

Foo

THE FAIR IMPOSTOR.

CHAPTER XII. A "ROMEO" ARRIVES.

But for the actors, the scenery, the properties and the supers, murmured Dawson Slade.

"There hasn't been such a brilliant affair at the Towers for I don't remember when," went on Mrs. Jones.

"What a narrow escape I have had," murmured Slade. "One hour earlier and I should have been let in for this. Well, Mrs. Jones, don't let me keep you away from this grand entertainment."

"Very well, sir; but I must, indeed, see about something for you to eat," said Mrs. Jones, and she hurried out.

"Let me go to bed, Louis," said Dawson Slade, with a sigh. "I fancied they might be out, or had dined, or that a ball might be on; but amateur theatricals! nothing so awful crossed my mental presentiments. I wonder what they will end up. Go and see, Louis. A cup of chocolate and a rusk will suit me."

The faithful Louis went down, and returned in about half an hour with Mr. Flitters himself, and bearing—vast condescension; a small but dainty little dinner, which the chef had achieved as an impromptu.

"I told Monsieur Egalite it was for you, sir," said Flitters, "and he threw his soul into it. 'Mr. Slade can appreciate an artist's efforts, and will make allowance for shortness of time,' he said, sir."

"Take my compliments to Monsieur Egalite," said Slade, as they lifted the covers, "and my best thanks. Good-night, Flitters, good night! Mind, not a word to anyone!"

"Rely on me, sir," said Flitters, "and then Slade and his valet were left alone. Arrayed in his dressing gown, he ate his dainty dinner daintily, smoked a cigarette and sipped the small bottle of old Lafitte, then leaned back in his easy-chair, musing over yesterday's singular incident in the park, and wondering whether he would ever see that pale, beautiful face again."

He had almost forgotten that he was at the Grange, had quite forgotten the dreaded theatricals, when an indistinct thunder of applause greeted his ears.

Then he laid down the end of his cigarette, and looked round for Louis. Presently that faithful domestic entered.

"Where have you been?" he asked.

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"Just look into the saloon, sir," said Louis, with a smile. "Shouldn't have known it from a theater. A great success, sir. Wonderful number of people there; quite a dress affair, too."

"And all bored to death; hiding their yawns behind their fan." "No, sir; the thing seems to be going very well. Not at all like amateurs; one young lady—very small and fair, Miss Warner, I think they said—is playing very well, sir."

"Ah!" was the remark. "I'm out of it. I hate amateur theatricals. I'll go to bed soon, Louis, and you can go back to the festive scene. Mind! don't let the duke or anybody who knows you see you, or they'll know I am here. I don't mean to put in an appearance till to-morrow."

Ten minutes afterward Dawson Slade was in bed, and Louis was about to take his departure on tiptoe, when there came a hurried knock at the door, followed by another; then the door was opened and Lord Gerald appeared.

With a hurried "How do you do, Louis?" he limped—it could scarcely be called limping—to the bed.

"Slade, my dear fellow! Is it really you?"

Slade sat up, Gerald seized his hand and held on to it.

"I am so delighted! But why have you gone to bed?" "How do you do, Gerald? The unexpected guest! Serves me right; I had no right to come; but you see I have effaced myself. I'm not supposed to be here till to-morrow morning."

"My dear Slade!" exclaimed Gerald, despairfully. "Ah, if you knew her, if you had seen her—"

"But that's just it!" said Slade, exasperated. "If it had been a professional lady, as it usually is, I might say I might have been simple enough to yield to your persuasions and play the fool—Romeo, I mean; but to play up to some insane young lady, who has no more idea of acting than a stick, but who thinks she can play Juliet better than Patti or Neilson! No, Gerald, it cannot be hid, as the Yankees say. Good-night!"

"Good-night!" he said, and there was something so bitter and sorrowful, so intense a disappointment, that it went straight to Slade's heart.

With something that sounded strangely like an oath, he sat up in bed.

"Here, Gerald!" he called, with his white forehead puckered into an exasperated frown. "Come back! Confound it! Look here—"

"To be continued."

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turned up. There was an accident, you say? Then he was in the train, and if you took the only fly—

"The only fly," said Slade, with grim satisfaction.

"He's left behind at the station and won't get here till the play is half over. And, I say, Slade, you must get up. I want you to play Romeo."

"What?" exclaimed Slade, sitting up in bed and staring at him.

"I want you to play Romeo," repeated Gerald. "I know you can act. Don't you remember playing it at Lady Brown's years ago? You played Romeo, didn't you?"

"I murdered that immortal character?" said Slade, drowsily.

"And I've heard you speak of your good memory; I say, Slade, do wake up."

"But I don't want to, my dear Vasavour; I'd rather not. Do go away!"

Gerald groaned, and his small fingers clasped and unclasped the broad shroud, nervously.

"If you don't know what a fix I'm in—"

"I never knew a man who went in for amateur theatricals that wasn't in a fix," murmured Slade. "It will be a lesson for you, my dear boy. Once bit twice shy. You won't want any more of this thing anyhow."

"It's real horrible," went on Gerald, disregarding the interruption. "It isn't the people I care about, though they'll be horribly disappointed, but her."

"Her—who?" asked Slade, from beneath the clothes, and with suppressed irritation.

"Lilian—Miss Woodleigh, I mean."

"And who may Miss Woodleigh be?" asked, with a yawn.

"Sir Talbot's daughter; she was to play Juliet—is to play, rather—for her sake you'll oblige me. It's for her I feel so cut up. I am so proud of her, and his lips quivered."

Slade turned over and looked at him.

"Oh!" he said, "the future marchioness, I suppose—"

"Slade!" exclaimed Gerald, in a low, reproachful voice.

"Well, what else can I think? You don't care a fig for a large and intelligent audience, exasperated beyond endurance, but center all your grievance on her disappointment! Miss Woodleigh—didn't know Sir Talbot had a daughter! Well, good and promise her that she shall play Juliet next week, next year, whenever Rayburn turns up."

"You won't come!" said Gerald, despairfully. "Ah, if you knew her, if you had seen her—"

"But that's just it!" said Slade, exasperated. "If it had been a professional lady, as it usually is, I might say I might have been simple enough to yield to your persuasions and play the fool—Romeo, I mean; but to play up to some insane young lady, who has no more idea of acting than a stick, but who thinks she can play Juliet better than Patti or Neilson! No, Gerald, it cannot be hid, as the Yankees say. Good-night!"

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King Edward VII.

An Outdoor Man.

(BY FRANK HYDE.)

In paying tribute to the many excellent qualities of our late Sovereign, and in reviewing the many sides of his life, while Prince and King, the orator or scribe would inadequately fill his mission if he failed to give due consideration to his late Majesty's innate love of good sport. Born to be a Monarch of the most virile and intrepid people that ever formed a nation, his influence as an active participant or patron of many sports and pastimes not only increased the popularity and vogue of each particular form of recreation but exerted a certain control on the conduct of those lines of sports, which to-day are enjoyed in Great Britain as they are no other place in the world. His days spent in England's great universities gave him an appreciation of athletics and field games, and later years he took particular pride in the achievements and the glories that came to Great Britain through the prowess of her sons. His fondness for yachting led him into earnest competition for the Queen's cup, which he won more than once at Cowes. As a huntsman, stalking deer and shooting game on his own and other preserves in England and Scotland, and as an expert big game shot in India and elsewhere, he had few equals. He enjoyed golf and played it much and well. His encouragement of football and particularly the game of cricket was especially gratifying to the upholders of these games. But of all the sport that stood first in his estimation and nearest to his heart, that of horse-racing was the one indulgence in which he was most deeply interested and withal most successful. The racing stables he maintained were for size and quality of product quite the best in England; his horses have time and time again carried off the highest honors of the turf. And it must be said of him that as King and good sportsman, he was ever concerned in maintaining the splendid traditions of an English gentleman's most popular sport. In the passing of Great Britain's most beloved and popular ruler, not only does the world lose the most ideal Sovereign that history records, but the nobler side of life sustains the loss of a sympathizer, and sport loses one of its most potent advocates and enthusiastic exponents. Matters of state, court and public functions and the social calls upon kingship permit but brief spells in which a King may follow, unhampered, the inclination of his mind. The wonder is that King Edward gave of such time as he could spare, so much to the free enjoyment of outdoor life and the evincing of a desire for peaceful pursuits. He has truly been called the prince of good sportsmen. If ever there was a human embodiment of British fair play and if ever a creator of non-militant spirit engendered in a nation's people by adherence to the pleasures of sport, then well entitled is our late King to the noblest title of King or subject, that of Peacemaker.

It is earnestly hoped that his son and successor, King George the Fifth, inherits King Edward's love of nature as well as the art of man and that British sport will have in our new Sovereign as zealous an upholder of the ideals of many games and as jealous a respecter of the traditions of all British recreations and outdoor sports as was that father who was the trust of monarchs and the frat of fine sportsmen. No other nation will more appreciate the fondness for outdoor life in its ruler than that which has carried good sports, into Dominions on which the sun never sets—"Outdoor."

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SEAMEN'S LIST.

Table with columns A, B, C, D, E, F, G, H, I, J, K, L, M, N, O, P, Q, R, S, T, U, V, W, X, Y, Z. Lists names and details of seamen.

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