

The Wife's Secret, OR A BITTER RECKONING

By CHARLOTTE M. BRAEME

CHAPTER XX.

Mr. Mallett did not get much sleep while awaiting Senior Castellan's return. His mind was too busy digesting what he had just heard. Putting two and two together, bearing in mind the fact that the son's description of his beautiful customer tallied exactly with that given of the so-called Pauline Malling by Jack Dornton, and that the photograph taken by Castellan was afterward found in that lady's possession, his belief in the imposture was naturally strengthened, and his impatience to visit the grave and see for himself the evidence of his niece's death increased every moment. At last he heard the convent bell strike six, and, with a feeling of relief, he rose and went downstairs.

He found the senior waiting below, looking triumphant, but cautious. There were several loungers about, and Mr. Mallett and Castellan passed through the room and out of the house without exchanging a word.

But, once safely outside, the senior, who was brimming over with pleasant self-importance, rapidly unfolded the plans which the servant and he had concocted for Mr. Mallett's admittance to the convent burying ground.

"I shall point out the gate by which monsieur will enter; after that, the rest must depend on monsieur's sagacity and on the exactness with which he carries out my directions. The servant would have nothing to do with you directly; but she will arrange matters so that you can enter the cemetery by yourself and obtain a view of the tomb. But monsieur will envelop himself in my accomplice's cloak, and if he is seen from the chapel windows, they will conclude it is but one of the sisters crossing the graveyard to gather herbs from the garden which lies beyond."

Then followed a list of directions, to which Mr. Mallett paid the closest attention—and, as the old Spaniard concluded, they came within sight of the Convent of the Holy Assumption. A substantial stone wall eight feet high inclosed it on all sides, and on the east front were massive iron gates boarded high above the line of sight to shield the sacred precincts from the vulgar gaze. Further on, on the west side, was a very small wicket almost hidden under the masses of ivy that hung half way to the ground. This door was the one used by the lay sisters when doing their errands, and a covered way led from it into the main entrance hall. The main gate was never opened except for funerals of the village.

The bells were still ringing for veepers as Mr. Mallett reached this half hidden little gate, and, according to directions from Castellan—who was lurking among the brushwood—he gave a low, quick, triple knock three times over, and then waited with his eyes on his watch until five minutes had passed.

The bells ceased ringing. This was the moment agreed on, and he pushed the door gently; it yielded, and the next moment he found himself in the dim light of a long, narrow passage.

He stooped and lifted a snuff colored garment that lay at his feet. It was a huge cloak, like a sister's. He wrapped himself in the capacious garment, carefully drawing the hood well over his head. Having taken off his boots, he went stealthily along the passage, across a large stone flagged entrance hall, and passed out of what he had been told was the main entrance into the inclosure beyond. He paused here a moment and looked about him attentively. In a line with him stood the chapel on the extreme right, the door of which was open; and he saw the backs of the sisters as they knelt at their devotions. He caught a gleam of gorgeous color as the clear evening light fell through the east window upon the vestments of the priests at the high altar, and a faint odor of incense crept out upon the air. He drew the hood still closer over his head and crossed the open space to the other side of the chapel. Here he had to pass a whole line of windows, and the profiles of the nuns were turned toward him. He now shortened his stride and drooped his shoulders the better to perform the part he was assuming, and passed on without a glance to the right or to the left. As soon as the windows were passed he raised his head and looked round again. He was at the edge of the burying ground, and over in the extreme corner under the walls he saw the stone he had come in search of. He recognized it by the semi-circular top—there was not another like it in the inclosure—and his heart quickened a little as he picked his way across the graves.

The sunset sky had changed from crimson to saffron, from saffron to a clear pearly gray, and still the brown cloak hood motionless before the headstone in the far corner of the convent graveyard.

Mr. Mallett had received a shock that entirely banished his preconceived ideas; and the new beliefs that crowded upon him were so conflicting and confusing that for a time he was overwhelmed with perplexity.

"Pauline Pelling. Died May 29, 18—"

He read the simple inscription over and over again; the more he pondered it the less he understood how it was that he had been deceived by fate into this fruitless journey.

Why should his niece, Pauline Malling, have a picture of the grave of Pauline Pelling in her possession?—for he no longer doubted that the lady reigning at Mallingford Park was his niece, and concluded that this was the grave of some other person—presumably the wife of his friend, Captain Pelling. He remembered the captain's impressive little story of his unhappy marriage and its premature denouement; and Mr. Mallett had no doubt whatever that he was now standing by the grave of that gentleman's wife. Still the question kept repeating itself: Why should his niece—of the same Christian name, too—treasure up this picture of Mrs. Pelling's grave? He pictured to himself at the freak of fortune

that ordained the obliteration of just the first two letters of the surname, and wondered at the insignificance of the trifle that had drawn him from England on such a wild goose chase!

The servant, to all appearance busy over her stovetops in the kitchen, was working herself into a fever of fright. She expected the exhortation to finish directly, and then the sisters would wander all about the grounds, and her mysterious visitor would be discovered. She quaked with fear as the consequences of her conduct presented themselves to her imagination. She had seen the brown cloak flit noiselessly past the half closed kitchen door a quarter of an hour before; but she was sure it had not yet gone back.

At last, unable to bear the anxiety any longer, she decided that she must at all risks go and warn the man away before harm came of his dilatoriness. Catching up a basket, and muttering a few words about gleaning to the other busy sisters, she started for the graveyard. She hurried along, keeping well out of sight of the sisters at their devotions, until she reached the corner.

"Come away at once! You will be discovered!"

Mr. Mallett was startled for a moment.

"You are the woman who helped Castellan to admit me?"

"Yes; but for pity's sake come away now, or we shall all be ruined!"

There was no mistaking the terror in the poor woman's face; and he started at once. She walked quickly over the grass; but for all his hurry, Mr. Mallett managed to ask two questions and get two replies before they reached the small door by which he had entered.

"What sort of a person was that Pauline Pelling, who lies buried there?" he asked.

"She was a mere babe, only three months old. She was born in the hospital of this town, long since abandoned." "Merciful heaven!" exclaimed Mr. Mallett, gazing at her in blank astonishment.

The woman was hurrying him along the narrow passage, for every moment now might lead to discovery.

"And its mother?" he gasped.

"Was the beautiful fair lady for whom Senior Castellan took the view of the grave just before she set out for England?"

And before Mr. Mallett had recovered from his last surprise he found himself outside the door, with his boots on the path beside him, his brain in a whirl of conflicting thoughts.

"Pelling has by some means jumped to the conclusion, or been led to it intentionally, perhaps, that his wife died in this convent and is buried here, while in truth it is his child's grave, and his wife is still living; and, according to the present aspect of affairs, Pelling's wife and Pauline Malling are evidently one! And she, Pauline Malling, or Pelling, or whatever she is, is going to be married to Dornton to-morrow morning, and she has one husband still living! I wonder if she knows that he is still alive? After all, if this turns out true—and it looks very like it—I shall resume my rightful position at Mallingford, for this girl has disobeyed the clause in Paul's will about marrying without Summers' consent. And that provides the motive for her conduct. She knew, if her husband found her, she would be compelled to resign the estate. Well, she has played a successful game so far; it is my inning now!"

And that evening Mr. Mallett, who had not been across a horse for nearly twenty years, rode the twelve miles of execrable road that lay between Villa Silencio and Bassilia, and prepared and delivered personally several telegrams to be dispatched directly the office opened in the morning.

CHAPTER XXI.

The eighteenth of September was a damp, comfortless morning, and Mallingford Park looked particularly desolate. The sky was of a dull gray, and the rain drizzled steadily all the day through.

Babette was busy in Miss Malling's dressing room. It was half past nine o'clock, and she had just returned from seeing her mistress off by train. None of the guests were astir yet, and the house was unusually silent, as it was likely to be for some hours. The hall of the previous night had been exceedingly spirited, and was not concluded until nearly 6 o'clock, so that the visitors would not be likely to be astir very early.

Babette was to join her mistress at Charing Cross station with the luggage at half past 2, and though her mind was full of tormenting doubts as to the day's events, she went about her business as methodically as though nothing unusual had happened. Tenderly and carefully she folded up the elaborate gown of cream-colored satin, with its draperies of thick costly lace, and its superb bouquets of deep crimson blossoms, in which Miss Malling delighted the eyes of her admirers at the ball. Very circumspectly she placed the magnificent diamonds and rubies, with which her mistress had adorned her shapely throat and arms, in their cases, and then packed them in a small ornate box with steel clasps. Then she went round the room with her keys and locked and strapped the traveling trunk one after another. That done, she sat down to wait, she knew not for what.

Captain Pelling received a telegram at a quarter to 11 that morning which filled him with surprise and curiosity. It ran:

"At all risks get to Bishopsgate church in time to see a wedding fixed for this morning, and obtain a good view of the bride's face."

The telegram had been dispatched from Bassilia, and he remembered the name as that of the nearest railway station to the convent where he had found his wife's grave. Without knowing why, he felt that he must obey the telegram,

and he was just in time to catch the 11 o'clock express for Waterloo. On arriving at his destination, Captain Pelling ran his eyes rapidly down the cab rank within the station, picked out the smartest looking horse, sprang into the cab, and called through the trap to the driver:

"A sovereign if you reach Bishopsgate church by twenty minutes to 12!"

The horse justified his good opinion, and the drive was accomplished in good time. The church doors were open, and a four-wheeled cab was waiting outside. He crept in very quietly, and walked up the aisle, not wishing to disturb the service, for he did not know what he was there for save to see the bride's face. He judged rightly that his future conduct was to be guided by that inspection.

The church was cold and gloomy this miserable morning, and a few persons were scattered here and there among the seats, attracted possibly more by curiosity than interest.

As Pelling advanced, he was struck by the subdued richness of the bride's costume, and he was not a little surprised at the absence of the usual attendants—for the old lady standing behind the bride evidently filled the office of pew opener. The bride and bridegroom were a fine couple, the man being quite six feet high, while the lady was also well proportioned.

Pelling went quietly along the chancel until he reached the end nearest to the altar, and then he waited for the bride to turn her face toward him. The clergyman's voice went on with the service:

"Wilt thou obey him and serve him, love, honor and keep him in sickness and in health, and forsaking all other, keep thee only unto him, so long as ye both shall live?"

Then, for the first time, she turned toward Pelling. Her expression was one of unmixt rapture as she raised her eyes to the bridegroom's, and her lips were unclenched to speak the words "I will," when she became aware of Pelling's fixed stare of horror. His gaze attracted her involuntarily, and she looked instinctively over Jack's shoulder in his direction.

Jack, wondering what was going to happen, and fearing she was about to faint, prompted her with the short answer. She did not speak, but continued to gaze over his shoulder at the man who had so unaccountably riveted her attention. Her under jaw dropped spasmodically, her eyes became as fixed as those she was gazing into, and every vestige of life and color left her face.

The next thing Jack seemed to realize was that a gentleman wearing a light overcoat was speaking quietly to the astonished clergyman and suggesting that the lady should be taken to the vestry, as she was evidently very ill.

The scattered congregation looked at each other in wondering curiosity as the bridal party disappeared. They lingered awhile until the old pew opener returned and begged them to depart, as she desired to close the church.

Pauline, with dull, dazed despair in her eyes, sat in the vestry, listening to, without understanding, the conversation of the three men grouped around her.

"I am extremely sorry," Pelling said, in answer to the clergyman's request for an explanation; "but it would have been criminal to allow the matter to go further, for the lady is my wife."

"Your wife?" echoed Jack, incredulously.

"Yes, sir, my wife!" Pelling replied, with the least touch of hauteur. "I have believed her to be dead for the last six years—in fact, I believed it so thoroughly that I should not have believed my eyes this morning if her own conduct had not betrayed her. It is possible that she thought I was dead, as I have been in Central Africa for several years; and I understand the expedition of which I was a member has been three or four times reported in the newspapers as completely exterminated."

"And how came you to present yourself so opportunely this morning?" asked the clergyman.

"That is more than I understand myself at present; but I think it is due to accidental discoveries made in Spain by a friend of mine who has gone hither on business of his own. How it happens that I have been led to believe in my wife's death all these years and never found out my mistake before I cannot understand."

"Miss Malling took her mother's name when she inherited the estate; perhaps that may explain matters," put in Jack.

"What estate?" asked Pelling sharply.

"It is all too long to discuss now," Jack accounted; "but no doubt the change of name accounts for your ignorance of your wife's existence."

(To be continued.)

Must Have Fads.
"If a woman hasn't a fad, there's something wrong with her," remarked an observer of mankind. "She's in love, or out of it, or her liver is out of order."

"American girls are the greatest for taking up new cults. Now, an English girl settles down to doing one thing, and sticks to it, and nothing short of an earthquake or a dynamite explosion will turn her out of the way of it."

"But you just suggest to an American girl that some new physical exercise will give her a plump neck, or reduce her hips or any other old thing, and she will be nothing else for—well, until the novelty wears off or something else turns up."

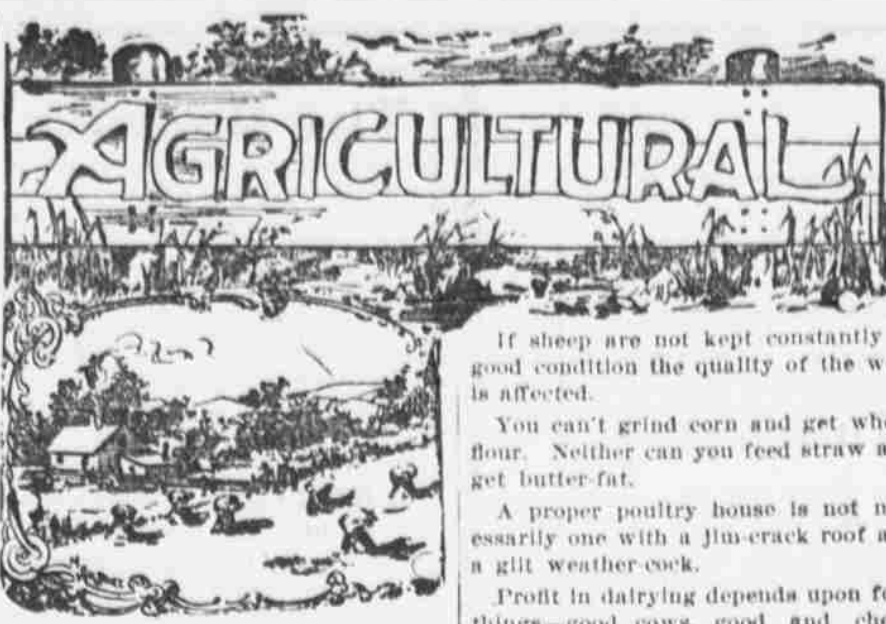
"Just now it's boxing. Every boxing master in town is rushed to death with applications for instruction from girls. Boxing, you know, is warranted to do the impossible; consequently they all want it."

"But, then, after all, I suppose it's just that variety and unexpectedness about the girls over here which makes them so attractive. You never know where they're going to break out next."

Size of Atlantic Waves.

The size of the Atlantic waves has been carefully measured for the Washington hydrographic bureau. In height the waves usually average about 30 feet, but in rough weather they attain from 40 to 48 feet. During storms they are often from 500 to 900 feet long, and last 10 or 11 seconds, while the longest yet known measured half a mile and did not spend itself for 23 seconds.

Cultivate health and thus radiate strength and courage.



As to Cement Culverts.

During late years farming communities are giving much attention to the public highways, realizing that it is money well expended. One of the chief expense accounts has been for culverts and these are quite as high when the opening to be bridged is narrow, for the reason that less expensive and much lighter lumber is used hence the culvert must be renewed at frequent intervals. As the cost of lumber increases, the cost of cement and cement building blocks and slabs decreases, so that the future will see many more structures of different kinds built of concrete than it has been thought profitable to use in the past.

Experts say that a span of twenty-five feet or less can be bridged with a flat culvert of cement at low cost and that the work is lasting. The main essentials in the cement culvert, be-



FINISH OF CEMENT CULVERT.

yond the first-class material, of course, are the submerged cut-off wall at each end to prevent undermining and the wing walls at each end. In every section there are masons who are familiar with the working of concrete and highway overseers should consult these men before investing money in the old-time and expensive wooden culverts. The illustration shows the side wings of the cement culvert, which adds to its durability.—Indianapolis News.

Potatoes from Small Seed.

Considerable argument is rife among writers as to the relative value of small and medium or large tubers, for use as seed. It is claimed that the small tuber will often (generally, perhaps) produce as large and fine results as the larger tubers used for seed. We believe this claim is open to question at least beyond the first generation, for it is safe to say that degeneration can only be the result from planting the small tubers a number of seasons in succession. This seems to be a logical conclusion to reach. On the other hand, it is quite as logical to assume that the fine medium or large tuber, containing as it must all the vigor and fine points of the variety, will produce first-class progeny and, we believe, this is essentially the case when the seed tubers are selected from one's own product and selected at the proper time and properly cared for. If the seed potatoes are selected from the bin, be the selection from small or the large tubers, in the spring just about the time they are wanted for use, it must not be expected that they will give as good results as those which have been properly selected in the fall and properly cared for. There is a decided saving of time, money and fertilizer in the careful selection of the seed potatoes, as any one will discover who will take the necessary trouble.—Exchange.

Increased the Potato Yield.

In a three-year test of growing potatoes after clover at the Ontario Station, an average increase of thirty-seven bushels per acre was obtained, as compared with growing potatoes without the use of clover. For fertilizing the land for potatoes the author recommends the use of a moderate quantity of barnyard manure applied on the clover in the fall, or of well-rotted manure used in the spring; or, if commercial fertilizers are used, an application of 500 to 800 pounds of or more per acre in the proportion of 250 pounds of nitrate of soda, 350 pounds of superphosphate, and 200 pounds of sulphate or muriate of potash. An increase of forty bushels per acre was obtained in a crop cultivated six times, as compared with one cultivated three times. In a three-year test spraying with bordeaux mixture apparently increased the yield ninety-four bushels. The cost of growing an acre of potatoes yielding 300 bushels is estimated at \$52.14.

Farm Notes.

Long and hard pulling makes wind-broken horses.

Hens are without exception the most sadly neglected of all the living creatures that are profitable to the farmer.

Clover Qualities.

White clover does not seem to be affected by the so-called clover sickness which interferes with raising common clover more than a certain number of years on the same piece of land. Alsike also seems to suffer less from the sickness and will thrive on a rather wet, heavy piece where red clover does not do well, likewise stands severe cold better than red clover, but is not liked by cattle so well as either the red or white clover.

Roof Painting Posts.

The roof wears out, unless kept painted, faster than any other part of a wooden building. It pays better to keep the roof painted than it does the sides, and it will also need to be painted oftener. When shingles are used from clear, straight-grain wood and kept always painted, they will last a very long time. One of the advantages of painting roofs is to keep water from the nails, where rusting soon rots the wood where they are driven.

If sheep are not kept constantly in good condition the quality of the wool is affected.

You can't grind corn and get wheat flour. Neither can you feed straw and get butter-fat.

A proper poultry house is not necessarily one with a jim-crack roof and a gilt weather-cock.

Profit in dairying depends upon four things—good cows, good and cheap feed, good care and a good market.

The Farm Toolshop.

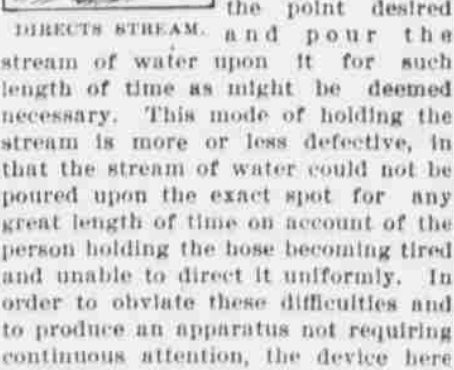
It is the exception, rather than the rule, to find a shop as a branch of farm work nowadays. We run to the store for any little thing we want, pay two prices for it and lose valuable time. Our fathers had all of the small tools in the shop and could make any repairs not of a serious nature on any tool or appliance of the farm and do it quickly and inexpensively. Our hired help are kept busy on rainy days going over tools and wagons, painting and repairing. If the harness breaks there are waxed ends of thread ready for use or some rivets to repair larger breaks. The shop contains a small anvil and a vise as well as a wooden clamp in which to hold the ends of leather when sewing them. Nails, screws, bolts, hinges and the like are kept in small numbers, but in various sizes. Oils, monkey wrenches, chisels, hammers and the like are always there and we are prepared for any small trouble. A very small corner of the barn is large enough for the shop, and it will pay to begin now to fit up such a place, adding tools as one can.

Small Farming.

It is not always the man who has 200, 300 or 500 acres of land who is making the most money in proportion to the amount he has invested in it. There are those who with 10, 15, 20 or 25 acres, are making more than the average farmer with five or ten times that amount of land. As a rule it is because the farmer has a part of his means reserved as a working capital. With it he can secure labor, implements, fertilizers and all that is necessary to bring his little farm up to the highest point of successful production. Many of our farmers would do better to sell half their land at even half the price and devote the money thus acquired to better managing the remainder of their farm, than to pay taxes upon the entire amount they now farm or rather half farm.

Curative Apparatus.

An efficient mode of treating bruised, irritated and sometimes diseased limbs of animals—as, for instance, the leg of a horse—is by pouring a stream of water upon the limb at a point affected. Heretofore it has been universally customary for the person in charge of the animal to hold the end of a hose at the point desired.



Directs stream and pour the stream of water upon it for such length of time as might be deemed necessary. This mode of holding the stream is more or less defective, in that the stream of water could not be poured upon the exact spot for any great length of time on account of the person holding the hose becoming tired and unable to direct it uniformly. In order to obviate these difficulties and to produce an apparatus not requiring continuous attention, the device here illustrated was produced.

Calves Cheaply Fattened.

Professor Roberts, of the Cornell station, claims that to fatten calves successfully on skim milk and grain to supply the butter fat, the calves should first be fed a moderate amount of new milk for a few days, and then skim milk should be gradually substituted so that at the end of a few weeks the calves would be fed entirely on skim milk. If seven pounds of linseed meal is mixed with one pound of corn meal, old process preferable, he finds it will make a fairly good substitute for the butter fats of the new milk.

Clover Qualities.

White clover does not seem to be affected by the so-called clover sickness which interferes with raising common clover more than a certain number of years on the same piece of land. Alsike also seems to suffer less from the sickness and will thrive on a rather wet, heavy piece where red clover does not do well, likewise stands severe cold better than red clover, but is not liked by cattle so well as either the red or white clover.

Roof Painting Posts.

The roof wears out, unless kept painted, faster than any other part of a wooden building. It pays better to keep the roof painted than it does the sides, and it will also need to be painted oftener. When shingles are used from clear, straight-grain wood and kept always painted, they will last a very long time. One of the advantages of painting roofs is to keep water from the nails, where rusting soon rots the wood where they are driven.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



1154—Landing of Henry II. in England from France.

1421—King Henry VI. of England born.

1542—Sigismund, Emperor of Germany, died.

1527—Pope Clement VII. escaped in disguise from prison.

1540—Meeting of the Diet of Worms.

1542—Mary Stuart, daughter of James V. born.

1565—Pope Pius IV. died.

1594—Gustavus Adolphus born.

1608—John Milton, the poet, born.

1648—Col. Pride prevented 200 members of British Parliament from entering the House. Called "Pride's Purge."

1661—English Parliament ordered the body of Oliver Cromwell hung at Tyburn.

1666—Ten Scottish Covenanters executed in Edinburgh.

1688—Flight of James II.

1742—Treaty of Moscow between Great Britain and Russia.

1746—Charles Ratcliffe, Earl of Derwentwater, executed.

1776—British take possession of Rhode Island.

1777—Suspension of habeas corpus act in Great Britain.

1787—Delaware by unanimous vote ratified Constitution of the United States.

1795—Rawland Hill, "father of the British postal service," born.

1716—Indiana admitted to the Union.

1835—Cereemonies at Nuremberg marking opening of first railway in Germany.

1842—Samuel Woodworth, author of "The Old Oaken Bucket," died.

1846—Santa Ana proclaimed President of Mexico.

1848—David Carter made the first deposit of California gold in the United States mint.

1854—The Immaculate Conception declared by the Pope.

1856—Father Matthew, apostle of temperance, died at Cork, Ireland.

1861—Congress passed bill authorizing exchange of Union and Confederate prisoners.

1862—Battle of Prairie Grove, Ark.

1864—President Lincoln urged curtailment of State banks.

1868—The Gladstone ministry assumed office. . . . Paraguayan army defeated and destroyed at Villets.

1881—Many lives lost in the burning of the Ring theater in Vienna.

1884—Washington monument at Washington, D. C., completed.

1884—Third Plenary Council closed at Baltimore.

1891—Lord Dufferin succeeded Lord Lyttleton as British ambassador at Paris.

1895—Great demonstration against municipal abuses in Madrid, Spain.

1897—Attempt on the life of the Sultan of Turkey.

1898—Gen. Galixto Garcia died, aged 62.

1899—Certificate of election given to W. S. Taylor as Governor of Kentucky.

1902—President Castro ordered arrest of foreigners in Venezuela. . . . Thomas B. Reed died.

1903—Four killed in railroad wreck at Worcester, Mass. . . . Gen. Reyes elected President of Colombia. . . . Japanese Diet dissolved.

1904—Labor riots begin in St. Petersburg. . . . Mrs. Cassie L. Chadwick arrested. . . . Three Russian battleships sunk at Port Arthur.

OLD WORLD NOTABLES

Sir William Watson has been appointed chairman of the Cunard Steamship Company, vice Lord Iverclyde.

Krantz, the czar of Russia's chef, is by tradition and position a gentleman, and has the right of wearing a sword.

The Khedive of Egypt is not only a monogamist but a teetotaler, and does not smoke—not even an Egyptian cigarette.

Prof. Coreboshi, a Frenchman, has perfected an apparatus which will transmit the peculiarities of a man's handwriting or drawing, enabling him to sign checks 1,000 miles away.

It is understood that King Edward will confer on the Mikado the decoration of the Order of the Garter, which will be conveyed to his majesty by a special mission, headed by Prince Arthur of Connaught.

The King of Greece is the greatest linguist among monarchs. He reads twelve languages and speaks most of them.

The King of Spain is a skillful and fearless rider; a keen motorist, a deadly shot with either rifle or revolver, a splendid fencer, and an exceptionally clever boxer.