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AN EXCLUSIVE STORY.

A
Strange Tale
Of Wills-Mayhew, a
Little Hindoo and
a Murder.

Llewella P. Churchill.

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The Cerberus of the office brought in the slip of paper and laid it on top of the copy which the city editor was reading. These slips are the only means by which to protect the name of the paper against the host of men who would "rattle away the editor's time."

The office boy waited while Mr. Standish gave the scantiest glance at the memorandum, just enough to gather that Mr. Wills-Mayhew was without and that his errand was to find "journalistic employment." When he had hastily pencilled on the slip of paper the terse formula "no possible opening" with which the messenger was to dismiss the several dozen applicant that day, Mr. Standish did not find his usual facility in putting the common enough incident out of mind.

An Englishman, of course, he reasoned from the name with a shiver in the middle of it and shuddered at the bare idea of British journalism in a New York newspaper office, for Standish had been on Fleet street and knew the solemn roll of the books and loops of stenography, which makes the British journalist so very accurate and so very dull. But the boy was back again with the same slip, and across one end

of the entrance of one who was on terms of sufficient intimacy to be admitted to such freedom. The newcomer was stated in the account to be a woman—at least the feminine pronoun was used throughout. The identity of this second person, even by physical features, was obscure in the story, but there was manifest a psychic familiarity with her motives and passions.

Passing over the commonplaces of such a meeting between intimate women, yet always showing as by a subordinate consciousness the black hatred and wild rage which gushed under the smooth words of the visitor, the English journalist hurried on his dialogue to the point where the murder was done, done with the consent of the victim, gained by the trick of some specious pretext. The weapon was but a common hypodermic syringe, common enough now among the toilet appliances of women on whom social duties press heavily. The young girl shrank a little at sight of the weapon, but her companion assured her that it was no more painful than the prick of a cannie needle and that a single application would instantly cure the headache from which she was suffering. The girl at once consented. A very graphic touch in the narrative was the shapely way in which she was represented as passing her hand across her forehead while her companion took the glittering implement of glass and silver from its blue bed of velvet in the leather pocket case, carefully withdrew the bristle from the needle point and screwed the latter into place, having first drawn the piston out to its fullest reach. In the syringe was not a drop of any fluid, nothing but the air of the room. While she was explaining that a charge of pure oxygen would be better, yet that ordinary atmospheric air would produce a satisfactory result, the young girl childishly laid her begin, for her courage was at the sticking point. A deft hand pressed the hollow needle beneath the skin of the girl's left wrist and gently slid it on-ward into puncture of the most prominently displayed blood vessel, a delicate blue vein in the clear white flesh. A very slight pressure in the ring of the piston forced a single bubble of air—oxygen would have been no better for the purpose—into the vein. The girl was dead, dead in that instant.

There the English journalist's story ended. Standish still held the last sheet of copy in his hand and looked with astonishment at the double cross which showed the finish. It was as though some one who had seen and heard all these incidents had been speaking and had suddenly broken off.

This was a story which needed cautious handling, for Standish at once accepted it as true. With a faculty of such position as that of the murdered girl, herself already a figure in society, no paper could afford any blunder. A reporter was sent to investigate, and Standish cautiously locked the manuscript in a drawer of his desk. The reporter's story was the account of such a career as may come to a young woman in her first year in society, a record of social successes. She had died suddenly that afternoon in her room. She had received a visit from her most intimate friend, who said that she had complained of a slight headache, but that it had passed away while they were together. An hour later her maid had found her in her easy chair, limp and dead. The family doctor certified to heart failure, for the publicity of an inquest causes at a certain social level.

Standish seemed puzzled and read the latter part of this copy a second time. Then he unlocked a drawer in his desk, took out a mass of manuscript, turned up the last few pages and read them with care. Finally he called up a medical friend on the telephone, and this was his share of the conversation after the preliminaries incident to that mechanical convenience:

"Tell me, doctor, what would be the result of the injection of a bubble of air into one of the veins of the wrist?"

"Instantaneous, you say, and painless? Then what would an autopsy disclose as to the cause of death?"

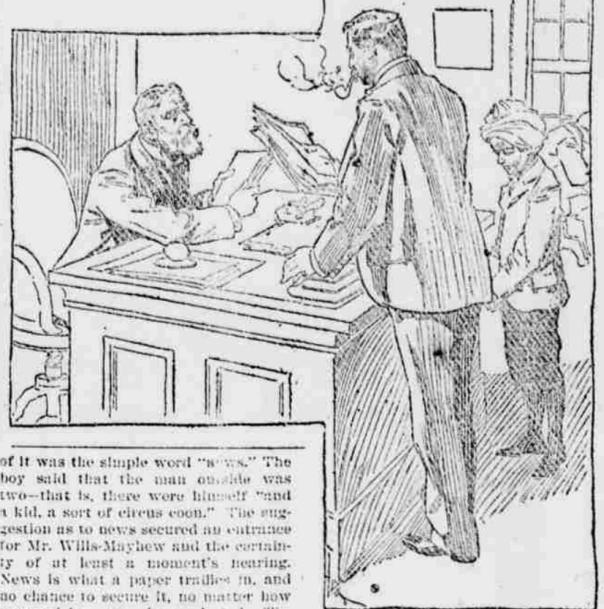
"Well, then, if the heart should be found just as it is in certain well known pathological conditions there might be a possibility of foul play. Would not the mark of the syringe be found?"

"Not one chance in a million, you say? Then that may be left out of account. Thank you kindly, Goodby, Ring off."

The regular reporter's story was printed the next morning. Possibly that discouraged Mr. Wills-Mayhew, for he never came again.

Standish now speaks with great respect of the marvels of the Hindoo. He has not yet given up his search for a British journalist accompanied by a young Hindoo named Abdul. Judging from sample, a place could be found for the pair.

I WILL COME IN TOMORROW AND CLEAR UP THE MYSTERY.



of it was the simple word "news." The boy said that the man on the slip was two—that is, there were himself and a kid, a sort of circus con. The suggestion as to news secured an entrance for Mr. Wills-Mayhew and the certainty of at least a moment's hearing. News is what a paper trades in, and no chance to secure it, no matter how unprofitable, may be neglected. The man was seen to be of that type of the British subject for which there is but one adjective—well fat. The really recognizable signs of his origin were sufficiently pronounced to be unmistakable, yet not great enough to attract to him uncomfortable comment in a crowd. In his companion, a boy in breeches, Standish saw a sight less usual in a newspaper local room. The boy of the door had spoken of him as a "sort of circus con," but he was clearly not a negro. The hair showed that, and its evidence was confirmed by the regularity of the features and the transparent depth of the dark brown complexion. A little spot painted between the eyebrows showed the lad to be a Hindoo.

Wills-Mayhew explained to Standish that he had the full story of a murder which had just been done in a residence street up town and that as he wanted a place he would write it up to show what he could do.

"But all that sort of thing," replied Standish, "is supplied us by regular channels of information. The police will report the facts in the case, and then, after making our own investigations, we shall give it the space which it may deserve."

"This one is different," rejoined the Englishman. "Without this story of mine you will never learn of the tragic nature of the death, for the body when found will display no signs other than those which attend a sudden but natural death."

"Such a thing is most improbable," said Standish, turning as about to finish the interview. "I do not think that we need consider such a case."

"Still," said Wills-Mayhew, "it will do no harm to try. Just let me sit down here and write up the story, and then you can see what it amounts to. You can form from it your own judgment. No other paper will know anything about it, and over here you seem to attach considerable importance to that sort of thing."

The Englishman went to a desk in a distant corner of the room and sat down to write, the little Hindoo squatting with legs crossed on a chair at his side. Standish watched them take their places and noticed that at the same time that this man with the story of murder, and an exclusive murder at that, drew a bunch of copy paper before him he began to get out pipe and pouch as one who prepares to do a thoughtful piece of work. Then the

was just a flash, and he was far too much occupied with other things in think of recurring for another look.

Not long after this Wills-Mayhew brought a thick heap of manuscript to the desk and laid it before Standish, who saw that, although it was written in a generous hand, there was matter enough for at least two columns.

"There is the story of the murder," said the Englishman. "You will find it all there except the name and the present place at which the murderer may be found. You can pay me for these at your best rates for good material, and I will come in tomorrow and clear up the mystery which still remains in the story. I cannot do it today, for Abdul is tired out, and I must take him to rest."

A rush of real copy came along just then, and in the hurry the Englishman and the little Hindoo went off together. It was not until comparatively later in the day that Standish found time to look at the copy thus left with him for trial. It did not begin in a very promising way. There were many pages of an introduction which blanketed whatever story might be to follow. There was much moral theorizing, and the apt citation from classical sources showed that the writer was both a man of wide reading and just as wide a field to be allowed to write a story for an American newspaper. Disgusted at the prolixity, Standish hastily cut in to the middle to see if there were really any story after all the overladen introduction. Here all was different, as different as the work of another hand, of another mind. There was indeed a story, and it was told in terse, nervous sentences, with the accuracy of detail which only eyewitnessing could give to an account and then only if written on the very spot of the action in progress. Standish worked backward to where the story itself began, laid aside the heavy introduction and read with growing amazement the consistent account of a murder wrought on a young girl. Every needed detail was presented, the girl's name and address were given, and her domestic and social relations were fully set forth. The city editor recognized that it would be necessary to be severely concerned of every point, for the social position of the girl and of her friends was of the highest. The graphic narrative continued with a slight account of the trials over which the girl was occupied in her own sitting room at

the entrance of one who was on terms of sufficient intimacy to be admitted to such freedom. The newcomer was stated in the account to be a woman—at least the feminine pronoun was used throughout. The identity of this second person, even by physical features, was obscure in the story, but there was manifest a psychic familiarity with her motives and passions.

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Footbal in Slam.

Lovers of outdoor sports would find one thing to interest them in Slam. It is the native game of football. Harper's Weekly says that it is very interesting to a looker on. It is played with a ball about four inches in diameter, hollow and strong.

The number of contestants varies, but play is sharpest when there are enough to form a circle about ten feet in diameter. Beyond that the larger the circle the slower the play.

The game consists in keeping the ball tossing in the air without breaking the circle. If a man misses his opportunity, he drops out, and when but four or six remain the work is sharp and very pretty.

The ball is struck most frequently with the knee, but also with the foot, from before, behind and at the side of the player. A player has been known to let a ball drop directly behind his back and then, without turning, return it clear over his head and straight into the middle of the circle, all with one well aimed backward kick of his heel.

Overheard in the Park.

First Nurse Girl—So you've got a new place?
Second Nurse Girl—Yes.
"Do you like it?"
"Like it? Why, it is right in front of a police station."—Tampabay Times.

A Tip For Dewey.

Bilkins—What is the matter with that dog of yours? He looks poor.
Gilkins—Indigestion. I call him Dewey, and the neighbors have been overfeeding him.—Ohio State Journal.

Always the Wrong Thing.

"There's a trust now to control the output of peanuts."
"Well, what we need is a trust to control the output of peanut shells."—Chicago Record.

Poetry Editors and Poets Exchanged.

A man must be patient with every boy who comes in, for the reason that the man may some day have to spend with him.—Athenian Globe.

SPELLING REFORM.

A fisherman sat on the quay,
Partaking of afternoon tea,
When a lady came by
Who winked with one eye
And whispered, "No sugar for me."
A man was committed to goal,
For stealing a tenpenny nail,
The judge was severe
And gave him one year,
Without any option of bail.
A grand old bootmaker of Haverdon
Used to spend the whole day in his gawarden,
When his friends asked him why,
He looked up at the sky,
But only replied, "Beg your pardon."
It is said that Nathaniel Finnes
Lived wholly on bread and broad bionna,
When invited to eat
But a morsel of meat,
He answered, "Just think what it amounts to!"
A thoughtful young butcher named Mowll
Had a tender and sensitive soul,
When he slaughtered a sheep,
He always would weep
And say for a funeral toll.
A sailor who sported a queue
Was vital to all that he knew,
If he came under fire,
He used to retire
And say, with a bow, "After yeus."
The dowager Duke of Devonshire
Was famous for Irish stouts,
When asked, "Do you use
Any onion in stews?"
He cautiously answered, "A feugh."
A groom of the royal demesne
Was the finest old man ever seen,
But he kept out of sight
In a ditch day and night
For fear of annoying the queen.
The amiable Commodore Hetch
Set sail down the channel one daich,
When asked, "Do you know
Which direction to go?"
He answered, "I'm feeling my way."
One autumn the Marquis of Steynes
Shot a partridge with infinite pains,
Then he cried, "I'm afraid
Of the hawk I've made!"
See—only one feather remains!"
—Westminster Gazette.

Pointed.



He—Awful lot of snobs up the river this season; much better set last year, I'm told.
She—Yes. You weren't up last year, were you?—Fun.

The Sentiment of the Snag.

"These songs of the sea are very impressive," she exclaimed when the full chested baritone had ceased warbling.
"Yes," answered the young man who lacks poetry, "but they're misleading. You get an idea that after a man has been in the navy awhile he goes around singing about his home on the rolling deep when everybody knows that if he is lucky his home will be right here in Washington."—Washington Star.

Feminine Strategy.

She—Tell me, Franz, would you rather pay the butcher's bill or pay for my new hat?
He—The butcher's bill.
She—Well, here it is.
He—What! Forty marks? Let me have the items.
She—For meat 2 marks, for my new hat the 38 marks that the butcher lent me, making just 40 marks!—Fliegende Blätter.

Saled.

Mrs. Youngwife—I want to get some salad.
Dealer—Yes, ma'am. How many heads?
Mrs. Youngwife—Oh, goodness! I thought you took the heads. I want plain chicken salad.—Catholic Standard and Times.

Held Up on the Train.

Passenger—Give me three of those bananas. How much?
Train Boy—Fifteen cents.
Passenger (handing over the money)—You are not as spectacular as the James boys used to be, young fellow, but you do it more thoroughly.—Chicago Tribune.

Boston Clubmen.

Fogg—The boys at the club are rather severe on Morton. They say he has more money than brains.
Bass—I should call that a compliment from their point of view. They could possibly have no use for a man with brains.—Boston Transcript.

A GOOD SCHEME.

Would Have Worked All Right, but There Was Too Much Enthusiasm.
"I know I oughtn't to give this away," said a local politician, "but it's too good to keep. The other day I happened to drop into the office of one of our campaign orators and noticed the manuscript of a speech which he proposed to deliver that night lying on his desk. Without thinking any harm I picked it up and in running my eye over the first few pages was surprised to find the thread of the argument interrupted here and there by a 'voice from the audience,' which asked impertinent questions. In each instance a very apt answer was written down, and I saw at once that a little comedy had been prepared in advance to show off the orator's skill at repartee."

"I laid the manuscript down and said nothing, but that night I went out to the meeting to see the fun. Knowing exactly where the first interruption was going to occur, I was on the alert when the piece in the speech was reached, and, sure enough, it popped a tough looking individual and fired off question No. 1."

"I must admit the scene was well acted. When the question was asked, the audience laughed and then waited eagerly to hear what the speaker would say. For a moment he seemed embarrassed and disconcerted, and then, just as everybody thought he was completely cornered, he suddenly straightened up and shot back a reply so apt and witty that it turned the tables in a twinkling. The effect was electrical, and the whole house went wild."

"I snickered in my sleeve and waited for interruption No. 2, which passed off with equal eclat for the orator. In fact, the scheme would have been a great success if the interrupter hadn't played his part too well. He was so extremely natural and gave such a fine imitation of a hobo bent on breaking up a meeting that when he started in the third time a big policeman grabbed him by the neck and put him under arrest."

"He tried to protest, but it was no go, and in three minutes he was on his way to jail. After the meeting was over the orator hopped into a cab and hurried down to bail him out. I understand he was pretty sick of his job, and unless a substitute can be found the rest of my friend's speeches will probably be made without reported interruptions."—New Orleans Times-Democrat.

Bilville in Mourning.

We are in great sorrow because Dewey will not visit Bilville. We had killed the fatted calf and made a pair of navy boots for him out of his hide, and all the leading ovens of the neighborhood had been lardened in his honor.

The greasy pole which the mayor had promised to climb in the event of Dewey's coming has been taken down and chopped into firewood.

We have sent seven Bilville physicians to Washington to prescribe for Admiral Dewey, and every one is sworn to tell him that nothing in the world will benefit him but the climate of Bilville.

Dewey's relations, 750 in number, left yesterday for their respective homes.—Atlanta Constitution.

His Repertory.

"What have you been playing during your present tour?"
"We played 'Hamlet' and 'King Lear' on the stage," answered Mr. Stornington Barnes.
"Were there no comedies in your repertory?"
"Only one. When we came to count up the box office receipts, it was usual 'Much Ado About Nothing.'—Washington Star.

Equalizing a Drawback.

He—I noticed that one of the leading golf players at the recent feminine championship contest was ruled off the course because she was offered some advice about her play by her husband.
She—It seems to me it would be more than fair to give the women with husbands a reasonable handicap.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

No Case on Record.

In the whole history of this country, not a single case has been recorded of fatigue on the part of any one who was collecting campaign funds.—Dallas News.

Bostonians and Their Sons.

How fortunate it is that a man usually gets his boy pretty well trained before the boy finds out what a humping the father is!—Boston Transcript.

A Change.



"I ain't seen yer 'bout lately, but your young lady, Mr. Tamm's."
"She ain't my young lady no longer now, Mr. Jones. I married 'er last Sunday."—Punch.