

(From Chambers Journal.)

A Cast of the Net.

THE STORY OF A DETECTIVE OFFICER.

CHAPTER-IV.—CONCLUSION.

Edmund Byrle was never caught, and so far as we were concerned, was never heard of. And if it hadn't been for his father, I should never have understood a lot of things that puzzled me. I had given a pretty good guess as to how Miss Doyle came, in the first place, to inquire about Mr. Byrle and the detective, a very clever idea in itself, but, like many other clever things, it lost her the game. Mr. Byrle had talked with his friend about employing detectives, and Miss Doyle knowing about the Bank paper, and being always on the watch, had got hold of just enough to mislead her.

She went out with Edmund Byrle to Turkey, I think, and was married to him, and old Mr. Byrle sent out a friend to see them. And it was in this way I got the particulars. It appears she knew me again—only as the limping laborer of course—when she saw me talking to Tilley, at the ferry. But she knew him as the detective at the Yarmouth Smack, and she thought, that although it might be all right, yet a detective was a dangerous customer, and his acquaintance might be dangerous also. Consequently she tried to persuade Edmund to put off his journey, but he wanted the money for the paper, and wouldn't listen to her. But he agreed, at last, to go aboard in another boat, which satisfied her, as she felt so certain the skipper's boat would be attacked. As I have exclaimed, her precaution saved him from fifteen years "penal," which is the least he would have had.

The skipper was sent for life, having killed a man in his arrest; but he didn't live six months in prison; he never got over the tremendous blow he received from Barney. All the reports spoke of his being a receiver of "stolen goods." The Bank paper was never mentioned, for the authorities did not want to unsettle the public again, or let them see what a narrow escape they had had.

And now comes about the queerest part of my story. Call me names if I didn't stop the thieving at Byrle's factory as well as recover the Bank paper, killing two birds with one stone.

It was all through my catching the bony ferryman. Finding that things were going hard with him, and hoping to make them easier, and being disappointed that those who were concerned with him did not come forward with money to provide for his defence, he "rounded" on them; he split on them all, and owned how he was the means of taking the metal over a fence on his side of the water, the things being stolen by a mechanic and a watchman who were in league. (I see I have used the word "fence," this means a receiver of stolen goods; but though I have been warned by the editor of this magazine, we can't do without some slang words.)

Peter Tilley got a tidy present, and was noted for promotion through this business. I was glad of it, for Peter was a capital chap—never wanted to play first-fiddle; and I admire people of that disposition. I tell you what I did; I got the newest five-pound note of all what the Bank had given me, and they were all very clean and crisp, and I wrapped old Bob the gatekeeper's own sixpence in it; and I went to the factory and I stood a pint of ale and says: "Bob, here's your sixpence!" He hadn't known exactly who I was till then, for I had made excuses as usual; and there I'm blessed if he didn't quite cry over his luck. Mr. Byrle, too, thought a lot of Bob's kindness, for I told the old gent about it; and I heard that on that very account he put six shillings a week on Bob's wages, and I was glad to hear it.

They couldn't keep me off the detective staff after this; and though I am free to admit—now I am on my pension and nothing matters to me—that I only stumbled upon these discoveries by accident. I was praised to the skies by those for whom I worked. However, it all died away, as such things do; but I had managed to get my house at Pentonville, as I have hinted; and a pleasant neighborhood I don't know, or one more convenient for getting about. I had some rather odd adventures since I have lived in my street; you can't help seeing strange things if you keep your eyes open in London. But I didn't begin to tell about them. I have finished my account of the robberies at Byrle & Co.'s and my story finishes in consequence.

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