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FROM WALL STREET TO NEWGATE.

VIA THE PRIMROSE WAY.

BY AUSTIN BIDWELL.

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CHAPTER III.

About every second day I called on Murpurgo & Weissweiler in Frankfurt and talked over matters and easily saw that everything would go right. All that was necessary was to produce the bonds and they would hand over the cash. Giving them a list, they gave me a memorandum offer for the lot. I accepted their offer and the next hour was a very bad 60 minutes for me. There was considerable delay, and my suspicions were fully aroused, and at one time I thought they had made some discovery; but, as a fact, my suspicions were wholly unfounded.

The banker and clerks were simply hurrying around, anxious to oblige me and have the money out of the bank before it closed. At last the amounts were figured up and verified by myself. One of the partners hastened off to the bank and in five minutes returned with a very pretty parcel of 175,000 guineas. Going to Rothschilds', in Rue La-fitte, I bought exchange on New York for \$80,000, and left the same night for London. Very many times I journeyed over that route in after years, but never with quite so light a heart. I was young and enthusiastic; all the glamour and poetry of life hung around me, while I was too inexperienced to notice whether I was drifting or to understand the powerful current upon which I had embarked. In fact, I had sold myself to do the devil's work, and day by day the chain would tighten, while all the time I thought I could when I pleased stop short on the downward grade and take the back track. More experience would have taught me that every one who forsakes the path of honor not only thought the same, but had a purpose to even everything up some day and make restitution. And today there is not a criminal but who at the start looks forward to the time when he will no longer war against society, but will go out and come in at peace with all men. But, when one comes to think of it, what a fool's game is that of a man who fights against society!

The criminal has but two arms; very short and weak they are, and of fle-h too. He has but two eyes that cannot possibly see around the nearest corner, while society has a million arms of steel that can reach around the world, and a million eyes which are never closed, that can pierce the thickest gloom with sleepless vigilance. The poor, unhappy criminal by fortunate dexterity may escape for a little, but at last society lays her iron grasp on him, and with giant force hurls him into a dungeon. As for the short lived, tempestuous success that some few criminals have, is there any sweetness in it? I say no; success won in honest fight is sweet, but I know from my own experience that the success of crime brings no sweetness, no blessing with it, but leaves the mind a prey to a thousand haunting fears that make shipwreck of peace.

I went down to Liverpool and embarked on the good ship Java. Ten days later we sailed through the Narrows.

During my last day in London I went to Westminster abbey and spent three hours in that Valhalla of the Anglo-Saxon race. It made a tremendous impression upon my mind. In no other work of human hands do the spirits of so many departed heroes linger, certainly in no other does the dust of so many of the great dead rest, and as I read memorial upon memorial to departed greatness I realized that the path of honor and of truth was the only one for men to tread.

All through the voyage the influences of the abbey were upon me; I felt I was treading on dangerous ground and resolved I would have no more of it. Would I had then resolved, when I met Irving & Co., to throw all the plunder in their faces and say, "I'll have none of it, and here we part." I felt that I ought to do that, but weakly said, I need the \$10,000, and I'll give the rogues their share and then see them no more. I had fully made up my mind to that, knowing Irving would be on the wharf eager to meet me.

In sailing through the Narrows and past Staten Island I was making up my mind as to the little speech I would make. We rapidly neared the wharf in Jersey City, and I quickly recognized Irving standing on the edge of the closely packed crowd, watching the steamer with a nervous look on his face.

He sprang on board, rushed to me with a beaming face, grasped my hand, and putting the other on my shoulder led me toward the gangway. He had not spoken yet, but as we were going down the gangplank he said, "My boy, you have done splendidly," and then, putting his mouth close to my ear, whispered, "We have got another job for you, and it's a beauty!"

Going up the wharf with Irving, I was on the point of telling him I wanted no more jobs, but weakly put it off, and by so doing, of course, made it more difficult. He told me Stanley and White were waiting at Taylor's hotel on Montgomery street, a few doors up from the wharf.

We soon were there, and they gave me a warm and even enthusiastic reception, and, opening a box, I produced the 16 bills of exchange for \$5,000 each, informing them they should have their cash in 90 minutes. It was curious to see these men handle the bills of exchange, passing them from one to an-

other, examining them with anxious care. But where were my good resolutions and what had become of them? Why, they, under the effect of the wine and the magnetic influence of these three minds, had gone flying down the bay, and under a favoring gale were fast speeding seaward beyond the ken of mortal eye, not to be found by me again until years after, when, with the toils about me, I found myself in Newgate. Then the fugitives all came back, this time to stay.

My three graces who adorned the police department of New York were full of matter of a new enterprise which by my co-operation was to make the fortunes of us all. But they were too evidently anxious, too eagerly desirous to handle the greenbacks my bills of exchange represented to fix their minds upon anything else, so by a unanimous vote we adjourned to the other side of the river, appointing a wineroom on Broadway, a few doors below Exchange place, for our place of meeting at 1 o'clock. Stanley and White went away together, but first each once more told me privately that he depended upon me to put in his own hands his share, showing how these rogues suspected each other and indeed were full of suspicions of every one and everything. Irving crossed the ferry with me, but on the New York side he dropped behind, and, although I paid no more attention to him, no doubt he followed me. The excitement of success and of being at home again banished any possible regrets or fears over the course I had entered, and with a light heart and buoyant step I quickly made my way to a friend of mine, a well known broker in New street, shook hands with him, and, telling him, very much to his surpris, that I had just returned from Europe, asked him to step around the corner to the office of the bankers and identify me.

In a minute we were there. Indorsing the drafts, I told them to make it in five hundreds. They sent out to the bank for them, and I was speedily on my way to our rendezvous with 160 \$500 greenbacks in a roll, and meeting the three at the wineroom I made their eyes grow big when I flashed the roll on their delighted orbs. The division was speedily made, I retaining \$10,000 for my share, but I was dissatisfied with my share and told them so, when each promptly threw out \$1,000, and we shook hands all around.

Here were four conspirators of us, and it was comical to see how anxious we all were to get away so that each could stow his plunder in a safe place. For my part I went home, but I shall say nothing of the meeting with the members of my family. I told them I had made a lot of money in a speculation, and not knowing the inside history or suspecting anything they rejoiced with me and were proud and happy for their boy. I spent about \$1,000 making things comfortable for them, but to their grief I told them that circumstances required me to take up my former quarters at the St. Nicholas.

It would be interesting to tell of my reception among my acquaintances on Wall street and other parts of the city. Rumor magnified my resources, and it was reported I had cleared \$100,000 in some fortunate deal. It was strange to see the new found deference all around, from my former employers down to my old waiter at down town Delmonico's, where I dined, but I will pass over all these matters and proceed with my history of the Primrose Way.

In 1865 there lived in London a famous queen's counsel, Edwin James. Fame and fortune were his. A born orator, a talented scholar, he rapidly pushed his way from the very bottom of the legal profession to all but its topmost height. At 40 he found himself facile princeps of the English bar, and public opinion, that potent factor in popular government, had already singled him out for the high position of attorney general. That secured, only one step remained to place him in the seat of the lord chancellor—truly an imperial position, one that satisfied the proud ambition of a Wolsey and fitted the genius of a Thomas a Becket. It carries with it the position of keeper of the conscience of her majesty, giving the possessor precedence in all official functions over the English aristocracy, next to royalty itself.

But about this time dark whispers began to fly about through the clubs of London. Soon it became known that Edwin James, the lord chancellor to be, was in the toils, and it shortly transpired that, in spite of the fact that his income from his profession was nearer \$20,000 than £10,000 per annum, it had proved insufficient, and he was heavily in debt and worse.

It would seem he was keeping up what in the polite language of society is known as dual houses. A woman of brilliant beauty presided over one, and the marvelous beauty of its mistress was only equaled by her extravagance. He also had a fondness for associating with younger men than himself and had got into a particularly fast set of young lords and army men. At his club he had lost large sums at baccarat and loo, and, in an unhappy hour for himself and his, was miserably from his high position and,—miscreant to think of—committed a crime, in the expectation that he would relieve himself from some of the more crushing obligations he had heaped upon himself, either through the extrava-

gant vagaries of his imperious mistress or by his own rashness in trying his luck among a lot of titled sharpers. He had among his clients one fast, even madly extravagant youth, heir of a historic name and of a lordly estate. To supply his extravagance "my lord" had applied to the money lenders—those sharks that in London, as elsewhere, fatten on such game. These gentry were eager to lend the young blood money upon what are known in English law as post obits, which loans in this particular case carried the trifling interest of about 100 per cent per annum. James was cognizant of his friend's excursions among the money lenders, and no doubt he thought the young spendthrift, when he came into his fortune, would never know within a good many thousands how much he had borrowed nor even the number of post obits he had given.

I will just explain that a post obit is a form of note or due bill given by the heir of an estate (usually of an entailed estate), which matures the moment the drawer of the document enters into that estate. That is to say, the tender hearted son discounts his father's death to provide fuel to feed his flame. So Edwin James, driven to his own destruction, stooped from his imperial position into what one might call ankle depth of crime.

He made out two post obits for £5,000, wrote his client's name at the bottom of each, gave them to the money lenders, who, never doubting that the prodigal son had signed and given them to his counsel, had made no question, but gave James the money for them at once. But James had reckoned without his host, for this nineteenth century prodigal was made of keener metal than he of the first. Strange to say, and utterly unexpected as it was to all who knew him and had looked upon his riotous living, he kept his books straight and knew to a single guinea how much and to whom he was owing.

His discovery of the forgery was accelerated by the sudden and most unexpected death of his father, his return home and stepping into his estate.

The various post obits were presented and placed before him. He instantly pronounced the two for £5,000 each to be forgeries, and the crime was easily laid at the door of the queen's counsel. The heir indignantly refused to condone the offense, and revealing the fatal secret to a few within a mouth it was known in every clubroom in London. From there it got into the newspapers, and they, under a thinly disguised alias of a "distinguished member of the bar," gave more or less accurate details of the damning truth. His former client eventually said he would not prosecute the forgery if the criminal left England; if not, he would immediately go before the grand jury, procure an indictment and have this man, who had moved a prince among men, arraigned in the dock at the Old Bailey, there to plead and stand trial like any common criminal.

And he fled. Of course, like all fugitives from justice throughout the old world, he looked to America for a city of refuge, and here he came. Not to keep my readers too long from the main narrative, it will suffice to say that soon after his arrival he applied for admission to the bar of New York, but first he won to his cause the high souled Richard O'Gorman, then a leader of his profession.

It was for Edwin James a lucky stroke, for at this time O'Gorman was in the full possession of his magnificent powers. Few could resist his magic. His great heart was stirred, and he took up the cause of his friend as if he had been his brother. The English lawyer's reputation was known to every member of the bar of New York, and there had been and still was a bitter opposition to his admission, but when it became known that their eloquent leader was his champion many began to feel that perhaps after all "the poor fellow ought to be given another chance," and when at the next meeting of the Bar association O'Gorman in a set oration brought all his splendid eloquence into play the cause was won.

Great hearted O'Gorman had helped this lame dog over the stile, but the dog's heart was not in the right place, and, as my reader will see in the sequel, he soon went lame again.

In the rear room of a somewhat luxurious range of offices in a building on Broadway facing the city hall four men were engaged in discussing what was evidently an exciting topic. The door of the main office bore the sign, "Edwin James, Counselor at Law and Register in Bankruptcy." He was one of the four. He had failed lamentably in his efforts to secure a practice. The effects of O'Gorman's eloquence had in the gray light of commonplace day faded away, the more so when the ideal his magic had created in the minds of men was in hourly contrast with the man himself and his history. His professional brethren looked upon him with suspicion, and there was a general impression abroad that his escapades were not over yet.

Brea, with a keen eye to business, had married the discarded daughter of a wealthy but not overrespectable New York family, and he had, unsuspected, pulled the wires so that James had been employed as the family lawyer, and in that capacity had drawn the will of the mother. She was an imperious, hot tempered body, one who when aroused was accustomed to use language more vigorous than polite, and who not infrequently went to fistfights with her daughters. The husband and father, the creator of the fortune, was dead, and the vast family property, in securities, stocks and lands, was vested absolutely in the mother. In the old lady's will Brea's wife, the second daughter of the house (there were no sons), was down in the very first paragraph for the wad-

nificent sum of "\$1 lawful currency," and her name nowhere else appeared in the lengthy document. The old lady was such a termanag and so implacable in her hatred that it was a moral certainty she would never relent and change her purpose toward her daughter. But James had also drawn up a second will of his own and Brea's concoction, and a precious piece of villainy it was, in which the wife was down for legacies amounting to \$750,000. The genuine will James kept in his own possession, ready to destroy the very moment word came that the old lady was an immortal, while the spurious will was kept in the vaults of the Safety Deposit company, there to remain until the death of the testatrix, when, of course, it would in due time be produced.

But money must be had at once, for Brea and James were in sore straits, particularly James, who had been threatened with arrest and was so far involved that he always entered and left his house at night in order to escape importunate creditors. This was James' second interview with the men and the first time he had been alone with them. He saw at once that he had to do with able, clear headed men, took them into his confidence and in order to excite their hopes and bind them to him as well he confided to them the plot of the forged will, producing the genuine for their inspection.

He assured them that it was a sure and speedy fortune, as the lady was old and frail in health, and he also promised they should share between them \$100,000, provided they would stand by to give a hand in the somewhat improbable event of the other heirs disputing the will, but above all if they would devise some means to furnish him at once \$10,000, or at least \$5,000. Money he must have, and he could no longer do without it.

The result of our conference in James' office was that the very next day an office down town was engaged under a fictitious name and a simple, unsuspecting fellow hired as porter and messenger. After some little negotiation he obtained particulars of parties banking with the great firm of Jay Cooke & Co., corner of Wall and Nassau streets. Briefly told, the result was that four days later a messenger walked into their banking house with a check for \$20,000, purporting to be signed by another firm, who banked with them. Along with the check went a letter bearing a signature well known to the cashier, asking him to pay the check to bearer, the result of all being that five minutes thereafter we were walking unconcerned up Broadway, and sending a message to James to meet us at Delmonico's, corner Broadway and Chambers street, we sat down awaiting his arrival. He had anxiously been looking for news, and almost before we had seated ourselves he entered, eager and anxious looking, but when he glanced at our faces a happy expression came over his own and without a word he put out his hand. After a warm greeting I produced the roll, and, to his delight, I handed over to James ten five hundreds. On the morrow I went to the office, and paying my messenger a week's wages, besides making a small gift, told him he need not come any more.

With this \$20,000 coup we fondly thought all our troubles and all our unlawful acts were ended. We now had a few thousands, sufficient to last until the \$5,000 we had invested in the will case should bring in a dividend that would mean a fortune for us all. So we took things easy about town, and altogether thought ourselves pretty good fellows and this world a very good sort of place to be in.

Thus the winter passed by and the summer was at hand. Our thousands of the year before had dwindled to hundreds, and the old lady whose heirs we had constituted ourselves seemed to have renewed her youth and threatened to outlive us all.

Besides this there had grown up a repugnance in our minds to the business, and when one day my friend Mac remarked it was a scoundrelly business to rob the heirs of an estate, and they women, George and I heartily acquiesced, and we vowed we would take no part in the matter and then there resolved we would throw both James and Brea over, but first to use Brea and James for our own purposes. Once more we found ourselves planning a coup in Wall street. Talking the matter over, we three soon had a plan, and being dowered with intense energy it promised a successful determination. Audaciously enough we determined the lightning should strike once more in the same place—that is, to make Jay Cooke & Co. again the victims. Irving and his honest fellows were to co-operate by watching everything, and if any arrest threatened to be on hand to make it themselves and then let the prisoner escape. Most important of all, when the bankers drove up in hot haste to police headquarters to give information, James, honest James, would be on hand to receive him, would call in his two trustees to get with him full particulars of the robbery and a description of the men. Then the banker would be sent away with the assurance that "we know the men and will have them," but at the same time warning him to keep the matter a secret in order better to enable them to catch the villains.

If successful, the detectives were to receive 25 per cent between them. Our plan required James to play an important part, and although no confederacy could be fixed on him, yet he would hardly escape questioning and a very considerable degree of suspicion, so much so that it probably would put an end to any lingering remnants of character he had on hand or in stock. But he was tired of America and determined to go to Paris with his share of the

plunder. Our visits to James had always been in his private office, and his clerks had never seen either of us or Brea.

Our plan was to make use of James' office in a way that will appear later. As related, he was suspected by his profession, but the general public thought him a very great man. He had appeared as (volunteer) counsel in two or three murder cases and had delivered powerful addresses which had attracted considerable notice in the papers.

One day, soon after our plan was matured, Brea went to Philadelphia, and by a mixture of audacity and finesse procured from Jay Cooke himself (the parent house of the New York firm of Jay Cooke & Co. was in Philadelphia) a letter of introduction to the manager of the New York firm. He wanted the letter ostensibly in order to consult the manager about certain investments which he, as executor of an estate, desired to make for his wards.

As the transaction was one of considerable magnitude there would be large commissions paid, and with the grand send off of a letter from Jay Cooke to his subordinate in New York the speculation opened well—so well that we at once decided what we would do with the money when we got it—a case in point for the old proverb. We had ascertained the name of a Newark manufacturer who had recently failed in business. I will call him Newman. On the morning after his return from Philadelphia Brea presented himself at James' office, it being arranged that James should be out, so Brea told the clerk that his name was Newman; that he had lately failed in business and intended to employ Mr. James to put him through the bankruptcy court. The clerk told him to come again at 12 and he would find Mr. James in.

At 12 he came. The clerk introduced him. James kept the clerk conveniently near that he could hear the conversation. Brea, as Newman, told James he had used in his business \$240,000 belonging to his wife and her mother, and that in scheduling his assets he proposed to use enough to make those amounts good, intending to conceal the fact from his creditors. He determined to invest the amount in bonds—so ran his story—and was going to deposit the money in the bank that very afternoon, at the same time producing his letter of introduction from Jay Cooke, all of this, of course, being for the eye and ear of the clerk, who might be required as a witness of his employer's good faith.

Brea Newman also paid James in presence of the clerk a retaining fee of \$250, which was privately returned. James banked in Jersey City, and when Newman said, "Introduce me at your bank, as I want a small credit handy," James said, "My bank is in Jersey City."

The clerk's brother was paying teller at the Chemical bank, and, as was expected, he at once spoke up, saying, "Let me introduce Mr. Newman to the Chemical bank." So down went Newman and the clerk, and in ten minutes our man had the Chemical bank check-book in his pocket and \$5,000 to his credit in the bank. The same afternoon he presented his letter of introduction at Jay Cooke & Co.'s and was cordially received. He of course told a totally different story there. In this case a relative lately deceased had left him an estate of great value. He was, he said, realizing on his real estate and buying bonds as fast as his money came in, and he wanted to invest a million in various railway bonds. At present he had \$240,000 on hand, which he wanted to invest in government bonds. He then left for the time being, leaving a good impression, which his refined manner and appearance confirmed.

So far all was well—that is, all was well from our point of view. The next two or three days Brea paid several visits to the Chemical bank, getting small checks for \$500 and \$1,000 certified, and now had his account drawn down to \$1,000. The day before he had called on Jay Cooke & Co. and told them he would take \$240,000 in seven thirties, "Bearer" bonds, and that he would call the next day and pay for them. At the same time he got them to give him a pro forma bill for them.

The eventful day had come, and James, to get his head clerk out of the way, sent him to the admiralty court to take notes of the evidence in a case going on there.

At 10 o'clock Brea sent a messenger with a note to the bankers, requesting them to send the bonds to Edwin James' office, and he would pay for them on delivery. He could not come himself, as he was in consultation with the executors of the estate.

In the meantime a check for the full value of the bonds, \$240,000, had been made out. It was drawn on the Chemical bank and was, in fact, similar to those always given between bankers on bond transactions.

Brea had drawn his own check for \$240, and had it in his hatband along with the \$240,000 dummy check. The plan is palpable enough. When the messenger brought the bonds, Brea, or Newman, was going to say: "All right, I have the check here. Bring the bonds, and we will go to the Chemical bank and get them to certify my check." Then when at the bank he would take out both checks, letting the messenger only get a glimpse of one, and that one would be the small \$240 one, which Brea would pass in through the window with request to have it certified. This would be done, and when handed out of course Brea was to change it and hand the messenger the big one of home manufacture.

The night before the expected coup we met James for a final full dress rehearsal for the morrow, and after everything was settled adjourned to the up-

town Delmonico's for supper. It so happened that Detective George Elder was there. He had some acquaintance with me, but the rest of the party were strangers. I did not see him at the time, but it would seem he was curious, even suspicious, from some scraps of conversation he overheard. However, neither his curiosity nor suspicion would have been of any consequence or concern to us had it not been that in going out Brea left on the table with some papers the memorandum or pro forma bill of the bonds given him the day before by the bankers. Strangely enough, the body of the bill alone was intact. The heading bearing the name of the firm and purchaser had been torn off and destroyed.

Elder picked it up, and having some vague suspicions of a plot somewhere he determined to go around among the hundred or more bankers and brokers in and around Wall street and investigate quietly, without making any report to his superiors, his immediate superior being of course our honest friend, the worthy chief of the detective force, who was anxiously looking for his percentage of the deal. The whole force was split up into cliques, each intensely jealous of every other, each with its own stamping grounds, and each strictly protecting his own preserves.

At 9:30 the next morning Elder started around, carrying the fragment of the memorandum he had picked up from bank to bank and from one broker to the other. He had spent over an hour making inquiries and walked into Jay Cooke & Co.'s office just as the messenger was leaving with the bonds for James' office. Fifteen minutes more, and the game was ours. Elder produced the memorandum, and they at once recognized it as their own. Elder asked them if they knew their man and were sure it was all right.

They said it was perfectly right, that Mr. "Newman" had been introduced by the head of the firm in Philadelphia and was also a client of Edwin James, but then it was strange the bill should be mutilated. Elder averred his belief that a fraud was intended and suggested that he and the manager should accompany the messenger with the bonds. This alarmed the manager, and he directed Elder and the messenger to await his return. Seizing his hat, he started for James' office to investigate. James was

there, and Brea, the pseudo Newman, was in the private office with two checks ready, anxiously awaiting the arrival of the messenger with the bonds.

Myself and all the other members of our party were near by, watching and awaiting developments. The manager, considerably perturbed, entered the office, and James saw at once the business was a failure, for he knew of course that any suspicion as to good faith would be fatal to the success of the plot. Brea, hearing the voices and supposing it was the messenger with the bonds, opened the door of the private office and was vexed to see the manager, who, shaking him by the hand, told him the bonds would arrive soon, at the same time saying, "I suppose you will pay currency for the bonds?" To which Brea replied, "I will go to my bank with you now and get my check certified for the amount and give it to you, or leave it until the messenger comes with the bonds."

This offer, along with Brea's coolness, apparently disarmed all suspicions, and he said: "Oh, all right. The messenger will go to the bank with you." He left the office, but stopped in the hall for a moment, then turned and hastily re-entering said, "By the way, Mr. Newman, please draw the currency from the bank and pay the notes to the messenger upon delivery of the bonds."

So the grand coup had failed, ignominiously failed, and through what appeared a trivial accident, but this was fate. More such "accidents" at critical periods will appear before the history is done that changed the whole course of our lives.

The dummy check was still in our hands, and was at once destroyed, so, with nothing to fear, we coolly walked up Broadway.

TO BE CONTINUED.

USE OF TURPENTINE.—Turpentine has almost as many uses in the house as borax. It is good for rheumatism, and, mixed with champhorated oil and rubbed on the chest, is one of the best remedies for bronchial colds. It is an excellent preventive against moths, although naphtha is preferable, the odor leaving much sooner; it will drive ants and cockroaches away, if sprinkled about the shelves and cupboards; a spoonful of it to a pail of warm water cleans paint excellently; and a little in the boiler on washing day cleans the clothes.

Of the potential voting strength of this country 12,000,000 are of native and 4,000,000 of foreign birth.



"I suppose you will pay currency for the bonds?"