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THE NOBLEST FRIEND OF ALL I have a friend, devoted, earnest, true, One whom my soul for long years never Though oft his voice fell on my careless

In accents dreaded then, but now most dear: I little dreamed that all my needless fears Would change to deepest love with passing

years. Oft then I closely scanned his earnest face Yet failed to recognize its nameless grace, Nor faintly understood the nameless charm Beneath grave looks I fancied boded harm; Charged with high duties for his Lord, the

King, How could his words with lightsome laughter ring?

But on his brow serene could rest no guile, And there was wondrous magic in the smile

With which sometimes his somber features gleamed. So gently solemn, yet so sweet it seemed; Some thought he knew not pity, grief nor ruth,

Yet all his acts were kind and trimmed with truth

Later, I found that he struck off the chains Of slaves bound down 'neath penalties and pains.

Set captives free, a million wrongs re dressed. Brought hope and happiness to the oppressed. Lightened harsh cares, bade wearing sorrows cease, Subdued all strife and substituted peace.

And when 1 learned to know-the veil un-

rolled-From all his greatness vast and mighty souled. And saw that for such sorrow as he made His heart was saddened though his hand

obeyed, I learned to love him, saw behind his mask And marveled at the greatness of his task So now, with soul serene and bated breath I reverence the friend whose name in Death.



I AVE I ever been victimized? Well, I must confess I have -once, only once; and that was by John Smith-probably one of the most cunning and original scamps that ever lent his name to an evil career. But perhaps you would like to hear the story ?"

The speaker was a friend of mine-Detective Inspector Henry Graham, of Scotland Yard, who ranked amongst the very smartest and most successful members of his profession. It was, therefore, with no little surprise that I heard him confess to having been victimized, especially by one of the very men he had recently brought justice; and, judging that this must have been a most interesting case, I replied:

"I certainly should. The person who could impose upon a detective of your reputation and ability must indeed have been particularly cunning."

known; and although I have had my own back since-he is now in H. M. civil service at Dartmoor-it will be a long day before I shall forgive myself for letting him slip from my hands at the last moment-or, worse still-but I must aot be premature.

jectured, and rightly, too, that he would reach Leicester by other means than by rail.

"I spent two or three days haunting the Leicester railway stations, in the faint hope of seeing my man, but to no effect. It would, of course, have been impossible for me to see every person entering the many trains each day, and preposterous to expect the station masters to arrest every gentleman clad in green sporting clothes; therefore, after a wearisome watch, I decided to return to town and procure aid for a thorough search after the scoundrei. "Accordingly, 1 took my seat in a

first-class carriage of the Midland express, which only stops at Bedford; and made myself comfortable behind a copy of the 'Times.' The bell had rung, and the train was just on the point of starting, when the carriage door was hurriedly opened, and in prang a person of aristocratic appearance, followed by a porter, who placed a bulky hand-bag on the rack, and left the carriage as the train was moving.

"Imagine, if you can, my surprise on recognizing in my fellow traveler the very person whom I had pictured as the culprit in the Fernleigh court robbery -the very man for whom I had been seeking for days, the man I had longed to meet, had unconsciously walked into my clutches; the fly had 'walked' into the spider's web without the familiar invitation! I knew, though, that I must go about the business shrewdly, guardedly; and that any uncommon action or indiscreet remark would upset the whole affair. But I could not refrain from inwardly chuckling as I thought of my 'victim's' surprise, disgust and punishment, and the fame, reward and promotion now in store for

"But I had reckoned without my host. On seeing me the stranger nodded pleasantly, and, opening a newspaper, remarked:

"'Shocking affair, this Fernleigh court robbery. It has caused quite a sensation in the neighborhood; and no wonder!

"You're right,' I answered, reticently, and endeavoring to screen my surprise at his audacious impudence.

"'Yes,' he continued, nothing abashed; 'the regues have got clean away, too, I understand. A smart party, ch?

'It does seem so.'

"'I hear they have got a Scotland Yard detective ou the track,' he went on; 'but, bless you, those fellows are not a bit of use-never have beennever will be. I understand that the one engaged on this case hasn't got a single clew yet. I'm very much afraid he's like the man who fell out of the boat-not in it!'

"'Ha!' I laughed to myself; 'he will sing in a different key by-and-by! If he only knew who I was he wouldn't be quite so merry!' But I answered, in an affectedly indifferent tone: "There's comething in that!

"T'll tell you what it is!' he went on. excit dly, apparently encouraged by my in orsing replies: The whole pock of Scotland Yard detectives are not worth that, sirl' and he snapped his fingers. 'When they've got a little intricate work on they're baffled entirely. Personally, I'm much concerned about this case. It's a disgrace, sir, a scandal, that such deeds can be perpe-

You're a deceitful scoundrel, and some day you shall pay for this."

Pray don't excite yourself, Mr. Smith,' he responded, sarcastically. "Don't forget you're in my power. I was going to give you a little information just to while away the time. How I committed the robbery I cannot afford to tell you-the secret will prove useful for future occasions-but I might as well inform you that, but for that nasty fall I had when making off, not a suspicion of a clew would you have had. As it was, the rapidity with which the news spread, and the number of persons immediately put on the watch, made it impossible for me to leave the district immediately. Even now, I have been forced to leave most of the 'swag' with one of my agents-I've got them nearly all over the country. I might also mention, for your edification, that I have had you under my eye practically the whole time; and I only lost sight of you owing to the necessity of visiting my agent. Dame Fortune, howover, has thrown us together once more -a little closer this time; and had I not been more sharp-witted than you, I should have had apartments booked for me in prison for the next few years. Now, Mr. John Smith, what do you think of your Scotland Yard detectives?

"I made no reply.

"'You intend to remain silent, then, like an obnoxious phonograph?' he went on, jocularly. 'It is just as well, for I must be now about my business. So saying, he opened my bag, and, taking from it a sheet of my official notepaper, wrote in a good hand:

"To the station-master at Welling Telegraph immediately to sta borough: tion-master at Bedford to have policeman and sergeant ready to meet this train in, to arrest the leader of the Fernleigh court robbery gang. Am obliged to go on to St. Pancras myself, to arrest confederates, who will be there, with portion of booty, to meet their leader. "'HENRY GRAHAM, Scotland Yard.'

"Having shown this to me, with a chuckle of satisfaction, he threw it out of the window as the train flew through Wellingborough, and it was picked up by one of the porters.

"This done, he drew from his bag a suit of clothes similar to mine, and changed. This, with a little touching up which he performed, gave him the appearance of quite a different person I have never known so complete a disguise effected in so short a time.

"All arrangements .completed, he again devoted his attention to entertaining me.

"'I'm afraid, Mr. Smith, that you'll nave to spend a night in Bedford prison. That place will get quite a name for imprisoning innocent people, what, with John Bunyan and John Smith, won't

"On arrival at Bedford, explanations, remonstrations and furious threats all

proved unavailing, thanks to Smith's ready wit. "'He's the most cunning rogue I have ever had to deal with,' was Smith's an-swer to all my detailed charges. 'Not bad conscience to accuse me of being the culprit, and claiming to be the detective himself! But it won't work, my friend, it won't work. It's useless to try to impose upon the Bedford police, Mr. Smith; they know a thing or two too many to be "had on" like that! They're not to be fooled, bless you!'

"The flattery on the police was,

THE SUNDAY SCHOOL

Lesson in the International Series for January 21, 1900-Preaching of John the Baptist. GOLDEN TEXT .- Prepare ye the way of

the Lord.--Luke 3:4. THE LESSON TEXT.

(Luke 3:7-17.) 7. Then said be to the multitude that came forth to be baptized of him, O genera-tion of vipers, who bath warned you to from the wrath to come?

See from the wrath to come? & Bring forth therefore truits worthy of repentance, and begin not to say within yourselves. We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto there are a stones to raise up children unto Abraham 9. And now also the ax is laid unto the

root of the trees: every tree therefore which bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn

down, and cast into the fire. 10. And the people asked him, saying: What shall we do then? II. He answereth and saith unto them, He that hath two coats, let him impart to him that hath none; and he that hath

meat, let him do likewise, 12 Then came also publicans to be bap-tized and said unto him, Master, what shail 18. And He said unto them, Exact no

more than that which is appointed you. 14. And the soldiers likewise demanded of him, saying. And what shall we do? And He said unto them: Do violence to no man, neither accuse any falsely; and be content with your wages. 15. And as the people were in expecta-tion, and all men mused in their hearts of

John, whether he were the Christ, or not in John answerd, saying unto them all, i john answerd, saying unto them all, i indeed baptize you with water; but one mightler than I cometh, the latchet of whose shoes I am not worthy to unlosse. He shall haptize you with the Holy Ghost

and with fire: 17. Whose fan is in His hand, and He will throughly purge Ills floor, and will gather the wheat into His garners: but the chaff He will burn with fire unquenchable. NOTES AND SUGGESTIONS.

Training of John the Baptist .- Of the early life and training of John the Bap-

tist, we know only that he was "in the deserts" (Luke 1:80). At what age he became a hermit, or whether indeed the word means more than that he lived quietly and uneventfully in the hill country of Judea where he was born (Luke 1:39, 40) we do not know. But we should note how plain was John's mode of life. All four Gospels quote more or less fully the words at the E. Pinkham's Vegetable opening of Isaiah 40 as applying to John, and the reason for this fact ap-

pears in John 1:23. John's Preaching .-- Repentance, as John preached it, was a turning away from sin to righteousness. It demanded a willingness to give up all practices which were inconsistent with the presence of God's kingdom. Baptism was an ancient rite, used in certain cases of cleansing (Num. 19), and was applied to proselytes who entered the Jewish fold. It was therefore a natural symbol of cleansing in preparation for living a clean life after repentance. John seems to have met first the deeply intrenched Jewish idea that for them no repentance was necessary. They regarded their descent from Abraham as a sufficient guaranty of salvation. John's words on this point (Luke 3:8) were therefore very radical. According to Matthew (Matt. 3:7), they were directed toward the religious leaders of the Jews. These leaders were the representatives of the two chief sects, the Pharisees and the Sadducces. The former were the Puritans of the time, in profession, though not in practice. They took great pains to observe the law and the traditions, going beyond

the literal command in their endeavor to render perfect obedience. The Sadducees professed equal regard for the law, but were by no means so strict in their compliance with either its letter or what they regarded as its spirit. John's Testimony .- The great sensation that John had created, his references to the kingdom of heaven as at hand, and the nature of his teaching combined to lead many of the Jews to believe him to be the Messiah. To those who questioned him, however, John made it evident that he thought of his own work as merely preparatory. His words lead us to suppose that he expected the work of Jesus to be vastly more sudden and sweeping than it actually was. The same idea finds support in the message which John afterwards sent to Jesus (Matt. 11:2, 3). Preparing the Way .- The work of preparing, or of repairing, these roads in advance of the coming of a royal personage is continued to the present time. At Hebron, as our party entered the Holy Land from the desert below,

WOMAN'S **MISTAKE**

It is a well-known fact that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has cured more women than any other remedy. It therefore must be the

best possible medicine for female ills. But some women make the mistake of thinking that they will try something else, simply because it is new. That mistake is often a fatal one-fatal to the health and happiness of the experimenter.

Is it not foolish to risk the possible results of such experiments? Is it not better to depend upon a medicine which has been tried successfully for thirty years, and which has never been found wanting? Do not therefore let any one persuade you to try something which they say is just as good. It cannot be just as good. Mrs. Pink-ham's Compound is the best, and there can be only one best. This is not a mere assertion. but is a positive fact, admitted by hundreds of regular physicians.

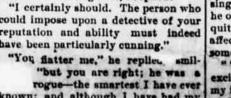
Rely on your own common sense, and Mrs. Pinkham's life-long experience, and you will make no mistake. Don't experiment with your health, but take a medicine that you know is good, and is backed by such letters as these to Mrs. Pinkham:

Suppressed and Painful Periods Cured by Lydia Compound.

"I was thin, sallow and nervous.] had not had my menses for over a year and a half. Doctored with several physicians in town and one specialist, but did not get any better. I finally decided to try your medicine, and wrote to you. After I had taken wrote to you. After I had taken three bottles of Lydis E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound and three of Blood Purifier, my menses returned, and I feel as well and strong as I ever did, and am gaining flesh."-MISS LENA GAINES, Visalia, Tulare Co., Cal.

"Before taking the Vegetable Com-pound I was troubled with irregular menstruation, and suffered great agony. My physician gave me mor-phine, and I remained in bed. I doc-tored eight years and got no relief, and the doctors told me there was no relief for my trouble. Finally I tried Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. While taking the first bottle I felt that I was improving. I have taken seven or eight bottles, and never had anything to do me so much good. Every month my troubles have grown less and less, and now at this time I am cured."-ELLA QUINNET, No. L. Stage Street, Haverhill, Mass.

Ovarian Troubles Always Vield to Lydia E. Pint()







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Well, it happened in this way: it was nearly ten years ago, and I was merely a novice in the profession. I, therefore, felt highly honored at being 'told off' to investigate the great robbery at Fernleigh court, in Leicestershire-the scat of the duke of Melbourne. You probably recollect the circumstances; the Melbourne coronet, of incalculable value, and other jewelery and cash to the value of over £ 10,-000, were stolen in broad daylight-certainly one of the most daring and complete robberies of modern times. The thief-or thieves-got clean away, al-

though the alarm was given immediately after the deed was committed. "I had been in the district nearly a

whole day before I came across the slightest clew; but it was not very long then before I had my man-for I discovered there was but one perpetrator -mentally figured before me. I judged him to be a person of about my own build, that he was very particular as to his appearance, and was dressed in a green sporting suit."

"But how did you gather these particulars, if I may ask?" I interrupted.

"Oh, that was simple enough," Graham replied. "Unfortunately for him, the thief was disturbed after having cleared his booty, and was compelled to make for some of the bushes and shrubs which surrounded the house. In his haste he tripped over a large stone. which resulted in a nasty fall over a bramble bush. This bush tore a piece of the cloth from his coat. It was a piece of green cloth, such as is used almost exclusively for sporting clothes. A pocket-mirror that was in his pocket had got broken by the fall, and a small piece of the glass lay on the ground. The culprit must certainly have been very particular about his appearance to carry a pocket-mirror.

"The bramble bush was but small, and was crushed by the weight of the falling man; consequently the impression made in the damp grass gave me an idea as to his height and build. On inquiry at various railway stations near, at length came upon one which contirmed my opinion, for such a man, dressed as I had anticipated, had alighted from a first-class carriage of the Leicester train there. He had booked from London-but not to the station nearest the scene of plunder; he was far too shrewd for that.

"Having gained a few other details, important but uninteresting to you, I booked for Leicester; knowing that the prompt discovery of the burglary would have prevented the perpetrator from leaving the district immediately. The line to Leicester was a branch one; and I instructed the station-masters all

a civilized country, where a small army but I determined to 'die' hard, nevertheof men is retained to investigate such matters, who have no more idea of how to go about their business than a donkey has of exerting himself. I repeat, sir,' he continued, vehemently, and stamping his foot on the carriage floor, 'it's a disgraceful scandal!'

"'Just because no clews are reported in the newspapers it must not be concluded that none have been found,' I repiled, in a heated tone, for his galling the scamp said, in a feigned sympaand slanderous remarks had quite up- thetic tone. 'He wishes me to miss the set me; 'perhaps you will be convinced train, so that his fellow-rogues shall differently some day!'

"'Never, sir, never!' he responded, quickly. 'Indeed, I'm going to show them a thing or two myself.'

"'You are?' I replied, not without a suspicion of sarcasm.

two,' he repeated, in a deliberate man- notes, a complete disguise, and set of ner. 'In confidence. I'm a private detective, engaged secretly in this case by the duchess of Melbourne-one of the my commission, and his bag,' I infinest women that ever lived!'

"'Indeed!' I ejaculated, in amaze-ment, and wondering whether I had been mistaken in my conclusion after all.

more, I arrest you, Henry Graham, on the charge of robbery at Fernleigh court four days ago!" And he pointed the train steamed out of the station; a business-like revolver at my bead. 'Hands up, or I fire! Right! Now move, and you are a dead man.' So saying, he drew a pair of handcuffs from town; and all the way we were accommy pocket, and before I had recovered panied by a giggling, delighted and infrom my amazement actually had the quisitive crowd. My indignation and audacity to handcuff me there and fury can better be imagined than dethen!

"'Sir!' I shouted, when I had sufficiently overcome the shock, 'this is an outrageous mistake! Take these things prison I had to remain until some one off immediately, and allow me to ex- came up from the Yard and identified plain!'

"'You needn't trouble to do that!' he replied, with a self-satisfied smile; "I will do that for you. You are Henry Graham, the Scotland Yard detective-I should never run down the force to a stranger. Allow me to introduce my-self, John Smith-no connection with the bookstall people-but the perpetrator of the Fernleigh court robbery. But now, with or without your acquiescence, we will exchange names and bags; you are John Smith, the Fernleigh culprit; I am Henry Graham, the successful and praiseworthy detective. Twig?

"I now saw through his little gamehow completely he had fooled me; and when I saw him change bugs-the condemning pieces of glass and cloth were in my bag-I guessed what he was about to do. My heart sank within me; along the line to telegraph to me if my all hopes of a successful career seemed visitin' entered the train; but, I con- crushed; and all I could reply was:

trated without any practical risk in knew, alone enough to settle my fate, less.

"'Only bring the fellow to the station with you, and send to the yard for some one to come and say which is which,' I pleaded. 'That is all I ask. He is a rogue, a scoundrel: don't let him escape, whatever you do. Take me, if you wish, but bring him, too.'

"'Ha! the poor fellow pleads hard and well for his confederates' liberty, escape with the whole of the booty. Only such a clever scoundrel would ever think of such a scheme; but it would never do for me to stay-I should lose my place if I did. See, here's my commission, sergeant; and look in his bag; "'I'm going to show them a thing or there are some of the stolen jewels and burglar's tools."

> "This fairly made me furious. 'It is sisted.

"'Ha! Ha-a-a-a!!!' burst forth police, porter, scamp, and a crowd simultaneously, in mocking laughter. 'A purty fine tale, that,' added the ser-"'That is so,' he replied; 'and what is geant; 'you must come eriong a me.' "'I'll remember you to your accom-'you'll meet them in the dock shortly.' "Triumphantly the police led me through the streets of the quaint old scribed.

"My explanation to the chief constable met a better reception; but in the me.

"John Smith? Oh, he got clean away, and wasn't seen again for years. How he managed it I don't know, for half a dozen detectives waited the train in at St. Pancras, by orders of the superintendent of police at Bedford; but no John Smith did they catch!"-Tit-Bits.

"What's that?" they asked. "I haven't the money to make the purchase."-Chicago Post.

Where It Happened.

Belle-He says he kissed her under the bay window. Dolly-The idea! Making such a blunt reference to the dear thing's nose

which she cannot help1 - Chicago Times-Herald.

we were told that the crown prince of Austria was just before us, and that the word had gone out from the Turkish authorities to prepare his way in ad-

vance. At this our dragoman was delighted, as he was sure that we would find the roads in excellent condition all the way northward. Again and again he said, gratefully: "This road has been prepared for the prince. I wish there was always a prince before us."

-Trumbull's Oriental Studies. Fleeing from Wrath .- Dr. George Adam Smith, in his "Historical Ge-ography of the Holy Land," gives a vivid picture of a fire in the Judean wilderness. The rain, during the short wet season, induces a rank growth of brambles and grasses. In the hot months that follow these become very dry, and a fire once kindled spreads with great rapidity. It comes sweeping down before the wind almost like a fire on the American prairies, and before it the lizards and serpents flee from their hiding places beneath the stones.

Dr. Smith remarks that such a scene may have suggested to this wilderness preacher the word in which he upbraided the Pharisees and Sadducees: "O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come?"

PRACTICAL.

Always there is a voice crying: "Make ye ready the way of the Lord!" What response are you making?

The way of the Lord can be made ready only by removing injustice, oppression, sin and all evil.

Those who say they repent must bring forth fruits meet for repentance.

When the people are in agitation, we do not understand how tranquillity is do not understand how tranquillity is to return; and when they are at peace, we do not see how tranquillity can de-Ma May B. STEVENSON, Alliance, Q. part-Le Bruyere.

ham's Vegetable Compound.

"I had been in poor health for twenty years, having inflammation of ovaries and womb trouble. Although treated by physicians, I could not gain strength nor do my work, and was so low-spiried and tired of life. A friend advised me to take Lydia E. Pink-ham's Vegetable Compound. The first bottle strengthened me, and I wrote to you. After taking six bottles can say that I an well and can even do my own washing"-MRS. M. W. MILLER, No. 1033 Caml Street, New Orleans, La.

"For three years I suffered with ovarian trouble, having inflammation and an abscess on right ovary. Had such pap in my back and head, and at times wis unable to walk. Had sev-eral dotors, but they did not do me much pod. One doctor said that I would ave to have an operation and would have to have an operation and have the ovary removed. I became disconfiged and gave up all hopes of getting well. I began taking Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. I wrot to Mrs. Pinkham and followed her dirctions faithfully, and am better tha I have been for three years. I hav taken ten bottles, and my friend are surprised at my rapid im-provement."--Mas. W. H. WALTERS, Cold Sring Harbor, L. L., N. Y.

Backache and Womb Trables Succumb to Lyda E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

"I have been for ten years an in-valid vith female weakness, and the tortu and pain I suffered no tongue can the interest of the sufference of the the the years that I was free from pain. My trouble was inflammation and ongestion of womb. When I commend to take your remedy I had and suggestion of womb. When I communed to take your remedy I had J been affast for some time under the treatent of two of the best physi-cians Illinois without receiving any bene. You can imagine the benefit I derivi from Lydia E. Pinkham's Vege-table ompound when I tell you that I have ained forty pounds and am well —a tng I never dared to expect."— MRS. E. FOLAND, Monett, Mo.

"Ir a number of years I was trougd with backache and lencor-rhom I became so weak and miserthat I could not attend to my or studies. The least effort worl or studies. The least effort worl or studies. The least effort ciarfailed to help me. I felt that my you was blighted, and the life before me ould be one of suffering and misy. Then a friend insisted on me take your medicine. Before I had usone bottle I was greatly relieved. I h not known a well day for four yes but now I feel better than I have sing child, and it is all due to Lydis

1000

Why She Can't. "Pooh!" she exclaimed, scornfully. "I could marry a title as well as any one if it were not for one thing."