

The Spoilers.

By REX E. BEACH.

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[Continued from last week.]

"Bah! I had you sized up at the start, but Roy couldn't see it. Then Struve told me what I hadn't guessed. A bottle of wine, a woman, and that fool will tell all he knows. It's a great game McNamara's playing, and he did well to get you in on it, for you're clever, your nerve is good, and your makeup is great for the part. I ought to know, for I've turned a few tricks myself. You'll pardon this little burst of feeling-professional plique, I'm jealous of your ability, that's all. However, now that you realize we're in the same class, don't look down on me hereafter." She opened the door and bowed her guest out with elaborate mockery.

Helen was too bewildered and humiliated to make much out of this vicious and incoherent attack except the fact that Cherry Malotte accused her of a part in this conspiracy which every one seemed to believe existed. Here again was that hint of corruption which she encountered on all sides. This might be merely a woman's jealousy, and yet she said Struve had told her all about it—that a bottle of wine and a pretty face would make the lawyer disclose everything. She could believe it from what she knew and had heard of him. The feeling that she was groping in the dark, that she was wrapped in a mysterious web of secrecy, came over her again as it had so often of late. If Struve talked to that other woman, why wouldn't he talk to her? She paused, changing her direction toward Front street, revolving rapidly in her mind as she went her course of action. Cherry Malotte believed her to be an actress. Very well, she would prove her judgment right.

She found Struve busy in his private office, but he leaped to his feet on her entrance and came forward, offering her a chair.

"Good morning, Miss Helen. You have a fine color, considering the night you passed. The judge told me all about the affair, and let me state that you're the pluckiest girl I know."

She smiled grimly at the thought of what made her cheeks glow and languidly loosened the buttons of her jacket.

"I suppose you're very busy, you lawyer man?" she inquired.

"Yes, but not too busy to attend to anything you want."

"Oh, I didn't come on business," she said lightly. "I was out walking and merely sauntered in."

"Well, I appreciate that all the more," he said in an altered tone, twisting his chair about. "I'm more than delighted." She judged she was getting on well from the way his professionalism had dropped off.

"Yes, I got tired of talking to uncle and Mr. McNamara. They treat me as though I were a little girl."

"When do you take the fatal step?"

"What step do you mean?"

"Your marriage. When does it occur? You needn't hesitate," he added.

"McNamara told me about it a month ago."

He felt his throat gingerly at the thought, but his eyes brightened when she answered lightly:

"I think you are mistaken. He must have been joking."

For some time she led him on adroitly, talking of many things in a way to make him wonder at her new and flippancy humor. He had never dreamed she could be like this—so tantalizingly close to familiarity and yet so maddeningly aloof and distant. He grew bolder in his speech.

"How are things going with us?" she questioned as his warmth grew pronounced. "Uncle won't talk, and Mr. McNamara is as close mouthed as can be lately."

He looked at her quickly. "In what respect?"

She summoned up her courage and walked past the ragged edge of uncertainty.

"Now, don't you try to keep me in short dresses too. It's getting wearisome. I've done my part, and I want to know what the rest of you are doing." She was prepared for any answer.

"What do you want to know?" he asked cautiously.

"Everything. Don't you think I can hear what people are saying?"

"Oh, that's it! Well, don't you pay any attention to what people say."

She recognized her mistake and continued hurriedly:

"Why shouldn't I? Aren't we all in this together? I object to being used and then discarded. I think I'm entitled to know how the scheme is working. Don't you think I can keep my mouth shut?"

"Of course," he laughed, trying to change the subject of their talk. But

she arose and leaned against the desk near him, vowing that she would not leave the office without piercing some part of this mystery. His manner strengthened her suspicion that there was something behind it all. This dispirited, brilliant creature knew the situation thoroughly, and yet, though swayed by her efforts, he remained chained by caution. She leaned forward and smiled at him.

"You're just like the others, aren't you? You won't give me any satisfaction at all."

"Give, give, give," said Struve cynically. "That's always the woman's cry. Give me this—give me that. Selfish sex! Why don't you offer something in return? Men are traders; women usurers. You are curious; hence miserable. I can help you, therefore I should do it for a smile. You ask me to break my promises and risk my honor on your caprice. Well, that's womanlike, and I'll do it. I'll put myself in your power, but I won't do it gratis. No; we'll trade."

"It isn't curiosity," she denied indignantly; "it is my due."

"No; you've heard the common talk and grown suspicious, that's all. You think I know something that will throw a new light or a new shadow on everything you have in the world, and you're worked up to such a condition that you can't take your own people's word; and, on the other hand, you can't go to strangers, so you come to me. Suppose I tell you I had the papers you brought to me last spring in that safe and that they told the whole story—whether your uncle is unimpeachable or whether he deserved hanging by that neck—what would you do, eh? What would you give to see them? Well, they're there and ready to speak for themselves. If you're a woman you won't rest till you've seen them. Will you trade?"

"Yes, yes! Give them to me," she cried eagerly, at which a wave of crimson rushed up to his eyes and he rose abruptly from his chair. He made toward her, but she retreated to the wall, pale and wide-eyed.

"Can't you see," she flung at him, "that I must know?"

He paused. "Of course I can, but I want a kiss to bind the bargain—to apply on account." He reached for her hand with his own hot one, but she pushed him away and slipped past him toward the door.

"Suit yourself," said he, "but if I'm not mistaken you'll never rest till you've seen those papers. I've studied you, and I'll place a bet that you can't marry McNamara or look your uncle in the eye till you know the truth. You might do either if you knew them to be crooks, but you couldn't if you only suspected it—that's the woman. When you get ready, come back. I'll show you proof, because I don't claim to be anything but what I am—Wilton Struve, bargainer of some mean ability. When they come to inscribe my headstone I hope they can carve there on with truth. He got value received."

"You're a panther," she said loathingly.

"Graceful and elegant brute, that," he laughed. "Affectionate and full of play, but with sharp teeth and sharper claws. To follow out the idea, which pleases me, I believe the creature owes no loyalty to its fellows, and hunts alone. Now, when you've followed this conspiracy out and placed the blame where it belongs, won't you come and tell me about it? That door leads into an outer hall which opens into the street. No one will see you come or go."

As she hurried along she wondered dazedly why she had stayed to listen so long. What a monster he was! His meaning was plain, had always been so from the first day he laid eyes on her, and he was utterly conscienceless. She had known all this; and yet, in her proud, youthful confidence, and in her need, every hour more desperate and urgent, to know the truth, she had dared risk herself with him. Withal, the man was shrewd and observant and had divined her mental condition with remarkable sagacity. She had failed with him; but the girl now knew that she could never rest till she found an answer to her questions. She must kill this suspicion that ate into her. She thought tenderly of her uncle's goodness to her, clung with despairing faith to the last of her kin. The blood ties of the Chesters were close and she felt in dire need of that lost brother who was somewhere in this mysterious land—need of some one in whom ran the strain that bound her to the weak old man up yonder. There was McNamara; but how could he help her, how much did she know of him, this

(Continued on page 6.)

PHILIPPINE REPORT

SECRETARY RECORDS RESULTS OF AMERICAN OCCUPATION.

Is Optimistic in High Degree, Even Though He Cannot Fix Time for Declaring Independence of Islands. President Commenos Report.

Washington, Jan. 27.—Nine years after the battle of Manila bay, Secretary Tait records the results of the American occupation of the archipelago and forecasts the future of the Philippines in an exhaustive report, transmitted to congress by the president, with a letter written by the chief executive, commending in the highest terms the secretary's conclusions. The president declares that run would have followed the adoption of any other policy towards the Philippines than that outlined by William McKinley and carried forward through these nine years, and asserts triumphantly that there is no brighter page in history than that dealing with the relations between the strong and the weak in those islands. He adds that the Filipinos "have yet a long way to travel before they will be fit for complete self government."

Secretary Tait's report records his observations on his recent visit to the islands to the extent of nearly eighty printed pages. Generally speaking, the secretary is optimistic in a high degree in treating of this subject, even though he cannot fix a time for declaring the independence of the islands. In answer to the critics who have made "the most astounding and unfair statements in respect to the cost to the United States of the Philippines," he figures out a total annual expenditure of \$6,000,000, and he vigorously denies the failure of the Philippine policy. He says that great changes have occurred in the islands. The people are now anxious to have the American soldiers retained. There is a high standard of administration of justice. Nothing is more popular than the constabulary. There are no questions between the government and the Roman Catholic church, unless the Aglipayan schism can be said to be involved. Peace prevails in a greater degree than ever before in the history of the islands. The magnificent Benguet road is now justified by the results obtained.

The secretary is willing to limit the amount of sugar and tobacco that can be exported to the United States. He predicts a development of business within twenty-five years that will make the Filipinos themselves stand high in the world's industrial populations. His recommendations are that Philippine products be admitted into the United States free of duty and reasonable limitations; that present restrictions be removed on the acquisition of mining property; that the Philippine government be authorized to conduct an agricultural bank, and, finally, that the islands be exempted from the operations of the coastwise shipping laws.

Feet of the Ancient Greeks.

A walk through the British museum and a close examination of the pedal extremities of ancient art there show they are all bad about the feet. "The Disk Thrower," a celebrated specimen, has particularly bad examples of inelegant bunions. If the foot of the Farnese Apollo, used as a model in most art schools, represents the foot of the average Greek corns and bunions must have been common in that classical country.—British Shoemaker.

The Earnest Word.

"You never can tell," observed Uncle Allen Sparks, "what lasting results may be accomplished by an earnest word spoken at the right time. Many a man has had the shape of his nose changed for life by calling another man a liar."—Chicago Tribune.

Equal to the Occasion.

Some time ago a friend of mine got a curious present from a sea captain. It was a fine specimen of the bird which sailors call the "laughing jackass," and he was a little proud of it. As he was carrying it home he met a brawny Irish navy, who stopped and asked him:

"Phwat kind of a burrd is that, sorr?"

"That's a laughing jackass," explained my friend genially.

The Irishman, thinking he was being made fun of, was equal to the occasion and responded, with a twinkle in the eye:

"It's not yerself; it's the burrd Oi mane, sorr."—London Answers.

A Paris shopkeeper wrote to one of his customers as follows:

"I am able to offer you cloth like the inclosed sample at 9 francs the meter. In case I do not hear from you I shall conclude that you wish to pay only 8 francs. In order to lose no time, I accept the last mentioned price."

There is no dish in the world that so rigidly requires to be eaten hot as steak. Some wag has said: "A cold cup of coffee, cold batter cakes, the cold shoulder, a cool reception—all are tolerable—we can use philosophy and forget them—but a cold steak is abominable. It is barbarous."

Rotation of Crops.

It seems that every force in nature is trying to compel the farmer to practice a rotation of crops. If corn is grown for several years on the same plot, the land will be infected with all manner of insects, from the root worm and louse to the insect that eats the tassel. The farmer who grows wheat year after year on the same plot of ground has the Hessian fly and the chinch bug to contend with; cotton planter and tobacco planter have each insects to fight and fungous diseases to overcome because one crop has been grown continuously for a number of years on the same plot. If rotation is practiced these insects and diseases may be held in check. If rotation is not followed no remedy will destroy or overcome them.—Southern Cultivator.

In the Zoo.

"Come on," said the first flea as he hopped from the brown bear's left fore leg. "Come over and join me at a short game of golf?"

"Golf?" exclaimed the second flea, hastily taking a bite at the hyena. "Where in the realm of the skies are we to play golf?"

"Why," said the first flea, smiling, "over on the lynx, of course."—London Answers.

"Pa, did you ever hear money talk?"

"Yes."

"What did it say?"

"'Goofie.'"—Exchange.

His Concession.

Miss Sallie Miller, the acknowledged belle of the town, had fewer beaux than were her due. This was owing to her father's peculiar aversion to all young men who called on his daughter. He had a disconcerting way of taking possession of the porch and snubbing her callers while they were waiting for her to come down.

One evening Newton Brown, a bashful young swain, came a trifle too early for Miss Sallie. Mr. Miller and Newton's father were close friends, but the boy had grown so rapidly that the old gentleman did not recognize little Newt Brown in this tall, gawky youth. "It looks as if it might rain," the young fellow ventured timidly.

"Tain't a-goin' to rain," was the gruff response.

For about a quarter of an hour they sat in silence. Finally the old man's curiosity got the better of him.

"Who are you, anyway?" he growled.

"Newton Brown, sir."

"What! Not old Jake Brown's son?"

"Yes, sir."

"Well, well," said Mr. Miller more kindly; "it may rain; it may rain."—Everybody's Magazine.

A mustard plaster is not a very poetic subject; but, ah, how warmly it appeals to a man's feelings!—Philadelphia Inquirer.

Are Patent Medicines Frauds?

We are often asked the above question, and our answer has invariably been that no medicine that gives satisfactory results could be fraudulent. We could not afford to sell fraudulent medicines. Our business depends on pleased customers—in fact any business does. Therefore, we would take an enormous risk did we not fulfil every promise made our customers. We are very careful of what we guarantee, and when we do guarantee an article we must know it pretty well—what it contains and how it is made. We have in mind the Rexall line of remedies, particularly Rexall Mucu-Tone, of which we are selling large quantities at this time of the year. Mucu-Tone is one article that we can recommend over our counter and know that ninety-eight per cent. of its purchasers are going to be benefited and will return to our store pleased customers. Mucu-Tone is a positive cure for internal scrofula or what is commonly called Catarrh. It is without a doubt the peer of all tonics for any one who is suffering from a run-down condition, can't work, feels constantly tired or suffering from the more plainly described symptoms of Catarrh—such as stopping of the nose, cold in the head or bad cough.

It must be remembered that Catarrh is not confined to the nose and throat. It usually starts there, but it leads more often to serious trouble, particularly the wasting of tissues, as in the case of little Miss Dillon, of Albany. Here is a letter from her father:

"My little girl had catarrh so badly that the disease had begun to eat into the cartilage of the nose. Snuffs and instruments failed to do more than give temporary relief. I saw the advertisements of Rexall Mucu-Tone, but I could not believe that anything taken in the stomach could cure the sore membranes of the nose. However, I took advantage of your free trial offer and my girl began taking your remedy according to directions. I want to say right here that Mucu-Tone is certainly the greatest medical discovery of the times, and to thank you for the liberal offer that first induced me to give it a trial. Mucu-Tone has cured my daughter's catarrh completely. The discharge has stopped altogether, and her breath is as sweet as can be. Again thanking you, MATT. DILLON, 24 N. Swan St., Albany, N. Y."

We are selling a large trial bottle of Mucu-Tone for fifty cents on the famous Rexall guarantee of your money back if you are not satisfied. We promise that one bottle will put flesh on your bones and bring new vitality to your system.

A REASON

The United Drug Company, manufacturers of the Rexall Remedies, for whose preparations we are agents in this city, make 300 remedies, one for each ill. Each one is especially prepared to cure one disease, and that only. This is an age of specialists. You don't contract with a plumber to build your whole house, do you? Why should you contract with one proprietary medicine to cure all your troubles?

Oftentimes you run across a building contractor who has a separate plumbing department, his own plastering department, and so on, all of which dovetail together and build the house. This is just what the United Drug Company is doing for you in the medicine line. They have cut down profits; they manufacture Rexall Remedies for over 2,000 retail druggists. These druggists are the only intermediates profit that stand between The United Drug Company and the patient.

Could the United Drug Company, of which we are a member, afford to make one poor medicine in this line? Does not common sense tell you that one poor medicine would ruin the sale of the other 199 preparations? If you bought a Rexall preparation and it didn't do for you what we claim it will, would you buy another one of our articles? We believe not. Therefore each preparation must be good—it is good. We who are in the drug business know the formulas of these Rexall preparations. We believe in them so implicitly that we stand back of them, with our guarantee to refund you your money if they do not benefit you.

For Nervousness—Rexall Americanitis Elixir, 75c.

For Constipation—Rexall Orderlies, Price, 10c.

For Coughs—Rexall Cherry Juice, large bottle, 25c.

And—106 other Rexall Remedies for 196 other ailments.

The H. E. Grice Drug Co., THE REXALL STORE.