

ficiently to beg that he would not christen that baby Woollens, Cottons or Piscopalian. He said emphatically that he would not, and then departed, taking home a string of bass to propitiate Mrs. Bigglethorpe. The tea party, spite of Miss Du Plessis' marvellous story of Tillycot, was very slow. The newly engaged couple were full of each other. Mrs. Du Plessis, her daughter and the colonel had Wilkinson on the brain, Mrs. Carmichael and the minister were self-sufficient, and Mr. Terry was discoursin' to his daughter, Honoria. The only free person for Miss Carmichael was the Squire, and happily she sat at his left.

"Marjorie, lassie," said Uncle John, "you're no lookin' weel."

"That's not very complimentary, uncle; but I am quite well."

"Yon block o' a lamb has been wearin' ye, I'm thinkin'."

"Not at all, uncle; his gifts and graces are not adequate to that."

"Did Coristine tell ye o' that advertesment in the Barrie paper?"

"Yes."

"Did he say he had dune anything aboot it?"

"Yes, he said he had written to the Edinburgh lawyer and to other people about it."

"That was unco gude o' the lad, Marjorie."

"Yes, it was very kind."

"What garred the laddie gang awa before the time, lassie?"

"How should I know, uncle?"

"Wha sud ken were it no you, Marjorie, my pet?"

"I am not in Mr. Coristine's confidence."

"I'se warrant ye, Marjorie, he's just bitin's nails to the quick at yon Mrs. Swamp's that's he no here the nicht."

"Oh nonsense, uncle, why should he be so foolish? If he wanted to stay, there was no one to hinder him."

"Weel, weel, lassie, we'll hear frae him sometime aboot yon neist o' kin business. Aiblins, ye'll be a braw leddy wi' a gran' fortune yet, and turn up your bonnie bit nose at puir lawyer chappies."

"I don't want to turn up my nose at Mr. Coristine, uncle. I think it was very splendid of him to fight for you as he did; but I knew nothing about that when he said good-bye, and I wouldn't shake hands with him."

The Squire put up his hand and stroked his niece's hair. "Puir lassie!" he said, "it's a gran' peety, but ye're no feelin' half as bad as he is the noo, gin I ken the lad, and I think I dae."

It was ten when Mr. Bangs brought home the colonel's horse, and Rufus rattled the missing waggon and team into the stable yard. The latter joyfully saluted his sisters, shook hands with Timotheus, and courteously responded to the greeting of Maguffin. Mr. Bangs, declining any solid refreshment, entered the office, where, besides the Squire, Mr. Errol and the veteran were established. The picnic ladies were tired and had gone to rest, and the colonel was relating the events of the day to the wakeful dominie. Mr. Bangs gave his company an account of the safe lodgment of Rawdon and Davis, and mentioned incidentally that he had seen Mr. Coristine alight from the train at Toronto and go up town. He also cautioned the Squire against divulging the secret of the exhumed box of money, if he wished to save it for Matilda Nagle.

"Squire," he said, "I don't want to elerm you, bet I'm efried there's gowing to be more trebble to-night; I saw thet tevern-keeper from Peskiwenchow, Devis' brether, et the stetion this merning, with sem of the fellows we fought et the Enkempment. They're not in Kellingwood now, end yeng Hill tells me he saw strenge men kemming this way in the efternoon. I towld yeng Hill to bring his gen, and I brought my mounted petrol kerbine."

"This is terribly vexatious, Mr. Bangs, just as we thought all our troubles were over."

"It is, bet I think it will be their lest attempt, a final effort to get meny and revenge. We must wound es many of them es we ken, end ellow the survivors to kerry off the dead end wounded. Thet will be the end of it. I met Toner, end he tells me old Newcome is ep and away. Toner kent come, for Newcome hes threatened to bern down his house."

A gentle rap at the door interrupted the conversation. The Squire went to open it, and saw his niece in night attire, with a pale, scared face, hardly able to speak. "What is the matter, Marjorie?"

"There's a man in Mr. Coristine's room, either in the cupboard-wardrobe or under the bed," she answered, and slipped quietly upstairs to her own apartment.

Quickly the information was imparted, and the detective at once took command.

"Mr. Terry, I know you are a good shot. Tek my kerbine which is loaded, and wetch the windows of Mr. Coristine's room outside. Give Mr. Errol a pistol, Squire, and kem on. Ah, Mr. Perrowne, we went you, sir; bring that lemp end follow us."

All obeyed, and slipped up stairs with as little noise as possible. Mr. Bangs opened the door and listened. Intuitively, he knew that Miss Carmichael was right; somebody was in that room. Whispering to Mr. Errol to guard the door, and to the Squire to stand by the wardrobe, he took the lamp from Mr. Perrowne and flashed it under and over the bed. There was nobody there. In a moment, however, the wardrobe door burst open, the Squire was overturned, the light kicked over and extinguished, and Mr. Errol pushed aside, when three feminine voices called: "Help, quick!" and, tumbling over one

another into the hall, the clever lookers for burglars found their man in the grasp of three picturesque figures in dressing gowns. They were at once relieved of their capture, and many anxious enquiries were made as to whether they had received any injuries from the felonious intruder. It appeared that they had not received any of importance, and that Miss Carmichael was the first to arrest the flight of the robber.

The household was aroused. The colonel came down with his pistols. Timotheus, Rufus and Maguffin awaited orders, so he ordered them to arm, and posted them as sentries, relieving Mr. Terry from his watch on the windows. Then the examination of the prisoner began. He was the youth who had driven the buckboard over for the doctor on the eventful Monday morning. His name was Rawdon, but he was not the son of Altamont Rawdon. His father's name was Reginald, who was Altamont's brother.

"Where is your fether?" asked Mr. Bangs.

"I dunno," he answered, sulkily.

"Then I ken tell you. He is dead, borned to death by yore precious encle Eltemont."

"O my God!" exclaimed the youth; "is that so?"

"Esk any of these gentlemen, end they will tell you that yore fether end old Flower were berned to death, end thet a keroner's jury set on their remains, which are buried."

"You say as 'ow my huncle Haltamont did that?"

"Yes, I do, end, whet's more, you know it."

Having terrorized his victim, and antagonized him to Rawdon, the detective drew from him the information that five men, three of Rawdon's old employees, the tavern-keeper Matt, and Newcome, were coming at midnight to burglarize the house and get possession of the dug-up treasure. He confessed that he had slipped into the house while the party was away picnicking, and, knowing that Coristine had left without his knapsack, had looked round till he found a room with knapsacks in it. There he intended to remain till his confederates should require his services to open the house to them.

"Who towld you thet awful lie about Rawdon's meny being in this house?"

"Matt knew. Uncle Monty guv it 'im by signs, I guess. Oh, he's O. K., he is."

"Well, sir, yore a prisoner here, end, if things don't turn out es you sey, I'll blow yore brains out."

"For goodness sake don't be aisty, mister. I've told you the 'ole truth, I swear."

Mr. Bangs next found out that the robbers were coming in a waggon, which would halt some distance to the left of the house, and that their plan was to set one man at the end of the hall to hinder communication with the servants' quarters, and two on the upper landing to command the front and back stairs, while the remaining burglars ransacked the office and any other rooms in which plunder might be found. The youth's appointed mission was to fire the house, when the search was completed. Hardly had this information been received when Maguffin's challenge was heard, and a well-known voice in military accents replied "A friend." The colonel went out, and brought in Corporal Rigby, panting for want of breath.

"You've been running, Rigby," said the astonished Squire.

"Duty required it, sir," replied the constable, saluting; "I have come at the double, with trailed arms, all the way from Squire Halbert's. This is his rifle I am carrying. The enemy is on the move, sir, in waggon transport." "You are jest in time, kenstable," remarked Mr. Bangs. "Miss Kermichael and the ether ledies hev jest keptured an impertent prisoner. Hev you yore hend-kells?"

"I have, sir, and everything else the law requires."

Mr. Terry handed a glass to the breathless constable, who bowed his respects to the company generally, smacked his lips as a public token of satisfaction, and proceeded to handcuff and search his prisoner. Several blasting cartridges with long fuses, and other incendiary material, were the results of the last operation.

"If I had my way with him, sergeant-major," the constable remarked, while taking his man under the veteran's command, to the stable, "I would borrow an old chair from the back kitchen, not the front, sergeant-major, tie him to it, and set off all these catridges under him. He would not go to heaven, sergeant-major, but they would help him a bit in that direction. The man that would catridge a house with ladies in it should be made a targate out of, sergeant-major."

"Poor, deluded crathur!" replied Mr. Terry, "it's but a shlip av a bhoy, it is, wid a burnt-up father, that's been shet on to mischief by thim as knows better. Kape him toight, Corporal Rigby, but be tindher wid the benoighted gossoon." Mr. Bangs ordered all lights out, save one in the thoroughly darkened office, and another in the closet back in the hall, which had no window. He called in the three sentries, ordered the constable to maintain silence in the stable, and slipped out to reconnoitre. The colonel, the Squire and Maguffin prepared their pistols for the first volley on the housebreakers. The clergymen, with Timotheus and Rufus, got their guns in order for the second. It was almost on the stroke of midnight when the detective slipped in and closed the door after him. "They are here," he whispered; "wait for me to ect! Now, not another word." Silent, as if themselves conspirators, the eight men crouched in the darkened hall, listening to steps on the soft grass of the lawn. There

was the low growl of a dog, a short bark, and then a muttered oath, a thud, and a groan that was not human. Poor Basil Perrowne ground his teeth, for he had heard the last gasp of the faithful Muggins. A hand was on the outside knob of the door. Mr. Bangs turned the key and drew back the catch of the lock, when two men thrust themselves in. "Ware's the lights, you blarsted fool?" one of the ruffians asked. The detective drew back, and the others with him, till all five had entered. Then Mr. Perrowne threw open the office door, and Timotheus that of the linen closet. In the sudden light cast on the scene the pistol men fired and the burglars tumbled back, two hanging on to three. "Don't shoot," cried Mr. Bangs to the gunners, "but kem on, fellow them up." After the fugitives they went, not too quickly, although the bereaved parson was longing for a shot at the murderer of Muggins. The burglars were on the road, and the waggon, driven by a woman, was coming to meet them. "Now then," said the detective, as a couple of revolver shots whizzed past him, "give the scoundrels thet velley, before there's any denger of hitting the woman." The four guns were emptied with terrible effect, for the woman had to descend in order to get her load of villainy on. The detective gave but one minute for that purpose, and then ordered a pursuit; but the waggon had turned, and, spite of screams and oaths that made hideous the night air, the woman drove furiously, all unconscious, apparently, that her course betrayed itself by a trail of human blood. "Non ere killed outright," remarked Mr. Bangs, "bet I downt believe a single mether's sen of them escaped without a good big merk of recognition."

"Do you think we have seen the last of them, Bangs?" asked the Squire.

"Certainly! This was a lost desperate effort of a broken-up geng."

"I wonder who that woman can have been," said Mr. Errol. "I know most of the people about here by sight."

"She's a very clever yeng woman," Mr. Bangs answered, evasively.

"It'll no be Newcome's daughter?" half asked the Squire.

The detective drew Mr. Carruthers aside, and said: "It wes to hev been Serlizer, bet she wouldn't gow, even if Ben hed ellowed her; bet a nice gel from wey beck, a cousin of Ben's, whom he had never seen before, end who hed just called on Mrs. Towner in the efternoon, offered to take her place. Her nome is Rebecca Towner, a very nice yeng person."

"Losh me, Bangs, you're an awfu' man! What deevilment is this ye've been at?"

"I didn't went you to shoot Rebecca Towner, because, next to pore Nesh, she is our best female personater, end her name, when she takes off these clowthes, is Cherley Verley."

"So, you brocht thae villains here by deputy?"

"Yes; they hed to kem, you know, bet I didn't know anything about thet boy end their plans, except in a general way. Rebecca woun't leave the pore fellows till they're pretty sick."

(To be continued.)

"AUSTRALIAN LETTER."

IT is probably owing to the more democratic constitution of South Australia and New Zealand, where "one man, one vote" is the law, that in these colonies successful efforts have been made for the right taxation of property. New Zealand is on the eve of passing a bill for the taxation of unimproved land values similar to what has been in force here for nearly seven years. We also have a tax on incomes over £200, and New Zealand is substituting for her property tax, which has not been quite satisfactory, a land and income tax. These two colonies had their crisis six or seven years ago, and are now in the soundest condition of all the group of colonies. Bad times were met by retrenchment, taxation of property, and endeavours to settle the people on the land. The Working Men's Blocks in South Australia and the village settlements in New Zealand were steps in this direction, which other colonies in their straits are seeking to imitate. But the opposition to radical legislation in the form of property and income tax is so strong that the Victorian Ministry prefers a higher protective tariff against the world—a McKinley tariff in fact—to it. I think it more likely that such excessive duties will sink Victoria deeper into the mire than that it will nurse the protected industries into profitable life. America may blunder as to her relations with the outside world without financially ruining herself. She has free trade from Atlantic to Pacific, among sixty-two millions of well-to-do people, but for little over a million people in Victoria to fence themselves off from their nearest neighbours is madness. Retaliatory tariffs shut out the products of Melbourne factories from the unsisterly sister colonies. To reconcile the farmers and pastoralists to an increase of duties on clothing, furniture, machinery and a host of things he has to buy, the Government gives a bonus on butter exported of 3d. a pound, imported butter paying a tax of 2d., and largely increase the tax on imported cattle, sheep and horses from outside. New South Wales, and Queensland even more so, is the natural breeding place of stock, and the Victorian pays more for his butter and his meat for the benefit, less of the small