NO OTHER WAY.

STORY OF THRILLING INTEREST, BASED ON THE WORKINGS OF THE ENGLISH PENAL SYSTEM AND DEBTOR PRISON ❦ ❦ LAST WORK OF SIR WALTER BESANT

Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

Mrs. Isabel Weyland, a widow, is threatened with the debtor's prison. Her chief creditor, Mrs. Brymer, suggests a way out of the difficulty, marriage with an imprisoned debtor, who, for a paltry sum, will assume Mrs. Weyland's debts also. He proves to be a young lawyer, Macnamara, who, through no fault of his own, has fallen into dire straits. Mrs. Weyland, in pity, pays his small debt, sets him free, and agrees to marry a negro condemned to die in three days. She then retires in poverty to country life, but later falls heiress to a large fortune and becomes a social queen in London. Here she meets Macnamara, now a flourishing barrister, who pledges himself to her service, and is most attentive to her, to the anger of her brother-in-law, Lord Stratherrick. Mrs. Weyland takes as secretary Alice Fulton, daughter of a former creditor. Stratherrick learns of her marriage to the negro through Miss Fulton's father, a worthless specimen. He then calls upon his sister-in-law and attempts blackmail, proposing that she pay £500 to him to keep the former creditor quiet. The negro returns to London, having escaped both the gallows and penal servitude in the colonies. He blackmails Mrs. Weyland, who calls Macnamara to her aid. He turns detective, and, in disguise, frightens Truxo, the negro, into the belief that his life is in danger. Macnamara secures a valuable ally in Doll, Truxo's real wife.

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CHAPTER XXVII.—(Continued.)

"You did, Doll, you did. Suppose I was to go to her and to say, 'Doll's his wife, and the proof is that she fetched me a box o' the ear enough to knock my head off. But we want better proof than that, Doll."

"I can't give you my marriage lines."

"No—and I don't want them. Tell me only where and when you were married. That will be quite enough for me."

"That's easy. I was married in Shadwell Church five years ago, in the month of July."

"Five years ago; in the month of July; in Shadwell Church. That's enough, Doll, and now don't let him see that you're jealous, because he's made so, and he'd be angered and when he's angered—if I was you, Doll, I wouldn't anger him. So that's all right, isn't it?"

"I suppose so," she replied, sullenly. "He has been there—"

"He won't go there any more, I promise you that, and there's to be no sticking with knives, is there? And no going to the house and calling names? Because you see, Doll, you'd only anger him the more, and no giving information because you see it would be a terrible thing for you, of all people in the world, to bring this man of yours—all your own—to the gallows. You'd never forgive yourself, and bad luck would follow you all the rest of your life."

"No, I won't lay information. But she's got to give him up."

"She will, she will, when she hears the truth, there's nothing she will desire more than to give him up. Now, Doll, the steak is done. I'll carry it up and hark ye, not a word of this talk. What he'd do to you I know. As for me I can keep out of his way, but I'd rather not, I'd like to run his arrants and to do for him—until I can get a job."

He carried the steak on a hot pewter platter upstairs to the man lying snug.

"Well," he asked, "have you got the money?"

"I've got five guineas—there it is for you."

"And you saw the lady?"

"I've seen the lady. She's a fine woman—as ever I saw. But she's a dangerous."

"How dangerous?"

"Tell the man,' she says, 'that he's got to do what he's told. I know all about him. A word from me will have him hanged. And tell him that he was not married to me, because he had a wife already. Doll is her name, and he was married in Shadwell Church, five years ago—in the month of July,' she says."

"How did she know that?"

"I can't tell you. That's what she said. And here's your money. Five guineas she sends you. You're to make it last a long time, she says. Divil a bit more you'll have for a long time. Give me a shilling. I wouldn't rob you; a shilling is all I want for my own trouble. Thank you."

"Come and drink a bout this evening." The negro rattled the coins with the rapturous visions of unbounded rum for himself and friends. "Be careful, mate; I wouldn't go down, if I was you. They seem honest lads, but no one can tell. There is talk of a negro runaway from Virginia; I heard people in the street talking of a hue and cry, and the reward. It's a pot of money for anyone, mind you."

"So 'tis; so 'tis."

"There may be some of those down below—but who knows? Brother, if I were you I'd lay up here. Get your drink up the stairs—and your supper. Doll will do that for you. Lay up, lay up a bit."

So saying he departed, leaving Mr. Truxo to the enjoyment of his steak and the apprehension of betrayal. He had also filled the heart of one of Truxo's wives with jealousy, so that he came away with the consciousness of having done a good morning work at the expense of a little exercise of the imagination.

As for the negro, he sat alone in his room, a prey to all the direst terrors—and drinking continuously in order to put out of sight that narrow courtyard with which he was already familiar, and the thoughts of the triangular tree along the Oxford road, which rose up before him in his waking hours and in his dreams.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Oliver next turned his attention to the bankrupt then under the hospitable roof of the Grapes, where his bill was mounting at an incredible speed, assisted by the landlord, who pressed upon his guest the finest contents of his cellar. Perhaps the lawyer had private reasons of his own for defeating the purposes of the noble Lord, Isabel's brother-in-law, from whom he had endured many flounts and insolences such as a man of rank may inflict upon one below him in station without risk of retaliation or retort. Perhaps, as a general rule, it might be alleged that the more worthless a man of quality is, either morally or mentally, the more intolerable is his arrogance, so that a nobleman who has nothing but his rank—neither statesmanship nor eloquence, nor service in the army, nor leadership, nor wealth, nor morals, nor principles, nor the record of an honorable life—carries off his true obscurity by pride and insolence. In his treatment of Oliver, Lord Stratherrick had been especially arrogant, because he foresaw the possibility, which should be prevented if possible, of a closer tie than that of friendship between him and Isabel—Oliver endured this insolence because he was unwilling to quarrel with one so closely allied with the lady. But, when the occasion arrived, it was but human and it was natural that he should seize upon the opportunity in order to defeat the schemes of this penniless peer.

It was now certain that Lord Stratherrick, out of gratitude to the lady who maintained him, was keeping this bankrupt at his former valet's tavern, in order to make money for himself by professing to buy his silence—a scheme truly worthy of his race and his ancestry. Now, therefore, Oliver considered the situation with some care. It was as follows:

There was a revengeful, drunken creature who had so often declared Mrs. Weyland to be the cause of his misfortune that he had ended by believing it. This man knew of the Newgate marriage.

He might talk; if he talked anywhere in the town except at the Grapes it would not matter; but this tavern was used by the servants, and any scandal related to them would quickly be spread abroad over the whole of the world of fashion.

That he had not, so far, spoken, was certain because there was no sign of such a scandal anywhere.

That he was for the most part, and always in the latter part of the day, speechless with drink—sometimes half speechless and sometimes wholly speechless—seemed a certain safeguard.

That in the morning, when his mind, muddled at best, was at its clearest, no one was in the tavern at all. This was another safeguard.

That he understood, if he could understand anything, that his delightful access to all kinds of drink was the price of silence.

That if he spoke at all the value of his silence was destroyed.

Further—the man was taken in at the tavern by order of his lordship.

But his lordship had no money to pay for the man's maintenance.

Therefore if Isabel refused to pay anything the man must be turned into the streets.

If Lord Stratherrick himself, in revenge, started the scandal, he would be sent back to his deserted country house by the withdrawal of the allowance.

If Isabel refused, further, to pay the landlord of the tavern, he might start the scandal on his own account. The man had already called upon Isabel and demanded payment.

On the whole, the only person to be feared in the business was this landlord, and he, chiefly, to the extent of his own bill.

Considering, therefore, the whole case thus presented, Oliver resolved on going behind his lordship's back and on discussing the case with Mr. Pinder direct. He therefore called at the tavern in the afternoon. Mr. Pinder was in the parlor, the room behind the bar, where the company met every evening. He was seated at the table, his account books before him. In an elbow chair beside the fireplace was a man asleep. By his purple cheek, his nose swollen and painted, his protruding lips, his hands which trembled in his sleep, Oliver recognized the bankrupt, object of so much solicitude. "Your friend," he observed to Mr. Pinder, opening the conversation, "appears to be very near an apoplectic fit. A swollen neck, short and thick, a bloated face, shaking hands—what do these things mean, sir? He should take care. He is ripe for the scythe unless I am much mistaken."

This was obvious true. Yet men in this condition do sometimes so continue for many years. It is as if the fatal shears were always open for them, and always kept from closing in order that they might repent and reform. Yet this man never thought of repentance or of reformation. He had no pricking of conscience—his conscience was dead—for the neglect of wife and children, or for the ruin he had brought upon himself. Hundreds, or thousands, there are in this town of creatures thus besotted and bemured, who can no longer think or understand or act, and are mere breathing casks of drink, to whom small ale is cool and raw punch is hot, and there is no other delight or longing or desire left in life but the coolness of the one and the sweet heat and strength of the other.

"He will do. Let him be," said Mr. Pinder. "You wish to speak to me, sir? You can do so without fear of waking him."

"If I mistake not," said Oliver, "this is the man concerning whom I have come to see you, Mr. Pinder. This is, I believe, Mr. Fulton, formerly of Ludgate Hill."

"It is Mr. Fulton, sir. A most unfortunate and worthy gentleman."

"Of his misfortunes I have no doubt. Concerning his worth, those who know him, I believe, differ in opinion."

"That's as may be, sir. You come, however, to see me about him."

Oliver gazed upon the sleeping man, whose appearance was certainly against him. "He looks like a gentleman of stelling worth, does he not?"

"Well, sir, before we discourse about him at all, perhaps you will kindly give me your name and your reasons for calling upon me."

"As for my name, it is Macnamara. I am a lawyer—of the upper bar as yet—a member of the Inner temple."

"What has a lawyer to do with Mr. Fulton or with me? I want no lawyer meddling in my affairs."

"I come from the Honorable Mrs. Weyland, a lady whose name you have heard—whom you have seen—in—connection with certain proposals of Lord Stratherick and concerning this worthy gentleman who is now asleep before us."

"Well, sir, there is no harm, I believe, in acknowledging that I do know her ladyship by name—and by reputation, and that I have had the honor of speech with her. Mr. Fulton, however, knows more about her than I myself."

"Perhaps. It is also certain that Mr. Fulton pretends to more knowledge than he possesses."

"In what way, sir?"

"In several ways. For instance, Mr. Fulton credits the lady with being the cause of his bankruptcy. He was already bankrupt when he tried to get payment of a debt not yet due, with the intention of defrauding his creditors."

"I know nothing about that."

"He also pretends that the lady was married in Newgate to a condemned felon in order to shift her debts to the back of that creature."

"Pretends? Why, she was married."

"He says so. That is one of the points on which he is imperfectly informed."

Mr. Pinder pushed back his chair and rose. "Sir," he said, "have a care—lawyer or no lawyer, it is certain that the lady was married in Newgate."

"It is, on the other hand, quite certain that she was not."

"Then, sir, why did not this gentleman issue a writ for the arrest of his debtor?"

"First, probably, because he thought she was married. Next, perhaps, because it was not his debt."

"This is a very strange story, sir, very strange."

"Perhaps. Now, Mr. Pinder, your affairs as regards this man are, to a certain extent, in my hands. You keep this man—Lord Stratherrick and you—in a kind of peaceful heaven—the only heaven the poor devil is likely to know. You keep him in captivity, so to speak. You keep him drunk, in order to insure his silence, which you propose to sell to Mrs. Weyland, and to keep on selling it as long as this man shall be spared the end which certainly awaits him.

"I don't know, sir, that I am obliged to discuss this business with you."

"You are not obliged at all. Keep silence, by all means, if you wish. I would, however, remind you, Mr. Pinder, that your friend here has already run up a considerable bill for drink and maintenance—that if you look to Lord Stratherrick for payment of the bill you will be disappointed—"

"I do not know that I shall be disappointed. Quite the contrary."

"You think so. You still look to Mrs. Weyland for the payment of this bill and for a certain sum of money, which you will share with his lordship."

"Well." Mr. Pinder changed countenance, "of course my bill will be paid, and there will be compensation for this poor man."

"Go on thinking so, if it makes you happy. Meantime, I can assure you that Mrs. Weyland will give nothing in compensation—nothing. As regards your bill, it will be for you to decide how long you will keep him—out of your compassion and generosity."

"His Lordship will pay me—"

"From what funds? From what income? You were his valet and you know the circumstances. Understand, Mr. Pinder that if his Lordship gives any trouble in the matter his allowance will be at once stopped. You have to deal with Mrs. Weyland, that is, with me, in the matter."

Mr. Pinder dropped his hands and stared. "Give his Lordship nothing?" he gasped.

"Nothing. Nothing at all."

"He informed me that the lady will give him all he asks."

"You are acquainted, of old, with Lord Startherrick. You are also acquainted with his present circumstances. What do you think?"

"Then—who is to repay me for my outlay on this drunken hog?"

"This worthy gentleman, you mean—Mr. Pinder, I do not know."

"Somebody will have to pay. Somebody shall pay; if I go to court with it."

"As you please. You received orders from his Lordship. You cannot make a noble Lord pay, surely, Mr. Pinder, you know so much. His rank protects him."

Mr. Pinder groaned. "If this is true—" he began.

"It is quite true. I am commissioned by the lady to present the facts for your consideration."

"His bill is tremendous. No one would believe that a man could run up such a bill as this man has done in so short a time."

"His appearance seems to indicate considerable powers where drinking is concerned."

"He is always drinking. I have taken him into the house at the request of my Lord, and I give him the run of the cellars—also at his request. He doesn't trouble the kitchen much, but the cellars, the cellars—why the man is like a sponge. He would empty the biggest cellars in London in a few months. He begins in the early morning with purl; all the forenoon he drinks wine by the pint, unless it is beer, which he sometimes prefers to wine as cooler to the stomach. He never eats any dinner, only calls for what there is, turns it over on the plate and sends it away and calls for more drink. In the afternoon, as you see, sir, he sleeps off some of the drink; in the evening he drinks punch until he is speechless, when the boys drag him upstairs and lay him on the bed. Drunk? He is drunk all day and all night. He is never truly sober for an instant."

"If I wanted to speak with him is there not an hour in the day when he is less drunk than at other times?"

"I suppose he is sobered at 7 in the morning. He wakes in good time, and he comes downstairs looking about him for a jug of small ale."

"An expensive guest."

"Well, sir, who is to pay my bill?"

"That," said Oliver, "is the difficulty. You can hardly expect Mrs. Weyland to pay it, seeing that the man is entertained solely on the chance of getting money from her."

"But sir, if I cannot get the bill paid I stand to lose a large sum."

"A large sum. I fear so, indeed, unless, of course, you come to terms with me."

"What may your terms be?" Mr. Pinder's expressive countenance had a limited range of expression; it might be cunning; it might be suspicious; it might be threatening. It had been all three in the course of their conversation. Now it began again, with suspicion.

"My terms are not hard. First of all, the man must be turned into the street."

"If my bill is paid he goes out in three minutes." Mr. Pinder made as if he would waken the sleeper. Oliver motioned him back.

"We will come to your bill afterward. Do not waken the poor wretch before the time. Let him go on drinking today. In the morning at 7 I will call here and try to get speech with him."

"Certainly, sir; certainly. That can be done."

"Very good. Now we come to the bill. Leave out the question of compensation altogether. Let me know the amount you propose to charge for his drink and maintenance."

Mr. Pinder turned over the leaves of his book. "Lodging at a shilling a night; a shilling?" He looked at the lawyer. "I meant two shillings."

"Dear. Very dear. But go on."

"Food. Dinner and supper, at two shillings and sixpence each—food for the most part spoiled, not eaten. Five shillings a day. Services of chambermaid, boots, potboy, at two shillings a day."

"Dear. Very dear. But go on."

"Drink—ah! there, I fear, you will stick. Yet the charges at the Grapes are notorious for their moderation. Eight shillings and sixpence a day."

"Yes . . . yes, dear, very dear. Is that all?"

"Washing; a new pair of stockings; money out of pocket, four shillings and twopence."

"Moderate, Mr. Pinder, very moderate."

"Could you believe it possible, sir, that one man could drink so much?"

"It is difficult, indeed, almost incredible. The total?"

"The total is £35 7s 10d, including yesterday." Mr. Pinder glanced curiously and anxiously at the lawyer. "As you say, moderate."

"I did not say moderate, except for the smallest item. Well, sir, it is praiseworthy of you to trust this man to so large an extent. To return to a disagreeable subject what security have you for this debt? No security? I thought not. Consider again; you have not consulted Mrs. Weyland; you called upon her and she warned you. Yet you thought she might be bullied and threatened. You cannot sue her. You must spread abroad libels and so find yourself in a criminal court. What will you do then?"

Mr. Pinder was silent. He stood beside the table with hanging hands and downcast face—in silence.

"I don't know," he replied. "I own, sir, that I can do nothing. I had looked to his lordship—I might have known that there is not any man in the world whose word can be less trusted than his. I was his valet and I know him! sir, there is not a more contemptible person in the world, when you have taken away his ribbon and his star. He will cheat and lie and deceive everybody for the sake of a guinea."

"He has deceived you in this case, at least, because it is quite certain that he cannot and will not pay your bill."

Mr. Pinder groaned. "Sir, I am at your mercy."

"Then we shall come to terms. They are these. You will say nothing to your friend here, the gentleman in liquor. In the consideration of such a part of this debt as Mrs. Weyland may consent to pay, you will transfer to me—to me, mind—the debt of the man to you. I shall send my attorney to you presently to arrange the business. At 7 tomorrow morning I will come here to see him. Perhaps he will then be able to understand and to speak."

Mr. Pinder administered a savage kick to the legs of the chair in which the sleeping man was sitting.

"Drunken beast!" he said, so quickly may a worthy gentleman lose his reputation.

CHAPTER XIX.

The Cockpit of Gray's Inn, lying on the north side of that venerable Inn of Court, was a place frequented by Lord Stratherrick every evening. The sport is in no way inferior to that of the Cockpit in Tothill Fields, while the company is not composed of noble lords and gentlemen, nor is the betting, without which the sport would be dull and spiritless, beyond the means of persons impoverished, delayed or beginning. The place itself is like a round tower outside, and within is filled with benches, which rise one above the other round a circular stage in the middle, which is the place where the birds fight. The company which assembles at the Gray's Inn Cockpit every evening is truly of a mixed character. For the noise that they make, for the shouting, swearing, fighting and brawling offered up every evening in sacrifice to the Powers of Evil, it should be called a rabble rout, but there are frequenters of the Pit who must not be classed with the rabble. Thus one may find here decayed gentlemen who have run through their estate, officers who have carried His Majesty's colors over many a field, Templars and others, lawyers who love the ancient sport of cocking, tradesmen from the city, who would be wiser to keep at home and attend to their shops; young merchants, who should be making up their ledgers; visitors from the country, anxious to compare the cockpits of London with those of their own towns; farmers and cattle-drovers, skippers of merchant ships, with stories of cock fights in the West Indies and on the gold coast; young bloods, mostly half drunk; butchers in blue, who are always patrons of the sport, craftsmen of all kinds, pickpockets, footpads, highwaymen and thief-takers; men who come to bet, and, if they lose, to slink away, if they win, to clamor for payment—a motley and mixed company, indeed. Among them may be found every day certain persons of grave and reverend aspect. They bring with them bags, and in the bags are birds. They are the owners, breeders and trainers of birds. This is their occupation, this their livelihood, and the cockpit is their exchange in which they make their money.

Oliver stood in the upper ring for a while, looking at the scene, with which he was not unfamiliar. Every Irishman loves all kinds of sport. It was not the first time that he had seen the Gray's inn cockpit. Now, however, he looked on with special interest, because he came on an errand which concerned one of the company and not the sport.

He discovered his lordship sitting in the lowest circle of seats, that close to the stage or pit where at the moment a pair of birds was engaged in the duel, which they love as much as the men who stimulate them and fire them. Lord Stratherrick was watching the combat with face rapt and absorbed; the peevishness had gone out of it; his lower lip no longer proclaimed his discontent; the insolence of his pride had gone out of him; he was transformed into one whose whole soul was still in the sport which had ruined him. Like all gamesters, had he received a second fortune, it would have gone the same way as the first. Oliver hardly recognized him, so transformed he was. He saw, further, that the people had given him the best seat; that they did not press upon him or crowd him—yet to other gentlemen they showed no respect as to rank. In this case they respected—could these gamesters but respect?—the man who had given to the sport by which they all desired to become rich (but never succeeded) the whole of his estate, and yet remained the votary of the sport. They also respected the man who had made of cocking the sole study of his life; who knew all the points of a bird; how to pick out likely chicks; what to pay for them; how to breed them; how to develop their fighting spirit; how to feed them; how to trim their feathers for the fight; how to fix their spurs; how to weigh and match the birds, to note their marks and their age, as well as their weight and in fighting out the main, to take care that only those birds are matched which fall in or are proved to be within an ounce of each other in weight. These are very important matters, and it will be confessed that since a cockpit is frequented by those who live upon the success of their birds, the presence of an umpire to see fair play and to take care that there shall be no trickery may be at times most useful. This important function was performed by Lord Stratherrick, not by election or appointment, but by universal consent. The respect with which his opinion was received doubtless helped to reconcile him to exiquity of his bets and the small amount of his transactions over the sport.

The company respected him; they all knew him for a ruined nobleman; they took his bets in shillings with as much outward show of care as they observed in their few guineas—higher than guineas the Gray's Inn cockpit rarely goes. For his part, he took no share in the bellowing and bawling of the company; he sat in silence, unmoved even when the brawl turned into a fight; or when one who tried to slink out lay half murdered on the floor, or when another who could not pay was hoisted in a basket to the roof and there hung up exposed to the derision of the house. In all the hubbub, he sat still and silent, distinguished among the rest not only by his dress and his star, but also by the serene contempt with which he regarded the clamor around him.

Beside His Lordship sat a fellow in a leathern apron, who was a smith, or craftsman of some kind. Presently Oliver, slipping down behind him, touched this man on the shoulder, whispered a few words and placed a coin in his hand. The man rose and exchanged seats with him. Oliver, therefore, was now sitting beside the man for whom he came to the place. Lord Stratherrick paid no heed to the change; not that he observed nothing, but it was part of his manner to show no interest in any of the company.

Oliver watched for an opportunity; the fight then going on was not one of those which belong to a main; it was a by fight between two young cocks still at the age when they can be called stags and of unequal weights. For some reason the match excited the greatest interest in the house. Everyone was bawling at once; the noise was terrific. Oliver, without reminding his neighbor that he knew him, introduced himself in the manner allowed in all sport.

"Does your lordship," he asked, "chose to bet?"

Without taking his eyes off the birds, this prince of cockers made immediate reply: "I will take 5 to 3 against the smaller bird."

Oliver, who knew something of the sport, recognized the old sportsman. For, in spite of the clamor of those who backed the stronger and the larger bird, he could see that the other was fresher, better plucked and of greater spirit than his antagonist. It was not his business, however, to display his own knowledge, so much as to humor and please the other man. "I will give you," he replied, "five to two against your bird in half-crowns." This, observe, was not only to offer a bet nearly sure to be lost, but also to give longer odds. "Five to two, my Lord? Done."

He said no more, and the fight went on. Alas! In five minutes after the usual sparring, feinting, retreating and advancing, which gives cock-fighting so much excitement and the charm of apparent uncertainty, save to those who know the meaning of the game and the powers of the birds, the smaller cock sprang upon the neck of his antagonist and with a single blow of his still spur laid him dead.

Then there arose the usual clamor which welcomes the conclusion of a cockfight, with the usual disputes and claims of those who bet.

"Five half-crowns, my Lord," Oliver passed them along. "I hope your Lordship will give me my revenge."

The evening went on. Oliver betted with continuous bad luck. In other words, he showed himself obstinately of the opposite opinion to that of his Lordship. When the play was over the latter was in great good humor; not only had he won many guineas, but he had also proved his own judgment and knowledge of the birds.

The people rolled out noisily, fighting their battles over again.

"I am proud to lose a few bets with so great a cocker as your Lordship," said Oliver politely. "Perhaps on some other evening I may be privileged to take another lesson."

"Sir, I am here most evenings. The sport is my chief amusement."

"My Lord, I have had the honor of meeting you once or twice at a certain house in St. James Square." Lord Stratherrick affected unconsciousnes. "At the house of Mrs. Weyland."

"Ay, ay, as you say, sir," he resumed at once the cold and insolent air of the nobleman. Outside the cockpit this manner was habitual with him. "No doubt, sir, as you say."

"My Lord, there is a tavern not far from here, in Covent Garden. I should be greatly honored, and so would the company, which is chiefly composed of lawyers, if your Lordship would take a glass of punch with me. A coach will take us to the spot in a few minutes."

"Sir," his Lordship hesitated, but yielded to the seductiveness of the punch, "I shall be honored by accepting your invitation."

After two or three glasses of the punch and listening to two or three songs from the young lawyer in the room, Lord Stratherick began to show signs of some cordiality. He was but human. "Sir," he said, "I remember, now, I have met you at the house of my sister-in-law on several occasions, if I am right."

"Quite right. On several occasions. Let me offer your Lordship another glass of this excellent punch. It is whispered among ourselves that the lawyer's wig covers the finest judge of punch, but tonight we must except your Lordship."

"Why, sir, you may do so, perhaps, without prejudice, as you lawyers, say to your legitimate claims."

"Mrs. Weyland, if one may mention her name with the greatest respect in this company," Oliver dropped his voice to a whisper, "your Lordship's sister-in-law is, I am sorry to say, unhappy at this moment."

"Indeed? Why?"

"Allow me—another glass. If your Lordship is as good a judge of a glass of punch as of a bird, we shall be pleased with your approbation. The lady's unhappiness is in fact partly due to your Lordship."

"How, sir?"

"I am glad of an opportunity—unexpected as welcome—of laying the matter before your Lordship, even in this public place. Your Lordship cannot but know the reverence with which Mrs. Weyland regards the head of her husband's family."

"Why, sir," thinking of the smallness of his allowance, "I was not aware—"

"Of course, the lady cannot be always proclaiming the fact. Your Lordship will, however, remember that her own family is inferior to her late husband's, which makes her the more ready, perhaps, to recognize the respect due to its leader."

"Pray, sir, proceed."

"She is, then, uneasy because she imagines that she has in some way forfeited your Lordship's esteem."

"Ahem! My esteem." His lordship sipped his glass thoughtfully. He could not understand what was meant, because, indeed, that esteem for the head of the family had not of late been marked.

"There are certain passages in the lady's past history which should be forgotten, out of respect to her husband's family. They have been misrepresented, especially by a fellow who is a drunken liar saving your Lordship's presence. She fears that you believe the story of this fellow and that you may be protecting him at the risk of her own reputation and the honor of the family."

"There is certainly an unfortunate person—"

"He is kept at your Lordship's expense at a certain tavern in Jermyn street, where he employs his whole time in drinking. He has made up a tale with which he deceives those who listen to him. I would submit to your Lordship that the maintenance of such a creature is derogatory to the dignity of your family."

(To be continued.)

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TRAVELERS' GUIDE.

The Best Way East is though the BIG TWIN CITIES MINNEAPOLIS and ST. PAUL and over the North-Western Line with its FAMOUS TRAINS To Chicago.

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All Thro' Trains from North Pacific Coast connect with Trains of this line In Union Depot, St. Paul.

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Call or write for information W. H. MEAD, General Agent, 248 Alder Street, PORTLAND, ORE.

Pacific Coast Steamship Co.

For South-Eastern Alaska

LEAVE SEATTLE:

Steamships COTTAGE CITY, CITY OF SEATTLE or ALKI, 9 P. M., Jan. 5, 11, 15, 20, 23, 30; Feb. 4, 14, 16, 19, 28.

For San Francisco

Steamers leave Seattle at 9 A. M. every fifth day. For further information obtain folder. Right is reserved to change steamers or sailing dates.

AGENTS—N. POSTON, 249 Washington st., Portland; F. W. CARLETON, N. P. Dock, Tacoma; Ticket Office, 618 First ave., Seattle. M. TALBOT, Comm'l Agt.; C. W. MILLER, Asst. Gen'l Agt., Ocean Dock, Seattle; GOODALL, PERKINS & CO., Gen'l Agts., San Francisco.

Salem, Independence, Albany Corvallis and McMinnville.

Steamer POMONA, for Corvallis, leaves 6:45 A. M. Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday.

Steamer ALTONA, for McMinnville, leaves 7 A. M. Monday, Wednesday and Friday.

OREGON CITY TRANSPORTATION CO., Office and dock, foot Taylor st. Phone 40.

TRAVELERS' GUIDE.

O. R. & N. OREGON SHORT LINE AND UNION PACIFIC

THREE TRAINS DAILY FOR ALL POINTS EAST

UNION DEPOT.	Leave.	Arrive.
CHICAGO-PORTLAND SPECIAL. For the East via Huntington.	9:00 A. M. Daily.	4:30 P. M. Daily.
SPOKANE FLYER. For Eastern Washington, Walla Walla, Lewiston, Coeur d'Alene and Gt. Northern Points.	6:15 P. M. Daily.	7:00 A. M. Daily.
ATLANTIC EXPRESS, For the East via Huntington.	8:50 P. M. Daily.	8:10 A. M. Daily.
OCEAN AND RIVER SCHEDULE.		
FOR SAN FRANCISCO. SS. Columbia—Jan. 7, 17, 27. SS. Geo. W. Elder—Jan. 2, 12, 22.	From Ainsworth Dock. 8:00 P. M.	5:00 P. M.
FOR ASTORIA and way points, connecting with str. for Ilwaco and North Beach, str. Hassalo. Ash-street Dock.	8:00 P. M. Daily ex. Sunday. Sat. 10 P. M.	5:00 P. M. Daily. ex. Sun.
FOR CORVALLIS and way points, str. RUTH, Ash-street Dock. (Water permitting.)	6:45 A. M. Mon., Wed., Fri.	6:00 P. M. Tues., Thurs., Sat.
FOR DAYTON, Oregon City and Yamhill River points, str. Elmore, Ash-street Dock. (Water permitting.)	7:00 A. M. Tues., Thurs., Sat.	3:00 P. M. Mon., Wed., Fri.

TICKET OFFICE, Third and Washington. Telephone, Main 712.

PORTLAND & ASIATIC STEAMSHIP CO.

For Yokohama and Hong Kong, calling at Kobe, Nagasaki and Shanghai, taking freight via connecting steamers for Manila, Port Arthur and Vladivostock.

INDRAVELLI SAILS JAN. 28.

For rates and full information call on or address officials or agents of O. R. & N. Co.

EAST VIA SOUTH — SOUTHERN PACIFIC COMPANY — SUNSET OGDEN & SHASTA ROUTES

Leave	Depot Fifth and I Streets.	Arrive
*8:30 P. M.	OVERLAND EXPRESS TRAINS for Salem, Roseburg, Ashland, Sacramento, Ogden, San Francisco, Mojave, Los Angeles, El Paso, New Orleans and the East. At Woodburn (daily except Sunday), morning train connects with train for Mt. Angel, Silverton, Brownsville, Springfield, and Natron, and Albany Local for Mt. Angel and Silverton.	*7:45 A. M.
*8:30 A. M.		*7:00 P. M.
*4:00 P. M.	Albany passenger ...	*10:10 A. M.
*7:30 A. M.	Corvallis passenger.	*5:50 P. M.
‖4:50 P. M.	Sheridan passenger	‖8:25 A. M.

*Daily. ‖Daily except Sunday.

Rebate tickets on sale between Portland, Sacramento and San Francisco. Net rates $17.50 first class and $14 second class. Second class includes sleeper; first class does not.

Rates and tickets to Eastern points and Europe. Also JAPAN, CHINA, HONOLULU and AUSTRALIA. Can be obtained at Ticket Office, No. 254, cor. Washington and Third.

YAMHILL DIVISION.

Passenger Depot, foot of Jefferson street. Leave Portland daily 7:20 A. M., 12:30, 1:55, 3:25, 4:40, 6:25, 8:30 P. M. Daily except Sunday, 3:30, 9:40 A. M., 5:05, 11:30 P. M. Sunday only, 9 A. M.

Arrive Portland daily, 8:30, 10:50 A. M., 1:35, 3:10, 4:30, 6:15, 7:40, 10 P. M. Daily except Sunday, 6:35, 9:30, 10:50 A. M.; except Monday, 12:40 A. M.; Sunday only, 10:05 A. M.

Leave for Dallas daily except Sunday, 5:05 P. M. Arrive Portland 9:30 A. M. Passenger train leaves Dallas for Airlie Mondays, Wednesdays and Fridays at 3:50 P. M. Returns Tuesdays and Saturdays.

*Except Sunday.

V. A. SCHILLING, City Tkt. Agt. R. B. MILLER, Gen. Frt. & Pass. Agt.

NORTHERN PACIFIC — TIME CARD OF TRAINS — PORTLAND

	Leaves.	Arrives.
Overland Express	2:00 P. M.	7:00 A. M.
Twin City, St. Louis & Kan. City Special.....	11:30 P. M.	7:45 P. M.
Puget Sound Limited, for South Bend, Gray's Harbor, Olympia, Tacoma and Seattle.....	8:35 A. M.	5:20 P. M.

Two trains daily to Spokane, Butte, Helena, Minneapolis, St. Paul and the East.

A. D. CHARLTON, Asst. General Pass. Agt., 255 Morrison street. Portland, Or.

THE GREAT NORTHERN

Ticket Office 122 Third St. Phone 630

LEAVE		ARRIVE
No. 4 6:00 P. M.	The Flyer, daily to and from St. Paul, Minneapolis, Duluth, Chicago and all points East.	No. 3 7:00 A. M.

Through Palace and Tourist Sleepers, Dining and Buffet Smoking-Library Cars.

JAPAN - AMERICAN LINE

STEAMSHIP IYO MARU

For Japan, China and all Asiatic points will leave Seattle

About February 11th.

Astoria & Columbia River Railroad Co.

LEAVES	Depot Fifth and I Streets.	ARRIVES
8:00 A. M.	For Maygers, Rainier, Clatskanie, Westport, Clifton, Astoria, Warrenton, Flavel, Hammond, Fort Stevens, Gearhart Pk., Seaside, Astoria and Seashore Express, Daily.	11:10 A. M.
7:00 P. M.	Astoria Express, Daily.	9:40 P. M.

Ticket office 255 Morrison st. and Union Depot. J. C. MAYO, Gen. Pass. Agt., Astoria, Or.

WHITE COLLAR LINE

STR. TAHOMA, DALLES ROUTE.

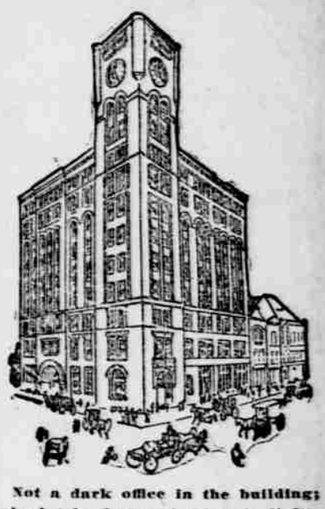
Winter schedule—Leaves foot Alder street every Monday, Wednesday and Friday morning, 7 A. M. Leaves The Dalles every Tuesday, Thursday and Saturday morning, 7 A. M.

Stops at all way landings for both freight and passengers.

ASTORIA ROUTE.

STR. BAILEY GATZERT (Alder-st. Dock.) Leaves Portland daily every morning at 7 o'clock, except Sunday. Returning, leaves Astoria every night at 7 o'clock, except Sunday. Oregon phone Main 351. Columbia phone 351.

THE PALATIAL OREGONIAN BUILDING



Not a dark office in the building; absolutely fireproof; electric lights and artesian water; perfect sanitation and thorough ventilation. Elevators run day and night.

	Rooms.
AINSLIE, DR. GEORGE, Physician	413-414
ANDERSON, GUSTAV, Attorney-at-Law	612
ASSOCIATED PRESS; E. L. Powell, Mgr.	806
AUSTEN, F. C., Manager for Oregon and Washington Bankers' Life Association of Des Moines, Ia.	502-503
BANKERS' LIFE ASSOCIATION, OF DES MOINES, IA.; F. C. Austen, Mgr.	502-503
BEALS, EDWARD A., Forecast Official U. S. Weather Bureau	910
BENJAMIN, R. W., Dentist	314
BERNARD, G., Cashier Tontine Savings Association	211-212
BINSWANGER, OTTO S., Physician and Surgeon	407-408
BROCK, WILBUR F., Circulator Oregonian	501
BROWN, MYRA, M. D.	313-314
BRUERE, DR. G. E., Physician	412-413-414
BUSTEED, RICHARD	503
CAMPBELL, WM. M., Medical Referee Equitable Life	700
CANNING, M. J.	602-603
CAUKIN, G. E., District Agent Travelers Insurance Company	718
CARDWELL, DR. J. R.	505
CHURCHILL, MRS. E. J.	716-717
COFFEY, DR. R. C., Surgeon	405-406
COLUMBIA TELEPHONE COMPANY	604-605-606-607-613-614-615
CORNELIUS, C. W., Phys. and Surgeon	206
COLLIER, P. F., Publisher; S. P. McGuire, Manager	415
DAY, J. G. & I. N.	318
DICKSON, DR. J. P., Physician	713-714
DWYER, JOE E., Tobacco	403
EDITORIAL ROOMS	Eighth Floor
EVENING TELEGRAM	325 Alder Street
EQUITABLE LIFE ASSURANCE SOCIETY; L. Samuel, Manager; G. S. Smith, Cashier	300
FENTON, J. D., Physician and Surgeon	509-10