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GANONG'S
Her Wish

GANONG'S
THE FINEST **G.B.** IN THE LAND
CHOCOLATES

Ted took the onus of reply on his shoulders.

"Dick was asked whether his father was reading by lamp or candle-light that evening; and when he said the former, how far off the table upon which it was placed was from the window-curtains? Dick answered about three yards; and the coroner remarked that it was clearly impossible then for them to have caught fire as had been suggested. Dick replied, somewhat sarcastically, that although he had left his father seated in that particular chair, he could not say how long he had remained there. To his mind, there were two different ways in which the fire might have originated. Mr. Emberson might by accident, awake or asleep, have knocked the lamp over—or, it was quite possible that, after undressing, he had continued reading in bed; and in that case he would probably have made use of the candle which, with matches, always stood ready to hand. Supposing him to have done this, and, falling asleep, to have left the candle burning, a sudden gust of wind from the window, which was always left open at night, might very well have blown the light muslin curtain into the flame and so caused the conflagration."

"Then the little dark man whispered again," said Colonel Anerley, taking up the thread of the narrative, "and the coroner asked a rather strange question; he wanted to know if Mr. Emberson had been in the habit of wearing false teeth?"

"False teeth!" echoed the two ladies, in amazement.

"Yes; don't you see, if he had, and they were attached to gold plates, the latter ought to be found."

"I should never have thought of that!" murmured Mrs. Anerley.

"What did Dick reply?" asked Enid.

"Not to his knowledge."

"Oh, but he did!" exclaimed the elder lady.

"He did! Who did? What did they do, my dear?" queried her husband.

"I know he did," she continued, without heeding the interruption. "When Mr. Emberson was talking to me one day he threw his head back and laughed, and I saw then that he wore something of the sort."

The Colonel elevated his eyebrows.

"Trust a woman," he said, "for observing trifles of that description. It seems to me, my dear, it would have been better if you and Enid had gone this morning instead of us; your evidence would have been decidedly more valuable than ours."

The summons to luncheon here broke up the conversation. Whilst the others took their places at table, Enid crept upstairs on tip-toe to Dick's room and listened outside. The door was ajar; and the sound of regular breathing betrayed the fact that, forgetful for a time of his troubles, he had fallen asleep.

She slipped into the room and went up close to his side; then stood for a moment looking down with an almost maternal tenderness at the pale, worn, young face—at the athletic figure, and the strong right arm thrown out widely across the pillows. Seeing him thus in the abandonment of sleep, Enid's heart throbbed with a mingled love and pity almost painful in its intensity. Yielding to a sudden temptation, she bent forward and pressed a kiss, soft as the caress of a rose-leaf, upon his forehead. He stirred a little and she drew back quickly, catching her breath with the fear of having awakened him. But he slept on; and creeping away as noiselessly as she had entered, she joined the others below. It was quite late in the afternoon when Dick appeared downstairs. He declared himself to feel heaps better; and his looks corroborated his statement; the expression of mental strain and worry had sensibly relaxed, and he was more like his normal self. Ted Alston whispered as much to Enid as he wished her "Good-night," and she replied under her breath, lest her lover should overhear—

"Yes; if only the funeral was over! When that is past we shall all begin to breathe again freely."

People came from far and wide the next day to attend at the last solemn laying to earth of the poor fragments of mortality which had once known the pride of manhood. Owing to Mr. Emberson's having been so many years absent from that part of the country, and also