

Greed For Gold

Or, The Sign of the Arrow

CHAPTER XXVIII.

As fast as his legs would carry him the Frenchman ran, spurred on by those two words, "Coward! murderer!" which never ceased to ring in his ears. He had been seen! All his trouble, the risk he had gone to, were wasted, and presently the hound-cry would be out against him for murder. What a fool he had been! This was the end of his scheming!

He slipped and stumbled again and again as he ran in the dark towards the Hall. Its open doorway faced him, but he avoided it. He crept round the house to enter the back way, hoping to reach his bedroom unnoticed, by the servants' staircase. He felt that he must look terror-stricken, and he wanted to remove that look and to think before he faced any one.

Just by the open study window he caught his foot in the wire-edging of one of the flower-beds, and measured his length on the grass. He uttered a curse, but remained still for a moment, fearing that Sir George, who was sitting by his study-table with his back to the window, might have heard him. Then he rose and hurried into the house, up the stairs to his room.

He lit the candles on his dressing-table with trembling hands, and looked at his reflection in the glass. He started back in fright, he was as white as a ghost! How thankful he was that he had had sense enough to avoid entering the house openly!

Unlocking his Gladstone bag, and extracting a small spirit-flask, the contents brandy, he poured some into the glass on his washstand and drank of the contents. The spirit brought back the color to his cheeks, hope to his heart.

It had been dark, he argued, the outline of his figure had been seen perhaps in the summer dusk, but recognition, impossible! Yet, if the witness had been able to see his figure! And then fear seized on him again.

Would it not be better to fly at once before it became too late? He pondered for a long time. He looked at his watch; he started when he realized that he had been sitting in his bedroom thinking for nearly half an hour. It was then five minutes to ten.

That night there was a late train down from London. He knew that, because Ashley was coming home by it. Once a week the company ran a theatre train, leaving London at midnight. There was therefore a late up-train on that occasion, and he knew that to-night he could leave Graynewood station for London at 10.25.

Round by the road it was more than an hour's walk, but if he cut across the fields he could cover the distance in less than fifteen minutes. He could lower his portmanteau from the window to the ground by one of the sheets off his bed, walk out of the house quietly, pick up his bag, and be off without a soul being the wiser.

Then another drink of the brandy made him change his mind. Why should he cut and run? Would not that very act excite suspicion? Better light a cigar and stroll downstairs as if he had been in the house all the evening. There was nothing like putting a bold face on things—so the brandy told him.

He ran a comb through his hair, and repointed his moustache, took a final look at himself in the mirror (the alcohol had brought his color back) and extinguished both his candles. He walked to the door and opened it, but did not cross its threshold. He was arrested by the furious ringing of a bell, the sound of hurrying feet, talking below, and there came up to him the word "murderer."

He shut the door and supported himself against it, he needed support just then. It had been found out then already, and they were after him! What a fool that he had not escaped before! He looked at his watch, there was yet time. The railway line ran beyond the foot of the garden; he could even see the signal-light which was there. He would hurry along the line to the station.

He was throwing his things into his portmanteau as he thought this. Then he suddenly stopped. He heard the clatter of many feet coming up the stairs. He sprang to the door and turned the key in it. If they were after him he would sell his life dearly—he would not be taken alive. He felt in his breast for the sheath-knife—gone!

He cursed his luck; it must have dropped from him when he fell on the grass—more evidence against him! The steps hurried nearer his door—passed. He gave a sign of thankfulness, and, after wiping the sweat from his brow, strapped his bag.

He drew a sheet from his bed, and running it through the handles of his bag, went to the window. That side of the house there was not a sound to be heard. He lowered the

bag and drew up the sheet; should he jump? Too risky. He knotted two sheets together, and, fastening an end to his bed-rail, lowered himself by that means to within a few feet of the ground, the rest of the distance he dropped.

The railway line or the short cut? The former, quicker, but more dangerous—he might catch his foot in the sleepers. So he hurried along on the path. He reached the station, and took his ticket for London. He was the only passenger on the platform. The train came in late; he hurried into an empty compartment, and, huddled in a corner, was carried Londonwards. The train did not stop again till it reached the terminus, when, within a few minutes of its arrival, it returned as the theatre train.

But there was another passenger from Graynewood—a woman came panting for breath, on to the platform as the train was starting. She was known to the officials, or she would not have been allowed to leave without a ticket. As it was, she was helped into the moving train, and she too was carried Londonwards.

Just before midnight, a few minutes late, the train reached Waterloo. As Lucy alighted she saw the Frenchman lifting his portmanteau out of a carriage ahead. A porter took it and walked to the exit, the Frenchman following—Lucy followed him.

They passed Ashley Grayne on the platform, but he did not appear to see them. He was there with his bicycle, going back to Graynewood by the train. Lucy was startled at seeing him, and started back. That moment widened the distance between herself and the Frenchman. At the barrier, too, she had to ascertain the amount of the fare, and pay it in cash.

Free, she ran out of the station. The Gladstone bag was on top of a hansom, and the Count was standing on the step, calling to the driver:

"66A, Dean Street, Soho." In a moment the cabman had whipped up his horse, and was driving away. Lucy hurried to cross the yard just as a late arrival in a hansom dashed into the station. Furious driving, a confused woman, and the horse's hoofs did the rest. There was a scream, and then the rapidly gathered together crowd picked her up, bleeding and senseless.

The horse which had knocked her down was, a few minutes after drawing her unconscious form to the nearest hospital.

CHAPTER XXIX.

That was what happened at midnight at Waterloo station. At Grayne Hall at the same hour excitement was reigning. Sir George Grayne was lying on the study floor dead, and his nephew Reginald was in the custody of the police, charged with his murder.

Vere was prostrate with grief, for things looked black against the man she loved, and who had only that evening told her he loved her still, and that his infatuation—his blind infatuation—for Miss Westcar was at an end.

He was arrested in the study beside the dead man, and when the servants entered the room he had the knife—a keen, double-edged weapon—with which the murder had been committed, in his hand.

His late quarrel with his uncle was known to every member of the household. He had been forbidden the house, and yet he was found on the premises in the dead man's presence. No servant had admitted him; things indeed looked black against him.

Miss Westcar moved about the house like a woman in a dream. The house she had been building proved but of cards—it had tumbled down. Her plans, her ideas, her pictured future had crumbled away. She was mad with an inward rage—rage against the hand which had struck the blow, and so foiled the scheme for her future happiness.

And who was the murderer? With Vere, she knew perfectly well that it was not Reggie. Like Vere, she knew him too well to, for a moment imagine him guilty of blood-shedding. He was in custody, and under gravely suspicious circumstances; but that was all.

The last train brought Ashley home. He was inexpressibly shocked to be met with the tidings of his uncle's murder. For some time he seemed too dazed to realise it, and sat as one petrified. Then his grief was so deep that the servants were greatly moved by it: they had not thought him so fond of his uncle.

The night through in that house no man or woman slept. Daybreak was welcomed, breakfast was welcomed, anything to compel the doing of something and possible forgetfulness of the dead master.

The police had wired to London, and by the first down-train a detective came—Detective Janson. The local police rather ridiculed the idea of London assistance, the case seem-

ed so plain to them. There was the recent quarrel between uncle and nephew and the surreptitious entrance into the house. It was as plain to the local police as the nose on your face.

Their idea of the acumen of the London detective fell considerably before he had been half an hour on the premises. He had heard the story from all lips in, practically, silence; and when the narrators were exhausted, and the local sergeant was boasting of his safe custody of the murderer, Janson threw cold water on the local force.

"See here, sergeant," he said, "don't you make too sure that you have got the right sow by the ear. I have had a day or two's—just a day or two's—experience more than you have, and by it I have learnt that it is not always the most guilty-looking man who is guilty."

"Oh, there's no doubt in this case, sir."

"Um! think not? Well, don't you let me interfere with your opinion, you know, all the same, it's just as well not to start counting your eggs before they're laid. Lived here all your life, sergeant, eh?"

"Yes."

"Looks a truly rural sort of place. Murders don't crop up too often eh?"

"Never been one except last year; Sir George's wife was murdered on the road some few miles from here."

"I remember. You didn't catch the murderer?"

"No; but we have been more fortunate this time."

Janson looked at him, but tendered no more advice. He said:

"Well, you may be right, Leyland. Don't let me keep you. You have your prisoner locked up in one of the rooms here? Very well, just let me have a look at him, and then I won't bother you any more. Whilst you are doing your duty taking him to the station I'll amuse myself looking over the house. Two o'clock before there'll be a bench of magistrates, you say? Very well, I'll see you again there. And now for the prisoner."

The sergeant led the way to the butler's pantry. It had a heavily barred window, and but one door; it had been selected for that reason. Outside this a policeman was on duty.

"I've stretched a point, Mr. Janson, here. The prisoner is engaged, I think, to the daughter of the house and so I have permitted them to have an interview. You don't think it wrong?"

"Wrong?—in this particular case? Oh no!"

The policeman opened the door, and Janson entered. Vere and Reggie were sitting talking. He was endeavouring to comfort her, and she was endeavouring to comfort him. The union was filling in the time pleasantly. To the sergeant's extreme surprise, the detective walked straight over to the prisoner, and, stretching out his hand, said:

"How do you do, Mr. Reginald? I'm a detective from London, come down to get you out of this mess you are in."

Vere impulsively sprang to her feet, and, seizing the detective's arm, said:

"You don't believe him guilty?"

"Not a scrap more than I am myself."

"Thank God!"

And then she swayed; but a few sharp words from the detective acted like a tonic.

"Come, come, no fainting! I am down here to help the prisoner, and you must help me."

She was herself again in a moment.

"And now, Mr. Reginald, you quite understand that I don't ask you any questions, and anything you may say may be used in evidence against you later on."

"I've told him that," interposed the sergeant.

Janson smiled.

"I have nothing to conceal," said the prisoner.

"Maybe not," said Janson; "but all the same, I'll listen to the story from the lady's lips, if you don't mind. Now you can say good-bye for a bit, can't you? The sergeant here has got a fly waiting, and he will want you to go with him—down the village, because, of course, there must be an examination before the magistrates. You must expect a day or two's imprisonment whilst we find the real murderer, you know. And now"—he put his arm through the sergeant's, and led that mystified officer to the door to give the lovers a chance of a more private farewell,—say good-bye. And you, miss, I will wait for. I want to have a talk to you."

Outside the door the sergeant looked with amazement at the London detective, and that worthy increased the amazement by winking and tapping his nose thrice with his forefinger.

"Sergeant," he whispered, "if you're careful I should not wonder if you got promoted over this little job."

And that opinion coinciding with the sergeant's own, he began to have a better idea of the London detective. Perhaps it was his way to work like that, to pretend friendliness when all the while he was pumping for information. After all, it wasn't a bad idea. He would try it himself the next time he got a chance.

(To be Continued.)

"What do you put on your face after shaving?" asked the man who smelled of bay rum. "Court-plaster usually," replied the nervous chap, gloomily.

QUEENS WHO FLY KITES

THE MANY GAMES THAT ROYALTIES PLAY.

King Edward Used to be an Athlete, and the King of Spain Likes Ping-Pong.

Certainly no other crowned head in the world has ever become proficient at so many different games and sports as King Edward VII. He was more of a wet than a dry bob in his early youth, and could pull a good oar with anyone. He never took kindly to croquet, considering it too slow, but hockey he simply delighted in, and he was especially keen upon hockey on the ice, a game which he used to play on the lake at Sandringham up to a time when his sons were old enough to take part in it with him.

So devoted was the King to lawn tennis that, when, as Prince of Wales, he was starting on his famous tour to India, he insisted on having a tennis court arranged on the deck of the Serapis. It was surrounded with lofty netting, and there His Royal Highness was ready to play all day, however great the heat.

Bowls has been a pet game of the King for many years, and he is no mean performer at quoits. Billiards he has always been fond of, and the table at Sandringham is a very perfect one. Lately His Majesty has not played billiards much, but he used at one time to be able to take a neat break of thirty.

Of late he has taken to golf. He began about five years ago when staying in Germany. His approaching and putting are said to be better than his driving. He has a private course at Windsor. The King plays an excellent game of whist, and at bridge he is also a thorough and steady player.

Football, for obvious reasons, is not usually included in the education of the heir to a throne. But cricket the King has played. He never, however, cared much for it.

THE PRINCE OF WALES

is also a rather indifferent performer with a bat, but plays a good game of tennis, and is one of the finest shots and horsemen in the Kingdom.

Among distinguished tennis players must be mentioned the Sultan of Morocco. To tennis, indeed, he gives more attention than he does to the affairs of State. He generally imports Englishmen to play with him, as his own subjects do not take kindly to the game.

Another Royal devotee to tennis is the German Kaiser. He used to play a very fine game, but, of late, increasing cares of State have prevented his spending much time on the court.

The Kaiser's brother, Prince Henry the Navigator, is a capital athlete. On two separate occasions he has jumped overboard and rescued men from drowning. The Prince resembles the Prince of Wales in being both a sailor and a horseman. During his visit last year to Ireland he played polo in the Phoenix Park. He helped to represent the Army and Navy against a civilian team. Prince Henry must also be numbered among the ranks of Royal tennis players.

Golf has a fairly large following among Royal circles. The Grand Duke Michael of Russia is the best of Royal performers. He has taken to the game since his residence in England. His wife, the Countess Torby, is also a good player.

King Leopold of Belgium is the keenest of golfers. He has his own private course near Ostend, and this is said to be one of the finest on the Continent of Europe. King Leopold's great height enables him to make a long drive. The Tsar has also played golf, but the Kaiser, on the other hand, will have nothing to do with the game. He

CONSIDERS IT TOO SLOW.

No game is more generally popular in Royal circles than billiards. In fact, the majority of European rulers play. Our King, the Tsar, the King of Portugal, the youth King of Spain, and the King of Greece may be mentioned as all being fond of billiards. Even the Shah of Persia is a player of no mean order. While on his recent European tour, the Shah played billiards almost every day, his usual opponent being his Minister of Public Works.

No single individual has more or finer billiard-tables than the Sultan of Morocco. He recently ordered his eleventh from a French maker. But his skill at billiards is not so great as it is at tennis.

The ex-Queen of Madagascar, Ranavalonajaka III., is an adept at billiards. Once she preferred kite-flying to any other amusement, but since her enforced residence in France, she finds that this pursuit attracts too much public attention, so she has turned to billiards instead, and is said to play a very fair game.

Ballooning is coming more and more into favor as a Royal amusement. The Archduke Leopold Salvator, with his wife and seven-year-old daughter, and accompanied by the Princess Therese (daughter of the Regent of Bavaria), recently took a trip in the balloon Meteor. They rose to a height of 5,000 feet, and crossed the Danube. They were in the air for some three hours, and when they came down at Kornenburg they wired to the Emperor to tell him of their safe descent. The Kaiser Wilhelm has always been most

anxious to take a balloon trip. It has been only the urgent representations of his advisers that have prevented his doing so.

THE SULTAN OF MOROCCO

is perhaps the only monarch who owns a balloon. It was ordered by him from Mons. Surcoup, the French aeronaut. It measures 900 cubic yards, and is of the newest military type. The car is a model of elegance and cushioned in velvet. Attached is a telephone by which communication can be held with the ground.

Russia's Tsar has been called a very serious young man, but anyone who had ever seen him playing ping-pong would certainly retract that opinion. Although ping-pong has seen its best days in England, it is still popular on the Continent. The Kaiser plays it; King Leopold says it affords excellent exercise on a wet day.

The young King of Spain is credited with remarking that when he has time for it he intends to go in strongly for ping-pong. Even the Sultan of Turkey is said to have succumbed to its fascination. If this is a fact, it is probably the only active game this monarch has ever played. He indulges, however, in chess, and is an excellent pianist.

Amongst European Royalties, the two strongest are probably Prince George of Greece and the Tsarevitch. Both these young men are very fond of boxing. The latter is a pupil of an American athlete named L. J. Phelan. Phelan declares he never had a better one.

As for Prince George, it is on record that his powers with his fists once saved his life when he was attacked by roughs in the streets of Athens. There were three assailants but the Prince polished them all off neatly.

Fencing is taught to all young Royalties.

THE KING OF SPAIN

wields the foils excellently. So in his youth did King Carlos of Portugal. The latter is the finest swimmer among living Royalties, and also the most wonderful marksman. He recently won the Gastinne Renette Medal in Paris, putting twelve shots in succession into a running rabbit target.

His wife is, curiously enough, an adept at the same two sports, and the young Queen of Italy, Helena, is said to be a crack shot with both rifle and revolver. The Duchess Carl Theodora of Bavaria and her sister, the Archduchess Carl Ludwig, both handle a light double-barrel with great skill.

Queen Helena's brother-in-law, the Duke of the Abruzzi, is best known as a Polar explorer. But he is also a magnificent mountain climber. To him belongs the record of the first ascent of the "Dames Anglaises," which forms part of the Matterhorn. The Duke is a splendid fencer and shot, and also plays racquets and fives.

Speaking of fencing the President of the United States must be mentioned as a skilful fencer with both rapier and broad sword. Recently he received a nasty injury in the shape of a wound under the eye during a fencing bout. Mr. Roosevelt is also a good wrestler. A professor of physical culture comes to the White House every day for a wrestling bout.

The latest idea of the President is to become a cricketer. He has engaged a professional, and has recently been playing with him and his own sons.—Pearson's Weekly.

SOME BRITISH STATISTICS.

There are, says Engineering, 2,000 building societies in Great Britain and Ireland, having 600,000 members and £62,000,000 sterling in funds; 28,000 bodies, registered under the Friendly Societies' Act, have 12,000,000 members and £43,000,000 in funds; 2,000 co-operative societies have 2,000,000 members and £40,000,000 in funds; and 600 trade unions have more than 1,500,000 members, with nearly £5,000,000 in funds. In the 13,000 postoffice and other savings banks, there are more than 10,000,000 depositors, and over £2,000,000 sterling invested. It appears that in the nearly 50,000 thrift organizations with which the Registry of Friendly Societies has to deal, there are 27,000,000 of persons interested, and £380,000,000 engaged.

CAUGHT AGAIN.

"See that man?"

"The one with such a vigorous and healthy look?"

"Yes. You wouldn't think he had one foot in the grave, would you?"

"No, indeed. He looks the picture of health."

"Well, he is."

"What made you say he had one foot in the grave, then?"

"Because he has. He lost his foot in a railway accident, and it was buried. You'd never think he could walk so naturally with a cork foot."

But the man had gone, and he was left to talk to vacancy.

Wife: "The Swintons are going to move out of this neighborhood after being here a year." Husband: "That's strange. All the people are just getting to know them now." Wife: "Yes, that's why they are going."

Women are seldom up to date in the matter of birth days.