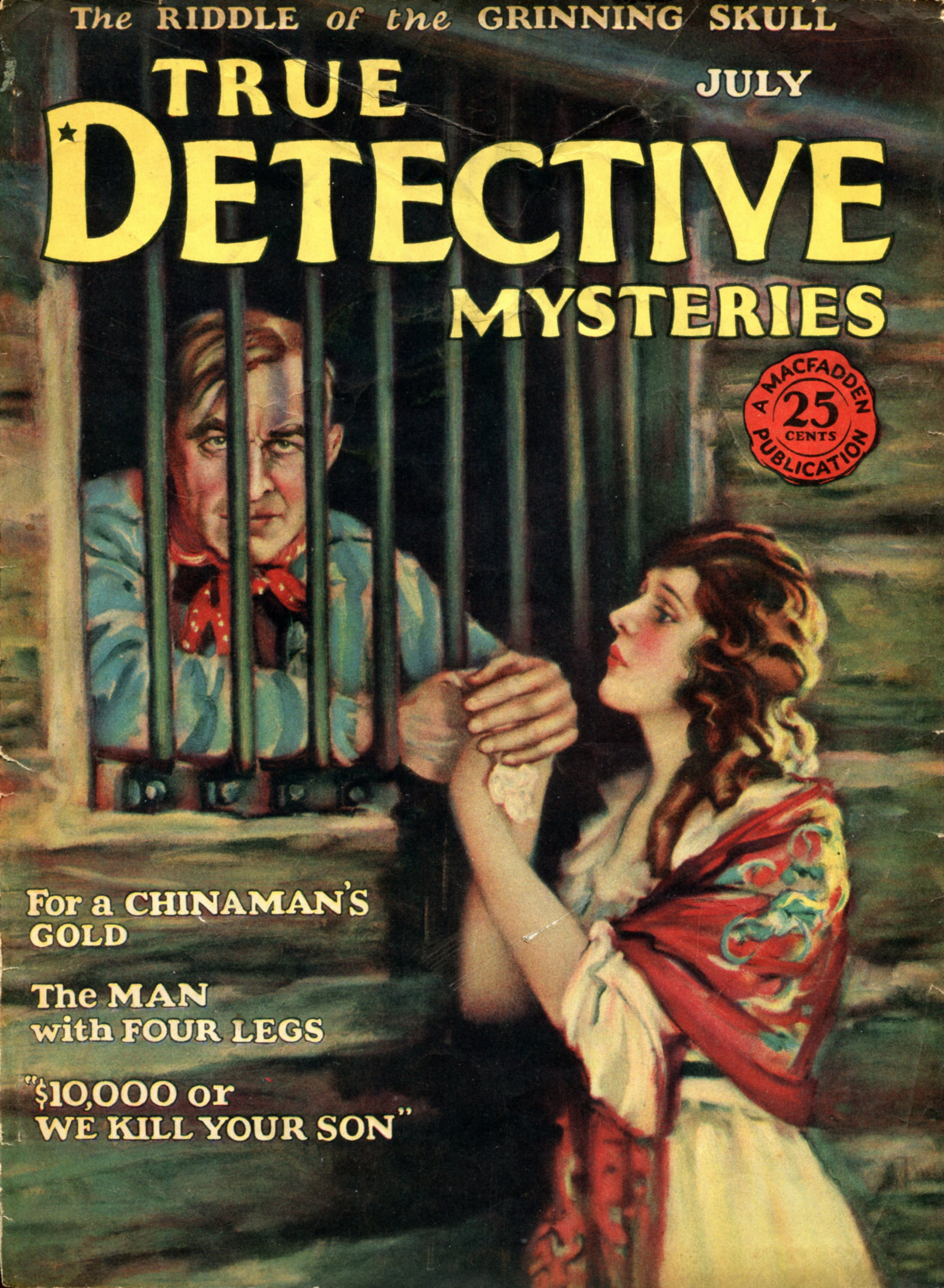
The RIDDLE of the GRINNING SKULL

TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES

JULY



A MACFADDEN PUBLICATION

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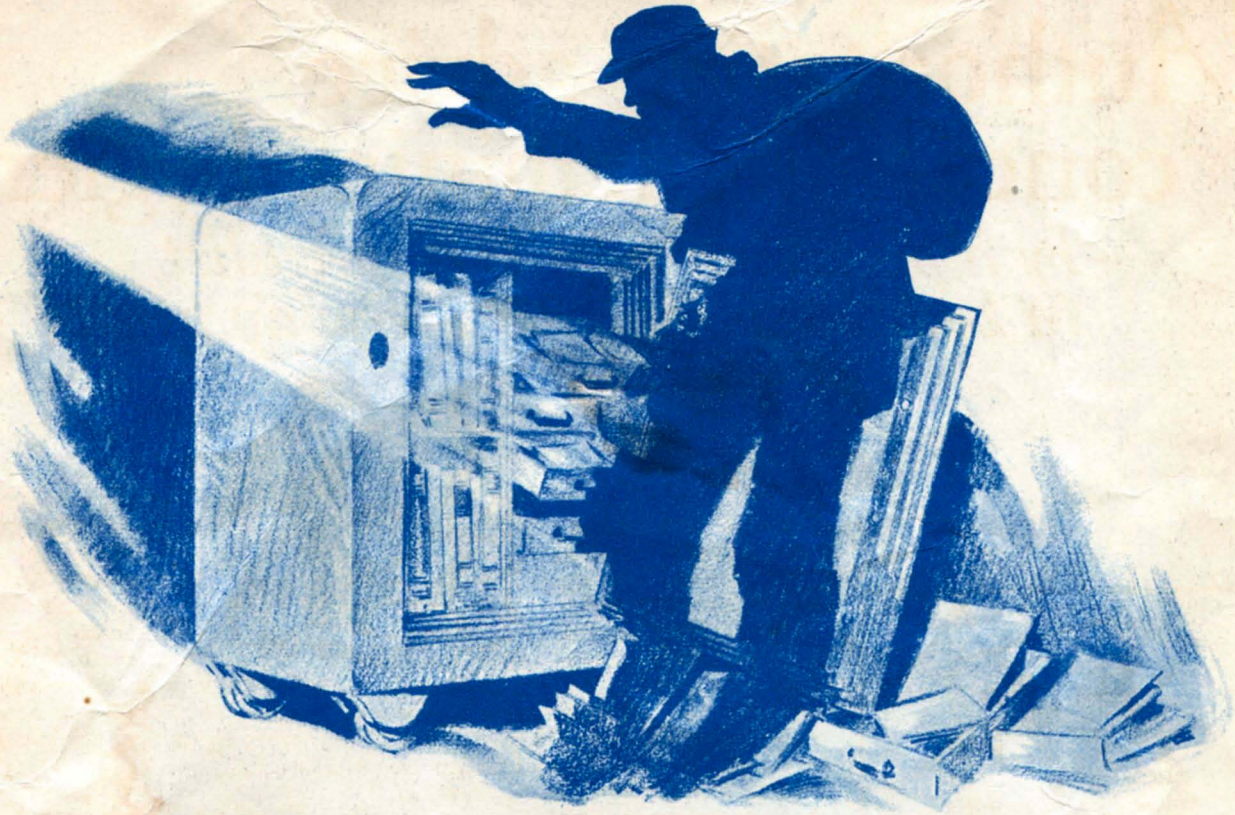
For a CHINAMAN'S GOLD

The MAN with FOUR LEGS

"$10,000 or WE KILL YOUR SON"



Follow This Shadow!

GO ALONG step by step with operator 38 in tracking down the crook. See how a crafty detective works. How he finds the telltale finger prints—how he tricks the suspect into leaving his prints on the silver cigarette case. More exciting than fiction, yet true, every word of it. No cost or obligation. Just mail the coupon for—

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And the best part of it all is this. It may open your eyes to the great future for YOU as a highly paid Finger Print expert. More men are needed right now. This school has taken men just like you and trained them for high official positions. This is the kind of work you would like. Days full of excitement. Big salaries. Rewards.

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Authoritative advice concerning feminine hygiene

—by a physician who is a specialist in body grooming for everyday people

On page 89

Dr. Sutton makes 3 important statements:

One douche a week is plenty for a healthy woman

Avoid any strong preparation (carbolic acid, bichloride, etc.)

. . . Where an antiseptic is desired, Zonite may be used . . .

(We are pleased to give credit to Dr. Sutton's book which contains 100 pages of advice on the care of the skin and hair.)

Nobody realizes so well as the physician just what the relation is between beauty and hygiene. Nobody knows so well as he, just what can be accomplished by careful "body-grooming." Dr. Irwin C. Sutton, formerly of the Mayo Clinic and Johns Hopkins Hospital, has given special attention to hygiene of this nature, particularly in the case of women. It is, therefore, interesting to note the recommendations he makes in his new book entitled "Good Looks."

Dr. Sutton, like most physicians of today, is heartily in favor of feminine hygiene as a healthful routine, and recommends a douche at weekly intervals. As an antiseptic to be used for this purpose, he names Zonite.

This is natural enough, because Zonite combines certain qualities not found together in any other antiseptic. In the first place, Zonite is *effective*. In the second place, Zonite is absolutely non-poisonous. And in the third place, its action is immediate.

Zonite safe compared with poisonous compounds

Most people know Zonite chiefly as the great World War Antiseptic, which saved countless lives in the Allied Hospitals in France. But since that time it has become the *Great Family Antiseptic* of America, and among its many uses, this service for feminine hygiene is not the least important. Women are learning more and more the dangers of using poisonous antiseptics for this intimate purpose. They are learning of the mercurial poisoning that may follow the use of bichloride of mercury—the hardening and scarring of delicate tissues that often follow the use of carbolic acid compounds. Not to mention the dangers of accidental poisoning, especially with children in the house.

In germicidal strength, Zonite is forty times as effective as peroxide of hydrogen and actually far more powerful than any dilution of carbolic acid which can be applied to the human body.

Send for free booklet which is frank but scientific

Zonite can now be obtained anywhere in the United States, even in the smallest town which has a drugstore. Full directions accompany every bottle. But if you want a copy of the special booklet devoted entirely to the subject of feminine hygiene, write to us for it, using the coupon below. We shall be only too glad to mail it to you, with extra copies for your friends if you want them. This booklet is authentic, clear, frankly written and attractive. Don't forget to use the coupon.

ZONITE PRODUCTS COMPANY
250 Park Avenue
New York, N.Y.

14-C

ZONITE PRODUCTS COMPANY
250 Park Avenue
New York, N. Y

Please send me free copy of the Zonite booklet or booklets checked below.

☐ Feminine Hygiene
☐ Use of Antiseptics in the Home

Please Print Name

Name _____
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City _____ State _____
(In Canada 165 Dufferin St., Toronto)

2 important statements
Zonite is *not* a poison
Zonite *does* kill germs

Use Zonite Ointment for burns, scratches, sunburn, etc. Also as a powerful deodorant in the form of a vanishing cream.

At all drugstores
In bottles
25c, 50c and $1
Full directions in every package

Zonite
the Great *family* Antiseptic

TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES

A MACFADDEN PUBLICATION

Vol. VII JULY, 1927 No. 4

CONTENTS

OF SPECIAL INTEREST

Cover Design from a Photograph of Mabel Scott and Harry Carey in Pathe's "The Frontier Trail"

PUBLISHED MONTHLY BY NEW METROPOLITAN FICTION, INC., 18410 JAMAICA AVE., JAMAICA, N. Y.
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Edwin E. Zoty, *President* M. A. Wood, *Secretary*

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An actual photo of a small part of one of our nine departments

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COYNE can and does make men electrical experts in 90 days. Coyne students learn without books or lessons. They learn by doing... by actually performing every conceivable step on every type of electrical apparatus.

They learn the theory, operation and repair of storage batteries, not by looking at charts, but by actually building one complete, testing it and operating it. They learn house-wiring by actually wiring a house. Step by step, Coyne training takes you from the simplest first principles to the most complicated switch boards, great motors and power stations—always on real full-sized equipment in full operation.

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And here, working on the greatest outlay of electrical apparatus ever assembled, are 1,000 students from every state and province of Canada.

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$100 a week

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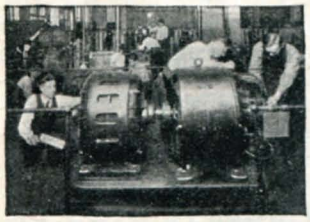

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Find out now what Coyne training can mean to you in money and future. Simply mail the coupon below for FREE Coyne catalog—56 pages of photographs... facts... jobs... salaries... opportunities in the electrical industry. This step does not obligate you. So act at once.

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Founded 1899

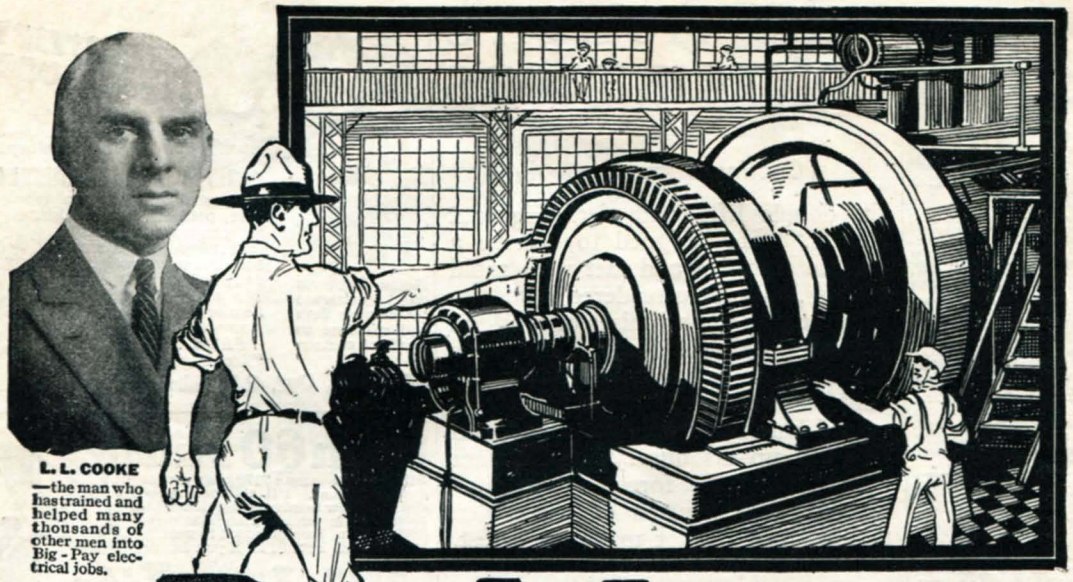
THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

ROSWELL BAILEY is frankly the *nom de plume* of a successful physician who prefers to remain unidentified. His story, "For a Chinaman's Gold," beginning on page 11, was supplied us by Carl Easton Williams. The worthy doctor spent some years of his early life under frontier conditions, in Montana, Arizona, and Alaska. He was at one time Company Physician in a great mining camp, and this story is based upon an episode in his many colorful experiences.

STEPHEN MARTIN, author of "The Man With Four Legs," appearing on page 52 of this issue of TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES, is a veteran detective of wide and varied experiences. At the time this country declared itself "in on the Great War," he put aside his blue uniform as a member of the Metropolitan police force and donned the khaki of a volunteer for Uncle Sam. Soon after reaching France, he was transferred to the intelligence branch of the service and won a citation for apprehending men and women from America who were operating as spies in London and Paris. Following the war, he was in the United States Secret Service for a time, then rejoined the New York police force as a detective. Many policemen in various places have been designated as possessing "camera eyes." None deserves this distinction more than Stephen Martin. Once he has had opportunity to study a criminal and note his characteristics, the impression is preserved for all time. In the current story he tells how this gift, plus logical reasoning and the ability to use his imagination—a quality too often lacking in most police department detectives—enabled him to capture two unusually daring and resourceful crooks.

RICHARD MORGAN says his chief stock in trade is his appearance, for no one looks less like a detective than he does. In his story, found on page 15 in this issue, he gives a brief description of himself and his habits, which makes his claim convincing. He was born in New Orleans and came North at the age of twenty. He joined the New York Police Force, but was thoroughly unhappy in a uniform. "I hate being tagged for what I am," he asserts. "I enjoy mystifying people, leading

(*Continued on page* 6)



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"Dear Chief: If it hadn't been for your wonderful Course I wouldn't now be making as high as $65 a day. It makes me proud to have your Diploma. And believe me I am a booster for your Course."—Jacob Lentz
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$3500 a Year and UP

GO ahead and feel bad for yourself—go ahead and feel blue about the poor pay you get! But don't blame anyone but yourself when thousands of men no smarter than you earn $70 to $200 every week in the same six days that bring you only a paltry $25 or $35. They had no special luck—no "pull"—no previous experience! But they jumped into Electricity, the Big-Pay field, through "Cooke" Training. Now they get the big money! I showed them how! And I'm ready to show YOU, too!

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Your age, lack of experience, or lack of schooling is no drawback at all! All you need to know is how to read and write—and you'll be surprised how quickly I'll show you how to break into the Big Pay Electrical Field. All I want is a little of your spare time. And with my easily learned, quickly-grasped, right-up-to-the-minute "Work Sheet" and "Job Ticket" Method I'll give you the same unforgettable training that has qualified 10,000 other men for electrical jobs paying $3,500 to $10,000 a year!

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Maybe it sounds too good to be true—maybe it's hard to believe when I tell you that YOU, a low-pay man without experience, can become a Big-Pay Electrical Man. But I don't ask you to take my word for it! I want you to investigate! Get the facts! Demand the proof!

Act At Once—Mail Coupon

See for yourself whether I do as I say here! Find out whether my thousands of students were any smarter than you when they started! They weren't—and they'll tell you so themselves! You'll find their signed letters in the Big Book I want to send you. And you'll find out all about "Cooke" Training and see why "The Cooke Trained Man Is the Big-Pay Man"—always and everywhere! Get this great Pay-Raising Book at once—it's FREE. Mail coupon for it this very minute!

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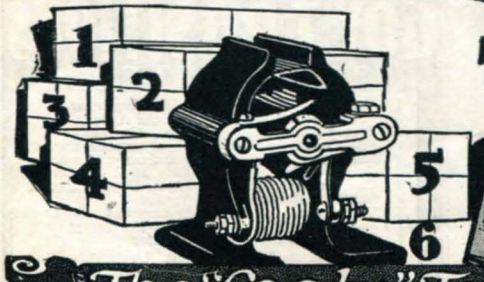

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Address.....

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Residents of Canada may send this coupon to R. A. Farrow, Special Representative, 7 Medbury Lane, East, Windsor, Ont., Canada.

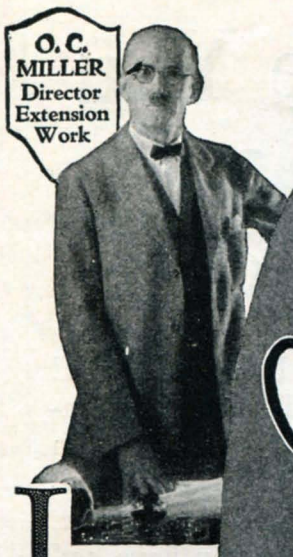
The "Cooke" Trained Man Is the "Big Pay" Man

THIS MONTH'S CONTRIBUTORS

(*Continued from page* 4)

the double life, and ferreting out secrets." He resigned to become a private detective and met with rapid success. He is considered a master at arranging compromises of the kind he describes in his story. On one occasion, he pursued an absconding bank cashier to North Africa, disguised himself as an Arab sheik, and rounded up his quarry in a Sahara oasis. There he forced the restitution of three-fourths of the stolen money, but did not make an arrest.

Amelia de Santis, whose splendid work as a detective has been written in "On the Trail of the Shoplifters," in TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES for August. Don't miss a good one!



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We have invented a new, simplified way to teach Drafting—the first real improvement in Drafting home-instruction in history. We want you to see it, try it—without one penny of cost or obligation. We want to show you how we get away from the copying methods used in the past. See how we make you *think*, solve problems, do actual drafting room jobs *from the first lesson!*

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O C Miller

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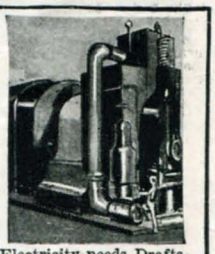
Draftsmen Wanted! $60 to $125 a week!

70,000 fine jobs advertised last year. Get ready to fill one. Get out of the rut. Make something of yourself. Plan your future in Drafting. Even if you have only common schooling, even if you know nothing of Drafting, we guarantee to make you a real Draftsman *or to refund your money!* Special surprise offer right now to the first 500 men who answer this ad—reduced price, easy terms. Coupon brings complete information.



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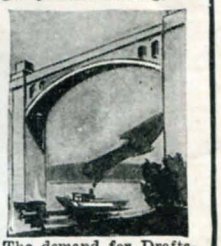
Copying drafting lessons prepares you to be only a "tracer." This new "Job-Method" gives you actual drafting-room jobs in a new one-step-at-a-time way. With pictures which you can understand almost without reading the "lessons." And that is why the American School-trained Draftsmen can qualify for a good job at big pay when they graduate.



The demand for Draftsmen experienced in concrete and structural steel work is enormous. Many big-pay positions open.

WIN SUCCESS thru DRAFTING

Drafting is easy, fascinating work. Short hours. Big pay. And the Draftsman is always in line for promotion to executive positions. This training is *complete.* It includes high school subjects (if you need them) and all the Engineering and Mathematics Drafting experts require.

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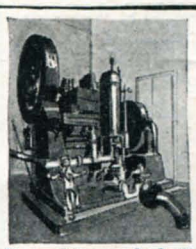
The big money in Drafting goes to men who specialize in Machine Design, or Electrical Drafting, or Architectural Drafting, or Structural, or Automotive. It is not enough merely to know *general* Drafting practice. You must know how to calculate and design and plan original work. You need many Engineering subjects to fill the kind of a Drafting position that pays $60 to $125 a week. The American School *now includes this specialized training in its Drafting course.*

Every great Auto factory employs Draftsmen who specialize in Automotive work—men who design bodies, plan engines, etc.



No machine can be built until the Draftsman first builds it **on paper.** My training prepares you for this work.

Never has the world seen anything like the building boom of today. This has created enormous demand **for** real Draftsmen.

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The American School now offers its students and graduates, without cost, the services of an efficient employment department keeping in constant touch with employers of Draftsmen all over the U. S. We have placed hundreds of men in good, big-pay Drafting positions. We've made this training so complete, so practical, so easy to master, that our students **are bound to make good.** And, so, because the demand for real Draftsmen continues to exceed the supply and because this training actually prepares men for good Drafting positions **we back it with a Free Employment Service.**

Costly Drafting Outfit Given!

Fine, imported instruments like these help you learn Drafting quickly and easily. These standard quality, full size instruments, board, table, triangles, T square, ink, protractor, etc., given to every student without extra cost.

Coupon Brings 3 Lessons FREE!

Get them. Test your own ability to learn Drafting and get ready for a fine job and big pay. Coupon also brings surprise offer, and complete information about your opportunities for success in Drafting. *Mail it Today!*

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Rush 3 Free Drafting Lessons, Job Service and Raise Offer, complete information, money-back guarantee, etc., to prove I can become a real Draftsman at home in spare time.

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City..... State.....

Are You a Detective?

TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES magazine invites you to send in the histories of cases that can be run in this magazine. Undoubtedly you have had experiences which you feel at liberty to put on paper for publication. This magazine wants them.

In building a detective magazine that is founded on fact, we recognize that there is no more prolific or sensational source of information than the detectives who work on cases themselves. From time to time we have carried stories of cases handled by well-known detectives. In this issue you will find another notable collection. Why should not your story be one of them?

For all stories we accept we shall pay from $25 to $50, depending upon the importance of the case. Don't concern yourself with literary style; we want the facts and the truth—told in your own words.

Are you a private investigator? A secret-service agent? A post office inspector? An amateur detective? Write out your most sensational case—your biggest case—your most baffling case—and send it in for our consideration.

Who Is to Blame?

By George William Wilder

FROM a large State in the East comes the news that a four-year-old boy shot and killed his mother with his father's revolver. The motive for the crime, so far as the authorities can determine, is that the mother objected to the child playing with matches.

It was Springtime. The mother, industrious, anxious to get from life all the bounties that would help her and her family, was in a garden, planting seeds. The child crept up behind her, leveled a pistol at the back of her neck, pulled the trigger, and fired. Death was instantaneous.

A County Coroner questioned the child. "Where did you learn to shoot a pistol?" And the answer came: "I had a toy pistol once. And when I saw my papa's real gun on a shelf in the kitchen, I knew it would go off." The child further remarked: "And now I'se can get matches."

Who is to blame for this atrocious crime? The parents of the child? Is the child old enough to reflect the spirit of the times, the *contretemps*, as it affects modern youth in modern youth's general disregard of convention and law? Does the responsibility lie with producers and manufacturers of childrens' amusements? Are newspapers to blame—newspapers that don't scruple to paint crime attractively?

Who is to blame?

Parents, there's a powerful message for you in the experience of this child and his gun. Remember always that children, brought up in a peaceful atmosphere, living a life of health in sunshine and the out-of-doors, are bound to develop healthy bodies. In a healthy body there must be a sound mind. And in a sound mind, young or old, thought of major crime never can lodge. Take thought—that the blame may never be yours.

The Allure of Young-Looking Skin

Accent your natural coloring with these youthful shades of Beauty Powder and Bloom.

NEW
Smart Purse-Size Bloom Compact

This beguiling new case encloses the unchanging perfection of Pompeian Bloom. It is a beautiful little conceit — one of the dainty accessories that women delight to carry.

Pompeian
Beauty Powder and Bloom

AS suave and supple as the touch of a rose petal . . . as clear and fresh as the skin of youth . . . the deft application of Pompeian Beauty Powder with Pompeian Bloom brings just this effect.

Discriminating women select Pompeian Beauty Powder for its purity, its velvety texture, and the perfection of its shades.

TEAR OFF NOW — YOU MAY FORGET

Madame Jeannette, The Pompeian Laboratories, Dept. 402 G., 595 Fifth Avenue, New York.

Please send me free samples of Pompeian Beauty Powder and Bloom.

Name_____

Address_____

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Powder shade wanted_____

Medium Bloom sent unless another shade requested.

It has the ever-desirable virtue of adhering well, maintaining its subtle finish of loveliness for hours at a time.

Pompeian Bloom adds the colorful note that typifies youth. This rouge brings the *natural* coloring, and seems to round the cheeks to the tender line of girlhood.

Medium, Oriental, Orange, Light and Dark Rose tones are to be found in Pompeian Bloom—with the more subtle differences in the shades of Pompeian Beauty Powder—Flesh, Peach, Rachel and White.

You can prove the flattering things done by Pompeian Beauty Powder and Pompeian Bloom by purchasing them this very day at your favorite toilet goods counter, or fill out the coupon and mail it. You will receive free samples of the Powder and the Bloom, each in its individual box—powder in loose form, rouge in a dainty, diminutive compact.

This pearl necklace was worth a king's ransom. Crafty Sing Ling became interested in it—so did Sam Wong. And when these two crafty celestials met in deadly combat—

For a CHINAMAN'S GOLD

By DOCTOR ROSWELL BAILEY
As told to CARL EASTON WILLIAMS

HATLESS, coatless, the farmer dashed out of his house and ran across the highway just in time to signal an approaching automobile. He shouted something as it raced past, ignoring him. The next car did the same. The fifth car slowed up to hear what he said; the driver shook his head and went on. Seventeen cars passed before an open car with the top down, containing several young men, slowed down doubtfully, hardly expecting to stop. The man seemed desperate.

"Doctor—doctor?" called the farmer as the big machine rolled past.

One of the young men reached forward to touch the driver, saying something that induced the latter to pull up to a quick stop. The young man leaped out and ran back to the farmer.

"You a doctor?" asked the farmer, in doubt because of the evident youth of this most kindly of the passers-by.

"No, I'm a reporter."

"Good God—I don't want a reporter. I want a doctor!"

"There's a doctor in the sedan behind. We just passed him—Doctor Roswell Bailey. He's a great surgeon. I'll stop him. What's the matter?"

"Someone shot. But I don't want a reporter."

"Can't help it now—the reporter goes with the doctor. Hey, Joe," the youth shouted to the driver, running part way to the car. "Stop the doctor in the sedan—the next car! There's a story here."

Whereupon the driver of the touring-car pulled square across the road, the doctor's sedan stopped, and shortly the farmer, the youth and the doctor together went into the house.

TWO hours later the doctor said to the young man, as the latter hung up the telephone receiver: "You can go back to New York with me, if you like. Unless you'd rather stay here."

"I've no desire to stay here," replied the reporter. "Thank you ever so much. I'll come out again to-morrow. But someone should stay."

"Why—why should anyone stay?"

"Well——" The youth hesitated. "They are taking the husband into custody. He'll at least spend the night in town, in jail, even if he can manage to get clear."

"Oh, it's perfectly clear that the Italian shot the woman and then killed himself," said the Doctor. "My examinations show it. The letter proves it. The husband is just out of luck. Still, they'll hold him till morning."

"But we can't leave two dead persons alone all night in this house," insisted the reporter.

"Why not? Nothing can harm them—now."

"Well, but—well, it isn't done! Someone always stays with a dead person."

"Out of sentiment, yes. But there's no other practical reason. Do you want to stay—and watch them?"

"Me? You couldn't hire me."

"Tut, tut," laughed the Doctor. "You'd be right on the ground for the rest of the story. You say it's your scoop. And you can get a nice quiet sleep."

"Sleep?" The scribe registered astonishment.

"Why not?"

"Thank you, Doctor, but I'll be very grateful——"

"All right, hop in. At that, they'll send out someone to stay. But it reminds me," added the Doctor, as they settled themselves comfortably in the big berline and the chauffeur put the car in gear—"reminds me of a little experience of mine when I was a young doctor. You're a reporter. It might even make a story."

Doctor Bailey's story follows, as he told it to the young reporter (myself):

IT was a night such as one does not forget—away out in a lonely prospector's cabin up in the mountains.

I was assistant company physician of the Stony Creek Mining Corporation, and on this particular night I had to take a trip up into the hills, fifteen miles or more, to attend a Chinaman who had been shot. I didn't care to go, but that's what a doctor's life is—the call of duty at any hour of the day or night. I remember that it commenced to rain just after I started out, and I had to get out the poncho from one of the saddle bags.

But, at that, the circumstances and complications of the affair made it interesting, and gave me something to think about on the journey. For I couldn't get it out of my head that this shooting of Sam Wong, the laundryman, was somehow closely connected with the thing that had happened in town that evening—the disappearance of a $250,000 string of pearls. Why, even the very idea of there being a string of pearls in that God-forsaken place was curious enough, if you ever saw Stony Creek. A necklace like that was about the last thing that one would ever expect to see there. As a matter of fact, it wasn't seen—not very much. It was the disappearance, as I said, that had us guessing.

There was a stranger in town, a suspicious character, supposed to be Frisco Irish, although he said his name was Frank Ingram, or something like that. A Chinaman by the name of Sing Ling ran a restaurant and chop-suey place, both American and Chinese foods, and along with that, in the up-stairs rooms, he was understood to run something of a dive, including an opium den. The Sheriff felt that he was a bad egg, and suspected some association with the underworld of San Francisco, but Sing Ling was pretty smooth. It was hard to get anything on him, and so long as his place was orderly it did not seem necessary to bother him.

If the stranger was really Frisco Irish, the underworld party that he was thought to be, probably with the drug addiction common to his class, it was only natural that he would see Sing Ling for the purpose of hitting the pipe. Sing Ling admitted this much to the Sheriff when Frisco was found in an up-stairs room quite dead to the world. Sing Ling also admitted that he had frisked his patron—had gone through him while he was stupefied with the drug, and so had discovered the pearls. He admitted that it was his practice to do this—oh, not for the purpose of stealing anything his customers might have; no, no!—but just for curiosity. If they had six-shooters, it was good to take the bullets out—much safer if they would get excited, later.

But, as to these pearls, when Sing Ling once got his

Sing Ling got the impression of someone reaching a hand through the broken window

fingers on them, he admired them with delight, holding them up by the light to look them over for a couple of minutes. But while doing this—so he said—he noticed the door was opened a slight crack, and he thought he saw someone's eye peeking in. Sing Ling laid the necklace on a little table which stood close to the window, but by the time he crossed the room to the door and looked out the owner of the spying eye—if any—had vanished. Sing closed the door, and this time fastened it, and commenced a further search of the pockets and clothing of his guest.

It was a couple of minutes, or possibly five minutes, after he laid the pearls on the table and fastened the door, and while he was in the act of making a final investigation of Frisco's pockets, that Sing Ling got the impression of someone reaching a hand through the broken window. Quickly the Chinaman wheeled about—in fact, too quickly, and without sufficient care, for he had the misfortune to knock over the candle near him and throw the room in darkness.

Sing Ling said he was so astonished at what had happened that he lost a few seconds reaching around for the necklace in the dark, and he lost another few seconds searching for a match, and then—as was not surprising—he found the necklace had disappeared.

The Chinaman, in his imperfect English, said that his mind was confused by all this. Certainly his report of the matter was much more confused than stated above, but as given it is about the meaning he sought to convey. It seemed strange, too, that Sing Ling would be so careless. A $250,000 necklace ordinarily should not be left on a table by a window, where there is opportunity for a hand to come through and take it.

The Sheriff, having traced the suspicious stranger, Frisco Irish, to Sing Ling's place, entered the restaurant, and was met by Sing Ling, who told him the above story.

Then the investigation began. Of course, Frisco Irish didn't have the pearls. Then there was the questioning of Sing Ling himself about the whole affair before anyone investigated the outside of the building to see if there were signs of a ladder or a rope. By that time any instrument of that kind employed would naturally have been removed. The ground was sandy, so that footprints, or even ladder marks, were not in evidence. A ladder belonging to the company, and usually left at the back of the store, was found in its place; it might or might not have been temporarily removed and returned.

THE Sheriff was not ready to believe Sing Ling's story, and accused him of treachery. He locked him up, along with the sleeping Frisco Irish, Charley See, the chef, and three or four other Chinese boys who served as waiters and dishwashers. Customers were searched, then ordered out, after which a painstaking examination of the place, and especially of the up-stairs room, was inaugurated. As to the broken window—which, by the way, had a couple of panes entirely out, except for some bits of glass hanging to the side—the Sheriff couldn't see why Sing Ling himself might not have removed the panes—for convenience. There was a trick somewhere, he said.

No trace of the pearls was found in the establishment, and, leaving further search of the premises to his deputies, the Sheriff devoted himself to putting Sing Ling through the third degree. There was no change in his story. As to the rest, the mind of the dishwasher boy seemed to be a complete blank, as was also that of each of the waiters.

Just what had happened? Had Sing Ling passed out the necklace through the window to a confederate? Or had he previously transferred it to someone, already out of the place when the Sheriff called, and then invented the window story? If so, to whom? Who were his friends? Well, there was Sam Wong, the laundryman, but Sam was a typical washee-washee, industrious and all that, and apparently honest. Had he been around? Sing Ling said he had not seen him. Finally, pressed upon this point, Charley See, the cook, said that Sam Wong had come into the kitchen through the back door, bringing some laundry. Sam Wong's place was on the same side of the street, at the other end of the block. He had had a little talk with Charley See, had taken a peek into the dining-room to see if he could say a word to Sing Ling, and then had gone on his way. All very suspicious, if Sing's rather fishy story were true. What did Sam Wong talk about? Nothing—except that he said he was going to the city to see his brother, who was sick.

I was brought into the case through the fact that the Sheriff could not wake up Frisco Irish, who was heavily doped. Had Sing Ling loaded the pipe with an extra big dose of opium for special reasons of his own? Anyway, both Doctor Beecher and I attended Frisco over at the jail, trying to bring him to, and incidentally we learned of Sing Ling's story of the affair and the other details of the case, so far as they were known in the Sheriff's office during that first hour.

ABOUT Doctor Alan Beecher. He had the contract as company physician for the Stony Creek Mining Corporation and was my superior officer, so to speak. In his fifties, he had been a very busy man, the mine officials told me, and sometimes two doctors were needed in two different places. Also, however, as I was told confidentially, while a highly competent man in his prime, Beecher seemed to be failing. He was drinking hard at times, gambling quite a lot and was no longer reliable. I was given to understand that when his contract expired I might have his place, at the advanced income. In any event, there was the opportunity for considerable private practice on the side.

When I arrived on the job and met Doctor Beecher, a few months before this affair of which I am speaking, I quickly saw the reason for his premature failing. The man showed slight traces of incipient locomotor ataxia, and I said to myself that it was not surprising that he had been

acting queerly. These symptoms were the forerunners of that general paralysis and insanity from which he would die within a few years. The thing would get progressively worse. Evidently the Doctor in his youth had lived high and fast, indeed; had gambled in more ways than one, taking chances that no prudent man would take. And now in his mature years, barely passing middle age, he was about to pay the terrific and frightful penalty.

Doctor Beecher and I both worked over Frisco Irish, using an electric battery, ammonia fumes, strychnine, artificial respiration, slapping, and coffee—though the latter only choked him. Meanwhile, I speculated on the mysterious features of the case. Was Sing Ling's story true? If the precious stones had really gone through the window, would the chop-suey man later share in the spoils? Sing Ling protested innocence, but by being safely locked up he was obviously removed from consideration as having any part in what followed later.

I took my time about lighting a cigarette as I watched Sam Wong

Charley See's story of Sam Wong's visit to the kitchen of the restaurant interested the Sheriff, and he asked me to leave Frisco Irish to Doctor Beecher and to go over and see if Sam Wong was in his laundry, at work.

"You can tell better'n anyone if he acts nervous," said the Sheriff. "Much better you'd see him, Doc, anyhow, than for me, or a deputy. He'd be on his guard if he saw one of my men. Just go and ask for your shirts and collars, or take some dirty wash in—anything. Just talk to him. Hell!"

With that last exclamation, the Sheriff snapped his fingers, then stepped over and studied the papers on his desk.

"What's the matter?" I asked.

He held up a telegram along with a "Man Wanted" police notice, offering a reward for the capture of Frisco Irish, and containing front and side photographs of a clean-shaven man who looked very like the man we were trying to awaken. The telegram, which I read later, mentioned a handsome sum, offered by the owner from whom the pearls had been stolen, for their recovery.

"Now that I think of it," said the Sheriff, "Sam Wong was in here about supper time to get my laundry." It might be explained that the Sheriff's private office was a sort of combination sleeping-room, living-room, office, cardroom, dining-room, washroom, shaving parlor, and about all the other things that a man would want in a one-room flat where he both lives and officiates as a public servant at the same time. A curtain stretched across a corner of the room back of his desk formed an improvised closet where his clothes were hung. He indicated this corner when he mentioned the laundry.

"I recollect," added the Sheriff. "Sam Wong looked the stuff over, counting the shirts and socks and things, and taking his time. And all the while this 'Man Wanted' picture and this telegram right here on my desk."

"But Sam Wong can't read English," I said.

"How the devil do I know that he can't read? He might have tipped off Sing Ling—and (*Continued on page* 58)

Revealed Through a NEEDLE'S EYE

William Armstrong, facing disaster for neglecting a sacred trust, could not take his case to the police. In his extremity he—

By Detective RICHARD MORGAN

of the "Phœnix Investigating Service"

***as told to* W. ADOLPHE ROBERTS**

I HAVE often been asked why so many cases that apparently might well have been handled by the Police Department are turned over to private detectives. People who are not familiar with the inside tracks of the law can only see that the services of the police are free, while a private detective must naturally charge a big fee. Why pay for the collecting of routine evidence, they demand, unless of course the cops have first tried and failed?

The answer to this is, that the victim of a crime quite frequently does not want the offender punished. He merely wants restitution, or the chance to dictate the terms of a compromise. If he employs the police, he may not be able to keep the matter out of the courts—and possibly his own good name may be smirched by any sort of publicity. He uses a private detective to insure secrecy and to evade the full implications of the law. Thereby, he sets up a personal system of justice, and it is the business of such as I to help him to do so. The confession is not wholly creditable to our profession, but it might as well be made once for all. And I shall tell a true story to illustrate the point.

Not so many months ago, I got a call from the president of a trust company I shall call the Union Finance. His name was William Armstrong, and he was one of the most eminent bankers in New York. I had successfully handled two or three little jobs for him. As soon as we were alone in his office, he stated in a voice that was hard with repressed anger:

"MORGAN, one of the officers of the company has been embezzling funds. I want a complete report on his private life, his outside business activities, and, if possible, the disposition he has made of the money taken here. He must not be arrested unless I say so later. I don't want him even scared to the point where he might become a fugitive and force me to admit what he has been doing. Are you equal to the assignment? I don't care to tell you the man's name unless you are."

"Why, of course, Mr. Armstrong," I replied easily. "I don't draw the line at *any* confidential work. A client's wishes are the only rules that govern me."

He nodded, smiling grimly. "Very well. The embezzler is George J. Duffy, our third vice-president. The Union Finance Trust Company makes a specialty of banking the funds of philanthropic enterprises, memorial committees and so forth. Generally, we are given the management of the accounts, but we'll accept them simply on deposit.

"For the past two years, one of these 'off-again on-again' drives has been waged for a new Polish hospital. Duffy was elected treasurer of the executive committee, because he was an officer of a bank, I guess, though the fact that he was connected with our institution had nothing directly to do with it. He brought the account here. About two hundred thousand dollars has been collected, of which Duffy has taken at least half."

"If his guilt is so obvious to you, isn't the hospital committee likely to detect it at any minute?" I asked.

"I DON'T think so. They seem to be a careless lot. They haven't had an audit since the drive started. Duffy has been making a financial report to them every six months. They have been satisfied with the balance sheets on the account furnished by us, because those sheets have always shown the fund to be intact."

I raised my eyebrows. "Doctored by a confederate in the cashier's department, eh?"

"No. Duffy employed a cleverer trick than that. He'd draw heavily on the fund throughout each six months' period. His right to do so was absolute. Then, on the last day, he would deposit his own check to cover the shortage. The moment the balance sheet was in his hands, he'd start drawing again, in progressively larger amounts.

"This time his covering check, which was for ninety thousand dollars on the Chelsea & Midas Bank, came back marked 'Insufficient Funds.' Our cashier was on the point of taking it up with Duffy, when the president of the Chelsea & Midas got us on the phone and asked that the check be put through a second time. He explained that Duffy had borrowed ninety thousand from his bank the day before, but as the result of a clerical error it had not been credited to him.

"I understood Duffy's scheme instantly. He'd been keeping a small account at the Chelsea & Midas, but his credit there was sound. He'd make a loan to protect the Polish Hospital Fund and take it up within a few days by means of a check drawn on the fund. The transaction cost him six per cent.—a paper transaction, pure and simple, like dealing in margins on Wall Street."

"But it's only a suspicion on your part," I cut in. "You've only got circumstantial evidence against him."

"I'll admit that," said Armstrong drily. "However, the fact that he drew one hundred thousand from the fund this morning is reason enough for me to consider him an embezzler and to have him investigated. He's taking ninety thousand to pay for a dead horse, and ten thousand more to squander, that's all. It can't be legitimate."

"Then you want me to——"

"To tie him up tight with anything you can get against him—anything, do you hear? Bring him to the point where he'll have to save his skin by accepting the hardest bargain I can force upon him."

"He's probably spent the money I ventured.

"Maybe. Find out. He has other resources, a house in Roslyn, Long Island, anyway. If we can't get back the full amount from Duffy, we'll make good to the Polish Hospital Fund. But we want the last possible cent from him without the scandal that prosecuting him would entail. You'll understand, I'm sure, that the Union Finance Trust Company can't afford to have it known that one of its officers has been looting a worthy philanthropy."

"Certainly, Mr. Armstrong," I answered. "I understand. This case is going to get the right of way over everything else on my books until I've shown you results."

A secretary was detailed to guide me to a passageway from which, unnoticed, I could take a good look at George J. Duffy. I saw a man about forty-five years old, with well-cut features that the ordinary observer would have considered strong, but which were weakened by soft hazel eyes and a lower lip that pouted while seeking to clamp itself against the upper. His hair was thin in front and was starting to turn gray. His clothes were in excellent taste, but carelessly kept and negligently worn.

I watched them through the peep-holes

That afternoon, when Duffy left for home at four o'clock, I started to shadow him. It was an easy job. He rode straight out to Roslyn on the Long Island Railroad. I found his house to be a rather modest frame structure, worth perhaps $20,000 with the land on which it stood. I hung around until I felt sure he would not be going out for the evening. Then I strolled to the main street of the village and made cautious inquiries concerning his reputation. He was described to me as a quiet citizen, whose family life had never been the subject of gossip. He was married, but had no children. The small shopkeepers valued his trade, because he paid promptly.

The sole hint of anything out of the ordinary came from the news-dealer at the railroad station.

"It's too bad Mr. Duffy has to work nights in New York so often," he said. "He misses the last train half the time. Them big bankers have to keep their noses to the grindstone, all right."

I had anticipated that Duffy had a secret life in town, and the next day, sure enough, he did not go to Roslyn. I trailed him to an apartment hotel in West Fifty-fifth Street and saw him enter the elevator without being announced as a visitor by the telephone operator. The Hampshire was a flashy, expensive house, which specialized in one-room and two-room flats. It demanded outward decorum, and no one

but a tenant would have been allowed to sail in as Duffy had done. Naturally, he would be using a false name, and for the moment I thought it better to ask no questions. I waited to see whether he would come out alone.

At 6.30, he reappeared in the lobby with a young woman. She was very beautiful; tall and blue-eyed. There was just a touch of hardness about her mouth, of gaudiness in her make-up and loudness in her clothes. But she would have passed in most circles as being quite ladylike. I figured her as a small actress; or a gold-digger of the type so common on Broadway who puts up a false social front in order to get by. Somewhere in her, I knew, there was a streak of the gutter.

I shadowed Duffy and his girl all the evening, but did not get close enough to overhear any of their conversation. They dined at a cabaret, took in the last show at a motion-picture house, drifted expensively through a night club, and ended up at the Hampshire, which obviously they both regarded as home.

"Only five hundred?" cried Pearl. "You've got to give me more!"

In the morning, I conducted two little operations which might stump an amateur, but which any detective can accomplish with half his wits at work. I learned that George J. Duffy's regular account at the Chelsea & Midas Bank did not much exceed $3,000, and that he and the young woman I had seen him with were occupying an apartment at the Hampshire as Mr. and Mrs. James Dudley. The details of how I got the information are scarcely important. At the bank, I posed as a tailor interested in Duffy's desirability as a charge customer. At the hotel, I pretended to have recognized the girl as a movie star and was obligingly set right by the desk clerk.

With these two points settled, I mapped my campaign. Duffy was a weak brother, I decided, who could best be reached indirectly. I did not believe he was doing a single crooked thing that was not related to his life with his girl. Success as a detective often rests upon the accuracy of judgments of this sort. Anyway, I set a cheap operative to shadowing Duffy and devoted my own attention to the woman who called herself Mrs. James Dudley.

In a week's time, I knew pretty nearly all I needed to know about her habits. She arose late every day and left the hotel some time between one and three in the afternoon. Her time before dinner was spent in certain smart shops, where she had charge accounts. Yet she did not buy a great deal of stuff, her passion for luxury spent most of its force in trying on nice things. She had many girl friends, a shade tougher-looking than she was, whom she'd meet here and there, for dancing, or in speak-easies, after leaving the shops. When Duffy was not expected (he came twice that week), she'd join a party that included men and women, for dinner. Once she hurried home alone at 9 P. M., and a little later a man asked for her at the desk and was allowed to go up to her apartment.

Hers was a life typical of the Broadway mistress who is circumspect and fairly loyal to her protector.

But the most interesting observation I made was as follows: On both mornings after Duffy had left her to go to his office, she emerged from the Hampshire a little early—for her—and went to a branch of the Wheat Exchange Bank on Seventh Avenue, where she deposited a roll of bills. It was not safe for me to follow her into the women's department of the bank, and I postponed any attempt to learn the name she used or the size of her account.

The time had come for me to make the woman's acquaintance. Now, I don't look in the least like a detective. That fact has helped me a lot. I have a round, good-natured face, and when (*Continued on page* 97)

The RIDDLE of the

In spite of the evidence against her the police could murder of her husband could have had a hand

By FREDERIC O. SCHULTZE
Police Reporter, Detroit *Free Press*

A GRINNING, human skull, yellow and mouldy with age, lay under a bright light on the desk of Inspector John P. Smith, head of the homicide squad of the Detroit Police Department. The shades in the office had been drawn so that but little of the light of the bright September day entered. The sight was ghastly—almost supernatural. Inspector Smith was standing near his desk, one hand grasping the right arm of the prisoner. In the room also were Edward H. Fox, chief of detectives, Detective Lieutenants Paul Wencel and Frank L. Collins, and myself.

Chills were running up and down my spine. The scene somehow reminded me of the grave-digging in "Hamlet." In my eight years as police reporter I never had seen anything with the dramatic setting of this. The prisoner, a woman, had her bloodshot eyes riveted on the skull and her face was deathly white. It seemed to us who were looking at her, that she was about to faint and sink to the floor.

Nothing was said for more than a minute while the little company remained in tense silence.

Presently she began to writhe as though pierced with red-hot needles. But it was her mind that was being tortured, and it was worse than any physical pain could be—the torture of a guilty conscience. Finally Inspector Smith spoke:

"Mrs. Turak, we dug where you told us and here is the skull of your former husband, Joseph Podolsky."

"No, no, it isn't my husband—it's Peter Zydko! Take it away! Don't let it look at me like that!" cried Mrs. Turak.

She clawed out as though to push it from her sight, but, before anyone could restrain her, she had fainted.

Inspector Smith exchanged glances with the others.

"Gentlemen, it looks as though we have unearthed two murders where we thought there was only one. When she revives we will question her further."

COULD any scene on the stage be more dramatic? Could a piece of fiction contain such a smashing climax?

I said no as I witnessed it in 1922, and now more than four years later I say the same. A police reporter plays many Doctor Watson rôles to the Sherlock Holmes of the police department, but never did a story impress me so much like one of A. Conan Doyle's. I could almost fancy Sherlock saying as the case was closed and the slayer put behind the bars for life:

"My dear Watson, never take anything for granted. You see there were two men slain instead of one——"

But from the beginning, the murder of Joseph Podolsky was a paradox.

No one could prove he had been slain.

For more than three years the police had tried to locate his body and then one day a man came to Police Headquarters and reported his wife had left him and taken three of his trunks and $600. He gave the name of John Turak, and in making the report he said his wife's former name had been Mrs. Mary Podolsky.

To the average person the association of the names would have little import, but then it has been said the greatest asset of any employee of a police department is a good memory. Earl Fleming, complaint clerk in the detective bureau of Police Headquarters, remembered the name. He also remembered that she had been arrested at the time Podolsky had been reported missing, on a charge of suspicion of murder, together with her roomer, Peter Zydko. He also recalled that they had been released several days after their arrest for lack of evidence or definite proof that Podolsky was dead. It had been hinted at the time that she would marry Zydko. The fact that she had not, aroused the detective instinct in Fleming. He wanted to know why she hadn't. So he sent Turak back to the homicide squad to report the theft to them. If he had been an ordinary clerk he would have taken the report as a matter of routine and one of the outstanding cases in the history of Detroit crime still would have been a mystery.

IF Podolsky had not been a man of sheer ability and prominence in the Ukrainian colony in which he moved, it is doubtful if he ever would have been reported missing or that any effort would have been made to locate him. Certainly after a lapse of more than three years he would have been forgotten, but as a man is loved in life, so will he be missed in death.

The facts of the unusual case are these.

Podolsky, who was about forty years old, was apparently living happily with his wife, Mary, several years his junior, in their modest little home. With then lived a roomer whose name was Peter Zydko, and who was apparently nothing more than a good friend of the family. While police suspected a love affair at the time of Podolsky's disappearance, there was nothing to substantiate it other than the idle gossip of neighbors.

One sweltering night in the middle of July of 1919 the three went for a ride in Podolsky's automobile. They told neighbors they were going to "cool off," and the last time Podolsky ever was seen alive or dead was when he waved a parting salute from the driver's seat of the car.

Along about midnight a passerby saw Mrs. Podolsky return home alone. A short time later Zydko drove into the garage—alone. No one thought anything about it until they missed Podolsky several days later and asked where he was.

They tapped at the door and were met by Mrs. Podolsky, pale and wan. "Where's Joe?" he next-door neighbor asked. "I haven't seen him in a couple of days."

"I don't know," she replied nervously. "He's gone. He told us he would be back, but he hasn't shown up yet."

"TOO bad," sympathized the neighbor. "He was such a nice man. But didn't he say where he was going?"

"No. You see it was so hot and he had been acting so strangely the last few days. We were out on the Seven-mile Road and he got out of the car to get some ice-cream to cool us off. He never came back."

Grinning SKULL

not believe that a woman who was accessory to the in the murder of her paramour. But——

"Did you report it to the police?"

Pale as she had been, she grew even paler, and as she moistened her lips she admitted she had not, but would do so in a couple of days if he didn't return. But she didn't have to report it. Neighbors did it for her and the man who had asked her about her husband gave it as his opinion that Podolsky had been slain.

"No, no, it isn't my husband—— Take it away!"

"He's dead as sure as fate. She killed him," the neighbor reported. "She's glad to get rid of him. She's going to marry Zydko, her roomer. He must be in on it, too. They took him out for a ride purposely to kill him."

This was the status of the case when Detective Lieutenants Paul Wencel and Frank Collins were assigned to it. After asking a few questions at the house, they brought Mrs. Podolsky and Zydko to Police Headquarters for a statement.

The oppressive heat still had the city in its merciless grip when they were brought to the little red building which housed the Police Department in 1919. It was a three-story, red brick structure which had been built in the early seventies, and the heat poured in from the burning pavement as though from a furnace. An effort had been made to cool off the building by creating a draught by opening the windows, but in spite of this the heat was almost unbearable. It was because of this that the door of the homicide squad's quarters was opened and on that particular afternoon when I strolled down the hall listlessly I could not help but hear the sound of a woman's voice in vigorous denial.

"I did not kill him!" I heard her say.

I looked in the door at a short, stockily built little woman, very commonplace-looking, it was true, but with a fire in

her dark eyes that caused one to give her a second glance. She was dressed plainly, but neatly, and seemed cool and collected. Across from her were seated Lieutenants Wencel and Collins.

I LOOKED down the corridors. The heat had driven everyone to cool corners or to open windows. Apparently the building was deserted. What a fine chance to hear what was going on, I thought, and while it was not ethical, I will admit I posted myself near enough to the door to hear what was being said, but far enough away to pass on should anyone approach. The end justified the means, I thought. Here was a woman accused of slaying her husband. I did not know who she was nor had I heard of the case, but I knew the public would be interested. A woman who slays always holds the public's attention.

"If you didn't kill him, who did?" The voice I recognized as Wencel's. The voice was hard and carried a tone I never had heard in it before.

"How do you know he's dead?"

"If he isn't dead, where is he?"

"I don't know."

"When did you see him last?"

She was being put through what the newspapers call a grilling. A few years ago it would have been called the "third degree." Spellbound, I listened.

"It was hot. That is why we went out for a drive in the first place. Joe was driving the car when he decided he would go and get some ice-cream. It was getting late and we were out in the country—not the country, exactly; but along the Seven-mile Road. Off to one side were some stores. Joe told us to wait, that he would get the ice-cream there, and he left us. We waited and waited and finally Zydko went to see what had become of him.

"He found he never had entered the store. Then I went there too and the storekeeper said there hadn't been a man in there for a couple of hours. We decided that he had gone some place else, so we waited around for a while. Then we concluded that perhaps he had met a friend of his and maybe he had gone for a ride with him to get the ice-cream and their car had broken down and that he couldn't get back. After being parked there for nearly an hour, we came home."

FOR more than a half an hour I listened to the two officers question her, but never did she weaken in her story. She gave the location of the store and detail after detail that seemed to bear her out, and then Wencel shot out a question which I had been waiting for and which he told me later he had been holding in reserve to shatter her story.

"If this is true, Mrs. Podolsky, why did you come home alone?"

Every word was as clearly enunciated as though cut with a knife. The "grilling" had come to a climax. The question was going to trap her or free her. I watched her face closely. Apparently the full significance had not touched her.

"Why, the car broke down on the way home and Zydko started to fix it. He was so long at it that I said I would walk. We were only a few blocks away."

"Do you love Zydko?"

"We are nothing more than friends. He is a friend of my husband."

There were a few more questions and the quizzing closed when the two officers told her they were sorry but they would have to hold her a day or so until they checked up on her story.

And then Zydko was led into the little room with the open door. What a tale the walls could tell of the men that had been questioned there for almost half a century, I thought. But still, what a better tale they could give to the world if they could but read the thoughts of the hundreds of criminals that had been led there, and thus be led to tell whether they were innocent or guilty.

ZYDKO was a determined-looking man, thick-set, with heavy features and a poise that spelled assurance and confidence. He told the same story as Mrs. Podolsky.

For more than an hour I heard the two detectives accuse him of murder. They told him that he had buried the body of Podolsky along the Seven-mile Road; that he loved Mrs. Podolsky and that he had planned to kill her husband; that Mrs. Podolsky had prompted him to do it; that she had helped him kill Podolsky and that she helped bury him, and that the story of the car being broken down was all a lie.

"TWO days after being brought in for questioning, they were released.

'"When Mr. Podolsky returns, we'll let you know,' said Zydko. He took Mrs. Podolsky by the arm—and that was the last time the police ever saw Zydko alive!"

But they could not shatter Zydko's story. Without anger and without emotion, he met their accusations. They were unable to twist him in what he said.

"I don't think he's dead," Zydko replied several times. "He must be wandering around some place. Maybe he's out of his head—you know—with the heat."

COATLESS and with wilted collars the detectives came from the little room. They told Zydko the same as they had told Mrs. Podolsky—they would have to hold him until they checked up on his story. They booked the two on a charge of suspicion of murder.

"There isn't the least doubt in my mind," Lieutenant Collins told me later, when I asked what the case was all about, "but what he is dead. What would he want to drop out of sight for? Apparently he had no enemies. Everybody liked him. The only reason to kill him would be to allow Mrs. Podolsky and Zydko to marry."

There was nothing about the disappearance of Podolsky to warrant a sensational story at this time and the daily papers carried a brief paragraph to the effect that his wife and her roomer were being held in connection with his disappearance.

But it is not always the sensational cases in which the most interest lies, and for two days I followed Lieutenants Wencel and Collins as they checked the stories of these two. There was nothing to disprove them. They had gone into the confectionery store looking for Podolsky, as they said,

and apparently their car had broken down. No one saw it, but then, the police had to take their word for it, for they could not shake their story. Along the Seven-mile Road we went looking for a freshly dug grave, or for a body in the ditch, but we could find nothing.

Time and time again within the forty-eight hours they had been held at Police Headquarters the man and woman had been brought in to check up on their story and to pick holes in it. Each was told the other confessed, but without avail. The deception got the officers nowhere. They laughed and said Podolsky was alive.

And so, while the friends of Podolsky besieged Police Headquarters and insisted that the pair had put him out of the way, there was not one single bit of evidence to prove that he had been killed. Two days after being brought in for questioning, the pair were released.

"When Mr. Podolsky returns we'll let you know," said Zydko. He took Mrs. Podolsky by the arm—and that was the last time the police ever saw Zydko alive!

"Did you notice the satisfaction he seemed to get out of that last remark?" asked Lieutenant Wencel. "If we could find Podolsky's body, I'll bet I would make him confess."

And so the case dropped into oblivion as far as the Police Department was concerned. Wencel and Collins made a few more trips along the Seven-mile Road looking for graves and in that section for more than a year every suspicious circumstance was thoroughly investigated by these two officers in the hope that it might in some way lead to a clue having connection with Podolsky's disappearance. But the quest was futile. Across the files of the case in the homicide squad was marked "Closed. No *corpus delicti!*" From time to time an effort was made to revive interest in the affair by Podolsky's many friends. Several months later Wencel called at the house Mrs. Podolsky had occupied, but another family lived there. The new occupant said Mrs. Podolsky had moved, but was unable to give her new address. For several months the detectives watched the papers for the marriage license of Zydko and Mrs. Podolsky, but it never appeared. It was possible, of course, that they had left town and might have been married elsewhere.

And so time went on until the case became a memory. Everybody forgot it with the exception of the two detectives who had worked on it, and Fleming, the detective bureau clerk.

She managed to get the gun away from him, and then——

There is a saying that "Murder will out." Certainly it applied to this case, but in a manner wholly unexpected—as is usually the case.

Three years had passed and there had been many changes in the Police Department, both in personnel and in appearance. The dingy red brick building which had housed the department for half a century had been replaced by a massive new building and several hundred men had been added to the staff. But the efficiency of the force was still a matter of pride and none shared it to a greater degree than Fleming.

One sweltering hot day in (*Continued on page* 62)

"$10,000 or We

"Pay!—or we will return your son to you ultimatum sent by "Black Fox" to the heart-

By Inspector THOMAS J. TUNNEY

Formerly of the New York Police Department

***as told to* ISABEL STEPHEN**

"IF this man will carry on with us, it should give us a good opportunity to get 'Black Fox' at last. During the past few years, it is estimated there have been about one hundred and fifty kidnapped school children. Parents are panic-stricken—scared to death to communicate with the police. Now, Captain, go to it and get your man. You can have all the assistance you require."

Commissioner Woods drawled out the foregoing as he handed me a soiled, clumsily written letter across his desk at New York Police Headquarters. Attached to it was a cheap envelope addressed in printed characters and the Central Office interpreter's translation.

It was the Commissioner's practice of giving the men under him a free hand that made him so popular with the entire force. Fraternizing with them outside the Department, he was probably one of the most genial men who ever held his position. In office, he was a man of very few words. When he spoke in that soft, overemphasized Harvard accent, it promised a big reward for success—or a punitive demotion for failure.

I WAS captain of the Greenwich Street Police Station at that time—it was in the summer of 1913—and while I discussed a few matters connected with my precinct, my eyes sought again and again the ugly image of a black hand, grasping a dagger, which served as signature to the anonymous communication before me.

"Go to it, now, and bring in Black Fox, dead or alive, but be wary. The child's life must not be endangered—and they are a murderous crew."

Leaving the Commissioner's office, I glanced over the threatening note. There was, of course, no name signed to it, nor any address given. The envelope, however, addressed to Joe Cascardo, No. — Bleecker Street, New York City, bore the stamp of a post-office branch in Brooklyn. The menacing characters had been translated as follows, in neat, official type:

> *We have Johnnie. We must have* $10,000. *Be careful. Don't go to the police. It will not be good for you and your family, and we will send your boy home in pieces in a box.*

I folded up the letter, official interpretation, and envelope, and placed them in my wallet. Such communications are not unheard of to-day—but they are sent by irresponsible morons who are quickly captured. They were broadcast, at the time of the Johnnie Cascardo case, by one of the most vicious gangs of desperadoes with which the New York police ever came in contact—a despicable mob, who prowled after little children, and penalized parental love to the last penny the family fortunes could stand. It was said to be ruled by a prominent merchant, known only as Black Fox.

As I rode back up-town, I reviewed in my mind all that I had heard rumored about this monster. Black Fox was not a bogey name used by parents to frighten their children—it was the sinister name muttered by messengers of the black-handers in order to paralyze parents with fear.

The threats, blood-curdling as they were, contained in the extortion letters were not empty ones. Kidnapped children had actually been mutilated, and in one or two instances killed, when the ransom was not forthcoming. The amounts demanded ranged from $500 to $15,000, and most parents had preferred being blackmailed to running the risk involved in reporting their troubles to the police.

Nine kidnappers had been arrested in ten years—but, though these all received long sentences, each one had been a "lone wolf," actuated by revenge. They, the police were convinced, had no connection with the gang operated by Black Fox. Investigations had uncovered the elaborate system employed in his organization, which was as follows: The kidnappers got their relatives to spread the word along in the right directions, so that finally the parents being blackmailed learned that so-and-so knew somebody else, who knew still another man who could get to the kidnappers.

It would have been an easy matter for the police to have captured the kidnappers had they had the co-operation of the parents, but the parents lived in terror of the vengeance of the gang.

Would Cascardo have the courage to go through with it? Frankly, I doubted this. If he, himself, had been in danger, it would have been possible to convince him of his duty. As it was, the criminals were shielding themselves behind the body of his oldest born—little ten-year-old Johnnie, the apple of his eye.

From a near-by telephone booth I called up the bakery store at No. — Bleecker Street which he owned, and asked him to meet me at a certain obscure restaurant that afternoon. I explained that the Commissioner had turned over the blackmailing letter to me.

"Oh, it's all right now," he answered in a dead, monotonous voice. "I know where he is now. He's with friends. It was just a joke of a neighbor of mine to send that letter."

SO he had reneged already. I didn't blame him. It was the most natural thing in the world. He had mailed the letter the night before, and had, for some reason or other, become panic-stricken. I knew the man; he was hard-working, thrifty and ambitious. He bore an excellent reputation. There had been a rumor that on two occasions he had aided relatives in paying a ransom for a kidnapped child.

The only thing to do was to force his co-operation. This entailed a tremendous responsibility—but something had to be done.

At that time I had some of the best men in the Department working under me. These included Detectives Bottie,

Kill Your Son"

in pieces, in a box!" was the blood-curdling broken father of little Johnnie Cascardo

Moses, Cavone, Oliver, De Gilio, Trabucci and Dowling. With their aid, I felt pretty confident I should be able to run down Black Fox, if things broke right. However, no matter how efficiently we might work, should Cascardo pay over the money before we came to some understanding, all our efforts would go for nothing.

Walking through Bleecker Street, on the side on which the bakery was located, I kept a keen but cautious look-out for a vacant flat from which Cascardo's place could be kept under surveillance. With one of those ten-strikes, by which fortune occasionally favors detectives, I discovered a "To Let" sign on the building directly opposite his place.

"Your boy is crying for you," the blackhanders' letter read

Two hours later the flat was rented, and I was addressing eight very skillful shadow men.

"You are to keep Cascardo's store under constant surveillance, day and night," I directed them. "Whenever you see a caller come out on the pavement and hold a conversation with the baker, follow that man. You needn't shadow Cascardo. Four men will be assigned to that. And remember, every minute, that a human life depends on your keeping successfully under cover. Don't take chances."

The men, dressed in rough working clothes, departed, took up headquarters in the rented flat and started what proved to be a forty-seven day-and-night vigil.

I knew the proprietor of a drug-store in the neighborhood, and obtained his permission to make my headquarters in his back room. There, I had two telephones installed so secretly that, so far as I knew, no one observed their installation.

Three days went by before I again got into communication with Cascardo. It was, as I mentioned before, absolutely necessary to gain his co-operation in order to snare Black Fox. The message I sent was a decoy to bring Cascardo to my secret headquarters. I rose and closed the door when he entered.

For an instant his dark, troubled eyes flashed with fiery anger when he recognized me.

"Why, I thought it was——" he began, with quivering lips. Then, belligerently, he added: "I don't want to have anything to do with the police. I told you it was all a mistake. I know where he is."

In spite of his anger, his lips trembled, and a misty veil filmed his eyes. I could see the man was all shot to pieces.

"You thought it was the man from Fiscarelli," I suggested softly. He started at the mention of the name. "Oh, yes, I know you 'consulted' him. He was one of the advisers the time your little nephew, Tony Coppola, was stolen, wasn't he? Yet he isn't an intimate friend of yours. I'm going to work on this case—that's settled. Why don't you work with me? You say you know where little Johnnie is. The truant officers would be interested to know, and

certainly I don't want to waste time if you do know. Sit down on that chair and think it over."

CASCARDD stood stock still on the spot he had reached when he first realized who I was. He remained standing. Up long before daylight, he worked late into the night. He seldom sat down, except at mealtime. Though credited with having a comfortable little sum in the bank, his money hadn't come to him easily. Except for a mechanical twitching of his lips and a vague rubbing of his hands against his coat, he seemed master of himself.

"Antonio Fiscarelli is the merchant who sells me flour," he offered. "He had nothing to do with Johnnie!"

More bravado!

"And it was just a coincidence you went to see him after Peter Gargiulo called on you—just as in the Tony Coppola case?" I murmured. This was a shot in the dark. My men had reported a pavement conference with Gargiulo first, and that this had been followed by a visit late at night to Fiscarelli's home on the East Side. Fiscarelli, it was true, owned a wholesale flour business and passed as a prosperous merchant among his neighbors, but murmurs had been heard connecting him with Black Fox's gang.

"Look here, Cascardo, I promise you that I shall not interrogate anybody—I won't have a soul approached until Johnnie is safely back with you," I said slowly and distinctly. "You shall be absolutely safe if you co-operate with me, give me your help. What's the use of your going on handing out money to those black-handers? You have other children—do you want them stolen, too, and frightened and tortured?"

The baker's broad shoulders quivered convulsively—once, twice. He was an intelligent man. He knew the danger of encouraging the kidnapping fiends—yet, his Johnnie was right then at the mercy of the enemy. It was an alliance that would be full of hazards.

Finally he seemed to realize that he was between the devil and the deep sea. I didn't believe that he suspected that our men were shadowing his store; he had probably never heard of "shadow men" being employed by the police. His surrender was pathetic. Though the back room, where our interview took place, was sunless and cool, beads of perspiration stood out on his forehead and lips as he silently confirmed our compact by handing me three printed letters, signed by the Black Hand.

"These say," he explained, "that they will send me Johnnie in pieces. First says they will send me the ear; second, the tongue; third, the heart. And each says, 'Beware—don't go to police.'"

"But you haven't told them yet that you will not pay the ransom, have you?" I asked him.

"No-o-o, this is just the start," he muttered. "I have yet to see the man who knows somebody to tell him. I have not ten thousand dollars, but will pay what I can."

He uttered the last defiantly.

"That's all right, Cascardo," I assured him. "Of course, you will pay the money—but you must tell me before you pay it. You swear this?"

He assured me that he would keep me in touch with developments through the mail, addressing his letters to the drug-store owner.

"Fiscarelli is my good friend," he insisted. "He is seeking the one who can take my message to those who have sent the letters. Soon now he hopes to let me know."

I glanced at the post-office rubber-stamp marks on the envelopes in which the letters were enclosed. These indicated that the threats had been mailed from Harlem, Jersey and the Bronx.

I certainly felt pity for that girl

Though Cascardo seemed to be perfectly sincere, I was taking no chances. After he had left me, I sent the letters down-town to Headquarters for translation, and sent a note to the men housed in the flat opposite the bakery urging them to keep up a constant surveillance.

Thirty days of continuous shadowing and investigation of all Cascardo's friends and acquaintances followed without any further communications from the kidnappers. Mrs.

Cascardo became haggard. Her eyes reflected the anxiety and torture she was undergoing. Italians rarely confide their worries and intimate business dealings to their wives, and I was certain that she had no idea as to how the negotiations were proceeding.

I compiled a list of all names and addresses of suspicious acquaintances and had these shadowed, so that when the time to spring our trap arrived I should have men on the ground to close them in if necessary. Naturally, I eliminated those beyond suspicion.

Cascardo had not communicated with me in any way—and I had not disturbed him. His conversations with men whom we suspected, because they were intimates of Fiscarelli and Gargiulo, took place either on the street or within the business establishments of these men.

On the thirty-fourth day of our work on the case, a delivery wagon stopped in front of the bakery. The driver entered and, according to my man's report, after a few moments Cascardo returned with him to the sidewalk, where they held a short conversation.

"Oh, please, please take me away!" begged the girl

To trail a clever crook is always a difficult matter. It is easy for him to mingle with the crowds and confuse the shadow man; if the latter know their business, however, they have a fair chance of keeping him in view. When the crook is riding in an automobile, his chances of escape are, of course, much greater. You cannot often trace him by the license number, for he takes the precaution of using a stolen car and a faked license number. But when the crook takes to a horse-driven wagon, the requisites the shadow man needs more than anything else are fleet feet and good wind.

IT may seem to the reader that the obvious thing for us to do would have been to go to the company owning the delivery wagon (it was a nationally known company) and make inquiries concerning this particular driver. That would not have done at all. These kidnappers were not taking any chances. Arrest meant fifty years in the penitentiary. Also, it was always necessary to keep in mind that the life of little Johnnie was at stake.

We had many mighty fine sprinters among our men. They could have easily kept up with that wagon. However, the sight of a man running always attracts attention—as much attention as a human fly climbing up the face of a building.

Though the two men who took up trailing the wagon on the first day lost their subject after a couple of hours, it was easy to surmise that at last we had discovered a man who was in close touch with those "higher up" in the gang. Whereas all the other men who had had conferences with Cascardo had taken no precautions against being followed, the driver led the shadow men such a roundabout and zigzag trail that we knew he had been instructed to be on the alert for possible followers.

Added to this was the fact that the driver stopped at only one other bakery store, and that was on the outer border of the East Side.

When Cascardo did not communicate with me, I thought it was time to have another interview. Consequently I sent for him.

"Haven't you something more (*Continued on page* 84)

"If He'd Let the Other

Aarons quarreled with a fellow boarder, strangled to death in his room. They

ONE of the most interesting cases I was ever sent out on came to me one morning not so long ago when Inspector Sullivan called me into his little cubby-hole of an office and said:

"Mike, a young fellow's been found murdered in his room in a boarding-house over on Manhattan Avenue. Beat it over there and see what it's all about." He handed me the address on a slip of paper and I made for the door.

Feretti, a clever detective from Headquarters, and his relief, Regan, were there when I arrived. I went into the room, three flights up, and found the murdered man, Albert Aarons, a young salesman, lying half across the bed, his pockets rifled of every valuable, and the unmistakable signs on his face and throat of having been strangled to death. I made a note of the fact that a letter "M," about an inch square, was tattooed on the under side of his right arm.

A fussy little man, who gave his name as Arnold Litsy, meanwhile was raising a rumpus about being detained—along with some others who were in the house at the time of the murder. His attitude I did not like. I mentally made a note of this, ordered that he remain, and left the room to follow out an idea that had just occurred to me.

I stepped out the window onto the fire-escape, followed along it and climbed through an open window into the room of George Myles, a young electrical engineer, who was one of the tenants, and who at the time sat at a table reading.

"Who the devil are you, and what do you want here," he bellowed.

"My name's Delaney and I'm from Police Headquarters," I told him quietly. "Kindly come with me."

The easy access from this young man's room to the room where the murder had occurred was a matter not to be overlooked. It is true I had known nothing of Myles when I stepped out onto the fire-escape. But I had had a hunch that there were possibilities in that direction.

I took Myles to the murder room and questioned him, my questioning resulting in the information that he knew Aarons and that there was bad blood between them, although he didn't state this. I knew it from his attitude, and from the remark he made when I pinned him down, which was this:

"I disliked him (Aarons) because I have no use for a man of his type. He never had a serious thought in his head, and made fun of those who had. As for a quarrel, one doesn't quarrel with a person one deliberately avoids."

The picture was that of Clifford Morris — the man who later was to become a jail-bird

Fellow's Girl Alone—"

over a girl—and later he was found caught the "other fellow," but——

By MICHAEL DELANEY,
Detective Lieutenant
as told to EDWIN A. GOEWEY

After he had made this statement, I could get nothing further out of him.

A little later I took Mrs. Simmons, the landlady, into a room for questioning. She became much excited, but I calmed her down and finally got the significant information out of her that for a long time preceding the coming of Aarons, Myles—for whom she had nothing but praise—and a pretty stenographer, Jessie Swayne, who lived in the house, had kept company. It was understood they intended to marry. Aarons showed interest in her, took her out to dances and the theater, and that led to a quarrel between Myles and Aarons. When I thought of Aarons, lying dead, it seemed like a case of, "If he'd let the other fellow's girl alone——" But still, one could never tell.

THIS girl, Jessie Swayne, was in the house, and I sent for her. While I was questioning her, Regan appeared, grasping the officious Litsy.

"I can't keep this fellow quiet, Delaney. He's roaring so about the police that he's got the others talking nasty. Maybe you'd better phone for someone from the station to take him there."

"I won't go to the station. I insist upon telling my story——"

"Right, Mr. Litsy." In a flash I decided the time had come to take advantage of the fellow's anger. "I'm going to let you talk now. Sorry I had to keep you waiting. No doubt you're a good, law-abiding citizen, anxious to tell everything which will help the police."

"Yes, sir, I am.

"Go down and keep the others quiet, Regan. Mr. Litsy, I'm going to hear you, but first listen to me." Then, in short sentences, I told him all I knew about the love affairs of Aarons, Myles, and the girl. While I spoke I watched her, noted her cheeks flame, then turn white; she appeared ready to cry. "What can you add to that?" I finished.

"Something that's important. Last night Myles came home earlier than usual and went to his room, after learning that Miss Swayne and Aarons were out together. They came in about eleven. She came into the parlor, where some of us were playing cards. Aarons went up-stairs. I followed, intending to go to bed. My room is on the third floor. As I opened my door, I heard the voices of Myles and Aarons from the floor above. They talked rather low, but they were quarreling bitterly about Miss Swayne and some letters. Finally I heard Myles say, 'If you were on the level I wouldn't care. But you're not. You keep away from her hereafter or I'll make you. And I'll give you until to-morrow morning, no longer, to turn over to me every letter she's written you.' Aarons laughed. Then I heard two doors slam; and that's all."

"You heard no sound in the night?"

"Absolutely nothing or I'd——"

"Thanks. You're a fine type of citizen. You can go now." I opened the door, pushed him out with a handshake, and yelled to Regan to permit him to leave the house.

Next I motioned for Mrs. Simmons to go, and turned to the girl.

Apparently what she had heard had made her anxious to speak; to say what she could to lessen the suspicion raised against Myles. She talked clearly and seemingly without attempt to hold anything back. After first protesting that Myles was the finest type of man, absolutely incapable of doing anything not aboveboard, she told this story:

For two years she and he had been sweethearts, frequently talking about marriage, though not actually engaged. She often had objected to Myles' close attention to his studies, because it deprived her of his company evenings; often compelled her to remain at home when all the other young people of the house were out enjoying themselves. Occasionally she went to the movies or elsewhere with some of the men, Myles making no objection. He and Aarons, however, never liked each other, the latter poking fun at Myles' studious habits. After Aarons had been her escort a few times, the men engaged in a bitter quarrel, in which Myles demanded that Aarons refrain from taking her out again.

She had resented this and accompanied Aarons, thereby creating the situation Mrs. Simmons had described. She insisted that she cared nothing for Aarons, and if Myles had apologized for his rudeness she would have forgiven him and done as he wished, for she loved him. But both had been stubborn, and the triangular misunderstanding had continued to the previous evening. Aarons, she stated, spent liberally when in funds. When broke, which was rather frequent, he was accustomed to borrow from the other boarders, giving his watch as security. Asked to describe it, she said it was an ornate timepiece of considerable value, upon the gold case of which was engraved a letter "M." He had explained the initial by stating that the watch had been his mother's, and her name was Mary. She was certain he carried the timepiece the previous evening, but believed he had very little money. He told her that he had not much more than sufficient to pay his board the next day, and so they had gone only to a movie and returned home early.

IN reply to queries concerning their relations, and if she knew anything concerning his past or where he came from, she gave me two leads. He had asked her repeatedly to marry him, stating that he expected an inheritance shortly, and promising to take her to Paris to live if she would do so. Each time she had refused, but this had not caused him to cease his attentions. He never had told her anything of his people or where he had lived. All she knew was that he went each night to a news-stand in Broadway, where out-of-town newspapers were sold, and purchased the Greensboro *Star*. (The name of the state doesn't matter.) To her questions he had replied that he had a close friend living there, and the paper printed occasional items about this friend.

Then I asked about the letters Myles had demanded. "I don't know how he learned about them," she said, "but they

were innocent. Mr. Aarons left each morning before I was up. If he wanted me to go out with him at night, he would leave a note on his dresser. If I could accompany him, I would write my reply on his note and drop it in a drawer. He would get home first, read my note, and dress. I never was in his room except when he was not there. He told me he kept the notes because he was fond of me. He said he hid them in a pocket nailed behind the dresser mirror, where no one would think of looking for them. They may be there now. I can't tell you anything else. But please be kind to George. If he wasn't so stubborn, he could explain everything. It's all my fault. But I know he never harmed anyone."

Both were arrested for an unpaid hotel bill

Sending the girl below, I went to Aarons' room and found the letters. They were exactly what she had stated. Myles probably had lost his head through jealousy and imagined they were love notes. And, despite the circumstantial evidence which had piled up against him, I recognized certain circumstances to offset them: the disappearance of the watch and money and the unusual strength of the killer. These would not let me believe the youth was the murderer. Still, he must be made to talk. If he continued obstinate, there remained but one course—to arrest him, either as principal or witness. If innocent, his arrest—when published in the newspapers—would throw the killer off his guard.

I went to Myles, told him what I had learned, and demanded that he make an explanation. He was obstinate and sarcastic, informing me that if he were made prisoner he'd obtain counsel to do the talking for him. Thoroughly exasperated, I ordered Feretti to take him to Inspector Sullivan at Headquarters.

Then I began a systematic search of Aarons' room, overlooking nothing. First I located several recent copies of the Greensboro *Star* pushed in *(Continued on page 92)*

Into the LAND of *HAPPY DREAMS*

"Go after these human ghouls—and get them!" were Detective Welch's orders from Headquarters when he started after Boston's dope ring

By Detective LAWRENCE W. WELCH

as told to BERNARD G. PRIESTLEY,

Formerly of the Boston *HERALD*

"GOD knows what may happen," exclaimed the Captain. "Keep your finger on the trigger, and, if necessary, don't hesitate at trying to shoot your way out. But go after these human ghouls—get them! Good luck to you."

Thanking the Captain for his good wishes, I hurried out of the old City Hall Avenue Police Station, Boston, mixed into the night crowd and headed for Scollay Square.

For the time being I wasn't Special Officer Lawrence W. Welch of the City Hall Avenue Police Station at all. I was a "hoppie" up from Providence on a visit. And I was bound for a "dope meet."

In the next four hours I was to pass through an experience at several intervals during which I wouldn't have given a canceled postage stamp for my chances of emerging alive. But that's the story!

Claiming that I was an honest-to-goodness "hoppie," which is the underworld vernacular for a person who is a confirmed addict of narcotic drugs, certainly wasn't enough on this occasion. I must look the part—and act it too.

A WRINKLED cap was pulled down over my eyes. My face, naturally somewhat like a pug's, was made more sallow-appearing by a couple of days' growth of beard. I had put on an old striped sweater under my coat and altogether I had managed to both look and feel the part.

As I strode down the street I did not glance back, but I knew that before I had gone more than a hundred feet two other men had descended the venerable stone steps of the old police station and were following along at a reasonably safe distance behind me. They were Special Officer Manning, attached to the station, and Inspector William P. Scanlon of the Federal drug squad.

For some days I had been working up my "hoppie" disguise and practicing the mannerisms of a drug addict. This rôle I had adopted in connection with a deperate plan worked out by the police to try to break up a notorious gang of dope peddlers. I knew that the slightest error in my appearance or the tinest slip in my actions might mean death. I had developed the rôle to such a perfection, my fellow officers said, that when I did the yawn and stretch so characteristic of a "hoppie" awaiting a new supply of drug, I acted almost too natural.

Arriving in Scollay Square, only a couple of blocks from the station, I took up a position by a news-stand next to a subway entrance. There I had agreed to meet two "hoppies" whose acquaintance I had made and painstakingly fostered during the past few days. At the proper time we were to proceed to the "dope meet."

Perhaps the term "dope meet" means nothing to you. How many thousand unfortunate wretches there are in this world who wish they could truthfully say as much! Let me do a little explaining.

A "dope meet" might be more correctly called a "dope picnic." A group of dope peddlers—those human rats who pray upon narcotic drug addicts by illegal selling of morphine, cocaine and heroin at exorbitant prices—arranges to sell a quantity of drugs in a secret place at a given time. The word is passed around to a few confirmed drug users. They tell others. Twenty to a hundred addicts go to the place at the specified hour and buy quantities of drugs.

At the time I am speaking of, eight years ago—before I founded the Expressmen's Protective League in Boston and also established the detective agency that still bears my name—Scollay Square was the hang-out of scores and scores of drug addicts. Many of them were in the clutches of the ring of dope peddlers to which I have referred—a gang that was literally forcing them to do anything, even sell their bodies and souls, to get the money to end just for the moment that maddening, insatiable craving for narcotics the terrors of which none except a confirmed drug addict can even imagine.

THE ring was staging "meets" every few days. The police were amazed at their regularity. Efforts to learn of them in advance, so detectives could be planted and the leaders arrested, proved just so much futile expenditure of brains and energy. By the time the police learned of a "meet" held in one section of Greater Boston another would occur in a section far remote from the first.

The gang was under the leadership of two Italians known to the police only as "The Shoemaker" and "Spike." They

had foiled so many attempts to catch them selling narcotics that they were openly defying the police.

And it must be admitted that the gang worked on a system that had no visible weak points. A small group of trusted "hoppies" acted as their "tip-off" men, who spread the news in the underworld as to when the "meets" would be held. These men took good care not to make any mistakes like tipping off "hoppies" who might squeal to the police, or worse still, letting a fly cop (policeman in plain clothes) know when a "meet" was to be held. The Shoemaker and Spike were continually threatening them as to what violent things would happen if any such errors were made.

Besides, The Shoemaker and Spike had spent a great deal of time before starting their nefarious trade in getting acquainted by sight with scores and scores of narcotic users who infested Boston's underworld. Before dope was passed out at a "meet" at least one of the pair personally looked over every prospective buyer. Anybody concerning which there was doubt was warned to beat it while he still had feet and the control of his mind.

The system went a step further. The "hoppies" had to pay over their money even before they got a look at the drug. Of the two leaders, the one who collected the money would never be the one who passed out the dope. This made it impossible to catch either The Shoemaker or Spike making the complete transaction of what legally constituted a sale.

Such was the state of affairs on this night when I slunk up by the news-stand near the subway entrance awaiting the arrival of my two "hoppie" pals. I was determined to do anything in my power to break up this gang. On the other hand I realized the danger of my mission—and the Captain's words, "God knows what may happen," came back to me again and again.

Unconsciously I put my hand into the lower right-hand pocket of my coat to make sure my revolver was there. Of course it was. A moment later I got a reassuring side glance from Special Officer Manning as he and Inspector Scanlon passed by.

"Now come on, my 'hoppie' friends, and we'll be off to the 'meet,'" I said to myself.

Within a few minutes they tottered along—Joe and Mike, their family names long since dropped lest they bring their own shame onto the heads of their relatives. They stood huddled near the opposite end of the news-stand, their pallid, drawn faces, the picture of misery, their drug-wasted bodies a-tremble, as they waited looking forward to the one hope—to get the stuff that would relieve their suffering and send them once more into the land of happy dreams.

Soon other "hoppies" began passing by on the sidewalk a few feet away, their dull, roaming eyes straining to sight someone who would tip them off concerning the "meet." My heart went up into my mouth when two of the addicts stopped for a word with my temporary cronies, for I had arrested them some weeks before for having narcotic drugs in their possession. My pals introduced me as "Jack from Providence, up to get a few 'shots.'"

My apprehension over the effectiveness of my disguise, left me for the time being

The men merely looked me over sleepily and passed on. Not the slightest sign of recognition in their eyes. My apprehension over the effectiveness of my disguise left me for the time being.

Another few minutes and the rumbling of a train far below in the subway was followed by a rush of footsteps up the stairs, and a crowd of people passed by us out into the bright lights. Then followed the scuffle of lagging feet. Up the stairs came a short, haggard-looking man wearing a dark felt hat. He stared at us questioningly and just as he started down the street, turned his head slightly, muttering:

"End of Viaduct—half an hour."

The average person would have seen in this only the disconnected mumbling of an absent-minded man. To us it

meant: "Take a Charles River Viaduct train, get off at the further end of the Viaduct. From there you will be escorted to the 'meet.'"

As we started down the subway stairs I signaled to Special Officer Manning and Inspector Scanlon by putting both hands on my cap and pulling it further down on my head. They already knew that the "meet" was scheduled to be held at the further end of the Viaduct. At my signal they were to speed there in an automobile.

My pals and I descended to the first level. We had to wait about a minute for a Viaduct train to come along. Within that brief time a dozen additional "hoppies" had arrived on the station platform as if by magic from the churning crowd on the street above, among them the two whom I had arrested and who I feared would recognize me. Several of them slunk into the same car of the train as did my pals and I. When I whispered the word around that I was much in need of a "shot," two of them each produced a solitary "deck" of dope which they exchanged for one of the dollar bills marked "B. P. D."—Boston Police Department—that I carried in the watch pocket of my trousers.

Only a few minutes' ride and we got off at the end of the Viaduct, on the fringe of the Cambridge, near where Somerville meets it. As my pals and I descended to the street, the other "hoppies" who had been on the train followed in little groups.

All around us was the curtain of night, except for a scattering of street lights that tried in vain to do any kind of a job of illuminating the vicinity without aid from other sources, for the locality was one chiefly of industrial plants which became silent shadows with the coming of night.

In less than a minute, out of the darkness emerged a slinking form that beckoned with a ghostlike hand for us to follow.

Two or three of the "hoppies" nearer to him than we were, fell in a little behind him. My pals and I followed suit and the rest did likewise. As the strange line moved down the street, many an eye and ear strained for evidence of the presence of "lurking cops" who might be interested in the proceedings.

"End of Viaduct—half an hour," whispered the dope steerer

We went only a little way before the line curved into a narrow side street, much darker than the main thoroughfare. In another minute we filed past a well-known pig slaughter-house—almost as lifeless as the animals which had passed through it during the day.

A little way further and we turned into a narrow alley. As the guide ordered us to halt, The Shoemaker emerged from somewhere out of the darkness. His broad form

stood out threateningly against the pitchy blackness behind him.

"Youse bozos forma da pairs," he exclaimed. Although he spoke in a low tone, he could not cover up his bossy, hateful air. "Den keepa da mouths shut," he added, "and steppa da quick and light."

Form into pairs! I heard this order with sinking heart. It meant I must part from my two companions—neither of them could be expected to leave the other to shift for himself while he accompanied me. Supposing I got one of the men I had arrested, and he recognized me? I knew what that would mean—the whole gang would set upon me.

I THRUST my hand into my coat pocket and clutched the trigger of my revolver—prepared to shoot instantly through my coat if developments became serious enough to warrant it. I hung back to allow the others to get paired up first. Since the two men whom I had arrested were together when I had last seen them in the subway station, probably they might stay together.

After the others had completed pairing into six twos there was one man left besides myself and The Shoemaker, the guide having disappeared. Seeing I was alone, this unpaired man stepped up to me.

"Ah say, Boss," he said, "what you all t'ink of me and you agoin' together?"

"I'm wid y', bo," I replied.

Just then a dim light was reflected upon the assemblage in some manner which I could not explain. I saw that, as I had suspected from his talk, my pal was a colored man. He was short but powerfully built.

"Down this alley, you big stiff—quick! Lead me to the street!"

Now The Shoemaker thrust his face very close to the man nearest him, grumbled as an indication that he passed muster and proceeded to repeat the process on the next man and the next. My heart began to pound as he drew nearer and nearer to me.

He was only three men away—now two. Would my disguise pass his searching inspection? I had deceived the drug-users all right. But The Shoemaker did not sniff the dope—he only sold it. If he hesitated about giving me an O. K. what should I do? I didn't know.

He looked over the colored man.

"You all sure knows me, sah," said he. "Ah sure am a good customer too."

The Shoemaker grunted "O. K.," and turned to me. He thrust his swarthy, scowling face so close to mine that our noses almost touched. His attitude aroused in me an almost uncontrollable desire to flatten his (*Continued on page* 89)

Did the Camera Lie?

A murderer is apt to "forget something" when he hastens from the scene of his crime —then, when he remembers, it's usually too late

By JAMES A. STAPP
Formerly of the Indianapolis *STAR* and other papers

IT was the first Sunday in June.

Only those who have suffered the bitter cold of a Missouri valley winter, and, with the forbearance of a Stoic, slopped through the rain and slush of early spring can realize the full meaning of that "Sunday in June."

There was a picnic in rustic Sycamore Park, on the southeastern tip of the city among the bluffs that border the Missouri. The golden sunshine filtered through the trees and dripped upon the young grass like molten ingots. The air was fresh with the fragrance of wild flowers, sought by the happy groups scattered among the hills.

One pair, a boy and a girl, became separated from the rest. As they sang their way along a shady, rustic path and into a sheltered ravine, they came to a shady nook, formed by overhanging trees.

"Let's sit here awhile," the girl lisped dreamily.

There was the silence of a summer day there, broken only by the insects and woodfolk. As they sat motionless and quiet, a low sound came to their ears.

The boy and girl turned in terror.

A gagging, strangling groan came from the thicket. The groaning continued for a second, then stopped with a queer, muffled cry which made their blood run cold.

The girl clung to the boy's side in terror. Suddenly she screamed and pointed.

Within a few feet of them the hands and arms of a woman protruded from under a clump of brush. They were motionless—ghastly in their stillness.

The boy tore himself from the grip of terror, parted the brush and saw the body of a woman, lying face downward. The skull had been mashed by some blunt instrument. The hair was matted with fresh blood and the clothing was torn almost to shreds.

Mastering his repugnance, he laid his hand on the woman's breast. It was warm, but he could find no heart flutter. He knew that while they had sat there in the beautiful glen, steeped in the romance of the day, the spark of life in this unfortunate unit of humanity had been snuffed out. And it was reasonably certain that their singing on their care-free, happy way into the ravine had frightened away the brute who had committed the crime.

AFTER searching in vain for a sign of life, the boy, his face chalky white, rose and took the girl by the hand and started away. She followed mutely, seemingly waiting for him to speak.

"I'll get the police," he said as they started away. Then, seeming to realize the horror of the thing, they started to run and call to the rest of the party. Their breath coming in short gasps, they told, as best they could, what they had found.

One man, older than the others, sent two of the boys back to guard the place where the body lay, ordered the rest of the party to remain where they were and took one of the other boys with him to the pavilion. Soon the wires were buzzing with the news of the finding of the body of a woman, brutally murdered, in the shadows of one of the lonely glens of Sycamore Park.

Although not on duty, I was sitting in the city room of the newspaper office on which I was employed when I heard the phone on the city desk ring. Then I heard the city editor unlimber a flock of cuss-words, answer, then say, "No, Art, you stay there! Jim's here."

"Hell's broke loose up in Sycamore Park," he said, turning to me. "A gang of picnickers found the body of a woman with her head beaten in. Art" (Art was the police reporter) "missed the dicks. Better get in your car and beat it out there."

No sooner was it said than I was on my way. I had no scruples against letting my foot rest heavily on the accelerator. Half-way out, I passed Coroner Steinman in his car.

In less than twenty-five minutes after the boy and girl had made their gruesome find, the law was on the spot and the relentless wheels of justice had begun their merciless grind.

A FRAGMENT of a gold chain—a chain which in all probability had held a watch—was found under the dead woman's head. There was no trace of the watch, and the balance of the chain was missing. The fragment was the only clue we could find.

The story sent souvenir hunters tramping the hills, over the spot where the crime had been committed. It seemed certain that if the officials had overlooked a single clue that Sunday afternoon, it would be gone, tramped into the ground or carried away.

For three days the body lay in the city morgue, where curious hundreds went to view it in an attempt at identification. Sometimes it was a single person hunting a lost loved one, sometimes a family from which one was missing, and sometimes just a group of morbidly curious.

At first it was believed the clothing would furnish a clue. A canvass of the stores was made. The store which had sold the hat was found, but no record had been kept of the purchaser. The trail of the corset, almost new and of a brand sold by only one store, was taken up next. It was found that only two of that size had been sold for two months before the murder—one to a woman who was found alive and one to an unidentified woman of whom no record had been kept. None of the clerks in the department, however, remembered selling it to a person of the dead woman's description.

The days slipped along, with the police at sea and the

body still unidentified, and now and then someone wandering into the morgue, looking at the still form and then exclaiming:

"Why, I know her—that's Mrs. So-and-so!"

Detectives would trace Mrs. So-and-so, find her alive and the identification would blow up.

THERE had been little attention paid to the absence of a wedding-ring. The report of the autopsy surgeon was that there had been a ring on the third finger and that it had been jerked off a short time before death. But it kept bothering me. I remembered a nationally known murder where the identification of the body, which resulted in the running down of the slayer, pivoted on the initials in a wedding-ring. Somehow, in my mind, it connected itself with this case.

"Frank," I said to the managing editor, Frank Matson, Friday afternoon, "there's no need of me hanging around here. Let me go out to Sycamore Park and look around."

"What for?" he asked, astonished.

"All week those fellows have overlooked the fact that the woman's wedding-ring is gone," I said. "But the surgeon says it was jerked off just before she died. It may be laying around there, and if it is there probably are some initials in it."

His reply was a laugh and to call me a fool for wanting to go out there on a day like that—it had been raining—but he consented.

So, with nothing more than that hunch, I started out alone to solve the murder mystery of Sycamore Park.

On the way down-stairs I met Joe Burnett, another reporter, and asked him to go with me.

"What do you expect to find?" he asked.

"The missing wedding-ring," was my reply, and again I was given a large-sized and full-grown laugh. But he agreed to go.

At the park we beat our way through the wet brush until we found the spot in which the woman had lain. It was trampled down almost beyond recognition—certainly not a promising prospect.

We examined every stick and every stone within twenty or thirty feet of the spot—but, if the wedding-ring ever had lain there, it was not there then.

About the time I was ready to give up, I heard Joe mutter something to himself, and I went to where he was on his knees beneath a dripping-wet bush. He was holding a scrap of paper not much larger than a half dollar, on which was handwriting, letters, parts of words. He gave it to me and turned back to the brush. He picked up four others and I picked up two.

We went back to the car and pieced them together. They formed a rent receipt, which read:

The boy and girl turned in terror

No.....May 31, 1926
Received of Fred Gellert.....$50.00
Fifty & 00/100 Dollars.....
For rent of house at 482 Elm Street
for month ending.....June 30, 1926
FRANK HOPKINS

We went back to the spot and looked around again and finally picked up a dirty, water-soaked fragment of a newspaper—our paper—just enough of it to give us the date. With it and the scraps of the receipt, we started back to the city, to identify Frank Hopkins.

The city directory showed two of them: one a railroad shopman and the other the proprietor of a soft-drink parlor and lunch room—a saloon in pre-Volstead days.

The last mentioned, we learned, was out of the city and not expected to return until the next day. We went to the home of the shopman. He denied owning property.

We went back to the office and discussed every angle of the case with Matson, then agreed that Burnett and I would work on this new clue without the help of the police.

The next morning we went to Hopkins' (the proprietor of the soft-drink parlor) place of business. We found him a congenial, talkative sort of a chap, and, after introducing ourselves as investigators from a bonding house, drew him into conversation.

"YES, I know Fred Gellert," he replied to our query. "He's a neighbor of mine and rents one of my houses. He runs that barber shop next door." Right there I realized that if this interview was to be a success I would have to use all my diplomacy and then trust to fate, or whatever it is that puts words in a faltering man's mouth, for more.

"Did you ever have any business dealings with him," I asked—I imagine rather apprehensively, "other than renting the house to him?"

"No," came the quick, straightforward reply, and I was sure my secret was safe.

I was certain I was on the right trail, but I feared a bend in a road so smooth—I was a long way from establishing a connection, if there was one, between that receipt and the mystery woman of Sycamore Park.

"When did he pay his rent last?" I asked.

"Oh, he's good pay, all right," the landlord said. "He always pays it the day before it's due."

"And you always give him a receipt?"

"You bet," was the quick reply, "then there's no trouble."

May 31st, the date on the receipt we had found, was on a Monday. I wanted to make sure there was no hitch, so I asked:

A gagging, strangling groan came from the thicket

"He paid you a week ago last Monday, then?"

"Yes," he said, "it was Monday."

I apparently dropped the subject and ordered drinks for the three of us. Then, after we had discussed trivial matters for several minutes, I pretended I had just thought of something else and asked the former saloon-keeper if Gellert was a married man.

"Oh, yes, he's married, and got a little girl," Hopkins replied.

That was something. But I had failed to connect the barber with the mystery woman any more than that a receipt bearing his name had been found near where the body had lain—a week after the finding of the body.

"Is he a drinking man?" I continued, determined to learn all I could about him.

"Oh, he drinks a little beer now and then," he said, hastily adding—"that is, near-beer." Apparently Hopkins realized he might be incriminating himself as a bootlegger.

"DOES he take it home?" I asked. Not until then had it occurred to me that the newspaper we found had light-brown stains on it. How close was that guess, I probably never will know.

"No, I don't believe he takes it home. But sometimes he does take some out in the country, a couple of bottles or so, when he goes on a picnic. Just Saturday night he bought two bottles—said he was going to the country on a little picnic."

(*Continued on page* 75)

The SEVEN Who DIED

There came a knock at the door!

A NUMBER of years ago, seven murders were committed in various rather widely separated points in the United States, and because of the fact that close by each murdered person a small roulette wheel was found, it was naturally believed that all seven of these gruesome crimes were executed, or at least, instigated, by the same person. The police were right.

I am that person.

To explain this, also why my story is being presented for publication, I must go back to the days when I was a student at Paris, taking a post-graduate course in chemistry. At that time, by a mere accident, while making a chemical experiment, I discovered a strange, new kind of gas, of such potent death-dealing quality that its value to the governments of France and Germany at once became apparent. This was just before the outbreak of the Great War.

Meanwhile I had fallen in love with a beautiful Spanish girl, Carmelita Perez, whom I first met at the roulette tables in the Casino at Enghien-les-Bains, a small town, eleven minutes out of Paris by rail.

The night I met Carmelita, the *croupier* at my table handed me 200,000 francs. I had broken the bank in one of the most spectacular "runs" ever witnessed at Enghien. And that very night I was attacked by thugs that I afterward found out were Carmelita's confederates. But I did not find out this astounding fact right then, and I call it an astounding fact because it was just that to me. I had in the meantime become engaged to marry Carmelita. It goes without saying that I trusted her.

But the worst was yet to befall me. Carmelita inveigled out of me the precious formula of the poison gas, and, happy in the thought that there were now no secrets between us—as befits two persons who are about to become man and wife—off we started, bound for the village of St. Marcelle, about fifty miles from Paris, where Carmelita had friends who would be witnesses, and a friendly civil official who would officiate—so she said.

It was all a lie, and I was soon to learn the bitterness of being a "fool in love"—which phrase exactly describes me as I was at that time. The girl led me into a place where I supposed the magistrate was awaiting us and a few moments later I woke up to find myself a prisoner in an *asylum for the insane.*

Carmelita and her gang had what they had started out to

Bitterly as "Roulette" has suffered, he stakes his all on the word of a woman, and finds that that woman is——

By One Who Lived

get—the formula for the poison gas, and I figured that young Duval, one of her mob, probably was an agent for the German Government, though this was simply my own idea of it. Anyhow, they had turned the trick neatly, using Carmelita as their lure, and I was left to face bare, grey walls.

There followed a period of two months that I will pass over quickly. It is miraculous that I didn't go insane myself, being locked up with raving maniacs as I was.

Then one day came the appalling news.

One of the patients had received visitors and they left him a newspaper. The front page head-line proclaimed that Germany had declared war on France, and was marching into Belgium!

The news set the place in a frenzy. The patients, with one exception (which was me, for I am an American), were all French. The French have one real emotion and that emotion is patriotism. Excitement was at a fever heat. It seemed to me that my time had come.

That night, after reading of the terrible havoc that had been reaped with the poison gas which I had been unfortunate enough to invent, I was beside myself with despair and anxiety. I was ready to risk all on my chances of escape. A spoon which I had sharpened to the fineness of a razor blade spelled death to any one who stood in my way, and I was prepared to kill, if necessary, without compunction, rather than spend another day in this house of hell.

The death of these boys in the trenches, which no one could tell me was otherwise than through the fiendish instrument of national vengeance that I had invented, stood heavy within me. Like rats they had died, with never a chance for their lives, having no place to turn from which they could escape this destruction that was sprayed on them from the air. That was my fault, I felt. Is it any wonder that I became almost a

I waited, my every sense alert, my heart almost at a standstill

madman in that hour?—that my heart was as lead within me and my thoughts wild and unthinkable by any sane person?

Just what I intended to do when I emerged from this house of my illegal detention I had no clear notion, except this one thought:

During my experiments I had contrived a sort of mask that shielded me from the dreadful fumes that rose about me. I would give the directions to the French military authorities for the making of a mask of this kind; perhaps that would help a little. It turned out later that they devised such a mask without my assistance, but, of course, I could not know that at this time.

WHAT else I could do, I had hardly an idea. I would give Perez (who was said to be Carmelita's father) and his gang, up to justice—if possible. But I considered that they had probably decamped from France ere now. Outside of that I had no particularly clear idea of just what I wanted to do.

Still, I might enlist in the French Foreign Legion, that regiment of dare-devil scamps gathered together from the fighting slums of the world. In this company I could fight, and perhaps in that way wipe out the stain that I felt enveloped my soul, and perhaps I could die for the country I felt I had wronged, though unintentionally. That would have been poetic justice. It did not occur to me at that time—though it did occur to me later—that if I got out, the French military authorities, knowing the poison gas had been my invention, would probably arrest me as a spy, and execute me. I had refused to deal with the French Government's representative, Colonel Gaveau, when he approached me on the matter, and on this evidence and the fact that later it developed the German Government was in possession of my deadly secret, it would have been a very simple and easy thing to convict me. No court martial in its right mind would have believed that I was actually innocent. I think even the intervention of the American Ambassador would not have been enough to save me.

I did not think of that, however, at this time, when I went about my plans and preparations to escape.

My plan was simple, and was based on my observation and knowledge of conditions. It was the custom for those

She had dropped her mask for that instant, and I saw the treacherous serpent that lay beneath

of us who were not violent and considered dangerous, to have dinner together in the general ward dining-room, after which we went to our several cells. At the end of dinner, as I knew, the Director, Doctor Marceau, generally sat for a few minutes in his office, at the very front of the building, and those of us who had anything we wished to communicate could ask permission to go to him. This permission was usually accorded. He always received his visitors alone, which was rather courageous on his part. Outside of his door there were generally two guards, but inside of the room he was alone.

This office of his was at the very front of the building. In front of his window was the garden and the road that led to the gate—a large iron affair that was locked, with two guards always standing before it. These guards had no key to the high gate, which was always opened, when necessary, by a button which was attached to Doctor Marceau's desk, and which he clicked when he wished the gate to open.

It worked electrically, and noiselessly. That is, when he clicked the button, the lock would be released, though the gate would stand shut as before. All one had to do then was to push it open. Otherwise it was quite immovable.

MY plan was to ask permission to talk to Doctor Marceau, get into his office, and in some way dispose of him—overpower him noiselessly by one means or another. I did not want to have to use my knife on him, but I would if it became necessary. Having done this, I would work the button that opened the gate. The guards standing in front of it would not know, of course, that the catch had been released, as it was a noiseless affair. All this I had found out by discreet and careful investigation.

At to getting out of the office of Doctor Marceau, that would be simple. There were two guards always before his door, so I would not use the door at all. I would simply step out of one of his large French windows to the balcony, drop down into the garden, work my way noiselessly and swiftly to the gate, catch the guards by surprise and be through the gate before they had time to recover. If they caught me in time, I would throw a handful of pepper into their eyes to blind them. If that was not enough, I would use my knife.

Once out on the road I felt convinced of my ability to get away. The underbrush was thick in the neighborhood, and I felt I could elude my pursuers until morning. I did not think they would dare to put up too much of an open fight, if I managed to make my way to a police station. The character of this business, and their share in it, were a trifle too shady for that. The ground was far too thin for them to cause any open trouble. Their only hope, I thought, would be to recover me before I could get to the police, or to any other authority.

So much for my plan. It was a very simple one, and I thought I had a fair chance of success. For some days I had been on very good and intimate terms with the director, and I knew he would be quite unsuspicious of me. That was what I depended upon—catching him by surprise. A surprise attack is the best of all military plans, as any strategist will tell you.

I PREPARED to carry it out. Before going in to dinner I went to my cell and removed the spoon which I had sharpened to razor fineness from my mattress, placing it in my pocket, where I could get my hand upon it instantly. I also took a handful of black pepper which I had procured, and which was wrapped up in a small bit of paper. This I also placed in my pocket.

I ate slowly and with outward calm, though within me was a furnace of anticipation and excitement. At the conclusion of the dinner I remarked to the guard nearest me that I wished to speak to the Director in his office. The guard nodded.

"Wait here," he said, "and I'll go and ask permission."

I waited in the corridor while the rest of the patients filed away to their cells, and in a few moments the guard returned.

"It's all right," he said. "Come along."

He conducted me down the corridor and around the bend that led to the office, and handed me over to the two guards that stood before the door, who nodded to me pleasantly. In a moment I was inside the room, and the door closed behind me.

Doctor Marceau was standing at the window with his back to the room when I entered, but turned at the closing of the door. He greeted me with a smile as I joined him at the window. Usually he sat at his desk and the patient talked to him from in front of the desk, but to-night he seemed in an especially good mood, and he stayed at the window talking with me, which made what I had to do much easier.

"Ah, Roulette," he said with a smile (Roulette was my nickname), rubbing his hands together in the professionally genial way that I hated, "and what can we do for you this evening?" It was a form of address that I disliked intensely, and it irritated me, but I concealed it, smiling back at him quite as genially.

"THE dust dropped from my eyes instantly, and I became as cool as ice . . . In that instant I believe Carmelita saw that nothing on this earth could save her. The color was drawn from her face as she shrank back from me. Her eyes were wide, but still defiant. Not a sound came from her.

"I approached her and . . ."

"A great deal, Doctor," I said. "You could release me, of course."

"Yes, I suppose I could," he replied slowly, catching up the spirit in which I had spoken. "That would be pleasant." There was a short silence. Then: "Is there any other slight thing that you wish me to do for you—or will that be all for the present?"

"I THINK that would be quite enough for one time," I commented, smiling back at him, edging just a little closer, and measuring my distance.

What I intended to do had to be done exactly right the first time. There would be no chance to try it a second time. That I knew. So, I stood close to him, measuring him for my blow just as a marksman measures, or estimates, his range before shooting.

"At what time would you like to go, Roulette?" he asked. "You see, it might be incon——"

That was as far as he got. And it was the last word he spoke for some time, for with all my strength my right hand came up in the good old right hook to the point of the jaw that every American boxer is familiar with. His head snapped back and he staggered, and that instant my left hand came up, catching him full on the other side of the jaw, just as he was falling.

He fell straight back, dead to the world. The first thing hitting the parquet floor being the back of his head. That was that.

I leaped instantly to feverish work. I tore the portière cords from the curtains, dragged (*Continued on page 69*)

Was This Woman *Crazy*?

Impenetrable mystery clouded the vicious slaying of Henry Simmons—then one dark night Burton Chadwick found——

By BURTON CHADWICK, Professor of Biology
As told to ELYNORE BAKER QUINN

IT is just ten years ago to-night that Henry Simmons met his death. The case, you will remember, went down on the police blotter unsolved. Well, to give the police their due, it was unsolved, and yet——

No, I wasn't the coroner, nor the sheriff. I was not even the murderer, which I know was a disappointment to some. So many people have proven beyond a shadow of a doubt that I did the deed that I am beginning to feel a little delicate about waiving the title to it. In point of fact, however, I am merely a professor of biology—a shy, retiring soul with a penchant for rare specimens of butterflies, and the means to indulge it.

At the time of the murder, as now, I was living quietly at my country home, doing nothing more villainous in my leisure hours than studying the winged beauties I captured in the nearby fields and poring over such excellent treatises as Hermann's *Lepidopterous Insects in Their Native Haunts*. Manslaughter, murder, mayhem—all were words I had seen on the printed page, but they meant little to me. They mean a great deal now. But, to get to my story.

On the night of Henry Simmons' untimely decease my family consisted of myself, aged forty-eight, my wife, Martha, (age withheld), and a really very fine maid who went by the piquant name of Daisy.

In the unused "L" of our summer home lived Simmons, the gardener, a morose fellow of about fifty years who had been with us exactly two months. He was an exceptionally fine gardener, as gardeners go, which caused us to overlook an unfortunate crabbedness of disposition, for, when you come right down to it, it was a gardener we wanted, not a companion. What caused his sour outlook I cannot say. I ceased abruptly to cultivate him after the day I absently pursued a magnificent specimen of *chrysophanus thoe* through his newly-seeded phlox beds.

ON the Friday night in question Martha and I had gone into town to see the opening performance of Lampdon's *Creole Days*, returning between eleven and twelve o'clock. Martha went directly to her bedroom on the second floor, but I, having divested myself of that barbarity known as a boiled shirt and put on a lounging robe, retired to my snug study on the first floor to smoke and read a spell. But I did no reading that night, nor for many nights to come, for, in my own swivel chair, directly facing the door, sat the late Henry Simmons, leering insolently at me—quite dead.

Now, according to the hocus-pocus of the modern cinema, I should have advanced fearlessly, felt his heart, taken his finger-prints, installed a dictograph, unearthed the murderer —and then notified the police. I did none of these things. On the contrary, I emitted a feeble yell and fled upstairs into the sanctum of my spouse.

"My dear!" I shrilled hysterically, "my dear, he's dead!"

Martha continued to brush her hair with that detached air with which she greets my enthusiasms. Time was when, to please me, she'd pretend a riotous joy at the sight of a pair of beady eyes or a delicately mottled stomach, but that was before the day I thoughtlessly deposited a dissected moth in her hair receiver, thereby causing it to be incorporated in her new transformation.

"Well, really, Burton," she murmured, abstractedly, "he isn't the first one you've killed, you know."

I was shaking from head to foot.

"B-but I don't mean a b-butterfly. I mean the gardener —Si-simmons. He's downstairs, dead!"

It is significant of the character of Martha that she did not faint. Quite the reverse. She had turned, hair-brush poised in air, and was studying me incredulously. Finally, convinced of my terror, with quiet determination she drew her dressing-gown carefully about her and led me down the stairs and into the studio without a word.

AT the door it seemed as though I simply could not prod my feet over the threshold, and yet, except for that gruesome figure in the chair, everything was exactly as I had left it earlier in the evening. The old man might just have been sitting there gazing at us with his customary malice were it not for the odd, almost arrested, look in his glazed eyes, the small discolored lump over his right temple, and the dark, still moist flakes of mud that streaked the carpet in the path of the door. As late as this, I cannot contemplate those mud-tracks without a shiver of distaste. They were the cause of untold trouble to me; in fact, even to this day their sinister shadow hangs over my house.

"We must call the police," said Martha, evenly, only the heightened color in her cheeks and the white line about her lips testifying to the tumult within her.

"We must call the police." I echoed, in feeble tones, feeling, somehow, as though a net were slowly tightening about me. A detective from the city was among the first to arrive. He was one of those thunderous fellows you read about in books, and you could tell that here was a task right after his own heart. You see, there are not many murders each year in our quiet village, so that when one does come along it finds not only the villagers but the entire surrounding neighborhood as ripe for the chase as a girl with her third gray hair.

He soon incurred the enmity of Martha by repeatedly

depositing the ash of his ill-smelling cigar in the Delft vase the Ainsleys had brought us from Doorn, but he was entirely unaware of this. He swung his unwieldy bulk pompously about the room, fingering this, studying that, emitting low whistles, and, when the Delft vase was not within reach, surreptitiously flicking his ash behind the divan.

With a magnificent gesture he summoned my entire household—as I have said, consisting of my wife, Daisy and myself. I think he was disappointed that we numbered only three, having probably read somewhere that every high-grade murder has at least one East Indian maid or a capricious ghost that whistles through keyholes.

He turned his attention to me first.

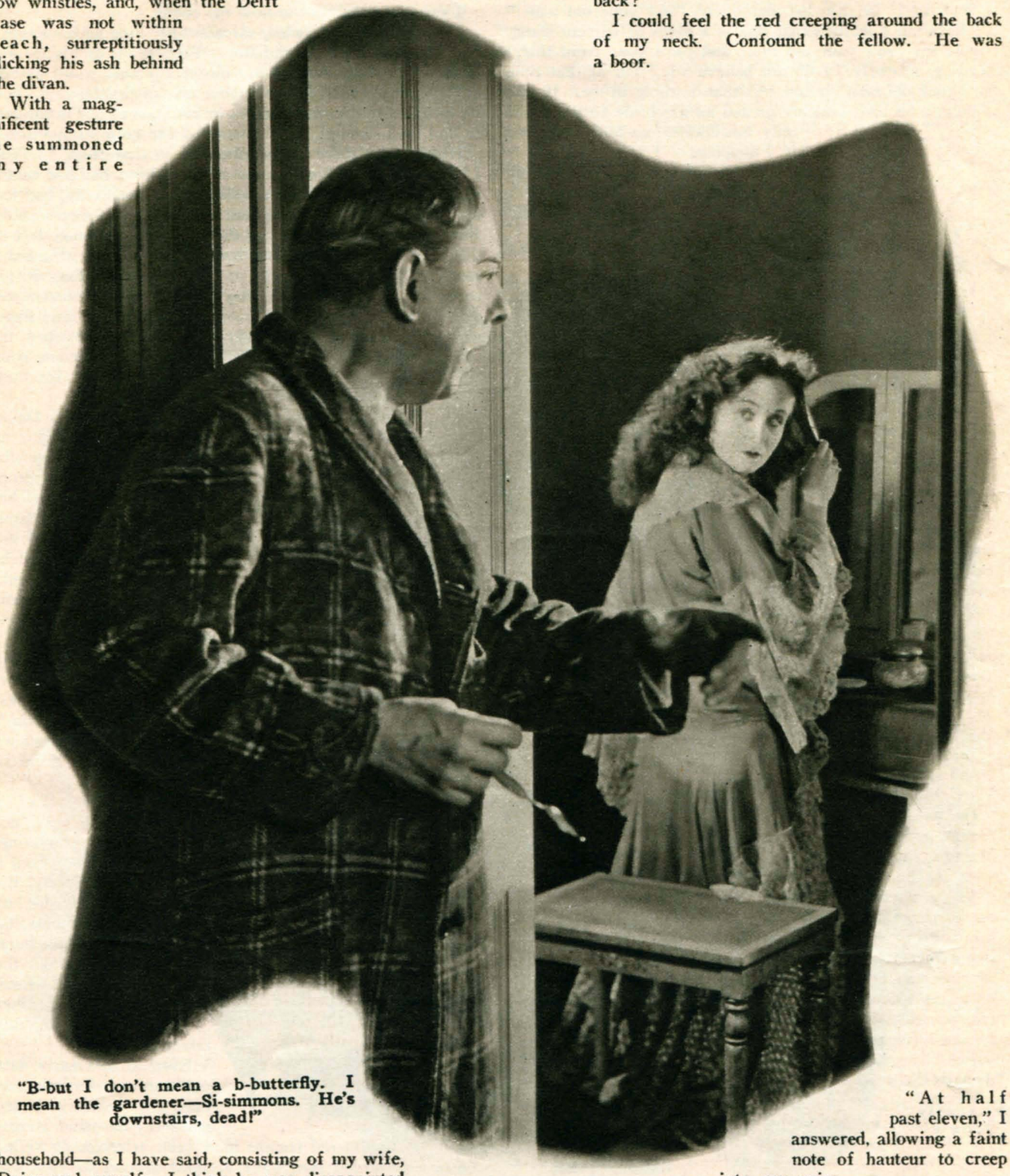
"Where were *you* when this happened?" he bellowed.

I bristled. There was no need of emphasizing me in particular, but at a warning look from my wife, I resolved not to lose my temper.

"My dear fellow," I replied, with what I considered admirable suavity, "I was at the theater. A most delightful performance it was, too, and I——"

"Aw, can the chatter, mister," he cut in. "This ain't no bedtime talk. What time did you get back?"

I could feel the red creeping around the back of my neck. Confound the fellow. He was a boor.



"B-but I don't mean a b-butterfly. I mean the gardener—Si-simmons. He's downstairs, dead!"

"At half past eleven," I answered, allowing a faint note of hauteur to creep into my voice.

"Yeh? Well, who found him?"

"I found him."

"Where was your wife at the time?"

"Upstairs in her room."

His eye lighted evilly. "So! And you were down here alone with the old geezer!"

"The geezer?"

"Aw, snap into it, mister. *How long were you down here alone with him?*—answer me that!"

A cold sensation crept along my spine. Upon my word, I believe the fellow suspected me.

"My dear man, I couldn't have been with him but a short time. The minute I saw him I ran right up-stairs and called my wife, and then we both ran down-stairs, and——"

"Yee-aah!" he drawled, derisively, "so's your old man!"

I have since learned that this is a form of current slang. People say "so's your old this" and "so's your Aunt that," meaning, properly, "I do not believe you," but at that time "so's your old man" meant less than nothing to me. It was as though he had suddenly quoted an algebraic formula. It only bewildered me and I showed it, I suppose.

"When did you hire this man?" he demanded harshly.

"Jennie!" I cried hoarsely, "Jennie!"

Now this was the one question I had been dreading. In point of fact, my hiring of the gardener had been slightly irregular. He had come to the door at a time when the front lawn looked like a wheat field in the year of plenty and we had taken him to our bosoms as a direct gift of Providence. Far from asking him any questions, we merely indicated the location of our only scythe, and later, sat watching him cut great swaths up and down and around the lawn.

Naturally, I hesitated when that blustering bulldog shot his question. You can appreciate my position. Whatever I might say would only drive another nail into the gallows he was building for me.

"Why, he sort of came to the door; said he was a good gardener, so we—er—we kept him."

I ran a moist finger around my collar.

"Is zat so!" he drawled, sarcastically, flipping his expired cigar stub back of the radiator. Then suddenly his manner changed. "Now lookit here, mister. I ain't goin' to take any nonsense from you or anyone else in this house," (here he included the frozen Martha in his glance) "I'm up here to find the murderer of this man and I'm goin' to find him!"

Him! Was there any significance in that "him"? True, I had hired the old man cat-in-a-bag fashion, had had heated words with him over the trodden phlox, and lastly, had had the extreme misfortune to find him dead in my own study. But what about that mud on the rug quite obviously left by the killer? They could not lay that at my door, for not a speck of mud was visible on either my clothing or my shoes on that fateful Friday night, since I had come directly up the gravel path upon arrival. Those mud flakes were the evidence that might save me. I cherished the thought of them as a dog cherishes a bone, for come what might, old Sherlock would have to account for them before he closed his net about me.

From me he went his unenlightened way to Daisy.

Now, in every well-woven mystery, the maid is an object of suspicion. She is usually a foreigner who listens at keyholes, who drops the gleaming knives of her country at the wrong time, who shrieks hideously in exotic languages. She may be so stupid, she thinks a night club is a weapon, but let her become involved in a murder and she will utter the most oracular sentences, any one of which might be construed a hundred different ways.

Poor Daisy neither dropped nor uttered anything. She was not even a foreigner. As the facts stand, she had had a toothache that took her moaning up to bed on the night of the crime, and which takes her right out of this tale now.

Even at this early date you can see for yourself that this is no ordinary murder. No maid is suspected, no bewildered tramps have been arrested, no veiled women or bearded men have dropped around to view the corpse. No one has even thought of ransacking my desk. Indeed, if you wish to split hairs about the matter, you might say you really have no murder at all, since you have no murderer.

But to proceed. Things rode along in the air for the next day or two. The detective did his best, but, though he took no pains to conceal his suspicion of me, either from me or from the village at large, he found nothing upon which he could base an arrest. He had had everyone else in the village up on the carpet, too, from the one-eyed vegetable

man who calls daily to looney old Jennie Briggs who lives in extreme poverty on the other side of the orchard, and who makes a few pennies now and then doing odds and ends about the house under Martha's hawklike eye. Jennie is feeble-minded under the most felicitous circumstances but when that roaring sleuth from the city got hold of her and bellowed at her, she degenerated into nothing more than a babbling idiot and he was forced to let her go.

I am convinced that with Simmons' interment (at the expense of the village), the whole unfortunate incident would have blown over had not the murderer singled me out for attention the next Saturday night, just a week and a day after the deed. I had had a really delightful dinner and was sitting on the veranda, pipe in mouth, as near to peace as I had been for many a day, when some evil genii put it into my head to take a small stroll before retiring.

Quite without the alleged premonitions of the average victim, I cut leisurely across the soft loam of the orchard that lay back of the house, and I remember noting how brightly my pipe gleamed in the inky blackness of the moonless night. Unfortunately for the cause of truth, that is all I remember, for when consciousness returned, I was lying prone on my back under an apple-tree, a terrific throbbing in my temples, and in my ears the faint exasperated voice of Martha calling me into the house.

Resentfully I staggered to my feet. The assault seemed so unprovoked. Far from being offensive to the murderer I was a godsend—for did not every one (barring Martha and the loyal Daisy) suspect me of the crime? Why should I be murdered by the murderer when my very existence guaranteed him immunity from suspicion?

I plodded painfully back to the house. Some blunt instrument had been used to strike me, possibly the very one that had put an end to the hapless Simmons. This thought in no way filled me with merriment. Was I to be the next victim?

My brain cleared somewhat as I walked along, mulling over the inexplicable attack and, as reason began to assert itself, I resolved to say nothing of my exploit. A hue and cry about being hit on the head would only alarm Martha, who, heaven knows, had had trials enough during the past week and then, too, it would only put the miscreant further on his guard. And anyway, besides being struck with the club, I had been struck with a clever idea which, in itself, would have been quite beyond the conception of my wife.

She broke into insane peals of laughter

She greeted me caustically from the back steps as I emerged into view.

"*Well!* Where have *you* been?"

I mumbled something about having gone for a walk, but all at once I felt, rather than saw, her eye me sharply.

"Why, Burton Chadwick! You're mud from head to foot! Where have you been?" (*Continued on page* 81)

Confessions of a

Jim Kendall pits his wits against a group of he means to get theirs. Will he

By One of Them

THE desire to make money easily, without the long hours of toil other men spent grinding away their lives, turned me early in life to confidence work. It took me many years and cost me many heartaches to learn the truth: I had picked the "hard way to make an easy living."

My first venture in crime made me a powerful and bitter enemy and lost me the girl I loved, the girl who might have shaped my life to better ends. But when I tried to forge a will that would have put a fortune into the hands of Charlie Higgins and myself, how was I to know that I was to lose not only the fortune but Mary as well?

In retaliation for poisoning Mary's mind against me, I vowed I'd follow Charlie Higgins and exact from him a full accounting. I had worked a shell game at circuses, swindled hundreds of gamblers with marked cards and had made something of a reputation for myself as a "wise one," under the tutelage of an old grifter, Gil Hawkins by name. And with my quest for Higgins still uppermost in my mind, I tried a race-track swindle at the old Bennings track, near Washington, about a year before the law closed that famous race-course.

One of my intended victims was a man named Davidson. With the aid of Nell Tyler, a woman I had met previously, and whom I more than half suspected was herself a grifter, Davidson took me for close to $35,000 at the track in as neat a manner as I ever had seen a swindle pulled—or pulled myself.

As soon as I had discovered my loss, I charged through the crowd at the track, hot on the trail of Davidson and the woman—determined to get back my money or die in the attempt.

A prize boob I had proven myself! Beaten at my own game and for no less than thirty-five grand. In my build-up before I "took" Harvey Davidson, and when he had come out to the race-track, I had had to show confidence in him by letting him carry the strong box with the money. I hadn't dreamed he was wise to me, and least of all had I thought he had anything to do with Nell Tyler.

In that moment I paused while I traced that triumphant laughter and so identified my Nemesis, I knew what I should do. I plunged through the crowd, elbowing and shoving and dodging, making what speed I could on my way to the side gate. Arrived there, I saw that I had guessed wrong as to the place where my man would leave, or else he had been too quick for me.

It was useless for me to try to locate him in the crowds leaving the track. One man can hide entirely successfully in a crowd of ten thousand. I had made capital of this fact more than once myself. For the moment I'd have to let that end of the pursuit go. I still had Davidson's address. I'd go hunt him up later in the afternoon. I turned my attention to the girl.

When she had taken that ride on a night that was under the spell of an intoxicating full moon and had told me she was desperately in love with me, I half believed her. I wouldn't commit myself with her by telling her so; my natural caution prevented. Now I was equally satisfied that she had played a con-man's game, waiting her chance to take me for what money she could get. All right. From now on she was fair game to me.

I want to make clear in this connection one point that is important with con-men. They never waste time going after revenge. They have another method of retaliation for injury. And that is the method I set out to follow.

I went back through the crowd to the spot where I had seen Nell Tyler, heard the laugh that must have meant sweet revenge to her. I felt sure she would be waiting near by, for the reason that I knew that she would want the chance to crow over me if she could. And if I found her, I had every intention of talking to her as if I had met an old friend and was pleased to see her again. I felt sure that Davidson was her brother. I also knew she didn't know I suspected it.

Sure enough, although the last race was being run at that very moment, she had hardly left the spot where I had seen her.

"How do you do, Miss Tyler?" I said, going up to her side, my hat in my hand, a smile on my face. I was boiling mad, smarting not only because of the loss of the money, but more because vanity had suffered a heavy blow.

"Well," she said, a sparkle in her big black eyes, the corners of her mouth curved slightly, "I hardly expected to see you so soon—or so friendly. Remember, the last time we met you as much as told me I was a millstone around your neck. You ordered me from your hotel, under threat of violence. Well—well! this is a surprise."

"You may well be sarcastic," I said, careful that my state of mind would in no way betray itself. "But I don't think there's any cause to be. I admit I was hasty, and said some things I shouldn't. Since I saw you I've been thinking I have been mistaken about you. We can at least be friends—and maybe I'll soon be able to return the affection you claimed you held for me. That's as you wished things to be, isn't it?"

For a second it seemed to me she lost her breath. Certainly she was on the alert, looking for a pitfall. She sensed I knew something. Certainly she knew I had just lost a fortune. My easy manner in view of that loss completely baffled her. But she could do nothing but fall back into the rôle she had played while she lived at the Old National. She didn't dare give herself away.

"How are they running for you to-day?" I asked, taking for granted that she could have no answer to my former question but an affirmative.

When I switched the talk to the track, which I did deliberately in order to get on more casual grounds, she seemed relieved.

"Oh, I made a little. Fourteen dollars or thereabouts. I had the winner in the second, also the fifth."

"Well," I said, taking out my watch, "I have an appointment back at the hotel, and I must be going. I'll want to have dinner with you soon. How about to-morrow?"

"Why—why, I'd like nothing better. I'm staying at the Shelbourne. I'll be expecting you—to-morrow," and there was a far-away look in her eyes as she said the last. Was the woman sincere when she said she loved me, and regretted taking a natural revenge for my turning her down

CONFIDENCE MAN

swindlers who mean to get his money—and be clever enough for them, or——

"I like you much better —as you were to-night, Jim"

coldly? Or, was she playing me from the first, worried now lest she had given away too much, worried because she couldn't understand my attitude? Try as I would, I couldn't tell. But regardless of the woman, I had on my hands the business of locating Davidson and the recovery of my money.

Without delay I went to the Hartwell House, on Capitol Hill. It was here that I had met Davidson twice while I was building him for a trimming. The clerk at the desk

recognized me, for I had no more than walked up to him when he volunteered: "Mr. Davidson checked out not fifteen minutes ago. Said he had to be in New York by midnight. . . . No, he didn't leave a forwarding address. I guess he don't expect no mail."

I KNEW that the clerk told me the truth—knew also that I stood nicked for a fat bank roll—knew as well that the "New York by midnight" was a stall. He might be on a train bound for New Orleans, he might be going to Chicago, he might be within two miles of me here in Washington. I couldn't tell. All I knew was one cardinal idea that I have followed, relentlessly, and that stood by me then as well as dozens of times since. A man is never licked unless he allows himself to be licked by admitting it in his own mind.

When a con-man is trimmed, instead of going after his "trimmer" for revenge in the usual sense, he lays for his man and gives him a beating up the trimmer isn't likely to forget in a hurry. After that, he watches for his opportunity to trim the trimmer. Con-men are master psychologists; they realize the futility of retaining in the mind and the emotions poisonous thoughts of "getting even," and the like. Fight one—get the emotional resentment over with—then take your man if you get the chance. And let it go at that.

My purpose in going after Davidson was of course to take from him the strong box he had taken from me. If I had caught him before he left the race-track, well and good. Since I didn't, and since I couldn't locate him at his hotel while the strong box was still on him (more than likely he had thrown it away by now), I considered it a waste of time to lay on his trail. I had something much more subtle in mind.

I resolved to give Davidson another opportunity to take my money. In so doing I meant to get back what I had lost to him—and if possible a good bit more. And I resolved to do this through his sister, Nell Tyler.

Of course I could have located Davidson through Nell Tyler, because I felt sure he would sooner or later communicate with her—no doubt to share with her the money he had taken from me. But I passed up this procedure, because it was no part of my plan.

IT may seem like boasting, but I knew that Nell Tyler would be at the Shelbourne Hotel that next night to meet me. How did I know it? I'll say it was because I knew human beings. I've already said that con-men are master psychologists. Her natural woman's curiosity would make her meet me, if only to see why I didn't whine at the loss she knew I had sustained. And sure enough, when I got to the Shelbourne, dressed carefully to please a feminine eye, she was there waiting for me in the lobby.

"So glad to see you, Mr. Kendall," she said, coming up to me enthusiastically, it seemed. I pressed her hand warmly.

"Call me Jim," I said, "won't you—Nell?" thereby setting the pace for a chatty, easy, informal evening.

"Delighted—Jim," she returned, and though a slight frown puckered her dark brows, there was a faint smile at the corners of her mouth. What was this woman—sincere and honest with herself and her emotions professedly fastened on me?—or was she a dyed-in-the-wool con worker? I'd give plenty to know; but I did know this: in carrying out my plan, I had matched my wits against a foeman worthy of my steel.

I took her to the Ormande, where certain of the diplomatic world of Washington dined in formal dress, with newspaper men and writers and others of a more Bohemian cast lending an air of gaiety to the place. The walls were lined with autographed photos of statesmen and other celebrities, the food excellent, the service good—altogether, the Ormande was just the place for the starting of my play.

Through the meal I chatted about the experiences I had had at the circus, some of the methods of breaking fractious horses I had used, and about other impersonal subjects, all with the purpose of putting the Tyler girl in an easy frame of mind. While the meal progressed, I could not help remarking that her tall erect figure, her black hair and flashing black eyes, as well as her general air of refinement, made her at home among the habitués of the Ormande. An excellent "come-on" for any group of confidence men, she was; she had the "front."

"THAT was the scheme. I was to give Nell's mob fifty thousand dollars for the picture. I was to take it at once to sell to Mallison. But—between the time the mob had my fifty thousand, and the time I was to conclude the bargain with Mallison, Nell and the mob and Mallison would be on their way to Honkong, or some other distant point.

"It was up to me to outwit them."

TOWARD the end of the meal I made a leading remark that she was quick to sense. "I'm tired of the track," I said. "It's an uncertain game. One day you have a bank roll, the next you're broke, and have to start all over again building up. I'd like to take what money I have and invest it in something that will give me a steady income, possibly a quick turnover."

That was as much as telling her that I was a boob laying myself open to being taken.

For a long moment she scrutinized me. She remained silent until a waiter had removed dessert dishes and had served the demi-tasse.

And the next thing she said told me that I had succeeded better than I had hoped to do.

"I know of a way right now whereby you can make a lot of money quickly," she said. "That is, provided you are not overscrupulous as to the ethics involved in the transaction."

I felt my cold resentment melting within me, as I warmed to the game. She had made the approach most con-men use. They invariably tell their proposed victims that there is a way of making money that is "not quite in accordance with the statute books of law." They do this to hook the gullibility of their suckers, to whet the greed of the victim.

And they usually use a method not on the statute books for the reason that in case the victim raises a holler with the police after the game is over and the victim is fleeced, they then have the right to say to him: "Well, you took a chance on an unlawful piece of business, didn't you? Go to the police if you want to. We'll go also and tell how you broke the law by going in with us." Under my breath I chuckled.

"No," I said to Nell Tyler, "I haven't any scruples that will keep me awake nights. I've paid money already to find the winner in a race, then I've put a bet on the winning horse and trimmed bookmakers," I went on, meaning to disarm her on the point of scruples.

"Well," she continued, leaning closer and moderating her voice so that she would not be heard at near-by tables, "you have heard of Flintt's picture they call 'The Meadows.'"

"Of course. Anybody who has read the newspapers the past month must have heard of it. The picture was stolen from the National Gallery about four weeks ago. It's an original 'master' by Flintt that can't be duplicated. The Gallery has offered a reward of a thousand dollars for information that will lead to its recovery. Sure I know about it."

"Well, I know where it is. And I know who stole it. Don't ask me how I know, Jim. I had no hand in stealing it, you may be sure." I smiled at this. "Of course the men who have it, can collect the thousand dollars. But they took the risk, and they want to collect a big profit. Naturally art dealers won't handle the painting. They're afraid to touch it. Now then, if you find a buyer for that painting, you can make a lot of money. They're asking fifty thousand dollars for it, and it seems to me that some rich art lover would willingly pay three or four times that amount of money for it. If you find the buyer, you get the cream of the profits. There now."

Without doubt her knowledge of this priceless work of art had come from her brother. If he and possible pals had stolen it, then Nell Tyler was working with a mob of higher caliber than I gave her credit for. If her brother had not been the thief, then she had a good workable con approach anyway.

To a man in conventional circles, her proposal had all the signs of a money-making scheme. There was no risk in it from a money standpoint. All I had to do was find a buyer for the painting. There was a risk of arrest as a party to the theft, but this I discounted. The purpose of Nell and her mob was to part me from my bank roll—nothing else.

Doubt as to her identity now had vanished. Nell Tyler was indeed the come-on for a group of con-men.

I gave nothing of this away, sitting there at the dinner table with her. I went right on playing my part.

"Well, that sounds like a money-maker," I said. "I'll look over my list of acquaintances, and see if I can find a buyer. If not, maybe I can dig one up."

I saw enough to tell me that the painting was a rank forgery

Notice I took it for granted that she should know about the stolen picture. It was not my business to question her as to how she had found out about it.

The conversation went on in general channels. After the meal I bought two tickets for the National Theater and saw a good drama. Back at the Shelbourne, Nell bid me good night, saying: "I like you much better—as you were tonight, Jim." Into her eyes came again that far-away, wistful look I had seen there so many (*Continued on page* **100**)

The NIGHT RIDERS

Out of the night they came—a trio on a the gruesome thought engrossing the

By Detective JOHN A. FOGARTY

Formerly of the Homicide Bureau, Police Headquarters, New York

"THAT listens like another case for you, John," Arthur Latimer, the District Attorney, said thoughtfully, as he clicked the receiver back on its hook. "Young woman found dead in a road-house at Lamberton. That was Doctor Frisch on the wire. He was called in by the coroner's physician around midnight. First off, he thought it was suicide, but this morning, after making a more thorough examination, he is inclined to think it is murder. Have you time to run out there with me and look it over?"

"Surest thing you know," I replied, at once rising from my chair and reaching for my overcoat and hat. Irving County, at that time, had no adequate detective staff of its own, and the D. A. had retained me on several big cases.

Within five minutes we were bowling along over the rough, rutty roads toward the desolate section of Lamberton, which lies a few miles beyond Cordova. It was December 19th, 1921—and cold! Bleak stretches of frost-nipped land lay on all sides. Overhead, gray, stormy clouds scurried across the sky, forming a dense foggy screen through which the wintry sun filtered in a dun, ashen light. A raw, damp, penetrating wind whistled through the bare trees which, scattered here and there, writhed their gaunt, blackened branches, like ugly beckoning arms which were welcoming us to the scene of the crime.

As we lurched over this ugly, barren landscape, the D. A. outlined the report he had received from Doctor Frisch.

"Mrs. Hahn, the young woman who was found dead about nine o'clock last evening, seems to have been a gay sort of girl who revolted against living so far out in the country," he began. "According to her husband she had threatened several times to commit suicide unless he would move into the city."

As I listened, my eyes swept the countryside, and I could well imagine its influence on any high-strung temperament. However, I made no comment and the D. A. proceeded.

"A friend of the Hahns telephoned to Tim Kerns, the village constable, telling him that Mrs. Hahn had been found lying dead, obviously from a bullet shot in her head. The Hahn farm is about a half mile from a place that is known as the Hottentot Road-House, which this couple also owned and ran.

"Kerns notified Doctor Greene, the coroner's physician, and Judge Kinsey, the justice of peace in Waverly. When these two arrived, Hahn claimed that his wife had shot herself and left a suicide note. He told them that she had frequently spoken of committing suicide.

"On questioning guests who had been at a rather wild party the Hahns had given yesterday afternoon, the Judge learned from them that though Mrs. Hahn had been given to fits of melancholy, they had never heard her threaten to commit suicide. She had, incidentally, they say, been very gay and unusually happy at the party, and had confided to one of the women in the party, that the reason for her high spirits was that she was an expectant mother."

With a wild swerve which threw the car half-way into a ditch, the chauffeur turned into a small wooded section. When we had cleared this, we saw a small house, silhouetted against the horizon. Smoke curled up from one of the chimneys, but was being blown in a straight ribbon westward by the strong gale.

"That the house?" I asked.

"Yes," the D. A. answered grimly. "Pretty lonely place for a young wife. I don't wonder she got the blues there. But to go on with the doctor's report. Hahn told Judge Kinsey that his wife had left a suicide note which he handed over. Doctor Greene refused to give a verdict of suicide, however, without a consultation with Doctor Howard A. Frisch of Brocton, who is always retained by us on technical cases.

"The Judge left, taking with him the revolver and the note. It was around midnight when Doctor Frisch arrived. He says that, though on the surface it looked like suicide, he was puzzled by several unusual things about the body. He refused to declare it a cut-and-dried suicide and called up Kinsey to inform him of his findings. Two State troopers were sent out to the farmhouse to remain on guard.

"This morning Doctor Frisch returned and made a very thorough examination. Without performing an autopsy, he told me, he could not give an official decision, but that he had a very strong conviction that the woman had been murdered."

As the District Attorney reached this point, our car approached the weatherbeaten, two-story, dingy old house that the Hahns had called home. At one side was a large chicken runway in which hundreds of well-cared-for fowl were pecking aimlessly about in the dry stubble. Gruntings and squealings of many pigs were the only sounds which broke the deathlike stillness.

About a hundred feet away from the house, on the other side, was a large, commodious barn and huge garage. In front of this latter were two men whom I recognized as Harris Tulle, the editor of a local newspaper, and his assistant, Roy Peck.

Before the automobile was brought to a standstill, they were striding over toward us.

"Hear they have a good murder here, Mr. District Attorney," the editor, a tall, heavy-set, good-humored-looking individual, remarked. "They've kept us out in the cold for a couple of hours until our marrow bones are almost congealed."

"If they'd only let us in that barn," Peck interrupted his chief to remark, "we'd have been able to warm up nicely on the pop-skull booze that's stored in there. 'Nough to flood the entire state, we hear."

Peck was short and very slim, and his teeth were chattering with cold. His thin nose was red, and his cheeks purple.

The District Attorney greeted both newspaper men heartily, and when the door was opened to us by one of the State troopers, no one appeared to notice when they entered with us.

from HOTTENTOT

rollicking ride—two of them little dreaming third. Too late they realized the awful truth

"Don't! Don't make me look at her again!" Hahn, husband of the murdered woman, beseeched the D. A.

An air of deep gloom hung heavy in the small parlor toward which we were led. Tim Kerns, with whom I had worked on other cases, was standing near a chair on which was seated a huddled figure, its head supported wearily by both hands.

"Ellen, oh Ellen, why did you do it? What will I do without you? Oh, Ellen, Ellen!"

The words moaned through the silence in a wraithlike wail. Kerns snorted: "Gosh, he's at it again," he muttered under his breath. Standing guard all night over a supposed murderer isn't conducive to sympathy. The constable's short, stocky body fairly quivered with animosity, his usually steely, bright eyes were heavy from lack of sleep.

"You, Hahn?" The D. A. went over and put his hand on the shoulder of the man in the chair.

Hahn looked up. Bloodshot eyes blinked at the District Attorney. His slack lips trembled, as if he were making a mighty but ineffectual effort to overcome his emotion and answer. Finally, he merely nodded his head slowly, his breath coming in sobbing gulps.

"I want you to come up-stairs with us while we look over the body. Come on now."

Hahn shrank back from the District Attorney's touch, like a cowed mongrel dog, though the words had been spoken gently enough.

"Don't! Don't make me look at Ellen again!" Hahn, husband of the murdered woman, beseeched the D. A. in a wailing outburst. "I can't stand it. I loved her so much. I don't know how I can live without her. I want to remember her as she was—always beautiful, and so neat and clean. Oh, Ellen——"

Hahn looked the picture of stark despair, and was wiping his face with the sleeve of his rumpled coat. Suddenly Kerns lurched forward, took hold of the mourner's wrist and jerked him to his feet. "Get on, wid you!" he ordered. "Do what the District Attorney tells you to do and for heaven's sake quit yer bawling! Oh, excuse me, sir." He turned towards the D. A. and a look of mortification flushed his tired face. "I wasn't thinking——"

In spite of the grim atmosphere of the room, I saw a faint

smile glimmer in the District Attorney's eyes for a second as he accepted the impetuous constable's apology.

Hahn hesitated a moment, teetered backwards and forwards as if he were about to fall. He looked around the room as if seeking for sympathy. Meeting only blank stares, he turned, left the room and slowly mounted the narrow steps of the stairs which led to the death chamber.

"What do you think of it, Kerns?" I had remained behind to question the constable, whom I knew to be a mighty shrewd man, with occasional bright flashes of intuition.

"Say, I dunno what to think," he answered slowly, as he scratched his head, ruffling still more his touseled, sandy crop of hair. "If the man had acted natural, I wouldn't be suspicious, but he cries too darned much. He overdoes it! He ain't dazed with grief. He's just turned on the waterworks and left 'em on all night. He's been wailing for 'Ellen' all night long."

While the constable was talking, I was taking note of the room in which we were standing. Though four men—the two State troopers, the widower and the constable—had remained there all night, the furniture had been left in exactly the same position as it was at the time the death had been discovered. This was in accordance with the rules of the police department.

"Ellen was trying desperately to hold the door closed until . . ."

Evidently the dead girl had been an admirable housekeeper and had made a desperate effort to overcome the ugliness of the little house. The living-room, we had been told, had been the scene of quite a lively party the afternoon before. However, no soiled glasses or dishes littered the tables. Every piece of furniture was in place with the exception of a small table and chair which were overturned near the door.

Nondescript furniture it was, such as is usually found in old farmhouses, but gay chintz covered the sagging seat of a dilapidated Morris chair, and the same material had been used in cushions which brightened up a shabby, horsehair sofa. A bright rag rug carpeted the floor. On this, near the overturned table, lay several scattered envelopes, a sentimental novel with a page turned in, evidently marking the place where the reader had left off, and a bit of crochetwork into which the knitting-needle had been stuck with a small cork protecting the tip.

That overturned table was mute evidence that someone, in rushing madly from the room, had collided with it, and knocked it over. This had to me great significance. The dead woman's personality was eloquently expressed in that stuffy little parlor; she had very evidently been a person of orderly habits, so far as her housewifely duties were concerned. No matter how disturbed she might have been, it would have been second nature for her to pick up that table and replace the objects on it, unless she had been the one escaping from some danger which threatened her. There was a possibility, of course, that some stranger had entered the house. The idea I stored away, as only a remote theory.

As an argument against suicide, however, was the number of religious pictures which practically covered the walls. These were to me of tremendous significance. I examined them closely, as I did, also, the miscellaneous collection of books stacked on four short shelves which hung between two chintz-draped windows. With the exception of a few ancient yellow-leafed novels by Sir Walter Scott and Dickens, it was made up of religious volumes of various kinds.

By the time Kerns rejoined me and told me that the District Attorney wanted me to go up to the death chamber,

I had a very good mental portrait of the slain woman.

"I'm goin' over to get two men that Hahn says was with him when his wife committed suicide," he explained, as he buttoned up his heavy overcoat. "His story is straight enough, but gosh, there's something funny about it, if you get what I mean."

As I mounted the stairs to the second and top story of the house, I heard the constable slam the front door.

The D. A. met me as I reached the top step.

"The man tells a straight enough story," he said. "I've questioned and cross-questioned him and he sticks to the one he told the Coroner. We can't find any motive he might have had for killing his wife. I don't want to put the county to the expense of an autopsy unless we have much more evidence pointing towards murder than we have now."

"It's murder all right," I told him. "I would bet anything on that!"

THE District Attorney looked at me in amazement. "But you haven't questioned the man," he objected. "Did you find any clues down there in the parlor that point toward murder?"

"No, I didn't," I admitted, "but I have gained a very good estimate of the dead woman and she isn't the type to commit suicide. Before I get to work on Hahn, I would like to have a look at the barn. It won't do any harm to let him sit around awhile longer in the company of the troopers."

Tulley joined us. His usually ruddy face was pale and there was a sick look in his eyes.

"Good lord!" he muttered. "I never saw such a gruesome sight in my life. Where are you going, John? Aren't you going to question Hahn? I don't believe he had anything to do with it. They were mighty good pals—gay and sporting a bit—but everybody knew that George was crazy about his pretty wife. I want to run off this story to-night and eleven o'clock is our dead line."

"Well, Jim, I hope it'll be all cleared up by then, but I can't tell you anything just now. Who has the key to the barn?"

"One of the troopers has it," he answered. "Hold on a second and I'll get it for you."

Tulley was a rattling good fellow. He never insisted on trying to rush matters. We had met on several other cases and he knew that I would give him a good break on anything I handled.

So, in this instance, he took the hint. When he brought the key, he handed it over and remained up-stairs while the District Attorney followed me back into the parlor.

"IT'S like this, Mr. Latimer," I explained as soon as we had regained the living-room. "That fellow, Hahn, has repeated his story so often that he has it pat. Before I take him in hand, I want to have a few unexpected questions to fire at him. If he has been running a still in the barn, I expect to learn something about him there. Just as Mrs. Hahn left the impression of her personality—her *portrait parlant* as the French call it—the man's individuality may show itself in his workshop."

I was very anxious to clear up the case that night in order to keep my engagement the following morning. At the same time, District Attorney Latimer had thrown many things my way, and this case would have to take precedence.

MUCH, I knew, could be learned by questioning the many friends of the Hahns, but there was a shorter cut which I intended to try out first. This might bring me up against a "detour," but I had a hunch that when Hahn and I came to grips, I would find I had taken the right track.

The early afternoon was bitterly cold, and the wind, swooping down in great gusts, burst into the house with the force of some ferocious invading animal as soon as I opened the door.

For a moment, the blast stunned me. While I was recovering, my eye fell upon a piece of flimsy, white material which the wind had caught and whirled up from some obscure hiding-place in the hall. On examining it, I discovered that it was a piece which had been torn from an article of women's underwear.

I put it in my pocket, closed the door and made my way to the barn.

"GEORGE picks up the note and hands it over to me. 'Read that, Tom,' says he; 'I can't read it.' Well, I reads it: 'I end my life for you, Ellen,' it says."

"What did you do with the note?" I asked.

"I lays it back on the bed somewheres, and then ——"

This was an old rusty-red building. On entering, I found nothing of interest in the place. However, above the peculiar, musty odor which always permeates these grain and cattle feed storehouses, I detected a smell of alcohol. Literally following my nose, I noticed that this came through the crevices of a door which had been cut in the wall, and led to the large garage that had been built obviously at some recent date.

AFTER trying three keys, I succeeded in opening this door. At a glance I saw that the "garage" was a camouflage for one of the most complete "still" houses I have ever come across. Metal-lined, to prevent fire, smoke had been eliminated by the use of gas for heating purposes. Forty barrels of "mash" stood on the floor. Graduated glasses stood in racks along the wall, and, in rather confused disorder, were littered test tubes, retorts and all the other paraphernalia for the making of moonshine, or pop-skull as the villagers called it.

Opening off this was a small room where I found three bags of sugar and four tins of pure alcohol standing on the floor ready to be used. Either the fittings of this illicit distillery had been bought second-hand or had seen very hard usage under its present owner, for there were many evidences of patching and make-shift substitutes for various pieces of equipment.

From that first tour of inspection I learned nothing more than that Hahn was a frugal soul, and in spite of the large sums which he must have received from his contraband, he wasn't the kind of a man to spend (*Continued on page* 64)

The MAN with

Wealthy patrons of New York's night clubs little coins into a beggar's tin cup, they laid

By STEPHEN MARTIN, Detective Sergeant
as told to ALLAN VAN HOESEN

"HI, fellers, look who's here!" "My word, what a lovely sunburn he got in Florida!" "Some drag, I'll say, to get a month's vacation at Miami."

These and other cries of a similiar nature greeted me as I entered the Detective Bureau at Police Headquarters, where a dozen men of the all-night squad were lounging about or making out reports.

"Greetings, boys! And have it your own way. But I got my man, didn't I? And it wasn't all fishing and swimming, I'll tell the world. I had a hard battle to persuade that Florida bunch to honor an extradition. But Yeager's here, locked up down-stairs, and that's that. Now, as its nearly two bells, I'm off for home and bed. By-by——"

"Hello, Martin! When did you get in?" I swung to find Inspector Brady, his brow corrugated with wrinkles, blocking the doorway.

"Hello, Inspector! Just back."

"Well, you've hit the town at the right time. I've got a big job for you. Come to my office."

As I followed Brady, I caught a chorus of, "Pleasant dreams, Steve," "Vacation's over, old top," and the like.

"Been reading the New York papers in Florida?" snapped the Inspector. He pushed a dead cigar beneath his grizzled mustache and nodded for me to take a chair.

"Yes. Every day."

"Then you saw the stories about the hold-ups of the society women and their escorts in the vestibules of their homes—after a fling at the swell cabarets in each case."

"Yes. Do you think anyone from the cabarets followed them?"

"IT'S possible, but unlikely. Maybe you didn't stop to think that the cabarets in question are the kind that won't permit the regular night crowd to get even its nose inside. Exclusive is the word; exclusive for those with real money and a blue-book rating.

"That's a fact. But from what I gathered from the newspapers, it appeared like the work of one gang——"

"Umph! Well that's what it's going to be your job to find out. I've had fifty men on the case since the first hold-up. They haven't turned up a damned thing, and to-night——"

"Another one, eh?"

"Yes. Less than an hour ago. I wish you'd been here at the start. This kind of stuff is your specialty. No working with stools is going to do the trick. I'm convinced these crooks are experienced performers who have been laying low or out of town for a long time. That's where your memory for faces will come in handy. Even the rookies are on to the hundred or so who have been dragged in here without a thing on 'em. These crooks are not dodos, who go around with a jimmy in one hand and a black-jack in the other. They've got brains. And it'll take brains to land 'em."

"Tell me the facts, Inspector—I'm a bit hazy on what I read—and I'll do my best."

"Okey. If you're tired, you'll have to forget it and get busy at once. To-night's job has got me dead sore. The Commissioner's mad as hell already and by to-morrow he'll be fit to be tied. I'm talking a lot because I want you to realize there's got to be action. Now listen carefully. To-night's hold-up is the third of a series, each a week apart, all on Saturday nights and so similiar in method as to indicate one band of crooks or a single crook pulled all the jobs.

"On the night of the fifteenth, Oscar Grayson—you know, the big oil man and race-horse owner—and his wife went to the Little Cottage in Fifty-first after the theater. Mrs. Grayson, as usual, was plastered with diamonds. Their limousine called for them and drove them straight home to their place on Riverside Drive.

"AS the machine shot away for the garage, the millionaire and his wife entered the vestibule. A man promptly pushed a gun into Grayson's ribs, ordered hands up, then cleaned them out. They made no resistance. Mr. Crook got away with about $100,000 in diamond jewelry, Grayson's watch, a split-second, made-to-order affair from Paris, and his bank-roll. As soon as the burglar had the stuff he forced Grayson to unlock the front door, pushed the couple inside and slammed it. By the time a holler had been raised which brought the servants and they went outside, the crook had vanished. Probably he had a getaway car parked in the shadows along the Drive."

"What description did they give of the man?"

"Below average height, say about five feet four, slim build, but with good shoulders and lightning quick in movement. A cap pulled low and a handkerchief tied across his nose hid everything but his eyes, which were dark and piercing. He talked only in a hoarse whisper, which disguised his voice. But his talk was ugly, he cursed a lot and he threatened to kill 'em both if they made a move or a sound."

"The second stick-up was of the Barnes-Morrisons, wasn't it?"

"YES. That was on the twenty-second. She's another diamond-toting baby. You know where they live—upper Park Avenue, in one of the few old brownstone mansions that haven't been squeezed out by the apartment hotels. Their case is like the other. Went to the Fireside from the opera, left there after one, drove home and dismissed the chauffeur. At the top of the stoop they faced the gun of a stick-up man. The woman screamed. The next second the burglar drove her against the wall with a blow to the jaw. He fairly raved, cursing and threatening, but always in a hoarse whisper. Barnes-Morrison started to help his wife, but the crook's gun in his stomach brought him up short. The man only got part of their stuff, about

Four LEGS

suspected that when they kind-heartedly dropped themselves open to robbery—and worse

$50,000 worth in diamonds and coin; then beat it, as the woman's cries had brought many persons to their windows.

"That girl is game. She let out a yell and reached for the gun"

"The Barnes-Morrisons were too excited to recall much about their assailant, except that he was not tall and wore a cap and handkerchief. But they saw him dart to the corner, where he jumped into a taxicab and got away clean."

"This boy sure is a bad baby. Mighty few of them are brutal to women. Of course none of the stolen stuff has reached the pawn-shops?"

"No. And we've put several of the diamond fences on the grill with no result. I tell you, this crook is slick. He's caching the stuff 'til things get too hot for him around here. Then he'll skip and sell it elsewhere."

"And to-night?" I asked.

It seemed as if the Inspector's gray pompadour fairly bristled, and he jerked the stub of cigar from his mouth and hurled it viciously to the floor. "To-night's job was the worst of all. And don't forget it's Saturday, just a week from the last stick-up. As for brutality, if it was the same yegg, he surely went the limit. Of course you know of young Chester Brewster. He's had more newspaper notoriety than any gilt-edged youth in——"

"Know *of* him? I know him. Was he held up?"

"He and the young woman with him."

"That gives me a laugh instead of tears. Old Jasper

Brewster's bad boy held up—and old Jasp the head of the bonding company that has put up bail for more crooks charged with serious offenses than all the others combined. It's rich. Wonder how he'll like having one of his clients pluck——"

"Forget that line. I've no more use for his line than you have, but the law makes us look after even his kind. Here's what I know; reported by Sweeney, the man on post. You can get more details. Young Brewster and Miss Norma Howland, that swell-looking young daughter of Aaron Howland, who's picture is always in the papers, were at the Black Pigeon after seeing a show. About one o'clock, in her car and driven by the family chauffeur, they went to the Howland place in Washington Square. When the machine had gone, they mounted the stoop. In the vestibule a stick-up man jammed a revolver against Brewster and ordered hands up and no noise.

"But that girl is game. She let out a yell and reached for the gun. The crook turned on her, cursing, and sent her flat with a blow which drew blood. Brewster leaped him, but wasn't the other's match. As they struggled the burglar hit him with the butt of his weapon, knocking him cold. The girl heard shouts from the servants, who were unfastening the door, and cried out again. The yegg deliberately kicked her, then snatched a diamond necklace and beat it. Nobody saw where he went. Probably across the park and through some Greenwich Village alley. The necklace was valuable and belonged to the girl's dead mother."

"Did the crook's description tally with the one on the other jobs?"

"Pretty much. Except that he wore a cap and a handkerchief. They couldn't remember the color of his hair, his clothing or whether he whispered or talked out. But he left one mark, a red bruise on Miss Howland's cheek, where a ring landed."

The two exchanged a few hurried words

"I can guess what the Commissioner and the newspapers are going to say."

"That's the reason I've taken time to put you fully wise. We haven't wasted any time at that. You can get to the

house in ten minutes in one of the department cars outside. Besides, when you arrive, the station-house detectives and cops will have finished asking questions, things will have quieted down a bit and you'll be able to get a clearer story. I ordered Sweeney to keep Brewster at the house until someone from Headquarters arrived. Also, to keep the reporters out and send 'em to me. There's some down-stairs now."

"I'm off. I'll keep you posted."

"One thing more, Martin. I'm counting on you—to put this bureau square with the Commissioner. You simply must make good. Dammit, I'll do something worth while for you if you nail this yegg and get such a case on him that even the crook lawyers can't keep him from getting a good stretch. This beating up of Miss Howland ought to jolt even an 'easy' judge."

"I'll go beyond the limit, Inspector. But I've just thought of something. Don't let the newspapers know the girl was beaten up. Keep mum on that and particularly that Miss Howland's cheek shows a ring mark."

The ride to Washington Square was brief, but I got in a bit of thinking concerning the robberies in recent years of women who made a display of their diamonds in the cabaret belt. The Schoelkopf, Louise Lawson and Dot King cases came pretty close together. I had a hand in rounding up the bunch that robbed Mrs. Schoelkopf and sending them over. I was not on the other cases. The boys had failed to run down the killers of the Lawson and King women. Maybe, in the latter case, some of the big money daddies who were mixed up with Dot, in an effort to get their names out of the newspapers as quickly as possible, didn't tell all they could. I always had regretted I hadn't had a chance at those fellows, one millionaire in particular.

I wondered if I had stumbled upon something significant

Anyway, those cases had raised such a holler and caused so much police activity that the cabaret crooks took to cover. Only at infrequent intervals in the more recent years had the "diamond babies" been followed home and robbed—either gold diggers or women whose names were in the Social Register. The new outbreak, three in a row, indicated either that one or more of the cabaret sneaks had resumed operations or that some other daring operator had decided the time was ripe for another clean-up. His choice of victims suggested he was after big game only. But that he had spotted the women from inside the ultra-exclusive night clubs in question I couldn't believe. Any man who could show the front and qualifications to get into these places wouldn't be the kind who would beat up two

women. My guess was that when I landed my bird I'd find a hardened crook of the yegg type, possibly a cokie. And a man who would assault women wouldn't be likely to show mercy to a detective if he got the drop on him. Thereafter my automatic was to be kept where I could reach it in a flash.

SWEENEY admitted me to the Howland house, a magnificent house of the Colonial type facing Washington Arch, and conducted me to the library. There were four persons there: Miss Howland, who was holding a handkerchief to her bruised face and over whom a physician was leaning; Aaron Howland and young Brewster, a bandage about his head, his face pasty white. He nodded, arose unsteadily and shook hands. The girl smiled. She was the coolest of them all. Howland, his heavy mouth set in a hard line, his shaggy brows frowning so they all but hid his eyes, burning with poorly suppressed anger, also came forward and took my hand.

"Inspector Brady telephoned you were coming. He says you're his best man for this kind of a job. Ask any questions. They'll be answered. By all of us," he added significantly.

The doctor left the room and I began to question Brewster. He was frank—frank with the contriteness of a spoiled youth with a bad record who had been brought up with a sharp turn. He realized he had been the cause of a near tragedy to a girl of whom he was very fond; maybe she was fond of him. She showed the greatest interest, now and then volunteering information. Howland remained silent.

The story I gleaned was this: Brewster, whose father had insisted that he get away from Broadway's night life, had been taking a course in civil engineering at one of the well-known New England colleges. Only a comparatively meager allowance was sent him. However, about a month back, he had received a tip from a sympathetic broker intimate in New York, had played it, pyramided his profits, and had cashed in on a considerable sum within a few days. Each week-end for the three last weeks he had come to New York to see some night life. The two previous Saturday nights he had visited only the noisiest and most garish of the cabarets and night clubs, feeling certain he would meet no one there who would inform his family.

However, he tired of his self-imposed ostracism, and early in the week wrote to Miss Howland—with whom he had been on most friendly terms until her father had denied him the house—daring her to accompany him for three evenings, beginning Thursday, "for a big time." The program he suggested was that they go to a different theater each night, then to the Black Pigeon, one of the city's two most exclusive and expensive night clubs. Her father being absent from the city and not expected back until Sunday, she wired Chester that information and her acceptance. She was a rather independent, high-spirited miss, believed Brewster was being dealt with too severely, and looked forward to a few evenings with a forbidden escort as a real lark.

Receiving her affirmative answer, the youth lost his head. He determined to show those who formerly had welcomed him socially that not only did he possess abundant funds of his own to spend, but that the wealthy Miss Howland would go the limit to appear at her best when in his company. Communicating with her by long-distance telephone, he urged her to wear her most fashionable gowns and the most showy of her jewels. She promised, and stated that one of the family cars would be at their disposal each night.

Then she did a most foolish thing. In addition to putting on the best of the gems she was accustomed to wear, she added a magnificent necklace of diamonds, willed her by her mother, which was kept in a big safe her banker father had installed in the house. She and he also knew the combination. She had been forbidden to wear it outside her home, but it had graced her throat each evening she accompanied Brewster. It was valued at $50,000 and was the only article the thief had had time to snatch from her before he raced away, following her alarm. That was about all, except that neither the girl nor her companion had noted anyone watching them in the Black Pigeon, and did not know if they were followed.

Next I examined most carefully the bruise on Miss Howland's cheek. Contrary to what I had expected, the skin had not been cut, as it would have been if made with a diamond ring. The shape of the red welt was oblong. The thief had worn a seal ring upon the hand which struck her. Pledging all of them to secrecy concerning the assault upon her, advising that none but Mr. Howland talk to the newspapers, I directed Brewster to go home and remain there, that I might be able to reach and question him at any time.

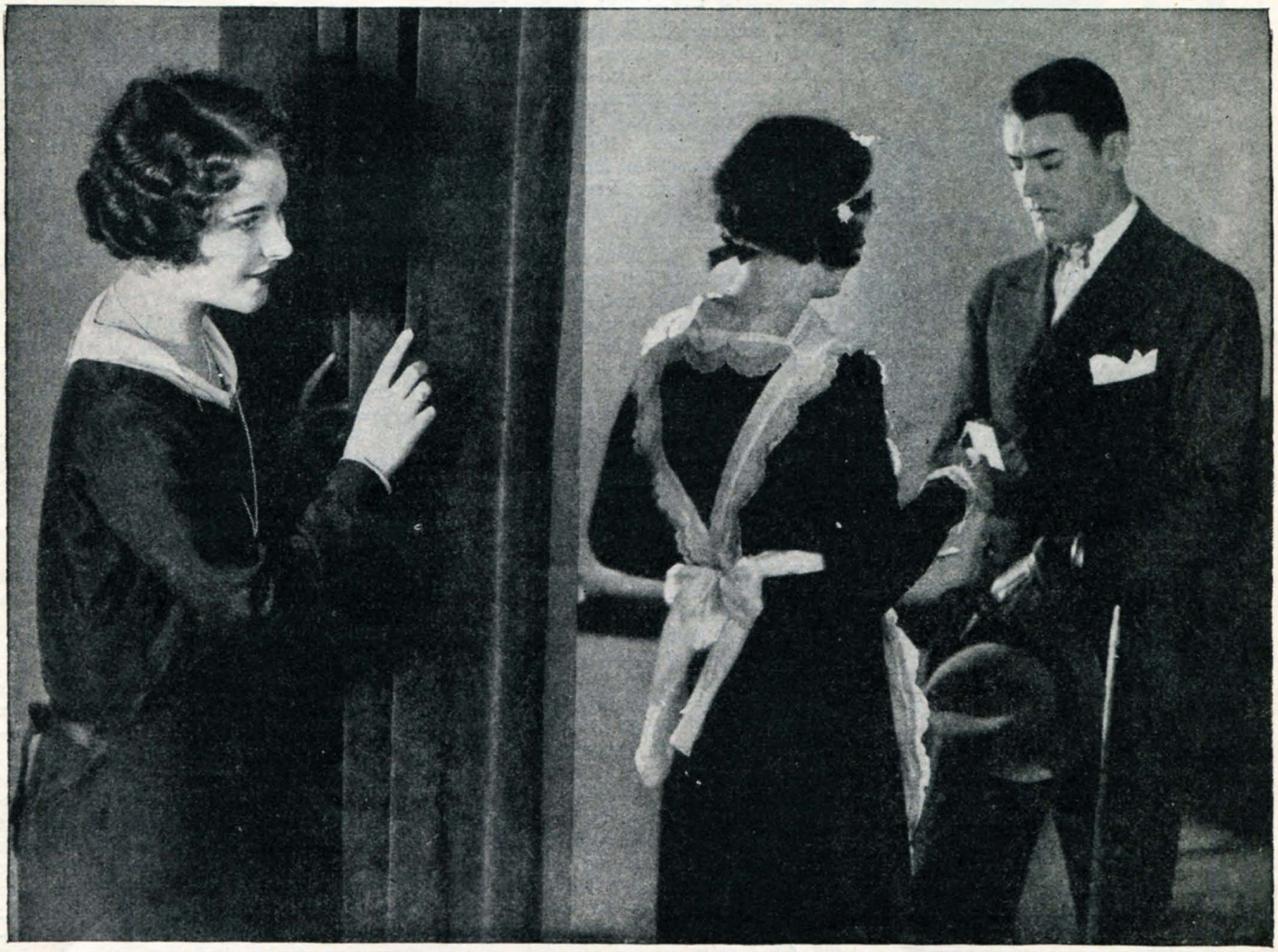
"That's all, Chester, you may go." Howland's tone was like chilled steel as he spoke.

For an instant the youth hesitated and the girl half arose. But both thought better of their first impulse. Brewster bowed, left the room, and soon after I heard the clang of the front door behind him. The girl then said good night, kissed her father, stating she would see the doctor again and retire.

IMMEDIATELY Howland closed the door and came near, speaking in a hoarse whisper, though fairly quivering with rage. "Listen, Martin, I'll do as you request about talking. But in the morning, through my attorney, I shall offer a reward of $5,000 for the arrest of the thief, and $5,000 additional if the necklace is recovered. I'm giving you the first tip. I think you can earn the money—if you dare to."

"If I—dare? What do you mean?" (*Continued on page* 76)

UNWELCOME!



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WHAT do all your graces and charms amount to if you have dandruff? Not much. Today, dandruff is an unpardonable social offense.

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So goes the good news about Listerine Tooth Paste—the dentifrice that gets teeth whiter in quicker time than ever before. The price—25c for the large tube.

LISTERINE

—and dandruff simply do not get along together

For a Chinaman's Gold

(*Continued from page* 14)

then again, he mightn't have. You just see if he's there, Doc, and keep your eyes open. I'll see him later."

It happened that I had some wash to take in. Sam Wong seemed natural and quite himself, but it is hard to tell what is in a Chinaman's face. He was friendly, as usual, and said, "'Lo, Doc," as always.

I was in no hurry. I took my time about lighting a cigaret as I watched Sam Wong. And then I told him that Sing Ling was in some trouble. He shrugged his shoulders. I asked him if he had seen Sing Ling that evening. He said no. I told him that Charley See had said that he did.

"Cholly See clazy," he muttered.

When I asked him if he hadn't taken some laundry to Sing Ling's place, he replied with an accompanying gesture that he had given it to Charley See. And at that I noticed a sore on his hand. It certainly did not look like a fresh cut, as from thrusting a hand through a broken window. I looked at it more closely and asked him what it was. He said it was a burn, withdrawing the hand a little and looking toward the flat-iron on the board in front of him. It did look like a burn, but I wanted to examine it closely. I wanted to hold his hand and wrist with both my hands, and get my fingers on his pulse to see if he were excited underneath this outward calm.

Sam Wong shrugged his shoulders again and turned back to his work—and I left him.

WHEN I got back to the jail Doctor Beecher had gone, giving Frisco Irish up as a bad job and saying that the fellow would have to just sleep it off. I reported the Sam Wong interview to the Sheriff, who said that he would see the laundryman himself, shortly.

But when the Arm of the Law called with me to see Sam Wong, the laundryman was not there. A small light was still burning, but the door was locked. Sam was industrious and obliging, and often he called for and delivered laundry. He might be around town, on some such errand. But the Sheriff promptly prepared for pursuit. I reminded him that Sam Wong might be on the way to his sick brother, but that possibility did not interest him. At that time there was no railroad to Stony Creek, and the only regular transportation was by stage-coach, three times a week. The stage had left that noon. Obviously, Sam Wong had hit the trail. The Sheriff figured that the laundryman had probably headed into the mountains, and therefore himself started in that direction with two deputies, after having sent volunteers off on the search in other directions. We learned later that Sam Wong had borrowed Sing Ling's horse, from the chop-suey man's little stable back of the restaurant—not a race-horse, by any means, but a good, capable broncho.

When I returned to my own quarters, which I shared with Doctor Beecher, I found that he was out. Of late he had gone out a lot without leaving word as to where he might be found, but I was getting used to his growing eccentricities. We occupied a joint office in the administration building of the mining corporation, and were located on the second floor, overlooking the street. It is a good plan for a practicing physician to have his office and living-rooms—or room—in the same place and so Beecher and I each had a small sleeping- and living-room adjoining the large office room which we shared in common.

That night I read a few pages in a new book on surgery, looked over the two papers the stage had brought that day, had a smoke and went to bed—at perhaps ten-thirty.

I WAS awakened at about half past twelve by the repeated ringing of my night-bell, for which I had a special button down below at the door. It was Frank Green, one of the deputy sheriffs.

"Sorry to rout you out like this, Doc, but Sam Wong's been shot. Bleeding badly—you'll want to hurry."

"Sam Wong?" I exclaimed, though I was already hurrying. "I thought he had gone away."

"He had. We picked him up—in fact, we heard the shooting—out near Dave Henderson's cabin."

"Good Lord—way out there? Who did it?"

"Don't know—we scared him off. He vamoosed. The Sheriff's looking for him now. We took the Chink to Dave's cabin—Sleepy George's there with him, and I've been riding like the devil to get you."

Well, the prospect was no fun, waking up for a ride like that. I knew the trip up into the hills because I had recently gone out there, in the daytime, to see Dave Henderson, prospector, who had been bitten by a rattler. I had later had him brought to town for careful nursing. He was recovering, for he had not gotten the full dose of the poisonous fangs, since the rattler had first bitten his dog and thus largely exhausted his venom. It was this sacrifice of the dog that saved the prospector. In the meantime, it seemed, Dave's cabin was occupied by Sleepy George Jackson, a colored cook and handy man.

Frank Green led the way and we made the best time we could, uphill and under the conditions. It started to rain and we used our ponchos; it was an unpleasant business. Fortunately, I had something to occupy my mind. Why was Sam Wong running away like that? He had avoided even an interview with the Sheriff. And then, why had he been shot? Had he really been the culprit who cut Sing Ling's wire and seized the pearls—if any outside party had done it? Had he taken them with him on this insane ride up into the mountains? Might he not have secreted them? Or might Sing Ling himself have had a secret hiding-place, secure against search, and reached in those moments of darkness? Or, if Sam Wong had the jewels, who would have known it, so as to follow him up and shoot him down—so soon?

Frank Green, the deputy, did not go inside with me when he reached the Henderson place, but said he would put my horse in the little stable just below the shack and then strike out to see what, or whom, he could find, with any possible

bearing upon the shooting of Sam Wong, or perhaps to join the Sheriff in the search. I told him to use my horse and rest his own.

So I found only the two in the lonely little cabin—the Chinaman almost dead from his wound, and Sleepy George Jackson almost dead from fright, as well as belying his nickname. The shooting had occurred perhaps a stone's throw from the cabin, waking up the sleepy one, and he had not yet recovered from that first shock. And then being left in charge of a bleeding and dying man, and not knowing what to do for him, had not helped his nerves any.

For in truth, the prognosis was grave. Indeed, it was more than that. Sam Wong was dying. I could see that when my eyes first reached him, there on Henderson's bunk. He opened his eyes, feebly, but said nothing. It was pure weakness, from loss of blood. He had only been hit in the shoulder, but the bullet had grazed the artery supplying the arm. Prompt first aid of the right kind, that is, even tight pressure of a thumb upon the artery above the wound, to stop it, might have saved him. If only I could have reached him sooner! But as it was, the hemorrhage had about drained away his life.

I OPERATED at once, for it was necessary to reach and tie the artery. To do that, I had to have George's help, such as it was, mostly holding the kerosene lamp for me. I gave Sam Wong a few light whiffs of chloroform to keep him quiet, but not enough to render him unconscious. I wouldn't have dared give him much, with his exhaustion of blood.

Having made him as comfortable as I could, I tried to ask Sam Wong some questions. Who had shot him? Did he know? Did they get the pearls from him? Did he know anything about the pearls? To all of which the man gave absolutely no response whatever, whether from weakness, stubbornness or whatsoever motive, until George volunteered the information that the Sheriff had asked him all that stuff when first bringing him in. Clapping my hands to arouse him, I told Sam Wong that he might be dead in an hour, and begged him for that reason to tell me what he could. He only opened and closed his eyes, as one would nod his head, to show that he knew he was going—and that it made no difference.

I gave Sam Wong a stimulant, but since there was nothing more I could do now, I turned my attention to the colored boy, to find what he had learned from the Sheriff when the wounded Chinaman was brought in. Apparently George had learned little or nothing, but as I questioned him, Sam Wong went to sleep—a sleep from which he never woke up. A few minutes later his breathing stopped entirely, as I watched. And it was an awe-stricken colored boy who received the news that his guest had "gone West."

I cleaned up. I washed and sterilized my instruments and put them back in their places in my case. It was still raining—harder than ever—and I was in no hurry to start on the return journey through the downpour. George build a good fire in the stove and spread out my poncho to dry. I took off my wet shoes, placed them near the stove, and sat down near by, to warm my feet. Wide-eyed Sleepy George made

me some coffee, opened a can of beans, soft-boiled me a couple of eggs and toasted me some cheese, which he served with a handful of crackers. It all surely did taste good, after my trip through the pouring rain. George himself didn't eat—couldn't. And now the cabin was warm and very comfortable, and I felt still less like trekking back to town through the storm. It was getting to be a very wild night outside, much worse than when I had come out.

It was somewhat after three o'clock when the Sheriff with one deputy came in, wet, tired, and clearly not unwilling to do a little heavy cussing when he found that my patient had passed on. I told him the details of the case, including the fact that Sam Wong had not disclosed a thing; his face, and presumably his mind, had been a blank. The Sheriff avowed that it sure did beat a certain very hot word of four short letters. For—where were the pearls? Had the Chink had them? The Sheriff had come up so quick, at the shooting, that the assailant had taken precipitous flight. He might have got the necklace—yet that was doubtful. The Sheriff himself had searched Sam Wong. Again—there was Sing Ling——

WHILE we were talking, Frank Green came in, dripping water like a garden sprinkler.

"What luck?" asked the Sheriff.

"Nothing. Except that I picked up Doc Beecher and Shifty Joe up the way—just ran into them."

"What the devil they doing way out here?" asked the Sheriff, and turned to me.

"First I knew of his coming out this way," I said. "I didn't see him after I left you to go and see Sam Wong."

"Oh, Doc's all right, but I don't like the looks of Joe Gates around up here," said the Sheriff.

"They told me," said Frank, "that Gates had brought Doc Beecher out to see Pete Galveston."

"What's the matter with Peter?"

"He's got a sore hand."

"Hell! What's this?" And the Sheriff came right up on his feet. "Where'd he git the sore hand?"

Thoughts of a jagged window frame also flashed into my mind. But Frank added, "The Doc said something about blood poison."

"Oh no," George, the colored boy spoke up, "he cut his hand with his big jack-knife—caught his fingers when he shut it—two or three days ago."

"You're sure about that?"

"Oh—yer, I seen him yesteddy. He put mud on it—nature cure."

"No wonder it's infected," I ventured. "That would very likely give him blood poison."

"Just the same," said the Sheriff, "he might a cut it again to-night. Nothing to that jack-knife stuff. I've done that myself. I wish you would go and see him, Doc, and take a look at that hand."

"I think I'll stay out here to-night," I said, "and I'll see him in the morning."

"Oh, never mind, I'll talk to Beecher about it," said the Sheriff. Then he added, "But it's funny—Beecher and Gates the only two people out this way to-night. You didn't search them, did you, Frank?"

"Well, yes, I did. Taking no chances of a callin' down from you. Doc was sore, but I went over them both."

"And nothing doing, eh?"

"Nothing like a string of beads on either."

"Mention the shootin'? Tell them why?"

"No, I didn't."

"They mention it? Say anything suspicious?"

"Nope." And that was all there was to that.

THE Sheriff prepared to depart. I asked about the weather. Worse than ever, according to Frank. The Sheriff had no heart for further pursuit that night; he wanted to get back to Stony Creek and get some sleep. I told him that I wanted the sleep, but not the getting back to Stony Creek in the storm. I would rather wait until morning, if I could find a place to stretch myself right there in the cabin. It appeared, however, that the shack would only accommodate three sleepers, at the most. The bunk, on which the dead Sam Wong now reposed, would hold two, with a bit of crowding. And then there was the couch upon which Sleepy George usually justified his nickname.

"Hey, you George," called the Sheriff—"you bunk in there with Sam Wong and let Doc Bailey have your couch."

The whites of George's eyes showed round as saucers as he glanced over at the Chinaman. He was appalled at the very suggestion. "N-n-no sah. The Doc can have my bed, but I'll sit up to-night."

"Nonsense," I said, "you go to bed—and sleep." And I nodded toward Sam Wong.

"Not with no dead man—I don't!" said George, stubbornly. We laughed.

"Well then," suggested Bob Harrison, the other deputy, "why don't you put Sam Wong on the couch, and you two get together on the bunk."

"That's it, Doc," said the Sheriff, with a twinkle in his eye, "you got your choice, sleeping with George or with the Chink."

I glanced at George. He was taking it all very seriously. "How about you, George—do you sleep quiet or do you roll and toss a lot?"

"I dunno."

The Sheriff told me later that he had made up his mind that I would occupy the couch, irrespective, even if George did sit up, but for the moment he was in a joking mood. It was a relaxation from the tension of the night.

"Personally," said the Sheriff, "when it comes to sleeping, I draw the color line. Now if it was me, I'd rather sleep with Sam."

"Well," I said, "there's no choice between a colored man and a Chink, to me, only I think in this case Sam will be more quiet. He won't kick me or stick his elbows into me."

"No," observed the Sheriff, scratching his head thoughtfully, "I don't think Sam will roll or toss much—to-night."

"If you're not offended, George," I said, "I think I'll bunk with Sam, and save moving him. We'll clean up the bed, push him over on his own side near the wall, and I'll turn in," I yawned.

George could hardly believe his ears. Even the Sheriff didn't think I meant it. I probably didn't intend it seriously my-

self, at first. But now I said to mysef—why not? I proceeded to get the bed ready. The Sheriff, chuckling, said good night and went out into the rain with his deputies, leaving me alone with the dead and the scared, the yellow and the black.

There was only the noise of the storm, the swishing, howling wind, the pour of the rain on roof and windows. Otherwise there was silence. Sam Wong was still forever. George scarcely breathed. And now for a moment I hesitated. What was this silly, crazy prank, this nonsense of sleeping with a dead man? Just to tease and astonish a poor colored boy—just to amuse a country Sheriff! A schoolboy idea. Who ever heard of such a thing. Well, that was just it—no one did such things, so why not? And then, when you faced it, it was a very practical thing to do, since this was the only double bed, and George wouldn't do it. Besides, if I really was not superstitious, what difference did it make?

MY mind went back to a schoolboy prank, when my brother and I, on a bet of ten cents, had taken a pup-tent into a graveyard to camp and sleep there all night, just to prove that we had the nerve to do it. Yes, we had been badly scared, but we went through with it, and nothing happened, though we felt that we richly earned the ten cents. Also I thought of a trick some of us played in my medical college days—the joke we perpetrated on a sleeping student by placing a cadaver in bed with him. Silly stuff. Nothing to it. Oh, well, I said to myself, I had said that I would, and so of course I would.

To George's great astonishment, I placed a folded blanket between Sam Wong and myself, made the bed comfortable and then turned in alongside of the poor piece of clay that a few hours earlier had been an excellent laundryman.

"The only trouble is, George," I said, "that they don't keep you warm in cold weather. Very quiet, but not warm. Fine in hot weather, but not so good in winter."

It was too much for the colored boy. He reluctantly stretched himself on his own couch, with the lamp burning high. I called to him to douse the glim. He hesitated, then remonstrated, but I told him I couldn't sleep with a light, and that if he wouldn't kill it, I would, and then he obeyed, blowing it out.

"Good Lord, Doc Bailey," said George, just before he did so, "Yo-yo-yo ain't afraid o' nothin'!"

"That's right. That's about the size of it, George. But listen, a Chinaman is like an Indian. When he's dead, he's a good Chinaman. He'll not trouble anybody, now. It's the live people you want to be afraid of. And I've got to have a good, quiet sleep."

But with the lights out it did seem kind of creepy and gruesome, and in my heart I did not blame poor George, with his unsophisticated, primitive outlook on things, for being nervous. I half regretted forcing him to extinguish the light; I almost relented to the extent of telling him to light it again, if he wished to. But the situation was a little interesting, as it was, with a slight touch of adventure. Within the cabin it was dark and silent; without, the weird noises of the storm. It was a lonesome little shack, far up in the moun-

tains, with not another human being for miles around. But stop—perhaps somewhere in the neighborhood, out there in the wilds, were the mysterious marauders who had shot down Sam Wong. Heaven only knew who they were—or where. Oh, well, they were not likely to be seen again that night. They were probably far away by this time, and even they were human. Bandits did not relish bad weather any more than anyone else.

I turned over to lie on my back, and said to myself that I must go to sleep. But I was conscious of the odors in the room; it still retained the atmosphere of the operating room, from my disinfectants, and the lingering odor of the chloroform that I had used. It was just faintly perceptible. Had I closed the cork of the bottle tightly? Oh, without question. Certainly Sam Wong was not giving off the fumes of the chloroform from his system, for he had ceased to exhale. And from that moment I commenced to speculate upon this business of death, the unfathomable mystery—next to life itself, the greatest of mysteries.

Even doctors have imagination. Doctors are just like everybody else. Perhaps death means less to a doctor than to the average man who meets it only a few times in a lifetime. Perhaps it means less to an undertaker than to a doctor. But to the undertaker, or the doctor, or the soldier, death is always death—a stupendous fact of human experience, meaning exactly the same to one as to another. On the other hand, there is no doubt that familiarity dulls the edge of one's sensibilities to anything. And probably a doctor would do such an absurd thing as I had undertaken, much more readily and easily than most other people.

But, just the same, my own imagination went to work as I lay there in the dark alongside of the departed laundryman.

Was my bedfellow really dead?

Doctor Bailey is to have a weird experience in that lonely shack, and his thought—"is Sam Wong really dead?" turns out to be but the beginning of it. The trail leading to that string of pearls is destined to give him more than one thrill before it ends. And—where does it end? Read in August TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES, of the hair-raising development that follow the Doctor's night with the "dead Chinaman." On the news-stand July 15th.

The Riddle of the Grinning Skull

(*Continued from page* 21)

September of 1922 a foreign-looking man came to the complaint desk and told the story of being robbed by his wife. He gave the name of John Turak. Of course, the name meant nothing. Neither did the case amount to much. To begin with, Turak could not make a complaint because under the laws of Michigan a husband or wife cannot steal from each other.

"Who is your wife?" asked Fleming more as a matter of form than anything else.

"She was Mrs. Mary Podolsky," replied the complainant.

Memories of another day when a woman and man were brought in for investigation in connection with Joseph Podolsky's death might have been revived by the terrific heat. Fleming thought for a moment or two and then said: "Is she the woman who was arrested for murder a couple of years ago?"

"Yes, yes," replied the man eagerly—"that's her. Do you know her?"

"No, but I've heard of her," Fleming replied dryly. "Then she didn't marry her roomer?"

"No, but I wish she had. Here she's stolen all I've got and I'm afraid she is going to Europe with it."

Fleming ended the conversation by taking Turak to the room used as the headquarters of the homicide squad. He told Lieutenants Wencel and Collins what had happened. They were anxious to talk with the man.

"Something seems to be troubling her. She would wake up in the night shuddering and crying. She said the house was haunted—that she could see ghosts. She has told me for a long time that she was going back to the old country. I don't know what to make of her. She acts crazy."

The greatest surprise to the officers was that she had not married Zydko.

"He dropped out of sight almost as soon as he got out of jail. I don't think they were in love with each other. I knew him. He was a nice man."

Further questioning revealed the fact that his wife had assured him Podolsky was dead and that it would be all right for Turak to marry her.

"He'll never trouble us," he quoted her as saying.

Turak had married her more than a year previously.

"I think she killed him," he said. His desire for revenge had come to the front. "She would not act like she did unless something was on her mind."

"The case has worried me for three years," Wencel told him. "If we can only get her in custody again I am sure we can get a confession out of her. That man is dead as sure as I'm alive."

AND so the quest was on and interest again had been revived in the mystery. Mrs. Podolsky-Turak owned property. If she was leaving the country, undoubtedly she would sell it. If she did, she would have to go to the county building to sign legal papers. That was one place to watch. Another way to trace her was by means of the expressman who moved her trunks. Fortunately neighbors had seen the truck that had taken them away, but when the officers investigated they found the truck had been stolen the very day it had been used in the moving. Undoubtedly the man who stole it had taken it to haul these things away.

When Wencel and Collins were unable to get any place in that direction, they centered their interest on the county building, in addition to the federal building, where she would have to get her passport. But then her story of going abroad might be a ruse. The chances were that she would sell and move to another city.

It was a week later that the call came from the county building that she was there making out the papers that would dispose of her holdings. Wencel and Collins made a quick run to the building and arrested her before she knew what had happened.

"You know I didn't kill my husband," she said almost pathetically. "I loved him too well."

"I think you hired him killed," said Collins bluntly. "We've got the goods on you this time, for your present husband says you did kill him."

"I did not!" she shouted. "He lies!"

"Then what are you worried about? What makes you say the house is haunted? Why do you get up in the night so frightened that you ask if daylight will never come? A woman with a clear conscience doesn't do that."

She did not answer.

"Where's Zydko? I'm surprised you didn't marry him."

There was no reply. She hung her head.

She was taken to a cell in the woman's detention home and several hours later she was brought to the homicide squad room, where Wencel and Collins were closeted with her for more than an hour.

I happened in the squad room when the two officers emerged.

"Boys, she's confessed!" they said triumphantly.

"To the murder of her husband?"

"Yes—he's buried under the house they used to live in. We are going out to get the body now."

It did not take long to get to the house and in a few minutes we were in the basement, which had only an earthen floor.

"She said it was near the center post," said Collins. "We'll dig there."

A MOMENT or two later shovels struck an obstacle. Careful digging disclosed it to be a bone of the arm. More digging and the skeleton of the man was found. The body had been dressed at the time of death, but dampness and mould had rotted flesh and clothing away until only the skeleton was left. More careful digging and the skull was located. There was a hole in the front of the skull.

"Shot," said Wencel. "By George, the bullet is in the skull."

He rattled it. A pellet of lead fell out in his hand.

"Now that we have found the *corpus delicti*," he said triumphantly, "I am going to take this much of it to Headquarters and when the case comes up for trial we can show he really is dead. Of course there are no witnesses and we have only her word that she killed him. This evidence of death may scare her into sticking to her story. The coroner was called to take the rest of the skeleton while Collins and Wencel took the skull back to Police Headquarters.

And so it was arranged to bring Mrs. Podolsky-Turak into the darkened room in which the shades had been drawn while the grinning skull faced her on the table. Cruel, perhaps, but in view of circumstances—necessary. It was believed she would tell the true story of the death of her husband if she was confronted with this gruesome evidence. In view of what

happened, the police are to be complimented for their bit of strategy.

What occurred when she was faced with the skull already has been told—and never were a more surprised group of officers gathered about a prisoner. When she had recovered from the fainting spell mentioned at the beginning, the questioning continued:

"This is the skull of Peter Zydko?" asked Wencel in tones that told only too well how he doubted her story. "Why, he isn't dead, is he?"

"He is," responded the heart-broken woman. "I shot him to death."

"But didn't you tell us this was your husband who was buried there? Where is he buried?"

"I don't know," she responded sadly. "I wish I did. Zydko killed him and buried his body. Then I killed Zydko and buried him under the house."

She paused.

"You see, when you arrested me this afternoon I was so frantic I didn't know what I was doing. I have been haunted for the last three years by the ghost of Zydko. I killed in self-defense. When you asked me about different things this afternoon I guess I didn't know what I was talking about."

IN spite of hours of questioning she insisted that Zydko had slain her husband after he had told her to get out of the automobile on that fateful night in July more than three years previously. She said he had told her that he wanted to have a private conversation with him and that she knew nothing of his death until Zydko returned several hours later and said Podolsky was dead. She added that they then had agreed upon a story to tell if they were arrested, and their tale when they were taken into custody was the result of that agreement.

Zydko wanted to marry her, she said. About two weeks after they were released, he came into the house with a gun in his hand and told her unless she married him he would kill her. She managed to get the gun away from him and then shot him through the head.

She took the body to the basement, where she buried it, and then she left the neighborhood. She insisted Zydko had threatened to attack her and when her case came up for trial she told the same story, but the jury brought in a verdict of first degree murder and she was sentenced to life imprisonment. Police were convinced she had a hand in the slaying of her husband and that she was not as guiltless as she pretended.

The thought that she had killed Zydko had been preying on her mind so much of late, she said, that she determined to leave the city with all the available cash she could gather. She insisted that she liked Turak, but she was afraid if he went with her he would form the chain that would link her with her past, so she decided to go alone and take all he had.

And so by stealing from the man she had pretended to love, she was caught in a trap of her own making. If she had dropped out of sight quietly she would be at liberty to-day, and the murder of Joseph Podolsky still would be an unsolved riddle while no one would know that Zydko was dead.

But then, every criminal is caught sooner or later, either through carelessness or by overstepping himself. With Mrs. Podolsky-Turak, it was the latter. And she is paying the penalty of her crime within a few miles of the scene of the slaying.

The Night Riders from Hottentot

(*Continued from page* 51)

his money for anything but sheer essentials.

He was the sort of a man who would insist on his wife "making herself useful," I deducted, and when I noticed a large mirror on the wall, at first I assumed that this had been installed by Mrs. Hahn. Upon examining the toilet preparations on the shelf which had been nailed up beneath it, however, I came to the conclusion that it was a silent deponent, testifying to the vanity of the Hottentot distiller himself.

NEAR the window was an old-fashioned bookkeeper's desk and high stool. On lifting up the sloping cover, I found the compartment filled with ledgers, written up in a fine Spencerian script. Occasional notes in the margin were made in a flowery, but rather illiterate scrawl. Tucked into one corner was a crocheted case containing a powder-puff and compact, and a scrap of paper on which was written in a dashing hand, "Tuesday, as usual?"

It is from such silent witnesses that I get my most important leads in building up my schedule of examining a suspect.

Satisfied with my booty, I returned to the house, taking with me one of the ledgers and the powder-puff. Two swarthy men in laborer's clothes were being examined by the District Attorney when I reentered the parlor.

"These are Tom Carone and Paul Patz—the two friends of Hahn's who visited here just after he had discovered his wife had shot herself. Kerns brought them in a few minutes ago," Mr. Latimer explained. "Do you want to question them?"

I said I might as well, and asked them to tell us their story as briefly as possible.

"Yesterday evening we drove up to Hottentot in——" Carone began.

"Where's that?" the D. A. asked him.

"'Bout half a mile from here. It's called Hottentot 'cause they sell raw liquor and red wine there to the men working on the new estate. We met Hahn coming out of the door of the place——"

"Did he seem excited?" I asked.

"No, not exactly," he answered slowly. "George was always a quiet sort; by that I mean, he don't get excited easy. He was jolly enough, and was kiddin' some young fellows and girls when we drove up. When he saw us, he left them. Before we got out of the flivver, he says, suddenlike:

"'There's an awful rowdy crowd in

there. Why don't you boys come on over to the house and we'll have a good time?'

"We says, 'All right, we'll meet you there,' and drove off. Before we'd gone more than a few yards, we heard him start off in his car, and a minute later he dashed past us. It's a narrow road and he had to run off on the field to get by. He didn't say nothing and I said to my buddies, 'Guess he's gone to tell the Missis we're comin'.' Ellen's a good sport—I mean, the poor gal was a good sport, full of fun and great company. But she was wantin'—you know—more fun an'——"

"GET on with your story," Mr. Latimer ordered him.

"Well, I just told you that. You might have thought it funny his getting past us like that. Anyway, we went a bit slow to give him time. When we got to the door, we found it locked. We pounded on the panels, and after a bit, he came and opened it. He was cryin' and seemed terrible upset.

"'My God, Tom,' he said to me. 'Ellen's killed herself over me.'

"I says: 'Go on, you're kiddin' us,' and then when he kept on wailin' I says to Paul, 'The fellow's drunk. Let's go back to Hottentot.'

"But he says: 'Come up-stairs and I'll show youse.'

"We went up with him, and sure 'nough, there was Ellen lyin' across the bed all covered with blood. 'See what's she's done,' he says. 'I've lost my best friend. Oh, Ellen, why did you do it?' or something like that. Then he picks up a bit o' paper off the bed——"

"Whereabouts on the bed was the paper lying?" I interrupted his yarn to ask.

"Lessee——" The man thought a moment, wrinkling his brows in an endeavor to recall the scene.

"I know," put in Paul Patz finally; "it was lyin' near her right hand. The gun was lyin' under the back of her left hand."

"Yesser, that's right," Carone said and nodded. "George picks up the note and gives it over to me: 'Read that, Tom,' says he; 'I can't read it.' Well, I reads it: 'I end my life for you. Ellen,' it says."

"What did you do with the note?" I asked.

"I lays it back on the bed somewheres, and then says: 'We'll have to call the constable.' I telephones to Kerns and then George and Paul and me, we went down to the kitchen and waited till he came."

"How did Hahn act? Did he seem stunned?"

When I put these questions to them, the men looked at each other and seemed embarrassed.

"Well—it looked a bit like put-on stuff to me," Patz said, after a considerable pause. "'Course, Ellen was a mighty bright girl, and it was her that was the business head. They quarreled a lot. George was crazy 'bout money, and I guess he's near 'bout a hundred thousand in the bank, due to Ellen."

He looked to his companion as if for corroboration. Carone nodded solemnly in confirmation. "Yeh, I guess he's all that, and him was only a glazier in Amesbury when he hitched up with Ellen."

Though I questioned them at length,

I got nothing of much importance from the examination.

"I'll run up and see Hahn now," I told the D. A. "I want to talk to him alone."

"All right," he said. "I'll wait down here. You men may go now. If we need you later, we'll call you."

Hahn was sitting slumped down on a small rocking-chair with his back deliberately turned toward the bed when I entered the low, narrow room on the east side of the hallway.

The dead woman was certainly a gruesome sight! Her face was so covered with blood that it was impossible to discern just where the bullet had entered. The nose appeared to be fractured, and it appeared to me that the bullet might have been fired through the nostril, emerging through the skull. The hair was matted with blood, and on the top of the head I saw a small, jagged hole. The bone of the skull had been splintered just as a pane of glass would be if a bullet were fired through it.

Blood soaked the bedclothes and the woman's garments, which were roughly disarranged.

To the uninitiated, it would have appeared that the woman had been brutally beaten before her death. Great black, blue and green bruises appeared on the half-clad body and the left eye was surrounded by an ugly, dark ring.

After death, however, it frequently happens that certain parts of the body become discolored when the blood congeals, and when a person gets shot in the brain, the eye on the side farther from the point of entry of the bullet usually becomes bloodshot and the surrounding flesh greatly discolored.

Only an autopsy could definitely determine where the bullet had entered, and whether it had been self-inflicted, for any injury to the brain, unless instant death occurs, is apt to cause bleeding from the nose, mouth and eyes.

While the rest of the room was as neat as wax, except for the small Chinese grass rug which had been pushed awry under the bed, the linen was rumpled considerably. This might have been caused by the convulsions of the young woman in what is popularly called the "death agony." On the dressing-table, cheap pink celluloid toilet articles were arranged in an unbroken row.

"What were you doing with a revolver, George?" I asked Hahn abruptly.

"I always carry one," he mumbled. "There's a lot of tough customers hanging 'round the restaurant."

HE had buried his face in his hands when I addressed him, and started rocking back and forth nervously.

"Turn around this way, and don't mumble like that. I can't make out what you're saying," I commanded gruffly. If the man's wife had committed suicide—and so far the actual evidence was in favor of this assumption—he was to be pitied, of course. But like the others, I received a deep suspicion that he was "putting it on too thick."

He did as I asked—at least he turned half-way round, and uncovered his face. Clasping and unclasping his hands spasmodically, he looked up at me with tear-bleared eyes. It was a hard face he disclosed, with small, cunning eyes and a full-lipped, sensual mouth. Though his suit was creased and mussed through his having sat up in it all night, he somehow gave me the impression that in his normal state he was somewhat of a dandy.

"How did you carry your gun?" I asked, as he blinked curiously at me.

"In a holster."

"Now listen, Hahn, I'm going to make this just as easy for you as I can but I want you to answer my questions truthfully. Did you kill your wife?"

I asked the question in quiet, matter-of-fact tones. He looked at me in amazement. His slack lips parted like a dead fish's. For an instant he forgot to groan and wail. It was as if the idea that he was suspected had been thrust upon him for the first time. If he were guilty, the thought again came to me, he was one marvelous actor.

"Of course not," he said thickly. "Why on earth should I kill Ellen? She was all I had. Oh, Ellen, why did you do it?"

"I'm sorry for you, Hahn, but brace up man. The quicker you answer my questions, the sooner we'll all get away from here," I broke in, as he seemed all ready for a fresh outburst of sorrow. "I know you're going to miss Ellen a whole lot. Helped you with your business, didn't she? Delivering hooch and that sort of thing?"

"No, Ellen didn't ever do that," he protested indignantly. "She was a swell educated girl. She could write like a copybook."

"Kept your books for you, didn't she?" I asked casually. He nodded in an absent-minded fashion. "I saw the ledger in the still-house. Left-handed, wasn't she?"

"She was not!" He denied the implication as emphatically as if I had accused the dead woman of some horrible vice. "Why'd you ask that?" He added the question, looking up at me with a hint of fear in his eyes.

WITHOUT answering him, I drew his attention to a framed snapshot which was hanging on the wall near the dresser.

"That your wife?" I watched him closely as I shot out the question.

Without glancing in the direction of the picture, he nodded. A flash of intense hate shone for an instant in the watery eyes. Jealousy? Was that the motive? I asked and answered the question inwardly. No, Hahn wasn't the type to kill in a fit of jealous rage. He was too selfish and conceited to suffer from that.

"Who is that young man with her? They seem to be pretty good pals?" Almost instantly Hahn had regained control of himself, and he answered indifferently enough: "Fellow by the name of Henry Eckert, used to board with us when——"

"Tell me the truth, Hahn!" I said sharply. "I saw murder in your eyes when I referred to that snapshot."

He shrugged his shoulders impatiently. His lips curled mockingly, as he answered sneeringly: "Oh, that was over a year ago. He boasted of it—the swine! Everybody knew. You can ask 'em. I forgave her and took her back."

A blank! I admitted to myself. As Hahn said, it would be easy to prove the period of the illicit affair. If he had condoned the offense, it wasn't likely that he would brood over it and take revenge a year later; he wasn't that sort of a man.

"Ellen was a very religious girl, wasn't she?" I asked him, abruptly changing the subject. "Went to church regularly and all that?"

"Yes, she was?" he answered, looking at me in a puzzled sort of way.

"Did she go to church yesterday morning?"

"Yes. What are you driving at? Say, don't you want to hear how it happened?" he demanded, a look of fright coming into his eyes, as he half rose to his feet.

"Sure, I do," I said very slowly, looking at him hard. "But I don't want a repetition of the story you've kept telling. You're keeping something back, so what's the use of my wasting my time. Wait here!"

"Am I under arrest?" he shouted.

"Oh, no, but I'm pretty sure that the District Attorney will want you to come along on a little trip with us. Just a minute, now."

I called in the trooper and asked him to remain with Hahn while I held a short conference with the D. A.

"I think it is murder and that Hahn is the murderer without a doubt about it," I told Mr. Latimer. "When we get hold of the suicide note, I'm sure I'll be able to prove it!"

BRIEFLY, I explained the trend of my reasoning and the findings which had resulted.

"But the motive?" he demanded.

"Hahn is the only soul on earth who knows that, so he will have to supply it." I noticed that the D. A. looked a mite skeptical, and I added, "I promise you that he will."

"Very well," he agreed. "We'll take Hahn to Westfield and you can continue your examination in the grand jury room. On the strength of your deductions, I'll have Doctor Frisch perform the autopsy. We can get the gun and the note from Judge Kinsey on the way."

I confess that I was somewhat taken aback at Hahn's attitude when the District Attorney ordered him to put on his hat and coat and accompany us to Westfield.

"Say, I want to get a lawyer before you begin questioning me any more," he said, his face flushing angrily. "I know my constitutional rights, and you ain't never warned me that what I've said might be used against me."

"Get a lawyer if you want to." The D. A. spoke very quietly, but very coldly. "You have not been accused of a crime and you are not under arrest. But you are obliged by law to submit to the questioning which I, as District Attorney, or any of my authorized representatives, put to you. You are not obliged by law to answer the questions put to you by a member of the police department—but that is another thing entirely."

Hahn looked bewildered. The pose of grief-stricken widower had evaporated, and he seemed to realize for the first time that he was rather hard up against something dangerous. His little rat-like eyes shifted malevolently.

However, he saw the wisdom of submitting and without another word he dressed and went along with us.

We stopped at Judge Kinsey's house and obtained the note and gun.

Immediately I compared it with the handwriting in the ledger which I had brought along.

"There it is," I pointed out to the District Attorney. "The rather sprawling handwriting in the margin is identical with that in the note. The dead woman kept the books, and used the regular Spencerian script. She wrote automatically, and no matter how hurried or nervous she might be, the fundamental formation of the letters would not change."

THE note had been written on an envelope, the sides of which had been torn open in order to make a flat sheet of paper.

"That's so. What are you going to do?" the D. A. asked as he examined the ugly, blood-stained envelope carefully. "There are finger-prints here."

"They won't help much, because we know that Hahn and Carone both handled it. The absence of Ellen's finger-prints would be significant, but since I believe the envelope belongs to a package that was on a table in the parlor, she may or may not have handled it. However, I'm going to try a little experiment which I believe will work."

When we left the Hahn house, the early winter dusk had fallen. The wind had died down, and a drizzling rain had set in. Through the windows of the limousine the suspected man stared sullenly. If he heard what we were discussing, he showed no signs of it. The wild party of the afternoon before, the long, sleepless night, followed by the day's continual chain of nerve-racking events, were taking their toll.

Before going into the District Attorney's offices, we went into a restaurant and had supper. The hot food and strong coffee put new life into Hahn and when we reached the grand jury room, he was once more full of pep and alert.

As I was about to close the door, I saw Tulley, the editor, loitering in the hall.

"Want anything, Tulley?" I called out to him.

"Yes, just as soon as I can get it," he grinned back. "I'll stick 'round here as long as I can."

It was very, very quiet in the grand jury room. I secured a sheaf of white sheets of paper and placed them before Hahn.

"Now, I want you to write the twenty-six letters of the alphabet in capitals," I said, handing him a pencil, "and while you are doing that I'll ask you a few questions."

As soon as he started, I could see that he was attempting to disguise his handwriting. There were two letters I wanted to get particularly, *i.e.*, the capital "I" and the capital "C." These, in the suicide note, were written with a peculiar flourish. It so happened, however, that these letters were not included in the marginal notes in the ledger.

"AFTER the party in the afternoon where did you go, George?" I asked him in a low, monotonous voice. "You drove off somewhere——"

"Yes, Ellen wanted some chop suey, and we started off . . . but it was getting late . . ." he began. Even at that early stage he was finding it difficult to keep his mind on the task of disguising his handwriting, and at the same time, keep from tripping up in his replies to the questions I was plying him with.

"But there aren't any chop suey places near Waverly," I suggested. His mention of chop suey instead of merely saying they went off to supper led me to believe that in some way the chop suey had an important connection with the sordid crime.

"No, there wasn't any place nearer than Dunmore," he answered slowly. "When we got to Leeton, I stopped the car and said we couldn't go any farther. We would eat there, I said, or not at all. Ellen was a very determined woman. She wouldn't leave the car, so I went in and ate by myself."

At this point, he finished his first set of twenty-six letters. I made him write them over and over again, plying him with questions all the time. In the frantic effort to keep his mind on two defenses, he slipped up several times.

For instance, I gained the admission from him that he had taunted his wife with having cultivated a taste for chop suey through her association with Henry Eckert. They had quarreled bitterly on the way back home.

The Hottentot was a free-and-easy where negroes and Italian laborers of the lower classes gathered and made merry on Sundays, I concluded, and Hahn was anxious to get back in case any trouble arose.

When they returned to the house, Ellen wanted him to remain at home and call up some neighbors. He told her that there might be mischief over at the Hottentot, unless he was there to keep order. She accused him of wanting to flirt with the colored girls and young white girls who used to join the weekly carousals.

It doesn't take long to tell this, but it took me a full five hours to worm these facts out of him. And while he wrestled with my questions and wrote over and over again all the letters of the alphabet in capitals and small letters, building up and tearing down, as his attention veered this way and yon, the hands of the clock in the grand jury room moved on toward midnght.

"NOW, Hahn, I want you to write from my dictation: 'I end my life for you. Ellen. I end my life for you. Ellen. I end my life for you. Ellen.' Faster, man, what are you afraid of? You make me suspicious!"

Just then someone knocked on the door. I got up, unlocked it. The District Attorney and Tulley were standing there.

"Say, how much longer" Tulley began, when in a flash it came to me that now was the time to take a long shot. I might hit the bull's-eye, or I might miss it a mile. If the latter—I was swamped. The psychological situation I had been carefully building up had been broken into, so I took a chance.

"It's all ready now," I bluffed. "Come right in. Meet Mr. Hahn. Hahn, this is Mr. Tulley of the *Review.* Now, I'm going to tell you just how Ellen died!"

Hahn's face assumed a dirty, gray pallor, his full lips lost their color and crawled up over yellowish fangs.

"Last night when the Hahns got home they had an argument. Ellen wanted Hahn to stay home with her and he told her he had to go over to the Hottentot. Ellen had changed into a kimono, and was sitting on a chair near the little table, which stood close by the door leading into the hall.

"Just see how plausible it all is. Ellen calls George some ugly names and says he would rather play round with the girls at the Hottentot than stay home with his wife. He smashed her on the nose and just as he was drawing off for another blow—— Now, George, what would you do if I were to start walloping you? If I were to come over there and start to smash you all over the place?" I bent over him and stared right into his eyes.

I wasn't very positive about this first scene, so I had to distract the man's attention from any inaccuracies in my description.

"I—I—don't know——" he stuttered

"Don't be foolish. Of course you know," I spoke gruffly. "You're sitting there helpless, and I go for you, ready to beat you up. You know what you'd do. You'd get up and make a break for the door or the window, and try to escape me." I paused.

"That's just—what—Ellen—did. She fell over the little table. As soon as she got to her feet you grabbed at her clothes and tore them. She managed to shake loose and tore up-stairs, bawling for dear life. Isn't that true?"

"Yes, that's right," Hahn said. Breathlessly he had been hanging on every word.

"I DON'T want to be bloodthirsty, but I want the truth. When you got to the door it was closed. There was no key in the lock. Ellen was trying desperately to hold the door closed until she could push some furniture against it. But you lunged your body forward like a battering-ram and the door was forced open.

"Ellen was sent sprawling on the bed. In a mad frenzy of rage, you pulled your gun from its holster and shot her through the top of the head, just as she rose up to make another effort to escape. That's how you killed Ellen!"

"No! No! No, I didn't! She took the gun from the dresser and when I entered the bedroom she said, 'I'll kill you!' In wrestling for the gun, it went off and Ellen was killed."

"Well, have it your way," I shrugged. "Then what happened. How did you come to write that note?"

"I went over to the Hottentot and took a drink. When I saw Carone and the Patz boys, I suggested their coming home with me, because I was afraid people would think I had murdered Ellen. I picked up an envelope from the floor in the parlor and scribbled the note. Then I let the boys in."

"Part of that's right and part is wrong," I said when he had finished. "Ellen didn't pick that gun off the dresser. If she had grabbed it off the dresser, the toilet articles would have been disarranged. Besides, you said yourself that you always carried your gun in its holster. It isn't likely that you would go unarmed on a Sunday evening when you expected trouble. Also, what was the sense of writing that note, if the shooting was an accident? Why try to make it like suicide?"

"Well, I told you, I told you! I knew people would think I had killed Ellen."

An officer appeared at the door and spoke in a husky, mysterious tone, "Mr. Latimer, Doctor Frisch is on the telephone."

The District Attorney left the room. While he was gone, I told Harris Tulley

just how I had promptly arrived at the conclusion that Ellen had never committed suicide.

"There is an extremely low percentage of religious people of the dead woman's faith among reported suicides. This specially applies to women. The belief is that a suicide is damned. Ellen was apparently a religious woman. The small table had, I surmised, either been knocked over by Ellen herself, or by someone else who was pursuing her. I found a piece of blood-stained lingerie in the hall. Since the girl was not left-handed, she would not have shot herself with the left hand, and the gun would have fallen on the side of the hand which had fired it. The logical place for the note would have been on the left-hand side, since it was written by the right hand. Whatever had led Hahn to murder his wife, it was, I felt pretty positive, something which had hurt his vanity. Carone, in describing the note, said it was scrawled. The entries in the ledger were written in a very fine hand. That's all!"

Except to say that Doctor Frisch reports that on opening the head, he discovered that Ellen Hahn had been murdered. The bullet could not possibly have been self-inflicted, nor could it have been shot off in any struggle for the possession of the gun. This is shown by the course the bullet took through the brain.

HAHN was convicted of murder in the s cond degree. It was a well-established fact that he had been drinking heavily on the day of the murder, and the prosecution was unable to prove premeditation. He had killed his wife in a frenzy of anger because his vanity had been hurt by her epithets and her accusation that he consorted with colored women.

He was sentenced to from ten to twenty years in prison and is now in Sing Sing.

A very stupid, sordid crime, which is another proof of the old adage that murder will out. Hahn had been clever enough to amass quite a snug fortune—which was consumed in the expenses of his trial.

But, strangely enough, he showed the intelligence of a child of ten when his life hung in the balance! This only goes to show how our emotions can undo all the deep-laid plans ever invented by man.

The Seven Who Died

(*Continued from page 39*)

the Doctor to the couch and began tying him up. I had just about finished doing this—and it was done swiftly, I can assure you—when the unexpected happened.

There came a knock on the door!

For some reason or other, it was the last thing in the world I had expected, though as I look back on it now, it was probably quite ordinary. I waited, my every sense alert, my heart almost at a standstill. Who could it be? Who could want to come in at this moment, this most important moment in my life, when the entrance of anyone spelled ruination to my well laid plan?

I kept quiet, hoping that if there was no answer they would understand that the doctor did not wish to be bothered at that moment. And, indeed, it turned out so.

After waiting a minute or so, whoever it was evidently decided just as I had hoped, and there was the sound of retreating footsteps. I thanked whatever stars there were on guard over me that it was an inflexible rule that no one in the institution, either guard or patient, was allowed to step into the Director's office without his permission.

I breathed a sigh of relief, relinquished the grip I had taken on my knife handle in my pocket, and leaped for the push-button under the edge of the Director's desk that worked the catch on the great door in front of the asylum. I pushed this button, and knew the door was open—providing, of course, that the contrivance worked.

I switched out the light in the office, hoping that whoever was in front of the house would imagine that the Director had done it, which was usual at about this time, and in the darkness I softly stepped to the French window.

Silently I fingered for the knob which opened the window, and in quiet—and a great deal of trepidation—I threw the window wide. In an instant I was out on the balcony.

So far, so good. I could not afford to remain an instant in that exposed position. I clambered silently over the railing, and landed on my hands and feet right in the midst of as gorgeous a dahlia bed as it has ever been my good fortune to fall into.

SO far everything had gone as I hoped and planned. Better, in fact, for I had been able to dispose of the Director without killing him, as I had been prepared to do, if necessary. The hardest part of my work was still ahead of me, however. I could not see the gate from where I stood, as there was a tall rose-bush in front of me, which, perhaps was very fortunate, but I knew that before it stood two sentinels, and that disposing of them was not to be quite as simple as disposing of the Director had been. Yet, it might turn out quite easy. The efficiency of my plan lay in its surprise and unexpectedness. It had worked with the Director, who was undoubtedly more intelligent than his guards. How much more easily then might it not work with the guards?

I had only to catch them off guard for a fraction of an instant, dash through the gate, which I knew would open at my touch, and be off down the road and into the woods. It was simply a case of picking the exact instant. But that had to be soon, almost instantly, in fact, for the Director would be recovering consciousness in a minute or so, and I knew that it would not take him long to work the gag out of his mouth and give the alarm. And if the alarm was given while I was still in the grounds, I knew that then it would be too late for me to get out.

I dropped flat on my stomach and worked my way through the grass and the flower beds like a snake, and as

silently. In a moment or two I could see the high iron grill work of the gate outlined against the somber sky, and on each side of it the two guards, standing still and silent as statues. I lay there, not more than a dozen feet from them and the gate that spelled freedom for me, measuring my distance and my probable chances, and shifting a little in my position so as to get my hand more firmly upon the handle of my knife, and also to be able to get my packet of pepper out of my trousers pocket. I got a handful of this strong pepper in my left hand, shifted back on my belly, and lay watching the two sentinels. They were immovable. They appeared to have been immovable forever, and as though they never could move.

This was bad. I did not expect them to have such a close and instant attention to business. I had thought that they might be talking together, as I noticed they often did, or looking through the grilled gate, or otherwise acting so that I could catch them in a slightly distracted moment. I did not expect to catch them off their guard completely, but I did expect them to be relaxed in their duty a trifle, as they usually were.

YES, it was bad. Ordinarily, a man could have lain there and bided his time, because eventually they were bound to unbend and converse with each other, and walk a few feet here and there. But in this case time was distinctly "of the essence," as the lawyers have it, and something had to be done at once if it was to be done at all. At any moment Doctor Marceau would come to and manage to give the alarm and then escape would be quite impossible.

I resolved upon a bold move. My boldness was what had carried me through successfully so far, and I believed it would carry me still farther. I released my grip on my knife handle for a moment, picked up quite a large stone that lay within my reach, and, taking careful aim—it is not easy to throw accurately from a prone position, as any baseball player will tell you—I threw the stone among a clump of bushes that lay behind the further guard.

They heard the rustling in the bushes that it produced, and were interested at once, as I had expected. They looked at the bushes speculatively for an instant.

"What was that?" said the first guard.

"*Je ne sais pas,*" answered the other. "I don't know."

Both started over to the bush to examine it, and at that instant I was up like a shot and speeding to the great gate. I was silent, but they heard me, and whirled instantly, leaping in my direction. They were both together, and with one sweep of my hand I let them have the pepper in their eyes.

With a cry of pain that went up simultaneously from both their throats, they stopped in their tracks for an instant, their hands going up to their eyes.

I dashed at the gate and threw my weight against it, expecting at the next instant to be out on the public road, running desperately and swiftly from this place.

The gate did not budge!

How could this be? I knew the gate was opened. What had gone wrong? I pushed it desperately again—and again it did not budge, and instantly there flashed through my mind the explanation. I cursed myself for a stupid fool in that moment. *The gate opened inward, not outward*—and neglecting to figure this out beforehand was the one thing that I overlooked in my daring and well laid plan.

I leaped at the handle of the great gate and began to swing it inward, but it was too late. The guards, in that instant, had recovered and were able to get to me, and I was borne to the ground, struggling and cursing and fighting, and straining to get my knife into play.

There was a shout from the direction of the house. We had been seen, and in an instant four more guards were added to the rapidly shifting melée in front of the gate.

THERE is no need to tell you more of that fight, except that I did not give in until I had been knocked unconscious. When I awoke I was in a cell—a smaller and lonelier one than I had been accustomed to occupying. There was no outside window, no sunlight, no air except what seeped in from the corridor through the little barred window, not more than six inches across, that was in my door—and, I was in a strait-jacket.

I cursed my stupidity for so blocking my own escape by a piece of ignorance that a schoolboy would have avoided. Not to know that the door opened inward instead of outward! One would have thought that that would have been the first thing I would examine into.

However, here I was in this solitary and hopeless cell, in a strait-jacket, and all my mourning and all my cursing were of no avail.

Of the interview with Doctor Marceau I shall not tell you. It is just about what you are imagining it would have been. I shall tell you simply this:

For sixteen months I lay in that mean, closed-off cell, in a living death, as much out of the world as though I were in a cemetery, under the sod.

When I was finally released from this cell I was a different man, embittered, tired, aged far beyond my years, and with one desire only in my mind—the mad desire for vengeance.

No news from the outside world, of course, and no news of the progress of the war. It might be over by now, for all I knew, yet I did not think so. I lay there, tortured with these thoughts, and worse—by my thoughts of Carmelita Perez, who had nearly been mine, and who now undoubtedly belonged to someone else.

But had she ever really almost been mine? Of that I could not be sure, but I was almost certain it was not so. Her association with Duval was more and more in my mind, strangely enough. There had been something about it that had been unexplained, something that I had sensed, some intimacy between them that I did not fully get hold of. She had used my love for her as a means for getting what she had wanted, and probably even at this moment she and Duval were laughing at what a dupe I had been. My blood would run hot at the thought, and I was capable of any deed then.

When I was released from my cell, and

little by little began to mix again with the other patients. But I was still kept under very rigid guard, and I saw that escape, under these circumstances, would be quite impossible. The war, I found immediately, was raging with greater fury than before. The mountains of dead were piling up, the toll taken by my poison gas, appalling. By now, I found, the French and the Allies had perfected a gas of their own that was quite as good, and they were using it to good effect, but I could not get out of my mind the vision of those poor boys, dead in their tracks; their lonely graves and their heart-broken womenfolks at home. I was responsible for that!

Well, I had paid for it, and I was still paying, but there were others who had still to pay. There were others who had probably made a fortune on the deadly secret, who were living, no doubt, on the fat of the land, on money earned with the innocent blood and tears of young manhood. These others had not yet paid, and I determined that they should pay—the seven of them.

THIS was the one idea that developed in my mind during that fearful incarceration in the asylum, the one fixed idea that kept staying with me at a time when all else inside of me and outside of me was changing. They had to pay. They had played with my life and with my heart, brutally and heartlessly. More than that! They had made light of the heart of the world and enriched themselves at the cost of the blood and the pain of others. They had been traitorous to the country that had afforded them a home and a protection, and they had betrayed that country as they had betrayed me. They were snakes, and they had to be wiped out with no more compunction than one would kill a snake. It was not enough to say that the damage had already been done—that killing these people, this Seven, would do no good. One does not say that of a rattlesnake after he has struck. One kills him without hesitation.

This gang was far more dangerous than any rattlesnake, and far more deserving of the fate of extinction. A rattlesnake kills only when angered, or in self-defense; he never kills without warning. These scoundrels gave no warning, and did not kill in self-defense. They killed for gain, and they counted their victims by the million. The damage had been done, but this gang was dangerous to the world, and had to be exterminated. Each one of them was a treacherous villain, and I resolved that it would not matter to me what their way of life was now; they were always dangerous and at all times liable to turn murderous.

Such was my line of reasoning during the time I spent at the asylum of Dr. Marceau, and that period lasted until the very end of the war—four years in all.

Four years! Can you imagine what that was—how that time dragged, second by second and minute by minute, until somehow the night came and, at last tired out, I could sleep and forget for a few brief hours that I, a sane man, was kept prisoner among the insane? Does it appear so strange to you that I should have been capable of that which I did? Ah!

It Seemed So Strange to Hear Her Play

We Knew She Had Never Taken a Lesson From a Teacher!

WE always thought of her as an onlooker—a sort of social wallflower. Certainly she had never been popular, never the center of attraction in any gathering.

That night of the party when she said, "Well folks, I'll entertain you with some selections from Grieg"—we thought she was *joking*. But she actually did get up and seat herself at the piano.

Everyone laughed. I was sorry for her. But suddenly the room was hushed. . . .

She played *Anitra's Dance*—played it with such soul fire that everyone swayed forward, tense, listening. When the last glorious cord vanished like an echo, we were astonished—and contrite. We surged forward to congratulate her. "How did you do it?" "We can't believe you never had a teacher." An onlooker no longer—she was popular!

She Told Me About It Later

We were life-long friends, and I felt I could ask her about it. "You played superbly!" I said. "And I know you never had a teacher. Come — what's the secret?"

"Well," she laughed. "I just got tired of being left out of things, and I decided to do something that would make me popular. I couldn't afford an expensive teacher and I didn't have the time for a lot of practice—so I decided to take the famous U. S. School of Music course in my spare time.

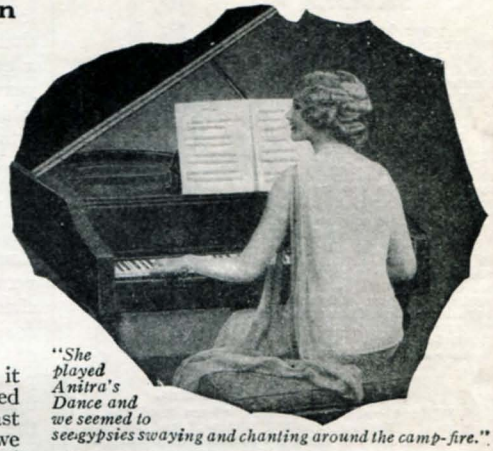
"Yes—and it's been such fun! Why it's as easy as A-B-C. I began playing almost from the start, and right from music. Now I can play any piece—classical or jazz."

"You're wonderful!" I breathed. "Think of playing like that and learning all by yourself."

"I'm not wonderful," she replied. "Anyone could do it. A child can understand those simplified lessons. It's like playing a game!

"You always wanted to play the violin—here's your chance to learn quickly and inexpensively. Why don't you surprise everyone, the way I did?"

I took her advice—a little doubtfully at first—and now I play not only the violin but the banjo!



"She played Anitra's Dance and we seemed to see gypsies swaying and chanting around the camp-fire."

* * * * * * * *

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it is indeed true that he jests at scars who never felt a wound!

FOUR years! Four years out of my life that no one can ever give back to me—four years of hell, four years of thinking of Carmelita Perez and of the play of the sunlight on her hair and the moonlight in her eyes; of the smile on her lovely lips—her lying, treacherous lips that could kiss my life away with never a qualm, or the quiver of a muscle. Four years of being locked up in this hell, while outside the world descended almost into its original blackness, and the flower of all nations was dying in the dirt and the mud of Flanders. And back home babies were dying of starvation and mothers dying of grief. Four years of slaughter with a poison gas that I had invented and that gave its victims no single chance. Even if they temporarily recovered from it, they went home to die of the dreaded white plague. And this pestilence and death had been released upon the world by Carmelita Perez and the gang that had duped me and that was paying for my detention here.

Can you still wonder at my state of mind and my actions? Perhaps I became a monomaniac on the subject, but I doubt that. My reaction is a perfectly logical one, and any human being with a drop of real blood in him would have acted the same way. The only trouble is that, not having gone through what I have gone through, it is impossible for anybody else to appreciate or recognize that fact. This, however, does not matter to me. It is enough that I understand it, and that I have unburdened my soul here in trying to make it clear.

Let it be enough to say that the war was already over when I emerged. A few months before, Doctor Marceau had been called into the service, and he was killed almost within a month of his joining the colors. So much for him. He was a scoundrel, I am sure, yet sometimes I feel that there might be a slight doubt about that. Anyway, he died for France, so let that go. Another doctor was put in charge of the asylum to whom I applied for release. He examined into the case, and kept me for several months, to determine my sanity by actual tests. He finally determined that I was sane. The payments to the asylum on my behalf seem to have ceased some months before, and I was released.

There I was, sent out into the world, blinking at affairs the way you would blink if you were pushed out into the sun after being for hours in a dark room. It was a different world, after the Great War, than I had been accustomed to. I had been accustomed to a mellow world that will now no longer return, I think. At least, not in our time.

IT was a world of thanksgiving that it had been saved, a world of victory and pæans of victory, a world of widows and orphans and destitute mothers. The aftermath of a warfare that had been largely a chemical warfare, a warfare that had been initiated by me. You may think I lay too much emphasis on that, that there would have been a chemical warfare even if I had not discovered a fatal gas, but I don't think that is so. It is true that the gas warfare would have happened, but I don't think it would have been so effective. In fact, I know it would not.

The world would indeed have been better off if I had died that time in my studio, when I had accidentally breathed the fumes of the terrible poison I had unwittingly brewed. However, that's a long time ago, and much blood has flowed since then, so we will say no more about it.

Let it be enough to say that I was out. I made a report to the authorities to get some kind of a report from them on the matter soon—perhaps in two or three years. Well, let them find me, if they could.

The teller of my bank remembered me very well indeed, and took it for granted that I had been away in the war. I did not disillusion him, for I had plans that made secrecy a necessity. I saw that there was nothing to hope for in the way of vengeance, or even justice, from the authorities. And from now on, vengeance was what I lived for. Condemn me, if you wish. It matters no longer to me. There is a peace in my soul that I am certain none of you can understand.

My money was intact, and, by lying idle, had even increased to an appreciable extent. I took a very fortunate precaution at that time, a precaution for which I have been thankful ever since. The franc, I noticed, was a bit unstable, and nobody knew what was going to happen to it. The dollar, as usual, was the money standard of the world, unchangeable and always valuable. I took my money out of the bank, changed it into dollars, and deposited it in the Paris branch of an American bank. Some time later, as you know, the franc's value began to drop terrifically, and had I left my money in francs, I would have been worth about one-seventh of the original amount. But this is history, and has no real place in this story, except to show you that I knew very well what I was doing.

I ALSO visited some hospitals. Some morbid curiosity drew me. I was sorry I had. One American hospital had fifteen hundred patients in it. I was conducted through by an intern.

"These are all gas patients," he said.

My heart sank within me as I stood in the doorway of one of the tremendous wards, gazing at the row upon row of patients; young boys who had been vibrant with life and action, beautiful young men, the flower of our land. Fully half of them had their eyes bandaged. I turned in inquiry to my guide.

"Blind," he said. "Most of them will never see again. A vicious gas." I was silent.

"Most of them have tuberculosis, too," he volunteered. "At least fifty per cent. of them can never recover . . . and those who do will never quite get over it. This is nothing," he said. "You ought to see the French hospitals. And most of them died, you know."

A vicious gas. Ah, it was all of that! Who should know better than I? Can you wonder at the resolve that remained crystallized in me? The resolve to wreak the vengeance, not only of myself but of an outraged world, upon these serpents who had no right to remain among the living when so many hundreds of thousands of

their victims were dead and worse than dead?

I went back to Enghien-les-Bains, where I had first made the acquaintance of Carmelita Perez, who had so strangely affected my life, and her gang. I found a different Enghien. The Casino was closed, and with it the life of the town had gone. Most of the residents who could do so, had moved away. The town was now an empty shell. A great many had died in the war. The streets, like the streets of every town in France, were filled with young cripples and women in mourning, and France is still that way to-day, eight years and more after the signing of the Armistice.

Of Carmelita Perez, her father, and the rest of the gang, I was for the time able to find no trace. They had disappeared from Enghien as though they had never been there. They might just as well never have existed, for all the news I could get of them. One or two people in the town remembered the Perez establishment. It had been destroyed by fire in the first year of the war—fire that had been started by a long-range German shell aimed at Paris, which had missed its mark. But no one had been in the house, my informant told me. They seemed to have gone a long time before.

I will not tell you of my search in France, for it was a long one. For a year I roamed the cities and the villages of France, on the chance that somewhere I would pick up the one thread that was necessary for me to have in order to unravel the puzzle. But it was a year before I came upon anything tangible. It was in Marseilles, that famous fishing and seaport city on the south coast of France.

I WAS sitting in front of a small café, at a table on the sidewalk, as is the charming custom in France, and drinking an after-lunch glass of coffee. Suddenly an elderly woman went by, with the inevitable French, black market basket, from which stuck out about a yard and a half of bread. The woman was the ordinary French *bonne,* or servant, but to me she was something more than that. She was the woman who had been a servant in the house of Carmelita Perez when I frequented it. I jumped up with a shout.

"Alors!" I shouted at her, and she stopped and looked in my direction. There was an instant recognition, and she almost dropped her sacred bread in her astonishment.

"Why, it's Mousieur Roulette!" she gasped.

I drew her out of the passing throng, and asked her to sit down with me at the table, which she did. It was not difficult to get from her the information that I needed. She had always been friendly to me, and had always distrusted the gang.

It appeared that several days after I had become incarcerated in my living hell, the Perezes had moved, bag and baggage. She had heard much talk about passports, and they had packed as though for sailing. From the talk she had gathered that they were all going—seven of them. They had gone, and she had never seen them again, or heard of them. But that was enough to give me a clue.

I took it that they had sailed from one

of the large ports, Havre, Cherbourg, or Boulogne.

In this direction my search occupied me another six weeks. I searched steamship sailings of the month before the war, passenger lists, passport records, and other data, and at last I had what I wanted.

On the *La Perouse,* which had sailed one week before the opening of the war, from Havre to New York, were Perez, Carmelita, and the other five. So that was that. I saw what I had to do.

In two weeks I was in New York.

It is not necessary to go into all the details of how I got on the track of this gang in America, I think. Suffice it to say that they had separated and covered their tracks marvelously. It took me three years to place every one of them, for they were all living apart—most of them in different cities. During the first month or two I managed to locate two of the gang, but I wanted them all at the same time. I wanted to dispose of them all for good, at one time, and clean it off the slate.

Well, I managed it. They had scattered for safety, I found out later, as they had all been made independently wealthy by the sale of the fatal gas which I had been unfortunate enough to discover. Even Carmelita and her father were no longer living together. He was the head of a large business.

FINALLY I had them all placed, and I knew my time was ripe. I had, in a toy shop, picked up seven small roulette wheels. One of these was found near the body of each—my "victims," as the papers persisted in calling them.

So I went about my work of vengeance. The details I shall not tell you, for they have been sufficiently cited in the papers, to say nothing of the fact that I have gone into them in some detail in the first instalment of this tale.

Let it be enough to say that Carmelita was the last one upon whom I wreaked my vengeance.

It was not easy to compose myself to dealing thus summarily with Carmelita, for treacherous and faithless as she had been, I still loved her, although I knew she was not for such as me. It is curious, is it not, that remembrance can be more vivid, more real than an actual presence or occurrence?—that a single peal of laughter remembered from the past can stand out more than a burst of laughter from a girl before me now? Yet this is so. I find that as the years go by, Carmelita grows more and more real to me and the others recede more and more in the shadows—so deep an impression had she made upon me.

This was the woman I was to kill.

Let me not annoy you with the details and the preliminary preparations. Suffice it to say that she expected it, as all who had been the victims of my vengeance had expected it, and when I appeared suddenly from between the portières of her drawing-room and stood, pale as death before her, she looked up from where she sat by the fireplace, a half smile on her tempting lips, which were more beautiful than I had remembered them, and said:

"You are here, Roulette? I expected you before this."

I nodded. "I was delayed," I said quietly. "It is not too late."

She looked at me a little uncertainly.

"I am alone," she said quietly.

"I arranged for that," I replied.

"You are much stronger than I. You are a man and I am a weak, frail woman."

I laughed harshly and my hard bitter laughter reverberated in the far reaches of the large chamber.

"You have always been a frail, weak woman for me, Carmelita," I said. "You were that even when you wormed from me the terrible secret which made you and your gang rich, which brought death to the flower of our youth—even when you promised to marry me and instead, tricked me into entering an insane asylum where I spent four long, hideous years of my young manhood. Even——"

"Sit down here by me, Roulette," broke in Carmelita, with that flashing smile of hers that could still turn my head. "There is time. You need not hurry—not for a few minutes, anyway. I have longed for you, Roulette." The black, mysterious eyes looked up at me and I felt myself falling into them—falling—falling . . . slowly at first and then swiftly and more swiftly, as one falls in the night in a dream.

I brought myself up with a jolt. I knew the folly of this and shook my head decidedly to clear out the mist that seemed to have seeped itself into my brain.

"Rien à faire," I said in an unsteady voice, lapsing into a language which was common to both of us. "There is nothing doing; I have done *that* before."

"Ah, but Roulette. . . ." She had risen and was standing at my side, her hand light as a petal upon my arm, and the perfume of her being overwhelming me once more.

"ROULETTE," she said softly, "I have longed for you—waited for you so long. I know this will be difficult for you to believe, but you will never know or understand how I have cursed my moment of treachery to you and wished with my whole being for your presence and your embrace." She looked up into my face and I was once more stabbed through and through with my old love for her.

"Kiss me, Roulette," she whispered, her face upturned, her eyes partly closed, her long lashes lying somberly and darkly on the velvet texture of her cheek and making deep purple shadows beneath them.

My arms went around her and I was lost in a bottomless void in which nothing mattered except the present moments of mysterious bliss.

I released her finally, shaking like a reed in the north wind, with the intensity of my emotion. So, this was to be the end of it, and I went back to where I had started from with her—back to the time when I was her slave and her fool, when she tempted me as a beautiful woman has always been able to tempt a foolish and stubborn man.

Ah, well, I said to myself. It makes no particular difference; she loves me after all. Perhaps I was mistaken; perhaps we can take up life where we left it off and wipe out the mistake of the past in a flood of happiness instead of a flood of tears.

I lighted a cigarette and shaking with excitement, turned away for a moment.

In that instant, through the glass over the mantel, I saw a swift change in the face of Carmelita, when she thought I could not observe her with my back turned. I saw something that is given to few human beings to see, I saw the real self of a woman. She had dropped her mask for that instant and I saw the treacherous serpent that lay beneath. She was looking at my back and her dark eyes seemed to be saying:

"Poor fool, you are once more in my clutches; you were clay in my hands. You are a slave still, and I am your master! You are the dust beneath my feet!"

All this I saw and more, and I saw in that instant that she did not love me, that she had never loved me, but had always used me for her own ends and had triumphed over me for her own purposes as she had always done. I saw the four long years I had spent in that hell, while she and her gang had lived selfishly in a far land with the money I had made—with the blood of our countrymen.

The dust dropped from my eyes instantly, and I became as cool as ice. I was by the window, and with a sweep of my hand I tore the portière cord from off its hook. It lay lightly in my hand as I gazed into her eyes. A light, silken, dangerous thing that could choke the beautiful white throat of a beautiful woman.

She saw that I knew, for as I whirled about she met my eyes. In that instant I believe Carmelita saw that nothing on this earth could save her. The color was drawn from her face as she shrank back from me. Her eyes were wide but still defiant. Not a sound came from her.

I approached her and . . .

Two minutes later I turned from her lifeless form—my work finished. She lay on her couch, her pale, silent face at rest as if she were sleeping, her eyes closed, her purple lashes shadowing her cheek.

My eyes were wet with tears. I bent down and imprinted a kiss on her already cold brow, and without a backward glance I was gone.

THAT is my story, reader. You have it now in full. I have made no attempt to gloss over anything that I have done. You may judge me now if you will, if you are able to judge me as you would judge an ordinary man who had done ordinary things. I think I will justify it, and I believe that the thoughtful among you will agree with me.

I intend to go into no long defense of myself. Let the facts speak for themselves. That which I have done, I have done. If I was wrong, rest assured that at one time or another, I shall pay for it all, finally. At the present I am calm and peaceful. I have gone back into the settled, ordinary way of living. I live regularly and work at my experiments, and I have a small circle of good friends who do not know that once I was called Roulette. My conscience is clear, I eat well and I sleep well, and if some time it happens that I am called upon to account for what I have done, I expect to do that simply and fearlessly.

Let that be all. I have done.

Did the Camera Lie?

(*Continued from page* 35)

My blood-pressure went up. My heart put in a couple of extra beats and I swallowed to keep from asking him to repeat it. That was real "info."

I LOOKED at Burnett for the first time since our drinks. He was looking at me. Two beer bottle caps had been found near the body and he had made some remark about broken glass the day before.

That was as far as I dared go. So we thanked him and left.

In our minds Mr. Gellert was connected very closely with the Sycamore Park murder. Close enough to warrant action.

It lacked two hours of being noon, but we had to act quickly if we were to get the story in the paper. I went into the barber shop and, on the pretense of trying to sell him insurance, made his acquaintance. Then I pointed him out to Burnett, who stood across the street while I went to the office.

I told Matson what we had learned. Then he and I went to the office of my friend, Ford Harvey, detective attached to the prosecuting attorney's office, and told him the story. He went back with us.

The stage was set for an exclusive story—how big, I had no idea. The most I dared hope for was that Gellert knew something which had not been told, although I had a hunch there was a lot more up the alley into which I had stumbled so blindly. Reason told me we were right, but, try as I would, I could not allay the fear that we were not.

When we met Burnett, he told us Gellert had just returned from lunch, and that he had followed the barber into the café, heard him order a sandwich and a cup of coffee, saw him push the sandwich aside and drink three cups of coffee. He said the man then went two blocks farther down the street to a drug-store, said something to the proprietor and waited about five minutes while the druggist was in the rear of the store, returned and handed Gellert a package which he put in his inside coat pocket.

It seemed to me that my suspicions of something more than mere connection between Gellert and that unfortunate woman were being verified. Men can not exist on coffee and bad booze unless there is something weighing heavily on their minds. I had intended to find out, if I could, who Gellert had seen that day in Sycamore Park, for I was sure he had been there, but I changed my plan as the four of us stepped into the shop.

"Gellert," I said, "we want to see your wife. Where is she?"

"She went to Denver, Sunday," he said. "I took her to the train myself."

WHATEVER suspicion I had had crystallized the moment he answered that question. The instinctive

alibi he had built for himself convinced me he was guilty.

"I took her to the train myself," he had said before we had asked him a single question. To me, it was a big story in few words.

"Are you sure of that, Gellert?" I snapped back.

"Yes," he replied. But it was far from convincing.

Harvey then saw what I was driving at.

"You didn't go out to Sycamore Park, did you?" he asked.

"No!" He almost shouted it.

"You're certain, Gellert?" Harvey shot at him. "Better take a minute to think it over."

In the silence which followed I could see great beads of perspiration come out on his forehead.

"I took her to the train, I told you," he barked at us.

Burnett had grown restless and was looking over the shop. A seat locker, such as is used for storing linens, caught his eye. He walked over and lifted the lid. Gellert stared at him, his face the color of a death mask.

Burnett gave a quick look, then his hand dived into the locker as he called me. He threw out a handful of spare towels, then in went his hand again.

Gellert gave a frightened look toward the door and Harvey stepped in front of him.

This time Burnett brought up something that glittered. It was a gold watch—a woman's watch—with a broken chain, identical with the piece found with the body.

He handed it to me and went back a third time.

"Ever see this, Gellert?" I asked, with a mocking grin on my face.

"No, no!" he chattered. "I don't know how it got there."

"What are you shaking for?" cut in Matson.

"I'm not sh-sh-shaking," he stammered.

I looked over at Burnett. He was holding a roll of films, as if undecided what to do with them.

"Put 'em in your pocket and bring 'em along," Harvey, who also had noticed his indecision, ordered.

SO Harvey and Burnett took films, watch, chain—and Gellert, whimpering and protesting—to the county attorney's office, while Matson and I beat it to the office to write the story—a clean scoop.

The identification bureau developed the films which proved the last link connecting Gellert with the brutal murder of his wife.

Five of the roll of six films were pictures of scenery around Sycamore Park—snaps the murdered woman had taken the day of her death.

It was the sixth, the picture of a young woman, which echoed the voice from the dead. It proved the key to the mystery.

Gellert's little daughter, Jane, furnished the clue which enabled us to locate the young woman and identify her. When questioned, she said Gellert had promised to marry her as soon as he could get a divorce.

Also, from the child, we learned that the mother had had a premonition of her impending death.

"If I don't come home, Jane," she said her mother had told her, "you will know that Papa has killed me."

The story was just another of the silent and accusing voice of the dead, leading the law unerringly to the guilty, but Gellert was never tried. Two days after his arrest his mind snapped, and seven months later he died in the insane asylum.

Did the camera lie? It didn't. Cameras never do lie.

The Man With Four Legs

(*Continued from page* 56)

"I said 'dare.' Why? Because I'm confident if you search hard enough you'll find the one who planned this theft was Chester Brewster, the young pup whom I ordered to keep away from my daughter and my house. He took advantage of her inexperience and my absence to——"

"Just a minute, Mr. Howland. You can't mean what you say. Brewster has been wild. But to turn deliberately crooked, to scheme with a professional criminal—and such a brutal yegg—to rob a woman in his own social set——"

"He's not in our set. Neither is his family. They're no good; except his mother. Look at his father. The president of a bonding company that specializes in bonding crooks. Don't class me with him. I'm a banker, president of one institution and director in half a dozen others. I try to keep money from his clients. No wonder his son is what he is."

Howland's rage appeared to choke him for a moment, and while he mopped the perspiration from his forehead, I recalled something I should have thought of before. Howland and Brewster were of opposite political faiths. Years before Brewster had defeated the banker for Congress. Evidently the bad blood between them had continued. I wondered how the children of two such enemies had learned to take such an interest in each other.

"I've had Chester watched," Howland resumed. "I wanted to learn the truth about him so that I could tell my daughter. Too bad I didn't do it. He has spent every cent he inherited from his grandfather; squandered it. You can guess how. His father had to get him out of town. He's been gambling with the small allowance sent him ever since he's been in college. I tell you the story of his stock killing is a lie. Your investigation will prove I'm right. He's been desperately hard up. He planned these robberies of his friends. Think it over. He admits he was in this city the last three Saturday nights. There was a robbery on each of them, of persons he knew well. He coaxed my daughter to wear most of her jewels, her mother's necklace in particular. Well, I guess I've talked enough. Anyway, now you know what's what. Good night. You can see me in the morning if you care to."

I left the house with my brain buzzing. Despite Howland's statements, I could not believe young Brewster was a crook. His type might turn embezzler or forger, but to work deliberately with stick-up men, thereby placing himself open to blackmail for the remainder of his life—hardly! Duty, however, compelled me to investigate him. If it turned out that Howland was right, up-river he'd go.

"The young fellow's inside. Said he'd wait for you," was the amazing statement of my driver, Concealing my surprise, I took my seat beside Brewster and ordered the chauffeur to drive slowly to Headquarters.

"I'll ride a few blocks with you. It's important I should tell you something at once."

"Shoot."

"I don't know what Howland told you, but it's a cinch he painted me pretty black. You know I've made a lot of bad breaks. To-night's experience has cured me. From now on it's the straight and narrow for me, and that goes. I lied about that stock deal because I thought it would make it easier for Norma."

His statement gave me an uneasy feeling. Was Howland right after all?

"Here's the straight of it, Mr. Martin. I did make a clean-up on a friend's tip. He phoned it to me just before leaving for Europe on his honeymoon. That means I can't prove the statement until he returns. Then I played the races, telephoning to bookies I know here. I cashed in big. Of course I can't prove that either. I don't know what you're thinking or what Howland said, but I'm going to stick around and I'll do anything you say to help. I'm not going home, though. Since I came here I've been living with Billy Van Alstyne at the Aldire—you know, the bachelor apartments facing Central Park. I'll remain there until you say different. If you haven't any question, I'll get out."

I was anxious to get rid of him so that I might think. But before he left me I gave him my home telephone number, directing that he call me there or at Headquarters if he learned anything. I found Brady waiting for me and reported, down to the smallest detail; then asked him to allow me to go home and think over the case for the remainder of the night before we discussed deductions or plans. With his permission I sent two men immediately to the Aldire to learn if and how long Brewster had been there, and to trail him if he left the place.

"JUST one question, Inspector, and I'm off. Brewster and his girl were at the Black Pigeon three nights running. Do you know if the Graysons were at the Little Cottage and the Barnes-Morrisons were at the Fireside more than once in the weeks they were robbed?"

"Yes. They were accustomed to go there frequently. They were in the places three or four nights in the weeks before the Saturday stick-ups."

"Think this over before I see you tomorrow. All these women flashed diamonds. This yegg, watching from the outside, could have spotted his victims one night, trailed them, and learned where they lived the next. Then, learning their habit of going directly home, could have watched them leave, beat them getting there in a taxicab—probably driven by a confederate and kept handy for the getaway—and been in the vestibules ready to receive them. That's my guess. I never believed a professional crook could get inside those places. There's one weak spot, however. A known criminal, naturally, would have been afraid to hang around these clubs. The police might tumble to him. But he could have had a spotter who wasn't known."

"Brewster could have gotten into any of them."

"Yes—— Wait! I'll settle that matter now."

I knew the managers of all the night clubs whose guests had been robbed. Those at the Little Cottage and Fireside were positive, when I phoned, that young Brewster hadn't been in their places for months. The manager of the Black Pigeon said he had been there the three nights he had stated.

I reported my information to Brady.

"That helps his case," he said, "but——"

"If he's guilty," I interrupted, "I'll get him. But no matter what Howland said or how desperate Chester was for money, I can't help thinking those jobs were the work of experienced professionals. I use the plural because the scheme has worked so smoothly that it required more than one to pull it off."

On my way home I smoked and tried to push the case from my mind briefly. I realized Brady was depending upon me as never before, that he counted on me to make good on my nickname, "Camera Eye." By the time I reached my quarters, had drunk two cups of black coffee and settled in an easy chair with my big record book in my lap, my brain was clear and ready for some real concentration.

Going over the names listed in the index as having taken part in stick-up cases in the last five years, I noted on a slip of paper those in which women had been robbed and assaulted. None, as I recalled, fitted the description of my quarry until——

SUDDENLY I whistled and put aside my cigar. I had reached the name of "Joe the Gent" Kilmer. His description tallied with that of the unknown thief, and he was a brute with women. I grinned, believing I had a real lead. He was under thirty, had been a lightweight prize-fighter, next a dope peddler, then a sneak-thief. He had been feared in the underworld because he never hesitated to fight with gun, knife or fists. He had been arrested many times, but shrewd lawyers and pull had kept him from getting long stretches. His last crime, before he disappeared from New York three years back, had been an attempted apartment robbery. A maid had caught him at work and screamed, and he had given her a terrible beating before escaping. Also, he had abused many women who had lived with him. Could it be that Kilmer had slipped back to New York and was the crook I must uncover?

I never had known whether his sobriquet, "the Gent," was bestowed upon him in a spirit of irony because of his brutality toward women, or because of his habitual fashionable attire. He was the type who would wear a ring, even "on business." There was one means of identifying Kilmer which his victims had overlooked. I'd

question them concerning it in the morning.

The telephone bell at my elbow rang. Guessing it was Headquarters, I snatched the receiver. "Yes?"

"That you, Mr. Martin?"

"Yes."

"This is Chester Brewster. Sorry to trouble you, but I've thought of something important. First, you needn't have had me watched. The all-night man here tipped me, after your detectives had questioned him. The help in these places are pretty faithful to the tenants. Don't be sore"—he had caught my muttered oath—"I just want you to understand I'm playing square. Here's the important thing. Sorry I didn't think of it before. The man who attacked us, I believe, is left-handed."

"What? You're certain?"

"When I had time to think it over, I remembered the revolver he pressed against me was in his left hand. He struck Miss Howland and snatched the necklace with his right. I don't believe anybody would attempt to use a revolver in his left, unless it was his good hand. Maybe I'm wrong. Good night."

"Thanks. Good night."

I THREW up both hands and laughed aloud. That was the clue I wanted. Kilmer was left-handed. But I soon quieted down a bit. This Brewster was a cool customer. It might be that he'd given me the tip about the left hand to throw me off, for I knew he was right-handed. Anyway, he was being watched. I could locate him when I wanted him. My first job in the morning would be to locate Joe's whereabouts. As I tumbled into bed I recalled something else about the crook. He had a habit of lighting matches and tapers by snapping them with the nails of his thumb and finger. I fell asleep realizing the "old bean" was working on schedule.

The new sun and I made our appearances in the street about the same time next day. I made Headquarters hot foot, and soon had Joe's record. In addition to the customary official information, there were some intimate memoranda. After he had skipped from New York, his shady lawyer somehow squared matters with the woman he'd assaulted, and the indictment was quashed. However, more than two years back, in Chicago, he'd been arrested for beating a woman with whom he had been living, and went to a penitentiary.

Immediately I called up the Windy City Police Headquarters. The information I received was decidedly interesting. Joe had saved a fellow convict from being killed in a prison fight. After serving a year and a half he had been paroled. In the six months he had been at liberty he'd been going straight, at least so far as my informant knew. He obtained a job selling washing machines on commission and changed his name to Killifer, with the knowledge of the authorities and his employer, in an effort to hide his prison past. He had reported to the parole officer once a month. He was due to report again on the eleventh of the following month. Chicago promised to learn if he had been absent from the city. Later I read Howland's reward offer in the newspapers and wondered if it would cause the crooks to hunt cover for a time. Nothing was printed about the assault upon Miss Howland.

I called Chicago again about noon. The news caused me a grin of satisfaction. When reporting on the eleventh of the current month, Joe had obtained permission to visit "his ill mother in New Orleans." He had left the city at once and had not returned. His accounts with the firm employing him were O. K. If my guess as to the identity of the slippery yegg was correct, he had come to New York instead of going South. With the haul he'd made he might never return West. Still, he had plenty of time to report there on the eleventh, and keep his Chicago record clean. He had another week to continue operations in the metropolis, and do that. My guess was he—and his possible confederates—would try to stage at least one more big play before things became too hot for them.

After informing Brady of my suspicions concerning Kilmer and my belief another hold-up would be staged, I arranged to remain away from Headquarters until the case was finished. The plan we agreed upon was for me to fix things with the managers of the ultra-fashionable night clubs to visit the places when I chose; in evening clothes, of course. I counted on dropping in on the Little Cottage, Fireplace and the Black Pigeon once or twice. However, as the police would be watching these now, the crooks were likely to give them a wide berth.

MOST of my time would be spent in and about the Café d'Orléans and the Club Victoria, from which no patron had so far been robbed, occupied a reconstructed residence. They were the acme of exclusiveness, admitting only "members," persons of assured wealth and standing. Still, in these, as in the lesser clubs, the wives and sweethearts of the members were accustomed to displaying their jewels. Any couple from either of these places would yield a small fortune in a hold-up. I figured when the crooks struck again it would be against patrons of these places. It wasn't worth the risk to rob any of those frequenting the resorts which admitted "anybody with the price." The jewels worn by many women at these places were phony, and the crooks knew it.

For two nights I trailed about the five clubs mentioned. I failed to note a person inside any of them I knew to be off color. Besides myself, plain-clothes men watched about the club exteriors. Not only were there no loiterers about the entrances—only the uniformed doormen, starters and occasional beggars—but no person was located hiding near or apparently watching those who came and went. By Tuesday night I was beginning to get nervous waiting for action. I wondered if Howland's reward had frightened my quarry and sent them out of town.

However, I put on my evening clothes immediately after dinner—though I liked wearing the "soup and fish" as little as any other cop—tucked my automatic in a holster beneath my left arm, and took to the trail. The clubs wouldn't get started until after the theaters, so I strolled about on Broadway, the side streets in which the better night resorts were located, and near the Metropolitan carriage entrance, with both eyes open for Joe. Nothing doing. Next I headed for the block where were both of the clubs in which I was particu-

larly interested. The many bright lights, particularly those before the Café d'Orléans and its neighbors, threw into strong relief the machines which whizzed by and the considerable number of pedestrians, some headed for the gay places, others merely strolling.

Suddenly a well-dressed youth not far ahead of me, and alone, swung toward the curb, snapped a match into flame with his nails, lighted a cigarette, then moved along. I caught the gesture. Also that he used his left hand. To say I was jolted, is putting it mildly. I moved up on my man. As I recalled Kilmer, this man's height, build and carriage were identical with his. I must see his face and his fingers. But he mustn't see me. If Joe, he would recognize me despite my unaccustomed garb. Glancing neither to the right or left, he reached the corner, then paused and looked into a shop-window. Keeping others between us, I passed and got a flash at his face. My heart gave a jump. He was Kilmer or his double.

I TURNED quickly, but stepped behind a great iron electric-light post which partly concealed me. My man dropped his cigarette stub, took another from a case and snapped a taper with the nails of his left hand. I noted something else, however. On the little finger of the right hand which held the case was a seal ring. Right then I felt my case was as good as proved. But I wanted to do more than arrest him! I wanted to capture his confederates. To me the fact that he still was in New York indicated he intended trying at least one more stick-up. I expected to be in on that. Pushing my arm against my gun to satisfy myself it still was in place, I fell in behind him again as he turned and made his way back toward the avenue.

As we neared the entrance to the Café d'Orléans, I noted none before it except the uniformed doorman at the curb, and a badly deformed cripple, huddled close to the wall near the entrance, a tin cup suspended from a bit of string around his neck. I probably would not have given him a second notice had not Joe, after a quick glance about, stepped close and fumbled for a coin to drop in the cup. As he did so the two exchanged a few hurried words, then Kilmer resumed his walk, with me trailing. I wondered if I had stumbled upon something significant.

Without hurrying, he circled the block and, as he passed the club, again paused before the beggar and talked with him. Instantly I crossed the street, dodging behind machines that Kilmer might not note me. For right there I believed I had hit upon the explanation of the puzzling case. The cripple was Joe's lookout. He, better than any other type of person, could remain at the club entrances without exciting suspicion, and could determine those who could be robbed with greatest profit. I attempted to keep track of Kilmer, but a collision of taxicabs at the corner drew a sudden crowd and I lost him in the crush.

Doubling back, I took a good look at the cripple. He was a big fellow with powerful shoulders and massive hands. A mass of rumpled black hair, heavy lips and piercing eyes gave his features a sinister appearance, in spite of his effort to wear a look which would excite pity. He sat upon a tiny platform upon wheels, his body resting upon his stockinged feet. Held in each hand—both of which were stiff and twisted at the wrists—was a contraption used to propel the wheeled platform.

HURRYING to the nearby police station, I called up Brewster at the Aldire, described the cripple, and asked him if he had noted him near the Black Pigeon entrance. He had. He had seen him each evening and had dropped a coin into his tin cup. He recalled distinctly, because the first night, after he had given the beggar the change from his overcoat pocket, the man had asked him the time. As he was about to reach for his timepiece, Miss Howland let go of the cloak she had pulled about her shoulders, looked at her wrist-watch, and told him. My guess was that the cripple had put the question for his purpose. And the banker's daughter, unsuspecting, had loosened her wrap, exposing her jewels.

Borrowing a suit of clothes from a house detective, I made a quick change, then hastened to the Little Cottage and the Fireside. The doormen at each place recalled the crippled beggar—that he had been there a few consecutive nights, then disappeared. My reasoning was that the cripple had remained in front of the clubs only sufficiently long to spot the Graysons and the Barnes-Morrisons and tip them to Kilmer, then go on to a new location.

Hastening back to the block in which the Café d'Orléans was situated, I was glad to note the beggar still outside. At the corner I met the policeman on post, explained my identity, and asked about the cripple. He said he had taken up his post before the club on Sunday night and had been there each evening since. He was such a pitiful specimen the officer had not disturbed him, and wouldn't unless a complaint was made. Cautioning him to say nothing about me, and to leave the beggar undisturbed, I returned on the opposite side of the street and took up a post of observation in the shadows of the deep doorway of an office building closed for the night.

There I spent a long and tedious vigil, as I did not dare to smoke. By half-past two the block was practically deserted except for waiting automobiles, doormen and stragglers. The cripple emptied the coins from his cup, said good night to the starter, and pulled himself slowly and painfully down the block. Keeping close to the walls, I followed. After a time he reached a loft building, its front completely dark, and disappeared in its shadows. I took shelter behind a show-window.

Suddenly a tall, heavily built man came from the building I was watching. As he passed beneath an electric light, I noted he wore a cap and appeared to be carrying something beneath his coat. I leaned out to get a closer look. He darted across the street, leaped into a waiting car, which at the distance appeared to be a taxicab, and was driven away so rapidly it was useless for me to attempt to follow.

WHEN I recovered from my surprise I crossed to the loft building. The doors were locked, as I had anticipated.

My crippled beggar was a faker!

Once in the shadow of the structure, with none near, he had untwisted himself, tucked his truck beneath his coat, and

escaped in the machine which had been waiting for him. Then, far more than when I had tumbled to Kilmer's identity, I realized I was up against one of the stiffest cases I ever had faced, and a band of crooks who were absolute masters of resourcefulness.

I went to bed with a hunch that this beggar and Kilmer had met in the Middle West, for I was certain the faker did not belong around New York. As the Chicago police had given Joe a clean bill of health since leaving prison, I naturally thought they might have met when behind the bars.

First thing next morning I called up the warden of the Illinois penitentiary. His information was good. During the early months with him, Joe had kept to himself. One day, in a row in the prison yard over a ball game, there had been a fight in which he had saved the life of a fellow prisoner, Dave Lucas, known to the underworld as "The Twister." This man's description answered that of my beggar. In his early life he had been a contortionist with circuses, then a sneak-thief, and later a fence. After the prison clash, Lucas and Kilmer became close friends. The Twister's time was up six months before Joe was liberated. He did not know where Lucas had gone.

Realizing I held all the trump cards and must win if I played my hand carefully, I arranged a most elaborate plan, with Brady's assistance. Beginning that night, a department taxicab was to wait near the Café d'Orléans for me. Another, in which would be two detectives familiar with Kilmer's appearance, also would wait in the same block and trail him when he again appeared. Next I arranged with the club manager to permit me to watch and listen at the cellar window just behind where the beggar had held a post nightly. That I might hear plainly, I raised the window about two inches. This, I figured, would not attract his attention.

It was close to twelve o'clock that night. Many patrons had entered the building. My back ached from hours of stooping so I could look into the street. Then it was that I saw Kilmer pause before the beggar. The doorman was at the curb. No one stood near the crooked pair.

Pretending to examine some coins in his hand, Joe leaned down with, "Anything to-night?"

"No. But I've spotted a pair of soft ones. She's wearing an ermine coat and a pink dress. Watch for my signal and follow them. Heard her say she could come with him again Friday."

JOE dropped a coin into the cup and moved away. Hastening up-stairs, I learned from the coat-room help that the woman who recently had entered wearing the clothing described was Mrs. Bradley Archer. She was with her husband, a Wall Street plunger. I knew that the couple occupied an old mansion in Fifth Avenue facing Central Park. When I located them in the cabaret, I realized why the beggar had spotted her. She was as bejeweled as "the Street" plungers' wives frequently are.

Returning to my lookout post, I noted when the Archers left the place and saw Lucas take out his handkerchief and wipe his forehead. I guessed it was his signal to Joe, though I did not see the latter. I didn't worry, however, for I knew my assistants would trail him. My interest for the night was in the faker. I went to the street immediately and, as on the previous night, watched him. When he untwisted himself in the shadows, then drove away in his cab, mine was not far behind. He entered a shabby house in upper Greenwich Village, and his car—which was painted to resemble a taxi—was driven to a public garage many blocks distant and left there. I noted the driver was a burly negro.

Next morning I interviewed the three policemen who covered the beat in which Lucas lived. He had occupied the house for several months with two hulking negro servants, one of whom drove him from the district almost nightly. The other black also left the house each evening, and none returned until the early morning hours. The cops had begun to look upon them with suspicion, but saw no reason for getting inquisitive, because no visitors came to the place.

While I was at the corner talking to the officer covering the morning patrol, Lucas came from the house. He passed without looking at us. Despite the fact that he wore good clothing and was carefully shaved and brushed, I recognized him as my beggar quarry. I trailed him to a bank in Eighth Avenue, where he went to the vaults and remained a considerable time. Later, through the bank policeman, I learned he had several safety-deposit boxes there. For future reference I took along a printed list of the bank's officials and got a grin when I noted that Aaron Howland was on the board of directors. I wondered if Lucas kept the loot from the recent thefts there, and if the necklace was with it.

NEXT I met my aids. Kilmer had followed the Archers home. After they had gone inside, he returned to the house, which had a high stoop, and examined the vestibule. His chauffeur, they said, was a a big negro, evidently Lucas' other "servant." Leaving the avenue, Joe was driven to a little hotel near the river. He had been living there for more than two weeks. Everything appeared to be all set for the crooks to put across the Friday night job, so I at once made all arrangements for the police end. These included the assignment of detectives to keep the principals and the negroes under surveillance at all times when they were not behind their own doors. I also placed Archer's house under guard. But I did not inform him of what was in the wind lest his wife become frightened and do something which would prevent us capturing the crooks red-handed.

Then—until Friday night—it was a case of trailing and marking time. That evening, with a dozen men in various places ready to close in with me, I watched from my cellar lookout. I saw the Archers enter the place and heard Kilmer get his final orders. When the couple left the club I was at their heels, and my cab, in which were an assistant and a disguised department driver, took up the trail of the other. My aid informed me Joe had left the neighborhood in his car long before. I figured he would be waiting in the vestibule. When traffic was halted at the Plaza, I slipped to the Archer car, showed my badge, and climbed inside. They were

more than amazed when I explained my errand, but agreed to play the rôles I assigned them.

When the car stopped before the house, we alighted, and they spoke to the chauffeur sufficiently loud to be heard by the man I was certain was hiding just above us. Crouching behind them, so he would not see me if he were peeping, my revolver held ready, I followed to the stoop. They stepped aside and I went up, making sufficient sound for two.

Reaching the top, I stuck my head into the doorway, then jerked back. As I had anticipated, Joe's hand, clutching a pistol, shot out, evidently meant to press against my body. It never reached me. Instead, the butt of my weapon smashed upon his hand and his gun dropped. There came a roar of pain and a curse, and the next instant we tumbled down the steps and rolled to the gutter. Squirming, kicking, biting, he tried to break my hold. I worked around on top. Then I recalled Miss Howland's bruised cheek. The next second I sent the butt of my revolver crashing against his skull and he collapsed in my arms—out.

BY that time several detectives were about us. They had captured Joe's getaway car and its driver. Ordering them to rush their prisoners to Headquarters, I leaped into my machine and told my driver to race for the Café d'Orléans. At the corner of the side street I picked up one of my watchers. He reported the cripple still before the night club. When we reached there several persons were coming out. It was no time for ceremony, however. Grasping Lucas' collar, I jerked him from his platform with: "On your feet, you faker. You're under arrest."

Groveling, whining, he begged the fashionable ones who pressed close with cries of "Shame!" to help him. "We're officers," I said, showing my badge. "Now, Lucas, quit the cripple stuff. We've just arrested Kilmer and——"

At the mention of Joe's name he came to life as if propelled by springs. Tearing himself from my grasp, he fought his way through my assistants and leaped for the street. I was upon him with a flying tackle. He was a tough battler, but I managed to throw him face down, and with a ju-jutsu hold twisted his arm behind him until he roared with pain. "Quiet, you," I bellowed, "or I'll make you a real cripple for life." As he slumped, I brought his other wrist behind him and an assistant snapped the handcuffs. Down the street we encountered the other negro driver, held by two detectives.

That about completes the story, except that we were able to make out such a case against the four that they were found guilty and given long stretches, though their corps of expensive "crook attorneys" made a hard fight to save them. One of the interesting things we brought out was that the company of which Brewster was the head had twice furnished bonds for Kilmer. After the trial the man resigned from the organization and went into another line of business, though no truce between him and Howland was declared. Howland was most useful to the authorities. Because of his influence, we were able to obtain quickly the strong boxes held in Lucas' name. In them we found every jewel taken by Joe in the recent stick-ups, including the Howland necklace, as well as other plunder stolen in Chicago. This was returned to the owners.

Chester is somewhere in the Far West making a new start. Before leaving New York he told me Norma was going to wait for him to make good.

Was This Woman Crazy?

(*Continued from page* 43)

Vaguely I looked down at my feet, striving frantically for some witty, yet convincing, thing to say. I succeeded only in conveying an impression of extreme irritability.

"Oh, for heavens' sake!" I snapped, pettishly—"out digging. Can't a man dig if he wants to?"

"But Burton, dear—that *mud*——"

And then her lips closed like a trap and I fancied she shrank back ever so slightly as I passed in front of her into the house.

I don't know what under the sun made me say those idiotic words. It must have been the thousand devils that by this time were hammering the top of my head. But why did she have to ask me what I was doing, anyway? A man's entitled to a little freedom on his own premises. Still, of all things on earth, why did I tell her I was digging—I, who don't know a spade from a hoe—and at an hour when the world was in such appalling blackness that had I unearthed some astounding thing, I would have needed a searchlight to see it. I bit my lips irritably, finding life suddenly very difficult. However, having delivered myself of this explanation, there was little else to do but betake myself, with a feeble show of cockiness, up the front stairs to my room.

TO forget my irritation, I went back over the evening's occurrence. The point that struck home was that someone did not want me to go beyond the orchard. But what lay over there? Nothing of significance—only the rude shack of Jennie Briggs, the cottage of Miss Clifton, a quiet spinster so gnarled with rheumatism she hadn't the strength to crack a nut, a few scattered barns, and then a long dusty stretch of road. It was all very peculiar. Far into the night I pondered on it and before I fell asleep I had decided to put my clever idea into execution the following evening.

Now, I am no detective. I cannot detect rain in the air unless it is actually falling. I think it must have been the excitement of the thing that egged me on, one of those inexplicable urges that occasionally seize us doddering old fools long after youth has fled, filling our blood with the red wine of adventure even while our teeth chatter and we half reach out for our pipe and book again.

The following day passed with interminable slowness, marked only by a noticeable

coldness on the part of Martha. And early in the morning when I went into the cellar for something or other I found her down there at an old disused set tub furtively sponging the mud from my suit. She did not speak to me. She would not even look at me. Good heavens! Does she think I tracked the mud into the study the night Simmons was killed? Does she think with the rest that I killed him?

At the first sign of dark I set about making a few quiet preparations for my little trip, which was rather difficult to do since I had not taken Martha into my confidence. Twice she came out on the veranda just as I was setting off and each time I was forced to seat myself with the greatest possible nonchalance on the railing—a thing I never do since an unprotected height of any kind makes me extremely nervous. And she knows this.

FINALLY, however, I managed to slip off accompanied by Major (who is my Airedale, and as canny a dog as ever walked), a long dark top-coat over my arm and my pipe between my teeth. This last I took especial care to have burning brightly. The darkness that drenched the orchard that night was like a stifling pall. No moon. No stars. Just a heavy, earthy odor—and incredible blackness.

Before I had advanced very far my riotous spirit of adventure had completely oozed away, leaving me stark afraid. Back in the safety of my well-lighted room the thing had looked glorious. Here in the orchard, with the earth smelling like a tomb, it looked like the act of a madman. I seemed to have conveyed some of my mood to Major, also, for he whined at intervals and slunk along beside me in ill-concealed disgust, as dogs often will when torn between common sense and loyalty.

And yet, in spite of this, I plodded foolhardily on. If I, myself, could catch the murderer, I could clear away once and for all the pall of suspicion that hovered over me, and what's more, I would probably be regarded as something of a hero. This last thought caused me no little pleasure.

Suddenly a sort of sixth sense warned me that I was nearing the scene of the previous evening's set-to. Stealthily I stooped down, drew Major's shaggy form in front of me, slipped the top-coat over his broad back and sent him on ahead. It was a frightful trick to play on a friend, but I swear I had no idea how badly he would fare.

As he slunk forward, the weight of the coat beating him down, he looked for all the world like a human figure creeping on hands and knees. Just as he reached the tree, the form of a man sprang out upon him. A wild, savage snarl cut the air followed by a sickening thud, a moan—then pitiful silence. For a moment I was as a man turned to stone and yet, oddly enough, that was just what I had expected.

Then, in a flash, I recovered my senses and with a strangled oath I pitched after Major's assailant, my whole being whipped into frenzy at his brutality, and my own. The man, aware now of the trap into which he had fallen, shot desperately over the soft ground, out toward the road. Up hill and down we flew, slipping over decayed fruit, plowing roughshod through Martha's prized corn, faster and faster—out over the dirt road and straight through the dimly lighted door of Jennie Briggs' house.

"Trapped!" I exulted under my breath—"trapped as neatly as any fox!" And my quarry could have chosen no worse refuge, for old Jennie would never have the wits to aid him in his effort to hide.

With a triumphant growl I hurtled through the doorway and crashed him to the floor beneath me. Over and over we rolled, twisted, wrenched, choked. I marveled at my incredible strength. I exulted in it. I summoned hidden forces that I never dreamed I possessed until suddenly the panting, writhing, frantic creature under my hands gave a last great heave and then went quietly to putty.

Dazed, I still continued to pin him in a vise, but he made no effort to escape now. He lay inert—lifeless. As I waited, for heaven knows what, his very helplessness seemed slowly to steal the glory of the battle from me. A chill of fear crept through me. Had I killed him?

IN sudden desperation I caught the limp figure and tried to make it sit up, but it is hard to lift a dead-weight body. I shook it again and again with a kind of hysterical viciousness and as I did, it suddenly rolled off and I drew up aghast. The face that I stared down into was not that of a murderous ruffian, not the face of a man at all, but the white countenance of looney Jennie Briggs! Jennie in men's clothes, her shrunken old body slumped grotesquely in dirty denim overalls. This was a *woman* that I had killed!

In a panic of fear I threw the body from me and bolted toward the door, every nerve strung taut. I must fly just as far and fast as my legs would carry me. No time to see Martha—or Daisy. I must disappear completely, irrevocably. If I could only make the back road, unseen——

Just as I was in the shadow of the door, a demoniacal shriek jerked me up abruptly. Terrified beyond endurance, I whirled about to find myself looking directly into the wide-open eyes of the woman. She had struggled to her feet and stood regarding me with an insane look.

With effort I moistened my lips.

"Jennie!" I cried, hoarsely, "Jennie!"

No answer, only that intolerable staring. Then all at once her breast began to heave spasmodically, and she broke into insane peals of laughter that seemed to cleave the very rafters of that miserable shack.

"Hush, Jennie!" I hissed, anger struggling with the relief that swept over me. "The neighbors will hear you!"

At the sound of my voice she stopped abruptly on a high note, a queer gleam in her eyes.

"Neighbors!" she shrilled, "what do I care for neighbors? They can't get me now. You ain't got me either, mister, though you think you have. This here's got me." She thumped her flat breasts pitilessly.

I made no answer and she peered up at me craftily. "Well, what are you thinking?"

By now I had presence of mind enough to speak soothingly. It needed only a single grating word to convert her into a raving lunatic again.

"Why, nothing, Jennie."

She shrugged incredulously, her eyes fastened shrewdly on me. "You think I killed Henry Simmons, now don't you?"

"Indeed, I don't, Jennie!" I hastened to assure her.

Abruptly she went off into peals of mirthless laughter again, and finally getting her breath, shouted: "I *did* kill him!"

I stared at her helplessly. She was mad as a March hare.

"But, Jennie——"

A spasm of coughing seized her and she clasped her thin hands to her chest.

"Here, let me help you over to the couch," I ordered, my anger lost in pity. "You will feel better there."

She shook her head irritably. "I'll never feel better nowhere, mister!"

I helped her to the couch, motivated by a strange tenderness, and sat beside her.

"There, that's better," she said, as she leaned back against the wall "I just ran into you by chance last night, mister, and you frightened me. I didn't mean to kill you—just wanted to scare you off. But I meant to kill Henry Simmons right enough!"

"But, Jennie, why——"

She cut me off savagely. "Because he stole the only thing I had in the world. I'd kill him again if he was here now!"

What in heaven's name could the old gardener have stolen from Jennie, to warrant her murdering him?

"I'll tell you about Henry Simmons. I'm a-goin' soon, so it don't matter." She stirred uneasily, striving for a beginning. "I suppose you think I'm a-goin' to tell you I was a grand lady once. Well, I wasn't. I was always poor an' what's worse, homely. When I was small I was so homely they used to make fun of me, and when I growed up I didn't improve none."

She peered up at me sideways, like a crab.

"DO you know, mister, I never had a beau? You don't know what that means to a woman. An' I'd have been good to a man, too. But I had a little sister an' she was a little beauty. *She* didn't lack no beau, mister. Every man what set eyes on her wanted to marry her. She had hair like gold and big blue eyes like you see in pictures of angels. She was all I had in the world. And then one day along come Luke Parker. I knew he was no good the minute I clapped my eyes on him. He was one of those big easy-goin' fellows, laughin' all the time and carryin' on, but never doin' a tap of work. But she couldn't see nothin' but his big broad shoulders an' his eyes, mister, and she up an' run away with him. She run away with him, mister, leavin' me, her Jennie, what would have done anythin' in the world for her, all alone."

She paused.

"She came back after a while, mister. He was through with her an' he jest up and left her, with a young 'un comin' an' all. But she came back to her old Jennie an' I was so happy to get her back, it seemed easy to bear the shame. It was easier than the loneliness, anyway. We moved away, mister, an' I worked my fingers to the bone to get enough together to have her cared for right. I ain't complainin', mister; I'd have given my heart's blood for her. She was all I had. But she died, mister, an' the baby died, an' I was all alone again. An' all I could think of was Luke Parker wanderin' off free an' happy——"

The fierce fire in her eyes was a piteous thing to see. I ached for her.

"It's many a long year since then, mister. I never see him again, though I watched every man that passed me. An' finally I give it up. But when Henry Simmons came to your place a spell back somethin' inside of me suddenly snapped. I could not believe it was him at first, but when I saw his eyes I knew it was. An' all the misery he brought to me an' mine seemed to rush over me again an' I up an' killed him. It was easy. He was snoopin' around your study. I seen him from the orchard. He killed her, mister. She was all I had. So I killed him."

The elemental justice of it!

"He killed her, mister. She was all I had. So I killed him."

Some dormant spring within me leaped to her clear, cold logic—even while I knew it to be fallacious.

The next moment she had slumped weakly against me.

"I'm all right, mister. Just wore out, that's all. I'll stretch out here on the couch now for a spell."

Almost before I had finished tucking a moth-eaten blanket about her wasted body she had dropped off to a sleep of utter exhaustion.

Far into the night I sat there beside her, forgetful of time, of Martha, of my own deplorable susceptibility to rheumatism. I knew I would have to go back to the house. I couldn't sit there forever. Yet, somehow, I dreaded that return. How much should I tell? How much should I keep? Just a few words from me would sweep aside the suspicion that encircled me still. Just a few adroitly put sentences would give me a delightfully enhanced rating both in my own home and with the neighbors. And yet it seemed so woefully cruel to escape on Jennie's pitiful tale. Told by her, it rang with sincerity and a certain, strange beauty. On the lips of the villagers it would he a hideous rag of a thing.

I arose wearily. It was all so very difficult. Perhaps, if I let it lie, it would right itself eventually.

For a moment before leaving I stared down at the emaciated old face at peace on the dirty pillow—then walked silently out.

Six hours later I limped laboriously down to breakfast. Martha was absorbed in the paper at my entrance, but that in no way prevented her from noting my infirmity. She said nothing, even when I reached for my egg with a grimace of pain, but when I had finished my coffee she contributed the following:

"The milkman says looney Jennie Briggs is dead—died in her sleep last night. It's just as well. She wasn't ever of much use to herself or anyone else—just plumb crazy."

I did not answer. After all, was Jennie Briggs crazy when she told her story?

Anyway, there is no wisdom in answering Martha. But I knew she was wrong, and I attacked my egg with a childish sense of superiority, doggedly reckless of the time when, after breakfast, she should go up-stairs and find fresh incriminating mud on my second pair of trousers.

"$10,000 or We Kill Your Son"

(*Continued from page* 25)

to tell me?" I asked him. "What is the latest? I understand the gang's getting into action."

He fumbled with his coat, unbuttoned it, and from the breast pocket took a letter. This he handed over silently.

It was short and written in a sprawling, though careful, child's handwritting:

Papa help me quick. They beat me with a horsewhip every day.
JOHNNIE.

"You are sure that this was written by Johnnie?" I asked him.

The father nodded silently. Tears blurred his eyes though he kept a stiff upper lip. It was just as easy to drown a duck by throwing water on its back as it was to try to get voluntary information from Cascardo without using pressure.

"Yesterday, however, you got in touch with some one who can take a message to those who know where Johnnie is," I reminded him, severely. "Why didn't you let me know?"

HIS dark eyes grew large with fear. I appreciated his mental anguish, but it was necessary to be a bit cruel. I believed I could read his mind. He suspected that I had made investigations on my own account — perhaps gaining information from underground sources. As a matter of fact, this would have been impossible, for the kidnappers were the most secretive of gangs; there was no chance of a leak. However, I was obliged to play on this fear.

"Cascardo, you know I don't want to have our men going around asking questions, though that will be necessary unless you give me your confidence," I said.

His eyebrows met in a deep frown. Once or twice he opened his mouth to speak.

It was a stifling, hot August afternoon. I had left the door, communicating with the drug-store, open, in order to admit a breath of air. The merry blare of a hurdy-gurdy organ, mingled with the joyous voices of children dancing to its music, drifted in.

As if absolutely worn out, Cascardo collapsed on a chair.

"Here's another I received this morning," he admitted, handing me a letter on which was the now familiar printed characters and the ugly black hand. "It say: 'Your boy is crying for you. If you do not send us $5,000 he will soon cry no more.'"

"Then, someone has been sent direct to you from the black-handers and you didn't tell me, Cascardo," I snapped. "That man whom you met yesterday—you told him you could not raise the ten thousand! That's why they have reduced the amount of the ransom."

He nodded. "Yes, a man came and said he could take a message to a man who would see that it reached the right man," he muttered, passing his hand over his perspiration-drenched forehead. "I told him I could not get the ten thousand. I guess, they have found out by now that I couldn't. I can't raise more than one thousand. That's all. I guess it don't help us much. I don't know the man's name."

"Oh, yes it does," I comforted him. "Offer them the one thousand and promise the balance later. They seem to be in pretty close touch with your affairs. If you don't pay up——"

I left the rest to his imagination. After a minute, I continued:

"However, Cascardo, don't forget you must let me know before you pay out that money. It must be paid in marked bills. If you double-cross me now, you are not going to do yourself any good."

He rose to his feet slowly, nodded, and took his departure.

TWO days later the man on the delivery wagon called again. As on the former occasion, Cascardo left the store and held a conversation with him on the sidewalk.

In that congested section of the city, these pavement confabs attracted no attention. Street vendors bargaining with thrifty foreign housewives, screaming, dark-eyed children, flirting with death as they tantalized furious truck drivers by scampering in front of their ambling dray-horses, shrill voices of factory girls from nearby sweat-shops—all served to make eavesdropping impo sible.

From their flat across the street, my watchers observed the pantomime as the argument between the two men took place. Cascardo, with helpless shrugs and vigorous head-shakings was evidenly explaining the extent of his financial resources. The driver, with many gesticulations and flashes of white teeth, that shone in his swarthy face like the fangs of a wolf, seemed to be protesting his impotence to aid the unhappy baker. My men who were on the watch could hear nothing, but they were taking note of every gesture.

Suddenly a child's scream rent the air. Once only—then silence. From the windows above, women's heads popped out. The street crowd milled towards the scene of the accident. One youngster more reckless than others had fallen beneath a horse's hoofs.

The man who was talking with Cascardo glanced carelessly over his shoulder, turned back to the baker and grinned. Cascardo, however, pushed him to one side and joined the others. He had three other children besides Johnnie—it might be one of them! His companion, with a shrug, followed.

Immediately his back was turned to the wagon, one of my men, who with his fellow shadow, was waiting to take up the trail, took advantage of the confusion to jump aboard the small, covered wagon and conceal himself.

It was a risky performance, but it confirmed our suspicions. When he turned up the following morning, after having been locked up in a small livery stable on East Twelfth Street all night, he reported that the driver had left the wagon there and after a short, casual chat with its manager, had remarked that he would return the following morning. The thing he learned was that the driver did not work for the company that owned the wagon, and the elab

orate precautions covering his movements was in close contact with the chief instigators in the kidnapping.

I sent two men over to keep the livery stable under surveillance immediately.

Days passed, however, before the phony driver showed up again and during that time another kidnapping case came to my attention, in which the little victim was in infinitely more desperate straits than little Johnnie.

I HAD taken the letter which Johnnie was supposed to have sent his father, to Public School Number 3, at Hudson and Grove Streets, where the child had been a star pupil. There I submitted the letter to the young lady who taught his class.

"Do you recognize this writing as Johnnie Cascardo's?" I asked, after cautioning her not to mention the note.

"Oh, yes, that's Johnnie's," she answered readily. "I have so often scolded the poor little fellow for making all those queer little curlycues on his capital 'p's' There is something I'd like to tell you," she continued, a perplexed frown wrinkling her brow and a worried look in her big, blue eyes. "There may not be anything in it, and you know how people in this neighborhood resent inquiries—but I heard one of the little girls confiding to another that her sister had been taken away by the Black Fox. She had overheard her father discussing it with a stranger yesterday when she was playing hide-and-go-seek. I made inquiries and learned that this child has been missing from classes. The parents sent a note saying that she is visiting an aunt."

I obtained the little girl's address. Just how I managed to persuade her father to confide in me and show me the letter, does not matter. This is Johnnie Cascardo's story. Briefly, I managed to see the note. In order to impress on me how disastrous it would be should the kidnappers get an inkling that the police knew of the crime, it was translated to me then and there:

We have Marie. Do not go to the police. Beware. Send us $15,000 *by our messenger. He will come soon. If you do not send this, Marie will be sold.*

This also was printed and signed by the Black Hand.

As Marie's parents were very well-to-do, I realized that there would be much less delay in bringing matters to a showdown than in the case of Johnnie Cascardo.

The postmark showed that the letter had been mailed in an outlying village of Long Island; yet the printing and the tone of the message so closely resembled those received by Cascardo that I was convinced that it had been sent by the same gang.

We had been working forty-five days on the Cascardo case before we discovered who the mysterious go-between actually was. By shadowing the driver of the delivery wagon, my men learned that he was Frank Barcia, who ostensibly owned a grocery store on East Seventy-sixth Street.

I could insert a few thrills here of how two of my men attempted to overhear a conversation between Barcia and Alfred Costagliola, who had a small wine store and basement saloon in the same block. However, though they nearly lost their lives, they learned nothing, so it has really nothing to do with this story.

Donning an inconspicuous suit of old clothes and a rakish visored cap, I sauntered past Cascardo's bakery just as I saw him putting up his shutters for the night.

He was walking along the garishly lighted streets, nodding and answering the salutations of friends and customers who were seeking a breath of fresh air before turning in.

"Well, has Barcia told you where to send the money?" I asked him abruptly. I was not afraid that he would betray any astonishment or excitement. He had been well schooled in repression.

"I DON'T know who Barcia is," he replied. "But I was going to let you know, I'm to have the money ready tomorrow. I don't know where it is to be paid."

"I'll be in the back room of the drugstore all day to-morrow and to-morrow night," I advised him and slouched off. "I'll expect you."

About two o'clock the following afternoon I heard Cascardo's voice in the store asking the clerk for medicine.

"I'll have to have this prescription filled," I heard the man reply. "Don't you want to go inside and wait?"

At first glance I thought Cascardo had received bad news. His face was ghastly.

However, he quickly relieved me on this point. Without any urging this time, he began to speak rapidly in his broken English.

"I have the money," he started to say, when I interrupted him.

"Let me have it," I ordered. "It must be marked. Now, go on."

While he advised me of the arrangement decided upon by the kidnappers I was busily engaged in marking the large roll of bills. They were of twenty, ten, and five-dollar denominations.

"I take the elevated train at Bleecker Street and Sixth Avenue," he told me in a voice which was little above a hoarse whisper. "I am to go to South Ferry. I have to get off at several stations to see if anybody is following. If anybody gets off and on, I will know somebody is following me." As if repeating a well learned lesson, he spoke monotonously and without the slightest feeling. "If I get to South Ferry without being followed, I take the Second Avenue north bound train. To see if I am being followed, I get off at Seventy-second Street and Second Avenue. If I see nobody following me, I walk up to Seventy-sixth Street and Second Avenue. I go into the wine store on the corner and there I will meet the man who came to me on the delivery wagon. He'll have me meet the right man."

Certainly the kidnappers were taking all precautions. I sincerely believe that Cascardo did not know Barcia's name. Anyway, though I knew that Costagliola owned the wine store at Seventy-sixth Street and Second Avenue, mentioned as the rendezvous, I kept this information to myself.

"All right, go ahead and follow their instructions," I remarked, rising from my chair and handing him the marked money. "I promise you again that until you have

Johnnie back, I won't make a move to molest those men."

Though he was on the eve of receiving back his son—or at least, so he thought—there was no enthusiasm or suppressed excitement in Cascardo's manner. He had been under such a nervous strain that all feeling seemed to have been sapped out of him.

When I instructed him to get off at Fourteenth Street, and at Park and Rector Streets, on the Sixth Avenue elevated; also, at Forty-second Street on the Second Avenue line—he agreed without asking questions, and departed.

It had occurred to me that Black Fox would very likely have a shadow tailing Cascardo in order to be certain that the baker made no slip-ups in detecting suspicious passengers who alighted from and re-entered the same trains that he did. Therefore, at each of the stations I mentioned, I had men waiting to board the trains at the same time Cascardo did.

It was impossible to foretell in which way such a sly creature as Black Fox would jump and I was taking no chances on Barcia suddenly appearing at one of the stations designated, and changing the route. There was the risk, of course, of the go-between being on the train and directing Cascardo to get off at stations other than those I had selected, but that was one of the gambles that all detectives are up against. We could not afford to have men at each station.

As it was, all went smoothly. Cascardo reached the wine store in due course, entered, remained for half an hour and left. The man who had completed the journey with him returned with him, and two others who were keeping the store under surveillance kept a sharp look-out.

I WAS seated at my table in the back room of the drug store waiting reports. As soon as Cascardo left, one of my men called up and advised me. Half an hour later the same tailer telephoned me that Barcia, Costagliola, and a third man, had walked over to the East River and seemed to be holding a conference. Naturally, it was impossible to get within eavesdropping distance.

"Follow the third man," I ordered. "I'll send somebody over to keep the stores under surveillance."

From the reports which had been sent in by the men who had been trailing Barcia, I made a list of all the people he had visited—some half a dozen—and telephoned for men to keep these closely watched.

After dispatching two men to East Seventy-sixth Street, I walked over to Bleecker Street and Sixth Avenue to intercept Cascardo when he returned.

It was a sultry, oppressive day and when my man finally arrived, he looked to be on the verge of a collapse.

"They return the boy to-night," he mumbled. "For God's sake keep away! They'll kill him! I think they suspect——"

Eleven o'clock arrived without Johnnie. Almost frantic, Cascardo dashed up-town again.

In the meantime, my men who had been shadowing the third man who had been in conference with Barcia and Costagliola returned and made their report.

Cascardo was evidently not far wrong in saying that the kidnappers were suspicious of surveillance. The unknown, after leaving his companions, had led them a merry chase—running, walking, dodging. It was in the heart of the Italian section, the avenues lined with push-carts, the side streets teeming with children—the worst sort of ground for shadow work.

Though one of my men lost the quarry, the second succeeded in catching up with a Second Avenue open surface car which he had been seen to board. All went well until he alighted and crossed over to the Bowery. It was impossible to tell whether or not he was actually aware that he was being followed; it may have been merely an extra precaution which made him bump into a group of loafers and instigate a fight. In the crowd which quickly gathered, he managed to escape.

I didn't blame my men. It had been a day of terrific heat and humidity. They had been working very hard and we were up against a very foxy mob—no pun intended on the name "Black Fox." That is exactly what they were.

It was around eight o'clock when I received the report of the failure to tail

STATEMENT OF THE OWNERSHIP, MANAGEMENT, CIRCULATION, ETC., REQUIRED BY THE ACT OF CONGRESS OF AUGUST 24, 1912, of TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES, published monthly at Jamaica, N. Y., for April 1, 1927.

State of New York } ss.
County of New York }

Before me, a Notary Public in and for the State and County aforesaid, personally appeared H. A. Keller, who having been duly sworn according to law, deposes and says that he is the Editor of the TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES and that the following is, to the best of his knowledge and belief, a true statement of the ownership, management (and if a daily paper, the circulation), etc., of the aforesaid publication for the date shown in the above caption, required by the Act of August 24, 1912, embodied in section 411 Postal Laws and Regulations, printed on the reverse of this form, to wit:

1. That the names and addresses of the publisher, editor, managing editor, and business managers are: Publisher, New Metropolitan Fiction, Inc., 1926 Broadway, New York, N. Y. Editor, H. A. Keller, 3 Riverside Drive, New York, N. Y. Managing Editor, Joseph M. Roth, 541 Nepperhan Avenue, Yonkers, N. Y. Business Managers, none.

2. That the owner is: (If owned by a corporation, its name and address must be stated and also immediately thereunder the names and addresses of stockholders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of stock. If not owned by a corporation, the names and addresses of the individual owners must be given. If owned by a firm, company, or other unincorporated concern, its name and address, as well as those of each individual member, must be given.) Owners—New Metropolitan Fiction, Inc., 1926 Broadway, New York, N. Y. Stockholder—Macfadden Publications, Inc., 1926 Broadway, New York, N. Y. Stockholders in Macfadden Publications, Inc., Bernarr Macfadden, West Nyack, N. Y.; O. J. Elder, 276 Harrison Street, East Orange, N. J.

3. That the known bondholders, mortgagees, and other security holders owning or holding one per cent or more of total amount of bonds, mortgages, or other securities are: (If there are none, so state.) None.

4. That the two paragraphs next above, giving the names of the owners, stockholders, and security holders, if any, contain not only the list of stockholders and security holders as they appear upon the books of the company but also, in cases where the stockholder or security holder appears upon the books of the company as trustee or in any other fiduciary relation, the name of the person or corporation for whom such trustee is acting, is given; also that the said two paragraphs contain statements embracing affiant's knowledge and belief as to the circumstances and conditions under which stockholders and security holders who do not appear upon the books of the company as trustees, hold stock and securities in a capacity other than that of a bona fide owner; and this affiant has no reason to believe that any other person, association, or corporation has any interest direct or indirect in the said stock, bonds, or other securities than as so stated by him.

5. That the average number of copies of each issue of this publication sold or distributed, through the mails or otherwise, to paid subscribers during the six months preceding the date shown above is.....
.....(This information is required from daily publications only.)

(Signed) H. A. Keller, *Editor.*

Sworn to and subscribed before me this 18th day of March, 1927.
(Seal)

BELLE LANDESMAN.
(My commission expires March 30, 1928.)

the unknown to his destination. At eight-thirty we found him again, and this is how it came about:

Among the men visited by Barcia was a certain small banker on the East Side who was very friendly with the underworld. This was one of the places that my men were keeping under surveillance. I was just bidding the shadow men good night over one phone when the other phone rang

"A tall, very thin man, blond, dressed in a brown suit with pink sox, ribbed with blue, and wearing a brown cap, just entered the bank," he reported. "He rang the night-bell."

"Keep track of him!" I ordered. "He's very important. Don't lose sight of him for a minute."

I was certainly pleased, for the detective had given me the exact description I had received from the man who had succeeded in tailing the unknown as far as the Bowery.

At eleven-forty-five, after learning that one of the men who was covering the bakery had telephoned to say that Cascardo had taken the down-town elevated, the unknown's trailer called me up again to say the man had gone up-town and that he had just seen him enter Costagliola's wine store.

All night long my two telephones kept ringing as the various detectives kept me in constant touch with the activities of the men, and the places they were watching. To tell the truth, all this excitement didn't seem good to me. Though I wouldn't have admitted it to Cascardo, I had an uneasy feeling myself that something had occurred to make the kidnappers suspicious.

The late summer dawn was breaking over cluttered Bleecker Street when I left my post in charge of one of my lieutenants in order to snatch a few minutes' sleep. In the next block I could see Cascardo opening up the shutters which led to his basement baking quarters.

When I neared him, I saw that his eyes were swollen for lack of sleep and his face was gray with fatigue. Hearing my steps, he looked up from the bottom of the short flight of stone stairs.

"Please keep away," he begged. "Guidone wasn't there. I went up-town after Johnnie when he didn't come. She, his wife, says 'You get the boy all right, don't be worried.' But I'm afraid. Why should she know?"

"Oh, he'll be all right," I reassured him. "They sent somebody with your money to the bank to be sure it was O. K. He'll turn up to-night."

But I was just as surprised as Cascardo at Mrs. Guidone knowing so much about her husband's underhand business. As I said before, Italians as a rule don't confide that sort of thing to their wives.

AFTER four hours' sleep and a hearty breakfast of ham and eggs and plenty of strong, black coffee, I was back on the job.

It was eleven-thirty that night before my telephone bell rang and one of the men who had been watching the bakery reported that Johnnie had been seen to enter the store which was still open.

I waited for an hour so that the little boy's mother would have a chance to cry over and hug him a bit and give him something to eat.

Then, I entered the side entrance which opened off the hall and was used after the store was closed.

"Cascardo, I've done my part and kept my word," I spoke gruffly for I wanted to forestall any argument. "I want to talk to Johnnie."

Johnnie, a tall boy for his ten years, with very bright, dark, intelligent eyes and chubby cheeks which were much paler than those of healthy Italian children, was seated on his mother's lap. His brothers and sisters were standing around the pair, hugely enjoying rich cakes which were evidently the remnants of a feast celebrating his safe return.

"All right," Cascardo acquiesced. "Mother, take the children and go in the next room."

For an instant she hugged the boy tightly to her and seemed as if about to rebel at the order. The habit of obedience, however, was too strong. She let the boy slip from her lap, gave him a final hug and kiss and departed. Automatically, she picked up from the table the soiled cups and saucers, and then turned back to thrust an exceptionally luscious piece of French pastry into Johnnie's hand.

Taking Cascardo to one side, for the first time I explained to him the peril of the little girl who had been kidnapped from Johnnie's school.

"We've got to get those people to-night." I impressed upon him. "I have delayed so long for the sake of your Johnnie. We can surprise them if we act quickly."

He gave an inarticulate grunt, and nodded to Johnnie: "Tell him what he wants," he ordered.

I took the child between my knees and spoke to him very slowly.

"Who brought you back here?" I asked first.

"A man who found me crying near the Bridge, near the park with the clock in it," he answered, with a little whimper. "Another man took me there in the car and left me."

"Tell me exactly what happened when the first man took you away. Think back and don't miss anything," I suggested. "Take your time."

"A man came to the school at recess and said he was my godfather and that Papa had told him to come and get me." His dark eyes were full of horror, as he recalled the meeting. "But Papa didn't tell him and he took me to a place where they gave me nasty medicine and whipped me with a big whip if I went near the window."

"What sort of a place was it?" I asked.

"A PLACE where there was a lady and two four-months-old twins, and a little girl, and then later another bigger girl who cried all the time. She was a big baby! I didn't cry. Anyway," he amended, conscientiously, "I didn't let them see me cry when they whipped me."

I recalled that the envelopes had been postmarked Harlem, Brooklyn, Jersey and Long Island. This led to my next questions.

"How did you go to the house where they took you?" Then, seeing him look puzzled at such a general query, I added:

"Did you go by subway or by the elevated?"

"Oh, no, we didn't. We went all the way on the street car."

"And you didn't take the ferry, or go under the ground?" I continued. He shook his dark, curly head. "Nor change cars?" Again negative.

Those answers eliminated Brooklyn, Jersey, and Long Island City.

The man would naturally have taken him to the nearest car line. The school was located at Grove and Hudson streets. There are several car lines within a short distance.

"Do you know where Eighth Street is?" I asked. He shook his head.

"Well, tell me somthing about the car you did take. How did it go—up a broad street?" Another negative shake. "Under an elevated?"

This brought a bright sparkle to his eyes and he nodded his head. The Eighth Street cross-town car passes under the elevated. I would follow that route and see where it led us.

"What did the place you got off at look like? Think, Johnnie. Did you go away over water?" I suggested.

"No, but I'll tell you," he almost shouted. "Now I remember. We stopped near a big bridge. There was funny cars with cages in the middle and a man standing near the cage, and another man in front. When we got off the car I saw a beggar, and he asked for a penny and the man was mad at him, and says, 'You rotten fake, you're always here.' And, say, Mister, he was there again to-night. I saw him!"

"And what else?" I prompted.

"Well, then we walked along," he said slowly, his full lips puckered in earnestness. "Then we came to a house with a brass railing on the stoop, and a candy store on the street floor. We went upstairs. The man left me there with the lady with the four-months-old twins and the little girl. And there was a big whip there and nasty medicine. Another man used to live there, too."

THE description was, of course, too vague for us to find the place without further aid from little Johnnie. I informed his father that, though it was two o'clock in the morning, it would be necessary for us to take the child along in order to identify the house where he had been detained. With nothing more than an inarticulate mutter in Italian, he fetched the boy's cap and told him to go with us.

Johnnie was quite excited when we entered a cab. I took along with us four detectives, and directed the chauffeur to drive us to Goerck Street near the Williamsburgh Bridge.

This bridge, which joins Manhattan to Brooklyn, is the only one which has "cars with little cages in the middle and a man in front."

Arriving at our destination, I ordered the cabman to wait for us. We took Johnnie up the south side of the street, but he failed to recognize the house.

Johnnie was a bright youngster, but he was no prodigy. The peculiarities of the neighborhood where he was and had mentioned were such as would impress an alert boy of his age—always on the lookout for something strange. He had never before seen a car with a "little cage in the center," nor was he accustomed to seeing houses which had brass railings; a candy store is always a vivid landmark in a child's eyes, and a beggar is a rare sight.

We crossed over to the other side of the street and here we had better luck. Near the middle of the block we came on a candy store with a brass-railinged stoop leading to the entrance of the flats over it.

"There's the place," Johnnie shouted. "I know it."

Johnnie was not certain on which floor the flat was. I knocked at a door at the head of the first flight of stairs. A burly, beetle-browed man, with dirt-begrimed face, answered. At a glance, I put him down as a laborer—an honest, bullyish sort of fellow.

"I'm looking for a family who lives in this house," I told him, inserting my foot in the opening. "They have two four-months-old twins. Do you know where their flat is?"

"No, I——" the man started to answer. Questions are not welcome in that quarter of the town. Whether the one addressed is law-abiding or a criminal, each one attends strictly to his own affairs.

However, I received assistance from an unexpected quarter. A shrill voice piped up from the dark interior.

"Say, Mister, I know," it said. "You mean the Roccos. They lived in the flat over us." A grotesque little figure appeared alongside the man, pulling up a ragged pair of trousers over a tattered shirt. Bright, black eyes peered at me inquisitively. "They moved around eleven to-night. I know 'cause I helped 'em."

"Where did they go, son?" I asked him.

"I dunno," he replied as he shook his head. "I was playin' on the street with the other kids when a wagon with a white horse and two men come along. Them was the men."

THANKING the kid, we mounted the stairs to the next floor. The door of the flat was unlocked. On entering, I found that the place was empty, true enough, but standing in one corner was a long whip such as "cabbies" used to carry, and on the mantelpiece was a bottle of medicine.

We had come to the right place! The birds had flown, but I wasn't floored. The men who had "covered" the livery stable where Barcia had housed his fake delivery wagon had reported that the place was owned by two Italians and that they owned a single wagon with a white horse!

I had left a detective seated in the back room of the drug-store—my temporary headquarters—and within half an hour I was back there after having returned Johnnie to his father.

"Any reports come in?" I asked the detective.

"Yes," he answered. "Costagliola was caught beating it out of his store disguised as a tramp. The men who were keeping his place under surveillance arrested him on a trumped-up charge of burglary. Guidone was seen sneaking down the street shortly afterwards and he was pinched for carrying concealed weapons. Two stilettoes were found on him. That's all so far."

"Did they have any money on them?" I asked.

"Yes, each had a big roll—but there were no marked bills!"

Not so good! It was more imperative than ever to find the family which had kept Johnnie.

Consulting past reports, I looked up the home address of the men who owned the stable. I ordered two of the detectives who were with me to pay a visit to these men and charge them with moving stolen goods from a down-town loft. In order to prove an alibi, I figured that they would come across with the address to which they had moved the Roccos' furniture. They, we were convinced, knew nothing of the kidnapping crime.

In brief, at five o'clock that morning I was ringing the bell, two short, and three long peals, which, according to Johnnie, was the manner in which Rocco and his pals usually announced themselves at the entrance to a tenement situated on Avenue B, between Fourteenth and Fifteenth Streets.

A woman opened the door. Before she could close it, I had forced my way in. Her careworn face became deathly pale, when she realized what I might be there for. She hurried toward a back room from which came the outcries of infants—probably the twins Johnnie had mentioned. At that moment a beautiful young girl of about sixteen came running out of the inner room, and instantly the hard-faced woman grasped her. I certainly felt pity for that girl.

"Oh, please, please take me away!" She begged.

I managed to calm her and threatened to take the woman to the station house right away unless she kept her hands off the girl.

My two assistants had now joined me, and in the silence of the early morning, we waited.

"Zip-zip, zip-zip-zip!" tinkled the doorbell some twenty minutes later.

I answered it, being careful to keep behind the door. The other men were hidden in the inner room.

A BLITHE voice called out something in Italian. A man entered with two live chickens under his arms. He was followed by Antonio Fiscarelli, Frank Barcia and Joseph De Lucca. The last named, I knew from reports, was a baker of No. — Elizabeth Street, who had a shady reputation and had been seen frequently talking with Fiscarelli.

That's all. In a twinkling we had the men handcuffed and a short time later, just as all honest folks were hurrying to work, we all drove in two cabs to Police Headquarters.

De Lucca was identified by Johnnie as the man who had posed as his godfather and lured him to the flat of Philip and Rosa Giglio.

Each was held in $12,000 bail. The only one of the mob who managed to put up the money was Antonio Fiscarelli—Black Fox. He skipped his bail and escaped to Italy.

There were seven convictions in this case—only two less than the number arrested in the previous ten years.

Subsequent investigations proved that kidnapping was not the only crime committed by these "blackhanders." Among their other activities were counterfeiting, bomb outrages, vendetta killings and blackmail.

That we had actually broken up the kidnapping gang was proved by the fact that from that time on we have had only two such cases in the past thirteen years!

Into the Land of Happy Dreams

(*Continued from page 32*)

already broad nose. He drew his face back a few inches hesitatingly. Unconsciously I gripped the trigger of my revolver a little tighter.

"My pal am all right, too, Massa Shoemaker," broke in the colored man.

The Shoemaker snorted like a pig and turned on his heel.

Was he satisfied that I was a "right" guy? I couldn't tell.

Now the Shoemaker beckoned for the crowd to follow. At that moment the mysterious dim reflection of light ceased as suddenly as it had come on, and the darkness seemed more pronounced than originally.

The colored man and I brought up at the rear of the line. Perhaps Inspector Scanlon and Special Officer Manning were following. If so, I wanted to be where I could do everything possible to cover up their movements.

As we trailed The Shoemaker down the alley the colored man became talkative and told what he would do to any cop who dared to interfere with him getting his dope. He drew a razor out of his pocket and brandished it in front of him in illustrating just how he would carve up the officer. Obviously I couldn't appreciate his boasting to any great extent.

We didn't proceed far before we turned off the alley into a still narrower one, lined with shacks of threatening blackness. There was no moon and the previously only partly clouded sky had now become entirely overcast, making the murk denser than ever. I doubted that Special Officer Manning and Inspector Scanlon would be able to follow us through this maze even if they had been fairly close behind us when we started.

FINALLY The Shoemaker led the way into one of the shacks. Black as it was outside, it was even darker in there. Besides, a nauseating mustiness pervaded the place.

The Shoemaker ordered the whole party to halt before the colored man and I had taken half a dozen steps. Then he lit a cigarette and with the glow of it providing the only illumination, solicited each man in turn as to how many "decks" of dope he wanted, and took the money for each order in advance.

I called for four "decks" and gave him four one dollar bills—each marked with the initials "B. P. D."

The Shoemaker disappeared.

For a long time thereafter the creepy, sinister silence of the place was broken only by an occasional whisper of a "hoppie," a lash of the wind, or the creak of an aged floor board.

Then a tiny red glow appeared in the far corner of the barn and came toward us, accompanied by the clank of a pair of feet.

The man behind the cigarette was not The Shoemaker but Spike, his partner. And The Shoemaker had nothing on him for surliness. From a small package he began handing out "decks" of dope to one after another of the "hoppies." As fast as he gave each man his allotment he ordered him to get out. When only two others besides the colored man and myself remained, the negro hastily stepped forward and made an attempt to grab the package in Spike's hand. Evidently the craze for the stuff was too much for his nerves to stand. Spike suddenly crumpled up the paper he had brought the drug in and threw it into the darkness. Then he gave me a hard look.

"Waita!" he mumbled and made off across the floor in the direction from which he had appeared.

What did this action mean? Had The Shoemaker suspected me because I was supposedly a friend of the colored man? Had he told Spike to look me over thoroughly and sidestep handing me any dope if he thought I wasn't a "right" guy? Had Spike finally decided I wasn't a "right" guy as the time drew near to give me my allotment? And did he crumple up the paper and throw part of the dope away with it as a play to get away while the going was good? Or was it just a gesture to cow the negro and incidentally show the rest of us that he had us at his mercy? I couldn't decide.

I thought of the possibility of searching for the crumbled paper to see if any dope did remain in it. But I decided that Spike might have only pretended to depart and was waiting in the gloom to learn what I would do. Or perhaps The Shoemaker had come back for that purpose, his entrance covered up by the commotion Spike made in distributing the drug. Realizing that silence would convict me, I joined the others in grumbling to make it appear that I was interested only in receiving the dope due me for the money I had paid.

A couple of times in the next few minutes I thought I heard the sound of a footstep in the direction toward which Spike had departed. A minute or two later I was sure a pair of feet stole along outside the wall of the shack. Then, mumbling that they were not going to wait there like dummies any longer, the two supposed "hoppies" who were with the colored man and myself made off into the darkness.

MY hopes sank. Now I was practically convinced that they had remained behind to spy on us, and were moving off to be out of the way of any violence that might start. I was sure that The Shoemaker and Spike had uttered a verbal death warrant covering me and the colored man who had vouched for me.

At any rate I was not going to be shot like a rat from behind. Clutching the trigger of my revolver more tightly, I backed the few steps between me and the nearest inner wall of the shack, expecting that with each step red flashes would strike at me from out of the gloom.

The colored man followed me to the wall. "Boss, you all ain't a-going' too?" he asked.

"Whada y' t'ink I am," I growled—"goin' t' leave them birds take me dough widout slippin' me any hop. Guess again, buddy!"

I had half a mind to take him into my confidence. But on second thought I changed my mind.

More minutes dragged by—and nothing happened. I decided that instead of coming in after me, Spike and The Shoemaker planned to wait for me to try to escape. It would be much easier to shoot me down in cold blood as I left the shack by the door.

Well, these two would wait until Hades became a winter sports resort before they got me that way!

Through a crack in the wall of the structure I could see the glow of a street light seemingly a long way off. Would I ever live to walk under such an object again? The creepy wail of the night wind seemed to portend otherwise. I would have sold my chances for two cents.

Suddenly the glow of another cigarette showed in the far corner of the shack. As it floated toward us, accompanied by the patter of feet, I waited with gaping mouth. Surely neither Spike nor The Shoemaker was fool enough to advance with the intention of attacking me behind such a give-away. But I braced myself against the wall, steeled for instant action, and waited.

"I bringa da stuff," a voice snarled when the glow was within a few feet of us. "I walka like da hell to get her."

The voice was Spike's.

Elation quickened my heartbeats. My suspicions were then unfounded. He had merely run out of the stuff, carrying only a small quantity on him so he could easily dispose of it in the event of an arrest. Evidently Spike and his pal had decided, since I had not tried to make a getaway, that I was a "right" guy after all. Or was he merely attempting to allay my suspicion, with the intention of pumping lead at me when he got closer?

Spike handed the colored man his "decks" first. Then he thrust three toward me. I put out my left hand, meanwhile gripping my gun with my right.

Spike made no indication of hostility, and when he had transferred the "decks" to my hand, turned to hasten away.

For the slightest fraction of a second I was tempted to thrust my gun against his back and tell him that he was under arrest. But it was one thing to arrest him and quite another to get out of that shack and that locality alive with him. I was going to get out alive first, if I could, and do the arresting, if possible, afterward.

"Say, bo, how do y' git out of this joint?" I asked, stepping after him.

"Come," he growled, after a moment's hesitation, "me showa da way."

I followed him into the gloom, the colored man falling in behind me.

AS we neared the door of the shack, I hugged very closely to Spike, determined that any of his gang should not pick me off without running great risk of shooting him also. My revolver was

almost pressing against him too. He would pay for any shot at me with his life.

Nothing happened when we passed through the doorway, the colored man following behind.

Now Spike turned abruptly to the left and began feeling his way along the wall of the shack. I did likewise, still keeping very close to him, the colored man still following me.

We walked by several shacks before we came to a junction of two narrow alleys. At this spot a dim light was reflected from somewhere near us.

"Thata da way," muttered Spike as he pointed to one alley. "Me go disa one." He pointed to the other.

The time for action had arrived. I thrust the point of my revolver into his side and commanded in a loud whisper:

"Stop a moment! One move—one yell—and you're a dead man!"

From behind came gasps of terror uttered by the colored man. I turned slightly, half-expecting to see him lunging at me with his razor. He was lunging all right—but in the other direction. This move did not surprise me, for, as a rule, dope users are cowards and it is only immediately following their using the stuff that they become imbued with courage—courage what is artificial and false. I made no move to stop him. I was after drug peddlers, not users.

Meanwhile, Spike protested: "Me no gotta da cash." His eyes flashed savagely at me as he added, "Shoemaker do da collect."

"Never mind time-killing stunts," I cautioned as I grasped him and pressed my automatic closer to his side.

"You know I'm no stick-up man. Down this alley—you big stiff—quick! Lead me to the street!" I hissed.

I motioned my head toward the alley down which he had indicated he intended to go. It was too good of him to direct me down the other one—where his pals could have shot at me to their heart's content while he moved safely in another direction.

With a roar of protest he headed as directed, I following with my gun against his back. As we went along I felt of his pockets for weapons. To my surprise I could find no gun on him. But I did locate a stiletto with a blade six inches long. I shuddered at what would have happened in the vicinity of my heart if I had given him an opportunity to plunge it into me.

SUDDENLY, from the direction of the alley which he advised me to enter, came loud shouting, followed by a fusilade of shots. In nervous haste I prodded Spike to make him quicken his pace. Meanwhile, I wondered if the colored man was breathing his last.

As we hastened along I tried to keep an eye on the threatening blackness on either side of me, fearful that at any moment one or more of Spike's pals might jump out to his rescue. As to danger from behind—I could not look back. And as to where we were going—well, I only hoped that Spike valued his life enough not to lead me into ambush.

When we had gone some distance, the alley crooked around sharply and my eyes welcomed a small street lamp at the further end. As we drew near it, I ordered:

"Don't forget! Lead me to a street!"

Then I slipped my revolver into my coat pocket, but continued to cover him with it. This I did so that if any of Spike's pals spotted us when we passed the light they might be fooled into thinking I was merely accompanying him on some mission.

We had gone only a few paces in this fashion when a powerful hand, seemingly coming from nowhere, suddenly grasped my coat collar with a savage grip. At the same instant another set of fingers clutched my right arm so I could not draw my gun.

Caught—only a step or two from my goal! Death—despite my every precaution! This was the thought that flashed through my mind. Anyway, I would die fighting.

"Let me alone!" I cried as I began to struggle to free myself.

Lo, another pair of hands jumped out of the night and caught Spike in the same fashion! Meanwhile, two stentorian voices announced that resistance would mean trouble and plenty of it.

Amazed, bewildered that Spike should be grabbed too, I turned my head part way around to get a look at my assailant.

Could I believe my eyes? Was something glistening on his chest? Or was fate dangling false hope to tantalize me? At that moment the man exclaimed:

"Sure, I'll let you go—to the station house."

"Why, I'm an officer too," I exclaimed with relaxation that thanked God I had fallen into the friendly hands of the law instead of the ghoulish hands of the drug gang.

"Lika hell!" broke in Spike. "He's holda me up. He's gotta da gun."

"So he has," declared the officer having me in tow, as he proceeded to relieve me of it. He added: "And I suppose if y' had another sniff y'd change from a copper into Napoleon."

"But I am a policeman," I insisted. "I'm Special Officer Welch of City Hall Avenue Station, Boston. I was arresting this man, Spike."

"T'hell you was!" roared the officer. "Tell that to the lieutenant when we get back to the office. I want to see him laugh."

"I can show you my badge," I persisted. It was pinned onto my shirt, inside my coat and vest.

"Save that for the lieutenant too," he ordered.

It was march to the nearest police box and ride in the patrol wagon for Spike and me? We landed in Station 3, Cambridge.

Just as I was opening my coat and vest to show my police badge, in walked Inspector Scanlon and Special Officer Manning and other officers. They had The Shoemaker! He had been taken at his home some miles away, after escaping from the vicinity of the "meet."

Of course Special Officer Manning and Inspector Scanlon identified me immediately. They told me that they had sent a hurry call for the two policemen since they expected that I would need help. But they had failed to give them my description. That was the reason the cops pinched me, thinking I was one of the peddlers.

On The Shoemaker's person was found every one of the marked dollar bills which I had given out, while a search of Spike's clothes revealed a number of "decks" of dope. After they were safe in the hoosegow, we had a good laugh all around. The officers who had arrested me, along with Spike, were Sergeant Le Marsh and Patrolman Walsh, both attached to that station.

Some days afterward I entered a building on Summer Street, Boston.

"Going up!" called a voice from the elevator.

Somehow that voice sounded strangely familiar. I looked at its owner. Behold, the colored man!

When I had introduced myself and he had recovered sufficiently to speak, I asked him:

"How'd you ever get out of that place alive?"

"Don't ask me, boss," he replied. "Ah jus' kept runnin'. Das all ah know."

If He'd Let the Other Fellow's Girl Alone

(*Continued from page* 28)

behind his trunk. I went through each rather carefully to learn if he had marked any particular items. That lead failed. But I learned something else while reading headlines. Greensboro was within a short distance of a penitentiary, and the paper daily printed lists of the convicts admitted and released.

I wondered if the dead man had been interested in some one in the prison; if, perhaps, he had done time there. Again I studied him, looking closely at his hands. I found something significant. The palm of the right was heavily calloused, as were the ends of the thumb and first finger. I knew the sign. All shoemakers developed such callouses through using an awl. Maybe Aarons had worked in the penitentiary shoe-shop. Perhaps, through the *Star,* he had been keeping watch to note when some other prisoner was liberated. Could the killer have been someone recently released? This thought recalled my previous guess that Aarons had not cried out because he had recognized the intruder. Who could it have been? Myles, the jealous suitor—the girl—or some unknown? I realized that I faced the toughest job of my career.

Leaving that angle of the case temporarily, I continued my search. It required more than an hour. Finally, with nothing new uncovered, I dropped to my knees and began studying the edge of the badly worn carpet. All tack-heads were dust covered until I reached a place near the dresser. There the tacks appeared to have been disturbed. Grasping the carpet, I tugged. It came up easily, revealing a piece of loose board. In a second I had this up and reached into the cavity beneath. I drew a prize—a large envelope in which were bills of large denomination amounting to nearly $10,000 and some sailing lists of steamships making French ports.

BEFORE I could more than wonder if the large sum was the result of a crime, and if it was the "inheritance" which Aarons had talked about when trying to persuade the Swayne girl to go with him to Paris, a physician from the Medical Examiner's office arrived. I gave him a rapid outline of the case, then told Regan to hold the boarders for further questioning and hastened to a telephone. With me I took the money, the steamship lists, the bundle of *Stars,* and the name and address of Aarons' employer.

Getting the Inspector, I learned that he was holding Myles for my orders.

"Put him under arrest charged with suspicion of murder," I said, "and have him locked up on a short affidavit until I can get to you."

"Is he the murderer?"

"He may be, but I don't think so."

"Say, what's the big idea?"

"I can't tell you till I get down-town. But I've got enough to hold him in any court, so you needn't be nervous. This is a tough case and needs careful handling. Do as I suggest, Bill, or the beans will be spilled. I think someone else is the killer, but I want him to think the police are certain it is Myles. Tell the reporters it was Myles—that he was jealous of Aarons over a girl. Above all, be sure to tell them that nothing belonging to the dead man was stolen. I'll see you as soon as I have run down a lead. Rush somebody up to take Aarons' fingerprints and photograph and get them to you on the jump. Then have somebody else come over and get the sworn statements of everybody here."

I went at once to the head of the firm for whom the dead man had worked. He stated Aarons' commissions averaged from $35 to $50 a week. Also, that he was square on the books, having drawn no advance. He telephoned most of Aarons' customers and learned that he had borrowed from none of them. I left him convinced that the $10,000 I had found cached was loot from some crooked deal. Also that, more than likely, the killer had known of the money and had murdered Aarons because he would not give him all or a part of it.

The Inspector and I then went over the case to the smallest detail. He agreed with my every deduction. While we were talking we received some additional information by phone from the Medical Examiner's representative and the finger-print expert. The fellow had been killed with bare hands. But in searching the room, the murderer had used gloves. That meant two things: no prints of him, and that he was an experienced criminal.

As a result of our conference, Inspector Sullivan agreed that I should hasten to Greenboro and see what I could pick up there. While I was away he would see that the reporters did not obtain the real story and that Myles would be kept under lock and key.

UPON leaving the Inspector, with a portrait of Aarons, his finger-prints, and copies of the Greenboro *Star* in my pocket, I hurried home, packed a grip and by late afternoon was aboard a train headed for that town.

In my own mind I felt certain I was on the right track—that my business in the

Middle West would not require more than a day or two at most, and that I soon would be back in New York ready to make my final plans to trap the killer. It had been my intention to go to the *Star* office and examine the files for several months. A check-up would show if anyone liberated six or seven months back had a last name beginning with "M" to correspond with the tattooed letter on the dead man's arm—also, if anyone turned loose recently had come from the same city or town as the man with the "M" name.

However, reflection convinced me that my shortest cut would be the penitentiary. If I failed to get all I wanted there, I might have to search the newspaper to learn why Aarons had purchased it regularly. At the prison I explained my mission to the officials and showed them Aarons' picture and finger-print. Almost immediately I learned that I had scored a bull's-eye. Their guess was that the photo was that of Clifford Morris, of Greenboro, though the ghastly likeness of the dead man made it hard to identify.

Then the real break came.

The police, through a person who requested that his name be not mentioned, and who apparently had been a friend of Morris'—but was no longer so—furnished a photograph that left no doubt in our minds as to whether Clifford Morris and Albert Aarons were one and the same man. The picture was that of Clifford Morris—the man who later was to become a jail-bird. It was somewhat old-fashioned in appearance and showed Morris standing as stiff as a ramrod, with one hand on a small stand on which was his derby hat. On the bottom of the picture were the words: "Moore's Studio, Greensboro." In addition to this, on the following day, the police located Morris' finger-prints in their files, and these finger-prints were identical with those of the dead man I had brought with me. This much settled, I now understood the tattoo mark on the under side of Aarons' right arm, and the initial on the watch which the Swayne girl had said was his.

AS told to me, Morris' story was this: He was twenty-eight years old. He had been born on a farm not greatly distant, had been educated in the country schools, and qualified as a particularly bright pupil. When in his teens he had gone to Greensboro and begun to earn his living in a paint store. He had prospered, later becoming a town and country salesman on his own hook, handling paints and hardware. But he had one failing—women. Several times he was in trouble because of escapades with some who were married. And more than once he had been thrashed by irate fathers and brothers of young girls who had been warned too steer clear of his company.

Finally, four years previous, he had left his work and gone to Columbus with a burlesque actress, where the two had carried on a week's celebration. Finally, broke, both were arrested for an unpaid hotel bill. He had settled, however; the woman disappeared and he was not prosecuted. But almost immediately afterward it was discovered that to the check which he had cashed to raise the funds to get himself out of trouble, he had forged the name of one of his customers.

He was tried, pleaded guilty and was given a short sentence as a first offender. In the penitentiary he had been assigned to the shoe-repairing shop and had become a really clever operator. This information clinched the thought which had come to me when I noted the callouses on his right hand. When he was released, some seven months before, he had returned to Greensboro and taken a room in a boarding-house in a decidedly unsavory neighborhood. There he had remained several weeks. People were sorry for him, bought liberally of him at the little shoe shop he had opened, and he made considerable money. Suddenly, however, he announced that he was going to San Francisco to live, and disappeared. Nothing had been heard from him since as far as the authorities knew. My information was the first inkling the officials had received that he had gone to New York instead of the West Coast.

"You've told me a lot I wanted to find out about," I said, "but there's something more. Was young Morris on particularly friendly terms with any of the convicts?"

"He was pretty well liked by all of those with whom he came in contact. But his one real intimate was the man who worked next to him in the shoe shop, Andy O'Connor, alias 'The King.' I believe he achieved that title years ago, when he worked in the Chicago stock yards, before he fell foul of the police."

"Was he a big, powerful fellow?"

"Yes. Did you know about him?"

"Not a word. But I guessed that much from something I uncovered in New York. Tell me all about him, please."

"O'CONNOR was considerably older than Morris, though he lied so about his age I don't really know what it was. He was just a big brute, powerful as an ox, bad tempered and ugly when crossed. Several times we had to put him in solitary for beating up other prisoners. It wasn't until Morris came and he was shifted to the shoe shop that he began to behave himself. I'm certain the younger man wielded a good influence, but I don't think they'd ever met before.

"O'Connor was a notorious crook; a safe cracker and a jewel thief. However, he was clever and escaped with but one previous conviction. His last crime was committed about eight years ago, after he had been in Greensboro for some time working as a painter. He broke into a jewelry store there one night and cleaned out all the precious stones in the place, valued at about fifty thousand. A policeman saw him as he came out of the cellar next door, chased and shot him. But O'Connor made his getaway, and was in hiding for several days. His identity was fixed by a hat he dropped in his flight.

"A general alarm was sent throughout the country and the police everywhere were asked to watch the pawn-shops for a certain stone, a diamond of a deep yellow color and oblong in cut. It was worth a lot. The jeweler had picked it up in Europe, and was keeping it to have it set in a bracelet for his wife on their twenty-fifth wedding anniversary.

"Finally, when everybody around this part of the country believed The King was thousands of miles away, a stool

squealed that he was hiding in a boarding house in a bad quarter of Greensboro. The police surrounded the place and rushed it, taking O'Connor without a fight. His wound had pretty well healed and he probably was about ready for a getaway. He pleaded not guilty and stood trial. And, though he was offered a light sentence to tell where he had hidden his loot, he only laughed at the police and the district attorney. He was satisfied to take a stretch, knowing that when he came out there would be fifty thousand dollars worth of diamonds waiting for him."

"Of course the place where he lived was searched?" I asked.

"From cellar to garret. Nothing was found. In fact, there weren't many hiding places; none the police didn't think of. But he did his work well. Probably hid the stuff the first night, after losing the cop who shot him and before he went home."

Somehow, the Warden's explanation didn't sound good. I wondered if the Greensboro police had examined *every* possible hiding place. Then I got a hunch. "By the way, Warden, how long ago was this O'Connor turned loose?"

"About a month back."

"Now, seeing that O'Connor and Morris were such good friends, did the older crook send the lad to the boarding house in the bad neighborhood where he had lived?"

"He did just that, I guess. Anyway, Morris went there and remained until he left Greensboro."

EVEN though I had been anticipating such an answer, the reply made my heart beat faster. Right then I especially wanted to know why Morris had gone to that particular place, when dozens of others were open to him, including some of the houses where he previously had lived and whose proprietors would have been glad to welcome the "reformed" prison bird. But I made no sign of my real feelings.

"I want the address of that place, Warden," I said. "The fact that O'Connor sent him there indicates there are those at the house who are shady and who would not make it unpleasant for his pal, just out of prison. Also, there's always one among that kind who'll talk, for money. From such a one I may be able to learn if Morris went directly to New York. It is possible that O'Connor also went to the house when he was released."

"I can answer that—he did." I was so tickled at that information I had hard work holding back a whoop. "We always try to learn where our released convicts go. As a reward for his better behavior, he was let out before he anticipated. O'Connor went to the old place for a week, then he too disappeared. I haven't the slightest idea where he went from Greensboro."

I thanked the Warden and hurried away, making directly for the town. I knew I was on a hot scent, and every minute's delay annoyed me. But I got a thrill of satisfaction now and then by slipping my hand into my inner pocket where I had placed the portrait and finger-prints of O'Connor given me by the Warden. My reasoning, from what I had heard, was this. Despite the search made by the Greensboro police at the boarding-house following O'Connor's arrest, the clever crook had succeeded in safely secreting his loot there. In prison he had taken a liking to Morris. The younger man was to be released first. O'Connor, wondering if his cache still was safe and fearful that it might be stolen at any time, finally confided in his friend. Probably it was arranged that Morris was to search the hiding place, and if the diamonds were safe, notify O'Connor. Then he would guard the plunder until the older man was released, when there would be a division.

But Morris had put one over on his pal. He had found the diamonds and run away, purposely trying to set up a blind trail by telling others he was going to California. In New York he had changed his name and gone to work at a straight job, realizing such a course would keep people from looking upon him with suspicion. At his convenience, taking plenty of time so that he could get good prices, he had turned the diamonds into cash and hidden the proceeds. The yellow diamond he probably had secreted in some safe place, realizing that it was dangerous to try and dispose of such a peculiar stone, after its description had been broadcast through the police.

THE time-table, I had found with the money, hinted at Paris as his ultimate destination. Why he had remained in New York longer than necessary to sell the loot could be accounted for by the story the Swayne girl had told me. He wanted her to go with him, and he delayed his trip in trying to persuade her to do so.

But O'Connor had been released sooner than Morris had expected. It was reading an announcement of that fact in the *Star* which had upset him. He should have made his getaway then. But he risked his safety for the girl. And that had spelled his finish. The old crook had caught him dead to rights. In some manner he had traced him to New York, had come to him in the night and demanded the diamonds or their equivalent. Morris had refused. And the brutal O'Connor had killed him in the fury of his anger.

Then he had searched the room and found nothing. He had left things fairly orderly, probably so that none would guess the place had been ransacked. No doubt he intended to return for another hunt. Quite probably he would go there again as a boarder and try to rent the murder room. If my deduction worked out, I'd get him. However, he wouldn't do it at once. But his purpose would keep him around New York. And that was what I wanted. I had no desire to be compelled to search the whole United States for him.

Then another thought held me. He had not only stolen the few dollars in Morris' purse, but also his watch and chain. Why? Because he was desperately hard up. Probably the reason he had killed with his bare hands was because he couldn't afford to buy a gun. What he had taken would permit him to exist until he could make a second try to locate Morris' cache. I congratulated myself on having had the Inspector pass the word to the newspapers that nothing had been stolen or anything of value found. O'Connor would read this and be convinced that neither the diamonds nor cash had been uncovered. Also,

I thought it might give him courage to pawn the watch. I hoped want would drive him to that. For, if he disposed of the timepiece at a pawn-shop, my chances of landing him quickly would be doubled.

Upon reaching Greensboro I first went to the office of the *Star* and looked over a file of the papers. Perhaps I was prompted by curiosity. More like by a desire to learn if my deduction had been correct. I found what I sought, the item printed when The King was released from the penitentiary. Most certainly that was what had worried Morris. I smiled inwardly. If I had made one such good guess, it was reasonable to suppose the remainder of my reasoning to date had been sound.

Then I went to the police and placed my cards, face up. They were most anxious to help and confirmed everything the Warden had told me. "O'Connor isn't the only crook who has made that place his headquarters," said the Chief. "It is kept by a former fence named Gregory, a vicious old reprobate who has done time. Still, it's better to let it run. It's one of the places we can go to first when searching for some criminal who is wanted out of town. I'll send a man around with you who knows Greg. That will keep him from getting ugly and result in quicker action. I'll also supply you with flash-lights. I know the place, and you may want to search it."

AT the questionable boarding-house we met the proprietor; as thoroughly disreputable in appearance as described. My companion ordered him into his shabby living quarters, then said: "Here's a man who wants to locate Andy O'Connor. He was here about a month ago, wasn't he?"

The old rogue's eyes fairly snapped hate at the mention of The King's name and his bloated face went red. "Yes, he were here—damn his dirty hide—about that time, fer a week. I wish t' hell I could peach where he is now, partic'ly if yer friend's a bull. If ever I git my hands on 'im again, I'll bust his cussed knob."

"Shut up with that chatter, Greg. You don't know where he went from here?

"No."

"What's your grouch against him?"

"He came here, right from the pen, blast him. Hadn't much more'n enough money t' pay his railroad fare. I took him in, trusted him fer his room, advanced money fer him to buy grub with while he was lookin' fer a paintin' job. He didn't look much. Stayed in his room most o' the time. One day I was out. He must a got ravin' drunk, the mutt, and went crazy. When I come back he'd vamped, stolen some o' my stuff and pawned it. But that ain't all. When I went to his room I found he'd busted up all the furniture, torn the mattress apart, ripped up the flooring, even took a big shelf out o' the closet and split it to bits—usin' my tools from the cellar to do it, damn him."

His words gave me a jolt. I felt certain I had the solution of the entire case in my hands if—— "Listen to me," I broke in. "What did you do with all the stuff O'Connor broke up?

"Do with it? What could I do with it? Threw it in the cellar back there. All it's fit fer's to burn up, soon's winter comes."

"Let me see it."

"Why?"

"Do as he tells you," snarled my companion, giving Greg no gentle push.

The cellar was dark and fairly littered with truck of all kinds. Only a wheezy gas jet lighted it. I snapped on my flash, moved it around until the man indicated a corner in which was a great pile of broken furniture and splintered wood. I picked up a piece of the latter, about an inch square and very heavy. Examining it, I noted something which made me catch my breath.

"Take him out and keep him," I said to my companion. "I want to look this stuff over."

The instant they were gone, I turned on my second flash and set them so as to make one great circle of light. Then I went to work, dragging out every bit of wood corresponding in length to the one I first had picked up. It took time, but when placed side by side they fitted, forming what I knew had been the heavy closet shelf to which old Gregory had referred. It had been split up with a hatchet, not a single stick being more than an inch square.

BUT the thing which interested me most was a peculiar circumstance that had caught my attention when I glimpsed the first stick. That was that, probably years back, holes had been bored partly through the wood with an auger, then puttied up and painted over to make the shelf appear as though it never had been disturbed. A reason for this fixed itself in my mind. O'Connor had lived in the place at the time of the jewel robbery. He had made the half-holes.

Had he also hidden the diamonds there, puttied them over and done the painting? I'd have staked my pile that he had. Probably he'd planned the robbery long in advance and had worked as a painter for the time being so as to have everything handy to do the job without exciting suspicion.

But the putty had been dug out of every hole.

Taking up a piece of the wood with two holes in it, I held it close to the lights. Then I got a fresh kick. The hatchet had split the holes directly in half. Some of the putty still remained around the sides and at the bottom. And, beyond question, there were two kinds of putty. With fingers which actually trembled I opened my knife and began picking at the putty. That which had been placed at the bottom was almost as hard as stone. I could easily push the point of my knife into that above.

Right there I held the answer to most of the case. Morris had taken down the shelf, cut out the putty with which The King had plugged the holes, pocketed the gems, filled them with new putty, repainted the shelf and put it back in place. By so doing, none would know of his act—until O'Connor came and made his search. It was possible that, in taking out the stones, he had followed The King's orders. But he probably had not been instructed to repaint the shelf, merely to get rid of it after obtaining the diamonds, then go to some place where it had been agreed they would meet after the older crook's release. However, greed had overcome him. He

had double-crossed his pal and covered his own crooked trail—for a time.

I was just about to quit when I got a new hunch, one which gave me a full hour's additional work. But it proved time well spent. With my knife I scraped the putty from each hole, practically every bit of it, even cutting into the wood. And, finally, I came upon what I had hoped. One cavity in which The King's knife had not cut away all the putty. And in that I uncovered the only diamond Morris had left—the oblong yellow stone of which I had heard. That explained why it had not been pawned. Had Morris been more thorough he might have recovered and pawned the stone, thereby causing his arrest and preventing the murder. And had O'Connor been more thorough he would have found it and kept me from a sure clue, one bound to send him to the chair, once I got my hands on him.

I HAD accomplished far more than I had expected, and at once returned to Greensboro Police Headquarters with my companion. There I gave him and the Chief one of the big surprises of their lives by turning over the yellow diamond, explaining how I had obtained it and how I had figured the case to date. It was placed in the safe until I should need it for evidence. By night I was on a train speeding for New York. But I didn't sleep much. The trail was too hot. After many hours of thinking I had my plan for the future all set.

The next evening I was quartered with Inspector Sullivan for hours, detailing my adventures during my absence. He was tickled pink, then asked the next move.

"When the reporters drop in later to learn what's doing, I want you to plant something on them. Tell them that a relative of the murdered man, who took possession of his effects, has made an important discovery. That, under some old clothing on a closet shelf, he found a little box in which was a yellow diamond of considerable value. You can hint that it is believed at the boarding-house that Aarons—stick to that name—had saved and purchased the gem, intending to have it set into a ring for a girl with whom he had been keeping company. I'll rush up to the boarding-house and tell Mrs. Simmons to let nobody talk to reporters who may come snooping around."

"I'll do it, Mike, and I'll make it so strong that the boys will be certain to give it good space. But what's the idea?"

"It's a cinch O'Connor is reading every line about the murder. This diamond yarn will get to him strong. His thought will be that Morris still had the diamonds hidden in his room when he killed him—secreted in places which he overlooked in his hurry. This will make him crazy to get back to that room and make another hunt for the rest. He'll want to do it as a boarder. He won't dare take chances of breaking in again. My big hope is that he's broke, has spent the money he stole. If so, he'll have to pawn the watch to make a payment down to Mrs. Simmons.

"I'm going to show her O'Connor's picture, tell her to let him have the murder room if he comes to her place and try to notify you by phone. Another thing. Get word to all the pawnbrokers to be doubly watchful to note if that watch is pawned, have the man followed and notify you at once."

The Inspector carried out my scheme. The papers printed the yellow diamond story. I arranged with Mrs. Simmons to help us. After that, for two days, things were dead quiet. Then matters broke wide open with a bang.

I had just dropped in to question Sullivan the third day, around eight in the morning, when the first flash came. A young fellow had pawned a watch which appeared to be the one we wanted. The pawnbroker had sent a clerk to trail the lad. The latter had turned the ticket and money over to a man who answered O'Connor's description. After giving the youth a dollar, he had hurried away. The clerk had followed the lad and turned him over to a policeman, who had taken him to the nearest station.

Pawn-shop and station were in a distant part of the city. I hurried there. At the pawn-shop I took possession of the watch, certain it was the one I wanted. Then I went to the station. The youth was innocent enough and already had summoned people who backed his story. He was out of work and very hard up. A man had offered him a dollar to pawn the watch. That was all there was to that angle of the case, except that he identified the picture of O'Connor as the man in question.

I telephoned Sullivan. He had some thrilling information. A man giving the name of James Wilson, but resembling O'Connor, had taken the murder room, paid a week's rent, but had gone away, stating he must get his clothing and would be back by night. He surely had worked fast. But, having taken possession of the room, he probably had felt safe in postponing the search until night, when he could work without danger of being disturbed.

IN jig time I was racing for the house in a taxicab, accompanied by the boy. He was a wise one and was only too anxious to help the police, particularly as I promised to get him a job. I made a stop at the 104th Street Station. Feretti was there in bed. Waking him, I told him sufficient so he'd know what was expected of him, showed him O'Connor's picture and told him to don civilian clothing.

The fact that The King had said he would not be back till night did not keep me from the neighborhood of the boarding-house. He might have been stalling. Feretti and I, both with our guns in our outer pockets, and the lad, kept an all-day watch on the boarding-house from a vacant flat across the street. He had not appeared by dusk, and I became anxious. Then we took to the street, I at the corner below the house and Feretti and the youth in the darkened doorway at the one above. It was a tedious wait, until nine o'clock, before we got a rise. Then the others hurried up. The lad had seen the man for whom he had pawned the watch enter the boarding-house.

Sending the youth back to the station, Feretti and I went to the place. Mrs. Simmons opened the door. I carried the key to Myles' Room. My plan was for Feretti to go through there and cover O'Connor from the fire-escape. I would gain admission to The King's room. I

gave him five minutes' start, but told him not to make a move until he saw me inside. As we separated, we could hear some one moving about in the room.

Five minutes, exactly, and my watch went back into my pocket and my gun came out. I rapped. Instantly all sound ceased. I tried the handle. The door was locked. I stooped. The key was in the lock, blocking my view. But a light burned. I rapped again. Not even a whisper.

Drawing back, I hurled myself against the door. The old lock splintered, the door banged open and I all but fell inside. As I regained my balance, I noted Feretti crouched in the window, gun pointed. O'Connor was bent low beside the dresser, a foot-long jimmy clutched in his hand.

I moved toward him, my gun covering him. But The King was an old hand, ever resourceful. In a flash he hurled the steel bar, there came a crash of glass and the light was gone. The next minute I felt as though I'd been struck by an elephant. O'Connor was upon me, swinging both great fists and kicking. I managed to grasp him, then knocked him down with the butt of my gun.

"Where are you?" came in a roar from Feretti, quite close.

"Here!" I yelled. I reached down, but O'Connor wriggled from beneath my fingers. "Look out! He's slipped me!" I cried. The next second a dark form blocked the window leading to the fire-escape. There were two flashes, two reports. The shadow appeared to crumple, there came a sort of gasping groan, followed by a dull thud upon the floor.

We both leaped upon it and held fast—until a light was brought by one of the babbling, excited throng which came rushing to the room. But we need not have exerted ourselves. King O'Connor was dead. One bullet had pierced his spine at the base of the brain. The other had imbedded itself in the framework of the window. I never knew which had shot straight. Later we proved O'Connor's identity, and there remained no doubt whatsoever but that he had killed Clifford Morris, alias Albert Aarons.

That's about all of the story. Except that young Myles showed that he was made of the real stuff. Instead of being sore because I'd locked him up, he came to Headquarters and made me promise that I'd be present at his wedding to the Swayne girl. I made good and took Feretti along.

He's a bright lad, that Feretti. I'm going to show him some of the ropes. Some day you're going to hear more of him or I'm no judge of good detective material.

Revealed Through a Needle's Eye

(*Continued from page* 17)

I grin and open my eyes wide I look like a nit-wit, to tell the truth. I dance well. I am strong on wise-cracking. Girls readily accept me as being one of those fellows with a salary from God-knows-where, who hang around Broadway resorts and are good for theater tickets, dinner checks and an occasional five-dollar bill.

MY quarry was fond of the Woodland Dancing Academy. I trailed her there on a Monday afternoon, and got one of the hostesses to introduce me in the regular way. "Mrs. Dudley" was the name given me, all right, and I soon discovered that her first name was Pearl. I called myself Timothy Davis.

By being light of weight mentally, entertaining, and appreciative of her charms, yet not too susceptible, I set out to make a hit with Pearl, and I succeeded. I had five dances with her. When we parted, I confined myself to asking carelessly whether she would be at the Woodland the next day. She said, "Yes." I met her again, and after we had danced a bit I took her to a speak-easy. I used a twenty-dollar bill to pay for the drinks, and to try her out I divided my change with her, remarking that she might find it useful for taxi fare. She accepted the graft, which proved to me that she was the kind who did not scorn chicken-feed and therefore would be all the easier to please.

A visit from Duffy intervened, but the third time I saw Pearl at the Woodland I asked whether I might call at her home. She stalled a bit. I think she would have refused if she hadn't begun really to like me. Finally, she made an engagement for Saturday night at 9.30. I solemnly wrote down the address of the Hampshire and the telephone number. But I assured her there'd be no phoning to change the date on my part.

The moment I arrived, I glanced about the comfortable little two-room suite and asked whether "friend husband" was expected. She replied that he was out of town, that he was a traveling salesman and was quite frequently out of town. I then produced a bottle from my overcoat pocket. As she took it from me and opened it, her wink and sly smile showed that she liked my informality. A certain wary defensiveness in her manner, however, gave me my cue. Instead of trying to make love to her, I was strictly the pal. I knew that these gold-digging girls are often fed up with the emotional demands of men. They enjoy masculine company, and they like to have it on a free-and-easy basis. But they don't want to pay the usual price for it. They're sick of paying prices. I can't say that I blame them.

PEARL visibly blossomed out the moment she realized that I didn't even intend to try to kiss her. Her chatter became confidential. She told me that she was from Cleveland, that she had come to New York to go on the stage and that lack of success rather than love had induced her to "marry." She produced childish photographs of herself which had been made in Cleveland, so I knew she was telling the truth and was not to be classed as an expert crook. I avoided questioning her. The essential details were certain to be supplied by her own lips in due time.

When I said good night, she urged me to call again. I felt quite astonished that

a girl of her simple type could have proved so expensive to George Duffy. The regular Broadway sport could have maintained her for $150 a week. Where had the $100,000 from the Polish Hospital Fund gone? I began to think that Pearl had had only a small cut of it. But I had a whole lot yet to learn about Pearl!

During the course of two lazy evenings and one afternoon in her apartment, she confessed to me that Duffy was not really her husband. She believed the story he had given her about himself, however, even to thinking that he was a traveling salesman and unmarried. His life away from her was plainly of little importance in her calculations. She needed his financial help, she said, and managed to convey the impression that he did not give her enough money. I expressed my sympathy, and she promptly asked me to lend her a hundred dollars.

"Why, Girlie," I answered, yawning, "I haven't seen a hundred all in one piece since I cleaned up on a horse last March. I make sixty a week, and it's mostly spent by Monday morning. If ten's any use to you, you're welcome."

"Excuse me, Tim," she muttered nervously. "I might have known." But she took the ten.

ON another occasion, she declared that she had a great purpose in her life. I felt it must be connected with money, and asked her whether that were so. She shrugged the question aside, not too convincingly. But she repeated the main fact, with a sudden leaping flame in her eyes and a clutching gesture of her hand to her breast. She was certainly working out as a queer one.

I had her confidence, which was of great value. The case, however, was not moving along as rapidly as I had hoped. It was necessary for me to see the girl and Duffy alone together at close range and to listen in on their conversation. A single room next to Pearl's suite was vacant. I decided to take it. But I did so through one of my operatives, who signed the lease and turned the key over to me.

Early in the afternoon of a day when Duffy was expected, I slipped into my own room and started on the ungentlemanly job of boring two holes through the partition. If any one thinks that is an easy job in a modern apartment house with thick stuccoed walls, let him try it. A special brace-and-bit that draws back the detached rubbish, is required. Even so, the greatest care must be exercised to prevent flakes of plaster from falling on the far side. The peep-holes have to be trimmed with a knife of razor-blade sharpness. They stand out more starkly than would be the case in a wooden wall. However, I had already taken my bearings and managed to place the holes so that they came out just above a framed picture in Pearl's living-room. The holes slanted downwards. When I stood on a chair and peered with both eyes, I commanded a view of the room, over the edge of the picture.

Pearl came in at 4.15 and hurried to make herself look as pretty as possible, anticipating Duffy's arrival which was at 4.30. Standing on the chair, I watched them through the peep-holes. It was like looking through a needle's eye.

The scene I witnessed remains unique in my memories of gold digging, that modern feminine variation of the confidence game.

DUFFY looked tired and despondent, though his clamped mouth still tried to keep up the bluff of courage. Taking off his hat and coat as he entered, he stood in the middle of the room, his eyes fixed with a hungry intensity upon Pearl.

She at once sidled over to him. "Have you got that money for your baby?" she asked, smiling artificially.

"How often must I tell you that I don't regard you as 'my baby.' You're not a child to me. You're my sweetheart, or nothing," he said.

She pouted and stiffened. "Then you shouldn't think anything too much to do for me. You promised me a thousand dollars to-day. Have you got it?"

"Five hundred is the best I can do."

"It was to be a thousand." Her voice rose sharply. "You can't expect me ever to love you, if you're stingy with me. I hate stinginess."

"That's unfair, Pearl. I've given you more money than I can keep track of in the past year. I can't imagine what you've done with it."

"I've told you, haven't I? I've kept my brothers in college. And I've paid for operations for my mother. They depend on me. And my clothes cost a hell of a lot. Oh, you make me tired!"

Duffy drew out his purse and started to count some bills. The girl looked at them greedily, but the moment she saw what they amounted to, she turned on him scornfully.

"Only five hundred?" cried Pearl. "You've got to give me more, or I won't even let you kiss me!"

"I'm broke. I've been borrowing money for you," he complained weakly. But he did not resist when she set to work on his person, hunted through his pockets and took every cent she could find, except a twenty-dollar bill.

"That's enough to see us over this evening," she declared.

As she started to turn away, he pleaded with an absolutely craven sentimentality, "I want to kiss you, Pearl. You promised you'd let me."

She threw a sneering, hostile look at him. Her lips were drawn into a rigid line as he took her in his arms, and she wrenched herself free as quickly as possible. The shoulders of the poor fool humped. His eyes swam with tears.

And so it went on. She treated him half-way decently only during the interludes when he did not try to make love to her. I'd known theoretically that middle-aged men sometimes become madly infatuated with young women who don't even pretend to care about them in return. But I'd not have credited a situation like the one described unless my own eyes and ears had proved it to me. Suddenly I understood that Pearl had been able to hold and to plunder Duffy for so long, because she had fed his craze for her on promises of greater intimacy which she had never fulfilled. He was the type with whom that sort of game would work.

Later in the evening I got the final evidence that I was right. He brought up a question that was plainly an old issue

between them. He begged Pearl to marry him, and she wearily refused.

Now, no man in Duffy's circumstances is going to risk the crime of bigamy unless he is almost insane with thwarted desire. I proceeded to some interesting deductions. Grasping and yet penurious, the girl was trying to save a definite sum of money for a definite object. Most of her loot from the Polish Hospital Fund was therefore intact, and might be recovered. But Duffy would be discarded the moment he had been wrung dry, and Pearl would disappear. I must work fast.

Immediately after she had told me she was from Cleveland, I had sent an operative to that city to ferret out her antecedents. The name of the photographer on the youthful pictures she had shown me had been the only clue. I had already received a meager report from my man. Pearl's maiden name was Schmitt. But she and her family had left Cleveland six years before, and no one could say where they had gone.

THE morning following the scene with Duffy, I visited the Wheat Exchange Bank where Pearl had her money and learned that her account was in the name of "Pearl Schmitt." This was bad news. The cash had been given to her without receipts to show for it, presumably, and she had made her deposits under her legal name. I saw no way to force her to disgorge.

But the detective game is full of surprises. I was nearer to a solution of the problem than I had any reason to hope.

I went to see Pearl once more in my rôle of confidential pal, and for want of a better opening I asked her carelessly why she did not marry Duffy? There was little danger that she would suspect I had overheard his plea to her. The question was a perfectly natural one, and her frank response to it showed that it had been much on her mind. I could not have chosen a luckier approach.

"Do you think it would be a good move, Tim?" she asked seriously.

"Depends upon what you mean by 'good,' Pearl."

"Well—I can't bear the man near me. But I need about ten thousand more from him. He's getting to be tight, but if I married him, maybe he'd come across."

"Could you stand him for the rest of your life?"

"God, no! I'd leave him in a week. Guess I could hide out all right."

"Why would you need to hide?"

SHE hesitated. "I might as well tell you the truth, Tim. I'm already married," she said. "It would be bigamy to take on this boob, but I'm almost ready to risk it."

The breath was knocked clear out of me. Why had I never suspected this possibility? But I kept a straight face and took advantage of her mood. "Why do you need the money?" I asked.

"My husband's in prison," she answered. "He was cashier of a bank in Milwaukee. He took a thousand dollars to buy nice things for me, and they caught him and sent him up for five years. After he was in jail, the bank discovered another shortage he hadn't had anything to do with and blamed it on him. It's seventy-five thousand. If he can make it good, the bank won't prosecute him again. If he can't, he's to be arrested the minute he steps out of the coop next month. You can guess how quickly he'll be railroaded, if that happens."

"You've been collecting the seventy-five thousand to save him, Pearl?"

"Sure."

In all my experience with crime, I'd never run into a more ironical tangle. Here was George Duffy, married and the officer of a bank, embezzling charity funds and being tricked out of them by the wife of the crooked cashier of another bank. Both were willing to be bigamists. Duffy was an infatuated weakling, and Pearl's devotion to her husband left her conscienceless toward the rest of mankind. Of the two, I'd have preferred to see Duffy punished. Yet my duty to Mr. Armstrong of the Union Finance Trust Company was to trap Pearl.

I didn't feel proud of myself when I argued her craftily into the idea that the chances of being detected at bigamy were not so great as she feared. Without actually advising her to take the step, I gave her the needed encouragement. When we parted, she told me she had decided to do it.

Two days later, I shadowed Duffy and Pearl to the marriage bureau in the Bronx, where they obtained a license under the names of Dudley and Schmitt. They could not be married the same day, which was what I had figured on. I obtained a certified copy of the entry made in the license clerk's book, waved this in Pearl's face as soon as I cornered her alone, and told her the whole story of my connection with the case.

"By swearing out this license, you committed a perjury for which you could be sent to jail for a long term. Hand over the graft you've had from Duffy, or I'll arrest you," I bluffed. "You won't help your husband any by going to prison. Better come across, and keep your freedom at least."

She came across. I recovered $65,000 of the Polish Hospital's money. Armstrong compelled Duffy to mortgage his home and pay in $10,000 more. The balance was made good anonymously by the Union Finance Trust Company.

THE embezzler was then discreetly let out of his job, and other banks were warned against employing him. He was soon destitute, and he ended by committing suicide.

The upshot of the affair would have been far different, had it been handled by the Police Department. There would have been a tremendous scandal, and Duffy undoubtedly would have gone to jail. Thereby, justice would have been served. The woman, however, would have escaped with her loot.

I leave it to the reader to decide whether I should be pleased or ashamed of my record as a private detective in this affair.

Confessions of a Confidence Man

(*Continued from page* 47)

times before. "Jim, I can't bear to have you so cold when—— But never mind," and as if to hide a slip she had made, she turned quickly and entered the nearest elevator.

There was that sincerity again, that demonstration of affection. Con worker she was; that I now knew. But—I couldn't place that show of affection. There is no telling where a woman's heart will lead her, I said to myself as I left the Shelbourne for home.

Indeed, I was well pleased with the evening. The game was on. I was after the money I had lost—maybe more. She was after more money from the boob she took me to be—and she was after what else? Could I believe her when she said she was after *me?*

I got into bed, impatient for to-morrow, impatient for the next move in the battle of wits.

On the face of it, I should look around and find a man whose passion for art would make him wish to pay a fortune to possess an original work of art. Genuine collectors pay no attention to the fact that what they possess has been stolen. I knew that if I made a job of finding such a person, I could do so. But this I neglected. And my reason for letting the buyer slide, so far as my finding him was concerned, was simply this: I knew that the scheme of the con men working on me made it necessary for them to supply me with the buyer. In order that their scheme would succeed, the "buyer" had to be one of them, working with them

The next evening I saw Nell again, taking her to a good dinner and this time for a drive through the Maryland hills by moonlight. And before the evening was over, I said to her:

"You have my curiosity aroused over this Flintt painting. More than likely I can make money on it. Would you have any objections to my seeing it?"

"Not at all. Only I'd have to make arrangements with the men who have it. You must understand, Jim, that these men are in fear of arrest. They are afraid to take chances on a stranger, and, after all, the only thing they have that vouches for you is my word."

"Who wouldn't trust a girl like you?" I inquired, taking advantage of the chance to flatter her and so keep up my rôle.

She smiled. "I'll have to let you know. Will I see you to-morrow night, Jim?"

"Certainly. I'm getting to enjoy these evenings with you. Since I quit the track (which I had) the only bright spot in my day is seeing you."

WITH that understanding we parted. And the second day following I met Nell at the foot of Capitol Hill.

There I was asked to ride inside a closed automobile, one of the two-cylinder variety all the rage then. It made about ten miles an hour and sounded like a steam-pump. The blinds were drawn, so that no light penetrated inside; but mainly so that persons riding in the car couldn't see out.

Nell and I were the only occupants, besides the driver. When I had entered the machine, I had taken a close look at the man at the wheel, but had failed to recognize him. He was broad-shouldered, and dark. The only mark I noticed about him particularly was the unusual growth of thick hair on the backs of his hands.

We must have ridden for fifteen minutes, when the car pulled up to a stop. After a moment the door was opened from outside, by the driver. He stood waiting for us to step out.

Nell got out first, and I followed. We were in front of a tumble-down building that once was a warehouse, possibly for tobacco. No street lamps were near so that I could place the location by signs on lamp-posts. The street stretched in both directions, with no mark that would allow me to fix its location; the houses on both sides were of the warehouse, produce variety. I thought we were near some shipping point or freight terminal; but beyond that I could not tell where I had been taken.

"You understand that the utmost precaution must be taken. The boys are scared." This from Nell. "Just go in, Jim, and act natural. You have nothing to be afraid of. But I must tell you that a pair of guns will be covering you, in case you make a move that can be interpreted as suspicious. Come now."

I followed while the chauffeur led the way through a small door that was part of a large sliding door, the kind that used to be in service on stables and now are seen at garage entrances. Inside the door was a large space, now bare of furnishings and equipment of any sort.

On the left the chauffeur mounted a narrow stairway. I went after him, Nell coming up behind me. In different circumstances I should have been on the alert for an attack from the semi-darkened stair pit, possibly for a shot; but I knew that whoever was here, was after my money, not me.

AT the top of the second flight of stairs we turned toward the front of the house. Here was a room that still showed signs of being used as a storeroom for hay and grain, for strands of hay and scatterings of oats littered the wooden floor.

In wooden chairs against one wall sat three men. In the dim light I couldn't make out their faces; but I could see that two of them had their right hands in their coat pockets—fingers on triggers, I was sure.

"You want to see the goods, hey?" one of the three asked without ceremony. "The quicker you do, and get us our jack so we can do a lam, the better, mister. Here."

He walked over to a crate about five feet by four in size and lifted a blanket from one corner of it. By the light of a flash-light which he held in his hand I saw a gilt frame surrounding an oil-painting of a landscape.

"See? Here's the guy's monicker," and the man with the flash-light trained it on the lower right-hand corner of the painting, which stood on end, and where I looked for the name of the artist. I saw the name—and I saw enough to tell me

that the painting was a rank forgery. Stuyvesant Flintt had spelled his name just that way. The surname on the painting had one letter "t" missing, making the artist's name Flint.

"What a magnificent piece of work!" I said enthusiastically. "There's the artist's inscription and all. That picture's worth its weight in gold to the man who wants it—and I'll find a buyer as sure as I live. How much did you say you wanted for it?" I asked blandly.

"Fifty grand—fifty thousand bucks," the man with the flash told me, "and the quicker you get it for us, mister, the better."

"I'll get to work in earnest to-day," I assured him. "You'll hear from me through Miss Tyler in a little while."

That closed the incident. The chauffeur conducted us down-stairs, and Nell and I got into the car again, to be driven back to Capitol Hill.

Worth its weight in gold! Worth its weight in Christmas-tree tinsel, would be nearer the truth. Anyway, I had carried through my part of the enthusiastic agent who wanted to see what he was trading in. And I must admit that Nell's mob did their part well, so far as their limitations would allow them.

THEY had had to secure the painting, at a cost of about fifteen dollars; that would cover the frame and the crate and all. The use of the abandoned warehouse they had no doubt appropriated. The closed cab they had hired, but the driver in all probability was one of them.

By "limitations" I mean this: The spokesman of the outfit had used crook slang of a low order. He had spoken of "doing a lam," which means making a getaway. And he had corrected himself too late when he called a thousand dollars a "grand." The fact that this mob was of low mental order gave me a distinct advantage, it seemed to me. But I hadn't counted on Nell.

Riding back in the car, it occurred to me that I should show a natural interest in Nell and her connection with the men I had just encountered. Accordingly I said to her:

"Nell, it seems queer that you should know men like those. Wherever did you run across them?"

The question seemed to surprise her. "Why—why, I have a—a cousin who is a sort of a black sheep. Although I don't in the least approve of what he does, I take an interest in him. It's my way of keeping him in my care. I've made it my business to see that he keeps out of trouble, which means out of jail," and she sighed.

She was a darned clever actress, I told myself. Her answer would have satisfied any normal man of conventional habits. And that cousin—I felt sure that "cousin" was really her brother.

The association of this woman and the man whom I believed to be her brother, who had a cultural appearance, like herself, and this low mob, could mean only one thing: the brother and Nell were the "brains" of the outfit, and the others were the underlings who did their bidding.

Nell turned down my invitation to dinner that night, pleading another engagement. I thought she wanted to see her

brother and report to him what I had said and done. I learned later that there was another reason why she wouldn't be with me that night.

I went back to my hotel, the Old National. I killed about an hour reading in my room, then went down to dinner. The dining room was well filled, as it usually was between six and eight, for the Old National in those days was a popular eating place.

I WALKED in, and saw no table vacant. But at a table for two, near the door, sat a man alone. He saw me, recognized the fact that I couldn't find a table, and beckoned me over.

"Join me here?" he asked. "That's better than waiting for a table, isn't it? I'm glad to have company."

He was a man of about fifty-five, with white hair and powerful physique. He had a way of smiling that was genial and friendly.

"Thank you," I said. "Yes, I'll sit right here."

He seemed relieved when I drew up the chair opposite him.

"My card," he said, and handed me a bit of pasteboard on which was printed: "John T. Mallinson, New York."

"Pleased to know you, Mr. Mallinson. My name's Kendall."

That started the association. I had seen this man around the hotel for several days. And before that meal was over, I knew that he was in on the plan to fleece me.

For a con man he used good methods, I knew. He had made our meeting casual. He had waited for a situation that would make it seem as inevitable that we would meet.

I knew he was a con man in the scheme by one thing he said. He told me he was a retired silk merchant, spending all his time and plenty of money collecting works of art. "I'm in Washington now, I don't mind telling you, Kendall, to see if I can't get a line on that stolen Flintt."

This, then, was the "buyer"!

From that time on the play moved to a swift conclusion.

I telephoned to Nell immediately after dinner. "I've located a man who'll pay a hundred thousand dollars for the picture," I told her. That was true—to the extent that Mallinson had told me he would pay that price for the Flintt. "Yes, I told him I might be able to help him out, Nell."

"Then your chance to make yourself a fortune has come, Jim," she said warmly. "You buy the painting from my cousin's people, and sell it to your man for his price. You just double the money."

THAT was the scheme. I was to give Nell's mob fifty thousand dollars for the picture. I was to take it at once to sell to Mallinson. But—between the time the mob had my fifty thousand and the time I was to conclude the bargain with Mallinson, Nell and the mob and Mallinson too would be on their way to Hongkong, or some other distant point. Clever work, I had to concede them.

Now it was up to me to outwit them, for my own profit.

"I'll see Mallinson again," I told Nell over the phone. "He's my buyer. If he can arrange to have his money to-morrow, we'll carry it through before sundown."

I heard her rippling laugh as she hung up the receiver.

Nell had had no engagement for that evening. And she wouldn't consent to go anywhere with me, for she wanted the mob's man at the National to make my acquaintance that night, if possible. And so it had turned out.

Later that evening I met Mallinson in the lobby of the hotel. He sat smoking a cigar and reading a newspaper. I walked over to him and sat down in the chair next to his.

"Mr. Mallinson," I began, talking under my hand in the way boobs talk when they want their words to reach one pair of ears and one only, "I know positively that I can get the picture you are after"

He beamed. "Great work, young man. When can you get it?"

"That depends on you," I said. "In order to show me you mean business, will you advance me fifty thousand on account?"

"You must think I'm crazy. You get the painting. If it's genuine, I'll pay my price. Here—look this over," and he took from his coat pocket a bank book and a book of blank checks.

The book showed that John T. Mallinson had on deposit with the Gates Trust Company, in New York, close to two hundred thousand dollars. That didn't mean a thing to me, because I knew that he could get a blank deposit book and could fill in any figures he wished. I've done it myself.

"That satisfy you?" he asked

"IT does—and it doesn't, Mr. Mallinson." I was leading up to my big play. "You must know that I'm taking as big a risk as you in this. The people who have the picture want cash money in payment. They're asking a hundred thousand." He knew this was a lie, but he could not give away his hand. "Will you go half-way with me?" I asked him then. "I'll put up fifty thousand dollars, cash. You want the picture. You ought to be willing to put up as much as I. Remember, I'm not making a thing on this. I'm trusting to you for that. Anyway, when I deliver the painting to you, you can give me the remaining fifty thousand. I'm risking my fifty thousand on the fact that the picture may not be genuine—in which case I lose entirely."

He remained silent while he took two deep inhalations on his cigar Then: "That's fair enough," he said. "When can you have your fifty thousand—and when can I have the painting?"

"I'll have my money by eleven o'clock to-morrow morning," I told him. "And I'll do what I can to get you the painting by noon to-morrow." I knew well enough that he would see that I did get the painting any time I wanted it.

"All right," he said. "You have your money here by eleven. I'll do likewise. An original Flintt! Well—well," and I left him rubbing his hands, playing his part through to the end.

I said I would have fifty thousand dollars, in cash, by eleven o'clock the next day. When I made that statement, I had just sixty-seven dollars and a few cents. Yet I knew I would have the money—and I'd get it in a way open to con men, closed to men in honest walks of life.

Now, there are certain men in many large cities who make a business of loaning "flash rolls." In Washington, at that time, was Mike Dunn. Mike had been a con man himself, and, like few of them, he had held on to "his" money. And con men known to him, could go and borrow an amount of money, for an hour, three hours, two days. No collateral was needed. You asked for it, told how long you wanted it, gave a brief word outline of what you wanted it for, and got it.

I knew Mike through Gil Hawkins. Any friend of Gil could have what Mike had. And when a man in the underworld says that, he means just that.

Mike asked no collateral, yet he exacted a collateral more rigid than is demanded by any bank—personal accounting to him. Let a man borrow a sum of money and skip with it, and Mike would hound him till the money was recovered and till Mike got full satisfaction. Two men tried it on Mike. Both were lost track of within a year—the body of one of them was found in the Potomac, a bullet wound in the head. His death, by the way, is still an "unsolved mystery" on the police records of the District of Columbia.

EARLY the following morning I called Nell on the telephone. She had been told I would call, no doubt, for she fell in with what I proposed. I asked her to meet me at the Old National about eleven o'clock, and to be prepared to take me to get the painting. She agreed to do it.

Then I set out for Mike's place. Exactly where it was located, has no place in this narrative. Mike's successor might not relish the idea if I told. Let it be enough to say that Mike did business in a basement, under a store, on Pennsylvania Avenue.

"Mike," I said to him, "I'm a pal of Gil Hawkins, and——"

"Yeh, you're Jim Kendall," came from between his thick lips. He was short in build, but he had an eye of steel.

I marveled at the man's memory, for it was six years at least since I had seen him, or he me.

"I want a flash roll, fifty grand," I told him, then went into a casual description of a play I had on "to take a sucker."

"Two hours is all I want it for," I concluded.

"All right." That was all. He went to a safe built into a wall, and counted out five bills of ten-thousand-dollar denomination. No demur. No questions. I knew what it meant if I failed to return the money on time. I knew, too, that he would charge about twenty per cent. for the "rental." And he knew that I understood.

I put the money into my pocket, and hired a cab to drive me down to the Old National. As I got into the cab, I saw a tall man going into Mike's basement. Something about him made me take a second look. It was his hands—hairy, heavy hands they were. Then I remembered. The driver of Nell's closed car had hands like those. But the man's back was to me, and by this time I was inside the cab, so I couldn't tell for sure whether or not this was the same man. But it would be like the mob to go to Mike for their flash roll, too. In that case, I meant that they should be in for a peck of trouble when it came their turn to repay Mike.

It was a few minutes before eleven when I arrived at the hotel. Nell was waiting for me. I sat down and talked with her a few minutes, then went up to my room. After five minutes or so I called up Mallinson's room. "Ready for you," he told me.

"I'll be right up," and I went directly to his room.

"Here you are," he said, and took from a drawer of a desk ten bills of five thousand dollars each. I thought he was abrupt, but a moment's reflection told me he was impatient, anxious to get his part over with.

I COUNTED the money, and examined it. To all of my belief it was genuine. The fact that he possibly had got it from Mike Dunn would reassure me, in any case.

I showed him my fifty thousand, then placed it with his into a manila envelope, which I sealed. While Mallinson watched me, I put it in the inside pocket of my coat.

"Come with me if you like," I said, knowing that he wouldn't, but feeling safe in giving this final touch of the character I was playing.

"I'll go down-stairs with you," he told me, and suited his word to his action.

When we reached the lobby of the hotel, I watched carefully to see if Mallinson would show any signs of recognizing Nell, or she him. Nothing like this passed between them, however. I knew that they were primed for this meeting, and being forewarned, they were on their guard.

I introduced the pair, Mallinson as a "friend" significantly, and Nell as the one who would take me to "success."

"Are we ready?" I asked Nell, and when she nodded, we started out.

At the curb was the same closed automobile, the same hairy-handed driver at the wheel. Nell and I got in, and the cab drove away.

To a casual person not familiar with the ways of confidence men, it would be fair to wonder why the mob didn't stop me somewhere on the way and hold me up for the money I had on me. The answer would be that that would represent crude work. They were sure of themselves—sure that I would go to the warehouse and get the painting, delivering to them the money they wanted, plus the money Mallinson had "advanced."

I was sure, too, that not for a moment was I out of sight of several of the mob. They were trailing the cab to the warehouse. It would be like their leader to set a shadow on the car we used, fearful lest the driver of it try to double-cross the mob and get away with all the money himself.

The cab drew to a stop. As before, the driver got out and held the door open. I made no move to leave.

"Nell," I said, "I'll wait here. Take this," and I handed her an envelope. "You get the picture, and I'll wait for you."

"But, Jim," she protested, "you ought to come up and carry out this business yourself. I can't——"

"Listen," I whispered, leaning close. "These people know you, you know them. I don't know them—with apologies to you. They wouldn't do you any injury, but they might try it on me. Go ahead now. I'm trusting you with the money. There's fifty thousand dollars in that envelope——"

SHE took the envelope, and disappeared inside the house. It would take her a minute to get up-stairs, take the men up there that time to open the envelope and find out that it contained only newspaper. In that minute I had to act quickly. I had handed her an envelope; *the* envelope was still in my coat pocket.

The driver came back to the car, and took his place at the wheel. As he walked across the sidewalk, I saw him glance behind us, and nod. I knew for a certainty then that we had been trailed, and by another car.

I whipped a gun from my coat pocket, and with my left hand I pulled up the blind at the front of the car.

"Drive like hell!" I said, placing the point of the gun through the front window, left partly open on purpose so that the driver could hear what Nell and I had said.

The move took him by surprise. He hesitated only a fraction of a second, while he thought no doubt that he was safe, since the car behind would head him off. He threw in the clutch and the car started away.

I turned like a flash, and threw up the curtain at the rear of the car. Taking only a fraction of a second to get my bearings and aim, I fired two shots through the window of the car, at a car that was behind us, within twenty feet. I know that one of my shots at least took effect, for a loud, secondary report told me I had punctured one of the tires of the machine behind.

Fearing that the driver had taken out a gun and would have time to cover me, I turned again and——

Evidently he was unarmed. If he had a weapon, he was too rattled to use it.

I pressed the point of the gun at the back of his neck. "Drive—and give it all you've got! You'll get a slug at the first sign of funny work. I don't make a threat I can't carry out," and I gave the gun a thrust to punctuate my words.

We turned into a side street—down this for a block, then into a main avenue. I saw then that we were far over in South East Washington. On we tore, the speedometer mounting by jerks and bounds.

Then like a thunderbolt came disaster. The only way I had of accounting for what happened was that the driver lost his nerve. I saw only that we were heading straight for a tree on the side of the avenue. Then came a crash that could be heard for a dozen blocks—I was hurled violently against the frame of the front window, striking the top of my head on the metal framework. After that—oblivion.

The last conscious thought I had was of the hundred thousand dollars in my pocket—and of what would happen if I failed to get his money back to Mike on time.

With young Kendall facing the loss of his money, possibly his life—what will the outcome be? You cannot afford to miss the next breathless instalment of this forceful story, in August TRUE DETECTIVE MYSTERIES, on the news-stands July 15th. Order your copy now!

LUMINOUS PAINT

Make Your Watches, Clocks, Etc., Visible by Night

The very latest discovery in the scientific world. Hitherto, practically unobtainable except at an exorbitant price, we have at last succeeded in producing this remarkable LUMINOUS PAINT, which, applied to the surface of any article, emits rays of white light, rendering it perfectly visible in the dark. **THE DARKER THE NIGHT, THE MORE BRILLIANT IT SHINES.** Quite simple to use. Anyone—you can do it. A little applied to the dial of your watch or clock will enable you to tell the time by night. You can coat the push buttons or switch plates of your electric lights, match boxes, and innumerable other articles; make your own Luminous Crucifixes, Luminous Rosaries, etc. Bottle containing sufficient to coat several small articles. **Price 25c.** Larger sizes **50c** and **$1** postpaid. **Johnson Smith & Co., Dept. 858, Racine, Wis.**

Microphone Transmitter Button

$1.00 POST-PAID

You can easily make a highly sensitive detectophone by using this Transmitter Button as the sound receiver. You can build your own outfit without buying expensive equipment. It is simple and inexpensive. You can install an outfit in your home and hear conversations being held all over the house. You can connect up different rooms of a hotel. This outfit was used by secret service operatives during the war. It is being used on the stage. It is ultra-sensitive and is the greatest invention in micro-phones. You can mount the button almost anywhere—card board boxes, stove pipes, stiff calendars, on the wall behind a picture frame, etc. Button is so light and small it cannot be detected. Persons can be overheard without suspecting it. You can listen in on conversations in another room. A deaf person in the audience can hear the speaker. Connected to phonograph, piano or other musical instrument, music can be heard hundreds of feet away. Button may be used to renew telephone transmitters; often makes an old line "talk-up" when nothing else will. The ideal microphone for radio use; carries heavy current and is extremely sensitive. Amplifies radio signals. Countless other similar uses will suggest themselves. Experimenters find the Button useful for hundreds of experiments along the lines of telephones, amplifiers, loud speakers, etc. Many fascinating stunts may be devised, such as holding the button against the throat or chest to reproduce speech without sound waves. $5.00 is given to anyone who sends in a new suggestion for the use of the Button providing the manufacturers find it suitable for use in their literature. **PRICE $1.00 POSTPAID ANYWHERE.**

REAL PISTOL Miniature Watch Charm Pistol

Shoots Blank Cartridges

Exact reproduction of a real pistol: actually fires Real **BLANK CARTRIDGES** of miniature size. Illustration is actual size. **1¼** inches long, with ring at end for attaching to watch chain. Loads like a regular pistol. Pull the trigger and it goes off with a loud bang. Pistol is break-open type; illustration shows position for loading. Made entirely of high grade steel, nickel plated, heavy gun barrel, handsomely engraved handles, complete in box with cleaning rod. **PRICE $1.75**, or, with **pearl handles. $2.50. BLANK CARTRIDGES 50c** box of **25.**

EXPLODING MATCHES

More fun than fighting with your wife. Look just like ordinary matches. Put up in boxes just like regular Safety Matches. As the victim tries to light one he gets quite a surprise. **PRICE 10c per box, 3 boxes for 25c, or 12 for 75 cents. By express.**

ANARCHIST BOMBS

One of these glass vials dropped in a room full of people will cause more consternation than a limburger cheese. The smell entirely disappears in a short time. **10c a Box, 3 Boxes for 25c**

INVISIBLE INK

The most confidential message can be written with this Ink, for the writing **MAKES NO MARK.** Cannot be seen unless you know the secret. Invaluable for many reasons. Keep your postals and other private memorandums away from prying eyes. Great fun for playing practical jokes. **Only 15c Bottle**

MIDGET BIBLE
GREAT CURIOSITY

Smallest Bible in the world. Size of a postage stamp. **200 Pages.** Said to bring good luck to the owner. A genuine work of art. Must be seen to be appreciated. Make good money selling them to friends, church acquaintances, etc. **PRICE 15c** each, **3** for **40c, 12** for **$1.35, 100** for **$7.50.** Also obtainable in Leather Binding, with gold edges. **Price 50c each, 3 for $1.25, $4.50 per doz. Magnifying Glass** for use with Midget Bible. **15c.**

K.K.K

Everything about the **Ku Klux Klan** told in a clear fearless manner. Book tells all—How it started and was suppressed in 1871—The New Ku Klux Klan—How organized—How members are enrolled—Oath of the Klan—**Questions for Candidates**—Creed—Objects of the Order—Obedience—Fidelity—Pledge of Loyalty—**Ku Klux Klan and the Masons**—The Jews—The Masons—Real K. of C. Oath—The Negro Ku Klux Klan, etc., etc. Latest and most complete book on the Klan published. **Price, 35c,** postpaid.

MAGICIAN'S OUTFIT

Apparatus and Directions for a Number of Mysterious Tricks Enough for an Entire Evening's Entertainment

ANYONE CAN DO THEM 75c

It is great fun mystifying your friends. Get this Conjurer's Cabinet and you will be the cleverest fellow in your district. It contains the apparatus for seven firstrate tricks, including The Disappearing Rose, that, when placed on the lapel of your coat, vanishes from sight at will; the Magic Vase and Ball Trick (a Wooden Ball is placed inside, and upon replacing the lid has disappeared and is found in someone else's pocket); The Magic Nail with which you can apparently cut your finger almost in two; the Wonderful Card Trick (a card is placed in an envelope, and when open an entirely different card altogether is found); The Disappearing Coin Box (a coin is placed in the little wooden barrel, and, when opened again, is found to have vanished entirely, or can be made to change into a coin of another denomination); The Famous Dissolving Penny Trick; The Glass Goblet and Vanishing Coin Trick (a coin is dropped into a glass of water, and when the water is poured out the coin has vanished). With the tricks described above we send full printed instructions for performing each trick, so that anyone can readily perform all the tricks to the great amusement of their friends or the public. Any boy of ordinary intelligence, with this Cabinet of Tricks in his possession, can give a parlor entertainment not inferior to some regular magicians. Besides the tricks contained in the Cabinet, there are many other feats and illusions fully explained with full printed instructions, for which you easily make or procure the necessary apparatus. **ONLY 75 CENTS POSTPAID**

A DeLuxe Edition of our new 1927 CATALOG mailed on receipt of 25c. Only book of its kind in existence. 550 pages of all the latest tricks in magic, the newest novelties, puzzles, games, spo ting goods, interesting books, curiosities in seeds, plants, etc., unprocurable elsewhere. Unused U. S. & Foreign Stamps accepted.

STAGE MONEY

With a bunch of these bills, it is easy for each person of limited means to appear prosperous by flashing a roll of these bills at the proper time and peeling off a genuine bill or two from the outside of the roll, the effect created will be found to be all that can be desired. **Prices, postpaid: 40 Bills 20c, 125 for 50c, or $3.50 thousand postpaid.**

Wonderful X-Ray Tube

10c

A wonderfullittle instrument producing optical illusions both surprising and startling. With it you can see what is apparently the bones of your fingers, the lead in a lead pencil, the interior opening in a pipe stem, and many other similar illusions. A mystery that no one has been able to satisfactorily explain. Price **10c, 3 for 25c, 1 dozen 75c. Johnson Smith & Co.**

Good Luck Ring

Quaint and Novel Design

A VERY striking and uncommon ring. Silver finish, skull and crossbone design, with two brilliant, flashing gems sparkling out of the eyes. Said by many to bring Good Luck to the wearer, hence its name, **Good Luck Ring.** Very unique ring that you will take a pride in wearing. **ONLY 25 CENTS.**

Exploding Cigarettes

JUST LIKE ORDINARY CIGARETTES. BUT SUCH REAL STARTLERS! The box contains ten genuine cigarettes of excellent quality. They appear so real, but when each cigarette is about one-third smoked, the victim gets a very great surprise as it goes off with a loud **BANG!** A great mirth provoker yet entirely harmless **Price 25c per box.**

Popular Watch Charms

15c

ONLY 3 for 40c; $1.35 doz.

Very, pretty little curiosities and decidedly novel. Fitted with Magnifying Lenses that enlarge the pictures to a very surprising degree; in fact, it seems almost incredible that a clear picture could be possible in such a small compass, and how sharp and distinct they show up when you look through. Come in assorted views—actresses, views of Panama Canal, Lord's Prayer in type, etc.

CIGARETTE MAKER

Roll your own and save money. Makes them better and quicker besides saving more than half. Use your favorite brand of tobacco. Neat, useful and handy. Pocket size, weighs ½ oz. Made entirely of metal, nickel-plated. **Price 25c postpaid.**

MAGIC FLUTE

Wonderfully Sweet Toned and Musical

Post Paid 15c

The Magic Flute, or Humanotone, is a unique and novel musical instrument that is played with nose and mouth combined. There is just a little knack in playing it which, when once acquired after a little practice will enable you to produce very sweet music that somewhat resembles a flute. There is no fingering, and once you have mastered it you can play all kinds of music with facility and ease. When played as an accompaniment to a piano or any other musical instrument, the effect is as charming as it is surprising.

Novelty Badges

Kissing Permit 10c *Garter Inspector 10c*

Two very novel metal badges, nickel plated, that you can wear, giving you fun out of all proportion to their trifling cost. **10c, each badge, 3 for 25c, or 75c per doz. p.pd.**

BLANK CARTRIDGE PISTOL

Price $1.00 Postpaid

This well made and effective Pistol is modelled on the pattern of the latest type of Revolver, the appearance of which alone is enough to scare a burglar, whilst, when loaded, it will probably prove just as effective as a revolver with real bullets, without the danger to life. It takes the standard .22 Calibre Blank Cartridges, that are obtainable most everywhere. Even the most timid women can use it with perfect safety and frighten a thief without risk to herself or anyone else. A Great Protection Against Burglars, Tramps and Dogs. You can have it lying about without the danger attached to other revolvers. We sell large numbers around the 4th of July. Well made of solid Metal. **PRICE ONLY $1.00 Postpaid. Blank Cartridges 22-cal., shipped by express only, 50c per 100. Johnson Smith & Co., Dept. 858, Racine, Wis.**

Sneezing Powder

Place a very small amount of this powder on the back of your hand and blow it into the air, and everyone in the room or those in front of you will begin to sneeze without knowing the reason why. It is most amusing to hear their remarks, as they never suspect the real source, but think they have caught it one from the other. Between the laughing and sneezing you yourself will be having the time of your life. For parties, political meetings, car rides, or any place at all where there is a gathering of people, it is the **greatest joke out. Price 10c or 3 for 25c** Shipped by Express Only.

Mystic Skeleton 10c pd.

A jointed figure of a skeleton 14 in. in height, will dance to music and perform various gyrations and movements while the operator may be some distance from it.

Serpent's Eggs

Box contains **12 eggs.** When lit with a match, each one gradually hatches itself into a snake several feet long, which curls and twists about in a most life-like manner. **Price per box 10c ppd.**

BOYS! BOYS! BOYS!

THROW YOUR VOICE

Into a trunk, under the bed or anywhere. Lots of fun fooling the teacher, policeman or friends.

THE VENTRILO

a little instrument, fits in the mouth out of sight, used with above for Bird Calls, etc. Anyone can use it.

Never Fails. A 16-page course on ventriloquism, and the Ventrilo, ALL FOR 10c postpaid.

ITCHING POWDER

This is another good practical joke; the intense discomfiture of your victims to everyone but themselves is thoroughly enjoyable. All that is necessary to start the ball rolling is to deposit a little of the powder on a person's hand and the powder can be relied upon to do the rest. The result is a vigorous scratch, then some more scratch, and still some more.

10c box, 3 boxes for 25c or 75c per doz boxes. By Express.

KEYLESS LOCKS

25c Postpaid

These clever locks cannot be opened unless you know the combination. No key necessary. For your locker, bicycle, tool chest, mail box, thousands of uses. Shackle and tumblers nickle plated. Weighs trifle over one ounce. Small, yet strong. Secret and full instructions with each lock. **PRICE 25c or 3 for 65c postpaid.**

SQUIRT ROSE

25c

A REAL STARTLER. This is the most popular of all squirt tricks. The flower in your coat looks so fresh and sweet that everyone is tempted to inhale the delightful perfume. Then is the moment to press the bulb. Geewhillikens! Don't they jump? There is a very long, rubber tube that easily reaches to the pocket of your coat or trousers, and the bulb is large enough to make a dozen shots with one loading. **PRICE 25c each, or 3 for 65c postpaid.**

COMIC CELLULOID BUTTONS

These Comic Celluloid Buttons provide subjects for pleasant jokes and amusing conversation and thus smooth the way to a more familiar acquaintance and cordial friendship. There are seventy different titles altogether, all very wittily worded and quite unobjectionable. Wear one and see the effect. All four Buttons illustrated above will be sent postpaid to any address for **ONLY 20c** or a **dozen,** all different, for **45c.**

PISTOL, OPERA & FIELD GLASS

PRICE POSTPAID, **$1.00**

LOOK!

It is made in the shape of and looks like a regular Automatic Pistol. No one is likely to stop and ask you whether it is real or not. Thus it is likely to prove itself very handy in an emergency. On pressing the trigger it opens up, as shown in the illustration at the right, revealing nine most useful articles—Opera and Field Glass, Telescope, Mirror, Magnifying Glass and Burning Lens Reading Glass, Sun Dial, Sun Compass, etc. In the handle of the revolver there is a place for various pocket necessaries, such as First Aid Articles, Buttons, Pins, etc. The Pistol is of sheet metal, blued finish, that can be carried comfortably in pocket. **PRICE $1.00.**

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JOHNSON SMITH & CO. DEPT. 858, RACINE, WIS.

Postage Stamps Accepted

Black Jack

"that good old licorice flavor"

Give this picture a title. $1000 in prizes

$1000

FOR TITLES TO THIS BLACK JACK PICTURE

8 cash prizes will be paid as follows

1st Prize	$500
2nd Prize	250
3rd Prize	100
4th Prize	50
5th to 8th Prizes ($25 each)	100

Here's fun for every member of the family. This picture needs a title. Perhaps chewing Black Jack and enjoying its good old licorice flavor, although not a condition of this contest, will help you to find the winning title that fully expresses the story this picture tells. Everybody residing in the United States or Canada is eligible except employees of the manufacturers of Black Jack Chewing Gum.

RULES

1: Each entry must contain a title suggestion in 20 words or less and the name and address of the sender. **2:** Contestants may submit as many answers as they wish. When sending in suggested titles white paper cut the size of a Black Jack wrapper (2¾"x3"), or the reverse side of Black Jack wrappers may be used. Use one piece of paper or one wrapper for each title suggested. **3:** All entries for this contest must be sent to "Black Jack Titles", Dept. 8, American Chicle Company, Long Island City, New York, and must be in before midnight, Aug. 22, 1927. Winners to be announced as soon thereafter as possible. **4:** Titles must be sent first class mail, postage prepaid. **5:** Originality of thought, cleverness of idea, and clearness of expression and neatness will count. **6:** The judges will be a committee appointed by the makers of Black Jack and their decisions will be final. If there are ties, each tying contestant will be awarded the prize tied for.

Study the picture. Think of Black Jack's delicious licorice flavor. Then send in your title or titles. Contest closes at midnight, Aug. 22, 1927.