

Bound by a Spell

CHAPTER XV.

Mr. Montgomery was particularly fond of telling stories of his own adventures. He was never known, however, at such times to give any clue to his family or connections. All the stories were confined to his vagabond days. He never allowed any person to interrupt his narratives by remarks; any such must be reserved until they were concluded.

"Of all the vagabond species I ever launched into, none ever brought me in so much cash as the mesmerism dodge," he began.

"I started at those words, and from that moment became an eager and attentive listener.

"When I first started in it, I thought it was all humbug. I got hold of a sharp, clever girl, who pretended to mesmerize the accomplices I carried about with me. Well, one fine morning, this girl bolted off with one of the accomplices, and I was left in the lurch, with my bills out, announcing a performance for the next night. I walked gloomily about the town. Turning down a back street, I went into a public house. There was only one other person in the room besides myself—a sallow looking fellow, who bore upon him the unmistakable marks of a follower of St. Crispin. He was inclined to be talkative. At first I was too moody to bestow upon him any reply. But he was not to be snubbed; and, at last, the low cunning, and coarse, humorous shrewdness of his remarks, began to amuse me. He invited me home to dinner with him. I accepted his invitation.

"He lived in a squalid court, a hideous looking place, and the home he led me into was in keeping with its surroundings. I began to wish myself out of the adventure; with all my love of vagabondism, this was a little beyond me. Crouching under a handful of fire was a girl about thirteen or fourteen years of age, with fiery red hair and a pale, sullen face, every bone of her thin, angular body showing through the ragged, scanty clothing that barely covered her. She rose from her seat with a scowling look of disdain, which changed to one of astonishment at the sight of a well-dressed stranger. She fixed her eyes upon me with an inquiring stare. There was something in those eyes that strangely affected me.

"Her father ordered her about with threats, and would have used blows, I believe, had I not been there. The girl regarded him much in the manner of a caged tigress, who would like to fasten upon her keeper, but dare not. I kept watching her as she moved about, and suddenly a strange idea struck me. Could I get this girl to play the clairvoyant the next night? I at once put it to her father. Seizing upon the dilemma in which I was placed, and which I had somewhat incautiously laid bare to him, he tried to drive an extortionate bargain. While we were speaking, the girl stopped her work, and leaning over the back of a chair facing us, listened eagerly to my proposition.

"Do you think you can do it?" I said, turning to her.

"I can do anything that you show me and teach me," she answered confidently.

"The night came, and when she was clean, her hair dressed and she was clothed in the black velvet dress that I carried about with me, she had a far more sybil-like appearance than her predecessor. I had drilled her well into her task, as well as I found her wonderfully apt; and, although I anticipated a few blunders, I had every hope of success.

"Although she had never faced an audience before, and we had a large one that night, she was as fearless and self-possessed as though she had been used to it for years.

"One of the principal points of the performance was to select a man from the crowd, bring him on to the platform, put him into a mesmeric sleep, and then cause him to answer any questions that the clairvoyant might choose to put to him; added to which, he was made to promise to do certain things when he awoke. Hitherto we had used an accomplice for the purpose. Whether she was confused by the sight of so many faces, or deceived by a resemblance, I do not know; but what was my dismay to see her select an entire stranger for the experiment! In sheer desperation, I tried to cover the blunder by saying that the party selected was not a fit subject, from a certain similarity in the color of the hair and eyes to those of the girl. The audience grew suspicious, and insisted that there should be no change.

"With the perspiration starting from every pore, I waited for what I firmly believed would be an ignominious exposure. Conceivably my astonishment, then, when, after being submitted to the mesmeric influence of her eyes for three minutes, I saw him grow rigid, his eyes fixed, and his whole body drawn irresistibly towards her, just as I had so often seen seized by my assistants. Not only that, but he answered every question put to him, some of a very awkward nature, with the air of a man irresistibly compelled against his will. She then desired that as soon as she should take the influence off him, he should go to the chandelier in the middle of the room, and burn his hat. And he did it; and I had to buy him a new one; but what did I care for that? I had discovered a fortune!

"At last, I was half-inclined to believe that she had planted some friend of her own to humbug me, and raise the terms; but I was soon convinced that such suspicions were groundless; and, indeed, from the first, the whole thing was too real to be doubted.

"Everywhere our success was enormous—crowded houses, no more accomplices, all genuine, except the clairvoyance, in which there was still a good deal of humbug; but that humbug she and I could manage together without other assistance than that of a planist.

"Never was such a change seen as I wrought in less than a week in both father and daughter. A good suit of clothes gave him quite an air of respectability, and taken away from old associations, he became comparatively reformed in his habits. In the girl, the

change was still more remarkable. No one could possibly have recognized in the neatly dressed, scrupulously clean Signora Zenobia the ragged, shaven, Judith Stokes of a few days back. For my part, I stood in awe of those terrible eyes, and she grew as proud and haughty as a duchess.

"For two years we traveled the country pretty comfortably together, and during all that time Judith scarcely ever made a failure. In the meantime, old Stokes was growing discontented—he considered that he was too much kept in the background. The strangest thing of all was that he took to religious books, and to attending the meeting houses. By and by he used to disappear regularly every Sunday for the whole day. At last I discovered his secret. He would go a few miles away from the town where we were exhibiting, and do a little open-air preaching to the rustics. Things were becoming very unsatisfactory; even the girl seemed getting weary of her work, and I was beginning to think that it would be better to turn the whole affair up and start something else, than to put up with the airs of people whom I had picked out of the gutter, when my thought was anticipated sooner than I counted upon.

"We were exhibiting at Spalding one night to a very bad house, and just as Judith was in the middle of her performance—a young fellow was upon the platform, answering questions in the mesmeric sleep—two or three swells strolled into the front seats. They were highly amused at the manner in which the fellow seemed compelled to answer all kinds of absurd questions; evidently regarding the whole thing, however, as a sell. As soon as the yokel was dismissed, one of the party, in spite of the remonstrances of his companions, rose from his seat, and bounding upon the platform, expressed a wish to be mesmerized. The event caused a great commotion in the room, as he and his companions were known to be gentlemen of position. At the first glance Judith could perceive that he was one of those strong-willed beings over whom she could exercise no influence. She declined. He insisted, and declared the whole thing was a swindle. The people began to hiss, not him, but us.

"I cannot mesmerize you, but I can your friend there," said Judith, pointing to the dark-eyed, weak-looking young man who had accompanied him.

"He objected; but his companion cried out, 'But you shall, Jack. No, hang it, fair play for Zenobia! We have called her an impostor, and we will give her a chance.'

"He jumped down off the platform, and whispered to 'Jack,' as he called him, but not in so low a tone but what I could catch the words, 'Go up—don't be a fool; she can no more mesmerize you than she can me. It is only a put off, thinking the challenge won't be accepted.'

"Very reluctantly the young man mounted the platform and took the chair indicated by Zenobia, very much to the delight of his friends, who clapped their hands, shouted 'Bravo!' and laughed uproariously.

"Judith, who always had the temper of a fiend, was boiling with passion at the ridicule cast upon her; but her rage was manifested by no word or sign, only by her livid face, and by those awful eyes, that looked for all the world like some brilliant metallic surface, upon which a strong light was shining. She cast one disdainful glance round the room, which had the effect of partly subduing the uproar, and set herself to her task.

"In two minutes he was as rigid as a corpse and as helpless as a child. The expression of her eyes was something fearful; the whole audience, including even his companions, were hushed into silence; even I shuddered as I looked at her. She used her power mercilessly, asking him questions of the most sacred nature, to all of which he replied unhesitatingly. The moment her eyes were off him, the young fellow fell down in strong convulsions.

"There was an awful consternation in the room. People rushed upon the platform to tender their assistance. Judith stood aloof, leaning upon the piano, gazing malignantly over her work. Well, as soon as he recovered, they put him into a cab and sent him home, one of his companions accompanying. But the challenger, who had caused the commotion, remained behind until all the people were dispersed, and then walked home to our hotel with us. He not only confessed that no blame could be attached to the young lady for what had occurred, but very handsomely apologized for his rudeness in doubting her power.

"He came into our private room, and sat down with us. He was remarkably curious about mesmerism, and asked us an infinity of questions concerning its powers and effects. It struck me that he had some motive underneath these interrogations beyond mere idle curiosity; for he seemed to ponder over our answers and revolve them in his mind.

"Well, of course the sensation in the town was something marvelous. For a week we turned crowds away from the doors nightly. Strange to say, the young man who had caused the sensation came every night, and persisted in desiring to be again mesmerized, although he still looked shaken and pale from the effects of the first experiment. This, however, I would not permit. Judith seemed to have acquired some strange fascination over him; he followed her like a shadow. But she would scarcely deign to look upon him; she seemed always to feel a great contempt for those who were amenable to the mesmeric influence.

"To our other friend, her behavior was very different. He came pretty often to the hotel, and I frequently found them in private confab together. I could not understand what a handsome swell like that could find to admire in bony, red-haired Judith.

"Well, the last night came. I had left the hotel about 5 o'clock in the afternoon to walk round the town with our bill poster. When the time came to open the doors, the checkers came to me to say that Mr. Stokes, who was money

taker, had not arrived. I knocked at Judith's dressing room door. She was not there. In an instant it darted upon my mind that I was sold—that they had bolted!

"I went off to the hotel. My suspicions were verified. They had left, bag and baggage, immediately after I had gone out. I went to the station, and found they had booked for Peterborough, but there all traces ceased, and from that time to this I have never heard of them. It will be warm for them if ever I do, for they completely broke me up—after saving them from starvation, too!

"Mr. Rodwell—that was the swell's name—and his friends disappeared at the same time. Then I discovered that they were strangers in the town—had only come down for the shooting season. The only person who could have given me any information—the landlord of the hotel where they put up—had received his caution, and pretended to know nothing.

"But the strangest bit of the whole story is yet to come. This very night, just as I was going down to the prospect wing, during the third act of the play, I saw a swell talking to Miss Gibson, in the third entrance. His face struck me in an instant as being familiar; but the moment I heard his voice all doubts vanished. It's some years since we met, and he was not more than two or three and twenty at the time; but I recognized Mr. Rodwell in a moment. We had a little private chat together, and he slipped a couple of sovereigns into my hand; but I couldn't get anything out of him about the Stokeses. He pretended to know nothing of their disappearance that night, and never to have seen them since, which I know to be a lie. However, I feel a little curious to know who my gentleman himself may be, so I set young Jack Brindle, the call boy, to watch him, and I warrant he won't lose sight of him."

CHAPTER XVI.

It may be imagined with what breathless interest I listened to Mr. Montgomery's story, for it is almost needless to remark that to Judith Stokes and her father I recognized the Rev. Mr. Porter and his daughter. The events related could not have occurred very long before I was sent as a little child to Tabernacle House. But this early connection of Judith with Mr. Rodwell was somewhat puzzling, for I had never seen him come to the house farther back than about eighteen months before I left it. Once, while the narration was proceeding, I debated within myself whether I should inform Mr. Montgomery of the identity of "Bill" Stokes with my late master; but for various and obvious reasons I decided in the negative.

"But another was not so reticent. At the mention of the red hair and the strange eyes of the girl, I saw Josiah's face assume an expression of more lively interest, which gradually increased as the narrator proceeded to describe Mr. Stokes' love of open air preaching. He dared not hazard a remark until the story was ended, as Mr. Montgomery's wrath was a thing not to be disregarded. But the instant the last words were spoken, Josiah burst out:

"I'll forfeit my life, Professor, if I don't know where to lay my hands upon him this moment!"

"What! Bill Stokes and his daughter?"

"The very same. Is he a man with stubby black hair, a large mouth, nose twisted on one side, and crooked legs?"

"That's the man."

"Then it is no other than Old Sunfish that Silas has just bolted from. I recognized him in a minute—didn't you, Silas?"

I was now compelled to confess that I did; but much against my will, as I foresaw that this discovery would bring to light all that I so ardently desired to keep concealed.

(To be continued.)

NO MORE LIGHTNING RODS.

Out of Favor, Though Still Credited with Slight Value.

Lightning rods have fallen into deep disfavor almost everywhere nowadays, but they are valued least by the busy people who once valued them most, and those who really know the most about them still credit them with a measurable, though small, amount of protective power—if properly constructed and maintained, as they hardly ever are. For those who consider even a slight diminution of the danger of lightning worth securing at some expense in money and a good deal of care, the weather bureau offers information and advice prepared for it by Professor W. S. Franklin, of Lehigh University.

The first desideratum is what the electricians call a "good ground"—that is, close and permanent connection with a large mass of high electrical conductivity, like damp soil or an extensive system of metallic pipes. The lightning rod itself should be a wide band, a thin-walled tube or a wire cable, rather than a solid wire, for so is the conductivity of a given amount of metal largely increased. And of extreme importance is it that the course of the rod to the ground should be as short and straight as possible. If the pathway provided for the "bolt" be devious the impatient messenger from—or to—the clouds will not follow it, no matter how much is spent for glass or other insulators, while if the path be straight the insulators are needless for any charge the rod can carry.

What happens when a good lightning rod is put to test is thus described by a man who went through the experience at a mountain hotel in this State: "I was standing on the piazza when the most tremendous shock or concussion conceivable took place. I had a sudden sun dazzle in the eyes, a bitter taste in the mouth, a pungent, sulphurous odor in the nose and a severe headache. Then I learned that the house had been struck by lightning; that is to say, that the conductors had functioned effectively and had safely conducted the electricity into the lake, instead of the discharge falling upon the hotel and wrecking it."—New York Times.

SOME MORE ADVENTURES OF HOME-AGAIN HIRAM.



—Cincinnati Post.

OLD SALTS AT MOORINGS.

Snug Harbor a Small Portion of the Big World.

There was a moment of solemn silence in which all three of the old captains drew out their red bandanas and generously mopped their brows. My guide essayed to speak, but the little man interrupted him and tottered over to an immense chest of drawers which served as a dresser and closet combined, says a writer in the Great Round World.

He took from the chest a manuscript written in a feeble, wavering hand, and fingered the pages nervously, as if they were great treasures. "This is what I would like to say to the world," he said, with pathetic earnestness. "After shipping fifty-two years in the sea, and after being tossed over the great salt mountains of the briny deep. I have at last cast anchor in peaceful Snug Harbor and moored my craft in the peace-giving shadows of the verdant trees on its beautiful grounds."

"Ain't that fine?" gasped the enthusiastic old crony, whose eyes were brimming with tenderness. "He's been a lecturer in his time." The three bandanas again did service on the three brows, like topsails in a stiff breeze of emotion. "And say," continued the lecturer, in a relieved tone, "you might say that I'm thinking of getting married again." Two of the topsails flapped on their quivering masts and were drawn down with a jerk.

"No, no," said the sympathetic old roommate, "I wouldn't put that in. That wouldn't do. Offer the gentlemen the candy," he suggested, with the true spirit of finesse. The ex-lecturer acted on his sailing master's advice, explaining, "We old snugs must have our luxuries."

The room was scrupulously clean. A "spread" of the old-fashioned "sham" variety over red muslin covered the bed. There were tidies and family photographs and a conspicuous print of George Washington on the chest of drawers. I had wanted simply to see the manner of rooms in which they lived; but, at the prospect of getting into print, the "captain" opened up the floodgates of their energetic old lives wherein yet surged the restlessness that had driven them all over the world. Snug Harbor was evidently but a small pattern of the big world, with prizes, jealousies, ambitions and strifes.

Softening It.

Boothlet—What do you mean by saying I'm the worst actor you ever saw? Coolly—Well, I've no doubt it did seem rather harsh; but, then, you know, there are so many actors I have never seen!—Boston Transcript.



Something New in Sulkeys. The training and breeding of race horses has increased to a very large extent in this country in recent years, which has resulted in the production of some very fast race horses and also the breaking of world's records. The



DRIVER ON THE HORSE'S BACK.

sulky has been used to a large extent in these races. As at present constructed, it is exceedingly frail and weighs so little that the horse finds no difficulty in pulling it after him.

A new idea in sulkeys is shown in the picture. The harness, with the rider's saddle, is put over the horse's back, directly in back of the front legs. The wheels are also placed just outside the forelegs, an arched frame connecting the driver's seat rigidly with the wheels. Necessary harness is provided to secure the vehicle to a fixed position to the body of the horse, cushioning devices being placed in position to lessen any jar that might be caused by the motion of the horse. This improved sulky would be of no appreciable weight to the horse, and when tried at some future race, as it surely will be, more racing records should be broken.

George W. St. Clair, Lexington, Ky., is the patentee.

Box for Holding Seeds.

The introduction of up-to-date agricultural machinery has done away with planting seeds by hand, except by the small farmer, who cannot af-



SEEDS CAN BE CARRIED.

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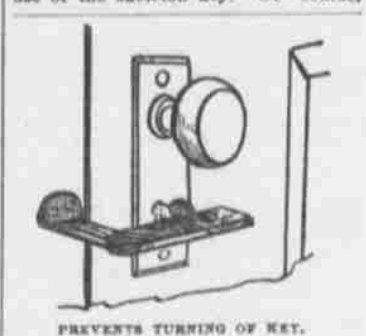
ford and has no use for such devices. He still has to plant his seeds by hand, usually using a box or bag for holding the seeds. A New Jersey man has invented a new arrangement for this purpose. This seed box comprises

a receptacle with an open top, and is made of some rigid material. The handle is arranged in the center on the upper edge of the seed box. A strap is suspended over the shoulder, which fastens to a loop secured to the inner upper edge of the box midway of its length. The shape of the box is made to conform to the curve of the body at the hips, so that it can be readily carried. Enough seeds can be carried in this receptacle to cover a couple of acres of ground, the seeds being at all times within easy reach.

The patentee is Richard Bassett, Dover, N. J.

Guard for Keys.

Some people are particularly careful in locking up the house at night, while others are just as careless. Experienced thieves and burglars know all the tricks of the trade, and if they cannot get in a house one way they can another, and unless the house is extraordinarily well protected they will find some way of breaking in. Sometimes they will saw the lock completely out of the door, but the easiest and most common way is the use of the skeleton key. Of course,



PREVENTS TURNING OF KEY.

this is only for use on doors having no other fastening but the door lock. Even if the door is locked by a key on the inside—which some people think ample protection—the key can be pushed through and the door opened by means of the skeleton key. In the illustration will be found a key guard to be fitted to a door which will effectively prevent entrance by a skeleton key. A bracket having a longitudinal slot is attached to the frame of the door in alignment with the keyhole. Pivotaly connected to the bracket is a guard formed of a strip of metal bent at the center, with a slot into which the key in the door fits. Connected with this guard is a spring-actuated lever having a finger which projects through the slots of the guard. When the door has been locked by the key the guard is turned and the head of the key inserted in the slot. The spring is then released, the finger on the lever projecting through the guard and the head of the key. The key cannot be turned nor moved until released by some one on the inside. This attachment, though small, also has the advantage that it can be easily and quickly slipped into place.

The patentee is Allen Morrell, of Cripple Creek, Colo.

MEMORIAL TO ETHAN ALLEN.



The picture represents the memorial tower which the Vermont Sons of the American Revolution will erect to the famous Green Mountain State patriot, Ethan Allen. It will be in the form of a square modified Gothic structure with an overhanging crenelated battlement. The material employed in the construction will be Vermont marble, and it will be located at Burlington, where Allen died in 1780, having been a resident of the town for two years. Although a blusterer and given to strong expressions, the old hero of Ft. Mifflin was as full of action as he was of explosives, and he displayed great ability both in war and in politics.

He Loved the Theater.

Few men of any rank or time have ever derived so much unaffected pleasure from the theater as George III. In fact, in the word of a contemporary, it was "as good as a play to hear the royal laughter and note the genuine enjoyment of his majesty." "He is said," Thackeray wrote, "not to have cared for Shakespeare or tragedy much. Farces and pantomimes were his joy, and especially when the clown swal-

lowed a carrot or a string of sausages he would laugh so outrageously that the lovely princess by his side would have to say, 'My gracious monarch, do compose yourself!' And he continued to laugh and at the very smallest farces as long as his poor wits were left him."

So frequent were George's visits to the theater that "his face was the most familiar in London to playgoers, who took no more notice of his presence than if he had been a simple citizen, except when his boisterous laughter drew attention to him and started others laughing out of irresistible infection." As familiar a spectacle as that of his majesty purple and rolling with laughter was to see him sleeping as peacefully as a child between the acts.

No partial was he to actors that he permitted and even smiled at liberties which he would have resented in any one else. On one occasion, when Parsons was playing in "The Siege of Calais," the actor walked toward the box in which George was sitting and addressed him in the words of his part: "And the king were here and did not admire my scuffold I would say: 'Hang him! He has no taste,'" a place of impudence which threw his majesty into a fit of laughter.—London Tit-Bits.

The Locomotive as a Coal Eater.

The total coal production of the United States is now at the rate of 1,000,000 tons per day, and the consumption of coal by railroads is equal to 40 per cent of this, or 400,000 tons per day. The fuel bill of a railroad contributes about 10 per cent of the total expense of operation and 80 to 40 per cent of the total cost of running the locomotives. A locomotive will consume on an average of \$5,000 worth of coal per annum, and for a road having an equipment of 1,000 locomotives the coal bill is approximately \$5,000,000.—Railway Age.

For the Serious Moment.</