

In The Fog

BY
Richard Harding Davis.

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the table. But their faces gave evidence of no other emotion than that of ordinary interest.

"Yes, the Czarina's diamonds," repeated the man with the black tie. "It was a necklace of diamonds. I was told to take them to the Russian Ambassador in Paris who was to deliver them at Moscow. I am a Queen's Messenger," he added.

"Oh, I see," exclaimed Sir Andrew in a tone of relief. "And you say that this same Princess Zichy, one of the victims of this double murder, endeavored to rob you of—that cigar-case?"

"And the Czarina's diamonds," answered the Queen's Messenger imperturbably. "It's not much of a story, but it gives you an idea of the woman's character. The robbery took place between Paris and Marseilles."

The Baronet interrupted him with an abrupt movement. "No, no," he cried, shaking his head in protest. "Do not tempt me. I really cannot listen. I must be at the House in ten minutes."

"I am sorry," said the Queen's Messenger. He turned to those seated about him. "I wonder if the other gentlemen"—he inquired tentatively. There was a chorus of polite murmurs, and the Queen's Messenger, bowing his head in acknowledgment, took a preparatory sip from his glass. At the same moment the servant to whom the man with the black pearl had spoken, slipped a piece of paper into his hand. He glanced at it, frowned, and threw it under the table.

The servant bowed to the Baronet.

"Your hansom is waiting, Sir Andrew," he said.

"The necklace was worth twenty thousand pounds," began the Queen's Messenger. "It was a present from the Queen of England to celebrate"—The Baronet gave an exclamation of angry annoyance.

"Upon my word, this is most provoking," he interrupted. "I really ought not to stay. But I certainly mean to hear this." He turned irritably to the servant. "Tell the hansom to wait," he commanded, and, with an air of a boy who is playing truant, slipped guiltily into his chair.

The gentleman with the black pearl smiled blandly, and rapped upon the table.

"Order, gentlemen," he said. "Order for the story of the Queen's Messenger and the Czarina's diamonds."

CHAPTER II.

THE necklace was a present from the Queen of England to the Czarina of Russia," began the Queen's Messenger. "It was to celebrate the occasion of the Czar's coronation. Our Foreign Office knew that the Russian Ambassador in Paris was to proceed to Moscow for that ceremony, and I was directed to go to Paris and turn over the necklace to him. But when I reached Paris I found he had not expected me for a week later and was taking a few days' vacation at Nice. His people asked me to leave the necklace with them at the Embassy, but I had been charged to get a receipt for it from the Ambassador himself, so I started at once for Nice. The fact that Monte Carlo is not two thousand miles from Nice may have had something to do with making me carry out my instructions so carefully."

"Now, how the Princess Zichy came to find out about the necklace I don't know, but I can guess. As you have just heard, she was at one time a spy in the service of the Russian government. And after they dismissed her she kept up her acquaintance with many of the Russian agents in London. It is probable that through one of them she learned that the necklace was to be sent to Moscow, and which one of the Queen's Messengers had been detailed to take it there. Bill, I don't know if even that knowledge would have helped her if she had not also known something which I supposed no one else in the world knew but myself and one other man. And, curiously enough, the other man was a Queen's Messenger too, and a friend of mine. You must know that up to the time of this robbery I had always concealed my dispatches in a manner peculiarly my own. I got the idea from that play called 'A Scrap of Paper.' In it a man wants to hide a certain compromising document. He knows that all his rooms will be secretly searched for it, so he puts it in a torn envelope and sticks it up where any one can see it on his mantel shelf. The result is that the woman who is ransacking the house to find it looks in all the unlikely places, but passes over the scrap of paper that is just under her nose. Sometimes the papers and packages they give us to carry about Europe are of very great value, and sometimes they are special makes of cigarettes, and orders to court dressmakers. Sometimes we know what we are carrying and sometimes we do not. If it is a large sum of money or a treaty, they generally tell us. But, as a rule, we have no knowledge of what the package contains; so, to be on the safe side, we naturally take just as great care of it as though we knew it held the terms of an ultimatum or the crown jewels. As a rule, my conferees carry the official packages in a despatch-box, which is just as obvious as a lady's jewel bag in the hands of her maid. Every one knows they are carrying something of value. They put a premium on dishonesty. Well, after I saw the 'Scrap of Paper' play, I determined to put the government valuables in the most unlikely place that any one would look for them. So I used to hide the documents they gave me inside my riding-boots, and small articles, such as money or jewels, I carried in an old cigar-case. After I took to using my case for that purpose I bought a new one, exactly like it, for my cigars. But to avoid mistakes, I had my initials placed on both sides of the new one, and the moment I touched the case, even in the dark, I could tell which it was by the raised initials.

"No one knew of this except the Queen's Messenger of whom I spoke. We once left Paris together on the Orient Express. I was going to Constantinople and he was to stop off at Vienna. On the journey I told him of my peculiar way of hiding things and showed him my cigar-case. If I recollect rightly, on that trip it held the grand cross of St. Michael and St. George, which the Queen was sending to our Ambassador. The Messenger was very much entertained at my scheme, and some months later when he met the Princess he told her about it as an amusing story. Of course, he had no idea she was a Russian spy. He didn't know anything at all about her, except that she was a very attractive woman. It was indiscreet, but he could not possibly have guessed that she could ever make any use of what he told her.

"Later, after the robbery, I remembered that I had informed this young chap of my secret hiding-place, and when I saw him again I questioned him about it. He was greatly distressed, and said he had never seen the importance of the secret. He remembered he had told several people of it, and among others the Princess Zichy. In that way I found out that it was she who had robbed me, and I know that from the moment I left London she was following me and that she knew then that the diamonds were concealed in my cigar-case.

"My train for Nice left Paris at ten in the morning. When I travel at night I generally tell the chef de gare that I am a Queen's Messenger, and he gives me a compartment to myself, but in the daytime I take whatever offers. On this morning I had found an empty compartment, and I had tipped the guard to keep every one else out, not from any fear of losing the diamonds, but because I wanted to smoke. He had locked the door, and as the last bell had rung I supposed I was to travel alone, so I began to arrange my traps and make myself comfortable. The diamonds in the cigar-case were in the inside pocket of my waistcoat, and as they made a bulky package, I took them out, intending to put them in my hand bag. It is a small satchel like a bookmaker's, or those hand bags that couriers carry. I wear it slung from a strap across my shoulder, and, no matter whether I am sitting or walking, it never leaves me.

"I took the cigar-case which held the necklace from my inside pocket and the case which held the cigars out of the satchel, and while I was searching through it for a box of matches I laid the two cases beside me on the seat.

"At that moment the train started, but at the same instant there was a rattle at the lock of the compartment, and a couple of porters lifted and shoved a woman through the door, and hurled her rugs and umbrellas in after her.

"Instinctively I reached for the diamonds. I shoved them quickly into the satchel and, pushing them far down to the bottom of the bag, snapped the spring lock. Then I put the cigars in the pocket of my coat, but with the thought that now that I had a woman as a travelling companion I would probably not be allowed to enjoy them.

"One of her pieces of luggage had fallen at my feet, and a roll of rugs had landed at my side. I thought if I hid the fact that the lady was not welcome, and at once endeavored to be civil, she might permit me to smoke. So I picked her hand bag off the floor and asked her where I might place it.

"As I spoke I looked at her for the first time, and saw that she was a most remarkably handsome woman.

(Continued in next issue.)

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For Campers

Don't That May Save Many Thousand Dollars.

(1.) Don't when in the woods, throw down a lighted match, cigar-stub or other flaming object; make sure that the flame has been thoroughly extinguished before throwing it away.

(2.) Don't build your camp fire larger than is necessary.

(3.) Don't, under any circumstances, leave your fire unguarded, even for a comparatively short time, see that it is dead out before you go away.

(4.) Don't build your fire in leaves, rotten wood or other inflammable material.

(5.) Don't build your fire against a large or hollow log, where it is hard to be sure when it has been entirely put out.

To these "don'ts" it may be added that in windy weather, or in a dangerous place, it is well to confine the fire in a hole dug clean down to the mineral soil. A fire may smolder in the humus, or "duff" for days only waiting for a strong breeze to fan it into a flame that may burn over miles of timber.

Summer tourists and campers unfortunately have a bad reputation among the owners of timber-lands as being a frequent cause of fires. Such fires could be prevented, almost without exception, by a little extra care on the part of the campers, who have been the unintentional cause of much forest destruction, and who have just as real an interest in the preservation of the forests as the owners of the timber themselves. The rules given above are the result of long experience and observation on the part of many woodmen and lumbermen as to the origin of fires from this cause, and are earnestly commended to the attention of campers, sportsmen and others.

The need for observing them is emphasized by the occurrence a few days ago of serious fires in the Lake St. John district in Quebec, one village being wiped out; the fires are thought to have originated from fires left by fishermen.

MINARD'S PATENT LUMBER-MAN'S FRIEND.

Nova Scotia's First Steel Ship Launching

The steel schooner, James William, the first steel ship constructed in Nova Scotia, was successfully launched on the 14th inst. She is named after the late Senator, James William Carmichael. She is a three-masted schooner, 111 feet keel, 37 feet beam, 14.6 depth of hold, and 146 feet in length over all, with tonnage about 490 net. The large quantity of steel used in the building was almost altogether the product of the Nova Scotia Steel Company. They supplied everything that was within their capacity.

The ship was built by I. Matheson & Co., iron founders, for J. W. Carmichael & Co. She is intended for the coastal lumber trade between Canadian ports and the United States in summer and in the winter will carry pine from the Gulf ports to the West Indies.

This afternoon a number of prominent citizens and visitors boarded a special train for Pictou Landing, where a steamer took them for a sail on Pictou harbor, and while on this trip the citizens presented Jas. C. McGregor with a \$500 silver service, suitably engraved, in token of their appreciation of his energy and push in inaugurating such a movement.

The Famous Pedestrian

Gentlemen:—I was a martyr to catarrh of the head, throat and stomach. I was so bad the doctors feared to operate. I tried many physicians and medicines. A friend suggested Psychine. I tried it and it was the only thing ever did me any good. I am now perfectly well. It is the greatest remedy the world has ever known. I do not need it for my health now but I use it as a strengthening for my walking matches. I owe much of my physical endurance to Psychine."

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Psychine is the greatest cure for catarrh of the head, throat or stomach in the world. It is a wonderful tonic and strengthener of run-down systems, giving youthful vigor and strength to the system. At all drug stores, and at Dr. T. A. Stearns, Limited, Toronto.

Barbank's Frost Experiment

For over twenty-five years we have heard of the Burbank potato, but very few could have imagined what lay behind that name and into what greater meaning it would grow. Potato being is usually considered a dull, tiresome task, but as a boy Luther Burbank took a different view. He looked at his home potato patch, in New England, as a fascinating problem. The result was a new and improved variety of potato, which, when he was 18, he sold to a seedling for \$100. This was practically Mr. Burbank's first experiment and his success since then in developing principally the ideally beautiful in fruits and flowers makes it all the more interesting, that again he is experimenting with the homely potato. For the last several years Mr. Burbank has planted and propagated potatoes on an immense scale, and now, with 10,000 kinds, his own hybrid—he diligently studies and works to perfect the white tuber in size, form and flavor.

That recently it was almost impossible to obtain either tubers or seeds of the "Irish" potato in its original wild form from its ancient habitat in South America. There, high up in the peaks of the Andes, the potato plant still finds food on the grim, scant rims of extinct volcanoes, and slowly, in two years' time, develops into one shapeless tuber. But the Indians of those regions are as wild and resistant as the potato, and fiercely prevented encroachments by white men until civilization took the form of whiskey. It is true that the seeds are washed down the sides of the mountains, but the plant changes form in its descent, finally becoming the worst weed the people have. More than 10,000 seedlings, Mr. Burbank says, of this weed are found upon a single acre. He has been importing specimens of the original wild form from the coast of the Chile and crossing them with others of his cultivated types, from the results selecting the best for further development. Of the new varieties already obtained, Mr. Burbank says some are almost as sweet as sweet potatoes. Certainly the world will await with great curiosity and equal faith the final results of this present series of potato experiments.—Scientific American

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