

Two Blooming

The Adventures of
Two Criminals.

BY
DOUGLAS WINTON.

Bay Trees.

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

(Continued.)
CHAPTER IX.

The "Sofian"—Elaborate Preparations—A Bad Slip.

In St. Thomas' Hospital, at Lambeth, is a private ward, where patients can be received on payment. And here Piggy was being nursed into convalescence, and beguiled the long hours with a manual of navigation, and a Spanish grammar. Meantime Jack lay low by day at the studio, and let his beard grow. It looked as if his beard would have lots of time to grow, as Piggy had a good deal worse a leg than he had supposed. In fact, the doctors had talked of amputation, but Piggy put a flat veto on the idea. He was determined to get well; but he was equally determined to get well a biped, and not a uniped; and, in accordance with the modern theory that mind controls matter, get well a biped, though slowly, he did. But it was very slow. The doctors said the wound had assumed a very sullen complexion—doctors' talk in describing such things can be nearly as picturesque on occasion as the market reports which assume one that flour, though dull, is not without a hopeful tendency, or that at last a silver lining may be discerned to the clouds which so long have lowered on land!

When a hansom did at last convey Piggy, cured, though pretty shaky yet on his pins, to the door of the studio at Kew, winter had passed, and spring was already merging into summer.

"Why, Jack," he said, as he surveyed his bearded friend, "you look like an Australian bushman. How have you been amusing yourself? You know, except the note in which you told me that you had recovered the satchel, I know nothing."

"Rowing every evening," said Jack. "Carpentering and learning Spanish all day."

"And the craft?" asked Piggy.

"The craft is to be launched next week. She will then go Manton's Yard, at Yarmouth, to be rigged. By the way, Piggy, there is not too much spare cash. We have got out hundred; but that is about the total assets of the firm, and Manton's bill is going to be a stiff one."

"Then I shall have to take a trip to Paris with a few of the smaller of the Tony Croft stones," said Piggy. "It would never do to be pushed for money just now. While I think of it, let's look at 'em; I deserve it, after what I've been through."

Jack took down a carboy from the rack, a carboy which had all the appearance of containing sulphuric acid. But it was a carboy which

took to pieces, the neck part coming away from the lower half, which remained, a glass bucket, encased in Wicker-work. He then spread out a rug, and was about to tilt the contents out on it when Piggy stayed him.

"Not here," he said, "in the cellar. Then we shall be safe from the slightest chance of peepers."

So they descended into the cellar, where Jack spread out the rug on the floor, and, on to the rug, poured out a heap of glittering jewelry.

For some minutes they feasted their eyes in silence. "Well, what do you think of them, Piggy, now that you have leisure to look at them altogether?" asked Jack.

"Put 'em back," said Piggy. "I shall get used to the idea in time; but, at present, I confess it gives me a kind of suffocating, Monte Cristo sort of feeling. I suppose I am a bit weak yet. But, Jack, we must be doubly careful now not to let anything go wrong. We must not risk losing such a prize as that."

Piggy did not remain at the studio but lived in his apartment in Radcliffe Street. A retired ship captain came daily to coach him in navigation, and a cadaverous-looking, but very grand-mannered, Spanish gentleman to teach him Spanish. Also, his health was not yet entirely re-established and he wished to see a doctor in when he wished. All these visitors calling at the studio in quiet Kew might have attracted too much attention. So he contented himself with going there two or three times a week, generally by water, and putting in a few hours' work with the jeweller's tools and melting pot. Once he made a short, continental trip, with the result that his banking account leaped suddenly, on his return, from being only just in credit, to a balance of over a thousand pounds. Soon after Jack, under his assumed name of John Henderson—he had a regularly made-out sub-lease of the studio in that name, ready to show in case of enquiries—paid a visit to Yarmouth, where he inspected his purchase, settled the riggers, and other bills, had her formally registered under the name of the Sea Queen and engaged a trustworthy old sailor or ship-keeper, to take charge of her, until he should be ready to put her in commission. When he returned to Kew, the two friends spent a long evening with the Army and Navy Stores List, making an estimate of the provisions and other necessities that would be required for three people for a year's voyage. As Piggy said, they might not be a year, but it was no harm to be on the safe side. They often had long talks over,

and inspections of, a big packing case which Jack was making. That is to say, he was putting it together; but many of the parts were much too intricate for Jack's skill—or even Piggy's—and these were made outside by various model and pattern-making firms, from drawings, and delivered at Piggy's lodgings in Ratcliffe street and thence conveyed by boat to the studio. A packing case does not sound as if it ought to need all this elaborate care in construction; but then this particular packing case was a packing case only in outward appearance; internally it was more like a conjurer's cabinet.

One evening Piggy appeared when he was not expected, Jack has just finished a two hours' read of Don Quixote in Spanish, for a good deal of Piggy's doggedness had fallen on Jack. He had closed his dictionary, lain down his pipe, given his second yawn and his first stretch preparatory to turning in, when he heard the grating of a boat. Quick as thought he had both lamps out, and stood ready, pistol in hand; but almost directly came their agreed-on signal, namely two light knocks, one heavy, a pause, and then a second heavy, and the sound of Piggy's key in the lock.

"I have some news," he said, "as he entered, while Jack was re-lighting the gas, 'too important to keep till morning. You see, to-day is Wednesday, and I have just learned that next Monday the Sofian takes half a million in gold from London to Rio Janeiro.'"

"The Sofian?"

"Sister ship to the Belgradian. Every bolt, plate, and nut on the Sofian is an exact duplicate of the corresponding bolt, plate, or nut on the Belgradian. Anything we want to inspect, or measure, we can see on board the Belgradian, which ship, by the way is now in dry dock, and I have lately become bosom friends with one of her officers; it will be just the same as if we went on board the Sofian, with the added advantage of not awakening any suspicion."

"But," said Jack, "I think we know everything we need know."

"So do I," replied Piggy; "but there is nothing like making certain, so we'll go on board to-morrow. But I hope we shall find nothing to alter in our plans, because time is short."

"Then we'll waste no more time," said Jack; "but have a full dress rehearsal to-night."

And so saying, he took off her coat, stepped over to the packing-case, and having given a few peculiar pulls and wrenches with the pliers to various apparently ordinary nails used in its construction, the whole front fell out on hinges, and he stepped inside. Piggy was now about to help him;

but Jack stopped him.

"If it works right I ought to be able to do everything myself," he said, "let me try."

From each of the eight corners came a strong steel chain, this chain having let into its length two inches of very strong steel spiral spring. All these eight chains were attached to staples on the outer circumference of a leather-covered and padded steel hoop, just big enough for Jack to sit down into it. As soon as he had wedged himself in this loop, he proceeded to fix himself as follows: First, he pulled a thick indiarubber cross-brace over each shoulder. These braces were already attached, back and front, to the ring in which he sat; however, after they were in place, to avoid any chance of their slipping off, there was a tiny steel chain provided, which he hooked from one to the other across his breast. Last, and by far the hardest thing he had to do, he got his feet into some very cleverly arranged stirrups, also elastic, attached to two of the corner chains. His arms, it will be seen, thus remained free. Various pulleys, springs, and bolts, as well as the switch of a tiny dry-battery electric light, were within reach of his hands; or, to steady himself, he could grasp two handles on two of the upper supporting chains, corresponding indeed to the stirrups for his feet.

So far he had done no more than he had already done a dozen times before in the course of putting the machine together. Now, however, he was about to make a more realistic trial.

"As soon as I shut up, Piggy," he said, when he had finally fixed himself to his satisfaction, "just put forth your muscle, and bowl the case about any way you can—side-ways, endways, upsidown, crash-bang, any way you like. If this case is built right, I ought to stand it without inconvenience; if there is anything wrong, it is better that we should have our accident here than on board the Sofian. If I want you to stop, I'll call out. Now, off with your coat, Piggums, and show what sort of a baggag-smasher you'd make. Ta, ta!"

And Jack drew up the front of box, which instantly fixed itself in position by two powerful steel spring bolts, and to all appearance the packing-case was a rough packing-case again, and nothing more.

Then did Piggy mightily exert himself; over with a thud to the right, over to the front, and quickly over again, and once more over, three-quarters head of over heels for Jack! Then backwards, and to the right, a rough lug round, so as to get more space, and then four times backwards, though with shifting of direction, because of the size of the room. And so on.

"Had enough?" asked Piggy, panting, and the perspiration streaming down his face.

"Go on, I like it," came Jack's reply, a trifle muffled and woody.

"Besides, I think it does my liver good."

"Damn your liver," growled Piggy, laughing in spite of himself; "do you want to kill me? You forgot I'm not

so very long out of hospital."

"Poor Piggums! Well, just put me head down, and leave me so; I want to try if I find any difficulty in extricating myself like that."

"Hang the chap! What a glutton it is! Well, rap with your knuckles on the head part then; I've forgotten which it is."

So Jack rapped, and Piggy once more turned the case over; then resumed his coat, and set to work to mix himself a drink. Before the cork of the soda-water bottle had popped, a side of the box had opened, not hinged down this time, but opened in panels, which slid back, one behind the other, and Jack, a little ruffled, but otherwise none the worse, emerged into the room.

"Capital!" he said. "So long as they stop short of breaking up the box, I give them leave to chuck me about any way they like."

(To be continued.)

FOOD OF MAINE LUMBERMEN.

Unique Bulletin Prepared by Director Woods of the U. S. Experiment Station.

Washington, D. C., Nov. 21.—A unique bulletin on Studies of the Food of Maine Lumbermen, has just been published as a bulletin of the Agricultural department. It was prepared by Director C. D. Woods of the Maine Experiment station and E. R. Mansfield, assistant chemist at the station. The studies are largely of a scientific character but in the course of the 60 printed pages, there are some interesting descriptions of the life of a lumberman in the Maine woods. The illustrations of which there are several in line half tones, will be recognized as very characteristic. There are pictures of a lumber camp, of a bean hole, "where beans are cooked," and of groups of lumbermen at table.

The conclusions indicate the amount of protein and fat and carbohydrates consumed by lumbermen when engaged in certain kinds of work. The scientists say that the large quantities of food consumed by lumbermen are undoubtedly due to the severe labor in the open air and the cold to which the men are exposed. Whenever the labor was less continuous, as in the case of teamsters, the amount eaten became noticeably less. The experiments also demonstrated that men driving the river, hard as that work is, do not eat less than when cutting in the woods.

The cost of food per person per day during the experiments was from 15.1 to 28.6 cents and averaged 23.5 cents. On an average about two thirds of the total expenditure was for animal food, and about one-third for vegetable food. A number of tables of statistics and much other matter of a kindred character are published in the bulletin, officially known as "Bulletin No. 149."

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One grain of the active principle in Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets will digest 3,000 grains of meat, eggs or other wholesome food, and this claim has been proven by actual experiment in the following manner: Cut hard-boiled eggs into very small pieces, as it would be if masticated, place the egg and two or three of the tablets in a bottle or jar containing warm water, heated to 98 degrees (the temperature of the body), and keep it at this temperature for three and one-half hours, at the end of which time the egg will be as completely digested as if it would have been in the healthy stomach of a hungry boy.

The point of this experiment is that what Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets will do to the egg in the bottle it will do to the egg or meat in the stomach, and nothing else will rest and invigorate the stomach so safely and effectually. Even a little child can take Stuart's Tablets with safety and benefit if its digestion is weak and the thousands of cures accomplished by their regular daily use are easily explained when it is understood that they are composed of vegetable essences, aseptic pepsin, diastase and Golden Seal, which mingle with the food and digest it thoroughly, giving the overworked stomach a chance to recuperate.

Diets never cures dyspepsia, neither do pills and cathartic medicines, which simply irritate and inflame the intestines.

When enough food is eaten and promptly digested there will be no constipation, not in fact will there be disease of any kind, because good digestion means good health in every organ.

The merit and success of Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets are world-wide and they are sold at the moderate price of 50 cts. for full-sized package in every drug store in the United States and Canada, as well as in Europe.



"Why, Mary," said her mistress, "I told you to make up my room an hour ago and here it is in terrible disorder."

"Yes, mum, and I did," said Mary, "but the master came in to put on a clean collar, mum, and he lost the stud."

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Alike though friends pursue him or grow cold— That man the crown of liberty has won.

And fancy not that feeling and the thrill Of love are absent from him. Infinite The love that waits the calling of his will.

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