

BY MISADVENTURE 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. Losses 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. Casby 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 g.g. 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, low-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 poscher would like for wiring hares. Yeames had been doing a good deal of shooting. A poscher 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, hard 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 was 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 Boat Variety.

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

"I do!" replied the sensible belle 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.

FARMS AND FARMERS



The Influence of Feed.

Linseed meal has a tendency to make a soft butter, provided the meal is fed in large amounts. If fed in only medium amounts, the butter fats are normal. It is a valuable milk-stimulating food and can be used to prevent the formation of excessively hard fats in winter. The only disadvantage to the general use is the price. Half or three-quarters of a pound of linseed or oil meal in a ration per day will exert a very favorable influence upon the quality of the butter.

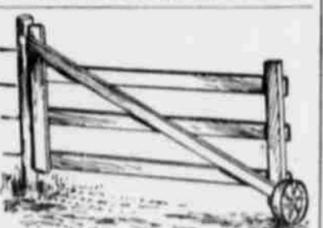
Corn meal, when fed in large amounts with coarse fodders, has a tendency to produce a firm butter. When mixed with other grains, a better quality of butter is produced than if the corn were fed alone. Gluten meal, a by-product obtained in the manufacture of corn starch and glucose, produces a softer butter than corn meal. The gluten, it is to be observed, contains more of the vital nutrient, protein.—Professor Harry Snyder, University of Minnesota.

Odds in Weather Forecasting.

People have learned by experience to make allowance for error in the predictions of the Weather Bureau but Prof. Schuster thinks that the allowances should be officially stated. Astronomers, it appears, are in the habit of giving the value of the "probable error" when publishing their observations. But, although meteorology lends itself more readily than any other science to the evolution of deviations from the mean result, the weather forecasters have not adopted the custom of stating the probable error. Prof. Schuster looks forward to the time when weather forecasts will be accompanied by a statement of the odds that the prediction will be fulfilled. Then, perhaps, we shall read in the weather column not simply, "rain to-morrow," but "3 to 1" or "9 to 1 for rain to-morrow."

Keeping a Gate from Sagging.

Most farm gates are heavy, and after a little time they sag. When they get this way it takes a strong man to open and shut one. Here is a remedy. Get a wheel, either big or little, from an old piece of machinery, and bolt it to the front end of the gate



GOOD USE FOR AN OLD FLOW WHEEL.

In such a way that the gate will be held level. Now the smallest child can open the gate for you. Try it, for it is a saver—saves your patience, your back, and the gate.—N. W. S., in Farm and Home.

Robins Killed for Food in the South.

A million robins were killed in Louisiana during the winter of 1907-8, the offenders being men and boys who shot them for food. While they are protected as song birds in Northern States, it is a common Southern practice to shoot them for the table, and in some States the hunters kill them in great numbers at their roosting places. A government expert suggests that the eastward movement of the boll weevil has been facilitated by the killing of the robins. If that is shown to be so, the cotton growers will not receive much sympathy from the members of the Audubon societies.—Leslie's Weekly.

Transplanting Trees.

In Revue Universelle, according to another foreign contemporary, there is a practical article of general interest on transplanting plants in full foliage at night. The results of some experiments by Rouault would make unnecessary the customary transplanting of deciduous trees in the fall or winter. He has found that trees may be transplanted in full foliage in May or June, with little or no injury, providing the process is carried on at night. This has been demonstrated to the entire satisfaction of some of the most prominent horticulturists of France.

Brewery Stock Feed.

Dried brewers' grains rank close to bran in feeding value, containing a little more protein and fat, but not quite so much carbohydrates. It is claimed that in 100 pounds of this feed there are 15.7 pounds of protein, 36.3 pounds of carbohydrates and 5.1 pounds of fat. Malt sprouts and dried brewers' grains are valuable cow feeds, especially the latter. Sprouts are rich

GRASSES AND CLOVER.

Possibilities of Its Successful Growth in the Pacific States.

By H. T. French, Director Idaho Experiment Station, Moscow.

Much interest is being manifested in the possibility of growing grasses and clovers in the section about Moscow and other portions of Northern Idaho. This matter is of special interest at this time, for many new settlers are coming into this state from the older states, where these crops constitute a very important part of farm production.

Our experience extends over several seasons and we thought it might be of profit to some to know what is being done in this direction on the experiment station farm.

We have undertaken to establish a seeding of clovers and grasses on a portion of the farm and herewith give a brief account of the results of our work during the past season.

Last April we plowed up ten acres of land on which wheat was grown the year before, and fitted it for the seed by harrowing twice with a fine toothed smoothing harrow. We then sowed broadcast the following mixture, covering six acres, leaving the balance until later, on account of the ground being in a lower portion of the field and too wet to sow.

40 pounds common red clover,
5 pounds Alsike clover,
25 pounds orchard grass,
5 pounds meadow fescue,
2 pounds English ryegrass,
10 pounds timothy,
4 pounds tall meadow cut grass.

This made 16 pounds of the mixture per acre. The balance of the field was sown to the same combination, at the same rate per acre, except eight pounds of alfalfa seed was added to the mixture in place of the alsike clover and timothy seed.

No nurse crop was sown with the grass mixture. And here is where many farmers make a mistake, by sowing wheat, oats or barley with the grass or clover. It is the experience of the best farmers now that it is not wise to sow a crop of grain with the seeding. The more rapidly growing grain crop takes the moisture away from the tender grass, and clover plants, and when the grain is out the hot sun burns these tender plants up. The wild oat which is so abundant in the soil of this locality is quite enough of a nurse crop, and a man's attention should be given to cutting this out of the way when it reaches the proper stage. We cut two crops of wild oats from our field. The first crop made a fair yield of hay. In cutting the wild oats the mowing machine should be set high enough so that it will not cut the clover or young grass.

The last of November, when the yield was last examined, there was a fine stand of clover and of all the grasses sown, so far as we were able to detect them. Much of the clover headed out last season making a growth one foot high or more.

Unless last season was an exceptionally favorable one there is no reason why clovers and grasses should not be grown in the hill lands in this section.

The yield of wheat will not be less when the farmers learn to grow these crops which restore fertility, and the possibilities of diversified farming, with stock as an important factor, will be greatly strengthened.

VARIETIES OF FRUIT.

Washington Professor Makes Study of Each Region.

By J. L. Ashlock, Washington State College, Pullman.

During the past year numerous inquiries have come to the State college department of horticulture asking questions which generally can be summed up in the one question: "What kind of fruit will do best where I live?" This class of queries has given the staff of the state experiment station considerable trouble, since, as stated by Professor Thorber, head of the department of horticulture, unless the staff members know exactly the climatic and soil conditions of the region from which the question came, erroneous information may be given, leading the seeker for information to plant trees not at all adapted to his region.

"Now we have solved the problem," said Professor Thorber, recently. "During the last year we have made a careful survey of the state with reference to the particular varieties of fruits which are adapted to each region. We have classified the lists into 'Western Washington,' 'Inland Valleys,' and 'Upland Valleys.' In this list is included apples, pears, cherries, peaches, apricots, plums, raspberries, prunes, blackberries, gooseberries, currants, strawberries and nuts. Early, medium early and late varieties are given where it is necessary. We submit these lists to all inquirers now, and from a dozen or so good varieties of apples, pears, etc., he may choose as he likes, according to the adaptability of the fruit for his region.

"Another experiment we have in hand is one in which we have selected sixty-five good varieties of apples from the eight hundred or so varieties in the state experiment station orchard, and are sending two varieties of each of the sixty-five varieties to ten farmers of fruit-brokers of Washington. We wish to determine by this experiment how each variety will do in the particular region in which it is tried, and in this way we hope to collect much valuable data concerning the possibilities for new varieties of apples in this region."