

# A MAN OF EXTREMES.

BY A. E. W. MASON.

"Although you have not been near Ronda for five years," said the Spanish commandant severely to Dennis Shere, "the face of the country has not changed. You are certainly the most suitable officer I can select, since I am told you are well acquainted with the neighborhood. You will ride therefore to-day to Olvera and deliver this sealed letter to the officer commanding the temporary garrison there. But it is not necessary that it should reach him before eleven at night, so that you will still have an hour or two before you start in which you can renew your acquaintanceships, as I can very well understand you are anxious to do."

Dennis Shere's reluctance however was now changed into alacrity. For the road to Olvera ran past the gates of that white-walled straggling residencia where he had planned to spend this first evening that he was stationed at Ronda. On his way back from his colonel's quarters he even avoided those squares and streets where he would be likely to meet with old acquaintances, foreseeing their questions as to why he was now a Spanish subject and wore the uniform of a captain of Spanish cavalry, and by seven o'clock he was already riding through the Plaza de Toros upon his mission. There, however, a familiar voice hailed him, and turning about in his saddle he saw an old padre who had once gained a small prize for logic at the University of Barcelona, and who had since made his inferences and deductions an excuse for a great deal of inquisitiveness. Shere had no option but to stop. He broke in, however, at once on the inevitable questions as to his uniform with the statement that he must be at Olvera by eleven.

"Fifteen miles," said the padre. "Does it need four hours and a fresh horse to journey fifteen miles?"

"But I have friends to visit on the way," and to give convincing details to an excuse which was plainly disbelieved, Shere added, "Just this side of Setenil I have friends."

The padre was still dissatisfied. "There is only one house just side of Setenil, and Esteban Silvela I saw with my own eyes to-day in Ronda."

"He may well be home by now, and it is not Esteban whom I go to see."

"Not Esteban," exclaimed the padre. "Then it will be—"

"His sister, the Senora Christina," said Shere, with a laugh at his companion's persistency. "Since the brother and sister live alone, and it is not the brother,

magical months in Paris and a June in London."

"But, Esteban?" said the padre doubtfully. "I do not understand. I knew something of Esteban Silvela. A lean man of plots and devices. My friend, do you know that Esteban has not a groat? The Silvela fortunes and estate came from the mother and went to the daughter. Esteban is the Senora Christina's steward and her marriage would not alter his position at the least. Did he not spoil the magic of the months in Paris?"

Shere laughed aloud in assured confidence.

"No, indeed," said he. "I did not know Esteban was dependent on his sister, but what difference would her marriage make? Esteban is my best friend. For instance, you questioned me about my uniform. It is by Esteban's advice and help that I wear it."

"Indeed!" said the padre quickly. "Tell me."

"That June in London two years ago—it was, by the way, the last time I saw the senora—we three dined at the same house. As the ladies rose from the table I said to Christina quietly, 'I want to speak to you to-night,' and she answered very simply and quietly, 'With all my heart.' She was not so quiet however but that Esteban overheard her. He hitched his chair up to mine; I asked him what my chances were, and whether he would second them? He was most cordial, but he thought with his Spaniard's pride that I ought—I use my words, not his—in some way to repair my insufficiency of station and the rest; and he pointed out this way of the uniform. I could not resist his argument; I did not speak that night. I took out my papers and became a Spaniard; with Esteban's help I secured a commission. That was two years ago. I have not seen her since, nor have I written, but I ride to her to-night with my two years' silence and my two years' service to prove the truth of what I say. So you see I have reason to thank Esteban." And since they were now come to the edge of the town they parted company. Shere rode smartly down the slope of the hill; the padre stood and watched him with a feeling of melancholy.

It was not merely that he distrusted Esteban, but he knew the cadet of an impoverished family, who had come out from England to a small estate in Ronda valley, which had belonged to his house since the days of the Duke of Wellington in Spain. He knew him for a man of tempests and extremes, and as he thought of his ardent words and tones, of his ready acceptance of Esteban's good faith, of his description of Christina, he fell to wondering whether so sudden and violent a conversation from passionate cynic to passionate believer would not lack permanence. There was that little instructive accident of

the dropped fan. Even in the moment of conversion so small a thing had almost sufficed to dissuade Shere.

Shere, however, was quite untroubled—so untroubled, indeed, that he rode slowly that he might not waste the luxury of anticipating the welcome which his unexpected appearance would surely provoke. He rode into the groves of almond and walnut trees and out again into a wild and stony country. It was just growing dusk when he saw ahead of him the square white walls of the enclosure and the cluster of buildings within, glimmering at the foot of a rugged hill. The lights began to move in the windows as he approached, and then a man suddenly appeared at his side on the roadway and whistled twice loudly as though he was calling his dog.

(Continued.)

### FADS AND FASHIONS

Very popular are the various tones of red. Little tots are wearing coats of colored velvet.

For hair ornaments peacock feathers are worn.

The minaret hat is the newest edition in millinery.

In neckwear the turndown collar is here to stay.

Simplicity is the keynote of the smartest afternoon gowns.

Waffle checks are one of the newest weaves in cloaking materials.

Fashion indicates the return of ruffles for spring and summer.

The gown that is shirtwaisted in the back has gone out of fashion.

In evening gowns the neckline is cut square, pointed or heart shaped.

The rough coat suit with a manish air has passed out of existence.

### MONEY VALUE OF MAN.

There is an industrious gentleman in the United States who has drawn up an elaborate table whereby he claims to have fixed as nearly as possible the monetary value of a man. He is Dr. Holt, of Portland (Maine), and he has put an enormous amount of energy, mathematical and medical ability into an ingenious system, which he fondly hopes will settle the abstruse problem of damages in compensation cases. The doctor has compiled a set of tables which, though extremely complicated, are really likely to be of practical use. As an instance, a shop assistant, aged forty-three, suffers entire loss of hearing in one ear through an accident; but is otherwise not affected. He earns two dollars a day, which fixes his total "economic value" at \$10,000 and according to Dr. Holt's tables the compensation to which he would be entitled would be \$1,359. To this such items as pain and suffering, medical expenses, loss of time during recovery, and so on, have to be added.

### NEWS OF LABOR

Indianapolis unions plan to establish a big co-operative store.

Denmark is said to have the most comprehensive system of unemployment insurance of any country of Europe.

Organized labor in Michigan will attempt to have a law passed requiring an eight-hour day on all State work.

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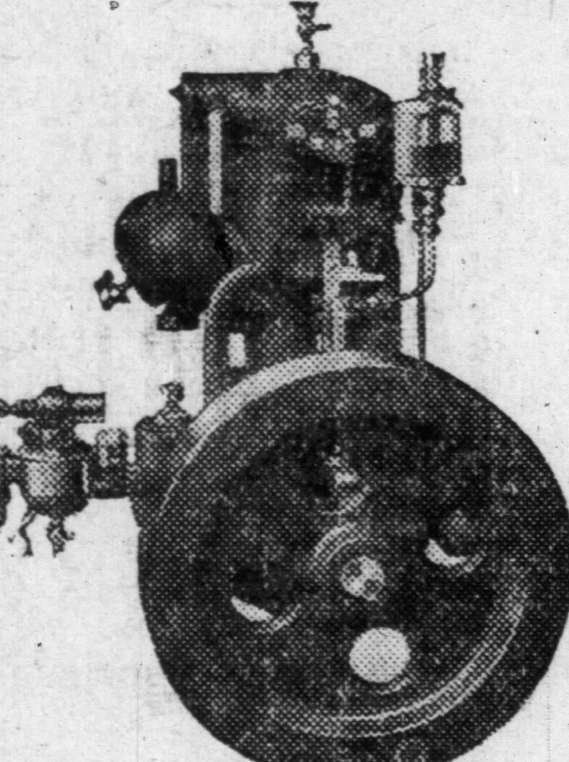
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To-day we received a letter from one of our agents enclosing orders for fifteen engines with cash payments on all—the result of one week's work. He wrote as follows: "I was the last engine agent to visit this territory, agents for the 'F,' the 'A,' the 'E.M.,' the 'D,' the 'B,' and others were all ahead of me—about a dozen in fact. However, not one of them sold a single engine, everybody wants the 'FRASER.' THERE IS A REASON! The above letter we showed MR. COAKER of the F.P.U.

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