

TO-MORROW.

To-morrow! Oh, To-morrow's
The day that I like best;
For though my sunset's clouded,

My Strangest Case

BY GUY BOOTHBY.
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CHAPTER III.—CONTINUED.

She rested her clasped hands upon the table and looked pleadingly at me. "And will you do so?"

"I am considering the matter," I said, with the first feeling of reluctance I had experienced in the case.

"So they informed me and that is why I am here," she replied. "Oh, Mr. Fairfax, you don't know how I pity them!"

"I am afraid it is very doubtful whether he will," I said, "even in the event of his being found."

"In that case you are one niece in a thousand, Miss Kitwater," I said, with a smile.

"You don't happen to have a photograph of him in your possession, I suppose?"

"No," replied Kitwater, shaking his head. "Gideon Hayle is not the sort of man to allow himself to be photog-

not one of them, for the clock upon my mantelpiece had scarcely finished striking the hour of four, when I heard footsteps in the office outside,

"Good afternoon, Mr. Fairfax," he said, as Codd led him to a seat. "According to the arrangement we came to yesterday afternoon, we have come here to learn your decision which you promised to give us at four o'clock to-day."

"And those conditions?" "Are that you pay my expenses and the sum of £500, to which another £500 is to be added if I am successful in helping you to recover the treasure of which you told me yesterday."

"An exceedingly fair one," Kitwater replied, while little Codd nodded his head energetically to show that he appreciated it.

"Let's hope for all our sakes that you will be as successful in this case," he said. "And now, if I may ask the question, when will you be ready to begin your search?"

"I am ready as soon as you like," I rejoined. "Indeed, the sooner the better for all parties concerned."

"He booked his passage as George Bertram," Kitwater replied. "We know that is so, for we made inquiries at Rangoon."

"I think those are all the questions I want to ask you at present," I said, closing my note-book.

"I must again express my gratitude to you, Mr. Fairfax," he said, "for having consented to take up the case. I feel certain you will ultimately be successful."

"I will communicate with you as soon as I have anything to report," I answered. "You may rely upon my doing my best to serve you."

"No, I certainly did not know it," he replied. "She said nothing to us of such an intention. I know that she is heart and soul with us in our desire to find Hayle."

"I think I do," I returned, for some reason almost abruptly. "She is a good girl," said Kitwater, and then took from his pocket an envelope which he handed to me.

"By the way, I brought this with me," he said, "in the hope that he should be able to induce you to accede to our wishes. Inside you will find a £100 note, which should be sufficient to cover any preliminary expenses."

"I thanked him and placed the envelope upon the table. In my own mind I felt that it would be an easy matter to guess whence the sum had come, and for a reason that I could not then analyze, and therefore am unable to describe, the thought irritated me."

"Having assured them that the amount would be quite sufficient, in the event of nothing unforeseen happening, to last for some considerable time to come, I conducted them to the door, again repeating the promise that I would communicate with them as soon as I had anything to report."

"I must beg your pardon, Mr. Fairfax," he said, in a totally different voice to that in which he had just spoken. "When I remember how we have been wronged, I am apt to forget myself. I trust you will forgive me?"

"I will do so willingly," I answered. "You have certainly won the right to be excused if you entertain a feel-

ing of resentment for the man who has treated you so shamefully. And now to resume our conversation?"

"I was about to ask you the number and description of the stones of which he robbed you. You told me they numbered 93 in all, if I remember aright. Can you tell me how many there were of each?"

"Forty-eight rubies and 45 sapphires," he replied without a moment's hesitation. "The rubies were uncut and of various sizes, ranging perhaps from ten to eighty carats. They were true rubies, not spinels, remember that. The sapphires ran from 15 carats to 60, and there was not a flaw amongst them."

"Has Hayle any knowledge of the value of precious stones?" "There's not a keener judge in the east. He would be a cunning man who would succeed in taking him in about the value of anything from a moonstone to a ruby."

"In that case he would, in all probability, know where to place them to the best advantage?" "You may be sure that was his intention in coming to England. But we have tried Hatton Garden and can hear nothing of him there."

"He may have disposed of some of them on the continent," I said. "However, we will soon clear that point up. The size of the larger stones is so unusual that they would be certain to attract attention. And now one other question. Are you aware whether he has any friends or relatives in England?"

"So far as we know he has not a single relative in the world," Kitwater replied. "Have you ever heard of one, Caddy?"

"The little man shook his head, and then, taking the other's hand, tapped upon it with his fingers in the manner I have already described."

"He says Hayle had a sister once, of whom he was very fond." The tapping upon the hand continued, and once more Kitwater translated: "She was a cripple, and lived in a small house off the Brompton road. She died while Hayle was in North Borneo; is that not so, little man?"

"Codd nodded his head to show that Kitwater had interpreted him correctly. I then made some inquiries as to the missing man's habits. So far the description I had had of him was commonplace in the extreme."

"Do you know whether he shipped on board the Jemadar for England under his own name, or under an assumed one?"

"I next noted the name and address of the vessel's owner, and resolved to pay him a visit next morning. It would be hard if I could not learn from him something concerning Mr. Hayle, and where he had gone on landing."

"I think those are all the questions I want to ask you at present," I said, closing my note-book. "It would be as well perhaps for you to furnish me with your address, in order that I may communicate with you, should it be necessary."

"At present," said Kitwater, "we are staying with my niece at the village of Bishopstowe in Surrey. My late brother was vicar of the parish for many years, and he left his daughter a small property in the neighborhood. They tell me it is a pretty place, but, as you are aware, I unfortunately cannot see it, and my friend Codd here cannot talk to me about it?"

"He heaved a heavy sigh and then rose to depart. "I must again express my gratitude to you, Mr. Fairfax," he said, "for having consented to take up the case. I feel certain you will ultimately be successful."

"I will communicate with you as soon as I have anything to report," I answered. "You may rely upon my doing my best to serve you."

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"I will do so willingly," I answered. "You have certainly won the right to be excused if you entertain a feel-

my door, and evidently watching for their departure, how much trouble and vexation of spirit we should all have been saved. But I did not know this until long afterwards, and then of course the information came too late to be of any service to us.

Next morning I was early at the office, being desirous of winding up another little matter before I turned my attention to the new affair. One of my subordinates had just returned from the continent whither I had sent him to keep an eye on a certain pseudo-French marquis with whom I expected to have dealings at no distant date. He reported that the gentleman in question had broken the bank at Monte Carlo, had staked and lost all his winnings next day, and had shot himself on the promenade on the evening following. With his death the affair, on which I had confidently expected to be employed, came to an end. I could not say that I was altogether sorry.

"I shall want you to leave on Friday, Turner, for St. Petersburg," I said, when he had finished his report and I had commented upon it. "Do you remember Paulus Seevanovitch, who was concerned in that attempt to defraud the Parisian jewelers, Maurel & Co., two years ago?"

"Yes, sir, I remember him perfectly," Turner replied. "A tall, burly man, with a bushy beard, the top of his little finger on the left hand missing, and a long white scar over his right eyebrow."

"The same," I answered. "I see you have not forgotten him. Well, I want you to find him out, and let me have an exact account of his movements during the next three weeks. The office will arrange your expenses in the usual way, and you had better leave by the mail train. In all probability I shall see you off."

"Very good, sir," the man responded, and withdrew.

[To Be Continued.]

GODESSE OF SMALLPOX.

In Her Honor the Thugs of India, It Is Said, Commit Many Murders.

The divinity worshiped by the thugs of India is appropriately enough the goddess of smallpox. Thagi (or Thuggee), the only religion that preaches murder is not yet extinct. It appears, in fact, of late years to have been actually on the increase. In the Punjab there were two cases of murder by thugs as late as 1896, while in Central India the increase in the last three or four years is startling.

About 70 years have passed since two young English officials agreed that the day of retribution was come for the followers of the goddess Kali, says the Boston Post. There were at that time at least 10,000 thugs wandering unmolested over the surface of India, who earned a livelihood by murdering their fellow men. They lived in this way partly because it was their religion and partly because they preferred murdering to either working or begging.

As each thug killed, on an average, three men a year, some 30,000 people, mostly under British rule or protection vanished into the earth every year. Such figures seem incredible, and yet officials of the time say that they are probably under the mark.

The thug would set out on his business with the quiet earnestness of one who is merely doing his duty, and would brutally murder 20 or 30 victims, not only with an easy conscience, but with the calm self-approval of a successful practitioner. Nor was he at all grasping in his dealings. The celebrated thug, Shumsherah, deposed that "eight annas (a shilling) is a very good remuneration for murdering a man. We often strangle a victim who is suspected of having two pice (three farthings)." Their motto was evidently small profits.

Why He Agreed. "I think," said the old-fashioned member of the school board, "that we ought to pay more attention to writing."

"So do I," said the Harvard graduate, unexpectedly. "Teach 'em all to write plain—plain as print."

"My boy," said the old-fashioned member after the meeting, "what made you agree with me so enthusiastically?"

"Why, you see," said the youth with hesitation, "I—I proposed to a girl last month, and she sent me her answer in writing, and—and, hang it, I don't know whether she said no or yes."—Washington Times.

Overheard. Two men, we may assume that one was a Frenchman, were riding together one day through Paris. One was exceedingly clever, while the other was correspondingly dull. As is sometimes the case, the latter monopolized the conversation, and his talk was fast becoming unendurable when his companion saw a man on the street far ahead yawning openly.

It is not probable that the dullard felt this needleprick of wit, but his companion's exasperation must have found momentary relief.

"Look!" he exclaimed. "We are overheard!"—Short Stories.

A Case in Point. Mrs. Manning—John, I believe you are the biggest liar in the world. The fact is, you don't care a fig for me, or you wouldn't try to deceive me all this time. There was a time when you said I was the best and sweetest woman on earth.

Mr. Manning—And you believed it. Then why can't you believe the little fibs I tell you now?—Boston Transcript.

A Great Want. Why doesn't some genius invent a glass eye that can see?—Chicago Daily News.



Mrs. Sophie Binns, President Young People's Christian Temperance Union, Fruitvale, Bal., Cured of Congestion and Inflammation of the Ovaries by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

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