BETWEEN TWO FIRES

By Mrs. C. N. Williamson,

Author of "Lady Mary of the Dark House," "The Woman in Grey," "Queen Sweetheart," "Fortune's Sport," "The Barn Stormers," Etc.

CHAPTER IV.

Told by Noel Brent, Who Is in Love With the Home Secretary's Daughter.

"Hide the Handkerchief."

I felt Juliette clutch my arm. "The treaty!" she whispered, in an agonized voice. (So the document in my letter-case was a treaty! But there was no time to think of its nature now. The thing was to provide for its safety—if possible.)

I thrust the letter-case into her hand, and heard a rustling of silk as, no doubt, she concealed it under her cloak. With this, up went the electric lights again as bright as ever; and to my astonishment I saw standing in the open doorway, between my bedroom and sitting-room, a commissary of police, with a gendarme looking over his shoulder and another in the background.

The door at which we had heard the first sound was that by which Juliette had entered the salon from the corridor outside; but I guessed in a second that the party had divided lest we should seize a chance of escape. The salon door Juliette had locked as she came in from the corridor, but the other, communicating with the bedroom, I had forgotten.

I threw a hasty glance at her, and seeing that she had already found means of concealing the letter-case I sharply demanded of the commissary of police what the dickens he meant by walking into my room uninvited. But his agreeable smile was unruffled.

"Ten thousand pardons, monsieur!" he exclaimed. "I knocked and hearing no answer ventured to intrude. Important business must be my excuse. I have to request that Monsieur Brent will place in my hands the gift which he has brought from London for Mademoiselle de Nevers."

"You are mistaken," I said. "I have brought no gift for Mademoiselle de Nevers."

I prevaricated with a bold face; but I fear it was also a flushed one, for the man's knowledge of my name was ominous. If the Paris police had contrived already to learn it despite all our precautions, it was possible that they knew enough to knock to pieces our house of cards. The fellow's very politeness looked as if he were sure he had the game in his own hands.

"Perhaps, I should say rather, the article which mademoiselle lent and monsieur has now returned," amended the commissary of police.

"You have been strangely misinformed," I replied, throwing out my hands with a gesture expressive of injured innocence.

"I trust that Monsieur Brent does not intend to obstruct the police in the execution of their duty," said the Frenchman, his smile hardening to a certain grimness. "In that case it would be my disagreeable task to order that monsieur be searched."

I shrugged my shoulders. "If I must submit to such an indignity I must, that is all. But in a few hours' time it would be my disagreeable task to make things lively for the person responsible."

"Also to search mademoiselle," said the commissary of police. "Whether the thing to which I refer is at this moment still in the possession of monsieur or whether it has already been returned to mademoiselle is immaterial. The matter of importance is that it must be in my hands within two minutes or Mademoiselle de Nevers and Monsieur Brent must consider themselves under arrest."

My lips were parted to speak, though I had no words sharp enough to cut this Gordian knot, when Juliette relieved me of the responsibility.

"It is monstrous," she ejaculated, "monstrous. A lady comes to call upon an old friend at an hotel, and because her name happens to be well known, because she is a servant of the public, she is to be insulted by this shameful, this ridiculous espionage of the police. Oh, I shall know how to make you regret this. But to show you how baseless are the suspicions, which I do not pretend even to understand, see for yourselves that I have received nothing from my friend which calls for the interest of the police."

White as marble, her eyes dark and dilated, she threw off her long, loose cloak, revealing the perfect lines of her figure, clad in a close-clinging dress of some soft black stuff. So snug was the fit that to have hidden even a small folded paper the size of an ordinary letter would have been difficult. Besides, the bodice was buttoned from waist to throat with tiny diamond buttons, each one a separate spark of light, as the glorious bust rose and fell in angry emotion. There would not have been time, after the knock of the door which interrupted our brief conversation, and the appearance of the intruders, for her to have undone half-a-dozen of these miniature, closely set buttons and thrust inside an object to be concealed, much less button them again.

The sleeves were tight to the wrists, as if their beautiful wearer had been born in them. There remained, therefore, only the pocket, which she hastily turned wrong side out, and the hat from which she contemptuously removed the diamond-headed pins, and shook as she took it off.

I watched and marvelled, for where was the letter-case? Not thirty seconds had passed between my placing it in her hand and the appearance of the three members of the police. How, then, had she managed to dispose of it in such a way as to dare a search? For, as she demonstrated the fact that she had nothing to conceal, she was assuring the commissary of police in scornful words that he might arrest her, take her to the police-station, and have the truth of her assertion tested more thoroughly if he chose.

Never had I appreciated Juliette de Nevers's power as an actress more than at this minute. Though the contents of the letter-case was still a mystery to me I knew well that if it were discovered in her possession it meant something worse than death to her. Yet the only emotion which she displayed was virtuous indignation. She was handsomer than she had ever been in her life, and though I loved another woman my blood was warm with admiration of her beauty and her high courage.

"Are you satisfied," she demanded.

"No, mademoiselle, I am not satisfied," reluctantly answered the gallant Frenchman.

Juliette's lips quivered. "Then drive me to the police station!" she exclaimed. She seemed even in haste to be taken at her word, for haughtily she moved towards the door.

The eyes of the police officer were fixed keely upon her.

"We have not searched monsieur," he said.

Juliette did not blench. He had not yet found the vulnerable spot.

Still his gaze was on her face. "The room must be searched before we leave it."

At last he had touched the quick. I don't know how to describe the change in her expression, for her iron self-control relaxed only for an instant, and then but slightly; yet there was a change which I felt, in sympathy, like an electric shock. In that instant I guessed her secret, and I was sure the commissary of police had guessed also, so far as to deduce that Mademoiselle de Nevers had snatched the time to hide what he desired somewhere in the salon.

"Search," he directed the two gendarmes. "Begin with all possible places of concealment within ten metres of the spot where mademoiselle and monsieur stood so earnestly talking together as we opened the door."

Juliette laughed; but her laugh, though musical, rang sharp in my ear. I suffered in my powerlessness to help, for I knew the laugh covered heart-throbs of suspense that sickened her; I knew that the careless nonchalance with which she leant her elbow on the mantelpiece meant physical weakness; absolute need for support.

The two gendarmes moved about with noiseless obedience, their countenances grave. They did not look at Juliette, absorbing themselves entirely in the task they had been set. But their officer kept his gaze upon her face as if in her eyes had been mirrored the hour-glass where the sands of his life run out one by one. I thought of a childish game I had often played—twenty years ago, perhaps. It was called "Hide the Handkerchief," and while certain of the players searched others stood by saying: "Now you are ice-cold." In remembering this suddenly we seemed to be five players. And it was Juliette de Nevers's beautiful white, deathly-smiling face which proclaimed against her will: "Now you are warm; now you are ice-cold."

There was a table in the centre of the room, two or three brightly-bound illustrated guide-books upon it and my hat and gloves, which I had flung down as I came in. The gendarmes picked up all these things, looked under them, put them down, peered under the table, lifted the silk cushions on the sofa, opened the doors of a small bric-a-brac cabinet, bowed apologies to Juliette for causing her to move from the rug on which she stood, lifted it, and also the fender, took out two logs of wood from the grate where a fire had been laid ready to light, shook the silk lace window curtains, pushed the chairs away from the positions they had occupied, and then confessed, with shrugs of the shoulders, that they were baffled.

I had a curious feeling as if my heart were the pendulum of a clock which had been shaken until it was uncertain whether to go or stop. For myself, the stakes were not so passing great; but all my life I have had an uncomfortable way of involuntarily putting myself in other people's places at moments of their distress or danger. I suppose it's an over-vivid imagination; anyhow, at such times I suffer all that they suffer—maybe more—and now the strain of the situation was tugging at my nerves. Once, when the gendarmes had carried their quest into a certain quarter, Juliette's face, though hardened into one unvarying expression—a smile which I should not soon forget—had a curious effect, as if the flesh had curdled under the skin, and at the same instant I saw in the fulness of electric light a dewy sparkle on her forehead as if diamond-dust had suddenly been flung all over it.

The question which had jarred the pendulum to indecision was whether the commissary of police had also noted that subtle effect, and, if so, whether he had put the same interpretation upon it.

I had not long to wait. The keen-eyed Frenchman gave no further directions to his subordinates, but, crossing the room, paused before the sofa.

The gendarmes had been lifting the pillows on the sofa when the diamond-dust had glittered on Mademoiselle de Nevers's forehead. When he had reached this place their superior officer turned and looked at her. She was smiling as before; but she had apparently ceased to breathe. Her breast no longer rose and fell tumultuously. The only movement there was the visible knocking of the heart under the close-fitting bodice.

For the fraction of a second—as the man bent towards the sofa—the desperate thought of trying to overpower all three men, stunning them and giving time for Juliette to get away with the letter-case, hung in my mind. But almost as quickly as it had come, the idea was superseded by the conviction that to attempt violence would only make matters worse for this fair woman who had risked so much.

I am something of an athlete, and have always prided myself a little too much, perhaps, on feats of strength and endurance; but it would be madness to hope that I could get the best of three armed men without at least making such a noise that a dozen servants would come to their assistance. I thought also of bribery, and this idea I did not entirely dismiss. It might be worked, providing a high enough price could be raised, if the letter-case was discovered. But all these pros and cons argued themselves out in my brain while I could have counted twenty; and meantime the commissary of police was deliberately removing the silk cushions which his men had tossed back into place. He laid them on the floor and then thrust his thin, wiry hand down between the seat and the back of the sofa. He moved it along slowly, inch by inch.

It was just as if Juliette's soul had sent a telegraphic message to mine telling me that she had pushed her treasure deep, deep into this crevice; yet as the fingers travelled slowly on and on, I dared to hope that by some miracle he would pass it over. In that case it would be but for him to apologize most humbly for the humiliating mistake he had committed, the inconvenience to which we had been put, and take his men away. I dared to hope, with that pendulum wavering in horrid, nauseating fashion, until the police officer gave a cry of triumph. Both hands instead of one went to work, two crooked forefingers being excitedly inserted; and then, with a dramatic flourish his French temperament could not resist, he waved aloft a dark red leather case.

"Voila!" he ejaculated, with a flash of white teeth. "Mademoiselle—monsieur, you have given us a fine game of hide-and-seek—a game to be enjoyed; yet I regret——"

"If you think," Juliette broke in, quickly, "that the thing you have there belongs to me you are mistaken. I never saw it before in my life."

"Nor I," I echoed. Juliette flung me a glance of gratitude mingled with surprise. I knew why. Once I had told her that in my opinion a lie was so cowardly I could conceive of no circumstances which would induce me to utter one. Now she thought that I was lying for her. But the queerest part of the tangle was that I couldn't be sure whether she had lied or not. I was bewildered—dumbfounded. Were we playing at cross purposes? I asked myself, amazed.

But the commissary of police was undaunted. He brought the red leather case down on the centre-table with an emphatic rap. "Quite probable," he sneered—though with the grain of good-nature which Juliette's beauty and popularity had left undissolved by his anger. "Quite probable that the last occupant of these apartments had a valued possession in so safe a place—and then forgot it. You shall have the pleasure, mademoiselle, of assisting me to see what the case contains."

One hand he laid upon it, pressing it down on the table, while with the other he manipulated a metal hasp, which fastened the two leather flaps together. But Juliette could bear no more. She sprang at him like a tigress, yet her white face was not fierce, but passionately imploring.

"For Heaven's sake, monsieur!" she gasped, in such a voice that my heart bled for her. "For Heaven's sake spare me! You do not understand. I swear to you that the affair of this case—this present, as you truly called it at first—is entirely between this gentleman—my friend—and myself. You know me. You know that I am proud—that I have held myself high. I have scorned many women in my profession because they have not held themselves as high. They say I am the only actress on the French stage who has not loved. Well, they are mistaken. I do love. What have you and your men to do with a gift to me from my lover?"

Involuntarily I took a step forward, my hand out to stop her. But I let it fall again, clenched, to my side. All the far-reaching consequences of this false excuse of hers rushed over me. Her words might be repeated and published. Margot would read or hear them. My hope of retrieving what I had lost would be gone for ever. I would be in the eyes of the girl I adored the man whom Juliette de Nevers had claimed before witnesses as her lover. My impulse was for contradiction—but I checked it. Whatever the sacrifice to myself, I would not dash from under her foot the slippery plank on which she essayed to walk.

"Your lover, mademoiselle?" echoed the commissary of police. "You ask me to believe now that this English gentleman is your lover, that there is a lover's gift in this leather case?"

And he tapped it, still closed, with his knuckles.

"I do not ask you to believe that," Juliette half sobbed, her glorious eyes swimming in tears. "The contents of that case are sacred to me. It is something that—that if seen, even by honorable men like you and your gendarmes here, will hurt me to the heart—to the heart. To me what lies hidden there is sacred. To others it would not be so. If behind the footlights I have ever been fortunate enough to bring smiles to your lips or tears to your eyes, by those smiles, by those tears, believe in me, spare me now."

"Mademoiselle, said the commissary of police, gravely and with dignity, "it is a grief to me that I must refuse such a prayer—and from you, of all women. But my duty forbids me to grant it. I must know what is hidden here."

Even yet Juliette would not abandon hope. She caught sight of his hand as again the fingers touched the metal clasp. "If I were rich I would give you and your men all I have in the world," she stammered, in a passion of pleading. "But I have been extravagant—I have served next to nothing. Still, what I have is yours if——"

"Mademoiselle, there can be no such 'if,'" pronounced the Frenchman, sternly.

With all my soul I strove to draw Juliette's eyes to mine, for with them I might have told her something. But I could not compel her gaze. Trembling, panting, all the actress forgotten, only the woman in her left, she darted at the case and made a wild attempt to snatch it from under the lean brown hand. What she would have done with it if she had succeeded I don't know, nor, perhaps, did she, unless her one hope was that, being still men, the police would not wrest it from her by force, even if I permitted them to try. But she did not succeed.

The commissary of police caught the red leather case off the table before her white fingers could seize it, and taking a quick step back before Juliette could fling herself upon him, he began fumbling with the clasp which held the two leaves of the case together.

Thwarted, desperate, all strength seemed drained from her body as hope died in her soul. With a moan she tottered back, and must have fallen had I not sprung forward to give her support against my shoulder. Three words I whispered close to her ear, but she did not hear them. Fascinated, her eyes were on the leather case, which did not open as easily as might have been supposed.

Twice, thrice, the commissary of police tried the fastening, then in a hot fit of impatience he tore the two sides of the case apart.

Something fell out—something that flashed as it fell like the arch of a cascade as it leaps from a cliff and carries with it a rainbow. Incredulous, amazed, Juliette's eyes followed the cataract of shimmering light; and I, too, only less dumbfounded than she, gazed at it in speechless astonishment. For some odd development in the plot had been indeed prepared since the finding of the red leather case in the sofa, but I had not been prepared for this, nor evidently had the police. Their superior officer gave vent to a grunt of surprise, and, stooping, picked up the thing which had fallen from the case almost with reverence. It was the most magnificent diamond necklace that I had ever seen.

"Sacre blue!" he ejaculated beneath his breath. But neither Juliette nor I uttered a sound. She still leant upon my shoulder, but she was no longer limp—half-dead. I felt her pulses leap; I felt her begin again to live. And her silence was pregnant. It would give birth to new schemes, new hopes, were she granted but a moment's breathing space.

"Where, then, is the document?" the man muttered.

This was all that the dauntless woman needed.

"What document?" she inquired, controlling her voice to a semblance of itself.

But that question was not to be answered by a diplomat, which was doubtless her reason for asking it, and to gain time.

"The contents of the case are not what I was led to expect, mademoiselle," said the officer of police.

"Led, I am certain, by a cowardly enemy of mine who strikes in the dark," she retorted, the slow color creeping back to her death-white cheeks. "It is not your fault, I do not blame you. But you see, I told you the truth. These diamonds"—she pointed an unsteady finger—"tell their own story to you, perhaps. Well, if you have any consideration for a much-aggrieved woman, you will tell it to no one else. And you will return to me my property without further parley. I have been made to suffer enough."

"Ten million pardons, mademoiselle, and of you, also, monsieur," said the commissary of police, placing in the beautiful outstretched hands the queer, unsuitable leather-case with its scintillating burden.

"You believe that my friend has brought me nothing treasonable from England, or will you look farther?" demanded Juliette, almost gaily. "Now that you know the worst you may search as you please."

"Thank you; I believe," he answered. "I believe because——"

"Because——?"

"There would not have been time to conceal more than one thing," was the terse reply.

Juliette broke into nervous laughter, and half-ashamed of his frankness, which was more earnest than jest, the commissary of police and his gendarmes bowed themselves to the door. This—as it was not the one through which they had made their first appearance, but the door leading into the corridor—had to be unlocked for them.

They went out; their footsteps were heard dying away, and until they could be heard no longer Juliette stood motionless, still gurgling with strange laughter, then, collapsing on the sofa, the laughter merged into hysterical sobbing.

"Oh, my friend, my preserver, my dear, good, precious Noel, my saint!" she gasped, convulsively. "How I love you—how I adore you. But why, why did you let it go on through such anguish for me? I nearly died of it. I wanted to die, but first kill. Why didn't you tell me somehow—somehow—that you had by a marvellous chance stumbled upon the necklace and brought it back to me instead of the treaty?"

"I didn't bring the necklace," I said.

"You—didn't bring the necklace?"

"No. At least that red leather thing isn't the case I brought. I knew that, and thanked Heaven mightily the instant the fellow pulled it out from the sofa."

"But the treaty? I am thankful—more thankful than I can say to have the necklace. If I had had it before all the misery and deceit and trickery would have been saved. Yet now the treaty is inestimably more important. For the love of Heaven don't keep me in agony any longer, my friend. Whatever the explanation of this tangle give me the treaty."

I stared at her dumb with bewilderment.

(To be Continued.)

HOW TO MAKE BABY SLEEP.

You can make baby sleep by giving him laudanum or the "soothing" stuffs which invariably contain opiates. But no sensible mother will do that. The way to make baby sleep happily and in comfort is to take away the cause of his wakefulness. This cause is located in his little inside—nowhere else. Babies seldom have anything the matter with them but their stomachs, and it is safe to say that the baby who cries unseasonably is complaining of his stomach. There is no ailment of a baby's stomach that Baby's Own Tablets will not cure right away. They make baby cheerful and happy and give him sound natural sleep—not the drugged sleep produced by soothing stuffs. Mrs. Wm. Smidt, Listowell, Ont., says:—"My baby used to be very restless and sleepless, but since giving him Baby's Own Tablets, he is better natured, sleeps better and is better in every way." These Tablets cure all the minor ailments of little ones, and can be given to the very youngest baby. You can get them from any druggist, or they will be sent post paid at 25 cents a box by writing direct to the Dr. Williams Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

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Sporting News

BASEBALL.

Although the present weather is hardly such as would gladden the heart of the average baseball fan or player, it does not prevent them from congregating and talking over the games of the past and making plans for the games to come in the approaching "Good old summer time."

The members of the local colony of ball tossers are awaiting the warm spring days when they can get down to hard practice; the weather so far this year has been more unfavorable than it was last year, when the boys started practice in February. However, it is to be hoped that before long meteorological conditions will alter sufficiently to allow them to commence light practice.

The big league teams of the East have already started practicing, being all sent to the warmer cities of the south to do their preliminary work. The Chicago nine of the National League will no doubt hold the record so far as making a long and expensive trip for spring training goes, as they take their entire team and attendants to Los Angeles, Cal., a straight jump of 2,000 miles.

After three weeks' drill the team will be taken to El Paso, Texas, another long jump of about 1,000 miles. From there they will travel by easy stages, playing en route until they reach Chicago in time for the opening game. It is estimated that this trip will cost the owners of the team no less than $5,000, quite an item to expend in getting the men into form for their season's work.

By the 15th of this month every club in both the National and the American Leagues will have their men on their grounds, giving all hands a full month's hard training before the actual opening of the season, which will take place on the 15th of April. It is expected that the fight for the pennant in both the big leagues will this year be far more closely contested than it was last season, especially in the National, where the Pittsburg team was entirely too much for the other seven teams in the race, winning the championship with comparative ease. Last season's leaders have been weakened to a great extent by the loss of Ciesbro and Tannehill, their best pitchers; Conroy, the shortstop, and Davis, the hard hitting outfielder. In their places they will have entirely experimental players, so the strength of the team is for the present somewhat problematical. On the other hand all the other teams have been strengthened considerably, and will be on a more even basis with the champions than they were last season. The best critics of the game concede the fact that the Pittsburg club, in order to win, will have to beat out the now strong Cincinnati team, which seems to be, in the opinion of those who profess to know, the nine that will make the strongest bid for the flag. Hanlon's reconstructed Brooklyn team and Hart's Chicago "Remnants," both look strong on paper, but only a couple of months' hard campaigning will show their quality. Boston, St. Louis, Philadelphia and New York, all have a large number of players under contract, and considerable weeding out will have to be done before they finally get their teams whipped into proper shape.

The race in the American League will no doubt be one of many surprises, as no one seems anxious at present to make any predictions as to the ultimate outcome of the struggle. The New York all-star team will probably be the great factor in the race, for it certainly appears to be about as strong an aggregation as ever was put together. Connie Mack's last year's champions have been too much weakened by the loss of their best players to cut much of a figure in the race; Detroit, strengthened by the addition of Kitsos and Donovan, the crack pitchers of last year's Brooklyn club, and Crawford, the star outfielder and heavy hitter of last year's Cincinnatis, will be very much in evidence throughout the season; Cleveland, with its magnificent corps of pitchers, Bernhard, Joss, Wright and Moore, and its heavy-hitting infield, Hickman, the great Lajoie, Gochnauer and Bradley, and a good trio of outfielders, should make their opponents hustle pretty lively; St. Louis also has a likely looking bunch, while Boston, Chicago and Washington are also in line with teams that should hold their own in the company they are travelling.

The Pacific War.

Next to the natural interest in their own ball team, the interest of the local fans will be centered in the war between the rival coast leagues, which promises to be one of the most bitter in the history of organized baseball. Now that the Pacific Northwest League has carried the war into the enemy's camp, so to speak, by placing teams both in San Francisco and Los Angeles, the war may be considered to be on for good. J. J. McCloskey, formerly manager of the Butte team, has been given charge of the San Francisco club, Zearfoss replacing him as manager of the Butte team, and T. Reilly, formerly third baseman of the Los Angeles team, and a great favorite with the patrons of the game in that city, has been appointed manager of the new Los Angeles club. The Pacific Northwest League is now composed of the following clubs: Seattle, Tacoma, Spokane, Butte, Helena, Portland, San Francisco and Los Angeles, making a full eight team league, but a league severely handicapped by exceptionally long jumps, which makes the financial end of the proposition an extremely doubtful one.

The new Pacific Coast League, the so-called "Pirate League," is composed of teams in San Francisco, Los Angeles, Sacremento, Oakland, Portland and Seattle, which, although only a six-club affair, is by far a more compact circuit with comparatively short jumps, and has considerably more chance of being a financial success than its rival. There is still some prospect, however, of the two factions arranging a peace measure of some sort, the officials of both leagues, as well as the managers of the various teams interested, being at the present time in San Francisco with that purpose in view.

The teams of the Coast League have already commenced practice, and are all in Southern California at the present time, while the teams of the Northwestern League have not as yet reported for practice. Manager Wilson, of the new Seattle club, has his men at Ventura, where they have been practicing for the past week; Schock, who formerly pitched for the Everett team, and one of Wilson's recruits, met with a most unfortunate accident on Thursday while at practice, breaking one of the fingers of his right hand while attempting to pick up a fast grounder. Harry Lane, another member of the team, has also been put on the sick list, having his hands badly cut by glass while at a fire. The remainder of the team are reported to be rounding into form in splendid style.

McCloskey's new San Francisco team is not yet organized, but that doesn't seem to bother McCloskey, who says he will give the fans a far better nine than they ever had before. The same conditions prevail in Los Angeles. However, both clubs have secured grounds, and are busy getting them into shape, erecting stands and fences, etc.

There is but one city in the entire lot than can support two teams, and that is San Francisco, but in Seattle, Portland and Los Angeles it seems as though someone was booked to quit a financial loser. However, what will be the baseball magnates loss will be the gain of the patrons of the game in the various cities in which the rival teams will play, for there is no doubt that they will get a far superior article of ball than they have been getting in the past, or than they are paying for at the prices which prevail on this coast.

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NORWAY PINE SYRUP
CURES
Coughs, Colds, Bronchitis, Croup, Hoarseness, Sore Throat, Pain in the Chest, Asthma, and all Throat and Lung Troubles.
It invigorates as well as heals, and soothes the throat and lungs so that you quickly realize the lung healing virtues of the pine.
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FIRST DOSE RELIEVED.
I had a very severe cold and used Dr. Wood's Norway Pine Syrup. The first dose gave relief, and part of the bottle completely cured me. At the same time my mother had such a severe cold and cough that she was confined to her bed. She also used the Syrup and it gave her almost instant relief. I cheerfully recommend it to all suffering from coughs and colds.
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THE WHEEL.

ANNUAL MEETING.

At the annual meeting of the Vancouver Bicycle Club the following officers were elected for the ensuing year: President, M. C. Clarke; first vice-president, Wm. Ralph; second vice-president, William Blackmore; secretary, J. H. King; assistant secretary, P. T. Hogg; captain, C. J. Marshall; first lieutenant, Robt. Haddon; second lieutenant, Jesse Edwards; timekeeper, G. S. Mason; handicapper, E. S. Wilband; buglers, Area. McQuarrie and Robert Knight; executive committee, W. Hodson, I. V. Williams, D. J. Koontz, D. McLean, J. A. Murray.

Messrs. H. C. Clarke, William Blackmore and C. J. Marshall were appointed a committee to interview the executive of the Brockton Point Athletic Association respecting a projected road race, to be held on Good Friday.

HOCKEY.

VANCOUVER v. GARRISON.

The next game of the provincial hockey series will be played between the Garrison and Vancouver teams on the former's grounds. The News-Advertiser says:

"The Vancouver club, in all their matches this year, have never erred on the side of over-confidence, and it is, therefore, not at all likely that the players will allow themselves to be overcome at all with the flush of victory and meet their Waterloo when they go down to the capital to play the Garrison. The club needs not only to win the Thorpe cup, but must do it without a defeat. The team has improved wonderfully since it played the Garrison here last December, and it may, therefore, be presumed that so well conditioned a team as the Garrison is, will also have added much to the science of the game, and likely give the locals the hardest tussle ever faced this season. It will be in the mind of all who witnessed the match here with the Garrison that their defence was next door to impregnable, for whilst the local team had the better of the argument in point of attack, continually keeping the Garrison on the defensive, still the two goals was the sum total of the effort of the home eleven. On the coming Saturday, therefore, every player should get out to Brockton Point and give the team a great practice. It is possible that changes may be necessary owing to the fact that some of the men who played last Saturday may be unable to go down to Victoria. Every player should, therefore, be out on time and put up the best game at his command."

CRICKET.

VICTORIA CLUB ACTIVE.

The cricket season is expected to be livelier than has been the case here for many years. The energy and enterprise of the new club is rousing interest in the game, and the membership is steadily increasing. Already active preparations for the ensuing season are being made. The grounds which have been leased from the Provincial Royal Jubilee hospital will be put into condition as soon as possible. The crease, however, will not be in fit shape for playing purposes until about the middle of the season, and in the meantime the club will use their last year's grounds at Beacon Hill. It is rather early yet for arranging a schedule of games, but the club has also been active in that direction. Games have been promised by both Nanaimo and Vancouver.

WIDENING THE WICKET.

In a column devoted to "Gossip in Cricket Circles," the Winnipeg Free Press says:

"The question of widening the wicket is still occupying the attention of the county clubs at home. It is more than amusing to note the differences of the collective wisdom of the several committees. Warwickshire have decided to oppose the suggestion, but they think that the stumps should be heightened by two inches.

"Staffordshire write to F. E. Lang, the secretary of the M. C. C., in a most guarded way. They should like to see the proposed widened wicket given a season's trial in the matches played at Lord's before expressing a definite opinion on the matter. This is no answer. Every county club should have a majority who can decide 'yea or nay.'

"It is a cool proposition to ask the M. C. C. to devote Lord's ground to a trial pitch for Staffordshire to form their opinion as to a change being desirable.

"Surrey go right in for all changes. They wish to see the wicket—not only increased an inch in width—but also the height an inch. Sussex say that they approved the widening of the wicket from eight to nine inches, but Dorsetshire consider that the widening of the wicket is not necessary in second-class cricket. In the Northwest most cricket clubs will agree to let well alone. It will be easy to judge by the results of first and second-class cricket in the old land, under the new ideas, if they should become rules. At present they differ so much that all we can judge from is the probable results of such changes here. No one will pretend to say that our batting is so superior to the bowling that any change is necessary. The M. C. C. had better consult the men who will be most affected by the proposed changes. These are the wicket keepers. Two inches added to the top of the wickets means a lot to them, and not to their advantage. The 'keeper' has the position, learnt of experience, as to his work behind the stumps. The eyes have to watch around each side of the wickets, but the balls he keeps an eye on also—not alone to remove them when a batsman is out of his ground, but also to protect his eyes from a flying ball dislodged by the bowler. Another inch of ground to be covered by his hands must make him accommodate his position to the attempted extra reach required both to the leg and the off side."

Dr. W. G. Grace expresses the following opinion: "There is danger in altering the rules and implements which have been in use so long, and have helped to raise the game to such a height of popularity. Certainly no change should be made unless the proposed one is first given a good trial."

On the question of width of bats, he remarked, how strange it is that the authorities should have allowed bats to be wider than the rule allows. This rule, he says, will now be enforced, and the players will have to use bats of proper width. Dr. Grace goes on to consider the new rule concerning "L.B.W.," and after mentioning the various proposals which have been made on the question, states that, in his opinion, we have heard the end of the "L.B.W." question for twenty years. Concerning the widening of the wicket, Dr. Grace gives an account of the size of the wicket since the year 1700, which is of great interest, and he also discusses the question of whether, with thicker stumps, the balls would fall off as easily as they do at present.

The London Times referring to the proposal publishes the following:

"A meeting of representatives of clubs in the Yorkshire Cricket Council, by a majority of 13 votes to 5, decided not to support the proposal to widen the wicket.

"At a well-attended meeting at Sheffield the Yorkshire club committee adopted the following: 'That the Yorkshire County cricket committee, having carefully considered the proposal made by the captains of the first-class counties, and supported by the M. C. C. cricket sub-committee and general committee, to increase the width of the wicket from eight to nine inches, while expressing itself favorable to the change, is of opinion that the alteration should not become law until a good trial has been afforded it.'"

BASKETBALL.

CHAMPIONS DEFEATED.

The Victoria West team defeated the F. Y. M. A. Athletics on Saturday evening by a score of 15 to 6. Needless to say the champions did not lose the game without a struggle, but against the Victoria West team's splendid combination and shooting the Fernwoods were powerless. The result of this match bars them absolutely from winning the championship of the league this season, and thus practically hands it to the James Bay five. It is safe to say that the large majority of those who witnessed this game were surprised to see the champions go down to defeat. All had expected that they would win and finally put up a good fight for the championship with the J. B. A. A. It is astonishing what an improvement has been effected in the Victoria West five during the past few weeks. Had the same team been playing in the opening of the season it would have been a neck and neck race for the coveted trophy between them and the James Bay boys.

The Fernwood team from the start showed the want of practice. Both of the forwards had been put in senior circles for the first time this season, and their shooting was spoiled by nervousness. Peden had hard luck, his shooting, usually excellent, was not up to the standard, the ball hitting the rim of the basket and bouncing out time and again. Malcolm played a plucky, hard game, but his work was not as effective as it should have been. For him, however, there is some excuse, as he was playing his first senior match. Dalby, at centre, was not up to his usual mark in checking, letting his dangerous opponent, Baker, have far too much liberty. In shooting, however, he did better than either of the forwards. Shotbolt and Peden, as guards, could not be replaced. They played together splendidly, and were the mainstay of the team. It cannot be doubted that the Fernwoods made a mistake in putting a new player on as forward in such an important game. Had the proposed arrangement, namely, Shotbolt and Thrall or Gallop back, with W. Peden centre, and Peden and Dalby forward, been carried into effect it is more than probable that the result would have been different.

Every praise should be accorded the Victoria West aggregation. They put up a magnificent game. Every member of the team did his duty. The forwards, who were C. and W. Fairall, showed conclusively that they can still play basketball. Their shooting, checking and combination was of the best. The star player of either of the teams was Baker. He played in a cool, accurate manner, and his shooting was almost faultless. Hughes and Jones, at guard, did their work well.

In the first half the Fernwood seemed to be somewhat surprised at the business-like manner the Victoria West team went into the game, and this turned into consternation as the score was gradually increased. The two Fairalls played excellent combination and at times the Fernwoods showed something like their old form in this direction. But when the forwards got the ball they couldn't put it in. The first portion of the game ended with the Wests some 8 points in the lead.

The Fernwoods started off the second part of the game with a determination to win. For the first few minutes they had the best of the play. But again the forwards failed to score. The Wests, however, soon recovered and increased their score gradually until it stood at the 15 mark. Dalby, for the Fernwoods, converted a number of free shots in fine style, bringing the F. Y. M. A. score up to 6. It was at this stage that the whistle blew announcing time. Frank Smith refereed the game most impartially.

The teams follow:

Victoria West — Guards, Jones and Hughes; centre, Baker; forwards, C. and W. Fairall.

Fernwoods—Guards, Shotbolt and W. Peden; centre, Dalby; forwards, R. Peden and Malcolm.

THE KENNEL.

FIFTY-FIVE ENTRIES.

Although the premium lists of the Victoria Kennel Club have been issued but a few days, entries are already beginning to pour in. Some 55 are in the hands of Secretary T. P. McConnell. Most of these have been received from local fanciers, but some 15 have come from Seattle. The secretary predicts that there will be between 250 and 300 dogs enter this year.

THE ROD.

THAMES REPLENISHED.

Addition to the stock of trout in the Thames has been made by the Henley Fisheries Preservation Association, which has turned into the river near Henley bridge about 700 two-year-old fish. The trout were well grown fish, and some of them ranged up to 11 inches in length.