

The DESTROYER

By BURTON E. STEVENSON

(CHAPTER XXI—Continued.)

"To be quite candid," answered Pachmann, readily, "I am afraid to give it to you on board this boat. I chose this boat because I believed we should be safe here. But there are spies on board; one of our conferences has been overheard—perhaps both of them," and he told of the assault upon Schroeder. "Then again, we must not be seen too much together. I might be recognized; and you are already suspected of having caused the destruction of La Liberté."

"How can that be?" Vard demanded, in a tone which showed that he was genuinely startled. For answer, Pachmann took from his vest pocket a paper, unfolded it and handed it to Vard. It was the wireless from Lepine. "That was received last Thursday," he said. "I suppose you know who Lepine is. By great good fortune, I intercepted it, and sent an answer denying that you were on board. It was for that reason you were removed to the first class and your name kept off the passenger list. But how can he have suspected you?"

Vard shook his head slowly. He was a little pale, and the hand which held the message trembled. "I cannot guess," he said.

"You have told no one?" "Told!" flashed Vard. "Do you not see that, unless my great plan succeeds, that action will have been an infamous one? To kill 300 men in order to assure peace to the world—that may be justified—that may even be heroic; but to kill them wantonly, to kill them and then to fail—that would drive me mad!" He looked at Pachmann, his eyes suddenly inflamed.

"And let me tell you this," he added, in a voice of concentrated passion, "if I find that you have deceived me, if I find that you have betrayed me, Germany shall suffer a reprisal that will make you shudder! I swear it!" Pachmann's eyes were also suffused. In that moment, he literally saw red.

"You threaten!" he cried hoarsely. "You dare to threaten!" "I warn!" said Vard. "And you will do well to heed the warning! You are playing with fire—take care that it does not consume you!"

Pachmann conquered his emotion by a supreme effort.

"It is foolish to talk in that way," he said. "It is foolish to speak of deception and betrayal. There is no question of either. But we must move cautiously. We must evade spies. Even you can see that!"

"Here is my last word," said Vard, more calmly. "We shall reach New York on Tuesday. I will await your answer for 24 hours after we have landed. If I have not then received it, I shall consider myself free to act as I think best."

A gleam of triumph flashed in Pachmann's eyes.

"I accept your condition," he said, and with a little ironical bow, rose and left the cabin.

CHAPTER XXII.

THE EVENTS OF MONDAY.

Kasia did not see the prince again. That ingenious young man had spent a most uncomfortable half hour with the doughty admiral, whose language had been both lucid and emphatic, and who had opened the discussion, and spiked the prince's guns at the very start, as it were, by producing the paper sealed with the imperial seal.

"I would call your attention especially to this clause," said Pachmann, and placed his finger upon the words, "all members of my family." "It was not placed there by accident, I assure you. You understand its meaning?"

The prince nodded sullenly, as he handed the paper back.

"Your father," Pachmann continued, replacing it in his pocket, "foresees that some difficulty such as this might arise. As you know, his confidence in you is not great."

The prince flushed and opened his lips angrily; but closed them again without speaking.

Pachmann smiled unpleasantly.

"I can guess what you wish to say," he said. "You would re-

mind me that you are a Hohenzollern, a prince of the blood, a scion of the house to which I, a petty member of the inferior nobility, owe allegiance. That I do not permit myself to forget. But in this affair, by virtue of this paper, I stand in place of your royal father. He would not hesitate to rebuke you, and neither shall I. What was it you were saying to Miss Vard?"

And the prince, after a moment's inward struggle, repeated the conversation, while Pachmann listened frowningly.

"You have been most indiscreet," he said severely, when the prince had finished. "How much harm you have done I cannot say—but I must hasten to undo it. I do not understand you. You know how important this affair is—you are a good German!—and yet you go about talking in this fashion! It is enough to drive one mad! If your father learned of it, I fear he would think it necessary to punish you with great severity. I shall not report it—but on one condition: you must give me your word to discuss affairs of state with no one, to make no chance acquaintances, and to see this girl or her father only in my presence."

And so deeply grounded was the habit of obedience, so profound his respect even for his father's signature, that the prince promised. Besides, he had no wish to spend a year or more in some second-rate fortress; and he resolved to watch himself most warily, until this annoying business was at an end and he was back again in Berlin.

So Kasia saw him no more. She had a little struggle with herself before she finally decided that it was her duty to outline the prince's confessions to her father, and she was deeply relieved when he waved them aside as of no importance.

"Every one knows," he said, "that Germany dreams of nothing but humiliating England; that is no secret—it has been the talk of Europe for 10 years past. But it is one of those dreams which never come true—or go by contraries!"

By noon of Monday, Pachmann had completed his scrutiny of the passengers, and sought an interview with the captain.

"I have discovered nothing," he said; "absolutely nothing. At one time, I thought that I had the man, but I caused his story to be investigated, and found that it was true. There remains only one thing to be done. At what hour shall we land?"

"That will depend upon the delay at quarantine. Two of our steerage passengers are ill. We may not be able to dock before evening."

Pachmann considered this for a moment.

"In the first place," he went on, at last, following out his thought, "you must secure for me two landing tickets—one for Vard and one for his daughter. The immigration officers must not see them. There must be no evidence that they ever reached New York."

Hausmann's face clouded.

"That is a very serious offense," he pointed out.

"We must take the risk."

"What will you do about their baggage?"

"I will have it claimed by some one from the consulate."

The captain hesitated yet a moment.

"I will secure the tickets," he agreed, finally. "A considerable outlay will be necessary."

"You will be reimbursed. Furthermore," Pachmann added, "I will myself explain to the emperor how greatly you have assisted us."

Hausmann bowed coldly.

"Is there anything else?" he asked.

"You have watched the wireless?"

"Yes."

"It must be watched even more closely. No message in cipher, nor any that is at all questionable, must be sent or delivered. If there are complaints afterwards, the failure can be explained as an oversight."

Again Hausmann bowed.

"And finally," said Pachmann, "I have here a message, which I would ask you to have sent at once."

It was in cipher and a long one,

and it took half an hour to transmit, for the wireless man at the Cape Code station was required to repeat it for verification. Then it was hurried on by telegraph to New York, and finally delivered at the German consulate, where the chief of the German secret service, to whom it was addressed, read it with great care.

Miss Vard, meanwhile, was finding the hours long. The prince had furnished a slight diversion—the day before; but today there was no such relief in sight, and she found herself singularly restless. This was, in part, a reflection of her father's mood, for she had never known him so nervous and irritable. The lines in his face had deepened, his eyes were brighter than ever, and he waved her impatiently away whenever she ventured to address him. Plainly, a crisis was at hand, and, as she saw how her father was affected, she awaited it with foreboding.

She tried to read and gave it up, for she could not fix her attention on the page; she sat for a long time looking at the sea, and then turned her eyes away, for its restlessness increased her own; she went for a walk about the deck, but it seemed to her in every pair of eyes turned upon her there was suspicion and aversion. How glad she was that the voyage was almost ended! It had started happily enough, and then, quite suddenly, it had become wearisome and hateful.

It was inevitable that, at this point, her thoughts should fly to Dan. What a nice boy he was! She would see him tomorrow night—she had promised him that! And before that? Would it be too undignified for her to steal up again to that bench on the after boat deck—would it—would it precipitate matters? She did not want to do that and yet . . .

"Good afternoon," said a voice, and some one fell into step beside her, and she looked up and saw that it was Dan. For an instant, she fancied it was only the visualization of her own thoughts; then she winked the mists away.

"This is nice of you," she said. "I was just wishing for—some one. I was dreadfully bored."

"You were a thousand miles away. I passed you twice and you didn't even see me. If it hadn't been for my newspaper training, I'd have made off to my den."

"I'm very glad you didn't. I really wanted to talk to you."

"Suppose we go up to the boat deck," said Dan, "where you—"

He stopped.

"Where I what?"

Dan led the way up the ladder without replying; but a gleam of understanding penetrated Miss Vard's mind when she saw him go straight to the bench where she and the prince had sat.

"It was this way," Dan explained, sitting down beside her. "I happened to be staring down at the forward promenade, yesterday afternoon, when I saw you walking with a tall young fellow, who seemed exceedingly interested in you. Naturally, I was a little curious, as he happened to be a second class passenger like myself—"

"Second class!" broke in Kasia, and stopped herself.

"Did you think him a millionaire?" queried Dan, a little bitterly.

"No," answered Kasia, quietly; "I thought him just what he is—an ingenious young German not very brilliant, perhaps, but clean and honest. I passed a very pleasant half hour with him."

Dan's face was a little pale, but he looked at her manfully and squared his shoulders.

"I deserved that!" he said.

"Thank you, Miss Vard. But it was very lonely, last night!"

Kasia's look softened.

"Yes," she agreed; "it was."

"You felt it, too?" asked Dan, his face lighting up again.

"Certainly I felt it. I haven't dared make any friends among the first class passengers, and a person can't read all the time! One likes to talk occasionally, no matter with whom."

"Why not slip over to second class tonight," Dan suggested, "and sit on the bench. The moon is very beautiful."

But Kasia shook her head, smiling.

"I shall have to admire it alone," she said. "We must not be seen so much together—it is not wise for us to sit here. Suppose some one, seeing us together, should take it into his mind to search your baggage, and should find that little package—"

"He wouldn't find it," Dan broke in. "During the day, I carry it in my pocket. At night, I sleep with it under my pillow."

Kasia gave him a quick glance.

"That is splendid!" she said, quickly. "And you don't even

wish to know what it is?"

"Not unless you wish to tell me. There is one danger, though. If the customs inspector should happen to run across it, he will want to know what it is."

"Tell him it is an electrical device."

"And if he opens it?"

"That will do no harm. All he will find is a small metal box, filled with tiny wires coiled about each other."

Dan breathed more freely.

"That simplifies things," he said. "From what you said when you gave it to me, I was afraid I might have to knock him down, snatch the package, and make a break for it."

"No," and Kasia smiled. "It would appear of value only to some one who knew what it was. The customs inspector doesn't count."

"And tomorrow evening, say at 8 o'clock, I shall bring it up to you."

"Very well. I shall expect you. And now you must go."

Dan rose obediently.

"It will be a long 24 hours," he said. "But I feel more cheerful than I did. By the way," he added, turning back, "there's one thing I forgot to tell you. If that other young fellow shows up again you needn't be afraid to talk to him. Chevrial says he's the only one on the ship you are safe to talk freely with!"

"Chevrial!" she repeated, starting; "Chevrial said that!"

"Yes," and Dan laughed. "He seems to be the wise guy, all right!" and without suspecting her emotion, he turned and left her. But for a long time Kasia sat there, unmoving, trying to understand.

Dan's evening was not so lonely as he had expected, for, as he sat on the bench on the boat deck, staring out across the water and thinking of the morrow, Chevrial joined him.

"I do not intrude?" the Frenchman asked.

"Not at all. Sit down, won't you?"

Chevrial sat down, and for some moments there was silence.

"Our voyage nears an end, M. Webster," Chevrial said at last. "Tomorrow you will be home again. Perhaps I may see you in New York."

"Where will you stay?"

"I have some friends in the wine trade with whom I usually stay. The little money I pay them is welcome to them, and I am more comfortable than at an hotel. I do not know their exact address—they have moved since I was last here; but they are to meet me at the pier."

"Whenever you have a leisure evening," said Dan, "call up the Record office and ask for—"

"and we will have dinner together."

"Thank you. I shall remember. And I should like you to meet my friends. I do not know if you are a connoisseur of wine, but if you are, they possess a few bottles of a vintage that will delight you."

"I'm far from being a connoisseur," Dan laughed; "but I accept the invitation with thanks."

Chevrial's face was bright.

"And when next you come to Paris," he added, "I hope you will let me know. There is my card. A letter to that address will always reach me—we have no telephone, alas! There are some things I should delight to show you—things which the average visitor does not see."

"You are very kind," said Dan, taking the card; "and I shall not forget to get abroad again very soon. You see, I have to collect a reserve fund, first; and the cost of living is high!"

"Whenever it is; and the more soon, the better I shall be pleased!"

"How long will you be in New York?"

"A week—10 days, perhaps. Then I go to Boston, and to Montreal and Quebec, and thence home again. I am glad I shall not have to use a German boat. I do not like German boats—nor anything German, for the matter of that! Which reminds me of a most peculiar circumstance. You may have wondered at my remark with reference to that young man who was strolling with Miss Vard?"

"That she could talk to him without fear? Yes, I have wondered just what you meant by it."

(Continued Next Week.)

Efforts are being made to resume the construction of branch railway lines in the Lometa basin of southern Russia, where, during the last years before the war, the branch and connecting lines annually completed averaged 25. The development of the mining industry in the basin was always closely dependent upon the railroads. In the present war transportation of coal in carts became disorganized and costs of transport increased 700 per cent.

A new pumping plant with a capacity of 20,000,000 gallons every 24 hours is to be built in Kansas City, Mo.

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H. J. Johnston, Drawer 197, Watertown, S. D.; W. V. Bennett, Room 4, Bee Building, Omaha, Neb.; and R. A. Garrett, 311 Jackson Street, St. Paul, Minn.

Canadian Government Agents

TROOPS AT SO MUCH A MAN

Soldiers Furnished British Government by British States at Beginning of Revolutionary War.

At the beginning of the Revolutionary war the British government made treaties with several of the German states by which they were to furnish troops at so much a man to assist in subjugating the Americans. Applications for assistance made to Russia and Holland were rejected, but several of the German states responded favorably. There was no united Germany or imperial government, no kaiser with autocratic power, but each independent state had a separate government. An English historian says:

"Finding it difficult or impossible to obtain the necessary recruits at home, and that the existing English and Irish regiments embarked with such reluctance that it was necessary to keep a guard upon the transports to keep them from deserting by wholesale, the ministry applied to Russia, the states-general (Holland), and finally to several of the German states for mercenaries. The infamy of filling up the British armament was reserved for the princes of three or four petty German states." Contracts were made with the rulers of seven German states under which an aggregate of thirty thousand troops were furnished at so much a head, cash down, and an annual sum to the rulers of the different states furnishing them.

"The subsidies," says the English historian, "were to be continued for one full year at least after the war ended and the troops had returned to their homes." The troops thus hired out by German rulers to fight against Americans were not raised easily. The American historian Bancroft says:

"The whole number of men furnished in the war by Brunswick was equal to one-twenty-seventh part of its total population; by the landgrave of Hesse, to one out of every twenty of his subjects, or one in four of the able-bodied men, a proportionate conscription in 1776 would have shipped to America an army of more than 400,000 men. Soldiers were impressed from the plow, the workshop, the highway; no man was safe from the inferior agents of the princes, who kidnaped without scruple."

And the more you are willing to do for your friends the less time you will have to do things for yourself.

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'Twas Easily Done.

Hypochondria was the topic that was being discussed at a social affair, says the Philadelphia Press, when Senator William A. Smith of Michigan recalled the following story:

A woman who was perfectly well, but imagined she had at least a dozen different diseases, called one day to consult an eminent specialist. "I think I understand your case thoroughly, madam," said the doctor as the patient began to tell the story of her life. "Just sit quite still a moment and let me look at you."

The patient complied and after studying her intently for a little while the physician glanced at his watch. "There is nothing the matter with you, madam," finally said the doctor. "You haven't the slightest indication of fever, and your heart beat is perfectly normal."

"Why, how do you know, doctor?" exclaimed the patient in surprise. "You didn't take my pulse."

"It wasn't necessary, madam," smiled the specialist. "I counted the vibrations of the ostrich feather on your hat."

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There is no need of suffering from the depredations of rats and mice now that Stearns' Paste is readily obtainable at nearly every store. A small box of this effective exterminator costs only 35 cents and is usually sufficient to completely rid the house, store or barn of rats and mice. The U. S. Government has bought thousands of pounds of Stearns' Paste for use in cities where rats and mice are plentiful. The Paste is also efficient in destroying cockroaches and waterbugs. Adv.

Bridget's Answer

Although not overparticular about her work, Mrs. Brownstone's new maid, fresh from the Evergreen Isle, was somewhat of a stickler for precision in language.

"Is it after eight yet?" asked Mrs. B.—of her one morning as she came in from the kitchen on some errand.

"Yes, num," replied Bridget carefully weighing her words. "It is after it all right, but it hasn't got there yet! It has five minute's yet to travel!"

An Iconoclast.

"Do you remember the famous Greek artist who painted grapes that were so natural the birds pecked at them?"

"Oh, yes, I've heard that yarn," replied the superior perambulator. "But ornithology teaches us that certain of the smaller birds have very poor eyesight."

A good many men who get credit for being close mouthed are in reality too lazy to talk.

He is indeed a busy man who can never find time to find fault.

COUGHING

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