

The Yellow Butterfly

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golden spark, till it was lost in the gloom of the rafters overhead. Your granduncle's eyes followed it up with the same strange look on his face, and when it had gone he turned to your uncle Cuthbert with a queer smile, and then spoke:

"I'm afraid I've suddenly forgotten the end of the story," he said.

"Suppose we have some music, Cuthbert."

"Then the lights sprang out on the walls, and the fiddles began a lively tune in the gallery; and we all, without knowing it, gave a great sigh, as if we had come out of a terrifying dream. But the hush was still on us, and it took some time before the dancing could really get started with any spirit; and a few of us who knew what the butterfly meant said one to another, under our breath:

"It was the soul of Lady Chiddingfold."

"The soul of Lady Chiddingfold!" said little Pervenche softly, as if to herself, her great eyes in a trance.

I patted her little flower hands folded on her child-lap. I feared for a moment that perhaps I was pouring too strange a wonder into so young a vessel.

"It's a pretty way to come back," she said musingly, after a moment. "A butterfly! I should like that, granddad."

I kissed her hair, and pressed her close to my side reassuringly.

"Is there any more, granddad?" asked the practical Asra.

"Would you like to hear some more?" I asked.

"Oh, yes!" said both the children together.

"Are you quite sure? You must know that it's rather a sad story, dear," I said.

"I love sad stories," said Pervenche wistfully; adding with a wise little shake of her head, "All real stories are sad."

"Oh, I don't know," I said, not wishing to feed that pretty melancholy that was sometimes rather disquietingly present in the ways of the little thoughtful girl. But she was not to be denied.

"Oh, yes, yes, they are, granddad," she persisted; and then she asked: "Which Lady Chiddingfold was it?"

"She is supposed to be the Lady Joyce Chiddingfold, who lived in the reign of Queen Anne," I answered. "There is a portrait of her by Joshua Reynolds hanging in the portrait-gallery at Chiddingfold—a beautiful, merry-looking young woman, dressed in a broad-based satin, with powdered hair, a long curl lying on her neck, and a scarlet rose beneath her ear."

"And was the butterfly often seen?" asked Pervenche.

"Curiously enough," I said, "it was. The servants used to see it sometimes, at all times of the year, sitting about the dark corridors, or dancing ahead of them up the great staircase. The older servants, indeed, had grown to be almost used to it, and in some degree lost their fear of it; for its coming and going didn't always seem to mean anything in particular. It seemed as though it only owed to be in the great old house and to take pleasure in sitting from room to room. If one can say such a thing, it seemed to bring a sense with it, at most times, of being very happy. It was such a gay, dancing, golden thing, always dancing, dancing here and there, as though it loved to dance by itself along the old passages and in the old rooms. I have come upon it myself in the old library, dancing from book to book, in the prettiest way."

"How strange that must have been, and to have known all the time that it was the soul of Lady Joyce!" said Pervenche, again in a dream.

"Yes, of course it was strange," I said, "but somehow it was sweet too. It gave one a feeling of a blithe, happy spirit watching over the whole household; and after all, you know, dear

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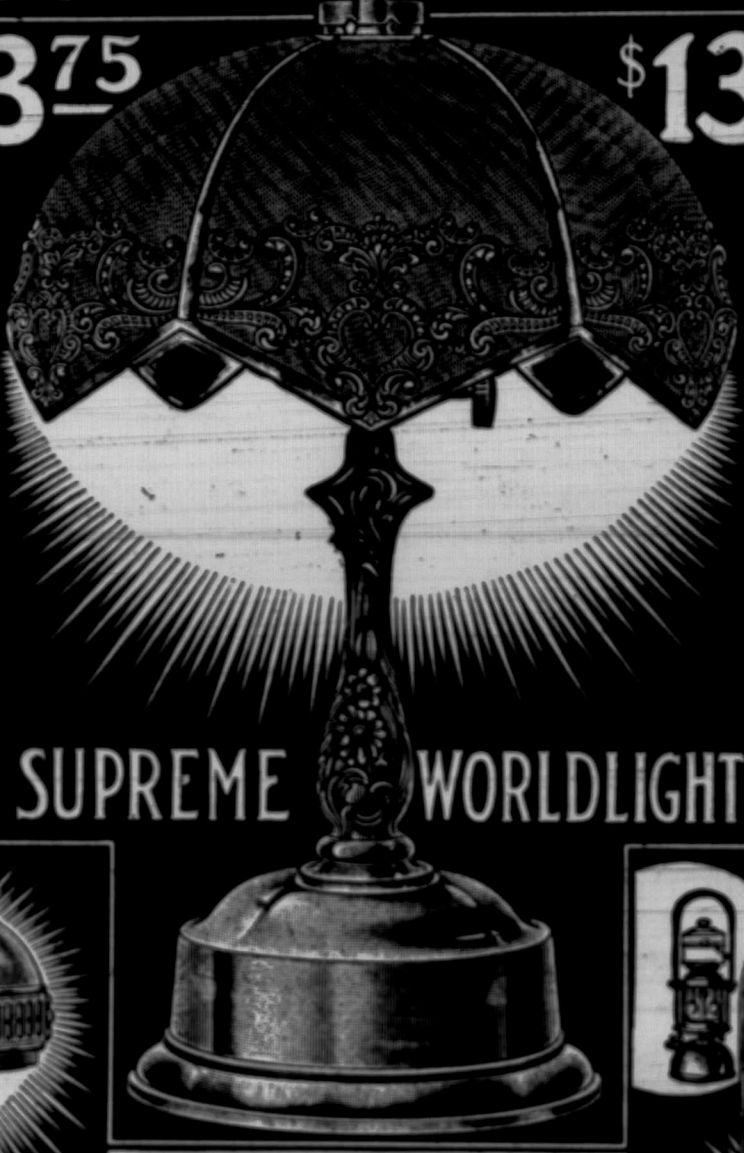
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Pervenche and Asra, I often think, as much wiser people think too, that the souls of the dead who love us are often nearer to us than we think, invisibly watching over us all the time.

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An official of the Kansas City stock yards, after visiting the south-west, places the number of cattle seriously affected by drouth conditions in Texas, New Mexico and Oklahoma at approximately 225,000 head. Of this number it is estimated that approximately 100,000 head have been shipped out to other and better quarters. This would leave around 125,000 still to be sent to feeding grounds.

The export of sugar from Canada, except on approval of the Food Controller, has been prohibited, with the exception of sugar sent by parcel post

to military and naval forces overseas. The limit of weight for those in England is 11 pounds, and if for furtherance to France, seven pounds.

The civic elections in Winnipeg, held on November 30, resulted in returning the old Council practically intact.

Are those chickens of yours still sneezing, are there swollen eyes, discharges from the nose or rattling in the throat? If so, use lime dust every few days. Close the house, get all the chickens in the corner, then as the boy says, "soak it to them." This is one of the best things the writer has ever used for croup and colds. Keep inside the house yourself as long as you can stand it. The dust should be so thick that you cannot see two feet ahead of you. When the fowls are dumpy, this also helps. Try it. It is the cheapest medicine to use.

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