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BY GEORGE E. WALSH

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CHAPTER I.



HAVE a partiality for balls and receptions and invariably try to make it a practice to be in the vicinity when one is in progress. There are al-

ways so many people coming and going that a stranger on the premises seldom attracts attention. It is an excellent time for inspecting basement windows, cellar doors and outbuild-

In a general way servants are more careless on such nights about locking up, and the hostess and her guests always bring out their best jewels and leave them loose on bureaus and mantelpieces after retiring. It may not have struck the casual observer that people sleep much more soundly after a ball than ordinarily. They are a longer time in retiring, but when everything is finally quiet about the house it would take nothing less than a pistol shot to rouse them. I suppose they are completely exhausted and after the excitement of the evening do not dream of burglars.

One March night I waited until after 3 o'clock for one of these festivities to draw to a close. It was cold and raw outside in the shrubbery, and I grew impatient at the lateness of the guests in taking their departure. The house was a large, old fashioned mansion just outside of the city limits, and from its general air and appearance I knew that considerable wealth in the shape of solid silverware and family heirlooms was contained in it. Following the custom of the day, the hostess would, I thought, bring all these relics from their hiding places and show them to her guests.

It was anticipation of a rich haul that kept me from giving up the job in disgust, for I was tired and exhausted with several nights' unlucky ventures, and my patience seemed sorely tried.

When the lights finally went out, I breathed easier and felt my courage returning. Everything promised to run smoothly. I had succeeded in disposing of the watchdog earlier in the evening and had discovered an unfastened window opening into the coalroom in the cellar, which I believed the servants would not think to lock so late at night.

I waited a good hour after the last flickering light had disappeared. Then I crept softly up to the house, and, concealed in its shadow, listened for sounds. There was none, except those



I saw that I was tooking into the mout? of a revolver.

strange, almost inexpressible voices which seem to come from nowhere in an instant." the dead of night. I do not know that anybody has ever noticed them, but I have always fancied that they were like the breathing of the earth-if such a thing were possible-for they come in regular, rhythmic pulsations.

I crept along the side of the house until I reached the basement window, and, finding it unlocked, as I expected, pose for your truce." I softly opened it and looked in. I opened into the coalroom, but from the general appearance of things I felt house as you, and I have run just as reasonably sure I was right. Not to much risk, but you got ahead of me forth a metallic sound. Swinging the think you belong to the class I"bag back and forth, I succeeded in identifying the object as a tin pan.

As I was afraid to use my dark lan- be quick." tern outside, I lowered myself cautiously into the basement. Instead of I added, a little nettled at his abrupt the coal bin I found myself in the dairy ways, "I propose that we divide the room of the house. The odor from plunder you have collected. For your newly made butter, fresh milk and extra trouble you take two-thirds and cream cheese gave me such an over- I one-third. Is that fair?" powering appetite that I had to satisfy He remained silent a moment and it before I could go any farther. By then said: groping around on the shelves I succeeded in getting a pretty fair supply of food-milk and cream in abundance, good cheese, several mince pies, some cake and cold meat.

and I did not regret the time I spent the street or anywhere else?" in eating of that cold but tempting repast. I would have felt better had I for I believe that every one should be discovered a bottle of good wine, but placed on the same level in such a busiin its absence the fresh milk was a ness and that one man should not set fair substitute.

The door leading from the dairy room to the basement laundry was not locked, and I quietly entered the latter place. I now ventured to open a little the slide of my dark lantern, and by means of it I found the stairs leading to the ground floor. The servants' quarters were above me, and to avoid

arousing any one I removed my shoes.

The house was spacious and roomy, and I had to take note of my surroundings as I proceeded, so that I might find my way back again without blundering. It is a poor general, I have always thought, who burns his bridges behind him. More than once this careful habit of mine has saved me from unpleasant complications.

When I passed from the kitchen into the dining room, I was greatly surprised not to find any solid pieces of silver. Even many of the expensive pieces of bric-a-brac that are usual to such houses were gone. It looked as if the hostess had anticipated robbery and had stripped the tables and man telpieces of every small article of special value.

Although disappointed, I made my way upstairs, hoping to find some loose jewelry at least on the bureaus. There were signs of the feast and entertainment all about the hall and rooms, but I was unable to find anything that appealed to my tastes. I passed from one bedroom to another, with about the same result. I could hear the regular breathing of the occupants of the house, and a distant noise in the rear told me that one man was a good snorer. So long as that rhythmic sound continued I felt that I was safe from all alarms.

After making a detour of the rooms I finally entered a small chamber that was used for storing linen and trunks. It occurred to me that possibly the missing things were packed away in this room. I closed the door gently behind me and turned on the slide from my lantern.

As I did so I was suddenly startled by the bright ray of some light shooting out of the darkness. Instantly I grasped my revolver and directed my light toward the spot. The result of this movement was to produce a queer combination.

I saw that I was looking into the mouth of a revolver held in the hands of a man who was inspecting me by the aid of a dark lantern similar to my own. My own revolver was covering the place where his heart should

The discovery must have been simultaneous, for we both flashed the light of our lanterns into each other's face and gazed long and silently. Neilife of the other would have been in- form a part of their deeply laid plan. ute or two for the man to speak.

"Well." I said finally, unwilling to bear the strain of silence longer, "you seem to be ahead of me tonight, and I must congratulate you upon the neatness of your work. I haven't found a thing behind you."

The man was not inclined to answer at first, but I continued in a reassuring voice:

"We may as well call a truce. It would be folly for either of us to shoot. I don't want to get you in trouble any more than myself."

I had been struck by the fine, handsome features of the man, but when he spoke in a well modulated, musical voice I was further puzzled. He did not look like one of my set.

"What kind of a truce do you want?" he asked. "You see I have you covered with my revolver and could kill you in

"But you fail to notice mine," I answered. "A very slight pressure of the trigger would send a bullet through your heart."

I thought he turned a trifle paler, but his voice was steady and unquavering. "I admit that and accept the situation. But tell me what terms you pro-

"Simply these: We should go into was not positive that the window partnership at least for tonight. I have had as much trouble in getting into the make any mistake or misstep in the and made a complete job. I admire darkness, I lowered my bag of tools the way you have done the work. until it struck something which gave Even I couldn't do it better, and I don't

> "Never mind that," he interrupted impatiently. "Stick to your terms and

> "Well, to come straight to the point,"

"If I agree to such a bargain, nothing further will ever be said of to-

"Not a word." "And you will never recognize me The night was early yet for my work, if you should happen to meet me on

night's work?"

I did not like this part of the bargain, himself up to being better than an-

other, but I finally assented, with the exception of one slight qualification:

"Not unless we happen to meet under similar circumstances again. Then l might recall to you this meeting."

"I don't think that is likely to occur," he replied firmly.

Then in a firm, measured voice he added: .

"Well, I'll trust you. I will give you one-third of all I have collected. I believe that you will keep your part of the agreement if I keep mine."

There was honesty written in his face, and I would have trusted him to the extent of pocketing my revolver, but again he got ahead of me. I stood there covering him with my weapon half a minute after he had put his pistol in his pocket. A temptation to make him give everything to me under penalty of death seized me for an instant when I realized that he had placed himself in my power. But that same rich, musical voice suddenly recalled me to my bargain.

"Here, take this bag outside with you, and we will divide the thing where there is less chance of detec-

"Have you been all over the house?" asked in a little confusion.

"Yes, all over. There is nothing worth taking left." He moved toward the door and start-

ed to open it. He turned an instant and asked:

"How did you come in?" "Through a cellar window," I replied. "A clumsy way when you could have entered by the front door."

"Do you mean to say"— I began. "S-s-s-h, don't speak now. I'm open-

ing the door. Follow me." I never felt the power of a man so strangely before. I attributed it to the fact that I was in the presence of a master who put my feeble accomplishments entirely into the background, and yet I had prided myself upon my

We walked stealthily down the stairs and out of the front door to the lawn. He carried a pack larger than mine. When we reached the shelter of a clump of trees, we both stopped.

"It is getting late, and it will be light soon," my strange companion said. "We must make our division quickly." In the same quick, masterful and, if I say it, honest way he made a division of the spoils, giving me more than one-

"Now, if you are satisfied, we will part," he said. "I think we have no further need of each other."

I made a motion as if to follow him, but he waved me back, saying: "Good night. I must be going."

He turned and walked rapidly through the gloom, leaving me standing there as nonplused as any man engaged in such a hazardous business as mine could ever afford to be.

CHAPTER II.



ENERALLY I do not cinity of a house that I have looted, for the police have an unpleasant way of arresting suspicious

characters simply to cover up their inability to find a clew otherwise. It gives the impression that they are really doing something to capther were a mask, and in the uncov- ture the burglar. They are always so ered eyes there was cool, deadly re- close mouthed, too, that people imagsolve written. It would have been | ine they are working diligently on the foolbardy for either to shoot, for the track and that the arrested characters stantly sacrificed. I waited a full min- Dut in this case I overruled my bet-

ter sense and decided to hang around the scene of my last engagement just to satisfy a feeling that I was in some way to meet again the man who had so generously shared his spoils with me. True, he had found himself in such a position that something had to | morning, staring at the house as if it be done to buy me off; but, as I | were a dime museum. There's nothing thought afterward, he could easily have | like a robbery to attract the attention outwitted me and escaped with all the | of the country people." plander.

On the following afternoon I dressed | cern over our meeting piqued me a litmyself in a spare suit of clothes which | tie, and on the spur of the moment 1 I always keep for an emergency and wandered out of the city limits toward the old fashioned mansion. As I approached it I caught a glimpse of an active little man who seemed to be inspecting the premises with great concern. Without hesitation I put him down as a detective, one of those half policemen whose shrewdness consists chiefly in following a trail that is as eleur as daylight.

I felt no fear of him, for I knew that he was not the kind of man to capture a professional. I knew that a bold front would disarm him of all suspicion quicker than anything else. If he caught me sneaking about the neighborhood, he would very likely arrest me.

Passing near the front of the house where he seemed busily engaged in studying the broken shrubbery. I accosted him.

"Is this the house that was robbed tast night?" I asked innocently, looking with great curiosity at the place. "Is it? Why, who said any house

was robbed?" He gave me a hard stare, which I returned without seeming bold.

"The papers are full of it." I replied. "And, being out this way, I thought I'd look around a bit and see the

"Oh, you did, eh? Well, it isn't a safe place just now for strangers." "Why not? There are no burglars here now, I hope. If there are, I'd like to get a look at 'em."

He seemed to smile inwardly at my ignorance.

"Well, nobody is allowed on the place," he answered rather brusquely. "And so, if you haven't any business here, you can march on." "But there is no harm looking at

the house from the street, is there?" "No, but the people don't want to be stared at by every Tom, Dick and Harry in the country, so please move on." I hardly noticed his last remark, so

thterested was I by the appearance of two people on the piazza. One was a beautiful young woman with a figure and face that would attract attention anywhere. She walked down the front steps and turned an instant to speak

to her companion. But, handsome as she was, the man who followed her attracted me more, and for an instant I felt myself growing dizzy. Fortunately for me the detective had turned to greet the young couple, and he did not see my sudden consternation.

I never forget faces that I have once particularly noticed. It is a part of my discipline to remember them. This one I had every reason to remember very well. Although I had only seen it by the aid of my dark lantern at night, I knew instantly that it belonged to my companion in crime.

He was handsomely dressed, and his clear cut features gave him an aristocratic appearance that must have been born in him. A slight pallor of the face suggested the possibility of some inherited disease that he was unable to control. As he walked alongside the beautiful woman I had to think what a noble couple they made. Each

seemed made for the other. "Well, Mr. Jenkins, have you any clew yet?" I heard him say in his rich voice as he passed the detective.

"Only a slight one," was the ready reply. "It is difficult to find any traces that may point to anything particular. but by putting this and that together I think I will be able to have a clew before night."

I saw the gentleman smile, and I admired him for his coolness. He evidently had no more confidence in the detective's shrewdness than 1, and he birds which seemed to the late Maurice was not courting fear unnecessarily.

Charles!" his companion said in all se- board." Suffice it to say that if a volriousness. "They accomplish such wonders that I should think a robber would be in mortal terror of them all the time."

shrewd, and again they are not. It all of the poet might be seriously quesdepends upon the man. This Mr. Jen-tioned. While all this display of local kins seems to me like a very persistent | color may seem too apparent an effort and determined person, a sort of hu- on the part of Californians to place upman hound, but I doubt very much if on their work the stamp of a definite he has much capacity for solving a locality, and may be considered by profound mystery."

ging his shoulders.

They were walking down the pave- tiveness, moreover, that will become ment toward the gate as they talked. I more and more acute with the cultivaand so eager was I to hear their words | tion of the higher faculties through inthat I very foolishly exposed myself to creasing educational growth.-Herbert

their view. As they came around a clump of shrubbery they suddenly stumbled apon me. I had just a moment in which

thinking.

there." see you either."

impassively that I wondered if he rec- lish newspapers." ognized me. Such self control did not seem possible even in the most experi-

"I judge you're another one of the curiosity seekers," he said pleasantly. "We've had stores of them here this

His failure to show any signs of condetermined to pursue a course that would arouse him.

"I confess that curiosity brought me here first," I answered, "but then I had



"Excuse me, ma'am,"

to come out into the country for my bread and butter. I couldn't get any work in the city, and I thought the country people couldn't treat me any

"Have you been out of work long?" the lady asked. "Yes, for nearly a month now, and I

am at the end of my rope," I replied glibly.

"Poor fellow!"

Her eyes and words made me ashamed of myself. Only the night before I had robbed her house, and here I was eliciting sympathy from her. But I thought if I was a scoundrel her companion was a worse one.

"Is there nothing we can do for him, Charles?" she asked, turning to him. This was a shot that I expected would make itself felt. But the pale, handsome face did not change.

"I don't know," he said slowly. Then to me:

"Do you know anything about horses?"

"Yes, sir," I replied quickly. "I've had a good deal of experience as a groom and coachman." This was partly true and partly false. "Well, my groom has left me, and if

you want to apply for the position call . around at my house tonight. I live in the first house on the left down this street." He pointed out his residence, but I

was so taken aback by his affability and readiness to engage me that I nearly lost his words of instruction. I recovered sufficiently, however, to rec-

ognize the place before they moved on. I heard their "good day" as one in a dream, and probably for the first time in my life politeness failed me. I actu-

ally forgot to thank either of them. Throughout the interview he had been playing a part with wonderful success or he had failed to recognize me. I was inclined to accept the latter as true, and he fell somewhat in my estimation. To forget a face so soon was something that no one of our profession could well afford.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Glory of California Scenery. As long as there remains the love of beauty in the human soul so long will the glory of California scenery and that of the whole Pacific coast prove a source of inspiration to the poetic mind. Descriptive verse has been from the beginning a marked feature of the literature of this region. In fact, the term "landscape poets" may be properly applied to this bevy of song Thompson to have taken "complete "How smart these detectives are, possession of the entire western seaume of verse were written by a Californian which reflected nothing of the state's scenic beauty or its warmth of color it would not only come as a sur-"Yes, Belle, they are sometimes prise to most reviewers, but the loyalty some a cheap form of art, it is this very "You haven't much confidence in him, sensitiveness to beauty and grandeur with which nature has clothed the west "Yes and no," he answered, shrug- that offers the most promise of its rapid literary advancement—a sensi-

Bashford in Atlantic.

All Have an "Itch" In Them. "Speaking of Servian names," said to pull myself together and to doff my an observant man, "they are not so bad when you once get used to them. "Excuse me, ma'am," I said without her are they so hard to pronounce. You no doubt have noticed that all Ser-Politeness is a second nature to me, | vian names end with a syllable having tarry long in the vi- for I have associated with gentlemen | some resemblance to the English word enough to know their ways and have 'itch.' Some of the names end in 'ies' unconsciously absorbed some of their or just with 'ic.' Sometimes it is 'ich' or 'ics' or 'isch,' and so on. It makes "Why, you frightened me," the lady no difference how the name ends, you said. "I did not know anybody was | will make no mistake if you give the sound of 'itch' to the last syllable. "I beg your pardon again then, That will be the proper Servica sound. ma'am, I was passing by, and I did not for Petrovich or Petrovic would be correct, and in both instances the word While I was speaking to the lady I | would be pronounced in the same way. was furtively watching the face of the | by sounding the 'itch.' Servian names one she called Charles. I was a little are all right when one gets used to concerned to see how he would take | them, but they are strange and shockthe meeting. He was looking at me so ling when put into the columns of Eng-

Goats That Fight. A species of the wild goat, the Capra ruppeli, haunts the rocks of the Abyssinian highlands and manages to hold its own as to flight against all enemies. with the exception of the fleet footed jackal, an adversary whose co-operative tactics and keenness of scent make flight unavailing and have led the capras to the conclusion that under certain circumstances valor may be the better part of discretion. The yelp of an approaching horde of jackals is therefore a signal for instant rally on the part of the goats. The nannies crowd around their kids, and the bucks rush forward en masse, butting away with a rage that lays out a yeiper at every spring and makes the survivors stand back howling and cowering.

Every farmer knows that some plants grow better than others. Soil may be the same and seed may seem the same but some plants are weak and others strong.

And that's the way with children. They are like young plants. Same food, same home, same care but some grow big and strong while others stay small and weak.

Scott's Emulsion offers an easy way out of the difficulty. Child weakness often means starvation, not because of lack of food, but because the food does not feed.

Scott's Emulsion really feeds and gives the child growing strength.

Whatever the cause of weakness and failure to grow-Scott's Emulsion seems to find it and set the matter right.

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