

## THE MYSTERIOUS CRIME ON THE S.S. NEPTUNE

### CHAPTER XXVI.

Meanwhile, quite unaware of the troubles in which Vassalla was involved, Carmela was enjoying herself very much at Bellfield. She was in much better spirits than she had been previous, as her conversation with Foster and Ronald had relieved her mind of a great weight, and she had come to the conclusion that her sister was not guilty, in which case she would not have to marry her cousin. Everyone stopping at Bellfield, was in excellent spirits, and so Carmela felt the influence of merry company, and was as gay and joyous as anyone present.

It being Bell's birthday, they decided to celebrate it with a picnic at Medmenham Abbey, and were all down at Hurley lock, embarking in the boats. Pat was especially exuberant, as he had discovered, beyond all doubt, that Miss Lester was in love with him, and he was only waiting for a good opportunity to propose. A merrier party was never on the river than the young people from Hurley.

And what a delightful morning it was on the river in this glowing July weather. They had no servants with them, as Sir Mark preferred full freedom for once, and the young men rowed the boats quickly up, passing other gay parties on the way.

Up the placid stream they went, past Lady Place, with its quaint old roof and mellow-tinted walls, under the wooden bridge that springs across the Thames; up through the still waters of the broad green meadows, filled with quiet cattle, and the sides of the Ferry Hotel came in sight, and on the shore they found young men in parties in boating parties, the ruins of the old abbey, its memories of the orgies they

held at the present Abbey is a pinchbeck affair, and the only genuine ruins of the old Abbey are to be found in the solitary pillar which stands at the back, near the haystacks; but surely the great building, with its ruined tower, overgrown with ivy, quaint windows, scribbled all over with names, and its low-roofed door, with the famous motto, "Fay ce que voudrais," are genuine enough.

After they had explored the Abbey, all the party strolled away inland to see the lions of the locality. An old-fashioned street it is that leads through the village of Medmenham, with the flint-built houses on either side, overgrown with ivy, and one can imagine, a cavalier, after the defeat of unlucky Charles Stuart, spurring swiftly down the lonely road, in his wild flight for safety.

Then the church, with the square Norman tower around which the rooks are always wheeling and cawing, casting its mighty shadow over the green grass, beneath which the quiet dead sleep soundly, as they have done for so many hundred years. Opposite the

church stands the "Dog and Badger," a very old hostel, with mellow-tinted roofs and numerous gables, and within, low-ceilinged rooms with great beams overhead, and queer, twisted staircases, and unexpected cupboards all over the house.

At the back, high up on the hill, and commanding a magnificent view of the Thames Valley, stands the stern-looking, old farm-house, said to have been mentioned in the Domesday Book, and where Charles II. and pretty, witty Nell Gwynne are reported to have stayed for a night. Then, farther on, the quiet little village of Hambleton, through which it is said Charles I. rode with a brilliant train of gallant cavaliers, on his way to meet his rebellious subjects. The whole neighborhood is full of antiquities and traditions, which lend a peculiar charm to the place.

When they grew weary of sight-seeing, the whole party went down again to the river, and getting into the boats, rowed up the stream for a considerable distance, and ultimately decided to hold their picnic just below Hambleton Lock, with the pleasant murmur of the Weir in their ears.

Such a scene of confusion, getting out the luncheon—everyone seated round in attitudes graceful and otherwise, with the clatter of dishes, the popping of champagne corks, and a perfect babel of voices.

"This is jolly," said Pat, with his mouth full. "I'm fond of Arcadian simplicity."

"Especially when it's accompanied by champagne," cried Bubbles, raising his glass to his lips.

"Beggars are not slow in finding out what I mean," said Ryan, laughing, and filling his glass.

"Imitation's the sincerest flattery," observed Miss Lester, gayly, trying to cut up a rather wiry chicken. "I believe this fowl was a pedestrian, his legs are so tough."

"Try some of the breast," said Sir Mark; "at all events, it hasn't got eight legs, like the birds you get on board ship."

"That's true enough," cried Pat; "everyone seems to get legs of fowls on board—perhaps they're like Manx men—got three legs."

"Or a hundred, like a centipede," said Bubbles.

"Oh, this conversation is frivolous," said Pat, raising his glass; "so I'll propose a toast: 'to the health of Miss Trevor, and many happy returns of the day.'"

This was, of course, drunk by everyone with acclamation, and then the male portion of the company sang, "She's a jolly good fellow," rather incongruously, it must be confessed.

"I wish Monteith was here," said Pat, when this was done.

Carmela said nothing, but looked much, for in her secret heart, that is just what she had been wishing. At this moment they heard a wild whoop from the river, and saw a boat coming quickly up the stream, rowed by a single man.

"Gad," cried Bubbles, who had the sharpest eyes of anyone, "it's Monteith himself. Speak of the Devil!"

"Hold your tongue," said Pat, "don't be personal."

It was Ronald, looking happy and jolly in his flannels, quite a different being from the gloomy youth of the previous week. He soon brought his light little craft, to shore, and sprang on to the green turf, to be welcomed.

"My dear lad," said Sir Mark, "I am delighted to see you, especially as your arrival is so unexpected."

"How did you find us out?" asked Carmela, giving him her hand.

"Oh, easily enough," replied Ronald gayly, "I came down to Maidenhead, drove over to Bellfield, and finding it was deserted, learned from the servants where you were so here I am."

"Hurrah for that!" cried Pat; "is drink a curse?"

"Egad, I'm not sure. I'll try, if you've no objection," said Ronald.

Whereat, Mr. Ryan grinned, and handed his friend a glass and a bottle, all to himself.

The luncheon was resumed, and then the party began to break up into little groups. Pat, of course, going with Miss Lester, while Boll went under the wing of Bubbles, though she secretly sighed for the society of Gerald Foster. So, in a short time, Ronald found himself alone with Carmela, whose eyes turned on him, with eager expectation.

"Well," she asked, "is there anything new?"

"Yes; I've seen your sister."

"And she is innocent?"

"Yes, and moreover, has told us who committed the crime."

Carmela was startled.

"Does she know who did it?"

"She says so. Your cousin?"

"What, Matteo?" rising to her feet. "Oh, impossible!"

"Of course that's what he says, also," said Ronald, shrugging his shoulders; "but your sister accused him, and he has been arrested."

"Will they hang him?"

"If they prove him guilty, no doubt; but first, they must prove the case."

"I cannot believe it of my cousin, he had no motive."

"Mrs. Verschoyle says he had—that he was in love with her."

"Yes, he was, seven years ago," not without a certain feminine spite, "but that would not have induced him to kill poor Leopold Verschoyle now. Maltese gentlemen don't avenge themselves in such a cowardly way."

"Well, Vassalla says he can prove his innocence, but there's one thing to be said, the whole secret of Verschoyle's death lies between your sister and Vassalla."

"How on earth will it all end?" said Carmela, in a bewildered tone; "but," with a sudden thought, "if Vassalla is guilty, I am not bound to marry him now."

"Of course not," said Ronald, taking one of her hands, "I want you to marry me."

She snatched her hand away.

"How can you talk so at such a time?" she cried, her face flushing.

"Because I love you," he replied, "and I want to have the assurance from your lips that you love me."

"How can you marry the cousin of a possible criminal?"

"I don't care a bit about that; I want to marry you."

"Wait till this affair is ended."

"Oh, I don't mind that; Vassalla will be brought to his trial in a few weeks, and then it will be decided one way or another. But Carmela," taking her hand once more, "when it is all over will you marry me?"

She paused a moment, then said, simply:

"Yes."

Ronald took her in his arms and kissed her.

### CHAPTER XXVII.

Of course it is not to be wondered at that the arrest of Vassalla made a great sensation. True, Vassalla was not a very well known man; but then the strangeness of the case, which was reported with numerous embellishments in all the papers, attracted everybody's notice. And then the way the crime had been brought home to him by the divorced wife of the dead man—in fact, it was quite a romance. The curious part of the whole case was that Vassalla obstinately refused to say anything in his own defence, and his persistent silence was taken as an acknowledgment of his guilt. But the Marchese only smiled grimly when spoken to, and said he could defend himself well enough when the time came, and moreover, would be in a position to punish Mrs. Verschoyle.

As for that lady, she was quite the heroine of the hour—not exactly in a

complimentary sense, perhaps—but everybody wanted to see a woman with such an exciting history, who had divorced her husband, and then accused her cousin of being his murderer. Plenty of papers wanted to interview her, but she declined to allow herself to be seen, and generally sat at home in a quiet, private hotel, off the Strand, where she exulted over the downfall of Vassalla.

"He wouldn't marry me," she said to herself, vindictively; "well, we'll see how he likes being in prison for murder."

Carmela came up to town and had an interview with her, in which Mrs. Verschoyle, lost her temper, as usual. "He wanted to marry you—he wanted, to marry you," she hissed repeatedly.

"I couldn't help that," retorted Carmela, angrily; "I certainly did not want to marry him, and would never have become engaged to him if it had not been to save you."

"Ha! ha! to save me from the gallows I suppose—bah! I do not believe it! he would have accused me of the murder of my husband, the Maltese dog; but he shall die for it—yes, he shall die."

"Are you sure he committed this—this crime?" said Carmela, hesitatingly.

"Yes, I am sure. Did I not meet him coming out of the cabin on that night; was the stiletto in the dead man's breast not the one you gave him years ago? Am I sure—bah! if he is innocent, let him prove it."

There was nothing to be got out of Mrs. Verschoyle, who was simply mad with anger, and grew purple in the face, till Carmela thought she would break a blood-vessel.

"You ought to be grateful to me," she said, furiously; "but for me you would have married Vassalla, then what of your Australian lover?"

"You can leave my Australian lover out of the question," said Carmela with great spirit. "I am only waiting for this unhappy affair to be settled, in order to marry him."

"Yes, do, do," cried Mrs. Verschoyle, "and go with him to Australia. Put the ocean between us. I never wish to see your face again. If it had not been for you, my husband would have loved me."

"He did love you," said Carmela, "but your temper drove him away."

At this Mrs. Verschoyle burst out into a storm of anger; so, in order to put a stop to the scene, Carmela left the room and went back to the Langham, where Sir Mark Trevor waited her.

"I don't want to see my sister again," she said, firmly, and she never did.

Of course when the trial came on, the court was crowded with the most noted people in London, anxious to see the end of this strange case. It ended more dramatically than they thought it would.

To be Continued.

## ROBERTS' GREAT SPEECH

### GOD'S HAND SEEN IN CONSOLIDATION OF THE EMPIRE.

Eloquent Sentiments Expressed at Cape Town by the Commander-in-Chief—A Tribute to the Empire's Unity.

At the reception in honor of Lord Roberts, in Cape Town the other day, when the British commander rose to respond after the presentation to him of the sword and casket, all present rose to their feet, cheering and waving handkerchiefs. The demonstration continued for some minutes. At its conclusion Lord Roberts made an eloquent address. After expressing deep thanks for the honours accorded him, he said the war in South Africa had a peculiar interest for him, "inasmuch as it enabled him to bring to what he hoped was a successful conclusion the work entrusted to him twenty years ago—that of dispelling, by force of arms, if necessary, the aspirations of the Boers to render themselves independent of British control.

Referring to his abortive visit to the Cape in 1881, he said:—"The wisdom of the world is foolishness with God. The guiding hand of the Omnipotent will bring out of what to our finite understanding was the most unfortunate war of 1881, for that war could not have consolidated the whole British Empire as firmly together as this had done, because it was fought by regulars alone, whereas the present war was fought by the militia, the yeomanry and the volunteers, the admirable and workmanlike colonial contingents all fighting as brothers-in-arms under the dear old flag of our Queen."

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he held the unique position of the first Field Marshal having the honor to command such an imperial outburst. He was convinced, he declared, that this spontaneous outburst of patriotism was not ephemeral. England had only to give the signal and her sons would again flock to her banner from the ends of the world. Never had a mother had more reason to be proud of her sons than had England to-day. God has brought them out of what in the dark days of December had appeared to them the valley of the shadow of death; and they could now remember the days of tribulation with deep gratitude for the mercy vouchsafed them.

Lord Roberts then paid a deeply moving tribute of gratitude to all who worked with him. He added that his interest in South Africa would not cease on leaving its shores, but that he should watch its settlement with the utmost eagerness. Dwelling upon the necessity for co-operation between the Dutch and English, he said it would be his proudest boast if he could claim to have done nothing but what stress of war had compelled to hinder the friendly fusion of the two races in the Republics. They must try to forgive and forget all that tended to bitterness of feeling, leaving the idea that nothing remained to be atoned for on either side.

### A GREAT HERITAGE.

"God has given into our hands," said the Field Marshal, "a great heritage for which a heavy price has been paid in the blood of the best and bravest; and we must not be neglectful of the trust as we have been in the past, but must be able to give a good account of our stewardship, and must remember there are other duties than national glorification."

He declared he could not better conclude his speech than by quoting the first verse of Kipling's Recessional: God of our Fathers, known of old; Lord of our far-flung battle line; Beneath whose awful hand we hold Dominion over palm and pine, Lord God of Hosts be with us yet, Lest we forget, lest we forget."

### DYSPEPSIA AND HEADACHE.

An Elderly Lady Tells of Her Cure Through the Use of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills After a Score of Other Remedies Had Failed.

Dyspepsia causes more genuine distress than most diseases that afflict mankind. In this country from one cause or another, its victims are numbered by the hundreds of thousands, and those afflicted always feel tired, worn out and miserable, and are subject to fits of melancholy or ill temper without apparent cause. It is obvious that the human body, in order to perform its functions, must be properly nourished, and this cannot be done when the food is improperly digested. Those who suffer from indigestion should exercise care as to diet, and only easily digested foods should be taken. But more than this is required—the blood needs attention in order that the stomach may be strengthened, and the secretion of the gastric juices properly carried on. There is no other medicine offered the public that will act so promptly and effectively as Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. Proof of this is given in the case of Mrs. F. X. Doddridge, St. Sauveur, Que. In conversation with a reporter, Mrs. Doddridge said:—"For quite a number of years I have been a terrible sufferer from dyspepsia, accompanied by the sick headaches that almost invariably come with this trouble. I suffered from terrible pains in the stomach, bloating and belching wind. All food seemed to disagree with me, and as a result of the trouble, I was very much run down, and at times I was unable to do even light housework. I am sure I tried a score of different medicines, but without success, and as I am 69 years of age, I had come to believe that it was hopeless to expect a cure. A friend who had used Dr. Williams' Pink Pills with good results, urged me to try this medicine, and my husband brought home a couple of boxes. Before they were finished, I felt much better, and we then got another half dozen boxes, and thus have completely restored my health, and I not only feel better than I have done for years, but actually feel younger. I very cheerfully recommend Dr. Williams' Pink Pills to similar sufferers.

If your dealer does not keep these pills, they will be sent postpaid at 50 cents a box, or six boxes for \$2.50 by addressing the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockton, Mass.

## Dr. Chase Makes Friends Of Hosts of Women

By Curing Their Peculiar Ills Dr. Chase's Nerve Food  
a Surprising Restorative for Pale, Weak,  
Nervous Women.

As a result of much confinement within doors, and the consequent lack of fresh air and healthful exercise, most women not only lose much in figure and complexion, but also suffer more or less from serious bodily derangements, as the result of thin, watery blood and exhausted nervous system.

More than nine-tenths of the cases of diseases peculiar to women are directly due to a weakened condition of the nerves, and can be cured thoroughly and permanently by taking mild outdoor exercise, breathing plenty of pure, fresh air, and using Dr. Chase's Nerve Food to form new blood and revitalize the depleted nervous system.

It takes time to build up the system anew, to fill the shrivelled arteries with new, rich blood, restore the wasted nerve cells and renew the activities of the bodily organs, but the persistent use of Dr. Chase's Nerve Food will accomplish these results and bring health and happiness to weak nervous and suffering women.

Mrs. Chas. H. Jones, Pierceton, Gu., writes:—"For years I have been a great sufferer with my heart and nerves. I would take shaking spells,

and a dizzy, swimming feeling would come over me. Night after night I would never close my eyes, and my head would ache as though it would burst. At last I had to keep to my bed, and though my doctor attended me from fall until spring, his medicine did not help me. I have now taken five boxes of Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, and it has done me more good than I ever believed a medicine could do. Words fail to express my gratitude for the wonderful cure brought about by this treatment."

Mrs. Margaret Iron, Tower Hill, N. B., writes:—

"Dr. Chase's Nerve Food has done me a world of good. I was so weak that I could not walk twice the length of the house. Since using Dr. Chase's Nerve Food I have been completely restored. I can walk a mile without any inconvenience. Though 76 years old, and quite fleshy, I do my own housework, and considerable sewing, knitting and reading besides. Dr. Chase's Nerve Food has proved of inestimable value to me."

Dr. Chase's Nerve Food, 50 cts. a box, at all dealers, or Edmanson, Bates & Co., Toronto.