

The Mystery of No. 13.

CHAPTER X

"Work thou within, we'll work without,
And I'll be sworn we'll set thee free."

Jack glanced swiftly around the court and found it empty, for Elizabeth was not there.

Thank God, that she was not, that she did not hear herself called in open day what all, save her own friends, believed her to be; and though later on she would read the newspaper, and her cheeks would burn, and her heart be seared by it, at least she would not be put to public shame.

When the counsel for the prosecution stood up, Jack as well knew what was coming, as if he had heard it already rehearsed, and indeed the case was so clear, the facts were so few and pitiless, that they needed little embroidery, and had none.

"It was the old story," said the counsel, "of a man trusting his wife and friend, and betrayed by both. This poor gentleman—poor in the sense of his wrongs, and in that he had not the moral courage to stand up against the discovery he made—had undoubtedly surprised his wife and her lover together, and on becoming aware of his dishonor had, in a moment of passion and madness, slain the betrayer, slain him, too, in a manner at once cowardly and indefensible for Mr. Ross was unarmed. The wife, presumably, witnessed the crime, and that she held herself immediately responsible for it is evidenced by the fact that she afterwards persistently accused herself of it, and begged to be committed for trial and punishment instead of her husband.

"Yet what astounding nerve she displayed during that night! After such a scene as may be imagined, but not hardly be described, she calmly slept—slept with the body of her murdered lover at her very feet, and to all appearance so dreamlessly, that only the entry of her maid next morning awoke her! The prisoner, too, showed a most inhuman callousness, for he, too, went to bed after the murder—presumably slept. It had been argued that Mrs. St. George slumbered throughout the whole tragedy, but was it credible that her husband could slay, and leave a body there, for her eyes to fall upon when she awakened? Such barbarity was impossible.

"But with the point of Mrs. St. George's ignorance or knowledge of the events of that night, the jury had nothing to do, but simply consider whether the evidence pointed to the prisoner as the person who slew Mr. Ross. His own confession, his possession of the pistol, and certain independent testimony that would be brought forward, must be considered to bring the guilt home to him as thoroughly as if the evidence was conclusively positive, instead of circumstantial.

"It would probably be suggested by the defence that a surprised burglar had fired the shot, but as Mrs. St. George's jewels were safe, and as diligent inquiry had failed to detect any trace of the house being entered on that night from without, that theory fell to the ground, and by no possible combination of circumstances could the prisoner have stood in his present position had he not been guilty.

"This theory, too, was negated by the wife; her self-accusal making it obvious that she suspected no one but her husband; obvious, too, that she well knew the motive that inspired the murder, and which no other person could possibly have.

"It was true that the prisoner had received the most terrible provocation a man could have. In his own house, betrayed alike by wife and friend, he had come unexpectedly on what must madden most men, and he had been seized by the terrible temptation to kill, and he had yielded to the temptation savagely, and to the forgetting of his manliness—since Mr. Ross was unarmed."

Jack bowed his head as if in shame. "Had there been a fight between the two, or the prisoner had not used a deadly weapon, the case might have been one of manslaughter only.

"But so long as human life was invested with sacredness, the laws that guarded it must be respected. That a cowardly crime had in this instance been committed was clear, and if they were satisfied that the prisoner was guilty of it, it would be their duty to say so.

"The peroration was plain to a fault, and the creatures who go to hear a cause celebre, as they go to a play expressly arranged for their edification, had a distinct sense of ill-usage as the counsel for the prosecution sat down.

Why had not that jade, Elizabeth, been set higher in the pillory of public scorn, and for a longer space? They would have liked to have her there, to gloat over her misery, to scan her face, to count each heart-throb of agony, as she gazed upon the wreck and desolation she had brought upon this poor gentleman who had so sincerely loved her.

But with the first witness called for the prosecution—Rose Dupont—a curious hush fell upon the assemblage, for one glance at the prisoner had shown how powerfully her presence there affected him.

Rose—as a witness against him! The devoted servant—the woman who would apparently have gone through fire and water for her mistress—what had she come hither to say? To speak against Elizabeth to corroborate his wife's mad story? Perhaps Rose had been in her confidence all through,

and now the woman had come here to betray her.

He hardly breathed as he looked at the slight, graceful, dark-eyed woman, who had that genius for dress which belongs to the born Parisian, and which will almost cover up the ravages of time or suffering and misspent days. She fixed all eyes for one breathless moment; then the women softly said "Ah!" and some of the men muttered, "What a little devil!"

Having been sworn, her examination commenced.

"You have been maid to Mrs. St. George some years?"

"Yes." She spoke English well, but with a French accent.

"You remember the night of May the 10th?"

"Perfectly."

"Your mistress slept down stairs in the back drawing-room on that night?"

"She did."

"Was this an unusual occurrence?"

"No. The ceiling of her bed-room was low, and she liked plenty of air."

"Mr. St. George did not?"

She stopped abruptly, a curious shade passing over her face.

"Did not?"

She made no reply.

"Did Mrs. St. George tell you beforehand when she meant to sleep down stairs?"

"Certainly. I prepared the room for her."

"At what time on that especial day did she tell you to prepare it?"

"After dinner."

"The prisoner was present?"

"He was."

"You disrobed her as usual, and saw her into bed?"

"I left my mistress in her dressing-gown in the drawing-room, ready for bed?"

"You afterward retired to rest yourself?"

"I did."

"What happened within your hearing afterward?"

"I heard the two other servants come up stairs."

"At what time?"

"About eleven."

"You then fell asleep?"

"No. I was suffering from toothache."

"Your door was open or shut?"

"Partly open."

"And you heard?"

Jack leaned forward, scarcely breathing as he waited for an answer.

"I heard Mr. Ross come up to his rooms."

"At what time?"

"Between twelve and one."

Jack smiled. Rose caught the smile and threw back her head defiantly.

"What happened next?"

"I heard him—some time after—go softly down stairs."

Jack's eyes flashed. A burning desire to strangle the life out of this mocking she-devil devoured him. Who would have thought she had power to corrupt Elizabeth? Yet this thing he believed she had done.

"You had placed a letter from Mrs. St. George on his table?"

"Yes."

"You say you heard Mr. Ross go down. Did you hear any loud talking or a shot fired?"

"No. My room faces on the street. The second drawing-rooms are built out at the back, and I could not possibly have heard what was going on."

"Mr. Ross did not return?"

"No."

"You were uneasy?"

"Yes."

"Yet you did not attempt to find out what was going on?"

"No—I was afraid."

"You feared something?"

"Yes."

"What happened next?"

"At two o'clock—for I heard the hour strike—Mr. St. George came up stairs."

Jack smiled again, and an irascible jurymen wondered what the young man could find to laugh at in this.

"And you?"

"At last I fell asleep."

"And in the morning?"

"I got up at seven, and went down stairs."

"Mr. Ross's door was open?"

"Yes. I concluded he had gone out again after coming in overnight."

"What next?"

"I prepared and took up my mistress's tea."

"Describe what you found."

"I pushed open the folding-doors, and went in. The room was rather dark, and only when I was quite close to it, I saw a body."

Rose shivered.

"You were surprised?"

"Mon Dieu! burst out the girl with perfect naturalness, 'I could have died with terror. Mr. Ross was there,' she drew back, and looked down as at some frightful sight, 'at my feet—dead!'"

"And Mrs. St. George?"

"Her eyes were open, she was looking at me."

"What state was she in?"

"Quite composed."

"You approached her?"

"Approach the body? Non, non, I ran away! I called, I shrieked, and they all came running, Mr. St. George and the rest."

"How soon did Mr. St. George come?"

"At once—on the spot. He arrived first of all."

"Fully dressed?"

Rose shook her head. She did not remember.

"You have carried notes from Mrs. St. George to Mr. Ross?"

"Often."

"And replies from him to her?"

"Often."

"They met occasionally in Mr. St. George's absence?"

"They did."

"Did he know of these visits?"

"That I cannot say."

"Mr. and Mrs. St. George were on good terms?"

"Perfectly."

"Have you ever witnessed any misconduct between Mr. Ross and Mrs. St. George?"

Rose paused—a pause more damning than any speech.

"I seldom saw them in each other's company," she said at last, and refused to say more. Had she made the blackest accusations possible she could not have produced a more unfavorable impression of Elizabeth's conduct than her silence conveyed.

"H'm," thought Mr. Lemaire, "likes her mistress and hates her master, knows a great deal that she won't tell, a great deal that she don't know."

"You are aware that the letter written to Mr. Ross by Mrs. St. George, and received by him on his return home that night, was never found?"

"So I have heard."

"You cannot account for its disappearance?"

"No."

"Did you see her take the letter on her way up stairs after, on the morning the murder was discovered?"

"No."

"Was she left alone a moment after she came up stairs?"

"Yes."

Obstinate silence rewarded further questions on this point.

"Mrs. St. George had every confidence in you?"

"I believe so."

"She did confide in you?"

"I never said so."

The questions languished after this, and she was left practically mistress of the occasion. To shake her out of her calm seemed impossible, yet this Mr. Lemaire had resolved to do, when he rose in his place to cross-examine her.

CHAPTER XI.

"But if once the message greet him,
That his true love doth stay,
If death should come and meet him,
Love will find our way."

"You say you could not sleep that night," he said, sharply, "were you expecting something to happen?"

"I had toothache."

"Why did you leave your door ajar?"

Rose's eyes sparkled. Through the thin veil she wore one could see her thin nostrils contracting and dilating.

"That is my business."

"You had no partiality for Mr. Ross yourself?"

Rose disdained to answer.

The question was pressed.

"Mr. Ross was a gentleman," she said at last.

"You expected something to happen that night, and it did," said Mr. Lemaire, "was it precisely what you did expect?"

He leaned forward with a satirical smile on his face that might have maddened a less passionate woman than Rose Dupont.

"You devil!" she exclaimed, point blank.

Mr. Lemaire shrugged his shoulders, some women in the court tittered, and there was a little pause while Rose recovered from her violence, and forced herself to mutter an apology.

"Upon my soul I shouldn't wonder if she did it herself," thought Mr. Lemaire.

"To resume," he said, smoothly—"you are quite sure that Mr. Ross did not get any farther than the drawing-room on the night when—ahem!—your toothache enabled you to have the full benefit of your ears?"

"I could not say." Rose's breast still rose and fell stormily. "At that distance I could not hear how far he descended, but I should probably have heard the street door shut had he gone out. He usually made a good deal of noise."

"Your impression is that he went no farther than the drawing-room?"

"That is my impression."

"Did not curiosity impel you to go down stairs and see what was taking place?"

"That would not have been a part of my duty."

"Was it a part of your duty to drug the draught your mistress took the last thing that night?"

The Frenchman turned livid as a corpse, her black eyes glowing like fire.

"I?" she faltered—off her guard at last—"I—" she tried to speak, could not, than taking her corsage with both hands, said firmly, "I mixed no draught for my mistress. I put the things ready as usual on a little table, and left them there."

Jack was listening with the most intense eagerness, his hand clutching the rail before him.

Had Elizabeth been drugged that night? Had he been all along under the influence of a horrible mistake? And was she indeed inhumanly wronged, not only in appearance, but by his thoughts?

"Was Mrs. St. George addicted to chloral?"

Mr. Lemaire put the question in his gentlest, therefore most dangerous manner.

Rose was silent.

"It was on Jack's lips to shout out 'No!' but he restrained himself."

"You knew the sapphires were in the pocket of her dressing-gown?"

"No," said Rose, with stubborn lips.

"Mrs. St. George hid them in all sorts of places, but never told me where. I have known other ladies do the same with their jewels, because they objected to having a safe put up."

A jurymen here remarked that he thought such carelessness criminal, and a direct encouragement to burglars.

"You never spoke to your lover—the young Frenchman with whom you walked out—of the sapphires?" said Mr. Lemaire, amiably.

Rose looked at him calmly. She had herself well in hand now, and was prepared for the worst.

"What we talked about was no business of yours," she said, coolly.

"But it may have been that of your mistress," he said, "and your master," he added, looking at Jack, upon whose face a new light had broken, turning it to joy.

Life had changed its mien for him during the space of the last minute, and from the abysses of despair he passed at a bound to the buoyancy of hope, and covering his face with his hands, he trembled like a reed.

Guilt was stamped on Rose's face, stamped there in letters that all her fierce control of feature could not hide; but she bore herself erect, and had evidently plenty of fight left in her yet.

"You spend a good deal of time at the cobbler's, the back of whose house overlooks No. 13, do you not?" said Mr. Lemaire.

"I go there occasionally to get Master Daffy's shoes mended, and buy him new ones," said Rose, hardily.

"You are aware that there is a skylight in the cobbler's house, from which a person might easily drop on to the leads that are level with the room in which Mrs. St. George slept that night?"

"So I heard afterward. To me the roof looked all slates, like your English roofs—and I saw no window."

"You are an old acquaintance of the young Frenchman who has assisted the cobbler in his work only so far back as a few months, and—"

"Mon Dieu! non," said Rose, raising expressive brows, "this young man is common—very common—and he seems not to be French, he speaks English always."

"Almost as well as yourself?" said Mr. Lemaire, dryly. "How does he call himself?"

Rose's eyes narrowed.

"How should I know?" she said.

To Be Continued.

ENGLISH GOLD COINS "SWEATED."

Swindlers Taking as Much as Fourteen Grains From Some Sovereigns.

Since the beginning of the year it has been noted at the Bank of England that an unusually large number of light gold pieces are in circulation. Finally, the mint authorities instituted an investigation, resulting in the discovery that such coins are being systematically "sweated" by immersion in acids. Those engaged in the operations are not common swindlers. They have capital and brains and are not actuated by an overreaching greed. The Bank of England records show that the average amount of gold "sweated" has been six grains from each sovereign, which would mean a profit of about one shilling per coin. Apparently, the members of the gang vary their methods according to the character of the persons to whom the "sweated" coins are to be tendered. Some sovereigns are barely a grain short in weight, while others are as much as fourteen grains. The coins appear fresh minted, and it is impossible to detect the fraud except by weighing; but few persons except bankers keep scales delicate enough to weigh a single coin, and a majority keep no scales.

Up to the present the post office has been the chief sufferer, and the matter has become so serious that the Postmaster-General has issued a special warning to officers in his department. He warns the staff that all gold coins received at post offices should be sent to the Bank of England for examination, and that those found short should be cut in two and the deficiency made up by the officers who received them. But the Postmaster-General has failed to assume the resultant responsibility of providing the officers with coin-weighting scales and the officers want to know how they are to detect the coins which apart from a few grains, deficiency in weight, are genuine. A lively agitation is now afoot, and if redress cannot be obtained earlier, the aggrieved officers will have the matter brought before Parliament in February.

The headquarters of the "sweating" gang are believed to be in some provincial town, but all efforts of the mint and Bank of England detectives to locate the gang have so far failed.

TOPSY-TURVY LAND.

If we want to find a country where nature has turned things topsy-turvy—that is, according to our notion—we must go to Australia. Many things are reversed in that country. It is summer there while it is winter here. Trees shed their bark instead of their leaves; fruit has the stone or kernel outside; swans are black; there is a species of fly that kills and eats the spider and a fish, called the climbing perch, that walks deliberately out of the water, and with the aid of its fins, climbs the adjacent trees after the insects that infest them. Most of the birds have no song and the flowers no odor.

A NEW KIND OF BRICK.

In Germany the granulated slag from blast furnaces is being utilized for the manufacture of brick. The making of slag brick is not a new thing, but heretofore fluid slag has been employed for the purpose, and the brick thus produced has been found unsuitable for building purposes because it is impermeable to air and steam. But the slag bricks made in Germany are, it is said, not open to this objection. On the contrary, while exceeding the strength of ordinary bricks and possessing an extraordinary resistance to heat, they are more permeable to air, and consequently are well suited for the building of houses. They do not absorb water as rapidly as ordinary bricks.

HATS UNKNOWN THERE.

There are parts of Spain where the hat is unknown, except in pictures. The men, when they need a covering, tie up their heads, and the women use flowers.

AFTER EFFECTS OF FEVER.

Mrs. Angle, of Merritt, Suffered so Severely That Her Friends Feared She Was Likely to be a Permanent Invalid.

In the picturesque village of Merritt resides Mrs. William Angle, who, after months of suffering, has found a cure from the use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Mrs. Angle relates as follows the experience through which she has passed. "Four years ago this spring, while a resident of Buffalo, I had an attack of typhoid fever, and the disease left me in a worn out and extremely nervous condition, so that the least noise startled me, I could not sleep at times for a week on account of terrible attacks of heart trouble. Then again my head would trouble me and I had bad dreams. I had no appetite and lost twenty-two pounds in weight and had become so very thin that my friends were alarmed. While in this condition I was treated by two physicians but with no avail. I tried everything recommended but still found no relief. Finally a relative persuaded me to try Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. After I had taken the first box I could see a change for the better, so I continued the use of the pills until I had finished six boxes and the results were most gratifying. I now have normal sleep there is no more twitching in my hands, the palpitations have ceased, and I have gained in weight and strength. My whole system seems toned up, and I feel entirely well. I feel grateful to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., and hope they will keep up the good work of administering to the afflicted."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills cure by going to the root of the disease. They renew and build up the blood, and strengthen the nerves, thus driving disease from the system. Avoid imitations by insisting that every box you purchase is enclosed in a wrapper bearing the full trade mark, Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People.

CAUSES STATES TO WORRY.

Decline of Trade With Canada Referred to in a Special Pamphlet.

In a statement issued by the Bureau of Statistics of the Treasury Department, showing that trade between the United States and Canada was not in the most prosperous condition from an American standpoint, the following appears: "Three spots on the world's commercial map of 1899 appear in unsatisfactory colors so far as the trade of the United States is concerned. These spots are Japan, France and Canada. As to Japan and France, the explanation is simple; Japan is cutting down her imports enormously, due to the adoption of a new tariff mildly protective, while France is not compelled this year to look abroad for breadstuffs as was the case in 1898. Japan has reduced her purchases from us but about 18 per cent., while from the world at large she has reduced her purchases 37 per cent. France has reduced her purchases of wheat from us nearly 18 million dollars, while her grand total of purchases from the United States has fallen by 13 million dollars, showing an increase in her general imports from the United States, and a decrease in the single item of breadstuffs.

"It is with Canada, our next door neighbor, that the general trade account has a more unsatisfactory appearance than that with any other part of the world. This fact is the occasion of considerable comment on the part of British trade journals, which are gleefully announcing that the American manufacturers are so busy with the home market that they are compelled to neglect that across the border, and that as a result the British manufacturers are making rapid gains in their attempts to recapture the Canadian markets. This assertion is apparently justified by the fact that latest official statements of exports from the United Kingdom shows that her exports to Canada in the nine months of 1899 ending with September were \$5,044,850, against \$4,488,181 in the corresponding months of last year, and \$3,875,335 in the corresponding months of 1897, while our own statement of exports to Canada shows a total in the nine months ending with September of \$63,026,224, against \$8,932,654 in the corresponding months of last year."

QUILT SYMONS."

The death of General Sir William Penn Symons, from the wound received in the fierce action at Glencoe, removes a lineal descendant of the founder of Pennsylvania. His grand-mother was one Agnes Penn, who upon her memorial tablet in Botus Fleming Church, Cornwall, is declared to have been a "lineal descendant of the excellent William Penn, and inherited many of his pious and amiable qualities." His modesty, indicated in the cognomen, "Quiet Symons," and his power of organization suggest some points of likeness to his famous ancestor.

PETROLEUM FOR PAINTS.

Monsieur Salome, a French artist, mixes his colors with petroleum instead of turpentine and drying oil, and he thinks he has made an improvement. The colors are first ground in oil, and then rendered fluid with petroleum.

TOOK HIM UP.

She—Will you buy me that hat?
He—My precious little—
She—Look here! You can either buy me that hat—or you can love me precious little!

SERVING HIM WITH SHOT.

Powder Monkey on the Battlefield—How the Ammunition is Supplied.

If it were not that there is a very excellent and elaborate system of supplying soldiers with ammunition during the course of a fight it would be almost hopeless to attack any position. Modern cartridges are very heavy things to carry. The long bullet, the heavy brass work of the case, and the weight of the wads and powder, all combine to produce an article which, though it is of small compass, is very weighty.

When our soldiers are attacking a Boer position their operations require that each man shall have a large supply of ammunition. This must be carried forward as the fight progresses. The Boer entrenched a hill-top may have the largest supply of his ammunition by his side, he is not weighed down by it, his soldiers are when storming the position.

WHAT HE CARRIES.

During a protracted fight the Boer soldier is, in most instances, compelled to fire away all the ammunition which he is personally able to use. An ordinary private carries 100 rounds. Just before an action, which firing is expected, this 100 is supplemented by fifty more rounds reserve of several battalions per man. Thus each advances into battle carrying more than 150 possible dealers of