

THE ST. JOHN EVENING TIMES, TUESDAY, JANUARY 3 1905.

THE STORY OF A GREAT SECRET. Millions of Mischief.

By HEADON HILL.

Author of "By a Hair's Breadth," "The Duke Decides," "A Race with Ruin," Etc., Etc. "And some that walk leave in their hearts, I fear, millions of mischief."—Julius Caesar, Act IV., Scene I.

(Continued.) CHAPTER XV. In Peril By Night.

To say that I was alarmed by the sudden swoop upon me of the enemy at the Mill House at Chipping Wye would fall very short of describing my first sensations. I am no heroine and I have no desire to pass as one, but I was really more agitated than frightened for myself in the minutes that succeeded my entrapment. The mere fact of my having been outstayed showed that I had been recognized by someone as a dangerous "adventurer" and that someone could be no other than Roger Marsha. I had already reason to believe that he suspected me of espionage, and that someone could be no other than Roger Marsha. I had already reason to believe that he suspected me of espionage, and that someone could be no other than Roger Marsha.

formed the sky-line two hundred yards up the hillside, and as the field was covered with growing corn, scarcely yellowed as yet, no one to whom I could appeal for assistance was likely to come within hearing. A month later the harvesters would be busy there, but where then should I be? On the chance that there might be another window parallel with that at which I stood, and to which at the risk of drowning I could swing myself, and so reach an unlocked room, I leaned out and scanned the wall to the right of me. Yes, there was a window—I could see its projecting sill—but it was so far away as to preclude all idea of reaching it in safety.

scattered scenes, and with them my scanty stock of courage, I remembered the trifling importance of my own danger compared with the results dependent on my safety. If that stealthy, lurking adversary succeeded in taking my life, not only would Arthur be a doomed man, but on his final repudiation of it some less scrupulous tool would be found for carrying out the murderous plot against the Prime Minister. The thought appalled me—that my slender chance of escape was all that stood to avert a great national calamity. Not that I needed any such excitement to make me strain every nerve to ensure self-preservation. My Arthur's liberty and good name demanded it, the more so that my assailant's desperate endeavour to silence me pointed to the guilt of the man with whom Arthur's sister had corresponded through the medium of the Notting Hill newsvendor. Actual proof, indeed, I had not yet obtained, even as to the identity of "Danvers Crane," but that would be furnished by the first glimpse I got of the man who had shot at me from the upper window.

But how was I to free myself and in such a manner, that in gaining freedom I gained also a sight of my enemy? The thing seemed impossible. The room door was of massive oak, but had it been the finest serry-builder's article there was not a single piece of furniture to use as a batter-ram. On the other hand, the mill-stream presented an impassable barrier, to say nothing of the certainty that I should be fired upon again if I so much as put my head out of window. For one wild moment I thought of the chimney, but inspection showed it to be impracticable. One one point only could I congratulate myself—that if I could not get away, neither, unless he had a boat, of which there was no sign, could my would-be slayer get at me. The stream, while it was my obstacle, was also my safeguard on one side, and on the other a pair of stout boots kept him out. Perceiving them when the door had first been shut on me, I had promptly shot them home in their sockets. On my remembering that first thrill of discovery that I was not alone in the house, the question occurred, why had not the wretch killed me when he stole to the door to close and lock it? I had been within a few feet of him then, with my back to the door. The answer, to my mind, seemed a simple one, and complimentary of my suspicions. He had not used his pistol on me then because, with all chances in his favour, there was yet the one chance of his missing me—a risk he dared not run, because if I saw him I should recognize him. If he had mistled me and I had leaped through the window into the river, there would have been the remote possibility of my survival, and my survival under those circumstances would have meant his ruin.

I was convinced that his present intention was to kill me without giving me the opportunity of seeing him, and unless he grew reckless after his initial failure, I might die in ignorance of my murderer's name. That he had passed under that of "Danvers Crane," was morally certain, that his real name was Roger Marsha was more than likely, but I could not know these things as knowledge is counted in a court of law. A hostile barrister would have called such knowledge as I possessed mere guess work and surmise. The minutes passed slowly, and still not a sound came from overhead or from the interior of the house. Outside in the sunshine, over the waving corn, the larks were singing merrily, insects hummed in the lazy air, and the cool gurgle of water came from the piles of the old mill. But inside that grim abode that is too quiet for peace of mind when you know that under the same roof there is someone who wishes you dead. The minutes grew into hours and the lengthening shadows of evening found me still standing in the bare, unfurnished room listening for sounds that never came. I began to wonder whether Mr. "Danvers Crane" had fallen back on slow starvation as a better weapon than his pistol, and I was glad that for a little while I could thwart that amiable intention, thanks to a packet of sandwiches that I had brought. It is true that I was very thirsty, and I would have given every coin in my purse for a cup of tea, but there was relief in the thought that he might have gone away and left his murderous work to "natural causes." Mother Nature in her sternest mood was like to be kinder than such as he. And then, when the birds had ceased to sing and the shadows had deepened into twilight, I was made suddenly aware that I was not alone in the Mill House after all—that the invisible one had not gone away but was horribly, cruelly active. The first sign I had of his presence was a sort of "swishing" noise in the passage close to the door, ceasing as suddenly as it began. I was wondering if my ears had deceived me when it came again after a few minutes' interval, and so keenly were my nerves stirred now to danger that I could as good as see what was going on at the other side of the door. Someone was piling up straw and brushwood, with a view to setting fire to the house, horror became terrible reality almost as soon as I perceived the invisible fiend at his ruthless work. A faint crackle reached my straining ears—a crackle that with every feeble second grew in volume, till smoke pouring through the crevices of the door, left no doubt of the fate awaiting me if I remained five minutes longer in the

and chamber. Just even at that awful moment a triumph compensated me in some measure for the ordeal I was undergoing—the triumph so dear to a woman's heart, which, in happier circumstances, she phrases in the well-worn commonplace: "I told you so." Above the hiss and roar of the now raging flames a man shouted from further down the passage: "Good-bye Miss Chilmark! The choice is with you—fire or water. So much for un-called-for interference." (To be continued.)

A JUDGE'S FALLACIES. Judge Daniels, a United States Court Commissioner in Wisconsin, is quoted as saying that "the American dollar is the armor from which genius all the darts of the modern cupid," and is of the opinion that the high wages paid to girls and women for labor is a cause for the falling off in marriage. Judge Daniels sees in this a proof that matrimony was never the culmination of love, but inevitable result of the dependence of women upon the sterner sex for support. He anticipates that with continued prosperity in the country matrimony will become a thing of the past. If the judge is serious he is a poor student of the woman nature, writes Henry F. Harris in Madams for January. He should know that a genuine love takes to thought of the financial side of a proposed matrimonial alliance. He should learn that there are few women who would not gladly sacrifice in obedience to the call of love. The yearning for home life and the tender present in their hearts. Then again, Judge Daniels ought to know that high wages for women are rare—most of the positions in industry and commerce are held by men, and one of the chief reasons is that employers discount the possibility of matrimony and know by experience that "Cupid darts" do pierce even the adamant walls of business life. It is unfortunate that a man occupying a position so high as that of Judge Daniels should publicly proclaim so low an ideal of marriage as is indicated in the above quotation. What is needed at this time is strong and helpful expressions which will inspire respect for the institution and supply a vision of its spiritual character.

MINARD'S "KING OF PAIN" LINIMENT. RECEIVED THIS MEDAL. This medal was awarded to Minard's Liniment in London in 1886. The only liniment to receive a medal. It was awarded because of strength, purity, healing powers and superiority of the liniment over all others from throughout the world.

TOMMY'S EXPERIMENT. Tommy's father and mother are both very proud of their hopeful's thirst for knowledge. But there are times when they feel impelled to the conclusion that the little fellow carries the thirst to extremes. One of these occasions occurred the other evening, when Miss Fessie stayed to dinner. As soon as Tommy had finished his second piece of pie and had given up hope of obtaining a third he asked to be allowed to leave the table for a moment. Permission was granted him, and he slipped out of the room. In a few seconds he returned with the dainty Dresden clock from the parlour mantlepiece. "Gracious child!" exclaimed the mother, "what mischief are you up to with that clock?" "Goin' to try 'speriment,'" replied Tommy with importance. "How clever of him!" she gushed. "The dear little fellow is going to try an experiment!" While Miss Fessie was speaking Tommy had carefully placed the clock on the table in front of her, with a mysterious gesture he laid his finger on his lips and enjoined silence. No one stirred. Tommy's strained expression relaxed, and he clasped his hands in exultation. "It goes!" he cried triumphantly. "Tommy's father said nothing, but looked apprehensive. "Of course, it goes, child," laughed Miss Fessie. "What made your father think it wouldn't?" "Well," replied the little fellow simply, "he said your face would stop a clock!"

A LOST CROWN. In the "Letters and Recollections of Sir Walter Scott," just published, there are many anecdotes which the "Wizard of the North" was in the habit of telling his visitors. One refers to an English party who visited Bannockburn and had the field of battle pointed out to them by a local blacksmith. The man carefully avoided every allusion which would wound English feelings. On a crown piece for his troubles but he put it back with a proud smile. "Well," replied the little fellow simply, "he said your face would stop a clock!"

A HEARTY OFFER. Three brothers had met to make arrangements for celebrating the golden wedding of their beloved parents, and after a prolonged discussion and praise of the worthy couple who had done so much for them, Tom, the older brother, said that he would pay for hire of a hall, and provide the supper. Jack followed by declaring he would give a purse of gold. Then after a long pause, Tom said: "An' what are ye gaun to do, Sandy?" "A well," came the reply, "on sic an important occasion I dinna like to be ahint my neighbors, an' I'll be delighted to provide th' grace at th' supper."

WHERE IT STRUCK. An Irishman, who was a member of a trades-union, fell into bad health for a long time. Two of the members of the Society were deputed to take him to town to be examined by a physician. After being admitted to a physician's house, the patient was asked his name. "Patrick, your honour." "Well, Patrick, where did the pain strike you first?" "Arrah! doctor, dear, is it where did the pain strike me first? Sure it struck me on the top of the bank going down to our yard, and not a step further could I go for the life of me, so I turned and walked home!"

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