

in the trenches, I can at least do it here, at home."

"If it is true that you've been already rejected as unfit," exclaimed Charlesworth, "I daresay I might induce the directors to reconsider their decision."

"No, sir," was Sainsbury's proud reply. "I will not trouble you to do that. It is quite apparent that, for some unknown reason, they wish to dismiss me. Therefore I consider myself dismissed—and, to tell you the truth, I don't regret it. But, before I go, I would like to thank you and the staff for all the kindness and consideration shown to me during my illness a year ago."

"Then you refuse to stay?" asked Charlesworth, rather puzzled, for he held Sainsbury in high esteem.

"Yes. Before dismissing me I consider that the directors should have inquired whether I had tried to enlist," he answered, resentfully.

"Then I suppose there is no more to say. Shall you remain till the end of the week?"

"No, sir. I intend to go now. It would not, I think, be a very happy seven days for me if I remained, would it?"

Charlesworth sighed. He was sorry to lose the services of such a bright, shrewd and clever young man.

"Very well," he replied, regretfully. "If that is really so, Sainsbury, I must wish you good-bye," and with frankness he stretched forth his hand, which the young man took, and then turned on his heel and left the manager's room.

While Jack Sainsbury was on his way through the bustle of Gracechurch Street, Lewin Rodwell, who had been upstairs at a meeting of the board, descended and entered Charlesworth's room, closing the door after him.

"Well," he asked carelessly, after chatting upon several important business matters, "have you spoken yet to young Sainsbury?"

"Yes. And he's gone."

Lewin Rodwell drew a sigh of relief. "He ought to enlist—a smart, athletic fellow like that! Such men are just what England wants to-day, Charlesworth. I hope you gave him a good hint—eh?"

"I did. But it seems that he has already endeavoured to enlist, but was rejected—a defective arm."

LEWIN RODWELL was silent—but only for a few seconds.

"Well, never mind; he's gone. We must reduce the staff—it is quite imperative in these days. What about those six others? Staff reduction will mean increased profits, you know."

"They all have notice. I'm sorry about Carew. He has an invalid wife and seven children. His salary is only two pounds fifteen."

"I'm afraid we can't help that, Charlesworth," replied the man who posed in the West End as the great self-denying patriot who hobnobbed with Cabinet Ministers. "We must reduce the staff, if we're going to pay a dividend. He'll get work—munition-making or something. Sentiment is out of place in these war-days."

And yet, only two days before, the speaker had made a brilliant speech at a Mansion House meeting in which he had beaten the patriotic drum

loudly, and appealed to all employers of labour to increase wages because of the serious rise in food-prices. Charlesworth knew this, but made no remark. It was not to his interest to thwart the great Lewin Rodwell, or his place-seeking sycophant Sir Boyle Huntley, who had been put by his friend into the position he now held.

Truly the city is a strange, complex world of unpatriotic, hard-hearted money-seeking—a world where the Anglo-German or the swindling financier waxes rich quickly, and where the God-fearing Englishman goes to a Rowton House ousted by the "peaceful penetration" of our "dear kind friends" the Germans.

Those who have known the city for the past ten years or so know full well—aye, they know, alas! too well—the way in which Germany has prepared us for the financial aspect of the war. In the light of current events much has been made plain that was hitherto shrouded in mystery. We have seen plainly the subtle methods of the enemy.

Lewin Rodwell and his catspaw, Sir Boyle, were only typical of dozens of others in that little area from Temple Bar to Aldgate, the men who were working for Germany both prior to the war and after.

Charlesworth, to do him full credit, was an honest Englishman. Yet such a man was bound to be employed by our enemies as a safeguard against inquiry, and in order to avert suspicion. City men, like Charlesworth, might be patriotic to the backbone, yet when it became a matter of choosing between bread-and-cheese and starvation, as in his own case, the matter of living at Wimbledon on two thousand a year appealed to him, in preference to cold mutton and lodgings in Bloomsbury.

Germans, with or without assumed English names, controlled our finances, our professions, our hotels, nay, our very lives, wherefore it was hardly surprising that we were unable, in the first few months of war, to rid ourselves of that disease known as "German measles."

"I must say I'm sorry about Carew," remarked Charlesworth. "He's been with us ever since the formation of the Company—and you recollect we sent him abroad two years ago upon the Elektra deal. He made a splendid bargain—one that has brought us over twenty thousand pounds."

"And he was paid a bonus of twenty pounds, wasn't he?" snapped Rodwell, impatiently. "Surely that was enough?"

"But really I think we should keep him; he is very valuable."

"No, Charlesworth. Let him go. Give him the best of references, if you like. But we must cut down expenses, if you and I are to live at all."

"We must live at the expense of these poor devils, I suppose," remarked Charlesworth, with a slight sigh.

TRUTH to tell, he could not express his repugnance.

"Yes. Surely we are the masters. And capital must live!" was the other's hard reply. "But where is Sainsbury going?" Rodwell inquired, quickly. "What does he intend doing?"

"I have no idea," the manager said. "He behaved most mysteriously when

I told him that his services were no longer required."

"Mysteriously!" exclaimed Rodwell, starting and looking straight across at his companion. "How?"

"Well, he expressed undisguised pleasure at leaving us—that's all."

"What did he say?" asked Lewin Rodwell, in an instant deeply interested. "Tell me exactly what transpired. I have a reason—a very strong reason—for ascertaining. Tell me," he urged, with an eagerness which was quite unusual to him. "Tell me the whole facts."

CHAPTER VII.

The Spider's Web.

THREE weeks went past—dark, breathless weeks in England's history.

Jack Sainsbury, keeping the knowledge to himself, spent many deep and thoughtful hours over his friend's tragic end. Several times he suggested to Mr. Trustram that, in order to clear up the mystery, the sealed letter should be opened. But Trustram—having given his word of honour to the dead man—argued, and quite rightly, that there was no mystery regarding Jerrold's death. He had simply committed suicide.

Rodwell and Charles Trustram had, by this time, become very friendly. The latter had been introduced to Sir Boyle Huntley, and the pair had soon introduced the Admiralty official into a higher circle of society than he had ever before attained. Indeed, within a few weeks Rodwell, prime mover of several patriotic funds, had become Trustram's bosom friend. So intimate did they become that they frequently played golf together at Sunningdale, Berkhamstead or Walton Heath, on such occasions when Trustram could snatch an hour or so of well-earned recreation from the Admiralty; and further, on two occasions Sir Boyle had given him very valuable financial tips—advice which had put into his pocket a very considerable sum in hard cash.

Admiralty officials are not too well paid for their splendid and untiring work, therefore to Charles Trustram this unexpected addition to his income was truly welcome.

The establishment of Lady Betty Kenworthy's Anti-Teutonic Alliance had caused a wave of indignant hatred of the German across the country, and hence it was receiving universal support. It aimed at the internment of all Germans, both naturalized and unnaturalized, at the drastic rooting out of the German influence in our officialdom, and the ousting of all persons who, in any sphere of life, might possess German connections by blood or by marriage.

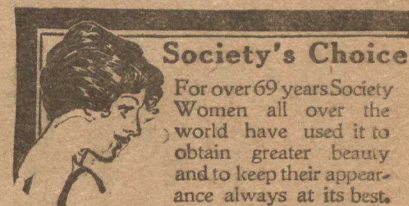
While Trustram was, of course, debarred, on account of his official position, from open sympathy with the great movement, Lewin Rodwell and Sir Boyle went up and down the country addressing great and enthusiastic audiences and denouncing in violent terms the subtle influence of "the enemy in our midst."

Jack Sainsbury watched all this in grim silence. What he had overheard in the board-room of the Ochrida Copper Corporation rang ever in his ears.

More than once he had sat in Sir Houston Bird's quiet, sombre consulting-room, and the pair had discussed the situation. Both agreed that the



clever masquerade being played by Rodwell and his baroneted puppet was, though entertaining, yet a highly dangerous one. But without being in pos-



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Further details can be obtained on application to G. J. Desbarats, C.M.G., Deputy Minister of the Naval Service, Department of the Naval Service, Ottawa.

G. J. DESBARATS
Deputy Minister of the Naval Service,
Department of the Naval Service,
Ottawa, March 12, 1917.

Unauthorized publication of this advertisement will not be paid for.

