"SALADA" TEA

ORANGE PEKOE BLEND

359

"Pekoe" comes from the Chinese word "Pak-ho", meaning silver hair, which was applied to the tip leaves on the Chinese tea bush. Tip leaves are wiry in shape. In India they were more orange in colour, so were called "Orange Pekoe" (Pak-ho).

The SKELETON FINGER

by Headon Hall

BEGIN HERE TODAY.

KATHLEEN GLENISTER, sister of James Glenister, whose mysterious death has stirred the countryside, and

NORMAN SLATER, her lover, are held in secret prison by Sir Dudley, who wishes to marry Kathleen to allay suspicion that he murdered Glenister, while—

JAMES WRAGGE, Scotland Yard detective, is searching for the lovers. He finds Simon Trickey, a police character, who was supposed to have died suddenly in the recent past, prowling about the Dudley home.

NOW GO ON WITH THE STORY

CHAPTER XX.—(Cont'd.)

Avoiding the graveled path, Wragge ran along the edge of the turf and dropped his hand lightly but firmly on the prowler's collar.

"Just a word with you, Trickey," he breathed into a purple-veined ear. "You've saved a lot of trouble by bobbing up here. Till ten minutes ago I was afraid we shouldn't get you without a pick and shovel and a yard of red tape."

The captive twisted his head, baring unpleasant gums.

"Who are you" he choked.

"Scotland Yard—C. I. D."

"What's the charge?"

"None at present. Likely none at all if you act wise."

"I'm fly," replied Mr. Trickey. "Lead on, Horatio."

By the same tortuous route which he had used on his successful foray into the open the inspector conducted his acquisition—no prisoner as yet—to the butler's pantry. Hinkley had evidently only just returned to his sanctum and was beginning to tidy up. The old man looked rather dazed at the entry of the disreputable visitor.

"Don't put that wine away yet," said Wragge. "This gentleman is going to talk and he is thirsty."

CHAPTER XXI.

PROGRESS IN THE PANTRY.

Simon brightened up wonderfully at the inspector's tactful suggestion that he should be given a drink. He sank into a chair.

"My respects," he said, sipping the wine which with unconcealed disgust Hinkley handed to him.

"Nothing like good port to loosen a man's tongue, eh, gentlemen "

"It will be the better for you if it helps to loose yours, if not I must try some other way," said Wragge. "How is it you are not under six feet of earth in Norwood Cemetery?"

The reprobate chuckled. "I wasn't aware that my untimely demise had become a police matter," he replied. "But as it isn't a crime to recover from a bad illness I don't mind telling you. I squared the worthy young medico of Lipscombe Road to aid the deception. You see I wasn't so dead as my wife and the slavey thought me. The doctor smuggled me out of my house into his own the night after I ought to have died. Of course the undertaker, who is naturally a pal of the doctor's was in it. What they buried at Norwood was an equivalent weight of rubbish from the back garden."

Wragge nodded comprehension. "It is lucky for the lady in the library that you have recovered or I should have had to arrest her for murdering you," he said.

"I know," said Simon plaintively. "That clever young medico's stomach pump extracted enough poison from my vitals to have killed a horse. He attributed my survival to what he called alcoholic immunity."

"Why did you conceal this attempt on your life?"

The ex-clerk made a wry face and for a moment seemed to be about to sulk.

"My sister—you will have ferreted out that Mrs. Coningsby is my sister—is rich," he said finally. "I thought I could touch her for a goodish bit after what she'd done to me. Little family matter, sir. Nothing to do with Scotland Yard, so far, eh?"

"I am afraid we shall have to travel a good deal farther before we can let you out, Mr. Trickey," Wragge rejoined more sternly now. "I should wish to hear your views as to your sister's motive for wishing you oue of the way."

"Ah, there you have me guessing."

"But Scotland Yard doesn't guess," rejoined the inspector. "We know why Mrs. Coningsby tried to kill you. She wanted to step into your shoes as the blackmailer of Sir Dudley Glenister by stealing your diary."

"We know why Mrs. Coningsby tried to kill you."

Mr. Simon Trickey was in the toils now.

"You've got at that?" he faltered.

Wragge drew up a chair and sat down facing his man.

"I've not only got at that but I've got the diary," he sprung his great surprise. "You will have to make a clean breast of it, Trickey, or be charged as an accessory before and after the fact to Mr. George Glenister's murder."

The shot went home. Trickey's knees began to tremble.

"I had nothing to do with Mr. George Glenister beyond what's written in the diary," he whined. "I couldn't even swear he is dead."

Wragge pounced on the admission. "But you've sworn it," he flung back. "It was mostly on the strength of your testimony on oath that the High Court gave leave to presume Mr. Glenister's death, thus enabling the present baronet to succeed to the estates and the title. That American stunt of yours was all a fraud for which you are liable to the law, my friend."

"What do you want of me, then? You can't lock me up for that unless you lock up my boss. It's conspiracy or nothing."

"Now you're talking," Wragge commended the statement. "Without wishing to be rude, Mr. Trickey, you are only small fry in the pot, and if you will help us by turning King's evidence you won't come to much harm. In your diary you mention that Dudley was going to write to his cousin after your first return from Lone Wolf City. Can you throw any light on that letter?"

If a cornered rat smiles when it suddenly sees a hole in the corner leading to safety Mr. Simon Trickey's grin resembled that smile.

"My dear sir, it's that blooming letter that I've been living on," he replied joyously. "I took the liberty of opening it before it went to post and I took a press copy. It was an offer by the boss to finance George Glenister's gold mine if he would come over to England and discuss the proposition. The boss made an appointment to meet him at Beechwood on the seventh of June three years ago."

Wragge's impassive features showed no sign of the triumph he had achieved in obtaining this information.

"Umph! You had a pretty powerful lever over your late employer," he said. "Can you help us to prove that that appointment at Beechwood was kept "

"Honest I can't sir," was the fawning reply. "But having made a note of the date I was at pains to observe that the boss was out of town on it for the week-end. The seventh of June that year was a Saturday."

The butler had listened in silence, but with growing consternation, to the web which the detective was weaving round his master.

"Maybe I can supply the blank," the old man interjected. "In Sir Philip's time I had to keep a record of the guests staying at the Grange and of the rooms they occupied. I continued the practice during the interregnum, while Miss Kathleen was mistress here, which she was on the date mentioned. Shall I look it up, sir?"

"By all means," said Wragge.

A reference to the well-thumber register which the butler produced settled the point. On Saturday the seventh of June in the crucial year Dudley Glenister had arrived at the Grange; he had left on the following Monday. There had been no one else staying at the house but Lady Marrables, who always came down when needed as a chaperon.

"You can't remember the comings and goings of the inmates of the house that week-end?" Wragge inquired.

"Not after the lapse of time," replied Hinkley. "My memory isn't what is was, but Miss Kathleen might recall the occasion."

"Unfortunately, for the moment, Miss Glenister is not available, though it must be our business to make her so," rejoined Wragge. "What's that mean?"

The sudden question was prompted by the screech of an electric bell under the ceiling. At the first sound of it Hinkley edged toward the pantry door.

"That's for me," he quavered. "To show the lady out, I expect," he added tentatively, as if not sure of the detective's permission.

But Wragge made a gesture of assent and when the old man was gone he turned to Simon Trickey.

"Now look here," he admonished the ex-clerk, "Sir Dudley Glenister is a sucked orange for future blackmail. Leave him alone and leave him to me. What you do with regard to your sister, unless you charge her with attempting to murder you, doesn't concern the police. You had better clear out and make your peace as best you can with 'Miss Maud Blair' in the Lipscombe Road, Brixton. Here, I am going out, too, and I'll show you the way."

Once more the convenient gunroom door served its purpose as a means of furtive exit, and the inspector and Mr. Trickey made their final adieus in the shrubbery that skirted the lawn. The former lingered over the ceremony as if loth to part with the rascal.

"Your feelings ain't easily hurt, Trickey?" Wragge insinuated gently.

(To be continued.)

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British Economist Discusses Reparation

Berlin.—There is no reason to believe that the reparation question is one of the causes of the present economic depression n Europe, nor that it will become a difficult problem in the near future, W. T. Layton, publisher of the Economist and a well-known British economic expert, declared in a lecture before the Commercial High School here.

The sums Germany is paying as reparations were flowing back into the country in the form of foreign credits, he continued, and it would take a long time, in his opinion, until the securing of the necessary sums for payment of the interest became a serious problem.

When the United States become tired of lending money, other nations would be in a position to do so.

In this connection, Mr. Layton pointed to France and its increasing savings, which indicated that the world one day would have to reckon with that country as an issuer of foreign loans. Somebody's capital would always come to Germany; therefore there was no immediatet cause for anxiety regarding reparations, Mr. Layton concluded.

Keep Minard's in the Medicine Chest.

Every time we hear of another inquiry, probe, investigation, etc., we think, well, if half the world doesn't know how the other half lives, they can say it doesn't try.

"Pair of Orators Rob a Hat Store." Well, they had to get the things to talk through somehow, didn't they?

"Unmarried Men Commit Most of Our Crimes." But are not told about them so often.

A. Chamberlain

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Venice—With the expiration of the three-day period of mourning for Lieut. S. M. Kinkead, of England, Major Mario de Barnardi, holder of the world's speed record, was ready to attempt to create a new record.

He had to postpone his attempt because of a strong wind and rough sea, but will try to break his own mark of 298 miles an hour. Kinkead was killed near Calshot, Eug., in an attempt to beat de Barnardi's record.

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