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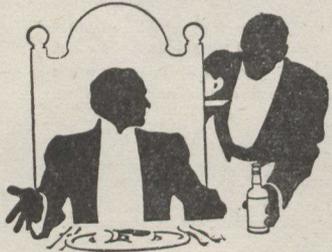
exclusively and a little **Cuticura Ointment**

occasionally that it is a pity not to do

so in all cases of pimples, redness, roughness, itchings and irritations.

Samples Free by Mail

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sank. She was a merchantman, homeward bound."

Muller pondered.

"Some ships passed me last night, steaming very fast. I saw a searchlight, and soon after that I think there was a collision; it sounded like a collision, followed by a torpedo explosion. I guess that was the end of your ship, Mr. Porter, and perhaps another."

The afternoon wore on, with no indications of wind. The Englishmen slept, and Muller set himself to think how best he could make use of the aeroplane. Badly as he wanted to see a German ship, he wanted in his heart of hearts just one more chance at a British man of war, something more worthy of his rifle than these slow, foolish ships of commerce that came nosing stupidly about his very nozzle—looking for possible lives to save! One did not wish to kill them unarmed and without suspicion, but there was no alternative. Now, to bag some wary cruiser, to ambush a crack battleship—that would be worth while, and restore one's self-respect after the other revolting work. But the immediate point was how to apply this new windfall, with effect.

OBVIOUSLY Porter must go aloft to navigate the machine; he could send an armed look-out with him, but what would prevent Porter from flying right away? The look-out wouldn't shoot Porter, for that would be suicide as well as murder. Send up a mechanic who could cut off the ignition? Ah, that was more to the point.

Jacobs and his chief were called on deck next morning.

"I haf a plan," announced Captain Muller. "Will you fly?" Porter hesitated. "Go below, and get some coffee und food, and consult mit your friend."

They did so, and Porter concluded that nothing was to be gained, while something might be lost, by refusing to fly. On deck they saw in the aeroplane the young Lieutenant who had "captured" them, strapping the receivers to his head. The cable end had been brought aboard the submarine, and connected. Muller drew the Englishman aside.

"I thought you would be sensible," he said. "Now I will tell you the conditions. You will go up with Lieutenant Sturm and an artificer; your friend will remain here. Your work is solely to navigate. The Lieutenant's work is to look about and report to me. The artificer's work is to watch you, and to cut off your ignition if you do anything abnormal, or otherwise than Lieutenant Sturm dictates. We have made the telephone cable very fast at this end. It must not break, for it is the thread by which hangs the life of your friend down here. Briefly, if it breaks, he will be shot. In conclusion I may tell you that both the Lieutenant and the artificer are armed. I have tried to provide against any trickery, but all's fair in war. If you can beat my precautions, well, then, I am beaten. I bear you no grudge, Herr Porter. I wish it was not war between us."

The Captain smiled wistfully at his prisoners, and left them. Jacobs touched his chief on the arm.

"About the cable, sir. I know you won't break it without cause, but if cause does turn up, sir, don't hesitate to break it. You're welcome to it so far as I'm concerned."

"So you wouldn't die unwillingly if it happened to do your country a good turn?" asked Porter, suddenly recalling a long-ago conversation with Captain Hunt.

"I'd dearly like to do these blighters in for that last night's work, whatever it cost. You've got my vote. If you can see a way to do 'em in, sir, you do 'em in."

"Are you ready, Herr Porter?" called the Captain.

The two Englishmen shook hands in silence, and parted. Muller, that mixture of grimness and geniality, came up.

"We will just run over the instructions. You are to fly above the fog in figures of eight. If you deviate, your ignition is cut off, and you

plane to the water. If you break the cable or interrupt the messages in any way, your friend is shot. This is not what you call 'bluff.'"

Porter stepped aboard the canvas boat.

"I don't think I can beat you, Muller, but I will if I can."

The German artificer helped him politely aboard the aeroplane. The familiar gurgle of water under the floats welcomed him.

"Buck up, old man," said the aeroplane to its maker, "we are together again, at any rate. That is something."

There came the order to cast off. The plane darted away and rose into the fog. Then began the monotonous rhythmic gyrations; the constant comparison of the dials. Suddenly she emerged into sunlight, fog-shreds trailing from her wings and floats. Higher and higher she towered, till the fog surface below looked like a clean white tablecloth—with a dirty finger mark some distance to the east. When Porter saw that, he turned to the Lieutenant, whom he found talking rapidly into the trumpet; Muller, in fact, had been made aware of the smoke before Porter himself had seen it.

And this aeroplane was his invention, and he had threatened to take it to Germany, and here he was, pinned to his threat without reward by a humorous fate. He looked over his shoulder at the mild artificer. There he sat alert, one arm encircling a strut, his hand upon the switch, in the other hand an automatic pistol. A shiver passed up the inventor's spine; for the first time he considered what a long way it was down to the water.

The Lieutenant placed his finger upon the barometer dial, indicating that he wished to descend to nine hundred feet. Porter descended obediently. Porter, a servant in his own house; a slave, rather, spying upon his own country's ships, perhaps compassing their destruction.

A NEEDLE-LIKE mast could now be seen in front of the smoke mark. The vessel was approaching them. The Lieutenant, his eyes alternately to his binoculars and to the compass, was shouting staccato details to the hidden submarine. Porter noted an unpleasant smile upon his face, and resented it. Turning again toward the smoke, he distinguished another mast, and then a third, and behind that, two more. A fleet was approaching them in "line ahead," and at considerable speed. But was it German or British? And in either case, what could he do? To hide in the fog till it was past would cost Jacobs his life, and that, perhaps, to no purpose. The Lieutenant had probably given Muller sufficient data to act upon already.

Suddenly the leading ship, now hardly a mile away, entered a thin place in the fog, and a faintness of horror came over Porter as he realized that he was looking at the British cruiser "LION," like an exquisite miniature in silver-point upon the vellum-like sheet of water below him. There were ragged holes in her funnels, and scars upon her deck, but the guns seemed right, and her speed was evidently good.

The Lieutenant, his work finished, leaned back in his seat. The artificer was in the same attitude as before, his eyes ever upon the driver.

Something must be done immediately. What?

Porter's brain suddenly became clear. He leaned forward to the barometer dial, and suggested mutely that they should rise. The Lieutenant nodded. They rose, as rapidly as the engines would take them. Porter's idea was to make a dash for the cruiser, and he wished to reach such a height that when his plan was discovered, and his power cut off, he could still reach the vessel in a "vol plane." Now, the "vol plane," in the case of a light, normal aeroplane is a fairly simple manoeuvre; in the case of Porter's heavy machine, it was almost reckless, a thing to be used only in emergency swift and steep to the point of danger; so



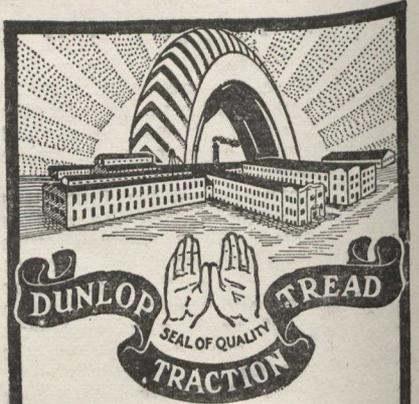
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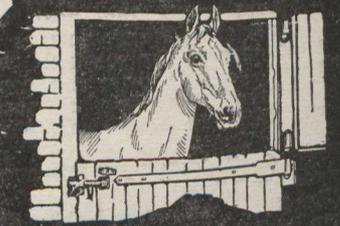
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