

The Great Seymour Square Mystery

Being Three Chapters from a Detective's Case Book

by James Franklin Fitts

I. THE DRAWING OF THE NET

ON the night of October 13th, 1864, Mr. John William Morley left his banking-office on Bay street at eleven o'clock; and after locking the door proceeded homeward. It was afterward remarked that this was a somewhat strange thing for this gentleman to do. He was a private banker and broker, and kept the usual business hours of such men; and his almost invariable custom was to absent himself from his office at five o'clock, two hours after closing the door. It was, therefore, unusual, to say the least, that he should upon this occasion have remained at his place of business until eleven o'clock; and it appeared stranger still when it was afterwards discovered that promptly at five he had dismissed all the help about the office, for the day—the two clerks, the book-keeper, the porter, the errand boy—dispensing with all assistance in the squaring of the day's business, and preferring to close the store himself rather than have anyone about him. It was decidedly singular.

Mr. John William Morley was a tall, stout, strong man, with a florid face, a keen eye, a nervous step, and one of the best heads of the street. He was in the vicinity of sixty years of age at this time, and a widower, with one son, Clarence Morley. The two were very unlike. The son was a young man of twenty-eight, of a scientific and artistic turn of mind, and could not be induced to put his nose between the leaves of his father's ledgers. There was no secret about it that there was trouble between these two. Mr. Morley senior desired two things exceedingly; first, that Clarence should be a banker, and succeed himself in business; and second, that he should not marry Miss Willets; and it was equally well known that the son took the negative and affirmative on the wrong side of these questions respectively, and that the stubborn wills of the two men clashed repeatedly and irately over these two questions of a business, and a girl. It was not thought strange that John William Morley, having built up one of the first banks of deposit in the city, which yielded him an income of about nine thousand per year, should desire to have his business, with the fame and money that were in it, perpetuated through his only son; nor was it uncharacteristic of a man of his patrician blood and education that he should desire a different person for a daughter-in-law from Annie Willets, pretty, amiable and poor, and a sister of a struggling artist—friend and protégé of Clarence. Nor did people greatly wonder that the son, having inherited a good share of independence of character and self-assertion from the father, should do pretty much as he pleased about these matters; except, by cautious and politic people who are ever on the keen scent for number one, it was ominously whispered that Clarence would certainly be disinherited if he did not cease his opposition to this father's wishes.

This digression, as it seems, is no digression at all. It is necessary to show by it that on the night of October 13th, 1864, there was positive and serious inharmony between the Morleys—father and son.

I have said that the banker left his office at eleven o'clock this night. This is known to have been the time, as two men had been watching for his appearance since half-past five of that afternoon. One was secreted in a dark alley-way opposite, whence he could plainly see the door of the banking office, as the light of a street lamp shone directly upon it; the other was in the barber's-shop directly over the office, or, rather, leaning from one of its windows, as he had been for five weary hours.

The barber proposed to close at ten; but this party was so well satisfied with his place of observation, and so anxious to retain it, that he gave the barber more money than he had made by his razor and scissors for a week to allow him to retain it all night, if it should be necessary. It was not necessary; with the stroke of eleven from the neighboring town-clock the windows of the banking-office were shuttered, the door was opened, closed and locked by Mr. Morley, and that individual walked slowly homeward with his eyes bent on the pavement, and his thoughts—but I shall not undertake to tell what he thought about. The two persons who watched him would have given some ready money to know at that moment; and I think that if they had known, they would not have slackened their vigilance a particle. It was too late for any other than the half-hourly omnibus, and Mr. Morley walked slowly north on Bay street, turning, after passing a few squares, into Elder, and thence to Canal. His walk was quite a long one—perhaps a mile and a half, for his residence was in Seymour Square which, as is well known, opens upon the northeast limits of Canal street.

He was closely followed all the way; that is, closely enough to keep him within earshot, without disclosing his followers. They walked after him on opposite sides of Bay street; at the crossing of Elder they came together, and followed on together, cautiously and silently, whispering eagerly as they went, until they stopped outside the residence of Mr. Morley. The latter had mounted the steps when they stopped, and was inserting his latch-key in the door. As the object of this careful surveillance disappeared within the house, closing the door after him, one of the men consulted his watch. The time was then thirty-five minutes past eleven. Had this person known that he was to be sharply cross-examined as to time, he could not have been more particular in fixing it than he was; but he was a person of the most careful habits, and one of the kind who value precision above all things, and in business, especially, as most men value the air of heaven that sustains them. Therefore, when he says that Mr. John William Morley entered his residence and closed the door behind him, at thirty-five minutes past eleven o'clock, I think we may safely believe him.

It becomes a matter of some consequence to be certain of this particular time, when we know that Mr. Morley the elder was never afterward seen to come out of the house, in fact, a great majority of all the people who knew or read anything about the matter asserted that he never did come out of that house. It is quite certain that he was never afterward seen within it; or, if seen, the knowledge has not been disclosed, up to this writing.

The men who followed him were sheriff's officers, and they carried a warrant for his arrest. They had been instructed to watch him until further orders, but not to arrest him unless he attempted to leave the city. They were zealously pursuing those instructions now; and they proceeded to place the premises in an immediate state of siege. The ground plan of the house was simple, and had been fully explained to them, and inspected by them in a sketch of it. There was no basement

communication anywhere, save by the rear door; an alley ran from front to rear, for the convenience of kitchen and cellar, and there was consequently nothing for these two videttes of the law to do but watch the front and rear doors (one front and two rear), and windows. This they did, faithfully and honestly, until the startling discovery of the next morning, which set all the city agape with astonishment and curiosity. One of them remained in the shadow of the opposite house; the other penetrated the alley, and established himself behind a pile of boards four rods from the back door. The front of the house was illuminated by a gas lamp nearly before it, and the rear of it was made so distinct by the light of the lamps upon the next street back of it that the watcher on duty had no difficulty in surveying both doors and windows from his post. And both these men join in the positive assertion that nobody left that house between the hours of thirty-five minutes past eleven and daylight; and that Mr. John Morley did not leave it at all.

At daylight, the watcher in the shadow of the house opposite observed the housemaid come to the door, wipe the knob and the bell-plate, sweep off the steps, and retire again. About the same time the man behind the boards saw the back door thrown open, and two or more kitchen girls pass out and in, and about the kitchen, in preparation of breakfast. Following these indications of an awakened household were sundry visits of butchers and greengrocers' carts down the alley; then the boy with the morning paper at the street door, front, and then the exit of the man-of-all-work from the back door to the woodshed. The interval of an hour which followed, without callers or exits, probably represented breakfast; and shortly after eight o'clock Mr. Clarence Morley passed out at the front door and a short way down the street putting on his gloves and whistling, softly and cheerfully, as with the warmth and inspiration of a good breakfast. Him the watcher at the front of the house sallied out upon and addressed—not with alarming directness, but with the carelessness of a casual inquirer:

“Beg pardon, sir—Mr. Clarence Morley, I believe? May I inquire if Mr. Morley, the banker, is at home?”

“No,” was the decided reply. “He has not been at home since day before yesterday morning, at nine o'clock, when he went down street.”

The officer elevated his eyebrows. “Did he not return last night” he inquired.

“No—he did not.”

The reply came as coolly and as unhesitatingly, as though no living man had seen him enter the door.

The officer did not hesitate a moment. “I am a sheriff's deputy,” he said, briefly, “and I'll trouble you to return to the house with me.” And with that they both walked back to the steps.

Many men under like circumstances would have expressed great surprise, and interrogated the officer as to what he intended; but Clarence Morley was a self-contained fellow, not easily unbalanced; and the announcement that his *vis-à-vis* was an officer of the law was sufficient for him—for the present. He was satisfied to let the affair take its own course, knowing that an explanation would presently be made, and that anything he might say or do just then, except to

comply with the request, would only lead to embarrassment and delay. So he went with the officer. The latter had kept his eye vigilantly on the front door all the time occupied by this short interview, and had seen that nobody came out; and as he ascended the steps with Clarence he called to a policeman who was passing, and requested him to guard the front door, and allow no person to go out during his absence. The policeman knew him well, and nodded as he took his place by the steps; and then the officer and Clarence went into the house.

“Show me to your father’s room—his chamber where he sleeps,” said the former. And the son led the way up the broad stairs to an elegant chamber at the left of them, or the second story. Mr. John Morley was not there. The bed was not tumbled; it had not been lain on at all; nor was there any trace of him in the closet, under the bed, nor anywhere in the chamber.

The officer was puzzled, but not nonplussed. His object was to find John William Morley, and he had great faith that he was somewhere in the house. In fact, it did not seem as if he could be anywhere else. It looked very much to him as though Mr. Morley were hiding in his own house, and the officer could do nothing else than to smoke him out. “Because,” he shrewdly reasoned to himself, “although hiding is not exactly leaving town, yet it’s putting one’s self so he can’t be found in town, and is probably preparatory to leaving town. So I’ll take him in charge when I find him.” And so he probably would have done; but he did not find him.

“I’ll trouble you to show me all over the house,” said the officer. “Begin on the kitchen floor, and go to the attic.”

“Well now,” remarked Clarence, “I should like to know what’s this all about before we go any further. What do you want?”

“I want to arrest your father.”

“The—dickens! What’s the old man been doing?”

“I should think now that he has been trying to run away from his creditors, though I wasn’t sure before.”

“Ho ho!—that’s pretty good!” the young man laughed. “A half millionaire absconding, indeed! Some mistake, I guess, which it won’t be hard to set right. But I tell you honestly, you’ll not find him here. He never came back last night, and he hasn’t been here this morning. Go to the office, and you’ll find him after ten o’clock, or my name’s not Clarence Morley.”

The officer declined to do so, and peremptorily insisted on an immediate and thorough search of the house, to which Clarence with some vexation consented. The needs of this narrative demand that we should follow them closely in their exploration. It began with the lower story of the house, which was half basement, and contained the kitchen, the laundry, the pantry, the store-room, and a dark corner of a place where old scraps and ends were kept. All of these rooms were perfectly light and clear except the last named; and this the officer carefully inspected with a lantern. It became perfectly plain that Mr. Morley was nowhere on the first floor.

The second floor contained the parlor, the library, and the billiard-room. It was very easy to reduce it to practical demonstration that he was not concealed in any of them.

The third floor embraced the sleeping-rooms of Mr. Morley and Clarence, and two guest-chambers. He was not to be found in either of them. The same was true of the fourth floor, which was entirely occupied by servants' sleeping apartments, with communication by a back stairway with the kitchen.

"There is an attic?" questioned the officer.

"A garret," responded Clarence, and led his way up a narrow and crooked stairway. The lantern was again brought into requisition, and every nook and corner of it explored. The search was useless; Mr. Morley was not there.

At this stage of the affair the officer was nonplussed. There was not a particle of the romantic or the supernatural in his composition; he was a plain, matter-of-fact man, with a bald head, and a pair of steel-bowed spectacles astride his nose, to whom the hard, tough *facts* of this world presented its only salient points; but it was just the facts of this mystery that perplexed him. There it was, as palpably plain as the nose on his face, which was of the Roman type, and very plain; a man had entered this house not nine hours before, had not left it, and still could not be found in it. The officer pinched his arm violently, to make sure he was awake, and looked reflectively at the unfinished ceiling of the garret. The house had a flat roof; there might be a trap-door in it; the building was one of a block, and an easy way of escape might lie over the adjacent roofs. His heart sank as he proceeded with his scrutiny and considered this possibility, meanwhile; but it rose again, and the old mystery came back to haunt him when he became satisfied, after a most thorough examination, that there was no aperture, small or large, covered or uncovered, through the roof. The garret was like a *cul-se-sac*, admitting no exit except by the entrance. The officer descended the stairs with the young man, and stepped in the library.

"Well," queried the latter, "are you satisfied?"

No—the officer was not satisfied at all. He would not be satisfied without an interview with every person who had stayed in the house the previous night. This, also, he obtained; and he was just as far from being satisfied as ever, after obtaining it.

The substance of the statements made by these persons to Mr. Barthely, the officer, was afterward given before the police court, upon a criminal examination of the case; all of them under oath, excepting that of Clarence Morley, who, from the peculiar circumstances of his connection with it was not allowed to be sworn. Certain portions of these statements are now presented, as the natural development of the narrative requires it.

CLARENCE MORLEY—I am the son of John William Morley. (in answer to a question) I do not know what had become of him. I have not seen him since the morning of October 13th, 1864, about nine o'clock, when he left the house on Seymour Square for his place of business, I suppose. I live at the same house with him; I slept there the night of the 12th and 13th; he was not at home either night. On the night of the 13th I went to bed about eleven o'clock, or half past;

was experimenting in my room with chemicals for two hours previous. It is my positive belief that my father was not in the house that night.

ROBERT JEBB—Am coachman and man-of-all-work for Mr. John William Morley. I don't know where he is now; haven't seen him since I drove him downtown on the morning of the 12th, about nine o'clock. I slept at the house both nights, and he was not there, to my knowledge, either night.

SUSANNA BYRNES, NORAH MACARTY, RACHEL MANN AND LOUISE PRAY, domestics, all stated that they slept in the servants' room on the nights in question, and that they had not seen Mr. Morley since he was driven down to his office by Jebb on the morning of the 12th.

Armed with these facts, Mr. Barthely hurried away with his fellow officer, who had all this time stood faithfully to his post, in rear of the house, and reported to the lawyer who had placed the warrant to arrest in their hands. The facts were very important ones to Mr. Lawyer and the parties whom he represented; and enjoining the secrecy of the two officers, he proceeded to set the machinery of the law in motion in another direction. By noon of the same day Mr. Barthely appeared in front of the banking-office of John William Morley, ready to attach everything of value within it. Much to his surprise the door was open; the clerks were all at their accustomed places, and the business of the concern seemed to be flowing along smoothly as ever. Money was being paid out and taken in over the counter in large sums, and people came, tarried and went, as usual. Almost unable to speak from his great surprise, Mr. Barthely approached the teller and inquired if Messers. Strong could obtain their deposit that morning?

“Certainly, sir,” was the reply; “produce your authority, and it shall be paid over at once.”

“It is rather large,” remarked Barthely, looking the teller straight in the eye. “Seven thousand, I think.”

“More,” reported the other, looking at a huge folio book; “the exact amount is seven thousand, three hundred fifty-nine dollars, sixty-three cents.”

“And you mean to say that you'll pay it?” ejaculated Barthely.

“Why, most certainly, if they want it,” replied the teller. “When did John Morley's banking-office refuse to pay their deposits, with interest?”

“Where is Mr. Morley?” pursued the officer.

“Probably at his house. Seymore square. He is a little behindhand this morning.”

And with that Mr. Barthely walked off with his attachment in his pocket, and repaired again to the lawyer, who rubbed his hands with delight at the information, but still cautioned the closest secrecy. There was a conference the same afternoon between lawyer, creditor, and book-keeper of the bank, upon which the two former were perfectly convinced that the institution was entirely solvent, having a surplus over all deposits of a hundred thousand, and an average daily deposit of

several thousands. The Messrs. Strong breathed freely for the first time in thirty-six hours, and concluded that their money had better remain where it was.

The fears of the depositors had been excited by certain conduct of the missing man, which seemed at the time to point directly toward bankruptcy; and their promptness in seeking legal remedies proceeded from their convictions that the apparently prosperous banking-house was coming down with a crash on the heads of its depositors. Shortly after the opening of the office, on the morning of the 12th, the senior Strong came into Mr. Morley's private room, and found the banker with his head down on the table, and his body rocking to and fro.

"I say, Morley," said Strong, not at first observing his emotion, "we want about half of that seven thousand tomorrow."

The banker raised his head and exposed a pair of eyes which were almost glaring and a face flushed from hair to beard. "It's impossible," he said, angrily, striking the table with his fist. "I can't and won't pay it. The concern is going to the devil; and if any of its creditors think they can squeeze any money out of it, they are at liberty to try."

Inexpressibly astonished, as well as alarmed by this intelligence—for the credit of Morley upon the street was second to none—Mr. Strong withdrew without another word, intent only upon saving his own deposit from the general crash. The steps he took to that end have been sufficiently detailed. Upon learning that his fears were groundless, the several writs in the hands of the sheriff were discontinued, and the bank was left to pursue the even tenor of its way. The conduct of Mr. Morley was thought somewhat strange, at the time, by the very few who knew of it; but it was imputed to temporary irritation, and to an overstrain of nervousness. It may be added that the substance of the last paragraph, together with the accounts of the sheriff's officers of their proceedings with reference to Mr. Morley on the 12th, 13th and 14th, were contained in the sworn statements of Mr. Strong and these officers, respectively, before the police court.

It was not until three days after the events which I have been narrating that the mysterious disappearance of John William Morley became the subject of suspicion and remark. It was first speculated about by business men, during business hours on the street; they wondering, meanwhile, into what sly speculation old Morley had thrown himself, that required his unaccountable and unexplained absence from his home and office; then the newspapers, emboldened after it was known that Clarence Morley was entirely ignorant of his father's whereabouts, took up the strain, and sent abroad through the city rumors of the alarming and mysterious disappearance of a prominent and wealthy citizen; and finally after a week had passed, the officers of the law got hold of the matter; and one evening I bolted out of my chair at the tea-table upon reading of the arrest of Clarence Morley, upon suspicion of the murder of his father. The stories of Mr. Strong, of the officers, and of the house-servants had been put together and reduced into the shape of affidavits, with some others which seemed to show foul play; and the result was that the son, in sore distress at the strange absence of his father, was arrested upon suspicion, and locked up in a felon's jail to await further developments. There I found him upon the night of the newspaper announcement, whither I hastened to render him every aid in his extremity that should be in my power.*

*The last chapter is, of course, understood to have been written before the action of the remainder of the narrative to place, excepting the police court examinations.

II. IN THE MESHES

My own personal knowledge of the facts of this case begins at this point; or rather it began with the arrest of Clarence, prior to which I had known nothing of any difficulty in the family. This was not strange: although a school-fellow and intimate boy-friend of the young man, our paths had widely diverged since reaching manhood, and our meetings, although always cordial, had been very few for ten years. And though I had heard in an official way of the disappearance of Mr. Morley, no whisper that any suspicion of foul play at the hands of his son was entertained had reached me, and the announcement, when it came, was like the shock of a thunderbolt. It was a busy day with me, or meant to be one: but I made no hesitation of dropping all work and repairing instantly to the prison where he was confined.

It will not be amiss here for me to state my business in life, as the same has an important connection with this narrative. It is that of a special detective, a private operator, whose occupation it has been for several years—almost since parting with Clarence Morley, in fact—to hunt down through all their labyrinthine details, crime, fraud and mystery. I should have been right glad to have been Clarence's college-mate, as I had been his academy-mate; but my poverty compelled me to be satisfied with being the latter; and while he went to Harvard I plunged into business, and after two or three years struggling with torture, at last settled down into what I think nature intended for my groove in this world—a special detective. People very often make mistakes in choosing a calling for which neither habit, education nor taste has adapted them; and I was on the brink of two or three errors of this sort; but no one who knows anything about my success in this difficult business can say that I made any mistake in this choice. There are very few men who have the qualities necessary for success in this line. It requires a remarkable knowledge of human nature, extraordinary quickness, acuteness, self-possession, more than a down-easter's skill in guessing, and a good faculty for disguise.

I am myself a plain, straightforward kind of man, and I can only tell this story in the plainest kind of way: and I have not the least hesitation in avowing at the start, that I was exactly the man Clarence Morley wanted at this time. I have heard it said that a man never gets himself into any kind of difficulty, no matter how complex, but that his friends can help him out of it, if he be the right kind; and however that may be, I cannot help thinking it was very lucky indeed for Clarence that he had just such a friend as I was, at that crisis in his life: a man with just my wits and experience, to take hold of the mystery that threatened to bring him to the gallows, and ferret out the truth. If there is a kind of professional vanity in this, I can't help it. The daily papers have declared too often, in reciting my exploits, that David Nerber (which is myself) is a keen, sharp, shrewd detective, for me to deny it now; and the reader will understand that when I took hold of Clarence's case it was not only my old friendship for him, but also the stimulus of my professional pride, which urged me to do my utter best. Maybe I was not deterred from putting myself forward by the knowledge that I should be roundly paid; but I declare that my chief motives were far higher than that. The hope of reward alone would never have made me devote myself to a case as I did to this for the next six weeks.

The evening was half gone when I reached the jail, and the keeper demurred a little to admitting me. "There's been no end of curious people here all day to see that swell chap," he said, "and there's a lot of 'em sitting up with him now. Howsomever, you are kind of privileged, Mr. Nerber;" and, having concluded his growl, he took up his bunch of keys and lantern, and led the way. We passed through the ponderous iron door into the jail-yard; across the yard, through the wicket-door, and into the passage-ways around the cells.

"He don't get much better accommodations than the rest," said the keeper, jerking his thumb up toward the upper tier. "He's got a little cage up there, just like the others; but as there's a young woman in the case just now, he's using my quarters for half an hour."

"What do you mean?"

In reply the keeper unlocked and opened a small door to the left, thrust his head and shoulders within for an instant, withdrew them, and then motioned me in. As he never made more words than were actually necessary in the performance of his official duties, I thought it best to enter without further interrogatives. I had no sooner passed in than the polite keeper closed and relocked the door after me; and I turned my attention to the inmates of the room—for there were several of them.

The room itself was a square, rude place, uncarpeted and otherwise bare of furniture and adornment, as suited the non-luxurious taste of the keeper. There was a bed where he slept, a pine table where he ate, and a stool where he sat to do it; and with an unusual stretch of politeness he had obtained a second stool, and the two were occupied by Clarence's visitors. The "lot of 'em sitting up with him now," in the keeper's account, were just two, a young man and a young woman. They were sitting quiet and thoughtful when I entered; and Clarence paced backwards and forward with folded arms.

"You are right, Brinley," he said, just as I entered. "I do need something more than a good lawyer and a good friend. I need a smart detective to straighten out the knots in this matter, and pick up evidence in my favor. If I were sure Nerber was in the city—"

"Be easy about Nerber, my boy," said I, and I came forward and took him by the hand. With a "God bless you, old fellow," the warm-hearted young man almost wrung my own hand off, and then threw his arms around my neck and hugged me, as I declare no woman ever did—except my wife.

"Nerber, you glorious chap," he exclaimed, when I had shaken him off and taken breath, "it almost makes a new man of me to see you here. Do you know what I'm here for?"

"Yes. Do you know what *I'm* here for?"

Clarence looked into my face; and I presume he saw friendship, and right good-will, and a determination to do all for him that my utmost ingenuity and faithfulness could effect. His honest blue eyes filled with tears and he wrung my hand again.

“Yes, Nerber, my dear old fellow, I know what brings you to me. I might have known that you’d never fail me, and I needn’t ask you now to do your best for your old friend. Of course you don’t believe me guilty?”

I had never thought of such a thing since reading the announcement in the paper of his arrest; and if I had suspected him, I think that the sight of his face as he asked me that question would have routed all suspicion from my mind.

“No a bit, Clarence,” I heartily replied. “With some men crime is simply impossible, and an accusation of murder against them is an absurdity; and you are one of that kind.”

“Thank you, David; you only do me justice. I assure you with my hand on my heart that I don’t know, and haven’t the faintest idea, where my father has gone. I saw him last on the morning of the 12th, just before he went down the street, and have no knowledge of his being in the house again. I became uneasy on account of his continued absence before anyone else, and was thinking of sending for you, to advise with you about searching for him, when I was almost knocked senseless with distress and astonishment by the appearance of the officer to arrest me. But I beg pardon, David, you don’t know my friends.”

Mr. Brinley Willets, who was first introduced, was a refined and rather effeminate looking young man, with light eyes and auburn locks; a person of apparently not the slightest individuality, and just such a shiftless fellow as Clarence Morley would be likely to take a fancy to. The story of his life can be told in a short paragraph. He was an artist of considerable merit, and with talent enough to give him fame and money; but he sadly lacked force of character, and could hardly confine himself to his studies long enough to make any visible progress with a picture. Nothing but the firmness in which his sister urged him to work had given him any success whatever; and under the stress of her stronger will he was induced to labor hours enough to keep him respectably clad and fed. Clarence had fallen in with him in some way, had visited his studio, and taken a sudden whim to learn the use of crayons and colors; and from this he found the way to a close friendship with the shiftless artist very easy; an intimacy of which the material advantages were certainly all on the artist’s side. But Clarence was never happy unless he was befriending somebody; and the patronage and support he had extended to Brinley Willets had led to an acquaintance with his sister, Annie Willets, and later, to his engagement with her, which had been such an apple of discord between Clarence and his father.

A few words further are necessary about Annie Willets, who was now introduced to me. I said near the beginning of this narrative, that she was pretty, amiable and poor: but that hardly does her justice. She was poor enough to be compelled to teach a primary ward school for her living. She was pretty enough, with her petite, graceful figure and winning face, or Clarence Morley, fastidious critic as he was, never could have devoted his life to her; and she was amiable, too; but I do not mean by that she had no force of character on her own. She was just the girl to refuse the hand of a man she did not love, though he could give her all the gold of Caesar; and she was just the girl, too, to persist in loving a man, and in meaning to marry him, though a rich, and aristocratic, and obstinate father stood between. A little later in our acquaintance, before the final solution of the mystery, she told me a secret of her own which aided me somewhat in my labors to unravel it, and also gave me a deeper insight into her own character; and this incident will be

better told in this connection than elsewhere. It is simply that a week before his disappearance, Mr. John William Morley called at the obscure rooms which she and her brother occupied, and, much to her surprise, insisted upon seeing her. She had never seen him before, to her knowledge, and did not know him by sight. He abruptly introduced himself and his business; told her that she was a disturbance to the peace of his family: that he was firmly determined never to allow her union to his son Clarence: and offered her his check for one thousand dollars if she would clandestinely leave the city, remain away for at least ten years, and conceal all trace of her whereabouts from Clarence. This offer she promptly and indignantly rejected. "How much *will* induce you to go away and stay away?" Mr. Morley coolly asked; and the girl rose from her seat, pale with indignation. "I feel insulted by your proposal, sir!" she answered. "You must understand that my affections are not to be bought off like merchandise. Whether I ever marry your son or not, no such consideration as this shall influence me." With which spirited reply Miss Annie left the room, and Mr. Morley flung himself out of the house in a rage. The next that was heard from him on the subject if this engagement was overheard by Robert Jebb, the remainder of whose statement will be presently given.

After the Willets and myself had been made acquainted, I sat down on the table and Clarence was eager to talk about the disappearance of his father and the charge against himself: but I saw that he was dangerously nervous and excited, and I thought it best to give him time to rally his spirits before we went very deep in the matter.

"Don't be in a hurry, my boy," I said cheerfully: "there's plenty of time, and you'll only worry yourself to no purpose by talking about it tonight. Get back your spirits as fast as you can: don't forget for a moment that your friends are about you, and that you won't lack for help of all kinds; and so let things take their course a little. We should only be fighting the air at present. The examination before the police-court will be tomorrow, and then we can tell something of how strong a case we are to meet. You have retained a lawyer, I suppose?"

"Yes; Clayton Mallard. I sent for him as I was arrested, and he was here with me an hour this afternoon."

"That is well; you could not have made a better selection. I will meet you both at the police-court tomorrow, and will consult with him afterward. And now, Clarence, I know we shall be doing you an act of kindness by bidding you good-night."

At such a time a man's friends are dearer to him than he could imagine; and I began to be afraid that Clarence would never let go of my hand. After he had said good night to Miss Annie—and kissed her, I have no doubt, although I did not see it done—she came out into the passage; and while the keeper was shutting and locking the door, she drew me aside. I had not noticed that she was so much agitated before, and I tried my best to soothe her.

"My dear young lady," I said, "you must not let this frighten you. I do not think there will be a very serious case against Mr. Morley."

"I hope not," she said, with an earnestness that spoke more emphatically than words. "He depends on you, sir, more than on his lawyer, or indeed everybody else."

“I think I can help him more than everybody else. And be assured I will do all that I can to help him.”

With that she took hold of my shoulders and kissed me, too. But I never told my wife nor Clarence Morley, either, for that matter.

* * *

At this time the reader will remember I had no knowledge of the stronger points of the very formidable case that had been worked up against Clarence Morley, and if I had known what the relations of the police court were to be, it is very likely that I should not have assured his betrothed that there could not be a very serious case against him. I had not heard the evidence of the sheriff’s officers, the inmates of the house, and Mr. Strong; and when I did hear all these I was startled to see what a very strong chain of circumstantial evidence was presented against Clarence. The substance of these statements I gave early in my narrative and though Mr. Mallard cross-examined each witness very closely and at great length, the statements as I have given them remained unshaken.

It will be remembered that a portion of the evidence of Robert Jebb, the coachman, was withheld in the early part of my narrative. I present it now, giving it in the third person.

He said that on the morning of the 12th, when he went up to Mr. John Morley’s chamber, as was his custom, to awaken him, he being a heavy sleeper, and always desiring to be called, he heard high voices and loud words inside. The chamber door was partially open; so that, though he could see no one, he could hear with entire distinctness the conversation, and recognized the voices as those of the two Morleys, father and son, without difficulty. He did not pretend to be able to repeat the exact language used, but its substance and effect he could give with perfect certainty. He heard Mr. Morley the elder speak first. His tone was loud, and his voice trembled as Jebb was accustomed to hear it when Mr. Morley was in his most violent passions. “By —, sir,” he said, using an oath, “you *must* give her up. If there is anything I have set my heart on in this world, it is to take you into the business with me, and to have you make a suitable match—one befitting your station in life. Now let me have it—yes or no—will you or will you not meet my wishes?” “As to the bank, sir,” the voice of Clarence replied, in an excited, but apparently not an angry tone, “as to the bank, you know that my tastes don’t run in that direction, and I’m afraid I shall never be able to please you in that respect. But as to Miss Willets, I may as well give you my answer now, that we may have done with all controversy about her. I shall marry her. I do not say when—but I do say that our marriage is a fixed fact, and no opposition can change it.”

Jebb said that he heard Mr. John Morley make several attempts to reply to this; but his anger brought on a severe fit of coughing, which for several minutes made it impossible for him to speak. When he did speak it was in furious denunciation and threatening. Without repeating any of the oaths and expletives with which his words abounded, it is sufficient to say that he informed his son distinctly that unless he at once terminated his engagement with Annie Willets, he should add a codicil to his will, depriving Clarence of every cent which the instrument gave

him, and would also turn him from his house; and that he might have two days, and no more, to make up his mind. This threat and intimidation were twice distinctly repeated; and the interview was ended by the son bitterly retorting upon his father that he was a cruel and unnatural parent, and retiring to his own chamber, slamming the door after him.

I sat with Clarence while this remarkable evidence was being elicited, and Mr. Mallard sat upon the other side of him. "Is this all true?" the lawyer whispered in his ear; and Clarence whispered in reply that, except in several trifling details, it was exactly true.

Clarence had no witnesses to offer in his defense, but merely made the statement which has been given. He added that, although the quarrel between himself and his father had occurred very much as Jebb had stated it, he had harbored no enmity toward his father, and he thought that his father's anger must have passed away.

This examination, after such evidence, could of course result in but one way. Clarence was recommitted to jail, to await the further process of the law; and by the next grand jury he was formally indicted for the murder of John William Morley.

The case seemed to be getting more and more serious, and I roused myself to the work I had undertaken, of making Clarence's innocence apparent. The poor fellow was in a fever of anxiety after the indictment; I had to visit him every day, and the careworn faces of himself and Annie Willets haunted my sleep. From himself I could get nothing more than was contained in his statement before the police court; his father was gone, he knew not where, and he had quarreled with him just before he disappeared. The reader may imagine the torments which must have possessed this sensitive, proud-spirited young man, upon being incarcerated upon such a charge, and with the certainty of being tried for his life upon it. The experience was a hard one to him and to Annie; but she stood bravely by him through it all, cheering and sustaining him in his despondency, and proving herself a noble, womanly girl, and a treasure beyond price to him.

My investigations began with the house. I searched it quite as carefully as the sheriff's officers had, from ground to roof, and I closely examined the vicinity, front and rear. Mr. Barthely attended to me, at my request, during this inspection, and I believe I astonished him by the number of questions I asked him. I made a note of one possibility which seemed to have escaped both him and his associate, and which I expected would (as it did) exercise a very strong influence on the case. I carefully copied the evidence of all the witnesses, compared and sifted it all; and when I had got the case as it stood thoroughly arranged in my head, I sought an interview with Mr. Mallard, the lawyer. He, of course, had been bestowing hours of reflection upon it, and was well-prepared to talk it over with me.

"Let us see," he said reflected, when we had withdrawn into his inner office; "let us see how the matter stands. Case for the people;" and he rapped with his knuckles on the table as often as he laid down a proposition. "Case for the people. A wealthy and prominent citizen disappears. Good reasons are shown for supposing him to have absconded as a defaulter; and in anticipation of that event, he is followed from his office to his house that night. He is seen to enter his house; he is never seen to leave it, although it is most closely watched, and searched in every nook and corner the instant foul play is suspected. All trace of the man is here suddenly lost. I think the jury will

assume, whether we like it or not, that he never left that house. Here is what appears like foul play; it will be urged that he was murdered in his own house, on the night of October 13th. By whom? The first inquiry will be, of course, who had a motive? Just here the evidence is strong indeed against our friend. He was threatened with the loss of fortune or loss of his affianced wife—either one a calamity of the gravest kind. With his father living, the loss of one or the other would be assured; with his father put out of the way before his disinheritance (and we learn that Mr. Morley had not fulfilled his threat at the time of his disappearance by making a codicil), he could both marry the wife and keep the fortune. Here is ample motive for the commission of the murder; and I am looking at the matter now from a lawyer's standpoint, and not as a friend of the accused, whom I heartily believe innocent of the crime. I am setting forth what we shall have to meet, in order that we may best know how to meet it. The discovery of the entire solvency of Mr. Morley's bank removes at once all possible object for his flight. I think it will be satisfactory to a jury that he was put out of the way by some unknown means. The evidence shows that the accused had an adequate motive for the crime; and it fails to show that any other person had the slightest motive for it. Now, what are we to make of all this? Clearly, that it presents a strong case against Clarence Morley—a very strong case—but a case which is relieved in its complexion of guilt by a single weak point. Can you lay your finger upon it?

“The failure to find the body?”

“You have hit it exactly; it is not certain yet that any murder has been committed. To be sure, the attorney for the prosecution will urge several plausible theories to account for this failure, such as that the body was entirely destroyed by the agency of chemicals, Clarence being well acquainted with their use. This doesn't seem very probable; but the prosecution must account for the body in some way. I never yet knew, and the books fail to tell us, of a case where a man was convicted of a murder without the finding and identification of the victim's body.* It is, in fact, the strong point of the defense, that no murder can be proved; and this, together with abundant evidence of the good character of the accused, ought to secure an acquittal. If the case were any ordinary one, I should say positively that it *must* secure an acquittal. As it is, there are hard odds to combat, and we have no certainty.”

**The reader will not fail to recall, in this connection, the case of Rutzky, convicted of murder in Brooklyn, N.Y. on an unsatisfactory identification of the body of the missing man. Rutzky was saved from the gallows, and his sentence commuted to a term of imprisonment, while many of the leading journals of the state called upon the governor for his full pardon. This is the only exception to the rule stated by Mr. Mallard, in the narrative, to which the author's attention has been called.*

The lawyer took a turn around the room, and came back again.

“But even if we can acquit him before the law, on this charge,” he said, “I do not think we can ever acquit him at the bar of public opinion. Though the law should declare that there is not sufficient evidence upon which to convict him of the crime, the public will continue fixed in the opinion which nine out of every ten now holds, that our friend is *guilty*. It is a bad business—a

wretchedly bad business.” And Mr. Mallard walked the floor of his office in a troubled way, as lawyers are apt to do when greatly occupied in the mind.

“You seem to assume,” I said, speaking for the first time, “that Mr. Morley dissolved into thin air as soon as he entered his house on the night of the 13th.”

“No; I simply don’t know what to think. Between you and me, I don’t clearly see how he could have got out of that house; but I shall make up some theory on the subject. What do you think?”

“I hope to make all further theorizing unnecessary,” I said, resolutely. “I think the missing man *did* leave the house on the same night, after he entered it, and that he left it in a perfectly natural and reasonable way. More than this, I think he is now living; and I hope, with good luck, to bring him before your senses in a week.”

Mr. Mallard smiled incredulously.

“You have the enthusiasm of your calling,” he said. “I never yet knew a detective who didn’t think black could be proved to be white, if he had the time to get the evidence. However, go ahead; find out all you can that is likely to be of advantage to Clarence, poor fellow; and though I don’t look for any startling developments in this case—and least of all do I ever expect to see John William Morley again in the flesh—yet your investigations may do the poor fellow some unexpected good, and I wish you God-speed. Don’t fail to report to me anything of a favorable nature you may find.”

I shook hands with him, and we parted. From his office I went to the jail, where I had a brief interview with Clarence, and Annie, who, as usual, was with him, and hinted to them that I was on the track of important discoveries; and then going home I put two shirts, with collars, socks, and handkerchiefs to match, in a satchel; and bidding my wife good-by for a few days, I took the night express, and was in New York by daylight.

III. DELIVERANCE

The sudden movement which closed the last chapter was the result of a determination arrived at the previous night; which determination was founded upon a belief which I had settled upon the same night, and which I have no doubt the whole city, as well as Mr. Mallard, would have pronounced absurd, had I divulged it. It was the belief that the missing man was alive and well, and might be found in New York by immediate search.

I have said once during the course of this narrative that a detective was required to be a good guesser; and it may be said that I could have arrived at this conclusion about Mr. Morley only by guesswork. It was more than that; it was by a process of reasoning so satisfactory to myself that I was almost sure I had discovered the truth. First satisfying myself that it was possible that Mr. Morley could have escaped from his house on the night of the 13th, in spite of the watch and ward kept over it by the sheriff’s officers (and of this I had become satisfied, as I have intimated), I had next to assign a motive for his absenting himself secretly and mysteriously from his house. Nothing in the conduct of Clarence would explain this; there was no motive for it in

the fact that his son was determined to marry against his wishes, or that he was unwilling to go in the business with him. Why, then, had he disappeared? I sought the answer to the question in the solitude of my office, during the lonely hours of the night before my departure for New York; I paced back and forth over the floor, locked away from all intrusion, and wrapped in my thoughts; I examined the evidence again, and as I reread that of Mr. Strong, a new light broke in upon me. In an instant the whole secret flashed upon me, as I read; and I believe I sprang to my feet and danced about the floor for joy at my discovery.

Mr. Strong, the reader will remember, testifies as to his reasons for putting a watch upon Mr. Morley, that he came into his office on the morning of the 12th, and spoke to him about withdrawing part of his deposits, and that the banker returned him an answer that startled and alarmed him. I quote his language again, that the reader may judge if my conclusion is not likely to be correct. "It's impossible; I can't and won't pay it. The concern is going to the devil; and if any of the creditors think they can squeeze any money out of it, they are at liberty to try." Mr. Strong said, in addition to this, that as Mr. Morley spoke, his eyes were almost glaring, and that his face was flushed, from hair to beard.

The secret of Mr. Morley's flight, as I reasoned it, was simply because he believed that what he said to Strong was true; he had formed a belief that his bank was insolvent, and that ruin and disgrace, if not beggary, were pressing him. I remembered that at the time of the interview with Strong he had just come from his exciting quarrel with his son, and that the prospect of defeat in both of the cherished plans of his life must have been bearing heavily upon his mind. He was a man of highly-strung nervous system, with an hereditary tendency to monomania; and it was my belief that the excitements and disappointments of the morning had suddenly developed in his brain this monomania of financial ruin. All his actions at the bank that day showed it; his dismissal of all the employees immediately upon closing, and his own late stay at the office. More than this, I thought I saw in his subsequent actions—in his late departure from the bank, his entry to this house, and his mysterious and as yet unexplained disappearance from it—I thought I saw in these, I say, the evidence of a monomaniac's cunning; for I concluded that he knew he was watched, and acted as he did in order to throw his pursuers off the track, and cover his escape. And he had done both most effectually, and more successfully than I thought he could have done it in his correct balance of mind.

And yet, almost six weeks had passed since that night. The trial of Clarence Morley was to be in the following week; and how could I reasonably expect to find the missing man, allowing my theory to be perfectly correct, six weeks after his flight?

I based my hopes of finding him upon my knowledge of the man; upon my conjectures as to what a man as John William Morley, suddenly become a monomaniac from the belief that he was bankrupt, would be apt to do. He would first absent himself from the city of his residence; he would go to New York, and there seclude himself some weeks—at least five or six—until the pursuit which he might suppose his creditors would institute for him should abate in its zeal; and then he would take the steamer for Europe. Such was my theory, and acting instantly upon it, I went to New York with all possible speed. To be sure, there were many possibilities against me; it would require an extraordinary combination of chances in my favor to give me success in finding him, even if I had hit upon the exact truth; but I think I never undertook anything in my

line with stronger faith in the result than I did this. In our business, we sometimes have presentiments, intuitions, which tell us whether we are to succeed or not; and in this business, from the first moment I adopted this bold theory, I anticipated success; though I suppose any betting man would have laid heavy odds against me. But it seemed to me as if I *must* win; and where you are able to feel like that, you have already gained the battle.

I always disguise myself upon these professional excursions; and I am quite certain that none of the people who saw me at the depot or on the train had the faintest suspicion as to the personality of the shabbily-dressed man with a bald headed wig, long, flowing beard, and large green goggles. Arrived at the city, I put up at an obscure house, registering my name as "Aaron Clancy," and forthwith consulted the newspapers for steamer dates. Upon that day there were three leaving for various parts of Europe; upon the following day, there was one for New Orleans, one for Havana, and one for Southampton; during the two days next ensuing there were to be no departures; and for three days after that, more or less each day.

I procured the assistance of a New York detective, and told him the whole story, and my theory. He pledged me his best efforts, but shook his head incredulously when I inquired what he thought of my chances.

"There are one hundred against you to one for you," he replied. "Your reasoning is good; but, after all, we have only a chance, and a slim one at that, I'm afraid. But we'll do what we can."

The three steamers upon the first day left at different hours, and we thoroughly examined each one just before her departure without success. Upon the following day, we searched the Southampton steamer together, with the same result; and as the Cromwell and the Matanza left at the same hour, we each took one, and each told the other the same story of no luck.

Upon the following morning, my coadjutor dropped in upon me at a late breakfast.

"No steamer today, Mr. Nerber, I think you said," he remarked, unfolding the morning Herald.

"Nor tomorrow," I said.

He turned the paper, and ran his eye down the columns to new advertisements.

"Halloo!" he exclaimed, "how's this? Special announcement—steamer Borussia—government dispatch—leaves for Bremen at two o'clock this afternoon—few passengers accommodated. What d'ye think of that, Mr. Nerber? I'll tell you what *I* think. If your idea about the missing man is the right one,—and I guess it is,—and if he's in New York now, I think he'll be very likely to try to get off by this extra steamer, for the reason that only about seven hours' notice of it is given. If secrecy is his card, this is just what he'd do."

I thought so too; and at a little after twelve o'clock, we boarded the Borussia, as she lay at one of the piers; and with a word of explanation from my friend to the captain, we searched the steamer from stem to stern, aloft and aloft, and pried into every place that could be made to hold a man. Nobody was hiding aboard her, that was sure. Then we walked about among the passengers who

had come on, and carefully inspected every face; but the object of my search was not there. Then we crossed the plank again, and taking a lounging, careless position by it, began to watch the passengers as they came aboard. There was barely half an hour left before sailing time, and quite a crowd was filing over the plank. I stood by it with my heart beating loudly as I looked quickly and sharply into every face that passed me. I can't tell why it was—there was something metaphysical about it, I suppose, of course I can't comprehend it—but my old premonition of final success returned upon me with redoubled force, and every boot and gaited that touched the plank seemed to echo the words which filled my ears, "He's coming—he's coming—he's coming to you!" Clarence Morley and Annie Willets, with their hopes and fears, seemed to be with me in person, as I stood there; and thoughts of my own success or failure danced in my brain.

"Lord love you, Mr. Nerber, what's the matter?" my companion asked. "You're as pale as a cloth."

"There—*there!*" I whispered, clutching his arm. "See that man coming up behind that woman and those girls!"

A very stout matron, followed by two blooming girls who bade fair to be quite as stout in their time, crossed the plank; and in their shadow sidled along a bent-over, masculine figure, leaning on a stout cane, with a large satchel in his hand, which he seemed to carry with much labor. The figure was dressed in ill-fitting, baggy garments; a wig of straggling coarse hair covered the head, and the iron gray moustache had no business on the upper lip; while I knew that more than half the wrinkles on the forehead and cheeks were fictitious. The disguise was skillful; but the quick, restless black eye alone was enough to tell me that this was John William Morley himself!

He disappeared in the steamer; the bell rang, quick and sharp, the whistle sounded, and the great paddle-wheels began to slowly revolve. I sprang aboard, followed by my coadjutor. In ten minutes we were steaming slowly down the harbor; and more than ten more were required before we found our fugitive.

He was in a dark corner of the forehold, among boxes and barrels, and shrank still further out of sight as he saw us approaching. I thought it best to make no concealment, and took him resolutely by the shoulder.

"You are my prisoner, sir!" I said. "You will return to the city with me by the pilot boat."

"Whom do you take me for?" he asked, betraying instant fear and trembling like a leaf.

"Your name is Morley—mine is Nerber," I replied. And I lifted my wig, removed my goggles, and dropped my beard.

He looked at me, as I stood transfixed into the man whom he knew as well as any in the city of his residence; and uttering one groan, but not another word, he fell senseless at my feet.

From his swoon Mr. Morley passed in to a condition of sullen apathy, which continued until he reached his mansion in Seymour Square; and the sight of many familiar faces, and the sound of familiar voices, threw him into violent spasms, which brought him down to death's door. He lay for three weeks in the most critical condition, raging with brain fever, and balancing between restored life and intellect, death and hopeless lunacy; and when at last his splendid physical powers triumphed, and the light of reason came back to his eye, it was against the fears of every one of the dozen doctors who counselled by his bed. In due time he was restored to strength, and his face was seen again on the street and in his office, as usual.

I pass over the rejoicing my discovery brought to the hearts of two of the actors of this life drama—Clarence Morley and Annie Willets. He only who has stood upon the brink of a dishonorable death, with wealth, love, and everything in life to live for, can appreciate their feelings when Clarence stepped forth from the prison, not only free, but justified before all men, and with a new promise of happiness before him.

The painful experience through which he had passed seemed somewhat to have softened the iron heart of Mr. Morley; and it may be that the gentle ministrations of Annie Willets during the long days of his convalescence had something to do with the remarkable change that came over him. A complete reconciliation was effected between himself and Clarence, much to the happiness of everyone concerned. Mr. Morley withdrew his opposition to Clarence's union with Annie, and they were soon united. Mrs. Clarence Morley is today the handsomest and best young wife in our city, and she does the honors of the house in Seymour Square as though she had been born to them. She is Mr. Morley's especial favorite; and I think there is now not the least danger of that codicil being made that was once threatened. As for Clarence, he had the good sense to confirm his happy reconciliation by conceding something of his own position; and concluding (wisely, as I think,) that nature never meant him to dabble in crayons and oils, he satisfies his aspirations after art by a liberal patronage of Brinley Willets, and has gone into partnership with his father in the bank, much to the delight of Mr. Morley. To his own surprise quite as much as mine, Clarence makes an excellent man of business and a close financier; and I am confident that the senior partner will some day pass over the whole great interest to him, with perfect satisfaction.

It may be of interest to the reader to know that I received the handsome fee of one thousand dollars for my services in this case. He need not be told that I received the everlasting gratitude of all parties concerned, which is continually manifesting itself towards myself and family.

CONCLUDING CHAPTER

STATEMENT OF MR. JOHN WILLIAM MORLEY,
Published by the Press of his City upon his Recovery.

TO THE PUBLIC:— I am aware that a statement of the facts and circumstances connected with my late disappearance and continued absence from this city is due to the many hundreds who have business relations with me; and after all that has been said, written and published concerning my departure from my residence in Seymour Square, on the night of October 13th (around which a vast deal of needless mystery has been thrown), I am willing to state publically the exact manner in which I absented myself.

Upon the morning of October 12, shortly after my entrance into my private office, I was suddenly seized with an extraordinary hallucination. In one hour I came to the firm belief that I was on the verge of bankruptcy, and that ruin and disgrace stared me in the face. What occasioned this monomania, it is unnecessary here to state; its cause was in my domestic affairs, and the public will not demand a more particular statement of it. With the scientific aspect of this phenomenon I have nothing to do. I state the fact only; and the fact furnishes a key to all conduct on my part which must have seemed inexplicable to my friends. I acted just as a high-spirited man would who finds himself suddenly faced with financial ruin and loss of reputation. I anticipated a terrible storm; I could not meet it; I resolved to fly. What I state will no doubt seem strange, in view of the fact that the bank was never on a firmer basis than upon that day; but I again declare that I can add nothing to my statement of my mental condition. My monomania took this form; I know not how or why. My perceptions were acute as ever, aside from this subject; I recollect distinctly all that transpired; but it seems now like a strange dream, more than a reality.

Acting on my first insane impulse, I decided upon secret and immediate flight; but anticipating that I might be watched, I remained at the office until eleven o'clock. I had intended to leave the city at once upon quitting the office; but I had not walked to the first street before I discovered that my steps were doffed. Determined to shake off these pursuers, I formed a plan on the instant, which I put into immediate and successful operation. I walked straight to my house in Seymour Square, and ascended the steps. A glance backward as I turned my latch-key told me that there were two men following me, and that both stood on the opposite side of the street. I knew that they were there prepared to watch the house all night, and I knew, of course, that one of them would proceed as quickly to the rear of it as he could go. The secret of my escape is simply that *I was there before him*. Seizing instantly upon this last chance to evade pursuit and make sure my flight, I darted through the hallway, out the back door, cleared the board fence in the rear, and was walking rapidly up the next street before the sheriff's officer had crossed the street that the house fronted on, passed through the alley in the dark, and taken his position in the back yard. The two officers therefore watched the cage all night after the bird had flown.

What followed is like what proceeded it—a troubled dream rather than a reality. Eager only for escape from the financial dangers that lay behind me, I walked all night, and reached the Northern Railway at Mervin the next morning. I picked up several articles of disguise on the way, and reached New York without being recognized. Then followed my seclusion there, my attempt to leave by the Borussia, my meeting with Nerber, and the finale of this singular affair. In that finale, none have greater cause to rejoice than

JOHN WILLIAM MORLEY.

The Flag of our Union, Oct 17, 1868