

## LOTTERY TICKET, No. 1710.

"Your name is—, I believe sir?" asked a tall, gray-haired gentleman of me one evening, as I was stepping out of the Carleton House, a hotel then on the corner of Broadway and Leonard Street.

"Yes, that's my name," offering my hand to receive the already extended hand of the gentleman.

"I have sought you," said he, "at the suggestion of my friend and lawyer, James T. Brady; who tells me that you are able, if anybody is, to help me in my loss."

"You've had a loss? Well, sir, you wish to tell me about it. Shall we go in here, or where shall we go to talk it over?"

"Can we not walk up Broadway, and I tell you during our walk?"

"Probably that would not be the best way," I replied, "for it is doubtless as a detective that you need me, and we might meet somebody who knows me as such, and who might be the very last person whom I should like to have see us together," I replied.

"You are right, sir," said he, smiling. "Your caution shows me that you understand your business; but it is too late to go far up town to my house.—I have it. I'll call at the Howard House, take a private room, and you follow, in half an hour, say, and finding this name on the register with my room, come up. Here's my card. Come directly to the room, and say nothing."

"That's a good plan, sir. I will be there;" and he left, and I, having finished my business at the Carleton, wandered slowly up Broadway to kill time, wondering what such a stately, dignified, cool-headed sort of a looking man as he—a real estate holder to a large amount, a man whom everybody knew by reputation as one of the most quiet in the city—could have for me to do. I suspected forgery, arson, or some attempt at it, and a dozen other things. But I drove them all out of mind in a few minutes, for it is never well for a detective to indulge in anticipations in such a juncture of affairs; and meeting just then an old friend, beguiled a few minutes with him along Broadway, and finally taking out my watch, saw I had only ample time to get to the Howard at the time appointed, and so "suddenly recollected" an appointment, excused myself to my friend, sought the Howard and the gentleman there, whom I readily found in waiting for me.

"You are here on the moment," said he, as he closed and locked the door on my entry. "Take this seat, if you please, and I'll try to be short with my story."

"Go on, sir," said I; but please don't be in too much haste. I have plenty of time; but tell me all your story as you would, and probably did, to Mr. Brady."

"Well, sir, day before yesterday morning I missed from my safe, at my house, seven thousand two hundred and fifty-five dollars, which I placed there the night before, having received most of it that day, at an hour too late to make deposit of it in bank;" and here he paused.

"Well, sir," said I, "who took it? That's the question, I presume, which you wish to solve."

"Yes, that, of course, is the point; but I can't fix my suspicions upon anybody."

"You say that most of this money was received after banking hours. Suppose you tell me next where and of whom you received it, and in what amounts, for I infer that you did not receive it in a lump."

"No; I collected it partly from rentals due, and some came to me from the country,—notes due,—and some from the sale of a cargo of pressed hay over at Jersey City, and I did not get around in time to put it in bank, such I had, before closing hours," looking at memoranda.

"Well, I am glad you have memoranda of the amounts. Now tell me where you received these, each one;" and he went on to tell me, in detail, where, and who was near by, if anybody, in each case where a tenant or other debtor paid him

money. I listened intently, and could get at nothing worthy of note till he came to the hay transaction at Jersey City. It appeared that there were several persons standing about at the time of the payment of the money to my client (call him Latimer, for further convenience), mostly working men, some dealers, loafers, and two or three well dressed, but rather dashily dressed, young men. Mr. Latimer had been obliged to take out considerable money from his own purse, in order the better to arrange it to put in the amount then received; and feeling that he had quite an amount of money, even at that time, and he added some before he reached home, put his purse in his inner vest pocket, thinking of nothing worse than possibly encountering pickpockets, or losing his money by accident on the way. In his vest pocket he thought it secure, and secure it was to take home, but not secure for keeping.

The result of our conference that evening, was that I should be obliged to go with Mr. Latimer to his home the next morning, when he would call at my office for me. I could not go that night, and perhaps it was as well, for I had a business appointment which led me, not an hour after parting with Mr. Latimer, into certain haunts where I fancied,—it was mere imagination, if it were not instinctive perception, in which I do not much believe, although many mysterious things have occurred in my life which seemed to be governed or directed by some subtle law, which the human brain is not yet strong enough to discover,—where I fancied, I say, that I saw some of the money which Mr. Latimer had lost, displayed, and distributed in dissipation. In short, I imagined that I had stumbled upon the thief, and had I known the character of the bills, which Mr. Latimer, however, could not tell me much about, I might have seized my man then and there.

But the next morning I visited Mr. Latimer's house in an up-town street, which was not then, as now, compactly built; at least, in the portion of it where he dwelt. I examined everything about the premises, concluded where a thief might have gotten into the house without much trouble, and finally commenced questioning Mr. Latimer about his family, the servants, etc. None of Mr. L.'s family, except his wife, were at home. Two boys, or young men, were at school, rather at college one of them, and both far away, and the daughters were at the female seminary in Cazenovia. As to the servants, in whose honesty Mr. Latimer had the utmost confidence, I had them called into my presence, and questioned them about the condition of the house on the night of the robbery. One of them heard some slight noise, at some time between twelve o'clock and four in the morning: was not definite. The others slept soundly; heard nothing. They did not seem to me likely to be connected with anybody, or to have lovers who would be apt to be of the class who might have robbed the safe. Besides, nobody, not even Mrs. Latimer, knew that Mr. L. had deposited any amount of money in his safe that night. He was of the order of men who attend strictly to "their own business," too strictly, sometimes, when evidence is wanted especially. His bedroom adjoined the room in which the safe stood, and was so situated in regard to a pair of "back stairs," that if the robber had come in from the back (on the theory of his possible complicity with the servants), he could have hardly gotten into the room without disturbing Mr. and Mrs. Latimer, unless on that night, which was probably the case, they slept with unusual soundness. I concluded that the robber must be an expert one, and somehow I constantly referred in mind to the fellow whom I have alluded to before as having been seen liberally dispensing money. He seemed to me competent for the business; but there was one thing which I left to the last, which arose in my mind at first on my interview with Mr. Latimer at the Howard; but I said nothing of it then, for I had learned that the best way is to approach the most serious troubles softly; as often the "course of things," as they take shape in an interview, will better point out how this or that mystery occurred than all the attempted solutions which one might, *a priori*, project for a week, and that one thing which