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MIDNIGHT TRAGEDY.
—OR—
THE CRIME OF THE BROKER'S OFFICE.
BY H. MOTT.

murder, and at the hour when the crime was committed, had neglected one proceeding which his principal had advised. He had failed to search the janitor's room.

Paxton resolved to visit this apartment in person.

The next evening the detective repaired to his boarding place.

The landlady admitted him, and he said:

"I called to see Mr. Kredge."

"He is not at home, sir," replied the landlady.

"In that case I will wait, if you please; I have an engagement with Levi. He asked me to run up to his room and make myself at home in case I arrived before he returned."

"Very well. The second door on the right at the head of the stairs."

Paxton ascended to Levi Kredge's room, entered and closed and secured the door.

The janitor's room was a small sleeping apartment, with a closet opening from it.

Besides the usual furniture, the room contained Kredge's trunk. It was locked, but Paxton opened it by means of a skeleton key which he had discovered in the closet with a small canvas bag, such as gold coin is packed in at the mint, in his hand.

"I thought some discovery might be made here," said the detective to himself, as he took satisfaction in having placed the small canvas bag in his pocket.

Then he ran down stairs.

The landlady met him to the hall.

"Are you going, sir?" she asked.

"Yes, I'll run over and see Levi at the office."

Paxton was well satisfied.

He had made something of a discovery, he fancied, but regarding it he maintained the most profound secrecy.

At the time when Paxton understood the solution of the mystery of John Oakburn's murder, he was engaged in another investigation which related to certain affairs which do not interest us.

Some business pertaining to the matter induced Paxton to make a visit to a certain obscure East Side street, where the dangerous undercurrent of the great city's human life is ever to be dreaded, one night soon after the occurrence last recorded.

The detective was elaborately disguised, for he was too well known to the criminal classes, and he had too many enemies among them to think of venturing among them in his own proper person.

As he traversed the dimly lighted way, Paxton noticed a female form flitting along before him, and he fancied there was something familiar about the woman's appearance.

In a moment or so he was at the woman's side, and as she passed beneath a street lamp, at a corner the night wind blowing before him, he saw, and he caught a glimpse of her face and recognized it.

The woman was Marion Oakburn.

Of course Paxton was surprised at finding Marion alone at night in such a dangerous locality.

He did not speak, and his detective instinct prompted him to follow her.

A few blocks further down the street, the detective saw Marion pause before the door of a gloomy building.

The cashier's daughter glanced about her as though she expected to meet someone, but she did not discover the detective, who had promptly stepped back into the alley.

A moment elapsed, and, peering from his hiding place, the detective's espionage was rewarded by the appearance of a man who came walking steadily along the street as though fearful of discovery, and joined Marion at the door.

The girl gave the man both her hands and seemed to greet him warmly.

The detective was so near that, as the man presently raised his voice a trifle, he heard him say:

"Come, let us enter the parlor. I have much to say to you."

Then they opened the door and disappeared within the house.

Paxton remained where he was, and he very deliberately read the following memorandum from his order-book:

May 18, 1897.

John Oakburn, No. 11 Wall Street, City. One ancient air pistol \$5.

The name of the ordered man was the very last one the detective anticipated hearing announced, as that of the purchaser of the air pistol, and he was completely surprised.

Paxton had entertained the hope that the fatal bullet which had occasioned the death of John Oakburn would serve as an important clue in tracing the unfortunate man's assassin.

From the first it had been the detective's purpose to trace the weapon of death to the assassin, by means of the bullet.

Now the purpose of the man-trail was no longer possible to be executed, and the hope which the possession of the death-missile had given him was destroyed.

So John Oakburn was murdered with his own weapon. The assassin probably found the weapon in the office and used it to kill Oakburn, very possibly, with the intention of perplexing the investigator, should the weapon be traced.

He recalled to mind the fact that no one had mentioned having ever seen such a weapon as the air-pistol in the possession of John Oakburn, and as a new idea entered his mind he cried:

"I have it! The strange weapon with which Oakburn was murdered formed one of his collection of curious, ancient weapons."

The assassin had opened the old cashier's little safe, robbed it, and secured the air-pistol when he heard Oakburn coming. The weapon had been discovered by the pistol was loaded and ready for use. He used it to kill his victim because it made no sound.

Paxton was satisfied with this theory. On this very evening, while Paxton was sitting in the curiosity shop, Levi Kredge was on his way to visit his sister. The treacherous scoundrel had taken

the alarm, and he was thoroughly on his guard.

From the evening when Paxton had shadowed him to the office of Pratt & Weeks, Levi Kredge had experienced the keenest anxiety for his personal safety.

"They are on my trail! Do they suspect the truth?" he asked himself over and over again.

For the present he did not visit Pratt & Weeks, for the wily brokers had instructed him not to do so.

Levi Kredge met his sister in the rear of Garrison's office by appointment, and the moment Judith saw his face she knew that he was troubled.

"What is it, Levi; you look frightened?" said Judith.

"I am frightened, Judith, the detectives are shadowing me day and night."

"Is that a fact?" cried Judith, starting.

"Yes, they surely have some suspicion against me."

"What do you fear?"

"You know well enough, I fear I shall be charged with John Oakburn's murder."

"That should not alarm you. You didn't kill the old man, did you?"

"No, that is true. But there are circumstances against me, Judith, which you do not know."

"Ah, you have secrets from your affectionate sister, eh?"

"I tell you I fear I shall yet be placed in prison for my life, on account of John Oakburn's murder."

"If it comes to that, I'll save you. I'll point out the real assassin, and prove that person's guilt."

After this, they conversed at some length, but they discussed personal affairs of no interest to our readers.

Paxton's faithful auxiliary, whose duty it was to track Kredge, overheard this conversation, for he had not neglected to track the janitor on this occasion.

Still Marion was silent.

The detective again repeated what he had overheard of the conversation just recorded to his principal.

This intelligence seemed, at the first view, to overthrow the detective's theory of the guilt of Kredge. But Paxton was not yet ready to admit that Kredge was not the assassin or his accomplice, and he thought:

"Kredge may have been concerned in the crime, and Judith be ignorant of the fact."

One point, however, seemed established, Judith Kredge was sincere in believing she could produce enough to prove the innocence of some one, who was not Stuart Harland.

The perplexing complications and mysteries with which the case abounded, but Paxton saw his way clear. His next step was to meet Levi Kredge, and he just received.

Judith Kredge must be compelled to reveal the knowledge of the crime which she was concealing.

To accomplish this, Paxton resolved to arrest Levi Kredge, and charge him with John Oakburn's murder.

He meant to thoroughly frighten Kredge, and lead him to believe that the danger of conviction, as Oakburn's assassin, was imminent, and he counted on Judith keeping her promise and revealing what she had claimed to know.

But meanwhile, during the time occupied by Paxton in making the investigations recorded, the Grand Jury had held a session. Stuart Harland's case had been considered, and a true bill was returned against him.

Stuart Harland had endured his imprisonment bravely.

Edna Garrison was an almost constant visitor to his cell, and the impatient young man was cheered and sustained by her untiring devotion.

Harland's attorney was a shrewd and successful criminal lawyer, and when Stuart had positively answered him that the real truth regarding the motive for his visit to Albany on the night of the murder could not be told under any circumstances, he said:

"I will not question your motive, but we must invent some plausible defense or you are lost."

"What resort to falsehood?" demanded Stuart.

"A story must be told to account for your midnight journey. Listen to me. I have made a study of the case, and here is what you must say when you are brought to trial."

Your aunt, whose prospects here you have said to be good, resides in Albany. Very good. You made your midnight journey to visit her.

"Some one had informed you that the first train in the morning would take Weeks to Albany to see your aunt, to whom he meant to reveal that you had become involved in a stock gambling, to the extent of ten thousand dollars."

"You had obtained a sight of your note for one thousand dollars, which you had given the scoundrel, and when you saw it had been raised to ten, you knew Pratt and Weeks meant to swindle your aunt."

You secretly took the midnight train in order to see your aunt and explain matters before Weeks came.

"You did not tell the truth at the Coroner's inquest, because, to do so, would have been to lead by the hand of the person who had warned you of Weeks' intention of visiting Albany, on the morning following the night of the murder. That person was a young clerk, John Sand by name, employed by Pratt & Weeks, and the sole support of a widowed mother and invalid sister."

"You knew that if it came out that he had warned you, he would be discharged by Pratt & Weeks. In that event, you thought the helplessness dependent upon his salary for support might suffer. This consideration prevented your risking the betrayal of your friend by telling the truth. Besides you will admit that you did not at the time of your examination fully realize how great your peril was."

THE HOUSE IN SESSION.

HOW BUSINESS IS CONDUCTED IN THE LOWER BRANCH OF CONGRESS.

Many visitors are upon the floor before the business of the day begins. Hanging the flag to announce that the House is at work. The day's proceedings.

By 10 o'clock there are many visitors upon the floor of the House of Representatives, writes Anne J. Cummings in the New York News. The hum of conversation increases as 11 o'clock approaches. Groups of ladies and gentlemen, under the direction of the guides, through the lobby, gazing at the portraits of the past speakers of the House, and gather with curiosity around the maps indicating the territories in every state and territory in the Union. At a glance they can ascertain whether it is raining or snowing at their homes, or whether the sun is shining. At a quarter to 12 the floor of the House is crowded with visitors. The assistant doorkeeper appears at the desk of the clerk of the House, and in a shrill voice says:

"I am directed by the doorkeeper to ask all persons not entitled to the privileges of the floor to immediately retire, as the rules of the House require the same."

This request is usually promptly heeded. Those disposed to linger upon the floor are approached by messengers, who shout, "It is time to clear the floor. All visitors must retire." Many of them seek the galleries to see the opening of the day's session.

At five minutes to 12 the blind chaplain, Henry N. Conden, who wears a Grand Army button, is led to the clerk's desk by a page. He is a soldier in a Michigan regiment, and a hot his right in the war. An assistant sergeant-at-arms comes through the east lobby door with the mace and places it by the side of a mahogany pedestal. It leans against the wall at the right of the steps leading to the speaker's desk. Meantime the speaker comes in his room adjoining the lobby. His members gather around him seeking promises of recognition, and asking him and in securing the consideration of bills.

Two minutes later the veteran John Chaney leaves the hall by the west lobby door. Going through the floor, he ascends to the roof, carrying an American flag. He ties it to the balustrade of the staff above the House, and gazes intently toward the State, War and Navy building. The time ball drops there at the noon hour, and Chaney, with bowed head, as he hears the sound of the gavel in the House, pulls the balustrade, and the flag floats above the south wing, announcing to all that the House is in session.

The speaker has already left his room. He walks through the lobby, entering the House by the southeast door, and slowly ascends the steps leading to his chair. His clerk has preceded him, and placed his gavel upon the desk. The speaker greets him, kisses it above his head, and greets the desk a sharp rap. The ringing of a bell, and the house rises, while a South Washington banner will be hoisted. With the crash of the gavel come the words, "order, order and distinct." "The House will be in order."

At this the assistant sergeant-at-arms carries the great silver mace from the floor to his place on the pedestal. The speaker surveys the House for 30 seconds and then says, in a low tone of voice that penetrates the remotest gallery: "The chaplain will offer prayer."

At this the members rise and listen to the prayer in a devout attitude. At the end of the prayer a page leads the blind chaplain into the lobby. As he leaves the desk the reading clerk takes his place, and the speaker orders the journal, which is the minutes of the last session, to be read. The House hums like a beehive, and frequently the speaker interrupts the clerk by calling it to order. After the journal is read, the speaker says: "Without objection the journal will stand approved," and the real business of the day begins.

If there are any executive communications, that is, papers from the president or departments—the speaker then presents and refers them to the appropriate committees. In the interval a swarm of members appears on their desks, or have appeared in the area fronting the speaker. As the last communication is referred, all shut at once, "Mr. Speaker," each holding a bill above his head. All are seeking recognition to ask unanimous consent for the consideration of bills or resolutions. The average spectator fancies that these recognitions are given upon the spur of the moment. This, however, is not so. The recognitions are always prearranged with the speaker. It takes new members some time to ascertain this, but when they have vainly sought recognition day after day for a month or more, they begin to learn how business is done.

These recognitions continue until some member shouts for the regular order. It may be unfinished business, or privileged matters may come to the front. Whatever is taken up is sure to lead to a discussion. Half the members of the House begin to write letters or read newspapers. When a debate opens, they stop writing and listen for a minute to the orator. If it concerns something in which they are interested, they move near him, and possibly participate in the discussion. If not, they resume answers to correspondence and the reading of their newspapers.

A vote of the House always attracts attention. Members listen for the calling of their names, and frequently lose the run of the call while in conversation with their colleagues. As

HELPS FOR HOUSEWIVES.

Peel, slice and pound an eight-ounce foreign pine, until well pulped; take this up into a basin, pour in a pint of boiling syrup, add the juice of a lemon, stir together, cover over with a plate, and when the whole has steeped for a couple of hours, filter through a silk sieve or beaver jelly bag; add a quart of spring water.

"Sugar curls" are a new form of the old-fashioned sugar cookies. They are particularly attractive to children or for any one desirous of a variety. Roll the cookie dough out rather thin and cut it into strips about eight inches long and three-quarters of an inch in width. Sprinkle them lightly with sugar and place them in a buttered pan. Bake them in a quick oven to a very delicate color. When the strips are baked, as soon as they can be handled, roll them around large pencils or sticks and keep them until they have cooled. —New York Sun.

A Good Tartar Sauce.

Take one-half gill of olive oil, four tablespoonfuls of vinegar, one even teaspoonful of mustard, one-half teaspoonful of salt, one-eighth teaspoonful of pepper, one-fourth teaspoonful of onion juice, one-half teaspoonful of minced capers, one-half tablespoonful of minced cucumber pickles, and the yolk of one egg. Beat the egg, salt, pepper and mustard together until thick and light; then add the oil, a few drops at the time, beat after each addition of oil until all is used. As the sauce thickens add a few drops of vinegar. When the sauce is smooth and thick, stir in the minced pickle and capers.

Drip Coffee the Best.

So many people have an idea that coffee has to be boiled to get the strength out of the crushed berry. On the contrary, boiling gives the liquid a peculiar bitter taste that is foreign to really good coffee. Besides that it ruins the flavor. "Drip" coffee is supposed to be the very best coffee that is made, but even that is spoiled sometimes by letting the liquid boil over the strainer, thus losing the oil that makes the coffee bitter. If you have not a regular coffee strainer, make three or four cheese-cloth bags of a size large enough to accommodate the amount of coffee that you use, allowing for swelling of the grain and for a draining to take. Wash one bag the bags after making, so that not a taste of the cloth remains in them. Fill the bag with the coffee, and have in a teakettle, boiling hot, exactly the amount of water you want to use for your coffee. Run the coffee pot out with hot water, and put the bag in the pot and pour over it the boiling water. Place the pot on the back of the stove, where it will remain just below the boiling period for at least ten minutes. The result will give you clear, strong coffee, you need not use a grain more than for the old way, and it will not hurt the weakest digestion. Neither is egg necessary. Empty the bag, as soon as the meal is over, as there will be no more need in the coffee, and wash the bag in hot water; shake free of all the grounds and hang in the air to dry. Have at least four such bags, and keep them and the coffee pot scrupulously clean. —Washington Star.

Household Hints.

Never cover potatoes.

A little turpentine mixed with starch will give a gloss to collars and cuffs.

To keep food hot cover it closely and set it in the oven in a pan of hot water. This will prevent it from drying.

Potatoes in winter should be soaked several hours in cold water before boiling, and should be put over to boil in cold water.

After handling substances that have a disagreeable odor upon the hands, if instead of water is used it will be found a most efficient deodorizer.

To remove the taste of new wood, first send the wood with boiling water, then dissolve potassium bichromate in tepid water, adding a little lime and wash the vessel thoroughly with the solution. Soak it well again with hot water and rinse with cold.

Rice water makes a refreshing drink. Wash three ounces of rice in several waters, and then put it into a steaming pan with a quart of water and one ounce of raisins. Boil gently for half an hour; strain through a coarse hair sieve into a jug, and when cold, drink plentifully.

In mowing lawns avoid mowing the lawn part first mowed, and the lawn left to the last. In mowing the latter, a gentle pressure upon its wrong side, outward with the reversed iron, its broad end doing the work, will prevent any smothering or tearing of the thin texture.

One of the most useful things in a kitchen is a broad-bladed knife, thin and flexible. We all know how exasperating it is to try to take a tender, crusted pie out of the tin. One of these sharp-edged knives, used with care, will prevent their breaking. Cost only ten cents. Handy to take up eggs with, too.

To test mushrooms plainly, cut off the part of the stems that grows underground. Wash the mushrooms carefully and remove the skin from the top, and if larger ones cut them in quarters. Put the mushrooms into a saucepan, and for each pint allow one tablespoonful of water, a heaping tablespoonful of butter, lightly dusted with flour, and some salt and cayenne pepper. Cover the saucepan and put it at the side of the fire until the butter is melted, then put it where its contents will simmer for fifteen minutes. Turn into a heated covered dish and quickly serve.

the vote is about to be announced, some representative usually appears in the area, saying, "Mr. Speaker, I desire to vote."

And so the business of the House runs on, with points of order and questions of privilege, discussions and roll calls, until the shades of night begin to appear. Then Mr. Dingley, or some other leader of the majority, moves that the House adjourn. As the members don their hats and overcoats and leave the hall, the janitor's assistants appear with brooms and waste baskets and clear up the litter. Within an hour all the doors are locked, and silence reigns until the ensuing day.

Life in Crete.

Crete is a land of the past. It is a land of memories rather than of passing events; a land whose period of activity and importance has passed, whose time of decay and torpor seems to have come. To history it is the birth place and tomb of Zeus, the home of Minos, the fabulistocrat, the scene of war and carnage, the Venetian colony seat. To Greece it is the land of memories and heroes. To Turkey it is a thorn. In old days it got the name of being a country of home life. It is, except in an agricultural island. In its entire area there are not more than six considerable towns, and these the ruins of other days, the houses old and fallen, about huge, stony, craggy hills and barriers bounding the streets. All around are the mountains, and every considerable town is by the sea. On the craggy mountain tops and in the rugged valleys the peasant till the land and pasture their sheep and goats. At night they sleep in the villages, and by day they are in their fields of rice, millet and sunflowers. They make but a sorry agriculturalist. Laziness is the root of their woes, and the Cretans are lazy under the wells. More than half of their days are holidays, which they celebrate by getting drunk. By actual count there are 125 of these holidays, and when men and women get intoxicated 125 times in a year it is a regular system. Springfield (Mass.) Republican.

Proverbs of the Searcher.

Skirts are not a bar to a century race.

Fast speed travels further than much lace.

Fine feathers never propelled a bicycle one foot.

The way of the searcher is not cheap at \$10 a ride.

A plug in time is like to save the price of a new tire.

One slide slip is more lasting than a dozen ordinary falls.

A search left at home will not mend a wheel broken on the road.

Don't bet that a man's horns handle bar signifies a 2,000 mile rider.

The shortest way across is always the longest way around, when the road is not impassable.

The appearance of a bicycle is not always significant of the muscular ability of the rider.

It is easier to climb a hill against a head wind than to ride a bicycle on asphalt with a punctured tire.

The man who rides with his head down will be followed by a procession of mourning relatives ere long.

The long-distance records that are stopped by an "if" are like the largest fish that flops off the hook just as it is being drawn into the boat. —New York Journal.

Longest Railroad in the World.

The dimensions of the undertaking are enormous. From Tchelabinsk, the western terminus, to Vladivostok, the present eastern terminus, the length is 4,741 1/2 miles; in other words it is nearly the longest railroad in the world. It goes west from Tchelabinsk, passing the southern edge of Russia's great Siberian dominion, through Ob and Krasnoyarsk to Irkutsk, then takes a sudden turn around the southern end of the great Lake Baikal, and follows the Amoor river along the northern boundary of Manchuria to Vladivostok. Until it reaches the Yessois river the road passes over a steppe country that renders the engineering very simple, but beyond that, in the vast mountainous region above Tary, the cost of construction has been heavy. When the three great railroad bridges are taken into account, Russia will pay at least \$175,000,000 for the privilege of reaching the Pacific. But Russia has always wanted to reach the sea. She is practically an island country, with the Baltic frozen up half the year and the Arctic and White seas eternally blocked with Polar ice. —Scribner's.

Blood Poison and Insanity.

While the fullest credit should be given to the staff of this important institution, the State Institute of Pathology, it is but fair to state that the study of toxemia in connection with insanity is by no means a novelty, nor is it the discovery of the enterprising young gentlemen (connected with that establishment) who have been credited therewith. Over a decade ago Nicholson, Rogers and others recognized the toxic origin of mental disease, while no less than ten others, among them Herter and Smith, have written extensively on the subject. Perhaps most credit should be given to Dr. Allan McLane Hamilton, whose paper on "Toxemia as a Cause of Insanity" was read before the Medical Society of London in May last. In this paper, which contained much original research, the connection between toxemia and insanity was fully shown. —New York Medical Record.

By a recent law Austrian physicians are permitted to ask no more than three florins for a visit by day and four for a night call. The consultation fee is ten florins (about \$1).