

The Mystery of Killard.

PART I.—THE RACE OF LANE.

Chapter VII (Continued).

Of each one of the score of languages spoken of now and then by ordinary people he knew some facts, such as the number of letters employed, its supposed origin, its manner of declining participles or conjugating verbs, or, perhaps, he would quote a few words; and with this he seemed, in his own mind, to have a master-key whereby he, next month, purposed entering thoroughly into all its intricacies and delicacies, expounding all riddles hitherto unsolved.

Often, when pressed by some stray student or school-boy for a translation of an obscure passage in a book at a stall, he would pause to deliver a lecture on the language itself or the author, or the style of binding employed in the early Venetian books as contrasted with the mean arts and florid styles in vogue to-day.

When his monologue was completed, he would hasten away at the beckoning of some profound science whose existence depended on his fostering care. In his own bare room there were no books. Had he not in his head a library perfect and always at hand wheresoever he went?

This gentle philosopher had, early in life, devoted himself vaguely to learning; but as the years went on, his mind had not developed proportionately to the guests he had so studiously invited, and things had come to a dead-lock.

However the learned might have been disposed to regard Mr. Heywood's claim to the title of philosopher, no one could dispute it to that of gentleman. He was kindly and loquacious to all, and, perhaps, his philosophy had helped him to see equality throughout the whole human race, or some faculty of his nature banded him to look on mankind as his brethren; at all events he had but one set of manners.

Whether the abstractions over which his life had been spent had weakened or effaced all perception of social distinction is a question hard to settle; but there was to be observed in him no apprehension of caste. Moreover, so simple and observant was he of objective matters that moral turpitude lay either outside his system and was unappreciated, or he had grown to regard the faults of mankind as matters for which he could not be held responsible, and over which he had received no commission to sit as judge.

At the time James Heywood, gentleman, came to reside at Clonmore there was in the town, another man who, as far as the qualification of doing nothing for his daily bread constitutes a gentleman, was a gentleman; but beyond this qualification he possessed no other claim to be so described.

In appearance he was thick-set, muscular, and heavy. His face was a dull brick-red, and his hair jet-black. It was hard to remember the color of his eyes, for they were rarely straight before an observer for a second; they were not so much restless as distracted.

Over a little river flowing by the town of Clonmore stretched a high stone bridge of five arches. The parapets were low and broad, and in the fine summer evenings many people walked to and fro on the bridge, enjoying the fresh air flowing with the stream, and the prospect of the green level plain stretching east and west below the road.

One night, early in August, Mr. Heywood stood alone on the bridge. It was close to midnight; all the other loungers had gone back into the town, but he still lingered, in hope of finding some one going in the direction of his home.

the bridge opposite the town. As the man drew near, Mr. Heywood rose and said "Good-night!"

"Oh, Mr. Heywood, is that you? I did not know you in the dark. What a beautiful night it is!" responded the other deferentially.

"And I did not recognize you, Mr. Cahill, until you spoke. I am glad to meet you. We are both going the same way and can walk home together."

"I am only too proud, sir," returned Cahill, in a tone of humble self-congratulation at the pleasure and honor in store for him.

"I was observing the water," continued the philosopher, pointing to the vague depths of air and river, "and thinking what a wonderful thing it is. Of old it was considered to be an element, but recent scientific research has proved it to consist of two gases."

"Oh!" mildly interpolated his hearer, as though he had never held water in very high esteem; and, after learning of its former deificity, was now prepared to hear with pleasure anything to its further disadvantage.

"There are, Mr. Cahill, most singular things stated in the books about water. Extreme cold, as you know, converts it into ice; extreme heat into steam. Burning mountains, or volcanoes, as the learned call them, throw up large masses of cold water, and cold ground expels hot. Its effect on the human frame is marvelous, whether in external or internal application; and it is capable of influencing to a wonderful degree the human mind."

"No?" inquired Cahill, with anxious curiosity. They were now walking in the direction of Clonmore. At the mention of the effect of water on the human frame and mind, the young man had started into eager attention. His steps became slower and slower, and the eyes which rarely dealt with a companion now rested half-wonderingly, half-fearfully on the old man.

"Oh, dear, yes!" promptly replied the other. "Men have been healed of madness by sea voyages; driven mad by looking continually at large plains of liquid oxygen and hydrogen—the two elementary gases which compose the well-known fluid. A man in whose dungeon, beneath the moat of an ancient castle, there fell drops of water, which sounded like 'trick-trick,' went mad because they would not, even once in months, fall like 'trick-trick; proving the deadly power of iambic feet on the intellect of human beings. Those who read iambics continually are mostly of feeble intellect; those who continually write them, mad. After iambics the mind requires trochees, or it's all over with sanity. Then there was another man driven mad by having a single drop of water let fall on his head at regular intervals."

"What a wonderful thing book-learning is, to be sure. And tell me, sir, for you know everything—"

"Oh dear, no. Only the foundation of knowledge—not everything. No one can know everything." There was more reputation in the words than in the tone.

"Did you, sir,"—Christopher Cahill was becoming abjectly humble as his interest increased—"in all your reading, ever meet with an account of water turning people that could talk into dummies, or making them wish to have dumb children?"

"Science cannot deal with anything that is not; and no metaphysician with whose works I am familiar—in fact, I may say no metaphysician at all—has ever yet investigated the problem circumscribed by the mental or physical condition of children, say, seven years before they are born. Let me warn you against the schoolmen in this important inquiry. They are likely to have a theory on the subject, but neither they nor their theories are to be trusted in the slightest degree. All they have to say on any subject is a mass of disintegrated froth."

"And is there nothing about it anywhere?"

"Yes in the poets. In the epic, but not in the didactic or pastoral poets, we frequently meet with people who are said to be—mind, said to be—struck dumb by the sight of the ocean; but then, you know, it is only a figure of speech to say so."

"Don't it seem a queer figure of speech to strike a man dumb?" asked Cahill, in a reverential puzzle.



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The old man hesitated and considered a while, then answered freely: "I shall be very happy indeed to go, although I don't think anything there is likely to take me unawares. Good-night." He retired and Cahill was alone.

With his head drooped low, Cahill stood awhile. Then, rising out of deep thought he muttered, as he turned and walked down the street: "I'll bring him face to face with David Lane; maybe he can make something out of it. Wherever I go, whatever way I turn, asleep or awake, David Lane and his property of the Bishop's Island are never far from me, and something whispers to me that it wasn't for nothing my father told me that history a hundred times, until I feel as if the history, and what caused the history, is my fate! my fate! And I'll know what is hidden of that history; my fortune lies in finding it out. I'll know it, or—"

He did not finish the sentence, for his eyes at that moment caught sight of two men in front. He quickened his pace, until he was sufficiently near to make them out by the light of the stars.

Could it be? Yes, there was no doubt of it. Tom the Fool and David Lane were walking on before him in a street of Clonmore; and Lane had not been in that town for two years, and never in the company of Tom. What could he want there now, and at such a time of night? Cahill dropped a little to the rear, and pausing just long enough to allow their getting beyond the sound of his footsteps, stole after them as quietly as his feet could fall.

CHAPTER VII.

"TEN GUINEAS."

For a hundred yards or so the two men kept straight on. Then they turned into a by-street and disappeared from Cahill's sight. He ran, gained the corner, and peered cautiously down the way they had taken.

A few paces from the corner the two men stood in a doorway. The Fool, just as young Cahill looked, raised his arm and knocked.

"What can they want at Dillon's this hour of night? Fishing tackle? But couldn't the Fool get that for Lane as he does for all the village?" Cahill whispered, as he slipped into a deep portico from which he could see without being observed.

For sometime there was no response to the knocking. It was repeated thrice. Then a window above opened, and a head appeared, and a voice asked crossly, "Who's there? What do you want?"

"There's Dillon himself," muttered Cahill.

"It's only Tom the Fool and David Lane, of the Bishop's Island. Open the door. He may wish to leave you."

"What an hour! Won't to-morrow be this time no time for business." The shopkeeper's tones were not so rough as at first.

(To be continued.)

Ontario's Public Lands.

TORONTO, Dec. 3.—The Commissioner for Crown Lands states that the action of the Government in withdrawing the Algoma district from sale under the Mining act was suddenly determined by the report of the commissioners of the United States Navy department and the anticipated report of the Iron and Steel institute about the value of the nickel in Ontario. No further steps will be taken till after a discussion will have taken place during the next session of the Legislature.

Canada's Drink Bill.

OTTAWA, Dec. 2.—The quantity of spirits produced during the year was 5,061,475 proof gallons, as compared with 5,847,508 proof gallons produced in the previous fiscal year. The raw material used in its production was 85,682,043 lbs. There was entered for consumption 3,521,194 proof gallons as against 2,960,447 proof gallons last year, and an average of 2,641,132 proof gallons for the four preceding years. The increase over last year is due mainly to distillers paying duty during the last part of June upon spirits to be held in stock to enable them to

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