

The DOOM TRAIL

—By—
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PORTO BELLO GOLD, Etc.

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WNU Service

CHAPTER IX—Continued

Parts of his ears were gone, and as he drew nearer I saw that his face was criss-crossed by innumerable tiny scars. When he raised his hand in blessing the Indians I realized that two fingers were missing, and those which were left were twisted and gnarled as by fire.

"Whom have we here?" he called in a loud, harsh voice.

"Two prisoners, reverend sir," replied Murray. "English spies caught at Jagara by the vigilance of Monsieur de Veulle."

"Are they heretics?" demanded the priest.

"I fear I have never conversed with Master Ormerod concerning his religious beliefs," said Murray whimsically.

The priest peered closely at me.

"Well, sir," he asked bruskiy, "are you a son of the true faith?"

"Not the one you refer to, sir," I said.

"And this savage here?"

"He believes, quite devoutly, I should say, in the gods of his race."

The Jesuit locked and unlocked his fingers nervously.

"I fear, monsieur, that you will suffer torment at the hands of my poor children here," he said. "Will you not repent before it is too late?"

"But will you stand by and see your children torture an Englishman in time of peace?" I asked.

"Peace?" he rasped. "There is no peace—there can be no peace—between England, the harlot nation, and holy France. France follows her destiny, and her destiny is to rule America on behalf of the Church."

"Yet peace there is," I insisted.

"I refuse to admit it. We know no peace here. We are at war, endless war, physically, spiritually, mentally, with England. If you come amongst us, you do so at your bodily peril. But—and the challenge left his voice and was replaced by a note of pleading, soft and compelling—"It may be monsieur, that in your bodily peril you have achieved the salvation of your soul. Repent, I urge you, and though your body perish your soul shall live."

Murray and De Veulle stirred restlessly during this harangue, but the savages were so silent you could hear the birds in the trees. I was interested in this man, in his fanatic sincerity, his queer conception of life.

"But if I repented, as you say," I suggested, "would not you save my body?"

His eyes burned with contempt.

"Would you drive a bargain with God?" he cried. "For shame! Some may tolerate that, but I never will! What matters your miserable body! It has transgressed the rights of France. Let it die! But your soul is immortal; save that, I conjure you! Death? What is death? And what matters the manner of death? Look at me, monsieur."

He fixed my gaze on each of his infirmities.

"I am but the wreck of a man. These poor, ignorant children of the wilderness have worked their will with me, and because it was best for me God permitted it. Torture never hurt any man. It is excellent for the spirit. It will benefit you. If you must die—"

His voice trailed into nothingness. De Veulle interposed.

"Reverend father," he said, "I have a letter for you from Jacques Pourrier. The rivermen would like you to give them a mass Sunday. This is a long—"

"Give me the letter," he cried eagerly.

"Ah, that is good reading! Sometimes I despair for my sons—aye, more than for the miserable children of the wilderness. But now I know that a seed grows in the hearts of some that I have doubted. I shall go gladly."

De Veulle winked at Murray as the priest limped away.

"I must send Jacques a barrel of brandy for this," he remarked; "but our Cahnuagas would be in the sulks if they could not celebrate the Moon feast, and they stand in such fear of the worthy Hyacinthe that they would never risk his wrath."

"The Moon feast!" exclaimed Murray. "True, I had forgotten. Well, 'twill be an excellent introduction to the customs of the savages for our friend the intruder."

"'Twill make a great impression upon him," laughed De Veulle. "In fact, upon both of them. I have a surprise for our Iroquois captive as well. The Mistress of the False Faces awaits them."

He murmured some orders to our guards, kicked me out of his path and sauntered through the gateway beside Murray.

With Boling in active supervision and Tom hanging greedily on the flanks of the crowd, we were hustled through the clearing, past the chapel and an intervening belt of woodland, into a natural amphitheater on the far side of the village, where a background of dark pines walled in a wide surface of hard-beaten, grassless ground. Two stakes stood ready, side by side, in the center, and our captors tore off our tattered clothes and lashed us to these with whips of joy.

So we stood, naked and bound, ankle, knee, thigh, chest and armpit, whilst the sun, setting behind the village, flooded the inferno with mellow light and an army of fiends, men, women and children, pranced around us. For myself, I was dazed and fearful, but Ta-wan-ne-ars again showed me the better road.

"The Keepers scream like women,"

he shouted, in order to make himself heard. "Have you never taken captives before? You are women. We scorn you. Do you know what has become of the seven warriors Murray sent to pursue us on the Great Trail?"

Silence prevailed.

"Yes, there were seven of them," glibbed Ta-wan-ne-ars. "And there were three of us. And where are they? I will tell you. Cahnuaga dogs, Shawendadie dogs, Huron dogs. Crawl closer on your bellies while I tell you."

"Their scalps hang in the lodge of the Keepers who could not fight against real men. The scalps of seven who called themselves warriors and who were so rash that they tried to fight three."

A howl of anger answered him.

"Begin the torment," yelled Boling. Tom drew a wicked knife and ran toward us, his yellow eyes aflame. But a squat Cahnuaga chief pushed him back.

"They are to be held for the Moon feast," he proclaimed. "See, the Mistress comes. Stand back, brothers."

The sound of a monotonous walling filled the air, joining itself with the evening breeze that sighed in the

branches of the pines behind us. The crowd of savages drew away from us in sudden awe.

"Ga-go-sa Ho-nun-as-tase-ta," they muttered to each other.

"What do they say?" I asked Ta-wan-ne-ars.

"The Mistress of the False Faces is coming," he replied curtly.

"And who is she?"

"The priestess, of their devilish brotherhood."

Out from the long bark building wound a curious serpentine procession of men in fantastic head-masks, who danced along with a halting step. As they danced they sang in the weird monotone we had first heard. And behind them all walked slowly one without a mask, a young girl of upright figure, her long black hair cascading about her bare shoulders. Her arms were folded across her breast. She wore only the short Ga-ka-ah, or kilt, with moccasins on her feet.

The breath whistled in Ta-wan-ne-ars' nostrils as his chest heaved against its bonds, and I turned my head in amazement. The expression on his face was compounded of such demonic ferocity as I had seen there once before—that, and incredulous affection.

"What is it?" I cried.

He did not heed me. He did not even hear me. His whole being was focused upon the girl whose ruddy bronze skin gleamed through the masses of her hair, whose shapely limbs ignored the beat of the music which governed the motions of her attendants.

The procession threaded its way at leisurely pace through the throngs of Indians, the girl walking as unconcerned as if she were alone, her head held high, her eyes staring unseeingly before her.

"Ga-go-sa Ho-nun-as-tase-ta," murmured the savages, bowing low.

The False Faces drew clear of the crowd, and danced solemnly around us. They paid us no attention, but when they had strung a complete circle around the stakes they faced inward and stopped, each one where he stood. For the first time the priestess, or Mistress as they called her, showed appreciation of her surroundings. She walked into the ring of masks and took up her position in front of us and

between our stakes. She had not looked at us.

"Bow down, O my people," she chanted in a soft voice that was hauntingly sweet. "The False Faces are come amongst you, for it is again the period of our rule, and I, their Mistress, am to give you the word."

"Behold, the old moon is dying, and a new moon will be born again to us. The Powers of Evil, the Powers of Good and the Powers of Life are come together for the creation."

"Thrice fortunate are you that you recognize the rule of So-a-ka-gwa (the moon—the light of the night)," for it brings you well-being, now and hereafter in the Land of Souls. Moreover, it brings you captives, and your feast will be graced by their sufferings."

She turned to face us, arms flung wide in a graceful gesture. I thought that Ta-wan-ne-ars would burst the things that bound him. His powerful chest expanded until they stretched.

"Ga-ha-no!" he sobbed.

She faltered, and her hands locked together involuntarily between her breasts. A light of apprehension dawned in her eyes, and for a moment I thought there was a trace of something more.

"Ga-ha-no!" pleaded Ta-wan-ne-ars. But she regained the mastery of herself, and a mocking smile was his answer.

"They are no ordinary captives who will consecrate our feast," she continued her recitative.

"For one is a chief of the Iroquois and a warrior whose valor will resist the torment with pride. And the other is a white chief whose tender flesh will yield great delight and whose screams will give pleasure in our ears."

"O my people, this is the Night of Preparation. When An-da-ka-gwa (the sun—the Light of the Day), the husband of So-a-ka-gwa, retires to rest to mourn his dead wife and make ready for the new one he will take tomorrow, you must retire to your lodges, and put out your fires, and let down your hair."

"For in the night the spirits of Hani-ka-o-no-geh (hell—the dwelling place of evil) will come to hold communion with their servants, the False Faces, and they will be hungry for your souls."

"And this is my warning to you, O my people. Heed the warning of Ga-go-sa Ho-nun-as-tase-ta."

"And on the next night we will celebrate the Moon feast, and I will dance the torture dance. And we will tear the hearts out of our enemies' breasts and grow strong from their sufferings."

She tossed her arms above her head, and the ring of False Faces burst into their high-pitched, nasal chant, and resumed the hesitant dancing step, their horrible masks wobbling from side to side, their painted bodies, naked save for the breech-clout, posturing in rhythm.

Their Mistress summoned the squat Cahnuaga chief, who seemed to be especially charged with our safe-keeping.

"You will unbind the captives from the stakes and place them in the Council-House," she said coldly. "If they are left out in the night, my brothers and sisters, the aids of Hane-go-ate-geh will devour them. Feed them well, so that they will be strong to resist their torment, and tie them securely, and place a guard of crafty warriors over them. If they escape, you shall be the sacrifice at the Moon feast."

The chief groveled before her.

"The commands of the Ga-go-sa Ho-nun-as-tase-ta shall be obeyed," he promised. "And I pray you will hold off the Spirits of Evil tonight, for sometimes they have been overbold and have snatched our people from their lodges."

"You are safe this time if you heed my words," she answered, "for you have secured a sacrifice which will be very pleasing to So-a-ka-gwa and her friends." (For this and other conversations I am indebted to Ta-wan-ne-ars, who translated them for me afterward.—H. O.)

Then she came up quite close to us. She looked at me with frank curiosity, and particularly my hair, which was brown. But most of her attention was bestowed upon Ta-wan-ne-ars.

"So you remember me?" she said in a hard voice and speaking in the Seneca dialect.

"I remember you, Ga-ha-no," he answered. "But I see you do not remember me."

"Oh, well enough," she returned. "But I am no longer an ordinary woman. I am the Mistress of the False Faces."

"And of a French snake," he added bitterly.

Her eyes flashed.

"I am not a squaw, which is what I should have been had you and my stupid father had your way with me!" Ta-wan-ne-ars shook his head sadly. (TO BE CONTINUED.)

Curious Old Church in Heart of London

Porters and clerks at Denmark Hill railway station, South London, often work to the accompaniment of hymns sung lustily by a congregation in a disused waiting room next to the booking office. The Mystical Church of the Comforter is one of London's most curious churches. Babies are baptized in a room that was once only used by impatient travelers waiting for their trains; funeral services are read in it and a marriage has been solemnized. This church has been in existence for about six years. One end of the former waiting room has been transformed by an altar painted white and surrounded by the seven colors of the rainbow. Seven steps lead up to the altar, and at the side are two pillars representing

beauty and strength. Everything is done by symbols in this remarkable church, and the badge worn by members is a dove, standing in a circle with a seven-leaved branch in its beak. The leader and founder of the church is a woman with the official title of "messenger."

Dolls Now Live Longer

With the cessation of manufacture of the kinds of dolls that had fragile heads the life of the average doll has been increased from a few days to a period that may run into years. Inquiry by the manufacturers among children developed the fact that they prefer soft-bodied dolls because they cuddle easier Yankee ingenuity was applied.

Electric Power to Be Biggest Factor in Bringing About Five-Day Week

By WILLIAM GREEN, President A. F. O. L.

THE five-day week is not only practicable, but necessary if the wheels of production are not to be stilled by a glut of goods that no one has time to consume.

As steam revolutionized our industrial processes so we find electric power is working a greater transformation. As the amount of electric power supplied in industry is increased in like proportion, efficiency and productivity is increased. Though silent and unseen, electric power is the greatest agency making for the establishment of the shorter work week in all lines of industry.

Forward-looking employers have sensed the coming of this reform and are prepared to accept it as a logical development and the class which clings stubbornly to the old must yield as they were forced to by the eight-hour movement.

Stern necessity of balancing production with the ability to consume will force the change. Furthermore, it must be made methodically in those industries that are ready for it. The building industry has been a leader in the shorter work day movement, and by use of modern tools is likely to make still more efficiency possible.

The best evidence that the reform is possible is that it has already been accepted by progressive employers to a much large extent than is generally known.

Possession of Intellectual Curiosity Great Need of Young Men and Women

By W. H. B. FAUNCE, President Brown University.

Young men and young women knocking at the doors of our crowded colleges must possess, for admittance, genuine intellectual curiosity, a real hunger for knowledge.

No buildings or equipment can make a university, which is an intellectual and spiritual enterprise. The most powerful and effective machine in the world is a dead thing, useful only in the service of living men. Only personalities, working together in the pursuit of truth and beauty and goodness, constitute the university. In ancient Athens in the time of Pericles the best flour mill could grind out about two barrels of flour per day. In some of our western cities a modern mill can produce 20,000 barrels per day. Yet the citizens who lived around the Athenian mill were of a finer type, more open-minded, more eager for truth, more sensitive to beauty, than those we produce today.

The object of education, as Goethe said, is not that something may be done through us, but something done in us. And when that vital thing has been done in us, when the mind has been opened and visualized and whetted and trained, then whatever the place in life we have to fill, we shall go forth as "gentlemen unafraid" to make some small spot of earth a finer place to live in.

First, I want to ask: Have you an appetite? Are you really hungry? All around our college campuses today are boys who really have no hunger for knowledge. They, of course, want to "succeed" in life, and they are willing to endure education if it seems the passport to success.

Too Little Attention Given to the Great Problem of Heredity

By C. H. ANDERSON, Iowa Alienist.

The span of life is shortening through neglect in the improvement of the race, while criminality, delinquency, disease and insanity are on the increase and public institutions and hospitals are growing more crowded.

The social fabric is steadily and rapidly weakening and unless this downward plunge is halted the race of mankind is destined to completely collapse. Even now it is stretched to the breaking point.

There are two chief factors which influence our lives. One is heredity and the other environment. Upon the improvement of the latter by schools, colleges, churches and social centers, we spend millions of dollars every year, but to heredity we give scarcely a thought, and as a result there is scattered over the state of Illinois, as in every other state, institutions for the crippled, the blind, the deaf, the dumb, the epileptic, the diseased, the insane and the criminal.

The laws of heredity are as inexorable as the laws of gravity. Tell me what your ancestors have been for two or three generations, and I will tell you what your children will be. Now and then an individual rises like a meteor to new heights, but it is rare. Heredity is one of the most difficult social problems of this age.

Church Unable to Cure All Evils Brought On by Modern Civilization

By DR. S. PARKES CADMAN, President Federal Council of Churches.

Modern civilization has beset society with more evils than the church has been able to cure, and the result is crime waves, godless pleasure, dirty drama, sex obsession and profligacy.

The majority of intelligent people admit that Christianity is the only hope of cure or prevention for these evils. If the people who so believe were united in one practical policy, they could find the cure for the present conditions in our nation and world.

Meanwhile, our upstanding and forceful men are giving their time and labor to politics in behalf of democracy. Yet when critics speak of the failure of the churches, do they take into account the even worse failure of politics and democracy? Notwithstanding strenuous efforts, scarcely more than half the voters could be induced to go to the polls in the last two Presidential elections.

"Boy Guidance" Plan Big Factor in Giving Aid to Ambitious Youth

By J. B. SHAW, Dean of Men, Iowa State College.

That many boys go to college with no definite purpose, except to get through with a minimum of exertion is the main reason why a chair of "boy guidance" should be established in every school.

We need men in every school to listen to the boys' ambitions and gain their confidence. We need men who are capable of counseling with the students with a view to helping them take up some profession.

The mission of these counselors would be to advise with the boy and aid him in choosing his life's work. After the boy has chosen his profession then it would be the work of the counselor to establish a point of contact between the boy and some members of his probable profession, that the latter might help him in any way possible.

Keep in Trim!

Good Elimination Is Essential to Good Health.

THE kidneys are the blood filters. If they fail to function properly there is apt to be a retention of toxic poisons in the blood. A dull, languid feeling and, sometimes, toxic backaches, headaches, and dizziness are symptoms of this condition. Further evidence of improper kidney function is often found in burning or scanty passages of secretions. Each year more and more people are learning the value of Doan's Pills, a stimulant diuretic, in this condition. Scarcely a nook or hamlet anywhere but has many enthusiastic users. Ask your neighbor.

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Town's Many Peculiarities

The town of Hancock, which borders for sixteen miles on the New York state line, was 150 years old last year. It is the longest and narrowest town in Massachusetts, says the Boston Globe. It has the smallest public school in the state—one pupil. It has the only Shaker community in the state. Its three oldest inhabitants live under one roof. It has the second highest body of water in Massachusetts.

The occasional use of Roman Eye Balsam at night will prevent sore and inflamed eyes and eye strain. 372 Pearl St., N. Y. Adv.

Causes of Fire Loss

In 1924 lightning as a cause of fires ranked eighth. The cause heading the list was exposure, which merely means the loss due to fires spreading beyond the point of origin. Next came matches and smoking; then defective chimneys and flues; stoves, furnaces, and their pipes; spontaneous combustion; sparks on roofs; electricity and lightning.

Does Weakness Detract From Your Good Looks?

San Francisco, Calif.—"About two years ago I was weak and rundown in health. I suffered so much with backache and pain in my side, and did not get any relief until I took Dr. Pierce's Favorite Prescription. A few bottles of the 'Prescription' was a permanent benefit to me and I am glad to recommend it to others for I believe it will do for them what it did for me."—Mrs. E. Webb, 1103 Laguna St.

Obtain this famous "Prescription" now, in tablets or liquid, from your druggist, or write Dr. Pierce, President Invalids' Hotel in Buffalo, N. Y., for free medical advice.

He'd Learn

"Oh, professor, don't you think my dear little Randolph will ever learn to draw?"

"No, ma'am, that is, not unless you harness him to a truck."—Rutgers Chanticleer.

DEMAND "BAYER" ASPIRIN

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Mrs. Plop—Good grief! That isn't the way to make coffee. New Cook (hopelessly)—What is it the way to make?

Stop the Pain. The hurt of a burn or a cut stops when Cole's Carbolsalve is applied. It heals quickly without scars. 50c and 60c by all druggists, or send 30c to The J. W. Cole Co., 127 S. Euclid Ave., Oak Park, Ill.—Advertisement.

Unnatural

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