

Happiness Secured

A Heavy Cost!

CHAPTER XXXVIII FOUND AT LAST.

"DON'T let me give you a shock, good people; but is there any one present who believes in ghosts?"

My husband propounds this rather startling question over the breakfast-table at Deerpene one morning during our stay, with a face of such preternatural gravity that we all burst into a laugh.

"Lesley does—firmly, truly, implicitly!" replies Len. "Declares she saw one once—a veritable specter, whose appearance couldn't be accounted for by any of the known laws of nature. So, if you have had a scare, old-fellow, turn to the wife of your bosom; she'll sympathize with you."

"Why, Charley!" I gasp, almost dropping my cup in my amazement, "you don't mean to say that you have seen anything?"

"Well, I don't know," is the rather hesitating reply. "The fact is, one of the queerest things I ever heard of has happened to me; but whether it was a dream or what—I suppose it must have been a dream, but—well, all I can say about it is, I never felt more wide awake in my life! But there, I'll tell you all about it, and then you can form your own opinion."

"As you know, we sat up rather late last night—we three"—by we three Charley means himself, Len, and Ernest Warden—"the ladies must have been in bed some time before we got through that last chat and pipe; for, when I went upstairs, Lesley was fast asleep. I did not want to wake her, she might have inquired the time, and given me a homily on the late hours, you know," he supplements, with a comical glance at me. "So I just crept into bed as quietly as possible; and there I lay, for goodness knows how long, striving in vain to go to sleep, and thinking, I verily believe, of more rubbish than ever before filled the mind of mortal man!"

"All the trash I had ever heard in the whole course of my life seemed to come trooping through my brain. But the subject that bothered me most was the one of which we had been talking just before we came upstairs, you remember."

"Do you mean the mystery of Squire

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Rutherford's lost will!" asks Len.

"That and Mrs. Erroll's mysterious death in this old house so many years ago," my husband returns. "Somehow the subject seemed to have got itself so mixed up in my thoughts that I couldn't, for the life of me, get rid of it."

"Over and over again the tragic story of Mrs. Erroll's strange death in that moldy, shut-up room upstairs kept rehearsing itself in my mind with such vivid distinctness that the more I tried to go to sleep, the more I couldn't, as the children say."

"For hours, as it seemed to me, I lay there, tossing and tumbling; and nothing but the fear of disturbing the house prevented me from getting up and going for a walk to soothe my nerves."

"Sleep I could not, though by slow degrees I became aware of a most singular sensation that was creeping over me—a sensation that, while seeming to paralyze my limbs to a helpless extent—left my senses abnormally clear and acute. It was the strangest feeling I ever experienced in my life. I was as wide awake as I am now, and yet I could not move."

"Humph!" interrupts practical Len, "a clear case of indigestion and defective circulation—in short, nightmare."

"As you know, it was a moonlight night," Charley proceeds, superbly indifferent to Len's interruption, "and a faint reflection of the ghostly radiance crept in through the partially curtained window. It was not very clear, but it was just sufficient to reveal an indistinct outline of some of the objects in the room."

"All at once, as I lay there in that strange condition, a cold breath, like a draft from a suddenly opened door, struck on my face, and at the same moment I became aware that some one or something had entered the room."

"At first I could see nothing, though I was as certain of that mysterious presence as I was of my own existence. But at last, as I lay there straining my eyes in the dull light, I clearly discerned the outlines of a shadowy figure, that, gliding across the floor, came and stood by the side of the bed, looking down at me."

"It was a woman with a face I should have recognized among a thousand—a face I have seen in a picture many years ago. Some day I will tell you where that picture hangs, and of whom it is a portrait."

"Curiously enough, it did not strike me as in any way strange that this woman, who has been in her grave for years, should be standing at that strange hour by my bedside; and when, turning away, she glided to the door and beckoned me to follow, I obeyed as readily as if under the influence of a spell."

"How I got out of bed and into some clothes I don't very clearly remember; I only know that I was following my ghostly guide down the passage that leads to that wing of the house which is never used, and finally into that particular room in which it is said Mrs. Erroll was found lying dead so many years ago with her half-written communication in her hand."

"Here my shadowy conductress came to a pause, and turning toward me with a pleading look in her mournful eyes, pointed to one of the carved panels over the queer, old-fashioned, mantelshelf, and in some

mysterious, voiceless way, seemed to command me to move it.

"With the same dreary, automatic feeling with which I had followed her hither, I made some effort to obey. But before I could do so, with a loud crash like the report of a gun or the banging of a door, the specter or dream, whichever it was, vanished into thin air; and there I was, standing in the middle of the moldy, dusty old room, quite alone, startled, chilled, but preternaturally wide awake now at all events."

(To be Continued.)

The Lost Will;

LOVE TRIUMPHS AT LAST!

CHAPTER I.

"How should I know?" retorted Jiggles. "You can easily find out."

"How?" demanded Jack.

"By calling on him, as he asks you!" snapped Jiggles. "I'm sorry I can't stay any longer; I'm hard at work on a difficult brief."

"Off you go, old mug-worm!" said Jack; and before he had finished the exhortation, Jiggles had disappeared. "Well, it's good advice," said Jack. Jim wagged his tail in assent, and half an hour afterwards—it was nearly twelve o'clock—Jack, beautifully dressed with that careless care which distinguishes the class of Mr. John Vandeleur Desborough Chalfont and is the despair of the ambitious class below it, sauntered down to the City—sauntered in scarcely the word; for there was the self-possessed bearing, the easy, graceful gait of the athlete in his movements, and that peculiar air about him which conveys to the observer the idea that the young man did not buy Fleet Street, Cheapside, and the Mansion House because, he didn't want them."

In his pleasant, free-and-easy way he inquired of a rushing passer-by the whereabouts of 203, Cothall Buildings; and, having arrived there, was led to a luxurious and richly appointed waiting-room, whence, ten minutes afterwards, he was escorted, by an individual who looked like something between a porter and a footman, to another room, by no means so luxuriously furnished as that which he had left, where, at a desk, sat a man who raised his head and regarded Jack fixedly.

The man in the chair, before the large table covered with important-looking documents, was of rather more than middle age and middle height; he was sturdy and heavy of figure; his features were roughly hewn, and the iron-grey hair over his massive brow was coarse and somewhat tousled, as if he had juggled the time spent in brushing it. Jack, careless observer as he was, could not help noting, and was somewhat impressed by the expression in the man's eyes. They were searching and in a heavy way, piercing; but mixed with the intensity of the scrutiny was a kind of furtiveness—a hint,

just a hint, of uncertainty and doubt. This curious expression was transient, scarcely more than momentary; but Jack had seen it, and it was stamped on his mind.

"So you've come, Mr. John Chalfont!" said Mr. Chalfont without the least hesitation to the man; but the voice had a note of roughness, like the appearance of the man; but it was low and slow, and impressed the listener with a sense of strength and self-reliance.

"Yes, I've come, sir," said Jack, in his pleasant voice, and with the well-bred, easy air which distinguished him, "though I can't think why on earth you wanted to see me," he added, with a smile.

"I'll explain," said Mr. Chalfont; and he pointed a thick finger to a chair. "Sit down, will you? Half a moment!" He touched a bell; a clerk came in and stood deferentially. "Tell Mr. Jones to buy thirty thousand Polychromes at fifty shillings and a third."

As the clerk bowed and withdrew as deferentially, Mr. Chalfont swung round in his chair, gripped his knees with his thick hands, and bending his brows on Jack, said: "I saw your name in one of the sporting papers—account of an amateur boxing match. Of course, I was attracted by the fact that your name resembled mine. But we're no relations," he went on, a little more quickly; "I've found that out. I made inquiries."

Without turning, he stretched out his great hand and took up a sheet of paper from the table. "You belong to the old Chalfonts; I don't; my family don't amount to anything; in fact, I don't know anything about it. I'm what is called a 'self-made man,' Mr. Chalfont. Come to that, we are all self-made men; we start as babies, and I reckon we, more than other persons, have the making of ourselves. I can remember running about barefoot, with nothing on my head and precious little in my stomach. Like a good many others, I left the Old Country and went to one of the new ones—Australia, as a matter of fact. I roughed it there for a good many years, and then I struck oil—or rather, gold."

"So I've heard, sir," said Jack, who was much interested not only in Mr. Chalfont's sketchy account of his past, but in the man himself.

"Yes, my story's pretty well known," said the elder man, with just a touch of complacency. "You see, the start's the thing. Once you've struck oil in one place it 'pears to spring up all round you. I've got interests in ever so many parts of the world; mines in Australia, Mexico, America; concessions in civilized and uncivilized countries; grants—ah, well, I needn't swagger about it; and I'd better come to business at once. Mr. Chalfont, I've made my pile, I've got my place here in the Old Country, in the great City of London, and it's a pretty high place, so I'm given to understand; but I've got no wife, no chick nor child, no one belonging to me, and I'm what you might call a lonely man. Friends—oh, yes, any number of friends." He smiled grimly. "A rich man is never wanting them. But most of my friends are ladies and gentlemen who like to eat my dinners, and always with their tongues lolling out for Stock Exchange tips. They say that a man will do anything to get an order for a theatre; but I reckon there's nothing he won't do to get a tip on the Exchange."

"I suppose it's human nature, sir," remarked Jack, consolingly.

"Yes, I suppose so; but I don't set much store by such friends; and I want one, a real one."

"If you're meaning me," said Jack, with his sometimes disconcerting frankness, "I'm a poor man, and may be just as keen on a dinner at the Carlton and a good tip as any of the others."

(To be Continued.)

Reading History Aright.

(From the New York Outlook.) In order to understand the British we must understand some of the reasons why we have not fully understood them. One of these reasons is to be found in our history. We think of George III., against whom we revolted, as an English King, whereas in fact he was a German. We think of our revolution as a struggle with the English people, whereas it was a struggle of the English people against an un-English Government. One reason why we have misunderstood the English is that we have misread our own history.

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CABLE NEWS. THE POLAND QUESTION. COFFENHAAGEN, Sept. 12. No solution of the Polish question has yet been found, according to the Berlin Voetsche Zeitung. The whole matter will be taken up at the Berlin conference between Admiral Paul von Hintze, the German Foreign Secretary, and Baron Burián, the Austrian Foreign Minister. Representatives of Poland will not be called in to the conference until an agreement is reached as to the terms of the agreement. Baron Burián's impending resignation, says the Voetsche Zeitung, is due to his determination to insist upon an Austro-Polish solution of a question with the ideal monarchy, a solution which, as is well known, finds no favor in Germany. There is no reason to expect Baron Burián's resignation, says the newspaper, until the Austro-Polish solution is finally rejected, if it is to be rejected.

PASSPORTS GRANTED TO RUSSIAN SOCIALISTS. LONDON, Sept. 10. Passports have been granted to the Russian social revolutionaries by the London Inter-Allied Labor Conference, which will begin its session in London next Tuesday. The delegates have been at Stockholm for weeks, awaiting a permit to proceed to England, where they are expected next week.

GIVING SECRETS TO GERMANY. NEW YORK, Sept. 11. Information has been obtained that Miss Wanda Kretzinger, a Postal Telegraph Company operator who was taken into custody here to-day has transmitted directly to the German Government important information regarding munition shipments through her cables, according to a statement tonight by Federal officials.

GERMANY'S MAN POWER. WITH THE AMERICAN TROOPS IN FRANCE, Sept. 11. (By the A.P.)—In their frantic efforts to stem the tide of the Entente Allied advance, the German high command has been taking divisions out of quiet sectors around Verdun and in the Woerwe and Lorraine, where they had been sent to recuperate, and is putting them into the line after short rests and recuperation. The Entente Allied military authorities have compiled some interesting information regarding the present strain on the German man-power. In this connection the following schedule of work thrown upon the German troops speaks for itself: In a certain sector four German divisions were withdrawn. After five weeks they went to a reserve area. After two weeks of rest and training, and then returned to the big battle. In July another four divisions were withdrawn. After being in a quiet sector for five weeks and a half, they were allowed to train only two weeks before being engaged again. In August 42 divisions were withdrawn from a quiet sector, but it was not until they had consumed several weeks that they were reconstituted.

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