

after another until three hundred pounds had melted away.

"You're out of luck," said a purposely smothered voice behind him; "better stop!"

He had an idea it was Carbine who spoke, but in any case he resented the advice, as a losing gambler always does, and went on more doggedly than before, throwing on a five-pound note instead of a sovereign.

He looked away from the wheel purposely, waiting to hear his fate, and suddenly his young, tired face grew livid, and he put his hand up to his forehead with a quick gesture, as though to dispel some oppression.

For it seemed to his overwrought mind that over the heads of the players opposite, he saw a wistful face whose white lips were parted in an appeal and whose dark eyes, wide with pain, gazed with supreme anguish into his, while the dark hair veiling brow and cheek was stirred by the night wind, in the moonlight.

It was only an instantaneous vision, gone as soon as imagined, dispelled by the stir of sensation at the croupier's voice.

"Zero!"

His last five pounds was lost!

With a dizzy feeling, Mauleverer rose, pressed through the double row of people behind him and walked to the bar.

Captain Carbine, following him closely, began to speak; but Tubby ignored him and, having demanded a whiskey and soda, drank it off, turned out of "the Bar" through a wide door, and, making his way down a back staircase, was outside in another moment.

Taxis were always on hand round this secluded corner, for many of them knew that a good fare might be picked up between midnight and cock-crow, as one by one the South Western company emerged and went homeward.

Tubby stepped into the first that came, gave the direction and, sinking back, closed his eyes.

Now that the fever had gone by, he saw his folly and despised himself for it.

"You fool!" he was saying to himself over and over again, mentally. "You've ruined yourself, and you deserve it!"

And the thought of how easy it was to end such folly with a knife or a revolver, ran like a dark thread through his brain as he drove home.

#### CHAPTER XIV.

THERE are certain persons in Paris who hold themselves ready at any moment to join a convivial party bereft of one of its members. The obliging individual who fills the gap is the "fourteenth."

Tubby Mauleverer came down the steps of a very large and shabby-looking house in St. George's Square, which bore on its blotched face the evidences of long-continued neglect, and might well have served as an advertisement for some enterprising decorator, inscribed something in this fashion—"In 1860—I was washed and painted by Messrs. Daubers. Since then no other firm has removed the effect of London dirt and smoke from my poor face."

It was a huge, rambling mansion, the town residence of the Brismain family, bought in the days of prosperity and since then left to take its chance. The Brismains had always been a reckless, spendthrift lot, acquiring and refurbishing new habitations in extravagant style, and finding themselves burdened with numerous domiciles which they had not the means to keep in proper order.

The house in St. George's Square had been very splendid in its early days, and former Lords and Ladies Brismain had entertained on a magnificent scale all the great world of London society.

The present Lord Brismain came seldom to his town house. The rooms were dismantled, pictures and furniture wrapped in hideous holland coverings, and an aged pair of servants lived in the basement as caretakers. Sallie Mauleverer had not been inside its portals for years. When she came to London she stayed

with cousins more prosperous than herself. As to Tubby, he generally put up at his club, or when funds permitted, took a luxurious suite of rooms and did himself well in a more convenient part of town.

At the present hour he found himself in such low water that he had been glad to seek a refuge in the Pimlico mansion. It promised safety from the assiduous attentions of duns. No one who had any personal knowledge of the Honourable Theodor Mauleverer would have dreamed of seeking for him there!

It was the evening after his bouleversement at the South Western Club. He still felt dazed by the magnitude of his losses, and could only repeat to himself the question: "What crass idiocy induced me to plunge in such a headlong fashion?" He had as little hope of paying the couple of thousand pounds for which he had signed his I O U's as of raiding the Bank of England so as to obtain the necessary cash, and he knew also that his father would repudiate the debt entirely. Lord Brismain found it difficult enough to defray his own losses at cards and races without undertaking those of his son, Theodor.

Tubby walked slowly towards the river, with grim despair clutching at his heart. He had incurred debts of honour which he could not pay. Disgrace was before him. He would be a social outcast—a pariah amongst his own class as soon as the intelligence became public that he was a defaulter. He leant over the stone coping of the Embankment, racking his head to think of any means of escape. He had known many cases similar to his own. Sometimes men ended their difficulties by putting a bullet through their brains; sometimes they cast themselves in front of a train, on the railway line; sometimes men drowned themselves.

HIS face hardened, and lines appeared deeply graven, like those of an old man, as he stared down into the depths of the water.

He conjured up all the gossip and scandal that would follow the discovery of his death and folly, and a cold shudder made his flesh creep with the anticipation of this climax to his troubles.

"Suicide of the Hon. Theodor Mauleverer, heir of Lord Brismain—found drowned in the Thames—Rumours of heavy losses at a gambling club," etc. Poor Tubby groaned in spirit and, raising himself from his stooping posture, began to drag himself towards the bridge where he might take his final leap into Eternity.

Two girls came at a brisk pace, arm in arm, along the Embankment. They were talking earnestly—so earnestly that they nearly collided with Tubby, who drew to the side, muttering an apology. His eyes met those of the taller girl. She glanced quickly at him, and then gave involuntarily an exclamation of recognition. Tubby raised his hat.

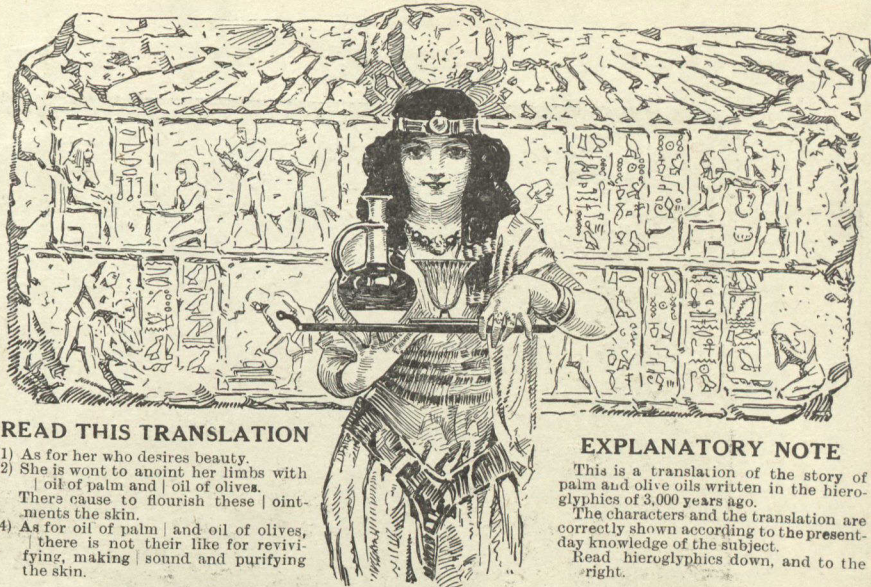
"Miss Leach! I—er—I'm surprised to see you—I had no idea you were in London. I hope there is no worse news from The Chase. The last I heard of Laurence Pridham he seemed pretty bad."

Fenelia stammered out rather confusedly that she herself had left The Chase some days before. Probably he—Mr. Mauleverer—had later news of its inmates than she possessed.

"My sister went over there to inquire," Tubby continued in a stolid tone of non-committal. "She said Pridham was still unconscious. Very strange affair, eh?"

His eyes seemed to search Fenelia's face for some revelation of her thoughts. She had flushed painfully, and her embarrassment was so great that she could not speak. Janet, standing silent beside them, looked from one to the other and drew her own conclusions. During these days that she and Fenelia had spent together she had learnt much of Spinney Chase environment, and the name of Mauleverer had become familiar to her.

(To be continued.)



#### READ THIS TRANSLATION

- 1) As for her who desires beauty.
- 2) She is wont to anoint her limbs with oil of palm and oil of olives.
- 3) There cause to flourish these ointments the skin.
- 4) As for oil of palm and oil of olives, there is not their like for revivifying, making sound and purifying the skin.

#### EXPLANATORY NOTE

This is a translation of the story of palm and olive oils written in the hieroglyphics of 3,000 years ago. The characters and the translation are correctly shown according to the present-day knowledge of the subject. Read hieroglyphics down, and to the right.

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