

BY MISADVENTURE

BY

FRANK BARRETT

CHAPTER XVII.—(Continued.)
I felt as if the floor had suddenly sunk away from under my feet; but I was too old to let it be seen, and said as calmly as I could:

"Well, sir, go on. You have not come here simply to make that statement, I presume?"

"That's one charge; but mark me!" he said, pausing to put his finger to the side of his fat nose, where he kept it as he continued: "Mark me! it isn't the only one—more than one witness to be produced. There's another charge—charge more serious than stretching rope cross road—upsetting you."

"And pray what charge is that, Mr. Bax?" I asked with pretended indifference.

"A criminal charge. We reserve it—respect for Mr. Lynn Yeames' feelings. Here's the fact—we can throw will into chancery, and ruin Dr. Awdrey, if we make facts public. Lynn Yeames does not wish to proceed; Mrs. Yeames does. So do I. To meet Lynn's wishes we will abandon proceedings—once more he laid his stubby finger on his stubby nose, "on condition."

"Tell me straight out what you mean by that," I said.

"I mean—our side abandons proceedings—written guarantee and all that sort of thing; you on your side pay over interest on money left in trust for Miss Flexmore. Awdrey professes he has no right to money—give it up to Lynn, who has. Loses nothing—avoid scandal—saves reputation. There you are."

"Have you anything more to add to this proposition?" I asked.

"Nothing except this—stay proceedings for a week—time for you to arrange with Awdrey, and give us decision. One week from to-day—you understand?"

"Perfectly well; there is no necessity to keep you waiting a week for a decision; you shall have it at once. On behalf of my client and myself, I refuse to have anything more to say to you. Let me say in conclusion, you pettifogging rascal," said I, rising and giving free vent to my anger, "that if you could prove your criminal charge against Dr. Awdrey, I am the last person in the world who would compound a felony, but the first who would take measures to punish the man who did. Get out of my house!"

He got up on his little legs, gasping and stammering, dropped his gloves out of his hat, got purple in the face in picking them up, gasped and stammered again; but quickly made his way through the open door with his small blue eyes in the corner, for all the world like a pig bolting past a driver. Mrs. Yeames' description of me or her son's, for I had no faith in his standing out, had evidently been not flattering, and he had thought to find in me a shuffling scoundrel of his own stamp.

CHAPTER XVIII.

This event gave me no little anxiety at first, but it wore off when I came to consider it calmly. I could not believe in the man's statement respecting a criminal charge in reserve. It was not likely he would keep back the stronger inducement in leading to a compromise. As for his witness to prove that Awdrey had been instrumental to my delay, that was nothing; he could get as many witnesses of that kind as he chose at a pound a head. No; it seemed to me nothing but a mere attempt at extortion, got up, probably, by Yeames, his mother and Bax, who thought, very likely, that I should be rascal enough to stand in with them.

I flattered myself that I had shown Bax the folly of his "proceedings," and that I should neither see nor hear any more of him or his criminal charges. And this belief was strengthened when two days later Lynn Yeames appeared in Coneyford, and his mother returned to her cottage.

He went the very morning of his arrival to Dr. Awdrey, and in the afternoon I saw them going along the High Street together, Lynn with his arm linked in Awdrey's. They were going towards the farm to see about some alterations and improvements that had occurred to the doctor in the other's absence. I felt sure then that the intimidation scheme was abandoned.

Nothing occurred for several days; but on Friday, the 20th of March, Miss Dalrymple called upon me. She was as pale as a ghost. Her hand trembled in mine. "Oh, Mr. Keene!" she exclaimed, "what is the meaning of these rumors?"

"Sit down, my dear," said I, guessing what she meant. "Sit down; now tell me what it is you have heard."

"They say that Dr. Awdrey prevented you from arriving at the house in time for Mr. Flexmore to sign his will. A man has confessed to being employed by him."

"I have heard nothing about that. Have you heard anything else?"

"Oh, yes, yes! They say that the medicine he gave me to administer to Mr. Flexmore was—she hesitated a moment, and dropping her voice so that it was scarcely audible, said—"poisoned!"

I started. This, then, was the criminal charge Bax had hinted at.

"Who told you this?" I asked, when I had overcome the first dash of astonishment.

"Mrs. Caseby came to tell me. She thought that I ought to know."

"I know what is in your mind," said I. "You do not wish Awdrey to know

what you have told me. Be under no apprehension; a lawyer knows how to keep a secret when it suits him. Leave the matter in my hands, and by to-morrow morning you shall have news of some kind—good news, I feel pretty sure."

I lost no time in seeing Dr. Awdrey; on my way to his house I settled how to act.

"Well, Awdrey," said I when we met, "how is the world using you?"

"Pretty much the same as usual—only more so," he said with a laugh; and then in a tone of perplexity he continued: "I can't quite make it out. I have received three letters to-day asking for my account, and all three have employed me only about a month. I suppose it's a polite way of telling me that I am not wanted any more."

"That's it," said I, "and the reason is that you are accused of throwing me out of a gig, and poisoning poor old Flexmore."

"What!" he exclaimed, knitting his brows in astonishment.

"It's a fact. The rumor is circulating. You'll have none but your paupers to doctor at the end of the week."

"I'm glad of it," said he, "if the rest will listen to such nonsense as that."

"We shall have to take measures to disprove the charge, doctor," said I.

"Then don't lose any time about it," said he. "Poor Nurse Gertrude!" he added tenderly, thinking doubtless of the affront he had received being offered to her. Then in a tone of vexation he asked, "How long have you known this, Keene?"

"Well, I heard something about it more than a week ago."

"Why didn't you tell me at once?"

"Because I thought it merely a scheme to extort money. A man named Bax spoke about it. He tells me he is a friend of the Yeames family."

He went off at once to find Lynn. And not long afterwards I caught sight of the pair in the High street, Lynn with his arm linked through the doctor's, and a look on his face that seemed to bid people observe that he still believed in Awdrey's innocence. While I was looking after them, a colleague clapped me on the shoulder, and said in a low voice, nodding toward the two:

"Which is the Judas?"

"There can be no doubt about that," I replied, "unless Judas be too good a name for Lynn Yeames."

"I am not so sure about that, Keene. I don't like Awdrey's quiet, long-suffering, martyrish manner. He's a clever man—ten times cleverer than Yeames—clever enough to make a big venture. If I had to judge without evidence, I should acquit Yeames and hang Awdrey. And I believe if you could only clear your mind of prejudice—"

I would not wait to hear more of such fustian. I had no patience. In due course I made a formal application for the post-mortem examination of Flexmore's remains. To my astonishment I learned that the inquiry had been already demanded and accorded; the examination was to be made at once.

"Lynn assures me, and I believe him," said Dr. Awdrey when we next met, "that he has been opposed to his mother's action from the very beginning. He could not with any delicacy tell me of her proceedings. He himself insisted on Bax quitting his mother's house."

CHAPTER XIX.

The examination resulted in this: Whether accidentally or otherwise, enough of a noxious substance had found its way into Flexmore's body to have decidedly accelerated his death. The news spread like a plague; within twenty-four hours every one had it, man, woman and child, without distinction of rank or station. Every one went about open-mouthed to find someone to give the news to. A dozen persons said to me:

"Have you heard the result of the examination? Dr. Awdrey did hasten Flexmore's end."

"Then why is he at large?" I asked.

"Why has no warrant for his arrest been issued?"

They could only shrug their shoulders; but I could explain the matter to them—Flexmore had not been affected by the poison at all. The arsenic was found in his mouth, it had not touched the digestive apparatus, and for this reason: It had been administered after the life had left his body. This was the report made by the authorized doctors who made the examination.

Upon this report no one could be accused of any crime legally, nor at the present juncture could a charge be instituted. That the poison had not been given in the form of a potion, such as Miss Dalrymple had been charged by Dr. Awdrey to administer, was clear from the fact that it was found in the form of a powder, and must have been dropped in my old friend's mouth when his jaw dropped after death. Still, it had clearly been given with a view to prevent any possibility of a return to life and it was equally evident to the majority of people that Awdrey, who knew the contents of the will to be signed, alone was presumably desirous of preventing a return to life, for only a very small minority knew that Lynn Yeames also had a strong reason for making death sure at that time.

Now, though there was no evidence to commit Awdrey, circumstances were sufficiently suspicious to enable the Yeames party to contest the will. But I had still

stronger reasons than that for getting at the truth of the matter, and fixing the guilt on the guilty. Even the paupers would refuse to take medicine from the hand of a man with such a reputation.

I went to work at once, and determined to take no rest until I had secured the safety of poor Awdrey and Nurse Gertrude. My clerk was a sharp, dependable young fellow.

"Now, Mr. Jones," said I, "I am going to put you on your mettle."

"Glad of it, Mr. Keene," he replied, eagerly. "Is it this poisoning case, sir?"

"Yes, it is. Bax, Yeames' agent, says they can produce the man who threw me out of the gig, and prove that he was engaged to do it by Dr. Awdrey. You must find their witness. In all probability that trick was unpremeditated. It was suggested to him by circumstances, by a chance meeting with the fellow who stretched that rope. Who might that be? It was just such a day as a poacher would like for wiring hares. Yeames had been doing a good deal of shooting. A poacher can be more useful than a keeper to a gentleman on the lookout for game. A man of that kind was the very one to suit his purpose. And a man who would do a job of that kind could be easily bribed to swear he was employed by Dr. Awdrey. That man must be found."

Jones was hardly out of the house before Miss Dalrymple came in.

"What are you going to do for Dr. Awdrey?" was the first question she asked.

"I am going to prove his innocence," I said.

"Tell me how," she said, in a tone of entreaty, laying her hand on my arm. "Let me help. Tell me what I may do—what difficulty there is to overcome, and trust my intelligence."

"There's one thing you can attempt, at any rate," I said; "the rascal employed by Yeames, Bax, signified that they had a witness in reserve to prove a criminal charge against Awdrey. That means they have got hold of some one to swear to his administering the powder. Now that some one must be of this place. If you can find out who it is, and let me know, I may persuade that witness to stand on the side of truth. Now, I must go off and see Awdrey."

"Tell him that—that I sympathize with him, Mr. Keene," she said tenderly.

"You may be sure of that," said I, pressing her hand.

We parted at the door, she going one way, I the other.

"Awdrey," said I, when I met him, "Miss Dalrymple sympathizes with you."

"I am certain she does," he replied.

"Yes; and you may be certain of something else. If we get this affair settled rightly, you may be the happiest man in the world, or it will be your own fault."

"What," said he, eagerly, "do you think her feeling is deeper than sympathy?"

"I am sure of it, that's more!" I exclaimed.

"Notwithstanding the doubt that hangs over me—the feeling against me?"

"There's no doubt in that generous soul," I said; "and as for the feeling against you, it's just the thing to endear you to her. Here let's get to work. Now, you have to tax your memory to the utmost. Your happiness depends as much upon a clear recollection as anything. I must have an account of every minute of the day Flexmore died."

Then carefully we went over the events of that day to the minutest particular, from the hour of his rising until he went again to bed. It was a long job, necessitating much discussion and verification, but we stuck at it till it was done, then we ate and drank and made as merry as we could. It was no effort to Awdrey; I had never seen him in such high spirits. It was as if ten years of hard work and disappointment had been taken off his shoulders. Only now and then his face assumed its old gravity, as the thought perhaps occurred to him that if he failed to prove his innocence he must slip back again into the Slough of Despond.

It was past five when I got back to my office. To my utter astonishment I found Miss Dalrymple waiting there for me, and with her a woman. Miss Dalrymple rose and met me with forced calm, but I could see that her face was flushed with triumph, and her eyes were sparkling with excitement.

"I have brought Mrs. Bates to see you," said she; "or rather Mrs. Bates asked to see you. She desires to make a full communication of all she knows."

I bowed to Mrs. Bates, who sat rigidly in her chair. She was a middle-aged person with a face like a hatchet, and a body like the handle of it. A hard, cold, long woman of the scraggy kind, and just dull enough to think herself sharp.

"I'm glad to see you, Mrs. Bates," said I turning up the lamp. "Why, surely, I have seen you before?"

"I were in Dr. Awdrey's employ," she replied.

"To be sure. Now I remember you. Do you have something to tell me, have you?"

"I wish to conceal nothing, for I have nothing to conceal," she said.

(To be continued.)

According to Orders.

"How do you do?" exclaimed the letter carrier, as he greeted the auctioneer.

"I do as I am bid," answered the auctioneer, with a fiendish grin.

"Much the same here," rejoined the l. c. "I do as I am directed."

The Boni Variety.

"You refuse me?" snapped the little count twirling his waxed mustache.

"I do!" replied the sensible helress coldly.

"Poor girl!"

"Yes, I would be a poor girl if I had you for a husband."

Tigers are greatly on the increase in Burmah, owing to recent legal restrictions on the carrying of arms.

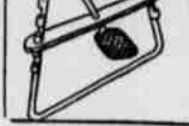
HOUSEHOLD

Egg-Beater.

Obviously, the object of all mechanical egg-beaters is to imitate the movement of the hand in beating the egg.

So far, no mechanical power has been devised which equals the hand beating. In these so-called egg-beaters the paddles, instead of beating the egg, generally revolve in a circular path, which stirs, but does not beat the egg.

The nearest approach to hand beating is shown in an egg-beater illustrated herewith, the invention of a Wisconsin man. In this apparatus the beater does not revolve, but is operated back and forth, obtaining both the efficiency of the hand beater and the rapidity of the machine beater. It is held in one hand and operated by the other, accomplishing the efficient beating of the egg in a very short space of time.



EGG-BEATER.

Buttermilk Ice Cream.

If you have never tasted ice cream made of buttermilk there is a most agreeable sensation in store for you. To a pint of buttermilk add a pint of cream and half a pound of lump sugar which has been rubbed on lemons until well flavored. After putting this mixture into the freezer add the juice of two lemons, just as it begins to freeze.

When serving ice cream in cold weather it is nice to pass around a pitcher of hot chocolate or caramel sauce, to be poured over it just as it is eaten. This sauce is sometimes served in tiny cups, into which the spoonful of ice cream may be dipped on its way to the mouth.—Ladies' World.

Cream Puffs.

Mix to a smooth paste one cup flour and one cup boiling water, then add half cup butter and place on fire. Cook one minute, stirring steadily, stand aside and let cool. When cold break in three eggs, one at a time, and beat hard. Drop by large spoonfuls on a well-greased pan, leaving plenty of room to spread. Bake twenty-five minutes in a steady but not too hot oven. Don't open door for this length of time. When cold make rich cream for filling. I use one large cup sweet milk, half cup sugar, quarter cup flour, one egg beaten. Stir over the fire until it thickens and flavor with vanilla. Makes about eighteen puffs.

Heat three cups of milk in a double boiler and stir into it by the handful a half cup of yellow meal, with which has been mixed a half teaspoonful of salt. Cook for half an hour, stirring often. At the end of this time have ready in a bowl half a cupful of molasses and a tablespoonful of butter, well beaten together, stir the milk and meal into this and add a teaspoonful of mace, cinnamon and ginger, mixed, and two eggs whipped light. Beat hard before turning into a buttered pudding dish. Bake covered in a steady oven for nearly an hour. Stir well from the bottom and then brown on top.

Flour should not be kept in a store-room or pantry where there is cooked foods, as it absorbs odors. Ignorance of this fact accounts for poor bread oftener than an inferior quality of flour. Articles of food that are made of gelatine or of milk should always be kept covered, as both milk and gelatine absorb not only odors, but germs. Neither cheese, cabbage, fish nor baked beans should ever be put into the refrigerator. They all leave an odor of which it is difficult to rid the refrigerator, and they also favor the food.

Drain all the oil from a large can of salmon, pick it over carefully and remove all bones. Beat together four eggs until light, add a cup of bread crumbs, a scant cup of rich cream, and the juice of one lemon. Salt to taste and add a good dash of cayenne pepper. Mix these ingredients well together, put in baking dish, cover the dish and bake for thirty minutes in good oven.

Two-thirds cup butter, one cup sugar, one cup sweet milk, third cup chocolate, melted; half-cup nuts, three eggs, whites and yolks beaten separately. Two and a half cups flour, one heaping teaspoonful baking powder beaten into the whipped whites.

Mix together the juice of three oranges, the grated rind of one, a small cupful of sugar, a tablespoonful of butter and the beaten yolks of two eggs. Cook over a slow fire, stirring constantly, until clear and as thick as honey. Serve cold.

A PRESENT DAY UTOPIA.

Moorea Island, the Happiest and Fairest Spot on Earth.

Hugo Parton, writing in the *Outing Magazine*, says that the happiest and most beautiful spot on earth to-day is the island of Moorea, one of the Society Islands, in the south seas. As a contrast to strenuous American methods this description sounds alluring:

"Whenever you are thirsty a word will send a lithe brown body scrambling up a tall palm tree 'rank, and in two minutes a green cocconut is ready for you to quaff—the nectar of the Polynesian gods. It is worth the trip down here to eat the native 'vittals,' for you get at every meal things you never tasted before, and each seems better than its predecessor; to see your dinner of fresh water shrimps, sharks' fins and roasted sea urchins. The bananas you eat—there are eleven varieties—baked, raw, fried, dried—grow a few rods back in the valley; ditto the breadfruit, the pineapples and about everything else on the board. It's nice to have your morning coffee grown in the back yard. Guavas grow in such profusion they are used as pig food, grated cocconut is fed to hens, while sensitive plant is considered excellent fodder for cattle.

"For perfection of the human body the Tahitian is unexcelled, if, indeed, he is anywhere equaled. They are a large race, both men and women being noticeably taller and more fully developed than Anglo-Saxons. I doubt if any Society Islander ever went through a whole day in his life without having a wreath of flowers on his head or a blossom behind his ear. The love of flowers is innate with man, woman and child. They can't pass through a patch of woods without emerging with a garland. Every gay mood calls for flowers on their hats, in their hair, behind their ears, and their life is an almost unbroken sequence of gay moods. Scarcely a native on the island of Moorea can speak a sentence of English, but every one you meet greets you with a courteous smile and the welcoming word 'Ia-ora-na' (Yorana)."

BINDER FOR BUNDLES.

Saves Time by the Eliminating the Tying of Knots.

Among recent inventions is a pocket-holder for quickly tying bundles of papers and similar articles, invented by a Louisiana man.

In designing the holder the inventor worked with the idea that all knots must be eliminated in wrapping the bundle. That he succeeded is apparent on reference to the accompanying illustration. The holder consists of a tin



BUNDLES WITHOUT TYING.

plate to which is secured the piece of rope or twine. The plate is laid on the center of the bundle and the twine carried twice around. On the second turn it is caught on a small hook in the plate and then carried around the opposite end of the bundle, the end of the twine being inserted in a V-shaped extension on the plate. In the free end of the twine are a number of knots equal distances apart. These knots are pulled through the plate to firmly bind the bundle, the peculiar shape of extension preventing them from slipping through after the twine has been released. The inventor claims that this can be manufactured cheaply, rendering its use practical.

Poetry Defined.

George P. Morris, the author of "Woodman, Spare That Tree," was a general of the New York militia and a favorite with all who knew him. Mrs. Sherwood in her reminiscences tells how another poet associated the general with a definition of poetry.

Once Fitz-Greene Halleck, the author of "Marco Bozzaris," called upon her in New York in his old age, and she asked him to define for her what was poetry and what was prose.

He replied: "When Gen. Morris commands his brigade and says, 'Soldiers, draw your swords!' he talks prose. When he says, 'Soldiers, draw your willing swords!' he talks poetry."

From the Devil's Note Book.

Death came near to her when she was young and beautiful.

"Oh, have mercy!" she cried. "I am not prepared to die—there it too much before me."

Death desisted, but returned a few years later. The woman held forth her trembling hands in supplication:

"Spare me! Have mercy! I am not prepared to die—there is too much behind me!"

Moral—There is no pleasing some people.—Smart Set.

The Sarcastic Victim.

The Barber—Your hair is coming out on top, sir.

The Crank—Good! I knew it was in me. Now, for goodness sake, don't talk to it or it will crawl back again.—Philadelphia Press.