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The House of a Thousand Candles

BY MEREDITH NICHOLSON.

CHAPTER XI.

I Receive a Caller.

Going to bed at three o'clock on a winter morning in a house whose ways are disquieting, after a duel in which you escaped only by sheer good luck, does not fit one for sleep. When finally drew the covers over me it was to lie and speculate upon the events of the night in connection with the history of the few weeks I had spent at Glenarm. Lately had suggested in New York that Pickering's statement that my grandfather's large fortune had proved to be a myth. If Pickering had not stolen or dissipated it, where was it concealed? Morgan was undoubtedly looking for something of value or he would not risk his life in the business; and it was quite possible that he was employed by Pickering to search for hidden property. This idea took strong hold of me, the more readily, I fear, since I had always been anxious to see evil in Pickering. There was, to be sure, the unknown alternative heir, but neither she nor Sister Theresa was, I imagined, a person capable of hiring an assassin to kill me.

On reflection I dismissed the idea of appealing to the county authorities, and I never regretted that resolution. The seat of Wabana County was twenty miles away, the processes of law were unfamiliar, and I wished to avoid publicity. Morgan might, of course, have been easily disposed of by an appeal to the Amundson constable, but now that I suspected Pickering of treachery, the caretaker's importance dwindled. I had waited all my life for a chance at Arthur Pickering, and in this affair I hoped to draw him into the open and settle with him.

I slept presently, but woke at my usual hour, and after a tub felt ready for another day. Bates served me, as

usual, a breakfast that gave a fair aspect to the morning. I was alert for any sign of perturbation in him; but I had already decided that I might as well look for emotion in a stone wall as in this placid, colorless serving-man. I had no reason to suspect him of complicity in the night's affair, but I had no faith in him, and merely waited until he should throw himself more boldly into the game.

By my plate next morning I found this note, written in a clear, bold, woman's hand:

"The Sisters of St. Agatha trust that the intrusion upon his grounds by Miss Armstrong, one of their students, has caused Mr. Glenarm no annoyance. The Sisters beg that this infraction of their discipline will be overlooked and they assure Mr. Glenarm that it will not recur."

An unnecessary apology! The note-paper was of the best quality. At the head of the page "St. Agatha's, Annandale," was embossed in purple. It was the first note I had received from a woman for a long time, and it gave me a pleasant emotion. One of the sisters I had seen beyond the wall undoubtedly wrote it—possibly Sister Theresa herself. A clever woman, that!

Thoroughly capable of plucking money from guileless old gentlemen! Poor Olaf! Born for freedom, but doomed to a penitence with a lot of doctored nuns! I resolved to send her a box of candy sometime, just to annoy her grim guardians. Then my own affairs claimed attention.

"Bates," I asked, "do you know what Mr. Glenarm did with the plans for the house?"

He started slightly. I should not have noticed it if I had not been keen for his answer.

"No, sir, I can't put my hand upon them, sir."

"That's all very well, Bates, but you didn't answer my question. Do you know where they are? I'll put my hand on them if you will kindly tell me where they're kept!"

"Mr. Glenarm, I fear very much that they have been destroyed. I tried to find them before you came, to tell you the whole truth, sir, but they must have been made away with."

"That's very interesting, Bates. Will you kindly tell me whom you suspect of destroying them? The toast again, please."

His hand shook as he passed the plate.

"I hardly like to say, sir, when it's only a suspicion."

"Of course, I shouldn't ask you to incriminate yourself, but I have to insist on my question. It may have occurred to you, Bates, that I'm in a sense—in a sense, mind you—the master here."

"Well, I should say, if you press me, that I fear Mr. Glenarm, your grandfather, burned the plans when he left here the last time. I hope you will pardon me, sir, for seeming to reflect upon him."

"Reflect upon the devil! What was his idea, do you suppose?"

"I think, sir, if you will pardon me."

"Don't be so fussy!" I snapped. "Damn your pardon, and go on!"

"He wanted you to study out the place for yourself, sir. It was dear to his heart, this house. He set his heart upon having you enjoy it—"

"And I like the word—go ahead!"

"And I suppose there are things about it that he wished you to learn for yourself."

"You know them, of course, and are watching me to see when I'm hot and cold, like kids playing hide the handkerchief."

The fellow turned and faced me across the table.

"Mr. Glenarm, as I hope God may be merciful to me in the last judgment, I don't know any more than you do."

"You were here with Mr. Glenarm all the time he was building the house, but you never saw walls built that weren't what they appeared to be, or doors made that didn't lead anywhere."

I summoned all my irony and contempt for this arrangement. He lifted his hand, as though making oath.

"As God sees me, that is all true. I was here to care for the dead master's comfort and not to spy on him."

"And Morgan, your friend, what about him?"

"I wish I knew, sir."

"I wish to the devil you did," I said, and flung out of the room and into the library.

At eleven o'clock I heard a pounding at the great front door, and Bates came suddenly knocking the snow from his shoes in the outer hall.

"The Reverend Paul Stoddard, sir."

The chaplain of St. Agatha's was a big fellow, as I had remarked on the occasion of his interview with Olivia Armstrong by the wall. His smooth-shaven face was bright with the freshness of youth. Here was a sturdy young apostle without frills, but with a vigorous grip that left my hand tingling. His voice was deep and musical. Voice that suggested sincerity and inspired confidence.

"I'm afraid I haven't been neighborly, Mr. Glenarm. I was called away from home a few days after I heard of your arrival, and I have just got back. I blew in yesterday with the snow-storm."

He folded his arms easily and looked at me with cheerful directness, as though politely interested in what manner of man I might be.

"It was a fine storm; I got a great day of it," I said. "An Indiana snow-storm is something I have never experienced before."

"This is my second winter. I came out here because I wished to do some reading, and thought I'd rather do it alone than in a university."

"Stodious habits are rather forced on one out here, I should say. In my own case my course of reading is all cut out for me."

He ran his eyes over the room.

"The Glenarm collection is famous—the best in the country, easily. Mr. Glenarm, your grandfather, was certainly an enthusiast. I met him several times. He was a trifle hard to meet—and the clergyman smiled."

I felt rather uncomfortable, assuming that he probably knew I was under the discipline, and why my grandfather had ordained it. The Reverend Paul Stoddard was so simple, unaffected and manly a fellow that I shrank from the thought that I must appear to him an ungrateful black-guard who on my grandfather's had marked with obloquy.

"My grandfather had his whims; but he was a fine generous-hearted old gentleman," I said.

"Yes, in my interviews with him he surprised me by the range of his knowledge. He was quite able to instruct me in certain curious branches of church history that appealed to him."

"You were here when he built the house, I suppose?"

My visitor laughed cheerfully.

"I was on one side of the barricade for a part of the time. You know there was a great deal of mystery about the building of this house. The country-folk hereabouts can't quite get over it. They have a superstition that there's treasure buried somewhere on the place. You see, Mr. Glenarm wouldn't employ any local labor. The work was done by men he brought from afar—none of them, the villagers say, could speak English. They were all Greeks or Italians."

"I have heard something of the kind," I remarked, feeling that there was a man who, with a little cultivation, might help me to solve some of my riddles.

"You haven't been on our side of the wall yet? Well, I promise not to molest your hidden treasure if you'll be neighborly."

"I fear there's a big joke involved in the hidden treasure," I replied. "I'm so busy staying at home to guard it that I have no time for social recreation."

He looked at me quickly to see whether I was joking. His eyes were earnest and steady. The Reverend Paul Stoddard impressed me more and more agreeably. There was a suggestion of a quiet strength about him that drew me to him.

"I suppose everyone around here thinks of nothing but that I'm at Glenarm to earn my inheritance. My residence here must look pretty sordid from the outside."

"Mr. Glenarm's will is a matter of record in the county, of course. But you are too hard on yourself. It's no body's business if your grandfather wished to visit his whims on you. I should say, in my own case, that I do not consider it any of my business what you are here for. I did not come over to annoy you or to pry into your affairs. I get lonely now and then, and thought I'd like to establish neighborly relations."

"Thank you; I appreciate your coming very much—and my heart warmed under the manifest kindness of the man."

"And I hope"—he spoke for the first time with restraint—"I hope nothing may prevent your knowing Sister Theresa and Miss Deveraux. They are interesting and charming—the only women about here of your own social status."

My liking for him abated slightly. He might be a detective, representing the alternative heir, for all I knew, and possibly Sister Theresa was a party to the conspiracy.

"In time, no doubt, in time, I shall know them," I answered evasively.

"Oh, quite as you like!"—and he changed the subject. We talked of many things—of outdoors, of sports, with which he showed great familiarity, of universities, of travel and adventure. He was a Columbia man, and had spent two years at Oxford.

"Well," he exclaimed, "this has been very pleasant, but I must run. I have just been over to see Morgan, the caretaker at the resort village. The poor fellow accidentally shot himself yesterday, cleaning his gun, or so he says. He is a bit of a duffer, but he has an ugly hole in his arm that will sit him in for a month or worse. He gave me an errand to do for him. He's a conscientious fellow and wished me to wire for him to Mr. Pickering, that he'd been hurt, but was attending to his duties. Pickering owns a cottage over there, and Morgan has charge of it. You know Pickering, of course?"

I looked my clerical neighbor straight in the eye, a trifle coldly, perhaps. I was wondering why Morgan, a fellow whom I had enjoyed a duel in my own cellar only a few hours before, should be reporting his injury to Arthur Pickering.

"I think I have seen Morgan about here," I said.

"Oh, yes! He's a woodsman and a hunter—our Nimrod of the lake."

"A good sort, very likely."

"I dare say. He has sometimes brought me ducks during the season."

"To be sure! They shoot ducks at night—these Hoosier hunters—so I hear!"

He laughed as he shook himself into his greatcoat.

"That's possible, though unsportsmanlike. But we don't have to look at it. We laughed together. I found that it was easy to laugh with him."

"By the way, I forgot to get Pickering's address from Morgan. If you happen to see it—"

"With pleasure," I said. "Alexis Building, Broadway, New York."

"Good! That's easy to remember," he said, smiling and turning up his coat collar. "Don't forget me; I'm quarantined in a hermit's cell back of the chapel, and I believe we can find many matters of interest to talk about."

"I'm confident of it," I said, glad of the sympathy and cheer that seemed to emanate from his stalwart figure.

I threw on my overcoat and walked to the gate with him, and saw him hurry toward the village with long strides.

To be Continued.

PROBING OCEAN**SIX MILES DEEP**

Marvelous Discoveries Made Far Below Surface of the Pacific.

Washington, D. C., July 30. — Until about 35 years ago the impression was general, some men of scientific attainments even holding it, that there were places in the ocean's abysses that were fathomless. Navigators solemnly assured credulous landlubbers that they knew the location of certain holes that were bottomless. This implied that the immeasurable depth continued through the earth to another immeasurable depth on the other side, a proposition that was manifestly not reasonable, to say the least.

Now the oceanographer knows the floor of the sea almost as thoroughly as the geographer knows the configuration of the land. There are tremendous depths, only 65 fathoms less than six statute miles. The peak of the highest mountain on earth is not so tall.

The work of the Nero probably never has been equaled by any other vessel surveying for a cable route. Incidental ship collected much material relating to the character of the bottom, something to the great stock of knowledge already acquired. The Nero made soundings every ten miles over a zig-zag exploration of 21,519.65 nautical miles. The exploration practically covered a sea territory fourteen miles wide and 6,000 miles long, and for thoroughness has never been excelled.

The form of the sea floor is very much like that of the visible world and plains, their ridges and valleys, lofty mountain peaks, and their precipices that put to shame those above the sea, and some of the tallest summits, which project from the waves in the form of little islands, would be accessible if they rose to the same height from the sea as they do from the bottom of the ocean.

The great difference between the under-ocean territory and that smaller part of the planet on which we have light and access. At a few hundred fathoms the ocean is gloomy as twilight and beyond that the uttermost depths there is no light except that given out by phosphorescent creatures and matter. The sunlight does not penetrate below this few hundred fathoms. At about 600 fathoms the temperature of the water drops to 35 degrees. Thereafter it drops to a depth of five or six miles there is an exceptional drop of only about one degree.

This coolness, only three degrees above the freezing point, is attributed partly to the absence of the sun's influence, and partly to the existence of polar and sub-polar currents that have sunk to the bottom and spread slowly over the valleys, carrying with them sufficient to sustain life even at the depth of three or four miles. These currents are sluggish, and it is conjectured that the denizens of the abyss—small plants and gnomes have an environment of absolute calm.

The pressure at six miles below the surface is about five tons to the square inch, which the tissues of the deep-sea animals are formed to resist. Some of them are so soft that they disintegrate when they are hauled into the air. All come up dead.

The sudden and enormous decrease of the pressure as they ascend and the immersion in a temperature of 80 degrees from a temperature of 35 degrees is enough to kill any sort of animal life.

The first accurate knowledge of deep sea conditions and life was obtained by the experts of the Challenger expedition around the world, beginning in 1872 and lasting about four years. But even the Challenger, which sounded great depths and brought up many new animals and specimens from the ocean floor, used the old-fashioned and unreliable rope-sounding apparatus. Sir William Thompson, who devised the machine for sounding with piano-forte wire, had one put aboard the Challenger, and the British conservatism of the explorers made them stick to the rope which had served them well, rather than experiment with new-fangled things. So Sir William's device was consigned to the storeroom.

The United States navy and coast survey, however, it was only a few months after the Challenger expedition had started that Capt. George E. Belknap, of the navy, in the steamer Tuscarora, fitted up for sounding for a submarine cable from California to Japan, took one of the wire-sounding machines along. He utilized it by firing the wire to his own improved apparatus. It is Capt. Belknap's sounding machine, perfected the then Lieutenant Commander C. D. Sigsbee, that is now in use on the most famous and complete of all searching vessels, the Albatross.

This machine has a sinker or shot, which is detached by the impact of the rod running through it against the bottom, or by the slacking of the sounding wire. The weight of the shot and all the attachments to the rod, including the thermometer, is about 70 pounds.

When the projecting bottom of the rod is forced by the weight of the shot into the sea floor it lifts a valve and fills the cylinder with specimen soil. The shot is detached automatically. When the rod begins to descend, the valves are closed, and the contents of the rod are protected from wash.

WE HAVE no hesitation in saying that Dr. J. D. Kellogg's Dysentery Cordial is without doubt the best medicine ever introduced for dysentery, diarrhea, cholera and all summer complaints, seasickness, etc. It promptly gives relief and never fails to effect a positive cure. Mothers should never be without a bottle when their children are teething.

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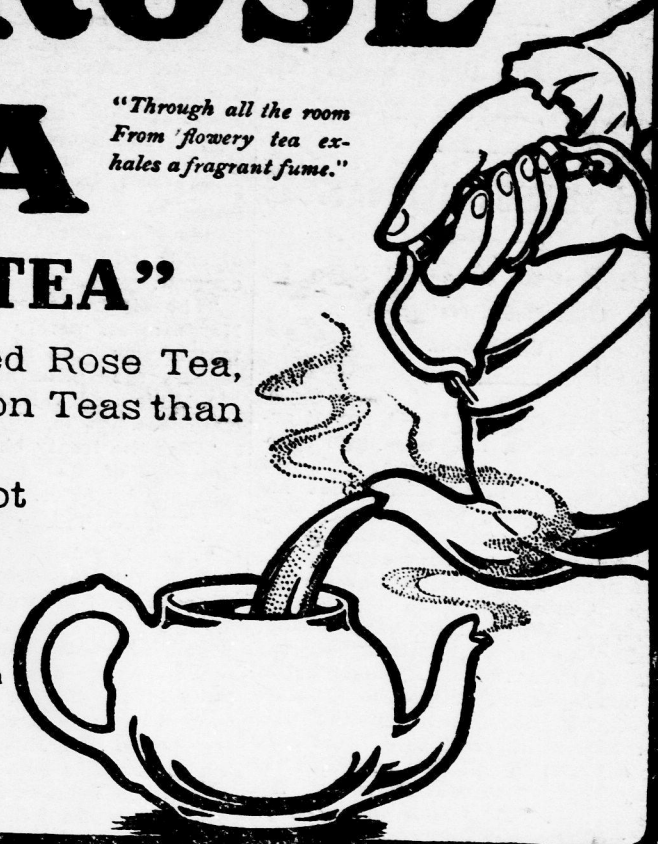
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"Through all the room From flowery tea ex-hales a fragrant fume."

**KING COMPLIMENTS WRITER**

Jermingham's Collection of Old Prints Is Accepted for Nation.

London, July 30.—King Edward has just paid a graceful compliment to a distinguished English writer, Edward Jermingham, author of brilliant, worthy articles in Truth, styled "Let-ters from the Librarian." Jermingham recently offered to the nation a rare collection of old prints of St. James' Park, which he had collected at much pains and expense. The King gratefully accepted the gift and set apart a special room in Kensington Palace in which they were hung. Last Thursday his majesty visited the palace to inspect the prints, commanding the donor to be present and spent an hour looking at them, questioning Jermingham about their peculiar features and showing a considerable knowledge of the manners and customs they depict.

TRICK WILL STAND ALONE

Never Again Can Penniless Clerk Bid in Government Bonds.

Washington, July 31.—There will be no opportunity for clever people to turn an honest penny without any risk on their own part in connection with the forthcoming issue of Philippine certificates, proposals for the sale of which are to be opened Aug. 23.

Captain McIntyre, the acting chief of the insular bureau of the war department, who is conducting the refunding of the outstanding Philippine certificates, has decided to require all bidders to inclose with their bids certified checks to the amount of 1 per cent of their bids as an earnest of their willingness to take the certificates allotted to them.

So there can be no repetition in this case of the successful capture and resale at a profit of bonds or certificates by persons without sufficient means to buy them outright if their bid is accepted.

To Improve Ill Temper

Relieve the physical suffering of colic, quickly done by the old reliable Putnam's Corn Extractor. Beware of acid-flesh-eating substitutes, and insist on "Putnam's." It's the one sure and painless cure.

There is nothing doing when a man is doing time.

DR. J. D. KELLOGG'S Dysentery Cordial is a speedy cure for dysentery, diarrhea, cholera, summer complaint, seasickness and all ailments incidental to children teething. It gives immediate relief to those suffering from the effects of indigestion, and acts with wonderful rapidity and never fails to conquer the disease. No one need fear cholera if they have a bottle of this medicine convenient.

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This week we intend to clear out fully half of our boards. To do this we will make reductions ranging from 25 to 35 per cent. This is the opportunity of a lifetime to buy a stylish board for little money.

The sideboard illustrated here, sells this week for \$16.75. Regular price \$24.00.

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