

## A YARN FROM THE YARD.

Just so! Your public—Monkhouse, the old detective, sat back with the pregnant chuckle that always riveted attention—your public knew about as much of that affair as the Rajah himself; and he went away blissfully unconscious that Scotland Yard had been holding its breath for a solid month. No, I shall give no name to the obscure restaurant, run by foreigners, where the beautiful scheme was brought to a head. Enough that one evening I was supposed to be dozing over my paper at one of the tables there. Yes; I was staring night and main at the gentleman for whose appearance I had waited a week—the man launched upon unsuspecting London by a set of fanatics who hoped to send a thrill shuddering from here right away to India.

I had no tangible proof yet. All the same I was ready to stake my hard-won reputation on the instinct that tingled through me at first sight of that wax-white, black-bearded face flashed on to a mirror from the doorway opposite. Entering, he sat down near the door, whispered for macaroni and coffee, and began rolling a cigarette with thin, nervous fingers, while—I knew—he was mentally photographing every detail in the room. And—er—yes, the furtive glance paused at myself. Good—splendid! He was fresh from the Continent, beyond a doubt; and I—well, it had taken me just one hour each day to "make up" as the foreigner who should have been there to meet him, but whom we had thoughtfully prevented from doing so.

The macaroni came. He just tasted it, shuddered, sipped at the coffee and began smoking hard. No attempt at a signal. The situation was exquisitely delicate. We didn't want London to send up a roar. The plot, and everyone concerned in it had to be traced home in strictest secrecy; a false move now, and the vile tentacle thrown out over sea by the Anarchist octopus might be instantly withdrawn. Luckily, the newspaper could tell nothing about the intercepted letter in cipher to Luigi Arboretti, the clever scoundrel who, handed across his own border a year ago, had found a refuge in London; the ferret-eyed correspondents could not—and never really did—discover that this latest plot of all aimed at stirring up a rebellion and hatred in India by murdering, on English soil, one of the most powerful provincial rulers—our distinguished visitor, His Highness, the Rajah Dhu Djaleen.

Minute after minute went by. I watched him breathlessly in the mirror there; he stared as steadily back. No life in his eyes yet; but—what was he up to? Twice he had held his cigarette at arm's length, stared fixedly at it, put the lighted end in his mouth, and blown a whiff of smoke in three directions. A sign? The letter had mentioned none. I had cigarettes—but I might make a fearful blunder that way. At my wit's end, I looked down at my newspaper again. Something like this stared up at me:—

"The Rajah Dhu Djaleen reached London late last night after his visit to Scotland. His Highness was said to be in the best health and spirits, and proceeded straight to his suite at the Cosmopolitan Hotel. It is understood that, although the Rajah has been received in conference in the highest quarters, his visit will remain a strictly informal one." Etc., etc.

In two seconds I snipped out the item with my thumb nail, held it up as if in a yawn, and then rolled it into a pellet. A backward flip, and the pellet lay near his feet. Would he bite? For another minute I held my breath; then—his cigarette dropped. When he picked it up the pellet was gone. Yes; it was a big bound my heart gave at the certainty that there sat the man selected to set an Indian province ablaze and put a big blot on Britain. For a time he never moved; then, almost before I knew it, he was seated opposite me, and had clutched and pocketed that paper with the dangerous elimination.

"Vous etes—" he breathed.

"Arboretti!" I gave him back, with an accent. "Keep to English here. I have been shadowed by Naples and Paris detectives—dared not give you the sign openly. Why so late?"

"Ah! I was followed; I know it. It took me the week to turn and twist and get to—where I am. I have carried twenty of the capsules, filled with nitro-glycerine, in the false crown of this hat the whole way....You are not speaking. Is it for to-morrow?"

"No; er—say Thursday." It wanted a bit of saying, as his hot breath puffed on my face. I was bound to risk a feeler on my own account. "Why was it to be the Rajah? They could not have chosen a worse place than England—London. If these people had but an idea, they would—"

"Then let it be to-morrow?" he caught my hand tightly. "But I say yes!—let it be over. It might mean madness for me; I have had the great struggle not to drown my senses in cognac. I am quite ready—I wait for nothing save your plan. There is the hotel: show me a way into it and it is done. For myself, I care nothing. To-morrow, yes! It is perhaps the last good blow we shall strike.

I, Mareschi, one man, will blow up their Rajah—I alone!"

"Hush—keep calm," I whispered. "You are mistaken; I shall be with you; I am no more afraid than you. Then—to-morrow!" I had to say it, his eyes had flamed up so dangerously—and, of course, all our hopes were based upon what we might glean from this Mareschi. So far, we were all in the dark as to the names and number of the plotters on this side. "It is just the plan we must consider now—to get a way in, and keep it." I waited, on the chance that he might know something of the real Arboretti's scheme; but he only hung on my words with that mad, puzzling intentness. I was treading the edge of a deep pit. "It is not to be Thursday, and so my best and safest plan falls to the ground. On that day he attends a reception at an Embassy, and returns to the hotel in time for—"

Another pause. No; it seemed fairly clear that the final arrangements had been entrusted to that deep Arboretti. "Well, here is our second and only alternative idea. Provided that the Rajah sleeps at his hotel to-morrow night, it cannot fail. To-morrow there will be cases of game, wine and other things carried in at the rear of the building. Mareschi, bend your head!"—and I whispered a clever notion that had been agreed upon days before, so designed that he and his confederates could be arrested quietly on the very scene of the contemplated crime.

"Yes, yes!" He simply nodded, and was on his feet again. "I care not so long as I succeed. You have all this ready? Then I meet you—where?"

Here was a staggerer! What could I answer offhand. Beyond the establishment of his own identity I had ferreted out absolutely nothing of value. Where was he staying, and with whom? A minute to think! I got it by calling for the bills—settled both; and led the way outside. I could simply risk another throw of the bait.

"It must not fail," I whispered. "Suppose I come back with you and talk it over with the others?"

"The others?" he stared, vaguely. "No, each may work for himself. I shall spend my night preparing the bombs, and—and"—with something near a choke—"writing to all those I left over there—little Nina and the others. I want to be alone. At eight o'clock I shall meet you just here, and you will have the cab ready."

He put a hand to his forehead and fairly walked away from me. Hurry back to the Yard with my report—or follow him on the chance of learning what we wanted before daylight? Follow him! He had struck along a quiet street leading farther west. Off I went. He was turning a corner. I hung back a second or so, took a run, peered round—and almost dashed my face into the wax-white one with the black beard. Something or other in his brain had made him halt and look back. Before he could properly realize, or shape any suspicion, I had spun him around, with an excited whisper:—

"That way—quick! We are seen. To-morrow night!"

And off I sprang in another direction. Phew! Another blunder like that, and I might scare him into prematurely attempting what he was here to carry out.

No, there was no real danger! When I left the Yard late that night every possible strand of the web had been drawn in, and His Highness was as safe here as he had ever been at home—and, perhaps, more so. It now only remained to arrest the plotters with all the proof possible, communicate with the Continental police, and deal with the organization in such a manner as—well, as would effectually turn the eyes of the extreme section away from Britain for many a year to come.

The memorable day dawned; seven o'clock came round at last. By half-past, still as Arboretti, I had reached the rendezvous and stood waiting for Mareschi. A four-wheeler hovered close at hand. The driver was a detective, a plain-clothes inspector was boxed in under the seat in case of emergency, and two men were watching in readiness—one to carry the word and one to follow wherever we went. The mine was undermined in every direction.

Eight o'clock! There was Mareschi, rounding the corner. Puffing at his eternal cigarette, he walked firmly up, deadly calm—almost smiling.

"Good! But where is it?" I whispered. "It" was always their word.

"Close by," he said, staring round. "Don't think I was afraid—I was only careful. We will step back for it, and return here for the cab. This way!"

That was unexpected, but it mattered nothing—might lead to something good. We should be closely followed in any case. Not another word passed between us, but as we went I managed to scribble on my linen cuff: "Have house searched moment we leave it." We were going towards Soho, as I expected; and barely ten minutes had elapsed when our man stopped, looked up and down and whispered: "Here it is!" I just had time to flick away the cuff as he turned his key. Next minute I was following him up a dark, narrow staircase.

How did it happen? He has pushed open some door; simultaneously he turned back, with a husky cry: "The police! Run—run!" There was no time to think; he was dashing for the staircase, he might get away even now. I just grasped the possibility in time to grip the man by the shoulder, and then—

A rush and a scuffle. I heard some one say, "Got them both," and found myself dragged bodily through the doorway. Kicking, shouting, I tried to keep my hold on Mareschi. No use; in less than a minute I was overpowered. Two constables had my arms, and a third stood holding the door. A candle burned on the mantel-shelf; I could make out nothing else.

"You—you raw fools!" I gasped, ready to dance. "What are you doing? You've let him go. Mareschi! That's Mareschi, our man!"

"He's safe. We've got Arboretti, at any rate," the door-man says, coolly as you please. I never felt nearer choking. For the Yard to put these clumsy idiots on such a ticklish job, and without my knowing!

"Arboretti!" I got out. "Who posted you here? Let go, will you? I'm not Arboretti! I'm So-and-So, of the Yard, in charge of this business. You madmen!"

I burst away—to start back in cold horror, I admit. The man at the door dashed off his helmet, dragged away his tunic, and I saw—no policeman, but a swarthy foreigner, with teeth savagely bared. I reeled back against the wall. Heavens! was I dreaming? They were all three foreigners, and I had been gently walked into this incredible trap by the simplest—Ah yes! The door half opened, and there stood our Mareschi, a sneer on his wax-white face that I could never describe.

"Out of your own mouth! I thought it—I knew, when you tried to follow me. You, Arboretti—you! You meant to die with the Rajah—with me. You shall! You shall live just long enough to know that we have a way of our own."

That was it. I'll own that the bare shock of the thing left me as nearly paralyzed as makes no difference. In a breath I had given the whole thing away, and Mareschi was gone—in all probability by a rear exit. I heard no door close; my man would hang outside in perplexed ignorance and—saints alive! it looked as if these determined scoundrels, in their extremity, had stumbled on a plan so subtle as to balk all the Yard's manoeuvres! More than that; did I manage to get away, I stood to risk becoming the laughing stock for life among those who knew of the plot. Thinking of that, and realizing what might be involved, I set my teeth and made a sudden rush for that door, only to stumble back before the steady barrel of a six-chambered Colt. My own—it had been whipped from my pocket in the struggle. I faced round—two pointed knives were between me and the window.

"You must stand there," said the door-man, deliberately; "you are minutes too late, he is well on his way. Failure or success tonight, you, at least, will never go as you came. We are sure of one blow—if not two."

They meant it! Hard as my brain worked in those first few minutes I could see no alternative for myself whatever might happen outside. Did my man suspect something and force the door down there, it was still one blow and a kick against two knives and a revolver.

It seemed we were simply waiting for a distant explosion and shouting that should tell—what it told. I was feeling faint under the awful strain....By now Mareschi would have reached the hotel. That candle over there! It was burned half down. If—if it would only go out of a sudden! If only—

The inspiration came without my knowing it. My slouch hat lay near my feet; in a flash I had picked it up and flung it. Bash! The candle was knocked, no one knew where. Sudden darkness! Now for life—dear life!

A jabbered curse—a simultaneous rush. I recollect how every hair on my head sprang up like a red-hot wire as I took two stealthy strides to the right. A hand blundered out and gripped me; I struck back convulsively, and met a bristly chin. One man crashed down. They had no matches—or feared to leave the door. One more desperate side sloop I made, collided with a body, staggered away struck at the wall, and crippled my hand—and suddenly remembered something just as death seemed clutching me by the throat. My whistle! I always carried one.

It was out. One deafening, piercing signal thrilled through the house. I made a huge bound just avoiding their arms. I sprang from side to side, kicking, shouting, blowing the whistle, until the place seemed a very pandemonium. Now—now there was a thudding at the door below—now a crash, and shouts. One minute more could I keep up that mad maze, and I was safe, and had turned the trap for one into a trap for three.

The door—the door; I heard it open. Another frantic rush, and I was struggling with the man who had held it. The pistol went off once, twice, flaring in the darkness, and then, with my very last effort, I dashed him sideways, and was out on the landing. A glare of lanterns; my man, with two constables, sprang past me. One of the scoundrels lay unconscious, another took flight, and the third was seized as he swung up the revolver again. Safe! I just waited to make sure, got my nerve, and went off like a man possessed.

I reached the Strand—that I had never thought to see again. Nothing had happened; people were bustling along as unconsciously as ever. A cab—the Cosmopolitan Hotel! Five minutes later, as it swung around the Piccadilly bend, I caught sight of my chief, just about to cross the road. I shouted to the driver, and leaned out to whisper one word.

"Halloa, where have you been?" he asked. "You're white enough! Got him? Yes, to be sure, twenty minutes ago, bomb and all, with just the papers on him we wanted. The man's mad; he made a clean rush for the front entrance. It was all over quietly in one minute. Meanwhile," with a chuckle, "the Rajah is not due in London for another two hours—change in the programme that was not announced to the papers! There were only five in it, it seems. Arboretti and himself we've got, and the other three—"

"Are safe in the cells," I said.

And then, for the first time in my life, I dropped back into the cab and quietly fainted.

## ECCENTRIC ROBBERS.

### Extraordinary Reasons for Committing Burglaries.

In July of 1898 a man broke into the castle of Count Lamberg, near Engelseck, Germany, and totally disregarding jewellery to the value of \$10,000 that was lying about, decamped with a volume of Heine, two water-color sketches, and a photograph of Countess Lamberg. Although an expert burglar he seems to have followed a career of crime more from a love of the work than from any desire of gain, often indeed, as in the foregoing instance, preferring some trifle to an article of considerable value.

When arrested he confessed to having committed in the course of the year no fewer than 398 burglaries, more for the love of exercising his skill than for the sake of booty, which almost always consisted of some insignificant article. Indeed, to such an extent did he carry his contempt for the more sordid side of his "art" that if at any time he abstracted jewellery he invariably disposed of it for next to nothing.

Another member of the fraternity who may be said to work for love of the gentle art of burbling is a stylish young Parisian, who, though possessed of a fine villa in the suburbs of the French capital and an income of \$2,500, has such a weakness for house-breaking that without hesitation he risks both liberty and reputation for the excitement that his nefarious pleasure affords. Not long since he fell into the hands of the police and was sentenced to a period of imprisonment.

Charles Peace, though not disdaining the more solid rewards of his profession, had an especial

### FONDNESS FOR VIOLINS,

of which he owned a valuable collection that had been feloniously acquired. His prototype seems to have been one Klett, an Austrian, who, at his death in the early thirties, was found to be in possession of some thirty violins—many of them of considerable value—the proceeds of depredations committed in his own and other countries.

Ten years ago the house of a lady living in the neighborhood of Liverpool was broken into. The rooms had been ransacked, but a thorough investigation proved that nothing had been carried off save a culinary recipe. This pointed to a certain gourmet, an old acquaintance, who had repeatedly asked for and been refused this very recipe. The epicure ultimately confessed to the theft, was forgiven, and within the year married to the lady he had robbed.

Two years since, during a discussion in the billiard-room of a country house in England upon crime and criminals, a gentleman present boasted that he could emulate the exploits of the most expert of the house-breaking fraternity. The others pooh-poohed his assertion, and a wager resulting, he was required that night to enter a neighboring mansion and take therefrom a certain photograph that stood in the owner's bedroom. In the result he successfully accomplished his task and won the bet. The photograph was returned anonymously the following day.

Last autumn a merchant from Nantes, while visiting the Eiffel Tower, was robbed of his purse containing a large sum of money. This affected his brain, and he promptly set about indemnifying himself for the loss by stealing every model of the tower on which he could lay his hands. He was at last arrested while in pursuit of his hobby in a shop on the Boulevard Voltaire, and on his rooms being searched no fewer than fifty models of the Eiffel Tower were found stowed away in boxes and cupboards.

### EVOLUTION OF MAN.

Mrs. Grout: Husbands are so different from other men!

Mrs. Snapper: I know it. I said to John last evening, How the wind blows! and he grunted and said: Did you ever know the wind to do anything else?

Mrs. Grout: That's just it. Before you were married to him he probably would have had no end of nice things to say in reply.

### LUMINOUS POTATOES.

The common potato, when decomposing, gives light enough to read by—a light so vivid that once a cellar at Strasburg was thought to be on fire when shining with the phosphorescence of decomposing potatoes.

### CHINESE CENSORSHIP.

The censorship is a very real thing in China. There, anyone who writes an objectionable book is punished with 100 blows of the heavy bamboo and banished for life.

## About the ...House

### MEMORANDA OF AN OLD HOUSE-KEEPER.

Roll pastry from the centre in all directions. Rolling backward and forward makes the crust tough. Rolling from the centre each way, gives a circle, and there will be less trimming.

A delicate green icing that is not unhygienic can be made by soaking two unroasted coffee beans twelve hours in the unbeaten white of an egg. Remove the beans, beat the white of an egg and add sugar.

When the tops of loaves of bread are burned instead of cutting off the burnt portion, when perfectly cold remove the burnt part with a coarse grater, brush away the crumbs and cover the top of the loaf with a soft cloth wrung very dry from warm water.

The unsightly yellow spots left by machine oil on white goods can be removed by rubbing them with a cloth dipped in ammonia, then washing with soap and water. Kerosene will remove the gummy substance which forms on sewing machines.

Marks on the kitchen wall which have been made by careless hands in striking matches will disappear if rubbed with the cut surface of a lemon, then with a cloth dipped in whitening. Wash the surface with warm water and soap, and quickly wipe with a clean cloth wrung from clear water.

Green tomato soy for fish and meat is made by slicing without removing the skins a two-gallon jar of green tomatoes and eighteen medium sized onions. Heat slowly without adding water, then put in two pounds of brown sugar, two quarts of vinegar, two tablespoonfuls each of salt, ground pepper and mustard, a tablespoon each of ground cloves and allspice. Cook slowly until tender, then put in pint cans and seal.

Success in making croquettes depends largely on securing the right temperature of the fat at first. This can be determined by dropping into the fat a small square of bread; if it browns while the clock ticks forty times, it is right for material that has been previously cooked, and for raw material the bread should brown in one minute. Always drain croquettes. They are nicer if rubbed with white of egg and rolled in bread crumbs before frying.

Fruit cake is more often heavy because the fruit is not properly prepared. A cake or pudding will not be as light if raisins or currants are used when damp. Wash them and rub the currants with a coarse towel to remove the remaining stems and thoroughly dry them both. Leave them in a warm place twenty-four hours, so that there will be no moisture; then store in cracked fruit pans. Store fruit cake in a tin box or stone jar, but do not wrap it in either cloth or paper.

Mutton can be made almost as delicate as venison, and loses largely its objectionable flavor if marinated. To prepare the marinade add to one part strong cider vinegar and one part water a few whole cloves, some allspice and pepper corns and a few slices of onion if the flavor is liked. Some add sliced carrot. Put the meat into this mixture (the liquid should cover the meat) and leave twelve hours or over night; then cook as usual.

It is not economy to turn down the wick of a coal oil lamp. If a dim light is desired, it is best to place the lamp in another room or shade it. When turned down, the oil feeds the wick faster than it is consumed, and a disagreeable odor results. There is a greater liability of explosion when a lamp is turned down than when it is burning freely.

When the wick is extinguished turn the wick below the top of the tube; when lighted turn up gradually, that the oil will not work up the wick and run over, nor the chimney break from too sudden expansion.

### DOMESTIC RECIPES.

Light Tea Cakes—One cup sugar, two eggs, one-half cup melted butter, one and one-fourth cups of sweet milk, three teaspoonfuls Royal baking powder sifted into four cups of flour. Mix, roll in a sheet and cut into biscuits. Bake twenty minutes in a quick oven.

Home Pudding—One quart hot milk, eight pounded crackers, one tablespoonful flour or corn starch, one cup sugar, six eggs, all kinds of spices, two cups currants and raisins. Bake, eat with sweet cream.

Pingree Cake—One cup granulated sugar, one heaping tablespoonful butter, one egg and the yolks of two more, two-thirds cup sweet milk of water, two cups sifted flour, one heaping teaspoonful baking powder. Flavor, bake in three layers. For filling—whites of two eggs, one cup sugar, one-half teaspoonful coconut.

Favorite Cake—Three cups granulated sugar and one and one-half cups butter, creamed together; five eggs, whites and yolks beaten separately; five cups flour, sifted with three teaspoonfuls baking powder; one teaspoonful of mixed spices and two pounds of fruit—seeded raisins, currants, dates, figs and chopped citron. A good, common fruit cake; will keep well for four weeks.