THE HOLLOW OF HER HAND

By GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON

Author of "Graustark," "Truxton King," Etc.

"If no other means is offered, Dr. Sheef, I shall ask you to let me take the car. I am perfectly capable of driving. I have driven it in the country for two seasons. All I ask is that some one be directed to go with me to the station. No. Better than that, if there is someone here who is willing to accompany me to the city, he shall be handsomely paid for going. It is but little more than thirty miles. I refuse to spend the night in this house. That is final."

They drew apart to confer, leaving her sitting before the fire, a stark figure that seemed to detach itself entirely from its surroundings and their companionship. At last, the coroner came to her side and touched her arm.

"I don't know what the district attorney and the police will say to it, Mrs. Wrandall, but I shall take it upon myself to deliver the car to you. The sheriff has gone out to compare the numbers. If he finds that the car is yours, he will see to it, with Mr. Drake, that it is made ready for you. I take it that we will have no difficulty in—" He hesitated, at a loss for words.

"In finding it again in case you need it for evidence?" she supplied. He nodded. "I shall make it a point, Dr. Sheef, to present the car to the state after it has served my purpose tonight. I shall not ride in it again."

"The sheriff has a man who will ride with you to the station or the city, which-ever you may elect. Now, may I trouble you to make answer to certain questions I shall write out for you at once? The man is Challis Wrandall, your husband? You are positive?"

"I am positive. He is—or was—Challis Wrandall."

Half an hour later, she was ready for the trip to New York City. The clock in the office marked the hour as one. A coddled individual in a great buffalo coat waited for her outside, hiccoughing and bandying jest with the half-frozen men who had spent the night with him in the forlorn hope of finding the girl.

Mrs. Wrandall gave final instructions to the coroner and his deputy, who happened to be the undertaker's assistant. She had answered all the questions that had been put to her, and had signed the document with a firm, untrembling hand. Her veil had been lowered since the beginning of the examination. They did not see her face; they only heard the calm, low voice, sweet with fatigue and dread.

"I shall notify my brother-in-law as soon as I reach the city," she said. "He will attend to everything. Mr. Leslie Wrandall, I mean. My husband's only brother. He will be here in the morning, Dr. Sheef. My own apartment is not open. I have been staying in a hotel since my return from Europe two days ago. But I shall attend to the opening of the place tomorrow. You will find me there."

The coroner hesitated a moment before putting the question that had come to his mind as she spoke.

"Two days ago, madam? May I inquire where your husband has been living during your absence abroad? When did you last see him alive?"

She did not reply for many seconds, and then it was with a perceptible effort.

"I have not seen him since my return until—tonight," she replied, a hoarse note creeping into her voice. "He did not meet me on my return. His brother Leslie came to the dock. He—he said that Challis, who came back from Europe two weeks ahead of me, had been called to St. Louis on very important business. My husband had been living at his club, I understand. That is all I can tell you, sir."

"I see," said the coroner gently.

He opened the door for her and she passed out. A number of men were grouped about the throbbing motor-car. They fell away as she approached, silently fading into the shadows like so many vast, unwholesome ghosts. The sheriff and Drake came forward.

"This man will go with you madam," said the sheriff, pointing to an unsteady figure beside the machine. "He is the only one who will undertake it. They're all played out, you see. He has been drinking, but only on account of the hardships he has undergone tonight. You will be quite safe with Morley."

No snow was falling, but a bleak wind blew meanly. The air was free from particles of sleet; wetly the fall of the night clung to the earth where it had fallen.

"If he will guide me to the Post road, that is all I ask," said she hurriedly. Involuntarily she glanced upward. The curtains in an upstairs window were blowing inward and a dim light shone out upon the roof of the porch. She shuddered and then climbed up to the seat and took her place at the wheel.

A few moments later, the three men standing in the middle of the road watched the car as it rushed away.

"By George, she's a wonder!" said the sheriff.

CHAPTER II.

The Beginning of a Night.

The sheriff was right. Sara Wrandall was an extraordinary woman, if I may be permitted to modify his rather crude estimate of her. It is difficult to understand, much less to describe a nature like hers. Fine-minded, gently bred woman who can through an ordeal such as she experiencel without breaking under the strain are rare indeed. They must be wonderful. It is hard to imagine a more heart-breaking crisis in life than the one which confronted her on this dreadful night, and yet she had faced it with a fortitude that seems almost unholy.

She had loved her handsome, wayward husband. He had hurt her deeply more times than she chose to remember during the six years of their married life, but she had loved him in spite of the wounds up to the instant when she stood beside his dead body in the cold little room at Burton's Inn. She went there loving him as he had lived, yet prepared, almost foresworn, to loathe him as he died, and she left him lying there alone in that dreary room without a spark of the old affection in her soul. Her love for him died in giving birth to the hatred that now possessed her. While he lived it was not in her power to control the unreasoning resistless thing that stands for love in woman; he was her love, the master of her impulses. Dead, he was an unwholesome, unlovely clod, a pallid thing to be scorned, a hulk of worthless clay. His blood was cold. He could no longer warm her with it; it could no longer kill the chill that his misdeeds cast about her tender sensitiveness; his lips and eyes never more could smile and conquer. He was a dead thing. Her love was a dead thing. They lay separate and apart. The tie was broken. With love died the final spark of respect she had left for him in her tired, loyal, betrayed heart. He was at last a thing to be despised, even by her. She despised him.

She sent the car down the slope and across the moonless valley with small regard for her own or companion's safety. It swerved from side to side, skidded and leaped with terrifying suddenness, but held its way as straight as the bird that flies, driven by a steady hand and a mind that had no thought for peril. A sober man at her side would have been afraid; this man swayed mildly to and fro and chuckled with drunken glee.

Her bitter thoughts were not of the dead man back there, but of the live years that she was to bury with him; years that would pass beyond her ken, that would never die. He had loved her in his wild, ruthless way. He had left her times without number in the years gone by, but he had always come back, gaily unchastened, to remould the love that waited with dog-like fidelity for the touch of his cunning hand. But he had taken his last flight. He would not come back again. It was all over. Once too often he had tried his reckless wings. She would not have to forgive him again. Uppermost in her mind was the curiously restful thought that his troubles were over, and with them her own. A hand less forgiving than hers had struck him dead.

Somehow, she envied the woman to whom that hand belonged. It had been her divine right to kill, and yet another took it from her.

Back there at the inn she had said to the astonished sheriff:

"Poor thing, if she can escape punishment for this, let it be so. I would not help the law to kill her simply because she took it in her own hands to pay that man what she owed him. I shall not be the one to say that he did not deserve death at her hands, whoever she may be. No, I shall offer no reward. If you catch her, I shall be sorry for her, Mr. Sheriff. Believe me, I bear her no grudge."

"But she robbed him," the sheriff had cried.

"From my point of view, Mr. Sheriff, that hasn't anything to do with the case," was her significant reply.

"Of course, I am not defending him."

"Nor am I defending her," she had retorted. "It would appear that she is able to defend herself."

Now, on the cold, trackless road, she was saying to herself that she did have a grudge against the woman who had destroyed the life that belonged to her, who had killed the thing that was hers to kill. She could not mourn for him. She could only wonder what the poor, hunted terrified creature would go when taken and made to pay for the thing she had done.

Once, in the course of her bitter reflections, she spoke aloud in a shrill, tense voice, forgetful of the presence of the man beside her:

"Thank God, they will see him now as I have seen him all these years. They will know him as they have never known him. Thank God for that!"

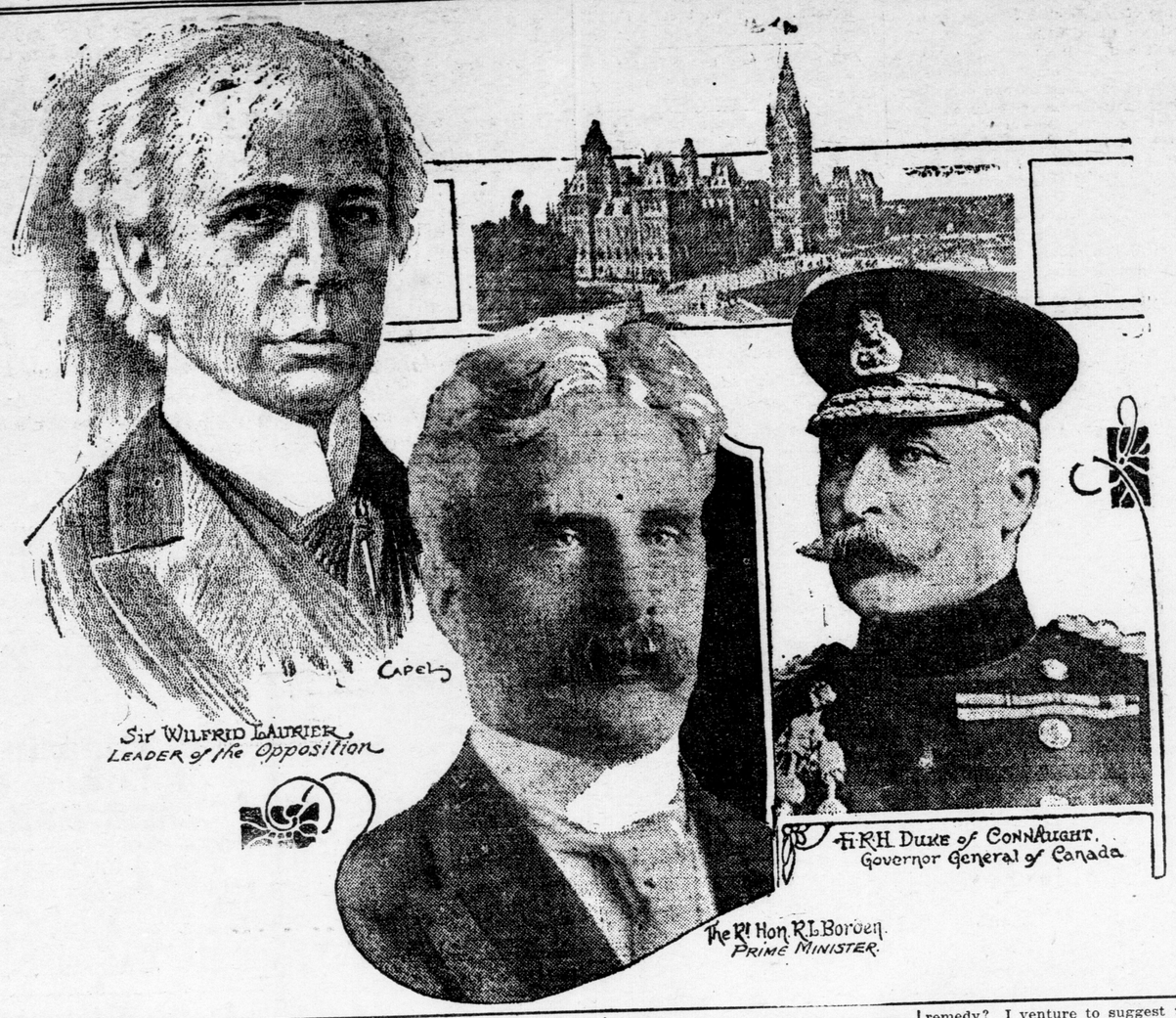
The man looked at her stupidly and muttered something under his breath. She heard him, and recalling her wits, asked which turn she was to take for the station. The fellow lopped back in the seat, too drunk to reply.

For a moment she was dismayed, frightened. Then she resolutely reached out and shook him by the shoulder. She had brought the car to a full stop.

To Be Continued.

---and the Worst Is Yet to Come

:-: Central Figures in the Opening of Parliament :-:



PARLIAMENT IS AT WORK, ON A NEW PROGRAM

Building Up Navy Gives Way to Building Up Senate.

NINE MORE MEN DEMANDED

Redistribution Bill is Also Included.

[Special to The Advertiser.]

Ottawa, Jan. 15.—Parliament is at work again. The last session's first business concerned battleships and the gifts of ships to the British navy. The enlargement of the Senate is the first piece of business of which the Government has given notice this session. Last year three battleships were asked for, and this year nine new senators are demanded. They are wanted for the west—three for British Columbia and two each for Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. This will bring the membership of the Senate to ninety-six—twenty-four for the east, and the same number for Quebec, for Ontario and for the west. A redistribution bill is the companion piece for the Senate enlargement measure.

New Members Introduced.

The activities of the first day were confined to the speech from the throne delivered by the duke, and the introduction of new members in both Houses.

In the Senate, W. H. Thorne, of St. John, was introduced to fill the vacancy created by the death of Senator Ellis.

The new members in the Commons numbered six, and their introductions were marked by more tumult and less dignity than the Senate affair. The Liberals cheered over the appearance of Mr. R. E. Truax, of South Bruce, who was escorted to the chamber by Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Wm. German, of Welland. The three are the only survivors on the Liberal side of the men who sat in Opposition in 1896.

Rogers Makes a Slip.

On the Conservative side, Hon. Arthur Meighan was reintroduced after the by-election made necessary by his appointment to the solicitor-generalship, an office of emolument. Alexander Morrison was reintroduced after a by-election necessitated by his unseating in MacDonald. Hon. Robert Rogers presented him to Speaker Sproule, and a slip of the tongue, by which he introduced "Mr. MacDonald" brought down the House. The Conservatives cheered the appearance of James Morris, the victor of Chateauguay. The other new members brought in were A. E. Hanna, of South Lanark; H. M. McLeod, of York, N. B., and F. J. Glass, of East Middlesex.

To Abolish Titles.

Public bills by private members included one for the abolition of capital punishment by Robert Bykerdike, of Montreal; one for the abolition of titles of honor in Canada, by J. H. Burnham, the Conservative member for Peterboro; one to forbid the pollution of streams, moved by George Bradbury, the Consevative representative of Selkirk, and a resolution calling for the reform of divorce proceedure. This is demanded by William Northrup, the Conservative representative of Hastings, who holds that the expense of the present procedure makes divorce prohibitive to the majority of Canadians. Last year there were fifty divorce applications, and this year they number forty.

Liberals Want Information.

The Liberal members are after information in wholesale quantity, and Conservative members show curiosity. know if there is to be a parliamentary inquiry into disasters on the Great Lakes. Hon. Rodolph Lemieux asks the Government if it will strengthen the election act to more severely punish corruption, to expedite election trials, to forbid sawing-off contested elections. He wants a return covering the public works promised by ministers to enforce the Chateauguay election. Hon. Frank Oliver asks for the last word about Stefansson and whether in giving him the Karluk the Government provided an unsafe ship for the work. Mr. MacLean, of Halifax, asks about recipients of Fenian raid bounties who now number fifteen thousand.

Mr. Bradbury has a cold storage bill to limit the time eggs may be kept to six months.

Government in No Hurry.

Though the session is called six weeks later the Government shows no disposition to press business, for instead of going on with the address debate Friday Hon. Robert Rogers, who took command of the House in the absence of Premier Borden, engaged in changing his clothes after the Senate ceremony, adjourned the Commons until Monday. The speech from the throne will be taken up then and the discussion will be upon what is not in the speech, the naval aid bill. The Liberals will discuss the eclipse of the "Emergency," and the Conservatives will denounce the Senate for killing the bill last year.

In the Senate the debate upon the address will be commenced on Tuesday. Senator Mason, of Toronto, will move the address, and it will be seconded by Senator Thorne.

R. E. TRUAX,
Member for South Bruce.

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WANT COMMISSION GOVT.

Berlin Board of Trade to Go Thoroughly Into the Question.

[Special to The Advertiser.]

Berlin, Jan. 15.—At the organization meetting of the board of trade, it was decided to forward to the associated boards a resolution asking that the Provincial Legislature be memorialized to have a commission appointed to investigate the question of municipal government by commission, with a view to drafting legislation giving municipalities with 10,000 population or more the power to adopt such form of governmentt. There are numerous advocates of commission government in Berlin.

WILCOX IS NAMED WHIP.

Windsor, Jan. 15.—Oliver J. Wilcox, Conservative member of the Dominion Parliament for North Essex, has been appointed Government whip for Ontario West, succeeding Senator Donnelly.

Chicken Thief Lost Purse With $92.00 In It

[Special to The Advertiser.]

Guelph, Jan. 15.—At Kossuth, a German settlement about eight miles from this city, a chicken thief has lately been very busy. One night recently he pried open the door of a coop and made off with twenty fine birds.

The woman of the house, whose special pride the chickens were, was bemoaning the fate of her beauties on the morning after the robbery.

While making search for tracks, she was surprised to find a purse lying in the snow, which the marauder had evidently lost.

Picking it up, she was still further surprised to find that it contained no less than $92. She has forgotten all about the loss of her twenty feathered pets.

PROMISED MAN WORK THEN MURDERED HIM

Woman Tells How Foreigner Was Killed for $2.00.

(Special to Advertiser.)

New York, Jan. 15.—The murder of Ivan Martysewicz, whose body crammed in a trunk was left in the street by two pushcart men on Dec. 29, was described today by Stefana Kiviatkowska, a young Polish woman, one of the six persons under arrest in connection with the crime. She said that two of the men now in prison killed Martysewicz with a drink of poisoned beer, in a house where she was an inmate, where they lured him, with a promise of work as a stable helper. The motive was robbery, she said, but all the murderers obtained was a cheap watch and $2 in money.

GEN. OTTER WOULD MAKE EVERY BOY A SOLDIER

Recommends Compulsory Training in the School and Universities.

[Canadian Press.]

Toronto, Jan. 15.—"The militia force of Canada is itself so apparently satisfied with its efficiency, and the public is so immersed in business as to be almost totally unconcerned with the question of Canadian defence. We are exposed on all sides. Unless our policy of drift is soon ended the certain end is irreparable loss," stated General Otter, addressing the Empire Club this afternoon.

General Otter quoted statistics to show that the Canadian militia as composed is ill-equipper. "What is the remedy? I venture to suggest that it must be compulsory training in the schools, and in the universities."

EMPEROR INTERVENES

May Prevent Crisis Growing Out of Zabern Affair.

[Canadian Press.]

Berlin, Jan. 15.—Emperor William today again intervened in order to prevent another crisis in connection with the recent violent incidents between the military and civilians at Zabern, Alsace. He directed an investigation to be made to determine whether the decree of 1820, authorizing the military to ignore the civil officials, was still in force and had been rightfully included in the army service instructions which permitted the acquittal of Col. von Reuter and Lieut. Schad.

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TRAVELLERS' GUIDE

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY.

SARNIA TUNNEL TO SUSPENSION BRIDGE AND TORONTO.

Arrive from the East—*3:52 a.m., 10:56 a.m., *11:12 a.m., *11:23 a.m., *6:30 p.m., *7:55 p.m., 10:45 p.m.

Arrive from the West—*12:14 a.m., 3.49 a.m., *11:55 a.m., 1.10 p.m., *4:10 p.m., 6:25 p.m.

Depart for the East—*12:10 a.m., *3:48 a.m., 7:20 a.m., 9:00 a.m., *12:05 p.m., 2:05 p.m., *4:25 p.m., *6:32 p.m.

Depart for the West—*3:57 a.m., 7:40 a.m., *11:18 a.m., *11:35 a.m., 1:40 p.m., 6:20 p.m.

LONDON AND WINDSOR.

Arrive—11:30 a.m., 4:00 p.m., 6:50 p.m., 11:05 p.m.

Depart—6:35 a.m., *11:43 a.m., 2:05 p.m., *8:05 p.m.

STRATFORD BRANCH.

Arrive—11:15 a.m., 1:29 p.m., 6:45 p.m., 11:30 p.m.

Depart—6:00 a.m., 10:00 a.m., 12:30 p.m., 2:45 p.m., 4:55 p.m.

LONDON, HURON AND BRUCE.

Arrive—10:00 a.m., 6:10 p.m.

Depart—8:30 a.m., 4:40 p.m.

Trains marked * run daily. Those not marked, daily, except Sunday.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY.

Arrive from the East—*11:42 a.m., 6:55 p.m., *7:50 p.m., *11:15 p.m.

Arrive from the West—*4:30 a.m., 11:30 a.m., *12:31 p.m., *5:35 p.m., 8:50 p.m.

Depart for the East—*4:38 a.m., 8:00 a.m., *12:40 p.m., *5:43 p.m.

Depart for the West—8:15 a.m., *11:50 a.m., 7:05 p.m., *8:00 p.m., *11:23 p.m.

Trains marked * run daily. Those not marked, daily, except Sunday.

MICHIGAN CENTRAL RAILWAY.

Trains Arrive—7:05 a.m., 11:20 a.m., 4:50 p.m., 9:40 p.m.

Trains Leave—7:22 a.m., 2:30 p.m., 5:27 p.m., 10:15 p.m.

PERE MARQUETTE RAILWAY.

Trains Depart—5:30 a.m., *7:00 a.m., 9:45 a.m., 2:10 p.m., *4:20 p.m., †6:30 p.m.

Trains Arrive—8:45 a.m., *12:50 p.m., 1:40 p.m., 5:10 p.m., *10:10 p.m.

Trains marked with * are through trains, to and from Walkerville. Train marked with † is mixed, to St. Thomas only.

Traction Company Winter Time

Commencing Oct. 1, cars leave London 6:50, 7:50, 9:30 a.m., and hourly to 11:30 p.m.

Through cars to Port, 7:50, 9:30, 11:30 a.m., 1:30, 3:30, 5:30, 7:30, 10:30 p.m.

Sunday cars to Port, 9:00 a.m., and every two hours to 7:00 p.m.; to St. Thomas, 9:00 p.m. Time table No. 4 at all stations.

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