

Hidden Ways

By FREDERIC F. VAN DE WATER

CHAPTER X—Continued

"Maybe not," Cochrane answered dreamily, "but he changed his name to Ferriter, during the war."

"King George—Gawd bless 'im—changed his too," I jeered.

The innocent face before me beamed.

"He changed it to Ferriter," my caller droned. "It used to be Horstman."

I stared. Cochrane's expression was as guileless as a pan of milk.

"I give up," I said at last. "I'm not good at riddles. What's the answer?"

"I don't know," the reporter told me gently. "I hoped that, maybe, we could find one together. And now I'm all muddled up. If it's any of my business, what was your date with the pure young man?"

"Are you completely goofy?" I asked. "What man?"

"The guy with the sneeze expression and the cologne," Cochrane went on. "He said he was waiting to see you."

I looked at him hard.

"Waiting? Where?"

My astonishment seemed to comfort Cochrane. He beamed.

"In here," he said. "It must have been Everett, though I've never had a closeup of him before. He blew a minute after I came. Seemed pretty anxious to go, too."

"Who let him in?" I began and then remembered I had told Mrs. Shaw to admit any man who called. Again in my mind, the swarm of half-uttered questions stung and flew.

"Search me," Cochrane answered, "but he let himself out before I could learn who he was. You weren't expecting a call from Mr. Ferriter-Horstman?"

"I was not," I snapped and turning opened the bureau drawer. I didn't hear the question Cochrane asked. My face must have been strange for his own changed when I looked at him again.

"He came here," I said slowly, "to search this room. He's been through the bureau."

"Did he get what he was after?" Cochrane asked.

"I don't," I answered, "even know what he was looking for."

CHAPTER XI

Cochrane said gently:

"You might check if he's taken anything."

By the mess in the bureau drawer, my visitor had not been a cool and careful seeker, or perhaps the reporter had come in before he could reorder the jumble of handkerchiefs, neckties and the like.

"He's left me my razor," I told Cochrane, "and that's what I need most right now. If there's any more confusion you want to spread, you can trot along to the bathroom with me."

In his cherubic face, his eyes were bright.

"You don't let business interfere with your pleasure, laddie?"

"Not this time," I snapped, and he grinned.

"Go ahead," he waved at the door. "I'll just sit here and think."

He was staring as though the opposite wall were not there when I returned.

"Why should he want to rob you?" he asked.

"Why," I threw back at him, "should his brother want to kill me?"

And while I dyed, I told him of my duel with Lyon. Cochrane lit a cigarette and watched the smoke he blew. He did not speak, until I bent before the mirror to the tie. Then he said in mild complaint:

"I wish crime could be a little more orderly. We pick up bits here and scraps there and, put them all together, they spell nothing."

I was pulled two ways. I wanted to stay and sift the day's events with Jerry in the hope of finding coherence in their madness. I wondered, as I fidgeted and looked at my watch, if anything but the promise of this evening could possibly make me willing to leave.

"Why," Cochrane asked, narrowed-eyed, "should one of the Horstman-Ferriter boys try to kill you and the other toss your room so inexpertly?"

"You tell me," I said. "I've got ten minutes more, at most."

"Then," he answered, getting up, "we better spend it elsewhere. Let's go, laddie."

"Go where?"

"We'll call on your friend Everett. Anyone in such beautiful evening clothes ought to be able to get me into the Morello. So far, the outside lobby has been my farthest north. Yoicks, my son."

"Wait a minute. We go to see Everett. I tell him I think he robbed me. He says he didn't. And that'll be that. How far does it get us?"

"Just about as far as you'd get by charging Lyon with felonious assault. But if the jittery get is home alone and we can get to him—well, I think he'll break down. He looks like the sort that can't take it. And laddie, when I'm crowded, I can deal it."

"He had another nervous collapse or whatever, this noon," I told my companion as we pulled on our coats. "He's not built for a murderer."

"Those that aren't built for it suffer worst when they do it," Cochrane replied with an angelic smile and led the way downstairs.

We hailed a taxi and drove toward the Morello. Beside me, Cochrane smoked in silence for some minutes before he asked with the sleepy air he used when things were most important:

"I don't suppose you've had time, during your toilet, to give a thought to the fact that Everett used to be Horstman?"

"This nightmare," I told him, "moves too fast for me to think much of any one thing. What are you brooding on now?"

"Well," he said, "Horstman could be a German name, eh?"

I nodded.

"And it was a German voice you heard, over the phone, just before Blackbeard was killed?"

He saw that he had pricked me and beamed.

"You don't think," I asked angrily, "that I don't know Everett's

voice? You really can't think that he has the guts to—"

"If you knew," Cochrane broke in, "the number and variety of the things I can think, you'd be dismayed and grieved. Anyway, you might chew on that a little, during your wooing of the lovely heiress."

"Listen," I began and glared at him.

He smiled sweetly.

"I don't want to hear a word," he answered. "Here we are at the scene of the crime."

Walters, the night doorman, was in attendance on a shiny town car when our cab drew up at the Morello and Cochrane followed me into the foyer, unchallenged. Fineman was on the switchboard. He seemed too dazzled at sight of me in formal clothes to notice the reporter and, at my request, telephoned the Ferriter apartment.

"Nobody home," he said, flicking down the switch. "The old boy, him that was pinched after the killing, went out twenty minutes ago."

"I wanted to see his brother."

Everett's absence cheered me. Apparently, my furies had found another job and my way upstairs to the Paget apartment was clear, at last.

"Him?" asked Fineman. "He hasn't shown since I came on. I'll tell him, if he comes."

"Do that," I answered and turned back to Cochrane.

He grinned at my news.

"Well," he said, "we tried anyway. Good night, to you, Prince Charming. Have a nice opera. I think I'll nose around a bit. Not in here, where I pollute the patrician atmosphere and run a chance of getting heaved out on my neck, but outside. I'll be seeing you, laddie."

"I feel like a pup, walking out on you now," I said.

"I certainly hope you do," Cochrane answered cheerfully.

Miss Agatha and Allegra were in the living room. There was coffee on the table beside them and its fragrance for an instant made me aware that I had missed another meal. Then Allegra smiled and I forgot prosaic food. She was very fair in her black evening dress with the frosty coronet in her hair; so lovely of body and face, that I looked quickly away and endured the old lady's humorous glare.

"David," Miss Agatha asked, "do you always appear everywhere exactly on time with the look of one who has run the last hundred yards?"

"I always run at least the last hundred when I'm going to see Everett," I told her.

Allegra giggled. Miss Agatha retorted:

"My dear boy, I've been a whetstone on which many men have sharpened their gallantry for use on others. You don't impress me. Go on to your opera. It's Wagner and it serves you both right."

I held the glittering, fur-collared coat in which Allegra wrapped herself. The fragrance of her hair made me slightly dizzy. She went to her aunt and, bending, kissed her. I saw the old hands catch one of hers and hold it tightly, passionately, for an instant. There was no pathos in that. There was none in Miss Agatha's brisk voice.

"Allegra, will you remember that

David Mallory starts his work again in just thirteen hours? What havoc you make of other men's nights is between you and your God. David is my employee. He's got to do a second chapter tomorrow as good as the first. Don't keep him out till dawn."

The girl laughed.

"Agatha," she promised, "you'll be surprised."

"I've lived with you young hellions too long for that," said the old lady. The tenderness in her eyes did not reach her voice until we turned to leave the room.

"Take good care of her, David," she called after us.

I nodded.

CHAPTER XII

Most of the first act of "Die Walkuere" went over my head, which, perhaps, left me even with most of the audience. I was stirred more by the girl beside me than by the fat persons on the stage. She watched their posturings and, whenever I dared, I watched her.

"Didn't it get you at all?"

She was flushed and her eyes were bright. I rose to let our seat neighbors pass into the aisle.

"It got too much of me," I told her. "Shall we get out?"

"If you had an opera hat," she said, "I'd know you were itching to wear it in the lobby with the rest of the show-offs. Me, I'd rather sit still. It takes time for me to get my breath after Ring music. Let's just talk."

I said: "I'd rather, too. Will you pick up where we were interrupted? Why hasn't Everett an alibi?"

"Aren't you," she asked, "the most persistent person?" Her smile faded and her face grew troubled. She frowned and picked her words:

"Measured by time, he hasn't. If you can stretch your imagination to believe him a murderer, he might have done it."

"Then why—" I began, but she took away my question.

"Why did I clear him? Because it was idiotic to dream—it's still crazy to think—that Everett was the killer. When Captain Shannon began checking up, Agatha said I had been with Everett and I let it go at that. I had been, too, but only for less than five minutes before you came in. How long he had been in our apartment before that, I don't know. He usually spends most of the afternoon in the workroom. He has a latchkey."

Her eyes were dark with worry. I said, trying for lightness:

"There are too many latchkeys."

I knew from the way she caught her breath that the jest had hurt. She sat for a moment, pleading her program with nervous fingers and I felt she was trying to control her voice. It was quiet when she said at last:

"Grove is with Ione tonight."

I could find no answer for a moment. She went on, as though she were afraid of silence:

"They probably are out together right now. They always are, when he has one of these 'business engagements' that keeps him from coming home."

She turned and faced me, like a child who is sorry for a fault.

"Maybe that's not fair. Maybe she loves him. It's just that—well, I'm jealous, I suppose. Grove and I have been very close since we were little children and now—we're not. That's not all. This murder seems to have turned everyone's world—but Agatha's—upside down. I'm frightened for Grove. He's walking deep into something. And I'm—afraid."

"Sure," I said. "I know how you feel."

The thick voice I had heard over the telephone; the still unexplained disappearance of the murderer; Grove turning on the light in the Ferriter apartment; my struggle in the dark basement hallway; Everett's furtive raid on my room; my duel with his brother—these were blown about by the strong wind of music. Siegmund and his rival were fighting with swords on the stage. When the clumsy contest ended I found my palms clammy and my breath scant. I might at this moment be lying like the slain Hundling. I looked at Allegra. She had made life important. I was sweating as the curtain fell.

Allegra, too, had felt the music's spell. She watched me mop my face and, I think, read there something more than the effect of an operatic tragedy. When our neighbors had gone again into the lobby, she asked:

"Just what is your—your interest in this mess?"

I could tell from her eyes and the sound of her words that she had kept that question a long while. I tried to gain time.

"I don't quite know what you mean."

She brushed that away with a quick movement of her hands.

"Mister," she said with hollow gaiety, "you wouldn't trifle with a poor girl, would you? You aren't just a spectator. You're in this up to your neck. I can feel it. Why?"

I said slowly:

"That's a hard one. Because if I told you the truth; if I said that my interest in a murderer and a murderer was chiefly—almost entirely—the hope that I might help you, you wouldn't believe me."

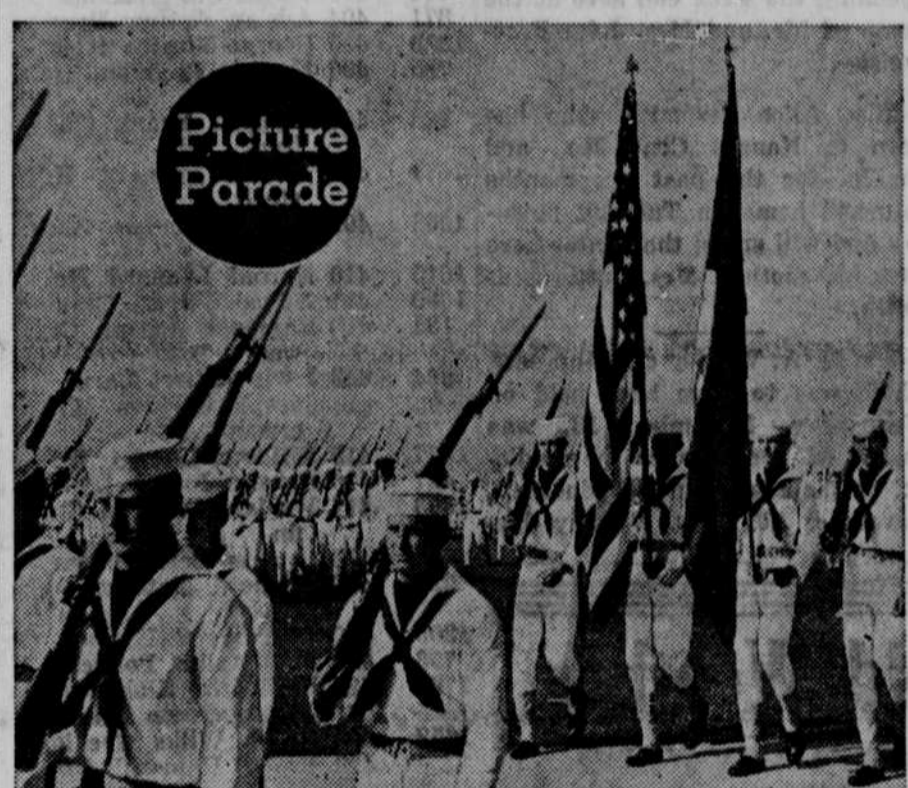
(TO BE CONTINUED)

Kindergarten for Gobs

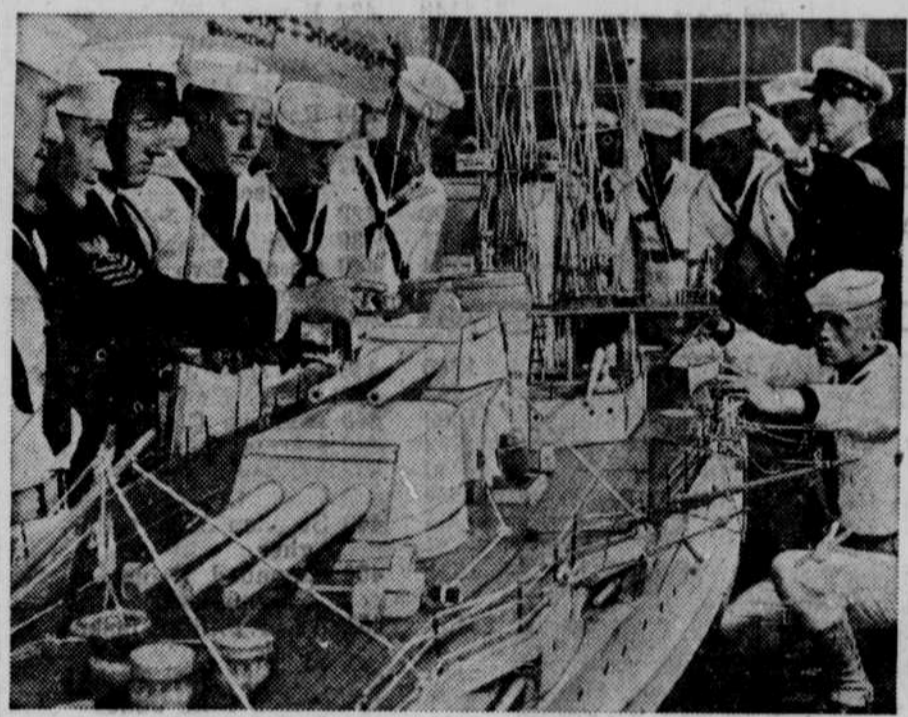
Strange to relate, the metamorphosis that transforms the civilian into a sailor takes place on dry land. The United States naval training station at Newport, R. I., is one of the four such institutions maintained by the navy for turning civilians into sailors. When a recruit is accepted into the U. S. navy he undergoes intensive training, lasting eight weeks, during which time he crosses the bridge between civilian and naval life. Currently there are 2,087 recruits taking the eight weeks' course as the start of a six-year enlistment. These photos take you to the U. S. naval training station at Newport, R. I.



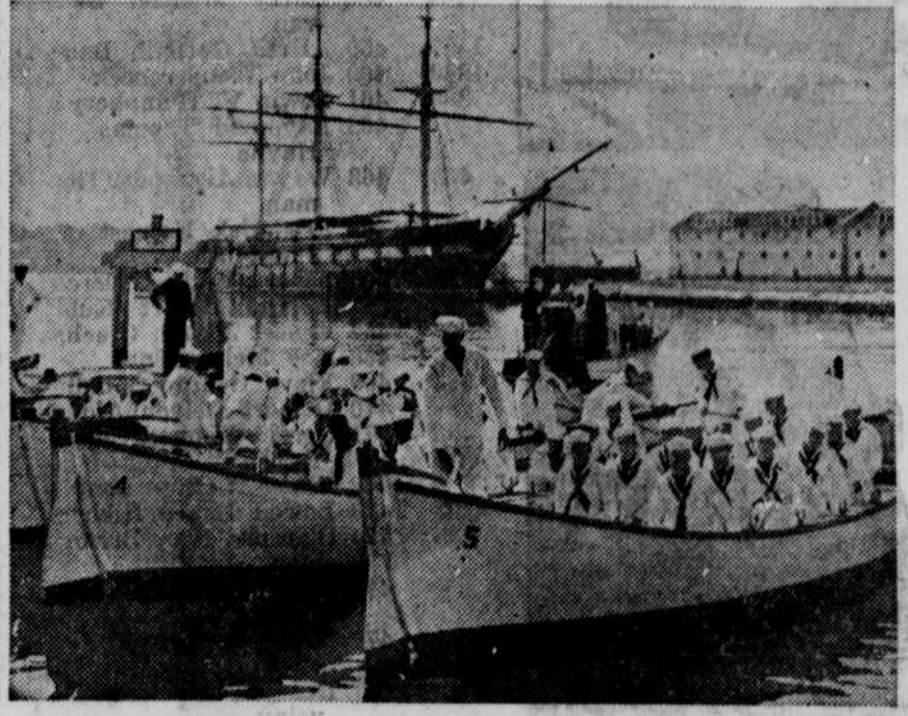
MARKSMANSHIP . . . The landlubber does not usually associate the sailor with a rifle, but naval recruits must learn to shoot straight. Here is a class on the rifle range at the U. S. naval training station, Newport, R. I., during target practice.



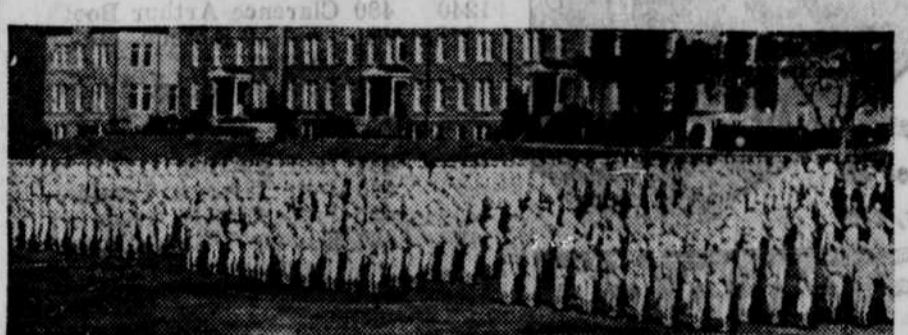
ON PARADE . . . Apprentice seamen who have learned to march in step and to carry their rifles at the correct angle as part of their infantry drills are shown here as color guard during a parade.



MODEL HOME . . . This class of naval recruits is being initiated into the mysteries of the model battleship, on which many of them will soon live. This is a model of the U. S. S. Utah.



ANCHORS AWEIGH . . . Like peas in a pod are these well-trained navy recruits as they man the oars for a drill in Narragansett bay. In the background is the old U. S. S. Constellation.



REVIEW . . . The parade ground during a review. Apprentice seamen are lined before the administration building.

THANKSGIVING

(Associated Newspapers.)
WNU Service.

AN OLD-FASHIONED Thanksgiving dinner?" said Ma Hubbell doubtfully. "I—don't know. Do you think we'd better, pa?"

"I ain't sure's we had or not," candidly, "but it's been on my mind consider'ble the last few weeks, an'—an' I guess mebbe I'd like it; we'd both like it. Ye see, ma, I'm over 70 now, an' there can't be many more times. We've been down here to Florida twelve years, an' never a Thanksgiving dinner in all the time."

"I know, pa," huskily, "but it—never seemed like I could. An' I kind o' felt you wouldn't like it, either. We've never spoke of it together—but you remember the last time."

"Fifteen years ago," trying to keep his own voice firm and steady, but turning his face away from her. "Sometimes I've tried to think mebbe I was too harsh with him, an' too hasty; but when I've studied it all over, fair as could be, I've felt I'd have to do just the same thing, the same way. There never was a black sheep in the Hubbell family from the time Great-Grandfather Hubbell's brother ran off to be a sailor, till—till our Enos—"

Ma Hubbell did not speak. Tears were twinkling silently down her cheeks.

"I've tried to think I was ha'sh," the old farmer repeated, "but couldn't. I tried to train Enos up to be a good farmer, to know the best way to grow things, an' the best way to sell 'em. An' Enos learned it all, too," with reminiscence gratification in his voice, "an' we were both proud of him. He was a good boy an' a good, sensible grower an' seller. Then all at once he commenced goin' wild, an' then he learned to play tricks so he could join the circus. Said he was tired of diggin' dirt an' wanted to see the world."

Ma Hubbell nodded. It was all just as fresh in her mind as in his, though neither of them had spoken of it in the long fifteen years.

"Then he came home for that Thanksgiving day," the old man went on, after a long silence, his face growing a little harder, "an' we killed the biggest turkey, an' after dinner I talked with 'im 'bout what we hoped an' the Hubbell family, an' what chances the world offered to strong young men. An'—an' he laughed in my face, an' used some pretty wrong language. An' that night he went off an' got so drunk he had to bring him home. The next day I told him to go an' not come back any more. Then we sold the farm an' came down here. Seems as if neither of us could live on the old place after that."

Pa Hubbell walked heavily to a window, repeating to himself as he did so: "Mebbe I was too ha'sh with him, mebbe I was, though it never seemed so."

A slight drizzle was beginning to fall and already the ground was wet. Many turkeys and other poultry were pecking in a desultory manner about the kitchen door and between there and the barn, and out under the long shed the hired man was preparing some of the fowls for market. The farmer looked at him with unseeing eyes. At length he turned back into the room.

"I'm over seventy," he repeated, "an' you're pretty close to me, ma. We can't reasonably count for much longer. An' I've been thinkin' a lot about New England an' Thanksgiving dinners lately. I don't want to go back, but seems like I could relish a real old-time dinner once more. Enos is likely dead long ago. Circus folks don't live long, they say. We—we can imagine him sittin' at the table with us, jest a little boy, like he used to be."

Ma Hubbell's lips quivered, but by a strong effort she stilled the quiver and turned to him what seemed a calm face.

"All right, pa," she agreed. "I'll start in at once, an' with the whole day before us I think Betsey an' me can get pretty much everything cooked up. The turkey we'll leave till mornin', for it'll taste better fresh-baked. But you'll have to buy me some cranberries in town, an' some raisins an' other things. I'll set 'em down. We can stew cranberries, an' mix an' bake some mince pies this evenin' after you get back. An' say, pa, if you should see anybody on the road, you'd specially like, you might ask 'em to dinner. 'Twould make it more sociable for you."

Pa Hubbell nodded and glanced through the window. He didn't see anything in particular because his thoughts were far away.

"Get your list ready," he said, "an' I'll go an' be gettin' the big farm truck ready. It's goin' to be a regular run by an' by. Up on the farm it would be snow now, an' the truck would be a sleigh. Well, I want to be gettin' back if it's goin' to be an all night's rain. I guess there's enough poultry dressed for a nice truck-load by now, for Bill an' I packed forty turkeys an' as many hens last night. This lot I think I'd better take to the fashionable street, which has nice stores an' high-priced trade. Such turkeys as ours ought to sell well, bein' the day before Thanksgiving. An' I'll keep my eyes open for anybody I

think will make good Thanksgiving company." It was a full fifteen miles to the stores at Clearwater that Pa Hubbell had in mind, and though he started fairly early, and had a good truck, it was well toward noon when he slowed up and began to study the store fronts he was passing. At length he stopped before one.

"Fine big show of everything except turkeys," he thought, "an' they seem sca'se. Guess mebbe the owner will be glad to buy mine."

He swung his truck to the curb, clambered to the sidewalk and went inside. The store was well filled with customers and he went forward and began to look over some boxes of oranges and grapefruit marked "From Owner's Grove."

"Fine's I ever seen," he thought admiringly. "That owner must have grown up a farmer an' fruit-grower, sure. Must take home a dozen of these for ma."

The talk of the customers was coming to him from all sides and he listened interestedly.

"Why, you seem to know all about turkeys, sir," he heard one woman say.

"I ought to," laughed a voice which made Pa Hubbell start and crane his neck. "I was brought up on a farm and learned to know turkeys from the egg to the Thanksgiving table. Why, I almost believe I could look at a turkey and tell just how long it took to grow and what it fed on. But I'm sorry I've such a poor stock to show you, madam, I wish I had one of the birds my old father used to—"

A shaggy gray head suddenly loomed up beside the customer.

"I've brought a flock of 'em, son," Pa Hubbell announced grimly. "Just tell the lady to wait till I bring 'em in."

He started toward the door, but before he reached it a hand was on his shoulder.

"Father," a voice thought—huskily. "I didn't know—I thought—I went back to the place and—is mother—"

"We sold an' moved down here," briefly, "and your ma is alive an' well. No, you needn't say a word, son. Tomorrow's Thanksgiving an' we don't want any old sores opened. Your ma told me to bring out somebody to eat with us an' I'll take you. Now help me with the turkeys an' then ask your boss to let you off till day after tomorrow, when I'll bring you back."

The son laughed shakily, his hand slipping caressingly across the other's shoulders.

"I have no boss," he said. "You don't understand, father. I'm not dancing clogs now, nor drinking. I quit that more than ten years ago. I just couldn't keep it up, remembering all you and mother had taught me. Then I tried half a dozen other things and went broke on them all. At last I settled down to something I knew—something you had taught me—eggs, poultry, beef, mutton, farm produce, fruits and the like, and I've made good."

Pa Hubbell's mouth opened and shut and a great light came into his eyes. But all he said was, "Ma'll be glad. Of course you'll go right off."

"Of course. I'll speak to the chief clerk about a few matters, and then—But I'm glad you have a truck, father, large enough to hold the whole bunch."

"The what?" looking bewildered.

"All of us. But I forgot. I suppose you don't know there are seven of us, wife, children and myself. The oldest boy is twelve, and named after you. Then there are girls of eleven and ten, and the younger boys. We live in rooms over the store."

Pa Hubbell lost command of himself.

"Five children—for Thanksgiving!" he shouted. "An' one of 'em a boy! He twelve years old!"

Then he whirled to the wagon.

"Come, help me out with these, quick!" he cried. "Then take me right upstairs to see 'em. Five! What will ma say?"

Imitation of Weathered Pine Produced by Stain

A country house of the English type near Philadelphia has been finished in exact imitation of weathered pine. The stain used to produce the effect was made by mixing one pound of raw sienna with one pound of burnt umber and an even teaspoonful of burnt sienna. All of these were oil colors. A half gallon each of turpentine and boiled linseed oil was added very gradually to thin the mixture thoroughly. The stain was then applied and immediately wiped away again with rags or waste. Each door or window was completely finished before leaving it. The following day, when the stain had dried, a small dab of quick drying black, ground in coach japan, was applied with the thumb for irregularity in each panel and blended with a dry rag or blender. When the entire finish became hard, another coating was added—this time of white lead barely tinted gray and thinned with turpentine and a small quantity of drier. Again each unit of door or window was entirely completed and rubbed before leaving it. The next day three coats of wax were applied, with polishing between coats. The floor was finished with the ground stain, applied evenly without lapping, and waxed. No wipe-off coats or dabs of black were used on the floor. It is possible to create the same effect by applying crude bi-chromate of potassium dissolved in water for a ground stain instead of the sienna-umber mixture.