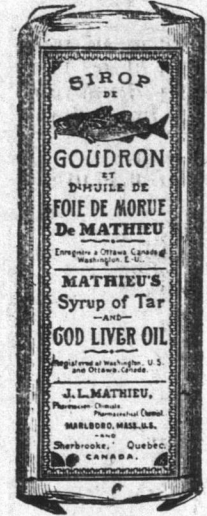


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"The Man Who Disappeared."

CHAPTER II. One Out of Nine With Fortune (Concluded.)

"Little my versatility has profited me. Which reminds me of business. When are these illustrations to be ready, Mr. Larcher? And how many are wanted? I'm afraid I've been wanting your time."

"In their brief talk about the task, Larcher, with the private design of better acquaintance, ranged that the artist should accompany the artist to certain riverside localities described in the text. Business details settled, Larcher observed that it was about dinner time, and asked: "Have you any engagement for dining?"

"No," said Davenport, with a faint smile at the notion. "Then you must dine with me. I hate to eat alone."

"I know the place and your friend is quite right."

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Wife's experience with Dr. Chase's Nerve Food led to husband's cure. "Since childhood I was afflicted with biliousness and sick headache," writes Mr. A. K. Van Wyck, Park Hill, Ont., "and as all the doctors' medicines and prescriptions failed to do me any permanent good, I had lost faith in all medicines. It was by accident that I came to use Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, for it had been recommended for Mrs. Van Wyck and did her so much good that she wished me to try it."

CHAPTER III. A READY-MONEY MAN.

"I want you," bowed the gentleman with the diamond, like a rustic washerwoman summoning her offspring to a task. "I've got a little matter for you to look after. S'pose you come around to dinner, and we can talk it over."

"I'm engaged to dine with this gentleman," said Davenport, coolly. "Well, that's all right," said the newcomer. "This gentleman can come, too."

"We prefer to dine here," said Davenport, with firmness. "We have our own reasons. I can meet you later."

"No, you can't, because I've got other business later. But if you're determined to dine here, I can dine here just as well. So come on and dine."

Davenport looked at the man warily and at Larcher apologetically, then introduced the former to the latter by the name of Bagley. Vouchsafing a brief condescending glance and a rough "How are you," Mr. Bagley

led the way into the eating-house, Davenport chagrined on Larcher's account, and Larcher stricken dumb by the stranger's outrage upon his self-esteem.

Nothing that Mr. Bagley did or said later was calculated to improve the state of Mr. Larcher's feelings towards him. When the three had passed from the narrow entrance and through a small doorway to a long, low apartment adorned with old prints and playbills, Mr. Bagley took by conquest from another intending party a table close to a street window. He spread out his arms over as much of the table as they could cover, and evinced in various ways the impulse to grab and possess, which his very manner of walking had already shown. He even talked loud, as if to monopolize the company's hearing capacity.

As soon a dinner had been ordered,—a matter much complicated by Mr. Bagley's calling for things which the house didn't serve, and then wanting to know why it didn't,—he plunged at once into the details of some business with Davenport, to which the ignored Larcher, sulking behind an evening paper, sulkily refrained from attending. By the time the chops and potatoes had been brought, the business had been communicated, and Bagley's mind was free to regard other things. He suddenly took notice of Larcher.

"So you're a friend of Dav's, are you? Quoth he, looking with benign patronage from one young man to the other.

"I've known Mr. Davenport a—short while," said Larcher, with all the iciness of injured conceit.

"Same business?" queried Bagley.

"I beg your pardon," said Larcher, as if the other had spoken a foreign language.

"Are you in the same business he's in?" said Bagley, in a louder voice.

"I—write," said Larcher, coolly.

Bagley looked him over, and, with evident approval of his clothes, remarked: "You seem to've made a better thing of it than Dav has."

"I made a living," said Larcher, curiously, with a glance at Davenport, who showed no feeling whatever.

"Well, I guess that's about all Dav does," said Bagley, in a jocular manner. "How is it, Dav, old man? But you never had any business sense."

"I can't return the compliment," said Davenport, quietly.

Bagley uttered a mirthful "Yah!" and looked very well contented with himself. "I've always managed to get along," he admitted. "And a good thing for you I have, Dav. Where'd you be to-day if you hadn't had me for your good angel whenever you struck hard luck?"

"I haven't the remotest idea," said Davenport, as if vastly bored.

"Neither have I," quoth Bagley, and filled his mouth with mutton and potato. When he had got these sufficiently disposed of to permit for their speech, he added: "No, sir, you literary fellows think yourselves very fine people, but I don't see many of you getting to be millionaires by your work."

"There are other ambitions in life," said Larcher.

Mr. Bagley emitted a grunt of laughter. "S'ur grapes! S'our grapes, young fellow! I know what I'm talking about. I've been a literary man myself."

Larcher arrested his fork half-way between his plate and his mouth, in order to look his amazement. A curious twitch of the lips was the only manifestation of Davenport, except that he took a long sip of ale.

"Nobody would ever think it," said Larcher.

"Yes, sir; I've been a literary man; a playwright, that is. Dramatic author, my friend Dav here would call it, I s'pose. But I made it pay."

"I must confess I don't recognize the name of Bagley as being attached to any play I ever heard of," said Larcher. "And yet I've paid a good deal of attention to the theatre."

"That's because I never wrote but one play, and the money I made out of that—twenty thousand dollars it was—I put into the business of managing other people's plays. It didn't take me long to double it, did it, Dav? Mr. Davenport here knows all about it."

"I ought to," replied Davenport, coolly.

"Yes, that's right, you ought to. We were chums in those days, Mr.—I forgot what your name is. We were both in hard luck then, me and Dav. But I knew what to do if I ever got hold of a bit of capital. So I wrote that play, and made a good arrangement with the actor that produced it, and got hold of twenty thousand. And that was the foundation of my fortune. Oh, yes, Dav remembers. We had hall rooms in the same house in East Fourteenth Street. We used to lend each other cuffs and collars. A man never forgets those days."

With Davenport's talk of the afternoon fresh in mind, Larcher had promptly identified this big-talking vulgarian. Hot from several affronts, which were equally galling, whether ignorant or intended, he could conceive of nothing more sweet than to take the toll down.

"I shouldn't wonder," said he, "if Mr. Davenport had more particular reasons to remember that play."

Davenport looked up from his plate, but with slight surprise, not with disapproval. Bagley himself stared hard at Larcher, then glanced at Davenport, and finally blurted out a laugh, and said:

"So Dav has been giving you his fairy tale? I thought he'd dropped it as a playlet on the stage. God knows how the delusion ever started in his head. That's a question for the psychologists—or the doctors, maybe. But he used to imagine it—he used to imagine he had written that play. I s'pose that's what he's been telling you. But I thought he'd got over the hallucination; or got tired telling about it, anyhow."

To be continued.

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Teachers' Convention

(Continued.)

SEPT. HANRAHAN

Mr. Hanrahan, Supt. school, District, expressed surprise that it afforded him the opportunity to speak at such a high level on a platform with such distinguished gentlemen as His Honor, the Administrator, His Lordship, the Premier, Mr. Morrison, Acting Premier, who has promised to be on behalf of the teachers, and the work of the profession, and the respect that he has accorded it. We are practical in our deliberations and the respect that we have accorded it. We are practical in our deliberations and the respect that we have accorded it.

SEPT. BLACKALL

Mr. W. W. Blackall, Supt. schools, said it was a pleasure to have an opportunity of expressing his opinions on the same connected with the reform. He then spoke of the early history of the Teachers' Association in what Mr. A. B. Morine has their cause, giving a grand

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