

THE DEBATER.

Blind and most frantic prayer,
Clutching at a senseless boon,
His that begs, in mad despair,
Death to come—he comes too soon!

THE BLUEFIELD DIAMOND ROBBERY

Those who pay attention to the records of criminal cases, as reported by the newspapers, and who have a good memory for such matters, will recollect the interest aroused, now several years ago, by the trial of one Robert Morris for what was known as "The Blue-Diamond Robbery."

First, then, for the recapitulation of the facts, as disclosed before the right honorable, the Lord Mayor at the Mansion house, and subsequently before the Recorder of London at the Old Bailey. The victim of the robbery was one Jacob Blumefield, an Anglo-German Jew, and a well known diamond merchant in Hatton Garden.

Which offer, you may be sure, made the inspector try his very hardest in the matter, but did not, any the more, make the discovery of the missing jewels an accomplished fact.

Next morning Morris was charged at the Mansion House before the Lord Mayor. He admitted, as he had done overnight, his felonious intention in breaking into Blumefield's office, but he still strenuously denied that he had stolen anything.

"I meant to steal the blue diamonds," he persisted. "But I've been forestalled by some other man. I've no more to say, and shouldn't have if you was to question me till the day of judgment."

In the interval between that event and his trial, Blumefield obtained leave to see the prisoner in Newgate. "Look here," he said to him (I am condensing the evidence subsequently given by a warder at the trial). "I'll make you an offer. If you'll tell me what you've done with those diamonds, and enable me to recover them, I'll pay £2,000 on any representative of yours you like to name. The money shall be paid to him in cash here, in your presence; and then you can have it when you come out. You're not making matters a bit better for yourself by sticking to that absurd story. If anything, rather worse, for you'll get lined up more heavily by taking that line than if you do your best to restore me my stolen property. Now, then, you will be a fool if you refuse; you will, upon my word."

"If I had stolen the diamonds, or know where they were, I'd close with you like a shot, Mr. Blumefield. For I know very well that I'm in for five years, anyhow. But I didn't steal them, and I don't know where they are any more than you do," answered Morris. "My story sounds unlikely enough, I am well aware. Maybe the judge and jury won't believe it, either; but it's true, and that's all about it."

felonious instruments. Yet not a sign of a blue diamond, or any other jewel nor valuable, was found upon him. His clothes, his boots, his hat, his person, even to the inside of his mouth, were again and again examined. Not a trace of the missing stones! And this was the more remarkable because he had been collared red-handed, and from that moment no chance whatever was allowed him of throwing away or otherwise disposing of the stones.

"I tell you I haven't got them," he kept persisting. "I'd have prigg'd 'em if I'd the chance, I don't deny, and it would be no use if I did. But I was forestalled, I tell you. Some other chap must have got it just before me and lifted 'em. You're only wasting time and trouble in searching me. You are, indeed."

Of course, no attention was paid to this ridiculous assertion, and after the process of search had been repeated again and again, Blumefield returned with two of the police to his office in Hatton Garden, where it was thought possible that the thief might have managed to drop the stones. But the most careful scrutiny of every nook, cranny and corner failed to discover them. Blumefield very naturally fell into a fine state of mind.

"Never mind, sir," said the inspector. "We're bound to find them, you know."

"Do—do you think that there's any chance of that scoundrel's story being true?" exclaimed Blumefield anxiously.

"Not much," laughed the inspector. "I'll give a hundred to the first man that puts his hand on them," cried the diamond merchant.

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From this position—true or false—nothing could induce him to budge. The day of his trial arrived. The case excited very great interest and the recorder's court was packed. There were two counts in the indictment; the one (I'm not a lawyer, and only quote from memory, and therefore I will crave indulgence in case my legal phraseology be incorrect)—the one of "feloniously breaking into" Blumefield's premises in Hatton Garden; the other of "stealing therefrom diamonds to the value of £20,000." To the former the prisoner pleaded guilty, and to the latter not guilty, and the prosecution, in the hopes of procuring a more exemplary sentence proceeded with the charge of stealing the jewels. But this was a difficult matter to prove. Everybody, of course, was convinced that Morris had stolen the diamonds, but to establish it by the technical rules of evidence was quite another affair. Against the fact that he was caught on the premises, admittedly with the intention of stealing the diamonds, had to be set the fact that no sign of a diamond, or any other stolen article, was found upon him when caught. Furthermore the circumstance of his having refused Blumefield's offer of £2,000, which was elicited by his counsel in evidence went to some slight extent in his favor. But this the prosecution tried to discount by advancing the theory that he must have had an accomplice who had made off with the jewels and that the prisoner was hardly likely to give away £20,000 for £2,000. On the other hand the defense urged that there was absolutely no evidence of the existence of an accomplice; and, besides, after the manner in which the theft had been bruited abroad and advertised, it would be impossible for the thief or thieves to dispose of them for a quarter of their value. If, indeed, at all, in which contention, of course there was some truth.

The recorder summed up at considerable length—a careful, equipped summing up, as I remember thinking at the time, balanced, like the sentences in a Greek dialogue, with perpetual "on the one hand" and "on the other hand;" impartial, no doubt, but colorless, and affording no assistance whatever to the jury. The latter, after considering their verdict for an hour or so, at length brought the prisoner in "not guilty" on this indictment. He was then sentenced to twenty months' hard labor, the recorder observing that if anything previous had been known against him, which apparently there was not, he should have sent him into penal servitude.

Such is a brief—a very brief—recapitulation of Robert Morris' sentence in connection with the theft of the blue diamonds. Any one who is interested to go more fully into the details of the matter can turn up the case in the back volumes of the newspaper, which he can put his hands upon at any of the public libraries. If he does so, he will find, I believe, that much as I have pruned and condensed the reports, I have not omitted any material item. And, indeed (to say nothing of the requirements of space in these columns) it would be wearisome to retell the story at any length, since, for the one mystery in the matter—the disposition of the blue diamonds by Morris (assuming him to have been the thief, as everybody still did)—the rest of the features are commonplace enough.

I now come to the important point in my story; the only part of it which is not mere recapitulation, namely—the elucidation of the mystery as imparted to me only a few weeks ago by Morris himself. I may take this opportunity of saying that I am the doctor who attended the ex-convict in his last illness, of which the fatal termination came so recently as a fortnight since.

"Doctor," he said to me one day, about a week before he died, "I shan't leave any effects behind me to pay your bill. But I can leave you a little secret which you might turn into a nice sum of ready money, if you set about it right away. Ah! what a fool I was to go and make ducks and drakes of all that oaf. Do you know, doctor, after I came out of shop I was worth £8,000!"

"Eight thousand!" I exclaimed. "Then you did steal the blue diamonds? How the devil did you manage to hide them?"

"That's the secret I'm owing to tell you. Ah, doctor the chucked gleefully; I am not writing a moral tale; I will tell the truth; and the truth is that Robert Morris was not in the least penitent. I had the diamonds on me when I was caught; I had them on me when I was searched at the station, I had them on me when I went before the Lord Mayor; I had them on me when I was tried at the Old Bailey; had them on me all the twenty months when I was in the stone jug—aye, all the blessed time."

"Impossible!" I cried. "You could not have concealed them."

"Couldn't I, though? Ah, doctor, I'll show you. Bring me that cup of the washstand, now. Do you see what's in it?"

"Your grinders," I said, looking down at the double set of false teeth lying in the cup, "what about 'em?"

"Nice ones, eh?" he said with a leer and a wink.

"Very," I answered.

"Made 'em myself," he said, with another chuckle. "The p'lice knew I was a dentist's assistant, too. Wonder they never guessed."

"Guessed what?"

"Take 'em out of the cup," he said. I did so.

"There's a little mark at the side of the plate," he went on. "It's a spring. Press it with your thumb nail."

I obeyed his instructions. In an instant all the top grinders sprang open, revealing to me the fact that each of them was simply a small hollow receptacle, contrived, as I saw on closer examination, with the most artful skill and workmanship.

The sick man broke into a yet more gleeful chuckle, as he watched the amazed wonder with which I was gazing at this marvellously clever effort of skill and cunning.

"There!" he said, chuckling until he coughed himself speechless. "Not so impossible after all—eh, doctor?"

Subsequent inquiries which I addressed to Morris himself elicited the following facts: That, recognizing the extreme risk he ran of being caught, he had had two duplicate keys of the safe made in order that by leaving one of them in the lock, some color might be lent to the assertion that he had been anticipated by another thief. The extremely clever contrivance of his false teeth, was, however, of course, his chef-d'oeuvre, and he had put the diamonds into these marvellously contrived receptacles the moment he took them. Hardly were the teeth safely fast in his mouth before the risk he feared eventuated, and he was pounced on by the watchman.

"My Dear Daughter: I have long felt how much my home and children needed a mother's love and care. I have been willing in this respect, as in every other, to sacrifice my own feelings to their good, but it is no easy matter to find just the right person to fill to important a position, and I do not wish to act hastily."

A few weeks ago I was introduced to a widow lady by the name of Norton, and finding her, on further acquaintance, to be all that I could desire, either as a companion or as a mother to my children.

"Howard Leslie!"

"P. S.—You were very wise in not engaging yourself without consulting me to the young man you mention. A young girl like you does not know what love is. Five years from now will be time enough for you to think of such a thing."

This was the letter that Anne Leslie received from her father, in reply to the one she had written him, overflowing with the glad anticipation of which her new born love had given rise.

For a time she sat speechless with anger and amazement.

The idea of her father every marrying again had never entered her head.

Why should he? Was she not there to keep house for him? And when she left, as, of course, she should in time, would not Marion then be ready to take her place? She never heard of anything so ridiculous.

And to think that her poor mother, who had been hardly two years in her grave, should be so soon forgotten!

But the postscript was the unkindest of all. The slighting manner in which her father alluded to "the young man," whose name she had written to him in full—Charles Edward Fitzhenry—was more wounding than the harshest invective.

And to presume to think that she knew nothing of love, who had experienced it in fullness and power.

Full of these indignant thoughts Anne sat down and penned an epistle to her adored Charles Edward, detailing her grievances, and ending with the declaration that she would never submit to be dominated over by a stepmother, and that she would ever be true to the first and only love of her life!

The next mail brought a reply, stating, together with many protestations of undying affection, "that he could truly sympathize with her feelings, in view of her father's marriage, having just received the intelligence that his mother was to take another husband. She had given him one step-father when he was a boy, and he would never submit to another."

Charles Edward was as good as his word. Promptly, on the following Thursday, he made his appearance at the house of the father of his adored Anne.

"Scarcely was the first rapturous greeting when the sound of carriage wheels were heard. Anne turned pale.

"They have come!" she cried, starting to her feet.

"Let 'em come," responded Charles Edward defiantly. "You are not afraid, I hope, when I am here?"

As he said this curiosity impelled him to turn his eyes to the window, and they fell upon the lady who was alighting from the carriage. "Why it looks like—but no, it can't be."

Mr. Leslie led his wife up to where his daughter was standing.

As Mrs. Leslie turned from the constrained greeting of her new daughter, her eyes fell upon the young man back of her, who stood staring at her in speechless amazement.

"Why, Charles?"

"I never thought of seeing you here!"

"Who is this?" inquired Mr. Leslie, looking in bewilderment from one to the other.

"It is Charles Edward that I wrote you about," said Anne, blushing.

"It is my son, Charles," said Mrs. Leslie. "Charles, this is your step-father."

"Why, Margaret! the whole idea is absurd and unlike you."

"That's just the reason I wish to do it. I am tired of the old yearly program. The symphony, hops, teas, drives and calls in the winter and then away to some fashionable resort in the summer with another whirl of gaiety for an entire season, I'm bored with it all and have decided for just one summer to seclude myself in some quiet country place where no one knows me, and I can dress simply and be my natural self, without one familiar face to remind me of home."

"But mother and the girls will be so disappointed, dear, and if you would only go to Nahant with them I could spend every Sunday there, and if you carry out this wild scheme of yours I may not be able to see you more than once, for I do not expect a vacation this year, as my senior partner sails for Europe next week."

"No, Ned, I do not want to see even you. That would spoil the whole plan. So you are not to come where I am."

Edward Linton arose with a flushed face and said quickly: "Do you mean, Margaret, that you won't write to me and I am not to see you until autumn?"

"Yes, Ned, I want to leave love and lover behind me to be free once more; but, you dear fellow, I shall return, you know. Now, let's have a parting song, for I leave tomorrow," and she turned to the piano.

"No, I do not feel like singing. I hope you'll enjoy your outing and freedom to your heart's content. Good night," and he was gone.

"Yes, I'll call him back, but I won't, and I'll carry out my plan now, anyway," and Margaret ran upstairs to finish packing.

Five weeks later a party of young people started from the Prospect house—the only hotel of a small New Hampshire village—to climb the mountain for which the house was named. The girls in their short walking skirts, shirt waists and Alpine hats looked cool and comfortable and chatted merrily with their escorts. One of their number, however, lagged behind a bit, and a girl noticing her, said: "I can't understand Miss Joyce. She is bright and attractive, and yet will not accept attentions from any young men. She told me yesterday that she came here in preference to Nahant, just to be quiet. If she was tired out or ill it would not seem odd, but she says she is in perfect health."

"Oh, just wait till my old classmate arrives tomorrow noon, and you'll see a great change in her. In the past four years, she'll be unable to resist his attractions," said her companion.

"Why, Mr. Carson," said the first speaker, Kate Norris. "Haven't you seen him in all that time?"

"Yes, we graduated from Harvard we have never corresponded, as both have been very busy, but as soon as I came here I wrote him to take a week's outing and join me, and he wrote me yesterday that he would arrive tomorrow."

"Oh, Mr. Carson," said Kate, mischievously, "did you describe the attractions of the house?"

"The young women? Oh, certainly, the heartless one in particular. I would like to see her captivated by Ned, just to pay her for the snubbing she has given to the rest of us fellows."

The next afternoon Miss Joyce strolled into the wood at the foot of the mountain, and, seating herself on a little bench, began to read.

But her mind would wander in spite of her efforts to become interested, and she closed the magazine and looked at the babbling water instead. Suddenly she saw a brilliant cardinal flower growing on the side of the bank, and she bent to gather them. As she did so a crimson pin on her coat caught on the edge of a rock, became unloosed and fell into the stream.

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Man treats his stomach worse than as if it belonged to a dog. He loads it with sweets and acids and biters with fats and acids and oils, with milk and watermelon; lobster and cream; vinegar and mayonnaise; vanilla ice cream and acidulous strawberries; sour wine and fizzing seltzer; the soft-shell crab and what the crab has been eating fried in oil or butter that has never known cream; and at intervals swallows scalding hot coffee and pours down the same way ice-cold ice water. And so man gets sick. No animal could swallow the same doses and keep well.

When a sane man gets sick he sends for a doctor. The doctor does not like to apply a stomach pump to relieve gluttony, as in an emergency case of poisoning; but he works on the line of assisting nature in unloading the overburdened stomach, and illness is removed.

We pity the poor people who do not get enough to eat; but we cannot quite bring ourselves up to the standard of pitying the millions of men who are eating too much. The power to eat less and be well is with them. It has been shown that the too fat may become comfortably thin without courting death and destruction.

Go without eating and give your stomach a chance, and you are cured. This is for those who eat and drink too much. Those who need building up must take more nourishing food and more stimulating drink than usual.

"Man, know thyself."

Be neither a fool nor a hog. Be a friend to your stomach, and it will stand by you while life lasts.

If you are a burden to yourself because you have superfluous flesh, the surest way to get rid of it is to eat nothing. That is the only prescription which offers a sure remedy. Some people go to Carlsbad for treatment, and if they stay there long enough and drink gallons enough of the water which nature has medicated for that purpose they can reduce themselves ad libitum, and if they choose can return to their friends disguised as skeletons. It is rather rough work, because it is speedy work, and to a small proportion it is attended with slight danger. It is effective, though, and you can get yourself down to the weight which you fondly believe to be that of the Apollo Belvedere or the Venus of Milo.

Others prefer a few weeks' sojourn at Marienbad, where the cure takes some longer time and you fade away less rapidly. The waters, the diet, the daily exercise which is insisted upon slowly reduces you to the outline of grace and beauty and makes you happy and contented. If you persist you become sphyllike, and in the sylvan grove are in danger of being mistaken for a water nymph. Still others take up their residence during the heated term in Bride des Bains, where the treatment approaches homeopathy. Long journeys on foot and up hill test your heart and lungs, while the mild waters and baths coax your adipose away and leave you at about the weight you have fixed for yourself. You make pleasant acquaintances who sympathize with you on the approaching thinness which is so desirable, and the summer skips along in gay mood.

While the toxins produced by microbes are more likely to enter the digestive canal than other poisons, they, unlike other poisons, become inactive when digested. Investigating further, Messrs. Boucahrd and Zevacki have found that the toxins are weakened when introduced into the intestines, and that they are acted on by the numerous germs of the digestive canal and also by the secretions of the glands, being thus forced to undergo a real digestive process.

You can easily make a delicious violet perfume for yourself by putting half an ounce of orris root, broken into small pieces, in a bottle with two ounces of alcohol. Add to this a bunch of newly picked violets, cork the bottle tightly and shake well. After it has been standing for four or five days a few drops on the handkerchief will leave the scent of fresh violets.

No more oak floors—at least, for ordinary mortals. That is what the experts are saying now. They announce that the supply of fine oak timber east of the Mississippi is practically exhausted by reckless cutting.

Nor is there any scrubby red in sight. True, groves of oak acorns has started up in many places which, if let alone, would in time furnish a fresh supply destroyed by forest fires. Their prospective value seems not to be appreciated.

Fine oak timber can, of course, still be obtained from abroad. The English oak in particular is excellent, but the cost puts it out of the question for any but the richest. Those who could have mahogany and rosewood if they wanted it can, of course, procure oak, but that is small comfort to householders of moderate means.

Builders, therefore, are looking about for a substitute. Our forests abound with ash, birch and other kinds of timber that are fairly satisfactory, but none of them is quite an equivalent for good oak.

A Hartford lawyer tells of a client in one of the adjoining towns who had a farm to sell. He had recently sunk a well on it, and the job cost quite a sum. Consequently, when he talked of disposing of his property, the well caused him considerable anxiety. "How much do you ask for the farm?" the lawyer asked.

"Wal, I'll tell yer," drawled the farmer. "I'll sell the dern place for \$700 with the well, and I'll let it go for \$600 without the well."—Argonaut.

"Did you sever your connection with the firm or were you discharged?" asked the friend.

"The man out of a job gae a few minutes to thought before answering. "I'm a little uncertain about that," he said at last.

"Uncertain?"

"Yes. Of course, I know that office boys are discharged and general managers sever their connections, but I can't be sure that I was high enough up to sever my connection, and I don't like to think I was low enough down to be discharged. Perhaps you'd better make it that the firm and I disagreed."

Senator Depew has purchased four thoroughbreds for the coach he is to keep in Washington.

A MUTUALSURPRISE.

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