

Two Blooming

The Adventures of
Two Criminals.

Bay Trees.

BY
DOUGLAS WINTON.

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

(Continued.)
CHAPTER IV.

Planning the Campaign.

They had slept the clock round. And now that it was again dark on the following evening, Piggy still lay in bed, smoking and planning. Jack, who had occupied a mattress on the floor, had sallied out at four o'clock, declaring his intention of ordering clothes, buying a portmanteau of linen, and spending a couple of hours at a Turkish Bath and an hour with a manicure. At the Uterson Street house he had got raiment, respectable enough to let him enter a West End shop without being too much stared at, and he was anxious to complete the transformation. The practical Piggy, who saw the advantage of having a show member in the firm, had grunted approval, and turned over for another snooze. Now he was revelling in a first pipe after waking, and, as we have said, was planning.

For Piggy was shrewd as well as bold. Now that he had definitely embraced the career of up-to-date highwayman, and drawn his friend into partnership with him, he was going to leave nothing undone to make their joint enterprise a success. The firm certainly started with one great point—the greater because unusual in such enterprises—in its favour. Each associate could rely implicitly on the other's loyalty. More, the fact that Jack was concerned as well as himself acted as a decided stimulus on Piggy. For Jack's sake he would take precautions that he would never have taken for himself. If only his moral side had been even rudimentarily trained—but this is the story of what they did not of what they might have done.

It did not take long to convince Piggy that they must seek other quarters. His Soho attic had done well enough for his old life of reading, slinking about, and dreaming away the time, varied by certain not very refined varieties of dissipation, and a rather intermittently pursued hobby of chemical investigation. But, as a base for his and Jack's future operations, it would never do. Where, then, should they go, and how should they establish themselves? This was the question with which, with the help of tobacco, he now set himself to grapple. Gradually ideas began to come; then, from the germinative, his plans passed little by little to the formative, and finally, just as his second pipe was finished, to the concrete stage. He sprang from his bed, dressed, and sallied out.

It was eleven o'clock before he returned, and found Jack, whom he had given a spare key, sitting wait-

ing for him. But a very different Jack from the dirty, weedy tramp who had eaten broken vitals and smoked "toppers" on a bench in Trafalgar Square. Barber, manicure, masseur, and haberdasher had done their work, and a good dinner at the Holborn had put on the finishing touch.

"Richard is his bally self again, I see," said Piggy.

"So, so! I can't really show, of course, till I get my clothes; these beastly things are an awful fit, and made by some cheap city tailor. However, I've ordered four suits, one of them to be finished right off, and be home to-morrow."

"You didn't give this address, did you?"

"No, I confess that I was in such a hurry to get something decent on my back that I forgot all about that. It didn't matter about the address from a point of view to a reference; I avoided that by paying beforehand, but it did hummock me a bit when the man asked where the clothes were to be sent. I had to say something and to say it without seeming to hesitate too much, so I said the first thing that came into my head. I gave my own name, and the Langham; and went straight there and reserved a room for to-morrow night. Any harm done?"

"No, I don't think so," replied Piggy, reflectively. "In fact, that rather squares than not with what I have arranged."

"Let's hear."

"Well, while you've been engaged in putting frills on the outer man, I've been working—partly thinking, partly acting—in the firm's interest. I'll make some coffee while I tell you about it."

"To begin with," he said, as he lit the oil stove, "we can't stay here; it would never do. And I don't suppose you're anxious to?" he added, looking up questioningly at Jack.

"Well, no. I've been so long in the gutter that I confess a little taste of the amenities of life would be a pleasant change. I'll rough it, anyhow and anywhere for business, but when it's not necessary—"

"Exactly," replied Piggy. "And on this occasion, not only is it not necessary to continue living like this, but a change is really required for our purposes."

"Where shall we live?"

"If by that you mean that you suppose that we are to live together, I don't think so. In fact, the more we spread ourselves out, so to speak, the better. There might easily come a time when an extra bolting hole, where one of us could get money and supplies, would mean the difference between liberty and prison."

"Ugh!" said Jack, surveying his nails, on which a young lady at Truefitt's had been exercising her muscle, and had really got to a very creditable state. "For goodness sake let's keep out of that!"

"We're going to if I can manage it," said Piggy; "but nothing was ever gained by blinking facts. How ever, to continue. What I would like to find would be a house of flats, after the French style."

"But there are heaps of them. Why at Knightsbridge—"

"No, Jack, those are only after the French style to the extent that they are let in flats. But the flats are all swell flats, and the tenants swell tenants—more or less, anyway. Now, a real French apartment house is very different from that. There are apartments in it of all prices, and tenants of all ranks. Rich society people live on the first floor, above them lawyers and doctors, and above them again chimney-sweeps and cabmen. Now our insular notions don't stand that; we still think of the staircase as being somehow private. A Frenchman, on the other hand, considers the public staircase of his house to be simply a continuation of the street, and doesn't care my flats for professional men, and in other neighborhoods we have tenement houses for the artisan class; but we never house the two classes under the same roof."

"Why did you want that so much?"

"Because you might have played the gay young man about town on the first floor, with an emergency exit, or ingress, over the back balcony, while I could have been a grubby journalist or author, or anything you like, in an attic, and having my emergency exit on to the roof. We could have judged by circumstances whether we would let on that we knew each other or not. That was my first idea, but it can't be done, and on the whole I am not sure that I haven't managed better. I bought half a dozen papers, and read over the flat advertisements in them while I got something to eat at an A. B. C. shop. I made a selection of half a dozen or so, more or less close together, and went off to inspect. No, I did not go in and ask to see; in fact, as you so politely reminded me last night, I scarcely look the sort of tenant they want. I just mounded about, and made my inspection from outside. The decision I have come to is that my friend, Mr. Jack Demerse, had better take up his quarters at a place called Paardsberg Mansions, in Chelsea, or perhaps a little beyond."

"New place, I suppose; never heard of it; but no doubt you have your

reasons. What are the advantages?"

"One advantage is that it is a new place, only just open. You will be able to pick and choose. Then there are private gardens, with another gate into the street, of which all the tenants have keys; that gives an extra entrance, without any scaling walls or roofs, and, what is more, a very private one. Also Paardsberg Mansions are situated in one of those curious neighbourhoods that one comes across in big towns where the slums run right up against a fashionable street. Two steps take you from the slummiest of slums right into the midst of rank and fashion."

"Draw it mild, Higgy! Rank and fashion in Chelsea!"

"Well, comparative rank and fashion, at all events; rich people with pair-horse barouches and electric broughams, and so on."

"And this juxtaposition of electric broughams and costermongers' barrows will be good for us?"

"One can easily imagine situations arising where it would be convenient. It is going to be specially convenient for us, because while you inhabit your flat in Paardsberg Mansions, I shall only be a hundred yards or so away from you, established in the upper part of a little house in Ratcliffe Street."

"A slum?"

"Well, no; it would scarcely be fair to call Ratcliffe Street a slum. It may rather be defined as a modest highway, running through the slums. I have taken the top half of No. 16. The house belongs to a bookbinder, who uses the lower part and basement only. I saw a card up announcing unfurnished rooms, went in, found him just shutting up shop, saw the place, took all he had to let, paid a deposit, and even, on my way home, ordered a little furniture to be sent in."

"Give your own name?"

"Yes, it's as good as any other. Time enough to take aliases when we have to. Well, as I say, this place, No. 16, Ratcliffe Street, is only about a hundred yards from the house where I want you to take a flat. From the back windows of some of the flats my window can be seen. If you could manage to get one of those, we could signal to each other."

"Morse—flag-wagging?"

"What?"

"I forgot, you were not a volunteer at Eton. However, we can easily fix up some system of signals. Piggy, considered as a strategist, you fairly take the cake."

"Wait till you know all," said Piggy, though evidently pleased by his friend's approval. "I've kept the best till the end. Here's your coffee."

"I'm all attention," said Jack, as he took the cup.

(To be continued.)

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IN TELEGRAPHIC AND GENERAL NEWS THE TIMES LEADS.

AN OBJECT LESSON

In a Restaurant.

A physician puts the query; Have you never noticed in any large restaurant at lunch or dinner time the large number of hearty vigorous old men at the tables; men whose ages run from sixty to eighty years; many of them bald and all perhaps gray, but none of them feeble or senile?

Perhaps the spectacle is so common as to have escaped your observation or comment, but nevertheless it is an object lesson which means something.

If you will notice what these hearty old fellows are eating, you will observe that they are not munching bran crackers nor gingerly picking their way through a menu card of new fangled health foods; on the contrary they seem to prefer a juicy roast of beef, a properly turned loin of mutton, and even the deadly broiled lobster is not altogether ignored.

The point of all this is that a vigorous old age depends upon good digestion and plenty of wholesome food and not upon dieting and an endeavor to live upon bran crackers.

There is a certain class of food cranks who seem to believe that meat, coffee and many other good things are rank poisons, but these cadaverous sickly looking individuals are a walking condemnation of their own theories.

The matter in a nutshell is that is the stomach secretes the natural digestive juices in sufficient quantity, any wholesome food will be promptly digested; if the stomach does not do so, and certain foods cause distress one or two of Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets after each meal will remove all difficulty, because they supply just what every weak stomach lacks, pepsin, hydro-chloric acid, diastase, and nux.

Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets do not act upon the bowels and in fact are not strictly a medicine, as they act almost entirely upon the food eaten, digesting it thoroughly and thus giving the stomach a much needed rest and an appetite for the next meal.

Of people who travel, nine out of ten use Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets, knowing them to be perfectly safe to use at any time and also having found out by experience that they are a safeguard against indigestion in any form, and eating as they have to, at all hours and all kinds of food the travelling public for years have pinned their faith to Stuart's Tablets.

All druggists sell them at 50 cents for full-sized packages and any druggist from Maine to California, if his opinion were asked would say that Stuart's Dyspepsia Tablets is the most popular and successful remedy for any stomach trouble.

FATAL ACCIDENT.

Worcester, Mass., Nov. 10.—Wearing newly tapped shoes, Peter Tattre an employe of the Worcester Consolidated Street Railway, slipped as he was passing in front of one of the company's cars tonight, and falling to the rail, was killed instantly, his head being severed.

David says, "A horse is a vain thing for safety," wonder what he would have said of the auto, had there been such a thing in his day!

U. S. ARMY STATISTICS

Military Secretary's First Report a Good One.

Washington, Nov. 10.—The annual report of General F. C. Ainsworth, the military secretary of the United States army, the first issued from his office since its creation by congress at its last session gives the total strength of the army at the close of the last fiscal year at 3,871 officers and 68,946 enlisted men. The loss of officers from death, dismissal, retirement, and other causes was 155. The number of enlisted men lost by death was 456. Of the 27,381 recruits enlisted during the past fiscal year, 3,662 were foreign born. Complaints as to the number of unsatisfactory recruits are said to have been unusually numerous.

Very satisfactory progress has been made toward bringing the organized militia, respecting armament, equipment and discipline, "up to the standard of the regular army. A total of 6,966 officers and 83,102 enlisted men of the militia organizations were present at the inspections.

TWO WOMEN QUARRELED

And Now One is Dead and the Other Under Arrest.

New Haven, Conn., Nov. 10.—Mrs. Cora Cassidy, wife of Christopher Cassidy of Highwood, is dead, as the result, it is claimed, of injuries inflicted by Mrs. Elizabeth Barnes, a friend, during a quarrel. Awaiting the result of the autopsy, Mrs. Barnes is held on the charge of manslaughter. She is 45 years old and has seven children. The story told to the police is that the women got into an argument over some trivial matter and in the scuffle Mrs. Cassidy fell and Mrs. Barnes jumped on her, inflicting internal wounds. The women were treated for peritonitis.

IN NO HURRY.

New York, Nov. 10.—The sentencing of Philip Weissner, former president of the building trades alliance, who was convicted for extortion, was deferred for the second time today, at the request of Weissner's counsel. Sentence will be passed next Monday.

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