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"SALADA"

JAPAN TEA

'Fresh from the gardens'



CHAPTER XXV.—(Cont'd.)

"Cayley asked us to bring a letter along," Bill explained to Angela Norbury. "Here you are."

"You will tell him, won't you, how dreadfully sorry I am about—about what has happened? It seems so hopeless to say anything; so hopeless even to believe it. If it is true that we've heard."

Bill repeated the outline of the events of yesterday.

"Yes. . . And Mr. Ablett hasn't been found yet?"

"No."

She shook her head in distress. "It still seems to have happened to somebody else; somebody we didn't know at all." Then, with a sudden grave smile which included both of them, "But you must come and have some tea."

"It's awfully recent of you," said Bill awkwardly, "but we—er—"

"You will, won't you?" she said to Antony.

"Thank you very much."

Mrs. Norbury was delighted to see them, as she always was to see any man in her house who came up to the necessary standard of eligibility. When her life work was completed, and summed up in those beautiful words: "A marriage has been arranged, and will shortly take place, between Angela, daughter of the late John Norbury . . ." then she would utter a grateful Nunc dimittis and depart in peace—to a better world, if Heaven insisted, but preferably to her new son-in-law's more dignified establishment.

But it was not as "eligibles" that the visitors from the Red House were received with such eagerness today.

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Antony explained that he had not seen Mr. Ablett.

"Of course, yes, I was forgetting. But, believe me, Mr. Gillingham, you can trust a woman's intuition in these matters."

Antony said that he was sure of this.

"Think of my feelings as a mother?"

Antony was thinking of Miss Norbury's feelings as a daughter, and wondering if she guessed that her affairs were now being discussed with a stranger. Mark engaged, or about to be engaged! Had that any bearing on the events of yesterday? What, for instance, would Mrs. Norbury have thought of brother Robert, that family skeleton? Was this another reason for wanting brother Robert out of the way?

"I never liked him, never!"

"Never liked—?" said Antony, bewildered.

"That cousin of his—Mr. Cayley." "How did Miss Norbury get on with him?" Antony asked cautiously.

"There was nothing in that at all," said Miss Norbury's mother emphatically. "Nothing. I would say so to anybody."

"Oh, I beg your pardon. I never meant—"

"Nothing. I can say that for dear Angela with perfect confidence. Whether he had advances—?" She broke off with a shrug of her plump shoulders.

Antony waited eagerly.

"Naturally they met. Possibly he might have—I don't know. But my duty as a mother was clear, Mr. Gillingham."

Mr. Gillingham made an encouraging noise.

"I told him quite frankly that—how shall I put it?—that he was trespassing. Tactfully, of course. But frankly."

"You mean," said Antony, trying to speak calmly, "that you told him that

"Think of my feelings as a mother."

—er—Mr. Ablett and your daughter?"

Mrs. Norbury nodded several times. "Exactly, Mr. Gillingham. I had my duty as a mother."

"There must have been a certain awkwardness about the next meeting," suggested Antony.

"Naturally, he has not been here since. No doubt, they would have been bound to meet up at the Red House sooner or later."

"Oh, this was only quite lately?"

"Last week, Mr. Gillingham. I spoke just in time."

"Ah!" said Antony, under his breath. He had been waiting for it. He would have liked now to have gone away, so that he might have thought over the new situation by himself. But Mrs. Norbury was still talking.

"Girls are so foolish, Mr. Gillingham," she was saying. "It is fortunate that they have mothers to guide them. It was so obvious to me from the beginning that dear Mr. Ablett was just the husband for my little girl. You never knew him?"

Antony said again that he had not seen Mr. Ablett.

"Such a gentleman. So nice-looking in his artistic way. A regular Velasquez—I should say Van Dyck. Angela would have it that she could never marry a man with a beard. As if that mattered, when—?" She broke off, and Antony finished her sentence for her.

"The Red House is certainly charming," he said.

"Charming. Quite charming."

She gave a deep sigh. Antony was about to snatch the opportunity of leaving, when Mrs. Norbury began again.

"And then there's this scapegrace brother of his. He was perfectly frank with me, Mr. Gillingham. He told me of his brother, and I told him that I was quite certain it would make no difference to my daughter's feelings

for him. . . After all, the brother was in Australia."

"When was this? Yesterday?" Antony felt that, if Mark had only mentioned it after his brother's announcement of a personal call at the Red House, this perfect frankness had a good deal of wisdom behind it.

"It couldn't have been yesterday, Mr. Gillingham. Yesterday—?" she shuddered, and shook her head.

"I thought, perhaps he had been down here in the morning."

"Oh, no! There is such a thing, Mr. Gillingham, as being too devoted a lover. Not in the morning, I. We both agreed that dear Angela—Oh, no. No; the day before yesterday, when he happened to drop in about tea-time."

It occurred to Antony that Mrs. Norbury had come a long way from her opening statement that Mark and Miss Norbury were practically engaged. She was now admitting that dear Angela had not to be rushed, that dear Angela had, indeed, no heart for the match at all.

"The day before yesterday. As it happened, dear Angela was out. Not that it mattered. He was driving to Middleton. He hardly had time for a cup of tea, so that even if she had been in—"

Antony nodded absently. This was something new. Why did Mark go to Middleton the day before yesterday? But, after all, why shouldn't he? A hundred reasons unconnected with the death of Robert might have taken her there.

He got up to go. He wanted to be alone—alone, at least, with Bill. Mrs. Norbury had given him many things to think over, but the great outstanding fact which had emerged was this: that Cayley had reason to hate Mark. Mrs. Norbury had given him that reason. To hate? Well, to be jealous, anyhow. But that was enough.

"You see," he said to Bill, as they walked back, "you know that Cayley is perishing himself and risking himself over this business, and that must be for one of two reasons. Either to save Mark or to endanger him. That is to say, he is either whole-heartedly for him or whole-heartedly against him. Well, now we know that he is against him, don't we?"

They had come to the gate into the last field which divided them from the road.

"Jolly little place, isn't it?" said Bill.

"Very. But rather mysterious. Isn't there a drive, or a road or anything?"

"Oh, there's a cart-track, but motor-cars can't come any nearer than the road"—he turned round and pointed—"up there. So the week-end millionaire people don't take it. At least, they'd have to build a road and a garage and all the rest of it, if they did."

"I see," said Antony carelessly, and they turned round and continued their walk up the road. But later on he remembered this casual conversation at the gate, and saw the importance of it.

What was it which Cayley was going to hide in that pond that night? Antony thought that he knew now. It was Mark's body.

(To be continued.)

Ceylon Taking Steps to Stop Child Slavery

Government Introduces Measure to Prevent the Cruelty Existing at Present

Colombo, Ceylon.—H. E. Newnham, Mayor of Colombo, addressing the annual general meeting of the Friend-in-Need Society on Tuesday, referred to the "ghastly cases of cruelty to children in Ceylon and the system of trafficking in children, amounting to slavery," and added that undoubtedly some of these little slaves were well treated but world-wide public opinion had definitely refused to tolerate anything in the nature of slavery. He cited the abolition of a similar system in Hong Kong a few years ago as the result of public agitation, and "it is time that the remnants of such a system in Ceylon should be abolished by the force of the public conscience."

Mr. Newnham described 13 cases of the grossest cruelty to child-servants in the Ceylon courts last year. The average age of the victims was eight years. He emphasized the slender chances there were of detecting cases of cruelty. The Mayor then gratified his audience by saying that the Colonial Secretary had authorized him to state that the Ceylon Government was taking immediate action in the matter. A bill has already been drafted to regulate the employment of children as domestic servants.

The Mayor concluded by saying: "The country should not rest until it has removed the reproach at present darkening the social system."

The Ceylon Daily News points out that no provision exists for the education of these children. L. Machae, Director of Education, has added a clause to the revised education code withholding grants in whole or in part from schools providing differential treatment for the children of the depressed classes.

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Russia," says a report, "is in the grip of an epidemic of tchekajohyt." First aid in this ailment calls for wrapping the patient warmly and sending for the proof-reader.

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How Gloria Swanson, the famous cinema star, recently scored over the big guns of the moving picture industry at Hollywood makes an amusing story. Dressing herself up in old-fashioned clothes, and wearing a wig of grey hair over her own glorious locks she went the round of the studios begging for work as a super. Marvellous to relate, she was turned down everywhere, and some of the men to whom she applied so far forgot their good manners as to make game of her. But the laugh was on her side in the end, for the whole business was a carefully thought-out publicity stunt. Next day the American newspapers were telling their amused readers how Hollywood's film-casting directors had unwittingly refused a super's job—at a super's wage—to one of the highest-paid film actresses in the world.

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