

THE MYSTERY OF THE GREEN RAY

By William Le Queux

CHAPTER XVII.—(Cont'd.)

"We're certainly learning something," said Dennis, as he finished. "Obviously, the Green Ray is very suspicious of somebody, but it's not Hilderman. He writes as if he were pretty sure of himself. Probably he has proved his theory about Hilderman being a Government detective."

"I have a message for Mr. Ewart, sir," the messenger interrupted. "You had better tell it to me," Dennis suggested.

"I'd rather Miss McLeod asked me," McKenzie demurred. "Those were Mr. Ewart's instructions. He said 'fail'."

"You had better tell it to me," Dennis suggested.

"Very well," laughed Myra. "I quite appreciate your point. May I know the message?"

"Mr. Ewart was to take no notice whatever of anything Mr. Ewart said in his letter about Mr. Hilderman. He was on no account to trust Mr. Hilderman, but to be very careful not to let him see he was suspicious. The gentlemen were always to wear their glasses whenever they were in sight of the hut above Glas—above Mr. Hilderman's house."

"When?" Dennis whistled. "But why didn't he—? Oh, I see. He was afraid the letter might fall into Hilderman's hands."

"I wonder where Ron can have got to?" Myra mused wistfully.

"We're very much obliged to you for all the trouble you have taken, Mr. McKenzie," said Dennis. "You've done very well indeed."

"Oh, Mr. Ewart also said that Miss McLeod was to put on her glasses by the red light."

"Yes, that's important," Dennis agreed. "We'll go up to the house now, shall we, Miss McLeod?"

"Yes," said Myra, "and Mr. McKenzie must come and have a meal and a rest, as I'm sure he needs both after his journey. I'll send Angus to look after the boatman." So the three stroiled up to the lodge.

"By the way," said Dennis, "of course it's all right, and you've carried out your instructions to the letter, but how can you be sure this is Miss McLeod, and how do you know I'm not Hilderman?"

"Mr. Ewart described everybody I should be likely to meet," McKenzie replied, "including Mr. Hilderman and Mr. Fuller. I know you are Mr. Ewart's friend because you have a small white scar above your left eyebrow. So, being with you, and wearing a shade and an Indian bangle, I thought I was safe in concluding the lady was Miss McLeod."

"Garnet doesn't seem to miss much!" Dennis laughed.

"He made me repeat his descriptions about twenty times," said McKenzie, "so I felt pretty sure of myself."

When they got up to the lodge, and the messenger's requirements had been administered to, Dennis unpacked the parcel. The spectacles proved to be something like motor goggles; they fitted closely over the nose and forehead, and entirely excluded all light except that which could be seen through the glass. The only curious thing about them was the glass itself. Instead of being white, or even blue, it was red, and the surface was scratched diagonally in minute parallel lines. Myra and Dennis hurried upstairs and lighted the lamp in the dark-room. When the girl came down again she declared that she could see beautifully. Everything was red, of course, but she could see quite distinctly.

"Have you any idea why these glasses are ruled in lines like this?" Dennis asked McKenzie.

"I couldn't say for certain, sir," the youth replied. "But I should think it was because Mr. Ewart thought the glasses would be so near the eye as to be ineffective. In photography, for instance, you can't print either bromide or printing-out paper in a red light. But if you coat a red glass with emulsion and make an exposure on it, you can print the negative in the usual way. I don't know why it is."

"Perhaps there is no space for a ray to form," Myra suggested.

"You must tell Mr. Ewart how deeply grateful we all are to him," said Dennis. "I'll give you a letter to take back to him. It has been a wonderfully quick bit of work!"

"I should think he has got some hundreds of the glasses finished by this time," said McKenzie, "and he has already asked for an estimate for fifty thousand of them."

"Whatever for?" Myra exclaimed.

"I couldn't say at all, but Mr. Ewart probably has all mapped out. He always knows what he's about."

A couple of hours later McKenzie left for Glenelg, with ample time to catch his boat, and the others sat down to lunch. Myra was delighted that she

could see, even though everything was red. Just as they had finished lunch a telegram was delivered to Dennis. It was handed in at Mallais, and it read: "Don't worry about me. May be away for a few days.—Ewart."

"Oh, good!" exclaimed Dennis. "A wire from Ron. He's all right. 'Don't worry about me. May be away for a few days.' Sent from Mallais. He may have got something he feels he must tell Glas, and has gone to Glasgow."

"I expect that's it," Myra agreed. "I'm glad he's well. I do hope he'll write from wherever he is to-night. Do you think I shall get a letter in the morning?"

"Certainly not," Dennis vowed, laying the telegram on the mantelpiece. "It's sure to write, however busy he is."

Though Myra was disappointed that there was no personal message for her, she tried to believe that everything was all right. Dennis went to what he called coastguard duty, and watched the sea and shores with the untiring loyalty of a faithful dog. That night, after dinner, he went out to keep an eye on things, and left Myra with her father. She has told me since that she felt miserable that I had not wired to her, and went to fetch my telegram in order to get what comfort she could from my message to Dennis. She held the telegram under the light, and read it through. The words were: "May be away for a few days.—Ewart." She made out the faint pencil writing slowly through the red glass. She read it twice through, and then suddenly collapsed into an armchair in the horror of swift realization. "Ewart!" she whispered. "Ewart! He would never sign a telegram to Mr. Burnham in that way. If Ronnie didn't send that wire, who did?"

In a moment she jumped to her feet. She must act, and act quickly.

She ran into the den, and picked up the revolver and cartridges which Garnet had sent, and which she had put carefully away until I should come and claim them. She loaded the revolver, and tucked it in the pocket of the Burberry coat which she slipped on in the hall. Then she tore down to the landing-stage, and made straight for Glasnabinnie in the Jenny Spinner. She had got about half a mile when Dennis, coming up to the top of the cliff on his self-imposed coastguard duties, saw her and recognized her through his binoculars.

He ran down to the landing-stage, putting on his red glasses as he went. His horror was complete when he found there was no craft of any kind about, not even a rowboat. Alas! I had idly allowed the dinghy to drift away. He ran along the shore, every now and then looking anxiously through his binoculars for any sign of any kind of boat that would get him over to Glasnabinnie in time to fulfil his promise of looking after "Ron's" little girl.

Myra has since admitted—and how proud I was to hear her say it—that she forgot about everything and everything except that I was in danger, and probably Hilderman knew something about it. She had thought of nothing but the pistol to his head and demand my safe return.

She came ashore a little beyond the house, having made a rather wide detour, so that she should not be seen. She knew the best way to the hut, and there was a light in it. She thought Hilderman would be there. She passed well to seaward of the Fiona, and noticed that she was standing by with steam up. Myra climbed the hill to the hut with as much speed as she could.

Hilderman was standing below the door of the smoking-room talking to three men. She knew that she would have no chance, even with a revolver, against four men. She might hurt one of them, but she recognized, fortunately, that the others would overpower her.

Eventually Hilderman went into the hut, and two of the men stayed outside talking. The other went down the hill. It was in watching this man that Myra saw the sight that had astonished her, the continuous stream of lights down the bed of the burn.

She waited so long she said it seemed, for hours and hours, before she could see a real chance of attacking Hilderman. Indeed, neither she nor Dennis can give any very clear idea precisely how long it was that she waited there, but it must have been a considerable time. At last Hilderman was alone. Myra crept to the edge of the little plateau on which the hut stood, and then made a dash for the door. She thrust it open and stepped inside, pulling it to behind her. Hilderman sprang to his feet with an oath as he saw her.

"Heavens!" he cried. "You!"

Myra drew the revolver and presented it at him.

"Put up your hands, Mr. Hilderman," she said, with a calmness that astonished herself, "and tell me what you have done with Ronnie—Mr. Ewart."

"I must admit you've caught me, Miss McLeod!" Hilderman replied. "I can only assure you that your fiancé is safe."

"Where is he?" Myra asked.

"He is quite close at hand," Hilderman assured her, "and quite safe. What do you want me to do?"

"You must set him free at once," said Myra quietly.

"And if I refuse?"

"I shall shoot you and anyone else who comes near me."

"Now look here, Miss McLeod," said Hilderman, "I may be prepared to come to terms with you. If you shot me and half a dozen others it would not help you to find Mr. Ewart. On the other hand, it would break up the family, and I have no wish to harm Mr. Ewart. If I produce him, and allow you two to go away, are you prepared to swear to me that you will neither of you breathe a word of anything you may know to any living soul for forty-eight hours? I think I can trust you."

Myra thought it over quickly. "Yes," she said, "if you will. But she never finished the sentence. At that moment someone caught her wrist in a grip of steel and wrenched the pistol from her."

"Come, come, Miss McLeod," said Fuller, "this is very un-neighbourly of you."

Myra looked round her in despair. There must be some way out of this. She cuddled her brains to devise some means of getting the better of her captives. Fuller laid the pistol on the table and sat down.

"You need not be alarmed," he said. "We shall not hurt you. You will be left here, that is all. And we shall get safely away. After this we shall not be able to leave your precious lover with you, but Hilderman insists that he shall not be hurt, and we shall take him to Germany and treat him as a prisoner of war."

(To be continued.)

Spring and Summer Forest Fires.

There are usually two periods of fire-hazard in the Canadian forests, in early spring just after the snow disappears, and in late summer, when the vegetation has begun to get dry. Exceptional seasons vary these periods, but the two classes of "spring fires" and "summer fires" remain.

Many people understand why the dry, hot period of late summer is likely to be favorable to the starting of forest fires, but they think that, after the heavy snowfall of winter, the woods ought to be safe till early summer at least. A little reflection, however, will show why the early spring period is particularly dangerous.

In early spring there is often a short period of hot, bright days. The leaves have not yet come out and the sun shines down through the leafless branches directly on the forest floor. The snow disappears as if by magic and the dead twigs and last year's leaves become as tinder. If a glowing match or cigarette stub is dropped among this material the forest floor is ablaze over a space of many yards in a moment. A few days at this period are always most critical. After the first spring rain the ground vegetation becomes green and damp, and the leaves come out and shade the forest floor. The worst danger is then over, until the hot days of late summer cause the vegetation to dry out, when a danger period ensues which lasts till the first autumn rains.

The moral of it all is that Canadians ought always to be careful with fire in the forest and doubly careful during these danger periods.

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Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains directions so simple any woman can dye or tint her worn, shabby dresses, skirts, waists, coats, stockings, sweaters, coverings, draperies, hangings, everything, even if she has never dyed before. Buy "Diamond Dyes"—no other kind—then perfect home dyeing is sure because Diamond Dyes are guaranteed not to spot, fade, streak, or run. Tell your druggist whether the material you wish to dye is wool or silk, or whether it is linen, cotton or mixed goods.

She Knew.

A Philadelphia school teacher was quoting to her pupils the sayings of various wise men touching the value of silence on certain occasions, when she gave them the proverb to the effect that we have one mouth and two ears, in order that we may listen twice as much as we speak.

A day or so after the instruction, the teacher, to see how well the lesson had been learned, asked a girl pupil the question, as above.

Little Lulu had forgotten the philosopher's maxim; but the question did not seem a difficult one to answer.

"Because," she said, "we should not have room in our face for two mouths, and we should look too crooked if we had only one ear."

"No, Lulu," said the teacher, "that is not the reason. Perhaps Marie can tell us."

"Yesum," said Marie, "it's that way so we can let what we hear go in at one ear and out at the other!"

"Every little helps" is all right for those with little, and all wrong for those who have much.

Minard's Liniment for Dandruff.

Play No Favorites Among the Children.

Most parents declare that they love one child just as much as the other, and that they have never made any difference in the treatment of their children, yet they can see that other parents have been most unfair and unkind to their offspring in the matter of family equality. The most glaring inequalities in their ideas of justice and rights for their own children often pass unnoticed, regardless of the turmoil and strife such inequalities call forth, and ignoring the fact that partiality is responsible for a large percentage of family quarrels.

In the ideal home each and every child is treated fairly throughout its life, but ideal homes are not always the rule. If parents would look back on their own childhood, remembering the bitter heartaches caused by partiality, they would make fewer mistakes in their own homes. Parents who desire peace and harmony now, and a binding tie between their children after the parents have passed from earth, should found their homes on the basis of equal rights for all and special privileges for none.

Some years ago it was customary for the whole family to pinch and save in order to educate the brightest son and send him forth on a professional career. "We ought to have one gentleman in the family," was the slogan of those who denied themselves comforts to lay by money for the one thought to be the most worthy of an education. Happily, that idea has about died out; and, in order to be fair and just, fathers and mothers who educate only one child give to the other children the amount of money which the college education represents. If one son chooses to become a doctor and another a farmer, the farmer last should have the same amount, year by year, for his farming venture as is paid out for college expenses. Farming is just as much of a profession as is "doctoring," and intelligent people no longer believe that farming is a good occupation only for a person of low mentality.

A man who had had a hard struggle in youth, but found himself in comfortable circumstances later in life, married the second time. His first wife had died when the children of that union were still young, and he had sent his sturdy sons and daughters to homes of their own with scant equipment and very little education. He had a frank and fair talk with the woman he married as to the rights of his dead wife's children, and with her full knowledge and consent he gave the children secure as to their property rights. In consequence, the step-mother was cordially received by the children, all of whom were anxious that their father should have a comfortable home. In time other children were born, but there was never any discord over the fact that these children could be educated and clothed in a style unknown to the older ones. The father, who desired to be fair and just to all, made it a point to share his prosperity with each and every child to the end of his days, and thus bound all together.

ly little things, in paying the friendly tribute that means so much, doesn't it?

"Of course, I've always had a warm, kindly feeling for the old town and the people, but I hardly supposed they had kept track of me, or followed my career. By the way—er—er—do you happen to recollect the wording of the tablet?"

"Yes. It says, 'Main Street.'"

Love of Home.

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Maintains its hold with such unfailing sway.

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—William Cowper.

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Some complain because of poor health, but many more have poor health because they complain.

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There is some one who is actually doing the thing that you are dreaming of doing—some one who is not better equipped than you are but who has the will to make dreams come true.

There is some one not very far from you, who would make a big thing out of the chance you are throwing away because you see nothing in it. There are thousands of young men who would think they were "made" if they only had your chance for an education, your chance to make good, where you think there is no chance at all.

Are you going to make use of your opportunities? What are you doing with your chance?

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Germs in Desert Sands.

The territory known before the war as German Southwest Africa is of little value to the British, who have acquired it, inasmuch as it is mostly desert. It does, however, produce many diamonds, which are picked up in the sands along the coast.

The desert diamonds have evidently been distributed by water and wind, and doubtless were brought from a not-distant source by ancient and vanished rivers. Presumably they were originally derived from volcanic "pipes," like those which produce diamonds in the Kimberly field of South Africa. Experts are inclined to think that all of them came from a single pipe, because they are so much alike in quality, appearance and crystallization. In the Kimberly field the diamonds from no two pipes are alike. Accordingly, an anxious search is being made for the source of the stones. Pipes, a number of them, have been found, but, alas! none of them contains any diamonds.

The Britannia (B.C.) Mining and Smelting Co. is erecting a new crushing mill with a capacity of 2,500 tons of ore per day.

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Three hundred and fourteen pilots

are employed to guide the more than

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