

# THE MYSTERY OF THE GREEN RAY

By William Le Queux

## Synopsis of Preceding Chapters.

The outbreak of war sends Ronald Ewart, a young London barrister, to the Highlands to say good-bye to his fiancée, Myra McLeod. On the train he meets Hilderman, who calls himself an American and a stranger in those parts, but later Ronald finds that he has built a hut on a cliff above the falls opposite General McLeod's lodge. While fishing in the river Myra is suddenly blinded by a flash of green light. The physician advises consulting a London oculist. Gen. McLeod tells Ewart of a curious experience at the Chemist's Rock. At the station they meet Hilderman, who is very curious as to the cause of Myra's blindness.

## CHAPTER V.—(Cont'd.)

I thanked him for his kindly interest and left him. I wired to Dennis not to meet the train, but to be prepared to put me up the following night. Then I got the tickets, and took Myra to the train. Hilderman was seeing his friend off a short, somewhat stout man, with flaxen hair, and small blue eyes peering through a pair of large spectacles. He bowed to us as we passed, and I was struck by the kindly sympathy with which both he and his companion glanced at Myra. Evidently they both realized what a terrible blow to her the loss of her sight must be. I will admit that, when it came to the time for the train to start, my heart nearly failed me altogether. The sight of the beautiful blind girl saying good-bye to her dog was one which I hope I may never see again. As the train steamed out into the cutting, Sholto was left whining on the platform, and it was as much as Angus could do to hold him back. Poor Sholto; he was a faithful beast, and they were taking his beloved mistress away from him. Myra sat back in the carriage, and furtively wiped away a tear from her poor sightless eyes.

"Poor old fellow," she said, with a brave smile. "If they can't do anything for me in London he will have to lead me about. It'll keep him out of mischief."

"Don't say that, darling!" I groaned. "Poor old Ron," she said tenderly. "I believe it's worth you than it is for me. And now that Mary has left you for a bit I want to say something to you dear, while I can. You mustn't think I don't understand what this will mean to you, dear. I want you to know, darling, that I hope always to be your very great friend, but I don't expect you to marry a blind girl."

I shall certainly not tell the reader what I said in reply to that generous and noble statement.

"Besides, dear," I concluded eventually, "you will soon be able to see again." And so I tried to assure her, till presently Mary returned. And then we made her comfortable, and I read to her in the darkened carriage until at last my poor darling fell into a gentle sleep.

But twenty-six hours later, when I had seen Myra safely back to her aunt's house from Harley Street, I staggered up the stairs to Dennis's rooms in Pantons Street, a broken man. Dennis opened the door to me himself.

"Ronald!" he cried, "what has happened?"

"Hello, old man," I said weakly; "I'm very, very tired."

My friend took my arm and led me into his sitting-room, and pressed me gently on the sofa. Then he brought me a stiff brandy and a soda, and sat beside me in silence for a few minutes.

"Feel better, old boy?" he asked presently.

"Yes, thank, Den," I answered. "I'm sorry to be such a nuisance."

"Tell me," he said, "when you feel well enough." But I lay, and closed my eyes, for I was dog-tired, and could not bring myself to speak even to Dennis of the specialist's terrible verdict. And soon Nature asserted herself, and I fell into a deep sleep, which was the best thing I could have done. When I awoke I was lying in bed, in total darkness, in Dennis's extra room. I sat up, and called out in my surprise, for I had been many miles away in my slumbers, and my first hope was that the whole adventure had been a hideous nightmare. But Dennis, hearing my shout, walked in to see if I wanted anything.

"Now, how do you feel?" he asked, as he sat on the side of the bed.

"Did you carry me in here and put me to bed?" I asked idly.

"You certainly didn't look like walking, and I thought you'd be more comfortable in here," he laughed.

"Great Scott, man!" I cried, suddenly remembering his heart trouble, "you shouldn't have done that, Dennis. You promised me you'd take no risks."

"Heavens! that was nothing," he declared emphatically. "You're light as a feather. There was no risk in that."

Indeed, as events were to prove, it was only the first of many, but being ignorant of that at the time, I contented myself with pointing out that very few feathers turned the scale at twelve-stone-three.

"Now look here, old son," said Dennis in an authoritative voice. "You mustn't imagine I'm dealing with your trouble, whatever it is (for you are in trouble, Ronald), in a matter of fact and unsympathetic way. But what you've got to do now is to get up, have a tub, slip into a dressing-gown, and have a quiet little dinner with me here. It's just eight, so you ought to be ready for it."

He disappeared to turn on the bath-water, and then, when he met me in the passage making for the bathroom, he handed me a glass.

"Drink this, old chap," he said.

"What is it?" I asked suspiciously. "I don't want any fancy pick-me-ups. They only make you worse afterwards."

"That was prescribed by Doctor

Common Sense," he answered lightly. "It's peach bitters!"

After my tub I was able to tackle my dinner, with the knowledge that I was badly in need of something to eat, a feeling which surprised me very much. Throughout the meal Dennis told me of the enlistment of Jack and poor Tommy Evans, and we were discussing their prospects and the chances of my seeing them before they disappeared into the crowded ranks of Kitchener's Army. Dennis himself had been ruthlessly refused. He spoke of trying his luck again until they accepted him, but I knew, from what he told me of the doctor's remarks, that he had no earthly chance of being passed. He seemed to have entirely mastered his regret at his inability to serve his country in the ranks, but I understood at once that he was merely putting his own troubles in the background in face of my own. The meal over, we "got behind" two of Dennis's excellent cigars, and made ourselves comfortable.

"Now then, old man," said my friend, "a complete and precise account of what has happened to you since you left King's Cross two days ago."

"It has all been so extraordinary and terrible," I said, "that I hardly know where to begin."

"I saw you last at the station," he said, laying a hand on my knee. "Begin from there." So I began at the beginning, and told him just what had happened, exactly as I have told the reader.

Dennis was deeply moved.

"And then you saw Olvery?" he asked. "What did he say?"

I got up, paced the room. What had Olvery said? Should I ever forget those blistering words to the day of my death?

"Come, old boy," said Dennis kindly. "You must remember that Olvery is merely a man. He is only one of the many floundering about among the mysteries of Nature, trying to throw light upon darkness. You mustn't imagine that his view is necessarily correct, from whichever point he looked at the case."

"Thank you for that," I said. "I am afraid I forgot that he might possibly be mistaken. He says he knows nothing of this case at all; he can make nothing of it; it is quite beyond him. He is certain that no such similar case has been brought to the knowledge of optical science. His view is that this green veil may lift, but he says he is sure that if there were any scientific reason for saying that her sight will be restored he would be able to detect it."

"I prefer your Dr. Whitehouse to this man any day," said Dennis emphatically. "He took just the opposite view. This man Olvery, like so many specialists, is evidently a dogmatic egotist."

"I'm very glad you can give us even that hope. But the eyes are such a delicate instrument. It is difficult to see how the sight can be recovered when once it has gone. Of course, Olvery is going to do what he can. He has suggested certain treatment, and massage, and so forth, and he has no objection to her going back home again. Myra, of course, is tremendously anxious for me to take her back to her father. She is worrying about him already, and, fortunately, Olvery knows Whitehouse, and has the highest opinion of him."

"Go back as soon as you can, old chap," Dennis advised. "Wire me if there is anything I can do for you

at this end. I'll make some inquiries, and see if I can find out anything about any similar cases, and so on. But you take the girl back home if she wants to go."

While we were still talking, Dennis's man, Cooper, entered.

"Telegram for Mr. Ewart, sir," he said.

I took the yellow envelope and opened it carefully.

"What is it?" cried Dennis springing to his feet as he saw my face.

"Read it," I said faintly, as I handed it to him. Dennis read the message aloud:

"Come back at once. I can't stand this. Sholto is blind.—McLeod."

## CHAPTER VI.

### Contains a Further Enigma.

Back again at King's Cross. I seemed to have been travelling on the line all my life. Myra turned to Dennis to say good-bye.

"I hope," she said bravely, "that when we meet again, Mr. Burnham, I shall be able to tell you that I can see you looking well."

"I do hope so, indeed, Miss McLeod," said Dennis fervently, with a quick glance at me. He was lost in admiration at the quiet calm with which my darling took her terrible affliction.

"Good-bye, old chap," my friend said to me cheerily. "I hope to hear in a day or two that Miss McLeod is quite well again. And," he added in a whisper, "wire me if I can be of the slightest use."

I readily agreed, and I was beginning, even at that early stage, to be very thankful that my friend was free to help me in case of need.

When at last we reached Invermalloch Lodge again I sat for an hour in the library with the old General, telling him in detail the result of the specialist's examination, but I took care to put Dennis's point of view to him at the outset. I was glad I had done so, for he seized on the faint hope it offered, and clung to it in despair.

"What is your own impression of Olvery?" he asked.

"I fancy his knighthood has got into his head," I replied. "He gave me the impression that he was quite certain he knew everything there was to be known, and that the mere fact of his not being sure about the return of her sight made him positive that it must be complete and absolute blindness. Of course he hedged and left himself a loophole in the event of her recovery, but I could have told him just as much as he told me."

"You say you took it on yourself to take Myra out of his hands altogether. Why?"

"When I received your wire, I rang him up at once, and asked him to see me immediately," I replied. "Eventually he agreed, and I took a taxi to his place and told him about Sholto. He gave his opinion without any consideration whatever. He said: 'The merest coincidence—and you may even find that the dog has not actually lost his sight at all.' So, naturally, I thanked him, gave him his fee, and came away. I propose now that you should try and get this man—Garish, is it—?"

"Garish," interposed the General, consulting a note Dr. Whitehouse had left. "Herbert Garish."

"Well, I want you to try and get him sufficiently interested to come here—and stop here—until he has come to some decision, no matter what it is."

"A thundering good idea, Ronald," agreed the old man. "But we can't tell him this extraordinary story in writing."

"I'll go and find him, and fetch him back with me if I have to hold a gun to his head."

Accordingly I dashed off to Malhaig again, and caught the evening train to Glasgow. I spent an unhappy night at the Central Station Hotel—though it was certainly not the fault, of the

hotel—and looked up Mr. Garish as early in the morning as I dared disturb a celebrated consultant oculist. I took a fancy to the man at once. He was young—in the early forties—very alert-looking, and exceedingly hair-brained. His prematurely grey hair gave an added air of importance to the clever eye and clean-cut features, and he had a charm of manner which would have made his fortune had he been almost ignorant of the rudiments of his calling.

(To be continued.)

## On a Tablet in Westminster Abbey.

Not all the stately marbles That grace the Minister's wall Bear names of England's glory. Not kings and sages, all.

Hard by the Poet's Corner Four words I found, and smiled, The deathless message musing, "Jane Lister—Deere child."

Fair head, above her sampler, Two hundred years ago, So sweet—dear, gentle daughter— To the hearts that loved her so!

So patient in her suffering, So quiet in her sleep, Now this, her fragrant memory, The storied marbles keep.

She lies with the Immortals, With Milton and the rest, Love's human cry still sounding Above her quiet breast.

"Right worthy to lie near them," I softly spoke, and smiled, "Perhaps they knew and loved you, Jane Lister—Deere child."

—Bartlett Brooks.

## Cunning Rather Than Speed.

An Englishman who had once seen an American fox running before a hound wrote that the American fox is much slower than its English cousin. As a matter of fact, the Englishman's assertion, which by the way appeared in an encyclopædia, is really a tribute to the superior cunning of the American fox. Reynard, says Mr. Charles D. Stewart in the Atlantic Monthly, could have run a good deal faster had he thought it wise to do it.

A fox surprised by a hound in a small patch of woods will run across the open at astonishing speed. Then he not only will slow up but may even sit down on some convenient elevation and look back. He keeps his wits about him; he wants to see what is going on. When the hound has struck his stride the fox will soon gauge it and lead him a chase. Anyone who sees the chase and knows that the hound is slow becomes an admirer of the witty Reynard and will be likely to say that the fox is running slowly just to tease the dog. Indeed, many entertaining writers have said so; but a veteran hunter would not so interpret the action of the fox. He will know that when a fox gets half a mile or so ahead of him and skulks along at a set distance out of sight, it is not doing it to tease him. The fox is not so human as that. The plain fact is that the fox will not retreat before a dog any faster than the dog drives him. That is because it is naturally cunning.

The biggest heart cannot hold both goodwill and pride.

Minard's Liniment for Colds, etc.

# Women's Interests

## A Pocket Lunch for Winter Months.

The time of the year is at hand when our mosquitoes are wont to appear, at the beginning of a half or whole holiday, announcing that they are off for a tramp or skating and want "just a bite" that will go in their pockets. They are insistent that it is not to be a lunch, but a "bite," and it must be a flat package.

Most wives and mothers know exactly the sort of "food" desired, but variations are always grateful, and long practice with every sort of picnic sandwich under the sun has crystallized, for me, a few favorites.

**Bread and cheese sandwich**—One of the simplest and best—is made as follows: Thick bread, liberally buttered and spread thickly with grated cheese which has been moistened with ketchup; very piquant and appetizing.

**Concordia picnic sandwich**—Grind cold meat—Hamburg steak, roast or boiled beef—through meat chopper and mix with thick tomato sauce; use liberally as a filling. These sandwiches, made more daintily as occasion demanded, were so popular in my own family that round or Hamburg steak was often purchased, broiled and ground for the express purpose of sandwich making.

**Use nut and raisin bread**—Substantial slices of this delicious bread, well buttered, may well constitute both "main dish" and dessert of a pocket lunch. Following is the recipe for one of the very nicest nut breads that I have ever eaten.

**Sue's nut bread**—Eggs, one or two; brown sugar, one cupful; chopped nuts, one cupful or less; chopped raisins, one-half a cupful (may be omitted); milk, two tablespoons, salt, one-half teaspoonful; baking powder, two level teaspoonfuls. Moderate oven; one loaf or two baking powder tins.

**Egyptian bonbons**—One cupful each of chopped raisins and dates; one-half to three-quarters of a cupful of chopped nuts. Mix well and knead together, using powdered sugar to prevent the mixture from sticking to the board; roll in a sheet one-third of an inch thick, cut into caramel-shaped squares, roll in powdered sugar. Moist raisins and dates should be selected; moisten with a little orange juice if too dry. A little crystallized, chopped ginger is a delicious addition if on hand.

**Quick chocolate sweetmeat**—Melt pound of sweet chocolate; wash and dry, removing all bits of stems, one package of small seedless raisins and stir as many of the latter as possible into the melted chocolate; keep the bowl containing the mixture in a pan of hot water during the process. Drop by spoonfuls on a platter, making small, round cakes. The surplus of this sweetmeat will, I assure you, be enjoyed by the family and also be an excellent addition to the children's lunchbox.

**Bacon and egg sandwiches**—Cover a liberally buttered slice of bread with slices of hard boiled eggs and then with crisp bacon; press another buttered slice firmly over.

**Mystery sandwich**—Chop shaved dried beef and moisten with enough mayonnaise dressing to spread; use as a filling between slices of buttered

bread; a particularly delicious sandwich.

**Emergency sandwich**—Spread buttered bread with peanut butter—melted with cream or milk if too dry—and add dabs of any jelly or jam on hand. The combination of any sort of the sweet with the peanut butter is very delectable. Plan to keep the butter in the house, buying by the half-pound instead of in the expensive containers; put it at once in a covered dried beef or bacon tumbler.

**Careful wrapping important**—Do up the sandwiches carefully, pressing each two slices of bread firmly together; wrap first in paraffin paper, then in wrapping paper. Do not try to do up two together, as it is best to carry one in each pocket.

Often a little sweet, as a bar of chocolate, is enjoyable and healthful. Stuffed dates and figs make an unsurpassed pocket lunch dessert and are comparatively inexpensive if prepared at home. Nuts and dates and figs are excellent always-on-hand winter supplies.

**Fruit loaf** is very nutritious and "heartily." Grind together any sort of soft dried fruits on hand—raisins, dates, prunes, figs, etc.—and, if necessary, add a little cream, melted butter or soft jelly to moisten sufficiently to press into a flat oblong. Cut in small bars, roll in powdered sugar and wrap each in paraffin paper. Chopped nuts are a delicious addition, if liked, or on hand. The same preparation, moistened to spread, makes a delectable sandwich filling; graham, entire wheat or oatmeal bread should be used instead of white.

**The Versatile Lemon.**

**Lemons**—If you feel "so tired," and your bones ache, and you have a bad taste in your mouth, squeeze lemon juice into fresh water, enough to make a sour beverage, and drink freely.

**For headache**—If you have a throbbing headache, drink the juice of one-half lemon in fresh water, repeat the other half in one-half hour, and rub the slice of lemon over brow and temples and the pain will soon go away.

**Heartburn**—Lemon juice taken before meals will be found advantageous as a preventive and cure for heartburn.

**Fevers**—When the mouth is parched and dry, a little lemon in warm water given in small doses will refresh the patient.

**Dyspepsia**—Juice of one-half lemon in a little water before meals; avoid sweets; repeat for several days.

**Rheumatism and gout**—Juice of a lemon in a little warm water at retiring.

**Colds and coughs**—Juice of two lemons, add tablespoonful of granulated sugar, mix and take a teaspoonful every half-hour.

**For the hair**—For falling hair, rub slices of lemon into the roots, wash afterward with soft, warm water.

**For complexion**—Lemon juice and milk, rub on face and neck, leave on all night.

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