

The THOUSANDTH WOMAN

BY ERNEST W. HORNING

Author of 'The AMATEUR CRACKSMAN, RAFFLES, Etc.'

ILLUSTRATIONS BY O. IRWIN MYERS

CHAPTER XIV—Continued.

Toye cocked his head at both question and answer, but inclined it quickly as Cazalet turned to him before proceeding.

"I went in and found Henry Craven lying in his blood. That's gospel—it was so I found him—lying just where he had fallen in a heap out of the leather chair at his desk. The top right-hand drawer of his desk was open, the key in it and the rest of the bunch still swinging! A revolver lay as it had dropped upon the desk—it had upset the ink—and there were cartridges lying loose in the open drawer, and the revolver was loaded. I swept it back into the drawer, turned the key and removed it with the bunch. But there was something else on the desk—that silver-mounted truncheon—and a man's cap was lying on the floor. I picked them both up. My first instinct, I confess it, was to remove every sign of manslaughter and to leave the scene to be reconstructed into one of accident—seizure—anything but what it was!"

He paused as if waiting for a question. None was asked. Toye's mouth might have been sewn up, his eyes were like hatpins driven into his head. The other two simply stared.

"It was a mad idea, but I had gone mad," continued Cazalet. "I had hated the victim alive, and it couldn't change me that he was dead or dying; that didn't make him a white man, and neither did it necessarily blacken the poor devil who had probably suffered from him like the rest of us and only struck him down in self-defense. The revolver on the desk made that pretty plain. It was out of the way, but now I saw blood all over the desk as well; it was soaking into the blotter, and it knocked the bottom out of my idea. What was to be done? I had meddled already; how could I give the alarm without giving myself away to that extent, and God knows how much further? The most awful moment of the lot came as I hesitated—the dinner-gong went off in the hall outside the door! I remember watching the thing on the floor to see if it would move.

"Then I lost my head—absolutely. I turned the key in the door, to give myself a few seconds' grace or start; it reminded me of the keys in my hands. One of them was one of those little round brass keys. It seemed familiar to me even after so many years. I looked up, and there was my father's Michael Angelo closet, with its little, round brass keyhole. I opened it as the outer door was knocked at and then tried. But my mad instinct of altering every possible appearance, to mislead the police, stuck to me to the last. And I took the man's watch and chain into the closet with me, as well as the cap and truncheon that I had picked up before.

"I don't know how long I was above ground, so to speak, but one of my father's objects had been to make his retreat sound-tight, and I could scarcely hear what was going on in the room. That encouraged me; and two of you don't need telling how I got out through the foundations, because you know all about the hole I made myself as a boy in the floor under the oilcloth. It took some finding with single matches; but the fear of your neck gives you eyes in your finger-

ends, and gimlets, too, by Jove! The worst part was getting out at the other end, into the cellars; there were heaps of empty bottles to move, one by one, before there was room to open the manhole door and to squirm out over the slab; and I thought they rang like a peal of bells, but I put them all back again, and apparently nobody overheard in the scullery.

"The big dog barked at me like blazes—he did again the other day—but nobody seemed to hear him either. I got to my boat, tipped a fellow on the towing path to take it back and pay for it—why haven't the police got hold of him?—and ran down to the bridge over the weir. I stopped a big car with a smart shaver smoking his pipe at the wheel. I should have thought he'd have come forward for the reward that was put up; but I pretended I was late for dinner I had in town, and I let him drop me at the Grand Hotel. He cost me a fiver, but I had on a waistcoat lined with notes, and I'd more than five minutes in hand at Charing Cross. If you want to know, it was the time in hand that gave me the whole idea of doubling back to Genoa; I must have been half-way up to town before I thought of it!"

He had told the whole thing as he always could tell an actual experience; that was one reason why it rang so true to one listener at every point. But the sick man's sunken eyes had advanced from their sockets in cumulative amazement. And Hilton Toye laughed shortly when the end was reached.

"You figure some on our credulity!" was his first comment.

"I don't figure on anything from you, Toye, except a pair of handcuffs as a first installment!"

Toye rose in prompt acceptance of the challenge. "Seriously, Cazalet, you ask us to believe that you did all this to screen a man you didn't have time to recognize?"

"I've told you the facts."

"Well, I guess you'd better tell them to the police." Toye took his hat and stick. Scruton was struggling from his chair. Blanche stood petrified, a dove under a serpent's spell, as Toye made her a sardonic bow from the landing door. "You broke your side of the contract, Miss Blanche! I guess it's up to me to complete."

"Wait!"

It was Scruton's raven croak; he had tottered to his feet.

"Sure," said Toye, "if you've anything you want to say as an interested party."

"Only this—he's told the truth!"

"Well, can he prove it?"

"I don't know," said Scruton. "But I can!"

"You?" Blanche chimed in there.

"Yes, I'd like that drink first, if you don't mind, Cazalet." It was Blanche who got it for him, in an instant. "Thank you! I'd say more if my blessing was worth having—but here's something that is. Listen to this, you American gentleman: I was the man who wrote to him in Naples. Leave it at that a minute; it was my second letter to him; the first was to Australia, in answer to one from him. It was the full history of my downfall. I got a warder to smuggle it out. That letter was my one chance."

"I know it by heart," said Cazalet. "It was that and nothing else that

made me leave before the shoaring."

"To meet me when I came out!" Scruton explained in a hoarse whisper. "To—keep me from going straight to that man, as I'd told him I should in my first letter! But you can't hit these things off to the day or the week; he'd told me where to write to him on his voyage, and I wrote to Naples, but that letter did not get smuggled out. My warder friend had got the sack. I had to put what I'd got to say so that you could read it two ways. So I told you, Cazalet, I was going straight up the river for a row—and you can pronounce that two ways. And I said I hoped I shouldn't break a skull—but there's another way of spelling that, and it was the other way I meant!" He chuckled grimly. "I wanted you to lie low and let me lie low if that happened. I wanted just one man in the world to know I'd done it. But that's how we came to miss each other, for you timed it to a tick, if you hadn't misread me about the river."

He drank again, stood straighter and found a fuller voice.

"Yet I never meant to do it unless he made me, and at the back of my brain I never thought he would. I thought he'd do something for me, after all he'd done before! Shall I tell you what he did?"

"Got out his revolver!" cried Cazalet in a voice that was his own justification as well.

"Pretending it was going to be his check-book!" said Scruton, through his teeth. "But I heard him trying to cock it inside his drawer. There was his special constable's truncheon hanging on the wall—silver mounted, for all the world to know how he'd stood up for law and order in the sight of men! I tell you it was a joy to feel the weight of that truncheon, and

let, "that you believed my story all the time!"

"Why, I didn't have a moment's doubt about it!"

Cazalet drew away from the chuckling creature and his crafty gleam. But Blanche came forward and held out her hand.

"Will you forgive me, Mr. Toye?"

"Sure, if I had anything to forgive. It's the other way around, I guess, and about time I did something to help." He edged up to the folding-door. "This is a two-man job, Cazalet, the way I make it out. Guess it's my watch on deck!"

"The other's the way to the police station," said Cazalet densely.

Toye turned solemn on the word. "It's the way to hell, if Miss Blanche will forgive me! This is more like the other place, thanks to you folks. Guess I'll leave the angels in charge!"

Angelic or not, the pair were alone at last; and through the doors they heard a quavering croak of welcome to the rather human god from the American machine.

"I'm afraid he'll never go back with you to the bush," whispered Blanche. "Scruton?"

"Yes."

"I'm afraid, too. But I wanted to take somebody else out, too. I was trying to say so over a week ago when we were talking about old Venus Potts. Blanche, will you come?"

(THE END.)

ONE ON THE FLOORWALKER

Presumably He Knew Duties of His Position, But He Was Not Proficient in Spelling.

The worst thing about the following is that it is true, and what's more, that it happened in one of Pittsburgh's stores.

The girl, stylishly attired, stepped up to the still more stylishly-attired floorwalker and inquired where she would find the chiffon. The floorwalker consulted a notebook. Her surprise came when he gravely told her that they did not keep chiffon.

"Why!" she gasped, "you cannot possibly mean that."

In her eagerness she stepped closer to the stylishly-attired man than Eleanor Gale says a stylishly-attired woman should, and looked over his shoulder at the notebook.

"Oh! I see," she said, flatly, as she moved off to ask the girl at the glove counter about the chiffons. The man had been looking under the s's.—Baltimore Star.

Food by Proxy.

Most of us know some particular food or drink, the desire for which is stimulated in us by reading about it. But the writing must be skillful, or if not skillful, artlessly good. The cruder method of the stage produces the same effect; all smokers have experienced the almost overwhelming desire to smoke which comes upon them when someone lights a cigarette on the stage; these strange and rapid restaurant meals of the fashionable theater, when a party sits down at a table and is whirled through six courses in about five minutes, surrounded by champagne bottles in ice buckets and trays of liquors, have an absurdly exciting effect.

Not a Nation of Singers.

In this country, though we have produced many fine voices, we have never become a nation of singers. There are, it is true, in most of the leading cities, choral societies, but the singing of large groups of people is comparatively uncommon among us. Here is a matter for regret, for among all large bodies of singers where there has been more or less training the effect is beautiful and inspiring. In fact, there are few things in music more impressive than the singing of hundreds of voices.

The dollar sign was derived from the letters "U S" in monogram.

English Female Magistrates.

The female magistrates just appointed in South Australia are being described as the first in the British empire. Woman justices, however, were not unknown in England centuries ago. The countess of Richmond, mother of Henry VII, was a magistrate, and tried many important cases, whilst in Queen Mary's reign a Lady Bartlet sat on the bench in Gloucestershire. Perhaps the most remarkable case of the kind was that of Lady Berkeley, who was given a special commission by Henry VIII to act as judge in her own cause in the trial of certain poachers on her estates.

Lesson to Parents.

Because two parents in Rome, Ga., could not agree on any one of ten names suggested for their boy baby all the names together were given to the boy, and now at the age of twenty-four if he signs his full name he has to write "Mord Talmadge Zachariah Taylor Benjamin Franklin Eleazar Poole Stewart Breckenridge Carter." This should be a lesson to parents.—Boston Globe.

HOW MRS. BEAN MET THE CRISIS

Carried Safely Through Change of Life by Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

Nashville, Tenn.—"When I was going through the Change of Life I had a tumor as large as a child's head. The doctor said it was three years coming and gave me medicine for it until I was called away from the city for some time. Of course I could not go to him then, so my sister-in-law told me that she thought



Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound would cure it. It helped both the Change of Life and the tumor and when I got home I did not need the doctor. I took the Pinkham remedies until the tumor was gone, the doctor said, and I have not felt it since. I tell every one how I was cured. If this letter will help others you are welcome to use it."—Mrs. E. H. BEAN, 525 Joseph Avenue, Nashville, Tenn.

Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, a pure remedy containing the extractive properties of good old-fashioned roots and herbs, meets the needs of woman's system at this critical period of her life. Try it.

If there is any symptom in your case which puzzles you, write to the Lydia E. Pinkham Medicine Co., Lynn, Mass.

WEEKS' BREAK-UP-A-COLD TABLETS

A guaranteed remedy for Colds and La Grippe. Price 25c of your druggist. It's good. Take nothing else.—Adv.

Acute Hearing.

A number of candidates for the police force were being questioned by a doctor the other day, and a pretty stiff examination it was, too. At length it came to testing the men's sense of hearing, and said the examiner:

"Do you see this watch?"

"Yes."

"Do you hear it tick?"

"Certainly; quite plainly."

"Stand further back."

Candidate retires three paces.

"Do you hear it now?"

"Yes."

"Well, you must be smart, for the watch has not been going for a week."

—Chicago Herald.

HOW WONDERFULLY RESINOL SOOTHES ITCHING SKINS!

If you have eczema, ringworm or other itching, burning, sleep-destroying skin-eruption, try Resinol Ointment and Resinol Soap and see how quickly the itching stops and the trouble disappears. Resinol Ointment is also an excellent household remedy for dandruff, sores, burns, wounds, chafings and for a score of other uses where a soothing, healing application is needed.

Resinol contains nothing of a harsh or injurious nature and can be used freely even on the most irritated surface. Every druggist sells Resinol Ointment and Resinol Soap.—Adv.

The Higher Education.

Hi—What course is Sarah studying in that boarding school?

Si—I can't remember, but I think it's cosmetics.—Stanford Chaparral.

Similarity.

"Have you any references?"

"Yes, mum, but I left them at home. Like me photographs they don't do me justice."—Boston Transcript.

TERM OF MUCH SIGNIFICANCE

Phrase: "South of Panama" Means Much More Than Merely a Geographical Location.

"South of Panama" is a phrase which has a mighty significance. It means not merely geographical location. It signifies vast virgin areas of lowland and upland contrasted with fallow valleys and lofty plateaus populated and cultivated through centuries.

It means barren and burned mountains and dreary deserts mingled with forested and watered slopes, grassy llanos and pampas and flowering savannas.

It means the mixing of almost forgotten aboriginal races and surviving Indian types with the intellectual and refined descendants of early Spaniards and Portuguese and the later sprinkling of adventuresome Germans, Italians, English and Americans.

It means an ancient civilization, fascinating Incan ruins, old-fashioned Moorish and Spanish architecture in the sleeping cities and towns with

strange peoples and conditions harking back to far centuries, hard by a new civilization, modern skyscrapers and boulevards in growing commercial entrepôts and ambitious capitals with progressive peoples and conditions which rival the best that the old East and the new West of North America can show.

Trapping Partridges.

How partridges are trapped in Virginia and North Carolina, in the winter, is described as follows: A net measuring from 15 to 30 feet, and about eight inches high, is put down with stanchions; horizontally in the center is an opening similar to the hoop nets for fishing; the opening in the net is cone-shaped, diminishing in size. The netter mounts a horse and starts at the distant side of the field, riding in a walk backward and forward, his objective point being the net. If he encounters a bunch of birds they will run before the horse. He then begins to so direct his horse as to drive them to the net, being always careful not to flush them. When he reaches the net the birds dis-

cover the opening and enter, the whole process being similar to driving sheep into a pen. When the birds are safe the netter dismounts and secures his game.

Brass Buttons No More.

The Grenadiers and some of the other British guard battalions are now giving up the brass letters on their shoulder straps and wearing instead the name of their regiment worked in cotton on cloth, as the men of the Royal Flying corps have always done. The guards are also to have the brass buttons on their tunics replaced with bone buttons, and the practice may be extended throughout the army.

The soldiers will not be at all sorry, as they have to spend a good deal of elbow grease in keeping the brass shiny. The change is being made not because England is running short of brass, but because experience has shown that the metal shines in the sunlight, and catches the eye of the enemy's snipers.

Rugby school was founded and endowed in 1567.