

# THE CRIMSON BLIND

BY FRED M. WHITE

Chris' heart gave one quick leap, then her senses came back to her. She needed nobody to tell her that the owner of the hand was James Merritt. Nor did she require any fine discrimination to perceive that he was up to no good. That it had something to do with the plot against Bell she felt certain. But the man was coming now, he could only reach the top of the cliffs just under the wall where she was standing. Chris peered eagerly down into the path of light until the intruder looked up. Then she jerked back, forgetting that she was in the darkness and absolutely invisible. The action was disastrous, however, for it shook Chris' diamond star from her head, and it fell gently almost at the feet of the climber. An instant later and his eyes had fallen upon it.

"What bloomin' luck," he said, hoarsely. "I suppose that girl yonder must have dropped it over. Well, it is as good as a coup she's handed me, anyway. Little misse, you'd better take a fearful farewell of your lumps of sugar, as you'll never see them again."

To Chris' uttering indignation he slipped the star into his breast-pocket. Just for the moment the girl was on the point of crying out. She was glad she had refrained a second after, for a really brilliant thought occurred to her. She had never evolved anything more clever in her life, but she did not quite realize that as yet.

Nearer and nearer the man with the maimed thumb came. Chris stepped back into the shadow. She waited till the intruder had slipped past her in the direction of the castle, and prepared to follow at a discreet distance. Whatever he was after, she felt sure he was being ordered and abetted by Reginald Henson. Two minutes, five minutes, elapsed before she moved.

What was that? Surely a voice somewhere near her moaning for help. Chris stood perfectly still, listening for the next cry. Her sense of humanity had been touched, she had forgotten Merritt entirely. Again the stifled cry for help came.

"Who are you?" Chris shouted. "And where are you?"

"Henson," came the totally unexpected reply. "I'm down below on a ledge of rock. No, I'm not particularly badly hurt, but I dare not move." Chris paused for a moment, utterly bewildered. Henson must have been

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on the lookout for his accomplice, she thought, and had missed his footing and fallen. Pity he had not fallen a little farther, she murmured bitterly, and broken his neck. But this was only for a moment, and her sense of justice and humanity speedily returned.

"I cannot see anything of you," she said. "All the same, I can see your outline," Henson said, dimly. "I don't feel quite so frightened now. I can hang on a bit longer, especially now I know assistance is at hand. At first I began to be afraid that I was a prisoner for the night. No; don't go. If I had a rope I should have the proper confidence to swarm up again. And there is a coil of rope in the arbor close by you. Hang it straight down over that middle boulder and fasten your end round one of those iron pillars."

"The rope was there as Henson stated; indeed, he had placed it there himself. With the utmost coolness and courage Chris did as she was desired. But it took some little time to coax the rope to go over in the proper direction. There was a little mutter of triumph from below and presently Henson, with every appearance of utter exhaustion, climbed over the ledge to the terrace. At the same moment an owl hooted twice from the long belt of trees at the bottom of the garden.

"If you are none the worse for your adventure?" Chris asked, politely.

Henson said sententiously that he fancied not. His familiarity with the cliffs had led him too far. If he had a ledge of rock, good, good, good, would Chris be so good as to lend him the benefit of her arm back to the castle? Chris was graciously willing, but she was full of curiosity as to the same time. Had Henson really been in danger, or was the whole thing some part of an elaborate and cunning plot? Henson knew perfectly well that she had taken a fancy to the upper terrace, and he might—

Really it was difficult to know what to think. They passed slowly along till the lights here and there from the castle shone on their faces. At the same time a carriage had driven up to the hall door and a visitor was getting out. With a strange sense of eagerness and pleasure Chris recognized the handsome features and misshapen shape of Hatherly Bell.

"The expected guest has arrived," Henson said.

There was such a queer mixture of snarling anger and exulting triumph in his voice that Chris looked up. Just for an instant Henson had dropped the mask. A ray of light from the open door streamed fully across his face. The malignant pleasure of it startled Chris. Like a flash she began to see how she had been used by those miscreants.

"He is very handsome," she contrived to say, steadily.

"Handsome is that handsome does," Henson quoted. "Let us hope that Dr. Bell will succeed in his mission. He has my best wishes."

Chris turned away and walked slowly as possible up the stairs. Another minute with that slimy hypocrite and she felt she would betray herself. Once out of sight she flew along the corridor and snatched up the electric light. She fell back with a stifled cry of dismay, but she was more sorrowful than surprised.

"I expected it," she said. "I knew that this was the thing they were after." The precious copy of Rembrandt was no longer there!

### CHAPTER XXXI.

Bell Arrives.

There were more sides to the mystery than David Steel imagined. It had seemed to him that he had pretty well all the threads in his hands, but he would have been astonished to know how much more Hatherly Bell and Enid Henson could have told him.

But it seemed to Bell that there was one very important thing to be done before he proceeded any farther. He was interested in the mystery as he was in crime and cunning played a part. But he was still more intent upon clearing his good name; besides, this would give him a wider field of action.

In the light of recent discoveries it had become imperative that he should once more be on good terms with Lord Littimer. Once this was accomplished, the whole complication. It was a great advantage to know who his enemy was; it was a still greater advantage to discover the hero of the cigar-case and the victim of the outrageous scamp, Van Sneek, the picture dealer, who had originally sold "The Crimson Blind" to Lord Littimer.

It was all falling out beautifully. Not only had Van Sneek turned up in the nick of time, but he was not in a position to do any further mischief. It suited Bell exactly that Van Sneek should be hors de combat for the moment.

The first thing to be done was to see Lord Littimer without delay. Bell had no idea of humbly soliciting an interview. He proceeded to a telephone office the first thing the following morning and wired Littimer to the effect that he must see him on important business. He had an hour or two at his disposal, so he took a cab as far as Downend Terrace. He found Steel slumming in the conservatory, the atmosphere of which was blue with cigarette smoke.

"So you are not working this morning?" he asked.

"How the dickens can I work? I haven't been trying. I might just as well take a long holiday till this morning."

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mystery is cleared up for all the good I am. What is the next move?"

"My next move is to go to Littimer and convince him that he has done me a great wrong. I am bound to have Littimer's ear once more."

"You are going to show him the spare Rembrandt, eh?"

"That's it. I flatter myself I shall astonish him. I've sent a telegram to say I'm coming today, after which I shall proceed to storm the citadel. I feel all the safer because nobody knows I have the engraving."

"My dear chap, somebody knows you have the picture."

"Impossible!" Bell exclaimed. "Only yourself and Enid Henson can possibly be aware that—"

"All the same, I am speaking the truth," David said. "Last night when you went into the hospital you gave me the print to take care of. At the same time I noticed a rough-looking man presumably asleep on the seat in the road facing the hospital. As afterwards when I looked round he had disappeared. At the time I thought nothing of it. When I came in here I placed the precious roll of paper on my writing-table under the window yonder. The window is a bay window, as you can see, and was opened about a foot at the top. I sat here with the light down and the room faintly illuminated by the light in the conservatory. After a little time I saw a hand and arm groping for the thing on the table, and I'm quite sure your Rembrandt. The fellow muttered something that I failed to understand, and I put a grab for him and got him. Then the other hand made a dash for my head with an ugly piece of gas-piping, and I had to let go."

"And you saw no more of the fellow?"

"No; I didn't expect to. I couldn't see his face, but there was one peculiarity he had that I might tell you for your future guidance. He had a thumb smasher as flat as the head of a snake, with one tiny pink nail in the middle of it. So, if you meet a man like that on your journey today, look to yourself. On the whole, you see that our enemies are a little more awake than you are."

Bell nodded thoughtfully. The information was of the greatest possible value to him. It told him quite plainly that Reginald Henson knew exactly what had happened. Under ordinary circumstances by this time Henson would be on his way to Littimer Castle, there to checkmate the man he had so deeply injured. But fortunately Henson was laid by the heels, or so Bell imagined.

"I am really obliged to you," Bell said. "Your information is likely to be of the greatest possible service to me. I'm sorry you can't work."

"Don't worry about me," David said, grimly. "I'm getting a vast quantity of experience that will be of the greatest value to me later on. Besides, I can go and compare notes with Miss Ruth Gates whilst you are away. She is soothing."

"So I should imagine," Bell said, drily. "Now, I must be off. I'll let you know what happens at Littimer Castle. Good luck to you here."

And Bell bustled off. He was pleased to find a recent telegram of acceptance from Littimer waiting for him, and before 5 o'clock he was awaiting the train for London. It was only after he left London that he began to crawl along. Thanks to slow local lines and a bad-fitting cross service it was nearly 11 o'clock before he reached Moreton Station. It did not matter much, because Littimer had said that a carriage should meet him. However, there was no conveyance of any kind outside the station. One sleepy porter had already departed, and the other one, who took Bell's ticket, and was obviously waiting to look up, deposited that a carriage from the castle had come to the station, but that some clerical gentleman had come along and countermanded it. Whereupon the dog-cart had departed.

(To Be Continued.)

## Operation Prevented

BAD CASE OF PILES CURED BY ZAM-BUK.

Sufferers from piles will be interested in the following testimony of Mr. Garfield Logan, 149 Welland avenue, St. Catharines, Ont. He says: "For years I was a great sufferer from protruding bleeding piles. They got so bad that it was impossible for me to walk or sit down without a great deal of suffering. The pain I endured was dreadful. I tried everything and the doctors told me I would have to be operated upon before I could be cured. I do not think that there was one remedy that I did not try, but they failed to cure me. One day I received a sample of ZAM-BUK and tried that. I got some relief and decided to give it a good trial. I bought three boxes and before I had finished the third box I was completely cured. ZAM-BUK has saved me hundreds of dollars because I had decided to have the operation if ZAM-BUK did not cure me. I have recommended ZAM-BUK to a number of my friends, and am always praising ZAM-BUK."

ZAM-BUK succeeds because it goes right to the root of the trouble. Healing, soothing and antiseptic. It is Nature's remedy for all skin diseases. All stores and druggists sell at 50c., or from the Zam-Buk Company, Toronto.

## WANT A LOWER GRADE

Nova Scotians Would Reduce I. C. R. Grade Over Cobeguid Mountains.

Ottawa, May 26.—An influential deputation from Nova Scotia, headed by Premier Murray and the mayor of Halifax, waited on Sir Wilfrid Laurier and Hon. Geo. P. Graham this morning to urge the lowering of the present heavy grade on the I. C. R. over Cobeguid Mountains between Moncton and Halifax. The G. T. P. will have a maximum grade of only 64, and the grade over the Cobeguid is now 1 per cent. The deputation urged that by building a new loop line the grade could be brought down to about the same as the G. T. P. maximum. Full consideration of the question was promised.

## FRENCH PRESIDENT POPULAR VISITOR

Lusty English Cheers Greet Fallieres on All Sides—Paris Sees Alliance.

London, May 26.—Clement Armand Fallieres, president of the French Republic, on a visit to the King of England, paid a round of ceremonial calls upon various members of the English reigning house, this afternoon.

In the afternoon, accompanied by King Edward and the Queen, he paid a state visit to the Franco-British exhibition in Shepherd's Bush. President Fallieres is proving a highly popular visitor. Huge crowds gather wherever there is a possibility of seeing him pass, and the cheers with which he is greeted are exceptionally lusty.

Paris, May 26.—The speeches exchanged in London between President Fallieres and King Edward have attracted much attention from the French press, and the Temps this afternoon says it considers the time to be ripe for the substitution of an Anglo-French alliance instead of the present entente cordiale. The British army he radically reorganized, in order to render it capable of energetic action on the continent, otherwise the paper says the benefits of the alliance would be one-sided, and in favor of England, and consequently inadvisable.

The Temps recognizes that the cordial relations between France and Great Britain as manifested yesterday are likely, in the event of a crisis, to breed identity of interest, but it thinks it dangerous to rely upon moral understandings.

"Forced to choose between Germany and Great Britain," the Temps declares, "France chooses Great Britain. We can with dignity live on correct terms with Germany, but the past forbids us going further. As for the future, Germany only wants what we cannot grant, namely, the admission of German troops to the Paris Bourse. On the other hand, the greatest objection to a British alliance has disappeared with the reconciliation of our ally, Russia, with Great Britain."

## A BIG FISH CATCH

That of Ontario Last Year Yielded Near Two Millions of Dollars.

Toronto, May 26.—During the past year the yield for the fisheries of the province aggregated \$1,325,024 90. This was over \$200,000 more than in 1906, being the biggest catch on record.

Many such interesting facts and figures are supplied by Mr. Edwin Tinsley in his report on game and fish as a separate department of the government.

Mr. Tinsley says it is impossible to effectively enforce the fishery laws and regulations, owing to the abolition of the close season for whitefish in Lake Erie and Lake Huron.

Mr. Tinsley recommends the appointment of special inspectors to prevent the illegal catching and shipping of immature and undersized fish.

## "ALL BIG GUN" SHIP

U. S. Navy Launches a Fighter of Same Type as Dreadnaught.

Camden, N. J., May 26.—The United States first-class battleship Michigan was launched today from the yard of the New York Shipbuilding Company on the Delaware River here. It comes closer to the Dreadnaught class of warships in the British navy than any other vessel in the American navy.

The new vessel is known as an "all big gun" battleship, as it will carry eight 12-inch breech loading rifles. The general dimensions of the Michigan are as follows: Length on load-water line, 450 feet; extreme breadth, 30 feet; draught 24 feet 6 inches; total hull capacity, 2,200 tons. The hull is of steel throughout. Although a very heavy vessel, the contract calls for a sustained speed of 21 1/2 knots per hour for four consecutive hours.

## TRAWLERS DAMAGE CABLE

U. S. Ambassador Asks British Govt. to Remedy Matters.

London, May 26.—The damage done to trans-Atlantic cables by trawlers on the Irish coast, which has become so aggravated during the past few days as to interfere seriously with the transmission of dispatches, was brought to the attention of Foreign Secretary Sir Edward Grey, by U. S. Ambassador Reid, at the foreign office this morning. Mr. Reid was not acting on instructions from the state department, but he took up the matter on the urgent representation of the managers of the cable companies. Sir Edward promised his immediate attention, and said he would do all in his power for the protection of the cables.

## THREE MORE BISHOPS

Elected by the American Methodist Episcopal Conference.

Baltimore, May 26.—Rev. Dr. Wilson S. Lewis, president of Morningstar College, Sioux City, Ia., and Rev. Dr. Edwin H. Hughes, president of De Pauw University, Green Castle, Ind., were elected bishops on the fifteenth ballot at the Methodist Episcopal General Conference today.

Rev. Dr. Robert McIntyre, of Los Angeles, California, was elected bishop on the sixteenth ballot. The seventeenth ballot resulted in no election.

Rev. Frank M. Bristol, of Washington, D. C., was elected bishop on the eighteenth ballot, thus completing the quota of members of the Episcopacy to be elected at the general conference.

The special commission appointed by the Methodist Protestant General

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ONLY FIFTY IN THE LOT

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If you want to be put down as a woman of good taste, you will put up one of these \$4.00 Parasols. Through our fortunate purchase we have certainly put the price down where you will like them. They are all black silk, gloria tops. The showing will surprise and delight you.

See window for display. Remember, the price is only \$1.95 for a \$4.00 Parasol.

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—Shakespeare

**Leap Year**

## DOCTORS CONVENED

28th Annual Meeting of Ontario Medical Association at Hamilton.

Hamilton, May 26.—The 28th annual convention of the Ontario Medical Association was opened at the Collegiate Building this morning with 225 doctors from all parts of the Province in attendance. The convention has been split into three sections—medical, surgical and preventive medicine. The most interesting papers were read at the latter section.

Dr. Sinclair, of Walkerton, asserted that the present system of quarantine in smallpox cases was absurd. He advocated people being shut in their own homes when afflicted with the disease and letting the general public look out for itself if it wanted to be immune. The section did not quite agree with Dr. Sinclair, and there was some fun for a few minutes.

At the Ingersoll Caledonian games on Monday, Mrs. James Murdoch aged 94, was awarded the prize for being the oldest lady on the grounds.

Montreal was struck by a severe lightning storm Monday evening and letting the general public look out for itself if it wanted to be immune. The section did not quite agree with Dr. Sinclair, and there was some fun for a few minutes.

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