

# Andover News.

WEDNESDAY, MARCH 7, 1894.

The Postoffice Department has a printed circular to send to correspondents who write to ask how much the government pays for canceled stamps. This becomes necessary on account of the large number of people who seem to think that there is value in such stamps.

The Denver Times exclaims: "Something will certainly have to be done to put an end to the dangerous and costly epidemic of train-robbing that has been sweeping over the country during the past six months, from north to south and from east to west. A terrible example will have to be made of some of the robbers, and it may become necessary to enact laws especially for their benefit."

Gathering wild fowls' eggs has long been a sport for boys living along the Atlantic coast of Maryland. The narrow reef that guards the eastern shore counties is a famous breeding place for many kinds of aquatic fowl, and their nests are frequently invaded and wantonly destroyed. There is a sentiment against the destruction of game birds' eggs; the hundred and one varieties of inedible birds are protected by no such sentiment.

The quantity of pepper, particularly red pepper, that is consumed by the natives of tropical countries will be deemed incredible to people who live in more temperate regions, but there is a physiological reason for the use of these sharp condiments. The use of red pepper in the tropics braces up the digestive organs when impaired and relaxed by the great heat. In other words, pepper is nature's tonic against hot weather and the more liberal use of it in summer time might be beneficial even to the natives of the temperate zones.

A few of the figures of animals that are sold for lawn ornaments and other uses are made of iron, but they are generally made of cast zinc, with a bronze paint finish. The animal figures most in demand are deer, dogs and lions. Deer are made of various sizes, up to ten or twelve feet in height. Dogs are made of a dozen kinds, large and small, standing and reclining. Lions are made of all sizes from small to heroic, and sitting, standing and reclining. Lions sell at from \$25 to \$300 each; a life-size lion brings about \$125. Deer range at from \$60 to \$300 each; life size, \$65. Dogs are from \$25 to \$100 each. We export these figures to Mexico, Central America, West Indies and South America. In this country about equal numbers of deer, dogs and lions are sold; the demand in foreign countries is mostly for lions.

It is a curious fact that Canada imports butter from England. One would suppose that it would be England which would import butter from Canada. This is indeed the case, for between 5,000,000 and 6,000,000 pounds of butter a year are sent from the dominion to the mother country. At the same time, however, Canada imports about 15,000 pounds of butter annually. The explanation of this mystery is that the butter which is exported from Canada brings eighteen or twenty cents a pound, while that which comes from England sells for only eight to ten cents. Thus the very excellence of the Canadian product renders it possible to find in that country a market for an inferior article from abroad. A similar anomaly surprises Americans who visit Bermuda. The fame of Bermuda potatoes has gone far abroad, and yet Bermuda buys potatoes from the United States and the maritime provinces. The reason is that potatoes grow on the group of islands bring so high a price in the New York market that it pays the farmers to send them there and put on their own tables the cheaper Irish potatoes which the steamer brings back. In fact, Bermuda potatoes are really a luxury in Bermuda, and the cheaper boarding houses do not serve them to their guests.

Looking into a glass to paint one's face is not wholly a feminine trick. A man looks into a glass to color his nose.



GENEVIEVE ULMER.

Ralph Prescott stood spell-bound, overwhelmed. He knew the woman in that room; he had met a surprise most startling; he had recognized the false nurse as the last person in the world he had ever expected to see in those somber hallways.

"It is she! What does it mean? What can it mean?" Oh, this is bewildering, impossible.

She? Yes; the one woman in the world who filled his mind's thoughts to the exclusion of all others. She—Ruth! the disowned, the wife of another, the heiress of Maple Leaf Farm.

There could be no doubt as to her identity; there could be no mistake; there was no need of a second glance.

The same pure, soulful eyes looked forth, only a trifle sadder than of yore; the fresh bloom of roses on the pearly cheek was the same, only a trace of the canker of care had paled it almost imperceptibly. Resolution compressed the lips slightly, anxiety brooded on the fair brow, but—Ruth Elliott was there!

What did it mean?

From wonderment to flashing suspicion on the thoughts of the enmeshed lurker passed rapidly.

Ruth Elliott was here, had been here for over a week. She had passed the cynosure of curious eyes with her identity unguessed; but had not Geoffrey Forsythe known her—had not he possibly even suggested the disguise?

If so—In the bewildering jugglery of disguise, doubt, and speculation Ralph Prescott lost himself.

Here, indeed, was a mystery—a mystery with a motive, surely—a motive that had made of a timid, shrinking girl a bold, resolute woman. For sweet love's sake she had undertaken a monstrous imposition; but why and where for the tangible issue of it all?

"It's beyond me! I can't understand it," breathed the lurker. "But I will know. Where there is secrecy there is mystery, where mystery, a plot. I thought myself a master hand, and this girl—she has outwitted, defeated, crushed me utterly."

He drew back from the window as he saw that she slept. His sinister face expressed every emotion in the gamut of a scheming rascal's mind—avarice, suspicion, love, hate, vengeful persistency.

For an hour he ruminated alone in the garden. Night influences were about him. The brooding clouds had inspired him to subtlety and plotting.

He approached the broken shutter again. Ruth slumbered.

"I will act with caution," he muttered grimly. "A sudden confrontation might precipitate flight. I will watch and wait—but I must know what her continued presence here means. I must know her scheme. I must bask its outcome, if possible. The letter she was writing—that may reveal all. If I could only get a glimpse at that!"

Prescott approached the unshuttered window of the vacant apartment. The door of communication with the adjoining one was closed securely. Ruth slumbered profoundly.

He was an adept at sneaking into the house after late hours, a natural burglar, too.

With his pocket-knife and a rusted piece of hoop, he forced the catch and pried up the window sash.

The next moment he was in the room. On tip-toe he advanced to the stand where the written sheets lay outspread.

Eagerly he took them up. His elfish eyes scanned their contents.

The joy of a great glowing exultation came into his eyes as he read the story of a woman's struggle for the right of a woman's faith in a loved one's fidelity.

For the letter told all—it cast light on darkness, it constituted the history of as singular an exploit as ever fell under the eyes of mortal man.

CHAPTER X.

WHAT THE LETTER TOLD.

It was fortunate for the secret plans of Ralph Prescott that the occupant of the adjoining apartment slept, for so absorbed was he in reading the letter that lay before him that he was impervious to aught for the time being.

That letter was in Ruth's well-known dainty handwriting. It was addressed to Paul Dalton, her husband and it was a chronicle of events rather than an ordinary epistle.

"I do not know where you are," it began. "When we parted at the altar, with faith supreme in your loyalty, I only asked to know that you had gone to make a final effort to clear up the mystery of your life."

"Since then, events have happened that you must know. I have but one clue to your whereabouts. You mentioned Ferndale once. At Ferndale, I wrote you there yesterday, asking you to return here speedily."

"To-night, recalling still another town, I wrote you there also. Come back, for while your fair name must not go uncleaned, I have outwitted the man who

strove to blast your reputation—Ralph Prescott."

And then, in terse lines, the writer told the story of Ruth the outcast.

Driven from her father's door, she had wandered wretchedly in the snowy night.

An inspiration of faith in her old grandfather, Geoffrey Forsythe, sent her steps thither. She had not mistaken the affection of the old recluse. He had received her with open arms.

He had listened to her pitiful story, he sympathized with her; he questioned her particularly in detail as to the various sums of money that her father had missed, the dates of the abstractions, and much concerning the habits and actions of Ralph Prescott for a month past.

Putting together what he knew and what she said, old Geoffrey Forsythe amazed Ruth by denouncing Ralph Prescott as the real thief.

He said that of late he had heard considerable about the schemer's gambling proclivities. He had employed a man to watch him. He knew of almost every money deal of the young man. He now knew that certain amounts he had paid corresponded exactly with the sums John Elliott had lost; in fact, he proved Ralph Prescott to be the thief, beyond dispute.

"I had begun to suspect that he was a hypocritical time-server," he had told Ruth. "My eyes were just beginning to open to the sacrifice I was demanding of you in wedding a man who has no claim upon me, except for a sentimental regard on my part for his dead mother. Ruth, you will stay here. Disguised, you will be my nurse until I can explore still more deeply into this knave's deception. Your happiness is everything in life to me. A woman's heart cannot usually be wrong in estimating the character of the man she loves. I have faith in Paul Dalton, in a man who stood ready to be adjudged a criminal, rather than anger your father against you with a revelation of your mutual love. We will await his return, and if he disproves the charge that he is a convict, your father shall be made to do you both justice, and Ralph Prescott shall be unmasked in his true colors."

But sickness came sooner than old Geoffrey thought. His hours were numbered, and he knew it.

Afraid of the wily cunning of Elliott, it left Ruth his fortune, he divided it as known to the reader, and left the bulk of it to her husband at her suggestion.

All this, Ruth wrote to Paul Dalton; all this, sick at heart, the enraged, baffled, unscrupulous Ralph read.

Now she bade her husband return. He was wealthy now, and what might not money do to untangle the knotted skein of his mysterious life?

Ralph Prescott stole from that room with a pale, perturbed face.

He reclosed the window as he found it—he left no trace of his felonious visit. He knew all now, and that information was weighty, vital.

To Ruth his true character was fully revealed, and if he dared openly to persecute her she possessed the means of proving him to be the thief of Maple Leaf Farm. Furthermore, for love of the man she had wedded, she would use that knowledge if he tried to annoy her again.

Paul Dalton had captured the double prize—bride and fortune.

What should he do? His natural impulse was to seize on all the ready cash he could get his hands on, and, like the craven he was, sneak out of the lives and memories of those he had wronged.

A thought of revenge, however, a subtle suggestion of thought, a hopeful belief that there was yet one weak point in the armor of his foes, awoke a last desperate combativeness in Ralph Prescott's wicked heart.

"If Paul Dalton should die," he glowered in a sinister hiss of hate, "then all the fortune would revert to Ruth. Who knows what may happen? The tramp told me much. Paul Dalton is a convict, let him say what he likes. I will anticipate Ruth. I will go at once to Ferndale. I will dig up this man's past, that I may effectually blight his future. Oh, there is some way out of this labyrinth of mystery, there must be some compensation for all he has made me lose!"

And, hiding the fact that his own evil plannings had been the cause of his misfortunes alone, Ralph Prescott, at early dawn, started on horseback on the trail of the man who had so mysteriously disappeared.

CHAPTER XI.

THE CAPTAIN PRATT.

Ferndale was nearly eighty miles from Ridgeway, and located in another State, but by dint of hard riding and few stops Ralph Prescott reached his journey's end the next morning.

The plotter's thoughts and calculations were vague. What good he could gain by the present investigation he did not know. Circumstances would guide him, he told himself.

He hoped to learn something more about Dalton's past. A man who had been a forger, a convict, might have many serious flaws in his life. There might be other crimes for which Paul Dalton was wanted—else why had he sought the obscurity of Maple Leaf Farm? If this was true, and he could learn sufficient to be of real weight against Dalton or Ruth, the plotter might terrorize, persecute, blackmail them. He hardly thought as far as ever gaining Ruth. Money and revenge were now the sole actuating motives of his mean nature.

If he had hoped to find Paul Dalton established and publicly known at Ferndale, he was doomed to disappointment.

Inquiries at several places revealed

no reliable knowledge of the man sought.

One man thought the name sounded familiar, another started strangely, and repeated it over and over vaguely. "That name ain't altogether unknown to me," he said, "but I can't fit its owner. Seems to me, though, that old Danby, the miller—yes, that's it—I remember now. You see—"

The man checked himself suddenly. "Well, go on," insinuated Paul, eagerly.

"No, I may be mistaken, and I don't want to make trouble. You see Danby."

"Where will I find him?" queried the self-appointed detective.

He was directed to a dilapidated mill structure. A somber-faced old man, patching up the worn-out machinery of the place, looked up from his labor irritably as Prescott asked him if he was Mr. Danby.

"Yes, Danby's my name," he replied. "What of it?"

"I am looking for a man I was told you knew."

"Who is he?"

"Paul Dalton."

The effect of that name upon the miller was something extraordinary.

He arose erect as from a shock. His face turned pale as death. With lowering eyes and quickened breath he surveyed his visitor, and, trembling all over with some suppressed agitation, demanded in a hoarse, unnatural tone:

"Who sent you here?"

Prescott retreated, a trifle frightened, for there was a gleam in the old man's eyes that was dangerous.

"Why," he stammered. "I—I came myself."

"No one sent you? He did not send you? He did not send you? Answer me."

"No one sent me."

"Because," went on the miller between his set teeth, "I would treat a messenger from them as I would they themselves—as reptiles, deadly enemies!"

"I simply wanted to find this Paul Dalton. I wished to learn all I could about him. You seem to hate him?"

"Hate him!" echoed the miller, bitterly; "as the viper that stings, as the savage who strikes the hand that tenders him bread. He stole my child away from me—my little Isabel!—and the gruff voice died in a pitiful sob."

He made his home here, he well-nigh begged me. Oh, curse his handsome face, and soft ways! Curse him, I say, to all eternity!"

Strange words to inspire joy, and yet a savage delight permeated the heart of the eager listener as he realized that he was learning more than he had hoped for.

Was this Paul Dalton a villain who operated the same at all places—robbing his benefactor, running away with his daughter?

It seemed so; but a still deeper satisfaction was in store for Prescott.

"That was five years ago. One night they disappeared. A week later I received a letter from Isabel. She begged forgiveness. She asked that they both return to the home roof; that her husband was repentful for the theft; that the money had gone in gambling. I went to the town whence she wrote, armed with a horsewhip. I cowarded him for the miserable pittance that he was."

"And were they married?"

"And made sure of that. I would have killed him if it had been otherwise. As it was, I left them. They had made their bed. In it they must lie."

Fierce, venomous joy tugged at Ralph Prescott's heart-strings.

Married! Then the ceremony at Ridgeway was a mockery. Ruth was not wife! Visions of her humiliation, and which she would gladly accept a new husband to hide the disgrace of the old one, ran riot in the schemer's mind.

A broken will—the Forsythe fortune won or a threat or prosecution for bigamy—ah, all was not lost yet!

"The hardened villain!" gasped Prescott, in a spasm of high virtuous indignation against a man whose rascality seemed to discount his own. "Married! Then all is safe, provided—one word! he utters quickly, as the miller turned away. "Is your daughter still alive?"

"Yes."

"Glory! What luck! The game is mine!" chuckled the delighted plotter.

"She wrote me a year ago. She said her husband had fallen heir to a great fortune. Would I allow her to repay me what he had stolen?"

"And you replied?"

"Not a word! Those two are dead to me."

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

The Captain Pratt.

Chili's most powerful war vessel has a name not at all suggestive of its formidable size and capabilities.

It might not unfitly have been called the Terror or the Thunderer, and it is not a little remarkable that so ardent, not to say flamboyant, a people as the Chilians were content with so prosaic a title as plain Captain Pratt.

For actual business the Pratt has the following qualifications: It is 328 feet long; beam over all, 60 feet 7 inches; depth, 34 feet 9 inches. It will mount in its main battery four guns of 9.45 inches caliber, and it has also four guns of 4.72 inches, six rapid fire guns of 1.97 inches, and four rapid fire guns (two Nordenfelters and two Hotchkiss) of 0.78 inches caliber.

It has six torpedo tubes of the Canet system. The Captain Pratt is, in short, a fast and formidable armored vessel, with powerful engines of the latest and most improved description, and a guaranteed speed of eighteen knots an hour.

The Old Gentleman Knows How.

Samuel Davis, of Whitneyville, Me., who is 84 years of age, shot four foxes in one day, making a total of forty this season. He says that "foxes are uncommon cute critters, but they're easy to get if you know how."

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