STRONGER THAN DEATH

OR

A RANSOMED LIFE

(CHAPTER VI. Con.)

"You swore you saw your master on the lawn and on the road the moment before."

"All lies. I did not see him that day. It was lucky the other witness swore to seeing him near the same place the same morning."

"You have no idea what brought him there?"

"None."

"The prisoner refused to give me the slightest information where he was or what he was doing that morning," whispered Trevor.

"The other witness did not fix the hour," said Ardel, still addressing the sleeper.

"No; luckily for me."

"Why?"

"Because it was an hour later than I swore."

Ardel asked his questions in low, incisive tones, and the other answered as a man thinks, without hesitation or reserve.

"Two days after my master's arrest," he went on, "a telegraph boy came and told me he had seen him at his own door at ten o'clock, the very same hour and the very same day I had sworn I saw him at Laburnham Lodge, three miles away."

"The boy was quite sure about the man and the hour?"

"Quite. I tried to shake him, and failed. He had a watch, and had just looked at it; he knew my master well; had often delivered telegrams at the door, and had got tips from him. My master, he said, was looking very pale and excited. Would his evidence help or hurt the gentleman? that was all the boy wanted to know from me. If it would hurt, he could 'stow it," he said, and no one need be a bit the wiser. Of course, I persuaded him to 'stow it.' I have kept the boy out of the way since."

"What's his name? where does he live?"

For the first time the man hesitated before replying. The keeping of this secret had grown to be a habit with him, which mechanically checked his speaking it, though his will was asleep.

He was silent for a moment.

"Speak!" said Vivian Ardel, in a tone of insistent command.

"William Ravel is his name."

"And his address?"

"19, Paradise Court, East."

There was a long pause after this. Trevor looked at his friend with a curious blending of triumph and admiration.

"What do you mean to do next, Ardel?" he whispered.

"We have done half our work. We know the truth. The next thing is to prove it. This fellow won't help us further. It's a pity they cannot hang him, instead of his intended victim. Yet I'm not sorry. I want no hangings."

"But what are you going to do with him now?"

"Wake him and let him go about his business."

Trevor looked at him in amazement. "You must be mad to think of such a thing! If you give him the chance, he will do his best to get the boy out of the way, and checkmate us."

But Ardel only laughed softly. "He will remember nothing of what he has said. He will resume his memory at the moment he fell asleep."

He touched the sleeper's forehead again with his finger-tips as he spoke.

"Wake," he said sharply.

The man's eyes opened, and his mind resumed its functions. The mask of stolid honesty was again on his face.

"But I'm bound to speak the truth when I'm asked," he said, finishing his sentence where he had broken it off, apparently without any suspicion of the intervening unconsciousness.

Ardel assented grimly. "The truth is very dangerous sometimes," he said.

"Very dangerous to my poor young master," Weevil answered, with such perfect hypocrisy that Trevor lost his last scruple about playing the game out to the end. He asked Weevil a question about this part of the evidence and about that, and was divided between repulsion and admiration at the cleverness with which Weevil, while professing deep sympathy, contrived by his answers to blacken the case still further against his master.

Both were glad when the man rose at last to go.

"I'm afraid I have not been of much help to you, Mr. Trevor," he said, and the keenest ear could find no sneer in his voice. "Innocent or guilty, it's very hard on me who dangled him a child on my knees to be the instrument, as I might say, of his death. I declare to you, sir, I'd give ten years of my life to let him go free."

"That's about what you will have to give, my friend," said Trevor dryly, as the door closed behind the reluctant witness,—"ten years' penal servitude for perjury."

Next day Trevor himself assisted his solicitor in searching the sitting-room at Laburnham Lodge. The letter and the inlaid revolver were found behind the books, and were carried away and laid on the table at Trevor's elbow, concealed by some loose papers when he rose at the opening of the court on Monday to cross-examine the chief witness for the prosecution.

In ten minutes the stolid, cunning, self-confident witness was utterly broken down, and his evidence demolished. The suddenness and fierceness of the attack, but, above all, the knowledge displayed by the enemy, confounded him. The questions were quick and sharp, and hard-hitting as revolver shots. The sudden production of the letter was a stunning blow. Still striving to brazen it out, he was confronted with the boy William Ravel.

Then he collapsed at once and completely lost all self-control, confessed his perjury, and begged and blubbered for mercy.

The crowded court literally went mad with excitement. Even the judge and jury scarcely escaped the contagion. The women rose in their seats, clapping their hands and screaming hysterically. A titled lady usually a model of decorum, who sat close to the witness-box, struck Weevil fairly across the face with her parasol, leaving a red weal on the white cheek.

The blow was the signal for an onslaught on the perjurer, and he would have been torn in pieces if the police had not interfered.

Amid the wild confusion the judge's deep voice was heard calling for silence, and the sternness of his face enforced the command. The tumult fell as rapidly as it had risen, though the intense strain of impatient excitement still made itself felt in the crowded court.

The formal gravity of the law, which life or death cannot stir one jot from its course, asserted itself.

In the midst of the profoundest silence the judge's voice was heard again, calm and formal in its tones.

"Mr. Attorney," he said, "what course do you now propose to adopt?"

"With your lordship's approval, I will enter a nolle prosequi," replied the Attorney-General as calmly.

"There is no other charge against the prisoner?" asked the judge.

"None."

"Then I order his discharge."

Again the tumult broke out in wild rejoicing over the escape of the man whose agony the same crowd had gloated over an hour before. The majesty of the law had disappeared with the retiring judge, and now the tumult was unrestrained.

Dazed by the shock of this sudden transit from death to life, Edgar Wickham was helped by his solicitor through the throng and driven rapidly away to his hotel. Weevil remained behind in the hands of the police.

"There goes a happy man," said Trevor to Ardel, as they stood outside the court while the crowd melted away.

"Not yet," Ardel answered, smiling. "I have been watching his face. He does not realize what has happened. He is stunned by the good news. But I envy his joy to-morrow when he awakes with clear brain to know his whole life is still before him.

(To be continued.)

Biliousness From the Liver

A Common and Distressing Ailment Which is Promptly Cured by

DR. CHASE'S KIDNEY-LIVER PILLS.

"Biliousness" is the one word used by most people to describe their trouble when the liver gets out of order, leaves bile, and brings on sick headache and irritable temper, stomach troubles, and irregularities of the bowels.

People who suffer much from biliousness become pale and yellow in complexion, irritable, and morose in disposition, and are liable to find themselves among the chronic grumblers, to whom nothing seems to go right.

The trouble begins with the liver becoming torpid and sluggish in action, and disappears when the liver is set right. Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills cure biliousness promptly, because of their direct action on the liver. They thoroughly remove all the symptoms because of their combined action on kidneys, liver, and bowels.

Mrs. Faulkner, 8 Gildersleeve Place, Toronto, says:—"After doctoring without success for biliousness, liver complaint and sick headache for over three years, I am glad to testify to my appreciation of Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills. At first they seemed a little strong, but being both searching and thorough in their action amply repay any inconvenience by after-results. I am feeling better in every way and my headaches have entirely disappeared. Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills are certainly the best I ever used, and I freely recommend them."

After all, it pays to stand by the tried and proven medicines instead of running after every new-fangled treatment that is brought out. Dr. Chase's Kidney-Liver Pills are considered well-nigh indispensable in thousands of the best homes. They stand supreme as a reliable family medicine. One pill a dose, 25 cents a box. At all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates and Co., Toronto. To protect you against imitations, the portrait and signature of Dr. A. W. Chase, the famous receipt book author, are on every box.

HARD ON THE BABIES.

One of the first effects of a hot wave, particularly in towns and cities, is a pronounced increase in the number of deaths of infants. Even in the open country the suffering of the helpless little ones would move the hardest heart. Stomach trouble and diarrhoea are the foes most to be dreaded at this time and every mother should appreciate the necessity of careful diet and attention at the first sign of these troubles. Medicine should never be given to check diarrhoea except upon the advice of a physician. A diet limited almost entirely to boiled milk and the use of Baby's Own Tablets will cure almost any case and keep baby in health. Mrs. W. E. Bassam, of Kingston, Ont., writes:

"When my little girl was about three months old she suffered with vomiting and had diarrhoea constantly. I did not find any medicine that helped her until we began giving her Baby's Own Tablets. After giving her the Tablets the vomiting and diarrhoea ceased and she began to improve almost at once. Since then whenever her stomach is out of order or she is constipated we give her the Tablets, and the result is always all that we desire. They are the very best medicine I have ever used for a child."

Baby's Own Tablets are sold by all dealers in medicine or will be sent postpaid, at twenty-five cents a box, by the Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Brockville, Ont.

A FAMILIAR SUBJECT.

Wife (after returning from church—"You should have been in church this morning. We had a beautiful sermon."

Husband—"I'll bet you can't repeat the text."

Wife—"Yes, I can. It was the tenth verse of the sixteenth chapter of Ezekiel—'I girded thee about with fine linen, and I covered thee with silk."

Husband—"Hug! It is no wonder you remember it."

DR. A. W. CHASE'S CATARRH CURE ... 25c.

is sent direct to the diseased parts by the Improved Blower. Heals the ulcers, clears the air passages, stops droppings in the throat and permanantly cures Catarrh and Hay Fever. Blower free. All dealers, or Dr. A. W. Chase Medicine Co., Toronto and Buffalo.

IRON DUKE'S WEAKNESS.

Patronage as It Was in the Early Days of Last Century.

A book of memoirs just published has a good story of the Iron Duke:—Colonel Wellesley was very much in debt and embarrassed when he left England, and a small tradesman in Dublin was of great assistance to him by the loan of four or five hundred pounds, which on his arrival in India in due course of time was repaid; and I have yeard that on his return from India he walked into the shop of the tradesman, a boot and shoe maker, and asked him if he recollected him. The man said "No." "Well," said Sir Arthur, who was secretary to the Duke of Richmond, "can I be of any service to you?" The man said, "I want nothing myself, but I have a son." "Give me his name," said Sir Arthur; "you did me a kindness once, and I do not forget it." He got the man's son a place at £400 per annum. It is an interesting side light on the methods of Government patronage in those days. Will the memoirs dealing with out present enlightened age have similar revelations to make?

"RETURN AT ONCE."

Merchant—"Did you deliver my message to Mr. Smith?"

Boy—"No, sir; he was out, and the office was locked up."

Merchant—"Well, why didn't you wait for him, as I told you?"

Boy—"There was a notice on the door saying 'Return at once,' so I came back as quick as I could."

ROBBERS REAP HARVEST.

ENGLISH BURGLAR HAS NO CONTINENTAL RIVAL.

Habits of European People Render Them Easy For Criminals.

England has long enjoyed abroad the enenviable reputation of breeding, training, and letting loose on the world the most skillful pickpockets, just as Italy stands first in the matter of highwaymen, or Germany in the production of cosmopolitan swindlers of the class known to the police as the "flash mob." As a matter of fact, poor old England does not at all deserve this reputation, which dates more or less from the time of Dickens' revelations in "Oliver Twist," and it would be easy to prove from police statistics that the percentage of Englishmen among the pickpockets arrested on the continent is a small one. On the other hand, the reason of this may be that the artful dodgers of London little care to practise abroad, because of the great severity of the foreign courts in dealing with this form of crime.

In France, for instance, there seems to be a fixed penal tariff applied to foreign voleurs a la tire, and that is the maximum allowed of by the code, five years' imprisonment. It is probable most of the pickpockets who operate abroad are Germans or Italians, though American enterprise is not lacking in this direction also. The English fraternity may derive satisfaction from the statement that in this branch of crime the English burglar for skill and courage has no continental rival. One rarely reads abroad of houses being broken into at night when people are sleeping in them and the danger of detection is great. In the last few years there have been two such cases in France, and two only, and in each case the arrested burglar proved to be a countryman of Bill Sykes. In each case the sentence was a heavy one; indeed, one of the two was sentenced to penal servitude for life.

OPERATE BY DAY IN FRANCE.

The French housebreaker invariably operates by day. It is only when he attacks an uninhabitated house—say, a suburban villa whose owners are away at the seaside—that he takes the risk of the increased penalty, for, as in England, burglary is punished much more severely than mere housebreaking. He only "goes for" premises when their occupants are away. He does not want to have to kill to insure his safety, though if he is caught in the act of robbery he invariably tries to kill. He is always armed with a revolver and a dagger, but generally relies on his "jimmy" for silencing his aggressor.

But he does not want to kill. Two men executed on the Place de la Roquette complained bitterly that ill luck had forced them to become murderers when they had never had the intention of becoming anything but burglars. With two other men they had broken by night into a house in the Rue Poussin, believing it to be uninhabitated, knowing that the family was away at Nice. However, an unfortunate caretaker slept on the premises.

RICH HARVEST AT HAND.

In these matters the housebreaker takes few risks, he usually reaps a rich harvest. The love of the French for economy is proverbial, and another typical feature of the national character is that people who save like to keep their money in cash where they can see and count it. The bulk of the French people of the lower and middle classes have little confidence in savings banks or investments, and since the Panama smash this confidence still has further diminished. So in most rooms and apartments in Paris the robber is assured of finding a sum of hard cash, and it is surprising to hear what sums they do find.

The other day a fire broke out in the attic of a house in Paris and amongst the garrets which were burned out was one occupied by a milkman's carrier. His despair, bordering on insanity, on learning what had happened was explained by the fact that he kept in a box in his room $4,000, $1,500 of which was in gold.

"THE POLISHERS."

A provincial assize court recently dealt with a gang of housebreakers, known as "the polishers," who were convicted of a number of robberies in farmhouses, the sums stolen varying from $100 to $1,000. Their modus operandi was to send two women of the gang, representing themselves as French polishers, who offered their services at such moderate rates they were almost always engaged I? was their business to watch where the money with which they were paid when the work was done was taken from. The cache having thus been located, the rest was easy. The cache was sometimes an old kettle, sometimes a hole in the mattress, but most often the cupboard.

This custom of using the cupboard as a safe is a rooted one in France. French servant girls all save and all keep their money in cash in their rooms. These rooms are situated on the sixth floor of the big Parisian apartment houses, and this floor is absolutely deserted during the day time. All the doors of the rooms being fastened with cheap locks, it will be seen that the housebreaker has an easy task. As a rule, however, he carries a complete outfit of burglar's tools, for the manufacture of which England still has the specialty.

VICTIMS SELDOM COMPLAIN.

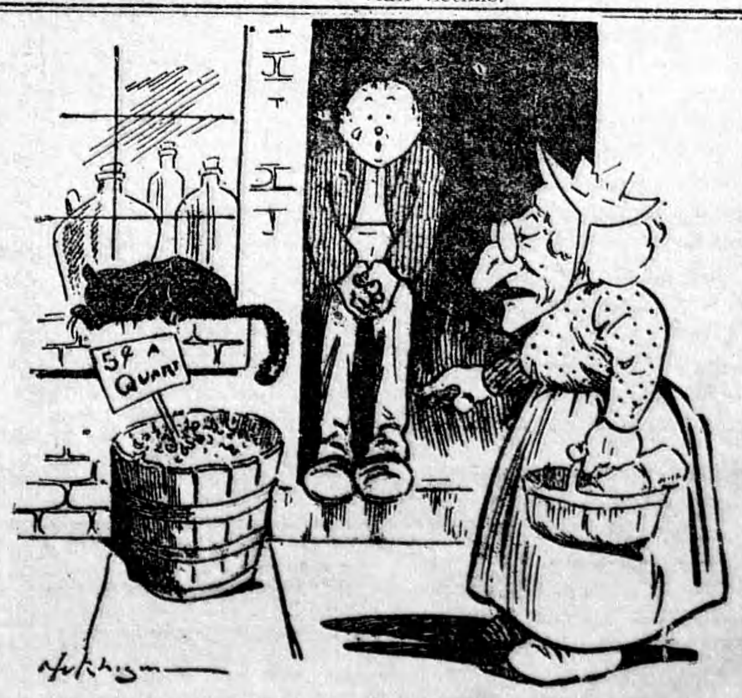
It is on the continent that the confidence trick especially flourishes. Hardly a week passes in Paris or Berlin but one hears of some one who has been robbed in this way. But, as a leading French police official pointed out, these cases are hardly ever taken up by the police, because almost invariably the actual victim was in intention a thief also. Having exchanged portfolios with the benevolent and millionaire stranger, the eventual victim makes haste to disappear. It is only when he comes to examine the contents of the portfolio, satchel, or portmanteau that he raises the cry that he has been robbed. The thieves in this branch of crime speculate on the natural dishonesty under strong temptation of the average man.

Blackmailing also prospers on the continent far better than in England, where criminals of this order are coming to the conclusion that the game is certainly not worth the candle. Abroad it furnishes an ignoble subsistence to thousands of men and women. Berlin is full of them. In Paris, be it said to the disgrace of the French press, many newspapers, for lucre, make themselves the allies of these scoundrels. A book could be written on the subject of blackmailing in France.

BURIED TREASURE.

The buried treasure swindle, thanks to Mr. Labouchere and other journalists, does not now-a-days make many victims in England. However, the Spanish prisoner and his congeners still reap an abundant harvest. If you come to think of it the Humbert swindle with the safe, with the 4,000,000 stored in it, is only a variety of this form of robbery. Thousands of letters go out yearly from Barcelona to people in all parts of the world, their names and addresses being taken from the various continental directories.

This swindle, by the way, was invented by a Frenchman named St. Firmin, and there is still extant a letter written by him in 1798 to a Parisian tradesman named Pauvert, in which he asks for an advance of funds so as to be able to travel to a spot where a buried treasure was hidden. Pauvert was to have his share in the proceeds. St. Firmin said he had been valet to a nobleman, who, fleeing the dangers of the revolution, had buried a chest containing $20,000 in gold and a quantity of jewels. St. Firmin was arrested in 1801 and it then came out his story was quite true. A treasure had been buried under the circumstances described. Unfortunately the cache had been rifled, so the ex-valet's stock in trade was a myth. He had duped scores of people with his story and has immortalized himself in the annals of the police as the inventor of one of the most productive forms of fraud to which human cupidity and credulity fall victims.



"What do you sell dried apples for, young man?"
"'Cause I can't get any other job, ma'am."