g Useful !

of best German reed, lined
on leather, size 19 x 19 x 38,
.....$6.50
s, cobbler seat and roll seat,
.....$2.75 to $6.50
st quality solid mahogany
from .....$1.00 up,
note rubber tires, strong

ing & Co.
MILTON, ONT.

PHONE 81
FOUNDRY
and a full line of
PLOW SHARES
also sharpen
ARDS,
ER KNIVES,
AWN MOWERS, &c.
Repair Work
Specialty.
and for Scrap Iron,
MACHINE & FOUNDRY CO.

RY REPAIRS
to at the
RY MACHINE SHOP

& ELECTROPLATING

ON GUARANTEED.
Mfg. Co. Limited,

have now an
Children's
r Fall & Winter
the ac-
L School

SHOE STORE.

T THE
R RIGHT

LENDAR
UARY 1911
SU RI SAT
67
14
21
28

YEARS WILL USE
THING BUT
OF THE WEST
FLOUR
A MODEL MILL
UARANTEED by
LDE MILLER
LING CO. LTD., TORONTO

YER & CO., Agent, Milton.

The Canadian Champion

VOLUME 51. MILTON, THURSDAY, JANUARY 12, 1911. No. 31

BANK OF HAMILTON

THRIFT is rightly described as "Economical Management."
A shrewd business man is spoken of as thrifty because he saves.
Perhaps only a dollar at a time—perhaps more—but the real secret of his success lies in the principle of saving.
One dollar will start an account with the Bank of Hamilton.

H. P. WANZER, Agent, Milton.

Head Office, HAMILTON.

COUNTY OF HALTON
LOCAL COURTS CALENDAR
FOR 1911

Place of Sitting	Day of Sitting	Hours of Opening	Jan.	Mar.	May	July.	Sept.	Nov.	1912 Jan.	Mar.
1 Milton	Friday	10.30 a.m.	13	10	12	14	15	10	12	8
2 Oakville	Tuesday	12.30 p.m.	10	7	9	11	12	7	9	5
3 Georgetown	Wednesday	10.00 a.m.	11	8	10	12	13	8	10	6
4 Acton	Thursday	10.15 a.m.	12	9	11	13	14	9	11	7
5 Campbellville	Saturday	10.00 a.m.	14	11	13	15	16	11	13	9
6 Burlington	Monday	11.00 a.m.	9	6	8	10	11	6	8	4

NAMES AND ADDRESSES OF CLERKS—1. Wm. Panton, Milton; 2. Arthur Hilmer, Oakville; 3. Chas. C. Row, Georgetown; 4. E. J. McNally, Acton; 5. Wm. Frazer, Campbellville; 6. Edward Donkin, Burlington.

General Sessions of the Peace and County Court Sittings, with or without Jury, 12th June and 12th December, on opening days at 1 p.m.

County Court Sittings, without Jury, 4th April and 3rd October, and so often at other times as may be required for the despatch of business.

County Court Sittings—formerly Terms—9th January, 3rd April, 3rd July and 2nd October.

Audit of Criminal Justice Accounts, 5th January, 4th April, 4th July and 3rd October.

By order W. I. DICK, Milton,
Clerk of the Peace.

Canadian Champion
PUBLISHED
EVERY THURSDAY MORNING
At the Office of Publication,
MAIN ST., MILTON, ONT.

TERMS OF SUBSCRIPTION—$1.50 a year. $1.00 if paid in advance.

TO SUBSCRIBERS—No paper will be stopped until all arrears are paid, except at the option of the proprietor. A post-office notice to discontinue is not sufficient.

To subscribers in the United States $2.00 a year, $1.50 if paid in advance.

ADVERTISING RATES.

SPACE	1 YR.	6 MO	3 MO.	1 MO.
1 Column	$50 00	$35 00	$20 00	$7 00
½ Column	35 00	20 00	12 00	3 50
⅓ Column	20 00	12 00	7 00	2 50
¼ Column	15 00	7 00	4 00	1 50

Business Cards of ten lines or less, $5.00 per annum. The number of lines to be reckoned by the space occupied, measured by a scale of solid nonpareil.

Advertisements without special instructions inserted until forbid, and charged accordingly.

Any special Notice, the object of which is to promote the pecuniary benefit of any individual company, institution, or fund, will be considered as advertisement, and charged accordingly.

Notices of births, deaths and marriages, 25c. each.

Transient advertisements, 10 cents per line, except those of lost, strayed, stolen, and wants, which will be inserted at 50 cents for the first insertion, and 25 cents for each subsequent insertion.

WM. PANTON,
Editor and Proprietor.

LEGAL.

C. E. HOLLINRAKE, B.A.,
Barrister, Solicitor, Notary Public Money to Loan. Office—Over Bank of Hamilton, Milton.

WILLIAM I. DICK,
(County Crown Attorney)
Barrister, Solicitor and Conveyancer. Money to loan. Office—Court House, Milton, Ont.

VICTOR CHISHOLM,
Barrister, Solicitor, &c., Notary Public Money to Loan at lowest rates. Office—Northwest corner Bank of Hamilton, Milton.

J. W. ELLIOTT, B.A.,
Barrister, &c., Notary Public. Money to Loan. Office—First door east of Messrs. Winn & Co's shoe factory, Main st., Milton.

E. W. BOYD,
Barrister, Solicitor, Notary, Conveyancer, &c., 25 Toronto St., Toronto. Money to Loan.

DENTAL.

B. GOLLOP, L.D.S., D.D.S.
DENTIST. Honor graduate Toronto University. Office: Dewar's Block, upstairs.

T. T. HARRIS, L.D.S.,
DENTIST, Oakville, will visit Milton on the last Wednesday of each month. Office: Bennett House.

MEDICAL.

H. A. MCCOLL, M.B.,
Physician, and Surgeon, Coroner. Office hours, to 9 a.m., 12 to 2 p.m., and 6 to 9 p.m. Office, two doors east of Bank of Hamilton, Milton.

MARSHALL E. GOWLAND, M.A., M.B.
M.C.P. & S.O.
Honor Graduate and Silver Medalist of Toronto University.
OFFICE and residence, Corner of Main and Charles Sts., Milton.

Private Funds
to loan on good farm security at 5 per cent. Interest payable yearly or half-yearly.
WILLIAM I. DICK,
Barrister, Milton.

Church Directory.

METHODIST CHURCH
REV. WM. SMYTHE, Pastor.
Sunday Services: 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.
Sunday School and Bible Class: 2.30 p.m.
Epworth League: Monday, at 8 p.m.
Prayer Meeting: Wednesday, at 8 p.m.
Pastor's Class: Friday, at 7.30 p.m.
W.M.S.: First Monday of the month at 3 p.m
Ladies' Aid: Last Monday of the month at 3 p.m.

KNOX CHURCH
REV. W. M. MCKAY, Minister.
Sunday Services: 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.
Sunday School: 2.30 p.m. Judge Gorham's Bible Class in Church at 2.45 p.m.
Prayer Meeting: Wednesday, at 7.30 p.m.
W.F.M.S. meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 3 p.m.
The Mission Band meets on the second Wednesday of every month at 4.30 p.m.

GRACE CHURCH
REV. G. MCQUILLIN, Rector.
Sunday Services: 11 a.m. and 7 p.m.
Sunday School: 2.30 p.m.
Holy Communion: 1st Sunday of each month at mid-day and 3rd Sunday at 8 a.m.
Week night service and Bible study, Wednesday evening at 7.30, when the Sunday School lesson for the following Sunday will be taken up.

ROMAN CATHOLIC CHURCH
REV. FATHER SAVAGE.
MILTON AND TRAFALGAR—2nd Sunday, 8.30 and 11.00 alternately; commencing 2nd Sunday of January with Mass in Milton at 8.30.

Travellers' Guide.

CANADIAN PACIFIC RAILWAY
GOING EAST.
7.00 a. m. 10.20 a. m. 2.55 p. m. 5.25 p. m. 8.25 p. m.
GOING WEST.
9.03 a.m. 2.55 p.m. 7.06 p.m. 8.25 p.m.
—SUNDAY—
West 9.03 a.m., 8.30 p.m. East 7.11 a.m., 8.12p.m

GRAND TRUNK RAILWAY
(E. & N. W. Division.)
GOING NORTH. GOING SOUTH.
7.45 a.m. 4.45 p.m. 10.25 a.m. 8.35 p.m

1911
WALL PAPERS
THE BEST VALUE EVER SHOWN.
Come and make arrangements early for your spring work.
FRANK PEAREN.
Art Decorator

60 YEARS' EXPERIENCE
PATENTS
TRADE MARKS
DESIGNS
COPYRIGHTS &C.
Anyone sending a sketch and description may quickly ascertain our opinion free whether an invention is probably patentable. Communications strictly confidential. HANDBOOK on Patents sent free. Oldest agency for securing patents.
Patents taken through Munn & Co. receive special notice, without charge, in the
Scientific American.
A handsomely illustrated weekly. Largest circulation of any scientific journal. Terms, $3 a year; four months, $1. Sold by all newsdealers.
Munn & Co. 361 Broadway, New York
Branch Office, 625 F St., Washington, D. C.

Clubbing Offer
With The Champion—
Daily Globe $4.25
Mail and Empire 4.25
Weekly Globe 1.75

THE Secret OF THE Countess

By WARD MUIR

"Plenty," said Derrick.

"He daren't do otherwise."

"Do you suspect Abner?"

She smiled enigmatically.

"If I don't, you do," she remarked, mockingly. "I can see that you distrust him. It's a sound instinct. But you need not fear him." Again she changed her tone. "Where is Sir Felix to be buried?" she asked abruptly.

"At Dalraven Craig, the family seat in Argyllshire."

"Does Mr. Abner know of this plan?"

"I spoke to him about it just after the inquest. He objected strongly. He wanted the body buried in London."

"I thought so. Don't take his suggestion. The funeral should take place in Argyllshire."

"It will. I have made up my mind not to break the family tradition." His chin was set. "Now, let me ask you a question, Countess. Am I to run the risk of being poisoned by secret assassins every time I venture to eat or drink?"

"You are certainly in danger, but the danger will not be so great once you have left this room."

"Why?"

"Because had you been poisoned when lunching with me, they would have sworn I was the poisoner." She stated the reason with a strange coolness. "That poison was intended to ruin me, as well as to do away with you."

"Not a nice prospect!"

Derrick's smile was grim.

"You are a pawn in a great game, she said seriously, "a pawn which one side wants to sacrifice, the other side to preserve. "But"—she paused a—"you'll be rather a self-willed pawn, if I mistake not. Remember, though, a pawn can become royal if it succeeds unscathed in running the gauntlet of ment's blind. He had looked forth on or ought he to delay it? At the last the almost deserted lamplit platform moment before entering the chapel he of Carlisle Station, and, as he looked, had received a telegram from Countess he had suddenly seen Abner hurry Klein—an amazing telegram, though past outside. The lawyer was fully short.

dressed, although one would have expected him to be asleep in his bunk. Why had he got out of the train at Carlisle? Why had he not undressed and gone to bed?

Soon the whistle blew, and simultaneously Abner reappeared, passing Derrick's window, and had evidently re-entered the sleeping-car and returned to his bunk. At once the train had started again on its journey.

Derrick was uncomfortable. Something was wrong, he felt sure. His thoughts reverted to the van and the coffin. Was it all right? Inspired with an unreasoning doubt, he rose from his berth, dressed rapidly, and went out from the cabin into the corridor.

The guard of the train was passing along the corridor, making the formal tour which is customary after leaving a stopping-place.

Derrick addressed him.

"Why was there such a lengthy delay at Carlisle?"

"The train had to be made up fresh, sir," said the guard. "It was your van that caused the trouble. I keep it locked, you see. Of course it wouldn't do to have people going into a van with a coffin in it. Well, at Carlisle there's coaches from Liverpool and Manchester and Birmingham the train; and we couldn't put them on behind your van, because that would have interrupted the through passage of the corridor. See? So you van had to be shunted off, the extra coaches put in, and your van brought back and hooked on behind 'em. It took longer than we expected; your van seemed slow in coming back We'd not have waited for it, only because of your contract."

Derrick nodded. The Countess had advised him to make a strict contract with the railway company, insisting that the van should be kept to the express and not transferred to any other train.

"We'd have left your van to follow by a later train but for the contract," pursued the guard, a little resentfully. "The job of shunting it took about ten minutes. I never did see such a muddle."

"It was detached from the train for about ten minutes, you say?" said Derrick. He was growing interested.

"Ten minutes," said the guard. "It was shunted off down a switch-rail, and I thought they were never going to bring it back."

Derrick made up his mind.

"I should like to go along and inspect the interior of the van. It's at the very back of the train, isn't it? I suppose I can get through to it? This shunting may have displaced the wreaths which are on the coffin."

The guard accepted a tip, and led the way along through the corridors to the rear of the express. Coach after coach they passed through, each with its dimly glimpsed interiors, containing somnolent travellers, and at last they reached the hindmost van. The guard unlocked its door, and, allowing Derrick to pass, discreetly retrained from following him.

It was a curious scene within that funeral van. One small electric bulb glowing in the ceiling revealed the grim interior, and, in the centre, the trestles on which was mounted Sir Felix Dalraven's coffin. Sure enough, some of the piled wreaths had been displaced by the jarring of the shunting operations, and now lay tumbled on the floor. The air was heavy with the langorous scent of lilies, some of which had been bruised by their fall.

Leaning over the coffin, he pushed back the sliding panel, and looked through the window on to the visage of the corpse.

His uncle's face, now very waxen-looking and pallid, gazed up at his once more—placid, remote, indifferent to this journey which it was being forced to take before it could find rest. Derrick peered down at it for a minute or two; then slid back the panel and hid the vision.

Derrick now began to re-arrange the wreaths, placing each in position on the coffin-lid. As he picked up the last wreath which had been lying on the floor, something tinkled on to the boards—some mall object which had become momentarily entangled in the sprays of flowers.

Derrick looked down, then gave an ejaculation of astonishment. He bent and picked up the object which had fallen. It was a silver bangle, shaped like a snake with an opal eye.

Unmistakably it was Delia's bangle!

CHAPTER VIII.

The Silent Passenger on the Highland Express

It was 3 a.m., and the night mail from Euston to the North, having left Carlisle and roared across the Solway flats, traversed the little bridge which marks the Border, and droned through Gretna and Lockerbie, was now mounting the long incline which marks the Moffat foothills

It was a long train, and at the end was a windowless van which was intended for the transportation of something quite other than normal luggage. This last van, which was situated at the rear of the express, and which was locked, contained a passenger—a dead passenger—Sir Felix Dalraven. His body, in its coffin, was being taken to Argyllshire for the interment.

Derrick, in his cabin in the sleeping-car, was ill at ease. His mind had kept reverting all night to the thought of that silent passenger in the hindmost van . There had been something furtive and almost hasty in the way the coffin had been placed in the van at the terminus. The loading had been done at a remote siding at the terminus, and the van afterwards attached to the train. Altogether the departure from Euston had been a worrying business, and Abner, who was accompanying Derrick to Scotland, had been of little help, for he had only appeared at the last moment, just before the departure of the train. As soon as they had started, Abner had withdrawn to his sleeping cabin, which adjoined Derrick's, on the plea that he was tired and wanted to go to bed immediately.

Lying awake in his berth, Derrick had mentally reviewed the events of the last few days, and again and again his thoughts had returned to Countess Klein, that mysterious woman who seemed to know so much, who seemed to wish him well, and yet who was so tantalizingly uncommunicative. He had twice been to see her at her house in Park Lane, and had been more and more impressed with her commanding personality—a personality wilfully veiled behind a flippant mask. It was curious to recollect how earnestly, though, she had advised him with reference to this journey, and the arrangements for Sir Felix's coffin. At her advice he had caused the coffin to be constructed with a sliding panel above a glass window, so that the body's face could be viewed if desired; at her advice he had insisted on the funeral van being attached to an express, and not sent by a slow train. Why had she insisted on these details? He could not tell. But he was convinced of their wisdom.

For since his first meeting with her, he had received a curious confirmation of her influence. When Mr. Varwell, the famous chief of the Criminal Investigation Department, had called on Derrick to cross-examine him with reference to the Olroyd Square murder the name of Countess Klein had happened to come up in conversation, and Derrick had casually mentioned that he knew her.

"Countess Klein is a friend of yours?" Varwell had questioned swiftly.

Derrick had said that she was, and had remarked that she seemed to be a strangely influential woman.

"The most influential woman in Europe—perhaps in the world," Varwell said. "There's no getting round the fact that Countess Klein is a power to be reckoned with—a financial power and a political power. A power for good, too, I sincerely believe."

Varwell's enthusiasm was striking, and, Derrick, recalling it now as he lay in his sleeper, again felt that Countess Klein was probably the chief factor to be reckoned with in the solving of the mystery of his uncle's death. What, for instance, did she know about Adolf Abner, the taciturn solicitor? Suppose the Countess had been here in the train, and had seen what Derrick saw at Carlisle, what would have been her interpretation of the episode?

For the train had made what seemed to Derrick an almost interminable halt at Carlisle, and, wondering what could be the significance of such a delay, Derrick had leant from his berth and had lifted a corner of the compartment's blind. He had looked forth on the almost deserted lamplit platform of Carlisle Station, and, as he looked, he had suddenly seen Abner hurry past outside. The lawyer was fully dressed, although one would have expected him to be asleep in his bunk. Why had he got out of the train at Carlisle? Why had he not undressed and gone to bed?

Soon the whistle blew, and simultaneously Abner reappeared, passing Derrick's window, and had evidently re-entered the sleeping-car and returned to his bunk. At once the train had started again on its journey.

Derrick was uncomfortable. Something was wrong, he felt sure. His thoughts reverted to the van and the coffin. Was it all right? Inspired with an unreasoning doubt, he rose from his berth, dressed rapidly, and went out from the cabin into the corridor.

The guard of the train was passing along the corridor, making the formal tour which is customary after leaving a stopping-place.

Derrick addressed him.

"Why was there such a lengthy delay at Carlisle?"

"The train had to be made up fresh, sir," said the guard. "It was your van that caused the trouble. I keep it locked, you see. Of course it wouldn't do to have people going into a van with a coffin in it. Well, at Carlisle there's coaches from Liverpool and Manchester and Birmingham the train; and we couldn't put them on behind your van, because that would have interrupted the through passage of the corridor. See? So your van had to be shunted off, the extra coaches put in, and your van brought back and hooked on behind 'em. It took longer than we expected; your van seemed slow in coming back We'd not have waited for it, only because of your contract."

Derrick nodded. The Countess had advised him to make a strict contract with the railway company, insisting that the van should be kept to the express and not transferred to any other train.

"We'd have left your van to follow by a later train but for the contract," pursued the guard, a little resentfully. "The job of shunting it took about ten minutes. I never did see such a muddle."

"It was detached from the train for about ten minutes, you say?" said Derrick. He was growing interested.

"Ten minutes," said the guard. "It was shunted off down a switch-rail, and I thought they were never going to bring it back."

Derrick made up his mind.

"I should like to go along and inspect the interior of the van. It's at the very back of the train, isn't it? I suppose I can get through to it? This shunting may have displaced the wreaths which are on the coffin."

The guard accepted a tip, and led the way along through the corridors to the rear of the express. Coach after coach they passed through, each with its dimly glimpsed interiors, containing somnolent travellers, and at last they reached the hindmost van. The guard unlocked its door, and, allowing Derrick to pass, discreetly retrained from following him.

It was a curious scene within that funeral van. One small electric bulb glowing in the ceiling revealed the grim interior, and, in the centre, the trestles on which was mounted Sir Felix Dalraven's coffin. Sure enough, some of the piled wreaths had been displaced by the jarring of the shunting operations, and now lay tumbled on the floor. The air was heavy with the langorous scent of lilies, some of which had been bruised by their fall.

Leaning over the coffin, he pushed back the sliding panel, and looked through the window on to the visage of the corpse.

His uncle's face, now very waxen-looking and pallid, gazed up at his once more—placid, remote, indifferent to this journey which it was being forced to take before it could find rest. Derrick peered down at it for a minute or two; then slid back the panel and hid the vision.

Derrick now began to re-arrange the wreaths, placing each in position on the coffin-lid. As he picked up the last wreath which had been lying on the floor, something tinkled on to the boards—some mall object which had become momentarily entangled in the sprays of flowers.

Derrick looked down, then gave an ejaculation of astonishment. He bent and picked up the object which had fallen. It was a silver bangle, shaped like a snake with an opal eye.

Unmistakably it was Delia's bangle!

CHAPTER IX.

The Coffin's Secret

It was late the following afternoon. Before the funeral cortege reached Dalraven Craig. The castle was thirty miles from a railway-station, through barren moorland country, shelving to a rockbound coast. Old Angus MacAlister, the chief henchman of the Craig, with his four sons, met Derrick and Abner at the station, and drove them, with the coffin, across those lonely miles of upland road. It had been a peculiarity of Sir Felix that would only have men-servants at the Craig, so nowadays Macalister and his sons were its sole inhabitants.

Dalraven Craig, grim and grey, stood at the summit of a cliff which looked forth over the Atlantic towards the quaintly named Hebrides islands of Coll, Tiree, Eigg and Canna. The Craig's private chapel clung to the verge of the cliff, and down from the chapel led the stair which was the sole approach to the Dalraven burial vault. An extraordinary place was this vault —whose age no man knew. It was carved from the living rock at the foot of the cliff. But more extraordinary still was the flight of steep, almost breakneck steps, which descended to it. They were hewn in the cliff's face—narrow, worn steps, slippery and crumbling, and only sheltered by an antique iron rail on their outer side. Down these steps many generations of dead Dalravens had been carried by their retainers. It needed strong men —men with steady heads—safely to carry a coffin, shoulder-high, down such a staircase.

Darkness had fallen before the service—conducted in Gaelic by a nonagenarian chaplain—was concluded, and the small party prepared to descend the cliff to the vault. The chaplain was too infirm to accompany the last rites. Macalister, his four stalwart sons—all five being in Highland attire—Derrick Dalraven, and Abner were the sole mourners to go to the tomb.

And now the time had come to lift the coffin and brave the descent. Derrick was strangely hesitant. Should he, the funeral proceed? he asked himself, or ought he to delay it? At the last moment before entering the chapel he had received a telegram from Countess Klein—an amazing telegram, though short.

"Open the coffin!" she had wired. "How? Why? Derrick mentally asked himself a thousand questions. What could her message mean? How was he to interrupt this ceremonial by such a gruesome request?

Half undecided, he strode forward to where Macalister's sons were preparing to lift the coffin and take it from the chapel.

"One last look!" he said in a low voice.

He slid back the panel.

Still the pale and waxen face gazing up through the glass!

Derrick returned the panel.

"You can proceed," he said. It was out of the question, he felt, to comply with Countess Klein's desire. To open the coffin would cause a needless scene.

Macalister, with a torch, was to precede the coffin down the staircase. His four sons, with Derrick and Abner, were to carry it.

The young Highlanders lifted the coffin and rested it on their shoulders, leaving a space at the front for the lawyer and the heir. Abner stepped forward to take his place, putting his shoulder under the coffin—purely a formal task, for the Macalisters bore the whole burden. And as, of course, the whole shoulder, Derrick join Abner put up his shoulder, Derrick started. For he had caught sight of Abner's neck, stretched out above his collar—and on that neck there was a peculiar mark—a wrinkled puckering, like a monkey's face!

Could two men possess such a mark? Was Abner marked exactly like Barny Lazarus? If not— But the tangle must await solution. Derrick strode forward and took his place by Abner, supporting the foremost end of the coffin.

The six men, with slow and careful tread, quitted the chapel, preceded by old Macalister with the torch. Outside all was black. It was a thundery night, and an opaque pall of clouds hid the moon. Not a breath of air stirred. Down below, in the gulf of darkness beyond the verge of the cliff, the Atlantic lisped in silken wavelets on the network of cruel rock-points. These were invisible, but Derrick well knew the knife-edged and dagger-like willdernesses of shelves and boulders which formed the base of the cliff fifty feet below.

Looking down, as they reached the top of the steps, he thought for an instant that he caught sight of a light on the sea, about twenty feet from shore. It vanished, and he concluded that he had imagined it, or that it was phosphorescent. Presently Macalister with the torch began to go down the staircase, and the coffin, swaying on its bearers' shoulders, commenced cautiously to follow.

It was a difficult manoeuvre to steer the large and heavy coffin round the narrow, jutting corner at the top of the steps. The six men advanced cautiously, choosing their foothold by the wavering light of the torch, and leaning slightly on the iron rail, high above which moved their grim burden. And suddenly, as they made this first, delicate manoeuvre, there was a jolt—a rude and impulsive jar. The coffin swayed and swung wide; its bearers staggered, and each, instinctively, clutched to save himself.

With one frightful lurch the coffin escaped from their grasp, pitched over the precipice, and—after a dreadful interval—was heard to crash thunderously on the jagged rocks below, with the sound of splintering wood.

The catastrophe was a staggering one, but the coffin had barely shattered itself on the rocks when the party of horrified bearers were astounded at yet another phenomenon.

Almost synchronizing with the crash, there flared forth, from some point a few yards out to sea, a dazzling, a palpitating, burst of light. It was like a sharp but soundless detonation, silent yet explosive. So lurid was the momentary glare that its sensation upon the eyes was almost painful; and when, before no more than a second had elapsed, the light died down, it left an aching blank of doubly impenetrable darkness.

The party on the rock-staircase were petrified with amazement; the superstitious Highlanders, with a relic of old days, muttered some ancient formula for the repulsing of evil spirits. Macalister's torch waved ominously, and in its rays Derrick could see that Abner, who had recoiled with his back to the cliff-face, was as white as marble. Derrick, regaining his self-possession, sprang forward and seized the torch from Macalister's fingers; then, regardless of caution, ran with it down the steps to the sea level.

On the rocks at the foot of the stair lay the remains of the coffin—smashed and wrecked. It gaped wide. And one glance showed that it was empty.

Derrick surveyed its interior, his heart beating, his nerves tense-strung. This, then, was why the Countess had wanted the coffin opened! She had suspected that it contained no body, the body had somehow been abstracted. And now an accident had revealed the mockery! Nay, was it an accident? Had not someone deliberately cast down the coffin from the shoulders of its bearers? That must be investigated. Meanwhile, here lay the coffin's meaningless remains, confessing to their strange secret. For there was now evident that behind the panel window there had been a wax mask, not a face of flesh.

Yes—he examined the debris—here was the mask; a skilfully constructed replica of his uncle's face. It was broken, now, by the fall, and had become detached from the rod which had supported it in position. But there was no mistaking its purpose.

Derrick stood erect again, to find that Macalister, overcoming his fears, had joined him.

"Macalister," said Derrick, "this night's tale must go no further! I rely on you and on your sons. Our lips are sealed till the mystery is solved. Promise me!"

"I promise." The Highlander spoke "for himself and for his sons. "But it's been overlooked. Did ye no' see your flash, when the coffin fell? There's a boat somewhere there, wi' a searchlight, or some such thing. Ay, we can see the noo! Here comes the moon!"

The clouds had thinned, and the moon came forth. It revealed a startling sight. For, only a few yards from the shore, a small motor-launch containing the figures of two men, one at the tiller and one standing up in the bow and staring earnestly shoreward. The standing figure held a square black object in his hand—a camera!

Derrick clenched his fist in helpless rage. So the Press had dogged him here! And actually a flashlight photograph of the coffin's fall had been obtained! That was the meaning of the dazzling yet silent explosion—it was a magnesium flash, and it had impressed the whole dramatic picture on a sensitive plate. The whole world, to-morrow or the day after, would see that picture in their morning's paper, and whet their vulgar curiosity on this fresh development of the mystery of Olroyd Square, this new scene in the drama of the Dalravens.

It was maddening. Derrick, nevertheless choked down his wrath, and prepared to parley with the intruders.

"Who are you?" he called to the men in the launch.

The standing figure replied courteously enough.

"My name is Hannen. This"—he waved his hand to the man in the stern—"is my colleague, Sims. We represent the 'Daily Wire.' We are sorry if we have caused any annoyance. On the other hand, we have obtained a priceless picture. We shall withdraw at once, and not cause you further worry."

"Name your price for that photograph," said Derrick.

"Sorry—the 'Daily Wire' does not take bribes." Hannen was curt. "Good-night! We're off back to Oban."

Macalister, at Derrick's elbow, chuckled.

"They canna escape!" he whispered. "It's a miracle they got in here at all. but since they came the tide's been falling, and there's rocks all round them not two inches below the surface. You watch, Mr. Derrick! We'll stop them yet!"

And he was right. The motor-launch began to throb, swerved round, and made for the open sea. But it had not gone a dozen yards before its bow lifted skyward, and there was a horrible rending sound beneath its keel. It had been torn like paper by the fierce fangs of a hidden reef.

The launch heeled over and filled with lightning rapidity. The two Pressmen jumped clear of it simultaneously. Hannen still pluckily gripping his apparatus. Five minutes later both men were ashore, dripping and breathless, and surrounded by Macalister and his stalwart sons.

Hannen, despite his ducking, was cool and collected.

"We surrender, of course," he smiled, "but under protest."

Already the camera had been taken from him, and it was palpably futile to resist.

"You will not be harmed," said Derrick stiffly, "but I shall take the liberty of detaining you. Give the camera to me, please; and conduct these gentlemen to Dalraven Craig." He addressed two of Dalraven's sons.

The big Highlanders took the Pressmen up the cliffs towards the castle.

"And now," said Derrick, turning again to Macalister and to two of his sons who had remained, "I want to know how it was that the coffin fell?"

Duncan, the youngest son, who had been at the rear of the coffin-bearers, stepped forward.

"Sir," he said, "the coffin was pushed off our shoulders."

"It was pushed! What do you mean?" Derrick questioned him. "Who could have pushed it?"

"It was pushed," the Highlander repeated doggedly. He was trembling with suppressed excitement.

"Who pushed it?"

"It was a ghost pushed it."

"Nonsense!" Derrick was angry.

"It was a ghost pushed it." Duncan reiterated. "The ghost came up behind us at the side, and leant over the turn of the rock. When I felt it give that push I turned and tried to grasp it but it was gone! It was a ghost, sir!"

"Well, well!" Derrick could not shake the man's convinced opinion. "We'll see if we cannot find traces in the morning of something more substantial than a ghost."

But Derrick was not going to trouble to look for footmarks to prove that someone material had dislodged the coffin. He had evidence more valuable than that. In his hand he held the camera, and when its plate was developed he knew that it would reveal whether or not there had been an uninvited addition to the funeral party at the top of the cliff-staircase.

The Pressmen's intrusion might prove less unfortunate than it had seemed.

CHAPTER X.

What the Bloodhound Tracked

Sir Felix Dalraven in his younger days had dabbled in science, and at the castle there was a very fairly well-stocked laboratory. It had been long disused, but, fortunately, the chief photographic developers remained in good preservation, and Derrick had found no serious obstacle in the way of treating the precious plate which enshrined Hannen's flashlight exposure.

Derrick stood now at the bench in the laboratory holding between gingerly fingers the dripping, newly fixed negative. It was an astounding example of the powers of modern photography. Here was the scene on the cliff, the whole weird drama petrified into immobility on the gelatine film: a fantastic miniature tableau in which each actor was fixed, like a marionette, in a wooden rigidity of posture. There was tall Macalister with his torch; there were his kilted sons; there was Abner squeezing back against the cliff wall; there was Derrick himself on the outer side against the iron railing. The one detail which was indistinct was the coffin. An odd blur close to the base of the precipice obviously represented the coffin. Its momentum had increased as it fell, until, just on the point of striking the rocks, it had been travelling faster than the duration of the flashlight, and was sconsequently rendered as a mere oblong streak.

But it was not the group of bearers that interested Derrick, nor the tumbling coffin. His attention was concentrated on that part of the negative which would show whether or not it was, as Duncan had insisted, a "ghost" who had dislodged the coffin from the party's shoulders.

And the negative had registered the entire story with literal faithfulness. Leaning over the lip of the precipice, partly above and partly behind young Duncan Macalister, was yet another figure—the figure of a woman with arm outstretched. Here was the hand that, at the critical juncture, had pushed the coffin and had upset its poise. And her face, small, but microscopically defined in the glare of the flash, was clearly visible.

Derrick seized a magnifying glass, and, through it, scrutinized this face, on the plate.

Already some inkling of the truth had come to him. Yes; it was as he had begun to suspect!

The woman who had dashed the coffin to destruction was Delia Frankfort.

He gazed long and fixedly at this incontrovertible witness, this silent testimony, this photographic plate so exact and so precise in its record, then deliberately dropped it on the cement floor of the laboratory, where it was split into a dozen fragments. These he ground under his heel into pieces still more minute. The negative was destroyed, utterly and beyond redemption.

But there was still the verbal proof, the journalists were still to be reckoned with. Could they be persuaded to hold their tongues? Was it likely that, after securing so exciting an item of exclusive news for their paper, they would refrain from publishing it? Impossible! That publication, then, must be delayed by hook or by crook. Derrick left the laboratory, and made his way to the room where Hannen and Sims had, at his orders, been confined. He unlocked the door and entered. The two men had just concluded the meal with which they had been supplied.

"I'm sorry to have to detain you fellows," said Derrick bluntly, "and I am well aware that I have gone beyond the law in so doing. I take the risk with open eyes. On the other hand, you may both go at once if you care to give me your word of honor not to publish what you have witnessed tonight."

"That is for us to decide."

"I am prepared to buy your silence —at a generous price."

"It is useless to offer us money. Frankly," said Hannen, "the longer you detain us here, the better will our 'story' be, from a journalistic point of view, when we are again at liberty."

Derrick gave a shrug.

"I had thought of that, but it does not alter my decision. At least, I can postpone the publication of the story —and I intend to do so. You are quite sure you won't take—er—money?"

"Quite sure."

"Right. You have my respect, though you have placed me in an abominable position. I shall have to keep you here, under the guardianship of my men, for a while—a day or two at any rate."

He went to his bedroom, and, without undressing, flung himself down to rest on the antique four-poster on which had reposed so many Dalravens. Abner had retired long ago. The lawyer's face, when Derrick had bidden him a curt good-night, was still the hue of chalk.

The light of dawn was filtering palidly in at the window when Derrick arose without having slept. He stole down, through the silent castle, and quietly let himself out into the open air.

He made his way to the stables—a rambling low pile of buildings at the inland side of Dalraven Craig. Despite the early hour, Angus Macalister was already on duty.

Derrick greeted the old man, then went on:

"I want to know, Angus, whether Old Rory has any descendants in the kennels now?"

"Ay, there's a young Rory, with a finer nose than his forebears," answered Macalister. "Here he is." He unlocked a kennel gate, and let out a big, lumbering bloodhound, with large melancholy eyes and flapping ears.

Derrick fondled the dog.

"So, his name's Rory, too?" he said. "A fine brute, to be sure. I have need of him. Put him on a leash, please."

The dog, Rory, was leashed, and Derrick led him forth.

"Shall I come wi' ye, sir?" Macalister was dubious.

"No; I prefer to go alone."

The sun had risen as Derrick crossed the castle couryard, passed the chapel, and came out at the top of the cliff-stairway. The far-stretching sea was still like glass; on the horizon hung a haze, which concealed the distant islands of the Hebrides.

"Now, Rory, old boy," said Derrick, "let's see whether you have any talent. Scent that, Rory!" And Derrick laid on a ledge of rock the bangle which he had found in the coffin-van.

The inner circumference of the silver snake was lined with velvet ribbon, to protect the wearer's arm, so a scent was by no means hopeless. Rory sniffed and nosed the bangle; then Derrick put it in his pocket again, led the hound to the exact spot where Delia must have stood last night, and bade Rory "Seek!"

Instantly, the creature, without giving tongue, strained at the leash, and was off. It had taken up the scent without hesitation.

Derrick, dragged by the taut leash, followed the hound as rapidly as he could. Its course was an erratic one. Delia, in the pitchy darkness, had evidently wandered and stumbled across the moor. Whether she had any definite goal, or not, it was impossible to guess, though Derrick felt that it was safe to suppose that she was making for the railway line. His heart went out in pity to her as her wanderings were thus mapped out for him in the light of day. What a flight hers had been!

On and on she must have struggled, through the heather and across the rocks, sometimes traversing morasses of peat-moss, where the white pennons of the wild cotton-grass fluttered their warning signals—signals invisible in the night. It was wonderful that she had been able to go so far. On and on ran the hound, mile after mile across the moor, in a wavering line, but a line which tended, by degrees, nearer and nearer the railway.

They were still some eight or nine miles from the station, when the hound suddenly swerved through a gap in the heathery hummocks, descended to the high-road, ran a few hundred yards along it, and then plunged up a short cart-track, which led to a deserted cottage—a cottage which had once belonged to a shepherd but which had long since fallen into disrepair.

The cottage door swung on idle hinges. Rory, the bloodhound, led Derrick straight to it, and nosed it open excitedly. Derrick entered.

Before him stood Delia—a Delia he would hardly have recognized. Her face was distracted with grief and horror, her eyes stared wildly as they met his.

"You!" she gasped.

There was a note of profound relief in her tone.

"Look!" she added, clutching his arm and pointing to the corner of the cottage's one room.

Derrick looked, and beheld the dead bodies of the two journalists, Hannen and Sims.

CHAPTER XI.

Delia's Chains

Derrick sprang across and bent over the bodies. Dead. There was no question that they were both dead, and had been dead some hours.

"They're murdered!" he exclaimed. "Shot! Who could have done it?" He swung around, to find that he was alone. Delia had fled.

He rushed to the door of the cottage. Twenty or thirty yards across the moor Delia was still visible, hurrying away, regardless of the obstacles in her path, as though she were distraught.

He ran after her, and caught her up. As he did so, she sank down on the heather.

"I can't st