



# The Mystery of Carney-Croft

By JOSEPH BROWN COOKE

(Copyright, 1907, by Story-Press Corporation.) CHAPTER XVIII.—Continued.

"How would it do to get your brother's own opinion and see how he feels?" I suggested. "Either you or I, or even both of us, might write him and put the matter clearly before him. If there is any good left in him—you will pardon me, Miss Carney, I hope, for I spoke very thoughtlessly—but he ought to come to his senses and decide for himself."

She looked up into my face, her eyes wet with tears, but with a wan smile that was evidently conjured up for the moment, and said, gently: "You need not ask my forgiveness, Mr. Ware, for you always think and speak for the best, and my own feelings toward Jack are the same as yours. I have never mentioned his name to you before for I could not bear to think of those awful days he spent here after my father's death, and I am so glad that poor Annie did not see him then as I did. He knew that he was not fit for her to see and I must say that he showed himself to me only enough to enable us to arrange our business affairs. He seemed to understand the degradation of his position, and although I have never written to him in all these years, my heart warms to him now and I want to overlook it, but I cannot, oh I cannot, Mr. Ware."

"Would you like me to write to him myself?" I asked. "I could hardly explain matters in a telegram, and while I never know exactly where he is I have reason to believe that he is in the neighborhood of London or Paris. A letter to his bankers would reach him within a week or ten days and he could be here in a little more than a fortnight."

"You know best," she murmured, resting her head on her hand and wiping her eyes slowly. "You know best and must act according to your own judgment. It seems to me that we ought to send for him, if only for Annie's sake, but I leave it all to you."

Her feelings overwhelmed her again, but as soon as she could calm herself, she went on: "Perhaps I have been wrong myself in not trying to help him and make him see the position in which he has placed himself, but when he was here I could not bring myself to do it."

I remembered Miss Weston's impassioned statement that no one connected with the mysterious happenings at Carney-Croft had done any wrong or was in any way responsible for the present inexplicable condition of things, and, while I could not see how John Carney could have any possible connection with the affair I grasped the frail straw offered by this suggestion and, in my anxiety to calm Miss Carney, I made the most of it that I could.

"I know nothing of your brother's life while he was away," I began, "and, while, of course, I do not count him blameless, I can assure you that you have nothing to regret on your part. You know things of this kind begin slowly and insidiously and—"

"Oh, no!" she interrupted, vehemently. "It was a cowardly way to act, at best, and, as I first understood it, it was worse than cowardly. You can imagine my feelings when I thought it was all for a mere lover's quarrel and then—then, when I knew the whole story, I could not bring myself to view it in a much better light, although, of course, my sympathies all went out to him. It was not the act of such a man as I had always thought Jack to be. I had looked up to him and respected him all my life and it almost broke my heart—it almost broke my heart. You wouldn't do such a thing, Mr. Ware, I know, and even if you try to hide your real opinion of him, I understand too well what it is—and he is my brother—my only brother!"

She sobbed convulsively for some minutes, while I stood like a fool by her side, keeping down, as best I could, the words that were uppermost in my heart and then, suddenly, she arose and said, abruptly: "I have kept you too long, I fear, but this was troubling me so that I simply had to tell it to some one. I think you had better write to my brother at once and it will have to rest with him whether he comes or not. Good night."

I followed her with my eyes as she entered the house and walked slowly up the stairs.

### CHAPTER XIX.

A Trail Discovered.

Another sleepless night followed, but long before the morning broke I had formed an opinion of myself and my conduct that was in no way flattering to either. To be sure, I had been sincere in every thought and act, and when, at times, I had felt and be-

lieved that Miss Carney loved me, I had soon argued myself into an opposite way of thinking on the ground, as I have said before, that her feelings toward me were influenced and magnified by her present anxiety and distress. Now, however, after considering the matter through the long hours of the night until my brain fairly reeled and I was sick at heart at the thought of my brutal behavior, I was at last able to see things in a right light.

Miss Carney had given me every evidence of her regard that she could give and still preserve her dignity and womanliness. She had doubtless realized the difficulties of my position, and she had taken into account that her brother's absence served as an added reason for my silence, and so she had met me more than half way and yet I had remained silent.

She had even permitted me to kiss her hand, and then, on the first occasion that offered, she had given me an opportunity to say the words that I owed to her if she would preserve her self-respect and not consider that I had trifled with her in a most cruel and unmanly way. And still I had remained silent, in an egotistical belief that my attitude was chivalrous and commendable when, in fact, it was only Quixotic and brutally unkind.

Now, she could only think that I did not love her, for surely she could not conceive that a sane man would have acted the part I did on the veranda unless he regarded her almost with indifference.

I rose and paced the floor until my head throbbed, hating myself and trying to smother my emotions until the morning came and I could go to her and beg her forgiveness.

As the day began to dawn a cold gray light spread itself over the fields,

some sort of an agreement at last, for he waved his hand pleasantly as he left her and she returned his salutation by throwing him a kiss as coyly as a schoolgirl.

The first thing the woman did after entering the house was to extinguish the lights, no longer necessary, as the rays of the sun began to touch the hill-tops, and I was just lowering my glass when I caught a fleeting glimpse of another man, darting around the corner of the building and disappearing behind the woodpile. I watched in vain for him to show himself again, but he did not, and finally, I turned and followed the trail once more, making all possible haste, lest I should lose it when the frost disappeared.

The foot prints led me up on the hill and around to the side away from the house and, at length, became lost in a grove of hemlocks under which there was no tell-tale frost. For a time it seemed that my efforts were to prove of no avail, and that I might as well return home, but the more I thought of the matter the more I was convinced that these people had been out for no good purpose, and that it was my duty to learn, if possible, what mischief they had been contriving at this early hour and where they had been.

In fact, I suddenly realized that I had not taken a proper interest in the mysterious happenings at Carney-Croft and that while it had seemed quite enough to bring them to a standstill, as far as outward appearances were concerned, they were, in reality, of far too great importance to let pass so easily.

Miss Weston's connection with the affair gave a new aspect to it, of course, and while I was bound by my word to respect her secret there was nothing in my promise to her to prevent me from using every legitimate

**Her Pointed Retort.**  
When the old lady put her head out of the window and inquired of the young railway porter what the train was stopping for the young man thought he would have a little fun at the old lady's expense.  
"Engine was out late last night, ma'am," he remarked with a smile, "so she's got a thirst on her this morning; they're giving 'er a drop o' wine."  
"Ah! it's water," said the old lady.  
"If you'll wait a minute, ma'am," he grinned, "I'll inquire whether they're givin' her port wine."  
"Never mind," came the answer, "don't you trouble, young man. I thought perhaps by the way we've been getting along she was run on sloe gin!"—London Tit-Bits.

**LIFE INSURANCE ACTIVITY.**  
The New York Life's Business Nearly Up to the Legal Limit.

The New York Life Insurance Company announces that its new paid business during the half year just ended was over seventy million dollars. As the new law allows no life company to write over one hundred and fifty millions per year, it would appear that this company is working nearly up to the limit. The New York Life gained such headway before the law was passed and suffered so little, comparatively, from the Armstrong investigation, that the question with its management has been how to keep business down to the limit, rather than how to reach it. No other company is writing nearly as much as the law allows. The New York Life has evidently become a preferred company.

The company's payments to policy holders during the six months ending June 30 were \$21,660,761. It is interesting to note that this amount was almost equally divided between payments under policies maturing by death and payments made to living policy holders. Thus, while death-claims were \$11,180,626, the amount paid for matured endowments, annuities, trust fund instalments, for purchased policies and for dividends was \$10,480,135. Modern life insurance, as practiced by the best companies, embraces a wide field, and covers many contingencies. It is money saved for the aged, as well as money provided for the families of those who die prematurely.

**Modesty of True Greatness.**  
Abou Ben Adhem had just found out that his name led all the rest. "Still," he observed, with a modesty as rare as it was charming, "the season is young yet. I've made a few lucky hits, it's true, but just as likely as not I shall be at the bottom of the percentage column in batting before the season ends." Smilingly accepting the bouquet of cut flowers sent to him by an admirer in the grandstand, he stepped up to the plate, struck out, dodged a lemon thrown at him by a disgusted bleacherite, and went and took his seat on the bench.

**Bobby's Viewpoint.**  
The theater was brilliant with colored lights and overflowing with a gay commencement throng. The stage was crowded with a class of 200 boys and their teachers. Among the graduates was John, the big brother of little Bobby, who was surveying the scene with bulging eyes. He snuggled up to his father and in a stage whisper asked: "Papa, isn't it nice that so many people came to John's commencement?"

**Not Comfortable.**  
"I'm going off into the mountains this summer and get close to the heart of nature," said the dreamy girl.  
"I once went off into the mountains to get close to the heart of nature," said the matter-of-fact man. "I sought the woods and lay down close to her throbbing bosom. But I found she was full of red bugs and other penetrating insects. So I arose and gloomily sought the artificial city."

**MEAT OR CEREALS.**  
A Question of Interest to All Careful Persons.

Arguments on food are interesting. Many persons adopt a vegetarian diet on the ground that they do not like to feel that life has been taken to feed them, nor do they fancy the thought of eating dead meat.

On the other hand, too great consumption of partly cooked, starchy oats and wheat or white bread, pastry, etc., produces serious bowel troubles, because the bowel digestive organs (where starch is digested), are overtaxed and the food ferments, producing gas, and microbes generate in the decayed food, frequently bringing on peritonitis and appendicitis.

Starchy food is absolutely essential to the human body. Its best form is shown in the food "Grape-Nuts," where the starch is changed into a form of sugar during the process of its manufacture. In this way, the required food is presented to the system in a pre-digested form and is immediately made into blood and tissue, without taxing the digestive organs.

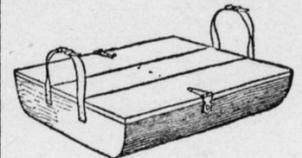
A remarkable result in nourishment is obtained; the person using Grape-Nuts gains quickly in physical and mental strength. Why in mental? Because the food contains delicate particles of Phosphate of Potash obtained from the grains, and this unites with the albumen of all food and the combination is what nature uses to rebuild worn out cells in the brain. This is a scientific fact that can be easily proven by ten day's use of Grape-Nuts. "There's a Reason." Read, "The Road to Wellville," in plga.



HANDY WAGON TOOL BOX.

Keep the Implements Handy Which May Be Needed for Breakdown.

At this season of the year the farmers are getting busy in the fields and where a breakdown occurs, especially if the farms are large, a great deal of time is lost in going for repairs. There are always apt to be unforeseen accidents which are more or less costly, and a simple device of this sort may prove helpful to many of our readers. Those who are working on the roads or are doing any amount of hauling, as well as farmers working in the field, should provide themselves with a set of tools which would come



The Wagon Tool Box.

Into play in case of an accident. By experience we have found that accidents generally happen in the worst possible place, where it is difficult to help ourselves. Sometimes the losing of a nut or bolt may be the means of throwing out a half day's work, rendering it impossible to continue until the damage has been repaired. While a great many of our farmers may think it is unnecessary and that it is always best to have everything snug and shipshape before going to the field or setting out on a journey, accidents will happen, no matter how much care is taken.

A wagon box such as is described here, says The Farmer, will frequently come into use and be the means of saving a considerable outlay that would otherwise be necessary for repairs. This box can be made about 18 inches long and 16 inches wide and five or six inches deep. It should be provided with several compartments for nuts and bolts of various sizes. It is large enough to contain such things as an extra hame strap, wrench, some staples, bolts, nuts, screws, screw-driver, hammer, cold chisel, wood chisel, punch, pliers, hoof-knife, copper rivets, some open links, hatchet, a few wrought nails and such other things as experience may prove to be convenient to have. The shape of the box is shown in the illustration. The middle of the top is nailed fast, while on each side is a hinged lid, fastened with a hasp and staple for a lock, if necessary. This box can be suspended from the guide pole directly beneath the center of the wagon box by two strong leather straps with buckles. Such a box would not be in the way and would be easily accessible if anything was wanted.

**SCIENCE AND FARMING.**  
The Wisdom of Making Nature Fight the Insect Foes.

Scientists are now realizing that the abundance of insect pests which the farmer of to-day has to battle with is due largely, if not entirely, to the upsetting of nature's laws.

Before man placed the woods and prairies under cultivation, excessive increase of any insect species was perhaps unknown, or, at most, very rare. Nature has always provided forces which operate against each other, as it were, and with insects, as with other creatures, a balance between the numbers of different species has been maintained.

Modern methods of farming have often decreased the natural enemies of injurious insects, says Coleman's Rural World, and in other cases have afforded conditions favoring the rapid multiplication of insects not formerly present in dangerous numbers.

The practical entomologist of today, while not discounting the value of poisons and sprays as implements of war against the six-footed host, recognizes that really satisfactory control is to be brought about by a partial or total restoration of the conditions under which nature formerly prevented the different species from becoming too numerous. The entomologist accordingly studies parasitic enemies and diseases which destroy the injurious insects, and oftentimes he is enabled to encourage the parasites to such an extent that they largely or entirely control the injurious forms.

**The Middle Man.**  
A New York report says that a great butter trust has been formed, backed by a capital of \$30,000,000. The projectors declare that they are going to eliminate the middle man in the selling of butter, and that they propose to get control of practically all the butter made in the country. This butter is all to be reworked to a single grade. It will probably prove to be but one mode of the many fruitless attempts to get rid of that very necessary worker, the middleman. Under the present financial arrangements for doing business, the middleman is a necessity.

**The Berry Bushes.**  
Don't let the berry bushes grow all over the garden. Confine them to rows and chop off the head of every plant that comes up out of place.

**A FRANK STATEMENT.**  
From a Prominent Fraternal Man of Rolla, Missouri.

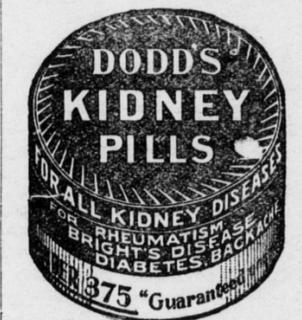
Justice of the Peace A. M. Light, of Rolla, Mo., Major, Uniformed Rank, Knights of Pythias, Third Battalion, Second Regiment, Missouri Brigade, says: "I am pleased to endorse the use of Doan's Kidney Pills, a medicine of great merit. Having had personal experience with many kidney medicines, I am in a position to know whereof I speak, and am pleased to add my endorsement and to recommend their use."  
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**His Finger Imprints.**  
Of Count Julius Andrassy, whose monument was recently unveiled at Buda-Pesth, the Neue Presse gives the following incident: Count Andrassy had a habit of smoothing with his hand his richly oiled hair. One day an important document had passed the Austrian council of ministers, in the contents of which Count Andrassy was interested. Shortly afterward the Austrian president of the ministry said to one of the ministers: "Count Andrassy has read the latest document." "How do you know?" "I find on it the imprint of Count Andrassy's fingers," responded the president with a laugh.

**Unkind Advice.**  
Two Irishmen were eating their lunch, when one asked the other: "Pat, an' what be you thinking about?" "Pat replied: "Shure, Mike, I was a-thinking how I would be getting me clothes over me wings when I would get to heaven."

"You would better be thinking how you would be getting your hat over your horns when you get to the other place," answered Mike.—Ally Sloper.

**Quite the Contrary.**  
"Borus, I haven't had time yet to read that last novel of yours. How did it end—happily?"  
"No, Naggus; it ended tragically. The total sales were 17 copies."



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I Stood Spell-Bound with Fear.

showing the hoar-frost on the grass and bringing clearly into view many distant objects which stood out sharply in the crisp autumn air.

I glanced from my window and saw what appeared to be two people walking slowly down the hillside in the direction of the Bruce cottage. A hasty scrutiny through my field glasses confirmed my suspicion and it seemed that one figure, that of a man, carried an implement like a spade or shovel, while the other was evidently a woman of about the widow's size and general appearance.

I dressed rapidly, and, slipping out of the house, made my way as quickly as I could to the point where I had seen them passing, feeling sure that I would have no difficulty in following their trail through the frost-covered grass.

It was all I had expected, and I walked rapidly up the hill, retracing the path they had made, and, occasionally leaving the trail where it led too directly through the open, and slinking along in the shadow of the hedges until I could again take it up with safety.

About half way up the incline I turned and looked down toward the Bruce cottage, from the chimney of which a black column of smoke was pouring and whose windows were brightly lighted as if something of importance was going on within.

As I looked, and I had taken the precaution to bring my binoculars with me, a man emerged from the house and I had no difficulty in making him out to be Jenks, the stage driver. He was followed in a moment by Mrs. Bruce and the two stood for some time in earnest conversation, after which the man strode rapidly down the road and the woman reentered the house.

It had seemed to me that the widow and Jenks were quarreling, for, during their talk, he had gesticulated violently and shown every evidence of extreme earnestness, if not of actual anger; but they must have come to

means to find out all that I could on my own account and make use of such knowledge as I might acquire in any way that would best serve my purposes without reacting on her.

I wandered about, more or less aimlessly, in the grove until, as I was on the point of leaving in chagrin, I again discovered the tracks in the frost leading across a little open space from another and denser grove near by. I plunged at once into this and had no trouble in directing my steps through the underbrush, which was broken and bent in many places and showed plainly the course taken by the man and woman but a short time before.

After going on in this way for some little distance I suddenly found myself in a small clearing under the branches of the overtowering trees, and saw, to my horror, an oblong space of newly turned earth which bore every resemblance in size and general appearance to a grave.

For several minutes I stood spell-bound with fear and dread and then, summoning up all my courage and with a cold sweat standing out on my body, I began to dig down in the soft brown earth, using a stick that was lying near by, and even my hands, to remove the stones and larger clumps of soil.

About a foot below the surface I came upon a bundle wrapped in cloths of the same kind in every way as those found by MacArdel and myself on the night when we first saw the ghosts and shot at Jenks.

I could bear no more for the moment, and quaking visibly, I rose from the ground and leaned against a tree for support. Then, for the first time, I saw that there were many other little mounds surrounding the one I had opened and—but I had reached the limit of my endurance, and, with pallid face, I dashed madly down the hill toward Carney-Croft.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)