

The Trail of the Dead:

THE STRANGE EXPERIENCE
OF DR. ROBERT HARLAND

By B. FLETCHER ROBINSON and J. MALCOLM FRASER

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CHAPTER XXV.—(Continued.)

I was nervous that night, and about one in the morning I thought I heard a noise in the passage outside. Very cautiously I opened my door and peeped out. My father's door was the next to mine, and between the two lay Reski in a great fur rug that he had. He waved his hand to me with a little smile, as if I were a child he was bidding to be of good courage. I slept undisturbed after that.

It was as we took our place for a twelve o'clock dejeuner that we received the second telegram. This is how it read:

"If danger presses, communicate fully police. We started on receipt of your message, and will be at Thuis by three. Should be at Pontresina at one o'clock to-night. Order rooms.—Graden."

I called in Reski at once; for he had refused to have his meals with us, though my father had invited him. He looked very grave, indeed, when I translated the message.

"You sent no telegram, Fraulein?"

"No, Herr Reski."

"Nor you, mein Herr?"

"No, Reski, no," said my father.

"Then someone has sent it in your name. I do not like it. It would seem a trap."

"A trap?"

I stared at him with fear gathering about my heart. Who had done this thing? And why?

"It would seem, Fraulein, some scheme of the old grey devil. What he intends, I cannot guess; nor can I think how he discovered that we are here. But there is a thing plainly to do. I will start for Thuis, to warn those who are hastening to us."

"I will come with you, Reski," said my father.

"You know that cannot be. I have no fear, with Reski to protect me. I will go."

Love gives great strength to woman, and I spoke as one who expects to be obeyed. It was much trouble to persuade them; yet from the first I did not mean to yield. My dear father had barely recovered from the fatigues of his long journey; to let him take this drive of forty miles would be the gravest folly. Yet it was not right that we both should leave our duty to a man of whom we had no real knowledge. Mr. Harland and his cousin had endangered their lives to save us; now that peril seemed to be closing round those gallant gentlemen, we could not both sit idle. Plainly it was I who should go.

And so at last it was agreed between us.

It was shortly after one o'clock when Reski and I rumbled off in our post-carriage across the snow-bound slopes of the valley to Ponte. Then began a climb of dreary monotony. Up and up we dragged, turn after turn through forests of larch and pine, with the Engadine growing wider, and its houses sinking into specks beneath us. At last we reached the crest of the Albula Pass, and trotted forward over the snow levels till we plucked down the steep descent of the rock-strewn Devil's Hall—as the mountaineers named it of old. The sun had set ere we rattled into Breda, and the moon had swung out from the southward when Bergun was reached. Half an hour later we had passed through the forests into the shadows of that black and dangerous gorge—the Berguner Stein.

Fresh snow had clogged the road on the Albula, and we had made slow progress, to our increasing anxiety. It was now impossible that we should reach Thuis before they started; but we had calculated that near Tiefenkastell we might meet them. That the snow had not fallen so deeply on the lower slopes, and that they had moved more quickly, we could not know.

We had passed the last bend that turned upward, leading in a long slope to the entrance of the gorge, when we stopped suddenly. Reski sprang out; clambering after, I found him by the driver, who was pointing with his whip up the road. The man had been warned to give us notice of any approaching vehicle.

"It is a post-carriage," he said. "They have stopped to breathe their team."

The road had been carved and joisted along the cliff side, and where we stood, under the mighty wall of rock, the shadows were gathered darkly. To our left the rugged barrier rose dimly into the night, clear only where its battlements broke the pearl of the sky at some great height above us; to our right, a low stone coping hid the grim uncertainties of the precipice. But fifty yards up the slope the cliffs fell back, and the road stepped out into the silver moonlight, mounting the hill, through a border of stunted trees, in a simple curve, as white and well defined as a chalk mark on a black-board. On its crest I could see the patch on the snow carpet that marked the waiting carriage. It was, perhaps, the half of a mile away.

CHAPTER XXVI.

The patch of shadow moved slowly forward.

Suddenly, though distance hid the suggestion of the cause, the pace increased. Faster and yet faster it swept down the road; in the white silence of the night the muffled hoof-beats came thumping to our ears. The carriage grew clearer. We could see how it rocked; it might have been some great ball that flew bounding towards us.

For some moments we had stood motionless, helpless, before this amazing apparition. It was Reski who first understood; it was he who seized me by the arm, screaming in his excitement to run—to run down the way we had come. And in my panic I obeyed, flying wildly towards the sharp bend in our rear. I had almost reached it when there came a thought to me that jostled out the remembrance of my own safety, turning me back, with heaven knows what anxiety in my heart. Robert and Sir Henry—could they be the travelers that came galloping to almost certain death?

The runaways had but one chance—to hug the cliff, thereby giving space to clear the turn without charging the low wall that guarded the unknown depths of the gorge. But to my horror, I saw that this was a chance our driver was preventing, for it was he who had edged his team against the cliff. They would have to pass him on the outer side.

I started up the road, shouting to him; but as I did so, I saw Reski spring upon the box. I heard cries of furious altercation, and then the driver was thrown from his place. He dropped on hands and knees; then rose and came running past me round the bend.

The whip cracked, and our team swung across the road, drawing up on the edge of the precipices. If the man who drove the runaways were not struck with terror, they had yet a hope of safety.

They were not one hundred yards away. I could see in the bright moonlight how the horses bounded forward, the traces now slackening, now tightening to the desperate plunges. Seventy yards—and the driver had gone mad. He was waving his arms and shrieking, not in terror, but rather in whoops of joyous exultation. It was a fearful thing to see those gestures and to hear those wild imprecations when death was so very near. Another second, and they were in the shadows, close upon us.

And Reski? I had almost forgotten him. Stiff as a soldier upon duty he sat, the reins tight in his hand, looking neither to right nor left, waiting the fate that might come to him. It was only thus that he could hold his team in their place—only thus, at the risk of instant annihilation. Did he dare this for the simple love of his neighbor? Did instinct tell him that they were indeed our friends? God rest him, whether or no; for by whatever rank men knew him, he was a most honorable gentleman.

Like a flash of light striking through darkness, I realized that the runaways were still holding the outer edge of the road; that it must happen—that there was no escape. And as I did so, there came a crushing, rending shriek that filled the whole air like the falling of a thunderbolt. Dimly I saw the great carriages collide, rebound—and then but one remained.

The spirit went out of me. I covered my face with my hands, crouching against the cliff, praying to heaven that at least the screaming of the horses might soon be ended.

How long I stayed there I do not know, but I was roused by footsteps passing before me. I started up with a cry.

"I beg your pardon, madam," said a well-known voice. "Gad; if it isn't Mary Weston!"

It was Sir Henry; but what was that he carried in his arms?

"Who is it?" I asked, pointing.

"It is Robert," he answered gravely. "He has had a nasty tap on his head. I'm afraid. If you will look to him, Miss Mary, I will go back and shoot those poor beasts of horses."

They found them next morning, lying close together at the foot of the precipice. They told me that their faces were curious to see, for Marnac still grinned with the vacancy of his insanity, and Reski were also a happy smile, yet one most different, for it was such as those carry who die in a noble effort, covering their memory with honor. For as Sir Henry has explained, it was Reski who saved their lives. They could never else have cleared the bend of the road. As it was, when their leading horse jumped the wall, his weight swung the carriage round, striking the other on the side, so that while they were left, battered, on the edge, with one horse dangling—until the harness broke—Reski, his carriage and his team, were hurled over the cliff.

Marnac had already been flung to destruction at the first impact.

We learned in time the details of his insane scheme. A heavy bribe had won the help of the Cornish loafer—though, to be honest with him, the man had no suspicion of the evil purpose to which his telegrams would be placed. From poor Martha, love-lorn and middle-aged, he had gathered his news. It was Marnac who had sent the further telegrams to Sir Henry, calculating well the time at which they could arrive. He had stayed at the village of Alvamen, and when the carriage passed it, had begged a lift as far as Bergun, a request granted readily enough by their driver. The poor fellow had been struck on the head at the entrance of the gorge, and so thrown from his place. He had not been seriously injured, and, indeed, was of much assistance to us all later in that evening.

I must add that Sir Henry dispatched the whole of the great reward he had

offered to Reski's next of kin. They were but distant relatives, as his wife was dead, and it had been his only son that Marnac murdered.

So ended the story that Robert, rightly enough, has named "The Trail of the Dead," for indeed it was a blood-stained path. I would have had Robert himself to conclude it, but that he insists that there is no necessity. One thing only does he ask that I should add—though, indeed, it is a matter that will have been already guessed. To please him, I will write it down.

Robert and I were married in June.
(The End.)

SUMMER CARE OF FURS.

Here is an Excellent Method for the Housewife to Use.

One of the spring duties most dreaded by the housewife is the putting away of winter furs, on account of the unsatisfactoriness of so many methods. The Housekeeper publishes an excellent and tried method for the care of furs, which will be widely appreciated. As spring approaches it is well to be on the alert against the insidious moth, as this is the time of year she deposits her eggs. It is the maggot of the moth and not the little silver-winged insect with which we are all familiar, which is so destructive to furs.

To prevent the ravages of this insect, furs before being put away should be lightly beaten with a thin rattan—care being taken not to break the hair—and allowed to hang in the sun for several hours. They should then be combed with a clean comb, wrapped in newspaper and put in a chest lined with tin or cedar. Unbleached muslin bags are a good substitute when chests are not available. The use of camphor is deleterious, as in the case of the dark furs—sable, for instance—it has a decided tendency to impair the richness of its coloring, and the darker the sable the more beautiful and valuable it is. The printer's ink on the newspaper is equally effective as camphor in keeping out the winged moth and will not in the least impair the color.

When it is found necessary to clean the fur before putting it away, the following method, culled from a grandmother's notebook, has been found most effective:

First, brush with a good, stiff brush. Have ready a quantity of new bran, which has been thoroughly heated. This will require constant stirring to prevent its scorching. When well heated the bran should be thoroughly rubbed into the fur with the hands. This operation should be repeated two or three times. The fur should then be taken and effectively brushed until not a particle of dust remains.

Ermine and other white furs can be cleaned in like manner, substituting flour for the bran, and rubbing against the trend of the fur. If very much soiled, the fur should be laid away for a day or two in a closed compartment after the flour has been well rubbed in.

Our Guests the Snowy Owls.

Every few years, especially along the sea coast and the larger rivers and lakes, there is a wave of those splendid, day-hunting rascals—the snowy owls. They are great fishermen, the only owls to make this sort of hunting a practice, and may sometimes be seen sitting, silent and motionless, like a block of ice, at the edge of the open water, waiting for a chance to nab an unsuspecting fish. Of course, this is not a very paying way to get a living, and they also catch field-mice, muskrats, hares, and even large birds like quail or grouse. But there are only two other birds of prey in our country that habitually eat fish, and one of these seldom catches its own, preferring to eat the dead fish along the shore or pirate it from the real fisherman—the osprey.—St. Nicholas.

Printed Paper.

Ascum—No, I don't know him, but he seems like a very successful man.

Kidder—Oh, his success is all on paper.

Ascum—Indeed? You mean—

Kidder—I mean he's a popular novelist.—Philadelphia Press.

Unnatural Finish.

Mrs. Meeds—And did your husband die a natural death?

Mrs. Weeds—No, he died suddenly.

Mrs. Meeds—What was there unnatural about that?

Mrs. Weeds—Why, poor dear John was the slowest man that ever lived.

Village Politics.

"So you voted for the socialist candidate. I can't understand your doing that."

"Well, you see, they may not keep them any better than others, but they make so many more promises."—Journal Amusant.

Possibilities.

"But," protested the first dear girl, "I haven't got the face to ask a favor of him."

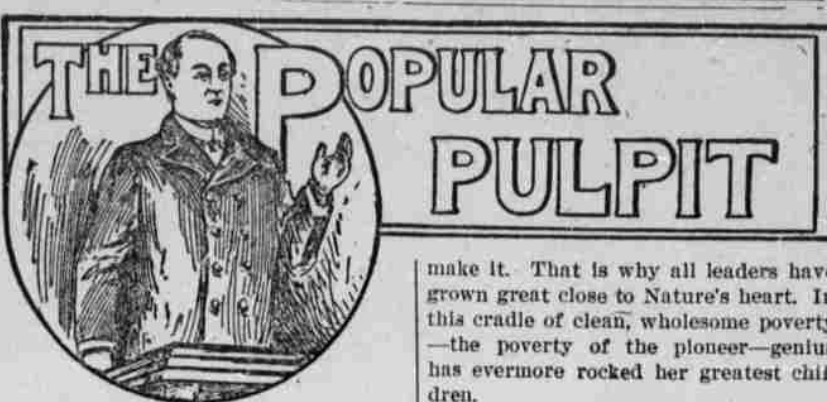
"Well," rejoined dear girl No. 2, "you might visit a complexion specialist and have your face remodeled."

Cause for Complaint.

Meeker—Yes, my wife always speaks her mind, but—

Bleeker—Well?

Meeker—I wouldn't object to that if she would only stop when she gets to the end of it.



A HARVEST AFTERMATH.

By Rev. D. F. Fox, D. D., Chicago.

There are four great agencies that have for their purpose the redemption of man—the Divine, the angelic, the human and the natural. We have all heard sermons on the first three, but at this fall season I wish to speak briefly on the ministry of Nature; our own Master drew most of his illustrations from the great world of Nature. Longfellow, in his poem entitled "Aftermath," exclaims:

When the summer fields are mown,
When the birds are fledged and flown,
And the dry leaves strew the path;
With the cawing of the crow,
With the falling of the snow,
Once again the fields we mow
And gather in the aftermath.

That is to say, along with the crop of grain the wise man gathers a harvest of wisdom.

And first of all, let us not forget what a wonderful something this world of Nature is. Think of the power that paints us August noons and December nights. Look at the clouds, lifting moisture from the sea and carrying it over mountain and valley; and as the rain patters, children dance with glee. As the benediction of the rain falls on all the earth, the rose stands forth on the cactus in the desert, the lily whitens in the pool and harvests nod their heads in thanksgiving and praise.

Now these clouds could do their work just as well by coming and going in straight lines, and they would answer all practical purposes if they were a somber black or a dirty brown; that is the way man carries his freight across the continent. Not so the Almighty. Behold his carriers, as in pomp and majesty they stand in grand array. See



REV. D. F. FOX, D. D.

the great banks of orange splendor in the morning, the magnificence and brilliance of the noon, and the matchless array of evening sunset.

It is great to live out-of-doors, as our Master did. My ideal of the natural, sane life is to be a nursling of the mountains, to know the wild things that dwell in their recesses, the air of enchantment that haunts them. To have the wholesome blood of forest pines in your veins; to sleep all night beneath the stars; to watch the day swing into the purple bosom of the night; to see the lark come down across the morning sky sideways on the wing; to follow the brook as it wimplies through the glen; to listen reverently with uncovered head to the crash of the thunder, like God's great Amen, falling down the stairway of the skies; to see the naked elm as it shivers piteously in the storm; to know the drama of the seasons, the rotation of flowers, the murmur of the trees, the solitude of the woods, the wildness of the moor, the height of the hills, the purple of the evening, the rosy touch of the dawn, the roar of the surf, the rush of the waves, the breath of the brine. In a word, to go yonder where things are seen and felt and heard; and there, with mind open, alert and responsive, to behold the whole epic of God's out-of-doors. That to me is the truly sane life.

"God made the country, man made the town." That isn't hard to believe; that is why life in the great city tends to superficiality. People who live in the city don't know much—I live in the city. It is the man who lives and works in the country who knows things. City people are always talking. They don't have time to think. The man in the country must meditate, for he often has only his thoughts for company.

What is the trouble with your city boy? He lacks the power of initiative. Why does the lad from the country win? Because when he wants a thing he must whip out his jackknife and

make it. That is why all leaders have grown great close to Nature's heart. In this cradle of clean, wholesome poverty—the poverty of the pioneer—genius has evermore rocked her greatest children.

Then again, Nature is the great restorer. If there is a scar of the battlefield left across the face of Mother Earth, she immediately begins to cover it with a strip of greenery. If a tree is torn and bleeding, Nature binds up its wounds and recovers the gash. If a stream is poisoned with the sewage of a great city, within forty miles the poison has been eliminated, for sunshine is the great germicide. And so, the ozone comes from ocean and mountain with healing on its wings.

While walking through the woods the other day I chanced upon a daisy. Coming upon it unobserved in fancy I heard it say: "I am down here in the grass, hidden away, buried out of sight—lost." Then in my imagination I heard the flowers talk. "We are not lost," they said. "Our friends are the over-arching sky, the ocean and the sun." Then I said, "But you are rather expensive are you not, and extravagant also. Can't you get along with less?" "No, no," they all replied as in one voice, "nothing less than this will do for us. Nothing less than suns and stars and over-arching skies."

And, if God has taken the measure of the flowers and fitted up a world-house adapted to their needs, then surely He will not do less for us. Here we are to-day; children of an eternal destiny, eye longing for beauty, ear yearning for harmony, reason going forth in search of truth, and the soul thirsting for God! Surely for the perfecting of this personality He will send us mighty impulses, great motives, infinite stimulations. For He who puts the crimson blush into the heart of the cowslip will also minister to the needs of the soul; and He who notes the sparrow's fall will also be mindful of these his little ones.

THE WATER OF LIFE.

By Rev. J. W. Worsnop.

Text.—"And the Spirit and the bride say, Come. And let him that heareth say, Come. And let him that is athirst say, Come. And whosoever will, let him take the water of life freely."—Revelation 22:1.

The expression, "water of life," is figurative and is intended to convey to our minds the idea of salvation. He who drinks of the water of life takes salvation into his soul; salvation is divine life in the soul of man. It is the higher nature of man controlling the lower; it is the spirit keeping the body under. Many think only of salvation from hell, and if it were not for the fear of hell they would not be Christians. That is a low conception of the Christian life. There is no hell where there is no sin. Let any sin control you—dominate your life—and you have hell within you.

The water of life, however, fills the soul with the highest love. It purifies human love in every relationship in which it is manifested. The water of life is in the Christian's soul as a well of water springing up into everlasting life.

We are to drink this water of life freely. It is a free gift from God to us as the light we see and the air we breathe. It cannot be purchased with money, or obtained by proxy.

Did you ever feel soul thirst? If you do, then you are the one alluded to in the words, "Let him that is athirst come." The water of life is the only thing that can quench this thirst. It is useless to try to quench it with money, ambition, fame and pleasure. While money is useful and good as a means to an end, and, as much as we may desire it, we cannot get along without it; yet it can never quench this soul thirst. It cannot even give bodily health. It may purchase every kind of medicine prescribed, get the best hotels in the healthiest localities and all obtainable comforts, but it cannot give peace of mind where there is no peace, and ease of conscience where there is a gnawing sense of guilt. Money can bribe men, but not death.

Weak and Unstable—Wealth is weak itself in that it is unstable. It has been said that all of the wealth of this nation passes through the Probate Courts in each thirty-five years.—Rev. B. A. Dawes, Methodist, Louisville.

Success and Truth—To make life big with success, one's thinking must be permeated and purified with that which is pure. To sham in life is to fellowship with shame.—Rev. A. H. Herries, Presbyterian, Union City.

Needs a Savior—Man is a sinner. Man needs a savior. The Son of Mary was called Jesus because He was to save man from sin. He makes bad men good.—Rev. B. B. Tyler, Disciple, Denver.