

Selected Story.

Pipley, the Policeman.

CONTINUED.

He was very busy that day, and took up one man on suspicion; but only got scabbed for his pains.

'I shall be too many for them yet,' said John, as he swung leisurely down a street. 'Every dog has his day, watch-dogs as well as mongrels, a running about and doing mischief; and when I do get hold, why then—'

He paused before an orange woman who was encroaching upon the pavement, and, after warning her off, began to ponder on her appearance. Some one must have committed those robberies, and why not she as well as any one else? She was bulky, and had a habit of sitting in a sieve packed with her legs under her, to keep her warm; her bonnet was very much crushed, and her plaid shawl all awry—all of which proved nothing; but they might be found to be associated in some way with the late robberies. It was astonishing what great things sometimes grew out of small, as the detectives had often shown.

John Pipley could not make the sides of the puzzle fit, so he moved on himself. Ah! Now that was more likely. An organ-grinder. Hum! Always loitering about and turning that handle, what opportunities for thinking out villainy! But no, it would not do. He couldn't take Giuseppe on suspicion; so the man ground out the march from "Faust" like so much musical meal to be blown away upon the wind, the sound buzzing in John Pipley's ears, even when he was out of sight.

'I'll have 'em yet—I'll have 'em yet,' said John, as he chewed the cud of his disappointment, and thought of his captain's words; but his business was slack, the people were awfully well-behaved, and it was very disappointing.

A coach rattled by, laden with luggage; but no scoundrel was dislodging a portmanteau; and he—John Pipley—could not run after that coach all the way to the depot to see if it arrived there safe. It was not reasonable, and would be horribly wanting in dignity.

How his head worked! How he beat together his gloves, in which his fingers itched to get at crime, or longed to lay hold of his truncheon, and hit at something, hard—very hard!

Up and down, here and there; but nothing on the wing. Not even a row, not even a horse down; all was peace when he wanted war—war to the truncheon.

It was enough to make any policeman sigh, and he sighed accordingly. Ah! if some daring scoundrel would only dash a brick through one of those great panes of glass, and seize handfuls of the glorious jewels therein! With what a feeling of exquisite delight he could bring down his truncheon upon the evil doer's arm and make him drop the treasure, which would fly scintillating all over the pavement; and then, with the fellow's cuff tightly held, the jewels gathered and placed safely in his—John Pipley's—pocket, how he could proudly march the thief off, enter the charge, and deposit the culprit, like so much honey which he had gathered safely in a cell!

Ah, and court next day! Yes he would shine there as the active and intelligent officer. The jeweler would, of course, come down handsome, and it would be a step toward promotion. Yes, if such an attempt were only made, and he was at hand to stay it. What a crack at the gang it would be—if it were only not a castle in the air.

Pipley beat his gloves together and sighed deeply.

'I was on the look-out when the last carriage robbery came off, and I'd almost go so far as to swear that I saw that roll of carpet perfectly safe ten minutes before it was stolen. Though it couldn't have been safe, or it wouldn't have been taken. Ah! I shall have 'em yet.'

Now, then, policeman, give a lift with this here, there's a good 'un.'

John Pipley had been slowly approaching a great grocery, at the end of which stood a light cart, with the tail-board down, and an ordinary-looking man was trying to lift a large firkin into the cart, its fellow being already there.

'Heavy?' said Pipley.

'Out an' out,' said the man.

Concluded in our next.

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