containing diamonds torn from a ly throat by a pair of armless, threatig hands, both with sarcastic, threating notes, signed by the inscrutable ds. His valet, Ross Brown, and a ler, Miss Quigg, are murdered in his ms. Laura and Lenora, his assistants, peot Craig, the professor's valet. Leta, abducted by the threatening hands, rescued. Quest traps Craig, loses him, ps him again in the house where Leta, was imprisoned, and loses him yet.

EIGHTH INSTALLMENT

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE INHERITED SIN. house shows, aren't you, Lenora?"

"Could anyone feel much sympathy," she asked, "with those men? Red Gallagher, as they all called him. is more like a great brutal animal than a human being. I think that even if they had sentenced him to death I should have felt that it was quite the proper thing to have done"

"Too much sentiment about those things." Quest agreed, clipping the end off a cigar. "Men like that are better off the face of the earth. They did their best to send me there."

"Here's a cablegram for you," Lenora exclaimed, bringing it over to him. "Mr. Quest, I wonder if it's from Scot-

Quest tore it open. They read it together, Lenora standing on tiptoe to peer over his shoulder:

"Stowaway answering in every re spect your description of Craig found on Durham. Has been arrested, as desired and will be taken to Hamblin house for identification by Lord Asheigh. Reply whether you are coming over, and full details as to charge"

"Good for Scotland Yard!" Quest declared. "So they've got him, eh? All the same, that fellow's as slippery as an sel. Lenora, how should you like a trip across the ocean, eh?" "I should love it." Lenora replied.

"Do you mean it, really?"

Quest nodded. "That fellow fooled me pretty well." if I get my hands on him this time. ey'll stay there till he stands where Red Gallagher did today. I don't feel content to let anyone else finish off

the job. Got any relatives over there?" "I have an aunt in London." Lenora told him, "the dearest old lady you ever saw. She'd give anything to

have me make her a visit." Quest moved across to his desk and took up a sailing list He studied it for a few moments and turned

back to Lenora. "Send a cable off at once to Scotland Yard," he directed. "Say-'Am sailing on Lusitania tomorrow. Hold pris-

oner. Charge very serious. Have full warrants." Lenora wrote down the message and went to the telephone to send it off.

As soon as she had finished Quest took up his hat again. "Come on," he invited. "The machine's outside. We'll just go and look

in on the professor and tell him the news. Poor old chap, I'm afraid he'll never be the same man again." They found the professor on his

Carefully arranged before him were the bones of a skeleton, each laid in some appointed place.

"What about that unhappy man, Craig?" the professor asked, gloomily. "Isn't the Durham almost due now?"

Quest took out the cablegram from his pocket and passed it over. The leigh on the day that Lady Jane Grey myself, and, in fact, offered to do so, professor's fingers trembled a little as he read it. He passed it back, however, without immediate comment.

"You see, they have been cleverer. over there than we were." Quest re-

"Perhaps," the professor assented. quired. "They seem, at least, to have arrested believe that it is Craig-my servant Craig—who is lying in an English prison. Do you know that his people have been servants in the Ashleigh

some entries concerning which I was interested. It contains a history of the Hamblin estate since the days of hall door." Cromwell, and here in the back, you see, is a list of our farmers, bailiffs Lord Ashleigh and fought with him in the Cromwellian wars as a trooper and since those days, so far as I can see, there has never been a time when

seem to have been, until-"Until when?" Quest demanded. The look of trouble had once more clouded the professor's face. He

shrugged his shoulders slightly.

there hasn't been a Craig in the serv-

"Until Craig's father," he admitted. "I am afraid I must admit that we come upon a bad piece of family history here. Silas Craig entered the service of my father in 1858, as under gamekeeper. Here we come upon the first black mark against the name. He appears to have lived reputably for some years, and then, after a quar-"Getting kind of used to these court rel with a neighbor about some trivial matter, he deliberately murdered him. Quest remarked, as they stepped from a crime for which he was tried and the automobile and entered the bouse executed in 1867. John Craig, his only son, entered our service in 1880, and, when I left England, accompanied me as my valet.'

There was a moment's silence "Lenora and I are sailing tomorrow," Quest said. "We are taking over the necessary warrants and shall bring Craig back here for trial."

The professor smoked thoughtfully for some moments. Then he rose deliberately to his feet. He had come to a decision. He announced it calmly, but irrevocably.

"I shall come with you." he announced. "I shall be glad to visi England, but apart from that I feel is to be my duty. I owe it to Craig to see that he has a fair chance, and owe it to the law to see that he pays the penalty, if, indeed, he is guilty of these crimes. Is Miss Laura accompanying you, too?"

Quest shook his head.

"From what the surgeons tell us." he said, "it will be some weeks before she is able to travel. At the same time, I must tell you that I am glad of your decision, professor."

"It is my duty," the latter declared. "I cannot rest in this state of uncertainty. If Craig is lost to me, the sooner I face the fact the better. At the same time I will be frank with you. Notwithstanding all the accumulated pile of evidence I feel in my heart the urgent necessity of seeing he continued, "but somehow I feel that him face to face, of holding him by the shoulders and asking him whether these things are true. We have faced death together, Craig and I. We have done more than that—we have courted it. There is nothing about him I can accept from hearsay. I shall go with you to England, Mr. Quest."

CHAPTER XIX.

The professor rose from his seat in some excitement as the carriage passed through the great gates of Hamblin park. He acknowledged with a smile the respectful curtsy of the woman who held it open.

"You have now an opportunity, my dear Mr. Quest," he said, "of appreciating one feature of English life not entirely reproducible in your own wonderful country. I mean the home life and surroundings of our aristocracy. You see these oak trees?" he went on, with a little wave of his the particulars of his escape, Lord hand. "They were planted by my an- Ashleigh? The sooner we get the hang cestors in the days of Henry VIII. I of things the better." have been a student of tree life in South America and in the dense forhands and knees upon a dusty floor. character, for splendor of growth and from the New York police. I under hardiness, there is nothing in the stand that it was with great difficulty world to touch the Ashleigh oaks."

> ogist admitted. "You notice, perhaps, the small

mossy, velvet carpet."

"A mile farther on yet. The woods them. They arrived quite safely and the man. Even now I can scarcely part and make a natural avenue past started for here, Craig handcuffed to the bend of the river there," the pro- one of the Scotland Yard men on the fessor pointed out. "Full of trout, that back seat, and the other in front with river, Quest. How I used to whip that the driver. About half a mile from the

stream when I was a boy!"

the it back to them. You was handcuffed was stun

ting to get my hands on that fel- of the fellow has been discovered." low Craig! I wonder where they're

pect," the professor replied. "My peared," he suggested. "Couldn't wa brother is a magistrate, of course, and do that?"

great front a moment or two later. take you to the spot."

Lord Ashleigh came forward with outand domestic servants. There was a Craig who was a tenant of the first tinct note of anxiety,

ice of our family. A fine race they back to your home! Mr. Quest, I am heard the news, of course?"

> fessor replied "You didn't go to Scotland Yard?"; thicket, talking as he went.

Lord Ashleigh asked. Quest explained. "We got on the boat Scotland Yard man who had been train at Plymouth, and your brother sitting by his side, followed him. The managed to induce one of the directors, searched for an hour, but found no whom he saw on the platform to stop trace of him at all. Then they rethe train for us at Hamblin road. We turned to the house to make a reonly left the boat two hours ago. port and get help. I will now show There's nothing wrong with Craig, is, you how Craig first eluded them."

low him. "Please come this way," he invited. He led them across the hall-which, dimly lit and with its stained-glass windows, was almost like the nave of | time ago and almost forgotten now a cathedral-into the library beyond.

"I have bad news for you both," he announced. "Craig has escaped." trayed any unusual surprise. So far escape." as the latter was concerned, his first glimpse at Lord Ashleigh's face had warned him of what was coming.

"Dear me!" the professor mur- search?" mured, sinking into an easy chair. "This is most unexpected!"

"We'll get him again," Quest de-

rother and Lady Ashleigh have recovered from the shock of poor Lena's caught a great stone by the side of the road, and all four men were leve, but the sight of the girl might ned, but Crais left her with triends, I hope, Mr. himself appears to have been unhurt. He stumbled up, took the key of the "She has an aunt in Hampstead." handcuffs from the pocket of the offi-the latter explained. "I should have liked to see her safely there my-self, but we should have been an groom or the other Scotland Yard man "What astonishes m nour, or two later down here, and I had recovered their senses. To cut anything," he pronounced, as he stood tell you," he went on, his voice gather—a long story short, this was last Thurs—looking over the desolate expanse of ing a note almost of ferocity, "I'm day, and up till now not a single trace

Quest rose abruptly to his feet. "Say, I'd like to take this matter up "At the local police station, I ex- right on the spot where Craig disap- all of a sudden there spring up these

he would see that proper arrangements were made. There he is at the hall door."

The carriage drew up before the dinner. I will have a car round and the several hours before we change for dinner. I will have a car round and the several hours before we change for dinner. I will have a car round and the several hours before we change for dinner. I will have a car round and suit, with gatters and the several hours before we change for dinner. I will have a car round and suit, with gatters and the several hours before we change for dinner. I will have a car round and suit, with gatters and the several hours before we change for dinner. I will have a car round and suit, with gatters and the several hours before we change for dinner.

stretched hands, the genial smile of and very soon they stepped out of the ton," his master explained. "He was the welcoming host upon his lips. In automobile on to the side of a narrow with us on the chase." his manner, however, there was a dis- road, looking very much as it had been described. Farther on, beyond a with the newcomer. "Edgar, my dear fellow," he ex- stretch of open common, they could claimed, "I am delighted! Welcome see the smoke from the gypsy encampment. On their left-hand side has given us all this trouble, eh? This very happy to see you here. You have was a stretch of absolutely wild cour-"We have heard nothing!" the pro- gray stone wall of the park. Lord Craig." try, bounded in the far distance by the Ashleigh led the way through the

"Craig came along through here" "We haven't been to London at all," he explained. "The groom and the

He led the way along a tangled path. Lord Ashleigh motioned them to fol- doubled back, plunged into a little spinney and came suddenly to a small shed.

"This is an ancient gamekeeper's shelter," he explained; "built a long What Craig did, without doubt, was to He closed the door and turned around. hide in this. The Scotland Yard man who took the affair in hand found distinct traces here of recent occupa-Neither the professor nor Quest be- tion. That is how he made his first Quest nodded.

"Sure!" he murmured. "Well now. what about your more extended

"I am coming to that," Lord Ashleigh replied. "As Edgar will remember, no doubt, I have always kept clared quickly. "Can you let us have a few bloodhounds in my kennels, and



"Craig Disappeared About Here, Sir."

"You know, of course," he began, "that Craig was arrested at Liverpool ests, of central Africa, but for real in consequence of communications he was discovered, and it is quite clear "They're some trees," the criminole that someone on the ship had been heavily bribed. However, he was arrested, brought to London, and then ones, which seem dwarfed. Their down here for purposes of identifica-tops were cut off by the lord of Ashwas beheaded. Queen Elizabeth heard but on the other hand, as there are of it and threatened to confiscate the many others on the estate to whom he estate. Look at the turf, my friend was well known, I thought that it Ages have gone to the making of that would be better to have more evidence than mine alone. Accordingly, "Where's the house?" Quest in they left London one afternoon, and I sent a dogcart to the station to meet south entrance to the park the road family for some hundreds of years?"

Quest was clearly interested. "Say, in the avenue. Before them on the country with a lot of low undergrowth hillside surrounded by trees and with claimed. "You know I'm rather great a great walled garden behind, was

as soon as we could get together one or two of the keepers and a few of the local constabulary, we started off again from here. The dogs brought us without a check to this shed, and started off again this way."

and then they had to jump across a small dyke, and once they had to make a detour to avoid an osler bed. They came at last to the river.

"Now, I can show you exactly how that fellow put us off the scent here," their guide proceeded. "He seems to have picked up something, Edgar, in those South American trips of yours, for a cleverer thing I never saw. You see all these bulrushes everywhere clouds of them all along the

"We call them tules," Quest muttered. 'Well?"

"When Craig arrived here," Lord Ashleigh continued, "he must have heard the baying of the dogs in the distance and he knew that the game was up unless he could put them of the scent. He cut a quantity of these bulrushes from a place a little farther behind those trees, then stepped boldclaimed. You know I'm rather great on heredity, professor. What class did he come from then? Were his people just domestic servants all looked at it.

"This is where you've got us best, ways?"

"This is where you've got us best, sure," he admitted. "Our country places are like gewgaw palaces compared to this. Makes me kind of the professor's face was for a more in a dimitted. "Our country places are like gewgaw palaces compared to this. Makes me kind of the professor shook his head."

"This really belongs to my brother, I didn't bring Lenora along."

Lord Ashleigh," he explained. "He professor shook his head. "You were very wise," he maid. "My his gun, just as the dogcart was passed."

"You were very wise," he maid. "My head the movel common and caught sight of one of these gypsy fellows setting a trap. He chased him, and more, I am sure, to frighten him than anything else, when he saw that the fellow was getting away, he fired his gun, just as the dogcart was passed."

"You were very wise," he maid. "My head keeper, to whom the very idea of a poscher is intolerable, was patrolling this ground himself that afternoon and caught sight of one of these gypsy fellows setting a trap. He chased him, and more, I am sure, to frighten him than anything else, when he saw that the fellow was getting away, he fired off, they never picked the scent up his gun, just as the dogcart was passed." again either on this side or the other.

sents all the appearance of a nerve-

raised his hat respectfully. "This is my head keeper, Middle-

The professor shook hands heartily

"Not a day older, Middleton!" he exclaimed. "So you are the man who gentleman and I have come over from New York on purpose to lay hands on

"I am very sorry sir." the man replied. I wouldn't have fired my gun if I had known what the consequences were going to be, but them poaching devils that come round here rabbiting fairly send me furious, and that's a fact. It ain't that one grudges them a few rabbits, but my tame pheasants all run out here from the home wood, and I've seen feathers at the side of the road there that no fox nor stoat had nothing to do with. All the same, sir, I'm very sorry," he added, "to have been the cause of any inconvenience."

"It is rather worse than inconvenience, Middleton," the professor said, gravely. "The man who has escaped Showing the Guest Through Ham is one of the worst criminals of these days."

"He won't get far, sir," the game- great things of you over here, Edgar. admit that men might search it for things with regard to our origin." weeks without finding anything, but 'Oh! there is no doubt about that," those gentlemen from Scotland Yard, the professor observed. 'Where we sir, if you'll excuse my making the came from and where we are going to remark, and hoping that this gentleman," he added, looking at Quest, "is room for the slightest doubt to the they don't know everything, and that's does elude us is the nature of our

"This gentleman is from the United By the bye, Middleton, I heard this morning that you'd been airing your opinion down in the village. You seem to rather fancy yourself as a thiefcatcher.

"I wouldn't go so far as that, my lord," the man replied, respectfully, "but still, I hope I may say that I've as much common sense as most people. You see, sir," he went on, turning to Quest, "the spots where he could emerge from the tract of country are pretty well guarded, and he'll be in a fine mess, when he does put in an appearance, to show himself I should say he must be nigh starved. for food. I've a little scheme of my man concluded, with a twinkle in his hand." keen brown eyes. "I'm not giving it away. If I catch him for you, that's it away. If I catch him for you, that's ing anyone into my little secret."

His master noddeu. "You shall have your rise out of the ing round here."

They made their way, single file, to the road and up to the house. Lord Ashleigh did his best to dispel a queer little sensation of uneasiness which seemed to have arisen in the minds of all of them.

"Come," he said, "we must put aside our disappointment for the present, and remember that after all the chances are that Craig will never make his escape alive. Let us forget him for a little while. . . . Mr. Quest," he with you myself. Her ladyship back yet, Moreton?"

"Not yet, my lord" "Lady Ashleigh," her husband explained, "has gone to the other side of ing doing out there." the county to open a bazaar. She is They strolled about for a hour or coming you at dinner time."

and which seemed vast by reason of by pillars of black oak, carved the eye of many an antiquarian, was and impalpable danger.

vanged along the black-paneled walls. (TO BE CONTINE

We tried them for four or five hours Everything was in harmony, even the before we took them home. The next grave precision of the solemn-faced burning, while the place was being butler and the powdered hair of the thoroughly searched, we came upon the spot where these bulrushes had been cut down, and we found them caught in the low boughs of a tree, drifting down the river." hopelessly out of touch with his sur-Quest had lit a fresh cigar and was party with many stories. He struggled of anachronism which now and then "What astonishes me more than

became almost oppressive. The professor's pleasure at finding himself once more amongst these to face to face with the fellow he pre- miliar surroundings was obvious and intense. The conversation between less and broken-down coward. Then him and his brother never flagged. There were tenants and neighbors to evidences of the most amazing, the be asked after, matters concerning the most diabolical resource. . . . Who's estate on which he demanded information. Even the very servants' names he remembered.

"It was a queer turn of fate, George." he declared, as he held out before him a wonderfully chased glass filled with amber wine, "which sent you into the world a few seconds before me and made you lord of Ashleigh and me a

struggling scientific man." "The world has benefited by it." Lord Ashleigh remarked, with more "We hear than fraternal courtesy.



keeper remarked, with a little smile. We hear that you have been on the "It's a wild bit of country, this, and I point of proving most unpleasant

tendencies while we are here on earth." States," Lord Ashleigh reminded him, had been placed upon the table and coffee served. The servants, according to the custom of the house, had departed. The great apartment was empty. Even Quest was impressed by some peculiar significance in the long-drawn-out silence. He looked around him uneasily. The growing regard of that long line of painted warriors seemed somehow to be full of menace. There was something grim, too, in the sight of those empty suits of armor.

"I may be superstitious," Lord Ashleigh said, "but there are times, especially just lately, when I seem to find upon a public road. Yet by this time a new and hateful quality in silence. What is it, I wonder? I ask you, but I Sooner or later he'll have to come out think I know. It is the conviction that there is some alien presence, some own, sir, I don't mind admitting," the thing disturbing, lurking close at

all that's wanted, I imagine, and we shan's te any the nearer to it for let. ground. He threw it up and listened. The others came over and joined him. There was nothing to be heard but the distant hooting of an owl, and farther police, if you can, Middleton," he ob- away the barking of some farmhouse served. "It seems queer, though, to dog. Lord Ashleigh stood there with believe that the fellow's still in hid- straining eyes, gazing out across the park.

"There was something here," he muttered; "something which has gone. What's that? Quest, your eyes are younger than mine. Can you see any thing underneath that tree?" Quest peered out into the gray dark-

ness. "I fancied I saw something moving in the shadow of that oak," he mut tered. Wait."

He crossed the terrace, swung down on to the path, across the lawn, over added, a few minutes later, as they a wire fence and into the park itself reached the hall, "Moreton here will All the time he kept his eyes fixed or They walked another half mile show you your room and look after a certain spot. When at last he across a reedy swamp. Every now you. Please let me know if you will reached the tree there was nothing take an aperitif. I can recommend my there. He looked all around him. He sherry. We dine at eight o'clock. Ed. stood and listened for several mo gar, you know your way. The blue ments. A more utterly peaceful night room, of course. I am coming up or more utter peace it would be hard with you myself. Her ladyship back to imagine. Slowly he made his way back to the house.

"I imagine we are all a little nervy tonight," he remarked. There's noth-

looking forward to the pleasure of well more, looking into different rooms, showing their guest the finest pictures even taking him down into the wonder Dinner, served, out of compliment to ful cellars. They parted early, but their transatlantic visitor, in the great Quest stood, for a few moments before banqueting hall, was to Quest, especiring, gazing about him with an air cially, a most impressive meal. They almost of awe. His great room, as sat at a small round table lit by large as an Italian palace, was lit by a shaded lights, in the center of an dozen wax candles in silver candle apartment which was large in reality, sticks. His four-poster was supported the shadows which hovered around the strange forms, and surmounted by the unlit spaces. From the walls frowned Ashleigh coronet and coat-of-arms. He down a long succession of family por threw his windows open wide and traits—Ashleighs in the queer Tudor stood for a moment looking out across costume of Henry VII; Ashleighs in the park, more clearly visible now by chain armor, sword in hand, a charger the light of the slowly rising moon. chain armor, sword in hand, a charger the light of the slowly rising moon. waiting, regardless of perspective, in There was scarcely a breeze stirring, the near distance; Ashleighs befrilled scarcely a sound even from the animal and bewigged; Ashleighs in the court dress of the Georges—judges, sailors, luctantly he made his preparations for retiring for the night, was conscious of armor which would have gladdened of that quer sensation of unimagined the even of many an animal production.

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