

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. Burrill'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 speak?—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. Burrill 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—all the shame and sorrow, 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. Burrill, "you shock me! you grieve me more than I can say!"

His friend interrupted him. "You!"



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

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. Burrill 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 shan'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—the sound 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. Burrill, 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 playtime 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.

GETTING TOGETHER

HARMONY RESTORED AMONG IOWA REPUBLICANS.

Speeches of Governor Cummins, Senator Allison and Congressman Lacey Show the Party to Be United on the Paramount Issues of the Day.

An encouraging sign of the times, a gratifying indication of the persistence of the right and the weakening of the wrong, is to be found in three notable Republican speeches delivered in the state of Iowa. In the first of these speeches, that of Gov. Cummins, at Des Moines, Sept. 26, one naturally looks for the reappearance of the "Iowa idea." But it is not there. You will not find a single allusion to the "monopoly-sheltering tariff;" not a word about the immediate necessity for tariff revision; no insistence upon "potential competition" as a means of bringing in an era of lowering prices; "domestic competition if possible, foreign competition if necessary." None of these things which Gov. Cummins has urged so strenuously in the past two years appears in the speech of Sept. 26. The "Iowa idea" is seemingly laid away and forgotten. For the most part the speech is sound in its Republicanism and stalwart in its protection as "the best adjustment that we can make within ourselves to enlarge the production of the country," he yet favors, through reciprocity, the larger admission of competitive goods from foreign countries, and the inevitable decrease of domestic production that must follow in the lines of industry selected for slaughter. Is it not astonishing that intelligent men should in one breath dilate

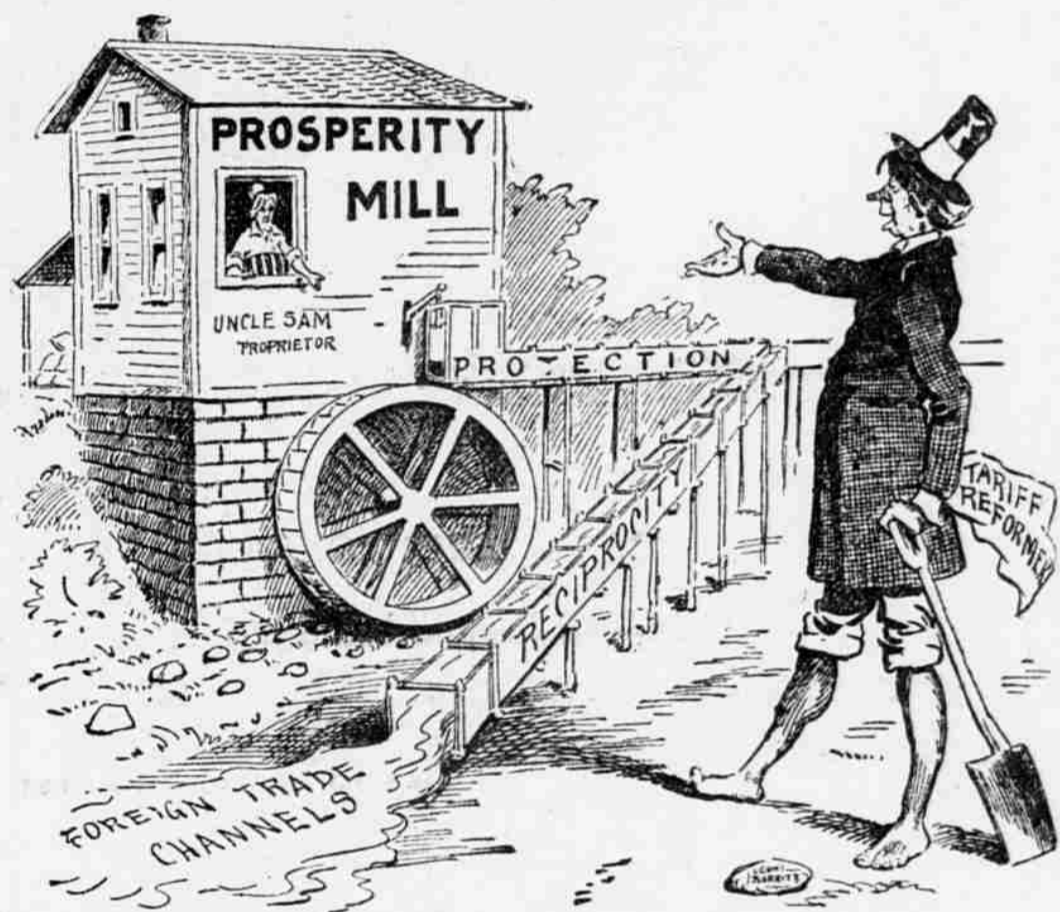
must frame no reciprocity arrangements that will do injustice to friendly countries—for example, Great Britain—and that in securing concessions we must do it "without impairing the protective policy in our own country." By these wise and intelligent standards we can never have reciprocity in competitive products. It is an impossibility. Senator Allison has strengthened his reputation for big brains and profound political sagacity.

The third of the great group of Iowa speeches was that of Congressman John F. Lacey at Allerton, Oct. 13. Here was a fine, old-fashioned, straightaway Republican speech. We do not find in it any reciprocity foolishness. It does not deal with that question at all. Mr. Lacey devoted himself wholly to the practical issue of Republican tariff making versus Democratic tariff making. He sketched in bold outlines our tariff history from the organization of the government up to the present day, and clearly demonstrated the invariable value of the protective policy and the invariable blight and curse attending our occasional lapses into or toward free trade. That is the point to be kept in view: Under whose scheme of tariff making, that of the protectionists or that of the free traders, has the country prospered most? That is the issue now, just as it has been the issue every time the Democratic party has undertaken to regain control of national affairs, just as it is going to be the issue next year. It is well that men of Congressman Lacey's great ability should make genuine, orthodox Republican speeches. The country needs them, "Lest we forget."

Shall We Abolish It?

Mr. Chamberlain is presenting some sad pictures of British industrial de-

TARIFF REFORM'S GREAT ENGINEERING FEAT.



Tariff Reformer—You see, Mr. Miller, dividing the stream cannot take anything from the force and power of Protection.
Uncle Sam (Miller)—Say, but you're a chump. Don't you see the wheel has stopped going round?

upon the tremendous blessings and advantages of protection and in the next breath advocate the purchase of a greatly increased volume of foreign competitive goods? Yet that is precisely the attitude of Gov. Cummins. From the standpoint of sound and logical economics it is the attitude of a schoolboy!

Senator Allison, in his speech at Clinton, on the 10th of October, was much wiser and shrewder. He did not put both feet in the reciprocity trap. After telling his hearers that tariff revision must not be thought of at least until after the election next year, "not until the voters have again passed upon the policy that should prevail in our tariff laws," the discreet and level-headed senator took safe, sensible ground regarding reciprocity. Thus:

"It is probable that in the future provisions for such trade will be largely made by modifying our tariff on condition that such countries modify their laws so as to give us an equivalent and so that we will receive as well as grant benefits. This will be done so as not to impair our protective policy."

If done at all—which it never will be or can be under a Republican administration—"this will be done so as not to impair our protective policy." That was McKinley's stand in the speech at Buffalo in 1901 that has been and still is being so flagrantly distorted and perverted. It is the stand of all sound Republicans: "Not to impair our protective policy." If our protective policy is not to be impaired, there can be no such thing as reciprocity in competitive products.

Again said Senator Allison, always insisting upon safe and consistent qualifications:

"In making these reciprocal arrangements, whether by law or treaty, with any country, care must be taken not to do injustice which would involve us in difficulty with other friendly countries with which we have treaties, or which have already given us great advantage in their laws for the free export of our products to such countries. Great Britain is an illustration of an open market for all our products."

"In making modifications of our tariff in the future the possibilities of reciprocal legislation should be utilized so far as practicable, securing thereby valuable concessions without impairing the protective policy in our own country, and without doing injustice to countries that already give us free access to their markets, or access to them upon favorable terms."

Note the saving clauses that we

MEMORY OF A KISS

OR A BOY'S ATTEMPT TO VOICE THE IDEAL.

The Poetry of Life Condensed Into One Short Story of a Summer Evening—Comments of the Older Men Who Listened.

The boy was telling the story to an intimate. He was not exactly a boy; not exactly a man. He had the sensations of a man with yet only a boy's experience. The boy's story was an attempt to voice the ideal, as he knew it. Thus it ran:

It was one evening in summer. The sun was setting, building fairy temples in the sky, painting its domes and minarets with shimmering gold. It cast a shaft of light on the darkening sea, which stretched to my feet like a golden stairway leading to the temples in the sky. The summer sea whispered a song to the sweet, departing glory in the west, and tumbled aimlessly as it sang, like a drowsy child. But before the sea song the universe seemed standing still, listening to its own whispering melody. Suddenly along the golden staircase there came a woman lightly tripping. She was of the stuff that dreams are made. Softly in a garb of clinging white she moved toward me. Her face was shining like the sun. Her glowing tresses gave back the glint of the sky with subtle, answering fires. Her eyes gleamed with the perfection of woman's eternal promise. Her lips, soft, sweet and warm, were parted with a glad, happy smile. She came to me radiantly, eagerly, with white arms outstretched. She came to me. She came to me.

As she drew closer in the golden evening light I saw all the glory of her face. Her face shone on me. Her eyes gleamed for me. Her lips smiled for me. I looked into the face in proud humility; it made tears in my heart to know such a face was clad in radiance because of me. If made hunger in my soul because I knew it could not be; was too good to be.

She came to me as a lover and a mother might. She held me tenderly as if I were very young and she kissed me, and the music of it was like the tireless sea. Then I awoke.

There was no sea. There was no anything, only a London morning. Only breakfast, and the coffee was bitter and the bacon cold. The landlady's head bore crumpled curls horribly jangling, and she talked of dead relations. From that day I have not dreamed and there is something wanting in my life.

That is the story. On the whole it is a silly story. If a man told such a story in a club, his head would get broken with a soda syphon. Men do not tell such stupid tales—they think 'em. Else, they are old.

The man who listened broke a coal on the fire and said: "H'm." And another older man, to whom he told the story, said: "Adam dreamt that way the night he lost his rib."—Black and White.

BRAVE IN FACE OF DEATH.

Heroic Conduct of a Famous Bull-Fighter in a Spanish Arena.

One of the most thrilling incidents ever witnessed in the arena is recalled by the recent feat of the Spanish toreador Reverte. It occurred at Bayonne. After disposing of two bulls Reverte had twice plunged his sword into a third, of great strength and ferocity, and as the beast continued careering wildly the spectators began to hiss Reverte for bungling. Wounded to the very quick of his pride, the Spaniard shouted, "The bull is slain!" and, throwing aside his sword, sank on one knee with folded arms in the middle of the ring. He was right, but he had not allowed for the margin of accident.

The wounded beast charged full upon him, but the matador, splendid to the last, knelt motionless as a statue, while the spectators held their breath in horrified suspense. Reaching his victim, the bull literally bounded at him, and as he sprang he sank in death, with his last effort giving one fearful lunge of the head that drove a horn into the thigh of the kneeling man and laid bare the bone from the knee to the joint. Still Reverte never flinched, but remained kneeling, exultant in victory, but calmly contemptuous of applause, till he was carried away to heal him of his grievous wound.

Passing of a Drudge.

Repose upon her soulless face,
Dig the grave and leave her;
But breathe a prayer that, in his grace,
He who so loved this tolling race
To endless rest receive her.

Oh, can it be the gates ajar
Wait not her humble quest,
Whose life was but a patient war
Against the death that stalked from far,
With neither haste nor rest.

To whom were sun and moon and cloud,
The streamlet's pebbly coil,
The transient, May-bound, feathered crowd,
The storm's frank fury, thunder-brood,
But witness of her toll!

Whose weary feet knew not the bliss
Of dance by jocular reed;
Who never dallied at a kiss?
If heaven refuses her, life is
A tragedy indeed!

—Century.

Christian Science Dinner Club.

There are so many varieties of eating clubs in the city that it hardly seems possible to conceive of anything new of that kind. But the Christian Science Dinner club which meets at the Astor House every Friday may suggest something. The club is composed of about thirty business men, all of whom believe that they have received some benefit from their faith. They assemble promptly at noon, and during the meal compare notes in regard to cures.—New York Sun.

Not Yet.

The beet sugar output next year will be enormous if—but we will not borrow trouble. The Cuban treaty is not in operation yet.