

In the Fowler's Snare

By M. B. MANWELL

CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

Looking on, thankful for his wife's temporary brightness, was Gervis, too much encumbered by his robes of icicles and snow to join the dancers, and holding his hand was little, misshapen Syb—she, too, perforce, being a spectator and never an actor in the merry games of life.

"It's a pretty sight, isn't it, little Syb?" heartily said Gervis, determined in his honest, manly fashion to be proud of the wife he had won.

Gladdy, light as a sprite, was darting up and down in the old-fashioned dance, and every eye was fixed upon her dainty figure, in its dress of silvery brocade. She, too, had blood-red berries fastened in the folds of her wedding gown and a great bunch on her left shoulder.

"If Leila had on a dress of silver brocade, and diamonds on her neck, she would look a thousand times prettier than that thin girl!" was Syb's harsh reply, as she glowered at the shining little figure dancing up and down the middle.

Before the startled Gervis could collect himself to reply a disagreeable, low laugh made both Syb and he turn quickly.

Temple-Dene was liberty hall, and the scientist had again shut himself up in his room all day, deep in some abstruse calculations, doubtless. But the music and laughter had drawn the hermit from his cell, and he stood close behind them, with a strange, mocking smile on his thin lips.

"Little missy has distinct powers of discrimination, evidently," Paul Ansdell said, fixing his black eyes full on the frowning face of the deformed child. At the same time he lifted his right hand, but, on second thought, dropped it at his side furtively.

"You ought to have been among the merry dancers, Ansdell," said Gervis, a little puzzled by his new friend.

"The merry dancers?" repeated the scientist quickly. "Why, do you know what you are saying? The merry dancers are the famous northern lights, and we folk across the herring pond have a superstition that they are never seen save before some terrible calamity."

While Paul was speaking his gaze grew more intent, and his dark eyes seemed to be drawing out the soul of the deformed child. The frown had faded from her uplifted face and in its stead an expectant look leaped. It was as though she were saying dumbly:

"I am ready! What would you have with me, my master?"

"Well," retorted Gervis, whose eyes wandered back to the quaint old dance had lost the byplay, "if the merry dancers are to bring a calamity, it must be upon yourself, Ansdell, seeing we have no such superstition among us that I know of." And he moved off, with a train of clamoring children at his heels.

The dance was over, and laughing, chattering and fluttering, the dancers, old and young, gathered around Lady Jane, who, determined to have a variety of entertainment at her Christmas party, was urging a shrinking, shy boy to recite "The Mistletoe Bough."

"You know, Bobby, you can do it so beautifully, and Mrs. Templeton would like to hear it so much!"

Bobby Vane was the big brother from Eton of the small slipper in blue velvet who clung to Gladdy's skirts when he could.

Bobby was a born reciter, but, unfortunately, shy—horribly shy.

However, at last, cajoled, hustled and goaded, the poor, with his ears pink and his knees knocking together—for he had never faced so large an audience—rushed at his task.

After the first line Bobby felt his feet. His voice was good, clear, sweet and round as a bell; it showed no hint of breaking as yet.

The gay company, breathless and intent, closed round the youthful reciter as the old legend in verse fell in clear, dropping syllables from his lips:

The mistletoe hung in the castle hall,
And the holly-branch shone on the old oak wall,
And the baron's retainers were blithe and gay,
Keeping their Christmas holiday.

And as the poem went on all were forcibly impressed by the curious similarity of their present surroundings to those detailed by the reciter.

The old world ballroom, with its dark oak rafters, its rows of glittering armor for Temple-Dene was no different for its armor—the "goodly company" of gallants and fair dames, the merry children, the old paneled walls blushing red with lavish wealth of scarlet holly berries; while here and there and everywhere, in the most unexpected places, large bunches of mistletoe hung to tempt and entrap the unwary. And, above all, there was the chief feature, the bride—

The star of that goodly company.

"I think we ought to carry it out to the letter!" excitedly cried Gladdy, when the recitation was over, and the deafening applause caused shame-faced Bobby to flee for shelter behind a suit of shining armor.

"A dear, wild child, this new daughter of mine," blandly said Lady Jane to her dowager cronies, as Gladdy sped through the hall to the distant staircase.

If Gladdy had not been the great American heiress she was, her escap-

ade would have been promptly frowned down, they knew very well.

Upstairs, in the gallery that ran round the hall, Paul Ansdell was pacing up and down, with folded arms and deeply frowning brow.

Tonight meant for this man other things than it did for the merry-makers below. The crucial moment had come when he was about to stake his all. Either he would be in a position to grasp a fortune, or he would find himself in a prison cell. That he knew.

As he paced along the gallery a light footstep came behind him. So light was its patter that Paul did not hear it.

"You?"

As he turned he faced a little figure in gleaming silver robes with patches of crimson here and there—blood-red berries—and at her throat a dazzle of diamonds.

It was Gladdy, on tiptoe.

"I have come to hide—to hide!"

Her voice abruptly died away, for Paul Ansdell's eyes held her. Her whole figure drooped, the joyousness died out of her small face, and her eyes grew large and dilated as they gazed back, almost glued to those of the scientist.

Motionless, immovable, she waited while he drew nearer to her. There was for her the fascination of the victim for the rattlesnake.

And while the two—master and tool—came closer and closer, there came floating up from below the sounds of music and revelry and gay laughter.

The dancing had begun again, and there was a flash of changing color as the couples whirled round.

In the gallery a strange silence reigned.

One little watcher, hidden close behind a bank of ferns and festoons of holly berries, could hear her own heart-beats.

It was Syb, the deformed girl, who had stolen away from the throng of merry-makers an hour since.

Something strange and uncanny had befallen Syb, some inscrutable influence held her prisoner. Her will was chained up, she was powerless to come and go as she would.

But only so far was she dominated. Every other sense she had was alert, and she watched with wonderment the bride, whom she hated for standing in the place that should have been Leila's, droop visibly before the slowly waving hands of Paul Ansdell, the scientist. The strain not to lose anything in the strange scene being enacted before her was too much for Syb even to wonder why the long, lean hands went up and down, up and down, slowly and methodically.

The gay music from below rose and fell, and between its bursts Syb's sharp, young ears caught the hissed out command as Paul Ansdell bent over the little crouching figure in silver brocade:

"Go! Do my will!"

With a faint, almost inarticulate cry Gladdy straightened herself, and, turning, went slowly along the gallery. Paul Ansdell's eyes followed her until she disappeared on the opposite side.

The music below ceased with a crash of chords, the dance was over, and in the lull Syb heard a sharp click.

So did Paul Ansdell, for he quickly lifted his head, and a gray pallor crept over his face.

Then he hurried away in the direction of the bachelors' wing, where he had been located on his arrival.

"I hate him, too!" irritably said Syb. In truth, the poor, misshapen girl hated most people.

As if some baleful thing had departed, she rose and shook herself. The holly had scratched her thin, bare arms, and there was a trickle of red that dropped on her white muslin frock.

"Ugh! It's all horrid!" she shuddered impatiently. "I wish Leila and I could run away from it all, and live in a cottage by ourselves," she murmured, as she went wandering round the horse-shoe gallery.

For to this afflicted child all the music and brightness and Christmas joy in the hall below was gall and wormwood.

CHAPTER X.

Even the maddest, merriest of revelers must grow weary.

The Christmas merry-makers flagged, the gay music dragged a little slowly; here and there a tired child-guest yawned in a corner, then nodded, and finally was carried away in a deep sleep.

Outside, under the stars, a long line of carriages waited, and the hostess, with tired eyes, wondered why people did not go.

It had been a fatiguing day for Lady Jane and for Leila, who had not spared herself in helping. She and Lady Jane, side by side, ran the gantlet of the interminable good-byes from exhausted but delighted guests.

The Christmas gathering had been the greatest success the county had known for years, and Lady Jane was excited by the flatteries and thanks of the departing guests.

"Where's your wife, dear? She ought to have been here to see the guests off."

Lady Jane laid her hand on her son's arm. She was, in her tired state, ready to be cross even with the heiress.

"Gladdy? I'm sure I don't know, mother dear."

Gervis yawned. He was pining to get off his Santa Claus trappings, and to have a quiet pipe by himself.

A quarter of an hour later nearly every soul under the Temple-Dene roof was echoing Lady Jane's question.

Where was the bride?

Not in her own room, not in the hot, deserted ballroom; she was not in the upper gallery, where the lights were already being put out.

All sense of fatigue was put to flight by a vague terror of some evil hanging over the house of Temple-Dene.

Under the ancient roof only two persons did not share the terrified excitement when it was discovered that Mrs. Gervis Templeton was nowhere to be found—its master and the American guest.

Gervis himself was petrified. He had brought all his strength of will to bear on nobly doing his duty to the woman he had won for his wife. No one but he would ever know how hard the fight had been.

And now it was all in vain, for Gladdy had gone—where, no one knew.

Since the journey on the Canadian Pacific railway, over the snow-covered prairies, Gladdy had been a bewildering puzzle to her husband. Her vagaries had made him secretly wonder at times if he had married a lunatic.

Then again a great fear would loom up that his wife had inherited some terrible wasting disease, and was about to slip through his fingers and out of life itself.

But this catastrophe on Christmas night eclipsed all that he had even dreamed.

Gladdy gone! She who had been the merriest, gladdest, happiest of all the "goodly company!" It was inscrutable, horrible, maddening!

Out into the freezing night went parties of searchers. Not a man under Temple-Dene's roof, gentle or simple, save two—its master and the American guest, Paul Ansdell—but joined the anxious hunt.

All was in vain!

"Nothing more can be done until the daylight comes," hoarsely said Gervis, as he strode into the still gayly lighted hall, and stamped the hard iced snow off his boots.

His face was gray, and a strange look of age had crept over it, which made it startlingly like that of his mother.

Lady Jane, worn out and spent, crouched down beside the great yule-log, that crackled and roared, the only cheery thing around.

She and Gervis gazed blankly at each other. What had they done, the two were asking one another silently, that this disgrace should have come to shame them?

"Can anybody tell me who saw or spoke with my wife last?"

There was a catch in the young husband's voice as he put the question to the circle of anxious-eyed searchers round him.

"She said she was going to hide. Don't you remember?" Bobby Vane, who had recited, craned his neck forward to say.

Then everybody did remember what they had forgotten—Gladdy's wild proposal to enact the bride in the "Mistletoe Bough," and a gasp of relief came.

"Why, she's in the house somewhere, safe and sound, laughing in her sleeve at us all; and we've been for the last hour tearing our clothes and the skin off our hands in that thicket of holly-bushes round the pond!"

"Let's go all over the house again," suggested somebody else.

"Perhaps she's crept inside one of the suits of armor," suggested Bobby, with protruding eyes. What a tale it was going to be to carry back to school!

Another hour was spent in search, but all fruitlessly.

(To be Continued.)

TOO EXTRAVAGANT.

A Defaulting Cashier Ate Ham Boiled in Champagne.

The manner in which one defaulting cashier was detected was rather peculiar, says the Louisville Times. It was all due to the curiosity of the women of his neighborhood. He went to no expense in the way of dressing, they never heard of his gambling or drinking to any extent, he was a model husband, but he loved a good tale. There was nothing unusual in this, but one day when the ladies of the vicinity were discussing the best methods of cooking meats the wife of the cashier declared very innocently that her husband doted on ham, but he would not eat it unless it had been boiled in champagne. "Boiled in champagne!" exclaimed the listeners. "Heavens, how expensive; we couldn't afford to have ham on our table often if we cooked it that way." It was soon noised all around the neighborhood that Cashier Blank was a high liver, indeed, and the men began telling of his uplifted ideas of cookery. This soon reached the ears of the directors of the bank, and they concluded it might be wise to investigate the accounts of such an epicure. Plain water was all they could afford for their hams, so the champagne lover was called up and subsequently relegated to the pen, where he had to forego his pet dish for many, many weary days.

Battle in an Apiary.

A singular battle was witnessed recently in an English apiary. A hive of bees was besieged by a large swarm of wasps. The bees made valiant sorties to try to drive away their besiegers and the wasps made furious assaults to drive out the bees. The battle raged for two days, at the end of which time the bees evacuated the hive and the wasp took possession.

...As the World Revolves...

Wu Ting Fang on Religion.

The address on religion which Wu Ting Fang, the Chinese minister to Washington, delivered in New York the other night, will serve to illustrate the very great difficulty of proselytizing in the Flowery Kingdom. For example this learned man of the far east quotes from the scriptures the injunction that if a man smite you on one cheek you should turn him the other and that imperative command, "Love your enemies," and makes an application of them that is too pertinent to be pleasant. There is no likelihood, he declares, that men will live up to such a standard, and then he adds: "At this very moment Christian missionaries are calling for bloodshed and vengeance, and Christian armies are devastating the land, sparing neither age nor sex. There is indeed a vast gulf between doctrine and perform-

In Memory of Mr. Hobart.

The committee having the matter in charge has chosen a design for the monument to be erected in memory of Garret A. Hobart, late vice president of the United States. The design selected is that submitted by Philip Martiny, and shows Mr. Hobart standing on a pedestal in a listening attitude, with a gavel in his hand. It is to be of bronze and will cost \$15,000, that sum having been raised by a committee. The figure of Mr. Hobart will be nine feet high. The kind of pedestal on which the statue will stand has not yet been selected. It is also announced that a few slight changes in the design will be recommended to the sculptor by the committee. Mr. Martiny, the successful competitor, is on the art committee of the Pan-American exposition. All the models examined were submitted to a committee consisting of J. Q. A. Ward, Charles Lamb, Daniel C. French and Herbert Adams of the Art society and Mayor John Hinchliffe of Paterson and Edward T. Rell of the memorial committee. The statue will be set up in Paterson, N. J., which was Mr. Hobart's home.



Accepted Design.



MINISTER WU.

ance." Again recurring to the same idea he says of Confucianism:

"It enjoins that kindness be requited with kindness and an injury with justice. It does not sanction retaliation in a vindictive spirit, such as, I regret to say, is shown by some persons professing to be governed by the tenets of Christianity."

It does not follow, of course, from the sting of such criticism that the Chinese are what they believe themselves to be. The most intelligent of them are, in fact, the slaves of the grossest superstition and many of their practices are repellant to humanity and to common sense. But they are not savages, and in spite of the dark spots in their minds they have an intellectual keenness and stubbornness combined with that national self-righteousness which makes the problem of converting the 400,000,000 a tremendous one indeed.

Victim of College Rowdies.

The death of Oscar Booze, the West Point cadet, as the result of a hazing he received at the military academy, has created a widespread sensation and much indignation is expressed that the war department should tolerate practices so brutal in their character as those to which this young man was subjected. It is said that the young man's throat was terribly inflamed by the poison he was forced to swallow, and he was unable to take any nourishment whatever. His stomach was so much inflamed likewise that it refused to assimilate the food injected into it, and this had to be



OSCAR BOOZE.

abandoned, so that he actually starved to death. President McKinley has ordered an investigation.

From a Great Newspaper.

Winamac, Ind., special to the Chicago Tribune: People here are surprised that the story of the Pittsburgh hens that are fed on asbestos siftings and lay fireproof eggs was considered worth telegraphing to the daily papers. Winfield Scott Purcell, a farmer, living near the Pink Marsh, returned in 1887 from a visit to the Hawaiian Islands, bringing with him a pair of fowls that had been hatched in a cleft in the center of the volcano Mauna Loa. This farm is now overrun with chickens that refuse to roost anywhere except on a red-hot stove, and will eat nothing but brimstone. The chickens are valueless for food, but are regarded by strangers as great curiosities. Mr. Purcell says they are never troubled by insect pests of any kind.

New Form of Automobile.

An American inventor, named Maxham, has recently patented an automobile horse which is designed to be hitched on in front of any vehicle in place of the usual animal. The automobile horse is so arranged that it is driven in exactly the ordinary way. Reins are provided for steering and stopping the machine. A pull on either rein turns the apparatus in the corresponding direction, and a steady pull with both reins together slow down the motor and applies the brake. A secondary pair of reins are provided, a pull on which brings the automobile to a stop at once. In France a somewhat similar invention has been put on the market, with the difference that the French machine is constructed in the shape of a horse. The American inventor thinks that his machine will be popular with people who already have vehicles which they do not feel like throwing away entirely. By hitching on one of his mechanical horses they may still use their old carriages or wagons and at the same time do away with the expense and other disadvantages of keeping horses.



The Automobile Horse.

The Hidden Force Intervened.

William Richardson, General Wheeler's successor in congress, was once sentenced to be hanged as a Confederate spy. He had been taken a prisoner of war, escaped, and was retaken in company of a notorious spy. He was sentenced to be hanged with the spy, but an unexpected attack by General Forrest resulted in his rescue.

The Weekly Panorama.

A Barred Actress.

Minnie Ashley, actress and singer of the Daly company in New York, has caused a stir among the fashionable residents of Great Neck, L. I., by endeavoring to purchase a home in that aristocratic community. They are up in arms against what they choose to regard as an intrusion upon their exclusiveness, and a committee of citizens has undertaken to frustrate her purchase. When the committee called upon her to seek to dissuade her she burst into tears and exclaimed: "Why, I'm going to retire from the stage next year. I'm going to marry William Astor Chandler." She is reported to have revealed the secret only after her pride had been stung to the quick by the action of a committee of the property owners who waited on G. Smith Stanton, a real estate agent with whom Miss Ashley was negotiating for the purchase of the Northam estate on the



MINNIE ASHLEY.

Shore road, Great Neck. Friends of William Astor Chandler, millionaire, explorer and politician, received the news of Miss Ashley's declaration with expressions of surprise. It was not known that Mr. Chandler contemplated becoming a benedict. He had busied himself with politics and was credited with a rather unromantic turn of mind, and he had been quoted as advising young men not to marry, although this he denied.

Minor Parties.

The delegates to the national convention of the American Federation of Labor have put themselves on record as opposed to the policy of allowing the organization to be drawn into politics as an adjunct to the Social Labor party. When one of the radical members of the convention introduced resolutions pledging the federations to go into the next national campaign as a body, with a platform demanding only that the initiative and referendum be made part of the policy of the national government, he was met with a storm of protests and his resolution was defeated.

Ambassador to Italy.

The name of George Von L. Meyer of Massachusetts, to be ambassador extraordinary and plenipotentiary of the United States to Italy was sent to the senate last week by President McKinley. Mr. Meyer is eminently fitted for his new post. He is quite wealthy, a graduate of Harvard with the class of '79; a traveler and cultured gentleman, and an adept in two or three Geo. V. L. Meyer, modern languages. He has been a member of the legislature, speaker of the Massachusetts house of representatives and Republican committeeman for his state. His wealth consists of large interest in industrial enterprises and real estate. At 42 he possesses gravity and experience denied to many public men who are older than he. Senator Lodge of Massachusetts was Mr. Meyer's backer.

Marks' Ninetieth Birthday.

The venerable Professor W. D. Marks has just celebrated his ninetyeth birthday. He is the senior minister of the West London synagogue of British Hebrews, usually known as the Reform synagogue. From its foundation in 1841 in Burton street Professor Marks has been minister of the congregation, and he is the oldest Hebrew minister in the United Kingdom. Up to a few years ago he was Goldschmid professor of Hebrew literature in University college.

General Mercier.

A celebrated military expert and leading French statesman, who created a sensation in the French chamber of deputies by demanding that France prepare for a war of invasion against England.

