

He Could Fill the Bill.
A day or two after George B. Cortelyou assumed the duties of Secretary of the Treasury, he was visited by an elderly man who wanted an appointment as confidential clerk to one of the assistant secretaries.

Notwithstanding the fact that he was very busy at the time, Mr. Cortelyou gave the elderly person a hearing. On account of his age, Mr. Cortelyou said, he felt that he could not comply with the request. So, gently but firmly, he intimated to the old man that it was about time for him to go. This, however, did not dampen the latter's spirit in the least.

"Now, sir," said he, "as I feel myself peculiarly competent to fill one of these confidential clerkships, I hope that you will further consider my application." Then, wagging his head most impressively, he added:

"Oh, Mr. Cortelyou, I could be so confidential!"—"Success Magazine."

Totally Different Characters.
"He must be a good fellow."
"Nonsense! Where did you get that idea? He never goes to a club and—"

"But his wife says he's a very good fellow and when a man's wife—"

"Oh! That's another thing. There's a big difference between a 'very good fellow' and a 'good fellow.'"—Philadelphia Press.

Seeking Something Easier.
"Why did that great financier want to get into political life?" asked one Wall street man.

"Well," answered the other, "conditions are becoming peculiar. It's harder for a man to stay at the head of a railway system than it is to hold a big government office."—Washington Star.

A copy of Correggio's celebrated painting, "The Repentant Magdalen," has been seized by the police of Cassel, Germany, and confiscated.

"I have lately heard the story myself," he answered. "The gentleman who saved you was Sir Laurence Penrhuddyn. But as soon as he was gone, the fishermen carried the bodies back to the coast and put 'em where the tide would wash 'em back into the sea again. They're a superstition about drowned people, and don't like 'em in their houses."

"How horrible!" she exclaimed, shuddering. "But what had become of my mother's body? Did you not see that?"

"Just as I came up I saw what might have been a body washed away by a wave. Whatever it was, it sank directly. There was not light enough for me to see very distinctly. I was only just in time to save you."

"Would to heaven that you had been too late!" she exclaimed bitterly. "And now have you anything more to say to me?" he asked, resuming his cold stern manner; "because my time is valuable, and is not my own to waste."

"Nothing more," she answered, sadly.

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DOOMED.

By WILLARD MacKENZIE.

CHAPTER XXII.—(Continued.)

"In making my claim for this property," she said, "I shall have to prove my identity—would you have any objection to state all you know?"

"I'd much rather not have anything to do with it," he answered, bluntly. "But however, if it's necessary, I won't stand in your way; you sha'n't say I show you any malice. But what I know would be nothing in a lawyer's eyes. I find you, a child, lying, apparently dead, upon the seashore; but fancying I can see some symptoms of life, I carry you home. As you know, I was a Coastguardman at the time. When you come round, you tell me that your name is Eleonore Soissons. I find 'Eleonore S.' marked on your petticoat. You tell me you have friends in Brittany. Eleonore is too Frenchified a name for my mouth, and I call you Ellen, and Soissons becomes Lawson; but after a time you are called by my name, and pass as Ellen Jenkins. That is all I know."

"And that would be most important evidence," she answered, quickly. "And have you that petticoat by you still?"

"Yes," he answered, hesitatingly, as though ashamed to confess it. "One more question, and I have done. A strange story has recently been told me by one who had no conception that I was an actor in it. Before you found me, I had been saved from the shipwreck by a gentleman—I and my mother. We were taken to a fisherman's hut, laid out for dead, and the gentleman was afterwards told that we were buried next morning. How came I, then, down by the sea again, where you found me?"

"I have lately heard the story myself," he answered. "The gentleman who saved you was Sir Laurence Penrhuddyn. But as soon as he was gone, the fishermen carried the bodies back to the coast and put 'em where the tide would wash 'em back into the sea again. They're a superstition about drowned people, and don't like 'em in their houses."

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CHAPTER XXIII.

On the second morning after Mrs. Castleton's interview with Jenkins, Mr. Wylie was somewhat surprised to hear Mr. Fig announce that that lady was in the outward office.

"I have not come to draw any more money, or to ask you to lend me any," she said, pushing aside the clerk, and entering the room before Mr. Wylie had time to speak.

She threw herself into a chair, with her usual air of bantering insolence. Mr. Wylie turned green, which was his way of turning pale, and bit his nails. He both hated and feared his visitor, and with every succeeding interview these feelings increased. Her scornful, defiant bearing stung him to madness.

"If that is all you have come to tell me, the sooner our interview is ended the better," he answered.

"Have you the vanity to suppose that I have come here for the purpose of contemplating and criticising your ugly features? Oh, dear, no; I would not be so rude as to so annoy my dear relation! How surprised you look! I repeat, my dear relation! It is a melancholy fact, I have discovered that you are my dear relation!"

"What do you mean?" he snarled savagely. "Are you going to vamp up some lying story to extort money from me?"

"I try to extort money from you?" she cried, fiercely; "not if I were starving, although you have robbed me of many hundreds. Yes, strange as it may sound, I am your relation—a distant one, I am thankful to say. With all your cunning, James Wylie, and all your prying, you never found out one secret of my life—my real name is Eleonore Soissons."

"Soissons?" he echoed, looking aghast. "Yes; of the Breton branch of the family. My father was Adolphe de Soissons—"

"Adolphe de Soissons had but one child—a girl—and she and her mother went down in the Genevieve off the coast of Cornwall. Every soul perished. I know the family history too well to be deceived by such a shallow, flimsy lie! I knew Adolphe well, and his widow, too! She came begging to me more than once while she was in London. What put this trumped-up story into your head?"

She turned very pale at his last words, and bit her lips until the blood came, and there was a baleful light in her eyes as she spoke. "Take care what you say about my mother—she was a fond, doting mother to me! When the occasion requires, I can produce ample proof of my identity. The only one I condescend to give you is this"—throwing a paper upon the table—"my marriage certificate, upon which you will see inscribed the name of Eleonore de Soissons. The Genevieve did go down off the Cornish coast, and every soul perished—except one. The man who saved

me still lives, and is ready to appear and give evidence. The clothes I wore, with my name marked on them, are also preserved."

Wylie eagerly examined the document cast at him. After a minute's silent reflection, his face slowly cleared. "I have no interest in denying your claim," he said, in his usual soft, hypocritical tone. "It will not take away one farthing from me. The claim of the Breton De Soissons is quite distinct from mine. But you must confess that your intelligence was somewhat startling. If I have said anything to annoy you, I apologize."

"Stop whining," she answered, impatiently. "Whenever you put on that tone, I fancy you mean mischief."

"What is it you want of me?" he asked.

"You have a paper which will secure Sir Laurence Penrhuddyn the mortgage money when it falls due. I want that paper."

Mr. Wylie laughed, and slowly rubbed his hands together as though enjoying a joke. "A modest request, certainly," he said. "In the first place, how do you know that the letter is genuine?"

"That I have ascertained for myself. I called upon Messrs. Groom and Fry to ask whether they were instructed to pay over to Sir Laurence a certain sum of money upon a certain date. Of course, as I expected, they declined to furnish me with positive information; but their manner convinced me that some such communication had passed. Hand me over that paper, and I will sign a bond making over to you one-half the sum that I may inherit under Mrs. Grierson's will."

"A sum that it is more than probable you may never touch," he sneered.

"A sum which it is more than probable I shall touch before the bells ring this year out. Oh, I know everything: I know that Constance Grierson wants not a month to her twentieth birthday, and that there is not the slightest chance of her fulfilling the condition under which she is to inherit the property."

Mr. Wylie looked amazed; then bent his brows and gnawed his nails again. During the last few minutes he had been revolving in his mind a desperate plan, but as yet it was only half formed.

"If what you say be true," he said, slowly, "we are both equally interested in the girl's forfeiture of her fortune. Have you any love for Constance Grierson?"

"I hate her!" she cried, vehemently; "and more than ever since I heard Arthur praise her beauty, and say that he could have loved her had it not been for—"

"I suppose that it is quite a settled thing that you are to be the future Lady Penrhuddyn?" he said, observing her sudden break. "Help me, then, in a plan which, if successful, will be equally to your advantage as to mine; and that paper shall be yours within sufficient time to save Penrhuddyn."

"What is the plan?" she asked, looking steadily into his face.

"It has come to my knowledge that Constance, alarmed, doubtless, at the near approach of the fatal day, is about to draw a large sum of money—many thousands of pounds."

"But can she do so?" inquired Mrs. Castleton.

"Yes, with the concurrence of her guardian, who is so violently opposed to the will by which she is hampered that he would do anything to nullify its provisions. I find that there is no provision in the will against such a contingency. Unless I could prove that the principal of the fortune was being reduced, I am powerless to check such expenditure without the coalition of my fellow trustee. There are many people for the fortune to be divided among, and its diminution by some twenty or thirty thousand pounds will materially diminish your share and mine."

"And how do you propose to prevent this?"

"It can easily be done by our united efforts. And, remember, the price of your assistance is the salvation of the Penrhuddyn estates. Refuse, and they are lost, and you will never be Lady Penrhuddyn. Which is it to be? Draw close, and listen."

She drew close to him, and he, bending forward, began to speak in a low, earnest whisper, to which she listened with pale, anxious attention.

A quarter of an hour afterwards, Mrs. Castleton passed through the outer offices, with a grave and preoccupied expression upon her face.

Could she, at that moment, have transported herself into the little closet in the private office and have watched the expression of Wylie's countenance, she might have considered twice before she committed herself to his proposals. He was leaning back in his chair, convulsed with inward laughter. "She herself will prevent Constance from saving Penrhuddyn! The twenty or thirty thousand that we have plotted against her having is the very sum she intends devoting to that purpose! This is delicious!"

Such were the thoughts then passing through his brain.

The die was cast, and Mrs. Castleton was Mrs. Arthur Penrhuddyn.

By advice of Sir Laurence, whose health was greatly improving, Arthur had returned to London a few days after that lady. His course lay clearly before him,

and he pursued it without hesitation or one thought of retreat.

One dark, foggy November morning they were married by license, with only Mrs. Freeman for a witness. It was a cold, cheerless wedding, and the clergyman shivered in the raw atmosphere as he offered the usual good wishes.

As they came out, a funeral was slowly passing down the road.

"The poor young lady was married in this church only a month ago," said the sexton, with that love of garnishing happy events by opposite and doleful anecdotes which characterizes the vulgar.

Eleonore shuddered, as she could feel her husband press her arm more closely to his side as he hurried her into the brougham. Passing his arm round her waist, and drawing her towards him, he said: "We must think no more of omens now, darling; let us leave all such dark shadows behind us at the altar. We are defying augury—let us now think only of love."

Never had her spirit been so softened. But the next moment came the blighting memory of how cruelly he was deceived in her; by what lies, and trickery, and deceit she had gained his love. She had not even confessed to him that she had once borne the fatal name of De Soissons. But that secret he knew inwardly, as clearly as though she had written it down.

"Shall I tell him now?" she thought. "No; let no other dark shadow come between us on this day."

The cheerful drawing room, with its blazing fire, and the table laid out daintily for the wedding breakfast, revived their flagging spirits. There was to be no honeymoon excursion; they were to remain at Brompton.

"Ours has, indeed, been a quiet wedding," she said, as they sat by the fire together.

"You know my reasons, dearest; in the present state of my father's health and affairs, I could not break so important an event to him. But, hereafter, there shall be another wedding—one worthy of you, and of the future mistress of Penrhuddyn."

What sweet music those last words sounded in her ears! "And it is I who will save Penrhuddyn," she thought. But even with this feeling of triumph came a revulsion. "If Wylie should play me false!"

"You shiver—are you cold?" asked Arthur.

"Oh, no; but I fancied I saw a hideous face in the fire," she answered.

That evening a letter was forwarded to Arthur from his own lodgings. It announced that Sir Laurence would be in town on the next day.

CHAPTER XXIII.

Not until a fortnight after his visit to Jerome could Stafford obtain his eagerly desired interview with Constance.

He had traveled to Guildford the next morning by the first train, and hung about the neighborhood of Linden Grange in the hope of accidentally meeting her. But the hope was not fulfilled. The next day, by dint of indirect inquiries, he learned that she was confined to her room by a severe cold. He contrived to get a letter conveyed to her and to receive a reply, making an appointment.

The day on which they met was Arthur's and Eleonore's wedding day. The place was the same which had witnessed their meeting some ten weeks back. Spite of himself, he could not prevent his first greeting being cold and restrained.

"What has happened, Edward?" she asked, anxiously. "Why have you written so urgently to me?"

"For your sake more than mine," he answered; "to clear your name from a blighting calumny."

She turned very pale, and asked faintly what he meant. He observed the look and tone, and it struck a pang of fear to his heart. But it brought him at once to the point, and made him speak plainly and concisely. So, without one word of preface or observation, he told the story, every incident of it, from Jerome's first meeting with the so-called Katie Doran on Westminster Bridge, to his, Stafford's, discovery of the picture in the gallery of Penrhuddyn, and the conversation he had heard upon his last visit to Jerome's studio. Then he waited her reply.

During the course of his narrative the pale, pained look upon her face had gradually changed to one of puzzled inquiry.

"But I know nothing of all this," she said, when he had finished. "I never heard of this Jerome or of his painting."

"Thank heaven!" he cried, seizing her hand and pressing it passionately to his lips.

"There is only one circumstance in the whole story that I have any knowledge of. I perfectly remember some men staring rudely at me in Harley street one day as I was stepping into my carriage; and that afterwards came up to the window, which my uncle drew up in their faces."

"But Jerome told me that you turned quite pale at the sight of him, and in this assertion he was corroborated by a second party."

"I could not be disturbed at the sight of Mr. Jerome, considering that I had never before seen nor even heard of the gentleman," she answered, flushing. "There was, certainly, one person in the group the sight of whom might have produced such an effect."

"And that was—"

"A man whom I once knew under the name of Parsons," she answered, in a low voice, and with downcast eyes; "a man who once cruelly wronged me."

"In what way?" eagerly inquired Stafford.

She was silent for a moment, then answered, quietly, "I cannot tell you now."

(To be continued.)

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Ennepek (interrupting)—Then why do you do it, my dear?

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"I reckon I do," said one small, serious-looking boy.

"What is the reason, Johnnie?"

"I guess he's home writing poetry," responded the boy, with a delighted chuckle.

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