

Jane Cable

By
**George Barr
McCutcheon**

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CHAPTER VI—(Continued.)

Droom was frugal. He was, in truth, a miser. If any one had asked him what he expected to do with the money he was putting away in the bank, he could not have answered, calculating as he was by nature. He had no relative to whom he would leave it, and he had no inclination to give up the habit of active employment. His salary was small, but he managed to save more than half of it—for a "rainy day," as he said. He did his reading and experimenting by kerosene light and went to bed by candlelight, saving a few pennies a week in that way. The windows in his apartment were washed not oftener than once a year. He was seldom obliged to look through them during the day, and their only duty at night was to provide ventilation, and even that was characteristically meager.

He was a man of habit, not habits. A pipe at night was his only form of dissipation. It was not too far for him to walk home from the office of evenings, and he invariably did so unless the weather was extremely unpleasant. So methodical was he that he never had walked over any other bridge than the one in Wells street, coming and going.

Past sixty-five years of age, Droom's hair still was black and snaky, his teeth were as yellow and jagged as they were in the twenties, and his eyes were as blue and ugly as ever. He had not aged with James Bansemmer. In truth, he looked but little older than when he made his acquaintance. The outside world knew nothing of Droom's private transactions than it knew of Bansemmer's. Up in the horrid little apartment in Wells street the queer old man could do as he willed, unobserved and unannoyed. He could pursue his experiments with strange chemicals, he could construct odd devices with his kit of tools, and he could let off an endless amount of inventive energy that no one knew he possessed.

When he left Graydon Bansemmer on the sidewalk in front of the office building he swung off with his long stride toward the Wells street bridge. His brain had laid aside everything that had occupied its attention during office hours and had given itself over to the project that hastened its steps seaward. His supper that night was a small one and hurriedly eaten in order that he might get to work on his new device. Droom grinned and tickled to himself all alone up there in the lamplight, for he was perfecting an "invention" by which the honest citizen could successfully put to rout the "holdup" man that has made Chicago famous.

Elias Droom's inventive genius unfortunately led him toward devices that could inflict pain and discomfort. His plan to get the better of the wretched, hard working holdup man was unique, if not entirely practical. He was con-

structing the models for two little bulbs, made of rubber and lined with a material that would resist the effects of an acid, no matter how powerful. On one end of each bulb, which was capable of holding at least an ounce of liquid, there was a thin syringe attachment, also proof against acids. These little bulbs were made so that they could be held in the palm of the hand. By squeezing them suddenly a liquid could be shot from the tube with considerable force.

The bulbs were to contain vitriol. When the holdup man gave the command to "hold up your hands," the victim had only to squeeze the bulb as the hands went up, and if accurately aimed the miscreant would get the stream of the deadly vitriolic fluid in his eyes and—here endeth the first lesson. Experience alone could do the rest.

Young Bansemmer hurried to their apartments on the north side. He found his father dressed and ready to go out to dinner.

"Well, how was everything today?" asked James Bansemmer from his easy chair in the library. Graydon threw his hat and gloves on the table.

"Terribly dull market, governor," he said. "It's been that way for a week. How are you feeling?"

"Fit to dine with a queen," answered the older man, with a smile. "How soon can you dress for dinner, Gray?"

"That depends on who is giving the dinner."

"Some people you like. I found the note here when I came in a little after 8. We have an hour in which to get over there. Can you be ready?"

"Do you go security for the affair?" asked Graydon.

"Certainly. You have been there, my boy, and I've not heard you complain."

"You mean over at—"

"Yes, that's where I mean," said the father, breaking in quietly.

"I think I can be ready in ten minutes, father."

While he was dressing his father sat alone and stared reflectively at the small blue gas blaze in the grate. A black grin smile unconsciously came over his face, the inspiration of a triumphantly joy. Twice he read the dainty note that met him on his return from the office.

"What changes time can make in a woman," he mused, "and what changes

a woman can make in time! For nearly a year I've waited for this note. I knew it would come; it was bound to come. Graydon has had everything up to this time, while I have waited patiently in the background. Now it is my turn."

"All right, father," called Graydon from the hall. "The cab is at the door."

Together they went down the steps, arm in arm, strong figures.

"To Mr. David Cable's," ordered Bansemmer, the father, complacently as he stepped into the carriage after his son.

His words were quickly nullified by the smile with which she was almost instantly favored. "Twenty years, I believe—it certainly came very near being never," he went on, abruptly changing from harsh to the sweetest of tones. "No one could believe that you—you're simply wonderful!" and added pointedly, "But your daughter is even more beautiful, if such is possible, than her—her mother."

Apparently the innuendo passed unnoticed. In reality, it required all her courage to appear calm.

"How very nice of you," she said softly. And looking him full in the face, "Her mother thanks you for the compliment."

It was a brave little speech. Such bravely would have softened a man of another mold—changed his purpose. Not so with Bansemmer. A sinister gleam came into his eyes, and his attack became more brutally direct.

"But the husband—has he never mistreated?"

The blow told, though her reply was given with rippling laughter and for the benefit of any chance listeners.

"For shame, Mr. Bansemmer!" she cried lightly. "After flattering me so delightfully you're surely not going to spoil it all!"

Despite his growing annoyance, admiration shone clearly from Bansemmer's eyes. His memory carried him back some twenty years to the scene in his office. Was it possible, he was thinking, that the charming woman before him exercising so cleverly all the arts of society, as if born to the purple, and the light hearted, frivolous little wife of the Central's engineer were one and the same person? The metamorphosis seemed incredible.

Unwittingly his manner lost some of its aggressiveness, and the woman, perceiving the altered conditions, quick to take advantage, resolved to learn if possible his intentions. Presently, going right to the point, she asked:

"Is that extraordinary looking creature you had in your office still with you, Mr. Bansemmer?"

"Extraordinary?" He laughed loudly. "He is certainly that and more. Indeed, the English language does not supply us with an adjective that adequately describes the man."

The people nearest to them by this time had moved away to another part of the large drawing room. Practically the couple were by themselves. She had been thinking for a moment, reasoning with a woman's logic that it was always well to know one's enemy. When she next spoke it was almost in a whisper.

"How much does that horrible man know?"

"He is not supposed to know anything," and then, with an enigmatical smile, promptly admitted, "However, I'm afraid that he does."

"You have told him? And yet you promised nobody should know. How could—"

"My dear Mrs. Cable, he was not told. If he has found out I could not prevent his discovering the truth through his own efforts," he interrupted in a tone more assuaging than convincing to her, and then, hitching his chair closer and lowering his voice a note, he continued: "The papers had to be taken out. But you must not worry about him. You can depend on me."

"Promise me that you will make him—I am so fearful of that awful—she broke off abruptly. Her fears were proving too much for her, and she was in imminent danger of a complete breakdown. All the veneer with which she had bravely concealed the interview had disappeared.

Bansemmer endeavored to soothe her with promises, but the poor woman saw only his teeth in the reassuring smile that he presented to her, together with the warnings that they were likely to be observed. With the hardest kind of an effort she succeeded in pulling herself together sufficiently to bid good night to her hostess.

When Mrs. Cable reached home that night it was with a full realization that she was irrevocably committed into the custody of these cold blooded men.

They met again and again at the homes of mutual friends, and she had come to loathe the pressure of his hand when it clasped hers. One might be held her hand long and firmly in his, and while she shrank helplessly before him he even tenderly asked why she had not invited him into her home. It was what she had expected and feared. Her cup of bitterness was filling rapidly—too rapidly. His invitation to dinner a fortnight later followed.

Jane Cable was radiant as she entered the drawing room shortly after the arrival of the two Bansemmers.

"It's quite like a family party. How splendid," she said to Graydon, with a quick glance in the direction of James Bansemmer and David Cable, who stood conversing together, and withdrawing her soft, white hand which she had put forth to meet him in friendly clasp. "It's too good to be true," she went on in a happy, spontaneous, almost confiding manner.

The two fathers looked on in amused silence, the one full of admiration and for her the challenging significance of

pride for the clean, vigorous manhood of his son awaiting to receive welcome from the adorable Jane; the other, long since conscious of the splendid beauty of his daughter, mentally declaring that she never had appeared so well as when standing beside this gallant figure.

Other guests arrived before Mrs. Cable made her appearance in the draw-

ing room. She had taken more time than usual with her toilet. It was impossible for her to hide the fact that the strain was telling on her perceptibly. The face that looked back into her eyes from the mirror on her dressing table was not the fresh, warm one that had needed so little care a few short months before. There was a heaviness about the eyes, and there were strange, persistent lines gathering under the soft, white tissues of her skin. But when she at last stepped into the presence of her guests, with ample apologies for her tardiness, with the picture of life and nerve. So much for the excellent resources of her will.

Bansemmer was the last to present himself for her welcome, lingering in the background until the others had passed.

"I'm so glad you could come. Indeed, it's a pleasure to—" She spoke clearly and distinctly as she extended her hand, but as she looked squarely into his eyes she thought him the ugliest man she ever had seen. Every other woman in the party was saying to herself that James Bansemmer was strikingly handsome.

"Most pleasures come late in life to some of us," he returned gallantly, and even Graydon Bansemmer wished that he could have said it.

"Your father is a perfect dear," Jane said to him softly. "It was not what he said just then that pleased me, but what he left unsaid."

"Father's no end of a good fellow. I'm glad you admire him."

"You are not a bit like him," she said reflectively.

"Thanks," he exclaimed. "You are not very flattering."

"But you are a different sort of a good fellow; that's what I mean. Don't be absurd," she cried in some little confusion.

"I'm like my mother, they say, though I don't remember her at all."

"Oh, how terrible it must be never to have known one's mother!" said she tenderly.

"Or one's father," added James Bansemmer, who was passing at that instant with Mrs. Cable. "Please include the father, Miss Cable," he pleaded, with mock seriousness. Turning to Mrs. Cable, who had stopped beside him, he added, "You, the most charming of mothers, will defend the fathers, won't you?"

"With all my heart," she answered so steadily that he was surprised.

"I will include the father, Mr. Bansemmer," said Jane. "If it is guaranteed that he possibly could be as nice and dear as one's mother. In that case I think it would be, oh, dreadfully terrible never to have known him."

"And to think, Miss Cable, of the unfortunate who have known neither father nor mother," said Bansemmer senior, slowly, relentlessly. "How much they have missed of life and love!"

"That can be offset somewhat by the thought of the poor parents who never have known a son or a daughter," said Jane.

"How can they be parents, then?" demanded Bobby Rigby, coming up in time.

"Go away, Bobby," she said scornfully.

"That's a nice way to treat logic," he grumbled, smiling on in quest of Miss Keating.

"The debate will become serious if you continue," said Mrs. Cable lightly. "Come along, Mr. Bansemmer. Mrs. Craven is waiting."

When they were across the room and alone she turned a white face to him and remonstrated bitterly, "Oh, that

was cowardly of you after your promise to me!"

"I forgot myself," he said quietly. "Don't believe me to be utterly heartless." His hand touched her arm. Instantly her assumed calm gave way to her deep agitation, and with a swift change of manner she turned on him, her passion aghast.

"You—she stammered. Then her fears found voice. "What do you mean?" she demanded in smothered, alarmed tones.

He desisted savagely and shrank away, the color flaming into his disgusted, saturnine face. He did not speak to her again until he said good-by long afterward.

As he had expected, his place at the dinner table was some distance from hers. He was across the table from Jane and Graydon and several seats removed from David Cable. He smiled

grimly and knowingly when he saw that he had been cut off cleverly from the Cables.

"Tomorrow night, then, Jane!" said Graydon at parting. No one was near enough to catch the tender eagerness in his voice nor to see the happy flush in her cheek as she called after him: "Tomorrow night!"

CHAPTER VIII.

BOBBY RIGBY and Graydon Bansemmer were bosom friends in Chicago; they had been classmates at Yale. It had been a question of money with

Bobby from the beginning. According to his own admission, his money was a source of great annoyance to him. He was not out of debt but once and then before he fully realized it. So unusual was the condition that he could not sleep. The first thing he did in the morning was to borrow right and left for fear another attack of insomnia might interfere with his training for the football eleven.

Robertson Ray Rigby, immortalized as Bobby, had gone in for athletics, where he learned to think and act quickly. He was called one of the lightest but heaviest quarterbacks in the east. No gridiron idol ever escaped his "Jimmy" or "Tippy" or "Pop" or "Johnny." When finally he hung out his shingle in Chicago—"Robertson R. Rigby, Attorney at Law"—he lost his identity even among his classmates. It was weeks before the fact became generally known that it was Bobby who waited for clients behind the deceptive shingle.

The indulgent aunt who had supplied him with funds in college was rich in business blocks and apartment buildings, and now Mr. Robertson R. Rigby was her man of affairs. When he went in for business, the old push of the football field did not desert him. He was very much alive and very vigorous, and it did not take him long to "learn the signals."

With his aunt's unflinching prosperity, his own ready wit and unbridled versatility he was not long in establishing himself safely in his profession and in society. Everybody liked him, though no one took him seriously except when they came to transact business with him. Then the witlessness of the drawing room turned into shrewdness as it crossed the office threshold.

The day after the Cable dinner Bobby yawned and stretched through his morning mail. He had slept but little the night before, and all on account of a certain, or rather uncertain, Miss Keating. That petite and aggravating young woman had been especially exasperating at the Cable dinner. Mr. Rigby, superbly confident of his standing with her, encountered difficulties which put him very much out of temper. For the first time there was an apparent rift in her obstinacy. Never before had she shown such signs of fluctuating. He could not understand it—in fact, he dared not understand it. "She was a most annoying young person," said Mr. Rigby to himself wrathfully more than once after he went to bed that night. Anyhow, he could not see what there was about Howard Medford for any girl to countenance, much less to admire. Mr. Medford certainly had ruined the Cable dinner party for Mr. Rigby, and he was full of resentment.

"Miss Keating," called Mr. Rigby for the third time, "may I interrupt your conversation with Mr. Deever long enough to ask a question that has been on my mind for twenty minutes?"

Mr. Deever was the raw young gentleman who had led in the office of Judge Smith next door. Bobby maintained that if he read law at all it was at night, for he was too busy with other occupations during the day.

Miss Keating, startled, turned round about promptly. "Yes, sir," at last came from the pert young woman near the window.

"I guess I'll be going," said Mr. Deever resentfully, rising slowly from the side of her desk on which he had been lounging.

"Wait a minute, Eddie," protested Miss Keating. "What's your hurry?" And then she almost snapped out, "What is it, Mr. Rigby?"

"I merely wanted to ask if you have sufficient time to let me dictate a few short letters that ought to go out today," said Bobby sarcastically. And

then added with mock apology: "Don't move, Mr. Deever. If you're not in Miss Keating's way, you're certainly not in mine."

"A great josh!" that young woman was heard to comment admiringly.

"You may wake up some morning to find that I'm not," said Bobby soberly. Whereupon Miss Keating rose and strode to the other end of the room and took her place beside Bobby's desk.

Bobby dictated half a dozen incoherent letters before coming to the one which troubled him most. For many minutes he stared reflectively at the typewritten message from New York. Miss Keating frowned severely and tapped her little foot somewhat impatiently on the floor. But Bobby would not be hurried. His reflections were too serious. This letter from New York had come with a force six-

cient to drive out even the indignant thoughts concerning one Miss Keating. For the life of him Bobby Rigby could not immediately frame a reply to the startling missive. Eddie Deever stirred restlessly on the window ledge.

"Don't hurry, Eddie!" called Miss Keating distinctly and insinuatingly.

"Oh, I guess I'll be going," he called back, beginning to roll a cigarette. "I have some reading to do today." Mr. Deever was tall, awkward and homely and a lot of other things that would have discouraged a less self satisfied "lady's man." Judge Smith said he was hopeless, but that he might do better after he was twenty-one.

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"Ready?" said Bobby, resolutely. "Take this, please." And slowly and carefully he proceeded to dictate:

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You might investigate a little further and assure yourself, do all in your power to check such stories as you relate. Of course I'll do as you suggest, but in positive I can find nothing discreditable in his dealings here.

Keep me posted on everything. As ever, yours,

(Continued Next Week.)

INQUIRERS FOR TIMBER ARE MORE NUMEROUS

There has been more inquiry for timber in the last three weeks than there has been for some time, says the Oregon Lumberman. Few sales have been made but the number of sales is very small compared to the number of inquiries which are coming in from all over the East. The largest sale effected recently along the coast was a tract in Northeastern Oregon, sold to L. B. Menefee, Houston, Texas. This tract is one of the heaviest timbered sections on the coast. The total amount of timber on the six thousand acres was crused at about 500,000,000 feet. It was sold on a stumpage valuation of one dollar, which brought the sum up to \$600,000. This is one of the best buys recently noted. In British Columbia a sale was made to Americans of timber land for \$200,000.

As soon as the fall season arrives, an active timber market may be anticipated. The atmosphere is full of smoke, mostly from fires in slashings or cut-over lands, which causes the non-coast resident to hesitate before buying, especially with big scare lines in the daily press, which are followed in later issues by small headings, saying the fires were not in the timber.

LOCAL TIMBER MARKET IS MOVING FASTER

While the lumber business as a general thing is prostrate before the greed of the transportation lines, the local market is booming because of the low prices the lumber yards are offering to run off their stocks. The planing mills and firms that handle millwork report that they are behind, and apparently unable to catch up.

For this reason contractors are having trouble in finishing up several structures around the town, which in turn keep them from taking other contracts.

Houses are going up very rapidly, but there are plans for some that have been waiting bidders and figures for a month. As well as Eugene needing more houses, there is also plenty of room for contractors.

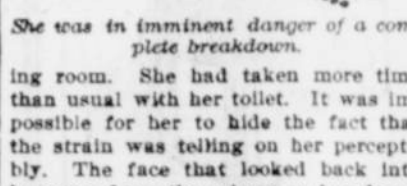
HARRISBURG NOTES. LOCAL AND PERSONAL

Jack Buffman has been quite ill over at Coburg. He has just returned from a trip to the Hot Springs and seems much improved.

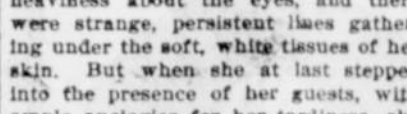
A bunch of fans went over to Halsey Sunday afternoon in the Douglas automobile to take in the Halsey-Springfield game. The latter won out by a score of 6 to 4. If it hadn't been for the rotten support given Tess Morris the Halsey team would have had a walkover. It was his splendid work on the slab that kept the score at a respectable showing.

Adolph Senders was up from Eugene over Sunday to visit his cousin, J. G. Senders. When he left for home he was mighty glad he wasn't dead. He had one of the worst times of his life that day. We have been watching the Eugene papers for scare-head articles of his trip, but possibly he hasn't caught his breath yet. He is willing to admit that there are some things around Harrisburg that are a little too swift for him.

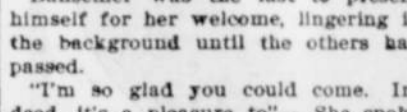
Harrisburg people will learn with sorrow of the death of Mrs. J. E. Harris, of Portland, which occurred last Saturday. For twenty years Mrs. Harris was a resident of this community, moving from here to Eugene and later to Portland, where she made her home for the past several years. She was born in Missouri and came West when a little girl with her parents, who settled near Eugene. She was 64 years old at the time of her death, the immediate cause of which was paralysis, she having suffered two strokes last June. The remains were taken to Eugene for burial, the funeral being held Tuesday. A number from here were in attendance.—Harrisburg Bulletin.



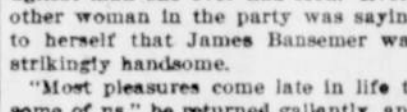
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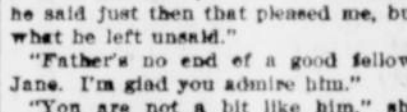
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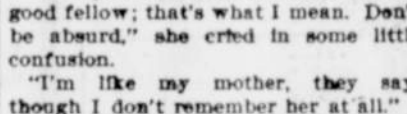
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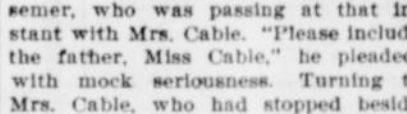
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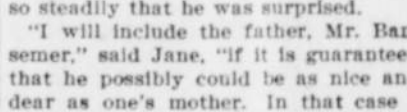
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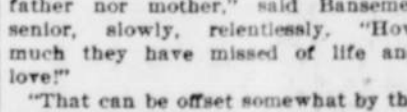
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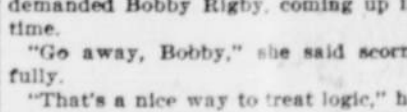
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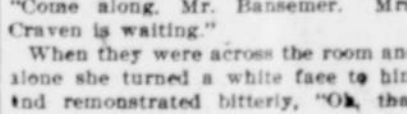
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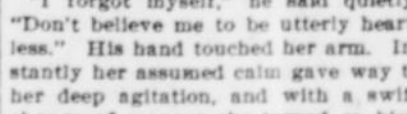
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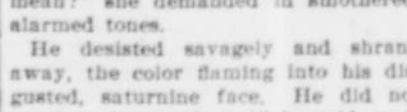
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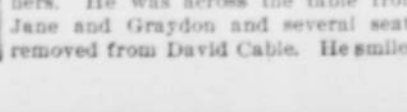
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