

A HAT LINING.

In 1840 Tipton, a small but notoriously wicked town in Staffordshire, England, was the scene of a mysterious crime. In the straggling outskirts stood a large, old-fashioned dwelling, almost surrounded with trees. A short avenue led to the front, and fifty yards to the right ran a lane leading down to an old mine long disused. On the side next the dwelling was a heavy growth of trees, but off from the lane by a high stone wall, in which was a strong oaken door leading to the rear of the house. There was a similar growth of trees on the other side of the dwelling, extending for perhaps half a mile to the left and far away down into the alley in the rear. Immediately behind the house was a vegetable garden, and the usual outbuildings were situated between the house and the garden. Back of the garden trees extended, the house looking as though had been built in a spot cleared away from the forest. For many generations this had been the residence of the Wildesley family. Formerly it had been wealthy, but in latter days it had lost much of its property, and the representative at the time of which we write had an income of about £800 a year. He was over seventy, but still hale and active. He had three children: John, the eldest, was in London; William, the second in age, was a wanderer, no one knew whither; and Mary, the youngest, was married to a sea captain, and resided in Liverpool. The family, as already said, was once wealthy, but the wild and reckless profligacy of its elder sons had reduced it almost to poverty. When the grandfather of the present representative died, in 1752, he left a will by which all the remaining property was tied up for ninety years, his heirs in the meantime to receive an income of only £800 a year. Ninety years from his death the whole bulk of the estate which, it was expected, by that time would be increased twenty fold in value, was to go to the representative of the family then living, but to his second child, he surviving. Owing to the discovery of valuable mines on the estate, it had increased in value greatly beyond the estimate, and it was expected that the next possessor would be one of the wealthiest men in the midland counties. William, the second child, was born in 1815, and Mary, the younger, a year later. In 1830 she was at school in Rochester, and eloped with a young sailor in the navy. After their marriage the sailor left the navy and in course of time became master of a sailing vessel. Mr. John Wildesley, a widower, and his only daughter, and from that day onward they never met. When William was just twenty-one years old he suddenly disappeared, and from that time to the year 1840 he was never heard of. After five years' disappearance the law presumes a man dead; and consequently Mary would become, in the event of her father's death, the second child, he surviving. As already said, Mr. Wildesley was hale and active. On November 17, 1840, he was seated in his dining room smoking his pipe after dinner, when a servant announced that a gentleman wanted to see him. He directed the gentleman to be admitted, and as was invariably his custom when a stranger called, directed his servant—an old and faithful attendant—to remain in the room with them. The servant retired, and introduced a man of medium age, who gave his name as Livermore. He was very swarthy, and had dark, bushy hair. "I come," said the stranger, after having taken a seat, "on very important business, in fact, I bring you word of your missing son."

Again before his return to America. As the night was dark, Mr. Wildesley suggested that a servant should accompany the stranger to the place where he said he had left his vehicle. The stranger, however, declined. At the last moment, turning to Mr. Wildesley, he said: "To tell you the truth, sir, your son has returned and is now awaiting you at the inn. He sent me on in advance to prepare you for the news of his return and to see how you would receive it. Mr. Wildesley at once said that he would accompany the stranger to the inn forthwith. "Samuel," he said to his servant, "I wish you to go along with me so that you can return with me." "Suppose," said the stranger, "you tell him to follow at a short distance, as I think your son would prefer to see you alone in the first instance." "God bless the boy!" said the old man, with feelings; "he need not be afraid of the welcome he will receive, though he did not treat us well." Then Mr. Wildesley and the stranger moved toward the door to start, and Samuel, supposing they were going to do so at once, went for his overcoat and boots, to follow them. When they were just about to quit the house, however, Mr. Wildesley said: "I declare, I have not so much as offered you a glass of wine. Come back for a moment and drink with me." The two men returned to the dining-room and after a glass or two of wine left the house in company. A few seconds earlier Samuel, supposing they had already gone, and were in advance of him, went after them, being about fifty yards in advance. The sounds of his feet were heard, and Mr. Wildesley said to the stranger: "There's some one walking in front of us: don't you hear the steps?" Just then the sound ceased, and then went on more slowly than before. "Oh," said the stranger, "it is probably a donkey." In reality it was the sound of Samuel's footsteps, and when he heard a voice behind him he paused to listen. Then he walked on again. When he reached the iron gate he again paused, and saw two figures approaching from the house. "That is my master and the stranger," he said to himself. "I wonder what delayed them." Then he opened the gate, and when the two men were within four or five yards of him he passed out and crossed the road, intending to wait and walk in the rear of Mr. Wildesley. "There was a footstep," Mr. Wildesley said, as they reached the gate. "I thought I heard it," the stranger said, and with a quickened pace passed Mr. Wildesley and stepped out into the road. At the instant there was the report of a gun, and the stranger staggered and fell. Samuel, who had just reached the other side of the road, ran across, at first fearful for his master, but the sound of his voice reassured him. Both bent over the fallen man, but there was no sign of life. Samuel ran to the house and returned with a light and help. The stranger was removed to the dwelling and a doctor summoned. Life, however, was extinct. Next day the police were on the move to investigate the matter, but not a clue leading to the perpetrator of the deed could be found. It was found, however, that the dead man's skin had been stained and that he wore a wig, both, evidently for disguise. When Lambert, the great English detective, took the matter in hand, he displayed his usual skill. In the murdered man's hat was a lining, and in the lining were the words: "Whitmore, hatter." There was no street or town. Lambert took the lining with him to London, and visiting the leading hat factory, questioned the journeymen as to their knowledge of the name "Whitmore," in the hat business. After persistent inquiry he came across a man who had once worked for a hatter of the name in Liverpool. Thither Lambert went and found the man. In looking over his books he came across the name of a customer who answered precisely the description of the murdered man. The customer's name was Roper, and his residence was in Everton, across the Morsey. Thither Lambert and his assistant went, and found that a Mr. Roper was living at the place with three children. The assistant threw himself in the way of one of the Roper children and heard that his father had been from home for a fortnight, precisely cover-

ing the time of the murder. Lambert then called on Mrs. Roper, and was soon satisfied that she had heard of her husband's death by some means before the disclosure of the fact. He also discovered another remarkable fact—that one of the Roper children was named Wildesley. To shorten the story, the woman was found to be the daughter of Mr. Wildesley, and by degrees the dreadful fact was developed that Roper had himself murdered William Wildesley to secure the vast accumulations of the property for his wife, and had subsequently arranged for the killing of the old gentleman, so that his daughter, as the second surviving child, should inherit as speedily as possible. Roper and his accomplice went to Tipton to carry out the plot for the removal of Wildesley. The accomplice was to hide behind the wall, close by the gate, and from the top of it take the fatal aim. The arrangement was that Roper was to pass out into the road in advance of Mr. Wildesley, and that as soon as Mr. Wildesley appeared he was to be shot. It will be remembered how it was planned by Roper that Samuel should come last, and that by the accident of Roper and Mr. Wildesley returning to take a glass of wine, Samuel went in first. The assassin supposing that Samuel coming out first was Roper, waited for the second man to appear, and shot him, thus slaying the instigator of the projected shooting of Mr. Wildesley. In the wood to the left of the dwelling was found the spot where the body of William Wildesley had been buried after his murder by Roper. Mrs. Roper claimed that though she knew of the killing of her father, she was in dread of her life, and dared not reveal the crimes. Retford, the accomplice of Roper, was captured, but in attempting to escape from the Stafford county jail, sustained injuries which proved fatal.

Eaton in the head, the ball penetrating his brain. The shooter escaped. It is reported on the streets to-day that the body of Frank Mallory, the mail-carrier between Rosefield and Harrisonburg, who has been missing since January 6, has been found riddled with bullets between the two places. The story is discredited.

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GENERAL NEWS ITEMS. AUGUSTA, Ga., Jan. 17.—Last Thursday, near Waynesboro, Burke county, Ga., while D. McNewell and J. D. Nixon were riding very rapidly in opposite directions, their horses came in collision. McNewell was killed and Nixon seriously injured. CHATAM, Ont., Jan. 17.—A man named Roganhammer shot a man named Henderson, with whom he had been given lodging, on Sunday. Roganhammer afterwards shot himself dead. SAN FRANCISCO, Jan. 17.—Gustav Heinrich, music teacher, who eloped recently with Anna Weibert, seventeen years old, a pupil from Forked River, N. J., leaving a wife and family behind, was arrested here to-day. Miss Weibert tells a terrible story of cruelty at the hands of her betrayer, and is anxious to return home. MANCHESTER, January 15.—An attempt has been made, it is believed by Fenians, to blow up the armory of the Infantry Barracks, at Sandford, where the rifles of the volunteers were deposited. A meat store near the armory was blown to atoms. The explosion is believed to have been effected with dynamite, which was smuggled into the barracks by some one having business with the regiment. LONDON, January 15.—The explosion at Salford, which, it is supposed, was caused by a Fenian attempt to blow up the armory of the infantry barracks, was heard for a distance of a mile. The barracks are situated in a very populous district. One woman was desperately, and a boy, it is feared, fatally injured. There were several thousand stands of arms in the armory at the time. There was a ventilator in the wall between the shed of Salford Barracks and the street, and one theory is that explosive materials were dropped through this ventilator. It is also asserted that the regiment now quartered in the barracks contains many Irish, and that Fenianism had been previously suspected among them. It is rumored that a fuse has been found on the ground near the shed. The damage is more serious than at first reported. In the outer walls of the barracks a hole was blown large enough to admit a man. BERLIN, Jan. 16.—Crown Prince Frederick William, speaking at the Institution of Invalids, to-day, decidedly condemned the anti-Jewish movement. He said he felt especially aggrieved because the movement was invading the schools and universities. He could not conceive how intellectual men could support a movement which was to be condemned for its tendencies and its aims. He hoped the movement would soon die out, for it was impossible that such an unhealthy condition of things should continue. NATCHEZ, Jan. 17.—On the steamer Natchez, Sunday night, below Natchez, a shooting affray occurred between two colored passengers which will result in the death of one, Johnson Eaton by name. There are several conflicting stories about the occurrence, but the most likely one is that Eaton attempted to ravish the wife of the shooter. The wife's screams brought the husband to her side and he drew his pistol and shot

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