

EGERTON OF SCOTLAND YARD.

At the time I had just sold my interest in a well-known shipping concern, and was making arrangements for a journey to South Africa, where I intended to start again in business. It was the loss of my wife that had decided me to take this step, for I could not endure life in surroundings which her dear presence had hitherto graced. I sold the house, a pretty detached villa at Barnes, and dispensed with the services of my manservant and several maids.

One night, about a week previous to the day I had intended to sail, my house was broken into by a burglar. He must have done his work very quietly, for neither my housekeeper nor myself was disturbed; and I was relieved to find next morning that there was a sum of £16,000 in the house, in my bedroom, in fact, he had only lifted a paltry £50 which he had found in my coat-pocket.

Nothing else was taken, but there was evidence of a search made in drawers and cupboards. This large sum of money was in some drawers by my bedside.

These drawers had false bottoms, secreting a very shallow under-compartment in which were placed two shallow tin boxes, rectangular in shape, and painted black—ten thousand pounds being in one and six thousand in the other. About eight o'clock that morning a tall, sandy complexioned man of gentlemanly appearance called to see me, with an air of importance.

"Sir, I have been informed that your house has been burgled during the night," he began.

"That is quite true," said I, somewhat taken aback at his knowledge of what I had so far kept a still tongue upon.

"And the man was caught red-handed by the constable on duty. The officer had a big struggle with the ruffian, and was shot through the leg and rendered helpless in the attempt to arrest him. The thief got away, but left behind him this pocket-book, which contains nothing of any moment except your card."

He produced a pocket-book, which I assured him was my own and was minus £50 in notes.

"Ah! I fancied something of the sort," he said, musingly, fingering the pocket-book interestedly.

"Now, something must be done at once," he added, abruptly, and looked at me keenly. "I am Egerton of Scotland Yard. The constable has been conveyed to Woolton Hospital in a bad state and I have been sent here. What do you know of this business?"

I told him how I found a pane of glass removed from the window of the drawing-room, indicating the mode of entrance; how I found the things slightly disturbed in this room and that, but nothing missed excepting the pocket-book which had been in my coat in my own bedroom.

"Have you much money in the place?"

"About sixteen thousand pounds in some drawers in my bedroom."

"Untouched? Just! Did anyone besides yourself know the whereabouts of this money?"

"I fancy my man servants did, whose services I have lately dispensed with."

"Ah! Could you show me the drawers? Are they disturbed? Is there anything which points to the man having previous knowledge of this money?"

I showed him the drawers, which contained clothing in the upper and much more capacious compartments, and, pulling out these show him the lower shallow compartments containing the two black tin boxes containing the notes.

"The clothing has been disturbed, you say," said he, "and an attempt made to force the oaken false bottom. These are the boxes I presume?" and he fingered the boxes rather lovingly, I thought. "Now, give me a description of this man Williams. He has gone to Ripley, you say?" he said again abruptly. It seemed a way of his, to lapse into a thoughtful concentration of mind in order to break it suddenly with a jerk, as though realizing that "something must be done," to use his own words.

"I will go down there first," he added; "and in the meantime keep indoors, and I need not tell you to say nothing. I will send you word later, or come myself, if anything is discovered. Yes, thank you, I will take a taste of brandy with you."

I placed the boxes into their places and, carefully restoring the wearing apparel in the upper compartment, closing the drawers and went downstairs to partake of my morning meal. About an hour later came a smart knock at the front door, and my housekeeper opened to admit a dark, powerful looking man, with a constable in uniform by his side.

"I have called to ask the reason of the visit here of that sandy complexion gentleman who left this house about an hour ago," began the constable. "I don't know whether you are aware of the fact, but you have been harbouring one of the biggest rogues in London."

"That is untrue," I answered. "He is one of your own detectives of Scotland Yard. Detective Egerton came to investigate the

manner of a burglary that has been committed at this house in the night."

"Detective Fiddlesticks!" said the dark man, who was Detective-Inspector Hanson, I learned from the constable; "what a lot of noodles we have in London, to be sure. He told you that he was one of our men, and you quite believe him, I suppose? Dear me! Did you show him over the house and supply him with particulars?"

"Yes, but I will explain," said I; and I told them of the burglary and of the manner of Detective Egerton. At the end of my explanation Inspector Hanson, who had paced up and down the room during the telling of it as though hardly able to control his temper, turned to me and said:—

"Mr. Smithson, you must pardon my rudeness to you, but we have here to deal with the cutest, most slippery man I ever came across in my career. This is the fourth time he has foiled us in jobs of this description. I can readily understand, however, how you have been hoaxed. Now, I will tell you something that, perhaps, will unnerve you a little, so take a mouthful of that brandy before I begin."

He lit a cigar and paced the room again. "This fellow," he began again, "is in league with the man who broke in here last night. Knowing that you possessed more money than the paltry fifty pounds which they have already possessed themselves of, they devised this scheme to abstract the much larger sum."

"Now, mark my words. He has extracted the money from one or other of those boxes which you allowed him so innocently to handle in his precious light fingers."

"I very much doubt that," I said, though beginning to feel uncomfortable.

"We can soon find out," said he.

"Why, I only allowed the fellow to examine the unopened boxes in my presence," I protested, as we all three went upstairs to the bedroom. I again drew out the drawer and, sliding out the false bottom, disclosed the two boxes in their hiding-place. I picked up one as Hanson casually lifted the other and, taking a key from my pocket to unlock them, was proceeding to open the one in my hands when he exclaimed:—

"Here, you see, sir, just as I conjectured; this one is not locked at all. You notice the lid is merely held down with a catch. A little pressure applied so—and up goes the lid—and there you are—empty!"

"Good heavens!" I shouted; "ten thousand pounds gone."

With trembling fingers I opened the other box, and was a little relieved to find that it still contained its precious bundle. I sank into a chair, the sweet running streams from my brow, and he handed to me the empty gaping box. Examining it, I soon discovered that it was not the original box which contained the money, but one similar to it in every respect.

"He substituted that while you allowed him to examine them, that is plain," said the constable.

"But how came he to have such a box in his possession?" I queried.

"That proves that he had previous knowledge of the box, gained, I expect, from that fellow Williams, who is in the business. There have been two attempts to procure the money. The first one to make the attempt—the burglar as you call him—failed through ignorance of the construction of your drawers. Then came the second with a more impudent scheme and accomplished the theft. Williams knows about this matter, I feel confident, and like your bogus detective, I must try to track him. It is a sorry business and no time must be lost."

"Now, Pilling," he added, addressing himself to the constable, "you stay here with Mr. Smithson and I will post off to Ripley, where Williams's people live. It is possible the ginger-headed fraud will return to try his hand on the remainder of the money. Oh! he has face enough for that. I know him. If he does, for Heaven's sake don't let him slip us again. I will call and inform our people on the way."

Detective-Inspector Hanson disappeared leaving the constable to console me on my loss. He was an ordinary, red-faced policeman, who sat and blinked as though he only half realized what a terrible loss I had sustained. I hadn't the patience to talk to him, and busied myself securing the remainder of my wealth in the bosom of my coat, feeling that I would trust it from my person no longer.

Half an hour after the detective had left the constable standing by the front window gave a short whistle to attract my attention, and pointing outside, showed me my very sandy-complexioned visitor of the early mornings. He had been coming up the drive under the lime-trees when, suddenly wheeling half round, as he caught sight of my companion in his telltale uniform, he started back at a trot. The constable rushed downstairs with me at his heels, but when we reached the door he motioned me to remain.

"I can catch him," he said; "you stay and secure what you have. I will raise the street. He is sure to be caught."

This sounded reasonable, so I let him go alone, and watched him disappear down the street in hot pursuit of the thief. It was

DON'T BECOME AN OBJECT

Of Aversion and Pity. Cure Your Catarrh. Purify Your Breath and Stop the Offensive Discharge.

Rev. Dr. Bochrer, of Buffalo, says: "My wife and I were both troubled with distressing Catarrh, but we have enjoyed freedom from this aggravating malady since the day we first used Dr. Agnew's Catarrhal Powder. Its action was instantaneous, giving the most grateful relief within ten minutes after first application. 50 cents. 9

Sold by Garden Bros.

with a great sense of relief that I walked indoors and lit my pipe, feeling that my money was practically recovered. The constable would be sure to run his man down, on whom the bulk of the money doubtless would be found. Hanson had gone to inform the police all over the country and to run down that scamp Williams, so that there was nothing for me to do until I heard from one of them. If I stayed indoors they would find me more readily than if I ventured abroad; and, again, this would be the better plan for my own safety, for I felt that there must have been a regular network of villainy woven around my house. I looked to my revolvers and placed one carefully loaded in my tail-pocket. The day wore on and I heard no more. Towards evening ominous doubts began to cloud my mind, and I determined to visit the nearest police station and ask questions. There was no satisfaction to be got there; they knew nothing of any burglary; they knew no Detective-Inspector Hanson; and there was no constable in that district answering to the description or name of Pilling. They wired to the authorities, who disclaimed all knowledge of the incident or the men. I gasped. The inspector went home with me, and I for the third time told the tale, which had grown with every time of telling. He seemed puzzled for some time as he weighed the matter over in his mind, asking me to repeat parts of the story.

"Well!" he said, at last, "I must go and see about this. I will be back before midnight."

The intervening period was one of mental agony for me; everything seemed so illusive and contradictory. About midnight the inspector and I were together again.

"Well!" he began, "I have to tell you that I am the first bona-fide detective you have yet had on this job. You have been made the victim of a cruel swindle. You have been deceived by one and the same band of intriguers."

"Surely, man! you don't mean to say that the constable and Detective Hanson are imposters?" I exclaimed.

"I do. They are unknown to us."

"But if the red-headed fellow took the money—the ten thousand, I mean—what need was there for the other two turning up and acting as they did?"

"Well, if you want my opinion, I don't believe the man Egerton took the money at all. He merely did his bit of acting to discover whether you had money and where you kept it. He took the opportunity of examining your boxes, and then went and, securing one like it, sent Hanson on his errand. Oh, yes, the whole thing has been elaborately thought out. I don't see that Williams need have had anything to do with it, as they might easily have learned from many people that you had sold your house and were making preparations for going abroad, and consequently had money about."

"Then Hanson himself must have substituted the spurious box for the one he had in his possession while I was fumbling with the other?" said I.

"Exactly, that is what I make of it."

"But why did Egerton return?"

"To give the constable an excuse for de-camping after keeping you quiet whilst Hanson got away with the money. It gave a sort of reality to the business, you must admit, for you sat down calmly enough afterwards, and let them get twelve hours' start of us. However, we will try to get even with them, clever as they are."

And they did, for they were all captured in due time, and I regained about half of my lost money. Needless to say, Williams had nothing whatever to do with the matter.

Some Reasons

Why You Should Insist on Having

EUREKA HARNESS OIL

Unequaled by any other. Renders hard leather soft. Specially prepared. Keeps out water. A heavy bodied oil.

HARNESS

An excellent preservative. Reduces cost of your harness. Never burns the leather; its efficiency is increased. Secures best service. Stitches kept from breaking.

OIL

is sold in all Localities

Manufactured by Imperial Oil Company.



Juicy Steaks.

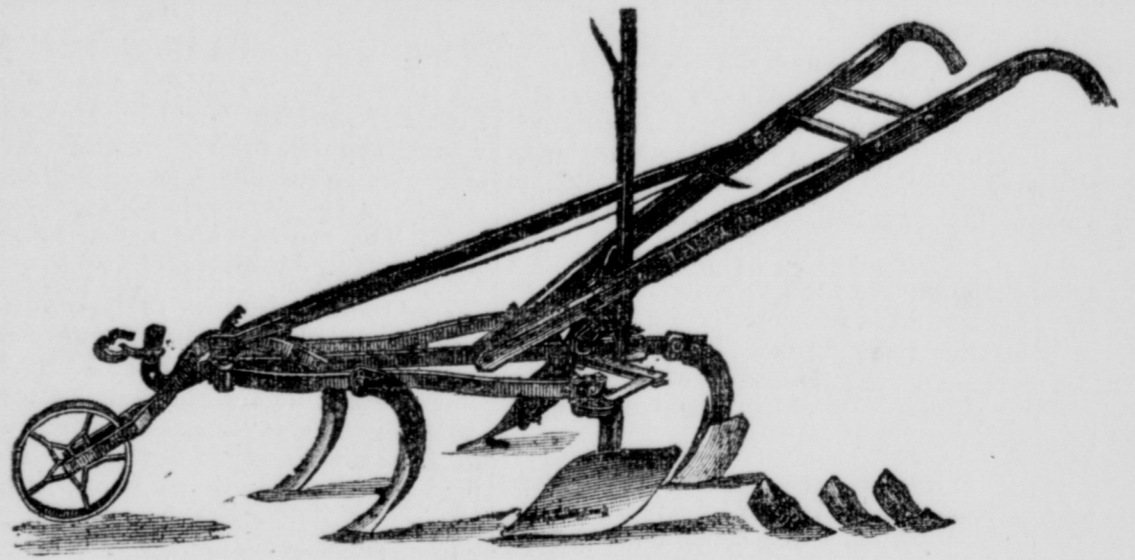
Thick, juicy steaks can be broiled to retain their rich flavor only over a red-hot fire, and in a stove with a proper broiling door.

"Cornwall" Steel Ranges

have such perfect drafts that the fire responds to them in a glow; and the broiling door is specially made for this purpose.

The "Cornwall" is the most durable steel range made in Canada. Heavy sheet asbestos covers entire body inside, preventing escape of heat—saves fuel. Ventilated oven bakes wholesome bread. Coal or wood linings always supplied. Made in four sizes and ten styles. Write our local agent or nearest house for free pamphlet.

McClary Manufacturing Co. LONDON, TORONTO, MONTREAL, WINNIPEG, VANCOUVER, & ST JOHN N.B.



CULTIVATORS.

Cultivators with Long Hillers

do do Side do
do do Flow do

ALL STEEL.

BALMAIN BROS.

Woodstock,

Hartland, Florenceville, Bath, Perth, Grand Falls Aroostook. May 22, 1901.

For pure blood, a bright eye, a clear complexion, a keen appetite, a good digestion and refreshing sleep, TAKE

BRISTOL'S Sarsaparilla

It arouses the Liver, quickens the circulation, brightens the spirits and generally improves the health.

Sixty-eight years trial have proved it to be, the most reliable BLOOD purifier known.

All druggists sell "BRISTOL'S."

AS TO

CARRIAGES.

We will make as large a variety of Carriages this year as we did last, and we have added some new devices by which our vehicles will be more comfortable, handy and durable. You will make a great mistake if you buy without looking through our shop and warehouses. Give us an idea of what you want and we will get you up any sort of special job.

THE WOODSTOCK CARRIAGE CO.

Main Street, South Side of Bridge.