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 explains that it contains the day's takings of her father's shop.

He attempts to track the thieves and reaches an old warehouse. Adam 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.

Adam is extremely puzzled over the connection of Corville Perkin and Montada who wants the antique chairs.

He had become intensely anxious before he came across her sitting demurely between two big rocks arranging her wildflowers. She looked up with an impish smile as he approached, but the smile faded as she observed the paleness of his face and the concern in his eyes.

"Oh, I'm sorry, sorry," she cried. "It was silly of me. I was only hiding to tease you." And as he flung himself down and seized her hands. "Poor boy," she said. "Would it have mattered so much if you had lost me?"

He raised his face and his grey eyes looked compellingly into her own. Then he said quite simply and sincerely: "It would have killed me if I had lost you."

TEA IN THE WOODS.

Gently she extricated a rather crushed hand from his hot grasp to draw his head against her, and for a long, silent time, she held it there, ruffling his short hair with her fingers, while he closed his eyes and listened to the beating of her heart. The sunlight splashed through the young leaves upon them, the wild flowers lay crushed on her lap. Encouraged by the silence a mating finch trilled from a branch near by, and a blackbird fluted richly from the edge of the copse. All this they felt rather than saw or heard, experiencing all beauty as an element in a single-passioned emotion.

The shortest minutes of their lives passed before either of them said a word, but in the end she stirred gently, thrusting him from her. "My poor flowers are all crushed," she said.

For a moment she caught him to her again, and her lips fluttered against his forehead. "Hadn't we better be going back now," she said. "They will be expecting us for tea."

For answer he put his big hands upon her shoulders so as to hold her at arm's length from him. "Promise you won't ever let me lose you again," he demanded.

Of course, she promised.

"We really must hurry back for tea now," she insisted, "our people will be waiting."

"They aren't going to see us till train time," he answered. "I've got our tea in the back of the car."

He had to show her before she fully believed him, the extraordinary jumble of food and utensils that was hidden under the rugs on the back seat. He had pillaged the larder in a rough masculine fashion, but thoroughly, of everything he had thought suitable for a picnic meal, and had even managed to include a kettle and some tea-things. Back in the copse they made themselves a little gipsy fire among the rocks.

The picnic was ended, and the spring day still far from its close when Priscilla's insistence forced him to look at his watch. Reluctantly he rose and gathered together the tea-things. "I'll just take these back to the car," he said, "and then we will say good-bye to this place properly."

She seemed to understand what he meant, for by now the little copse meant so much to her that she sat down to dream her own dreams, content to be left alone for a few minutes.

Hardly had his footsteps died away, when she was disturbed by the sound of someone breaking clumsily through the branches, and the next moment there came across the clearing in front of where she sat an ordinary little trippery man in a grey suit and very light brown boots.

"Oh miss," he cried at the sight of her. "For God's sake come and have a look at my missis. She's fainted or something, and I can't get a word out of her."

"Where is she?"

"Just over by the edge of the wood, miss. Not very far. Won't take you a minute. This way. I do hope as it isn't anything serious."

Without a thought the girl hurried after him.

GONE AWAY.

Adam came back to the picnic site and smiled indulgently when he saw no sign of his Scylla. He imagined she was repeating her earlier mischief. He was not going to get alarmed this time, however much he might pretend to be at the appropriate moment. At first he almost enjoyed the search. For ten minutes he hunted about the boulders, for 15, for 20.

He shouted her name wildly, feeling that she could not continue to hide if she heard the dismay in his voice. There was no reply, no sign of Scylla.

At length he decided to push on rapidly through the copse, and he blundered along, calling, stumbling often in his haste, peering round bushes. In about a quarter of a mile the bushes ended against a little sandy track. There were marks of tires to show that many picnic parties had driven along it that day, but by this time there were only scattered paper plates and bottles to betray the incorrigible habits of the English picnicker. He doubled back into the copse again and ranged despairingly across its breadth. It was dusk before he reached the point where he had left the car. There was nothing for it but to return home and report his loss, to face their reproaches. Nothing that they could say would make him feel worse, and he felt somehow as if he had deserved their bitterness. A wild hope spurred him that she might somehow have managed to get back to the farm without him, a lift from a passing car perhaps.

He jumped into the car and drove recklessly.

HAGAR'S ADVICE.

But at his home after a perilous drive, Adam found no sign or news of Scylla.

All three parents were sympathetic over his distress. The reproaches he anticipated and almost desired were not forthcoming. They hastened to inform the local police, and then drove to the copse in the darkness and spent long hours searching without result.

The next three days were an agony of distress for them all. Norval, rendered helpless with anxiety, pottered about the lonely Cavendish St. premises, or hung around the police station where they were kindly tolerant of his importunities. Still, after all, with them it was only a matter of business, with him it was life or death.

It was late in the afternoon that followed a day of aimless hanging about in Menston that Adam bethought him of the man Hagar.

Vaguely, he associated Scylla's disappearance with Montada, and Hagar had invited him to apply for help if ever he were in trouble with Montada. Accordingly he made his way down Hayne Street and turned into the network of foul little streets among which the Hagars kept their "nice little home."

(To be Continued.)

THE NEW GOVERNOR

Writes the Renfrew Mercury — "The coming of John Buchan to Canada as governor-general in succession to Earl Bessborough will to many Canadians seem like the arrival of an old friend. His novels have had a wide circulation in the Dominion. The fact is noted that this is the first occasion a commoner has been named as vice-regal representative in Canada, but before the landing on Canadian soil of the new Rideau Hall host he may be given a title, titles being bestowed quite frequently in Britain. But whether as plain John Buchan or as Lord So-and-so, there will be a welcome for the new governor.

His novels teem with stories of the Scottish Highlands, of deer and of fish, especially the salmon. Of highlands and lowlands he will find no end in Canada, while we have deer of various kinds and our fish are wonderful, also of wide variety. Mr. Buchan has been in the Dominion before, and looking over it as he would with a critical eye he could not fail to accept with readiness an offer of residence for a term at Rideau Hall.

There are those who would fain see a Canadian made governor-general, but not many native sons are prepared to put up the necessary money. It is true that the office carries with it a salary of $50,000 a year but expenditures run beyond that. There is a social status to be maintained which runs away with cash at a rapid rate. Moreover the appointment of a Canadian would be severing another link with the Mother Country. In addition to this a governor is governor in name only. His powers are defined and limited.

Renfrew county has had citizens of the name of Buchan. Also it has known the Buchanans. The name is not a common one here, but if one may judge from John Buchan the Buchans are people cast in no ordinary mould.

25 Million Nails Used In 70 Years

Gananoque. — This town boasts the oldest working shoemaker in Ontario. Michael Brennan, nearing 84 years of age, in his 70 years at the trade estimates that he has put on 69,000 pairs of heels, used 3,500 sides of leather, and more than 25,000,000 nails.

Shake Hands Or Not—As You Like

An unusual reception held in London was participated in by the Duke and Duchess of York. It was a soiree given in the National Gallery in Trafalgar Square by the trustees to members of the National Art Collections Fund to mark the completion of the artificial lighting of the famous gallery, and was the first evening function ever held there. It lasted until midnight.

The Duke and Duchess and 3,000 famous men and women followed each other into the redecorated Florentine Room unannounced. Sir Philip Sassoon and Sir Robert Witt, the hosts, shook hands with their guests in turn, while at the entrance an attendant murmured "Keep to the left if you don't want to shake hands; to the right if you do."

Guests were warned not to bring their cars because of the difficulty of parking. There were no refreshments of any kind.

The artificial lighting of the galleries, which has been designed to allow them to remain open later in the winter evenings, and perhaps at night, was voted a success by everyone.

Resources, Industries Group Make Film Visit

How the development of one of Canada's most important natural resources led directly to a kitchen revolution was one of the interesting facts revealed at an unusual gathering of members of the Toronto Council of Women last week. Sponsored by the committee on national resources and industries under the chairmanship of Mrs. C. A. Northover the group made a synthetic tour of Canadian mines, smelters and refineries which culminated in a semi-technical study of kitchen operation, when it saw a private screening of new technical and popular Canadian screen studies which included camera shots of the Canadian nickel industry.

Two C.N.R. Hotels Show 1935 Profit

Ottawa — The Chateau Laurier Hotel in Ottawa and the Nova Scotian in Halifax were the only two units of the Canadian National Railways Hotel System to show a profit on operating revenues last year, Hon C. P. Fullerton, chairman of the Board of Trustees told the House Railway committee. The Chateau's profit was $152,000 and that of the Nova Scotian was $9,500.

To date, said Mr. Fullerton, $8,544 000 had been spent on the unfinished C.N.R. hotel at Vancouver. It was estimated $2,700,000 more would be required to complete that establishment including the furnishings.

WHAT DOES YOUR HANDWRITING REVEAL?

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GEOFFREY ST. CLAIR
Graphologist

I have often been asked of what practical value is it to any one to have their handwriting analysed? Well, the more we know of ourselves, our innermost natures, the greater will be our understanding of ourselves, qualities, characteristics, talents. And the more we understand ourselves the greater our opportunity of getting on in the world, the better able we are to make friends and keep them. In other words, to be happy, popular and successful.

Are you happy? — or are you continually frowning, with a constant chip on your shoulders?

Are you progresing in your work? —or are you dissatisfied; a square peg in a round hole; unable to make any real progress in the work you are doing, yet not knowing what to do to effect a change for the better?

If you are married, are you contented? — or is disquiet and unhappiness creeping in, with perpetual bickering between yourself and your wife or husband.

Do you make friends and keep them? — or are you living the life of an involuntary recluse, unable to enjoy the society and companionship of real friends?

Are you self-confident? — or are you diffident and bashful, restrained from realising yourself to the full because of inner qualms and self-consciousness?

If you go through life without knowing and understanding yourself — your faults and your virtues; your merits and your weaknesses of character and disposition — you will be seriously handicapped.

Graphology helps you to know yourself, to the end that you will seize on your strong points and make the most of them; and shows you the way to overcome the weak traits, so that you will not be handicapped in the race for happiness and success.

Handwriting is not merely a matter of puting your pen to paper. You have to use your brain in order to write. And because the brain is the captain of your body, everything that you do emanates first from your brain. Handwriting is merely the physical expression of the brain impulsees. Whatever you are and what you might be if you make the fullest use of your capabilities, are expressed in your writing.

A character analysis from your handwriting will not, of itself, effect a change in you, but it WILL show you wherein you need to strengthen yourself, and what traits you have but are not building to the full. And knowledge is the forerunner of action.

Would YOU like to have your character analysed from your handwriting? Have you any friends whose characters you would like to know? The author of these articles will send you a personal delineation. Send specimens of the handwriting you wish to be analysed, stating birthdate in each case. Send 10c coin for each specimen, and enclose with a 3c stamped addressed envelope, t: Geoffrey St. Clair, Room 421, 73 Adelaide St. West, Toronto Ont. In confiding in Mr. St. Clair, you may be sure that whatever you write will be treated confidentially. Letters will be answered as quickly as possible.

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