POOR DOCUMENT

MC 2033

THE BANNER SERIES OF SELECTED SHORT STORIES

Collector of the Porte

By Robert W. Chambers

AUTHOR OF "THE MYSTERY OF CHOICE," "THE RED REPUBLIC," ETC.

Copyright by S. S. McClure & Co. and the Canada Newspaper Syndicate, and Published Exclusively in This Province by The Telegraph

"I will grow round him in his place,
Grow, live, die, looking on his face,
Die, dying clasp'd in his embrace."
—Tennyson.

I.

In winter the Porte is closed, the population migrates, the Collector of the Porte sails southward. There is nothing left but black rocks sheathed in ice where icy seas clash and splinter and white squalls howl across the headland. When the wind slackens and the inlet freezes, spotted seals swim up and down the ragged edges of the ice, sleek, restless heads raised, mild eyes fixed on the turbid shallows.

In January blizzard-driven snowy owls whirl into the pines and sit all day in the demi-twilight, the white ptarmigan covers the softer snow with winding tracks, and the white hare, huddled in his white "form," plays hide and seek with his own shadow.

In February the Porte-of-Waves is still untenanted. A few marauders appear, now and then a steel-gray panther from the north, frisking over the snow after the white hares; now and then a stub-tailed lynx, mean faced, famished, snarling up at the white owls, who look down and snap their beaks and hiss.

The first bud on the Indian willow brings the first habitant back to the Porte-of-Waves, Francis Lee, superintendent of the mica quarry. The quarrymen follow in batches; the willow tassels see them all there; the wind-flowers witness the defile of the first shift through the pines.

On the last day of May the company's flag was hoisted on the tool house, the French-Canadians came down to repair the rusty narrow-gauge railroad, and Lee, pipe lighted, sea jacket buttoned to his throat, chalking and condemning sleepers, blazing spruce and pine, sounding fish-plate and rail, and shouting at intervals until the washouts were shored up, windfalls hacked through, and landslide and boulder no longer blocked the progress of the company's sole locomotive.

The first of June brought sunshine and black flies, but not the Collector of the Porte. The Canadians went back to Sainte Isole, across the line; the white-throated sparrow's long, dreary melody broke out in the clearing's edge, but the Collector of the Porte did not return.

That evening Lee, smoking his pipe on the headland, looked out across the sunset-tinted ocean and saw the white gulls settling on the shoals and the fish hawks soaring overhead with the broad red sun glint on their wings. The smoke of a moss smudge kept the flies away; his own tobacco smoke drove care away. Incidentally, both drove Williams away—a mere lad, in baggy blue jeans, smooth faced, clear eyed, with sea tan on wrist and cheek.

"How did you cut your hand?" asked Lee, turning his head as Williams moved away.

"Mica," replied Williams, briefly. After a moment Williams started on again.

"Come back," said Lee; "that wasn't what I had to tell you."

He sat down on the headland, opened a jackknife and scraped the ashes out of his pipe. Williams came slowly up, and stood a few paces behind his shoulder.

"Sit down," said Lee.

Williams did not stir. Lee waited a moment, head slightly turned, but not far enough for him to see the figure motionless behind his shoulder.

"It's none of my business," began Lee, "but, perhaps, you had better know that you have deceived nobody. Finn came and spoke to me today. Dyce knows it; Carrots and Lefty Sawyer know it—I should have known it myself had I looked at you twice."

The June wind blowing over the grass carried two white butterflies over the cliff. Lee watched them struggle back to and again; Williams watched Lee.

"I don't know what to do," said Lee, after a silence; "it is not forbidden for women to work in the quarry, so far as I am aware. If you need work, and prefer that sort, and if you perform your work properly, I shall not interfere with you. And I'll see that the men do not."

Williams stood motionless; the smoke from the sumdge shifted west, then south.

"But," continued Lee, "I must enter your name properly on the payroll; I cannot approve of this masquerade. Finn will see you in the morning; it is unnecessary for me to repeat that you will not be disturbed."

There was no answer. After a silence Lee turned, then rose to his feet. Williams was weeping.

Lee had never noticed her face; both sun-tanned hands hid it now; her felt hat was pulled down over the forehead.

"Why do you come to the quarry?" he asked, soberly. She did not reply.

"It is men's work," he said; "look at your hands! You cannot do it."

She tightened her hands over her eyes; tears stole between her fingers and dropped, one by one on the young grass.

"If you need work—if you can find nothing else—I—I think, perhaps, I may manage something better," he said. "You must not stand there crying—listen! Here come Finn and Dyce, and I don't want them to talk all over the camp." Finn and Dyce came toiling up the headland with news that the west drain was choked. They glanced askance at Williams, who turned her back. The sea wind dried her eyes; it stung her torn hands, too. She unconsciously placed one aching finger in her mouth and looked out to sea.

"The dreen's bust by the second windfall," said Dyce, with a jerk of his stunted thumb toward the forest. "If them sluice props caves in, the timber's wasted."

Finn proposed new sluice gates; Lee objected, and swore roundly that, if the damage was not repaired by next evening, he'd hold Finn responsible. He told them he was there to save the company's money, not to experiment with it; he spoke sharply to Finn of last year's extravagance, and warned him not to trifle with orders.

"I pay you to follow my directions," he said; "do so, and I'll be responsible to the company; disobey, and I'll hold you to the chalk mark every time."

Finn sullenly shifted his quid and nodded; Dyce looked rebellious.

"You might as well know," continued Lee, "that I mean what I say. You'll find it out. Do your work, and we'll get on without trouble. You'll find I'm just."

When Dyce and Finn had shuffled away toward the coast, Lee looked at the figure outlined on the cliffs against the sunset sky—a desolate, lonely little figure in truth.

"Come," said Lee; "if you must have work, I will give you enough to keep you busy; put in the quarry, either—do you want to bury yourself in that pit? It's no place for children, anyway. Can you write properly?" The girl nodded, back turned toward him.

"Then you can keep the rolls, duplicates and all. You'll have a room for yourself in my shanty. I'll pay quarry wages."

He did not add that these wages must come out of his own pocket. The company allowed him no secretary, and he was too sensitive to suggest one.

"I don't ask you where you come from, or why you are here," he said, a little roughly. "If there is gossip, I cannot help it." He walked to the smudge and stood in the smoke, for the wind had died out, and the black flies were active.

"Perhaps," he hazarded, "you would like to go back to—to where you came from? I'll send you back."

She shook her head.

"There may be gossip in camp."

The slightest movement of her shoulders indicated her indifference. Lee relighted his pipe, poked the smudge and piled damp moss on it.

"All right," he said, "don't be unhappy; I'll do what I can to make you comfortable. You had better come into the smudge, to begin with."

She came, touching her eyes with her hands, awkward, hesitating. He looked gravely at her clumsy boots, at the loose, toil-stained overalls.

"What is your name?" he said, without embarrassment.

"My name is Helen Pine." She looked up at him steadily; after a moment she repeated her name, as though expecting him to recognize it. He did not; he had never before heard it, so far as he knew. Neither did he find in her eager, wistful face anything familiar. How should he remember her? Why should he remember? It was nearly six months ago that, snowbound in the little village on the Mohawk, he and the directors of his company left their private Pullman car to amuse themselves at a country dance. How should he recollect the dark-eyed girl who had danced the "fireman's quadrille" with him, who had romped through a reel or two with him, who amused him through a snowy evening. How should he recall the careless country incident—the corn-popping, the apple race, the flirtation on the dark, windy stairway? Who could expect him to remember the laughing kiss, the meaningless promises to write, the promises to return some day for another dance, and kiss? A week later he had forgotten the village, forgotten the dance, the popcorn, the stairway and the kiss. She never forgot. Had he told her he loved her? He forgot it before she replied. Had he amused himself? Passably. But he was glad that the snow ploughs cleared the track the next morning; for there was trouble in Albany and lobbying to do, and a rival company was moving wheels within wheels to lubricate the machinery of honest legislation.

So it meant nothing to him—this episode of a snow blockade; it meant all the world to her. For months she awaited the letter that never came. An Albany journal mentioned his name and profession. She wrote to the company, and learned where the quarry lay. She was young and foolish and nearly broken-hearted; so she ran away. Her first sentimental idea was to work herself to death, disguised, under his very eyes. When she lay dying she would reveal herself to him, and he should know too late the value of such a love. To this end she purchased some shears to cut her hair with; but the mental picture she conjured was not improved by such a sacrifice. She recoiled her hair tightly, and bought a slouch hat, too big. When, arrived at the quarry, she saw him again, she nearly fainted from fright. He met her twice face to face, and she was astounded that he did not recognize her. Reflection, however, assured her that her disguise must be perfect, and she awaited the dramatic moment when she should reveal herself—not dying from quarry toil, for she did not wish to die now that she had seen him. No—she would live—live to prove to him how a woman can love—live to confound him with her constancy. She had read many romances. Now, when he bade her follow him to the headland, she knew she had been discovered; she was weak with terror and shame and hope. She thought he knew her; when he spoke so coolly, she stood dumb with amazement; when he spoke of Finn and Sawyer and Dyce, she understood he had not penetrated her disguise, except from hearsay, and a terror of loneliness and desolation rushed over her. Then the impulse came to hide her identity from him—why, she did not know. Again that vanished when he called her to come into the smoke. As she looked up at him her heart almost stopped; yet he did not recognize her. Then the courage of despair seized her, and she told her name. When at length she comprehended that he had entirely forgotten her, forgotten her very name, fright sealed her lips. All the hopelessness and horror of her position dawned upon her—all she had believed, expected, prayed for, came down with a crash.

As they stood together in the smoke of the smudge she mechanically laid her hand on his sleeve, for her knees scarcely supported her.

"What is it; does the smoke make you dizzy?" he asked. She nodded; he aided her to the cliff's edge, and seated her on a boulder. Under the cliff the sunset light reddened the sea. A quarryman, standing on a rock, looked up at Lee and pointed seaward.

"Hello!" answered Lee, "what is it? The Collector of the Porte?" Other quarrymen, grouped on the coast, took up the cry; the lumbermen, returning from the forest along the inlet, paused, axe on shoulder, to stare at the sea. Presently, out in the calm ocean, a black triangle cut the surface, dipped, glided landward, dipped, glided, disappeared. Again the dark point came into view, now close under the cliff, where thirty feet of limpid water bathes its base.

"The Collector of the Porte!" shouted Finn from the rocks. Lee bent over the cliff's brink. Far down into the clear water he followed the outline of the cliff. Under it a shadowy bulk floated, a monstrous shark, rubbing its length softly, as if in greeting for old acquaintance sake. The Collector of the Porte had returned from the South.

II.

The Collector of the Porte and the company were rivals; both killed their men, the one at sea, the other in the quarry. The company objected to pelagic slaughter, and sent some men with harpoons, bombs and shark-hooks to the Porte; but the Collector sheered off to sea, and waited for them to go away.

The company could not keep the quarrymen from bathing; Lee could not keep the Collector from Porte-of-Waves. Every year two or three quarrymen fell to his share; the company killed the even half dozen. Years before the quarrymen had named the shark; the name fascinated everybody with its sinister convention-ality. In truth, he was Collector of the Porte—an official who took toll of all who ventured from this Porte, where nothing entered from the sea save the sea itself, wave on wave after wave.

"In the superintendent's office there were two rolls of victims—victims of the quarry and victims of the Collector of the Porte. Pensions were not allowed to families of the latter class; so, as Dyce said to Dyce's dying brother, "Thank God you was blowed up, an' say no more about it, Hank."

There was curiously enough, little animosity against the Collector of the Porte among the quarrymen. When June brought the great shark back to the Porte they welcomed him with sticks of dynamite; but, nevertheless, a weird sense of proprietorship, of exclusive right in the biggest shark on the coast, aroused in the quarrymen a sentiment almost akin to pride. Between the shark and the men existed an uncanny comradeship, curiously in evidence when the company's imported shark-destroyers appeared at the Porte.

"G'wan now," observed Farrely, "an' divil a shark ye'll get in the wather, me bucks! Is it sharks ye'll harpoon? Sure th' company's full o' thim."

The shark-catchers, harpoons, bombs and hooks, retired after a month's useless worrying, and the men jeered them as they embarked on the gravel train.

"Dhrop a dynamite shtick on the nob av his nibs!" shouted Farrely after them—meaning the president of the company. The next day little Caesar l'Hommedieu, indulging in his semi-annual bath, was appreciated and accepted by the Collector of the Porte, and his name was added to the unpensioned roll in the office of the company's superintendent, Francis Lee.

Helen Pine, sitting alone in her room, copied the roll, made out the duplicate, erased little Caesar's name from the pay-roll, computed the total back pay due him and made an order on the company for $10.39. Then she rose, stepped quietly into Lee's office, which adjoined her own room, and silently handed him the order.

Lee was busy and motioned her to be seated. Dyce and Finn, hats in hand, looked obliquely at her as she seated herself and leaned on the window ledge, face turned toward the sea. She heard Lee say: "Go on, Finn;" and Finn began again in his smooth, plausible voice:

"I opened the safe on a flat car, an' God knows who uncoupled the flat. Then Dyce signaled go ahead, but Henderson, he sez, Dyce signaled to back her up, an' the first I see was that flat hangin' over the dump dock. Then she tipped up like a see-saw, an' slid the safe into the water—fifty-eight feet sheer at low tide."

Lee, pale about the lips, said quietly: "Rig a derrick on the dump dock, and tell Kinny to get his diving kit ready by 3 o'clock.

Finn and Dyce exchanged glances.

"Kinny, he went to Bangor last night to see about them new drills," said Finn, defiantly.

"Who sent him?" asked Lee, angrily.

"Oh, you did, eh?"

"I thought you wanted them drills," repeated Finn.

Lee's eyes turned from Finn to Dyce. There was, in the sullen faces before him, something that he had never before seen, something worse than sinister. He recognized it instantly. The next moment he said pleasantly: "Well, then, tell Lefty Sawyer to take his diving kit and be ready by 3. If you need a new ladder at the dump dock, send one there by noon. That is all, men."

When Finn and Dyce had gone, Lee sprang to his feet and began to pace the office. Once he stopped to light his pipe; once he jerked open the top drawer of his table and glanced at a pair of heavy Colt revolvers lying there, cocked and loaded. He sat down at his desk after a while and spoke, perhaps half unconsciously, to Helen, as though he had been speaking to her since Finn and Dyce left:

"They're a hard crowd, a rough lot, and I knew it would come to a crisis sooner or later. Last year they drove the other superintendent to resign, and I was warned to look out for myself. Now they see that they can't use me, and they mean to get rid of me. How dared the messenger unlock the safe before I was notified?"

She turned from the window as he finished; he looked at her without seeing the oval face, the dark, questioning eyes, the young, rounded figure involuntarily bending toward him.

"They tipped that safe off the dock on purpose," he said, "they sent Kinny to Bangor on a fool's errand. Now Sawyer's got to go down and see what can be done. I know what he'll say. He'll report the safe broken and one or two cash boxes missing, and he'll bring up the rest and wait for a chance to divide with his gang."

He started to his feet and began to pace the floor again, talking all the while:

"It's come to a crisis now, and I'm not going under—if any one should ask you! I'll face them down; I'll break that gang as they break stone! If I only knew how to use a diving kit—and if I dared—with Dyce at the life line—"

Half an hour later Lee, seated at his desk, raised his pale face from his hands and, for the first time, became conscious that Helen sat watching him beside the window.

"Can I do anything for you?" he asked with an effort.

She held the order out to him; he took it, examined it, and, picking up a pen, signed his name.

"Forward it to the company," he said, "Caesar's family will collect it quicker than the shark collected Caesar."

He did not mean to shock the girl with cynicism; indeed, it was only such artificial indifference that enabled him to endure the misery of the Porte-of-Waves—misery that came under his eyes from sea and land—interminable, hopeless, human woe.

What could he do for the lacerated creatures at the quarry? He had only his salary. What could he do for families made destitute? The mica crushed and cut and blinded; the Collector of the Porte exacted bloody toll in spite of him. He could not drive the dust-choked, half-maddened quarrymen from their one solace and balm, the cool, healing ocean; he could not drive the Collector from the Porte-of-Waves.

"I didn't mean to speak unfeelingly," he said: "I feel such things very deeply."

To the surprise and displeasure, she replied: "I did not know you felt anything."

She grew scarlet after she said it; he stared at her steadily.

"Do you regard me as brutal?" he asked, sarcastically.

"No," she said, steadying her voice; "you are not brutal; one must be human to be brutal."

Conscious of the epigram, he looked at her half angrily, half inclined to laugh.

"You mean I'm devoid of human feeling?"

"I am not here to criticize my employer," she answered, faintly.

"Oh—but you have."

She was silent.

"You said you were not aware that I felt anything. Criticism is implied, isn't it?" he persisted, with boyish impatience.

She did not reply.

He thought to himself: "I took her from the quarry, and this is what I get." She divined his thought, and turned a little pale. She could have answered: "And you sent me to the quarry—for the memory of a kiss." But she did not speak.

Watching her curiously, he noticed the gray woolen gown, the spotless collar and cuffs, the light on her hair like light on watered silk. Her young face was turned toward the window. For the first time it occurred to him that she might be lonely. He wondered where she came from, why she had sought Porte-of-Waves among all places on earth; what tragedy could have driven her from kin and kind to the haunts of men. She seemed so utterly alone, so hopelessly dependent, so young, that his conscience smote him, and he resolved to be a little companionable toward her, so far as his position of superintendent permitted. True he could not do much; and whatever he might do would, perhaps, be misinterpreted by her, certainly by the quarrymen.

"A safe fell off the dock today," he said, pleasantly, forgetting she had been present at the announcement of disaster by Finn and Dyce. "Would you like to see the diver go down?"

She turned toward him and smiled.

"It might interest you," he went on, surprised at the beauty of her eyes; "we're going to try to hoist the safe out of fifty-odd feet of water—unless it is smashed on the rocks. Come down when I go at 3 o'clock."

As he spoke his face grew grave, and he glanced at the open drawer by his elbow, where two blue revolver barrels lay shining in the morning light.

At noon she went into her little room, locked the door, and sat down on the bed. She cried steadily till 2 o'clock; from 2 to 3 she spent the time in obliterating all traces of tears; at 3 he knocked at her door, and she opened it, fresh, dainty, smiling, and joined him, tying the strings of a pink sunbonnet under her oval chin.

III.

The afternoon sun beat down on the dump dock, where the derrick swung like a stumpy gallows against the sky. A dozen hard-faced, silent quarrymen sat around in groups on the string piece; Farrely raked out the fire in the rusty little engine; Finn and Dyce whispered together, glowering at Lefty Sawyer, who stood dripping in his diving suit while Lee unscrewed the helmet and disentangled the lines.

Behind Lee, Helen Pine sat on a pile of condemned sleepers, nervously twisting and untwisting the strings of her sunbonnet.

When Sawyer was able to hear and to be heard, Lee listened, tight lipped and hard eyed, to a report that brought a malicious sneer to Finn's face and a twinkle of triumph into Dyce's dissipated eyes.

"The safe is smashed an' the door open. Them there eight cash boxes is all that I can see." He pointed to the pile of steel boxes, still glistening with salt water, and already streaked and blotched with orange-colored rust.

"There are ten boxes," said Lee, coldly; "go down again."

Unwillingly, sullenly, Lefty Sawyer suffered himself to be invested with the heavy helmet; the lines and tubes were adjusted, Dyce superintended the descent and Finn seized the signal cord. After a minute it twitched; Lee grew white with anger; Dyce turned away to conceal a grin.

When again Sawyer stood on the dock and reported that the two cash boxes were hopelessly ingulfed in the mud, Lee sternly bade him divest himself of the diving suit with reasonable celerity.

"What you goin' to do?" asked Finn, coming up.

"Is it your place to ask questions?" said Lee, sharply. "Obey orders or you'll regret it."

"He's goin' down himself," whispered Dyce to Sawyer. The diver cast a savage glance at Lee, and hesitated.

"Take off that suit!" repeated Lee.

Finn, scowling with anger, attempted to speak, but Lee turned on him and bade him to be silent.

Slowly Sawyer divested himself of the clumsy diving suit; one after the other he pushed the leaden-soled shoes from him. Lee watched him with mixed emotions. He had gone too far to go back now—he understood that. Flinching at such a moment meant chaos in the quarry, and he knew that the last shred of his authority and control would go if he hesitated. Yet, with all his heart and soul, he shrank from going down into the sea. What might not such men do? Dyce held the life line. A moment or two of suffocation—would such men hesitate? Accidents are so easy to prove, and signals may be easily misunderstood. He laid a brace of heavy revolvers on the dock and smiled.

As Dyce lifted the helmet upon his shoulders he caught a last glimpse of sunlight and blue sky and green leaves—a brief vision of dark, brutal faces—of Helen Pine's colorless, frightened face. Then he felt himself on the dock ladder, then a thousand tons seemed to fall from his feet, and the dusky ocean enveloped him.

On the dump dock silence reigned. After a moment or two Finn whispered to Sawyer; Dyce joined the group; Farrely whitened a bit under his brick-red sunburn, and pretended to fuss at his engine.

Helen Pine, heart beating furiously, watched them. She did not know what they were going to do—what they were doing now with the air tubes. She did not understand such things, but she saw a line suddenly twitch in Dyce's fingers, and she saw murder in Finn's eyes.

Before she knew what she was doing she found herself clutching both of Lee's revolvers.

Finn saw her and stood petrified; Dyce gaped at the leveled muzzles. Nobody moved.

After a little while the line in Dyce's hand twitched violently; Finn started and swore; Sawyer said distinctly: "Cut that line!"

The next instant she fired at him point blank, and he dropped to the bleached boards with a howl of dismay. The crack of the revolver echoed and echoed among the rocks; a silence that startled followed. Presently, behind his engine, Farrely began to laugh; two quarrymen near him got up and shumbled hastily away.

"Draw him up!" gasped the girl, with a desperate glance at the water.

Finn, a foreman, cursed and flung down his lines, and walked away, cursing.

"Take the lines, Noonan!" she cried, breathlessly. "Dyce! pull him up!"

When the great blank-eyed helmet appeared, she watched it as though hypnotized. When, dragging his leaden feet, Lee stumbled to the dock and flung one of the two missing cash boxes at Dyce's feet, she grew dizzy, and her little hands ached with their grip on the heavy weapons.

Sawyer, stupid, clutching his shattered forearm, never removed his eyes from her face; Dyce unscrewed the helmet, shaking with fright.

"There, you lying blackguard!" gasped Lee, pointing to the recovered cash box, "take them all to my office, where I'll settle with you once and for all! I'll find the other tomorrow."

Nobody replied. Lee, flushed with excitement and triumph, stripped off his diving dress before he became aware that something beside his own episode had occurred. Then he saw Lefty Sawyer, bedabbled with blood, staring with sick, [illegible] who sat huddled on a heap of sun-dried sleepers, sunbonnet fallen back, cocked revolver in either hand, and, in her dark eyes, tears that flowed silently over her colorless cheeks.

He glared at Dyce.

"Ask her," muttered Dyce, doggedly.

He turned towards Helen, but Farrely, behind his engine, shouted: "Faith, she stood off th' gang or the breathin' below wud ha' choked ye! Thank the lass, lad, an' mind she's a gun whin ye go worritin' the fishes for the company's cash box!"

* * * * * * *

That night Lee made a speech at the quarry. The men listened placidly. Dyce, amazed that he was not discharged, went back to nurse Sawyer, a thoroughly cowed man. Noonan, Farrely and Phelan retired to their shanty and got fighting drunk to the health of the "colleen wid the gun"; the rest of the men went away with wholesome convictions concerning their superintendent that promised better things.

"Didn't fire Dyce—no, he didn't," was the whispered comment.

Lee's policy had done its work.

As for the murderous mover of the plot, the plausible foreman, Finn, he had shown the white feather under fire, and he knew the men might kill him on sight. It's an Irish characteristic under such circumstances.

Lee walked back from the quarry, realizing his triumph, recognizing that he owed it neither to his fool-hardy impulse nor yet to his mercy to Dyce and Sawyer. He went to the house and knocked at Helen's door. She was not there. He sat alone in his office, absently playing with pen and ruler, until the June moon rose over the ocean and yellow sparkles flashed among the waves. An hour later he went to the dock, and found her sitting there alone in the moonlight.

She did not repulse him. Her innocent hour had come, and she knew it, for she had read such things in romance. It came. But she was too much in love, too sincere, to use a setting so dramatic. She told him she loved him; she told him why she had come to the Porte-of-Waves, why she had remembered the kiss and the promise. She rested her head on his shoulder and looked out at the moon, smaller and more silvery now. She was contented.

Under the dock the dark waves lapped musically. Under the dock Finn, stripped to the skin, plunged silently downward for the last cash box, trusting to sense of touch to find the safe.

But what he found was too horrible for words.

"Hark," whispered Helen; "did you hear something splash?"

Lee looked out into the moonlight; a shadow, a black triangular fin, cut the silvery surface, steered hither and thither—circled, sheered seaward, and was lost. Then came another splash, far out among the waves.

"The Collector of the Porte," said Lee; "he is making merry in the moonlight."

THE END.

When the Great Blank-eyed Helmet Appeared She Watched It as Though Hypnotized

NO ONE

WHO HAS EVER SEEN OR HEARD THE HELPLESS CHOKING OF A CONSUMPTIVE

CAN THINK LIGHTLY OF A COUGH

A single dose of Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup will convince you that it will stop the cough, sooth the throat, and start you on the road to recovery.

DR. WOOD'S NORWAY PINE SYRUP

is rich in the healing virtues of the Norway pine tree, skilfully combined with Wild Cherry Bark and the soothing and expectorant properties of other pectoral balsams, forming the pleasant, safe and effectual medicine for Coughs and Colds, Hoarseness, Sore Throat, Pain in the Chest, Asthma, Bronchitis, Croup, Whooping Cough, Quinsy and all troubles of the Throat and Lungs.

Be sure and do not accept a substitute for Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup. The genuine is put up in a yellow wrapper, three pine trees the trade mark, and the price 25 cts.

HAS NO EQUAL

"I had a very bad cold which settled on my lungs. I tried many remedies but could get no relief. On the advice of a friend I procured a bottle of Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup. Before the bottle was half finished I had not the slightest trace of a cough, and in my opinion Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup has no equal as a cure for coughs, colds, or any affection of the throat and lungs.

J. J. McINNIS, Woodbine, N.S.

Hotel Men's Fight With Rats

(Washington Post.)

"Of all the lower classes of animals, rats are the greatest criminals, and were it not that we wage against them a constant warfare, the people who run hotels would have to go out of business," said the proprietor of one of Washington's finest establishments. "The only satisfactory plan of keeping them down that I know of is the employment of a professional rat killer. I have a standing contract with a Baltimore man, who comes over there at least once a month to destroy the rodents. He goes after them with ferrets and dogs and an air rifle. I think he puts more reliance on the gun than his other agents, and in a day he will kill from forty to fifty with leaden bullets. Once he gets a bead on a rat there is no chance of its escape."

"Eternal vigilance is the only way of keeping your house free of the pests, but this is a measure of self-preservation," said another hotel proprietor. "I find the only effectual mode of reducing them in numbers is to set traps which have been properly baited. This has been been with me an unfailing remedy, but my traps are faithfully attended by a man who has been fighting rats in this house for twenty years. He never lets up his campaign of slaughter, and yet to free the place absolutely from the vermin seems an impossibility."

Farmer Murdered Woodchopper

Woodstock, Vt., Dec. 2—"I suppose I shall hang for this," remarked William Allard, a farmed of Bridgewater, as he was being locked up in Woodstock jail tonight, charged with the murder of Thomas McCormack, a woodchopper, whose home is not known. The latter's body was found on the steps of Allard's house tonight. The police later arrested Allard at his home, and it is alleged the accused man confessed tonight. He threatened McCormack with an axe several times, and it is supposed that he killed him.