

THE FATAL REQUEST OR FOUND OUT

By A. L. Harris Author of "Mine Own Familiar Friend," etc.
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CHAPTER II—Continued.

Mr. Burrirt's face became flushed, and he started to his feet with the haste and hot indignation which would have done credit to one of half his years. "James!" he cried, with passion, "is this the way you treat your old friend? Does the fidelity of half a life time count for nothing? Why, even your name has been preserved in inviolable secrecy, and at this very moment not one single soul, besides myself, is aware of the object of my journey, or of the identity of the individual I have come to meet!—and this is all you have to say to me! I had better return home at once, without more delay!"

He was evidently much moved, and the other man could not but recognize that the emotion he betrayed was genuine. So he, too, rose from his seat and, catching Mr. Burrirt by the arm, said, "My dear fellow, don't misunderstand me! Surely you did not take me seriously just now. It is not that I doubted you for a moment, Silas; but—" He passed his hand over his eyes, as though to clear away something which obstructed his vision. Then, after a moment's hesitation, he continued: "I only landed in the old country this morning, and it has brought it all back again—the all the shame and sorrow, and all the suffering and remorse—it seems as fresh as though—as though it had all happened yesterday, instead of twenty years ago. I cannot but realize the fact that, in spite of all my wealth—honestly earned, too, every penny of it, I swear—I am a pariah, an outcast. No, don't interrupt me. I tell you—with a bitter, mirthless laugh—"I feel more like a returned convict than anything else."

"James!" exclaimed Mr. Burrirt, "you shock me! you grieve me more than I can say!"

His friend interrupted him. "You!"

excitement caused by the meeting with the old friend he had not seen for so many years. At any rate, whatever the cause, there was no doubt as to the effect; for he found it impossible to sleep, or to do anything but toss from side to side, as hour after hour wearily wore itself away. By some peculiar action of the brain, he also found himself compelled to review all the past scenes of his life, and mentally, step by step, retrace the path he had trodden during those fifty years or so, which went to make up the sum of his existence on this planet.

At last, in despair, he rose, and going to the window, looked out upon the night. It was a very moonlight night—too much so, in fact. There was something almost weird and ghastly in its effect. So he dropped the blind with a crash, and went back to bed again, hoping that, this time, he might be able to sleep.

But it was the same thing over again. Only this time his thoughts concentrated themselves upon his family and his home life. He remembered, with a sense of remorse, that he had been a little—only a little—irritable at breakfast that morning, and that he had spoken rather sharply when interrogated as to the purpose of his sudden expedition.

Certain of his friend's sayings had grated upon his ear, and caused a chill feeling of dissatisfaction and regret.

"Thank God!" he had said when he heard of the deaths of those others, cut off, more than one of them, before they had attained their proper span.

Mr. Burrirt turned uneasily in his bed as he reflected upon this, and remembered that he was the only one left who knew all. The only one his friend had to fear. To fear! Surely that was not the right way to put it?

he felt himself falling—falling from an immeasurable height—and woke! "What a hideous dream," he thought. "How weird—how awful—how real! I would rather lie awake the whole night through than dream just such another. I wonder what the time is?"

He felt for his watch and the matches, and struck a light. Just half past three—no more. As he restored the articles again to their places, he thought he heard faint sounds of movement in the next room.

"Evidently I am not the only restless person," he said to himself as he lay down again. "I have a companion in misfortune. To-morrow morning we shall be able to compare experiences. Suppose I were to knock at the wall and speak to him? But then I might disturb someone else and alarm them. That would never do. I expect it must have been the cucumber that gave me the nightmare. I hope I sha'n't have another such dream; if I do, I'll never touch cucumber any more as long as I live." His eyes closed, and in a few moments his deep and regular breathing showed that he had again fallen asleep.

And again he dreamt, and the dream was as follows:

He was lying in his bed, or at least, so he thought, and, after a while, it seemed to him that it became very hard and narrow, so that he had no room to move in it. It was also very dark. He tried to turn over upon his side, but found, as in the other dream that he could stir neither hand nor foot. And what appeared to him a long time, he began to hear sounds over his head. Sometimes in one place, sometimes in another, and at the same time he began to experience a difficulty in breathing. And still the sound went on—the sound of some one hammering—of some one hammering nails—

The sound of some one hammering nails into a coffin!

And with that, all at once, the awful truth broke upon him. He was dead, and they were nailing him up in his coffin—dead!

His heart stopped beating as he grasped the full horror of the situation.

They were burying him alive! Oh, horrible!—horrible!

In vain he tried to burst the bonds of the insensibility in which he was held. In vain he made frenzied efforts to cry aloud. The most frantic endeavors were unavailing. He was unable to utter a sound or produce the smallest movement. Then it seemed as though some one were trying to raise the lid of the coffin. There was a faint, creaking sound—a faint glimmer of light was perceptible overhead. It increased and widened! Oh, joy! He was saved—saved! The coffin-lid was raised little by little—higher and higher—in another moment he should be free!

It was done. He saw a face bending over him—a familiar face—the face of an old friend. Already he hailed him in his heart as his benefactor, his deliverer. Then—what were those words he heard? Words he had heard before—when was it?

"You can ruin me whenever you please, but now you are in my power!"

The lid was clapped down again, leaving him in utter darkness. The hammering began again. He made one last tremendous effort and woke. Woke to find himself sitting bolt upright, with the perspiration streaming from him. Woke to find the man, whose voice even now seemed to ring in his ears as he bent over the open coffin, standing beside his bed, in the faint, grey light of morning.

"What brings you here?" gasped Mr. Burrirt, as soon as he had realized the fact that the terrible ordeal he had just passed through was only a dream.

"I couldn't sleep," was the response, "and I couldn't lie still any longer, so I came to see whether you were awake."

(To be continued.)

A Chess Village.

Near the Prussian town of Magdeburg lies the little village of Strobeck, which has earned for itself an interesting celebrity. The village contains 1,200 inhabitants, who are one and all chess players. They may be said to learn the game in their cradles, for among the first lessons taught to a child by its parents are the moves in chess and the first playthings it receives are chessmen. The smallest children are to be seen in their play-time sitting quietly together with a chessboard before them gravely considering the moves and in the evening the old people meet to play their favorite game. At stated times in the year there are chess tournaments in which both the grown-up people and the children take part, prizes being given to the victors. Many people come to Strobeck during these competitions to watch the peasants at their games. The children even receive instruction in chess in the schools.

A Collection of Pens.

The Carnavalet Museum in Paris contains a collection of pens which, while interesting from a connoisseur's point of view as works of art, are no less attractive to the historian.

Every time a sovereign visits the town hall in Paris he is begged to sign his name in the visitors' book, and for this purpose a richly ornamented pen is handed the royal visitor.

For the intended visit of the king of Italy the city of Paris has ordered a special pen of the Italian silversmith Froment Meurice. The design is in XVI century style and is in exquisite taste. The penholder is ornamented with a little enamel cartridge bearing the arms of the House of Savoy.

NO MORE DISPUTE

Premier Balfour Declares England's Boundary Attitude.

ACCEPTS DECISION AS FINAL

England Pleased With the Removal of the Alaskan Dispute Between the Two Great Countries.

The new lord mayor, Sir James Ritchie, gave a banquet to 1,200 persons in the historic guild hall, London, in honor of the king's birthday. Premier Balfour was the guest of honor. Many notables were present, including Ambassador Choate, the foreign ministers, the archbishop of Canterbury, Foreign Minister Lansdowne, and others.

Premier Balfour prefaced his speech in reply to the toast with a lengthy and touching reference to the life and work of his distinguished predecessor. Concerning the situation in the far east, Mr. Balfour said there was every reason to feel sanguine that it would have no serious outcome. He based this assurance on the passionate desire of the czar of Russia to promote general peace and on the fact that Japan, as the ally of Great Britain, would be certain to display moderation, discretion and judgment in its demands as well as firmness in enforcing them.

Mr. Balfour said that the Macedonian question raised issues more difficult, but he was convinced that the question must be ultimately settled by the court of Europe, which could not more effectively carry out its designs than through the medium of those great powers, Russia and Austria, which had undertaken to deal with the situation.

Referring to Alaska, Premier Balfour said:

"The danger arising from the uncertain and disputed frontiers in the case between the British empire and the United States has been decided for all time. I regret that the decision has not been favorable to the claims of this country, but the two small islands, the loss of which to Canada has aroused such great feeling are really valueless from a strategic and military point of view. We regret the exact tenor of the decision, but however the balance of advantage went, the gain to the United States or the loss to Canada is nothing compared with the final removal of this subject of dispute between the two great countries. The decision must be loyally accepted, for the removal of so serious a controversy is an inestimable boon."

SAMUEL PARKS PEEPS

Played to a Losing Hand and Now Regrets It.

Before he left his cell in New York city to begin serving his sentence of more than two years in Sing Sing prison, for extortion, ex-Walking Delegate Parks of the New York house-smiths' and bridgemen's union, called about him a number of newspaper men to bid them farewell. In so doing he made the following statement:

"It's only taken a little more than seven years to get me here. It has been a hard fight and I've lost. That's all. I'm down and out and I know when I've got enough. I'll be forgotten in less than a year, except by some of the boys who thought there was some good in me, and I am sorry for it. Every laboring man in the country should remember me for years to come. I should be a warning to them. I'm the victim of a custom that is older than I am and that is the habit of having money transactions with employers. That put me here.

"The salvation of the unions lie in stopping that practice at once. They must give up fines, waiting time, back pay for strikes and everything like that. That's the loophole through which this 'graffin', as they call it, creeps in. The employers never leave any tracks. I could name one hundred employers who have made a practice of using labor unions against competitors. I know plenty of employers who have made fortunes by the use of money of a young fellow who has never made more than a couple of dollars a day and has been in authority by his union."

New Chapel for the Peru Normal.

A new chapel building for the state normal school at Peru is now assured. The state board of education met at State Superintendent Fowler's office at Lincoln and awarded the contract to a St. Joseph firm, whose bid was \$36,170. In addition to the \$36,170 for the building, the board awarded a contract for heating, plumbing and electric light wiring, the price being \$4,475. As the board has \$43,500 at its disposal it will have enough left to seat the building and prepare it for opening. It is to be completed by August 20. The board also approved the plans for improvements at the Green Terrace, Kearney, a building which has been donated by the people of that town for use as a dormitory in connection with a state normal school to be erected. The improvements will cost \$7,000 or \$8,000. The citizens of Kearney will play the cost of the repairs.

Daughters Tribute to Mother-in-Law.

In memory of the "best of mothers-in-law," is Queen Alexandra's tribute to the late Queen Victoria, inscribed on a memorial just erected on the royal mausoleum at Frogmore, England. The memorial, a beautiful statue of the Saviour, seventeen feet high, sculptured and sent from Denmark at the expense of Queen Alexandra.

Believes Capital and Labor Will Unite.

President Thomas J. Shaffer of the amalgamated iron, steel and tinworkers' union, at a mass meeting of local union labor men in New Haven, Conn., said:

"I am hopeful of better things. In the church we hear of the good work in behalf of the laboring classes by Bishop Potter and Archbishop Ireland. A union of interests between the nation, the church and organized labor will accomplish much for the American people."

M. E. CHURCH EXTENSION

What Will Be Necessary in Order to Give Assistance.

The national general committee of church extension of the Methodist Episcopal church in session at Kansas City, Mo., by a vote of 27 to 8 rejected the plan to consolidate home missions and church extension benevolences. This does not carry with it a rejection of the plan to consolidate other charitable departments of the church. The committee also rejected by a vote of almost two to one, the plan submitted by an Ohio representative to change the rules of the church so that the society could not assist churches whose buildings cost more than \$10,000.

The following appropriations were made, the first column showing the amount the conference must raise to entitle it to the loan set down in the second column:

	Subscription.	Loan.
Alabama	350	\$ 350
Alaska mission	100	3,000
Arizona mission	250	500
Arkansas	275	550
Atlanta	275	300
Atlantic mission	200	1,000
Austin	325	750
Baltimore	7,550	1,500
Black Hills	250	500
Blue Ridge	225	675
California	3,000	4,000
California Germans	350	350
Central Alabama	200	600
Central German	7,000	7,000
Central Illinois	6,000	9,000
Central Missouri	300	900
Central New York	6,500	1,000
Central Ohio	6,000	1,200
Central Pennsylvania	8,500	1,350
Central Swedish	650	900
Central Tennessee	325	800
Chicago German	4,900	4,000
Cincinnati	6,500	1,200
Colorado	1,500	3,000
Columbia River	1,200	4,000
Dakota	1,000	2,000
Delaware	1,000	1,000
Des Moines	5,000	1,800
Detroit	6,000	3,000
Eastern Swedish	200	1,000
East German	4,000	4,000
East Maine	1,000	2,000
East Ohio	7,500	300

For general purposes the following appropriations were made: Contingent fund, \$30,000; expenses of administration, \$25,000; preferred claims, \$115,000.

The committee recommended that sites for churches in the rapidly growing cities of the west be bought well out in the suburbs or beyond corporate limits.

LOSES ITS IDENTITY

The Royal Tribe of Joseph Debarred from Nebraska.

The Nebraska insurance department, not approving the manner in which the Royal Tribe of Joseph has sold itself to another insurance company, has revoked its license. Insurance Deputy J. L. Pierce has forwarded to the company's office at Sedalia, Mo., a written cancellation of the license in which he says the Nebraska department does not approve the method of the transfer of the company to the Cosmopolitan Life Insurance Association of Illinois, which is an assessment company, and he believes the Royal Tribe of Joseph has no right to transfer its reserve fund, which amounts to over \$55,000, as that fund belongs to the members of the order. The Illinois company is not licensed in Nebraska. Mr. Pierce's letter is as follows:

Royal Tribe of Joseph, Sedalia, Mo.—Gentlemen: You are hereby notified that the license issued by your order by this department March 1, 1903, is hereby revoked for the reason that your order has transferred, without notice to this department, and without notice to its members in this state, its assets to another company, namely: Cosmopolitan Life Insurance Association of Illinois, such company not being a fraternal order, but being an assessment company of another state. In this transfer you have turned over to this assessment association, funds which include the reserve or emergency fund of your order, which is set apart for the benefit and protection of the members of your order. It is true that in the contract you have made with the Cosmopolitan Life Insurance association they have agreed to accept the members of your order as its members, and that they assume the certificates and policies of your order, and the liabilities of your order, but take them subject to the conditions and limitations stated in your contract; also, subject to the by-laws of the Cosmopolitan Life Insurance association. This department does not approve of this transfer and is opposed to the method that you have adopted in transferring the same, and believes that you have no right to transfer your reserve fund belonging to your members to a third person or party; hence, the revocation of your license. Yours truly, CHARLES WESTON, Auditor.

By L. L. FEIRCE, Ins. Deputy.

State Wants Pay for Insane Patient.

The state of Kansas, through the attorney general, filed a claim in the probate court against the estate of William J. Walker for \$2,800 claimed to be due the state for the care of Walker at the Topeka insane asylum during the part nineteen years. Walker was sent to the insane asylum from Franklin county. There was some dispute about a guardian for him and one guardian was appointed from Franklin county and another in Missouri, and finally Bradford Miller, of Topeka, was appointed by Probate Judge Hayden quite recently. During the squabble about the guardianship Walker's pension and property, with interest, has grown to the sum of \$2,800. Now the state steps in and claims the \$2,800 and wants \$500 more.

Curtailling the Iron Output

Two thousand men were laid off by the Illinois steel works at South Chicago as anticipated. In addition to this reduction the 1,200 men who were discharged a couple of weeks ago, and who were expected to return to work soon have been informed that there is no work for them. It is claimed the men are being laid off because of curtailment in the output.

Everest is unable to find ground for a cemetery nearer than four files. The council will take up this grave subject.

CONGRESSIONAL DOINGS

SENATE—MONDAY.

With nearly every senator in his seat, the gavel of President Pro Tem Fry sounded at noon Monday calling the senate together in the second extraordinary session of the Fifty-eighth congress. The special session of the senate following the adjournment last spring of the Fifty-seventh congress eliminated much of the routine work, which otherwise would have been performed today. New senators had gone through the formality of taking oaths of office, seats had been assigned, and with the exception of the appointment of some vacancies all functions of the organization had been completed. More than two hours before the senate was called to order the galleries were filled up.

The first week of the extra session in the senate will be devoted to the usual preliminaries. The program for the week is to have four brief sessions and an adjournment on Thursday until the following Monday. On Tuesday the president's message will be received and read. Adjournment will follow its reading as a caucus of republican senators is to be held in the afternoon. Wednesday will be devoted largely to the introduction of bills and Thursday will be a short legislative session unless discussion of the Panama situation is precipitated by the introduction of resolutions asking for information. It is the intention of Senator Morgan to introduce resolutions on the subject, and these may be discussed under the rules on the day following their presentation. The republican members of the senate will interpose no objection to a discussion of the Panama and canal questions, but it is not likely that any action will be taken until after the committees are reorganized.

The senate was called to order at noon and after a prayer by the Rev. F. J. Prettymann of Washington, the formal proclamation calling the congress in extraordinary session was read.

At the roll call seventy senators answered and President Pro Tem Fry declared a quorum present.

Mr. Hoar and Mr. Gorman were appointed by the house to inform the president congress had organized and was ready to receive any communication he had to make.

A resolution offered by Mr. Cullom fixing 12 o'clock, noon, as the hour for convening daily sessions was adopted, after which the senate adjourned.

HOUSE—MONDAY.

The Fifty-eighth congress convened in extraordinary session at noon Monday in accordance with the proclamation of President Roosevelt for the purpose of enacting legislation necessary to make effective the Cuban reciprocity treaty. The day was devoted to personal greetings and organization.

Many handsome floral tributes to members were borne in unusual profusion to the lobbies back of both the senate and house members to be placed later on the desks of the members. The new members of the house received their initiation to doorkeepers and house employes and many were turned back for identification because of their slight hesitation on presenting themselves for admission. Such incidents contributed to the general lively animation and good humor of the occasion.

The speaker was to be elected and that this was the first session of a new congress added to the interest that usually attached to an opening day. Long before the hour of noon, when the gavel fell, the galleries were filled, the ladies being in the majority. Many more were disappointed holders of cards by admission. Among the spectators were public officers, diplomats and a great many out-of-town visitors. The floral display was never more elaborate than today. The popular members on both sides were remembered in lavish fashion.

First of importance among the day's events was the election of Mr. Cannon as speaker; next was the swearing in of the members and the drawing for seats.

The democrats rallied around a new leader, Mr. Williams, (Miss.) having been chosen to take the place of Mr. Richardson, (Tenn.) who retired from the leadership of the minority.

Promptly at noon Clerk of the House Alexander McDowell called the house to order. Prayer by the chaplain followed.

A call of the roll by states developed a quorum, the clerk called for nominations for speaker. Mr. Hepburn (Ia.), chairman of the republican caucus, formally nominated Mr. Cannon.

Mr. Hay (Virginia), chairman of the democratic caucus, nominated Mr. Williams (Miss.).

As the call proceeded it was noted that old members generally occupied their former seats, while new members occupied those made vacant.

At the conclusion of the roll call, which showed the party majority for Cannon, he was formally declared elected speaker, and after being sworn in assumed the gavel. The oath of office was then administered to the members and shortly afterwards the house adjourned.

Recommends Government Ownership.

In his annual report Capt. Charles Young, acting superintendent of Sequoia and General Grant national parks of California, in which many giant trees are located, urges the acquisition by the government of the land in those parks, which is owned by private individuals. In Sequoia park there are many large tracts trus owned and after waiting for years for the government to purchase their property, the owners are beginning to sell off the large timber.

Claim Bender and Wilson are Ineligible

Bender and Wilson, members of the Nebraska football team, were protested by the Kansas men on the ground of professionalism. Kansas gathered evidence that the men received salaries last summer as members of baseball teams, hence under the Chicago conference rules they are ineligible on college football teams.

Two Cimarron school boys were caught playing seven up with a bottle of whisky between them—drink or smell.



"What brings you here?"

he sneered, "you are the immaculate citizen—the man without a past! What have you to do with such an one as I?" There was a bitter sarcasm in his tone, a morbid jealousy in his look. Mr. Burrirt refused to recognize the presence of either.

"But you will return with me, will you not?" he said, "you will let me introduce you to them and make their acquaintance? Take us on your way, and spend at least one night under my roof."

"You are very good, Silas," said his friend. "Ah, if they were all like you—but you forget there are others who—"

Mr. Burrirt interrupted him. "I know what you are going to say and will relieve your mind at once. Of all those—and they were not many, six at the outside—who were intimately acquainted with your past history and," he hesitated a moment, "and that unhappy affair, not one is living besides myself."

"What!" cried the other man, in great excitement, "all dead?"

"All but myself," was the answer. "Thank God for that!" burst from the other's lips. "Will you swear that this is so—that they are indeed all dead who are connected with the past, except yourself?"

Mr. Burrirt bent his head in reply. The strain of the interview was beginning to tell upon him, together with the hurried journey, and he felt the need of repose.

"Believe me, Jim," he said, falling back again into the old familiar style of address, "you have nothing to fear. Your secret is safe enough with me—never doubt it." He spoke kindly, even affectionately, but his fatigue was evident, and his friend could not but observe it.

"Silas," he said, "you are worn out. We will continue the subject some other time."

They turned to leave the room together. Mr. Burrirt passed out first; his companion lingered behind him. As he did so, his brief assumption of cheerfulness fell from him; his face changed and darkened, and the whole expression altered.

"All dead but one," he whispered to himself—"and that one—" The sentence was left unfinished.

CHAPTER III.

Midnight Reflections.

Mr. Burrirt passed a very restless night. Perhaps his dinner had disagreed with him. More probably it was the result of the agitation and