FLOY'S SILENCE.

By ADA FERRIS



the valuable stock at Vane & Hunt's blg dry goods store-and nobody knew who or when or how. The employes had been asked to use extra care and vigilance, and the most light-hearted

girl there felt worried and uneasy. Was it a clever shoplifter? Could there be a thief among them? Did the firm suspect any one? Was there perhaps a detective watching them even now? And-did detectives not sometimes make mistakes? Every one was painfully nervous, and impatient to have the mystery cleared up.

"And I believe you know some hing about it, Floy," said Jennie Burnham, under her breath, to a fellow clerk.

"Why, what makes you think that?"

Floy asked, startled. "I know it. I know by-by the way you hold your tongue when we are all puzzling about it. Now what is it?" "No," said Floy Irving, very slowly as if weighing every word, "no, I do not know any more than the rest of you about this. I don's even know what is missing."

"But you have a suspicion. Now own

"No," even more slowly, "And if I had, it might be doing a great mistake to tell."

"Oh, you obstinate little mule! wish there was an X-ray so we could look through people's heads and find out what they knew."

But some one came up just then, and Floy seized the opportunity to slip away, with a deep breath of thankfulness. For she did know something-only, had it anything to do with this case? If she spoke, all in the store-or all but two, perhanswould say at once, "That solves the riddle." But would it? Or would it ouly practically convict one who might after all be innocent?

Oh, if, there were only some X-ray by which one might look into a soul and see if it were true! There he stood at an opposite counter, quiet and faithful, although he must know that one word from her would concentrate all this dark cloud of suspicion on his head.

Yet why should she not say, "I do not know who is the thief now, but ! know who was responsible for a similar course of petty losses a few years ago, and not so many miles away. He calls himself Robert Murdock now, but he was sent to the reform school then under the name of Bob Jamieson."

Yet was it quite fair to conclude that because Bob Jamieson, ill-fed, illclothed and ill-advised by an unscrupulous stepfather, had robbed the employer who provoked the act by refusing to pay fair wages, therefore Robert Murdock, some years older, wiser, and to all appearance strictly honorable, was equally guilty?

He had been in the store some months now, and apparently she slone knew of this old trouble. She hardly knew why she had not told that he was an old schoolmate of her ownpartly, perhaups, because so much had been said of a girl's inatility to keep a secret, and she resented the idea, but more on account of a bindly reluciance to make trouble for one trying knew that the had ever met before.

Murdock's behavior had been faultless-almost too good to be natural, it seemed to Floy. Still, this might mean only that he was determined to retrieve his good name and bury the old disgrace from sight forever. What injustice, then, practically to convict him of this new theft, without one particle of proof, and make the cloud above him darker than ever!

Yet the word once spoken could never be recalled. And there before her eyes every day stood Robert Murdock, waiting the word that should hurl him to destruction-vet neither by word nor look appealing for mercy.

She slipped out hurriedly, when the day's work was over, lest Jennie should overtake and ply her with more questions. She did not want to talk-or to think. What was the use of puzzling one's brains over a problem one had not facts to solve? But before she had fairly reached her boarding place she was stopped by one of her comrades in

the store, with a piteous appeal: "O Floy Irving, I'm in such a bother! You'll help me out, won't you? There's a darling! My head aches fit to split, and there was such a crowd at our counter I couldn't begin to keep things straight, and some of the ladies pulled the laces all round and got them into such a tangle! I do believe one of them was the shoplifter that is making us all so much trouble. didn't dare take my eyes off her, and I fust shoved the whole tangle back in a drawer, out of sight, till I had time to straighten them out. And my head ached so that I forgot them entirely, O Floy, would you go and put them away for me-like an angel? I don't feel as if I could stand it to go back myself tonight."

When did Floy Irving ever refuse to do a favor? The jolly old nightwatchman would admit her readily enough, she knew, even if the bookkeepers had finished and gone-and often one or another of the clerks was detnined.

So in a few moments later she re ntered the store by the rear door. How ghostly and empty it looked in glances and incautious wo the dim light! There was no sign of her very uncomfortable.

Somebody was helping himself from , life save the watchman's whistle away up in one of the galleries. She hurried toward Annie's counter, and turning a corner, came sharply upon-Robert Murdock!

How often she had wished for a chance to question him! Here it wasif she only knew how to use it.

"Did I frighten you?" he asked, civilly, for she had given a startled cry. "I merely stepped out to see who was coming in. Mr. Hale asked me to stay and help unpack some new good to night."

Floy briefly explained her own presence in turn. No one at Vane & Hunt's wanted any suspicion attaching to their movements just now. Thenfor she dared not let this golden opportunity pass-she added hurriedly, "Iwant to ask you one question." Involuntarily she caught his arm and turned his face toward the light.

"Well?" "Is Robert Murdock your true name?"

"My true name. It was my father's before me. Jamieson was only my stepfather. Is that all?" For she had dropped her hand and turned away with a gesture of hopelessness.

"Yes-no! That is, what's the use? I know what you would say-either way! There's no use wasting time." "And you wouldn't believe anything

I said-either way! No, it's not much use talking," she said bitterly. "I-I don't understand!" gasped

Floy, startled. "You think, 'Once a thief, always a thief.' Well, you won't believe me, I sunnose. I don't know why you have ker my secret so long, unless you liked to play with me as a cat does with a mouse. Nevertheless, I will say this-as heaven hears me, I know

nothing whatever about the thefts in this store. I am as innocent of them as you are." "I believe you!" Floy exclaimed, extending her hand eagerly. "And I don't believe that horrible old saying. Don't be angry with me, please. didn't mean to be hard or cruel. I never thought you cared to have me speak to you. I wasn't playing with I kept still because I thought it

You may trust me." He controlled his voice by an effort 'Forgive me, I should not have spoken so. You have a right to choose your acquaintances."

was right-and now I know it was.

'The watchman is coming; I must go at Annie's laces. But I know what to believe now," and she hurried on breathlessly. A moment later she was hastily bringing order out of chaos, even while explaining her return to her friend, the watchman,

"She's a careless one!" the old man growled. "I'd let her do her own straightening. 'Tisn't your business."

"She was sick, you know," said, excusingly. "I don't mind helping her a little." She glanced uncon-"I don't mind helpsciously over where Murdock was now arranging the new goods on the

idea that Bob Murdock might offer to not delay me." see her home," chuckled the watchman. "But I never saw you show any weakness in that line."

"Oh, you don't see everything!" Floy laughed, although her cheeks flamed, "But I'll be done and at home long before he can get away."

"Oh, if you spoke to him tonight, I'll warrant it was the first time."

At which suggestion Floy's nervous fingers only flew the faster. She did not care to talk more with him tonight. Yet she was very glad she had come. Her doubts were setled now. Only-she wished she had been a little less cautious and a little kindera little more just, perhaps. But at least she was thankful that she had not spoken out her doubts.

But when she entered the store the next morning, the air was heavier than ever with doubt and dread. More losses had been discovered. The girls huddled together, exchanging wild guesses in frightened whispers. The firm had not given out any word, but there was unwonted hurrying to and fro, the senior partner had been summoned by telephone, and now was closeted with Mr. Hunt, the junior partner, one of the floor walkers and the head bookkeeper. And with them was a sharp-eved little man no one know-a detective, perhaps, Mr. Hale and the watchman had been called before them, as the last persons in the store the preceding night. It seemed that matters were to be thoroughly sifted at last.

"They'd better ask who else was here last night," Katie Maguire whispered, venomously, "Mr. Hale wasn't

"You don't mean Mr. Murdock? Why you might as well accuse a parson!"

cried two or three at once. "No. I don't mean Mr. Murdock. Somebody else was here after hours, with a mighty poor excuse-somebody that holds herself quite too high and

mighty to go with ordinary folks." "Floy Irving? O bosh! She came to oblige Annie. Floy's one of the nicest girls in the store."

"Maybe, but if I was Mr. Hunt I'd look into her obligingness a little." Of course this was not before Floy's face, but she caught enough side es and incautious words to make "It's only

Katie's spite," she told herself, but she went to her work flushed and nervous not forgetting, however, to give Robert Murdock a nod and a smiling "Good morning!"

How gravely he returned it! But of course this suspense was even harder for him than for the other. A little later she saw him entering the private

A particularly exasperating customer taxed her attention to the utmost for the next quarter of an hour, but her long breath of relief as the woman departed was cut short by the ominous words:

"You are wanted in the private office, Miss Irving."

"I? What for?" Floy gasped, in dismay.

"I do not know. No doubt they will ten you." Was it only her fancy, or was the tone frosty with suspicion? She saw the girls around exchange startled glances, heard Katie's exultant whisper, "You see! Didn't I tell you so?" and Jennie's indignant

'Hush! That doesn't mean anything." Of course it did not, Floy told her-It was only their excitement which gave significance to such a trifle. To be sure, girls were not summoned to the private office often. But why should she be nervous? What if she had seen Robert Murdock entering that private room just a little while ago? The villain in a storybook might make a false accusation to rid himself of a troublesome witness, but in real life- If only her cheeks would not burn so! I was enough to make any one suspect her, and the very thought made them burn hotter.

All this flashed through Floy's mind as she walked quickly from her counter to the door of the private office; but if her heart beat so fast that it seemed to choke her, she carried her head bravely.

Inside the dreaded portal she passed, outwardly calm, inwardly fighting down a panic. The partners and head bookkeeper were in close consultation. Kirdly Mr. Hunt nodded to her, bidding her sit down, but nervous Mr. Vane snapped out shortly:

"We hear that you were here after hours last night, Miss Irving. How is that? And how did you get in?"

Floy explained briefly why and how she had returned, forcing herself to speak steadily, although all the time something seemed whispering in her ear, "How should they know that unless he has forestalled you by throwing suspicion on you? Why did you let yourself be convinced so easily? Didn't you know that a man who would steal would lie? Why didn't you speak out at first? After he has once accused you, your story will sound like a weak attempt at self-defence.

And she could only tell herself, desperate y, "I told him he might trust me. I can't break my word unless I am sure."

"How long were you here? What did you do? Be exact, now," Mr. Vane demanded, while Mr. Hunt leaned back, watching her with an odd, amused air that bewildered and alarmed her, as if he were expecting she did not know what. Certainly not the matter-of-fact answer she gave.

"Not over 20 minutes, I think. I stepped to exchange a few words with Mr. Murdock-maybe five minutes. 1 nut the counter and drawers in order as quickly as possible, and went out "If 'twas any of the other girls, as I came in. The watchman spoke to now, I'd just wonder if she hadn't an me while I was at work, but that did

"And what were you talking about, if I may ask?" Mr. Vane snapped. Mr. Hunt's eyes twinkled as he waited for her answer.

That voice seemed to roar in her ears, "Tell it all !You will never have such a chance again. Can't you see that he has accused you to save himself?" But she said, steadily, "Oh, the watchman teased me about coming back so as to talk with Mr. Murdock We told each other how we happened to come back to the store, and-"

"And what?" Mr. Vane demanded sharply, as she hesitated.

"And complained a little about how pervous these mysterious thefts were making us all," she finished, boldly.

What do you think about these thefts, Miss Irving?" Mr. Hunt asked, suddenly, his eyes twinkling more

Once more Flow desperately fought off a great temptation. "I don't know

what to think " He chuckled, rubbing his hands to-

gether in satisfaction. "You understand stenography and

typewriting, I am told?" 'Yes, sir!" gasped Floy, staring. She had taken great pains to learn, hoping to find a better position, but so

far none had offered. "Well, I am without a private clerk this morning. Sit down there and put these letters into shape, if you please. These to be answered-according to the notes I have scribbled on them. You know the proper form, of course. Floy obeyed, feeling perfectly dazed. The partners went out and were gone some time. She was just finishing the task assigned when Mr. Hunt returned. He looked over the letters,

thoroughly confounded her by saying: "How would you like the place of my private clerk and typewriter, Miss Irving? I have been obliged to part with young Greydon. He talked too freely of my business affairs. You don't write quite so fast, but I see you know how to keep a secret to perfec-

tested her skill in shorthand, then

"I? Keep a secret?" Floy gaspe He laughed and patted her shoulder in his fatherly fashion. "Let me put your mind at ease about Bob Murdock. I know all about that Jamieson affair. The boy told me himself when he first

asked for work. His father and I were old friends. 1 don't think I'll regret giving him a fair chance. And now the mystery of the thefts is solved. It was the janitor of the place next door. He found a board loose in the partition between the cellars, and thought he had discovered a benanza-thought he never would be suspected. But when he tried to dispose of the things he

was caught. "Tut, tut, child, don't cry! You've done splendidly. I expected every day that you would speak out, and have every one thinking Bob was the guilty one. But you didn't, so I think I can trust you to hold your tongue about other matters, too."

"But I almost said it 20 times," Floy said, honestly. "Indeed! Why didn't you quite say

"Because I was afraid it might be doing injustice-and 'A word once spoken, a coach and six horses can't bring back,' as grandpa used to tell us."

"Then if you once make up your mind, after careful consideration, that it is right to tell other people my business secrets, you will do it, will you?" he asked, dryly.

'Why-yes-I suppose so," Flay faltered.

"But not till then?"

"Oh, no!" she said, earnestly.

"Well, if you wait till then, I think we won't quarrel. Consider yourself engaged. And you may tell Bob Murdock, if you like, that I have taken you on his recommendation."-Youth's Companion.

QUAINT AND CURIOUS.

American bumble-bees are wanted in the Philippines to sting the clover plants into fertility.

In the colony of Japanese in New York city there are about one thousand men and but thirty women.

The new German law prohibits any person under 18 years of age from driving an automobile or motorcycle.

Calico printing was a new industry in Japan twelve years ago. Today a single firm has factory buildings covering nearly four acres, The corn cob pipe isn't the only

pipe made in Missouri. The pipe factory at Louisiana made and shipped 215,000 hickory pipes last year, and a pipe made from a section of a hickory pole is said to be just as good a pipe as the much-glorified cob pipe.

The Goliath beetle is a Samson among insects. It is found in South America. Between the neck and shoulder this curious creature has enormous strength. Anything placed within the aperture is tightly gripped and, if breakable, snaps. A key which was inserted in one as an experiment was bent out of shape.

In Hawaii even private lands in forest are sometimes administered by the Territorial Board of Agriculture and Forestry. Some of the lessees of public land within the Koolau Reserve have turned over to the Board for administration both their leased and their private lands, amounting in all to 27,000 acres.

David Davis, an old man of Cincinnati, was scated on a twelve-foot wall that he lost his balance on the wall to wipe out of existence at one blow British House of Lords, declare influend toppled over into the street. Owand toppled over into the street. Ow- the late Emperor and all his children, may prove fatal.

The fire which destroyed the old British Houses of Parliament broke building, termed the Palace of Westminster, was opened on Nov. 4, 1852. It stands on a bed of concrete twelve feet thick, and covers an area of nine statute acres. It contains 1100 apartments, one hundred staircases, and two miles of corridors and passages. The great Victoria Tower, at the southwest extremity, is 346 feet in

The origin of eating goose on Michaelmas day dates from the time of Queen Elizabeth. On her way to Tilbury Fort, on Sept. 20, 1589, she dined on roast goose and Bergundy wine. With the last glass she drank "Destruction to the Spanish Armada." As she drained the glass news came of the destruction of the Spanish fleet by a storm. Thereupon she ordered that roast goose should be served for her every year on that day, and the custom soon became general among the people.

Thieves Steal a Whole Church.

Thieves of Chicago and vicinity, notorious for many remarkable deeds eclipsed all previous efforts time yesterday when they stole bodily the Presbyterlan church, seating 200 people, from River Grove, on the Desplaines River. The church had no regular pastor, but itinerant ministers would address the farmers in the edifice occasionally.

This morning Z. A. Rosi, a farmer living across the river, missed the church. He rubbed his eyes and called his family. Then they crossed the river to make certain the church was gone. It had been stolen, down to the last splinter, and there is no trace of it, although active search has been kept up all day.-Chicago Inter-Ocean.

Which machine of the type invented by Guillotin was first put to its dread use is not known, but that used fo the execution of Marie Antoineite stil

CZAR'S CHARMED LIFE.

Miraculous Escapes of Nicholas II From Violent Death.

Emperor Nicholas may be said to bear a charmed life, and there is no monarch in modern times nor prince of the blood, who has had so many hair-breadth escapes. For it now turns out that the wreck of his steam yacht Standart was the result not of accident, but of deliberate design. The channel where the mishap occurred is notoriously dangerous, so much so that the little passenger steamers running from St. Petersburg to the neighboring Finnish ports, and drawing a third as much water as the imperial yacht, are strictly forbidden to use it. prohibition is known to everybody in Finland and is a matter with which every navigating officer of the Muscovite navy is acquainted.

Yet in spite of this the most experienced Finnish pilot took the huge imperial yacht into the channel at full speed, of course ripping up her bottom on several rocks, which, in spite of what has been said to the contrary, figure on every chart, Russian as well as foreign. The boat was going at the rate of fifteen knots when she struck, and the force was so great as to give her a heel of twenty-four degrees. Fortunately the sea was absolutely and phenomenally calm. If the ordinary fresh Finnish weather had prevailed it would have been a matter of the utmost difficulty to have taken off the women, and especially the children, in boats.

The commodore in command of the boat was the captain of that solitary cruiser of the ill fated Baltic fleet which managed after the victory of Admiral Togo to escape northward and to convey to Vladivostok the first news of the destruction of the Russian armada in the Sea of Tsushima. The arrival of that one battle scarred. storm beaten cruiser in the bay at Vladivostok in view of the crowds assembled on the neighboring heights to witness the advent of the great Muscovite fleet which they had honed would break the naval power of Japan, turn the tide of the war and transform defeat into victory, but which proved to be such a messenger of evil, has furnished the inspiration of several striking marine paintings.

The Czar's escapes, so far as they are known to the public, have been, to say the least, dramatic and wellnigh miraculous, and there are many others which from motives of policy have remained shrouded in mystery One of the most sensational was the wreck of the imperial special train at Borki, in October, 1888, when the destruction was so complete that it seemed inconceivable that any one could have escaped slive. Twentyone were killed outright, including several of the servants, who were it the act of serving dishes to the late Czar, seated with his wife and his children at dinner. Grand Duchess Olga's nurse was found with her skull shattered, holding tightly clasped in her arms the child, whose only injury, beyond the terrible shock to her nervous system, was caused by a dinner fork, the prongs of which had penetrated deeply into her arm. ander III also sustained some slight injuries, but the present Emperor. then a lad of twenty, suffered no barm at all. I need hardly add that with a number of companions today, the destruction of the imperial train swapping funny stories. The old man at Borki was nothing more nor less laughed so heartily at one of the tales than a carefully organized attempt ing to his advanced age the injuries for no more deadly spot could have been selected for the purpose than that where the wreck took place.

Then there was that attempt upon the life of the present Czar in Jaout on Oct. 16, 1834. The present pan, when a crazed and fanatic Japanese ex-noble struck at him with one of those terrible old two-handed Japanese swords, the blades of which are so keen and so finely tempered that they will slice without effort a silken handkerchief thrown up into the air, and cut through tissue and bone, inflicting the most frightful wounds. Nicholas, thanks to the intervention of his cousin, Prince George of Greece, who hit the wouldbe assassin a terrific blow on the head with his heavy walking stick, escaped with a glancing wound on the head. Had the sword struck true, and had it not been for Prince George's interference, it must have cleft the head of Nicholas to the chin.

Then, two years ago, when the Emperor, the Empress and his other relatives were presiding at the ceremony of the blessing of the waters of the Neva, the guns used in firing the salutes across the stream from the imperial entourage standing in the immediate vicinity of the Czar and Czarina were struck, while many of the windows of the Winter Palace, including the two at which the imperial children were standing to witness the ceremony, were shattered. Now we have the wreck of the yacht Standart. Truly the escapes of the present Emperor of Russia from violent death may be described as miraculous.-Marquise De Fontenoy, in New York Tribune,

Ment Drying Increases.

The development of the meat dry ing (jerked beef) industry in Brazil is proceeding rapidly, apparently at the expense of the industry in Argentina and Uruguay. The following figures are given for killings for the first five months of the present seaon: Argentina, 148,300; Uruguay, 482,000; Brazil, 674,000.

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NEWSY GLEANINGS.

Drouth continues in India. Germany has 40,000 postoffices.

Tasmania grows the largest apple. H. O. Havemeyer, the Sugar King. died of indigestion. In Algeria the horses outnumber

the human beings. South Africa is becoming a great field for musical instruments.

Wales brought defeats to the Socia Amateur aeronauts in Paris have lost interest in the snort since the sudden flight of the Patrie.

Municipal elections in England and

Hog cholers in virulent form prenear Marshalltown, Iowa, some herds being entirely wiped out.

The Salvation Army anti-suicide

bureau reported more suicides recent-ly in New York City than ever be-Extensive denosits of nig iron have been discovered along the line of the Grand Trunk Pacific Railway, near

Fort William, Canada. Several New York City firms formerly allied with the Milk Trust abandoned the Trust's nine-cents-aquart rate and sold for eight cents.

Work on the Northern Nigeris Railway is now in active progress Rails from England have been landed and 2000 men are at work laying George H. Richmond, who naid

\$1225 for the book known to hibito-philes as "John Milion's Family Bible," has concluded that it is not genuine. ians who had intended to come to this country will star in Itale, while 200,-

000 more than usual will return from Mental capacity is the need of the

Prime Minister to create a number of new peerages. James Hazen Hyde offered to compromise for \$1,000,000 the Equitable Life's suits against him to compe!

restitution, but Attorney - General Jackson refused to acquiesce.

FEMININE NEWS NOTES. The engagement of Miss Theodora Shonts to the Duc de Chaulnes has een announced.

Members of the faculty of New York City Normal College refused to allow the girls to form a basketball team.

Frau von Pann. Berlin's first wom-an driver of a taximeter cab, took \$30 in fares on the first night of her new career. Many of the sailors on the Pacific

cruise will carry Bibles, gifts from Helen Gould, with her name personally inscribed. Gowns valued at \$10,000, the pron-erty of Miss Florence Todd, of New Orleans, were selzed by the customs

officials in New York. The engagement was announced in New York City of Mrs. Paul Lelces-ter Ford, widow of the novellst, to marry Dr. L. R. Williams.

the opposite bank were found to be loaded with shrapnel instead of blank dressed in white, was ordained as cartridge, and several members of nastor of the Church of the Higher Life in Huntington Chambers Hall.

Mrs. David Beatty, the late Mar-shall Field's daughter, was robbed of \$25,000 worth of lewelry at her English country house at Melton

Mrs. William Jennings Bryan and her younger daughter sailed from New York City on the steamship Friedrich der Grosse. They expect to make a tour of the Holy Land.

Mr. Andrew Carnegie placed Mrs. Ida Lewis Wilson, keeper of the Limerock light house, near Newport. who has saved eighteen lives, on his private pension list at \$20 a month.

Mrs. Anetta El. McCres, the first woman landwape architect in this country, is the official landscape architect for the St. Prul road, and consulting landscape architect for the Western roads.

Chancellor Day at Syracuse an-nounced that he had declined an offer from a lecture bureau for a debat on socialism with Gaylord Wilshire.