

CHAPTER L

If there be aught in presentiments, I was well warned by that first glimpse of the inn. The monstrous bulk of gables, sloping roofs and lean chimneys nched blackly against the sky would we scared a bolder spirit than mino. all day I had walked under blue sky, between green hedgerows, with light heart and whistling lip. Confronted in the twilight by so sinister a scene, I felt qualmish. Ragged clouds dropped their fringes over sullen western red, around spread the salt marshes, evil in their desolation, and I, with chilled blood, stared at the lonely mansion dominating the outlook. Here, thought I, an adventure awaits me. The hour, the house, the scene, hint at romance, and that of

the strangest. So much were my spirits dashed by these ominous environments that it was in my mind to walk the farther 10 iles and shelter for the night at arshminster. Yet some fate compelled y unwilling feet toward that inhospiable door, and almost before I knew my own mind I was knocking loudly. It opened while my hand was still raised for the final rap, and a handsome woman presented herself to my astonished eyes. What beauty did among the tombs I know not, yet there she smiled. Though handsome, she was not a lady and lacked the undefinable stamp of birth. At the same time she was above the commonality. Not a lady, not a servant, but something between the two. Her appearance confirmed the promise

"I have walked from Eastbury," said L cap in hand, "and wish to put up here for the night."

"Marshminster is only 10 miles away," answered she, in nowise disposed to admit me.
"And for that reason I want a bed

here. Twenty and more miles walking under a hot sun has wearied me considably."

I am sorry we cannot accommodate sir." "This is an inn," I said, glancing at

"The Fen inn, sir," she replied, still smiling, "and full of guests for the time

being. "Full of guests in this locality! You must then entertain waterfowl, for 1 have seen no human being for the last 12 miles.

She made no direct answer, but shook ner head and prepared to close the door. Pigfed by the discourtesy and still more by the mystery of this reception, I was about to insist upon admission when my attention was attracted to a face at the near window. I recognized it as that of a college friend and waved my stick in greeting.

'Hello, Briarfield!'' I shouted lustily. "Come and help me to a night's

lodgings. The girl was surprised by my remark, and, as I thought, changed color. She epped aside to let Briarfield pass and thil ted further astonishent at the ur-

anity of our greeting. "What wind blows you here, Denham?" asked Briarfield, shaking my

"I am on a walking tour," I answered, "and hoped to have reached Marshminster tonight, but as it is 10 miles away and I feel weary I wish to sleep here. This young lady, however, says the inn is full of guests and".

'Full of guests!" interrrupted Briarfield, looking at the girl. "Nonsense, Rose. I am the only guest here!" "We expect others, sir," said Rose

obstinately. "You can't expect a sufficient number to fill the house," he retorted.

"Surely Mr. Denham can have a bed?" "I shall ask my father, sir!" When she disappeared, Briarfield

turned to me with a smile and asked a trange question. "Now, I'll be bound," said he, "that

ou don't know my first name!" Felix." "No! You are wrong. I am not the

rich Felix, but the poor Francis." "You see the result of being one of twins," said I impatiently. "If at college I could not distinguish between you, how can you expect me to do so now? I haven't seen either you or your brother for at least two years. Where is

Relix? "At Marshminster." "And what are you doing here?"

"Ah, that's a long story! If you"-"Please to walk in, sir," interrupted Rose at this moment. "My father derires to speak with you."

"I have, then, to submit myself to the approval of the landlord," said I and orthwith entered the house, followed by Francis Briarfield.

The landlord, a lean, saturnine man above the common height, saluted me with a sour smile. In appearance and demeanor he was quite in keeping with that dreary inn. About him lurked a Puritanic flavor not ill suited to his somber attire and unctuous speech. He was less like an innkeeper than a smug valet. I mistrusted the man at first

"I can give you supper and a bed, sir," said he, bending his body and rubbing his hands, "neither, I regret to say,

of the first quality."
'Never mind," I answered, unstrapg my knapsack. "I am too tired and

ngry to be particular."
"We have only lately taken up this house, sir," he continued, still bowing, "and things are a trifle disordered."

I gianced around. Despite the cheerful blaze of a fire, the room had a mildewed look, as though long uninhabited. Traces of hasty cleansing were visible in all corners, and in the dim light filtered through dusty panes the apartment had a singularly uninviting aspect. Again that premonition of misfortune came

over me. "I wonder you took up the house at all," said I. "You won't make your fortune in this locality."

The landlord made no reply, but muttering something about supper left the room. His daughter had already departed, presumably in the direction of the kitchen, and I found myself alone with Francis Briarfield. He was absently looking out at the window and started when I addressed him directly. augured mystery therefrom.

"What's the meaning of these mysteries?" I asked abruptly. The horror of the place was already influencing my

"What mysteries?" demanded Briarfield in a listless manner.

"This inn has been uninhabited for some considerable period. A suspicious looking rascal and his pretty daughter have taken up their abode here with no possible chance of getting customers. I stumble on this castle grim in the twilight and find you here—you of all men
—whom I believed to be in South America. Don't you call these mysteries?

"If you put it that way, I admit the mysteries, replied Francis, coming toward the fire. "I know little about the inn, still less about the landlord and his daughter. As to myself, I am here by appointment to meet my brother Felix. Came from London to Starby and rode from thence to this inn."

"Why meet him in this murderous looking house?' "He named the place of meeting

himself." "And you?" "I only arrived this month in England from South America. I wrote him from London, asking to see him. He

as to meet, so here I am." "Why neutral ground? Have you quarreled?"

appointed this inn as neutral ground for

'Bitterly." "You did so at college," said I, looking steadily at him. "Strange that such ill blood should exist between twin

"The inevitable woman," said Franwith his usual soft speech.

"Oh! And her name?" "Olivia Bellin!"

"I know her. Do you mean to say, Briarfield, that"-

"Hush!" he said, rapidly indicating the door, and there stood the girl Rose listening to our conversation. Her face was pale, and it was evident that the mention of the name had powerfully affected her. Seeing our eyes were on her, she apologized in a low, nervous

"Your pardon, gentlemen," she said, placing a tray on the table. "I did not intend to interrupt your conversation. Allow me to lay the table for supper.'

"First show me my room," said I, picking up my knapsack. "I am dusty and wish to give myself a brush up."

Rose nodded and preceded me out of the apartment. I glanced back and saw that Francis had returned to his old post by the window. Evidently he was saying-your own brother!" watching for the arrival of his brother. "When does Mr. Felix Briarfield ar-

stairs. "I don't know the name, sir," she said, with an obvious effort.

"You don't know the name?" I reeated, seeing she was lying, "yet Mr. brother."

"It may be so, sir. But I know nothing about it. Mr. Briarfield is a stranger to me, like yourself." "It is to be hoped you received him

more willingly than you did me.'

My words fell on the empty air, for after her last remark she hastily departed. I mechanically attended to my wants and wondered what could be the meaning of the girl's attitude.

"She knows Miss Bellin and Felix Briarfield," I thought, "perhaps not personally, but at least their names. She is also aware of the intended visit of Felix to this place. I must find out from Francis the reason of that visit, and it may throw some light on the demeanor of Rose. I am glad I came here tonight, for that landlord is scarcely a person to be trusted. Certainly my presentiment of romance is coming true.

When I descended to the dining room, I found supper laid and Francis impatiently awaiting my arrival. A lamp was lighted, and for the first time I saw his face plainly. The alteration in his looks and demeanor since our college days was astonishing. Felix had always idle. been the graver of the twins, and it was the distinguishing mark between them. Now the livelier spirits of Francis had calmed down to a subdued gravity which made the resemblance between them still greater. We seated ourselves at the caught my earnest look.

"You find me altered?" he asked. with manifest discomposure.

"Very much altered and more like Felix than ever."

"I haven't seen him for over a year, said Briarfield abruptly, "so I don't know if the resemblance is still strong." "It is stronger," I answered emphat-

ically. "I saw Felix two months ago, and now I look at you tonight I can scarcely believe it is Francis and not Felix seated before me."

"We are alike to outward view, Denham, but I hope our natures are differ-

"What do you mean?" "Felix," said he, with marked deliberation, "is a thief, a liar and a dishonorable man.

"You speak strongly."

"I have reason to." "The before mentioned reason, Briarfield," said I, alluding to the feminine

"Yes. By the way," he added feverishly, "you said Miss Bellin was known

"In a casual way only. She is a society beauty, and I have met her once or twice; also her very silly mother. The latter is as remarkable for folly as the former is for beauty. Well, Briarfield, and what about Miss Bellin?"

"I was engaged to her."

"You are engaged to her?"
"I said 'was,' "he replied, with emphasis. "Now she is engaged to my brother." "Of her own free will?"

"I don't know," said Briarfield. "I really don't know. When I went to Chile, I was her affianced lover. Now I return and learn that she is to marry my brother." 'What explanation does he make?"

"None as yet. Tonight or tomorrow morning he comes here to explain."

"But why here, of all places?"
"Miss Bellin is in Marshminster. Felix is staying there also, and in his letter asked me to see him at the Fen inn, as he wished to explain his conduct fully before I met Olive again."

"And you agreed?" "As you see.

"In your place," said I meditatively, I should have gone at once to Marshminster and confronted both. There is some trickery about this."

"You think so?" "I am by nature suspicious," I answered. "Perhaps too much so. Yes, I think there is some trickery.'

Francis frowned and glanced at his "It is now 8 o'clock," he said, replacing it in his pocket, "too late to

go to Marshminster. "Besides which," I added, "our worthy landlord has doubtless neither trap nor horse."

By this time we had finished supper, and Rose came in to clear away. Thoughtfully filling my pipe, I watched her closely. Undeniably she was a very beautiful woman and ill suited to her present occupation. Why a girl so handsome should bury herself in this lonely inn was a mystery to me. I felt sure that there was a purpose connected with her presence here, and that inimical to Briarfield. The landlord did not make his appearance, which was to me a matter of some relief. I disliked the fellow

Francis, smoking hard, sat staring at the fire and took no heed of Rose. Once or twice she glanced in his direction cis in a harsh tone, quite at variance and looked as though about to address him. Catching my eye, she bit her lip from the room, with manifest anger at | be over." not having accomplished her design.

"Strange," said I, lighting my pipe. "What is strange?" asked Briarfield, looking up.

"That girl knows your brother." "It's not impossible," he answered carelessly. "Felix always had an eye for pretty faces, and as he appointed this inn as a meeting place he has probably been here before. Rose Strent no doubt draws him hither by her beauty." "That is not a compliment to Miss

band. He shall not marry her," added Briarfield angrily. "I say he shall not marry her and make her life miserable. I'll kill him first."

"Man, man, think of what you are

"My own brother-my twin brother," scoffed Francis, "is that any rearive?" I asked Rose as we ascended the son why he should take away from me the woman I love?" "She is not worth regretting if she

forgets you so soon."

"She has not forgotten me," he said earnestly. "I assure you, Denham, she Francis Briarfield is here to meet his loves me still. The last letter I received



"I say he shall not marry her and make her life miscrable. I'll kill him first." from her gave no hint that she wearied of me. As you say, there is some trickery about it. I'll have an explanation from Felix," continued he, striking the table with his fist, "or, by heaven, I'll kill him!"

"Where did you meet her?" I asked, ignoring this last remark, which was but

"In town over a year ago," he replied, calming down. "She is, as you know, very beautiful, and her mother wished her to make a great match. I am comfortably off, but have not a title; therefore Mrs. Bellin would not sanctable in silence, and he colored as he tion the engagement. Then I had to go to South America on business connected with my property. Before I left she promised to become my wife and swore that nothing should part us or render her false to me. See, here is the ring she gave me," he added, stretching out his hand, "this pearl ring. I was to be back in six months, and our engagement was to be made public. I am back in

six months, and the first thing I hear is that she is to marry Felix."

"Did she write and tell you so?" "No. But Felix did and asked me to meet him here before seeing her." "Now, I wonder if this apparent

treachery of Miss Bellin has anything to do with your twinship?"

"What do you mean?" asked Briar-

field, starting up.
"You are so like in appearance," said
I, "that no one could tell you spart. You have lived constantly together save for the last six months and know every action of each other's lives. It may be that Felix has passed himself off to Miss Bellin as you.

"Impossible! She would detect the

deception."
"I doubt it, save by intuition. I assure you, Briarfield, that the resemblance between you is most perplexing. There is not the slightest difference. You dress the same; you have the same gestures; you almost think the same. It is scarce possible to tell which is which when apart. I thought tonight that you were Felix."

"It cannot be; it cannot be," he muttered feverishly. "Her own heart would tell her the truth." "Did you tell Felix of your engage-

ment?" I asked abruptly.
"Yes. I told him all."

"And when did you hear last from Miss Bellin?" "Some three months ago. It was be-

cause she did not reply to my letters that I came back so soon. "To whom were your letters sent?"

"To her, of course." "Care of Felix?" said I, with instinctive suspicion.

"Why, yes," he said, with a sudden own. "I did not want Mrs. Bellin to frown. know of our engagement, so did not dare to write openly. Felix undertook to deliver the letters."

"He may have undertaken to do so, but," I added forcibly, "he did not." "Denham!"

"The whole case is as clear as day," said I. "Felix was in love with Miss Bellin and wished to marry her. Knowing she was in love with you, he was well aware he had no chance, so resorted to trickery. When you left for Chile, he gave her your letters for three months, then, saying he was going abroad, ostensibly left England, but really staid and presented himself as you."

'As me?" "Yes. He has traded on the marvelous resemblance between you. He knows all your life, all your love affairs, and I have no doubt that Miss Bellin believes that he is Francis Briarfield, her lover, returned from South America in three months instead of six."

"If I thought so," muttered Francis, biting his fingers, "if I thought so"— "I am sure it is so. Now you see why it is imperative that he should interview you before you meet Miss Bellin. He wishes to reveal the deception and throw himself on your mercy.'

"He'll get no mercy from me if this is so," said Briarfield in a somber tone. "Oh, fool that I was not to write direct to Olivia when I came back to England! But it is not too late. When he comes and desisted. Finally she disappeared him to Olivia. Then our troubles will

"A man capable of such a trick is capable of worse," said I sententiously. "I advise you to be on your guard against Felix."

"Do you think he'll kill me?" "I don't go as far as that," I replied cautiously, "but your meeting will beproductive of trouble. Just now you exressed a wish to kill him."

"And I shall if he has tricked me as you say." "Nonsense, Briarfield, you talk wild-

ly. This matter can surely be settled in "I know it. Felix is a profligate a less melodramatic fashion. I am glad scamp and will make her a bad hus- I am here, as perhaps you will permit me to be present at the interview." "Willingly. I know how clever you

are, Denham. You may assist me to unmask Felix." "Do you think he'll come tonight?" said I, going to the window.

"His letter said tonight or tomor-"Then it will be tomorrow. Felix wouldn't risk meeting you at night if he had thus betrayed you. Let us go to bed and tomorrow settle the matter."

At first Francis was unwilling to retire, but when the landlord came to lock up for the night and laughed at the idea of any one coming there from Marshminster he fell in with my desire. Together we went up stairs and parted on the threshold of his room. It was five or six doors away from mine.

"Lock your door," said I as we part-

"No, but I don't like the inn, and I

dislike the face of Strent, the landlord.

"What, do you think I'll be murdered in my sleep?"

Besides," I continued, tapping Briarfield's breast, "that girl Rose." "What about her?" "She knows Miss Bellin.

With that I departed, notwithstand-

ing his desire for an explanation of my last words. So wearied was I that despite my suspicions of the inn I speedily fell asleep.

(To be continued.)

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SOLD BY GROCERS EVERYWHERE. WALTER BAKER & GO. DORCHESTER, MASS. **GOVERNMENT ROADS**

IS PUBLIC OWNERSHIP PRAC-TICAL AND DESIRABLE

No. 1.

Under the above head we propose to give to our readers a series of articles on the public ownership of railroads. Many honest and otherwise well informend persons believe that public ownership of railroads is not only impractical but a new and untried theory. In the outset we want to disabuse their minds of this error. Public ownership of railroads is as old as the invention of railr ads. If anyone will take the pains to look it up they will find in the America nRevision of the Encyclopedia Britannica, Vol. III., pages 1303-6, that the following governments own railroads, most of which are operated by the state:

Austria owns and operates nearly 2,000 miles of railway.

Baden owns 829 miles of railway. Bavaria has 2,896 miles of railway owned by the government.

Belgium owns about 2,000 miles of railway.

Some 181 miles of railway is owned by Ceylon. Chili owns 670 miles of railway.

Chins owns and operates all her railways. The United States of Columbia owned 218 miles of railway in 1890.

Denmark has about 1,000 miles of railroad owned by the government France owns about 2,000 miles of railway, but most or quite all is

leased to companies. The German empire owns about 21,-840 miles of railway. England and Wales own 14,034

Scotland has 3,118 miles of railways belonging to the state. Ireland owns 2,791 miles of railroad.

Hesse owns 226 miles of her railway system. A large per cent of the railways of Italy belong to the government, but

are leased to companies. Japan owns 503 miles of railway. The colony of Natalowns 305 miles

The Netherlands has nearly 1,000 miles owned by the government. New South Wales owns 2,182 miles of railway.

New Zealand in 1890 owned 672 miles of railroad. Norway has 929 miles of railroadall her own.

Portugal owns about one-half of the railways in that country. Oldenburg owns 222 miles of her

Peru has 1,625 miles of railroads owned by the state. Roumania in 1880 owned 1,590 miles

of rai way.

Poland and Caucasia own 5,065 miles of railways. Sweeden owns 1,645 miles of rail-

Victoria owns all of her railroads-2.341 miles. Some 1,137 miles of road in Findland

belongs to Russia. About one-tenth by the government. Servis also has a few lines of rail-

way owned by the state. Brazil owns and operates 2,091 miles of railway.

system. With regard to the practical success

repugnant to him."

must admit, no matter what his per- the local unemployed. sonal predelictions may be, that the Mr. Henry Matthews, lale home country, in the short space of three secretary of England, says of New or four years, has made wonderful Zealand: 'Altogether it seems to me progress. * * Here the state is looked to to do almost everything. have the labor difficulty there, of The state is expected to form roads course, as elsewhere. There seems and build bridges in the country, to to be so much scope for individual find remunerative occupation for the enterprise that it is well nigh posunemployed; as well as to support sible to obtain labor for ordinary helpless and infirm members of so- come in time." helpless and infirm members of so-come in time.

It will be noticed that the "labor ciety. It owns and operates the rail-difficulties" to which Mr. Matthews roads of the colony, the postoffices, refers is, that every man seems to be out of which there is made a consider- don't have to work for others, really able annual profit that goes to swell a very desirable and happy condition

the general revenue, thereby relieving taxation to that extent. There is also a government life insurance department, which enters into spirited competition for business with both local and foreign companies. There is also a government saving bank which, with the insu ance department, yields a handsome profit every year. All these profits are available to assist in defraying the expenses of the government. . . .

The public works of the colony are now conducted on the co-operative principle When a railway or highway of any kind is to be constructed a government engineer makes a survey and estimate of the cost. Upon the basis of this estimate the work is given in small sections to gange of men who each receive an equal proportion of the money earned. There is no calling for public tenders, thus dispensing with the contractor altogether, whose profits, if any, are divided among the men. The government supplies tools and necessary material, if the men are unable to do so, charging first cost only for whatever is supplied in this way. The work is conducted under the nominal direction of the government engineer, whose duty it is to give measurements and levels, and generally to see that the work is properly done. The men work very hard and earn good wages. By this means they are enabled to pocket the profits that would go to the contractor under the old system and the government gets the work done at no greater! cost than formerly. One peculiar; feature of this method is that he young, robust, and middle-aged men worked together, while the weaker and less vigorous are formed into gangs by themselves. The younger and stronger men object to their older and necessarily weaker brothers because they are no longer able to perform their full share of the work. The old men are, however, perfectly content to have the opportunity to earn a livelihood in this way and they do so very comfortably. The co-operative system has given great satisfaction and has to a large extent solved the problem of the unemployed in this colony.

Another excellent system which works in conjunction with the cooperative principle is the 'labor bureau.' There are several of these bureaus in charge of government agents throughout the colony, where employers of labor can send orders for men. If a man is out of employment he makes application to the agent in charge of the labor bureau in his district, who sends him to some suitable occupation, paying for his transportation if necessary, and having it refunded from the first money the man earns. In this way the labor market is always open, and information is obtainable free of charge to employer and employe.

There are many other institutions of a character similar to those mentioned, all of whi h are calculated to relieve distress.

Notwithstanding the decidedly paternal and in many respects socialistic tendency of legislation in New Zealand, some of which is naturally repugnant to those who, like myself, have not been accustomed to 'state of the roads in that empire are owned socialism,' yet the fact remains that it all appears to blend harmoniously with the sentiments and requirements of the people. This is the best evidence that can be adduced upon a closer acquaintance with its practical South Australia owns her railway working here in New Zealand that it is not the 'bogy' it is generally be-

lieved to be." of state ownership of railroads Now here is a practical test of the and other public utilities, the systems and principles proposed by United States consular report of the Populists. We ask in the name of New Zealand for May, 1894. contains reason why the Populists should be some very valuable information. It termed "cranks" for advocating the reads some like Populist literature, adoption of systems which even the yet it is an official public document, enemies of those systems, upon inprepared by a man who admits in the vestigation, are compelled to acknowlreport that this class of laws is edge a success.

Mr. J. T. Farrell of New South, On pages 59 and 60 the report says Wales in a recent letter to the St. "Though many of the laws that have Louis Courier, commenting on the marbeen placed upon the statue books of velous escape of the colony of New Zea-New Zealand during the last few years land from the general depression says: have been characterized as "socialistic" "Under the rule of the new political and "revolutionary." they are all work- element which came into action there ing admirably, giving the utmost gen- at the last general election, the proseral satisfaction. It can be truly said perity of the colony has been amazing. that the tendency of legislation has To-day it is incomparably the best; been to reach the landless class, and colony of the group for a majority to teach them their rights and how to of wage-earners. and its advantage obtain them. There has been no at- increases The latest returns show a tempt to tear down established inter- great increase of imports, a heavy ests, but at the same time no effort surplus of current revenue over curhas been spared to elevate the condition rent expenses, made up of advances of the masses by placing within their in the returns from every department reach all that rightfully belongs to of public service, great expansion of them, or that would tend toward their national wealth as shown by large deeducation and material prosperity. posits in the savings and other banks, Every unselfish and unbiased person and an almost total disappearance of

a most desirable place to go to They asylums, hospitals, and charitable in- purposes at reasonable rates. But stitutions for the aged poor and the this difficulty will, I suppose, be over-

the telegraph and telephone lines, engaged in individual enterprise and

(TO BE CONTINUED.)