

A Dark Career.

BY OLIVER HERFORD.

CALL it misfortune, crime, or what  
You will—his presence was a blot  
Where all was bright and fair—  
A blot that told its darksome tale  
And left its mark, a blighting trail,  
Behind him everywhere.

He stood by the Atlantic's shore,  
And crossed the azure main,  
And even the sea, so blue before,  
About his wake grew dark and bore  
The semblance of a stain.

On English soil he scarcely more  
Than paused his breath to gain;  
But on that fair historic shore  
There seemed to gather, as before,  
A darkness in his train.

Through sunny France, across the line  
To Germany, and up the Rhine  
To Switzer-land he came;  
Then o'er the snowy Alpine height,  
To leave a stain as black as night  
On Italy's fair name.

From Italy he crossed the blue,  
And hurried on as if he knew  
His journey's end he neared.  
On Darkest Africa he threw  
A shade of even darker hue,  
Till in the sands of Timbuctoo  
His record disappeared.

Only an inkstand's overflow,  
O bumblebee! remains to show  
The source of your mishap;  
But though you've flown my ken beyond  
The foot-notes of your *tour de monde*  
Still decorate my map.

—St. Nicholas.

bourhood of Mrs. Linnett's shop, to pick up any information he could concerning Euclid or his own son Roger. It was not long before some sailors, coming in from a long voyage, fell into the trap he had laid for them, and talked of the heaps of money left with Mrs. Linnett, and the numerous sea-chests, filled with valuable goods, which she took care of for absent seamen.

Roger was gone to sea again, and Capt. Upjohn had taken Victoria to visit his people at Portsmouth: so no one was left in the house but Bess and the two old people. It was a rare chance if only he could get David to seize it. There would be Euclid's hoards into the bargain; for Blackett had never ceased to believe he was a miser, who had untold money secreted in holes and corners, if they could only make him reveal his hiding-places. But would David do it? There was an irresistible fascination to Blackett in the thought of at last fulfilling his threats, and wreaking his vengeance upon Euclid.

"Old Euclid," he muttered contemptuously, "and Bess and a old woman! I could almost manage 'em myself."

He set craftily to work upon David's imagination, describing the sea-chests in the old woman's room, and their contents, as if he had seen them; and the hoards of the miser, who carried bank-notes stitched into the lining of his waistcoat, over which he wore a ragged old blouse. He dared not tell David the name of the miser, nor mention Bess. There was a soft spot still in David's heart, and Blackett knew it.

It had been a slack time of late, and all their ill-gotten gains were gone. There was no longer money to spend at the tavern, with its many attractions, at the corner of the street; and the garret was a miserable place to spend the whole day in. David was weary of having nothing to do, and there seemed no reason to him why he should not enter into Blackett's schemes.

It was a dark night when Blackett and David, having matured their well-laid plans, entered the quiet street, and surveyed the front of the house they were about to break into. The street-lamps made it clear enough. On one side stood a high warehouse, empty and closed for the night, unless there should be some watchman in it, of whom there was no sign; on the other was an unoccupied dwelling-house, with the bills "To let" grown yellow in the windows. There was no light to be seen in any casement in the short street; for people who work hard go to bed early. To get to the little yard at the back of Mrs. Linnett's house, it was necessary to turn down a narrow passage beyond the unoccupied tenement, and to climb over a wall, in which there was no door. But there was no difficulty in doing this, even for Blackett; and only in doing it in an instant. It was David who was over it in a moment, and the dense darkness of a cloudy night, and the overshadowing gloom of the high walls surrounding them which created the only perplexity.

"It's as dark as the black hole," muttered David; immediately afterwards stumbling over a bucket, the iron handle of which rattled loudly. He stood perfectly still and motionless; whilst Blackett grasped the top of the wall with both hands, ready for instant flight.

But there was not a sound to be heard in the house, or in either of the buildings on each side. All about them there was a dead hush, unbroken by any of the numerous noises of life and toil with which the streets were full throughout the day. As David's eyes grew more accustomed to the obscurity, the dark sky became dimly visible overhead, cut by the black outline of the surrounding roofs. This little, ancient dwelling-place, left standing between two more modern and much loftier buildings, looked as if it was pinched in and hugged between them, with its old half-timber walls, and low yet high-pitched roof, with a single gable, and a dormer window in it. He could make it out in the gloom, as he stood breathless and motionless in the shadow of the wall, listening for any sign of moving within. He was not afraid: there was nothing to be afraid of. In three minutes he and Blackett could be safe away. But he felt something like reluctance to break the stillness and tranquility of the little, quiet house. Besides, there were only an old man and old woman in it. If they made any noise and re- waman in it. If they made any noise and re-

sistance, what would Blackett do,—Blackett, who was always savage when his blood was up? A number of thoughts seemed crowding through his brain, as he paused, with his eyes and ears all alert to catch any token of the waking and stirring of the old folk. But it was only for a few minutes. A church-clock near at hand chimed four quarters and then struck one. The spot was as desolate at this hour as it ever could be.

"We're not going to do 'em any hurt, you know," he whispered to Blackett, "for luck's sake. They are old folks, you said. We'll not hurt 'em."

"No, no!" answered Blackett, laughing.

within himself in the darkness. He would like to be even with old Euclid and pay off the grudge he had owed him these many years. There was bound to be a scuffle, though there was no danger for himself or David in it. Two strong, active men would find it mere play to overpower Euclid and Mrs. Linnett; and Bess would not count for much. What would David do if he found out that Bess was in it? If he could, he would silence her first, before David knew who she was.

But though there was no light to be seen, and no movement to be heard, in the dark little house before them, there was a quiet, noiseless stirring within, which would have frightened them away, or hurried them on in the execution of their project, if they had but known it. Mrs. Linnett was a light sleeper; and she had been broad awake when David stumbled over the bucket, and she heard the clatter as loudly as he did. Her bedroom was the one whose window overlooked the yard; and she had drawn aside the curtain a very little, and peeped cautiously into the gloom. Blackett's figure, with his hands upon the wall, ready to leap back, from the inner side of it, was quite visible, even in the dark night. Would it be safe to increase the alarm of the thieves by showing herself? She was afraid to do that, lest it should fail. Her room was crowded with seamen's chests, piled one upon another, seven or eight of them, left in her keeping by old shipmates, who had trusted their possessions confidently to her care. She stepped quietly back to the bed, and woke up Bess, who was sleeping the deep, unbroken sleep of girlhood.

"Hush, Bess! hush!" she whispered, laying her hand on her mouth. "There's robbers in the yard! Get up quietly, and slip out at the front, lass, and run for your life to the police. It's for me and Euclid, and the mates away at sea. It's nigh upon one o'clock in th' night; and we might all be murdered before anybody 'ud hear us shout for help."

So, whilst David was listening and watching in the yard, Bess was rapidly getting on some clothing; and, as Blackett began to remove the pane through which he could unfasten the kitchen-window, she was creeping downstairs, from step to step, with stealthy and noiseless feet. She heard the quiet grating of the tool Blackett was using, and her teeth chattered with fright. But she stole by unseen into the little shop beyond; and letting down the old-fashioned wooden bar, and turning the key cautiously, she opened the door, closed it after her, and fled swiftly down the deserted street.

There was so little difficulty in opening the kitchen-window, that, in a few minutes, Blackett and David were both inside, and now lighted the small lantern they had brought with them. They moved about as quietly as they could, though they had no fear of the consequences of arousing the inmates, whom they could easily gag and bind if need be. But there was still no sign or sound of waking in the house. Mrs. Linnett, indeed, was standing within her room, with her door ajar, hearkening, and peering down the staircase, and wondering, as she trembled with dread, how long Bess would be; but they could not know she was watching for them until they went upstairs.

And now fly, Bess! fly! If you meet any belated wayfarer in the street, or see the light of any watcher in a window, give the alarm quickly. Give way to no terror that might hinder you. Every minute is worth more than you can count. Run swiftly—for old Euclid, fast asleep after the day's toil; for Mrs. Linnett, shivering with helpless fright; for the mates at sea, and for Roger, whose goods are in danger. And yet, Bess, if you did but know who it is that has broken into your quiet house as a thief and a robber, you would fly back more swiftly than you are running for help; and with your arms about his neck, as when you were little children together, and your voice pleading in his ear, you might save him even now at the last moment!

(To be continued.)

SOME SMALL PRINCESSES I HAVE KNOWN.

BY FANNIE ROPER FRUDGE.

WHEN I first saw Queen Victoria of England, she was a blooming young wife and mother, surrounded by her charming family of well-trained boys and girls, who looked very much like any other refined, cultured Christian family.

The Queen is the granddaughter of George III., and the only child of the Duke of Kent, who died when the little princess was eight months old. At the time she succeeded to the throne, in 1837, she was a gentle, graceful girl of eighteen, rosy and fair, with blue eyes, and soft, blonde hair.

Young people generally think that the children of kings and queens have a very easy time, doing pretty much as they please, and never being obliged to work or study unless they choose, while they feast every day on dainties, and need only to express a desire for it to be granted at once. Now, the very reverse of this is true. The children of royal families are placed under tutors and governesses long before and long after our boys and girls are sent to school; they have to study many things that are not considered necessary for other children; are constantly subjected to the strictest discipline; and in the matter of eating and drinking they live far more simply than the majority of children of well-to-do families in private life.

The little Princess Victoria was trained by her mother with admirable care and prudence. She was taught to seek health by exercise and temperance, and from her childhood to cultivate a brave, self-reliant spirit, even in her amusements of riding, boating, and driving in her own little phaeton that was drawn by goats, and, as she grew older, by a pair of Shetland ponies.

I have often seen Queen Victoria's own children enjoying themselves in the same way, at the Isle of Wight; sometimes picking up stones and shells on the beach, or playing at hide-and-seek about the old castle of Carisbrooke, where the gentle Princess Elizabeth, daughter of King Charles I., died in captivity, and Queen Victoria had erected to her memory in the village church a beautiful marble monument.

The royal children were often accompanied in their rustic sports by the Queen or Prince Albert; and these wise parents early instructed their young family to be unselfish towards each other, considerate towards dependents, and economical in the use of their spending money, that they might enjoy the luxury of being charitable, each from his own private purse.

On these virtues, this exemplary mother was her children's best teacher; and to the personal interest shown her people in times of sorrow or joy is doubtless due the loving loyalty of her subjects during her gracious reign of more than fifty years.

I noticed the many occasions found by even ordinary people to speak well of their Queen, and I heard everywhere little incidents told of her gentle and womanly ministries.

One who is now an accomplished artist, relates of himself that, when an uncultured lad in the Highlands, he one day saw the Queen and several of her children passing on their ponies, and made a sketch of them, without knowing who they were. The Queen, who is herself quite an artist, asked to look at the boy's drawing, and after a glance, said:

"Why, that is my portrait, and very like me too."

"Thanks, madame," replied the blushing lad. "If you like it, will you accept it?"

"With pleasure," was the merry answer; "and since you give me one portrait of myself, I will give you another."

Then handing the lad a sovereign, she cantered away with her little family; and it was only after looking curiously at the golden coin that the boy-artist knew for the first time who his royal customer was.

THE CHURCH VERSUS THE SALOON.

THERE is many a sick woman in this country to-day, with lips parched with fever, to whom the taste of fruit would be delicious, healing medicine, but she can't have it because the money that should be hers has gone to the saloon; but no saloon-keeper's wife needs to go without fruit. Many a pitiful little voice in this country to-night will cry for milk that it cannot have because its father is a drunkard, and a pauper in consequence; but no saloon-keeper's child need be without milk. Down on your knees, you men who love your country—you Christian men—and pray God to save us from ourselves. No; rather up—up from your knees. Catch step with the Son of God; plait a scourge of Christian ballots and lash from the temple of liberty the last money-changer, and let us stand up for righteousness, and let the priests lead or leave. *John G. Whittier.*

In Prison and Out.

By the Author of "The Man Trap."

CHAPTER XX.—BLACKETT'S REVENGE.

IT was five years since David Fell had first crossed the fatal threshold of the jail. He had graduated in crime; and, being neither a blockhead nor a lout, he had developed skill enough to transgress the laws, and yet evade the penalty. The untrained ability of an English artisan, and the shrewd tact of an London lad, had grown into the cunning and business-like adroitness of a confirmed criminal. The police knew him well by sight or report; but he had kept out of their hands for the last two years, in spite of much suspicion and many hairbreadth escapes from conviction. He was doing credit to the brotherhood which had been forced upon him,—the brotherhood of thieves. There was no disgrace for him now, except the disgrace of being found out.

Blackett had drifted back to his old quarters after Roger's time was up on board the *Clover*, and he was no longer liable to be called upon to pay half-a-crown a week for his maintenance. David had gone with him; for there was a lingering faithfulness in his nature, which attracted him to the only fellow-man who had not turned his back upon him when he came out of jail. They had taken Euclid's old garret, which afforded good facilities for escape from a hot pursuit along the neighboring roofs. For a little while David had felt mournful—or, as Blackett called it, mopish—at finding himself back again in the self-same spot where he had taken care of Bess, and helped his mother in her dire struggle for life. But presently the slight impression wore off. Blackett made much of him. They shared and fared alike, and lived together as though they were father and son.

It was a merry thought to Blackett, that, if the magistrate had filched Roger from him, they had thrust David into his hands who was worth twice as much as Roger. He had spirit and energy and brains. The clear-headed sense of the honest carpenter, his father, muddled neither by drink nor ignorance, had descended to David in a measure that set him far above the poor, idle, terrified Roger, who had always cowered away from Blackett's savagery. He dared not be savage with David, and his respect for him almost amounted to affection. He was uneasy and anxious when David was long absent, and a welcome was always ready for him when he made his appearance in the garret.

Blackett said nothing to David of the discovery he had made of Euclid's dwelling-place and the fact that he shared it. Carefully disguised, he bought the tavern in the neigh-