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 ... 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. Then Priscilla is spirited away.

ADAM PLANS AN ATTACK

After Adam had made his statement, he found there was just time to get to the Technical College before Professor Starling would have left. If everything had been all right he would have been at work on his valve tonight. He was working out in his mind a scheme for an attack on Mr. Corville Perkin, and in that scheme he was proposing to make use of the mysterious powers of the valve.

The Professor received him kindly. He was aware of the trouble in which he had been involved by the loss of a young girl from a picnic party at Pennymoor, and from what he had observed of Adam lately he had been able to make a good guess as to the significance that loss was likely to have for his inventive pupil. "Afraid you're too late to do any good tonight, Meriston," he greeted him half-humorously. "You look as if you'd been having a worrying time, my boy."

"I came to get the circuit. I want to make an important experiment with it tomorrow."

The Professor pursed his lips. It was evident he did not like the idea of the circuit going out of his control, or else it was that he considered himself to be in charge of the experiments now, and resented the suggestion of independent action. "I suppose you would not mind telling me the lines you propose to go on," he remarked equably enough.

"I think it would be better if you did not know, sir. I am by no means sure of my ground yet. I'm in awful trouble, as you will have guessed, and I'm proposing to give the valve its first exercise in the detection of crime. If I can frighten the truth out of one person, I think everything will come right. If I can't, I suppose I shall be in a worse mess than ever."

"That sounds very interesting indeed, but I think you would be well advised not to experiment without the aid of a trained and, I think I may say, a competent observer. In your present condition you are liable to become excited, and the most important of your results might escape you altogether. What I mean is, you'll probably be so concerned about a matter that has no scientific value whatever that you will overlook the subtler phases of your subject's reactions. I therefore propose to be present at this experiment. I can make the notes that you will certainly be too unbalanced to make, and without which the experiment will be, scientifically speaking, valueless."

"I'm afraid it wouldn't do for you, sir. I am by no means sure of my ground yet. I am acting only on very strong suspicion. If the man I'm after does not know anything about Miss Norval's disappearance there'll be an awful stink."

"But my dear fellow, you surely give me credit, after forty years of laboratory experience, for being used to stinks. They are sometimes very valuable indications to the trained mind. And as a matter of fact, I've none of the vulgar prejudices against stinks. I quite like 'em."

"This'll be a legal stink, sir, if it comes to that. Action for assault and battery and all that sort of thing. You'll be aiding and abetting if you come."

"I never did any aiding and abetting as far as I remember," said the Professor philosophically. "One ought always to seek new experiences. Look here, my lad, don't you think it would be wiser to tell me all about it first. Then I'll tell you whether I think I ought to come with you or not."

It was a great relief to the tormented Adam to tell all his hopes and fears to a sympathetic listener, but he insisted that he must be packing up the apparatus while he talked, and in this the Professor thought it wise to humour him. He even lent a hand to load the batteries into Adam's old suitcase and to connect up the circuit on a removable shelf. "I have begun to dislike your Mr. Perkin very strongly, I'm afraid," he remarked half-way through the narrative. "I fear already that I may find it difficult to retain the scientific detachment so necessary in these experimental stages. I had much the same difficulty, I remember, in the little test I made on my wife's goldfish. If you knew how I hated that goldfish I think you would understand."

Undoubtedly he was trying to cheer Adam up by his foolishness, but in this he was not very successful, and when the young man left the College half an hour later, staggering under the weight of his battery-loaded suitcase, the burden on his mind seemed to exceed that on his body. He made his way to Cavendish Street, where he had been staying for a night or two.

Although the hour was late, Norval had not attempted to go to bed. He said the house seemed so liked a morgue now, that he never lay down in it without thinking of himself as already dead. The rooms were untidy and undusted, but beyond all that there was an extraordinary sense of emptiness as though the soul of the place had departed.

Norval found some plates and oddments and the two made a show of eating. As they did so he suddenly remarked: "You'll be surprised to learn that I have decided to let my chairs go at last."

"Let them go? To whom?"

"To your Mr. Corville Perkin, of course. He called here today and renewed his offer. He also hinted that if he had a sufficient sum of money placed at his disposal he firmly believed he lould do a great deal more for me in connection with the recovery of my girl than all the police in the country. I feel I daren't refuse his aid, and the only way to get the necessary money is to sell him the chairs."

"In other words he's blackmailing you in what looks to be a perfectly legal way, and more than that, the cunning devil is getting the chairs and the money as well, that is he's getting the chairs for nothing. Don't do it. Leave Mr. Perkin to me for a couple of days at least."

"But what can you do that you have not already done?"

"I can frighten the soul, if he has one, out of Mr. Perkin," answered Adam boldly.

He was confident now that the lawyer knew all about the disappearance of Scylla, was no doubt responsible for it just in order to secure the chairs by this specious offer of assistance. His proposal had a certain degree of cleverness about it, and forced a reluctant admiration from him. Perkin certainly was a remarkable negotiator.

"I'm afraid it's too late to withdraw now," Norval was saying. "He's sending for the chairs tomorrow and bringing receipts for the payments of the money between us."

"Then don't open the door. Shut the shop. People will understand you doing that after all your troubles. Be out. That is, don't be in—they might break in—but unless they do, don't show up."

(To Be Continued.)

"Have you seen the engagement ring Jack gave me?"

"Yes; pretty, isn't it? I was sorry it was too large for me!"

Are Proud Of Penitentiaries

English Judge Says Jails And Courts Attract Visitors

London, Eng.—People are proud of their penitentiaries, according to Mr. Justice, Sir Rigby Swift, one of the judges of the King's Bench. The judge was giving evidence before the Royal Commission on the despatch of business at common law.

"Nothing has created greater indignation in some parts of the country than the closing of jails," declared the judge. "No one would think that they wanted a jail in their midst, but I know several towns which were highly indignant that their prisons should be taken away. Prisons bring people into town as visitors, to see it, and the same thing applies to the holding of assizes."

On the question of retirement of High Court judges, Mr. Justice Swift who is just 60 years of age, said: "No retiring age should be fixed. I speak without prejudice because I have almost reached the time when I am entitled to retire, and I am considerably below any retiring age which is likely to be fixed. If a judge is competent to do his work, I cannot see any reason why he should not go on doing it. Ample power is already vested in the Lord Chancellor to get rid of anybody who by age or incompetency should be relieved of his judicial responsibilities."

Saved by the Modern Nose

Picture the consequences if the powers of smell which once belonged to the human race were restored. There can be no civilization without smells. To warm ourselves we burn coal and other fuel, producing smells which we do not notice, though if our noses were perfect they would be loathsome. In our houses there must always be tiny escapes of gas, which luckily our modern noses do not detect. Nor are they offended by the smell of the wool or cotton of which clothes are made, or the leather of our footwear and the thousand and one other odours which would become intolerable.

A Word Of Praise

I wonder why we are so prone to censure and to blame?
Can't we forget the faults, and seek for virtue and acclaim?
I wonder why we always see the flaws and faults alone?
Are there no virtues there? And are the faults worse than our own?
O, let us give a word of praise to those who daily plod;
That word may be the ray of hope that lights a soul to God.

WHAT DOES Your HANDWRITING REVEAL?

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Geoffrey St. Clair
Graphologist

(Editor's Note: Many of our readers have already obtained a character study from their handwriting. Have YOU? The revelations will certainly interest you and they may surprise you. The author renews his invitation to readers following this week's article.)

* * *

I have another letter this week from a young lady—she is 21 years of age—who says she has fallen in love with a married man, and, to use her own phase, "simply cannot give him up".

Well, of course, the decision as to her future course of action must come from herself, but as she has written to me about her problem, I deduce hat she is worrying over it, and I am therefore going to give her my candid opinion.

Her own handwriting shows that she is very affectionate and of a markedly sympathetic nature. She responds very readily to emotional influences, and I have no doubt that it was, in the first place at least, this eager readiness to sympathise with others that led her into her present attachment.

However, she also sent me some of the writing of the man in question, also that of the man's wife. And from my inspection of all three writings I cannot but come to the conclusion that this girl is making a very grave mistake.

Apart altogether from the moral angles to this question, the writings tell me that this is the case. Both the man and his wife are of the self-interested type. They look after their own interests firstly and lastly. I would say that the man and his wife are well-suited.

But I cannot say the same thing about the girl who writes to me and the man. I do not think that the man is seriously in love with her. He may be infatuated with her, but I suggest that, if the girl insists on his getting a divorce in order that they can be married, she will find that what I say is merely the truth.

He is interested in her for the moment, but has no sincere desire to ruin his present conditions of life and marriage.

So I say to the girl who wrote me, in all sincerity, that she is far too good to take the chance of ruining her life for the sake of this man. Give him up. You will find happiness in other directions and in a more permanent manner.

* * *

I have a letter from a lady who signs herself A.K., and the postmark on the letter was Edmonton. I would like this lady to write me again and please enclose her full address so that I may write to her confidentially.

* * *

Not all the problems with which this well-known author has to deal are given in these articles. There are many that are too confidential to be included and in all cases, Mr. St. Clair is able to help sincerely and without bias. Would YOU like his help? Have you any friends whose true characters you would like to know? Or do you merely wish to find out what YOUR handwriting tells about yourself? Send specimens of the writings you wish analysed, stating birthdate in each case. Enclose 10c coin for each specimen, and include with a 3c stamped addressed envelope, to: Geoffrey St. Clair, Room 421, 73 Adelaide Street West, Toronto, Ont. Letters will be answered as quickly as possible, and letters will be confidential.

NEW YELLOW LABEL 28c ½ lb.

BROWN LABEL - 33¢ ½ lb.
ORANGE PEKOE - 40¢ ½ lb.

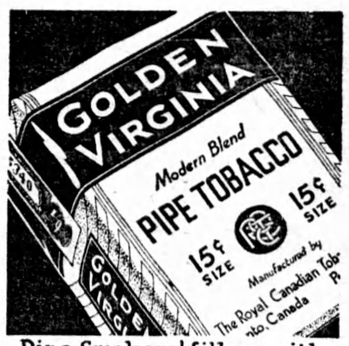
Gladiolus Popular In The Dominion

The gladiolus is deservedly one of the most popular flowers in Canada. Also it needs very little care except at planting and digging time. About the middle of May is a good time for planting but, as pointed out by the Horticultural Division, Dominion Experimental Farms, the exact date varies according to locality because the frost must be out of the ground and the soil dried. Sandy loam, well fertilized the previous year, is the ideal soil, but gladioli will do well on heavier soils. In a light, poor soil they would probably fail in a hot dry season. After planting the soil must be cultivated frequently to keep down the weeds and render the surface loose. During very dry weather a thorough soaking with water once a week is very beneficial, and it is well to remember that when the time comes for cutting the blooms at least two sets of leaves should be left on the plants, so that the corm will come to full growth and so be in good condition for growing next year. There are hundred of varieties to choose from, but the Primulinus hybrids which are quite distinct in appearance from the large-growing varieties are becoming more popular every year. The corms, as obtained from the seedsman, should be planted from four to six inches deep and about three inches apart in a sunny position in the garden.

"An angel is a person who has conquered self and risen to high levels of character. No person can be endowed with virtue or holiness."—Edwin Markham.

Canadians Well Fed

Canada certainly does not starve its people if we may judge by its recorded consumption. In 1933 we ate, per capita, 136.99 pounds of meat, 10.68 pounds of poultry, 30.4 pounds of butter, 3.30 pounds of cheese and 257 eggs. The meat bill was as follows pork, 74,58 lbs.; beef, 56.09 pounds; and mutton and lamb, 6.32 pounds.



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1. Write a short statement (under 50 words) on why you prefer RIT Dyes and send it together with an empty RIT package (or reasonable facsimile) and your name and address, to John A. Huston Co. Ltd. 46 Caledonia Rd., Toronto.
2. Send as many as you wish; contest closes midnight June 29, 1935.
3. 1,000 prizes will be awarded on the decision of the judges, which will be final. Whether you win a pair of silk stockings or not, we will mail to all entrants free of charge, our famous booklet—"The A.B.C. of Home Rug Making".

TINTS and DYES
Rit is a convenient *scored* wafer, easier to measure; won't sift out of the package.

NOT A SOAP!

NO PEP?

When you feel like a log and your muscles tire easily, it's more than likely that wastes that shouldn't be in your body are sending out poisons into your blood. At times like these, take a bubbling, bracing glass of Andrews Liver Salt each day till the trouble clears up. Then take an occasional glass—once or twice each week—and you'll stay perfectly fit. Get Andrews now. Small tin, 35c; Large tin, 60c; Extra large bottle, 75c. Proprietors, Scott & Turner, Ltd., Newcastle-upon-Tyne, Eng. 45

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Why at 40 You Think You're "GROWING OLD"

It's Frequently Just an "Idea." Not "Old Age." And According to Scientists, May be Something No More Alarming Than A Touch Of Acid Stomach

At about 40, many people think they're "growing old." They're tired a lot. Have headaches. Stomach upsets. Dizziness. Nausea.

Well, scientists say the cause, in a great many cases, is merely an *acid condition* of the stomach. The thing to do is simply to *neutralize* the excess stomach acidity.

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