IMMEDIATELY following her marriage to David Glare, Nadia Rendle rushes from the vestry of Green Plains Church, seizes her father's car, and dashes over the cliff into the sea, thirty feet below. Ralph Brierly, a rich young lawyer, who is cruising in a motor boat with his friend, George Darrell, rescues her and takes her up to town, installing her in an apartment. Nadia has married Glare to save her father, George Rendle, who owns the fine estate, Redden, from a charge of murder. In his library, at night, Rendle kills a woman, whom he mistakes for Glare. Glare explains to the police that the woman was a burglar, and she is buried in an unknown grave. But Glare and Rendle know her by her maiden name, Miriam Lind, and she claimed to be the wife of Rendle's partner, who disappeared from South America, where Rendle made his money in rubber plantations. Rendle could not settle her claims without practically bankrupting himself. In return for her promise of marriage, Glare gave Nadia Miriam Lind's passport and picture, which she hides in the home of her old nurse, Mrs. Jarratt. Glare knows of Nadia's escape with Brierly, but decides he will make her come to him. He gives the police an intimation that his wife's mind was affected, and compels Rendle to sign a document setting forth that Nadia killed the Lind woman. Brierly, in town, receives a letter from his mother's lawyers, saying she has disappeared. He goes to Green Plains and discovers that the unknown woman killed for a burglar in Rendle's library was his mother, Miriam Lind, who always used her maiden name in business. Grace Jarratt, Nadia's maid, witnesses Glare's interview with Rendle, when he compels Nadia's father to sign the document, and she discovers a bullet in the library wall, while Rendle's gun showed only one shot fired, which was supposed to be the bullet lodged in the dead woman's body. Nadia, in town, has worked for a day as a gown model, and a number of moving pictures of her have been made before she discovers the camera man. Then Brierly returns to see her and begins to wonder what will happen if Glare puts the police on the trail of Nadia, as his mother's murderess. In the midst of his speculation, he declares his love for Nadia, who answers, "I am glad you told me."

CHAPTER XXVII.

FERRAN REPORTS.

QUICKLY David Glare sprang off his motor cycle and entered the inn, which he was making his headquarters for the time being. He had been to see Mr. Rendle again, and his lip curled as he remembered the old man's feeble mental state. He felt no pity for the havoc he had brought to Redden, the stately home that had known no deep sorrow, until his shadow had darkened its portals. He cared nothing for his own possible ruin and destruction. For that of others he had merely an indifferent contempt.

As he entered his own room, Glare glanced at the businesslike traveling clock on the mantelpiece.

"Hm! Ferran should be here in something under half an hour to make his report," he said aloud. Then he dropped into an armchair, lighted a cigar, and made a mental survey of the last few days. As he sat in the armchair his body did not relax, for the muscles remained tense, the shoulders humped in a half-crouching position, as if to give symbolic justification of his nickname—The Stoat—"of all living things, the most relentless, the most tireless in the chase."

The chase promised well already, though it had scarcely begun. The quarry had taken the first spurt out of sight of the pursuer, and doubtless reasoned that now all was well. A low, contented chuckle broke from his lips. There would be another spurt soon, when the pursuer came in, and then perhaps yet another. He knew that he was working in dangerous country. He had invoked the aid of the police, and that was a weapon he would have to handle with the utmost care, lest it wound the hand that wielded it.

But as for Ralph Brierly—The Stoat grinned, partly in malevolence and partly in genuine mirth. Brierly was, no doubt, laboriously discovering precisely that fact which The Stoat wished him to discover—namely, that the woman killed in Rendle's house had been his own mother. That little fact could be counted upon to turn the quarry at the right moment.

His musings were broken into by the entry of Ferran, one of the active satellites who had followed him from South America.

Glare did not look up as Ferran entered the room, for he knew a footstep as well as he knew a voice or a face.

"Fire away," he ordered. On the trail, The Stoat was economical of words, economical of everything save his own passion-fed energy.

"He has installed her in his town studio—No. 3, Sutton Terrace. She lives there alone."

The Stoat nodded.

"Yesterday," continued Ferran, "she went to Martin & Burrows, which, as you probably know, is about the most fashionable and expensive woman's store in the city."

"Oh?" said Glare oddly. "What did she go there for? She has no money."

"I'm beaten there, chief, and I'll admit it," admitted Ferran.

"Didn't you go in after her?" demanded Glare.

"Yes, and a tight place I let myself into, too. It's a whale of a place, and the whole show is run for rich women. Mighty few men go in, and they are the lap dogs. I wasn't dressed for the part and attracted attention the whole time I was there. The way some of those dolled-up saleswomen stared at me——"

"We'll take that part as read," interrupted Glare. "I'm not concerned with your difficulties—I want your results."

"I found out the lady had gone in looking like a hick from the country and come out like a movie queen. She bought like a millionaire's wife, but after lunch she took a job as a model."

"What?"

"'Struth, chief. All the girls had gone on strike, and she stepped into the breach. Made a hit, I heard afterward from the woman who helped her put the glad rags on. Made out I was a reporter and wanted an interview——"

"Get on with the tale."

"There was a camera man there, making a film of the show—advertisement idea of Martin & Burrows. The picture's exhibited at one movie house after the other, I understand."

"Would the model's face be visible?"

"All the time."

The Stoat's eyes glinted, his mouth narrowed into a cruel line.

"You are positive it was Miss—Mrs. Glare?"

"Yes, chief. Looked over the movie guy's shoulder and identified her as easy as silk."

"What did you do then?"

"Nothing, chief. Continued in our next."

"You don't mean to say you quit then?"

"I did, chief. And you'd have quit cold, too, if you'd had a stuffed shirt, of a smelling like a perfume counter, coming up to you and asking you if you were waiting for your employer, and if so, didn't you know there was a bench in the hall for servants."

The Stoat laughed and then, to placate the other's feelings, said:

"I guess it was lucky for that guy you happened to be on my business, or he'd probably be in the hospital by now. Anyhow, you let him bluff you, so I know you'll be anxious to make up for lost time."

"Any orders, chief?"

"Get back to town," said The Stoat thoughtfully, "and keep in touch with

her as you've been doing. Leave no stone unturned to find out whether there's anything in that movie business. If any photograph has been taken of her, I want to know all about it. If it's a movie that's to be shown publicly, find out where it's to be seen. When you bring in that last piece of news, I'll let you quit the job."

"S'long, chief," replied Ferran, and left the room.

For several minutes David Glare digested the report.

"Odd that a man who has brain enough to be a successful lawyer hasn't enough cunning to know that I'd be sure to put a man on his track, as a means of finding Nadia," ran his thoughts. "Well, the law is a profound study and evidently raises men's minds above the level of common sense. Hm!" The pupils of his eyes narrowed. "I wonder what little Nadia would do if she knew that her legal, loving husband was fully aware both of her existence and of her exact address."

He smiled proudly. David Glare was not conceited, but incontestably vain and ever conscious of his own worth. He was proud of his own forbearance. He was proud of the steady balance of his mind and his emotions. He knew that he wanted much more than the mere physical presence of Nadia—he wanted her pride, her sturdy, virginal independence of spirit. And, for all the perfection of his plans, he knew that the hour of conquest was distant yet.

There was still one blind spot in the barrage he was throwing before and behind her. What had she done with that passport with which he had bought her nominal wifehood? He must set himself to find out, and the sooner the better. With The Stoat to think was to act, but not to act precipitately.

The report of his man Ferran was extremely useful. Nadia a fashion model at Martin & Burrows! As a model she had been photographed by a moving picture camera man! It was too easy! A piece of childish carelessness! It hurried the chase to such a point that it might well inconvenience him. That was why his mind had at once leaped to the problem of the passport.

He would see a line of action in a minute, but he must not hurry. The Stoat never hurried on the trail. A quick, inductive thinker, he rapidly marshaled the essential facts.

She was in possession of that passport which proved the identity of Miriam Lind. That, in turn, would prove a motive of murder against her father. She had not left the passport behind, because he had furtively searched her room.

She might have destroyed it. But women don't destroy things like that, as readily as men. Even a man might have hesitated to destroy that. He would have reasoned that, if any legal complications should arise, the passport would be the one way of clearing it up.

Suppose she did not destroy it? It was not in her possession. She could not have taken it with her over the cliff. She must have intrusted it to some one.

The thought process was simple, yet relentless—leading inevitably to one reasonable solution—the correct solution.

To whom would a girl in such a position intrust such a document? Only to an intimate friend. Nadia had no intimate friend and confidant. To whom, then? To a servant? Absurd. What about that old nurse of hers?

"Yes, of course! That old nurse!" reasoned Glare. "Ferran, who was watching her for me before the marriage, reported that she went to the cottage the day after it happened. I'll go there right now!"

CHAPTER XXVIII.

GRACE WALKS WITH GLARE.

DEFTLY Grace Jarratt's hands moved among silks and voiles, furs and hats and fans. She folded and packed and sorted, as if her thoughts were with her work. As a matter of fact, though they centered round it, they flew to speculations and side issues which were hidden—and must remain hidden—to the other occupants of Redden.

"Nice young man, that Mr. Brierly. It's easy to see he's in love with Miss Nadia, but the question is, what does she think of him? What a nuisance she actually married that Mr. Glare before she thought to throw herself over the cliff. Well, that'll all come right in the end, I dare say. So long as nobody finds out where she is now, she's safe. They won't find out through me, anyway."

She shook out a frock of green silk in which Nadia had looked regally fair. On leaving Brierly, Grace's mind had been mainly occupied with the disposal of Miss Nadia's clothes.

She had been told, when she first began her task of "clearing up," that she could take Nadia's entire wardrobe, and she had written to a secondhand dealer in the city about them, and that morning received a satisfactory reply. The revelation that her young mistress was still alive, however, put her into a difficult position. Finally, she decided to make no change in her plan of action. She would sell Nadia's clothes, retaining only such trifles as had a special value for their owner. No other consideration, after all, was of so much importance as that she—Grace—should betray nothing.

"There's her ermine opera cloak—I'll keep that back for her," she decided. "She used to look lovely in that, with that high collar behind, and her pearls round her neck." Her mind flashed to another high collar she had seen lately—first on a woman who had lain dead in the room below; then in a passport photo of that woman; lastly in another photo of that woman—and this third time her instant recognition of face and dress had brought tragic certainty to the woman's son. Amazing, how that woman, dead though she was, had crossed her path.

"I can't understand that passport," Grace mused, not for the first time. She dropped onto a couch and began absently to tidy a box of ribbons. "Miss Nadia didn't kill that poor creature, that's certain. On the other hand why did she want to hide the passport and photo, unless it was because the passport's got the poor lady's name, and Miss Nadia didn't want that name known?

"Well, I'm not likely to find out. But one thing I do know—that beast Glare is trying to put the murder on Miss Nadia, and there may be some that are fools enough—or wicked enough—to believe him. If they do, the fact that she hid that passport in mother's cottage will go against her. For her own sake, that passport ought to be destroyed. I wonder——"

Grace's wonderings lasted some five minutes more. Then she rose, went to her room, put on her hat and slipped away to her mother's cottage.

Mrs. Jarratt had not recovered from the shock of Nadia's accident. She was in bed. That simplified Grace's task. She spent half an hour with her mother and then, making an excuse to leave the room, entered the kitchen.

Mrs. Darby, the neighbor who was looking after Mrs. Jarratt, was not expected back for an hour. Grace went straight to the loose brick and removed it.

The interior was empty.

Grace stared at the blank space stupidly. All her plans were based on the belief that she would find the pass-

port there and would be able to secrete it elsewhere or destroy it. That it should have been removed was beyond her comprehension, seeing that her mother was presumably the only person who knew of its existence, except Nadia, and her mother could not have left her bed.

Still holding the brick in her hand, utterly at a loss, perplexed and dismayed, she started as a shadow from the doorway fell upon the brick.

She looked up.

David Glare was standing in the doorway of the cottage.

Grace flushed scarlet. She replaced the brick, with the air of a naughty child caught in misdoing. In vain she tried to assure herself that, as far as Mr. Glare was concerned, she was doing nothing she had not a perfect right to do. But few women indeed were insensitive to the silent, compelling magnetism of The Stoat—and Grace was certainly not one of them, though she was not going to lose her head on that account.

The Stoat was eying her with a look of satisfaction which embarrassed her.

"Is there anything I can do for you?" she asked, with the demureness which she knew well how to assume when it suited her.

"There is, apparently," said David Glare. "In fact, there is quite a lot you can do for me, and it will be very much to your interest to do it. However, we can go into the details in a few minutes. I came in the hope of seeing your mother, who, I understand, was Mrs. Glare's nurse."

"Mrs. Glare!" repeated Grace in momentary bewilderment. "Oh—Miss Nadia! I beg your pardon." To cover her confusion she hurried on: "I'm afraid you can't see my mother. She is ill in bed and won't be able to see any one for several days."

"I am sorry to hear it," said Glare politely. "But, as a matter of fact, it will probably be unnecessary for me to see her, after I've seen you. I suppose you are going back to Redden. Let us walk back together."

"Oh, sir, I wouldn't presume," said Grace, demurely reminding him that her position was that of a servant.

The Stoat looked at her under his heavy, half closed lids.

"Charming garden!" he said, as they walked together down the short garden path, bordered with hollyhocks, into the road.

"Yes, sir," said Grace respectfully, determined to make his task as difficult as possible for him. While she was fencing thus, she was asking herself why Mr. Glare had come to see her mother. Could it be possible that he was aware of the existence of that passport?

There were two ways back to Redden: one lay down the highroad, the other, a mere footpath, ran through the woods, and was the shorter. Glare chose the latter.

He made light conversation, to which she replied in monosyllables, till they came to a clearing in the woods, where some trees had been felled.

"Let's sit down for a minute," he said, and she obeyed.

While he lighted his cigarette, Grace prepared herself for the coming battle. Whatever else she did or didn't do, she must on no account let him suspect that the woman he had married was still alive.

"I want to talk about those papers you found under that loose brick," he said almost casually.

The directness of the attack confused her.

"Papers?" she echoed. "There weren't any papers there. The inside was empty."

The Stoat grinned.

"People often try to bluff me, but they seldom succeed," he said good-naturedly. "You and I will get to busi-

ness much quicker if you cut out the attempt. I know there were papers there—and I know who put them there; at least, I know on whose behalf they were put there—which is much the same thing in the end."

"I don't know what you're talking about. I can't follow you," said Grace.

"Yes, you can," said Glare. "You know that I am talking about the passport and photograph of Miriam Lind, which was intrusted to your mother by your late mistress. You know, because you have the passport in your possession at this minute."

"I certainly have not," said Grace.

David Glare ignored the denial. In Grace's hand was a large vanity bag. With consummate coolness The Stoat took the vanity bag and opened it. "Hm!" he ejaculated, as he gazed at the interior, packed with feminine trifles. "I was sure you put it in here. You must have hidden it about you. I am sorry to have to use violence, but I won't hurt you if you keep still."

He gripped her by the other arm and, before she could protest, felt the pockets and lining of her coat.

"Oh!" said Grace as he released her, "and you call yourself a gentleman!"

"Never in my life," said Glare coolly. "Nor has any one else who knows me." He took out his pocketbook. "Perhaps you will accept this in compensation for —er—injury to your feelings and all that."

As he spoke he handed her a fifty-dollar bill.

For a moment Grace could not answer. Then she took the note quietly, folded it, tore it, tore the pieces again, and threw the bits into his face.

"That for you, Mr. David Glare, and your dirty underhand ways. No wonder poor Miss Nadia——"

Grace broke off, trusting herself no further, and ran with all her might through the woods to Redden.

The Stoat stood looking after her, fragments of the bank note about his feet.

"No wonder poor Miss Nadia—hm! Now, how exactly would that sentence have ended, if she hadn't thought better of it? Hm! I must find out."

CHAPTER XXIX.

IN A SECONDHAND SHOP.

BEHIND the counter Nadia settled herself on the stool and began to mend some lace. This was her third day in the secondhand shop in the suburbs, and she liked it better than she had anticipated. The work itself was simple. The haughtiness of the ladies who came to sell, and the shabby gentility of those who bought, interested and amused her. Miss Pinnard was pleasant enough, and Nadia never forgot that she was earning her own living. When she had found a cheap room somewhere, she would be able, with great pinching and contriving, to be independent of—of—him.

Nadia's hands trembled as the thought of Brierly rushed over her. In vain she tried to shut herself away from it. Something sang in her, "He loves me, and I love him." Something else sobbed, "You are bound. When will you two love as other lovers may? Never, never, never."

A taxi drew up outside the shop. Nadia, peering through the curtains, could see three trunks on the roof, another trunk beside the driver, and, through the open window, a medley of hat boxes.

The cab appealed to her humor.

"I wonder whether this is a friend of the family come to stay for six months?" she mused. "Oh, no! Miss Pinnard said a lot of things were coming in to-day."

She retreated to the back of the shop and, in the shadow of a glass cupboard full of evening gowns, waited for the customer to enter.

The next instant she stood petrified with astonishment as the door opened and Grace Jarratt, a hatbox in each hand, stood in the doorway.

"Gracie!" exclaimed Nadia. "How do——"

At the amazement in Grace's face she stopped short. Of course, Grace must have believed her dead. What a terrible shock!

"Never say again," said Grace, with the utmost solemnity, "that Friday isn't my lucky day!" With that she whisked her load of hatboxes on to the counter and, turning, began to direct the driver where to pile the trunks. When he had departed with a liberal tip, and the little shop door could barely be closed for the size of the trunks, Grace, sitting upon one of them, launched into speech.

"It's better than a movie," she said ecstatically. "Here I come to a place I only heard of through an advertisement and I walk straight into your arms, Miss Nadia. Never say again that Friday——"

"But, Gracie dear, didn't you think I was dead? I meant everybody to. And if you didn't, why are you selling all my clothes?"

Grace hesitated. She did not want Nadia to know of The Stoat's machinations or of the disappearance of the passport. Finally she related that she had met Mr. Brierly in the drive, that he had asked her whether she could describe the woman who was shot at Redden, and that she had identified that woman as being the original of the photo in Brierly's motor boat.

"It come on me like a—a conviction," she finished, "that he knew you. He admitted he did, after a time, and then, guessing, I suppose, that I was your true friend, Miss Nadia, he told me you was alive and well, how he'd rescued you and was looking after you—everything except where you were to be found. He said he'd tell me that when it was safe for me to come to you. In the meantime I was to go on behaving as if I thought you was dead. That's why I thought I'd better sell your clothes. But I've kept all the things you care about."

"You're splendid, Gracie," returned Nadia gratefully. Then she described her temporary home, the studio, her afternoon as a model, her work under Miss Pinnard.

"Mr. Brierly didn't at all like the idea of my coming here," she admitted, "but, you see, I must become independent first and then gradually pay off all the money he's lent me. I have no business qualifications, so I can't get much better work than this."

Grace's eyes wandered about the overcrowded shop, the piles of undergarments, the throng of brightly colored gowns, the out-of-date millinery. Before she could speak a chorus girl came in and demanded a hat. Nadia served her patiently, but the girl was difficult to please.

"There's a new lot just in," said Grace, getting energetically off her trunk. She opened one hatbox after the other, produced a hat Nadia had always disliked and drove so hard a bargain over it that Nadia was dumb with admiration.

"We might do worse than set up a little place of our own like this," said Grace, when the customer had gone, the hat in a bag. "I've got a little saved, and there'd be no need for you to work." She chattered on about the project, while she helped Nadia unpack the trunks and lay their contents in the back parlor to await Miss Pinnard's inspection, on her return from work.

"She's such a kind woman," said Nadia, "but she gossips. Now, when I showed those dresses at Martin & Burrows, I was being filmed the whole time, though I never guessed it. Miss Pinnard says a thin, quiet man, a reporter, accosted her, as she was leav-

ing the shop that night and said he wanted to interview me. She gave him my name, but, fortunately, she didn't know the studio address and she didn't give this one, because she doesn't like people to know about the shop. That film business worries me. Do you think anybody I know is likely to see the pictures of me and recognize them?"

Grace looked profoundly alarmed. Here was Miss Nadia, whom it was imperative to keep hidden, appearing, of all places, on the screen! What would happen if, among the thousands who would gape at her, there should be that Mr. Glare, who was making people believe all kinds of terrible things about Nadia? Grace went cold at the thought.

She hid her anxiety as well as she could, took an affectionate farewell of her beloved young mistress, promised to come again soon, and then made her way to Martin & Burrows. There she used a visiting card of Nadia's—of which she always kept a stock in her bag—to obtain an interview with Madame Devalet.

"I am Miss Rendle's maid, madame," she said composedly, trusting that madame would not have read of Nadia's marriage and sensational death. "Miss Rendle has heard that Miss Edgar's trousseau gowns were filmed here and she would very much like to know what company took the pictures. Miss Rendle is thinking of having her winter's gowns from you and would like those filmed, too, if Miss Edgar's have come out well."

Madame gave the information graciously enough, and Grace hurried off to the offices of the company she named. Here she received a temporary setback. No one seemed to know what films the firm was producing or where they were to be exhibited. Eventually, however, she departed with positive information that the film would receive its first public exhibition at the Grand Theater on the following Tuesday afternoon. With this information she returned to Redden.

CHAPTER XXX.

IN THE PROJECTION ROOM.

ON the day on which the film was to be publicly exhibited, Grace arrived in town about two o'clock. She had a hurried glass of milk and some rolls in a neighboring tea room, then made her way to the Grand Theater. She bought a ticket and entered the dark theater. Then she studied the program the usher had thrust into her hand.

"The Law's Delay," "Topical Review"—ah, that was it! "Fire in Washington—Tennis Finals—Miss Sylvia Edgar's Wedding Gowns at Martin & Burrows."

Grace looked anxiously round her. The huge theater was almost empty as yet. No one was in the boxes on that side, no one on this.

She closed her eyes, opened them, and peered again into the box nearest the stage on the left-hand side. Two men were taking their places in it. Sheriff Morris of the Green Plains police and David Glare.

Grace's mouth went dry, her hands grew cold, her heart thumped wildly against her side. Before she could look at the box again, the lights had gone down and the entertainment had begun.

Trapped! Miss Nadia was trapped!

In the troubled confusion of Grace's brain no plan emerged. The wild hope that Nadia might not be recognizable scarcely sustained her. If Glare and the sheriff were to recognize Nadia, and further, if Glare had succeeded in convincing the police of the truth of his diabolical plot, concocted to throw suspicion upon Nadia for the murder of Miriam Lind——

Grace cast desperately about in her active young brain for something to do, some forlorn hope to follow.

She stared at the screen. The film now showing was the headliner. It

was a star film and would doubtless take some time. The fateful film, then, was the next on the program. She supposed there would be a quarter of an hour or twenty minutes in which to devise something.

At the end of ten minutes the idea came.

Glancing overhead at the dancing beam of light that spread itself upon the screen, she traced its origin to a spot at the back of the gallery. Grace was not given to speculation. Without more ado she left her seat and passed out of the theater.

In the light of day she examined the contents of her purse. A fifty-dollar bill, Nadia's Christmas gift, which had nestled in the corner of her purse ever since it had been placed there, was taken out. Then she went upstairs to the gallery.

In the gallery an usher received her check and with a wave of the hand intimated that she could seat herself. The attendant, thought Grace, would require careful handling. She hesitated.

"Plenty of room down the front, miss. No need to stand," said the man.

"All right. Don't disturb yourself. You sound hungry to judge by your voice," she said pertly.

"Shouldn't wonder," said the man, with a grin.

"Hungry enough to break the rules?" asked Grace in a next attempt.

The man eyed her critically and decided she was a "good sport."

"It depends," he said guardedly.

Grace produced a dollar from her purse and pressed it into his doubtful hand.

Grace pointed toward the projection erection, part box, part room, from which the beam of light proceeded.

"That's my friend in there," she said. "I want a word with him. I shan't be more than a couple of seconds."

It was a long shot. The operator in the box might have been the brother-in-law of the attendant for all she knew. But the grin which spread over the man's face as he pocketed the money reassured her.

"Look here," he said, "I'm just going to see if the fire escape's in proper working order. Got me? What you'd better do is to go round the other side and tap on the door. If any one stops you, remember I don't know nothing about it."

"I'll remember, all right," Grace assured him. "I just went there on my own responsibility. I'll wait till you've gone."

The man slipped away without further ado.

Grace crept round as the man had advised her, until in the faded red light she could discern the door in the box-like office. She tapped, and there was no answer. The door was part of the fireproof casing. She tapped more loudly.

The door was opened, and a pale young man confronted her. Grace had a fleeting vision of an electric motor and an intense white light.

"Hello! I thought it was the manager. Who are you?" demanded the young man anxiously.

"I—I want to know—is the 'Topical Review' film next?" asked Grace.

Only the unmistakable suggestion of earnestness in her face prevented the young man from immediately slamming the door.

"Yes," he said suspiciously. "Who are you? What do you want to know for? It's on the program. You have no right to knock at this door."

"If you show that," said Grace impressively, "you will do a lasting injury to an innocent girl."

"You must see the management," said the young man impatiently. He would have closed the door, but Grace's foot intervened. "If you don't go at once I shall have to call an attendant."

"Wait." Grace was fumbling with her gloves.

"What the——" began the young man and stopped, as she unfolded the crisp fifty-dollar bill and held it toward him.

"Fifty dollars not to show that film," said Grace breathlessly.

CHAPTER XXXI.

THE FACE OF NADIA RENDLE.

FROM his chair in the box David Glare glanced idly around the auditorium. To one whose life had been crowded with romantic episodes the screen held no interest whatever.

This by no means applied to Sheriff Morris. The latter was following the fortunes of the heroine with such rapt attention that Glare thought it as well for his own interests not to disturb the officer's preoccupation.

"Our film comes on next," volunteered Glare.

"Um!" The sheriff was absorbed. "I bet you he marries her in the end, all the same."

The Stoat shrugged his shoulders and inwardly lamented the simple nature of the man with whom circumstance had forced him to deal. He decided to wait until the end of the film. When at last it came, as the heroine fell into the arms of the man she loved, Glare spoke sharply.

"Now, Morris, it'll be on the screen in a few minutes. You want to keep both eyes peeled."

The lights were up, then gradually began to fade. If The Stoat were incapable of feeling excitement on the trail, he could at least feel a quickening of interest as the lights grew dimmer and dimmer.

"Hello—what the——"

The Stoat angrily examined his program. There could be no doubt whatever that the "Topical Review" film was next on the list. Yet there was the screen calmly announcing "A Moonshine Comedy." He took from his pocketbook a telegram he had received that morning:

Film to be shown Grand Theater three-thirty-five.

"There's a mistake here!" he exclaimed.

"It's all right, Mr. Glare," said Morris soothingly, with one eye on a preposterously fat man, already appearing on the screen. "Perhaps it'll come along later."

"And perhaps I'm going to sit quiet till it does," said The Stoat ironically. "They may have taken it out of the program. We are going to complain if they have."

"Yes, sir. They'll pay more notice to you than they will to me, because I'm in plain clothes," said the sheriff, jealous of every moment.

Glare beckoned an usher. As the attendant appeared, he handed her his card.

"Take that to the manager, please, and ask him to be good enough to step here a moment," he ordered.

The girl looked sharply at the card.

"Hadn't I better say what it's for?" she suggested.

"If you like," said Glare. "Say that I consider he has made a definite misrepresentation, and I request an immediate explanation."

Morris laughed uproariously as the fat man slipped on a banana skin.

"For Heaven's sake, Morris, don't be laughing when the manager comes," said Glare.

Morris took care to obey. When the manager did appear, he received him with an unsmiling face, while Glare looked markedly unfriendly.

"You have a complaint to make. I unstand, Mr.—er—Glare," began the manager.

"I have," said Glare. "I paid for ad-

mission to your house for the exclusive purpose of seeing the 'Topical Review,' and now I find you are cutting it out of the program."

"Cutting it out of the program!" repeated the manager, in genuine bewilderment. "I have certainly done nothing of the kind. Excuse me." He leaned forward, looked out of the box, and identified the comedy.

"It should have been shown before this," he said. "To the best of my belief——"

"It was not shown," said Glare patiently. "This film was preceded by some sentimental drivel."

"'The Law's Delay,'" volunteered Morris, in soft tones.

The manager frowned.

"I am extremely sorry, Mr.—er—Glare, that the order of the program has, for some reason, been altered without consulting me. I can promise you that the film you have come to see will be shown next, unless some accident should have occurred, in which case I will immediately refund your money. I will see that the matter is attended to immediately." The manager bowed himself out.

A couple of minutes later the manager was knocking at the asbestos door of the operating box.

"What about that 'Topical Review' film?" he asked angrily.

"Very sorry, sir," replied the operator. "I made a mistake."

"See that mistake doesn't occur again, young man. Put the 'Topical' on next."

"All right," said the young man, as the door closed, and then: "They've spotted it, confound them. It was dollars to doughnuts they'd have missed it. I'll have to hand that fifty back now, I suppose."

Grace Jarratt, after her interview with the operator, returned to her seat in excited elation at her success, and decided to wait until Glare and his companion should leave the theater. The operator's promise had been only provisional—that he would try to leave the film out if he could. If not, he had made the very honorable stipulation that Grace should return for her note.

When she saw the comedy go on, Grace's hopes beat high. From where she sat she could hear the sheriff's heavy guffaws and wondered at the strangeness of the official mind, that could laugh at buffoonery, while it was arranging the destruction of a fellow being's happiness.

The farce was over. She waited breathlessly, and then her heart sank as the "Topical Review" film flashed on the screen.

The two first features seemed interminable. Then came the subtitle: "Gowns at Martin & Burrows. A dream of perfect coloring."

The camera flickered, and then suddenly there was a richly carpeted room with people in it—people whose backs were toward the audience. Colored photography—how wonderful, thought Grace. The orange velvet curtains parted, and an exquisite figure in fairy blues and grays emerged, swaying and bending, lifting softly rounded arms and posing with a natural grace that showed every lovely line. Grace caught her breath, as the model swept her filmy gown toward one of the seated figures and stooped to allow an inspection of some silver lace. As she straightened herself, she looked for a moment directly toward the camera.

Beyond all doubt, in spite of hair that was too light, and eyes that were too dark, it was the face of Nadia Rendle.

Grace, trembling and dry-lipped, could not drag her eyes from the screen. She saw Nadia in a cunningly pleated gown of rust-red cloth and a hat of black and gold, swathed in ospreys. She saw her in an evening costume that was an inspiration. And, finally, she saw her sweep forward in the mystic

gossamers of a bride, aloof, pale as a pearl, ethereally fair.

Grace gave a hysterical laugh. The mockery of it all! There was the fugitive bride and, within a stone's throw of the screen that so faithfully recorded her every movement, the husband who pursued her, would pursue her till the goal was won! Grace laughed again, and curious eyes were turned toward her from the rows in front.

She cast a despairing glance up at the box. The two men were standing, and Glare was saying something. She would have felt still more wretched if she could have heard his words.

"That's good enough for you to swear to, Morris, isn't it? Well, all you have to do is to come along with me to a magistrate, now, and get the warrant issued. She's alive and in hiding, and it oughtn't to take long to find her. The film people will help you."

CHAPTER XXXII.

NADIA DECIDES.

GATHERING up her bag and gloves, Grace groped her way out of the theater into the street. A taxi was slowly coming toward her. She crossed the pavement and hailed it.

"To the railroad station," she instructed the driver, a pleasant-faced young man in a neat uniform.

He nodded, glancing admiringly at Grace's trim figure and smart little hat. Then his eyes went to something behind her. Grace turned sharply, with a sense of dread. She was face to face with The Stoat.

"You must forgive my waylaying you," Glare said urbanely. "I caught a glimpse of you leaving the theater, after that colored photography feature. Very fine, wasn't it?"

"Very," said Grace uncompromisingly. She opened the door of the cab.

"One moment," said The Stoat. "I have one or two very urgent matters to discuss with you going back to Redden. Of course, we will travel together. The railroad station, please," he repeated to the driver, who was watching Grace's troubled face curiously.

Against her will Grace entered the taxi and found herself being whirled rapidly to the station. The Stoat rambled on about the picture they had just witnessed.

"Here we are!" he said, as they rolled up before the station. He helped her to alight and paid the driver, whose eyes still lingered on the girl. "We have half an hour to wait, I see."

After they were seated in the station waiting room, Glare said:

"I will come straight to the point. You have probably known for some time that my wife"—Grace winced—"is alive, and equally probably have been in communication with her. Your presence in the theater this afternoon would otherwise be an amazing coincidence—and I dislike coincidences; they never bring me luck. But what neither you nor my wife know is this: now that the police are convinced she still lives, they may at any moment arrest her on a charge of murder—the murder of the woman who was shot at Redden, Miriam Lind."

Grace kept her self-control.

"If they do, it's your plottings and lyings that have made them do it," she retorted.

"Quite true," admitted The Stoat with the utmost composure. "But I assure you there is no 'if' about it. The warrant will be out within the hour."

Grace looked at him steadily.

"It will take a little time to find her," Glare continued. "My own particular spy has lost sight of her since she moved from the studio in Sutton Terrace, but modern police methods are wonderful. In the end she will be found."

"Well, and what then?" demanded Grace. "Supposing she is arrested

and"—she gulped—"and executed for a murder she didn't commit? What good will that do you? She risked her life to escape from you. You aren't getting her back—if that's what you want—by having her put in prison!"

"As I believe I have told you before, you're a clever girl, Grace," said Glare. "I do want her back. I intend to get her back. I forced her to marry me and I will force her to come back to me."

"You're setting about it in a poor way!"

"I am," agreed The Stoat. "You see," he went on, "to your mind, being arrested for a murder means that the police must have convincing proof of your guilt. Well, they haven't. Proof enough to arrest isn't necessarily proof enough to convict. The case against your mistress will fall through, as it stands at present."

"Then why——"

"Wait a minute."

He took from his pocket a folded document. Grace opened it and glanced at it. In a flash she realized what it was. It was the statement of Nadia's guilt which Glare had drawn up and prevailed upon Rendle, in his enfeebled mental state, to sign.

"You have a good memory, Grace," said The Stoat, "and you will be able to describe this document to your mistress without any difficulty. When you have done that, give her this message from me."

He leaned toward the girl, his compelling eyes fixed upon hers.

"If she will give me her promise to return to me, I will destroy this document, and in due course the police will release her, owing to lack of proof. If she will not—I shall send this to the police. I will wait a week for her answer—not a day more."

"You beast!" said Grace deliberately.

For one instant she saw a glint of surprise in The Stoat's eyes. Then a smile crept round his lips again, but before he could speak the girl broke out again.

"You, to dictate terms to poor, sweet Miss Nadia! You she went over the cliff to escape! You, with your statements that you'd never have got signed if that old man hadn't lost his reason through all the sorrow you've brought him! You——" She stopped, panting.

"Mr. Rendle knew perfectly what he was doing when he signed this statement," The Stoat said equably. "As you see, it is dated the day after the shooting affair. You will admit that his mind was clear enough then. It was not till after the accident that he began to grow so feeble."

Grace stared at the date on the paper. Her mind was busy with its own recollections. Slowly she raised her head again.

"The date on that paper is a lie," she said flatly. "It was signed on the day Mr. Brierly came to ask about his mother—it'd just been signed when he was announced. I was behind the curtains, Mr. David Clever Glare, while it was done, and I'm not ashamed to admit it. And what's more, I don't forget how Mr. Rendle was wheedled into signing it and I'll swear in court that he didn't know what he was doing. He was in the same state then that he is now—and any doctor'll tell you what that is!"

Glare sat very still. For the first time in his life he was faced with an unexpected element. It was not a forceful one, perhaps, it would not seriously interfere with his plan of campaign, but it had caught him unprepared and humiliated him. His eyes gleamed resentfully, and a dark color mounted to his face.

Before he could frame a retort, a newsboy came into the restaurant. To Grace his raucous shout was unintelligible, but The Stoat's attention appeared to be caught by it. He bought

a paper, opened it, then pushed it across to Grace.

DEATH OF A WELL-KNOWN MILLIONAIRE.

Mr. George Rendle, who has been in ill health for some weeks, died at his country home, Redden, near Green Plains, just before noon. It will be remembered——

The print danced before Grace's eyes. Just before noon. He must have died soon after she left the house, then!

"It will be difficult now," The Stoat said, smiling again, "for anybody to prove what Mr. Rendle's mental state was when he signed this." He folded the document and put it away. Then he tapped the newspaper. "An extraordinary coincidence," he added, half to himself.

"And coincidences," Grace reminded him fiercely, "never bring you luck!"

Before he could stop her she had gathered up her belongings and dashed out of the station. Outside was a taxi. To her amazement, she saw it was the same one.

"Jump in, miss," said the driver, opening the door. Mechanically Grace obeyed, hurriedly gave an address, and the next instant she was whirled away.

"What a day!" she said to herself. "Talk about coincidences! Or—I wonder now—was that young fellow hanging about on purpose?"

She studied "that young fellow's" broad back with a good deal of interest during the drive, and by the time she jumped out at her suburban address, she had decided she liked it.

"I was very glad you were there," she said simply, pulling out her purse. The driver smiled back at her and drew her attention to the meter. The flag had not been pulled down, and no fare was registered at all.

"I—I really can't accept such a favor," declared Grace. "You must have refused a dozen people all that time you were waiting, and you don't even know me."

"I'd like to, though," was the quick answer. "I kind of felt I'd like to from the first. My name's Grant—George Grant."

Grace gave her own.

"I've got a job here," she added and gave the address of the secondhand shop.

"Could I drop in there some time, then?" Grant said diffidently. "And how about the movies some night?"

"I'd be pleased, I'm sure," said Grace demurely. She put out her hand and felt it grasped tightly. Then her new friend touched his cap, and his cab slid off.

"What a day!" repeated Grace.

With an effort she put her own interests out of her mind and began to busy herself with Nadia's. Her first step was to find quiet, clean rooms for two. These she engaged in the names of Miss Davis and Miss Carlyle. Then she wrote to the housekeeper at Redden, saying that she would not return, and asking that her trunk might be sent to the suburban express office. It was a rude farewell to Redden, but there was no help for it. Then she went to the clothes shop.

Nadia was sitting behind the counter, wistfully watching the passers-by.

"Oh, Gracie," she exclaimed, "how nice to see you again! Come in and tell me what's been happening at Redden since I saw you last."

Grace ignored the question.

"I've had a busy day," she said, drawing off her gloves. "Miss Nadia, my dear, it was a good thing you mentioned to me that you were filmed as a model. It was shown in a picture theater today for the first time, and I've been to see it. And a good thing I did, for I wasn't the only one watching it."

"Not—not——" began Nadia in alarm.

Grace nodded vigorously.

"Yes, Mr. Glare was there as large as life. And knowing you didn't want

him tracking you down, Miss Nadia, I took the liberty of making plans for you."

She described the rooms and the change of names. Her idea further, she said, was that Nadia, as Miss Carlyle, should live quietly in the rooms, and that Grace—as Miss Davis—should take over the work in the shop.

"After a week or two you're sure to be left in peace," she concluded, with an optimism she was far from feeling.

Nadia agreed reluctantly. She saw the necessity, but disliked the idea of burdening Grace.

"You'll do the housework," Grace assured her. "I've no patience for that, as you well know. Now here's Miss Pinnard. Tell her what we've arranged."

Miss Pinnard, tired after a long, hard day in town, was at first annoyed by the idea of a change. But, when she saw how trim and capable Grace was, she agreed and ended by asking them both to supper. They declined, however, and hurried off to move Nadia's trunk from her old quarters to the new.

The rooms were furnished, but there were a number of small purchases to be made, and it was late before the two were finally installed. In spite of Nadia's protest, Grace insisted on performing all her old duties.

"You haven't been keeping your hair as you should," she said reproachfully. "It's quite dull, Miss Nadia—lovely hair like that, too." She wielded the brush vigorously.

At last, when Nadia was tucked up in bed, Grace very gently broke the news of old Mr. Rendle's death.

"He must have died just after I'd left yesterday," she said.

Nadia read the newspaper paragraph in sorrowing silence. Then she lay speechless and dry-eyed, while Grace undressed, turned out the light, and got into her own bed.

Her father dead! Nadia's mind escaped from the difficult, dangerous present and wandered back to the days when her father had been vigorous, cheerful, generous—glad to show his daughter the beauties of the world beyond Redden, glad to shower on her, within its walls, every luxury that charms a woman's fancy. They had been friends, as well as father and daughter, in those sunny hours. But afterward——

From the moment that the shadow of The Stoat had fallen across their threshold all was changed. The threat of ruin could not have estranged them; it had been the dark distrust in Nadia's heart—when Miriam Lind lay dead at the feet of the man she had menaced—that had come between them forever. Pity Nadia had felt, and an almost maternal longing to protect and shield. But her love for her father was gone—the terrible doubts of that night had killed it.

She tossed wearily on her pillow. She lived again through the anguished moment in which she had discovered that Ralph Brierly was the dead woman's son. What mockery—what bitter juggling of fate! She reviewed the whole position with fierce resentment. Her father's fortune was claimed by Ralph Brierly's mother. Her love for Brierly, and his for her, starved and denied, because her father had killed his mother, and for the sake of the old man's safety she had bought David Glare's silence with her liberty.

She hid her face in the pillow.

Did Ralph know, yet, the full tragedy of his mother's fate? He must do so by now. Had he then foregone his vengeance on the father because of his love for the daughter? Evidently—for Rendle had died in the peace and safety of his home, and no man had questioned his honor.

With a sharp movement Nadia sat up in bed. A thought had flashed on her that drove away all others.

Miriam Lind had a right to the Rendle fortune—and Miriam Lind had been killed. But what of her son? Did he not inherit the claim?

As things were now, Nadia supposed, Redden and the money would go to distant relatives, since she herself was believed dead. She could bear that, she thought, with resignation. But not—not if Ralph Brierly were the loser thereby.

His happiness, his peace of mind, revenge for his mother's fate—of all these had she deprived him. Would she rob him, too, of what was lawfully his, as her father, she feared, had robbed his mother? No—never—never.

But only The Stoat knew of Miriam's claim. He would make no move to secure justice for Miriam's son. Nadia went as white as the lace at her breast when she realized that only she herself could insure justice to the man she loved.

To do that she would have to go back—back to the life she had left—back to The Stoat. There was no other way.

She crept from the bed and softly raised the window. She was burning with fear, as with a fever.

It was impossible. She could not do it. Life with David Glare! She wept and trembled. Anything but that. After all, Ralph was rich already, and he would be the first to tell her that Redden meant nothing to him. If only that made it right to keep silent! But she knew it did not.

The hours were passing. Soon it would be dawn. The dawn was cold—cold as her duty, cold as the dead heart The Stoat would trample, when she, the fugitive, had put herself into his power again.

To be continued in next week's issue of DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE.

HORSE'S OWNER SENT TO JAIL

RATHER than agree to have his old horse, Bimbo, killed, John Ranavaro, an elderly truckman in New York, recently took a sentence of three days in the workhouse. The horse is diseased and is sixteen years old, but Ranavaro cannot bear the thought of its being killed.

An officer of the Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals told the truckman that the horse should be shot, but Ranavaro would not have this done. Then he was taken to court and charged with cruelty. He pleaded so pitifully with the presiding magistrate that that officer of the law went to Ranavaro's stable and looked at the horse himself. What he saw caused him to decide that the horse would be better dead.

Still Ranavaro was obdurate. "Give me three weeks and I'll make him well," he said.

"In my opinion," replied the magistrate, "the horse will be in the same condition three weeks from now, as he is to-day. Unless you consent to let him be killed I will have to fine you ten dollars for cruelty."

Ranavaro was unable to pay the fine, and he knew that the alternative for him was a jail sentence. Nevertheless the old man did not weaken in his resolution.

"You can send me to jail, but don't kill Bimbo," he pleaded, as tears flowed down his cheeks. "He's been my friend for a long time. I won't mind going to jail if I save Bimbo."

Then sentence of three days in the workhouse was pronounced on the truckman.

By Way of Experience

by Anna Alice Chapin

Author of "The Seventh Shot," etc.

AS she sat in the log hut, miles away from any habitation, Pippa found herself ironically repeating her words of six hours before.

"Yes, I should like to go up Mount Pelican—just by way of experience."

It had sounded so cheerfully and safely adventurous in the quiet dining room of the Daltons, in the comfortable little town in the valley. It was a simple matter to fit her out with tramping togs and to engage a guide who knew the mountains. Then had come the snowstorm and the starting of sundry old snowslides, under the furiously rising wind. It had ended in a scramble for this hill shelter, the hut used by divers trappers and lumberjacks through the long winters; and now—well, it looked like an all-night job, at the least of it, said the guide. And all "by way of experience!"

Philippa Carpenter was spending a month in Oregon with the Daltons, people she had met on her world-wide wanderings. The little town of Barrow, nestled among the chaos of rugged hills, filled with the roar of the great stream that carried the logs down from the mountain forests, had been a tremendous tonic and inspiration to her. Every morning she rose to greet mighty Mount Shasta, shining white in the first sunshine, and found new hope and strength in that marvelous vision. She was not a mountain climber and she could not essay any of the higher bliss, but she had decided to go up Mount Pelican, "by way of experience!"

Pippa could have laughed, albeit hysterically, at the way that silly phrase reiterated itself in her tired brain. With a rueful, yet humorous, twist of thought, she determined to fight shy of all new experiences, forever after, amen!

In all her luxurious life she had never come so near to practical realities as to-night. Time and again, she had found herself close to the heart of life, but it was the heart of mental and emotional life, not merciless and uncompromising physical life. Here in the bare and comfortless hut, with the winds shrieking outside, Philippa felt a sense of awe and wonder. Had such things been going on all along, while she trailed French clothes about Paris and New York and Vienna? Had the mountains been swept by these ravaging tempests year after year—tempests in which strong men suffered and sometimes died?

The realization of a new view of life is always rather staggering to the soul. Pippa was more adaptable, more sentient, and more imaginative than most women. She had a bigger outlook and a broader grasp of things, yet she felt

as helpless as a little child as she sat there listening to the howling wind and waiting for the guide to come back.

He had only gone to a shed near by, where the trappers kept wood against just such times of need; he had been gone barely five minutes, yet already Pippa was restless. She was, however, able to realize the quaintness of the situation and to smile wryly at the way the only man present becomes inevitably The Man upon whom a woman leans. Guide, king, knave, scholar, or fool—it made very little difference, philosophized Philippa—in times of trouble or danger, women were only too willing, like Portia, to let him pass for a man!

A wilder noise of storm and a gust of icy wind made her start up eagerly. The guide hastily closed the door behind him and stood beating the snow from his cap against his knee.

He had a haggard, handsome face, marked about the eyes with gray shadows. The eyes themselves were dark blue and very clear; it seemed to Mrs. Carpenter that there was an incurably hurt look in them, like that of a beaten dog. The mouth—how sensitive it was! Full of lip and deeply creased at the corners, it told of a thousand moods and emotion still-born or smothered at the moment of birth. A man who had lived and suffered, clearly. Mrs. Carpenter understood men; it was not, perhaps, only a passing impulse that made her desire to understand this man.

For the moment, however, she was too full of the urgency of their situation to allow her thoughts to go very far afield.

"Well?" she said quickly.

The man shrugged his big shoulders and walked heavily across the room to the fire. It flared up, showing the board walls of the hut, rough and stained and full of knot holes; showing, too, the bunks built against them, like steamer berths. The place smelled musty, but it was the clean mustiness of old, damp timber.

"No wood left," he said laconically. "It's been a bad winter. Guess the last lumber gang used it up and forgot to replenish."

Pippa looked at him in bewilderment that slowly changed to horror.

"But—we'll freeze!" she exclaimed.

The man laughed. His laughter had a rusty sound, as if it were not often called into use.

"No," he said. "We shan't freeze. There's enough wood in the house here to keep the fire going nearly all night—without counting the table and chairs, all good combustibles."

The intonation or the choice of the words arrested Pippa's imagination. The man must be educated to speak like that. And there was just a hint of accent—— For a moment she forgot the dire straits they were in and surveyed him with a keen interest.

"Please tell me," she said abruptly—she never wasted time on preliminaries, which was one reason why she always got on better with men than with women—"aren't you English?"

The man began to poke the fire—carefully, so as to waste no ounce of fuel.

"Somersetshire," he rejoined briefly. And then, with a twisted smile: "Do you read Kipling?" Pippa nodded silently.

He began to quote under his breath:

"We're little black sheep that have gone astray,
Baa, baa, baa——"

He stopped short and gave the fire a particularly vicious poke.

"Oh, hang it all!" he said. Then Pippa heard a smothered expletive, and realized for the first time what a world of pathos the profane word could contain.

"I've always been crooked," he said

heavily, crouched before the fire. "I suppose it was in my blood——

"From the legion of the lost ones,
From the cohorts of the damned——

"That's where I come in, Mrs. Carpenter. I've never lived straight two months on end. But this time I'm going to win out—and go—home!"

"To England?"

"Where else?" His look held a vague wonder. "There was a girl—but that was nearly ten years ago. She's probably got a husband and six children by now."

Suddenly he straightened up and faced her.

"Do you realize just what the situation is?" he demanded. "How many inquiries did you make when you started to look for a guide?"

Pippa stared at him, startled.

"Why——" she began haltingly and rather vaguely. "I—I don't believe I made any! Mr. Dalton was away, and I thought——"

"Exactly. Mr. Dalton was away. If he had been at home he would never have let you come up Pelican with me. I——" He stopped and drew a long breath. "I'm a crook, Mrs. Carpenter."

"What are you talking about?" She was honestly bewildered.

"I'm a crook, I tell you," he persisted doggedly. "I came up here as a guide just to get out of town."

"And stage-managed the storm and everything, I suppose!" she appended unbelievingly and somewhat derisively.

He smiled a rather twisted smile as he shook his head.

"No," he said, "I didn't plan the snow. I'm not sure whether it's going to be a help or a hindrance—yet! It's this way——" He paused and drew a wooden stool closer to the fire. "Wouldn't you be warmer here?" he suggested deferentially.

Philippa moved to the point nearer the blaze and held out her chilled hands.

"Go on," she said.

The man stood now, looking down into the flame and glow.

"I had to get out of Barrow," he said finally in a very simple fashion. "I've—lit out with ten thousand bucks that don't belong to me."

Pippa's eyes, raised to his, were filled with an amazement that was for the moment too great to include horror.

"Ten thousand dollars! Why—then," she said, still gazing through the firelight at the lined and haggard face, "you're a thief?"

The man nodded, without apparent emotion. He still stared into the fire, and Philippa still stared at him.

A wild burst of wind shook the little hut, sending flurries of snow under the rattling door, but neither of them noticed it. A silence was poised fast between them and hung so, growing more and more tense every moment.

The night seemed full of voices. Were they warning, menacing, mocking—or all three? The strings of Pippa's life had been tautly strung, and she recognized an urgency that pervaded the atmosphere. She was not in the least afraid of the man. She was never afraid of anything. But she was more thrilled and interested than in many a long, chill moon. And, characteristically, she forgot the dangers of cold, hunger, and isolation in her absorption of the moment.

"What did you do it for?" she asked simply and without preamble.

"To get away," was the equally direct answer.

"But can't they follow you—overtake you here—to-night?"

The man shrugged a pair of lean, but sturdy, shoulders.

"Maybe," he remarked laconically. "If they can get up the trail. But that works two ways. It wouldn't be any cinch to get over the pass and away, a night like this. Besides——" He paused.

"Besides—what?" said Pippa.

"Nothing. It's a bad night, and——"

"Nevertheless," she thrust in swiftly and with conviction, "if you weren't with me you would take the chance, storm or not? It's having a woman on your hands that hampers you?"

"Perhaps," he admitted, without emotion. "I couldn't very well leave you to the chance of freezing, in case they *don't* come, could I?"

"Why not?" she asked him quietly.

"Oh—*because!*"

She almost laughed, although half tenderly, at the slow, yet boyish, flush that accompanied the word.

"But," she went on quickly, "what reason could there be for taking a chance of this sort—palming yourself off as a dependable guide, taking me up here, with the full intention of giving me and every one else the slip and getting away—and then—quitting?"

She was purposely using words here and there that she knew to be from the crude vernacular.

"You ought to understand," said the man, without looking at her. "You're —different. I wouldn't have cared, with most women. I'd have left them to be frozen or rescued, just as things happened to turn out. But you——" She saw his knuckles whiten as he clenched the hand that hung at his side. "You're different. In the first place, you're a lady. You don't belong out here or with people like—me; and yet, believe it or not, the women of my people have been ladies, too. I've been away from God's country for nearly ten years, but—I can't leave you here alone in the storm any more than I could leave one of my mother's guests without——"

His voice failed him. Suddenly becoming self-conscious, like nearly all human males when laboring under sincere emotion, he tramped to the door and tried the fastenings.

"Come here!" said Pippa Carpenter. Her voice was like a bell. She sat there in the firelight, with the red radiance glittering on her red hair, and her eyes unbelievably dark in her white face.

The man, as if in wonder, went slowly back to her. Pippa stretched out a slim, cold hand and took one of his. Almost without his knowing it, he slipped to one knee before her, and the unfathomable purple-gray eyes looked straight into his.

"I want you to go away," she said gently. "But I want you to leave the money with me. Will you do that?"

"But how can I——" he was beginning. Her vehement voice broke in and stopped him short.

"Work! Walk! But go! And go home. Perhaps the girl will have waited. How can we know? *I* should have!"

He stared into her eyes a long moment. When he spoke there was a queer break in his voice.

"Yes—you would have. Only—the Lord was too busy filling the world with just—people to take the time to make many like you. Here's the money."

He took from his pocket a roll of bills and put them into her hands. Gravely and quite deliberately she drew from the roll one bill and gave it back to him.

"It will carry you part of the way, anyway," she said.

He looked at the crumpled green slip in his hand.

"And you want me to take this——" he was beginning, frowning, when she checked him.

"As a loan from me. I shall pay it back myself. And you shall pay me back, when you—get home."

Their eyes met in a long look.

"What sort of a woman are you?" whispered the man, and she felt his tremulous, hard kiss upon her hand.

The next moment both started, and Pippa hid the money inside the loose blouse of her dress. In a lull in the

tempest they could hear the sound of clumping footsteps and smothered voices.

"So it's too late, after all!" muttered the Englishman, rising to his feet.

Pippa was listening intently.

"It's the rescue party, of course," she said.

"Sure," said the man, with a rather bitter grin; "but a rescue party ready for a little lynching séance on the side. They know very well I'm here!"

He laughed and began to examine his revolver.

"Wait!" said Pippa quietly, but sharply. The wind had risen again, and they could not tell how close the men had drawn. "I have an idea! Do what I tell you! Go into that other room—instantly—do you hear? Do what I tell you!" as he hesitated. "And, while I am talking to the men, get out of the window and away—and—God be good to you!" she ended gently. Then, as a heavy knock sounded on the door, she pushed him frantically. "Will you go?" she almost screamed at him, though it was an inaudible scream.

When the men from Barrow came in they found a white-faced woman sitting calmly by the fire.

"Well, gentlemen?" she said coolly. "What is it you want? Shelter from the storm, I suppose?"

"We want Oliver Crane, ma'am," said the spokesman, a big, rough-bearded fellow.

"What do you want with him?" she demanded. She looked very lovely, with the red firelight playing on her tumbled hair.

"We want to lock him up!" said the fellow grimly. "He's no guide, ma'am—he's a thief!"

"Oh—no!" she said.

"Yes'm. Where is he?"

"But what has he done?" she temporized. How many minutes had passed, she wondered.

"Stolen a wad from a chap down below. Better let us take him, ma'am, without a fuss."

"But suppose he gives the money back?" urged Pippa. Her great eyes searched their faces anxiously. Some of the men laughed.

"No fear, ma'am," said the spokesman. "But even if he did, I'm obliged to arrest him, anyway. I'm deputy sheriff round here, and law is law!"

"I thought I had seen you with one of the lumber gangs," said Pippa, suddenly regarding him.

"Well, I'm a lumberjack, too," he said.

Pippa drew a long breath and then faced them more squarely.

"Why won't you give him his chance?" she pleaded, a strange, but appealing, Portia, in flannel shirt and climbing skirt. "Would one of you want to be punished—punished hopelessly and irrevocably—for keeps, I mean?" She corrected the more difficult word to meet the understanding of her audience. "Would you like to feel that just because you slipped up once, you'd have to pay, pay, pay all your life?"

"That's all right, ma'am," spoke up a little, sandy fellow from the bunch of men, "but we can't afford to have crooks loose in our camp—not on your life we can't!"

"Crook!" began Philippa indignantly. "He isn't a regular crook! He's a——"

She checked herself, realizing how absurd her explanation would sound.

"He's a mighty good imitation of one," the bearded man remarked dryly.

Pippa cast wildly about in her own mind for some argument that would hold them for a few minutes longer.

"I've heard," she said slowly, "that when you run the logs down in the spring, there are sometimes dams and breakwaters, belonging to other men, that you have to break down. Is that so?"

"That's so, ma'am."

"It's illegal—against the law, isn't it?"

The men grinned a little sheepishly. They began to see what she was driving at.

"It don't happen very often," one of them ventured rather unwisely.

"Ah!" exclaimed Pippa. "But say it happened once even—it was against the law. Suppose you were sent to jail for it?"

"That ain't the question, ma'am," the big man said bluntly. "Breakin' dams and stealin' money's two different things, I reckon. We want Ol Crane, and we're goin' to get him!"

Pippa suddenly flamed upon them.

"You're not going to get him!" she declared almost savagely. "I'm going to stop you from getting him. I won't see any man put in jail for just one mad thing he did!"

"You're plumb interested in him, ain't you, ma'am?" said a fat fellow who hadn't spoken before. The tone was frankly insolent. Pippa Carpenter had never been so whitely angry in her life. But even through her rage she wondered—wondered—whether he had gotten away.

"Well, boys," said the bearded man, "we'd better search the premises and then be moving on."

As her last coup, Pippa pulled the roll of bills from her dress and said:

"Here's the wretched money! Now will you let him alone?"

All the men started and stared, and then there was a whoop of coarse laughter.

"So it was you he stole it for!" shouted the fat man. "Say, boys, it's great, ain't it? Ol Crane and a—lady!"

Pippa stood there, feeling rather sick and faint with the shock.

"The wind's down!" cried some one near the door. He opened it and added exultantly: "An' it's stopped snowin', too!"

A sudden stillness had fallen about the cabin. One could hear the crackle of a falling icicle, the blurred thud of a slipping drift.

"Oh, thank God!" said Pippa and hid her face in her hands, for she knew that with the wind and snow both stilled, it would be a short matter to get either down the mountain or over the pass.

But, at the moment in which she breathed the words, that closed inner door banged so violently that every one —Pippa with the rest—started in astonishment.

The Englishman, Oliver Crane, stood there, rather grim, but perfectly tractable.

"I guess I'm the one you're out after, boys," he said. "I've got the money you're looking for and I guess I've got the proofs of identity."

Two minutes later he stepped close to Pippa and, unseen, shook her arm almost roughly.

"The money!" he muttered. "Quick!" I want to take it back myself."

Silently she passed it to him. The men were conferring at the door as to the advisability of attempting the down trail immediately.

Pippa lifted her eyes to his.

"Why did you do it?" she asked. "Why did you come back? Oh, why —why did you do it?"

"Do you think I could stand there in hiding to hear you fight for me like that? Hear you insulted for it?" His own voice shook, and he was even whiter than she was. "You have stood by me and tried to help me regain my hold on self-respect and honesty. Help me now to meet the law and justice."

"I guess we'll try the descent now, ma'am," said the bearded man, turning into the room.

Pippa looked at Crane, and her eyes eloquently approved his decision. Then she said: "I am ready to start, gentlemen, when you are."

Headquarters Chat

JUST as we ran a piece of paper into our "mill" to do this weekly greeting, in walks Herman Landon.

"What," cries he, a bit scornful-like, "an editor working!"

"Yes," we reply proudly, ignoring respect-lacking inflection, "we are going to work very hard. We are going to write a Chat."

"Ha, ha!" comes in a voice that is still more contemptuous. "You don't have to do any work on your old Chats, for the readers and authors do them for you."

"Well," we counter, still proudly, "if we have succeeded in making a place in the magazine where the honorable editors—readers—and the authors can get together, we are mighty well pleased with ourselves. And being of a modest and retiring disposition, we gladly step out of the limelight. Also," we add, very pointedly, and with insinuations in *our* voice, "a gentleman from Toronto, Canada, remarked here last week, that the Chats were—— But let us not bring up unpleasant memories. However, if the readers and authors write the Chats, we should worry about what that Toronto gentleman thinks of them!"

With these words we turn 'round in our chair, write down the above conversation, and introduce, "A Young Girl," who says:

"DEAR EDITOR: I am a constant reader of your magazine and wish to say that, even if I am a girl, and girls aren't supposed to care for detective stories, I like your magazine very much. My favorites are stories about The Gray Phantom, The Thunderbolt, Thubway Tham, Mr. Clackworthy, Doctor Bentiron, Big-nose Charley, and Thorndyke Flint. Let's have more of them, for I know they are the most popular. Don't let Mr. Johnston McCulley, the best author you have, and Doctor Poate sleep on the job, or your DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE won't sell as well. A YOUNG GIRL.

"P. S. Even The Early Bird can't call Man-whose-name-can't-be-read enough names for me."

Speaking of The Early Bird, don't fail to read "Mr. Clackworthy Studies Politics." You will find it in the next issue.

Not wishing to heap coals of fire on Landon's head, but hoping our doing so will not make him too pleased with himself, we take great delight printing these two letters:

"DEAR EDITOR: Will you please give me a little information? At present I am reading 'The Gray Phantom's Romance.' Six months ago I read 'The Gray Phantom's Revenge.' Both stories were written by Herman Landon. Has Mr. Landon written other Gray Phantom stories for you? If so, will you please tell me if I can get the magazines that contain his stories? Have you them on file? Have The Gray Phantom stories ever been published in book form? I will thank you for any information you may give me.

"FRANK O. HATCH."

"DEAR EDITOR: I have just finished 'The Gray Phantom's Defense,' and I think it is one of the very best stories I have read. That is the first Phantom story I have seen. It interested me so much I am now right on the trail of The Phantom stories by Herman Landon that came out before it. One of them

is 'The Gray Phantom Goes It Alone.' I don't know the names of the others. I want to get them. I do not care whether they were published in book or magazine form. I will take all issues. I understand you hold back issues in the subscription department, and I want to get all The Gray Phantom stories the worst way. I will also send my subscription in. Please answer me at once.

"Salina, Kansas. J. M. HARLAN."

Yes, there have been other Gray Phantom stories, and, we are pleased to add, there will be more. Here is a complete list of all that have appeared so far: "Gray Terror," a novel, in the issue of May 20, 1919; "The Gray Phantom Goes It Alone," a novel, in November 25, 1919; "The Gray Phantom's Defense," a serial, in June 1, June 8, June 15, June 22, June 29, and July 6, 1920; "The Gray Phantom's Romance," also a serial, in January 15, January 22, January 29, February 5, and February 12, 1921; and "The Gray Phantom's Guests," April 2, 1921. You can get back numbers by addressing our subscription department. Send fifteen cents for magazines a year old, twenty for those two years old, and so on, adding five cents for a magazine as it goes back a year. No, they have not as yet been published in book form.

When this letter came in it just happened that Booth was sitting directly behind us, correcting some points in a story we had just bought from him. We gave him the letter. He read it. His reply: "Well, that bird certainly has me dead to rights—cold!" Here is the letter:

"DEAR EDITOR: I am going to criticize a small point in Christopher B. Booth's story, 'The Sparrow.' I have been reading DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE for two years and am going to keep on doing it.

"Chris says the bartender rushes in and sees the dead man on the floor with the smoking revolver by him. Now, Chris, I shot my revolver off, and after the lead hit the mark she would not smoke. Also, in a story, some time ago, a man was charged with murder because he said he saw the smoking revolver on the floor, but he was killed by some contraption in the telephone receiver. But I think that was done by the fellow who wrote the Ed Hardin stories. Anyhow, Chris, old boy, you take a gun and try it, and see if you-all can make it smoke. BILL TODD.

"Harlen, Kentucky."

Cheering words, these:

"DEAR EDITOR: I like the DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE better every week. I think it is the best magazine on the market. Although I like some of the stories better than others, I never read a poor story in any issue. My favorite authors are Herman Landon, Johnston McCulley, and Christopher B. Booth. The Gray Phantom stories are the best in the magazine. They are the most thrilling, gripping stories I have ever read. I think The Gray Phantom is one of the greatest characters in detective fiction. Tell Herman Landon to write more Gray Phantom novels. RUSSEL AIM."

He has. We bought it last week.

The first letter in this Chat was from a girl, and it is quite fitting that we close it with one from a feminine admirer. We says ladies first and ladies last—ladies always. We like 'em? *Indeed we do!*

"DEAR EDITOR: I have been a constant reader of your valuable magazine for years, and I never once found it lacking in any way. It has always kept me thrilled and amused. I would like to mention some of my favorite stories,

but I am afraid that I would not have enough paper to do so, and likewise for authors.

"Nearly every magazine I have read tires me, but I never get tired of the DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE, and don't think I ever will.

"I am only seventeen now, but I have been working for over three years. The reason I started working so early was because I have to support my mother. So now, you see, I have not much time for anything; it's always work, work. But I am not grumbling. No doubt I would if I did not look forward every week for your magazine with a new interest in life. BETTY."

If you are an employer and desire to place your employees in the positions in your office or factory for which they are best fitted; or if you are just about to step out into the world to earn your own living; or if crimes involving handwriting have been committed in your community; or if you want to know the characters of your friends as revealed in their chirography—send Louise Rice, in care of this magazine, specimens of the handwriting of the persons concerned, and inclose a stamped, addressed envelope. She will analyze the samples submitted to her and will give you her expert opinion of them, free of charge.

All communications will be held in strict confidence. When permission is granted, cases will be discussed in the department, with or without the illustrations. Of course, under no circumstances will the identity of the persons concerned be revealed.

Every care will be taken to return specimens of handwriting, but it is to be understood that Miss Rice cannot be responsible for them.

MOTHER OF SIX.—You have, indeed, a quiver full. That is surely a great burden, my dear, not only to provide a home for all of them, but to make the money with which to maintain it, too. I can't see why in the world those two boys, twelve and fourteen, should not help you with the housework, just as much as if they were girls. This idea that men and boys can never, under the most exacting conditions, be asked or allowed to do housework is one of the things that arouses my irritation and sometimes my rage, as in the present case. You start right in and teach those young men that it is not only their duty, but a blessed privilege for them to help their overworked mother. Let them wash the dishes and do the sweeping and clean the windows. The idea of your coming home and working all Saturday afternoon and Sunday morning, after your daily toil as a bread-winner, just so that your children shall not do work that some other silly boy, equally spoiled, might laugh at them for! And besides yourself, take pity on the girls that those boys will marry some day. A man who has the idea that it is beneath him to do "women's work" has broken the heart and bowed the back of many a fine woman, who was too fine to teach him with a sharp tongue, what his mother ought to have taught him with a good, stout whip, if necessary.

HARRY N.—Please read carefully my concluding remarks to A Mother of Six, and you will know my opinion of you. Any man who whines to me that his wife, who has four little children to care for, besides doing all her own house-

work, including the washing for all those youngsters, is "selfish enough" to trouble him with household matters—well, Harry, your mother spared the rod and spoiled the child, I see. It's partly bad training, because, taking you all in all, you are not such a coward, shirker, and cad as your words would seem to indicate. There! How do you like those pretty names? Just face yourself once, and you will be so ashamed that you will never be able to do enough for your wife. And mind you, by your own confession you have two assistants in your department, and your hours are from nine to five. What do you suppose your wife's hours are? Huh?

OLIVE M.—Your handwriting shows a nature which is especially well-balanced, and in which practical ability, while not leaning toward any one line, is applicable to a number of them. So it is not possible for me to point out to you "your speciality," because you haven't any. Now, don't be discouraged by that. There are very few of us who are natural specialists. Most of us are artificially made, if we are specialists. Generally speaking, your best line would be that of business, office work in particular. Not necessarily stenography, to which too many girls apply exclusively the word business. You have good judgment and such self-control and such a capacity for remaining sane and calm under all circumstances that you ought to be able to work into the managership of departments. This is quite possible to-day, although twenty years ago a woman had little chance of attaining executive positions, no matter how talented she was. So, if I were you, I would study office management, accounting, filing systems, "efficiency" systems, "big business" methods, and so on. You have a good start right where you are.

G. MASTERS.—You will do well to stick to the line of work which calls for salesmanship. I don't say that you have no talents for surveying, but I do say that your best chance of success is as a salesman. You have tact, suavity, and a good temper—all traits which are needed and are almost imperative in any work requiring salesmanship. On the other hand, I do not find you exact, and your mental processes are more general than precise. This shows that your talents should be used in general lines, and that your mind is not of the type fitted for particular development. Hope this delineation suits you.

C. Y., Naples.—Well, you certainly are the opposite of a modest flower. Some truth in those bombastic assertions of yours, too. You really have a most extraordinary assortment of talents, your personality is unusual, and your mind is really an exception; but upon my word you are one of the most unpleasant boasters from whom I ever had a letter. And that one thing, my dear boy, will handicap you hopelessly. I don't care what your talents are or what you can do; your attitudes of aggressive vanity and self-satisfaction will make you enemies everywhere you go, and no man can be truly successful without friends. I strongly advise you to turn your attention to painting and to confine it to that. In fact, unless you learn to concentrate all of your faculties upon one of your talents and to keep them pinned there, to the exclusion of everything else, all your gifts will go for less than nothing; they will serve just to make you miserable. Last of all, and for the sake of a tired world as well as your own happiness, perform a major operation on yourself and extract that ingrowing lump of vanity before it becomes a hopeless pathological condition.

TIRED.—Look here, my dear, no woman has a right to sacrifice herself to her family. It's not good for the family; they never are helped by it, and they end up by considering the sacrificer a painful fool—which, in fact, she is. Now, then, I suppose you think that I am anything but "so sympathetic." But

I really am. Your letter made the tears start into my eyes. What a waste! What an outrage that you should ever have allowed your family to walk on you like that! What an outrage that they didn't spank you instead of praising you! What on earth are you keeping the thing up for? You are still a young woman, and now, with your little fortune, you can do what you like. There never was any real reason for that sacrifice of yours, and at present there is not even the shadow of one. Tell you what I'd do if I were you. I'd travel in California for the remaining cold months and have a lovely time and learn to stand on my own two feet, actually and figuratively. Now don't say, "What, alone!" Most emphatically, alone. The aloner the better! Get acquainted with yourself. My word for it, you'll have a pleasant surprise.

FRANKIE M.—My dear girl, you are no more fitted for stenographic work than you are for bookkeeping. You are not fitted for office work at all. You are not naturally methodical, careful, painstaking, or interested in detail work, as all good office workers are. You are naturally tactful, sympathetic, quick to understand people, with a good eye for what is beautiful and a leaning toward love of the artistic. I advise you to go into a high-class art shop and learn to sell the beautiful things there. You'll probably have to dust and pack and be little more than a first-grade charwoman for a while, but it will be worth it. A good saleswoman in such shops, knowing the wares and having a feeling for them and having the tact which is yours, easily can make an amount of money that few stenographers may, and at the same time she may delight her soul with the beauty that it loves. Your character is one which will steadily mature, but which will be slow in gaining poise and assurance.

ARTHUR B., Detroit.—You sent neither stamp nor addressed envelope, Arthur, so you get answered here. I am not surprised at the oversight, for those long, sweaping strokes of yours, so impatient and heedless, show your forgetfulness of detail and your poor memory. I wish you hadn't written on blue paper and in the palest of ink, so that I could have reproduced your very characteristic script. Your use of those two things also shows your heedlessness of the poor graphologist's eyes; tired by a fourteen-hour day of inspecting handwriting, she had to use a reading glass to see you at all. Don't think I am too hard on you. Your good traits are your instinctive generosity, your freedom from petty meanness, your capacity for honest and spontaneous affection, and your courage and pleasant personality. All these nice qualities, however, will avail you little if you have not a development of practical abilitation. You lack concentrativeness; are inclined to be too easily deflected from your course; have too much fondness for pleasure. This last can be a great weakness, even if your idea of pleasure is a pure one. I've known many a good office girl to be ruined as a worker by her love for dancing—a perfectly legitimate and natural love, so long as it is not the leading characteristic of a nature. So, dear Arthur, heedless and impulsive and thoughtless and too versatile, please try to pin your nose down to the grindstone. I assure you that you positively must if you are to be what you ought and easily may be.

GUILLIAME.—Good gracious, my dear man, how can I discuss "the peculiarities of the Latin temperament as opposed to the Saxon, with special reference to graphological data" in this department? I have to squeeze all these readings down to their barest essentials, as it is. But I'll just stop long enough to say that human nature remains the same, no matter what twists and turns racial temperaments may give it. Courage remains courage, moral beauty is always to be recognized, and unselfishness is the glowing star of the spirit, in all quarters of the globe. Your precise, involved, and laboriously wrought handwriting shows exactly the kind of person who could seriously propound

that lengthy scientific question to a person conducting a popular "department." In a word, what you lack is a sense of proportion and the saving salt of humor. When you can grin at your own pomposities you will have made more real headway than if you spend all the rest of your life in learned discussion. Your mind is really unusual, but it is most certainly not used with any direct effect. You need greater sympathy with various aspects of life; you need more gentleness and less hardness in your outlook on the world.

FRANKLIN.—Your son's handwriting does not show me the bad boy that your words describe. Your own handwriting, on the other hand, shows a great deal of smug self-satisfaction, a lot of meanness of spirit and bad temper. Between the two of you, your boy has infinitely the finer nature, and I strongly suspect you of trying to crush that fineness. Why insist on his going into the bank if he wants to be a salesman and has already proven his ability in that line? Why demand that he shall choose friends only from older men? Such a thing is unnatural. Youth craves youth and should not be denied. I do most earnestly beg you to let your son do as he wishes—live outside your home and lead his own life, at least for a while. Your two natures are not congenial, and you are doing nothing but laying up trouble for yourself and for the boy by your dictatorial attitude toward him.

SAX ROHMER.—It is characteristic of you to take the name of a person whom you admire for the name by which I shall address you, for your greatest fault is your tendency to sink your own personality and individuality in those of your friends and loved ones, and this, of course, makes you a poor judge of them. No, Roy is not a wonder boy at all, but an egotistical young cub who needs a lot of severe discipline from life to lick him into shape. G. is a girl of some promise, but I know her to be selfish. Try to live a little as really pleases yourself, and less in the lives of others.

P. P. A.—Every once in so often, dear girl, I get a letter almost word for word like yours. You think that your husband is careless of your comfort and indifferent to your happiness, because he refuses to go out at least every other night with you. You are allowed to have a woman to clean your small home once a week, and you send your washing out. Now tell me: What do you really do to warrant your existence? Since it is your husband who makes all the money, and since you do not do even your share of domestic work—light, at that, since you evidently live on canned food—and since you evidently don't consult him about anything or conserve his resources or do any useful work at all, what excuse have you for demanding anything? I've said this time and again in answer to such letters as yours. Your character is exceedingly immature, but by instinct you are a woman of sense and good feeling, so I'm hoping and praying that just these few words will bring you to a realization of where you stand.

CORPORAL S. W.—Your handwriting expresses good nature and a fair amount of practical ability. Your will power, however, is far from being what you need, and your emotions are too easily touched. You have not learned as yet that the mind needs to sit in judgment on the emotions, if life is to be anything save a series of unrelated and often disastrous events. So far as practical life is concerned you have a fair equipment; ought to do well as a salesman of some kind when you are out of the service. The specimen you inclose shows the type of woman, exactly, with which you should *not* associate. She is wholly the emotional type, but with far less will power than you, without much strength of belief or conviction, and most certainly very lazy and "shiftless." The pleasant elements of this nature are the tendencies to hopefulness and good-temper, but these are far outweighed by the weaknesses.

SEATON MYERS.—There is not a trace of insanity in your handwriting—not a trace! But there is every evidence of a great nervous disturbance and of unsettled mental conditions, the latter very, very different from insanity. If you were really insane the last thing you would ask would be this question. It is rare, indeed, for an insane person to even question his or her own sanity, but it is very common for them to attribute insanity to many of their associates. I have had correspondents several times, who repeatedly sent me specimens with questions as to the writers' sanity, whose own handwriting gave me a qualm every time I looked at it. What you need is to stop all this introspection and attend to your physical needs. Since you have the money, go to Arizona, get board on a ranch, and make the cowboys teach you to ride so that you can stay in the saddle half a day at a time. Eat what is put before you and stop thinking about your stomach's likes and dislikes. Get away from all the overheated, overexcited atmosphere with which New York, the great show place of America, is charged. A year of that, and I'll guarantee that you'll be able to smile a the memory of what you think to-day.

THE YOU : MAN WHO WROTE FROM ALBANY, NEW YORK, ABOUT SUICIDE.—My dear boy, I have no earthly way of getting word to you except this, and I am desperately afraid that you will not see it. If you do, won't you write me, tell me where you are to be found, and let me send some good friends of mine who live in your town to see you? I can't discuss what you wrote here; I can only say, give yourself another chance. There is help for you. You can find friends. You really have talent, and if you will only have courage you will be able to use it. I wish I could think of stronger things to say, but perhaps you will know that I mean them, anyway.

D. C.—The specimen you want analyzed shows a nature which is sincere and kind; therefore, I think that your estimate of it is incorrect. Such a person would be incapable of treachery, and utterly incapable of the deliberate malice which you mention. Your own handwriting, about which you do not ask, expresses a nature which is hysterically untruthful, and which is marked by intense self-absorption. Sorry—but, you see, you put the problem before me, and I have to solve it in the best way I can. Your handwriting supplies the clew. I should think it likely that you were an emotional leech; that your whole attitude toward the writer of this sane specimen had been abnormal; that you had little foundation for your assertion of a tie between you; and that the writer of the specimen, probably entangled in your emotional reactions before he was aware of it, proceeded to do the only sensible thing—efface himself from the scenery. Your nature is one which needs the severest sort of discipline. Women of your type would be greatly benefited by some such training as men receive in the army. If you were compelled to exercise every day, to the limit of your physical endurance; were required to fulfill certain well-defined obligations; were obliged to learn the lesson of obedience and good temper—why, in a year or two you might be an exceptionally attractive person. At the present time, you are a pest. There. You're either crying or having hysterics by this time, I suppose; but when you cool off, won't you try to think, coolly and dispassionately, of what I have said? You, like so many abnormal people, have real promise.

EXPERT DETECTIVE ADVICE

CONDUCTED BY WILLIAM J. BURNS

Mr. William J. Burns is a well-known criminologist, who for years has been engaged in the study and investigation of crime and criminals. Any of our readers may consult Mr. Burns through this magazine in regard to any matter relating to crime and its detection, to psychological problems, and the protection of life and property against criminals and other evildoers. Letters seeking expert information along these lines should be addressed to the DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE, 79-89 Seventh Avenue, New York. These letters will be answered personally by Mr. Burns, without charge, if stamp for reply is inclosed; they will be discussed in this department, the names and addresses in all cases to be omitted, when so desired.

The Scientific Investigator

A GREAT many of my correspondents have been moved to ask me if there really is a field for special scientific investigators of crime, and, if so, how to go about being one.

Many laboratory scientists, through the analysis of the blood of murdered persons, through their investigation of blood-stained garments, through their analysis of materials, such as the dirt scraped from beneath a finger nail, came into touch with the world of crime, and so became known, after a while, as authorities on certain phases of crime. The finger-print expert must sometimes rely upon the very unusual photographer for assistance. And the photographer, through taking pictures of the scenes of crimes, and through association with detectives, may eventually come to be a sort of specialist on crime photography. Many of the great chemists, called in to analyze the organs of those suspected to have been murdered by strange substances, have come pretty close to becoming celebrated scientific investigators.

However, for a man of no scientific attainments to set out to become a scientific crime investigator, and to propose doing this without any connection with ordinary detective work, and apart from all organized detective and police systems, is, in my opinion, rather a precarious undertaking. One thing is sure: it would take years for such a man to establish his position, since it would be necessary for him to be, as it were, a superscientist before he could compete successfully with the scientists who, without ceasing their laboratory work or stepping from their places as college instructors, yet give excellent and often specialized assistance to detective work.

It seems to me that it would be easier for a man who already had a scientific training of rather an extensive sort, to make a side issue, even though a specialty, of such use of his knowledge as could be applied in that way. His chief income would be derived from laboratory work or teaching, in the usual manner.

A number of scientists in Europe have gained really enviable reputations as detectives, but they never have ceased to continue their professional labors.

ANSWERS TO READERS' QUERIES

J. L. B.—As to your first question, read the above article. As to your second, the department of justice is rather a wide term. It would depend on your qualifications, and what place you held in it, and whether you were qualified for any special job—that would answer your question. Send me a note as to all this, and I will answer you by mail.

THE TWO BOY DETECTIVES.—There is no law against your making your own investigations of crimes and then turning the result of your investigations over to the police. However, I think that fourteen or fifteen is pretty young for lads to begin a detective career. I do not see how you can afford to distract your mind with such ideas while you are still going to school. Of course you are interested in detective work. I never saw a boy who was not. And it may be that you actually possess talent for it, so that it will do you no harm to

read up, as you say you have. Remember, though, that crime is a very serious matter, and that no boy is really fitted to try to be a detective until he is over twenty-one.

LAWRENCE.—If you are afraid to have me write you, why not send me the address of that clergyman who has assisted you, and who suggested that you should write me? It seems to me that this is rather a serious matter. Usually people who believe that they are in danger of bodily harm are merely giving away to a state of nerves, but in your case it almost seems as though there were a plot, of the nature which you mention. The fact that you are so far from cities would render such a thing all the more possible. Write me at once, giving that address. Also, I would like to have the clergyman's version of the affair. Even though he is unacquainted with the details, he might be able to throw some light on the persons concerned. Try to seem unsuspicious, and to appear as usual. If any new developments come you can, of course, ask protection from the clergyman.

HOW TO KNOW YOUR NEIGHBOR

CONDUCTED BY A. T. CRAIG

Mr. A. T. Craig is a master of the science that makes it possible for us to understand different persons' natures by studying their facial and bodily characteristics, so that we may know which of our acquaintances would make congenial social companions, which suitable business associates, et ceters. Unless your case is urgent, Mr. Craig would prefer that you wait until his articles treat upon the subject in which you are particularly interested. However, if you are confronted with problems that demand immediate attention, in dealing with some individual, write Mr. Craig fully of the conditions which baffle you, give as complete a description of the person in question as you can, and, when possible, inclose a photograph. Mr. Craig then will give your case his personal attention. All photographs will be carefully returned, if a stamped, addressed envelope, of the proper size for the photograph, is sent. This service is free.

The Shoulders

THIS part of the trunk belongs properly to the head, since the significance of the shoulders is largely affected by the shape and set of the head which surmounts them.

The narrow shoulder—that is, the shoulder which has a short span from neck to outer edge—is always indicative of one of two things: either a poorly nourished body, which never has had proper exercise, or a long line of ancestors who have not worked. If the latter is true, hands and feet are likely to be small and delicate and very finely shaped.

The narrow shoulder, sloped, and terminating in delicate, softly rounded arms and small hands, is most often found in women who have for generations led a life of ease. By artists this type is considered exceedingly beautiful, but by no stretch of conventionalization can we call it natural.

The female shoulders are a shade more delicate than the male, and this is true of animals as well as of humans. Female dogs show this in a marked manner.

Therefore, in estimating shoulders, we must deal with them from the sex standpoint, to a slight degree. A short shoulder, on a man with a strong neck and a deep chest, but with small hands and feet, will often be found in the descendants of aristocratic families who have not known manual labor for centuries. In that case the narrow shoulder must be so read. A markedly narrow shoulder, with large hands and feet and an otherwise strong and prominent bony framework, is the mark of a tendency toward organic diseases. If found in a red-headed or sandy-haired person, this indication is fairly reliable. The combination is not often found in the brunet types.

An exceptionally wide shoulder is always the sign of virility and of physical strength. If the width is pronounced, and if the arms also are heavy, the

nature as well as the body is likely to be rather marked by animalistic tendencies.

Among women the square-shouldered are most apt to have executive ability, but the narrow and sloping-shouldered are most frequently found among the producers of art.

Singers are inclined to have very square shoulders, both men and women, while painters, poets, writers of fiction, creators of any form of beautiful objects are inclined to the narrow and sloping shoulder.

In connection with shoulders it might as well be considered that the shoulder which is pulled forward where the arms are attached to them, thus throwing the shoulder blades outward and causing a rounded appearance of the upper part of the back, is a mark of the unaggressive. This is a sign which is all but unfailing. It is usually associated with a head which is slightly bent forward.

UNDER THE LAMP

CONDUCTED BY HENRY A. KELLER

THIS week's mental gymnastic stunt was sent in by Mr. H. O. Hall, of Portland, Oregon, who has been keen and enthusiastic in following the problems and tests of puzzle-solving ability that have appeared in this department from week to week. Mr. Hall was the self-appointed, amateur detective in an interesting theft case not long ago. He was the means of thwarting an attempt to loot a large storehouse of grocers' supplies. In the course of his work on the case Mr. Hall came upon the following cipher; solving it, in fact, was what gave him his start in the first place.

One of the would-be burglars, Peter Barlowe, so it was learned, formed an association of the "tougher" boys while a kid at school, and between them they worked out a cipher by which they communicated with each other during school hours.

Later Pete and another of the gang planned to rob the office of a wholesale house in a near-by town, and Pete went to get the lay of the ground. Not wishing to trust his report by way of an ordinary letter, he remembered the school cipher and sent the following message:

11, 8, 11, 24, 9-16, 12, 21, 14, 3-21, 7-23, 13x 16, 23, 5, 23, 24', 23, 17-14, 21, 3, 12, 16-1, 16-16, 11, 14-5, 11', 16-5, 11-1, 16-24'-10, 24, 21, 2, 3, 11x

PETE.

See if you can solve it. Next week's issue will contain the answer.

CIPHER NUT, Albany, New York.—I have worked out the cipher you sent me, and I'd like to write you about it. Drop me a line and let me know your street address, won't you?

DANIEL B., Omaha.—Yours was a straight substitution cipher, letter for letter substitution, in an arbitrary arrangement. What stumped you, I think, was the fact that the cipher contained no indication of ends of words. The solution is: "Come around some evening for a game of crokinoe."

The solution to last week's problem is: "ICONTTBIAOWILHOTMM ENEEUEPEEJTGTTLHKUMIIHAOSNORTENMVETLTMNEABHSIMI FCUEKLYNOATRNLSGRTDAOIETTIONWWLOWONDARF." There were 104 letters in the text to be enciphered. The number of columns in one set was to be three less than twice the number of the other set—therefore 13 and 8 are the only divisors of 104 that can be used—horizontal 13, vertical 8. Did you work it out?

MISSING

This department, conducted in duplicate in DETECTIVE STORY MAGAZINE and WESTERN STORY MAGAZINE, thus giving readers double service, is offered free of charge to our readers. Its purpose is to aid them in getting in touch with persons of whom they have lost track.

While it will be better to use your name in the notice, we will print your request "blind" if you prefer. In sending "blind" notices, you must, of course, give us your right name and address, so that we can forward promptly any letters that may come for you. We reserve the right to reject any notice that seems to us unsuitable.

If it can be avoided, please do not send us a "General Delivery" post-office address, for experience has proved that those persons who are not specific as to address often have mail that we send them returned to us marked "not found." It would be well, also, to notify us of any change in your address.

When you hear from the person you are seeking, tell us, so that we may take your notice out.

Now, readers, help those whose friends or relatives are missing, as you would like to be helped if you were in a similar position.

WARNING.—Do not forward money to any one who sends you a letter or telegram, asking for money "to get home," et cetera, until you are absolutely certain that the author of such telegram or letter is the person you are seeking.

SANDS, GEORGE HAYS.—He is a little over six feet tall, and has light, curly hair and blue eyes. He is a telegrapher, and is crippled in his right arm, which makes him left-handed. He left Perry County, Pennsylvania, in 1879, to go West, and was last heard from about six months after he left from Cedar Rapids, Iowa. He is fifty-eight years old. His brother Clement, and his sister Edith, and two half sisters, would be grateful to any one who can tell them if he is still living, and would deeply appreciate any information about him. Mrs. Mary Lukens, Duncannon, Pennsylvania.

BERGEN, B. A.—One year ago he left his home in Kalamazoo, Michigan, and his wife has not heard from him since that time. He is of medium build, with light hair and blue eyes, and is very bald. He worked in ammunition plants, and was sometimes known as Al Adams. Any information about him will be gratefully received by Mrs. B. A. Bergen, care of this magazine.

HOWELL, WILLIAM R.—He is twenty-nine years old, about five feet seven inches tall, and has black hair and dark eyes, and a dark complexion. One finger is missing on his left hand, and another is off to the first knuckle. He was a corporal in the Fifty-second Pioneer Infantry. He left his home last April, and when last heard from was in Illinois. He is asked to communicate with his wife, as there is important business for him to attend to. Mrs. Fannie B. Howell, Box 25, Windsor, New York.

MANLEY, JULIUS J.—He served in the United States army during the World War, and was last heard of in Baltimore, Maryland, in 1913. His brother would be very grateful for any news concerning him. Please send information to Mrs. Albert Manley, 261 Pike Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

COOPER, MAY BELL, who left Beaman, Missouri, in 1919, and may have gone to Salina, Kansas. Any information about her will be greatly appreciated as it is important that she should be found. G. B. Nichols, Box 1037, Fort Worth, Texas.

FEINE, CHARLES THEODORE, born at College Hill, Ohio, is asked to communicate with his sister, Flora Henderson, 4728 Washington Avenue, Newport News, Virginia.

FINN, THOMAS JOSEPH.—He is forty-four years old, and was a machinist or steamfitter when last heard of in Philadelphia six years ago. He has brown hair and eyes, and met with an injury to the pupil of his left eye, which is very noticeable. Any information about him will be thankfully received by his mother, Mrs. Ellen Finn, 20 Vernon Street, Worcester, Massachusetts.

NAPIER, HARRY.—He was born and brought up near Charleston, West Virginia, but went West, and was last heard from in Idaho, in 1909. He is twenty-nine years old, and has light hair and blue eyes. Any information regarding his whereabouts will be gratefully received by a relative, Mrs. Julia Penrod, Box 116, Oak Hill, West Virginia.

MOORE, FRED, and **RAYMOND GRAY,** who were discharged from the Machine Gun Troop, Eighth Cavalry, on October 18, 1919. Moore was nicknamed "Wop," and he lived in Evansville, Indiana. Gray was nicknamed "Greasy," and lived in Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania. They are asked to write to Dave, in care of this magazine.

MACE, ALEXANDER ALOYSIUS.—He is thirty-six years of age, five feet ten inches tall, has chestnut curly hair, and his feet turn in slightly. His left eyelid droops, and he wears glasses and stoops. He is a professional pianist and when last heard of was playing in vaudeville. His wife has not seen him for nine years, and will greatly appreciate an information that will help her to know his present whereabouts. Mrs. V. Mace, care of this magazine.

ATTENTION, PLEASE.—In 1887 a little boy five years of age was found in the streets of New York City by Justice Murray, and was placed in the care of the Children's Aid Society. If any one who sees this should remember having heard of a boy of that age being lost at that time, he will be glad to hear from them. He does not remember anything of his parents or how he came to be alone in the streets. He would be very happy if he could find his relatives, and will be deeply grateful for any assistance in the matter. William J. Sherwood, care of this magazine.

NORMAN, DORA.—She was last heard from in 1912, when she was in Erie, Pennsylvania. Any one who knows where she is please write to Esther Berner, care of this magazine.

GILBERT, CHARLES W.—When last heard from he was in Charles City, Iowa, in 1914-15. He is thirty-two years old, five feet six inches tall, with blue eyes and dark-brown hair. He was supposed to be traveling for an oil concern. Any information about him will be greatly appreciated by his brother, W. B. Gilbert, 197 North Forge Street, Akron, Ohio.

WARSCHAUER, JOSEPH and **HERBERT STRAUB.**—They both disappeared after Straub had made a fortune in Mississippi and Tennessee. They were close chums and lived most of their time in Flatbush, Brooklyn. Their occupation was selling for a large concern in New York, and they usually lived at first-class hotels. Any information regarding them will be greatly appreciated by C. F. Straub, Pinehurst Hotel, Laurel, Mississippi.

KELLY, C. L.—He is twenty-nine years old, five feet nine inches tall, weighs one hundred and fifty pounds, and has light hair and brown eyes. On his left forearm is tattooed a rose and heart and on his right arm the initials C. E. H. He was a member of the Princess Patricia Canadian Light Infantry, and served overseas from August, 1914, to July, 1919, when he was discharged. He returned to Chicago and left there in August of the same year. A former buddie wants to find him and will be deeply grateful for any information that will help him in his search. M. J. K., care of this magazine.

TAGTINIER, HOWARD J. H.—His buddy, who soldiered with him in Company L 32, Camp Kearney, California, would like to hear from him, for he has some good news for him. Corporal Yaw, care of this magazine.

KNOWLES, JOHN HENRY.—He left England nine years ago and went to Canada, where he intended to make a home for his wife and his little son, who was then two years old. He was last heard of eight years ago, when he was working for the Canadian Car Company, Cote St. Paul, Montreal. It has been impossible to get any news of him since that time. His wife has made every effort to trace him, but without success. He is five feet eight inches tall, broad set, with round features and a dark complexion. Any information that will help his family to know what has become of him will be very gratefully received by his wife, Mrs. E. Knowles, care of this magazine.

WILLIAMS, MISS.—She is an Australian actress and is thought to have been performing in America for some time. It is believed that she makes her home somewhere in New Jersey and that she is married to a theatrical manager. Her sister has just come from Australia to visit her. Some friends from Australia are anxious to get into communication with her and will greatly appreciate any assistance in the matter. Mrs. E. C. Martin, care of this magazine.

GREEN.—If any of the descendants of W. Green, who came to the United States from Cambridgeshire, England, when he was twenty-one years old, should see this and would care to get in touch with their English relations, they are asked to write to O. Dring, care of this magazine.

BECKER, EDWARD P., formerly of Buffalo, New York, and last heard from in Seattle in 1910, is asked to write to W. M. Whittenhall, care of this magazine.

JONES, MRS. KATIE.—She placed her daughter in St. Clare's Convent at Denver, Colorado, when she was five years old, and she is now twenty-seven. She has never seen her mother since that time. She also remembers having a brother, but does not know what has become of him. Any information that will help to find her mother or any of her relatives will be gratefully appreciated. Hortense Augusta Jones, care of this magazine.

JABLONSKY, ANNA, the mother of **ROBERT,** who was adopted by George B. Stalter. She was last heard from in Rochester, New York, in 1918. For the baby's sake she is asked to write to George B. Stalter, P. O. Box 1031, Mechanicsville, New York.

DONLEN, WILLIAM J.—He was born in Philadelphia, and in 1890 lived with his father, Patrick J., at 804 Dickerson Street, that city. He had a brother and sister. He died in Salt Lake City, Utah, in 1892. His son is anxious to find some trace of his relatives, and will be glad to hear from the descendants of any member of his family. William J. Donlen, 1610 Virginia Avenue, Kansas City, Kansas.

MATHEY, LAWRENCE.—He was last heard of in Newport News, Virginia, about nine months ago. His home is in Buffalo, New York. He is about twenty-two years old, weighs one hundred and eighty-five pounds, and has auburn hair. Any word from him, or any news of him, would be a great joy to his worried mother, and would be greatly appreciated by all his family. Please write to his brother, William R. Mathey, 2124 Geneva Street, Buffalo, New York.

LANG, STUART MELLVILLE.—He is a Canadian and is the son of Ed. F. and Nellie Lang. When last heard of he was with a survey party in Montana, intending to go into Colorado. This was four or five years ago. All letters sent to the Colorado address were returned unclaimed. Any information as to where he is if alive, or of his death, would be thankfully received by his aunt, Mrs. A. B. Davies, R. R. Number One, Joseph, Oregon.

GROVER, FRED L.—He left home to go to work on the seventh of September, 1920, and has not been heard from since. His wife and children are very unhappy about him, and beg him if he sees this to come back to them and everything will be all right.

P. A. R., who was with the H. G. W. in the summer of 1918, is asked to write to his old buddy, E. D. M., care of this magazine.

MATHES, HENRY F.—He was brought up at Corydon and left there when quite a young man. He was last heard from in May, 1896, in Boxbutte County, Nebraska. He is a small man and used to weigh about one hundred and forty pounds, and had brown hair and mustache. He is now about sixty-four years old. Any information about him will be appreciated by O. D. G., care of this magazine.

MORSE, AMY FLORENCE.—Please come home at once. Mother is critically ill and wants to see you. Write to your sister, Mrs. Bell Jones, 5 Lindel Street, Haverhill, Massachusetts.

KOHN, JAMES ABRAHAM GARFIELD.—He was known in Beaumont, Texas, as Doctor Alfred Collins, professor of palmistry, in 1907. He is about thirty-nine years old, five feet seven inches tall, of dark complexion, and weighed one hundred and twenty pounds when last seen by his family, in 1904. Any information concerning him will be gratefully received by his brother, Joseph Kohn, 117 North Main Street, Los Angeles, California.

TUCKER, ALEXANDER KNIGHT.—He was born in New York City, and was last seen about 1889 at 142 West Seventeenth Street. Any information about him will be gratefully appreciated by his brother, William Thomas Tucker, 135 1-2 Michigan Avenue, Detroit, Michigan.

JOHNSON, CHRIS.—He is six feet tall and was born in 1892 in Sawyer, Wisconsin. He left Sturgeon Bay, that State, fourteen years ago. His mother, his sisters, and his brother Oscar, would like to find him. His mother has just lost a young son, Walter, and is longing to see Chris again. He is asked to write to his sister Amanda, who will thankfully receive any information. Mrs. H. Boland, 267 San Jose Avenue, San Francisco, California.

STEWART and **THAIRD.**—These two men were sailors and before being sent abroad during the war served at 280 Broadway and also on the receiving ship at New York. They are asked to write to their old friend, "Dizzy," who will be very glad to hear from them. W. R. Datoush, care of this magazine.

SPANGLER, MRS. C. L.—On the second of November, 1920, she left her rooms in Shreveport, Louisiana, about five o'clock in the afternoon, and went to the railroad station. A man named Nelson helped her with her baby and suit case. She said she was going to Kansas City to see her husband's mother, who was seriously ill, and that her husband, who works on the railroad, would follow when he came in from his trip. She left no message for her husband, who is grieving at her absence, and who will be deeply grateful to any one who may help him to bring back his wife and baby. Any information will be thankfully received. C. L. Spangler, 4021 Woodland Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri.

BARNES, S. M.—He is about fifty-six years old, six feet tall, and weighs two hundred pounds. He was last heard from in Oklahoma about eighteen months ago. He has gray eyes, a sandy mustache, and wears a beard. The third finger of his left hand has been cut off at the first joint. An old friend would be glad to get some news of him and will appreciate any assistance in the matter. C. P. Niccles, 907 East High Street, Terrell, Texas.

BARNUM, WILLIAM HOMER.—He was born in or near Vermont or Boston. The last time he was seen by his son was just before the earthquake in San Francisco, in 1906. If any of his relatives, or any one who knows the family, should see this, they will do a favor by writing to Albert Whittmore Barnum, 3552 Pueblo Avenue, San Diego, California.

TOWSLEY, HOBART CHARLES.—He left his home in Lansing in December, 1919. His wife got a divorce and went away, and the baby died in February. One child is with his wife's people and the other one is with Hobert's mother. His sister and brother will be glad to receive any news of him and will be most grateful to any one who will help them to communicate with their brother. Mrs. Clyde Towsley, 210 Beal Avenue, Lansing, Michigan.

LINDSEY.—My mother died forty-six years ago, when she was thirty-four years old. Her name was Jane Emma Lindsey, or Lindsay, and she came from Pennsylvania. She had a brother Jim and a sister Libbie. She married Augustus Smith, in New London, Ohio, who kept a livery stable. There were three children, George, Augusta, and Hattie. If any one can give me any information relative to my mother's people, I shall be deeply indebted to them. Mrs. Hattie Sherman, 355 Eleventh Street, Elyria, Ohio.

CORNEW, SAM H.—He was last heard from in California before the earthquake. He was born and brought up in New Jersey, and had served in the Philippines with the U. S. army. Any one who knows anything about him, or who can tell if he is alive or dead, will do a favor by writing to his sister, Mrs. M. H. Diefenbach, General Delivery, Tampa, Florida.

MOSS, R. T.—When last heard of he was in Marshall, California. He has brown hair and eyes, and weighed about one hundred and forty pounds. Any news of him will be gladly received by Mrs. Margaret Sisson, 29 Mechanic Street, Westerly, Rhode Island.

CROGG, JOSEPHINE E.—She left Philadelphia on the twentieth of June, 1920, in the morning, and is supposed to have gone to Atlantic City. She is twenty-two years old, about five feet three inches in height, and has hazel eyes and brown-reddish hair. A burn scar runs from the point of her chin to the base of her neck. She may be employed as a domestic. Her husband and her mother are worrying about her and will be deeply grateful to any one who can give them any clew that will help them to find her. Any information will be thankfully received by her husband, James E. Crogg, 57 East Rich Street, Columbus, Ohio.

SOHN, SOLLIE, formerly of Chicago. If he sees this, he is asked to write to his brother, who will be glad to hear from any one who knows his present whereabouts. Martin Sohn, 623 North Hamlet Street, Columbus, Ohio.

THEISS, WILLIAM OTTO.—He was employed for some time as a motorman on the street railway in Milwaukee, and was last heard of in Listowel, Ontario. He is tall and has gray hair. He was last seen a year ago last May. He is also known by the name of Turner. Any information about him will be gratefully appreciated by Mrs. William Turner, care of this magazine.

O'DONNELL, JOSEPH—He was discharged from the U. S. army at Port Townsend, Washington, in 1913. The following year he was employed as a street-car motorman in Port Arthur, Canada, and later went to Winnipeg. He is thirty years old. Any information about him will be appreciated by his brother and sister. Please write to James T. O'Donnell, care of this magazine.

JACKSON, MARGARET, also known by the names of Johnson and Lockhart. She is about five feet six inches tall, with dark-brown eyes and hair and a dark complexion. The last letter received from her was in April, 1920, in which she said she was going to South Dakota. She is accompanied by an elderly woman with gray hair and eyes, small in stature, with a crippled hand, who claims to be her grandmother, but is no relation, and it is feared that she is not doing the right thing by the girl, who is only sixteen years of age, but looks older, and has been married, but the marriage was annulled on account of her age. Any information will be most gratefully received by her mother, who is in distress and sorrow at the absence of her only child. Mrs. Mildred Baker, care of this magazine.

WHEELER, SAMUEL D.—He was born in Washington, D. C., and his mother's maiden name was Mary L. Walton. She came from Marshall, Tennessee. He had an uncle named Samuel Donelson, who was in Washington, D. C., when last heard of. Any information will be gratefully received by L. H. Wheeler, 487 Main Street, Poughkeepsie New York.

ROSENGREN, GODFREY WILLIAM.—He left home about eight years ago and has not been heard from for the past two years. He is about five feet ten inches tall, weighs one hundred and sixty pounds, and has blue eyes, very dark brown hair, and had a fair complexion when last seen. The forefinger of his left hand is missing. Any information regarding his whereabouts will be highly appreciated by his brother. When last heard of he was with the United States secret service in Alaska. Carl G. Rosengren, 3572 Sixteenth Street, Detroit, Michigan.

McCONNELL, FRANK S., known as "Slim." He is six feet two inches tall, of slender build, with black hair and blue eyes. When last heard of he was in Picher, Oklahoma, in November, 1918. Any news of him will be gladly received by B. Moore, care of this magazine.

SMITH, J. F.—Please write to me. I will forget the past.—L. G.

SIMS, IRWIN.—He lived in Fort Wayne, Indiana, and enlisted in the army and was sent to Fort Preble, Portland, Maine. He was overseas in Company A, C. A. C., and was last heard from in June, 1918. Some of his comrades said that he had been taken prisoner, but nothing definite was known. His friends are anxious to find out what has become of him and will be glad to hear from any one who can give them news of him. M. P., care of this magazine.

SMITH, GEORGE and **MAURICE,** who left West Fairview, Pennsylvania, thirty-five or forty years ago. George was with General Custer when he was fighting Indians in the West, but Maurice has never been heard from. Any information about them will be gladly received by Joy L. Smith, Camp Hill, Pennsylvania.

ADDRESSES WANTED of Cal Beebe, formerly on the U. S. S. "Kentucky," and last heard of in 1919 in Boston; Charles Yarbrough, formerly of the U. S. S. "New Hampshire," and last heard of in Warren, Ohio. Please write to F. S., care of this magazine.

JOHNSON, HAROLD N.—He left Camp Stewart, Newport News, Virginia, and went to France. He came back and was last heard of at Roanoke. He is asked to write to his old friend who bunked with him at Camp Stewart, Thomas Sims, 904 Raleigh Avenue, Norfolk, Virginia.

BURNS, JACK.—He is about fifty-four years old and was employed by the C., R. I. & P. R. R. at Goodland, Kansas, and later on Texas railroads. Any information as to his present address, or that of any member of his family, will be gratefully received by M. A. Cornwell, 1235 South Durbin Street, Casper, Wyoming.

HENRICK, SARAH and **WILLIAM.**—They were last seen by their sister eight years ago, when they were living at Greene Street, Philadelphia. She would like to know where they are now and will greatly appreciate any information that will help her to find them. Mrs. Sealoski, 51 Jefferson Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey.

DURWOOD, ALLEN T.—He left Camp Gordon, Georgia, in May, 1920, with his wife and daughter, Rose, for Salt Lake City, Utah. Any one who knows his present address will do a favor by writing to Sergeant Lawson B. Bootle, Q. M. C. Det., Camp Gordon, Georgia.

DANNER, ROBERT.—He has not been heard of for more than fifty years, and his grandchild would be glad to know something of him. C. D., care of this magazine.

MARTIN, LEE R.—He was last heard from at Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. Any information regarding his present whereabouts will be greatly appreciated by his sister, Mrs. C. B. Martin, 968 Thirty-fourth Street, Bellaire, Ohio.

WARMAN, JOHN WESLEY.—He was last seen on June 22, 1920, when he left his home in Connellsville, Pennsylvania, to go to Pittsburgh, to get his pay from the B. & O. Railroad. He is twenty-four years of age, five feet eight inches tall, and has dark-brown hair, hazel eyes, and a ruddy complexion. He weighs about one hundred and forty pounds. The head of a cowgirl is tattooed on his left arm. His wife and three little children are very unhappy at his absence, and any news of him will be greatly appreciated. E. L. W., care of this magazine.

HILLEGAAS, DOCTOR W. G.—When last heard from he was in Pennsylvania. Any news as to his whereabouts will be greatly appreciated. Please write to Mr. M. Miramon, 46 High Street, Reno, Nevada.

JOHNSON, EDWARD WELLS, who left Winifrede, West Virginia, about thirty-two years ago, and when last heard of, about twenty-five years ago, had married, had a family, and was living in Greenville, Kentucky, where he was connected in some way with a small coal mine. Any news of him or his family will be gladly received by his sister, Mrs. Virgie Lee Mease, South Charleston, West Virginia.

SHELDON, ROSE and **EDITH,** who left Lapeer, Michigan, about 1908. It was heard that Rose had married a Mr. Wheeler, and when last heard of they were living in Kalamazoo, Michigan. If any one who knows them should see this, they will do a great favor by writing to C. Prosser, 309 Langdon Street, Toledo, Ohio.

GRANT, JOE.—He is about twenty-nine years old, six feet tall, weighs about one hundred and seventy pounds, and has light-brown hair and dark-blue eyes. The middle forefinger of his left hand is off at the knuckle. At one time he belonged to the Oddfellows Lodge, at Crossett, Arkansas, and was last seen on February 10, 1916, in San Francisco, on board a boat bound for Central America. If he sees this, he is asked to write to Jack F. Stevens, 1118 North Commerce Street, Fort Worth, Texas.

MOORE, JOHN KENNETH.—He left his home in Stratford, Connecticut, on November 17, 1920. He is fifteen years old, five feet four inches in height, weighs one hundred and twelve pounds, is well built, and has light hair, blue eyes, and good teeth. When last seen he wore knickerbockers of mixed material, black shoes and stockings, brown hat, and a reddish-brown mackinaw. His family is heartbroken at his absence and will be most grateful for any information that will lead to his return. Please write to his father, George Moore, 203 King Street, Stratford, Connecticut.

STRODE, WILLIAM JAMES.—He was last heard of in Keene, New Hampshire, two years ago. His sister would like to hear from him and hopes, if he sees this, that he will write to her. Mrs. J. Gilbert, 27 Ann Street, Guelph, Ontario, Canada.

LEVIE, EVERSOLE.—When last heard of he was in Milwaukee, sixteen years ago. He was a railroader and belonged to the brotherhood lodge. Any one who knows anything about him will do a favor by writing to his sister, Mrs. Fannie Kleinsorgen, 1917 Columbia Avenue, Philadelphia, Pennsylvania.

HAINZE, EUGENE.—He was born in Austria and is thirty-two years old. Is well educated and speaks, reads, and writes English, German, and Italian. He came to the United States in 1911, is a designer and cartoonist by profession, and was last heard of in Rochester, New York, in 1912. He is about five feet eleven inches tall, clean shaven, with gray eyes and brown hair, and has a scar between the third and fourth fingers of the right hand. His name is also spelled Haincze and Heinze. This young man's mother is getting old and is grieving at the absence of her son. Many efforts have been made to find him, but without success, and it is hoped that some of our readers may be able to help in tracing him, for which they will receive the sincere thanks of his anxious mother and brother. Please write to F. J. Hainze, Box 1093, Amarillo, Texas.

CROCKENBERG, MRS. JOSEPHINE.—She was last heard of on January 1, 1919, on Adams Avenue, Toledo, Ohio. Her son would like to hear from her. Any information about her will be gladly received. Lyman J. Crockenberg, care of this magazine.

CAGLE, ISOM.—He went to California with the "Forty-niners," and when last heard from was in Sonora, that State, where he owned a large ranch. His home was in Batesville, Arkansas. Any information will be greatly appreciated by his nephew, James J. Allen, Route A, Hugoton, Kansas.

RANDLES, MAYBEL MARGARET.—She was last heard of in December, 1915, in Windsor, Ontario, when she left home to marry a man named Jim Buhl, and has not been heard from since that time. Her sorrowing mother will be deeply grateful to any one who can help her to find her lost daughter. Mrs. Ada Randles, Benito P. O., Manitoba, Canada.

HYRE, RADERS HUMBOLDT.—He is tall, with blue eyes and auburn hair, and weighs about one hundred and seventy pounds. He was last heard of at Jerome, Arizona, in September, 1920. Any information will be gratefully received by his sister, Leonora Hyre, Box 284, Mineral Wells, Texas.

CHAPPELL, ANNIE.—Her maiden name was Woods, and she left her home in West Toronto, Canada, on September 6, 1912. She wrote once, at Christmas, 1913, but there was no address in the letter, which bore the postmark of Edmonton, Alberta. If she sees this, she is asked to write or come home to her mother, who has never ceased to long for her, and who will be thankful for any information that will help her to find her daughter. Mrs. F. Whitfield, 541 West Side Avenue, Jersey City, New Jersey.

PHIPPS, MRS. VERN G.—Her sister is very anxious to hear from her and would be glad if she would come home, as her little girl is grieving herself to death for her mother. She is twenty-five years old, with dark hair and eyes, and was not in good health when she went away. Any news of her will be gladly received by her sister, Mrs. Lydia Godfrey, 313 South Union Street, Tecumseh, Michigan.

SMITH.—I was born in New York twenty-one years ago, and was placed in St. Vincent's Home. When I was four years old I was adopted, and have been unable to get any information about my parents. I do not know my mother's maiden name. I have been told that I had a sister in Boston who was older than I, but how much older I do not know. My right name is Joseph John Smith. If any one can help me to know something about my people, I shall be most grateful to them. Joseph J. Smith, care of this magazine.

HANNIGAN, JOHN and **LAWRENCE.**—Their brother, Maurice, who has not heard from them for years, would be glad to get news of them. M. A. Hannigan, care of this magazine.

BAYES, MRS. C. C.—Her maiden name was Agnes Viola Hobbs, and she formerly lived in Seattle and vicinity. Before she was married she lived in Salem, Arkansas. A friend would like to hear from her or from any one who knows her present address. Mrs. Gladys E. Hoffman, Curtin, Oregon.

HUBERTZ, YOHAN, known as "Barney." Seven years ago he took his little boy to the Orphans' Home in Addison, Illinois, and has not been seen by his family since. He is about fifty years old, tall, and of heavy build. His children are anxious to know what has become of him, and will be most grateful to any one who will be kind enough to help them to find their father. Please write to his daughter, Margaret Hubertz, care of this magazine.

PAQUETTE, ALBERT.—He is five feet three inches tall, has dark, curly hair, and weighs about one hundred and twenty-five pounds. He was last heard of in 1919, when he was in Oklahoma. His mother died on November 16, 1920, and his brother would like very much to hear from him or from any one who can tell him where he is. Arthur Paquette, care of this magazine.

MUNTON, SERGEANT FRANK.—He was in the Seventy-Ninth Field Artillery, Battery B, and was sent from El Paso, Texas, to Anniston, Alabama, and later went overseas. It was heard that he came back and had married. He was in the regular army ten years. His son and daughter-in-law are very anxious to hear from him, and will be grateful to any one who can tell them where he is. Please write to Mrs. J. H. Munton, 805 Bradley Place, Chicago, Illinois.

BOOTH, E. O.—In 1900 he was a member of Troop G, Fifteenth Cavalry, at Mindanao. Any information about him will be greatly appreciated by W. L. B., care of this magazine.

KEIMS, CHARLES.—When last heard of he was in the navy, stationed at League Island. He is about twenty-nine years old, tall, with dark hair. If he sees this, he is asked to write to an old friend, who will be glad to hear from him or from any one who knows him. D. V. H., care of this magazine.

BUCHLOLTZ, BRUNO.—Any one who knows where he is or who can give any information whatever about him will do a great favor by writing to his uncle, John Wilhelm, 1521 North Street, Flint, Michigan.

JACKSON, GLADYS, formerly of Kansas, Illinois, is asked to write to J. C. A., care of this magazine.

MORRIS, NELLIE.—She is twenty-two years old, five feet two inches in height, and has light hair and blue eyes. She is also known as Mabel Belchor, and when last heard of was in Knoxville, Tennessee. Her home is in Alabama. If she sees this, she is asked to write to her old pal, Dot, care of this magazine.

SOMERS, FRED RAY.—He is a seaman and was last heard of on the schooner "Constitution" at Cleveland, Ohio, on October 25, 1920. He was then second officer. His grandmother died and his father would like to get in touch with him. If he should see this, he is asked to write to his father at Coopersburg, Pennsylvania.

KINSEY, FLOYD.—He was in the marines in Bremerton navy yard, Washington, in 1910-11. His old chum who was on the "Empress of Japan" would like to hear from him or from any one who can give his address. C. A. B., care of this magazine.

BODWELL, J. H., formerly of the Ninth Division, Camp Sheridan, Montgomery, Alabama, and last heard of at Camp Meade, New Jersey. Before entering the army he made his home at Yazoo, Mississippi. Any information as to his present whereabouts will be gladly received by F. Miller, 382 Superior Street, Detroit, Michigan.

HUNT, MRS. DAVID.—She disappeared from her home at Howlette Hill, Onondaga County, New York, about thirty-five years ago, and has never been heard from since that time. Her son is very anxious to know whether she is living or dead, and will be glad to hear from any one who can give him any information about his mother. Austin Frank Hunt, care of this magazine.

McALPINE, MRS. LAVINA.—Her maiden name was Paton and she was last heard of in North Dighton, Massachusetts. Her cousin Al would like to hear from her. Lester McAlpine, care of this magazine.

VOLDENAUR, WILL, whose home is somewhere in Indiana and who, during the war, was on the U. S. S. "Wyoming," is asked to write to the soldier who chummed with him in London, England. Jimmy, care of this magazine.

SHARP, CHARLES L.—He was last heard from in 1912, at 614 Capitol Street, Vallejo, California. He had joined the army at Akron, Ohio, in 1907, and went to Honolulu. He served four years and was waiting for his discharge in 1912 when he was last heard from. He is fifty-five years old, about five feet six inches tall, with blue eyes and brown hair. Any information about him will be gladly received by his mother, Mrs. Mary E. Sharp, 553 Fourth Street, Parkersburg, West Virginia.

WHITE, SAMUEL.—He is the son of Mrs. Mary Kate and Paul White, of Whitesboro, New York, and was born in Utica in 1901. He disappeared from his home in April, 1916, and his family has not heard from him since. He has sand-colored hair, gray eyes, and a light complexion. He sometimes stutters when he talks. His mother has worried very much since he left, and any information about him will bring great joy to her and to all his family. If he sees this, he is asked to write to his sister, Miss Mary White, 11 Watkins Street, Whitesboro, New York.

PELTZLOTTER, MONYA.—He was last heard from thirteen years ago in Buenos Aires, Argentina. He is forty-odd years old and was a tailor. His wife's name is Esther Leah, and they have four girls, the eldest being over twenty years of age. Any information will be gladly received by his sister, Mrs. F. A. Fingerman, 818 South Eighth Street, Camden, New Jersey.

MITCHELL, JOHN M.—He is about forty years old, six feet one inch tall, with brown hair and eyes. He has two crippled fingers and four false teeth, two white ones and a gold one on each side. He was last heard from in Alameda, Texas, in 1914. Any information about him will be gladly received by his daughter, Mrs. Doris Smith, 551 Fourth Street, Parkersburg, West Virginia.

OLSEN, THYRA.—She is about forty-two years old, and was last heard from in Seattle. She is asked to write to C. J. Olsen, care of this magazine.

WILSON, CLEO K., commonly known as "Flunco." He is twenty years old and was last heard of when he was sixteen. Any information as to his whereabouts will be greatly appreciated by his younger stepbrother, Wren Davis. Fort de Lesseps, medical department, Canal Zone, Panama.

FULLER, LEROY, who was last heard of in Pensacola, Florida. If he sees this, he is asked to write to L. Worthington, 3258 Holmes Street, Kansas City, Missouri.

EYRE.—The address is wanted of any of the children of Sam or Annie Eyre, or that of David or Martin Eyre. They were from Ballymena, County Antrim, Ireland, and when last heard of were in Philadelphia. There were two sisters in Belfast, Ellen and Rebeka. Their niece, the daughter of Thomas Eyre, deceased, would like to get in touch with some of them, as she is anxious to hear from some of her father's people on this side of the ocean. Please write to Mrs. Alex. Rathay, Hillier P. O., Prince Edward County, Ontario, Canada.

LOGAN, WILLIS.—He is about twenty-three years old, and when last heard of was in Brawley, California, in 1915. Any one who knows his present address will do a favor by writing to N. Glover, care of this magazine.

ROBERTS, F. F.—He disappeared mysteriously from Atlanta, Georgia, on October 18, 1920, and is believed to be somewhere in Texas. He is thirty-seven years old, five feet four inches tall, with blue eyes, light hair, and dark complexion. Both forefingers are slightly inclined inward. Any one who can tell where he is will greatly oblige by writing to Mrs. F. F. Roberts, 358 East Georgia Avenue, Atlanta, Georgia.

DRUMMOND, FRANK D.—Any one who knew him while he was in Company B, 158th Infantry, or in Company B, 306th Infantry, A. E. F., will do a great favor by communicating with Mrs. L. Pennywell, 322 East Third Street, Cushing, Oklahoma.

VAN KIRK, THEODORE.—He left Wilcox, Pennsylvania, in 1872, and was last heard from at West Oakland, California, in 1885. Nothing has been heard from him since. Any one who knows of him or of his heirs or who can tell something definite of his death will greatly oblige by writing to his sister, who will be most grateful for their kindness. Mary Horton van Kirk, Curtisville, Pennsylvania.

COSTELLO, MILER.—He came from Dublin, Ireland, when he was a young man, and was killed twenty-one years ago. He had some brothers in this country, and his son would be glad to hear from them. Any information that will help him to find his father's people will be most gratefully appreciated. George L. Costello, Remmel, Arkansas.

O'BRIEN, LUKE, about forty-four years old, and his sister **KATHERINE,** now about forty-two, the children of Thomas and Mary O'Brien. Their father is still living in Kansas. Their sister, who has never seen them, would be very happy if she could find them. Her mother died when the child was nine days old. Any news that will help her to communicate with her relatives will be most gladly received and highly appreciated. Mrs. Mary Dougherty, 47 Prince Street, Middletown, New York.

BARROW, OTIS W. and **JAMES S.**—Otis was last heard of in 1919, when he was about to be discharged from the army at Camp Lee, Virginia. He is five feet six inches tall, with brown hair and gray eyes, and is now about twenty-three years old. James is five feet nine or ten inches tall, thirty years old, with gray eyes and hair turning gray. He was getting his discharge from the army at Honolulu, in 1919, when last heard of, and was intending to come back to the States at that time. The brother and sister of these two men will be grateful for any information that will help to find their brothers. Please write to Miss Elsie Barrow, Port Royal, South Carolina.

SKELTON, MRS.—Her maiden name was Sloan. After her marriage she lived in Maunie, Illinois. Her daughter, Mary, was taken by an uncle and aunt to Mount Vernon, Indiana, and was placed by them in the Orphans' Home at Indianapolis. She is married now and would be glad to know something of her people. Mrs. G. M. Redd, Route Number One, Kirklin, Indiana.

WANTED to find any of the family or descendants of **HERMAN OTTO** and his wife, Alvena Querengaesser Otto, who were married in Marshall County, Illinois, in 1865, and left there some time between 1870 and 1880, supposedly for Brooklyn, New York, and who at the time they left had two children, Louis and Dora. Also any relatives of **JOSEPH MARCH,** who, in 1867, married Etta Querengaesser in Marshall County, some years later moved South, and died during the epidemic of 1878 in Vicksburg, Mississippi. Any information will be greatly appreciated by Miss Frances W. March, General Delivery, Shreveport, Louisiana.

KELLNER.—My father left home in Chicago in September, 1894, and was last seen in New York City about four or five years ago. I would like to hear from him, as I am practically alone in the world, and if I can find him I shall be glad to do anything in my power for him, and it would make me very happy to see him again. C. T. F. Kellner, care of this magazine.

PICKERING, RAYMOND W.—He is twenty-six years old, six feet tall, weighs one hundred and seventy-five pounds, and has brown hair and eyes. He has a scar on his left cheek that looks like a dimple when he smiles. He was at Kankakee, Illinois, in 1914, and at Madison, Wisconsin, in February, 1915. Any news of him will be gladly received. Robert L. Bender, 727 Ontario Street, Toledo, Ohio.

KLEINER, MORTON.—He is about five feet eleven inches tall and has dark hair and gray eyes. His home is supposed to be in Richmond, Virginia, but when last heard from he was in New York City, in November, 1920. An old friend would be glad to get his present address. C. Summers, care of this magazine.

JOHANSSON, JOHAN ALFRID.—He left Sweden in 1875. His father is still living and is ninety-one years old. His youngest brother is seeking him and will be most grateful to any one who will help him to communicate with his brother. When last heard from he was somewhere in Illinois. Please write to C. Wilhelm Johansson, 10 Leverett Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

TURNER, GEORGE E.—When last heard from he was in Youngstown, Ohio. Any information about him will be gladly received by a friend. P. L. Vaughen, East Lynn, West Virginia.

REA, FRANCES and CECIL.—Frances, the girl, is fourteen years old, and Cecil, the boy, is twelve years old. They were taken from Hering, Nebraska, on April 25, 1917. They were put in an orphans' home at Omaha, and later were adopted by some people in Nebraska. If any one can tell where they are, it will make the hearts of two old people glad to get news of their grandchildren. Any one who can give any assistance in finding these children will confer a great favor by writing to Grandma, care of this magazine.

ANDERSON, JAMES D.—He has been absent from home for eighteen months, and has only written twice during that time, and does not give any address. His parents are very much worried about him and beg him to write. They are still at the same address. If he will tell them where he is, they will gladly go to see him. If he sees this, they hope he will write at once. D. S. Anderson, 411 Fourth Avenue, Altoona, Pennsylvania.

HALVORSEN, CHRISTIAN.—He was in a hospital in Mobile, Alabama, when he was last heard from, in 1908, but since that time he has been sailing on American ships. His son Rolf is in the United States, and would be glad to hear from him. Any information that will help him to get in touch with his father will be greatly appreciated. Rolf Halvorsen, care of this magazine.

BARTEE, ABRAHAM MARSHALL.—He married Elizabeth Axem Wright, and had two brothers. Information about any member of this family will be greatly appreciated by Mrs. Paul Sheppard, 415 Main Street, Fernville, Georgia.

LINC.—Please write; I want to hear from you. I assure you that nobody touches my mail. Vic, 1920 East Fourth Street, Los Angeles, California.

FERGUSON, ALICE.—She has been missing eleven years and was last heard of at Ironton, Ohio. Any information about her will be very gratefully received by Lizzie Osburne, care of this magazine.

HATTLE, MRS. IDA.—She was in Albuquerque, New Mexico, when she was last heard from, one year ago. She has light-brown hair, blue eyes, and a fair complexion. Her sister is very anxious to hear from her and will be grateful for any news as to her present whereabouts. Mrs. Eunice E. Rainey, 2301 West Tenth Street, Little Rock, Arkansas.

BOWSER, CORA.—She has been missing for five years, and her parents are very anxious about her and wish she would write to them. Any one who knows where she is will do a very great kindness by writing to her mother, Mrs. W. E. Bishop, Herndon, Kansas.

WOECK, Fred Harry.—He left home on the 26th of November, 1920, and mysteriously disappeared. He had served one year in the Quartermaster's Corps on this side of the water. Any one knowing anything about him is earnestly asked to write to his pal, T. A. Cooke, care of this magazine.

RAY, HANLEY.—When last heard of he was in El Paso, Texas, attached to M. T. Co. 401, and is supposed to have enlisted in Denver, Colorado. His old dad would like to get in touch with him. Any information that will help him in his search will be greatly appreciated and gladly received. C. A. Gallant, 467 Tremont Street, Boston, Massachusetts.

BAKER, RUBY.—Please write to your friend of Kaukauna, Wisconsin, who would be glad to hear from you. D. J., care of this magazine.

F. J. C.—Come at once before it is too late. Your mother is very ill and I am helpless, as money from H. did not come, and we are heartbroken. E. F.'s note has been taken care of, and nothing else matters if you come quick or let us know where you are. Please.—El.

ROBINSON, NEWTON R.—He was last seen in Kansas City, Missouri, on October 10, 1919, when he left there to go to New York City. He is six feet three inches tall, weighs two hundred and ten pounds, is twenty-five years old, and has black, curly hair and gray eyes. Any one who can help to find him will receive the grateful thanks of his brother, John S. Robinson, 3615 Garner Avenue, Kansas City, Missouri.

BARNABY, F. N. RAYMOND, formerly of the U. S. S. "Wolverine" in 1908, at which time he had a brother, William, living in Marquette, Michigan, and working as a brakeman for the M. R. Railroad. An old friend would like to hear from him or from any one who can give news of him. F. K., care of this magazine.

SANSON, GEORGE C.—He was last heard of in 1916, when he was in Brooklyn, New York. His daughter, Effie, would like to know what has become of him, and will be most grateful to any one who can tell his present whereabouts or help her in any way to find her father. Effie, care of this magazine.

McBRIDE, G. D.—Any one knowing his present whereabouts will do a great favor by notifying his wife, Mrs. G. D. McBride, Troy Hotel, San Diego, California.

BYRNES, AGNES.—When last heard from she was living on West Washington Street in Los Angeles, California. Any one who knows her present address will do a kindness by sending it on, or if she should see this, she is asked to write to R. G. Seward, care of this magazine.

MILLER, WILLIE and GEORGE.—When these boys were last seen they were in the State school at Owatona, Minnesota. Their sister, who has not seen them for fifteen years, is very anxious to find them, and will be deeply grateful to any one who can give her any information that will help her in her quest, as she has tried every other means without success. One boy has brown hair and eyes, and the other has light hair and blue eyes. Please write to Eliza Miller, care of this magazine.

WYATT, OLIVER.—When last heard of he was in Joplin, Missouri. A friend would like to hear from him, and will appreciate any information that will lead to his communicating with him. Friend, care of this magazine.

MINER, MRS. E. T., and her daughters, Theresa and Nita. A relative who has lost sight of them since 1898 will be most grateful for any information. S. A. Austin, 816 Twentieth Street, Sacramento, California.

BLACKWELL.—I desire to communicate with some of the direct descendants of Cornal or Nathan Blackwell, who lived near the southeast corner of Franklin and Bedford Counties in the State of Tennessee about the year 1837. Box 403, Tullahoma, Tennessee.

WHITTIER STATE SCHOOL.—I am very anxious to correspond with any boy who was at the school from 1893 to 1897, inclusive, but particularly boys of Company "G." My object is the renewal of possible friendships, exchange of experiences after leaving school, et ceters. Boys, no matter where you are now, write to me. W. S. S., care of this magazine.

KACSMAR, JOE.—He is about six feet tall and has chestnut hair and dark-blue eyes, a round face, small nose and dark complexion. There is a scar on the left side of his nose and one on his left hand. There is important news for him from Europe, and any one who knows his address will do a favor by sending it. If he should see this, he is asked to write to Nick Bodner, R. F. D. 57, Box 114, Sharon, Pennsylvania.

KAUFFMAN, MRS. MABEL.—Her maiden name was Reynolds. Her husband was a veterinary surgeon at Humboldt, Kansas. After her divorce from him it was heard that she had married a man named Peterson and went to Rockford, Illinois. Her two daughters, Tassie and Bessie, are married and well, and would be glad to hear from their mother. If she sees this, she is asked to write to her daughter, Mrs. A. F. Hammack, Bentonville, Arkansas.

STORCH, FRANK.—His last address was care of Charles Votapka, Jennings, Kansas. I wish to communicate with him in regard to the death of his brother, a Czecho-Slovak soldier, in Siberia. F. Marsicek, care of this magazine.

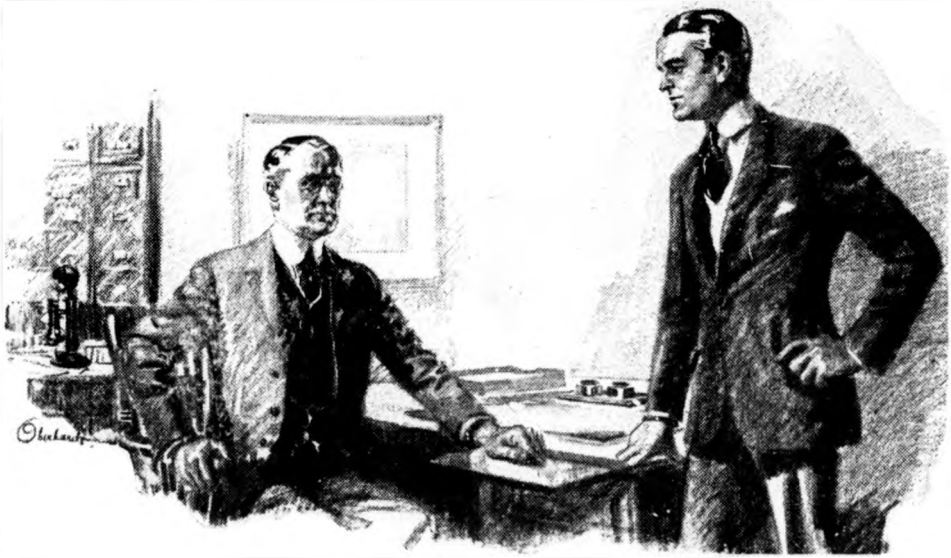
SETHMAN, WILLIAM, who lived in Texas several years ago. A relative would like very much to communicate with him. H. G. S., care of this magazine.

CLAUS, HERMAN A.—When last heard from he was in Philadelphia. His daughter would like to hear from him. R. P. H., care of this magazine.

MARY.—I am back in New York. If you are willing to let the past be forgotten, and begin all over again, I am sure we can be happy and contented. Please write to me and I will answer at once. Daddy Dan, care of this magazine.

SCOTT, JOHN.—He is a miner, fifty-six years old, and was last heard of at Engle and Trinidad, Colorado, in February, 1905. Also **THOMAS SCOTT,** thirty-one years old, last heard of in 1916, and **WILLIAM SCOTT,** twenty-nine years old, who left Liverpool in August, 1919, for demobilization. Any information of these men will be gratefully received by the wife and mother, Mrs. John Scott, care of this magazine.

WOOTEN, AVRIL.—He left his home in McPherson, Kansas, in July, 1920. He is about sixteen years old. His mother is so worried about him that her health is very seriously impaired, and it is feared that she may not live if she does not get news of her son. Any one who knows where he is will greatly relieve her anxiety by writing to Mrs. Lilly Lane, care of this magazine.



"Find the Man!"

"We'll pay him $5,000 a year. Go over our list of employees—pick out those who not only have been doing their work well, but have been studying in spare time getting ready for advancement. That's the kind of man we want for this job and for all of this firm's responsible positions."

Employers everywhere are combing their ranks for men with ambition, for men who really want to get ahead in the world and are willing to prove it by training themselves in spare time to do some one thing well.

Prove that you are that kind of man! The International Correspondence Schools are ready and anxious to help you prepare for advancement in the work of your choice, whatever it may be. More than two million men and women in the last 29 years have taken the I. C. S. route to more money. More than 110,000 others are getting ready right now. Hundreds are starting every month. Isn't it about time for *you* to find out what the I. C. S. can do for you?

Here is all we ask: Without cost, without obligating yourself in any way, simply mark and mail this coupon.

TEAR OUT HERE

INTERNATIONAL CORRESPONDENCE SCHOOLS

BOX 3002-C **SCRANTON, PA.**

Explain, without obligating me, how I can qualify for the position, or in the subject, *before* which I mark X.

- ☐ ELECTRICAL ENGINEER
- ☐ Electric Lighting and Railways
- ☐ Electric Wiring
- ☐ Telegraph Engineer
- ☐ Telephone Work
- ☐ MECHANICAL ENGINEER
- ☐ Mechanical Draftsman
- ☐ Machine Shop Practice
- ☐ Toolmaker
- ☐ Gas Engine Operating
- ☐ CIVIL ENGINEER
- ☐ Surveying and Mapping
- ☐ MINE FOREMAN OR ENGINEER
- ☐ STATIONARY ENGINEER
- ☐ Marine Engineer
- ☐ Ship Draftsman
- ☐ ARCHITECT
- ☐ Contractor and Builder
- ☐ Architectural Draftsman
- ☐ Concrete Builder
- ☐ Structural Engineer
- ☐ PLUMBING AND HEATING
- ☐ Sheet Metal Worker
- ☐ Textile Overseer or Supt.
- ☐ CHEMIST
- ☐ Pharmacy
- ☐ SALESMANSHIP
- ☐ ADVERTISING
- ☐ Window Trimmer
- ☐ Show Card and Sign Ptg.
- ☐ Railroad Positions
- ☐ ILLUSTRATING
- ☐ Cartooning
- ☐ BUSINESS MANAGEMENT
- ☐ Private Secretary
- ☐ Business Correspondent
- ☐ BOOKKEEPER
- ☐ Stenographer and Typist
- ☐ Cert. Public Accountant
- ☐ TRAFFIC MANAGER
- ☐ Railway Accountant
- ☐ Commercial Law
- ☐ GOOD ENGLISH
- ☐ Common School Subjects
- ☐ CIVIL SERVICE
- ☐ Railway Mail Clerk
- ☐ AUTOMOBILES
- ☐ Mathematics
- ☐ Navigation
- ☐ AGRICULTURE
- ☐ Poultry Raising
- ☐ Spanish
- ☐ Teacher
- ☐ Banking

Name_____

Present Occupation_____ Business Address_____

Street and No._____

City_____ State_____

Canadians may send this coupon to the International Correspondence Schools Canadian, Ltd., Montreal, Canada

How In One Evening I Learned The Secret of Drawing

By Walter Sayden

FROM boyhood, I have always wanted to draw things. I suppose there are hundreds of young fellows who feel the same way as I did. I often said that if it were possible, I should choose commercial art as a profession. It was not only the big salaries and independence enjoyed by artists and cartoonists that appealed to me, it was the fascination of the game itself.

But I could hardly draw a straight line. My friends used to have laughing hysterics at my attempts to sketch things.

One morning, as I was coming into town on the eight o'clock train, I met Larry Stafford. I had come into town with him every day for years, usually passing the time discussing the morning papers.

But this particular morning he had a pad and pencil in his hand. He was drawing little pictures of things that looked like a series of small animals.

"What on earth are you doing?" I asked in amazement.

Larry smiled. "Don't be afraid, I am quite sane. These little pictures are part of a scheme of mine. I am illustrating an idea. They are supposed to be a graphic representation of a deal I am putting over. They speak louder than words."

I watched him,—amazed to see that he drew very well indeed. As he proceeded, and the drawings became more lifelike, my curiosity was aroused—I asked him about it.

"Why, I am surprised that you ask me!" he answered. "Look how easy it all is,"—and he quickly sketched a few other figures and grinned at my amazement.

"There is just one little secret of the whole thing, Walter," he added. "I never drew before in my life, and you see,—these little sketches really are not bad, are they? You have always wanted to draw, and even if you don't become an artist, you will find it a mighty convenient thing to know. This secret makes drawing as easy as writing. Let's get together this evening and I'll show you how simple it is. I'll give you a little lesson."

The Greatest Surprise of My Life

That night I was astonished to learn that there was but One Great Rule that covered every sort of drawing. I mastered this rule in just fifty minutes, and in two hours found that I could draw. Think of it! It was almost like magic. I had never before been able to draw a recognizable object.

At this time I was a salesman, so that the only time that I had to practice and apply this secret, this Rule, was in spare minutes when at the office or at home. But I progressed with almost unbelievable rapidity.

My First Real Drawing

One day I was talking with a buyer. Remembering Larry's "idea-pictures," I drew some figures to illustrate the point I was trying to establish. He looked at the pictures and caught my idea at once. Before I left he gave me a larger order than I had ever before received from him. My pictures had put my idea over.

This worked so well, that I tried it again several times, in fact—and each time I got the same results. My pictures seemed to make a stronger appeal than my words, and my sales increased tremendously.

But that was not all. Two weeks later, I overheard a conversation that struck me as amusing. I wrote it down, illustrated it and just for fun, sent it to one of the humorous weeklies. A few days later, to my great surprise and pleasure, I received a check from the art editor and a request for more contributions.

From that time on, I sent in little sketches and jokes, more or less regularly. A few months ago, I received an offer which startled me. The magazine for which I had been drawing wished to take me on the regular staff at a much greater salary than I was then making.

My love of drawing came strongly to the front and, needless to say, I accepted at once, and the first thing I did was to tell Larry Stafford, what his idea had led to. When he heard that I was actually a successful artist on a real magazine he gasped with amazement.

I told him how the same One Great Rule of drawing which had made it easy for him to draw had meant even more to me—and how this simple home-study course by a famous artist, Charles Lederer, which we had gone over that evening, had given me the secret which had meant so much.

Larry laughed at my enthusiasm, but admitted that such a remarkable success as mine was enough to make a man a bit optimistic.

What Everyone Is Saying

I must say the Lederer Art Course surpassed my expectations.

My friends have been amazed at my drawing and I simply cannot help smiling when I watch their attempts at copying the face I have drawn. They cannot make it look anything like it, because they have not what Mr. Lederer gives in his course.

Anybody who is interested in drawing should take this course. It is interesting and even though he or she may never use it professionally, they never will regret sending for it.

Though I am only on the first lesson, I could not help but write you, as I am so amazed at my own drawing.

I never will regret sending for it. The course is worth much more than the small price asked. Paul H. Manning, Headquarters Co., 22nd Infantry, Fort Jay, New York.

"It is just the thing" and a lot more than I expected. I can't see how you ask so little, while others with far inferior courses get from $20 to $60 for theirs.

Robert B. Downs, 725 Coplin Ave., Detroit, Mich.

Easier Than Learning to Operate a Typewriter

Through this amazing system, drawing can be **taught** as easily as anything else. In his simple, home-study course a world-famous cartoonist, Charles Lederer, teaches you to draw just as a business school teaches you to keep books, or operate a typewriter or write shorthand. But it is a hundred times simpler than any of those accomplishments.

And the best part of it all is that the course teaches you to draw so that you can sell your pictures right from the start. That is really the most important part after all. Everyone wants to sell his work, and that is just what you can do, with Mr. Lederer's great secret.

Don't misunderstand, I am not praising myself. The point is this,—if I, who never was able to draw at all, could achieve this really remarkable success, others can do the same or better.

See for yourself,—send for the course and try it out. If you can draw at all you will probably get along even faster than I, and you will find modern commercial art the most fascinating and delightful work imaginable. Remember, that opportunities in this uncrowded field are unlimited. There is a constantly growing demand for cartoonists and illustrators. If you like to draw, or if you **think** that you **would** like to draw, don't miss this wonderful opportunity to learn in an evening or two of your spare time.

Five Days' Free Trial

We want you to prove to your own satisfaction the tremendous value of Mr. Lederer's discovery. It will not cost you one penny. We want you to examine the Entire Course at our expense for five days. If you will just fill out the coupon below, detach it and mail it to us, we will gladly send you the complete course for your approval. We feel sure that when you see the surprising simplicity of this method you will agree with us that it is the greatest discovery ever made in this field.

Look it over, test it out—then if after five days you decide that you want it, send us $5.00. If you do not wish to keep it, return to us and forget the matter.

But act AT ONCE. Learn to draw—whether or not your aim is commercial art. It is a big asset no matter which field you are in. Let us disclose to you the whole secret. Detach the coupon and mail it TODAY.

Independent Corporation
Dept. D-294, 319 Sixth Ave., New York City

Independent Corporation
Dept. D-294, 319 Sixth Ave., New York

You may send me the Course or Courses checked below. Within five days after receipt I will either remail them or send you $5 for each in full payment.

- ☐ Drawing, Art, Cartooning Course ($5) By Chas. Lederer.
- ☐ How to Read Character at Sight ($5) By Dr. K. M. H. Blackford.
- ☐ Roth Memory Course ($5) By David M. Roth.
- ☐ Super-Salesmanship ($5) By Arthur Newcomb.
- ☐ Mastery of Speech ($5) By Frederick Houk Law.
- ☐ How to Write Stories ($5) By Prof. W. B. Pitkin.

NAME .....

ADDRESS .....

..... Detect. Sto. 4-16-21