



#### CHAPTER XIV.

Meanwhile Willie Snow had been hanging awkwardly in the rear, not decided whether to return to Hampton or stay and see the affair out. He walked a few paces downhill, and all at once encountered Gracious Me. Willie felt as if some gigantic toad stood face to face with him.

"She ain't much, sir," he said, inditing Vanity with his thumb. "Your good lady and me's been instrumental in finding her out."

There he stood, with his swollen face and yellow eyes and greasy attire, touching his cap for reward, and looking such a model of shambling infamy that Willie's face turned crimson with shame.

"Look here!" Willie cried furiously, "if you ever dare to speak to me again—I'll—I'll—*you hear?*"

Gracious Me made no reply, for reading the wrath in Willie Snow's countenance, he hastily concluded that his time was at hand and disappeared round the corner with remarkable rapidity, looking more like a toad than ever.

Now, for the first time, Willie observed that a stranger was loitering about with an air something like his own—as of a man undecided whether to go or stay. As this man eyed Willie curiously and seemed anxious to speak, Willie, who, above all things, wished to avoid Vanity, turned about to the stranger:

"Do you know anything of this extraordinary affair?"

"My firm has reason to know a good deal," the man answered. "We have lost property to the value of five thousand three hundred pounds in connection with—"

"Five thousand three hundred!" Willie echoed, aghast. "What a sum of money to be sure! Tell me, how is this young person connected with it? She is not the thief?"

"There, sir," the small man answered, speaking, it seemed, for the detective police force and the plundered firm, "you have us. Up to last week we knew very little. At this present moment we are practically in the dark. If it had not been for a cat's-eye we should have had no light on the subject at all."

Willie Snow was quite staggered at this.

"I see that cat's eye," continued the little man, dropping his voice to an awful whisper, "see it in a shop window near College Green, Bristol, set in diamonds."

Light broke upon Willie. The cat's-eye was a precious stone, but as we are not great people for jewelry near Hampton, he had never heard the gem mentioned before.

"Near College Green, Bristol, sir. I was looking in at the window, as you might be, thinking of nothing at all, and I saw a stone which I seemed to recognize. I looked at it, and as sure as I am standing in my shoes that eye seemed to wink at me. I looked deeper; there was the identical flaw far down. Then, say I, 'Land at last.' We followed it up, and here we are."

"But, surely," Willie said, wondering what the answer would be, "you do not connect the young lady with that?"

"That is the very sin. This young lady and her father have been for some time traveling about, or, rather, going from place to place. The father, as far as can be discovered, is a quiet, good old man—fond of his church, they say, when he can get there; and he has been known to ask if such and such a ministry was improving. Steady, respectable old gentleman. And his daughter seems fond of him, too."

"Well," Willie said impatiently, "what next?"

"Why, sir, wherever these two go—at least, wherever they have gone up to this time—a man has been observed to be connected with them, coming to their house at night—never seen by day—but evidently upon most intimate terms. This man has been at last identified as a burglar and worse than a burglar; and the police believe that they are on the eve of one of the most important discoveries that have been made for years. In fact, England will ring with it—at least so they say."

"Look here," said Willie, seeing that the detective moved forward; "they are going into the farm. I must see this matter out."

And in a strange sort of way, much like a walking funeral, the party moved on toward Tumbledown Farm.

#### CHAPTER XV.

It was now plain that the detectives had taken such precautions that the escape of any one from the farm was an impossibility. Another officer in plain clothes had joined my friend, and two men were to be seen approaching the farm, carelessly as it seemed, but they, too, were there on business.

All this time Vanity showed no agitation. She led the way with her swift, fearless step, and the detective looked at her with an admiration he could not conceal. The more sure he was that his man lay in the house, the more he admired the girl's daring.

More like a walking funeral than ever, the party stopped as they got up to the door. Sure, Willie Snow felt a sickening at heart as he saw the officers had hemmed the place in, and how serious and determined they seemed, as if the business might be death to one or other of the party.

"Andrew," the stout man said to the companion at his side, "you and I walk in. Now, miss, I go first; you second, if you please; and this gentleman third."

Easy he and easy she. If the pain had been footmen with silk legs and powdered hair, and she my lady, Miss Vanity could not have treated them with a more haughty indifference. And so they walked into the parlor, Willie following, like a man in a dream.

There sat the old gentleman, with a tumbler of water beside him, and a newspaper spread open on the table, and he groping out the words and pronouncing them to himself, as I have noticed deaf people sometimes do. He looked up at the party with great curiosity, and he called out:

"Who are these people?"

Vanity went to him, and replied, in that high-low voice in which we speak to the deaf:

"No one of consequence, father; it is only the landlord—"

The old man scrutinized the party with a penetrating air.

"He must be a good landlord, if he comes to see about repairs before he is asked."

The detective passed out of the room, and Andrew with him.

Now, for the first time, Vanity seemed

to observe that Willie Snow was in the room, and she dealt him rather an impudent look, which made him very uncomfortable.

"Why you come in here, I don't know," she said. "As you are here now, you must stay till this meetin' goes on."

Willie stood feeling as if he had never felt in his life before, but he could not utter a word, and Vanity returned to her father's side.

The tramping of feet was heard overhead, as of men going from room to room, and two or three times there was a heavy sound of furniture being dragged over the floor.

In a few minutes the heavy downward tramp of the detectives was heard on the stairs, and the two men re-entered the room, the chief looking puzzled and disappointed.

"I have made a mistake, miss," he said to Vanity. "Fact is, I have been misinformed. I hope you will admit that I have tried to make the job as pleasant as I could."

(To be continued.)

#### AN UNENVIABLE LOT.

The Life of a Missionary in China Far from Pleasant.

The lot of the missionary in China, particularly the zealous minister of the gospel, who wanders away from the beaten paths and into new territory, is far from pleasant. It is a most dangerous proceeding, for in the localities of the recent massacres the minds of the ignorant Chinese have been poisoned by the reports circulated by designing officials, and a portion of the population is decidedly opposed to the presence of the Christians.

All sorts of stories are told of the cruelties practiced by the missionaries and every little while this hatred, fanned to a flame, breaks out and several missionaries and their families are persecuted. Sometimes they escape with their lives and only their property is destroyed, but it not infrequently happens that there is considerable loss of life, as in the recent cases. There is a great hue and cry and the United States government and other powers are denounced for not sending a fleet of warships to the scene, regardless of the fact that the scene of the disturbances are always hundreds of miles inland, far from the coast and navigable rivers. To send a land force would only mean the addition of so many more victims to the already long list.

For the United States to send a force to the locality where the last massacre occurred would be about as reasonable as it would have been for the King of Italy to have ordered a force to march from New York to Colorado, where there were a number of Italians killed by a mob a few months ago. The United States shipped more than \$4,500,000 to England through the Post Office department; and more than \$2,500,000 to Germany. Altogether the people of this country sent nearly \$13,000,000 abroad by postal order, and received less than \$6,000,000 through the same channel. But it is worthy of note that we sent nearly a million dollars less abroad last year than we did the year before.

As soon as it seemed likely that the newly discovered Rontgen rays might prove to be of value to the medical profession experiments were begun by many physicians and photographers with a view to determining the uses and limitations of the rays in surgery. The results in many cases have shown that the profession will reap great benefit from the X rays, especially in the direction of surgical diagnosis.

The French Government's new budget shows that a step has been taken in the direction of State socialism. Six hundred thousand francs have been voted to societies for the sick and aged, and 400,000 to societies for the relief of children. This foots up a million francs, the same sum voted to the missions that will represent France at the coronation of the Czar, as the previous vote of 975,000 francs has been increased.

The followers of Menelek, King of Shoa, while not so large as the fierce Zulus are about the toughest warriors in the world. They do not know physical fear. A New York Press writer has seen a man jab a burnt stick several inches in his flesh without wincing. This apparent insensibility to pain is accompanied with a religious frenzy in battle that renders the soldiers unconscious of bodily harm. They have no fear of death and their happiness is to kill.

A curious application of the Rontgen rays has been made in France by Professor Buguet, of Rouen, and the chemist, M. Giscard. They took true and false diamonds for the experiment, and obtained entirely different results. When the rays were applied to the false diamonds only indistinct images appeared on the photographic plates. The real diamonds, however, allowed the rays to pass, and as a result, much darker pictures were produced on the plates. Thus a certain method of discovering the quality of diamonds is ascertained.

The attempt of the Italians to get possession of Abyssinia is not colonization at all, even if it succeeds, but conquest. It may not succeed. The population is only about three or four millions, but when a population of that size puts 100,000 fully armed troops into the field in their own country, they're hard to beat. The Abyssins live in the mountains and love liberty. The height of their land keeps it cool and healthy, even under the equatorial sun. They are racially mixed. Some of them are descended from the old Coptic kings and from the Phoenicians, who once ruled all the Mediterranean. Others are the ordinary Ethiopians.

According to the New York Times, which prints a partial list of them, with the names of their owners, the number of their occupants and their street numbers, so far as they have any right to have such a number, there are about 2,500 rear tenements in New York city, occupied by over 50,000 people. These, says City and State, are peculiar breeding places of disease and crime. The law now forbids the building of any more of these rear or back houses, but the real problem is how to get rid of those now in existence. They are a terrible menace to the health and well-being, physical and moral, of the great city wherein they are found.

"A good many of the ignorant country people in Spain," says The Boston Transcript, "are very much more courteous to Americans than to English people, for the curious reason that they consider them subject also to the crown of Spain. It has been found in out-of-the-way villages near Gibraltar especially, where the English occupation of that fort is still looked upon as a temporary and offensive intrusion of foreigners on Spanish soil, that the whole tone of the people will change when it is found that a tourist is not English but American. 'Ah, I have a brother in Havana,' a grim-browed villager will say, with an infection that implies that his American interlocutor must necessarily be from Cuba too."

These are the gentlemen who make their living by piracy. They and the men of Canton have learned wisdom by experience. They no longer cruise the wide seas, attacking any craft that may come along. There are too many gunboats patrolling the coast—too many rifled guns and too many yard arms. Law and order, in the past half-century, have shot, hanged, drowned, burned up or burned at least 100,000 followers of the "black flag." To-day the work is done upon a smaller, but a far shrewder and safer, basis.

They keep spies at various places in their neighborhood, who report to headquarters whenever some junk is about to leave that has a rich cargo or carries a large amount of money. Along with this goes the information of who commands the boat, how large a crew it carries and how it is armed. The pirates then plan to intercept the craft in some river or arm of the sea, or else in some shoal water near the coast, where there is no chance of meeting a gunboat, and where, after the robbery, they will have a safe means of escape.

Their calculations are carefully made but come out right only once in four or five times. It may be that a foreign or Chinese gunboat suddenly appears on the scene. It may be that the junk they are after goes past their rendezvous with a European steamer or a river launch, or maybe the prospective victim is delayed by adverse winds and tides, and so does not appear at the time and place figured upon. When they do make a capture they are not so brutal and cruel as in the old years. For the rest, any one who knows China and the Chinese will not need to be told that the booty is easily disposed of without risks or questions asked.—Pall Mall Gazette.

#### Impartial.

A remarkable instance of the impartial administration of justice is said to have occurred some years ago in a court of Texas, when a young Mexican, charged with having stolen a pistol, was arraigned. He proved beyond all doubt that the pistol was his own, and that it had been in his possession long before the alleged theft occurred.

The case went to the jury at 12 o'clock, the usual hour of adjournment, and the jury, who did not wish to be kept until the court opened again at 3 o'clock, hurried to give in their verdict.

"But is he guilty?" queried a thoughtful old gentleman.

"Well," exclaimed the foreman, after a stare of astonishment at this view of the matter, "you think he ain't guilty, let's clear him!"

"Go ahead," said another. "We don't want to stay here until 3 o'clock. Hurry up!"

"But is he guilty?" queried a thoughtful old gentleman.

"Well," exclaimed the foreman, after a stare of astonishment at this view of the matter, "you think he ain't guilty, let's clear him!"

"Come down here!" he cried. "No, thank you; I am master here. Come up, you. The way is narrow, and you are broad enough. Still, if I take care, I may miss you; I may not make your wife a widow; come along and try."

The detective was meditating how he could break his way through, or whether he could coax his man down, when Hardware, having drained his tumbler, hurled it savagely at the officer. Quick as the detective was, he saved himself only by a hair's breadth as it shivered upon the floor.

"Your health for forty years!" roared Hardware, with his diabolical laugh, "and after that your lifetime!" Walk upstairs and have a chat with the old man!"

In the moment while the officer drew back Hardware must have carried out his awful scheme, for when the detective looked up the stairs again all was raging.

Hardware had deluged the place with paraffin, or some other inflammable liquid of that sort, and had set the whole on fire. At the top he stood as before, looking now like some gigantic fiend.

"Come up to the madman's room!" he yelled again. "Hot flame, cold head! all ready! Up to the madman's room!"

Another roar of laughter came from above, and then they heard another loud crash, the meaning of which was evident the next instant. Hardware must have thrown a great glass vessel down the stairs, filled with paraffin, for immediately after the crash a stream of liquid flame ran out into the room. Another crash followed, and another, and then the room was filled with smoke and fire.

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