NEWS IN BRIEF.

HAPPENINGS IN SHIELDS AND THE DISTRICT.

LIGHTING-UP TIME.—Sun sets 8.50 p.m. (Summer Time). Light up 9.50 p.m.
Identification glass on motor vehicles light up 9.20 p.m.
MOON'S AGE:—New Moon, May 15, 10.38 p.m.

NORTH SHIELDS.

Hens and Gyele Parade.—We have been asked to state that the first prize for Tabbies was taken last Saturday by Brunel and Bobby's Egyptian sons.

2.S. District Church Parade.—The Tynemouth Battalion of the Boys' Brigade (to the number of 150) attending the morning service at St. Andrews Congregational Church on Sunday last. The chaplain (Rev. James Anderson) conducted the service, and delivered an impressive sermon on "The Ways of Zion in the Hearts of Men." Special hymns were sung—the battalion formed up in front of the Church and saluted the colours, the various brigades passed in procession along the street, accompanied by the band.

TYNEMOUTH.

Workers' Educational Association.—Members of the Tynemouth branch of the W.E.A. held its annual meeting for the summer season on Saturday, when they, in common with members from other branches in the district, paid a visit to Armstrong College. The members assembled in King's Hall, where they were addressed by Professors Hall and Meek. After the addresses tea was served, an orchestra providing lighter music the while. Votes of thanks to Professor Meek and members of the staff for having been proposed and replied to, the assembly split into groups, the several groups being conducted over the various departments by students, who performed their respective tasks in a very able manner.

WALLSEND.

Death of Mr W. R. Dixon.—By the death of Mr W. R. Dixon, of The Green, Wallsend, after an illness extending over two years, Tyneside Methodism has lost an earnest and generous supporter. Mr Dixon, who was 79 years of age, commenced work as a boy at Ashington colliery and subsequently served his time as a blacksmith at Mitchell's shipyard, Low Walker. In 1875, he commenced business as a blacksmith at Willington Quay, and for many years he was connected with Wall Street Methodism, and he was a valued official in the New Connexion Society. He was a member of the teachers and for 20 years was superintendent of the school. Among the Church records he was also a Steward of Church Council, Wallsend, made death interrupt his illness.

Simple Church Concert.—Wallsend Slipway Male Voice Choir visited the Bay Bridge Church, Blyth, on Sunday last, about 40 members being present. In the evening the choir gave a concert in the church, con-ducted by Mr George Wheatley, Jarrow. There was a large attendance, and the choir's singing was much appreciated. Mr Hudson, Mr T. Wheatley, and Mr Ridge assisted in the programme.

EARSDON.

Christy Whist Drive.—Over 400 persons were present at a whist drive and dance held in the Edward Rooke Church Hall, Earsdon, on behalf of Miss Esther Peacock, a well-known local invalid. The event was organised by Mrs. R. Beecham. Sixty-three tables were occupied in the whist drive, which was the largest ever held in the hall. The prizes, which were presented by Mr T. Leonard, were won as follows:—Ladies: 1, Mrs Hutton, Backworth; 2, Miss C. Cassidy, Forest Hall; 3, Miss Lockie, Ashington. Gentlemen: 1, Mr W. Dwyer, Backworth; 2, Mr G. Armstrong, East Holywell; 3, Mr W. Simpson, Bates Cottages. Messrs F. Beecham and G. Thompson acted as M.C.'s for the whist, and Messrs F Burgess and Ralph Dickinson for the dance. The William Hills' orchestra supplied the music free of charge. The sum of £25 was realised.

NEWCASTLE.

Pilgrims Depart.—Yesterday a party of 10 pilgrims left Newcastle en route to Lourdes. Among their numbers were two victims of paralysis, Miss S. McGuire and Mr P. Hobins. The party was in charge of Mr J. McLoughlin.

Farm Hirings.—Glorious weather favoured the hiring fairs for single farm workers held in the Corn Exchange, Newcastle. While experienced women were scarce, there was a very large attendance of lads, many of whom seemed to be beginners. As a consequence, the bulk of them were unhired. The rates ruled as follows:—Experienced girls, £14 to £18; younger girls, £8 to £12; experienced lads, £20 to £24; younger lads, £6 to £12. The following ladies from the Girls' Friendly Society officiated as letter clerks:—Miss Bell (honorary secretary), Miss Forster, Mrs Shallcross, Miss Daggett, Misses Crawhall, and Miss Ridgway.

THE "LADIES."

"Our lady hit me, and then another lady hit me, and then up pops a third lady and tries my character away. Being a stranger to this man any of them, I acted as such, and didn't hit back," said a woman at Thames Police Court.

STOLEN MASTERPIECE

FOUND HIDDEN UNDER ROADSIDE HEDGE.

HOW BURGLARS LOST 10th CENTURY RELIC.

The 400-year-old oil painting of the Earl of Essex, which was stolen from Viscountess Hereford's mansion, Ashford Hall, near Ludlow, has been recovered under dramatic circumstances.

It was found by the police, aided by a search party of villagers, under a hedge at Middleton-on-the-Hill, four miles away, writes the "Daily Chronicle" Ludlow correspondent.

Unfortunately, the picture, which was valued at every £1,000, was irreparably damaged.

The discovery was the outcome of certain clues which had been obtained from two men who had been arrested in Scotland in connection with a theft there.

VILLAGE SEARCH PARTY.

A party of Ludlow police officers visited Middleton, and, aided by the villagers and school children, searched the fields and hedges on Saturday afternoon and evening, but failed to find any trace of the vanished masterpiece.

On Sunday the search was resumed, and all the hedges between Ashford Hall and Middleton were raked with scythes and forks. At midnight, one was about to be abandoned when Mr Price, a farmer's wife, found what at first appeared to be a large piece of old linoleum.

On examination it was found to be the picture, which had been there for two months.

It was folded across the centre, and a second crease had evidently been made while the canvas was being hidden in the hedge.

BURGLARS' MOTOR QUEST.

The police theory has been that, after the burglary at Lady Hereford's, residence the thieves walked to the nearest house at Ashford Carbonell, in the hope of stealing a motor car.

But the owner, Mr W. D. Hall, was awake, and the thieves made off.

They went to Middleton, where they attempted to steal a second car, but they could not start it.

Realising that they must be detected at daylight with the picture, which measured 20 inches by 17½, the thieves deposited it under the hedge, where it has remained ever since.

The picture, which was taken from its resting place in Ashford Hall, represents the Earl of Essex, in armour, seated on a prancing horse.

CRICKET, TENNIS & RUGBY

South Shields Club's Annual Report

The 56th annual report of the South Shields Club, which embraces the Westoe Lawn Tennis and Westoe Rugby Football Clubs, will be presented at the meeting of members to be held in the County Hotel, Westoe, shortly.

There was a total membership on March 31 of 631 (305 ladies and 326 gentlemen), as compared with 631 (124 ladies and 477 gentlemen) twelve months previously.

With respect to cricket, both first and second eleven showed improved form in the League tournament last season. The first team won 8, drew 8, and lost 6 matches, scoring 2,685 runs for 171 wickets, an average of 15.7, against 2,681 runs for 171 wickets, an average of 15.6 scored by opponents. The second team won 11, drew 4, and lost 4 matches, scoring 2,874 runs for 184 wickets, an average of 17.9, as against 2,174 runs for 184 wickets, an average of 11.6 scored by opponents. The first team played five Cup ties and Friendlies, of which they won 2, drew 2, and lost 1. Regret is expressed at the departure from the district of Mr J. Robinson, who rendered consistently good service during his four years connection with the club.

Lawn tennis play last season was greatly restricted. The three teams—two men's and one ladies'—were entered in the Northumberland and Durham Leagues. The first team played four matches in Group B to Group A, did badly, playing 10 matches, of which one only was won and nine lost. The second team played 11 matches in Group C, winning 5 and losing 6, two being left out. The ladies' team, in Group A of the Ladies' League, played 11 matches, winning 3 and losing 8. The annual tournament on August 7 and 8 was highly successful financially, the sum of £72 16s being handed over to the club funds.

With reference to Rugby football, the senior fifteen won 13 matches, lost 14, and drew 1, scoring 278 points against 185. The second team won only two out of 20 matches.

Dealing with the finances of the club, it is pointed out that during the past 12 months the expenditure had exceeded the income by £39 19s., which had increased the debit balance to £522 19s 8d.

LABOUR'S FITNESS TO GOVERN.

MR MACDONALD AND THINGS AS THEY ARE.

A reply to those who question the ability of the Labour party to govern was made on Saturday by J. Ramsay Macdonald, addressing a crowded meeting at Neath. The Opposition leader said Mr C. T. Cramp had been spending an active day in the Aberavon district addressing a number of May Day demonstrations.

Mr Macdonald said that when people asked whether Labour was fit to govern "and all that sort of nonsense," he was generally interested enough to reply, "If we cannot govern any more than other people did, I do not think we should be fit, but if we can do that, I do not know what is."

"I see," added Mr Macdonald, "one party scribbling about the leaders, squabbling about its unity, and as the very moment that it fills its newspaper columns as to whether this section should amalgamate with the next section, or another section should give up its leaders in order to prove how genuine they are, that party tells you to doubt our capacity. United harmoniously as we are this day, day by day, a consistent battle in the interests of all sections, not only in the interests of the nation, but in the interests of the international working classes—that is the continent between us and that party."

The other party, the Tory party, Mr Macdonald went on, rent also by internal division, faced with the problem of how to produce one Bill then changed its mind, giving one division, and allowing it; put up its Ministers for election and failed to get them elected; changed its Cabinet, its promise, its view, its policy, its plan, and, even in six months after the election, was not in a position to produce to the House of Commons when asked the Bill that was going to settle whether houses were going to be controlled or decontrolled. Finally, when it was a question of homes, it declared for rabbit hutches as a home, and when it was subdividing, declared that they would only subdivide things that were dignified by the title of house. If a house were to be built with ten or twelve hundred square feet, then this great Government was not subsidising for that, but if a house were to be built of eight hundred and fifty or nine hundred and fifty feet, if the Labour party screwed them enough—"and I am sure it will," said Mr Macdonald, "we will"—then the taxpayers would give a subsidy of £6 for that sort of dwelling.

FOREIGN AFFAIRS.

Turning to foreign affairs, Mr Macdonald said it was exactly the same. The Labour party stood with its record behind it of wisdom. What had come of the Ruhr policy? Nothing but destruction and failure. France could succeed if she liked. Germany is a success by creating a wilderness and declaring peace. That was not the success the Labour party had in mind. The Labour party, when France started to go into the Ruhr, straightway said there could be no success in that adventure. Did they want reparations? They could not be collected with bayonets. Did they want national security? That could not be got by strengthening every impulse of bitter nationalism in the hearts of their enemies. Did they want peace? They could not get peace founded upon injustice. Did they want co-operation? They could not get co-operation by force and by the Ruhr adventure. They could not get trade by closing markets and hampering the flow of goods.

But our Government, said Mr Macdonald, was silent. The Government could not speak, the Government could not speak. Germany could not say anything because they feared it would be taken as a sign of weakness. The French Government said they could say no thing because they had taken up a position and had to stand by it. The Belgian Government said they could do nothing because they had taken up a position with the French allies and the British Government said we do not agree, but we cannot say it aloud else we might be misunderstood. So the weeks went on and became months and the trade of the country suffered.

"If fitness to govern consists in keeping away from and co-operation from Europe I admit we are not fit to govern because our ideas are exactly the opposite," concluded Mr Macdonald amid cheers.

TIMBER FAMINE FEARED.

Would Hit Great Britain More Than Any Other Country.

There is a widespread fear of a timber famine at no distant date, states the report, issued yesterday by the Forestry Commissioners for the year ended September 30 last.

Such a famine would be more disastrous to the United Kingdom than to any other country, the Commissioners point out. The needs for timber are constantly increase, and virgin forests are being worked out rapidly.

During the year ended 30 June, the Forestry report the sum spent on the normal forestry programme was £232,000, but this was brought up to £373,987 by unemployment relief works.

The Commissioners appeal for a broader view of their work, and for a steadier national policy.

FOOTLIGHTS AND SCREEN

REVIEWS OF LAST NIGHT'S ENTERTAINMENTS.

FILMS AT SHIELDS.

THEATRE ROYAL, NORTH SHIELDS.

During this, the sixth week of their visit to the Theatre Royal, North Shields, the "Royal" Stock Company produced the gripping domestic drama by Sheila Walsh, entitled "Mother." Last night's audiences were delighted and impressed with the splendid interpretation of the beautiful story. The dramatic situations are moist touching, and yet appealing, but are not dwelt upon too long, for some real good humorous positions are nicely interpreted. The greatest character in the piece is undoubtedly that of "Duncan Grieve," a man of the weather-beaten old sailor, which is admirably portrayed by Mr Terry Davies. In the first act he is seen as a bluff, hearty old sailor, who passionately loves his daughter Nellie, and later he is seen filled with deep sorrow at his daughter's mistake and filled with the most bitter resentment against the man who lot her astray, and finally as a blind, bowed and broken man, forgiving everything and receiving his girl back home again. Miss Florence Churchill plays the daughter's part well, and Mr Joseph Millins plays the part of her husband cleverly. Mr Edward Louis and Mr Edward Brooke ensure the minor parts in a convincing manner, while Mr Alfred Reymond and Miss Kity Dillon are responsible for the higher comedy parts. Miss Dillon is the very sweet and charming as Nellie's child.

COMEDY THEATRE.

A brilliant production was presented at the Comedy Theatre last week when "Rise of Life" featuring Lon Chaney and Wesley Barry was screened. The picture was really worth seeing, and the story is full of interest up to a delightful climax in the fourth. Thirty minutes of the picture are laid there was a pleasant mixture of comedy and drama. The atmosphere of the Chinatown in San Francisco is well in evidence in the picture. An episode of the serial "The Son of a Sheikh" and a comedy were also shown.

HOWARD HALL.

An emotional drama depicting a fight between two men for the soul of a man, was screened at the Howard Hall last night, and it will be repeated to-night. The clever portrayal of one woman who tries to sell herself to be in love with her, but later he discovers his mistake. How he eventually found happiness in the company of his first love and her family who very touching, and a fitting climax to the story. The acting of the principals was astonishingly fine. The picture is worth seeing, if only for the "Do or Die." proved as exciting as ever; and Topical Budget and a comedy completed the programme.

GAIETY PICTURE HALL.

An exciting drama entitled "The Dawn of Love," was screened at the Gaiety Picture Hall, North Shields, last night. The smuggling element is paramount in the story, and the curious position which a Customs officer found himself in when he was sent to hunt down a par ticularly daring smuggler, who happened to be his brother. Other features were Pathe News, Pathe Supplementary items in "Quality Plays, No 1, The Thief," Interest, Graphic and a comedy were also shown.

PICTURE HOUSE, WHITLEY BAY.

"Miss Lulu Bett" was shown at the Picture House last night, and everyone enjoyed the story of the woman, who thinked for herself and whose sister Dulah had been starved Lulu Bett was the drudge in a middle-class household, and she plays a strange predicament when a mock-marriage, in which she played the part of the bride, was performed in her home. The ceremony unconsciously conducted the proceedings. The dodge was planned for the amusement freedom from a life of hardship and oppression. The other incidents leading up to a dramatic climax were exciting and interesting. Supporting films were Larry Semon in "Frozen Fists" and "The Channel Raiders." The latter is a fine story by Jack London.

BORO' THEATRE.

A nice selection of variety was provided at the Boro Theatre last night. Eve's Revue delighted the ladies of the audience by a show of latest mode. Charlie Chaplin appeared in "Easy Street," a picture which contained some of the best items of New York in most amusing manner. A scene from pictorial entertainment Arthur Ackerman's Bouquet, showing the fair land of English songs and nursery ditties in most charming and tuneful manner, and they proved not only novel but enjoyable. The Pathe story by Sir Gilbert Parker with the famous actor, Jack Holt, in the lead, was a drama "The Lane That Had No Turning," concerns the life in Paris of Jerry Lane, her husband, a member of the French aristocracy, whose sole idea is to retain his rights and dignities as Lord of the Manor in a Canadian village. A spinal trouble develops and his insane desires and suspicions lead to many strange incidents. A feature of the picture is the wonderful characterisation of the difficult part by Theodore Kosloff, a one time famous dancer.

ALBION CINEMA.

Two extremely entertaining pictures are the chief items in the menu at the Albion Cinema for the first half of the week. There is a Harold Lloyd comedy entitled "Grandma's Boy," which is of sufficient length and excellence in itself to constitute a substantial feature. This picture runs to 5,000 feet of film, and as the producers claim, there is a laugh in every foot of it. Harold Lloyd has now a firmly established reputation as a great screen comedian, and this picture will not prove the last time that not only is his work clever and artistic, but that his comedies are wholesome and without the least taint of vulgarity. Last night's audiences thoroughly enjoyed "Grandma's Boy," and laughed so their heart's content. The other big attraction is the charming love story, "Bought and Paid For," in which Miss Agnes Ayres, and Mr Jack Holt play the principal parts. Miss Ayres is an actress of great ability, and one of the most beautiful of the latter day screen artists. The picture is intensely absorbing, and has a rich vein of comedy. The programme also includes a capital Gaumont Graphic and a comedy, and concludes with an instalment of the adventures of "Pella the Cat."

THE QUEEN'S, SOUTH SHIELDS.

The attraction at the Queen's this week is a domestic play on rather new lines. "Miss Lulu Bett" introduces a new type of Cinderella of the kitchen. For the sake of a home she performs all the drudgery of the house, and for her pains she is treated with scant courtesy, and is generally neglected. But one day there comes an admirer—Dulah's sister, who has just spent his life abroad. He takes in the situation and insists upon taking Lulu out to a late supper party. By way of a joke he goes through a form of marriage with Lulu. It is a very humorous and full of intense touches, without being unduly overdrawn, and the parts are very ably presented. A comedy entitled "Bought and Paid for" delightful soprano, in Marie Lawton, completely captivated the house with her charm and quality. "The Ko Ko Kids," a sparkling American comedy is also booked for the week.

SPEY SALMON RECORD.

A new angling record for the River Spey was set up last week by rod anglers on the Wester Elchies reaches, the total for the six days ending Saturday being 153 salmon. This includes one individual day's catch of 12 fish.

BLYTH WATER RATE UP A PENNY.

FIRST ESTIMATE SINCE TOWN BECAME A BOROUGH.

An increase of a penny in the water rate was recommended at a meeting of Blyth Town Council last night, the Mayor (Ald. J. Goulding) presiding.

There was no change in the poor rate or the general district rate, which combined amounts to 19s 2d making a total of 16s 8d, as against 14s 7d for last year.

Ald. T. C. Healey, chairman of the Finance Committee, in presenting the first estimate for a whole year under the charter of incorporation, said the past year had been one of great financial anxiety. Unemployment prevailed in the town and district and, while they had not been able to do all they would like, efforts had been made to meet the unemployment to some extent, and they had incurred additional expense in securing their charter. He thought, however, they would all agree it was money well spent, and future generations would thank them for taking that step of progress in the history of the town.

CAN'T GET GOOD ROADS AND LOW RATES.

Their expenditure last year was £4,024 in excess of the estimate. The income was £2,000 more than was anticipated. They had also had an increase of £1,165 from the rates. These two amounts had helped them over their difficulties. They had had to pay £5 per cent. more for their water in bulk.

The estimated expenditure amounted to £38,553, and £40,000 had been spent on housing. Coming to the slight increase in the assessable values, a penny in the £ now produced £635 15s 4d.

They had been a good deal of criticism about the condition of the roads. The high rates were also grumbled about, but they could not get good roads and low rates. If they wanted town improvements they must be prepared to pay for them.

RATE STILL BELOW THE AVERAGE.

They spent last year £31,276 on main roads, and on other roads £6,284. They proposed to spend this year £3,300 on main roads and £21,650 on private roads. Everything had been pared down to the barest notes. Money was very scarce. They wanted to improve the trade of the town and attract industries and speculators, and it was in the best interest of the town that the rates should be kept as low as possible.

Their rate was still below the average throughout the country. The Education rate for the year is 2s 2d which was 11½d in excess of the county education rate. It was not his business, however, to discuss the merits or demerits there.

The water rate, unfortunately, would have to be 1s 10d, an increase of 1d. The poor rate would be 8s, the same as during the past two or three years. The total rates would be 12s 10d—poor rate 8s and district rate 4s 10d. He moved accordingly.

Ald. Walton seconded.

NO SUPPORT FOR AMENDMENT.

Councillor T. C. Blackburn moved an amendment that the accompanying expenditure be reduced by £300, that on other roads by £300, on municipal buildings and offices by £200, and on public lighting by £200 in order to avoid the additional penny on the water rate.

The amendment was not seconded.

The Mayor remarked that to take anything from the proposed scavenging expenditure was outrageous. The only regrettable thing to him was the payment of 11½d more for education.

The resolution of Ald. Healey was adopted with one dissentient.

WENT TO AID OF SHOT PRESIDENT.

Link with Abraham Lincoln Snapped at Shields.

A link with Abraham Lincoln has been snapped at South Shields by the death there of Mr William Hall, of Seafield Terrace, at the age of 89.

Mr Hall was born in 1833, his father being the Rev. James Hall, of Gilmore Hall, an incumbent of the old church at Jarrow, and his grandfather, John Stephens Hall, was a Captain under Sir Nelson's day, and was Vice-Admiral of the Blue Division.

At the age of 16, William Henry Hall went to America, where he began business as a grocer at Memphis, Tennessee. When the Civil War broke out, he threw in his lot with the Northern Army.

He was then appointed a uniform he visited Ford's Theatre, Washington, and found himself sitting in the pit almost under President Abraham Lincoln's box.

It was an actor named Wilkes Booth who shot the President, and immediately after the shot rang out Mr Hall ran with three others to the President's box and assisted to carry him out on a shutter arrangement.

They took him to a house near by, where he died the next day.

On the occasion of the last visit to this country of ex-President Wilson, Mr Hall was a guest of honour at a dinner given by him at Carlisle.

CANADIAN CATTLE IMPORTS

Ministry of Agriculture's Alleged Obstructive Tactics.

The Sheriff of Newcastle (Mr. David Adams, M.P.) presided at a meeting yesterday of the City Corporation Health Committee, when Councillor Walter Lee reported on the action of the Ministry of Agriculture in regard to the importation of Canadian cattle, from which it appeared that although the lifting of the embargo had been carried by a large majority in Parliament, every possible obstruction was now being placed in the way of it becoming effective.

Mr Adams undertook to do everything possible in the House to secure the effective carrying out of the intentions of the Commons, when it passed the original measure.

TYNEMOUTH CUP SEMI-FINAL

HEBBURN COLLIERY v. PRESTON COLLIERY.

These teams met at Hebburn last night in a replayed semi-final in the Tynemouth Primary Cup Competition. The home team were easily the superior side, and the visitors were completely kept on the defensive, especially in the second half. Pearson gave Hebburn the lead after 35 minutes' play, and ten minutes from the end that player added a second goal, and five minutes later Armstrong secured a third. Result:

HEBBURN COLLIERY.... ... 3
PRESTON COLLIERY.... ... 0

Hebburn Colliery and St. Peter's Albion will meet at Wallsend in the final on Saturday, kick off 3.30 p.m.

CRICKET.

Percy Main entertained Tynemouth II. and had to be all wickets. A feature of the play was the bowling of A. W. C. Gray, of Tynemouth, who took seven wickets for 30 runs.

PERCY MAIN.

R Grey, b Gray	0
J Wilkie, b Pulman, b Bell	20
W Harris, c Pulman, b Gray	0
R Hastley, c Stoddart, b Gray	0
J Hutchinson, c Crabb	0
R Parkes, b Gray	0
J Wilkie, c and b Gray	0
R Pickering, b Bell	0
T Wilkie, c Bell, b Gray	0
G Lockley, c Bell, b Gray	0
A Earl, not out	0
Extras	0
Total	20

TYNEMOUTH II.

W J Pulman, b Pickering	0
H Evans, c Wilkie, b Harris	22
A Stoddart, c Hutchinson, b Harris	0
W A Chrisford, run out	0
A Newbigin, not out	0
F Maxwell, not out	0
Extras	13
Total (for 4 wickets)	13

R C Bell, J T Clarke, G M Brooks, T Hunter and A W C Gray did not bat.

Mr Lloyd George will preside at the great choral festival at Harlech Castle on June 21, when 17 choirs will compete.

THE GIRL WHO RAN AWAY

BY L. F. RAMSEY.

(CHAPTER VII. (Continued).

"Perhaps you will answer my questions, Dulcie; it will be the best way. About what time was the young lady?"

"About eighteen."

"Dark or fair?" she asked the reply.

"What colour was her hair?"

"Fair."

"And curly?"

"Yes, very curly."

"What colour were her eyes?"

"Dark."

"And her complexion?"

"Pale."

"What name did she go by?"

"Rose Dandy."

"Oh, it is the same, then. Didn't even try to hide her identity."

The man put away his pencil and slapped an elastic band round the note-book.

"Now I ask the object of these inquiries," cried Mrs Gray.

The man hesitated.

"I suppose you have read in the papers all about the accident to the express at Leatham?"

"Well, yes, I was very specially interested, you see, since my son and Miss Dunby were both of great service to the injured people."

"Did you see that it was suggested that the mishap to the express was deliberate and accidental?"

"I did see something of the sort, but I put it down to the excitement surrounding the cause of the so-called accident, and that led us to look for a motive for the wrecking of the train. The robbery of the jewels supplied it."

"All that you tell me is very terrible and wicked," said Mrs Gray. "But I cannot see why you have come here to me. Nor why you have asked me all those questions about Miss Dunby. I feel sure she can tell you more about the matter than I can."

The detective glanced round the room with its air of comfortable prosperity, looked up at the portrait of the benign old gentleman over the mantelpiece, and then said:

"A lady like you, madam, knows nothing of the wickedness of the world nor of the number of adventuresses who live by their wits. This Miss Dunby, now no doubt she imposed on your kindness, pitched a yarn to you and provoked your sympathy. Am I right?"

"But this is monstrous!" protested Mrs Gray vehemently. "That girl is no more an adventuress than I am. I thought!" he exclaimed. "Of course she anticipated that questions would be asked, and invented this story to explain her presence on the scene. Didn't it strike you as a most improbable one?"

"It was unusual certainly. But a fellow-passenger who spoke to my son could corroborate the story: he promised to call and see the doctor."

"And has he done so, madam?"

Mrs Gray shook her head.

"Not up to the present, but I should think it is highly probable that he has been indisposed. My son said he was not a young man."

"Do you know his name?"

"I am afraid not."

The man smiled slightly.

"Evidently an accomplice. You will not be troubled by a visit from him, madam." Mrs Gray was usually gentleness itself, but anything like injustice roused her to anger.

"You see so much of the dark side of life, that you look for the worst in people. Instead of the truth." Mrs Gray, I will tell you, I am certain that the girl had no more to do with either the wrecking of the train or the jewel robbery than I had. To look at her face is enough to tell me that she is incapable of crime. She is just a sweet, innocent English girl; I can stake my knowledge of human nature on that."

"Well, madam, I can assure you that I hate to have to disillusion you. But the girl is a dangerous criminal known to the police as 'Flash Jim,' was seen in Melford Hall the night the train robbery; we have not been able to trace his movements since and it is strongly suspected that he was concerned in the crime. Of course his movements were watched by the police; he had been employed as a porter in a drapery establishment in North London, and we at once communicated with them. The reply came that the girl had missed valuable goods, and that one of their girl employees, called Hope Dunby, had also disappeared without leaving any trace of her destination."

"There was a note of quiet triumph in the man's voice, but Mrs Gray was not to be convinced against her will.

"That also is easily explained," she said quietly. "Miss Dunby told me the whole of her history, and it is a very sad one. She left Teecock and Forrest's—that is the drapery's to which you refer, I take it—owing to the undeserved attentions of the very man whom you are seeking. I am not denying that he may be a criminal, but Miss Dunby quite certainly is not."

(To be continued.)

All the characters in this story are fictitious.

The detective listened attentively and once more drew out his pocket-book.

"She is even cleverer than I thought!" he exclaimed. "Of course she anticipated that questions would be asked, and invented this story to explain her presence on the scene. Didn't it strike you as a most improbable one?"

"It was unusual certainly. But a fellow-passenger who spoke to my son could corroborate the story: he promised to call and see the doctor."

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The man smiled slightly.

"Evidently an accomplice. You will not be troubled by a visit from him, madam." Mrs Gray was usually gentleness itself, but anything like injustice roused her to anger.

"You see so much of the dark side of life, that you look for the worst in people. Instead of the truth. Mrs Gray, I will tell you, I am certain that the girl had no more to do with either the wrecking of the train or the jewel robbery than I had. To look at her face is enough to tell me that she is incapable of crime. She is just a sweet, innocent English girl; I can stake my knowledge of human nature on that."

"Well, madam, I can assure you that I hate to have to disillusion you. But the girl is a dangerous criminal known to the police as 'Flash Jim,' was seen in Melford Hall the night the train robbery; we have not been able to trace his movements since and it is strongly suspected that he was concerned in the crime. Of course his movements were watched by the police; he had been employed as a porter in a drapery establishment in North London, and we at once communicated with them. The reply came that the girl had missed valuable goods, and that one of their girl employees, called Hope Dunby, had also disappeared without leaving any trace of her destination."

There was a note of quiet triumph in the man's voice, but Mrs Gray was not to be convinced against her will.

"That also is easily explained," she said quietly. "Miss Dunby told me the whole of her history, and it is a very sad one. She left Teecock and Forrest's—that is the drapery's to which you refer, I take it—owing to the undeserved attentions of the very man whom you are seeking. I am not denying that he may be a criminal, but Miss Dunby quite certainly is not."

(To be continued.)

All the characters in this story are fictitious.

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