

STRENGTHENING BEVERAGE

MYSTERY OF THE GREEN RAY

By William Le Queux

The outbreak of war sends Ronald Ewart, a young London barrister, to the Highlands to say good-bye to his fiancée, Myra McLeod. On the train he meets Hilderman, who calls himself an American and a stranger in those parts, but later Ewart finds that he has built a hut on a cliff above the falls opposite General McLeod's lodge. While fishing in the river Myra is suddenly blinded by a flash of green light. Gen. McLeod tells Ewart of a strange experience at the same place, known as Chemist's Rock. Hilderman is very curious as to the cause of Myra's blindness. The famous London oculist holds out no hope and Ewart, after taking Myra home, brings Dr. Garsnek from Glasgow. In the meantime Sholto is also blinded, then chloroformed and stolen. Garsnek asserts his belief that Hilderman knew of Sholto's affliction. The next morning the two men find footprints and heel-marks on the beach, and the name-plate from the dog's collar. Ewart telegraphs for his friend, Dennis Burnham. At Chemist's Rock Ewart sees the green flash and Ewart is suffocated. While in the darkness are the two young men are developing snap-shots, Myra discovers that she can see in the red light. As the oculist departs as Burnham arrives, Hilderman and his friend Fuller invite Ewart and Burnham to return from the station in the latter's boat.

CHAPTER XIII.—(Cont'd.)

The trivial but necessary question of edible species will detain us for a few moments," Fuller said. "But we shall be more comfortable here than wandering about in the herring-gillies. So we made ourselves comfortable in the deck-chairs in the stern, while the steward went ashore and made the all-important purchases.

"You cruise a good deal, I suppose?" was my first question.

"Yes, a fair amount," our host replied. "I pretty well live on board, you know, although I have a small house further north, on Loch Duich, if you know where that is best."

Mr. Ewart was bent up here, and knows it backwards," Hilderman informed him. And we chatted about the district and the fishing and the views until the steward returned, and we got under weigh. I should have liked to have seen the accommodation below, but the journey was a short one, and I had no opportunity to make the suggestion. Dennis was sitting nearest the rail, and there was a small hank of rope at his feet.

"I beg your pardon, Mr. Burnham," said Fuller suddenly. "I didn't notice that rope was in your way." And he leaned over and tossed the rope away. As he did so some hard object fell with a clatter from the coil.

"It's not interfering with me in the least," laughed Dennis, and looked down at a large, bone-handled clasp-knife which had dropped in front of him. He picked it up idly, and weighed it in his hand.

"Useful sort of implement," he said. "Oh, these sailor-chaps like a big knife more than anything," said Hilderman, "and of course they need them strong. I daresay that has been used for anything, from primitive carpentry to cutting tobacco. The one knife always does for everything."

We continued our conversation while Dennis idly examined the knife, opening it and studying the blade absently. Presently Fuller, noticing his absorption, began to chaff him about it.

"Well," he suggested, "have you completed a complete history of the knife and its owner? If you're ready to sit an examination on the subject I will constitute myself examiner, then we'll try who can contradict your conclusions."

"It's a very ordinary knife to find on board a boat, I should think," said Dennis.

"Oh, come, Mr. Burnham," Hilderman joined in, "you couldn't wriggle out of it. Surely you can answer Mr. Fuller's questions."

"If Mr. Fuller will allow me to put one or two preliminary questions to him," Dennis replied, entering into the spirit of the fun, "I am ready to go into the witness-box and swear quite a number of useful things."

"Come now, Fuller," chaffed Hilderman. "You must give him a run for his money, you know. He is risking his reputation at a moment's notice. I

breath away. I have a man on board with red hair, and when the boat came up, the factor he was working about here. I saw him leave his work to come ashore for me. I shouldn't be at all surprised to find that the knife belonged to him."

"Oh, well," Dennis laughed, "one shot right is not a bad average for a beginner, you know."

"No," said Hilderman, puffing a cloud of smoke, and dreamily following its ascent with his eyes, "not bad at all. Not bad at all."

And then, the joke of the clasp-knife being played out, we admired the scenery, and convolved of less speculative subjects till we arrived at Glasnabinnie.

We were pulled ashore by the man with the red hair, and when our host confronted him with the knife he promptly claimed it.

"I think you won, Mr. Burnham," laughed Fuller, and Dennis smiled in reply. We did alongside the landing-stage and stepped out, and Dennis's schoolmaster was about to slip the painter through a ring and make the boat fast. But evidently the ring was broken, and the man came ashore, and Hilderman began to lead us up the path. But Dennis deliberately turned and watched the sailor. Hilderman and his companion strode ahead while I stood beside Dennis. The man with the red hair fished among a pile of wire rope, and picked out a small marine-spike. Then he lifted a large stone, held the marine-spike on the wooden plank of the landing-stage, and hammered it in with the stone. Then he threw the painter round it, and made the boat secure in that way.

"Yes," murmured Dennis quietly, as we turned to join the others, "I think I won."

For the man had held the stone in his left hand.

CHAPTER XIV.

A Further Mystery.

"Well," said Hilderman, as we caught them up, "what about lunch? After his journey I daresay Mr. Burnham has an appetite, not to mention his excursion into the realm of detective fiction."

"We lunched at Malles," I explained, "with Mr. Garsnek before we came."

"Oh, did you?" he asked, with evident surprise. "I didn't see you at the hotel."

"We went to the Marine," I replied, "to save ourselves a climb up the hill. There was a snack at Malles, too, the American assured, "intending to lunch here. Are you sure you couldn't manage something?"

"It would have to be a very slight something," Dennis put in. "But I daresay we could manage that."

"Good!" said Hilderman. "Come along, then, and let's see what we can do."

We strolled into the drawing-room through the mezzanine verandah, and though Hilderman was the tenant of the furnished house he had contrived to impart a suggestion of his own personality to the room. The furniture was arranged in a delightfully lazy way, and that almost made you yawn. The walls were hung with photographic enlargements of some of the most beautiful spots in the neighborhood. I remembered what Myra had told me as to his being an enthusiastic photographer, so I asked him about them.

"Did you take these, Mr. Hilderman?"

"Yes," he answered. "These are just few of my crew, and it is obvious others which I should like to see some time. I always leave the enlarging to keep me alive during the winter months. These are a few odd ones enlarged for decorative purposes."

"They are beautiful," I said enthusiastically, for they were real beauties, more like drawings in monochrome than photographs. "And you certainly seem to have got about the neighborhood since your arrival."

"Yes," he laughed, "I don't miss much when I get out with my camera. Most of these were taken during the first month of my stay here."

"These snow scenes from the Callins are simply gorgeous, and surely this is the Kingie Pool on the Garry?"

"Right first time," he admitted, evidently pleased to see his work admired. I thought Garsnek's suspicion, excuse for the way he called upon to see that our American friend was engaged on detective work of some kind, and it struck me that with his camera and his obvious talent he had an excellent supposing he went along anywhere, time to explain his presence in some outlandish spot.

"You must have kept yourself exceedingly busy," I remarked in conclusion.

(To be continued.)

Why Stars Twinkle.

If you look at the heavens on a clear, starry night, you will notice that some of the myriad bright points twinkle, whilst others shine with a perfectly steady light.

Those which shine with unwavering brilliance are the planets, worlds like our own earth, which revolve as it does, round the sun. But the twinklers are stars. They are themselves distant suns, many of them bigger than our sun.

Our sun, for instance, is 800,000 miles in diameter, but Betelgeuse, a star in the great constellation of Orion, is no less than 200,000,000 miles across.

Now, why should planets shine steadily and stars twinkle? Some people are satisfied with the answer that twinkling is caused by the mistiness of our atmosphere. But that is no explanation at all, for planets must send their rays through just the same amount of atmosphere as stars.

The real reason is twofold. In the first place, the stars are thousands and thousands of times more distant than the planets, so that their rays have to pass over far greater distances of air to reach us. Now, though there is no star in space, there are countless millions of tiny bodies constantly travelling through it. Some are no bigger than pebbles others are of great size. It is these bodies passing through the rays of a star that are the main cause of its twinkling.

The other reason is that, whilst the planets have no light of their own, but merely reflect the sun's brilliance, the stars are always sending out their own light, which is more brilliant at some times than at others.

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Wind and Weeds.

In Sumatra the length of time a widow must wear her weeds is determined by the wind. After her husband's death she plants a flagstaff at her door, upon which a flag is hoisted. While the flag remains untorn by the wind etiquette forbids that she should marry. But as soon as a rent appears, no matter how tiny, she can lay aside her weeds.

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Women's Interests



Under-Nourished Children.

During a recent inspection of school children by a trained nurse in a small city some startling facts were brought out about poorly nourished children. Many families with two or three children had not a pint of milk for the whole family, while butter was rarely seen on the table. These poor families aroused the sympathies of club and church ladies, who immediately took steps to supply the children with pure fresh milk daily, so that their poor little starved bodies might have a chance to develop to the standard of normal beings.

But among the poorly nourished youngsters were a number who had recently moved in from the country, and whose indignant parents had much to say that was unkind and impolite in regard to the reports of the nurse. But when they took the children to the family physician the verdict was the same. Under weight, poorly equipped to resist disease, under size and not normal physically because of lack of proper food. Then it came out that the children "hated" milk and would not touch butter. They ate greedily of meat, white bread and potatoes, but used little fruit and eggs. The parents trusting to time to bring them out all right, had not attempted to force them to eat wholesome things; indeed, they hardly knew what children should eat. Yet the man could talk intelligently on balanced rations for pigs and sheep and horses, and his wife could raise chickens better than most of her neighbors, as she proudly informed folks. They knew how to feed for pork and lambs and eggs, but they did not know what was good for children.

With many children it is a whim that they will not touch milk, and often economical parents rejoice when the larger amount of whole milk or cream or butter goes to market, because the children do not care for it. But those who are informed as to the needs of growing boys and girls disguise the milk so that the boys and girls get enough each day while thinking they dislike it. In milk soups, gravies, custards, ice cream, puddings and bread the life-giving elements are introduced and the boys and girls eat them unthinkingly. To be sure, fresh, sweet milk uncooked is better than milk boiled, but by going at the thing gradually it is easy to inculcate a liking for milk and cream and butter. Take mashed potatoes, for example. Fresh, sweet cream and butter can be beaten into the mashed potatoes without the long boiling that milk gets in gravy, and the effect is almost the same as if the butter were spread on bread and the cream used on cereal. Whipped cream sweetened and mixed lightly with warm lapsoxa or served with berries is relished by children who will tell you that they do not like milk. By calling it pudding, sauce or salad dressing, the youngsters will eat cream and butter unhesitatingly and get all the benefits therefrom.

Children must have butter, milk, eggs, cream and fruits to thrive and to gain in weight and height. The farmer is alarmed when the pig or the lamb or the cow does not thrive, and immediately changes the feed and tries to discover the cause, but few families change their diet when the children are over thin or when they lack vigor. The common idea is to buy something in a bottle with which to dose them, when good food would accomplish the same or better results in less time and without injury to the stomach. A visit with the children to the family physician two or three times a year, and a heart to heart talk with him about the proper food would save many wrecked lives and many undertakers' bills. Be sure that your children are getting at least a quart of pure milk daily for each one, with butter thickly spread on good bread, and cream on cereals. Then you will see results just as you see results in feeding animals correctly. If it pays to study the needs of animals, and it does, it pays much better to study the proper diet for your children.

Revive This Old Custom.

It used to be the custom for one member of a family to set himself by the fireplace on a cold winter's night, after the chores were done and the dishes washed, and read aloud to an interested and attentive audience. Many of the conditions which formerly encouraged the practice of reading aloud no longer exist, for in earlier days reading matter was scarce, the fireplace was the main source of heat, and the tallow candle or oil lamp furnished accommodation for but one person.

If we of to-day have gained much, we have also lost much; from this practice there are benefits to be derived as valuable to-day as they were fifty years ago. Among these benefits was the exchanging of ideas which formerly encouraged the practice of reading aloud no longer exist, for in earlier days reading matter was scarce, the fireplace was the main source of heat, and the tallow candle or oil lamp furnished accommodation for but one person.

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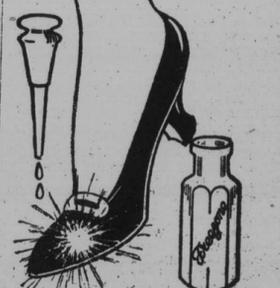
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