

NUMBER 70, BERLIN

CHAPTER XV.

The Working of "No. 70."

JUST as it was growing dusk on the following evening, a handsome middle-aged woman, exquisitely dressed in the latest mode, and carrying a big gold chain-purse, attached to which was a quantity of jangling paraphernalia in the shape of cigarette-case, puff-box, and other articles, was lolling in a big arm-chair in Lewin Rodwell's little study in Bruton street.

From her easy attitude, and the fact that she had taken off her fur coat and was in the full enjoyment of a cigarette with her well-shod feet upon the fender, it was quite apparent that she was no stranger there.

"It certainly was the only thing to be done in the circumstances, I quite agree," she was saying to Rodwell, who was seated opposite her, on the other side of the fire.

"How did he look at Bow street this morning? Tell me!" Rodwell asked her eagerly.

"Pale and worried," was the woman's reply. "The case was heard in the extradition court, and there were very few people there. The girl was there, of course. A young barrister named Charles Pelham appeared for him, and reserved his defence.

"So I heard over the 'phone."

"I thought perhaps you would be called," the woman remarked.

"My dear Molly," laughed the man grimly, "I'm not going to be called as witness. I've taken very good care of that! I haven't any desire to go into the box, I can assure you."

"I suppose not," laughed the woman. "The prisoner must never know that you've had a hand in the affair."

She was a well-built, striking-looking woman, with a pair of fine dark eyes sparkling from beneath a black hat, the daring shape of which was most becoming to her. Upon her white hand jewels gleamed in the fitful firelight, for the lights were not switched on, and in her low-cut blouse of cream crepe-de-chine she wore a small circle of diamonds as a brooch.

"It's a good job for us all that you've closed the young man's mouth just in time," she declared. "He knew something, that is evident."

"And he kept it to himself, intending one day to launch it as a thunder-bolt" Rodwell remarked. "But you've been infernally clever over the affair, Molly. Without you, I don't know what I should have done in this case. There was a distinct danger."

"It wasn't very difficult, after all," his companion replied. "Money does wonders—especially the good money of Germany. Here in England 'Number Seventy' happily has much good money, and has a 'good press.'"

"Yes," laughed Rodwell. "And yet the fools here think they will win!"

"My dear Lewin, they would win if they were not so hopelessly egotistical, and if we had not long foreseen the coming conflict and Germanized the British political and official life as our first precaution. In consequence, our victory is assured. Already this country is in the grip of our German financiers, our pro-German politicians, labour-leaders, and officials of every class. Our good Ger-

By WILLIAM LE QUEUX

man money has not been ill-spent, I can assure you!" she laughed.

"I quite agree. But tell me how you really managed to engineer that evidence," he asked, much interested.

"Well, after you had given me the correspondence four days ago, I took a taxi and went down to the City to see my old friend George Charlesworth," was her reply. "He and I used to be quite old chums a year ago, when, as you know, he fell into the trap over that other little matter, and became so useful, though he still remains in entire ignorance."

"Ah! of course, you know the arrangements of the office. I quite forgot that."

"Yes, I arrived about five o'clock, just as the old boy was leaving, and sat in his room while he finished signing his letters. Already most of the clerks had gone. When he had finished, and all the staff had left, I lit up a cigarette and begged to be allowed to finish it before we went out. I having suggested that he should take me to dinner that night at the Carlton. Suddenly I pretended to grow faint, and asked him to get me some brandy. In alarm the dear old fellow jumped up quickly, and ran out to an hotel for some, leaving me in the office alone. Then, when he'd gone, it didn't take me long to hurry out into the clerks' office and put the papers in between the leaves of that big green ledger which I found in the desk at which young Sainsbury had worked—just as you had described where it would be found."

"Excellent! You are always very 'cute, Molly," he laughed. "I suppose you quickly recovered when Charlesworth got back with the brandy—eh?"

"Well, I didn't recover too quickly, or the old bird might have grown suspicious," was her reply.

MARIECHEN PAGENKOFF, known as Mrs. Molly Kirby, was a native of Coblenz, but had been educated in England, and had lived here the greater part of her life until she had lost all trace of her foreign birth. Her husband had been a German shipping-agent in Glasgow, and at the same time a secret agent of the Koenigergratzerstrasse. But he had died two years before, leaving her a widow. Her profession of spy had brought her into contact with Lewin Rodwell, and ever since the outbreak of war the pair had acted in conjunction with each other in collecting and transmitting information through the various secret channels open between London and Berlin, and in carrying out many coups of espionage. Mrs. Kirby lived very comfortably—as the widow of a rather wealthy shipping-agent might live—in a pretty flat in Cadogan Gardens, and to those around her she was believed to be, like Lewin Rodwell, most patriotic and charitable. Indeed, she had done much voluntary work for the charitable funds, and had interested herself in the relief of Belgian refugees, and in the work of the Red Cross.

"The day after you had been to the office," Rodwell explained, "I went down there upon one or two matters which required attention, and, after a couple of hours, I told Charlesworth that I wanted to glance at a certain

ledger to verify a query. The book was brought, and as I carelessly searched through it in Charlesworth's presence, I discovered some documents. We opened them, when, to our great surprise, we found letters in German, there being enclosed in one a ten-pound note."

"What did old Charlesworth say?" asked Mrs. Kirby, with a smile upon her red lips.

"Well, as he can read German, I allowed him to digest the letters. The old man was dumbfounded, and exclaimed: 'Why, young Sainsbury kept this book! Look at this letter! It's addressed to 'Dear Jack'! Is it possible, do you think that Sainsbury was a German spy?'"

"What did you say?"

"I EXPRESSED the gravest surprise and concern, of course, and suggested that he, as manager, should take the documents to Scotland Yard and make a statement as to how they had been discovered. He wanted me to go with him, but I declined, saying that in my position I had no desire to be mixed up with any such unpleasant affair, and that he, as managing director of the Ochrida Corporation, was the proper person to lodge information. The old fellow grew quite excited over it. He had several of the clerks up, and from them ascertained that the ledger in question had not been used since Sainsbury left. This, in conjunction with the fact that one of the letters was addressed to 'Jack,' and in it a mention of meeting at Heath street, proved most conclusively that the incriminating documents belonged to Sainsbury. Therefore, an hour later, after I had instructed Charlesworth what to tell them at Scotland Yard, I had the satisfaction of seeing him enter a taxi with the documents in his pocket. I continued to do some work in the office when, later on, as I expected, he returned with a detective who inspected the book, the desk in which it was kept, and who listened to the story of young Sainsbury's career."

"And I suppose you gave the young man a very good character—eh?" asked the woman who had led such an adventurous life.

"Oh, excellent!" was Rodwell's grim reply. "The officer went away quite convinced that Sainsbury was a spy."

"Though you gave me the letters, I quite forgot to read them," said the woman. "Of what character were they? Pretty damning, I suppose?"

"Damning—I should rather think they were!" answered the man who posed as the great British patriot, and hid his real profession beneath the cloak of finance and platform-speaking. "Two of them were letters which our friend Wentzel, at Aldershot, had received from the Insurance Company at Amsterdam—you know the little institution I mean, in the Kalverstraat. Wentzel is known as 'Jack,' and in one of these he is addressed as such. So it came in very useful. The letter enclosed a Bank of England note for ten pounds."

"The monthly payment of his little annuity—eh?" laughed the woman. "I understand. I had a letter only this morning from the same Insurance Company."

"Well," laughed the man, "we all



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