

**THE MASTER KEY
CHAPTER XXI.**

WHEN the chest was dove on deck, dripping with ocean slime, corroded and mysterious, Harry Wilkerson stared at it stupidly. His mind went back down the years to that night when Thomas Gallon—scheming for his little daughter—had drawn a plan by candlelight, to the quarrel, to his own desperate flight and escape.

And now he was about to see for the first time the fatal paper—to know the secret of the wealth of the "Master Key." He forgot his surroundings.

It was Jean Darnell who recalled him to the present. She leaned over



Thomas Gallon and His Little Daughter.

his shoulder as he knelt, and the perfume of her breathed into his nostrils. He looked up, laughed and then ordered the box taken aft.

"I was dreaming," he said slowly. Then he looked at her directly, and she saw the flame in his eyes.

"Why dream when things are coming true?" she parried.

"I wonder whether they will all come true," he said moodily and followed the chest aft.

The curious sailors set the box down and waited. It was evident from their attitudes that they expected to see nothing less than great treasures. Otherwise, why this costly expedition?

But Wilkerson did not start immediately to open the chest. Its very appearance seemed to bewilder him, and his hands shook. It was Jean Darnell who stirred him to activity.

"Now you've got it," she said impatiently, "hurry and open it! The other launch is chasing us!"

Wilkerson stared around and picked up a marlinspike. He began to pry at the lock. Mrs. Darnell angrily jerked at his shoulder.

"Harry, you fool, here is the key!" He took the article she handed him and nodded. "Sure enough," he assented, "we have the key! Funny I had forgot that."

With some difficulty he managed to clear the lock and insert the key. It turned with difficulty.

A moment later he had prised the lid back from its setting of rust and slime and they were all staring at the sodden contents.

There was no sound except the trundling of the swiftly revolving propeller and the heavy breathing of the sailors.

Suddenly Wilkerson swung round angrily and ordered everybody forward. Then he began his slow search.

Old jackets almost disintegrated by the action of water, pulpy papers and



Wilkerson Stared at It Stupidly.

various odds and ends came to his hand. The pulp he carefully laid aside as being possibly what he was looking for.

"I'm afraid the plans are gone," Jean whispered.

"We must find them!" he snarled and went on with his task.

Halfway down he came upon a grotesque figure dripping with woody ooze. It stiffly stared up at him as he held it.

"Some sailor's curio. Well, go on. We don't talk."

An hour afterward Harry Wilkerson rose to his feet and kicked the scattered contents of the chest into the scupper.

The idol rolled away and came to a stop upright against the bulwarks, when it presented glazed, mysterious eyes.

"No plans!" muttered Wilkerson with a curse.

"Only an idol!" laughed Jean in wild derision.

Then her handsome face flamed with wrath. She turned her back contemptuously on Wilkerson and stared across the water at the launch which was pursuing them.

In the bitterness of her heart was no mingling of pity for her tool; only self contempt that she had depended on him, helped him.

When she could control herself she went forward to get out of sight of the mocking heap of rubbish that had cost so much.

Presently a sailor made excuse to come aft and peered at the pile of junk. The idol caught his eye, and he stealthily caught it up and hid it in his shirt.

"Good in a pawnshop," he chuckled. Thus once more the plans of the mother lode of the "Master Key" mille escaped from Wilkerson's itching fingers.

When the launch put into San Pedro Mrs. Darnell did not wait for Wilkerson.

"I'm going to Los Angeles," she said. "You'll find me at the hotel—if you think it worth your while."

He looked up from his business of settling with the divers and made a gesture to detain her. He seemed to call out some inarticulate plea.

She merely smiled again and left. She paid no attention to one of the sailors who brushed by her, clutching a concealed object beneath his jacket.

This individual, once clear of the water front, quickly made his way to a pawnbroker's shop, and the idol changed hands for a small sum after much haggling.

Before Wilkerson had settled with the diver John Dorr's launch also made its landing, and the two enemies would have met except that Wilkerson had to go to bank to cash a draft.

As he slipped away he saw the other boat and laughed bitterly. Dorr was welcome to what there was in the old chest.

"There is just one thing to do," John told the broken hearted Ruth, "and



"I'm going to Los Angeles," she said.

that is to find out what Wilkerson did with what he got from your father's chest."

The captain of the other boat received them with a good humored grin and in answer to their inquiries pointed to the open box and the articles scattered on the deck.

"So far as I could make out," he went on, "there wasn't anything in the old chest worth the trouble of going after. At any rate Mr. Wilkerson and the lady seemed disappointed and put out."

"Didn't they take anything?" demanded Ruth, peering curiously at the moldy sea chest.

"Not a thing, so far as I could discover," was the reply. "In fact, I heard the two of them kind of quarrelling, and the lady went off by herself."

The three of them stared down at the mementos of the long past tragedy, and then the captain suddenly ejaculated. "Yes, there is one thing missing."

"What is that?" demanded John.

"An old idol. But I'm sure neither of them took it."

"But what became of it?" John continued, trying to conceal his anxiety.

"Maybe one of the men picked it up for a curio," the skipper said apologetically. "Everybody seemed to think the old thing was worthless, and you know a sailor will grab at just that kind of thing. Better ask some of the crew."

A few moments later Dorr had learned that one of the sailors had indeed taken the image and gone uptown with it, apparently to sell it.

John thanked the captain, and when he and Ruth were out of earshot he

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GEORGE EDMUND FOSS HEARD FROM

Wishes to Correct Wrong Impression Published in Daily News

HIGHLAND PARK PRESS, Highland Park, Illinois. GENTLEMEN:

For fear the public may have received a wrong impression of an incorrect report made of my speech before the Electric Club in the Chicago Daily News of last week, I would appreciate it very much if you will publish my letter which appeared in the Chicago Daily News of yesterday, a copy of which is herewith enclosed.

Yours very truly,
GEO. EDMUND FOSS.

Letter of Mr. Foss

My attention has been called to The Daily News' editorial criticism of a speech made by me before the Electric Club last week.

I do not think the criticism would have been made if the editor had heard the speech or had had an accurate account of it before him. The Daily News account amplified it and gave it a direction and twist, so to speak, not warranted.

I did not refer to the Green Brier incident. The only incidents which I related were ten years old. My speech was in general terms and gave reasons for building up the American navy.

I believe in American neutrality at the present time and at the same time I believe in pro-Americanism. I trust that our state department may be able to smooth out any friction which exists on the high seas and undoubtedly the friction has been greater than the public has been aware of, as Secretary Redfield is reported to have said at Louisville.

If the facts were fully known public opinion would insist upon drastic action that would prevent the recurrence of the arbitrary holdups and exactions of which our foreign commerce is today the victim.

Notice

Public notice is hereby given that the Board of Local Improvements of the City of Highland Park, County of Lake and State of Illinois, has filed in the county court of Lake County, Illinois, a certificate that the following improvement has been completed, and that it conforms substantially to the requirements of the original ordinance for the construction of the same, to-wit:

For the grading, draining, curbing, paving with reinforced concrete pavement and otherwise improving Sheridan Rd., from its intersection with the easterly line of St. Johns Ave. southeasterly to the northerly end of the new pavement in Dear Ave., said northerly end of said new pavement being in the southerly line of Cedar Ave., produced easterly, at the junction of Sheridan Rd. and Cedar Ave., all in the city of Highland Park, Lake County, Illinois. Highland Park Special Assessment of said court docket number 214, and that application has been made to said court to consider and determine whether or not the facts stated in said certificate are true. That a hearing will be had upon said application on Friday the 26th day of February A. D. 1915, at the hour of ten (10) o'clock in the forenoon of said day, at the county court room of said court, in the county court house, at Waukegan, in said Lake County. Objections may be filed to said application on or before the hour of ten (10) o'clock in the forenoon of said day.

Frank P. Hawkins
Robert W. Buckley
Frank W. Sheahan
Byron J. Stevens

Board of Local Improvements of the city of Highland Park.
Dated at Highland Park, Illinois, December 30, 1914. 50-51

Winning a Violin.

The way M. Ysaie, the great violinist, became the owner of a Guarnerius violin dated 1742 was thus quaintly told by himself:

"The Guarnerius was bought in Paris by a pupil of mine, a charming young woman. I envied her the violin, and fate gave it to me. I teach this pupil, and by and by I meet her sister, a most lovely young woman, with whom I fall in love straightway and marry. Soon I go to my sister-in-law, who was my pupil, and say to her:

"It is time you stop fooling with a violin. You will never learn how to play it. I take the liberty of a big brother, but she do not like it for long time. At last she succumb to my experience and wisdom, and she stops playing. Then I say grandiloquently:

"I will take the Guarnerius, 1742." I take it, and that is how the violin came into the possession of Ysaie."

Cracow.

Cracow stands even before Warsaw in the minds of Polish patriots. Not only was it once the capital of free Poland, with a cathedral equivalent to Westminster Abbey, wherein sleep the generations of Polish kings and heroes, but it possesses the most striking patriotic memorial in the world. This is the Kosciuszko, a mound 300 feet high, erected to the memory of Kosciuszko, and formed of earth from every battlefield of Poland. In the construction of that memorial Polish nobles, statesmen and peasants toiled side by side.—London Spectator.

Enjoyment.

A certain rich woman, having run her eye over the latest report of the bureau of statistics touching food-stuffs, grew very blithe all at once.

"Why shouldn't I enjoy life when so few can really afford it?" she exclaimed glowingly.—Puck.

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The contest will be conducted in this manner: 2,000 votes will be given for each new subscriber to The Highland Park Press paid one year in advance which is \$1.50. 500 votes for a renewal of subscriptions. 6,000 votes for a new subscription paid 2 years in advance. 1,500 votes for renewal paid 2 years in advance. In addition to this 25 votes will be given free with every 25c cash purchase of any Deerfield merchant. These ballots may be voted for anyone you desire.

The Ballot Box will be at Knaak's Drug Store

Take your subscriptions there and receive a ballot with your own name or the name of the person for whom you wish to vote and deposit it in the ballot box.

This Contest is Open to Everybody Over the Age of 13 Years

The Highland Park Press

OPENING ANNOUNCEMENT

Drew and Savege
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If there is any matter affecting your Lake County property upon which, now that the tax season is close upon us, you wish authentic and prompt information, let me help you out, be it a matter ever so small or ever so weighty.

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