

# The Wand of Sleep

OR

## The Devil-Stick

By the Author of  
"The Mystery of a Hansom Cab," Etc.

### CHAPTER VI.

Maurice returned home after a somewhat stormy interview with Mrs. Dallas. For once the mother of Isabella was roused out of her habitual indifference, and she refused absolutely to accept Aymer as her son-in-law.

"It is because that black woman distrusts me that you object," he said. "I wonder that an educated person should be dominated by that uncivilized creature."

"Dido has nothing to do with my refusal!" said the widow, coldly; "and although I take her advice in some things, I do not in this. I don't wish Isabella to marry you, and I request you to leave my house."

"As a gentleman I must accept your dismissal, but I decline to give up Isabella."

"And I," cried the girl, "swear to remain true to Maurice!"

"You'll do nothing of the sort," said her mother, violently. "I forbid you even to think of that young man. You shall marry whom I choose!"

"Dr. Etwald, I suppose?"

"No," Mr. Sarby.

"David!" ejaculated Maurice, in an astonished tone. "You wish Isabella to marry him?"

"Yes! He loves Isabella much more than you do, and he asked permission—which you didn't—to pay his addresses to her. I consented, and so," Mrs. Dallas raised her voice, "he shall marry her."

"I refuse to marry Mr. Sarby," said Isabella, vehemently. "I hate him!"

"That is no matter!" replied her mother, coldly. "You must marry him!"

"Must!" repeated Maurice, with great indignation.

"Yes, Mr. Aymer! Must! Must! Must! If you want an explanation of that you can ask Major Jen!"

"The Major! My guardian!" cried Aymer, quite thunderstruck. "Is he against me?"

"Ask him! I want no further speeches from you. Go to your room, Isabella."

Resigning himself to the inevitable, Maurice gave one glance at Isabella, and went outside with a heavy heart. Dido was standing upon the veranda, with her eyes glowing like two coals. Yet there was an ill-concealed expression of triumph in her gaze which Maurice, in his then disturbed and angered state of mind, could not brook. He paused abruptly as he passed by her, and asked a direct question:

"Why do you hate me, Dido?"

"Voodoo!" said she in a harsh voice.

"Bah! you black parrot!" muttered Maurice, scornfully, and turned upon his heel. As he vanished down the walk Dido clapped her hands together with great satisfaction, and began to sing in low tones. Her song was barbaric in words, and strange beyond all telling in the music. It rose and fell, and crooned and drawled in a curiously painful manner. In the drawing-room Mrs. Dallas had risen to her feet at the first deep contralto note, and now stood rocking herself to and fro with an expression of alarm on her face. Isabella was terrified in her turn. She shrieked and ran out of the room. Then Dido, still singing, appeared at the window, and looked at Mrs. Dallas with an expression of triumph.

"Why do you stir the death song?" asked Mrs. Dallas, opening her eyes.

"Because de master had doomed dat yaller-hair!" said Dido, and continued her song.

In the meantime, Maurice walked slowly homeward, puzzling out his own mind, as to what could be the meaning of these strange things. He could not understand why Mrs. Dallas objected to him as a son-in-law; nor could he surmise the meaning of the mysterious word "Voodoo," pronounced so significantly by Dido. However, he saw plainly that the negroess was the disturbing element in the Dallas household, and by a half-hypnotic control over the weak will of her mistress, she could act as she pleased.

Maurice, simple and upright in conduct and character, was no match for the unscrupulous machinations of Dido. She hated the young man, and was determined that he should not marry her nursing. But whether she had, like Mrs. Dallas, a preference for David over Dr. Etwald, Maurice could not determine. The more he thought over affairs, the more incoherent and complicated did they become; so Aymer gave up the task in despair. Then it occurred to him that Mrs. Dallas had referred him to Major Jen; so to his guardian Maurice went the moment he arrived at the big house.

"Major gone out, sir," explained Jaggard, to whom Maurice applied for information. "He got a message from Dr. Etwald, and went to see him. Be back to dinner, sir, I believe."

"Where is Mr. Sarby?"

"Gone over to Branch Hall, sir."

"Ho, ho!" thought Maurice, as he turned away. "So David had gone to see Meg. Now if he is in love with Isabella, and Mrs. Dallas favors his suit, I wonder why he acts in that way."

The question he could not answer, so dismissing it from his memory, he returned to the smoking-room with a novel. When Jen and David returned he intended to question both, and, in possible, get to the bottom of these sickening mysteries.

"Hang it!" soliloquized Maurice over his book; "since yesterday everything seems to have gone wrong. That negroess and Dr. Etwald are at the bottom of affairs. But I can't see their

reasons for mixing up things so."

Then he laid aside his book to think, and stared idly at the opposite wall. It chanced to be that upon which the barbaric weapons before alluded to were arranged, and conspicuous among them the golden handle of the devil-stick. Recalling the mention of Voodoo, and Etwald's reference to African witchcraft, Maurice connected in his own mind the devil-stick with those barbarisms, and on the impulse of the moment he rose to examine the magic wand. Handling it carefully—for he dreaded the poison, although it was said to be dried up—he wondered if Dido could make use of it were it in her possession.

"I heard Mrs. Dallas say that Dido's people came from Ashantee," soliloquized Maurice, "so I have no doubt she can work the infernal thing. Perhaps she knows enough to fill the bag with fresh poison. If she did so, I wouldn't trust myself near her. She would be sure to experiment on me."

At this moment Major Jen, looking slightly worried, entered the room, and seeing the devil-stick in the hand of Maurice, he stopped short with an ejaculation of surprise.

"You are looking at that thing, Maurice?" said he, wonderingly. "Now that is strange. I have just been talking about it with Dr. Etwald."

"Oh!" said Maurice, his thoughts flying back to the mysterious influence which he had seen Etwald exercise over Dido. "And what was the doctor saying?"

"A great deal. He saw the devil-stick the other night, and to-day he sent a note, asking if I would ride over and see him this afternoon. I did so, then he explained that he wished to buy that thing!"

"The devil-stick? Why?"

"I can't say. He explained that he had been in the Barbadoes; and that he took a great interest in the subject of African fetish-worship. He had heard of these 'wands of sleep,' as they are called, and greatly wished to obtain one, but he was unable to do so. Since seeing mine he has been seized with a desire to possess it."

"Why?" said Maurice, again.

"As a curiosity, I suppose. I've told you all he told me. But I refused to sell it to him, and he seemed greatly vexed, a display of irritation which in its turn vexed me. I was quite annoyed when I left him."

"Why don't you wish to sell it, Uncle Jen?"

"Because it is a dangerous thing to handle. Although the poison is dried up, yet there may be enough in it to kill a man. If I parted with it and anyone was injured by it, I should never forgive myself. Pray put it up, Maurice; I dislike to see you touch it. To-night, after dinner, I shall lock it up in a safe place. David is right; it should not be on the wall there."

"David has gone over to see Meg?"

"Yes. I don't think he will be back until after dinner," said Jen, rising. "So you and I had better sit down as soon as we are dressed. I am very hungry."

"Uncle Jen, I want to ask you something. Do you wish David to marry Isabella Dallas?"

"I really can't say. That is a matter which lies in the hands of the girl herself. If she likes you better than David—"

"She does!"

"What! Have you spoken to her?"

"I have, and to Mrs. Dallas, who declines to sanction our engagement. She wants Isabella to marry David, and said—"

"I can guess what she said," interrupted Jen, hastily. "No more of this till after dinner, my dear lad. Then I'll explain all!"

"Explain what?"

"Why Mrs. Dallas wants Isabella to marry David. Not another word would the Major say on the subject at that moment, so Maurice was forced to seek his room in a very unsatisfied frame of mind. However, as he thought, here was one mystery about to be explained, and that was a comfort. As Jen prophesied, David did not return to dinner, and Maurice had a tete-a-tete with his guardian. But they talked of indifferent things, and it was not until they were once more in the smoking-room that the Major consented to speak on the subject of Mrs. Dallas' strange conduct.

"Now, my boy, I'm ready to 'all—' Here Jen stopped and looked blankly at the wall.

"The stick!" gasped Jen, pointing a shaking hand at the wall. "The death-wand!"

Maurice looked—the devil-stick was gone!

### CHAPTER VII.

For some moments the two men looked at one another; and then Major Jen, seeing the necessity for prompt action, rang the bell. Jaggard entered with military swiftness, and stared blankly at his master, who was pointing at the wall.

"Where is the devil-stick?" demanded Jen, wrathfully.

Jaggard advanced to the trophy of weapons, and examined them with some deliberation, after which he returned to face the irate Major.

"It's gone, sure enough, sir, but I don't know where."

"Find out if any of the servants have taken it."

Jaggard saluted and vanished, while his master walked up and down the room, fuming at the loss of the curiosity. In a few minutes Jaggard returned with the news that none of the

servants had been in the smoking-room that evening.

"Who lighted the lamp?" demanded Jen, sharply.

"We found the window open when we came in," said Maurice. "Did you open it?"

"Yes, sir. The Major told me to always air the room during dinner."

"Do you think that someone has stolen the stick, Maurice?" said the Major. "Someone from outside, I mean."

"I am sure of it," replied Aymer, with decision. "Jaggard, did you notice that negroess Mrs. Dallas' about the grounds, since 5 o'clock?"

"Why, no, Mr. Maurice, I can't say as I did."

"The tramp, then; Battersea!"

"No, sir. Haven't set eyes on him for a week."

"Very good, Jaggard," broke in the Major, "you can go. Maurice!" he turned to the young man when Jaggard had left the room, "what do you mean by all these questions and examinations? Do you suspect anyone?"

"Yes," replied Maurice, deliberately. "I suspect Dido, the negroess."

"Why?" asked Jen, with military brevity.

"It's a long story," returned Maurice. "Look here, Uncle Jen, I went to dress at half-past six; you did also. When we left the stick was in the room on the wall. Now we are here again at half-past eight; it is gone. In these two hours Dido has had time to cross the lawn ponder and steal it. "But why do you suspect Dido? She was never in this room."

"No, but Dr. Etwald was."

"Dr. Etwald! Do you think he has anything to do with it?" queried Jen, perplexed, and a trifle startled.

"I am certain of it," replied Maurice. "He employed Dido to steal it from you, as you refused to sell it. Listen, uncle, and I'll give you my reasons for this belief, and then Maurice told succinctly all that had taken place at "The Wigwam" during the afternoon.

Major Jen listened quietly, and waited until Maurice ended his story before he spoke. The information about Mrs. Dallas and her reference to himself did not surprise him so much as Aymer expected it would do. In fact, he only made one brief remark upon this point.

"I am sorry Mrs. Dallas said that," he remarked, when Maurice paused in his narrative.

"But what does she mean by it, Uncle Jen? Didn't you wish me to marry Isabella?"

"I am neither for nor against," replied Jen, enigmatically. "As I said before, let the girl marry whom she loves best."

"She loves me best!"

Major Jen wriggled uneasily in his seat. He disliked telling what appeared to him to be a silly story, but as such story bore strongly upon the present position of things, and as Maurice was impatiently waiting to be enlightened, Jen was forced to put his scruples on one side and speak out.

"If what I relate appears impossible, don't blame me," he said abruptly, "and I feel certain that you will laugh when I tell you about Voodoo!"

"That word again!" cried Maurice, in a puzzled voice. "Dido used it when we met Etwald; she repeated it to me before I left. Voodoo! Voodoo! What does it mean, Uncle Jen?"

"African witchcraft! Obi! Fetish-worship! The adoration of the bad spirit who catches mortals by the hair. Any one of these things explains the meaning of the term."

"Fm!" said Maurice. "It is a devil-worship pure and simple."

"Yes, and Mrs. Dallas knows more about it than is good for her, my boy," Jen laid his hand upon the arm of the young man, "when you reach my age you will find that there is no limit to the credulity and folly of human beings. When I was stationed in the Barbadoes many years ago I met Mrs. Dallas."

"Oh! so she is an old friend of yours?"

"Yes, I knew her in the West Indies shortly before Isabella was born. It was through knowing me," explained the Major, "that she came to this neighborhood and rented The Wigwam. You see, Maurice, I was one of the few people she knew here, and she remained near me for company's sake, and because she was afraid of herself."

"I don't quite understand."

(To be continued.)

### A Star Right Away.

"I'd like to become an actor."

"I suppose you have something to fit you for a career?"

"Oh, yes. I've got two boxes of grease paint, a wig and a false nose."

"Good. Buy yourself a couple of slapsticks and we'll star you in musical comedy."—St. Louis Star.

### Its Weakness.

"Now, the house of lords has come to a bridge it must cross."

"I am afraid it is not a very strong bridge."

"Why not?"

"On account of the weakness of its peers."—Baltimore American.

### Spellbound.

"Why don't you go on writing my speech?" said the orator.

"I'm spellbound," replied the typist.

"Has my eloquence such an effect?"

"Yes, sir. I never worked for a man who used so many words I can't spell."—Washington Star.

### There, Little Lamb.

There, little lamb, don't cry! We have sheared your wool, we know; But we've let you go, And the fleece will grow, And you will come again by and by.—New York World.

### Modest Ambition.

Kicker—Wouldn't you like to be so famous that people would restore your birthplace?

Bocker—I'd be content if I could make the landlord repair my present flat.—The Sun.

American plows, threshers and reapers cover the fields of Argentina.



"Do you give your wife an allowance?" "No, she takes it."—Chicago Record-Herald.

Jones (at the ball, to Mrs. Catterson)—How beautifully your daughter sits out her dances.—Life.

"You used to be an awful spend-thrift." "Yep. But I ain't any longer." "Ah! Reformed?" "No—I spent it all."—Cleveland Leader.

"Who was the greatest financier ever known?" "Noah; because he floated his stock when the whole world was in liquidation."—Tit-Bits.

"I never dare to look down when I'm standing on a high place," said Mrs. Lapaling. "It always gives me an attack of vertigo."—Chicago Tribune.

Miss Rogers—How did you imagine anything so beautiful as the angel in your picture? Artist—Got an engaged man to describe his fiancée to me.—Brooklyn Life.

"Do you like my new hat?" asked Mrs. Brooke. "Yes, indeed," replied Mrs. Lynn. "I had one just like it when they were in style."—Lippincott's Magazine.

"How did you enjoy the musicale?" "Oh, I applauded at the wrong time, as usual. Thought the orchestra tuning up was a classical number."—Kansas City Journal.

"I want to look at some dresses suitable for automobiles," said the lady. "Yes, ma'am," replied the polite clerk; "these walking skirts are the thing."—Yonkers Statesman.

Pedestrian—How far is it to Alder-shot? Let me see. Well, as the crow flies—Footsore Tommy—Never mind 'ow the beggar flies; 'ow far is it as the beggar 'ops?—Punch.

Caller—How pleased you must be to find that your new cook is a stayer. Hostess—My dear, don't mention it. She's a stayer, all right, but unfortunately she's not a cook.—Boston Transcript.

Mr. Figg—Gasser says he kept perfectly cool last night when that burglar got into the house. Mrs. Figg—So his wife told me. She found him trying to hide in the refrigerator.—Boston Transcript.

"Do you ever find it desirable to oppose your wife?" "Yes," answered Mr. Meekton. "I always feel less likely to annoy Henrietta if I can avoid being her partner in a bridge game."—Washington Star.

"Father," said Little Rollo, "what is a happy medium?" "I suppose, my son, that it is one who can earn several hundred dollars a day by making tables and chairs move around the room."—Washington Star.

"Meg!" No answer. "Maggie!" he called softly. Complete silence. "Madge!" Not a sound. "Margaret!" Then he whistled softly before making his final effort. "Marguerite!" And a flute-like voice replied in the distance—"Yes, darling!"

Physician—Have you any aches or pains this morning? Patient—Yes, doctor; it hurts me to breathe; in fact, the only trouble now seems to be with my breath. Physician—All right, I'll give you something that will soon stop that.—Boston Globe.

"Yes," admitted the modest young man. "I have broken off the engagement. I have been thinking it over for a long time, and I've come to the conclusion that a girl who can love an idiot like me must be wanting in both taste and intelligence!"

Father-in-Law—I suppose you are aware, Henry, that the check for \$10,000 I put among your wedding presents was merely for effect. Groom—Oh, yes, sir! and the effect was excellent. The bank cashed it this morning without a question.—Boston Transcript.

Irate Woman—These photographs of myself and husband are not at all satisfactory, and I refuse to accept them. Why, my husband looks like a baboon! Photographer—Well, that's no fault of mine, madam. You should have thought of that before you had him taken.

"I have a good position to offer a worthy college graduate. I presume you have some fine young man in your senior class?" "Sure," said the professor. "What are your requirements? Would a football player suit you, or do you prefer a mandolin expert?"—Washington Herald.

Proud "Autumn" Father—Bless me, it's really marvelous about that baby of mine. You'll hardly credit it, but every time it looks up into my face it smiles—positively smiles. The "Fed up" Friend—Well, I suppose even a baby has some glimmering sense of humor.—The Sketch.

"Johnny," said the boy's mother, "I hope you have been a nice, quiet boy at school this afternoon." "That's what I was," answered Johnny. "I went to sleep right after dinner, and the teacher said she'd whip any boy in the room who waked me up."—Boston Sunday Post.

"Well," said a traveler in the train one evening, "speaking of long lives, my dear aunt died at the age of one hundred and six." "That's nothing," said a drummer. "I had a grandmother who died at two hundred and twenty-three." "Do you want us to believe that a relation of yours died at two hundred and twenty-three? It is not only improbable, but utterly impossible," snapped the first. "Not at all. She died at two hundred and twenty-three Broad street."—Boston Herald.



**Trolley Mail Box.**  
Many patrons of rural delivery routes live a considerable distance from the highway, and a device which would carry the mail between the house and the road would be a great convenience. A Kansas subscriber whose house is 90 rods from the rural route and who has a straight line of telephone poles to the road, asks if an endless wire cable could be arranged in some way to carry a small box.

A No. 10 wire can be attached to

brackets fastened to the poles at such a height as not to interfere with teams, etc. A small box and carrier can be run over this between the house and the road. The box can be sent down and brought back from the house by the use of a cord or light twisted wire cable. Attach it to the box and pass it through a pulley on a post at the road and around a drum or through another pulley at the house. The trolley wire should be soldered to the brackets so the carrier may run

**The Farmer's Automobile.**  
While automobiles are expensive vehicles, in a sense, they are daily becoming less so. Improvements in methods, materials and knowledge have made a cheaper car possible and the fact that the purchasers of fancy cars are already supplied has caused manufacturers to devote their energies to turning out a car that is medium priced and of high quality. A new field for the marketing of the product of their factories was necessary and this field was found among the farmers. High-priced, fancy cars would not go with them, but quality would, and those manufacturers who were shrewd enough to make a car of high quality at a reasonable price have found ready customers among the farmers.

It is estimated that there are now in use about 100,000 automobiles among the farmers of this country and something like 5,000 of these are in Kansas. They are great favorites among the dairy farmers as time savers in the delivery of milk, but they are no less so among other farmers, who find in them a means of rapid transit without disturbing the farm teams. The new farm automobile is here to stay.—Kansas Farmer.

**Wheat for Laying Hens.**  
Many farmers grow and sell wheat, but they do not feed any of it to their chickens. Wheat is one of the best egg-producing feeds, and it will pay to feed it to the hens at all seasons, even when it is above a dollar a bushel. Wheat is similar in composition to milk and eggs; it contains nearly all the elements in right proportion for perfect animal growth and maintenance. A little of it will go a long way in feeding.

**A Merciless Parasite.**  
The fluke macropylia, commonly called the Moreton Bay fluke, is a merciless Australian parasitical growth, says a writer in the Wide World magazine. It takes root in the forks of its host tree (which in this case is a Queensland bloodwood) and ultimately smother the latter and usurps its place as an independent tree. Many valuable trees in the scrubs of Queensland are destroyed in this manner.

**Certified Milk Pays Best.**  
Certified milk sells in all large cities for about twice the price of other milk. It is absolutely clean, no impurities being allowed to get into the milk. A layer of fine cheesecloth is stretched over the milk pail, a layer of absorbent cotton is placed upon that, then another piece of cheesecloth. There is no sediment in the bottom of the milk vessels of milk treated in this way. It is not expensive, either.

**Ensilage and Alfalfa Feed.**  
The scientific ration for a cow giving twenty pounds of milk with 4 per cent of butter fat—a good average dairy cow—is forty-five pounds of ensilage and ten pounds of alfalfa hay a day. Ensilage costs about \$2 a ton and alfalfa about \$10 a ton. Thus the cow feed cost of 9½ cents a day, which is more than a third cheaper than could be sustained on an ordinary corn ration.

**Protect the Grindstone.**  
A grindstone should never be left exposed to the sun. The weight of the handle will always cause one portion of the stone to remain uppermost, and this from exposure will reach a different degree of hardness from the underside, so that after a while the stone will be ground out of circle. If the stone has to stand in the open a flat box can easily be obtained to serve as a cover.

**Meat Barrel Cover.**  
This sketch shows a meat barrel cover that can't be beat. Get a barrel that has top and bottom and saw it through in the middle, making two tubs. Use these tubs for covers on meat barrels by turning them over the barrels as shown in the sketch and they will assuredly keep out the dust and moisture.

**Testing Eggs in Incubator.**  
During incubation, eggs should be tested on the seventh and fourteenth days. At the first test the air cell should measure about a quarter of an inch; on the tenth day, one-half inch; on the fifteenth day, five-eighths of an inch; nineteenth day, three-quarters of an inch. The measurement should be taken from the middle of the large end.

**Care of Horses' Teeth.**  
Horses seldom suffer from decayed teeth, but because of the upper teeth closing on the lower ones a little on the outside points are sometimes found which lacerate the cheek or penetrate the gums, creating a tenderness that prevents the proper mastication of food, annoying the horse so much that he falls away very rapidly.

**Mixture for Pasture.**  
Minnesota farmers have found six pounds of timothy, five pounds of white clover, three pounds of Kentucky blue grass, and one pound of red top seed per acre, to be an excellent mixture for pastures. If the ground is inclined to be wet, the red top is the place of the timothy.

**Value of Humus in Soil.**  
The value of humus in the soil is not only that it supplies an element of plant food, but that it absorbs moisture and is an obstacle to evaporation, says the Rural Californian. It also prevents soil erosion and waste. The most successful farmer is the one who takes the most pains to utilize every element of his farm products that contributes humus to the soil. This is especially important in localities where the surface is uneven or broken, and the earth is not firm, or, in other words, is easily eroded by rainfall.

**Points in Pruning.**  
Do not choose the dormant season to cut back trees that are growing too fast to be fruitful; it will only make them grow the faster in the spring. Wait till they are in full flush of growth in May or June if you want to drive their surplus energies into fruit buds. Be sure to carry a paint pot along with the pruners, and whenever a limb as much as an inch in diameter is cut off, cover the wound with oil and white lead to keep out dampness and the entrance of fungi spores that will produce rot. In the spring this cover is not so necessary, for as soon as growth begins the tree will begin to cover its wounds with new wood that will creep over it from all sides.—Rural Wor.