

THE CHIEF LE GATEE

A STORY OF LOVE & MYSTERY INVOLVING STARTLING INCIDENTS, COMPLICATIONS & ADVENTURES.

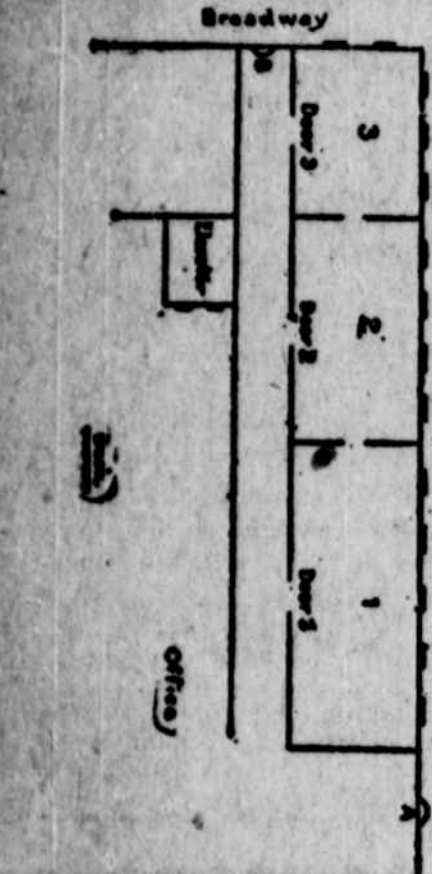
By ANNA KATHERINE GREEN.

AUTHOR OF 'THE LEAVENWORTH CASE,' 'BEHIND CLOSED DOORS,' ETC.

'Did you follow Mr. Ransom when he walked through those rooms?'

'No, sir; I stayed in the hall.'

Mr. Loomis bowed, and together they crossed the office to the reception-room door.



There are three of them, as you will see, all reception-rooms. Mr. Ransom had passed through them all in looking for his wife.

Mr. Ransom staggered against the table. The veil was wound around her face for a far deeper purpose than to ward off rice.



Mr. Ransom staggered against the table before which he had been standing. The blow was an overwhelming one.

'Who is this woman?' he demanded. 'She came from Mr. Fulton's house. More than that, from my wife's room. What is her name and what did she mean by such an outrage?'

'Dressed in her maid's clothes. Oh, you'll have to hear worse things than that before we're out of this muddle. If you won't mind a bit of advice from a man of experience, I would suggest that you take things easy. It's the only way.'

Shocked into silence by this cold-blooded philosophy, Mr. Ransom controlled both his anger and his humiliation; but he could not control his surprise.

'What does it mean?' he murmured to himself. 'What does it all mean?'

'He Knows the Word.' The next moment the doubt natural to the occasion asserted itself.

'How do you know all this? You state the impossible. Explain yourself.'

Gerridge was only too willing to do so. 'I have just come from Mr. Fulton's house,' said he.

in the reception-room, and I the person who rode here with you from Mr. Fulton's house.

'I did not observe her face was all I saw. She was looking directly at me as I stepped into the room.'

'I must,' Mr. Ransom had risen in great excitement. 'Nothing can hide the fact that my bride left me on our wedding-day. It only remains now to show that she did it under an influence which robbed her of her own will; an influence from which she shrank even while succumbing to it. I can show her no greater kindness, and I am not afraid of the result. I have perfect confidence in her integrity—he hesitated, then added with strong conviction—and in her love.'

'No. Yet let me think; let me think,' Mr. Ransom dropped his face into his hands and sat for a moment silent.

'Tell me her history so far as you know it. What do you know of her life previous to your meeting her?'

'I have a man on his track,' Gerridge replied. 'And one on the girl's too; I mean, of course, Bella Burton's. They will report here up to twelve o'clock to-night. It is now half-past past eleven. We should hear from one or the other soon.'

'A description of the clothing she wore has gone out. We may hear from it. But I doubt if we do to-night unless she has rejoined her maid or the man with a scar. Somehow I think she will join the girl. But it's hard to tell yet.'

'Have you found the man?'

'What have you got? Have you found the man?'

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'Have you found the man?'

'Perhaps not; but you take the life out of me. Last night you were too hot; this morning you are too cold.

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ANOTHER'S MISSION.

By W. T. Childs. A little messenger boy, dripping with perspiration and covered with dust, stepped up to the paying teller's window at one of the largest banks in the city, and said: 'Please, sir, give me nickels for this?'

Mr. Ransom's expression of surprised inquiry was sufficient answer.

'Well, it's a pity you didn't look at her gloves instead of at her face. You might have had some dim idea of having seen her before. It was she who rode to the hotel with you; not your

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A family tree is of no use to the lumber dealer.