FIVE CROOKED CHAIRS

By FAREMAN WELLS

SYNOPSIS

Adam Meriston a farmer's son, articled to a solicitor, makes a brave but unsuccessful attempt to thwart three thieves in a bag-snatching raid The bag was torn from the hands of a girl who afterwards explains to Adam that it contains the day's takings of her father's shop.

He attempts to track the thieves and reaches an old warehouse. Adams enters the building while the girl watches the door Suddenly he hears footsteps.

The man turns out to be Adam's employer—Corville Perkin.

Adam, in his private hours experiments with short-wave wireless.

Walking homeward, Adam is nearly run down by a large swift car.

He calls on Priscilla Norval.

Her father recounts the history of five antique chairs he possesses.

There was no doubt that the Professor had been enjoying his work on Adam's invention, but it was more satisfying to learn that, in addition to these scientific pranks, he had found time to write the famous Dobson and had that day received a reply.

It was not until he had, as he put it, "got the rabble started" that they were able to adjourn to his room and study the letter from the famous neurologist. It expressed the utmost interest in the phenomena and went at great length into an analysis of the probable explanations. Its most interesting feature, however, was a series of suggestions for the shielding of certain of the nerve-centres with metal plates. Once they had experimentally decided for him which centres, if any, could be so protected Professor Dobson promised them further enlightenment.

For the rest of the evening, therefore, the two busied themselves plastering Adam's person with strips of tinfoil, an dexposing him to the rays with each of the various protections that the neurologist had suggested. It needed only a few seconds' exposure under most of these conditions to decide Adam that the current must be switched off immediately.

"Off, for heaven's sake!" he would cry as the sense of fear seemed to soak into him, and then a little later: "That's better. It seems to get worse every time." But one method that consisted of a sheet of foil running over the head from ear to ear seemed to be completely effective until the foil slipped. "Switch off!" he cried.

The Professor humanely switched off, though there was a twinkle in his eye as he did so that showed how much he enjoyed the infliction of a little terror. He crossed the room to some coat-hooks and took down a greasy old felt hat. "Put this over it," he suggested. On complying Adam was able for the first time to resist the effects completely.

"Looks as if a fellow had only got to line his hat with foil to be immune," he commented.

"A most important step, Meriston. A most important step," agreed the Professor. "I must write Dobson tonight about it. Meanwhile if you only know how delightful you look in my hat you would be wanting to scream with laughter instead of with terror." He chuckled delightedly.

Evidently the new interest was doing him good, rejuvenating him, for never before had he been suspected of harboring a sense of humor of any but the most academic kind. Another unexpected effect of the investigation was to decide Adam that he would in future wear a hat on all suitable occasions and that inside the hat should be a lining of superior foil. He was beginning to feel that he would never be able to trust the Professor not to play one of his little jokes.

This impression was confirmed by the story of the old fellow's next experiment. This time, being anxious to determine the effect on cold-blooded creatures, he had succeeded in so frightening his wife's pet goldfish that it had leapt gasping out of its bowl. Only the fact that the domestic cat was at that moment clinging distractedly to the curtain had saved the fish from complete destruction. Undoubtedly the Professor was finding a new interest in the scientific life.

What with his scientific achievements, his love affair, and his mysterious adventures, Adam was just then living a very full life himself. Of late he had been unexpectedly neglected by Mr. Perkin who, to all he could tell, might have been too much engaged with his professional work to take any further interest in the Norvals, and their chairs. Adam was content that this should be so, indeed he did not look forward with any relish to a renewal of their conversations concerning these matters. However, his exemption was not to be permanent for on the Saturday morning following the discovery of the immunity head shield his chief sent for him.

Severe and parchmenty of face as ever, the solicitor was sitting erect behind his broad mahogany desk. From the beginning he seemed to have made up his mind to be affable, but there was always a glint in his hard eyes that belied any benevolent assumptions.

"Ah, good morning, Meriston," he said. "I think it is time I had a chat with you regarding your position in the office. Let me see, how long have you been with me?"

Adam told him that it was rather more than four years.

"And you are satisfied with your own progress?"

"I think that is rather a question whether you are satisfied or not, sir," was the somewhat adroit answer.

Mr. Perkin smiled drily. "Witnesses are there to answer questions," he remarked, "not to ask them. How long before you expect to sit for your final?"

At this leading question the articled clerk felt a guilty resurgence of all his misgivings regarding his work for the Final examinations. For some months now he had not so much as opened a legal textbook. "I don't quite know, sir," was all the reply he could muster.

"Well, the sooner the better, the sooner the better, you know. I am hoping to put you in the way of more advanced experience and the sooner you qualify the sooner you will be able to become of real use to me."

Adam forced a look of gratification such as he was at that moment far from feeling.

Mr. Perkins answered the look. "Oh yes," he said. "I am more interested in your career than perhaps you realize. I think I can say that I take far more interest in the progress of the staff than they commonly give me credit for. Now in your own case. I have watched you quite a good deal and one thing at any rate has given me satisfaction, that is I have been gratified to find you are popular with clients. A great thing to make a good impression with clients, my boy."

Adam could only look mystified. It was so rarely that he had any contact with the firm's clients. Mr. Perkin, however, did not seem to require an answer. He nodded and went on. "Mr. Montada was very favorably impressed with you the other day when, I understand, he met you on the stairs."

"Mr. Montada? I was really rather afraid I had annoyed him. I seemed to get in his way."

"Not at all. Not at all. As a matter of fact he spoke quite nicely to me about you just afterwards. Now I might as well say that it would be a very important thing for your career if an outstanding man like Mr. Montada were disposed to take an interest in you. He has far-reaching interests, very far-reaching. It was he, as I think I mentioned at the time, that instruced me to try to secure those chairs of old Norval's. By the way, have you been able to make any progress in that little matter?"

(To be Continued.)

HOW IT HAPPENS!

A little snow,
A little sleet,
A little sniffle
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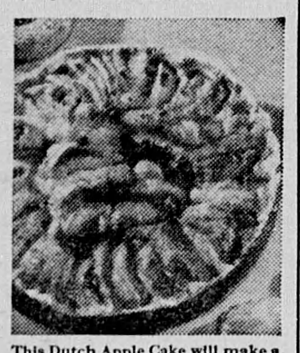

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What Does Your Handwriting Reveal?

GEOFFREY ST. CLAIR
(Graphologist)
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(Editor's Note: This series of artices on Character from Handwriting continues to attract wide interest and many readers are taking advantage of the author's offer to get a personal character delineation. You still have an opportunity of getting YOURS.)

I have a letter from a married woman who asks my advice on a problem that is cropping up quite often nowadays. Here is what she says: "I am a married woman in my middle thirties, and have two young children. My husband lost his position about a year ago, and has not been able to get new employment. Although we had some money saved up, we have still had a difficult time making ends meet, and I have got to a point where I am utterly fed up with the situation. Before I married, I held a good position, and now I find that I can get my old work back again, but with not so good a salary—enough, at any rate, for us to get along on. However, for some time, my husband and myself have not been getting along very well. We bicker on the slightest pretext, and I am seriously wondering whether to leave him, and take a place of my own. I don't really see why I should be the one to work and keep the home going, while my husband idles. What do you suggest?"

I haven't given the letter in full, but surely the salient points. Now, turning to the two specimens of handwriting, I find firstly that the writing of the lady who wrote to me, shows that she is very self-contained, even to the point of being selfish. She sees only her own point of view. She is shrewd, a quick-thinker, and is extremely intelligent. But that factor of "self" stands out like a flagpole, and effects every other trait in her character. She simply cannot think of anyone outside herself. On the other hand, her husband's writing shows more tolerance and affection. He is more kindly and is straightforward, honest, loyal and is capable of getting things done. Perhaps not particularly intellectual but steady.

It seems to me, in the first place, that these bickerings have been caused by a lack of appreciation on the wife's part for her husband's inability to get work. This is unfortunate, and my correspondent is taking a rather one-sided point of view, with which I cannot have much sympathy. These are topsy-turvy days, and many men, similar to the writer's husband, are unable to obtain work, through no fault of their own. He, like many others, is the victim of circumstances entirely beyond his control.

Instead of finding fault with him, and taking every opportunity to criticize, she should be more sympathetic and tolerant. However, her lack of sympathy is clearly shown in her writing.

My advice to her is to take the work and continue living with her husband and family, at the same time modifying her outlook as regards her husband. She would find, in all probability, that a more kindly attitude would spur him to greater effort to obtain work of some kind.

To the husband, I suggest that, if it is impossible to get anything in his own line of work, at least he try something, even a selling or canvassing job. Anything to keep himself busy, and help to retain his self-respect and esteem.

I have given rather unusual prominence to this letter this week, because I find that this problem is appearing quite often, and it would certainly seem that there are some wives who are content to be cheerful and friendly when things are going alright, but immediately disaster hits the home, in the shape of unemployment, as a rule through no fault of the husband, then they make their husbands' lives unhappy through ill-timed and unfair criticism.

I am happy to add that there are by far the majority of women who are not like this, but in those cases where it is so, a good deal of unhappiness and trouble could be saved by mutual understanding of the difficulties to be contended with.

Would YOU like to have YOUR handwriting analysed? And perhaps you have some friend whose real nature you would like to know the truth about? Mr. St. Clair can help YOU as he has helped thousands of others. Send specimens of the writings you want analyzed, stating birthdate in each case. Enclose 10c coin for each specimen, and send with 3c stamped, addressed envelope. If, in addition, you would like to have a copy of Mr. St. Clair's new Chart—the GRAPHOCHART—which has over 100 illustrations and shows you how you can analyze handwriting for yourself, send an additional 12c for your copy. You will find it both interesting and fascinating. Address: Geoffrey St. Clair, Room 421, 73 Adelaide West, Toronto Ont. Letters are confidential, and will be answered as quickly as possible. Owing to the large number of letters that are coming in, an immediate reply is not possible, but readers may be assured that no unnecessary time will be lost in replying.

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Bus Cost Double That of Street Car

Not Practicable For Cities Of 100,000 or More Fairty Says

Toronto—In cities of 100,000 or more the street car has no rival for efficiency and economy, I. S. Fairty, K.C., general counsel of the Toronto Transportation Commission, told the Progress Club of Toronto in an address in which he said subways fr Toronto are a long way in the future.

Buses to replace street cars in Toronto would mean practically doubling the fares, and would be impossible unless more numerous and wider highways were provided, he said. Only one city of over 100,000 population, San Antonio, Texas, has abandoned the street car for the bus, and three cities, Bridgeport, Des Moines and Akron, have, after a trial, restored the street car.

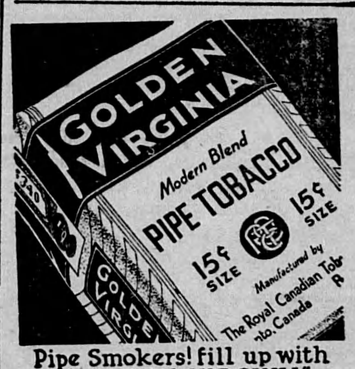
Nowhere in the world, not even in New York, were subways paying propositions, he said, and a subway on Yonge Stree from Front to St. Clair would cost approximately $25,000,000 or almost one-half the city's present total investment in transportation.

The Second Minuet

My Grannie used to say to me
When I was very small
That she remembered well the day
She went to her first ball.
How in her dress of crinoline,
She sat from two till eight.
And how through all those hours she wept,
For fear she might be late;
But Grandpapa and Grandmama
Had never really met
When Grandpapa asked Grandmama
For the Second Minuet.

Hauptmann Jury Paid $1,516 Total

Flemington—The State of New Jersey paid members of the Hauptmann jury $1,516 for their 42 days of service. Each juror received a $126 cheque from Sheriff John H. Curtiss, prior to leaving for their homes.



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2. Gargle thoroughly—throw head way back, allowing a little to trickle down throat. Repeat—do not rinse mouth.

3. If you have signs of a head or chest cold take 2 Aspirin tablets—drink a full glass of water. Repeat in 2 hours.

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DOES NOT HARM THE HEART