A Detective Story.

Lady Hayward was expected every minute at Hayward Castle, and the great entrance doors stood wide open, spite of the cold. There were three or four men men servants standing in the hall, while the gray-headed butler took up his position on the steps. Lord Hayward came and stood by him a few seconds at a time, and listened for the wheels, and then went back and fidgeted about the hall, whistling to himself. Evidently he was very uneasy about something or other. Nobody supposed for a moment that that something or other was connected with Lady Hayward; she had never given him a moment's uneasiness. She was the most precise and perfect of women, always in the right and fully aware of the fact; and Lord Hayward, who was a very good fellow, accustomed to regard himself as not overburdened with brains, was very anxious to talk to her about something that worried him.

The house party was a large one; in fact, the castle was full. But everybody was upstairs, the first dressing-bell having rung. If Lady Hayward was much longer there would be no time to speak to her before dinner. Why, queried Lord Hayward crossly, were the down trains on that confounded line always late?

Lady Hayward had been to London to see her lawyers about some urgent business, and, leaving Lord Hayward to entertain the guests, had gone alone, or rather with her maid. She had stayed the night in town, in order to bring with her a new dress for a ball which was to be given at the castle the following evening.

At last the carriage dashed up to the door, driven very fast, for the coachman knew it was late. The first person who emerged from it was an exceedingly quiet-looking, well-dressed young woman—the maid, evidently. She quickly disappeared and was followed by Lady Hayward, who seized her husband's arm and began to scold him, no matter about what—probably because the train was late. She scolded in the most ladylike way; her voice was clear and slightly shrill; she herself was like a pretty doll just out of a band-box, always dressed according to the latest Paris fashion, always perfectly neat and in order, and quite aware of her own good looks; in manners and morals absolute perfection, and quite aware of that, too.

"I want to speak to you," said Lord Hayward, "before you dress; there's just time."

He followed her up to her dressing room, where tea was served on a little table by the fire. Lady Hayward's maid had just put an easy wrapper temptingly ready, and was busy getting out a dinner dress for her mistress.

"I will ring for you in a few minutes, Taylor," said Lady Hayward, and the perfectly trained servant vanished at once.

"I wonder whether it's that girl after all!" exclaimed Lord Hayward; "yet it seems impossible."

"Don't talk enigmas," said Lady Hayward imperiously; "there isn't time. What is the matter?" She was pouring out her tea as she spoke, and now began to sip it.

"More things have disappeared," said Lord Hayward, in a low voice, "and this time it is worse. The old Duchess has lost a big diamond ring, and your sister's diamond necklace is gone."

Lady Hayward put down her tea.

"Vernon, this is awful," she said. "What are we to do? Who can it be? It's absurd to talk about Taylor; she was with me in town."

"Ah, but we can't tell exactly what time the things were taken; she may have got rid of them in London. It was when you took her to town with you last that your diamond brooch went."

"So it was," said Lady Hayward. "But that makes no difference. The brooch was taken while we were away. Besides, the thing's absurd. Taylor is above suspicion, I know the girl so well. Why, Vernon, she went with me all through France and Italy, when I joined you in Rome; we were always together, and I used to talk to her a great deal. She is a very superior girl. No; it would be most unjust to suspect Taylor."

"Well, there's no one else," said Lord Hayward dejectedly, "except poor little Rose Mannering."

"Poor little Rose Mannering" was the governess who took charge of their one little girl.

"Absurd!" said Lady Haywnrd. And so it was, on the face of it. They knew Rose Mannering's family well; she was a lady, and little more than a child.

A silence followed, during which both looked into the fire for inspiration. All the servants in the house were born of families who had been for generations on the estate. The idea of suspecting any of them was too painful. Taylor was the only exception, and she had been with Lady Hayward two years.

"I begin to believe," said Lady Hayward, "that it is one of our guests."

"Good heavens, Kate, what an idea!"

"Can you suggest anything else?"

"No, I can't. There is some infernal deviltry at work, but, beat my brains how I will, I can't see where it comes from."

"I tell you what we must do, Vernon," said Lady Hayward decisively. "We must be very careful, not frighten anyone, and keep our own counsel. Ride over to the town early tomorrow morning and telegraph to Scotland Yard for a detective to come down disguised to the ball. There will be so many people the servants won't have time to notice him. He must stop as a visitor till he finds out something."

"That will do," exclaimed Lord Hayward.

"Now go," said Lady Hayward, ringing the bell for Taylor; "I must dress at once."

As he went out he met the maid in the doorway and gave her a more curious look than ever. The result was only to give up the idea as preposterous. She had a very gentle, good face; her soft, brown hair, brushed smoothly over her ears, gave it an almost Puritanic look. Lady Hayward had made something of a friend of her, and the girl had never presumed in the least upon it, but had always retained her subdued, sweet manner.

Lady Hayward scrutinized her, too, during the process of dressing, but she shrank from the thoughts in her own mind. She had grown fond of her treasure of a maid, and felt ashamed of herself for her quickly suppressed suspicions.

Early next morning the telegram was sent to Scotland Yard by Lord Hayward, who rode over alone to send it, and waited for the answer. The reply seemed to please him and he rode back in good spirits to a late breakfast. He even faced, with moderate cheerfulness, Lady Hayward's eldest sister, who was in a frightful state about her necklace. This lady was one of his pet aversions; she was not pretty or clever, like his wife, but she was more irreproachable, more moral, more perfect, and she was an old maid. Probably she was the only person in the world of whom Lady Hayward was afraid. Miss Collette was a severe censor in all things and kept her eyeglasses well fixed on her younger sister, who had an important position to fill before the world. At present Miss Collette was very angry because she did not know what was being done about the thefts, and she held that she ought to be one of the council. But Lady Hayward was obstinate; she had found out before that the exemplary Cecilia could not hold her tongue.

This extreme discretion having been observed, the Scotland Yard detective arrived, as a visitor, and no one paid any particular attention to him. He was very quiet and adopted the character of the man who does not dance, or talk or do anything, and it answered admirably. A number of other men with superb shirt-fronts hung about the doorways and looked bored; Mr. Hawk was admirably go ten up for the purpose, and had only to mingle with these others and look as bored as they. Lady Hayward was delighted at this excellent effacement of himself and kept her eye on him with great interest. She managed to speak to him very late, when the party was breaking up. He had discovered nothing so far—not even a "clue,"—and she went to bed disappointed.

Visitors at Hayward Castle breakfasted, of course, at any time during the morning, but the family and household always assembled to morning prayers at 8:45, and breakfast formally began directly afterward. Mr. Hawk had learned this and was in the breakfast room early—the only guest present. No one else turned up but Lord and Lady Hayward themselves, Rose Mannering, who always appeared with her charge at this time, and the servants. Even Miss Collette was too tired to come down, though no one was stricter, theoretically, on the subject of family prayers. How grateful was Lady Hayward, half an hour afterward, that her sister had been late that morning.

"My Lord," he said "may the men servants watch the windows of this room outside for a few minutes? Don't ask me to explain; there's no time to lose."

The old butler came in at that moment, carrying a silver coffee-pot. Lord Hayward gave the order.

"And tell them to keep their eyes open," added Mr. Hawk. "We've got to deal with the lightest pair of heels in the kingdom."

Lady Hayward listened and looked, her heart in her mouth. What was coming next?

"Your ladyship," said Mr. Hawk, "may I send for your maid?" Lord Hayward rang the bell instantly.

"Why should you suspect her?" protested Lady Hayward. "She is a most superior girl. She has traveled with me, and I know her well. No suspicion must fall on her unless you have proofs."

Mr. Hawk arose and went anxiously to the door. The order had been given, but scarcely a moment had elapsed.

"Do you expect her to come in less than a moment?" asked Lady Hayward, a little crossly.

Just then Taylor appeared at the door; the butler was behind her. She came in and the door was shut, the butler remaining outside. At the first glance Lady Hayward had seen a curious look on the girl's face—one she had never seen there before. But immediately she was herself again, and now she stood before Lord and Lady Hayward and the detective, perfectly quiet, without a quiver on her face.

"John," said Mr. Hawk, "this is really very wrong of you. It is an infamous trick to have played. For two years you've been wanted, and I knew you weren't out of the country; but I'd no idea you could be doing such a thing as this?"

While he spoke Mr. Hawk had approached Taylor and put a pair of handcuffs on her. There had been a little byplay first. Taylor had scanned the windows and instantly saw they were guarded.

"So the game's up," she said sullenly.

"Yes, my lady's maid, to the tune of fourteen years," answered Mr. Hawk.

"What does it mean?" cried Lady Hayward; "I can't understand."

Mr. Hawk snatched the dainty little Parisian cap and smooth brown wig from Taylor's head and flung them on the floor. In an instant the gentle girl's face became a man's, smooth and malleable as wax. It was not nice to look at just now. The head was covered with a dark, very, very short growth of hair.

Lady Hayward uttered a shriek and fell back into her chair.

"I'll take him off," said Mr. Hawk. "It's too much for her ladyship."

"Mr. Hawk! Mr. Hawk!" cried poor Lady Hayward, "put on his wig and take him away as a woman! I'll give you anything—anything if you'll do that."

Mr. Hawk seemed suddenly to understand.

"Your ladyship may depend on me," he said solemnly; and he put the wig and cap on again with the greatest solemnity.

"Vernon," exclaimed Lady Hayward hysterically, the moment the door was shut, "promise you'll keep the secret—don't tell any one—don't tell Cecilia. Vernon, are you a brute? I believe you are laughing!"

INSANE PATIENT.—Sheriff Beatley, of Umatilla county, brought an insane colored man to the Asylum last night. The "crazy" was a cook in the Blue mountains, and "cleaned out the ranch" wherever he appeared. Fourteen men tried to arrest him, but it remained for one woman and a stranger to corral him finally.

Poultry.

POULTRY NOTES.

Give the young turkeys meat three times a week, and force them in growth as much as possible, in order to secure large size by Thanksgiving.

Incubator chicks are increasing in the markets every season, and yet the prices are still very high during the period between Christmas and June.

Whitewash the hen-coops now in order to clean them thoroughly and to rid them of lice. Use carbolic acid with the whitewash as a disinfectant and preventive of lice.

Sand is not a substitute for gravel in the poultry yard. The hens usually pick up the sharpest and most irregular pieces. When oyster shells are provided they should be broken into pieces the size of grains of corn, and not ground to a fine powder.

In the absence of meat, potatoes boiled in milk, where there is plenty of the latter, is an admirable preparation for feeding to young, growing chicks. A mixture of one-third corn-meal and wheat bran with the above will make the young chicks grow wonderfully if given fresh every day. The best feed for setting hens is plenty of good, sound whole corn. They should have plenty of fresh water to drink.

Rearing Chicks and Turkeys.

A North Carolina correspondent writes to the Country Gentleman:

It requires a long time to find out things. I have been keeping fowls, ducks and turkeys more or less for nearly forty years, and never lost a chick from the prevailing and much complained of disease called gapes, until this season, and so far have lost but one—the only one lost out of 85 hatched chicks. I have had chicks by hundreds, and one year by over a thousand, and all without any appearance of gapes. The chick which died of all the apparent symptoms of the disease known as gapes, had no worms in the throat, but the bronchial tubes were thickened and filled with a frothy adhesive liquid, and the lungs were much inflamed. It is a very common thing to find the tricheal worms in chicks which have given no indications of the disease, and while there is no doubt of many suffering from these worms, yet many undoubtedly gape from other causes, and gasp for breath, when there are no worms to trouble them.

The same disease troubles turkeys; and from what we read of the feeding of the young turkeys, there is little reason to doubt that most of the ills which affect the young broods result from overfeeding, just as the majority of fatalities among young chicks are produced by the same cause. R. E. says that he gave his poults curds, crumbs and hard boiled eggs (most indigestible food), and the chicks are fed on cooked feed, wheat, corn and scalded meal, with red pepper and ginger in the feed and copperas in the water. S. J. inquires about the best food for his young turkeys, and the good appetite they have indicates the probability that they, too, suffer from excess of food. Now, I have learned that it is very easy to feed too much, because such small animals need only very little food; and in our desire to do the best with them, we overdo it.

The staple food of my young chicks has always been coarsely ground corn and cracked wheat or rye mixed, and crushed wheat only for the first week. I have a brood of twelve young turkeys, reared by one turkey hen, of which two were killed by accident in moving the coop, leaving ten, and their food has been corn and rye cracked together, with what they will pick up in a grass and clover field over which they range by day. There are some wild turkeys in my woods, which of course have no curd or hard boiled eggs, or even cracked corn, and I have seen a brood occasionally which seem quite as forward as the tame broods, and fly already quite as lively. My young turkeys or chicks never had any eggs or curd—only the plainest food, and that measured out to them—and I attribute their healthfulness to this carefulness.

In this locality, the farmers rear quite a number of chickens, which are small but hardy, and the hens rear large broods; and these fowls get their living as they can, ranging the fields and woods, and getting no corn at all. I have not heard any of the farmers complaining of gapes carrying off their chicks. It is well known that parasites infest the weak and sickly animals, and that children whose digestion is weak, and whose habit is unthrifty from eating sweets and candy, are those which suffer from worms. Is it not the case, too, that we overfeed the chicks, and so weaken them that they become a prey to parasites which stronger and healthier ones resist successfully?

Keeping Eggs

A great many plans are given for keeping eggs, but the safest mode is always turn the eggs. If they are turned three times a week and kept in a cool place, no packing material will be necessary at all. The reason they should be turned is that when an egg remains in a certain position for a length of time the yolk approaches and adheres to the shell. It is not necessary to turn each egg separately, but to pack them in a box and turn the box. They may be packed in a barrel, and the barrel turned half round, with the same results. To keep eggs without going to the necessity of making any kind of composition use fine, clean, dry dirt or ashes, either from wood or coal, but they must be fine. In a box or barrel first lay down a layer of the dirt or ashes, then a layer of eggs, care being taken that the eggs do not touch each other. Fill the spaces between the eggs with dirt or ashes, and then put on a layer of dirt or ashes an inch thick. Repeat the process until the box or barrel is full, and before closing be sure everything is packed in a tight and close manner, so that the contents will not shake when the top is put on. Turn daily if preferred, but twice a week at least. Be sure and use none but perfectly fresh eggs. No other kind will keep no matter how well they may be packed. You cannot get fresh eggs by purchase, even from your neighbor, for he will sometimes be unaware of the presence of those that might be stale. A single bad egg will sometimes spoil all. You will have to keep your own hens in order to succeed in preserving eggs. The eggs from hens not in company with males will keep twice as long as those from hens running with the males.—Poultry Keeper.

Feeding Condiments.

In the endeavor to induce the hens to lay, many poultrymen resort to forcing processes, and feed in a manner sometimes unnatural. Red pepper, sulphur, saffron, ginger and all kinds of egg foods are resorted to, and if there is any virtue in such there is no excuse for the best results. But it may well be stated that while such articles may serve as stimulants, and temporarily invigorate the hens, they are of no possible value whatever to healthy fowls. The hens in their natural condition simply seek a variety of food in order to derive those elements that are essential to the formation of the eggs, and to supply body waste, and the best tonics consist of wholesome food. When egg foods and condition powders are given the benefit from such is due more to the fact that they supply something which the poultry man neglects to give, such as salt, for instance, rather than to any substance contained, that induces laying. The hen only lays when she is capable of supplying the materials for forming an egg, and red pepper contributes but a small proportion of any substance that is necessary. But there are those who do find such things beneficial at times, but it is when the hens are debilitated, and require stimulants. Even when the hens are urged to lay, should their appetites be increased by such means, the eggs are seldom fertilized, and are almost worthless for hatching purposes. There is no necessity for treating fowls differently from other stock, but they should receive all the care necessary for their thrift and prosperity.—Farm and Garden.

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