

Two Blooming

The Adventures of Two Criminals.

BY DOUGLAS WINTON.

Bay Trees.

"I have seen the wicked . . . spreading himself like a green bay-tree."—Psal. xxvii. v. 35.

(Continued.)

For a moment he was in two minds whether or not to blow out his candle. He decided not, as to do so would be to put them on their guard, but placed it well away, partly shaded in a corner. He was thus in the half light, as he stood ready behind the door, yet the candle was there in case he wanted it. Nearer came the steps, and nearer, he grasped the poker tightly, and held his breath. Now they were at the door. He could hear talking, but not the words. And now—surely—but no, he could not be mistaken—they were passing the door!

If the burglars had that night shown themselves the politest of their craft, the master of the house was nearly surpassing them in complaisance; for it was only a sudden sense of the ludicrousness which, coming from him, such a remark would have, that prevented his calling out to remind them that they had forgotten the silver. In any case, he would have been anticipated.

Succeeding a tinkle of falling glass raised by the end of a jemmy breaking a pane of the little window in the passage, which was for light only, and did not open—

"We have been so successful upstairs, Mr. Childs-Gordon, that we are not going to trouble with anything heavy or bulky, like silver. I think you are surprised," pursued Piggy, who was the speaker, "though it is a little too dark to see your features very clearly. At any rate, you seem to be waiting at the door to welcome us?"

"Had you wished to see us?"

"I—er—well, I admit that I expected that you would return."

"Quite so! Well, there is time for a talk. If you will take the trouble to come to the window here, we can have our chat quite comfortably across the bars."

Wondering more and more, but not apprehensive of any personal danger—as, indeed, why should they wish to injure him?—Childs-Gordon obeyed, disembarassing himself of his poker by laying it quietly across an old cushioned chair en route. But Piggy saw the motion, and flashed the little electric light, which, it will be remembered, formed part of the spoils taken from the two professional gentlemen now lying amusing themselves with their own thoughts in the house in Utterson Street. It was a tiny light; but the beam was well concentrated by a bull's-eye lens.

"Ah!" he said quickly, and a trifle roughly, "so that was the sort of welcome you were preparing for us, was it, Mr. Childs-Gordon? That alters matters. I had formed an opin-

ion that our visit might not have been so entirely displeasing to you—in fact, that we might be benefiting each other mutually; but if that sort of reception was in contemplation," he paused. "Look here, Childs-Gordon, be square with us. Were you getting ready to do a bunk or not?"

"Who the devil are you? How do you know my name, and how do you—that is, what the devil do you mean?"

"As for who I am, I was under the impression that I had, already once this night made it clear that I wish to remain anonymous. I do not criticize, for I can make allowance for your agitation; but really, you must see yourself that all the dictates of good form forbid you to press the question. Your name I might have acquired from the Directory. As for what I mean, there, to use a popular expression, we come to business. Allow me to answer the question, in the first instance, by the Socratic method—that is to say, by putting another. Were you interested in the Jamieson Raid?"

"Jamieson Raid! I was an undergraduate at the time, and have never been in South Africa in my life."

"I put my question badly I mean, were you interested in the accounts of the Jamieson Raid, and of the conspiracy which led up to it? If you were, I wonder if it did not strike you as I think nearly every paper commented on the fact—that a business man has a lot to learn, or to speak more exactly, a lot to unlearn, before he is fit to figure as even the most ordinary, third-rate conspirator."

Childs-Gordon began to wonder if he was talking to an amiable lunatic; if so, it was lucky that there were bars between them. Yet he hardly thought that. Then who could he be? He felt an irresistible desire to pluck away the handkerchief that concealed his face, and even made a motion to do so, but restrained himself. For all that, the movement was seen, and the other figure, standing as before, in the background, plucked the white-masked man aside, and whispered something in a low voice. But the latter only laughed, saying—

"It's all right, Jack; he has no pistol, or why the poker? No, it was a little pardonable curiosity, I think; but he will not repeat it."

And Piggy once more crossed his arms on the window-ledge, and prepared to resume the conversation through the broken pane.

Think for a minute. What is the one great guiding principle underlying the work of a well-run office? Order, filing of documents, preservation of all correspondence, press copies of all letters—in a word, records of everything. Now, that sort of thing never does in a conspiracy. A successful conspirator speaks little, and writes a great deal. But how different with a well-trained man of business! Whenever a glimmer of some new plan germinates in his brain, his first, his instinctive idea, is always the same—to jot it down. It was this habit that had a great deal to do with making the Jamieson Raid the fiasco that it was; and it is to this habit that I attribute my finding this paper. It was in the drawer, with the money, by the way, we must thank you for the money, nearly two thousand pounds, all in gold and small notes, easily negotiable—so convenient! Here is the document."

So saying, he held up a piece of paper that looked as if it might be a leaf torn from a pocket book, written on in pencil. This is how it ran—

"Cash in hand about . . . £2,000
Could take away small articles of value, say . . . £500
Could get hold of tomorrow, say . . . £2,000
Could get more; but it would be risky; thus I might get clear with £4,500
In ten days could easily have . . . £10,000

But how to account for Olive's jewels? Sham burglary? No—too risky."

"So you see, sir, I was not talking at random; I had something to go on. Now let us speak frankly. Are we not doing you a good turn by breaking into your house? Do we not, while taking two thousand, give you a chance to raise ten, and therefore benefit you to the extent of eight thousand pounds? I do not wish to pry into your private affairs, but, really, if there is something of value, for the disappearance of which you must account, it seems to me—"

The situation, and especially Piggy's imperturbable gravity, was too much for Childs-Gordon. He fairly burst out laughing.

"Who you are, or what you are, I can't imagine; but, since you press me, yes. We are rogues together, except that you have succeeded, and I have failed."

"But, really, with the traces we shall leave of a bona-fide burglary—"

"Not enough, my dear fellow, not enough. The actions of a man who is going to abscond have to be like Caesar's wife. Now if I could have had one of you to show in the morn-

ing! Known, as I am sure gentlemen of your ability must be known, to the authorities at New Scotland Yard—"

"Now I understand the poker," said Piggy. "Fortunately we can do your business without you having recourse to that instrument. Not another word, my dear sir; I understand your position exactly, and am happy to say that we are in a position to offer you the very assistance of which you stand in need."

"You mean that one of you—began Childs-Gordon, fairly amazed."

"No, we do not carry philanthropy to that extent. Even if we did, or if you had been successful in your poker scheme, the affair would still lack something of the full—of the artistic finish which you so evidently desire. You see, your kind flattery notwithstanding, not only are my friend and I unknown at New Scotland Yard, but we hope to remain unknown there for some time to come. We are burglars; but I assure you that we are not common burglars. But over there in an empty house in Utterson Street, to be reached by a five minutes' clamber over the leads, we have the very article you require. Come Jack, we'll unlock the door, and talk over with Mr. Childs-Gordon over a glass of stout."

Within a comparatively small radius, a good many people had had surprises that night. Some of the surprises were pleasant, some otherwise. Mr. Albert Peachey, for instance, had had several between when, full of hope, in the wake of his pal Bill Womsey, he had entered a certain house in Utterson Street, meditating on the easy and lucrative job that they were going to do in Vigor Square, and the moment when—free, it is true, but with throbbing head and aching limbs—he once more stood on the pavement, where he had been justly, sans jargon, just before daybreak. He wondered where Bill had gone, but he had been put out and gone off before, and slouched away.

But what single individual ever underwent such a whole gamut of surprising experiences, between rise and set of sun, as fell that night to the lot of Mr. William Womsey? When the policeman's lantern—and the policeman's boot—roused him into something like sensibility, his head was still buzzing, partly from the effects of the iron bar, partly owing to much whisky, generously administered by the same Methodist parson who had doored him, preached at him, and generally worried him earlier in the night, and who now, for some reason, wore a handkerchief over his face. Assisting—but only in the French sense—at the great whisky drinking, had been a tramp and a prosperous looking gentleman in a dressing-gown. At least, so he thought, for he could really be sure of nothing. All too soon all impressions seemed to blend and lose themselves in one vague, delicious, golden-tinted, vinous haze. Then came dreams, not quite so golden; dreams of being bumped and lugged across cold stones, and let down steep places with ropes. Then once more oblivion, and—the policeman's boot!

(To be continued.)

NO ARGUMENT NEEDED.

Every Sufferer from Catarrh Knows that Salves, Lotions, Washes, Sprays and Douches do not Cure.

Powders, lotions, salves, sprays and inhalers cannot really cure Catarrh, because this disease is a blood disease, and local applications, if they accomplish anything at all, simply give transient relief.

The catarrhal poison is in the blood and the mucus membrane of the nose, throat and trachea tries to relieve the system by secreting large quantities of mucus, the discharge sometimes closing up the nostrils, dropping into the throat, causing deafness by closing the Eustachian tubes, and after a time causing catarrh of stomach or serious throat and lung troubles.

A remedy to really cure catarrh must be an internal remedy which will cleanse the blood from catarrhal poison and remove the fever and congestion from the mucous membrane.

The best and most modern remedies for this purpose are antiseptics scientifically known as Red Gum, Blood Root and Hydrastin, and while each of these have been successfully used separately, yet it has been difficult to get them all combined in one palatable convenient and efficient form.

The manufacturers of the new catarrh cure, Stuart's Catarrh Tablets, have succeeded admirably in accomplishing this result. They are large, pleasant tasting lozenges, to be dissolved in the mouth, thus reaching every part of the mucous membrane of the throat and finally the stomach.

Unlike many catarrh remedies, Stuart's Catarrh Tablets contain no cocaine, opiate or any injurious drug whatever and are equally beneficial for little children and adults.

Mr. C. R. Rembrandt of Rochester, N. Y., says: "I know of few people who have suffered as much as I from Catarrh of the head, throat and stomach. I used sprays, inhalers, and powders for months at a time with only slight relief and had no hope of cure. I had not the means to make a change of climate, which seemed my only chance of cure."

"Last spring I read an account of some remarkable cures made by Stuart's Catarrh Tablets and promptly bought a fifty cent box from my druggist and obtained such positive benefits from that one package that I continued to use them daily until I now consider myself entirely free from the disgusting annoyance of catarrh; my head is clear, my digestion all I could ask and my hearing which had begun to fail as a result of the catarrh, has greatly improved until I feel I can hear as well as ever. They are a household necessity in my family."

Stuart's Catarrh Tablets are sold by druggists at 50 cents for complete treatment and for convenience, safety and prompt results they are undoubtedly the long looked for catarrh cure.

The mother—Now be careful, my son, and don't work too hard at college or you may injure your health.
The son—Don't worry, mother. Under the new football rules there isn't half so much work required as formerly.—(Chicago Daily News.)

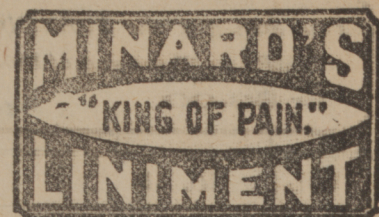
THE SOLDIER OF TODAY.

The Man Behind the Gun
A Man Worth Knowing.

(Gen. Charles King, in The World Today.)

Afoot or on horseback, regular or volunteer, as you see him today, our man behind his gun is the man worth knowing. Take him all in all, and a physical sounder and morally straighter soldier doesn't live or dwell on the face of the globe. Like English Tommy Atkins, as well as the sailor jacks of Anglo-Saxon blood, he has his faults and limitations. He comes higher than do the rankers of other lands, but he fights harder. With fewer numbers, he accomplishes greater results. He has patience illimitable in face of a turbulent mob of his own people, but he pulls trigger quick, sudden and sure when he get the word. He is the bugbear of demagogue orators before election, but the sure defence of society at any time. He presided over Chicago's early infancy, and thrice since the great Civil war has he come with fixed bayonets to stand between her and anarchy. He is proud of his flag and his country. He is stout hearted, clean-limbed, law abiding, self-respecting as a rule. He wants to be held and hailed as a man not a boy. He devotes reasonable time and thought to his drill, but he delights in healthful, hearty, outdoor sports, baseball, football and polo preferred. He sometimes slights the little niceties of military character and courtesies, but he will cheerfully submit to the sternest discipline, the hardest privations, the heaviest trials when he knows the need; and, finally, when it comes to fighting he will charge with finer fury and enthusiasm or hold his ground with more grim, dogged tenacity, and all the time shoot with greater skill and precision than any other man-at-arms of all the vaunted legions of Europe. His one great wish seems to be that the people he so loyally serves might know him as he is—a man to depend on in fair weather, or foul, a soldier to be proud of at all times."

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