PROPERTIES MANAGED.

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TRUNKS AND BAGGAGE.

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THE DEPOT on time. L. M. E. Tel. 789. —454

CITY OFFICIAL NOTICES.

No. 326, December 18, 1902.
ORDINANCE NO. —.

An ordinance granting to Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns, the right in, upon, over, under and along the streets, boulevards, alleys and public grounds of the city of Omaha, to erect, construct, operate and maintain wires, poles, conduits and other structures and appurtenances necessary for properly conveying, conducting and distributing electric currents and energy for power, lighting and heating purposes within said city, subject to certain conditions, rules and regulations, and also providing for the submission of the same to the electors of the city of Omaha for their ratification or rejection.

Be it Ordained by the City Council of the City of Omaha:

Section 1. That the right is hereby granted to Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns, for the erection, construction, operation and maintenance in, upon, over, under and along the streets, boulevards, alleys and public grounds of the city of Omaha of poles, conduits and other structures and appurtenances, with wires and cables for properly conveying and distributing electric current and energy for power, lighting and heating purposes within the city, subject to existing ordinances relating to such construction and such reasonable regulation, as may from time to time be provided by the ordinances of said city for the safety and protection of the persons and property of the inhabitants thereof. The said right hereby granted is also subject to the construction and maintenance of the power plant and the furnishing of power as hereinafter provided.

Section 2. In consideration of the rights herein granted said Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns, shall cause to be constructed a hydraulic power plant deriving its water from the Platte or Elkhorn rivers which shall have an average daily hydraulic capacity on a ten-hour basis of not less than twenty thousand horse power; said plant with all electrical mechanism, poles, wires, cables, conduits and other necessary adjuncts for transmission and distribution of electrical current to be developed by said power into and within the city of Omaha, shall be completed and in operation within three years after the ratification of this ordinance by the electors of the city of Omaha; provided, that only such cause, or causes, of litigation, either as to the operation in perfecting the power plant, or in erecting or constructing within the city the means of distributing the power, light and heat therein referred to, shall not be included as a part of the time limit of three years where mentioned.

Section 3. As a further consideration of the franchise herein granted, the said Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns, shall, when required by the city, do the electric lighting of the city at not to exceed sixty-five dollars per arc light of the present standard of 425 watts for twelve hours each day, through the year, and in addition thereto said Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns, shall pay to the city of Omaha an annuity of one (1) per cent of the gross receipts from sales in the city of Omaha during the first five years after completion of said plant, two (2) per cent of such gross receipts during the next five years and three (3) per cent thereafter.

Section 4. As a further consideration of the rights herein granted by the city, the said Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns, shall furnish electric current for power, light or heat to consumers within the city of Omaha on semi-annual contracts at not to exceed the following rates per Kilowatt hour:

Five horse power or less	$0.035
Over five to ten inclusive	.031
Over ten to twenty-five inclusive	.029
Over twenty-five to fifty inclusive	.027
Over fifty to one hundred inclusive	.025
Over one hundred to two hundred fifty inclusive	.023
Over two hundred fifty to five hundred inclusive	.021
Over five hundred to seven hundred fifty inclusive	.019
Over seven hundred fifty to one thousand inclusive	.017
Over one thousand to twelve hundred fifty inclusive	.015
Over twelve hundred fifty to fifteen hundred inclusive	.013
Over fifteen hundred to two thousand inclusive	.011

Section 5. At any time after January 1st, A. D. 1905, upon giving six months' notice thereof, the city of Omaha shall have the right to acquire the power plant, lands, reservoirs, buildings, machinery, conduits, poles, wires and all appurtenances thereto within and without the city limits used for and in connection with the plant for the development of hyraulic and electrical power, light and heat of the said Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns, by paying to the owners thereof the appraised value, but no allowance shall be made by the appraisers for the value of the franchise herein granted by the city of Omaha when computing the value of such plant. The appraisement shall be made by five appraisers, as follows: Two appraisers shall be selected by the owners, two by the mayor and city council and the fifth shall be designated by the four appraisers thus appointed, and, if they cannot agree, then the fifth shall be drawn from a list of four names, two of which shall be, respectively, selected by each of the two heretofore appointed.

Section 6. The privileges and franchise mentioned herein shall not be in force or be considered as granted to Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns until this ordinance shall have been submitted to the electors of the city of Omaha at the holding of the next general election for city officers in the year 1903, nor unless a majority of the electors voting at such election shall vote for the same to be in force and effect.

Section 7. At the general election for city officers to be held in the city of Omaha in 1903 the question of whether the said franchise and privileges as herein mentioned and provided and upon the terms herein set forth shall be granted to Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns shall be submitted to the electors of the city of Omaha. The question shall be submitted at said election in the following form: "Shall the franchise and privileges provided for and described in Ordinance No. —, entitled 'An ordinance granting to Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns the right in, over, upon, under and along the streets, boulevards, alleys and public grounds of the city of Omaha, to erect, construct, operate and maintain wires, poles, conduits and other structures and appurtenances necessary for properly conveying, conducting and distributing electric currents and energy for power, lighting and heating purposes within said city, subject to certain conditions, rules and regulations, and also providing for the submission of the same to the electors of the city of Omaha for the ratification or repection,' be granted to Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns as in said ordinance provided."

Said proposition shall be printed upon the official ballot at said election, on the left side of the ballot and immediately underneath the said proposition shall be printed the word "For," and immediately underneath the word "Against." All electors desiring to vote for the proposition shall make a cross at the proper place on the ballot opposite the word "For," and those electors desiring to vote against said proposition shall make a cross at the proper place on the ballot opposite the word "Against." The vote upon said proposition shall be counted, canvassed and returned, and the result of the vote thereon declared by the same officers in the same manner as the vote upon the election of officers are counted, canvassed, returned and declared.

If, upon the canvass of the returns of the vote upon said proposition, it shall appear that a majority of the electors voting at said election have voted for the said proposition, the same shall be deemed and considered as carried, and the result shall be declared by the canvassing board accordingly. And thereupon the said Andrew Rosewater, his successors and assigns shall become the owner of and possessed of the franchise and privileges described, mentioned and provided for and granted by said ordinance, subject to and upon the terms and conditions therein prescribed, with the right to use and enjoy the same to himself, his successors and assigns. Provided, that said Andrew Rosewater shall, within thirty days from the date of such declaration, file with the city clerk his acceptance in writing of said ordinance and its terms and conditions.

But, if it shall appear that a majority of the electors voting at said election have not voted for said proposition, the same shall be deemed and considered as not carried, and the result shall be declared by the canvassing board accordingly.

Section 8. The mayor shall give due notice of the submission of this ordinance in his proclamation call for the next general city election.

Section 9. This ordinance shall take effect and be in force from and after its passage, but the privileges and franchise therein mentioned are granted conditioned upon the ratification of this ordinance by a majority of the electors voting therefor as hereinbefore provided.

By Mr. Zimman. J5 E2w (noS

LEGAL NOTICE.

STOCKHOLDERS' MEETING.

Notice is hereby given that the annual meeting of the stockholders of The Bee Building company will be held at 4 o'clock p. m., Friday, January 23, 1903, at the office of said company in The Bee building, Omaha, for the election of a board of directors for the ensuing year and the transaction of such other business as may properly come before such meeting. By order of the president. C. C. ROSEWATER, Secretary.
E&S-tf

NOTICE OF DISSOLUTION.

To Whom it May Concern: The Andrews-Bones Can company has this day been dissolved by mutual and unanimous consent of all the stockholders and individuals composing said company. All persons having claims against said company shall present the same at once for payment to Charles T. Kountze, trustee, at First National bank, Omaha, Nebraska, and the same will be paid.

Dated this 3d day of January, 1903.
J11-18 ANDREWS-BONES CAN CO.

RAILWAY TIME CARD.

UNION STATION—10TH AND MARCY.

Union Pacific.	Leave.	Arrive.
Overland Limited	a 9:40 am	a 7:50 pm
The Fast Mail		a 3:25 pm
California Express	a 4:20 pm	
Pacific Express	d11:30 pm	
Eastern Express		a 5:20 pm
The Atlantic Express		a 7:30 am
The Colorado Special	a 7:10 am	a 3:40 am
Chicago Special		a 3:40 am
Lincoln, Beatrice and Stromsburg Express	b 4:00 pm	b12:50 pm
North Platte Local	a 8:00 am	a 5:15 pm
Grand Island Local	b 5:30 pm	b 9:25 pm
Chicago, Rock Island & Pacific.		
EAST.		
Chicago Daylight L't'd	a 5:00 am	a 6:45 am
Chicago Daylight Local	a 7:00 am	a 9:35 pm
Chicago Express	b11:15 am	a 5:05 pm
Des Moines Express	a 4:30 pm	b11:50 am
Chicago Fast Express	a 3:35 pm	a 1:25 pm
WEST.		
Rocky Mountain L'td	a 6:50 pm	a 4:55 am
Lincoln, Colo. Springs, Denver, Pueblo and West	a 1:30 pm	a 5:00 pm
Colo. Texas, Cal. and Oklahoma Flyer	a 5:20 pm	a12:40 pm
Wabash.		
St. Louis "Cannon Ball" Express	a 5:55 pm	a 8:20 am
St. Louis Local, Council Bluffs	a 9:15 am	a10:30 pm
Illinois Central.		
Chicago Express	a 7:35 am	a 5:10 pm
Chicago, Minneapolis & St. Paul Limited	a 7:50 pm	a 8:05 am
Minneapolis & St. Paul Express	b 7:35 am	b10:35 pm
Chicago Express		a10:35 pm
Chicago & Northwestern. "The Northwestern Line."		
Fast Chicago	a 3:40 am	a 7:00 am
Mail	a 8:00 pm	a 8:30 am
Local Sioux City	a 5:10 am	a 3:50 pm
Daylight St. Paul	a 7:35 am	a10:25 pm
Daylight Chicago	a 8:00 am	a11:20 pm
Local Chicago	a10:55 am	a 5:10 pm
Local Carroll	a 4:00 pm	a 9:50 am
Fast Chicago	a 5:50 pm	a 4:05 pm
Fast St. Paul	a 7:55 pm	a 8:15 am
Limited Chicago	a 8:10 pm	a 9:20 am
Fast Mail		a 2:40 pm
Local Sioux City	b 4:00 pm	b 9:50 am
Chicago, Milwaukee & St. Paul.		
Chicago Daylight	a 7:45 am	a11:15 pm
Chicago Fast Express	a 5:45 pm	a 3:40 pm
Chicago Limited	a 8:05 pm	a 7:50 am
Des Moines Express	a 7:45 am	a 3:40 pm
Missouri Pacific.		
St. Louis Express	a10:00 am	a 6:25 pm
K. C. and St. L. Ex	a10:50 pm	a 6:15 am

BURLINGTON STATION—10TH & MASON

Burlington & Missouri River.	Leave.	Arrive.
Wymore, Beatrice and Lincoln	a 8:40 am	b11:55 am
Nebraska Express	a 8:40 am	a 7:45 pm
Denver Limited	a 4:25 pm	a 6:45 am
Black Hills and Puget Sound Express	a11:19 pm	a 3:10 pm
Colorado Vestibuled Flyer		a 3:10 pm
Lincoln Fast Mail	b 2:52 pm	a 9:13 am
Fort Crook and Plattsmouth	b 3:20 pm	b11:05 am
Bellevue & Pacific Jct	a 7:50 pm	a 8:27 am
Bellevue & Pacific Jct	a 3:00 am	
Kansas City, St. Joseph & Council Bluffs.		
Kansas City Day Ex	a 9:45 am	a 6:05 pm
St. Louis Flyer	a 5:10 pm	a11:15 am
Kansas City Night Ex	a10:30 pm	a 6:15 am
Chicago, Burlington & Quincy.		
Chicago Special	a 7:00 am	a 4:05 pm
Chicago Vestibuled Ex	a 4:00 pm	a 7:50 am
Chicago Local	a 9:25 am	a11:00 pm
Chicago Limited	a 8:05 pm	a 7:50 am
Fast Mail		a 2:45 pm

WEBSTER DEPOT—15TH & WEBSTER

Fremont, Elkhorn & Missouri Valley.	Leave.	Arrive.
Black Hills, Deadwood, Lead, Hot Springs	a 3:00 pm	a 5:00 pm
Wyoming, Casper and Douglas	d 3:00 pm	c 5:00 pm
Hastings, York, David City, Superior, Geneva, Exeter and Seward	b 3:00 pm	b 5:00 pm
Bonesteel, Lincoln, Niobrara and Fremont	b 7:20 am	b10:25 am
Fremont Local	c 7:20 am	
Chicago, St. Paul, Minneapolis & Omaha.		
Twin City Passenger	a 6:30 am	a 9:10 pm
Sioux City Passenger	a 2:00 pm	a11:20 am
Oakland Local	b 5:45 pm	b 8:45 am
Missouri Pacific.		
Nebraska Local, Via Weeping Water	b 4:10 pm	a10:25 am

a Daily. b Daily except Sunday. d Daily except Saturday. e Daily except Monday. c Sunday only.

STEAMSHIPS.

HOLLAND-AMERICA LINE
New Twin-Screw Steamers of 12,500 Tons.
NEW YORK—ROTTERDAM, via BOULOGNE.
Sailing Wednesday at 10 A. M.
Rotterdam ..... Jan. 28 Rotterdam ..... Mar. 4
Amsterdam ..... Feb. 4 Amsterdam ..... Mar. 11
Ryndam ..... Feb. 18 Statendam ..... Mar. 18
Holland-America Line, 39 B'way, N. Y.
Harry Moore, 1601 Farnam st., J. S. McNally, 1323 Farnam st., H. S. Jones, 1502 Farnam st., Louis Nesse, First Nat'l Bk., F. E. Fiodman & Co., 1514 Capitol ave., Chas. Marss, 512 So. 10th st., S. L. Kostorys, 509 So. 12th st, Omaha.

FREWEN HAS A NEW SCHEME

Evolves a Plan for Reviving Irish Industries Which He Lays Before Government.

(Copyright, 1903, by Press Publishing Co.)

LONDON, Jan. 17.—(New York World Cablegram—Special Telegram.)—The "Jerome sisters," Mrs. George West, Lady Randolph Churchill, Mrs. "Jack" Leslie and Mrs. Moreton Frewen are all living in Great Cumberland place, where the last named has just taken a house. Moreton Frewen is, as usual, full of big schemes, his latest being a gigantic undertaking for reviving the Irish industries, which he has laid before the Irish government.

PRIZE FOR THE POLICEMEN

One Hundred Dollars to Officer Who Arrests Most Automobile Scorchers.

(Copyright, 1903, by Press Publishing Co.)

PARIS, Jan. 17.—(New York World Cablegram—Special Telegram.)—The prefect of police received an anonymous letter containing a banknote for 500 francs ($100), with a request to give it to "the two policemen who showed the most zeal last year in securing prosecutions against automobilists for excessive speed in driving—considering such to be the greatest service the police can render the public."

THE SEVEN SECRETS

by WM. LE QUEUX

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CHAPTER XXIII.

The Mystery of Mary.

The astounding message, dispatched from Neneford and signed by Parkinson, the butler, ran as follows:

"Regret to inform you that Mrs. Courtenay was found drowned in the river this morning. Can you come here? My mistress is very anxious to see you."

Without a moment's delay I sent a reply in the affirmative, and after searching in the A. B. C. found that I had a train at 3 o'clock from King's Cross. This I took, and after an anxious journey arrived duly at the Manor, all the blinds of which were closely drawn.

Parkinson, white-faced and agitated, a thin, nervous figure in a coat slightly too large for him, had been watching my approach up the drive and held open the door for me.

"Ah, Doctor!" the old fellow gasped. "It's terrible—terrible. To think that poor Miss Mary should die like that!"

"Tell me all about it," I demanded, quickly. "Come!" and I led the way into the morning room.

"We don't know anything about it, sir. It's all a mystery," the gray-faced old man replied. "When one of the housemaids went up to Miss Mary's room at 8 o'clock this morning to take her tea, as usual, she received no answer to her knock. Thinking she was asleep she returned half an hour later, only to find her absent and that the bed had not been slept in. We told the mistress, never thinking that such an awful fate had befallen poor Miss Mary. Mistress was inclined to believe that she had gone off on some wild excursion somewhere, for of late she's been in the habit of going away for a day or two without telling us. At first none of us dreamed that anything had happened, until just before 12 o'clock Reuben Dixon's lad, who'd been out fishing, came up, shouting that poor Miss Mary was in the water under some bushes close to the stile that leads into the Monk's wood. At first we couldn't believe it—but with the others I flew down posthaste, and there she was, poor thing, under the surface, with her dress caught in the bushes that droop into the water. Her hat was gone, and her hair unbound floated out, waving with the current. We at once got a boat and took her out, but she was quite dead. Four men from the village carried her up here, and they've placed her in her own room."

"The police know about it, of course?"

"Yes, we told Jarvis, the constable. He's sent a telegram to Oundle, I think."

"And what doctor has seen her?"

"Doctor Govitt, from Peterborough. He's here now."

"Ah! I must see him. He has examined the body, I suppose?"

"I expect so, sir. He's been a long time in the room."

"And how is it believed that the poor young woman got into the water?" I asked, anxious to obtain the local theory.

"It's believed that she either fell in or was pushed in, a long way higher up; because half a mile away, not far from the lock, there's distinct marks in the long grass showing that somebody went off the path to the brink of the river. And close by that spot they found her black silk shawl."

"She went out without a hat, then?" I remarked, recollecting that when she had met her husband in secret she had worn a shawl. Could it be possible that she had met him again, and that he had made away with her? The theory seemed a sound one in the present circumstances.

"It seemed to me, sir, that the very fact of her taking her shawl showed that she did not intend to be out very long," the butler said.

"It would almost appear that she went in the night in order to meet somebody," I observed.

The old man shook his head sorrowfully, saying:

"Poor Miss Mary's never been the same since her husband died, sir. She was often very strange in her manner. Between ourselves, I strongly suspect it to be a case of deliberate suicide. She was utterly broken down by the awful blow."

"I don't see any motive for suicide," I remarked. Then I asked, "Has she ever been known to meet anyone on the river bank at night?"

Old Parkinson was usually an impenetrable person. He fidgeted, and I saw that my question was an awkward one for him to answer without telling a lie.

"The truth will have to be discovered about this, you know," I went on. "Therefore, if you have any knowledge likely to assist us at the inquest it is your duty to explain."

"Well, sir," he answered, after a short pause, "to tell the truth, in this last week or so there have been some funny rumors in the village."

"About what?"

"People say that she was watched by Drake, Lord Massington's gamekeeper, who saw her at 2 o'clock in the morning walking arm in arm with an old gentleman. I heard the rumor down at the Golden Ball, but I wouldn't believe it. Why, Mr. Courtenay's only been dead a month or two. The man Drake is a bragging fellow, and I think most people discredited his statement."

"Well," I said, "it might possibly have been true. It seems hardly conceivable that she should go wandering alone by the river at night. She surely had some motive in going here. Was she only seen by the gamekeeper on one occasion?"

"Only once. But, of course, he soon spread it about the village and it formed for a week a nice titbit of gossip. As soon as I heard it I took steps to deny it."

"It never reached the young lady's ears?"

"Oh, no," the old servant answered. "We were careful to keep the scandal to ourselves, knowing how it would pain her. She's had sufficient trouble in her life, poor thing." And with tears in his gray old eyes, he added: "I have known her ever since she was a child in her cradle. It's awful that her end should come like this."

He was a most trustworthy and devoted servant, having spent nearly forty years of his life in the service of the family, until he had become almost part of it. His voice quivered with emotion when he spoke of the dead daughter of the house, but he knew that toward me it was not a servant's privilege to entirely express the grief he felt.

I put other questions regarding the dead woman's recent actions and he was compelled to admit that they had of late been quite unaccountable. Her absences were frequent and she appeared to sometimes make long and mysterious journeys in various directions, while her days at home were usually spent in the solitude of her own room. Some friends of the family, he said, attributed it to grief at the great blow she had sustained, while others suspected that her mind had become slightly unhinged. I recollected, myself, how strange had been her manner when she had visited me, and inwardly confessed to being utterly mystified.

Dr. Govitt I found to be a stout middle-aged man, of the usual type of old-fashioned practitioner of a cathedral town, whose methods and ideas were equally old-fashioned. Before I entered the room where the unfortunate young woman was lying he explained to me that life had evidently been extinct about seven hours prior to the discovery of the body.

"There are no marks of foul play?" I inquired anxiously.

"None, as far as I've been able to find—only a scratch on the left cheek, evidently inflicted after death."

"What's your opinion?"

"Suicide. Without a doubt. The hour at which she fell into the water is shown by her watch. It stopped at 2:28."

"You have no suspicion of foul play?"

"None whatever."

I did not reply, but by the compression of my lips I presume he saw that I was dubious.

"Ah! I see you are suspicious," he said. "Of course, in tragic circumstances like these the natural conclusion is to doubt. The poor young lady's husband was mysteriously done to death, and I honestly believe that her mind gave way beneath the strain of grief. I've attended her professionally two or three times of late and noted certain abnormal features in her case that arouse my suspicion that her brain had become unbalanced. I never, however, suspected her of suicidal tendency."

"Her mother, Mrs. Mivart, did," I responded. "She told me so only a few days ago."

"I know, I know," he answered. "Of course, her mother had more frequent and intimate opportunities for watching her than I had. In any case, it is a very dreadful thing for the family."

"Very!" I said.

"And the mystery surrounding the death of Mr. Courtenay—was it never cleared up? Did the police never discover any clue to the assassin?"

"No. Not a single fact regarding it beyond those related at the inquest has ever been brought to light."

"Extraordinary—very extraordinary!"

I went with him into the darkened bedroom wherein lay the body, white and composed, her fair hair disheveled about her shoulders and her thin white hands crossed upon her breast. The expression upon her countenance—that face that looked so charming beneath its veil of widowhood as she had sat in my room at Harley Place—was calm and restful, for indeed in the graceful curl of the lips there was a kind of half-smile, as though, poor thing, she had at last found perfect peace.

Govitt drew up the blind, allowing the golden sunset to stream into the room, thereby giving me sufficient light to make my examination. The latter occupied some little time, my object being to discover any marks of violence. In persons drowned by force, and especially in women, the doctor expects to find red or livid marks upon the wrists, arms or neck, where the assailant had seized the victim. Of course, these are not always discernible, for it is easier to entice the unfortunate one to the water's edge and give a gentle push than grapple in violence and hurl a person into the stream by main force. The push leaves no trace; therefore, the verdict in hundreds of cases of willful murder has been "suicide," or an open one, because the necessary evidence of foul play has been wanting.

Here was another case in point. The scratch on the face that Govitt had described was undoubtedly a post-mortem injury, and with the exception of another slight scratch on the ball of the left thumb I could find no trace whatever of violence. And yet, to me, the most likely theory was that she had again met her husband in secret, and had lost her life at his hands. To attribute a motive was utterly impossible. I merely argued logically within myself that it could not possibly be a case of suicide, for without a doubt she had met clandestinely the eccentric old man whom the world believed to be dead.

The facts within my knowledge were important and startling, yet if I related them to any second person I felt that my words would be scouted as improbable, and my allegations would certainly not be accepted. Therefore I still kept my own counsel, longing to meet Jevons and hear the result of his further inquiries.

Mrs. Mivart I found seated in her own room, tearful and utterly crushed. Poor Mary's tragic end had come upon her as an overwhelming burden of grief, and I stood beside her full of heartfelt sympathy. A strong bond of affection had always existed between us, but as I took her inert hand and uttered words of comfort she only shook her head sorrowfully and burst into a torrent of tears. Truly the Manor was a dismal house of mourning.

To Ethelwynn I sent a telegram addressed to the Hennikers, in order that she should receive it the instant she arrived in town. Briefly I explained the tragedy and asked her to come down to the Manor at once, feeling assured that Mrs. Mivart in the hour of her distress desired her daughter at her side. Then I accompanied the local constable and the three police officers who had come over from Oundle, down to the riverside.

The brilliant afterglow tinged the broad brimming river with a crimson light, and the trees beside the water already threw heavy shadows, for the day was dying and the glamor of the fading sunset and the dead stillness of departing day had fallen upon everything. Followed by a small crowd of curious villagers we walked along the footpath over the familiar ground that I had traversed when following the strange pair. Eagerly we searched everywhere for traces of a struggle, but the only spot where the long grass was trodden down was at a point a little beyond the ferry. But as far as I could see there was no actual sign of any struggle. It was merely as though the grass had been flattened by the trailing of a woman's skirt across it. Examination showed, too, imprints of Louis XV heels in the soft clay bank. One print was perfect, but the other, close to the edge, gave evidence that the foot had slipped, thus establishing the spot as that where the unfortunate young lady had fallen into the water. When examining the body I had noticed that she was wearing Louis XV shoes, and also that there was still mud upon the heels. She had always been rather proud of her feet, and surely there is nothing which sets off the shape of a woman's foot better than the neat little shoes with its high instep and heel.

We searched on until twilight darkened into night, traversing that path every detail of which had impressed itself so indelibly upon my brain. We passed the stile near which I had stood hidden in the bushes and had overheard that remarkable conversation between the "dead" man and his wife. All the memories of that never-to-be-forgotten night returned to me. Alas that I had not questioned Mary when she had called upon me on the previous day!

She had died with her secret hidden within her heart.

CHAPTER XXIV.

Ethelwynn is Silent.

At midnight I was seated in the drawing room of the manor. Before me, dressed in plain black which made her beautiful face look even paler than it was, sat my love—bowed, despondent, silent. The household, although still astir, was hushed by the presence of the dead, the long, old room itself, usually so bright and pleasant, seemed full of dark shadows, for the lamp, beneath its yellow shade, burned but dimly, and everywhere there reigned an air of mourning.

Half demented by grief, my love had arrived in hot haste about 9 o'clock, and, rushing to poor Mary's room, had thrown herself upon her knees beside the poor inanimate clay, for even though of late differences might have existed between them, the sisters were certainly devoted to each other. The scene in that room was an unhappy one, for, although Ethelwynn betrayed nothing by her lips, I saw by her manner that she was full of remorse over the might-have-beens and that she was bitterly reproaching herself for some fact of which I had no knowledge.

We had not spoken of the past. She had been too full of grief, too utterly overcome by the tragedy of the situation. Her mournful figure struck the sympathetic chord in my heart. Perhaps I had misjudged her; perhaps I had attributed to her sinister motives that were nonexistent. Alas! wherever mystery exists, little charity enters man's heart. Jealousy dries up the milk of human kindness.

"Dearest," I said, rising and taking her slim white hand that lay in her lap, "in this hour of your distress you have at least one person who would console and comfort you—one man who loves you."

She raised her eyes to mine quickly, with a strange, eager look. Her glance was as though she did not fully realize the purport of my words. I knew myself to be a sad blunderer in the art of love, and wondered if my words were too blunt and abrupt.

"Ah!" she sighed. "If only I believed that those words came direct from your heart, Ralph!"

"They do," I assured her. "You received my letter at Hereford—you read what I wrote to you?"

"Yes," she answered. "I read it. But how can I believe in you further, after your unaccountable treatment? You forsook me without giving any reason. You can't deny that."

"I don't seek to deny it," I said. "On the contrary, I accept all the blame that may attach to me. I only ask your forgiveness," and bending to her in deep earnestness, I pressed the small hand that was within my grasp.

"But if you loved me, as you declare you have always done, why did you desert me in that manner?" she inquired, her large dark eyes turned seriously to mine.

I hesitated. Should I tell her the truth openly and honestly?

"Because of a fact which came to my knowledge," I answered, after a long pause.

"What fact?" she asked with some anxiety.

"I made a discovery," I said ambiguously.

"Regarding me?"

"Yes," regarding yourself," I replied with my eyes fixed full upon hers. I saw that she started at my words, her countenance fell, and she caught her breath quickly.

"Well, tell me what it is," she asked in a hard tone, a tone which showed me that she had steeled herself for the worst.

"Forgive me if I speak the truth," I exclaimed. "You have asked me, and I will be perfectly frank with you. Well, I discovered among old Mr. Courtenay's papers a letter written by you several years ago which revealed the truth."

"The truth!" she gasped, her face blanched in an instant. "The truth of what?"

"That you were once engaged to become his wife."

Her breast heaved quickly, and I saw that my words had relieved her of some grave apprehension. When I declared that I knew "the truth" she believed that I spoke of the secret of Courtenay's masquerading. The fact of her previous engagement was, to her, of only secondary importance, for she replied;

"Well, and is that the sole cause of your displeasure?"

I felt assured from the feigned flippancy of her word that she held knowledge of the strange secret.

"It was the main cause," I said. "You concealed the truth from me, and lived in that man's house after he had married Mary."

"I had a reason for doing so," she exclaimed in a quiet voice. "I did not live there by preference."

"You were surely not forced to do so?"

"No. I was not forced. It was a duty." Then, after a pause, she covered her face with her hands and suddenly burst into tears, crying, "Ah, Ralph! If you could know all—all that I have suffered, you would not think ill of me! Appearances have been against me, that I know quite well. The discovery of that letter must have convinced you that I was a schemer and unworthy, and the fact that I lived beneath the roof of the man who had cast me off added color to the theory that I had conceived some deep plot. Probably," she went on, speaking between her sobs, "probably you even suspected me of having had a hand in the terrible crime. Tell me frankly," she asked gripping my arm, and looking into my face. "Did you ever suspect me of being the assassin?"

I paused. What could I reply? Surely it was the best to be open and straightforward. So I told her that I had not been alone in the suspicion, and that Ambler Jevons had shared it with me.

"Ah! that accounts for his marvelous ingenuity in watching me. For weeks past he has seemed to be constantly near me, making inquiries regarding my movements wherever I went. You both suspected me. But is it necessary that I should assert my innocence of such a deed?" she asked. "Are you not now convinced that it was not my hand that struck down old Mr. Courtenay?"

"Forgive me," I urged. "The suspicion was based upon ill-formed conclusions and was heightened by your own peculiar conduct after the tragedy."

"That my conduct was strange was surely natural. The discovery was quite as appalling to me as to you. And, knowing that somewhere among the dead man's papers my letters were preserved, I dreaded lest they should fall into the hands of the police and thereby connect me with the crime. It was fear that my final letter should be discovered that gave my actions the appearance of guilt."

I took both her hands in mine, and, fixing my gaze straight into those dear eyes wherein the love-look shone—that look by which a man is able to read a woman's heart—I asked her a question.

"Ethelwynn," I said, calmly and seriously, "we love each other. I know I've been suspicious without cause and cruel in my neglect; nevertheless the separation has quickened my affection and has shown that to me life without you is impossible. You, darling, are the only woman who has entered my life. I have championed no woman save yourself; by no ties have I been bound to any woman in this world. This I would have you believe, for it is the truth—God is my witness."

She made me no answer. Her tiny hands trembled in my grasp and she bowed her head so that I could not see her face.

"Will you not forgive, dearest?" I urged. The great longing to speak out my mind had overcome me, and, having eased myself of my burden, I stood awaiting her response. "Will you not be mine again, as in the old days before this chain of tragedy fell upon your house?"

Again she hesitated for several minutes. Then, of a sudden, she lifted her tear-stained face toward me, all rosy with blushes and wearing that sweet look which I had known so well in the happy days bygone.

"If you wish it, Ralph," she faltered, "we will forget that any breach between us has ever existed. I desire nothing else, for as you well know, I love no one else but yourself. I have been foolish, I know. I ought to have explained the girlish romantic affection I once entertained for that man who afterward married Mary. In those days he was my ideal. Why, I cannot tell. Girls in their teens have strange caprices, and that was mine. Just as schoolboys fall violently in love with married women, so are schoolgirls sometimes attracted toward aged men. People wonder when they hear of May and December marriages, but they are not always from mercenary motives, as is popularly supposed. Nevertheless I acted wrongly in not telling you the truth from the first. It is myself who is to blame."

So much she said, though with many a pause and with so keen a self-reproach in her tone that I could hardly bear to hear her, when I interrupted:

"There is blame on both sides. Let us forget about it all," and I bent until my lips met hers and we sealed our compact with a long, clinging caress.

"Yes, dear heart. Let us forget it," she whispered. "We have both suffered—both of us," and I felt her arms tighten about my neck. "Oh, how you must have hated me!"

"No," I declared. "I never hated you. I was mystified and suspicious, because I felt assured that you knew the truth regarding the tragedy at Kew and remained silent."

She looked into my eyes as though she would read my soul.

"Unfortunately," she answered, "I am not aware of the truth."

"But you are in possession of certain strange facts—eh?"

"That I am in possession of facts that lead me to certain conclusions is the truth. But the clue is wanting. I have been seeking for it through all these months, but without success."

"Cannot we act in acord in this matter, dearest? May I not be acquainted with the facts which, with your intimate knowledge of the Courtenay household, you were fully acquainted with at the time of the tragedy?" I urged.

"No, Ralph," she replied, shaking her head, and at the samq time pressing my hand. "I cannot yet tell you anything."

"Then you have no confidence in me?" I asked reproachfully.

"It is not a question of confidence, but one of honor," she replied.

"But you will at least satisfy my curiosity upon one point," I exclaimed. "You will tell me the reason you lived beneath Courtenay's roof?"

"You know the reason well. He was an invalid and I went there to keep Mary company."

I smiled at the lameness of her explanation. It was, however, an ingenious evasion of the truth, for, after all, I could not deny that I had known this through several years. Old Courtenay, being practically confined to his room, had himself suggester Ethelwynn bearing his young wife company.

"Answer me truthfully, dearest. Was there no further reason?"

She paused, and in her hesitation I detected a desire to deceive, even though I loved her so fondly.

"Yes ,there was," she admitted at last, bowing her head.

"Explain it."

"Alas! I cannot. It is a secret."

"A secret from me?"

"Yes, dear heart!" she cried, clutching my hands with a wild movement. "Even from you."

My face must have betrayed the annoyance that I felt, for the next second she hastened to soften her reply, saying:

"At present it is impossible for me to explain. Think! Poor Mary is lying upstairs. I can say nothing at present—nothing—you understand."

"Then afterward—after the burial—you will tell me what you know?"

"Until I discover the truth I am resolved to maintain silence. All I can tell you is that the whole affair is so remarkable and astounding that its explanation will be even more bewildering than the tangled chain of circumstances."

"Then you are actually in possession of the truth," I remarked with some impatience. "What use is there to deny it?"

"At present I have suspicions—grave ones. That is all," she protested.

"What is your theory regarding poor Mary's death?" I asked, hoping to learn something from her.

"Suicide. Of that there seems not a shadow of doubt."

I was wondering if she knew of the "dead" man's existence. Being in sisterly confidence with Mary, she probably did.

"Did it ever strike you," I asked, "that the personal appearance of Mr. Courtnay changed very considerably after death? You saw the body several times after the discovery. Did you notice the change?"

She looked at me sharply, as though endeavoring to discern my meaning.

"I saw the body several times and certainly noticed a change in the features. But surely the countenance changes considerably if death is sudden?"

"Quite true," I answered. "But I recollect that in making the post morten Sir Bernard remarked upon the unusual change. He seemed to have grown fully ten years older than when I had seen him alive four hours before."

"Well," she asked, "is that any circumstance likely to lead to a solution of the mystery? I don't exactly see the point."

"It may," I answered ambiguously, puzzled at her manner and wondering is she were aware of that most unaccountable feature of the conspiracy.

"How?" she asked.

But as she had steadfastly refused to reveal her knowledge to me, or the reason of her residence beneath Courtenay's roof, I myself claimed the right to be equally vague.

We were still playing at cross-purposes; therefore I urged her to be frank with me. But she strenuously resisted all my persuasion.

"No. With my poor Mary lying dead I can say nothing. Later, when I have found the clue for which I am searching, I will tell you what I know. Till then no word shall pass my lips."

I knew too well that when my love made up her mind it was useless to try and turn her from her purpose. She was no shallow, empty-headed girl, whose opinion could be turned by any breath of the social wind or any invention of the faddists; her mind was so strong and well balanced so that she always had the courage of her convictions. Her sister, on the contrary, had been one of those giddy women who follow every frill and furbelow of fashion, and who takes up all the latest crazes with a seriousness worthy of far better objects. In temperament, in disposition, in character and in strength of mind they had been the exact opposite of each other; the one sister flighty and thoughtless, the other patient and forebearing, with an utter disregard for the hollow artificialities of society.

"But in this matter we may be of assistance to each other," I said, in an endeavor to persuade her. "As far as I can discern, the mystery contains no fewer than seven complete and distinct secrets. To obtain the truth regarding one would probably furnish the key to the whole."

"Then you think that poor Mary's untimely death is closely connected with the tragedy at Kew?" she asked.

"Most certainly. But I do not share your opinion as to suicide."

"What? You suspect foul play?" she cried.

I nodded in the affirmative.

"You believe that poor Mary was actually murdered?" she exclaimed anxiously. "Have you found marks of violence, then?"

"No. I have found nothing. My opin