

BOVRIL

AN INVIGORATING HOT DRINK

THE MYSTERY OF THE GREEN RAY

By William Le Queux

Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

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. Garnesk from Glasgow. In the meantime Sholto is blind, then chloroformed and stolen. Garnesk asserts his belief that Hilderman knew of Sholto's affliction. The next morning the two men find footprints and keel-marks on the beach, and the name-plate from the dog's collar. Ewart telegraphs for his friend, Dennis Burnham. At Chemist's Rock, Garnesk sees the green flash and Ewart is satisfied.

CHAPTER XI.—(Cont'd.)

"I shall certainly go on," I replied eagerly. "But we can hardly expect you to run risks on our behalf."

"It may be in the interests of civilization," he answered, "and in that case it is our duty. Now look here, Ewart, this will have to be a secret. It is essential that we should not get ourselves laughed at because for one thing, the scoffers may get into serious trouble if they start investigating our assertions in a spirit of levity. You and I must keep this to ourselves entirely. What about your friend?"

"I can trust him," I replied simply. "Then tell him everything," Garnesk advised. "If you know you can rely upon him he may be of great assistance to us."

"What about Hilderman?" I asked. "He knows a good deal already."

"There is no need for him to know any more. He may be of some use to us. I had thought he might be of the greatest use, but he may be able to help us still. We should decrease, rather than augment, his usefulness by telling him these new complications."

"How do you mean?" I asked. "Well, for instance, he might think we are mad, although he's a very shrewd fellow."

"Yes," I agreed, "I think he's pretty cute. Funny that Americans so often are. Anyway, he's been cute enough to make sufficient to retire on at a fairly early age, and retire comfortably, too."

"H'm," was my companion's only comment. After dinner that evening we discussed all sorts of subjects, mainly the war, of course, and went to bed early.

"Now, Ron," exclaimed Myra, as we said good-night, "if Mr. Garnesk is really going to leave us on Monday, you mustn't let him worry about things to-morrow. Do let him have one day's holiday while he is with us, anyway."

"I will," I agreed. "We'll have a real holiday to-morrow. Suppose we all go up Loch House in the motor-boat in the afternoon?"

So it was arranged that we should have an afternoon on the sea and a morning's fishing on the loch. Garnesk fell in with the plan, and the matter was settled. "It will do you good," he declared. "You won't be feeling too frisky in the morning after your adventure this afternoon."

As it turned out he was quite right, for I awoke in the morning with a slight headache and a tendency to ache all over. So we fished the loch

in a very leisurely fashion for an hour or two, and after lunch the four of us went up to Kinlochcourn. We took a tea-basket with us, and very nearly succeeded in banishing the green ray altogether from our minds. I had taken my kodak with me, and we ran in shore, and otherwise altered our course occasionally in order to enable me to record some choice peep of the magnificent scenery. When we got back to the lodge we were all feeling much the better for the outing. After dinner Myra, who had taken the greatest interest in the photographs, although, poor child, she could not see what I had taken, and would not be able to see the result either, was anxious to know how they had turned out.

"I should love to know if the snapshots are good," she said, "particularly the one at Caolas Mor. Develop them in the morning, Ronnie, won't you? If you don't you'll probably take them away, and forget all about them."

Garnesk looked at me. He was always on the qui vive for any opportunity to give Myra a little pleasure. He felt very strongly that she must be kept from worrying at all costs.

"Why not develop them now, Ewart?" he suggested.

"Certainly," I said, "if everybody will excuse me."

"Dad's in the library," Myra replied, "but everybody else will come with you if you ask us nicely. Besides, I shall have to tell you where everything is. There's plenty of room for us all."

"Right you are," I agreed readily, and went out to get a small folding armchair from the verandah. We went up to the dark-room at the top of the house, and Myra sat in the corner, giving me instructions as to the position of the bottles, etc. I prepared the developer while Garnesk busied himself with the fixing acid.

"Now we're ready," I announced, as I made sure that the light-tight door was closed, and lowered the ruby glass over the orange on Myra's imposing dark-room lamp; she believed in doing things comfortably; no messing about with an old-fashioned "hook-bottle" for her. I took the spool from my pocket and began to develop them in blue.

"How are they coming along?" Myra asked, leaning forward interestedly.

"They're beginning to show up," I replied; "they look rather promising."

"It's rather warm in here," said the girl presently; "do you think it would matter if I removed my shade, Mr. Garnesk?"

"Not if you put it on again before we put the light up," the specialist answered. Myra took off the shade and the heavy bandage with a sigh of relief, and leaned her elbow on the table beside her.

"There's a glass beaker just by your arm, dear," I said; "just a minute and I'll put it out of reach."

"All right," said Garnesk, moving forward. "I'll move it; don't you worry."

But before he could reach the table there was a crash. The beaker went smashing to the floor. I turned with a laugh, which died on my lips. Myra was standing up with her hand to her head.

"What is it, darling?" I cried, dropping the length of film on the floor. Garnesk made a grab for the shade. Myra gave a short, shrill little laugh, which had a slightly ominous, hysterical note in it.

"Don't be alarmed, dear," she said quietly, in a curiously tense voice, "I can see!"

CHAPTER XII.

Who is Hilderman?

I must admit that I was so de-

lighted to find that Myra had recovered her sight that I very nearly made what might have been a very serious mistake. I gave her a loud cheer of triumph and made a dive for the light, intending to switch it on. This might, of course, have had a very bad effect upon my darling's eyes, but fortunately Garnesk darted across the room and knocked up my arm in the nick of time.

"Not yet, Ewart, not yet," he warned me. "We must run no risks until we are quite sure."

"But, Ronnie, I can see quite well," Myra declared delightedly. "I can see everything just as easily as I usually can by the light of the dark-room lamp."

"Still, we won't expose you to the glare of white light just at present," Miss McLeod said. Garnesk solemnly. "We must be very careful. Tell me, how did your sight return, gradually or suddenly?"

"Suddenly, I think," the girl replied. "I took off the shade and laid it down, and then when I looked up I could distinctly see the lamp."

"Immediately the shade was removed?"

"No," she answered, "not just immediately. You see, I was looking at the floor, which is so dark, of course, that you couldn't see it in the ordinary way. Then as soon as I looked up I could see the lamp. For a moment I thought it was my imagination, but when I found I could see the room, and the more I looked at it, the more I was convinced that I was all right again."

"This is very extraordinary, you know," said Garnesk. "Can you count the bottle on the middle shelf?"

"Oh, yes!" laughed Myra. "I can make them out distinctly. Of course, I know pretty well what they are, but in any case I could easily describe them to you if I'd never seen them before."

"What have I got in my hand?" the specialist queried, holding his arm out.

"A pair of nail-clippers," Myra declared emphatically, and Garnesk laughed.

"Well," he said, "you can obviously see it pretty well; but, as a matter of fact, it's a cigar-cutter."

"Oh! well, you see," the girl explained airily, "I always put necessity before luxury."

So then the oculist made her sit down again and cross-questioned her at considerable length.

"I'm puzzled but delighted," he admitted finally. "It's strange, but it is at the same time decidedly hopeful. I suppose it means that the eye will always be able to see in a red light at any rate?" I suggested.

"Probably it does," he agreed, "and, of course, her sight may be completely restored. There is also a middle course; she may be able to see perfectly after a course of treatment in red glasses at once. We can see how that goes. But I feel that it would be advisable to introduce her to day-light in gradual stages, in case of any risk."

"Oh, if we could only find poor old Sholto!" Myra exclaimed eagerly. Garnesk turned to her with a look of frank admiration.

"You're a lucky young dog, Ewart," he whispered to me, "by Jove you are!"

So Myra graciously, but a little reluctantly I think, placed herself in the hands of the young specialist and replaced her shade. Then we left the dark-room, allowing the films to develop out on the floor, and went downstairs. We took her out on the verandah and removed the shade for a moment, but the chill air of the highland night made her eyes smart after their unaccustomed imprisonment, and we gave up the experiment for that night.

As Garnesk and I bathed together in the morning we were both brighter and more cheerful than we had been since his arrival.

"I shall catch the train for Mallaig," he declared. "You see, if we have come to the conclusion that this green ray is some chemical production of Nature unassisted there isn't the same reason for you to leave us."

"No, that's true," he agreed, "but we were both a bit scared yesterday, old chap, and the more I think of this dog business the less I like it. It was mere conceit on my part that made me say it was bound to be some natural phenomenon merely because I couldn't understand how the effect could have been humanly produced."

"Perhaps," I suggested, "our best course would be to keep an open mind about the whole thing."

"Yes," he replied, "I'm with you entirely. And in that case my going

away is not going to aggravate the effects of a natural phenomenon, while it may restrain the human agency by removing the necessity for further activity."

"Well, that's sound enough," I acquiesced; "but I shall hear from you, I hope?"

"Of course, my dear fellow," he laughed, "we're in this thing together. You'll hear from me as often as you want, and who knows what else besides. I have no intention of dropping this for a minute, Ewart. But I think I can do more if I am not on the spot. We're agreed that my presence here may be a source of danger to you all."

"Yes," I said, "I think yours is the best plan. What do you propose to do?"

(To be continued.)

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Men held in honor, and likewise rewarded by those tangible tokens that matter less than a good name, are men who were willing to leave the safe, easy, settled things and places and be original. They weighed anchor and spread sail forever to the breath of fresh adventure. They sought not to let go but to take on. They were not looking for those to whom they might unsholder the burden of command. They rose each day with a gladness to be needed, in counsel and in control, as prime factors in some ongoing work of real and lasting value.

Unskilled laborers may go dully to a task, coming on and knocking off in the mechanical routine of hours bought and paid for. These may leave all thinking to those higher up and reserve for themselves the right to protest against the terms of their employment. The employed who has the slimmest chance of joining the ranks of the employers is the one who is satisfied to mark time in a fixed place on the payroll without doing anything to enlarge his value to the concern that employs him. You need not look to him for a new idea. He does not even wish to be foreman; he would rather blame than take the blame.

A successful young salesman, aggressively on the alert to every chance of putting his wares on an enlarging market, said to an older relative of his who was an office clerk with the same company: "Why don't you go into the factory, in some of the time when you're sitting idle, and learn about what we're making and how we make it?"

The older man did not kindle to the idea. Instead, he looked at his junior and said coldly: "That is not my department; it's none of my business." The clerk is earning less than \$2,000 a year; the salesman is getting \$12,000 a year. But the second man makes it—which is a very different matter from merely receiving it.

Too many of us fail to draw the distinction, and we talk of making money and taking money as though these were one and the same thing. The money-maker hustles early and late. He rubs up against those who can give him ideas. He figures out the reasons why other men's plans succeed or fail. When he fires, he fires the no-good or the too-good; when he hires, he hires those who stick at the job and put it over. He doesn't pay men necessarily to think as he does and to agree with him. He is willing to be something of a shock-absorber, if you can show him that the new scheme works.

Business calls for grit and determination and gumption, not for the dreamy lassitude that folds its hands in pious resignation to fate and expects the pigs to appear roasted and the manna to fall from the skies. We get what we go for. We arrive after and not before the start.

A Famous Round Robin.

Many theories have been advanced for the origin of the term "round robin." The most generally accepted is that the practice of signing a protest or petition in a circle, thus concealing the order of signing, originated in France, where protests from subordinates were regarded by Government officials as little less than mutiny.

The best-known "round robin" in the English language originated at a dinner at the house of Sir Joshua Reynolds, the famous portrait painter. Among those present were Edmund Burke, Edward Gibbon, and others famous in the world of letters, all of whom were friends or acquaintances of Oliver Goldsmith.

The epiphany written for the poet by Dr. Johnson became the topic of conversation, and various changes were suggested. These, it was agreed, should be submitted for the doctor's consideration. When the question arose as to who should propose them to him, it was suggested that a "round robin" was the best means of solving the difficulty.

Despite his fiery disposition, Dr. Johnson accepted the "round robin" in the spirit in which it was intended.

He Had a Reason.

Mother was very surprised when Jimmie came up to her and said: "Mother, didn't you say last week that you wanted the carving-knife and the chopper sharpened?"

"Yes, I did," admitted Mrs. Greens. "Bless your little heart! How thoughtful of you!"

"Well, I'll take them round to the cutter's for you," was the next unexpected offer.

"How sweet of you to offer to do such a thing for your mother! I'll wrap them up," replied Mrs. Greens gratefully.

"No, no," answered Jimmie quickly. "Don't wrap them up. I want them to show. There's a boy out there waiting to fight me, but I fancy that when he sees me coming with these he'll go home."

Mahomedan women may not, according to the Koran, permit their faces to be seen by any man save their fathers, husbands, sons, or other close blood relatives.

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