

The Promoter's Wife

BY JANE PHELPS

ONCE MORE BARBARA

CONFIDES IN MR. FREDERICK

CHAPTER CVI.

While I was glad of Blanche Orton's visit, in a way made me very uncomfortable. More so perhaps than I had been since the day I had been so snubbed by Scott. I tried to put myself in a business man's place, but try as I would I could see no reason why a legitimate business should be carried on in such a way; why it should be necessary to use the means Neil was using to interest them in his projects—if those projects were perfectly legitimate ones.

But I said nothing to Neil, although I told him of Mrs. Orton's visit. He seemed rather surprised I thought at first, but afterwards I concluded I had been mistaken. He asked me no questions, and seemed to take it for granted that it was simply a social call without any ulterior object.

Yet while I said nothing to Neil, I did not keep her visit—the cause of it rather, a secret. Mr. Frederick called in the afternoon of the following day and found me alone, although it was my afternoon at home. My afternoons were not as well attended as formerly, a cause of chagrin to me.

I poured him tea, then said: "I had a caller yesterday, Mrs. Orton. You know she was so nice to me the other night that I began to like her again—I used to think she was really charming when her husband was alive—she came to tell me why she received those women." I would not betray her in any way, but I felt I must put the questions which were so bothering me to someone. "She said that men like Tearle and Connor weren't happy unless they were entertained by handsome women who could play cards." I realized as I finished that I had not said what I intended, and that it sounded rather peevish.

"Yes, they are rather fond of the ladies." "Tell me, please, Mr. Frederick, is it necessary to do business in that way—legitimate business I mean? It seems so strange to me. Father always attended to business at his office. I thought that was what offices were for." I tried to speak lightly. I did not want him to think I was too much worried.

"I scarcely know how to answer you, — Barbara," he had hesitated over my name. He seldom addressed me so. "But it is done sometimes. Men like Tearle and Connor are hard to handle sometimes. They are hard drinkers, and want their own way, especially when in New York. They have the arrogance of men who have made great fortunes quickly."

"But why mix business with cards and—ladies?" I asked. "Why not keep them separate. Can't it be done?" "—perhaps—" he slowly sipped his tea, and I knew he was trying to think how to satisfy me without blaming Neil.

"Please Mr. Frederick don't treat me as a child. Neil won't tell me anything about his affairs. I hear things, and I can't stand being kept in the dark any longer. You are my good friend, aren't you? If you are, please tell me what to do to get Neil away from those people and from—that business."

I was so ignorant, so absolutely unversed in Neil's affairs that he, any one could see at once how little I knew of business. I think that was why he was so sorry for me and tried to help me. I had shown him I wanted to help Neil. It made no difference what he cared for me, really I think it made him more anxious to help Neil. He knew that I loved my husband passionately, and that I would be true to him always no matter what happened.

"I wish I could," I honestly do," he replied in his peculiar way. "I'd give a good deal to get him straight. But I'm afraid he'll have to come a cropper first—before he will listen to anyone." "You have talked with him?" "Yes, only yesterday. I called at his office. I had seen Scott, and Scott means mischief. He claims that Mr. Forbes has misrepresented his properties and so has induced him to invest. He didn't say misrepresented, but that sounds better. I tried to pacify him, but he wouldn't listen to me. Then I went to your husband, and he wouldn't listen either. I guess I'm not a very convincing talker. Mr. Forbes thinks Scott is bluffing when he threatens. I am not so sure. Sometimes a snapping dog bites."

ROBERT FALLS AND BREAKS HIS ARM

CHAPTER CVII.

Just after Mr. Frederick had said he could do nothing for Neil unless he himself wanted to help, others came and we had no further opportunity to talk together. I urged him to remain to dinner, but he had an engagement. I hoped Neil would come home and that if we both talked to him he might listen. I knew from Frederick's manner that things had reached some sort of a crisis.

Miss Wilson came in just as Frederick was leaving. She persuaded him to wait until she had a cup of tea, promising to drop him at his hotel if he would. "I have a new Rolls Royce. I should like you to see it, she had said with an arch look at him. All the women I knew that had met him liked the blunt friend of mine; this man who called things by their names, and whose word was never questioned."

"That is an inducement. I mostly ride in flivvers at home," was his characteristic answer. Then Maud Wilson remarked: "I haven't seen you at Mrs. Powers lately, Mrs. Forbes. She had a wonderful affair the other night. I looked for you and your handsome husband."

I made some sort of a reply, my cheeks burning. Fortunately no one save Mr. Frederick heard her. He ignored what she had said, and without giving me time to reply commenced to talk of her new car. She was immediately interested, and so I was spared the mortification of an answer. So we were absolutely dropped by Mrs. Powers, and of course by her set. The one in which I had hoped to move. It had been a large affair, and we had not been invited. I was very glad I had not gone any further with my social planning. I should have been laughed at, my efforts a failure. My lips quivered as I thought of it. I caught the pitying look in Mr. Frederick's eyes and pulled myself together sufficiently to hide them good afternoon in my usual manner. But after everyone had gone I threw myself on my bed and sobbed for half an hour. It was hard to be slighted, harder because I knew I had done nothing to deserve it. I would tell Neil. It might be a good reason to urge more caution on his part as to his associates, and his business methods.

But when finally Neil came in I had forgotten that such people as the Powers existed; or that I had ever had any social aspirations.

I was bathing my face so that Neil might not know I had been crying when I heard a scream, then my boy calling for me. I rushed into the room, and down the stairs. While playing in front of the house, Robert had fallen in such a way as to break his arm. We carried him up to his room, then called a doctor. I was almost mad with pity for the poor child until he came; then faint when Robert screamed as it was set. Fortunately Neil did come home, and although he went out later, he remained with us until Robert fell asleep, worn out with pain.

I sat beside my boy until Neil came in a little after midnight. When he insisted I go to bed I had no strength to resist, so gave up my place to him. We had a nurse, but both idolized our boy and would not have dreamed of leaving him alone with her under the circumstances.

They did not call me until almost time for Neil to go to the office. He had snatched a little rest on a couch he had had brought into Robert's room, but he looked white and worn. "A good bath and some coffee will set me up," when I told him he looked tired, and then he hurried away to get ready for the day. He looked ill, and bade us good bye before he went down town, but we had no time for any talk, even had we had the inclination.

All day I was kept too busy to think. It is hard to take care of a sick person, no matter what their age. But when an active healthy boy is obliged to remain quiet, one's wits must be sharp indeed if they succeed in entertaining him. Robert, like all boys tired of things quickly, spent most of my time devising means to amuse him. I told him stories and when all else failed carried him down to the music room and played for him. He loved music and always kept very quiet when I played.

About four o'clock I heard Neil come in. I called: "We are here in the music room, dear, come in." When he did not reply I swung around on the stool to see him standing in the door, a grayness in his face, a despair in his eyes that frightened me. He motioned me to say nothing. Then carried Robert up stairs, and left him with his nurse. I had followed slowly, wondering what dreadful thing had happened. NEIL TELLS BARBARA

BARBARA MEETS A REPORTER FOR THE FIRST TIME

CHAPTER CVIII.

"What is it Neil?" I asked as soon as we were alone. "Are you ill, dear?" "No! Nothing so simple as being ill. Barbara I can't tell you, you'll have to read it for yourself. That skunk Scott is trying to ruin me."

"Trying to ruin you, why?" I made no move to take the paper extended. I was too shocked at Neil's appearance now that I saw him in the lighted room. He looked like death, and I noted that he staggered as he walked. Yet he had not been drinking of that I was sure.

"Because he is a whelp!" "But why Neil? He surely gives some reason." "He says I cheated him. Why don't you take the paper and read what they say about your husband. How was I to take time to examine every property I handled. I took my risk, others had to take theirs. Then when they can't get a hundred percent on their investment, they squeal. Bah! I am sick to death of them all!" He flung his hands out in a gesture of something very like despair.

"But Neil they can't take a man's character away like that." I was slowly unfolding the paper. It's outrageous! to say you cheated is false and I know it," as I said that every bit of blood seemed to leave his face, he was ashy gray, and trembling.

"But I may not be able to prove it." "I don't care whether you can or not! I know it!" "Oh, Bah!" He covered his face with his hands as he sank into a chair.

"There dear don't worry, it will all come out right." The paper slid to the floor as I laid my arm around his neck. "Read what they say, Bah, then you may not be so lenient in your judgment. They're not. They even bring you in for their miserable ranting. Gad, I'd like to get even with Scott for this. I am ruined Bah, ruined I tell you." He shook with dry sobs.

I was frightened, I did not know what to do. I stooped, raised the paper, opened it and read: "John Scott, Western millionaire, accuses Neil Forbes, mining promoter." Then below: "Scott claims that Forbes induced him to supply money for digging wells when he, Forbes, did not even own the land. He also claims that Forbes' extravagance, his fine new house and expensive motor cars, etc., are purchased with the money of victims like himself who have given it to Forbes for investment upon his promise of large dividends. It is evidently the old shyster game of getting rich upon the credulity of the people. Forbes has overstepped himself, Scott says. And he will prosecute him unless every cent he has paid him, Forbes, is returned forthwith." There followed some more irrelevant stuff then: "Forbes had quite an extended clientele among people of small means who gave him their all because of his glowing promises. It remains to see what their attitude will be when they know he has swindled them."

I stood motionless with the paper clutched in my hand. A groan from Neil startled me. "Why don't you say something?" he demanded. "Pretty isn't it?" "No dear, it is not pretty, and I do not believe you ever intended to swindle anyone. But we must do something at once. Something to stop this—any more of it." A thought of Blanche Orton flashed through my mind. Suppose the papers got hold of her, the part she had played in helping Neil. No one would believe it was a business arrangement. My face burned as I thought of what people would say, what they would surely think. "Let us call up Frederick dear, perhaps he can do something."

"No, it's no use. He tried and failed." "But surely we can do something. Pay Scott every cent you have taken from him. Then he will be satisfied." "I can't pay him. I haven't money enough. Then don't you see all the rest, when they see this, will be down on me like a pack of wolves. No I can do nothing but—" he stopped as the door bell jangled loudly. "A gentleman to see you," the maid announced. "Show him in," I told her, and she ushered in a brisk young man who said: "I have come to get your side of this affair Mr. Forbes. I am on the Express Tribune."

NEIL SENDS BARBARA FROM THE ROOM WHILE THE REPORTER TALKS TO HIM

CHAPTER CIX.

When the reporter announced his errand Neil turned a bit more ghastly, and I trembled so I could scarcely stand. It was my introduction to newspaper tactics, and I was frightened as well as anxious. "You are talking of that scurrilous article?" Neil pointed to the paper lying on the floor, the bold headlines staring up at us. "Yes. Our paper wishes to state the facts. Scott has given us his version, now we want yours."

"You have been to Scott?" "Of course. He claims to be the aggrieved party. He is going to make it hard for you Mr. Forbes. If you can clear things up it would be advisable before he goes any further. He is very vindictive," he finished with a meaning glance at me which I rightly judged to mean that he had something to say to Neil which he preferred I shouldn't hear.

"Leave us Barbara. Mr. Moore," the young man gave his name. "Mr. Moore probably feels embarrassed by your presence," he added, the last sentence so sarcastically I wondered. "Please let me remain," I replied quietly. Then to Mr. Moore. "I know all about what the other paper has said, why shouldn't I hear the rest—whatever you know?" How I wished I might say with truth that I knew all about my husband's business and that it was all a lie, a monstrous lie. But I knew absolutely nothing, yet I must show my faith in Neil—even though I felt there was some foundation for the awful scandal.

"As Mr. Forbes wishes." "No—go, Barbara." There was nothing for me to do but to leave them together. But I didn't go beyond the reach of their voices. I sat on the stairs where they curved upward and so out of sight should the door of the music room open. It was fortunate I did so, as after a few minutes they came out into the hall. "I have some papers that perhaps may interest you," I heard Neil say, that same peculiarly sarcastic tone in his voice as they moved toward the library. "Some with Scott's signature."

They didn't quite close the library door and an occasional sentence would float to me. Then Neil became excited and talked in loud angry tones, but I could not catch the words save a few. I sometimes caught Scott's name. Then came a question in the clear quiet voice of the gentlemanly reporter: "Scott is the only man you fear?" "Yes, the squealer!"

"I am afraid Mr. Forbes you are not facing this as you should. There are others—many of them who are ready to make trouble." "What others?" "Men and women who have invested their money with you hoping for the enormous profits you have promised them in your circulars." As he finished I heard the rustle of paper. Then after a moment he added: "Unless you are frank and tell your side of the story quickly—you see Mr. Forbes I am supposing you can contradict Scott's charges—it will give the yellow sheets a chance for a lot of soft stuff—widows and orphans deluded, etc."

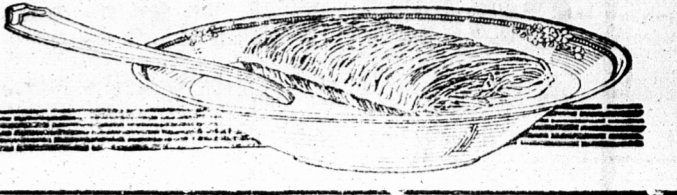
"Where did you get that circular?" "I am afraid I can't tell you. But you may be sure that my paper isn't the only one with a copy. In fact Mr. Forbes we have planned to print this in the morning unless I hear something from you that prevents." A groan, stifled, was his answer. Then to my disappointment one of them closed the heavy door tightly and I heard nothing more. I crouched on the stairs some time longer, then as I heard them come out, and Neil bid him a hasty good night I hurried up to my room so that Neil might not know that I was listening. I sat by the window, my mind in a perfect whirl. What in the world did "soft stuff" mean? That reporter had said the yellow journals would print it. I knew nothing of newspaper terms and it made me doubly anxious for that reason. Would Neil never come up so I could question him? I asked myself just as I heard his heavy dragging steps so unlike his usual quick climbing of the stairs. I held my breath as he staggered into the room, his face white and set, a dogged look in his eyes. "What can we do, Neil? Oh, you poor boy!" I exclaimed going to him. "Do?—Take my medicine I guess," and with that he flung himself into a chair, covered his face with his hands and hard, dry sobs broke from him.

Tomorrow—Neil Tells Barbara His Story.

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IN MEMORIAM MR. PAUL MCLELLAN.

Mr. Paul McLellan died at Cable Head East on May 17th, 1919, in the 85th year of his age. He was a man of sterling character, having lived all his life in the community in which he was born, and was well known and highly respected. Four sons and two daughters are left to mourn, his wife having died some twenty years ago. His funeral to St. Peter's church, was largely attended. The pall-bearers were Messrs. Clement Sutherland, James McDonald, Charles McKimbon, Angus McLean, Howard McEwen, Henry McDonald. The sympathy of the entire community goes out to the bereaved family. May his soul rest in peace.—Com.

MR. SAMUEL AULD

There passed peacefully away at her home Clyde River on May 24th, Mrs. Jane Brown, beloved wife of Mr. Samuel Auld, aged 57. All that tender nursing and medical skill could do was done but without avail. She was of a kind and lovable disposition, devoted to her home and family. During her illness which lasted for over a year her patience and resignation were the admiration of not only those who waited upon her but also those who visited her. The funeral which was held on Tuesday, May 27th was largely attended despite the unfavorable condition of the weather. She leaves to mourn besides a sorrowing husband, one son Leslie, residing in Halifax, N. S., two sisters Mrs. Daniel McRae and Mrs. Richard Green and three brothers Henry, Emmons and Cameron in the United States and two brothers John W. in Tyne Valley and Aubrey in Charlottetown, P. E. I.



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ZACHARIAH ROGERS

On Thursday, May 29th 1919 there was laid to rest in St. Ann's, Hope River cemetery, the soul of Zachariah Rogers. At the age of seventy four years deceased was a very highly esteemed person by all those who knew him and he will be greatly missed in this community. During his illness he was attended by his pastor Rev. Father Gaudet who administered to him the last rites of the Catholic church. He leaves to mourn a sorrowful wife, five sons and five daughters. The funeral service was conducted by Rev. Father Gaudet. The pall bearers were Messrs Joe Blaquiere, Gilbert Gallant, Aubrey Doiron, Isidore Gallant, Belony Gallant and Joe Gallant.

MR. HECTOR MCNEILL

The funeral of the late Hector McNeill of New Dominion took place on Monday, May 19th, 1919. The deceased was 66 years of age and had been in a declining state of health all winter but not considered by his friends and relatives as near his journey's end. Heart failure, however, snapped the vital cord of life and he passed quietly within the veil. His sickness though not of long duration was borne with christian patience and fortitude. He was regular in church attendance and contributed generously of his means and service to its support and prior to his exodus had this assurance that nothing could separate him from the love of God in Christ. He leaves to mourn two brothers and three sisters Silas and Malcolm, Catherine and Mary at home, and Mrs. McPhail, Lowell, Mass. (Patriot please copy)

MR. WILLIAM GRAVES

The death of Mr. William Graves which occurred at his home in Emy Vale, P. E. I. on May 9th, 1919 removes an old and respected resident from that community, he having resided there for forty-eight years. Mr. Graves was born at North River, and was in his 88th year when he passed away. He was an honest, industrious, hard-working man, and had attained all his faculties up to the time of his death. He is survived by a wife and seven children all of whom are at home. He also leaves to mourn six children by a former marriage. Sophia E. and John J. in Manchester, N. H.; Mrs. Amos Peterson and George H. in Massachusetts; Mrs. Albert Savine in Charlottetown and A. Russel in Bungay, P. E. I. Three children by his first marriage pre-deceased him. He also leaves 14 grand children, two half-brothers James and Anthony Essory and one half-sister, Mrs. Sophia Wise. His funeral which took place on Monday, May 12th, although unavoidably postponed from Sunday was largely attended by friends and neighbors many coming from a dis-

In The Stud Season of 1919

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Sire, Kepoch Prince (10800). Dan, Jean of Shore, Acres (27291). Winner of championship for best Canadian-bred Clydesdale stallion, any age, at Provincial Exhibition, 1918. Will stand for season at owner's stables, Cornwall. Service fee \$3.00. W. W. CROSBY, Owner 5973-5-28WSV4ipd.

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MONDAY—Leaves Montague, P.E.I. 7 a. m., Lower Montague 7.45 a. m., Georgetown 8.15 a. m., Murray River 11 a. m., Murray Harbor North 12 o'clock arriving at Pictou, N. S. about 4 p. m. WEDNESDAY and Saturday—Leaves Pictou on arrival of noon train from Halifax calling at Beach Pt., Georgetown, arriving at Montague 5.30 p. m. THURSDAY—Leaves Montague at 8 a. m. calling at intermediate ports on way to Cardigan returning to Georgetown same evening and remaining over night. FRIDAY—Leaves Georgetown at 6.30 a. m., Murray Harbor South 8.30 a. m., arriving at Pictou 1 p. m. Run by Daylight Saving Time. For further particulars write, wire, or phone to WILLIAM MCLEURE, Pictou, N. S. 5525-22Mf.

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