

The Grand Babylon Hotel

By ARNOLD BENNETT.

CHAPTER I. Millionaire and Waiter.

Jules, the celebrated head waiter of the Grand Babylon, was bending formally towards the alert, middle-aged man who had just entered the smoking-room and dropped into a basket-chair.

"Yes, sir?" repeated Jules, and there was a shade of august disapproval in his voice.

"Oh!" said the alert, middle-aged man, looking up at length. "Bring me an Angel Kiss."

"Pardon, sir?"

"Bring me an Angel Kiss, and be good enough to lose no time."

"It's an American drink, I fear we don't keep it. The voice of Jules fell icily distinct.

"I didn't suppose you did keep it, but you can mix it, I guess, even in this hotel."

"This isn't an American hotel, sir."

The alert, middle-aged man sat up straight. "Get a liquor glass," he said half curtly, "pour into it equal quantities of maraschino cream and creme de menthe. Don't stir it; don't shake it. Bring it to me."

"I will send the drink to you, sir," said Jules distantly.

A few minutes later Jules sat in conference with Miss Spencer, who had charge of the bureau of the Grand Babylon. Miss Spencer had been bureau clerk almost since the Grand Babylon had first raised its massive chimneys in London. Her knowledge for Bradshaw, of steamship services, and the program of waiters and musicals was unrivaled.

"Who's No. 107?" Jules asked this black-robed lady.

Miss Spencer examined her ledgers. "Mr. Theodore Racksole, New York."

"I thought he must be a New Yorker," said Jules. "Says he wants an 'Angel Kiss'—maraschino and cream. If you please, I'll see he doesn't stop here too long."

Miss Spencer smiled grimly. She knew, of course, and knew that Jules knew, that this Theodore Racksole must be the unique and only Theodore Racksole, the third richest man in the United States, and therefore probably in the world. Nevertheless she ranged herself at once on the side of Jules. In the world of hotels it was currently stated that, next to the proprietor, there were three gods at the Grand Babylon—Jules, the head waiter; Miss Spencer, and most powerful of all, Rocco, the renowned chef.

The Grand Babylon, though it never advertised itself, stood an easy first among the hotels of Europe—first in expense, first in exclusiveness, first in that mysterious quality known as "style." It was the only hotel in London with a genuine separate entrance for royal visitors constantly in use. The Grand Babylon counted that day wasted on which it did not entertain, at the lowest, a German prince or the Maharajah of some Indian state. When Felix Babylon—after whom the hotel was christened—founded the hotel in 1869 he had set himself to cater for royalty, and that was the secret of his triumphant eminence.

If there was one thing more than another that amazed the Grand Babylon—put it back up, so to speak—it was to be compared with, or to be mistaken for, an American hotel. The Grand Babylon was resolutely opposed to American methods of eating, drinking and lodging—but especially American methods of drinking. The resentment of Jules, on being requested to supply Mr. Theodore Racksole with an Angel Kiss, will therefore be appreciated.

"Anybody with Mr. Theodore Racksole?" asked Jules, continuing his conversation with Miss Spencer.

"Miss Racksole—she's in No. 111."

"She's where?" he queried, with a peculiar emphasis.

"No. 111. I couldn't help it. There was no other room with a bath-room and dressing-room on that floor."

"Why didn't you tell Mr. Theodore Racksole and Miss Racksole that we were unable to accommodate them?"

"Because Babs was within hearing."

Only three people in the wide world ever dreamt of applying to Mr. Felix Babylon the plural but mean abbreviation—Babs: those three were Jules, Miss Spencer and Rocco.

"You'd better see that Miss Racksole changes her room tonight," Jules said after another pause. "Leave it to me: I'll fix it. Au revoir!"

At 3 o'clock precisely dinner was served in the immense salle-a-manger. At a small table near one of the windows a young lady sat alone. Her frock said Paris, but her face unmistakably said New York. It was a self-possessed and bewitching face, the face of a woman thoroughly accustomed to doing exactly what she liked, when she liked, how she liked.

"Sorry to keep you waiting, Nella." It was Mr. Racksole. Nella—her proper name was Helen—smiled at her parent.

"You always are late, father," she said.

"Only on a holiday," he added.

"What is there to eat?"

"Nothing."

"Then let's have it. I'm hungry."

"Say, father," she said with seeming irreverence, "had you forgotten it's my birthday tomorrow?"

"Have I ever forgotten your birthday, O most costly daughter?"

"On the whole you've been a most satisfactory parent," answered sweetly, "and to reward you I'll be content this year with the cheapest birthday treat you ever gave me. Only I have it tonight."

"Well," he said, with the long-suffering patience, the readiness for any surprise, of a parent whom Nella had thoroughly trained, "what is it?"

"It's this. Let's see filleted steak and a bottle of Bass for dinner tonight. I shall love it."

"But, my dear Nella," he exclaimed, "steak and beer at the Grand Babylon! It's impossible!"

"I said steak and Bass," Miss Racksole set her small white teeth. There was a gentle cough. Jules stood over them. Theodore Racksole hesitated one second and then issued the order with a fine air of carelessness: "Filleted steak for two, and a bottle of Bass."

"It's not on the menu, sir," said Jules.

"Never mind. Get it. We want it."

"Very good, sir."

Jules walked to the service door and merely affecting to look behind, came immediately back again. Mr. Rocco's compliments, sir, and he regrets to be unable to serve steak and Bass tonight, sir."

"And who is Mr. Rocco?"

"Mr. Rocco is our chef, sir," Jules had the expression of a man who is asked to explain who Shakespeare was.

The two men looked at each other. It seemed incredible that Theodore Racksole, the ineffable Racksole, who owned a thousand miles of railway, several towns, and sixty votes in Congress, should be defied by a waiter, or even by a whole hotel. Yet so it was.

As for Nella knowing her father, she foresaw interesting events, and waited confidently for the steak. She did not feel hungry and she could afford to wait.

"Excuse me a moment Nella," said Theodore Racksole quietly, "I shall be back in about two seconds," and he strode out of the salle-a-manger. No one in the room recognized the

millionaire for he was unknown to London, this being his first visit to Europe for over twenty years. Had anyone done so, and caught the expression on his face, that man might have trembled for an explosion which should have blown the entire Grand Babylon into the Thames. Jules retired strategically to a corner.

Theodore Racksole entered Miss Spencer's sanctum. "I want to see Mr. Babylon," he said, "without the delay of an instant."

"I am afraid"—she began the usual formula. It was part of her daily duty to discourage guests who desired to see Mr. Babylon.

"No, no," said Racksole quickly. "In don't want any 'I'm afraid.' This is business. My name is Racksole—Theodore Racksole."

"Of New York?" questioned a voice at the door, with a slight foreign accent.

The millionaire turned sharply, and saw a rather short, French-looking man, with a bald head, a gray beard. "There is only one," said Theodore Racksole.

"You wish to see me?" the newcomer suggested.

"You are Mr. Felix Babylon?"

The man bowed.

"At this moment I wish to see you more than anyone else in the world," said Racksole. "I only want a few minutes quiet chat. I fancy I can settle my business in that time."

With a gesture Mr. Babylon invited the millionaire down a side corridor, at the end of which was Mr. Babylon's private room. The landlord and his guest sat down opposite each other.

"I read in the New York papers some months ago," Theodore started, without even a clearing of the throat, "that this hotel of yours, Mr. Babylon, was to be sold to a limited company, but it appears that the sale was not carried out."

"It was not," answered Mr. Babylon frankly. "And the reason was that the middle man wished to make a large second profit, and I declined to be a party to such a profit."

"May I ask what the price was?"

"Are you a buyer, Mr. Racksole?"

"Are you a seller, Mr. Babylon?"

"I am," said Babylon, "on terms. The price was four hundred thousand pounds, including the leasehold and goodwill."

"I will put one question to you, Mr. Babylon," said the millionaire. "What have your profits averaged during the last four years?"

"Thirty-four thousand pounds per annum."

"I buy," said Theodore Racksole, smiling contentedly; "and we will, if you please, exchange contract-letters on the spot."

"Precisely," agreed Mr. Babylon, smiling. "There are details to be thought of. But it occurs to me that you cannot have dined yet, and might prefer to deal with minor questions after dinner."

"I have not dined," said the millionaire, with emphasis, "and in that connection will you do me a favor? Will you send for Mr. Rocco?"

"Rocco is a great man," murmured Mr. Babylon as he touched the bell. "My compliments to Mr. Rocco," he said to the page who answered his summons, "and if it is quite convenient I should be glad to see him here for a moment."

"What do you give Rocco?" Racksole inquired.

"Two thousand pounds a year and the treatment of an ambassador," he said. "I shall give him the treatment of an ambassador, and three thousand."

"You will be wise," said Felix Babylon.

At that moment Rocco came into the room, very softly—a man of forty, thin, with long, thin hands, and an inordinately long brown silky moustache.

"Rocco," said Felix Babylon, "let me introduce Mr. Theodore Racksole, of New York."

"Sharmed," said Rocco, bowing. "Ze-ze vat you call it, millionaire?"

"Exactly," Racksole put in, and continued quickly: "Mr. Rocco, I wish to acquaint you before any other person with the fact that I have purchased the Grand Babylon hotel. If you think well to afford me the privilege of retaining your services I shall be happy to offer you a remuneration of three thousand a year."

"Three, you said?"

"Sharmed."

"And now, Mr. Rocco, will you oblige me very much by ordering a plain beefsteak and a bottle of Bass to be served by Jules—I particularly desire Jules—at table No. 17 in the dining-room in 10 minutes from now? And will you do me the honor of luncheon with me tomorrow?"

Mr. Rocco gasped bowed, muttered something in French and departed. Five minutes later the buyer and seller of the Grand Babylon hotel had each signed a curt document, scribbled out on the hotel notepaper. Felix Babylon asked no question, and it was this heroic absence of curiosity, of surprise on his part, that more than anything else impressed Theodore Racksole.

(Continued in The Morning Bee.)

Five Sentenced to Jail for Dry Law Violations

Five men who pleaded guilty yesterday in a federal court to liquor law violations, thinking they would be let off with fines, were sentenced to jail by Judge T. Blake Kennedy of Cheyenne, who is presiding here this week.

Power, light and heat are furnished to several cities in Italy from volcanoes.

Speaks Highly of This Home Made Cough Remedy

Says It Acts With Unusual Speed—Loosens the Mucus—Relieves the Irritation and Stops the Cough.

Costs Next to Nothing—for a Big Supply.

Whenever anyone in my family catches cold and begins to cough and sneeze, and hack and breathe heavy, it doesn't take me many minutes to fix up a remedy that will drive away all such troubles in double quick time.

It's no secret—anyone can make a half pint of the finest cough medicine in the world for a trifling sum.

Get from an druggist one ounce of Parmit (double strength) — to this add a little granulated sugar and enough water to make one-half pint—that's all there is to it.

But now you've got a real medicine—mind you—the first spoonful you take acts directly on the membrane of the throat and nose, the tickling ceases almost instantly—the inflammation begins to disappear—up comes the stubborn mucus and often in 24 hours every trace of the cough that frightened you is gone.

It's a really remarkable how this home made remedy acts on the mucus membrane and that is one reason it is so helpful to thousands of Catarrh sufferers.

BURGESS-NASH COMPANY.

"EVERYBODY'S STORE"

Today's Advertisement for Saturday's Selling

First Showing Men's and Young Men's New Spring Suits

\$30 to \$60



Our buyer has just returned from New York, bringing with him the first of the new spring suits, each one a perfect garment from the viewpoint of style, material and tailoring.

Tweeds, checks and pencil stripes, perfect in cut and tailoring, correct in the details that mark them distinctly of the 1923 season.

The New "Foresome" Suit
This consists of a sports coat, vest, long trousers and a pair of knickers. These are very new and come in a variety of colors and materials. Sizes 34 to 44.

Free Instruction on Golf
Every day, in our newly located Sporting Goods Dept., Herman Weiner, assistant professional at the Country Club, will give lessons without charge. He is there the entire day.

A Special Purchase of Women's Undergarments at 95c

Nightgowns, envelope chemise, petticoats, vests, step-ins, bloomers, costume slips, camisoles, brassieres, bandeaux, in regular and extra sizes. Made of

Crepe Dimity Batiste Voile
Radinette Nainsook

in orchid, rose, jade, coral, Nile, gold, pink, white; in plaid, check, stripe, figured, floral, polka dot, tailored and trimmed effects. Saturday only.

Sale of Men's Lehigh Sample Silk Hose

Fine quality silk hose from a leading manufacturer. Samples of the famous Lehigh mills and every pair offered at prices far below regular. Saturday, in two great groups—

At, Pair, 75c **At, Pair, \$1.15**

A fine quality plain silk hose in brown, black, white and gray. All sizes represented. **3 pairs, \$2.00**

Exceptional quality, full fashioned, fancy cloxed hose, valued at \$1.50 to \$2.00. Special— **3 pairs, \$3.00**

Men's Mercerized Lisle Hose
A fine mercerized lisle hose with double heel and toe. Priced specially for Saturday.
Pair, 35c—3 pairs, \$1.00

Three Great Groups New Handkerchiefs 12 1/2c

Women's White and Colored Linen Handkerchiefs—Specially priced for Saturday's selling.

Gingham Sports Handkerchiefs—These are made of imported gingham in a variety of colors.

Tissue and Lawn Handkerchiefs in gay colors. All are imported; there are a number of designs from which to choose.

Boys' Two-Pant Suits

Up to \$16.50 **\$7.95** All Sizes 6 to 17

Odd lots and broken sizes from our own fine stock—not a garment brought in for sale purposes.

Suits of tweed, cashmere, and others made in Norfolk and plain belted styles. Most of them with two pairs of fully lined knickers. Regularly priced up to \$16.50; now **\$7.95**.

Boys' Novelty Suits
Five Sentenced to Jail for Dry Law Violations

Well made little suits in all-wool serge, cashmere, flannels, tweed and combination velvet pants and soisette blouses. The styles are made entirely of woolsens, or are a combination of velvet pants and tan soisette blouse. Most of them have Windsor ties and rows of braid for finishing. Sizes 2 to 8 years.

500 Pairs Women's Sample Shoes \$2.80

Sizes 3 1/2, 4, 4 1/2 Only

Spring styles in pumps and oxfords—sample shoes, the values of which we did not estimate, but marked each and every pair at the ridiculously low price of **\$2.80**.

Sports, Street and Dress Styles of Patent, Russian Kid, Gunmetal and Nubuck Leathers—in tan, black, white.

Women who wear sizes 3 1/2, 4 and 4 1/2 will secure splendid values in straps, ties, colonial effects and oxfords with low and medium heels and welt soles.

Wear the Corset Designed for Your Figure

Smartly groomed women give more attention to the corsets they wear than to any other article of dress, for they realize the importance of correct corseting.

Self assured is the wearer of **Madame Binner Corsets** for she has the confidence that only perfectly corseted woman knows.

Spring models for every type of figure are priced from **\$5.00 to \$16.00**

Special \$5.00
Elastic top or medium bust models of brocade or coutil.

Women's Will Appreciate the Value of These New Leather Bags

The wide range of styles and a variety of leathers in this group of bags afford a wonderful selection. Bags of vachette, cobra, grain, seal grain, fancy calf, walrus and pin seal. Mostly in black and brown. Long handles, large mirrors, outside tuck pockets, stationery inside purses. Large and small sizes in swagger, pouch, envelope and square shapes.

\$1.45 **\$1.95**

Sale of Parfait Ivory Toilet Articles

At 79c At \$1.19 At \$1.89

Three pieces manicure sets, powder boxes, hair receivers, trays, shoe horns, hat frames, pincushion and jewelry box, brushes, buffers, clothes brushes.

Three-Piece Sets Greatly Reduced

La Tosca pattern, regularly \$13.50, now **\$8.95**

La Tosca pattern in rose and gold, regularly \$10.95, now **\$6.95**

Classique pattern and hand-decorated in 3-piece set, regularly \$10.50, now **\$6.95**

Louis XVI pattern in white, originally \$7.95, now **\$4.98**