

The Crimson Blind

By FRED. M. WHITE

CHAPTER XXXIX.

The Fascination of Mrs. Merritt. On the whole Mr. James Merritt, ex-convict and humanitarian, was enjoying himself immensely. He did not sleep at the castle, for Lord Belmont drew the line there, but he contrived to get most of his meals under that hospitable roof, and spent a deal of time there. It was by no means the first time he had been "taken up" by the aristocracy since his conversion, and his shyness was wearing off. Moreover, Henson had given his henchman strict instructions to keep his eyes open with a view to getting at the bottom of the Rembrandt mystery.

Still, there is always a crumpled leaf left somewhere, and Merritt had had a few days after Henson's departure so hurriedly from town the stolen Rembrandt disappeared from Merritt's rooms. Nobody knew anything about it; the thing had vanished. "You are going to see some fun presently," she said, coolly, to the astonished Merritt, as she laid the missing picture before him. "No, I shall not tell you anything more at present. You shall hear the whole story when Reginald Henson stands in the pillory before you. You know now that Henson was at the bottom of the plot to destroy Dr. Bell's health, and that he was a great scoundrel." Littimer purred over his cigarette. "And if you succeed in exposing him thoroughly I shall watch the performance with the greatest possible pleasure. I am not curious, my dear young lady, but I would give sixpence to know who you are."

"I hope so," Chris said, with a curling lip. "You look guilty enough now." Merritt explained that it was merely the first emotion, and would pass off presently. Nor did he boast in vain. He was quite cool as the officers came up and called him by name. "That's me," Merritt said. "What's the trouble?" One of the officers explained. He had no warrant to issue, but all the same he would have to trouble Mr. Merritt to accompany him to Moreton Wells. A diamond star had been found in possession of a gentleman in a blue coat which he expected at Littimer Castle at any moment. The police were coming, and Merritt was late to-day. If Merritt failed to turn up the whole situation would be spoiled. It was with a feeling of unutterable relief that Chris saw him coming up the drive.

"Come on the terrace," she said, "I have something very serious to say to you. Mr. Merritt, you have got us both into very serious trouble. Why did you do it?" "Ah! no very serious," Merritt said, doggedly. He repeated the old formula. "What's up?" "Er—it's about my diamond star," said Chris. "I lost it a few days ago. If I had known what was going to happen I should have put up with my loss. But I made inquiries through the police without saying a word to anybody, and now I find the star was pawned in Moreton Wells."

"Oh, lor," Merritt gasped. "You don't mean to say the police know that, miss?" "Indeed I do. You see, once I allowed matters to go out of my hands I was powerless. The case now rests entirely with the police. And I am informed that they may come here and arrest you at any moment. I fear there is no escape for you, you must do the thing yourself in your own name. What a thousand pities you yielded to sudden temptation."

"But I found it," Merritt whined. "I'll take my oath as I found it on the terrace. I—I was rambling along the cliffs one day and I found it. And I didn't know it was yours. If I had known it was yours, I'd never have gone and done no such a thing." Chris shook her head sadly. "And just as you were getting on so nicely," she said.

"That's it," Merritt whined, brokenly. "Just as I was properly spooning everybody as I—I mean just as I was getting used to a better life. But you can save me, miss; you can say as you were hard up for money and that, knowing as I know the ropes, you got me to pawn it for you. Put it in that way and there's not a policeman in England as can touch me."

"I had thought of it," Chris said, with a pretty assumption of distress. "But, Mr. Merritt, I have a terrible confession to make. I was not I who started the police; it was somebody else. You see, the star was some property of all, I—I got it in London."

Mr. Merritt looked up with involuntary admiration. "You don't mean to say as you nicked it?" he asked. "Well, well." Chris bent her face lower to conceal her agitation. Her shoulders were heaving, but not with emotion. The warmth of Merritt's admiration had moved her to silent laughter, and she had made the exact impression that she had desired.

"I have telegraphed to the lady, who is my best friend of mine," she said. "I have urged her to take no further steps in the matter. I fancy that she is a good and kind girl and that—but a reply might come at any time." "There was a reply on the way now, as Chris knew perfectly well. The whole thing had been carefully arranged and planned to the moment by Steel and the others.

"I dare say they'll let you down easy," Merritt said, disconsolately. "But I'll be hot for me. I've copped it too many times before, you see." "Yes, I see," Chris said, thoughtfully. "After what you've done for me, if I had not—er—borrowed that star, it would not have been lost, and you would not have found it, and there would have been no trouble. My conscience would not rest if I allowed you to be dragged back into the old life again. I am going to save you—I am going to tell the police that you pawned that star for me at my instigation."

Merritt was touched even to tears. There was not an atom of chivalry in the rascal's composition. He had little or no need for the trouble that his companion appeared to be piling up for herself, but he was touched to the depths of his soul. Here was a clever girl, who in her own way appeared to be a member of his profession, who was prepared to sacrifice herself to save another. Self-sacrifice is a beautiful and tender thing, and Merritt had a notion of thwarting it.

"What, and I'm your pal for life," he huskily. "And I never went to a prison yet. Ask anybody, they'll know me. 'Tain't as if you weren't one of us, neither. I'd give a trifle to know what your little game is here, eh?" Chris smiled meaningly. Merritt's delusion was distinctly to be fostered. "You shall help me then, presently," she said in a mysterious whisper. "Help me and keep your own counsel, and there will be the biggest job you ever had in your life. Only let you and I get out of this mess, and we shall see what we shall see presently."

Merritt looked speechless admiration. He had read of the class of high-toned criminals in the gutter stories peddled by certain publishers, but he had never hoped to meet one in the flesh. He was still gazing open-mouthed at Chris as two men came along the avenue. They were both in plain clothes, but they had "policeman" writ large all over them. "Cops, for a million," Merritt gurgled, as he pallid face. "You can tell 'em when you're asleep. And they are after me; they're coming this way. I'll be all right presently."

Merritt's heart was gained. His pride was touched. "Go back on you!" he cried, hoarsely. "After what you've done for me, only give old Jim Merritt a call, and it's pitch-and-toss to manna for those pretty eyes of yours. Good day's work! Aye, for both of us." And Chris thought so too.

CHAPTER XL.

A Useful Discovery. Waiting with the eagerness of the greyhound in leash, David Steel was more annoyed and vexed over the appearance of the wounded Van Sneek than he cared to admit. He had an uneasy feeling that the unseen foe had checkmated him again. And he had built up so many hopes upon this strangely-uninvited guest of his. If that man spoke he could tell the truth. And both Cross and Bell had declared that he would not lie.

As soon as the result of the election last night became known Hon. Mr. Templeman was the recipient of enthusiastic congratulations by friends, not only in Victoria but throughout Canada. Among the first to arrive was one from the veteran chief of the party, the First Minister of Canada and this was followed by others from less distinguished sources, but of equal heartiness. Some of these received were as follows:

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It was a meeting of the police commissioners yesterday afternoon at which it was agreed that the recent action in reference to Sunday closing and the removal of the nickel-in-the-slot machines was giving general satisfaction, and that it be continued. In respect to the latter, the judgment in the Morris case given in October, 1899, was submitted. As will be remembered this was a test case at that time. E. A. Morris was charged with running a common gambling house, and the nickel-in-the-slot-machine was made the chief feature. The use of the machine the defendant did not deny, but he claimed that it was not a gambling device—that it was not played for money. The jury which tried the case found Morris guilty, and Judge Walker allowed him out on his own recognizance to appear for sentence when called upon.

His Worship the mayor pointed out that the use of this machine was prohibited in San Francisco, Seattle and other cities and submitted several newspaper extracts in support of the action.

The recommendation of Chief Langley, that six additional constables be appointed, was turned down, but it was agreed to establish a telephone service which would facilitate matters. The telephone boxes will be placed in different locations throughout the city, from which the men on duty can communicate with police headquarters at regular intervals.

The resignation of Constable W. H. Best was accepted, and Victor Hender, employed by the B. C. Cold Storage Company, appointed in his stead. There were several applicants for the position, and of these three were selected for a future call.

THE ORIGIN OF CATARRH IS INTERESTING, BUT A TRUE CURE IS WHAT YOU SELDOM FIND. Scarcely anyone escapes catarrh in some form. At first it is a cold. But each day makes it more sickening and offensive.

Some spots are healed, inflammation subsides, the mucous membranes are cleansed and strengthened, the cause of the trouble being cured by Catarrhine, through cure quickly follows.

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CONGRATULATIONS TO NEW MINISTER

IS RECIPIENT OF HEARTY WELL WISHES

Sir Wilfrid Laurier Thanks Supporters of Mr. Templeman—Telegrams From Gratified Friends.

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150-Mile House, B. C., March 7, '06. Hon. Wm. Templeman, Victoria: Congratulations on your victory. There are pleased tumbuts at 150-Mile House. SWINERTON & LEIGHTON.

OPENING OF THE DOMINION HOUSE

EARL GREY READS SPEECH FROM THRONE

No Reference Made to Tariff Revision—Parliament Likely to Be Summoned in Fall.

Ottawa, March 8.—The second session of the tenth parliament of the Dominion of Canada was opened today by Lord Grey. There was a large attendance inside and outside the parliament buildings, and interest in the function was as great as in past years. The fact that the opening was some two months later than last year did not in any way detract from the enthusiasm of the occasion.

As is always the case the escort which accompanied the viceregal carriage from Government House to the parliament buildings was supplied by the Princess Louise Dragoon Guards, and the guard of honor which received His Excellency at the main entrance to the House of Commons was from the Governor-General's foot guards. The usual salute was fired from Niagara point as Lord Grey proceeded to the senate and delivered the following speech from the throne:

Hon. Gentlemen of the Senate; Gentlemen of the House of Commons: In again summoning you to meet for the dispatch of business I am glad to be able to congratulate you on the prosperity prevailing throughout the Dominion.

The severe bereavement which Queen Alexandra has sustained through the death of her father, the King of Denmark, has occasioned much sorrow throughout the empire, and I am satisfied that the warm sympathy of the people of Canada will be readily extended to Her Majesty.

It afforded me much pleasure as the usual construction of the waterways commission will be laid before you. The work of the joint commission has been somewhat delayed owing to a doubt as to the jurisdiction of the American section on the waters dividing the two countries and the opportunity for the generating of electric power at many points necessarily involves questions which can only be dealt with by international arrangement or by treaty. At Niagara the commission will have to consider how best to preserve the scenic effect of the falls, while not unduly restricting the use of the flow of Niagara river so valuable for power purposes.

A report has been received from the transportation commission containing several recommendations. The document will be laid before you. The legal experts appointed to revise, classify and consolidate the public general statutes issued since the revision in 1898, have completed their task and it is expected that the volumes will be ready for distribution before July.

A measure for the better observance of the Lord's day will be submitted for your consideration. You will be invited to consider among other subjects bills to amend the Railway act, an act respecting usury and also the Denmark, Immigration Act. Gentlemen of the House of Commons: The accounts of the past year will be laid before you. The estimates for the nine months, embracing a portion of the proposed fiscal year terminating on the 31st of March, 1907, will be submitted for your approval at an early date.

Hon. Gentlemen of the Senate, Gentlemen of the House of Commons: I invite your earnest attention to the several subjects I have mentioned and to the general business that will come before you and I trust your deliberations will be guided by wisdom and moderation.

May Meet in Fall. Ottawa, March 8.—The one great surprise in the speech from the throne is that no reference is made to tariff revision. Until to-day the general opinion was that there would be a tariff session. If that were to be the case some notice would be made of it in the speech. The talk is that there will be no tariff revision this session, but that it has been put off until fall when parliament will be summoned to deal with it. Nothing official can be obtained on this point. The likelihood, however, is that an effort will be made to have a short session just now and to meet soon again.

There is no doubt the unfortunate accident to the finance minister would make the budget somewhat late, if it were taken up at the approaching session and there would be no interests that would suffer by postponing revision for a few months longer. Indeed the general opinion is that the tariff is working well.

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Additional Messages Received by Hon. Mr. Templeman from Various Sections of the Dominion. Hon. Mr. Templeman was in receipt last night of a large number of congratulatory messages in addition to those received by him on the evening of the election. Among those received last night were the following:

SEATTLE MAYORALTY. Result is Still in Doubt—Riplinger Is Leading. Seattle, March 7.—Complete returns of 68 out of 96 precincts give John Riplinger, Republican candidate for mayor, a plurality over Wm. M. Moore, Republican ownership. The result is in doubt.

OFFENSIVE BREATH. It is usually caused by constipation, which permits virulent matter to collect in the system. To have your breath sweet, keep the bowels regular. Let Dr. Hamilton's Pills assist you. A treaty on behalf of Canada has now been concluded between the United Kingdom and Japan, which it is confidently hoped will largely increase our trade with the people of that progressive empire. When the formal documents have been received they will be laid before you.

The rapid destruction of our forest now going on will, unless the operations of the lumbermen be prudently regulated in the future and a system of reforestation adopted, result in grave consequences affecting the uni-

form flow of our rivers and limiting our valuable water powers to a few months in the year. A bill will be presented for your consideration empowering the government to set apart reserved reserves on lands under its control. In accordance with the offer made by my ministers to the government of the United Kingdom, the Imperial treasury companies in the neighboring Republic has naturally created some uneasiness in the public mind as to the condition of Canadian companies. A commission has therefore been appointed to inquire into and report on the management and financial standing not only of companies holding Canadian charters, but also of all companies doing business under license in Canada. Satisfactory progress is being made in the exploration and surveys of the eastern division of the national transportation railway and it is expected that the construction of the important sections, embracing together about 400 miles, will shortly be commenced. The interim report of the Canadian section of the international waterways commission will be laid before you. The work of the joint commission has been somewhat delayed owing to a doubt as to the jurisdiction of the American section on the waters dividing the two countries and the opportunity for the generating of electric power at many points necessarily involves questions which can only be dealt with by international arrangement or by treaty. At Niagara the commission will have to consider how best to preserve the scenic effect of the falls, while not unduly restricting the use of the flow of Niagara river so valuable for power purposes. A report has been received from the transportation commission containing several recommendations. The document will be laid before you. The legal experts appointed to revise, classify and consolidate the public general statutes issued since the revision in 1898, have completed their task and it is expected that the volumes will be ready for distribution before July. A measure for the better observance of the Lord's day will be submitted for your consideration. You will be invited to consider among other subjects bills to amend the Railway act, an act respecting usury and also the Denmark, Immigration Act. Gentlemen of the House of Commons: The accounts of the past year will be laid before you. The estimates for the nine months, embracing a portion of the proposed fiscal year terminating on the 31st of March, 1907, will be submitted for your approval at an early date. Hon. Gentlemen of the Senate, Gentlemen of the House of Commons: I invite your earnest attention to the several subjects I have mentioned and to the general business that will come before you and I trust your deliberations will be guided by wisdom and moderation. May Meet in Fall. Ottawa, March 8.—The one great surprise in the speech from the throne is that no reference is made to tariff revision. Until to-day the general opinion was that there would be a tariff session. If that were to be the case some notice would be made of it in the speech. The talk is that there will be no tariff revision this session, but that it has been put off until fall when parliament will be summoned to deal with it. Nothing official can be obtained on this point. The likelihood, however, is that an effort will be made to have a short session just now and to meet soon again. There is no doubt the unfortunate accident to the finance minister would make the budget somewhat late, if it were taken up at the approaching session and there would be no interests that would suffer by postponing revision for a few months longer. Indeed the general opinion is that the tariff is working well. Ottawa, March 8.—Sir Wilfrid Laurier announced in the House to-day that there would be no tariff revision this session, but that it has been put off until fall when parliament will be summoned to deal with the tariff.

SEEN FROM THE PRESS GALLERY



John Oliver Quotes the Columbia and Western Subsidy Bill to Prove that the Government has Refused Settlers Their Rights.

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John Oliver Exposes Incoherence of McBride Administration—Tricks Exposed. (Continued from Monday) North Vancouver. On the second reading of the incorporation of North Vancouver Bill, Mr. J. F. Gorden moved a resolution that the bill be passed its second reading. Speaker Will De-

Mr. Oliver pointed out that the Municipal Act could be amended to give the Municipal Council the right to incorporate a city. He said that the Municipal Council should be empowered to do so. He said that the Municipal Council should be empowered to do so. He said that the Municipal Council should be empowered to do so.

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