SOLACE.

You say you are not strong enough, dear To bear misfortune's sting and scarring smart.

You say the future seemeth gray and dark—
A troubled sea on which you must embark. I know how futile is my power to cheer.
I know how vain my words must be, my dear!

Wet will I utter thoughts that throng the In hopes therein some solace you may fird. The Past hath vanished like a fleeting Bearing our joys and sorrows on its stream.

The Future's doors are barred and will not E'en to the sesame of sacred hope!

The Present only is what we possess,
In which to do the deeds that blight or bless.

The Present-ah, what joys we daily store For future good when we observe her lore.

The duty done, the anguish borne, the weight
Of cares upheld—that is to smile at Fate!

Dear heart, live in the now, nor vainly That which to fancies threatens far ahead.

Arthur E. Locke, in Boston Budget.

My Strangest Case

BY GUY BOOTHBY.

Author of "Dr. Kikola," "The Beautiful e Devii,'' "Pharos, The Egyptian," Etc.

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CHAPTER I.—CONTINUED.

Next day I made my way to the great metropolis, and installed myself at a small private hotel, while I looked about me preparatory to commencing business. To talk of gaining a footing in London is all very well in its way, but it is by no means so easy a task to accomplish as it might appear. Doubtless it can be done fairly quickly if one is prepared to spend large sums of money in advertising, and is not afraid to blow one's own trumpet on every possible occa-sion, but that is not my line, and besides, even had I so wished, I had not the money to do it. For a multitude of reasons I did not feel inclined to embark my hardearned savings on such a risky enterprise. I preferred to make my way by my own diligence, and with that end

in view I rented an office in a con-venient quarter, furnished it, put a small advertisement in a few of the papers, and then awaited the coming of my clients. As I have a long and curious story to tell, and this book is only intended to be the narration of a certain episode in my life, a detailed description of my first three years in London would not only be superfluous, but in every way a waste of time. Let it suffice that my first case was that of the now notorious Pilchard street diamond robbery, my success in which brought me business from a well-known firm in Hatton Gardens. As the public will doubtless remember, they had been robbed of some valuable gems between London and Amsterdam in a singularly audacious manner. My second was swindler, who called herself Countess Demikoff. This case alone took me nearly six months to unravel, but I

did not grudge the time, seeing that I was well paid for my labors, and that I managed to succeed where the police had failed. From that time forward I think I may say without boasting that I have been as successful as any man of my age has a right to expect to be. What is better still, I am now in the happy position of being able to accept or decline business as I choose. It is in many respects a hard life, and at all times is attended with a fair amount of risk, but you cannot make omelettes without breaking eggs, and if anyone chooses to spend his life running to earth men who are waging war against society, well, he must not grumble if he receives some hard knocks in re

After these preliminaries I will proceed to show how I came to be mixed up in the most curious case it has ever counter. It showed me a side of human nature I had not met before, and it brought me the greatest happiness a man can ever hope to find.

CHAPTER II.

All business London, and a good many other people besides, must re-member the famous United States Empire bank fraud. Bonds had been stolen and negotiated, vast sums of money were discovered to be missing. ors were absent also. So cleverly had the affair been worked, and so flaring were the defalcations, that had it not been for the public-spirited behavior and generosity of two of the directors, the position of the bank would have been most seriously compromised, if not shattered altogether. How the culprits had managed to slip through the fingers of the law in the first place no one could say, but the fact re that they were able to get out of England, without, apparent'y, leaving trace of their intentions or their whereabouts behind them, Scotland Yard fook the matter up with its usual promptness, and promptness, and promptness, they set their cleverest detectives to work upon it, and it was not until more than a month had elapsed that the men engaged were compelled most reluctantly to admit their defeat. They had done their best; it was the system under which they worked that was to blame. In the Old Bailey in the direction of the detection of crime, or in the tracring of a criminal, it is best, as in every

remaining directors of the bank, in which they inquired if I could make it convenient to call upon them at the head-office that day. To tell the truth, I had been expecting this summons for nearly a week, and was far from be ing displeased when it came. The work I had expected them to offer me was after my own heart, and if they would only trust the business to me and give me a free hand, I was prepared on my part to bring the missing

gentlemen to justice.

Needless to say, I called upon them at the hour specified, and after a brief wait was conducted to the board room where the directors sat in solemn con-

The chairman, Sir Walter Bracebridge, received me on behalf of his

"We wrote to you, Mr. Fairfax," he said, "in order to find out whether you could help us concerning the difficulty in which we find ourselves placed. You of course are aware of the serious trouble the bank has experienced, and of the terrible consequences which have resulted therefrom?"

I admitted that I was quite conver-sant with it, and waited to hear what

he would have to say next.
"As a matter of fact," he continued,
"we have sent for you to know whether you can offer us any assistance in our hour of difficulty? Pray take a chair, and let us talk the matter over and see what conclusion we can arrive at." I seated myself, and we discussed the

affair to such good purpose that, when I left the board room, it was on the understanding that I was to take up the case at once, and that my expenses and a very large sum of money should be paid me, provided I could manage to bring the affair to a successful ter-mination. I spent the remain r of that day at the bank, carefully studying the various memoranda. A great deal of what I had read and heard had been mere hearsay, and this it was necessary to discard in order that the real facts of the case might be taken up, and the proper conclusions drawn therefrom. For three days I weighed the case carefully in my mind, and at the end of that time was in a position to give the board a definite answer to their inquiries. Thereupon I left England, with the result that exactly 12 weeks later the two men, so much wanted, were at Bow street, and I had the proud knowledge of knowing that I had succeeded where the men who had tried before me had so distinctly

As will be remembered, it was a case that interested every alass of society, and press and public were alike united in the interest they showed in it. It is not, however, the trial itself much as another curious circumstance connected with it that has induced me to refer to it here. The case had passed from the magistrate's court to the Old Bailey, and was hourly increasing in interest. Day after day the court was crowded to overflowing, and, when the time came for me to take my place in the witness-box and describe the manner in which I had led up to and effected the capture of



"YOU ARE MR. FAIRFAX, ARE YOU NOT?" INQUIRED THE TALLER

OF THE MEN. the offenders, the excitement rose to fever heat. I can see the whole scene now as if it had occurred but yesterday; the learned judge upon the bench, the jury in their box, the rows of counand the benches full of interested spectators. I gave my evidence and was examined by the counsels for the prosecution and for the defense. I described how I had traced the men from England to their hiding-place abroad, and the various attempts that had been made to prevent their extra dition, and had just referred to a certain statement one of the prisoners had made to me soon after his arrest when an interruption caused me to look behind at the rows of spectators, At the further end of the bench, neardently tall, the other very short. The taller was the possessor of silvery white hair and a long and venerable He was a handsome-looking at him told me that he was blind. As I have said, his companion was a much smaller man, with a smooth, almost boyish face, a pair of twinkling eyes, but a mouth rather hard set. Both were evidently following the case close ly, and when on the next day I saw that they were in the same place I took an even greater interest in them than be-fore. It was not, however, until the trial had finished and the pair of miserable for a lengthy term of years, that I made the acquaintance of the men I have just described. I remember the circumstance quite distinctly. I had left the court and was proceeding down

Turning round I discovered to my stor shearn the two men I had seen

smaller was guiding his friend along run any risk of losing our appoint-the crowded pavement with a dexter-ment." ity that was plainly the outcome of a long practice. When I stopped, they stopped also, and the blind man addressed me. His voice was deep, and had a note of pathos in it impossible to describe. It may have been that I was a little sad that afternoon, for both the men who had been condemned to penal servitude had wives and children, to whose pitiful condition the learned judge had referred when passing sentence.
"You are Mr. Fairfax, are you not?"

"That is my name," I admitted.
"What can I do for you?"

"If we could persuade you to vouchafe us an hour of your valuable time we should be more grateful than we could say," the man replied. "We have an important piece of business which it might possibly be to your advantage to take up. At any rate, it would be worthy of your consideration."

"But why have you not come to me before?" I inquired. "You have seen me in court every day. Why do you wait until the case is at an end?

"Because we wanted to be quite sure of you," he answered. "Our case is so large and of such vital importance to us, that we did not desire to run any risk of losing you. We thought we would wait and familiarize ourselves with all that you have done in this affair before coming to you. Now we are satisfied that we could not place our case in better hands, and what we are anxious to do is to induce you to interest yourself in it and take it up.

"You pay me a very high compliment," I said, "but I cannot give you a decision at once. I must hear what it is that you want me to do and have time to think it over, before I can answer you. That is my invariable rule, and I never depart from it. Do you know my office?"

"We know it perfectly," returned the blind man. "It would be strange if we did not, seeing that we have stood outin as few words as possible."

I bowed and signed to him to prosible for you to grant us an interview to-night?"

"I fear not," I said. "I am tired, and stand in need of rest. If you care to come to-morrow morning, I shall be very pleased to see you. But you must bear in mind the fact that my time is valuable, and that it is only a certain class of cases that I care to take up per-

"We are not afraid of our case," the man replied. "I doubt if there has ever been another like it. I fancy you yourself will say so when you hear the evidence I have to offer. It is not as if we were destitute. We are prepared to pay you well for your services, but we must have the very best that England can supply."

My readers must remember that this conversation was being carried on at the corner of Ludgate Hill and the Old Bailey. Curious glances were being thrown at my companions by passers-by, and so vehement were the t man's utterances becoming that small crowd was gradually collecting

in our neighborhood.

"Very well," I said, "if you are really desirous of consulting me, I shall be very glad to see you at my office at ten o'clock to-morrow morning. must ask you, however, not to be late, as I have several other appointments."

"We shall not be late" the man answered, "you may rely upon that. We have too much at stake to run any risks of losing your assistance. We will be with you to-morrow at ten 'clock punctually." He thereupon bade me good-by, and,

raising his hat politely, was led along the street by his companion in an op-posite direction to that I was taking. They seemed delighted that I had given them an appointment, but for my part I am afraid I was too absorbed the memories of the day, and the punishment that had been allotted to the two principal members in swindle, to think very much of them and their business. Indeed, although I made a note of the appointment, it was not until I had arrived at the office on the following morning that I recollected their promised visit. I had ust finished my correspondence, and had directed a few letters to my man aging clerk, when a junior entered with two cards, which he placed be fore me. The first I took up bore the name of Septimus Codd, that of the second, Mr. George Kitwater. When I had finished the letter I was in the act of dictating, I bade the clerk admit them, and a moment later the blind man and his companion whom I had seen on Ludgate Hill the previous evening were ushered into my presence. I cannot remember a more erable appearance than that presented by the taller man. His was a personality that would have appealed force ibly to any student of humanity. I decidedly an open countenance, to which the long white beard that descended almost to his waist gave an added reverence. His head was well shaped and well set upon his shoul his height was six feet two if an inch, and he carried himself with the erectness of a man accustomed to an outdoor life. He was well dressed and for that reason I surmised that he was the possessor of good manners His companion was as much below the middle height as he was above it. His was a peculiar countenance resembling of a boy when seen at a distance, and that of an old man when one was close to him. His eyes, as I have al ready said, were small, and they were set deep in his head. This, in itself, was calculated to add to his peculiar appearance. He steered his blind con n a seat. Then he perched himself on a chair beside him and waited for me

o open the debate. "Good morning, gentlemen," I said. 'Allow me to congratulate you on your punctuality.

One morning on arriving at my office astor's ment the two men I had seen "We were afraid of missing you," are proud of. Literature has made a found a letter awaiting me from the ig the sourt, and who had seemed to observed Kitwater. "Our business is us."—Stray Stories.

take such an interest in the case. The | so particular that we did not want to

"Perhaps you will now be good enough to tell me what that business is?" I replied, taking my note book out of a drawer, preparatory to writing down what they had to say.
"In the first place, sir," the man be-

gan, "we of course understand that everything we have to tell you will be regarded by you as strictly private and confidential?"

"That goes without saying," I replied. "If I were to divulge what my clients tell me, my business would not be worth a day's purchase. You can rest assured that everything you may impart to me will be treated in strict confidence."

"We thank you," said Kitwater. "The story I have to tell you is perhaps the strangest that has ever been told to mortal man. To begin with, you must understand that my companion and myself have but lately arrived in England. We have been for many years missionaries in China, sowing the good seed in the western provinces. I do not know whether you have ever visited that country, but, even if you have not, you must be aware to some extent of the dangers to which our calling is subjected. We carry our lives in our hands from the moment we leave civilization until we enter it again. There are times, however, that ompensate one for all the trials that have to be undergone.'

"You must excuse me," I said, "if I remind you that my time is valuable, and that, however interested I may be in the missionary work of China, 1 cannot allow it to interfere with my business. The sooner you tell me in what way you want me to help you, the sooner I shall be able to give you the answer you are seeking."

"I must implore your pardon," the man continued, humbly am afraid our calling, however, is apt

[To Be Continued.]

THE WHIRLIGIG TABLE.

An Ingenious Three-Story Affair Made by a Connecticut Yankee Years Ago.

A lounger in a second-hand furniture shop asked the man behind the counter whether he had ever seen one of the queer merry-go-round tavern tables described recently in a New York newspaper, relates the Detroit Free

"Yes," the second-hand man answered, "and I can go ahead of that New York man's story. I've seen a whirligig table three stories high. The New York man's table had only one story, with pigeon-holes for the dishes of food in the revolving center. Also, he describes it as a southern device, but I hapenn to know that all these revolving tables are Yankee inventions. Those I have seen were invented by Connecticut Yankees, good men who had such big families that they couldn't get all their children served with food under half an hour's valuable time.

"Down in a Kentucky town, now, I could show you a three-story revolv-ing dinner table. It was carefully constructed years ago by a man who came west from Connecticut; he made it of beautiful inlaid woods, and the family used it with doilies under the plates instead of a tablecloth. The center of the table proper was a revolving disk on which the meats and vegetables were placed, and above this a smaller disk revolved, holding salads and fruits, and on a little disk at the top was always a glorious big cake. Yes, it looked queer, of course; but that Yankee mother and housewife was an extra good cook, and I've seen some remarkably toothsome repasts trimmed liberally with lace and made go round on that old whirligig table The family is all grown and scattered now. When the children were young they thought their father's invention was the finest thing in the world. It served a good purpose too old whirligig table did."

Church Going in the Olden Days. Those who are concerned about the present condition of church attend umns, might like to return to the state of things prevalent in George II.'s reign. The mediaeval laws for fining people who did not go to church, and even those who harbored absentees were still in force, which looks as though the church still entered a good deal into the daily life of the There was, indeed, daily serv people. There was, indeed, daily service in 44 of the city churches, and evening service in all of them on Wednesday and Friday evenings, besides spe cial sermons on other days in churches endowed with lectureships. Fast days were still rigorously observed, too, although, in most cases, the shops were not closed on Ash Wednesday and Good Friday, as they had been in monastic times. But the work of the clergy practically ended with the performance of their ecclesiastical duties and the visiting of the sick. Other parish work was not then done by the clergy at all .- London Chronicle.

Prominent in Literature

"I tell you," said "Shiny Patches," as he addressed five of his companions while all were basking in sunshine and resting between rests. 'we are the prominent figures modern literature. I don't pick up a paper without reading something about some member of our ancient order. The very thought of our fame makes me eloquent.

"We are indeed famous. Every intelligent man recognizes the names of 'Weary Willie,' 'Dusty Rhodes,' 'Meandering Mike,' 'Tired Thomas,' 'Hungry Hawkins,' 'Resting Robert,' and a score more of names that we

Gossipy Gossip of 33 Prevailing Fashions

Little Hints of What to Wear That Are of Timely Interest - Some Charming Gowas.



coming season is bewildering in its variety and loveobtains in dress materials, ranging from regal bro-cades to fabrics of gossamer light-

Our old favorite, alpaca, is again



Charming Afternoon Gown of Crepe de Chine, Made Up With Appropriate Em-broideries and Applique Materials.

pecimens are beautifully silky in appearance, and frequently have fancy designs imprinted on them. In pearl gray, willow green and soft dove color these are suitable for dressy toilettes and dust cloaks. Favorite Mmmings for alpaca are coarse cream lace—Irish or Venetian point for preference—and ecru applique with an edging of gold thread.

Foulards in silk, and in their excellent cotton counterfeits, are prettier than ever, and are especially suited for wear in this month of tears and smiles. Rose-pink in rather a deep shade is charming in foulard, trimmed lace insertion and knots of black velvet ribbon.

Delaines, in exquisite colorings and designs, are not only stylish for dresses, but are much used for blouses, of which the narrow turnover collars and cuffs are fashioned of hemstitched or lace-edged silk, matching the prominent shade in the

All transparent fabrics over silk will be much worn. Sometimes the silk underslip is of a contrasting shade, such as green under pink, yel low under mauve, etc. Very beauti ful are the clinging English-made crepes, with satin striped cream background, on which are printed clusters of lovely pink roses, chrysanthemums or honeysuckle. Fairies themselves would not disdain to wear these ideal productions.

Soft grenadines in stripes and floral designs, d'esprit net and voiles are



fussy with many lace-edged tiny flounces. Plain, clear white muslin is made up into simple gowns and blouses. The latter have a tucker of pink or blue ribbon, ending in a rosette and streamers at the back of the neck. The bishop sleeves are just pinched at the elbow, where a knot of ribbon to match prettily adorns them. The waistband is also composed of strands of ribbon.

Long silk sashes, with fringed or

hand-painted ends, frequently accom-pany frocks of muslin and thin silk Where the sash is, there also one usu- proved vain.

EMININE raiment for the ally finds the dainty frilled white net or muslin fichu.

Skirts are still built to cling closely round the hips and back, which means that the underskirt or petticoat must fit equally smoothly without ruck or wrinkle. From below the knee skirts are very full, and in light materials break out into an abundance of frilliness that is really very fetching.

Dress skirts made of diaphanous materials are often gauged at the back, or flat plaits employed to give substance to the back width. There less tucking on skirts, but more flounces and frills.

For country and morning wear short all-round skirts with boleros of square-cut pretensions, or with simulated basques, are seen in light tweed, covert coating, linen, pique and drill.

Blouses, or rather slips, as they are termed, are daintiness personified in fancy and embroidered muslin, and especially in black, white and cream d'esprit net. A net blouse in the lat-ter shade looks delightful made with quarter-inch tucks and yoke of cream lace across which are bretelles of black ribbon velvet with a tiny gold clasp in the center of each. sewn at intervals over the bodice and sleeves are black lace butterflies.

Black net slips have appliques of cream lace for garniture.

The mixture of black with cream or white is very modish; and pale blue—real Cambridge blue—is one of the spring colors, and is seen in all dress goods, and also in millinery. A note of black is usually introduced with it. Green also, in the shade of tender leaf green, promises to be very popular. It has a silvery bloom

on it that is very soft and becoming.

Full neck ruffles of chiffon, net and tulle fasten at the neck with long streamers of black ribbon velvet. Some are furnished with a wide frill,



Summer Street Gown of Satin Foulard With Valenciennes Lace Insertion, Ribbon Vel-vet, Silk Herringbone and Arabian Lace Guimpe.

which droops over the shoulders in cape fashion.

All the smaller yet now essential dress accessories are very pretty, and much skill is expended on their manufacture. Narrow collar and cuff bands are made of lace or finely embroidered muslin, and used to decorate cotton and silk blouses. These trifles are easily fashioned by the home worker, as well as embroidered waist belts and sashes. There is also ample scope for the artist to achieve beautiful decorative effects in the painting of satin, maslin, chiffon and

Transparent lace yokes and collars are worn. These should be lined al-ways with white chiffon, as it makes the skin look whiter, and also affords more portection from the too ardent attentions of King Sol. Dress collars are generally soft and dainty look-ing, or, more often than not, are conspicuous by their absence.

Silk petticoats have deep flounces of muslin and lace made to button on, so that they are easily removed for the laundress. The petticoat worn should, if possible, tone with the predominating color in hat or costume. For instance, a pale blue hat, trimmed with black, and costume of the two colorings, would be worn with a pale blue underskirt. Thus one could have flounces of different colors to fasten on to the same upper

Cream lace veils are la mode, worn either as a veil pure and simple or draped carelessly round the brim of the hat to end in a cachepeigne drooping over the hair. The smartest sailor hats have draped on the brim.

MARIE BAYARD. sailor hats have cream lace veils

Why Everybody Laughed.

A Baltimore lady donned an \$18 new hat for a promenade and wondered why the first admiring glances on the street were changed to Eventually she found that the hat had dropped off, and a search for it