

A DEAD RECKONING.

CHAPTER XVI.

Never had the little town of Cumberhays been stirred to its depths as it was on a certain April morning, when it awoke to find that it had rendered itself famous after a fashion which would cause its existence to become known wherever an English newspaper penetrated. Its name would be in everybody's mouth for weeks to come. It felt that it could never again sink into utter obscurity.

For the prisoners—about whose alleged attempts to rob the train all sorts of wild rumours were afloat—had after their capture been put into the train and brought on to Cumberhays, and were for the present lodged in the town jail. The magistrate would assemble at ten o'clock, when the preliminary inquiry would take place. But even a deeper interest, if that were possible, centred itself in the arrest of the alleged murderer of the Baron von Rosenberg, who was said to have actually been working as a signalman on the line for the past three or four months. It was dreadful to think that the lives of several hundreds of respectable people should have been at the mercy of such a miscreant!

The town-hall was besieged by an excited crowd long before the opening of the doors, and had the justice-room been three times larger than it was, it might easily have been filled three times over. Among the foremost ranks of the surging crowd, and maintaining his position with passive tenacity, was a man on whom many furious eyes were bent. He was a foreigner—so much was evident at a glance—and that of itself was enough to excite the curiosity of the good folk of Cumberhays, many of whom had never been a score of miles from home. He was very lean and very sallow, with drawn-in cheeks and sharply defined cheek-bones. He had deep set eyes black and burning with something in them of the expression of a half-famished wild animal. He wore small gold circlets in his ears, and was dressed in a coat of frayed velvet, with a soft felt hat; and a coloured silk handkerchief knotted loosely round his throat. He spoke to no one and no one spoke to him; but now and then his lips worked strangely, as though he were holding a silent colloquy with some invisible companion. He was the one man in the crowd who was the least incommoded by the crowd. Those nearest to him shrank a little from him involuntarily, as it were. He was a being of a different world from theirs, and they knew not what to make of him.

Jules Picot—for he it was—had arrived in Cumberhays at a late hour the preceding night, having walked there from another town about a dozen miles away. By what strange chance his wandering footsteps had brought him by many devious paths to this place of all others, and at this particular time, will be told a little later on. He had hired a bed for the night at the Wheatsheaf Inn, a cheap and unpretentious hostelry. He was up and had ordered his breakfast by eight o'clock next morning, and it was while waiting for that meal to be brought him that his intention was attracted by some conversation in the taproom which he could not help overhearing. The pallor of his face grew deeper as he listened; but whatever other emotion the change might arise from, it certainly had not its origin in fear.

"So! It is for this that I have been brought here," he muttered, half to himself and half aloud, in French. Now I understand."

Going into the taproom, he put a few questions to the men to whose talk he had been listening. Having ascertained what he wanted to know, he left the house without waiting for his breakfast and bent his steps in the direction of the town hall. At a quarter to ten o'clock, when the doors were thrown open, Jules Picot was one of the first to push his way forward, or to be pushed forward by those behind him, into the small, crowded space allotted in the justice-room of Cumberhays to the general public. In three minutes the place was crammed to its utmost limits.

A few minutes after ten, the magistrates entered one by one, and took their seats their clerk having preceded them by a few seconds. They were three in number, all venerable gentlemen. One was partially blind; one had a deaf ear, while the third, who had a very red face and took the lead in everything, was quick-tempered and aggressive in his manner. There were two cases of drunkenness and one of theft to be disposed of before the great sensation of the day would begin.

Everybody seemed relieved when they were over; and presently a flutter of intense excitement ran through the court as three men, in charge of as many constables filed in, and were placed in the dock. Then, after a brief pause, a fourth man was ushered in whose left arm was supported by a sling, and a murmur ran round that this was the alleged murderer of the German Baron. A moment later another door opened, and there glided in a female in black, closely veiled, who sat down on a chair in the background which one of the officials handed her with a bow. The prisoner with his arm in a sling was also allowed to be seated a little way from the dock in which the other men had been placed.

When the mountebank beheld Gerald Brooke, whom he still knew only by the name of "Mr. Stewart," marched in as a prisoner, and when he saw, and

his black eyes recognised the veiled figure in black who entered immediately afterwards, he was seized with a vertigo, which caused the room, the magistrates, and the prisoners to surge up and down before his eyes as though they were being tempest-tossed at sea. "Mon Dieu! est-il possible!" he exclaimed half aloud. Then he buried his face in his hands for a time, while a cloud seemed to lift itself slowly from his brain, and much became clear to him that had been dark before.

The charge against the first three prisoners was one of assault and attempted robbery; but against one of them was a supplementary charge of attempted murder. That against the fourth prisoner was the much more serious charge of murder. But from what the magistrates could understand of the case at present, this fourth prisoner was so mixed up with the charge against the other three—he being the man who had been assaulted and bound and afterwards shot by one of them—that the poor gentlemen, who had never before had to investigate a case of such gravity, or one which presented so many peculiar features, were fairly at their wits' end to know how to deal with it from a strictly legal point of view. Thus it fell out that the whole of the prisoners found themselves in court at the same time. It was now, however, suggested by the clerk that the prisoner on the capital charge should be put back while the examination of the others was being proceeded with. This suggestion was at once acted upon.

After the remaining prisoners had answered to the name entered on the charge-sheet, the first witness was called, but not till the red-faced magistrate had intimated that he and his colleagues only intended to take sufficient evidence that day to justify a remand. The first witness proved to be Mr. Sturgess, a London jeweller. His evidence went to show that, accompanied by a trustworthy assistant, he had left home the previous day on his way to Lord Leamington's seat, a few miles beyond Cumberhays, having in his charge a box containing jewellery to the value of several thousands of pounds. All had gone well till he reached Greenholme, at which place he had to wait an hour and change to the branch line; but on his arrival there he found a telegram awaiting him from his partner in London, in which he was told on no account to pursue his journey without first obtaining an escort of four or five constables. No reason was furnished by the telegram for taking such extraordinary precautions, and he could only surmise that an attempt was about to be made to rob him of the box, and that by some means his partner at the last moment had obtained wind of the affair. Fortunately, through the courtesy of the police authorities at Greenholme he experienced no difficulty in obtaining the required escort, and under its protection he resumed his journey by the next train.

The next witness to answer to his name was the driver of the train, who deposed to everything having gone right till he was just inside the distance signal of Cinder Pit Junction, which showed "line clear," when he and his mate were startled by the explosion of a fog-signal. He at once whistled, and put on all the brake-power at his command, and could not have gone more than forty or fifty yards farther before a second signal exploded; and then he could just make out the figure of a woman standing on the embankment and beating the air with both her arms as a sign for him to stop, which, as the brakes were on already, he was not long in doing. After that the police took charge of the affair, and he did just as they told him.

The next witness called was Margery Shook. She had been sitting out of sight behind a large screen which sheltered their worshippers from any possible draughts at the lower end of the room. As she entered the witness-box she shot a glance of venomous hatred towards Crofton, which would have killed him then and there if looks had power to slay. The nature of the evidence she had to give we know already. More once her peculiar phraseology caused a titter to run through the court, which was, however, promptly suppressed.

Clara Brooke was the next person called upon. As she raised her veil her eyes met those of Crofton for a moment, while a faint colour suffused her cheeks, only to die out as quickly as it had come. A low murmur of commiseration passed like a sigh through the court; and the eyes of many there filled with tears when they beheld her pale beautiful face, for it had been whispered about that this was the wife of the man who was accused of murder. The evidence she had to offer was given clearly and unhesitatingly; with the purport of it we are sufficiently acquainted already. When she had told all she had to tell, she let her veil drop and went back to the seat she had occupied before.

The next and last witness whose evidence it was proposed to take at present was the Greenholme sergeant of police. He told how he had been instructed by his superintendent to take four men and accompany the gentleman from London as far as Cumberhays. Then he narrated how the train had come to a stand in consequence of the explosions of the fog-signals; and how when he and his men alighted from it, they had found the witness Margery Shook, who gave them to understand that the train was about to be attacked a little way farther on. How the girl had scarcely finished telling them this when up ran the signalman, who had been released by his wife; and how, under his guidance, he, witness, and his men had succeeded in surprising the three thieves; and finally, how the signalman had been severely wounded by Crofton, one of the prisoners, firing his revolver point-blank at him.

"You have omitted one little episode," said Crofton in cold measured tones as the sergeant was about to step down from the witness-box; "you have forgotten to tell these worthy gentlemen that it was I who recognised the so-called signalman as Gerald Brooke, the man charged with the wilful murder of the Baron von Rosenberg, and that I denounced him as such then and there."

"That is so, your worships," said the sergeant.
"We quite understand that already," remarked the red-faced magistrate; "but it is a point on which we need not enter at present, more especially seeing that the prisoner in question has already admitted that his name is Gerald Brooke, and that he is in point of fact the man whose apprehension a reward of three hundred pounds is still unclaimed." With that the magistrates laid their heads together and consulted for a little while among themselves.

By Picot, sitting quietly among the general public and watching everything with restless burning eyes, all these proceedings were only imperfectly understood. Why Gerald Brooke had been brought in a prisoner and almost immediately taken out again without any charge being brought against him, was a mystery to the mountebank. Neither could he understand how "la belle madame," and "Margot," as he termed them, came to be mixed up in such a strange fashion with the prisoners at the bar, in one of whom he had at once recognised the man he had gagged and bound to his chair in the house in Pymm's Buildings. He lacked the key to the situation, and wanting that, he could only look on and listen, and feel himself becoming more bewildered after each witness that appeared on the scene. Not that he troubled himself greatly about these things; something of much deeper import lay at the back of all his wandering thoughts about this matter or the other. He had been led to that place, his footsteps had been mysteriously guided thither—he could see it all now—for a certain purpose, and that purpose, as he sat there, was never for one moment out of his mind.

The magistrates having brought their brief consultation to an end, intimated that the prisoners at the bar would be remanded till the following Monday. They were at once removed; and after a brief pause, Gerald Brooke took his stand in their place. Having answered to his name in the usual way, the red-faced magistrate leaned forward a little to address him. "Gerald Brooke," he began, "you stand charged on the verdict of a coroner's jury with the wilful murder of Otto von Rosenberg, commonly called Baron von Rosenberg, at Beaulieu, in the county of—, on Thursday, the 28th day of June last. The crime having been committed outside the jurisdiction of this court, all we have now to do is—"

Suddenly a man with gold circlets in his ears and holding a soft felt hat in his hands stood up in the body of the court, and addressing himself directly to the magistrate, said in a voice which all there could hear: "Pardonnez moi, s'il vous plait, monsieur, but I—Jules Picot—and not the prisoner at the bar, am the man who killed Otto von Rosenberg."

(To Be Continued.)

THE WOMAN WHO WAITED.

When Doctor Nansen went north in the Fram to leave himself at the mercy of the drifting ice-floes, a silent heroine remained behind to await his return. It was his devoted wife, the daughter of a university professor, and a woman of refinement and delicate sensibility. Three years she was without word from the Arctic seas, and then her husband returned in triumph, the hero of the most intrepid voyage and march in the annals of adventure.

The little child of four months whom the explorer had left in his wife's arms, was her chief companion during the long, anxious interval. When he returned "Liv," was a frolicsome toddler, whose fearlessness and inventive mischief reflected his own love of adventure. The mother's face had deepened in intensity of expression, and her voice, when she sang, seemed to have in it undertones of the mysterious, sea-like Wagner's music in "The Flying Dutchman," written after his disastrous voyage in the Baltic.

After remaining five months at home the Nansens went to London, where they were received with the greatest honor by princes, men of science and leaders of the world of fashion and letters.

Few foreigners have ever had so conspicuous a social triumph as the gallant Norwegian. Banquets, receptions, luncheons and parties were planned for him. Enormous crowds filled the halls where he delivered his lectures. He was the one man whom everybody wished to see and hear.

At one of the earliest receptions in London, when the Arctic hero's name was on every tongue, a guest turned to Mrs. Nansen and remarked quietly: "If I were to propose a toast, it would not be alone to the man of action, who had the inspiration of great undertaking and the excitement of a tremendous battle with nature. It would be also to the woman who waited patiently at home with little 'Liv.' Hers was surely the harder part, for she lacked the excitement of adventure, and had only the agonizing suspense of waiting for a voice out of the darkness of the Polar night."

Mrs. Nansen could not speak, for her eyes were trembling with tears which it was not easy for her to restrain; but she nodded her head and smiled sweetly. It had been her sacrifice willingly made from devotion to her husband, but the memory of those years of wearing anxiety still haunted her, proud and happy though she was in his triumphs. His story the world would read in detail. Her story of apprehension, loneliness and heart sickness would never be told, for it contained neither range of incident or startling experiences like his, but only a simple record of wifely devotion and anxiety.

WHAT HE NEEDED.

Mr. Woodware—That young fellow you have in your office is the most conceited puppy I ever ran across.

Mr. Queensware—Yes, I know; but you must remember he is young yet, and his character is not fully formed. He has never been tried by fire.

Mr. Woodware—Then you had better fire him.

HEALTH.

COMPLEXION HINTS.

To almost every girl and woman whom nature has not blessed with a beautiful complexion, this subject is of much importance, because she realizes what a necessary factor it is to good looks. Although in some complexions "roses and white lilies" show, it does not follow that everybody can have a similar one, but much can often be done to improve a poor one. Good health is essential. Without it all attempts at improvement of the complexion will prove fruitless. Another cause of poor complexion is indigestion. This is a trouble easily cured provided it is taken care of in time and precaution exercised in eating proper foods. People suffering from this trouble should eat very slowly, thoroughly masticating the food. No liquid should be taken until after a meal is finished. Foods which particularly disagree with one should be avoided. A cup of very hot water taken before breakfast has been recommended. Lemon juice without sugar is good, and so are charcoal tablets, sold in most drug stores. A teaspoonful of saleratus—baking soda—taken with a little water, is excellent for indigestion. Probably if the trouble has become chronic these simple remedies will do no good, but in ordinary cases they have been effective.

A good complexion requires that some attention be paid to diet. Too much greasy food should be avoided, and plenty of fruit and vegetables are absolutely necessary. Onions are excellent for the complexion, and when they can be partaken of by all means indulge. To many the odor of onions is extremely disagreeable, so it would not do to eat them at a time when one either expects to entertain or go out in company. Kindness cannot be sacrificed even for a complexion. Eating frequently between meals is an unhealthy practice, and should be avoided, as it gives the stomach no rest.

Impure blood is often the cause of a bad complexion and there are a number of simple and effective remedies for that. Many people believe it necessary to take something every spring to cleanse the blood, and it is a good idea. There is probably not a farm housewife but who has a recipe for some decoction in which are such ingredients as sassafras, sarsaparilla, dandelion and other herbs and roots. All of them are good and inexpensive. Here is a simple remedy often recommended: Mix enough powdered sulphur in a cup of molasses to make a thick, waxy mixture, when well stirred. Take a teaspoonful or more for three mornings. Omit three mornings, and repeat the process until you have taken it nine times, always omitting three mornings between the doses. Another old-fashioned remedy is to take a teaspoonful of powdered charcoal for three successive nights, and the fourth morning take a dose of Rochelle salts, sold by all druggists. This remedy should also be repeated three times.

Given good health, the keynote to a nice complexion is cleanliness. This does not mean a careless wash of the face once a day with cold water and poor soap. It means bathing of the entire person, daily, if possible, or, if not, as often as convenient. Even if bathing facilities are not conveniently arranged, it does not take much longer to bathe thoroughly if once the habit is formed. How can any one expect to have a good complexion unless the skin is in a healthy condition and it cannot be so with inactive pores, not of the face, only, but of the entire person. Besides the delicious sense of perfect cleanliness and comfort afforded by the bath, the blood is brought into circulation by the brisk rubbing which follows, and every pore is awakened to action. Surely the bath is a health-giver as well as a beautifier, and the woman who wants both health and beauty cannot afford to be sparing in its use.

Blackheads are a source of much annoyance. The pores, especially those around the nose and chin, become clogged with an oily substance and dirt, and show up black and ugly. They are easily removed, but it takes a little time and patience. One way of getting rid of them is as follows: Bathe the places where the blackheads are with hot water as can be borne, holding the cloth or sponge on, if possible, and allowing the steam to penetrate the pores. This will soften the inactive ones. Then gently squeeze each little black spot until it comes out. If they do not come out easily leave them for a day or two. Use the finger nails, well protected with a handkerchief, for squeezing them. The bare finger nails irritate the skin. Anoint each little spot with sweet oil, cream, rendered mutton tallow or any oily substance, except vaseline, rubbing the unguent very gently. When all the spots have been thus treated, wash the face with hot water and pure castile soap, rubbing the affected portion for some time with the latter; then rinse the face thoroughly and wipe with a soft towel. This treatment, persisted in for a few times, will remove blackheads. The face should be steamed in the above mentioned way each time for about ten minutes. Anyone troubled with blackheads should never use glycerine on the face. Unless one is exposed to much dust and dirt it may not be advisable to wash the face and neck with hot water every day, but about once every other day may be necessary. After washing in warm water, dash cold water over the skin. It stimulates the pores and gives one a healthy glow. Pure soap is a necessity. Highly scented soaps are not always the best. Castile soap is said to be the purest, but it is also expensive. Ivory soap is a good toilet soap, and there are other nice mild soaps which are inexpensive.

Pimples are often caused by impure blood, and if that is made healthy, they will go away; very often it is the lack of personal cleanliness and sometimes they are caused by a lack of nourishing food. Each individual is probably best able to decide what is the cause of the pimples on her face and remedy it. Pork and greasy foods should not be indulged in when one is troubled with pimples. If it is merely a skin disease, a lotion like the following will remedy it:

- 1 grain liquor of potassa.
- 1-4 ounce acetated liquor of ammonia.
- 1 ounce sulphur water.
- 2 ounces white wine vinegar.
- 2 ounces distilled water.

Shake the bottle before using each time. Leave the mixture on the skin for fifteen minutes, and then wipe off with a soft cloth.

Another lotion and a salve that is to be used with it are said to be excellent. It is as follows:

- 30 grammes sublimate of sulphur—a gramme is fifteen grains.
- 12 grammes of distilled water.

Salve—

- 3 grammes oxide of zinc.
- 30 grammes vaseline.

Moisten a small sponge with the lotion, and wash the face thoroughly, repeating the process frequently. Do not wipe the face, but allow the lotion to dry on it. The salve should be mixed thoroughly and applied to the face at night. Omit the treatment once during the week for about twenty-four hours. The face should always be washed with hot water before the lotion is applied.

During the summer the least exposure to the hot sun has a most uncomfortable and unbecoming effect on the skin. Sunburn will doubtless wear away in time, but a girl is generally anxious to remove it as soon as possible. Girls who ride wheels often experience as much trouble from the wind as from the sun, and something healing for the sore skin is as necessary as a bleach. A mixture of lemon juice and buttermilk is excellent. Nothing more refreshing or healing can be found than the following:

- 1-2 ounce tincture of benzoin.
- 1 ounce almond or olive oil.
- Juice of two lemons.
- 2 ounces of rosewater.

Mix together in a bottle and shake thoroughly, until of a smooth, creamy consistency. Apply with a cloth, and shake the bottle before using. This removes sunburn and soreness of the skin; it is also good for chapped hands.

A fine complexion is generally the result of good health and a perfect digestion and cleanliness. The woman who desires strength and beauty must take plenty of outdoor exercise, pay attention to her diet and bathe frequently for personal cleanliness means health.

PHOTOGRAPH IN A FISH.

Strange Mar-Ins Found Inside an Australian Cod.

There is a large fish found in the rivers of Western Australia, known as the "Murray cod." This fish, which is delicious for the table, is remarkable for its size, sometimes weighing as much as 150 pounds, but the strangest thing about it is the fact that it carries around a photograph inside its body. (At least the natives say that it is a photograph, and certainly it looks like one.)

(When the Murray cod is cut open a bladder is seen extending along the backbone from just behind the gills to the fatty part of the tail. In a thirty-pound fish the bladder is about 12 inches long, and an inch or more in width. Within this is a film, or thin membrane, through which runs a delicate tracery composed of a multitude of little red lines, interlacing like the frost-work on a window pane in winter. This film can be peeled off and spread upon a sheet of paper or a piece of cloth, to which it readily adheres. It then forms a very pretty picture. Sometimes it looks like a bit of pressed seaweed; sometimes it seems to portray a miniature landscape with a dark forest background, but in most cases it presents a surprisingly distinct outline of a single tree—the Australian gum tree, a species of eucalyptus.)

To explain this singular fact the aborigines have an ingenious theory. They say that the picture thus imprinted on the membrane represents the tree which overshadows the pool where the big fish made its haunt—in short, that it is a real photograph.

Fanciful as the notion seems, it gains a certain possibility from the known habits of the fish, which is extremely solitary and exclusive in its ways. The Murray cod really does make its home in some forest-shadowed pool, to which it always returns after its excursions abroad for food or exercise, leading a hermit-like existence. It will allow no other member of its species to intrude upon its domain. Here the sullen creature spends its life, year in and year out. It never changes its residence. Here it grows from insignificant minnowhood until it becomes a king among fishes, as big and heavy as a well-developed man, and for the greater part of each day the shadow of its favorite tree falls upon its slinky back. It is little wonder, therefore, that the untutored but imaginative savages, puzzled by the life-like picture which they find in the bladder, conclude that the familiar scene has become photographed in the creature's very substance.

SUBURBAN ADVANTAGES.

Mr. Levelhead—There's one thing I dislike about living in a city. We can never save enough to go to Europe.

Mrs. Levelhead—Well, are people in the country any better off?

I should say so. They rent their houses for the summer and go touring around the world on the proceeds.

THE TOP OF THE PROFESSION.

He is one of the leading lawyers of the town.

Gets pretty big fees, eh?

I should say so. Why, it is almost as cheap to buy the grand jury as to pay him.