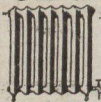


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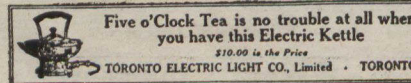


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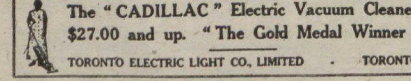
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The Hour by The Clock

(Continued from page 13.)

Shouts and tumult and babies crying—hungry, miserable infants, offspring of desperate and patient women. How much longer could the news be kept from the mass? What sign could they have to unite them against or for the powers ruling Berlin?

Poor Pleigman was swallowed in the crowd. But from his suffocating cranny of the stale masses of flesh and clothes he could see a riband of white—the balcony of the hotel; upon it one lone figure—the Captain whose papers he had sworn to deliver to Frau Bobel.

A group of men on the balcony, blue-grey; he in the dull khaki, with its dot of an iron cross, in the midst of them. Slowly the eyes of all were turned to that balcony; a hundred thousand eyes and more; eyes that could make out the glint of that khaki, knowing who it was—

"Kluck!" Pleigman heard them say; they had seen his face in the newspapers; seen him on the street; him with his Iron Cross. He saw the flick of a swift rope up there; heard the drone of a biplane somewhere; a woman scream on the balcony—Frau Bobel with her arms out as for a moment the little gang of blue-greys fell back from the rope.

But Captain Clock, removing the iron cross, paid no heed to the woman. He looked at the hangman.

He leaned over the rail and peered down at the crowd and his big slow voice megaphoned over a hundred thousand people and more.

"You'll kindly postpone that little affair of the rope, gentlemen. British justice always gives a gallows victim the right to one statement of his case before he swings. The first man who touches me before I'm done—goes below."

"People of Germany—the Kiel Canal is a mass of tumbled masonry. The German navy is a long lump of twisted steel, Heligoland that never should have been Germany's at all is a dead rock in the midst of exploded mines and junk-heaps of Krupp guns. The Armada of the air with one of my own countrymen, Billy Bishop, in the advance guard, has done it. The Irresistible."

Their faces seemed ineffably stupid. The message began to travel over the crowd as pebble rings in a pool.

"Be glad you all are not smithereens," he went on. "God knows if ever Babylon and Sodom and that bunch of immoral places deserved the scourge of the sky, this city of the Ultimate Beast did. But ten just men would have saved Tyre and Sidon, and I guess there are that many in Berlin."

He spoke in a great silence.

"Listen! Hamburg and Bremen have ten hours' notice to evacuate or be shelled to the shore line by the British navy. All the air-navies in Germany can't stop that. Our Armada of the air is too close. God knows where. But it's near enough for business. Tell your Kaiser in his crumbling Potsdam—tell him and old Tirpitz that the Baltic is no longer a German lake; that the circus with which he said he would broom his way into England by a grand concourse of air and water has travelled the other way. Take back your Iron Cross!" He flung it into the crowd. "Think yourselves lucky that the humanity of your enemies keeps them from crucifying all the Hohenzollerns on wooden crosses just like it. But you'll never have a chance to hang me—or crucify me as

your brute soldiers did one Canadian on the west front—"

He looked up. His words seemed to melt into the blue. A sudden shadow swept over the faces below. They looked up at the sound. It was an air-ship, heralded by a scream from Frau Bobel on the balcony. Flying low and at slow speed, it seemed almost to collide with the balcony, and it trailed a rope that like a miracle struck paralysis into the gang of hangmen. On the end of the rope was a weight that stretched it. A rubber rope reinforced with elastic! The man in khaki hurled himself from the rail, and to a great unbelieving grunt of the crowd, turning to escape his fall, he caught the rope trail of the long sky-line. His flung weight stretched the rope as the machine zoomed clean up. Hand over hand as the biplane swung away he went up—

"I knew it," mumbled Pleigman. "I knew they never would hang him. If he dies, it is the death of a hero, not of a traitor. My captain!"

Somewhere in its mad career over the brainstricken city, from behind a cloud where no eye of a crowd could behold it, there went up the bullets that sped to the mark. Commander Hopkirk's machine came toppling down, pilot, rope, man below and all.

When by whatever sanity was left in Berlin the police at length discovered the mangled remains of the Commander and the Captain, they found beside the wreck the body of Frau Bobel—in her hand the clutched papers delivered to her by Pleigman.

THE END.

The Winds of the World

(Continued from page 21.)

dared show what we—Germany—can do to help. I have seen from the first it was only with the aid of the army that we could accomplish anything, yet the army has been unapproachable. How is it that you have seemed so loyal, all of you, until the minute of war?"

Ranjoo Singh spat again through the opening with thoroughness and great deliberation. Then he proceeded to give proof that, as Yasmini had said, he was really not a buffalo at all. A fool would have taken chances with any one of a dozen other explanations. Ranjoo Singh, with an expression that faintly suggested Colonel Kirby, picked the right, convincing one.

"The English are not bad people," he said simply. "They have left India better than they found it. They have been unselfish. They have treated us soldiers fairly and honorably. We would not have revolted had the opportunity not come, but we have long been waiting for the opportunity."

"We are not madmen—we are soldiers. We know the value of mere words. We have kept our plans secret from the merchants and the hillmen, knowing well that they would all follow our lead. If you think that you, or Germany, have persuaded us, you are mistaken. You could not persuade me, or any other true soldier, if you tried for fifty years!"

"It is because we had decided on revolt already that I was willing to listen to your offer of material assistance. We understand that Germany expects to gain advantage from our revolt, but we cannot help that; that is incidental. As soldiers, we accept what aid we can get from anywhere!"

"So?" said the German.

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