MC2289

POOR DOCUMENT

The Crimson Slipper.

BY DORA LANGLOIS,

Author of "A Bait From the Sea," "The Red-Haired Woman," "The Kiss of Judas," "The Secretary's Daughter," "Victoria's Dream," &c.

(Continued.)

"You knew that your friend and the lady were on intimate terms, I suppose?"

"I thought they were—at least, I thought Mr. Duncan was interested in her."

"She'd have been invited to the house if she hadn't come to it." The remark was more a statement than a query, though he looked at both of us as if expecting an answer.

"No," said Herman, emphatically.

"No," I was about to echo, but I could not; the monosyllable died on my lips, for she had been invited by me. Yes, with my whole heart I had asked her as boldly as I dared to share my home, and only two hours ago I would have asked her to share my name as well.

"Ah!" said the inspector, drily, "she was invited. And as to the paper, sir, was it yours?"

"It was not hers," I said.

"Was it yours?"

"Yes. I had bought it."

"In that desk you got at the sale?"

"Yes."

"Was the paper put up for auction with the desk, then?"

"No."

"I think you'd have some difficulty in proving your right to it then, and I shall take the responsibility of refusing to accept the charge. You can apply before the magistrate tomorrow. Good-night to you."

"To-morrow will be too late," I insisted.

"To-morrow will have to do," he answered.

"We will find a justice of the peace at once," I said, turning to the door.

"Half a moment," said Herman, gravely. "Doesn't it strike you as extraordinary, Inspector Bronson, that a lady so nearly connected with the late Mr. Danvers, should so soon after the tragedy, disappear?"

"It's not proved that she has disappeared, sir. She may be at home and in bed at this moment."

"Tomorrow may show you you're mistaken."

"And tomorrow you can get a magisterial warrant in due form."

"Come, Herman," I said, impatiently, from the door.

"Allow me," he insisted. "Inspector Bronson, can we have a moment alone with you?"

"Very good," said Herman, moving quite cheerfully towards me. "I merely thought it high time to tell you what the paper was (with my friend's permission of course). But if you would rather not know, we can go to Sono J. F. first—the matter is too urgent to be left till tomorrow."

The inspector hesitated. Herman, with consummate art worthy of a great actor, got across the boards to the door; not fast enough to make it necessary to call him back from outside, but without shewing that he was expecting to be stopped before he got there.

"Just half a minute, gentlemen."

"Well?"

"Come in here if you please."

In answer to a motion of his hand we found ourselves a moment later in a sort of little private sitting-room, for hitherto all that had passed had taken place in the presence of an ordinary silent stolid constable, who stood behind his superior's elbow.

Of course, it was a pill to the inspector's official pride to have to give us a hearing at all. But I did not blame him, I could not blame him for his disinclination to listen to the charge against one whom he knew, and perhaps respected and pitied. Therefore I was no longer angry, though he took a high hand to cover his own confusion.

"I suppose you know," he said, "that if you are aware of anything connected with or bearing on Mr. Danvers' death you're acting illegally in suppressing that knowledge?"

"We don't know that we know anything bearing on the case," Herman answered with a readiness that I was quite incapable of. "You've got a prisoner, and if Sir Robert Birchall is guilty then this paper, which we charge Miss Denzell with stealing, has no possible bearing on the crime. But the fact remains that the paper itself is not merely important but of the highest importance. Here's the case in a nutshell, inspector—Mr. Danvers got it illegally and meant to part with it for a huge sum of money, and there were persons who would have stuck at very little to have it to sell themselves. That appears to us to suggest a possible motive for his murder. The paper came into Mr. Duncan's possession quite accidentally. He knew the rightful owners, and meant to return it to them without fee or reward of any sort; but if Miss Denzell and her associates get across to the Continent with that paper the result will be nothing short of a national calamity."

"Why didn't you say so before?" demanded Mr. Bronson, using unconsciously the stereotyped complaint of the official who has declined to listen.

Herman was wise enough to make no direct reply. "If this was connected with the murder," he said. "I suppose it would mean promotion for you?"

I laid my hand on his arm with a sudden grip. He was, I thought, unfairly whetting the official appetite She was, she might be many things I had not thought her, but nothing could make me believe that she had acted a part in her guardian's death. I would have given something even then to be as sure that their relations in life were what I had once thought them, as I was that she was innocent of his murder.

I was not the only person, however, angered by Herman's speech. Bronson turned on him furiously, for the suggestion that he worked for promotion (like every other individual who works at all) is peculiarly distasteful to the official mind.

"It would mean doing my duty, sir," he retorted; "and promotion is not my business—that lies with my superiors."

"I say it ought to mean promotion," Herman retorted, coolly, "and I've something more to say, Inspector. The man who clears up this Danvers mystery and bags the right party has the front door open for him and must go up a bit; but the man who prevents Miss Denzell reaching the Continent with that paper on her has a right to go round to the back door and use the stairs. What's more, if he is long-headed enough to get that paper quietly and without fuss as a piece of ordinary private property, stolen from a private individual—if he is discreet enough not to blab the size of the order he has undertaken— I honestly believe that there is no plum in the service that that man might not have for the asking."

The inspector's eyes were burning now. He had caught the fever common to humanity, official or otherwise. Herman had scratched him and injected the virus of self-interest.

"I should like to know in whose interests I am working, sir?" he said, in a low voice.

"You are doing your duty." Herman answered, speaking severely and coldly, now that this man was on fire, "and you're working for your country. That's all you need to know at present."

"You must make up your mind at once," I said, "or I must go to the house of some Justice of the Peace. There's no time to lose, for my own position of responsibility as temporary holder of the paper is too grave for trifling."

"I'll undertake the business,' the Inspector said after a moment's pause. Then he added, with a return to the ordinary business style of an energetic and intelligent officer: "I'll close all the ports first to make quite sure, and then follow them up from this end. You're wrong about them going to Santhwaite; there's no train out. They've gone to Santrigg, there's a train for York they'd catch there. I may be able to get the wires to work in time to stop them at York. I'll do it if it can be done. If I can't stop them there they'll get on the main. But it doesn't much matter where they go if we are waiting for them at the boats. I'll see to the warrant; that can be got in plenty of time. You'd better let me have the fullest description you can give of the two foreigners, and then you can go home and rely on me. I won't let the grass grow under my feet I promise you."

The reader will, of course, surmise that I had told Herman everything as we drove to the police station, otherwise he could not have brought the coup off unaided; and I should certainly have failed, for I had neither his tact nor his self-control.

"Well," he asked, when we were once more in the dog-cart, "did I say too much? Did I promise him more than he is likely to get if he works for it?"

"No," I answered. "I don't think you did. I'm not the man to belittle the power of the secret service corps, or limit the number of wires they are able to pull when they like, but, for all that, we shall do no good, Herman. I am convinced that they have mailed or will mail the paper."

"We can't help that," Herman said. "By Jove! his lordship might though, if we could communicate with him at once."

"Tamper with the mails?" I exclaimed, with a start. "No," he would not do that; it's un-English."

"It's very Continental," Herman rejoined. "Every fellow who has ever stayed in a foreign garrison town knows that his correspondence is tampered with by quite petty officials. Besides, this would not be tampering with a mail. He knows most probably to whom the letter will be addressed, and the district, if not the town, from which it must come (for if they aren't going to carry it the whole way, they won't carry it any distance), so the thing is simple to a man in power. And as for its being un-English, everything that goes into the post is her Majesty's property pro tem, and she doesn't contract to carry and deliver stolen articles for anyone, whether stolen from herself or anyone else."

"That's true," I said. "But what am I to do?' I can't get a wire off tonight, the office is closed."

"There's an all-night office at H—" he suggested, naming a big manufacturing centre sixteen miles away.

"It's not a true all-night office," I replied. "They close at 8 a. m., just as we do at York, and this is Saturday night, remember?"

"The office is open till 8 a. m. on Sunday morning," Herman replied. "I am sure of that. I was looking over the guide only yesterday."

"I don't know that it would be much use even if we went there," I said, despondently. "I know no cipher in which I could speak out fully, and an ordinary wire wouldn't reach his lordship; it would fall into the hands of some understrapper who is hardly likely to wake the great man up to give him a message from plain Richard Duncan of Elsinore."

"That's true," Herman admitted, "but his agents here are sure to know some man who is bound to wake up and attend to the business at any hour. Quick, Duncan, tumble out of the cart and get behind that elm-tree, and I'll run Bob into this field on the left."

We had just come round a bend in the road, and if there was anyone behind us he was not yet in sight.

(To be continued.)

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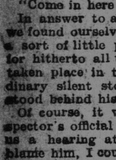

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QUESTION OF MORALS.

Negative Treatment of Drink Question Will Not Cure The Evil.

The Rev. John Mackay, B. A., addressed the temperance mass meeting in Knox Church, Montreal, on Monday evening.

Mr. Mackay said that after as thorough a study of the question as he was capable of making he had come to the conclusion that the attempt that was being made to cut off the supply of liquor from users, which was a negative treatment of the evil, could not succeed. A positive method of dealing with the subject would have to be devised. Man's nature had a social side that was being in many ways neglected. Men wanted recreation, diversion, amusement, sympathy and brotherliness. They must and would fraternize. Churches and temperance societies should be social centres as well as preaching places.

The speaker cited the methods and success of Dr. Rainford's institutional church in New York which had won to respectability and good living a community that had been alienated from the church through lack of practical sympathy and brotherly kindness. Reformers should apply themselves first to breaking down class distinctions. The rich must become interested in the poor. The latter would become elevated and the former occupied with a kind of work they needed and interested in a cause that required their help.

The question, Mr. MacKay said, was wider than the mere use of intoxicating liquors. If a real and substantial advance was to be made, a thorough study of all the issues bearing on social conditions would have to be made. What was wanted was a Welsh revival, not merely an overflow or good feelings or nice emotions, but a revival of social service, unselfishness and brotherliness.

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A CLOSE CALL.

How a Man's Presence of Mind Saved Him.

(Yarmouth Herald.)

On Thursday last, whilst Lemuel S. Freeman, an employe of the New Burrell-Johnson Iron Co., was engaged mixing paint for the engine of the new steamer Bufferin, he had in his hands a can of benzine, which came into contact with a lighted candle and exploded. His clothing caught fire and he was at once enveloped in flames. With wonderful presence of mind he ran outdoors and jumped overboard into the channel, holding on to the guard of the steamer. Before the workmen on the vessel could realize what had happened he was overboard. This saved his life, but his hands were badly burned. He was taken on board, and conveyed to Messrs. C. C. Richards & Co's, where Mr. Gardner attended his injuries and he is doing well.

THEY ARE VERY DRY.

Eastport, April 20:—Our Canadian cousins at Campobello Island are not overlooking the fact that the Sturgis bill is causing dry times in eastern Maine, and with the closing up of the places in Eastport where liquor was formerly sold, the lovers of strong drink had started in to drink up the supply to be found at the above village, where it was only a matter of a short trip to buy all they wanted. But the worm has turned and the Canadians have the Scott Act to keep them on the dry list when it is enforced, as has been the case recently. It is stated that Magistrate G. R. Byron has been holding session at the village lately and it now looks as if even a drink of Canadian liquor was to be denied the Eastport hunters for the fluid. With no open bar rooms here and enforcement of the liquor law over the border it would indicate that the temperance wave had struck in this section in earnest.

WOULD YOU HAVE A BEAUTIFUL COMPLEXION

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Healthy beauty is the only kind that charms. Of what avail is the sallow prettiness of an invalid? Artificial beauty obtained by the use of lotions, washes and powders containing lead, zinc and bismuth is but a travesty—easily seen through. It is the plumpness of flesh and pure blood that makes people attractive. You cannot have health, good looks, rosy cheeks and bright, snappy eyes unless your blood is pure, rich and red. You cannot have that symmetry of development, that radiance of beauty and that healthy glow to your skin which is a guarantee of a pure, rigorous blood supply unless your stomach, liver and bowels are working together right. If you are constipated, if you have dyspepsia indigestion or an occasional attack of biliousness, there is reason enough why you have a bad complexion, but that is no excuse for your using cosmetics to cover up defects. Better use Smith's Pineapple and Butternut Pills to cleanse the blood of impurities, regulate the bowels and establish a normal condition of digestion and nutrition. Begin right and you will have no use for artificial beautifiers. Under the active influence of these wonderful little vegetable pills the blood is invigorated and enriched, the nerves are strengthened, the muscles take on new energy, the skin becomes rosy and red, showing the circulation is normal and active as Nature intended it should be. Try this plan, use Smith's Pineapple and Butternut Pills each night for two weeks and you will be astonished at the improvement. Depend upon it that these little pills will not only correct a bad complexion, but they always cure sick headache, constipation and biliousness in one night. Price 25 cents at all dealers.

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A CURE AT THE PEOPLES PRICE

ONCE LIVED IN ST. JOHN.

Mrs. Samuel C. Fessenden died in Stamford, Conn., Tuesday, at the age of 85. She was the mother of 11 children, two of whom are State Senator Samuel Fessenden and Major Joshua F. Fessenden, postmaster of Stamford. Her husband, who lived in Rockland, Me., was congressman from the district and later United States consul at St. John, N. B. He died 23 years ago. He was a brother of William Pitt Fessenden.

ALMOST PROHIBITION PENALTY.

"Justice David J. Brewer," said a Philadelphian, "made an address not long ago at Haverford. After this address there was an informal little reception, and very interesting it was to hear the justice talk. A Haverford boy said to the learned man during a lull in the conversation:

"'Will you please tell me, sir, what is the extreme penalty for bigamy?'

"Justice Brewer smiled and answered:

"'Two mothers-in-law.'"

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"IN A FOOL'S PARADISE."

The Liberal Ontario Globe Utters a Warning to the Dominion Government and Ontario Members of Parliament.

Those who suppose that opposition to the educational clauses in the Northwest autonomy bills is confined to Toronto, and that it is dependent on Orange-Toryism for its vitality, are living in a Fool's Paradise. It may be that the noisiest clamor is being made by Toronto Tories and by newspapers catering for ultra Protestant and Tory or quasi-Tory support. But such opposition is utterly without significance, and may safely be disregarded both by the public and by Parliament. And it may be, too, that public opinion on this and other questions is represented as inadequately and as uncertainly in a Toronto club as in the lobbies and smoking-rooms of the House of Commons. That point need not be argued.

But the point of capital importance and which cannot be disproved by shutting one's eyes to its undesired existence or by shouting bravely that it does not exist, is the unmistakable fact that not in Toronto alone but in scores of centres throughout this province the sanest and steadiest and most intelligent men cannot bring themselves to approve of the Dominion Parliament, on any pretext whatsoever, interfering in the educational affairs of the new provinces. The men who make this objection are not Tories. They are not Orangemen. They are Liberals. They are, some of them, the men who give virility and prestige to Liberalism in their constituencies, and without whom there would be no Liberal party worthy of the name. To ignore the fact of their opposition, to minimize its significance, or to misunderstand its quality is to play the part of children in a situation which demands the wisdom and courage of men.

Another delusion is the notion that this significant opposition is wholly based upon racial or religious prejudices. There are, to be sure, race-and-creed fanatics here and there throughout Ontario whose occupation would be gone and whose enjoyment of life would be destroyed were they unable periodically to raise a scare about "French-Canadian domination" or "the aggression of the hierarchy." But there is no endurance in any opposition they may excite; and if the present controversy is politically abortive it will in largest measure, be due to the public revolt from the part played by the leading organs of anti-French and anti-Catholic fanaticism. The opposition that counts, however, and that will survive when the frenzy of the professional fire-eaters is past, is the deliberate and convinced opposition of the men in dominantly Protestant constituencies who have never bowed the knee to the Baal of race-and-creed prejudice, and who again and again defended the inalienable rights of religious minorities against unjust political antagonism. There are Protestant Liberals who fought the P. P. A. and its minions in their anti-Catholic campaign in Ontario ten years ago, who would not join the Equal Rights movement or withdrew from it when it was delivered to baser purposes, and who in every campaign of bigotry since Confederation stood resolutely for the principle and the practice of religious tolerance and racial unity. To class those men and men of their spirit, with the Toronto sensationalists, or to regard their opposition as misguided or short-lived, is to comfort one's self in a Fool's Paradise.

Members of the Liberal party in the House of Commons would follow the counsels of prudence if, during the Easter recess, they sounded the most intelligent and most significant opinion of their leading support. The echo-voice of the purblind partisan is unimportant, and members of Parliament ought to guard against the soothing tones of those who would heal the hurt of the Liberal party lightly with their Peace! Peace! when there is no peace. A public man cannot afford to live in a Fool's Paradise.

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