THE STOLEN BOX

"I wish I had a safe," said Colonel Burkley, gloomily. "A thousand pounds in gold and notes is a big sum to be responsible for——"

"But there are no burglars in Brambleleigh," laughed Eve. "Sometimes I almost wish there were——"

"So that Bob could defend them, I suppose," retorted her father, smiling.

"Bob's been so strange, so different, lately," she began impetuously. "He looks so worried; almost haggard."

"His father seemed uneasy this morning, I fancied," observed the colonel. "I dare say he's glad to be rid of the money. Thank goodness it's shared out to-morrow."

He lifted the little oak chest in which the Brambleleigh Thrift Club stored its cash on drawing it from the bank and slid it under the sofa.

The club was instituted to provide a seaside holiday fond for the workers in the factories in the neighboring towns of Woodhampton. One midsummer day its members called at the Knoll, were there entertained to lunch by the colonel and his daughter; and then attended the sharing out.

Godolphin Terrison, Brambleleigh's one and only solicitor, acted as treasurer of the fund—had done so for twenty years past.

Bob Terrison, his only son, was a barrister with a small, local practice in Woodhampton. Though there was no engagement between him and Eve, it was generally understood that he only awaited moderate success in his profession in order to propose.

Eve had gone to bed, the colonel had stumped about his dressing-room, smoked a last pipe, and pulled the sheets about him, when he fancied he heard a slight noise.

He sat up in bed listening; then with a grunt, condemned his nerves and lay down again.

It was another sound, a sharp noise, which occurred at least fifteen minutes after the first, which aroused Eve.

She lifted her head from the pillow, her eyes staring into the darkness. A tremor ran through her limbs, leaving her chill, as that mysterious sound again broke the silence.

She sat upright, listening intently. Then she slid her trembling feet into her slippers, drew on her dressing gown, and tiptoed to the door.

All was silent, except for the click-clock in leisurely, measured cadences from the grandfather clock in the hall. She began to think she had been mistaken, that her nerves had tricked her.

She drew back, pretending to feel reassured. Then, as if ashamed, she slipped out into the passage, going to the head of the stairs and looking over the bannisters. She crept down with thumping heart. Once she thought she heard a faint sound, and it sent her back a step, her quivering fingers to her lips, which were wide to her shuddering breath.

Silence again, and she plucked up courage, slowly descending and flitting softly across the dark hall. They had spent the evening in the colonel's study—the chest was hidden there.

But the door was closed, and she scarcely dared open it. She stood outside, her fingers on the handle, her head bent.

Unmistakably there was someone in the room. She could hear cautious movement. It was too late to rouse her father.

Her flesh was tingling in innumerable pin-pricks, her cheeks were damp and shaking, but suddenly she flung wide the door. She saw a figure bending down by the sofa. He carried a little electric torch.

It flickered out, making the darkness more impregnable to her dazzled eyes. She screamed twice very shrilly and then pitched forward into the room, her shivering knees giving away beneath her.

A minute later, the colonel, revolver in hand, had bounded down the stairs. "Great Heavens! Eve!"

The three words escaped him as he stood there aghast on the threshold of the room. The window stood open, unshuttered. A dark figure was running swiftly across the lawn. Colonel Burkley raised his revolver and fired twice into the darkness. At the second shot he saw the living target swerve, but the burglar did not slacken his speed.

With an oath the colonel turned to his prostrate daughter. Kneeling on one knee he raised her head, staring into her face.

Two terrified maidservants fluttered across the hall and shrank back at the tableau in the study. The colonel dispatched them for the brandy decanter and for water, looking anxiously at Eve's closed eyes.

When at last her eyelids flickered, he helped her to her feet, supporting her, asking eager questions.

Discovering that she was unhurt, he heaved a sigh of relief, and then, recollecting the chest, ran to the sofa.

A loud cry escaped him as he groped beneath it. He fell on his knees, peering under the chintz flounce, staggering at last to his feet, running his fingers through his gray hair.

"Gone!" he gasped. "By Heavens! It's gone!"

. . . . . .

Mr. Terrison, senior, called early the next morning. He strolled into the dining-room soon after breakfast.

Colonel Burkley looked up from his newspaper. "Ah, Terrison!" he said, awkwardly. He was ashamed of the story he had to tell—ashamed that he had taken no proper precautions.

"I want to speak to you, Burkley," said old Terrison, "in private."

His voice was harsh and his eyes haggard, but his host did not seem to notice.

"We're private here," said the colonel. "Eve is having, or pretending to have, her breakfast upstairs. I've a— an appalling story to tell you. But I went to set your mind at rest about one thing; the fault was mine, and the brunt of it must fall on my shoulders. I shall, of course, find the money for the shareholders. We had a burglary last night. Terrison——"

The old solicitor collapsed into a chair, clinging to the arms of it, stuttering.

"The chest was stolen," went on the colonel, and, of course, its contents. I was fool enough to leave it in the study; I felt so secure, so certain. There hasn't been a burglary in Brambleleigh for twenty years or more. It is terribly inconvenient for me to raise such a large sum, but I must face the consequences of my own folly."

"Stolen—the chest—stolen!" faltered Terrison, loose-lipped. "You don't mean it; you can't mean it, Burkley! Stolen! Its not true?"

"It is true, old friend," said the colonel, slowly. "I'm ashamed to say it."

Very suddenly the solicitor broke down. He threw out his arms across the table, his head sinking on them.

"I brought it up safe," he quavered, raising his haggard eyes to Burkley's. "It hasn't been my fault. Last night I stayed with Judge Purvis at Woodhampton—we played cribbage till nearly one. Ask him; if you don't believe me; ask him! He'll tell you the truth."

Colonel Burkley put his hand on the old man's trembling shoulder. He saw that the solicitor was strangely upset—not himself.

"My dear old friend," he said, gently, "as though anyone would dare suspect you! How absurd, how preposterous. You're shaken, as you might well be. Besides," and he laughed grimly, "I saw the fellow—winged him, too. I hope. He was young, slight——"

"I thought—you—might think it was me," muttered Terrison. "I don't know why. It was silly of me. Can you trace the thief? Have you got a clew?"

The colonel shook his head. "I searched the lawn before breakfast," he said, "and found nothing The gardener's looking about now." As he spoke the man came running across the lawn. He blundered in at the French window, his heavy boots rasping on the polished flooring.

"Oi found this 'ere!" he bawled. "Look at un! Down by the road in the long grass. You hit un, colonel."

Excitedly he waved a blood-stained handkerchief, shouting almost incoherent observations at his master while the colonel examined it.

Very swiftly Burkley glanced at Terrison from under his gray eyebrows.

"There's a name, an initial, a laundry mark, something by which we can identify the rogue?" the solicitor was vehemently exclaiming. "We'll run him to earth yet, though"—he shook his head sorrowfully—"though I fear he'll have got rid of the money by now. Is there a mark, Burkley?"

The colonel shook his head. "Eve first raised the alarm," he said, and his voice was constrained and astounded. "I want to question her. Will you wait here for me, Terrison?"

The colonel went slowly upstairs. Knocking at Eve's door, he entered, his eyes falling on a letter which lay in her lap.

"You're upset—crying," he said, softly. "What is it, Eve?"

She turned her head away, dropping her eyes.

"Is that a letter from—from Bob?" asked her father.

She nodded, brimming tears filling her eyes and rolling down her cheeks.

"Let me read it," he said, gravely. "Yes, Eve, I must, I insist. Oh, my little girl, I'm sorry for you, but——"

She turned to him very suddenly, her face aghast.

What she read in his face made her let him take the letter.

". . . Everything has changed," read out the colonel. "I feel I shall never be a success in England; I am going to Canada. Of course, I don't ask you to wait for me. You will meet and marry some one far worthier. For a little, perhaps, you will hate me, despise me. I pray God that one day you'll think of me a little more kindly.—R. T."

"R. T.," repeated the colonel, and his eyes gleamed and then went dim. "Eve, you don't know the reason of his going; it's my duty to tell you. For months he has confided his despair to me—he fancied he wasn't making progress. I encouraged him. I liked the boy. I was fond of him. I never thought he was capable of—this."

Very slowly he drew from his pocket the handkerchief, staring down at one corner of it.

"R. T.," he said gravely. "R. T. Eve. The gardener found it not ten minutes ago."

He expected her to flare up in the boy's defence, expected recrimination, protest, argument, entreaty, tears; but she only turned her ivory face to his, looking at him very mournfully, anguish in her eyes.

"I knew," she whispered, burying her face in her hands. "I knew; I saw him."

. . . . . .

The colonel himself drove to Bob Terrison's rooms. He did not hope to find innocence, but he longed for explanation. He found silence. Bob Terrison admitted his guilt when he found escape impossible.

"Come back with me," commanded the colonel curtly.

Old Terrison looked up in surprise when the colonel and his son entered the dining-room at the Knoll. Bob caught the colonel's arm.

"Don't tell him, don't let him know," he said swiftly in low tones. "Promise me that."

But Burkley shook him off. "Old friend," he said quietly to the solicitor, "I think you ought to know——"

"Stop!" cried Bob. "Stop! do you hear me? For Heaven's sake, colonel!"

"I will speak," retorted Burkley. "I love your father too well to prosecute. You shall escape scot-free. You can go to Canada—or where you please, so long as I never see you again and Eve never hears from you. You're escaping disgrace—imprisonment, but you sha'n't cheat your father. He's going to have the truth. Terrison, there was a mark on that handkerchief. It belonged——"

But Bob moved swiftly forward. He went to his father's side, putting both hands on the old man's shoulders, speaking very fast, in a whisper, which the colonel could not hear. Old Terrison's face went white then flushed very red. For a moment he listened, then flung up his hands, shrugged his shoulders free.

"You sha'n't, you sha'n't," he almost screamed. "Your young life, Bob. Bob, how did you know? How did you find out? Burkley, for the love of Heaven, listen to me! I came to you this morning to confess the chest contained papers, not money; memoranda of sums I had embezzled. I didn't keep the payments up into the bank. I'm a thief, Burkley, an old thief! I came to tell you—to throw myself on your mercy—to beg you to aid me. But you told me your story, it opened up a way of escape. I never guessed—never for a moment imagined Bob knew that the valueless accounts of an unfaithful trustee were all that the chest contained!"

"I hoped to pay you off, sir, some day," said Bob, miserably; "I meant to go to Canada. You weren't to lose, colonel." He went to his father's side, and his voice was broken as he added:

"He's been all that a father could be to me. He's held his head so high—been so honored, so trusted. I wanted to save him. It was a mad way, mine, but I could not think of any other. I discovered by his private ledger how hopelessly wrong things were with him."

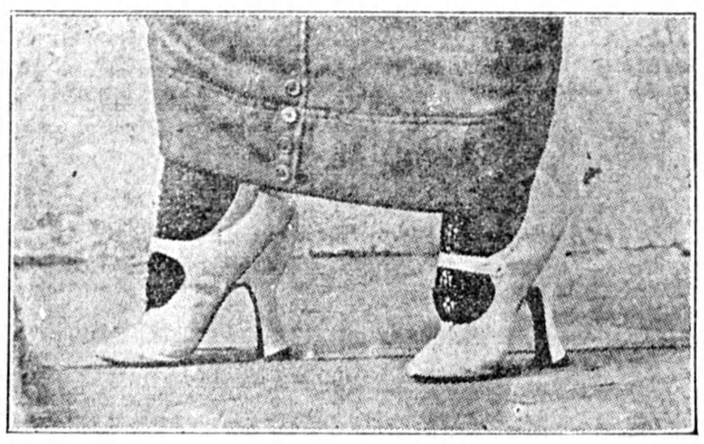
The colonel put both hands on the solicitor's shoulders.

"Don't despair, old friend," he said. "Only four of us know, or have to know. You and I—and we both understand—and Bob and Eve."

"You'd—you'd give her to me now?" muttered Bob.

The colonel held out his hand. "Leave us alone," he said. "Let us talk it over and bury it. Call Eve, Bob; Bob, call her down to you."

Two hours afterwards the members of the Brambleleigh Thrift Club were drinking the health of their ancient and honored treasurer, Godolphin Terrison, and, at the colonel's request, cheering to the echo the announcement of the engagement of his daughter to Bob.—London Saturday Journal.



ON TIP-TOE—WEARING SHOES WITH SIX-INCH HEELS.

Fashions in feminine gait and modes of progression change with the shape of woman's clothes. The hobble skirt, for instance, brought in a peculiar style of walking. If the six-inch heel becomes popular, woman will have to walk on the tips of her toes.

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More Praise for Dr. Hamilton's Pills

"For a period last summer the thought of food excited feelings of nausea," writes Mrs. C. A. Dodge, of Bloomsbury. "The heat had made me listless and the distaste for food reduced me to a condition of semi-starvation and brought me to the verge of nervous collapse. Tonics were useless to restore an active desire for food. The doctors told me my liver and kidneys were both at fault, but the medicines they gave me were too severe and reduced my strength so that I had to abandon them. At the suggestion of a friend who had been cured of blood and skin trouble, I began the use of Dr. Hamilton's Pills. The difference I first noticed was, that while they cleansed the system, instead of feeling weaker I felt better after taking them. Indeed their activity was so mild it was easy to forget I had taken them at all; they seemed to go right to the liver, and in a very brief time not only did all source of nausea disappear, but I began to crave food and I digested it reasonably well. Then I began to put on weight until within three months I was brought to a condition of good health. I urge Dr. Hamilton's Pills for all who are in poor health."

Get this best of all medicines today and refuse a substitute for Dr. Hamilton's Pills of Mandrake and Butternut. Sold by all druggists and storekeepers, 25c. per box or five for $1.00. Sent postpaid by The Catarrhozone Co., Buffalo, N.Y., and Kingston, Canada.

After taking the bread from the oven it should be removed from the pans and put bottom side down on a wire bread cooler. If you wish the crust to crisp, do not cover it. If you wish a soft crust, cover it with a clean towel while it is cooling. Put it into a tin box and cover closely.

TORONTO CORRESPONDENCE

INTERESTING BITS OF GOSSIP FROM THE QUEEN CITY.

Reminiscences of a Politician—Toronto and Normal School Square—Harbor Commissioners' Plans.

The publication of a volume of reminiscences by the late Sir Richard Cartwright has caused something of a sensation in political circles. Sir Richard deals with the men and events of his time with great frankness and his book contains more than one surprise.

A particularly significant chapter is one in which he pays a tribute to the intelligence and ability of the Ontario farmer. In part he says: "No one thing has been made more clear to me during my political experience than the extreme ignorance of a vast number of otherwise intelligent and well-informed professional and business men of the political doings of the day. There is, curiously enough, in Ontario at least, a very great deal more interest taken, and a very great deal more accurate idea of the aims and proceedings of the several political parties, among the better class of farmers than among the so-called more highly educated classes. I am myself a city man, more or less of the public school and university type, but I have always represented agricultural constituencies, and from the very first I was immensely struck with the attention and intelligence with which many of my auditors would listen to and discuss political questions. They were very critical, and by no means given to enthuse on any subject, but they would listen for hours to an analysis of the public expenditure or an explanation of the reasons for adopting a particular line of policy, and, what is more, would consider and remember what you told them. Many a time, and sometimes after the lapse of twenty years, I have been reminded of statements made by myself in times past and called on for explanations if they thought there was any discrepancy between my then and former position.

Ontario of Scotch Origin.

"Of course the percentage of such men would vary in different ridings But taking the farm populations of Ontario as a whole you would have found in most constituencies a considerable number of just such men as I have described—earnest, thoughtful, intelligent and well-read men, at least as far as the political history of Canada was concerned. They had their limitations, no doubt, but as a whole they stood for honest government. If they had a fault, it lay in their staunch devotions to their respective parties, which sometimes made them condone conduct which at the bottom of their hearts they really condemned. Once they had taken a side it was a matter of extreme difficulty to induce them to change it. In some respects they answered very nearly to the class of old English yeomen in the days when they owned the lands they cultivated. They were largely of Scotch origin, and as you know Ontario is to a great extent a Scotch colony. At any rate they were a class of whom any country might be proud, and the men from whom most of our leading public and professional men have sprung. They would study our blue books, and even such a formidable document as the Auditor-General's report, with a zeal which very few of our members of Parliament ever bestow upon them."

Criticism of Blake.

Perhaps the most surprising thing about Sir Richard's book is his criticism of Edward Blake. He rarely mentions Blake except to censure him. He accuses him of disloyalty to Alexander Mackenzie and of repeatedly ruining the prospects of the Liberal party in the House of Commons and in the Province of Ontario by his bungling politics. His conduct in trying to publish his famous West Durham letter previous to the election of 1891 is described as "treacherous" to Laurier and Cartwright, the Dominion and Ontario leaders respectively in the House of Commons. His resignation of the Liberal leadership in 1887, one is led to infer, was the act of a quitter, when victory was within sight.

One of the most serious charges against Blake is that he deliberately and needlessly estranged the Orange Order from the Liberal party, particularly by his attitude on Riel and by his direct attack on the Order in Parliament. This, Sir Richard affirms, will take generations to counteract.

Of Sir John A. Macdonald he speaks vehemently, but with some mellowness. Repeatedly he declares that Sir John's Pacific deal and his subsequent re-endorsation by the country did more to degrade the public life of Canada than will be overcome for generations.

Of Laurier.

Of Laurier he speaks cordially, but without any apparent enthusiasm. No doubt he will have more to say on this subject in a second volume, which the publishers promise later, the present one stopping short at the year 1896. Alexander Mackenzie is praised for his personal qualities, and his weaknesses as a politician pointed out. McGreevy is described as an honest man, but a scapegoat. Of course, Sir Richard, during a long life, came in contact with all the prominent men of an interesting era, and he gives his estimate of most of them.

His views on public questions were made known pretty thoroughly during his lifetime, but he leaves a succinct account of them for future generations. The depopulation of Ontario and the issue of protection receive the fullest consideration.

There is little doubt but that the book will have influence on future generations. Sir Richard had undoubted ability, and a turn of the wheel of fortune might at more than one stage in his career have made him Premier of Canada. Doubtless he would have made a judicious Prime Minister, but in that case he would have scarcely left us his delightful reminiscences.

No Gift for Toronto.

Sir James Whitney has replied in characteristic fashion to the request of the city of Toronto that the Normal School grounds should be turned over to the city as a civic park. The Square is worth probably a million dollars now, though it was originally purchased by the Government for a few thousand. The argument that the increase should be handed over to the city because it was the city's growth that gave it the increased value is knocked into a cocked hat by the Premier, who points out that "the Province as a whole has been unquestionably the chief factor in the increased values of property and of the great increase of wealth in the city."

The Premier dictated his reply, but it was not delivered until he was on the middle of the Atlantic on his way to England, where he and Dr. Pyne are spending a flying visit preparatory to the session. The Minister of Education is one of Sir James' strongest personal friends, dating from long before Sir James was called to the Premiership. They are both fond of an ocean trip and will no doubt manage to get some enjoyment out of it even during the chill days of December.

Toronto's Harbor Plans.

No proposed civic improvement has ever created more, perhaps not as much, enthusiasm as has the plans of the recently appointed Harbor Commission. They call for a total expenditure of $19,000,000, of which $6,000,000 is to be contributed by the Dominion Government, and most of the rest will be raised by the Commission itself by the sale of bonds on which the interest will be paid by revenues from docks and rentals.

Doubting Thomases smile when members of the Commission declare that the whole expenditure will be made and the scheme carried out within ten years. But the Commission insists that it means it. The Dominion Government work, consisting chiefly of dredging, will begin at once, and plans for the Commissions' own expenditure are well under way.

The chief effects of the improvement plan will be to make Toronto practically an ocean port, to turn the vast area of Ashbridge Bay, now chiefly waste, into exceptionally desirable industrial sites, and to beautify the city by a ten-mile waterfront boulevard and driveway extending from the Humber to the Don.

The results of these changes is hard to foretell without some imagination. The Ashbridge's district can easily support an industrial population of 100,000, and the establishment of real shipping facilities will give Toronto a stronger grip than ever on the distributing business of Canada. It may be that after all, Toronto's dream of a million people may not be so far in the distant future.

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IS AN IDEAL PORT.

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The position of the port of Southampton is that of England's premier passenger port, and no further evidence of this is needed than the fact that 304,045 passengers and 47,968 troops, giving a total of 352,013 persons, arrived in the port and departed from the docks in 1910.

The geographical position of the port is not only unique, in that it is situated almost midway on the coast line of the English Channel, and within easy access by rail to the Metropolis, but it is blessed with the unusual natural advantage of double tides, which gives it virtually four hours of high water twice a day—an advantage enjoyed by no other port in the world. The harbor itself is landlocked, but for the east and west entrances, and the very moderate tidal range with a slow flood tide, is a boon that cannot be too highly valued, for it not only makes the port very acceptable, but minimizes the cost of dredging.—Cassier's Magazine.

Salt fish should always be soaked with the skin side up.

Certain tall flowers—lillies among them—are best arranged in a wide-mouthed vase with a stem holder in the bottom. Or wire stem-holders may be had that fit over the top of the vase or jar.

Sweet potatoes are delicious served in the following way: After they have been boiled until done, mash them and put in a generous supply of cream and butter, then beat them until very light, put them in a baking dish and bake them in the oven until they are a nice brown.

When a lamp wick is a trifle large draw out a thread or two from the centre; then it will move up and down easily. Speaking of lamp wicks: make it a point never to cut a burned wick; rub it off instead with a piece of cloth or blotting paper. Then it will always burn evenly.

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