

The Crimson Slipper.

BY DORA LANGLOIS,

Author of "A Bolt From the Blue," "The Red-Headed Woman," "The Kiss of Judas," "The Secretary's Daughter," "Victoria's Dream," &c.

(Concluded)
"That's it," he replied. "If the girl had been in love with Mr. Montgomery we could understand how her mistress managed to terrorise her into silence, but we know that her affections were elsewhere. I don't hold with your idea that she's afraid to lose her own character, because she was pretty careless of that when she interviewed you on the road. No, sir, there's something unexplained and mysterious in the business as regards her, and if I were in Sir Robert's pay my first step would be to get Miss Halladay's history from the cradle up to date. As for your own case, if there's any way out it lies through the murder mystery. You may have to wait months, and you may not be able to help yourself by a hand's turn, but in the end the truth about the murder ought to clear you."

"No," I said, fiercely, "no. Miss Denzell took the paper and she had nothing to do with the murder. She was too fond of the brute they killed."
"There seem to have been a good many people after it," he retorted. "There are no grounds of suspicion here of the murder. Well, I'll leave you now, sir, and take a look round. I shouldn't wonder if the runways were caught at York, in which case they will be back here very shortly."
"And will the police send me word?" I asked.

"Oh, yes, you and your friend will be wanted to identify them and make the formal charge," he answered; and I noticed that he did not look at me as he spoke. There was a pause. He gave me time to digest his last remark, and then added:
"By the way, your servant is leaving? May I give out that I'm engaged to take his place?"
"Certainly," I replied, "if it's likely to assist you. They are at breakfast in the kitchen, will you join them?"
"I might as well," he answered; "there's always something to pick up when one gets among the servants."
"I rang the bell, gave Minton his instructions, and saw him usher the detective out with a haughty and supercilious mien; then I set down at the table overpowered with a terrible sense of loneliness and helplessness, and a shuddering dread of the summons that might so quickly come, calling on me to face Mary Denzell publicly as her accuser."

"Denzell! What are you doing here? You promised me you would go to your bed!"
It was Herman's voice that roused me from the sleep of exhaustion into which I had fallen with my head upon the table.
"Don't blame me, Herman," I said, impulsively. "I meant to go. Eleven! It's nearly eleven o'clock. Have they not yet gone to the station yet?"
"No," Herman replied. "I thought you were asleep, Herman, and so I went over to the police station myself. It's strange, Denzell. They were not caught at York."

"They will have been taken in London," I said. "They will have made straight for town to catch the boat train at Charing Cross."
Herman shook his head. "There is no news from the south at all yet," he said. "But that's not what puzzles me, it's their slipping through at York that seems so unaccountable. It appears that Bronson knocked the station master at Smith-wait up last night, got the station open, and wired along the line to York. It's true the wire did not get in till after the train arrived from Santrigg; but it was there before any train for London left, and they put detectives on at once."
"Perhaps they didn't go to York at all," I suggested.

"But consider the district," Herman urged. "They couldn't get on any system from here without going via York, at least not without a very long, unnecessary journey by road."
"They could have driven to H—," I retorted, "and made north, or got across country on the Lancashire and Yorkshire, and so by the London and North Western to town."
"But they wouldn't take such elaborate precautions," he insisted, "seeing they did not know that anyone was aware of the loss of the paper. Why should they? It seems to me they must have gone via York."

"Then the detectives have muddled the business," I said, fiercely. "They have got through York, and covered their trail in London too by the look of things. If that cursed fellow had not put us virtually under arrest last night we might have done better ourselves."
I was sane enough now, and able to feel keen disappointment that the police had failed to profit by the information it had cost me so much to give. While I waited expecting any moment to hear news of her arrest I had striven to push the thing away from me, to believe and hope that I should not be called upon to meet her yet. But as soon as there was a check I became again an ordinary Englishman, a unit of a great nation, whose honor was as my mother's honor, whose interests were above my own.

"Someone has blundered I daresay," Herman answered, gravely, "but not Bronson. His first care was to put York on the qui vive, but as soon as he heard of the failure at York he sent to Santrigg, and to H— to try and trace them there; meanwhile he has closed all the ports. Provided they try to get away at once (as we have every reason to suppose they will), and provided also they don't separate, they must be taken soon. Of course, there are men on at every London terminus and dock, and here is a list of the other routes he has blocked: Harwich for Hook of Holland; Queenboro'-Flushing; Dover-Calais and Dover-Ostend; Folkestone-Boulogne; Southampton-Havre; Southampton and Weymouth for the Channel Isles and St. Malo. Then he thought of Liverpool, Fleetwood, Barrow and Stranraer, and coming back east notified the Wilson liners at Hull, the Thule liners at Grantown, the Hamburg boats at Newcastle and Leith, and the authorities at Aberdeen, Dundee, Greenby and the Hartlepoons. Look

at the list yourself, Duncan, and you'll see he has left nothing to chance. I tell you, if there is no news soon I shall begin to think that they have separated, and that our description of the men being naturally vague, one at least of them has slipped through."

I glanced at the list he offered me and pushed it aside with a weary sigh.
"Well, don't worry about it now," he added, kindly. "We've done our best, and I don't see how to do more. Cheer up! He looked full into my face as he spoke, and breaking off said very gently and half-apologetically: "No, never mind! Perhaps I'm in the way."
"They say it does a woman good to weep, and if it does then the right to make one's own is a blessed privilege. But no such right was mine; and if I could not shew any cheer at least I must face the music, so I stopped him with a gesture of my hand."

"I've had a visitor this morning, Herman," I said, and plunged at once into an account of the circumstances that led to my writing for Howell, his strange appearance, and his views on the situation.
"So, that was what detained you, was it?" Herman remarked as I concluded. "You've been busy it seems; but I wish you would go to your room now, old man. You'd be frightened if you caught sight of yourself in a looking-glass I can tell you."
"I don't think I shall trouble a looking-glass much," I answered, making an effort to laugh things off, "but for your sake I'll make myself a trifle more presentable by getting a tub."

"Don't take a cold tub," he called after me as I left the room. "I should have a can of hot water in it if I were you."
"All right," I answered; and I believe I meant to keep my word—I don't usually promise things just to save trouble—but when I got to my room the cold tub was there all ready for me, and when I rang for hot water Minton didn't come, so presently I forgot what I was waiting for and plunged into it.
I came out expecting to feel the usual warm glow which ought to supervene; it was, however, conspicuous by its absence, and I had a shivering fit instead. I huddled myself into my clothes, and tried to slip on my slippers, but the shivering was so bad that I was unable to do so. I was just about to give up when Minton knocked at the door to announce that my "new servant" was below and wished to see me at once.

"Send him up," I said as I reached for my shirt and collar.
"Howell, what is it?" I demanded as he came in. "Is there anything new?"
"Something I think you'd like to know, sir," he said, drawing eagerly near me. "It's a hundred to one that your first idea was right, and that the young lady only meant to destroy the paper, for if you can get your coat on I'll show you as clear as day that she was not in league with the men in the gig, but that they followed her and kidnaped her."
I dropped down on the side of my bed and stared at him blankly, my heart thumping against my ribs with Heaven knows how much mingled joy and fear.
"No, no, it's no use," I said. "My man saw her. She was quite quiet. She was—"
"In a gig with two men, and your servant was on the road," he interrupted. "She couldn't have done herself much good by appealing to him could she?"
"Good Heaven!" I cried. "If she was not in league with them what will they do with her?"

"If she was acting on the straight—that is, if she only wished to tear up a paper that, so to speak, belonged to nobody, and they suspected that she would give trouble and thwart them, even when they'd got it if she saw a chance—then Heaven knows what they'd do! But if she was speculating on her own and saw the game was up, she would probably go quietly, and they would merely take her along because they wouldn't dare to leave her behind. But come outside, sir, I want to know if it seems as clear to you as it does to me, for two reasons—first of all, you're interested personally; and secondly, it makes a difference to the police, for if harm has come to her the men at the ports ought to be watching for two persons and not three."

While he was speaking I had, with trembling hands, completed my toilet; and now I ran after him down the stairs, past the astonished Minton, and into the garden.
"It's all the question of a lady's heel," he said, with breathless eagerness. "She wore French heels, I never knew one of the professional criminal class wear them on a job. See, here's the mark of the heel, as plain as a signature, on the flower-bed by the gate; in the hedge through which, according to your friend Mr. Herman, she must have come. You see it, don't you? You can't mistake it, in fact, for the bottom of that sort of heel being no bigger than a halfpenny, and the heel itself so high, it always cuts a deep hole in soft earth. Well, there you are. That's the impression she left when she came towards the house, because the round part of the heel is towards the road. Here's the impression she made when leaving with the back of the heel towards the house. Now the trap your friend saw was to the left, under the sycamores; and between the place where it stood and this gap there's a gate that, I take it, is always on the latch, as if certainly was at five this morning when I tried it. Well, then, if she came in the gig, or meant to drive away in the gig, why didn't she use the gate? That isn't all. Come out on the road. You may take it from me that there isn't a trace of the heel to be found between this point and the place where the gig was waiting, but here's the heel again as plain as possible on the edge of this puddle, and she is now going away from the house. It's no use stopping to look for every such impression, that takes time; but come along, and I'll show it you much further on."

We were pushing along the moor road now like a couple of beggars.
(To be continued.)

Hints to Pipe-Smokers.
Never get a pipe hot. Use Rainbow Cut Plug Smoking Tobacco, take in the smoke slowly and the result will be cool and free-burning.

Brother.—"Mabel's doing her hair an awfully ripping way now. It makes her seem quite pretty. You ought to try it."
—Punch.

HAS TRAMPED THE WORLD And Seen the Inside of Prisons in Many Countries.

Ned Kishman Has Been Incarcerated in Forty-Seven Different Countries and Talks About It.

CHICAGO, April 22.—Ned Kishman, alias Texas Ed, alias Brake Rod, alias Cinders, alias Globe Trotting Ted, a tramp who has been arrested in more countries than any other man on earth, is back in Chicago.

Kishman has carved his name on railway stations all over the world, and has established a record of being incarcerated for vagrancy in the jails of forty-seven different countries. He has lost count of the number of times he has been arrested, but declares he has viewed more than fourteen hundred prisons from the viewpoint of the man inside. He has looked through the bars upon the cities of the world, and claims a record of travelling 22,485 miles without paying a cent of railway fare.

He boasts that the only railroad fare he ever paid was from Hot Springs, Ark., to Malvern Junction, approximately thirty-five miles, when he was too ill to attempt to beat the road. He figures that, had he paid first-class fare for all the riding he has done, he would have spent \$672,888.

The man who has kept half a million dollars out of the pockets of shareholders in railways is a small, bronzed man, probably forty-three years of age. He was born in Clinton County, Ohio, and ran away from home at the age of fifteen. He has visited practically every country on the globe and every district of the United States since then, and once came within three miles of his home, which he saw through a blur of cinders while riding on the rods of a through express.

During his career of twenty-eight years Texas Ed. has never yet been convicted of a crime, and has only twice been charged with crimes, and these only because he was gathered in by the police dragnets after some robbery or murder, when all suspicious characters were apprehended. He is worth \$80,000 and owns a tract of farm land near Highland, Clinton county, Ohio, which was left him by relatives who died. He could be independently wealthy if he chose to go home, but he refuses, and declares that he will die on the road.

Kishman's word on jails is of interest. He declares the best prison system and the ideal prison from all points is a new municipal prison at Bangkok, Siam, where he spent three weeks against his will.

He declares the United States possesses, as a class, the best and the worst prisons in the world. He cites the Cook county (Ill.) jail as a model in the United States, and the municipal prison at Frankfurt, (Ky.), and the calabocosa at Hillsboro, (Ohio), and at Leser (Minn.), and Waycross (Ga.), as among the worst in which he has been locked up.

His comments on the lack of system, brutality and political control of American prisons are scathing.

"The British system," says the champion tramp, is one of the best in the world, and the prison administration is undoubtedly the best. The public works system means hard and healthy labor. The cell system exists, but mostly the men work together, in brick yards, on forts, or other public works. I had the honor (and Great Britain the benefit) of serving two months at Dover, helping build a line of forts to protect England as a result of having been accused of jodging. It was there that I learned quarrying and stone cutting, which added one more trade to the twenty-three that I have learned in prisons. The men get credit for exactly what they do—they are paid, really, in lessening their sentences, and I earned thirty days off out of ninety day sentence by working hard."

"Perhaps the worst and most wicked jail system in the world—taken as a whole—I found in Portugal. Like any self-respecting tramp I hate to beg. In most of the countries of the world the beggar is locked up to protect the public from him. I have, of course, secured tens of thousands of meals without working for them, but I am not a beggar. In Portugal the system of imprisonment makes beggars. The prisoners, no matter what the charge against them, are thrown into the common room, usually facing the market place. I was in jail in Oporto, Braga and Setubal, and in each prison we faced the crowded market place, standing behind the bars and visible to the entire population. We stood at the bars and begged for food from the marketeers, else we should have starved, for the prison keepers furnished nothing in the way of food for those awaiting trial. The Portuguese system makes beggars of all prisoners, besides hardening all prisoners and manufacturing criminals rapidly."

"Mexico has advanced wonderfully in the last fifteen years. When I first visited Mexico I had the honor to be arrested in Mexico City and thrown into a dirty, overcrowded, disease ridden hole, where

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Tramps Unlucky in France.
France, according to Brake Rod, is a bad place for tramps, and the prisons are extremely cruel places of confinement. Most of the prisoners, he says, hope to escape the noisome places even at the expense of being deported to the convict colony in New Caledonia. Germany, he declares one of the best prison countries in the world, each prisoner of over three months being forced to learn a trade.

Switzerland, too, he praises for its prison system, and Denmark he declares one of the most advanced countries in the world in treatment of prisoners. The contract system is frowned upon there, and the prisoners work for the government on public works, occupying comfortable rooms. Before trial the prisoners are accorded treatment as mild as possible.

Among the countries in which the champion tramp has been arrested are Cuba, Iceland, Sweden, Algiers, Turkey, Austria, China, Japan, Ceylon, Bosnia, Cape Colony, Portuguese East Africa, French Congo, Greece, Ireland, Denmark, Holland and New South Wales.

AT THE OPERA HOUSE.
The Chester DeVonde Stock Company has made good. It will prove one of the strongest attractions that has come to the Opera House for a long time.

A house packed to the doors last evening gave striking evidence of its approval of the play, the players, and the exceptionally splendid scenery and appropriate costumes.

The company is new to this circuit, having come here from Schenectady (N. Y.), and there was much curiosity to learn whether it was really a strong company or an aggregation of melodramatic disappointments. The verdict last night was that Mr. DeVonde is a very strong and very attractive romantic actor, supported by an excellent company.

Beneath the Tiger's Claw was the play. It is a melodrama, and has the inevitable incongruities which the gallery—and perhaps the pit—demands of the playwright; such as the projection of an absurdly impossible Irish-American gentleman and his daughter into the thick of a Russian family and political affair; but he was a most entertaining citizen of the great republic, with a delightful brogue, and his daughter was very charming—and the playwright was therefore forgiven—just as he was when two other persons, who had no excuse for their appearance, brought with them an element and atmosphere of comedy into sombre passages of the play.

Mr. DeVonde is an actor of fine presence, and possesses a deep, rich, flexible voice, capable of great variety of expression, gentle and persuasive in pleading, and powerful in denunciatory passages.

Miss Van Auker, the leading lady, has a singular charm of voice and manner, and from her first appearance was a pronounced favorite. Of quite different gifts were Miss O'Mally, the merry American girl, and Miss DeTono, of commanding presence but desisting spirit; yet each in her part was admirable.

Phil Maher was very funny, without the buffoonery of the ordinary stage Irishman; and he showed between two of the acts that he can sing and dance as well. The other characters were well taken, and the action of the play was rapid and at times thrilling. Each act ended in a climax and tableau, to which the audience responded with curtain calls and great applause.

This evening the play is entitled "Doomed." It, like that of last evening, was written by Mr. DeVonde, who has a very strong role, and is given excellent support in a play that has several highly sensational features. Last night's play was of Russian, while that of tonight is American life.

Between the acts last evening Mr. DeVonde came before the curtain and briefly addressed the audience, making a most favorable impression. He and his company will have a large business at the Opera House this week and next. While they produce melodrama, with abundance of sensation, their work is not marked by the rant of many such performances, but depends for strength upon strong acting and expensive scenic effects.

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