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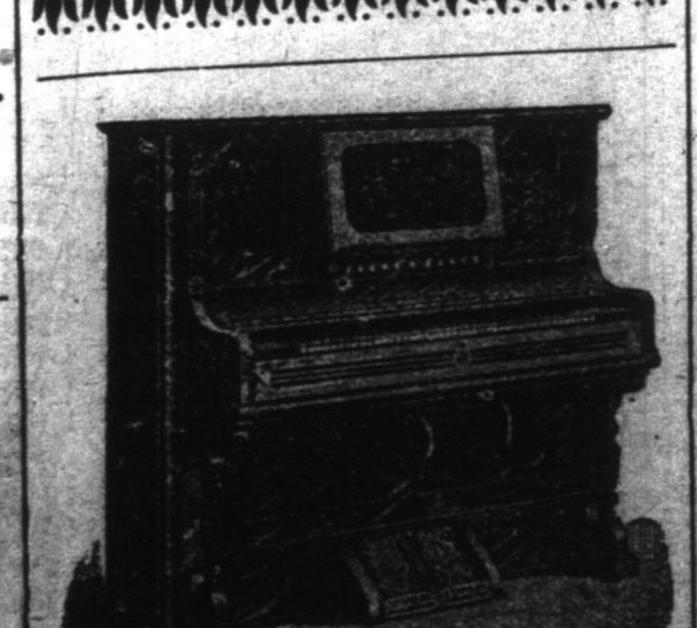
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coming toilet.

Mrchand,

.Jeweler, Milton.



my uncle thread his way through the and moved off. throng and come toward me. How

beard, accidentally touched my foot in made good his escape. Perhaps from down?" passing. He immediately apologized some vantage ground he might still be "This morning. And you?" profusely and with a quite unneces- watching me, watching the effect of sary vehemence, I thought. Indeed his work; but, if so, I saw nothing of place, Brighton, isn't it?" the little accident seemed to excite him him. However, I thought it highly "Very." greatly and fill him with an alarm, which was quite disproportionate to the offense. I smiled a ready forgivewas gone did I seem to recollect the wild, nervous glance of his eyes as he stared a moment into my face. Under other conditions I might have thought

him with some interest as he disappeared in the crowd. Discovering no sign of my uncl amid the moving throng and feeling that I had held my place for a reason able period, I turned with the intention encountered those of a pale faced young gentleman who was leaning on the end of the counter. He started speak, but hesita: d as quickly, restrained, so it appeared, by a second

thought. I in the meantime took up the tumbler and was about to raise to my lips when one more my look instinctively wandered his way. His eyes were fixed up n me with a keenness which I failed utterly to fathom, and, seeing, no doubt, the curious interrogative expression of my face, he came instantly toward me. I at once

lowered the glass and watched him in-He was an ordi ary young fellow, with an insipid mustache and fair hair drew the to him. pressed close upon his head; perhaps not a strong man physically or intellectually, but apparently of some class. "I hope you will pardon me," he said.

tremely nervous-"I think I ought to tell you what I've seen. You will pardon the liberty?"

"Certainly." surd question to ask. Have you-have taken his departure.

I started and looted him squarely the eyes, but he withstood the scrutin, without the flicker of a lid. "Excuse me," I said, now thoroughly

recognize the incongruity of addressing such a question to a stranger." "I do," he replied.

"Then why do you ask?" "Because I have just seen somethin, which-which, to say the least of it, is singular. Do you remember the man with the beard who a minute ago apol-

ogized for treading on your foot?" "Perfectly." "Well, I saw him, while your back was turned, drop something into your t .ibler."

"Good heavens!" Involuntarily the exclamation escaped me. A convulsive shiver swept me from head to foot. The young man, watching intently, must have seen my face blanch, for he added hastily: "I hope I haven't frightened you, but

I thought it looked suspicious and that I had better speak." "Thanks, a thousand times!" I said. "I have enemies. It was good of you. to speak." I seized his hand and shook it warmly, scarcely noticing the limp fingers which returned no answering

Then he added in another key, "If a were you, I'd chuck that stuff away." I took up the glass and looked at h like result. Then I became curious to know of what this drug consisted of

hal could detect no sign. "I think I shall preserve it as a piece dence," I answered. "I can de-

that the thing fell crashing

about it. Nevertheless 1 ordinary being could hope to cope s

This, coming so soon after my escape hemence. Mr. Wentworth watched him at the theater, unnerved me completely. No miracle would have surprised

the door, and together we entered and made a thorough search of the apar , but here we found no trace him we learned that two men ha come about 7 o'clock to look for rooms but what they were like, beyond being little men and dark, he could not say We thanked him, and he withdrew. Then my nucle, turning to me, address ed me for the first time, using, strange

My uncle, without speaking, opene

father had so often employed: "Davie, we must pack up." offered no shadow of an objection to my uncle's proposal, and after breakfast on the following morning we drove to Victoria and took train for Brighton. Upon our arrival in Brighton

to say, precisely the same words my

we drove to the Metropole. Needless to say, our first promenade eyes shut, but no one resembling Woo- tered Mr. Wentworth once more. ching, or the spy of Dover street, was "Hello!" said he. "What floor?" seen. Nor later on, when people came I ordered my drink, drank while the was extremely annoyed, and in my to dring tea in the winter garden, was soda fizzed and then placed the tum- heart I censured him greatly for his anything of a suspicious nature disbler upon the counter while I turned carelessness; but, as nothing further covered. But an hour or so after as I walked down the passage, he chatting about to quiz the approach to the bar, could be said on the subject. I thanked was passing through the vestibule I glibly of what he had seen and what for I was not without hope of seeing him once more, bade him good night encountered my friend of the Empire, he had been doing with himself that the young fellow who had warned me day. Opposite his door he stopped and

"About an hour ago. Delightfu. I thought he seemed a trifle excited

and I noticed that his slim fingers felt very cold as they rested against my "Stopping here, I suppose?" he asked

"So am I. Awfully glad to have me

Thanks very much. You may be sure after the service you rendered me last night that I fully reciprocate"-"Pooh!" he said. "Don't mention I thought it looked fishy, and I spoke. He opened his case and offered me a

cigarette, taking one himself. Then he struck a match and held it to me, for look in a similar manner, and I thought | which I duly thanked him. But my thanks merely added to his embarrassment. He struck me as being a singularly nervous young gentleman. I thought he was not quite so pre-

sight of a fat, middle aged Jew will sentable by daylight as he had been i the artificial glare of the theater. His unmistakable traces of an irregular mode of life. His eyes were narrow and blue and shifty, the pupils of which seemed to remind me of pricking pin points. Indeed I might go so finished he clutched me by the arm and with the young gentleman, who, by rance by asking questions." the way, was not so young by daylight, did not impress me with an ardent de-

thoughts, for he had a shrewd face,

Empire," he whispered confidentially. history. "Brighton next day. No pick me up success. The performance was nearing its close. Already many people had like it. Fellows are awful fools. You

"Well," said I, not altogether relishclearly imprinted upon my face, "it all depends on what you call dissipation. He smiled almost offensively. thought, yet in a way which many people would have called clever. At all events, it deepened my first impression of him, which, in spite of my gratitude was not altogether complimentary. Just then my Uncle Jim came along.

and I immediately introduced my new "This is my uncle, Mr. Davie. This is the gentleman who warned me in the Empire last night."

"Pleased to meet you, sir. May we exchange cards?" our cases. The stranger's card bore junks, mandarins in gorgeous robes of the legend "Mr. Cyril George Went-

"I am delighted to meet you," said my uncle warmly. "My nephew has torture." described the incident of last I believe we are greatly in-

"I hope not, indeed. Perhaps, after in the affirmative. all, I may have been mistaken. The man's action was certainly suspicious,

"Unfortunately, I am unable to think that we have enemies?" believe he did say something to that effect," replied Mr. Wentworth "but I hope your enemies are not of

desperate class?" wily one. "But you will admit that your story is a little stimulating?" "Well, yes," be admitted, "it certain ly is if one takes it seriously."

"I take it very seriously," answe my uncle gravely. "Then it is possible that your en mies are desperate?" "I am afraid it is. Tell me, what to associate with a marked man. was this man like who tampered with

Mr. Wentworth screwed his face u

"That's be!" cried my uncle.

narrowly, and watching, saw the brow contract, the honest eyes grow hard and cold. Perhaps, too, he summed up the physical capabilities of the man before him. I think he could not very well ignore them, for whenever my uncle's thoughts ran on the society, the martial spirit of the Davies asserted itself and commanded respect. "If you ever see that man again," he said. "remember I should like to meet

"I shall introduce him without fail." Our acquaintance smiled and passed on, arranging the flower in his buttonhole as he neared the door. As his figure disappeared through the street door my uncle shook his head. "I don't quite understand that fel-What a beastly complexion he's

CHAPTER XV. A COLLECTION OF CURIOS. Later on in the evening, as I was going up to dress for dinner, I encoun-

We got out of the lift together and invited me within.

"Half an hour yet to dinner. I suppose you can dress in ten minutes?" "Less, I think, if the need arise." It was a bedroom similar to my own. Indeed the rooms of a hotel have a wearisome likeness to each other-a chilly bareness that makes one feel a stranger and a wanderer.

I noticed on his dressing table several quaint curios of an eastern pattern and drew his attention to them. hunter. This Malay creese," he continued, taking up a villainous looking weapon with an inlaid handle, "has a grewsome story of its own. I got it with the weapon as one gets a pedigree with a dog; but, whether real or

"And the story?" "The man who owned this ran amuck and killed seven people. Jealousy, believe. But, Lord, you can never credit half the tales you hear." "The weapon looks sinister enough

faked, I can't say."

to have such a history." He laughed. "I think a curio is of no value without a personal history. In fact, I insist upon getting a history with the article, real or spurious. never inquire too closely. It doesn't We are all very fine fellows, but we might easily be finer. Now look at this pistol," said he. "It is very old and is of Chinese or Korean manufacture. History traces it back to Chiface, of a sickly, pallid tone, showed King, a celebrated prince of the Ming dynasty. Who Chi-King was or what was the Ming dynasty I haven't the remotest idea, but the dealer I bought it from in Wardour street spoke of them with such an air of familiarity gard as he listened, and when I had far as to say that a closer acquaintance that I did not like to display my igno-

The weapon referred to was a curiously wrought, old fashioned flintlock, not unlike the clumsy contrivances of appearance of the metal I had no doubt whatever that the dealer of Wardour street had manufactured this antique "Always begin a heavy night at the firearm as easily as he had traced its

"It doesn't shoot, I suppose?" "Good heavens, no! It couldn't even if you found the man who was heroic

and smilingly asked if I was not anxlous to hear its history. "No. thanks. Some day perhaps. It's getting rather late now." see. You think I've been mad probably. Fortunately · l

such trifles seriously. But these Painted on rice pa per. I believe. Awfully delicate stuff. Be very careful, or you'll stick your fingers through it." He opened a portfolio and displayed

dozen or so of glaring pictures, stift and crudely colored in the approved We all three immediately took out Chinese style. There were pictures of office, Tartar generals on unnatural looking horses, women playing guitars and several pictorial expositions of the

Turning to him, I suggested that he seemed exceedingly fond of Chinese curiosities, to which he frankly replied

ours, their ways of life so but it was all done so quickly that it strange. It is the change, the complete is just possible I may have imagined change, which fascinates me. The great longing of my life is to go to the far east, and one of these days I hope to avail myself of the opportunity.

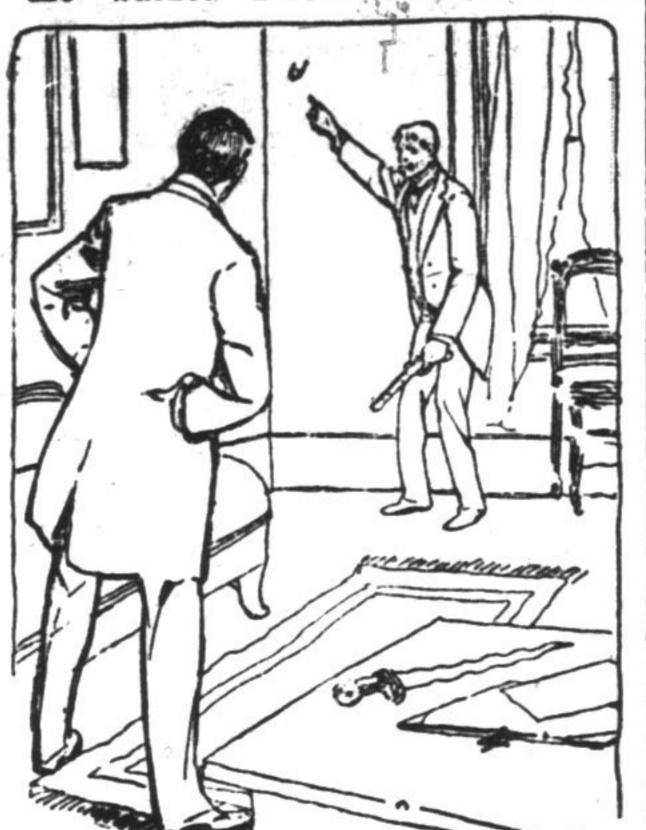
idea doesn't seem to fascinate you." "Well, no. I can't say that it does," "Strange how tastes differ. Why, my rooms in Cork street I have a splendid collection of curiosities. You must come and see them one day when you

Of course I declared that I should I

delighted. There was no reason why should tell this stranger that any- ty? long story and one best kept to myself. ern face, but then I am always imagin It was not every one who would care ing things. The difficulty with me is

"You are not hurt?" he gasped.

cessfully with such persistent flends? though just a little ashamed of his ve- Look, you might have received this in-He walked across the room and



He showed me where the bullet had imbedded itself in the plaster.

ing a splash, had imbedded itself in if the whole story had been but a ruse "Heavens! What a providential es-

cape! An inch or two more and"almost scorch my eyes." exclamation of disgust.

first ascertaining their condition ought reply. to be criminally prosecuted," he pro- As we prepared to go down to dinner ceeded energetically. "Chance, and my uncle suggested that we should call chance alone, has averted one of the on Mr. Wentworth, examine his curies many tragedies with which the news- and investigate the affair still further. papers daily provide us. I have often But the knock at his door received no wondered how people can be so care- response. Jim knocked again, this less: now I realize how easily an acci- time more loudly. A querulous query dent may happen. But thank heaven came: "Yes," he said; "I'm a bit of a curio no harm has come of it. You will for-

> "Willingly," I smiled, but I was still bit shaky. "How were you to know the thing was loaded?" "Aye," he echoed solemnly. "How

His distress was so evident and sincere that I began to make light of the matter, not wishing to deepen the con- chat." cern which I saw so visibly affected "Awfully sorry, but I'm in the I'll him. No doubt it was a narrow es- dle of dressing. Will after dinner suit cape, but misses never count. All the you?"same it was lucky for me that I had "Admirably." suddenly thrown back my head, the better to view the pictures. Otherwise there would have been one more shoot- reception rooms in vain for Mr. West. ing fatality to record.

was I to know?"

I left him with his protestations ring- stairs and knocked at his door ing in my ears and carried away with eyes that shone like points of hot met- of news. al. It was not a pleasant picture, and as I entered my room I instinctively the hotel about an hour previously! locked the door. For of a sudden a hought came to me, or rather, a thought that I had repeatedly striven to banish assumed the aggressive and forced itself upon my attention. strove to put it away as one of those things which do a man no honor, but i would not be denied. Presently it beat

in upon my brain; it throbbed through every pulse; it turned me cold with a hopeless, sickening dread. Was the I think he read something of my three centuries ago, and yet from the discharge of the pistol due to accident -or premeditation? My uncle had not yet come in, so doubt robbed me of all reason and sent me into a maddening maze of conjecture. Surely, surely this man, this Mr.

Wentworth, a gentleman without doubt, and one of the numerous class to be found in the West End, could have no connection with Wooching and Society of the Hidden Meaning? was a monstrous thought, unworthy of me, unworthy of any honest man, and as I have said. I sought to stifle it, up it leaped like a flame which will give it no welcome which in any way might be construed as an encouragement, for as yet I had still some faith

A few minutes later my Uncle Jim came in, and after listening to an apology for his absence (he had been paying a visit in the neighborhood of Palmeira square) he inquired the news. accordingly told him of my second meeting with Mr. Wentworth and of the incident which had taken place in that gentleman's room.

There was no manner of doubt as to the direction his thoughts immediately flew. The old suspicious look leaped to his eyes; anxiety clouded his face in the most pronounced manner. He saw in this, as I was beginning rapidly to see, the hand of the society, and yet amounted to this-in every stranger was to see a possible enemy! I could neither eat, drink nor sleep in safety. The thought turned me sick-sick to death of life and the world. And yet, up slender clews," he said. "No doubt dejected and hopeless as I was, there was an undercurrent of despair which made me cling madly to that which I

felt assured was worthless. "Were the circumstances at all picious?" queried he. "Did he, by word or act, lead you to believe that he was in any way connected with the socie

"Neither by word or act. True, at times I did imagine things just as fear a dark street, a man with an east

"You must not forget," said he gravespect a superb series of torture pic- ly-"not for a moment. If you do, that edy In a West End Hotel. Murder or and tapped his head in a vain effort tures, when of a sudden there was a which our enemy has waited. Poor tlash, a muffled report, and a bullet lad, it's a terrible heritage, this, but I "Upon my soul, he was a very or sang by my eyes. In an instant I was is ours, and we are men. It is fright Then I pulled myself together, my linary individual with a beard. That on my guard. Springing around I en- ful, this having to suspect every one brain, with strange insistence, assuris about the only thing I seem countered the scared white face of Mr. with whom we come in contact, and Wentworth. He was still holding the heaven knows it is the very antithesis fer to any one who tol in his hand, that quaint of my nature, as of yours. But what I weapon of eastern design, and his agi- are we to do? I confess I do not like there was no one in the look of things, and I did not like Not that I was too

Accidentally I snapped the flint, circumstanced we should never dream ment by a vote of 94 to 26

of connecting with the incident a sin ister design. "True," he replied, "and that's where

> the curse of our position touches us acutely-we must suspect everything and everybody." "And yet, if he is what we dread, how can you reconcile this incident with the warning he gave me in the

> Empire last night?" "That, too," said my uncle slowly. his eyes fixing me with a serious, steady look, "has caused me an infinite amount of speculation. In these times, Davie, our own shadow may conceal the assassin. What if your liquor had

not been tampered with at all?" But that seems incredible. I recollect distinctly the man with the beard stumbling over my toes and apologizing profusely. Oh, no; I fear there can be no doubt of the attempt." "Well, I am not so certain. In this

firs, place, it would be an infinitely risky thing to attempt at a crowded par-this deliberate pouring of the contents of a bottle or a vial into a strailger's glass. Some one was sure to see the act. Some one, as it happened, did. But what if the man with the showed me where the bullet after mak- beard had been an accomplice? What to gain your confidence?"

I began to see things clearer, or at "Yes." I said, beginning to quake of the last vestige of hope. I would low all the danger was over. "I felt it like to have combated my uncle's argument, but somehow I couldn't. There He threw the weapon down with an was a terrible force and reality in his indictment. I felt instinctively that it "People who sell old firearms without would have been a waste of powder to

There was silence for a moment or two; then the voice said, "Anything

me the picture of a pallid face, a pale arm came along the passage, and fr and quivering mouth, and two fittle her I learned a rather startling pro-

Mr. Cyril George Wentworth had left

CHAPTER XVL A WEST END TRAGEDY. I cannot conscientiously say that this flew from his eyes to mine, and I read

worst fears. "Humph!" he muttered. "I expected We accordingly went to the office livered to him during mealtime. But to the individual in charge this meant nothing. People were always coming and going. To us, however, it had a fuller significance. Why had that young

"I think I should like to look at the there, but her look was strangest of all as I pointed to the bullet splash on the

"Law," she gasped, "how did that told her, and asked if nothing ha been heard of the report.

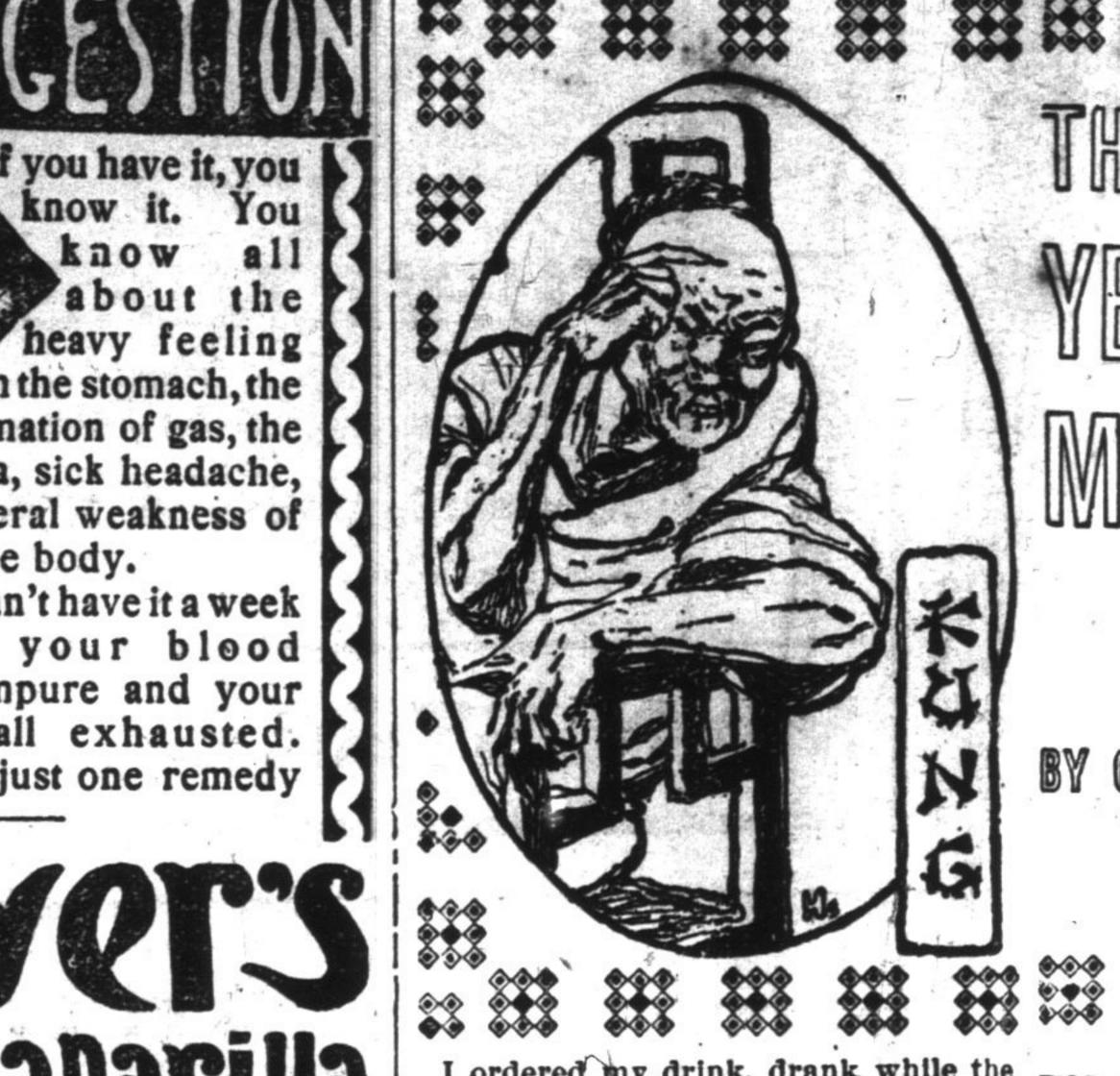
Here my uncle, who had been closely examining the mark, turned and said "I can't find the bullet, Davie. It has been extracted. It was true, but why I could not imagine. Jim shook his head sagely

"The police have a way of following

had a very good reason. The next morning at breakfast my uncle, who was an insatiable reader of

have been at it again!" My heart seemed suddenly to turn cold, for I knew to whom he referred

The Toronto Daily Globe and Ch Pion for one year for \$4.25.



A THRILLING STORY OF THE BOXERS IN CHINA

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I looked vainly for the gentleman against the drink. ever, he failed to put in an appearance, with the beard, though I had little Recognizing me, instantly he held and one by one the men moved off and hope of discovering him. Indeed, but out his band. made room for new arrivals, and the for his stumbling over my foot I doubt Ah, how do rou do? This is a defeilow who was next to me, a man if I should have noticed him at all. with a somewhat full, dark brown Having completed his work, he had lightful surprise. When did you com-

> probable that he had put some distance between him and the theater. Presently I beheld my uncle advancing toward me through the crowd, and as he came up he smilingly asked if I thought he had been lost.

"That chap Cockerton," he explained,

referring to the stockbroker, "would, seriously of it. Nevertheless I watched insist upon dragging me round to see the manager. A little spec he has on; wants me to join. But no, thanks. Very good, but not good enough for me. I used to know theatrical gentlemen. And he favored me with a profoundly Let's say no more about it, at least as knowing smile, a smile I always asso. far as I am concerned." ciated with the city, and a cleverness which did not appeal to me. I once saw a Jew financier tap his nose and immediately of fat pork. It is curious,

> But, evidently seeing the agitation i my face, the smile faded from his, and advancing closer, he whispered, "Why, Davie, what's the matter?" "I've had a squeak." "What, here? Good heavens! How?" In as few words as possible I told him. His face grew drawn and hag-

when one comes to think of it, how the

conjure up pictures of pig.

"This is awful, Davie," he whisper-"Forgive me for leaving you; but sire to cultivate him. light, how could one dream they would I have not the pleasure of knowing attack us here? And the young fellow and he accordingly smiled somewhat you, but-but"-and he seemed ex- who warned you - where is he? I amusedly. should like to speak to him." We searched for him, but without

"Then I'm afraid it will seem an ab- left. The young fellow had evidently don't dissipate?" "I am sorry," said my uncle. "I ing the fact that my virtues were so I handed it back to him. He took it would know this young man again?"

> "Never to my knowledge. He was quite the ordinary, well dressed sort of person. I should not have noticed him had I not caught him staring so strangely at me.'

"Had you ever seen him here

"Anyway, it was lucky he spoke, and his hand tightened on my arm. Dear old Jim. We left the theater and walked home, almost hoping that the enemy would make some sign, but we suc-

i encountered my friend who had warn me against the drink. Naturally, being sus

te he handed the glass shoulder. I saw distinctly the sign o newhat carelessly, for as the society, traced with the now famil

serious as that?"

debted to you, sir." the worst." My uncle looked serious.

me try," said he, and as I hand- clous of our shadows, we trod with

"Was be fair or dark?"

"Oh, no; I only wanted to have a

worth, and as a last resort i ran to chambermaid with a bundle on h

After dinner we searched the various

information, though broken to not the ele by me with bated breath, occas, died him any surprise. Something Ve like a look of inward comprehensi n

there a decided confirmation of my

as much. Let us make inquiries. gentleman left so hastily

room," said my uncle as we turned away. "Let us go up stairs. On reaching our floor we rang for the chambermaid and by her were admit ted to the room which had lately been occupied by Mr. Wentworth, but a minute examination disclosed to the antecedents of that young gontleman. The girl regarded my unch with a half curious, half superior smile of astonishment as he peered

"Nothing," she answered. don't understand it." "Nor I. But there is the proof."

me blankly in the face. "Davie." he muttered below his breath, "the devils

"What is it? What has happened

To be continue