

THE THIRD MAN

(Continued from page 12)

"Yes. The fellow has a lot of bluster, but he's a coward at heart. I gave him a fair chance, but—oh well, he'll not forget our meeting for the next fortnight."

Eve lowered her eyes and was silent for several moments.

"You're not sorry, are you?" Geoff questioned at length.

"No, dear. How can I be sorry? I'm only human. If I were a man— But there!" and she smiled a little sadly. "Such men ought to be punished, Geoff."

Geoff left by the 9.40 train, feeling on the whole, well satisfied with his visit, and not the least part of his satisfaction arose from the fact that he had given David Wiggs a sound thrashing. Again and again a grim smile lighted up his face as he recalled the encounter. Even the sore places on his own anatomy were a pleasant reminder. He would gladly have suffered a great deal more for the mere joy of punishing such a cad as he deserved.

While Geoff journeyed back to London, generally at peace with himself and the world, David Wiggs sulked in his room at the Randolph Hotel and anointed his bruises with boracic ointment. To show himself in the lounge or in the smoke-room would be to betray his humiliation. After turning the matter over in his slow brain for the best part of an hour, he came to the conclusion—very reluctantly—that he had better lie low.

To get at Geoff through the law would be to reveal the whole story, and that would mean a greater humiliation than he was now suffering. He was obsessed mainly by one idea, and that was to get even with Geoff Lincoln. He had now a double score to wipe out.

Before any of the other guests in the hotel were stirring David had taken his departure. He was anxious not to be recognised by anyone he knew. His face still bore traces of his recent interview with Geoff Lincoln. So he turned

his face once more toward London, and by nightfall he was comfortably housed in the Victoria Hotel.

There could be no peace for him, no chance of regaining his self-respect, until Geoff Lincoln had been paid back in full and overflowing measure.

It was easy to discover where Geoff lived, and not at all difficult to follow his movements, but the chance of striking back with safety to himself seemed a long time coming.

And yet it did come—for do not all things come to those who wait? It came, too, in a way that he little expected, and David made full use of his opportunity.

CHAPTER XIV

A FRESH START

A WEEK after Geoff's return from Oxford he met Mr. Robert Kingsland, M.P., by appointment at his club in Pall Mall, and had lunch with him. He was a little overawed at first. He appeared to be the only young man in the place. Even the waiters were elderly. Mr. Kingsland struck him as being one of the handsomest men he had ever met. He was about sixty years of age, tall, broad, and erect as a soldier.

The meal threatened at the beginning to be a silent one. Geoff never felt less inclined to talk. This handsome, soldierly man, with his keen, bluey grey eyes,

seemed to be mentally weighing him up all the time.

After a while he got Geoff to talk about his life at Oxford.

Geoff spoke with tenderness and affection of his college, and by degrees with enthusiasm. He remembered only the pleasant side—the sports, the river, the bump supper, the rags, the bonfires, the union debates, the visits to each other's rooms, the friendships. How memories came trooping back as he talked!

Before lunch ended all shyness and reserve had vanished, and Geoff began to appear at his best. He was a good talker when interested; besides he had convictions, and was not afraid of expressing them.

In the smoke-room, over coffee and cigarettes, they came to business. He did not want a shorthand clerk or a typewriter. He wanted an assistant—a secretary who would do for him what he had not time to do himself. To attend to his correspondence would be the least part of his duties.

"Just as present I am worried over a report I have promised the Board of Trade on the shipping industry. I know my subject. I have my facts, but to present the case in decent literary form is—well, not exactly in my line. You understand?"

Geoff inclined his head again.

"Then, a Member of Parliament, if he is to be of any value at all, must be fully abreast of the questions of the hour—Education, Licensing, the Land Laws, Tariff Reform, etc. Then he should know something about foreign and colonial policy. Well, these are big subjects—most of them intricate and involving a considerable knowledge of detail. I know where I stand on most of these questions, but to hunt up the facts, search out references and all that, requires a good deal of time, and I'm a busy man. Now you understand, perhaps, what I am looking for, what I require?"

"You require a man to give up his whole time?" Geoff interposed.

"Well, not necessarily. I understand your position. You are reading for the bar. You have still some law examinations to pass."

"That is so, and I could not take any post that would absorb all my time. If I could do what you require and have sufficient time to work up my law, I'd be pleased beyond anything."

"Suppose you tried it for a few months. Parliament will not meet till February; by that time you will have got into the swing of things."

Geoff's face brightened. "If such an arrangement is agreeable to you, I'll be delighted," he said.

"You'll not object to live in the country, I expect. Rankwood is thirty miles from London. Your week-ends you would have at home if you very much wished."

"It would be rather a relief to get out of London just now," Geoff laughed. "The fogs are not exactly exhilarating."

"And when could you begin?"

"To-morrow, if you like."

"Let me see, to-morrow is Friday. Suppose you begin on Monday?"

"That will give me time to get my belongings together. Thank you very much," and Geoff returned to St. John's Wood feeling greatly elated.

The short day was rapidly fading when he reached Branden Station on Monday afternoon. A two-horse brougham was waiting for him with coachman and footman in livery.

A three-mile drive through country lanes brought them to the entrance of an extensive park. A long carriage-drive ended in a wide sweep before what seemed in the dim light a huge mansion.

Geoff alighted from the carriage feeling rather nervous and ill at ease. A man servant in livery opened the door and showed him into a large and richly furnished hall, which was warmed and brightened by a fire of logs in an open chimney. Above his head hung a large chandelier suspended from the roof. Opposite him was a wide staircase which divided into two and ended in a gallery which swept round three sides of the hall.

Geoff had had no experience of country houses and was anything but an authority on furniture and domestic architecture, but he could not help feeling, nevertheless, that there was something very harmonious about the arrangement of this particular hall. The coloring, too, was rich and subdued, and, best of all, a delightful air of comfort pervaded the place.

He was looking at a landscape by Leader when a step behind him caused him to turn his head, and he found himself face to face with his employer.

"Good afternoon. I am glad to see you have arrived safely," and, with a smile, Mr. Kingsland extended his hand.

A moment later Mrs. Kingsland appeared on the scene, and Geoff was introduced to her. She was considerably younger than her husband, rather tall, with a figure that was distinctly youthful, and an expression that indicated good nature and freedom from worry.

Cross section of radiator showing fused joints.

HECLA FURNACE

No Gas
No Dust

Saves one ton
in seven.

FUSED JOINTS CANNOT LEAK

Comfortable heating is possible only with a Furnace that cannot leak gas and dust. At every joint where a leak might otherwise occur, the Hecla is sealed tight. We do not trust to bolts and cement. The wear due to constant expansion and contraction would grind out the cement and leave a series of leaks for the escape of gas or dust. To make a joint that will be as tight after years of service as it is when new, we fuse the steel sides and cast-iron frames of our radiators by a patent process. This welds the iron and steel into one piece.

Homes heated by Hecla Furnaces 20 years old are getting as pure air from the registers as when the Furnace was new.

And this Furnace saves one ton of coal in seven.
Isn't it worth looking into?

WRITE FOR THIS BOOK.

If you want a more comfortable home, it will interest you.

All fumes from fire go through this passage. Every joint is fused making it gas and dust proof

Fused

Burns wood
as well as coal.



CLARE BROS. & CO., LIMITED,
Dept. J, Preston, Ont.