

SIX

THE STAR ST. JOHN N. B., WEDNESDAY, APRIL 22, 1908

The Fair Lady.

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"It is the portrait of my ancestor, Mistress Elizabeth Mowbray," remarked Dickson to his assembled guests. With one accord the four persons seated at the table in the great dining room turned and looked at the picture. Framed in gold, it hung over the chimney piece, reaching almost to the lofty ceiling. It depicted the life-size figure of a beautiful young woman in a pale gray gown in the fashion of a century past.

A large gray-plumed hat rested on her dark hair, and about her shoulders was a loose rose-pink cloak, caught together by one slender hand, while the other held a plump spray of white lilac.

Dickson arose, glass in hand. "To Mistress Mowbray, always young, always beautiful and—" he paused and added with a mischievous glance at his wife, "ever silent!"

There was laughter from the men and a merry protest from Mrs. Dickson as they drank the toast and resumed their seats.

"Rather in unfair advantage to take of Mistress Mowbray," objected Mark Randolph, with a glance toward the portrait.

"I am sure that Harry's insinuation is quite unjust," said Mrs. Dickson, with spirit. "Family history related about this room, leaving a fragrance of white lilac in her wake."

"Have you witnessed this apparition?" asked Randolph, with interest. "Never," replied Dickson, helping himself to walnuts. "But I will endeavor to continue, with a quizzical glance at his pretty wife, that I have detected the odor of white lilac in this room."

"When does the ghost walk?" asked Randolph.

"Invariably on the 13th of March," replied Dickson, leaning back in his chair, and looking feebly at the portrait. "We have never seen the apparition, but some of the servants claim to have seen it. It has so come down to me."

"On the 13th of March since our honeymoon, I recollect that we came downstairs one morning on the 13th of March and detected a strong odor of white lilac. As the conservatory was empty of plants, and as there were no flowers of any sort in the house, it was rather—"

"A shock!" interpolated Mrs. Dickson with decision. "It was a positive shock to smell the odor of white lilac that morning—especially as old Hannah had regaled us with the story the night before."

"And so you have never waited up to see the ghost walk?" queried Randolph as he opened the door for his hostess.

"No," to tell the truth we always run away!" she laughed. "Suppose you come down on the 13th of March and watch for Mistress Mowbray. Hannah will take care of you, and then you can report to us the result of your investigations."

"Agreed," he said, readily; and as he left the room he returned to the table and remarked to the others: "Any volunteers to keep me company?"

"Not I," returned Seaside, quickly. "I shall be south about that time."

"And we," said Dickson, lightly, "will be in Egypt."

"I had forgotten that," said Randolph. "Nevertheless, I shall accept Mrs. Dickson's invitation to run down here and make the acquaintance of fair Mistress Mowbray."

He was looking at the picture with dreamy abstraction in his eyes.

"You admire my beautiful ancestor, then, Mark?" Dickson shot a keen glance at his friend.

"Yes," was the low response. "She reminds me of—another whom I once knew."

On the 13th of March Randolph journeyed down to the sleepy old New England village where the Dickson home-

stead spread its comfortable wings behind sheltering elms, now leafless and sighing mournfully in the east wind. Within doors all was cheerfulness and comfort, with soft lamplight and blazing fires.

When Hannah had cleared the dinner table and departed, Randolph threw himself into a huge easy chair before the fire in the dining room and looked up at the picture of Mistress Mowbray. He compared her face with that of another Elizabeth Mowbray—a cousin of Harry, Dickson, and a descendant of the lady in the picture.

It was an old story now—ten years old. He and Beth had quarreled and she had returned his ring and gone back to her home in the south. They had never met afterwards, but he had never forgotten.

Randolph placed not the slightest credence on the story of the apparition of Mistress Mowbray, but the idea of spending an uninterupted evening before the portrait appealed to him. Unable to longer withstand the siren song of the tender eyes, he hurried his face in the upturned palms of his hands and gave himself up to unhappy musings.

Hour after hour was told by the tall clock in the hall, and when the bell chimed 12, Randolph roused himself with a slight start from the half-dozes in which he had indulged.

Involuntarily he gazed at the portrait and great wonder came into his eyes. He wheeled his chair away from the fireplace and stared.

There was the same youthful figure, with its gray-plumed hat, gray gown and rose-pink cloak caught together by one slender white hand. It was all as it had been before save that now there was life in it. Life in the soft, brown eyes and in a certain tremulous movement of the pink-bowed lips.

With white face and unbelieving eyes he watched the figure step slowly down from the frame, and he saw the movement of the purple velvet draperies that formed the background.

She stepped upon the wide mantelpiece, which was devoid of ornament, and made an imperious gesture with her hand, and as she did so he was conscious of the heavy sent of white lilac from the branch she carried.

"My good sir, pray assist me to the foot," she said in a low, vibrant voice. As in a dream, Randolph hastily reached a chair and supplemented its height with a hassock.

With grave courtesy he extended a hand to the lady on the mantel, and as she gave him the tip of her fingers he felt the lilac from the purple velvet draperies that formed the background.

"My God!" he muttered, staring from the vision before him to the empty frame above the chimney piece. As in a dream, Randolph hastily reached a chair and supplemented its height with a hassock.

With grave courtesy he extended a hand to the lady on the mantel, and as she gave him the tip of her fingers he felt the lilac from the purple velvet draperies that formed the background.

Lightly she stepped down, gathering her skirts gracefully about her dainty, gray-shod feet, and presently she stood beside him, looking timidly at her long hair.

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SCHOOL QUESTION GHOST RESURRECTED AGAIN IN HOUSE OF COMMONS

Laverne and Bergeron Tried to Make Trouble Over Saskatchewan Schools—They are More Catholic Than the Pope, Said Premier—Mr. Borden Was Silent

OTTAWA, April 21.—An effort to revive the school question was made in the commons today by the third party leader, Alexander Laverne, supported by the opposition, Mr. Bergeron. They criticized the government for not having disallowed the Saskatchewan act for establishing high schools, claiming that no provision was made to allow Catholics to have their children educated in their own schools.

R. L. Borden was in the house, but was dumb as an oyster. His silence was taken as an endorsement of Mr. Aylesworth's opinion that the Saskatchewan act did not violate the minority rights and of Sir Wilfrid Laurier's statement that if the minority rights of Saskatchewan were being interfered with, the government would have been moved to increase their rights of citizenship with-out interference from any one.

The bill repealing the act cannot be passed until the next session, and the bill amending the act inspection act and the bill amending the meat inspection act were put through.

Some progress was made in committee on the dry docks inspection bill. Mr. Fielding has given notice of an amendment to the bank act for the purpose of the government was to allow employees to be moved to increase their rights of citizenship with-out interference from any one.

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A Wonderful, Harmless Cure For All Forms of Sea and Car Sickness.

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A remarkable cure for all forms of seasickness, car sickness, climbing, and all nausea caused by motion, which has positively never failed.

Mr. Bergeron congratulated Mr. Laverne on having raised the question. While in Saskatchewan, Roman Catholics had told him that they could not vote against Mr. Turgeon, as he was a member of the majority.

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USES IT EVERY SPRING
Mr. H. Langley, Hamilton, Ont., writes: "I have used Burdock Blood Bitters as a spring tonic and find it the best thing I can take. It builds one right up and I use it every spring. It is excellent for the blood."