

Half A Chance

BY FREDERICK S. ISHAM.

Author of "The Strollers," "Under the Rose," "The Lady of the Mount," Etc.

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"That I do. Not likely to forget him. Unmanageable; one of the worst. Was transported for life, with death as a penalty for returning." A slight sound came from the nobleman's side.

Lord Ronald's eyes half closed. "A heavy fisted, shapely brute, with muscles like steel, but ignorant." He fingered on the word. Then his glance suddenly lifted. "Had something on his arm; recall nothing it while the boat was on?"

Mr. Gillett, with a knowing expression, rose, took a volume from a bookcase and opened it.

"The something you speak of, my lord," he observed proudly, "should be here. I will show it that you may appreciate my system, the method I have of gathering and tabulating data. You will find an encyclopedia of information in that bookcase. All that Scotland Yard has and perhaps a little besides. To illustrate, here's his case." Gillett's fingers moved lightly over the page. "Testimony of Dandy Joe, downstairs at the time with landlady who kept the house where the crime was committed. Heard Frisco Pet, who had been drinking, come in, go upstairs, as they supposed, to his own room; shortly after loud voices; pistol shot. Landlady and Joe found woman, Amy Gerard, dead in shabby little sitting room. Pet, the worse for liquor, in dazed condition at a table, head in his hands. Testimony of Joe corroborated by landlady. She swore no one had been in house except parties here mentioned, all lodgers.

"Private men—house in bad neighborhood, near the Adelphi catamount. Son of landlady, red headed giant, also one time prizefighter, used to live here. The Pet's last fight in the ring was with him. Later Tom took to the road. Was wanted by the police at the time of the crime for some brutal highway work—'But,' breaking off, "I am wearying your lordship. Here are what I was especially looking for, the markings on the arm of the Frisco Pet. Perhaps, however, your lordship doesn't care to listen further."

"Go on!" The words broke sharply from the visitor's lips; then he gave a metallic laugh. "I am interested in this wonderful system of yours."

Mr. Gillett read slowly, "On the right arm of the Frisco Pet, just below the elbow, appears the figure of a man in sparring attitude done in sailor's tattooing; about the waist a flag, the stars and stripes in their accustomed colors crudely drawn, but not to be mistaken by noting following defects and details—'which,' closing the book, "I won't read."

His lordship's head had turned. "A good system," he remarked after an interval. "But my purpose—the purpose of my visit—I—we have wandered quite from that. Let us, I beg of you, talk business. I believe—the visitor moistened his lips—"I believe I mentioned—John Steele when I came in?"

"I am all attention, your lordship." Mr. Gillett's manner was keen, energetic. If he felt surprise he suppressed it. "Good! Your lordship's business concerns John Steele?"

"For reasons that need not be mentioned I want to find out all I can about him. That, I believe, is the sort of work you undertake. The terms for your services can be arranged later. It is unnecessary to say you will be well paid. I assume you can command competent and trustworthy help; that you have agents perhaps in other countries?"

Mr. Gillett nodded. "If your lordship would give me some idea of the scope of the inquiry—"

"The long fingers opened, then closed tightly.

"In the first place, you are to ascertain where John Steele was before he came to England, how he got there, what he did. Naturally if you have lived in a faraway port you would seek to know the ship that brought him there, the names of the captain and the crew."

"It shall be done, your lordship," replied the other quickly. "I shall embark in the matter with great zest and, I may add, interest. If I might be so bold, may I ask, does your lordship expect to find anything that would—ahem—cast any reflection on the high standing John Steele is building up for himself in the community?"

A shadow seemed to darken the mask-like features of the visitor. His gaze at once glittering, vaguely questioning, was fastened on the wall; then slowly without answering he got up. "Surmises are not to enter into this matter," he said shortly. "It is facts I want—facts."

"And your lordship shall have them. The case appears simple, not hard to get at the bottom of." An odd expression shone from the visitor's eyes. "Which reminds me he has left town," added Gillett.

"Left town?" Lord Ronald wheeled abruptly. "You mean—"

"For a little trip to the continent, I should imagine; heard of it because he got some unsuspicious court matter

put over." "Gone away?" The nobleman lifted a hand to his brow. "Last night." "It was only yesterday morning I was riding with him." "And he didn't mention the matter?" The visitor did not answer. "Why should he have gone away?" he murmured, half aloud. "Was it because—?" He walked to the door, at the threshold stopped and looked back. "You might begin your inquiry by learning all you can about this little trip," he suggested. And he departed.

Several months went by, and John Steele saw nothing further, although he heard often, of Miss Jocelyn Wray. His business to the continent, whatever its nature, had seemed sufficiently important to authorize from him to her in due process of time a short, perfunctory message regretting his inability to present himself at the appointed hour at Strathorn House.

A number of supposedly prospective clients had called to ask for him at his office during his sojourn on the other side of the channel. That was to have been expected. But one or two of these by dint of flattery or possibly silver lined persuasion had succeeded in gaining access to his chambers.

"I should like to have a look into John Steele's library. I've heard it's worth while," one had observed to the butler at the door. "Only a bit of a peep around!" His manner of putting his desire, supplemented by a half crown, left the butler no alternative save to comply with the request until the "peep around" began to develop into more than cursory examination, when his sense of propriety became outraged and the visitor's welcome was cut short.

"He was that curious, a regular Paul Pry," explained the servant to John Steele in narrating the incident on the latter's return to London. "Seemed specially taken by the reports of the old trials you have on the shelves, sir. 'What an interesting collection of causes celebres!' he kept remarking. 'I suppose your master makes much of them.' He would have been handling of them, too, and when I showed him the door—trusting I did right, sir, even if he should happen to be a client—he asked more questions before going."

"What questions?" quietly.

"Personal-like. But I put a stop to that."

For a few moments John Steele said nothing. His face on his reappearance in London had looked slightly paler, more set and determined, not unlike that of a man who, strongly assailed, has made up his mind to do battle to the end. With whom? How many?

"You will admit no one to my chambers during my absence in the future," said Steele at length to the man sternly, "no one, you understand, under any pretext whatever, even—a flicker of grim humor in the deep eyes—"if he should say he was a client of mine."

(To Be Continued.)

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THE LESSER PEACH BORER

By A. A. Girault, Engaged in Deciduous Fruit Insect Investigation for the Department of Agriculture.

The cocoon is constructed of pieces of bark chewed into fine bits, frass, and silk secreted by larva, and is light yellowish brown in color, and soft to the touch. An old cocoon varies but it is always several millimeters longer than the pupa which it incloses.

The larva having formed a cocoon and inclosed itself within, waits several days and then pupates. The pupa is brownish yellow in color, dark at the edges of the segments, sutures, head and wing covered, spindle-shaped, and is broadest at the first abdominal segment. It has all characters normal to its family. The setae are sparse and minute. The spines of the first abdominal segment are very weak; in the female there is but a single row of these after the first abdominal segment, and in the male after the 6th abdominal segment. The secondary sexual characters are therefore distinct. The cremaster consists of 8 stout spines surrounding the anal end. Structurally the pupa is similar to that of the peach borer, but easily distinguished from it by its smaller size and lighter color, by the smaller and lighter cocoons, and by the more finely granulated structure of the latter. The pupa varies considerable in length, being from 10—17 mm., averaging about 14 mm.

Just after formation the pupa is nearly white, gradually turning darker and darker to its natural color after several hours. As the instar approaches its close, it turns darker and darker, gradually assuming the color of the inclosed moth, becoming steel-blue black a couple of days before emerging. Emergence, however, may be delayed several days after the assumption of the color. In the cocoon the pupa is naturally covered with more or less moisture.

The duration of the pupa instar varies according to seasons and latitude. At Myrtle, Ga., and vicinity records of actual instar obtained during 1906 from pupa first formed, in the late winter and early spring, shows a maximum period of 32 days, and a minimum period toward the end of April, of 20 days. In the latitude of Washington, D. C., records obtained in 1906, for first pupa formed in April, the adults emerging early in May, give actual pupal instar from 29 to 30 days. By the middle of May in the same latitude the peach instar at Tryon, N. C., as being about 26 days during May, 1904. These records did not include the several days spent in the cocoon as a larva, which must be added.

Immediately preceding the final ecdysis, the pupa becomes restless somewhat and swollen, and, by aid of a row of spines with which it is armed rather quickly works its way through the anterior end of the cocoon up to about its fourth or fifth abdominal segment. The moth emerges while the pupa is in this position, projecting for more than half its length from the cocoon.

The adult—Moths of the lesser peach borer resemble in general others of the family Aegeriidae and more particularly the males of the peach borer. They may be distinguished most easily from the latter by the fact of their bearing but two yellow bands on the abdomen, on the second and fourth segments, respectively, the band on the fourth segment sometimes not entirely encircling it; whereas, the male of the peach borer has a yellow band on the posterior

margin of each of the abdominal segments, some of which may be more or less obsolete. The males of the latter are also larger than the moths of the former, but again agree in having a general hymenopteriform aspect, but flying in the bright sunlight the two species are easily recognized after a little practice in observing them. The sexes of the lesser peach borer are quite similar, but may be distinguished by one or two minor secondary characters, such as the simple antennae of the female and the more robust abdomen and straight anal tuft. Probably the most available secondary character, however, is found in the frenulum, which in the female consists of two closely applied, long, and slender spines, while in the male it is single and slightly shorter. This character is concealed by the front wings.

The adults emerge from the pupae in the morning hours, generally between 7:30 and 9:30, the males issuing slightly earlier than the females. They are more likely to issue on clear days, being somewhat retarded by cloudy or inclement weather. At the time of ecdysis the pupa, which is projecting from the cocoon as described, commences peristaltic-like movements of the abdominal segments which after several seconds cause the pupal integument to part rapidly along the meson of the thorax and the sclerites of the head and wings. Almost simultaneously with this parting of the pupal integument, the moth begins to move forward and glides out, the forelegs holding to the nearest object to prevent it from falling. The actual emergence requires but a few seconds. At this time the moth is perfect but for folded wings, and can move with a peculiar jerky, gliding motion when it falls to the ground or is disturbed, but otherwise it prefers to remain motionless or to crawl to a convenient place. During the unfolding of the wings, when the moth is weak and delicate, it is probably in the most critical stage of its existence. If it falls, it is likely to injure the soft wings and become crippled, in which case it will almost certainly die a few hours later. The slightest injury at this period appears to be fatal directly or indirectly. The wings begin to swell at once and slowly expand, becoming normal after about 8 to 10 minutes. After expansion, however, they are still weak and unfit for use for at least another half hour.

As soon as ready for flight, the female moves to a convenient place and, taking position, begins to attract the males by elevating the end of the abdomen and extending the ovipositor horizontally from it. No perceptible odor is present. In badly infested orchards the males will begin to arrive after 3 or 4 minutes, or earlier, and soon a swarm of a dozen or more will be humming around the female. The sexes unite suddenly; the male grasps the female with the claspers, and then turning assumes the position normal to the Lepidoptera. Copulation may last a variable time. Mr. J. H. Beattie, then connected with this bureau, observed a pair remain in copula 65 minutes on August 16, 1905, at noon, and an observation made in the late summer of 1906 gave 58 minutes. In case the weather is unfavorable or no males appear, the females will continue to await them for several days, during the time from about 10 a. m. to 3 p. m.

(To Be Continued.)

CENTRAL POINT NEWSLETTER

E. J. and L. K. Shepherd, of Ashland, and E. H. Evans and wife, of Medford were registered at the Central Point hotel Wednesday.

Roderick Easley has been appointed Chief of the soon-to-be-organized Volunteer Fire department, and a meeting for the organization of the company has been announced for next Wednesday evening.

S. A. Pattison, Editor of the Herald is moving his family into the new bungalow recently erected by Dr. E. Davis.

Mrs. Jessie Amy, of Los Angeles, mother of Mrs. J. H. Kincaid, of this city, and, step-mother of Frank Amy, a former resident, arrived here a day or two ago and will spend the summer with relatives here.

Mr. Stevens, of Gold Key was in town on Tuesday attending to the transfer of furniture purchased by her of Mrs. Excess, at the time of the sale of Mrs. Evans' property and household effects. Mrs. S. A. Murrey accompanied her to Gold Hill for a few days visit.

A letter received on Wednesday by Miss Isabel Curtis, visiting at the home of J. W. Merritt, states that her grand parents are much better, and Miss Isabel will prolong her visit here for one more week in consequence.

The Central Point State bank now

meetings have been very successful, and a large number of people have been soundly converted it is believed.

Mr. Chas. M. Davis, of Tenino, Wash., an experienced paper hanger, painter and decorator, is thinking of establishing a business here. Good opening too.

Will M. Morris and Miss Ethel Tucker were married at the home of the groom's mother, Mrs. C.W. Morris, in this city on Wednesday afternoon of this week. The groom is a resident of Central Point, while the bride's former home was in Brownboro, Oregon. The young couple will reside here. Rev. K. H. Stegagoose was the officiating clergyman.

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