

TAKEN FROM THE ENEMY.



INTERNATIONAL PRESS ASSOCIATION.
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BY HENRY NEWBOLT.

Camilla was in a state of feverish agitation. She attacked him at once.

"Well," she cried, "and what does this mean, sir?"

The colonel hung his head.

"Did I not tell you," she continued, "that if Captain Estcourt went with you I should stay behind?"

"I thought perhaps you might think better of it."

"Do I generally threaten what I do not mean to carry out?" she retorted. To this he made no answer, and his silence suggested, as it was intended to do, that it was now rather late in the day for the fulfillment of this particular threat.

"Do you not see," she went on, "into what a position your foolish obstinacy has entrapped me?"

"I am very sorry," murmured the colonel.

"It is infamous of you," she cried. "Here we are, with our enterprise already launched; for me to turn back now would be to forfeit my share in the glory of success; to send him away would be to ruin it all."

"I'm afraid it would," said the colonel, in a tone of discouragement; and he looked at the difficulty of the dilemma. Camilla's indignation was by this time beginning to exhaust itself. To hammer so abject an opponent was merely beating the air, and of that the strongest fighter soon wearies.

"What am I to do?" she cried in despair.

"Couldn't you go on as you are doing?" he suggested.

"What! live for a fortnight cooped up here with a man whom I've insulted to his face?"

"It's not your fault," he replied; "he brought it on himself."

"No, no! he did not!" she answered, hotly. "It was your doing from the beginning."

"I asked him to come, I admit," said the colonel; "but he shouldn't have accepted."

"How can you," she exclaimed, "how dare you, compare his share in it with your own? You were the tempter, you were the suggester of evil. His conduct in yielding may seem strange to us, but we can not tell what good reasons he may have had for taking a less severe view of his duty in this instance. He belongs to a party which has long favored the Emperor's release; he was no longer actually employed in the English government, which has treated him with ingratitude; he was chivalrously devoted to us, his friends, and there may have been other reasons. I could wish that he had acted differently, but I will not hear you blame him."

The colonel hugged himself in secret. It was an exquisite pleasure to hear his own sophistries arrayed against him and to see them working out his own purpose after all. Some gleam of satisfaction must have twinkled from a crevice in his assumed stolidity, for Camilla stopped, as if partly conscious of something inconsistent in her argument.

"Don't misunderstand me," she cried; "I do not take back anything of what I said. He interrupted her."

"Of course not," he said; "I was waiting to remind you that as we are to touch at Ascension, you have still a free choice; we could easily land you there for a fortnight, and take you off again on our return from St. Helena. You would lose none of the credit of the undertaking, and you would share the Emperor's triumphant return to Europe."

"I will consider that," she replied, "before we reach Ascension; but it was not what I was thinking of. What I meant to tell you was that in any case I refuse to have Captain Estcourt forced upon me as a colleague. I decline to recognize him in that position, and you may tell him that if he and I are to meet, it must be on other ground, and expressly on condition that the object of this voyage is never mentioned."

The colonel sighed; not, as she supposed, with resignation, but with relief and perfect satisfaction.

"I will go to him at once," he said, and left the cabin, still dejected and submissive in appearance.

As he climbed the companion-ladder, however, his demeanor underwent a complete change, and it was with a beaming face that he emerged up the deck, where Estcourt was anxiously awaiting his return.

"It is all right," he said, cordially; "I knew it would be. She has quite got the better of her disappointment, and is sorry for having hurt your feelings just now. Her indignation, it appears, was not directed at you but me, whom she blames severely for having been the original cause for all this trouble. I confess it, but I assure you I was far from intending to estrange you from us."

"Don't say another word!" cried Dick, seizing his hand and shaking it in a fervor of gratitude. "My own debtor for the rest of my life. But now let me go to her at once."

"Stay a moment," said the colonel, holding him by the sleeve; "let me give you one last hint before you go. No wise man expects an apology from a woman under any circumstances."

"Apology!" Dick broke in impatiently. "Of course not!"

"Very well, then," continued his companion, "that being so, it will prevent any possible awkwardness if you ignore the late regrettable incident altogether. And I may add that I know you would be consulting her own wishes if you refrained from mentioning the subject of our voyage at all. The subject is not one with pleasant associations as between herself and you."

Dick thought the colonel a model of judgment and kindness. He thanked him again hastily, and went below with a beating heart. Camilla was in the saloon by herself; she flushed when he entered, but greeted him naturally, and without any reference to what had passed. While her hand lay in his she looked at him a little sadly, he fancied, as though a tinge of her first disap-

pointment still remained; but that surely was natural enough, and needed only time to efface it from her memory. Meanwhile he had a fortnight, a whole age—of happiness before him. The colonel, who had calculated with nicety the time he ought to allow them, now came discreetly in and suggested breakfast.

"Certainly," said Dick; "it is long past the time; but where's Captain Worsley?"

"Oh," replied the colonel; "haven't they told you? He's got a fever, and can't leave his berth today."

"That's rather sharp work," said Dick; "he seemed all right when I left the ship yesterday."

"Yes," said the colonel, "there is a sudden kind of feverish attack which is not uncommon, I am told, in these latitudes. It took him quite suddenly, just as we came on board; he was very queer, and kept me up late into the night talking in the most random manner. I thought you must have heard us," he added, with a quick, searching glance at Dick.

"And that reminds me that I also heard, or fancied I heard, a boat put off in the middle of the night, and come aboard some time later."

"Just so," said the colonel; "that was what he and I were arguing about. I wanted some things I had forgotten fetched from the Hamilton, and Captain Worsley refused me a boat, but I got my own way at last with some difficulty." And having fired off this explanation which he had ready loaded and primed for some time past, he turned the conversation adroitly back to the Hamilton, and the incidents of their voyage from England. When the meal was over, Dick remembered the captain again.

"I can't say I regret old Worsley's temporary absence," he remarked, "for I prefer very much our present party of three; but I think I must go and see him, for the sake of civility."

"I don't think I would, if I were you," said the colonel lightly; "he's still rather over-excitable this morning, and he has apparently, for some absurd reason, taken a dislike to you."

Dick laughed. "I'm not afraid of his tongue," he said; "I'm shot-proof against marine gunnery." And he went toward the door. The colonel turned away and bit his mustache. He dared not insist further, for fear of arousing suspicion; for, upon the face of it, what could it matter to him whether Dick went or not? But in reality a good deal was at stake, and Dick's sudden caprice had taken him for once unprepared. He sat still and listened with desperate anxiety to hear what would follow. The Speedwell's construction between decks was not quite that of an ordinary brig. She was large, but, as was only reasonable in a ship carrying government stores, she had no provision for a number of passengers, but was instead fitted with unusually ample quarters for the captain and three or four others. Thus, while the saloon was small, there were on each side of it three good cabins, or rather state-rooms, instead of the ordinary berths. On the starboard side Madame de Montaut, the colonel, and Dick were quartered; on the opposite side were the captain's two rooms and the mate's cabin. A narrow passage was left on each side between them for state-rooms, and the saloon. The colonel, with his head against the wooden wall of the latter, could hear perfectly all that passed on the other side; and, in fact, when Dick stood at the captain's door he was within a yard of him. First he heard him knock once, and again louder. There was no answer. The colonel was rigid, but his eyes betrayed intense anxiety. Camilla had fortunately gone to her own cabin, and there was no one to observe his unconcealable agitation. Dick knocked a third time, and drew in his breath. A rattling noise followed. Instantly the tension of his limbs relaxed, and a look of relief spread over his face. Dick had tried the door and found it locked. The colonel got up and wiped his brow. His secret was safe now, and he must get ready for another little scene in the comedy, which could not be long delayed.

Dick meanwhile was knocking again, and calling Captain Worsley by name. Still there was no reply, and he began to fear that the unfortunate man had fainted, with no one at hand to look after him. He turned to the mate's room. It was empty. He knocked more loudly yet on the captain's door. Finally he was able to rush away to the mate's room on deck, when he caught the sound of some one moving about inside the room.

"Open, open!" he cried. "Why don't you open?"

The door swung inward as he spoke. A strange man stepped quickly out. Then, as Dick drew back, he stooped and coolly locked the door behind him. As he raised his head again, Dick stared at him in amazement. It was not Captain Worsley, but Hernan Johnstone, the pilot of the Edgar at Copenhagen.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Ring Out the Old.

A manifest absurdity is the practice, still apparently universal, of figuring and stating the gearing of the bicycle. It is a survival of the unfit. When the safety bicycle first came in competition with the ordinary or high wheel, it was quite natural that they should be compared, and it was proper that the crank revolutions of the one should be stated in terms of the other, but now that the ordinary is absolutely dead, why should the old and always inconvenient practice be retained? It would evidently be better all around to give the crank effect of the safety either in the feet of road traversed per crank revolution or in the number of revolutions to the mile. Thus, a 54-inch machine might be called a 144-foot wheel for the number of feet to the revolution, or it might be called a 273 wheel for the number of turns to the mile. Almost any method would be better than the present historical relic.—American Machinist.

Mr. David H. Wyckoff recently wrote that a million horse power could not produce the effect that a single flash of lightning has been known to accomplish. He believed that we have yet hardly begun to utilize the forces of nature.

A Practical Youth.
Old Bullion—What! You wish to marry my daughter? She is a mere schoolgirl yet.
Bullion—Yes, sir. I came early to avoid the rush.

SMUGGLING WITH SNOWBALLS.

A Clever Ruse to Hoodwink the Customs Officials of Russia.

Until within recent years the Russian frontier on the German boundary was guarded in a surprisingly weak manner for a nation so completely under military rule as the czar's great empire. But now there is a strong cordon of garrisons only a few miles apart, and a careful patrol service between them. The chief duty of these garrisons is to prevent smuggling, and the introduction of nihilist literature into Russia. The duty is hard and monotonous, and the czar does not like to have his best trained and most effective regiments sent out along the boundary line.

For the most part these garrisons consist of young recruits from the eastern and central provinces of Russia. They are seldom expert soldiers, and the lax discipline they are under is further weakened by their excessive drinking. Their small pay is doled out to them twice a month, and every kopeck of it is immediately expended in vodka. After the vodka is gone they employ their spare time in making raids across the boundary line into the German farm yards to supplement their meager rations. Along the entire boundary line between these two countries there is a series of great open plains. Over these an icy east wind blows in winter, and the only way the soldiers can keep alive on their patrol is by the building of wood fires between the posts. Even then the patrols frequently have their limbs frozen in their monotonous marches to and fro. Hence it is not at all difficult to smuggle across the boundary, and, indeed, it is suspected that the soldiers often add to their small pay by making deals with the smugglers and turning their heads the other way when they pass by. Two very novel attempts were made last spring by the smuggling fraternity, both of which proved successful. In one case, late one night, a band of men in German began snowballing some villagers on Russian territory, and the Russians returned the attack. In the snowballs thrown from Germany, however, yards of fine Brussels lace were concealed. This method proved most successful, for even the secret police did not discover it, and the guard of the frontier certainly had no idea of what was going on. Quite as efficacious was the bringing of thousands of nihilist proclamations through Silesia under the very eyes of the garrison. These proclamations were in the hollow staves carried by a body of men who passed themselves off as pious pilgrims entering Russia on a sacred journey.

From the New York Sun: The daughter in a wealthy household in close neighborhood to Central park is engaged to be married, and the news of the engagement has been published. "We all wish it hadn't," says a paternalist, "because since it got out it has looked as though we would not be able to enjoy life or even to stay in town. The mail we receive and the people who try to get in to see my wife or myself are such as to cause consternation. Both the letters and the visitors come from tradesmen who would like to furnish flowers for the wedding or to cook the wedding supper (whether we were to have one or no), or to supply the china-ware or the cabs. They are from stationers who desire to print the cards, from engravers, from jewelers, from dressmakers and tailors and milliners, from caterers who will furnish waiters, napery, china, glass, plate—even a bridegroom if we run short, I imagine. The letters pile up beside my wife's plate every morning, and the most stylish engraved cards, bearing the names of men and women whom we never heard, are sent up to the distracted woman from the front door all day long. Interesting? Yes, very; especially the covert suggestion by a jeweler or two that if we desire to swell the display of wedding presents of gold or silver or jewels they can be had on hire."

ENGAGEMENT TIME.

It Usually Has Many Terrors for the Bride's Family.

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CHILDREN DESTROY THISTLES.

Minnesota Scholars Engage in a Praiseworthy Work.

Minneapolis Journal: The children and various things in which they are concerned are now absorbing the attention of the Woman's Improvement league, as is quite natural, as the active membership is made up largely of mothers and teachers, and this is their common ground of special interest. Yesterday, at the meeting of the Young Men's Christian association, Miss Wertz, chairman of the committee for the destruction of the Russian thistle, reported that thirty-two schools had been engaged in this work, and had during the year destroyed 1,149,431, an average of twenty to each scholar. The prizes were awarded to the Douglass, Van Cleve, Corcoran, Prescott, and Clinton schools. Honorable mention was made of the Lyndale, Clay, Motley, Bryant, Greeley, Schiller, and Washington. The prizes will be pictures adapted to the grades, suitable for hanging in the school rooms.

The curfew ordinance, which was appointed as the topic for discussion at the meeting was taken up quite at length. Mrs. Robert Pratt reported on the investigation which she had made at the request of the league. The ordinance is in use in sixteen towns of the state, and is most successfully operated in Stillwater, the largest town that has adopted it. The women passed a resolution indorsing it and pledging their support to an effort to get such an ordinance passed here. The matter of ascertaining the number of children who are not attending school was appointed a subject for the league meeting of next month.

THE Modern "dent Kitchen."

"The Ideal Kitchen" is treated at length, described in detail by James Thompson, and illustrated in the Ladies' Home Journal. Mr. Thompson says that in the model kitchen of the present the walls should be of glazed tiles or enameled brick to the height of six or seven feet. In place of these, painted brick or plaster may be used. Soapstone is also excellent. The tiles or brick should be carried clear to the floor; no wooden baseboards must be used. The floor should be of tiles, plain mosaic, stone or cement, all hard and dirt-resisting and easily kept clean. Have as little woodwork as possible, and what you are obliged to have let it be plain, with a few joints and crevices as possible. Your cook will at first object to this style of flooring, but a few days' care of this cleanly surface will convince her.

Quiet Reception Dress.

Any pretty silk with a fancy neck dressing is in good taste for an elderly lady who does not go out a great deal, writes Isabel Mallon in December Ladies' Home Journal. If she fancies it, a dainty bonnet may be worn, though I think it in better taste at an evening affair at a private house for the head to be uncovered. Black satin, brilliant with black jets, softened with frills of black lace, makes a rich and fashionable gown for the matron, while for the younger woman all the pretty figured, striped and chine silks are in good form. Silks showing changeable backgrounds with brocade figures upon them are advocated by the dealers, but I confess myself to not caring for them, inasmuch as they look better suited to covering a chair than making a lady's gown.

WHERE GRAIN GROWS.

Manitoba's magnificent crop of 1896 demonstrates the wonderful fertility and productiveness of the soil of that western Canadian province. The yield of wheat on 1,145,276 acres was about 35,000,000 bushels; of oats, nearly 30,000,000 bushels on 482,578 acres; of barley, 6,000,000 on 153,339 acres, and there were besides 1,250,000 bushels of flax, 55,000 bushels of rye and 25,000 bushels of peas. This is an average of over 30 bushels of wheat to the acre, of 60 bushels of oats, and of 39 bushels of barley; and this immense crop was sleyed harvested by 25,000 farmers, many of whom settled in Manitoba within the past ten years with very little capital except industry and energy, and some with little or no experience whatever in farming. In the aggregate these 25,000 farmers have averaged 2,880 bushels of grain of all kinds; and besides this have produced magnificent crops of roots, potatoes, cabbages, onions and garden vegetables of all kinds. They have shipped tables of all kinds. They have shipped thousands of head of sleek cattle and large numbers of sheep. And all this has been accomplished without the expenditure of one dollar for artificial fertilizers and with a very small outlay for wages.

Beyond this province are fertile lands and a ranching country stretching miles to the foothills of the Rocky Mountains. These are divided into the districts of Assiniboia, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The eastern part of the former is also admirably adapted for wheat raising and mixed farming, and the western part of the district, and the southern half of Alberta combine to furnish the great cattle ranches of the northwest, there being countless acres of prairie land on which grow the most nutritious grasses on the continent. Northern Alberta, to which have flocked in recent years thousands of settlers from Nebraska, Kansas, Washington and other states, is the poor man's paradise, and although it has only had the advantages of railway communication since 1891, is rapidly filling up. There is practically no taxation in these districts, except for educational purposes, and each one possesses every requisite—in climate, soil, fuel, water, etc.—that the most favored old settled countries enjoy. No country is more prosperous than this Canadian northwest, and to none will there be a larger immigration, as its wonderful productiveness becomes known.

God wants us to rejoice always, because there is always some good reason why we should.

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