

## A COOL HAND.

(CONTINUED.)

I don't know what the lady was like to this day, for I spent the rest of the time taking a photograph of the ring on my brain; and the next morning I took a hansom and drove to a man whom I'd been introduced to already in the way of trade. His name was Graves.

"I want a stone re-set," said I; "and when you've seen it, I think you'll say it's worth the doing."

I put my hand into the breast pocket, where I always kept it, in a little leather case, wherever I went, and— I'll never forget the cold shiver that ran down from the roots of my hair into the tips of my toes when I found it wasn't there!

The jeweler waited patiently enough, while I felt in every pocket I'd got, thinking as hard as I could where the stone could have gone to. Surely there couldn't have been a hole? And yet there might be, for I hadn't been to the tailor a day too soon. In another minute I stood before the jeweler with every pocket I'd got turned inside out, and hanging like bags all over me. But nothing fell out, and there wasn't a ghost of a hole.

I had never looked for such a thing as that, anyhow. It's enough to bother a man to miss a diamond that's not worth a penny less than eighteen hundred pounds; and what made it the worse was that I'd given it to Kate, so it wasn't mine to lose. But lost it was; for I never had it out of my breast-pocket, so that if it wasn't there it couldn't be anywhere. I began to wonder if my diamonds hadn't been fairy ones after all, like fairy gold, that, as soon as you think you've got it safe, turns to chips and straws.

"I expect you've been robbed, Mr. Connor," said the jeweler. "London's a bad place for a man with stones like that, if he doesn't know the ways."

"As if," I said, "a man that's been in San Francisco, and New Orleans, and the Diamond Fields, ay, and Dublin too, wasn't putting up to the ways of London, or of anywhere?"

And it isn't likely he would, either.

"As for being robbed, it's not possible. I've always kept it in this breast-pocket, under my right arm; and a tougher right arm you'll not find in a month or two; and that was true, too. 'I'd like to see the London thief that would try to rob me.'"

The man had a trick of smiling, and he smiled then.

"Of course you'll go to the police?" said he. "They sometimes find that a man has been robbed, even when it's impossible. Who knew of your having the diamond, Mr. Connor?"

"Not a soul. We learn to hold our tongues where I've been. You're the first man I've spoken to of it since I left Cape-town."

I don't know why, but he smiled again; I suppose it was a manner he had with him.

"If I were you," he said, "I'd go straight to Scotland Yard—the head police station, you know."

"Not a bit of it," said I. "I know the ways of the peelers, anyhow, and the lawyers. I'm looking for a letter every post that'll call me to Dublin by return of mail; and they'd be keeping me kicking my heels here while they are on the traces, as they call it, of some poor devil that had no more to do with the stone than I. Why, do you think I'd be robbed of a diamond like that under my very nose? I'd have to be made drunk or knocked down; and you may try me yourself, both ways, and see if that's easy. No; I'm sorry the stone's gone, but it's no more stolen than you are; and what's gone's gone; and it's only fools that bother."

And it's true I was vexed more for Kate's sake than my own; for it's sure enough that worrying over gone things is a waste of time.

But the jeweler wouldn't rest so easily. I believe he thought me a simple stranger that wanted looking after, instead of a man who'd seen more of the world in ten years than he had in fifty. He made me describe the stone to him three times over, and wrote it down, setting and all, and said as my business in Ireland was so important he'd spare me the trouble of going to Scotland Yard if I pleased.

"That's as you like," I said, as if a diamond more or less wasn't of much account to a Connor—for it doesn't do to lower one's dignity before a tradesman. "And of course I must thank you for being so kind."

"You'll have to offer a reward," said he.

"I'll leave that to yourself," said I. "Anything in reason of course I'll pay, to get the stone back again. And I'll bet you ten pounds to one that it's not been stolen."

"I don't bet," he said, with another smile. I thanked him again, in an off-hand way, not to let him see how really vexed I was about it all, and went home.

But I was vexed, and the more I thought about it the more vexed I grew; for I'd just set my heart on giving Kate this diamond.

"I wish I hadn't let that fellow go to the police," thought I. "He'll be sure to make some mess or another—I think I'll go myself, after all, and see that things are done properly. I'll drive to Scotland

Yard, wherever it is, this very afternoon."

Of course I'd hunted high and low for the stone, but it was no more in my lodgings than it was in my pockets; and I asked all the questions in the house that I could without hinting that it was a diamond I was looking for.

I couldn't believe it was stolen, even now; but still there might be a chance if the police were put on the scent by a proper reward. But, all at once, just as I was thinking the least of poor Kate herself, and the most of her stone, a letter came in.

It wasn't from Dublin, though. It had only a London postmark, and I didn't know the hand. I don't know, when I think of it now, whether it was fact or only an after-fancy, but the minute my fingers touched that common-looking letter I seemed to feel it was ill news. I opened it. Dated from London—signed Miles Cregan—what would it mean? What would Miles Cregan, the Dublin lawyer, be doing with No. 24 Melton street, Mayfair?

And how is it that the very look of a letter, like a look of a face, will tell you before you read, if the heart of things is changed?

\* \* \* \* \*

"Dear Brother-in-Law,—Yours to hand. I am heartily glad you have prospered so well. Of course there is no objection now to your presence, or even to your residence in Dublin. I am no longer there, which accounts for all delays in my receipt of your letter. I regret to have to inform you that your sister Catherine has enjoyed for five years the delights of another and better world, which makes it impossible for her to give you in person the welcome which you appear to have earned. For myself, I always believed you would eventually become a credit to your friends, though at the time I was disbelieved; but you have doubtless not forgotten the practical proof I gave of my confidence in you. I gather from your letter that the news has not yet reached you of my marriage, by means of which, and of Providence, I have transferred my office and practice from Dublin to London, where I have always had many clients, chiefly young military men of excellent family. As I am naturally anxious to be of service to my first wife's only brother, I may be able to invest your capital to better advantage than a young man, without experienced and affectionate aid, would be likely to do in this Den of Thieves where I practice at the present. It would also give me much pleasure to make you such advances as you may require on merely formal and nominal security. I am occupied by business during the day, but it would give Mrs. Cregan as well as myself the greatest pleasure if you will come and see us next Wednesday evening. A few friends may drop in, including some young military men of excellent family; but we are very quiet people, and I wish you to look upon this formal invitation as of a purely domestic character."

"Believe me to be, my dear Thomas, affectionately yours,

\* \* \* \* \*

"MILES CREGAN."

My heart swelled up for a minute as if it would burst, and then sank down as if it had turned to frozen lead in me. Poor Kate—the only girl I'd been coming home for; the only soul there was to give me a kiss of welcome after eleven years—and she was dead, and I had never known.

I sat there for I don't know how long holding Miles' letter in hands that were nigh as dead as her own. . . . "The hansom, sir," said the servant, from the door.

"Hansom! what hansom?"

"The one you wanted fetched to go to Scotland Yard."

"Then send it away!"

What did it matter about that diamond any more—Kate of Africa, when Kate of Ireland had been buried five years; ay, and forgotten too by her own husband, and by everybody but me? I would not have had that diamond back now, not if it were the Koh-i-noor.

I need not tell the story of that day and evening. It seems odd that I should have done without my sister for more than ten years, and without corresponding with her even, and yet that her death should have struck me just like a blow. I'd never thought of the chance of her dying; and while she was alive, or while I thought her so, though I never saw her or heard of her, I hadn't felt quite alone in the world. But I did when I woke up next morning and lay half thinking, half dreaming about it all—terribly alone.

I'd made money, but I hadn't a kinsman that cared twopence about me, and we don't make friends in my sort of life—we only make chums, who seem to come no-whence and to go no-whither. Paul Andrews had been most like a friend while he lasted, but he hadn't lasted.

Of course I'd go and see Miles. His new offers of help were just doubling all his old kindness, and I somehow liked him for himself a little better now that he wasn't Kate's husband; I had never liked to think of him in that way. She seemed to have come back to the Connors now she was gone. And, anyhow I hungered so much for the feel of somebody's hand that I'd have taken Cetywayo's even, if he asked me—and I must get him to tell me the last of Kate, if he hadn't quite forgotten her. He was

the nearest to me now, after all; and if the new Mrs. Cregan had got a child or two of poor Kate's, to whom she was perhaps acting as a good step-mother, and if they took to me, I might find something to do with my money now that it didn't feel of any use to me.

I didn't want to meet Miles' officers, but no doubt I'd be able to have a talk with him over a late pipe when the others were gone. So I just wrote him a word that evening to say I'd come, and set off for a twenty-mile walk, to get rid of the blue devils, and make myself feel like a man again.

What's death after all? I've seen him face to face often enough, and I never could manage to think much of him. But poor Kate! It's easy enough preaching when one isn't one's own congregation. I doubt if she was ever quite happy with Miles, but I did wish she hadn't died quite so soon.

III.

It is not very far from Norfolk street, where I was lodging to Mayfair; but somehow it took me a long time to get to Melton street on Wednesday evening. It wasn't till the last minute that I made up my mind to dress; and I only did at last because this was the only way I could go in decent mourning, though of course after five years nobody but myself would notice how I chose to go.

And then I got hold of a cabman that didn't know the town, and as I didn't either, we lost a good deal of time on the journey. I was afraid to look at my watch when I got there at last, for Miles was an early man at both ends of the day.

I was in too much of a hurry to notice much about the outside of the house as I went up to the door, though when I thought of it afterwards I called to mind one or two little things that might have surprised me; but when I was inside, "Faith," I thought to myself, "things have changed with Miles as much as they have with me—the new Mrs. Cregan must have had money anyhow." Indeed, at first I could hardly believe my own eyes.

Miles had never been anything but rich, but even in the best Dublin days he'd been content to live in a little house and in the plainest way; the biggest thing in the shape of an entertainment was a pot-luck on Sunday to his priest and his doctor, and a tea-fight every now and then.

But if I'd been in a duke's house I couldn't have been in a finer one than he lived in now; and as for the few friends, there were hundreds of them all down the stairs—if he calls this a few, thought I, he must be a hail-fellow-well-met with all London. And if Mrs. Cregan had money, she knows how to make it fly too; I don't see much here to remind me of Miles.

And to think it was the merest chance I hadn't come in a light shooting coat—the thought of it made my hair begin to stand on end. Even now I didn't know how or where to begin, I was so taken aback by the big hall, and the staircase that an elephant might have marched up, and the light, and the perfume, and the flunkies, and the guests, and everything I didn't expect to see; and down the stairs I heard music the like of which I'd never heard but once before, and that was at the opera.

I'd half a minute's mind to turn tail and run, though it had been my sister's house and was my own brother-in-law's now; but before I knew where I was, I was drinking coffee in what seemed to me a bit of the National Gallery, where I'd been a week ago, mixed up with one of the hot-houses at Kew. I'd never seen anything to beat it, not even in Dublin, though there are some fine houses there; and I felt proud to think that Miles was keeping up the credit of the old country, though it must have made him feel sore at heart to pay the bills. I wondered where he was, and, having finished my coffee, I went to the stairs, and by and by began to move up them. There were some pretty girls there, especially three or four that I'd ask Miles to introduce me to as soon as I got hold of him.

But, by the time I'd got to the first landing, if one can call it so, for it was half a green house and half a gallery looking down into the hall, I'd changed my mind about the three or four. The band was playing a waltz that made my toes tingle, and the flowers all round were breathing their sweetest, when I felt—gone. There nothing else to say.

When a man's in love, he's in love—and if you can find another word to say about it you're a bigger poet than the world has known so far. Love isn't words. And it's not much good trying to say what she was like, there, when I first set eyes on her, for ten to one you're in love with somebody else and won't agree with me that she was just the loveliest girl that ever was born. But she was, all the same; and that's the only point on which I'm not open to argue. She was just as fair as an angel, and precisely the height and size of one; and she was about the age that angels are when they're eighteen, or may be a little more.

It's true, that I'd just come from where angels of that sort are rare; and before that evening I'd never been mixed much with them anywhere; so that falling in love at first sight might be a trifle more easy and natural to me than to landmen in general. But that's neither here nor there. It wasn't so much the beauty that

## FUR LINED CIRCULARS!

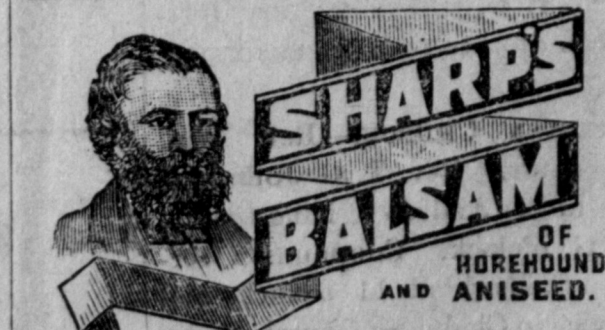
We are opening the balance of our stock of Ladies' Fur-lined Circulars, and have now a splendid assortment of these goods from the low and medium prices to the very fine Squirrel lined. Ladies' Astrachan Jackets, Ladies' Beaver Shoulder Capes, Ladeis' Astrachan Shoulder Capes.

D. C. SULLIVAN,  
114 Main Street, MONCTON.

GOOD  
COMMERCIAL  
AND OTHER  
PRINTING  
AT  
THE REVIEW  
OFFICE



WILL CURE OR RELIEVE  
BILIOUSNESS, DIZZINESS, DYSPEPSIA, DROPSY, INDIGESTION, FLUTTERING OF THE HEART, JAUNDICE, ACIDITY OF THE STOMACH, ERYSIPELAS, DRYNESS OF THE SKIN, SALT RHEUM, HEADACHE, AND every species of disease arising from disordered LIVER, KIDNEYS, STOMACH, BOWELS OR BLOOD.  
T. MILBURN & CO., PROPRIETORS, TORONTO.



FOR  
CROUP, WHOOPING COUGH, COUGHS AND COLDS.  
OVER 40 YEARS IN USE  
25 CENTS PER BOTTLE.  
ARMSTRONG & CO., PROPRIETORS  
SAINT JOHN, N. B.

BUCTOUCHE  
DRUG  
STORE.

TOILET SOAPS, SPICES, PIPES, HAND MIRRORS, BRUSHES, ETC., IN VARIETY.  
FRUIT AND CONFECTIONERY.  
Prescriptions carefully prepared.  
A large assortment of Patent Medicine constantly on hand.  
W. G. KING, M. D.  
aug2229ui

JOHN HANNAH,  
—MANUFACTURER OF—  
Woven Wire Mattresses,  
Of Different Grades for the Trade only. Warranted not to sag.  
To be had from all the principal furniture and general dealers in the Maritime Provinces.  
Repairing promptly done. 105 CITY ROAD, ST. JOHN, N. B.

FARM  
MACHINERY  
AND IMPLEMENTS OF ALL KINDS.  
ROTARY MILLS & SHINGLE MACHINES.  
PIANOS AND ORGANS.  
FINEST CANADIAN AND AMERICAN SEWING MACHINES.  
Special attention given to repairs for all kinds of Machinery. Bring or send me the piece, whether broken or not, and I can get it duplicated for you.  
I do not wish to sell the cheapest, but I shall strive to select goods as good as the best, give good value, fair terms; and hope by upright dealing and careful attention to business to merit a share of the patronage of the citizens of Kent County.  
Agent for FIRE, LIFE AND ACCIDENT INSURANCE.  
E. E. PECK, Office—305 Main St. Moncton, N.B.  
Telephone—Office, 45; Residence, 37 A.

Millers' Tanning Extract Co.  
(LIMITED).

—WORKS AT—  
Millerton and Mortimore, N. B.  
Cable Addresses—"Hypotan," London; and "Miller," Miramichi.  
A very complete stock of General Goods, cheap for Cash or Trade, at  
OUR MORTIMORE STORE.

Change of  
Business.

GREAT CLEARANCE SALE OF DRY GOODS.  
\$20,000 --- WORTH --- \$20,000

Will be sold at cost, on Goods other than Staples much less than cost, as we mean to dispose of the entire stock. Bargains in everything. The stock is still complete and well selected in all lines. Purchasers will save from 15 to 50 per cent. We will sell for CASH only. Those who have accounts are requested to call and settle. Sale will continue till all is sold. Call early in the day to avoid the rush.

J. FLANAGAN  
MONCTON, N. B.

RICHARD SULLIVAN & CO.  
—WHOLESALE—

Wine and Spirit Merchants,  
—IMPORTERS AND DEALERS IN—

TEAS, TOBACCOS and CIGARS,  
54 DOCK STREET, ST. JOHN, N. B.

Bonded Warehouse No. 8.

James D. Irving  
—COMPRISING—

SHEATHING, WAINSCOTTING, FLOORING, CLAPBOARDS, WINDOW and DOOR CASINGS, MOULDINGS, LATHES, &c.  
FLOUR CHEAP FOR CASH.

Buctouche, N. B., June 22, 1891.