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BRETA'S DOUBLE

By HELEN V. GREYSON.

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CHAPTER XXIV.

CONTINUED.

As he spoke, he unconsciously pressed the little hand that lay so contentedly in his, and she cast a half-sly glance at his manly face, while a soft blush suffused her white brow.

"Now I will tell you about myself," she said.

But he interrupted her.

"No, never mind, now; wait until I take you to my mother, then you can tell us both at once. I see that you are tired from your walk to the station, and now I want you to lay your head back and rest, while I watch over you," he said, with a tender smile.

"Do you know," she said, glancing up at him confidently, "that I feel so much better since I have gotten out of that stuffy room. I believe that a week or so spent in the fresh air would make me quite well."

"That would give me more happiness than you know," he said, and then added: "But now you must obey me and rest."

CHAPTER XXV.

"WAS ANYONE IN THERE?"

The girl whom Eric Brentwood had taken from the old haunted house had not been gone more than two hours when Gerald Danton's supposed granddaughter made her visit to that vicinity on so mysterious an errand. And she had not left the place more than thirty minutes when a cry of fire was raised in the village, and the people jumped from their beds in alarm, thinking that perhaps the fire was close to them and threatened their safety. Having satisfied themselves of the distance, some remained at their windows, suggesting as to the probable locality of the conflagration, while others donned their clothing and went down the road like mad.

As fate would have it, the last to be awakened by the cry of fire was Carlos Monteri. But when he at last went to the window and saw the direction of the light he uttered an exclamation.

"Good heaven! The old house where she is confined is on fire! I am sure, for there is no other building in that exact direction. Will I be in time?" he asked, excitedly, as he hurriedly donning his clothes, he rushed from the hotel and tore down the road like mad.

Never before had Carlos Monteri been in such a hurry. Bad as he undoubtedly was he was too much of a man to let an innocent girl who had never harmed him, perish in the flames.

At last arriving upon the scene, he uttered a cry of despair, for the place was one solid mass of flames.

"Was anyone in there?" he asked, addressing the crowd. "Was anyone saved?"

"I saw no one," answered a rough-voiced man, "and I was about one of the first to get here. But if anyone had been in there, he would have been burned alive. But everybody knows that no one lived there, because the place is said to be haunted, and people steer clear of it. I wonder how it must have been set on fire."

"It must have been set on fire," spoke up another. "There was no other means of it catching, as no one lived there."

Carlos Monteri was in a perfect fever of excitement. Over and over again he asked himself how the place caught fire, and each time his thoughts reverted to Inez.

"Did that fiend do it?" he muttered under his breath. "Was it she who did this wretched night's work, expecting that I also was in there? If she did she shall pay dearly for it. Breta Danton has perished, but God knows that I would not have had it so. She, I am confident, is responsible for the death of that innocent girl, and now she shall be made to feel my revenge indeed. No doubt she is now exulting over my demise, but before another sun sets she will sing another tune. Tend! Bad as I am, I have yet to stoop to be on an equality with her. But let her beware! She has almost reached the end of her rope. And with a feeling of disgust he turned and left the scene that he felt he would never forget as long as he lived.

Visions of Breta Danton in the agonies of death would rise before him; and although he was innocent of doing the girl any actual harm, he could not but feel that he was to blame for taking her to that isolated house, and also close, too, to the girl who wished her forever out of her path.

Ah, well, she had succeeded; but Carlos Monteri was not dead, and while he lived she still had much to fear.

CHAPTER XXVI.

"HAVE I FAILED?"

The second day after the destruction of the house where she supposed her intended victim had met her death, Gerald Danton's granddaughter (?) was strolling down the walk that led to the gate, with a triumphant and satisfied air.

At last she told herself that she was free. Carlos Monteri and Breta Danton had perished as she meant they should do. Of that she felt assured, else he would have come to accuse her. "Thank heaven!" she exclaimed under her breath. "That man, who has hounded me from place to place, is at last out of my path. There is no

one now on this side of the Atlantic to raise a doubt about my identity, unless he be that old Doctor Montford, to whom I own my position here in Gerald Danton's home. And I flatter myself that I can manage to keep out of that old man's way. At any rate, my risk is considerably reduced. The two whom I most feared are evidently past exposing me, and if I cannot cope with one old dotard, then my inventive powers have greatly deteriorated; that is all."

And, with a carelessness of her head, she opened the gate and went onward down the road gaily.

She had not gone far, however, when, upon looking up, she gave a start of amazement.

"Good heaven!" she cried. "Have I failed, after all?"

There, before her, not ten feet away, stood Carlos Monteri, insolent, smiling.

Approaching, he lifted his hat mockingly.

"Good evening, my dear Inez. Have you heard of the great catastrophe?"

"What do you mean?" she asked, controlling her surprise and chagrin.

"Why, the burning of the old haunted house."

"Oh, of course! I suppose you got your prisoner out safe, however?"

"On the contrary, she perished in the flames, and you, my dear Inez, are her murderer."

"What do you mean? What had I to do with it?"

"Everything! I know that you set the old place on fire with the expectation of ridding yourself of Breta Danton and Carlos Monteri. Breta Danton perished, but Carlos Monteri lives to avenge her."

"You are mad!" she exclaimed.

"Not half as mad as you are at my unexpected appearance. But, my dear Inez, I was not fit to die just yet while, you see."

"Well, what do you wish of me now?" she asked, desperately.

"What I told you to do the other night. At least, you must do the part assigned you. The rest, I can attend to. Will you obey me or not? Will you promise to carry out my instructions or shall we go immediately to old Danton and introduce ourselves?"

"I give you exactly two minutes in which to make your decision. Taking his watch from his pocket he watched it silently. Presently he spoke: 'Time's up. What is your decision?'"

"I agree," she answered, sullenly.

"I knew you would," he said, as he laughed softly. "And remember I shall not let you retract. I will murder you first. You hear?"

"There is no danger. When I say I will, I keep my word. You need not fear but that I will keep my part of my contract. It is my only chance. I have played a desperate game so far, and now there is no turning back, as it is death and exposure on one side, and who knows what on the other."

"Success and triumph," he said.

"For whom?" she asked.

"For you, for me—for both of us."

"He answered, as he turned away. Then looking back, he said: 'Remember, if you fail me, it is at your peril. Carlos Monteri holds the trump card at last.'"

CHAPTER XXVII.

A STARTLING DISCOVERY.

The last interview between Carlos Monteri and Gerald Danton's granddaughter was not without a witness.

Cecil Doniphan, who had set himself the task of watching those two, had been loitering around the grounds, and had seen their meeting. And, although it was impossible for him to get close enough to hear their conversation, he could see by their gestures and expression that they were engaged in an excited interview.

His curiosity was roused to the highest pitch, but try as he would, he could not alter his position without being discovered.

He was satisfied, however, that it was not altogether a friendly feeling that prompted their strange meetings. He had intended to visit the old haunted house and see what took the fellow there, but before he had done so, the old place had burned to the ground. Not for an instant did he think anyone was confined there.

It was late that night when he raised his head from his pillow and listened. What was that peculiar cry? He was certain that he had heard it. But not hearing it repeated, he decided that he must have been dreaming, and lay down again.

In the morning he was the first to descend to the breakfast-room.

When the bell rang for breakfast they all assembled save the head of the house.

"Where is grandpapa?" asked the supposed Breta Danton.

"I was just about to ask that question myself," replied Cecil Doniphan.

"Jorkin, go to uncle's room and see if he is ill. He is always punctual at meals."

Jorkin, returning a few minutes later with a very white face, said:

"Mr. Cecil, he is not in his room, and the bed has not been slept in."

"Impossible!" exclaimed Doniphan.

"What does it mean?" as he rose from the table in his alarm. "Come," he said, addressing his cousin and the servants. "Search the house! I fear something has happened to him," as his mind reverted to the cry he had heard in the early part of the night.

Had it been his imagination or was it, after all, a reality? Following Cecil Doniphan's lead, they repaired first to the library, and there a sight met their eyes that made even the girl, wicked as she was, turn pale.

Lying at full length upon the floor was the body of Gerald Danton, while beside him a pool of blood stained the carpet a deep crimson.

"Oh, grandpapa!" cried she, as she drew back and covered her face with her hands.

With a cry of alarm, Cecil Doniphan and the servants hurried forward.

"What fiend has done this?" cried Doniphan, as he gazed on the stiffened form of his uncle.

"Oh, this is terrible!" exclaimed the servants.

"Must I go for the doctor?" asked Jorkins.

"It's too late, Jorkins," returned Cecil Doniphan. "He is cold and stiff now, and past all aid. See, that window is wide open, so the assassin, whoever he might be, must have entered that way. Search the grounds, and to the one who finds a clue to this murder I'll give fifty dollars. Search well; don't leave an inch of ground unsearched; and, Jorkins, go to the station and telegraph to town for a detective. I mean to get at the bottom of this affair."

All the time he had been talking, his cousin had crouched back against the door with that scared, white face, which Cecil Doniphan's keen eyes were not slow to note. Of course, the situation was bad enough, but the wild, restless look in her eyes caused him to watch her closely.

All sorts of wild suspicions rushed through Cecil Doniphan's head, but he dared not utter them without being sure. He had no particular love for his uncle, and had often wished that he would hurry himself off the earth and leave Ravensmere in his possession. But to see him murdered, to know that after all he would not be heir to his uncle's estate—that was quite a different matter altogether. To himself he was thinking:

"She, that evil-faced girl who stands there before me, she would be heir to Gerald Danton's wealth, while I would be left with a paltry thousand or two. There is something behind all this. She knows more about this affair than she pretends, and, if possible, I mean to bring it home to her. She is the one who will be benefited by his death, and in that fact alone I see a clue. But I must not be too hasty."

"You had better go away from this sight," he said, addressing her. "It is not fit for you to look at, and I see it agitates you greatly. Take my advice and retire. If I need your assistance I will send for you."

Glad of any excuse to get away from Cecil Doniphan's searching eyes, she availed herself of the opportunity and went to her room.

"Why did he watch my face so closely?" she said when she had closed the door behind her. "Is it possible that he suspects me? Ah, I must control myself! This will not do!" as she took a bottle from her pocket and proceeded to take a small dose of the liquid. "Ah, that's better. I feel the effects of it already. Now that he is dead, I will inherit all this wealth," she added. "There is no one to dispute my right, and if Cecil Doniphan interferes I'll fight him to the death. How I hate him! I know that in him I have an enemy. But what will the rich Miss Danton care for his enemy! And I am sure that, suspect what he might, he can prove nothing."

Ah, Inez, don't be too sure of safety! Have you forgotten that Nemesis is on your track?"

(To be continued.)

The Nation's Library.

They call it the Library of Congress, and the original plan was for a library of reference for Senators and Representatives. The plan broadened until the library became a National, rather than a Congressional library. It is the attraction which draws to the capital every year hundreds of earnest students and historians; and it is one of the deciding causes in establishing there many of the literary people who make Washington their home.

When the new library building was nearing completion it was planned to have the books from the old library rooms in the Capitol moved across the plaza and put in the new building in the spring. The calling of the extra session of Congress interfered with this plan. The books were needed for reference by the members of Congress; so it was deemed inexpedient to attempt the removal of any but those of remote interest until Congress had adjourned. The old newspaper files will be the first removed, and the books will follow slowly. Two months will be required for the work. The number of books to be moved is greater probably, with one exception, than was ever transferred from one place to another. There are seven hundred and forty-five thousand books now on the shelves of the library.—Leslie's Weekly.

Still Very Young.

The best argument against the antiquity of the human race is found in the slow progress man has made toward the highest of his present civilization. The fact that he has just made intercourse by telephone practicable, and is beginning to unfold the mystery of electricity is not a matter of much surprise and admiration, if he has been a million of years at work upon it, and when we take into consideration the intolerance, superstition and ignorance of our best men and most advanced thinkers, the conviction cannot be escaped that, if the human race has been in existence many thousands of years, it must have started from a very remote point of intelligence to have made no further progress out of stupidity than it has done so far.—Louisville Commercial.

AGRICULTURAL.

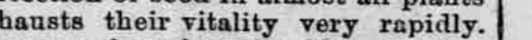
Cucumbers For Pickles. Pickled cucumbers are sold by count, and the small ones are generally preferred. Hence close picking and frequent picking, so as to prevent any from growing too large, is necessary to secure large crops. Sometimes, however, a stray cucumber will hide under the leaves until it has almost ripened its seeds. It is astonishing how this lessens the yield of the vine. Yet it is not to be wondered at, for the perfection of seed in almost all plants exhausts their vitality very rapidly. Cucumbers vines should be handled carefully so as not to loosen the roots which some of them send into the soil from the joints. These are great helps to see what is under it some of these side rootlets will be destroyed.

Cause of Streaks in Butter.

An authority says that streaks in butter are generally caused by uneven salting. In the farm dairy the best way is to sprinkle fine salt over the butter while still in the churn, then revolve it a few times very slowly to incorporate the salt with the butter. The moisture in the butter will dissolve the salt in a few minutes and it can then be massed and the surplus brine pressed out. This finishes the job. Don't hold it over until the next day and then work it. In creamery practice the salt must be evenly distributed and then the butter worked enough to make it uniform. White lumps in the butter come from abuse of the cream; it is not ripened uniformly. A portion gets too sour and partially decomposes. The remedy is plain—avoid the cause.

A Handy Gate Latch.

A serviceable latch is shown in the accompanying illustration. When the gate is swung to, the end of the latch strikes the beveled portion of the post, c, and is raised a couple of inches by means of the iron rods, bb. The post is beveled on both sides, so that the gate can swing from either way. As the latch reaches the slot, a, it drops into it and the gate is



DOUBLE SWINGING GATE LATCH.

secured. The bevel as described consists merely of a perpendicular slot in the center of the post. On each side of the slot the wood is cut away, forming the bevel. The iron rods, bb, are inclined only enough to cause the latch to fall back in place, having been lifted when it struck the bevel. I have planned this swinging gate in every imaginable way, but the latch caught every time.—Charles L. Hill, in New England Homestead.

Irrigating a Field of Celery.

From my experience with irrigation on my farm I have learned how to economize in the use of water by mulching or shading the surface of the ground. I am now irrigating a field of celery planted in rows with alternate spaces between them of twelve and eighteen inches apart. The wide spaces are mulched with coarse manure, and the plants are large enough to shade the narrow spaces. Irrigating this field once a week keeps the ground sufficiently moist, while another, with the surface exposed to evaporation, needs irrigated every day. In a word, the lessons learned are: Fill the soil with humus to enable it to retain all the moisture possible, give frequent cultivation during the early part of the summer, then, when practicable, mulch the surface not shaded by the plants.

I hardly think you appreciate the value of cover crops, which when plowed under fill the soil with humus. When the early garden crops, such as peas, corn and potatoes, have been removed, if a late crop does not follow this year, some catch crop should be used to cover the ground. Where it will survive the winter, sow crimson clover and it will save a part of your fertilizer bill the next year. On rich garden soil, when the weather is favorable, it makes a good growth. Crimson clover, cow peas, or rye, when plowed under fill the soil with the humus that helps to retain the moisture. Do not leave the ground without seeding to some crop when a crop has been removed. Nature's plan is to keep the ground covered, and unless you cover it with some useful crop she will cover it with weeds. The difference in soils is shown in times of drouth; the soil on some parts of my garden has been so filled with humus by plowing under heavy crops and heavy dressings of stable manure that it conserves so much moisture that the plants do not stop growing during an ordinary drouth, while on other parts where the soil is deficient in humus they cease to grow.—Vick's Magazine.

Useful on the Farm.

I saw some time ago a request for a combination wagon ladder, stock rack, etc. I send you a sketch of mine, or part of it, rather. Any handy with tools can make it, and it need not cost over two dollars for bolts and iron. I made mine, and would not part with it for several times its cost. Make it any length desired; mine is

16 feet—long enough for two horses, and to haul 15 head of 200-pound hogs. The sills G, Fig. 1, are 2 by 8, red elm, and the uprights A and B, Fig. 2, should be heavy at the bottom and taper to 2 by 2 at the top. They

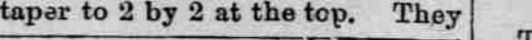


Fig. 1.



Fig. 2.

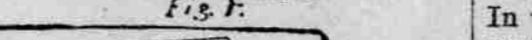


Fig. 3.

A HANDY COMBINATION.

fasten in the rollers with bolts. They are the only bolts that have to be removed in changing from one to the other. The balance of it I made out of linn. It is light; one man can handle it easily. Have the bottom boards to fit snugly, but do not nail them.

By using the main body C, Fig. 1, with two extra bolsters F, Fig. 2, you have a good log rigging. For the stock rack, taper the posts. Use linn boards. Have your blacksmith make eight square sockets, 1 1/2 by 2 1/2 inches, look in shape of sills G. Use one-quarter-inch bolts for these. I used old buggy tires. Make end-gates like the side D, Fig. 2. Use rods also. Make two light gates for partitions; it makes three pens. Hogs cannot crowd them. Hooks and staples will do for two middle gates. E, Fig. 3, is one side for wagon ladders. Have the arms notched just enough to set square on the sill after the round ends in the two-inch hole on opposite side. You can also have extra side-boards, tight, for hauling wood, corn, etc. One man can unfold this combination. Store it in a small place. You can surely find a dry place for it. This is my own invention, not patented, and if you use it once you will like it.—Ohio Farmer.

Agriculture in the Public Schools.

Those who have taken time to thoroughly investigate the matter of teaching agriculture in our common schools seldom arrive at any conclusion but that it must be done and the sooner the better. It is not an experiment by any means, as many suppose, for other countries have long since adopted it and it has proved to be very satisfactory. In this country, too, few realize the fact that an education pays on the farm as well as anywhere else, but there are too many yet who are wedded to the old plan of teaching reading, writing and arithmetic, and look upon higher education as being unnecessary for the farmer, and such a thing as teaching agriculture as being a waste of time, an unwise innovation or a ridiculous impossibility.

If the farmers of this country only realized how successfully agriculture is now taught in France they might be induced to give the matter more consideration. It is carried on there systematically. The following clipping from the Australian Agriculturalist under the caption, "How Agriculture is taught in France," gives a good idea of the system and of the excellent results:

"The perfect system of agricultural education in France has had much to do with the wonderful improvement in French farming. The federal grants for this purpose are now about 200,000 pounds. The social and political position of the farmer in France has been advanced also, and the general public appreciate the importance of agriculture. Agricultural teaching is now given in France in seven different stages or degrees. 1. There is the superior instruction of the national agricultural college. 2. The national schools of agriculture. 3. The practical schools of agriculture. 4. Apprenticeship schools where boys and girls are taught all the mysteries of general farm work, fruit growing, dairying, silk culture, agriculture and fish culture. Then there are (5) mixed schools, with professors of agriculture and agricultural chemistry, and (6) instruction in the fields for all of these schools have lands attached just as though the schools in the country in Australia had lectures on the agricultural sciences illustrated by work in the field. 7. France has carried to great perfection her experiment stations. The laborer has the farm school, suitable for the practical school, those in a better sphere of life the national schools, while others who desire to devote their attention to agronomic science have the agronomic institute which is truly a polytechnic of sciences physical, chemical and natural. By this means those engaged on the soil are kept abreast with the best and latest practice in agriculture, and are enabled to see and learn such things as tend to the improvement of their condition and industry."

The Anti-Rent Agitation.

Over \$2,000,000 has been spent by the State of Massachusetts in the building of improved highways. It must be plain to any one who gives the matter thought that he suffers enormous losses each year as the result of bad roads.

Earth is the poorest of all road materials except sand, and earth roads require more attention than any other kind and generally receive less.

The fact that the Davis automobile trip from New York to San Francisco was abandoned on account of bad roads will make a text for the good roads people.

The best road for the farmer, all things being considered, is a solid, well-built stone road, so narrow as to be only a single track, but having a firm earth road on one or both sides.

Where the traffic is not very extensive the purposes of good roads are better served by narrow tracks than by wide ones, while many of the objectionable features of wide tracks are removed, the initial cost of construction is cut down one-half or more, and the charges for repair reduced in proportion.

A mile of broken stone road, fifteen feet wide, costs in the State of Massachusetts about \$7500 per mile, while a mile of the same width and kind of road costs in the State of New Jersey only \$4700. This is due partly to the fact that the topography of Massachusetts is somewhat rougher than that of New Jersey.

Herr Riggenbach, who introduced the cog-wheel railroads that have enabled tourists in Switzerland to do their mountain climbing without effort, died recently.

Teaching Pupils to Swim.

Teaching boys and girls how to swim is the newest subject to be taken up in our grammar schools. The matter was first suggested by a philanthropic society of New York City, who will endeavor to have the subject adopted.

The Saginaw River, in Michigan, is eighteen miles long, and on its banks have been produced 18,000,000 feet of pine boards.

GOOD ROADS NOTES.

Abolish the Toll System. The continuance of the toll system is simply the perpetration of an onerous tax upon the people for the benefit of the baldest kind of a monopoly. In various parts of the country toll roads have been gradually abolished, as their franchises have expired.

Use of Crude Petroleum.

A writer in a St. Paul paper states that he recently drove over a piece of road at Fort Worth, Texas, which was treated last fall with a wetting of crude petroleum. He says that during five months of drouth, when all other roads were enveloped in dust, this one was clear of it, and that when heavy rain made mud of the dusty roads this one remained dry and pleasant.

Where the Farmer Profits.

We may say that it doesn't cost the farmer anything to market his crops, because he does all the hauling himself. True, but isn't his time worth something? Suppose that in place of every ton of wheat or hay or potatoes loaded on his wagon he had a ton of result of good roads, to load up two tons, and to market the entire crop of his farm with just half the labor and in just half the time which is required at present, which would be the case with good roads, wouldn't the amount of time he could save be worth something, and wouldn't it be worth saving?

Automobiles and Good Roads.

The "good roads movement," which has been quietly and steadily progressing in the United States for several years, is likely before long to become a great national issue in politics. The movement was first started by the wheelmen, through their national organization, the League of American Wheelmen, and hundreds of thousands of dollars have been spent by this organization in agitating the question. To the wheelmen will soon be added a large number of owners of horseless carriages as ardent advocates of road improvements.—Los Angeles Times.

One Country's Experience.

Mecklenburg County, North Carolina, not long ago began the construction of a system of macadam roads. It was customary there to load up two bales of cotton on a wagon to be hauled by a mule team. The mules could draw this load very well during dry weather. After a rain, when the roads were soft, the load was too much for even a pair of tough mules. After the county had begun to build roads this load was doubled several times, as it was found that the same two mules were able to haul as much as twelve bales, or six tons, in place of their former load, which amounted to only a single ton. And more—the improved roads made it possible to haul this load in wet and dry weather alike, for being properly built of stone, they were fit for use immediately after a heavy rain.

Interstate Object-Lesson Roads.

It is the intention of many States besides Massachusetts, either by connecting their detached sample roads or by laying down long lines to be built as a whole, to establish State roads, which shall be object lessons on a large scale. The Legislature of New York has frequently had under consideration the subject of a network of roads connecting all of the county seats by north and south and by east and west lines. The same or similar plans have been proposed in Pennsylvania, Maryland and California. Other States have proposed to limit these object lessons to a single road running lengthwise of the State or two lines crossing each other at the capital. Should these plans be put into execution, it will be very important that these roads in the different States should be made to connect at the State lines and thus form interstate roads.

Heretic Measures.

After standing it in rebellious silence for three days, the hale and rugged old gentleman called his daughter aside.

"See here, Ann," he began, "your children don't pretend to mind you. I should say they didn't, father. They pay no more attention to me than if I were a piece of statuary, unless I resort to extremes. But you should see their father bring them to time. He can do more in a word than I can in an hour's straight talk."

"But that isn't right, Ann. They must be taught to respect and obey you while they are young. You are not with them enough; you fail to enter into their childish pleasures and to warm the natural affection that is a part of their being. Your own future happiness demands that you take the matter in hand. As between the everlasting social whirl and your children, they should have the preference."

"I don't know out you're right, but the old gentleman sighed at the tone in which the subject was dismissed.

Next day the mother was about to go out when one of the little folks grasped her about the dress and danced up and down in the rain because she could not go along. There was a cross reprimand, an angry shriek, and then the child, holding her arm tight to her grandpa, he chopped his visit off short and left for home that night.

A little later the expressman left a package at the house and "Ann" was surprised beyond words to find it contained a nicely polished ax. Then she espied this note, signed by her father: "If a hatpin is required to make Edith obey now, you will need this before she is grown up."—Detroit Free Press.

Death From Yawning.

"I suppose I have spent about one-eighth of my life supporting the whole weight of my body in midair by my teeth," said