

The Kingdom of The Blind

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

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Synopsis of Later Chapters.

Captain Granet calls upon Monsieur Guillot at the Milan Hotel and gives him a document from the Kaiser offering France a separate peace. The plot is discovered. Conyers sinks two submarines. Granet is commissioned by his uncle, Sir Alfred Anselman, to destroy the new sub detector, made by Sir Meyville Worth of Norfolk. At his aunt's luncheon he meets the daughter, Isabel Worth.

CHAPTER XVII.—(Cont'd.)

"You mustn't draw too gloomy a picture of your home," Lady Anselman said. "I have seen it when it was simply heavenly."

"And I have seen it," the girl retorted, with a note of grimness in her tone, "when it was a great deal more like the other place—stillness that seems almost to stifle you, grey mists that choke your breath and blot out everything; nothing but the gurgling of a little water, and the sighing—the most melancholy sighing you ever heard—of the wind in our rugged elms. I am talking about the autumn and winter now, you must remember."

"It doesn't sound attractive," Granet admitted. "By-the-bye, which side of Norfolk are you? You are no where near Brancaster, I suppose?"

"We are within four miles of it," the girl replied quickly. "You don't ever come there, do you?"

Granet looked at her with uplifted eyebrows.

"This is really rather a coincidence!" he exclaimed. "I've never been to Brancaster in my life but I've promised one or two fellows to go down to the Dormy House there, tomorrow or the next day, and have a week's golf. Geoff Anselman is going, for one."

The girl was for a moment almost good-looking. Her eyes glowed, her tone was eloquently appealing.

"You'll come and see us, won't you?" she begged.

"If I may, I'd be delighted," Granet promised heartily. "When are you going back?"

"To-morrow. You're quite sure that you'll come?"

"I shall come all right," Granet assured her. "I'm not so keen on golf as some of the fellows, and my arm's still a little dicky, but I'm fed up with London, and I'm not allowed even to come before the Board again for a fortnight, so I rather welcome the chance of getting right away. The links are good, I suppose?"

"Wonderful," Miss Worth agreed eagerly, "and I think the club-house is very comfortable. There are often some quite nice men staying there. If only father weren't so awfully peculiar, the place would be almost tolerable in the season. That reminds me," she went on, with a little sigh, "I must warn you about father. He's the most unsociable person that ever lived."

"I'm not shy," Granet laughed. "By-the-bye, pardon me, but isn't your father the Sir Meyville Worth who invents things? I'm not quite sure what sort of things," he added. "Perhaps you'd better post me up before I come?"

"I shan't tell you a thing," Isabel Worth declared. "Just now it's very much better for you to know nothing whatever about him. He has what I call the inventors' fidgets, for some reason or other. If a strange person comes near the place, he simply loses his head."

"Perhaps I shan't be welcome, then?" Granet remarked disconsolately.

There was a flash in the girl's eyes as she answered him.

"I can assure you that you will, Captain Granet," she said. "If father chooses to behave like a bear, well, I'll try and make up for him."

She glanced at him impressively and Granet bowed. A few minutes later, in obedience to Lady Anselman's signal, they all made their way into the lounge, where coffee was being served. Granet made his way to Geraldine's side but she received him a little coldly.

"I have been doing my aunt's behests," he explained. "My strict orders were to make myself agreeable

to a young woman who lives in a sort of bluebeard's house, where no visitors are allowed and smiling is prohibited."

Geraldine looked across at Isabel Worth. "I never met Miss Worth before," she said. "I believe her father is wonderfully clever. Did I hear you say that you were going out of town?"

Granet nodded. "I am going away for a few days. I am going away," he added, dropping his voice, "ostensibly for a change of air. I have another reason for going." He looked at her steadfastly and she forgot her vague misgivings of a few minutes ago. After all, his perceptions were right. It was better for him to leave London for a time.

"I hope the change will do you good," she said quietly. "I think, perhaps, you are right to go."

CHAPTER XVIII.

Granet, a few days later, brought his car to a standstill in front of an ordinary five-barred gate upon which was painted in white letters "Market Burnham Hall." A slight grey mist was falling and the country inland was almost blotted from sight. On the other side of the gate a sandy drive disappeared into an avenue of ragged and stunted elm trees, which effectually concealed any view of the house.

"Seems as though the girl were right," Granet muttered to himself. "However, here goes."

He backed his car close to the side of the hedge, and laying his hand upon the latch of the gate, prepared to swing it open. Almost immediately a figure stepped out from the shrubs.

"Halt!" Granet looked with surprise at the khaki-clad figure.

"Your name and destination?" the man demanded.

"Captain Granet of the Royal Fusiliers, home from the Front on leave," Granet replied. "I was going up to the Hall to call on Miss Worth."

"Stay where you are, if you please, sir," the man replied.

He stepped back into the sentry box and spoke through a telephone. In a moment or two he reappeared.

"Pass on, please, sir," he said.

Granet walked slowly up the avenue, his hands behind him, a frown upon his forehead. Perhaps, after all, things were not to be so easy for him. On either side he could see the stretches of sand, and here and there the long creeks of salt water. As he came nearer to the house, the smell of the sea grew stronger, the tops of the trees were more bowed than ever, sand was blown everywhere across the hopeless flower-beds. The house itself, suddenly revealed, was a grim, weather-beaten structure, built on the very edge of a queer, barrowlike tongue of land which ended with the house itself. The sea was breaking on the few yards of beach sheer below the windows. To his right was a walled garden, some lawns and greenhouses; to the left, stables, a garage, and two or three laborers' cottages. At the front door another soldier was stationed doing sentry duty. He stood on one side, however, and allowed Granet to ring the bell.

"Officers quartered here?" Granet inquired.

"Only one, sir," the man replied.

The door was opened almost immediately by a woman-servant. She did not wait for Granet to announce himself but motioned him to follow her into a large, circular, stone hall, across which she led him quickly and threw open the door of the drawing-room. Isabel Worth was standing just inside the room, as though listening. She held out her hand and there was no doubt about her welcome.

"Captain Granet," she said almost in a whisper, "of course you'll think we are all made, but would you mind coming upstairs into my little sitting-room?"

"Of course not," Granet acquiesced. "I'll come anywhere, with pleasure. What a view you have from here!"

He glanced through the high windows at the other end of the room. She laid her fingers upon his arm and led him towards the door.

"Quietly, please," she whispered. "Try and imagine that you are in a house of conspirators."

She led him up the quaint stone staircase, spiral-shaped, to the first floor. Arrived there, she paused to listen for a moment, then breathed a little more freely and led him to a small sitting-room at the end of a long passage. It was a pleasant little apartment and looked sheer out over the sea. She threw herself down upon a sofa with a sigh of relief, and pointed to a chair.

"Do sit down, Captain Granet," she begged. "I am really not in the least insane but father is. You know I got back on Wednesday night and was met at once with stern orders that no visitors of any sort were to be received, that the tradespeople were to be interviewed at the front gates—in fact that the house was to be in a state of siege."

Granet appeared puzzled. "But why?"

"Simply because dad has gone out of his senses," she replied wearily. "Look here."

She led him cautiously to the window and pointed downwards. About fifty yards out at sea was a queer wooden structure, set up on strong supports. From where they were, nothing was to be seen but a windowless wall of framework and a rope ladder. Underneath, a boat was tethered to one of the supports. About thirty yards away, a man was rowing leisurely around in another small boat. "That's where father spends about twelve hours a day," she said. "What he is doing no one knows. He won't even allow me to speak of it. When we meet at meals, I am not supposed to allude to the fact that he has been out in that crazy place. If ever he happens to speak of it, he calls it his workshop."

"But he is not alone there?" Granet asked.

"Oh, no! There are two or three men from London, and an American, working with him. Then do you see the corner of the garden there?"

She pointed to a long barn or boathouse almost upon the beach. Before the door two sentries were standing. Even from where they sat they could hear the faint whirr of a dynamo.

"There are twenty men at work in there," she said. "They all sleep in the barn or the potting sheds. They are not allowed even to go down to the village. Now, perhaps, you can begin to understand, Captain Granet, what it is like to be here."

"Well, it all sounds very interesting," he remarked, "but I should think it must be deadly for you. Your father invents no end of wonderful things, doesn't he?"

"If he does, he never speaks about it," the girl answered, a little bitterly. "All that he wants from me is my absence or my silence. When I came back the other night, he was furious. If he'd thought about it, I'm sure he'd have had me stay in London. Now that I am here, though, I am simply a prisoner."

Granet resumed his seat and lit the cigarette which she insisted upon his smoking.

"Well," he observed, "it does seem hard upon you, Miss Worth. On the other hand, it really is rather interesting, isn't it, to think that your father is such a man of mysteries?"

The girl sighed.

"I suppose so," she admitted, "but then, you see, father is almost brutal about taking any one into his confidence. He never tells even me a thing, or encourages me to ask a question. I think for that reason I have grown rather to resent his work and the ridiculous restriction he places upon my freedom because of it."

A parlormaid entered with tea, a few minutes later, and Granet moved to his hostess' side upon the sofa. He showed no more interest in outside happenings. He was an adept at light conversation and he made himself thoroughly agreeable for the next hour. Then he rose quickly to his feet.

"I must go," he declared.

She sighed.

"It has been so nice to have you here," she said, "but if you only knew how difficult it was to arrange it, you'd understand why I hesitate to ask you to come again."

"Why shouldn't you come and lunch with me to-morrow at the Golf Club?" he asked.

She hesitated. It was obvious that the suggestion appealed to her.

"I believe I could," she assented. "Captain Chalmers has a small motor-car he'd lend me, and if I go out with my golf clubs it would be all right. Very likely father will sleep out there and we shan't see anything of him until to-morrow."

Granet stepped once more to the window. The mists had rolled up more thickly than ever and the queer little structure was almost invisible. A bright light, however, fell upon the water a little distance away.

"Your father has electric light out there," he remarked.

"Yes, they have a wire from the shed," she told him. "Whatever he's trying to do, he needs a very intense and concentrated light at times."

Granet drew a little sigh.

"Well, I hope it's something that'll do us a bit of good," he said. "We need it. The Germans are miles ahead of us with regard to all new-fangled ideas."

She opened her lips and closed them again. Granet, who had suddenly stiffened into rigid attention, felt a quick impulse of disappointment.

"I have rung the bell for my own maid," she said. "She will show you out of the place. Don't let any one see you, if you can help it."

"And to-morrow?" he asked. "You will lunch with me?"

"I will be at the Golf Club," she promised, "at one o'clock."

Granet was conducted almost stealthily down the stairs and into the avenue. Half-way to the gate he paused to listen. He was hidden from sight now by the gathering twilight and the rolling mists. From behind the house came the softly muffled roar of the tide sweeping in, and, with sharper insistence, the whirr of machinery from the boathouse. Granet lit a cigarette and walked thoughtfully away. Just as he climbed into the car, a peculiar light through the trees startled him. He stood up and watched. From the top of the house a slowly revolving searchlight played upon the waters.

(To be continued.)

The township of Elizabethtown, Leeds county, Ontario, is undertaking reforestation on a line of sand hills in order to stop the damage from shifting sand.

Minard's Liniment for Burns, etc.

NATIONAL PARKS OF THE DOMINION

COMPRISE TOTAL AREA OF 8,948 SQUARE MILES.

Most Picturesque of These Parks, as Well as Most Extensive, is in Rocky Mountains.

The act providing for the establishment of Dominion parks gives as the reason of their creation "to be maintained and made use of as public parks and pleasure grounds for the benefits and advantages and enjoyment of the people of Canada." The crowd of tourists from other lands, however, which reach them in ever increasing numbers each year by train and automobile, indicates a utilization and appreciation much wider than in the conception of the originators of the scheme and their annual presence is a glowing tribute to the wonders and beauties of Canadian scenery.

The Canadian National Parks, where primitive nature harmoniously blends with the modern comfort and luxury of civilization, have become the playgrounds of a continent and will without doubt remain so, an eloquent acknowledgment to a nation's forethought in preserving these areas as sanctuaries for birds and beasts and havens of rest and holiday for man.

A striking illustration of the popularity of the Canadian Rockies was given last summer when, under the auspices of the Brooklyn Eagle, a party made a park to park tour through many United States parks, including the Canadian Rocky Mountains Park. At the conclusion of the tour a vote was taken as to the respective merits of the various parks and hotels visited, with the result that out of eighty-six votes, Banff and Lake Louise received first place with twenty-four, and among the hotels, Banff Springs led with twenty-one.

National parks situated all over the Dominion comprise a total area of 8,948 square miles. They are the properties of the people of Canada, a region where they are free to make holiday in the realization that their playground is their own, a haven where the wild things of the forests soon learn they are secure from the molestation of trap and gun, and can live in peaceful harmony with man.

The Rocky Mountain Park.

The most extensive and grandly picturesque of these parks are situated in the extreme west, featuring the rugged grandeur of the Rocky Mountains. Here Nature reigns supreme, the veriest tinge of civilization touching her domain. The Rocky Mountains park which takes in parts of the provinces of Alberta and British Columbia, has an area of 2,791 square miles and incorporates such spots of international renown as Banff and Lake Louise, Jasper Park, in the wild ruggedness of the more Northern Rockies, is the largest of all the Canadian parks of the west, closely adhering to their primitive state and unchanged in the wild charm of their surroundings, are Yoho, 560 square miles; Glacier Park, 468 square miles; Watertown Lake Park, 423 square miles, and Buffalo Park, 159 square miles.

In Saskatchewan the Antelope Reserve, near Maple Creek, has been reserved as a park and contains twenty square miles. In the province of Ontario twelve islands in the St. Lawrence of 140 acres, have been preserved to the nation from industrial or agricultural desecration, and Pt. Pelee, with 3,869 acres, is maintained in perpetuity as a bird sanctuary. In the eastern provinces the national parks have a more historic flavor, as Fort Howe, historic park at St. John, in New Brunswick, and Fort Anne, historic park at Annapolis Royal, in Nova Scotia. British Columbia, on the Pacific Coast, has reserved to its people two provincial parks, one, Strathcona Park, on Vancouver Island, containing 800 square miles and Mount Robson Park, in the Tete Jaune Cache area, of 650 square miles.

The National Forest Reserves.

In addition to these national playgrounds there are the national forest reserves, which add considerably to Canada's holiday and camping grounds. Permanent settlement is not permitted on these grounds, though leases may be secured for summer resorts, etc. The cutting of timber is permitted to allow the removal of mature timber and enable that of lesser growth to attain full size in a shorter time than would otherwise take place, to conserve a full volume of water in the rivers and to guard against fire. Permits are granted for grazing on the reserves. These forest areas where wood may only be cut for the good of the forest, are each year the haunts of throngs of nature lovers. They are situated in Ontario and Quebec, amounting in the case of the former for a total of 20,038 square miles and the latter 174,065 square miles.

NURSES

The Toronto Hospital for Incurables, in affiliation with Bellevue and Allied Hospitals, New York City, offers a three years' Course of Training to young women, having the required education, and desirous of becoming nurses. This Hospital has adopted the eight-hour system. The pupils receive uniforms of the School, a monthly allowance and travelling expenses to and from New York. For further information apply to the Superintendent.

The full value of Canada's national parks may not yet be appreciated whilst so large a part of the Dominion still holds its pristine charms unblemished. But in the years to come when the rapidly growing Dominion has made greater onslaught upon Nature's work, the people of the continent will pay a well merited tribute to a nation's foresight in preserving these beauty spots from desecration and reserving a playground for them for all time.

The Way Home.

The question, How do birds find their way? is answered by many ingenious and speculative theories. Many have decided that birds possess a sense of direction, which is often very incorrectly called orientation. Biologically, this term does not imply any connection with the East, but is simply used to describe the power of finding the way back to a certain base, or of returning home. In the Migration of Birds, Mr. T. A. Coward quotes from Mr. John Burroughs's Ways of Nature a striking instance of this faculty.

Mr. Burroughs's son brought a drake home in a bag from a farm two miles away and shut it up in a barn with two ducks for a day and a night. As soon as it was released it turned its head homeward, but for three or four days its efforts were frustrated. Then Mr. Burroughs decided to see what the bird would do, and he set it free.

The homesick mallard started up through the highway, which he had never seen, and Mr. Burroughs followed fifty yards behind. A dog scared the bird and turned it up a lane, but after a detour it reached the road again; it stopped to bathe in a roadside pool, then started off refreshed. A lane leading in the right direction off the main road puzzled it, and it took a wrong turning, but, discovering its mistake, made for the road again, but not by actually retracing its steps. The false move seemed to put it out, for, after hesitating at the next and right turning, it actually overshot the mark. Mr. Burroughs, unable to spare him to continue the experiment, then headed it back, and when it reached the turning again it raced home with evident signs of joy.

What He Was Losing.

A British destroyer lay close inland near a small African village, and the sailors were lounging near the rails and throwing pennies into the water for a crowd of dusky, naked youngsters to dive for.

It was a lively scene. No sooner was a penny thrown into the water than a native boy dived and brought it to the surface. Many times a penny did not reach the bottom before a boy caught it.

On the jetty the native king, surrounded by his fellow-townsmen, was awaiting the arrival of the British naval officers, to whom he was going to tender a grand reception. He watched the diving with evident interest.

A reckless sailor began throwing shillings and half-crowns into the water. Then someone threw over a handful of small silver. What a scrambling! It seemed as if every native from the village was either in the air or in the water.

Suddenly a dusky messenger came dashing alongside the destroyer in a native canoe.

"Will you lads please stop throwing money? The king's betting restless; he's already taken off his coat!"

The man who sells his health for wealth makes a poor bargain.

Minard's Liniment for Dandruff.

There is no greater self-protection from all that is low, ordinary, and inferior than the cultivation of a lofty, grand estimate of oneself and one's possibilities. All the forces within you will then work together to help you realize your ideals, for the life always follows the aim; we always take the direction of the life purpose.

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