The Canadian Champion

AND COUNTY OF HALTON INTELLIGENCER.

VOLUME 29. THURSDAY AUGUST 15. 1889. NO. 9.

—TERMS:—
$1.00 per year in advance.

OFFICE
On Main St., one door east of Wallace House.

Travellers' Guide.

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY (N. & N. W. Division).
GOING NORTH — GOING SOUTH
7.47 A. M. 3.55 P. M. — 10.00 A.M. 7.42 P. M.

CANADA PACIFIC RAILWAY
GOING EAST
7.00 a. m., 8.56 a.m., 10.55 a. m. 7.22 p.m.
GOING WEST
9.14 a. m. 3.21 p. m. 5.[illegible] p. m.

The Canadian Champion, IS PUBLISHED EVERY Thursday Morning —AT— MILTON, CO. OF HALTON, ONT. TERMS—$1 PER ANNUM. TYRRELL & PANTON, Props.

OFFICE—On Main Street, one door east of Wallace House.

TERMS—$1 in advance will be charged on the date of subscribing, $1.50 if not paid in advance.

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[illegible]MAS, L. D. S., Dentist Licentiate of the College of Dental Surgeons, Ontario, will be in Milton on the last Tuesday of every month. Office in the Thompson House, where he may be consulted by persons wishing professional services.

CARRIQUE, D. D. S., SURGEON DENTIST. OFFICE: MAIN ST., - MILTON. Hours from 9—6.

ZIMMERMAN, DENTIST, HAMILTON, ONT. King & McNab Streets. 18-

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J. BUTTERFIELD,
Milton, Nov. 18, 1886. AGENT.

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COUNTY OF HALTON.

LOCAL COURTS CALENDAR, 1889.

Place of Sittings	Clerks.	Jan.	Mar.	May.	July.	Sep	Nov.	Jan. 1890.	Hour of Opening
Milton	Wm. Panton.	25	29	31	26	27	26	29	9.30 a.m.
Oakville	R. Balmer	16	6	8	3	11	6	8	10 a.m.
Georgetown	[illegible] Grant	8	12	14	9	17	12	21	9.30 "
Burlington	[illegible]	10	[illegible]	16		19	15	23	10 a.m.
Burlington	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	10	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	10	10 a.m.
[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	[illegible]	5	7	2	10	5	11 "

General Sessions of the Peace, [illegible] Court Sittings, with or without Jury, Tuesday 11th June, [illegible]

County Court Sittings, without Jury, Tuesday, 2nd April, and 1st October, at 10 a. m.

County Court Sittings—Formerly Terms—Monday, 14th January, 1st April, Tuesday, 2nd July, and 7th October at 10 a. m.

Court of Criminal Justice Accounts—Wednesday, 2nd January, 3rd April, 3rd July & 2nd October.

By order, T. G. MATHESON, Clerk of the Peace.

Are You Coming to Hamilton's Summer Carnival, 19th to 23rd Aug.?

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All goods packed free of charge.

DOMINION FURNITURE COMPANY.
120½ and 122 King Street East, Hamilton.

A DESPERATE MOVE.

BY ELLA MATERS.

"I am extremely obliged to you for your offer," I said at last, "and if I hadn't other work in hand I should have been delighted to accept it in spite of the strange condition you attach to it. I know lots of men who work as well or better than I do, and if you don't mind I'll try another one of them. And now I think I'll say good night, Mr. Bellamy," I said, rising. "Don't trouble to get up; I'll let myself out," and I put my hand on the fastening of the door.

"I'm afraid you'll find that Antony has fastened the door. It's a favorite trick of his. He's a most valuable fellow, Antony is, but the very devil if you thwart him. Sit down, will you, and I'll go and call him."

The old man was upon his crutches in a moment, and disappeared through the door, thinking he had gone to summon the dwarf to let me out, at down to await his return. I took up one of the pictures from the portfolio, and began to examine it critically. Once more the marked contrast between these early prints and the one I had just asked to engrave struck me with surprise, and I lifted my eyes suddenly to take another look at the beautiful drawing which had been left standing on the mantle-shelf.

But, before my eyes reached it, they were arrested by another object, one much more attractive than the most lovely pictured presentment of a woman could ever be, one of the like of which I certainly never expected to find in this strange dwelling-place. By the corner of the table, just within the circle of light cast by the reading-lamp, stood a tall, slight girl, with fair, smooth face and well-formed, regular features. Though the one magic touch which is needed to give a sense of absolute beauty has been withheld, her's was a face which would have lingered long in the memory, even after meeting her in the crowded street; and naturally the impression was far more vivid to me, looking up suddenly in the dusky silence and solitude, and seeing a figure that might just have stepped out of one of Leyrer's canvasses. She was dressed in a plain black gown, and her hair, tied only with a single ribbon, fell in heavy masses on her neck and shoulders. Her eyes were large and dreamy, filled with a look in which wonder and shyness, and ever so slight a shade of pity, were strangely blent. I saw at once that she had come to speak to me, so I rose and bowed, keeping silence as I did so.

"You have seen my father, sir, and he has been talking to you about some engraving work, has he not?" she said, in slow hesitating speech.

"Yes I replied, "Mr. Bellamy has very kindly offered most generous terms for a bit of work, but unfortunately has coupled his offer with conditions which I find it rather awkward to agree to."

"Oh! and so you cannot help him;" And as she spoke a cloud as of disappointment passed over her face, and her eyes wandered uneasily round the room.

"[illegible] father, I think, is gone to [illegible] who has fastened the door. But perhaps you can show me the way. As I spoke I made a motion towards the door, and she did not move to [illegible] made a slight gesture as if [illegible] keep me back.

"[illegible] asks you, sir," she said, "[illegible] has strange ideas on some subjects, as I dare-say you may have noticed, but if he could get the book finished he might be better. He thinks of nothing day and night but this book of his. Oh, I shall be glad, when he has done with it."

"But I thought it seemed to be a great favourite [illegible] certainly is a charming work in itself," I replied.

"To some men it might be, perhaps, but tell me, sir," she said, coming nearer to me, and casting an anxious glance toward the door of the inner room, "do not people go mad, sometimes, when they keep their thoughts bent on one subject and nothing else? I often fear he will. If that one picture were engraved the book could be printed, and then he could think of something else."

"But there are hundreds of men who would do it for him, just as well as I could [illegible] but he had made up his mind that you are the man to do it, and he would never be satisfied with another engraver's work. He came home from the cafe a few nights ago in such good spirits, and said he had found the man he had been looking for these last ten months; and he has just told me your work is the finest he has ever seen."

"If it were to undertake it I'm afraid I should spoil plates enough to make the book out," she said. I felt there was the slight tremor of pathos in these last words of mine, and a moment after, when I looked up in the girl's face, it occurred to me that she may be good—extravagantly good—and the work interesting, that there was a touch of romance about the whole business, and that, by humoring the old man's fancy, I should be doing a kind action by taking the girl's mind of a burden, the existance of which she had revealed to me by her anxious words. She said nothing, however, nor did she confess by the slightest blush that my words of flattery had touched her. She only raised her eyes wistfully to mine, and played nervously with a bit of string that she held in her fingers.

"Can you tell me," I said, "what reason your father has for not letting anyone take that picture away, and why he wants the man who may attempt the work to remain here till it is finished?"

"No, I cannot, at least I cannot tell you why he would want you to stay here all the time you were doing the engraving. As to that picture, he very rarely lets it go out of his sight, and if he did allow you to take it away with you, I am sure he would be in an agony of fear till you brought it back. And oh! sir, it would be terrible to me if I should be worried afresh about anything. As it is I am almost driven wild sometimes by his strange anxiety. I cannot think why he is so much more particular about that plate than any of the others. He has engraved it over and over again, but has always destroyed it."

As the girl was speaking I could hear the old man's voice in the adjacent room. There was another voice—a vulgar-sounding, squeaking one—which I assigned to the ugly dwarf, and, after a little, I became conscious of a third, soft and melodious, speaking in a much lower key than the others, but still much more distinct. The girl glanced anxiously over her shoulder as the sound of voices fell upon her ear. "He will never do it to his liking, I am sure, and the book will craze him. He says no one could do it justice but you. Do try it. As to your staying here, consider that it is only an old man's whim. There is a nice bedroom beyond the studio, and I will see that you want for nothing."

Nothing could have been more artless and sincere than the girl's speech and manner but, whether it was the simplest nature or the most perfect art, it affected its purpose. I was just about to answer, with more of warmth, perhaps, than the occasion demanded, that I would do anything that she might ask me to do, when a tall, dark, Italian-looking man entered the room by the door in the corner. His flashing eyes fell first on my companion, but in a moment shifted over to me. He bowed to me with all the grace and deference of a gentleman and at once began to speak.

"My good old friend tells me he hopes that he has at last found the hand which can put the final touch to the opus magnum. He is a little upset just now, for he fears that he may have offended you. So I am come to add my prayers to those of his dear daughter that you will accede to his request. As to your sleeping here all the time, that, of course, is all nonsense to us, but it is something very real to him. If you were to go away and leave the picture half done he would work himself up into a fever that you would not come back."

"You are a friend of Mr. Bellamy's, no doubt?" I replied.

"Yes, and I am also his medical man. I have attended him ever since he was paralyzed and lost the use of his legs. I am his friend, yes, and I hope ere long to be something more;" and as he spoke he cast a tender and languishing glance towards the young girl, but she neither smiled nor blushed, nor gave any other of those outward manifestations which girls in love are wont to give when such words are uttered by their lovers.

"Ah, I see," I replied, "and you think the worry he feels about this book is hurtful to him?"

"Undoubtedly," replied the doctor. "He is, as you must have observed, a man of great reading, and his sedentary habits have certainly injured his health. But there is no hope of getting him to move till this book is out. Then, perhaps, we may induce him to go abroad for a time. Of course we have not the shadow of a claim upon you, but I ask you of your kindness to grant this request. If the offer he has made does not seem to you liberal enough, he will be quite ready to increase it."

"Oh, the money is ample, and pray assure your friend I am not in the least offended. Of course I was taken a little aback at his request, for it was as you yourself say, rather a strange one."

"Yes, I quite understand. And so from what you so kindly say I gather that I may assure him of your assent. I thank you most sincerely on behalf of us all. Perhaps you would like to make a beginning to-night. I think everything is ready in the studio except the subject," he said, smiling as he glanced at the photograph on the mantlepiece. "A lovely figure, is'nt it? I expect you will be fascinated with it yourself before your work is done."

I TRIED THE LOCK OF THE DOOR.

I said nothing in contradiction of the doctor's assumption. As I looked at the girl who had passed behind me, and was now standing near the window, I caught a soft look of thankfulness in her eyes. Even without this, I doubt whether I should have kept up any longer my show of opposition. There was at least an element of romance in the affair, and romance is not a plentiful product in these matter-of-fact days we live in; and the fascination of the girl's dreamy eyes, her strange surroundings, the look of gratitude she had vouchsafed to me, and, last, the apathy or distaste with which she had received the advances of the doctor, all helped to compel my consent. The fifty pounds, too, I will confess, had its weight. I did not find fifty pounds lottery work, at every month either. "Would you be good enough to follow me," said the doctor, and see whether you find everything to your liking?" And as he spoke he led the way through the door by which he had just entered. I followed, and found myself in a long room rather narrower than the one I had just left, but furnished much in the same fashion. There was a bright fire burning in the hearth, and the window, like the one in the other room, was covered with heavy dark curtains. The room altogether had a warm and cosy air. There were several carved oak chairs and a handsome cabinet standing against the wall, and in one corner was the most beautiful old Dutch eight-day clock I ever saw. The face was of brass, covered with a delicately-worked design in white metal, and the case was of black lacquer, adorned with a lot of quaint figures in high gilded relief. It had a cheerful melodious tick, and the tone of the bell as it struck the hour was music itself. In the center of the room was a table covered with engravers' tools and a fresh plate, and a shaded lamp, all ready for work. This, then, was evidently my workshop, and as I looked around it I told myself that, as far as lodging, at any rate, I should have nothing to complain of.

"There is a bed room through here," said the doctor, opening a door at the far end, "and I have no doubt you will find all you may want. Nathalie, dear," he said, addressing the girl who had followed us, "will you tell your father that Mr. —— I beg your pardon, I have not yet learnt your name—aha! Mr. Costello, is ready to begin, but stay—just get the photograph out of the next room first.

The girl brought the design, and placed it on an easel under the light, and then left the room by a door leading apparently to the passage outside. In less than a minute I heard the sound of the old man's crutches coming along the passage, and he entered the room.

"I am quite ashamed to look you in the face," he said, with all his original composure restored, "quite ashamed to plead guilty to such an absurd whim, but a fine young fellow like you can afford to humor an old man, just as my good friend Dr. Fabricius does. Nathalie, my child, tell Antony to get some supper for Mr. Costello. He must keep up his strength. A fowl and a bottle of red wine. Will that suit you?"

I made no amendment to this hospitable proposition, for I was hungry enough to have enjoyed a meal of bread and cheese. "I see," he went on, "you have the design already, and here is the size; fix it here, just at the corner of the plate; and now I will leave you and go to bed, and if you are wise you will not sit up later than half-past twelve. Good-night." And with this he left the room, the same benevolent-looking old gentleman he was when I first met him.

The supper was brought. I soon demolished the fowl, and made a good hole in the bottle of wine which accompanied it; and just as I was about to begin my task, Dr. Fabricius entered the room.

"He is quite a new man since the matter has been arranged. I waited until he was settled. You will add years to his life by your kindness, Mr. Costello."

Dr. Fabricius spoke with that melodious "coo" which Italians never lose, even in the longest sojourn amongst northern guturals and sibilants, and his manner was politeness itself, but I somehow felt an instinctive dislike and distrust of him. From management of the harmless old bibliomaniac and his daughter—of his daughter the first moment I set eyes upon him I seemed to resent the freedom with which he took upon himself the especially, the prosaic reader will say, no doubt. Well, it might have been jealousy, or it might have been something I cannot define. Anyhow, the result was the same. Dr. Fabricius became to me as obnoxious as Dr. Fell became to the young lady of the well-worn rhyme.

"I am glad to hear that," I replied. "It is the first time I ever heard of an engraver being called in to help the doctor."

"Ah! but we physicians are not like you. We do not work under a brilliant lamp. The best of us are only groping in the dark, and often for no reward. Now you, Mr. Costello, will always have the consoling consciousness of a good action performed. You are an unselfish man, I am sure, and I am delighted to have met you. Would there were more of your sort in the world."

The man's flattery made me dislike him all the more. "You don't know me as well as I know myself, Dr. Fabricius, or you won't not talk in that strain."

"You mean that you look for some recompense in all you do. And pray, who does know? Show me the men who professes perfect unselfishness, and I will show you a knave. 'Virtue is its own reward.' Bah! If that were so virtue would soon be as scarce as truffles are getting. But I must not take up your time with my chatter any longer. See, here is some coffee by the fire, in case you should want any. Good-night; and, if you require anything else, Antony will be sleeping on a couch in the front room."

Then Dr. Fabricius left me, and very glad I was to be relieved of his presence. When once I was alone with my work I began to realize fully how strange the situation was, much more like an Arabian night than an English one. Before settling finally I looked into the front room, and there, sure enough, was the dwarf sound asleep on a couch. I tried the lock of the door by which I had originally come in, and found it still fastened, as was also the one in the studio by which the doctor had gone out. My bedroom was a small recess, with no exit save the door leading to it from the studio. There was a window, but that was high over the bed, and guarded by stout bars. I was evidently a temporary prisoner, but I felt no fear as to my personal safety, since I had spoken to the girl, and had learned from her, and from Dr. Fabricius as well, the reason of their anxiety to gratify the old man's fancy. I sat down at the table, and was soon hard at work.

I set out the design on a reduced scale Mr. Bellamy had given me without much trouble and found my task easier than I had anticipated. I worked till the clock struck two and then I bethought me of the coffee the doctor had named. I took a cup, and found it excellent—such coffee as I rarely tasted before. After taking it I did not feel inclined for more work, and remembering Mr. Bellamy's counsels as to late hours I went to bed.

I cannot say how long I may have slept. When I awoke I judged it to be day from the faint hum of the streets; but there was no more light in my bedroom than that which came in through the door. I got up and found the lamp which I had extinguished on going to bed, trimmed and lighted, and the curtains drawn back. The lower panes of the window were ground glass, and through those above I could only see the customary black walls and chimney of the rear view from a London house. Breakfast was prepared on a side table, and having despatched this, I sat down to my work.

I kept at it steadily for a couple of hours and more, for I certainly felt that the work had a strange fascination for me. As the reduced version of the figure of the fair and stately woman advanced toward perfection on the plate before me, it seemed to grow more and more familiar to me, and I instinctively recalled the old man's inquiry of the prveious day as to whether I had not seen something like it before. The doctor's words too, seemed to be in the way of being fulfilled; for I really was becoming fascinated with the grand, calm face which looked down upon me from the photograph on the easel.

But this pictured face, lovely as it was, could not drive out of my thoughts the one in real flesh and blood I had looked at last night. I heard a noise behind me, and started up with a thrill of hope and excitement in my heart, and sat down disgusted when I found it was only the dwarf come to clear away the breakfast. I asked where his master was, for I was getting proud of my work, and wanted to show it. "Mr. Bellamy," he said, "was not feeling very well this morning, and would not be about yet. The young lady was in the front room if I wanted to speak to her."

I laid down my tool at once, and found Miss Nathalie sitting by the fire doing some needle-work. I addressed some commonplace observations to her, and we sat talking for half an hour and more. I soon discovered that she was intelligent and well read, and I fancied she seemed very glad to have some one to talk to. By daylight her face seemed handsomer and more striking than in the evening dusk; but, just the same as the night before, I noticed that there was no youthfulness about her. That was the great charm she lacked; but, living in such surroundings as hers were, there was little wonder that it was so.

Our conversation was interrupted by a knock at the door, and Dr. Fabricius came in.

"So, Mr. Costello. I am glad to see you looking so well. I have just come from our old friend, and he is very anxious to know how the plate goes on. Have you had good luck with it?"

"You shall judge for yourself," I replied, as I led the way into the inner room.

The doctor took up the plate, and examined it narrowly with a microscope under the lamp.

"Ah, yes; it is first rate. I can be certain so far, ignoramus as I am about engraving. And what progress you have made. You will never repent having taken this job in hand, Mr. Costello. When it becomes known that this is your work, you will have no occasion to ask for commissions.

I took my tool and sat down to work again. Dr. Fabricius watched me for a minute or two, and then left the room. I worked hard for the rest of the day, and when the clock struck eight I had very little to do. I saw nothing more of Nathalie, nor of Mr. Bellamy either, till after my tea, when the latter, seemingly quite well, came in, and at once began to congratulate me on my success.

"The good doctor tells me you have succeeded beyond all expectation," he began. "Ah, you remember what we were saying about the consolations of art the first time we met. Art is like mercy, it blesses him that gives and him that takes. We two are indeed fortunate. We know a joy that must always be strange to the sordid seeker after gold."

I saw the old man was genuinely pleased with what I had done, so I did not stop him in his rhapsody, though I had begun to suspect there was more sound than sense in his words.

"I have all the delight of your perfect work," he went on, "and you have done a kind action, a reward that will last as long as you live, my young friend, as long as you live."

As he spoke Mr. Bellamy placed his hand on my shoulder, and the beaming smile rippled over his countenance.

"I think it is about finished now," I said. "It is a mistake to overwork a plate of this kind."

"Yes, I quite agree with you. And, by the by, here is the money," and he counted me fifty sovereigns out of a canvas bag. "And now I will take the plate up stairs just to examine it under a microscope. Will you wait a little in case there should be anything to do in the way of retouch? Here is your supper. Eat it, and enjoy it; though I hope it may not be the last meal you take under my roof."

He left the room, and I, nothing loth, fell to. Half an hour passed, and no one came. I took a book and began to read; but I was soon interrupted by a knocking at the outer door, and the sound of feet and muffled voices in the passage. I was astonished at this after the intense stillness that had prevailed hitherto. Almost immediately Dr. Fabricius stole suddenly into the room, and locking the door, made a gesture of silence as he did so.

I saw in a moment from his manner that something was amiss.

"Hush, speak softly," he whispered; "something most unfortunate has occurred. The police are in the house, and have gone up to Mr. Bellamy's room, poor old man! I fear it will be the death of him."

"What is it? What has he done?" I cried.

"Nothing, just nothing; but it is the shock of his system that may do the mischief. The reason for the police coming here is this. This morning there was an attempt to blow up Newgate with gunpowder, the work, so they say, of some Fenian conspirators. Now Mr. Bellamy has been in the habit of meeting and talking to some of these men and their foreign associates at a cafe he frequents, and the police knew this. I don't want to make you nervous; but I believe they have come here, not so much to find Mr. Bellamy, as to discover the whereabouts of a young man who was seen in his company at the cafe two or three nights ago. I fear that points to you. What do you think yourself?"

I was very much taken aback at this speech of the doctor's, for though one be as innocent as a baby, one never poses quite so well after an appearance at the bar of a police court as before. "But they can't want me. I never saw Mr. Bellamy till the day before yesterday. Oh, hang it," I cried, "that fifty pounds will cost me dear if my name gets into the papers. Of course everybody will set me down as an Irish conspirator."

"Not so bad as that let us hope," said the doctor, "but it may be awkward for you. Stay! Is there no way of dodging them? Look here, leave your tools just as they are. They are Mr. Bellamy's, of course and get into this old clock case. It is big enough to hold two men," and as he spoke he crossed the room on tiptoe and opened the case of the old Dutch clock, revealing as he did so a tolerable lig cupboard. I followed him close, with my mind a little relieved, for I felt I should be well nigh ruined if my name should be mixed up, ever so slightly, in connection with a Fenian plot I stepped lightly inside, and the doctor, before he closed the door, called my attention to some perforations in the wood-work which would admit plenty of air.

"They will be here for some minutes no doubt," he went on, "and as soon as they are gone I will come and let you out. Mind, not a sound if you hear footsteps in the room. Now I must go and see to Nathalie. The poor girl is almost beside herself, and with these words he closed the door. The lock, seemingly a spring one, gave a sharp metallic click as if it were strong and in good order, a far more efficient lock, indeed, than one finds usually on old Dutch clock cases.

I heard Dr. Fabricius close the door of the room, and, as all became silent again, a thousand fancies took possession of my brain, and in a minute's time these gave place to fears. It then occurred to me what a short, sharp, vicious snap the lock of the clock-case had given when Fabricius closed it. It is not a pleasant sensation to be shut up in a box with a spring-lock, with your release depending upon the good will of a perfect stranger, a stranger, whom you had met under the most peculiar condition, and one, moreover, who had hitherto not impressed you very favorably; but after a little a reaction came. What harm could happen to me in the house of so kindly a person as Mr. Eugene Bellamy? He was a little cracked, indeed, on the subject of art and its humanizing influences; but then two-thirds of the human race have bees of some sort or other in their bonnets. And then there was Nathalie. That look of gratitude she gave me last night was yet fresh in my memory, and I assured myself that she would not see me in peril without using her woman's wit to help me.

I listened attentively for the door to open and the myrmidons of the law to enter. I speculated as to whether they would examine my handiwork in search of treasonable emblems, and the interval of despondency returning, I wondered if the stately woman I had been drawing might not be some Goddess of Freedom of Spirit or Liberty. A design, perhaps, for the Great Seal of the Irish Republic, but the entire absence of the Hibernian emblems comforted me. I could swear there was neither a shamrock nor a harp in any part of the plate I had just finished.

Suddenly, as if the vain strivings after identification of the past twenty-four hours had been violently crystallized into coherence by a sudden shock of electricity, my heart stood still, and all my blood seemed to freeze in my veins as I became aware of what I had really been doing since I had been Mr. Bellamy's compulsory guest. In a moment in the semi-darkness of my strange prison, this frightful recognition came upon me full and clear, accompanied by a feeling of wonder that my senses should have gulled me so long. Over and over again, both in the photograph and in the reduced drawing on the plate, I had been sensible of some glimmer of resemblance to something seen elsewhere; but this glimmer, unhappily, had never been kindled into a perfect light. Too late I knew that the figure I had just finished was no other than the one which may be seen any day on the left-hand corner of a Bank of England note, and that I was in the clutches of a gang of forgers!

For a minute or so such a paralysis fell upon my will that I doubt whether I should have been able to step out into freedom had the door of my prison been thrown open. How clearly and fully came back to my recollection all the weird stories I had read about men who had fallen into snares like the one which had now closed over my head, and as I considered these I abandoned all hope that any feelings of mercy would sway the decisions of my gaolers in the disposition of a tool like myself. I had served my purpose, and was no longer of any use; but it would hardly be safe to let me go my way. Before this many a one had no doubt been lured to destruction in like manner, and had never issued alive to tell the world of his adventures. The story of the police being in the house was of course all part and parcel of the trap; and, had I declined to enter the clock-case, another method, less convenient but just as efficient, would have been found to silence me. In the midst of this storm of agitation I was in a measure recalled to myself by the sound of the clock which began to strike over my head. I counted ten strokes, and when the ring of the bell had ceased I could plainly hear footsteps in the room, and a bright light shone through the perforations of the door.

By drawing myself up to my full height I managed to bring my eye level with one of the holes, and peered out into the room. There I saw the man they called Dr. Fabricius standing by the table clearing away the engraving tools I had lately used, and almost immediately the old man entered from the adjoining apartment—to my horror and amazement no longer on crutches—but walking with a swift, stealthy tread. He came close to where Fabricius was standing and the two talked for some moments in a tone too low for me to catch what the words were. Then they both withdrew to the most remote corner of the room and began to turn up the carpet, and when they had rolled this back some distance, so as to leave a large space of the floor exposed, Fabricius, stooping down, took hold of an iron ring and lifted up what was evidently a trap-door of a cellar beneath.

Strange to say, this movement, suspicious and threatening as it was, kindled in my heart a speck of hope. Perhaps the story of the police might be true after all. Perhaps the old man was really a Nihilist or a Communist, and had been a little too sympathetic towards the high-souled patriots of the Emerald Isle, who even then were making trial of the emancipating virtue of explosives, though in a milder degree than in these latter days of progress.

Perhaps the trap door they were lifting up was a way of escape contrived in the same ingenious fashion as had made a sort of conspirator's closet out of an innocent-looking Dutch clock-case, but then came the terrible thought that perhaps it was a living tomb to which they were going to consign me to, clock-case and all, to starve and rot, and effectually conceal the secret of that fatal plate, and of the image which I, in my ignorance, had engraven thereon.

But I was not long left in doubt. Leaving the trap-door open, they came toward the clock-case, and, standing one on each side of it, pushed it easily from its place. It evidently moved on wheels, and was quite distinct from the dial apparently belonging to it, for I heard the clock strike the quarter in its original situation when I was being moved towards the middle of the room.

Up to this moment I had kept silent and well-nigh motionless, but now the crisis had come to me which comes to the fly in the web when he sees the spider advancing towards him. The fight for life must be made, however desperate the odds against me. I passed my fingers rapidly round the inside of the case to detect, if possible, where the fastening of the lock might catch, but the joinery was so smooth and perfect that I should never have found it had not the brass plate of the lock struck cold to my fingers as they touched it after passing along the wood. Then, drawing my legs up till my knees were about level with the lock, and pressing my back against the back of the case, I brought every muscle into play to drive outwards the walls of my narrow cell, caring nothing whether it might give way, front or rear. The violence of my effort tested to the full the handicraft of man who had put the woodwork together, for it cracked as if it must burst, and the whole thing swayed over, and would have fallen had not one of the men caught it and laid it down on a horizontal position on the ground.

"Aha! my young friend," said the voice of the old man; "you are tired of standing erect, are you? Well, you shall lie down a little. But he will not have much more walking to do, will he, good doctor?"

While the old fiend was speaking, I was straining every muscle, and the chest cracked again and again. I even felt the panels give way against my knees; but the lock still kept its hold. Again and again I put my whole force into my struggle for life, and so blurred and confused did my perception become in the agonized pantings and strainings, that I did not realize I was being moved along until I felt my head sink suddenly. The chest was evidently being lowered down a sloping surface, grating against rough wood in its descent. Suddenly, with a shock, it came to a standstill, and a loud crash overhead told me that the trap-door, which I had seen raised a few minutes before on the plate, I had been sensible of some had closed upon me. Not a gleam of light now penetrated the holes in the chest, and the utter darkness told me the terrific fact that I was lying alive in my coffin in the underground cellar of a forger's den, with no more chance of escape than from an iceberg in the Polar Sea.

(To be continued.)