

1917?

(Continued From Page Five.)

So that was the plan of her strategy.

"Hardly, I should say," he returned coolly.

"Besides, seeing me there, you discovered who I was, perhaps?"

"I certainly discovered who you were!"

"I am Marion Mariatt, of course," she admitted almost casually.

"S. D. Mariatt, who is now in jail, is my uncle; some of the others are my cousins; in some ways, of course, I was and am with them, but it should not be impossible to imagine, I should think, that in other ways I am not."

"In what ways, if I may ask?"

"Not in that tone!" she forbade, facing him with eyes suddenly aflame and with her little hands clenched.

"I am as good an American as you, I think—and running at least as much risk to do my bit."

"Your bit?" he repeated.

"Why not?"

"For America?"

"Of course!"

"But—"

"Smoke, please," she requested quickly, holding her jacket close about her throat again.

Some one passed through the vestibule without halting; the car doors closed and Jim and Marion Mariatt were alone again.

"If you want to know why I was in that house that night," she burst out, "it is very simple. I live there; it was my home. Put yourself in my place for a few moments, please, Mr. James Ashby, and tell me what you would have done?"

Jim felt the blood tingling in him at her repeating his name. So she had acquired of him. Then he realized that inquiry on her part implied no personal concern; as one of the spies threatened by him, Marion Mariatt naturally would have attempted to learn how he came upon them.

"When I found out, during the war in Europe, that my uncles and cousins were planning and preparing for the regent to make war here, what good would I have done by denouncing them?" she demanded.

"I had no good proof against them, and, besides, lots of people already were saying that the regent had his secret agents here, but the authorities never paid any attention. Pretty soon I got evidence; I admit that, but it wasn't any better evidence than was being printed and published in some of the newspapers every day; and no one was paying any attention to things like that. So I knew I'd simply give myself away if I said anything and gain nothing. My uncles—Mr. Mariatt and Mr. Gervis—"

"The one whose house you were in that night?"

"Yes; where I was living since my mother died; he was her brother. Well, my uncles found out that I knew about them and they thought I was with them. They knew I was born here, of course, and was brought up here, and went to schools here, and had all my friends here, but they were sure I must be like themselves and my cousins; they thought nothing could count compared to the old country. But it isn't so with me, but I didn't let them know it. They told me a great deal and I found out more and more."

"I knew, a long time ago, that this war was coming, but as thousands of her people were saying it and no one was doing anything, the only thing I could see to do was to stay where I was, and—well, see to it, if I could, that some of my uncles' schemes wouldn't work out the way they wanted."

"In other words," Jim challenged her more coolly—he had drawn further away from her and had quite recovered himself—"you want me to believe that you, instead of being in that house as a spy of the regent, were there for the American cause?"

"No," she denied as coolly. "I merely told that to you, as it might prove possibly interesting to you. I don't care a cartilage whether you believe it or not!"

"A cartilage?" he repeated.

She turned from him abruptly without offering explanation, and seemed suddenly entirely absorbed in the black landscape the other side of the car door. Jim observed her a moment as she buttoned her blouse jacket close about her neck again and drew on her heavy gloves. Her whole attitude said to him more plainly than words, "Well, what are you going to do about it?"

He did not know, and he was aware that she knew that he did not. Her explanation of herself—though once she all but had won him with it—of course was absurd, fantastic. It accounted in no way for her business there, in aviator's garb, on the train, nor had she offered reason for her going through the train at the risk of being recognized, as she was. She fastened her gloves, but still stood with her back to him, waiting; and, as he realized that she was watching his indecision as he mirrored himself in the black glass before her, he turned to the other door of the vestibule.

The train was rushing steadily at much more than moderate speed through a flat farming country; houses rather close together and now a tall spired church told that the train was approaching a town, and Jim, gazing out wondering idly for an instant what place it might be. A click behind him caused him to jerk about. Marion Mariatt had lifted the platform step before the other door and, as he turned, she pulled the door in and ran down the car steps.

"What are you doing?" he cried, and grabbed at her; she escaped his fingers and crouched on the lowest step.

"Come back!" he ordered. But as he shouted to her she leaped. The train dashed on, and her slight figure was lost from the light from the car. Jim halted for the instant, now balanced on the bottom step. He swung down and let go, trying to run as his feet struck the ground, but he stumbled, fell, and rolled over and over. He had leaped over the rock ballast of the roadbed and landed in soft, soggy loam which tripped him and sent him tumbling, but without serious hurt. The train had passed. It was only a speeding street of yellow light far

down the track when Jim sat up and dimly took stock of himself and tried to get up on his feet.

Why he had leaped after Marion Mariatt was not yet entirely clear in his mind. Whether he had done it because, believing she was a spy, he meant to try to prevent her escape or because he realized that, after such a leap, she must be hurt and must need aid he did not know. He got to his feet, still somewhat stunned and awayed as he stared after the train. It was half a mile away now and rushing swiftly, steadily, when suddenly the front cars, next the middle rows of lighted windows, now the end of the rows of light, plunged forward and vanished. A roaring detonation came down the breeze, then a crash, the

hoarse hiss of escaping steam, an explosion. A flare of flame shot up. Jim gasped and groped in the dark for support. He steadied himself and started to run. He knew now what had happened. Down there beyond the town—at some sort of bridge or culvert—the roadbed had been dynamited in front of the engine, and engine and cars together had crashed down and disappeared.

(To Be Continued)

Icelanders in America.

The first colony of Icelanders to establish themselves on the American continent arrived at Lake Rosseau Aug. 30, 1873, and there began the pioneer Canadian settlement of their people. This was the beginning of a considerable immigration of Icelanders

to America. The first party consisted of more than 150 men, women and children, but only about a dozen families settled in the Canadian colony. The remainder scattered over Canada and a few went on to Wisconsin. Since then thousands of Icelanders—perhaps inspired by the old Icelandic sagas of Eric the Red, whose son Leif is said to have voyaged to America five centuries before Columbus—have emigrated to America, most of them settling in western Canada and the northwestern states. They have made sturdy, intelligent, patriotic citizens. Vihjalmar Stefansson, the distinguished explorer, comes of Icelandic stock, his parents having emigrated from Iceland and settled in Manitoba a year or two before Vihjalmar was born in 1879.

Not an Evangelist.

The orthodox minister's son, Tommy,

aged 5, had a fight with a larger boy, with the usual result. As his mother washed the blood and tears from his face, he sobbed:

"Jimmy will g-go away into ev-er-lasting punishment for this, w-won't he, ma?"

"Oh, I hope he'll repent and be saved," said his mother.

"Well, I just hope he won't," said Tom.—The Christian Herald.

The Pup and the Cycler.

A slippery road, a bicycle and an elderly gentleman. Such a combination is full of possibilities, and when to these is added a playful puppy, excitement is apt to grow intense.

On the occasion under notice the puppy evidently mistook the bicycle tires for his own elusive tail. He scampered around it for awhile, with the consequence that the elderly gen-

tleman found that he was detached from his bicycle, and that he was sauntering the road in the amiable fashion of the far northern country, where they rub noses.

"Oh, he was not delighted with the situation; but the dog evidently was, for he frisked around and barked joyously."

"Did you fall, mister?" inquired the butcher's boy, who had viewed the performance.

"Of course I did," said the elderly gentleman, with some show of anger.

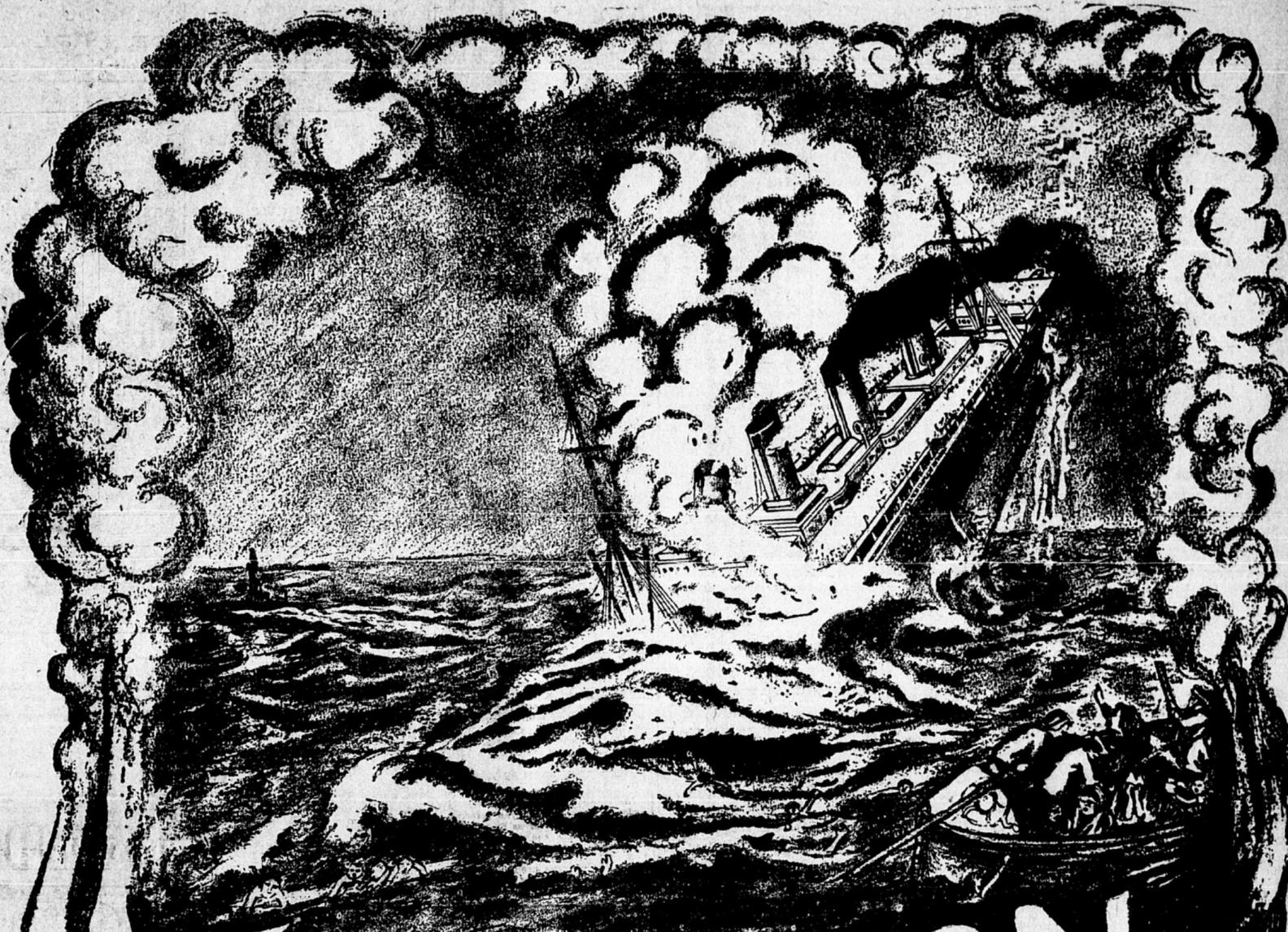
"Ah," said the philosopher and friend of the man of meat, "I thought you wouldn't have got down there just to play with the dog!"

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