A Secret

OF THE

HEART

By HOWARD FIELDING.

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Mr. Willard Davis is the head of the surface lines of New York, and his office is in the rear of the company's rooms on the third floor of the Ann Street kank building. Associated with him in various schemes for the absorption of small street car lines is George Stalbridge. Stalbridge is much disliked by Willard Davis' nephew, young Davis, who believes that Stalbridge is leading his uncle into dangerous and corrupt schemes with the object of finally securing control of the great property himself, and of gaining the hand of Willard Davis' daughter, now engaged to Walter Norman. The morning after a transaction, by which a small line in which Norman is interested if swallowed up by the large company, young Davis goes down to remonstrate with his uncle. He meets Stalbridge in front of the bank building, and rebukeshim. As he mentions Norman's name young Davis notes that Stalbridge glainces upward in a startled way toward the elevated railroad. Young Davis goes to his uncle's office, followed by Stalbridge. The door is locked. There is a key inside the lock. A moan is heard and then a crash young Davis pushes the key out with Stalbridge's key, and unlocks the door. He sees his uncle on his knees, the latier tries to speak and falls to the floor, dead. As young Davis entered the room, a door opposite closel with a snap. He bursts it in, but finds the room beyond vacant, with an open window looking on the stone court. It is found that Willard Davis' body has two wounds, one on the head made by a heavy instrument, and one a stab in the breast with a small pointed weapon. A detective is summoned, who finds Willard Davis' keys on the floor near the entrance door. A towel is hung on a looking-glass high above the washstand. Hlood stalns are found on the door and on the edges of the wash basin. Stalbridge surgesis that Norman is a very tail man. Meanwhile among the corroborative evidence is discovered, and while the detective does not accuse him, the matter asymment on a passing street car while Stalbridge and he weath lis

PART V. A QUESTION OF TIME.

"This bit of paper was caught upon the weapon that pierced your uncle's eart," he said, "I have the weapon

"Not Norman's stiletto!" I cried, re-membering that he had taken it. "There was no stiletto in the case," he said. "The weapon was a peaceful implement suddenly perverted to a deadly use. There it stands." He indicated an ordinary spindle on

which documents are spiked. It was simply a bit of steel wire about five inches long, mounted upon a metal standard, and sharply pointed at the

"I: was all done in a moment of passlou," said the detective. "Your uncle It was burning. The spectacle and your uncle's words at the moment must have maddened the murderer. He struck suddenly and surely with the first thing that came to his hand. Willand Davis fell mortally hurt. As he fell, his head struck the corner of his desk a violent blow. Thus, doubly wounded, he lay upon the floor. The murderer' bent over him and slowly. fearfully, withdrew the weapon. 'Why did he do that?"

"Recause that bit of paper was pinned down upon the victim's heart. The murderer dared not leave it there. He secured it at the cost of wetting his hands with blood. The paper was soaked. It would not burn. Distracted with fear, the murderer rolled the paper in his hands and thrust it down the escape pipe, where, fortunately for me, it lodged. Then the criminal washed his hands, dried them on that "What are you telling me?" I ex-claimed. "This is all new. What has become of the theory which you explained to me with such care-my un cle struck down, the door locked with his keys, the paper taken, the fatal thrust given at last because the victim

"I'p to the time when I was ten years "I p to the time when I was ten years old," replied Johnson, "I was a very truthful boy. Then I happened to notice that lying was not directly prohibited in the commandments. Since then I have made it a point never to tell the truth unless there is a very pressing need of it. Thus I have risen in my

revived while Stalbridge and I were at

But why was it necessary to lie to

me?" I demanded.

"Let me show you why." he said earnestly; "and now you're going to get the exact facts. The great point of this case is that Mr. Davis lived nearly half an hour with a hole in his beart." earnestly; "and now you're going to get the exact facts. The great point of this case is that Mr. Davis lived nearly half an hour with a hole in his heart. There was where you went astray. You took my bogus medical report on top of the natural error of the ambulance surgeon, and believed that your uncle had been instantly killed. Wounds in the heart are popularly supless under suspicion. I knew that he less under suspicion. I knew that he Wounds in the heart are popularly sup-posed to be immediately fatal, but that is not true. There are many cases—"I know all about them," I broke in. impatiently. "But you forget that when I entered the place I saw the door, leading to the rear room, close; and that it was locked when I reached it.



The murderer was just escaping; my uncle was breathing his last. Then, by your measure of time, the assassin had remained with his victim nearly half an hour. Is that credible?"
"It is not," replied the detective. "But I can solve your difficulty. In the first place let me show you how I measured the time, It is rather pretty."

He led me to the bowl beneath the glass, and called my attention to the fact that there was a small leak from the faucet. He asked me to observe the steadiness of it, and then attempt to place the faucet in such a position that there would be a different rate of leakage. I found that the thing could not be done. The faucet worked by a law of its own, and wherever placed, it would spring at once to the position it seemed to prefer.

it seemed to prefer.
"Just after the crime," said Johnson.
"when you and I bend over this bowl "when you and I bend over this bowl looking for bloodstains. I noticed that leak. Instantly I marked the level of the water in the bowl. Afterwards I experimented and found that the time required for the bowl to be filled to that point was fifty-two minutes. Take twenty-five minutes off for the time between the discovery of the crime-coincident with your uncle's death—and my marking of the bowl. That leaves twenty-six minutes. Now add four minutes for the time taken by the murderer in washing his hands. That makes just half an hour that your makes just half an hour that your uncle lived."

"This is guess work," said I. "How do you know that the murderer left no

water in the bowel?" Because, my dear sir, the last thing he did was to bush down this bit of paper, and he wouldn't have done that while there was water in the bowl. He didn't let any run afterwards, otherwise the paper would have been soaked. He pushed it in, supposing that it would fall down the pipe. Then he re-

He pushed it in, supposing that it would fall down the pipe. Then he replaced the stopper—or it fell into place—and my timeplece was in operation. "Now as to the closing of that door. Watch this little experiment. I open the door thus. Now will you oblige me by opening the main door suddenly. Thanks. You perceive the draught of air shuts this one. It fastens itself. I've replaced the lock you broke, and everything is as it was. So we've diseverything is as it was. So we've dis-posed of your delusion that you were right on the heels of the murderer."

right on the heels of the murderer."

I was considerably perplexed by this sudden change of theory. It was hard to esmape the detective's reasoning in regard to the time of the commission of the crime, yet there were several points that needed explanation. For instance, how could the door have been becked on the inside with my uncle's locked on the inside with my uncle's keys? I heard them drop out of the lock. Who had put them into it?
"It was Mr. Davis himself." said Johnson, when I put the question to

him; "he was trying to get out. Doubt less he was feebly crying for help, but no one heard. Those marks of hands upon the door were his. The position shows that they were made by some one who was supporting himself with

difficulty."
"He could not open the door and for t very good reason. Dazed and dying, he had selected the wrong bunch of keys. I got the right one out of his oocket and the key of that door was

"And that's the great point of this case. The door was locked-not with Mr. Davis' key, for otherwise it would not have been in his pocket. There is but one other, and that beongs to-

"Stalbridge!" I exclaimed.
"Correct, and beyond a doubt Stalbridge is the murderer." "My instinct told me so, even when I believed absolutely that I knew him

o be innocent.' "And now for the reason why I de-ceived you," continued the detective, "At first I acted on general principles. My theory propounded in this room was intended to deceive everybody. Afterwards I acted for the sake of the effect upon Stalbridge. I did not know him to be guilty, but I strongly suspected him. I had heard of his stopping you and taking you for a walk.



"BY HEAVENS, MACK, YOU'VE LOST HIM.

If he had anything to say, why didn't he bring you up here? Or take you into one of the rooms of the Union Lines? It was fair to guess that he wanted to keep you out of the way.

"At last you forced him back to the scene of the crime. What must have been his surprise and horror at finding that his victim still lived! Rut soon he saw that it was to be his own salvation

The closing door, the wound in the heart—everything seemed to indicate that the crime was but just done. Then he could prove an alibi through

"Instantly the desire to convict Norman seized upon him. He was Nor-man's rival for Miss Davis' hand. and had worked in that cause as well as for money in getting your uncle into his power. It was in my favor that he should plot to convict Norman, for he was more likely to be led into an indiscretion. And the surest way to keep him at it was to satisfy himself

less under suspicion. I knew that he had been here, though I was not aware that Stalbridge was present at the same time. You forced that out of Stal-bridge and also the very valuable and singular alibi for Norman."
"How about the Italian?"

"He was saved by my water clock. He could account for himself up to the time when he entered this building and that time was absolutely known. It was three minutes before eleven. The crime was committed five minutes earlier. Judge, then, of my satisfac-tion when you remembered seeing Antonelli. Stalbridge was with you at that time. He had just appeared. He had time to leave the scene of the crime, to leave the building by the side door, to see you approaching, and

to stop you in order that you might not find the body. "To Stalbridge, then, all clews lead.

To Statistics, then, an clews lead. He will be here presently and you shall see how he faces the accusation."
"Is he under arrest?"
"No; but he is shadowed. He will be arrested if he does not keep the appointment which he has with me here. Hesis overdue." He is overdue."

Johnson glanced at his watch and

start. His face suddenly flashed.
"Come here," he cried.
A slender young man in rather shabby dress stepped quickly to the door.
"Where's Staibridge?" he gasped, as
he glanced into the room.

"He hasn't been here," returned needs by

"By heavens, Mack you've "Not on your life. I shadowed him

to this room."
"He did not come in. The man escaped. He got onto you and took the alarm." Mack, the shadow, struck his fore-

Mack, the shadow, struck his fore-head with his right hand.

"Is it possible that he got in there?" he said, and then he pointed to the door of the vacant suite. "If he did, he hasn't had any chance to get out."

Johnson and I rushed into the rooms. They were empty. The window opening into the shaft was open.

"By all the saints!" exclaimed the detective. "The fellow has climbed into the back room and has heard all I have said."

We ray back and passed into the rear room, leaving the shadow on guard in the hall. Stalbridge was not there, but



ON THE WALL BESIDE THE DOOR SOME WORDS WERE SCRAWLED.

were not long in finding evidence of his presence. On the wall beside the door some words were scrawled in pen-cil. They had evidently been written while the murderer stood there listen-

Thank you for these disclosures, Mr. Johnson. Your views are surprisingly accurate. I would like to remain and point out some of your errors, but time presses, and certain considerations urge my immediate departure. I fear we shall not meet again, as it is improbable that I shall ever return to New York. If it were not for the distressing noise of firearms, I would open this door and shoot you both where you

These words had caught Johnson's These words had caught Johnson's eye on his first glance around the little room. He read them aloud, I meanwhile had hastened to the window. "The infernal rascal has got away," said the detective, "but he will be caught. It may be a long chase, though, for he will take a barrel of money with him."

As he spoke I measured with my eye the distance between the two windows.

the distance between the two windows. It was a haz-lous feat to pass from one to the other. I glanced into the shaft to measure the distance one

would fall.
I looked straight down into George Stalbridge's face. He had fallen in passing from one window to the other, and he lay in the bottom of the shaft.

and he lay in the bottom of the shaft, mortally hurt.

His fall had been heard, though not by us. Before we could get down the stairs he had been taken out of the shaft. He lived about half an hour, and was conscious most of the time.

Knowing that he was fatally injured, he had no hesitation in speaking of the crime. His story coincided perfectly with Johnson's theory. Willard Davis had yielded to Norman's plea for fairer treatment in the rallway transaction. treatment in the railway transaction. Stalbridge, in the back room, had heard

When Norman had gone Stalbridge When Norman had gone Stationage entered, and there was a brief and angry discussion, which ended in my uncle's touching a match to the railway contract. As it blazed up, so Stat-bridge's anger blazed. The fatal blow came speedily. All else the reader knows.

"Our Learned character sketch by George Gissing, will begin tomorrow

RAILROAD NOTES.

The statement is made that a syndi-cate composed of New York and Cleveland capitalists are behind a project to build a system of suburban electric car lines in northern Indiana connect-ing various cities and towns. The de-sign, it is said, is to start from Lake county, where the syndicate already owns property, and establish net-work extending around to touch South Bend. Valparaiso, Michigan City, Laporte. Elkhart and half a dozen or more other places. The syndicate is supposed to be headed by Daniel S. Lamont and ex-Secretary Whitney. Its active agents are ex-Congressman Johnson and Mark W. Hanna.

pany, was consummated Monday. The consolidated company has \$200,000,000 of stock and will have \$20,000,000 of bonds. the mortgage to be filed within a day or two. Following are the directors: C. E. Whitehead, of New York, president; John Tod, vice president; E. R. Perkins, treasurer; John H. Dynes, A. M. Tucker, Samuel Mather, Fayette Brown, Frank P. Ray and Melville E. Ingalis, jr., C. C. Mason is secretary.



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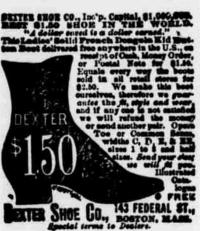
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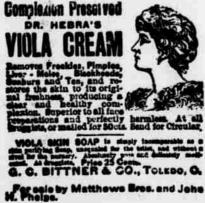
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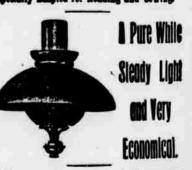
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