

The Truant Soul

By Victor Rousseau

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MYERS

SYNOPSIS.—Nurses in the Southern hospital at Avonmouth are angered by the insolent treatment accorded them by Dr. John Lancaster, head of the institution, and there is a general feeling of unrest, into which Joan Wentworth, probationary nurse, is drawn. Doctor Lancaster is performing a difficult operation, for which he has won fame. Joan, with other nurses, is in attendance. She is upset, through no fault of her own, and makes a trivial blunder at a critical moment. The patient dies and Doctor Lancaster accuses her of clumsiness. She is suspended, the action meaning the end of her hope of a career as a nurse. Without relatives or friends, and desperate, Joan, urged by her landlady, goes to Doctor Lancaster's office to ask him to overlook her blunder and reinstate her. She overhears a violent altercation between Doctor Lancaster and other men she does not see. Joan is struck by the favorable change in the appearance and demeanor of the doctor, recalling that at times in the hospital he has been gentle and thoughtful and at others supercilious and bullying. He tells her he can do nothing for her at the hospital, but offers her a position in a nursing institution in the country, telling her she can be of "great assistance" to him.

CHAPTER III—Continued

"You're a fool! You don't know when you are well off. I tell you, I wash my hands of you. This is final!" Joan could not help but hear. And as she emerged into the passage, all the time hearing the sounds of the quarreling voices, Myers came hurrying past.

He did not see her. He ran to the door, flung it open, and rushed down the steps into the street. As he went along the passage the girl saw him starting right and left; then, as she came out, he saw her and went toward her. She knew that it was she whom he had been seeking.

"What was it Doctor Lancaster was saying to you, Miss Wentworth, before I came in?" he asked in his rasping voice.

Joan stared at him in astonishment. Now she realized that she had mistaken him; he was not a servant, but apparently a member of the doctor's household.

"Will you let me pass, please?" asked Joan, as he blocked the way.

"I want to know what the doctor was saying to you," repeated the man doggedly.

"Are you going to refuse me passage?" demanded the girl, flushing with anger.

He stepped aside with a sneer and a mock bow. "O, very well, if that's your attitude," he answered. "I shall find out."

Joan turned swiftly upon him. "I don't know who you are, but I shall complain of you to Doctor Lancaster," she said.

Myers looked at her and sneered and chuckled. Then, without a word, he went back into the doctor's room. And still the voices kept up their quarreling dialogue.

Joan found herself in the street in the twilight, and how the unreality of the absurd interview struck home to her. She tried to puzzle it out. Before she reached the boarding house she thought she had her clue.

That Lancaster, the terror of the nurses, should have been unable to promise immediate reinstatement, his evident good-will, his indecision and illness were explicable only in one way. The man Myers must be a relative, the third man perhaps a nephew, Lancaster had been supporting a worthless pair in illness, and had turned on them in exasperation. That was the meaning of his look of illness, his preoccupation—the shock of some domestic discovery.

At any rate she was satisfied with some such solution. And she was certain that, if she pleased him with her mysterious mission, her reinstatement would follow. She went home happy, and Mrs. Webb read the news in her face the moment she opened the door.

"I knew it, my dear," she exclaimed with pleasure. "I knew that you could twist that old devil round your finger if you tried hard enough."

"Mrs. Webb, it was nothing of the kind," said Joan. "And Doctor Lancaster is one of the kindest of men. He's going to try to have his decision reversed, and—Mrs. Webb, he is sending me to a sanitarium, on a case, in the meantime."

She checked herself, suddenly remembering Lancaster's caution. But Mrs. Webb took the girl to her wide bosom and kissed her.

"You little humbug!" she said.

"Mrs. Webb," cried Joan, scandalized, "if you know—"

But when she was upstairs she sat down suddenly and faced her conscience. What impression of herself had she given in the consulting room? She did not know. This came, like that of the morning, had become blurred in her memory, and she had begun to see her own little blunder as she thought of it.

that day than at any time since her mother's death!

She leaned out of the window. She suddenly remembered that the institute was not many miles from her old home. It would be almost going home—and on the morrow. Joy leaped into her heart.

Then she saw something that for an instant chilled the blood in her veins. Across the street, leaning against the park railings and looking up at the house, was a short, square-bulld figure of a man wearing a hard hat. She could not distinguish the face, but she thought it was Myers. And she remembered his threat.

What did it mean? Bewildered, she turned into her room again. She half regretted now that she was to go to Lancaster.

But in the morning she dismissed the incident from her mind as a fantasy.

Chapter IV

At half-past seven in the evening Joan descended from the train at Lancaster station, after an all-day ride.

It was like going home. Joan could not see her village, which was on a branch line, but at Medlington she was only four miles away. There were the same misty mountains, breaking the horizon line, the same small, straggling towns, the same fragrance of the deep forests, bringing back to her those remembrances which a chance odor suddenly unlocks, as at the touch of some magician's staff. The two years that she had spent at Avonmouth seemed to slip out of her recollection.

As the afternoon flew by the distant mountains changed into a semicircle of irregular heights. Now the train was climbing into the foothills. It was a lonely land. This was further in the back country than Joan had ever been. The villages were becoming mere clusters of negro cabins. There had been two changes of trains



The Horse Breaking Into a Short Gallop Near Every Summit.

and each time the coach became shabbier and more disreputable, and more impregnated with tobacco smoke. The character of Joan's fellow travelers changed as well. They were uncouth, they wore chin beards and rough store suits; they sat perspiring and collarless, the soft hats pulled over their foreheads. But she looked at them with the loving appreciation of her own people that was in her heart, and they, in the presence of the pretty girl who was traveling alone, displayed the innate courtesy of the Southerner.

The sun descended; it was gliding the whole land with level rays of gold and dancing on the horizon like a red ball when the train pulled into Lancaster, the last station before Millville, the terminus. Joan got down and looked about her.

The station was a tiny place and seemed deserted. The waiting office was closed. In the waiting room, appearing almost to fill it, was a stout negro with a dozen parcels; from the wicker sides of one two hens' heads with blinking eyes protruded. Outside a ramshackle buggy, with a lean chestnut horse attached, was drawn up to the edge of the muddy road.

A well-dressed young mountain boy in a hard-felt hat was standing beside it. As Joan came out of the station he turned toward her, took off his hat, and bowed.

"Miss Wentworth," he inquired in a well-bred tone.

"Yes. You are from the institute?"

"Yes, Miss Wentworth. Mrs. Fraser will be expecting you." He looked beyond her, and Joan, turning, perceived to her discomfort the man Myers, in his hard hat. He was here, he had traveled up in the train with her.

Myers came forward, taking off his hat and bowing. "Miss Wentworth, the buggy I reserved for you is right here," he said. "I ought to have explained

to you that I'm the secretary of the institution. I guess my manners ain't very good, but I meant no harm."

Joan, who had witnessed his presence with consternation, now felt a sudden reaction from her fears. Of course, Myers' explanation made the situation intelligible.

She bowed, and he turned to the boy. "You can take Miss Wentworth up," he said. "I'll find a buggy some where."

As there was only room for two in the buggy, Joan did not demur to the proposition. She stepped in, the young man holding out his hand to guard her dress from the wheel. Joan glanced at the man with momentary interest. He had the appearance of a gentleman, and the manners of one. There was no hint of either servility or presumption, and yet there was a sort of independence about the man which fitted him admirably. He flicked the horse, and the buggy began to crawl out of the station yard along the single street of a tiny village, straggling uphill. It was a white village, but clusters of shanties a little back among the pines betrayed the presence of the black element. There was a store or two, their fronts plastered with tobacco and baking powder advertisements, and in front of each stood a gaunt, yellow-faced hillman, chewing and gazing after the buggy with unanimated face.

"This is Lancaster?" asked Joan.

"Yes, Miss Wentworth."

"The people here look depressed."

"There's a good deal of sickness, Miss Wentworth. Hookworm, and what they used to call malaria. But there isn't any malaria here; it's bad diet—salt pork and soda biscuits. And there's pellagra; it's been here for generations, but it wasn't till last year that the medical commission discovered it."

The coachman's knowledge might have been ludicrous in most men of his class, but there was nothing ridiculous in the grave, refined face of the young mountaineer. He must have picked up some knowledge at the institute, thought Joan.

"But it's healthy up in the hills, Miss Wentworth," he added. "This valley is a valley, you see, that grows cotton in the valley over yonder, but the frost killed the crops three years ago, and the mill fell into ruin. Quite a little water power in that stream."

The buggy ascended a steeper grade, the horse breaking into a short gallop near every summit, and then resuming its leisurely crawl.

"That's the institute, Miss Wentworth," the coachman continued, pointing toward a straggling building on a little plateau. It had the appearance of a large but rather dilapidated farmhouse. "It's three miles by the road," he added, "but less than a mile over the hills."

The horse had stopped to gain breath again. Looking back, Joan saw a white line that crept upward over the rocky slopes almost direct from the station to the building. Half way up was a little speck of black that seemed to move. Joan knew it was Myers' hard hat, his body being hidden from view among the bushes. She shuddered slightly; the man was very repugnant to her.

The horse went on again, the road winding uphill through pastures gay with buttercups and white with little branched asters. It dipped between hedgerows pink with meadowsweet. The sun had set, but its light still gilded the hills. The scene was very peaceful. Now the institute seemed to swing out from among the undulations of the mountain flanks immediately in front of them.

The buggy came to a standstill before the long wooden building, which was of unshingled boards and very much the worse for weather. It had not been painted for years, and two windows in one wing were broken. A patch of weedy, unweeded lawn extended between what had once been hedges, but were now mere tangles of undergrowth. Nearby was a large inclosure in which were a few chickens, pecking for grains of corn, and a cow at pasture turned her head and gazed at them placidly.

The door opened and a pleasant-looking woman came forward.

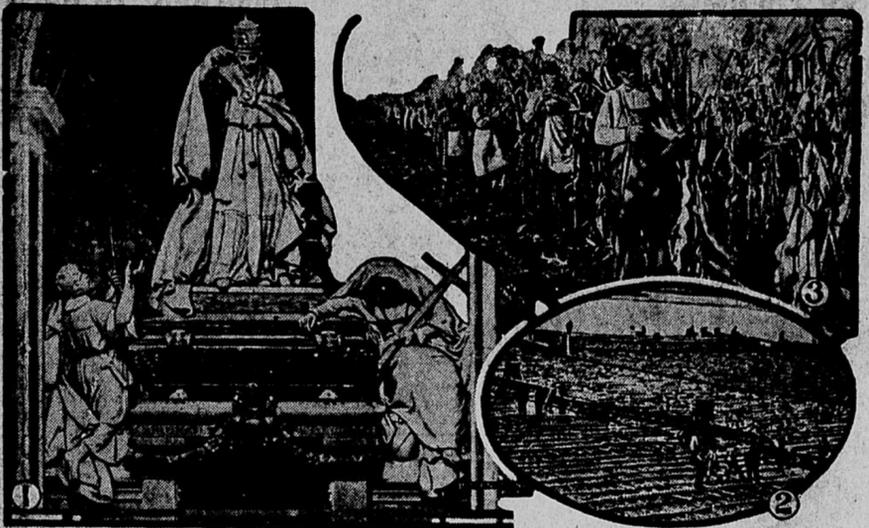
"How do you do, Miss Wentworth," she said. "I am the matron, Mrs. Fraser. Doctor Lancaster telegraphed about your coming. I'll show you your room, and your supper will be ready in a few minutes."

Joan descended. The driver, who had leaped to the ground, held his hand over the wheel, but did not offer it to her. Then he re-entered the buggy, and, rather to Joan's surprise, drove off along the road by which they had ascended.

The mystery deepens, with Myers the secretary of the institution. Is Joan in for a disagreeable adventure?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

In parts of Africa and southern Asia the horse, a small stock, is used for riding.



1.—Tomb in the Cathedral of St. John ordered built by the late Pope Leo IX and in which his body has now been placed. 2.—Building and sinking willow mats on the banks of the Mississippi near Memphis to protect the shore line from erosion. 3.—Illinois farmers selecting seed corn from the state's \$400,000,000 crop.

NEWS REVIEW OF CURRENT EVENTS

Some Causes and Results of the Great Victory of the Republican Party.

By EDWARD W. PICKARD

REASONS for the tremendous Republican victory in the national election are not far to seek. First among them come confidence in Calvin Coolidge and faith in his wise devotion to the public welfare, and the repugnance of a vast majority of the American people for extreme radicalism. Mr. Davis was not a radical, nor was his platform, but the "LaFollette menace" was an actuality, threatening a deadlock in the electoral college and throwing of the election into congress with the possibility of the choice of Charles Bryan as chief executive, and about 18,000,000 voters decided that this should not be. LaFollette, of course, never had a chance of being elected, but he did have a chance of carrying several of the northwestern states in addition to Wisconsin, which was conceded to him. His popular vote in some places, especially in Iowa and several of the larger cities, was heavy, but in the main the farmers, upon whose discontent he had counted, failed him. Furthermore, it was demonstrated again that the vote of organized labor cannot be delivered, for instead of going to LaFollette in a body, as Gompers recommended, it split along normal party lines. One thing LaFollette and his "menace" did was to bring out the largest vote ever cast in an American election, and this only helped pile up the Coolidge plurality of about 10,000,000.

PRESIDENT COOLIDGE on March 4 next will take fresh hold on the helm of the ship of state with the pleasant knowledge that the new congress is safely Republican and that the little radical group has lost the balance of power, even in the senate. In the house there will be probably approximately 250 Republicans, only 12 of whom cannot be counted upon to support the President's policies. Without this dozen the administration seems assured of a margin of about twenty above a majority. The Democrats will number about 185. One Socialist and two Farmer-Labor members were elected.

The situation in the senate will be better for the Republicans than they had anticipated. At this writing the result in several states is still in doubt, but it is likely that the new upper house will contain 54 Republicans, only four of whom are definitely in the LaFollette group; 41 Democrats, and one Farmer-Laborist. Forty-nine constitutes a majority in the senate. There are six Republican senators who have occasionally voted with the LaFollette bloc; but they can be counted on to join with their party colleagues in the organization of the body. Especially gratifying to Republicans and to the more conservative citizens generally was the defeat of Senator Magnus Johnson of Minnesota, Farmer-Labor, by Thomas D. Schall, the Republican blind congressman. It was thought for several days that Senator Brookhart of Iowa also had been beaten by Daniel F. Steck, Democrat, but when the returns were rechecked the man who ran as a Republican, and at the same time supported LaFollette for the Presidency was slightly ahead.

AMONG the interesting results of the election was the selection of two women governors—the first to be so honored. Mrs. Nellie T. Ross was elected by the Democrats of Wyoming to succeed to the office of her husband, the late Governor Ross, and under the law will take office as soon as she qualifies. In Texas Mrs. Miriam Ferguson, Democrat, set out to vindicate the honor of her husband, who had been impeached and removed from the governorship, and she succeeded in defeating her Republican opponent on the face of the returns, although he has demanded an official tabulation of the vote before he will concede her victory.

Al Smith, governor of New York, gave a new and most impressive demonstration of his popularity by overcoming the plurality of 800,000 by which Coolidge carried the state and defeating Theodore Roosevelt for the governorship by about 165,000 plurality. In Illinois the Coolidge plurality was tremendous and the entire state Republican ticket was elected, but Governor Small ran far behind, and Charles S. Deneen's plurality for United States senator was cut down a lot by Albert Sprague.

Mixed results attended the active participation of the Ku Klux Klan in the election. In Indiana Ed Jackson, Republican candidate for governor, was supported by the Klan and though he was elected, he ran a long way behind the national ticket. In Texas the Klan suffered severely, for Mrs. Ferguson is its avowed foe and made her campaign largely on that issue. In Kansas the Klan helped pile up a huge vote for Ben S. Paulen for governor. William Allen White, Independent anti-Klan candidate, ran third. Other Kansas candidates whom the Klan opposed were successful. In Colorado, judging by incomplete returns, the Klan elected both the governor—Clarence C. Morley, and a senator for Nicholson's unexpired term, Col. Rice Means. In Denver it made almost a clean sweep. Jack Walton, the impeached and removed governor of Oklahoma, sought election to the United States senate on the anti-Klan issue and was beaten by W. B. Pines, Republican, which probably would have happened even if the Klan had reversed its vote. Ohio yielded the Ku Klux what is accounted a victory. Governor Donahy, Democrat, seeking re-election and "favorable" to the Klan, defeated his Republican rival, former Gov. Harry L. Davis, "unsatisfactory" to the Klan. His plurality was more than 100,000, despite the Coolidge landslide. On the rest of the state ticket four officeholders seeking re-election, all "favorable" to the Klan, were re-elected.

NO SMALL part of the credit for the Republican victory is to be given to General Dawes, President Coolidge's running mate, who devoted much of his vigorous campaigning to defending our Constitution and institutions against the attacks of the radicals. Over in France the result of the election was pleasing especially on Dawes' account, for they know him much better than they know Coolidge. Pertinax, political editor of L'Echo de Paris, predicts that now, with the English Conservatives in power, Great Britain more than ever will tend to co-ordinate her action with the United States, which, he believes, will involve collapse of the Geneva protocol on arbitration and security, the assembling of another disarmament conference, and a moderate but strict settlement of the allies' war debts. Le Journal says the same things in other words.

RAMSAY MACDONALD and his cabinet did not wait for the assembling of parliament, but tendered their resignations to King George, who accepted them promptly and intrusted to Stanley Baldwin the task of forming a new government. The new prime minister soon submitted his selections for the cabinet and they were approved by the king. He is himself first lord of the treasury and Austen Chamberlain is foreign secretary. Lord Curzon being given the ornamental post of lord president of the council. Winston Churchill, tree trader and anti-Bolshevik, is chancellor of the exchequer, which is regarded as a bid to the Lloyd George following to join with the Conservatives and also as notice that the loan to Russia is dead. Sir Robert Horne, former chancellor, was offered the minor position of minister of labor, which he refused, and he and his friends feel that he was insulted.

Before quitting office the Labor ministry made an apparently sincere effort to solve the mystery of the alleged Zlapoviet letter advising British communists to revolt. Its committee found it impossible to come to a definite conclusion on the matter. The original letter was not produced and never has been seen by the members of the Labor government.

GEN. FENG YU-HSIANG apparently has taken complete control of the central China government at Peking and plans to turn the country over to bolshevism. He has seized the imperial palace, evicting the former emperor and his wife and servants; has occupied all of the Forbidden City and has even taken the horses and motor cars of the deposed president, Tsao Kun. A bolshevik rump cabinet set up by him has abolished forever the title of emperor and all other titles and has confiscated the palace in the name of the state. A further mandate agrees to pay the former emperor \$500,000 annually as a private citizen and to appropriate \$2,000,000 for the relief of the poor attendants of the household.

M. Karakhan, soviet envoy to China, is said to be most influential in the councils of Feng, and Dr. Sun Yat-sen, leader of the southern China group, has been invited to Peking. Meanwhile General Fu, who fled to a warship at Taku, is waiting for a chance to consolidate the non-bolshevik factions. It will be interesting to see what course General Chang, the Manchurian, will pursue, for it looks as if Feng were not proceeding according to Chang's plans and wishes. The advance guard of Chang's troops arrived at Tien-tsin.

THE movement to deprive President Kemal of Turkey of his power is growing stranger daily and since the grand national assembly has just opened at Angora, the crisis may be expected soon. Rabat Bey, former premier and a great avial hero, is the leader of the opposition to Kemal and is supported by such powerful and popular men as Gen. Ali Pasha, Gen. Kiazim Kara Bekir Pasha, Refet Pasha and Djambolat Bey. The ostensible object of their attacks is Premier Ismet Pasha.

M. RAKOVSKY went to Paris and met Premier Herriot, cementing the Franco-Russian accord. It was announced that Leonid Krassin would be the first soviet ambassador to France, and that Jean Herbetie would be sent as ambassador to Moscow.

PREMIER MUSSOLINI is confident that the crisis which threatened him and the Fascist has passed and that his organization will be stronger than ever. The minister of the interior, Sig. Federzoni, who is regarded as one of the biggest members of the cabinet, and who has won the confidence of the country for his impartiality, intimated, that the Fascists are cleaning their own house and are taking energetic means to stop the excesses which were complained of by the Italians.

FROM London comes the interesting information that contracts for construction of an airship twice the size of the Los Angeles, formerly the ZR-S, and capable of crossing the Atlantic from London to New York in two days, have been placed by the British government. Vickers, Ltd., the company which makes all sorts of war materials and other things, will build the huge ship.

HENRY CABOT LODGE, senior senator from Massachusetts, was stricken in a Cambridge hospital where he had undergone several operations, and at the time of writing the physicians have little hope for his recovery. He has been in the senate continuously for thirty-one years; is chairman of the foreign relations committee and has been the leader of those who opposed entry of the United States into the League of Nations.

Ferdinand W. Peck, a pioneer Oklahoman and for many years one of the most influential citizens of that city, is dead at an advanced age. He was prominent in the creation and direction of the World's Columbian exposition, was commissioner general of the United States to the Paris exposition of 1900 and was a grand officer of the French Legion of Honor.

Cornelius Cole, who was elected senator from California way back in 1876 and who had been an intimate friend of Abraham Lincoln, passed away in Los Angeles at the age of one hundred and two years. He was born the year after Napoleon's death.

BRAZIL'S revolution, which is centered in the state of Rio Grande do Sul, is spreading seriously. The crew of the battleship Sao Paulo, the biggest vessel in the navy, mutinied, and the parliaments of several states have resigned.