THE SILVER LOCKET.

CHAPTER I.

AM a plain-clothes officer, James Dryland by name, age 35, married. If it had not been for the deepness of Sigismund Hannay I should have been still a bachelor. Of course Sigismund Hannay was only indirectly concerned in my marriage, but undoubtedly if it had not been for him I should have been still a bachelor.

It came about, you see, in this way: I had been 13 years in the police, I had served as a constable, I had served as a sergeant, there was nothing against me. I was a plain-clothes officer at last, and on my promotion I had hoped to marry. Annie—that's my wife—was a nice girl, an only child, and a bit above me, I own it; but I had walked out with Annie since she was 17, that's five years ago, so you see she is quite a young thing, now only 23. Annie's old father was very proud of her, proud of her good looks, proud of her education, which, as I said, is above mine, and proud of her having been left £1,000, which he had the use of for his life, but which on his death came to Annie.

Annie, then, was an heiress in a small way. Annie's father, old Day, lived in a little house in Hoxton. Five years ago I walked past it when I was looking for fresh lodgings. It seemed very neat and clean, and in the window was a card, "Lodgings for a respectable single man." I am a single man, said I, the place will suit me—just suit me. I knocked, the door was opened. Annie appeared; I asked to see the lodgings. Instead of showing them to me she said: "You can see father." I saw father. Old Day was sitting by the fire, his legs wrapped up in a rug.

"Good day," says he.

"Morning," says I, and I began asking about his lodgings. But he never answered me one word.

"Are you respectable?"

"Of course I am," says I.

"What are you?"

"An officer," says I.

"Sheriff's officer?" with a grin. "Won't do," says he.

"No, police," said I, indignant-like.

"That's better. But," said he, with a sort of reckon-you-up look, "how about respectability, though?"

"You can ask my inspector," said I; "he's in of a morning till noon."

"Won't do—it isn't good enough."

"Good morning," says I, getting up, and feeling very riled with the old fellow.

"Sit still—I mean it isn't good enough for me; I can't go to him. I'm only half a man; my lower half wrong. Can you do for yourself, policeman?" said the old man.

"No objection to," said I; and after some ten minutes' talking it was arranged that I was to see the rooms, and if I liked them I could have them very cheap; all he wanted was protection for himself and his daughter. "I can't stand women," said he, "and you can take the girl out a bit now and then."

I opened my eyes, but the old man meant no harm; I was a policeman, that was enough for him, and he didn't consider that policemen have hearts. We settled it. I saw the rooms, my inspector was to call round and speak for me. He did call, and he satisfied old Day. I went to live at Hoxton. I did as he suggested. I took the girl out now and then. I was a steady man, she was a steady girl; no harm came of it—why should there? But we fell in love. I spoke to the old man.

"Jim," said he, "it can't be done. You're but a common policeman, my girl will have some money, and it can't be, Jim."

This was the first I'd heard of money. I pleaded; all no use. Annie pleaded; all no use. Next day the old man called me into his parlor; there he sat all day, like an old toad in a tree; he never moved—he couldn't, poor old chap!

"Sit down," says he. "Jim, I've thought it over," and then he told me of the thousand pounds. "Now," says he, "I'm a cripple, Jim, and I can't part with my girl, and she won't get the money till I'm dead. There is one way; stay on where you are, Jim, go on as you are, and when you've earned £500, why, take my girl; stay on here with me, and when I'm gone she shall have the money—£1,000. It's a fair offer, Jim; what do you say?"

What could I say? I was worth something under £50 at that time; how could I earn £500?

"It's to take or to leave," said old Day.

"I agree," said I. Not that I had any idea I should ever get £500 together, but I didn't like to leave Annie.

"You won't mention it to Annie, Jim?"

"Not I," said I.

He slapped his hand into mine, and he lit his pipe; he never said another word on the subject again. Things went on as they had done. I used to see Annie about, and take my walks with her, and I used to read the paper of an evening to the old man, just as usual. He always used to make me begin with the agony column.

One night I sat prepared to commence reading to him.

"Anything in my way?" said he. He meant the agonies.

"Nothing," said I.

"Anything in your way, Jim?" He meant the rewards for lost property, criminals, and such like.

"Only Sigismund Hannay," said I.

"Who's he?" said old Day.

Now I hadn't read the continual advertisements about Sigismund Hannay to him, for when a big reward was offered he would put down his pipe with an irritating way he had, and grinning at me say—

"That's a nice little sum, Jim Dryland, why don't you earn it?"

I began, "Five hundred pounds reward."

"That's the exact sum, Jim Dryland," says he; "why don't you earn it?"

I didn't answer him, I was too much disgusted. I read the advertisement. No need to read it, I knew it by heart. I know it by heart now. This is what it was:—

FIVE HUNDRED POUNDS REWARD.

"Wanted, Sigismund Hannay, who has absconded, taking with him the following securities" (here followed a long list of bonds that the criminal had taken with him.) "A percentage will be paid in addition upon all the securities recovered.

"Sigismund Hannay, a native of Saxony, is 5 feet 10 inches high, stoops a little, speaks English fluently, with a slight German accent; when much excited his right eyelid droops slightly. Had on when last seen shepherd's plaid trousers, a cutaway coat and vest of black diagonal cloth, plain gold shirt studs, a tall hat with a black mourning band, Edwards maker; brown merino socks, and light Oxonian shoes. He has curly chestnut hair, blue eyes, slight mustache, and beard same color; is of pleasing personal appearance and manners. All communications to Inspector Roberts, Scotland Yard."

"Read it again, Jim."

I read it again; old Day never said one word. I read the paper through to him. When I'd finished, and risen to bid him good night, he said:

"Read it again, Jim."

"Read what?" said I.

"About him," said the old man.

I knew very well what he meant. "If I were a young man, Jim Dryland; if I had my sweetheart's happiness and my own happiness depending on it, I'd find Sigismund Hannay, leastways I'd try to." That's what he meant.

He wished me good night, just as he always did. Annie shook hands; I just squeezed hers.

And I went to bed, to dream, as I had dreamt for some time, of Sigismund Hannay, the native of Saxony, five feet ten inches high, etc. I had been to Scotland Yard, and I had seen Inspector Roberts. He told me it was a city case, not in my way at all. I was mostly concerned in other things, and the Inspector showed me Hannay's portrait.

There he sat, the man who was worth £500 to me, and more, perhaps. Of course it wasn't likely that I should be put on to the trapping of Sigismund Hannay—not likely. I had my own regular work. Still I heard all there was to hear about him. That was not much. There was not the slightest clew to Hannay or the securities.

Old Day had been in his time an attendant at a private madhouse—what you call a keeper, you know—and many a curious yarn he could tell of those madhouses, and the goings on in the old days; but now he said it was all changed, all fair and square, and straightforward.

Some 20 years before, Day had been sent to a special job; he was attendant to the insane son of a man of rank; he stayed there, married a servant in the family, and when the patient died, out of gratitude for the care he took of his son, the gentleman settled £1,000 on old Day. Old Day lived on that £50 a year, and his savings. Mrs. Day died, and the old fellow, being alone with his girl, took me to live with them as watchdog, as I have related. Now old Day had one great friend, old Stewart. Old Stewart was an attendant at a large private asylum in the environs of London. Whenever old Stewart had an hour or two to spare, he would come and sit and smoke with his old comrade Day—he was very fond of old

The Old Man Sat Before the Fire, His Legs Rolled Up in a Blanket.

Day, he was, very fond; but he was also fond of Annie, and he was 50 if he was a day. I didn't like old Stewart, but I took care not to show it, and I took care not to seem jealous of him, but I was, for all that.

In those days I used to study French. I thought it might get me on in the force, and I worked hard at it. I sat poring over my grammar in old Day's room, when who should come in but Stewart. I wished him good evening, but I returned to my work, and, elbows on the table, I ground away at my verbs.

I thought of Stewart and Annie. Stewart's presence seemed to annoy me. I could not concentrate my attention; involuntarily I began to listen to their talk, as usual about the "establishment," as they called it.

"New boarder yesterday," said Stewart—they never called them madmen, but "boarders."

"Bad case?" said old Day.

"Um," said Stewart; "curious case; he beats me, the fellow does. I've been on asylum work, man and boy, this 33 year, and he's the first boarder I ever see as liked it—and he does, he likes it."

"Likes it," said old Day as if he was being chafed; "you don't say that?"

"I do, though," said Stewart; "that's just it, he likes it! There weren't no fuss at all when 'the Winker' comes in." (I noticed they mostly had nicknames for their patients which they used among themselves.) "'I think I'll go to bed at once,' says he, quite quiet like. 'I think I'll go to bed at once. Are you a keeper?' says he. 'Show me my room.' 'I'm an attendant, sir,' says I. 'All the same,' says he, and tips me a little wink. I marches him off into one of our doubles,* as per usual. 'I'll valet you, sir,' says I. 'You can go,' says he, cool as a cucumber, tipping me another wink, however, there I stood, a-waiting on him; and feeling of each of his pockets for knives and such like. I leaves him his watch, and I leaves him his money till I gets my orders, and as he jumps into bed, without a-saying of his prayers, says I to myself, 'You won't be here long, young fellow.'

"What are you taking my clothes for?"

"Taking to brush," says I.

"Just so," says he with another wink—that cool he took me aback. "Good night," says he.

"Good night, sir," says I.

"And five minutes after, when I come back, he was as sound as a house."

"Rum case," said Day.

"I believe you," said old Stewart. "I goes in to the doctor for my instructions." "Safe in bed, sir," says I.

"Very good," says he.

"I suppose I'd better sleep in this room, sir?"

"Oh, no! quite needless!" said he, taking me all of a heap; "he's a chronic case."

"About his things, sir," said I.

"Oh, he can retain them," said he, in his stand-off way. "You might have knocked me down with a feather, Day."

I heard no more; I didn't listen; their talk didn't interest me. Stewart left after supper.

Many of these chats took place between Day and Stewart of an evening. Gradually I dropped into their conversation unawares; there was no secrecy; the two men seemed at loggerheads about one of the patients. Stewart stoutly maintained that one of the "boarders" at Selby House was sane. Old Day laughed at him.

"One would think we were in the old times, Stewart. And the man attempts no escape, and seems comfortable, and is sane—posh!"

"The Winker's as sane as I am, Jack," sulkily asserted Stewart, "and what's more, the doctor and the 'prop' had words about him the other day."

By the "prop" he meant the proprietor, who was not a doctor at all, as he had told us. The two old fellows wrangled over the pros and cons of the matter till supper time.

"By the way, I found a locket, Annie, today," said Stewart to my Annie. I didn't like his calling her Annie, but he was an old man and presumed on it.

"Would you like to see it?" She nodded, and he drew from his pocket a battered silver locket. In it were two colored portraits, an old lady with little old-fashioned curls at her temples on one side, the portrait of a handsome boy with curling hair on the other. I looked at him with interest; I seemed to have seen his face before, but couldn't recall it.

"It won't be long before its claimed," said Stewart, "and that find will not be worth much to me. I expect it belongs to one of our boarders. What's it worth, sergeant?" said he, passing it to me.

"A matter of 5 shillings, I should say," weighing it in my palm. And I noticed that on each side was a worn monogram—M. S. V. on one side, H. S. on the other. Stewart put the old locket in his pocket and, supper over, took his leave.

I soon went to my bed, but not to sleep. The £500 reward didn't give me much chance of that. Wanted, Sigismund Hannay. His defrauded employers couldn't want their bonds more than I wanted Sigismund Hannay and the £500 which depended on his capture. I slept at last, to dream that I had captured him on an iceberg in the Polar seas, and I woke shivering, to find that my struggles with the visionary culprit had ended in my kicking off my bed-clothes, which accounted for the Arctic regions.

I used to go down to the head office to see what was doing occasionally, and among the many photos of the wanted ones I again saw the comely features of Sigismund Hannay. I gazed on his face with rapt attention; in my mind's eye I filled in the details which the photo failed to give—the chestnut hair, the blue eyes. "I shall know you when I see you, my friend," said I to myself. Stay, there was a something almost familiar about the photograph—a something that seemed familiar; but I said to myself that I had so often looked with longing eyes at this photograph that it doubtless seemed an old acquaintance. No, Sigismund Hannay had surely ere this cleared out of England; doubtless the United States—the longed-for bourne of the hunted English criminal—had been reached, and Sigismund Hannay and his bonds were beyond even the long arm of the London police.

Next evening Stewart came in again. We played a rubber, Annie and I against the two old men, then we sat down to supper. After supper Stewart told us that he had found the owner of the locket. "And he's a mean hound, is 'the Winker;' he says he'll give half a crown for it, and it's worth a crown to melt, isn't it, sergeant?" said he, tossing it across the table to me.

"I'll get you more than a crown for it," said. "It's worth three half-crowns as old silver; why it's thick and heavy—very heavy."

"Keep it, and see what you can get for it, sergeant," said Stewart. "He's a mean hound; I wouldn't care if it was one of the other boarders, poor chaps, they haven't any cash save an odd shilling or so, while 'the Winker,' he's piles, piles; notes, too, as I'm a living man! What did I tell you? there's a screw loose somewhere, Day; there's some game on. When did you ever see a boarder, Jack Day, with his pocketbook full of notes?—notes, Jack. When did you ever see a boarder as slep' his first night alone? Alone, Jack Day!" cried the excited man.

"Why do you call him 'the Winker,' Stewart?" I asked.

"It's a rule we have; none of the boarders' names are ever mentioned off the premises; it's a fine—five bob:"

"But what is his name?" said I.

"Hoffmann," said Stewart.

"Stewart!" cried old Day.

"Well," apologized Stewart, "the sergeant is one of us, or nearly so; but as for 'the Winker' ——"

"You haven't told me why you call him 'the Winker,'" persisted I.

"Because he was always a-winking the day he came in; he seldom does it now, only when he's riled; he did wink, though, over the old locket; he made an awful fuss over it, and the 'prop' says it must be found. Found be hanged, say I; that Winker is a mean hound.'

By this time Stewart had had quite enough; he bade us goodnight and went away.

I forgot the locket next day. When at the Scotland Yard office I felt it in my pocket, and I remembered that I had promised to ascertain its value. I opened it out of curiosity; there was the old lady—a fine old lady; there was the youth—a handsome youth. I was going to close the locket. Stay, there is something familiar about that handsome face, that curly chestnut hair, those blue eyes—can it be——? My hand closes on the locket with a convulsive clutch, I feel faint like and sit down. Then I walk up to the portraits of the 'Wanted.' There they are—the hang-dog, villainous men, the low-browed, scowling women, thief and ruffian written on all their faces. From all stands out in smiling comeliness Sigismund Hannay, the bright young German. It is very like him! it is—it must be he! Taken, perhaps, some years ago, the boy of the locket would become the celebrity of the criminal portrait gallery.

I returned home and carefully examined the locket; I took out the likenesses; both were cut from ordinary cartes de visite and colored; on the back of the youth's is the photographer's address—Sachsen (Saxony). It is almost enough. I carefully replace them and close the locket with a snap. H. S. on the nameplate, why not S. H.? They are merely intertwined letters. It is enough! I have found him!

CHAPTER II.

I said I had found him. I thought I had, but between seeing the clew, or rather thinking you see it, and catching your man, there is a great distance. Here is the position, if my theory is correct. Sigismund Hannay, under the alias of Mr. Hoffmann, is incarcerated under false pretenses, to which he is probably a consenting party, in Selby House.

A Remarkable Discovery.

Who are his accomplices? All the sane inhabitants of Selby House? That is unlikely, with a reward of £500 on his head. It is some years ago that the occurrences I am narrating happened. Now, Sigismund Hannay would have smiled on the British public from a board outside every police station. Then the only portrait of Sigismund Hannay was that in the office in Scotland Yard—and perhaps the one in the locket in my hand. Consequently, the keepers in Selby House need not be the accomplices of Sigismund Hannay. There remain the resident proprietor and the doctor. I remembered Stewart's saying "the doctor and the 'prop' had words about him the other day." Then his banknotes. Who ever heard of a lunatic with banknotes, except, perhaps, those of the Bank of Elegance? But then, if he had these notes and the piles of money Stewart talked of, why didn't he offer more for the old locket he wanted back, and that the proprietor had said must be found?

He was afraid to offer much, and so attract attention to himself.

If he were insane, why, when Stewart put him in a double-bedded room, as was the custom at Selby House, did he sleep alone? If he were a sane man, and it seemed Stewart had no doubt of it, why didn't he try to escape? Because he didn't want to. The only person, then, really in the secret, might be the proprietor, the doctor being merely mystified, and possibly in doubt; for Sigismund Hannay, if it were he, could only have been placed in the asylum on the certificate of two medical men and a friend or relative. Were the two medical men and the friend or relative accomplices? Not necessarily; Sigismund Hannay might have deceived them; he might have shammed mad. Or—though this was an unlikely theory—Sigismund Hanny, incarcerated as Hoffmann, might be really mad. Or, Hoffmann might not be Hannay at all. Alas! a very possible solution.

But then, the nickname "the Winker." Why did Hannay or Hoffmann wink continually the first day, or rather evening, of his arrival at Selby House? If insane and Hoffman, because he was under great excitement at his incarceration. If sane and Hannay, because he was excited at the thought of pursuit, or feared the other inmates—a very natural fear. Why did the winking pass off? In either case, because the excitement had ceased. Why did it suddenly return on the loss of the locket? Because again there was cause for excitement. Did "the Winker," Hannay or Hoffmann, as the case might be, wink with his right eye, his left eye, or both? Only to be determined by seeing him wink. It would not do to arouse Stewart's suspicions by more questions. If he drops his right eyelid, he is probably, or rather possibly, Hannay; if the left or both, certainly not. How to ascertain?

Only by seeing him.

How to see him?

Only by entering Selby House. I cogitated. If I attempted an entrance by stratagem or ruse, and were detected as an impostor the first time, there could be no second attempt. Weighing all these things in my mind, hurriedly I am afraid, for the fear was ever before me that, even were my theory right that Hoffmann was Sigismund Hannay, hidden in Selby House by some artful conspiracy, yet I might not be first in the field. Stewart might see the advertisement, and might guess, as I had done, that Hannay was the supposed lunatic. Time then pressed. Stewart might at any time give information and forestall me; that he had suspicions of foul play of some sort I was certain. I must act at once. I went into Inspector Roberts' office, I saw him, alone. I asked for a week's leave—I, who had never taken a day, save when on two occasions off duty on account of health.

"Your application can go in," said he.

I demurred. I wanted it then, that moment.

"Is it a family bereavement?"

"No, not a bereavement."

"Quite impossible, then; against all rules,"

"Inspector, I may lose my sweetheart if you don't give it me," said I.

"Speak plainly, my man; if I can strain a point I will, but speak plainly."

I did not hesitate. I told him of Day's bargain with me, and—here my voice sank to a whisper—"I think I have a clew to him," I said, and I pointed to the bill offering £500 for Hannay, which was fastened with others by tin tacks to the wall behind the inspector.

"Sergeant Dryland," said the inspector, "this is no matter for trifling. Are you quite serious?"

I assured him of my seriousness.

"You are a young and comparatively inexperienced officer," said the inspector; "I

A Satisfactory Interview With the Doctor.

will associate someone with you——." He stretched his hand toward his bell.

"Inspector Roberts!" I said, with a gasp, "I should lose the reward—and I honestly believe I can put my hand on Sigismund Hannay in 48 hours."

The Inspector paused. "It's a great responsibility, Sergeant Dryland," said he, "a great responsibility. I'm an Inspector of police, but I feel for you—don't disappoint me," he said. As he spoke he raised the lid of his desk, and without a word he placed in my hands a pair of light steel handcuffs.

"On my own responsibility," he said, "I give you 60 hours' leave, Sergeant Dryland. Don't, don't dissapoint me." I thanked him, and putting the handcuffs in my pocket, left his office.

As I walked down the stairs I felt that the Inspector had trusted me, and that I must not abuse his confidence. Unless I succeeded in clapping those neat handcuffs of his on Sigismund Hannay, I never could hold up my head again. The die was cast, and I had staked my all upon the throw.

I reconnoitered Selby House; it was in Chelsea—a high wall—nothing remarkable—a big, old-fashioned house; on the door was a very small plate, Mr. Blank, the proprietor's name. Another smaller door at the side of the house with a bell-handle and the old-fashioned bell in an iron cage, as was once common in big suburban houses; on this door was written in staring white letters, "Servants' entrance." In the door was a small grating with an inner shutter. I rang the bell; the shutter opened; I saw the face of an old man. "Can I see Mr. Stewart, an attendant here?"

"What's your business?"

"Merely a friendly call; name of Dryland, please."

"I'll see."

The shutter closed with a snap. I waited patiently five minutes, ten minutes; as I raised my hand, my patience being exhausted, to ring the bell a second time, the door noiselessly and suddenly opened, and Stewart, bareheaded, stood before me.

"Nothing wrong, I hope," said he, holding the handle of the door in his hand; "nothing wrong, I hope?"

"No, nothing with them at Hoxton—nothing. Can you give me a few minutes?"

"Step inside," said he. "I can't leave the house; I'm on duty."

Nothing could have happened more opportunely if I had planned it; Stewart had evidently no suspicion of me.

"Take a seat," said he, pointing to a bench just inside the door. We were in a small flagged courtyard, half of which was covered with a roof of corrugated iron; three sides a dead wall evidently the back of Shelby House; two windows only on the ground floor. These were heavily barred as is usual with the basement windows of large houses; they were evidently the kitchens. The smell of cooking came from the half-opened windows; the bustle of active work, and the clatter of crockery could be heard.

"Busy place," said I.

"Boarders' dinner," said he.

"You feed them well," said I, as a most appetizing display was carefully arranged on a small tray by a kitchen maid. Plated entree dish, two vegetables, roll and butter, and a pint bottle of claret.

"Winker's lunch," he said. "I must take it up. Wait for me."

I nodded, and composed myself comfortably on the bench. Just as Stewart was about to enter the kitchen door, a surly-looking young man, with the appearance of a gentleman's servant, and carrying a carpet-bag, entered the courtyard, followed by an old man in a striped jacket—the old man who had asked my business at the grating in the door; he was about to open the outer door; he held a bunch of keys—doubtless the hall porter.

"Going, Randal?" said Stewart, turning to the surly-looking young man.

"Yes, Mr. Stewart, I'm off, and glad of it."

"Better luck next time, Randall," said Stewart, hurrying in; "goodby."

They nodded, and the surly-looking young man and his carpet bag disappeared into the street.

The porter looked at his watch and gave a yawn, then he sniffed the balmy odors of the kitchen, sat down by me and gave a sigh. "Friend of Stewart's?" said he.

I nodded.

"In our line?" he added, looking me over.

"No such luck," I replied; "they didn't feed us in my late business."

"What was that?" said he, carelessly.

"Police," said I.

"Left it long?" said he.

"This very morning; an hour ago."

"Um," grunted the porter, stretching his legs, "he was in it—Randall was, before he came to us."

"What! the young chap just gone out?"

"Yes, bad-tempered chap; couldn't keep his temper with the boarders—sack," he said, laconically.

"What's the screw?" said I.

"Varies," said he. "A pound to beginners, and found three square meals a day; but we only recruit steady men."

"I suppose so," said I.

Here we subsided into meditation. How was I to see the man Hoffmann? I was as far from my goal as ever. Hoffmann, alias "the Winker," might be really a lunatic, or he might not be Hannay. A sight of him would be enough for me; but how to get a sight of him? Why had I told the porter that I had left the police that morning? Because I hoped to replace Randall, if only for a few hours, and so to see, if but for an instant, the man called Hoffmann. Doubtless if I suggested my being engaged at Selby House they would be suspicious; the suggestion must come from them. From the porter—why not? or from Stewart? This had been my course of reasoning; there was no other way of getting a sight of Hoffmann. If he were Hannay he would not stir out of Selby House; if he were a lunatic he could not stir out; in any case, to see him one must get inside—this seemed the only way of getting inside.

But I was not aware of one thing; the rules imposed upon the keepers of licensed houses, as the proprietors of lunatic asylums are termed, are very strict. No keeper or attendant can be employed without a license from the Commissioners in Lunacy. I was unprovided with such a license; to obtain it I must really leave the police force, get a reference from my superiors, lose my chances of promotion and pension, and, perhaps—nay, probably, after all these arrangements, find out that Hoffman was not Hannay at all.

Stewart returned; he drew a pipe from his pocket. "I've got just a quarter of an hour off, Dryland," he said, as he carefully filled and lighted it. "You look dull, my man. What is it?"

I told him the tale I had told the porter. I clothed my naked lie in the details of probability; to my great relief he believed me; he did more, he sympathized with me.

"So you left rather than be put upon," said he. "I'd have done the same."

"You wouldn't have liked to have seen a younger man put over your head, would you?" said I, with, as I trusted, the air of a deeply injured man.

"No! I shouldn't, you showed a proper spirit;" here he began to smoke reflectively. The porter, who, though hungry, was a sympathiser, too, here broke in, "What are you going to do?"

"I haven't an idea," I said.

"How about references?" said Stewart.

"Oh, they are right. I resigned; I wasn't dismissed."

"Would you like our line?" said Stewart.

"I shouldn't mind," said I.

"Stay where you are," said he, rising hurriedly; "I think I have a billet you might drop into at once."

"Here?" said I.

"Yes, here."

He left us; after a few moments a bell rang, the porter, with a nod and a smile to me, went indoors—evidently the servants' dinner bell. Things were looking up; I should be surely engaged, Stewart would speak for me, and I should see—see whom?—well, perhaps, Sigismund Hannay? But arrest him—if it were he—that was another matter; let me but see him, I asked for no more.

Stewart returned. "Step this way," said he. I went through a series of well-appointed offices, then into what was the front hall; there were no bolts or bars, everything very solid, very good; an old house, a fine old house, a big wooden staircase at the end of the hall, at the foot of the staircase was a green baize door. Stewart tapped lightly—"Come in!"—we entered.

Stewart saluted. "This is James Dryland, sir."

A dark little man, dressed in shining black, looked at me with a furtive glance—it was the criminal look—there was no mistaking it; he dropped his eyelids with a sigh, and he never looked me straight in the face again.

"You wish to serve here?" he said softly.

"I should be glad to, sir."

"You are aware of the duties? You can keep your temper under provocation—even extreme provocation?"

"Yes, sir."

"That will do. He will have to attend at the Commissioners' office. When he has got the necessary papers he can come, say in three days. Explain it to him, Stewart. That will do."

"Is that all, sir?"

"That is all." The furtive eye dropped on the big account book open before him, the white hand followed the columns of figures, he had ceased to be aware of our existence. We left the room. Stewart congratulated me, and while he explained to me the steps I must take, the hope of getting a look at the man, Hoffmann, died within me. How could I resign on the chance of his being Hannay?

"Look round in the evening, at 9, and we can take a glass," said Stewart, "and I'll tell you all about it, and put you up to the ropes."

I thanked Stewart effusively, and promising to call for him at 9, took my leave. I dined at a coffee house, I sat and thought it over. Yes, I was as far off as ever; if I was

The Arrest in the Hack.

ever to see the man, I must see him, must arrest him in 50 hours; ten hours were gone. This thought came vividly to my mind as I put my hand in my pocket for my handkerchief and touched the inspector's superior pair of special handcuffs. How many guilty wrists had they not clasped? Were they ever destined to be clasped over those of Sigismund Hannay? My spirits sank; I felt that on handing back those natty handcuffs, unused, to my inspector, the next step would be to go into the sergeants' room and write my resignation. I took an aimless walk. Five minutes to nine. I walked again round Shelby House—a large place, windows mostly lighted up, patients retiring for the night, as I knew. Nine. I let a minute or two elapse, then I rang the bell, and was admitted by the porter; he stretched out his hand in a friendly way.

"I hear you are to be one of us," said he.

"I fancy so," I replied.

Stewart, ready for walking, entered the courtyard; several men of respectable appearance accompanied him.

"We're all free till 11, Dryland," said Stewart, introducing them to me by a wave of the hand. "New attendant," said he; "late of the police."

I drew myself up. They all shook hands with me, and all seemed friendly. No chance to see him to-night, evidently. The porter advanced to let us out—when suddenly a shout broke from the interior of the building—"Fire!"

We looked at each other. The kitchen door was flung open, one of the kitchen maids, pale as ashes, rushed out into our midst as we stood in the little courtyard. "Fire!" she shrieked. "Fire! in the ground floor corridor!"

There was no hesitation; each man pushed rapidly through the kitchen door, Stewart among the rest. "Come on," he said, "you can be of use here."

The place was old and full of wood; there were no hydrants, there was no water. I smelt the smoke already, as I followed close at Stewart's heels. We ran all together in a body to a door; Stewart opened it—a long passage half full of smoke, not a soul visible; shrieks and shouts were heard; "This way! this way!" We passed through an open door into a bare graveled yard; there stood a young man, his face very pale, his hands terribly burnt, his hair, whiskers and eyebrows singed.

"They are all safe—all safe I think, but we can't count them, they will move about, it is impossible," said the young man. This was the doctor; he was not excited, far from it, his wits were about him. Here my police education came to my aid; my practiced eye ran quickly over the half-dressed patients.

"There are 48, sir," I said.

"Who are you, man?" said the doctor, apparently alarmed.

"New attendant engaged this morning, sir—joins in a day or two," chimed in Stewart; "ex-policeman."

"Are you sure, man," said the doctor, "only 48?"

"Only 48, sir."

"Men," said he, to the attendants, "do you miss any one?"

They all ran their eyes over the confused mob.

"Mr. Hoffmann is not here, sir," said Stewart.

"Heavens! it's true," cried the doctor.

Stewart turned pale. "He's my case, sir," he groaned, "and if he's lost, I'm a ruined man."

"Come on, Dryland," he said to me, and, following him, I re-entered the house.

A huge alarm bell now began to ring, the flames which had got well hold of the building began to light up the sky. I saw that as we rushed into the house again.

"This way," muttered Stewart. We flew up the staircase; at the top of it we met the proprietor. "Are they all out?" he screamed.

"All but Mr. Hoffmann, sir."

"Great heavens!" he cried, but he made no attempt to move. The firing of his premises had evidently unnerved him; he covered his face with his hands. On ran Stewart; he stopped at a closed door at the end of a long passage, 14 was painted in small white figures on it; there was a circular piece of brass in the middle of the door, but the door was locked. Stewart felt in his pockets for the key.

"I must go back for it," he said. "Come."

"I will stay here," I said.

Stewart did not reply; he ran hurriedly off by the way he came.

I examined the door, hoping to force it. No, it was too strong. I raised the small round piece of brass; a circular peephole, glazed, came to my view. I could see into the room; the chamber candle was lighted, a man with his back to me lay upon the bed, a novel was on the coverlet, he had fallen asleep reading; the candle placed on a chair illuminated his curly chestnut hair. But I could not see his face. His was the end room of the corridor. A window with a light sash was at this end, on either side closed doors; at the other end the staircase. I hammered furiously on the door. "Fire!" I cried, "Fire!" I kicked, I battered at it, I rushed from the other side of the passage at it; it was too strong for me. I looked in once more; the man was awake, he turned to me, it was the face as I verily believed of Sigismund Hannay. "Fire! Fire!" I shouted, my eye still at the peephole; the handsome face turned pale. The right eye began to blink. "The Winker," alias Sigismund Hannay, was before me; there was no doubt. I rushed to the head of the staircase; it was in flames—in flames. Everything had turned pink. This was why Stewart did not return; there was no other exit.

Stay, the window at the end of the passage! I rushed to it, I broke a pane; the sash was steel, solid steel; the apparently light window was a grating of the strongest kind.

"Have you nothing to try and break the door with, Mr. Hoffmann?" cried I; he was already dressed.

"Himmel!" he cried, "I have nothing to try with." He spoke with a slight German accent.

We should be burnt alive together, I and my prey, the prey I was cheated of, only to die slowly by fire. I heard a cheer; something struck the window. A moment after, a form was on the sill, then a second—two firemen—one plied an ax, the other a crowbar, they worked rapidly and scientifically. Crash! The steel window frame fell inward, the two men sprang in.

"In here," I cried; "he's in here."

"What, one of the madmen?"

"Yes, the last one."

"Is he very bad? Is there much danger in him?" repeated the man—the brave man, who was ready at a moment's notice to risk his life amid fire and flame and falling walls for a paltry stipend.

"Get the door open and I'll secure him," said I.

A few strokes on the door-jamb with his sharp ax, and the long crowbar of the second man is inserted; the door yields, it opens. Hoffman rushed into my arms, the men stood back, in an instant I had the handcuffs on him.

"What does this violence mean?" he hissed, winking furiously with his right eye in nervous trepidation."

"They are afraid of you, that's all, sir. I told them there was no need."

"Be smart! Be smart!" cried the fireman nearest me. I helped Hoffman to the window. The crowd below, on seeing us, cheered loudly. "Go first," said the firman. I knew the escapes, I stepped lightly into the canvas slide; in an instant I was in the street, a hundred eager hands were stretched to grasp mine. In another instant Hoffmann, handcuffed, slid down the canvas trough, and was beside me. The crowd stood back.

"One of the lunatics; see his handcuffs—he's dangerous—stand back!" I hustled the bewildered Hoffmann through the crowd. A hansom stood at a near corner. We got in; Hoffman, more dead than alive, sank into the corner of the cab. I whispered to the cabman where to drive, and took my place by the shuddering Hoffmann.

"Where are we going?" said he.

"To another asylum," said I.

"Take these things off," said he.

"I can't just yet," said I.

"Can't! What do you mean?"

I placed one hand on his shoulder, the other on his fettered wrists, and I whispered in his ear, "Sigismund Hannay, I arrest you for felony—take it coolly, sir."

"Himmel!" he muttered—not a word more.

We got to Scotland Yard. I took him into the office of the inspector on duty; it was Inspector Roberts. I charged him. He acknowledged it all. As he did so his right eye never left off its winking; Sigismund Hannay and "the Winker" were one.

Stewart never forgave me. We never found out how Hannay had squared the proprietor of the asylum—it was all hushed up. The proprietor was burnt to death in the blazing staircase of Selby House. Poor fellow, he lost his head in his ruin, for the property was uninsured.

Sigismund Hannay pleaded guilty; he got 14 years—most of the bonds were got back. I had a good bit out of it, one way and the other.

Yes, these are the identical handcuffs; Inspector Roberts gave me them as a keepsake.

Sometimes the man-eater traverses long distances. Thus the Jaunsar man-eater, which was killed by an officer of the forest department, after killing a man in one place would kill another 20 miles off the next night. This one, also a tigress, frequented a belt of the Himalayas 5,000 to 10,000 feet high, and was eventually killed 8,000 feet above the sea. But none of the man-eaters recorded by Mr. Gilbert were decrepit or worn out. They were strong, handsome beasts in their prime.

THE MAN-EATERS OF INDIA.

Some Erroneous Ideas Concerning Them Corrected.

At the last meeting of the Bombay Natural History Society Mr. Gilbert, a well-known shikaree, read a paper on man-eating tigers, of which a brief report is given in the London *Times*. He says that the popular idea of the man-eater is wholly incorrect. He is commonly supposed to be "an old brute, more often decrepit than otherwise, perhaps lamed from some former wound, with his teeth broken, his skin always mangy, unable from his infirmities to kill game, but obliged to conceal himself near a village path and then to pounce upon some lonely human being and devour him, never attacking when there are more than two or three persons together, and always displaying great cunning."

Sir William Hunter takes this view, and describes the man-eater as generally an old beast, disabled from overtaking his usual prey, and who seems to accumulate his tale of victims in sheer cruelty rather than for food. Sir William Hunter mentions a man-eater who was known to have killed 108 people in three years, and another which killed an average of 80 persons a year for the same period. A third caused 13 villages to be abandoned and 250 square miles of land to be thrown out of cultivation. A fourth killed 127 persons in a year and stopped a public road for many weeks.

Mr. Gilbert, however, says that these views as to the man-eater are quite erroneous. They are not different from the ordinary tiger, which lives on game and bullocks, but he does not say why they become man-eaters. Sir Joseph Fayrer suggests that it is by the accident of having once tasted human flesh and then finding all other flesh insipid.

Mr. Gilbert mentions certain famous man-eaters. One, a tigress in the Nagpur district, has a fondness for the employes of the Bengal-Nagpur Railway, frequents a tract of country only about nine square miles in area, and is possessed of extraordinary cunning and audacity. This year, up to June, she had killed seven people, besides wounding others. She lives in a rocky and precipitous spur, in which there is a heavy bamboo and other jungle. Several springs of water rise at the foot of the scarps, and there is a cave which shows many signs of being used by her and her family. A big stone just outside the entrance is scored deep and long with many scratches of their claws. In February last, in broad daylight, she carried off one of a gang of permanent way men from under the eyes of his companions. She had been shot at many times and her cubs killed, but she has got off scatheless. Sometimes the man-eater traverses long distances. Thus the Jaunsar man-eater, which was killed by an officer of the forest department, after killing a man in one place would kill another 20 miles off the next night. This one, also a tigress, frequented a belt of the Himalayas 5,000 to 10,000 feet high, and was eventually killed 8,000 feet above the sea. But none of the man-eaters recorded by Mr. Gilbert were decrepit or worn out. They were strong, handsome beasts in their prime.

NEW ZEALAND PARROTS.

Birds That Will be Killed Rather Than Desert Wounded Companions.

Nature.]

We shot about a dozen birds and were about to leave the wood when I saw a large brown bird flying through the tree tops and cut him down with a snap shot among the branches. He only had a broken wing and at once set up a great squawking like a frightened parrot. I was about to go and finish him when my host bade me wait, concealed under cover of a small tree; I noticed Blank run to ambush, and wondered why for a moment, when I heard cries similar to those uttered by the wounded bird proceeding from all parts of the forest, and soon the air was literally filled with birds. We began shooting them as they circled around the trees, evidently trying to come to the aid of their companion.

We had soon fired away about 100 cartridges, and had the ground strewn with birds which Blank said were ber-caw-caws. They were like large bronze pheasants in size and shape, with hooked