

man of forty, with a clean-shaven face that wore an expression of craftiness. He seemed confused when I entered, and said:

"Ah, I thought it was the porter. Haven't you made a mistake?"

Without replying I deliberately locked the door and put the key in my pocket, while he stared amazedly.

"I see you are getting ready to leave," I remarked sarcastically.

"Yes."

"Suppose you stay in New York a little longer," I said.

"Why, what do you mean?" he exclaimed, rising from his chair.

"Oh, nothing of consequence," I replied, coolly.

"Perhaps you wouldn't object to my taking a look into that valise, eh?"

"Perhaps you will do me the kindness to get out of my room," he retorted.

He had taken the valise from the floor and I quickly snatched it from him. I had hardly done so when he dealt me a blow near the temple, sending me reeling across the room, where I brought up against the door. He then threw the valise on the bed and angrily exclaimed:

"Look here, sir, are you drunk or crazy? Now hand me that key and get out of my room, or I'll throw you out of the window."

"Not so fast," said I, drawing my revolver. "I am an officer, and here to arrest you for the murder you committed last night."

"Come, you can't play that," said I. "This is no laughing matter. Where are the money and silverware you took from Bradley's house?"

"Are you really an officer?" he asked, growing serious again.

"Certainly I am. Perhaps you never saw this bit of paper, sir," said I, displaying the piece that had blown from the window.

"My friend," he replied, "I admire the earnestness with which you go about your business as detective, but you have got on the wrong track. I am sorry I struck you in a moment of anger, and I hope you will pardon me. I am Charley M—, a Boston detective, of whom you have probably heard. I arrived at daylight this morning, and have been taking a good sleep before attending to some business in Brooklyn. I registered as J. Brown, for a reason you will readily comprehend. Here is my card, and here are some

slight evidences of my occupation." Here he took two pairs of handcuffs out of his pocket and jingled them before my astonished gaze: "By the way, if that is the piece of newspaper that fell from my window, and you think it has any connection with the affair you speak of, it will probably afford you an important clue. I found it here, where it was probably left by a former lodger. I think you will find a name on the margin."

I examined the margin over the title of the paper, and to my astonishment found written in pencil the name and residence of Henry Collins. It was a weekly paper, which I observed was published in a city he had formerly lived in, and its date was so recent that he must have received it on the day preceding the murder. I immediately took leave of Mr. M—, saying I thought I knew where the paper had come from, and, begging his pardon for having been so rude to him, I hastened down to the office of the hotel, where I examined the register, finding the name of J. Brown, with room 21 assigned. I knew the clerk, and I inquired—

"When did Mr. Brown take room 21?"

"Early this morning, when I was not on duty."

"Did any one occupy the room during the evening?"

"No—yes—let me see," he replied, glancing over the register—"here is the name of Harvey Elton. I remember now. He was without baggage and paid for the room in advance, saying he wanted to be called at 3 o'clock. The porter went up at that hour, but the door was open and the bed had not been slept in. The other clerk told me he gave the same room to Mr. Brown because he wanted a front room."

"Do you remember the appearance of Elton?"

"Yes—rather small man, with a very full black beard."

Henry Collins was a small man, but had no beard. Of course, my suspicions were fixed on him as soon as I discovered his name on the margin of the newspaper, yet I never dreamed that he was capable of committing a crime.

My mind underwent a series of rapid changes. One moment I regarded it as almost certain that Henry Collins had something to do with the murder