The Toronto World

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SATURDAY MORNING, DECEMBER 25.

A New-Born Babe Brings New Hope to the House.

Christmas touches the human heart with peculiar tenderness because it celebrates the birth of a little child. The early Christians no doubt attached much more importance to the triumphal feast of Easter. They staked the truth of their revelation upon the historical fact that Christ had risen from the dead. This was the supreme test and proof of His divinity, and His followers above everything wished to convince the world that their Master was divine. Now the appeal to the world is rather thru the humanity of Christ. The new born Babe, the mystery of birth, the bright new star overhead in the sky, are symbols of hope to a weary world.

Much the same idea runs thru the celebration of New Year's Day, which for many years in many countries was a greater festival than Christmas. In France, and probably Scotland, to this day, New Year's is more of a holiday than Christmas. Proscribed by the Pilgrim Fathers it was centuries before Christmas was generally celebrated in the United States. The effort to substitute Thanksgiving Day failed utterly, because the purposes of the two holidays were so entirely dissimilar. New Year's, however, was long a great day both here and in the United States until people came to see that the two days were emblematic of much the same thing—birth, new hope, new life.

What can we say to the babies, and there must be many, who happen to be born this Christmas morning, not in Bethlehem, but in Canada. Instinctively, the new born babe appeals to our sympathies. We hope his feet will find a smooth, open road thru life, but can we point out to him any star in the sky? Fortunately, he is not worrying much about stars at present, his main efforts, like ours, being directed toward keeping warm and getting nourishment. Perhaps he will get along all the better if he does but little star-gazing, and attends to the work that comes to his hand. Yet we hope that he will live in a brighter and a happier world.

Whatever the distressed situation in Europe may be, and its future is dreadful to contemplate, we need have no fear in Canada. Just now we are suffering from the terrible burden and cost of the war and are beginning to realize what we should have known all along, namely, that war is destruction. But from a national standpoint we cannot regret the war and its sacrifices, any more than we can regret the war and its victories. If we have to we will fight again, but never again will we go into a war lightheartedly. It is the one horror we never again want to experience. It is the great calamity we want hereafter to avoid. A few years of peace and prosperity will make us in all material things wealthy, as the memory of our heroic dead make us rich beyond measure in patriotism.

Remarked in Passing.

Let's make it a merry Christmas. We won't have another chance for twelve long months.

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Government dispensaries had the busiest days of the year yesterday. Christmas Day may be cold, but it won't be altogether dry.

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Sam McBride's good wishes for Mayor Church's merry Christmas no doubt must not be taken to extend to an altogether happy New Year.

* * *

Controller Cameron says he hears somebody kissed the cook at the Inglenook Farm. Tut-tut, Controller, shouldn't talk like that; perhaps the lady deserved it.

* * *

Now you have a whole year in which to buy your next Christmas presents. Comfortable thought.

* * *

Inmates of the Ottawa Jail will go without turkey today for the first time in years. Well, there are plenty of people out of jail who will go without it, too.

* * *

When a candidate wishes you a Happy New Year, he perhaps means that he wants you to help make his own New Year happy.

* * *

If Santa Claus brings us a little cold snap for the holidays, we won't complain—but not too darn cold for the state of the coal market.

* * *

In the shuffle attendant upon the recent earthquake, a South American river got lost and has not since been found. Somebody page Detective Mitchell.

* * *

United States proposes spending seventy-six millions more on its army. It might be cheaper to join the League of Nations.

* * *

The Star, in its enthusiasm for its candidate, Controller Ramsden, said that Ald. Nesbitt had helped to defeat a motion by the controller which was intended to get the city council out of a muddle over whether certain hardworking civic employes were entitled to a raise of $1 a week. The Star is too eager to beat Ald. Nesbitt, even at the cost of being nailed in a lie. The proceedings of the city council, as officially printed, show quite otherwise; in fact, Ald. Nesbitt's name is printed therein on page 222 as having supported Controller Ramsden's motion. The attitude of Ald. Nesbitt towards labor has always been fair, and a large part of his support during the coming election will come from labor circles.

ONE-WEEK LIMIT UPON CERTIFICATES

(Continued From Page 1).

ployment office that that office is unable to offer the applicant employment. A certificate issued is good for only one one week, and the relief granted by the municipality must be sufficient only for that period. At the expiration of the week the applicant may return for another certificate when, if possible, he will be given employment. In this way, an applicant for relief, tho not able to obtain employment at the time of his first application, may do so later on.

Already in Mails.

Supplies of the certificates which are to be issued from the employment offices have already been printed and placed in the mails. They will be in the hands of the provincial employment service offices early next week. The form calls for particulars as to the applicant, address, usual occupation, nationality and the period during which he has been unemployed. If employment cannot be offered, the superintendent signs a statement to that effect. The applicant then presents the form to the relief office, who endorses on the reverse side the amount of relief issued, if any. Space is provided in which the applicant acknowledges receipts for the relief, and the relief officer also attaches his signature vouching that the amount stated has been granted. In this way it may be known at any time just what amount has been disbursed by any municipality, and the Dominion and provincial governments, who participate, are alike protected.

To Encourage Employment.

It is pointed out that the municipal authorities must also agree that the relief is necessary before it can be granted to an applicant for a certificate. The minister emphasized the importance of finding employment for applicants if that is possible. He expressed the opinion that the scheme would tend to encourage the municipal, federal and provincial governments to engage in necessary works in order to create employment.

D'ANNUNZIO DEAF TO ALL PROPOSALS

(Continued From Page 1).

if human life were imperilled to settle them.

It is reported here that the council of rectors at Fiume has proposed to Gabriele D'Annunzio a plan for a peaceful solution of differences with the Italian government, namely evacuation of Islands of Arbe and Veglia, but the poet refused to consider the suggestion.

D'Annunzio's latest proclamation which is of a most violent nature, declares:

"We have spoken and written too much. If our words are not made good we shall lose our honor, having already lost all else. There is but one duty—resist."

Foreigners Asked to Leave.

Trieste, Dec. 24.—Ricardo Gigante, mayor of Fiume, has addressed a proclamation to the people of the city inciting them to extreme resistance and announcing that he takes upon himself the responsibility for shedding blood. Late reports from Fiume say that the work of putting the city into a state of defence is going on feverishly. All foreigners have been asked to leave within three days in order to diminish consumption of the necessaries of life. Theatres must close at 10 p.m., while promenading in the streets at night is prohibited.

Expels His Legionaires.

London, Dec. 24.—A despatch to the Central News from Rome says Gabriele D'Annunzio has withdrawn his troops from Mount Luban for tactical reasons. The despatch adds that following the proclamation of martial law D'Annunzio has expelled several of his legionaires from Fiume for alleged lack of discipline.

TO REINFORCE TURKS ON THE SMYRNA FRONT

Constantinople, Dec. 24.—The staff of Mustapha Kemal Pasha, the Nationalist leader, has decided to reinforce the nationalist army on the Smyrna-Brussa front to 100,000 men for the purpose of an attack on the Greek forces.

Cholera has broken out in the Russian camp outside of Constantinople. The allies have taken measures to prevent spread of the disease.

OTHER PEOPLE'S OPINIONS

The World will gladly print under this head letters written by our readers, dealing with current topics. As space is limited they must not be longer than 200 words and written on one side of the paper only.

THE LASH FOR GUNMEN.

Editor World: Criminals are the meanest men in the world, and the sneak thieves and hold-up men so busy just now in Toronto are no exception to the rule. They rob and plunder regardless of age and sex and are essentially cowards of the worst type. The majority of them are young men making their early steps in their careers of crime. Jail seldom frightens them into decency. Among a certain class of youths in this town there is an idea that a light sentence or two has about it something that makes a hero of the sneak thief. Your suggestion of the lash for such offenders as made in "Remarks in Passing" yesterday, is the first sensible word passed on the subject for some time.

Nothing on earth would better tend to turn the young crook into paths that might thru—mere habit make him a decent member of society in time, and the hardened criminal would either be turned from his path or forced to seek new scenes for his outrages.

Citizen.

MANY HAPPY RETURNS OF THE DAY

Many happy returns of the day to ex-Ald. James Brandon of 48 Foxbar road, born Dec. 25, 1852, in Montreal.

BOMBAY STRIKERS CREATE DISORDER

Motor Car Containing Police Stoned and Street Cars Attacked.

Bombay, Nov. 16.—(By mail).—Three thousand strikers at one mill in the vicinity of Bombay, wrecked the office of the factory a few days ago and stoned a motor car containing police, severely injuring one inspector and two soldiers. Before the police succeeded in dispersing the strikers, they took to looting shops. A number of arrests were made and the mill district is being picketed.

Minor disorders took place elsewhere in the city, some stoning of street cars being indulged in at various places. The situation became serious enough for the commissioner of police to call the mounted police, who charged the crowd in semi-circular fashion. The casualties have not been reported, but the crowd broke up and fled. Wholesale arrests were soon after made, 60 men being taken in custody.

For more than two months now the city of Bombay has been witnessing a series of strikes in the mill industry, on the street cars, in gas works and the postal service. The tension has grown every day more serious, especially on account of government refusal to arbitrate the various disputes. An all-India trade union congress recently held in the foremost industrial city has given further impetus to the laboring ranks.

The Bombay strikers have sent a cable to London, asking for financial support from the British Labor movement for their cause.

MANY ARMENIANS IN TERRIBLE PLIGHT

New York, Dec. 24.—(Canadian Press).—Three thousand Armenians, driven from their homes in the war-ravaged countries south of the Black Sea, are concentrated in old churches or other refugee buildings in Constantinople, says a report received here by the Near East Relief from one of its workers. Their fate is described as wretched. Work is at a premium in Constantinople because of the influx of 100,000 Russian refugees from the Crimea and numerous Greeks from the fighting zone in Anatolia.

The buildings in which the Armenian refugees have been herded are caracterized as unsuitable in almost every conceivable way for housing so many. There are five of these refugee centres, called camps.

YANKEE SHOE CONTRACT CAUSES BILBAO DISMAY

Bilbao, Spain, Dec. 6.—(By Mail).—The mere announcement of a shoe dealer here that he had made a contract with an American firm to send 35,000 pairs of shoes to Bilbao on trial with a view to further orders, produced a panic among the storekeepers of this city. The announcement stated the American shoes would be sold at half the prevailing price of the home-made articles. Immediately afterward prices came down with a run.

The local newspapers advise other localities to follow the lead of the northern city and thus put a stop to profiteering.

BY-ELECTION SOON IN WEST PETERBORO

(Continued From Page 1).

political circles here it is expected that there will be at least three candidates remain in the field.

J. H. Burnham, who resigned in July, is running again as an independent Conservative candidate. When forwarding his resignation Mr. Burnham gave as his reason for doing so the fact that he considered his mandate as representative of the voters of West Peterboro had expired.

Career of Burnham.

Mr. Burnham first came into the house of commons in 1911, when he defeated J. R. Stratton, Liberal, who had been elected with Mr. Burnham as his opponent in 1908. Mr. Burnham was re-elected at the general election of 1917 with a civilian majority of 2,282, and a majority in the soldier voting of 3,418.

For a time in the fall session of 1919, after the third party was formed, Mr. Burnham occupied a seat among the "cross benchers," but the session of 1920 found him back in the Union government ranks.

Fifth By-Election.

The filling of the West Peterboro seat by means of this by-election will remove the last of the commons vacancies. This will be the fifth by-election since Hon. Arthur Meighen became Prime Minister at the close of the last session. Of these contests three—Colchester, N.S.; St. John, N.B., and Yale-Cariboo, B.C., were won by the government, a Farmer candidate being returned in East Elgin, the fourth contest.

ALFRED LEITHHEAD BURIED.

Montreal, Dec. 24.—Many citizens prominent in journalistic and athletic circles as well and from a wider sphere were present at the funeral this afternoon of the late Alfred Leithhead, president of The Herald Printing Company. The service was conducted at the residence of the deceased, Querbes avenue, Outremont, by Rev. Dr. Symonds, vicar of Christ Church Cathedral.

MANY MOTOR CAR FIRMS FACED WITH EXTINCTION

Unfair Discrimination by Federal Government Causes Greatest Crisis in Trade's History—Record Deputation Going to Ottawa Wednesday to Protest.

By Warren B. Hastings.

At least three special trains from Toronto alone will be required to carry the members of the automotive trade, who have already made known their intention of swelling the ranks of the mammoth deputation of motor merchants which, by appointment, will wait on the federal government next Wednesday, and make representations looking to the rebate of moneys collected on unsold cars in stock under the terms of the so called "luxury" excise impost.

The deputation promises to, and should be the largest representation of any trade that ever had audience with the minister of finance, Sir Henry Drayton, because no government decision has ever threatened the existance of so large a section of a wholesome progressive and constructive business as that made by the commissioner of taxation, Mr. Breadner. According to W. C. Miller, secretary of the Retail Merchants' Association of Canada, and of the automotive branch of that association, the automobile dealers of the Dominion will have no option but to take losses ranging from a few hundred dollars to thirty-five thousand dollars or more, according to the number and value of cars they had in stock at the time of the repeal of the excise tax, if Mr. Breadener's adverse ruling is sustained.

The government, according to newspaper despatches, bearing Ottawa date lines of the 23rd inst., advises the automotive trade to include the excise tax on cars on hand in their selling price. Delightfully simple, isn't it? Simply simple in the simple Simon pure simp sense. The only trouble with the ingenuous proposal is that it won't work. Dealer A on first street had 150 Streakit "fours" on hand, while dealer B on Seventh avenue only had one the day the excise tax was abruptly abolished by order-in-council. Can A sell Streakits at market plus excise in competition with B, who sells at market, that is undersells A by the amount of the excise (15 or 20 per cent., according to value)? Even if miles of country divide the dealers such a disparity in prices would soon become known with fatal results to A.

The crisis the dealers face is the greatest in their history. There is only one specific, one cure, and that is the reversal of Breadner's probably well-meant, but certainly ill-advised, decision. The excise tax was repealed to provide employment by bettering prevailing merchandising conditions. It promises to do both—if the Breadner decision is reversed. If it is not—and there is a grave possibility that it will not be, unless everyone interested does his utmost—a large proportion of the dealers are faced with taking losses that will force them into the hands of receivers owing to the credit stringency and the buying strike that during the past few months has compelled many of them to carry on at a loss. A few thousand dollars is all that stands between many a dealer and insolvency at this time when loans are hard to float even on gilt-edged securities. A high financial mortality among the dealers now and in the near future would a great deal more than counteract the salutary effect of the repeal of the excise tax. Indeed, it might precipitate a national panic, for those dependent on the automotive trade and industry for a living in the Dominion number over three hundred thousand people in normal times. The car, truck, tractor, parts, tire, equipment and accessory manufacturing companies of Canada employ some twenty thousand hands. These support, say, an average of four each, or eighty thousand more—100,000 people in all (these figures are from the Automotive Industries of Canada). According to Might's Automotive Directory, there are six thousand odd firms in the automotive trade, i.e., service and merchandising concerns. These employ an average of eight hands in normal times. Allowing the same number of dependents, it is a matter of flash, mental arithmetic to determine that approximately 240,000 more Canadians depend for their living on the automotive sales and service business—or a total of approximately 350,000 in normal times look to the automotive industry and trade for their daily bread.

The present transition has gravely reduced this number. It is estimated that the cut amounts to seventy-five per cent. Couple this with the fact that no industry lives unto itself alone, that many industries are tributary to the automotive trade and industry, and more or less dependent on it, and the gravity of the present crisis must be obvious.

As the motor car ranks with the telegraph, telephone, railroad, typewriter and computing machines as a time and labor saver, it never should have been taxed as a luxury. The tax was unpopular in large part because it was a tax on individual and national efficiency. Its repeal was universally commended and gained for the government the instant approval of the motor trade. It is not to be thought of that the government will lightly alienate this good-will by sustaining Mr. Breadner's decision. The modern garage has taken the place of the corner general store as at once a clearing house and a dispensary of public opinion. It would be a grave error to antagonize public opinion and at the same time probably defeat a laudable effort to provide much-needed employment.

In addition to the three special trains that will leave Toronto for Ottawa Tuesday night, special delegate trains are being made up at Winnipeg, Windsor, Montreal, London, Quebec and other points. It seems quite probable that the government will face Wednesday the largest deputation that ever foregathered at the national capital. If you are in the trade or any of its myriad ramifications you should be there. By way of anticipating the brief that will be presented, telegrams and wires of protest should fairly inundate the government, for, in simple equity, why should excise stamps be redeemed and excise receipts of other forms be nedied redemption? The bigger the deputation, the more patent the protest—so it is clearly up to all the trade. In this instance everyone's name is George—unless he prefers to have it changed to Jonah after Wednesday.

And not the least of the fruits of victory the mammoth deputation will join is to finally eradicate the government's anarchronistic misconception that the passenger car is an unnecessary luxury and plant in its place an appreciation of the fact that it is a utilitarian necessity—the greatest efficiency device of the century.

The World's Weekly Novel

THE SHADOW OF THE SHELTERING PINES

By Grace Miller White

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(Continued From Yesterday's World).

"Tony," he said sternly, "there's something beneath all this, something you must tell me. Do you know where the things went that were in the safe?"

To deny it would be the same as telling that a third person had been there. To admit it would forever place her beyond the pale of his love. Yet there was Edith—and Uriah, whom she had sworn to protect.

"Yes, I know," she whispered. "Of course, I know," she repeated louder.

"You'll tell me," begged Philip, hoarsely. "Great Heavens, child, can't you see how awful it looks for you?"

"Yes," was all she said, miserably.

Dr. John was wandering aimlessly about the room. The mystery that had hung over Tony Devon ever since she had been with them was deeper than ever. He felt like shaking the truth from her, for the sight of his horror-stricken brother filled him with rage, which for the moment obliterated the past two years, in which the girl had been the one bright spirit in their home.

"Then, if you know, Tony, just out with it. Your father evidently didn't take them—"

"I did," interrupted Tony, giving him one swift, awful glance.

"What for?" was his bitter retort. "My brother gave you permission to wear them whenever you wanted to!"

Tony couldn't answer. She was becoming hopelessly entangled, more so with every word she uttered.

"God, I'd rather have given them all to you," mourned Dr. Paul. "I intended to, anyhow."

How could she bear that tone of sorrow in his voice? How could she stand losing him, Philip and Cousin John, and all the happiness they had brought her?

"If your father dies, Tonnibel," said Dr. John, sternly, "you'll be arrested. Oh, Lord! What a mess!"

"It's awful!" muttered Tony.

Simultaneous with her assertion, Reginald Brown opened the door and minced over the threshold. Perfectly certain now that Uriah had but a temporary wound, and that for the love they bore Tonnibel Devon his cousins would hush the matter up, he had determined to make his plea openly to the girl. Philip, of course, wouldn't ever look at her again after such a disgrace had fallen upon her.

"Tony," he said, coming forward with a magnanimous swagger, "I'm the only one in this house who loves you—"

"You lie!" flashed Philip, as Dr. John took a step toward his young cousin, but the girl's expression brought him to a halt. She was looking at Reginald with eyes that seemed to him to burn holes thru him.

"I've never told anyone here you cared for me, Reggie," she faltered, drawing herself forcibly from Dr. Paul, "and—and I took the things out of the safe to help us along when—when—"

Reggie stared at her, amazement spreading over his countenance; he felt a swelling in his chest, an overwhelming awe and respect for her.

"I didn't tell you to steal," he blurted.

"I know you didn't," responded Tonnibel, amid the terrible silence that had fallen on her friends, "but we couldn't get along without money, so I took the—the—Cousin Paul's—"

* * *

During the broken statement Philip MacCauley had dropped into a chair and covered his face with his hands. Dr. John was gaping at her as if she had struck him, but Dr. Paul— Well, he simply reached out and grasped her hands.

"You're lying again, Tony," he interrupted her grimly. "Reginald, have you ever asked Tony to marry you?"

The boy smiled broadly. Everything was working out splendidly for him.

"Yes, and her father promised her to me," he boasted, "but I didn't know until tonight she really loved me."

Tony shot him a look of hate, but she lowered her eyes instantly. She dared not risk Paul Pendlehaven seeing her revulsion.

But it was to Reginald's credit, that he believed she spoke the truth. His vanity wouldn't allow him to think otherwise.

"I'd like to talk to her alone," he said crisply, directly at Cousin Paul. "Women are peculiar creatures. Why, I've loved her over two years, and to think she made Philip believe she was going to marry him—"

"So she is," snapped Philip, raising his head.

"When I've done my damndest to get her to kiss me even," continued Reginald, ecstacking MacCauley's ejaculation. "You remember yourself, Phil, what happened that day on the boat."

"Don't repeat it," cried Tony. "Oh, all of you go away, go away. Let me alone. I want to be by myself."

"You want to be with me," contradicted Reginald, and he whirled in jubilant ecstacy on one heel, then clicked his feet together. "You love me, Tony! You do, don't you?"

The dark head made an almost imperceptible nod, but Philip in his jealousy saw it.

He got up as if he were an old man. The youth had gone out of him.

"If she doesn't love me and never has," he muttered dazedly, "then I'd better go."

He waited for her to speak to him, to deny her words, but the fearful expression in the gray eyes turned upon him confused him still more.

"Yes ,go," Tony told him, rousing herself, "and—and—never think of me again."

There was silence in the room as he went away, but no sooner had the door closed than Tony flung up her arms and sank unconscious in a forlorn little heap against Paul Pendlehaven.

* * *

Edith Devon, with the small black bag in her hand, crept out of the Pendlehaven garden, unapprehensive. She had no power to think—no desire to go anywhere or do anything. She even forgot the words Uriah had spoken to Tonnibel; she didn't even remember the girl had told her to go back to the "Dirty Mary." She lingered about Pendlehaven Place until the morning dawned. During the hours preceding daylight, she studied over the events of the afternoon and evening. As her mind cleared, all her love for Uriah rose up and clamored to help him. She remembered leaving him stretched out on the floor as if he were dead. When the town below began to show signs of day, she walked back into Pendlehaven Place, and slowly up to the house.

It was a servant who ushered Mrs. Devon into the library, where Dr. John and Dr. Paul still sat, struggling with the mystery that had come into their usually quiet home. After vainly trying to force more than monosyllabic replies from Tonnibel, they had put her to bed, gibbering with fright.

Edith advanced to the middle of the room, holding the little bag in her hand, looking first at Dr. John, who tried unsuccessfully to recall where he had seen her, and then at Dr. Paul.

"Where's my man, my Uriah?" she asked hoarsely, and then Dr. John recognized her and rose to his feet. "You got my husband here with a bit of lead in 'im; I want to take 'im back to the boat."

For the space of thirty seconds, perhaps, no one ventured a word. Then, as the woman swayed, Dr. John leaped forward and put her into a chair. The bag dropped to the floor beside her. Tears began to flow down her cheeks, and, with her sleeve, she brushed them away.

"Where's my man, my Uriah?" she demanded again fiercely. "Give 'im back to me, mister, and I'll— Where's the pup that shot 'im?"

"Who shot him?" cried Dr. John.

Edith gave him a peculiar look.

"Reggie, Reggie Brown," she whined. "I saw 'im, and Tony, thinkin' I did it—"

A sharp cry fell from Dr. Paul Pendlehaven.

"Tony vowed she did it," he gasped. "Oh, my poor little girl! She didn't even mention your being here."

"Tony's like that," assented Edith. "She wouldn't peach on a dog."

Dr. John came to her side with one long stride.

"Are you ready to swear Reginald Brown shot your husband?" he demanded.

"Of course I am, mister," nodded Edith. "He was always runnin' after Tony, and she hated 'im. He was right over there when, sudden-like, he banged a bullet smack at my man. That duffer, the dirty pup, ain't fit to clean Uriah's boots. When Tony pushed me out of this house, she says, well, she says, 'Run, mummy, before somebody gets you,' and I was kind a dazed-like and ran away."

Just then Philip flung into the room, "I'm half crazy," he exclaimed, and then stopped, seeing Edith Devon, but he was so filled with misery that he gave no further heed to the stranger and went on hastily, "Jack, Paul, there's something behind that affair of Reggie's!"

"There sure is," said John Pendlehaven. "Sit down, boy. We're just getting at it. This is Mrs. Devon."

"And my man," she insisted, struggling up. "Uriah always was a damn fool, mixin' up with swells like Reggie Brown, but I love 'im; and, mister," she wiped her face and, shudderingly, appealed to Paul Pendlehaven, "if you give 'im to me, mister—"

While their cousins were with Uriah's wife below, Mrs. Curtis and Katherine were talking over the events of the night.

"If Tony'll only stick to what she's said," Mrs. Curtis was repeating, "nothing could be better. She'll probably go to jail, and Reginald will forget her."

"Rege's such a fool," commented the girl, "I wonder if she really did say she loved him. She simply couldn't care for him when she had Philip, nor after her knowing he tried to kill Cousin Paul. I'd like to know what's behind it all."

Tony received the call to the library listlessly. Nothing that any one could say now would make her feel easier. Nothing! Nothing! Philip, her new father, kind Uncle John, all had vanished in the waters of bitterness that had overwhelmed her.

The room seemed full of people when she crept timidly in. Uriah Devon, with a white cloth tied around his head, lounged in a large chair. Mrs. Curtis and Katherine were seated, rigidly erect side by side. The girl's gaze passed over their glaring eyes and settled on Philip MacCauley. Was that a smile she saw lurking around his lips? Of course not! He couldn't smile when she was in such trouble! She shivered as she met Reginald Brown's eager eyes, and, thrusting back a sob, she went to Paul Pendlehaven because he had held his hand out to her. Then she saw her mother, and a bewildered expression spread over her face. Dr. Paul, his eyes soft and gleaming, his lips twitching nervously, drew her down beside him.

* * *

"Mummy doesn't know anything about it," gasped the girl, extending her arms to Edith. "I won't hear any one say—Oh, Uriah," she turned to Devon, "you know. Oh, say I did it."

"Won't say any such thing," muttered Uriah.

"Of course he won't, Tony," exclaimed Dr. John. "We know the truth now."

Tonnibel got to her feet, pulling herself away from Paul Pendlehaven.

"No, you can't arrest my poor little mother," she cried. "Her whole life has been so miserable. I must help her. You must, you, Philip—"

Philip got out of his chair, but Dr. John put him back into it again.

"Walt," he whispered into the boy's ear.

"I want to tell you, every one," went on Tony, fiercely, "that I'll swear till I die my mother—"

Paul Pendlehaven took the speaker by the shoulders and forced her face up to his.

"This woman, here, your mother," and he waved his arm toward Mrs. Devon, "says you didn't have that gun in your hand, and it's loaded to the brim now. She didn't use it either."

Reggie's jaw dropped. He made a dash for the door, as Mrs. Curtis screamed. Dr. John caught the fleeing boy and wheeled him around to face his horror-stricken mother.

"Tell the—the—I didn't," he mumbled. "Where'd I get a gun to shoot any one? This woman did it herself. I saw her."

"Then you were here," cried Philip.

Mrs. Curtis acted as if she were going to faint, but, as no one paid any attention to her, she slumped back beside her daughter, who turned away contemptuously.

"That settles one question," commented Dr. Paul, grimly. "You shot Devon, Reggie," and the boy sank into a chair beside his mother. "Now," continued the doctor, "who robbed the safe?"

To know that her mother hadn't done the shooting relieved but one of Tonnibel's worries. Uriah wasn't hurt much anyway, but the doctor's question brought vividly to her mind another danger, not a whit less serious. Edith was certainly involved in looting the safe!

"I told you once," Tony began weakly.

"Child," interposed Dr. Paul, "you'll shield no one else. I shudder to think what might have happened if your mother hadn't come here for her husband."

* * *

His tones were low and stern, tho much moved.

His eye caught sight of the black bag at the same time his brother did. Dr. John opened it, and, amid an appalling silence, took box after box out of it.

"Plain stealing!" he growled, and then he stared at Mrs. Devon in open-mouthed amazement. "What'd you bring 'em back for?" he questioned.

Edith paid no attention to Dr. John's query, but addressed her husband.

"Uriah, now you went and done it again!" She turned to Dr. Paul. "You got everythin' back, give me my man. He didn't know what he was doin', sir."

"Then he'll be taught a lesson, the same as Reginald will, madam," rejoined the doctor. "Ever since your daughter came to us, she's been in dread of your husband, her father. Once he was sent away, and she had peace. This time he won't come back in a hurry."

Dr. John reached into the drawer of the table near him and produced the roll of bills that Philip had found on Devon the night before.

"How about this, you?" he inquired of Devon. "Where'd this come from before it was in your pocket? While we're at it we might as well clear up everything."

Dr. Paul and Philip fixed their gaze upon the wounded man and waited expectantly for his answer. They had spent considerable time over the five thousand dollars and wondered what connection, if any, it had with the events of the night. To Tonnibel and Edith, the appearance of such a sum from such a place seemed absolutely incredible. The Curtises knew what money it was, but their anxiety was no less acute on that account. Katherine leaned forward feverishly, and her mother leaped to her feet.

The centre of interest, Uriah Devon, shifted uneasily in his chair. He had discovered the loss of the money, but had not dared to make any inquiry about it. Hastily he ran over the situation, and it appeared to him as hopeless as possible, but five thousand dollars was a good thing for a man to have whatever his position. If Mrs. Curtis claimed the money, her connection with him would come out, and that might make things easier for him. If she didn't, he'd have the cash anyhow.

"That's mine, mister," he grunted, "and I didn't steal it neither. Give it to me."

The same considerations had been chasing thru Mrs. Curtis' mind, and, in the general cataclysm that she saw before her, she concluded the money might be very necessary for her and her children.

"Don't let him have it, John," she screamed. "It's mine. Give it to me."

Dr. John arose and stood between Uriah and Mrs. Curtis, holding the roll of bills in his hand. Amidst the closest attention of the rest of the group he looked from one to the other, while the claimants indulged in a dispute.

"You give it to me, didn't you, ma'am?" asked Uriah roughly. "Didn't you?"

"Yes, I suppose I did," she acknowledged, "but you haven't done what you said you would."

"Twasn't my fault," Uriah grumbled. "If that fool of a son of yours hadn't butted in and shot me, I'd taken Tony like I bargained to."

Then Dr. Paul interposed, and a few questions, sternly put and categorically answered discovered the whole conspiracy between Mrs. Curtis, her children and Uriah Devon.

John Pendlehaven, whose anger had been steadily rising, suddenly stepped forward and brushed his brother aside.

"I'll take charge of this now, Paul," he stated. "You're too damned easy. Here!" where you treacherous snakes go to jail," he included Uriah and the Curtises in a sweep of his hand. "Everyone of you!" He turned savagely upon Reginald. "You little pup," he charged, swiftly, "you tried to poison Paul, didn't you?" He crossed to his side and towered over him with upraised fist. "Own up, damn you. Didn't you?"

Reginald cowered, slipped out of the chair and attempted to shield himself in Mrs. Curtis' arms, who leaned protectingly over him.

"I—I was drunk," he excused himself," "and I thought," he whimpered to his mother, "I thought you wanted me to."

Then Edith projected herself into the excitement again. She glanced at Uriah, her eyes melting with tenderness arose and stood looking at the Pendlehaven brothers.

"Mr. Paul," she said in a low voice," "don't you remember me?"

Paul looked her over with no sign of recognition, and his brother turned away from Reginald to observe this new development.

"No," said Paul, and shook his head.

"Never mind! That don't matter!" was the reply, "but I'll make a flicker with you. You give me my man for keeps and I'll give you your girl, Caroline, I—I mean Edith Mindil!"

You could have heard a pin drop, so deep was the silence. All were looking at the haggard woman, facing Paul Pendlehaven, who was rising unsteadily.

"Give me my man," she repeated. "Don't send 'im to jail, and I'll give you your girl."

Dr. Paul had become so white that his brother went to him and flung an arm across his shoulders.

"Are you lying?" he thundered at Edith. "If—if— Sit down, Paul. Let me—"

"Where's my baby?" quavered Paul Pendlehaven.

"Does my Uriah go free, scot-free?" questioned Mrs. Devon.

"Yes yes," consented both brothers at the same time.

Tony had risen to the floor. Now that little Caroline had been found, she could no longer be a Pendlehaven daughter. Edith went to her and knelt beside her.

"Here she is, sir," she said in husky tones, lifting a tearful face to the men, "and you couldn't have a finer girl in the world. I ain't goin' to say no for you to forgive me, sir, but you've had her over two years! Now gimme Uriah, and we'll go."

Tony threw her arms around Edith's neck. What a change two minutes and a few words had made! She seemed to have taken on a new dignity as, with shining eyes, she said to Paul Pendleton:

"Father, darling, whatever it was that separated us, I want, oh, how I want to do something for the only mother I've ever known."

Of course, Dr. Paul consented; he even did more. He got a promise from the confused Uriah that he'd turn his back on the old days and old ways, and begin again with such aid as the Pendlehavens would give him.

While Dr. Paul was settling the fate of the Devons, John Pendlehaven had been sizing up the Curtis family. They grouped together, clinging to each other.

"Reggie," he ejaculated "I reckon you did a good job when you stopped Devon with a bullet last night. As for you, Sarah, you and your children aren't safe to have in the house. Here!" He stretched forth his hand and offered the five thousand dollars to her. "Here's your money. Now go, and take Reggie and Katherine with you."

Mrs. Curtis was so utterly overcome that she could do nothing but sob, but Katherine took the bills from the doctor's hand and turned to her brother.

"Come on, Rege," she muttered. "Help me get her out of this. We better go." She pinched her mother's arm spitefully. "Get up, mother. Quit that crying, and come on."

The others watched them leave the room, and then Mrs. Devon spoke up:

"We're next, Riah! And we're everlastingly grateful to you, Dr. Paul, and you, Dr. John, for lettin' us go. Ain't we, Riah?"

Devon straightened up from his chair and grinned sheepishly.

"That we be," he agreed, "and I'll try to show it."

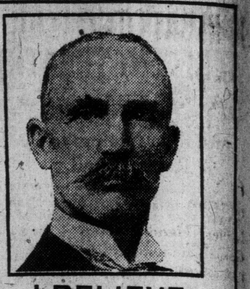
* * *

That evening when Tonnibel and Philip were alone together, the young man said chokingly, "You don't for a moment imagine I ever believed you did that thing, darling? I went away because I thought you didn't love me any more, that you never had loved me. You don't think—any other way?"

"No, dear," she answered gently, "no, of course not!"

The boy pressed her to him, and, as they whispered so low, no one could hear anything, there isn't another word to record, except that Tonnibel Pendlehaven had everything the world could give one little girl.

THE END.



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