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Author of "Little Hodge," "Lord Bantam," "Ginx's Baby," &c.

CHAPTER III.—Continued.

"Kill me! Kill me!" murmured Mr. Fex.

"There is no harm done, papa," cried Miss Araminta, smoothing her hair and looking round, to see that the ulster was as gracefully disposed as possible. "It's my fault. I rushed upstairs in my fright, and this — this—gentleman—was kind enough to take charge of me. I asked him to bring me to the captain's cabin. For some reason or other that gentleman there had left it—and when he came back he had left it—and when he came back he —he—locked the door before he discovered me——"

Araminta would have gone on, but Sir Benjamin began to feel in his gouty feet the chilling effects of the water in which they were standing.

"Take my arm," he said, curtly, to his daughter. "I am infinitely obliged to you, sir, whoever you are, for your attention to Miss Peakman. She is very young and inexperienced."

"Not more so than I am, I expect," returned the young man, bowing haughtily. "I am glad to have been of any service to the young lady," with a more kindly inclination to Araminta.

As the knight and his fair daughter left the cabin, the youth was about to follow them, when a muttered remark from the occupant drew him to the side of the berth. He caught a glimpse of the man's face, who with his eyes shut appeared to be groaning out maledictions.

"What, Corcoran!" cried the young gentleman, seizing Mr. Fex by the shoulder, and shaking him roughly. "What on earth, sir, are you doing here? and travelling incog, too?"

"I'm gone clean mad!" said Mr. Fex, starting straight up in the bed, and speaking with an unmistakable Dublin accent. "Where on earth—or at sea rather—did you come from, my lord? if it is indeed yourself—for I can't believe my own eyes and ears."

"I ought to ask you that question, sir," said Lord Pendlebury, laughing—for it was he. "How comes it that the Master in Chancery is off duty, and at his age, under an assumed name, performing these pranks on a steamer a thousand miles from Dublin?"

Overcome with the odddity of the thing, the young man threw himself on the sofa and laughed boisterously.

"Oh, Corcoran!" he cried, at length. "I owe you a guinea. I was lying in my berth as sick as a dog when all this happened, and you have cured me!"

"Whist, me lord!" cried the reputed Mr. Fex, putting his head out of his berth, and earnestly motioning to the peer to be silent. "You knew all about the 'proceedings,' of course?"

Lord Pendlebury nodded.

"And that she got the divorce?"

The peer nodded again.

"And that she got it on suborned evidence got up by that cursed attorney and thief Mulrooney?"

"I did not know that, Corcoran," replied the young man, gravely.

"Fex, Fex! My lord, call me Fex," cried the tenant of the cabin, in a ludicrous attempt to speak low and yet to carry his voice through the din. "I've seen her!—She's there!' and he pointed towards the thin mahogany bulkhead which divided his cabin from that of the purser next door.

"What, Mrs.——

"Och, dear Lord Pendlebury, don't you mention the name now, darling, for I'm at my wits' end what to do.'

"Oh, it is impossible: it's all nonsense!"

"No, no; look here;" and Fex, alias Corcoran, vaulted into the water, and shutting the door, whispered loudly to his friend. "You know when that terrible shock came, I was lying here quiet enough, and thinking I'd soon be three thousand miles away from Dublin and the everlasting banter of the Castle and the clubs, when I heard the shock and roar of the water as it rushed along the deck and burst in the two doors next to mine, and came running in here through every cranny and crevice. I thought we were all off for Hades, and not liking the idea of going down in my berth, I opened my door and ran out on the deck. At the same instant, on my life as I hold on here, she ran out of the next cabin, the purser's, in a neat undress familiar to me; and she no sooner saw me standing there in my own al fresco state, than she began to give tongue like a steam fire-engine whistling for water—though, by the way, at the moment there was plenty of that about.

"'Tis he! 'Tis he!' says she, covering her eyes. 'Tis Peter's ghost come to reproach me, just as I am about to perish.—Oh, Peter! Peter!' and she tried to lay hold of my arm.

"'Aroynt thee!' says I. For I thought she was a ghost too, and that may be we had each appeared to reproach the other at our dying moments. And I made a leap for the cabin. Faith, I don't know what's to come of it! There was a female on deck, there was a female in the cabin I ran into, and there was a female in possession of my own when I came back. There are at least two people to be settled with, besides her second husband, who must be on board, for I was told six months since she was to be married again. You'll stand by me now, won't you?"

The earnestness of the narrator produced on the young lord an effect the reverse of that intended. He shouted with laughter.

"Oh, my lord," said poor Mr. Fex. "It's amusing to you, but it's death to me. Now you know all about this, I need never show my face in Dublin again. Well, well, I may arrange a thing or two, and get over the side of the ship, for 'twill kill me, any way."

There was just a flash of seriousness in the speaker's manner, and Lord Pendlebury, who was an astute young fellow for his age, began to be afraid the joke was going too far. He sat up and assumed a more sober air.

"Nonsense, Corcoran. I give you my word of honour I'll say nothing about it. The fact is, in the excitement, you have made a mistake. She is not on board. It is impossible. Make yourself easy. Come, I'll call up a steward. They must bail out this cabin, which is one huge footbath. As for that ridiculous old knight, and his chit of a daughter, and her stupid maid, we shall soon put them all right. Get into bed, my friend, you are shivering fearfully. How did you get that bruise over the eye?"

Mr. Fex was soon in bed, and the events of the day, acting upon an excitable temperament, brought on a slight attack of fever. His servant being prostrated, as gentlemen's gentlemen and ladies' abigails are by the weather at sea, a steward was told off by the doctor to look after him during the night. This fellow, having nothing better to do than to listen to the patient's incoherent wanderings, excogitated a theory about poor Mr. Fex which entailed serious consequences.

CHAPTER V.

By the morning of the third day the wind had slightly abated, although it was still blowing what are termed "great guns," and the captain, who had been up the better part of two nights, was taking a few hours' rest in the chart-room, when a loud knock, followed by the opening of the door and the insertion of a dripping sou'-wester, disturbed him.

"If you please, sir," said the intruder, "may I speak to you, sir?"

"Yes, Mr. Stackpoole, if it is anything important. Come in."

The intruder was the fourth officer, and he was followed by a steward, Cadbury. They both looked very grave.

"I think, sir," said the mate, "we've got him!"

"Got what!" said the captain, whose brain was a little disturbed by want of sleep.

"Him, sir; the murderer Kane, sir!"

"The devil!" cried the captain. "Where?"

"In your cabin, sir!"

The honest captain burst out in a cold perspiration at the idea of his quarters being occupied by an accused malefactor.

"What, the Mr. Fex—?"

"His name ain't Fex, sir," interrupted the steward, touching his forehead. "He was took ill yesterday, sir, and I've been with him all night. He's been going on rambling most dreadful, just like a murderer; asking God to forgive him, saying he'd drown himself, calling out that he'd be the death of a man of the name of Mulrooney — that, of course, sir, would be the detective—and asking his dearest Pearl to forgive him—that would be some wicked woman of his acquaintance, sir."

"Does he answer to the description?"

"Exactly, sir," cried the officer and steward in one breath. "And we've agreed to divide the reward."

"Humph!" said the captain, throwing off his great woollen nightcap, scratching his head, screwing up his eye, and taking an observation of the two lucky men bobbing there before him, and wishing to himself that they might ever get the reward they were so cock-sure of dividing. "Humph! What have you done with this man?"

"He's still in the cabin, sir."

"But he'll run away; he will throw himself overboard."

"Oh, no, sir. He is very weak this morning. And I've stationed six of the watch, under a quartermaster, outside this door, with instructions to seize him if he tries to escape," said the officer.

"Very well, Mr. Stackpoole. Keep the guard on until further orders. Serve out a brace of pistols to the quartermaster, with orders to shoot the man if he becomes unmanageable. If you want to get your reward, Mr. Stackpoole, you must produce him dead or alive. It will never do to let him go overboard, you know."

Mr. Stackpoole smiled appreciatively at the captain's shrewdness, and heand Mr. Cadbury, left the honest master to his own reflections. These reflections were anything but pleasant. He knew nothing of any laws except those of navigation and cyclones, and such scraps of land legislation as particularly affected his ship and his jurisdiction when in port. The job in hand he did not relish. If he were to make a mistake he had sense enough to know it would turn out very seriously for him. This person who had given him £12 for the use of his cabin, he had seen. He seemed to be a gentlmanly man; the steward might be quite wrong in his surmises. The captain therefore resolved to act very cautiously. He went down, as soon as he had dressed, to take the opinion of Sir Benjamin Peakman. The knight was not the best person to have consulted, at the moment and on this particular subject. He had not yet recovered his equanimity, so severely shaken the day before, and was ready to believe anything of the occupant of the captain's cabin. He was terribly alarmed to hear for the first time from the captain's lips that there was a murderer on board.

"That is the man, beyond a doubt," said he. "I assure you, Captain Windlass, he behaved like a ruffian. He ran into Lady Peakman's maids' room, and locked himself in with my daughter's maid, a very proper young person. In rushing out again, he knocked me down, and I am still suffering in the chest from the blow he gave me. Then he locked himself in with my daughter, who happened to have been carried into your cabin by an officious young fellow you have on board, and but for the alacrity with which he was followed up, God knows what might not have happened. There can hardly be a doubt about it; that is the man!"

Fortified with this opinion, which an experienced and impartial lawyer like Mr. Carpmael would have at once discarded as resting on no evidence really relevant to the question of identity, the captain ascended to his cabin, where the unconscious Mr. Fex lay, invested by a small naval and military force. There he found awaiting him the fourth officer and Cadbury, the steward. They had been making a reconnaissance.

"He's lying quiet enough in his berth now, sir," said Cadbury.

"All right, Mr. Stackpoole, you and Quartermaster Sinclair will follow me. Cadbury, you stay within reach. The rest draw up on either side of the door, and be ready at a call."

Captain Windlass, not liking the job a bit, but pressing his teeth together and going at it with all the resolution of a true Briton, turned the handle of the door and entered the cabin. His two aides-de-camp had followed, and on a sign from him closed it again, looking sharply all the while at the enemy, who, whatever intentions he harboured, looked mild enough as he raised his head and glanced at them inquiringly. The dull light revealed a large head, covered with thick, dark hair, a fairly prominent proboscis, dark whiskers and moustaches, and a bearded chin, Over the left eye was a black bruise. The captain and Mr. Stackpoole nodded to each other.

The tenant of the cabin, who, as we have seen, was an Irishman, could not remark the mysterious demeanour of the intruders without an observation.

"Good-morning to you, captain," he said, recognizing the latter. "Are you wanting to refer to some of your charts here? You're quite welcome. Faith, I hope you're not going to give us another fright like that we had yesterday."

"I'm afraid I am going to give you a fright, sir," said the captain sternly, bending his brows on the unhappy Fex, and transfixing him with a Rhadamanthine stare. "You came on board, sir, and took this cabin under the name of Fex?"

"I did," says Mr. Fex, quailing before the captain's eye, but not for the reason the spectators imagined. "Here, it's all out now," said Fex to himself, "all over the ship; and I need never look near Dublin and the Four Courts again.."

"Is that your real name, sir," thundered the captain, shaking a prodigious fist in the direction of the cowering Fex. "On your oath, sir, is that really your name?"

The man who was thus called on to bear witness against himself had never seen cross-examination conducted in this way before. He was demoralized.

"Ah! ye—ye—what is it you're after, Captain Windle—Windlemass— Windlass—or whatever you're called. What do you mean, sir?"

"Is Fex your name, sir?" roared the captain, in increasingly stentorian tones, as he once again brought his fist in much more alarming proximity to the countenance of the suspect.

"Gracious heaven, deliver me!" cried Fex, sitting up as well as he could. "If you must know, then, Fex is not my real name, sir."

"I thought so," said the captain, taking off his cap and wiping his beaded brow in triumph at the admission he had extracted. He sat down on the sofa, his great knees coming up to a line with his watch-pocket, and laid his huge arm on the top of the locker beside him.

"Now, sir," he said, "be cautious! You are our prisoner. Quartermaster, show the pistols."

The startled eye of Mr. Fex, alias Corcoran, glanced a moment at a couple of long ship's pistols, large enough apparently to carry about sixteen to the pound, and with a shudder he turned his eyes toward the captain.

"What do your say your name is, sir?"

"Corcoran, of No. 66 Lower Merrion Square, Dublin."

"What other names have you passed under, sir?"

"None whatever. Send for my servant, he will tell you all about me."

"I dare say," replied the captain, drily. "Did you never hear of the name of Kane, sir? Kane—d'ye hear?"

"I did," replied the other, with the irrepressible humour of his countrymen. "He killed his brother Abel."

The captain and the two officers started and looked into each other's faces. Their worst suspicions were confirmed..

"Your answer condemns you, you wretched man!" cried the captain. "You evidently know all about it. A person named Eugene Kane—Kay—aw—en—ee— a fugitive from justice, charged with murdering Mr. William Philpotts, banker, of Darnley, and robbing the bank of five thousand pounds sterling—is on board this ship, and you're the man!"

"Nonsense!" said poor Mr. Fex, breaking out into a healthy and profuse perspiration.

"Yes, sir," the captin went on. "We have the description here. Stackpoole hand me the description, and you and Mr. Sinclair stand by there and tell off the particulars as I read them."

"Ay, ay, sir!"

Captain; "A man."

Ambo. A man he is, sir!

Captain. "Of about forty-five or fifty years of age."

Ambo. To a day sir.

Captain. "With thick black hair."

Ambo. Excitedly. Black as tar, sir!

Captain. "Dyed to cover grey."

Ambo. Ay, ay, sir!

"Dyed, ye blackguards!" interrupted Mr. Fex, in high dudgeon. "It never was tinted with a drop of anything but its natural juices!"

Captain. Silence in the dock there. "Parted down the middle."

To be Continued.

POPULATION OF OLD COUNTRIES.

Disputeting Statistics Which Upset Many Preconceived Notions.

It has popularly been supposed that the population of the monarchies and unstable republics of Europe was declining, or if not declining, increasing at a ratio so small as to be almost imperceptible. For nearly half a century there has been a steady stream of emigration from European countries to the United States, Canada, South America and Australia, and no increase of population in any European country from immigration from other countries than Europe. The devastating wars, which, theoretically, at least, reduce the population of all military countries abroad, have operated to the disadvantage of many lands, and especially those which have maintained colonies the pacification of which requires military operations.

Again, the decrease of the birth rate in some European countries has been the subject of abstruse controversy among physicians and men of science, and yet it appears from official figures at hand that the increase in the total population of Europe during the past ten years has been nearly 10 per cent., a statement which has obtained corroboration in other countries, and the correctness of which is proved by the records of countries in which there have been censuses recently.

At the beginning of the present century the population of Europe was put by Levasseur at 175,000,000. In 1830 it was 220,000,000, In 1860 it was 290,000,000, and in 1890 it was 350,000,000. It is now 380,000,000, and the continuance at the present rate of increase will make it 385,000,000 in 1900, 10 per cent. increase over what it was in 1890.

The yearly emigration from Europe is about 500,000 at present, or 5,000,000 in a decade. In the absence of newcomers to make up this decrease and in view of the backward and unprogressive condition of many European countries, it may be supposed that there would be no vast gain of population, but the contrary of this is shown. The number of inhabitants are increasing in like ratio. These are the figures given of the increases in European countries during the past ten years: Russia, 14.5 per cent.; Germany, 11.5; Austria-Hungary, 9.6; England, 3.5; Italy, 4.5; France, 0.8. At this rate in 100 years Russia would have 228,000,000 inhabitants, Germany, 106,000,000, Austria, 79,000,000; England: 65,000,000 Italy, 44,000,000; and France 40,000,000.

The modest estimate which this French statistician makes of the growth of population in his own country, may, perhaps, disarm the answering criticism of the German statistician whose profound ethical treatment of "ratios" in population has already outrun many volumes of Leipsic, Berlin and Dresden publications, but the English and Scotch statisticians are not thus easily satisfied, and the Scotch statisticians especially are obdurate when asked to revise, correct, amend, or in any way modify their conclusions, as to the population of other countries, although in respect of the population of Scotland they are less steadfast. Possibly this is due to the fact that the population of Scotland, varies comparatively little, though there has been a remarkable growth in late years of the population of its chief cities. The present population of Glasgow is in excess of 700,000. Edinburgh has 300.000, and Aberdeen 125,000.

The British Museum is to have a phonograph department, in which will be stored, in cylinder form, the voices of eminent people.

ABOUT LOCKJAW.

How the Trouble Begins, and How a Person Attacked Should be Treated

Lockhaw, or tetanus, is a disease which, fortunately, is more read about than seen; yet it is not very rare, at least, in its mild form. It occurs more frequently in children than in older people, and oftener in boys than in girls; but this is probably only because boys are more liable to cut and scratch themselves, for it is after such injuries that lockjaw usually occurs.

The disease is more common in some countries than in others, England being one of the countries, and Cuba another, in which it prevails to a much greater extent than in this country. Here, too, some states and some portions of states have an unenviable preeminence in this regard.

The trouble usually begins with a stiffness and tendency to contraction in the muscles which bring the teeth together, and with the progress of the disease it becomes impossible to open the mouth—hence the popular name, "lockjaw." The other muscles of the face soon become affected in the same way, and after them the muscles of neck, the trunk and the extremities. According as one or another set of muscles is the strongest or most firmly contracted, the arms and legs will be thrown into constrained positions, and the body will be bent forward, or backward, or to one side.

When these spasms—which are usually painful—are very severe and recur frequently or even become continuous, tetanus is usally fatal. Fortunately, however, this is the less common form of the disease. In the usual milder variety the spasms are less severe and less frequent, and soon, with proper care, begin to become less and less marked until they finally cease entirely.

Lockjaw is caused by a poison excreted by a microbe which is found in the soil, especially in that near stables and in manure heaps.

This poison, which is somewhat like strychnine in its effects, is absorbed into the system through a wound made with a rusty nail or other dirty object, or through a wound which has been soiled with earth or bound up with a dirty rag. Sometimes, especially in tropical countries like Cuba, the disease comes on after a wetting or a sudden chill, even when there is no wound of the skin so far as can be seen, or it may follow insect bites.

A person with lockjaw must be kept perfectly quiet and shielded from anything that may bring on a paroxysm, such as a touch, a jolt of the bed, or even a strong draught of air. The treatment belongs entirely to the physician, for tetanus is too serious a malady and too rapid in its course to permit of any experimenting with domestic remedies. The fatal cases usually last only four or five days, but the milder forms may continue for two weeks before recovery is complete.

POOR MEN'S PALACES.

Description of the Workmen's Taverns in Belgium.

The workingmen's hostelries now in process of organization in the principal Belgian centres of population, under the auspices of the Chaplains of Labor, are described as literally poor men's palaces. That of St. Anthony, just opened at Marchienne-au-Pont, has on the ground floor a spacious hall with a stage opening on one side of a restaurant and on the other off a pretty chapel. The dining rooms look out on a spacious courtyard and garden with various games and a kiosk for a band. A laundry with all the latest appliances, the building containing the electrical machinery and the house inhabited by the chaplains who manage the institution are attached to the same building. The main structure consists of three floors containing the men's sleeping rooms, each furnished with a bed, a press, a table and some chairs, all opening on airy corridors. The centre of each floor is occupied by a sort of general dressing room, with looking-glasses and water taps all around the walls, while baths can be had in the basement, and all is lit by elecrtic light. Those who wish to board as well as lodge can have food, washing and the mending of their linen for twenty-two francs a fortnight, nine shillings and twopence a week. For breakfast they get coffee and bread and butter and libitum, and for the midday meal one plate of meat, half a litre of beer and bread and vegetables at discretion. Coal miners who cannot go home to dinner get cold provisions to take with them. At 4 o'clock coffee and bread and butter again, and at supper, vegetables, some times meat, and beer in abundance. For evening entertainment there are billiards, readings or music lessons for those who join the band. In order to board it is not necessary to lodge in the institution and the restaurant is open to any workman who wants a single glass of beer.

A DIAMOND CROWN.

A pretty and agreeable amusement is the production of a perfect imitation of a diamond crown by means of a cheap chemical solution. It is only necessary to dissolve a pound of alum in a quart of hot water and hang in this solution a crown made of wire, wound with flannel.

In order to achieve the best results a smooth surfaced and perfectly transparent glass should be used, and this, with the solution and the crown, be allowed to stand, undisturbed for twenty-four hours. The alum will then have been depoited in crystals on the crown, giving the latter the appearance of a diamond studded crown, which can be taken out of the solution, dried and preserved. In place of the crown, one can select any other shape, which can be made with wire, and one can color the crystals by pouring a little ink of whatsoever tint into the solution of alum.

SIR WALTER SCOTT, DUNCE.

Sir Walter Scott was far from being a brilliant pupil at school. After he became famous he one day dropped into the old school. The teacher put the pupils through their paces. After a while Scott said: "But which is the dunce? You have one, surely. Show him to me." The teacher called up a poor fellow, who looked the picture of woe as he bashfully came toward the dishe boy. "Well, my good fellow," said tinguished visitor. "Are you the dunce? asked Scott. "Yes, sir," said Scott, "here is a crown for you for keeping my place warm."

Saint Peter's in Rome, occupied three and a half centuries in construction, and during this time forty-three popes reigned.

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