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THE GRAFTERS

By FRANCIS LYNDE

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CHAPTER VII.

THE SENTIMENTALISTS.

Kent's time from Alameda Square to the capitol was the quickest a fogged cab-horse could make, but he might have spared the horse and saved the double fee. On the broad steps of the south portico he, uprushing three at a bound, met the advance guard of the gallery contingent, down-coming. The house had adjourned.

"One minute, Harnwick!" he gasped, falling upon the first member of the corporations' lobby he could identify in the throng. "What's been done?"

"They've taken a fall out of us," was the brusque reply. "House Bill Twenty-nine was reported by the committee on judiciary and rushed through after you left. Somebody engineered it to the passing of a finger-nail: bare quorum to act; members who might have filibustered weeded out, on one pretext or another, to a man; pages all excused, and nobody here with the privilege of the floor. It was as neat a piece of gag-work as I ever hope to see if I live to be a hundred."

Kent faced about and joined the townward dispersal with his informant.

They parted at the entrance to the Camelot club, and Kent went two squares farther on to the Wellington. Ormsby had not yet returned, and Kent went to the telephone and called up the Brentwood apartments. It was Penelope that answered.

"Well, I think you owe it," she began, as soon as he had given his name. "What did I do at Miss Van Brock's to make you cut me dead?"

"Why, nothing at all, I'm sure. I was looking for Mr. Ormsby, and—" "Not when I saw you," she broke in flippantly. "You were handling Miss Portia an ice. Are you still looking for Mr. Ormsby?"

"I am—just that. Is he with you?"

"No; he left here about 20 minutes ago." Kent hung up the receiver, and when he was asking a second time at the clerk's desk for the missing man, Ormsby came in to answer for himself. Whereupon the crisis was outlined to him in brief phrase, and he rose to the occasion, though not without a grimace.

"I'm not sure just how well you know Mrs. Hepzibah Brentwood," he demurred; "but it will be quite like her to balk. Don't you think you'd better go alone? You are the company's attorney, and your opinion ought to carry some weight."

David Kent thought not; but a cautious diplomatist, having got the idea well back into the back part of his head, was not to be denied.

"Of course, you'll come. You are just the man I'll need to back me up. I shan't shirk; I'll take the mother into the library and break the ice, while you are squaring things with the young women. Penelope won't care the snap of her finger either way; but Elinor has some notions that you are fitter to cope with than I am. After, if you can give me a lift with Mrs. Hepzibah, I'll call you in. Come on; it's getting pretty late to go visiting."

Kent yielded reluctantly, and they took a car for the sake of speed. It was Penelope who opened the door for them at 124 Tejon avenue; and Ormsby made it easy for his coadjutor, as he had promised.

"I want to see your mother in the library for a few minutes," he began. "Will you arrange it, and take care of Mr. Kent until I come for him?" Penelope "arranged" it, not without another added pang of curiosity, whereupon David Kent found himself in the rather embarrassed third of a silent trio gathered about the embers of the sitting-room fire.

"It is to be a Quaker meeting?" asked Penelope, sweetly, when the silence had grown awe-inspiring.

Kent laughed for pure joy at the breaking of the spell.

"One would think we had come to drag you all off to jail, Ormsby and I," he said; and then he went on to explain. "It's about your Western Pacific stock, you know. To-day's quotations put it a point and a half above your purchase price, and we've come to persuade you to unload, pronto, as the member from the Rio Blanco would say."

"Is that all?" said Penelope, stifling a yawn. "Then I'm not in it: I'm an infant." And she rose and went to the piano.

"You haven't told us all of it: what has happened?" queried Elinor, speaking for the first time since her greeting of Kent.

He briefed the story of House Bill Twenty-nine for her, pointing out the probabilities.

"Of course, no one can tell what the precise effect will be," he qualified. "But in my opinion it is very likely to be destructive of dividends. Skipping the dry details, the new law, which is equitable enough on its own face, can be made an engine of extortion in the hands of those who administer it. In fact, I happen to know that it was designed and carried through for that very purpose."

She smiled. "I have understood you were in the opposition. Are you speaking politically?"

"I am stating the plain fact," said Kent, nettled a little by her coolness. "Decadent Rome never lifted a baser set of demagogues into office than we have here in this state at the present moment."

He spoke warmly, and she liked him best when he put her on the footing of an equal antagonist.

"I can't agree with your inference," she objected. "As a people we are neither obsequious nor stupid."

"Perhaps not. But it is one of the failures of a popular government that an honest majority may be controlled and directed by a small minority of shrewd rascals. That is exactly what has happened in the passage of this bill. I venture to say that not one man in the ten who voted for it had the faintest suspicion that it was a 'graft.'"

"If that be true, what chances there are for men with the gift of true leadership and a love of pure justice in their hearts!" she said half-absently; and he started forward and said: "I beg pardon?"

She let the blue-gray eyes meet his and there was a passing shadow of disappointment in them.

"I ought to beg yours. I'm afraid I was thinking aloud. But it is one of my dreams. If I were a man I should go into politics."

"To purify them?"

"To do my part in honest. The great heart of the people is honest and well-meaning; I think we all admit that. And there is intelligence, too. But human nature is the same as it used to be when they set up a man who could and called him a king. Gentle or simple, it must be led."

"There is no lack of leadership, such as it is," he hazarded.

"No; but there seems to be a pitiful lack of the right kind: men who will put self-seeking and unworthy ambition aside and lift the standard of justice and right-doing for its own sake. Are there any such men nowadays?"

"I don't know," he rejoined gravely. "Sometimes I'm tempted to doubt it. It is a frantic scramble for place and power for the most part. The kind of man you have in mind isn't in it, blurs it as he would a plaque spot."

She contradicted him firmly. "No, the kind of a man I have in mind wouldn't shun it; he would take hold with his hands and try to make things better; he would put the selfish temptations under foot and give the people a leader worth following—he the real mind and hand of the well-meaning majority."

Kent shook his head slowly. "Not unless a motive stronger than the abstraction which we call patriotism."

"I don't understand," she said; meaning, rather, that she refused to understand.

"I mean that such a man, however exalted his views might be, would have to have an object more personal to him than the mere dutiful promptings of patriotism to make him do his best."

"But that would be self-seeking again."

"Not necessarily in the narrow sense. The old knightly chivalry was a beautiful thing in its way, and it gave an uplift to an age which would yet have been frankly brutal without it; yet it had its well-spring in what appeals to us now as being a rather fantastic sentiment."

"And we are not sentimentalists?" she suggested.

"No, and it's the worse for us in some respects. You will not find your ideal politician until you find a man with somewhat of the old knightly spirit in him. And I'll go further and say that when you do find him he will be at heart the champion of the woman he loves rather than that of a political constituency."

She became silent at that, and for a time the low sweet harmonies of the nocturne Penelope was playing filled the gap.

He turned upon her suddenly. "Did you mean to reproach me?" he asked abruptly.

"How absurd!"

"No, it isn't. You are responsible for me, in a certain sense. You sent me out in to the world, and somehow I feel as if I had disappointed you."

"But what went you out for to see?" she quoted softly.

"I know," he nodded, sitting down again. "You thought you were arousing a worthy ambition, but it was only avarice that was quickened. I've been trying to be a money-getter."

"You can be something vastly better."

"No, I'm afraid not; it is too late." Again the piano-mellowed silence supervened, and Kent put his elbows on his knees and his face in his hands, being very miserable.

He believed that he had been slow to credit before; that he had it in him to hew his way to the end of the line if only the motive were strong enough to call out all the reserves of battle-might and courage. That motive she alone, of all the women in the world, might have supplied, he told himself in keen self-pity. With her love to arm him, his clear-eyed faith to inspire him and pushed the cup of bitter herbs aside, there would be time enough to drain it farther on.

There came the sound of a door opening and closing, and Ormsby

stood looking in upon them. "We needn't keep these sleepy young persons out of bed any longer," he announced briefly; and the coadjutor said good-night and joined him at once.

"What luck?" was David Kent's anxious query when they were free of the house and had turned their faces toward.

"Just as much as we might have expected. Mrs. Hepzibah refuses point-blank to sell her stock—won't talk about it. The idea of parting with it now, when it is actually worth more than when we bought it!" he quoted, mimicking the thin-lipped, acidulous protest. "Later in an evil minute, I tried to drag you in, and she let you have it square on the point of the jaw—intimated that it was a deal in which some of you inside people needed her block of stock to make you whole. She did, by Jove!"

Kent's laugh was mirthless. "I was never down in her good books," he said, by way of accounting for the accusation.

If Ormsby thought he knew the reason why, he was magnanimous enough to steer clear of that shoal.

"It's a mess," he growled. "I don't fancy you had any better luck with Elinor."

"She seemed not to care much about it either way. She said her mother would have the casting vote."

"I know. What I don't know is, what remains to be done."

"More waiting," said Kent, defiantly. "The fight is fairly on now—between the Bucks crowd and the corporations, I mean—but there will probably be ups and downs enough to scare Mrs. Brentwood into letting go. We must be ready to strike when the iron is hot; that's all."

The New Yorker tramped a full square in thoughtful silence before he said: "Candidly, Kent, Mrs. Hepzibah's little stake in the Western Pacific isn't altogether a matter of life and death to me, don't you know? If it comes to the worst, I can have my broker play the part of the god in the car. Happily, or unhappily, whichever way you like to put it, I shan't miss what he may have to put up to make good on her 3,000 shares."

David Kent stopped short and whaled suddenly upon his companion. "Ormsby, that's a thing I've been afraid of, all along; and it's one thing you must never do."

"Why not?" demanded the straightforward Ormsby.

Clocks have played an important part in these defences. Lives have depended on their accuracy or inaccuracy. In the case of a man named Hardy, who was accused of having taken part in a murder with others, one of the murderers, after the crime was committed, made his way home as fast as possible. It was night and there was no one in his house but a servant. Putting the clock in the hall back two hours, the man went to bed, and rising shortly afterward awoke the servant and ordered her to go downstairs and see what was the time. The girl did so, and once more retired to her room, when the murderer, stealing softly downstairs in his bare feet, once more put the clock right. The unsuspecting girl's evidence that the prisoner was in bed at the time when the crime was committed secured his acquittal on his trial. The truth was made known by a deathbed confession some years later.

Witnesses who come forward to prove alibis by the clock sometimes proved very unsatisfactory. In a murder case at the Central Criminal court two witnesses swore most persistently to the prisoner having been in their company at the hour when the prosecution contended he was engaged in the crime.

"Are you quite certain of the exact time?" asked the counsel for the prosecution.

"Certain," replied the first witness.

"How are you so sure about it?" asked the barrister.

"We were in the Bear Public house, and I saw the time by the clock in the bar," replied the witness. "It was 27 minutes past 9."

"You saw that time yourself?" asked the counsel.

"Yes."

One of the detectives engaged in the case here whispered something to the barrister, and he turned to the witness once more.

"You see that clock," he said, pointing to the clock in the court. "What is the time by it?"

The witness turned ghastly pale, scratched his head, gasped, and was silent. He could not tell the time. The prisoner was condemned.

A remarkable case of innocence being vindicated occurred at Exeter some years ago, when a young naval officer was charged with having presented at a Plymouth bank a forged order for payment in the name of the paymaster general. The order was cashed and the presenter disappeared.

From the description of the man given by three of the bank clerks, suspicion attached itself to the accused, the son of an admiral, and the clerks identified him out of other naval officers as the presenter of the forged check. Fortunately for the accused he was able to bring forward a small army of his comrades to prove most positively that at the hour named he was in their society, and that he could by no possibility have been at the bank as the clerks described. Justice Crompton found the exculpating evidence so conclusive that he suggested to the counsel conducting the prosecution that it was useless to proceed, and the charge was withdrawn. In this case the really guilty presenter of the forged order must by some strange chance have borne a striking resemblance to the unfortunate officer charged.

Baron Platt used to declare that the worst false alibi to demolish was one in which the witnesses for the defence all spoke to actual facts, but to facts that happened on some day other than

Miscellaneous Reading.

CRIMINALS' FAVORITE DEFENCE.

Trials in Which Attempts Were Made to Prove Alibis.

The proof that an accused person is somewhere else at the time that a crime is committed has always been a defence in which advocates have taken special delight. Nothing can be more satisfactory, says Answers, provided that the alibi is a good one.

"If I prove to you, gentlemen!" said a young barrister addressing the jury in a case before Mr. Justice Hawkins, "that my unfortunate and estimable client was a hundred miles away from the scene of the burglary at the time that that foul deed was committed, then, I presume, that fact will be sufficient for you."

"Of course, I cannot speak for the jury," Mr. Justice Hawkins broke in in gentle tones, addressing the advocate, "but I can assure you that I myself shall not be particular to a mile or two. If you can show that the prisoner was even a mile, or half a mile, away at the time I will give him the benefit of the doubt."

The alibi has always been a favorite defence with calculating criminals. It has, on the other hand, in hundreds of cases extricated the innocent from the meshes of a net of circumstantial evidence which must otherwise have inevitably dragged them to unmerited doom.

In the famous case of Rush, executed for the murder of Mr. and Mrs. Jerry and their son at Stanfield Hall, the assassin endeavored to establish an alibi by means of his housekeeper. Upon the night of the murder Rush slipped out of the house in disguise, effected his horrible design and returned. His housekeeper declared at first, upon examination, that Rush had come home to tea at 6 o'clock and had then taken off his boots for the night. About 9 he had left the room in which they had been sitting, and was absent about 10 minutes. After that he went out no more. Under a severe cross-examination she broke down and admitted that the statement she had made had been dictated to her by Rush himself. The alibi was false. She burst into tears, and sobbing, described to the court how Rush had been absent from the farmhouse just at the time of the murder.

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Baron Platt used to declare that the worst false alibi to demolish was one in which the witnesses for the defence all spoke to actual facts, but to facts that happened on some day other than

the one actually in question. In the case of two men charged at the Central Criminal court with housebreaking, a remarkable alibi of this kind was presented. The men were accused of having broken into a house upon the night of a certain Sunday, and they were positively identified by three persons who swore they saw the prisoners going to and coming from the house in a trap drawn by a brown pony.

On the other hand, numerous witnesses were called for the defence to show that the prisoners were at home and remained there all night. All these witnesses agreed in their details of what happened during the evening, and the fiercest efforts of the counsel for the prosecution failed to shake them in any particular. In reply to a question as to what was the state of the weather on that particular Sunday night, the witnesses unanimously declared that it was dark, rough and wet. By an almanac that was brought it was shown that there was a full moon, but none in court could remember what the weather had been. The jury returned a verdict of "not guilty," and the prisoners were released. Subsequent inquiry proved that the night in question, when the housebreaking had taken place, was fine and bright, but that the night of the previous Sunday had been all that the witnesses described. Their evidence had clearly related to the wrong Sunday.

A case in which an innocent man was able to establish an alibi and refute a mass of extraordinary circumstantial evidence against him was that of the Cannon street murder. Sarah Milson was the housekeeper to a large firm, with premises in Cannon street, in which she lived. Upon the night of the murder, a man, whose duty it was to lock up the building after the hands had left, closed the place and duly delivered the keys to Mrs. Milson. The housekeeper and a woman who acted as cook were now the only persons in the place. The cook, in her evidence, stated what happened. Mrs. Milson was sitting in the dining room and the cook was in the bedroom when, about ten minutes past 9 there came a ring at the door bell. The witness was about to go down to answer it, when Mrs. Milson called out to her: "Elizabeth, the bell is for me. I will go."

The cook stayed in her room, but later on went downstairs, when she was horrified to find Mrs. Milson lying dead in the corridor, just inside the door. She had been killed by a terrible blow with a crowbar that was lying close by the body.

An arrest was made, and the prisoner was defended by Sergeant Ballyntyne and Mr. Montague Williams.

The defence was able to prove, by the evidence of witness after witness, that the prisoner was at Eton and Windsor upon the night of the murder at times which rendered it impossible for him to have committed the crime. A bootmaker and the bootmaker's son, for whom the accused worked, had seen and spoken to him there. The alibi was incontestible, and the prisoner was acquitted. The murderer has remained undiscovered to this day.

A young girl who lived with her parents in a lonely part of Kirkcubright was one day left alone in their cottage while her father and mother were harvesting. On their return the girl was found murdered. A surgical examination revealed the fact that the injuries inflicted must have been the work of a left handed man and the police discovered in the soft ground around the cottage the imprints of the boots of a young laborer named William Richardson, who was acquainted with the dead girl, and who was also left handed. Richardson on being asked where he was on the day of the crime, declared that he was employed the whole day in the work of his master, a farmer, some distance away. This fact was borne witness to by the farmer and Richardson's fellow servants, and the police were baffled.

The alibi, in spite of all the other suspicious circumstances against the prisoner, appeared so strong as to be unassailable. But the police persevered, and at last one of the detectives discovered that Richardson and his fellow servants had that day been employed in driving their master's carts. These carts had been driven in a direction which took them close to the scene of the crime, and while they had been passing through a wood Richardson had requested his comrades to stop a few minutes while he ran to a smith's shop and back. They did so, and one of the drivers remembered that Richardson when he returned had been absent half an hour by his watch. This was ample time for him to run to the cottage, commit the murder and run back again. He had not been to the smith's shop. The alibi, thus broken down, Richardson was found guilty and, before his execution, he confessed the justice of his sentence.

An ingenious system of proving an alibi was that of a man named Gorton—at least, that was one of his 20 names—convicted of various clever frauds in the north of England. He had a twin brother, and while he was engaged in a robbery the twin kept himself in prominent evidence in another far removed place. When Gorton was arrested, the persons who had met the twin trooped into the witness box to relate how they had met and conversed with him elsewhere at the hour of the crime.

Their evidence was of course given in all honest belief that it was perfectly correct, for they had not the slightest suspicion of Gorton having a double. The arrangement broke down at last, however, through one of those little oversights that even the most cunning rogues will fall into, and the

ingenious twins came to their deserts. The Gortons were criminals of the kind that, as that clever detective Littlechild once remarked, "make detectives gray before they are old."

JAPAN AND THE JAPANESE.

Thirty-Two Important Facts About These Interesting People.

Japan has nearly 50,000,000 people, more than half as many as the United States.

The word "Mikado" signifies something like "the Sacred Gate" or "the Sublime Porte."

The name of the reigning mikado is Mutsu Sito.

The name of the empress is O Haru—"spring."

The name of the crown prince is Yoshi Hito.

European dress is worn at all court functions.

Rice is the common food of the common people.

Sixteen cents a day is now good pay for unskilled labor in Japan. Ten years ago it was 6 cents.

Japan has very few millionaires and practically no multi-millionaires.

Tokio is a hundred years older than St. Petersburg.

The lovely Japanese cherry trees produce no cherries.

On the Japanese stage male actors play the female roles.

There is only one Japanese admiral—Mme. Sada Yacco.

Danjuro the great Japanese tragedian, is also the most skillful dancer of Japan.

Japanese dead are buried in a squatting posture, chin upon knees.

More than 10,000 pilgrims, male and female, ascend Fujiyama every year.

The Japanese people, even the poor, travel much in their own country.

Modern Japanese coins and banknotes bear legends in English as well as in Japanese.

Semi-nudity is common in rural Japan, and furthermore it is respectable and healthful.

The average Japanese is better bathed than the average Britisher.

Wrinkles are poetically termed by the Japanese "waves of old age."

It is quite proper, even complimentary to ask a lady's age in Japan.

The Japanese "Hello!" on the telephone is "Moshi moshi" or "Aho me" with the accent on the "me."

The Japanese farewell, "Sayonara," means something like "If it must be so," or "If we must part thus, so be it."

Kissing and shaking hands are rarely practiced in Japan.

Japanese mothers do not kiss their children, though they may press the lip to the forehead or cheek of a very young baby.

Sewing on buttons is not a widely duty in Japan—there are no buttons.

Japanese inns furnish fresh toothbrushes every morning free to every guest. The brush is of wood, shaped like a pencil, and frayed to a tuft of brush or fibre at the large end.

All of the food served to a guest at a Japanese banquet and not consumed by him at the time is taken to his home by the servants of his host.

Japanese chopsticks are delivered to the guest in a decorated envelope. The two sticks, already shaped from one long-shaped piece of wood and are broken apart by the guest.

Japan has one of the largest steamship companies in the world, with England by way of Suez.—By Burton Holmes.

HUNDRED YEARS OF WEATHER.
Cold Days in Georgia and South Carolina For a Century Past.

The following interesting clipping from an old file of the Chronicle shows the cold days in Georgia and South Carolina for the past one hundred years. It will doubtless be read with particular interest during the present cold snap.

1394—Cotton killed in May.
1816—The cold summer.
1818—Great drought, cotton 32 cents per pound.
1827-28—Mild winter. Leaves and cotton not killed.
1830—Great drought.
1835—February 7, the cold Saturday.
1840—"Harrison freshet" in May.
1844—Another cold summer.
1849—Great sleet April 15th, kills cotton and corn.
1851—January 21, second coldest day known in the south.
1855—Fine crop year. Hot summer.
1860—Largest cotton crop to that date. Hot summer.
1862—Great fruit crop.
1864—Cold summer, no fruit.
1866—Hot summer, no fruit.
1867—Great crop and great decline in prices.
1875—March 20, great cyclone.
1880—December 30, temperature at zero in Middle Georgia.
1882—Largest oat crop ever made in Georgia; corn and cotton crop large.
1884—Long fall drought, nearly three months.
1886—January 3-14, intense cold; Savannah river at Augusta solidly frozen.
1887—Hot summer; temperature at 100 in June and July and heavy rains.
1888—Wet summer; poorest crop year in many years; no fruit; great freshet in August; September 10th, higher than ever known.
1889—Frost in upper Georgia, June 1st, and abnormally cool in southern parts; drought in May greatly retards crops; much cotton not up June 10; great peach crop, first in several years.—Augusta Chronicle.

Where the Bible does not get worn the heart soon gets weary.
When you have an affection for the golden rule you will not need to advertise the fact.

VALUE OF COURTESY.

People Who Would Succeed Must Be Considerate.

Chicago Record-Herald.—Eph. 4. Be ye kind, tender-hearted, etc.

1. Courtesy has its commercial value. Some years ago two business men from New York were breakfasting at their hotel in Paris. One of them was commenting upon the millions of money that Americans were pouring into the coffers of Paris, the city of beauty, art and pleasure. He insisted that this golden river ought to be turned upon the fields of American industry and commerce. He urged that his own store offered advantages as many and great as the shops of Paris.

"Do you