A PERSON OF SOME **IMPORTANCE**

LLOYD OSBOURNE

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PROLOGUE.

Lovers of Romance, attention! tells of mystery under the dreamy but you have put it off and off"moon of the Pacific islands and of love in the shady lanes of New story reader want? The mystery, of Chile silver." of course, is introduced early in the love remains.

You know, of course, about the author, Lloyd Osbourne. He be given and by you sacredly keptlearned how to write in a worthy and"school, for he is a stepson of Robert Louis Stevenson. And no out a vessel?" expostulated Matt, altogreater story teller than the latter gether bewildered. "You can not alever lived.

CHAPTER I.

Who Is John Mort? HE moonlight streamed through the palms of the Pacific island of Lotoalofa, outlining on the beach a vivid tracery of fronds and stems. Across the lagoon, softened and mellowed by the stretch of glassy water, came the sound of a mouth organ and the rhythmic beat of a wooden drum as the crew of the North Star raised the chorus of "Goodby, My Feleni." At intervals there was a deeper note as some mighty comber flung its might against the coral and burst with fury on the seaward reefs.

In all those lonely seas there is no lonelier island than Lotoalofa. On some Pacific charts it is called the "four crowns of Quiros," with a question mark after it. On others, when it is noticed at all, it figures variously as "Melampus reef, p. d.," "Winslow shoals, p. d.," or merely "Island, e. d.," p. d. signifying "position doubtful" and e. d. "existence doubtful." In the fifties its handful of inhabitants was carried away bodily by Peruvian slavers. In later years it attracted the attention of Bully Hayes, who had had the intention, never to be carried out, of making it into a sort of pirate stronghold, and to this day there stands his battery of six small, rusty iron cannon, commanding the anchorage.

Here, leaning against one of these venerable guns, were two men in close all were conductve to an access of and earnest conversation. One of them was about forty-five, tall and thin, with high cheek bones and a narrow, ugly, withered face, whose usual expression was one of sardonic melancholy. But it was not a commonplace took a few whiffs before he spoke. face nor a weak one. The pale blue eyes were masterful, the nose pronounced and the general air distinin the past John Mort, as he called himself, was ineradicably a cavalry officer, with an underlying military flame up like a volcano.

His companion was Matthew Broughton, a man of thirty-one, sobered, hardened and somewhat worn by eleven rears on the outposts of civilization. He was an American, alone in the world. He had had two years at Annapolis, from which he had been discharged for hazing. Later he had drifted to the Pacific. He had thrown himself wholeheartedly into the life of danger, daring and romance of the south sea islands, and all he had to show for it were a few sears, a smattering of half a dozen outlandish dialects and the memory of some desperate chances taken and lost. At thirtyone he had achieved nothing more tangible than \$100 a month and the command of John Mort's schooner, and even these he was now abandoning, to begin again with nothing.

"But, my friend, is there anything you complain of?" Mort was asking, his slight foreign accent more marked than usual as the result of his concern.

"Oh, no, sir!" "Money? Shall I double your salary -treble it? That is simple."

Matt shook his head. to his heart. "I don't know what's the recently its only inhabitants had been matter with me; but I'm tired of it all; crabs and seamews. Noble pictures, homesick, perhaps, dissatisfied, depressed."

tne?"

this before my last trip, not wishing grandeur delicately modernized, softto take you unawares."

"I'm sorry," said John Mort with palace that sheltered Mort in exile.

moon. "What a choice!" he mur mured. "What a choice!"

"It is an impulse stronger than I am," returned Matt after a silence. "After all, I am a white man, and those are my people. Have you never felt that sudden longing to get backthat overpowering, irresistible, unreasoning-longing?"

"No," retorted John Mort savagely. "No, no, no! To me it is a hell I have left forever."

"I wonder at myself," said Matt. "There is not a soul in the world I respect more, admire more-yes, lovethan I do you. Yet I am going." John Mort's eyes glistened, and he

grasped. "Well, so be it," he said.

"Then, may I sail tonight with land breeze?"

"Yes, you may sail."

"And my accounts, my vouchers, and all that? You ought to pass them, sir, as well as arrange about the North Here's a story you will like. It Star's return. Pardon my insistence, a look of tender scrutiny. "And, oh,

"What amount have you in the ship's safe?"

"Nearly £800, sir, in French, English England-and what more can a and American gold, besides the chest

"My friend, It is yours, and the the tale, and the love- follows schooner also, it is yours. It is small close after. Together they go enough return for such loyal service. Ah, indeed, much too small, and I will hand in hand through the pages increase it with this"- As he spoke of the story, never parting com- he drew from his finger a superb ruby pany until the-final chapter. ring and forced it on Matt, whose There the mystery departs, but stammering words of thanks were cut brusquely short.

"There's another matter much more pressing," he exclaimed, "a pledge to

"But, sir, how will you manage withlow yourself to be marooned here-utterly cut off from all"-

"Oh, I fear not that. We are self sustaining now, and besides in a couple of years I look forward confidently for your return. Isolation has no terrors for me-rather a charm, a picturesqueness and a greater sense of se-

John Mort paused on the last word,

peering strangely at his companion. "Do you realize, Broughton," he continued at last, "that during our six years' close association, intimacy, you have never asked me a question; that you have never betrayed the least inquisitiveness; that you have seen me draw forth whole packets of Bank of England notes, often thousands and thousands of pounds, and never once have you disturbed me by even a look?"

"Your private affairs were none of my business, sir. I have always made Mirovna, take your seat at the piano it a point of honor to keep my curi- so that my last picture of you both osity to myself."

"And even now, when you are going

away, perhaps forever, with the riddle still unsolved, are you not tempted to

"Well, I suppose it's just this, sir; if you wished me to know you would tell

John Mort mused as though, indeed, he were very near to making a confidant of his companion. The spell of the moon, the beauty and stillness of the tropic night, the faint, mellow throb of the wooden drum timing a barbaric chant far across the waterfriendship, of affection and trust, that might sweep away the last barriers of reserve. He struck a match on the corsair's cannon, lit a cigarette, and,

with an appearance of some indecision, "It is enough for you to know that I am a ghost," he said oddly. "Mort means dead, and the fancy pleased me guished. Whatever else he had been to take it for my name. Before I died I was a person of some importance; of sufficient importance, in fact-were my existence here ever to be known-for harshness that on occasions could the news of it to shake the world. Broughton, I ask no promises, no oaths. I simply tell you that my life, my happiness, all that is dearest and most precious to me, hang on your discretion. Vaster issues are at stake than you can dream of, and today there are hundreds on my track. A chance remark of yours, an unguarded

> ton, I rely on you to guard my secret." "I shall guard it, sir." "And you appreciate, even in this half told way, its supreme, its vital im-

word, the most innocent of confidences

-and these bloodhounds might seize a

clew that would destroy me. Brough-

portance?"

"I do, sir." "Then let us go back."

In silence they walked up the path to the broad veranda of the housethe house that had taken three years to build, whose massive walls were timbered with whole trees-a low, red tiled, Spanish structure, in appearance half fort and half monastery, with a cloistered court where a fountain played. It had taken the North Star a dozen voyages to furnish it with a

splendor almost incredible, considering of his cabin before the ship went over, her daughter in that city, "It is here," he said, laying his hand the remoteness of the island and how Venetian carvings and old brocades, Flemish tapestry, exquisite furniture "And you are determined to leave still showing the faded gild of medieval Italy-nothing, so it seemed to "Do not reproach me, sir. I told you Matt, could vie in taste and luxury, in the ship's bottom, and after four days

emotion. "Sorry for myself at losing But of all the beautiful objects withone I liked and admire, who for six in its walls, none could compare with years has always been so faithful, so its mistress, that radiant, girlish Miloyal. Sorry, too, for you, my friend, rovna, who shared John Mort's forthat you should choose to go back tunes and engrossed his entire heart. among strangers-back to that ac- As fair as he was dark, with crisp tain Hayward, Purser Smith, and the cursed civilization where none fares so golden hair more red than yellow, with well as the greedy and unprincipled. captivating blue eyes and a mouth all posa toward himself and his crew. A Is it that you prefer? So, is it that wantonness and dainty impudence, she concert was given in aid of the shipfor which you will surrender this?" could hardly have been more than Mort raised his hand to the tropic twenty when Matt first remembered \$318.75 realized on their behalf.

ened and restrained-with this coral

her in Guadalcanaar. Who she was or what she had been-actress, dancer or exalted lady, Pole, Russian, Albanian or Magyar-all was a mystery she shared with her somber husband. Matt knew nothing save that she was one of the most adorable of women. Her caressing and pretty friendship meant much to him, and he repaid it with the profound regard of a man that had no other woman in his life.

But all that was over now, to melt forever in the swirl of receding years. He was probably seeing that familiar room for the last time and those dearer faces of his friends. Matt's heart was very full and he faltered under Mirovna's questioning gaze. put out his hand, which the other

"I cannot persuade him," said Mort. with affected lightness, stooping to kiss his wife's hand, "the captain abandons us."

There was no reproach in Mirovna's

face, rather concern and regret. "We have been fortunate to keep him so long," she said, enveloping Matt in for six years, always so good, so loyal, so true hearted gentleman-surely never was another like our capitan."

"I have one favor to ask before I go," said Matt, somewhat huskily; "just one favor. Onae," he went on,



He Played as Matt Had Never Heard Him Play Before.

addressing Mort by his Kanaka title. "will you not get your violin-that wonderful violin-and you, Masiofu may be as I have always loved you best, with your music following me out into the night?"

John Mort glowed at the request, the poetic fancy of it touching him to the quick. He drew the violin from its case, his face transfigured, his eyes scintillating and impassioned, as he gave a few swift strokes of the bow to test the tuning.

"Music is the only language-the divine language." he exclaimed. "and how far surpassing the stupid commonplace of words! Captain, you are a thousand times right, and all our affection for you, all our sorrow, all our unuttered hopes and prayers for you,

will find their voice in what I play." When once the violin had touched his chin John Mort became a different man. He was strangely ennobled; the glamor of his genius lent dignity and beauty to his gaunt frame; his thin, haggard, deeply lined face took on a From Tuesday's Dally. new expression, so rapt, so inspired,

palms behind him.

Chronicle of January 24, 1904:

"RESCUE AT SEA. Broughton and nine south sea island- with the growth of the city. ers, of the schooner North Star, capsized in north latitude 34, west longitude 132, during a heavy squall. Captain Broughton was below at the time. The disaster is ascribed to the carelessness of the Kanaka crew, who were struck the vessel, which was lying becalmed with her sails up.

"The crew, none of whom drowned, contrived to perch themselves on of intense suffering were picked up by the W. H. Hall of this city, in lumber for Suva, Fiji. The Hall, in her turn, transferred them to the mail steamer, which was fortunately intercepted a week later.

"Captain Broughton cannot speak too highly of the extreme kindness of Capofficers and passengers of the Mariwrecked mariners, and the sum of

"The North Star was of seventy-four tons register, built at Bath, Me., in 1884, and carried no insurance. It was learned from Captain Broughton that she had been employed in the copra trade for many years, and was on her way to this port for drydocking and repairs. Western bound ship masters are warned to look out for the derelict, which was still affoat when last

sighted." The loss of the North Star, together with the coin in the ship's safe, cost Matt between \$18,000 and \$20,000. The vessel had not been insured, owing to the troublesome and prying questions that would have been asked, which, if passengers of the Mariposa he would Eve must have been very stronghave landed in San Francisco utterly penniless. As it was his crew and he became dependent on a seamen's charitable institution. While others had that, talked and telephoned and promised vague assistance, leaving the poor castaways shivering on the wharf in a circle of newspaper men and photographers, it was the Rev. John Thompson, crisply English and bustlingly practical, who descended on them, checked them away like so many sheep.

somewhat austere roof Matt sneaked surplus grain. away in the morning to try to pawn his ring. He hated to part with it, yet what else was he to do? He had not even an overcoat, and here it was January and piercingly cold. He had nothing-not a toothbrush, not a spare shirt.

He determined to pick out the biggest and most fashionable jewelry Snood & Hargreaves for his objective. pounds more of bologna were in-His entrance, which he attempted to side and all on fire. Some thought Caddie Foster, teacher, was exmake as inconspicuous as possible. Side and all that Stiles had fallen into the in this splendid establishment. As he big kettle with the rest of the the glittering stronghold, he was dian woman with her papoose and as he was receiving the apologies the night, the baby accidentally of the passing gentleman a hand from wiggled its toes among the fire We will give a report in our next, bomb in his rear pocket. It was all so brands and kicked out a spark and also the High school examquickly and coolly done that Matt had which set the dry old shanty on ination, which will take place the hardly time to realize he was under fire, and the baby was supposed ensuing week.

the clew, for there, at full length, he early stage of the accident, in an official saw what a deeply tanned, wild haired. Higher and higher still mounted schools, has been very noticeable, ragged desperado he appeared and saw the flames, and cooler and cool- and was commented on by the of pale employees to guard the exits and block his escape.

shame than anger, and still closely followly got there before the build- has been done for the children. lowed by the store detective, he made ing burnt down, one single soli- We sincerely hope the High his way to the nearest clerk. To Be Continued.

AND HARNESS SHOP AL-MOST READY FOR BUSINESS

The fixtures for the new shoe that he might have been in communion store and harness shop, which is had there been the least breeze gun the other day. She put her with another world. That night he being started by Mr. John Frank we might have had a very dan- foot on the muzzle to keep the played as Matt had never heard him in the Leonard building, opposite play before, with an intensity, a fire, the Journal office, are all in posi- hope the fire boys will see the other end, and scattered some Daniels, near Union, died last an unendurable pathos that wrung the tion and the store will be ready necessity of exercising with their toes and things around loose in in a few days to do business. Mr. He had taken as a motive one of those simple, plaintive German folk songs, passing from improvisation to recommended from his former improvisation till it seemed the cry of home at Farnam, Nebraska, and na, herself a brilliant musician, was to the business life of the city.

Mrs. Kate Oliver departed this

all asleep at the moment the squall The Best Flour on the Market



FORTY YEARS AGO

items of Interest to Old and New Residents of City Which Were New Forty Years Ago.

The identical kind of apple truthfully answered, would have in that tempted Eye is on exhibition validated the policy. Had it not been at the Herald office, raised by for the ruby ring on his finger and his Perry Walker of Cass county. It portion of the small sum raised by the is called a "Pardise Sweet" and minded indeed if she would not succumb to such an apple as

with a big grain contract the ficacy of Mrs. Winslow's soothother day. Half the hay and oats ing syrup. contract let by the government this year, and part of the corn off their names in a notebook and led contract. It will leave consider- Franklin county, and well known able money in the place, besides in Cass county, died last week. After a night under this kindly but making a market here for all our He had many friends, both here

Out of the northwest corner of

help him materially. Matt knew San were affoat. One story suggested Water, Francisco well and accordingly chose that Judge Ellison and 200 bumped into by a passing gentleman, had straggled in there to stay for to be roasting alive, the mother The absence of parents and carbonic acid would set all doubts and fire, too, at rest. The Babcock did arrive, and all the little Babcocks mounted themselves on the backs and shouldfolks, into their eyes and over their clothes; after some delay the big Babcock began to play very handsomely and soon extinguished the fire. Seriously,

engine and keeping it in better the wagon, besides kicking the order hereafter and ready for prompt work. At the same time we are disgusted with the ableall suffering, doomed humanity. Mirov- will prove a most useful addition bodied citizens of this place who quick and apt in following and to The occupancy of the Leonard and left the few firemen that most delightfully at the home of suddenly sick with a severe at-Matt's untrained ear marvelously re-building fills up all the store could be assembled at once to Mrs. R. A. Bates, and the ladies tack of bowel trouble, and her sponsive and marvelously perfect. buildings in the main part of the tug the heavy hook and ladder enjoyed a very pleasant time in condition gradually grew worse An hour later he was aboard the city, with the exception of one bound to the city, with the exception of one bound to the city, with the exception of one bound truck and engine over to the fire, working upon their danity fancy until death brought relief from North Star, and the rustling land room in the Wettenkamp build- and some half dozen boys were work and in social conversation, her sufferings. Mrs. Hayes was lagoon on the long slant north. Six ing on lower Main street, as the land some land to the long slant north. Six ing on lower Main street, as the land that could be got together to and the hours sped by very rapid. The mother of C. H. Harris and years of his life were sinking with the vacant store rooms in the Riley pull the truck home again. Every ly. A very delicious three-course Mrs. Ellis Daniels, both of whom block are to be occupied by the business man in this town ought luncheon was served at an ap- reside in the vicinity of Union, Extract from the san Francisco firm of Peters & Richards and to have interest sufficient in propriate hour, which served to and the children will receive the Frank R. Gobelman with his preventing fires and destruction add greatly to the enjoyment of deepest sympathy of the comstock of wall paper and paints, of property to lend a hand at the afternoon. The occasion was munity in their loss of their be-"Among the passengers yesterday on and this will fill the business sec- such a time, and more older men a very pleasant one and the jolly loved mother. The body of Mrs. board the incoming Oceanic Steamship tion of the city better than it has should join the fire department, growd of ladies saw with regret Hayes will be taken back to the company's Mariposa were Captain been for some years and keep up giving it tone and efficiency, and the time for departure draw old home at Marion, Virginia, for not leave so important a matter near. as the preservation of our property in the hands mainly of boys morning for Lincoln, where she scarcely 21 years old. If the men and hardly managed to scramble out will visit for a short time with who own property here can't turn out to aid the fire department, you can't expect much of the

> James W. Berger, one of the Masonic Home, Herald's friends, made us glad by his presence last week.

M, transfer were dumped in the river by a missplaced switch last week.

The annual examination of the city schools commenced on Monday of this week. The First ward, made by his firm, BANK OF COMMERCE. under the charge of Miss Marcia Livingston, Mr. Carruth and Mr. | Take Hall's Family Pills for constipation.

Pollock of the council were present more or less of the time, but no parents or other visitors. The school passed a fair examination and was especially good in numrals, Roman and Arabic.

The Second ward school, eacher, Mrs. Arnold, was examined on Tuesday. Present, Prof. Wise, Mayor Livingston, Councilman Johnson, Rev. Mr. Arnold and the editor. We would like to tell all the little folks said, and notice each scholar's good points, if we had time and space. Not having these two requisites at our command, we must simply say we were very much pleased. indeed, with the little folks.

Oh what a nice wedding cake we got from Weeping Water, all on account of Miss Kate Winslow, and the Rev. Mr. Folden suggests Connor and "Thatch" got away that Mr. Davis can test the ef-

> Jos. Perry, county clerk of and in the place he chose as his new residence in Nebraska.

two little youngster's mouths. Weeping Water grows like startled our people, on Saturday magic; every time we go there we evening just about nightfall. feel surprised and pleased with The small frame building in the the changes for the better. Just His chief preoccupation, however, rear of Leonard's photographic now they are putting up a new was more to avoid being cheated in gallery which had been used as \$3,000 school house, which will the disposal of the ring, for, though he a smoke-house for bologua saus- be a very fine building when comhad little knowledge of jewels, the ages by Judge Ellison was found pleted. Messrs, Fleming & Rice stone seemed to him of unusual fire to be on fire. The night was have just opened a new stock of and purity and evidently was very val- beautifully calm and a little hot goods, and the old stand-bys, without the aid of any more fire. Reed Bros., have a large and nevertheless half the town soon commodious stone building store and, explaining his position, ask gathered round the fierce blaze plumb full of new and handsome the favor of their expert advice. They from the bolognas to toast their fall and winter goods. Success might be obliging enough to tell him shins, light their cigars and to the little town under the granwhat the gem was worth and thus make remarks. Very wild rumors ite rocks on the lovely Weeping

amined on Wednesday, Present, Prof. Wise, Mayor Livingston. paused at a case of napkin rings, nerv- grease and was now all ablaze; Councilmen Johnson, Newmann ing himself for a further advance into again it was told that a poor In- and Carruth. The examination was fair.

The Fourth ward will be examined today, as we go to press.

A large, imposing mirror gave him having been suffocated in an visitors, except those connected er smoked the lookers-on, per-examining board and teachers, fectly secure and abandoned to who feel hurt that the parents Flushing to the eyes, more with the belief that if the Babcock exhibit so little interest in what tary gushing squirt of pure school examination next week will be better attended.

> Mrs. J. J. Roberts, who is well known in our town as the widow of the Rev. J. J. Roberts, forbig red spiders, from whence they squirted around on the here, is in town on a visit to MRS. EMILY HAYES AN some of her old friends and acquaintances.

A Mrs. Goodman of this city. was in a wagon with a loaded From Tuesday's Daily. gerous conflagration, and we thing quiet, but it went off at the end-gate.

Entertains Kensington Club. cooly walked along the sidewalk sington club was entertained Union, and while here was taken

Notice to Masonic Lodge!

The members of Plattsmouth Lodge, A. F. and A. M., are hereby notified to meet at their hall boys and strangers who join it tomorrow afternoon at 1 o'clock in order to attend the funeral of Brother C. Emment Sweet, at the painful affections. Yard rolls \$1.00; also

Secretary.

Four freight cars on the B. & How's This? We offer One Hundred Dollars Reward for any

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ou don't nave money when you buy cheap or hig-hing powder. Don't be misled. Buy Calemet, ore economical—more wholesome—gives best res-domet is for superior to some milk and soons.

AGED LADY PASSES AWAY

Mrs. Emily Hayes, an aged lady who has been residing at the home of her daughter, Mrs. Ellis evening at quite an advanced age, "Grandma" Hayes, as she was affectionately known through the southern part of the county, a few days ago went to the home Yesterday afternoon the Ken- of Mr. and Mrs. Lee Farris, near interment among the scenes which the departed lady loved so

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