

# HOUSEHOLD TALKS

## Henrietta D. Grauel

### For Flower Lovers

Nothing adds more to the beauty of a home than flowers within and without. And this month especially we cherish and enjoy any "green things growing" whether a tiny graceful vine, a spreading fern or crocks of proud chrysanthemums in full feathery bloom.

If you have the right sort of plants in your rooms, an average temperature, and if the air is not too dry, you will doubtless have what is called "luck" with your flowers. But too often, late in the fall a few flowers are potted and brought into the house and expected to make a brilliant showing of blossoms. This is impossible; after a flower has worked all summer you must let it rest through the winter.

Two tablespoons of castor oil around the roots of the plants. This makes a very glossy leaf on both palm and rubber plant.

Little grubs among the fern leaves annoy another flower lover. In this case the soil is too moist but it is too late to help the plant by drying it. Do not water for a few days then fill the saucer of the plant with warm water containing just a pinch of chloride of lime or with strong lime water. This will destroy any insect life. If there are fishworms in the soil they will crawl to the top and may be picked out. Angle worms are good friends in the garden but they are not good in flower crocks or among the roots of potted plants.

Many, many letters have been received recently complaining that flowers are disappointing their owners. One reader asks what to do with a rubber plant whose leaves are growing black and yellow, and falling off? It has been kept too moist. Do not water during the winter and keep the plant in a cool, dry place. As it is ornamental you will not want to put it in the basement but you can put it in a cool hall or on a stair landing. The cuttings of rubber plants are started in soft water just as oleander are but not at this season.

It is good to find a letter of praise among all the requests for help and complaints of failure with plants—it says: "We just love geraniums and have every window full all winter. They need little heat and they bloom continuously." We are all in love with this hardy plant. Its colors are wonderful and whether you have the rose or walnut geranium, the ivy, the California hybrid, the dwarf horse shoe or "just geranium" you can scarcely make a failure with it. Yet some persons do stunt its growth by planting it in painted or glazed pots through which the air cannot penetrate. A plain clay pot is the only proper holder for growing houseplants.

Another complains that her palms have a scale on them. They have been kept too hot and dry. The infested parts must be brushed and washed with warm suds of tar or whale oil soap or quassa chips tea. This cleaning must be done several times. Moisten the soil with a mixture of milk and water and after the scale is removed and there are signs of new growth pour one or

After years of flower growing, in places far apart, I think it is not so much the soil and the climate, as the care and skill of the cultivator that counts for success."—Page Roberts, E. President the Rose Society, England.



# NOVEMBER JOE

## The Detective of the Woods

by Hesketh Prichard.

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Continued

Mrs. Rome started "So he has, but I never remembered that till this minute!" She looked back into Joe's gray eyes with indignation. "And he smokes 'Nugget' all right, too. I know it. All the same, it isn't Val!"

"It's queer them bits of worsted on the doornails," observed Joe judicially. Her color flamed for a moment. "Why queer? He's been here to see me—us more 'n once this time back. The nails might have caught his necker any day," she retorted.

"It's just possible," agreed November in an unconvincing voice. "It can't be Val!" repeated Mrs. Rome steadily. "When we were out of sight and of earshot I turned to November.

"The evidence against Black is pretty strong. What's your notion?" "Can't say yet. I think we'd best join Evans; he'll be trailing the thief." We made straight through the woods toward the spot where the dog's body lay. As we walked I tried again to find out Joe's opinion.

"But the motive? Haven't Mrs. Rome and Black always been on good terms?" I persisted.

Joe allowed that was so and added, "Val wanted to marry her years ago." "But surely Black wouldn't rob her, especially now that he has his chance again."

"Think not?" said Joe. "I wonder! After a pause he went on: "But it ain't hard to see what'll be Evans' views on that. He'll say Val's scared of her growing too independent, for she's made good so far with her traps and so he just naturally took a hand to frighten her into marriage. His case ain't Val won't break down for want of motive."

"One question more, Joe. Do you really think Val Black is the guilty man?"

November Joe looked up with his quick, sudden smile. "It'll be a shock to Evans if he ain't," said he.

Very soon we struck the robber's trail and saw from a second line of tracks that Evans was ahead of us following it.

"Here the thief goes," said Joe. "See! He's covered his moccasins with deer skin, and here we have Evans' tracks. He's burying, Evans is his feeling good and sure of the man he's after."

Twice November pointed out faint signs that meant nothing to me.

"Here's where the robber stopped to light his pipe. See! There's the mark of the butt of his gun between these roots. The snow's thin there. Must 'a' had a match that chap," he said after a minute, and standing with his back to the wind, he made a slight movement of his hand.

"What are you doing?" I asked.

"Saving myself trouble." He turned at right angles and began searching through the trees. "Here it is. Hung up in a snag. Satisfactory match he used." Then, catching my eye, he went on: "Unless he was a fool he'd light his match with his face to the wind, wouldn't he? And most right handed men 'ud throw the match therabouts where I hunted for it."

Well on in the afternoon the trail led out to the banks of a wide and shallow stream, into the waters of which they disappeared. Here we overtook Evans. He was standing by the ashes of a fire almost on the bank.

He looked up as we appeared. "That you, Joe? Chap's took to the water," said the game warden, "but he'll have to do more than that to shake me off." "Chap made this, too?" inquired November, with a glance at the dead fire.

Evans nodded. "Walked steady till he came here. Dunno what he lit the fire for. Carried grub, I s'pose."

"No; to cook that partridge," said Joe.

I glanced at Evans. His face darkened. Clearly this did not please him. "Oh, he shot a partridge?"

"No," said Joe; "he noosed it back in the spruces there. The track of the wire noose is plain, and there was some feathers. But look here, Evans, he didn't wear no pink necker."

Evans' annoyance passed off suddenly. "That's funny," said he, "for he left more than a feather and the scrape of a wire." The game warden pulled out a pocketbook and showed us wedged between its pages another strand of the pink and grey wool. "I found it where he passed through those dead spruces. How's that?"

I looked at Joe. To my surprise he threw back his head and gave one of his rare laughs.

"Well," cried Evans, "are you still sure that he didn't wear a pink necker?"

"Surer than ever," said Joe, and began to poke in the ashes.

Evans eyed him for a moment, transferred his glance to me and winked. Before long he left us, his last words being that he would have his hands on "Pink Necker" by night.

### CHAPTER VII.

#### The "Pink Necker."

JOE sat in silence for some ten minutes after he had gone; then he rose and began to lead away southeast.

"Evans 'll hear Val Black's the owner of the pink necker at Lavette village. It's an otter's to a muskrat's pelt that then he'll head straight for Val's. We've got to be there afore him."

The afternoon was yet young when we arrived at Val Black's. Val was not at home, but Joe entered the hut and searched it thoroughly. I asked him what he was seeking.

"Those skins of Sally's." "Then you think Black?" "I think nothing yet. And here's the man himself, anyway."

He turned to the door as Val Black came swinging up the trail. He was of middle height, strongly built, with quick eyes and dark hair which, though cropped close, still betrayed its tendency to curl. He greeted November warmly. November was, I thought, even more slow spoken than usual.

"Val," he said, after some talk, "have you still got that pink necker Sally knitted for you?"

"Yes, I've got her." "Where?" "Right here," and Black pulled the muffler out of his pocket.

"Huh!" said Joe. There was a silence, rather a strained silence, between the two.

Then November continued, "Where was you last night?"

Val looked narrowly at Joe. Joe returned his stare.

"Say, November Joe, are you searching for trouble?" asked Black in a ominously quiet voice.

"Seems as if trouble was searching for me," replied November.

There was another silence. Then Val jerked out, "I call your hand."

"I show it," said Joe. "You're suspected of robbing Sally's traps this month back. And you're suspected of entering Sally's house last evening and stealing pots."

With a shout of rage Val made at Joe.

November stood quiet still under the grip of the other's furious hands.

"You act innocent, don't you, you old coyote!" he grinned ironically. "I never said I suspected you."

Black drew off, looking a little foolish, but he flared up again.

"Who is it suspects me?" "Just Evans. And he's got good evidence. Where was you between 6 and 7 last night?"

"In the woods. I come back and a sleep here."

"Was you alone?" "Yes."

"Then you can't prove no alibi," Joe passed.

It was at this moment that Evans, accompanied by two other forest rangers, appeared upon the scene. Quick as lightning he covered Black with his shotgun.

"Up with your hands," he cried, "or I'll put this load of birdshot into your face."

Black scowled, but his hands went up. He stood panting. At a sign one of the rangers sidled up, and the click of handcuffs followed.

"What an I charged with?" cried Black.

"Robbery." "You'll pay me for this, Simon Evans!"

"It won't be for awhile—not till they let you 'out again," retorted the warden easily. "Take him off up the trail, Bill!"

The rangers walked away with their prisoner, and Evans turned to Joe.

"Guess I have the laugh of you, November," he said.

"Looks that way. Where you takin' him?"

"To Lavette. I've sent word to Mrs. Rome to come there tomorrow. And now," continued Evans, "I'm going to search Black's shack."

"What for?" "The stolen pelts."

"Got a warrant?" "I'm a warden—don't need one."

"You'll not search without it," said November, moving in front of the door.

"Who'll stop me?" Evans' chin shot out doggedly.

"I might," said Joe in his most gentlemanly manner. "I'm in the right, for it's agin the law, and you know it, Mr. Evans."

Evans hesitated. "Have it your way, but I'll be back with my warrant before sunup tomorrow, and I'm warden, and maybe you'll find it's better to have me for a friend than—"

"Huh! Say, Mr. Quaritch, have you a fill of that light baccy o' yours? I want soothin'."

As soon as Evans was out of sight, Joe beckoned me to a thick piece of scrub not far from the hut.

"Stay right here till I come back. Everything depends on that," he whispered.

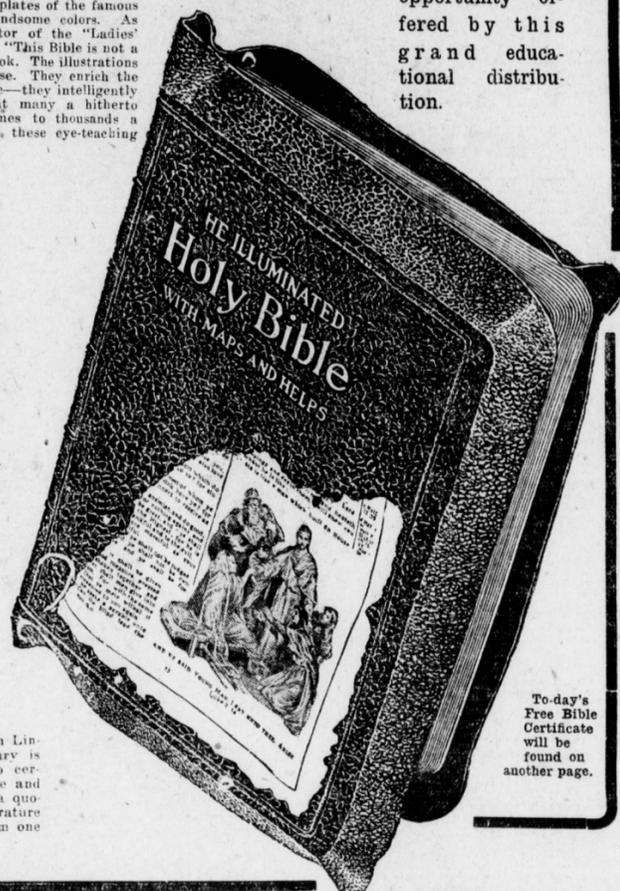
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This is what Abraham Lincoln said: "No library is complete without two certain books—the Bible and Shakespeare; hardly a quotation is used in literature that is not taken from one of these books."

I lay down at my ease in a sheltered spot, and then Joe also took the road for Lavette. Everything appeared to be against Black—the cartridge which fitted his rifle, the strands of the tell tale neckerchief, the man's own furious behavior, his manifest passion for Mrs. Rome, and the suggested motive for the thefts—all these things pointed, conclusively it seemed to me, in one direction. And yet I knew that almost from the beginning of the inquiry November had decided that Black was innocent.

The evening turned raw, and the thin snow was softening, and though I was weary of my watch I was still dreaming when I started under a hand that touched my shoulder. Joe was crouching at my side. He warned me to caution, but I could not refrain from a question as to where he had been.

"Down to the store at Lavette," he whispered. "I was talking about that search warrant—pretty high handed I said it was, and the boys agreed to that."

After awhile Joe touched me to wakefulness, and I saw something moving on the trail below us. A second or two of moonlight gave me a glimpse of the approaching figure of a man, a humped figure that moved swiftly. A whistle. No answer. And its hand went to the latch. I heard Joe sigh as he covered the man with his rifle. Then came his voice in its quiet tones.

"Guess the game's off, Sylvester. Don't turn! Hands up!"

"The man stood still as we came behind him. At a word he faced round. I saw the high cheek bones and gleaming eyes of an Indian. His savage face was contracted with animosity.

"Now, Mr. Quaritch," said November suggestively.

I flatter myself I made a neat job of tying up our prisoner.

"Thank you. What's in that bundle on his back?"

To Be Continued.

### IMMIGRATION CONFERENCE

Southern Commercial Congress Calls Conference to Consider Placing Immigrants on Southern Farms

Washington, D. C., Nov. 13.—Senator Duncan U. Fletcher, of Florida, president of The Southern Commercial Congress, issued a call to-day for state and local officials, representatives of the press, commercial and civic organizations, railroad officials, bankers, and real estate and business men of the South to meet in Washington on Saturday, December 12, to consider and devise methods of interesting and locating agricultural immigrants in the Southern States. The call is issued by The Southern Commercial Congress, with the approval of Secretary Wilson of the Department of Labor, at the instance of leading business men throughout the South to discuss the advisability of undertaking efforts for placing agriculturally inclined immigrants now out of employment in our indus-

trial communities on Southern farms, and to plan methods of caring for the horde of foreigners that will probably come to this country at the close of the European conflict.

Secretary Wilson will deliver the opening address at the conference. The Southern Commercial Congress will have the cooperation of the Department of Labor in this work, and Mr. T. V. Powderly, chief of the division of information of the Bureau of Immigration, has been designated to actively assist in arranging for the meeting.

The conference is called, it is stated, to determine a Southern immigration policy, and to work out a practical plan by which the South can take advantage of existing opportunities. There are thousands of immigrant families in our industrial communities, either out of work or on short time, that have been working and saving for years in order to be able to return to Europe and purchase agricultural homes who are now prevented from leaving this country. Many of these people no longer desire to return abroad in view of the economic burden which the war has placed on the countries of Europe, and large groups can be placed on Southern farms if the proper efforts are made to secure them.

Large numbers of European immigrants, many of whom will be practically destitute, will come to the United States at the close of hostilities in Europe and must be cared for. The advisability of attempting to utilize this class of people on the farm lands of the South will also be considered. Preparations are being made to have representatives of the foreign press in this country, and officials of the more important of the immigrant societies to attend the conference. In addition to Secretary Wilson, other high officials of the federal government will also be in attendance.

The fact that the South possesses peculiar opportunities and advantages in this instance is fully realized by the officials of The Southern Commercial Congress and they will see that the conference directs its attention to devising a system of financing agricultural settlements in the Southern States and to the task of establishing an immigration service capable of properly handling and directing this important work.

A large attendance is expected for the subject of immigration is now provoking considerable attention throughout the country, and is commanding serious consideration on the part of the Government. It is already being urged that postoffice officials, and the county agents of the Department of Agriculture co-operate with the federal immigration officials and state officials in effecting a proper distribution of immigrants to the agricultural regions.

**A Safe Proposition**  
I lay it down as a safe proposition that the fellow who every little while has to break into the baby's bank for car fare isn't going to evolve into a Baron Rothschild.—Philip D. Armour.

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### FOWLS OUTSIDE QUARANTINE

Turkeys and Chickens Not Affected by Cattle Disease Edict  
Washington, D. C., Nov. 13.—Housewives need have no fear that their tables will be without Thanksgiving turkey on account of the Federal quarantine in various States against the livestock foot and mouth disease. To allay any uneasiness on this score the

Department of Agriculture last night issued a statement explaining that the disease does not infect poultry and the quarantines lay no embargo upon the shipment of turkeys or chickens. The Department experts also expressed the belief that the rise in price of poultry reported to have occurred in various States could not in any way be attributed to the outbreak of the foot and mouth disease.