

LOVE'S ANSWER.

BY NED F. MAH.

"I must write him an answer. The mail will soon go. And that answer must be a most definite No!"—
And she played with the paper folder.
"What all say is true and they all tell me so. A prettily worded but definite No!"—
But Love looked over her shoulder.

She played with the paper knife. Love at her ear whispered that, "Truest love casteth out fear!"
Then she cried, as her good heart grew bolder—
"Don't I know my own mind? Old enough I should guess.
I love you! I trust you! My answer is, Yes!"
For Love has crept over her shoulder.

Well! She ventured, "Who ventures not, never may win."
Do likewise," she says to the friends who drop in.
Where Peace smiles on every beholder.
"To know much is accursed. To have much is blest.
To be wise may be clever. To be loved is bliss.
Thank God if I love look over your shoulder!"

A LONG LANE—ITS TURNING.

BY CLARENCE M. BOUTELLE.

I.

"Murder will out," said Robert Janny, firmly; "murder will out. Not merely because it is wicked, and therefore opposed to the thought—the better and truer thought—of men and women; not because good was first, and in the end will be highest; not because good is natural and evil unnatural; but simply because anything can be found out if one will only give an effort to it. Any effort had a cause, and there were connections, natural connections, between the effect and the cause. A thing once done, is done, done for ever: cover it, conceal it, hide it away if you can! No, sir, it cannot be done! The vibrations of sounds made ages ago are beating all about us now. There is evidence all around us for all we may wish to know. We have only to read it aright. This case is no exception."

"Of course it isn't an exception," said John Clell, "but, on the contrary, it is one of the simplest illustrations of your theory. How could a case be clearer! How could evidence be more direct! Here is one man dead—a man without an enemy—dead without being robbed. Here is another man who comes forward and presents a draft at a bank. It is dated to-day. He is at the bank when it opens in the morning. He is nervous, excited, and in a hurry. He gets the money and goes out. An hour later the man whose name is signed to the check is found dead—murdered in his office. The doctors say that he had been dead for twelve hours at least; that is, that he was killed early last evening. The bank authorities say that the check is a forgery, as, of course, it must be, unless this exact man of business made a mistake and dated it one day ahead, and then was murdered afterwards. The man who drew the money is missing. No train has left since. No livery-stable man has let a team this morning to any one, nor to him for a half year at least. He owned no team. But he is gone. A half-dozen saw him at the bank. No one has seen him since. A check, otherwise unaccounted for, is gone from the checkbook of the murdered man. The coroner's jury did their clear duty in giving just the verdict they did. And when they find a man who has only an hour the start—only an hour in this age of railroads and telegraphs—a man who cannot have much more than the five hundred dollars he got on the check he had cashed this morning—a man who will be followed by the eager relatives of a murdered man who was worth his millions—when they find William Canton, in short, they will have the man. Your theory is good, perhaps, but not quite applicable to this case. Murder will out sometimes; but in this case it is out already."

Robert Janny rose quietly to his feet to go home. "I will stake my life that my friend William Canton is innocent," he said. "I would have staked mine on the honesty and uprightness of William Canton twenty-four hours ago. He was my friend twenty-four hours ago, as well as yours. But where is there anything on which to base a single hope for his innocence. I cannot see one. Can you?"

"I have nothing definite enough to amount to much, even in my own mind, until I can consult with William himself. I shall volunteer to defend him, and I shall clear him. Clear him to the world—leave his name without a stain—establish his innocence beyond a question, not because I like to be considered a good lawyer—although neither of us object to that—not because the case is in all appearances an almost hopeless one, although you know I love anything which puzzles and is mysterious, but because I feel in my very soul that William Canton is innocent, and that when a man is innocent it can be proved."

"You've nothing definite; have you any clew?"

"Wait and see what comes of seeing the accused. Will you join with me for the defense?"

Yes, I will. For your sake, though. Not for his. It would be a great triumph to clear William Canton, if he can be taken, and when once taken guarded with care enough to insure his ever being brought to trial. But it would be the triumph of the legal mind over the mind of the jurymen to me. I knew William Canton just as well as you did. I have known him just

as long as you have. I liked him just as well as you did. And I feel just as strong a conviction that he is guilty as you do that he is innocent. But I will join with you, for your sake, not for his."

Robert Janny shook the hand of his friend in silence and left the office. John Clell found a tear on his own hand as Janny turned away. He stood and watched him as he walked down the street in the gathering twilight. With head bent forward on his breast he moved slowly away. "Poor fellow," said John Clell, with tears in his own eyes, "he takes it hard."

A moment later another man came towards Clell's office. Clell opened the door without a word. He felt he knew his errand. He almost regretted the promise he had made to his old friend Janny.

"Good evening, Mr. Clell."

"Good evening, sir."

"I need not enter into particulars to-night. My partner's death is too recent and my own grief too fresh for it to be easy for me to talk much of it. But I wish to retain you for the prosecution."

"Are you sure there will be one?"

"Oh, yes. The prisoner was lodged in jail a half-hour ago. I waited until that was all settled before coming. There would have been an attempt at lynching if we had not used care. I had a half-dozen men at the depot when the train from the West came in. They were ready to prevent any trouble of that kind. We must have everything done in strict accordance with all legal forms. I wish to secure the services of all the lawyers here where Mr. Black was known. Your fee will be five hundred dollars. Here is one hundred of it." And he laid a roll of bills on the table.

"I am sorry to disappoint you, Mr. Wint, but I have promised to aid the defense."

"To aid the defense? Promised! Who asked you?"

Mr. Wint's every word was one of the utmost astonishment.

"I promised Robert Janny, at his request."

"Robert Janny is quite forward. He volunteers his own services and engages help with a most praiseworthy haste, to be sure. I don't like it. They say that he is engaged to Canton's sister?"

"Do they?"

"Yes, they do. And I say he has the reputation of being an unscrupulous rascal, and that if you help him you will deserve the reputation of being a fool."

And with a slam of the door Mr. Wint, angry and scornful, was gone.

II.

Our readers are already in possession of nearly all the known facts relating to the murder of Mr. Black. William Canton had been searched for by officers in a half-dozen different directions, and arrested not far from noon in a small town which it was evident he could only have reached by driving hard, and by having started at once after getting his money at the bank. The five hundred dollars were found on his person by the sheriff, who arrested him; he either showed, or pretended to show, great surprise on being arrested. He had been brought back by a somewhat roundabout way, being taken nearly as far by carriage to reach a convenient station on the railroad as would have been necessary to get him home, and had then been brought in on the train.

Robert Janny and John Clell were allowed to have an interview with the prisoner the morning after his arrest. It was not a very satisfactory one.

"You are innocent, of course?" asked Janny.

"I am," answered Canton.

"I want you to go over carefully everything that will help me in making a good defense for you."

"You are more than kind, Robert," said Canton, coming across the cell and giving Janny his hand, "but there are some things I cannot tell you."

"Lawyers always prefer to know the whole truth from their clients. If you were really Mr. Black's murderer I could serve you better if I knew it and knew all the circumstances of your relations to each other which would throw any light on it. But, innocent as you are, the reason that a criminal might have for silence is gone, while the necessity for entire confidence remains. Tell me the truth and the whole truth."

"What I tell you will be the truth, but I shall not tell you the whole truth. There are some things connected with this unfortunate matter which I cannot speak about. There are some questions which you will ask me which I cannot—which I will not answer. I am innocent of the terrible crime of which I am accused, but I scarcely dare hope to escape hanging for it."

"Shall I ask you some questions?"

"Yes, but I'll not promise to answer them."

"You drew five hundred dollars at the bank yesterday morning?"

"Yes."

"You presented a check for it?"

"Yes."

"What was the date of the check?"

"If I had gone quietly about my business and the question had come up in an ordinary business way I should have said June 10th, but it seems that the check with my indorsement on the back bears date of June 11th. I really cannot say."

"Would you swear that the check you had was dated June 10th?"

"No, I couldn't do that."

"Would you swear that it is your conviction that it was dated June 10th?"

"No, I couldn't even say that."

"Did you see it made?"

"No."

"Who made it? Who signed it—that is?"

"I don't know. It was procured for me by a person who has no back account. I merely glanced at the amount, put it in my pocketbook, put that in my pocket, and I believe I never looked at the face of it again."

"From whom did you procure the check?"

"That is one of the questions I will not answer."

"For what purpose did you want the money?"

"I'll not tell that, either."

"Where were you going when you were arrested?"

"I decline to answer."

"When were you coming home?"

"I don't know."

"Were you in Mr. Black's office on the evening of June 10th?"

"Yes."

"For what purpose?"

"I decline to say."

John Clell rose and walked to the narrow window of the cell and stood there looking out. His back resolutely turned to the prisoner and his friend during the rest of the interview.

Robert Janny affected not to notice it. But William Canton saw it, and his face was sadder, and his head dropped lower, as he realized that one of the men who had volunteered to defend him believed he was guilty, and despised him for it.

"When did you leave Mr. Black's office?"

"Somewhere about eight o'clock. I can't say exactly."

"Where were you the remainder of the evening?"

"I decline to say."

"Eight o'clock was early. If we could prove that you were elsewhere after—"

"We can't prove it," interrupted Canton, "for I shall not give you a clue to the witnesses necessary."

"Look here, William Canton, you are an innocent man. The prosecution will find out enough of all these things to use against you. I mean to find out as much as I can to use for you. Why not help me?"

"If I thought that either the prosecution or you would come to my trial able to answer all the questions you have asked me, I would plead guilty to the horrible charge against me, and hang for it without a word."

"One last question. Do you suspect any one of this deed?"

"I don't know. There is one man that I might think—no, I suspect no one; I feel you have no suspicion as to who did the deed or why it was done. There is only one line of defense open. Plead my well-known good character, my honesty and uprightness, and if you find that they are going to prove that I did kill him, in spite of your efforts to shield me from that, then try the plea of insanity. It will be the only show then."

Janny shook hands with Canton when he left the cell; Clell went out without so much as a look at a prisoner.

In the corridor, scarcely out of hearing of the prisoner, Clell turned almost fiercely on Janny.

"It is a waste of time and effort, Janny. You may show all the interest in Canton, for the sake of his sister, that you please. But whatever you show, what can you do? His uprightness, his honesty, his good character; as if every man who has suffered for his crimes has not had those things in the history of his past to plead in his favor. Character, honesty and uprightness are so much chaff in such a case. If he didn't kill him—mind, I say, if he didn't—he is insane beyond a doubt. What are you going to do?"

"I tell you, William Canton is an innocent man, and I will prove it!"

The next day William Canton waived examination, and was sent to jail in default of bail.

"Six months to trial," said Clell to Janny.

"What are you going to do meantime?"

"Keep my eyes open and follow everything that looks like a clue," said Janny.

III.

"What success?" was the question which Clell asked of Janny every morning and every evening during the six long months which elapsed between Canton's arrest and trial. Clell found himself getting as interested as Janny; something, too, of Janny's firm belief in the innocence of Canton found a place in his mind. Or, perhaps it might be fairer to say that, from being sure that Canton was guilty, he had come to doubt it a little and to think sometimes that he might be innocent. Sometimes Janny had something of interest to tell, but usually nothing of much importance. He had found out much of that regarding which he had vainly questioned Canton at the first interview he had with him after the arrest. He had had frequent interviews with his client since, and had given Clell the results of most of his questions. He had spent a little time with Emma Canton, his promised wife, but it had been but little. Janny was giving his time, his thoughts, his very life to the investigation. He had looked over the scene of the murder at the time it was discovered, but had shunned the place since. Once or twice he had to go to the office of Mr. Wint to

sign papers connected with business which came in his way, but there was a coldness between the man who had undertaken the defense of William Canton and the man who had been the partner of Mr. Black.

"I must go down and see old Wint again. Thank heaven it will be the last time until the trial is over! Do you know to-morrow is the day for it?" said Janny.

At dusk he saw Clell.

"Go up and see whether William has any new thing to say or any wishes to express. I shall spend this last evening with Emma. She needs help. And perhaps I shall feel stronger in the morning."

Before daylight Clell was awakened by a ring at the door-bell. It was Janny.

"If you will let me keep it for a little I will be grateful. I know it is your right to know it all now, but I don't want to run the risk of even a tell-tale face when I ask any questions to-day. Will you wait?"

"Of course I will," said Clell. "What is it? Have you a hope?"

"No, not a hope—a certainty. William Canton will be a free man in a few hours."

"Are you in earnest? Are you sure?"

"I am."

"I will wait then."

After the opening of the case in court the prosecution first proved the fact of the death of Mr. Black and the circumstances attending the discovery. Mr. Wint and a friend were away on business early in the morning. Members of Mr. Black's family had been alarmed at finding that he had not returned home, and had gone to the office. Accompanied by two policemen they had forced an entrance. Mr. Black was found dead. His desk and that of Mr. Wint were found locked. Mr. Black's death had evidently been caused by a blow from behind with a poker. His death had probably been instantaneous. The policemen and the members of the family gave their evidence in a straightforward manner. The cross-examination by Janny seemed directed toward establishing the fact that robbery had no part in the murderer's plans. Under his questioning the fact that the desks were found locked was emphasized. The fact that Mr. Black's key was on the floor and not in his pocket, was also brought out in addition to what they had already told.

The doctors, three in number, gave their testimony. They were called at half-past nine. Mr. Black was dead; his death resulted from a blow on the back of the head. Death must have been instantaneous. He had probably been dead about twelve hours when they saw him.

On cross-examination the doctors said that the man was doubtless killed without shouting for help. Death must have been instantaneous. They would not say that he was killed later than eight o'clock at night. They would not say that he was killed earlier. Probably not earlier than seven nor later than ten, so far as they could judge.

The prosecution next proved the fact of the presenting of the check by William Canton. The cashier was deceived by the excellent imitation of Mr. Black's signature. The bank had just opened. Mr. Canton was the first one in. He indorsed the check in the bank. The cashier saw him do it. He was certain of it. The check was dated June 11th.

The evident intention of the lawyer for the prosecution was to impress the jury with the idea that the check was written in the morning after the murder, and dated, by a very natural error, on the day when it was really written, the former forgetting that the man whose name was at the bottom of it had been dead since the evening before. The check was written on a form similar to that used by Mr. Black.

Mr. Janny declined to cross-examine. Mr. Black's check-book was introduced in evidence. The place from which the check had been torn was found and fully identified. The check fitted the place in the book perfectly.

Experts testified that there had been no erasures or changes in the check.

The prosecution next took up the journey of William Canton. Instead of going to a livery-stable himself, he had hired a man to go. The owner of the stable testified to letting a team on the afternoon of the 10th to be gone until the 13th. The man who hired it was well known to him, and had hired teams of him frequently. Had never hired a team for so long a time before. He considered him responsible, however, and let the team go.

Janny declined to cross-examine.

The man who hired the team testified that he had done so at Canton's request. At his orders he had driven out a few miles from town alone on the afternoon of the 10th, had returned to near town in the morning, and had taken the prisoner at a few minutes past nine o'clock and driven quite rapidly as far as the town where the arrest took place.

Janny declined to cross-examine.

The prosecution next took up the task of showing the need that Canton had for money. They called a witness who swore that he was a professional gambler, that he had won all the money in his possession from a younger brother of William Canton's; that, continuing the game, he had won young Canton's notes for five hundred dollars. He testified that he had threatened that, unless the money was paid him by the 11th of June, he would expose his debtor and disgrace the family. A letter in his possession was introduced in evidence. It was from William Canton, and promised that his brother's indebtedness should be discharged without fail on the 11th of June.