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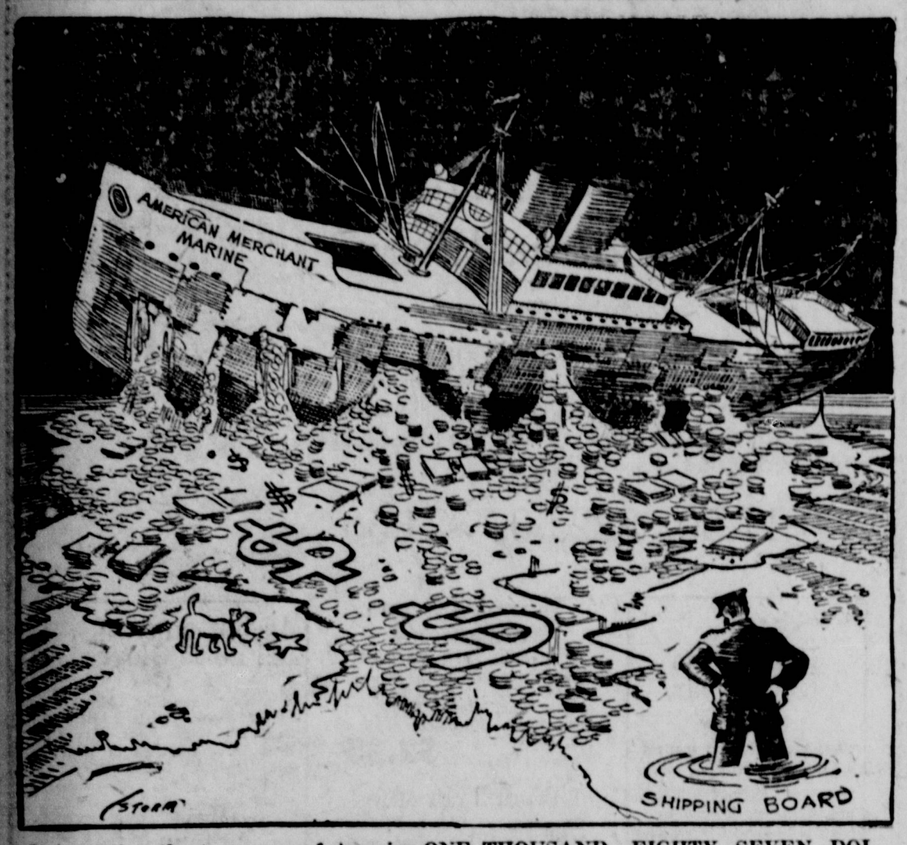
A Job for an Expert Caulker!



It is costing the taxpayers of America ONE THOUSAND, EIGHTY SEVEN DOLLARS, FOUR CENTS A MINUTE to maintain an "American Merchant Marine"—on the mudflats!

It cost these same taxpayers FOUR BILLIONS of dollars to build a fleet of ships, primarily for war purposes, secondarily for an American merchant marine.

Today great fleets of these ships are opening their seams and rusting out their plates on mudflats at Benecia, California; in Lake Union at Seattle, in the marshes at Wilson's Point, Long Island Sound, and on the murky bosom of Chesapeake Bay at Norfolk.

In two years it has cost the taxpayers of the United States ONE BILLION, TWO HUNDRED FORTY-EIGHT MILLION DOLLARS to support this fleet of ships—most of them in idleness—and, as yet, no one knows how much more in operating losses, repair bills, etc., for those operated. And the loss goes on at the rate of $624,000,000 a year—more than half a billion dollars.

The ships are laid up; export business is shrinking to a shadow of its previous proportions; an expensive fleet has become an expensive liability instead of the profitable asset it was promised the American people it would be.

The figures are startling.

The United States shipping board is writing off its books an annual depreciation of five per cent on this four billion dollar fleet.

In other words, rusting, rotting, hulling into the waters of our harbors each year are TWO HUNDRED MILLION DOLLARS of the people's money.

The interest on that four billion dollars is 160 million dollars per year. So along with the rusting and rotting of the 200 million dollars goes the 160 million dollars interest—320 million dollars in two years.

The cost of guarding this fleet of ghost ships, keeping them in repair, supporting an army of accountants, inspectors, and otherwise providing that the fleet may sink into the slime in style, is, according to a recent statement of Mr. Lasker, newly named chairman of the board, draining the people's treasury at the rate of 22 million dollars a month, 264 million dollars in two years. And this fleet has been lying idle or operating at a loss for more than two years.

To be added to this is the loss of interest on the losses by rust and rot each year, the loss of interest on the cost of upkeep each year; and, experienced shipping men say, the depreciation of an idle fleet is twice the 5 per cent written off—and we are no nearer a merchant marine—long the dream of America—than before the war.

What are we going to do with the merchant ships?

Officials of the shipping board say they are "waiting, hoping things will get better." And while they are waiting and hoping, and while rust and rot go on, it is costing the American people $1,287.04 a minute—$71,222.60 an hour—24 hours a day, and has been for more than two years—and our merchant marine lies rusting and rotting on the mudflats.

Such figures daze the human mind. They mean nothing but a lot of ciphers. But translated into terms we can understand here is what they mean—these figures of losses so staggering.

The corporation which paid $75,000 income tax last year paid for keeping this fleet on the mudflats for slightly longer than ONE hour—and its money was gone.

The business man who paid $1,000 income tax last year paid for keeping this fleet on the mudflats for LESS THAN ONE MINUTE—and his money was spent.

The laborer, trudging to work in the mists of the early morn, who paid $40 income tax last year, paid for keeping this fleet on the mudflats for TWO SECONDS—and his money was gone.

A continuous expense, day and night for a merchant marine moored on the mudflats, of $19.78 A SECOND— every tick of the watch—faster than the money can be minted.

What are we going to do with the American merchant marine?

Feeding Our Children

We know how to feed our stock, but when it comes to feeding our children many of us are miserable failures.

Fred S. Stimson has done a fine thing in furnishing quarters on his estate for treatment of underweight youngsters this summer.

He will, in addition, furnish from his Hollywood farm all dairy products necessary to bring these children up to standard and to full health.

Hundreds of thousands of children in the United States are suffering from malnutrition and they do not all come from families of the poor, by any means. Malnutrition does not necessarily mean lack of nutrition so much as it means improper nutrition.

Thus, many who are encouraged by indulgent but mistaken parents to stuff themselves with rich foods are underweight and backward. The reason is that they are filling their systems with food which does not nourish.

The "reclaiming" of undernourished children has developed into a science taught to university students. They will watch the development of the 40 kiddies who are to be selected this summer to partake of Mr. Stimson's hospitality.

Butter, fresh from the churn, and quantities of fresh milk and eggs will be the foundation of the diet. There will be no candy, probably, and little cake.

Sounds simple, doesn't it?

Have you a little fairy in your home?

Try it on him—or her!

Tacoma isn't the only city, it would seem, whose leaders are sometimes claimed by neighbor cities, or so assigned by outsiders. The Star today has a letter from a Hoquiam man protesting because Governor Hart enumerated Alex Polson, just appointed to the taxation commission, as from Aberdeen. "His mills are here, his home is here and the new Polson block is here and Hoquiam is the headquarters for all the Polson Logging & Lumbering Co.'s operations," writes our informant. The governor stands corrected.

Movies are to be shown in the Shakespeare Memorial theatre at Stratford-on-Avon. Shades of Julius Caesar—or Charlie Chaplin?

Members of the National Woman's party will feed congressmen. Hoping, no doubt, to jam their measures thru.

Germans are getting tired of movies. No wonder. All during the kaiser's reign they had a film before their eyes.

Management

The salary of Warren S. Stone, president of the Brotherhood of Locomotive Engineers, has been raised to $25,000 per year.

This means that labor is beginning to see the value of management to the extent of rewarding it.

Under Stone's leadership his organization has built one of the finest office structures in Cleveland, on land purchased from one of the largest employers of its membership, the New York Central railroad, and in which the same railroad is its largest individual tenant.

The brotherhood has recently acquired another site for the purpose of erecting at once a 20-story office structure.

It has also recently opened a co-operative national bank in Cleveland, which has grown in resources from $620,000 to $7,824,000 in just seven months.

These and many other enterprises for the prosperity of the body and the economy of the individual members have been conceived and put thru by President Stone.

And all of them are the results of management.

Ability seeks its reward just as water seeks its level.

And the reward that it seeks is material.

There is just one way for labor to develop ability within its own ranks, and that is by materially rewarding it.

The best money a labor organization can spend, the best investment each individual member can make, is in honest, capable, conservative management.

Admiral Sims appears to be remarkably like the famous British admiral, the late Lord Charles Beresford, who was famous for his indiscretions. Following one of Lord Beresford's outbursts, Winston Churchill, then first lord of the admiralty, said in the house of commons: "The gallant admiral is a person who when he gets up to speak, does not know what he is going to say. While he is speaking he does not know what he is saying. When he sits down he does not know what he has said."

Apparently the only group that has no lobby at congress is the public.

The brightest boy in school may not turn out best, but he has a flying start.

Judging from repeated price drops, Ford is the new price level.

How long since you've seen a $5 gold piece?

Music by Berton Braley

You sang a little song,
Just a silly little song,
Just a pretty little ditty
With a lot of lilt and "go";
But it made my pulses dance
To the rhythm of romance;
And it gave to life a shimmer
And a glimmer
And a glow;
And I walk my way a-singing
Since that time you came along
With your silly little,
Merry little,
Thrilly little song!

You sang a little song,
Just a tender little song,
Just a tingly little, jingly little,
Joyous little lay;
But it put my gloom to flight,
And it filled my eyes with light,
And my troubles
Were but bubbles
That are wafted all away;
Oh, my blood's a quicker ichor
And my spirit's glad and strong
With the magic of that thrilly little,
Silly little song!

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LETTERS TO EDITOR

Would Sterilize the Unfit

Editor The Star: Is it not just as easy to examine a boy at six years old, when he is ready to enter the public school and tell of his mental deficiency as it is to examine him when 19 years old, when he is about to enter the pen for murder?

Why not line them all up at six years old and classify them so the public will at least be warned—some of them might be sent to an asylum instead of the public schools.

Why not establish by law that all mentally defective shall be sterilized as well as all persons found guilty of a felony? This would end the breed and as a curative measure would go a long way toward causing some men and women to hesitate about committing crimes.

The trouble about a life term is it does not mean life. After a few years along comes someone with a pardon and when all the circumstances of the murder have faded mortals be away, a thoughtless governor will pardon him and the weak-minded simpleton and murderer goes free—marries, and brings more simpletons and murderers into the world.

We should not forget the Juke case, where with a simpleton for a father and a fool for a mother, six girls have produced 1,200 of the same kind, who in the last 200 years have served 2,200 years in the state penal institutions of New York and cost the state over $100,000. And the end is not in sight. They increase like the Canada thistle and grow worse as the years go by.

Sterilization is the only remedy. It has served the stock grower and will help put the human race back where it should be. At the present rate of increase in crime, and weak-minded, the people outside the penal institutions and asylums will not be able to pay sufficient taxes to support those inside. Oh, what fools we be!

O. L. MILLER.

Urges Deportation of Aliens

Editor The Star: I was always under the impression that when an alien commits a crime against this nation, he was liable to deportation to the land whence he came, for if he cannot learn to obey the laws, he is not needed here, and especially did I hold to the opinion that the unassimilable alien, such as the Jap and Chinese, was liable to deportation as soon as convicted, since he, far less than the white alien, was less desirable.

But what do we see? Scores upon scores of Japanese and Chinese peddlers of dope, as well as brewers of moonshine, and what is done to them after they are convicted? They are fined, perhaps serve a sentence in jail, and then are free to renew their unlawful activities. Since they are committing a crime against the nation's laws, are they not subject to deportation? Who is satisfied to see these culprits turned loose to renew the crime of poisoning our children and undermining our morals and teaching us to break our laws?

It makes one's blood boil with anger to read of the doings of the big rings and the risks one takes to show them up, yet they are continually on the job. When I read of the Japs captured in the house on 22d ave., with one of the largest stills ever found, I made up my mind to wait and see what disposition the grand jury will make of this case. Every one knows what should be done.

F. C. WHITTLEY,
107 First Ave. N.

Why the 17th Hole Was Not Used

BY DR. WILLIAM R. BARTON

Golf is a fascinating game.

It affords exercise, and beside that is a cheerful subject of conversation.

People who are addicted to it and who really care for it, are not easily dissuaded from the regular employment of their powers of intellect and language in its pursuit.

When we read of a golf course that has shut off some portion of the links from the players, we assume that repairs are under way, or that flood or storm have temporarily put that part of the course out of commission.

The English sparrow is not a favorite among the birds. I do not remember to have heard any one speak well of the sparrow.

And yet, about a month ago, I read in the daily press that a certain golf club had deliberately abandoned one of its 18 holes to permit an English sparrow to finish the business of hatching some eggs which she had laid in a nest built in the 17th hole.

Of course, the old-fashioned and maybe sensible thing to do would be to break up the nest and wring the necks of the baby sparrows, and thank the Lord that there were a few sparrows less.

But the members of that golf club did nothing of the kind. They simply abandoned the 17th hole till the mother bird got thru. By this time she probably has done her work, and the birds are out of the way, and the golf club has returned to normalcy.

But the members of that club are gentlemen, and I like them.

I wish the English sparrow had never come to our shores; but if it were put up to me as a member of a golf club to choose whether to omit one hole from the game for a few weeks, or break up a sparrow's nest, I should do just what those other gentlemen have done.

Two sparrows were sold for a farthing 1900 years ago, but they were too valuable to be treated ruthlessly.

I should like to meet the members of that club at the 19th hole, and drink their health in lemonade or iced tea.

From the Congressional Record

HEROIC CAPTAIN

I want to tell you about C. L. McNabb. He was one of five men who volunteered to take a treatment of serum to see if the effect of influenza might not be alleviated thereby. They injected it into five men, into their spinal cords. In less than 30 days two of the five were dead and the other three are permanently paralyzed, and McNabb from his waist down is paralyzed, yet today he is as cheerful and as true and as genuine an American as ever lived. —Rep. McSwain (D.) S. Car.

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THEN FAMILIARITY DOESN'T

Upon this floor friendship looms large. Members learn to know the worth of their fellows and to hold them in highest esteem.—Representative French (R.), Idaho.

• • •

THE REAL TEST OF SINCERITY

I hear members on the floor of the house saying that certain allowances given the boys for this and that disability is too much; that the money given them by way of compensation and insurance is more than they should have. But I would ask any of them who make these criticisms if they would be deprived of even one of their fingers for one hundred times the compensation allowed any of the boys?—Representative Bixler (R.), Pa.

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A HUGHES HANDICAP

It is hard to make me believe that Mr. Secretary Hughes is lacking in ability to deal with the big things of the world, even tho he be handicapped by a Harvey and perhaps humiliated by a Sims.—Representative Garrett (D.), Tennessee.

REMARKABLE REMARKS

The great business of the college is to inspire ideals and to inspire confidence in ideals.—Dr. A. B. Storms, president, Baldwin-Wallace college.

• • •

The Mexican people are looking to the United States with good will and friendliness for the aid their country needs.—Brigadier General Alfred Cecil Critchley, Canadian army.

SETH TANNER

Repeatin' a thing don't make it true, but it does make a lot o' people believe it. Ter-baccer is th' poor man's disinfectant.

"THE UPHILL ROAD"

(Copyright, Hodder & Stoughton)

By RUBY M. AYRES

(Continued From Yesterday)

"That's just the sort of thing my boy would have done," she said tremulously. "Always so kind-hearted."

She stroked the head of the thin cat; it was looking about it with scared, frightened eyes.

"What am I to do with it?" asked Ferrier awkwardly.

"We do want another cat in the kitchen," said the woman hesitatingly. "If you'd like to leave it here, sir."

Ferrier put it into her arms.

"Tell them to be kind to it," he said. "Can I have some breakfast, or is it too early?"

"You shall have some at once, sir."

Ferrier walked into the dining room. His head ached furiously. He shivered as he sat there in the deserted room. When his breakfast was brought he had no appetite for it, but he drank three cups of strong tea.

Presently he inquired which was Major's room. He sent a card up to him. The reply came back that Mr. Major would be down in ten minutes.

Ferrier wandered up and down the room. He was conscious of a desire to get Major out of London. He dreaded that Hastings should meet him again, and yet he could not make up his mind whether or not to go back to Eastsea. He was in a state of miserable indecision.

He hated Major, and yet he longed to see Joan. It seemed a lifetime since he had left her. He could not bear to think of her, unprotected as she was.

He wondered miserably how much truth there was in the story young Hastings had told him. He gritted his teeth and swore that there was none, but then, when Major came into the room, smiling and immaculate, Ferrier's heart slowed to a sickening pulse of suspicion.

Major was undeniably a handsome fellow; a woman might find him attractive; there was torture in the thought.

"Early bird as ever," said Major. "Couldn't you sleep? Where's your friend—nice chap—eh?"

"Yes."

"Had your breakfast, too?" Major glanced at the table rather suspiciously. "What's the program?" he asked.

Ferrier did not answer for a moment.

There is no stronger passion in life than a man's love for a woman, and Ferrier answered the voice in his heart that was Joan's voice.

"I've had enough of London," he said. His eyes met those of Edward Major unflinchingly. "I'm going back to Eastsea."

CHAPTER XIII.

There was unfeigned delight in Major's dark face; he echoed Ferrier's halting words eagerly.

"Back to Eastsea today—this morning?" He laid an almost affectionate hand on Ferrier's arm. "My dear boy, only too delighted. London's impossible this weather. I'll look up a train at once."

He called to a waiter for a Bradshaw; he handed his cigaret-case to Ferrier. He looked as pleased as if some one had unexpectedly presented him with a fortune.

"They'll be delighted down at the cottage," he went on. "I'll just send them a wire. Bennett must stay on—we'll make a night of it, eh? I told Hastings you—" He broke off, and forced a rather uneasy laugh. "I bet old Ralph that you'd soon be fed-up with town," he added quickly.

He took the Bradshaw from the waiter, and flicked over the pages quickly; there was a suppressed excitement about him. Ferrier stood, hands in pockets, smoking his cigaret, watching him with steely eyes.

"There's a train at 10:45; we can just catch it." Major glanced at his watch. "Get me some breakfast, waiter—no, toast and coffee will do. You'll join me, Ferrier?"

"No. I've had mine, thanks."

Ferrier sauntered over to the mantelshelf, and stared at a shipping calendar standing there; once or twice he glanced at Major thru the mirror above the shelf.

Major sat down to his toast and coffee whistling.

"By the way," he said, as he buttered a slice, "how about that friend of yours we met last night? Won't you have to go and tell him we've decided to go back?"

"He knows."

"Oh!"

The eyes of the two men met in the mirror; Major laughed.

"He was very gone on that little dancer at the Frivolity, eh?"

"Yes."

"Great pity! Those sort of women are no good to a young fellow like that. Pretty and taking, I grant—but as wives!" he shrugged his shoulders.

"Yes," said Ferrier slowly. "As wives one would feel rather sorry for them, I should think."

"Sorry? For them? For the husbands, you mean!"

"Why?"

"Oh, well, they never settle down; they can't live without excitement—the call of the footlights, you know."

"Humph!" Ferrier turned, leaning his square shoulders against the marble mantelshelf. "I don't profess to understand women," he said casually.

"Lucky man." Major sugared his coffee with the air of a man who makes a study of what he eats and drinks. "I've met all sorts myself but I must say that of the whole lot there is not one to hold a candle to our little Joan—bless her!" He raised his cup as if giving a toast. Ferrier's eyes never left his face.

A scheme had been slowly growing and maturing in his brain as he stood watching his companion's face in the glass.

"By the way," he said suddenly, "I don't know if it's a presumption on my part, but do you think Hastings would have any objection to my friend dropping down to Eastsea for a couple of days later on? He's quite a sport—plays cards and all that. I thought I'd mention it to you first. Say so if you think it won't do to ask."

"My dear chap, Ralph keeps open house, and I am sure that any friend of yours——. Why not ask him to come along with us today?"

"No, he couldn't do that. He's busy, but later on I'm sure he'd be delighted."

"Good; we'll fix it up; I liked him. By the way, what was his name? I've an awful memory for names. Never forget a face, but names—" he laughed.

Ferrier flushed dully. He could have bitten his tongue out with vexation. For the moment he, too, had forgotten what name he had given to young Hastings when he introduced him to Major.

He dropped his cigaret and stooped after it, while he racked his brains for the name. Suddenly he remembered it.

"Hibbert," he said. "Yes, he's quite a good chap."

Major left the table. He lit another cigaret; he was hardly without one for more than a few minutes at a time.

"Well, we'll have the bill, and be off, eh? I'll send a wire to Joan." He sauntered from the room, humming gaily under his breath.

Ferrier had not moved from where he stood. Thru the glass he could see Major at the desk in the hall, writing; presently he moved away out of sight.

Ferrier threw his half-smoked cigaret into the empty grate and stretched his big limbs.

Some one entered the room. Ferrier roused himself hastily, thinking it might be Major, but it was the waiter.

"Please, sir, there is a lady—" he broke off. "I beg pardon, sir, I thought you was the other gentleman. There's a lady to see the other gentleman, sir."

"Oh, well, he'll be back in a moment; you'd better ask her in to wait." He stopped as a girlish figure pushed open the door and entered. She wore a large hat and a black veil, which she flung back nervously; she made an eager step forward, then—

"Oh!" she said with a little frightened catch in her voice. "I thought you were—thought you were—"

Ferrier stood up straight. There was a curious gleam in his eyes. The girl was Kitty Inglis, the dancer from the Frivolity.

She was very white, in spite of the rouge and powder which disfigured her pert face; there were dark lines of tears or sleeplessness beneath her eyes. The waiter looked at her curiously as he creaked from the room in shabby shoes.

Ferrier drew forward a chair.

"Won't you sit down? Major will be back directly. He's only gone to send a wire. Ah, there he is!"

Major came into the room briskly. He wore a smart, light overcoat, with a flower in the buttonhole.

"I've settled up," he said. "There's a taxicab at the door; we've just time—" He broke off, staring at the girl who had risen from the chair and was looking at him with wide, piteous eyes.

He turned white even to the lips; his eyes took an ugly expression. The girl spoke first—timidly—falteringly.

"Edward, I—I—" she broke down, bursting into tears.

Major turned to Ferrier.

"Will you leave us together? I—this—I'm very sorry. It's a most unfortunate business—" He spoke between his teeth. Ferrier left the room without a word, without a glance at the sobbing girl.

He went out into the hall. The stout manageress eyed him uneasily from the small office. The door stood open, and he walked towards it laconically.

"How's the cat?" he asked. He spoke for the sake of something to say. His words sounded vague.

The woman looked pleased. She smiled nervously.

"Quite at home, sir; she was sitting by the fire just now, poor thing! I'm always sorry for stray cats."

"Yes."

Ferrier looked around the room. Unconsciously, his ears were straining to hear what was going on across the hall, but the door was closed now; he could only bitterly conjecture what treatment the poor little dancer was receiving at the hands of the man who had broken his marriage vows almost as soon as he had made them.

"Are you leaving us today, sir?" asked the woman hesitatingly.

"Yes. It's too hot in London. I like some air—we're going down to the sea. I only came up on business."

"Yes, sir."

Her eyes asked a question she did not like to voice, but Ferrier would not see it. His glance had fallen on the grinning demon who held the calendar on a pitchfork; it took him back to that morning when his dream-castle had been brought crashing about his ears. What a lifetime ago it seemed!

He wondered what Major had said in his wire to the cottage. He wondered how Joan would receive the news of his return—if she would be glad. His pulses raced at the thought of seeing her again, even while he despised himself because his anger and resentment against her never lasted for long. She might be all that circumstances declared her to be, she might be even worse, and yet he loved her—his blood turned to fire at the thought of her—sweet, dainty, lovable—playing the decoy to coax money from the pockets of infatuated fools, laughing her merry laugh, singing her airy songs. He brought his clenched fist down on the high desk against which he stood with sudden despair; the stout manageress started with a scream from her ledgers.

"Oh, sir!"

Ferrier smiled grimly.

"Sorry, I was thinking." He turned sharply as the door of the room across the hall opened and Kitty Inglis came out.

She walked slowly. Her little feet in their absurd high-heeled shoes seemed to drag as if they were very weary, her face, shaded by its big hat, was downbent; but Ferrier saw it—the hopeless despair in the merry eyes—the white misery of the child mouth.

He longed to go forward and ask if he could not help her—she looked so young and lonely; but across the hall, thru the open doorway, he could see Major watching, and the little lonely figure passed on and out thru the heavy swing-doors and was lost to view.

CHAPTER XIV.

Major attempted no explanation until they were in the speeding taxicab.

There was a look of concentrated rage and mortification about him. He sat beside Ferrier, his hands clasped together so that the knuckles stood out hard and white, his dark brows sullen.

Ferrier asked no questions, and it was not until they neared the station that Major spoke.

"I owe you an apology. It's difficult to explain. I ought to have told you before; but I never dreamed she would turn up and worry me. That girl—you recognized her, of course—she danced at the Frivolity last night. I knew her years ago." The words came with a sort of snarl.

"But she evidently remembers me well enough. It upset her last night when we went into her dressing-room. I should never have gone if I had suspected—you know what these little affairs are. I was not serious; she, apparently, was. That is all! I am sorry for your young friend Hibbert; but you see I was right in what I said. A woman of that class is no good."

His voice was brutal. Ferrier made no comment; he could not trust himself. Major laughed slightly.

"I soon let her see I was not to be blackmailed," he said with detestable inflection. "She was very subdued when she went away. I fancy I've seen the last of her." He looked around at Ferrier, his white teeth gleamed. "Don't mention it to little Joan," he said.

"No."

Major leaned back.

"I thought you'd understand; wild oats have an unfortunate habit of cropping up in a man's life. However, as I say, I fancy I've seen the last of her."

"She didn't mention Hibbert?"

"Good heavens, no! Poor chap! Think he's serious?"

"I should imagine so."

"Humph! Well, he's welcome to her." He laughed again brutally.

"Here we are," he leaned forward and opened the door. Ferrier got out; there was a singing noise in his head. He felt as if all the blood in his body had rushed to his brain.

He went to the railway bar and ordered a neat brandy. He was conscious that Major was eyeing him suspiciously. He asked him with exaggerated solicitude if he felt ill.

Ferrier laughed.

"I've never had a day's illness in my life."

He tossed off the brandy—it quieted his nerves—and followed Major to the train.

They had a first-class compartment to themselves, but this time Ferrier sat opposite Major; he kept alert and awake the whole time; it was Major who dozed.

Soon Ferrier began to recognize familiar bits of the flying landscape; he felt like a schoolboy going home for long-desired holidays.

He wondered if Joan would come to the station, how she would look, if she would be glad to see him. He remembered the way they had parted, the stunned wild look to prevent Major from going with him.

The racing train seemed to crawl; it seemed an eternity till the first glimpse of the sea flashed in the sunlight. Ferrier, looking at it, drew a deep breath; he let the window down and leaned out.

"Glad to be back?" asked Major. There was a sort of jealousy in his dark eyes.

"Yes. Doesn't it smell good after London?"

Ferrier's eyes sparkled; he drew a deep breath, filling his lungs with the pure salt air.

The train slowed down, and steamed into the little station.

"Wonder who'll meet us," said Major. He stepped out first and looked up and down the platform. "Nobody," he said with a wry smile.

"They may not have got your wire," said Ferrier. He spoke with an indifference he was far from feeling; every second he expected to see Joan's little figure appear. They walked out into the sunny road together.

"Nobody," said Major again ruefully. "Shall we have a cab?"

"No, let's walk; my legs are cramped."

They walked together down the winding road. On the cliff-path they passed the bare-footed boy Peter. He grinned at Ferrier, his white teeth gleaming against his brown skin.

A bend in the road brought them before the cottage; the sunblinds were drawn, the windows stood wide open.

"They're all out, I expect," said Major. He opened the gate and walked up the path rather quickly.

At sound of their steps on the gravel-walk. Hastings came to the door.

"Hullo, hullo!" he said cheerily. "So you've soon come back, like a pair of homesick boys, eh?" He held out a hand to each. "Glad to see you both; we've had a slow time since you went. How did the business to go on, eh?" he asked Ferrier.

Major answered for him.

"Oh, that's all done. We spent the evening with a friend of Ferrier's last night. Ferrier wants him to come down one day. I said I was sure you would be pleased, eh?"

"Of course, any friend of yours."

They entered the house together.

"Did you get my wire?" asked Major.

"Yes, two or three hours ago; we had a good laugh over it, Bennett and I. Where is he? I really don't know—wandering round somewhere."

"And Joan?" Major asked the question eagerly.

Hastings answered slowly.

"She's been out of sorts since you two left—won't eat." His eyes twinkled. "I don't know which gay Lothario it is. She doesn't know you're coming back! she was out on the sands all the morning, and I didn't tell her about your wire at lunch. I thought it would be a surprise for her, eh?"

He laughed, looking at Ferrier.

He took them both into the sunny dining room and pressed sherry and biscuits on them. Ferrier felt in a frenzy of impatience. It was Joan he wanted to see, Joan he wanted to speak to; not these men with their exaggerated hospitality. He had a strange feeling that some crisis lay before him; it filled him with a sort of nervous apprehension, even while it stimulated, and put him on his guard.

Major went off to have a bath; he declared that railway traveling always made him filthy. He grumbled about the carriage in which they had traveled; he said that if he were a rich man he would have his own saloon car.

Ferrier listened rather disgustedly. When the door had closed upon him, Hastings laughed—

"Don't notice him—Major always talks rubbish like that." He refilled

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