



THE SCHOOL OF LIFE.

The shadows long and dreary... Around a schoolhouse lay... The sun was slowly setting... At close of weary day...

Scoundrels & Co. BY COULSON KERNAHAN Author of "Captain Shannon," "A Book of Strange Sins," "A Dead Man's Diary," Etc.

CHAPTER XIV.—CONTINUED.

Of the existence of this room no one but Hall and his man Hubbock had any suspicion... The entrance to it being very cunningly contrived... In most houses of the sort, where the space under the roof has been utilized as a loft for the storage of lumber...

"Poor opinion! Why, man alive, I've got no opinion of them. Nor would you if you'd seen the way they muddled the burglary at my friend Paul's not long ago..." "Tell us about it," I said. "A yarn will be a change after so much billiards..."

away by an accomplice. Of course, the police found footmarks on the flower-bed next morning, and this confirmed the burglar theory. Hence no further suspicion attached to the other lodgers, a circumstance of which the Irishman took advantage by wearing openly the only stolen article he had retained—a pair of brown boots, which he blacked over...

CHAPTER XV. NUMBER TWO'S LITTLE PLAN FOR PUTTING A THOUSAND POUNDS A-PIECE IN EACH OF OUR POCKETS. "You have seen my man Hubbock. Well, I am venturing to propose that he be elected to fill one of the three vacancies on the council. It seems to me, when an outsider gets to know as much as, under the imperative circumstances, we could not prevent Hubbock from knowing about our business—that one of two things must



ALL MADE UP ALIKE.

happen. That person must either be more committed—must, in fact, be not only an accessory to what we have done or propose doing, but must be our actual accomplice—or else we must protect ourselves from the possibility of that person doing us mischief or of turning informer by taking the one and only effectual way of shutting his mouth. Hubbock has been with me for four years, and I can go bail for his trustworthiness. I've sounded him and find him ready and eager to be elected. He will be a distinct acquisition to the council, for an abler fellow or a man of more resource I don't know...

"Gentlemen," our host went on. "I think that the time has come when it is no longer desirable nor feasible for us to attempt to conceal our identity from each other. It is possible—perhaps probable, if I speak my mind—that the woman who betrayed us has informed the police that we are all dressed and disguised alike. But even were it not so, now that we are all thrown together in this way, it seems to me childish to keep any further semblance of secrecy. Personally I am not, and never was, very keen on disguise. That sort of thing may, and often does pass muster in the street, or in the presence of people who have no cause for looking at the disguised person too closely, or for suspecting him to be other than he seems. But—practical as false hair and false beard may be for ordinary purposes, or for deceiving strangers—I am bound to admit that I never yet met the criminal whose abilities for 'making up' were so wonderful that he could enter unsuspected into conversation with any one who had reason to be suspicious. I have read of such criminals in books, where you have to take the author's word for it that the thing happened as you are told it happened, and I have seen them in melodramatic plays, where the person who is supposed to be impenetrably disguised is placed far enough away from the audience to maintain the delusion. But, as far as my experience goes, a practiced criminal or clever detective is too knowing in the matter of disguise to be deceived by false hair and false beard. You can see the joint too plainly. When the man who has been in the habit of wearing hair on his face shaves it off, or the man who has worn none lets it grow, the disguise is often extremely effective. And when he adds to the change in his appearance by a change in dress, or by skillfully darkening his skin (although, unless he darkens the whole of his body there is always a risk of being found out), the disguise is greatly assisted. But for us, at any rate, to keep up among ourselves the pretense of a disguise would, it seems to me, be idle, especially as there is the possibility, and even probability, as I have already said, that the woman who betrayed us has informed the police of the fact that we are all made up alike. I think we shall only be courting discovery by continuing the practice..."

"I say ditto to that," said Number Six. "Them as is of the same opinion will oblige by hoisting a paw." "Carried unanimously," he remarked, turning to Number Two. "There's unity for you. The liberal party ain't in it with us, for pulling together amicably. Now I've got a word of my own to say, and it's this. It's more than time this syndicate had a leader. We're not like the liberal party in that. They can do without one seemingly, but we can't, and the sooner we've got a head the better. Well, that head don't want much looking for. It's right between your shoulders—Number Two. Hands up, those who vote for Number Two. [To Be Continued.]

Prepared for the Worst. Mr. Brown's enemies say that there is nothing else in the world he enjoys so much as finding fault and putting other people in the wrong. When engaged in this pleasing occupation he loses all hold on a sense of humor which is none too keen at other times. Not long ago he and his wife were taking a trip through the White mountains, and at one place they were to be called at 5:30 in the morning to take an early train. Mr. Brown awakened first, and after a glance at his watch fell back on his pillow with a groan that frightened his wife out of her slumbers. "Here it is on the tick of 5:30," grumbled Mr. Brown, in response to his wife's troubled questions, "and if they don't call us within five minutes we sha'n't have time enough to get dressed and eat breakfast! But it's no more than I expected."—Youth's Companion.

"At Home" Same Day. Two of the most eminent lawyers at the Philadelphia bar were the late Benjamin Harris Brewster and his half brother, Frederick Carroll Brewster. Both had held the office of attorney general for the state, and the first had been attorney general of the United States. They had not been on friendly terms for many years. It is said that on one occasion a mutual friend tried to bring them together, and finally Frederick C. consented to bury the hatchet and sent Benjamin H. a card containing his name, with the words written underneath, "At home on Monday evening, May 1." By the same messenger Benjamin H. sent a card in return, which read: "Benjamin H. Brewster also at home Monday evening, May 1." This ended negotiations.—Kansas City Journal.

Rectifying the Record. The following incident is related as having occurred in South Africa: One of the soldiers who had been reported killed in a certain battle and against whose name in the regimental books a note to that effect had been made afterward turned up and reported himself. Then the sergeant made another note in the book: "Died by mistake." The man was placed in the hospital and a few weeks later succumbed to the injuries he had received. This fact was communicated to the sergeant through the colonel of the regiment and then a third note was made: "Redeemed by order of the colonel."—Chicago Chronicle.

AND HE GOT IT.

But It Proved to Be Something He Did't Care to Hold Very Long. An indulgent mother of the Tuxedo colony was traveling on a local train one day in company with her three-year-old son, his nursemaid and a copy of a society magazine which absorbed her attention, relates the New York Times. The son was occupying the seat behind her with his attendant, who attempted every once in awhile to curb his restless and rebellious spirit by a gentle denial of his latest whim, but each time the mother, noticing only that some argument was in progress, and without looking up from her book, would remark: "Let him have it."

The nursemaid thereupon would yield to this double demand. Finally a strong and rather venomous looking wasp flew against the window pane, and the youthful hunter reached out to grasp it, and waited dejectedly when he was once more restrained by the watchful caretaker. Again the fond mother, without raising her eyes, exclaimed: "Oh, do let him have it!" And the howl which followed the nurse's compliance caused an amused smile to pass around the car.

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