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## OUR MUTUAL SECRET.

How that vonerablo patriarch, Father Timo, with his sand-glass and sicklo does koop his paco. It will now bo almost twelvo yoars sinco I, Hugh Ponscarden, might havo beon occasionally soon in tho Cuurta of Sossion or, Justiciary in our besuliful "modorn Athons," arrayed in wig and gown, practiring my profossion as an advocato.

Two years had elapsod sinco I had bacome a full-flodged pleader, and within tho last fow months my business had beon rapidly incrossing, and my provious inability to conviuce fifteon of my countrymen to my own ideas was a matter I was beginning to bo tolerably adept at.

The analytical procision with which I sifted out every favorable detail, the impressive earnestness which characterised my forensio addresses unmisakoably possessed incalculable woight, and finally in a brilliant peroration I made a touching appoel to thoir hearts and consciences, and dolioately and gracefully alluded to the manifest perspicuity, which would be strikingly displayed by retarning a verdict in favor of my cliont.

Of course, this at least candid ogotism is entre nutes, or ss the Scotch have it, "atween corsels."

Ono aftornoon I was at work in my chambers, when my junior clerk ushered in one of the city detectives.

With a "goodday, sir," he immediately launched upon his errand, which I briefly narrate.

First of all pormit me to inform you that only the other evening, whic at the house of Mr. Cullen, an old friend of our family, I was introduced to Mise Nellio Kinloss, his nioce, on a visit to Edinburgh.

When I take a retrospective glance at that memorablo day I cannor honestly confess that an exquisitely moulded figure, with a pair of liquid brown eyes, had any nousual attraction for me.

Imagine my constornation when Detective Spynie told mo that this estim. able young lady was at the Central Police Office accused of shop-lifting, and that she had asked to see me.

It appeared that qeveral articles of clothing had beon stolen during the last few daye from a drapery warehouse, whore Miss Kinloss had called to mako some purchases.

On this particular day four pairs of gloves weto sudjenly discovered to be missing, and on a preconcerted signal all exit was shut, and tho customers wore compelled to undergo the process of being searched.

All came unscalhed out of this disagreeablo businoss except my unfortunate lady friend, in whose pocket was found one pair uf unrorn gluvos, which were identified as being stolen. On this irresistible proof sho was arrosted and datained in custody.

I at once sapp har on my arrival at the polica station, and there, with tearful ejes and agonizing look, she implored mo to obtain her liberation and to use my atmost ability in clearing her from this foul blot on her character.

Tbe first request I speedily obtained on consultation with the Procurator Fiscal, having lodged bail as a guarantee for her future appearance at coutt ; but as to the last, that was a difficulty which would tax my mental strengsh.

Her gratitude to me was delineated in every foature of her besunfol countenance, and ber ejes were perfectly radiant with it; and yet across that pretty face there rested a dark dismal shadom, which I determined I muss instantly dispel.

Very prudently she desired me to keep the secret of hor accusation from her fricnds, and this wंe wero succassful in doing.

I had critically examined the evidence upon which this charge was based. If the case did come to trial my first thought was I could easily obtrin a verdict of "not proven," by merely producing witnesses to prove the hitherto irreproachablo character of my client, but I was anxious to preven! the case coming to trial, and besides, I would not have beon content witg " not proven," which literally signifies exemption from punishment buts tarnished reputation.

It would occupy unnecossary space were I to detail my every procesi in unravelling the tangled skein ; suffice.it to say that my efforts, like most re!l directed and painstating actions were crownod with succoss.

First of all, by judicious advertising, I, strange to remark, stumbui apon two elderly ladies (in metaphur only) who bad been making purchase and were ready to testify that they observed my friond onter, seat hersal down close by, and remain there until the hue and cry was rajsod about fre minutes afterwards.

Their only excnse for not asserting this at the timo was the purely fase. ful aversion to apposar as witnesses, to boing convoyed to tho polico statias and to being precognosced, \&ec.

This poor paltry and unreasonablo apology I will not attempt to dilak upon further than expressing my unmitigated disgust of such cillous cales lating wretches.

I was 80. gratified at my good fortane in uncarthing these two spiase that I firily jumped for jos. Though I had cherished a faint hopo of gh ting somobody who could adducesome proof similar to this, my most mguino expectations did not paint it with 60 rosy a hue.

During the fow days of my investigation, Asiss Kinloss had called eres afternoon at my chambers, and, roally, her dolight whon I apprised bes, the latest intelligenco was frantic. Then, and only then, for I am frath avowing tho truth, did I cxperianco a new omution to which I had bet hithorio ansurceptible.
"What was it "" I wss half inclinod to ask myself, whon my iaqi, Was smothered before articulation by tho magic whispor, "Love."

The creatare of my adoration had been branded as a felon, but It assisted in evading that cruel and tarrible blow from the arord of jath which, Damocles-like, was hanging ofor her head.

