SERIAL STORY

The Chronicles of Addington Peace

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19

THE VANISHED MILLIONAIRE

(Continued.)

I woke with a start that left me sitting up in bed, with my heart thumping in my ribs like a piston-rod. I am not generally a light sleeper, but that night, even while I snored, my nerves were active. Some one had tapped at my door—that was my impression.

I listened with the uncertain fear that comes to the newly waked. Then I heard it again—on the wall near my head this time. A board creaked. Some one was groping his way down the dark corridor without. Presently he stopped, and a faint line of illumination sprang out under my door. It winked, and then grew still. He had lit a candle.

Assurance came with the streak of light. What was he doing, groping in the dark, if he had a candle with him? I crept over to the door, opened it, and stared cautiously out.

About a score feet away a man was standing—a striking figure against the light he carried. His back was towards me, but I could see that his hand was shading the candle from his eyes while he stared into the shadows that clung about the further end of the corridor.

Presently he began to move forward. The picture gallery and the body of the house lay behind me. The corridor in which he stood terminated in a window, set deep into the stone of the old walls. The man walked slowly, throwing the light to right and left. His attitude was of nervous expectation—that of a man who looked for something that he feared to see.

At the window he stopped, staring about him and listening. He examined the fastenings, and then tried a door on his right. It was locked against him. As he did so I caught his profile against the light. It was Harbord, the secretary. From where I stood he was not more than forty feet away. There was no possibility of a mistake.

As he turned to come back I retreated into my room, closed the door. The fellow was in a state of great agitation, and I could hear him muttering to himself as he walked. When he had passed by I peeped out to see him and his light dwindle, reach the corner by the picture gallery, and fade into a reflection—a darkness.

I took care to turn the key before I got back into bed.

I woke again at seven, and, hurrying on my clothes, set off to tell Peace all about it. I took him to the place, and together we examined the corridor. There were only two rooms beyond mine. The one on the left was an unoccupied bedroom; that on the right was a large storeroom, the door of which was locked. The housekeeper kept the key, we learnt upon inquiry. Whom had Harbord followed? The problem was beyond me. As for Inspector Peace, he did not indulge in verbal speculations.

It was in the central hall that we encountered the secretary on his way to the breakfast room. The man looked nervous and depressed; he nodded to us, and was passing on, when Peace stopped him.

"Good morning, Mr. Harbord," he said. "Can I have a word with you?"

"Certainly, inspector. What is it?"

"I have a favor to ask. My assistant and myself have our hands full here. If necessary could you help us by running up to London, and—"

"For the day?" he interrupted.

"No. It may be an affair of three or four days."

"Then I must refuse. I am sorry, but—"

"Don't apologize, Mr. Harbord," said the little man, cheerfully. "I shall have to find some one else—that is all."

We walked into the breakfast room, and a few minutes later Ransom appeared with a great bundle of letters and telegrams in his hand.

Ransom said not a word to any of us, but dropped into a chair, tearing open the envelopes and glancing at their contents. His face grew darker as he read, and once he thumped his hand upon the table with a crash that set the china jingling.

"Well, inspector?" he said at last.

The little detective's head shook out a negative.

"Perhaps you require an incentive," he sneered. "Is it a matter of a reward?"

"No, Mr. Ransom; but it is becoming one of my personal reputation."

"Then, by thunder! you are in danger of losing it. Why don't you and your friend hustle, instead of loitering around as if you were paid by the day? I tell you, man, there are thousands—hundreds of thousands—melting, slipping through your fingers, every hour, every hour."

He sprang from his seat and started his walk again—up and down, up and down, as we had first seen him.

"Shall you be returning to London?"

At the question the manager halted in his stride, staring sharply down into the inspector's bland countenance.

"No," he said; "I shall stay here, Mr. Addington Peace, until such time as you have something definite to tell me."

"I have an inquiry to make which I would rather place in the hands of some one who has personal knowledge of Mr. Ford. Neither Mr. Harbord nor yourself desire to leave Meudon. Is there anyone else you can suggest?"

"There is Jackson—Ford's valet," said the manager, after a moment's thought. "He can go, if you think him bright enough. I'll send for him."

While the footman who answered the bell was gone upon his errand, we waited in an uneasy silence. There was the shadow of an ugly mystery upon us all. Jackson, as he entered, was the only one who seemed at his ease. He stood there—a tall figure of all the respectabilities.

"The inspector here wishes you to go to London, Jackson," said the manager. "He will explain the details. There is a fast train from Camdon at eleven."

"Certainly, sir. Do I return tonight?"

"No, Jackson," said Peace. "It will take a day or two."

The man took a couple of steps towards the door, hesitated, and then returned to his former place.

"I beg your pardon, sir," he began, addressing Ransom. "But I would rather remain at Meudon under present circumstances."

"What on earth do you mean?" thundered the manager.

"Well, sir, I was the last to see Mr. Ford. There is, at it were, a suspicion upon me. I should like to be present while the search continues, both for his sake—and my own."

"Very kind of you, I'm sure," growled Ransom. "But you either do what I tell you, Jackson, or you pack your boxes and clear out. So be quick and make up your mind."

"I think you are treating me most unfairly, sir. But I cannot be persuaded out of what I know to be my duty."

"You impertinent rascal!" began the furious manager. But Peace was already on his feet with a hand outstretched.

"Perhaps, after all, I can make other arrangements, Mr. Ransom," he said. "It is natural that Jackson should consider his own reputation in this affair. That is all, Jackson; you may go now."

It was half an hour afterwards, when the end of breakfast had dispersed the party, that I spoke to Peace about it, offering to go to London myself and do my best to carry out his instructions.

"I had bad luck in my call for volunteers," he said.

"I should have thought they would have been glad enough to get the chance of work. They can find no particular amusement in loafing about the place all day."

"Doubtless they all had excellent reasons," he said with a smile. "But anyway, you cannot be spared, Mr. Phillips."

"You flatter me."

"I want you to stay in your bedroom. Write, read, do what you like, but keep your door ajar. If anyone passes down the corridor, see where he goes, only don't let him know that you are watching him if you can help it. I will take my turn at half-past one. I don't mean to starve you."

I obeyed. After all, it was, in a manner, promotion that the inspector had given me; yet it was a tedious, anxious time. No one came my way, barring a sour-looking housemaid. I tried to argue out the case, but the deeper I got the more conflicting grew my theories. I was never more glad to see a friendly face than when the little man came in upon me.

The short winter's afternoon crept on, the inspector and I taking turn and turn about in our sentry duty. Dinner time came and went. I had been off duty from nine, but at ten-thirty I poured out a whisky and soda and went back to join him. He was sitting in the middle of the room smoking a pipe in great apparent satisfaction.

"Bed time, isn't it?" I grumbled, sniffing at his strong tobacco.

"Oh, no," he said. "The fact is, we are going to sit up all night."

I threw myself on a couch by the window without reply. Perhaps I was not in the best of tempers; certainly I did not feel so.

"You insisted on coming down with me," he suggested.

"I know all about that," I told him. "I haven't complained, have I? If you want me to shut myself up for a week I'll do it; but I should prefer to have some idea of the reason why."

"I don't wish to create mysteries, Mr. Phillips," he said kindly; "but, believe me, there is nothing to be gained in vague discussions."

I knew that settled it as far as he was concerned, so I nodded my head and filled a pipe. At eleven he walked across the room and switched off the light.

"If nothing happens, you can take your turn in four hours from now," he said. "In the meanwhile get to sleep. I will keep the first watch."

I shut my eyes; but there was no rest in me that night. I lay listening to the silence of the old house with a dull speculation. Somewhere far down in the lower floor a great gong-like clock chimed the hours and quarters. I heard them every one from twelve to one, from one to two. Peace had stopped smoking. He sat as silent as a cat at a mousehole.

It must have been some fifteen minutes after two that I heard the faint, faint creak of a board in the corridor outside. I sat up, every nerve strung to a tense alertness. And then there came a sound I knew well, the soft drawing touch of a hand groping in the darkness as some one felt his way along the panelled walls. It passed us and was gone. Yet Peace never moved. Could he have fallen asleep? I whispered his name.

"Hush!"

The answer came to me like a gentle sigh.

One minute, two minutes more and the room sprang into sight under the glow of an electric hand-lamp. The inspector rose from his seat and slid through the door, with me upon his heels. The light he carried searched the clustered shadows; but the corridor was empty, nor was there any place where a man might hide.

"You waited too long," I whispered impatiently.

"The man is no fool, Mr. Phillips. Do you imagine that he was not listening and staring like a hunted beast. A noisy board, a stumble, or a flash of light, and we should have wasted a tiring day."

"Nevertheless he has got clear away."

"I think not."

As we crept forward I saw that a strip of the oak flooring along the walls was gray with dust. If it had been in such a neglected state in the afternoon I should surely have noticed it. In some curiosity I stooped to examine the phenomenon.

"Flour," whispered the little man, touching my shoulder.

"Flour?"

"Yes. I sprinkled it myself. Look—there is the first result."

He steadied his light as he spoke, pointing with his other hand. On the powdery surface was the half footprint of a man.

The flour did not extend more than a couple of feet from the walls, so that it was only here and there that we caught up the trail. We had passed the bedroom on the left—yet the footprints still went on; we were at the store-room door, yet they still were visible before us. There was no other egress from the corridor. The tall window at the end was, as I knew, a good twenty feet from the ground. Had this man also vanished off the earth like Silas Ford?

Suddenly the inspector stopped, grasping my arm. The light he held fell upon two footprints set close together. They were at right angles to the passage. Apparently the man had passed into the solid wall!

"Peace, what does this mean?"

(CHRONICLES TO BE CONTINUED.)

HIS ATTITUDE WAS OF NERVOUS EXPECTATION

Prehistoric Monster.

Eighty feet long and thirty feet high, the atlantosaurus was one of our prehistoric animals.

USE FOR STALE BREAD

MAY BE MADE OVER INTO MANY NICE DISHES.

Our Grandmothers Knew Particularly Well How It Might Be Done—Some Recipes Presented That Are Worth Trying.

The modern housekeeper is likely to buy a loaf of fresh bread every day at the baker's, but our grandmothers made their bread at home and used up every scrap of one baking before baking day came around again.

Here are some of the ingenious ways in which one grandmother disguised stale bread so that the most pernickerty child she had would not know it from a brand new dish.

Even though small economies are seldom practiced in these days when the high cost of living stalks abroad, yet these old recipes will prove what used to be called "tasty" dishes for breakfast and luncheon.

Cut squares of very hard bread two inches thick; steam over boiling water for twenty minutes and serve hot, with butter and maple syrup.

Or cut the bread in one-inch squares, put in a colander, and dash cold water over them. Then fry the squares in butter until they are a delicate brown. Break two eggs over them, cook three minutes, and serve immediately. This is particularly good for breakfast.

Another way is to make our old friend, French or Spanish toast, which is good for breakfast or luncheon. Cut rather thick slices of bread, dip in milk, then in beaten egg, and fry a delicate brown. Serve this very hot, and, if possible, with maple syrup.

If you happen to have a whole stale loaf left over here is a fascinating way to use it. Cut off all the crust, put it on a tin, and set in the oven to dry and brown. When it is a light golden brown lay it on the molding board and crush fine. Then cut the crustless loaf into pieces one inch thick and two or three inches long; beat two eggs very light, add two cups of sweet milk and a pinch of salt, dip the pieces of bread in the mixture, roll in the fine bread crumbs, and drop them into hot lard. When they are fried a nice brown put them on a hot dish and sprinkle thickly with sugar and a little fine connamon.

A really delicious pudding can be made in the following manner: Take rather thick slices of bread from which the crust is trimmed. Butter these slices on both sides. Heat a can of rather tart red or purple plums, put a layer of fruit in the bottom of a pudding dish, then a layer of bread and butter, and continue until the dish is filled. Set it in the oven for five minutes to get heated through. Then remove it from the oven, cover with a plate, put a weight on it, and set where it will become thoroughly cold. Eat it with cream and sugar. Tart cherries may be used in place of plums, or blackberries, and there should be plenty of juice, so that the bread may be saturated.

Apple Desserts.

Make a very thin apple sauce; half a kettle full. When soft add sugar, butter and cinnamon to taste. While still cooking, lay upon the top small dumplings made of reliable flour and milk, cover and cook gently about 20 minutes. Sometimes I serve a hard sauce with this. Berries, canned or fresh, are fine this way.

Another similar dessert, but prepared a little differently, is made by filling cups nearly to the top with apple sauce. Put a thin dumpling made as above on the top. Cook in a steam cooker. Serve with any sweet hot sauce. I use one cup sugar, one tablespoon flour, one tablespoon butter (cream two last), add one cup boiling water, nutmeg. Let come to a boil.

Ice Cream Trifles.

Work one egg and a tablespoonful of sugar into as much flour as will make a stiff paste. Roll out thin and cut into the shape of the petals of a rose. Cut two sections, one a little larger than the other. Place one on top of the other and press firmly together in the point. Drop into hot fat; when they rise to the surface and curl up, they are done. Take out with a skimmer and lay on sieve to drain. Put a spoonful of ice cream in the center, and perch a butterfly, made in the same manner, beside each rose. The butterfly is iced with white frosting and chocolate.—Harper's Bazar.

Spider Corn Cake.

Take one cup of cornmeal, one-half teaspoon salt, mix with new buttermilk till it can be poured from the dish, then dissolve one-half teaspoon of soda in one tablespoon cold water and add to the batter, also one egg not beaten. Beat all well and turn into hot spider which has been well buttered. Put in rot oven and bake till just cooked. It does not get brown on top and is about one inch thick when cooked. Serve hot with butter or molasses. Cut it in wedges like a pie.

Jelly Hint.

When I make jelly I melt the paraffin in an old coffee pot. I find this to be a very easy way to pour the wax over the top of the jelly without spilling it on the table or tray.—Indianapolis Star.

When Washing Collars.

Before washing lace collars, I baste them closely on a piece of white cloth to keep them from being stretched or torn. If no starch is put in them, they will look like new.—Washington Star.

VALUABLE CROP FOR SWINE

Hogs of All Ages Relish Cut Alfalfa When Fed in Slop and Make Excellent Growth.

I have found that alfalfa makes one of the most valuable crops for the hog grower, whether it is pastured or cut up finely and fed with ground feed, writes John H. Dunlay in the Farm, Stock and Home. Last winter when middlings were selling around $30 per ton I cut alfalfa in a cutting box and fed with the warm slop to all my hogs that did not have access to blue grass or the rye fields. Hogs of all ages relished the cut alfalfa when fed in the slop and they made a fine growth.

The alfalfa was cut to about one-half an inch in length and then scalded before being mixed with the ground feed. I usually put the cut alfalfa in a large galvanized tank and pour boiling water over it. It is then left to stand over night and if covered will be warm the next morning.

I want to purchase a feed grinder that will grind alfalfa into a coarse meal, and if I do this I think the hogs will find it even more palatable. Alfalfa contains about the same amount of protein as found in the best middlings and at the same time it seems to act as a tonic for all the hogs that have access to it.

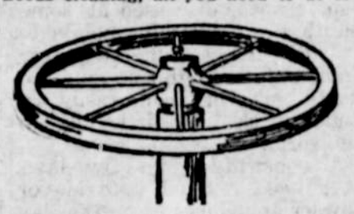
It is not too late to sow alfalfa and it will pay you to sow at least a small patch even if you only feed the hogs the cured hay during the winter months, when they do not get green feed. When there is a good supply of alfalfa, it makes the best of forage crops for hogs of all ages. Alfalfa, when pastured, should be allowed to get a good start and should not be pastured the first season. In this way it gets a good start and is able to stand pasturing better the next year. It is well to ring the hogs or take them from the alfalfa field if the ground gets wet or muddy.

CHEAP ROOST FOR CHICKENS

Discarded Cart Wheel May Be Made to Serve Purpose—No Trouble in Cleaning House.

(By G. DOVER.)

Take a cart wheel and stab the axle into the ground, or cut the axle in two, bolt it to a post and set the post in the ground. When the chicken house needs cleaning, all you need to do is



Roost for Chickens.

to lift the wheel off and it is out of the way. Then, too, if there is a chicken on the other side from you that you wish to catch, just turn the wheel around.

SUMMER RATION FOR HORSES

Good Combination Is Corn, Bran and Little Oilmeal—More Carbohydrates and Less Protein.

If corn must be fed to the horses, grinding it will not pay, unless the horses have poor teeth, in which case it might be advisable. Feeding the ear or shelled corn would be the more desirable method of feeding.

Crushed corn and cobmeal is not as good because of the cost of crushing, and the amount of food value secured from the cob is so small that it does not make up for the energy required to digest so much crude fiber.

A combination of corn, bran and a little oilmeal make a good summer ration for horses. Feeding a 1,000-pound horse about ten pounds of corn and three pounds of bran per day would be equivalent to fourteen pounds of oats, although it contain a little more carbohydrates and less protein, thus making a little wider ration. A small amount of oilmeal would offset this, however.

GENERAL FARM NOTES

Rotate your garden crop.

Give the radishes just a little shade.

Plant early smooth peas. Alaska is a good early variety.

The farmer is known by the amount of clover seed he sows.

A set of steel drills will soon pay many times their small cost.

One way to increase the profits of your farm is to build a silo.

Fine cabbages follow beans but do not grow well after potatoes.

Alfalfa pasture and hogs make a combination that is hard to beat.

Sweet peas should be planted as soon as the ground can be worked.

Do not plant your potatoes in the same old place and invite the scab.

Save muscle and time when cutting bands by having a keen-edged knife.

Plant radishes remote from the track infested by the wire-worm last year.

When short of room, train squash vines on trellises or wire fence; they are good climbers.

Plant cucumbers in level rows; in dry seasons they do better than when grown in elevated beds.

Onions, beets, spniach, radishes and lettuce may be sown as soon as the ground can be worked easily.

Lettuce should not be where the soil is too dry or light. Parsley will stand such soil a little better.

For the LITTLE ONES

NEW BLOWPIPE GLIDER TOY

Whirling Wheel Describes Arc Over Person Blowing It Into Air and Returns to His Feet.

One of the new glider toys placed upon the market this year is a whirling-wheel glider which describes an arc over the person blowing it into the air and returns to his feet from

Boomerang Glider.

the rear, says the Popular Mechanics. The glider is in the form of an elongated plate with ends turned down and is somewhat similar to a pinwheel. It is set upon pegs at the outer end of a blowpipe, and when air is puffed through the latter it rises into the air.

COMMON WORDS IN ENGLAND

First Thing an Englishman Notices in America Is That Nobody Says "Thank You."

The most used words in England are "Thank you," says the New York Sun. It means anything from "yes" and "no" to "please get off my hat." When in doubt always say "Thank you."

When you give a servant anything he says "Thank you," and when he gives you something he says "Thank you." The first thing an Englishman notices when he comes to America is that nobody says "Thank you."

He gives the taxi driver "thrippence" and then misses his favorite "Thank you." At least what the taxi driver says doesn't sound like "Thank you."

When you reach France, however, you may relapse into all your little home comforts. You may pick your teeth and manicure your nails in a restaurant, and you can eat anything you like with your fingers. You may omit your daily tub and patronize the "parfumerie."

But if you wish to be a gentleman you must wear smart clothes, smart clothes consisting chiefly of gayly colored waistcoats, socks and ties.

Do You Know That—

Only one man in 203 is over 6 feet in height.

The nightingale's song can be heard at a distance of a mile.

One pound of cork will support a man of ordinary size in the water.

Three thousand marriages are performed every day all over the world.

An ordinary railway engine is equivalent in strength to about 900 horses.

The modern kid glove goes through the hands of 235 workmen before it is finished.

Over $1,000,000 worth of diamonds are stolen every year from the South African diamond mines.

In males, the average weight of the full-grown human brain is about forty-nine or fifty ounces; in females, forty-four ounces.

RIDDLES

Why has the shoemaker wonderful powers of endurance?

Because he holds on to the last.

Why is the nose in the middle of the face?

Because it is the center (scenter).

What is a put-up job?

The paper on the wall.

Why is a pleasure trip to Egypt fit only for very old men?

Because it's a see-Nile thing to do?

When is a butcher like a thorough thief?

When he steals a knife and cuts away with it.

Why does a young lady prefer her mother's fortune to her father's?

Because, though she likes patrimony, she better likes matrimony.

When was Napoleon I. most shabbily dressed?

When he was out at Elba (elbow).

Why do girls kiss each other, and men not?

Because girls have nothing better to kiss and men have.

When is a fish kettle like a city omnibus?

When it's blocked-tin (blocked in).

When is a young lady not a young lady?

When she is a sweet tart (sweetheart).