THE PORTRAIT THAT WALKED

OCTOBER

Ghost STORIES

A MACFADDEN PUBLICATION

PRICE UNITED STATES 25¢ CANADA 30¢

A Sleeper Bewitched

Phantom Guided

A Police Chief's Story

OCTOBER ★ GHOST STORIES ★ 1928

LUMINOUS PAINT

Make Your Watches, Clocks, Etc., Visible by Night

The very latest discovery in the scientific world. Hitherto, practically unobtainable except at an exorbitant price, we have at last succeeded in producing this remarkable LUMINOUS PAINT, which, applied to the surface of any article, **emits rays of white light, rendering it perfectly visible in the dark. THE DARKER THE NIGHT, THE MORE BRILLIANT IT SHINES.** Quite simple to use. Anyone—you can do it. A little applied to the dial of your watch or clock will enable you to tell the time by night. You can coat the push buttons or switch plates of your electric lights, match boxes, and innumerable other articles; make your own Luminous Crucifixes, Luminous Rosaries, etc. Small bottle, **price 25c.** Larger sizes, **50c** and **$1** postpaid. **JOHNSON SMITH & CO. Dept. 871 RACINE, WIS.**

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10c

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Smallest Bible in the World. Size of a postage stamp. **200 Pages.** Said to bring good luck to the owner. A genuine work of art. Must be seen to be appreciated. Make good money selling them to friends, church acquaintances, etc. **PRICE 15c each, 3 for $1.25, 100 for $7.50.** Also obtainable in Leather Binding, with gold edges. **Price 50c each, 3 for $1.25, $4.50 per doz. Magnifying Glass for use with Midget Bible, 15c.**

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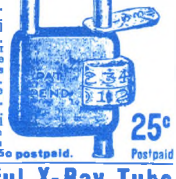

25c Postpaid

STAGE MONEY

With a bunch of these bills, it is easy for each person of limited means to appear prosperous by flashing a roll of these bills at the proper time and peeling off a genuine bill or two from the outside of the roll, the effect created will be found to be all that can be desired. **Prices, postpaid: 40 Bills 20c, 120 for 50c, or $3.50 thousand postpaid.**

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Post Paid 10c

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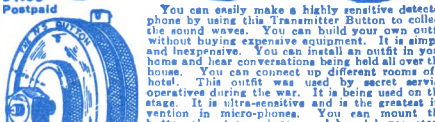

$1.00 Postpaid

You can easily make a highly sensitive detectophone by using this Transmitter Button to collect the sound waves. You can build your own outfit without buying expensive equipment. It is simple and inexpensive. You can install an outfit in your home and hear conversations being held all over the house. You can connect up different rooms of a hotel. This outfit was used by secret service operatives during the war. It is being used on the stage. It is ultra-sensitive and is the greatest invention in micro-phones. You can mount the button almost anywhere—card board boxes, stove pipes, stiff calendars, on the wall behind a picture frame, etc. Button is so light and small it cannot be detected. Persons can be overheard without suspecting it. You can listen in on conversations in another room. A deaf person in the audience can hear the speaker. Connected to phonograph, piano or other musical instrument, music can be heard hundreds of feet away. Button may be used to renew telephone transmitters: often makes an old line "talk up" when nothing else will. The ideal microphone for radio use; carries heavy current and is extremely sensitive. Amplifies radio signals. Countless other similar uses will suggest themselves. Experimenters find the button useful for hundreds of experiments along the lines of telephones, amplifiers, loud speakers, etc. Many fascinating stunts may be devised, such as holding the button against the throat or chest to reproduce speech without sound waves. **PRICE $1.00. JOHNSON SMITH & CO., DEPT. 871, RACINE, WIS.**

JOHNSON SMITH & CO.

Dept. 871 **RACINE, WIS.**

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All home study schools on this page marked with a star (★) have been investigated and approved. These schools are recommended on the following grounds: truthful purposes, thoroughness of courses, capable instructors and reasonable instruction fees. National Home Study Council, Washington, D. C.

★ **Hotels Need Trained Executives. Nation-**wide demand for trained men and women; past experience unnecessary. We train you by mail and put you in touch with big opportunities. Write at once for particulars. Lewis Hotel Training Schools, Suite BA-W637, Washington, D. C.

★ **Radio! Big Pay, Rapid Advancement.** Success! Learn at home. Finest instructions. Post Card brings you free booklet. Dept. R, Radio Institute of America, 326 B'way, N.Y.C.

Agents—Sell $1 Christmas Card Assort-ments. Also beautiful personal greetings. Unequaled values. High commissions. Samples Free. Harry A. Doehla, Fitchburg, Mass.

Something New! Latest Craze—Rubber Art Rugs in attractive patterns and colors. Practical, serviceable, economical. Soft, easy on feet. Most women buy 3. Agents cleaning up! Make $90 weekly easy. Also 47 other fast-selling rubber specialties. Free Outfit. Write Quick. Kristee Mfg. Co., 1406 Bar St., Akron, O.

A Knock-Out Sideline— Tailoring Salesmen add $30 a Week to your profits. New and different. Every customer buys. Sample Outfit can be carried in pocket. Free. Tell me what line you are selling. Morton, 1705 N. Oakley, Chicago.

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Marcelwaver Is Taking American Women by storm. Men and women representatives everywhere making biggest profits of years. $279 a week—$57 a day—$17 an hour—spare or full time workers earn such amounts easily. Territories now being allotted. Full information Free. Marcelwaver, Dept. 98R, Cincinnati, Ohio.

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$10. No more. Buys Option on 5,000 bu. wheat, corn. Possibility large profits. Full particulars Free. Write today. Grain Traders Service, Dept. 46A, 22 Quincy Street, Chicago.

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Men, get Forest Ranger job; $125-$200 month and home furnished; hunt, fish, trap. For details, write Norton Institute, 1523 Temple Court, Denver, Colo.

Vol. 5 *OCTOBER, 1928* *No. 4*

Contents

Cover design painted by Doris Stanley from a photograph of Esther Ralston furnished by courtesy of Famous-Players-Lasky

Next Month—November issue—on the news stands September 23rd, will contain

"The Haunted Harem," "The Man in Red," "The Ghost of the Side-show"
and many other thrilling, uncanny tales

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A Sleeper

By
STANLEY HORTON
As told to
STUART PALMER

FOUR years ago this summer I first became acquainted with the unusual profession that Karl Brandt had chosen. We were thrown together during the Prentiss case, and the horrible week we spent in that abandoned house is fresh in my memory. It was then that I learned to appreciate the cool, hard head of my old acquaintance, who had set himself up as a sort of "ghost-layer," if I may use the term. He called himself merely a "Consultant."

His work at the time consisted mostly of proving to superstitious townsfolk the fact that old and vacant houses were perfectly safe to live in. He had a cousin in the real-estate business, and Karl was co-operating with him in rebuilding and rehabilitating old houses throughout New England. From this rather prosaic work his profession originated. All over the country he discovered that things existed, or were thought to exist, which could not be explained by natural means—and as soon as the public learned that this lanky Easterner with his wide smile and keen blue eyes was having unusual success in applying common-sense methods to the Unknown, Karl found himself greatly in demand.

At college Karl had been decidedly unsuperstitious, and he began his work in real estate with the idea that superstition and credulity would account for all the "ghost stuff," as he called it. But the Prentiss case, and some that followed, changed his mind considerably.

Being a reasonable person, Karl applied reasonable and scientific methods to the Unknown, with almost unvarying success. From time to time, I heard rumors of his achievements but we did not meet again until he telegraphed me to wait for him at Grand Central Station on a certain evening in July. He had been in the Far West.

He was the same Karl, as he suddenly appeared beside me in the crowded waiting room. His face wore the same wide smile, but I noticed that lines appeared here and there. Some of the boyishness had been worn away. While a Red Cap followed us with the luggage, we sought a cab.

After our cigarettes were going well, and the cab was worming its way north through the network of Manhattan's streets, I leaned back against the cushions and looked expectantly at Karl. Except for giving the driver an address in the Bronx, he had hardly spoken since we met.

SUDDENLY he laughed. "I suppose you are wondering why and wherefore. Sit tight and listen. I just got a call to investigate a case here of a man with sleeping sickness."

"But you're a spook-chaser, not a doctor."

"Yes—but listen. The chappie that's so sound asleep is being haunted now and then by a phantom arm, so it seems. And the idea has come to his family that maybe the arm is the cause of the sickness. Now you know as much about it all as I do."

"But what do you make of it?" I asked.

"Nothing, yet. Wait till we get there. I've discovered that at least ninety per cent of 'ghosts' are pure fiction, anyway. The others work according to very real laws, and have a reason behind them. The Dead don't come back as a rule—their interests

Bewitched

He lay asleep for thirty days, drifting toward death. But why did a dismembered hand hover above him?

aren't here, unless something is weighing terribly on their minds. Ghosts don't haunt for amusement, old son."

I shivered a little at the matter-of-fact way he discussed it all. "You weren't so calm the last time we were together," I told him.

"No, I wasn't. But I have learned a lot since then—about this world and the next. That's why I wired you. I want you to go along with me on this investigation, so that I can show you how my methods have changed."

When the long trip was over, the cab pulled up in front of a large and somewhat lonely house in the upper part of the Bronx. It was rather imposing, or had been at one time. But around the place were vacant lots, some of them covered with weeds and rubbish. On an adjoining lot a broken-down wagon stood on the edge of a gaping hole which had once been a cellar.

The house itself was rather dingy, but it had formerly been white with green shutters. A porch ran all around it, and vines straggled here and there up its side. Karl instructed the driver to take his grips to a near-by hotel, and we climbed the steps.

They were not expecting us. In a moment a tired-looking woman opened the door a narrow crack.

"What do you want, please?" she asked. Then she seemed to recognize Karl. "Oh, come in, Mr. Brandt. Thank God you've come at last!"

We were ushered into a long hall that ran straight back into the house. There came to my nostrils the acrid odor of antiseptics. It seemed far more like a hospital than a haunted house. She led us into a large, attractive living room and library.

"I am Mrs. Crane," she said. "Do you wish to see my husband now?"

Karl shook his head. "Not yet." His eyes roamed over the room, taking in every detail. Yet I suspected that his mind was far away. "Will you please tell us everything you know about the whole case? This"—with a slight gesture toward me—"is an old friend of mine who has helped me many times. You may speak freely."

"There isn't much to tell. My husband retired from business a few years ago, and since then has lived here very quietly. He has never had an enemy, living or dead. I can't imagine who or what can be doing this terrible thing to him. I—I——"

"Mrs. Crane," said Karl calmly, "you must start at the beginning and tell me everything that you know. When did this start?"

"They brought him home late one night—two men in a cab, they were. And they said that he had become unconscious at a meeting or a show or something—I don't know what. He seemed to be sleeping perfectly normally. But he didn't wake. The men brought him in and left him. I called doctors, and they said that it was sleeping sickness. At least, some of them did. Others claimed it failed to show all the symptoms, and now they say that if it were sleeping sickness my husband would have been dead long ago. For twenty-six days he has been just as he is now. The doctors give him a little nourishment through a tube, where he lost a tooth. His jaws are locked together, and his pulse is slow. It gets slower every day."

Karl nodded. "Go on," he said. "You mentioned a—a hand?"

MRS. CRANE shuddered. "Yes. I've seen it. Three times, when I've been watching over his bedside, I've felt a horribly creepy feeling and looked up to see a dim and wavering hand over the bed—a hand and part of an arm! Once I thought I saw two eyes."

"Has anyone else seen it?"

"Yes. The maid and the nurse saw it—and now I can't get anyone to take their places. So the doctor stays here a little while in the daytime, and I watch at night. I know it's some horrible thing from Beyond which has come to finish the work it started! And I won't let it! I'll fight it every way I can." Her jaw was resolute.

Karl Brandt stood up. "Will you let us see your husband?"

She led the way up a winding staircase. In a large and dimly lit bedroom on the second floor lay a bearded man of about sixty. He seemed to be sleeping peacefully. With a start I remembered that he had been sleeping like this for almost a month!

Karl took his pulse and respiration, nodding to himself as if finding what he had expected. Then he turned to Mrs. Crane. "When you first saw the arm—take the same position now, and show me all that happened."

Her face went white, but she stood by a window at the foot of the bed. "I was here." She pointed to a spot a few feet above the sleeping man, and directly in front of him. "There I saw the arm—the horrible snake-like arm and the twisting fingers! Also, I saw the eyes, burning like fire."

Karl nodded, but I could tell that he was puzzled. "What did you do? You said that you were fighting against the Thing."

"I screamed at the top of my voice, and turned on all the lights. It disappeared. Then I put these here." She proudly pointed out to us a variety of charms and amulets, surprising in as sensible a person as she seemed. Across the head of the bed were three rosaries, with dangling crucifixes. Sprigs of garlic, henbane and parsley were tied at each door and window.

"I've read that the Dead cannot come into such a room," she said. "But once since I put them up, I have seen the hand outside the window, and once in the hall. So It is only waiting—waiting—— And my husband cannot live much longer this way! It will win, even if I keep It away from him!"

I smiled, against my will. But Karl was not smiling. "Keep up your precautions," he told her. Then he added: "Don't worry, Mrs. Crane. We'll soon get to the root of the matter. Have you thought of moving your husband to a hospital?"

"Sometimes. But I have a feeling that whatever It is, would come anywhere. And they'd laugh, the doctors and nurses, at my feeling about the rosaries."

WE left the room, and went downstairs again. Karl started to put on his coat. "We'll be back shortly, Mrs. Crane. Perhaps one of us will watch with you tonight."

He and I walked down the deserted street. I knew that Karl always thought most deeply when he was physically exhausted, and for over an hour we walked through the suburban streets. Finally we found a bench.

"What do you make of it?" asked Karl.

I shook my head. "Nothing much. Maybe his wife is poisoning him, and making up the story about the hand. But she didn't look the type."

"No, not that," Karl corrected. "She would have nothing to gain by killing him, except a little insurance. And remember that the nurse and the maid left, because they could see the hand. She is not a spiritualistic trickster, materializing under cheese-cloth."

"Well, then—what is it?"

"I'll know by tomorrow," Karl told me, but I thought he was overconfident.

We went back to the house. Mrs. Crane seemed glad to see us. For a moment we stood on the porch.

Karl whispered in my ear, "Will you watch tonight?"

"Yes," I told him. "But why?"

"Mostly for her sake. Nothing will happen."

Then we went in. It was settled that I was to watch by the bedside of the sleeping man while his wife got some much-needed rest. I did not understand why Karl was not to stay. Of course, he was tired from his journey, but I had never known him to turn his back on an adventure before. Unless, of course, he was right in thinking that nothing could happen.

I settled myself for the evening, with a cigarette case beside me, and a magazine. It was an especially hot night, and I opened both windows, unconsciously walking on

tiptoe so as not to awaken the sick man. Awaken him! If sound would have done it, he'd have been awake weeks before!

The long night passed. I caught myself dozing twice, but there was no change in the still form of poor Crane, and no sign of anything out of the ordinary. When the first faint flush of dawn touched the gloom, I turned out the lights and rested my eyes in the pleasant morning dusk. A cool wind stirred the shade at the window. It was the "zero hour," when soldiers went over the top. Just before dawn, doctors say, is the hour when most men die, and the time when human resistance is at its weakest.

Suddenly I saw It! Just outside the window, faintly shining through the dimness, was a weird human arm and hand, pointed directly at the sleeping man. The fingers moved slowly. A chill ran through my body, and my scalp tingled. The muscles of my throat twitched, and a cold perspiration broke out on my back. But I did not run. I could not have risen to my feet if it would have saved me from death and from damnation. For above the arm were two burning, unwinking eyes—human eyes! They were focused on the sleeping man.

ALL this happened in a moment. Suddenly strength returned to me—I leaped to my feet and jerked the light cord. The room sprang into brilliance, and the eyes faded away. But just as the arm disappeared, I thought it moved in a despairing gesture. When I reached the window, nothing was there. In the east, the sun was shimmering on a distant roof.

When I started to leave the room, I noticed with a sudden shock that the sleeping man had moved his hand above the coverlet! In an instant I was by his side. His pulse was the same, as was his breathing. But he had moved! For the first time in nearly a month, he had voluntarily moved!

When I showed Mrs. Crane what had happened, she was overjoyed. She looked on her husband's slight movement as a sign that the Unseen Power she feared had begun to loose its hold. But when I admitted that the spectral arm had appeared before the change occurred, she was suddenly broken. Her iron will was being visibly shaken by the terrible strain she had been under. Never before in my life had I seen a character such as hers. I wonder if women, after all, are not the stronger sex.

It was nine in the morning, and though the doctor had come to give poor Crane his tubeful of liquid food, there was no sign of Karl. I asked the doctor, when Mrs. Crane was out of the room, what he thought of the case. He looked at me, shrugging his shoulders.

"Probably sleeping sickness of some new type. There are thousands of ramifications to every disease. I am now preparing a monograph on the subject, and——"

I broke in. "My God, here is a man slowly dying and you write pamphlets!"

Again he shrugged his shoulders. "Medicine hasn't solved all the problems yet, my friend. We're just studying and going along half blindly toward the goal of Health. We're not near it. I confess this has stumped me."

"What about the arm Mrs. Crane sees?"

"Nonsense—pure nonsense! Overwrought imagination. She believed it and scared the nurse and maid. All nonsense."

I smiled, a little grimly, remembering what I had seen outside the window only a few hours before. Then I went down to the hotel where Karl was staying. I confess that I felt somewhat resentful at him for having left me alone in that gloomy room with the haunted man. He was the ghost-chaser, not I. While he had been peacefully sleeping, I had been facing the Unknown in its most unpleasant form. I was prepared to say something to Karl about it, but when I opened the door to his room I found him hard at work at the table, surrounded by newspapers. His bed had not been slept in, and his eyes showed that he had rested less than I during the night.

HE looked up and waved me to a chair. "You've seen the hand?"

I nodded.

"I thought it might possibly be overwrought imagination on the part of Mrs. Crane and her helpers. But if you saw the Thing, it must be real. Describe it, and everything that happened."

I told him the whole story. When I came to the part about the movement on the part of the sleeping man, he leaped to his feet.

"I've got it!" he shouted. "At least, I think I see what it means." He stuffed two or three newspaper clippings into his pocket and reached for his hat.

"Stay here and get some sleep," he said to me. "I'll need you tonight, and need you badly. I've got to make a few calls. Wait here until I get back."

I was a trifle put-out at not being taken

into his confidence. For a little while I sat on the bed and tried to piece together the various parts of the mystery. I began to wonder if I had seen the arm, or if the superstition of Mrs. Crane's overwrought mind had influenced me indirectly. Soon I fell asleep on Karl's bed.

I was awakened by someone shaking me.

"Get up," Karl ordered. "Do you know what time it is?"

IT was early evening, and I had nearly slept the clock around. As soon as I had a cold shower and dressed, I noticed that Karl was under high nervous tension.

"Tell me what you know," I asked him. "What did you have all those newspapers for?"

He smiled, and showed me the clippings, which were several weeks old.

The first was an obituary notice. "Winkelmann, Jacob V., died of angina pectoris . . . evening of June 25th . . . relatives in Germany cabled . . . burial in Woodlawn. . . . "

I could see nothing in that.

Others contained advertisements of various psychic fakers and mesmerists. One was an advertising bill for a performance by "The Great Wilhelm."

The rest were various newspaper stories about the strange illness of Crane. For a while he had been featured in every New York daily; then new wonders had displaced him, and the "Sleeping Marvel," as the tabloids had dubbed him, was moved to Page Eight and even farther toward the back of the paper. All this had no direct bearing on the case, as far as I could see.

"Where have you been all day?" I asked Karl.

He laughed. "Most of the time I've been sleeping here in the armchair. A lot depends on tonight, and we have got to be in good shape. This morning I tried to run down the men who brought Crane home that night, but they have left no traces. If I could find them, I would know for sure what really made Crane this way. But I've a theory—you'll see it either work out or fail tonight."

He started out of the room and I followed him.

"How can we get Mrs. Crane out of the house tonight?" Karl asked, turning to me suddenly. "Do you think she will be willing to go to some friend's home and give us a free hand?"

"Why should she go away?"

"You'll understand later—it's the most necessary thing in the whole business."

We found her glad to see us. The patient's condition had not changed during the day, and the doctor had found at four in the afternoon that his blood pressure was far below normal. It was very evident that his long sleep was soon to be changed for a longer one, and that the fight which his brave wife had waged was of little avail. If anything were to be done to bring John Crane back from the silence, it would have to be done immediately.

Strange to say, Mrs. Crane seemed quite willing to leave the house for the evening. "I will stay at my sister's home, only a block away. You will call me at once if there is any—any change? I think I need to rest now. It has been a long time since I felt I could trust anyone alone with my poor husband. You are not afraid?"

Karl smiled his wide, beaming smile. "It is my business to face things that other people fear. I'll call you if there is any news, and I think it may be good news."

Mrs. Crane shook her head. "I'm afraid not. The doctor says that my husband cannot live more than a day or two longer, in his present condition. And I have a feeling that the devilish power is getting stronger and stronger. It is only a matter of time now." She broke down for a moment, wiping her eyes.

Karl comforted her, and then walked with her around the corner to her sister's. I sat smoking on the porch. I am not a coward, but I did not care to spend any more time alone in that house if I could help it.

KARL was soon back. "There's nothing for us to do yet," he said. "Shall we have dinner?"

I was not at all hungry, and told him so. There is something about excitement which makes eating unnecessary.

Karl nodded. "We'll think better if we don't eat, I guess. And we need our brains tonight."

"What are you going to do, Karl? Shall we try to drive the Thing away? What brings it here? How can we frighten away the Unknown?"

"One question at a time," he answered. "Perhaps it won't be necessary to drive it away. Ghosts, as I said, don't haunt for the joy of it. They have their purposes, and anything which is important enough to bring the Dead back is worth our study—and our respect."

He was talking in general terms when I wanted him to be specific. I think it amused him to keep me utterly in the dark, but it was exasperating to me.

"You'll know everything soon enough," he assured me. "Let's go upstairs."

THE room in which the sleeper lay was just as I had left it that morning, except for the fact that Mrs. Crane had redoubled her "precautions." There was not a possible place in the room where she had not tied crucifixes and magical herbs. They seemed strangely out-of-place in such matter-of-fact surroundings. But they had not been prosaic to me that morning. I shuddered as I looked out of the window.

It was about ten-thirty in the evening and the city shone with a dim radiance to the south, against the low-hanging clouds. The night was hot and the air seemed sticky. Not a breath of wind moved.

I turned—and gasped to see that Karl was busily removing the crucifixes and herbs from the door and bed!

"Why—what are you doing that for? Didn't they keep the Thing away? It will come into the room tonight and——"

He smiled, rather tolerantly I thought. "Maybe that's what I want to do."

"But—you can't endanger the sick man that way!" I pointed to the motionless figure lying on the wide bed. "He is nearly dead because of this Thing. You don't dare to risk his chances for life."

Karl looked at me intently. "His only chance rests in what I hope will happen. It must be done now, or it will forever be too late. Sit down—and listen to me. Why is it necessary to believe that every manifestation of the supernatural is vindictive? The cases where ghosts have harmed the living are not as common as people think. We naturally fear the Unknown. But isn't it possible that strong love, or duty, or some other benevolent emotion, could bring the Dead back, as well as malignancy?"

"Then you think that—that the Thing I saw is not the cause of what has kept this man here all these weeks, asleep?"

"I don't know, yet."

"Why did you take down all Mrs. Crane's charms?"

"Well, they haven't cured her husband. He is sure to die if we leave him in his present condition. I much doubt whether such fetishes will keep the Dead away, anyhow. But it is certain that Mrs. Crane's mental resistance could keep a disembodied spirit from materializing. I removed the herbs and the rosaries because they had been so closely associated with her long vigil here that they might retain an influence. I am making an experiment tonight that I think is utterly new."

"I think you are taking a great risk! But what shall I do?"

"Nothing, but watch with me. Try to subordinate your mind. Do not fear anything that may come. Be passive. I want no resistance here in this house throughout the night."

"But—suppose the Thing comes into the room?"

"I hope it will. There is nothing to lose. Crane will die soon if nothing is done for him. We are risking a little to gain a lot—if what I hope is true."

He arranged two chairs at the one end of the room, and opened the window wide. The curtains hung lifelessly. Somewhere I heard a clock strike eleven.

"It is very early yet," Karl said. He was whispering. "Midnight is not the hour at which the next world is closest to this one. That idea is a relic of the ages when men practiced the Black Mass at midnight, with the thought that by reversing time and saying the Lord's Prayer backwards they could invoke demons. I have found that early in the morning is the best—or worst—time for the Dead to come."

I shivered, remembering the dawn.

We sat down, and made ourselves as comfortable as possible. There was a soft, shaded light by the head of the bed. The rest of the room was nearly dark, but the body of Crane was outlined in white against the wall. The light shone in his face, which looked like that of a cadaver—drawn and pale gray.

IN spite of the sleep I had had, I found it almost impossible to keep awake. My lids would drop, and the room would blur away into nothing. Then I would come to myself with a jerk, wide-awake and at an abnormally high tension.

Karl was silently smoking. His head was in his hands, and he appeared to be concentrating. Once he leaned over to me.

"You must not fear," he said. "You must be passive. Allow the night to enter into you! Open your mind to truths that are stranger than our truth! Remember that there are things good and evil that are beyond our comprehension. And do not fear!"

Fear is an abstract horror that men can hardly control. But I tried to remember all that Karl had said. He was more used to that sort of thing than I, and while the supernatural has always had a fascination for me, I had never been able to come to terms with it, as he seemed to have managed.

There is nothing that requires more effort than waiting. Man is used to action. I wanted to walk the floor, to leap and shout and relieve my nerves in any way. But I sat there in the armchair, motionless.

THE hours dragged by, and if it had not been for my memory of the previous night, I should have given up hope, or fear, of anyone or anything coming. Finally, I think I dozed. My sleep was fitful, and tortured by hideous dreams of a vast and awful hand that brushed men before it like dominoes.

Suddenly I awakened with a start. Karl's hand gripped my arm. He was not smiling. My eyes followed where he pointed.

There, above the sleeping man, was the Thing. I could see the same wavering white arm, with the fingers which moved slowly and terribly. As I watched, two eyes came out of nothing—two burning eyes that were turned away from us, and directly on the sleeping man.

Karl's fingers were clenched around my arm so tightly that it felt paralyzed. He held me in my chair by main force, for I would have reached for the light cord. I could not speak. The room was permeated with a force which made every nerve in my body vibrate in response.

The arm grew clearer, and I could see the suggestion of a face around the eyes. The face did not seem malignant. Rather, it struck me as being under the greatest strain, and worried. The brow was high and wide, but wrinkled and contorted. The deep and burning eyes never wavered from the face of the sleeping man. Below the aquiline nose, the mouth was tense. I suddenly lost most of my fear. This specter was not malignant. But it was possessed with a strong purpose.

"Will success for It!" Karl whispered. "It needs help. Give It of your strength, as I am doing——"

I tried to do as he said. As I cast my will-power in that direction, the specter tossed its head back with an imperious gesture of command. At the same moment the fingers of that ghostly hand snapped sharply. I jumped almost out of my chair, but Karl held me.

The motionless figure of the man on the bed moved slightly. Again the spectral figure commenced the slow, rhythmic movement of its hand. It seemed to be drawing something out of John Crane. I might have wondered if it were not his very life itself, had it not been for the unspoken confidence which Karl seemed to have. He was *willing,* with every power of his brain —willing success to that figure from the Other World. I tried to add my strength.

A second time the specter threw back its head with the strange gesture of command. Again the long, powerful fingers snapped sharply. I could see that great beads of perspiration were standing out on the forehead of the Thing. But the sleeping man only raised himself a few inches and sank back weakly on the pillow.

"Now, for the last time!" Karl whispered fiercely. "If this fails, everything must fail. Once more—together—the three of us——"

Again the fingers were building up their rhythm. The figure vibrated with a strange, eerie humming noise, like a reed in the wind. The eyes closed for a moment, as if to gain strength, and then burned out again like searchlights. Together, Karl and I and that Thing strove for some mastery that I could will, but not understand.

John Crane slowly rose to a sitting posture on the bed. His hands were extended in front of him.

Then *"snap"* went the fingers, and Crane opened his eyes!

"What—where am I? What has happened?"

AS he spoke, I saw the spectral figure fade out into obscurity. Karl loosed my arm and leaped to his feet. I sank back exhausted into my chair. I felt drained of energy.

"Get Mrs. Crane—quick——" called Karl. He was leaning over the man on the bed. I staggered downstairs to the telephone, and in a few minutes Mrs. Crane was running ahead of me up the stairs.

"Thank God," she was sobbing. "Thank God——"

Her husband was propped up in the bed, with Karl talking gaily to him. He seemed weak, but otherwise all right.

"What happened?" Mrs. Crane asked as she sat on the bed, with her husband's hand in hers. "Did you drive It away—forever?"

Karl looked at me, with a tenseness of his lips that spelled secrecy. He smiled at the Cranes. "Nothing will bother you again.

We'd better not tire the man any more than we must."

IN a short time he and I had bid farewell to the Cranes and were walking together in the early morning.

Suddenly I faced him. "I'm going no farther until I know the whole story. I can guess, but——"

He laughed. "Well, I've been silent. I wasn't sure, and I didn't want to spoil everything by talking before I was sure. I'll tell you all about it in the hotel."

A little while later we sat at the table in his room. "I'll start at the beginning," he said, "and outline it for you.

"To begin with, we were dealing with a man who had been sleeping for about a month. I dismissed the sleeping-sickness idea at once. The symptoms were not the same, and the doctors were undoubtedly out of their element.

"Then, in regard to the Thing that appeared to Mrs. Crane—I have come into contact with too many real manifestations to doubt seriously the testimony of as sensible a woman as she is. Furthermore, the nurse and the maid had seen the apparition, too. Of course, the natural thing for a person to do when he sees something abnormal is to fear it. Yet Mrs. Crane was defeating her own purposes. The ghost meant only good—but how was she to know? So much for that.

"I have made rather a complete study of hypnotism in all its phases. And as soon as I looked at John Crane, I was sure that he was in a profound hypnotic state.

"I did not believe, when I sent you to watch alone in the room, that anything would happen. At that time I thought the hypnotist who had put Crane to sleep was living."

"Do you mean that Crane was hypnotized by a ghost?"

"No—not exactly. Listen! I spent the night going through the back files of New York newspapers. I showed you my findings, but you did not see the point."

"All you showed me were obituary notices and such things——"

"Yes—obituary notices. But if you had read a little further you would have discovered that Jacob Winkelmann, who died at ten o'clock on the night of the twenty-fifth of June, was known in theatrical circles as 'The Great Wilhelm.' And the play-bills I showed you were for a performance in hypnosis to be given on that very night by that man Winkelmann, under the name Wilhelm. Do you see?"

"Partly. But——"

"It's perfectly clear. If I could have found the two men who brought Crane home, I might have been able to prove it all to you before we went back to the room. But the city is large, and I had no time to advertise for them. So I took a chance."

"You mean—Crane was hypnotized by Winkelmann, or the Great Wilhelm, after the fellow was dead?"

"No, of course not. Crane must have offered himself as a subject at the performance. In the library at his house I noticed several books on telepathy, mesmerism, and the like. He was probably skeptical about the power of one mind over another. He must be convinced now.

"Picture the meeting—a large hall packed with people; the Great Wilhelm, an imposing figure, standing on the platform, asking for a volunteer who will consent to be placed in a hypnotic state. Crane answers, and goes up on the stage, determined to have a battle of wills with the hypnotist.

"In such cases, it is difficult for the performer. Wilhelm, as he called himself, had to exert all his mental strength against the man he was trying to put to sleep. Finally the stronger intellect triumphed, and Crane went into a hypnotic state as deep as is possible to man. His resistance being suddenly released, he was put into a much more complicated sleep than would have been the case if he had been merely passive all the time.

"BUT then, under the tremendous strain, the heart of the old hypnotist stopped beating. He fell dead on the platform, leaving his subject in the deepest of hypnotic states. See?"

I nodded. It was misty yet, but I began to visualize what Karl was leading up to. "Go on."

"Well—someone around the theater, perhaps the stage manager, sent Crane home in a cab. I did not have time to talk to him, but undoubtedly he had no knowledge of the real seriousness of Crane's condition. His one idea was to keep the thing as quiet as possible, and to avoid letting the newspapers get the story. He succeeded.

"It didn't matter much. I doubt if any other hypnotist could have brought Crane out of it, even then. He was entirely subject to the will-power of a dead man!"

Karl smiled, and gestured. "See it all?

Crane was asleep, and would die asleep if nothing were done for him.

"But Jacob Winkelmann was a conscientious man. He realized, in whatever dim land he found himself, that he had left a fellow mortal in dire straits. He knew, with a certain knowledge, that he and he alone could bring John Crane back to life. So his spirit sought to materialize above the sleeper; it sought energy enough to awaken him. And——"

"Then Mrs. Crane was fighting against the Thing which was trying to save her husband?"

"Yes. She thought of the Unknown as inimical to mankind. And it isn't, necessarily.

"But to go on with the story—I guessed at what was going on, and went with you into that room, intent on helping the specter in any way I could. That is why I removed every evidence of fear and resistance that Mrs. Crane had left. That is why I asked you to eliminate fear from your mind. I was trying to give aid to the ghost of Jacob Winkelmann. For it faced an almost impossible task—the necessity of materializing in human form, and controlling a human mind. The brain of 'The Great Wilhelm' lies rotting in Woodlawn Cemetery—but he called it back to him for a few moments, and drawing on us for energy, he managed to undo what he had, in all innocence, done to his hypnotic subject. Thus Crane awakened, and the ghost, its work finished, went back behind the veil."

I WIPED my forehead. I suddenly realized the stupendousness of what had been happening in the last few hours.

"I didn't want to explain matters to the Cranes," Karl went on. "They might not have believed it all, anyway—and Mr. Crane was naturally in a greatly weakened condition. His wife thinks that I, with the help of her crucifixes and herbs, drove away the terrible Thing which had kept her husband in that condition. And he probably remembers very little of his last evening of consciousness and his experiment with the hypnotist. It is better that he forget it all as soon as possible, for his will has been for so long subject to a powerful, if distant, control, that he will have to convalesce mentally as well as physically. He has been where few have been before."

"By the way," I asked, "what fee did you charge for coming across the continent and bringing John Crane to life?"

Karl Brandt looked at me and burst out laughing. "Good Lord," he said, "I forgot all about that! I guess I've made Mrs. Crane a present of her husband!"

A Friendship that Bridged the Gulf

THIS strange story of a man who came back from death and comforted his friend is told by Mrs. Lillian Wilkerson.

"A few years ago a dear friend of mine passed on to the next plane of existence. We had been warm friends for years and when he found that he was afflicted with heart trouble and had only a short time to live we often discussed the life after death.

"I was in a distant city the night of his passing. On that night I was awakened at twenty minutes past one by my friend's presence in the room. I felt he was in distress and was trying to communicate with me. In the morning I received word that he had passed on at exactly twenty minutes past one the preceding night.

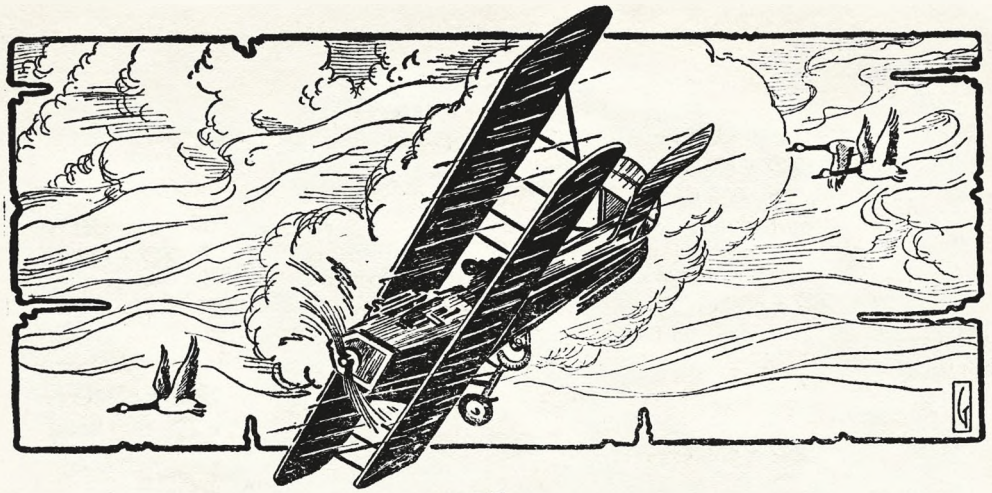
"I attended the funeral, and that same evening desired with great intensity that he should return and tell me if all was well with him. Again I felt a presence approaching and then I heard these words: 'Don't worry—I will come back and tell you about my new life.'

"A great peace enveloped me.

"Three months afterwards I was in the same city in the same room, when he appeared at the bedside, smiling and looking happier than I had ever seen him. He leaned over me and, placing his hands on my shoulders, said: 'You have been worried, fearing I was not prepared to go. Open the Bible and read Matthew, fourteenth chapter, thirty-first verse; Matthew, eleventh chapter, twenty-eighth verse; and John, fourteenth chapter, twenty-seventh verse. Then you will know why I was not afraid to go.'

"I read those verses in the morning and was ashamed of my lack of faith.

"The strange part was that neither of us had been readers of the Bible."



The Moving Finger Writes

By ELAINE KENNEDY

As told to ARCHIE BINNS

Would to God that I had never looked into the Future and seen all that it held for me!

WHO has not wished for the occult power of looking into the future and foretelling coming events? I am no exception—at least, I was not, until my wish was granted. Since that event everything has changed, and my most earnest hope is that the veil of the future may never be drawn aside again. If some magician were to bring me a book containing a record of all that is going to happen in this world from this day to the end—I would burn the book, unread, as the first sibylline books were burned.

A year ago I was living with my married sister, Helen, in one of the pleasant California towns on the peninsula near San Francisco. I was engaged to Harry Barnwell, who belonged to a fine old San Francisco family. George, my cousin from Santa Barbara, visited us frequently, and life was never dull when he was about. He was interested in Jean Sheppard, who lived in Burlingame, near by, and who had been a friend of mine since our days together at private school. My sister and Charlie, my brother-in-law, were the best sports in the world—and then there were their adorable children, Bobbie and Marie—aged six and four. Altogether, we were like one large, supremely happy family; it seemed as if nothing could ever happen to interrupt our good times. And yet——

It would have been better if I had never seen Yogandi—or danced with him. Indeed, that evening at the country club was the first and last time I saw him; we had only one dance together and hardly exchanged a hundred words. But even those few words had been better left unsaid.

Naturally, I had no such thoughts at the time. I knew that the wealthy Mrs. Breckenham was entertaining Yogandi, the mystic philosopher and exponent of Yoga. I had heard of the remarkable powers he was supposed to possess, and that evening, when I saw him regarding me with his flashing black eyes and an inscrutable look on his delicately modeled, ascetic face, I decided that he must be an uncommonly fascinating

person. A little later I could have hugged my cousin George when he introduced us and Yogandi asked me for a dance. The orchestra was just striking up, and a moment later we glided away.

"You are happy?" the mystic asked, when we had been dancing a while.

"Why not?" I answered—"on such an occasion?"

"One occasion determines very little," he responded. "What I meant to ask was, is your life a happy one?"

"It is," I admitted. "There is little that I would ask to be changed."

Yogandi smiled suavely. "Then you have little use for the occult," he observed. "Those who are content with things as they seem, have no occasion to look behind the mask of appearances."

THE suave smile and the pronouncement piqued me. "I *am* content with the appearance of things," I answered quickly. "If occult power were able to let me see into the future, that would be another matter."

"Are you so sure that it cannot?" he asked, with a genuine look of surprise. "Have you ever tried?"

"I wouldn't even know how to go about trying," I admitted.

The suave smile reappeared. "You keep a diary."

The cool remark startled me, for I thought diaries rather silly, and I kept mine a secret.

"Yes," I confessed. "But what has that to do with it?"

Yogandi smiled without answering.

It was not until the music had ceased and he was leading me to a seat, that he spoke again. "So you keep a diary and do not know how to read the future?" he asked, as if I were very stupid not to know.

"I still do not see the connection," I said.

"Think for a minute," he suggested. "Every event which takes place was foreordained at the beginning of the world; every event which you will ever record in your diary, is written there already. The pages which you think blank, are actually full, and when you write in it, you only trace the words that the hand of Fate has already written there."

With that he bowed, smiling, and left me. I smiled, too, at his fanciful reasoning, and by the end of the next dance I had quite forgotten the incident.

Although it was very late when we came home from the club-house, we sat about and talked for a long time; the dance had been an exceptionally charming and successful affair, and no one seemed willing to have the party end. Finally George took Jean home, and Harry, who had been particularly thoughtful and attentive, kissed me good night and started back to the city. A little later the rest of us separated regretfully and went to our rooms.

Even then, I didn't feel the least bit sleepy; indeed, I was much too happy to sleep. So with fountain pen and diary, I settled myself in my big wicker chair to record the events of the day—especially the evening—trying to catch that elusive something which makes one party so much happier and more memorable than a hundred others. When I had finished writing, I sat on, holding the diary in my hands and turning the blank pages which other days would fill—imagining, fancifully, the happy events that were to be recorded in the future.

The future! That word brought back to me vividly the velvety sound of Yogandi's voice, and his unfathomable smile. What strange things he had said! Why, if I could believe him, the pages before me were not blank—their crisp smoothness was already filled with events which the hand of Fate had recorded at the beginning of time. Could I but have the sublime faith of that fascinating mystic, I might read as far ahead into the future as the book was dated.

THE idea took hold of me with a grasp like steel—I could not shake it off. If the pages were already full, and I was simply retracing each day what had been written at the beginning of the world, why could I not read it now—read right through to the end of the book, and learn what was going to happen in two, three, yes, even five years hence?

I turned the pages more slowly, gazing intently at each one; but on their smooth surfaces I saw only the reflected brilliance of my pink boudoir lamp. By this time I had grown very sleepy, but I could not make myself go to bed. I was held, as by some hypnotic spell, scrutinizing the white pages and thinking of Yogandi and his strange suggestion. At one time I thought I actually heard the black-eyed mystic moving at my side—but when I looked up, no one was there. Obviously, the lateness of the hour and the stillness of the night were making me imagine things.

Finally I must have dozed in my chair, for presently I was dreaming. And yet,

who can truthfully say how much I dreamed, and how much I actually *saw?* All I know is that after a while I looked more closely and saw that the pages I turned were no longer blank—they were filled with dim handwriting, closely spaced!

I scanned them more intently, and little by little the writing grew clearer, until I recognized entries inscribed in my own hand, recording the events of days that were still unborn!

I can recall no feeling of surprise. I only thought: "How interesting this is! Why couldn't I have thought of it myself? If ever I see Yogandi again, I am going to tell him that I'm not so stupid as he thinks I am—why, I can read the future as easily as he!"

Fascinated by this new power, I turned the pages lightly, glancing at a paragraph here and there. It was interesting, but not really as wonderful as I had at first thought; after all, the record of the future was not unlike that of the past. Suddenly I stopped short at a brief entry:

Today Hugh Blake and I were married. I think that I have chosen wisely.

What an absurd entry! Surely this must be the mysterious Yogandi, using his occult power to confuse and distract me! Why, the only Blake I knew was no more than a shadowy figure in the background of my consciousness; we had met but twice, without showing any interest in each other. He was a young doctor, and his first name might be Hugh, or anything else, for all I knew—or cared. As if I would give up Harry Barnwell for someone who was no more to me than a stranger!

INCREDIBLE as was that terse entry, I couldn't help feeling annoyed and puzzled by it. Why had I written such nonsense?

I began turning the leaves backward, to look for some explanation of this absurdity. After glancing at many pages that cast no light on what I had read, I was halted abruptly by another entry, dated some months earlier:

Today I learned that Harry Barnwell and Jean Sheppard were secretly married.

The handwriting was my own.

Now, whatever made me write anything like that! Particularly as I was engaged to Harry Barnwell and Jean had eyes for no one but my handsome and charming cousin!

Hereafter, I told myself reproachfully, I would stick to writing up events after they happen, not before.

I turned back toward the front of the book, to make sure that my diary had not distorted the past as it had the future. With a sigh of relief I came to the page written that night—the account of the dance at the country club, just as it had happened.

"Thank Heavens that isn't all mixed up!" I told myself.

Then, with a chill of horror, my gaze rested on the opposite page, bearing an entry for the next day:

Today George was killed in an airplane accident.

What a dreadful thing to write! And what an awful person Yogandi must be, to make me write such a dreadful thing! I tried to laugh it off as an absurdity, but it stared me in the face—that terrible sentence, set down coldly in my own hand. Could it be true—my brilliant and lovable cousin had been killed—no, *was to be killed that very day?*

"It's a mistake," I told myself. "It *can't* happen. I won't let it happen! I won't!"

I must have cried out "I won't" so loudly that I woke myself, for I sat up shivering and looked about. The sky that I saw through the eastern window of my room was gray with approaching sunrise, and the fatal diary had slipped to the floor. Surely I must have been asleep and dreaming. And yet, supposing——

Trembling violently, I recovered the book and turned again to my entry about the dance. Thank God the opposite page was blank, as were all the others that followed. It had been only a dream. But what terrible things to have dreamed! I undressed hastily and crept into bed, vowing that if I ever saw Yogandi again, I would avoid him as I would a poisonous reptile.

At breakfast everyone was in amiable mood. George was in particularly high spirits, and before long I was able to smile a little, inwardly, about the shock I had received from my weird dream.

"This is my day for traveling," George announced, lighting a cigarette. "Before taking the one o'clock to Santa Barbara, I'm going to Del Monte and back, just for the ride."

"How is that?" my brother-in-law asked, looking at his watch and rising from the

table in nervous haste. "Are you flying?"

The question chilled me and I caught my breath, while the cup that I was raising clattered against the saucer.

"'Flying' is the word," George answered. "I ran into Harvey Thomas at the party last night. He's got a new plane and wants to show me what it can do. I've never taken a long flight before, and it'll be quite a lark."

BREAKFAST ended somehow, and I followed my cousin out on to the porch.

"George," I said with determination, "you are not going flying today."

"Who said so?" he answered, putting an arm around me. "Why, child, you are as pale and trembling as if I said I was going to jump off the top of the Cliff House."

"Maybe so," I admitted. "But please, *please* promise me not even to go near an air-plane today!"

George sat on the porch rail, rumpling his wavy red-gold hair with his hand, while he studied me quizzically with his clear gray eyes.

"'Not go near an air-plane today'," he repeated—"is it a game or a puzzle?"

"Neither," I told him. "I am afraid you will meet with an accident if you do."

My cousin looked at me with unbelief. "But, Elaine," he expostulated, "whatever gave you this sudden notion? If it were anyone else, I would say that you were afraid. But last year you went up with me in the rickety old ship that Harvey had then—and you weren't afraid."

"I know," I agreed. "Any other day I would consider a plane safer than a motor car on the highway to San Francisco."

"And what is wrong with today?" George demanded, more puzzled than ever.

"Just a hunch," I told him—"a hunch that something will happen if you go up today. It may be silly of me, but please, George, don't go."

"But I promised Harvey," he reminded me, slipping off the rail. "And when we get back, it will prove to you that hunches aren't worth anything." Then he turned and caught the agonized look on my face. "Are you really as worried as that?" he asked incredulously.

I nodded without speaking.

My cousin stood there, undecided, looking at me and rumpling his hair. Then he treated me to a slow, indulgent smile—and I knew that I had won.

"All right," he announced, "have your way. I'll phone Harvey that I can't make it, and I'll take a drive instead—no," he added with a smile, "an air-plane might flop down and sit on me!" Inspiration seized him. "Tell you what I'll do; I'll spend the morning in the nursery, with the children. That ought to be safe enough."

I couldn't help smiling, in spite of myself. A few minutes later I heard shouts of merriment from Bobbie and Marie—George was as popular with the children as he was with grown-ups. The rest of the morning I went about with a light heart. Even if my dream had been sheer nonsense, there was no harm done—and perhaps I had forestalled Fate. Who could tell?

A little before train time, George emerged from the nursery, still in high spirits, and asked for a piece of court-plaster.

"I'm a casualty," he said, with a laugh, showing me a slight scratch on his hand.

"How did you manage to get wounded?" I asked in jest, placing a tiny bit of sticking plaster over the little red spot.

"I was playing with one of the children's toys, and it 'bit' me, as Bobbie explained."

STILL smiling over Bobbie's quaint expression, we both got into the car and I drove George to the station and waited there with him until his train came in. At the last minute, just as he was about to go on board, a young man hurried across the station platform, started to board the train, then recognized us and stopped, with one foot on the step. I experienced an odd feeling of shock as I recognized him—it was Doctor Blake!

"How do you do, Miss Kennedy?" he said, raising his hat. "How are you, George?"

Evidently my cousin knew the man better than I did. "Hello, Hugh," he responded. "Glad I'm going to have your company on the way down."

Blake smiled good-naturedly. "And I nearly missed this train, too! Had an emergency this morning—patching up Harvey Thomas. Know him?"

"What happened?" George asked, opening his eyes very wide.

"He was going to fly to Del Monte" Blake explained. "Taking off, a gust of wind caught him and his plane side-slipped and turned over. It didn't do any worse than break his leg and scratch him up a bit. Lucky he hadn't anyone with him; one of the wing spars was driven clear through the fuselage, just where the passenger would have been."

"All aboard!" called the conductor, and a moment later the train began to pull out.

George and I had only time to exchange an awed, half-frightened look. Neither of us said a word.

I drove home in a daze. Then my dream had not been mere nonsense! I had actually saved my cousin from death. The now invisible entry in my diary had given me a glimpse into the future in time to prevent disaster. And I had accused Yogandi of distorting my diary just to annoy me! Why, the man was a savior! It was to him George owed his life—for without his uncanny suggestion I should never have thought of trying to read ahead in my diary.

Then I remembered the item about Doctor Blake—strange that I should meet him again that very morning! And George had called him Hugh. There could no longer be any doubt that he was the one intended in that baffling entry:

Today Hugh Blake and I were married. I think that I have chosen wisely.

"What does it mean?" I asked myself.

Since the first entry had almost materialized, surely the other two must have some meaning. In my mind I traced the manner in which Fate had planned to juggle with our lives: George was to have been killed in an airplane accident that morning; Jean, the friend of my girlhood, was to transfer her affections to my fiancé and take him away from me; and I was to be left the doubtful solace of Doctor Blake.

What a sinister scheme! But thanks to my miraculous glimpse at the still-to-be-written entries in my diary, I could now use my energies to stay the destructive hand of Fate. Just as I had managed to checkmate the first and awful move, so I would be able to break the rest of the shadowy pattern that was threatening to take shape out of the future. These thoughts filled me with confidence, and I hummed a rollicking dance tune.

A WEEK later I was summoned hastily to Santa Barbara. George had died of blood-poisoning!

The blow was sharp and unexpected. Even after I arrived, I could hardly bring myself to believe the terrible truth. It seemed so impossible! He had had a scratch on his hand—a slight scratch that apparently amounted to nothing. Then, all at once it began to show signs of infection and quickly developed into a most violent form of blood-poisoning. He went very suddenly, almost without warning.

Terrible days passed after I returned home. Mingled with my grief was a feeling of helplessness and futility. I had known of one fate that had been planned for my cousin—had been able to save him from it—and yet I had had no hint of the other that was lying in wait for him. Even when I had seen the scratch, I thought nothing of it. That cruel and baffling realization haunted me for weeks, and I was sick at heart. I had matched my powers against the engines of Fate, and Fate, as cunning as it is inexorable, had tricked me at the very moment of victory. Ah, Yogandi, if I had never met you, or talked with you, I would not have added this torture to my grief!

During those weeks, Harry was very thoughtful and considerate. Of course, George's death had postponed the plans for our marriage, but I was content to have life drift on uneventfully for a while.

Poor Jean—for her the blow seemed hardest! For a time we thought she might do herself some harm, for her grief took a form of recklessness that was disturbing, to say the least. Naturally, I felt it my duty to give her what solace I could; and, believing that a steadying influence would be good for her, I invited her often to my home.

At first, Harry was inclined to resent her frequent presence, and we very nearly quarreled about it. That certainly did not sound much like the entry in my diary. Nor did Jean seem to have any fondness for my fiancé. Her repartee was unfailing, and she bickered with him constantly. That was just as well, I thought; it took her mind off her sorrow, and even I found a diversion in it. One cannot be haunted by the dark problems of Fate in the company of two people who are saying clever and outrageous things about each other.

As the months passed, however, I began to have vague doubts. Do these two really dislike each other, I sometimes asked myself, or are they only pretending? At times my suspicions appeared to be ridiculous; and again it seemed to me that all the bickering was a sham—to conceal from each other a feeling that they were unwilling to admit—or to throw me off the scent.

Yes, I had my moments of jealousy, much as I disliked myself for it and knew that it was a dishonorable emotion. But I was determined not to let my feelings influence my

actions. Over and over I told myself that I had no grounds for suspicion, except, perhaps, that Harry no longer complained about Jean being in our company—which might have been out of consideration for me, as much as anything else. After all, I reasoned, I would certainly not suspect anything if my mind had not been turned in that direction by the lines in that baffling diary. And why should I put any faith in that dream? Terrible as had been George's fate, it certainly had no connection with the air-plane accident prophesied in the diary. Why, then, should I allow myself to be influenced by the other two entries?

TRY as I would, though, I could not altogether put the idea out of my mind. If I am to be master of my destiny, I told myself, I must do something about it. Since it was I who was responsible for Jean's being so constantly in our company, it was up to me to arrange matters in such a way that her attention would be drawn away from Harry. But how?

While I was still casting about in my mind for some pleasant and tactful way of accomplishing this end, an opportunity presented itself as conveniently as could be.

The three of us were playing tennis on the club courts one afternoon; happening to glance toward the club-house during the course of the game, I noticed Doctor Blake sitting on the shaded veranda, regarding us with very apparent interest. I waved my racket in the air, as a sort of playful greeting to him; and he, misunderstanding the gesture and thinking that I had beckoned to him, left his seat and started toward us.

At first, I felt somewhat embarrassed that he should take my offhand greeting to be a summons, but within a few minutes I was grateful for the mistake. When I introduced him to our little company, he seemed to be very much taken with Jean; and she, in turn, seemed delighted with him.

"So much for my diary and its sinister predictions!" I thought. "Harry and I will be married, and Jean and Doctor Blake will get along swimmingly, no doubt."

I entered the new game of mixed doubles with a zest and pleasure that I had not known for some time. Harry remarked on my improved drives several times, and Doctor Blake paid a number of compliments to my play. It was the happiest occasion I had known in several weeks.

After playing several sets, the four of us strolled over to the club-house for some refreshment. While we were sitting round the little table, waiting for our orders, Doctor Blake turned to me.

"I believe I have met you three times before," he remarked, studying my face with his deep brown eyes. "The last time was at the station, when you were seeing George off."

"Yes, the last time," I responded, meaning that it was the last time either of us had seen George alive.

Both of us were silent for a time, listening to the sparkling battle of wits that was going on between Jean and Harry. Then Doctor Blake spoke again.

"In a way, though," he went on, "it was also the first time I ever saw you."

"How do you mean?" I asked, frankly puzzled.

"I mean that until that afternoon you were only a part of the background of my consciousness," he explained. "Is that a rude thing to say?"

"Not at all," I answered dryly, remembering that I had thought of him in those very terms.

"That day," he continued, "you somehow became separated from the mass of people I had seen once or twice, and I realized that you were someone I should like to know better."

WE said nothing more on the subject, though I should have liked to question him further.

Altogether, the afternoon was a pleasant one. By the time we were going home, I felt that Jean might do far worse than fall in love with Hugh Blake. Strange that he should have first wished to know me on the very day after I had had my inexplicable dream!

Thereafter the four of us were together frequently, playing doubles at tennis, motoring down to Monterey, and going to the theater in San Francisco. It almost seemed as if no two of us could be together without the other two. Sometimes I felt that the reason should not be hard to find—but it always escaped me. I loved Harry as much as ever; but I was not blind to the fact that if we were not drifting apart, neither were we drawing any closer together, and it seemed just as well that we should have other company. Of course, there were times when I was troubled—times when it seemed that the four of us were playing some blind, incalculable

game, hiding things from each other by keeping close together.

One evening at a dance at the country club, several months after my cousin's death, I got separated from my partner and strolled out on to the deserted porch. It was a beautiful evening, with the scent of flowers and new-cut grass in the air, and I was not sorry to have missed a dance. Apparently others seemed willing to miss it, too, for presently the dance music swelled louder with the opening of the door, and someone stepped out on to the lighted strip of porch. It was Harry! He glanced about but did not see me standing there in the shadow. On his face there was a look of eager expectancy, such as I had not seen there for a long time.

The fox-trot swelled louder as the door opened again—and Jean emerged into the light. Never before had I seen her so sparkling and bright. Harry turned with a quick exclamation, and she glided into his arms.

I stood there in the darkness, suffering a hundred tortures. So, the prediction was coming true!

"BUT I won't let it!" I told myself with determination. "I managed to avert George's fate, even if something else did get him later; and I'll stop this. After all, it's my fault for thrusting Jean upon Harry as I did in the weeks after George died. And I'm not going to lose Harry—I'll win him back!"

When the four of us left together, after the dance, Harry was unusually gallant to me, and Jean treated Doctor Blake with an affectionate playfulness. But I was not deceived. I knew it was only a sham, and that if I was to win my lover back, I must use all my intuition and tact. Accordingly I was as pleasant and gay as could be, all the way home, jesting almost to the point of recklessness—so much so, in fact, that before he left me, Harry was moved to remark that I hadn't been so jolly and such good company for months.

Once up in my room, I laughed at my silly fears. Why, all I had to do was to be my old happy self again, and Harry wouldn't have eyes for Jean at all.

Elated with my success, I began at once to plan for ways of having Harry to myself. A few days later I met him in the city for lunch; we had a pleasant hour together, after which he had to hurry back to the office. But before he went, we made plans for a picnic together the following Saturday; we were to go off by ourselves, early in the morning, and spend the day at Half Moon Bay.

I spent some busy days, getting things together for our outing. Then on Friday afternoon I had a most annoying telephone call—one that shattered all my plans. Jean called up to say that she and Hugh were going to spend the day at the beach; and Hugh having learned from Harry that we were planning to go to Half Moon Bay, she thought it would be lovely if we all went down together.

What could I say? Of course, I had to consent—even had to try to seem pleased about it. But I could no longer look forward to the day with anticipation. In fact, I earnestly wished that something might happen which would prevent our going.

But nothing did happen, and on Saturday morning the four of us set out together, merrily enough, to drive over to Half Moon Bay. It was a lovely morning, cool and balmy, with the mist of the night just lifting as we sped along. For the time being, I forgot my worries, content to be carried along through the refreshing morning air, toward the far reach of blue water and the curving strip of white beach.

We loafed about all morning, taking a dip in the cold surf now and then, and meanwhile resting on the warm sand. As the sun rose higher, the day grew warmer, and by noon we were all feeling the effects of activity and heat. In the shade of our beach umbrellas we made hearty inroads on our picnic luncheon, and gave silent thanks to the inventor of vacuum bottles as we took long drinks of ice-cold lemonade.

AFTER eating, we all sat about and talked for a while; and presently, I do not know whether it was the result of a hearty meal, or the effect of the heat, or both, but I became so very sleepy I could hardly keep my eyes open. At length, I had to succumb to the drowsiness, and I fell asleep, face down, on the warm, white sand.

I must have slept a long time, for I awoke feeling chilly, and looked up to see the sun low on the western horizon. Then I wondered why the others were so quiet. Glancing around, I noticed that Jean and Harry were nowhere in sight; only Hugh was sitting near by, reading a book that I had brought along. When he heard me moving, he put it down and turned toward me.

"Hello!" I exclaimed, suppressing a

yawn. "What's happened to everybody?"

"We're everybody," he informed me. "Jean got a sudden toothache, and Harry took her back to town."

"Harry took her!" I repeated in amazement—"why not you?"

Hugh gave me a slow, quizzical smile. "Do you wish I had?" he asked keenly.

After I had shaken myself free of sand and sleepiness, Hugh helped me gather up our scattered belongings, and then we drove home together.

Sunday morning I had two special-delivery letters—one from Harry, the other from Jean. Both sounded a little sad, and at the same time, intensely happy. They had eloped together; they just couldn't help themselves. Would I ever forgive them?

At first, I felt violently angry and hurt. Then I calmed down. After all, wasn't it my fault? Hadn't I thrown Jean and Harry together so often that they just couldn't help falling in love? And there had been that entry in the diary—but no, that was mere nonsense! The diary had nothing to do with it. I had brought it upon myself.

That afternoon I was sitting in the little arbor at the foot of the garden, struggling with my thoughts and emotions, when I heard my sister directing someone down the path toward me. Then I heard footsteps, and when I looked up, there was Hugh Blake, ducking his head to pass under the low, leafy arch.

Our greeting was without undue warmth, and then we talked a little of the elopement. After a bit Hugh took both my hands in his, and said, with trembling voice:

"Elaine, I know I ought to be sorry, but I'm not. No, I'm glad!"

"Glad?" I couldn't believe my own ears.

"Yes, glad, my dear, dear girl. Because now I can tell you, freely and honorably—I love you."

The last words were spoken in a burst of emotion, and the next moment Hugh had me in his arms, kissing my eyes and my hair.

I felt as if I ought to be offended, but I wasn't. The sensation was far pleasanter than I would have expected. Still, I was not willing to give him the answer he wanted, though he pleaded for half an hour. Of course, the diary had predicted it, but that meant nothing; the diary had prophesied that George was to be killed in an air-plane accident—and he had died of blood-poisoning. No, I told myself, if both the other prophecies had come true, I would not hesitate—I would consent at once. As it was, I must have time to think calmly about it.

I told Hugh as much, and, reluctant as he was to go away without a definite promise, he finally agreed to come back in a week.

The following Saturday I was sitting in my room, still trying to decide what answer I would give Hugh next day, and at the same time keeping an eye on the children who were playing in the nursery across the hall. Presently a disagreement took place between them. Glancing up, I was just able to see the back of Bobbie's head, with the sun from the open window glinting on his red-gold hair. George's hair had been just like that.

"No, you can't!" I heard Bobbie say to Marie, who was hidden from me by the door.

"I will!" Marie announced, as if that ended the matter. There was a clicking sound from the spring of a toy being wound.

Directly there was a scuffle, and Marie whimpered.

"I'll tell Aunt 'Laine you took it away from me," the child complained.

I listened, puzzled, but without interfering. It was the first time I had ever known Bobbie to take anything forcibly from his little sister.

"You can have it when I wind it up," the boy explained.

"I want to wind it my own self," Marie objected.

"You can't," Bobbie affirmed, while the clicking of the spring continued. "It would bite you."

"It would not bite me," Marie came back.

"It would!"

"It wouldn't!"

"It would," Bobbie persisted. "You know it bit Uncle George."

"No," pouted Marie. "When did it bite Uncle George?"

"You remember," Bobbie went on patiently, "a long time ago, when Uncle George was here, and he played with us so long. Don't you remember—when he was going away he winded it up and it bit his hand, and made him bleed?"

The awful truth dawned on me, and I sprang to my feet. Good Heavens! The children were playing with the instrument that had poisoned George!

It was only after I had stumbled into the nursery, where the children looked up at me inquiringly, that I realized the terrible jest Fate had played on me. In his hands Bobbie was holding one of his toys—*an innocent-looking little metal air-plane!*

A Medium's Memoirs

The GHOST of LENINE

By HORACE LEAF, F. R. G. S.

GHOST-LAYING is a queer occupation, but a useful one. Many beautiful homes are rendered almost uninhabitable by strange phenomena caused by ghostly visitors.

To remove the nuisance and restore peace and happiness to the inhabitants is no small service. The ghost-layer does this.

Then there is the question of the nature of ghosts. Mankind since the dawn of history has believed in them, but little has been done to discover what they are. Opinion on the subject differs greatly.

Ghosts are complex and cannot be accounted for by such simple explanations as imagination and fraud. It seems that the majority of ghosts are spirits, and I accept that explanation for some that I have met. There appear to be other causes, however, and I have ventured to suggest what they may be.

I ask the reader to believe that the extraordinary experiences I recount are true; he may form his own conclusion as to their cause.

IN THE summer of 1924 public attention was called to weird manifestations said to be occurring in an old house not five minutes from Piccadilly Circus. Emphasis was given to the subject by the experiences of the representative of a leading daily newspaper, who spent the hours between midnight and dawn in the haunted house.

The manifestations usually took place in a basement room which had at one time served as a kitchen, but had been converted into an exhibition art gallery. Here had been heard, usually after midnight, strange irregular tapping sounds for which no normal explanation could be found, and more than one person claimed to have seen the ghost of a man walking the stairs.

The newspaperman had awaited the specter in this room and heard the sounds which usually heralded its appearance; although he saw no form, a strange light appeared to illuminate the staircase leading to the floor above. The sounds and the light were repeated at frequent intervals,

and finally the atmosphere became so "crowded" that it was impossible to stay in it. No person, he declared, could remain seated alone in the building ten minutes without becoming aware of the supernatural element; escape was a sheer physical relief. In the end, he sought this relief and hurried away to write the account of his experience.

As a student of the occult, I welcomed, a few days later, an invitation from Sir Arthur Conan Doyle to join him and the Reverend Vale Owen in an endeavor to learn who the ghost was and to help it, if possible.

The house, we found, was a tall, plain building over two hundred years old, near Golden Square. It had formerly been a priest's house, and was said to be built on the site of an ancient burial ground. There was also a belief that the vaults were connected with the remains of an old monastery. The secretary's room used to be a chapel.

We were welcomed by the assistant secretary and three gentlemen, one of whom was a Harley Street physician. Two of the gentlemen and the assistant secretary declared that they had either seen or heard the ghost, and all had felt the evil psychic influence that had lately impregnated parts of the building. They, too, had heard the raps, had seen the luminous ray, and all were extremely anxious to restore the place to its normal healthy condition.

Sir Arthur took charge of proceedings, my services being requisitioned because my mediumistic powers might prove useful for getting into communication with the ghost, who had been described as an old man who moved restlessly about the stairs. The greatest care was taken by the leader of the expedition to guard himself and the company against practical jokers, and after carefully questioning the assistant secretary and her friends, Sir Arthur had all doors locked and a piece of twine tied across the only staircase that led down to the haunted room.

IT is a curious fact that the hour of midnight or thereabouts seems best for certain kinds of psychic phenomena, and ghosts certainly appear to prefer late hours of the night or the early hours of the morning. The reasons are, I believe, threefold: at that time it is sure to be dark, and light rays are always gravely inhibiting to physical forms of supernormal phenomena, and ghosts when visible to ordinary people are always partly materialized; there are certain magnetic changes in the atmosphere not yet understood but favorable to these manifestations; and finally the mediumistic individuals from whom ghosts derive the substance necessary for the construction of their temporary organisms are in a quiescent state suitable for the emission of ectoplasm.

SIR ARTHUR wisely chose 11:30 p. m. as the hour to commence the more serious part of the experiment. We assembled in the lower room and grouped ourselves around a table, ready to receive any messages that might come through to us, and the lights were turned out.

The experience of sitting in an old house of evil reputation is disturbing enough, but to sit in total darkness without a sound reaching one from the street would be positively distressing to the uninitiated unless care were taken to interest and distract their attention. To do this judiciously is one of the arts learned by the capable psychical researcher. Our leader, therefore, encouraged us to chat occasionally among ourselves, as experience teaches that sound vibrations and a reposeful state of mind are helpful to the production of psychic phenomena.

We seemed to have selected a day when the psychic atmosphere was weak, as those who had been present when the newspaper representative held his vigil said it had been more noticeable then. This may have been owing to the different combination of persons, and I concluded that as we numbered five men and one woman the presence of so much "positive" magnetism may have been responsible. It is generally concluded that women as a rule emit a different kind of psychic force from men; too much either way may prove detrimental to results. There was, too, an air of doubt and skepticism abroad. The Harley Street physician was more or less a novice to the subject and evidently looking out for snags, while the three spiritualists were experienced enough to know that the best proof of psychic manifestations is their occurrence. We were sympathetic, but ready to admit that nothing had happened that could confirm the testimony of the assistant secretary and her friends—one, a Dutchman, possessing clairvoyant vision.

Proof of our mental attitude was soon forthcoming. At first the darkness was impenetrable, then gradually we were able to see a dim phosphorescent-like glow upon the stairs. The effect was spectral, but we

were all in agreement that it was caused by the reflection from the glass roof of the building. This effectually checked any tendency to attribute to a supernormal source what was due to our eyes becoming gradually used to the conditions.

Sir Arthur's suggestion that we should use the table as a starting point proved a good one. Our hands rested on it for some time before it trembled in the way that indicates genuine psychic movements are about to commence. Our interest was immediately intensified; we had waited so long for results that we had begun to think that our efforts might prove fruitless. There had been a few spasmodic, faint raps, which, however, we concluded could be best accounted for by normal means.

With the movement of the table, phenomena came thick and fast, and we began to feel the ghost was a real one. Nothing unusual had appeared to me; but this was no criterion, as psychic vision is a variable and elusive gift. It is possible for one clairvoyant to see clearly while another sees nothing. It was the assistant secretary who saw the ghost. Seated on the left of Sir Arthur, she whispered in an agitated voice: "I see him. He is standing on the stairs looking down on us."

She described him as an elderly man, bearded, with slit eyes and a cunning expression. This is the conventional idea of a Chinaman of doubtful character, but the lady assured us that he was a white man. The description of the apparition was corroborated by the Dutchman. The rest of us could see only the faint luminosity that dimly lit up part of the staircase. I was, however, beginning to feel signs that increased my interest, and although prepared to speak only of what I personally experienced, my confidence in the existence of the ghost grew stronger. His appearance was attractive, if sinister. Here was no commonplace entity.

Sir Arthur Conan Doyle is one of the best psychic experimenters I have ever met. He has the kind of personality that inspires good feeling and confidence. By no means credulous, he gives every encouragement, reserving his judgment until the end. This is the best way to success in psychic science and accounts for the extraordinary good results he has had. When the two seers announced that the specter had descended the stairs a little and the lady's emotions grew stronger, he persuaded us to encourage the entity to communicate. The two seers then stated that the figure had disappeared.

Almost immediately, the table began moving in a regular and orderly manner, conveying the impression that a firm, strong personality was working it, and having assured ourselves of the supernormal origin of the movements, we invited the invisible operator to "talk" to us through it. A code was accordingly arranged, and very quickly the following interesting dialogue took place:

"Are you a friend?"

"Yes."

"A man?"

"Yes."

"Are you the spirit who has haunted this room?"

"Yes."

"Is it money that troubles you?"

"No."

"Papers?"

"No."

"Remorse for deeds done?"

"Yes."

SIR ARTHUR then talked sympathetically to the entity, explaining the conditions under which he seemed to live, urging him to turn his thoughts away from worldly considerations and adjust himself to the new world to which he had gone, while the Reverend Vale Owen offered up a prayer in hope that this restless spirit might find peace. In answer to whether he heard and understood, the ghost replied:

"Yes."

Now, something of his strong character began to manifest again, for when asked whether what had been said affected his attitude of mind he replied with some hesitation that it had not. His resolute character was impressing itself on the entire company, and by now the strong psychic atmosphere referred to by the newspaper representative was making itself felt. It seemed to surge round me very strongly, and I was preparing myself for anything unusual that might happen. The ghost seemed anxious to say something important. Sir Arthur divined this, and said he would take any message from him; but would he first endeavor to tell us his name? With that object, the alphabet was slowly called over, with the request that the table be pushed at each letter in proper order. Then came the surprise of the evening, for no one seemed to have suspected that our visitor was so famous. The name Lenan was spelt out.

"Is that right?" asked Sir Arthur.
"No."
"Is 'LEN' right?"
"Yes."
"Should the next letter be 'I'?"
"Yes."
"Is Lenine the name?"
"Yes."
"Are you Lenine, the Russian leader?"
"Yes."

The next question was whether any of our company had the name of this man in mind and so had tended to move the table. None of us had.

Doyle was not disposed to leave the matter thus, and sought confirmation.

"Could you spell something in Russian?" he asked.

"Yes."

Owing to lingual difficulties, this did not prove very successful; it was found too hard to follow the movements. Spelling out the alphabet at the table was found very tedious even in one's own tongue and practically impossible in another with which one had no acquaintance. The Dutchman came to the rescue and addressed the entity in several languages, receiving correct answers to all his questions.

Sir Arthur then asked: "Have you a message for us?"

"Yes."

"Then I will give you the alphabet."

Slowly the following sentence was spelt out:

"Artists must rouse selfish nations."

The answer to whether the whole message had been given was, "No."

THE alphabetical method was proving too slow for patience and costly in energy. The atmosphere was now well charged, and I felt that better progress could be made by adopting a different procedure. I, therefore, suggested that we put aside the table, form a circle and invite the ghost to control one or other of the company. I was quite prepared to act as a subject, and the Dutchman also volunteered.

Having formed our circle, we sang a hymn for the sake of vibrations and harmony, and awaited events. Suddenly, I was controlled by an entity who claimed to be not the ghost, but a spirit interested in the proceedings and willing to help. In "low, level, clear tones," to quote Sir Arthur's report, he declared: "There is a spirit here who wishes to speak. He is a strong spirit. No, I would not say he is an evil spirit. His aura is not evil. Yes, he is a foreigner. I could not say more than that." The voice died away.

My own feelings were interesting. I was certainly the center of strange activities. The atmosphere around me fairly pulsated, and through it came the impression of a quiet, firm personality with an indomitable will. There was an air of anxiety, a desire to do something of paramount importance, and the idea of Russia and its relations to the world floated through my mind. Whatever the strange influence might be, I felt it desired peace for Russia and a more sympathetic attitude towards that country from the other nations of the world. These thoughts were certainly far from my normal mode of thinking. Politics do not interest me. Practical experience convinced me years ago that I am temperamentally unsuited for dealing with such problems. Now, however, I felt literally bathed in them. It was just the kind of influence one would expect from such a man as Lenine if he could telepathically transmit his thoughts and feelings.

No sooner had the first control departed and my normal condition been restored, than a second influence attempted to possess me. The effect was distressing and painful. Seated on one side of me was Mr. Owen and on the other the doctor, and all they could do was to hang on to my convulsed and twisting arms. Every muscle seemed strained, my breath came in short, sharp gasps, and perspiration broke from every pore. Fortunately, I have no nervousness about these things, experience having taught me that if a person remains calm no harm is likely to befall him, and I should have felt well repaid for all my inconvenience if the spirit of Lenine or whatever the ghost might be had succeeded in giving the remainder of the message. But the effort was doomed to failure. No amount of twisting and twirling sufficed to produce the state which would enable the unseen entity to grip my brain and tongue so that he might speak. After a while, the effort died away in despair and all was quiet once more.

There was, I thought, a fair amount of evidence in favor of the belief that the ghost was that of Lenine, anxious to convey a posthumous message to the world. Whatever may have been his faults during life, Lenine was a great man and a sincere lover of his country. On passing to the next world, it is conceivable that he would, if possible, attempt to transmit any message

he thought important to the interests of Russia. His strong will and great determination would cause him to seek any place and adopt any means through which he could make a wide appeal.

From the psychic point of view, no more suitable place than this artists' center could have been selected. Artists are temperamentally psychic; and in these galleries met a broad-minded, cosmopolitan set, open to admit any fact no matter how strange and unconventional, and many of the members were Russians.

His choice seems, therefore, to have been a good one. In selecting the heart of London, he showed commendable wisdom—there was no more likely place in which to arouse sympathetic interest. It is the home of many eminent spiritualists and psychical researchers, well known all over the world.

The description of the ghost coincides with the appearance of Lenine, and the lady who saw him first declared that she had no recollection of his face during life. The haunter seems to have been satisfied with the result of his effort, as thereafter the hauntings ceased, and recent enquiries show that the eerie light, the evil influence, and "crowded" atmosphere are no longer seen or felt; nor is the figure of the old man observed restlessly moving up and down the stairs.

Watch for the second article—A Ghost in Solid Form—*in Mr. Leaf's amazing series. It will appear in the November issue of* GHOST STORIES, *on all news stands September 23rd.*

The Phantom Train Whistle

FROM Beckley, West Virginia, Mr. A. Lewis Allen has sent us the following amazing story:

Of all the cousins on both sides of my family, Emma Allen, on my father's side, was the one that I loved most. I fairly idolized her. She seemed to feel the same way toward me.

Some way or other, we had the same desires to a great extent. That which one of us disliked, the other also disliked. I do not intend to leave the impression that we were identical in our likes and dislikes, but our minds seemed to vibrate on the same plane to such an extent that it was noticeable by many who came in contact with us.

Late in the fall of 1916, after I had fed and rubbed down the horses, I lay down on a pile of straw in the cutting room of the barn. Being weary and sleepy from my day's toil, I dropped off to sleep almost immediately.

I was awakened a little later by a sound somewhere near me. I raised myself on one elbow to listen, but I could hear nothing. The growing dusk had changed to the black of night.

Just as I started to arise and go to the house, a sound attracted my attention in the far end of the cutting room. Turning around as quick as possible, I was startled to see through the dark, the form of my cousin as plain as I had ever beheld her in broad daylight. She looked more charming and beautiful than ever, and seemed to be trying to speak to me, but from some cause could not.

When I had recovered my wits, so as to speak, a distant train shrieked out a long blast from its whistle.

Before the sound had died away, Emma threw up her arms and said in a voice as natural as I had ever heard her speak, "Farewell, Lewis; I hear the Reaper coming."

I found myself staring at nothing but the blackness of night—Emma had vanished into the dark. I knew what I had just seen wasn't a dream. I could not understand it. I knew, too, that Emma couldn't have been there, when she was thirty miles away. I tried to think that it was my imagination tricking me, but I could not. It seemed as though I could not meditate any further, and tears filled my eyes.

The following morning my experience of the evening before was flashed before me in a form that actually stunned me. A message came stating that Emma Allen had been killed, together with her sweetheart's mother, and a taxicab driver, when a train struck the taxi in which they were riding.

Phantom Guided

By FOSTER CAMPBELL

As told to LEE COOKSLEY

WE of the Jungle Club were sportsmen, and Hamilton Craig was the greatest of our number. Although it is infrequently mentioned in the press, the Jungle Club is an organization of adventurers. We prided ourselves that we were gentlemen and it was our conviction that one of life's obligations was to laugh at death. In various ways, all of us had qualified in this respect, and certainly in many others.

Big-game hunters, explorers, scientists—we sought out the Jungle Club when we came into New York, as naturally as ordinary men seek their homes. There we would recount our adventures, compare notes and bring into those comfortable quarters all the color and atmosphere of the storied places of the earth. And, also, we would bring curious relics and strange works of art which made of the club a sort of adventurer's museum.

On the occasion with which this narrative is concerned, I had but recently returned from an expedition into the interior of Africa. I was supposed to have something of a reputation among medical men and had gone out to verify, if I could, the growing belief that Africa had been contributing to the list of dreaded diseases on this side of the water. Leprosy and hookworm, dysentery and malaria, not to omit yellow fever, had all come under my observation, yet my findings had not satisfied me.

I was back at the Jungle Club, nervous and still suffering a bit from malaria. Naturally, in the line of duty, it had been necessary for me to subject myself to the dangers of any malady I might find. It is less exciting than fighting a revolution, or shooting an enraged lion, but it is quite as trying on the nervous system.

As I say, I was highly nervous and had been drinking considerable. My financial affairs were none too well-off, either, and this added to my tension. But, ironically enough, it was a far lesser thing than any of these which wrecked my career, blasted every hope I possessed, and sent me out into the world a fugitive.

Hamilton Craig, smilingly self-possessed, sat opposite me at the card-table. It seemed uncanny that he should win every hand in

The famous doctor killed his best friend over a card-game—and thereby plunged into the weirdest adventure ever known!

which I played. Ordinarily, gambling with me is an entertainment, but this night it became a fever.

"Damn it, Craig," I burst out, "you have the luck of a levee nigger."

He smiled indulgently, as his hard, slender hands, browned by tropic suns, flashed in the deal.

"The trouble with you scientific chaps," he drawled, "is that you take yourselves too confounded seriously. As though it matters—win or lose—life or death. Why, man, with all your knowledge of disease and death, you should be a stoic. Why bother about the inevitable?"

I PICKED up my cards and looked at them with narrowed, unexpressive eyes. I had three Kings.

I attempted my old light-hearted bantering. "Then I suppose you consider it inevitable that no one but you should win this hand?" I inquired.

Craig laughed softly, studying his own cards. "Absolutely," he replied. "You see, Campbell, I have faith in my cards just as I do in the hereafter. You inquisitive fellows, always poking around for advance information, lack faith. You don't take anything for granted."

The waiter halted at my shoulder and I drank recklessly. The others at the table looked at me curiously and were silent. We drew cards. I took two and discovered a pair of jacks. The stakes were high and Craig had raised the wager before the draw. In his quiet, drawling voice he called for three cards. By every reasonable rule of the game my "full house" should beat anything he could draw.

Again and again the bets were raised. The others dropped out. It became a silent battle between Craig and myself. At length I called. Not once had his confident smile disappeared. His expression did not change now as he spread out four Queens before me.

"I held two and caught two," he announced quietly.

"Damn you, Craig!" I exclaimed. "You lie! It's impossible——"

I was scarcely conscious of his movement—it was so swift and unexpected. He leaned across the table, and the palm of his big hand struck flush against my cheek!

After that I did not see him or any of the others. A red curtain flamed before my eyes and my brain became a seething furnace. I was carrying an automatic pistol. I heard its sharp report—smelled the acrid odor of burning powder. As the wisps of smoke cleared away, I saw Craig sink back into his chair.

He was smiling at me. His hand was pressed upon the white bosom of his shirt, and between his fingers I saw the red trickle of his blood.

"Excellent shot, old man," he gasped.

Fellow club members gathered about our table and their voices were subdued. Someone had relieved me of the automatic and I was in the center of a little group. Other men were bending over Craig. These men, it must be understood, had all seen human passions at their best and at their worst. They were the sort who acted swiftly, yet thought first. Excitement was not in their natures. Even the club attendants were composed.

Dazedly, I felt a hand tug at my arm.

"Come on, Campbell; pull yourself together. Chuck out of this—and be damned quick about it!"

ANOTHER voice came to my ears as I was half propelled from the room.

"Craig's dead," he said softly—"shot through the heart."

Somehow, I found myself in the street, where the cold, damp wind of early winter swept everything before it. A steady hand guided me, and instinctively I signaled a cab. My companion half pushed me into the seat and followed me. I heard my own voice direct the driver to swing into Central Park. Then, as we moved up the avenue—the interior of the cab illuminated irregularly as we passed street lights—I half turned to stare into the face of my guide.

Beside me, and smiling with his old familiar savoir faire, *was Hamilton Craig!*

In that moment terror struck deep into my heart.

"Have you plenty of money with you?"

he asked, with a ring of authority. "Come, come, Campbell—quit staring at me like a fool. You need your brains now."

"But Craig," I began to plead, "I just——"

He nodded quickly, and again I felt the touch of his hand on my arm.

"I know. You just shot me. Now you've got to get out of it. It wasn't a premeditated crime—but they'd punish you, just the same. Forget it. Concentrate—use the brains God gave you. Tell me, have you money?"

I obediently produced what cash I had, and he examined it. As I drew back, I could see *through* the steady hands that shuffled the bills. Then, I found myself gazing through the very form of Hamilton Craig, at the street beyond the glass!

"Be calm, Campbell," the phantom said. "I wasn't ready for this yet, but it's not half bad. Won't you understand, man, that death isn't the awful thing we've made it through superstition and ignorance?"

HIS husky voice, its tenor slightly changed now, but still the voice of Hamilton Craig, bore all its warmth of friendliness and charm.

"Let me tell you, old man, I've often suspected it would be like this," he went on, and there was a note of tranquillity that was new to him. "I've watched men die, and so have you—hundreds of them. It was never death that put the grimace on their faces, Campbell, but the final pain of life. Can you grasp that?"

Suddenly he resumed his former manner of command.

"Order the driver to take you to Grand Central Station." He spoke sharply, as an officer addresses an inferior in the ranks. "Get yourself straightened and follow me. Control your face. There's an express for the north, due to leave about now. Take it and go to some outpost of civilization in Canada, where you can outfit yourself for the timber. Head north as soon as you can—into the lumber country. Do you understand?"

I nodded dumbly and called to the driver.

A few minutes later Craig and I stood at the ticket window. With almost superhuman effort I endeavored to set my face. My hand shook as I picked up the tickets and turned to face the vast waiting room of the Grand Central. Hurrying travelers looked at me curiously and went on. Their eyes did not wander to the figure beside me at all. Apparently they did not see Craig!

Then I felt a tug at my arm.

"Come along! Great heavens, Campbell—snap out of it. As a doctor, you've been dealing in dead men since you left college, yet you're acting like a raw student."

A sort of drowsy subconsciousness enveloped me and I moved across the wide floor to the gates. Mechanically I handed my tickets to the guard and passed out to the train. Craig moved through the gates ahead of me, unchallenged.

"Baggage, sir?" A Red Cap rushed up to us.

"Coming by express," I told him, dully, not attempting to account for the thought.

Beside me, Craig smiled. "You're coming around," he said encouragingly. "In the past you've traveled around the world with only a tooth-brush. You can get along now with less."

In the Pullman the berths had not yet been made up and there were few passengers. I dropped into my seat and Craig sat down beside me.

"One last bit of advice," he said, and I turned inquiringly. "You've got to forget your profession, Campbell. That's final."

"You mean——" I would be a futile thing without my life work!

"Exactly." Craig's voice was very firm and steady. "Practice as a physician, or a surgeon, and you ruin your chances. You may be sure I know what I'm talking about, old man. It's hard—but it's the only way."

His hand dropped on my arm. "Get a philosophy," he went on, softly. "When you're up there in the big timber, you'll have a chance to think. It was wrong to kill me, old man, after a fashion. Yet I'm happier than I've been before. Don't let my—my wind-up worry you. Just plan for yourself—and don't go back to your profession. Sooner or later, we'll meet again. So long, old man. Good luck."

SUDDENLY, I felt vastly and irrevocably alone. Yet my mind had cleared to an extent, and now there came the power to reason. As the car began to fill, I realized that my fellow passengers were regarding me with mild amusement. No doubt, I reflected, they took me for a dissipated traveler, still dazed by the pace of the metropolis. As soon as the porter made up my berth, I retired.

There would be no point in my describing that uneventful journey. I followed Craig's instructions faithfully, and within a week

my fellow members of the Jungle Club would have recognized me only by a comparison with photographs taken on my various expeditions into the Arctic. I was heading by easy stages into the gleaming white empire of Ungava, which stretches from Hudson Bay to Labrador.

It is a land of deep forests and deeper silences. Men ask no questions, nor do they answer readily to those of others. A stranger's secret is as much his own as is the mystery of the northern lights that paint the sky with dazzling strokes through the long, gray night of winter.

ON this northward trek I had my first opportunity really to give my mind over to the crime I had committed. It came to me with sharp force that Hamilton Craig had demanded the sacrifice of my profession, not as any measure of punishment or retribution, but only to save me. Back in New York, even with the influence of the Jungle Club, it would have been impossible to avert arrest. As I sent the bull-whip curling out over the head of my lead dog, I realized that the police of a hundred cities were searching for the eminent Doctor Foster Campbell.

And now, I asked myself, were the grim men of the Northwestern Mounted searching, too? Would they suspect this unkempt, bearded traveler of being the scientist of the Jungle Club? No—unless I gave them some hint. It was for that, then, that Craig warned me. Good old Craig, a prince of men in death as he had been in life!

It was midwinter when I came into the Red Lake territory. Game was scarce and my dogs were lean and snapping. My own provisions were about exhausted and I was prepared, within twenty-four hours more, to kill off two of the huskies for food. We were breaking our own trail when we came into a clearing where, banked deep behind snow walls, a ramshackle cabin lay. As the door opened, my dogs instinctively flung themselves into the snow, panting, fagged out.

An ancient man looked out at us curiously.

"You ain't got no mail for Jim Durey, have ye?" he called out cheerfully. "If ye have, you're the first durn carrier in years to bring him any."

I stumbled a little as I plunged toward the cabin, righted myself and went on.

"Well, come in here, stranger," old Durey cackled. "You're plumb wore out."

"I thought there'd be more game," I told him and saw him looking at me curiously as we entered the cabin. "I'm looking for work in a camp."

I had flung myself upon a bench before a great pot-bellied stove. In the next few moments, while Durey busied himself in preparing some food, we came to know each other and launched into one of those strange, quick-flowering friendships of the north. He accepted my story without question. I told him merely that I had known the north before and had wanted to come back.

"Ye picked a bad time o' year, stranger," he said with a sympathetic note in his voice, "but you're plumb welcome here as long as you want to stay. I got so dang tired of lookin' at my own face that I shot hell out of the only mirror I had."

"But how about work?" I urged, as my strength was revived with jerked meat and hot black coffee.

Durey chuckled. "Well, now, I'll tell ye," he replied. "As I say, I've been here twelve years and I never loafed a day yet. But I ain't after wood. Me, mister, I'm lookin for gold. An' sure as hell I'll find it jest in time to line my coffin with it. But you, now—it's different with you. There's lumber camps in these parts. Matter of fact, there's the Hawkins outfit not more'n ten mile north. I 'low you can sign up with them."

Durey flung dried fish to my dogs, and long after the snarling brutes had burrowed into the snow, he and I sat talking in the comforting warmth of the cabin. He spoke of the north country and its people, and in turn I told him of the tropics and their mystery. But Durey, not unnaturally, evinced his greatest interest in the cities.

"YE see, Colton," he said, addressing me by the name I had chosen, "I ain't been in a city for so long that a horse cyah would scare me to death. My daughter now, she's different." He spoke proudly.

"She's down in Quebec, gettin' learnin'. Come spring, I 'low she'll be up here to see the old man. It's for her I'd like to find this metal. Pshaw, a jerk o' bacon and a little flour is all an old codger like me needs. But I want to get her all the pretty dresses she can wear. My gal ain't goin' to grow up in the north like a squaw. I 'low you can understand all right, knowin' the cities as you do."

"Yes," I told him, "but I'll bet that girl is glad to get back up here, just the same. The cities aren't so fine as they're cracked up to be, Durey."

He shook his head sagely. "I s'pose not," he agreed, "but it's right lonely here in the timber, with the snow an' all. Helen—that's the gal—does like to come up here. It's a sort o' adventure for her. But I allus notice when the snows begin to come and them old gray wolves begin to howl, she gets kind o' fidgety. Then I packs the big furs around her and we head for the settlement."

IT was as Durey had predicted. At the Hawkins camp I found work readily enough, nor was I questioned overmuch. To be sure, the lumberjacks were curious, but they held their thoughts in abeyance. I suppose that my manner puzzled them. Obviously, it was impossible for me to speak as they did, or to follow their customs. There was a gulf between us, the chasm that divides men of the civilized places from those of the wilderness.

The weeks passed quickly and I became a hardened creature of the woods. But never did I join my rough companions in their drinking, nor could they persuade me to touch a card. One night in the bunk house, as I lay on my narrow bed, apparently asleep, during a card-game, I heard Leroux, a brawny French Canadian, mutter to his comrades at the table.

"Dis fella Colton, by Gar, he want to drink! I see by his eye when he look at ze bottle. He play gamble-game one time, too! By Gar, I tell you he knows about it."

Then, with uncanny intuition, he added: "Maybe Colton get drunk one time in game an' kill fella." He shrugged. "Some men 'fraid after that, eh?"

"Oh, pipe down," growled Cypress Red, who had come up from the California forests. "What the hell does it matter to you what he did?"

Inwardly I thanked Red, and as the game continued I fell asleep. Some time before dawn, which is only a gradual dimming of the Aurora Borealis in the northern sky, I was awakened by a gentle tugging at my blanket. The bunk room was in gloom. Men snored heavily around me, and occasionally one of them stirred.

"Be quiet, Campbell!" It was Hamilton Craig's voice in my ear, and as I stared up, he was bending over me. "You're doing well," he went on. "Things have quieted down at the Club since we left. But you're not out of the woods yet, by a long shot, old man."

I sat up hurriedly, again possessed by that old fear which had swept me when he directed my escape just after his death.

"No, don't speak," he commanded and smiled in his old friendly fashion. "In my —er, present capacity, it is fortunately arranged that I can direct my words to a single person. You're not so well equipped in life. What you say is usually heard by those for whom it isn't intended."

He paused and looked down at me thoughtfully.

"Group action!" he resumed. "That's it, Campbell. You living men are like sheep. You get so little opportunity to think for yourselves, because the whole group is thinking and talking for all the others."

He chuckled and leaned down a little closer.

"You hear men talk of loneliness," he said. "Why, man, they speak of it as though it were a curse. Now here, in my capacity, it has proved to be the greatest boon of all. Do you know—" his whimsical mood was on him now—"it would be a wonderful thing, it seems to me, if mankind could exist first in this stratum of mine, then begin their lives on earth. They'd get off to a philosophical start then.

"THERE wouldn't be any crime, because they'd realize that the inevitable law of nature makes the punishment fit the crime. Each man and woman would be a separate entity, commanding his or her own destiny on earth. But here—I'm thinking aloud. I came to you, really, to encourage you a bit. And to tell you again, old man, carry on! Forget your profession. Remember that, above all things.

"It would be too bad, now, when you have gone so far—when you are beginning to gather some understanding of life and some of death—to spend the rest of your time on earth in a six-by-nine cage. I'd regret that. And it would be hell for you——"

I fell back on my cot and whispered. "All right, Craig. I'll do anything you say. But tell me, how long——"

"Until you get the word," he replied softly, and was gone.

As the winter drew to a close and the thin sunlight of spring and summer sent us up into the big timber, there were other visitations from my friend. And always his message was the same. I must not practice my profession.

I saw men felled by giant trees and watched them suffer while dog teams were sent for medical aid. I watched men die and stood by helplessly. Now and then,

without exhibiting more than a rather unusual skill in making splints, I bandaged broken limbs. But never did I actually resort to the knowledge and the swift scalpel that were within my range.

It was in midsummer that I met old Durey again, and with him was his daughter, Helen. They came up to our logging camp and he remembered me instantly. I saw the girl's eyes question me, as I bared my head over her hand. Lumberjacks, ordinarily, do not possess the little amenities of courtesy.

"Ye're lookin' a heap better'n when I saw ye last," said the old man, happily. "Well, I tol' ye about my gal. Now, what do ye think? Was I correct?"

I looked at Helen Durey and saw a girl, who, despite her education, was yet a product of the Ungava country. Clear-eyed, slender in her corduroys and sweater, there was no mark of the city in her manner, nor yet in her beauty. She had the reserve and the quiet assurance that come to those whose lives are spent in the silent places. She gazed straight back at me, as one man might study another.

I nodded my approval and she smiled fleetingly.

"Dad told me about you," she said. "You must like the north, to come in here as you did."

I assured her that I did. We talked for a moment until she recognized Dick Hawkins, the veteran owner of the camp, and, excusing herself, went to greet him.

"I'm losin' her, Colton," Durey advised me when she left us. "But it's to a damn good man. Come spring again, the gal's goin' to marry Tom Bartlett, of the Mounties. He aims to be a sergeant by then an' I 'low he will be, too."

THREE times more before the first blizzard roared down out of the north, Hamilton Craig came to me. On the first occasion, he appeared to me in the gloom of the timber when I was pacing back and forth, fighting the wind, battling an overwhelming desire to head back into civilization and face the penalty.

"Hello, Campbell, old man!" He greeted me exactly as his living personality might have done in the lounge of the Jungle Club. He was unchanged, and still, apparently, contented with his lot in the nether world. I had, by now, accustomed myself to the weird knowledge that I was the ward of a ghost.

"You're forgetting our philosophy," he continued conversationally. "Resign yourself, man. The time isn't yet. It may never be. By the way, Campbell, when you came up here, you brought along your kit, didn't you?"

"Yes," I told him. "It's hidden away in my bag."

"Well, chuck it," he urged. "Get rid of it. A kit of surgeon's tools is a temptation to you. Temptation is a human thing, you know, and it's human to give way before it. You see, Campbell, nothing tempts us here. We're completely free. Temptation is a thing of the flesh, nine times out of ten. The spirit, or the soul, is too strong for it. Do you follow me?"

"Not exactly," I replied, hesitating. "I can understand that you'd have no temptation. You're not a part of the world. But——"

"Bosh," Craig interrupted sharply. "Intelligence is all the human race lacks, Campbell. If you think intelligently, you can't be tempted. For example, that tool kit of yours is near at hand. You like to look at those gleaming instruments and feel them; you'd like to use them. Well, suppose something happens suddenly and you're tempted to use them. You might do it. But if you're intelligent, you'll get rid of them. That eliminates the temptation. Do you gather my meaning now?"

"All right," I promised wearily.

"Good. Carry on then. I'll see you again."

He came to me again when early winter was closing down and all our world was gray, except for the shivering lights that reached into the heavens with twisting, brilliant tentacles from the edge of the northern horizon. This time it was but a brief call—as Craig himself described it, a little visit on behalf of philosophy. His mocking voice was just as it had always been, yet there was a great seriousness in the words he spoke.

"IN this realm of consciousness," he told me, after our first greeting, "as in your own, each individual has certain duties. With us, however, there is no penalty for neglecting them, other than our own sense of failure. You see, we function only on the basis of intelligence. Just now, Campbell, you are suffering—paying a penalty—for having shirked the duty of self-control when you shot me. If you weren't paying in that manner, you'd be marching a lock-

step at Sing Sing—and for a man of your type, that wouldn't be intelligent. That's why I don't want you to give up. Don't let anything take you back to your own work! Don't do anything that would let anyone suspect you are a surgeon! Is it understood?"

Again I agreed, though the future seemed more drab than the winter sky, less useful than the mangiest dog in camp, purposeless and futile. Craig touched my arm reassuringly and smiled, as his figure seemed to blend into the haze of the snow-laden winter air.

This was the situation in February, when the empire of Ungava lay dead beneath the snow, like a corpse covered by a white sheet. All trails had long since been obliterated and even the timber wolves had retreated south, howling dismally in their time of starvation and death. Most of the men of our camp had gone out with the coming of winter. I stayed on, snowed in like a husky that has strayed from the pack.

On a night when death seemed to hover at the door of the bunk house, when its icy breath penetrated the heat from blazing logs, I was startled by the sound of a human voice outside and the whining of dogs that followed it.

I sprang to the door. The glow from the oil lamps, flickering in the wind, revealed a man sprawled in the snow behind his sled. The dogs already were burrowing in. I lifted the body of their master and carried him into the cabin. When I pushed back his parka, I recognized old Jim Durey, half frozen, but still alive. He revived under hurried treatment and gasped out his story.

"My gal—Helen," he spoke through cracked and swollen lips, "she's down with sickness, Colton. Somebody's got to go on for a doctor. It ain't in me to go no farther. I'm old——" His plea broke off in a pitiful sob.

I questioned him briefly and recognized the symptoms. The girl was stricken with acute appendicitis. She had remained with him through the winter, Durey explained. It came to me instantly that her case was hopeless—there was no one within hundreds of miles who could perform the necessary operation.

"You stay here," I commanded. "I'll take fresh dogs and go back. Perhaps I can help her. There's no surgeon within two hundred miles, Durey."

The old prospector gazed about wildly.

"Ye can't go alone!" He shook his grizzled head. "Ye couldn't find no trail. I'll go back with ye."

It seemed to me an impossible feat for him to face that storm again—yet Durey was right. I would be unable to find the way. We left word with the Hawkins foreman, explaining our mission, and he promised to send aid at the first opportunity. Then, with a fresh team, Durey and I struck southward into the white wilderness. I forced him to lie on the sled beneath the robes, while I mushed beside the runners, following the trail he directed.

Hours later, we plunged up beside his shack and the old man shouldered the door with amazing strength. The girl lay on a cot in the main room. She was in a coma. Nothing less than an immediate operation could save her and even that was doubtful.

DUREY, so frantic in his grief that his own physical suffering and weariness affected him not at all—stood beside the cot.

"Bring hot water," I commanded sharply. "Get me a whetstone."

He moved swiftly without questioning. He was in the rear room of the cabin as I rolled back my sleeves, staring down in the meanwhile at the thin, white face on the cot. Ordinarily, the operation would have been nothing out of the routine of any average surgeon. A deft incision in the abdomen was all that was required. However, I was without the proper instruments, having followed Craig's instructions. Neither did I have an anesthetic and obviously I could not expect much assistance from old Durey.

"You're operating, Campbell?"

Hamilton Craig's steady voice startled me, and I turned to find him gazing with mild curiosity into my wind-burned eyes.

"I am, Craig."

He nodded. "You understand the chance you take, of course? Every officer in Canada is still on the search for Doctor Foster Campbell—and here's a lumberjack performing an operation! I suppose you remember my little talk on intelligence?"

I faced him squarely. I was in the grip of a thing stronger than fear, stronger even than the law of self-preservation.

"I haven't any choice in this, Craig. It's life and death—and Durey is my friend."

The negligible weight of his hand fell upon my shoulder, and Craig smiled.

"I thought you would, of course. Well, old man, I've done what I could. The best of luck to you!"

Durey came in with hot water and a whetstone. He watched me apprehensively as I sharpened the point of my penknife to a keen edge. He spoke no word, nor did I. Suddenly, the door crashed inward and a man plunged into the room. As his parka was flung back, I recognized the red coat of the Northwestern Mounted Police!

"Is she——" The stranger turned blazing eyes on me. "Oh, you've got a doctor, Jim! They told me at Hawkins' Camp——"

"Sit down. Be quiet," I ordered, and he subsided, never taking his eyes from me.

When I had sterilized the blade over the oil light, I bent down to my work. It was a familiar operation. The incision was quickly made, and clean. I had never seen man or woman bear up under pain as the girl, Helen Durey, did. The sweat rose swiftly on her white face. She moaned, but that was all.

Presently, turning from the completed task, I fell into a chair and gazed at Durey. His eyes burned into mine with a great question that I could not answer. Then, half turning to the officer, I saw that he, too, was studying me with a peculiar expression on his lean, Arctic-bitten face. Suddenly, he nodded as though to himself.

"Will she—will she live, Colton?" Durey asked.

I could only shake my head. "In an hour, perhaps two, we shall know," I told him. "I think there is a chance."

I rose and went into the rear room. I washed my hands in a basin on a rough wooden bench. As I leaned down, the cool voice, which I had come to know so well, spoke in my ear.

"You have taken the long chance, Campbell! I wondered if you would. It was a human thing to do—but it was magnificent. You know, of course, that the officer recognized you?"

"Damn the officer!" I said bitterly. "After all, Craig, you have your duty there and I have mine here. You've been fine—you always were. But a man has to shape his own course. If there's a penalty, I'll pay it."

Again his hand brushed my arm and I felt the slight pressure as he gripped me.

"But I'm not through yet, Campbell. If there's such a thing as influence between my world and yours—well, we'll see. In any event, old man, this time it's farewell."

He was gone before I could reply. When I returned to join Durey and the officer, it was young Tom Bartlett who rose. I leaned over the girl he loved, and studied her face. She was in a coma, but her fever was dying. Her breathing was becoming regular and there was peace in the expression on her face.

"She'll pull through," I said to Durey.

A heavy hand fell upon my shoulder and I spun around to face Bartlett. He was looking straight into my eyes.

"They told me at Hawkins' camp that you were a lumberjack," he said. "I didn't know you were a doctor until I saw you handle that knife." He studied me keenly. "It's odd, too!" he went on. "We're looking for a doctor—a Foster Campbell, of New York. He's wanted for murder. Maybe you know him?"

This, then, was the finale, I thought. Bartlett was toying with me before he clapped the manacles on my wrists!

"Yes," I replied, "I know him quite well."

"Too bad about him," said Bartlett, and his eyes went to the quiet figure on the cot. "He died in the blizzard last week. I'm reporting the facts to headquarters when I get in."

Involuntarily, I started. Bartlett reached for my hand. And in that instant I knew that Hamilton Craig had forced his influence through the dim reaches of the nether world! Somewhere out there, he would be smiling quietly over a duty intelligently performed.

The Old Man who

Wherein the astounding story of Don Ricardo is unfolded, and by unparalleled means an ancient curse is ended

THE man who recounts this amazing adventure is a Frenchman, at the time in question in charge of a sugar estate near Cartagena, South America. He had made the acquaintance of a Spanish family, and had fallen in love with the daughter, a beautiful girl named Magdalena. On his first visit to their home, he was presented to an incredibly old-looking man, Ricardo Espinosa, Magdalena's great-grandfather. This ancient asked his nationality, and on learning he was a Frenchman, he showed signs of the bitterest animosity and forbade D'Espagne ever to return to the house.

Magdalena, however, aided by her brother Ernesto, continued to meet the Frenchman. One day, the three young people, who had been out riding, stopped at the hut of an Indian woman, a fortune-teller. This crone predicted happiness for the lovers, after they should have overcome certain difficulties. But the most startling part of her message was a stern reproof to Ernesto for not having told the Frenchman the whole truth about his family. Ernesto promised to be frank and made an appointment with his friend for the following day.

That night, D'Espagne witnessed a phenomenon he had already encountered once before. On his way between Cartagena and the sugar estate, a ball of phosphorescent light—a Will-o'-the-Wisp—appeared on the road. He decided to follow it, and, to his consternation, it fled from him until it reached the home of the Espinosas. He saw it climb the wall and enter one of the windows of the house.

Now read what follows:

DAZED and dumfounded, I gathered my wits and turned the pony about, just as the sky began to fade into a lighter gray that presaged the dawn. Of how I reached the sugar estate or passed the following day, I have no recollection, nor does it matter. The evening came at last and I met Ernesto, by agreement, in the *Plaza* which was almost deserted, there being neither moonlight nor *retreta*. In a secluded corner we were more isolated and immune from interruption or eavesdropping, than in any other place we might have chosen.

Ernesto's preliminary remarks were to the effect that he had not acquainted me with the full story—the tradition—regarding his ancient relative, Don Ricardo, because, until further developments should take place, he had not thought it wise or necessary to do so. Now that the old Indian woman had forced his hand, so to speak—and after consulting with his family—he was ready to confide in me all that they or he were themselves aware of. And so, to the story!

In the latter part of the Seventeenth Century, Cartagena had more than once been a prey to those vultures of the sea, picturesquely called buccaneers and pirates. It was in the days when the seas of the Span-

HATED Frenchmen

By

Paul d'Espagne

As told to

Pauline de Silva

ish Main swallowed many a pirate ship and those of their victims. We are told that once at least in that dread history of the sea, there adventured a buccaneer as romantic as he was brave and chivalrous. The rest of them at any rate were brutal, rapacious rascals of the type of L'Ollonais and Levasseur, and it may indeed have been one of these very buccaneers who, on a certain occasion, selected Cartagena for assault and pillage.

Cartagena, its hills screening it to east and north, faces an inner harbor on the south. Beyond is a lagoon about three miles across, which narrows into a neck called Boca Chica. This was defended by a fort, and a second fort protected the deep and narrow channel opening into the inner harbor. East and north is the mainland, but the city lies open to the sea on the northwest and west, except for a half mile of beach and the huge city wall.

In those days of which I write, the Spaniards did not fortify Cartagena on her west coast because of the shoal water that lay for three quarters of a mile beyond the beach, which prevented any ship from coming within bombarding distance of the city. Also the heavy surf, even in calm weather, made landing in small boats practically impossible. Thus the elements guarded the city.

Such was the situation, well known to the buccaneers of the three nations then plundering the seas—Spanish, French and English. A superior force might reduce both forts and oblige the city to surrender, but not without grave risk to their ships.

There lived in Cartagena at that time a wealthy Spanish merchant, and his name was Ricardo Espinosa. When, in common with other citizens of the city, he saw the sails of a French pirate fleet which rode at anchor within sight of Cartagena, the first concern of his shrewd mind was the possible saving of his own goods and moneys from being looted, and his own life and the lives of his family from butchery and rapine. He knew what to expect if the buccaneers were to enter the city. Thereupon, he made his plans.

BY cover of night, he and a trusty servant made their way in a small craft out of the inner harbor, down the lagoon and finally to the pirate ships outside the bay. The night was cloudy, but the sea was calmer than usual. As a messenger of peace, he was permitted to board the Captain's ship and his message was soon conveyed. Briefly, in consideration of a promise to leave his

personal property untouched, and himself and family unharmed, he offered to act as guide to the Captain and his men. He assured them of safe approach to the beach on the northwest at a point where a natural breakwater made the surf less dangerous, especially at the ebb of the tide at this time of year. Once safe and unobserved on the beach, the scaling of the wall would be a lesser feat, and the approach to the city through wooded land would be swift and easy under proper guidance. As to the capitulation of Cartagena—taken completely by surprise—it would be the simplest matter of all.

The Captain of the pirate fleet agreed to the offer and terms of Ricardo Espinosa, and all the rest came about as described. But the end of the affair, for the citizen who had betrayed his city, was not precisely as he had expected. The French buccaneers sacked and pillaged and the plunder was enormous, but Espinosa's own treasure-trove formed part of the plunder. For the French Captain double-crossed him in the end (in the minor matter of loot) and then boasted of it, so that the news spread far and wide that Ricardo Espinosa was a traitor.

BEFORE he paid the supreme penalty at the hands of infuriated Cartagenians, a strange thing happened. This was after the departure of the buccaneers. A half-breed Indian priest came down from the hills and, hearing what Espinosa had done, he laid a curse upon him in the name of the Spanish blood that ran in his own veins. He knew Ricardo of old and perhaps harbored an ancient grudge. The aged Indian had summed up his malediction in this wise:

"You who so love life that you would sacrifice the lives of thousands to preserve your own, I put upon you this curse—that you may live forever!"

The tradition that had been handed down, generation after generation, gave no data as to whether or not Espinosa believed in the efficacy of such a curse. Subsequent happenings were beyond the mind of man to understand or explain. Ricardo Espinosa was hanged as a traitor, and, out of respect to his widow, he was buried in consecrated ground.

The following day he was in his home—alive and unharmed! His wife had not witnessed the hanging, nor had any but a handful of citizens. Incensed at what was regarded as carelessness or even treachery, a larger body of citizens again hanged Espinosa and saw to his burial. The next day he was back in his home! The affair was repeated a third time, but when once more he appeared alive and well, there was not a human being in Cartagena who would have touched him at the bidding of God or man.

"That is all we know," Ernesto concluded; "all that anyone knows, I believe—even the oldest inhabitant—and whether it be truth or merely fable, God alone can tell."

I had listened with my mind as well as my ears. Now I, too, had something to tell, something that I had wanted Ernesto to know, although just why it so intrigued my imagination I could not have explained. But of a sudden I decided to delay the telling. Instead, I asked him a question:

"How much credence do you personally, Ernesto, put in this story—this fable or tradition, call it what you will?"

His dark eyes were troubled as he said slowly:

"How can I tell! Sometimes I believe, sometimes I scout belief. But there are facts that none of us can ignore. Don Ricardo, the old man called by my generation our great-grandfather, is certainly much older than any of us can reckon, and, in the memory of those of our family who died in old age, he has not changed at all from one generation to the next. And now that you know all—at least, as much as we know ourselves, Pablo—there need be no more restraint between us."

When Ernesto and I parted that night, our friendship was cemented for all time, and I knew that I could count on him to the death.

The next day I paid a visit to the old Indian woman who had hesitated to read my palm. I did not ask her to read it this time. I was making my own personal history, and I felt that no warning or prophecy of hers regarding the future could change the march of events. But there was something else I wanted of her. I told her of my chase after the Will-o'-the-Wisp, and what I had seen. I asked her if she had knowledge of this thing that would be of use to me. Then she said something that seemed to stop the flow of blood in my veins:

"That was, Senor, the ghost—the spirit—of Ricardo Espinosa. We, my people, we have known this always. In the very beginning, this was the manner of his passing between life and death, between the grave and the home. None of his race have ever understood or known the truth. Each midnight since that curse was laid upon him,

more than two hundred years ago, he has returned to the grave, and before each dawn he has gone back to his home, always in the form you beheld last night."

WHEN I could find speech, I asked the old woman if Don Ricardo was bound up in my own destiny.

"Yes, Señor," she said quickly, "and it will be to your undoing unless you should prove stronger than he."

Puzzled and amazed, I asked her what she meant, and she told me. Espinosa, in the human form I had seen on one occasion, was forever beyond my power or any human power to harm. But it might be that I could kill, destroy, the form in which he went to and from the grave. If I could do that, I might rid myself forever of a mortal enemy and ensure my safety and happiness and that of the girl I loved.

"It may be you have the power, it may be that you have not," was all the comfort the old crone could give me, and by that I mean that I was, momentarily, reduced to a state of mind where anything seemed credible, and the Indian woman's words had made a deep impression upon me, heretic and scoffer that I had always been.

I called at the Espinosa home after midnight. Although nothing was said about it, I could see by Magdalena's eyes that they had told her the story as her brother had told it to me. It was truly strange that I should have heard something unknown to the family, but I did not doubt Ernesto's assurance that he had recounted all that he knew. You see, I believed what the Indian woman had said, hours after she had said it and after I had had time for cool reflection,

The dazed and unhappy expression in Magdalena's eyes that night, as well as my own longing to put an end to this farce of waiting, quickened the resolution that had slowly been gathering strength since my visit that afternoon to the old Indian woman's hut.

For what I planned to attempt, I preferred midnight to dawn, and as it was midnight before I called at the Espinosa home, I had to defer my plan until the following night.

It was, therefore, shortly after midnight twenty-four hours later, that my sorrel stallion and I waited in the shadows at that bend of the road where twice I had seen the Will-o'-the-Wisp cross the highway. This time it would be going in the direction of the cemetery, if there were an atom of truth in what the Indian woman had told me.

I had not long to wait. From where I sat on my pony's back, and because I was expecting and watching for it, I saw the thing coming across the fields a long way off—the same fields across which I had chased it three nights before. I felt my body tingle from head to feet as my blood began to course swiftly through my veins. What I felt was not exactly fear, but I confess that an element of dread and even horror entered my being at that moment; perhaps it was merely a natural dread of the unknown which I was so soon to face, but the horror could not be explained away so easily. There is a coward streak in all of us, and it may be that fear was what actually I felt as I waited tense and motionless, trying to curb the pony's nervous impatience. For he pawed the ground and flung his head up and down, angry at this—to him—unreasonable delay by the wayside. I did not dismount, fearing that he would break away if I tethered him.

Now the phantom had reached the center of the adjacent field, the one near the bend of the road; now it bobbed and careened its rapid way toward the hedgerow. My heart missed a beat; I lifted my right hand that held my automatic, finger on trigger; my eyes, burning in their sockets, followed the thing as it flashed through the hedge and out into the highway.

I FIRED, and the pony sprang forward, but my left hand on the bridle controlled him. My right hand and my sight were sure and steady, for all my inward tumult, and I had always been an excellent shot. That piece of lead went through the phosphorescent ball; as I have lived to tell it, I say that I *saw* my shot catch its target, as often I had caught many a wild bird on the wing. But it was as if I had fired at the air, for the uncanny thing bobbed its irregular passage across the road, apparently untouched.

Again I fired, just as it reached the hedge on the opposite side, and again I knew with a sixth sense more acute than sight or hearing, that my shot had found its mark and passed clear through it. A second later, the Will-o'-the-Wisp was out of my sight—on its journey to the cemetery. This I state as my own conviction which future events confirmed.

Suddenly I felt as weak as an infant or a decrepit creature, my nerves completely unstrung. My teeth were chattering, and a

chill swept over me that the cool air of midnight could not account for. It was without thought, and without sensation, except for the shivering of my body, that I continued on to the sugar estate. My pony carried and led me, for I had no sense of time or space.

I WAS able next day, because of my youth and health, to swing back to normal, if normality were possible to a man in my state of mind, following upon such experiences. I tried to face the situation I found myself in, with intelligence and self-control, and finally I decided that I would drop this ghastly business of attempting to kill something that, so far as I knew, had no sentient life of its own. I would try to forget what the Indian woman had told me, and as to Magdalena and our mutual love, I would match my wit and will with human forces which I could comprehend. As to those other forces outside my ken—I would deny their very existence. But, first of all, my nerves needed a rest.

For a week I did not leave the sugar estate, and when one day Ernesto rode out to see me, wondering why I had not been to town, I made excuses of work, fatigue, and other equally unconvincing statements. He knew that something had happened, but he asked no questions. What he told me, however, stiffened my resolution to fight the human element in the situation.

It appeared that Don Ricardo, some days before, had spoken strangely to Magdalena. He had looked at her so sternly that she had trembled under his gaze, and he had said, to this effect:

"That Frenchman whom I met one night in this my home—you have disobeyed me. You have paid no heed to my wishes. You have seen him, talked with him—often. This I *know!* If aught come of this affair, my child, it will fare ill with you—and with him!" Saying which, he had turned away and not spoken to Magdalena since. It was the first time the old man had mentioned my name to any of them.

She, poor girl, Ernesto told me, had been much upset. She was racked with the fear that some harm had come to me, and that was why her brother had ridden out to see me.

"Do you mean," I asked him, "that Don Ricardo found out about my visits to the house?"

"We have no idea," Ernesto said, and his eyes expressed the uncertainty of his mind. "There is no possible way that he could have discovered your visits to the house, and yet —well, how else——"

The upshot of this was, that the family had decided that I had better not call at the house for the present, but Ernesto assured me that Magdalena would continue to meet me with him, as usual. That evening we met at the *retreta,* and talked frankly as never before.

Then there followed, during the subsequent week or two, a series of events as unpleasant as they were utterly confounding and inexplicable. The first one was a scene in a café one night, where I was sitting at a table with an acquaintance, drinking wine.

At a table across the small and smoky interior, there were sitting five men—half-breeds they looked like, and an ugly, noisy lot at that. I knew their kind and how quarrelsome and dangerous they can become on very little provocation. Except for these men and ourselves, the café was empty. One of them got up and sauntered past our table to the door. The man with me was an Englishman and had been in the country for years. He nodded a curt recognition to the native as he passed our table, then mumbled something to me which I scarcely heeded, for just then the half-breed swung around, strode back past our table and with a lurch of his body struck the table so violently that glasses and bottles tipped over and crashed to the floor.

The action was so obviously deliberate and not an accident, that on the second my companion and I were on our feet, with our hands on the butts of our guns. But, quick as we were, the natives were quicker, or rather they knew before we did just what was going to happen. They had us covered —all five of them—and their faces were menacing.

IT was a dirty deal—five men against two —but my friend and I would have had it out with them, undoubtedly to our own undoing, had not a gang of English sailors entered the café at that moment. No Colombian natives of the caliber of those five men would risk a free-for-all fight with a dozen or more sturdy British sailors, for their notion of a fight was a question of five guns to two.

At any rate, the sailors saved our lives that night, little as they knew it, for the menacing guns had been whisked out of sight at the entrance of the first two sailors.

There was no doubt that the quarrel had

been deliberately picked, but why? And had it been directed at me or at my companion? Because there was doubt on this point, I put the incident out of mind. It was new in my experience, although some of my adventures had been dangerous enough.

Two nights later I was riding my mule back from Cartagena about eleven o'clock. My sorrel stallion had gone unaccountably lame the night I had tried my experiment at the bend of the road. Deep in thought—for I had been riding that afternoon with Magdalena and her brother—I let the mule amble along at a slow gait. Suddenly, I distinctly heard the sound of something whizzing through the air. Where it had come from I had no idea, but it passed within an inch or two of my ear. I had heard no shot, so it must have been a knife, and as the highway was empty except for the mule and myself, whoever had thrown a knife at my head must have been hiding behind the hedgerow.

For a second I had an insane impulse to search the trees and shrubs on either side of the road, but my common sense told me how futile and stupid such an attempt would be. I would be making of myself an excellent target for an unseen foe, with little chance of fighting him in the open. So I spurred the mule and we galloped down the road.

This second incident gave me food for thought. There was no doubt that I had an enemy and that my life was menaced. I began to feel certain that the scene in the café had been staged with intent to kill me. I wondered what means my assailant would next select to murder me, and I went armed and alert day and night. Of none of this did I speak to Ernesto, far less to his sister.

Three nights later—or I should say early morning, for there had been a *baile* and I was riding back to the country between one and two—the previous incident repeated itself, except that this time it was a bullet and not a knife that barely missed my head. The shot rang out on the deadly stillness, but it did not serve as a warning, for in the space of time that it took for the sound to travel, the bullet had had time to reach me and I heard the whiz of it almost before I heard the report of the gun.

I SHOT blindly in the direction from which the sound had come, and an answering shot was my answer, shaving so close to my face that only God's mercy saved me. Knowing only too well the danger and uselessness of fighting an assailant who strikes from ambush, I put spurs to the mule and we disappeared down the road, but not at the speed that my pony was capable of making. I began to wonder about the stallion's sudden lameness.

Obviously, if this were to continue, my life would not be worth a *peseta*, but what to do about it was the question. As far as I knew I had made no enemies, or certainly not one who would wish to kill me. The possibility occurred to me that hired assassins might be at work. I took a few days' holiday and went to the hotel in Cartagena, with the idea of taking a look around and making a few inquiries. This riding back and forth alone at night or in the darkness that precedes dawn, over a deserted highway, was not my idea of adventure or excitement. It could have but one ending—should my secret enemy continue to dog my steps—and it was an ending I was far from ready to meet.

THERE were two other incidents which I will refer to briefly. I fell ill after dining in a café one night by myself, and when the doctor examined me he insisted that I had been poisoned, although he failed to make it clear by what. Then Ernesto and I went sailing one afternoon, in a yawl that I had frequently hired. Quite a distance outside the harbor, she sprang an unaccountable leak, shipped water rapidly and we had to swim for it, but fortunately were soon picked up by a fishing smack.

This last incident could so easily have been pure accident and chance, that I tried not to connect it in my mind with the more obvious attempts upon my life. Nevertheless, it haunted my thoughts. Two days later, Ernesto came to me in great distress of mind. He had heard—very vaguely and indirectly—that I had an enemy in Cartagena who was a menace to my life. Ernesto said that he had been urged to warn me. Immediately I told him of the two deliberate attempts to kill me, and that I was now certain that the incident in the café, when the half-breeds had picked a quarrel, had been the first of a series of such attempts. My sickness which the doctor had insisted was due to poisoning, and lastly the leaky sailing boat, were all of a piece with the knife throwing and the shooting.

Ernesto implored me to leave Cartagena, if only for a time. He begged it in the name of Magdalena whose life would be ruined if any harm were to come to me. I promised

to consider the matter, or else report what had happened to the *Alcalde* and see what the police could do about it. Ernesto merely laughed at that suggestion.

The following day I rode out in the direction of the hills on a pony loaned to me by my British friend. I went alone, but watchful and wary and very fast. For the second time, I went to take counsel with the Indian woman. I narrated all that had occurred, and I described in detail my attempt to shoot the Will-o'-the-Wisp. Her old eyes were caverns of thought and knowledge that I could not fathom, then she said:

"You are brave, *joven,* and you are worthy to live. Your life is in danger. Since the night when you attacked the thing that is the ghost of Ricardo Espinosa, your life has been menaced by men hired to murder you. I told you that it might be you could destroy that thing you call a Will-o'-the-Wisp, and it might be you could not. I was not sure, but now I know. And I know also of a weapon which will not fail in its mission."

SHE rose from her chair outside the door, and she went to the far end of the hut. I watched her open an old carved chest, and take from it a knife which she gave to me, upon her return. It was an odd-looking thing, unlike any weapon I had ever seen. The blade was broad and flat and about eight inches long. The handle was of carved wood, about five inches long, and the guard crossed the blade like the horizontal bar of a cross. In fact, the curious knife *was* a cross, in shape and proportions, and for a moment I held it and stared at it, forgetting the steel that formed its vertical bar.

Then I ran my fingers over the edge of the blade. It was dull, as was the point. I looked up at the old woman, with a question on my lips which she answered before it was spoken, in her own patois which I translate:

"No, Señor, it is not sharp, that ancient knife, but it has no need to be. Listen and I will tell you something. Don Ernesto told you of the strange curse put upon Ricardo Espinosa over two hundred years ago. But something else he did not tell you, for he knows it not. There can be no curse which will compel a human being to live on forever. There is no curse which can render a human being immune to death. Always there is the power to destroy the efficacy of a curse. It is, Señor, the power of Good over Evil! Such an instrument is that knife you hold in your hand, for it is made in the form of a cross. Its blade needs not to be sharp, for it is necessary only for you to hold up that weapon over the thing of evil. Go you now and do this thing, for your life is in serious danger and you have little time to lose!"

Call me a credulous fool, or any other epithet fitting to one so susceptible to the vice of superstition as I was on that long-past day. I took the strangely fashioned weapon, thanked the old Indian and gave her a gold piece, and galloped back to the city.

Once more, just after midnight, I sat my horse in the shadows by the bend in the road. Once more, I saw that vibrant ball of light coming toward me across the fields, and I watched it come ever nearer until it flashed into the hedgerow and appeared on the road just around the bend. But I was closer this time, and as the thing careened upon the highway it was only a foot or two from where I waited—on foot, for I had sprung from my horse's back.

If only a picture of swift action could be portrayed by words! But it never can be. I lifted my arm and held the knife that was like a cross over the Will-o'-the-Wisp. Only a second was needed for it all to happen as I describe it. I held the knife high, and my fascinated gaze noted the ball that I had called a gaseous emanation from dead animal or vegetable matter stop in its track with the suddenness of lightning. Then I saw something that my mind's eye will see as long as I live.

ON the dusty road, almost at my feet, there appeared the outline or rather the formation of a skeleton about six feet long. I saw the skull, the arms and body, the legs and feet—complete and plainly visible in the bright starlight. The thing I have called the Will-o'-the-Wisp had vanished.

More deeply moved than I had ever been in my life, I bent down close to this stark and terrible object that stretched its length in the road, a trifle darker and grayer than the dust of the highway. I could see it now more clearly. I reached out my hand and touched it—where a rib curved over the spot that once had held a human heart. I touched it and felt—dust, nothing but dust!

In that second of startled wonder, there came a night breeze that stirred the hair on my damp forehead. And before my astounded gaze, the wind lifted that skeleton outline that was only dust, from the road where it lay and high into the air.

As I stood looking down at the spot where only a second or two before I had seen that strange gray outline, I wondered if I were going mad and had imagined the entire experience. Then a small object caught my eye. I bent nearer and picked it up. It was a bone and here and there in the dust I discovered others—fine and fragile, but unquestionably bones. I carefully gathered up all of them that I could find.

Then at last I threw back my head and took a long breath of the sweet night air. No, I was not mad, nor had I imagined what I saw!

I mounted my horse, which had been grazing by the side of the road, and found the way to the old cemetery. I unlatched the wrought-iron gateway, and leaving my horse outside I walked across the burial ground until I came to a grave. There I laid the few bones that were so nearly dust. Then I went my way.

For two days I saw and heard nothing from Ernesto or Magdalena. I remained at the sugar estate, longing, yet dreading to have news of them. The third afternoon Ernesto rode out to find me. He had a startling piece of news to impart.

Three mornings before, Don Ricardo had not appeared downstairs in the early morning as had always been his custom. The family, concerned, yet fearing his wrath at being disturbed, waited until noontime. Then they knocked on his door. Receiving no answer, eventually the door was forced open. The room was empty!

"He has disappeared," Ernesto cried excitedly, "and nothing has been seen or heard of him. We have searched everywhere. Where do you suppose he can have gone?"

"Have you," I asked quickly, "reported his disappearance to the authorities or to any friends?"

They had not, Ernesto said, adding that they could not longer delay doing so.

"Do not!" I cried out eagerly. "Wait until you hear what I have to tell you."

Then, because I had made up my mind to confide in him sooner or later, I told my friend all that there was to tell. Perhaps because he had been born and reared in the shadow of that terrible tradition, it was easy for him to accept as truth what I narrated. We decided that his sister need never learn what I had lived through, but his parents must be told and plans formed.

To the proper authorities they gave out that Don Ricardo, who had been growing more feeble and mentally unbalanced, had suddenly lost his reason and had gone down to the beach alone at midnight. Ernesto had heard him go and had followed, but he had been too late to rescue the old man from the angry sea into which he had flung himself. Some such convincing explanation of Don Ricardo's disappearance was necessary, or the family could not have laid claim to his property and money for years.

As to Magdalena, all that she ever heard was, that the old man had been drowned in the sea, and that her brother had concealed the fact when the room had been broken into.

For myself, nothing mattered after what I had experienced, except to devote my life to making happy the girl I loved and married. I had had my fill of adventure. But the scars of memory remained!

Now There Is a Motorcycle Ghost

A GHOST which rides a motorcycle is the latest thrill for the people living between Pontypool and Usk, England. A young motorcyclist reported recently that while he was riding along the main highway at night, his machine suddenly was lit up by a glare, and the roar of a motor engine sounded behind him.

Looking over his shoulder, he saw another cyclist speeding toward him. The youth rounded a bend, then suddenly heard a crash. Stopping his machine, he hurried back on foot, but found the road empty, with no trace of motorcycle or rider. Later, others reported that they had seen and heard the same ghost.

The SPECTER of Black Hills

By GERALD HUGHES

As told to LEE LESTER LEIGH

ON the day I returned to New York, after three months in Europe on legal business, I received an unexpected call from Harvey Mason, private secretary to Kenneth Hubbard, my most intimate friend.

He brought a letter from Kenneth, who was at Black Hills visiting his fiancée.

As I took the letter, I said laughingly, "Is this an invitation to Kenneth's wedding?"

"I don't think so, sir," Mason answered in a strange voice. "His sweetheart's father is dead."

I was shocked into silence by his words. Jasper Grey dead! He had seemed such a strong old man.

"Was it an accident?" I asked at last.

Mason shrugged. "They say it was. He was found dead at the base of a cliff near the river. That's the reason Mr. Hubbard went up."

His reply gave me a decided jolt. A sort of sixth sense seemed to warn me there was something sinister connected with Grey's death.

"Tell me all you know about it, Mason, I said in a low tone.

"I can't tell a great deal, sir. A few weeks ago, when Mr. Hubbard returned from a short stay at Black Hills, he confided to me that Mr. Grey had become very nervous, though he was not really ill, and, contrary to his usual custom, took long walks in the wild country about his place. Two weeks ago he left home early in the morning, accompanied by a dog and carrying a cane.

"Some time later, the animal, which had been wounded by a pistol bullet,

When Joan Grey's fortune was at the mercy of her father's murderers, aid of an amazing kind came from the Beyond

returned to Black Hills.

"Search was at once made for Mr. Grey, and he was found dead at the foot of the cliff. He had fallen upon his head and crushed his skull. This was put down as an accident, as the body showed no other wounds. But his cane was not found and nothing could be learned as to who had shot the dog. Miss Grey telegraphed for Mr. Hubbard and he went at once. A week ago he sent for me, told me he had read in a newspaper you were to return to New York on the *Victoria* and gave me the letter to deliver to you in person. Your boat docked two hours before the announced time, or I would have met you at the pier."

AN inexplicable nervousness had gripped me while he spoke, and I ripped open the envelope impatiently, anxious for a further clue to the riddle Mason had propounded. I read these scrawled words:

Dear Gerry:—In addition to what Mason will tell you, I can state this: I am more than half convinced Joan's father did not meet his death through an accident! Also, I fear my sweetheart is in grave personal danger. There are enemies at Black Hills of whom we cannot rid ourselves. Maybe you can help us in this matter. I know you will not fail me. Come at once. Each day makes your presence and advice more necessary. Wire answer, simply saying when you will reach Rock Creek Station. We will meet you. Destroy this.

KENNETH.

For several minutes I puzzled over the missive. Putting together what Mason had told me and the hint conveyed in my chum's letter, I could draw no other conclusion than that Grey had been murdered! The "enemies" mentioned were probably some of the dead man's relatives, all of whom were persons of mediocre talents and limited means. He had been at bitter odds with them in recent years—ever since his decision to cease replenishing their purses from his considerable store of wealth.

"Tell me, Mason—who were at Black Hills besides Miss Grey and Kenneth?" I asked suddenly.

"I don't know, sir, for certain. Mr. Hubbard and Miss Grey were most secretive. They met me at the railway station, gave me the letter, then drove back home almost immediately. I had to wait three hours for a train and picked up most of what I've told you, from the natives. According to their gossip, Mr. Grey's two half-brothers are stopping at the Hills. But I don't know whether that is correct, for they also told some very fantastic things."

"Such as?" I prompted, when he hesitated.

"I might as well tell you, sir—you'd hear about it, anyway. You know, I'm rather hard-headed, but my informants were so positive, I'm convinced there is something behind their stories. In short, they insisted that, ever since Mr. Grey's body was buried in the family vault at Black Hills, his ghost wanders about the property at night."

"A ghost? Jasper Grey's ghost! That's nonsense."

"MAYBE so, sir—I don't know. But several took oath they had seen it; they were certain of its identity because of the long, white whiskers and the queer, round cap Mr. Grey always wore. Anyway, no money would tempt any resident of Rock Creek to enter the grounds after dusk, and most of them are afraid to pass the place at night, even along the main highway."

Mason's earnestness satisfied me he too believed, and his information gave me a creepy feeling. However, I felt that my friend's personal affairs had been sufficiently discussed, and so I arose, saying, "Kenneth has asked me to come to Black Hills. On your way downtown please wire him that I shall reach Rock Creek around nine o'clock tonight."

When he had departed, I summoned my man and directed him to pack a small bag for me as I intended to hurry to the station immediately and catch the noon train north. Although uncertain concerning the nature of the adventure into which I was about to plunge, I had an intimation that I would be away for a considerable time, so I also directed that he forward my trunk next day with sufficient clothing to last a month.

My final act, just before snatching up my grip and hurrying out to locate a taxi, was

to load my automatic and place it in my inner coat pocket.

It was not until I was settled in my chair and the train was speeding toward my destination in the lower Adirondack Mountains, that I got a firm grip upon myself and began to take stock of the situation.

Although Kenneth and Joan Grey had been sweethearts for a considerable time and I had been a guest at Black Hills on several occasions, my knowledge of the Greys was a bit sketchy—probably because Jasper Grey had been a somewhat peculiar and secretive man and my chum had shown a disinclination to discuss the family's affairs and its skeletons at length.

This much I knew: Jasper's father had been only mildly successful as a New York attorney and the lad, after receiving a common-school education, had left home, finally landing in China, where he remained for many years. His mother's death was one of the causes which prompted him to leave America. A year after Jasper's departure, the elder Grey married a second time. The result of this union was two sons, Stephen and Joseph, who grew into shiftless youths and whose escapades not only brought them into conflict with the law but, it was said, hastened the death of their parents.

JASPER, grown moderately wealthy, returned to this country and operated an importing agency. For a time he was on friendly terms with his half-brothers, permitted them to live in his quarters and gave them employment. Finally, tiring of their persistent demands upon his funds and their dissipations, he determined to rid himself of them and establish a home of his own.

He was more than forty when he married Joan's mother, a wealthy woman ten years his junior, and they went to live in Westchester, near the city. Soon after the birth of the girl, her mother became an invalid and Jasper sold his business and purchased the great estate in the mountains, to which he removed with his family. Shortly after that, the half-brothers got into serious difficulties, and Jasper gave them money to leave the country. At the same time, however, he passed the word among all his relatives that thereafter none would receive more money from him. From Europe, Stephen and Joseph frequently sent requests for funds, but received nothing.

Joan's mother died when she was fifteen and from then until quite recently the girl had passed much of her time in New York, completing her education. She was on intimate terms with many wealthy families, including Kenneth's.

Joan was a thoroughly modern girl, beautiful, and utterly unlike her father, who was one of the most superstitious men I ever encountered. Among other things, he always wore a round, brimless cap, such as he had become accustomed to in the Orient—because he believed it brought him luck—and he so feared death and disliked any talk concerning it that he refused to make a will disposing of his vast properties, though Kenneth often had urged him to permit me to draw such a document. Still, it was possible he had employed someone else to make a will.

Thought of this neglect conjured up other disagreeable thoughts. If he had died without a will, it placed his daughter in a trying position, for his relatives, particularly his half-brothers, were certain to claim a share of his wealth. From the gossip Mason had heard, it appeared these two already had reached Black Hills. I had no foundation upon which to base a sinister conclusion, but somehow I couldn't help wondering if they had been responsible for Grey's death. From this speculation I passed to another. What steps could I take to protect Joan's interests if, upon reaching my destination, I learned no will had been located? This was a knotty problem, for Stephen, Joseph and others would have legal claims, though actually deserving nothing. I mulled over the puzzle for hours, but had failed to fix upon a satisfactory plan of action by the time I reached Albany and was compelled to change trains.

AFTER that I had something else to think about. We soon ran into a heavy downpour of rain, accompanied by thunder and lightning and a gale of such violence that it seemed as if the train might be blown from the rails. I began to fear that we might encounter a washout which would prevent me from reaching Rock Creek that night.

But, though the storm continued for hours, no untoward incident occurred and I reached my destination only a few minutes late. I was the only passenger to alight and I looked eagerly about the station for Kenneth. He was not there! Neither was there a waiting automobile. Inquiring of those in the place, I was amazed to learn that my friend had not been seen in the town that day.

I questioned the telegraph operator and learned that he had received my message and forwarded it to Black Hills early in the afternoon. Certainly there was no good reason why Kenneth should have failed to meet me! Again suspicion clutched me and I asked who had signed for the telegram. The receipt showed the signature of Stephen Grey!

Immediately I leaped to a conclusion which would explain matters. The elder half-brother of the dead man had read the message, then refrained deliberately from letting my chum know when I would arrive. Why? Probably to prevent us from holding a consultation before going to the house.

This thought made me all the more determined to reach the Grey home with no further delay. Turning up my coat collar against the still falling rain, I hastened across to the hotel, with whose proprietor I was on friendly terms. The loungers about the desk made way for me and, after an exchange of greetings, I informed the host of my desire and asked him to obtain a conveyance to take me to the Hills. I noted the exchange of significant glances between the natives.

After a moment's hesitation, the landlord beckoned me into his office, closed the door and repeated what Mason had told me—that the neighborhood of the estate was haunted by the phantom of Jasper Grey, the ghost having been seen by at least a dozen persons whose credibility was unquestioned.

I tried to laugh aside the idea, but he was not to be shaken in his belief.

"I'm a fairly brave man," the proprietor said finally, "but you couldn't offer sufficient money to induce me—or any of the others living hereabouts—to take you into Black Hills at night. You'd better remain here until morning. Then——"

"No. I'm going there tonight! I'll telephone Kenneth and have him come for me."

"You can't do that. The storm has torn down the wires and there's no communication north of here."

BY that time I was thoroughly angry because of the combination of circumstances piling up to thwart me. "Isn't there anyone around here with enough nerve to drive me to the edge of the estate? I'll go the remainder of the way on foot."

"I might be able to arrange that—but nobody will go further on such a night. Excuse me a few minutes."

He soon returned, smiling. "My son will drive you in my car to within a half mile of the Hills. But he won't go a yard further. I know. Mr. Hughes, you consider us foolishly superstitious, but you may have cause to change your mind."

DURING the long ride over the muddy and rutted road I learned a few additional and significant facts. Two days following the funeral of Jasper Grey, the half-brothers had appeared at the place—and were still there. In addition there were only Joan, Kenneth and an old servant, Isaac DeLeeuw, who had worked for Grey in China. The other servants had deserted in a body and headed for New York.

Right there I began wondering if the ghost was a hoax, perpetrated by the half-brothers to keep people away from the place, thereby giving them free rein to carry out some nefarious plot against Joan.

When my companion finally brought the car to a halt, saying he would go no further, I determined—because of the uncertainty which racked me—to risk a question, even though it might add to the town's gossip.

"Tell me," I said, as I placed some bills in his hand and picked up my bag, "has Grey's will been filed for probate?"

"Not at the county-seat—and we've been watching for that," the boy answered. "I guess it never will be. Old Jasper was too scary of death to ever make a will, I hear."

By the time the sound of the chugging machine had died away, I was plunging ahead, picking my way through muck which was ankle-deep in places. Reaching the edge of the estate, I turned into a lane which was a short cut to the house. But, because of the brush and trees through which the path ran, I was compelled to slacken my pace. I had stumbled along for perhaps fifteen minutes when I had an instinctive feeling that I was not alone—that another presence was near me!

My first thought was that some spy of the brothers might be dogging my footsteps. I paused, listened and looked about. But I neither saw nor heard anything. Then I recalled the phantom and went cold all over, while my pulses pounded so it seemed I could hear them. I just couldn't believe in anything supernatural—and yet I couldn't shake off the feeling that I was not alone.

A flash of lightning showed the path running straight ahead. I set my teeth, lowered my head and started forward at a dog-trot.

This proved a mistake. Within a few seconds I found myself entangled in a mass of scrub which all but threw me.

Straightening up, I waited for another flash, so that I might locate the path. It came. But, as I glanced about, I uttered a yell and tried to back away. For not a dozen feet before me I beheld the figure of a man! Yet, was it a man? The outline appeared too indistinct. Almost paralyzed with fear, I kept staring at the spot where I had seen the figure. The wait was brief. Out of the blackness it emerged, indefinite, yet moving.

It came toward me! It stretched out an arm. Closer, closer it came. Then another flash. This time I recognized the figure—the long, white beard; the queer, round cloth cap. I knew I was looking upon the phantom of Jasper Grey!

Unable to restrain an agonizing cry, I dropped my grip and plunged into the forest, intent only upon getting away from the terrifying apparition. A limb knocked off my hat. Branches slapped and stung my face. But I kept on—I don't know how long—until I reached a clearing. Then I paused, utterly spent, my breath coming in gasps which seemed as though they would tear my heart out.

IT was some time before I regained a measure of composure and was able to reason a bit. I did not try to deceive myself. I knew that neither my eyes nor my imagination had played me tricks. I had seen Something—and that Something was the shadowy counterpart of Jasper Grey! The tales at which I had scoffed were true. At the next lightning flash I looked about me. I did not recognize the locale. In my mad race from the phantom I had become lost. Next, I noted the rain had ceased. But my predicament still was serious. I was soaked to the skin, cold and utterly unable to decide which way to turn. Nothing remained but to begin walking and trust to luck to lead me to a familiar roadway.

I started forward. Soon, as before, I realized I was not alone. I paused, drew my weapon and waited. There came another flash, so vivid that, for a moment, everything seemed as light as noonday. And again I beheld the specter!

This time I did not flee. A sudden rush of reason made me realize the folly of doing so. Besides, the phantom made no movement indicating it intended to harm me. Then it came nearer and raised one arm. Calmer than at any time since my first fright, I noted the figure was beckoning. Could it be that it was trying to guide me from the maze into which I had plunged? The thought gave me courage. I determined to take the chance.

"Go on," I cried. "I'll follow."

Instantly the specter turned and grew dimmer. It was moving. With arms outstretched to ward off vagrant branches, I stumbled after it—for a mile, I guessed—then another. At last, my shadowy guide disappeared and I found myself standing in a gravel roadway. I realized I was in the main drive—that the house was to the left.

I MOVED with quickened steps, swung round a mass of foliage and saw many lights before me. I knew that I had reached my destination, that the house was just ahead. On the instant my fears returned. With a cry I began to run, reached the steps leading to the porch, clattered up them and staggered against the front doors, beating upon them with my fists.

Almost immediately they were thrown wide and I lurched inside, to find myself facing old Isaac, who had opened the doors, and Kenneth and Joan, who had come from a near-by room to learn the reason for the mad racket at that hour.

"In God's name, Gerry, what does this mean?" cried my friend, bounding toward me and helping me to a chair, while Joan wiped some of the mud and water from my face with her handkerchief.

"I—I lost my way—in the woods," I stammered, striving to recover both my breath and scattered wits.

Before I could say more, two men came running down the stairway, and pushed the others aside.

"Stephen and Joseph," I thought, giving them a quick, appraising glance. I noted the older man was a hulking brute, red-faced and heavy-jowled, while the other was a slinking wisp of a man with shifting, rat-like eyes which never looked full at one.

"Well, well, and who have we here?" bellowed the larger one, Stephen.

"This is Gerald Hughes——" began Kenneth.

"To be sure! We were expecting you," he interrupted, his smile belying the look in his eyes.

"You didn't know Gerry was coming?" said Kenneth.

The fellow paid no heed but kept watching me. "Something has happened. You

look so disheveled you must have run afoul of our ghost!" He laughed sardonically.

"Shame on you," rasped Kenneth, taking Joan, who had given a little sobbing cry, into his arms.

"I beg pardon—my tongue slipped." He turned back toward me. "Our neighbors have given the Hills such a bad reputation, I thought——"

"Never mind what you thought," snarled Kenneth, pushing him aside. "Why didn't you wire me, Gerry? I would have met you at the station."

"I did wire," I said, rising, a feeling of bitter anger putting new life into me. "The telegram reached here early in the afternoon and Stephen Grey signed for it."

"Why, bless me; that's true. What trouble my absent-mindedness keeps getting me into! I had forgotten all about the telegram." He drew a yellow envelope from his pocket, sealed. But I knew he had read it.

Kenneth snatched it and ripped it open. "It is your message, Gerry. Now, listen to me, Stephen Grey—this is the final straw. I have reached the limit of my patience with you and your brother, and your persistence in interfering in my affairs——"

"*Our* affairs, my dear Mr. Hubbard. You, not we, are the intruder. Until a will is found disposing of this property, we have a perfect right——"

"Never- mind," I interrupted. "We'll thresh that out later."

"Oh, I remember," Grey said derisively. "You are an attorney. Well, sir, you'll learn I know the law in such cases and nothing will keep us from obtaining our rights."

"I imagine nothing would stop you from doing almost anything, if what I have heard about you is true," I shot back.

For a moment he swallowed hard, his red face becoming positively crimson, while his great fists clenched. "What the devil do you mean by that, you——"

Joseph gripped his arm and gave him a meaning glance. "I was hasty—forgive me," said the great brute with a shrug. "Now, if you will excuse my brother and myself, we will retire."

As they moved toward the stairway, I saw a dog come limping along the hall. But, at sight of the brothers, it whined and scuttled away into the shadows. A trifling incident, maybe, but significant to me. The dog feared these men. Probably one of them had fired the shot which had crippled him!

When the two had disappeared above, Kenneth sent Isaac to prepare some food, then beckoned me to follow Joan and himself to the rear of the house.

"We will not talk now," he said, in a low voice. "We might be overheard, even though we appear to be alone. After dinner, Joan, you and Isaac go to your room and lock yourself in until I come. Gerry and I will go outside, where we will be beyond eavesdroppers. Now, let's go to the dining room where there is a log fire and Gerry can dry off a bit."

WITH clothing fairly dry, the meal completed and Joan and Isaac safely in her room, I pulled on a heavy overcoat and accompanied Kenneth outside. Instead of rain and lightning, the moon was trying to force itself through scudding clouds, and my friend led me to an open place where none possibly could get near enough to overhear us. Still, we talked in whispers. What Kenneth told me, in brief, was this:

He believed the reason Joan's father had changed suddenly from a man of good health and spirits to one whose nervousness was obvious to everyone, was because of the sudden return of the brothers who, perhaps from some hiding-place on the estate itself, had made demands for a large sum of money, threatening violence if refused. That these threats had been against Joan's person he was convinced, because her father had told her never to leave the house unless accompanied by himself or a trusted servant. Being a man of courage, Grey undoubtedly would have met Stephen and Joseph face to face and refused their demands.

According to Kenneth's theory, the old man had probably kept an appointment with his half-brothers on the cliff. Following a quarrel, they had attacked him, beating down such defense as he was able to make with his cane and then hurling him to the base of the rocks. Kenneth believed the dog was shot while attempting to defend his master, and the cane, possibly broken in the scrimmage, had been hidden so as to give no clue.

In reply to my query as to what had occurred since the funeral, he said, "We scarcely had time to recover from the shock before these two beasts appeared and demanded to know the contents of Jasper's will. As my suspicions had not been formed then, I foolishly told them no will had been found. At once they announced that, pending the location of such a document—and as legal heirs to a considerable share of the

property, if there should be no will—they would take up their residence in the house."

"Why didn't you have them thrown out?"

"I wanted to, but Joan would not permit. She dreads scandal almost as much as her father dreaded death—particularly as we are to be married this coming winter. But it was a mistake. These men have been doing as they pleased about the place, though pretending to assist me in my efforts to locate a will. I think they hope to find such a document and destroy it. They have driven Joan almost frantic and I have all but come to blows with them several times. And, Gerry, in some manner the pair have acquired a greater knowledge of the house than Joan possesses, for I have repeatedly come upon them in rooms which they could have entered only by secret doors or sliding panels. However, I have failed to locate any secret passages. The one room they are bent upon searching thoroughly is the big library where Joan's father spent much of his time and where there are thousands of books and other places where a will could be concealed."

"What have you done to prevent this?"

"I have driven them from the room several times in daylight, and I sleep there at night. Now that you have come, we will lock them out and go over every inch of the place—as hurriedly as possible. If they try to force their way in, I will take your advice, for you are to act as our legal adviser until this case is cleared up. If you say throw them out, we shall do so and let scandal go hang."

"WE'LL go a bit slow and see if they will betray their hands. But what did you mean by saying we must hurry?"

"Two things. Isaac has told me that Jasper Grey did keep some personal papers in a bronze box he brought from China and which was probably concealed somewhere about the library. Then, the other Grey heirs have pooled their claims and engaged an attorney. Joan received a letter from the lawyer today, stating he soon would arrive to consult her, preliminary to beginning court action. We burned his letter and the brothers do not know of it."

"One thing more, Kenneth, before we go inside. What do you know about—this phantom of Grey?"

"I have heard the story, of course. The servants left because of the tale. But I cannot believe that it is anything more than a wild tale started by some superstitious native. However, to satisfy my curiosity, I have been to the vault each day since I first heard the story and I know the coffin has not been disturbed. Besides, the only key to the vault is in my possession, so the doors could not have been opened. I thought the tale might have been invented by ghouls, who intended to steal the body and demand a reward for its return."

In spite of his skepticism, I told him I had encountered the specter that night. Time after time he interrupted the story I told—voiced doubts and advanced arguments. But, finally, he admitted he was more than half convinced.

We started back toward the house, when an idea came to me. "Listen, Kenneth—and do exactly as I say. I've a hunch I can bring about a show-down with your unwelcome guests. When we reach the house, you and I will go to your old room and talk sufficiently loud for this pair to hear us. I want them to believe you and I will pass the night there. Then, in the dark, I'll slip down to the library, lock the doors and sleep on a couch."

"Such a course would be dangerous—these men are thoroughly bad."

"I'll risk it. Besides, I'm armed."

"Very well. But I'll not undress. A shot or a cry will bring me to you."

Practically from that moment, startling events followed one another with a rapidity that was almost stunning.

The first of the chain of racking experiences came some time after I had gone to the library and thrown myself upon a couch—while it still was pitchdark. I fell asleep quickly, but my nerves were in such a condition that I was sensitive to the slightest disturbance. I awoke with a start to note the circular glare from a flashlight moving about the room, but immediately I closed my lids so that when it reached me I appeared to be deep in slumber. The light moved on and rested upon some shelves of books. I was able to see that one person held it, while another took down volumes, searched them, then placed them noiselessly upon the floor.

With deliberate movements which made no sound, I drew my revolver. But, before I could determine whether to shoot one of the intruders or simply to fire a shot to summon Kenneth and bring about their capture, I was held tense and motionless by noting the now familiar specter of Jasper Grey moving across the room, straight toward the two men!

I cannot recall whether I was frightened or not. For I had scarcely more than glimpsed it, when there came a cry of fear. The light was dropped with a clatter—there was the sound of mumbled words and hurried steps—then all was still. I glanced about. The phantom had vanished.

ALMOST immediately I heard Kenneth's voice. I admitted him, then lighted a lamp and told him what had occurred. Upon the floor lay the flashlight and the books handled by the brothers—I was certain of their identity—but there was nothing to indicate their means of exit. Kenneth returned upstairs and reassured Joan, then came back to the library.

"What do you make of things?" he questioned, after we had drawn chairs together and he had announced he would remain with me until morning.

"I think my coming has frightened the brothers badly. They believe a will is hidden in this room, and they know we will make a thorough search for it. Believing the library was deserted tonight, they tried to forestall us."

"But the phantom?"

"I can't determine whether it came here to protect me or whether it tried to frighten the pair from the house—but probably the former. Had I attempted to interfere, there is no telling to what lengths the scoundrels would have gone. But say nothing to them about the incident. It will make them more uneasy if they are uncertain how much we know."

After that we dozed in our chairs, but were awakened shortly after daylight by the barking of the dog somewhere in the house. Motioning to Kenneth to look into the hallway, I peeped from a window—just in time to see the brothers slipping along the pathway which led to the cliff overlooking the river. Telling my friend that I intended to follow them, I ran from the house, kept behind the shrubbery until I reached the path, then hurried ahead, walking on the turf so as to make no sound. I was close to the river, however, before I saw the brothers. Obviously they believed no one knew of their movements, for they did not look behind. Finally they reached a clearing. Stephen stooped and drew something from a hollow log, then carried it to a great heap of brush and leaves, under which he buried it. Immediately they turned back, passed close to me and made toward the house.

When their voices had died away, I ran to the brush and soon uncovered Jasper Grey's cane. A piece of wood had been splintered from it by a bullet!

I knew I held the answer to the murder mystery. Grey had attempted to defend himself. One of the brothers had fired, the bullet striking the cane instead of him, causing him to drop it. Then they had hurled him over the cliff and, in their fright, had concealed the cane in the first place which presented itself. My guess was that the experience of the previous night had so frightened them that, fearing this evidence of their crime might be discovered, they had gone to the cliff to put it in a more secure hiding-place. I hid it some distance back in the wood, where I would be able to recover it later. Certain now of the brothers' guilt, I determined to bring them to punishment just as soon as I could obtain such additional evidence as would hold in a court of law.

BY running most of the way I reached the house before the brothers. When I told Kenneth of my find, he was beside himself with anger and wanted to call the police at once. But I vetoed this, explaining that we did not have enough evidence to convince a jury, and adding that if the pair did not know they were suspected of the killing, they were more than likely to betray themselves by some overt act.

When the brothers appeared at breakfast, their appearance indicated their encounter with the specter had shaken their nerves considerably. However, they asked no questions and we volunteered no information, though they must have been convinced we knew they had been in the library. I hoped their experience would make them less troublesome, at least for a time.

Along in the morning, after they had retired to their room, Kenneth and I, accompanied by Isaac, went to the library and began a search for the box. We had been busy for a considerable time when, suddenly, Isaac gave a cry! Hurrying to him, we found that, from beneath a pile of old magazines and newspapers, he had pulled a bronze casket, covered with Chinese characters.

He held it toward us, saying, "Master kept his papers in this."

In a fever of anxiety and with no thought of searching for the key, we forced the lid and emptied the contents of the box upon the desk.

But, before we could examine the papers, a panel in the wainscoting near the fireplace was pushed back, and Stephen and Joseph, their features twitching with nervousness, crawled into the room!

"Damn you—what do you want here?" cried Kenneth.

"Our rights! And we're going to have them, in spite of anything on earth or elsewhere!" bellowed Stephen. "Understand me, in spite of—anything."

I had to admire the brute's nerve. He was openly defying the phantom of the man they had killed. But, to convince him that we intended to control the situation, I shifted my automatic from my inside to an outer pocket. He saw the weapon, but said nothing.

"Now, you two listen!" I said. "We are going to examine these papers and you may look on. But if you touch one of them, I'll shoot you before you can do anything else."

As it turned out, my threat might as well not have been made. The documents proved to be merely deeds to several parcels of property. There was no will. Kenneth and I were bitterly disappointed. But Stephen's reaction was amazing. With a string of oaths he turned upon Isaac, declared he must know of other hiding-places where Jasper had secreted things, and demanded that he uncover them.

The old man protested he did not, and that he had found the casket quite by accident, stammering and weeping through his denial. But he failed to convince the brute, and Stephen seemed half inclined to throttle the old man.

I stepped between them, and the hulking fellow fell back with, "You win this time, Hughes, but you must realize you can't trick us. We will be watching you at all times. Come on, Joseph."

They sidled through the opening in the wall and the panel closed with a snap. Right there I made a serious mistake. I should have gone to their room and compelled them to leave the house.

KENNETH and I spent the remainder of the day searching the library, but found nothing which interested us. We put off the matter of locating the hidden passages until a later date. Whether we were watched or not was of little moment. If we located the will, we felt abundantly able to protect it until it could be carried to town and filed.

After dinner, at which Joan sat down with us, the brothers retired immediately to their quarters. We three passed a rather gloomy evening. When we retired Joan locked herself in her room, and Isaac, as usual, slept in the one next to it, while Kenneth and I went to the library.

Thoroughly exhausted, we slept until long after sun-up. We would not have awakened then but for a piercing shriek which echoed through the house and which we knew Joan had uttered. Racing upstairs, we found her crouched over old Isaac, who lay in the doorway of his room. A moment's examination proved he was dead. While we stood over the body, stunned and bewildered, the brothers appeared, partly dressed. It was they who suggested we look for wounds. There was no mark upon the man.

By telephone we summoned a doctor and the constable. They arrived with fair promptness, and the former, after an examination, informed Kenneth and me that Isaac apparently had died of fright.

"No need to discuss that angle in detail, gentlemen," he concluded, "but you probably can guess what he saw—what others have seen. Only, his old heart couldn't stand the shock."

This deduction, however, did not satisfy me. My guess was that, in the night, the brothers had seized Isaac, stifled his cries and dragged him to their room, where they had attempted to force him to tell of other places where his master had secreted things. He probably had died of fright while they held him, and they had dragged him to his room and left him in such a position as would indicate he had fallen after leaving his bed. Kenneth agreed with me, but without proof we were helpless. Nevertheless, we were utterly weary of Black Hills, its tragedies and its phantom, and we determined to conclude our search as speedily as possible, then leave it forever. If we found a will—well and good. If not, we would fight Joan's case in the courts.

Then followed three days of mingled grief for the old man and of persistent searching by Kenneth and me. We found nothing and no untoward incident occurred. We purposely held the funeral and burial services late in the afternoon, hoping this would keep the natives from the place. But their curiosity was not to be denied. Many of them were on hand.

The brothers did not attend the services. But they followed the little cortège to the tiny graveyard and watched from a near-by knoll until the dirt began to cover the low-

ered casket. Kenneth and Joan entered a car and drove to the town for some needed supplies and I turned about and headed for home.

Instead of trailing me, the brothers moved away through an ancient mud road, which was a shorter cut to the house. Although I was familiar with it, I would not have taken it in the gathering dusk, for a portion of it led through treacherous marshes. Some of the natives, who appreciated the danger, called warnings to the pair, but they paid no heed, evidently being intent upon carrying out some plan which necessitated their reaching the house ahead of me.

I was the last to leave the spot, and looking back toward the brush into which the brothers had disappeared, I thought I noted a shadow which suggested in outline the ghost of Jasper Grey. I brushed the thought aside as a figment of my imagination, and directed my steps toward the house.

Reaching the place, I found the front doors standing wide, and inside I encountered a silence which was appalling. The moments passed slowly. Finally, as the night began to close down, I called the names of the brothers. Even they would be a relief from the fearful loneliness. But only echoes answered.

Then I went to their room. It was empty. And I could locate them nowhere else. I went to the library, lighted a lamp upon Grey's desk and dropped into a chair, wondering. Maybe I really had seen the phantom of Jasper at the graveyard. Possibly it had followed the brothers into the path which led through the marshes and quicksands——

I woke from my revery with a start. I could hear no sound, but sensed I was not alone. Then, out of the shadows, emerged the specter of Grey, giving me a start but causing no feeling of fear. I started to rise, but the figure made a gesture indicating I was to remain where I was. Wide-eyed and tingling, I watched what probably was one of the weirdest dramas which ever took place.

THE phantom seated itself at the desk, drew a sheet of paper before it, and began to write. I thought I could hear the scratching of the pen. After several minutes, its work was completed and the wraith read the document carefully, then brought its hands together. There was no sound. But, just as though there had been, a second phantom—*the ghost of old Isaac!*—entered the room and approached the specter of his master. While I was striving to recover from my amazement, the dead servant took the pen and wrote something below the message prepared by the phantom of Jasper Grey.

Then, as mysteriously as they had come, the phantoms of these two old friends slowly faded from my sight.

When I could pull myself together, I staggered to the desk and looked at the sheet. At the top were the words, "Last Will and Testament of Jasper Grey," dated a year previous. With burning eyes I read the lines which followed, a declaration that all Grey's property was bequeathed to "my daughter, Joan Grey." The bold signature of her father appeared at the bottom and, below it, the scrawl of Isaac DeLeeuw, as witness.

When Kenneth and his sweetheart returned shortly after, I gave them the document, explaining I had found it while searching through some books we apparently had overlooked. I did not tell them the truth—because my tale would have sounded too fantastic for belief. We left Black Hills next day.

The will was admitted to probate and its provisions were fulfilled. Kenneth and Joan are married now and living in the big city. Black Hills is deserted and probably will remain so until time has dulled the memory of its somber tragedies—and its ghosts.

AS for the brothers, I am satisfied—as the residents of Rock Creek long have been—that they perished in the quicksands of the marshes. Otherwise, we should have seen them again, at least as beggars for a dole if not as contestants for a portion of their victim's wealth. But I know what the natives do not—that the phantom of the murdered man followed them from Isaac's grave, no doubt bent upon vengeance, and forced them to their awful death!

There is one point, however, upon which I never have been able to reach a satisfactory conclusion. What would the phantom of Jasper Grey have done to protect his daughter's interests from his numerous relatives if he hadn't been able to summon from its grave a kindred spirit—one whose signature could not be denied—to witness the will that had been drawn weeks after the man was killed?

The Green Monkey

THERE is a reason for me to write this story. I want my green monkey.

Have you seen a green monkey? Has anyone offered to sell you one? If you have bought it (perhaps for the children to play with) for heaven's sake take it away from them! Don't let them tear it up! I must tell you about it: how it came to be mine and—the rest.

The first time I saw the green monkey was many years ago, inside the crystal of Zanzara, the fortune-teller. At the time I was but a slip of a girl, barely able to reach up on tiptoes to peer into the crystal. Zanzara herself seemed young then. I liked her; I ran inside her shack every chance I had. She held a fascination for all of us children down in River Hallow. She named me Silvia, and said that I reminded her of the forest with its crickets, birds and brooks, because I laughed and ran and capered so. She often touseled my hair, and when I was good, very good, she would let me stare down into her crystal. And one day I saw the green monkey there.

I remember asking, "What is that funny animal, Zanzara?"

And she answered, muttering the words in her throat, "That's me——"

I laughed and pointed my finger at her. "Oh, Zanzara, you—a green monkey!" And when I looked again into the whirling shadows of the crystal, the monkey was gone. Zanzara was meditatively patting my hair.

Years passed. I married and moved away to a town where my husband was cashier in a bank. I only wrote to Zanzara now and then.

One summer I went back to River Hallow, and the first person I went to see was Zanzara. My, but she had grown old! You see, I was twenty-eight at the time but she seemed about seventy, I guess. I found her crouched before a fire, although it was summer. She looked at me for a moment tensely out of dimmed eyes, then she rose and flung her arms high.

"Silvia!" she cried and held me close.

I COULD feel her sharp bones against me.

Everything about the shack was just as it had been years before. There was the crystal, the old, enormous diagram of a human palm, the pictures of skulls nailed to the walls. I sat by the fire and talked to her a long time, feeling like a little girl again. That evening, before I left, she told me she was going to make me a present before I returned to my new home. And she did.

Two weeks later, when I went to say good-by to Zanzara, I found her in the doorway of her shack, as if she had been waiting for me right along. She did not say very much, but when I started to leave, she rummaged in the folds of her shawl and pulled out a loose-jointed, crudely knitted monkey. A green monkey!

She had knitted the thing herself out of wool yarn for me. She had stuffed it with cotton, sewed into the head of it two yellow crystal beads for eyes, and put in a few red stitches for nose and mouth—and that was

It was the fortune-teller's last gift to her friend—a present far more valuable than any earthly keepsake

By SILVIA UNDERWOOD
As told to ROSA ZAGNONI MARINONI

the monkey, a reminder of old, happy days.

I all but cried. She had made that thing for me with her own hands—poor old soul!

She handed me the monkey, and her voice quavered as she said, "Keep this, honey; it will remind you of me, when—when I'm gone——"

"Oh, Zanzara," I cried, the tears stabbing at my eyes. "I'll come and see you again. To think you made this for me! A green monkey! Remember—the green monkey—I saw——" I could not finish the phrase.

Zanzara placed a finger on her lips. "Hush," she said. "Someone is coming."

I looked around. No one was in sight. I did not think anything of it at the time—she was old and queer—and I left, hugging that homely thing to my breast. Later I stuck it into my suit-case and when I returned home, I pulled it out and placed it above the door of my living room. There the green monkey sat, balanced on the moulding, where I could look at it when I played bridge, or when company bored me.

It was a week later that I learned old Zanzara had died. I cried, and was glad she had given me the monkey.

BUT you can't grieve long over an old friend that dies, when you have children, a seven-room house and a perfectly good husband who comes home for supper as hungry as a wolf. My duties absorbed all my attention, and I thought very little of Zanzara.

One night, about two months after her death, my husband came home long after the children had gone to bed, and announced that he was to leave at midnight for a nearby city. He showed me a large envelope, and told me that the bank had intrusted him with an issue of bonds which he was to take to a bank in Kansas City.

As he was showing me the bonds and proudly telling me of the confidence the bank had placed in him, there was a thud at our backs. I turned. The green monkey had fallen from its perch above the door and was lying limp on the rug! I picked it up and put it back above the door, while my husband went to the phone to make a reservation for a Pullman berth.

He soon returned and said the phone was out of order. He decided he had better go to the depot and make reservations right then, to be certain he would not have to sit in a chair car all night.

As he started to leave, he fingered the package in his coat pocket and remarked: "I dislike to ramble about more than is necessary, with these bonds in my pocket. Guess I had better leave them here till I come back." So saying, he placed the bonds well back in a pigeon-hole of his desk.

He took his hat and left. I sat near the reading lamp, looking over the evening paper. The children were asleep, and I felt cosy and contented—yet, as the minutes ticked by, a strange uneasiness began to

crawl over me. I glanced at the clock. Why had not my husband come home? He had been gone over half an hour, and the depot was only four blocks away. What could be detaining him? I walked to the window and looked out. No one was coming down the street. I went back to my chair.

Suddenly, I thought I felt a draft on my back. I turned. No one was in the room. The hall door was closed.

The walls seemed to stifle me. What had come over me?

I tried to shake off my feeling of uneasiness, but I could not. I had that spooky sensation that comes over you when some hidden person is staring in your direction.

My voice was strangely hollow as I called, "Is that you, Spencer?"

No one answered.

My glance traveled about the room, and then focused on the green monkey balanced on the moulding above the door. I don't know why, but it did. The monkey was staring straight at me.

From where I sat, its head had always seemed to be turned toward the ceiling, but now those yellow eyes were looking down at me.

SUDDENLY my hands grew cold. What was that! As I stared at the monkey's eyes, I saw its gaze *shift*. Do you understand? Its eyes traveled slowly from my face to the window back of me! I did not move. Slowly, slowly, I tell you, the eyes again met mine and again drifted to the window! I had to turn and—look toward the window——

There, in the shadow of the room, I saw the long draperies move. They bulged strangely. I looked toward the floor. A pair of black shoes protruded from under the fringe—the heavy shoes of a man!

My body grew cold. A man was hiding behind those draperies and—the green monkey had made me look at them!

I could not move—I could not breathe. A thousand pins stabbed at the roots of my hair. I wanted to scream, but could not. Was that man looking at me through a hole in the drapery?

My horrified gaze traveled up to what should have been the level of the man's face. Through the red curtain I saw the sparkle of eyes! I screamed.

The lights went out. I heard a chair turn over. I felt something push me backward—a hand clutched at my wrist! I frantically pulled away—afraid—afraid to scream. The children!—had they heard?

A hand grabbed at my throat. A door slammed. Then a shriek! A terrible, eerie cry, unhuman in its harrowing dissonance, cleft the span of silence like a thin knife hurled from Satan's wrist. The light came on——

In the sudden glare I saw a man staggering away from me, his eyes like glazed opals bulging from his head! His hands were thrashing wildly in the air—blood trickling from his gaping mouth!

Curled around his neck—I saw—I saw—*the green monkey!*

The man dashed madly toward the window, plunged through it and dived into the night.

I ran to the window. Looking out, I saw him running wildly along the pine trail that led to the river.

A few minutes later, some neighbors and I found my husband lying unconscious on the lawn, stunned by a blow on the head.

When he regained consciousness, he could only remember that as he left the house, a man had jumped out of the bushes and hit him.

On the grass were papers that had been pulled out of his pockets. Fortunately the bonds were safe in the desk.

We also found that our telephone wires had been cut—obviously the man had known of the bonds. He had assaulted my husband and, failing to find them on his person, had come into the house—and I knew the rest.

A search failed to uncover any trace of the man. Where did he go? Who was he? I do not care. I want my green monkey—did anyone find it? Has anyone seen a green monkey? Having heard of my experience—if you have the monkey, you would not want to keep it, would you? Oh, please, if you have it, return it to me! It means nothing to you—it means so much to me. You see, I owe my life to it. Also, I loved old Zanzara.

PIECES of EIGHT

Treasure of incalculable value is found, but its ghostly guardian strikes swiftly

By CAPT. HARRY McDONALD
As told to WILBERT WADLEIGH

I ACCOMPANIED Mark Vendome, the explorer, on his second voyage in search of buried treasure. Leaving his yacht at Haiti, we went in a launch to Pelican Island, where we dug up two chests of treasure previously located by Vendome. Then we went on to Lizard Island, to search for the gold and jewels buried by Peg-Leg John Arrington.

The party consisted of Vendome, myself, his nephew, Clayton Powell, and his daughter, Phyllis Templeton, whom I loved. During our first night on Lizard Island, we were visited by supernatural beings. Phantom figures re-enacted the burying of the treasure and the murder of four pirates by Peg-Leg John. Later we saw a spectral figure crawl out of the hole and stagger toward the shore, crying for water.

Next day we started out to locate the treasure, but we labored in vain. We dug a deep pit but found only a few loose coins and the mouldering bones of three pirates. Someone had moved the treasure!

As we were discussing our dilemma, suddenly a tremor shook the island and Vendome dropped into the pit!

IT was an earthquake, and the shock threw us all off our feet. There was a second shock, not quite as violent. Powell had struck his head against the blade of a spade in falling, and lay still, blood trickling from a gash in his forehead. I noted this an instant after I had fallen myself, and between the first and second tremors I heard Phyllis scream and heard Vendome's hoarse cry from the excavation.

"Harry!" cried Phyllis, as I was about to examine Powell. "Help Daddy—he's in the pit, and it's caved in!"

Fortunately, only one side had crumbled, and little dirt had fallen upon Vendome, though he had no doubt struck his head against the bed-rock at the bottom, and was unconscious. I sent Phyllis to the tents for a rope, and plunged into the hole, scooping the fallen earth from Vendome's head and lifting his limp form to a sitting position. I saw that he was only stunned, and so I climbed out of the hole and examined Powell. He too was unconscious, and bleeding profusely where his forehead had struck the spade.

Phyllis returned on the run with the rope,

and leaving her to minister to Powell, I dropped back into the pit and fastened the rope around Vendome's body, just below the armpits. In a few moments I had hoisted him above, and brought him to with water from our canteen. He was soon himself again, though considerably shaken, and we turned our attention to Powell. The young man had also regained consciousness, but his wound was an ugly one, and required prompt attention.

WE helped him to camp, where Vendome displayed a skill I had not suspected, by securing materials and dressing from the medical kit and taking seven stitches in the wound. Soon Powell's head was bandaged, and Vendome ordered him to bed. Then the three of us returned to the site of the vanished treasure and picked up the tools, bringing them back to camp. We had hardly started back when it commenced to rain, and by the time we reached the shelters, a torrent was pouring down. Our spirits were dampened enough as it was, and the rain seemed an ironical gesture of Fate.

But Fate, or whatever it was that seemed to be playing with us like a cat with mice, was not through with us. As we gained the shelter of the main tent, we saw that Powell was gone!

This development struck us dumb with consternation. We had removed his boots and left him lying upon his cot, the blankets pulled over him—and now the cot was empty, and both the blankets and the boots were on the floor!

"Where could he have gone?" Phyllis cried.

"He might have gone into one of the other tents," her father ventured desperately. "I'll see!" He hurried out into the rain.

"Mighty strange," I observed. "He didn't even stop to put on his boots——"

"And his coat!" she exclaimed, pointing to where it lay behind the cot.

We tried in vain to imagine why he had left.

Vendome entered, his face wrinkled in perplexity.

"He's not in the other tents, and I don't see him at the cove. The dory and the launch are still there."

We discussed the situation for ten minutes, and when Powell did not return, I donned oilskins and went in search of him. It had grown dark, but I had my flashlight. Considering it possible that he had staggered a short distance away, in the throes of some sudden delirium, I made a circuitous tour around our camp—but saw no sign of him.

Then I went down to the beach, looking inside the dory, and even throwing the beam of my light toward the launch. Failing to discover him in either boat, I studied the sand, and was rewarded by the sight of one or two depressions, nearly obliterated by the descending rain. I followed in the direction they seemed to point, and came upon other and fainter marks, and finally upon one clear imprint in a small patch of clay near the bank. Undoubtedly, it had been made by Powell, for it was the impression of a foot encased in only a stocking. Other depressions, all rain-washed and most of them barely discernible, led me to a rocky wall—and looking up, I saw that I was close to the cavern.

Had Powell entered into that dark hole in the bluff? Inexplicable though it was, he had apparently done so. I made my way carefully over the slippery rocks, ascending to a narrow and irregular shelf that sloped up at an angle across the face of the cliff. It was treacherous going, and I had to steady myself by grasping the rocky wall as I advanced. I paused within ten feet of the cave, calling out, but there was no answer, and I kept on. At one place there was a gap in the rocky shelf, and I worked my way over by inches, at length gaining the mouth of the cave. It was pitchblack inside, but I fancied that I heard a sound.

"Clayton!" I called. "Clayton!"

A DEAD silence followed, broken only by the patter of rain and the pounding of the surf forty feet below. I flashed my light into the murky shadows, and crept into the cave cautiously, wondering, if I did find Powell, how I could get him out without assistance. Vendome would not be able to hear me, and it was doubtful if he would be looking out to catch a signal from my flashlight.

The cavern was high enough to permit my walking erect, but I had only gone ten feet or so when the flashlight, wet from the rain, slipped from my grasp and fell to the rocky floor. The sound of breaking glass told me what had happened; but hoping that the bulb might not be broken even if the lens was, I groped around for it, heartily sick of the excursion. The damp odors of the cave were nauseating, and had I not been seeking a fellow human, I would have turned back. As I felt about for the light, I heard a low moan, seeming to come from a great

distance in the interior of the cavern.

"That you, Powell?" I called.

There was no other sound, and I got down on my knees, fumbling about nervously. I had just located the flashlight when there was a sudden whirring noise that seemed to issue from within the cave, growing swiftly in volume.

As I started to my feet and stared into the pitchy blackness ahead, some monstrous thing seemed to swoop by above me! I felt the wind made by its passage, and cringed down involuntarily, gripped by a nameless terror. I remained in a crouching position for all of ten seconds, before the strange and seemingly endless thing had passed by, and as the sound ceased, I stared out toward the mouth of the cave. Silhouetted against the faint gray of the opening I saw countless flapping shadows plunging into the rain, and realized that the strange monster that had flown over me had in reality been several hundred bats in precipitate flight.

The reaction following this discovery affected me worse than the first shock of surprise, and I fumbled with the flashlight with trembling fingers. The lens had been broken into fragments, but the bulb was still intact. Hoping that the filament was also, I managed to put the reflector into position with both hands, and to my relief, the light went on.

UNFORTUNATELY, only the lens had held the reflector and the bulb in place, and so I had to proceed with both hands gripped around the flashlight. The floor was rough, and as I rounded a bend I had to pick my way between huge stalagmites, as well as avoid knocking my head against stalactites overhead. It was as if I was journeying through the cavernous mouth of some monstrous animal. Certainly the stifling odors contributed to this effect.

Owing to the fact that my fingers held the reflector in place, much of the light from the tiny bulb was blocked and diffused, and I could not see very far ahead. Thus it happened that, in going around a particularly bulky stalagmite, I quite unexpectedly stepped in a depression and lost my balance. Quite naturally, I let go of the broken flashlight to break my fall, and quite naturally the light went out. I was struggling to my feet in the stygian darkness, when I heard a shuddering moan close by!

"Clayton——" I gasped, an icy fear setling over me.

"Oh——" came the faint response. "Is—is it you, Harry?"

I could have swooned from relief.

"Thank God! Yes. How in heaven's name did you get in this cave, Powell? And where are you?"

I HEARD him gasp. "I—we're in the cave? Good God!"

Noting the direction of his voice, I crept cautiously toward him. I bumped against a stalactite, the thing breaking off and crashing down, to break into bits.

"What was that?" whispered Powell.

"Steady, young man," I called. "It's me. Are you lying down?"

"No, sitting up. Something's wrong with my leg. Lord—how did I get in here?"

"Don't you remember?" I exclaimed, feeling about for him.

"No. I dropped into a doze shortly after you folks went for the tools—ah!" He shuddered convulsively as I touched his shoulder. "Thank God you came, Harry. I would have gone mad—stark mad!" he whispered hoarsely. "This place is haunted!"

"Nonsense," I managed to retort, though a tremor coursed through me. "What's wrong with your leg?"

"I—I don't know. Maybe I fell on it when I came into this frightful place. How did I come to do such a thing——"

His voice trailed off into a gasp, and I felt his body grow rigid. I stooped down anxiously.

"What is it?" I exclaimed.

"Look! For God's sake—*look—behind you*——"

I wheeled, standing erect, the blood freezing in my veins. Coming toward us in the distance was a staggering, ghostly figure! It advanced through the maze of stalactites and stalagmites as if they didn't exist!

It was a curious and horrifying sight. The Thing radiated a weird, luminous aura, and the silhouettes of the stalactites and stalagmites, which otherwise would have been undiscernible, flitted past it like moving shadows.

I felt Powell's fingers dig into my wrist, and somehow the pressure served in a measure to overcome the lethargy that had gripped me. I reached in between the folds of my oilskin coat for the box of matches I knew I had in the breast pocket of my flannel shirt. The ghost was nearly upon us when my trembling fingers found them, and I snatched the box out. The desperate thought that a light would dispel the appari-

tion had occurred to me, and I opened the box—upside down! The few matches it had contained rattled to the floor of the cavern.

There was nothing we could do now, but wait for whatever might happen!

NUMB with terror, we watched the hideous specter lurch directly through a calcareous pillar, seeming as if divided for an instant. Then it halted within a yard of us, swaying as if with weakness. I saw it was the phantom pirate who had seemed mad with thirst!

The figure was of herculean proportions. A ghostly bandanna was bound around its head, and a scraggly mass of luminous hair hung down in wisps, merging with an unkempt beard or either cheek. Though the horrible face is seared into my memory, I am unable to describe it, except to say that it was savage and ghastly, the eyes wide and staring, the mouth heavy and moving as if in soundless speech, the swollen tongue protruding. A ghostly shirt hung about its massive shoulders in tatters, and about its waist was a phantom sash in which were thrust two large pistols and a dagger. The boots flared out at the top, and were turned down at the knees. The complete specter was of a grayish cast, radiating a faint glow like phosphorus.

And then a very strange thing happened; it was as if my capacity for terror had reached the point of saturation, for a nervous reaction began to course through me. I became conscious that the thing before me was only a wraith, while I was a living and breathing mortal of more than average strength. I thought of Phyllis, who loved me, and whom I loved, and realized that I must rescue her cousin and return to her somehow.

The specter, however, did not seem to see either of us, though, as if repelled by the sudden surge of courage that had come upon me, it lurched suddenly to the left, disappearing into what seemed to be a fork of the cavern. As it vanished from view, I heard a faint call from the mouth of the cave that brought cheer to my fevered brain, and a gasp of relief from Powell.

"Harry! Har-ry! Clay-ton——"

"Here, Phyllis!" I shouted. "We're safe!"

"Thank God!" came her voice.

Vendome shouted a question as to whether we needed help, and I bent over Powell.

"How about it, Clayton?"

But he managed to get to his feet.

"I guess my leg is all right, now, but my head aches from that wound. We can make it."

"Wait outside for us!" I called. "And Phyllis—watch out for bats."

Like entombed miners, the welcome sound of outside voices cheered us immeasurably, though we knew that somewhere in the darkness behind us was that frightful apparition. We crept forward cautiously, making our way through the jagged rows of calcareous substance, some of the brittle protuberances breaking off and crashing to the floor. At last we rounded a bend, and found that the cavern was growing lighter. We were able to make better headway, and rounding another bend, we came in sight of the mouth of the cave. Phyllis and her father were standing at the entrance, Vendome holding the gasoline lantern. Soon we emerged from the horrible place and joined them, breathing deep draughts of the fresh air.

"Oh, Clayton!" cried Phyllis. "Why did you ever come to this awful cavern?"

"I don't know," he muttered. "Thank heaven Harry thought of looking for me here. God! I'd be there yet—maybe dead from fright——"

"Well, let's get away from here," I interposed. "You and Phyllis go ahead with the lantern," I said to Vendome.

WE made our way over the narrow shelf to the bank and soon we were headed through the rain to our camp. Here, while Phyllis prepared supper, Vendome and I examined Powell. Part of the bandage had come off his forehead, and the muscle of one thigh was bruised as if by a fall. Powell had regained some semblance of composure, and soon a fresh bandage was on his head, and he had donned dry clothing.

He was utterly at a loss to explain how he had come to leave his cot and go to the cavern, and to this day it remains a mystery, though Phyllis' supernatural hypothesis may explain it. She suggested that, while Powell had lain dozing upon his cot, still weak from the shock of his accident and the loss of blood, he had been influenced by the spirit of the phantom castaway that haunted the cave.

We discussed the strange occurrence during the meal, and it was Phyllis again who brought up another supernatural aspect of our adventure that we had all been considering, but had hesitated to speak of.

"Harry," she said to me, "you and Daddy saw that phantom crawl out of the p

From what you have said, it was the same phantom you saw outside your tent, and, a short time ago, in the depths of the cave. What can we believe, except that one of the pirates buried by Peg-leg managed to scramble out of the hole?"

"I know," I admitted. "We have discussed that theory—but don't forget that we dug all of seven feet before we found the first skull, and a man would have to be superhuman to crawl out of such a pit."

"Well," Vendome mused, "I believe that is exactly what happened. Of course," he added, "the men were not buried seven feet below the surface. Part of that depth is accounted for by wind-blown surface soil that has accumulated during the two hundred years since the hole was dug. The pirate did not suffocate because the soil is gravelly, and admits some air. At any rate, he crawled out, found that he was marooned, and came back and removed the treasure, hiding it somewhere else."

"But—what if he hid it in the cavern!" cried Powell. "By George, I'll bet it's there, somewhere!"

We considered this possibility with interest.

"And he built signal fires on the cliff," Phyllis exclaimed, "hoping to be taken off the island, planning to return later for the treasure. And the treasure is still here!"

"It must be!" put in her father. "Lord! But—it seems so far-fetched. Granting that he managed to crawl out of the hole, he must have been wounded by sword or pistol, and weak from loss of blood." He drummed his fingers upon the table nervously. "Anyway, we'll explore that cavern the first thing in the morning. Unless the pirate got away from the island, and came back later to reclaim the loot, we will probably find it."

FOR the better part of two hours we discussed the situation, and then we retired. Though the night was as oppressive and subtly menacing as the first had been, and the pattering of the rain added to the brooding effect, we managed to sleep fitfully until sunrise.. The sky had cleared, and a brisk breeze was blowing when we rose, considerably refreshed.

Following a hearty breakfast, we took the gasoline lantern and proceeded to the cavern, fired with the feverish excitement and enthusiasm that treasure hunting inspires. I had warned Phyllis about the bats that tented the cavern, but she was determined to company us regardless. She took the precaution, however, of fastening a handkerchief over her tawny hair.

We proceeded slowly into the cave, the powerful light from the lantern glistening upon the frost-like stalactites and stalagmites, and upon the equally frost-like walls.

"Calcium carbonate," Vendome observed, breaking off one of the sparkling protuberances. He pointed up at the roof of the cavern. "And here are several members of the bat family."

PHYLLIS uttered an exclamation of distaste, grasping my arm, and her father glanced at her reassuringly.

"I'll get them out of here," he said, setting down the lantern and masking the light with one of the heavy canvas sacks we had brought along. Then he drew his revolver. "When I fire a shot, Phyllis, these bats will rush out."

"Oh!" she exclaimed, "but they'll collide with us——"

"Bats," Vendome said, "have a sixth sense; they can feel the presence of obstacles. Some years ago I made a test in a cavern like this, putting strings across in a veritable maze. There was no single instance where one of the creatures failed to avoid the obstacles in flying through the darkness. Now don't be afraid; they'll go right by without touching us, even if we tried to block their passage."

He fired the revolver, the report seeming like that of a cannon. Simultaneously we heard several stalactites crash down at different points of the cavern, jarred loose by the violent sound vibrations—and then came the whirring of myriad wings! Hundreds of bats flapped by overhead, and for several seconds the air was full of them. Finally they had all departed, and we proceeded into the cavern.

The sparkling, frost-like formations that protruded from floor and ceiling seemed like immobile phantoms, awaiting some eerie signal to pounce upon us. The floor was covered with broken fragments, most of these no doubt having resulted from the earthquake the day before. We picked our way carefully through the narrow, foul-smelling passage, Vendome preceding us with the lantern, until we came to the place where I had found Powell. The shell of my flashlight was lying between two stalagmites, and the rim, reflector and bulb were near by.

Powell and I pointed out the fork of the cavern into which we had seen the specter disappear. The opening was barely large

enough to permit a person to enter in a stooped position. Vendome suggested that we explore the rest of the main cavern first, and we proceeded on, finding that at the end of another forty yards it terminated in a sort of chamber.

"This is a remarkable example of geological changes," Vendôme said. "This cavern was formed by the sea, undoubtedly, and yet the floor is all of forty feet above sea-level. Meaning, of course, that during the ages since the cavern was formed, the island has risen considerably."

WE made our way back to the narrow side-passage, and Vendome inspected it. Dense calcareous formations blocked the way, however, and I preceded the others, advancing on my knees and breaking off the brittle protuberances. Vendome came behind me with the lantern, Phyllis and Powell following. The passage wound about for a distance of some forty feet, and ended abruptly in a wall of earth.

"Blocked up!" Vendome declared, after an inspection. "We'll have to dig it out."

We debated the problem, and after I had dug into the wall a bit with my hand-axe, it was decided that we return to camp and obtain some trench shovels and picks that comprised part of our equipment. A half hour later, the work was under way—tiresome, back-breaking work—the four of us strung out along the small passage, passing back the soil, rocks, and broken bits of stalactites and stalagmites. Then, suddenly, as I dug away at the base of the barrier, out rolled a human skull!

The grisly discovery occasioned considerable speculation. There were other fragments of a skeleton, heavily encrusted with calcium carbonate. It had doubtless lain there for centuries, and we agreed that it was probably the remains of the ancient pirate.

We continued the cramped work of excavation, and I was about ready to give up when my spade went through the barrier into space. We worked with renewed vigor, then, and soon we entered an ovalescent chamber some ten feet in length, by eight feet in width, barely high enough to permit standing. Like the rest of the cavern, calcareous formations covered the floor and ceiling, many of them meeting to form grotesque pillars. As the light from the gasoline lantern illumined the place, we saw three frosty, square objects in the far corner —and knew that they were chests!

"It's the treasure!" cried Phyllis—"Pegleg John's treasure!"

And so it proved. They were brass-bound chests, thickly crusted with limestone. Vendome and I tried to lift one, and found it to be stuck to the floor, and for several minutes we worked at prying them loose. All were very heavy, despite the fact that the largest was only two and a half feet long by some two feet in width and depth.

Vendome dug away at the ancient lock of this one, and after several minutes of work, we managed to force the lid open. The sight that met our eyes struck us speechless!

Gleaming in the glare of the lantern were pieces of eight, double doubloons and other golden and silver coins; golden crucifixes studded with precious stones; exquisite beads, pendants, tiaras, bracelets and other things, all wrought in gold, delicately engraved, and set with diamonds, pearls, emeralds, rubies, turquoises, and all manner of precious stones!

Vendome straightened with an awed gasp, meeting my eyes.

"Good Lord, McDonald! There's a king's ransom in this one chest, and I promised you half of this treasure!"

I was speechless, staring down at the glittering wealth of gold and jewels. And then an accident happened. Powell, in striving to catch a better glimpse of the treasure, broke off a stalactite, and the thing crashed down on the gasoline lantern, knocking it over and jarring loose the delicate, white-hot mantles. Vendome seized the lantern hastily and shut it off, plunging us into stygian darkness.

"Why couldn't you have been more careful, Clayton?" he snapped at his nephew irritably. "Fortunately, I have two mantles with me; somebody light a match."

I lit one, and he raised the cylindrical glass, plucking off the remaining fragments of the broken hoods. He was adjusting the new mantles, and I was preparing to light another match when my eyes encountered a ghostly face in the darkness at the farther end of the chamber—the hideous, phantom features of the pirate castaway!

PHYLLIS and Powell both saw the Thing, and broke forth with affrighted exclamations. As I stared at it in horrible fascination, the flame of the match singed my fingers, and I dropped it. Black darkness rushed upon us, and the rest of the apparition took form. The Thing was advancir toward the treasure in the lurching, croucl

ing manner Powell and I had noted on the previous occasion. Vendome straightened up, knocking me aside as he did so, and we both tripped over stalagmites and fell to the floor. Phyllis screamed from somewhere beyond, and I heard Powell cry out hoarsely.

I raised myself to my knee, just as a sudden icy chill descended upon me, and I saw that the phantom was walking through me! Utterly spellbound with horror, I knelt immobile, unconscious of the unused match that was gripped in my fingers. And then we saw a strange and awe-inspiring sight.

The phantom pirate bent over the chest we had just opened, and though the lid was up, he seemed to raise the lid again—a luminous, grayish lid that seemed to be composed of the same substance as the specter itself. With eyes wide and staring, mouth twisted in a maniacal grin, tongue protruding, the phantom reached both hands into the chest and scooped up phantom coins, letting them fall in a soundless shower into the chest, and repeating the action again and again.

"God!" gasped Vendome from somewhere near.

The sound of his voice drew my attention away from the specter, and I regained power of movement. Crawling away, and feeling for stalagmites that might block my path, I touched something soft and warm. It quivered and drew away, and Vendome cried out in terror. I had touched his face.

"It's I," I muttered. "Have you got the lantern?"

"—I—yes——" he chattered.

"TAKE your eyes away from that ghost," I whispered, as if afraid that the specter would hear me. I knew that we must repair the lantern, and obtain light. I struck the match I still held, and saw Vendome on his knees before me, the lantern on its side between us, and Phyllis and Powell standing at the wall of the cavern behind, still staring spellbound toward the phantom.

Vendome righted the lantern with shaking hands, and I lit match after match while he tried to slip the mantles into place and tie the strings that secured them. He succeeded at last, though heaven knows how—his fingers trembled so. Without waiting for him to find his knife and cut off the tag ends, I proceeded to set the mantles ablaze in the prescribed manner, and soon the dismal cavern was flooded in a welcome white glare. I heard Phyllis and Powell sigh with relief, and looking around, I noted that the spectral pirate had vanished.

We lost no time in dragging the chests to the narrow passage, but it was in carrying them through the tunnel to the main cavern that we exhausted our strength and patience. Half suffocated by the foul atmosphere, we managed after over an hour's struggle to remove the three chests to the cavern proper. This done, Phyllis preceded us with the lantern, while we dragged each chest separately to the entrance. When the third one had been brought into the sunlight, we sat down to rest on the rocky wall.

"THANK heavens that's over!" breathed Powell, staring into the darkness of the cave and shuddering. "We'll never have to go back in that awful place again."

"You're wrong," Phyllis said quite unexpectedly. "Have you forgotten the skeleton of the pirate?"

We stared at her.

"Surely," her father exclaimed, "you don't suppose that I am going to be foolish enough to take his bones with us to the yacht? Never! And as soon as we put out from Haiti, I'm going to bury the skeletons of the pirates we dug up on Pelican Island on the first cruise——"

"Thank God!" Phyllis cried. "And that's what I was going to suggest doing with that skeleton in the cave, as well as the three near the pit we dug—give them a decent burial."

Vendome laughed nervously. "I suppose we owe it to them."

"Of course," Phyllis said, with a wistful expression, the spiritual quality of it enhancing her beauty. "Perhaps—who can say—such an act will release these poor, lost souls from the centuries of torture they have undergone, haunting this island, re-enacting ancient and tragic occurrences."

And so, though we were anxious to start back to the yacht, and the work was exceedingly distasteful, we collected the four pirate skeletons and lowered them in the first pit we had dug, erecting a rude cross made from driftwood. I read a brief and solemn service, and then we buried them, and turned our backs upon the spot.

We struck camp, next carrying our equipment to the dory and then transporting it to the launch. This accomplished, we brought the launch as close under the cavern as possible, and rigged up blocks and tackle. By mid-afternoon we had the treasure safely aboard, distributed in canvas sacks like the treasure we had removed from the other

island. And at four o'clock after a belated lunch on sandwiches, we took leave of Lizard Island, watching it drop behind us without regret.

The sight of the canvas bags about us dispelled our anxieties, and we grew quite cheerful and garrulous. To me, of course, the realization that a large share of the wealth was mine induced myriad happy speculations. I would be independent for life; I would marry Phyllis, and, like Vendome, have a schooner-yacht to take me wherever I chose to go when the sea called—as I knew it would ever call both Phyllis and me.

But I could not help but wonder why a man of Vendome's wealth should gloat over the intrinsic value of the treasure, as he obviously did. During the long trip back to Gonaives, he enlightened me, however, and I found that he desired to retain it all in its present form, writing me a check for whatever my share proved to be worth. I realized then that he was fired by the fanatical acquisitiveness of the true collector and art enthusiast, and that he looked forward to spending many ecstatic hours studying every item of jewelry and every coin.

This was his privilege, of course, as a man of wealth, and I readily consented, as did Powell and Phyllis, to receiving cash in place of an actual division of the treasure. Heaven knows now how glad I am that this arrangement prevailed!

IT was a few minutes past ten o'clock that evening when we reached Gonaives and got aboard the *Gray Ghost,* Vendome's yacht. Despite the terror the vessel had held for us on the trip down from Boston, it was like coming home. Riley, the auxiliary engineer and second mate, received us with evident relief, having been worried over our long absence. The treasure-laden canvas sacks were hoisted aboard, and excited the curiosity of the crew, but Vendome spread the false impression that the sacks contained fossils, and had them taken to a spare stateroom next to his own.

A boat was sent for two sailors who were ashore, and before midnight the *Gray Ghost* stole quietly out of the harbor under power of the Diesel engine, and headed into Windward Passage, to proceed under power until we were favored by a sailing breeze.

It was eight bells before Powell relieved me at the wheel. He was considerably flushed and excited.

"Uncle Mark and Phyllis and I have been inspecting the treasure," he told me, "and it's worth a fortune. Can you guess how much?"

I shook my head.

"Well," Powell whispered, glancing about to see that he was not overheard by one of the seamen at work below, "exclusive of the two chests we obtained from Pelican Island—that is, considering only Peg-Leg's Lizard Island treasure—my uncle claims an intrinsic value of a million and a quarter!"

I gasped with amazement. This meant that, if Vendome's cursory appraisal was accurate, I would receive, apart from the bonus Vendome had promised me on the first treasure, six hundred and twenty-five thousand dollars!

"You're mighty fortunate," Powell exclaimed enviously—"you not only get the lion's share of the treasure, but you win the finest woman in the whole wide world——"

A sob choked his voice, and I put an arm about his shoulders.

"Don't I know it, Clayton?" I breathed. "Believe me, there is no treasure as precious as the love of a good woman."

He sighed, meeting my gaze with flashing eyes. With a quick smile, he grasped my hand firmly.

"I am glad to hear you say that, Harry. After all, I haven't quite lost her—she's my cousin. And I'm happy to know that—she's in love with a real man."

There was no bitterness in his voice—only a boyish wistfulness; the wistfulness of the unrequited love of youth. Like Powell, I had once fancied myself in love with a woman older than myself; a woman who was to me like Phyllis was to this youngster; the embodiment of all those physical, mental and spiritual qualities that the idealistic adolescent mind invariably discovers or imagines it discovers in persons older.

AS I left the young man, he told me that Vendome wanted me to drop into the stateroom where the treasure was kept and have a look at it. I found both Phyllis and her father engaged at taking careful stock, separating the various items of jewelry, loose gems, pearls, and other things, and doing them up into numbered packages.

"Good heavens!" I laughed, glancing at my watch. "It's a quarter past four, and you're not in bed yet! And it will be five days or so before we reach New York."

They laughed, with all the happy exu-rance of two children.

"Did Clayton tell you of your good

tune?" Vendome asked, his eyes sparkling.

"He did," I replied, looking meaningly at Phyllis. She flushed very becomingly, and lowered her eyes.

"Well," her father exclaimed in a hushed tone, "lock the door, and then we'll discuss certain details. So far, I don't think any of the crew suspect that we didn't bring back fossils, and we'll have to be careful what we say the remainder of the trip."

I GLANCED up and down the companionway before I closed and locked the door, and then Vendome exhibited some of the pieces of eight, double doubloons, and exquisite articles of jewelry. There was one tiara of ecclesiastical design, made of delicately wrought and engraved gold of the finest quality, and set with perfectly matched rubies, diamonds, and emeralds, that Vendome valued at $75,000.

"Roughly, that is its intrinsic value," he said. "From an esthetic and historical standpoint, it is worth much more—to collectors like myself. So, in arriving at the ultimate amount due you for your share, I shall take this into consideration."

I was dazed at the heap of glittering wealth that remained on the table, waiting its turn to be sorted and done up in packages. Vendome had opened all five chests—the two he had obtained on Pelican Island, and the three we had brought back from Lizard Island. All stood, lids raised, at one side of the stateroom.

As he and Phyllis continued sorting the treasure, Vendome gave the principal reason why the collection was being done up in small bundles. This was so it could all be secreted in a hidden compartment that opened both into the room we were in and into Vendome's stateroom adjoining.

He pointed to a large pile of pig-iron, scrap metal and heavy bolts that lay near some canvas sacks in one corner. "All that metal you see," he informed me, "I placed in the secret compartment for just this emergency. It is to be put into the chests, which are to be bound and sealed, placed inside the canvas bags again, sealed a second time and taken below by the crew in the morning to be crated."

"And the customs——?" I began.

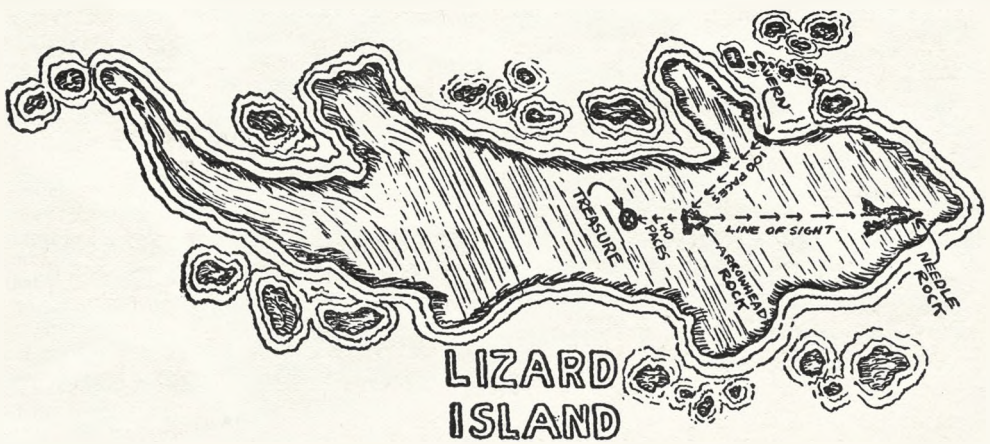
"I have arranged that; the actual treasure will be duly inspected by Government officials at my place on the Hudson. This is to guard against any possible outburst of curiosity on the part of the crew."

I admitted that it was well to take all the precautionary measures possible, when such a fortune was at stake.

"Precisely. And if you're not too tired, McDonald, I'd like you to fill those chests. In that way, between the three of us, we'll get the treasure all put away tonight, as well as classified and indexed, and have the bags ready for the crew to crate in the morning."

I set to work, Vendome cautioning me against making too much noise in filling the chests. By dawn I had completed my task, and Vendome helped me bind the chests, seal them, and put them in the canvas bags. These were sealed again, Vendome smilingly painting false archeological classifications on each.

THIS done, he went to the wall, and pressing a concealed button, he caused an ingeniously arranged panel to slide back, disclosing a recess some three feet in height and depth, by five feet in length. It was so arranged that the space it occupied would



have appeared, to even the most critical observer, to be taken up by a ventilator shaft and beams which seemingly converged at the point.

It was nine o'clock before I finally entered my cabin with the intention of taking a nap of a few hours. The *Gray Ghost* was under full sail on a northeast tack, and the canvas-bound chests containing the pseudo-bones had been crated and now reposed in the hold. I closed the shutter over the port-hole, and was undressing when I happened to glance at my old sea-chest that had accompanied me on countless voyages. Protruding from the top of the chest was a shiny bit of metal four inches or so in length!

Puzzled, I rose and walked over to it, an exclamation of astonishment breaking from me. It was the blade of Peg-leg John's brass dagger!

I stared at it for several seconds, unable to account for the phenomenon. I recalled distinctly having thrown the thing into the chest and snapping the lock before leaving Haiti in the launch for Lizard Island. The lock, as it happened, was a heavy one of exceptional workmanship, and I had had only two keys made for it. One I carried with me, and the other was in the custody of my mother in Boston.

Unable to puzzle out this strange occurrence, I opened the chest and flung back the lid. The ancient dagger, in some unaccountable manner, had been driven half-way through the lid—and the lid was of stout white oak! The hinges, all opening from within, had in no way been tampered with.

The thing was uncanny, and it worried me. But I could arrive at no logical explanation, and at length I closed the chest, and got into bed, vowing that I would be glad when the cruise was over.

I managed to sleep until the middle of the afternoon—a fitful sleep composed of weird and grotesque dreams—when suddenly I started violently awake, my heart pounding furiously!

I sat up, staring through the semi-darkness. My eyes encountered the chest, and as I gazed at it I saw the point of the ancient dagger wiggling slowly back and forth, edgeways!

Crouched on the floor beside the chest was a faint, ghostly figure that was vaguely familiar. As I took in the outline of it, it seemed to grow more distinct, and I made out certain details: the sash, the single boot and a ghostly, wooden leg.

It was the spectral pirate, Peg-leg John Arrington!

Conveniences for Ghosts

IN Virginia, not more than a half hour's ride by automobile from the famous home of the father of his country, there is a curious old house, long unoccupied and falling into decay, about which many curious stories are told, including the customary one concerning such places—that it formerly was haunted.

The house is large and has many rooms, but the unusual feature about the place is, that in each and every room there is a fireplace with unusually wide openings into the chimney. Hanging above each mantel is a clock. According to legend, the man who built the place was a firm believer in ghosts. Knowing that when clocks toll the customary hour for them to return to the graveyards or the other places from which they come, ghosts usually disappear into fireplaces and up chimneys, he constructed his home and arranged his clocks so that any visiting phantoms could easily keep p ted concerning the time and would not be pelled to search for exits.

A Police Chief's Story

The strange, ghostly tangle of the twin brothers and their lost friend

By COL. GEORGE WARBURTON LEWIS

Commanding the Insular Police of Porto Rico

IN the course of a varied lifetime it has always been my luck to arrive just *after* something important has happened. But once I broke into the scenery at a moment when something vital was happening—and that was when Julio Santos was seeing a ghost for the second time. And among the hundreds of persons who surrounded him almost instantly after the occurrence—which had the odd effect of putting him into a sort of trance—there were fewer who doubted than believed that he had indeed seen and heard exactly what he related.

The chain of events began with a droll bit of humor. I had been summoned by Chapel, the local police chief, to the theater where Santos was employed and where he had just had his first encounter with the supernatural. Santos himself had called the police—for protection, I suppose. I entered the dim auditorium and Chapel presented the man to me for questioning. A gaping crowd was standing around, staring at everything with superstitious awe.

I began by asking Santos for his full name. Spanish is as much my language as English, but Santos, though a Porto Rican, preferred English.

"My full name," said the respectful young man, gazing at me evenly out of wide blue eyes, "is July Saints."

I was momentarily mystified. Chapel, seeing my perplexity, explained that his name was Julio Santos in Spanish.

"Uncle Sam has said that we must learn English," the Chief said, laughing, "and Julio has turned his name inside out in his willingness to be obedient."

I was still smiling inwardly at the translation of the name when July Saints helpfully supplemented: "Likewise, I have a brother named August Saints." He paused, noted that I was attentive, and solemnly con-

cluded, "Altogether we are a family of five Saints."

"To whom then, if not to saints," asked Chapel in jocular fashion, "should it be given to penetrate the veil between this life and what comes after?"

"THIS was how it happened," said Julio Santos, frowning as though to invoke minute details. "For a long time Juanito Puig and I have been the only janitors of this building, the biggest moving-picture place in Arecibo. While sweeping out this morning, we got so vexed with the heat that we decided to have a plunge in the river about noon and return here for a two-o'clock *almuerzo*, or lunch. We reached the bathing-place at midday, stripped and dived deep under the swiftly swirling yellow flood. We came to the surface considerably separated. The river seemed to be full of little whirlpools. They tugged at my arms and legs like live things—and then I saw something I had not noticed before! On the far bank the water was above its usual mark by more than a tall man's height. The heat had brought rain, and the high mountains just beyond the cane flats were shunting down torrents of water through racing rivers to the sea."

July Saints, notwithstanding his resolve to talk in majestic English, had lost himself in the thread of his story and lapsed into good, coherent, almost scholarly Spanish. I took care not to interrupt him, and this was well, for I was yet to listen to the most amazing, straightforward account of the supernatural I had ever heard.

"The current seemed to buffet me with increasing force as I advanced," went on Julio Santos, "and I noted almost at once that I was being carried rapidly downstream.

"'The water's bewitched today,' I called out to Juanito Puig. 'Watch yourself a little, Juaniquito.'

"I didn't hear Juanito answer, so I treaded water and, standing higher out, looked around to where I had last seen him. *He wasn't there!* God!—but my heart did jump! I whipped round and lashed upstream, for Juanito had been above me. I hadn't made a dozen strokes when, first a horrible sputtering, then a choked cry, came to my shocked but intent ears. The sickening sound was behind me, below me in the racing current. Like a flash I rolled over and strained my eyes in the direction of the sound. Yes—there he was! There was Juanito's head—sinking below the water!

"'*Julio—no me haces caso?*' That was Juanito's voice, barely audible! '*Julio, don't you hear me?*' wailed the half stifled voice; and oh, the terror, the lamentation, and the something of lost faith in me, his boyhood friend, that trembled across the eddying waters out of that strangling throat! It stung like an accusation of disloyalty. It scorched and seared like the brand of treason.

"Had I waited for Juanito to come to the surface, and not swum up-stream while the current was carrying him down, I should now have been almost within arm's reach of him. But as it was, there were more than twenty meters between us. I wanted to fly to Juanito. Heaven knows I tried to fly! But the treacherous flood opposed me, slowed me down. Gradually the round, black thing that was poor, dear little Juanito's head sank lower in the clay-colored swirl of waters, till it was no longer visible. For half an hour I drifted with the current and dived in a murkiness that defied vision. Finally despairing, I climbed out of the stream and lay half conscious on the lip of the rushing monster which had deprived me of my best friend."

YOUNG Santos sighed wearily and gazed into the eyes of his listeners as though he sought their approval; but our sympathy did not comfort him; and anon he looked over our heads and beyond, as though his steady blue eyes were probing for light somewhere beyond the range of human vision.

Prompted by me to proceed, he picked up the story of his astounding experience with an ease and accuracy which instantly banished any suspicion I might have entertained that the fearful ordeal had temporarily unbalanced his mind. All I perceived of queerness in Julio Santos was a sort of astonishment of unbelief that did not abate. This was always present in the very large, round blue eyes, and it persisted to such a degree at times as to suggest a state of hypnosis.

"Juanito was drowned at noon," resumed Julio Santos, "and after I had given the alarm and guided searchers up and down the river for some hours without our finding Juanito's body, I came back here about four-thirty this afternoon, and, as there was nobody else to sweep after the matinée, I took my broom and, beginning on the stage, was sweeping toward the front doors,

my mind numbed by sadness, when——!"

The speaker broke off suddenly as if his very breath had been sucked from his lungs by some sinister, invisible agency. For the space of a dozen heart-beats he stared into vacancy as though visualizing anew the incredible thing he had so lately seen, as though listening for a remembered voice he had so lately heard, echoing out of the shadowy Unknown. Then he grimaced as from pain and raised his hands pleadingly.

"God knows I did everything I could to save Juanito," he protested. "Isn't there—oh, *isn't* there some way in which I can get that across to him, wherever he is now? When I beheld him here, little more than an hour ago, I was too startled, too horrified, to plead with him—to make him understand that I had done my supreme best to save him; and had not, as his half stifled query implied, abandoned him to his fate. If I can't get this message to him, I know I'm going mad. I'll never be able to live down the shame of what he died thinking."

I comforted the poor youth and got him to proceed with his story, beginning with the moment when he started sweeping the stage on this same sunlit afternoon—just one hour and a half before, no more.

"I remember it all perfectly," he went on. "I was sweeping the third step of the stage—this way," and the speaker caught up a broom and enacted his part in what had happened. "I was absolutely alone in the building, and all doors and windows were wide open. All at once I heard a voice, a voice that seemed to be struggling up through phlegm, that hiccoughed and broke and stuttered on every note—*the terror-ridden voice of drowning Juanito Puig!*

"THE sound was at my elbow—on this side, my right—and it was so close to my ear that, had the maker of it been of flesh and blood, I must have felt the breath accompanying it on my cheek—which, in the circumstances, I did *not*. I swung round, more mystified than frightened, I think. The horror of it all hadn't yet burst upon my mind; and, honestly, when I turned and saw dear little Juanito Puig in his familiar swimming trunks, standing right here face to face with me, all adrip from the river and coated with yellow mud and slime, my first thought was that, by some miracle, he had saved himself and made his way back here, unseen by those searching for his body.

"Then my senses suddenly grasped the s that must have emanated from the dripping figure confronting me. *'Julio, don't you hear me?'* If this were Juanito, still alive, then why didn't he say, rather, 'Why in the devil didn't you help me?'

"The seeming discrepancy, together with the sudden and surreptitious way in which my old friend had taken form beside me, prompted me to put out my hand and touch Juanito's dear, wet face—yes, *wet,* though the nearest river-water was a mile away and the sun was shining! And then my outstretched hand *went through Juanito's round, familiar face—through his head with its river-dripping black hair, and my terror-benumbed fingers closed on emptiness!*

"My shriek of anguish brought into the theater a curious crowd which, after reviving me with rum and water, sat around and listened, at first incredulously and then—at least less skeptically, to a story which I realize must sound as strange as it is in fact truthful.

"At about five-thirty the searchers found Juanito's body and brought it here, covered over with wet sacks, and when I surveyed my friend in death, he looked for all the world as when I had seen him standing here before me an hour previously—choking and sputtering and demanding to know whether or not I heard his cries for help."

HAVING noticed that the narrator's scalp had lately been opened to the bone in an inch-and-a-half clean cut above his right eye, I asked Santos in what manner he had sustained his injury.

"Oh, that!" said the youth a bit nervously—"I got that when I fell here, when I reached *through* Juanito's ghost. A *practicante,* as you can see, took half a dozen clumsy stitches in it. He's away now getting a bandage to put around it."

It was after six o'clock. Soon darkness would be gathering in the great barn-like structure, now destined forever to have a creepy bit of history clinging about its somber beams and stanchions.

Somehow I was not satisfied with Julio's story. I wanted to know whether he had really seen something out of the world beyond. I was doubly determined to check up on the young man's statement, for the reason that it was entirely possible he had not got his hurt in falling, but had brought it from the river with him. In this latter case, the implication would be that Santos and Puig had had trouble at the river, that the deceased had struck Santos with something and that Santos had either throttled

his companion or held him under water till Puig succumbed.

"Chapel, step this way a minute," I said to the Chief, and when we were apart from the crowd, I told the local minion of the law to clear the building, out before so doing, to secrete some intelligent and reliable person in the nearest corner of the dressing-room on the right of the stage, less than three yards from the spot where Santos asserted he had beheld the apparition.

This done, I again engaged the attention of him who might yet turn out to be more saintly in name than in fact. The subterfuge succeeded. In less than five minutes the crowd had been put outside, and Chapel gave me a sign and nodded his head.

My purpose was to try out the power of suggestion. Chapel and I were to leave the building. Santos would believe himself quite alone. Then Chapel and I would re-enter the theater through a window in the dressing-room on the opposite side of the house from the one in which the Chief had "planted" our man. From this point of espial we could see without being seen.

Julio Santos had been told to go on with his sweeping. If that which he had seen were subjective, as opposed to objective—in other words, if it were imaginary—then I believed that if the "subject" were sweeping as before and our concealed agent gave a choking cry similar to the one Julio had described, he *would again see all he had seen before!*

Furthermore, if he were the murderer of his friend, his involuntary cries might reveal the facts of the killing to us.

Chapel and I had barely glued our eyes to slits cut in a canvas partition when a half-stifled shriek of terror came from the opposite dressing-room, accompanied by the disconnected, half coughed, half spoken words, *"Julio, don't you hear me?"*

I SAW Julio Santos stiffen, drop his broom, turn in the direction of the sound; then to my utter amazement he flung out both hands as though in appeal to somebody or something he seemed to see there.

"Juanito!" he half wailed, half screamed, *"I—I tried to save you—I tried—— May the Lord strike me dead if I didn't do my utmost!"*

Santos' legs kinked under him, his knees thumped on the hollow drumshell of the stage, and he seemed to be groveling at someone's feet. No feet were there, of course—no tangible thing.

Chapel and I rushed on to the stage. Julio Santos sprawled on hands and knees, groaning, patting affectionately with quaking hands a pair of feet which were not visible to my eyes nor to those of Chapel.

The next moment a crowd burst into the building again, attracted by Santos' screams.

Half an hour later, while many groups of persons were still knotted together in high-voiced comment in the theater, I bethought me to caution Chapel to keep Santos under surveillance.

THE Chief glanced about him. A moment before, Julio Santos had been standing no more than ten feet distant from us, his hands to his eyes, the fingers of one hand resting on the cut wound above his right eye—apparently in a trance-like state. Now *he was not there, nor was he elsewhere in that spacious edifice, nor was he ever after, so far as I am aware, seen by human eyes!*

Chapel and I stared at one another.

"Can you beat *that?*" I demanded.

"That was the uncanniest get-away I've ever yet had put over on me—but I don't much mind, because now we *know* how Puig died," declared the Chief. "Julio Santos strangled him, and on that I'll stake a month's salary!"

"Where is the brother whom this fellow called August Saints?" I queried.

"I instructed a sergeant to bring him to the station. He'll be waiting there."

The Chief and I slipped out of the theater and into my car. In five minutes more I was ushered into Chapel's office. The sergeant reported that August Saints could not be found, but that he had just brought in the father of the two junior Saints—and with that, I found myself facing an olive-skinned man of maybe fifty who appeared to be laboring under some racking emotion.

"You have two sons, Julio and Agosto," I began eagerly.

"I *had* two such sons, *gemelos*, twins," corrected the elder Santos. "But one of them now remains to me, alas! for Julio was drowned with Juanito Puig while bathing in the river at noon today. August, the survivor, is a little queer in his head."

"You are mistaken, I am glad to be able to assure you," I said quickly. "I was talking with Julio Santos not more than twenty minutes ago."

I stared at my listener, for he had raised his hands in a gesture of half-smiling despair. Tears were in his dim eyes.

"Would to God that you, ar[illegible] word

right! The body of my son Julio was recovered and brought home by two peasants half an hour ago. I have just sent a messenger to carry the sad tidings to Agosto at the theater. If you spoke with one of my name at the theater, it was Agosto, who, when his brother did not return from the river, himself went as a substitute to sweep the theater."

"What—*what!*" exclaimed Chapel. "Have we, then, been talking with *Agosto* Santos? I doubt it. And besides, what object could this twin of Julio's have had in impersonating his brother? Crack-brained? Maybe—but, again, I doubt that a crack-brain could have so skilfully deceived us. And—the wound over the eye?" the Chief suddenly hurled at me. He turned swiftly to the old man. "Did August, twin of the deceased, have a gash on his forehead *when he went to sweep the theater?*"

"No," the father answered, in confused surprise.

"Say—I've got a way of getting at the truth," I found my usually calm self barking with unaccountable abruptness.

"Come on!" bit out Chapel. "I know what you're going to propose—that we examine the corpse of Julio and see whether it shows a cut over the right eye. Good!"

Chapel made the street in a single leap and tumbled into my car, closely heeled by me, a sudden and silent trail-hound, moving fast, thinking hard, gripped by a mad mania to part the veil of the incomprehensible, to link the present with the future, to join life with death.

"Yes, that's it," I pantingly confessed. "I want to see the body of Julio Santos. If the corpse has that cut over its right eye——"

"If that cut is over the right eye," fairly roared Chapel, "then by heavens we've been holding a tete-à-tete with—a *ghost!*"

Two minutes later we crunched to a stop in front of the Santos home and rushed inside. At our request, friends of the family uncovered the face of the dead. Good God! Chapel and I both recoiled a little. Something—the ravenous, finny things of the river—had nibbled the flesh of the corpse, in three places, the chin, the left cheek, and the forehead, in the last instance *at a point just above the right eye.* The gnawed spot on the forehead was an inch and a half or two inches in diameter and was of such a pattern, alas, that it would be impossible to determine whether the corpse, before mutilation, had had a cut wound an inch and a half long in that region or not!

Several weeks elapsed before I again dropped in on Chapel. He glanced up at me a bit startled when I entered.

"Ha!" he laughed, and continued to smile, oddly crimp-browed, as though my presence brought with it the recollection of some event that still plagued his wits.

"I'VE had my mind on ghosts ever since you were here last," he said with pleasant candor. "The peasants who brought in Julio's body that day—I questioned them. They had seen all that happened at the river. Julio and Juanito Puig, they said, were quarreling. The witnesses were on the opposite side of the river from the contenders and so couldn't prevent what happened. Julio and Puig were undressing when the latter struck Julio a blow on the head with the blade-end of an oar. The witnesses could see immediately that blood began streaming down one side of Julio's face. The wounded boy rushed Puig and, being the stronger of the two, forced his armed adversary into shallow water. Puig clung tenaciously to the oar and tried to use it, but Julio forced his opponent under the water and held him there until he expired.

"It was not until the amazed peasants called out to Julio to surrender, that he was apprised there had been witnesses to his crime. He hesitated only an instant; then in a fit of mingled remorse and terror he threw himself into the mill-race of the river and was swept away. The two peasants got a boat and, several hours later, found Julio's body lodged in the forks of a mangrove tree, for the river was high."

"And August Saints, what of him?" I managed to stammer out of my perplexity.

"*Evaporated,*" said Chapel with a slow grin. "You and I were the last to see him—only it wasn't August we saw at all. *August had no cut above his right eye.* Don't forget that."

"Then—do you mean that you and I talked with Julio Santos a quarter of a day after he was known to have drowned himself?"

"*Si, senor,*" mused my friend, speculative but apparently undoubting, "Julio Santos—quarter of a day—drowned himself—— He came back to tell a lie—to attempt to establish his innocence——"

And Chapel, his voice trailing off, sat down with sudden helplessness and stared fixedly at that which my eyes, following his, told me was nothing more than a crack, in the clean-swept, bare floor of the police station.

The PORTRAIT

A True Ghost

By
MRS. JANE HARDINGE
As told to
HAROLD STANDISH CORBIN

THE church of St. Barnabas, in the Eastern city where I live, dates back to the early days. Giant elms, as old as the building itself, rise above its lovely Gothic arches and cast their shade like a benediction over the churchyard at the rear. Since the church is now just around the corner from the shopping district, and is open at certain hours for rest and meditation, it used to be my habit to drop in there occasionally after the turmoil of department-store purchasing.

Late one afternoon in early summer, tired and hot, I entered the sanctuary and sank down into the nearest pew, exhausted and nervous.

A light burned dimly near the front, but otherwise the place was in shadowy gloom. I was alone in the quiet church, and a feeling of peace came over me.

But not for long! Lost in contemplation of the great rose window behind the chancel, I suddenly became obsessed with the idea that someone was staring at me. I started, and looked about me. It was as though someone peered at me out of the shadows at one side, from under the gallery!

But I could see no one! I sat tense until my eyes became accustomed to the gloom, striving to pierce the corners. To all intents and purposes no one was there!

I shrugged my shoulders and started to gather up my parcels, when down near the front I suddenly saw a figure emerge from the shadows under the gallery and glide toward the chancel rail.

I say "glided," because no other word expresses it. There seemed to be no movement of feet or legs, nor was there any sound of footsteps. The figure was like a cloud blown before a soft summer breeze!

It was a woman. She wore no hat, but she was garbed in some sort of loose, flowing black gown that seemed a part of the shadows from which she had appeared.

I could not see her face, but I did observe that she carried a little child in her arms.

As I watched her, strangely startled by her presence there, she raised her face slowly toward a great plaque on which appeared a sacred group in relief, and seemed to be praying. Then abruptly she turned, and making her way to the center aisle, near which I sat, glided down its length, the baby tightly clasped to her bosom.

As she approached me, I became strangely afraid. I could not move from the place where I sat. I seemed to be spellbound.

BUT she took no notice whatever of me. I could have reached out and touched her as she passed, but a cold breath of air hovered about her as she moved, and I drew away from her.

The black gown she wore merged definitely with the gloom of the church and made her face seem startlingly white, like pale ivory against a black curtain. The soft fluffiness of her dark hair formed a frame

that WALKED

Experience

"She brought you here to save my life!" the doctor cried, at the climax of my weird psychic adventure

for the delicate oval of her features, and I could not help but think of something ethereal, something apart from this world, as I stared at her. She looked straight ahead, gliding on without noise or movement, the baby at her bosom apparently asleep, its face also white, its eyes closed.

Then suddenly I realized that I knew the woman! Back through the years, to my girlhood days, my memory leaped. She and I had been playmates together. She was Lucy Wells! Older, of course, than when I knew her, but with that same pale, esthetic face that had always seemed to wear an expression from some higher sphere.

I had known that Lucy was married and living somewhere in the city, but I had not seen her for years. When that sudden flash of memory came to me, I called to her.

"Lucy!" I cried. "Lucy Wells!"

The woman was almost at the door. But, hearing my voice, she stopped and turned. Her eyes, piercing and black, now lighted up with an intelligence that replaced the strange, impersonal stare.

But she did not answer me. I thought she gasped, started to speak, and then, wheeling, passed on out into the vestibule.

Yet such a look of tragedy was on that pale face! For some unknown reason the woman's soul was racked with agony and fear.

I arose in agitation and, catching up my parcels, hurried toward the door. But when I got there, she was not in the vestibule. I crossed to the outer door and pulled it open.

She was not in the yard! I ran to the street, looked up and down its length. I turned back to the church again, even crossing the lawn to gaze along the path at the side.

It was only a matter of seconds between the time she passed through that door and the moment when I gained the vestibule. It was impossible that she could have gone far. The thing was surprisingly queer! It vexed me. I was certain Lucy had recognized me—her hesitant gesture when she stopped as though to speak convinced me of it. But where was she?

I RETURNED to the church. I looked carefully in the gloom of the hallway and, re-entering the auditorium, walked along the dim aisles at either side under the galleries. But my search was fruitless.

Once more I went outside, telling myself I had been dreaming there in the peaceful stillness. Then suddenly I saw her! She was at the far end of the churchyard, standing quite still beside a new grave.

As I had been out of touch with Lucy for years, I did not know what loved one she might have lost; so I hurried toward her, raising my voice again.

"Lucy! Lucy Wells! Wait for me. It's Jane Stoughton."

Stoughton was my maiden name — the

name by which she would know me. But she did not wait, nor did she seem to notice me at all. She turned quickly and made her way out of the yard by a small gate at the side.

But now I wanted to see Lucy more than ever. It would be pleasant, indeed, to renew the acquaintanceship of other days. Moreover, if Lucy were in trouble, I'd be glad to help her in any way I could. And in addition to that, somehow I felt I *must* see her—I *must* catch up with her. Some strange, compelling force had surged over me, urging me on, almost against my will.

I hurried as fast as I could. I could see her, hatless and in her black gown, far down the street. Did she turn and beckon to me? I thought so. But try as I could, I was not able to gain on her. She moved so strangely, without effort apparently, but she glided along more rapidly than I could follow.

SUDDENLY I found myself on a residential street that was not familiar to me. It was a street of fine homes, each bordered by a lawn enclosed within an iron fence. They all were built similarly, however, of light brick, with a flight of steps leading down to the sidewalk.

I saw Lucy ascend one of these flights of steps and enter the house. Pressing on, I soon came to it—and now stronger than ever was that desire to follow her and talk with her.

I mounted the steps where she had disappeared. The door of the house was partly open as though she had not stopped to close it. I pressed the bell button and waited.

After several minutes, I pressed it again. The door was invitingly open, but no one came to answer my ringing. I debated. Lucy had certainly entered this house and I knew that she would bid me enter, too, if she knew who I was. I looked at the door. It swayed farther open as if some draft had blown it. It was a new invitation to me.

Hesitatingly, feeling that perhaps I was doing the wrong thing, I opened the door wider and entered.

The house was as still as death. No one seemed moving anywhere within it. I had come into a hallway and on either side of it were great, high-ceilinged rooms, set, I could see, with richly carved but somewhat old-fashioned furniture. I stepped to the center of the hall, from which a broad staircase led upward, and called.

"Lucy!" I cried, pitching my voice to carry into all parts of the house. "Lu-cy Wells!"

I waited. Still there was no sound. I began to wonder what had become of her when suddenly I heard a voice speaking behind me—a man's voice.

"What is it, please?"

I whirled. Before me, standing in the doorway of one of the rooms, was a tall man, well dressed, of middle age, good-looking in a dignified sort of way. He wore a mustache that seemed to emphasize the frown of annoyance he had assumed. I could see instantly he thought me either a burglar or some busybody whose presence there was not welcome.

"I was looking for an old schoolmate of mine," I began in some confusion. "I saw her enter here a moment ago and I wanted to speak with her."

He looked at me severely, disbelief strongly written on his stern features.

"There is no woman here besides yourself," he said tersely. "There hasn't been for a long time."

The frown on his face deepened, and in an effort to hide my embarrassment at being discovered like a culprit in a strange house, I spoke again.

"But I saw her come in," I insisted. "It was Lucy Wells, whom I used to know long ago."

If I had struck him across the face, he could not have been more startled. He staggered back, catching at the door to steady himself. A gasp sounded through his gaping mouth.

"You saw—Lucy Wells—come into this house?" he repeated, his amazement springing up beyond description.

"Why, yes," I replied. "She came up the steps a moment ago."

He gasped again, running one hand in agitation over his dark hair. Then suddenly he stepped into the hallway and motioned toward one of the rooms—the library.

"Please go in there and sit down," he directed quickly. "You are ill. Rest a moment and you will feel better."

"But I'm not ill," I persisted. "I followed an old friend of mine——"

Before his commanding, compelling manner I could do nothing but obey. I turned and entered the library as he indicated, and seated myself in an easy-chair. I felt like a child about to be disciplined.

He stepped into the room after me and stood studying me thoughtfully. The frown still lingered on his face but his eyes were

closing to mere slits as he stood there. After a moment he began to speak.

"I want you to be very calm," he began, "and tell me exactly what happened. You saw a woman—Lucy Wells, you say—come into this house?"

"Why, of course," I said, "as plainly as I see you. I was in a church this afternoon—St. Barnabas—and she was there also. She came up the aisle and I called her name."

Briefly I told him of what had taken place up to the moment I followed her into the house.

His face was grave as I finished. Deep in thought, pale, haggard, he pulled up a chair and seated himself before a desk.

"What you say is extremely strange," he said. "I have been here alone all the afternoon. I should have known if anyone entered. Despite what you have told me, the door was locked when I myself came in. If there is anyone in this house besides us two, I want to know it. Would you—will you accompany me through the house to see?"

I eyed him suspiciously. That was an unusual request, to say the least. I did not know who he was, and since he assured me Lucy was not there, there could be no possible reason for me to remain alone with him, much less accompany him to some other part of the house.

I started to arise.

"I hardly see why that is necessary," I replied, summoning all the dignity I possessed. "I'm very sorry to have troubled you. Perhaps I have made a mistake. Perhaps it was the house next to yours, or the one beyond, that I saw her enter. I must be going."

But he did not listen.

"If I should tell you that I am a doctor," he said abruptly, "and that you are very ill and that the figure you saw was only an hallucination that may point to a serious mental condition, would you believe it?"

A WAVE of resentment swept over me. Even though he might be a doctor, I did not feel ill and I hated to be told I was "seeing things."

"You may be a doctor," I said—"but I know what I saw."

A sad smile crossed his drawn face at my outburst.

"Very well," he said. "To prove that you were wrong, will you wait here until I myself can search the house?"

The antagonism in his speech aroused a like antagonism in me. Lucy must be there—and I knew it!

"It really doesn't make any difference to me," I replied haughtily. "I had no particular reason for seeing Lucy today, except to renew an old acquaintance. But to satisfy you—and myself—I'll wait. When you find her, tell her Jane Stoughton is here."

He arose, bowed graciously, and left the room.

I sniffed to myself.

"Trying to make a fool out of me!" I said to myself. "Says he's a doctor and that I'm ill! He knows very well Lucy is in this house. There's something strange about it. Or else I made a silly mistake. I'll wait until he comes back and then I'll go. I never should have come in here, anyway."

I heard his footsteps about the house—now ascending a stairway, now in the rooms above, now descending to the basement.

At last he returned. He did not look at me as he entered, but continued to stare thoughtfully at the floor.

"I have looked everywhere," he said, his fingers working convulsively. "Lucy—is not here."

I glanced up at him, when he used her name like that.

"Lucy?" I exclaimed triumphantly. "Then you know her!"

He started again, as though I had struck him. His face was ashen as he raised his eyes to me.

"Know her?" he cried. "Know Lucy? Oh, God!"

Then before I could think, he raised his hands high above his head and with a cry like that of a wounded animal—like the cry of a soul that is damned—he turned and burst from the room, running the length of the hallway, great sobs clutching at his throat. Somewhere a door slammed behind him.

To say I was startled, is putting it mildly. I was more afraid than ever before in my whole life. Was the man insane?

I wanted to be out of that house, away from him. But if he were ill, in human charity I could not leave him alone like that. If he were insane, however, I had better be out on the street! And what did he mean, I asked myself, by the things he had said? The mystery was getting to be too much for me.

For a time I waited. There was no move-

ment from the rear of the house where he had gone. The afternoon was waning. Outside the window, in the street, the shadows were long and it was high time that I should be getting home. I determined to do no more investigating that afternoon. I picked up my parcels and was crossing the room when I heard him approaching, his footsteps slow and stealthy, just outside the door.

It made me catch my breath. My heart pounded. I wondered what he was going to do now.

In a moment he entered. His face was deathly pale, his long fingers working. His eyes burned like coals in their sockets. I was terribly afraid.

I started toward the doorway in which he stood, thinking that he would stand aside and let me pass. But his gaze was upon me, studying me. He did not move.

"You must not go!" he cried.

I stepped back out of his reach.

"Why, yes, I must," I said coldly. "I shall not stay here a moment longer. If you are a gentleman, you will let me pass."

Still he did not move. But turning his burning eyes full upon me, he cried:

"For God's sake, no! If you have any pity, any compassion, for a soul that is in hell, do not go! Wait!"

AND suddenly, out in the hall, there came to us the soft sound of rustling silk, like the swish of a woman's dress. I saw his body go tense. He seemed to shiver as if a cold wind blew over him.

He must also have seen the scorn in my face for the lie he had told. Lucy was there, coming down the stairs. We both could hear her. And as he shrank back from the doorway, I dashed through, calling to her.

"Lucy!" I cried. "Lucy, come in here. This man——"

I stopped, dumbfounded. The hall was empty. The rustling had ceased. Not a thing or person was there. Only far away, above me, or beyond me—I could not tell where—came a sound like the faint cry of a baby and the almost imperceptible crooning of a mother's song, lulling it to sleep.

"So!" I exclaimed, turning back to him where he stood shaken and old there in the room. "She *is* here. And because you are a brute—because for some reason Lucy is in your power—you do not wish me to see her. Very well! It looks to me like a case for the police, and I'm going to tell my husband and have him send them here to find out what's wrong!"

HE raised his hand, motioning me to silence. Strangely I obeyed, for even in his perturbation he had an air of command. I stopped. He motioned to a chair.

"Please sit down," he directed, in an attempt to be kindly. "I need your help. Only a woman will understand."

Need my help? His change of manner was not going to disarm me of my suspicion. I did not know what new trickery he was up to, and I did not intend to stay there a minute longer.

But suddenly there came upon me a most terrific headache, such as I never had experienced in all my life. Darting pains shot down into my eyes—the room swayed about me. I felt as though someone were knocking on my brain. I put my hands to my eyes. I must have moaned.

The man saw my condition. As I looked up at him in the agony of my pain, a sudden change came over his face. No longer was that wild, hunted, haggard look in his eyes. A revelation was dawning on him—a strange comprehension of something I could not understand, swept over him. Awe changed to gladness—though why he should be glad at my misfortune was more than I could fathom. It only served to make me more angry at him—and more afraid.

And now this incomprehensible man did another incomprehensible thing. He strode across the room, stopping in front of a great, dark-colored drapery that hung on the wall. He raised his hands above his head as though in supplication.

"Lucy!" he breathed. "Don't torture her any more. It's all right, dear. I understand now. It's all right."

Well, that was too much for me! I stared at him, speechless in amazement. And now there came a sudden click in the room. I thought it was in my brain—that I had fainted—for the room grew dark around me. Yet I could see plainly—the carved furniture, the table in the center, the rich rug on the floor.

There seemed to fall upon the room an atmosphere of rest and quiet, such as I had experienced in the church. It was as though a benediction had fallen on us, and all the antagonism and misunderstanding of the last few minutes had been swept away. In its place was such a calm as one feels at evening when the hurry and rush of the day are past.

There was a Presence there, too. Of that I felt sure. And as my eyes strove to pierce the darkness, I hardly could believe my senses! All at once there appeared at the opposite side of the room the figure I had observed in the church—Lucy Wells, with the baby clasped to her bosom.

I must have cried out, for the man turned to me. He was smiling—a sad, pathetic smile. And then I saw that by some mechanical means he had dropped the curtains at the windows and had swept aside the great, dark-colored drapery toward which he had extended his hands. He now switched on a shaded electric light and I found I was not gazing at a spirit or ghost, as I thought, but at a great oil painting that had been behind the drapery.

IT was a lovely thing, so lifelike that it had deceived me. Lucy Wells stood there in the painting, her hair soft about the sweet oval of her face, in her eyes the lovely tenderness of motherhood. She was clad in a gorgeous black velvet gown, whose blackness only emphasized her delicately fragile beauty. At her breast she held the babe, quite as I had seen her in the church.

Astounded, unable to speak, I sat enthralled by the magic of the picture. At last, the man turned to me.

"Are you better now?" he asked.

"Better?" I repeated uncomprehendingly.

"Is your headache gone?"

"Why, it's quite all right now," I said in surprise. "I—I had forgotten about it."

But I could stand this no longer.

"Tell me what it means," I cried. "Why is Lucy there—in the picture?"

He did not reply at once. And he was too nervous to sit down. He stood gazing at the painting, a look of rapt devotion on his dark face, as though he worshiped at the shrine of the madonna before me. But at last he turned.

"Do you believe that spirits of the departed return to watch over us?" he asked solemnly.

"Gracious, no!" I exclaimed. "The Bible says you shouldn't."

"I know. But the Bible by that very admonition recognizes the existence of spirits—doesn't it?"

I had to admit that grudgingly. It was a new thought to me. I hadn't looked at it in that light before.

"Very well," he went on, deeply thoughtful. "The woman you saw today—Lucy—was a spirit. It must have been. For Lucy—and her child—are dead and in the grave."

"Dead?" I echoed.

"Yes."

A sob seemed to clutch at his throat. "They were killed in an automobile accident, three months ago."

The thought stunned me. Lucy Wells, my little playmate of other years, the lovely girl in the picture there—dead? Her life tragically lost?

But the man was speaking again. "I loved Lucy, more than a man should ever love a woman," he said. "I cared for her more than it is right—for when a man and a woman love each other as deeply as Lucy and I did, and one is suddenly taken away, the whole structure of their love becomes warped and tangled, without vision or outlook for the one who is left.

"Ever since her death, life to me has been horribly lonely. The world has no more allure; the desire to win success is stifled. Ambition is gone. Days are long and nights longer. I only want to be with Lucy."

He paused and I waited for him to go on. There was nothing I could say.

"And so this afternoon," he continued, "I was about to end it all—to commit a horrible deed—to become a suicide."

I gasped. But he did not notice.

"The revolver already was at my temple when you came. Another instant and the bullet would have gone crashing into my brain. Then I heard your voice calling Lucy. It made me hesitate—for an instant. I put down the revolver. It lies in there still, on the table."

He nodded his head. Then he stared again at the great painting lighted by the hidden lamp. His face was ashen gray in an agony of conflicting emotions. I felt so sorry for him I laid one hand on his arm. He turned and smiled sorrowfully at me, mute appreciation in his look.

"I WAS angry at you when I saw you there," he said. "I wanted you to go away, so that I could finish that horrible act. But even then my soul was passing through an agony of hell. I knew that Lucy was near! I felt her but could neither see nor communicate with her. And when you told me you yourself had seen her, I became jealous. But I also knew that Lucy had sent you to me—to stay my hand."

"Do you really believe that?" I asked in awe.

"I do. We doctors encounter strange

things in our practice—matters that a layman does not believe because there is no practical explanation that he can grasp. Often I have been forced to believe that the dead do return in spirit—that there is but a thin shell between this world and the one that lies beyond.

"A few moments ago I was torn with a great desire to send you away and end my life. I wanted to be with her—and the child. Yet I knew I must not. I must go on—and live, and wait until my years are accomplished. Tortured between desire and duty, I asked you to stay with me—not to leave me until the spell had passed, until I could regain control of myself and face the right decision.

"BUT you did not want to stay. I do not blame you. You thought I was mad. You were afraid. But if you had gone, then I should have succumbed to my desire and have sent my soul crashing out into the unknown, hoping in some way to find Lucy.

"But suddenly you were seized with that violent headache. It was a revelation to me. As a doctor I know you are an unusually strong woman, little given to ills and pains. It was apparent there was no specific cause for that headache.

"What, then, was the explanation? Again, it was something the layman hesitates to accept. But I understood. Some higher intelligence was attempting to communicate with you. It was Lucy."

I started to speak, but he motioned me to silence.

"Do not scoff at me," he went on. "Do not say I jest. There are numerous cases on record to prove it. A leading spiritualist of England tells in a most simple manner of the same experience in her own life. A temporary pressure was caused on your brain, and though undoubtedly Lucy grieved to give you suffering, it was the only way at her command to keep you here until the evil spell had passed from me. Had you gone, I should have taken my life. Lucy, by projecting that headache, not only kept you here but appealed to me through my professional instincts—through a symptom that I would understand. Do you see?"

I confess I wasn't sure. It all seemed very strange to me. He wanted me to believe him. But there was something else that appealed more to me, in explanation of that strange figure I had followed into the house. As a woman I felt I could understand a woman's love that would last beyond the grave. It never did seem to me that love—true love—was an emotion that death could snuff out. I turned to the man before me.

"But that Presence in the hall there?" I asked. "That sound as of someone passing! And the baby's cry and the crooning song! How do you explain those things?"

"Lucy was leaving us—bidding us farewell. Her work was done. She had brought you here to save my life. She thought it would be all right—that you, for her sake, would stay until I regained my senses. And I knew, when I spoke to her before the picture, that she would hear me and would understand. Then she went back to her grave."

"Her grave?" I repeated. I gazed at the delicate, fragile features in the great painting, the lovely hands that clasped the child to her breast. It seemed horrible to think of her in a grave. I said so to my companion.

"Ah, no," he replied. "It is but her earthly body that you think of. Her spirit is in some more lovely clime than we can visualize. The spirit does not die."

I THOUGHT that over for a moment. "Love and the spirit do not die!" It was what the Bible says.

Once more I turned to him.

"Who are you, Doctor?" I asked.

"If you mean my name, I am Doctor Wayland," he replied, a touch of pride ringing in his voice.

My eyes widened. Everyone in our city had heard of Doctor Wayland, eminent surgeon, physician and psychologist.

"And Lucy——" I began.

"Was my wife. The child was our only child. They are both buried in that little plot at the rear of St. Barnabas' Church, where you saw her.

"But life will not be lonely for me any more," he went on. "Lucy will come to me now when I am tired, discouraged, or despondent. And I shall remember this afternoon and take courage from her presence and shall carry on, losing myself in service to others."

He did not heed me when I arose to go. As I let myself softly out of the house, Lucy's husband was standing before the great painting, his hands clasped behind him, his head thrown back, with new courage shining out of his eyes. Illuminating his countenance was a look of rapturous, adoring love.

The Blue Teapot

Monte Carlo knows no stranger tale than that of the waiter's twenty thousand francs

By
HERBERT BRENT
As told to
E. JEAN MAGIE

A True Ghost Experience

"FAITES *vos jeux, Messieurs,*" chanted the croupier, casting his sad eyes over the brilliant group that pressed about the roulette table. And with the spinning of the wheel, I was seized with a nostalgia, queer and unaccountable. I found myself horribly bored and in a fever to leave. Collecting my winnings, I thrust a great handful of five-thousand-franc tokens into my pocket, as the monotonous cry of the croupier announced the termination of the betting.

A moment later, I, Herbert Brent, stood at the door of the Sporting Club and faced a fine rain through which the gleaming white walls and tiled roofs of buildings peered in weird relief.

The usual crowd was in evidence, hurrying somewhat to escape the rain. A woman, superbly bejeweled, escorted by an Italian prince, swept past. I watched her Rolls-Royce disappear in the darkness, tail-light winking back at me like an evil eye. "Someone once said that Monte Carlo is like a vast whispering gallery," I confided to myself. "Even here, one hears——" I did not finish my soliloquy, startled as I was by spoken words, coming seemingly from nowhere.

"Will you bet twenty thousand francs for me, sir?" the voice was saying. "I have observed the luck is with you. I wish it placed on Number Seventeen."

I had passed through the exit. Now I wheeled sharply about, sensing menace in the voice so uncannily near. I saw through the mist an undersized individual, wrapped in a coat much too big for him, that flapped against his ankles as he walked. For he was walking close to my side, determined, it seemed, upon an answer.

"The trouble is," I explained, "that while I frequently win with my own money, I might not be so fortunate with yours, Mr. ——?"

"Harris," added the other. "Harris, sir. Thank you, sir. Thank you, sir. Waiter by profession. You don't happen to recall my having served you at any time, do you, sir? The Hotel de Paris, perhaps——"

The voice trailed off to a mere whisper, a tremulous, wistful whisper, that somehow

made me quicken my steps as a reminder to my companion that his company had been entirely unsolicited, on my part at least. "No," I called over my shoulder. "I am not a habitual frequenter of the cafés here. In fact, I am a stranger, an American."

We had passed out of the casino gardens, and I signaled to a watchful chauffeur whose machine edged close to the curb.

"He had a white spitz dog," Mr. Harris was saying, as I stepped inside the car and the door swung partly to.

"A dog," I repeated dully. "Who had a dog?"

The man who called himself Harris pressed a white, drawn face against the glass. "The thief who stole my twenty thousand francs, sir."

Something in his faded eyes that seemed fairly to cry out to me, made me pull the stop-signal. "Out with it, man," I protested angrily. "What is it you want of me?"

THE answer came to me faintly: "Half way up Mont Agel Road, behind a wistaria-draped wall, is a yellow villa. The money is there, hidden in a blue English teapot of oriental design; the beehive and the rose, stamped on the bottom."

"Ingenious, very," I told him. "A teapot, you say?"

"Yes, please get it," Mr. Harris murmured, his pale eyes mingling tears with the rain that whipped his face and sparkled in the glow from the motor lights. "I dare not."

I felt that I was losing possession of my senses. "Wait!" I admonished as I leaned forward and pushed the car door entirely open. "Come in!" I called. But a swivel of rain, now backed by a stiff wind, was the only answer that came to me. Mr. Harris had disappeared. The door swung to with a snap, as the car leaped forward in response to a tardy signal, perhaps from Mr. Harris, outside in the wind and darkness.

Assuredly, I was no longer bored. In response to an impulse, entirely beyond my control, I let down the forward window and called to the chauffeur to drive at once to the Hotel de Paris. I had decided to dine there, after all. Inside the lounge, I found warmth and color enough. A juvenile party trooping in to dinner just ahead of me, blotted out entirely the melancholy face of Mr. Harris. It returned to keep me company later, as I loitered over coffee and liqueur. The voice in its mistiness floated back to me, "The Hotel de Paris, perhaps——?"

"Waiter," I abruptly addressed the silent man at my elbow, "a Mr. Harris, small, apologetic chap impossible to describe, is in a measure responsible for my presence here. Do you know him?"

A discreet hand, at that moment in the act of placing an apricot liqueur beside my coffee cup, jerked violently, and the amber liquid leaped upward, spilling itself in half. "Yes, sir, very well indeed," replied the man, occupied in the removal of the glass. In a moment, a fresh serviette covered the stain and a full-sized apricot-creme slid into place.

I stirred my *café noir*. "He was robbed, I believe," I hazarded, my eyes on the cup, seeking an opening in the interval of silence that followed.

The hand was steady now, as the waiter came forward from the back of my chair into my line of vision. "You surprised me, sir," was his measured reply. "The last I saw of Harris was two years ago, during the period of his misfortune, in fact. The tables in this corner of the room were assigned to him. He worked here for a number of years and served thousands of patrons. He was odd, Harris was. He kept his fees hidden in the buffet, in an ancient china teapot. He thought, poor fellow, no one would look for money in so unlikely a hiding-place, for he took care of everything in this portion of the room. A thief, however——"

He paused, lowered his voice and added: "We do not speak of it now, sir—bad for patronage and that sort of thing. It broke his heart. He had planned to complete his daughter's education with the stolen money. Poor Harris!"

"Was he let out of here?" I persisted.

The waiter, who was an old man, passed a hand that shook slightly over his protruding nether lip. "As I pointed out," he replied a little coldly, following a prolonged pause, "it is a subject, prohibited by the management. However, you might talk with his daughter, at Seventeen Rue de Follette. Shall I serve you with another *café noir*, sir?"

I THOUGHT the man appeared saddened and furtive in his eagerness to soften his refusal to talk. "No more, thanks," I rejoined in an effort to conceal my chagrin. "I have dined well." Jotting down the address, I arose hurriedly. But the tip I left on the bill-tray perhaps convinced the discreet one that the rebuff had been well taken.

Decidedly cold it was when, outside the

café, I dismissed the chauffeur, as I had made up my mind to walk to my lodgings.

My thoughts revolving round the puzzle, I faced the storm and walked down to the sea where, close to the shore, the great stone inn I had chosen to house me during my stay in the Principality, loomed darkly. Once a monastery, the inn was practically unchanged. The cells, formerly occupied by monks long dead, retained an atmosphere of rigid simplicity. It seemed to me, as I lay in my narrow bed and listened to the sea lick the shore hungrily, that the morning would never come. Sleep cunningly evaded me as the hours piled themselves one upon the other, like dust upon my eyelids. I tried lying with my eyes open. And presently, out of the gray darkness, the cell window outlined itself. There, pressed against the pane, the pale, rain-drenched face of Harris peered in, as though seeking something lost.

I sprang over to the window and flung it open. Only the rain again! Thick with salt-spray, it drummed against my face with icy fingers. And, from below, the sad voice seemed to float upward: "Secure the money. I dare not."

I closed the window and fastened it with hands that shook strangely. Lighting my one candle, I found my traveling flask and, after drinking deeply, I crept into bed, sinking at once to sleep. Morning, all a-sparkle like a naiad fresh from the sea, found me free from brain-fog and well on my way up Mont Agel Road, eager for a sight of the yellow villa behind the wistaria-draped wall. It was there waiting for me, like a lovely woman draped in a soft purple shawl of bloom. I thought the wistaria, entwined as it was with pale honeysuckle blossoms, almost too sickeningly sweet.

As I hesitated, a small, white spitz dog crept up to me, its teeth bared in a grin of welcome. My heart was racing now. Harris had said something about a white spitz dog. Well, here it was; but the touch of my hand on a small back revealed an emaciation that aroused my quick pity. I spoke to the little creature softly, and together we found the latticed portico.

"One would almost think the place deserted," I thought, so thick was the carpet of bloom under my feet. A curtain of grapevine, sea-green tendrils swaying gently from the low roof of the Italian doorway, intensified the impression.

The dog whined softly, crowding close to me. I had found the knocker at last. But even as I raised my hand, I saw the door was partly open. And the dog, seemingly in haste, preceded me, trotting boldly across the threshold. If the thing were a cleverly arranged trap, I was oddly eager to walk into it. A queer man, Harris, and a queer place, the yellow villa; but the adventure on the whole, was entirely to my liking.

As I entered, I faced a sun-bathed room, bright with yellow satin-covered walls, paneled in matched mahogany. Seated before a great French window, bare of drapery, a folding table between them, a man and woman were engaged in a game of chess.

MY murmured, "Pardon, may I apologize and state my errand?" covered the quick, darting glance that found the object of my search for me. The blue English teapot, in fact, stood in frank view on a mantel of exquisite pink marble, at the end of the long room.

The lady, who was small and dark with a sleeked head, reminding me strangely of a seal's, smiled brightly. For I had quickly added, "Madam, I am an American tourist, a dealer in objects of art." I then produced a card and laid it on the table between the players, who eyed it gravely. I thought I had never seen fingers so pearl-white as those of the woman, daintily poising the ivory chessman for the next play.

Afterward, when I tried to recall the events of that bright morning, they plagued me. For I failed to visualize the woman and her companion clearly in my mind. The man had sat so quietly, head bent, absorbed in the fascinating game of chess.

I tried again: "I am in the throes of the collecting mania," I told them. "China, in fact. Mention has been made at my inn that the lady possesses a unique English teapot. Would she consider selling me the piece?"

I turned then, and approaching the mantel, I took up the object in question, deliberately removing the cover. I looked down into a bed of rose-leaves. But the thing was strangely heavy. Surely a nest of rose-leaves could not weigh a fraction of the weight registered in my hand. Quietly, I replaced it; and as I turned and faced them, the woman's smiling face took on the semblance of a frozen mask.

My eyes followed the mask's bleak stare. Outside, against the window, crouched a form that slowly raised an arm; and with the release of the bullet the woman crum-

pled, the impact of her falling body sending the chessmen spinning over the polished floor.

I FOUGHT the black terror that beat me down; but I found, strangely, that I could not move.

The dead woman's companion had seized the chess-table, and after hurling it through the window, he leaped to meet the shape, crouched there as though waiting. They embraced in a death struggle. Then the assassin's revolver found the other's heart. He flung his victim from him. He turned for a flash, his face toward the room.

"Harris! Harris! Why did you kill them?" I heard my own frenzied voice calling. "I have found the money. It is here!"

I knew then that I was falling. My head struck against the mantel, the impact causing agonizing pain.

My pain stabbed and tormented me back to life. My eyes were staring upward, a hot light beating down upon them. I saw plainly, now, the yellow satin of the villa walls. Something rough and hot brushed my face. I raised an arm with an effort, my fingers closing over thick, soft fur. The blurred outlines of the spitz dog emerged and took form. He was licking my cold cheek.

"Good dog," I muttered. "You've brought me back. Now for it." I got to my feet, and my hand sought and found this thing that had taken the toll of two lives. Yes, down underneath the nest of rose-leaves, my fingers closed over a compact package which the leap of my heart told me was the twenty thousand francs.

As I turned, the great rent in the window revealed itself. And without a glance at what I knew lay in the shadows just beneath it, I ran from the accursed house. It was not until I was half-way down Mont Agel Road, that I noticed the white spitz dog, trotting close at my heels. Never afterwards could I recall how I found my way back to the inn, for I was half unconscious from pain. But once inside my cell room, I removed my coat containing the packet of money. As I tossed it on a chair, the dog leaped upon it, nestling his nose in the folds.

"Good," I mumbled. "Watch it for me, old scout!" Sinking down on my bed, I surrendered to unconsciousness.

When I awoke, it was morning again. The old concierge whose duty it was to attend the lodge gate, sat near me, telling his rosary.

"How long have I lain here?" I demanded.

"Two days, Monsieur, you have been sleeping. Your dog has watched your coat with a patience. Only a few moments would he leave his post for food. He seemed to trust me, which was good."

My languid eyes found the dog, lying just as I had last seen him, his nose in the folds of the coat. "Yes," I told the concierge, "we are friends. He will travel with me back to my home in America. But is there any news?"

"Nothing much, Monsieur. The gambling rooms continue to take the usual toll. That is all."

I closed my eyes, too weak to grapple with the puzzle.

It was a full week before I left my bed to carry out the strange request of Harris. The morning following the visit I then made to the gaming tables, I sat in the clean kitchen of Number Seventeen Rue de Follette, the home of Harris the waiter.

A girl whose blue eyes were black-lashed and somber, sat facing me. Her restless fingers folded and smoothed a bank-note. On the deal table, the morning sun shone on a great pile of gold and notes.

"But, sir," she insisted, "I dare not accept this money. It is a fortune. Indeed, I cannot."

"But," I insisted, "last night I went to the casino and played the twenty thousand francs on Number Seventeen, exactly as instructed to do by your father. It is quite a fortune, as you see." I stopped to stroke the head of my dog, to hide perhaps, my pleasure at the quiet joy I saw in her eyes.

"When did my father make so strange a request, Mr. Brent?" she asked.

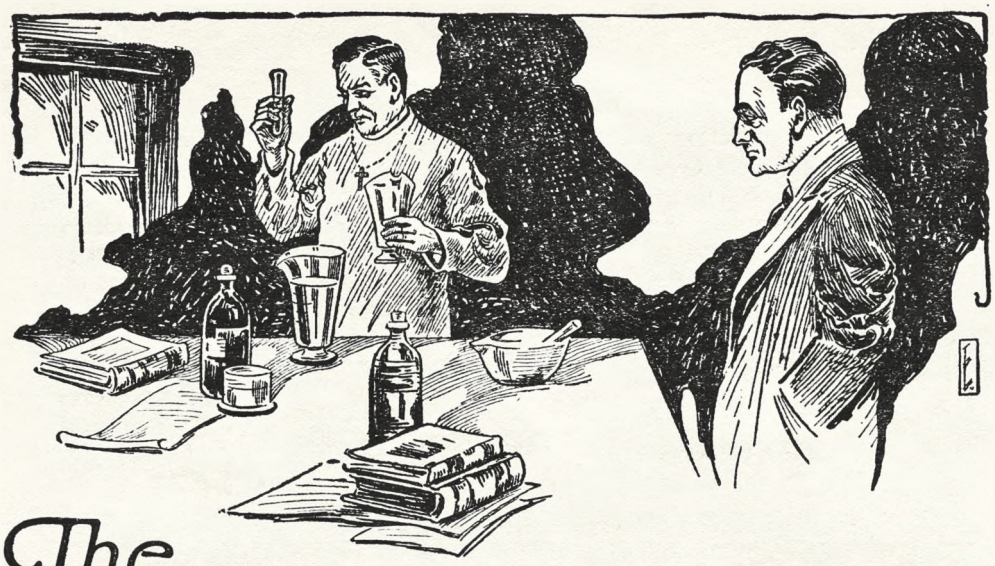
Her query brought my thoughts back to the question which so plagued me. "Why," I told her, "just a week ago, the night, in fact, before I found the money. Please," I added, "may I see your father? Is he here? There is a point I wish cleared up. I——"

She was looking at me steadily, her eyes wide with terror.

"My father!" Her voice came to me faintly, a spent whisper. "My father is dead."

I jumped to my feet, facing the impending dénouement. "Dead!" I repeated stupidly. "Dead!"

"Yes. He was guillotined two years ago for the murder of the thief and a woman companion. They were engaged in a game of chess, when he shot them to death at th Yellow Villa."



The Prisoner of LIFE

The age-old dream of artificial gold plunges us into an orgy of inhuman strife

By LESTER SHIELDS

As told to VICTOR ROUSSEAU

PAM was the daughter of Henry Rycroft, millionaire art collector, and I was a poor clerk in his employ; so, though Pam loved me and swore to be true to me, she obeyed her parents and rejected my suit.

Desperate, I went abroad, and enlisted with the British forces. Chance brought me to the Church of St. Sulpice, from which Rycroft's agents had stolen a historic carbuncle. There I was accosted by an aged monk, who, after bewailing its loss, gave me a draught of a rare cordial in the crypt. Hardly had I left the church, when I saw him blown to pieces by a German shell.

After the war, I returned to Effingwell, to find the Rycroft home a burned ruin. I discovered Pam entranced at a spiritualistic séance, between Aunt Susy and a mulatto half-wit, her son, a powerful medium. In a recess of the wall near by, the great carbuncle shone with a lurid glow.

I was about to rush in when a hand fell on my shoulder. Turning, I saw the figure of the monk who had been blown to pieces before my eyes—no ghost, but flesh and blood. He urged me to fly with him, but I wanted to save Pam. Later I saw her, denouncing me, and urging on the posse that the old crone had summoned. So I escaped with the monk to a lonely cabin on the mountains, where he told me that his name was Bungay. He calmly asserted that he had been a comrade of Roger Bacon, five hundred years before, and that they had discovered the two secrets of the ages, the philosopher's stone and the elixir of life. The latter he had given me to drink at St. Sulpice, that I might not die in the war, as he had foreseen that we must work together.

Even as we were in conversation, the posse burst in upon us. Bungay and I were placed beneath two trees, with ropes about our necks, and swung up into the air. I saw Bungay riddled with bullets, and as I felt my own body pierced through and through, I sank into unconsciousness.

Awaking, to my amazement I found my-

self with Bungay on the mountain side.

"Do you not now believe?" he asked me.

"Yes," I cried, "I believe, I must believe!"

THERE had been no support below the bough from which I had hung. I had actually been strangled—yet I had lived. I had been shot through the heart, my body had been pierced through and through by a score of bullets, and still I had not died. And in two days I had recovered my health and vigor.

"I held you back when you would have fought your way to that girl's side," said Bungay, "because I knew that we had first to suffer this experience. Had you reached her and been captured, you would have been subjected to the same fate as the one you have passed through, but there would have followed no freedom, nor opportunity of taking up the fight unhampered. Yes, the task before us is much greater than you imagine, Shields, and I have devoted myself to this last of many battles, before I seek some means of freeing myself of the curse of this body and seeking forgiveness at my Master's feet. This devil who is trying to gain possession of the stone and of the girl you love, is an old enemy of the human race. I spoke of Faust. You know the legend?"

"I know that, according to the story, he sold his soul to the Devil in return for a life of sensual pleasures," I answered.

"IT is no mere legend, my friend. Faust was not his name, but we will call him that. He is the type of human being who deliberately devotes himself to evil, and abandons the eternal struggle that all must make against their baser natures, for their souls' salvation."

"You said you knew him!"

"I knew the man well. I was associated with him in many of those wild revels. I watched him sink lower and lower, until he had become wholly a thing of evil. And yet the living Faust had not a tithe of the powers for evil that the dead one has, embittered by his inability to regain corporeal form. Much of the evil of the day, many of the worst crimes, are due to his prompting. And I—I am to blame!"

Bungay beat his breast—his voice broke into a note of wailing horror.

"Yes, I am to blame, Shields," he repeated. "It was on one occasion of our revelry that I told him of the existence of the philosopher's stone. Gold—gold was what he craved more than anything else. He and another arch-fiend in human form, named Vandermast, had long sought to make the stone, but in vain.

"Had I told Faust of the elixir, I should have let loose an immortal devil upon the earth. But I shrank from that, and I know now that it was the influence of my beloved Master, exerted from afar, that sealed my lips. But I told Faust of the stone.

"Where it was hidden I refused to say, though he used every form of cajolery to discover it. He died in ignorance of the secret, for, at the appointed time, the Devil snatched away his soul to torment. But in the infernal realms there exist ways, undreamed of here, by which knowledge comes. Perhaps he read my mind; suffice it that he learned the secret.

"There, Shields, in the depths of hell, where his fiercest torments came from the inability to gratify his passions, he discovered the secret hiding-place of the stone. From that time, he has devoted all his efforts to effecting his return to earth, with a view to enjoying those pleasures which unlimited gold would place at his disposal."

"You mean that he—the man we know as Faust—is trying to possess himself of the stone?" I cried. "Then, that shape that molested Pam—the Thing in the burned house that night—that was Faust?"

"That was Faust, the most evil black magician that has ever troubled this earth," answered Bungay. "Had I not intervened and used certain arts I learned when my Master and I literally fought with devils in our laboratory, he would have crushed the life out of you. That shape was Faust—and, next to the stone, I think he wants that girl more than anything in the world. If he fails to win her by materializing as a mortal, he will drag her into the hell from which he has re-arisen!"

FOR a moment or two I remained silent, numbed with horror at the thought. I saw now that already Pam had been reduced practically to an automaton, responsive to the will of the evil creatures who had brought her under their sway.

"Yes, that was Faust," said my companion. "The very incarnation of evil, manifested in all its lust and pride. Long he has sought rebirth, but that was denied him, since there was no human mother to be found vile enough to have such a monster for a son. For long, he sought a medium powerful enough to permit him to materi-

alize completely in the daylight, but not once in a century are such mediums to be found. At best—an evanescent appearance in a dark room; and what would that be to Faust, who demands complete physical existence to satiate his evil lusts?

"At last, searching in hell, he found a spirit who had been a black necromancer in his last incarnation. He brought him into incarnation, and only succeeded in that by means of a disharmonic, mixed racial parentage. That is the mulatto, who is one of the most powerful mediums that has ever existed. In that half-witted boy—half-witted because no brain could withstand the pressure of such occult forces as he possesses—reside powers which have not been known for centuries. And through him Faust hopes to gain complete humanity, to obtain the stone, and hold the kingdoms of the earth at his beck. While, incidentally, he means to gain possession of Rycroft's daughter, as his first victim.

"Yes, Shields, it was a terrible thing when Henry Rycroft stole that stone from St. Sulpice," Bungay went on. "He has unchained forces that it will take all your power and mine to suppress. But for my belief that my beloved Master is cognizant of what is going on, and will aid us, I should call them invincible. For it is not Faust alone. Devils never run singly. There are others linked with Faust—Vandermast, one of the worst of the black magicians of the Middle Ages, and Doctor Dee, and others unknown to me."

"What can we do?" I cried. "Pam—every moment makes her ruin the more inevitable."

"Happily there is a little breathing space," answered Bungay. "Faust has not yet succeeded in materializing completely. He still needs darkness. He is still incapable of materializing in a form that will remain proof against the disintegrating effects of sunlight. Till then, he can do little but endeavor to possess her soul."

"We must fight together!" I cried.

"With all my heart," replied the monk gravely. "That you were destined to be my comrade in this fight, the horoscope showed me even before we met in the church. We'll win, Shields, or I shall never again believe that right must triumph over wrong."

"But we must get Pam," I cried. "That is the first thing to be done. Every moment that she remains in the power of those devils will make it harder to restore her to her normal self."

He shook his head sadly. Then, reaching into a little recess of the cave, he produced a sheet of a crumpled newspaper.

"One of the posse dropped this," he said. "Read, Shields. You will see that our enemies have not been idle."

I took the sheet and read:

MILL-GIRL'S ROMANCE

Miss Pamela Rycroft, whose father was the late Henry Rycroft, has been working under another name in one of the mills her father formerly owned. This was made known today when she was discovered there by Mr. Charles Stanfield, the new purchaser of the property, when he was making an inspection of the factory.

Mr. Stanfield, who had been actively associated with the late Henry Rycroft in many of his undertakings, was inexpressibly shocked to find the former society girl reduced to such a means of livelihood, and informed her that he had been endeavoring to trace her, in order to fulfil his obligations to his old friend. It appears that there is a considerable sum of money due Miss Rycroft from certain investments of her father's which Mr. Stanfield had been managing, and that these are exempt from the receivership that has been instituted with regard to the other Rycroft properties.

Mr. Stanfield, it is understood, has offered to fulfil the duties of a guardian toward Miss Rycroft, and Miss Rycroft has accepted, and will leave with the New York millionaire and his wife, together with her maid, for the North by the first train tomorrow.

"Stanfield!" I cried to Bungay. "Why, that is the man who was trying to get possession of the carbuncle when Rycroft anticipated him. He owns a big chemical works in Hoboken, New Jersey. Do you think he suspects that the carbuncle is the philosopher's stone?"

Bungay shrugged his shoulders. "What he suspects is of little consequence now, Shields," he answered. "One thing is sure: we shall have all our work cut out for us before we are again so nearly in possession of the stone as we were that night. But," he added grimly, "it is a fight that will never cease, short of victory, on either side of the grave!"

THERE was no doubt but that, whether or not he knew the power of the carbuncle, Stanfield had long been on its track, and was now in possession of it.

The owner of great chemical works and many times a millionaire, Stanfield had been in rivalry with Rycroft over the possession of numerous art pieces, and Rycroft had

often discussed him with me. He frankly admitted Stanfield's superior knowledge of art, particularly of historic relics.

I suggested to Bungay that we must leave for the North immediately, and secure an interview with the millionaire, and Bungay concurred.

"We can hardly expect him to surrender the stone," I said, "and probably he will deny all knowledge of it, but at least we can try to prevent it falling into Faust's hands."

We left for New York on the first available train, after a cross-country journey, but whatever was in Bungay's mind, he did not take me into his confidence. And I was decidedly in the dark when, after some preliminary correspondence that we kept intentionally vague, we obtained admission to Stanfield's house late one winter afternoon in the guise of art dealers.

Smugglers, Stanfield must have thought us, for I had had no time to replenish my wardrobe, and Bungay, despite his half-clerical attire, looked like anything but a cleric.

THE big house of the magnate was on a hill on the New Jersey shore of the Hudson, overlooking the vast flats that lie between Hoboken and Newark. At the edge of these, not more than a half-mile from the house, the tall chimneys of the works sent up black streams of smoke. Here and there, the red eye of a furnace was beginning to gleam in the darkness.

A queer situation for the home of a millionaire, but the smoke drifted too high to trouble the inmates, and it was one of those old sequestered districts that are to be found in the heart of many industrial sections. Certainly, one could hardly have asked for a lovelier setting than the remodeled, ancient house, in its five acres of wooded grounds.

We were expected. A butler opened the door to us, a footman ushered us along the corridor, with priceless works of art upon the walls, into a Louis XIV reception room, thence into a Louis XV, and thence into a still longer corridor, flanked with Greek marbles. But at the entrance to this I halted.

Across the hall I heard the clink of teacups, the sound of feminine voices—then a man's voice, speaking in a slightly foreign accent. And one of those women's voices had been Pam's!

And there I stood, trying to suppress a wild desire to rush in and seize her, and tell her to come with me, out into the world, just we two alone. . . .

Bungay had read my mind. He took me by the arm. "Shields, keep yourself under control," he whispered. "Everything depends upon our talk with Stanfield."

I nodded; I could not speak. And together we followed the flunkey, who had paused respectfully for us, between those rows of Aphrodites and Apollos, and fragments of friezes, horses with the lower halves of riders on their backs, and armless athletes, until we reached a door at the end.

We passed into an immense room, its walls lined with shelves, on which were thousands of books. There was only one picture in the library, a glorious Rubens worth an untold fortune. Under it was a large French window leading out on an interior court, and before this at a desk sat a man of about fifty-five, with a short, graying mustache and all the look of the prosperous American man of affairs.

I recognized Charles Stanfield as I had often seen him pictured, the many-sided financial monarch, art-collector and bookish recluse.

He waved us to chairs, and Bungay began his story.

UNTIL that moment I had not had the least idea how Bungay proposed to approach Stanfield. It was certain that the millionaire would not surrender a stone of apparently inestimable value, for any amount of talk; on the other hand, to warn Stanfield against a half-materialized spirit seemed to me the peak of madness.

I had underestimated the monk's shrewdness. One does not live even a life of average length without gaining a good knowledge of human nature. In a few minutes, the two were chatting away upon the subject of art. Bungay astounded me by the knowledge he displayed. He countered Stanfield, thrust for thrust; names of which I had never heard were bandied to and fro.

"But the exact purpose of your visit, Monsignor?" inquired the financier presently.

"It concerns the carbuncle, falsely supposed to have been the property of Charlemagne, which Miss Rycroft brought from her father's house," said Bungay.

Stanfield's face did not change a muscle. "You are making a large assumption, Monsignor."

"But a correct one, Mr. Stanfield. That

stone was stolen by Mr. Rycroft's agents from the abbey to which I am attached."

Stanfield laughed. "And you claim that I am in possession of it, and expect me to return it? Surely, my dear Monsignor, you are too well acquainted with the foibles of collectors to be so simple."

BUNGAY got up and picked up a book upon the table. "You were studying this, Mr. Stanfield, when we were announced," he said. "You have been studying it for days past. You are fully aware of the history of the carbuncle, for here are the Hermetic formulae, printed at Padua in 1496. And here is the supposed formula for converting base metals into gold." His finger traced some figures on the page. "Those formulae have been tried for centuries, but none ever got beyond the black Saturn."

For the first time Stanfield appeared discomposed. "What do you know of the black Saturn, Monsignor?" he demanded.

"I know the black Saturn, Mr. Stanfield, and the white powder, and the red powder from which was fashioned the carbuncle," Bungay answered.

"You mean——" gasped Stanfield.

"I am in possession of the true formula for the conversion of certain metals into gold by the medium of the stone. It acts, as you are aware, as a catalytic. Unchanged by the fiercest heat, it behaves as a central sun, drawing to each atomic nucleus the number of electrons that give it the properties of gold.

"Come, Mr. Stanfield, there is no need for us to dissemble with each other. I am here to make you a proposition. In your private laboratory you possess the means for enabling the experiment to be performed. Name the amount of gold for which you will restore the carbuncle to me, for replacement in the church of St. Sulpice."

Stanfield was still staring at him. "How do I know you are not a madman or an impostor?" he demanded.

Bungay laughed. "The world-old problem of the conversion of the elements was solved long ago. These Hermetic formulae are on the track. So are many of today's investigators. But without the catalytic, none will ever succeed. And that is the only carbuncle in the world that has those properties. You are aware"—he dropped his voice—"that others are on the track of the stone?"

Stanfield smiled, but not calmly. "A pressure of my foot upon a button beneath this table will bring two armed detectives into this room by a door that you might search for in vain for hours."

"Exactly," smiled Bungay. "You are a wise man, Mr. Stanfield. But above everything you need money. Come, name your price."

"If I have the carbuncle," said Stanfield slowly, "I should want gold for it to the amount of fifteen million dollars."

Bungay threw back his head and laughed outright. "Talk of the treasures of the Incas—you would want a large room to hold it. And as for the consequent depreciation in exchange——"

I WAS looking from man to man—from Stanfield, white, shaken, uncertain, to Bungay, easy and confident.

"Come, sir," said Bungay, "we can talk over terms when I have shown you what the stone can do. If I convert five pounds of lead into its equivalent weight in gold in your private laboratory, will you be convinced?"

"On two conditions. The stone—that is, assuming that I have the stone—shall be placed in the furnace chamber by my own hands, and there shall be three armed guards present."

"Reasonable conditions," smiled Bungay. "I accept them. When shall the test be made?"

"Tomorrow night!" cried Stanfield, springing out of his chair and beginning to pace the floor excitedly. "I am not wholly convinced that you are not an impostor, sir. I have had many plausible ones to deal with. But I have never dealt with one who knew the complete catalogue of the Benvenuto Cellini works in the Vatican, as you do, and therefore I am prepared to let you try the experiment. Yes, I have the stone, and I know that it is more than a carbuncle, for I have already subjected it to the fiercest heat my furnace will produce. Do you know the private laboratory, at the foot of the hill? Can you be there at nine? I'll meet you there, with the guards—but the stone will not be upon my person. Who is this gentleman?" Stanfield turned fiercely on me.

"My American representative, Mr. Stanfield."

"I didn't catch his name?"

Bungay smiled again. "Mr. Lester Shields, an old friend of Miss Rycroft's," he answered.

But I saw by the blank look on Stanfield's

face that my name meant nothing to him. He had not been privy to the lynching plot.

"So you've thrown out your challenge," I whispered to Bungay as we left the library. "If he tells Pam, and she's as she was that night, she'll tell that fiend. . . . I must see her at once!"

"You shall see her," replied Bungay. "But, my dear friend, do you not suppose that all our movements are known to the world of unseen forces with which we are contending? Fortunately, I am not alone. I even have material forces to fall back upon. Here, I think, comes Miss Rycroft."

PAM, in such clothes as she had worn in the old days, was at the door of one of the reception rooms across the hall. Behind her I saw Mrs. Stanfield—I knew her from her photograph in the papers—chatting with another matron. A colored maid was carrying out a tray with teacups on it. As Pam moved aside, the maid passed her, then passed me, without a change in her expression, though it was Aunt Susy's face that I had looked into.

Then Pam had seen me, and was approaching, radiant.

"Why, Lester!" she exclaimed. "What in the world are you doing here? How did you get here? I've thought of you so often since the old days—those foolish days," she added, with a little catch of her breath. "And never a word to let us know whether you had been in the war, whether you had lived through it, even. Didn't you know I was still your friend? You won't even know about poor Father's death and——"

She was rattling on, but the words came from her lips exactly as if she was repeating some lesson learned by rote. And suddenly she faltered, tried to collect herself, and I saw a new look come into her eyes.

"Lester!" she whispered, coming slowly toward me, her eyes fixed on mine. "You—have come back to me——"

She had changed in a moment; a new personality had taken possession of her. And this was the real Pam—my Pam.

I think I should have caught her in my arms, but at this instant a step sounded behind her. A man was coming out of the room.

"Pam, my dear!"

Pam swung around. Instantly the old Pam was gone. A shallow little laugh broke from her lips.

"Won't you introduce me to your friend?" Pam turned to me. "Oh, Lester, I want you to meet my fiancé, Prince Uffizzi," she said.

But I had already seen the face of the man who stood behind Pam—the pride, the lust, the cruelty, the scorn, and the infernal beauty of it! It was Faust himself, no longer a half-embodied wraith, but *completely materialized in human form!*

I REMEMBERED, as we left the house, that I had let Faust take my hand, and had felt the warm flesh beneath my fingers. I was still shuddering at that memory.

The devil had smiled into my face in unmistakable challenge. And then—crowning horror of all!—Pam had placed her hand upon his arm and stood there beside him, looking up at him with love and rapture in her eyes.

"Uffizzi!" commented Bungay, as we left the house. "The name of a famous Florentine family, if I am not mistaken. The fiend is certainly a man of many aliases." He swerved upon me. "Shields, I don't want you to come to Stanfield's laboratory with me. Some deviltry is afoot, and you—I doubt whether you are any longer immune against violence, after your experiences at the hands of that posse. As I told you, the elixir contained certain imperfections. It would be necessary for you to drink another draught of it before you would acquire immunity against violence. And Stanfield's desperate."

"Desperate?" I asked.

"Couldn't you see? He doesn't mean to play fair with us, though what he is planning at present I don't see."

"I'm going with you," I answered. "Pam means everything in the world to me, and I can't stand by while you are working for her. No, Bungay, I'm going with you. But how did Faust become materialized so completely? He is a human being, or I never saw one before."

"I don't know," answered Bungay, "unless . . . but where is the mulatto medium? There's our clue, Shields. Unless Faust has succeeded in emancipating himself from him completely, by obtaining possession of the mulatto we hold Faust in our power. We must find him—as soon as the experiment is completed."

A newsboy passed us, shouting his papers. There was a great flare of red ink from the headline over the front page. I threw the boy a dime, and snatched a paper from the pile. I handed it to Bungay with a startled exclamation. It told of a sudden

break in General Chemical stocks, hinted at bankruptcy and a receivership.

Bungay scanned the column. "Yes, Shields," he answered. "The great carbuncle is getting in its deadly work more promptly than usual."

We had spent the two weeks that had passed since our arrival in New York in the room Bungay occupied on Second Avenue. It was a huge, old-fashioned place, running the entire length of the upper floor, with an enormous fireplace. Underneath was a storage warehouse, so that there we were entirely secure against molestation.

WE spent the whole of the following day preparing for the test, Bungay combining certain chemicals, principally sulphur and mercury, in certain proportions, and repeatedly testing them in a vessel over the fire. It was not until late in the afternoon, by which time my expectations were at fever heat, that he found time to explain his plans.

"Again I urge you not to come with me, Shields," he said, "although I foresee that my appeal will be useless. Even my master could read very little of the future, and it is more or less dark to me, but I am convinced that Stanfield is under Faust's control and is meditating treachery. Nevertheless, the planets are not wholly unfavorable. Last night, while you slept, I cast the horoscope."

He led the way to a long table and lifted a cover from an astrolabe of what looked like medieval workmanship, consisting of a sphere projected on a plane, with a graduated rim and altitude sights. From beneath this instrument he drew a sheet of Bristol board, on which he had plotted out the horoscope.

"Jupiter, which is Stanfield's planet, is in the eighth house, the house of death," he said, pointing to a star in a triangle, "but is in conjunction with your own planet, Mercury, which signifies good fortune. Here"—he indicated another of the triangles—"is Betelguese, always an ill-omened star, now in the ascendant, but in opposition to Mars. If Mars has already passed through the eighth house by the time we reach the laboratory, Stanfield——"

He turned to me. "Shields, the very heavens are as if uncertain," he said. "Violent death threatens Stanfield. For us, on one side of the finest line is triumph, on the other disaster. Beyond that, even my master could not go. You are determined to accompany me?"

"Yes, whatever happens," I replied. "But what are your plans?"

"My plans are as I have indicated to Stanfield," Bungay answered. "Though I have never made gold with the philosopher's stone since that night when my master and I discovered the secret, I know that I can repeat the experiment. The Hermetic books are close upon the track, but it is in the proportions of the salt and sulphur that they err, as well as in their ignorance of a certain compound, of which a very small quantity must be added at an exact moment when the mass is in the crucible.

"If Stanfield plays fair I will make him the quantity of gold that he requires, doubtless to stave off his impending bankruptcy, and will take the stone back to St. Sulpice."

"And Pam?" I cried.

"DO you not understand, my friend, that Faust's whole existence is bound up with the stone? Until he gets it into his possession, your girl is safe. For the present, he prefers to work through Stanfield, to let him do the work, to use his laboratory—and it was doubtless in order to permit me to show Stanfield the experiment that Faust made no further attempt upon our lives. In other words, at present we are necessary to that devil.

"But I have a plan by which I hope to checkmate all his activities. It is in connection with the mulatto medium. I do not understand how Faust has managed to materialize so completely without the mulatto's presence. I am convinced that the mulatto is somewhere near him all the time he is in human form. If we can catch the medium at a moment when Faust is off his guard, we can make it impossible for him to materialize again."

"You mean to murder the mulatto?" I asked in horror.

"By no means, Shields. That would simply be to throw back his powers into the unseen world, and immensely to strengthen them. No, I propose to put our friend Faust in quarantine, and—keep him there!"

I did not understand. But I had confidence in Bungay's judgment, and I forbore to pester him with questions. At the proper time, I should know.

The private laboratory was out of sight of the Stanfield house, at the foot of the hill, facing the swamp. It was a small building of stone, with a high chimney at one end, to carry off the products of the fur-

nace combustion. It looked very like a jail, I thought, as it loomed up, squat and forbidding in the darkness.

Doubtless to guard against espionage, the windows were mere slits high up in the walls.

Bungay pressed the bell, and instantly the interior was illuminated, the rays of light spreading fanwise through the slits over the ground, on which a thin coating of snow had fallen. Next moment, Stanfield stood before us in the open doorway.

"Welcome, welcome, gentlemen!" he cried in a high, falsetto voice. "This is a great night for us. May success crown our efforts. Enter!"

An aroma of liquor came from him; it did not take me more than a glance to see that the man was reeling drunk. Reeling drunk, and yet coldly sober; drunk in body, sober in mind. The change from the shrewd business man of the preceding afternoon was startling.

Bungay shot a glance of warning at me, though I was unable to interpret it, as we followed Stanfield through a small room, lined with books, like the library of his house, and containing also the equipment of an office. Beyond this was the dark interior of the laboratory.

He switched on a light, disclosing all the paraphernalia of a complete laboratory, compactly arranged. In rows along the floor were small dynamos and other appliances. At the end was the small furnace.

The electric light left that part of the interior almost in darkness. As we entered, I could have sworn that I saw the undersized figure of the mulatto lurking behind the furnace.

"Your guards?" questioned Bungay.

"Ha, ha!" laughed Stanfield. "That was merely a test of your good faith, my friend. What do gentlemen need with such precautions? No, no, we are in need of each other's good faith too much. But I have asked a friend to accompany me—my ward's fiancé, the Prince Uffizzi, who shares all my secrets!"

HE switched on another series of lights, which threw the far end of the room and the furnace into sudden relief. What I had taken to be the mulatto was Faust himself, bland and smiling as he approached with outstretched hand. He wore a morning coat, he was immaculately groomed, and I choked with astonishment at the sight of him.

A materialized spirit, standing there, perfectly human, in the bright glare of the lights? I glanced at Bungay, and for the first time since I had known him I saw uncertainty upon his face. And that was one of the times when I asked myself whether the whole thing was not error and imposture; whether those bullets, of which no trace remained upon my body, had really pierced my heart; whether the whole story had not arisen in the mind of a crazed monk?

THEN Faust was bowing to me, and smiling at Bungay.

"Monsignor Bungay and I are old acquaintances," he said with a laugh.

"Ah, you have met before?" inquired Stanfield. "In Paris?"

"Paris and Germany, and many other parts of Europe," answered Faust. "In fact, we were inseparable in the old days when we were young and the world was younger. Have you seen any of our old friends lately?" he continued, addressing Bungay. "Herr Vandermast was speaking to me about you only lately. He appeared extremely anxious to meet you again. And Doctor Dee— you remember the good old Doctor?"

"Why, that is the name of a famous astrologer of the time of Queen Elizabeth!" exclaimed Stanfield. "Are you two gentlemen centuries old, or is it merely accident that those two names should . . . Vandermast? Vandermast! Why, that is the name of another medieval astrologer! You are quite uncanny sometimes, my dear Prince."

Faust laughed. "It is indeed something of a coincidence, my dear Stanfield," he answered, "but not more amazing than the coincidence of life. Well—I shall be interested to see this experiment. If Monsignor Bungay can really change lead into gold, I shall believe that anything is possible—even immortality on this earth."

I watched the proceeding with fascination as the monk set to work, and yet with the feeling that something diabolical was being designed against us. And Stanfield was a party to that design. The man was in a highly overwrought condition; I could see it by his nervous pacing of the laboratory floor as Bungay pounded the elements in the mortar. Faust sat straddling a chair, watching intently. Now and again his eyes met mine in confident, almost humorous challenge.

It was a small gas furnace, the gas mixed with air by a mechanical device, on the principle of the Bunsen burner, thus furnishing a considerable degree of heat, although of course not the equivalent of that provided in a large modern apparatus. A tank, constructed of pot clay, covered the whole area of the upper compartment, while the melting compartment at the rear received the contents as they flowed through a sort of valve by force of gravity. Beyond this was the refining compartment immediately above the furnace, which was a chamber of roaring fire, some six feet high by two in width. Further refined by the heat, the metal flowed into the gathering compartment beneath where a water-jacket thickened and solidified it.

The heat within the laboratory was growing intolerable. I saw the beads of perspiration spring out on Stanfield's brow. My clothes were wet with sweat, but Faust sat, straddling his chair, the confident, devilish smile still on his face. At the long laboratory table stood Bungay, preparing the mixture from a formula, written on paper, which he was holding at arm's length to read, in the way far-sighted old men do. I wondered whether Bungay had the same feeling of some imminent treachery that I had.

Stanfield paused in his incessant stride and went to Bungay's side.

"This is the complete formula?" he demanded.

"The complete formula," Bungay assented. "The mixture of the three components, mercury, salt, and sulphur is very nearly that which is given in the secrets of the Hermetic books. But it is in the addition of this solvent that the secret lies. Without it, it is impossible to go further than the black Saturn."

"And that is the solvent?"

Bungay looked up at him with the confident glance of a child. "The solvent is in the mortar. Everything is ready. Without doubt we shall succeed in converting your lead into gold, and satisfying you as to the powers of the carbuncle," he said.

I NOTICED that Faust had drawn nearer. I saw an interchange of looks between him and Stanfield. Bungay meanwhile was pounding the mass in the mortar afresh.

"May I look through this paper?" Stanfield demanded, taking up the formula.

"By all means," responded Bungay, giving the paste a last whirl with the pestle. "I am sure that after tonight you will be prepared to talk business with me." He raised the heavy mortar, containing the mass, and, stepping back a pace, looked critically at it. Stanfield put the formula into his pocket.

"I'm ready to talk business with you now, Monsignor," he replied.

WHAT happened next, happened so quickly that my eyes were unable to take in a consecutive and detailed picture. But as he placed the paper in his pocket, Stanfield must have drawn a blackjack that he had concealed beneath his armpit. I saw the weapon descend, heard the thud of its impact on Bungay's head, and saw the old man crumple to the floor.

And that was another of those moments of awful doubt for me, as I saw Bungay lying motionless on the laboratory floor, with a thin trickle of blood oozing from his temple.

As if by a preconcerted signal, Faust leaped forward. His face was twisted in a hideous snarl. If ever I had imagined that there was something beautiful about his face, I was undeceived now, for all the evil passions of hell distorted it.

As he leaped, with a deft movement of his foot, pantherlike in its swiftness, he kicked open the door of the fire compartment, disclosing the white-hot interior, a sheet of incandescent flame. The frightful heat sent me staggering back, the ends of my hair beginning to crisp under the tips of those tongues of licking fire. And, before my paralyzed wits had time to control my motor nerves, Faust had stooped and picked up Bungay's body in his arms as easily as if it had been a child's doll that he was carrying, and literally hurled it into the furnace!

The body passed into the compartment and wedged there. Faust, as he stood watching it, with his arms extended, and leaning forward, had the grace of some horrible faun. And it was dreadful beyond conception to see him peering into that blazing cavern, and old Bungay's face, already a sheet of roaring flame, looking back at his, the eyes wide open.

Then, leaping back, Faust kicked to the door of the fire-chamber, while peal after peal of mocking laughter broke from his lips. He tossed his arms, he howled in derision.

"Bring on your master now, Bungay!" he roared. "Let's see whether Bacon can

save you. Let me see you get out of there, and I'll believe anything, old Shadrach, Meshech and Abednego!"

I believe that I had not stirred hand or foot from the moment when Stanfield had struck Bungay down until the awful deed had been completed. It was Stanfield's scream of horror that seemed to dissolve the stupor that had fallen about me. And yet, even then, it was no conscious action on my part that impelled me, for my nerves, numbed by the horror of the deed, were incapable of telegraphing commands to my brain. No, I think it was an instinct purely automatic that flung me forward against Stanfield, who happened to be in my way, as he flourished his drawn revolver, screaming hysterically.

HE swung about, aiming at me. I heard the crack of the discharge, but the bullet passed harmlessly by my head, and the next moment Stanfield and I were engaged in a life-and-death struggle. Each of us was animated by an insane impulse to kill, the millionaire to wipe out the only hostile witness of the awful deed, and I goaded to madness, and seeking vent for my overcharged nerves in violent action.

I was forcing Stanfield backward, and had wrenched the revolver from his hand, I was turning it against his breast, while my finger sought the trigger, when of a sudden a mesh of fine steel wire seemed to descend over my head. The more I struggled, the more I found myself entangled. The revolver dropped from my hand, I stumbled, tripped, and then found myself prone upon the ground and unable to move hand or foot.

Stanfield was holding his sides and gasping against the laboratory table. Faust was standing over me, a diabolical leer upon his pale face. He was holding nothing, and was at least three feet distant from me, and yet I was trapped helplessly by something completely invisible.

Everywhere the meshes of that invisible net seemed to be pressing close against my body.

"Throw him in after the other one!" gasped Stanfield, straightening himself with an effort, and staggering toward us. There was a look of madness on his pale face.

"Not yet, not yet," answered Faust, with a mocking laugh. "It may be that there is some useful information to be extracted from him first. Even I am not omniscient, my father-in-law to be."

"What are you?" gasped Stanfield. "The devil?" His eyes held a strange light.

"Not far wrong, my friend," answered Faust. "Don't worry about Shields; we'll attend to him later. At present there are more important things before us. We've got to make our gold. Have you forgotten?"

"No, the gold, the gold!" Stanfield shouted. "Gold enough to enable me to stave off the disaster that threatens me until I can get even with that Wall Street gang."

"Precisely," grinned Faust.

Picking me up in his arms as easily as he had carried Bungay, Faust flung me into a recess beside one of the dynamos. And, though my limbs were unfettered, I could not even raise my hand. Inarticulately, I strove in vain to hurl curses on my captor.

Faust turned to Stanfield. "Well, the chief one's disposed of," he said. "When we get through with our friend Shields, I assure you there are likely to be no inconvenient inquiries about the carbuncle. And now let us complete the experiment."

"Yes, yes," cried Stanfield eagerly. "We have no time to lose. Only let me see the gold gleaming in the refining chamber, and I'll be a happy man, Prince Uffizzi."

I CURSED Bungay in my mind for having been such a fool as to betray the secret. In doing so he had sealed his own doom. If he had not told Stanfield everything, he would still be alive, and probably we should both have left the laboratory unscathed. Now, realizing that my own time was short, and that I was probably destined to pass out in the same hideous manner as my companion, I nerved myself to watch the pair in the laboratory. It occurred to me that there might be some possibility of bargaining for my life, and, if there were, I meant to avail myself of it, for Pam's sake.

"Come, let us get to work," said Faust briskly. "The paste should be stirred again; it may have settled. The heavier components would sink to the bottom."

He picked up the pestle and resumed the pounding of the mixture, while Stanfield stood by his side, peering eagerly into the mortar. In this way several minutes went by, during which I struggled furtively and ineffectively to free myself from the invisible net that held me.

At length the preparation seemed to be completed, for Stanfield, at a signal from his companion, picked up the mortar and staggered with it to the clay tank. He deposited it within, and then, as Faust spok

again, with a wild laugh he pulled something from an interior pocket of his waistcoat.

I saw the ruddy rays of the great carbuncle as he dropped it into the already seething mixture.

I SAW the faces of the two men silhouetted against the furnace glare. I could hear the bubbling of the liquid above the hissing of the gas flames. Then I heard it trickling into the melting compartment, and from that, to judge from the muttered comments, it was beginning to emerge into the refining chamber.

Stanfield had reached the utmost pinnacle of excitement. He danced about the furnace, uttering incoherent cries.

"Open it! Open it!" he shouted to Faust.

"Have patience," Faust responded suavely. "A few degrees of temperature lacking, an improper fusing of the elements, and who knows what we shall find? We must not risk the success of this experiment, for if, instead of gold, we should find only lead at the finale, it means your ruin."

"Yes, yes, you're right! Damn that Wall Street crowd!" shouted Stanfield, completely amenable to the other's subtle persuasion. "They laid a trap for me and raided me when I was loyal to their interests. I'll wait—I'll wait, Uffizzi! All the gold that a man can need—and the carbuncle's mine now, with that old fool dead."

"And furnishing part of the heat for our experiment, Stanfield," added Faust, with a devilish laugh.

"Ha, ha, yes, you're right, Uffizzi! A capital joke of yours, that was. And then the other one!" he shouted, darting a sudden glance at me.

"Oh, yes, we'll all get what's coming to us," answered Faust, leering. "But come, my friend, perhaps it is now time to open the refining chamber."

Stanfield stepped back and pressed a lever; another, and I heard the hiss of the molten metal as the pan that held it came in contact with the water circulation. Once more Stanfield pressed a lever, and I heard the click as the door of the refining compartment flew open. From where I crouched, I could see a tray filled with lumps of half-molten metal.

A terrible cry burst from Stanfield's lips.

"Lead! Lead! Lead!" he babbled. "The old fool tricked me!"

He raved and shrieked, tossing up his arms, while Faust stood quietly by, the same eternal leer upon his face.

"Look! Look!" screamed Stanfield. "Lead! He told me that the formula was infallible, if the solvent was added. He said it was in the correct proportions. Ruined! Ruined!" he raved.

His arms were working up and down like pump handles, and the look on his face was one of utter despair.

Faust stepped lightly to his side. "It looks as if you're right. Too bad!" he commented. "Yes, Stanfield, it certainly does look as if old Bungay tricked us, and the worst of it is, it's too late to call him back now. You're ruined. Tomorrow will see the downfall of your corporation, the loss of your home, and yourself and your wife turned out into the world as all but paupers. And, of course, you'll be lucky if you escape being indicted for fraud. Do you know, it almost makes me regret that you planned such a stupid murder scheme and dragged me into it?

"Yes, Stanfield," Faust continued, with a chuckle, "your idea of murdering the old man, in order to have the undisputed ownership of the carbuncle, was almost unworthy of a man of your intelligence. You have made the false step, and I'm afraid—I'm very much afraid that you are going to pay the price."

"Why are you telling me all this?" raved Stanfield. "Why don't you help me, advise me? Everything I've done has been by your advice. That murder——"

"Come, come, my friend, surely you do not propose to implicate me in that fantastic scheme of yours?" leered Faust.

"You killed him. He was only stunned. Damn you, why don't you advise me, instead of leering there? What am I going to do?"

"Do, my dear fellow? Is it possible that you don't see what you will have to do?" asked Faust.

Stanfield stood perfectly still, staring into his face.

"Why, my dear Stanfield, it is very regrettable," Faust answered, "but of course you'll have to kill yourself."

WITH a low moan, Stanfield staggered back against the table, and faced the other. His eyes were haggard, his features twitched convulsively.

"Kill myself?" he whispered hoarsely.

"Why, certainly, my dear Stanfield," answered Faust. "As a man of spirit, you can hardly do anything else, having played your last coup and failed. Surely no man of your character and courage is going to live on, a

discredited fugitive from justice? I refer, of course, merely to the fact that you will certainly be placed under arrest for fraud tomorrow, though naturally, if the unhappy events of tonight should become known, the charge will be a far more serious one."

"You devil!" whispered Stanfield.

"Then there is your wife to consider, Stanfield," Faust went on blandly. "Alive, you will be a considerable burden to her; but, dead, your insurance policy for a million dollars which cannot be sequestered by the creditors of your corporation, will enable her to live in reasonable comfort. Surely a man of your intelligence cannot fail to see the point?"

"You did it all," bellowed the unhappy millionaire. "You hypnotized me into it. I verily believe you are the Devil."

"Only an underling of his," laughed Faust, "but proud to serve him. He is a good master, Stanfield. But this is neither here nor there. Let us conclude this painful —very painful, conversation."

As Stanfield grew wilder, Faust had seemed to become more collected. Leaning forward, his hands in his trousers pockets, bland, debonair, he seemed the very type of the fashionable gentleman, and it was clear that he was hugely enjoying the torturing of the unhappy financier.

All the while this conversation had been going on, I had been making spasmodic efforts to free myself, but at first without the least success. But now, as I continued to strain against the invisible bands that held me, of a sudden they seemed to slacken.

For a moment or two I did not understand what was happening. But then the realization came to me. Faust had been holding me captive by a concentration of will power or magnetism, akin to the manner in which a public hypnotizer holds his subject motionless upon the stage by mere suggestion.

Now, his will being directed upon Stanfield, I had momentarily gained the power to free myself.

As Faust's sneers went home, Stanfield seemed to wilt. A groan broke from his lips.

"Uffizzi, all is not lost," he said. "Why should you speak to me of suicide? Perhaps we can succeed with another attempt. Perhaps we were too hasty in cooling the mixture in the refining chamber before it had become transmuted. Let us try again. There is no use giving up the ship."

"My dear Stanfield, I assure you that I never give up the ship, as you are pleased to phrase it," answered Faust. "But it is long past midnight, and really my social engagements will not permit me to waste unnecessary strength in fruitless labors. Besides, I am quite well supplied with money, and the success or failure of your efforts are a matter of indifference to me.

"Come, Stanfield, don't be a coward! Do the manly thing! Think of your wife! Do you propose to ask her to begin life with you over again in a hall bedroom? Get it over, man," he added, with indescribable brutality. "Get it over! One pressure upon the trigger, and you will have solved your problem and ended all your perplexities!"

STANFIELD'S look was of abject despair. I felt a queer pang of pity for him as I watched him.

"You devil out of hell!" bleated the unhappy man.

"Come, take your revolver and put a bullet through your brain," urged Faust.

Horrified, I saw Stanfield turn and pick up the revolver from the table. He stood with it in his hand uncertainly, looking from it to Faust as if he did not quite understand where he was, or what was happening to him.

"Pamela Rycroft—what about her and you?" he cried suddenly.

"I shall take good care of your ward, Stanfield," answered Faust. "Don't worry about her. Come, finish the job, you——!"

Suddenly the suavity vanished. The vilest epithets poured from Faust's lips. He roared, he bellowed, he beat down the unhappy man's last resistance. Desperately Stanfield's arm went up. I saw him thrust the muzzle of the revolver into his mouth.

For a moment longer he seemed to hesitate, and then, even as the roar of the discharge rang out, I saw the millionaire begin to topple.

Down he came, flat as a beam upon the laboratory floor; but life was already extinct before he reached it.

Again the evil influence of the red stone has brought death and ruin to its possessor. Faust has destroyed Bungay and holds Lester in his power. What hope remains to the latter of saving Pam? The next thrilling instalment of this amazing story will hold you spellbound. Remember that the November GHOST STORIES *is on sale at all news stands September 23rd.*

A True Ghost Experience

The Ghost Car

By Betty B——

As told to Ken Batten

Whose was the unseen hand at the wheel of this auto that persistently sought to wreck itself?

THINGS happen in this life which not only change character but put the soul through an acid test that purifies it and reveals undreamed-of realms of thought and emotion.

Such a thing happened to me when I was only twenty-one, and as light-hearted and frivolous a girl as ever had a doting father to spoil her.

For a birthday present I had asked for a Rolls-Royce automobile. Father remonstrated with me and suggested a less expensive make of car, but spoilt girl that I was, I wanted a "Rolls" or no car at all. On the morning of my birthday Dad took me to our garage and there, to my surprise and joy, was a beautiful, yellow Rolls-Royce roadster!

Dad, being strictly truthful, explained that it was a second-hand car, but as good as new in every respect. Experts had examined the motor and pronounced it perfect. The car was only two years old, which is young for a Rolls-Royce. Nothing was known of its previous history, except that it had never been driven in this country. And obviously, whoever had owned or driven it in England, had taken great care of it and driven it only a few times.

We decided to christen my car at once, so Dad and I started out for a little spin. I was at the wheel, going about forty miles an hour on a little-traveled country road. I saw a car on the cross-road to the right and I made my calculations to slow down because it had the right-of-way. About a hundred yards from the intersection I put my foot on the brake. To my surprise and horror, my car, instead of slowing down, continued at forty. The other car was ap-

proaching the crossing with equal speed.

Again I pushed down on the brake, but without result. Dad never stirred or said a word. Both cars reached the intersection at the same moment. With a violent jerk I swung my steering wheel to the left, just as I heard the grinding of the other car's brakes as its driver swung to the right. There came a crunching of mud-guards, then both cars stopped in their tracks.

I was too stunned for speech, whether from shock or fear I scarcely know. The occupants of the other car were furious, and Dad apologized and explained that we were trying out our car and that the brakes hadn't worked. No serious damage had been done and the other car drove off.

Then Dad got out and examined the brakes. Nothing seemed to be wrong with them. We turned homeward, driving slowly and testing the brakes frequently. They worked perfectly!

WE drove in silence, yet I knew that my father was sharing my troubled and confused thoughts. I was conscious of a vague fear and a sense of mystery such as I had never felt before. It was not a natural, healthy fear. What had happened was uncanny—sinister—and we both felt it intensely.

When we put up the car, Dad spoke for the first time, saying that he would have the motor thoroughly overhauled. Then he suggested casually that it might be better not to mention our experience to the family.

Mechanics examined the car and pronounced it in absolutely first-class condition. I decided that I was a young fool. I determined to put that morning's incident out of my mind and to take my car out at once. For days I drove it for long stretches, and all was well.

At breakfast one morning my mother asked me if she might use my car that day, as I was going to town by train. With quick assent on my lips I felt my eyes drawn to Dad's. He was looking at me with a queer expression, and I knew that he didn't want Mother to drive the Rolls.

She caught my hesitation and said, "My dear, if you'd prefer for me not to drive your new car, just say so frankly."

Of course I couldn't let it pass that way; so I assured Mother that I didn't, in the least, mind her driving it.

That night she came to my room after I had gone to bed. She looked worried and she spoke very low

"Betty, don't mention what I'm going to tell you, to your father. I want to ask you. first, if you've had any trouble with your Rolls-Royce?"

I caught my breath but I managed to say casually:

"Nothing in particular—why?"

"Because," Mother said excitedly, "something happened this afternoon that was so mysterious and left me so weak with fear that I wanted to tell you about it. It's beyond my understanding."

Her story was briefly this: On a narrow road she saw a big car approaching at high speed. She slowed down, and when she was within fifty yards of the oncoming car, she turned her steering wheel to the right. To her horror the car stayed in the center of the road, close in the path of the onrushing car.

Again she wrenched at the steering wheel, and then, at the last moment of desperation, she used the emergency brake. The roadster stopped with a terrific jolt and she heard a screeching and grinding of brakes. The other driver had used his own brakes just in time, and when his car stopped, the bumpers of both cars were touching.

The other driver had been considerate, seeing that Mother was on the verge of fainting. After hearing her explanation about the steering wheel, he examined it and tested it. It worked perfectly.

When he started away in his car, his expression seemed to say: "These women drivers!"

MOTHER had driven home cautiously and safely, but her mind had been confused and her nerves had had a fearful shock.

"I'm not a coward," she summed up. "You know that, Betty, and it wasn't ordinary fright I felt. I can't put into words the horrible and uncanny chill of fear that completely mastered me. Why, I wouldn't drive that car of yours, my dear, or even take a ride in it, for anything in the world! And I advise you to get rid of it. I can't explain what I feel, and perhaps you think me silly."

I managed a natural laugh and told her that she certainly was silly, and that she should look upon her experience as an ordinary motorist's adventure and forget it.

As for me, I dismissed Mother's story from my mind—or tried to—and assured myself that it was merely an unpleasant coincidence, our both having had such queer

experiences with my Rolls-Royce. I continued to drive my car, although far back in my mind was always an uneasy expectation of trouble.

One day my brother Dick asked me for a loan of twenty-five dollars. He was in the habit of borrowing money from me, and I usually let him have small sums without question. But on this occasion he looked worried, and I asked him why he needed twenty-five dollars.

"Got a ticket for speeding," he said curtly.

"Is that all?" I said, laughing at him, for it wasn't his first summons to court.

He frowned angrily and his eyes held a mystified and baffled expression.

"But I *wasn't* speeding this time. That's the damn funny part of it. You see——" He hesitated. "Well, Sis, I took out your roadster for a spin. Didn't think you'd mind as you were in town. At a traffic signal I tried to slow down but that *blankety blank* car shot ahead like a bullet."

UNDER other circumstances I would have resented his using my car without permission, but now I said eagerly:

"Oh, Dick, you *must* have ignored that signal, or done something you shouldn't have done!"

"You're as bad as the cops!" he said angrily. "They thought I was lying, and they jeered at me when I told them the car ran away. But, darn it all, Sis, that's exactly what it did!"

I knew he was speaking the truth. But I would not admit it to him. I argued, saying feebly, "But I don't see——"

"Neither do I," he interrupted excitedly. "That Rolls is cuckoo. I simply couldn't stop the darn thing, and believe me, I was scared to death—I admit it frankly. I wasn't afraid of being killed—but something I can't understand or explain made me feel as weak as a baby."

It seemed that he just missed hitting a huge truck, escaped collision with a wall by a miracle, and then the cops caught him.

"There's something spooky about that car!" he finished.

I laughed and said lightly, "Nonsense! Who ever heard of an automobile being spooky?"

Inwardly I did not laugh and for a few days I did not use my car. Then one evening Dad took me to one side and said quietly:

"Betty, don't you think we'd better get rid of your Rolls and get another car?"

I could see by his face that he was holding something back. I asked what had happened.

He surprised me with this question: "Did you notice the weather today?"

I nodded my head.

"Fine and clear, wasn't it? Absolutely dry roads for the last two weeks. Couldn't imagine skidding on such roads, could you?"

"Skidding!" I was amazed, for all the highways were as dry and dusty as the desert.

"Well," Dad continued, frowning, "going about thirty an hour, on a bone-dry road, that car skidded clear across. I just missed smashing into a bus. If I had, there'd have been nothing left of me. And it wasn't ordinary, human fear I felt! It was worse than that first day with you. Betty, that car isn't safe! Heaven knows why, but the fact remains. Not for *us* at any rate. I'm going to put it on the market at once."

I agreed eagerly. I never wanted to ride in that Rolls-Royce again. But Fate decreed that I should. The next day I received a wire calling me to a hospital twenty miles away, cross-country—where a dear friend was on the verge of death. By train it would have taken half a day. It happened that our two family cars were out. There was nothing to do but drive the Rolls roadster. Heavens! How I hated even to get into the thing, but if I wanted to reach the hospital in time, I had to act quickly.

THE roadster ate up the road for about fifteen miles, and behaved beautifully. I confess that I didn't let my thoughts run ahead of me to my sick friend. I concentrated on what I was doing—driving a car that had played every one of us some queer trick, and that demanded every ounce of agility of my mind and body.

I saw a grade crossing just ahead to the right, and a sharp curve in the track. I did as I always do at one of those dangerous crossings—slowed up, strained my eyes and ears, then, hearing and seeing nothing, stepped on the gas, but only to about thirty. It sounds unbelievable, but right in the middle of that crossing, the car came to a halt, with a jerk that almost threw me out.

I was seized with such fright that I could not move a muscle. All I had to do was to jump out and leave the car to be wrecked if a train came along. Instead, I tried to press the self-starter and shift gears but my legs and arms were as if paralyzed.

At that moment I heard the whistle of an approaching train!

I remember nothing more until after the train had stopped and people were crowding around my car, excitedly seeking an explanation of my extraordinary conduct. All I could tell them was that my car had stalled and that I had almost fainted from fright. But I knew well enough that some mysterious power beyond my puny control or understanding had stalled that car in the middle of the track, and left me shaking with an unnameable fear.

Then, to the amusement of the crowd and to my own horrible embarrassment, that car started off as quietly as a lamb. I reached the hospital without mishap and found my friend out of danger, which partly soothed my overwrought nerves. But it took all my grit to drive home in that roadster. Nothing happened, but I had reached the point where no mortal power could have induced me to drive that car again.

Dad had advertised the car for sale, but a week passed without a single bid. I did not tell him about getting stalled on the grade crossing. Then, one afternoon, a strange thing happened. I was alone in the house, except for the servants. Suddenly I felt that I was being controlled as if by some hypnotic influence!

Consciously, but against my own will, I went to the garage, stood staring at the Rolls and struggling to escape back to the house. But the next instant I was in the car, with my foot on the self-starter and my hand on the gear-shift. Outwardly calm but seething inside with the most terrific fear I have ever felt, I started that car down the road.

It was like a nightmare, for I was powerless to escape from the spell that bound me. Faster and faster went the car. Soon I was doing sixty miles an hour along an embankment that I knew well. To the right the ground sloped down about fifty feet into marshy land. Suddenly the car headed for the edge of the embankment. It jolted horribly over the rough ground. The left front wheel hit a telegraph pole and I hung to the steering-wheel as the car leaped into the air, then rolled sideways down the embankment. I was thrown out and knocked senseless.

AT that time, as I knew nothing of the occult, I had never heard that just before physical dissolution the soul leaves the body, but is still earth-bound until life is actually extinct.

But while I was lying there almost at the point of death, my soul did leave my body, as surely as I have lived to write of this experience. And the eyes of my soul, as it hovered near its physical shell, witnessed a drama more vivid than anything I had ever seen in actuality.

This is what I saw: a quiet country road with fields on either side and some very old trees standing here and there. It was early dusk and the sky was faintly streaked with reds and yellows. It seemed to be a road in rural England.

By the side of the road stood a car (*my* car, which, in reality, lay shattered and useless at the bottom of the embankment) and so vivid was this picture that I saw the license number distinctly—and it was *not* an American license plate!

Two men were sitting in the roadster, deep in conversation. The man at the wheel was dark, with a thick, stocky figure. His face was singularly evil with small, dark eyes and an unhealthy complexion. He seemed to be irritated, for he kept tugging at his mustache with quick, angry gestures.

His companion was younger, a semi-blond with a frank, clean-cut face. He was calm and spoke little, although he watched the older man with a piercing intensity. Then the dark man made a violent statement which he emphasized by bringing his fist down with a bang on the steering wheel. The younger man turned pale—his face looked very white in the fading light—and said something quickly which seemed to infuriate his companion.

For a brief instant the man at the wheel stared at the other, without speaking, but his face twitched and he seemed to hesitate. Then, with a lightning movement, he reached for the side pocket in the door of the car and drew out a revolver. Quick as he was, the younger man, watchful and silent, was ready for him. The next minute they were grappling for possession of the gun.

I could see that the blond man was trying desperately to get hold of the weapon without injury to either of them. He tried with all his strength to unclinch the other man's fingers that gripped the butt of the revolver, so that it would drop to the floor of the car.

Up and down, backward and forward the revolver waved, still held in the dark man's hand. He was trying to aim it at his adversary—to turn it toward his stomach. It was a struggle to the death, but I knew, as I watched, that only one of those men *wanted* to kill; the other struggled only to

prevent any injury to either one. However, if those murderous fingers gripping the revolver butt could not be loosened, then it must be death to one or the other—to the one who was the weaker of the two!

Then—I saw, with those eyes of my detached soul, that the hand holding the gun was slowly, slowly, turning inward. Steadily it moved toward the body of its owner, and he was powerless to stop it. There was a sharp flash, and I saw the dark, evil man straighten up for a second, then fall back.

The picture gradually faded and I saw nothing more.

TWO days later, lying in a hospital bed, I regained consciousness and could think rationally once more. I recognized my parents standing near the bed, and I saw a nurse and the doctor. In reply to my feeble inquiries they told me quietly that I had been thrown from my car and knocked unconscious. (As if I didn't know that much, and oh, so much more!) I had been picked up by motorists and hurried to the hospital. I had been delirious but was now on the road to recovery.

The scene that my soul had witnessed while my body lay inert by the side of the lonely road, was still so vivid in my mind that I was sure I had talked about it in my delirium. Tremulously eager and weak from emotional strain, I asked if I had talked in delirium of two men fighting in a car.

I saw the glances exchanged between those watching me, and the doctor said, "Do you mean that you recall what you talked about while you were unconscious?"

I nodded my head and said that I knew I had talked of seeing two men struggling over a revolver until one man shot the other.

"That's very extraordinary," the doctor remarked, looking puzzled. "In all my experience I have never known a patient to recall, after regaining consciousness, the ravings of delirium."

"Did I keep repeating a certain number?" I asked anxiously.

"Yes, you did," the nurse said quickly, with a swift glance at the doctor.

"It was—'MX 2198,'" I said slowly.

For a moment there was dead silence in that hospital room. Then the nurse went to a desk and came back with a slip of paper.

"Here it is," she said gently. "You repeated it so many times that I wrote it down. It corresponds exactly."

I needed no proof of the reality of my vision, but there was something terribly uncanny in this strange corroboration of the license number on that ghost car. I felt the blood rushing to my head and thought I was going to faint. The doctor whispered to the nurse and she poured something between my lips which quieted me at once. Soon I fell into a profound and dreamless sleep.

As the days passed and I slowly regained my strength, I tried to talk to the nurse about what I had seen when I lay unconscious by the roadside. But she would not let me talk, and when I grew restive she always gave me a sedative. It is a wonder that I recovered as rapidly as I did, for my mind and soul were in turmoil.

The day I returned home from the hospital, Dad and I had a heart-to-heart talk. Not only did he understand all the mental perturbation I had suffered, but he shared my intense desire to investigate the mysterious phenomenon of that fatal Rolls-Royce. Mother, of course, was taken into our confidence when we decided that we must go at once to England.

Money and wire-pulling can accomplish a good deal, even at the eleventh hour, and we sailed on one of the larger steamers two days later.

On reaching London, we went straight to the Automobile License Bureau. We discovered that the number "MX 2198" had been issued in 1924 to a Mr. Bernard Stanley, with an address at Surbiton, a town near London. The license, however, had not been renewed after that year. The next step was to find Mr. Stanley of Surbiton, and this we set out to do the next day.

THE address proved to be a large and well-kept house. The servant who answered our ring told us that Mr. Stanley no longer lived there. We asked for a forwarding address, and the maid, after some hesitation, ushered us into the presence of her mistress, a gracious lady who asked if we were friends of Mr. Stanley. Dad told her frankly that we had never met Mr. Stanley but that it was highly important for us to find him.

"I am sorry," the lady said gently, "but Mr. Stanley died two years ago. We are distant relatives of his."

It may have been her voice or it may have been an expression in her eyes that quickened my intuition. But the conviction that seized me was so impelling that without hesitation I said quickly, looking

her squarely in the eyes: "Did he die a violent death?"

She drew back a little, surprised and startled, but she said quietly, "Yes, he did, although I cannot understand by what right you are questioning me."

"Oh, please," I said eagerly, "believe me when I say that we are here on a very serious mission. Later we will explain. But you must tell me," I rushed on—"was he shot in his own automobile?"

Her face paled and she stared at me and at Father. Evidently she was convinced of our sincerity, for she answered that her cousin had been killed in his own car.

I quivered with excitement—now I *knew* who was the man I had seen shot. But I must find out who the other man was, and what had happened to him. I begged the lady to tell me if she knew of anyone who had been closely connected with the tragedy, with whom I could talk. My desperate earnestness and Dad's impressive personality must have convinced her beyond all doubt that we had very good reasons for our probing questions.

She replied, "The sister of the man who is serving a twenty-year term for the murder of Bernard Stanley, lives only a few miles from here. Her name is Eileen Bassett." Then she gave Miss Bassett's address and we departed.

I WENT alone to call on Eileen Bassett and I found her at home. She was a very charming girl, only a little older than myself. I went straight to the point and told her that I had come to talk with her regarding her brother's conviction of murder.

Her face turned so white that I thought she was going to faint, and her blue eyes grew almost black with emotion. Her lips trembled in her effort to speak, and I put my hand on her arm and asked her to sit down and listen to what I had to tell her.

As briefly as possible, I told her everything. Then I said, gently and sympathetically:

"I don't know if you will be incredulous of my story—as I would have been a short time ago—but from the bottom of my heart I want to help you to prove your brother's innocence, for I *know* what happened in that car that fatal night. I know, as surely as I know that I'm alive, that he shot Bernard Stanley in self-defense."

At that point the girl broke down and wept, assuring me between her sobs that she believed in psychic phenomena and that she thanked God for sending me to her brother's rescue.

"Never for a minute," she said earnestly, "have I doubted my brother's innocence—I mean his declaration that he shot Bernard Stanley in self-defense."

Then she told me the story. Stanley had met and fallen in love with her some four years back. He was several years her senior and had a sinister type of face, but he had fascinated her from the beginning. Even while her instinct warned her against him, another side of her nature was thrilled by his love and responded to it. Finally she had promised to marry him on a certain date—the very month that was his last on earth.

Her brother Tom had disliked Stanley and distrusted him. He did everything in his power to dissuade his sister from marrying the man, and had put many obstacles in the way of her seeing him. She had to use subterfuge to meet him, and it made her angry with her brother, whom she had always loved dearly. When she told him of her intention to marry Stanley, Tom Bassett went white to the lips and said that if she did, it would be over his dead body. (They were orphans and he was the elder.)

She regarded Tom's attitude as personal antagonism to Stanley, and she defied him to prevent her marriage. One day, when her fiancé left the Bassett home, Tom said he would ride back with him, as he wished to have a talk with him. That was the last time Eileen Bassett saw Stanley alive.

Her brother had come straight home after the shooting, told her his version of what had happened, and then had given himself up to the police. He was tried and convicted, and received a twenty-year sentence, which, to Tom Bassett, had seemed worse than hanging.

"The awful part of it for me," Eileen Bassett said, with her face drawn in pain, "is that I was the cause of the tragedy. If I had heeded my brother, he would not be serving a sentence for murder. And the strange thing is, that from the hour when he confessed to killing Stanley, I believed him absolutely. And although I would have brought Bernard back to life if I could have done so, my love for him died with him. I despised him—for Tom, wanting me to know the truth, told me why Bernard turned on him with the gun. It was because Tom had threatened, as a last resort, to tell me things he had found out about

Bernard's life—things that he knew would turn me completely against the man I had promised to marry. The rest of his story—which the jury refused to believe—was just what you have described seeing that night a few weeks ago."

I WAS deeply stirred, and filled with eagerness to free this girl's brother from an unhappy fate.

I outlined my plans, then she said: "Before going to Scotland Yard, you must give your story to the Psychical Research Society, for they will stand back of you and help you with the police. You see," she said wistfully, "we English do not scoff, as most Americans do, at spiritual manifestations. Even if, as individuals, we cannot understand or experience these things, we know that others do. We are all interested and unprejudiced, when it comes to psychic phenomena. The Society will not scoff at your testimony."

"They will not dare!" I cried excitedly. "My inmost soul told me the first time that I drove the Rolls-Royce roadster, that something uncanny had come into my prosaic life—and the feeling grew and grew until the final catastrophe. I don't understand why the evil spirit of Bernard Stanley tried so hard to destroy me, but I do know that he failed, and that I have it in my power to right a great wrong."

Dad and I got a letter of introduction to a certain peer prominent in the Psychical Research Society, and his interest in my story and his full acceptance of it were very inspiring. Perhaps his chief interest lay in the fact that I had contributed another bit of evidence for the Society, but he was only too glad to help us prove Tom Bassett's innocence.

This man—his name is well known throughout the world—accompanied us to Scotland Yard and into the rather plain office of the Chief.

For the third time in as many days, I related the story of the Rolls-Royce roadster, of my vision and of my purpose in coming to England—and of my added purpose in proving that Tom Bassett had shot Bernard Stanley in self-defense.

I knew as I talked, that the Chief—a kindly, humane man—was politely incredulous, although believing in my sincerity.

When I had finished, he asked quietly, "Had you ever seen either Bassett or Stanley before the night when you say you saw them fighting over a gun in the roadster?"

"Never," I told him quickly. "But their faces were indelibly stamped on my memory that night. I could never forget either of them."

The Chief gave an order over the telephone in a low voice; then he looked from me to Dad, and said slowly:

"I remember that case. As far as we knew, Bassett was a fine young chap. But when a man testifies that he killed another man to prevent that man killing him, and when there isn't a single witness, it's not so easy to convince a jury that the accused individual is telling the truth. But the case puzzled me, and I felt very sorry for young Bassett."

At that point a man entered and laid some papers on the Chief's desk. The latter turned to me, saying that he was going to show me twenty-five photographs of different men, and that one of them was the picture of one of the men I had seen in my vision.

"See if you can pick him out, Miss," he said, handing me a package of photographs.

I examined them, first rapidly, with a fast-beating heart, then more slowly, fingering each one with reluctant conviction that something was wrong.

Handing them back to the Chief, I said, "There is no photograph there of either Tom Bassett or Bernard Stanley."

I stared into the Chief's gray eyes with a puzzled and questioning glance. I wondered what he was up to. Then he handed me, without a word, another packet of photographs. I seized them eagerly—and on looking at the third picture in the stack, I cried out excitedly:

"That's Bernard Stanley—the man who was shot to death in his own car!"

I SAW surprise on the Chief's face, and the representative of the Psychical Research Society patted my shoulder encouragingly. Then the Chief told me that I must forgive him for playing a little trick on me, but that he had wanted to put my identification to the test.

"You can test me as much as you like," I said, laughing for sheer relief. "If you had shown me a hundred pictures, I would have picked out that man's face if it had been among them. I could never forget it, nor Tom Bassett's, either."

"Well, Miss," the Chief said kindly, "may I ask you two or three questions? You never met Miss Bassett before yesterday?"

"Never," I told him promptly.

"Did she show you any picture of her brother or did you see one in her house?"

"No, to both questions." I spoke quietly, looking into the Chief's shrewd eyes, and I knew that he believed me.

Then he said, "I'll take you to the jail where Tom Bassett is serving his term and see if you can identify him among the other prisoners."

THE next day we four (Dad, myself, the Chief and the psychic investigator) visited the prison. The details of the trip are unimportant. All that matters is that presently I found myself in a room where many prisoners were standing in rows of ten. Then I was directed to identify Tom Bassett.

Like a field-marshal inspecting troops, I walked the length of the first row. Tom Bassett was not in it. The same with the second row. I wondered if they were playing a trick on me.

Then, in the row next to the last, fifth from the far end, I came face to face with him! In that flashing second before I spoke his name aloud, impressions and thoughts tore like lightning through my brain.

There was no possible doubt that the face I stared into was that of the blond young man I had seen so plainly in my vision, but he was terribly changed. There was strength and nobility in his face, but all the youthful radiance was gone. His expression was flat, defeated, dead—and the pain of it made me catch my breath.

I turned to the others and said, "This is Tom Bassett!"

I heard excited murmurs and exclamations, but I was more intensely conscious of the look of puzzled wonder on Tom Bassett's pale face. When the situation was explained to him, his expression of utter amazement changed quickly and the tears came to his tired eyes. Then we left him, because we had work before us, out beyond the walls of that prison.

The Chief gave us advice, if not hope.

"Your identifications, Miss, would convince most people that Tom Bassett's testimony in court was gospel truth. But it takes more than a haunted car to get a man pardoned, once he's been convicted of murder. I advise you to go and see the Home Secretary. It's in his power to help you. But I'll have to warn you that there isn't much chance of his seeing the matter the way you do, Miss."

With as little delay as possible, we called on the Home Secretary, by appointment. After I had narrated my experiences in the realm of the psychic, we told of my identification of the two men.

The Home Secretary—a dark-eyed, rather stern-visaged man of about fifty—looked thoughtfully at us and said slowly:

"There is one point—an important point—in this story of the Rolls-Royce, that rather mystifies me. I cannot see exactly *why* the evil spirit of the dead man should have attempted to destroy this young lady."

"That's what I wondered about," I burst out eagerly. "I cannot understand why he wanted to get me out of the way."

As my glance turned to the member of the psychic society who had accompanied us on our important mission, I saw his face light up with enthusiasm.

He said eagerly: "If every psychic phenomenon were as easy to explain as the point you have raised, all the world would accept our beliefs." He glanced from the Home Secretary to me. "This young lady is what is called a 'sensitive.' I realized the moment I saw her, that she was psychic. The evil spirit of Bernard Stanley knew that sooner or later she would discover the truth about the car in her possession. He determined to kill her. In the final catastrophe he nearly succeeded in his evil purpose, for her soul did leave her body and it was in that moment that everything was revealed to her."

I stared at him, amazed at the simplicity and clarity of his explanation. Then an astounding thing occurred. The Home Secretary told us that he had always been profoundly interested in psychical research and had followed the activities of the Society in London. He was absolutely convinced, he said, of the innocence of Tom Bassett.

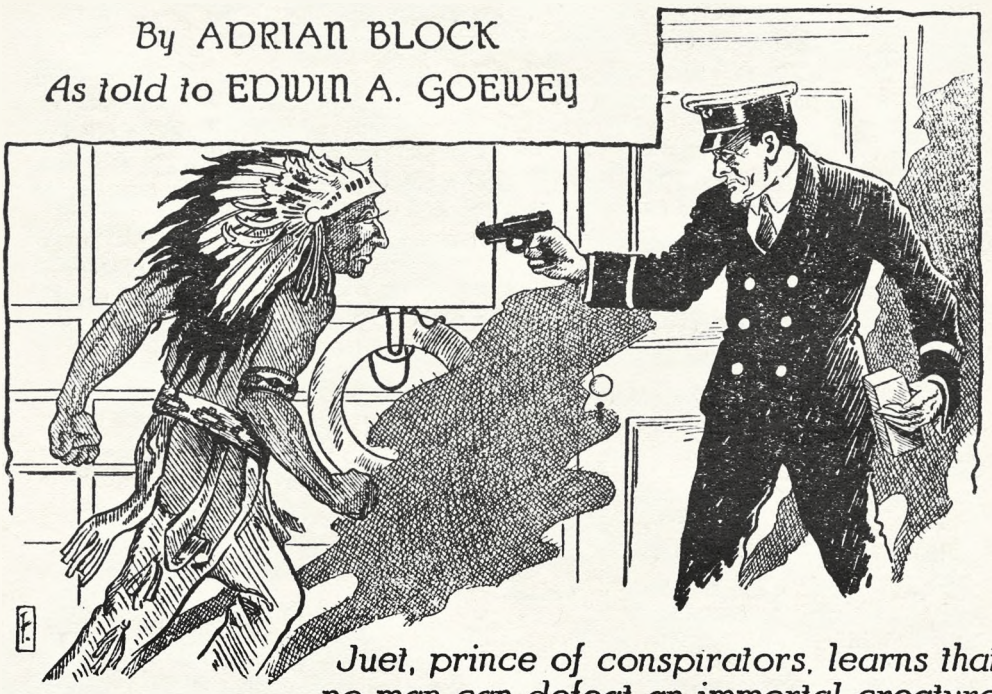
"Such a belief," he ended quietly, "and such a statement as you have made, are obviously outside the scope of English law. But feeling and believing as I do, I shall urgently advise His Majesty to pardon the young man."

And so it came about that full pardon was granted by the King to Tom Bassett. He was once more a free man, although he would have to bear the cross of a tragic memory to the end. But as the years have passed, the cross has grown less heavy. Thank Heaven I have done my small part in bringing happiness into his life, for—Tom and I were married about a year after his release from prison—after his new lease on life, which he insists he owes to me.

When the RED GODS Call

By ADRIAN BLOCK

As told to EDWIN A. GOEWEY



Juet, prince of conspirators, learns that no man can defeat an immortal creature

GEOFFREY JUET, my arch enemy, was determined that I should never come into possession of the immense fortune of Sir Lionel Juet; and as my title to the estate was dependent upon a certain ancient map, he was ready even to commit murder in order to get the chart into his hands and destroy it. Having failed repeatedly to wrest it from me by violence, he kidnaped my sister Edith and threatened to kill her unless I gave up the map.

All the servants except Jason, the butler, had been frightened away from my Long Island home, The Pines, and there was no one to help me but Bruce Dyke, my sister's fiancé, and Talbot, his man. And I knew that Geoffrey was in command of a large band of desperadoes and gunmen!

When I was on the verge of despair, Paw-te-won, the phantom protector of my family, appeared to me.

AS I had followed the specter several times without harm coming to me, I was the first to recover my nerve.

"Quick!" I cried, snatching up an automatic and a handful of cartridges—"arm yourselves and follow me. Paw-te-won intends to lead us to Edith; I'm certain of it."

The others did as I directed, and stumbled along at my heels. We passed through the hallway and out upon the veranda. The phantom stood at the foot of the steps, but turned and moved away when it noted our appearance.

"Where—where are we going?" gasped Talbot.

"For God's sake, don't ask questions but come along!" I answered. "We've got to see this through."

Dyke quickened his steps until he had caught up with me, but his man continued to trail behind.

Swinging from the driveway, Paw-te-won led us to the garage. I understood. The specter intended either to take us on a considerable journey or else desired we use a car for the purpose of making greater speed. I was too amazed at the turn events had taken to think clearly. But I was determined to follow blindly the phantom's lead, believing implicitly it would bring us to my imprisoned sister.

Within a few minutes I had backed a car into the open and whirled it about; then I shouted for the others to join me. With a

leap Dyke was at my side. Talbot was a bit more reluctant. But he was game and took his place in the rear, at the same time cautioning us to hold our weapons ready for instant use.

Next, with a suddenness which sent me chill all over, I realized I had lost sight of Paw-te-won in the surrounding blackness! The night was overcast, shutting out any hint of moonlight, and the sticky heaviness of the air indicated we were likely to run into a storm.

But, as I set the car in motion and switched on the lights, the phantom was silhouetted in the glare. Increasing our speed, I made for it. Paw-te-won turned and ran out into the highway, then veered and headed westward—toward the great bay along the south shore, where I long had believed that Geoffrey had his hide-out.

ONCE on the broad road, I forced the machine to a swifter pace, and pulled alongside Paw-te-won. But never did I draw a foot ahead of the phantom. It was able to cover ground as fast as the machine. Now and again we passed other cars. I then was glad it was dark and that a gentle rain had begun to fall. For these things probably prevented other drivers from noting the specter racing beside us—and we were upon too serious a mission to be annoyed by persons whose curiosity might be aroused at the sight of the Indian.

Finally we reached a sparsely settled district within a half mile of the bay. Paw-te-won raised his hand, crossed in front of the car and slowed his pace to a mere jog. Comprehending his purpose, I brought the machine to a halt in the shadows cast by a clump of shrubbery, and turned off the lights. None of us had spoken during the ride. But now I whispered to the others to bring their weapons and follow me.

When we leaped to the roadway, I could just make out our phantom guide, who immediately turned and led us in the direction of the water-front. But once we had left the highway behind and were moving through the growth of timber and brush, the queer greenish light I had noted on previous occasions began to radiate from the specter, making him fully visible.

I caught gasps from my companions and muttered a few words of encouragement, but never faltered in keeping step with the apparition. I didn't dare betray the slightest sign of hesitancy, for I sensed their feelings. As long as I kept plunging ahead, they would fight down their fear and trail doggedly along with me.

It was not until we had almost reached the shore that my dulled wits grasped Paw-te-won's purpose. By a short cut he was leading us to the wharf where my motor-boat was tied up!

In a few words I confided my surmise to the others. They at once moved up closer, and Dyke spoke.

"If, as you believe, this . . . Indian is leading us to the place where Edith is being held, it must be on one of the islands."

"I think so."

"Looks as if I was right then," interrupted Talbot, striving to keep his voice even. "Geoffrey's hide-out is here in the big bay."

Before I could reply, we reached the wharf. The phantom pointed toward my boat. Followed by my friends, I jumped aboard, told Dyke to start the engine, and then turned to look for Paw-te-won. For a moment I failed to see him, and again my heart sank.

But almost upon the instant he appeared from out the shadows along the shore, paddling a canoe! Despite the weird happenings of my previous excursions with him, I was amazed. But I made no comment. The others, no doubt, were too stupefied to speak.

As the wraith of the Algonquin pushed his craft out into the waters, I grasped the wheel and swung my boat about and followed, slowly and with motor throttled down so as to make the least noise possible. If, as I was morally certain, we were headed for the place where my sister was being kept a prisoner, I didn't intend to make any undue sound which would warn her captors of our approach.

By this time the rain had increased from a drizzle to a steady, light fall. I was not sorry, for I figured it probably would cause Geoffrey and his men to keep under cover.

I was but slightly acquainted with the bay, and so made no effort to do anything more than keep close to the canoe; the greenish light continued to surround the phantom, enabling me to do this.

FOR perhaps an hour we zigzagged about among the islands. Occasionally I detected lights, indicating human habitations. For the most part, however, land was discernible only because it loomed blacker than the surrounding darkness. Without the guidance of the specter, we surely would have run aground.

Finally the canoe turned sharply in the

direction of the opening to the sea and headed directly toward a great, black mass which appeared literally to rise out of the water—an island.

"This is probably the end of our journey!" I said to my companions, in a hoarse whisper. "Get ready!"

The weird light had come to a pause. I knew Paw-te-won had beached his craft; so I cut off my power, turned my boat and permitted it to drift to the sandy shore, stern first. We jumped out, carrying a rope, with which we made fast the craft to a stunted oak.

The rain had again dropped off to a drizzle. We could see Paw-te-won quite plainly now, standing at the edge of what appeared to be a considerable stretch of woodland. The trees, in places, extended almost to the water's edge.

"Follow me—and have your weapons ready," I whispered. "I'm certain we're close to Geoffrey's hide-out—and the battle may start any minute."

The specter raised an arm, turned and bent low, then started off through the wood. We trailed it, doing our best to make no noise, for we hadn't the faintest notion when we would stumble upon our enemies. However, the rain had so dampened everything that only infrequently did I hear any sound behind me, such as the breaking of twigs beneath my companions' feet.

Our trek was brief. With a suddenness which startled us all, we emerged from the miniature forest and found ourselves upon the edge of a clearing. We noted lights which, we judged, marked the building in which were hidden Geoffrey and his men—and Edith.

Glancing about, I failed to see the phantom. I supposed he had gone ahead, so I stepped from the brush, prepared to follow. But, upon the instant, a dark shadow loomed up directly before me and a voice rasped, "Who's that?"

"One of Geoffrey's sentinels!" I thought.

AND I went dead cold, too numb to move. My tongue seemed to swell and choke me.

With a muttered oath the man advanced cautiously, then stopped, as though uncertain whether he actually had seen anyone. I imagined I could see the barrel of a gun pointed toward me.

Realizing the crisis had come, I set myself. And, somehow, my strength seemed to return. With a careful, deliberate movement I raised my revolver, intending to shoot him unless he came sufficiently close for me to leap upon him and try to disarm him.

But, as I crouched, waiting for his next move, I saw the greenish light which indicated the presence of Paw-te-won—behind the sentry!

Before I could more than gasp, the shadows merged and I heard a crash as the unknown man went down. Instantly I plunged ahead and leaped upon him, grasping his throat to prevent an outcry. As we closed, the phantom slipped away. Over and over I rolled with my antagonist. We struck, clawed and kicked, but I clung to my weapon and finally managed to bring it smashing down upon his head.

He groaned and his hold on me relaxed. Then Dyke and Talbot came to my assistance, and we bound and gagged the man and tossed him into the brush. Ahead, in the direction of the lights, I thought I saw a greenish glow.

"Come on," I said. "There is probably a cabin there—and Geoffrey and the others. If we can surprise them, we may catch them unarmed. If they resist, shoot to kill! I'll find Edith; you two fight the others off."

WITH pistols held ready, we ran across the sands. Soon a building loomed up before us. We slackened pace, preparatory to creeping to the windows from which the lights shone. But, as we did so, a series of wild yells came from behind us. They meant but one thing. Our prisoner had managed to rid himself of the gag and was crying an alarm.

"Down! Keep out of sight," I gasped.

The door of the shack was thrown wide and several men dashed into the open. Behind them, silhouetted in the light, I saw the gigantic form of Geoffrey, shaking his fists above his head and shouting orders.

"Shoot!" I ordered.

Our weapons began to bark and two men fell. I fired at Geoffrey. But my hand must have shaken, for he leaped from the doorway and ran around the building. Then bullets began singing over our heads. We fired another round. Two more men slumped.

Then came an agonizing thought. Geoffrey was making his way inside the cabin by a rear door—to carry Edith away—or to kill her!

"Hurry!" I shrieked. "Get 'em at close quarters."

We sprang to our feet, firing as we ran.

The men before us broke and made for cover. Forgetting everything else, I dashed inside the cabin. It was empty. The rear door was open.

Then I caught the piercing cry of a woman—Edith's probably!

In a few bounds I passed through the doorway and was racing down the hill behind the shack. Below, I could hear the *chug, chug* of an engine. Some of the band were trying to escape in a motor-boat and take my sister with them! I increased my speed, rounded a growth of brush and fairly bumped into a struggling couple.

THE size of the man indicated Geoffrey. I hurled myself upon him. But he released his burden, pushed me back, then felled me with a blow, full upon the forehead, when I attempted to close with him again.

"Help, help!" I recognized Edith's voice and staggered toward where she lay. Then came another sound—the clatter of feet racing across wooden planks. Swinging about, I stumbled after Geoffrey, at the same time snatching my other pistol from my pocket. I reached the edge of a pier. I could just discern the outline of a boat, with two men in it.

"Let 'er go, Tom," the larger cried, then huddled down so I could not see him. I fired at the other. A wild yell, from a man sorely wounded, came echoing back. Then the boat disappeared in the darkness. My arch enemy had escaped me!

Hurrying up the bank, I found Edith, almost delirious with fright, but upon her feet. She recognized me and after a passionate greeting—tears and sobs all but choking her words of joy—she permitted me to lead her back to the cabin.

There I found Talbot and Dyke with three prisoners whom they had disarmed. Edith threw herself into her lover's arms, and together they went outside, leaving Jack and me to watch the captured men. We proceeded to tie them with ropes made of strips of bedding. After that, we located and brought to the shack the bandits who had been wounded. And it was not until this labor was completed that I realized the phantom Algonquin had disappeared with the beginning of the attack. I spoke of this to Talbot, but he made no reply. He was probably glad to be rid of the uncanny presence which was utterly beyond his ability to comprehend.

The remainder of the night's adventures can be told in a few sentences. On questioning the prisoners, I learned that all of Geoffrey's band, with the exception of Loftus, were in the cabin. It was the latter whom I had shot. I wondered if I had killed him. If not, Geoffrey would probably spirit him away to some new hide-out and care for him. In such an event, my most dangerous enemy would again be assisted by a clever and resourceful confederate, if he decided to resume his attacks upon me. And I had no doubt that he would renew the battle.

When the first pink streaks of the new day were visible above the tree tops, I sent Dyke and Edith to the mainland with instructions to notify the authorities of the kidnaping and rescue, and to ask the police to come and relieve us of our prisoners. Talbot and I stood guard until help arrived, meantime questioning the men and obtaining considerable information which we repeated to the authorities.

Edith and Dyke were still up when we arrived at The Pines, and my friend called me aside and informed me the figure of Paw-te-won was in its accustomed place in the huge old painting in the library. Accepting Talbot's offer to remain on guard until relieved, the rest of us retired for a few hours of much-needed sleep.

I was the first to leave my room—somewhere around ten o'clock—and found Talbot, wide awake, just outside the door of Edith's room. He reported that nothing out of the ordinary had occurred since I left him and that his dog, which had roamed through the house, had displayed no signs of uneasiness.

Sending him to bed, I called Jason, the only servant left in the house, and told him to do what he could to prepare a makeshift breakfast. That meal, to which my sister—fully recovered from her misadventure, and in high spirits—sat down with Dyke and me, was the jolliest meal eaten in the house for many days.

OF course, we all expressed regret that Geoffrey had escaped, and we agreed that undoubtedly he would make further attempts to obtain the Juet fortune. But with his island hide-out uncovered and his band scattered, it appeared reasonable to believe he would be unable to molest us for a while. This thought added to our spirits, as well as the knowledge that the parchment was positively beyond his reach and that thereafter Dyke and I would be sufficiently near Edith

at all times to prevent a second kidnaping attempt.

It was well along toward noon when a local police officer arrived and directed that we accompany him to the county-seat to appear against the prisoners at their preliminary hearing. What he told us was both interesting and enlightening. No trace of Geoffrey or Loftus, or of the boat in which they had fled, had been uncovered. We therefore surmised that they had made their way to some point close to New York where they had hidden the boat and then gone on to the city by other means. Once there, it would be comparatively easy for them to hide away until they were ready to leave for some other country—or, at least, until the hue and cry for them had subsided somewhat.

I WAS inclined to think the precious pair would lie low for some weeks, and then make their way to England, where Juet would try some new scheme to block me from obtaining Sir Lionel's fortune.

The county officer reported that all the men in the hospital would recover, though two were severely wounded, and it would be some time before they could be brought into court and arraigned. They and the other prisoners were without funds, and all had confessed freely, in the hope of lightening their punishment. Without exception they were from New York's underworld—some of them former convicts—and had been recruited by Loftus for his chief's desperate enterprise.

None of them had ever really understood what Geoffrey was trying to accomplish, but they had been led to believe that he had expected to steal a great sum of money kept in a safe at The Pines. All had been promised rewards running into the thousands if he was successful. While at the island hideout, he had kept them supplied with liquor, fed them well and given them small sums so they could gamble in their idle periods. This had kept them from becoming impatient because of the delay in obtaining the expected funds.

Taking Talbot with us, Dyke, Edith and I accompanied the officer to the court. When the prisoners were arraigned, I gave my evidence. What I told was the truth—but not all of it. After describing the battle and the escape of Geoffrey and Loftus, I explained that the ringleader was a contestant for a fortune willed me by his uncle, Sir Lionel Juet, of London. His reason for kidnaping my sister, I said, was that he might force me to surrender a document which would establish my claim when the case came before the English probate courts. Concerning my previous experiences with Geoffrey I told but little, and I made no reference to the supernatural happenings with which the case had been surrounded. I was questioned briefly concerning the attempts to burglarize the house on two occasions. Dyke and Talbot confirmed my testimony, and Edith told how she was kidnaped and where she was kept a prisoner.

Obviously the full confessions made and signed by the prisoners, which had been submitted to the Judge earlier in the day, had told him all he desired to know concerning the criminals' side of the affair.

After pleading guilty, the prisoners were remanded to jail. The county authorities believed the New York police would be able to apprehend the missing principals. I, however, entertained no such hope.

Leaving the court, we motored directly to New York City, where I sent a cable to the late Sir Lionel's lawyer, the Honorable Sydney Bayfield, at the Australian address he had given me. In this I stated I had recovered the Block portion of the map, that it was in a bank vault and that I had been prevented from communicating with him previously because of Geoffrey's interference. I added that he had disappeared and I was inclined to believe he would return to England, preparatory to making a legal fight there.

This much, I felt, was sufficient to awaken Bayfield's keenest interest and to cause him to carry out such arrangements as he might think necessary to balk any legal move Geoffrey might make. The remainder of my story could wait until I told it to him, face to face. Even then I doubted if he would be able to credit my tale in its entirety.

MY one regret was that considerable time must elapse, even though Geoffrey did not make a legal fight, before the property left by Sir Lionel would be turned over to me. The family funds were running very low, and interest charges on mortgages and other debts were steadily piling up. Before long, I must meet some of the financial obligations my father had left. My plan was to continue to keep Edith and Dyke in the dark—unless some pressing circumstance forced me to take them into my confidence—and borrow the necessary sums from close friends.

Even if I were compelled to tell my sister the truth now, it would not create the same situation that would have resulted a few weeks previous. For there no longer remained a doubt I would obtain a great fortune, and she would be able to marry Dyke, not as a penniless girl but as an equal sharer with me in more wealth than my father had possessed in his most prosperous days.

Moreover, Dame Fortune came to my rescue and once again favored me when I least expected to have good luck thrust upon me. And her favor promised to save me from borrowing — something I long had dreaded. Just before the close of the week, I received a cable from Bayfield in answer to mine. Not only did it cause surprise and general rejoicing, but it made necessary a complete recasting of my plans.

It stated that, because of unanticipated conditions, he would be able to finish his mission in Australia far sooner than he had believed possible, and that he was planning to return home within the month. He expressed gratification that I had recovered the parchment and suggested that, as soon as convenient, I start for England, bringing it with me. Also he assured me he would be able to defeat any legal action Geoffrey might undertake.

I was only too glad to follow the barrister's advice and leave America speedily. In the first place, I hoped to reach London before my enemy arrived there. I considered it unlikely he would learn of Bayfield's change of plans—and, therefore, he would probably await Loftus' recovery before starting for England. In his schemes he was certain to require the assistance of his resourceful confederate. Furthermore, the sooner I arrived in London and complied with the terms of the will, the sooner the much-needed fortune would be placed at my disposal.

Dyke and Edith were as enthusiastic as I, upon reading the cable from Australia, and they agreed with me that there was every reason for my reaching England by the time the barrister arrived there. Of course, it was taken for granted that this time my sister would go with me, and Dyke not only insisted on accompanying us but announced that he intended to take Talbot along, too.

We were seated in the library when this decision was reached and I nodded toward Paw-te-won's picture, saying, "I wonder if our guardian will remain in his frame all the time we are away."

"Just what do you mean?" questioned Edith.

"I don't want to alarm any of you," I said, "but I have a feeling that matters are not going to progress as smoothly as we would wish."

"You mean Geoffrey will interfere again?" asked Dyke.

"Yes. And it behooves all of us to keep on our guard at all times. Until I actually have taken possession of Sir Lionel's fortune I shall feel uneasy."

"That was the reason I suggested taking Talbot along," said Dyke. "He will continue to act as a special guard for all of us. But why your remark concerning the—Indian?"

"Something tells me we shall encounter Geoffrey again—in the not distant future. By this time he must be desperate, to the point of frenzy, because of the repeated failure of his efforts to obtain the map. No telling what he may attempt as a last-minute move to thwart us! Such a diabolical scoundrel wouldn't hesitate to try murder."

"But Paw-te-won?" questioned Dyke.

"I think you have guessed my thought. The Algonquin has stood by us so long I'm certain he will not desert us now. If Geoffrey again succeeds in outwitting us, I believe the specter will come to our assistance —in London—anywhere."

NEXT day, while the others packed, I visited the judge who had presided at the arraignment of Geoffrey's band and explained the imperative need for all of us to hasten to England. He assured me our sworn depositions would be sufficient to hold all the prisoners—including the wounded men—and he agreed not to schedule their trials until I cabled him the date of our return to America.

Exactly three days after receiving Bayfield's message we were on board the *Beuratania,* bound for England, and the precious parchment was locked securely in the ship's vault.

However, because of the number of tourists anxious to get to Europe at that particular time, and the late date on which we had applied for accommodations, we had been unable to obtain four cabins together. We did get three in a row, though. And, as a precautionary measure, Edith occupied the center one of these, with Dyke's room on one side and Talbot's on the other. My cabin was on the same deck but well toward

the stern of the luxuriously furnished ship.

Knowing the map was in a safe place and believing it reasonably certain Geoffrey had not learned of our departure, I thought we had nothing to fear during the journey across. However, my recent unfortunate experiences had made me wary and during the first day out I spent most of my time in making inquiries of the purser and stewards, and in studying my fellow passengers.

I saw none who bore the slightest resemblance to my enemy, and learned nothing to indicate he might be on board. My own immediate neighbors surely were above suspicion. The cabin on one side of mine was occupied by two middle-aged school teachers, while an old man, who kept almost entirely to himself, occupied the other.

WITH my fears allayed—and able to assure the others we had escaped our enemy—I was able to enjoy the remainder of the trip to the utmost. The weather was ideal, with days not too hot and nights not too cool, and I kept in the open the greater part of the time, recuperating from my recent racking experiences which had taken a considerable toll of my strength and vitality. Edith and Dyke were sufficient unto themselves, playing at their love game which had been interrupted by Geoffrey's attacks, while Talbot, to whom endless stretches of rolling waters meant less than nothing, killed much of his time in the card room or sleeping in a deck chair.

But, all too soon, the lazy, pleasant trip approached its end. We neared the English coast considerably ahead of the scheduled time, and there was more than the usual hustle, bustle and excitement on the evening of our fifth day out, when word was passed that we would arrive at Southampton early next morning instead of at noon. We packed our possessions and retired a bit early, for we intended to be among the first ashore and to start for London without delay.

I had said nothing concerning the parchment to the others, letting them suppose I would not take it from the vault until immediately before leaving the boat. But, knowing the excited throng which always besieges the purser and his assistants to reclaim their valuables in the final hours of a journey, I dreaded the possibility that, through a mistake, my package would get into other hands.

Also, I entertained another fear, one which had come to me within the last twenty-four hours. It was possible that Geoffrey had learned of our departure and the vessel we had taken, and had cabled to agents in England to rob me of the map.

These things caused me to take extra precautions to protect the parchment. My plan was to apply to the purser late that night, remove the steel box to my cabin and sew it inside my vest. This scheme, I felt certain, would prevent it from being stolen from me even should I be forced into a crowd of elbowing strangers.

IT was just before midnight when I recovered the steel container. However, I did not return to my cabin until another hour had passed, but smoked and chatted with the purser, an unusually intelligent fellow with whom I had become very friendly.

After a final good night I left him for my quarters, holding the box, securely gripped, beneath my coat. The decks were practically deserted except for some scattered members of the crew, and I reached my cabin without being accosted by anyone.

Securing the door, I opened the container, took out the silken bundle and unwrapped it. The parchment was there—safe. Replacing everything, I put the box on the bed and removed my coat and vest, preparatory to sewing the parcel in.

But, at that moment, there came a knock upon the door. Wondering a bit but thinking my late visitor was Dyke or Talbot, I crossed the cabin and asked who was outside.

"Wireless message for Adrian Block," was the reply.

Probably a cablegram from Bayfield, relayed by Jason, I thought.

Unlocking the door, I threw it open. A man in uniform, with lowered head, pushed inside. Instantly thinking of the box, I put out a hand to detain him. The next second I staggered back! The intruder had raised his head.

I was staring, speechless and numb, into the leering face of Geoffrey Juet! And an automatic covered me.

"One cry—and I'll kill you like a rat!" he snarled. "You thought you'd beaten me, eh? I'm never beaten. I followed you aboard; I saw you when you placed a box in the purser's care—the other half of the map, of course."

"You're—mad," I managed to stammer.

The hateful smile of triumph never left his lips. "You have just recovered the

parchment. I'll take it," he said insolently.

"No, no. You're crazy——" I stopped, noting a sudden change in his expression. I knew what it meant. He had seen the box on the bed!

Then, before I could make a move, he was past me, quicker than the flashing dart of a cobra, and had snatched up the box. I threw myself upon him. But he hurled me aside, sending me crashing into a corner. The next instant he was gone!

With a wild cry I was after him—out of the cabin. I saw him racing down the deck toward the stern, and fairly tore after him. But he gained upon me! If he reached the row of cabins and turned out of my range of vision, I would lose him!

But—he never reached the end. Suddenly, seemingly from out of the very air, the phantom of Paw-te-won appeared, blocking the fugitive. In a flash they were at grips. I reached them just as the box clattered to the deck. Instantly I snatched it up and backed away.

LIKE maddened animals the two fought, Geoffrey striving with the fury of madness to break from the grip which held him. But he was helpless in the phantom's clutch.

The struggle was brief. Backward they tottered. They reached the rail, bent across it—then disappeared—over it!

I heard a cry—just one—the agonizing shriek of a man done to death! Then all was still.

I was tempted to rush to the rail and look below. But the sound of voices and tramping feet stayed me. Others had heard Geoffrey's death cry. Caution caused me to crouch back into the shadows.

"Man overboard! Man overboard!" came from all sides. Men of the crew and passengers rushed by me. Clutching the steel box tightly, I came from my hiding-place and mingled with those who crowded to the stern.

Others around me were but partly dressed, and so my appearance attracted no attention. I knew what the next move would be. And I wondered if even an inkling of the truth would be learned—if anyone would ascertain that the man who had gone overboard had been in my cabin.

The vessel was stopped and a life-boat lowered. But the search was in vain. I returned to my cabin—glad that I had encountered no one I knew.

The next morning we were told the man who had "fallen" overboard was one who had shipped as an assistant steward, but who had been ill almost from the moment the vessel left New York. That explained how Geoffrey had managed to keep out of sight.

It was not until we were in London next day—after I had placed the parchment in a bank vault and we had assembled in the sitting room of our quarters at The Wiltshire—that I confided to the others what had occurred the night previous.

My story was greeted with expressions of amazement. Then Edith made a suggestion; one which I should have thought of.

"Listen, Adrian. According to what Setaucus told you, if Paw-te-won ever took a human life, his likeness would disappear from the painting in the library. Cable Jason and inquire. His reply will tell us—whether Geoffrey still lives."

The answer from the old butler at The Pines was what I had expected; what I knew all of us hoped for, more than anything else just then. There was only an empty frame in the library!

That practically concludes my story—a tale of weird happenings in which I played a leading rôle but which I am utterly unable to explain.

Bayfield reached London before we had wearied of sight-seeing. I told him in detail of everything which had occurred since I last saw him, including the incident which terminated the earthly career of Geoffrey. How much he believed I never learned, for he neither disputed nor commented.

His chief interest centered in the Block portion of the map, which matched perfectly with the Juet half. I had a suspicion he didn't care how I had obtained it, or who had helped me, so long as I had recovered it.

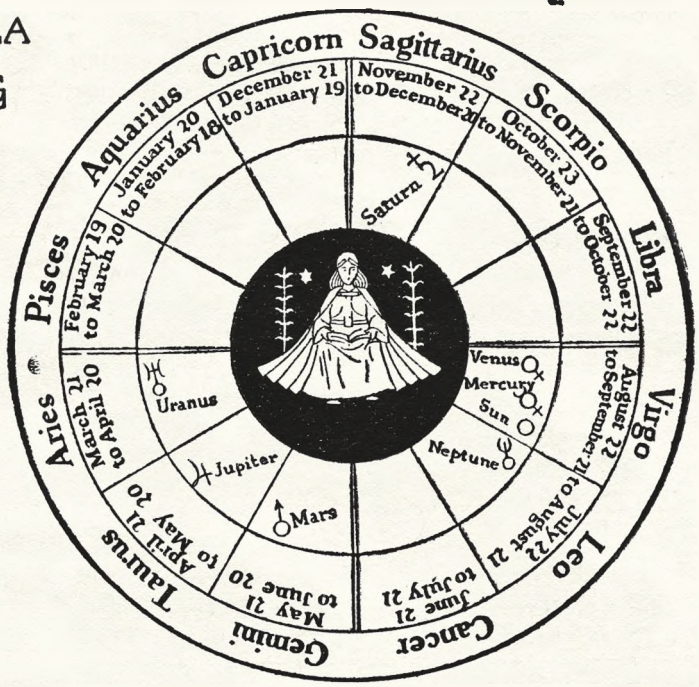
Nothing was heard from Geoffrey and I encountered no difficulty in obtaining possession of Sir Lionel's fortune. Edith and Dyke were married soon after we returned to America.

The empty frame still hangs in the library at The Pines and will continue to do so as long as I live. Beneath it I have placed the portions of the ancient map.

Old Setaucus is still alive. Occasionally I accompany him on fishing excursions. And he is the only one of those so intimately concerned in the struggle for Sir Lionel's millions with whom I discuss my amazing adventures and the part played by the specter of Paw-te-won in fulfilling the sacred pledge of his ancestors—events which are now past but which never will be forgotten—at least by me.

Were You Born *in* September?

By STELLA KING



Let the Stars Indicate Your Fate

AS THE harvest moon hangs low in the sky, the sun passes through the sign of Virgo, which it enters each year on August 23. This sign is often pictured as a woman holding in her arms a sheaf of wheat, to show that this is the harvest season, when the fruits from the virgin earth are gathered and stored for the winter. The idea of service is closely associated with Virgo, for it is only after man has tilled the earth and sown the seed that the harvest can be gathered. This thought expresses itself in the character of those born under the influence of Virgo, through their intense desire to be of service to others and to produce things which are of use rather than those which are purely ornamental.

You Virginians are practical people. You are craftsmen, utilitarians, workers. You may be idealists, but your idealism is planted firmly on the earth. You may be dreamers, but you are prepared to work to make your dreams come true. Your castles in the air are not of gossamer. You believe what you see and await performance of promised miracles. You are not necessarily narrow-minded, though, as a group, you are rather prejudiced. You are faithful, fastidious, industrious and naturally pure-minded. Being of the mercurial temperament, you are easily affected by atmosphere and suffer from moods of depression, as do all mercurial people.

Most of you have a workable philosophy which makes you bury your disappointments and sorrows in work rather than grumble about them. You rarely permit strangers to see the real *you,* which is a much more sensitive being than most people imagine.

Your ruling planet is Mercury. Your talisman is the jasper stone and your chief abilities lie in your power of analysis and discrimination.

At the present time, the sun, Venus and Mercury are all sending you favorable vibrations, which promise you success and happiness in the little things of life. These orbs move too quickly to have very much effect, but they (*Continued on page 124*)

The Meeting Place

Do Animals Come Back?

An Editorial by ROBERT NAPIER

FROM the time that man first became convinced that he had an immortal soul, he has wondered whether the lower animals also survive the dissolution of their bodies. He could not fail to observe that the individuality of beasts is almost as marked as that of human beings, and that life functions in them along lines not to be dismissed as wholly material.

The more advanced religions have pronounced that animals have no souls. But this is in the theological sense, which regards a soul as an entity capable of sin and repentance, and therefore subject to the judgment of God. A soul can be imagined as a thing apart from the spiritual activity common to all living creatures.

Side by side with the religious evidence, we encounter the fact that, in all countries, at all periods of history, there are stories of the apparitions of beasts. These have not been seen so often as the shades of our own kind, but they have been quite numerous enough to be impressive. Seemingly, the composition of such phantoms is identical, whether they walk on two legs or on four.

And, after all—why not? A ghost is not necessarily a soul.

It is significant that the most common animal specters are those of domestic pets, with horses and cattle next in order, and the predatory wild beasts third. In other words, those animals which are important to man, either because he loves or fears them. Innumerable cases of phantom dogs are on record, but we have yet to hear of the ghost of a giraffe! The Hindus, who live in terror of tigers, believe the jungle to be haunted by the shadows of departed tigers.

Remember, our knowledge of the subject rests upon

what men see, or think they see. We have no way of telling whether our dumb neighbors experience similar visions. It may well be that all apparitions have their origin in our subconscious minds, which create visible, though ethereal, bodies for vanished individualities of no matter what breed.

Probably, it is safe to answer the query in the title of this editorial as follows: IF men come back, animals do so, too.

"WHILE at a party in a small town in Pennsylvania, we were using a ouija board and securing excellent results. It began to assert that the owner of the board was secretly keeping company with a young man, and spelled out his name. This was of Polish origin, unknown to us, and unpronounceable by those operating the board. The owner said, 'Ouija, you lie.' It promptly moved up to 'NO'. While it continued to reply to questions for any other one, it refused to answer its owner, and was never known to operate for her or to reply to her questions again. Later investigation proved that the board had told the truth."

B. H. R.

Long Beach, Calif.

"My grandmother had been sick for about two years. One afternoon, as I was typewriting, the thought came to me like a flash that Grandmother was dead and her body was out at my aunt's. The very next morning I received a call from my uncle that Grandmother had died and her body was at their place. In all those two years I had never had the thought before. Was it a spirit message?"

E. F.

Pittsburgh, Pa.

"One day, while riding with my brother in his automobile, I had an overwhelming sense of fear settle upon me. I regarded this as childish imagination and attempted to remove myself from this condition. However, the matter was not easily cast aside. A short time later, my brother and I smelled smoke. Upon investigating, we discovered that the car was on fire. We succeeded in putting it out by smothering the flames with green weeds. Needless to say, whenever I now have that feeling, I heed the warning."

G. D.

Grand Rapids, Mich.

"About two years ago, I was going away to spend a week-end in the country and was planning to catch the 10:45 train. I started to get ready, and was just about to leave the house when some power seemed to draw me back.

"First I had the thought that I had forgotten something, and I unpacked my grip and found that I had put everything in. Then I searched for my keys. I had just five minutes left to catch my train and I thought I would take a taxi, but I could not get one and had to miss my train. I later learned that the 10:45 train was wrecked. Did some supernatural power prevent me from going on that train?"

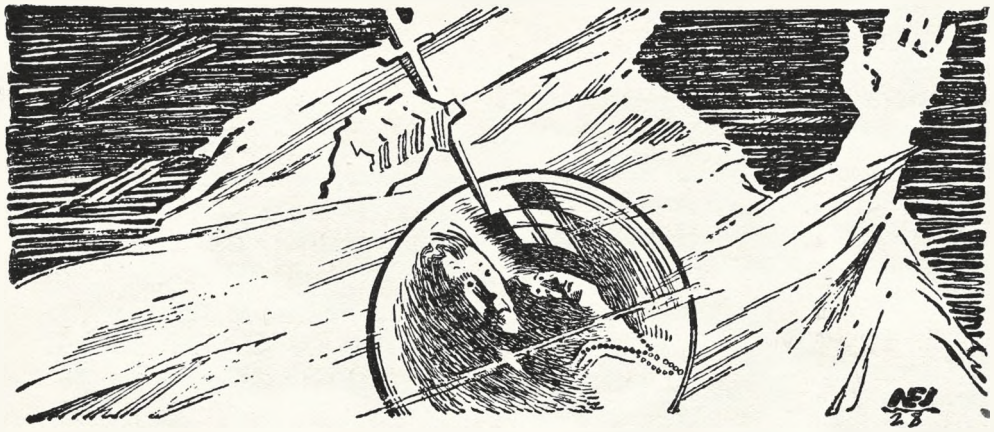
R. E. R.

Springfield, Ohio.

"Near our home in southern Louisiana is a swamp, several miles long and two-and-a-half miles across. Three years ago my cousin, who had lived with us all his life, was lost in the swamp. With only my mother and myself left in the family, no one dared go to look for him, for deadly fear of never coming out themselves.

"A few months ago, my mother got sick, and one night fell into what I thought was her death sleep. She just lay on the bed, barely breathing. I became panicky, and ran from the house to get the doctor, who lived in the nearest town on the other side of the swamp. If I went around it, I knew I would be too late. So I had to go through it, trusting to my instinct to carry me safely across the dark, clammy area.

"I plunged in, crazy with fear and anxiety. In two seconds my legs were wet to the knees, and I floundered over half-sunken logs and moss-covered hummocks. I don't know how much time passed, but little by little I realized that I was lost. I stopped and my (*Continued on page 127*)



SPIRIT TALES

Timely Topics of Current Interest

By COUNT CAGLIOSTRO

THE following account appeared shortly after the New York Republican Convention which nominated Theodore Roosevelt for Governor, and is supposed to represent the story told by the late Chauncey Depew.

It happened that Mr. Depew was called upon to deliver three important addresses in less than two weeks. He had been asked by Colonel Roosevelt to make the speech placing Roosevelt in nomination as candidate for Governor. He had been invited to speak for his State upon New York Day at Omaha, and he had been cordially asked to address the Hamilton Club when he was in Chicago on his way back from Nebraska.

It seemed to him that all three of these occasions offered excellent opportunity for him to say those things which were uppermost in his mind respecting the inevitable expansion of the influence of the United States. Nevertheless, it was difficult even for so experienced an orator to plan speeches that were to be so near together, whose central thought was to be the same, which should nevertheless differ in treatment and phraseology. This difficulty puzzled him somewhat.

On the Saturday afternoon before the Republican Convention was to meet, Mr. Depew went to the Country Club at Ardsley-on-Hudson, which was his temporary home, and after luncheon he went out upon the piazza, from which a beautiful view of the Hudson could be obtained.

By and by the vista seemed to pass away. Instead, he saw the convention hall in Saratoga as vividly as though the scene were real. He saw the delegates stroll in. He looked at the presiding officer, whose name he did not know, as he called the convention to order.

He heard that temporary chairman's speech, he saw the various details of the preliminary organization, and every aspect of the work was as vivid and distinct as though he were a part of the convention at the moment. Then, at last, he saw Mr. Quigg make the motion for the nomination of candidates and heard the brief comment with which Mr. Quigg accompanied that motion.

As a matter of fact, he did not know that Mr. Quigg was to make that motion; nevertheless, he saw him do it.

He said to himself, "The time is come for your speech placing Roosevelt in nomination."

He saw himself arise and address the Chair, heard himself deliver the speech and felt the glow of satisfaction at its reception, which is the highest reward of eloquence.

After that, the convention hall, the voices of the orators, the faces of the delegates faded away as in a dream, and Mr. Depew—

again saw the Hudson River and the distant mountains beyond. He got up, went to his room, and with his own hand wrote out the speech, exactly as he afterward delivered it.

The address which the delegates heard was the address which, by that singular preoccupancy of the mind, Mr. Depew composed on that dreamy Saturday afternoon. Moreover, at the convention, he was amazed to discover that the picture which he had seen with his mind's eye was perfectly reproduced—even to the words of the chairman and the manner and the motion of Mr. Quigg.

Mr. Depew spoke of this later as a strange mental phenomenon. He did not attempt to explain it. At other times he had composed speeches, or the general outline of one, in a single flash of inspiration—but he never before had seen or heard himself deliver an address in the manner of the experience of that September afternoon.

AFTER the Saratoga convention, Mr. Depew found himself still puzzled as to the way in which he should express what was in his mind, to his audience in Omaha. The central thought, he knew, must be like that which he uttered at Saratoga.

Suddenly the whole treatment came to him, although not the phraseology, as was the case with the first speech. Again, he went to his room and wrote out his address.

The Hamilton Club address was dictated late on the Saturday evening before he started for Omaha. A short while before dictation began, Mr. Depew had no idea of the manner in which he should treat the subject he had in mind. But two hours before he met the stenographer, the speech was outlined. Like a good workman, he knew where his tools were, and how to use them, for he speedily had the few statistics that he needed at hand, and then, pacing the floor, he dictated the speech precisely as the enthusiastic members of the Hamilton Club heard it.

The incident relating to the convention speech is the most remarkable—that he should visualize every detail, even seeing the temporary chairman and noting the manner and motion of Mr. Quigg, amazed Mr. Depew himself.

When asked if the story appearing in the newspapers did indeed represent the facts, Mr. Depew made the following statement:

The story is substantially true as written.
CHAUNCEY M. DEPEW.

Mr. Harry Price, the European representative of the American Society for Psychical Research, has been having an exciting time in London.

He sends the following account to the Society:

A few weeks ago there appeared in the papers, accounts of tappings, thumpings and rumblings which were alleged to make night—and day—hideous in the dressing-room of the Adelphi Theater occupied by "June" (Miss June Howard Tripp), the popular revue dancer now playing in *Clowns in Clover*. Being hardened to such stories, I put the tale down as a not too subtle publicity stunt, and took no notice. Soon afterwards I went abroad and when I returned I found among my press cuttings a notice in the *Daily Sketch* to the effect that the National Laboratory was going to investigate. This was indeed news to me, so I rang up June, who arranged an interview. Over a cup of tea in June's cosy dressing-room during a matinée performance, I agreed to hold a séance on the following Wednesday evening (March 14).

It was at the stage door of the Adelphi Theater in 1897 that William Terriss was murdered, and it was into the room now occupied by June that his body was carried. I interviewed a number of dressers, firemen, *et cetera,* and all declared that they had heard the strange noises. June informed me that time after time, when resting on a certain couch between the afternoon and evening performances, she had been awakened by the loud noises in her room and thumps under the couch on which she was lying. Friends who have been with her on these occasions verified her statements. Once June awoke with a scream and said her arm felt as if it had been gripped by a hand. Sure enough—I was informed—on her arm were red weals as if made by four fingers pressing tightly. A woman friend who was with her confirms this story.

On the evening of the laboratory séance, I learned to my astonishment that the Adelphi publicity man had also invited the London S. P. R. to hold a séance at the theater earlier in the evening, and had asked the press to attend my experiments which were timed for 11:30 P. M. Of course, the newspapermen confused both séances and societies in their reports. I took to the séance Lady Mooney, an amateur society *clairvoyante,* and Miss Stella C. in order to try and induce a favorable atmosphere for the experiments. But the 'atmos-

phere' was one of tobacco smoke and press men—than which anything more unpsychic I cannot imagine.

Besides the two ladies I have mentioned, there were present Miss Cicely Courtneidge, the actress; June; June's medical adviser, and a number of press men who were thoroughly in the way. The séance lasted till 2:30 A.M., and some phenomena occurred which may have been due to Stella's presence. June declares that she felt the familiar thumps under the couch on which I had asked her to sit. One very curious thing happened. During the séance there was a sudden crash from the direction of the mirror over the mantelpiece. Everyone heard it, and we speculated as to what it could be—it sounded as if something had fallen heavily. One of the press representatives who recorded the incident stated:

"The crash seemed to come from behind the mirror—the nearest person to the mirror was myself, and I was quite a yard from it."

I think there is a *prima facie* case for investigation, if the investigator can control the conditions—which should *not* include the embarrassing attentions of the theater's very active publicity department.

For the past few weeks we have been keeping observation on Douglas Drew, the 8-year-old "poltergeist boy" who was commended to us by Baron Bonde, the Secretary to the Swedish Legation. So far nothing has happened at the Laboratory where the boy spends most of his afternoons.

On February 29th we carried out an elaborate experiment in order to induce and amplify any electrical or magnetic power the boy might possess—assuming the phenomena ascribed to him are of an electrical nature. I will not detail the experiment, which necessitated our insulating the boy, who sat on a chair placed on four sheets of plate glass. This gave rise to a silly story in the American press that we had put Douglas in a glass chamber. We are continuing the experiments.

In reporting the case, one of the papers told us that "a poltergeist is a medium through whom unruly ghosts manifest themselves, the phenomena being marks left on the body."

So much for our erudite press!

Skeletons in the Closets of Famous Families

In Scotland there is a haunted Castle where drums of doom invariably foretell a death

By GORDON HILLMAN

HIGH up on the heather stands Cortachy Castle, declared to be the "most haunted" manorial seat in all Britain. This is no doubt an exaggeration, but the old, rambling Castle, home of the Earls of Airlie for generations, does boast a ghost that has appeared century in, century out, to sound the sinister doom of some member of the Ogilvie family.

All through the early annals of Scotland, Cortachy Castle seems to have been spoken of with a shudder. The tradition is, that hundreds of years ago, a Highland drummer had incurred the displeasure of a former Lord Airlie, and had been killed in a most savage and summary fashion. Stuffed head first into his own drum, he had been hurled from a turret window to his death below.

This is a mere legend, beyond hope of verification. And so is the story that the drummer threatened to haunt the family if his life were taken. And prior to the Nineteenth Century, there is only the most shadowy evidence to support the theory of the phantom drummer and his ghostly drum.

It seems a well established fact, however, that a very real and ghastly fear of the phantom has haunted the Ogilvie family, the hereditary Earls of Airlie since the early beginnings of Scottish history. No drum is kept in the Castle, none has been for centuries. There is no drummer upon the premises.

Upon Christmas Day, 1844, a Miss Dalrymple, relative of a Countess, whose castle was near Dundee, was invited to spend a few days at Cortachy Castle with the Earl and Countess of Airlie.

In the light of what subsequently happened, it is interesting to note that Miss Dalrymple had never heard of the Ogilvie legend, was not interested in the supernatural, and manifested a lively disbelief in ghosts and phantoms, historic or otherwise.

The day of her arrival was the day after Christmas, and she was given a room in the now notorious haunted turret. While dressing for dinner, she heard a strain of music under her window, which finally resolved itself into the well defined sound of a drum.

She looked out. There was no drummer in sight, but the drum still beat, not in a measured tune but a sort of ghastly monotone. She records that it made her shiver a bit.

Her maid came upstairs, and Miss Dalrymple inquired whether the drummer was a regular feature of the Castle's Christmas entertainment.

The maid turned pale, dropped the dress she was holding, and fled downstairs.

Miss Dalrymple, who seems to have been a lady not easily disturbed, wondered at the occurrence, but finished her dressing and went downstairs for dinner.

For a time she forgot all about the drummer and his eerie tune, but at dessert, she turned and asked the Earl, "My Lord, who is your drummer?"

His Lordship went a ghastly white, Lady Airlie was visibly distressed, and several of the guests looked not only embarrassed, but actually frightened.

Miss Dalrymple politely changed the topic of conversation to the weather. But afterwards, in the drawing room, she again put her question to a member of the family.

"Who," she asked, "is the drummer who played that particularly unpleasant tune outside my window?"

"What!" said young Mr. Ogilvie. "Have you never heard of the drummer?"

"And who in the world is he?" asked Miss Dalrymple.

"Why he—It—goes about the house playing his drum whenever there is a death impending in the family. The last time he was heard, was shortly before the death of the last Countess (the Earl's former wife), and that is why Lord Airlie became so pale when you mentioned it. The drummer is a very unpleasant subject in this family, I assure you."

A SUDDEN sound made Miss Dalrymple start. It was the beat of some distant drum—grim, ghastly, foreboding. She said nothing further about it, and neither did the white-lipped Mr. Ogilvie.

On the following day when she had just arisen, she again heard the drum, this time so loud that it seemed almost within her turret chamber.

Again she turned to her maid. "What's that?" she asked.

"Death, My Lady!" said the maid.

It was too much for Miss Dalrymple. She had her bags packed and left immediately.

Afterward, she was rather ashamed of herself, and seems to have told the story as a joke.

But it was very little of a joke. Almost immediately afterward, Lady Airlie, who had left the grim castle as soon as possible after the drums of doom had sounded, was found dead in her rooms at Brighton. On her desk was a paper, declaring her conviction that the drum's warning was for her.

The affair caused a good deal of talk at the time, and it was said that sheer, stark terror of the phantom drummer and his phantom drum had literally frightened Lady Airlie to death.

FIVE years later, events in the North took another ghastly turn.

A young Englishman was on his way to the Tulchan, a lonely shooting lodge belonging to the Earl of Airlie. It was half past eight at night, the wild Forfarshire moor was thick with mist, and the young Londoner was in no mood to spend the night in this desolate wilderness.

He whipped up his Highland pony, and urged his dour Scottish guide to hurry. Soon, he began to see the welcome lights blazing from the windows of the Tulchan, and breathed a hasty sigh of relief.

At that precise moment, a faint murmur of music eddied out of the mist. The sound was of a distant band, accompanied by a drum, and appeared to come from the low ridge of ground below the hunting lodge.

As he approached, it grew louder and louder, the drum drowned out the other phantom instruments, and even the hard-headed Englishman had a vague idea that the whole occurrence was eerie and unearthly.

The Tulchan was the only house within miles. All else was bracken, brown heath and bogland. It was no spot for a drummer, and certainly none for a whole band.

He asked the Scotchman what it was, and the openly apprehensive Highlander first muttered that such sounds were "no canny," and then denied having heard them at all.

He hurried the Englishman to the hunting lodge, looking fearfully over his shoulder, and when they drew rein at the Tulchan, it was only to learn that the old legend had come true again.

Lord Ogilvie (afterwards tenth Earl of Airlie), had been summoned to London, where his father, the Earl, lay dying.

On the following day, the ninth Earl breathed his last in Regent Street, London,

far away from the sound of the phantom drum.

AGAIN, the ghastly story came true, when one of the Ogilvie family went to his death in the Boer War. The drum, the Highland folk say, was heard days before the telegram announcing his death arrived.

But if the drums of death roll for the Earls of Airlie, the Earls of Strathmore have a yet more horrible secret—a secret too terrible to be told.

Not far from Cortachy Castle, in Forfarshire, stands their great house of Glamis, one of the oldest and most remarkable castles in the whole Kingdom.

Duncan was murdered there by Macbeth, the story goes, and Macbeth's shirt of mail and sword are still shown to visitors. These matters may be taken with a grain of salt; Macbeth's armor, it seems, might well be dust by now.

At any rate, the Castle is almost as old as Scottish history, blood has flowed within its walls, deeds of horror have been done there, and one Lady Glamis was actually burned to death on the joint charge of "witchcraft" and conspiracy against the life of King James V of Scotland.

Laying all these legendary facts aside, Glamis still holds its ghastly secret—a haunted room that can never be found, strange phenomena that have never been explained, an unspeakable secret that is handed down from generation to generation unto the present day.

This much is truth. In modern times, a London artist, who had the reputation of being a most cool-headed young lady, visited at Glamis. She was given very handsome rooms at the junction of the new buildings and the old. They were neither ghostly nor dark nor dusty, and the artist came down to breakfast the next morning in good spirits.

Asked how she slept, she said: "Very well thanks, up to four o'clock in the morning. But your Scottish carpenters seem to come to work very early. I suppose they put up their scaffolding quickly, though, for they are quiet now."

For a moment, her remarks produced only dead silence. Then she was told that there had been no carpenters and no scaffolding, and the request was made that she would never speak of the matter to anyone.

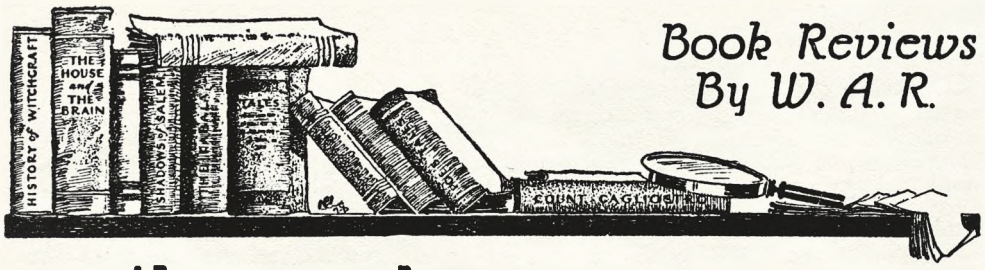
As soon as she left, she sought out information concerning the Castle. Other visitors had heard the hammering, as if of men working on a scaffold or gibbet; some had heard unearthly screams and cries for help. It was on record, also, that the late Lord Strathmore had been quietly playing cards with some guests when a fury of knocks and screams burst from the secret room.

Lord Strathmore went to a certain door, flung it open, and fell back in a dead faint. What he saw within, no one knows. When his guests reached him the door was securely locked, and to the day of his death the nobleman refused to disclose what horror the hidden chamber held.

All this interested the artistic lady, and she contrived to have a party of high-spirited friends invited to the Castle on one occasion. Together they heard the hammering, the screams, the murderous cries, and they searched the Castle high and low. Try though they might, they could not locate the room that held unknown horror, and at last fell to the expedient of hanging towels out their windows while a companion watched from the outside. The window from which no towel blew might well be the secret chamber. By this means, they finally ascertained that the room of dread must be in a great square tower that dated back a thousand years or more.

But they could not find the tower entrance. They must have come near disclosing the dread secret, though, for when they left, a stone mason was hastily summoned by the Earl of Strathmore. What he did, what he saw, no one knows, but apparently he saw too much. For the mason was bribed to secrecy, given a handsome pension, and sent away to Australia by the Strathmore family.

To this day, investigators are not welcome at the Castle, representatives of psychic societies are barred. And, in each generation, only three men know the secret of this unfathomable horror. These three are the Earl of Strathmore, the heir apparent, and the house steward. On the night the heir reaches his twenty-first birthday, he is solemnly initiated into the ghastly mystery, and then sworn to silence. Each heir has promised to tell the secret to his friends—but the promise has never been kept. Where the ghastly chamber is, what unspeakable horror it contains—are unknown to this very day.



Book Reviews
By W. A. R.

The Ghost Forum

A Mirror for Witches, by Esther Forbes; Houghton Mifflin Company, Boston and New York.

HERE is a beautifully written book, and one that contains a great deal of sound and curious lore. The reader is likely to be deceived by Miss Forbes' deliberate **naïveté** into supposing that it is all a pretty fiction. Actually, this novel—if novel it can be called—contains more truth about New England witchcraft, and recreates more artfully the hysteria of that vanished day, than any book written by an American which I can remember. Compared with it, a recent romance concerning the descendants of the Salem victims, reviewed in this magazine, was sad piffle indeed.

Quaintly archaic, the title page describes Miss Forbes' work as follows: "*A Mirror for Witches* in which is reflected the Life, Machinations, and Death of Famous *Doll Bilby*, who, with a more than *feminine perversity*, preferred a Demon to a Mortal Lover. Here is also told how and why a Righteous and Most Awful JUDGMENT befell her, destroying both Corporeal Body and Immortal Soul."

It is then set forth that Jared Bilby, captain and owner of an English brig, found himself at Mont-Hoel in Brittany, France, on a day when some two hundred devil-worshipers were burned in one great holocaust. He took pity on a wild child, whose mother had been among the slaughtered, and carried her off to the American colonies with him. Knowing no other name for her, he called her Doll. Officially she became Doll Bilby, but was more commonly spoken of, half in derision, as Bilby's Doll.

Regarding her as the spawn of a witch and a warlock, the Puritans of Cowan Corners near Salem, where she grew up, believed from the start that she was in league with the Evil One. What did Doll believe? With the finest subtlety, Esther Forbes makes it clear that the child, too, had her doubts about it. After all, she had seen her mother burned.

It would be criminal to betray the plot of this strange story. Suffice it to say that a black bull plays a part in it that is quite unforgetable. The episode of the demon lover is one of the most pathetic things in literature. A somber climax is reached when Doll is tried for her life on the charge of sorcery, with the celebrated Mr. Increase Mather present in the courtroom, two priceless judges on the bench, and a crew of the oddest witnesses whose testimony has ever been recorded.

I have a warning for those who may be led to read the book on my recommendation. If they are shrewd enough to detect the vein of genuine occultism that has been woven into the tale, they are due to be badly scared.

Cups, Wands and Swords, by Helen Simpson; Alfred A. Knopf, New York.

THIS, also, is a novel of unusual literary distinction. The characters and setting are proudly British, as against the salty Americanism of *A Mirror for Witches*. The psychic interest is less pronounced, but is of equal significance.

We are introduced at the opening of *Cups, Wands and Swords* to a group of young persons of considerable oddity. The heroine is Celia Riddle, an Australian girl recently arrived in London. The men about her include her twin brother Anthony, a melancholic Irishman named Dominick Tighe and a fairly normal Englishman, Philip Moreing. All of them are sophisticates of the post-war period. Half the value of this book, by the way, lies in the vivid picture it paints of the disillusionment and the affectations of the youth of England.

The group is amusing itself with fortune-telling cards, the (*Continued on page 128*)

Prize Winners *for the* Month

The awards to readers for opinions of GHOST STORIES, issue of June, went to:

1st award of $10.00	2nd award of $5.00	3rd award of $3.00
Mr. Walter Vierke, New York City.	**Mr. E. Clyde Thoroman Garnett, Kansas.**	**Miss June Hunter Garden City, L. I.**

Someone will collect the awards for opinions on this issue. Why not YOU?

The Letter *that* Won First Prize

IN this decade, when many men and women are gradually turning away from material matters and are striving to bridge the mysterious chasm between life and death, your magazine assists by presenting to its votaries stories and articles which tend to increase their spiritual growth. You appeal to the imagination; you appeal also to the inner emotional part of man (we call it the "soul") which is afraid of death. And, in so doing, you show that though the flesh may crumble, the spirit is ever living—the soul is immortal.

All the stories in the June issue are for the most part engrossing reading. Besides acquainting us with matters pertaining to the realms of the occult, they furnish entertaining, charming and, at times, glamorous reading.

The best story is *Pieces of Eight*, by Wilbert Wadleigh, whose two previous serials in GHOST STORIES were the incentive to my becoming a regular monthly purchaser of the magazine. There is a story! Just the opening instalment—yet it takes me far away from the cares and tribulations of this so commonplace existence and carries me on the wings of adventure. It bears a similarity to the immortal Robert Louis Stevenson's classic of romantic adventure, *Treasure Island*. Besides, the ghostly element is naturally introduced and is plausible.

The poorest story, to my mind, is *How Could It Happen—Like That?* I explain this contention by the statement that it is not sincerely narrated; the style and tone are not those of a young boy. It did not convince me.

As you ask for suggestions, I offer this: That you include in each future issue, several stories of adventure, romance and charm, with a spiritualistic and ghostly background and motif, where the settings are not confined to the United States. Why not some foreign scenes? Ghost stories, with scenes reflecting the glamor of moonlight in a Persian garden, the charm of romantic France, the exoticism of a Turkish harem, or tales with a Chinese, Arabian or South Seas locale; these I would like to see presented in the magazine.

Also stories and experiences like that narrated in *The Dark Lady of Doom*, wherein not a trace of artificiality exists, and sincerity and conviction are noteworthy.

GHOST STORIES, I think, is likely to become a creative force in psychic matters.

In closing, I would add that Robert Napier's editorials are always informative and engrossing, as are likewise the departments, particularly *Spirit Tales* and *The Meeting Place.*

WALTER VIERKE.

New York City.

Can YOU Prove *that* Ghosts Exist?

FORM YOUR OWN PSYCHIC CIRCLES

FOR the most thorough and convincing reports of results obtained by amateur investigators of psychic phenomena, GHOST STORIES will pay the following prices:

For the Best Report	**$100.00**
" " **Second Best Report**	**65.00**
" " **Third Best Report**	**35.00**

WE invite you to form your own psychic circles. The secretary of each circle should keep minutes of each meeting, and at the end of six months prepare a typewritten report (not to exceed five thousand words) from the minutes. Send in only the complete report to this office. It must be accompanied by the affidavits of at least two members, sworn to before a notary public, to the effect that a true account has been given of the events occurring at the séances held by your circle.

Reports will be purchased on the basis of the most remarkable results obtained. Should no circle succeed in demonstrating the reality of ghosts, we will, nevertheless, buy the three best reports. The one which receives the highest rating will be published in GHOST STORIES. We reserve judgment as to whether we shall publish the other two reports purchased.

The following board will pass upon the reports submitted:

FULTON OURSLER, celebrated novelist and playwright.

DOCTOR HEREWARD CARRINGTON, eminent student of psychic phenomena.

W. ADOLPHE ROBERTS, Editor of GHOST STORIES.

This offer expires at midnight, February 28th, 1929. Results will be announced as early as possible thereafter.

Were You Born in September?

(*Continued from page 111*)

improve general conditions and attract congenial people to you. This same general influence is also felt by those born under the influence of Taurus and Capricorn, since these signs vibrate in harmony with Virgo.

Jupiter, being now in the eleventh degree of Taurus, is helping those born about the first of May, September and January. If your birthday falls within a few days of these dates, you should now take every opportunity to advance your interests. Jupiter lends you optimism and clear vision and will bring you into contact with those in a position to help you.

BIRTHDAYS between the third and sixteenth of September, June, March or December are not quite so fortunate and just now it is necessary for those born on these dates to look after their health and avoid unnecessary expenditure of energy. They are susceptible to cold and should not neglect early symptoms of ill-health. Those born on the fourth, fifth or sixth of these months should consider this a period in which to mark time rather than to expand.

During the month of May and the first two weeks of June, Uranus was in the same position that he occupies at present and those who felt his influence in May will now have similar experiences. As I mentioned in a previous article, this planet always exerts a powerful effect on the life of each individual during the forty-second and forty-third years of his life, and so those who were born about the twenty-eighth of March, June, September or December forty-two years ago are likely to experience drastic changes of some nature within the next two months.

Uranus rules the nervous system and is now in Aries, the sign that rules the head and face. Consequently, any neuralgic tendency in the people whose wave-lengths correspond to this vibration is now likely to show itself. As a preventive measure, the general health should be built up and everything possible done to quiet the nerves and to overcome worry. It is because so much can be done by each individual to improve and conserve health that I mention these

(*Continued on page 126*)

(*Continued from page 124*)

exciting vibrations. Otherwise—if nothing could be done to improve a situation—it would be better not to know anything about adverse indications.

This Uranian influence will be felt particularly by those born in 1866-7, 1884-6, and 1904-6. Such people should be very conservative just now in their business affairs and should not make changes unless they are obliged to do so. In domestic relationships they must try not to be too exacting and to be quite sure of themselves before they make any definite move. Even if a love interest comes into life, as it often does under a Uranian ray, it is better not to marry while this vibration is in power. It is wiser to wait a few months until judgment is calm.

On the other hand, should you have been born in 1871, 1872 or 1898, and if your birthday happens to be about the twenty-ninth of July or November, you are now on the crest of the wave and may anticipate a change that will bring you the opportunity you have been looking for.

THE last few days of August are not very fortunate because Mars at that time opposes Saturn. There may be more accidents than usual under this vibration and those born about the fifth of September, June, March or December should be very prudent and cautious, remembering that forewarned is forearmed.

Days that are said to be generally fortunate during August and September are: August 10, 19 and 20; and September 2, 15 and 22. For the Virginians the next few weeks should be pleasant, for their lucky days include August 21, 22 and 26; and September 5, 10, 13, 14, 16, 18, 20, 21 and 26.

In an old Arabian manuscript the following days are cited as being especially fortunate as birthdays and as days upon which to engage in important undertakings: January 3 and 13; February 5 and 28; March 3, 22 and 30; April 5, 22 and 29; May 4 and 28; June 3 and 8; July 12, 15 and 18; November 13 and 19; December 23 and 26.

The list of days considered fortunate for love matters is too long to give in full, but the days in August and September are August 6, 7, 10, 11, 16, 20 and 25; September 4, 8, 17, 18 and 23. Test them for yourselves.

The Meeting Place

(*Continued from page 113*)

brain grew hazy. I stared at the black shadows around me. Then I must have fainted, for I woke up, later, to find myself clinging to the base of a tree that grew out of a dank pool.

"Before my eyes, then, I made out a dim figure. It beckoned and I followed, stumbling and slipping. The figure led me on, and when I saw the edge of the swamp, it vanished. I got to the doctor, sobbing with relief, and we drove back home. My mother lived. I never told her about seeing the figure, but I am convinced it was my cousin. No other in the Beyond could have guided me through the death swamp."

Crois, La. P. R. M.

"One morning, a few days before Christmas, 1927, I was lying in bed just making up my mind to get up, when, from out of an utterly blank state of mind, there came before me a mental picture. It was of a bedroom, a very cold room at the top of some high building. In a tumbled, uncomfortable-looking bed lay a woman whom I instantly recognized as an intimate friend. I will call her Frances.

"She is married and has a little girl, and I saw the little girl standing by the bed with an unhappy face, and gathered that she was cold and hungry, as was my friend Frances, who was evidently also quite ill. I had a sense of desertion and forgetfulness; I wished to do something for her.

"Then I had a strange sensation of leaving my body in my bed and appearing suddenly on a long flight of stairs leading up, as I knew, to this bedroom I had seen. On the first landing I met a woman, and I asked her why nobody had gone up to see my friend, who lay there sick and neglected. She shrugged her shoulders and passed by. On the next landing I found a man, walking up and down, smoking a pipe, in dressing gown and quaint smoking cap with a tassel at the side. I said the same thing to him, becoming very indignant that nobody in the house seemed to know or care that my friend lay there untended. He, too, merely shrugged his shoulders and passed on.

"So up I went, into my friend's bedroom. She was very glad to see me, and said she had been suddenly taken ill and could not

call anyone, and that her little girl had had no breakfast, and she herself was faint and weak from hunger and cold and pain. I told her I would soon have a nice breakfast ready for them both, but first set about straightening up the tumbled bed. Then the vision faded and I lay a long time wondering if it had any meaning.

"I felt an urge to write to Frances, who, since my last seeing her, had moved to another town. She wrote me in reply that on that very morning she had been in bed, had been suddenly taken ill, and that her little girl had stood around crying with hunger, she herself being too weak to call for help. The radiator was then turned off and she could not reach it to release the heat. She had been thinking of me very strongly, because I had, previously, been of some help to her in like circumstances. She wrote, also, that there was just such a man as I had seen, who was accustomed to smoke his pipe on the landing in a dressing gown and smoking cap.

"Did my spirit actually leave my body and go to see this friend, or was it a case of telepathy?"

New York City. N. K.

The Ghost Forum

(*Continued from page 120*)

suits of which are called cups, wands, swords and pentacles, instead of hearts, clubs, etc. For Celia, Dominick Tighe reads the following destiny: "A good marriage, with the Fool crossing it. Behind her, some memory that is going to work in. Seven of cups, that's vision, things seen in the glass of the spirit. Then the eight of wands, reversed, and the ace of swords; jealousy, the conception of a child. The eight of swords is fatality, that way."

The working out of this fortune makes the story. Of course, it is one of the group that Celia marries. But the real drama, the struggle and the suspense, grow out of the girl's strange psychic relationship with her brother. So close are they to one another, that Anthony cannot endure her giving herself to a husband. Then a tragic fate overtakes Anthony. It is enveloped in mystery, and the scene in which Celia solves the mystery is one of the best pieces of writing about the "supernatural" that I have read in ages. W. A. R.

REMARKABLE VALUE IN WRIST WATCHES

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With 6 Jewels... $12.50

With 15 Jewels... $16.50

JOHNSON SMITH & CO. Dept. 871 RACINE, WIS.

Rubber Chewing Gum

Price 10c Pkge. 3 for 25c P.Pd.

It is just like a regular package of chewing gum and looks so real that it fools everybody. Of course no one suspects it is not genuine until they start to chew it. There's a world of fun in this rubber chewing gum—5 sticks to the package. **Price, 10c Pkge.; 3 for 25c; 12 for 75c postpaid. JOHNSON SMITH**

INVISIBLE INK

The most confidential messages can be written with this ink, for the writing makes no mark. Cannot be seen unless you know the secret. Invaluable for many reasons. Keep your postals and other private memorandums away from prying eyes. Great fun for playing practical jokes.

Only 15c a Bottle; 3 for 40c.

JOHNSON SMITH & CO. Dept. 871 RACINE, WIS.

POCKET CIGAR LIGHTERS

You may pay more, but these two Lighters will do the work as well as the most expensive. The **"SIMPLEX"** (Illustrated on the left) sells for but **20c**; lights merely by giving the wheel a turn with the thumb. The **"AUTOMATIC"** (on right) lights automatically; press the button, the lid flies open and lights wick at same time. Better, safer and cheaper than matches. A light instantly available whenever you want it.

Prices: Simplex Lighter 20c; Automatic Lighter $1.00; extra flints for either 5c each. All postpaid.

Simplex 20c Lighter 20c

Automatic Lighter $1.00

Lover's Knot or Friendship Ring

Made of 4 strands of genuine 14K gold filled wire, woven into the True Lover's Knot, symbolic of love or friendship. Very pretty, yet not showy. Each ring made by hand by gold wire expert. It looks good and it *is* good.

Price 50c postpaid

Resurrection Plant

Great curiosity. Place in water, plant opens up and starts to grow in 20 minutes. Taken out it dries up and goes to sleep till put in water again. *10c, 3 for 25c, 75c doz.*

Great Fire Eater

A great trick by which you can apparently breathe fire from mouth, to the horror and consternation of all. Quite harmless. All apparatus necessary sent complete in box for **ONLY 30c. p. pd. JOHNSON SMITH**

SEEBACKROSCOPE

Place this clever instrument to your eye to see what is going on behind your back. Very interesting things sometimes occur when no one thinks you are looking. Just like having eyes at the back of your head.

PRICE 25c POSTPAID

SQUIRT ROSE

25c

A REAL STARTLER. This is the most popular of all squirt tricks. The flower in your coat looks so fresh and sweet that everyone is tempted to inhale the delightful perfume. Then is the moment to press the bulb. Geewhillikens. Don't they jump? There is a very long rubber tube that easily reaches to the pocket of your coat or trousers, and the bulb is large enough to make a dozen shots with one loading. **PRICE 25c each, or *3 for 65c postpaid.***

Send remittance (Postage Stamps accepted) for all articles listed above to

MAGICIAN'S BOX OF TRICKS

Apparatus and Directions for a Number of Mysterious Tricks, Enough for an Entire Evening's Entertainment..... $1.00

ANYONE CAN DO THEM

It is great fun mystifying your friends. Get this Conjurer's Cabinet, and you will be the cleverest fellow in your district. It contains the apparatus for ten first-class tricks, including The MAGIC BALL AND VASE TRICK (a wooden ball is placed inside, and upon replacing the lid, has disappeared and is found in someone else's pocket); The HINDOO TRICK CARDS (can be made to change completely no less than five times); DISAPPEARING COIN BOX (a coin, placed in the wooden box, vanishes entirely or changes into a coin of another denomination); The GLASS GOBLET TRICK (a coin is dropped into a glass of water and when the water is poured out the coin has vanished and is found somewhere else); the RIBBON FACTORY FROM THE MOUTH TRICK (a seemingly endless supply of colored paper ribbons comes out of your mouth); the DISAPPEARING HANDKERCHIEF (a handkerchief held in the hand mysteriously vanishes); the WIZARD'S RING COIN TRICK; the ENCHANTED BOTTLE (no one but yourself is able to make it lay down); the GREAT HAT AND DICE TRICK (a large dice is placed on top of a hat, disappears, and is found underneath yet no one has touched the hat), and last, but not least, the GREAT PHANTOM CARD TRICK, or two from the five leaves nothing. Full instructions are sent for performing each trick. In addition to the above, a number of other feats and illusions are fully explained for which you can easily make or procure the necessary apparatus. **Price complete $1.00 postpaid. JOHNSON SMITH & CO.**

U. S. BABY TANK

25 Cents

It goes with real Yankee Pep—by its own power

Most remarkable toy ever invented. By drawing the Tank backward, either with the hand or over the floor or table and then placing it down, it will crawl along, overcoming all obstacles, in the same lifelike manner as the larger Tank that proved so deadly in the great war. What makes it go is somewhat of a mystery, for there is no mechanism to wind up as is usually understood with mechanical toys, yet this tank will keep plodding along ten times longer than the ordinary run of toys. It will perform dozens of the most wonderful stunts; 5½ inches long. **Price only 25c prepaid. Stamps accepted.**

JOHNSON SMITH & CO.

BOYS' HAND CUFFS

65c

There is a great deal of wholesome fun and amusement to be derived from these handcuffs. Although merely a toy, they are well and strongly made, with extremely simple mechanism that can be slipped on and off in a moment. No key is required either to lock or unlock them. Just slip them over the wrists and you have your pal securely handcuffed. These Handcuffs stand Law and Order and, in the hands of the boy, inspire him with respect for Civic Virtues. They are entirely nickel-plated all over. **Price only 65c pair postpaid.**

Female SEX Indicator 25c Male Sex Indicator

Hold the **MAGIC INDICATOR** over a man's hand—instantly it moves in a straight line, backward and forward. Hold it over a woman's hand and it describes a complete and ominous circle. The same action can be obtained over a letter written by a man or woman, etc. It is fascinating; baffling. We have never been able to figure out how it's done—but we've never seen it fail. Many novel and entertaining feats may be performed with the Sex Indicator. For example, similar results can be obtained with animals, cats, dogs, rabbits, over birds, chickens, canaries, etc. Also used to predetermine the sex of chickens and birds, etc. In fact it is sold as a patented egg tester in Europe. **Price 25c, or 3 for 65c, postpaid.**

DISSOLVING VIEWS

50c

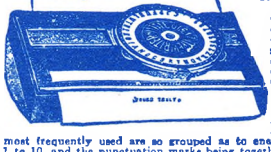
You may have a lot of fun with this little peep-show. A regular startler. Made entirely of metal, having a microscopic lens fitted into one end. While the victim is absorbed in admiration of the pretty picture, and turns the button in the confident expectation of seeing something interesting, a spring syringe is brought into action, and the observer experiences a very pleasurable surprise. **50c p. pd. Johnson Smith & Co. Dept. 871 Racine, Wis.**

Comical Motto Rings

Lots of harmless fun and amusement wearing these rings. Made in platinoid finish (to resemble platinum), with wording on enameloid, as illustrated. **Price only 25c Postpaid.**

The "Little Giant" Typewriter

A First Class Writing Machine For $1.50



A perfect little typewriter for $1.50. There are thousands of persons who would like to use a typewriter but whose needs and business do not warrant the expense attached to the purchase and use of a fifty or seventy-five dollar machine. To such persons we confidently recommend our Little Giant. It is strongly made, but simple in construction, so that anyone can quickly learn to operate it, and write as rapidly as they would with pen and ink. The letters of the alphabet most frequently used are so grouped as to enable one to write rapidly, the numerals 1 to 10, and the punctuation marks being together. With this machine you can send your best girl typewritten love letters, address envelopes, make out bills, and do almost any kind of work not requiring a large, expensive machine. With each typewriter we send a tube of ink and full printed instructions for using the machine. **Price complete $1.50 by mail postpaid to any address in the world.**

JOHNSON SMITH & CO. Dept. 871 Racine, Wis.

See our other full-page advertisement in this issue.

$30 SAVING and Big Gift, Too

Beat this Bargain if you can

$10 Table GIVEN with Order

Our gift to you with each suite—this handsome Davenport Table in rich Brown Mahogany finish with hand rubbed top . . . a regular $10 value. Made of selected seasoned hardwood, in large size. Roomy top has artistic beveled edges. Shaped end panels are richly decorated. Graceful stretcher.

Full size Davenport Table with Top 48 in. x 16 in.

Regular $90 Value NOW $59.95 COMPLETE

30 Days FREE Trial

Davenport Quickly Converted into a Comfortable, Full-size Double Bed

Luxurious Bed-Davenport Suite

Slashing $30 off the regular price, Mr. Spear offers this beautiful 3-piece Velour Bed-Davenport Suite **below actual factory cost,** the *biggest bargain of his career.* It's new—new cane panel frames, new 1928 style, new comfort, richer beauty—the peak of 35 years of value-giving.

And, as a still greater inducement, Mr. Spear insists that you have IN ADDITION this stunning Davenport Table. "Win more friends for Spear & Company. Sell way below the regular price! Include a valuable gift! Make this a gigantic value"—these are his very words.

What an astonishing offer! This suite, without table, would cost you $90 elsewhere.

That isn't all—this exquisite suite will be sent to you for only $1 with order. You have 400 days to pay—13 easy monthly payments—30 days FREE trial. If you are not completely satisfied, return suite and table. We will refund your $1 and transportation charges both ways.

You know the increasing popularity of velour living room furniture! This one is not only a charming, colorful suite for the living room, but a full-size comfortable double bed is embodied in the davenport.

A living room and bedroom suite combined! Just like having another room—a spare bedroom for the unexpected guest. The davenport opens with a single easy motion into a restful full size bed for 2 adults. You do not sleep on the upholstery—bed compartment has its own link fabric spring. During the day bedding is concealed in the interior. Interior bed section is 72 in. by 48 in. when open. Davenport overall, 54 in. Rocker and armchair, 24 in. wide overall. Height of backs from seat, 20 in. The right proportions to assure complete comfort and restfulness.

The sturdily constructed, attractive frames are of selected and seasoned hardwood, finely finished in rich Brown Mahogany. The new, distinctive cane panel ends are ultra-fashionable. Covering is an excellent grade of Figured Velour in a handsome blue and taupe pattern that will harmonize with any furnishings. The backs are upholstered in the new overstuffed effect. Interior upholstery of fine sanitary materials, deeply overlaid with pure cotton batts. Strong coil springs in the seat of each piece prevent sagging. All 3 pieces are wonderfully comfortable. Davenport has 18 springs in seat—rocker and armchair have 9 each. This is a suite which you will be proud to own, and will give years of wear.

Mail the coupon with $1 today. This 3-piece Velour Bed-Davenport Suite and full size Davenport Table will be sent you on home trial. Use for 30 days as your own. Then if you are not convinced of their worth, or if you should change your mind, return them. We will refund first payment and transportation charges both ways.

ALL for $1 DOWN

Just Out! Big Bargain Book—FREE!

Autumn leaves are falling—prices have fallen, too. Now you can save 25% to 40% on everything for the home. This new book shows you the way. 1278 great bargains. All on Easy Credit. A year or more to pay. Furniture, chairs, davenports, rugs, beds, lamps, dishes, stoves, curtains, silverware, linoleum—everything for every room in the house. All on Credit. All on 30 days Free Trial. You need this book. Your copy is ready. Send the coupon for it now. No obligation to buy!

Order No. D A 4228, 3-piece, Mahogany Bed-Davenport Suite with rich Velour covering, and Gift Davenport Table without extra charge. Sale price $59.95. Terms $1 with order, $4.75 monthly.

President

Spear & Co.

Dept. G 501 Pittsburgh, Pa.

Home Furnishers to the People of America for 35 Years

SPEAR & CO., Dept. G 501 Pittsburgh, Pa.

Send me at once the Velour Bed-Davenport Suite and the Gift Table without extra charge, as described above. Enclosed is $1 first payment. It is understood that, if at the end of 30 days trial, I am satisfied, I will send you $4.75 monthly. Order No. D A 4228. Sale price $59.95. Title remains with you until paid in full.

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