

Two Blooming

The Adventures of
Two Criminals.

Bay Trees.

BY
DOUGLAS WINTON.

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

(Continued.)

"Well," yawned Jack, "I confess that the idea of a rest cure is a very pleasant one."

"Then that's what we'll do," said Piggy.

Latterday popular fancy loves to picture the great police detective as a wonderful being of brilliant inspirations and pitiless logic. As a matter of cold, prosaic fact, the prime quality for a successful police officer is the very unromantic one of patient, plodding industry. Tom Robbins, who had been put on to the job of watching Paardeberg Mansions, on the chance that Demerse, Tony Croft, society robber, would some time yield to that curious influence which brings one, in spite of danger, to take a look at a place one has known and lived in. had been selected for these very qualities. It must not be supposed that the Metropolitan police can keep a watch like this on the haunts of every criminal; that would, of course, be out of the question. But the Tony Croft robbery was so big, and the case so peculiar in every way, that night after night, day after day, the authorities considered it worth keeping a man employed on nothing else but to watch the approaches to Demerse's old rooms, which was, in fact, the only clue they had.

For the more the Commissioner and Inspector Mackay, who had the case in his special charge, examined Jack's record, the more they felt sure that they were dealing with a criminal of a vastly different sort from the ordinary society man gone wrong. Generally, in the case of a young man of Demerse's upbringing, his haunts and associates furnish a clue. There is some great friend, male or female, to whom he must bid adieu before he flees the country, a favourite corner of the old home park where he buries the swag, or something of that sort. So far as could be discovered, Demerse had neither haunts nor associates. He had gone through the educational course usual to a young man of his station, then utterly disappeared; two years later he had suddenly cropped up from nowhere, to take rooms at the Paardeberg, and make the acquaintance of the American millionaire Van Coortvelt, and, almost directly afterwards, in company with an accomplice even more elusive than himself, to carry out one of the biggest, boldest jewel robberies known to the annals of crime; then—again to disappear! The Commissioner said:

"That young gentleman is a criminal of no common kind, Mackay. The sooner we lay hands on him the better, for unless we can put him

where he will have other employment, you may be sure that he will soon be heard of again."

So a good man was put on day duty, and Tom Robbins, the most careful officer of the whole force, on night watch in Ratcliffe Street. It was a message from the latter that brought Inspector Mackay in hot haste to Ratcliffe Street the night that Jack and Piggy made their escape, as has been related, over the roofs.

He found Robbins and a man in uniform, the regular constable of the beat, standing together on the doorstep of No. 16, and took their report.

"Well, Robbins," he said, "I am going to pay you the compliment of breaking into this house on the strength of what you have told me. If it had been anyone else who had said that Demerse had come along and walked straight into this house, I wouldn't have believed them. We did hope for a sight of him strolling along, and taking one last glance at his old crib; but to come briskly along, and walk into a house close by we didn't expect that to happen here any more than in any other part of London. You are perfectly sure it was him?"

"Not to swear to, sir, or I should have arrested him right off. The big beard he had would be nothing to me if I had ever seen the man, and knew the look of his eyes; but with only a photograph to go on—"

The Inspector nodded.

"So I let him go up the steps. But I got another look sideface as he went up; and, if the photograph we have is a good one, that was Demerse and no one else who went in here, sir."

"They can't be up to no good, sir," said the constable in uniform, "whoever they are. When first we rang we heard a noise distinct. Since then there 'asn't been a sound."

"That is true enough," said the Inspector. "Now Robbins, let's see what sort of a cracksmen you are? That window on the right looks inviting."

Admittance once obtained, it was a comparatively easy task to follow Piggy and Jack's movements, and trace the route of their departure by the roof.

"Gone!" said the Inspector sadly, as he at length descended, after an excursion on the tops of the houses, into Piggy's bedroom. "Utterly vanished and gone! But it's something to have had even a glance at him. We know he's in London, at all events."

"And has grown a beard," said Tom Robbins.

"Yes, either that, or that he sometimes wears a false one," said the Inspector. "And now to try if we can't find out a little more? This gentleman, who seems such a friend of his, is going to find his possessions rather tumbled about tomorrow, I am afraid. Well, he should keep better company. Robbins, while I start looking, just go round to the station and learn what is known there about the tenant of No. 16."

Then Inspector Mackay started, to use his own expression, to turn over the place—in plain English, to ransack it so thoroughly, that not a pin's head could escape the thoroughness of his search. And yet, except to confirm him in his suspicion that the owner, like his friend, was a crook, and a crook of the highest and most dangerous class, there was not a single clue forthcoming. Burglars' tools were there, not many, and those that were there were far from Piggy's best, which latter he always kept at the studio; but burglars' instruments, valuable as evidence, are no good as a clue; the makers thereof do not put their marks on. Disguises there were also, but never the name and address of a tailor. Nor was there one single scrap of manuscript, for Piggy had lived always ready for instant flight.

Every scrap of written paper was kept in a certain drawer, and every scrap not carried off had been burned. Even his Spanish exercises were written, not in a book, but on loose sheets, and had been burned with the rest. A copy of Don Quixote, however, and a Spanish dictionary lay on the table.

Inspector Mackay had to confess that he was baffled. Except that the tenant of No. 16 was a crook with a taste for the study of modern languages, there was absolutely no clue. And yet it could not be denied that he was far more hopeful now of the ultimate capture of the Tony Croft robbers than he had been before being called to No. 16, Ratcliffe Street. It was one more end of the net secured; gradually they would get others, then make their haul. Just at present the Inspector's greatest hope lay in an application of the ancient, but always efficient, mouse-trap device. A man would be left in the house, and all correspondence seized, and all visitors, if any questioned and shadowed.

Not that he expected visitors, certainly not criminal visitors; for, with several hours at disposal, this tenant would be a poor pal if he did not manage to get in a warning to anyone who was likely to come, that the house was no longer a safe meeting place. But correspondence, that was different, there was more

hope there; however clever he might be, he could not stop letters already in the post. The Inspector had just decided on this, and that Robbins should be the man, when the latter returned with his report from the police-station.

"Peter Porson, sir," he said. "Youngish man, apparently a gentleman, supposed to be a journalist, or something in that line. Out a great deal; when at home lives very quietly; away for several months last winter. They don't seem really to know much about him, seems to keep himself very much to himself like."

The Inspector smiled.

"The sort of description that fits a fly cracker from the crown of his head to the heels of his boots," he said; "and yet we mustn't blame 'em too much at the station, for it equally fits thousands and thousands of honest men. I should not wonder if this is the very accomplice in the Tony Croft business. But we mustn't go forming theories—facts are what we want. Now, Robbins, we are going to take you off the street—I'm afraid that your usefulness there is at an end for a time—and put you in this house."

Then the Inspector went home to finish his interrupted night's rest before beginning the day's regular work.

Apparently Mr. Peter Porson did not have a large correspondence, nor many friends; and for several days Mr. Robbins had nothing to do but to sit in an armchair and read books on chemistry, which seemed to form the major part of the library in the upper part of No. 16, Ratcliffe Street. It was the fourth day when there came a ring, and the quick descent of the postman.

"Bah! a circular," said Mr. Robbins. "Well, let's look at it."

It was indeed acircular of Messrs Hamel and Mathews, carriers and furniture movers, special attention given to the transhipment of luggage at the docks, goods forwarded to any part of the world at lowest charges, Ec., Ec., Robbins read it through slowly; then read it through again; then he looked at the back of it; next held it up to the light; finally he lit a gas, and warned the paper near the flame.

"Nothing, apparently," he said. "Well, I suppose it is a genuine circular."

He subjected the envelope to much the same scrutiny to which he had already subjected the enclosure, but equally without result. It was an ordinary commercial envelope, unstuck, addressed in a common clerk's handwriting, and stamped with a halfpenny stamp.

"Well," said Mr. Robbins, "this may lead to something, or it may not. Anyway, my business is to let the Inspector see it at once."

One Came Out After the Other. Suffered With Boils for Six Months.

Mr. Elie Braizeau, Meadowside Station, Ont., tells of his experience with Boils and

Burdock Blood Bitters.

He says:—In the Spring of 1889 I was continually troubled with boils—one coming after another for about six months. I suffered terribly, and was in a very bad condition. In August I got a bottle of Burdock Blood Bitters, and began to feel better after taking it. I kept on until I had used five bottles, and can truthfully say that I was cured, and have remained so ever since. I have not had the least sign of a boil."

There is nothing like Burdock Blood Bitters for bad blood, boils, pimples, dyspepsia, indigestion, or any trouble arising from the Stomach, Liver, Bowels or Blood.

he had heard his story. "Well, a circular is better than nothing." The Inspector did not waste any time on trying for ciphers or sympathetic inks perhaps he had an intuition that the paper was really nothing more than it pretended to be, a genuine trade circular; perhaps he was old enough in his profession to know that it generally pays to try the prosaic, commonplace, obvious course first, before launching out into dramatic Sherlockholmsian frills. However, this did not prevent his studying the circular intently.

"This is a circular," he said, after a while, "but it's a very different kind from a coal or wine circular."

"Ye-es, sir," said Robbins, who did not quite see what his superior officer was driving at.

"To begin with, it comes through the post," said the Inspector, who saw that his subordinate did not understand. "That's one point, and a big one. A coal circular, left by hand, would have meant nothing, except that a man had been told to cover that street. But this, coming addressed, and through the post, like that, means that Hamel & Mathews have this Mr. Porson's name on their books."

"The Directory?" hazarded Mr. Robbins.

"(To be continued.)"

CALF COST HIS LIFE. Wyoming Ranchman Murdered for Stealing Another Man's Stock.

Sun Dance, Wyo. 29.—The mystery of the disappearance of James Garrett, a prominent ranchman, on Oct. 19, has been cleared up by the confession of Willie Erickson, a 19 year old boy. Erickson confessed that on Oct. 19, while Garrett was driving off a calf belonging to Erickson he was met by Otto Erickson, who commanded him to release the calf, and attempted to shoot him with a rifle. The boy was too quick and shot Garrett three times. Garrett fell from his horse, still alive, and Erickson dragged him into some bushes and there cut his throat with a knife, despite his appeals for mercy. Later in the day Otto returned to the body and, tying a rope to the feet dragged it some distance to a new hiding place. Two days later Willie and Otto packed the body on a horse and moved it four miles, depositing it where it was found by a searching party.

BULGARIA IS ARMING.

Sofia, Bulgaria, Nov. 30.—The National Assembly behind closed doors today discussed and approved the demand of the war minister for an extraordinary credit of \$3,400,000 for the purchase of 82 field and nine mountain batteries and for the extension of the coast defences on the Black Sea.

When All Others Fail

To relieve constipated headache just try Dr. Hamilton's Pills of Mandrake and Butternut. Wonderfully prompt, and never cause griping pains. For headache and biliousness use only Dr. Hamilton's Pills. Price 25c.

I suppose a statesman must give a great deal of attention to books," said the novice.

Well, answered Senator Sorghum, he has to keep a check book. But it is just as well for him to be a little careful about what he puts down in his ledger.

\$2.75--Up to Date Ladies' Skirt--\$2.75

Special Seasonable Sale of Ladies' Tailor Made Skirts, newest materials, first class fit and finish, every skirt is beautifully tucked and corded, making a really elegant skirt, we have 240 of these for sale, original prices were \$3.00, \$3.50, \$4.00 and \$4.50, and we purpose offering as a leader, and for a few days only at one price and one price only, your choice for \$2.75 each, these skirts will be on view in our windows on Saturday 19th inst., when you can judge for yourselves if this is not a bonafide offer of extraordinary value combined with low prices it is hard to beat.

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