Che Home Reading Circle



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SYNOPSIS.

This story is told by Madeline Rennick an English governess in the family of Dr. Chance at St. Petersburg, Russia, Chance is an Englishman by birth, but many years a naturalized Russian has a Russe-German wife and two daughters, Olga and Maroussa, aged six daughters, Olga and Maroussa, and six teen and fifteen years. Dr. Chance has long since given up the practice of medi-cine to bury himself in scientific researc, in his laboratorics, leading the life of a recluse. Miss Rennick is a Girton graduute and much interested in scientille sub-jects. One day, while she is with the girls, Dr. Chance hears her tell them o her fordeess for chemistry, He is de lighted to hear this, and asks her at one to help him on a paper he is writing for an English scientific journal. It is on the subject of photographing thought. Or. Chance dictates the paper to Miss Ren-nick, and she copies it out. After this-a work of some hours-she returns to her

PART II.

When I entered the salon Olga and Maroussa rushed to meet me. With the avidity of healthy, affectionate young animals they began to kiss and "We missed you dreadfully," said

"You know, darling, you are quite the life of the house," said Maroussa. "Sit between us now, and tell us what has happened."

"But I have nothing to tell, Murous-"Nonsense; you have been away for

five hours.' Yes, and during that time your father dictated a lecture to me which I took down in shorthand. I have just transcribed it for him and left it on his desk. It is a scientific paper and I be

Heve he will post it to England to-"And we, during those hours," said Olga, "yawned a good deal, and read novels, and are sweetments. How different you are from us! Please, Madeline, tell us what was the subject of father's paper."

"I am not at liberty to do that, Olga." Olga and Maroussa glanced at each "They say that Englishwomen a!

ways respects secrets," said Maroussa at last, "that they never breathe them "No honorable woman would ever breathe a secret which was committed

to her," I replied. The girls again gazed anxiously at each other. Then I am not honorable," said Olga, "for I intend to confide in you."

"But suppose I don't listen?" "You had better listen. You know from this out you will be often in the laboratories.

"Is there more than one?" "Yes. Now pray give me your attention. Madeline, Please understand that father will ask you to help him again and again. He may even get you to assist him with his chemistry. couple of years ago we had another governess. He got her to write for him and to help him. Well, she did not

ribly frightened." Oh, Olga, cught we to tell her about Rosa?" Interrupted Maroussa,

"Never mind," I said, "now that you have begun, spenk out." I cannot imagine why I urged these

girls to open up their hearts to me, but a sensation which I had never experienced before came suddenly over me. It was a feeling of nausen for this stately house, that cold-looking man, down-stairs, the mysterious laboratory which I had not yet entered.

"Speak out," I said. "Whatever you say I promise not to betray you, and if your father really wishes to secure my services, I may as well be armed at all points.

"That is just it," said Maroussa, "but after all it is not about our poor governess, poor Rosa-we always called her Rosa-she was not so pretty as you, Madeline, nor so strong-minded, but it is not about her we want to speak. It is about father's other laboratory, the one you have not yet seen, the Blue Laboratory. The fact is, Olga and I have a secret on our minds in connection with it. It weighs on us, sometimes it weighs heavily."

As Maroussa spoke, she shuddered, and Olga's olive-tinted face grew distinctly paler. "We long to confide in some one.

said Olga. "From the moment we saw you we felt that we would be 'en rapport' with you. Now will you listen?" "Certainly, and I also promise to respect your secret.

"Well, then, I shall tell you in as few words as possible. A couple of months ago some gentlemen came to dinnerthey were Germans and were very learned. One of them was called Dr.



"YOU HAD NO RIGHT TO FOLLOW ME INTO THIS ROOM."

Schopenhauer, who is a great savant, When the wine was on the table they began to talk about something which made father angry. Soon they were ther pale, and father said: 'I can prove sprang up and said: 'Come this way,

quite excited and we slipped into the cabinet after them. I don't think any of them noticed us. They went from the cabinet into the laboratory, a gimpse of which you saw today. We thought of course that father would stay there and make some hide-ous fizz or smell with his horrid chemistry, but he did nothing of the kind-he opened a door at the further end and walked on in front down a long passage. The scientists and father, absorbed in their own in-terests, went in in front, and Maroussa. and I followed. Father took a key out of his pocket and opened a door in the wall, and as he did so he touched a spring, and behold! Madeline, we

During our intercourse-and I now spent a good deal of my time with the doctor-he never really took me the smallest way into his confidence. He never for a moment lifted the vell which hid his real nature from my gaze. Never except once, and to tell of that awful time is the main object of this story. To an ordinary observer, Dr. Chance was a gentle-mannered, refined but cold man. Now and then, it is true, I did see his eyes sparkle as if they were flints which had been suddenly struck to emit fire. Now and then, too, I noticed an anxious look about his tense mouth, and I have seen the dew coming out on his forehead when an experiment which I was helping him to conduct promised to prove exceptionally interesting. At last, on a certain afternoon, it was necessary for him to do some very important work in the Blue Laboratory. He required my aid and asked me to follow him It was indeed a splendidlyequipped room-a teak bench ran round three sides of the wall, fitted with every conceivable apparatus and appliance, glazed fume chambers, stoneware sinks, Punsen burners, porcelain dishes, balancer, microscopes, polariscopes, thermopiles, burettes, mortars, retorts, and in fact every instrument devoted to the rites of the mephitic divinity. In one corner, as the girls had described to me, was a mysterious-looking, dome-shaped projection, about three or four feet high and covered with a black cloth that looked like a pall. In this room, side by side, we spent two or three hours. The doctor was working hard and I helped him. As a rule he worked in his shirt sleeves, treating me absolutely as if I were either an automaton or a boy. On this occasion he looked like the scientist who had not a found our elves on the threshold of an- scrap of soul about him. His research-



THE FACE WAS A HORRIBLE ONE.

other laboratory, twice, thrice as large es were deep and fascinating, he was as the one we had left-a splendid penetrating into some of Nature's sedace, lefty, and furnished with every crets-some of her ghastly secretssort of thing that the heart of a chem-ist could desire. There was an ex-traordinary sort of dome in one of the slor on which I worked with him in Maroussa and I noticed it the moment | ternoon I went with him there on many we entered the room. We were dread-fully afraid of being banished, and we room well, walted there while father and the sayants talked their secrets together. Suddealy Marovasa, who is always up to a bit of fun, suggested to me that we should stay behind and examine the place for curselyes after father and the Germans had gone. I do not know how we could really think of such a daring scherce for, of course, father would lock us in, but I think we forget that part. stay long; she became frightened, ter- After a time he seemed to satisfy the gentlemen, and they left the room as the glass. The effect was almost inquickly as they had come in. Then father turned off the electric light and we

were in darkness. "We heard his footsteps and the foot steps of the men dying away down the long corridors. We felt full of fun and mischief, and I said to Maroussa: 'Now

let us turn on the light." "We had not gone half way across the room, when sh! Madeline, what do you think happened? There came a knock which sounded as if it proceeded from the floor under our feet, and was in the direction of the queer dome which I have already mentioned to you. A voice cried pitcously three times: 'Help. help, help!' We were terrified; all our little spirit of brayade ran out of us. I thick Maroussa fell flat on the floor, and I know I gave the loudest scream that could come from a human throat It was so loud that it reached father's cars. The knecking underneath ceased and we heard father's footsteps hurrying back. There was Maroussa moanag on the floor and pointing at the She was too frightened to speak, but I said: 'There is some one under-neath away by that dome in the corner, heard some one knocking distinctly, and a voice cried 'Help' three times.

'Folly,' said father, 'there is nothing underneath. Come away this moment. You had no right to follow me into this room. Come, not another word this nonsense.

"Father hurried us out of the room, and locked the door, and told us to go up to mother. We told mother all about t, but she said we were talking nonense, and seemed quite angry, and Maroussa could not help crying and I had to comfort her,

"But, Madeline, that night we heard hat cry again in our dreams, and it has haunted us ever since. Madeline, if you go on helping father he will certainly take you into the Blue Laboratory. If ever he does, pray listen and watch and tell us, oh, tell us, if you hear that terrible, awful voice again." Olga stopped speaking; her face was white, and there were drops of moisture on her forehead.

"Why, child," I said, "the telling of that story seems quite to have alarmed

"Yes," she answered, "I cannot bear to speak of it.I shall never forget the awful terror of that cry,"

"Nor I either," said Moroussa. "But aush, Olga, not another word just now,

I hear mamma coming." From that hour I felt that I had a mission in life. I determined to be wary and watchful, to act cautiously, and, if possible, to discover the secret of the Blue Laboratory. For this purpose I made myself agreeable and use quarreling. It was fun to listen ful to Dr. Chance. At meals I talked them. They got red and fa- to him on scientific subjects, and although my knowledge was undoubtmy words.' I am sure they forgot all edly that of the smatterer and his of about our existence. Suddenly father the profound and deep scientist, yet compared to the conversation of his gentlemen. I am in a position to make wife and daughters, he doubtless found my point abundantly plain.' They all it pleasant to listen to me. Many, swept out of the dining room and went | many times when he complained of his into the cabinet. Mother said she had eyes he asked me to be his secretary, a headache, and she went upstairs to and on each of these occasions he she salon, but Maroussa and I were paid me ten rubles for my trouble.

orners, standing up out of the floor, the Blue Laboratory, but after that af-

One day m in this laboratory. I have by nature plenty of courage, and I did not take an instant in availing myself of this unlooked for opportunity. The moment he left the room I hurried across to the mysterious dome and raised the black cloth, saw that it covered a frame of glass doubtless communicating with some chamber below. I struck my knuckles loudly on stantaneous; I was immediately conscious of a dim face peering up at me from beneath, and I now saw that there was an inner and much thicker partition of glass between us. face was a horrible one, horrible with suffering. It was haggard and lean ghastly white, there was a look about the mouth and the eyes which I had never before seen, and I hope I may never witness again upon a human face. This face, so unexpected, so appalling, glanced at me for a second, a shadowy hand was raised as if to implore; then my master's steps were heard returning, and the ghost-like vision vanished into the dark recesses beneath. I pulled the covering back over the dome as it had been before and returned quickly to my work. Dr. Chance was near-sighted-he came bustling in with a couple of phials in

"Come here," he said, "I want you to hold these. What is the matter?" He glanced at me suspiciously. "You look pale. Are you ill?"

"I have a slight headache," I replied, "but I shall be all right in a "Would you like to leave off work

"I can go on," I answered, placing immense control upon myself, shock was past; it was an awful one. but it was over; my suspicions were now realities; the girls had really heard that cry of pain. There was

I have no desire to injure your

knows for what awful purpose, My duty was plain as daylight. TO BE CONTINUED.

ome one confined in a dungeon be-

low the Blue Laboratory, God only

A Promising Settler. "Do you think Skinner can make a liv-

Make a living! Why, he'd make a livng on a cock in the middle of the oceanwas another man on the rock."-Tid-Bits.

AT THE THEATERS.

which Stuart Robson has added to his with occasional interruptions when already large repertoire, is a dramatization from a late popular novel on provincial life in the Sunny South, their savings and gone to Canada to There are said to be many square raise a family. They make no fuss inches of fun, a natural spring of laughter and a streak of reality's "pay thing. Ten years later, or even sooner, dirt" at the bottom. No one tells tales they will be back with a big string of of a certain class in the South better than Opic Read-of that shiftless, irre-sponsible, happy-go-lucky stuff of which the Kentucky colonel was made. Mr. Read's studio appears to contain infinite numbers of these figures, and he touches them up so as to bring out the differences in a masterly manner. "The Jucklins" will be given its first vening at the Academy of Music with a cast that comprises well known names. Novel readers know of Opic Read's quaint and interesting charac ters, and would be particularly interested in the dramatization of any of the works of this talented author. Lem Jucklin, it is said that Mr. Read has created a character even more quaint and interesting than any of the many others that have added to his fame. The character is quaint and unique and far different from anything which Mr. Robson has ever played before. The dramatizing was done by Daniel L. Hart, of Wilkes-Barre,

The brilliant tragedy event of the season at the Frothingham will be the engagement of the distinguished artist, Frederick Warde, on Wednesday and Thursday. He will give three per-formances, presenting "King Lear," "The Merchant of Venice" and "Richard III." The Dallas, Tex., News, a conservative Southern paper, says: "The acting of Frederick Warde, in contrast with the general commonplace of the stage is like Hamlet's star set in the darkest night. It is not a wonder, therefore, that the most intelligent and cultivated portion of the amusement oving public goes to see him. The spaclous opera house contained a large audience last night, who saw with deep interest and frequent carnest plaudits Mr. Warde's splendid presentation of the tragedy of 'King Lear.'" With Mr. Warde's company, Miss Florence Ham, of Honesdale, a most talented young woman, will be seen,

"The Dazzler," which will be seen at the Academy of Music for a period of three nights commencing Thursday, April 29, with a special Saturday matince, is this season as full of ginger as one of Sanford's bottles. Everything is bright and new, the music being the latest popular songs, the dancers the newest and most fetching, and jokes and witticisms devoid of whiskers. The company is first-class comprising the eleverest comedians and prettiest girls over seen in the piece. All who enjoy good fun, catchy music, beautiful dancing and pretty girls will get their fill at the "Dazzler."

RAISING FAMILIES FOR PROFIT. How Connecticut Mill Operatives Provide for Their Old Age.

The cable dispatches telling of the proposal of the French government to offer premiums for large families, hoping by this inducement to restore the native population to its size of a quarsomething novel, a system which has for reasons not of statecraft, but mere leave me for a couple of minutes alone by personal, long been in operation in eastern Connecticut.

In the mills, which are to be found wherever in this hilly portion of the state there is a water power, the workers are French Canadians. Big mills with their hundreds and even thousands of operatives, are numerous, and little milis, each employing from twenty or thirty to 100 or 200 workers of both sexes, are tucked down between the hills in all sorts of possible and seemingly impossible spots.

In the large mills is to be found : sprinkling of women of other nationalities, but fully ninety per cent are French. In the smaller mills there are

practically none but French workmen. What surprises the visitor who has come out of a New England city like Hartford or New Haven to see how ection and woolen goods are made is the number of children in the factories Should this visitor ask the superintendent of a small mill to point out the children of one family he will name half a dozen in the room in which he happens to be; indicate another on the stairs and four or five more in the various workrooms. The father or mother may or may

not be workers in the factory. If the family is large enough the mother the housekeeper, and the onerous duty of the father is to escort his offspring to and from work. He goes to the milwith them in the morning and knows that they are all inside the gate be fore the hour of starting the machinery. At noon he conveys them home to dinner and back to the factory. At night he may come to take them hom but this is not an imperative duty On pay day he comes in the factory and draws the wages of all of them. A mile from Dayville, and about five miles from this city, is a factory from which a man, who can neither read nor write, draws over \$90 a month for the labor of his children. The size of his family is indicated by an extract from the factory books showing that the children earn from \$2 to \$4.50 ;

This Frenchman is merely one of nany who have found profit in a large family. He is now making hay while the sun shines, and in a few years he will retire to a farm in Canada with rom \$1,000 to \$2,000 in his canvas bag. There he will live, a nabob among his people, the remainder of his life,

This child farming is but one acof the drama of French factory life The years during which all the child-

Labor Time

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dren work and the father draws the wages are necessarily few. The fund for a life of ease must be made quickly. The female child, which at four-teen is the source of greatest profit, is ready to marry one of her own class at sixteen, and she does so promptly. The new husband and wife will work on in the mill for the next five years there are additions to the family, and then they vanish. They have gathered about the matter. It is the regular boys and girls to earn money for them; they will gather the profits and retire for life to the Canadian farm, as their

fathers and mothers did. It is not: crable of late years that the operatives are more in haste to be rich than formerly. They rush back to the factories with smaller families than were common twenty years aga.

WHO SETTLED AMERICA?

Expedition Will Seek to Answer This Interesting Question.

An expedition to circle the globe in of information conserving man's first appearance in America is shortly to be sent out by the American Museum of Natural History, of New York city. Morris K. Jesup, president of the museum, will pay all expenses out of his own pocket, and it is estinated that the cost will amount to

Professor F. W. Putnam, who was in harge of the anthropological division of the Worlds fair, and for many years a professor at Harvard, will conduct the expedition, and with him will be the anthropologist, Dr. Boas. They will take with them a competent corps of assistants, and will, it is expected, occupy six or seven years in their re-

America, Asia and Africa will be visited, and Mr. Jesup is confident a valuable anthropological collection will be secured. Particular attention will be given to collecting data relating to the earliest visitors from Asia to this coun-

LITTLE BREECHES.

Colonel John Hay, who succeeds Thomas P. Bayard as ambassador to England.) don't go much on religion.

I never ain't had no show: But I've got a middin' tight grip, sir, On the hamiful of things I know. don't pan out on the profits And free-will and that sort of thing, But I believe in God and the angels, Ever since one night last spring.

I came into town with some turnips, And my little Gabe came along, No four-year-old in the country Could beat him for pretty and strong, eart and chipper and sassy. Always ready to swear and fight-Jest to keep his milk-teeth white.

The snow came down like a blanket As I passed by Taggart's store; went in for a jug of molasses And left the team at the door, They scared at something and started, I heard one little squall, And hell-to-split over the prairie, Went team, Little Breeches and all.

Hell-to-split over the graine

I was almost froze with skeer; But we rousted up some torches And searched for 'em far and near. At last we struck the hosses and wagon Snowed under a soft white mound, Upsot dead heat, but of little Gube No hide nor hair was found, And here all hope soured on me

I jest flopped down on my marrow-bones Crotch deep in the snow, and prayed. By this the torches was played out, And me and Isrul Parr That he said was somewhar thar,

We found it at last, and a little shed Where they shut up the lambs at night We looked in and seen them huddled than So warm and sleepy and white And thar sot Little Breeches and chirped

And that's what's the matter of me." How did he get than? Angels?

He could never have walked in that storm; They just scooped down and toted him To whar it was cafe and warm, And I think that saving a little child, And bringing him to his own.

Than losfing round the Throne,

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