

Under the sleek silk hat, and above the thick, white silk handkerchief that filled in the "V" of the black overcoat, was a face which an observant person could hardly have passed without a second glance.

It was pale, but bronzed by exposure, with a soldier's bronze; and one might with safety have laid a wager that this man was a soldier. He had keen, light eyes, with thick brows drawn together in a slight frown, and a fair, turned-up moustache, with long ends waxed to a fine point.

Never before had the young man in the red car beheld that face in the flesh, save once, when as a little boy he had been taken to a grand pageant to gaze in awe at those same clean-cut features (or others exactly like them) under a glittering silver helmet. But, unless he were egregiously mistaken, he had seen the face in a hundred photographs, in as many black-and-white drawings in illustrated journals; he had seen it caricatured in comic sketches, and flashed on to white sheets by biographs at music-halls.

"Could it be the real face?" he asked himself, with a quickening throb of excitement. Then he remembered reading, a day or two ago, that it might presently be expected in England, on an unofficial visit, during which—for all save its distinguished friends—it desired to be *incog*.

For a moment Christopher Race forgot all about his car, his errand with the car, and his interest in the car that was disabled. But the first words spoken by the gentleman with the shining hat and neat overcoat reminded him forcibly of all three.

"No better success?" asked a clear voice, in perfect English, enriched by a slight foreign accent.

"I am very sorry indeed, sir," apologised the chauffeur, "but I haven't been able yet to make out