

Greed For Gold

Or, The Sign of the Arrow

CHAPTER XXII.

The Count Oscar de Verement was as shrewd and keen a man as a successful liver-by-his-wits needs to be. He had absorbed the information which chance had thrown in his way—the knowledge of the whereabouts of the woman who was sentenced with him at the Central Criminal Court.

Miriam had spoken so confidently that he did not for a moment doubt the accuracy of her information. The woman who was to marry Sir George Grayne was the woman who—He laughed as he thought of that woman's past, and how, if she was marrying a rich man, that rich man's pocket would bleed; for the Count had no scruples; he was by no means above a little blackmailing.

The danger to himself he set at naught. The woman could not afford to betray him; and if the worst came to the worst, he possessed the certificate of his own demise, that would need a deal to upset it. Four men at the inquest had sworn to his death. One woman would have an uphill task in upsetting the Registrar General's return.

He went to London and bought two pounds' worth of private detective—that is to say, he did not get the ordinary way to work, and pay so much a day for "inquiries." He had once had a share in a private inquiry agency, and he knew how those things were worked. An advertisement in the Daily Mail for "a man used to making inquiries" brought him a score of replies. He interviewed one man, and said:

"I can't offer you a permanent job, but I can offer you a couple of sovereigns for what you can do in a couple of hours, once you get on the spot. I am in the line myself, and I am spotting some one in the house; but I can't show my face there without spoiling the thing. See?"

"Yes."

"It's down in Sussex. I just want the full names of the people living there, all of them—who they are, what they are, and how long they have been staying there. I could go down myself, and by laying hold of a servant get the information I wanted easily."

"Of course you could."

"Is the job good enough for you, then?"

"Yes. I am doing nothing."

The Count gave him the address of Grayne Hall, showed him the woman's photograph to identify, if possible, gave him his railway fare, and half a sovereign on account, and waited patiently for the report.

It came. The information was of course easily obtained. The man had had identified the photograph. Had seen the woman walking in the grounds; the servants had told him her name—Miss Evelyn Westcar. Was supposed to be playing up to Sir George, the owner of the place. Had been there about three years. There was a stepdaughter, Vere, and two nephews, named Ashley and Reginald Grayne, living there, barristers, with chambers in King's Bench Walk, Temple.

That was enough. The man departed with the balance of his two pounds, leaving the Count deep in thought. He was thinking of the name of Ashley Grayne; he had it in his mind somewhere but he could not connect it. And then it suddenly flashed on him. At one of the midnight orgies in the old days, Ashley Grange had been a prominent and very drunken guest. The Count

remembered now that he had seen him home, intending to keep up the intimacy with a man who had appeared to have well-lined pockets. But about that time the police arrested him. He did not suppose for a moment that Ashley would remember where he met him, or have any recollection of the police incident.

The Post Office Directory, Debreit, and the Blue Book did the rest. He got the name of Ashley's Club. He inquired there how often Mr. Ashley Grayne came and the hall-porter informed him—regularly on Mondays and Wednesdays. Whilst talking to the servant, a man passed in, and seemed to recognise him, and they both nodded. The man was a club-lounger, and, with nothing on hand but to kill time, stretched out his hand, saying:

"I know you—your face—quite well, but, hang me if I can remember your name!"

They exchanged cards. The title impressed the lounge.

"Met somewhere, I suppose. Will you join me in a whiskey and 'polly?' Bestly hot weather, bai Jove!"

The Count seized the opportunity. He was a brilliant conversationalist. They spent some hours together, and ultimately dined at the Holborn. When they parted at night they arranged a meeting for the next day. The Count did not think he would stop in London long, and his new friend desired to see as much of him as possible whilst he did stay.

The Count knew his man well enough: he was one of the pigeons he had helped to pluck in the old days; he was glad his new friend's memory was not as keen as his own.

So they met each afternoon at the club, and the Count walked in and out of it with the ease of a member. He had ascertained that Ashley paid a morning call on Mondays and Wednesdays, fetched his letters, and idled away an hour or two in the reading-room. So on the following Monday morning the Count was in the reading-room, waiting.

He watched Ashley come in, recognised him in a moment, and prayed kind Heaven that Ashley would not recognise him. Presently he sauntered over, and, stretching out his hand, said:


"Mr. Ashley Grayne, I believe?"

They shook hands, but Ashley good-humouredly said:

"You have the advantage of me."

"Really, you—perhaps I did wrong. You did not want to know me?"

"If you were not smiling as you said that, I should not take it in very good part. You know me evi-



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dently, but I can't remember you."

"Well, it is somewhere about three years ago since last we met. I have been travelling abroad, and no doubt you have forgotten me; perhaps," he was smiling, again, "do not want to be reminded of our last meeting."

But Ashley was piqued now. In some way the man had the advantage of him. He said:

"Please do not talk so. Sit down."

Come now, tell me where we met and why you say—"

"Well, I will tell you a little story, and if you like to apply it—well and good. If you don't, well, let bygones be bygones, and we will say—say that I have made a mistake, and bid each other good-bye."

"Go on."

"About three years ago I was knocking about town. I got into one of the night-houses, partly gambling-hell, partly club; anyway, a swell place. I am afraid I had had enough to drink, but there was a young fellow there who had had more—more than enough. He got into some quarrel and was turned out. I took his part, and was thrown out too. In the road I found that three roughs were setting about the first man who had been thrown out, and were looting him. I was sober enough to lay about me with my stick, snatched the watch and chain they had taken, and helped the man to his feet. As he replaced his jewellery he swore eternal gratitude. He gave me his address; we got into a hansom and I saw him to his rooms in safety, and left him protesting unending gratitude and friendship. Since that time I have not seen him until—"

"Until to-day," and Ashley grasped the Count's hand and shook it heartily. "What a confounded outsider you must have thought me! But no, you would know I had forgotten. The recollection of the incident had escaped me. Believe me that—What will you drink?"

It commenced that way, and the friendship continued and ripened—the Frenchman looked to that. He played his cards well, and ultimately won what he had been playing for, an invitation to Grayne Hall. Fortune favours the brave, and consummate cheek helps along consummation of the cheekiest scheme.

CHAPTER XXIII.

When Evelyn fainted, the newly introduced guest showed sympathy only—no surprise. He was prepared for the meeting, the advantage was on his side. Salts brought her round. She stared wildly at the Frenchman, and then dropped into the situation—she saw no sign of recognition in his eyes. That meant safety—for the time being, anyway.

She apologised for her foolishness, talked of the heat, whispered to Sir George that joy had a lot to do with it, and the dinner was served. The Count shone at most dinners, he was excellent company, and he scored at this one. Sir George liked him, Vere liked him, Ashley was proud of him, Evelyn—well, she knew him. There was just that feeling of fear gnawing at her heart which made the dinner one of the most uncomfortable she had ever sat down to. Doubtful clouds are ever troublesome. When the overhead sky is thick, the bother is to know whether it will blow away or rain; Evelyn did not expect her cloud to succumb to the wind, she was waiting for the rain.

After dinner the Frenchman was a success again. He sang well. It happened that in that old, two-floored house the music-room was on the upper floor in a line with the bedrooms. That was why in a whisper, as he bent over to turn the music, he said to Evelyn:

"Be here in this room as midnight strikes—do not fail."

And she did not fail. She found him there when she entered. He turned the key in the door and came over to her side. The light of the moon came full on her face through the shutterless window, and he did not like the way she looked at him.

He had intended to be all affection and honey—why not? He was cloyed with Miriam, and would fain return to his old love. But he saw that sweetness would be thrown away, that no softness would prevail, that he must put down his foot, and, if need be, show his teeth.

"You do not seem overjoyed to see me?"

"How did you escape?"

"Escape? What do you mean?"

"From prison."

"Why talk of such things?—they are best forgotten."

"Not if—"

"Must I then remind you, too, of prison, the prison you were in? Are such dead memories raked up with any advantage?"

"But I served my time. I am free. You—"

"Not so fast, miss—er—let me see, what is the last alias?"

She shivered.

"We are both free. I hope we shall remain so. You say you are free, as if that were a trump card to play. Will it make any difference, think you, whether the imprisonment is or was past, present, or future, if it comes to the ears of Sir George Grayne?"

She shivered again. She felt the man had her in his power, but she was not going to give in without a struggle. She said:

"A word from me to the police that we have an escaped convict in the house—"

"Would mean the shattering of all that little fabric I suppose you have been erecting. The police would not find an escaped convict. The last time I left prison, I did so, shown to the gate by the governor and chief warden: both shook hands with me, wished me good-bye, and expressed the greatest sympathy for what I had undergone."

She stared at him in amazement, but the look in his face told her that he was speaking the truth. She knew him well enough to know when he was lying. Even the greatest scoundrels sometimes have tall-tale

faces, as easily read as a clock's, when you know how to read them.

"Why, then, the change of name?"

He changed his position at that: turned his back to the light. He had to go from truth to romance, and he knew her ability to read his face.

"I came into a title that I had expected to come into just about as much as I might expect to be Lord Mayor of London. An entire family, yachting, were drowned. At one swoop eight lives between me and the title were swept away. Then the disgrace on the family name had to be erased. French influence was brought to bear on perfidious Albion. The Home Secretary was made to see that there had been a miscarriage of justice, that I was innocent, and I was liberated."

"Is it—possible?"

"Behold me! I am here."

She had thought to have the whip hand of him. She had to recognise that she was in no better position than he was. He seemed to read her thoughts, for he said:

"Whereas I am a free man, with sympathy from every soul who knows of my wrongful conviction, you are—"

He paused. She realised what he meant. If the Graynes knew they were harboring a woman who had filled a sentence of two years' hard labor—Well, she threw up her hand.

"It was no accident brought you here?"

He smiled.

"Then I suppose—blackmail? Is that it?"

"Is there any need to use such—"

"Oh, we need not be particular about words."

He shrugged his shoulders.

"You want money, I suppose?"

He smiled again, deprecatingly this time.

"I haven't any—"

He looked at her.

"Yet."

"I understand that."

"But it will come. Do you know that I am to marry Sir George?"

"If I allow you to, yes."

He was showing his teeth at last. She turned on him with:

"What do you mean?"

"Sir George is wealthy. I am poor. Need I say more?"

"Your terms?"

"Half your marriage settlement money."

"You—thief!"

He smiled and shrugged his shoulders as he said:

"How very fond you are of plain language!"

"No date is fixed for our marriage yet."

"Then you must hurry it on."

"Must?"

"Must. I need money quickly. Don't misunderstand me, hurry the marriage on before I make the marriage impossible."

She saw that he meant what he said. And for her own sake, too, she must hurry it on.

"There is nothing more you have to say to me?"

"Nothing, if you quiet understand me."

"I do."

He turned to the door, and turned the key in the lock. The hand he held out she disregarded. He smiled.

"Then we are to be enemies?—is it wise? We worked so well together before. Even again you may find me useful."

"But to blackmail me!"

"As,"—he answered softly,—as we have so often blackmailed others. The sin did not seem so very great then. We shared and shared alike in the old days; why this difference now?"

Whilst he was talking an idea flashed through her brain. It prompted her to take his hand and say:

"Very well then: friends as of old."

"Good little woman. That's much better."

"Good-night."

"Good-night."

As he turned the handle of the door a figure rose from its knees on the outside, and glided away silently in the darkness. The figure had not been at its devotions, but had had one of its ears to the key-hole.

(To be Continued.)

THE FIRST BABY.

What joy there is in the home when the first baby comes, and yet to the young and inexperienced mother who has to care for it there is no other period of her life so trying. In the little ills that are certain to come the inexperienced mother scarcely knows what to do. To the young mother—to all mothers—Baby's Own Tablets are a real blessing. They promptly cure such troubles as constipation, colic, sour stomach, diarrhoea and simple fevers. They break up colds, destroy worms, allay the irritation accompanying the cutting of teeth and prevent more serious ills. These Tablets are sold under a guarantee to contain no opiate, nor any other of the harmful drugs always found in the so-called "soothing" medicines. They are good for all children from the new born babe to the well grown child. If you do not find the Tablets at your medicine dealers send 25 cents to The Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont., and a box will be mailed you post paid.

An eminent painter was asked what he mixed his colors with to produce so extraordinary an effect. "I mix them with brains, sir," was the answer.

CURED OF ASTHMA.

THE REMARKABLE EXPERIENCE OF A NOVA SCOTIA MAN.

He Had Suffered for Years and Often had to Sit Night After Night at an Open Window Gasping for Breath.

Mr. Thomas Johnson is well known in the vicinity of Hemford, N.S. He has taught school in Lunenburg county for more than thirteen years, and his reputation as a teacher is deservedly high. It is known that Mr. Johnson has been a severe sufferer from asthma, and as he had found a cure for the trouble, a reporter thought the facts of his case would prove interesting to similar sufferers. "One evening," said Mr. Johnson, "while lighting my pipe I inhaled the sulphur from the match. The fumes appeared to penetrate every portion of my lungs, and nearly strangled me. It was more than an hour before I recovered from the effects of this mishap, and I believe that that was the starting point of the trouble that has made my life so frequently miserable since. At all events a few days later I had my first attack of asthma. Following this the attacks became more and more frequent, sometimes continuing for a week or more at a time. When these attacks came on I dare not lie down, and many a long, cold winter night I have passed at an open window gasping for breath. I was treated by two of the best doctors in the country, but derived no benefit. Then I began trying the remedies usually advertised as a cure for this trouble, but with no better results. I was continually growing worse and life was becoming a burden. About a year ago my wife was using Dr. Williams' Pink Pills, and was deriving so much benefit from them that one day she said to me, 'Why don't you try these pills, they might do you good, and they certainly can't do you harm.' To please my wife I began taking the pills, but only occasionally at first, but inside of a few weeks I felt that I was improving in many ways. Then I began to use the pills in earnest, and soon found that breathing was becoming easier, the spasms came less frequently, and I could go about out of doors without danger of bringing the trouble on as was formerly the case. I took twelve boxes of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills in all, and after the improvement began every box added to it until all signs of the trouble had disappeared, and I have not since had any recurrence of it. Dr. Williams' Pink Pills have saved me from a life of misery, and I am glad to make this public acknowledgment."

The above strong evidence proves that Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are not an ordinary medicine and that they cure when other medicines fail. Every pill makes new, rich, red blood, and thus enables the system to resist the inroads of disease and works a cure. Only the genuine pills can do this, however, and the purchaser should see that the full name, "Dr. Williams' Pink Pills for Pale People," is printed on the wrapper around every box. Sold by all medicine dealers or sent post paid at 50 cents a box or six boxes for \$2.50, by writing direct to the Dr. Williams' Medicine Co., Brockville, Ont.

RAIN SUPPLIED TO ORDER.

Storms Are Now Produced by Aid of Chemicals.

Dr. McCarthy, a Melbourne (Victoria) medico, has invented a method of producing a downfall of rain. The doctor says "I claim to produce rain by sending up continuously from three centres a column of gas, made by certain chemicals. The gas, if sent up for a maximum of thirty-two hours, will produce rain over a range of 90 miles at any altitude, with any sky, and with the wind from any quarter. "I do not need to wait until the wind is from the usually rainy quarter. In the experiment I made the barometric conditions were quite unfavorable, yet I produced rain. The gas, you see, causes in the different strata of the atmosphere a vacuum. This vacuum is the centre of a heat storm, and is filled by dense clouds that contain rain. These clouds come down with the gravity of the earth, when the rain descends."

"The rain is different from ordinary rain found in districts in which experiments have been made. It is a tropical rain, coming from very lofty regions being slight at first, and then later descending in heavy showers and bucketsful."

"What's the matter, Wife?" said Mrs. Brown to her small son, who was crying. "My kite won't fly," sobbed Willie, "and I made it out of fly-paper, too."

Usually the cheerfulness of the bride's father would seem to indicate that he is the best man at the wedding.

It is to weep every time one sees a well-dressed woman being dragged down the street at the end of a string by a dog.

Standard Cure for Itching Piles.

When Doctors and Surgeons, Medicines and Operations Fail, You Can be Cured by Dr. Chase's Ointment.

There is always some standard by which the merits of the article are measured. Among ointments the standard is Dr. Chase's. If a dealer tries to sell you any other kind he tries to clinch his argument by saying "This is as good as Dr. Chase's."

Don't be satisfied with substitutes or imitations, for Dr. Chase's Ointment is the only positive and guaranteed cure for every form of piles.

Rev. Wm. Thomas, Brownville, Ont., writes: "As a man of seventy years I am grateful to God and to Dr. Chase's Ointment for a cure of piles which has caused me endless annoyance and much misery. The itching and burning was almost beyond endurance, but Dr. Chase's Ointment brought quick relief, and as the trouble has not returned, I have reason to believe that the cure is lasting."

Mr. Duncan MacVicar, Caledonia Mines, N. S., writes:—"For a number of years I have been troubled with bleeding and protruding piles.

I tried several salves and ointments, which only afforded me temporary relief. Sometimes I would be laid off from work for weeks. One day last winter one of your books came into my hands, and after reading the testimonials of Mr. Donald MacLean of Tarbot Vale, N.S., and Rev. S. A. Duprau of Belleville, Ont., I decided to give Dr. Chase's Ointment a trial. After using two boxes of this ointment I found myself completely cured. What I suffered from that awful disease would fill a big book. You are at liberty to publish this, as it may be the means of convincing some poor sufferer, such as I was, that there is a cure for piles. To all sufferers from piles in any form I would recommend Dr. Chase's Ointment as the only cure."

Dr. Chase's Ointment, 60 cents a box at all dealers, or Edmondson, Bates & Company, Toronto. To protect you against imitations the portrait and signature of Dr. A. W. Chase, the famous receipt book author, are on every box of his remedies.