

DEAD CASHIER FOUND SHORT

Man Who Robbed Farmers of \$14,000 at South Shore Also Took \$500 from Bank.

Mitchell.—After making an examination of a week of the State bank at South Shore, S. D., a representative of the state bank examiners office found a shortage of \$500 in the accounts of R. H. Williams, the cashier. The bank has been closed temporarily, but the depositors will lose nothing by the shortage. Williams was associated with a farmers' elevator company at South Shore, in which the farmers had stored about \$14,000 worth of grain. When the farmers commenced to make a demand for their grain for shipment to take advantage of the higher prices, they discovered that there was no grain in the elevator. Williams had shipped all the grain, and received about \$14,000 for the same, which he used in his speculations on the board of trade. He eventually lost all the money, and then drew on one of the grain firms for \$500, which he placed to the credit of the farmers in the bank. Anticipating a visit from the banking department, Williams, rather than bear the disgrace of the exposure committed suicide. While the shortage in the bank was apparent, it was several days before the examiner found it, when a letter was discovered written by Williams, which gave a full explanation of the shortage.

Goes to Penitentiary.

Sioux Falls.—That Uncle Sam has a long memory has just been discovered by Joe Conderlario, who was sentenced by Judge Elliott, of the United States court in this city, to a term of one and one-half years in the federal penitentiary at Leavenworth, Kan., for stealing horses on an Indian reservation. The crime was committed seven years ago, and soon after an indictment was returned against him. Conderlario fled from the country. He kept under cover until a few days ago, when he returned to his old haunts in the western part of South Dakota, and was promptly placed under arrest by a deputy United States marshal. When taken before Judge Elliott he entered a plea of guilty.

SOUTH DAKOTA NEWS NOTES

A number of Lake Andes baseball enthusiasts have raised funds for the construction of a grand stand at the ball park.

Rev. Father Egan, of the Wakonka Catholic church, has been elevated to the deanery of the southeastern part of South Dakota.

The foundation for the new public school building at Chancellor has been completed and carpenters now are at work on the main structure.

In accordance with the result of the spring election Hecla now has become a "dry" town, and the authorities will make every effort to prevent the illegal sale of liquor.

The directors of the Hutchinson County Fair association have appointed superintendents for the various departments. The fair will be held September 4, 5 and 6, at Tripp.

All the bids for the erection of a school building at Burke, when opened, were found to be too high, and accordingly the plans for the building will be changed somewhat and new bids asked.

As the result of her horses becoming frightened and running away, Mrs. Heber Schelobelt of Clear Lake, was hurt when the buggy was overturned and she was thrown violently to the ground.

John Mann, arrested at Murdo on the charge of burglary, has been held under bonds of \$200 for trial at the next term of circuit court. It is alleged that he broke into a Murdo livery barn and stole a harness and a bridle.

Boy Loses A Thumb.

Pierre.—Frank, the 10-year-old son of Charles L. Hyde, in playing about near the home of his parents, caught hold of a live wire which had been blown loose in a storm, and before help could reach him was so badly burned that one thumb had to be amputated, and it may be necessary to take off a finger.

Ernest List, a 4-year-old Yankton boy, is the victim of a folding bed. The child tried to climb into the bed occupied by his parents, when the contrivance folded up. The father managed to stop the folding process before he and his wife were caught in the bed's deadly embrace, but the little lad's foot was caught and his ankle broken.

The impression seems to have gotten out that the Rosebud country is about dried up by drought again this year. It began raining on July 4 and the whole country has been thoroughly soaked by frequent heavy rains. The water holes are full and dams running over. Small grain is assured if there is no more precipitation. Prospects for corn are fine and the hay crop will be unsurpassed.

Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday and Thursday, September 23, 24, 25 and 26, has been fixed as the time for the annual Corson county fair, to be held at McIntosh.

Vern Fairley, aged 15 years, living south of Gayville, has recovered consciousness after three days of coma resulting from a fall from a horse which he was riding to the pasture to drive in the cows. Near his head was found a piece of iron, which the boy may have struck in falling. There was little visible wound. The lad will recover.

The Catholics of Westington and vicinity have petitioned Bishop O'Grady of Sioux Falls to retain Father Dolney in charge of the Westington parish.

At the annual meeting of the stockholders of the Baltic farmers' elevator company a dividend of 6 per cent was declared. The total amount of business transacted by the company during the past year was \$150,000. E. J. Oyan, under whose management the affairs of the company have prospered for many years, will continue as manager.

The Man Who Disappeared

Strange Experiences in the Life of a Doctor.

By A. T. MEAD

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On a certain morning toward the end of September in the year 1897 I received the following letter:

"Dear Sir: I have been asked to call on you by a mutual friend, General Cornwallis, who accompanied my step-daughter and myself on board the Osprey to New York. I hope to call to see you or send a representative about eleven o'clock today. The general thinks that you can give me advice on a matter of importance. I am a Spanish lady. My home is in Brazil, and I know nothing of New York or its customs. I wish to take a house near New York and to settle down. This house must be isolated, and in the midst of large grounds, and must have extensive cellars or basements, as my wish is to furnish a laboratory in order to carry on scientific research. The general agent and I have had a long conversation and you would understand just what I wanted and be willing to advise me.

"Yours sincerely,
"STELLA SCAIFFE."

The letter was dated from the Mantion hotel, and I smiled as I read it. It was so like old General Cornwallis to imagine just because a lady was interested in scientific pursuits that I should at once become interested in her to the degree of adopting the role of a real estate agent and spend valuable time chasing around in the endeavor to find a house which would suit her. But it so happened that a cousin of mine, who was extremely ill and under my care in a hospital, was hard pressed for money and wanted to rent an old-fashioned and somewhat gruesome mansion he owned which was situated in a lonely part of the Bronx. It occurred to me that this house might suit the general's acquaintance and that I could do both her and my cousin a good turn at the same time.

At eleven o'clock my servant handed me a card bearing the name, "Miss Muriel Scaiffe," and a few moments later a slight, fair-haired English girl entered the room. She informed me that she was Mrs. Scaiffe's step-daughter and that she had come to see me in reference to the house, which they were desirous of renting within a week.

The girl was pretty, and her smile was wistful and sweet, although with a tinge of melancholy in it. On the whole, she impressed me favorably, and I informed her that, although such matters were hardly in my line, it so chanced that there was a house belonging to a relative of mine, called The Rosary, and situated in a somewhat isolated spot in the Bronx, which I imagined would suit her step-mother. I also told her that if she wished I would meet her there at three o'clock on the following day, when she could view the interior of the mansion for herself. To this she agreed, and at the appointed hour I presented myself at the gates of The Rosary. A carriage was waiting, and as I approached a tall lady with dark eyes stepped out of it. I saw at a glance that the young lady had not accompanied her, and when she introduced herself as Mrs. Scaiffe we proceeded to view the house.

The Rosary had been unlet and neglected for a considerable time, and the grounds had a desolate and gloomy appearance. But the Spanish lady appeared well pleased with the interior as well as the exterior of the place, and particularly with the numerous cellars, one of which she pronounced exactly fitted for a laboratory.

"My brother, Senor Merello, joins us here next week," she said. "He and I are scientists, Dr. Halifax, and I trust scientists of no mean order. We have come here for the purpose of conducting experiments, and this house is the one of all others for us."

Everything went off without a hitch. The Rosary passed into the hands of Mrs. Scaiffe and those of her brother, Senor Merello, a tall, dark, handsome man. A week or two passed by, when one afternoon I was astonished to receive a visit from Muriel Scaiffe.

"I have come to see you on a matter of vital importance, Dr. Halifax," she said. "I cannot linger, for even now I fear I am followed. You are a bosom friend of Oscar Digby, the famous discoverer and traveler, for he told me so. It was on that account I persuaded mother to come to you about the house."

"Certainly I know Digby," I responded. "Indeed, I may lay claim to being his greatest friend. Where is he, and what is he doing?"

"He is on his way to New York," she replied. "Even now he may have landed. He brings great news, and the moment he sets foot in this city he is in danger. He is your friend, and it is your duty to save him."

"But what am I to save him from, Miss Scaiffe? You are speaking wildly. Don't make such ambiguous statements, pray. You must be more explicit."

She trembled and dropped into a chair.

"I am not brave enough to explain more fully," she said. "I can only repeat that he is in danger. Tell him to have nothing to do with us. If he mentions our names, pretend that you know nothing about us. I have grave reasons for what I say. When we took The Rosary I did not know that matters were so awful; indeed, I was aware then that Mr. Digby was returning to New York. But last night I overheard something—I cannot say more. Only keep Oscar Digby away, and if possible do not betray me. Yet if there is no other way, tell him that I, Muriel Scaiffe, said so."

She rose and stood regarding me piteously for an instant. "I must fly," she said. "If this visit is discovered my life is worth very little."

After she had gone I sat in amazement pondering over the strangeness of the occurrence. It seemed to me that the girl must be temporarily insane, but nevertheless I was haunted and disturbed by her mysterious suggestion. And when on the next day Digby, whom I had not seen for years, called unexpectedly, I recalled Miss Scaiffe's visit with feelings of decided apprehension. Before Digby went away he and I had been very close friends, and I was delighted to see him again. His broad forehead, his keen blue eyes, his strong, muscular hands, all denoted strength of mind and body.

"Well, Halifax," he said, "I have a good deal to tell you. I have made an amazing discovery. I do not know whether you are sufficiently conversant with out-of-the-way places on the globe. But, anyhow, I want to inform you that there is a wonderful region, little known, which lies on the watershed of the Essequibo and Amazon rivers. And there I have discovered a spot close to Lake Amacu that is simply laden with gold. The estimates computed on my specimens and reports make it out to be the richest place in the world. The whole thing is as yet a close secret, and I have come to New York to put it into the hands of a big financier. A company must be formed with a capital of \$20,000,000 to work it."

"Have you charts of the location?" I asked.

"Yes, but those I would rather not disclose, even to you, old man, just yet."

"Well, Oscar," I said, "the man you require is Horace Lancaster, the biggest financier in New York today. He is a good friend and patient of mine, and if you can satisfy him with your charts and specimens he will undoubtedly float the company. Unfortunately, I happen to know that he is at present in Paris, and won't be back for a week. You are prepared to await his return?"

"Yes, if you think it best," he responded. "Will you dine with me at my club tonight, and talk things over?"

"With pleasure," I responded.

"By the way," continued Digby, "some friends of mine, Brazilians, ought to be in New York now; a lady of the name of Scaiffe, with her pretty little step-daughter, an English girl. I should like to introduce you to them. I had a letter from Mrs. Scaiffe as I was leaving Brazil, telling me that they were en route for New York and asking me to look them up in town. Her brother, Senor Merello, is a most charming man."

"If I were you," I said, gravely, "I would have nothing to do with those people. I happen to know their whereabouts, and the little girl does not want you to call on them. Better take her advice, Digby; she looked good and true."

He gazed at me in evident surprise, and seemed a trifle put out. "True," he repeated. "Of course she is true. I tell you, Halifax, I am quite fond of her. The mother—I mean the step-mother—is a magnificent woman. I was staying at their Quinta last winter. But I don't understand your warning. Has little Muriel lost her head?"

"She is anxious and frightened. The whole thing seems absurd. But she certainly was in earnest when she begged me to keep you away from her step-mother, and I half promised to respect her secret, and not reveal to you where they are at present."

Digby did not seem pleased at this candid avowal, but he made no comment, and took his departure. That evening we dined together, and went into the subject of his great discovery. He showed me his specimens and reports and interested me so much that I, too, began to long for Lancaster's speedy return. Three or four days passed and the financier was still detained in Paris. One afternoon Digby rushed excitedly into my room.

"Well, Halifax," he cried, "you can't fight against fate. The little girl has discovered herself. She came to see me at my hotel and declared that she just couldn't keep away. I took her into my arms and hugged her. We will have a wedding when the company is floated, and this evening, old chap, I dine at The Rosary. You see, I know all about the secret retreat of the Scaiffes by this time. I dine there tonight, and they want you to come, too."

I was about to refuse, when some impulse influenced me to see the affair through, and I consented to accompany my friend. We arrived at The Rosary between seven and eight o'clock. Mrs. Scaiffe received us. Diamonds flashed in her raven black hair and glittered around her shapely neck. The pale little Muriel looked quite insignificant beside this gorgeous creature. Senor Merello was a masculine edition of his handsome sister. At dinner we were served by Spanish servants, and a repulsive-looking negro of the name of Samson stood behind Mrs. Scaiffe's chair. She was in high spirits, and openly alluded to the great discovery.

"You must show us the charts, my friend," she said to Digby.

"As regards anything else, command me," was his reply, "but not the chart."

Mrs. Scaiffe did not press him further, and the evening passed away without any event of importance having transpired. During our journey back to the city I mentioned to Digby that Lancaster had wired to say that he would be at his office prepared for a meeting on Friday. This was Monday night, and I again impressed on him the fact that I did not trust Mrs. Scaiffe or her brother, and warned him to keep the chart out of their hands. He promised, and I left him

on Tuesday I saw nothing of Digby, and on Wednesday evening, when I returned home late, I received the following letter:

"Do not think I am mad. I have bribed the kitchen maid, the only American woman in the whole house, to post this for me. I was forced to call on Mr. Digby and to engage myself to him. I am now strictly confined to my room under pretense of illness. In reality I am quite well, but a prisoner. Mr. Digby dined here last night, and under the influence of a certain drug introduced into his wine, has given away the whole of his discovery, except the exact location. He is to take supper here again late to-morrow night (Thursday) and to bring the chart. If he does, he will never leave The Rosary alive. All is prepared. Don't betray me, but save him."

The letter fell from my hands. What did it mean? Was Digby's life really in danger, or was the girl who had written mad. The letter was without a signature, but of course I knew that Muriel was the writer. I read it over again, and became convinced that it told the truth, and that Muriel was perfectly sane. I resolved not to disregard the warning, and late as the hour was I left the house and sought the residence of my friend, Inspector Frost, one of the keenest and most trustworthy police officers on the New York force. I found the inspector, a tall, square-shouldered man of 50, at home and not yet retired. Without mincing matters, I came to the point at once and narrated the whole story of the past few weeks. Frost's gray eyes shone with interest, as he perused Muriel's letter.

"I'm glad you came," he said, when he had finished reading. "There are four curious points about this case. First, your friend has this valuable secret about the spot where the gold is to be found, a secret which may be worth anything. Secondly, he is very intimate with Mrs. Scaiffe, her

the business. I must tell you that the affair promises to be of the most serious kind. I have been busy since I saw you, used the cables a bit, and through the kindly assistance of a United States secret service man who happens to be in Brazil right now on a government case, I got some details about the operations of Mrs. Scaiffe and her precious brother. Unfortunately there is really nothing against them that would justify us in laying hands on them. But from what I have learned I judge that they are in a conspiracy with a notorious gang in Brazil to force Digby to disclose the exact position of the gold mine. I also know that Mrs. Scaiffe is in communication with some suspicious characters both in New York and Brazil. It's a cinch that she means to get possession of Digby's chart when he visits the house tonight. Now we can't keep him from going there against his will, and I don't believe he can be persuaded to stay away. Therefore, we will be on hand at The Rosary tonight, and will have a number of my men stationed in the grounds as soon as it becomes dark. If Digby insists on going in, there will be protection outside, at all events, in case of trouble. And if he doesn't come out after a reasonable time has elapsed, I'm going in after him."

The inspector's plan seemed to be the most feasible that could be adopted, and I agreed to accompany him. Digby had said that he was invited to a late supper, and therefore it was nearly ten o'clock when we arrived at The Rosary. As Frost and I passed down the dimly-lit lane beside the wall, a figure emerged from out the gloom and came toward us. As it approached I saw it was one of the inspector's sleuths.

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"Not a thing," was the reply. "Mr. Digby hasn't arrived yet."

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Frost strode forward and laid his hand on her arm with an imperative gesture.

"I am a police officer, madam," he said grimly, "and demand to know where Mr. Oscar Digby is. He entered here at a quarter past ten tonight. From that moment the house has been surrounded and closely watched. He must therefore be here."

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An adjoining door opened, and Senor Merello made his appearance. She looked up at him and smiled, then said carelessly:

"Gentlemen, this is my brother, Senor Merello."

The senior bowed but did not speak.

"Once again, Mrs. Scaiffe," broke in Frost, "what have you done with Mr. Digby?"

"He is not here," she said, angrily. "You can look for yourselves."

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Mrs. Scaiffe eyed the inspector vindictively, but made no reply. The operations which followed were conducted rapidly. The establishment, consisting of Mrs. Scaiffe, her brother, two Spanish men-servants, two maids, one of Spanish extraction, and the negro who had opened the door to us, were summoned and placed in the charge of one of Frost's detectives. Muriel Scaiffe was nowhere to be seen. Then we began to search the house. In the basement the large cellar which had attracted Mrs. Scaiffe's pleased surprise, had now been fitted up as a laboratory. I examined it closely. It was evidently used for the manufacture of chemicals on a large scale. All the latest chemical and electrical apparatus were to be found there, as well as several large machines, the purposes of which were not evident.

Particular interest was attracted by a big tank with a complicated equipment for the manufacture of liquid air in large quantities. I lingered here quite awhile, and suddenly a hideous possibility presented itself to my mind. Just then, however, I remembered Muriel, and turned to join Frost in his search, wondering if any harm had come to the girl. Our search in the upper regions was equally unsuccessful. We were just going downstairs again when Frost drew my attention to a door which we had not yet opened. It was locked, but we burst it open. Within, we found a girl crouching beside the bed. She turned, saw my face, and suddenly clung to me. It was Muriel.

"Have you found him; is he safe?" she asked.

"I do not know, my dear," I replied, trying to soothe her. "We are looking for him."

"Did he come to the house? I have been locked in here all day and heavily drugged."

"He came in. We are searching for him, and hope to find him."

"That you will never do," she cried, and fell fainting on the floor.

We placed her on the bed. Frost produced brandy and gave her a few drops. She came to in a couple of minutes, and began to moan feebly. After a little while she became calm and finally fell into a deep slumber. Then I left her and hastened back to the laboratory, intent on trying an experiment which had occurred to me on my last visit there.

"Meanwhile Frost and his men had not been idle. Convinced that Digby or Digby's dead body was concealed somewhere around the premises, they began a systematic search of the entire house from roof to basement. Pick and crowbar were ruthlessly applied, floorings were torn up and rafters cut through. Walls were pierced and bored through, closets and cupboards ransacked. The very backs of the old-fashioned fireplaces were torn out, and the chimneys explored. At last Frost called me upstairs. He was leaning against the wall, looking bewildered.

"This is beyond me altogether, doctor," he said. "There is absolutely no trace of Digby, alive or dead."

"Look here, Frost," I said, "this thing has to be worked out logically. If Digby left this house he went up, down, or horizontally. Up is out of the question. If he disappeared in a balloon or was shot off the roof he must have been seen by us, for the house was surrounded. He certainly did not pass through the cordon of men. He did not go down, for every cubic foot of basement and cellar has been accounted for, as well as every cubic foot of space in the house. So we come to the chemical change of matter. Dissipation into gas by heat. There are no furnaces, no ashes, no gas cylinders, nor dynamo, nor carbons present. The time when we lost sight of him to the time of entrance was exactly two hours and three-quarters. If you come with me, I think I can throw some light on the problem."

I went down to the laboratory again, followed by Frost. When we reached the basement I pointed to the machine with steel blocks and the great metal tank.

"There is the explanation of Digby's disappearance," I said. "He is dead, Frost, and we will never see his body. No inquest can be held, for there is nothing to hold it on. The winds have taken him and scattered him in dust on the surrounding grounds. I arrived at my present conclusion by a process of elimination. Into that tank which contained liquid air, Digby, gagged and bound, must have been placed violently, probably after he had given away the chart. Death would have been instantaneous, and he would have been frozen into complete solidity in something like 40 minutes. The ordinary laboratory experiment is to freeze a rabbit, which can be then powdered into mortar like any other friable stone. The operation here was the same. It is only a question of size. Remember we are dealing with 312 degrees below Fahrenheit. That big machine over there is a stone



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step-daughter and her brother. The intimacy started in Brazil. Thirdly, he is engaged to the step-daughter, who evidently is being used as a sort of tool, and so far as I can make out, he is not especially in love with Digby. Fourthly, Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother are determined at all hazards to secure the chart which Digby is to hand to them to-morrow evening. The girl thinks this so important that she has practically risked her life to give you the warning. By the way, didn't you say that Lancaster was to meet you and Digby at 11 o'clock on Friday morning? Well, I suppose that Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother know of this. Now if Digby goes to The Rosary to-morrow evening that interview with Lancaster will probably never take place. I believe, Halifax, that the Scaiffes intend to be the sole possessors of that secret, and mean to get it from him before he sees Lancaster. And the chances are that if he gives it up to them he will never leave that house alive."

"Then what are we to do?" I asked.

"Leave the matter in my hands until I make a few inquiries," said Frost. "In the meantime you might see Digby and try to persuade him not to go to The Rosary. That would simplify things a whole lot. I will call at your house at five o'clock tomorrow afternoon."

The next morning I called on Digby and found him at breakfast. "I would like to have you make a run out of town with me, Digby," I said. "We can get back in time for our interview with Lancaster in the morning."

"Sorry, Halifax," he responded, "but I have an engagement to The Rosary to-night."

"I wish you would not go," I said. "Digby, if ever people were playing to get you into their hands, they are. Why, haven't you already told them most of your secret?"

"I don't know how you happen to know that," he said, impatiently, "but I admit it. Mrs. Scaiffe and Merello will join me in this matter. I see no reason why things should be kept dark from them."

"It doesn't strike me as exactly fair to Lancaster," I remarked.

"He can't object to possible wealthy shareholders," returned Digby. "And once for all, old man, remember that I dislike being interfered with, and that I believe in the Scaiffes. So goodbye for the present. I will see you in Lancaster's office tomorrow at 11."

I saw that further argument was useless and went back home. At five that afternoon Frost made his appearance and I narrated the matter in which Digby had repudiated my well-meant advice.

"You have done all you could," commented Frost. "Now for my part of

the business. I must tell you that the affair promises to be of the most serious kind. I have been busy since I saw you, used the cables a bit, and through the kindly assistance of a United States secret service man who happens to be in Brazil right now on a government case, I got some details about the operations of Mrs. Scaiffe and her precious brother. Unfortunately there is really nothing against them that would justify us in laying hands on them. But from what I have learned I judge that they are in a conspiracy with a notorious gang in Brazil to force Digby to disclose the exact position of the gold mine. I also know that Mrs. Scaiffe is in communication with some suspicious characters both in New York and Brazil. It's a cinch that she means to get possession of Digby's chart when he visits the house tonight. Now we can't keep him from going there against his will, and I don't believe he can be persuaded to stay away. Therefore, we will be on hand at The Rosary tonight, and will have a number of my men stationed in the grounds as soon as it becomes dark. If Digby insists on going in, there will be protection outside, at all events, in case of trouble. And if he doesn't come out after a reasonable time has elapsed, I'm going in after him."

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"Look here, Frost," I said, "this thing has to be worked out logically. If Digby left this house he went up, down, or horizontally. Up is out of the question. If he disappeared in a balloon or was shot off the roof he must have been seen by us, for the house was surrounded. He certainly did not pass through the cordon of men. He did not go down, for every cubic foot of basement and cellar has been accounted for, as well as every cubic foot of space in the house. So we come to the chemical change of matter. Dissipation into gas by heat. There are no furnaces, no ashes, no gas cylinders, nor dynamo, nor carbons present. The time when we lost sight of him to the time of entrance was exactly two hours and three-quarters. If you come with me, I think I can throw some light on the problem."

I went down to the laboratory again, followed by Frost. When we reached the basement I pointed to the machine with steel blocks and the great metal tank.

"There is the explanation of Digby's disappearance," I said. "He is dead, Frost, and we will never see his body. No inquest can be held, for there is nothing to hold it on. The winds have taken him and scattered him in dust on the surrounding grounds. I arrived at my present conclusion by a process of elimination. Into that tank which contained liquid air, Digby, gagged and bound, must have been placed violently, probably after he had given away the chart. Death would have been instantaneous, and he would have been frozen into complete solidity in something like 40 minutes. The ordinary laboratory experiment is to freeze a rabbit, which can be then powdered into mortar like any other friable stone. The operation here was the same. It is only a question of size. Remember we are dealing with 312 degrees below Fahrenheit. That big machine over there is a stone

step-daughter and her brother. The intimacy started in Brazil. Thirdly, he is engaged to the step-daughter, who evidently is being used as a sort of tool, and so far as I can make out, he is not especially in love with Digby. Fourthly, Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother are determined at all hazards to secure the chart which Digby is to hand to them to-morrow evening. The girl thinks this so important that she has practically risked her life to give you the warning. By the way, didn't you say that Lancaster was to meet you and Digby at 11 o'clock on Friday morning? Well, I suppose that Mrs. Scaiffe and her brother know of this. Now if Digby goes to The Rosary to-morrow evening that interview with Lancaster will probably never take place. I believe, Halifax, that the Scaiffes intend to be the sole possessors of that secret, and mean to get it from him before he sees Lancaster. And the chances are that if he gives it up to them he will never leave that house alive."

"Then what are we to do?" I asked.

"Leave the matter in my hands until I make a few inquiries," said Frost. "In the meantime you might see Digby and try to persuade him not to go to The Rosary. That would simplify things a whole lot. I will call at your house at five o'clock tomorrow afternoon."

The next morning I called on Digby and found him at breakfast. "I would like to have you make a run out of town with me, Digby," I said. "We can get back in time for our interview with Lancaster in the morning."

"Sorry, Halifax," he responded, "but I have an engagement to The Rosary to-night."

"I wish you would not go," I said. "Digby, if ever people were playing to get you into their hands, they are. Why, haven't you already told them most of your secret?"

"I don't know how you happen to know that," he said, impatiently, "but I admit it. Mrs. Scaiffe and Merello will join me in this matter. I see no reason why things should be kept dark from them."

"It doesn't strike me as exactly fair to Lancaster," I remarked.

"He can't object to possible wealthy shareholders," returned Digby. "And once for all, old man, remember that I dislike being interfered with, and that I believe in the Scaiffes. So goodbye for the present. I will see you in Lancaster's office tomorrow at 11."

I saw that further argument was useless and went back home. At five that afternoon Frost made his appearance and I narrated the matter in which Digby had repudiated my well-meant advice.

"You have done all you could," commented Frost. "Now for my part of

breaker, and on the blocks of steel belonging to it I found this."

I held up a test tube containing a blue liquid.

"This is the Galucum test, Frost. In other words, blood. This fact taken with the facts we already know, that Digby never left the house; that the only other agent of destruction of a body, fire, is out of the question; that this tank is the receptacle of that enormous machine for making liquid air in very large quantities; and above all, the practical possibility of the operation being conducted by the men who are at present in the house, afford me conclusive proof beyond a possibility of doubt as to what has happened. The body of that unfortunate man is as if it never had been."

"You have proved your case, doctor," said Frost, fetching a deep breath when I had finished. "It is by long odds the most extraordinary crime I ever heard of. Well, there's nothing to do but take these parties along, and see if we can't get something in the way of a confession out of them."

Before I left that awful house I made arrangements to have Muriel Scaiffe conveyed to a private hospital. This was done, and of many weeks she hovered between life and death. Meanwhile Mrs. Scaiffe, her brother and their servants were detained by the police. In the long run, the negro servant weakened and confessed his complicity in the crime, to the extent of fetching the senseless body of Digby to the laboratory, after the latter had been drugged. Through the evidence given by this witness for the state the brother and sister were convicted for Digby's murder, but owing to the absence of the murdered man's body, a technical plea by their lawyers resulted in a sentence of imprisonment for life, instead of capital punishment. Senor Merello, however, managed to commit suicide in his cell at the Tombs prison the day before he was to have been removed to Sing Sing penitentiary, and his sister died within six months after she began serving her sentence, of typhoid fever. The chart for which murder had been committed never came to light again, and it was supposed that Mrs. Scaiffe had destroyed it rather than allow anyone else to benefit by the information it contained.

Meanwhile Muriel grew better. I was interested in her from the first. A year ago she became my wife. I think she is happy, and know that the past has ceased to trouble her. I have long ago come to regard her as the best and truest woman living.

ed the button. In less time than we had expected we heard the bolts shoot back. The door was flung open, electric lights sprang into a glare, and my eyes fell on Mrs. Scaiffe.

"Rather an odd hour for a social call, Dr. Halifax," she said, coolly. "May I inquire why I am so honored?"

Frost strode forward and laid his hand on her arm with an imperative gesture.

"I am a police officer, madam," he said grimly, "and demand to know where Mr. Oscar Digby is. He entered here at a quarter past ten tonight. From that moment the house has been surrounded and closely watched. He must therefore be here."

"Mr. Digby is not in the house," responded Mrs. Scaiffe defiantly.

An adjoining door opened, and Senor Merello made his appearance. She looked up at him and smiled, then said carelessly:

"Gentlemen, this is my brother, Senor Merello."

The senior bowed but did not speak.

"Once again, Mrs. Scaiffe," broke in Frost, "what have you done with Mr. Digby?"

"He is not here," she said, angrily. "You can look for yourselves."

"Very well," said Frost, calmly. "Then you, madam, this gentleman, and all your servants are under arrest until we find him."

Mrs. Scaiffe eyed the inspector vindictively, but made no reply. The operations which followed were conducted rapidly. The establishment, consisting of Mrs. Scaiffe, her brother, two Spanish men-servants, two maids, one of Spanish extraction, and the negro who had opened the door to us, were summoned and placed in the charge of one of Frost's detectives. Muriel Scaiffe was nowhere to be seen. Then we began to search the house. In the basement the large cellar which had attracted Mrs. Scaiffe's pleased surprise, had now been fitted up as a laboratory. I examined it closely. It was evidently used for the manufacture of chemicals on a large scale. All the latest chemical and electrical apparatus were to be found there, as well as several large machines, the purposes of which were not evident.

Particular interest was attracted by a big tank with a complicated equipment for the manufacture of liquid air in large quantities. I lingered here quite awhile, and suddenly a hideous possibility presented itself to my mind. Just then, however, I remembered Muriel, and turned to join Frost in his search, wondering if any harm had come to the girl. Our search in the upper regions was equally unsuccessful. We were just going downstairs again when Frost drew my attention to a door which we had not yet opened. It was locked, but we burst it open. Within, we found a girl crouching beside the bed. She turned, saw my face, and suddenly clung to me. It was Muriel.

"Have you found him; is he safe?" she asked.

"I do not know, my dear," I replied, trying to soothe her. "We are looking for him."

"Did he come to the house? I have been locked in here all day and heavily drugged."

"He came in. We are searching for him, and hope to find him."

"That you will never do," she cried, and fell fainting on the floor.

We placed her on the bed. Frost produced brandy and gave her a few drops. She came to in a couple of minutes, and began to moan feebly. After a little while she became calm and finally fell into a deep slumber. Then I left her and hastened back to the laboratory, intent on trying an experiment which had occurred to me on my last visit there.

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