

A BETRAYAL of CONFIDENCE

...By Howard Fielding

Copyright, 1917, by Charles W. Hooper

It was the sound of my own voice that woke me from the state of semiconsciousness into which I had fallen. The room was dark, but the light from a window on the left showed a dim cell under ground, and four dark robed inquisitors watching some tortured victim on the rack.



A MAN WITH A LANTERN LEANS TO A LITTLE INN.

come quite usual with me, I began to repeat the phrase that I had uttered automatically before waking:

"As her husband is a citizen of Rhode Island—"

Could it be possible that I had put those words in a letter addressed to the one person in the world who mustn't know that the young woman in question has a husband? I knew myself too well to doubt that I had done it. My memory, for all its useful purposes, is gone. I meet my friends and do not know their names; I talk with them and forget the subject which is under discussion even while I am in the very act of discussing it.

But when I am asleep—or sunk in that purgatory of mental stress through which I never can quite win my way into the heavenly sleep—I am liable to remember anything—minute details of my boyhood, the exact turn of a phrase or glance of an eye that marked a scene of youth, but chiefly my own faults and errors. These, whether of long ago or of the day just done, come into my mind with startling suddenness and always with absolute accuracy, so far as I am able to determine. Sometimes I repeat aloud my own words or those of others; sometimes I utter vain protests against the recurrence of such thoughts, but the end is always the same—I pass through purgatory in the wrong direction, and am cast into the torment of Wide-awake.

The way in which this memory had come to me stamped it as genuine. Moreover, I have a rule for such matters, and I rely upon it with a sad certainty. If which is good is a dream, that which is bad is true.

I arose, shivering, and huddled some clothes upon me, with a heavy hooded bath robe over them. Then I made a fire of sea coal in the parlor and sat down before it to meditate upon a state of affairs which, briefly stated, was this:

An old gentleman named Christopher Hooper, who lives in Sayville, on the Maine coast, a pretty little town where I have spent a summer or two, had written to me for a legal opinion upon the status of certain property. He particularly desired to know what would become of it in case he should die without a will. He did not say why I was wished to die without a will, but I was of the opinion that he might do so. Indeed, I was considerably relieved to find that such was his intention. If he should die, the property which he owned in Maine, and which he had inherited from his grandfather, Gertrude Ellis, would inherit about a quarter of a million dollars, to the best of my knowledge and belief.

In regard to the property mentioned in his letter asking my advice there might be some question as to whether the situation would be complicated by the fact that Gertrude was no longer a minor, with a legal residence in Maine, but was secretly married to Robert N. Ellis of Rhode Island.

Ellis was a young man who had had a little money and had lost it through neglecting the advice of Christopher Hooper. This was a serious offense, but he had cut himself off from pardon by taking a position on a newspaper. Mr. Hooper despised all newspapers as a result of having been abused by one of them in the course of a political campaign in 1868. Ellis had met Gertrude in summer vacations, and had. He was still in his youth and with a sunny view of life. It was better that he should win her. I had never striven against him nor said one word in my own cause. I had no exalted notions of self abnegation. I thought that this could be like other sorrows, but somehow it isn't.

They made a great friend of me, and when it came to their childish folly of a secret marriage I was their sole confidant. I tried to dissuade them, selfishly, generously, I don't know which. Perhaps the meeting of those storms of different passions in my mind may have had something to do with the condition of it. At any rate, if I hurt me it benefited no one else. They were married as a guarantee to Ellis that old Christopher Hooper's opposition should not wreck his hopes. The ceremony occurred in New York, where Gertrude spends her winters with an aunt who is so full of wit that I think the wedding might have taken place in her own parlor and she have been none the wiser. I was the only accomplice.

It was some months later that I had my letter from Mr. Hooper. As I sat down to answer it I said to myself: "I must be careful. I don't know what I'm about."

best had been as bad as possible, for those words had crept in:

"As her husband is a citizen of Rhode Island—"

The name of the state would identify the man, and as Hooper had once been led to fear a secret marriage no lies, though backed by all the resources of perjury that are known to a New York lawyer, could repair the mischief.

Beyond doubt I had arranged matters so that Mr. Hooper would not be vexed out of a hair. No recent advice upon the point could have been half so effective. If he lived long enough to find a bottle of ink after reading my letter Gertrude would be disinclined.

What was to be done? Upon this point I tried to think clearly. There must be a way out of it. I said to myself that if I could have ten minutes of rest sleep—no, but five—I could think my way through this difficulty. With deliberation I laid my heavy head against the cushioned chair and closed my eyes despite the force of the springs that held the open window. The orb of the eye were sore. I saw many visions of the old days at Sayville; Gertrude, seventeen years old, upon a tennis field shaking down the masses of her hair disordered in the game, the picture of youth that I had never seen before. But this has nothing to do with the letter. I must think of that.

Mailed about half past 10 of the evening. It had not yet started on its way to Boston. Only one mail a day at Sayville. I wrote a letter to Gertrude once and sent it to Sayville by a full day's time. If I take the train at 10 o'clock this morning I may be there in time. In that case I'll find some way to intercept the letter. I'll bribe a servant. So that's all settled and off my mind, and I may sit here in this chair and dream of things that aren't true. All that is good is a dream.

It is a comfort to ride in a railroad train. The engineer knows his way, and the conductor, for a consideration, will put an absent minded passenger off at the proper station. If he happens to forget to render this service who should the absent minded passenger make trouble? Rather let him be comforted by the thought that some one else has lost his memory. However, Boston is a terminal, so there is no risk.

In Boston it is raining to a degree that Noah never saw the like of. The roof of the car is leaking, and the city streets with the flood that is descending upon it.

Beyond Boston the train seems like a submarine boat. Night closes in, and the rain still falls. We are late at Portland, later yet at the junction where I must change to the branch road. A man with a lantern leads me to a little inn that looms in an ocean of rain. He takes it for granted that I want to go to bed. Probably he has never seen a man who did not have that natural inclination at such an hour of the morning.

Next day the weather had cleared. The sun shone brightly, but the whole region seemed to be a lake. I had many misgivings, yet the branch train started confidently on time. It ran about ten miles and then stopped while the track ahead was tested and repaired.

A few miles farther along the same process was repeated, and so we crept down to Belfast, arriving too late for the boat across the bay.

Mails reach Sayville about 2 o'clock in the afternoon, coming down by stage along the east bank of the Penobscot. By the best calculation that I could make my letter had been in the very train that had taken me to the junction. It would probably fall to make connections at Bangor because of the storm and would not go down to Sayville until next day, but if I should write for tomorrow's boat, I might be too late to intercept the letter, the margin of time being very narrow. Therefore it was advisable for me to hire my own transportation across the bay.

It was 2 o'clock when we drifted into Sayville harbor.

While I was walking up the main street of the town I encountered Hiram Banks, who was Mr. Hooper's handy man.



Uncle Joe.

forehead with my clenched hand? "How should I remember anything? Where is she?"

"Come up to his room," he replied. "Have you heard?"

"I ain't heard nothing," said he. "Is there likely to be a rumper?"

I strode by him into the parlor and flung my overcoat off upon the floor. As I did so something fell out of the pocket I had tucked in. It was my letter to Christopher Hooper.

I had forgotten to mail it! All this mental torment, this accusation, this scurrying across country, this insane summons to Gertrude, had been wholly unnecessary. The old man which had caused the trouble had, in the mystery of divine reeve, averted it to my own advantage.

I ripped the letter open. It was a lengthy communication, but I knew just where to look for the bit of lunacy which had dripped from it. There it stood, most plainly written down, "As her husband is a citizen of Rhode Island." The phrase had recurred to me accurately in sleep.

The need of the moment was for quick and accurate thought upon the present emergency, but there was no time to think. I stood wringing the letter in my dripping hands until it was a mere rag, and my mind was wrong in precisely the same way. All I could think of was that Gertrude was in the room over my head. Without a notion as to what I should say or do I rushed up the stairs four at a leap.

Some one said "Come in" as I knocked at Hooper's door. Entering, I beheld the old gentleman lying upon a couch and propped up with pillows. His white hair floated round his head. It was of a perfect whiteness and as fine as the strands of a sunbeam. With his eyes fixed upon me, he said in a faint, "You remember that Speaker Reed told a similar inquiry that no gentleman weighs more than 200 pounds, don't you?"

"Yes, I have heard he did say something of that kind."

"Well," boomed the secretary, "I have revised that. I tell everybody that no gentleman weighs more than 300 pounds."

WASHINGTON LETTER

(Special Correspondence.)

An old song with new words has appeared in congressional circles. Mr. Sherman and Mr. Tawney, the sweetest of sweet men, and the most popular of the house chieftains, have placed the music loving public under obligation to them for having brought it out. The title is "Our Good Old Uncle Joe," and it goes to the tune of "I Smoked My Last Cigar."

We have with us a pleasant guest. Of all the good souls the rarest, best, His friends call "Uncle Joe."

Oh, he's a man to know, This same old "Uncle Joe," Search high and low The stars below.

This song was first rendered at a recent festive gathering at the residence of Representative Sibley of Pennsylvania, when he entertained in honor of ex-Speaker Henderson, Messrs. Tawney and Sherman made a decided hit in their rendering, particularly with the following:

He's a witty, and tactful man, His words do easy flow, He seldom bets a hotball flush, He's called "Uncle Joe."

There were several stanzas of like heart-felt tribute, but enough has been given to convey an idea of the spirit of the tuneful lay.

Cautious Secretary Shaws.

Secretary Shaw has decided to deprive the sightseeing public who visit Washington of one of the most popular souvenirs of the trip. The little busts of Washington and Lincoln in green and red showing their genuineness, are to be abolished. Some quid nunc in the treasury department has convinced the secretary that it is a dangerous thing to allow the greenback pulp to be made up into such trinkets and sold, as they often contain pieces of quite noticeable size, and there is a constant temptation to pick them out and patch together a bill.

No one here ever heard of the thing being done, and one of the expert mathematicians out at the Naval observatory made a computation that in the doctrine of chances it would not be done but once in 8,000,000 years. Nevertheless Mr. Shaw is a very careful man, and he will take no chances even at the ratio named. The greenback pulp is hereafter to be more carefully guarded and will be ground to a fine flour so that it will lose all identity with its former noble purpose as money. The bust models will be permitted to use this, but they say that no one will want to buy the things unless they can see the bits of greenback sticking out of them.

A Gentleman's Weight.

Secretary Taft is huge. He is tall and broad and thick. At Senator Foraker's reception in his honor the other night somebody looked the secretary over and asked, "Mr. Secretary, how much do you weigh?"

"You remember that Speaker Reed told a similar inquiry that no gentleman weighs more than 200 pounds, don't you?"

"Yes, I have heard he did say something of that kind."

THEY DIDN'T PART.

How Two Brothers Settled a Matter of Matrimony.

An English book of reminiscences tells of two squires named Leman of Lybridge. "Two thin, delicate looking old men, thin as reeds, seventy-two years old, with white hair, very gentle and courteous in manner, red-outwazy coats, white ruffs, black boots, caps and gloves." When past sixty years of age one night after hunting one of them said to the other: "I have been thinking neither of us can have much longer to live in this world and it will be a terrible thing for the survivor to have to remain here alone. Don't you think one of us ought to marry?"

"Yes," was the reply. "I have thought so for a long time." "Well, do you know of any lady?" "Yes, I do. Is there any young lady?" "No, no, no," replied the other, "the company of the same woman, the manager of a hotel at Oklampton. Well," said one, "we have lived together all these years without a wry word, and it's a pity we should fall out at our time of life." So they tossed up who should marry her. The winner rode down to Oklampton next morning and was accepted. All three lived together and the wife nursed both brothers in their last illness and was left their money.

Plan Pudding as Food.

In popular belief plum pudding, though difficult of digestion, contains a large proportion of nutriment. The London Lancet publishes the analysis made of two puddings, of which one was found to have a "nutritive value" of 68 per cent and the other of 50.

It appears that, although most agreeable as an article of food, plum pudding is not quite so concentrated a form of diet as has been supposed, and conjectures that it yields as much sustenance as beefsteak are certainly not supported by its chemical composition. The amount of protein matter is only moderate, and it must be remembered that in calculating the nutritive ratio and value all the nitrogen has been assumed to be albuminoid. Probably the true albuminoids and consequently the food value are slightly lower than would appear from the results; also the percentage of water is rather large, and the quantities of the remaining components are proportionately lessened.

SOMETHING NEW!

A Reliable TIN SHOP

For all kind of Tin Roofing, Spouting and General Job Work.

Stoves, Heaters, Ranges, Furnaces, etc.

PRICES THE LOWEST!
QUALITY THE BEST!

JOHN HIXSON
NO. 116 E. FRONT ST.

J. J. BROWN,
THE EYE A SPECIALTY.

Eyes tested, treated, fitted with glass and artificial eyes supplied.

Market Street, Bloomsburg, Pa.
Hours—10 a. m. to 5 p. m.

PLANTS IN BEDROOMS.

They Are Harmless in the Daytime, but Violent at Night.

In the daytime, when sunlight stimulates their nutrition, plants can do no harm in bedrooms, for then they give off oxygen and are useful in absorbing from the air the carbon which is injurious to animal life. The free use which is made nowadays of flowers and plants in our hospitals is in itself sufficient proof that this is a wholesome means of ministering mental cheer and comfort to the sick and suffering.

At night the case is different. Then all plants and flowers are removed from hospital wards, because they exhale the carbonic acid which they have gathered from the soil and air and thus give off by a process similar to respiration a gas which is injurious.

We may therefore conclude that during the hours of darkness, when the respiratory process is active and the nutritive is at a standstill, plants should have no place in our bedrooms. What is prudent in spacious wards is imperative in smaller chambers.

WRITERS' CRAMP.

It is a Sort of Paralysis of Either the Muscles or Nerves.

Writers' cramp, which is more paralysis than cramp, is caused by excessive writing, especially when in a weak or depressed condition. It is still a matter of doubt whether this embarrassing defect is due to a failure of the central nervous system or whether it arises in the muscles involved.

Duchenne, one of the highest authorities on nerve diseases, holds that it is an affection of the great nerve centers, for local treatment of the hand does no good, and cramp rapidly appears in the left hand if the sufferer transfers the work to it. It is probably caused by the complete exhaustion of some portion of the brain which presides over the movements of the group of muscles involved.

Rest is the chief, if not the only, cure, though the substitution of a keyboard typewriter in the early stage is often of no avail. A dial machine, which must be grasped with finger and thumb, is not so successful. Pianists, violinists, telegraph clerks, tailors and many others suffer from a similar cramp.

Nothing has ever equalled it. Nothing can ever surpass it.

Dr. King's New Discovery

For Consumption, Coughs, Sore Throat, Whooping Cough, Asthma, and all Lung Troubles.

A Perfect Cure For All Throat and Lung Troubles. Money back if it fails. Trial Bottles free.

LACKAWANNA RAILROAD
—BLOOMSBURG DIVISION—

New York	.....	8:30	10:00	11:30	1:00	2:30	4:00	5:30	7:00	8:30
Bloomsburg	.....	9:00	10:30	12:00	1:30	3:00	4:30	6:00	7:30	9:00
Scranton	.....	9:30	11:00	12:30	2:00	3:30	5:00	6:30	8:00	9:30
Pittsburg	.....	10:00	11:30	13:00	1:30	3:00	4:30	6:00	7:30	9:00
Wilkes-Barre	.....	10:30	12:00	13:30	2:00	3:30	5:00	6:30	8:00	9:30
Kingston	.....	11:00	12:30	14:00	2:30	4:00	5:30	7:00	8:30	10:00
Lyonsville	.....	11:30	13:00	14:30	3:00	4:30	6:00	7:30	9:00	10:30
Northampton	.....	12:00	13:30	15:00	3:30	5:00	6:30	8:00	9:30	11:00
Easton	.....	12:30	14:00	15:30	4:00	5:30	7:00	8:30	10:00	11:30
Easton	.....	13:00	14:30	16:00	4:30	6:00	7:30	9:00	10:30	12:00
Easton	.....	13:30	15:00	16:30	5:00	6:30	8:00	9:30	11:00	12:30
Easton	.....	14:00	15:30	17:00	5:30	7:00	8:30	10:00	11:30	13:00
Easton	.....	14:30	16:00	17:30	6:00	7:30	9:00	10:30	12:00	13:30
Easton	.....	15:00	16:30	18:00	6:30	8:00	9:30	11:00	12:30	14:00
Easton	.....	15:30	17:00	18:30	7:00	8:30	10:00	11:30	13:00	14:30
Easton	.....	16:00	17:30	19:00	7:30	9:00	10:30	12:00	13:30	15:00
Easton	.....	16:30	18:00	19:30	8:00	9:30	11:00	12:30	14:00	15:30
Easton	.....	17:00	18:30	20:00	8:30	10:00	11:30	13:00	14:30	16:00
Easton	.....	17:30	19:00	20:30	9:00	10:30	12:00	13:30	15:00	16:30
Easton	.....	18:00	19:30	21:00	9:30	11:00	12:30	14:00	15:30	17:00
Easton	.....	18:30	20:00	21:30	10:00	11:30	13:00	14:30	16:00	17:30
Easton	.....	19:00	20:30	22:00	10:30	12:00	13:30	15:00	16:30	18:00
Easton	.....	19:30	21:00	22:30	11:00	12:30	14:00	15:30	17:00	18:30
Easton	.....	20:00	21:30	23:00	11:30	13:00	14:30	16:00	17:30	19:00
Easton	.....	20:30	22:00	23:30	12:00	13:30	15:00	16:30	18:00	19:30
Easton	.....	21:00	22:30	24:00	12:30	14:00	15:30	17:00	18:30	20:00
Easton	.....	21:30	23:00	24:30	13:00	14:30	16:00	17:30	19:00	20:30
Easton	.....	22:00	23:30	25:00	13:30	15:00	16:30	18:00	19:30	21:00
Easton	.....	22:30	24:00	25:30	14:00	15:30	17:00	18:30	20:00	21:30
Easton	.....	23:00	24:30	26:00	14:30	16:00	17:30	19:00	20:30	22:00
Easton	.....	23:30	25:00	26:30	15:00	16:30	18:00	19:30	21:00	22:30
Easton	.....	24:00	25:30	27:00	15:30	17:00	18:30	20:00	21:30	23:00
Easton	.....	24:30	26:00	27:30	16:00	17:30	19:00	20:30	22:00	23:30
Easton	.....	25:00	26:30	28:00	16:30	18:00	19:30	21:00	22:30	24:00
Easton	.....	25:30	27:00	28:30	17:00	18:30	20:00	21:30	23:00	24:30
Easton	.....	26:00	27:30	29:00	17:30	19:00	20:30	22:00	23:30	25:00
Easton	.....	26:30	28:00	29:30	18:00	19:30	21:00	22:30	24:00	25:30
Easton	.....	27:00	28:30	30:00	18:30	20:00	21:30	23:00	24:30	26:00
Easton	.....	27:30	29:00	30:30	19:00	20:30	22:00	23:30	25:00	26:30
Easton	.....	28:00	29:30	31:00	19:30	21:00	22:30	24:00	25:30	27:00
Easton	.....	28:30	30:00	31:30	20:00	21:30	23:00	24:30	26:00	27:30
Easton	.....	29:00	30:30	32:00	20:30	22:00	23:30	25:00	26:30	28:00
Easton	.....	29:30	31:00	32:30	21:00	22:30	24:00	25:30	27:00	28:30
Easton	.....	30:00	31:30	33:00	21:30	23:00	24:30	26:00	27:30	29:00
Easton	.....	30:30	32:00	33:30	22:00	23:30	25:00	26:30	28:00	29:30
Easton	.....	31:00	32:30	34:00	22:30	24:00	25:30	27:00	28:30	30:00
Easton	.....	31:30	33:00	34:30	23:00	24:30	26:00	27:30	29:00	30:30
Easton	.....	32:00	33:30	35:00	23:30	25:00	26:30	28:00	29:30	31:00
Easton	.....	32:30	34:00	35:30	24:00	25:30	27:00	28:30	30:00	31:30
Easton	.....	33:00	34:30	36:00	24:30	26:00	27:30	29:00	30:30	32:00
Easton	.....	33:30	35:00	36:30	25:00	26:30	28:00	29:30	31:00	32:30
Easton	.....	34:00	35:30	37:00	25:30	27:00	28:30	30:00	31:30	33:00
Easton	.....	34:30	36:00	37:30	26:00	27:30	29:00	30:30	32:00	33:30
Easton	.....	35:00	36:30	38:00	26:30	28:00	29:30	31:00	32:30	34:00
Easton	.....	35:30	37:00	3						