

FOILED BY HIMSELF.

CHAPTER I.—CONTINUED.

He went slowly up the stairs and along the corridor towards the room he was wont to occupy on the occasions of his visits to Moredun House. As he passed the door of the room where lay the dead body of his friend so lately instinct with life, a feeling of awe crept over him. A stillness as of the grave seemed to hover in the air: What a strange thing was this which men call death!

Next morning, when the solicitor came down-stairs, he found Miss Ashley in the breakfast-room. She was a slight fair-haired girl with a very pretty face. She wore a dark-blue morning gown. Her eyes looked heavy and bore the traces of recent tears. She greeted Mr. Barnett with outstretched hand. "Oh, it is such a relief to have you here!" she said. "I did not know what to do; and Mrs. Crawford was not here when I wrote you. She would tell you that Henry Monkton came yesterday afternoon?"

"Yes, I expected to see him at breakfast. Is he not going to appear?"

"I do not know. He was up early and has gone out somewhere, the housekeeper says. But we will not wait for him. Mrs. Crawford is having breakfast in her own room."

"I expected Henry Monkton would have been trying to act the master here," said Mr. Barnett; "but Mrs. Crawford informs me he has shown no disposition to do so—that he has left everything for me to arrange."

"She told me so too. He seems to have altered for the better. We could scarcely blame him even if he did assume the mastership in the house; he is Mr. Monkton's only near relation."

"Yes; but how did he behave towards him? Not as a brother should, certainly. Had I been in Monkton's place I would never have borne with him so long."

"Uncle was very patient with him; I believe he always looked on him as a mere boy, who would grow wiser in time. And he was only eight years younger than uncle, after all. He must be somewhat about forty-six."

Mr. Barnett ate his breakfast in comparative silence. He was debating with himself as to the advisability of imparting to Miss Ashley the terms of Mr. Monkton's will at present, or leaving it till later. She had said nothing on the subject, and, judging by appearances, the thought of the will or of how she herself might be concerned in it did not seem to be troubling her. Had she shown any signs of anxiety with regard to what she should do, or where she should go after the funeral, Mr. Barnett would have felt it his duty to tell her she was amply provided for; but as it was, he thought it better she should remain in ignorance in the meantime.

After breakfast, Miss Ashley went up-stairs. Left alone, Mr. Barnett decided that he would wait until he had seen Henry Monkton, before beginning his work in the library, and went out into the garden to smoke. He was in the full enjoyment of his cigar when a step coming down the garden path caused him to turn round. The comer was Mr. Henry Monkton, who held out his hand with apparent friendliness. He was a tall, sallow-complexioned man, not bad-looking, with a restless look in his black eyes. He had a moustache, but no beard. Saving in his complexion and his restless looks, he had a great resemblance to his dead brother.

The solicitor took the offered hand, and bade him good-morning in as friendly a tone as he could muster. "I have to apologise for not appearing at breakfast," said Mr. Monkton, "I had a headache, and went out to walk it off. I am going in now—I believe you came last night?"

"Yes, you were in bed, I think. I saw no one save Mrs. Crawford."

"She would keep you in talk at any rate. How her tongue does go! I never can make out half she says. Confound these poor relations, always cropping up!—Have you seen Miss Ashley this morning? She was not well yesterday."

"I saw her at breakfast. She has gone to her room now.—You would be sorry to hear of your brother's death?"

"I have good reason to be sorry. A better brother man never had. I am afraid I was sore trouble to him. I am glad, however, that our last quarrel was made up before he died; I should never have forgiven myself otherwise."

"Then you have seen him lately?" asked Mr. Barnett in surprise, which he did not attempt to hide.

"I saw him in the city on Tuesday, and spoke to him. He had been at your office. He was rather stern at first; but he had always a warm side to me, had as I was."

Mr. Barnett doubted Mr. Monkton's statement very much but did not tell him so. He only remarked; "It must be a great comfort to you now as things have happened."

"Yes; it is a comfort, as you say.—Will you be good enough to have a look through my brother's papers and arrange them if they need arranging? You understand such things. He would have liked you to do it, I know." He spoke as though conscious that by his own wicked conduct in the past he had forfeited all right to interfere in his brother's affairs.

Mr. Barnett, although wondering not a little at the position Henry Monkton was taking up, wisely refrain-

ed from making any remark. He merely said: "I was just waiting to see you before I began.—I will go in now," and left Mr. Monkton standing alone.

Before he could begin his work amongst the documents, the arrangements for the funeral required to be seen to, and the afternoon was pretty far advanced also when he at length set himself down to work in earnest. He first of all opened the safe, and took out the papers which he had wrapped up in the newspaper the previous night, and placed them on the desk in the middle of the floor.

"I had better find the will in the first place," thought he. "I can't understand Henry Monkton's behaviour at all, so different from his usual style. One would think that he already has an idea how the will stands, or he would be acting differently. He must have come down here simply in a fit of bravado, and with the intention, perhaps of deceiving the people around by a pretence of regret for the brother he has lost. He can't cheat me, however, with his hypocritical talk. I wonder if he knew that the will was in his brother's possession, or if he thought I had it?—Here is a bundle of titles; the will may be amongst them. I have seen Monkton take it out from one of these drawers before. I think this one is half empty. Some of these papers on the desk probably have been kept in it."

He sat down and unloosed the piece of pink tape with which the documents were tied together and scrutinised each carefully. "It is not amongst these at all," he said, laying them aside and taking out another smaller bundle. "Nor here either," he added, after glancing over this second lot. "After all, it may be in that old cabinet or in his desk; but I should think he would not keep anything but letters or things of that kind in either of these two places."

He happened to turn round after closing the drawer, and the bundle lying on the desk attracted his attention. He unwound the newspaper which enveloped its contents and scattered the papers loosely over the desk. A slight scrutiny convinced him that they consisted chiefly of letters and circulars of one kind and another, some of them dated many years back. These he paid little attention to. Then came part of the Moredun House titles, which, together with some leases, formed the remainder of the documents before him. He looked these over and then placed them in the drawer he had already examined. The rest of the safe was mainly taken up with business books used by Mr. Monkton before his retirement from business as a merchant. The safe was not a large one, yet it took Mr. Barnett some time to examine thoroughly all it contained. He had just made up his mind that the document he sought for was not there, when he was summoned to dinner.

Mrs. Crawford, Miss Ashley, and Mr. Monkton were all present, but none of them had dressed for the occasion. The meal passed very quietly, little conversation being indulged in. Even the usually garrulous Mrs. Crawford was silent. When the ladies left the dining-room Mr. Barnett retired with them, and at once went back to the library to resume his search.

He had anticipated no difficulty in finding his late friend's will; but the looking for it promised to be a more tedious business than he had expected, although he had no doubt of finding it ultimately. Hours passed, and still the search went on unsuccessfully. By ten o'clock both cabinet and desk had been thoroughly overhauled, unless there were some secret drawers which he had failed to discover. There was no other place left in the room where Mr. Monkton would be likely to keep the will, that he could see. Could it by any chance be in his room up-stairs? If it was not discovered there, the conclusion seemed inevitable—that the will was lost.

"I would be very sick sorry to see him get anything at all, much less two-thirds. We have had as well as any-thing. The other may not be far off. We'll finish what we are at, I reckon.—Is the event of us not finding the father it will be. It contains a provision for Miss Ashley, which is a good thing. If there was no will, she would get nothing. If the other is not forthcoming, we must act on this one."

"Do you think Mr. Monkton would ken o' that will being inside the book?"

"No; I don't think he would. That book does not seem to have been disturbed for a long time. He must have thought he had destroyed it. But yet—The solicitor stopped short in his speech as a sudden thought struck him. "If it be true that his brother and he had become friendly again, he may have burnt the last will, intending to make a new one; or he might be aware of the existence of this one, which would do perfectly well," he said. "I may have even burnt the will on the evening on which he died."

"Was there any appearance, Mrs. Crawford, of his having burnt any papers?"

"I heard the housekeeper say he had been burning some papers; but of course they might be some old letters or things o' no consequence."

"Quite possible. We will not assume that it is burnt yet, till we see.—There goes twelve o'clock. Another twenty minutes and we will have finished.—What's that?"

It was a noise like the faint creaking of a door, distinctly heard through the stillness of the house, seemingly coming from one of the rooms on the floor immediately above. Mr. Barnett and Mrs. Crawford both strained their ears to listen. For the space of nearly a minute they heard nothing.

"Perhaps Miss Ashley or the housekeeper looking out to see if the hall gas is still lit, or if we are up-stairs," Mr. Barnett said. "I hope it is not that brother stying about to see what we are after. If he had happened to be outside this door a little ago, he might have heard us talking of the will.—There it is again. Some one is certainly awake up-stairs."

Listening intently, they now heard a slight sound, as of a footstep coming slowly down the stairs step by step. The footstep seemed too light to be that of Henry Monkton; it must be either Miss Ashley or the housekeeper, Mrs. Boddling.

"They're taking their braw time, whoever it is," said Mrs. Crawford in a whisper. "They have got to the foot of the stair now. They're coming in here.—The Lord preserve us; it's Mr. Monkton himself!"

The door had opened, and a tall figure in white walked slowly into the room. Mrs. Crawford, almost fainting with terror, cowered down on the floor and clung to the tails of the solicitor's frock coat. Both were on the opposite side of the desk from the apparition, which advanced with noiseless tread into the centre of the room, and there raised, regarding them with a fixed stare, it held something in his right hand like a long blue packet. Mr. Barnett, his blood freezing in his veins, stood literally paralyzed and incapable of motion. He felt his hair rise on his head. For the space of one dread minute he actual-

ly believed that the spirit of his dead friend stood before him. Then came a wild feeling of relief as he recognized the apparition. It was not the dead man in the spirit, but his brother in the flesh, whom he beheld. It was Henry Monkton in a fit of somnambulism.

(To be Continued.)

HIDDEN DANGERS OF CYCLING.

A Diversity of Opinion as to the Hygienic Effect of Wheeling.

It will be remembered that the late Sir Benjamin Richardson warmly recommended the use of the bicycle, and was undoubtedly responsible for much of the general confidence in its hygienic virtues. We are told, however, by another English medical authority, Dr. A. Shadwell, in a late number of the National Review, that before his death Sir Benjamin's opinions on the subject were materially modified, and ought, therefore, to be no longer quoted in their original form. Dr. Shadwell's own notion of the matter is that, while cycling is unquestionably good for many people, there are, on the other hand, many for whom it is not good but distinctly hurtful, and that in ways and for reasons which are not yet generally recognized.

In spite of the tendency of bicycle riders to conceal untoward results, lest they should be forbidden to use the wheel, many facts have come to light which, in Dr. Shadwell's opinion, ought to attract serious attention. He cites the case of a healthy girl, rather stronger than the average, and able, apparently, to cycle as well as anybody in short flights. One day she went further, though not very far, perhaps ten miles; the result was utter collapse, followed by confinement to bed for several days. In another case within Dr. Shadwell's knowledge, a girl developed exophthalmic goitre as the result of a rather long ride, which she supposed herself able to accomplish without difficulty. Her throat swelled at the time, never went down, and quickly exhibited a well-marked example of the disease. This obscure but grave affliction is said to be caused by mental excitement. Another form of organic injury that Dr. Shadwell has observed in cyclists is internal inflammation, of which the symptoms are much pain, and a kind of chronic dysentery, extremely obstinate and of the most lowering character. One of the British medical journals has lately called attention to the occurrence of appendicitis caused by bicycle riding, and a definite anatomical explanation is suggested.

More important in Dr. Shadwell's opinion, because more common and more easily overlooked than such decided injuries, are the various forms of ill-defined nervous effects. Men of more than average vigor, and accustomed to far harder work than cycling, complain after a long ride on the wheel, of headache, insomnia, lassitude, nervous depression and prostration, which are essentially nervous and not muscular effects. Various causes are assigned for these nervous troubles. Some blame the saddle, others the vibration or the mechanical defects of the machine; all these factors, however, are common to the tricycle, which has been found void of offence, and by the way, it was a tricycle and not a bicycle, which was used by Sir Benjamin Richardson. In Dr. Shadwell's judgment, the true cause of the nervous disorders sometimes observed in cyclists lies in the extreme instability of the two-wheeled machine, which can never be left to itself for a single minute without dismounting. In this respect bicycling differs from every other occupation. The strain of attending to the wheel may not be very great in itself; sometimes it is, and sometimes it is not, but it never ceases, and it is this incessant tension which tells upon the nerves. We are reminded that the demeanor of most riders attest this incessant tension with an emphasis, which still excites ridicule, familiar as the sight has become. Some time ago Dr. Shadwell drew attention to the peculiar, strained, set look so often associated with this pastime, and called it the "bicycle face." Some have the "face" more or less marked, but nearly all have it. "Has anybody," asks Dr. Shadwell, "ever seen persons on bicycles talking and laughing and looking jolly, like persons engaged in any other amusement?" Doubtless they can look merry at a pinch, but in practice most of them do not. Usually all their attention is given to the road and to the machine. It is this strange and unhuman gravity which excites the mirth and hostility alike of the urban hoodlum and of the dull-witted rustic. No one, of course, can blame the bicyclist for wearing a fixed and anxious expression; his machine is so excessively crank that it cannot stand the slightest shock. To ride it safely entails a double strain, a general one on the nerves and a particular one on the balancing centre. The latter strain does not affect everybody, but Dr. Shadwell testifies that it affects some very seriously. People differ in balancing capacity as much as in an ear for music; and it costs some bicycle riders constant and conscious effort to keep their equilibrium. They show the effect of the effort by suffering from headache at the back of the head, where the balancing centre is situated.

No attempt is made by Dr. Shadwell to exaggerate the weight of these considerations. He submits, however, that they show that cycling does not deserve indiscriminate commendation, but that, in the case of many persons, it is attended with evils which do not appear on the surface, and therefore have been hitherto overlooked.

TOO EXPENSIVE.

Why did you discharge that last girl, wife?

Because everything she cooked was eaten right up. Mine lasts.

SAD STORY OF AN EXILE.

HIS ESCAPE FROM SIBERIA AND ARRIVAL AT VICTORIA, B.C.

Capture of a Nihilist and His Terrible Sufferings in Siberia—How He Found His Way Out of It.

Jules Germand, a scarred exile broken by two years of terrific struggles across the wilds of Siberia, leaped from the deck of the steamer Empress of China recently and, in a transport of joy, knelt and kissed the boards of the outer wharf at Victoria, B.C. Two years beneath the stinging lash of Russian tyranny, and two years in the trackless wilds; well might he bedew his tears upon the spot of freedom's soil which marked the end of his terrible journey. Here is his story:

"Beginning life as a trainer in an obscure Polish village and surrounded by daily evidences of the brutality and soul crushing tyranny of the Russian Government, it is not to be wondered at that at the age of 20 I found myself a member of one of Russia's most deadly Nihilistic Associations. My business was of such a nature as to cause me at different seasons of the year to seek employment first in Austria and then in Russian Poland. I naturally drifted into the position of secret courier to the order of which I was a member.

THE FIGHT AND CAPTURE.

"Important business tending toward the removal of an official high in Russian diplomatic circles, caused the convention of the lodge to which I was immediately joined. Each man knowing the dangerous nature of the work appeared fully armed, which accounts for the bloody outcome of a struggle, which arose when we found ourselves surrounded by a detachment of Russia's secret police.

"Wounded, desperate, reeking with prison filth, untried and uncondemned within a month I was wearily dragging my shackles across the Russian frontier along that sorrow laden road which ends in the Siberian mines. I found myself one of perhaps a hundred other unfortunates who, like myself, had fallen under the displeasure of our iron masters. Of the soul sickening scenes attending this terrible journey, I can scarcely speak. I saw the tender flesh of maidens torn by the cruel knout because of a refusal to pander to the base passions of their guards. I saw lion hearted men broken into whimpering idiocy by the terrible tortures they were compelled to undergo. I myself twice on that journey had my back laid bare to the bone by the lash of the ever ready knout.

HIS DYING MESSAGE.

"We reached Siberia, and it was a change not much to the better. Scantily fed, housed in wretched hovels, through the long and hopeless hours we toiled beneath the blows and insults of our relentless masters. Only those who have gone through such experiences can know what the human frame is capable of enduring. A year and a half passed like a horror-filled nightmare. I was shifted to another village there to continue my tasks in the alluvial gold mines. A few nights after my arrival, a guard with a heart not yet hardened out of all semblance to humanity, told me that my name had been spoken by a dying man; I could see him if I wanted to.

ON THE WRETCHED BUNK.

"On the wretched bunk, crunched, bleeding, dying, I found my friend the leader of the lodge to which I belonged, and whom I had not seen since the bloody fight which ended in our capture. Unusually high spirited and impatient of control, he had drawn upon himself every indignity which the fiendish ingenuity of his jailers could invent. With dying lips he murmured a few almost incoherent messages to loved ones far away, placing upon me the burden of their transmission.

HIS TERRIBLE JOURNEY.

"Hopeless before, the vows which I made to sooth that dying friend's last moments, revived my resolutions to escape, and from that time it was my one, my constant dream. At the approach of summer in the second year of my captivity I managed to elude the guard, and with a knife, a few fish hooks and a knapsack filled with scraps of prison bread, I faced the Siberian wilds, determined to escape or die.

THE END AT LAST.

"My experience in the alluvial gravels of Siberia stood me in good hand during the second season of my wanderings, and with a pan fashioned from the bark of a tree, I gathered from time to time a little burden of gold dust, until my failing strength warned me that I could carry no more.

"The rest is soon told. I brought up at a native village, north of Vladivostok. I stole a small fishing schooner and made my way down the coast and joined a wandering trader, and after some months landed in Hong Kong. Even here I did not dare to make my identity known, fearing the Russian spies, which swarm on every hand in that port, and it was only when I felt the deck of the British steamer beneath my feet, and heard the throb of her engines far out on the broad Pacific, that the first feeling of security came to my tortured soul."