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THE STRANGE CALL

Fascination Lured Thousands of Happy Lovers to Death.

Twelve Persons Summoned to Spectacular Deaths Within Three Months-- Hypnotism the Cause.

That Niagara Falls, the blissful scene of our great grandmothers, should also be the leading stage whereon so many life tragedies have reached their climax, seems the very irony of paradox. And to students of mental phenomena the mysterious lure of Niagara Falls, which unfailingly year by year adds to the appalling roster of suicides, has long been a grimly fascinating puzzle.

This year during the period between July 1st and October 6th, twelve persons have ended their lives at the brink of the great cataract. Why did they pass by the secret, solitary gorges of poison and gas, the quick turnstile of the pistol, the sinister twilight pathway of morphine, and instead, seek out the heat of their puny lives upon the rocks at their feet?

The lure of Niagara for newly wedded lovers may be understood—if honey moons are susceptible of being understood. Materially speaking, there are miles of shady and sequestered walks and hundreds of embowered nooks where, screened from prying eyes and ears Mary and John, may speak the dear new language they have learned or sit in voiceless rapture all undisturbed.

And, aside from these and more subtle fascinations for lovers—unperceived by them, perhaps in the mystic symbolism of the falls themselves? The lovers are at the threshold of a new life and meet they not feel, though dimly, the parallel of the river and the cataract to the phenomena of human existence? The ever swiftly moving rills, here placid as a pond, there eddying aimlessly, yonder whirling and tossed, here boiling in passionate content with their events, there dashing themselves fruitlessly against impeding rocks; further on, at sight of the brink, rushing madly back as if in fright from the inevitable plunge, only to turn again in a sudden magnificence of resignation and pass over in beautiful and unresisting majesty to the oblivion below, that, to the eye of man, is only a mist, and a solemn voice that is never still. This it may be, is the slight, the voice, which lures like the lover with his hopes and the suicide with his hopelessness. It is at once the picture of life and of death and so may explain the paradox.

But while the lovers live on and may explain these things to their own satisfaction—and that would seem to be all that is necessary—the others whose lives have ended in this mist cannot return to tell us why, if there was a reason, they chose Niagara as a resting place with death. There is evidence to show that with most of these deaths was not the result of choice, but of impulse; that a large proportion of suicides were persons who came to the Falls merely as visitors, with no other motive than to see the mighty cataract and were led to kill themselves by some sudden and uncontrollable desire fostered by the rushing waters.

Dr. A. L. Benedict, of Buffalo, a specialist in nervous diseases, finds the explanation of this sudden impulse in the hypnotic influence of the hurrying flood. For six years, ever since the February day when Miss Alice M. Cole left Dr. Benedict's office in good spirits one afternoon and was never heard of again except through a note poked up on Goat Island, the doctor has studied each case of suicide attributed to the lure of the falls, with the result of confirming him more and more strongly in the theory that the victims were led to suicide by hypnotism.

"The waters are calling me," said Miss Cole in her farewell note to her parents and her betrothed. Dr. Benedict's observations led him to the conclusion that the waters have called the majority of the twelve who have taken the plunge since July 1st, as well as the majority of those who have gone over the falls in other years.

"I am thoroughly convinced that hypnotism is responsible for so many suicides at Niagara," said Dr. Benedict, "because thousands have experienced the hypnotic influence very strongly while watching the cataract and listening to its hoarse, monotonous roar. Remember," said he, "that word, 'monotony.' That they were not overpowered to the extent of losing their interest in life was their good fortune.

"I have met many persons who have told me that they cannot stand near the rapids or the cataract for any length of time without feeling a strong impulse to jump in. I, myself, would not care to sit within sight and sound of the rapids for any length of time, and I think it is above the normal so far as yielding to hypnotic suggestion is concerned. It is dangerous to sit beside the cataract, even for persons perfectly normal."

"I spoke of monotony. Monotonous stimulation of any of the senses except smell and taste, which are both chemical, produces drowsiness or hebeteude. The only requirement is that the stimulation be mild and repeated and of the same degree each time.

"You can feel this effect through the sight, especially by looking at any bright object kept in regular motion. If the motion is irregular it will not produce the hypnotic effect. It can be produced through the hearing in the same way. Many persons

of the upper rapids, and then leaped into the torrent and was swept over the falls. He left behind a note saying: 'I act with all my reason, and there is absolutely nothing of a lunatic or demented in my brain.'

In Schneider's case it is apparent that not until he had placed himself within reach of the hypnotic influence of the waters did he have courage to end his life.

As an evidence of the superior fascination of Niagara Falls for suicides the case of Peter Schemm, a millionaire brewer of Philadelphia is interesting. Mr. Schemm had for many years been haunted by the fear of total blindness. He was an eccentric man and had made a hobby of studying the various methods employed of self-destruction. His apartment was a veritable museum in relics associated with suicide, and he loved to plan new ways by which a man might end his own life. No one knew so well as he the advantages of one means over another—the effects of the different poisons, the surest place to see a fatal bullet. All the most comfortable ways of death were known to him. And yet he chose to go over the great cataract.

He engaged a cabman to drive him about the Niagara reservation, and when at the Hotel Grand Island, he told the driver he would walk to get a better view of the rapids. Reaching the centre of the bridge, he shouted "Good-bye," and leaped over the railing.

There are many recent examples of the sheer power of the Falls to direct incite persons to suicide. Miss Nina M. Phillips, a young servant employed in the village at Niagara Falls, after telling several friends that the rushing waters had thoroughly fascinated her, leaped from the top of the Goat Island bridge. She had gone out to do some errands for her mistress. Before going home she went to Goat Island, and on her return to the mainland she placed her hat, purse and gloves on the ledge and jumped into the river twenty feet below. She also left a paper bearing her name and address, with the words, "Over the Falls, July 15th."

A similar case was that of Miss Gertrude Roth, a beautiful young society girl of Alton, Ont. She was of a particularly lively and sanguine disposition. She was a visitor at the Falls, and rising early on the morning after her arrival, engaged a carriage to take her to the points of interest. She did not breakfast at her hotel, but after driving about for a while stopped at the Table Rock House on the Canadian side, where she ate a light repast. Then she resumed her drive, stopping to buy a souvenir to send to a friend and proceeding to the Whirlpool Rapids Hotel. While standing on the platform over the water she remarked to the photographer there:

"It's a great wonder that more people do not commit suicide here; the view is so beautiful, the water is so beautiful, and the people are so beautiful. The photographer's attention was directed to his gallery, she stepped out on a large rock by the platform and plunged into the whirling current.

"That it is no other power than hypnotism which lures so many to the dreadful death seems evident from the story told by R. I. Helm, of Philadelphia. Mr. Helm and a score of others were watching the falls from Prospect Point, when a richly gowned young woman, who had been invited to the party, stepped into the water. She was on one of the benches for some time suddenly arose, walking hurriedly to the wall, climbed over and jumped into the rapids.

The current at this point runs at express train speed. Notwithstanding the peril, Mr. Helm stepped into the water and attempted to swim to the woman. He succeeded in grasping her hand, but she resisted and slipped away from him. She smiled as the current caught her and drew her over the awful abyss.

On the same day that this happened the Rev. C. H. Priddison, of Canonsburg, Pa., A. M. Ford, of Boston, and A. C. Palmer, of San Francisco, were standing by the river's brink when a man appeared and accosted them.

"I have a thought one could never get out," he remarked. The others made no reply to this. The stranger gazed into the stream for a few minutes, when he suddenly cried:

"By Jove, I'm going to try it."

He made a motion toward the bank. The three men attempted to seize him, but before they could reach the spot he had deliberately jumped into the river and was almost immediately carried over the cataract.

The deliberation and nonchalance so often observed in these Niagara suicides are in themselves strongly suggestive of a hypnotic state in the victims. One rainy October day some years ago a man about thirty-five years of age strolled through Prospect Park. He was the only one of the usual crowd of visitors so that what the man did cannot be set down to a desire for spectacular effect. Arrived at Prospect Point, he buttoned up his brown overcoat, removed his derby hat, drew some papers from his pocket, placed them in the hat and put the hat on the stone railing. Then he calmly produced a cigar, lit it, climbed upon the parapet and turning, looked quietly back at the park. Seeing two harkmen rushing toward him from some distance away, he turned again and sprang, cigar in mouth, into the roaring waters.

Another example of the peculiar mental state brought about by the sight and sound of the monotonous rush of the current is the suicide of an elderly gentleman named Otis White. So entranced was he by the racing rapids, that he appeared to wish to make himself as fat as possible a spectator as it were of his own death. He dislodged a large cake of ice from the bank of the river and, getting upon it, paddled out into the deadly stream. Then, standing on the cake with arms folded he coolly contemplated the sublime scene about him, and so motion toward the water, until he had reached the point where he had passed the brink.

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A faint heart hasn't the ghost of a show where there is a strong-armed rival.

Try Bibby's 50c. knitted gloves.

Faith without a ferment is as flat as a pancake and as useless as a last year's dog license.

Try Bibby's \$1.50 silk-lined gloves.

READY FOR HARVEST

MISSIONARY WORK HAS BEEN WELL DONE.

Rev. Geo. E. Hartwell Tells Story of the Progress Made in Field Where He is Engaged.

The Rev. George E. Hartwell, writing from Peshien, gives some account of his journey to Shanghai in the autumn of 1907, to accompany his family that far on their way to Canada, and then of his return journey in charge of a large party of missionaries on their way up the Yangtze river. Speaking of the work on his extensive field, he writes:

"During my absence native evangelists had charge of the work in the northern district while Mr. Stewart kept in touch. It was a pleasure to see how well the work had been done. The quiet influence of the gospel, like the seed in the ground, is preparing the way for a harvest, an awakening that will come as a surprise even to the missionaries. On every side little incidents are occurring that are as rivulets bursting forth to form that river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God. For example, only last Saturday at Heh-O-ty, at the close of the morning service, an inquirer about to be received as a catechumen brought in a bundle of old, dusty papers, idols that had been buried sacred for many years, and in the presence of the members burned them, while we all sang, 'Praise God From Whom All Blessings Flow.' Again on Sabbath morning a class of women, who had been organized over a year ago, by Miss Brooks and Miss Hamby, came to be examined. These women had been working away for a year at the books—left them, trying to master those puzzling hieroglyphics and train their poor, survived memories to retain them. One, a sort of Lydia, a middle-aged widow in comfortable circumstances, had made good progress and was in turn helping others. She was to be baptized that very morning, and appointed as leader of the women's class. Two others were to be received as catechumens. While the class was in session a plain, shy country woman came in. She had not been in before, and seemed quite awkward. She was introduced as the wife of an inquirer who was also to be received that morning. The women began to exhort her in a sort of superior way, to study the books required, when she remarked she had studied the catechism in her home. The big catechism or the little one? was asked. A big one was brought, and to the surprise of everybody, including the pastor, the awkward-looking country woman went almost through the men's catechism. Afterwards I heard her reading hymns.

"Again, the elder of the Heh-O-ty church is a street official. He had been preacher of the Sacred Edict, and takes an interest in the welfare of his town. Recently a Taoist priest came to the town to practise his sorceries, pretending he was able to go up to heaven and secure a healing for any one who would give him sufficient cash. Now it just happened that the head magistrate of Peshien had put out proclamations urging the towns in his district to pave their streets and keep them clean for their own health and comfort, and forbidding priests to deceive the people with their sorceries. The priest wore a red turban which smacked of Boxyism, and would go off into his trance to visit the king of heaven. The active member secured a copy of the proclamation, and going to the local police, requested they should find out the business of the priest, with the result that next morning the priest was gone to find a place with less scruples. I asked the elder if the officials were sought to issue proclamations forbidding these things, and he said it was very unusual. These may only seem straws in the wind, but they are really the precursors of a great change that will be all the more rapid as the mass in motion is heavy."

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This is the slow combustion stove known as "The Quebec Heater" and is certainly a wonder. A few years ago we could not coax a customer to use them. Last year we sold forty-four. This year we will double that quantity, and all because they give more heat for the same quantity of coal than any other stove at twice the price. We have five sizes. Suitable for any and all places. Come in and see them.

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WHAT WU SAYS.

Crimes Committed Only By Meat Eaters.

New York, Nov. 14.—Wa Ting Fang, minister from China, addressed the young women of Miss C. E. Mason's school at Tarrytown. He said that he did not approve of women taking men's places, for they had placed their own health and comfort, and forbidden priests to deceive the people with their sorceries. The priest wore a red turban which smacked of Boxyism, and would go off into his trance to visit the king of heaven. The active member secured a copy of the proclamation, and going to the local police, requested they should find out the business of the priest, with the result that next morning the priest was gone to find a place with less scruples. I asked the elder if the officials were sought to issue proclamations forbidding these things, and he said it was very unusual. These may only seem straws in the wind, but they are really the precursors of a great change that will be all the more rapid as the mass in motion is heavy."

PRINCE DISAPPEARS.

Years For Western Life—Gets to Paris.

Paris, Nov. 14.—Two dusky princes, Souphanouvong, son of King Sisowath, of Cambodia, and Ouanilo, son of King Behanzin of Dahomey, are causing much anxiety to a paternal minister of the colonies. The young men suffer from a violent liking for life in Paris, and refuse to be educated and trained in the provinces.

Souphanouvong abandoned from his school at Bantol, in the department of the Var, and came to Paris. He is believed to be somewhere in the capital, but no trace of him can be found.

Ouanilo fled from a Montpelier school, and has informed the minister that he will commit suicide if he is not allowed to reside in Paris. The minister threatened to cut off financial supplies, but Ouanilo replied that he would then become a beggar in the streets of Paris.

Try Bibby's 50c. knitted gloves. The difference is mainly that some of us are able to conceal our appetite for flattery better than others.

The Facts in the Case

For Constipation, or tightness of the bowels, the simplest—safest—most agreeable remedy to cure the trouble—no griping or after effects—is unquestionably

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Get acquainted with **Black Watch** the big black plug chewing tobacco. A tremendous favorite everywhere, because of its richness and pleasing flavor.