A TERROR TO EVIL-DOERS.

CHAPTER I.—Continued.

Fortunately, Mr. Renton did not perceive the frown on the young doctor's face; neither did he notice his daughter's flushed cheeks, nor any of the subtle tokens of a disturbed moral atmosphere. He had news of his own to communicate, and that excited him, to the detriment of his faculty of observation.

"What a dreadful affair!" he exclaimed.

Madge thought of Philip's proposal; Philip thought of Madge's engagement, and both asked, "What affair?" with more embarrassment than curiosity.

"That murder of the policemen down the river."

"The murder!" They were both sufficiently curious now, and for once in his life Mr. Renton had two attentive listeners. "You know," he explained, "that a month ago the police escort took a load of gold and dust to the bank at Melbourne. I suppose they left most of it there; but they were bringing back a considerable sum in bank-notes to the miners up the country. Bank notes are light, so there were only two men sent on the return journey."

"I know all that," said Philip, with a touch of impatience. "We expected them to stop at Picton last night. When they didn't come, I concluded that the roads were bad and that they had got along slower than they expected."

"The roads were bad, and they could not reach Picton before nightfall; at least, so I suppose, for they camped about ten miles away on the bank of the river, and there they were found murdered this morning."

"Who can have done it?"

"Some bushranger, I suppose. Of course the object was theft; all the notes are gone."

"It won't profit the thief much, I fancy; for doubtless the numbers of the notes are set down in the bank at Melbourne; and as soon as he presents one he will be caught—that is, if he is rash enough to present it himself. If he gets a dupe to do it for him, it may take a longer time, but not much; he is a fool as well as a rogue."

"It is funny that we should not have heard of bushrangers being in the neighborhood," said Madge. "Captain Frere was out all the night before last looking about on the route the policemen were to take, in order to make sure that all was right; and he told me the coast was clear. If there had been any dangerous characters about, he would have sent an escort to meet the men, I suppose."

"Ah! the bushrangers must keep a better lookout than the police magistrate," said Mr. Renton. "They have brought the bodies to the inn; and I suppose Captain Frere will hold an inquiry, though it is hardly likely that anything will come of it besides a verdict against "person or persons unknown."

"To the inn!" exclaimed Philip, with some irritation. "I hope not; noise or excitement may injure my patient greatly, poor woman."

"Oh, you have a patient at the inn," remarked Madge, faintly piqued. "Is the fair Miss Jenny ill?"

"Not she; Miss Jenny is the goddess Hygeia. But they have a guest there, a woman who has once been beautiful, but has, if one may judge by appearances, had a hard life. I suppose she was going up to the mines. But I know nothing about her beyond the fact that she fainted after going out for a walk yesterday morning, and that she is now in a very weak and feverish condition."

"Poor thing! Is she young?" asked Madge.

"Not very. About forty, I should think from her appearance. I think I ought to go and see her. The bustle may have injured her. Miss Jenny—I know her!— would go rushing up to the invalid's room to tell her of "the murder," as if it were really a great treat. Besides, they'll probably want me to diagnose the nature of these two poor fellows' wounds."

So Philip, glad of the excuse for a graceful departure, went away, his sore heart—such is human nature, with its troubles balanced by strange and fantastic compensations—fretting him a little less because of the exciting news.

He went down to the inn, partly to see his patient, partly to ask if his services were to be called upon in connection with the inquiry on the murder of the two policemen. He was interested in the matter, and when one has a curiosity to gratify, it is well to have the excuse of official duties to justify its gratification. The innkeeper's daughter met him at the door; Her eyes were not dim, nor was her natural colour abated; but, nevertheless, when she saw Philip, she leant up against the door post and gasped out: "O doctor, I am glad to see you. Isn't this a terrible business! It has made me quite faint!" For the goddess Hygeia, probably because she had never had a day's illness in her life, had a great ambition to be considered an invalid—a weakness which had become more pronounced since Dr. Sewell came to Picton.

"The air will do you good, then," said the doctor coolly, passing her with a nod. "Is your father about? I want him to take me to see the poor fellows."

"He is in the coach house. They're there, and father is with Captain Frere, who is looking at them."

Philip Sewell was not particularly desirous of meeting Captain Frere at this moment, but having expressed a desire to see the bodies, he could hardly turn round in a moment and profess indifference to the matter; besides, it was inevitable, if any investigation of the murder was to be made, that the doctor and the magistrate should meet in connection with it.

He went to the coach-house, where the two dead men lay. They had been stalwart fellows, apparently of a more active habit than the blue-coated guardians of the peace at home—rough riders, who could find their way across an almost trackless country, and perhaps were not very scrupulous whether they took a bushranger alive or dead—men who have no place in a fully civilized community, and in a semi-barbarous one are a protection or a terror to the inhabitants according as some chance wind of circumstance may move them towards good or evil; but brave men, who, having undertaken a task, discharge it at any cost. These two had died in the fulfilment of their duty, and apparently had died hard. The discharged pistol, taken from the cold, nerveless hand of one, proved that he had tried, however vainly, to prevent the theft. It was just possible that the thief had got more than the bank notes in that midnight robbery.

Dr. Sewell nodded silently to the innkeeper and Captain Frere as he entered the coach house, A scant greeting suffices for the living when we are in the presence of the dead, and besides, Philip was not in the mood to lavish courtesy on Madge Renton's lover. Madge Renton's lover! What on earth could she see in that withered old stick? Philip asked himself, eyeing the captain with vigorous disfavour. The contempt was decidedly unjust. Lewis Frere was a picturesque looking, if not a handsome man. His face was lined and weather beaten, and his hair was decidedly thin at the temples; but his dark eyes had that melancholy look which has a certain attraction for girls who have never known trouble themselves, and his long, silky pointed beard was in itself a feature, giving him something of the aspect of the high-bred gentlemen whose portraits Van Dyck painted for all time.

"This is a sad sight, doctor," said the innkeeper, after Philip had looked silently at the bodies for a minute or two. "These poor fellows, full of health and strength only yesterday, and murdered last night when we were fast asleep in our beds."

"Not quite," said Philip, whose professional eye had noted more than that of an ordinary observer.

"Not quite what? Not murdered?"

"O yes, murdered. But they were not murdered last night. From all appearances, I should judge that they have been dead more than twenty-four hours.

"Nonsense! How can you tell that?" exclaimed Captain Frere sharply.

"Oh, the study of medical jurisprudence is not exactly a waste of time; one learns a good deal by it,"" answered Philip, in a tone which, without obvious discourtesy, indicated the sentiment, "Mind your own business' and don't interfere with mine." — "These two men must have been killed the night before last," he went on in a more amiable tone; "and, by-the-by,' it's funny, as you were out on scout-duty that night, that you didn't see a sign of the murderer. He must have been somewhere in the neighborhood."

"I wasn't out the night before last," said Frere, hastily; "I was in my bed like the rest of you."

"I beg your pardon. It was Miss Renton who said you were out, and I took it for granted she had learned the fact from you."

"Miss Renton is not my guardian."

"No; but I took it for granted that as your fiancee, she did not speak without authority, or at least knowledge."

Frere muttered an imprecation, which Philip took to be an expression of anger at his stupidity in thus abruptly announcing an engagement which was supposed to be still secret, and the words which the captain at last addressed to him, "You are a good gossip monger, Dr. Sewell," confirmed the notion in his mind.

"I suppose I ought to apologise," said Philip, "but as a marriage is a thing for all the world to know, doubtless I am anticipating your announcement only by a very short time. I can only say that I hope you will be worthy of Miss Renton's love. Now, Birch, I think I will go and see my patient. Her heart is weak, and this fuss and excitement in the house may have injured her."

He went out; and Birch, turning to offer surprised congratulations to the captain, saw that he was very pale. "You look bad, captain," he exclaimed. "This sight does make a man feel a bit queer. Come into the house and get a drop of brandy."

"I confess I would be glad of it," said Frere, and they left the coach house. But the captain would not enter the inn. He threw himself down on a bench near the door, saying that the air revived him; and while Birch hurried away to bring the brandy, Miss Jenny, who was still leaning against the doorpost, pouting a little that the doctor had wasted so few words on her, entered into conversation with him.

"You do look ill, captain. Of course that sight would give you a turn; and you've got a cold, too, haven't you?"

"No; I haven't. How could I catch cold?" he said, irritably, as if the idea of a cold annoyed him.

"Oh, I don't know," she returned, offended at his tone. "But seeing you've had your throat wrapped for two days, it wasn't such a strange idea to get into my head, was it?" And she pointed to a silk handkerchief which the captain wore folded closely around his neck.

Captain Frere had apparently recovered his temper. "You're right, Miss Jenny," he admitted; "I have a cold, but you see I'm very touchy about confessing to such an old woman's complaint."

Philip Sewell meanwhile was sitting holding his patient's wrist with his fingers on her pulse. He had been pleased to note when he first took it that it was calm and steady. But the voices of the two speakers outside floated up to the open window of the room where the unknown woman lay, and at the sound of the captain's, the pulse suddenly leapt into a quick, fluttering irregular beat.

"Now, this is very funny," said Philip to himself, preserving an immovable countenance the while. "I wonder if it was Frere she came to Picton to see? It is evident that his vicinity excites her."

CHAPTER II.

The inquest was duly held. Captain Frere examined the witnesses—the shepherds who had found the dead bodies lying near the extinguished fire, and Dr. Sewell, who certified that the men had died from wounds caused by a pistol bullet; and everybody looked upon the affair as over. It was a regrettable accident, a thing for which somebody ought to be hanged, if one only knew who that somebody was; but it was over, and the excitement it had caused died away. Within even twenty-four hours of the discovery of the dead men, most people had found something else to talk about.

To many people Captain Frere's engagement offered a more inviting topic—to Miss Jenny Birch, for example. Whether gentleness of temperament be the cause or not, most women, dearly as they love sensation, would rather hear of a single marriage than of half-a-dozen deaths; and though Miss Birch felt annoyed, and in a sense ill-used, that Madge Renton, who was five years her junior, and was, besides—she considered—absolutely plain, was to be married, she could not keep the objectionable topic from her mind and tongue. She questioned her father minutely about the manner in which "the doctor" had announced and "the captain" received the news; and made him repeat the story so often that at last he exclaimed irritably that he wished he had never said a word about it. There was no question of keeping the engagement a secret now; Miss Jenny made that quite impossible by telling every one who entered the inn to talk about the murder. The effect of this on minds which were fundamentally sanguinary was to confuse therein the clear and lucid—howbeit imaginary—picture of the murder they had held by superimposing the love-story upon it; a process which resulted in one of those incongruous unions of people and events which mark our dreams, and find a physical exemplification at times in those scrap-work screens, the result of domestic genius, where Her Majesty in full court costume is represented against a background of kitchen dresser, rich in willow-pattern plates.

"If you go mixing up the marriage and the murder in that fashion, lass," said old Birch to his daughter, "people'll go away thinking that the captain murdered the policemen in order to marry Miss Renton."

"Well, father, you are a donkey!" exclaimed Miss Jenny with great candour. "Who on earth would think that!"

"Why, any one would, from the way you're chattering. Is there a single person who has been in the house today whom you have not told?"

Miss Jenny laughed. "O yes; there is—you didn't expect that, now! I haven't told the sick lady up-stairs."

"It's because you haven't had a chance, then."

"Well, maybe. The doctor said I wasn't to go up for fear of exciting her, and gave old Margaret orders to look after her. Perhaps he thought like would draw to like," said Miss Birch with some irritation; for she resented being excluded from the stranger's room, and tried to soothe herself by pretending that Dr. Sewell wished to spare her the indignity of waiting on one who was very probably a fitter companion for old Margaret—the maid-of-all-work of the establishment and an ex-convict.

Miss Jenny did not mind escaping the task of waiting upon the invalid; but she felt wronged at not having the opportunity of retailing her news. It almost spoiled her sleep that night, to feel that she had thus failed in her duty.

With the morning, however, opportunity came. Miss Birch was lounging at her favourite post at the front door, when the strange lady came down-stairs dressed for walking. She walked slowly with one hand pressed to her side, as if she feared that any exertion would cause her pain; and the lines round her mouth and between her eyebrows told of suffering already endured and the expectation of more. she had once had a delicate prettiness of flaxen hair and blue eyes, the sort of beauty which seldom outlasts youth, and which in her, disease, and probably enough hardships of another kind, had destroyed sooner than usual. Her clothes were poor and worn, and she seemed conscious of their meanness; yet she had that air of refinement which no woman never wholly loses who has once possessed it, and which made even Jenny Birch, who preferred to judge people and things by their surface aspect, treat her with respect.

"Are you going out, ma'am?" she asked in surprise, seeing the stranger's feeble steps.

"I am going away," was the answer. "Will you ask the groom to get me a carriage to take me to the next station?"

"A carriage!" thought Miss Jenny. "You don't look like one that can afford that; I'd have said from your appearance that the stage-fare was as much as you could manage." Not being, however, destitute of good feeling of a pachydermatous kind, she said: "Hadn't you better wait till to-morrow? The stagecoach passes then, and you'd be the better of another day's rest. The doctor won't be pleased at your running away like this."

The invalid shook her head. "I want to get back to Melbourne as soon as I can," she said; "so I am going to evade the doctor, for fear he should forbid me.—Will you, however, give him my most grateful thanks for his kindness, and ask him to accept this?" She handed the girl a sealed envelope, and proceeded to ask for her bill.

"It's father who manages that part of the business said Miss Jenny; and she disappeared for a moment to ask him prepare the account and order the carriage.

"You liked the doctor, didn't you?" she asked when she returned to the guest, who had now seated herself on the bench Captain Frere had occupied the previous day, and seemed to be gratefully inhailing the fresh autumn air.

"I did indeed, he was so kind to me, a stranger, and apparently a poor one. He is in every respect a gentleman."

"Isn't he now!" exclaimed Miss Jenny. "More so than Captain Frere, to my mind, though of course, the captain's very well connected. But he's not up to Dr. Sewell. And if, as they say, Miss Renton could have had either of them—I don't believe it myself—I can't understand how she accepted the captain."

"What do you mean? What are you saying?" The lady had started from her seat and caught Jenny's hand. Her body was swaying with weakness, but her voice was firm and imperious. "Tell me what you mean?" she cried again.

"Why! that Miss Ranton the parson's daughter is going to marry Captain Frere.—There's nothing so wonderful in that, is there?"

But apparently there was, for the lady's grasp relaxed, and if Miss Jenny had not caught her in her strong round arms. she would have fallen to the ground.

Jenny carried her back to her room and laid her on the bed she had lately quitted, then calling old Margaret to attend to her, she ran herself for the the doctor.

"It's all my fault!" she said penitently, when she had explained what had occurred. "Though I don't see yet why Miss Renton's marriage should upset her so. But it seems to be upsetting everybody," she added with a glance at Philip, who had winced a little when she spoke of Madge; for even in her distress at the strange lady's danger, Miss Jenny was woman enought to feel annoyed—"riled," as she phrased it—at Miss Renton having won the hearts of both the most desirable men in Picton.

Philip hurried to his patient, and having forbidden her to leave her bed for several days, went off on his rounds which this time were to include a journey into the bush that would take two days.

"I'll see you as soon as I come back to-morrow evening," he promised; "meanwhile, you must not be guilty of any more such rashness as this morning's work."

She smiled, but did not answer, perhaps because she was too weak. But when he was going she caught his hand and detained him a moment. "You have been very kind to me," she said. "Wome nlike kindness; not girls, perhaps—they have never felt trouble, and like a man whose manner masters them. But as life goes on and sorrows come, one learns to appreciate a man who is strong and tender, too. You are both, and I wish you all happiness. This morning when I meant to go away, I left some money for you; but money isn't happiness, is it? If I could only do something to secure that!"

(To be Continued.)

LAKE MYSTERIES.

The Subterranean River Said to Exist Between Superior and Ontario.

"I believe there is a subterranean river running from Lake Superior through Lakes Huron and Michigan under Lake Erie, and emptying into Lake Ontario," said a traveller the other day. "There is no other theory by which certain mysteries of the great lakes may be explained. The surface of Lake Superior is about 650 feet above tide, while its bed is 260 feet below tide level. Lake Huron's surface is 50 feet below that of Lake Superior, and its bed is about on a level with Superior's bed. The surface of Lake Michigan is 300 feet lower than Lake Huron's, and its bed is sunk to a corresponding distance to the level of Lakes Superior and Huron. Lake Erie's surface is nearly as high as Lake Michigan's being 365 feet above tide, and its bed is also above tide, being 4350 feet above the ocean level. consequently its bed is 250 feet higher than the beds of Lakes Michigan, Huron and Superior. The surface of Lake Ontario is the lowest of all the lakes being less than 500 feet above tide, but its bed is 260 feet below the ocean level, or on about the same level with Lakes Michigan, Huron and Superior. So there is a continuous fall from Lake Superior to Ontario, and all the known outlet that the upper lakes have is in the comparatively insignificant Detroit River. It does not seem within the bounds of physical possibility that Detroit River could dispose of all that great volume of water from above, or its banks withstand the enormous pressure of that immense volume and the theory of the existence of the underground river such as I mentioned seems to me not only plausible but the existence of that stream is a necessity. All the St. Lawrence River fishes are found in every one of the great lakes except Lake Erie. Why? Because they follow the course of the subterranean river, passing 300 feet beneath the bottom of Lake Erie, and enter the waters of Lake Michigan, thence to be distributed to the other lakes above it.

"The Lakes above Lake Erie have frequent but irregular flux and reflux of their waters, corresponding with ocean tides. What is the explanation of the mystery of those erratic lake tides? Simply, according to my opinion, that the subterranean river becomes occasionally obstructed by great obstacles that are constantly separated from the lake bottoms and moved down. Then that supplementary outlet for the great volume of water above for the time becomes useless, and the only other outlet, Detroit River, being insufficient for the purpose, the waters are dammed back and the lakes rise. At last the underground obstructions are swept away by the irresistible pressure, the subterranean river flows naturally once more, and the dammed waters of the upper lakes subside. That is the whole mystery of the rise and fall of the tides in the great lakes."

X RAYS AS A DETECTIVE.

The French Government has adopted the X rays as a means of checking the prevailing practice of smuggling. Director Pallain of the French customs service has ordered that Crookes tubes be kept at all the larger custom offices, and all of the customs inspectors in Paris have been summoned to the chief office to have the method of their use explained to them. Hitherto vast quantities of watches, jewelry, and other dutiable articles of high valuation have been concealed by stowing them in the legs of deal tables and ink receptacles, and have thus escaped the notice of the customs officers. It is believed that by means of the X rays the presence of such articles will be readily detected.

MODERN WHALE HUNTING.

The Huge Mammals Now Pursued with Explosive Lances Fired from Cannon.

The weapons with which a well-armed modern whaling vessel is equipped are probably the most savage and deadly known to warfare. The enormous strength of the average whale makes the contest with a small boat, even under the most favorable conditions, very unequal.

Capt. A. E. Folger, of New York, otherwise known as "Whale Oil Gus," who has spent thirty years on whaling vessels, has accumulated a very curious collection of these deadly weapons. The most barbarous is a bomb-lance. In whaling, the main object of the hunter is to securely fasten a harpoon in the whale's flesh. The old style of fishing consisted in merely throwing a barbed harpoon at a whale with sufficient force to fasten it in its body. It often happened that this crude instrument was torn out of the flesh and the whale was lost.

The bomb-lance consists of a long, thin cartridge, at the end of which is fixed a very sharp steel lance. The bomb-lance is fired with great accuracy and force from a gun especially constructed for the purpose. The bomb is provided with a fuse, which is set on fire automatically when it is discharged and burns for three seconds before exploding the bomb itself. This gives the bomb time to strike the whale and become imbedded in its flesh before it explodes. These bombs are filled with a pound of powder, so that the result of the explosion is very likely to be fatal.

The bomb-harpoon is constructed on the same general plan, except that the harpoon is much heavier and the bomb much larger. This interesting weapon is fired from a gun weighing 250 pounds or more, the harpoon itself weighing about forty pounds. A rope is attached to the end of the harpoon, the other end of which is, of course, held in the boat. It is customary, Capt. Folger says, to open fire on a whale with the light musketry, a bomb-lance or so, and then immediately to follow with a broadside of bomb-harpoons.

ROPING IN GROOM AND BRIDE

A Policeman Interferes with an Old Cheshire Wedding Custom.

Of the many marriage customs which still survive in many parts of rural England, the one peculiar to the county of Cheshire, of roping a wedding party is certainly interesting, though it was the subject of magisterial investigation at Sandbach Petty Sessions recently. Three men named Dodd, Duckworth and Burroughs, were summoned for obstructing the highway at Betchton, a village two miles from Sandbach. Not long since a rustic beauty was united to her faithful swain at that village, and the happy couple were driving away from the church, down Betchton hill, when the observance of the marriage custom peculiar to the neighborhood brought the carriage to a sudden stop. At the horse's head stood Duckworth and Burrows holding the ends of a rope across the road. While the liberal display of rice and old shoes enables the friends of brides and bridegrooms elsewhere to speed the newly wedded couple, in Cheshire it seems to be the custom to delay their depature till they pay their "footing." The driver was at no loss, for it was part of the custom not to proceed till those inside had given the rope-bearers a shilling each. Another villager named Dodd saw no reason for his exclusion from the benefits of the custom, since, after Duckworth and Burrows had received the coin, he promptly fixed up another wedding-had the wedding carriage to stop and the funds of the couple to defray the expenses of the honeymoon were the poorer by another shilling. Unfortunately, however, a police officer, who happened to be driving in the neighborhood, was a highly interested spectator of the proceedings. He caused Duckworth, Burrows, and Dodd to be summoned, and they were fined, the two first named half a crown each, and Dodd five shillings.

A DOG STOPS RUNAWAY HORSES

A gentleman who makes his home at the Hotel Berkeley, Minneapolis, is the possessor of a fine St. Bernard which deserves a gold medal. The dog has developed a strong penchant for stopping runaway horses, and the last time the stop was accomplished just in time to save a party of ladies from serious injury and perhaps worse. His master was driving down Portland avenue when he was startled by a cry of "Lookout!" He turned and was just in time to wheel his horse out of the way of a runaway, which was tearing down the avenue. Just ahead there was a party of ladies who could not possibly escape what seemed certain death to some of them, when the dog, who had been following and who seemed by instinct to comprehend the impending tragedy, gave a leap and caught the lines of the runaway between his teeth, his great weight bringing the frightened animal to his haunches just as he was about to strike one of the ladies, who seemed too terrified to move.

BOTH MISTAKEN.

Jaggs, a little under the weather, to female acquaintance in bloomers,—Shay, wontsh yer come (hic) and join mesh in a drinksh?

Miss Wheeler—Sir! I always took you for a gentleman.

Jaggs—Excuse me (hic.) Thatsh whatsh I took you (hic) to be.

TROUBLE FOR THE SULTAN.

A woman's journal has been started in Constantinople, in which the doctrine of the equality of the sexes is vigorously advocated.