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THE CONCORD TIMES.

JOHN B. SHERRILL, Editor. "BE JUST AND FEAR NOT." $1.00 a Year, in Advance
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The Lone Inn

A STORY OF MYSTERY.

BY FERGUS HUME.

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CHAPTER XV

"You see I was right," said Merrick when I met him at the station.

"You have been right in every instance," I answered. "The inspector here quite agrees with me that you should be a detective. Where are your prisoners?"

"No, no! Not prisoners," replied Merrick, shocked at the word. "They are my guests, traveling companions—what you will, but not prisoners."

"Still I see my detective attends on them both," said I as Strent and Rose Gernon came along the platform.

"It is well to take all precautions. How is Francis Briarfield?"

"Rather downcast. He is afraid of being arrested for the murder."

"No fear of that," answered Merrick, casting a glance at Strent. "This gentleman's evidence will exonerate him fully."

Strent, smooth and unctuous as ever, rubbed his hands and bowed, but Rose Gernon turned her back on him with a gesture of disgust. Evidently she had not forgiven his hurried departure from the inn.

"What are we waiting for?" she said sharply. "Let us go on to the inquest. I wish to get it over as soon as possible and return to town."

We took the hint and walked along to a room adjoining the morgue, where the inquest was being held. I introduced Merrick to the inspector, and after a short conversation they went into the morgue to examine the body. Not caring to see so ghastly a sight, I remained outside with Francis. In a quarter of an hour the doctor and the inspector returned, the former rubbing his hands with a well pleased expression, the latter looking somewhat astonished. What had passed in the morgue I know not, as Merrick refused to gratify my curiosity.

"Wait till you hear the evidence of Strent," he said significantly.

The jury was made up of well to do Marshminster tradesmen, who took a profound interest in the proceedings, as the dead man was the brother of Miss Bellin's future husband. The Bellins were the great people of the neighborhood, and the tradesmen hoped to serve the hall when Mr. and Mrs. Brairfield settled there. They were, therefore, excessively polite to Francis, but their frequent marks of attention only drew from him a bitter smile.

"Would they treat me in this way if they knew all?" he whispered to me.

"They will never know all," I answered in the same tone.

I had spoken to the inspector, and he in his turn had talked seriously with the coroner. The latter had been told the whole story, and though astonished at the folly of Francis yet found it in his heart to be sorry for the young man. He said he would not question Francis more than was necessary, and we hoped to carry through the inquest without exposing the underlying romance.

The first witness called was a local doctor, who deposed to having examined the body of Felix. He gave it as his opinion that the young man had died of poison and explained the state of the blood with a lot of medical technicalities which none of the jury understood. It was, said the doctor, a case of blood poisoning, and the deceased had been wounded in the hand by some sharp instrument which was steeped in poison.

I came next and narrated how I had staid at the Fen inn on that night and had met there Francis Briarfield, who was waiting there for his brother. Then I told of the discovery of the corpse and the finding of the arrowhead in the fireplace. I said nothing about my tracking the trail to the pool, and if possible we wished that portion of the evidence to be passed over in silence. Fortunately the jury were a dull headed lot and submitted quietly to the guidance of the coroner. He only asked questions pertinent to the death without going too deeply into the subject. At this point I produced the arrowhead.

Francis explained that he had arrived from Chile on the 6th of June and had gone at once to the Fen inn at the request of his brother Felix. His brother had not arrived on that night, and he had gone to bed. He was unable to say how his brother had come to his tragic end. Then came the critical point which we wished passed over in silence.

"Did you see your brother at the Fen inn, Mr. Briarfield?" asked the coroner.

"I did not see my brother alive," was the evasive answer.

"Perhaps the body had been put in the pool by the murderer," said one of the jurymen, "in which case Mr. Briarfield would not see him."

"I did not go to the pool on that night," replied Francis, adroitly evading the remark. "It was later on that I learned my brother's body was there and at once gave instructions that the pool was to be dragged."

At this point Mr. Briarfield was asked to stand down, and the inspector's evidence was taken. He deposed to the fact that Mr. Briarfield had instructed him to drag the pool for the body, and that it was found there.

This piece of evidence quite put the jury off the scent, as, if Francis had placed the body in the pool, he would not have told the inspector where to find it. The critical point was thus glided gently over, and the coroner called Rose Gernon. Once the jury knew how the crime had been committed, and they would forget all about the hiding of the body in the pool, so that the folly of Francis would not be made public.

I must say that Rose Gernon gave her evidence very clearly. She said she was an intimate friend of Felix Briarfield, a statement which rather shocked the moral tradesmen of Marshminster. Felix asked her to go down to the inn, as he had prepared it for his brother and wished to see him there about a family matter.

"But the inn was a ruin," interrupted a juryman. Miss Gernon said that was very true. Still it was habitable, and Mr. Felix Briarfield had sent on fuel and provisions. As the former proprietor had left all the furniture, the rooms were fairly comfortable. She could not say why Felix did all this unless it was that he wanted to see his brother privately.

Such talk was very weak, and the jurymen looked significantly at one another. They knew the Fen inn and could not conceive that any one could be so mad as to dwell in it even for a night. It was said to be haunted, and, though such a superstition might be scoffed at, yet not one of those present would have passed 12 hours of darkness in that ill omened place.

"Were you not afraid when you saw the lone inn," asked a juryman.

Rose shrugged her shoulders and laughed contemptuously.

"I am afraid of nothing," she said coolly. "There are no such things as ghosts. Besides I had my brother with me."

"Your brother!".

"Yes, Edward Strent."

The inspector gave a low whistle, and catching my eye nodded significantly. He remembered what I had said on the previous night, and now agreed with my theory that the secret of the committal of the crime lay in the relationship existing between Rose and Strent. They were, it appeared, brother and sister. I saw all kinds of possibilities now that such a tie was made clear. Meanwhile Rose proceeded with her evidence.

"Mr. Felix Brairfield came to the inn," she said, "after his brother had gone to rest. I saw and spoke with him and afterward went to bed myself. I understood that he was going to stay all night and see his brother in the morning."

"Was he alone in the room when you left him?"

"No. He was with Strent. An hour or so after I retired Strent came to my door and asked me to go down stairs. I did so and found Felix lying dead on the floor. My brother had left the room, and on going out at the back of the house I found him mounting the horse of Mr. Francis Briarfield. I asked him what had happened, and he just said Felix was dead and advised me to fly lest I should be accused of the murder."

"That, I suppose, was also the reason of his flight?"

"So he told me when I saw him in London, but he then declared himself innocent of the crime. I was afraid I would be accused of the crime, so took the horse and gig in which we had come to the Fen inn and drove to Marshminster. From there I returned to London."

"Why did you not give the alarm?"

"I was afraid of being accused of the murder."

Here the inspector whispered something in the ear of the coroner. He nodded and again spoke to Rose Gernon.

"Why did you not tell Mr. Denham where to find Strent when he was apparently guilty?"

"Strent is my brother," said Rose quietly, "and as he told me he was innocent I did not wish him to be arrested for the crime. But that he visited me yesterday and was seen by the men set to watch me he would never have been caught."

Her examination lasted some considerable time, but the coroner did not succeed in eliciting anything new from her. She persistently held to the same story, so in despair the examiner desisted, and she was told to stand down. In her place Edward Strent was called, and then for me began the most interesting part of the case. I knew all that had been said hitherto, but I did not know how the crime had been committed and waited to hear what Strent had to say. I quite believed him to be guilty, yet hardly thought he would accuse himself of the crime.

He first corroborated the story of Rose as to going to the inn and narrated all that had occurred up to the time when he was left alone in the room with Felix.

"When I found myself alone with Briarfield," he proceeded, "I had a quarrel with him."

"About what?"

"About my sister. He had promised to marry her, yet, as I well knew, was paying attentions to Miss Bellin."

"But Miss Bellin was engaged to his brother," remarked a juryman.

"I know that. It was about Miss Bellin he wished to see his brother. I insisted that he should marry my sister, and he refused. We had hot words. He was on one side of the table, I on the other. Between us lay the arrowhead which he had brought in his pocket."

"Why had he brought the arrowhead there?"

"I don't know," replied Strent, lying with the utmost promptitude. "He took the arrowhead out of his pocket, said it was poisoned and laid it down on the table."

"Do you think he intended to kill his brother because he stood in his way with Miss Bellin?" asked an inquisitive juryman of a romantic turn of mind.

"I really don't know, sir," replied Strent, looking the juryman straight in the face. "He said nothing to me. We were quarreling over the shabby way in which he had treated my sister, and the arrowhead was on the table between us."

"What was the position of the arrowhead?" asked the coroner prompted by Merrick.

"It was leaning against a book which was on the table, and the point was uppermost. I said to Mr. Briarfield, 'Will you marry my sister?' and he said: 'No, I'm —— if I will.' While saying this he brought down the open palm of his hand on the arrowhead and gave a cry of pain. When he lifted his hand, it had a ragged wound across it from the thumb to the little finger. I wished to bind it up, but he pushed me away, crying out he was a dead man. In three minutes he was lying dead on the floor. I threw the arrowhead into the fireplace and tried to revive him, but it was of no use. He was dead."

"And you?"

"I was afraid I would be accused of the death, as Mr. Denham or Mr. Francis might have heard us quarreling together. I lost my head altogether and only thought of flight. I ran up to my sister's room and told her Felix was dead. Then I saddled the horse. When she came to the door, I was mounting. I told her to take the gig and fly to Marshminster, and that I would explain all in London."

"You fled like a coward."

"I suppose I did," said the man sullenly, "but I was beside myself with terror. I rode to Starby and gave the horse back to the livery stable keeper. Then I went to London and saw my sister. She agreed with me that it was best to keep quiet, so I did not come forward to give evidence. Had it not been for that detective who watched my sister, I should not be here now."

This evidence practically ended the inquest. Merrick was called to prove that the wound in the hand was such a one as might have been made by the downward stroke of the hand on a sharp point. This evidence was substantiated by the local practitioner, who had examined the body with Dr. Merrick. There was no doubt that the affair had happened as Strent said. Felix Briarfield had slapped his open hand on the table to emphasize his refusal to marry Rose Gernon. Unfortunately it came in contact with the poisoned arrowhead. The flint had an edge like a razor, and being steeped in virulent poison acted like a snake bite on the unfortunate young man. Felix had not been murdered, but died by misadventure.

That was the verdict brought in by the jury, and so the whole of this strange affair came to an end. Thanks to the astuteness of the inspector and the delicacy of the coroner, the jury were quite unaware of what had happened between the death of Felix and the inquest. The reporters of the Marshminster Gazette merely put in a short statement of the affair, and in a few days people ceased to take any interest in the Fen inn crime. It was a lucky escape for Francis, but I don't think the lesson was thrown away on him.

Rose Gernon and her brother went back to town the same evening. I never saw Strent again, but frequently had the pleasure of seeing his sister performing on the stage. She is now engaged to be married, but with the knowledge of her actions at the Fen inn I cannot say I envy the bridegroom.

After the burial of Felix I went abroad with Francis, whose health was quite broken down by the strain put on it during the last few weeks. He returned in six months and married Olivia. She was told all that had taken place in the lone inn, but kept the information to herself. Mrs. Bellin never knew that Felix had substituted himself for Francis. I was best man at the wedding by particular request and saw the happy pair start for their honeymoon. I hope they will be happy and am sure they deserve to be, seeing through what tribulations they have passed.

I saw the happy pair start for their honeymoon.

"What has become of the Fen inn?" asked Dr. Merrick one day when we were talking over the case.

"Oh, the Fen inn is pulled down, I believe!" was my reply. "There will be no more tragedies there."

"A fit end for such a shambles," said Merrick, and I think he was about right.

THE END.

Separate Coaches in Tennessee.

The Supreme Court of Tennessee has decided that the State law requiring railroad companies to provide separate coaches for white and colored passengers was constitutional. The case in which the opinion was delivered was of Smith vs. State.

Smith, who was a conductor on the Louisville and Nashville, was indicted for allowing negroes to ride in a coach with the whites. The lower court decided against Smith, and an appeal was taken to the Supreme Court, with the result as stated.

The court held that the separate coach law was a wise and fair police regulation, and, therefore, not repugnant to the federal constitution. The court further held that persons coming from other States must, upon entering this State, observe the law existing in the State.

On the morning of Feb. 20, 1895, I was sick with rheumatism, and lay in bed until May 21st, when I got a bottle of Chamberlain's Pain Balm. The first application of it relieved me almost entirely from the pain and the scond afforded complete relief. In a short time I was able to be up and about again.—A. T. MOREAUX, Luverne, Minn. Sold by M. L. Marsh, & Co.

Check for $288,000 Sent to Nashville.

WASHINGTON, March 21.—The treasury department has forwarded to the Methodist Publishing House at Nashville a warrant for $288,000, the amount allowed that institution for damages done it during the war by Federal troops.

Thus closes the transaction and ends one of the longest legislative fights in the history of Congress. The fight for this appropriation covers a period of nearly thirty years. Representatives from all over the country vied with each other to pay this just claim. The only opposition to the claim came from New England.

A man stands no chance of being elected to the mayorship of a city unless he enjoys the confidence and esteem of his neighbors. Geo. W. Humphrey is the popular mayor of Swanton, Ohio, and under date of Jan. 17, 1896, he writes as follows: "This is to certify to our appreciation of Chamberlain's Cough Remedy. My family and neighbors have tested it, and we know it is an excellend remedy for coughs and colds.—George W. HUMPHREY." Sold by M. L. Marsh & Co.

BILL ARP'S LETTER.

"Sic utre tuo ut alieum non toedas," which means if your chickens get in your nabor's garden he must sic the dog on 'em, or words to that effect. Yesterday I received a kind letter from some unknown friend saying that our peafowls were annoying the neighboring gardens and if they were not put up they would be killed. I was ruminating about this anonymous letter and my opinion is that this is not the best way to make a complaint. Our nabors are all good and kind to us and I suppose it was the fear of giving offense that kept the writer's name from the letter, but I really would have felt better if the writer had told me face to face about the peafowls. As it is, I am afraid several nabors have been feeling unkind and I don't know who to apologize to. My wife has told me several times that she feared the peafowls were trespassing and that we had better get rid of them. Well, we have had four or five every year for twelve years and they never did any serious harm to our own garden—not half as much as some of our nabors' chickens and dogs have done, but folks are folks about such things and nobody likes to have other folks' bipeds or quadrupeds prowling around. The peafowl is such a nice, pretty, aristocratic bird that we thought the nabors would like to see them occasionally, and if they behaved badly a few stones and clods and sticks and womanly "shoes" would drive them away for good, for they are timid and easily insulted. As for putting them up, we can't do it, for we can't catch them and they roost so high we can't reach them. A colored Methodist preacher couldn't. And so when I got the anonymous I engaged a friend to come and shoot them in the treetops, but they had flown away before he got here. We then baited them into the workshop and finally caught them and have sent them to the country where nabors are not so near or so anonymous.

The peafowl is a historic bird. Solomon sent his ships to Tarshish and brought back ivory and gold and peacocks. And the Lord said unto Job: "Who gave to the peacock his goodly wings." It is said to be the most magnificent of all birds; its form is elegant; its movements graceful; its plumage resplendent with tints of green, golden, bronze and blue; its long bushy tail is beautiful beyond description with its iridescent hues, velvet centers and brilliant eye spots. In their incomparable robe we find all that glistens in the rainbow and sparkles in the mine—the azure tints of heaven and the emerald of the fields. Now isent it a pity to kill a bird like that? And yet the ancient Romans killed them for their brains and tongues and it took 1,000 to furnish enough for a great entertainment.

The peafowl is a gallnaceous bird, but not graminiferous. How's that. It belongs to the polyplectron genera of the sub-family of pavonine. Just think of it. The bill is moderate with the base of the culmen elevated, the apical half arched and vaulted; tarsi long and strong, spurs conical, anterior toes united at the base and the tarsi in the females tuberculate.

Mirable dictu! Some people don't know all that. Maybe my anonymous friend didn't know it or he would have had more consideration for the bird. Their food is grain, seed and insects, but they are non-scratchibus. They can't scratch for their legs are not built that way. They sing but one song and that song has but one short strain of two notes that sounds like "paon," and that word is its French name. There is not much melody in this song, especially when oft in the stilly night it tries to play upon its grammaphone and begins and finishes with a wild Comanchee screech. Like some children, they are to be seen and not heard.

But I have long wondered why the male was made so much more beautiful than the female. This peculiar distinction seems to mark the males of all gallinaceous birds and makes them arrogant and vain. "As vain as a peacock" is one of the oldest proverbs. When one is in full array he will sit upon the belustrade for an hour and survey himself in the half reflecting window glass. What he would do before a large plate mirror I do know, but I found out long ago that the best way to steal your neighbor's pigeons was to set up small pieces of looking glass on the shelf of the dove cote.

But in mankind and most all quadrupeds the male is coarse, domineering and unadorned. In fact, most all men are positively ugly and unattractive, and woman weds him only because she can't do any better. It is woman who wears the ornaments of nature, and "when unadorned is adorned the most." Strange to say, she wants more than the Creator gave her, and delights to array herself in beautiful fabrics and to wear pearls and diamonds and other jewelry. This is her nature and she cannot help it. She loves the beautiful and would be miserable in a room without a mirror, though I have seen some who never had but one admirer. I wonder who were those sons of God who saw that the daughters of men were fair and took wives from among them and raised up giants and mighty men of renown. I wonder if the women of that day were so beautiful that the angels came down to mate with them. There is no telling what men or angels will do for a beautiful woman. I have never ceased to be sorry for Jacob, who worked seven long years for Rachel and then had to take her homely sister, and had to work seven years more to get the girl of his choice. But the sacred historian says these seven years "seemed to him but a few days for the love he had to her." Was ever love like that? Not in these days. Men must have been scarce in that country or Rachel wouldn't have waited that long for Jacob. Old Laban was a sheep raiser, and I reckon his nearest nabor was another about fifty miles away, and those poor girls never saw a young man once a year. Rachel let Jacob kiss her on sight before she knew his name or where he came from, and that histoic kiss has come down to us through all the corridors of time for 4,000 years. I remember that away back in the 40s when I was young and fairly handsome my father sent me on business to Mississippi and as there were no railroads I bought a horse in Mobile and rode across the country to Vicksburg. One night I found comfortable lodging with a big cotton grower on the Chicasaha river. He had emirgrated from South Carolina many years before with his wife and little children and about 200 negroes. His name was Calhoun, and he was a cousin of John C. Calhoun. There he lived outside of civilization; not a school nor a church within miles of him and he kept putting off moving his family to where there were some. His oldest daughter, a lass of eighteen, was as shy of me as a fawn, but she brushed her hair and washed her face and changed her dress and shoes and gazed and lingered on the sly long and sweetly. I made advances to her that night in the parlor and pleased her father and mother and bewildered her, for I soon found out that she was a flower born to blush unseen. When I left the next morning the old gentleman followed me to the gate and begged me to come back that way. "Maybe you and Sally might fix up things to your notion," said he, "and if you do I can spare you 200 or 300 acres of the finest land in Mississippi and as many niggers as you want to tend it," and he laughed in a joking way. There were no fourteen years about that, but I never saw Sally any more. Poor girl, I have often wondered what became of her. She was of good old Carolina stock, but was smothered in the woods. No companions, no books or newspapers, no nothing but niggers and cotton—much like Rachel, I reckon, who saw nothing but sheep and longed for a nice young man. I remember that two negro boys held torches for us to eat our supper by and everything else was of the same primitive style.

But what has this little episode of mine to no with peafowls and anonymous letters? I don't know how my thoughts drifted that way, but they will drift. To go back to them, I will say that a woman did not write the letter, for she is too fond of the beatiful to want to kill a peafowl. And if the man who wrote it had have known their ancient, historic renown he would have taken off his hat to that beautiful bird and said: "Good morning, sir, I hope you are well?" BILL ARP.

P. S.—Some Georgians in Texas and Indian Territory have sent me some mule-eared rabbit feet and rabbit ears. They write that the feet are for Colonel Candler when he is "hard run." My daughters are wearing the ears on their hats and I will keep the feet till later.

B. A.

The Railroads and the People.

Charlotte Observer.

One would not think that there could be any good in railroads at all, judging by the tendency in recent years to load them down with oppressive legislation, but viewed in the light of a distributor of money among the people, one must admit that the railroad is a desireable institution. The railroads daily distribute money, directly in most cases and indirectly in some, to all classes of people. The New York Sun says that "the railroads of the United States expend in a year a sum more than $100,000,000 in excess of the total expenditures of the Unites States government and this computation does not include nearly $250,000,000 paid in the form of interest upon railroad bonds on guaranteed stock, and from $80,000,000 to $100,000,000 paid in the form of dividends to stockholders. The railroads, indeed are the great disbursing agencies of the country, handling never less than a billion dollars in a year and disbursing it all, or practically all; for railroads, as a rule, do not keep large bank accounts and do practically a cash business, turning money over rapidly."

For crossties, sleepers and rails, the roads last year spent $15,000,000, all the money for the two first named items going, of course, to the land owners. The expenses which the railroads have to meet are many and varied. The collective tax paid by them last year was $40,000,000. They can't keep from killing Jersey cows and have to keep lawyers continually employed to argue with the jury that every cow killed on the railroad is not a Jersey. The services of the lawyers cost the railroad last year $10,000,000. The settlement for damage suits is about $5,000,000 a year.

It is, however, in the disbursement of money to wage earners that the raslroads prove of greatest benefit to all communities. The roads of this country pay out $2,000,000 a day in wages which goes to 800,000 railroad employes, 100,000 station men, 35,000 engineers, 40,000 firemen and helpers, 25,000 conductors and dispatchmen, 65,000 trainmen, 30,000 machinists, 100,000 shopmen other than machinists, 20,000 telegraph operators and their helpers, 45,000 switchmen, flagmen and watchmen and 175,000 trackmen.

These facts show that there is some good in railroads and a little consideration will show how great a proportion of the population of the country is dependent directly for its prosperity upon the prosperity of the railroad corporation. There is a moral in these facts and figures which the average railroad legislator would do well to reflect upon.

Fifty Years Ago.
President Polk in the White House chair,
While in Lowell was Doctor Ayer;
Both were busy for human weal
One to govern and one to heal.
And, as a president's power of will
Sometimes depends on a liver-pill,
Mr. Polk took Ayer's Pills I trow
For his liver, 50 years ago.

Ayer's Cathartic Pills
were designed to supply a model purgative to people who had so long injured themselves with griping medicines. Being carefully prepared and their ingredients adjusted to the exact necessities of the bowels and liver, their popularity was instantaneous. That this popularity has been maintained is well marked in the medal awarded these pills at the World's Fair 1893.
50 Years of Cures.

A Matter of Business.

"John," said the mayor of Turniptown to the marshal, "the city treasury is entirely empty, and I need a new shirt. Ain't there anybody on the street you can make a case against?"

"Deadest time I ever saw. Not a soul on the street except old Bill Collins, an' he's leanin' back against his store door sound asleep."

"Is he snoring?"

"Yes, I think he is."

"Much loud?"

"Loud enough to be heard five or six feet, I guess."

"That's good! Arrest him for disturbing the peace, and I'll give him $7.50 and all costs."

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The Maine's Dead Number 266.

HAVANA, March 22.—Chaplain Chidwick has completed his mortuary report, which shows that 257 men and 2 officers perished in the catastrophe, 6 succumbed to their injuries in the Sanambros Hospital here, one died on the Spanish transport Colon; 171 bodies have been recovered from the wreck, of which 61 have been identified, 160 have been duried in Colon Cemetery and 11 at Key West. This is the official report, made public, after careful correction, for the first time. It is probable that many more identifications will be established when the enlistment records are compared with the notes in Chaplain Chidwick's possession of marks on the corpses.

A Christian must be gentle to the rude, kind to the thankless, patient with the ignorant and liberal with the bigoted.

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It is the only medicine which makes the coming of baby safe and comparatively easy. In a personal letter to Dr. Pierce, Mrs. Marguerite Collin, of Cutler, Algoma Co., Ont., says:
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