

here. The alarm was raised. The house was searched, but in vain. The gold had actually disappeared.

Whither had it gone? Had robbers been in the house while they were asleep? The whole house was in an uproar. The swiftest horse was saddled, and Baldwin set off eagerly for detective Wilson. In his absence the house was re-searched, and this time the footprints of a bare-footed person were discovered near the front door. They traced them backward to the lane, but he could trace them no further.

Consabina hastened to "Rosemont" to acquaint the Melodines of what had taken place. On his entering, Arabella perceived by his features that something was wrong. Another family were thrown into consternation. The family that had rejoiced with them the previous evening, now condoled with them in their loss. All, even Jake, ventured with him to assist in the search. As they arrived, Baldwin and Wilson arrived also. Wilson glanced around the apartment. His eyes met Baldwin's; but he had known him from childhood, and could lay no suspicion on him.

Everard was next in turn. He might suspect him. He was comparatively a stranger. His story he had heard, but it might be a fabrication.

Jake came next. He received a more scrutinizing glance than the others. Wilson had no word of antipathy to the negro race, but Jake had such an open expression, and looked so simple and good-natured that his very appearance pronounced him innocent.

After Wilson had enquired into the facts of the case and examined the footprints, he and Don Zeres entered one of the rooms and closed the door, when the following private conversation took place:

Wilson began, "Do you suspect any party in this house at present?"

"I do not," was answered, firmly.

"Have you any suspicion whatever of any other party or parties?"

"I have not."

"Well, then, are you willing to leave the matter entirely to me, to suspect whom I may choose, whether the same be friend or foe of yours?"

"I suppose I must submit: but at the same time I tell you emphatically, you need not lay suspicion on any one in this house at present."

"Are you certain of Everard's innocence?"

Did you know his occupation or character prior to his living with you? His story is all very good, but remember that in his own story his father was placed in prison for alleged forgery. Remember also, according to the story, he died ere the matter was brought to trial. I tell you what it is, Mr. Seville, we have to look sharp in these days; some of our apparently best friends are at heart our secret and vilest enemies."

"All very true, Mr. Wilson; still I can have no suspicion of Everard. You may suspect him if you deem it proper, but I hope it will not come to that. I leave all to you; if you succeed in finding the gold, I shall in return give you \$1,000, and if that be insufficient I will give more."

Mr. Wilson expressed his thanks for the liberal inducement offered, and promised to leave nothing undone that could be done in the matter.

The private interview being ended, the door was opened. Every eye was turned towards the detective as he came out of the room, for all were eager to know what was next to be done.

"Friends," he began, "I must acknowledge there is mystery in this affair. One thing is evident, the gold has disappeared. Whither we know not. Of the guilty party or parties, Don Zeres himself has not the slightest suspicion. He suspects no one, and yet some one acquainted with the interior of this house must have taken it."

This last clause was spoken with emphasis, and a searching glance was directed at Everard, but he flinched not under it.

He resumed, "Who that party or parties may be, it is my duty to endeavor by all the means in my power to discover."

Once more the house was searched. Every nook examined, every trunk and chest searched, but neither the gold nor any clue to the thief was obtained.

Three months passed by. Everard had been suspected and he knew it; watched, and he knew it. He began to think his father's fate was hanging ominously over his path, and, as a consequence, was thrown into a state of despondency.

Detective Wilson had been on the alert ever since, but had obtained no further clue to the mystery. He had watched Everard closely, but to no more avail than that his suspicions of him were somewhat strengthened, and that merely by his despondent ap-