

SILENT LIPS

By ANNIE O. TIBBITS.

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CHAPTER XXVII.

There was something strange about Ted Sealey, something wrong. He had altered for the worse of late, had taken to queer hours and was neglecting his work.

Geoffrey did not find him at his lodgings either that night or next day when he called and Mrs. Sealey, sank her voice and leaned forward and whispered mysteriously in his ear.

"They're working overtime at the mill, but I reckon you won't find him there," she said. "He ain't the lad he was. He's going wrong, is Ted Sealey, an' all through that brazen lass o' Merrill's. He weren't here last night, nor the night after that."

Geoffrey turned away, disappointed and vaguely uneasy. It all sounded so unlike Ted that he couldn't believe it. But somehow he could not find him. He inquired at the mill early in the morning, only to find that he had not arrived, and the timekeeper at the door shook his head.

"There's no tellin' with him of late," he said, "and if you're a friend of his you'd better give him a warnin'. He's a good workman, but the master won't stand too much of it, and he's bin givin' it lately."

The old man's words echoed in his ears all day, and sent him back to the mill again late that afternoon. But this time he did not go round the great gateway to the employees' entrance, but to the office door, where an impudent clerk lifted up a frosted glass window and said, "Hello."

Geoffrey handed in his card, and the youth's manner underwent a sudden change.

"Sir Geoffrey Waring?" he said in an awed voice. "Mr. Thomson will no doubt see you on air, sir, if you will step in."

Geoffrey did so, and soon afterward the man he remembered so well—the man who once upon a time, long years ago, had known him only as a poor lad in a corduroy suit, hustled in. He

had grown stout and prosperous. His mill had done well, and the master was no longer a man who worked with his employees, but who drove them.

He looked into Geoffrey's face without recognition, looked into the face of the lad he had employed, and did not know him!

"Sir Geoffrey Waring?" he said, in an oily voice, "I am extremely honored. No doubt you have heard of the steps I am taking for turning my mill into a company?"

Geoffrey nodded. "Then it is fortunate you are here at this moment for Jackson's clerk—the lawyer you know—is here, too, and will give you any information you wish. It will be satisfactory, indeed, Sir Geoffrey, if we can persuade you to become one of the directors."

Geoffrey let himself drift, and a few minutes later he found himself following Thomson over the mill, through the workshops he had known so well long years ago when he had worked there.

He looked about him curiously. There were men that he remembered still, women whose faces scarcely seemed to have changed. Some of them looked up as he passed, and once or twice he saw the men, expecting recognition. But it never came, and in the faces he fancied he saw instead of the old eager, happy air, a sullen look, as if they resented his appearance.

It had not seemed like that in the old days. It had been all work and bustle and good spirits. Even the wheels had sung as they spun, and the whir of the traps and the hum of the dancing bobbins had been almost like music in the old days.

Now, surely, there seemed to hang about the workshops a sullen air, an air of restraint and sadness.

He started about him, and then at last followed Mr. Thomson through a narrow gangway into another part.

Thomson said proudly, "and I feel I shall be justified in adding yet another building twice the size to meet the demands of my business. This is why I wish to form a company."

His chest swelled out, and at the entrance to the new rooms he stood, his thumbs in the armpits of his waistcoat and his hard face smiling and complacent.

But in this room the faces of the workers, thin faces most of them, and all looking worn and many ill and hungry, were still more sullen. They were older hands—most of them men, and as Geoffrey and Mr. Thomson entered the hard look seemed to settle still more sharply upon the faces.

Geoffrey and Thomson stood for a moment looking round. The movement and noise and bustle went on. Then suddenly everything seemed to come to a standstill, and before either realized it there was a movement among the workers. They had collected in a group before them, and one of them stood out, looking Geoffrey straight in the face.

"You, bein' a stranger, had better quit," he said roughly, "but we're goin' to deal with Mr. Thomson here and now. It's all arranged, and you can quit if you want to. We'll see you out."

Geoffrey stared uncomprehendingly, but apparently Mr. Thomson understood only too well. His face had changed and grown a sudden ghastly gray. He puffed out his lips uncertainly, and his eyes wandered helplessly over the rapidly increasing group about him. He looked round, and he was surrounded. There was no way of retreat. He was helpless among the enemy—among the workers who had been sweating for years the people—friends once—whom he had alienated.

"You'd better quit," the workmen repeated. "We're goin' to have things our way."

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settled tonight. Shall we wait for you?"

Geoffrey shook his head. "No, I'll stay," he said. "I've got a friend here myself."

"A friend?"

"Ted Sealey," Geoffrey replied and there was a shout.

"A friend of his, and you're welcome," the man cried. "But stand away."

Geoffrey fell back and the spokesman came forward and confronted the owner of the mill.

"We've heard all about the company you're forming," he cried, "but you've got to deal with us first, before you do anything to that, and we're set on it. We're goin' to have our rights. Twice in these last two years you've promised us a rise of wages that we've never had. Twice—once when Burton's give their men a rise, and once when Friddle's men went out on strike you promised us more wages if we'd keep in. And we stuck to you, every man of us. We were loyal to you. But we never got our rises. We were never a blessed farthing the better off for bein' faithful to you, and so now we're determined to once what you owe us, the rise in wages you promised us two years back. We want all you owe us—the two years' extra money that we haven't got. An' we're goin' to have it out of you one way or the other, Mr. Thomson. Are you goin' to give it to us fair an' square, or 'ave we got to get it for ourselves?"

For a moment Thomson was taken aback. For a moment fear overcame him, and blanched his face and hurried him. But before the man had finished his speech he had steadied himself. He drew himself up.

"I am not to be terrorized," he said, boldly. "This is not the way to get any rise or anything else, and I shall certainly not listen to any demand made in this way. Let me pass."

None moved. All the mill seemed to be curiously still. Only the spokesman threw up his arm, and instantly at the edge of the crowd there was a queer responding movement.

"Are you decided upon that?" he asked.

"Certainly," said Thomson.

"Are you sure?" said Geoffrey two minutes to make up your mind," the man went on. "We've took you by surprise, maybe. The day was when you weren't a hard master, and there's some of us as can't credit as you'll be hard now though we've had years' experience to prove as you are."

"What you used to be. But we'll give you a chance. Two minutes—"

"Bah!" The master's rage broke loose. "Every man who has had a hand in this will be instantly dismissed," he shouted. "To your work, you can't pass at once. Do you hear?"

Apparently no one heard or cared. The spokesman waited a moment, looking into Thomson's convulsed face and then suddenly blew a whistle.

It was answered instantly by another in another part of the building. After that the men waited, curiously silent, as if listening.

Somehow Thomson and Geoffrey waited, too—somehow Thomson did not know what to do, and before he had made up his mind a shout behind him made him turn.

"They're all out," said a voice, and a moment later a sudden vivid glare, a tongue of flame, its reflection red against the white wall of the room in which they stood, caught his eye.

"Good heavens! the mill's on fire!" he cried, hoarsely.

The man who had acted as spokesman laughed harshly.

"Yes, yes, it's a fire," he said, "and all the women are out, and we're going to keep you here until the flames catch the gangway. Then you can run if you like."

Thomson gave a sharp cry, but before he could speak someone rushed up.

"Ted's caught and shut off," he cried hoarsely. "He went back for summit at the last minute, and he's there in the midst of the fire, in the very heart of it, mates."

Everyone instantly forgot all about Thomson. A hundred voices clamored at once.

"What did he go for? What brought him back? What's to be done?"

A score of men had disappeared for help. A dozen others began making attempts to get back into the other part of the mill.

But already, swift as it was, the gangway was filling with smoke, and now, amidst the clamor of voices, there began to be heard a dull, sinister sound, the roar of fire!

They looked at each other with blank, white faces. For a moment they seemed helpless and stupefied, and then there began a move toward the other side of the new building, and the way out into the great yard.

Geoffrey went with them, drifting helplessly among them. They forgot all about him, they even forgot Thomson and the effect their revenge was having upon him in their dismay; but when they got round into the street in front they stood in horror.

The road was full of crowd that was rapidly increasing stared up at the burning building. The workmen had evidently prepared their plans carefully, and taken care that they should not fail. There was a strange smell of paraffin in the air, and the flames were leaping in the windows in a way that no ordinary flames would leap. Their plans had been well laid.

No firemen had arrived, but a ladder had been raised against the wall, and beneath it were huddled a group of people with strained, anxious faces. They were looking up breathlessly in strange silence.

"They're watching for Ted Sealey," someone said huskily in Geoffrey's ear. "It's the sixth time he's gone, and he's hurt and fit to drop as it is. They tried to prevent him going the last time, but it was no good. They say now there's a woman shut up in the mill still."

"Ted Sealey?" Geoffrey repeated.

"Yes, there's been some mistake, and some woman got left behind and cut off. Ted got them out, and now they say that Barker, the lawyer's clerk, got left there too and Ted's gone after him. It looks as if it would be a miracle if he ever got out again."

He stepped suddenly, for a shadow appeared amidst the leaping flames at

one of the windows, and an instant later a hoarse cheer went up from the crowd. It was Ted, and Ted with a burden in his arms!

The cheer was repeated. Then a man ran up the ladder and took from him a loose heap that looked more like a charred bundle of clothing than a man. It was Ted Barker.

Ted raised himself to the sill, the fire roaring behind him, and sat for a moment, his feet on the ladder. A shout went up from the crowd.

"How are you, lad? Are you all right, lad?"

He waved one hand. The other hung oddly at his side.

"I'm all right," he cried in a queer dead voice. "Yes, lads, I'm all right."

He swung himself slowly on to the ladder and began to descend. They had laid Barker down on blankets, and now turned to help Ted. A whisper ran through the crowd, Barker was dead or dying, but suddenly the whisper ceased and changed to a quick sharp cry.

Geoffrey gave a start and ran forward.

The ladder, bending already under Ted's weight, had snapped suddenly. There was a crash, and a sharper cry, and then sudden, horrified silence.

To Be Continued.

FANCHER INSURANCE BILL

Governor Hughes, of New York State, Approves the Measure.

Albany, N. Y., July 19.—Governor Hughes today approved the two bills introduced by Senator Fancher, aimed to perfect the insurance legislation of last year. One amends the law generally, extending the time for filing with the superintendent of insurance lists of policyholders before the election; requiring that such lists shall be subject to inspection under the regulations of the superintendent of insurance; prohibiting agents during business hours from soliciting votes for directors, and providing for a serially numbered official ballot in a form to be approved by the superintendent of insurance.

It was understood that this bill did not meet with the views of the governor, but that he believes there are so many important features in the measure that he was justified in approving it as a whole. It is not expected that he will seek to have amendments made at the present session of the legislature.

The other bill amends the law relative to biennial elections and provides that in case of the death or resignation of any director elected in 1936 his successor shall be chosen by the board of directors, to hold office only until the next election of directors.

At the annual election of 1938 the directors shall be elected for a term of one year in place of those whose terms of office then expire. At the annual election to be held in 1939, and biennially thereafter, an entire new board of directors shall be elected for a term of two years.

A SOCIALIST WIN

Long-Time Liberal Riding Captured by the New Party.

London, July 19.—The Socialists gained a notable political victory in the by-election at Colnevalley Division, Yorkshire, W. R., to fill the seat made vacant by the raising of James Kitson to the peerage.

Victor Grayson, the Socialist candidate, was returned at the head of the poll, Colnevalley has been Liberal for many years. The votes of all the candidates this time were very close. The Liberal aspirant was only 153 behind the winner, while the Unionist candidate was a good third.

Mr. Grayson, who is a Manchester journalist and lecturer at Owens College, Manchester, was largely supported by the Laborites.

Artificial Digestion

Quite Useless

THE TEMPORARY RELIEF OF DIGESTIVE TABLETS IS FUTILE.

My experience and study indicate that 90 per cent of dyspeptics have slow liver, weak kidneys and constipated bowels.

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If you feel heavy and dull after meals, use Dr. Hamilton's Pills.

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Think it over. Dr. Hamilton's Pills are a system-cleaner and health-bringer of unusual merit; and they are safe for young and old.

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KOREA'S EMPEROR

FORCED TO YIELD

Unable to Resist Pressure of

His Cabinet—A Dramatic

Scene Enacted.

Seoul, July 19.—It is reported that a most dramatic scene occurred at the palace last night when the ministers, headed by Premier Yi Wang Wong, appeared before his majesty, and made the cabinet's final representation in urging the emperor's abdication.

His majesty was in a high state of excitement, but firm tone prevailed at length upon the want of precaution and prudence of the emperor's policies hitherto, especially in diplomatic affairs, whereby he was endangering the safety of the nation. The premier enumerated the facts of his majesty's duplicities which culminated in the dispatch of a deposition to The Hague Peace Conference, and forcibly reasoned the uselessness of the Emperor's disavowal of his relations with the Hague affair.

Unable to successfully combat the logic of the premier's representations, the Emperor sought a last refuge in the council of older statesmen, doubtless anticipating their sympathy. The council immediately convened. Four elders quickly responded, and appeared before his majesty at 1 o'clock this (Friday) morning.

The emperor's disappointment and surprise was boundless when they unanimously agreed with the advice of the ministers. His majesty's mind, however, was finally made up, and he consented to the draft for an imperial rescript, announcing his abdication, which was placed before him for his signature.

The emperor's condition was indescribable. Greatly agitated and perturbed, he signed the document, and the seal was affixed and impressive silence. A suppressed sob from the emperor was the only sound which broke the deathlike stillness, which reigned throughout the memorable scene.

Briefly the emperor, in the imperial rescript of abdication, expresses his regret that during the 44 years of his reign, national calamities have followed in rapid succession, and the people's distress has become so aggravated that he deemed it now time to transfer the crown to the heir-apparent in conformity with ancestral usages.

Excitement at Korean Capital.

Tokio, July 19.—It is felt here that the connection among the populace at Seoul is not actuated by the spirit of true loyalty to the retired emperor, but out of fear of the adoption of drastic measures by the Japanese Government toward Korea as a nation. The ceremony of abdication, it is expected, will assume the form of a rescript transferring the throne to the late emperor's successor.

While much sympathy is expressed with the Korean emperor, the public is breathing easier for the sake of both countries, now that the arch-intriguer has been completely disarmed. It is confidently expected that thereafter the relations between Japan and Korea will be smooth.

Evening.—Enraged crowds are assembled at various points throughout the city, and inflammatory documents against the Japanese are being freely distributed, giving rise to a forlorn hope that some active opposition is about to begin.

BACK TO HIS FIRST LOVE

Prince de Broglie Says He Will Remarry His Divorced Wife.

Paris, July 19.—Prince Robert de Broglie, whose marriage a year ago in Chicago with Miss Estelle Alexander, an American, was yesterday declared void by the French courts, will, within a few days, formally notify his father, at whose instance the marriage was annulled, of his intention to remarry Miss Alexander, under the French law. This notice will be served through a notary.

Under the law passed during the last session of the Chamber of Deputies, modifying marriage procedure in France, Robert is free to marry at the end of thirty days, unless his father interposes an objection. If this step is taken, however, Robert must personally appear in court and request permission to marry, and this the court must grant him.

SOCIALIST VICTORIOUS

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Mr. Grayson, who is a Manchester journalist and lecturer at Owens College, Manchester, was largely supported by the Laborites.

THE COUNTERFEITERS

Important Conference.

Toronto, July 19.—Further important developments are hourly expected in the Lindsay counterfeiting case.

Today at the Parliament buildings a lengthy conference was held in the attorney-general's department. There were present Mr. J. R. Cartwright, K. C., deputy attorney-general, representing the attorney-general; Mr. Bailey, solicitor to the attorney-general's department, who has been given the conduct of the case for the crown; Provincial Inspector Jos. E. Rogers, who returned last night from his investigations at Lindsay; and Col. Percy Sherwood, head of the Dominion police, who inaugurated the case and asked the Provincial officers to take it over.

When interviewed the officers declined to discuss the subject matter of the conference, but intimated that it prefaced further important action in the immediate future.

KEEP MINARD'S LINEN IN THE HOUSE

Under the joint management of MISS SCOTT, formerly principal of the Girls' Department of the Provincial Model School, Toronto, and MISS HERRICK. Autumn term will begin Sept. 1. For prospectus apply to Miss Scott.

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THE RIGHT QUALITY AT THE RIGHT PRICE.

We have everything, good in low and medium priced umbrellas, and a splendid showing of the more expensive goods. Everything in this line you need at prices that are a net saving to you.