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The Direct Agencies, Ltd

may 17, 19

The Lady Who Waited.

BY MAX PEMBERTON.

The policeman at the corner admitted that "the old cove had a couple of le's," and this was the very worst that could have been said of Nathaniel Colispike, M. D. and M. S.

We admit it without scruple.

The kindly bachelor of mature middle age and sober habit, had—as the observing policeman remarked—partaken of light refreshment to the extent of an encore, and his rucund fowl and lightsome step did not conceal the fact.

Why should they have done so?

Was there anything to be ashamed of; anything to excuse in the conduct of an old Merchant Gilder who had attended the banquet of his Company upon the eve of Christmas, and there partaken of punch, hock, burgundy, champagne, claret, and port, to say nothing of brandy-and-sodas and three foras cigars? Had not a Lord Mayor and a Chaplain been his neighbours at the board? "Eminently respectable," the doctor would have told you; although, to be sure, that phrase was a little difficult at midnight.

He did not attempt it. Rather he repeated the chorus of a blithe song which declared that he might have been the only girl in the world—a possibility which did not alarm him. A friendly little conversation with a pillar-box lacked that discussion which Dr. Johnson has told us is necessary to good talk. He passed on with some contempt for his adversary's silence, and, pulling himself together, he prepared to face his own doorstep. Here was his Stux, beyond which lay the shades and sleep. The doctor sat for quite a long time on the pedestal by the area gate, and it really was wonderful how the night air sobered him. He found that he could repeat "The Boy Stood on the Burning Deck" without any trace of accent.

The whole reputation of the College of Surgeons was at stake here, and the goose-step did not serve it over well. Generally speaking, the Doctor's finger-tips helped him, and a crouching attitude as if one about to spring was safer under the circumstances. He was a little surprised to see a light in the drawing-room on the first floor, and he said with some severity that his servants must have been keeping Christmas prematurely. "Alcohol is the curse of the country," he reflected, "to say nothing of its effect upon the hearties!"—a joke he ought to have made at the dinner. He determined to exert his paternal authority and to try the thing upon Mary the housemaid.

There was no trouble whatever about opening the door. He had merely to find the handle, which, absurdly enough, persisted in being on the side where he did not seek it. When, at last, he succeeded, it was easy enough to enter the room majestically and to ask, "What are you women doing here?" He did so with a gall worthy of Martin Harvey. The fact that there was but one woman there did not immediately disconcert him. He was about to call her Mary when something in her flashing eyes arrested the very word upon his lips.

"I beg your pardon," he said.

She seemed to think that he had reason to do so.

"Such men as you," she cried, "are lower than the beetles we crush beneath our feet—though, God knows, I have never had the courage to crush one."

"You are quite right, madam," he said; "if anybody is to be crushed, crush me!" and he sat heavily in a gilt-backed chair and stared wildly about him. The beautiful lady continued to regard him with something that the earth should be ashamed to cover.

"When my husband stooped to employ you," she remarked, "I knew at once that he was in the hands of a blackmailer and a thief—mild terms, but unfortunately I know no others. All your past should have warned him. The woman you basely deserted at Clapton; the money you got out of young Lord Dester—that horrible case of Margaret Anderson—do you think London knows so little that you can hide your crimes through all eternity? Detective indeed! Say rather villain, adventurer, and assassin!"

The Doctor bowed his thanks.

"Madam," he said, suavely, "I perceive that you mistake me for another. I wish that I had such a reputation as you are good enough to indicate. Unfortunately, I am merely a nerve specialist—and this, madam, is my poor house—very much at your service. Should you be suffering from anything in particular of nothing in general, I shall be pleased to examine you—here and now, madam, if it is convenient to you."

The lady rose and looked closely into the stranger's face.

"Good God," she exclaimed, and the words came prettily from her lips, "it is another man!"

"Too true," said the Doctor, "another man," and he shook his head sadly. "A man, madam, who this very night has for the good of his fellow-men partaken of punch, sherry, port, champagne, and burgundy. God bless such a man, madam! Who knows whether he begins or ends—even, it may be, at Bow Street, in the cruel hands of the inexorable Law!"

He shed a few tears and wiped them away upon a handkerchief which smelt strongly of tobacco. The beautiful lady regarded him with a new interest. A smile gave luster to her wonderful face and she rang the bell for soda-water.

"How did you get into this house, man?" she asked.

He worked out the answer to that sum upon his fingers.

"In darkest London," he said, "One house is no better than another house. We are all brothers, madam. Your house or mine, what does it matter? Nevertheless, there are peculiarities. You, for instance, own an establishment which has no door. Upon that point my mind is irrevocably made up. You have no door and it was open. I perceived the fact and I entered. 'What is the Reason,' I asked myself, 'for the absence of that common ornament—a door?' My professional curiosity was aroused. I ascended your stairs—not without difficulty. I entered, and was in the presence of angels."

"No," she said, slowly, "there is

only one of us. And Reggie, it appears, was stupid enough not to close the door after him. Well, here is my husband at last. Thank heaven, he will protect me!"

"A tall and objectionably-strong man entered the room at these words, and took a good look at the doctor.

"Mildred," he asked, mildly, "who is this d—d scoundrel?"

She put her arms about his neck and told him.

"Alfred," she said, "this is the man who has been following me for a whole month past. You suspected me, darling, oh! so unjustly—you set that horrid detective to watch me. You might have spared yourself the trouble. I determined from the first to expose the villain—and there he is. Alfred, will you not punish him?"

The big man turned up his sleeves and looked at his boots.

"Joseph," he said, "you are about to leave us forever."

The doctor sat upon the kerbstones for quite a long time, wondering where the fellow bought those boots. A young man named Reggie, who appeared from nowhere, was quite sympathetic and offered to get him a cab.

"You shouldn't have turned your back to him," he said; always keep a straight left—he's a mass of flesh really, and if you had got one in on the plexus you would have gassed him immediately. But really, you know, you shouldn't be running after the girls at your time of life."

The Doctor agreed.

"It is not usually necessary to run in these days," he said. "I should not think of doing so at this time of night. Please get me a cab. I have forgotten the name of the street in which I reside, but no doubt the driver will remember it."

The driver, however, did nothing of the sort. He was eighty-two and the age of his horse about the same. The Doctor swore he would never leave him "till death do us part." It was a resolution that gave him no joy.

"Drunk?" he asked Reggie.

"No," said the bad boy, "happily married—that's all!"

And so the cab drove off to nowhere and London slept to the music of the Christmas bells.

Stirring Her Up.

The salesmen are the men who keep the world from falling fast asleep. The good old world would love to quit, and shut its eyes and snore a bit, and let the spiders please themselves by weaving cobwebs o'er the shelves. The world would like it well enough to nodder on with shop-worn stuff, and not buy anything that's new until its shelves were bare to view. No doubt it could have its way, the world would drop the live-long day, and leave its business to chance, and gather mildew on its pants. But, ah! The salesman, keen and fit, he prods the world and chivvies it, and gladly squanders railroad fare to keep the moths out of its hair.

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At this time of the season, for some years past, we have been featuring a one price sale. This time it is 25 cents, and the first comers get the best bargains. Perhaps you will see what you want among these items, if not we have many more things. Come and see them all.

A Tin Pin Hardwood Extension Clothes Rack.
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Pussyfoot, Prohibitionist

HAS ALL ENGLAND GUESSING AS HE SILENTLY "SAWS WOOD."

London.—If it is a distinction for one more American to have thrown a scare into all of Great Britain, then surely some one is due to advance to the front and center and pin a medal on the expansive chest of one William E.—So-called Pussyfoot — Johnson, temperance worker and representative in Britain of the Anti-Saloon league back home. For Pussyfoot Johnson has done that little thing; he has the back hair of every honest drinker in these isles rearing up on end through fear that by some magic he alone and unaided is going to smother the cheering cup from British lips. And do that iniquitous thing right speedily, too!

The amusing feature of this little tale, lads, is that Pfend Pussyfoot hasn't done a thing to merit all this bogey-man stuff except to saw wood and say nothing. Only he had the misfortune to be discovered—to be discovered sawing wood and saying nothing.

Muckraker Starts Wheeze.

This week the Daily Mail sent out an enterprising survival of the muckraking age of fifteen years ago to write a series of scarey stories about how American prohibition spellbinders already were secretly at work to convert the British Isles to the present parched condition that inhabitants of the U.S.A. are enjoying. This belated muckraker was an industri-

ous soul; he went at his job hard, and the very second person he picked on was Pussyfoot Johnson.

What he said—to the extent of a close-packed column in the Daily Mail—about the insidious methods of this same Mr. Johnson, how he moved into an area of wetness, pussy-footed around for a spell and suddenly made that area dry as a dog biscuit, was indeed a crime. The late lamented Guy Fawkes, who once, many years ago, plotted to blow up the house of parliament and all who happened to be therein at the time, was a babe in arms in comparison with the picture this Daily Mail man drew of Mr. Pussyfoot Johnson. He was a raving fanatic with the astuteness of a Machiavelli, was this American propagandist; he worked in the dark; he snatched honest liquor from honest men's lips without their seeing the hand that did the trick.

The day after the Daily Mail's broadside appeared Mr. Johnson had the bad judgment to go to Finland. Why Finland, no body knows. He might have chosen Kansas City or Timbuctoo. The smooth tongued alder he left behind him said he'd gone to Finland in answer to an urgent call from "influential people" in that distant land; they did not know just when he'd return.

This was a tactical blunder on the part of Mr. Johnson—perhaps. The Daily Mail exulted that it had "smoked him out." Publicity, it declared, was bad for Mr. Johnson's business. Therefore, having received the big bowl-out, Pussyfoot had been forced to flee.

Playing a Deep Game.

But perhaps—just perhaps, dear reader—Mr. Johnson, of Kansas, or wherever he hails from originally, was playing a deeper game than the Daily Mail wotted when he ducked for Finland after the "exposure." It is barely possible he believed that by playing up to the part attributed to him, by sustaining his reputation as a "pussyfoot," he could the better uphold that very reputation as a worker in the dark which the London paper had fixed upon him.

However, the scare was abroad in London.

Other papers began to enquire into the mysterious menace exercised by this mild-mannered gentleman with glasses and an embonpoint. The Evening News took up the cry and sent out a young man to interview "a prominent American engineer" "at present in London." The news representative must have found this "prominent American engineer" in the Savoy bar; for his gloomy predictions as to what Pussyfoot Johnson would do to the well known demon over here had the prophecies of Jeremiah, of Holy Writ, looking like a real estate's prospectus.

Pussy Overturns Tittle.

The Evening News followed up with a cartoon by Poy—the kingpin of the pencil boys over here—on the front page. It represented a kitten wearing a Methodistical tie and silk hat tipping over the "mug of bitter" of the honest British worker while he was engrossed in his newspaper, and it was entitled "Pussyfoot."

Perhaps, in the first analysis, the

joke is on the correspondent of Universal Service, whose office is one floor above that of Pussyfoot Johnson. The correspondent had ridden in the so-called "life" of Mr. Johnson, had talked with Mr. Johnson, knew he was some sort of a prohibitionist person—and let it go at that. So the correspondent had a "beat" pulled off under his very nose.

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ST. JOHN'S GAS LIGHT CO.

June 27, 1919

Fads and Fashions.

Suit coats are long.
Bracelets are still in favor.
The dress-coat will be popular.
The waistline is slightly raised.
There is a new circular fullness.
Squirrel gray is a favorite hue.
Cape collars are very fashionable.
The kimono sleeve is here to stay.
Evening wraps are of a dull hue.
Evening dresses are in pannier styles.

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