

GREEN FANCY

BY GEORGE BARR McCUTCHEON

Author of "GRAUSTARK," "THE HOLLOW OF HER HAND," "THE PRINCE OF GRAUSTARK," "FROM THE HOUSETOPS," ETC.

Copyright by Dodd, Mead and Company, Inc.

CHAPTER XV—Continued.

—13—

His uneasiness increased to consternation when he discovered that Sprouse had not yet put in an appearance. What had become of the man? He could not help feeling, however, that somehow the little agent would suddenly pop out of the chimney in his room, or sneak in through a crack under the door—and laugh at his fears.

Shortly before the noon hour, Peter Ames halted the old automobile from Green Fancy in front of the Tavern and out stepped O'Dowd, followed by no less a personage than the pseudo Mr. Loeb. There were a number of traveling bags in the tonneau of the car.

Catching sight of Barnes, the Irishman shouted a genial greeting.

"The top of the morning to ye. You remember Mr. Loeb, don't you? Mr. Curtis' secretary. Mr. Loeb is leaving us for a few days on business. Good morning, Mr. Boneface," he called out to Putnam Jones who approached at that juncture. "We are sadly in want of gasoline."

Barnes caught the look that the Irishman shot at him out of the corner of his eye.

"Perhaps you'd better see that the scoundrels don't give us short measure, Mr. Loeb," said O'Dowd. Loeb hesitated for a second, and then, evidently in obedience to a command from the speaker's eye, moved off to where Peter was opening the intake.

O'Dowd lowered his voice. "Barnes, I let you off last night, and I let her off as well. In return, I ask you to hold your tongue until the man down there gets a fair start. A day's start and—"

"Are you in danger, too, O'Dowd?"

"To be sure—but I love it. I can always squirm out of tight places."

"I would not deliberately put you in jeopardy, O'Dowd."

"See here, I am going back to that house up yonder. There is still work for me there. What I'm after now is to get him on the train at Hornville. I'll be here again at four o'clock, on my word of honor. Trust me, Barnes."

"Do you mean to say that you are coming back here to run the risk of being—"

"We've had word that the government has men on the way. Why, hang it all, Barnes, don't you know who it was that engineered that whole business last night?"

Barnes smiled. "I do. He is a secret agent from the embassy—"

"Secret granny!" almost shouted O'Dowd. "He is the slickest, cleverest crook that ever drew the breath of life. And he's got away with the jewels, for which you can whistle in vain, I'm thinking."

"For heaven's sake, O'Dowd—" began Barnes, his blood like ice in his veins.

"But don't take my word for it. Ask her—upstairs there. God bless her!—ask her if she knows Chester"



He Was Known to Her as a Thief of International Fame.

Naismith. She'll tell ye, my bucko. He's been standing guard outside her window for the past three nights. He's—"

"Now I know you are mistaken," cried Barnes, a wave of relief surging over him. "He has been in this tavern every night—"

"Sure he has. But answer me, did ye ever see him here after eleven in the evening? You did not—not until last night, anyhow. In the struggle he had with Nicholas last night he was recognized. That's why poor old Nicholas is lying dead up there at the house now—and will have a decent burial unbeknownst to anybody but his friends."

"Good God, O'Dowd, you can't mean that he—killed—"

"He stuck a knife in his neck. The dirty snake! And the chief trusted him as no crook ever was trusted be-

fore. In the name of God, Barnes, how did you happen to fall in with the villain?"

Barnes passed his hand over his brow, dazed. "He—he represented himself as a book agent," he mumbled, striving to collect himself. "Jones knew him. Said he had been around here for weeks. I—"

"That's the man," said O'Dowd, scowling. "He trotted all over the county, selling books. For the love of it, do ye think? Not much. He had other fish to fry, you may be sure. Barnes, if we ever lay hands on that friend of yours—well, he won't have to fry in hell. He'll be burnt alive. Thank God, my mind's at rest on one score. She didn't skip out with him. They all think he did. Not one of them suspects that she came away with you. There is plenty of evidence that she let him in through her window—"

"All ready, O'Dowd," called Loeb. "Come along, please."

"Coming," said the Irishman. "Don't blame yourself, old man. See you later, Barnes. So long!"

CHAPTER XVI.

The First Wayfarer Visits a Shrine, Confesses, and Takes an Oath.

How was he to find the courage to impart the appalling news to her? He was now convinced beyond all doubt that the so-called Sprouse had made off with the priceless treasure and that only a miracle could bring about its recovery. He realized to what extent he had been shaped into a tool to be used by the master craftsman. He saw through the whole Machiavellian scheme, and he was also now morally certain that Sprouse would have sacrificed him without the slightest hesitation.

In the event that anything went wrong with their enterprise, the man would have shot him dead and earned the gratitude and commendation of his associates! He would have been glorified and not crucified by his friends.

With a heavy heart he mounted the stairs. At the top he paused to deliberate. Would it not be better to keep her in ignorance? What was to be gained by revealing to her the— But Miss Thackeray was luring him on to destruction. She stood outside the door and beckoned. Then she closed the door from the outside, and Barnes was alone with the cousin of kings and queens and princes.

"I feared you had deserted me," she said, holding out her hand to him as he strode across the room.

"I saw no occasion to disturb your rest," he mumbled.

"I have been peeping," she said, looking at him searchingly. "Where is Mr. Loeb going, Mr. Barnes?"

"O'Dowd says he is to be gone for a few days on business," he equivocated.

"He will not return," she said quietly. "He is a coward at heart. Oh, I know him well," she went on, scorn in her voice.

"Was I wrong in not trying to stop him?" he asked.

She pondered this for a moment. "No," she said, but he caught the dubious note in her voice. "It is just as well, perhaps, that he should disappear. His flight today spares—but we are more interested in the man Sprouse. Has he returned?"

"No, Miss Cameron," said he ruefully. And then, without a single reservation, he laid bare the story of Sprouse's defection. When he inquired if she had heard of the man known as Chester Naismith, she confirmed his worst fear by describing him as the guard who watched beneath her window. He was known to her as a thief of international fame.

"You were no match for Chester Naismith. Do not look so glum. The shrewdest police officers in Europe have never been able to cope with him. Why should you despair?"

He sprang to his feet. "By gad, he hasn't got away with it yet," he grated. "I will run this scoundrel down if I have to devote the remainder of my life to the task."

She sighed. "Alas, I fear that I shall have to tell you a little more about this wonderful man you know as Sprouse. Six months ago the friends and supporters of the legitimate successor to my country's throne consummated a plan whereby the crown jewels and certain documents were surreptitiously removed from the palace vaults. Instead of depositing the treasure in Paris, it was sent to this country in charge of a group of men whose fealty could not be questioned. The man you know as Loeb is in reality my cousin. I have known him all my life. He is the youngest brother of the pretender to the throne, and a cousin of the prince who is held prisoner by the Austrians. This prince has a brother also, and it was to him that I was supposed to deliver the jewels. I traveled from New York, but not alone as you may suspect. I was carefully protected from the time I left my hotel there until—well, until I arrived in Boston.

"While there I received a secret message from friends in Canada di-

recting me to go to Spanish Falls, where I would be met and conducted by Prince Sebastian himself to the place called Green Fancy, which was near the Canadian border. A safe escort would be provided for us, and we would be on British soil within a few hours after our meeting. It is only necessary to add that when I arrived at Green Fancy I met Prince Ugo—and understood! I had carefully covered my tracks after leaving Boston. My real friends were, and still are, completely in the dark as to my movements, so skilfully was the trick managed.

"And now for Chester Naismith. It was he who, acting for the misguided loyalists and recommended by certain young aristocrats who by virtue of their own dissipations had come to know him as a man of infinite resourcefulness and daring, planned and carried out the pillaging of the palace vaults. Almost under the noses of the foreign guards he succeeded in obtaining the jewels. No doubt he could have made off with them at that time, but he shrewdly preferred to have them brought to America by some one else. It would have been impossible for him to dispose of them in Europe. You see how cunning he is?"

"He was no doubt thwarted in his design to waylay me on the road from Spanish Falls by a singular occurrence in this tavern. He was attacked in his room here, overpowered, bound and gagged by two men. He knew the men. They were thieves as clever and as merciless as himself. They too were watching for me. I do not know how these men learned of my intention to come to Green Fancy."

"They came to the Tavern four or five days before your arrival at Green Fancy," Barnes interrupted. "Sprouse told me that they were secret service men from abroad and that he was working with them. My theory is this, and I think it is justified by events: The men were really secret agents, sent here to watch the movements of the gang up there. They came upon Sprouse and recognized him. On the day mentioned they overpowered him and forced him to reveal certain facts connected with affairs at Green Fancy. Possibly he led them to believe that you were one of the conspirators. They waited for your arrival and then risked the hazardous trip to Green Fancy. They were discovered and shot."

"I believe you are right," she cried. "Then we have accounted for Mr. Sprouse, and I am no longer interested in the unraveling of the mystery surrounding the deaths of Roon and Paul," said Barnes. "There is nothing to keep me here any longer, Miss Cameron. I suggest that you allow me to escort you at once to your friends, wherever they—"

She was opposed to this plan. While there was still a chance that Sprouse might be apprehended in the neighborhood, or the possibility of his being caught by the relentless pursuers, she declined to leave.

"Then, I shall also stay," said he promptly, and was repaid by the tremulous smile she gave him. He was helplessly in love with this beautiful cousin of kings and queens. And when he thought of kings and queens he realized that beyond all question his love was hopeless.

CHAPTER XVII.

The Second Wayfarer Is Transformed.

O'Dowd returned late in the afternoon. He was in a hurry to get back to Green Fancy; there was no mistaking his uneasiness.

"For the love of heaven, Barnes, get her away from here as soon as possible, and do it as secretly as you can," he said. "I may as well tell you that she is in more danger from the government secret service than from anyone up yonder."

"She may prefer to face the music, O'Dowd. If I know her at all, she will refuse to run away."

"Then ye'll have to kidnap her," said the Irishman earnestly. "There will be men swarming here from both sides of the border by tomorrow night or next day. It's the gospel truth, and—it's going to be bad for all of us if we're here when they come."

"Who is she, O'Dowd? Man to man, tell me the truth. I want to know just where I stand."

O'Dowd hesitated, looked around the taproom, and then leaned across the table.

"Miss Cameron is in reality the Countess Therese Mara-Dafanda—familiarily and lovingly known in her own land as the Countess Ted. She was visiting in this country when the war broke out. If it is of any use to you, I'll add that she would be rich if Aladdin could only come to life and restore the splendors of the demolished castle, refill the chests of gold that have been emptied by the conquerors, and restock the farms that have been pillaged and devastated. In the absence of Aladdin, however, she is, almost as poor as the ancient church mouse. So there you are, man. Half the royal progeny of Eu-

rope have been suitors for her hand, and the other half would be if they didn't happen to be of the same sex. Good-by. I must be on my way." He arose and held out his hand. "Good-by and good luck forever."

"You are a brick, O'Dowd. I want to see you again. You will always find me—"

"Thanks. Don't issue any rash invitations. I might take you up."

Barnes started upstairs as soon as O'Dowd was off, urged by an eagerness that put wings on his feet and a thrill of excitement in his blood. Half-way up he stopped short. A new condition confronted him. What was the proper way to approach a person of royal blood? He would have to think. Pausing at her door, he was at once aware of voices inside the room.

He rapped on the door, but so timidly that nothing came of it. His second effort was productive. He



Miss Cameron Is Lovingly Known in Her Own Land as the Countess Ted.

heard Miss Thackeray say "good gracious," and, after a moment, Miss Cameron's subdued: "What is it?"

"May I come in?" he inquired, rather ashamed of his vigor. "It's only Barnes."

"Come in," was her lively response. "It was awfully good of you, Miss Thackeray, to let me hear your lines. I think you will be a great success in the part."

"Thanks," said Miss Thackeray dryly. "I'll come in again and let you hear me in the third act." She went out, mumbling her lines as she passed Barnes without seeing him.

"I hope you will feel able to leave this place tomorrow, countess. We must get away almost immediately."

"Ah, you have been listening to O'Dowd, I see."

"Yes, He tells me it will be dangerous to—"

"He is right. It would be difficult for me to clear myself. No one would believe that I did not deliberately make off with the jewels. They would say that I—oh, it is too dreadful!"

"Don't worry about that," he exclaimed. "You have me to testify that—"

"How little you know of intrigue," she cried. "They would laugh at you and say that you were merely another fool who had lost his head over a woman. They would say that I duped you—"

"No!" he cried vehemently. "Your people know better than you think. You are disheartened, discouraged. Things will look brighter tomorrow."

"I don't know what I should do without you," she said.

CHAPTER XVIII.

Mr. Sprouse Continues to Be Perplexing, and Puts His Nose to the Ground.

Barnes was abroad early. He was at breakfast when Peter Ames called up. An inspiration seized him when the chauffeur mentioned the wholesale exodus: he hired Peter forthwith and ordered him to report immediately—with the car. He was going up to Green Fancy for Miss Cameron's wardrobe.

Two minutes after Peter drove up to the Tavern he was on the way back to Green Fancy again, and seated beside him was Thomas Kingsbury Barnes, his new master.

There was not a sign of human life about the place. Peter accompanied him upstairs to the room recently occupied by Miss Cameron.

They found two small leather trunks, thickly belabeled, in the room upstairs. Both were locked.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Altar vs. Halter. Said the facetious feller: "Nobody expects a wedding ceremony to go through without a hitch."

BOY SCOUTS

IMPROVED UNIFORM INTRODUCED

SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

By REV. P. B. FITZPATRICK, Teacher of English Bible at Bible Institute of Chicago (Copyright, 1915, Western Missionary Society)

(Conducted by National Council of the Boy Scouts of America.)

BOY SCOUTS AND BOMBS

A circular printed in red and threatening him with "extermination" for his part in the boy scout membership drive was received by Gavin McNab, a prominent attorney of San Francisco.

Others were said to have been received by Associate Justice W. W. Morrow of the United States circuit court, and Frank Summers, an attorney, who also were identified with the campaign.

The circular accused McNab of recruiting the boys as future soldiers "to protect the flag-faunting financiers."

One of the most effective ways to fight bolshevism and anarchism in this country is the suggestion: "Boost the boy scout movement." Everybody knows the wholesome Americanism taught the boys of this organization, along with a general system of physical, mental and moral development. One seldom hears of a boy scout going wrong and getting into trouble with the law. It may also be said no one ever hears of a scout who is not a patriot.

Boys who belong to the scouts do not grow up to flaunt red flags and plant bombs. And if they have any influence at home, their fathers and big brothers imbibe something of their spirit of loyalty and understanding. Clearly enough, if all American boys were scouts, there would be mighty few adult reds to make trouble.

START OF SCOUT'S EDUCATION

Scouting is an educational proposition. Its intent is both to help the scout do the thing he likes to do and to do it better and to lead him out into fields of thought and action that its many divisions offer.

Every applicant for membership must pass the following requirements before he can attain the rank of a tenderfoot scout:

1. Know the scout law, sign, salute and significance of the badge.
2. Know the composition and history of the national flag and the customary forms of respect to it.
3. Tie the following knots: Square or reef, sheet-bend, bowline, fisherman's, sheepshank, halter, clove hitch, timber hitch, or two half-hitches.

SCOUTS IN THE EPIDEMIC.

One scout in Morrinstown, N. J. served as an interne at a local hospital for two weeks. He did all the work which is usually performed by a grown man. Another spent the better part of a week at a children's home where the majority of sixty inmates were suffering from influenza. Water had to be carried up four flights of stairs, meals prepared and served and many other duties performed.

Still another volunteered for work with the Red Cross and drove a supply truck three times a week between Hoboken and a soldiers' convalescent hospital at Mendham.

Four other scouts were on duty at a diet kitchen established during the epidemic in the high school building.

BOY SCOUT FARM WORKERS.

Over the field and down the road
The day's toll done;
A song upon the lips of us
To speed the setting sun;
And peace within our laughing hearts
And pride to know that we
Still carry on like true scouts—
(We did our share in wartime,
Our share and more in wartime),
In time of Victory.

Liberty bond and Victory bond,
We did not fail;
And love of country in our hearts
Shall never die nor pale;
And never call but that we heed
For what the gain if we
Should mar the record that we hold—
(We did our share in wartime,
Our share and more in wartime),
And fall the Victory?
—Edmund Leamy in Boys' Life.

SCOUTS AVOID OIL-SKIN BAGS

About the worst kind of a sleeping bag a scout can choose, especially in cold weather, is one made of rubber or oil-skins.

Major David A. Abercrombie tells of a trip through the North in which one of Stefanon's companions used bags made of oil-skin material. When he awoke in the morning he found that the moisture from his body had accumulated on the inside of the oil-skin and had frozen stiff.

And what is more, they couldn't get the frost out of the thing for the rest of the journey! An extreme case, to be sure, but one that points a warning.

CHEERFULNESS

Better to be small and shine, than to be great and cast a shadow. Cheerfulness is God's medicine. Everybody ought to bathe in it. Grim care, and the rest of life can be scoured off with the oil of cheerfulness.

LOVE NEVER TIRES

Love is indefatigable; it never tires. Love is inexhaustible; it lives and is born again of itself, and the more it pours itself forth, the more it abounds. —De Lamennais.