

OUR SERIAL

THE HOME IN THE BLOSSOMS.

Dar's a white path leadin' ter it tum de valley en de hill.

En de daisies lak a rainbow is a-runnin' round 't still;

Des shingled wild de blossoms—fur fum de city strife,

Whar de mockin'-bird is singin' lak he des enjoyin' life:

"Chuck-will-widder!" "Jorester—jore!" All de songs de birds sing

He singin' right at me!

De sun looks tho' one winder, en some-how 'peckin'-bird—all three,

"Good mawnin' ter you, neighbor, I gwine ter shine all day!

I got ter fin' dem v'lets what winter los' away,

En wake dem sleepy singin'-birds what dreamin' er de May?"

Den it's bluebird, en redbird, En brown thrush—all three,

Shake de shiny blossoms Singin' right at me!

De do'way frame wid roses what 'pear ter run a race

Ter see who'll fin' de mawnin', sweet-smillin' in his face;

But bes' er all, en sweetest, ef nigh er fur I roam,

Is a voice dar, in dat do'way, a-singin' songs er home!

En brown thrush, en redbird, En mockin'-bird—all three,

Don't sing no song what sweeter Dan dat song is ter me!

No singin' fer de great worl' bright-shinin' fur away;

"Pears lak de sweetest' flowers grows whar de humble stay;

I kin ter all de v'lets—blue ez de sky above;

Dey teach me ter be humble, en de lilies teach me love.

Birds in all de blossoms Callin' w'en I roam,

Singin' en singin' Songs er love en home!

—Frank L. Stanton, in Youth's Companion.

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

CHAPTER XXII.

THE MAN WHO WAS "BLACK-BALLED."

Need I say it was I who was answerable for the failure of Mr. Hubbock's little scheme?

I have been a member of the Ishmael club for 10 years, and have twice served upon the committees.

This fact, while it accounted for the sneers with which Hall had alluded to the club, made me all the more resolved to checkmate Mr. Hubbock's little demonstration.

Rather than that the guest of a club, of which I am a member, should come to harm under its roof, I decided—should every other means fail—to make known to the police the whole story of my connection with the syndicate.

What was not so easy was the substitution of my musical box for the infernal machine with which Hubbock had promised to replace the original gong.

While the rest of the members were in the reception chamber waiting the arrival of the prince, I made my way to the dining-room, with the gong which I had procured in Geneva under my cloak, and under pretense of looking where my seat was placed, began to examine the tables.

As the waiters were coming and going the whole time, no opportunity offered for making the exchange, finding which,

I determined to take the bull by the horns; so boldly walking to the head of the table, I lifted the gong, and began turning it round and round, as if curious to learn the mechanism.

I was present also next morning at the meeting, when Hubbock had hoped to receive the congratulations of his fellow-conspirators.

To have to report utter, if unaccountable failure was humiliating enough; but the smiling incredulity with which Number Two refused to accept any other explanation than that Hubbock had become flurried, and in his haste had placed the wrong machine on the table, added immeasurably to the poor man's wrath.

He might as well have talked to a brick wall. "My good Hubbock, my excellent Hubbock, it is quite unnecessary for you to excite yourself about the matter," said Number Two, smiling imperturbably.

"I tell you I didn't muddle the thing," roared the unhappy Hubbock, with tears of vexation in his eyes.

"Stop a moment," interposed Number Six. "It is easy enough for Mr. Hubbock to prove himself right if he is right. When he changed the gongs, he kept one of them. Where is it? There were only two gongs, and if the one our friend here put on the table was an infernal machine, the other one plays 'God Bless the Prince of Wales.' Let's have a look at the thing, and Mr. Hubbock can prove that he's right, straight off."

"Yes," said Hubbock, almost crying openly now; "but that's just what I can't prove. After I had made the exchange, and as soon as the dinner was far enough advanced for me to slip away unnoticed, I left the club—I needn't say that I didn't want to wait for the explosion. I cleared out, and took the other gong—the musical box—with me. I meant to have kept it as a memento; but when I thought what a hullabaloo there'd be after the explosion, and the death of the prince, and that every one who was known to have been in the place would come under suspicion, I thought I'd better not run the risk of having the thing found on me, so I went along the Thames embankment, and dropped it gently over into the water. So I can't prove that I'm right. All the same, I'll swear that the gong I set upon the table was an infernal machine, though I can't get Mr. Hall to believe me."

"My good and estimable Hubbock," smiled Number Two, "I've never known you to make a mistake. But you have made one now, and you'd better recognize the fact, and not distress yourself unnecessarily. The gong you put upon the table not only didn't go off, but it actually played 'God Bless the Prince of Wales.' The papers are full of it this morning, though the whole contemptible business of a two-penny-halfpenny musical box seems a tin-pot thing to me, for the club and the papers to gush about. But your gong didn't have a musical box inside it, as well as a bomb, so, as I say, you must have put the wrong one on the table."

"No, I'll be damned if I did," vociferated the angry Hubbock, positively dancing round the room in his exasperation.

"In that case you did do it, for you'll certainly be damned," laughed Number Two. "You make yourself easy on that score, my friend. And I don't think it will be altogether on account of a musical-box."

CHAPTER XXIII.

HOW THE POLICE DISCOVERED A HAREM IN THE HEART OF ENGLAND.

It was a windy day, and as Number Two spoke we distinctly heard the gate at the end of the garden blow to with a bang.

"Who's that, I wonder?" said the chief. "I latched the gate myself just now very carefully. Some one must have opened it."

He rose as he spoke, and crossing to the side that faced the garden, put his eye to one of the many spy-holes that he and Hubbock had made.

"I don't like the look of this, boys," he said. "There's a man coming up the path who looks and walks uncommonly like a plain-clothes policeman. And what makes the thing all the more fishy is that there's another hiding behind the hedge outside, as if on guard. Ah! there's the knock."

Sure enough an authoritative "rat-tat-tat-tat-tat" told us that some one was making free with the knocker on the door below.

"What had we better do, Hubbock?" asked the chief, looking anxiously at his factotum.

"Let them knock, I think," was the answer. "They'll think there's no one at home. And even if they effect an entry and search the house, they'll never find us here."

"Perhaps you're right," replied Number Two, more nervously than he was wont, as the visitor below began to ring the changes with a series of sounding single blows that reminded one of a blacksmith playing his hammer upon an anvil.

"He's playing 'Rule Britannia' on it now," said Number Six, with an uneasy laugh. "I suppose you don't know anything about this caller, Mr. Hall? You were mightily sure about our being safe here, and about the police thinking you to be a respectable resident, and nothing's happened since to change their opinion. I can't think of you, that you'd play us false."

Hall's reply was to take a revolver from his pocket, and to offer it, but forward, to the speaker. "It is loaded in the six chambers," he said. "Keep it, and if I give you cause by as much as a finger stir to suspect that I'm in league with the police, blow my brains out where I stand."

"I ask your pardon for fearing for the moment that you'd rounded on your pals," said the fellow, not without dignity, "and I'm quite satisfied. Keep your shooting irons, Mr. Hall. You may have need of them, and I've got a brace of my own in my pocket if they're wanted."

The knocking ceased, and was replaced by a low whistle. At a signal from Number Two, Hubbock crossed to the spy-hole and looked out.

"I thought so," he said. "The man outside the gate is coming up the



WE SAT, AS IF FROZEN.

path. That's what the whistle meant. I fancy they're going to break in."

"They're all fastened," said Hubbock, "and they won't get in that way. Listen! they're breaking a window. Ah, now they're in. I hear their footsteps and voices in the hall. They're searching the ground-floor rooms, I expect."

"Keep still, every man of you," whispered Number Two sternly. "You three and Hubbock and I are the only living souls who know about this room. What cause the police have for suspecting me, and what they've come for, I can't think. But, whatever they have got to know, they don't know about this room, and if we keep perfectly still, the chances are, after they've satisfied themselves that no one is in the house, that they'll go away again. And if they do find us out, and it comes to fighting, so much the worse for them. We're five to two, and after all the risks we've run, we're not going to be taken by a couple of Tarborough bobbies."

"They're coming upstairs now, sir," interpolated Hubbock warningly. "We must be very quiet when they're in your room below, for I believe I left the cupboard door open, and when that's so, the sound of what is being said or done in that room comes up surprisingly clear. Number Seven, you're nearest to the trapdoor that opens into the cupboard. Would you mind standing on it, in case they should happen to try if it pushed up?"

I tiptoed to the spot indicated, and took up my position as desired. The next moment we heard the two searchers enter the room below.

"This is the last room, Stocker," said a voice, "and now I think we've pretty well satisfied ourselves that no one is in the house. All the same, we're sure of our man, I think. Mr. Hall is a gentleman—every one knows that—and directly he hears who the villain is that he's been employing as a servant, and what he's wanted for, he'll be only too glad to assist us to make the arrest."

"There can't be any doubt about that, sergeant," was the reply, "and lucky for him too that he hasn't been murdered in his bed before this with that fellow about the place. How so pleasant-spoken a gentleman as Mr. Hall could a-got imposed upon to take such a devil in his service I can't think. A forged character done it, I expect. That Hubbock 'd stick at nothing. Fancy him being the man who is wanted for those murders, and all the country a-wondering who it was as done it, and crying out against the police for not finding out. This ought to mean promotion for you, sergeant, when you've made the arrest, and I shouldn't be surprised if Mr. Hall came down with something handsome as well."

An exclamation from the sergeant checked the voluble Stocker.

"Some one's been a-writing in this room, and not very long ago," explained the officer excitedly. "The blot on this sheet of paper ain't dry. See, I can smear it easy with my finger. I don't like the look of this, Stocker."

"No more don't I, sergeant," was the answer.

"It's very suspicious about those two doors both being fastened on the inside. The windows was all bolted, too, as we know, because we tried 'em. And if the doors was fastened on the inside and the windows too, it looks as if them as fastened 'em must be in the house too. Ay, Stocker?"

"It does that, sir," acquiesced the admiring Stocker. "By Jiggins, what a headpiece you've got!"

"Stocker, I'm going to see this thing through—that's what I'm going to do. Hush! what's that?"

"Cistern in the roof a-gurgling, I think, sir. That's what it sounded like."

"Perhaps so. Why, there it is again. It is a most extraordinary noise!"

It certainly was. Even to us over-head who saw it coming—if one may be permitted to speak of "seeing" a noise come—and knew to what it was attributable, the sound seemed weird and unearthly; but to those who heard the noise without knowing its origin, the effect must have been mysterious in the extreme. The day was, as I have already said, windy, and when Hubbock's eye was applied to the open spy-hole in the roof, it was apparently "struck by a squall." So at least we assumed from the red and watery aspect which the organ in question presented when he returned to his seat. That, however, was an infliction which the rest of us could have borne with becoming resignation; but when certain hideous distortions of the patient's face apprised us of the approach of a seizure which we hoped at first might mean only sudden death or a fit, but which we were alarmed to see developing into a sneeze, we felt that the situation was becoming—in a diplomatic sense—strained. With admirable presence of mind the nearest man to Hubbock handed him a handkerchief to put to his nostrils in place of that which the sufferer had already stuffed into his mouth. Then—like brave men who, having done their best and failed, sit down to wait death calmly—we sat and waited for that sneeze. It was a long time coming. At first it seemed so long that Hope told a flattering tale, and we began—all except Hubbock, who still had the handkerchief stuffed in his mouth—to breathe again. That he should breathe again was a matter of only secondary importance, and had he then and there had the decency and consideration silently to give up the ghost, he would assuredly have carried our good wishes with him wherever he may have gone. But Hubbock's breath, so far as passing away in a last low sigh, seemed, as we watched, to swell up suddenly within him. His cheeks became hideously distended, the spaces about his now protruding eyes puffed up like blown bladders. With a great effort he lunched his straining shoulders toadwise, to his ears, and then—no, I cannot describe it. I got so far as to try to spell it phonetically, but when I saw the unholy thing which I had thoughtlessly called into existence, I tore the paper into fragments and then chewed them into a pulp that no other eye but mine might look upon it again.

As the sound died away, we sat, as if frozen into dreadful silence, staring at Hubbock with eyes of horror and reproach; but when we saw by his fixed, upward-turned and prayerful eyes, dropped jaw and outstretched, imploring hand that a second seizure was impending, we quailed as the soldier in the trenches quails before the coming shell.

[To Be Continued.]

A Poet's Pastime.

It was not only as a boy that Wordsworth, "Shod with steel, hissed along the polished ice."

He was a skater of skill in his manhood. "A girl skater; noan better in these parts," was the testimony of a Dales man, quoted by Canon Rawnsley in his "Lake Country Sketches."

On one occasion the poet went by himself to figure a bit upon the White Moss Tarn, and a man sent a boy to sweep the snow from the ice for him. When the boy returned from his labor the man asked:

"Well, did Mr. Wordsworth gie ye owt?"

"Nay," rejoined the boy with a grin of content from ear to ear. "I seed him tumble, tho'!"

But the lad, who had thought the tumble a fair equivalent for a tip, had been much impressed by the quiet way in which Wordsworth had borne his fall. His skate caught in a stone when he was in full swing, and he came down with a crash.

"He didn't swear nor say nowt," said the boy, "but he just sot up 'an said, 'Eh, boy, that was a bad fall, wasn't it?'"

Alphabetically Answered.

A turn of the political wheel had placed the English conservatives on top and lowered the liberals.

Not long afterward a young and presumptuous member of the ruling government, who was sitting opposite a member of the defeated party at a London dinner-party, took that time to say:

"Well, Mr. Blank, how do you like being an ex?"

"I should like it better if we had been succeeded by the y's" (wise), instantly retorted the liberal.—Youth's Companion.

From Small Beginnings.

Some great men have sprung from small beginnings, even as the great oak sprang from an acorn, but no boy ever became a great, or even a successful man who did not nurse a good sized bump of ambition. It is all very well to start in as a call boy, but unless you have an unquenchable desire to push the buttons rather than answer them, your name will never illumine the scroll of the immortals.—From "Vest Pocket Confidences" in Four-Track News.

WESTERN CANADA HAS AN EXCELLENT CLIMATE.

The Saskatchewan Valley Very Highly Favored.

An interesting feature of Western Canada is its climate. Those who have made a study of it speak highly of it. The Canadian Government Agents are sending out an Atlas, and at the same time giving valuable information concerning railway rates, etc., to those interested in the country. As has been said, the climate is excellent. The elevation of this part of Canada is about 1,800 feet above the sea, about twice that of the average for Minnesota. It is a very desirable altitude. The country has a very equable climate, taking the seasons through. The winters are bright and the summers are pleasantly warm. R. F. Stupart, director of the meteorological service for Canada, says:

"The salient features of the climate of the Canadian northwest territories are a clear, bracing atmosphere during the greater part of the year, and a medium rainfall and snowfall. The mean temperature for July at Winnipeg is 66, and Prince Albert 62. The former temperature is higher than at any part of England, and the latter is very similar to that found in many parts of the southern countries."

At Prince Albert the average daily maximum in July is 76 and the minimum 48. Owing to this high day temperature with much sunshine, the crops come to maturity quickly.

Moisture is ample in the Saskatchewan valley, being about 18 inches annually. It is notable that about 75 per cent. of the moisture falls during the crop months. Thus, Western Canada gets as much moisture when it is needed and with several hours more sunshine daily than land further south gets during the growing season. It is not difficult to understand why crops mature quickly and yield bountifully.

Winter ends quickly, sowing is done during April and sometimes in March. Harvest comes in August, about the middle. Cyclones, blizzards, dust and sand storms are unknown.

Evening It Up.

Towne—Hear what Snifflins did when the collection plate came round to him in church last Sunday? Brown—No. Dropped a button in, I suppose. "Not even that. He leaned over and whispered: 'I paid the pastor's fare in the car yesterday morning. We'll call it square.'"—Philadelphia Press.

CUTICURA OINTMENT

The World's Greatest Skin Cure and Sweetest Emollient—Positively Unrivalled.

Cuticura Ointment is beyond question the most successful curative for torturing, disfiguring humors of the skin and scalp, including loss of hair, ever compounded, in proof of which a single anointing with it, preceded by a hot bath with Cuticura Soap, and followed in the severer cases by a dose of Cuticura Resolvent Pills, is often sufficient to afford immediate relief in the most distressing forms of itching, burning and scaly humors, permits rest and sleep, and points to a speedy cure when all else fails. It is especially so in the treatment of infants and children, speedily soothing and healing the most distressing cases.

Geographical Changes.

"I don't see any use in having wars in this advanced age," remarked Mrs. Suburba, turning up the lamp.

"If you were a mapmaker," replied Mr. Suburba, glancing up from the new atlas on his knees, "you probably would"—Cincinnati Times-Star.

The Editor of the Rural New Yorker from whom there is no better Potato Expert in the country says: "Salzer's Earliest Potato is the earliest of 38 earliest sorts, tried by me, yielding 461 bushels per acre." Salzer's Early Wisconsin yielded for the Rural New Yorker 736 bushels per acre. Now Salzer has heavier yielding varieties than above. See Salzer's catalog.

JUST SEND 10c IN STAMPS and this notice to the John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis., and receive lots of farm seed samples and their big catalog, which is brim full of rare things for the gardener and farmer, easily worth \$100.00 to every wide-awake farmer.

It describes Salzer's Teosinte, yielding 160,000 lbs. per acre, of rich green fodder; Salzer's Victoria Rape, yielding 60,000 lbs. of sheep and hog food per acre, together with Salzer's New National Oats, which has a record of 300 bu. per acre in 30 States, so also full description of Alfalfa Clover, Giant Incarnat Clover, Alsike, Timothy and thousands of other Fodder Plants, Grasses, Wheat, Speltz, Barleys, etc. [K. L.]

Encouraging Sign.

First Boy—Do you think your father will let your sister marry Mr. Come-offen, Johnny? Second Boy—O, yes; I know he will. Pa keeps our dog tied up every night, now.—Stray Stories.

Ladies Can Wear Shoes

One size smaller after using Allen's Foot-Ease. A certain cure for swollen, sweating, hot, aching feet. At all druggists, 25c. Accept no substitute. Trial package FREE. Address A. S. Olmsted, Le Roy, N. Y.

An Explanation.

"I wasn't always in this condition," said the ossified man in the dime museum. "How did it happen?" asked the obese lady.

"A girl once gave me the marble heart and it spread," exclaimed the hardened freak.—Chicago Daily News.

Hoxsie's Croup Cure, cures Baby's Croup, Mother's Cough, Father's Pneumonia and Grandma's Bronchitis. No opiates. All druggists, 50 cts.

Automobile Dealer—"This machine we guarantee can be stopped in three lengths, going at full speed." Prospective Purchaser—"Um-m-m! Which side up?"—Town and Country.

Stops the Cough and works off the cold. Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. Price 25 cents.

Fit yourself for the best society—and then keep out of it.—Phidistine.

Do not believe Piso's Cure for Consumption has an equal for coughs and colds.—J. F. Boyer, Trinity Springs, Ind., Feb. 15, 1890

It is a good deal easier to drop into a rut than to rise out of it.—Ram's Horn.

Putnam Fadeless Dyes color Silk, Wool and Cotton at one boiling.

Does the clam fritter its time away?—Philadelphia Record.

A Mastinating Wooer.

"It is with faltering penmanship that I write to have communication with you about the prospective condition of your damsel offspring. For some remote time past a secret passion has firing in your bosom internally with loving for your daughter."

So begins the letter of a love-stricken Babu. The writer continues: "My educational capabilities have abandoned me and here I now cling to those lovely long tresses of your much coveted daughter like a mariner shipwrecked on the rock of love. As to my scholastic caliber, I was recently rejected from the Rangoon college, and I am now mastinating."—Penang Gazette.

Teosinte and Billion Dollar Grass.

The two greatest fodder plants on earth, one good for 14 tons hay and the other 80 tons green fodder per acre. Grows everywhere, so does Victoria Rape, yielding 60,000 lbs. sheep and swine food per acre. [K. L.]

JUST SEND 10c IN STAMPS to the John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis., and receive in return their big catalog and lots of farm seed samples.

Husband—Does Jack know Miss Peppertree? Wife (calmly)—I believe not, for he has asked her to marry him.—Town and Country.

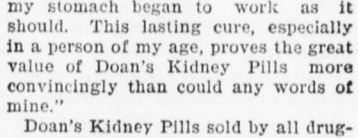
EIGHT YEARS OF TORTURE.

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Sold throughout the world. Cuticura Resolvent, 25c. (in form of Chocolate Coated Pills, 25c. per box of 100). Ointment, 25c. Soap, 25c. London, 27, Charterhouse Sq.; Paris, 5 Rue de la Paix; Boston, 137 Columbia St.; New York, 150 Nassau St.; Philadelphia, 122 Arch St.; San Francisco, 109 Montgomery St.