The Canadian Champion

AND COUNTY OF HALTON INTELLIGENCER.

VOLUME 37. MILTON, THURSDAY, OCTOBER 28, 1897. NO. 19

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Chief Justice Armour has given judgments for total damages of $1,150 against Deputy Returning Officer E. M. Fleming of London for refusing to allow Ira Collins to vote in the last Dominion election and for causing his arrest.

In the Supreme Court at Ottawa judgment was rendered in the City of Toronto v. the Toronto Railway, allowing the motion and quashing the appeal.

A CONFLICT OF EVIDENCE

BY RODRIGUES OTTOLENGUI, AUTHOR OF "AN ARTIST IN CRIME," ETC.

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Burrows retired early that night, intending to be as fresh as possible for the next day's work. He slept so soundly that when he awoke, with a sudden consciousness of having been disturbed by some extraneous sound, it was impossible for him to determine whether he had slept for hours or minutes. Indeed he could not even understand thoroughly what it was that he had heard. It left the impression on his mind of an object, such as a chair perhaps, which had been overturned, but whether he had really heard anything or only imagined it in connection with some vagary of dreamland he could not be sure. However, though he had ben sleeping soundly, he was now thoroughly aroused, and could not dismiss the idea that he had heard a distinct and loud sound, but whether in his own room or in an adjoining apartment or even downstairs puzzled him.

He lay quiet, straining to catch the least evidence of a repetition, but no sound reached his acutely-attentive ear save his own breathing and the ticking of his watch beneath his pillow. The latter, however, suggested that he might at least learn how long he had slept. Striking a match, he lighted the oil lamp, and found it to be but ten o'clock, whereas he had thought that it must be near day. Finding that there would be time enough to spare to an investigation and still obtain a good night's rest afterward, he dressed and left the chamber. Crossing the hall, he entered the room on that side of the house, thinking that from that direction had come the noise which had disturbed his slumbers. Looking about him, it seemed evident that nothing had been disturbed, or else it had been re-arranged.

He was about to prosecute his search farther, when he fancied he heard footsteps. Listening attentively, he could almost have sworn that they came from the direction of his bedroom. Hurrying back thither, he found everything just as he had left it. What could this mean? The first sound might have been in a dream, but surely he was awake the second time. Nevertheless, though he had apparently heard someone walking in his chamber, when he reached it it was as vacant as when he had left it. There was the supernatural possibility that the ghost of the corpse in the adjoining room was promenading in the moonlight, but Burrows was above entertaining such an idea, and, as it occurred to him for a moment, he smiled as he thought "It is not midnight."

However, if the footsteps had been in that room, whether of the living or of the dead, he could not discover, for the doctor had taken away the key.

The bed bore no evidence of having been disturbed.

Was it possible that Lewis was up and walking about down stairs? This seemed to promise an explanation, and Burrows at once went to the floor below. He entered the chamber which he knew had been assigned to Lewis. It was empty, and the bed bore no evidence of having been disturbed. Was his last surmise correct, then, and was it Lewis whom he had heard? If so, what was he doing prowling about at such an hour, and where was he at the present moment?

This last question he would endeavour to answer, for, if he had just heard him walking, he must be in the house. But Burrows went into every room except, of course, Virginia's, only to find them all empty. Determined to solve the mystery, he replaced the lamp in his bedroom, and, again descending the stairs, seated himself on a chair in the hall, where it would be impossible for Lewis to pass him unnoticed. To a detective long vigils of patient watching become almost a habit, but sleep will overpower a man even though he be a detective. Burrows kept awake for four hours, occasionally striking a match to note the passage of time. Finally, when it was nearing the hour of 3, he would start up every little while from a doze. Finding at length that he must sleep, with commendable perseverance he still resolved not to abandon his self imposed task. In his dilemma he decided upon a bold plan, which was to lock the door of Lewis' room and tip his chair back against it. Thus he might sleep, rather uncomfortably, but yet with the knowledge that Lewis must disturb him to pass him. When he awoke again, it was once more with the consciousness of a loud noise near him, but this time it continued after he had jumped up. It was now day and quite light. As he stood rubbing his eyes, trying to collect his senses, upon recollecting what had occurred he was astonished to find that the noise, which still continued, was occasioned by some one within the room shaking the door which he had locked. In wonder he turned the key and was amazed to see John Lewis standing before him. They looked at each other a moment in silence, and then Lewis said:—

"Good morning! What was the matter with the door? I could not open it." Burrows recovered himself at once, and replied:—

"I don't know. I was just coming down stairs and heard you trying to get out. Seeing a key in the door, I turned it, but as I turned it more than once I don't know whether you were locked in or not when I commenced."

"I hardly think that, for who would want to fasten me up? This is the only exit, as the other door leading into the library is locked."

"I suppose it could not have been," stammered Burrows, a little confused. "What could he think? How was it that Lewis had come out of this room, when he was sure that he had found it empty the night before and had subsequently kept guard all through the lonely hours of the early morning? He left Lewis and went into the library. Going to the door which opened from that room into the apartment which Lewis had just quit, he found that it was locked, as he had stated. Moreover, the key was in the lock on the library side. Burrows unlocked the door and entered, curious to determine whether Lewis had slept in the bed or not, and upon investigation decided that he had. More than ever puzzled, he regretfully concluded to await until Mr. Barnes should arrive, and seek his assistance in solving this mystery. As it was yet early, he went to his room and was soon sleeping soundly.

CHAPTER VII.

THE AUTOPSY.

After being released from his room by Burrows, Lewis crossed the hall and entered the parlour. Though New England farm people usually arise early, he judged from the stillness in the house that no one else was yet astir. He heard the detective go upstairs and close his door behind him. In the quiet of morning in the country the least sound is heard afar off. He wondered how it was that Burrows had been in the hall so early and why he had returned to his bedroom, but there was no way of having his thoughts answered. He stood near the fireplace for a long time with one elbow on the mantel, his head on his hand, gazing upon the spot where the corpse had been found, as though fascinated.

There are some who avoid the presence of the dead, or places where the dead have been. These would strenuously deny the possibility that spirits of the departed return to earth, yet in their secret hearts they admit that it might be. They scoff at ghosts, yet avoid a chance of meeting one. There are others who would no more enjoy such an encounter, but who, having speculated little as to the possibilities or probabilities, yet, in an undefinable, half conscious way, wonder whether such things can be. There are attracted to the scenes of deaths, and especially of homicides, for, if any ghost should have the desire to return, would it not be the grim specter of one who had been forcibly ejected from his earthly shell? Might not his unfined career contain some incompleted purpose, so strongly impressed upon the soul, that he would try to get back into communication with some one whom he might inspire to do his bidding, so that he, poor ghost, might continue upon his long journey lighter hearted? Or, in case of murder, might it not be that the keen following of a scent by the quick mind of a shrewd detective results from the whispering of the spirit of the deceased, which hovers about the scene till justice be done? If this be a possibility, would it not be a probability that such would be the case where suspicion had fallen upon some beloved one? For whether she, if a woman were suspected, were even truly guilty, might not a kindly, loving ghost, be willing to save her from vengeance, even though some other, perhaps his enemy, would suffer in her place?

However this may be, the fact remains that, though we may speculate and speculate, we know nothing. And, knowing nothing, we speculate. Thus it was not strange that in that room and on that spot Lewis should allow his thoughts to wander afar off, so far indeed that we need not follow him. But while he stood there blind and deaf, as the abstracted always are, though their eyes and ears may be in perfect order for the reception of impressions, there entered one whom he neither saw nor heard.

I use this pronoun, although I am alluding to the great mastiff, for it was the dog who stalked silently into the room. I believe that religionists, in their egotism, have selfishly appropriated all the souls in creation and bestowed them upon the king of all animals, man. To my mind there is something inherently wrong about this dogma. I have met too many good dogs and too many bad men to easily believe that man alone is immortal, for surely if there be any immortality at all the good in the world must share it. So I think the good in the dog is more worthy of perpetuity than the evil that resides in man.

The mastiff, having entered the room, went close to where Lewis stood, and after sniffing at his legs a moment, gently licked the hand which hung down, reaching it without an effort, so tall was he.

Lewis must have indeed been lost in thought, for he heeded not the "Good morning" of the brute. His salutation unnoticed, the mastiff dropped down upon his haunches, and so sat staring into the face of the man as though to ask wherefore he was not observed. There is the picture—the man leaning against the mantel, present in the body, but absent in mind or spirit, and the dog sitting patiently waiting for the return of consciousness in the man, so that he might be recognized. As he continued to stare up at Lewis, who will say that, dog though he was, he would not be able to note the first expression on the face which would show that the man's mind had returned from its pursuit of the unknowable? The position remained unchanged for many minutes, till at last the dog must have concluded that he deserved more than was accorded to him. He raised one of his huge paws and placed it upon the man's leg, repeating the action, as though intentionally touching him to attract his attention. Still failing, he reached a little higher and let his paw rest on Lewis' hand.

This aroused Lewis, and even before he fully recovered from his reverie he closed his fingers upon the proffered paw, grasping it tightly. He looked down, but as he met the mastiff's eyes they were turned away. What is there about a dog which causes him to do this? He will stare at you by the hour, but look at him and he turns away as though caught in an act of which he is ashamed. Is it a recognition of the superiority of man, and does he instinctively feel that it is a liberty for him so to stare, even though the proverb allows the cat to gaze upon majesty?

Lewis stooped and patted the huge head, and the dog turned his mouth up so that he could lick the hand which caressed him.

"Poor dumb brute," said Lewis, aloud, "I wonder if you know that I am in trouble and are offering your sympathy?" He leaned farther forward, and the dog licked him in the face.

"You seem to be fond of dogs," Lewis looked up quickly, releasing the dog's paw, and saw that it was Virginia who had spoken.

"Yes," he replied, "I am devoted to the species. I feel quite complimented at the favours shown to me by this one. He does not look like a dog who would make friends with everyone, and it is said that these intelligent brutes instinctively avoid the evil-disposed."

"You are the first man of whom Savage ever made a friend at sight," replied Virginia. "I think that his name is a good exponent of his nature. There are few about this neighbourhood who do not fear him. I wonder if what you say is true? I mean that a dog can do what a man cannot—read character and distinguish between the good and the bad?"

"I cannot be certain, of course, but I think so. It is all speculation, though there are stories in substantiation of that theory. However that may be, I am glad that Savage is friendly with me, since I am to be your guest. It would be very awkward otherwise. I should fear to leave my room at night."

"You must not call yourself my guest," said Virginia, in friendly tones. "Despite what the detectives, or others, may have told you of my recent unpleasantness with my uncle, I loved him dearly. As you are his heir, regardless of what the squire tells me are the provisions of the will, You must consider yourself entirely at home."

"You are very kind to the prodigal." He paused a moment. "You said just now that you dearly loved my father." His voice trembled a little, and he stopped again to regain control of himself. "I am glad to have you say that. I am glad that someone loved him." Again he was obliged to pause. "You see I forsook him, and he must have been a very lonely man had you not given him your affections. Now that I have come back, in face of the dreadful calamity that has befallen us, your kind words lead me to hope that—that you will give me your good opinion and your good-will now, and that later we may grow to be firm friends and perhaps affectionate cousins. Am I—am I too bold?"

"I told you the truth when I said that I loved my father—for he was a father to me. How could I help loving him? He was so good to me. She was not answering his question directly, and as she said the last words she choked back a sob and turned her head away to hide her emotion. For this reason she did not see an involuntary movement toward her which Lewis made. He stretched forth his arms, as though he would infold her with them by way of sympathy. Almost as quickly as he had been moved, he checked himself and seemed calm when she looked at him again.

"Do you know," said she, "your voice is very like your father's? And you are like him, too." Then, after a moment, offering him her hand impulsively, "Yes, I think I can promise that we shall be friends."

Lewis took the proffered hand, and held it without saying anything. Virginia immediately withdrew it, not resentfully, but yet firmly. Her emotions, aroused by the subject which they had discussed, had betrayed her into more demonstrativeness than war her custom. Now she returned to her usual mood and said a little more coldly:—"Come, we will have breakfast. I came to call you." Lewis sighed, as he followed her. The mastiff had sprawled off on the rug, lying on his side, his long legs outstretched, and appeared to be asleep. But as soon as the two left the room he jumped up and went after them.

It was about noon when Dr. Snow arrived, and by this time Burrows had risen. Meeting the doctor, he asked if he had come prepared to make the post-mortem examination, to which he received a reply in the affirmative.

"Will you go up to the room at once? May I accompany you?"

"Yes," said the doctor, "I meant to come earlier, for I am anxious to make this examination as soon as possible, but I had to make a call on a very ill patient some miles away. As you are present, it is what I always wished. It is always best that more than one should witness such an investigation, in case anything of an unexpected nature should be discovered."

"Very well, let us go at once, for you cannot be more anxious than myself to begin. In fact, there is another reason why I would like to see the inside of the room."

"What is it?" asked the doctor, with some curiosity.

"Well, the fact is," said Burrows, "last night I thought I heard someone in the room, and also that a chair or other piece of furniture was overturned. I am anxious to see if we find any corroboration of it in the appearance of the place."

"I doubt very much that we shall, for I have the key in my pocket, and so you see no one could have gained entrance."

The two men then proceeded to the apartment where lay the dead body. The doctor unlocked the door, allowing the detective to enter ahead of him. Burrows gazed eagerly around, but nothing seemed to indicate that anyone had been in the place since it had been closed the day before.

"You see," said the doctor, "nothing has been disturbed. I am afraid your imagination played some trick upon you."

Opening a satchel which he had brought with him, Dr. Snow produced his instruments and immediately began his work. First he stripped the body and found a considerable quantity of blood clotted about the parts, which with a sponge he carefully cleaned. He had scarcely done so when Burrows, who had been following his actions with eager interest, excitedly exclaimed:—

"Look, doctor! There seem to be two wounds."

"As you say, so it seems," said Dr. Snow, phlegmatically, "but before we make a positive assertion let us examine farther." With these words he took up his probe. Passing it into one wound, he worked in silence for some time, Burrows endeavouring to command his impatience. Finally he removed the instrument and inserted it into the second opening. With a little manipulation it passed superficially through the flesh and then emerged again about six inches from the entrance and toward the back. At length the doctor spoke:—

"I think," said he, "that you are correct in your surmise, and that two bullets have entered here. One I can feel with my probe; the other passed out, as you see this second track indicates. Both wounds are close together."

"Will you extract the bullet?" asked Burrows.

"Of course. It will give us a needed clue as to the bore of the weapon used." Thereupon he continued, determined to complete the task before him. While he was thus busily engaged Burrows stood looking from the window, and was deep in thought over this last point in the evidence.

In the talk between him and Mr. Barnes both had thought that but one bullet had found its mark in the dead body. Now it was incontestably proved that there were two wounds. How to explain that in connection with what they had already discovered was the problem, and his astute mind quickly evolved a theory to fit the case. It will be remembered that the pistols found on the lawn had each one empty shell, and as but one shell had been picked up in Virginia's room he concluded that that weapon also had been fired only once. The tracks in the snow seemed to indicate that Virginia had met Harry Lucas (whose name was on one of the pistols), and then left him to go to the woods. Suppose, then, that Lucas had fired his weapon at Lewis, and that the ball had struck at the point where it made but a flesh wound, and then had passed out. From this point Burrows reasoned as follows:—"Lewis, finding himself wounded, had taken the precaution to write the name of his supposed assailant on the paper which Mr. Barnes thought that Virginia had taken from the table. He had then retired to his bed, as was evident from his being in his nightdress. Then the man whom Virginia had met across the river, and who had unquestionably visited the house afterward, as was easily shown by his tracks, had entered and fired the shot which proved fatal." As he reached this point in the case which he was constructing to fit the facts he started with a new idea. "As Virginia had been cleaning a pistol, suppose that it was her own weapon, and that it was she who, having planned the deed with Lucas, had finished it when she returned home and found her uncle still alive. This seems more probable, because Lewis might have left his own room to tell her of his wound, when she came in, whereas the man would have sought him in his bedroom, and have killed him there." Two points occurred to him in connection with his theory, and he approached the table where the doctor was at work, and asked:—

"Can you tell from what distance these shots were fired?"

"I have just been looking into that point. Of one thing I am convinced, and that is that one was fired at very close range, for the cloth of the gown is blackened with powder."

"Which wound was that?"

"That is the curious part of it. There is but one hole in the gown, and there are two wounds. I cannot be sure which bullet passed through the garment, because the wounds are so close together."

This satisfied Burrows, and he came to his second point. If he could find the suit of clothes which the murdered man had on when the first struck him, and if he found a bullet hole in the garments, it would bear out his theory that Lewis had received one bullet from without, and then had undressed, the second and fatal shot coming after.

Burrows was now anxious to search for the suit of clothes necessary to his theory of the crime, but was obliged to wait until Dr. Snow had concluded his investigation. This occupied some time, for he very carefully made notes of all the results. However, at last the doctor signified his readiness to dismiss the case for the day. The two men left the room together, Dr. Snow carefully locking the door and placing the key in his pocket. They passed down the stairs and, meeting no one, parted at the gate, the physician jumping into his waggon and turning his horse's head homeward.

Left to himself, Burrows hastened to commence his search. First he satisfied himself that he was alone in the house, the others apparently having gone out. Feeling thus safe from danger of interruption, he unhesitatingly proceeded to the room which had been occupied by John Lewis. Here he found clothing in the closet and in the drawer of a bureau. He examined everything most thoroughly, but was chagrined and disappointed by not finding what he sought. At length, however, he was compelled to admit that there was no sign of such evidence as he sought, and he commenced replacing things as he had found them.

He heard the door open behind him, and, turning, saw Virginia.

While thus occupied he heard the door open behind him, and, turning, saw Virginia.

"What are you doing?" said she. "Those are my uncle's things. Why are you disturbing them?"

Burrows flushed, as though detected in some dishonourable act, and though he felt that he had done but his duty he would have been glad if Virginia had delayed her entrance by half an hour. However, he determined to tell the truth, and it even occurred to him that he might discover something by closely watching Virginia's face as he disclosed his suspicions to her.

"Miss Lewis," said he, "I confess it may seem strange that I should be thus engaged, but as a detective, endeavouring to find the murderer of your uncle, I suppose you will admit that I may use all means to compass that end?"

"I am not sufficiently versed in the methods of the thief-taker to be a judge," replied Virginia, coldly. Burrows coloured at the evidently intended slur, and with some asperity he answered:—

"If I am a thief-taker, it is only the criminal who has need to fear my methods. The innocent can be in no danger—"

"You are egotistical. Beware that you do not make the innocent suffer for the guilty in this case."

"Ah! You know who the guilty is, do you not? Tell me what it is that you know and what you are concealing?" At these words Virginia drew herself up to the extreme height of her commanding figure, and with withering scorn she replied:—

"Mr. Burrows, you forget yourself. How dare you speak so to me?" Burrows was about to reply, but before he could sufficiently control himself she continued:—"Enough of this, I am not here to aid you in capturing the criminal, but I want to know what you are doing among my uncle's clothing."

By this time Burrows was determined to deal with her with entire disregard to her sex, remembering only that she was possessed of guilty knowledge it nothing more. He watched her narrowly as he asked:—

"Where are the clothes which your uncle wore when he was shot?"

The girl's countenance did not change, save that a slight, a very slight, smile crossed her lips.

"It appears that my uncle was in his nightdress when he was killed. Therefore your question is unintelligible," she replied.

"Your uncle was in his full dress when shot, and I am seeking the garments which he wore."

"Have you found them?" asked Virginia, still with her countenance under perfect control.

"No, I have not," admitted Burrows, a little disconcerted. Before he could continue he was surprised to hear her say:

"Will you come into dinner? I came to call my cousin, but he does not appear to be here." Without waiting for his answer she left the room.

Burrows was disconcerted at the readiness with which she had dismissed the whole topic. Could it be, he thought, that, after all, she knew nothing? He could not bring himself to admit this, remembering her evident interest in keeping some secret of which she was possessed. "The deeper I get the more complicated the whole thing seems to be," he muttered, as he followed his hostess to the dining-room. At that moment he sincerely wished for the return of Mr. Barnes.

Nothing of any consequence occurred during the remainder of the day, and Burrows retired early to sleep that night. Once in bed, he could not help wondering whether there would be a repetition of the mysterious noises of the night before. His slumbers were undisturbed, and he awoke much refreshed the next morning. Immediately after breakfast he left the farm and went to the saloon where he and Mr. Barnes had stopped on their first arrival. Here he found, as he expected, that their trunks had been sent from New Market, and he was thus enabled to make a change of clothing, of which he felt sorely in need. This done, he proceeded to the squire's house to ascertain if anything had been heard from his superior.

He was ushered into a most comfortable parlour, and was shortly joined by the squire himself, who entered with a despatch in his hand.

"Good-morning, Mr. Burrows," said he, advancing. "I presume you are anxious to know about Mr. Barnes. I have just received a message from him, sent from Portsmouth. He promises to be with us to-day. Do you know what called him to that city?"

"Not exactly, squire, though I fancy I might guess. He left me to find out the address on a certain letter which he thought of importance to have. I suppose he must have followed the letter to its destination, in order to come up with the party to whom it was written."

"And who may that be?" asked the squire, with considerable curiosity.

"I cannot say certainly," replied Burrows; "but, as the letter was written by Miss Lewis, I fancy it may be her lover, Walter Marvel. If this should prove to be the case, you will see how well Mr. Barnes foretold how he should find this man when he said that he would only need to keep a watch on the movements of the lady."

"But does he—that is, does Mr. Barnes think that Marvel is connected with this case?" The squire's voice quivered slightly. Evidently he was sorry to have this young man implicated.

"You will find when you know Mr. Barnes better, that he is very slow to express any decided opinions in cases of this kind; in fact, it is commonly said among the men on the force that when Mr. Barnes accuses a man, he always proves him guilty. Therefore, you see, it is impossible for me as yet to say just what he does think."

CHAPTER VII.—Continued.

Before the conversation could be carried on any further, there was a loud rap on the knocker of the front door, and the squire himself hastened to open it, ushering in Mr. Barnes and Walter Marvel. Squire Olney was at one struck dumb when he saw and recognized the latter. How quickly this shrewd detective had accomplished what had baffled the efforts of so many others! In just twenty-four hours he had apprehended the man whom he had come to find. Marvel was the first to speak.

"Good-morning, squire. You seem surprised to see me."

"I am," rejoined the squire, briefly.

"Mr. Barnes here has told me what I did not know. You have offered a reward for my capture."

The squire hastened to disavow any personal responsibility for that action and continued "I hope, Walter, you know that I am your friend. I have only done my duty."

"I understand perfectly, squire. However, under the circumstances and because of later occurrences, I accepted the advice of Mr. Barnes and returned at once."

"Oh! Then you are not under arrest?" asked the squire, anxiously. Walter changed colour slightly, and Mr. Barnes hastened to relieve his embarrassment by saying:

"No, squire; he came with me voluntarily. But now, if you can offer us any refreshments, we should be grateful. We walked from New Market, and it has sharpened our appetites, has it not, Mr. Marvel?"

Walter nodded assent, and Burrows, who was watching the scene with interest, was surprised at the apparent good-will which seemed to exist between them. The squire at once led the way to the dining-room, and his wife soon spread a bountiful repast before them.

CHAPTER VIII.

THE INQUEST.

It was decided that the inquest should be continued that same afternoon. The squire had notified the district attorney at Dover to be present and assist, and he arrived during the morning. All of the jurymen and witnesses were therefore notified to be present at the squire's house at two o'clock. This was at the suggestion of Mr. Barnes, who had a special reason for not going back to the farm. He did not wish Virginia to know that Marvel had been captured until after she had testified. To further this end Marvel was instructed to remain in one of the upper rooms, and though he was not actually under arrest he felt constrained to obey.

Mr. Barnes learned from Burrows of the strange noises that he had heard on his first night at the farm, but told his young assistant that he had probably been dreaming. When informed of the singular behaviour of Sarah Carpenter, he thought that of sufficient importance to have her name added to the list of witnesses. Burrows told nothing of the information imparted by Josiah Skene.

Mr. Barnes then sought the district attorney, and was closeted with him for an hour, during which they arranged their plans for conducting the examination.

The inquest was to be held in a large room on the ground floor. It was well adapted for the purpose because of the fact that the squire had allowed it to be used as a schoolroom while the selectmen were having the regular schoolhouse enlarged and remodelled. Thus there was a raised platform at one end, upon which the squire and the witnesses could sit, while the rows of benches readily afforded seats for the jurymen and the spectators.

News of any importance travels rapidly in a small town like Lee, and before the time set for the inquest quite a motley crowd of people had congregated about the squire's grounds. There were men and women, farmers, workmen and idlers, all more or less interested in the proceedings which were about to commence, and each had some theory, all his own, as to the identity of the guilty one. One man remembered a farm hand who had been discharged by Lewis and who had left the town, breathing vengeance. Another had met a suspicious-looking tramp prowling about Riverside on the very day of the crime. Being reminded by a neighbour that he had spent all of Saturday and Sunday over in Dover, he was forced to admit that it might have been on Friday when he had met the tramp; but, nothing disconcerted, he continued to urge his opinion that that individual would yet be proved to have a guilty connection with the affair. This proposition was ridiculed by another, for the simple fact that nothing had been stolen would tend to exonerate a tramp, who could not possibly have any other motive but theft, and then he drew attention to the suspiciously close arrival of the man who claimed to be the son, and who would now come in for a share in the property. But yet another had only that morning heard that the entire property would go to the daughter, and so settled that theory.

An old lady at this juncture mysteriously announced that the whole truth of the matter had been revealed to her in a vision, but just what it was she declined to state "till the proper time comes." So they argued and talked over the situation, till at length Mr. Tupper, the district attorney, appeared, walking with Mr. Barnes. All then knew that the investigation would at once begin and forthwith pushed their way into the room which was to be the scene of the inquiry.

The proceedings began promptly. The squire entered, followed by Mr. Tupper and the two detectives, and took a seat in a leather-covered chair which had been brought from his library and placed upon the stand, a similar one awaiting the witnesses. Mr. Tupper and Mr. Barnes took chairs at a small wooden table in front of the squire, and Burrows went to a seat among the crowd. The jurymen were called, and, as they responded to their names, were directed to places on benches placed partially beside the stand at the end nearest to the witness chair. It is worthy of remark that, though this was in a small, isolated country town, the composition of the jury was far above the average to be met with in large cities. Here all were men of families, and identified with the interests of the community in which they lived. Each, as he sat, was the embodiment of earnestness and sincerity. Rough garbed though they were, they possessed shrewd minds and good common sense, and therefore would make admirable jurors.

The preliminaries over, the examination was begun. Mr. Barnes was asked to take the stand, and he testified to the discovery of the crime, and the position and condition of the corpse as first seen by himself, when he accompanied the squire to the house on Monday morning, and to other facts which have been already told.

The next witness was Dr. Snow. The squire interrogated him.

"Dr. Snow," he asked, "have you prepared a report of the autopsy made by you yesterday upon the body of the deceased?"

"I made a thorough examination and have notes of all that I discovered which could, in my opinion, be of the least assistance."

"Very well. What then do you find to have been the cause of death?"

"The man was shot. The ball is of large size. I am not expert enough to give the exact calibre, but think it is a No. 32."

"Did you succeed in finding the ball?"

"Yes, here it is." He passed it to the squire, who in turn handed it to Mr. Tupper.

"Dr. Snow," said the latter, "can you tell how long the deceased lived after the shooting?"

"I found the bullet lodged in the heart; therefore death must have been instantaneous."

"Did you find any other marks of violence?"

"In addition to the wound which proved fatal I found another, which was only superficial."

"Did you find that ball also?"

"No; it only passed a short distance through the body and emerged again."

"Can you describe the direction which it took?"

"From the front toward the back."

"How was the body dressed?"

"In a nightdress, and it is a noticeable fact that though there are two wounds there is but one hole through the garment."

"Did the fatal bullet pass through that hole?"

"It would seem that it did, but as the nightdress is a loosely-fitting garment it is impossible to say. The two wounds are so close together."

Mr. Barnes whispered to Mr. Tupper, who then continued:

"Was this last wound above or below the other? What I wish to know is, was it high enough for the bullet to have come from a pistol fired from the lawn and through the window?"

"Yes. I thought of that point, and therefore measured the height of the window-sill from the ground and from the floor inside. I found by these measurements that the sill is about five feet from the lawn outside and only two feet above the floor within. The wound which we are now considering is above the fatal one, though only slightly so, and is so located that if the deceased had been standing it would have been about four feet above the floor, and so two feet higher than the window-sill."

"Then, in your opinion, that wound may have been made by someone on the lawn?"

"I am sure that it would have been possible. Of course it might depend on how near Mr. Lewis stood to the window."

As the doctor was about to withdraw Mr. Tupper stopped him by asking:

"Will you please tell us if you found any marks, scars, you know, or birth marks, by which the identity of the corpse might be established?"

"Nothing whatever. The face and head have been burned beyond all possibility of recognition."

"Were these burns of such a nature that they may have been the cause of death?"

"I should say not, but of course if a man were burned as badly as that he might subsequently die, though not so quickly."

Mr. Tupper, addressing the squire, said:—

"I suppose there is no doubt as to the identity of the body, but in the face of the fact that the features are so much disfigured it would perhaps be as well to seek some evidence in this direction."

"I have no doubt," said the squire, "that Miss Lewis may be able to help us better than anyone, though I will say this much myself:—When I first saw the body lying by the chimney and leaned over it, I noticed that there was a name on the nightdress in large letters."

"I saw that also," said Dr. Snow. "It is in indelible ink, and done with a stencil plate. As might be expected, the name is John Lewis."

"That in itself seems almost conclusive," observed the squire, "but we can ask Miss Lewis about the matter when she is called."

Dr. Snow was then allowed to leave the stand.

To be Continued.

It is reported that Mr. Pullman's two sons were disinherited by their father shortly before his death.

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