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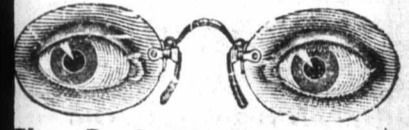
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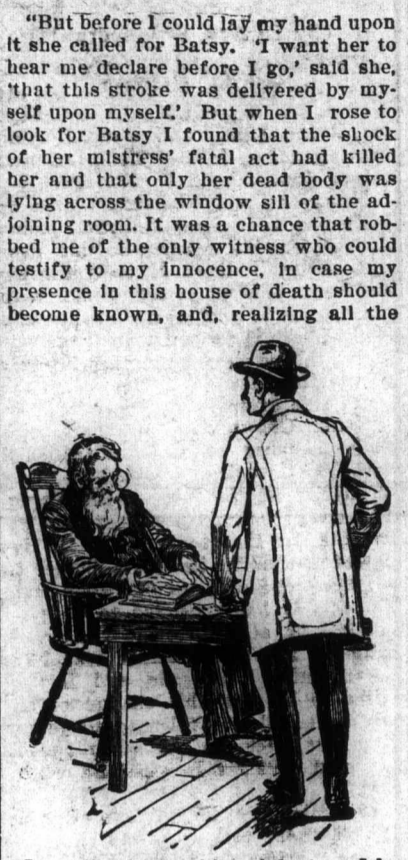
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THE MYSTERY OF AGATHA WEBB

By Anna Katharine Green, Author of "The Levensworth Case," "Lost Man's Lane," "Hand and Ring," Etc., Etc.

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"I saw it to be the elder of the two, John Zabel."

"But before I could lay my hand upon it she called for Betsy. 'I want her to hear me declare before I go,' said she, 'that this stroke was delivered by myself upon myself.' But when I rose to look for Betsy I found that the shock of her mistress' fatal act had killed her and that only her dead body was lying across the window sill of the adjoining room. It was a chance that ruined me of the only witness who could testify to my innocence. In case my presence in this house of death should become known, and realizing all the

danger in which it threw me, I did not dare to tell my mother for fear it would make her last moments miserable. So I told her that the poor woman had understood what she wished, but was too terrified to move or speak, and this satisfied my mother and made her last breath one of trust and contented love. She died as I drew the dagger from her breast, and, seeing this, I was seized with horror, the instrument which had cost me such a dear and valuable life and flung it wildly from the window. Then I lifted her and laid her where you found her, on the sofa. That the dagger was an old time gift of her former lover, James Zabel, I did not know, much less that it bore his initials on the handle."

"He paused, and the awe occasioned by the scene he had described was so deep and the silence so prolonged that a shudder passed over the whole of the assemblage when from some unknown quarter a single, cutting voice arose in this one short, mocking comment: "Oh, the fairy tale!"

"Was it Amabel who had spoken? Some yet thought so and looked at her, but they only beheld a sweet, tear stained face turned with an air of moving appeal upon Frederick as if begging pardon for the wicked doubts which had driven him to this defence. Frederick met that look with one so severe it partook of harshness. Then, resuming his testimony, he said: "It is of the Zabel brothers I most now speak, and of how one of them, James by name, came to be involved in this affair."

"When I left my new-found mother, I was in such a state of mind that I passed the room in which my new-found father sat sleeping, with scarcely so much as a glance. But as I hastened on toward the quarter where the Zabels lived some computation of my father's desolate state caused me to falter in my rapid flight, so that I did not reach the house quite as quickly as I might otherwise have done. When I did, I found it dark, as I might reasonably have expected; but, remembering the extreme anxiety which my mother had shown in their regard, even in her dying moments, I approached the front door and was about to knock when I found it open. Greatly astonished, I at once passed in, and, reaching my mother's room on the left, the door of which also stood open. It was the second house. I had entered unannounced that night, and in this, as in the other, I encountered a man sitting asleep by the table."

"Going up to him, I saw it to be the elder of the two, John Zabel, and I took out the first bill my hand encountered in my overcoat pockets and laid it on the table by his side. As I did so he gave a sigh, but did not wake; and, satisfied that I had done all that was wise and all that even my mother would expect of me under the circumstances, and fearing to encounter the other brother if I lingered, I hastened away and took the shortest path home. Had I been more of a man, or if my visit to Mrs. Webb had been actuated by a more communicable motive, I would have gone at once to the good man who believed me to be of his own flesh and blood and told him of the strange and heartrending adventure which had changed the whole tenor of my thoughts and life and begged his advice as to what I had better do under the difficult circumstances in which I found myself placed. But the memory of a thousand past ingrattitudes, together with the knowledge of the shock which he could not fail to receive on learning at once so tragic and full of menace that the child which his long buried wife had once placed in his arms as his own was neither of her blood or his, rose up between us and caused me not only to attempt silence, but to secrete in the adjoining woods the money I had received in the vain hope that all visible connection between myself and my mother's tragic death would thus be lost. You see, I had not calculated on Miss Amabel Page."

"The cash he here received from that

lady's eyes startled the crowd and gave Sweetwater, already suffering under shock after shock of mingled surprise and wonder, his first definite idea that he had never rightly understood the relations between these two and that something besides justice had actuated Amabel in her treatment of this young man. This feeling was shared by others, and a reaction set in in his favor which even affected the officials who were conducting the inquiry. This was shown by the difference of manner now assumed by the coroner and by the more easily impressed Sweetwater, who had not yet learned the indispensable art of hiding his feelings. Frederick himself felt the change and showed it by the look of relief and growing confidence he cast at Agnes.

"Of the questions and answers which now passed between him and the various members of the jury I need give no account. They but emphasized facts already known and produced but little change in the general feeling, which was one now of suppressed pity for all who had been drawn into the meshes of this tragic mystery. When he was asked to resume his seat, the name of Miss Amabel Page was again called.

She rose with a bound. Naught that she had anticipated had occurred; facts of which she could know nothing had changed the aspect of affairs and made her position of respect something so remote from any she could have imagined that she was still in the maze of the numberless conflicting emotions which these revelations were calculated to call out in one who had risked all on the hazard of a die and lost. She did not even know at this moment whether she was glad or sorry he could explain so cleverly his anomalous position. She had caught the look he had cast at Agnes, and, while this suggested her, it did not greatly modify her opinion that he was destined for herself, for, however other people might feel, she did not for a moment believe his story. She had not a pure enough heart to do so. To her all self sacrifice was an anomaly.

No woman of the mental or physical strength of Agatha Webb would plant a dagger in her own breast just to prevent another person from committing a crime, were he lover, husband or son. So she believed and so would these others also when once relieved of his magnetic personality. Yet how thrilling it had been to hear him plead his cause so well, so thrilling it was almost worth the loss of her revenge to meet his look of hate and dream of the possibility of turning it later into the old love of love. Yes, yes, she loved him now, not for his position, for that was gone; not even for his money, for she could contemplate its loss, but for himself who had so boldly shown that he was stronger than she and could triumph over her by the sheer force of his masculine daring.

"With such feelings, what should she say to these men? How conduct herself under questions which would be much more searching now than before? She could not even decide in her own mind. She must let impulse have its way."

Happily she took the right stand at first. She did not endeavor to make any corrections in her former testimony, only acknowledged that the flower whose presence on the scene of death had been such a mystery had fallen from her hair at the ball and that she had seen Frederick pick it up and put it in his buttonhole. Beyond this and the inferences it afterward awakened in her mind she would not say though many present, and among them Frederick, felt confident that her attitude had been one of suspicion from the first and that it was to follow him rather than to supply the wants of the old man, the Zabels, she had left the ball and found her way to Agatha Webb's cottage.

(To be continued.)

HOMAGE NOTES When washing chamois leather, rinse in slightly soapy water to prevent it from becoming hard and stiff. When shutting up a house for a long time pack the silver in dry flour and keep it dry by raising and spooning together, arranging in layers with flour in between. The silver will remain perfectly bright and un tarnished. A simple and excellent way to remove dirty marks from a mask made of a well known farmer, living near here, tells of her remarkable recovery from an illness of two year's standing.

TWO YEARS OF NEEDLESS SUFFERING

Then Mrs. McRea Found a Cure in Dodd's Kidney Pills Other Medicines May Help But Dodd's Kidney Pills Always Cure - That's Why They Are Woman's Friend.

Prével Gase Co., Que., July 14 (Special Agent J. McRea, wife of a well known farmer, living near here, tells of her remarkable recovery from an illness of two year's standing. "I was a sufferer from kidney disease, brought on by my cold and a strain," Mrs. McRea says. "My eyes were puffed and swollen, my muscles cramped, and I suffered from neuralgia and rheumatism. My back ached, and I had pains in my joints. "For two years I was under the doctor's care, but he never seemed to do me any lasting good. Then, on the advice of friends, I started to use Dodd's Kidney Pills. "Two boxes made a new woman of me."

There's only one sure cure for kidney disease, and that is Dodd's Kidney Pills. Other medicines sometimes help, but Dodd's Kidney Pills always cure. If you are a suffering woman, it is almost a certainty you haven't tried Dodd's Kidney Pills, for ninety per cent of the ills of women come from bad kidneys.

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North Bangor, N. Y.—"As I have used Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound with great benefit I feel it my duty to write and tell you about it. I was ailing from female weakness and had headache and backache nearly all the time. I was later every month than I should have been and so sick that I had to go to bed. "Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has made me well and these troubles have disappeared like magic. I have recommended the Compound to many women who have used it successfully."—Mrs. JAMES J. STACY, R.F.D. No. 3, North Bangor, N. Y.

Another Made Well.

Ann Arbor, Mich.—"Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound has done wonders for me. For years I suffered terribly with hemorrhages and had pains so intense that sometimes I would faint away. I had found out long ago that I had to doctor all the time and never found relief until I took your remedies to please my husband. I recommend your wonderful medicine to all sufferers as I think it a blessing for all women."—Mrs. L. E. WYCKOFF, 112 S. Ashley St., Ann Arbor, Mich.

There need be no doubt about the ability of this grand old remedy, made from the roots and herbs of our fields, to remedy women's diseases. We possess volumes of proof of this fact, enough to convince the most skeptical. Why don't you try it?

Chance Calls Shanks One of Best in League

New York Manager Says He is Better Fielder Than Cobb and as Good on the Sacks.

NEW YORK, July 16.—"This fellow, Shanks, playing left field for your club, is going to be the surprise of big league baseball here he gets through," said Frank Leroy Chance, manager of the Yankees, to Griffith. "I've never seen a youngster with as little experience show so much class."

"When Ty Cobb broke in with the Detroit club, if you will remember, he did not set the world on fire. He had to show what he could do before he became the great star that he is now. He occupied then much the same position that Shanks does now. While Shanks may never be the equal of Cobb, nevertheless he is right now a better all around player than Cobb if you bar the hitting. As a batsman, Cobb is a wonder, but when you end there, this kid, Shanks, is a good deal better."

"Without Cobb's speed on the bases, Shanks pulls more wise stuff on the bases than any other player in the league. He knows to a fraction of an inch just how much distance to take off a base, and his delayed steal calls for absolute perfection. He doesn't think anything of setting opponents by the ears on the bases, making them throw around wildly in an effort to get him. This calls for headwork of a superior nature."

Call Speaker Best

"The best outfielder in this league to-day is Tris Speaker, the Red Sox star, but after him I place Edward Shanks. In the field, the Washington player is just as fast, just as sure on ground balls or flies, and can throw like a shot to any base. His stunt of breaking into the infield and making put out is unequalled by any player in the big leagues and only goes to strengthen my belief in his greatness. There are not many players with the necessary speed to do this and the fact they haven't the brains to think of it."

"Shanks' hitting is getting better all the time. Give him another year and he will be up among the leading batsmen. That's all he has to improve now. He has everything else necessary in his makeup."

DOES YOUR SIDE ACHE

When the first symptoms appear, rub with Nerviline—rub it in deeply. It penetrates to muscles and chords that are sore—takes away stiffness—removes all strain and inflammation. If the condition is chronic, put a Nerviline Porous Plaster on the affected spot. This draws out any virus or neuralgic irritation, restores the tissues to their wonted healthiness, permanently cures any weakness or tendency to pain.

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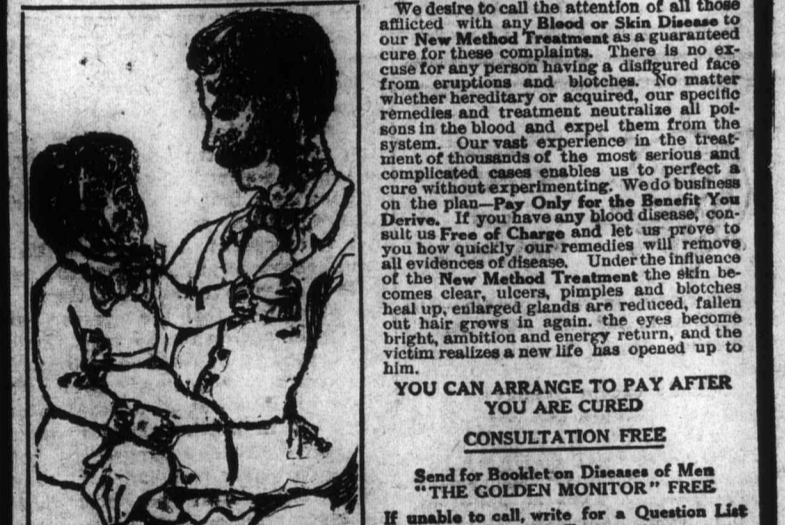
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