



# The Mystery

OF  
**Carney-Croft**

By  
**JOSEPH BROWN COOKE**

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## CHAPTER VII.

### A Misplaced Joke.

The door was securely locked and bolted on the inside, as I had left it the night before, and a most thorough search disclosed no other door opening into the room, and no possible place of concealment for anything of the bulk of a man.

The thought of a concealed opening in the ceiling over the bed naturally suggested itself to my mind, but nothing of the sort existed and a moment's examination with a towel on the end of a walking stick showed a layer of dust which evidently had not been disturbed for years.

In short the presence of the envelope on my bed seemed to be shrouded in mystery of the most impenetrable kind; but even it was exceeded in its incomprehensibility by the astonishing contents of the note.

My love for Florence Carney was, I had thought, a secret buried deep in my own breast. Surely I had never told it in all the years that I had cherished it so fondly, and, on one occasion at least, I had denied it flatly. Yet it was mentioned here, in as matter-of-fact a way as if our engagement had been formally announced and our wedding day named.

I turned the matter over and over in my mind, as I strolled slowly along in the winding road that led to Hoskins' hotel, but I was no nearer a solution of the problem when I finished my breakfast than I had been when I left the house. There were a number of letters for me at the post office, but I had no interest in them, and, stuffing them unread into my pocket, I wandered back to Carney-Croft, still pondering deeply.

Unlocking the door, I returned at once to my room and again made a careful search for any possible means of ingress after the door was closed and secured for the night. While the lock might have been turned from the outside with a master key, there was still the bolt to hold it, and that this could not have been slipped by any other hand than mine I was absolutely sure. Moreover, there was no hidden mechanism connected with the bolt, which was a simple, commonplace affair, bearing the name of a well-known maker and evidently attached to the door after the house was completed.

Giving up in despair, for the present, at least, I descended to the ground floor again, intending to make a minute inspection of the house and grounds, when a faint odor of cigar smoke attracted my notice, and I saw that the library door was ajar.

Tiptoeing forward, I peered through the opening and beheld, to my amazement, a familiar figure seated comfortably in one of the large leather chairs with his feet resting lazily on another in all the assurance of apparent proprietorship. At the same instant he turned his head slightly in my direction and, uncertain as to whether he had seen me or not, I retreated rapidly and noiselessly up the stairs to my room, where I locked myself in and tried to smother my anger and view the situation logically.

While the manner in which the note had reached me was still as much of a mystery as ever, its contents, at least, were explained, and my fury knew no bounds at the wholly unwarranted impertinence of this sorry attempt at a practical joke.

To me the matter was so sacred, so precious, so entirely my own, that my rage at the frivolity of this contemptible jest drove from my mind all thought of wonder that a man who, I had every reason to believe, was miles away, should be, at this very moment, under the same roof with me.

I sat down and gazed out of the window across the river to the heavily wooded hills in the distance, and made an almost superhuman effort to control myself. Finally I opened the letters that had come by the morning's mail and began to read them in a perfunctory way. The second was from my secretary, and, as I perused it, I suddenly awoke from my apathy and read with interest:

"Two letters came this morning from Mr. Carney, one postmarked London and the other Paris. I forward them, with other papers, under separate cover.

"Dr. MacArdel called this afternoon and was greatly surprised to learn that you had gone away so suddenly and without sending him word. He said he wanted to see you on a personal matter, and seemed quite disappointed at missing you.

"The Jarvis case has been postponed to the fall term."

The letter closed with a few memoranda of business matters and by the time I had finished reading it my mind was clear to an extent that enabled me to see things in a reasonable light and to appreciate that the mystery of the note was as deep if not deeper than ever.

Opening the door I strode downstairs, into the library, and up to the figure in the chair.

"Hello!" I exclaimed, grasping him by the arm.

"Better late than never!" he responded with a hearty laugh. "What made you sneak upstairs in that mysterious way? Think I was a ghost?"

"No," I replied, slowly and seriously, "I thought you were a scoundrel, and I owe you an apology from the bottom of my heart!"

"Have a cigar, old man," said MacArdel.

## CHAPTER VIII.

### A Disappearing Cigar Case.

"Want on earth brings you here, Mac?" I exclaimed, accepting his proffered cigar and lighting it with a sudden interest and respect for the traditional pipe of peace.

"Train," said MacArdel, "coupled with an overwhelming desire to seize upon you and take you off with me for a month's vacation."

"So that's why you called at my office yesterday afternoon, eh?" I queried.

"How did you know that I was there?" asked MacArdel.

"My secretary mentioned in his letter that came this morning," I explained. "And it's a great good thing that he did, for while the information only made a big mystery out of what appeared for a moment to be a comparatively small one, it served, fortunately, to clear you in an instant from a very serious charge that I was nursing against you."

"Humph!" said MacArdel. "So that's the way you treat your friends! Condemn 'em without a hearing, eh?"

"Well, Mac," I replied, "this had to

positive way, unless he had known that it was true. Now, you are the only person living with whom I have ever talked on this subject, for you will remember that you once intimated pretty broadly that I was in love with Miss Carney."

"And you denied it flatly," he remarked.

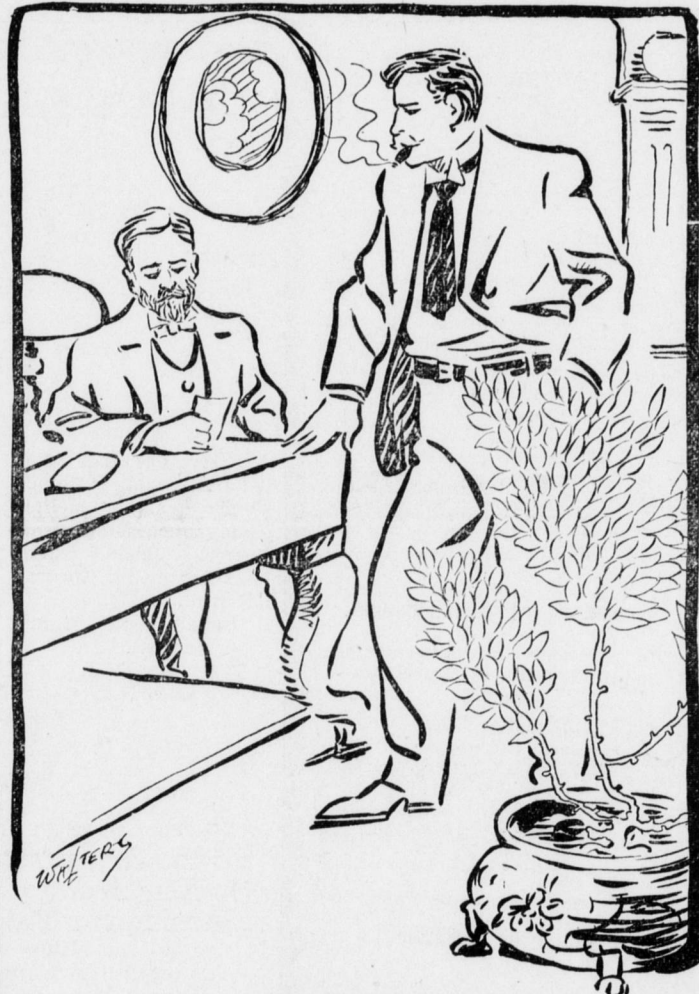
"Yes," I replied, "I denied it flatly."

"MacArdel," I said, soberly, looking him squarely in the face, "you've cornered me and I might as well tell you the whole thing. It was three years ago when we talked of this before, and I must have loved her then and from the day I first saw her. But not as I love her now, old man, for now she is my all in all and my only thoughts are for her welfare and her happiness. You know I saw her very frequently when she was living in town, and now that she is away our correspondence is necessarily frequent, so that I can keep informed of her whereabouts and know of her needs from the estate."

"Of course, you could not pay her any attentions unless you meant to ask her to marry you," said MacArdel, "but I don't see any objection whatever to that. I know you haven't any money, but your social position is as good as hers, and you are doing well in your profession. It seems to me that it would be a very appropriate match if you love each other."

"No, Mac," I insisted. "It's better as it is. Considering my position in connection with the estate it would be a mean advantage for me to take, and, Mac, if she refused me, I believe I would kill myself, I'm such a fool over it."

"But suppose she didn't refuse you," said MacArdel softly, laying his hand on my arm.



"When Did You Get It?"

do with a matter that only you and I knew anything about, and what you know about it you have merely inferred. Then, when I saw you here in the house there seemed to be no other explanation at all, at least of the most important part of the thing. But now it is more hopelessly tangled up than before, for, as you were in my office yesterday afternoon, you could not possibly have had anything to do with it.

"Delightfully interesting, I'm sure!" said MacArdel, "and most appropriate when occurring in a house alleged to be haunted. Still, I confess I could follow you more closely if I had some faint glimmer of an idea of what you are talking about."

I handed him the note, and he read it slowly and thoughtfully.

"When did you get it?" he asked.

"Found it on my bed this morning when I woke," I replied.

"Who put it there?" he continued.

"How the devil do I know who put it there?" I returned, excitedly. "The house was locked up and so was the room. The window was open, I admit, but I am positive that no one could have gotten in that way. There are too many vines about it, and not a twig was bent."

"So you thought it was a miracle and that it must have been I who performed it, eh?" said MacArdel. "I know you always maintained that I worked a miracle when I cured your typhoid."

"Hang it all, Mac!" I exclaimed. "I don't care a snap of my little finger how it got on the bed! I want to know who wrote it!"

"Well, I didn't, anyhow," said MacArdel. "I never heard of it before. I suppose somebody wanted to play a joke on you for your temerity in sleeping alone in a haunted house. Pretty poor sort of a joke, to be sure, but I don't see anything to warrant your getting so excited over it."

"See here, Mac!" I said, drawing my chair up close to his, "you don't seem to understand just what I mean. The point is simply this. No one could have written a thing like that, in such a

"No, old man, it's no use talking that way," I replied. "I'll just go on as I've been doing. It's the only thing I can do, as I see it."

"Bet you a dinner at Sherry's that you propose to her and marry her within two years!" said MacArdel, with a quizzical look in his kindly eyes, and, with a half-hearted grasp of his hand, I accepted the wager with a temerity that was half wishing and half hopeful.

"So you see why I feel so strongly about this note," I said, rising and opening the door, which I had closed carefully on my entrance. "The subject is one that I cannot bear to have trifled with, and, anyway, I cannot imagine who could have read my innermost thoughts so correctly. That puzzles me more than the mysterious appearance of the letter in my bed."

"I fancy we'll be able to explain that without much trouble," said MacArdel, lighting a fresh cigar and laying his cigar case on the table beside him. "These mysterious occurrences always happen in a most simple fashion, after all is said and done. One night, last summer I was reading in bed and just before putting out the light I laid my eyeglasses on a little table about six feet from the window. I was perfectly sure about it, for the spring was bent slightly and I had spent several minutes fussing with them before I put them down. The next morning they were gone and never turned up, in spite of the most vigorous search, until the maid found them, three or four days later, hidden completely in the folds of the lace curtain which had blown across the table and caught them up. As my room was on the fourth floor and had been securely locked all night, the affair was quite mystifying until it was so simply explained. We'll find out before long how the letter got on your bed, and that will doubtless lead to the discovery of its author. Have a fresh cigar and show me around the place a bit. It looks mighty interesting and romantic."

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

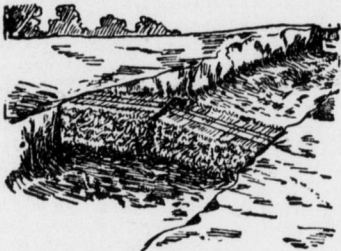


## PLAN TO PREVENT EROSION.

Use of Spoiled Hay That Has Been Baled Will Do the Trick.

Farmers in some sections suffer much from the effect of erosion of their lands. Ditches formed by overflow water I have found can be cheaply filled by bales of hay or straw placed across the ditch so as to form a dam. The ditch may then be plowed in or a little earth piled against the bales and succeeding rains will complete the work.

The bales should be laid flat and carefully fitted after manner shown in the illustration, says a correspond-



The Bales in Place.

ent of Prairie Farmer. The bottom of the ditch should be leveled so that the bales will set firmly on the ground and the banks dug off so that they will be reasonably perpendicular. Next all crevices must be trampled full of earth.

If one bale will not reach across the ditch more may be used. If two bales are used they should be added so as to press against each other and against the bank as shown in the cut. If put in this way no support will be required, the force of water will only crowd the bales against the bank and keep them firmly in place.

If more than one tier of bales is required the ditch should be filled level with the top of the first tier before another tier is laid.

Masonry or concrete would of course make a better job, but the bales are not so expensive. I use damaged hay or straw which I have baled for the express purpose of use in this manner.

If the bales are properly placed nature fills the ditch. Water goes through the bales as readily as through a sieve, but all particles of earth are held back until the ditch is filled to the top of the bales.

## GLEANINGS.

Give the hog a chance to be clean. The farm of the good farmer improves in productiveness from year to year.

After all, the grain and roughage grown on western farms are the cheapest and best feeds for fattening stock, and especially for fattening steers.

The best time to plant corn is when the ground is warm enough; but the surface should be so dry that the dirt will not stick to the planter wheels.

Take quick and good care of the trees and shrubs as they come from the nursery. Don't leave them lying about in the wind and sun to dry out. Protect the roots. Dig big holes, spread out the roots carefully and cover with fine dirt, and your stuff ought to start right off growing.

Grass and grain form a good combination for pork making. If the grass is blue grass so much the better, as that is rich in muscle-making food. The best grain is that not too heavy in starch. In some parts of Europe barley is used for finishing hogs on grass, and produces an excellent meat.

## Push the Corn.

All corn growers have noticed that if corn is planted at just the right time, that is to say, when the ground has warmed up sufficiently, and the moisture is not too deep, the seed sprouts quickly and often within two days you can see the young plants in the rows. Growing crops, like young live stock, need a quick, vigorous start, and then they need pushing along during the whole season. The harrow will do more telling work right now than any other implement. Don't be afraid of harrowing too much. Harrow before planting, and when the plants begin to peep through the ground harrow with the rows. If thorough work is done, the ground will be kept clean, and is in much better condition than if cultivators were started early. More thorough harrowing is done, the cultivators need not start till the corn is six or eight inches high.

## Land Good for Something.

All land is good for something. If it has been so badly cut up by rains that it cannot be brought under the plow or cannot be used for pasture, it may still be used for the growing of certain kinds of trees. There are trees that will grow in gullies and on the poorest of soils. It is better to have them occupying the ground than to have unsightly gullies and clay banks lying baked in the sun. A group of trees will at least lend beauty to the landscape while they are young and value to the farm when they are old.

## A Good Ration for Calves.

Sam McKelvie of Nebraska feeds his calves the first year equal parts of bran, corn and meal and oats, with all the alfalfa they want. That ration ought to make them hump.

## 25 PER CENT OF DAIRY COWS HAVE BOVINE TUBERCULOSIS

HEALTH OFFICE REPORTS SHOW AN ALARMING INCREASE OF THE DISEASE.

Thousands of People Are Daily Contracting Consumption from Milk and Meat of Diseased Cattle.

"Tubercular cows in number probably in excess of 7,500 are daily contributing to Cleveland's milk supply," is the startling declaration of Dr. Friedrich, health officer, in his annual report to the Board of Health.

Out of the 30,000 cows furnishing milk to the city of Cleveland, and valued at \$300,000 the ratio shows 7,556 have Bovine Tuberculosis, and in view of the fact that "Bovine Tuberculosis and human Tuberculosis are identical," these figures present an alarming problem to the people.

**Bovine Tuberculosis Dangerous.** "Facts gathered show that Bovine Tuberculosis is even more dangerous to the human race than human Tuberculosis or Consumption. Not enough stress is laid on the fact that milk from Tubercular Cows is an ethnological factor in the production of human Tuberculosis. The Tubercular cow must go before we can get rid of human Tuberculosis."

There are 70,000,000 cattle in U. S. and the Govt. is daily condemning them

to slaughter by the thousands, yet the disease is continuing to spread. Cattle owners everywhere as well as the millions of people innocently exposed to contagion daily from the consumption of the

7,500,000 Gallons of Milk annually consumed in daily food use will rejoice in the discovery of what is claimed to be positive and simple preventative—one that costs but a few cents a year to guarantee the dairy cow against the disease.

A very interesting booklet on the subject is edited and distributed free to all for the asking by The Mutual Mercantile Co., Cleveland, O., and should be read by every one whether a consumer or producer of milk and meat in any form. It gives the whole story in a very clear and concise way, and shows how the claim is made to wipe out the disease in a single generation by feeding small amounts of Rasawa and extract of Gentian, both of which may be had at any Drug Store. Ask your Druggist or Feed Dealer for a Free Booklet.

## THOUGHT HE WAS WANTED.

Swede Returned According to Instructions on Envelope.

Christ Nelson, having been in this country only a few weeks, was slow in learning American customs, and especially the inscriptions on envelopes. One of his first acts after landing in Oregon was to take out naturalization papers. On the corner of the envelope, in which were contained the documents that made him an American citizen, were the words: "Return in five days."

"Wal, I be har," he said yesterday, as he shuffled up to the counter in the county clerk's office and spoke to Deputy Prasp.

"What do you want?" asked that official, carefully noting the embarrassed flush on the Swede's face.

"Wal, it say on this har envelope 'return in five days,' and time be up to-day, so I ban come round."

When assured that nobody wanted him, he turned with surprise and walked sadly away, not certain whether he was naturalized or not.—Portland Oregonian.

## How's This?

We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any case of Catarrh that cannot be cured by Hall's Catarrh Cure. F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O. We, the undersigned, have known F. J. Cheney for the last 15 years, and believe him perfectly honorable in all business transactions and financially able to carry out any obligations made by him. W. A. RAY, Wholesale Druggists, Toledo, O. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system. Testimonials sent free. Price 75 cents per bottle. Sold by all Druggists. Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

## And He Was Not German.

One of our third grade teachers noticed a little fellow the other day during a penmanship lesson who was evidently absorbed in his work and putting his whole soul into his efforts to make his results look like the teacher's copy upon the blackboard.

Thinking such devotion worthy of special reward she passed up the aisle to give him an encouraging pat upon the head and the regulation smile of approval. As she drew near she noticed that his lips were moving, and that with the completion of each letter he compared it with his copy and muttered audibly, "damit," "damit," then screwed up his courage and his lip for a new attempt. The teacher passed on without distracting his mind from his work.—Journal of Education.

## Blind Man Expert Whist Player.

Bert Trim, a blind resident of Woonsocket, R. I., is an expert whist player, being a valued member of a local club. He uses a special pack of cards, on which there are faint imprints sufficient to tell him what they are, but which are far too fine for the ordinary touch. Trim, who has been blind since childhood, is now 39 years old. He plays the piano and cornet in excellent style and is often heard in local entertainments.

A quiet wedding is but a curtain raiser for a strenuous afterpart.

## CHANGE IN FOOD

### Works Wonders in Health.

It is worth knowing that a change in food can cure dyspepsia. "I deem it my duty to let you know how Grape-Nuts food has cured me of indigestion."

"I had been troubled with it for years, until last year my doctor recommended Grape-Nuts food to be used every morning. I followed the instructions and now I am entirely well."

"The whole family like Grape-Nuts, we use four packages a week. You are welcome to use this testimonial as you see fit."

The reason this lady was helped by the use of Grape-Nuts food, is that it is predigested by natural processes and therefore does not tax the stomach as the food she had been using; it also contains the elements required for building up the nervous system. If that part of the human body is in perfect working order, there can be no dyspepsia, for nervous energy represents the steam that drives the engine.

When the nervous system is run down, the machinery of the body works badly. Grape-Nuts food can be used by small children as well as adults. It is perfectly cooked and ready for instant use.

Read, "The Road to Wellville," in pgs. "There's a Reason."

**Danger in Signals.** "I was playing a game of cards in a mining camp in the Rockies," said the mild-mannered man, "when suddenly my partner, by way of a gentle hint, held up two fingers to indicate that he had a pair. Quick as a flash, one of our opponents whipped out his dirk and slashed off the fingers."

"Awful! Well, it was pretty bad, but wasn't he in luck that he didn't have a full hand?"

## SPECIAL TRAINS.

National Editorial Association and Christian Endeavor Conventions.

Personally conducted special trains via the Chicago, Union Pacific & North-Western Line leave early in July for the Pacific Coast. Special all-expense tours at very low rates for round trip, including sleeping car accommodations, meals, etc. All the advantages of a delightful and carefully arranged tour in congenial company. Write for itineraries and full particulars. S. A. Hutchison, Manager Tourist Department, 212 Clark Street, Chicago.

## The Bright Side.

"Oh, this poverty!" wept the beautiful wife when her shifty-eyed husband came home. "The gas and electric companies have shut off their service because you have not paid their bills."

"Well, we can use candles," consoled the husband.

"And the telephone company has disconnected our instrument because we owe them two months' rental."

"So much the better. If anyone tries to ring us up to spend the evening with us they will think we are not at home."—Judge.

## STOMACH ON STRIKE

SUCCESSFUL TONIC TREATMENT FOR INDIGESTION.

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills Cured Many Women and Have Cured Many Hundreds of Other Cases of Common Ailments

Loss of appetite, coated tongue, bad taste in the mouth, heavy dull headache and a dull, sluggish feeling—these are the symptoms of stomach trouble. They indicate that the stomach is on a strike; that it is no longer furnishing to the blood the full quota of nourishment that the body demands, hence every organ suffers.

There are two methods of treatment, the old one by which the stomach is humored by the use of predigested foods and artificial ferments, and the new one by which the stomach is toned up to do the work which nature intended of it. A recent cure by the tonic treatment is that of Mrs. Mary Stackpole, of 81 Liberty Street, Lowell, Mass. She says:

"I suffered constantly for years from stomach trouble and terrible backaches and was confined to my bed the greater part of three years. I was under the care of our family physician most of the time, but did not seem to get better."

"I was completely run down and was not able to do my work about the house. My blood was impure and my complexion pale. I suffered from flashes of heat, followed suddenly by chills. I had awful headaches, which lasted from three to four days. I could get but little rest at night, as my sleep was broken and fitful. As a result I lost several pounds in weight and became very nervous."

"I was in a wretched condition when I heard about Dr. Williams' Pink Pills. I started to take the pills at once and began to gain in weight and health. I was encouraged by this to keep on until I was cured. My friends and neighbors often remark what a changed woman I am and I owe it all to Dr. Williams' Pink Pills."

"These wonderful pills are useful in a wide range of diseases such as anemia, rheumatism, sciatica, neuralgia, nervous headaches, and even locomotor ataxia and partial paralysis. The great value of Dr. Williams' Pink Pills lies in the fact that they actually make new blood and this carries health and strength to every portion of the body. The stomach is toned up, the nerves are strengthened, every organ is stimulated to do its work."

Dr. Williams' Pink Pills are sold by all druggists, or sent, postpaid, on receipt of price, 50 cents per box, six boxes for \$2.50, by Dr. Williams' Medicine Company, Schenectady, N. Y.

