

he had made on the previous night. On Wednesday the north-east coast of England would be left unguarded. What, he wondered, would happen to startle with "frightfulness" the stupid English, whom he at heart held in such utter contempt?

THAT same night Jack Sainsbury was on his way home in a taxi from the theatre with Elise. They had spent a delightful evening together. Mrs. Shearman had arranged to accompany them, but at the last moment had been prevented by a headache. The play they had seen was one of the spy-plays at that moment so popular in London; and Elise, seated at his side, was full of the impressions which the drama had left upon her.

"I wonder if there really are any spies still among us, Jack?" she exclaimed, as, with her soft little hand in his, they were being whirled along up darkened Regent Street in the direction of Hampstead.

"Alas! I fear there are many," was her lover's reply. "Poor Jerrold told me many extraordinary things which showed how cleverly conceived is this whole plot against England."

"But surely you don't think that there are really any spies still here. There might have been some before the war, but there can't be any now."

"Why not, dearest?" he asked, very seriously. He was as deeply in love with her as she was with him. "The Germans, having prepared for war for so many years, have, no doubt, taken good care to establish many thoroughly trustworthy secret agents in our midst. Jerrold often used to declare how certain men, who were regarded as the most honest, true John Bull Englishmen, were actually in the service of the enemy. As an instance, we have the case of Frederic Adolphus Gould, who was arrested at Rochester last April. He was a perfect John Bull: he spoke English without the slightest trace of accent; he hated Germany and all her works, and he was most friendly with many naval officers at Chatham. Yet he was discovered to be a spy, having for years sent reports of all our naval movements to Germany, and in consequence he was sent to penal servitude for six years. In the course of the inquiries it was found that he was a German who had fought in the Franco-German war, and was actually possessed of the inevitable iron cross!"

"Impossible!" cried the girl, in her sweet, musical voice.

"But it's all on record! The fellow was a dangerously clever spy; and no doubt there are many others of his sort amongst us. Jerrold declared so, and told me how the authorities, dazzled by the glamour of Teuton finance, were, unfortunately, not yet fully awake to the craft and cunning of the enemy and the dangers by which we are beset."

Then he lapsed into silence.

"Your friend Dr. Jerrold took a very keen interest in the spy-peril, didn't he?"

"Yes, dear. And I frequently helped him in watching and investigating," was his reply. "In the course of our inquiries we often met with some very strange adventures."

"Did you ever catch a spy?" she asked, quickly interested, for the subject was one upon which Jack usually avoided speaking.

"Yes, several," was his brief and

rather vague reply. The dead man's discretion was reflected upon him. He never spoke of his activity more frequently than was necessary. In such inquiries silence was golden.

"And you really think there are many still at large?"

"I know there are, Elise," he declared, quickly. "The authorities are, alas! so supine that their lethargy is little short of criminal. Poor Jerrold foresaw what was happening. He had no axe to grind, as they have at the War Office. To-day the policy of the Government seems to be to protect the aliens rather than interfere with them. Poor Jerrold's exposure of the unsatisfactory methods of our bureau of contra-espionage to a certain member of Parliament will, I happen to know, be placed before the House ere long. Then matters may perhaps be remedied. If they are not, I really believe that the long-suffering public will take affairs into their own hands."

"But I don't understand what spies have done against us," queried Elise, looking into her lover's face in the furtive light of the street-lamp they were at that moment passing. Her question was quite natural to a woman.

"Done!" echoed her fine manly lover. "Why, lots of our disasters have been proved to be due to their machinations. The authorities well know that all our disasters do not appear in the newspapers, for very obvious reasons. Look what spies did in Belgium! Men who had lived in that country all their lives, believed to be Belgians and occupying high and responsible positions—men who were deeply respected, and whose loyalty was unquestioned—openly revealed themselves as spies of the Kaiser, and betrayed their friends the instant the Germans set foot on Belgian soil. All has long ago been prepared for an invasion of Great Britain, and when 'the Day' comes we shall, depend upon it, receive a very rude shock, for the same thing will certainly happen."

"HOW wicked it all is!" she remarked.

"All war is 'wicked,' dearest," was the young man's slow reply. "Yet I only wish I were fit enough to wear khaki."

"But you can surely do something at home," she suggested, pressing his hand. "There are many things here to do, now that you've left the city."

"Yes, I will do something. I must, and I will!" he declared, earnestly.

A silence again fell between them.

"It is a great pity poor Dr. Jerrold died as he did," the girl remarked, thoughtfully, at last. "I met him twice with you, and I liked him awfully. He struck me as so thoroughly earnest and so perfectly genuine."

"He was, Elise. When he died—well—I—I lost my best friend," and he sighed.

"Yes," she answered. "And he was doing such a good work, patiently tracing out suspicious cases of espionage."

"He was. Yet by so doing he, like all true patriots, got himself strangely disliked, first by the Germans themselves, who hated him, and secondly by the Intelligence Department."

"The latter were jealous that he, a mere civilian doctor, should dare to interfere, I suppose," remarked the girl, thoughtfully. "The khaki cult is full of silly jealousies and petty prejudices."

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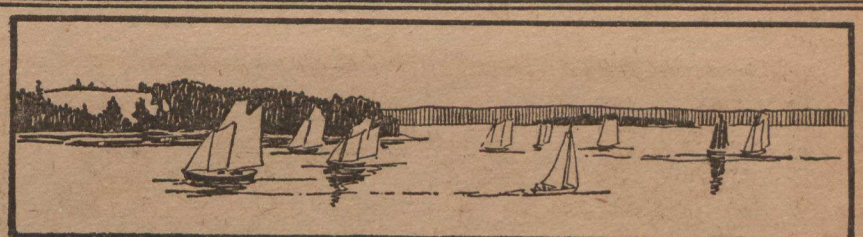
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