

The Wife's Secret, OR A BITTER RECKONING

By CHARLOTTE M. BRAEME



CHAPTER X.—(Continued.) She began methodically to remove every article singly, placing them neatly in a heap on the table, after reading or looking at them. Then she turned to the other side, going through it in the same way, and reached the bottom without discovering anything more than is usually to be found in a lady's desk. With a disappointed air, she began to replace the articles, when Miss Malling's address book fell from her shaking hand on to the floor.

She stooped to pick it up as it lay open; and, in doing so, she saw the edge of a photograph peeping from the pocket in the cover. She took it out hurriedly, scattering, as she did so, some dead pressed violets on to the table. She shuddered when she raised the tissue paper, for it was the photograph of a grave!

She went to the dressing table, where the candles were still burning, to read the name of the photographer at the back of the card. The printing was in a language she did not understand; but she guessed it must be Spanish. She turned to the picture again, and in the strong light she could almost make out part of the inscription on the plain headstone. The first name, she was sure, began with the letter "P." In order to assist her, she procured Miss Malling's magnifying glass, and, with the aid of that, she spelled out the name, or as much of it as she could see.

"P-a-u-l-i-n-e" she could clearly trace; then came a blank, followed by "t-i-n-g, d-i-e-d M-a-y 18--." The remainder of the inscription was undistinguishable.

"I never expected this! The grave of Pauline Malling! Then who is my mistress? An adventuress—a usurper! And I shall have a hand in dethroning her!"

She wiped the perspiration from her white, quivering face, placed the photograph in her dress, and locked the desk.

CHAPTER XI. Jack was by no means heartless, and his conscience pricked him more often than was pleasant with regard to Ethel Mallett. He wondered a little if she had really ceased to care for him, if she had yet found a successor to him, or if pique alone had led her to offer him his freedom. She had sent him back the little ring he put on her finger when they were so happy together, and, with a strange inconsistency, he carried it about with him continually.

Just about this time Jack began to think that he ought to call in Buckingham street, if only to show his gratitude for Mr. Mallett's many past kindnesses, for the old gentleman had often been able and always willing to do Jack a good turn in past days. Once convinced that he ought to do a thing, Jack did it.

The morrow would be the first of September, and the house was full of people who had been invited to enjoy the abundant sport Mallingford offered. A number of amiable young men were lounging about the corridors and billiard room all day, who talked of nothing but the probable weather on the morrow, the chances for and against good sport, and the respective merits of their own and other men's guns. Jack obtained a few words with Pauline before breakfast, and carried his point.

"I must have several things for tomorrow," he said. "I know you would not wish me to be different from others, and I cannot get what I want without going to town myself."

Pauline would have dearly liked to go with him, for she had a horrible fear that he would find out something if he should call on the Malletts. She was not supposed to know of the existence of such people—for Jack had never spoken of them to her—so he could not well as him not to call on them; and she could not leave her guests without some very serious reason; consequently she was forced to feign a complacency she was far from feeling as she answered:

"Of course, if you must go, there is nothing more to be said; but you will not stay one half-hour longer than is absolutely necessary? If I don't know where you are, I have such a feeling of unrest and anxiety that life becomes a sorrow for the time being."

There was honest truth in these words, and Jack was flattered and grateful for her love. He kissed the beautiful lips, and promised to be back at the very earliest moment possible.

When Jack was in the train, with a quiet half-hour before him for thought, he felt curiously cloyed with the sweets of love, and was ungrateful enough to wish that Pauline would leave the love-making a little more in his hands, and that her affection was of a less assertive character.

Two or three hours later, when he had rushed through the business of the day and stood in the Malletts' sitting room, shaking hands with both father and daughter and exchanging cordial greetings, he felt as if he had been living in a hot house of affections for the past weeks, and had just regained the invigorating open air, where the harder, healthier class of feelings flourish.

He wondered a little at Mr. Mallett's generosity, knowing nothing of Ethel's generosity in taking the entire responsibility of their separation upon herself, and still less of her father's hope that she had got rid of a nameless nobody just in time to leave the door clear for a suitor more worthy of her in every way; and Jack felt somewhat piqued that Mr. Mallett should make so light of the whole business.

But he did not let his annoyance appear upon the surface. He told of the success of the paintings for Lord Summers, of his hopes for the future, of the gay life at Mallingford, and impressed his hearers with the fact that he was brimming over with good fortune and happiness.

Ethel did not say much; but she appeared to be quietly, kindly interested; and, though she was paler than she used to be, she did not give one the idea of a love-lorn damsel. She sat listening

foss I am curious, and I shall be glad when you can tell me all without distressing yourself.

"Thank you very much, dear. And now I want to ask you if there is any one you would like me to send a card to for this ball."

Jack flushed as he replied:

"Yes; there are two people I should like you to invite—Mr. Mallett and his daughter. They are everything and are, or I should not suggest it, and the old gentleman was very kind to me in the days that are gone."

"Was the daughter kind, too, Jack?" playfully.

Again Jack flushed a little.

"I think you are a bit of a witch," he said, with a laugh. "I may as well tell you, and then there will be no secret in my past for you to find out by and by. Yes, she was kind to me, and once I thought I liked her well enough to make her my wife; but that was before I met you, you siren!"

"You don't think so now?"

"If I did, should I be here?"

The rain continued to pour down steadily, and the scratch, scratch of the busy pens went on without interruption. Pauline finished her list first, and sat back in her chair, with a thoughtful, chaste look on her face which was strangely unlike her usual imperious air. Jack noted it, and thought her more beautiful, if that were possible, although he wondered what had brought about so great a change. He felt a forewarning that this was the little cloud in their sky that would darken the whole heavens.

"At last!" he exclaimed, as he threw down his pen.

"You have been a good boy," Pauline said, with a smile. "We could not have finished this to-day without your help."

"So I shall lose him, after all, if I can not satisfactorily explain this morning's fright!" she reflected, alone in her dressing room. "He will not allow a secret between us. What can I do? If I concoct a lie to account for it, there may be an advertisement in to-morrow's paper that will expose it. Who can want to find Geoffrey Malling after allowing me undisputed possession for the last six years? If they find him, they will tell all, and he will claim his inheritance; they cannot want him for anything else. I must discover how much they know, or how can I fight them? I can't trust another; I must do it myself," and, with these thoughts ruling through her mind, she crossed to the bell, which Babette promptly answered. "Babette, I want to run up to London this afternoon, and I don't want the whole house to know about it."

Babette's eyes flashed with a quick glance of intelligence; but her lids drooped instantly, and she answered, meekly: "Certainly, mademoiselle."

"If the people see the brougham leaving the house, it will set them wondering; so I want you to run down to the village during luncheon and bring back one of the public fiats from the inn there. Tell the man to drive to the stable yard—in fact, you can come back in it; and let it be there by a quarter past three."

"Very good, mademoiselle."

Babette's face gleamed with maral delight behind Pauline's back as she left the room.

"So you think you have only to go to Messieurs Daws & Rayen and show your pretty face, and maybe a ten-pound note or so, and they will tell you all about the person who sent them that advertisement! But you do not outwit a Frenchwoman so simply, my good friend! Mr. Daws is quite prepared to receive you with politeness, and to tell you that he really knows nothing more than that his client, whom he is not at liberty to name, is anxious to obtain the address of the present Sir Geoffrey; and the girl chuckled grimly as she went along. "That old Daws will hardly risk losing his share of the plunder, even to oblige a sweet, so handsome, so soft-voiced a lady as you, madame," and she laughed again as she pictured the meeting between her mistress and the lawyer. "I wish I could be there to see!"

Pauline stopped to speak to Jack as they crossed the hall after luncheon.

"I shall lie down for the whole afternoon; my head is aching so dreadfully. What will you do with yourself, Jack? A wet day is such a terrible affliction in a country house. It's a week today since I touched a brush; it will be a grand opportunity. I should advise your taking a good rest while you can get it."

Jack responded, in a matter-of-fact tone.

Pauline set her teeth in her underlip and left her, her mind racked with anxiety and fear.

"At all cost I must be in a position to tell him something that will not be contradicted. I must find out how much those people know before to-night."

(To be continued.)

Common Sight. "Let us wait and see the lady contortionist," said the bachelor in the side show.

"Wouldn't interest me," replied the benedict. "I see one at home every day."

"At home?"

"Yes; my wife has one of those blouses that button at the back."

Know What He Wanted. Weddely—If there is a woman in this town who is a better cook than my wife I'd like to meet her.

Singleton—Your wife is an expert, eh?

Weddely—Expert nothing! Didn't I just tell you I was anxious to meet a better cook?

Starting Him Right. They had been engaged all of ten minutes.

"Horseless carriages and wireless telegraphy may be all right in their way," she said, "but—"

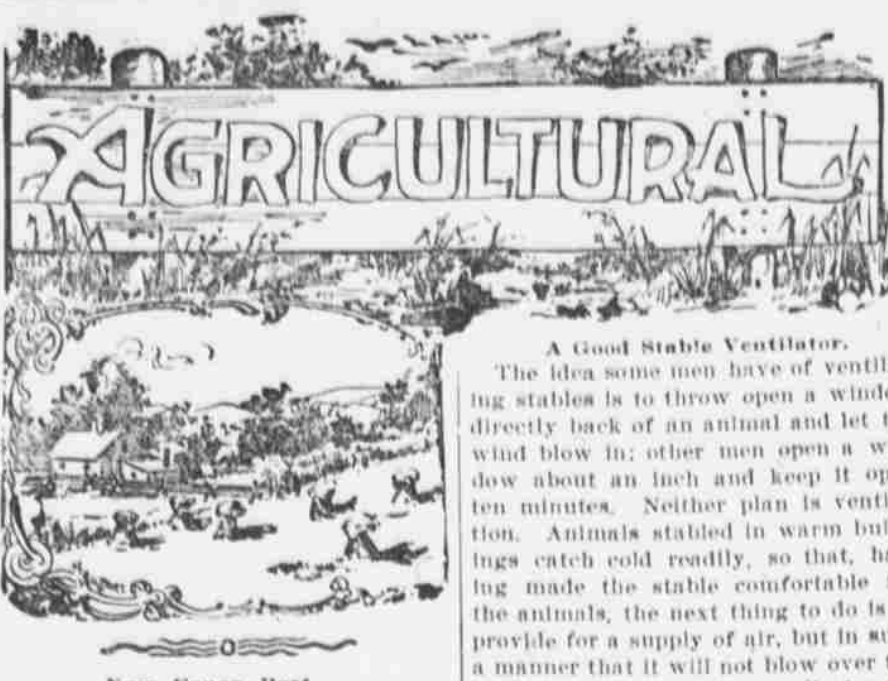
"But what?" he queried, anxiously.

"I don't think much of kissless courtships," she continued.

Where Deafness Is Valuable. First Floorwalker—Poor old B Jones has completely lost his hearing. I'm afraid he will lose his job.

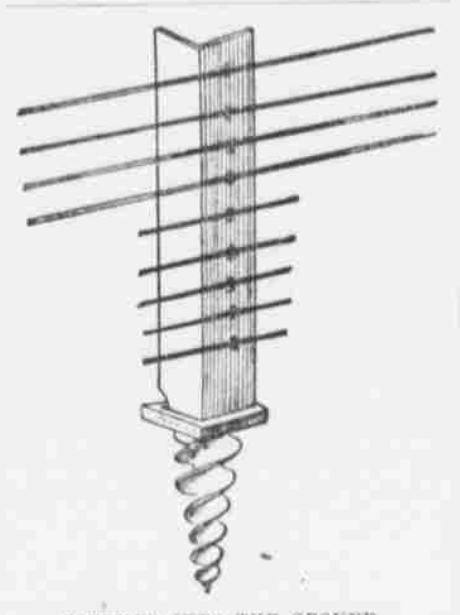
Second Floorwalker—Nonsense. He's to be transferred to the complaint desk.—Philadelphia Record.

A sign of politeness in Thibet on meeting a person is to hold up the clasped hands and stick out the tongue.



New Fence Post.

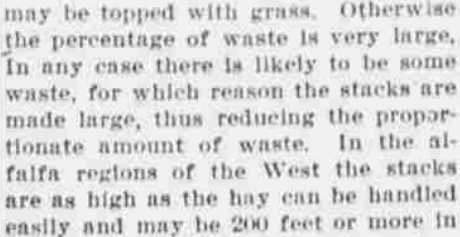
The old-time fence-post has served its purpose for so long that it is about time it was improved. It has always seemed natural that in erecting a fence post a hole should first be dug in the ground and the end of the post inserted in the hole, the remaining space being filled up again. A California man has invented an excellent and simple plan, which entirely eliminates this procedure. By the use of his method the initial digging of the hole is entirely unnecessary. The bottom of this post is spiral in shape.



Screwed into the ground.

Throughout the western half of the United States alfalfa hay is commonly stored in stacks in the field. Alfalfa stacks will not shed water as readily as stacks of grass hay. In the arid regions there is little danger from rains during the season of storage, but in humid climates it is necessary to store the hay in barns or else cover the stacks with large tarpaulins, or they may be topped with grass. Otherwise the percentage of waste is very large. In any case there is likely to be some waste, for which reason the stacks are made large, thus reducing the proportionate amount of waste. In the alfalfa regions of the West the stacks are as high as the hay can be handled easily and may be 200 feet or more in length. The size of the stacks is then limited chiefly by the convenience in bringing the hay from the surrounding field.


Cheap Potato Pit. Select slight elevation for position. Dig pit 10 feet long, 5 feet wide and 2 1/2 feet deep. Get three 6-inch poles, 10 feet long; put two, one above the other, at back of pit. Get sixteen 4-foot poles, 6 inches in diameter, and twenty 7-foot poles, 6 inches in diameter, for roof. Make frame for door 2 feet wide and 5 feet high; set in center of front. Put your 4-foot poles, eight on each side, nail through door frame and set two stakes each end to hold poles in position, one above another. Then put your other 10-foot pole on top, resting center on door frame. Notch all 7-foot poles so as to fit each end on front and back; then set up so as to form roof. Nail any old plank on ends. Bank up earth all around on top. Nail old bags on door to keep roof from blowing away. Guaranteed to keep potatoes well through the coldest weather. Will hold 100 bushels.—Henry Kirk.



POTATO PIT.

What Attracts the Bees. A study of the habits of bees indicates that flowers having bright colors possess much greater attraction for bees than dull colored flowers. Nectar does not seem to attract bees unless in the bright colored flowers, and it was found possible to attract bees quite successfully by means of artificial flowers. They do not seem to be attracted much by perfume, but bright color and perfume together exercises strong attraction.

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A Good Stable Ventilator.

The idea some men have of ventilating stables is to throw open a window directly back of an animal and let the wind blow in; other men open a window about an inch and keep it open ten minutes. Neither plan is ventilation. Animals stabled in warm buildings catch cold readily, so that, having made the stable comfortable for the animals, the next thing to do is to provide for a supply of air, but in such a manner that it will not blow over the animals. If one has box stalls for horses a window at some distance from them will supply needed ventilation. If the stalls are not so arranged then some opening should be made in the barn if necessary so that the air may enter readily yet not blow directly on the animals. If there is no other way of getting ventilation than through the windows at the rear of the animals then put an attachment to each window to shed the air; a board eight or ten inches wide nailed on a slant over the opening that is made when the window slides to one side will reflect the wind, so to speak, and it will not strike the animals directly. Surely a man of bright wits will find some way of giving his animals ventilation without injury to them if the way suggested does not suit him.

Frost Bitten Combs.

If the trouble is seen before the frost has thawed out, put the bird in a room that will warm up slowly, letting the circulation begin slowly. Avoid a place where the bird can get into the direct sunlight or a room that is much above the freezing point. Even the holding of dry snow against the comb will help remove more slowly the frost of the parts. Having restored the circulation, or noticing the bird after it has thawed out, apply twice a day an ointment of vaseline, six tablespoonfuls; glycerin, two tablespoonfuls; turpentine, one teaspoonful. This will help start into a healthy condition the blood circulation of comb and wattles and at the same time reduce the swelling.—Dr. Sanborn in Reliable Poultry Remedies.

Kind of Cows to Keep.

I have no particular choice as to the kind of cows to keep. This is a good deal like a man getting a wife—it depends largely on the kind he prefers. If you are going to keep cows exclusively for butter, the Jersey, Guernsey and Holstein are desirable breeds. If you are going to take into consideration the value of a calf, which seems quite necessary in our State, the milking strain of the Shorthorn meets the requirements as well as any. The only reliable test for a cow is the amount of butter she produces. If she does not produce 225 pounds of butter fat per year she is not a desirable cow to keep. In building up a herd it is quite necessary to select sires from the best milking strain.—G. L. McKay, Iowa.

Vise for Harness, Etc.

In winter months is the time to repair harness. The cut shows a very handy tool to hold your straps while you sew. Take two hardwood staves about 2 1/2 feet long, bore a 1/2-inch hole, 10 inches from top end, through both the staves, then put in a bolt 3/4-inch thick and 5 inches long, and a nut with short handle on. Old coiled spring slipped on the inside, between the two staves, make it to open itself. Lower ends could be hinged together with piece of leather.—F. B. Thor.

Feed Horses Less When Idle.

In an exchange Andrew Stenson sensibly says: The horse not only requires less feed when idle than when at work, but is actually injured if the ration is not reduced on days of idleness. Some feeders of high standing reduce the feed of their work horses on Sundays and holidays, in the belief that even one day's feeding of a working ration while the horse is at rest is injurious. It is now the belief of all who have thoroughly studied the subject that idle horses are fed too heavily as a rule. But no fixed ration can be named, since the food requirements of individual horses differ so widely. Close observation will enable the feeder to adapt the quantity to the needs of each animal.

Black Knot.

Look carefully on the cherry trees for any signs of black knot. It will be an advantage to cut away the branch or limb and burn it if any indications of the disease are found. It comes from spores, and once it gets in an orchard seems to hold its own. Trees that were treated last fall should be sprayed early, following with spraying several times thereafter.

Poultry Pickings.

The smaller the poultry quarters the cleaner they must be kept. The best breeds will not be profitable if they are mismanaged. Are you giving your poultry the attention you give the other stock or just allowing it to shift for itself?

- 1290—England banished Jews and confiscated their property.
- 1482—Henry Stafford, Duke of Buckingham, beheaded.
- 1493—Columbus discovered land he called Dominica.
- 1502—Columbus entered Porto Bello.
- 1510—Spaniards under Cortes entered Mexico.
- 1580—Sir Francis Drake arrived home from his voyage around the world.
- 1674—John Milton, poet, died.
- 1694—The ship "Hannibal" of London arrived at the Barbadoes with a cargo of negro slaves from Africa.
- 1755—Many killed in an earthquake at Lisbon, Portugal.
- 1762—Peace papers signed at Fontenoy between England and France.
- 1763—Stamp act went into operation.
- 1771—First newspaper to be published in Albany, N. Y., issued.
- 1773—Liberty flag raised on Harvard Grove, Boston.
- 1774—Declaration of rights by American Congress.
- 1775—Gen. Montgomery captures fort at St. Johns, Canada.
- 1776—British abandon Crown Point.
- 1783—Washington issued his farewell address to the army.
- 1788—Deborah Guffrey, said to have been the mother of thirty-eight children, died at Stepney, England.
- 1793—Louis Joseph Phillip, Duke of Orleans, beheaded.
- 1812—French defeat Russians at battle near Wiazma.
- 1813—Neutrality of Switzerland proclaimed.
- 1818—First steamboat on the lakes left Buffalo.
- 1825—Albany, N. Y., celebrated opening of Erie canal.
- 1847—Melendsohn, the famous muskian, died.
- 1853—First Presbyterian Chinese church organized in San Francisco. . . . Russians defeated Turks at Orlentza.
- 1861—Seizure of Confederate commissioners on the steamer Trent.
- 1867—Stars and Stripes raised over Alaska.
- 1884—Grover Cleveland elected President of the United States.
- 1893—Anarchists threw bomb in theater at Barcelona, killing thirty persons. . . . Yourhouse repeal bill passed by House of Representatives. . . . United States Senate passed Chinese exclusion act. . . . Free silver men issue an appeal from Washington.
- 1894—Alexander III, of Russia died. . . . Lieut. Dreyfus of the French army arrested on charge of treason.
- 1898—Russia mobilized fleet at Port Arthur.
- 1901—Li Hung Chang died.
- 1902—Fireworks explosion in Madison Square, New York.
- 1903—Panama declares its independence of Colombia. . . . Panama recognized by the United States. . . . Irish land act went into operation.
- 1904—Theodore Roosevelt elected President of the United States. . . . Russian Baltic fleet left Vigo, Spain.

The Comic Side of The News

Perhaps Japan will yet get that indemnity out of American tourists.

The broiled steak has to work overtime to pay the beef trust's \$25,000 fine. If a battleship is out of date before she is completed, what's the use of building 'em?

They may yet, through The Hague channels, make football a fit Sunday evening parlor game.

What we didn't know about the big insurance companies a few months ago would fill a cyclopedia.

Yet the Carnegie commission left out of the list of heroes the life insurance president who died poor.

Maybe it is only an attempt to make a digest of the language that is continually upsetting the Hungarian Diet.

John W. Gates admits that an automobile overtaken for speeding is no place for holding an open-air prayer meeting.

And it all sprang from a French dinner given by James Hazen Hyde last spring!

Senator Hurton is still raising demurrers to those indictments against him; after all it is natural to demur to an indictment.

The family physician of a life insurance president doesn't always have to marry the daughter to take up with a good thing.

As another evidence that it is trying to reach our high standards of civilization, Japan reports that it has a grafting politician.