

A QUESTION OF TASTE.

Up a certain crooked city street, through which I often pass. There's a narrow little window, set with tiny panes of glass.

A STRANGE CLEW

BY "The Captain."

When I was quite a young man I counted among my close friends a private detective. The two of us were enjoying a quiet smoke and chat in his cosy little office one day when the door opened and his boy ushered in a lady client.

"At your service, madam. Pray be seated."

"I am in sore trouble, sir," she said, in tremulous tones, applying her handkerchief to her eyes. "Death has suddenly robbed me of a father, and the prison, if nothing worse, threatens to take a dear cousin from me."

"That is very sad," my friend said, sympathetically. "But compose yourself, my dear lady; we may yet avert the latter half of your trouble."

"Oh, sir! Heaven grant that you may, for my cousin, whom they suspect of the murder of my poor father, was to be my husband," she said, the seriousness of the case quite overcoming her natural modesty.

"My dear young lady," said Banks, encouragingly, "before hearing the first detail of your case, I am convinced that he is. My belief in feminine intuition is based upon the solid foundation of experience. Be calm, therefore, and let me have the story from the beginning."

The circumstances she related were as follows:

Her father, Thomas Kempton, was the proprietor of a large furniture factory. He was a man who paid strict attention to business, and was in the habit of remaining in his office after the factory had closed for the night and the men had departed, in order to finish up his large correspondence.

One of the clerks in his employ was a nephew, a fine young fellow, strong of body and generous of heart, but not free from the follies of youth. Harry Stanton was a graduate at college and a thorough athlete, and, being yet scarce twenty, he had not outgrown his youthful enthusiasm for sports, clubs and semi-incidental late suppers with the boys.

Now the old are not always so tolerant of the ways of the young as recollection should make them, and so it happened that the frequent transgressions of the uncle's office rules by the nephew caused between the two considerable friction. On the evening of the tragedy there had been quite a serious quarrel, and the young fellow had left the presence of his employer in hot-headed haste and with angry words.

One hour later, and half an hour after the factory was closed, Mr. Kempton was found dead in his private office. He was seated in his chair, his head falling forward on his desk before him. A clasp-knife had been used to accomplish the deed, and this lay on the floor in a pool of blood at the murder man's feet. On being cleansed and examined the fatal weapon was instantly recognized by the clerks as young Stanton's.

The safe had been rifled of its valuable contents, and there was evidence that the assassin, in making his exit through the general office, had stopped to open Stanton's desk and remove such things as the young fellow, in making a permanent departure, would be likely to take.

When the sight was so surprising that my vision seemed to fall. For from underneath his sugared bench he drew a dinner-pail.

Now don't you think that such a taste was something very strange? Consider what a diet he could easily arrange.

On solid things like taffy-balls, for instance, he could dine. For luncheon, candied violets—so delicate and fine!

"Um!" said Banks in his peculiar way, and then he proceeded to go through the contents of the drawer. Being slightly acquainted with one of the clerks, I stepped up to him for a moment's conversation.

"I think we have seen sufficient," he said immediately, and in a few minutes we were on our way back to town.

"Found something, Banks?"

"A mere trifle," he responded, "but mum's the word, my boy, even for you. A little spice of mystery, you know, will sharpen your interest."

"You will oblige me by gathering all the employees of the factory together in this office, Mr. Williams," said Banks, addressing the head clerk.

"I observe that you use a typewriter," he went on, after Mr. Williams had given orders to have the men called.

This being brought Banks proceeded to untie his package. Removing the outer wrapper, he laid bare a plain cardboard box, the cover of which he was on the point of lifting, when he looked up to see the eyes of all present gazing upon it with eager curiosity.

In five minutes the men—looking somewhat mystified—were all assembled, and everything ready for the next step.

"Now, men," he said, addressing the gathering, "as little more can be done in the matter of the murder until we hear from Detective Gregg, Mr. Williams here has kindly consented to allow me this favorable opportunity to put to the test a little theory which it is said that in China all holders of public offices, and especially soldiers, are known by their thumbmarks.

"Now," said Banks, lifting the mysterious package, "I have here a small magic lantern through which I propose to put the slide bearing the impressions. It is now dark enough, I fancy, and—yes—the back of that large calendar yonder will serve excellently as a white surface. Oblige me, Mr. Williams, by turning its face to the wall. Thank you."

"To make the test a little more interesting," he continued, "I will first show you the thumb-mark of a gentleman whom I have a great desire to meet. We will compare the others with this one."

Presently Banks pushed the long slide in and stopped at number one. For a few seconds he allowed it to show out beside the first. It exhibited a conformation entirely different. He then superimposed them, and placed the figure on the moving slide directly over that on the stationary one.

Quickly he hurried through the list, treating each in the same manner and allowing the dissimilarities to speak for themselves. Presently one of the thumb marks fitted so nicely over the

stationary one that not a single variation could be observed; there was no crossing of the lines, and no blur.

"Seize him—John Trasker—the murderer! Don't let him escape, men!"

Before a hand could be raised to stay him John Trasker had plunged headforemost through the window and was flying with terror at his heels down the street.

Presently a clatter of hoofs was heard, and a horse and rider dashed past, then and gained rapidly upon the flying fugitive. Seeing he would be shortly overtaken if he kept the road, Trasker climbed a stone wall and dashed across a meadow.

Arriving at the factory, Trasker broke down and made a most abject confession. He had planned to remain behind that evening to rifle the open safe. Overhearing the quarrel between uncle and nephew, he saw how it might be used to his advantage.

HE prediction is that in fifty years—perhaps less than fifty, if the present laws remain in effect and are rigidly executed—the Chinese population of the United States will become practically extinct.

A generation ago, there were in San Francisco from thirty to forty thousand Chinamen. The Chinese consul-general there told me that, counting men, women, and children, there are now not 10,000.

According to the most liberal estimate, there are not more than one hundred and fifty legal Chinese wives in San Francisco. But the number of Chinese women is estimated at between one thousand and two thousand.

ET us suppose, for instance, that you wish to have a good house built. As a general rule you will apply to a master carpenter. You cannot select and hire workmen; guild regulations forbid.

He builds your home according to contract, but that is only the beginning of the relation. You have really made with him an agreement which you must not break, without good and sufficient reason, for the rest of your life.

Should the roof leak, for instance, you must not send for the nearest tiler or tinsmith; if the plaster cracks, you must not send for a plasterer.

The man who built your house holds himself responsible for its condition, and he is jealous of that responsibility. None but he has the right to send for the plasterer, the roofer, the tinsmith.—From "Japan; An Attempt at Interpretation."

An engineer named Knorr, a German who has become a naturalized Russian, built four of the great bridges on the Trans-Siberian Railway including the big Yenisei and Obi bridges, which cost, respectively, \$2,350,000 and \$2,000,000.

OT only do a man's friends, but particularly his enemies, insist that he shall live up to his name. It is a wholesome discipline.

In Chicago.

"Why do those men look so much alarmed?"

Abstainers and Insurance

A Prohibitionist Leader on Life Insurance Premiums.

By I. K. Funk.

It is not wholly reasonable to ask that the expert actuaries of our best insurance companies figure out carefully from the now recognized facts the average rate of longevity of total abstainers and adjust premiums accordingly.

Several years ago a petition was sent to a leading New York life insurance company requesting the organization of a total abstinence class which would secure to total abstainers the increased profits which accrue from their habits of self-denial.

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The Passing of the Chinese

How Nature is Solving the Problem of the "Yellow Peril."

By W. S. Harwood.

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Trades Unions in Japan

By the Late Lafcadio Hearn.

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Live Up to Your Name

By S. M. Crothers.

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In Chicago.

"EYES AND SEE NOT."

Simple Affairs of Everyday Life That Pass Us By.

How many buttons have you on your waistcoat? This is no "catch," just a simple question, but if you can answer it without counting, it will show, says Pearson's Weekly, that you possess powers of perception above the average.

It is not that man has not the faculty of remembering such things. That he does possess this is shown by the feats of memory each performs daily in his or her special line of occupation.

In a recent murder case a man suspected of the crime was seen by three different persons. One, a laborer, said that the individual was rather short and stout, had a beard and mustache, and wore a dark suit of clothes and a derby hat.

The third witness, another laborer, was positive that the man was short, thin, elderly, had a gray beard and mustache, and wore a brown coat and corduroy trousers.

With a view to throwing light on this subject of the conflict of evidence, an interesting experiment was recently tried at Berlin by Professor Von Liszt.

At the time appointed the quarrel took place, amid tremendous excitement. The professor finally put a stop to it. A week later he lectured on "Evidence," having in the meantime taken the testimony of those who had witnessed the made-up quarrel.

Out of these twenty-three well-educated young men the testimony of no two was exactly alike. No fewer than eight different persons were named as the originator of the fight in which, actually, but two had been concerned.

The actual firing of a pistol was accurately described by nearly all, but there were four separate versions of the period of the quarrel at which it was fired.

"You are like most persons," Professor Von Liszt told his students, after reporting the result of this inquiry. "You look but you do not see. It is not wilful perjurers who impede the course of justice—such persons are few—but careless people like yourselves, who have not trained the eye to report to the brain."

There is now under construction across the St. Lawrence at Quebec a cantilever bridge when completed will contain the longest span of any bridge yet erected, not even excluding the great cantilevers of the Forth Bridge in Scotland.

The structure is of the cantilever type, and consists of two approach spans, of 210 feet each, two shore arms, each 500 feet in length, and a great central span, 1800 feet in length.

The total length of the bridge is 4220 feet, and although in extreme dimensions it does not compare with the Forth of Scotland, which is about one mile in total length, it has the distinction of having the longest span in the world by ninety feet, the two cantilevers of the Forth Bridge being each 1710 feet in length.

Titmouse is a bird. Catgut is a sheepgut. Sealing-wax has no wax. Blind worms have eyes and can see. Irish stew is unknown in Ireland. Rice paper is not made of rice or the rice plant.

With the withdrawal of the training ships Northampton and Cleopatra from the active list, the other day, the last shred of canvas disappeared from the British Navy.

A new use of vanadium is announced in a forthcoming invention by Wilhelm von Siemens. It concerns a vanadium glow lamp.