POOR DOCUMENT

MC 2033

The Eleventh Hour

BY SIR WILLIAM MAGNAY, BART

Author of "The Red Chancellor" "The Fall of a Star" "The Heiress of the Season" etc.

Exclusive Copyright for This Province Secured by The Telegraph

CHAPTER XIII. (Continued.)

She illustrated her description by mistaking his meaning. "Mr. Fauconberg!" she exclaimed, half in reproach, half in fear.

He saw her error, turned and laughed. "Oh, I don't mean in that way, as I meant it at Scotwick the other day. All I am going to say good-bye to is this stupid fashionable world of ours. This!" He swept his hand round to indicate the chattering crowd.

"To live at Gains?"

"No. I am going to work with a friend of mine who has a Hostel for broken-down loafers over Hackney way."

She looked at him incredulously. "You don't mean it, Jack?"

"I do, on my honor. I was there this afternoon, and have quite decided."

"Are you so disgusted with life and your friends in these parts?"

She was looking straight in front of her now, across the room at a fatuous couple whose attempts at flirtation were obviously hampered by publicity. They were doubtless too busy to notice Sybilla's face of disappointment and vexation. Fauconberg did not see it either, for he too was preoccupied.

"Not that," he answered slowly. "Only one ought to try to do something for one's fellow creatures. I've not done much, Heaven knows; you know," he added with an uneasy laugh, "what my life has been."

Now she could hardly tell whether to be glad or sorry. Certainly the life he had led up to that time had not tended, except for one critical half-hour, to bring him to her side. And the ever-present memory of that peep through the window at Gains suggested a motive for this surprising resolve. Sybilla brightened.

"I think you are right," she replied in that dangerously confidential tone which is one of a handsome woman's most effective weapons; and of course every true friend will wish you happiness and success—as I do. But are you really going to turn your back on—all of us?"

"No, no, I hope not," he protested with a laugh.

"I must say it rather looks like it," she pursued half banteringly, yet with a suggestion of seriousness. "You promised last time we met to come and see us, but you have never been."

"I have had a lot of business with my lawyer since I got back to town," he explained.

She recognized the utter inadequacy of the excuse, but was too clever not to accept it. "And now," she said with a regretful smile, "you will have less time than ever to visit old friends."

He felt that he had not treated her well. The spectre of that, after all, unjustifiable kiss in the garden at Scotwick rose to tell him he was playing a mean part. It mattered little that he had meant no harm in it, that the circumstances had been exceptional. The consequence remained and he was shirking it. With an impulse of self-reproach, he laid his hand upon her gloved wrist. The touch was nothing less than a caress, although he only meant it to emphasize his promise.

"I will find time to come and see you, Sybilla."

In the dark eyes that met his was a light which he did not care to see there. For he felt he could call up none to answer it.

It was late now, and Fauconberg soon had an excuse for taking his leave as Lord Renagle—their hostess was a widow—came up and suggested to Sybilla that the crowd having thinned, there was room to dance. Fauconberg having satisfied himself that Miss Evandale had gone, put himself into a handsome and drove home in a state of mind wherein the delight of meeting Barbara Evandale again was corrected by an annoyance of the false position with Sybilla Caspari into which his folly had led him.

Meanwhile Sybilla was waltzing with Lord Renagle. She would have preferred the man who had just left her, but after all, her thought of him was not exactly as a dance partner; Fauconberg had not seemed in a waltzing mood, and Renagle's step was perfection.

"What a pretty girl Miss Evandale is?" she casually observed to her partner as they swung round.

Lord Renagle had been thinking the same thing all the evening. "Yes; isn't she?" he replied. "My mother thinks no end of her. Not because of her looks, but because she is rather different from most girls. Although I must say I think it's a pity; clear waste, I call it. As if there were not plenty of plain women to do that sort of thing."

"What sort of thing?" Sybilla asked as they stopped.

"Oh," he answered, "I thought you knew. Why, she has gone in for slumming, or good works, or whatever they call it. Absurd in her, isn't it? Goes off every day to Hoxton or Hackney or some such awful place. Shall we have another turn?"

"No, thank you," Sybilla answered in a tone of decision that the masterful young viscount was a stranger to. "My aunt is waiting for me; will you take me as far as the stairs?"

Her face as she went down to get her cloak was hardly that of a girl who had just danced with one of the greatest catches of the day.

"What a fool—what a fool I am!" she cried half aloud, careless as to who might hear her.

CHAPTER XIV.

"When I see the most enchanting beauties that earth can show me, I yet think there is something far more glorious; methinks I see a kind of higher perfection peeping through the frailty of a face."

Paul Hascombe was naturally delighted at his friend's almost unhoped for decision, and had Fauconberg been the Savonarola of the mission world he could hardly have had a warmer welcome than that which met him on going into residence at the Hostel.

He did not like it; he knew that on account neither of his capabilities nor his motive did he deserve it, and his manifest deprecation of the open-armed reception was set down by Hascombe and his colleagues as a favorable sign; it showed modesty, they agreed, and earnestness of purpose. But the wish was father to the thought. The very first day convinced Fauconberg, if proof were needed, that the work was distasteful to him. To a man of his temperament, with his restless, longing for pleasure, his knack of spending money recklessly, his impatience of dullness and monotony, the work, the life, the environment promised soon to become more irksome than he even cared to anticipate. Was it to be wondered at? The tastes and habits, mental as well as bodily, of generations of a family who have all lived pretty much the same life and had the same ideas, are not to be uprooted and swept away casually for a whim or a wish. A man's counsel or a woman's face is not the harlequin's wand that can transform an easy-going, pleasure-loving mind into one burning and hungering with the fierce desire to altruism, welcoming fatigue and frugality and danger to health, not in a spirit of bravado or a craving for novelty, but from a conviction of fitness and equipment for a work as strenuous as it is noble; because the desire for the work precludes, in its very essence, the love of ease and soft living. The sensual earth-man must be killed, beyond all chance of reviving, before the man after the divine pattern and will can live.

And this was why John Fauconberg was as sure of failure in his half-hearted, wrongly conceived attempt to change the way of his life as that sunrise should follow night. He was in the main a good fellow; according to his lights, and those shed down on him from his forefathers, a gentleman. But the world was strong within him, and his world, comprehending as it did a certain proportion of the flesh and the devil, was not to be beaten down under his feet simply by living in a colony of good workers which included a pretty girl with whom he was in love. True, he told himself—for he now had more time than usual for introspection—he was doing the right thing and tried hard to persuade himself that he liked it. But there was no depth or reality in his forced moods. He might fortify the citadel as strongly as he would—and this will could be strong occasionally—against those three enemies in the Litany, but there was always the subterranean passage, leading from outside into the very heart of the objective, left open awaiting the first enemy who should light upon it. Could he have cut himself off from all desire of communication, all fellowship with the world, he had been safe; as it was, he could not bring his heart to consent to that, and so might hold out merely on sufferance.

He had, not very willingly, paid his promised visit to Sybilla, who lived with her aunt in Bryanston Place. To his relief he found his reception less embarrassing than he anticipated. Sybilla never for a moment seemed inclined to revert to the position which on that unlucky afternoon had been suggested, if not established, between them. She was interested in his work at the Hostel, and if his obviously forced enthusiasm on the subject confirmed her worst fears as to his motive, she gave no sign of not taking him seriously. He spoke of a concert which was projected to take place in a popular nobleman's house in aid of their funds, and she hoped he would give her a place in the programme. This he could hardly refuse to do, and presently left the house well pleased that the visit had gone off without the fuss he had dreaded. For there is nothing a man hates more than the living ghost of a dead love affair—dead, that is, so far as he is concerned. Among the lower orders, where men's feelings have less training in restraint, this troubling spectre frequently has to be laid through the medium of a cheap revolver, such a persistent bugbear does it become.

Fauconberg's work brought him, as he intended it should, a good deal in the way of Barbara Evandale. She came out to the Hostel three or four days a week, and on those alternate days he was a different man from the Fauconberg of the intervening ones. Yet to him she, although friendly enough, was always cold, inexplicably cold, compared, that is, with what he would have had her to be. Any attempt at tenderness on his part was gently but decidedly checked by the girl whose strong character and self-possession were always enough to neutralize the dangers to which her looks might expose her. Fauconberg loved her on that first evening of their acquaintance; now by a rather slower but none the less certain process, he learned to respect her as, in his self-indulgent life among scoffing and cynical companions, he had never respected, or thought to respect, a woman. His conduct in the episode which made their first meeting now filled him with shame; not that there was any actual wrong in it, but the motive, the manifest easy-going freedom of his act, must, he knew, lower him perhaps for all time in her regard. And the worst of it was he could not help feeling certain that she, clever as he knew her to be, with that clear penetration which instinctively sees through shams and false profession, must see through him, his slackness in the work, his spurious enthusiasm, his half-hearted zeal, could but see the difference between him, coated over with the film of earnestness, and a man, a real worker, like Paul Hascombe—single-minded, honest devoted, never sparing, but killing himself in the strenuous effort of duty.

He knew this, and came near to despising himself for it. But what could he do? The grip of the world was on him; he could only hope that Barbara Evandale might not think so badly of him as his conscience told him he deserved.

Coming in late one evening he found her alone having tea in the common room of the Hostel. He fetched a cup and asked if he might join her. When she had poured it out they talked for a while of the details of their work. Presently he said—

"My own record here is not exactly a brilliant one. I seem to be the dead weight of the community, and often wonder whether it would not be better for me to give up and let a better man take my place."

"If you don't succeed," she remarked quietly, "it is perhaps because your heart is not in the work."

He knew that she was right in the best sense, but he took it in another.

"My heart is very much in the work," he protested warmly.

If she understood, she ignored his meaning.

"I am glad to hear it," she replied simply.

"It is my heart that has brought me here," he insisted, letting the words have their full significance now. He leant forward, resting his elbows on the table and looking into her face. "You must know that, Miss Evandale."

She kept her eyes averted from his. "If I understand you rightly," she returned, "I am very sorry to hear it."

"Sorry!" he repeated. "Why?"

"That you should have taken up a noble work from an unworthy motive."

"Unworthy!" he protested. "No one else would say that."

"Any one," she retorted, "who was in the habit of looking at actions from a right point of view would say it. Selfishness is the first encumbrance we must throw off if we would set ourselves to this work in earnest."

She spoke calmly, with no more feeling than if she had been one of a party discussing the ethics of the undertaking. And her coldness made him desperate.

"It is unkind of you," he said, "to think me selfish. You might at least forgive my motive. You must know that I have come here to be near you."

He put out his hand to hers, but at the touch she drew quickly away and rose.

"If that is the truth," she said, "the sooner you let another man take your place here the better."

"Barbara" he cried, pleadingly.

"No, no!" She drew away and seemed to give a little shiver as he came close. "You must not speak to me like that. You must not stay here—or I must go."

"Will you listen to me?" he begged. She shook her head, but said nothing. "You might hear what I have to say," he urged. "You are too kind and just to condemn and dismiss me like this. I have confessed my motive to you; it can never seem wrong to me. I have loved you ever since the day we first met. I saw no wrong in trying to be near you, in ——"

She turned quickly and for the first time looked him in the face.

"No wrong!" she broke in—"no wrong in taking the place of a man who would work for Christ's sake, not for the fancy of a girl's face? Are you not keeping away another who would succeed where you fail, simply because the guiding spring of his work would be of Heaven, while yours is of earth?"

"I know," he said humbly, "I have been wrong; but not so wrong, I hope, as to earn the contempt, the dislike of the woman I love. Barbara, will you forgive me?"

She had turned away. "The offence is not against me," she said.

"No. But can you not have pity on a man who has not your high ideals or your singleness of purpose to seek them?" Fauconberg had never dreamt he would have to ask a woman's pity. "Barbara—"

She made a forbidding gesture. "No. You may not speak like that."

"Miss Evandale, then," he went on; "am I to think that you do not care for me—that you never can?"

She said nothing.

"Will you give me an answer?" he asked.

She raised her eyes for a moment to his face; the suspense was making him draw his breath quickly, and his eyes to shine with the unsteady gleam of a hope which the next instant may quench in the waters of despair. She saw this and hesitated yet another moment, less for her answer than for the words in which to clothe it.

"I can never care for John Fauconberg as he is today," she said.

The light in his eyes leaped like the flame in a crucible.

"Ah, then I have hope?" he cried, making a step nearer.

She put out her hands to keep him away, as she retreated. "No, no," she said, "not that!"

Something in her face made him stop, not her words.

"You must not speak to me of love," she said, with a catch of her breath.

He looked at her as though not knowing whether to obey or disregard her words.

"Never?"

"Perhaps never."

"Bar—Miss Evandale, what do you mean?"

"I had better tell you," she answered. "It is right you should know, after what you have said. You don't perhaps understand me when I say that, if ever I could care for you as you think you care for me it could not be as you are now."

"Because," he burst out, "you look upon me as a hypocrite in coming here. I am not quite that."

"I don't say you are," she rejoined quietly. "But—you won't mind my speaking plainly, as I must—do you imagine, Mr. Fauconberg, that your life has been one to commend you to a woman's respect, And if you are satisfied to have love without respect, I cannot give it."

"I have never done anything dishonorable," he protested warmly.

Then the burnt mortgage deed came to his mind, as such things inexorably will, and he added, "At least, not wittingly. Nothing that should prevent my asking you to be my wife."

"I don't suppose you have," she replied, "because the esence of honor and dishonor are questions of definition. I have never heard even a whisper against you of dishonor as you and your set would define it. But I presume you would wish the woman you make your wife to respect you. Even if she were rich, respect could hardly be a secondary consideration."

"And you cannot?" he asked gloomily, wincing a little under the sting of her last words.

"I have heard things of you," she answered, "told not in spite but rather as redounding to your credit, which do not make for respect. That you have lived a fast, extravagant life, have been a gambler, a spendthrift, and the knowledge that your patrimony, the home of your fathers for many generations, was slipping from you was not enough to check this—folly. Was this quite worthy of you—of a man who bears one of the oldest names in England?"

"You are right," he confessed. "But it is done; I have met you too late. And if I am so low in your opinion, what hope is there for me?"

"I cannot tell," she answered. "It is not for me to dictate your course of life."

"If it were different you could care for me?"

"How can I say that," she returned. "At least you know I take an interest in you or I should not have spoken of what seems to me your faults."

That was all the satisfaction he could get. Paul Hascombe came in, cheery in spite of his manifest fatigue, and Barbara Evandale soon left them to return home.

"You look worried, Jack." Paul remarked when they were alone.

Fauconberg was gazing gloomily into the fire.

"Every day," he said, "proves to me how little good I am likely to do here."

Hascombe looked at him steadily. "It isn't altogether that," he observed.

Fauconberg raised his head. "What do you mean?"

"You don't suppose I haven't seen your liking for her?" Hascombe answered, jerking his head back towards the door by which Barbara Evandale had left them.

Fauconberg's eyes fell. "I daresay you have," he admitted with a short laugh. "Perhaps you have likewise noticed that it is not reciprocated?"

"I should have said, if anything, that it was," his friend replied gently.

Fauconberg shook his head impatiently "She won't look at me."

"Why not?" Paul asked with a touch of genuine surprise.

"Oh, for very good reasons," Fauconberg answered self-reproachfully. "You know that I am not fit to ask a girl like that to marry, much less expect her to be in love with me. At the same time, it hadn't quite occurred to me till half an hour ago. Women—do women—do care for scamps sometimes. I'm a bad lot, a wastrel, a mauvais sujet, anything you like; above a, a hypocrite, for coming down here under false pretences. And she doesn't respect me. That's all."

Hascombe looked grave for a moment. Then he said, "You are unjustifiably hard upon yourself, Jack. No one has accused you of false pretences in being with us. Surely Miss Evandale has not suggested that."

"It is true enough, anyhow," Fauconberg blurted out in an access of passionate self-conviction. "I am here under false pretences. I should never have joined you had it not been for Barbara Evandale."

Hascombe looked away to hide the pain and disappointment in his face. After a few moments of silence he spoke in a low voice.

"That may have been your motive in deciding to come to us. I have half suspected it. But that hardly detracts from the fact that your work has been real and, I hope, profitable."

Fauconberg rose abruptly and took a turn across the room. He knew well enough that what his friend suggested was not the case. Still, with the avowal on his lips, he could hardly bring himself to confess the utter hollowness of his profession there.

"I don't think it has been profitable." he said at length, restrained perhaps from a more direct disclaimer by the thought of Paul's disappointment. "Not to me, at any rate, and if not to me, then assuredly not to others."

"I am sorry to hear it," Hascombe returned, looking at his friend's remorseful, handsome face with an unmistakable yearning. "But I think," he continued gently. "the rebuff you have just suffered may have spread a dark cloud over your mind, and so given a gloomy aspect to everything connected with your life here. It will pass away."

Fauconberg came near and stood over him. "Paul," he said, with the intensity of the self-accusation wrung from him. "I am not fit for this work, not fit to be with you. I am a broken reed, a humbug."

Hascombe rose and faced him, looking at him steadily with eyes alight with a pity and sympathy which were almost divine. "If you have been that," he said, "you can be so no more."

"I will not," Fauconberg returned. "I will go."

Hascombe laid his hand on his friend's arm. "No; stay. Let this be the real turning-point of your life. Stay, and start afresh."

"It is useless, hopeless."

"Nothing is hopeless. Nothing that makes for good. Every effort of service for God is full of hope; more, of the certainty of fulfilment if persevered in. Stay."

Still Fauconberg shook his head. "Ah, if I were like you, Paul!"

"You may go much farther than I. Am I not a man, like yourself? With perhaps, were hearts but known, still greater cause than yours for self-reproach. Stay. Jack, and win back your good name."

Fauconberg was still unresponsive. The life and work of the Hostel, never congenial, seemed just then utterly unsatisfying and inadequate to provide the distraction for which the blow he had received now made him hunger. Perhaps Hascombe realized the dangerous crisis in his friend's soul, for he laid both hands on him and pleaded more insistently.

"You must stay with us. Jack. You cannot look back or give up now. It would be madness, ruin to body and soul."

The force of Hascombe's character was working its effect on Fauconberg. Most of us hardly realize the subtle power given to a man by a good life bravely lived. But the worldling struggled yet.

"But if my life and work are sham? Paul, let me go, and free myself from this hypocrisy."

But the loving hands held him fast. "No, no. You shall stay and free yourself from it here. The canker must be cut out, not covered over. Jack, don't be a coward; stay. Don't run from the fight. Don't go back to that empty life. Would I entreat you like this to stay if I were not certain that it is your great chance of salvation? You came here, you say, for an unworthy motive; stay now for a higher, a purer one. Let the light of honest purpose come into your heart, and let your work be as full and real as it was sham and empty. Do you not owe it to yourself to show Barbara Evandale that you can win her respect, that you are capable of something nobler than she gives you credit for? As her life and work are good and pure, has she not the right to demand a worthy life and a sense of duty in the man who asks her to be his wife? Jack, you will stay?"

He had touched the right chord at last. "Yes," Fauconberg answered. "I will stay."

CHAPTER XV.

"White shall not neutralize the black, nor good
Compensate bad in man, absolve him so:
Life's business being just the terrible choice."

It spoke hopefully, Hascombe thought, for the flexibility and unprobed depth of Fauconberg's character that he was able on his second effort to throw himself with genuine devotion and tenacity of purpose into the work of the Hostel. That this was so, his friend felt sure, since, whatever Fauconberg's failings were, studied duplicity was quite foreign to his nature, of which, as may perhaps have been shown, frankness was a salient characteristic.

The work was there to his hand, never ending, nor to be wholly grappled with, and Fauconberg, at last, it seemed, thoroughly roused from the apathy of pleasure, set to it with a will, never sparing himself, and vieing with the hardest of the devoted workers. Not one of the least of Paul Hascombe's causes for rejoicing was the perception that his friend had surely broken the threads which had been wont, after a spell of spasmodic work, to draw him back to the gayer end of the town. He went but little away from the district now, and even when he did journey to the West-end it was often in the cause of the work, to enlist sympathy and help, or to organize means for replenishing its coffers.

Of Barbara Evandale he saw comparatively little. She was not one of the regular workers, and was much away from London; but whenever she did visit the Hostel Paul Hascombe, loyal and grateful, never failed to put in a word in praise of his friend, taking care that the girl should know the genuine change that had come over him. For Fauconberg himself never alluded to what had passed between them; he knew that if he was to win Barbara it must be done gradually; the old reproach would have to be removed by sincere devoted work and an amended life. But he loved to hear that she had spoken of him to Paul, and this friend on such occasions would ever give him assurance that her opinion was changing, her respect increasing. It was this that spurred him on and kept him to the work when at times, in spite of resolution, he would grow unutterably weary of it. The memory of her voice, the touch of her hand, the look of encouraging approval and sympathy which he so longed and vowed to turn into love, all this was ever with him, glorifying the mean surroundings, sweetening many a distasteful task, for he had got into the way of imagining always that Barbara was looking on; Barbara his goddess, for whom he lived, for whose approving nod he would, if need be, go to his death, whose love he hardly dared now to hope to win. And he had once asked her for it so glibly. He felt hot with shame when he recalled his temerity; what a conceited madman he must have been! And how right she had been in her unhesitating refusal. Ah, the thing he was then! What right had he to thrust himself into her life, and make that amazingly audacious proposal. Then her rejection, he thought, had been so exquisitely tactful; she had not evaded the real reason, but had told him straightforwardly of the mistake he had made in supposing she could love him as he was then. Her voice had been so kind; she might have snubbed him, and her contempt, he felt, would have sent him to perdition. But she had treated him with a sympathy and gentleness which, he now felt, he had had little right to expect. For had not his proposal, to a being so far above him as she was, been almost a piece of impudence? He thought of Miss Rousfield, the pushing contractor's daughter, and shuddered at the difference. Supposing he had married such a girl as that and afterwards met Barbara Evandale? The contrast of his lot with what might have been must have driven him to a state of desperate repining.

But in his dream of hope and with the satisfaction of strenuous endeavor there mingled from outside an element of ever-renewed mortification and self-reproach. It arose from his entanglement with Sybilla Caspari, and was kept alive by the knowledge, of which she took care he should have no doubt, that she was in love with him. He had hoped and expected that with his absence and indifference, any feeling of the sort which he had aroused in her would have died away. He had meant nothing, and, man-like, could not understand why she could not take that unfortunate love passage at Lord Davenham's party as episodically as he. But that Sybilla did not do so he was very insistently reminded, and in a way which threatened to force the matter unpleasantly upon his attention.

For Sybilla had appeared at the Hostel, and seemed likely to become a frequent visitor there. She had taken a prominent part in a concert given in aid of its funds, and from that had promised to sing in the weekly entertainments given during the winter at the Hostel itself. Paul Hascombe eagerly accepted her offer of help, little dreaming of the feeling which existed between her and Fauconberg. And so the Hostel began to see a good deal of Sybilla. Fauconberg avoided her when possible, but was friendly enough when they did meet; Sybilla on her side, although keenly on the alert for the slightest expression of tenderness on his part, was yet too clever to force him to a declaration one way or another. She told herself that she must play a waiting game and profit by the absence of her rival, and in the meantime she appeared to be more interested in Paul Hascombe than in Fauconberg.

However, with a nature so ardent as Sybilla's the game of patience was only practicable so long as nothing occurred to rouse her jealousy. And with Barbara Evandale's return to town and to the work of the Hostel a crisis in the affair became imminent.

At one of the entertainments given in a schoolroom, hired for the purpose, Sybilla had been singing, and as Hascombe handed her down the steps from the platform Fauconberg came up and the two men spoke a few words of congratulation on her performance, which had been most appreciated and rapturously applauded. She was looking her handsomest that evening, in a black demi-toilette dress with a spray of flowers at her breast. Her face was flushed with the excitement of the unstinted applause, so different from that of a fashionable concert-room. She knew she had gone straight to these people's hearts; why, she asked herself, should John Fauconberg's be impregnable?

As Fauconberg joined them, she turned to him radiant; his approach had not deepened the flush on her face—she was too much a woman of the world to let herself blush like a schoolgirl—but the light, the lovelight, in her eyes was unmistakable. She seemed now hardly to notice Hascombe's compliments, and yet to an outsider they would have rang more truly, more spontaneously than the somewhat forced congratulations of the other man.

She opened her fan. "It is so hot here," she said. "Can't we go and sit in that further room?"

She was looking at Fauconberg, who in turn glanced at Hascombe, and on his friend's pale face he noticed a momentary contraction of pain.

"Will you take Miss Caspari, Jack? I fear it is but rough accommodation, but no doubt you will find it cooler in there."

He turned away almost abruptly, and went back to the concert room. Fauconberg and Sybilla walked through to another of the bare class-rooms, neither speaking.

"What a good fellow Mr. Hascombe is," Sybilla observed at last.

Perhaps they were both conscious of the same thought, for Fauconberg replied—

"Yes; the best, the truest and most unselfish that ever breathed. Good fellow enough to deserve the best of luck and to get—the worst."

She glanced quickly at him as though to be sure of his meaning. Then she sat down in the bare wooden armchair he brought forward.

"It is a pity," she said, "that the world is made to run so perversely."

"Yes," he agreed, "but we must be thankful for those few things that do go right. Your singing, for instance."

She looked down with the suggestion of a sigh. "Even there it may have been more apparent than real," she said in a low voice.

He did not mean that, and felt annoyed at her for so turning his simple remark; annoyed, too, that he was left there with her. Sentiment never bores so much as when we hear it from those in whom we ought to welcome it and cannot.

He wondered what safe topic he could find to talk on till released by his companion's next song. She found one for him, though far from safety.

(To be continued).

More than half the battle in cleaning greasy dishes is in the soap you use. Use Sunlight Soap it's the best. 6B

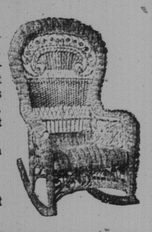
Bargains in Furniture

Parlor Suits, solid walnut frame, upholstered in velour, 5 pieces, $18 and upwards; Fancy Rockers, new designs, at $2.25 upwards; Lounges, strong and durable, at $3.50 and upwards; Parlor Tables, all shapes and sizes, from $1.50 upwards; Bureau, large, well finished, bevel edge glass, at $6.90 and upwards.

In fact all our goods are sold at Bargain prices.

N. A. HORNBROOK & CO.

O'Regan's New Building, 15 Mill Street



TERRIFIC FIGHTING AT PORT ARTHUR

Almost One Continued Series of Desperate Japanese Attacks and Russian Sorties--Great Damage Done to Fortifications.

Tokio, Nov. 2, 7 a. m.—The official reports of the Port Arthur operations since August 1 form a recital of almost continuous fighting of a desperate nature. The Russians first struggled desperately to block every Japanese advance, and then met the concentrated artillery fire of the Japanese with a kind. Latterly, since the Japanese began running parallels and traverses and extending mines, the Russians have been constantly making sorties. They rushed into the Japanese trenches and engaged in ferocious struggles with the engineers and pioneers. With desperate courage the Japanese continued to close in upon the fortress, progressing stage by stage. The Japanese infantry never failed to respond when asked to make an assault on almost impossible positions, and when the troops gained a foothold they generally held it with unflinching determination.

The reports commencing August 1 record the assault and capture of Taku mountain, a general advance following, and then a general bombardment opened August 19, and on August 20 an attack on Panlung Mount. Wire entanglements protected the latter position.

The Japanese artillery first shelled the Pantung fortification and then on August 21 the Japanese infantry charged and were beaten back owing to the deadly fire from the Russian machine guns and the insufficiency of the preliminary destruction of the wire entanglements. The Japanese were also forced to abandon a fort southeast of Keekwan Mountain, which was captured after desperate fighting, owing to the enfilading fire of the neighboring forts.

During the morning of August 22, the Japanese troops forming the centre army changed the east fort on Panlung Mountain and by noon had captured two-thirds of it. The Russians who continued to hold the keep resisted desperately, aided by the fire of the west fort, and forced the Japanese to abandon the positions occupied. The Japanese centre immediately re-formed, stormed, captured and held the west fort, forced the abandonment by the Russians of the east fort and mastered the entire position.

On the night of August 23, the Japanese centre, with the right co-operating, attacked the heights northwest of Wang Tai, and the north fort east of Keekwin mountain, but the troops were forced to abandon the attack on account of the heavy losses sustained from machine gun fire from every direction. On the morning of August 27, the Russians concentrated their artillery fire, attacked the left Japanese line, and were repulsed.

Until the end of the month and the first week in October the Russians continued to attack and shell Pallung mountain. They managed to seriously damage the new Japanese works there and to hamper the operations of the Japanese miners. By August 29, the Japanese mines had reached within about forty yards of Fort Kuropatkin, and about two hundred yards east of the northern forts on Keekwan mountain and some fifty yards from Fort Suishiying.

August 12, the Japanese discovered that the Russians were endeavoring to mine Panlung Mountain. The afternoon of August 19, the Japanese, using siege and naval guns, opened a general bombardment, and at 6 o'clock in the evening made assaults on forts Suishiying and Kuropatkin and on a Russian position on 203 metre hill. The attack was continued at dawn, Aug. 20, with the result that the Japanese occupied Fort Kuropatkin in the forenoon of that day. They also captured four additional forts south of Suishiying mountain and two forts southeast of 174 Metre Hill, inflicting serious casualties on the retreating Russians. The Japanese attacked 203 Metre Hill from the east, north and west during the night, and a company of the Japanese managed to reach and secure a foothold on the northwest point of the summit of the hill, which the Japanese prepared as a base for further operations, and then endeavored to capture the entire position. The Russians, however, were reinforced and desperate fighting followed. The gallant little company of Japanese, without food or water, managed to hold the position throughout August 21, and until the night of August 22, when they retreated. During the fight the Japanese threw bombs and stones at the Russians.

August 25 the Russians centred their fire upon the Japanese trenches leading to Rihlung Mountain. A detachment of one hundred Russians then advanced and attacked the Japanese miners. Thirty Russians charged into the trenches and twenty were killed before the survivors retired.

August 27 the Russians again shelled the Japanese miners and twenty Russians charged the Japanese, twice throwing bombs into the trenches.

During August 28 the Japanese bombarded the Russian fleet. Seven or eight shells struck Russian warships. August 30, the battleships Peresviet and Pobieda were each hit five times. The night of October 2, the Russians desperately attacked the Japanese miners and also the Japanese siege line, but were repulsed after a fierce battle. The Japanese continued to shell the Russian fleet and hit the Poltava, Petresviet and Pobieda.

During the night of Oct. 4, the Japanese surprised the Russians and destroyed two guns on Yenchaang Hill. The Russian attacks on the Japanese miners and the Japanese shelling of the forts, city and fleet continued throughout the early part of October, the Russians varying the routine October 10 with a night attack, in which they used dynamite against the west fort on Panlung Mountain. They were repulsed.

On October 11, the Japanese captured the railroad bridge south of Yungtung, and October 12 and 13 Japanese shells set fire to the Peresviet apparently disabling her. They also set fire to another warship, name unknown.

October 16 the Japanese centre taking advantage of a bombardment stormed and captured a fort in the centre of Rihlung Mountain, after a desperate struggle. The Russians left behind them a hundred dead, one field gun, one small gun and two machine guns. Desperate fighting also took place around Sunshu mountain and 203 Metre Hill.

October 18 the Japanese captured some Russian prisoners who said that the fall of Port Arthur was near at hand, that the food supplies were insufficient and that the Russian battalions were greatly reduced numerically. They added that General Stoessel was offering rewards in money and medals for 400 volunteers to make a sortie and destroy the Japanese guns.

From October 18 the Japanese continued to drive their trenches forward, the Russians desperately resisting.

On October 24 the Russians ran a traverse from east of Keekwan Mountain and dynamited the Japanese traverse. A conflagration raged at Port Arthur during the afternoon of October 24.

On October 25 the Japanese guns sank a thousand ton steamer anchored at the end of the harbor.

SUCCESSFUL AIRSHIP

Went Up 1600 Feet and Came Down in the Same Spot it Started From.

St. Louis, Nov. 1—A second successful flight of the Baldwin airship was made at the World's Fair today under the guidance of A. R. Knabenshue, of Toledo, Ohio, who manoeuvred the "California Arrow" at will high above the western portion of the exposition grounds and descended in the Stadium adjoining the aerial concourse, amid cheering thousands, after a flight of 36 minutes. Yesterday the ship went up to an altitude of 2,000 feet and circling around descended in the aerial concourse within 100 feet of his starting point. Today Knabenshue went up to an altitude of about 1,600 feet and descended on the exact spot upon which he had decided to land. Owing to the large crowd gathered within the concourse enclosure, the inventor, T. S. Baldwin, admonished Knabenshue at the start not to attempt to land in the concourse enclosure, but to choose some spot without, and nearby, where he would not be indanger of sticking spectators. Knabenshue chose the stadium enclosure and came down just as he intended to do.

Satisfied with the demonstrations of the airship over the short courses during these two trials, Inventor Baldwin announced at the conclusion of the flight that Knabenshue will tomorrow undertake a fifteen mile flight over a designated course, the choice of the course to be left to newspaper men, and the flight to be made regardless of the wind conditions.

St. Joseph's, 8; U. N. B., 3.

St. Joseph's, N. B., Nov. 1—(Special)—In the presence of an enthusiastic crowd of spectators St. Joseph's won its first game today over the U. N. B., defeating the latter 8 to 3.

Harris—"Jenkins says you didn't speak to him when you and he met last evening. He thinks you didn't see him."

Barlow—"Funny he should think that."

Fruit-a-tives or Fruit Liver Tablets are the concentrated extracts of fresh, ripe fruits in tablet form. The natural cure for all Stomach, Liver and Kidney Troubles. At your druggist. 50 cents a box.