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THE PANGS OF REMORSE —OR— A COMPLICATED TANGLE.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Would you wait an eternity for my love," she interrupted him, looking up into his half-darkened face with eager eyes.

He smiled down at her again and stood looking from the window, musing on:

"Clifford shut up in France, these two out of the way, we can rest while her ladyship takes possession."

A dark and sinister smile accompanied these words and was shadowed upon the woman's face.

"And she?" she asked, fixing her eyes upon him. "How long will she remain mistress of Rivershall?"

"As long as I please," he said, with a smile. "Until my revenge has been reached. Ah, Kate, it has been gathering its compound interest all these years; my thirst for it has known no abatement. I have only to remember that I am—what I am; have only to look upon her still beautiful, ever false face; have only to call up the memory of those short, sweet, deceptive months when my youth was fresh as that patch of sky yonder, and I feel the fire of hate blaze up afresh and strong, and I long for the ruin of this hated race as the tiger longs for blood."

His hand clinched as he spoke, and his face grew black as night, fit index of the soul.

"Hush!" she said, soothing him with a touch and glancing warningly at the bed. "Much has yet to be done, much to be disposed of, Melchior, ere the time can come when you and I will reap our reward. For the present have you no fear?"

"None!" he said, with a curling lip. "What have I to fear? Not this old man and his daughter; they are as wax in my hands."

"Nor Mr. Besant?" she asked.

"I trust to his cowardice and meanness," he said, with a gesture of contempt. "While the ban of fever hangs over the house he will keep clear of it, never fear."

"The doctor?" she asked.

He laughed a low, scornful laugh.

"His folly and senility are our safeguards. He leaves everything to me. My forged diplomas, my stories of renowned patients and august acquaintances—above all, my cure of that girl in the cottage yonder—have won him to believe in me implicitly. Not, if he can be so deceived as to mistake this

partial state of coma, into which I have cast these two, for the fever he can be deceived as to anything. No, the old idiot is safe, perfectly. Who comes next, Kate? It is well that we should review them."

"The lawyers," she said.

"What have I to do with them?" he asked, raising his dark eyebrows. "My task done here, I shall depart, leaving them the field clear."

"I see, I see," she mused. "For the rest they are not to be feared. Her ladyship—"

He interrupted her with a dark and fateful smile.

"Will endure the torments of the lost. She shall believe that all this is her work and ah—what a meal of revenge for me! and yet more to come."

"How?" asked the woman, quickly.

He replied with a frown.

"That is for me," he said, curtly, and she knew she had gone too far.

"Last, there is left Clarence Clifford; fate may desert us and bring him on the scene too quickly."

"No," he said, with a smile; "he is safe. Trust a Calais private prison to hold him until I give the word. Then when the bird is free and flies hither he will find the nest gone. The pretty sweetheart and her dotting father dead and buried—"

A cry short and awful stopped him. The woman grasped him arm with the sudden clutch of a vice.

He looked down at her, turned swiftly in the direction her eyes were staring and saw his patient and victim sitting up in bed looking at them with two wide-stretched eyes and white, parted lips.

"She has heard all!" breathed Miss Lucas, her breath coming fast and thick.

Melchior silenced her with a look, and with a noiseless step approached the bed.

The terror-stricken girl, alive to and fully aware of the horrible plot against her own and her father's life, sprang up and essayed to scream, but all that her terrified tongue would pronounce was a gasping:

"Murderers!"

Before he could say more Miss Lucas darted forward like a snake, caught her in her arms and forced her down again.

"Quick!" she cried, holding her hand over the poor, struggling lips. "Give me the handkerchief—quick!"

Melchior, with flashing eyes, drew a vial from his pocket, poured its contents upon a handkerchief, and held it over Lillian's face. After one or two convulsive struggles a quivering sigh ran through her frame, and she lay perfectly motionless.

Miss Lucas straightened her back with a breath of relief, while Melchior still bent over her.

"Hush!" he said, "not a word, some one may be outside. Give me that glass. The draught must be ministered now—at once—before we are detected."

Miss Lucas passed a wine glass from the table, and Melchior, taking a tiny vial from his pocket, poured out a few drops of a colorless liquid.

These he forced between the teeth of the unconscious girl, and then threw the vial upon the fire, where its thin substance soon melted and disappeared. The handkerchief was also consigned to the flames and the bedclothes arranged neatly.

Then the two conspirators stood and looked at each other. Their work thus far had been well done, now for its completion.

"Kate," said Melchior, "it is done."

Watch her closely while I mark the time."

The woman bent over the still form, and fixed her eyes upon the pallid face.

"She is growing deathlike! It is death itself!"

"And the breath?" asked Melchior, keeping his eyes fixed upon the second hand of his watch.

"Is going, going fast. It has gone!" she exclaimed, in an awe-struck whisper.

"Good!" he said, with a sinister smile. "Now for our places. Stay here while I go below to the library or dining room. In five minutes ring the bell loudly and cry out for assistance; the first one who comes send to look for me. The rest I can manage."

Waiting only for her word of acquiescence, the grave doctor walked slowly down the stairs, stopping to answer one of the servants inquiries with a grave shake of the head, and passing into the dining room.

Some luncheon was spread there, and with his usual coolness the doctor helped himself to some raised pie and sipped a glass of choice claret.

Five minutes passed and he was still enjoying his repast when a bell rang loudly. There followed a rushing of two or three servants—there were only a few in the house now, most of them had taken flight at the fever—and then a cry of distress.

In another minute a servant entered hurriedly.

"Doctor, Miss Lucas is calling for you. I'm afraid—"

"For me?" interrupted the doctor, setting down his glass and rising hastily. "Yes, certainly," and he ran up the stairs and entered the sick room.

In a few seconds he came out again with a solemn face and addressed the group of terror-stricken servants in the lobby:

"One of you ride for Mr. Morecroft, and bring him back immediately."

One of the grooms dashed off and soon returned with the old doctor, who, from what he had been able to glean from the man's account, was fully prepared.

Mr. Bromwell met him at the head of the staircase, and without a word took him into the sick room.

"My dear sir," he said, "I regret to say—"

The poor old doctor, notwithstanding his years of experience, burst into tears.

"I have known her from her birth," was all he could say, and it was some moments before he could approach her bed.

When he did it was to burst out afresh:

"Dead, dead!" and he looked down upon the white, marble-lined face, the still, rigid outline. "Dead, and I not here at the time."

So affecting was the scene that Miss Lucas sobs came thick and fast:

"Oh!" she cried, "who is to break it to poor Sir Ralph? My dear, dear girl! my poor Lillian!"

At this reminder of fresh trouble to come the old doctor summoned all his fortitude and consulted with Dr. Bromwell, who, though not an old friend of the unfortunate family, was very much moved and spoke quite huskily.

Between them it was determined to conceal the sad calamity from Sir Ralph until he had fully recovered—"if he should do so," added Dr. Bromwell, with sad significance.

(To be continued.)



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IN DANGER OF BEING CUT IN TWO

The Hampshire Archaeological Association have visited Freshwater Bay, Isle of Wight, where the sea threatens to break through and join the river flowing into the Solent, cutting off the western portion of the island from the remainder.

Mr. George Colenutt, of Ryde, who has studied coast erosion locally, said the possibility was not remote if a southerly gale were accompanied by a high tide, and if so the fall of the land and the difference in the height of the water in the Channel and Solent would cause a huge rush of sea, inundating the whole valley and involving public water and sewage works, railway, and much private property.

He claimed that the rapid advance of the sea was due to the folly of the Government about seventy years ago in removing large quantities of the natural shingle barrier for building forts at the entrance to the Solent. Only a narrow strip of shingle now holds back the sea.

Local authorities have appealed to the Government for help to erect protective works, but without result.

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The Imperial Idea

A scheme to educate the rising generation to the possibilities of Empire trade has been started in the Australian Pavilion at the British Empire Exhibition at Wembley.

Parties of 400 or 500 boys from secondary schools are taken each day for a three hours' tour of the pavilion by Australians who explain the exhibits and give short lectures on Empire trade and history. The boys are then invited to write essays on their visit, prizes being awarded for the best.

Of the 5,000 boys who have already attended, 2,500 have sent in essays, and others pour in every day.

A Hammersmith boy, Allan Munro, aged 14, after visiting the exhibition, went to a shipping company and within a fortnight had arranged to work his passage to Australia, as he is too young to go under the boys' migration scheme. Munro sets off on his adventure very soon.

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Canadian Lady, F.R.C.I.

VANCOUVER, B.C., July 1.—(C.P.)—Mrs. J. C. Bruce of this city has received advice from London that she has been admitted as a fellow of the Royal Colonial Institute, England.

Since the institute decided in 1922 to confer fellowships on women interested in helpful work for the Empire only once before has a Vancouver woman been so honored. Mrs. Bruce, before coming to Canada six years ago, took an active part in educational matters in the homeland as principal of commercial colleges in Scotland and England. The institute owns its headquarters in the city of Westminster valued at over a million dollars. Women who are fellows, besides sharing in the control of the property and direction of the institute's work, enjoy the comforts and privileges of a club.

Pit Phenomenon

Reference to the condition of affairs in Scotswood Pit, where on March 30 last 35 men and boys lost their lives, through being trapped by an influx of water, is made by Mr. W. Straker, secretary of the Northumbrian Miners' Association in a recent circular.

He states that at the place where the water broke through and where there is still a considerable quantity

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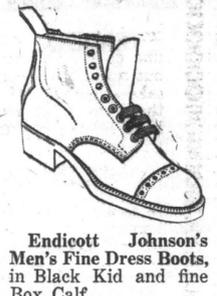
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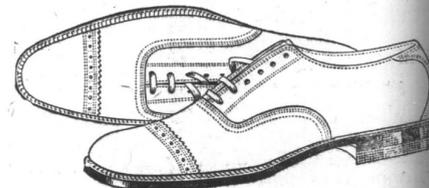
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of water, gas is coming through the water and there is a continuous hammering sound like that of a gas-engine exhaust. Such a phenomenon has never been experienced by any of those who have heard it. The cause is unknown.

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70th Annual Convention OF CANADIAN GRAND LODGE.

HAMILTON, Ont., July 3.—(Canadian Press)—An interesting ceremony will take place at the 70th annual communication of the Masonic Grand Lodge of Canada in the province of Ontario, which is to be held here July 15 and 16, when a number of past masters in good standing of affiliated lodges,

who have attained their 50th anniversary of installation as rulers in the craft, will be presented with appropriately inscribed silver medals.

Approximately 105,000 "blue lodge" masons in the province will be represented at the communication, to be presided over by W. J. Drope, Grand Master.

The committee of general purpose meets on July 13 and 14 for presentation to Grand Lodge, which as a whole opens on July 15, being received on behalf of the local masons by W. J.

Jutten, mayor of Hamilton, and member of the craft.

At the election of officers on the day, July 16, it is expected that W. Rowland, of Toronto, present puty grand master, will become grand master. Candidates for position of puty grand master will probably be Hon. John S. Martin, Minister of Agriculture for Ontario, and A. J. King of Toronto and North Bay.

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