MC2289

POOR DOCUMENT

AT THE "UNION"

Men's New Spring Suits, $4.50 to $20.00

Men's New Spring Overcoats, $6.50 to $18.00

Men's New Spring Trousers, $1.25 to $5.00

New Spring Shirts, 65c. to $1.50

Union Clothing Company

26 - 28 Charlotte St., opp. City Market

ALEX. CORBET. Manager.

THE LONELY GUARD,

—BY—

NORMAN INNES,

Author of "The Surge of War" (London Magazine, Eveleigh Nash, 1906); "Parson Croft" (Eveleigh Nash, 1907.)

(Continued.)

"A great lord!" said I in surprise as I glanced round the hovel, and then with a smile, "And these are his retainers?"

"Without a doubt." answered the smith with a scowl—the incredulity of my tone was not lost upon him—and away he shuffled as the youth appeared with a flask of white wine. The room was empty but for the drawer and a knave asleep before the window, and as I sipped the liquor—stuff as sour as ever roughened a Christian's throat—I could but smile that Fortune in the guise of a blue-eyed, fair-haired child should have brought me to such a squalid, cutthroat den.

Meanwhile from the smithy came the ring of hammer on anvil, the roar of bellows, and peals of laughter besides, coarse laughter from a dozen throats, and much shouting. I had it in my mind to seek the cause of the ruffians' mirth, but as I was about to rise from the settle, a door not a yard from where I sat and which had escaped my notice hitherto, was pushed open and a man stole softly in carrying two empty flagons. These the drawer filled and with a careless glance in the direction of the smithy and a second at me, the man, who from his appearance might have been a soldier out of uniform, disappeared as quietly as he had come.

"Who is that?" said I, addressing the youth who had replenished the flagons.

He started at my enquiry and answered in a voice scarcely audible above the din without.

"A servant of him who is in the chamber upon the upper floor."

"And who is he?" I demanded.

"Nay, I know not his name," rejoined the pale-faced drawer with a furtive glance round the room.

I was so amazed at his apparent fear, of the reticence of one whose calling has never been credited with the gift of silence that I cried, rather for the sake of hearing the wight talk than for my own information—

"Then what is he like? And whence comes he, man?"

The fellow's cheeks that were grey as ashes took on a livid hue, his hands I saw were trembling.

"Nay, sir, believe me, I know not," he faltered in terror, in terror as apparent as it was intense. "For Heaven's love question me no further. I know little of these folk, nought of what is done this day."

He clutched at the table white-lipped and moist of brow; I had been laughing but could laugh no longer.

"What ails thee, man?" I gasped in astonishment.

Was the place bewitched with its villain crew, its unseen guest, its trembling drawer? And then there was the white-haired stalwart landlord and his child, that little one whose fair face and winsome speech had charmed me at first sight. Was it—and my hands gripped the arms of my chair, for a moment my heart stood still. Then I sprang to my feet, dashed the table aside, and as the drawer sank cowering beneath the window, I strode to the door that opened into the smithy.

A strange sight met my gaze. At the distant end of the reeking barn were gathered that motley ill-conditioned band, and it appeared that their attention was rivetted upon some one who was kneeling beside my horse. I could see the grey above their shoulders with his ears thrown back, its head half turned, but of the smith that shod it I could see nought.

And strangest of all beside the blazing forge stood the child, little Marie Schalk, with the bellows chain in her hand, and her eyes fixed not on the group clustering about her father, but on the opening wherein I stood. And she cried at sight of me, while the same smile of wondering innocence that had caught my fancy an hour before played about her lips.

"Not yet, not yet, Your Excellency, your steed is not yet shod."

The men that were gathered about my horse turned at her cry, and I caught a glimpse of the smith on his knees beside my grey but without hammer, nails or horseshoe in his hand, but instead my saddle-bags, one of which it semed he had been in the act of strapping but a moment since.

"Knave," cried I, my eyes open at last, and a great fear at my heart for the gems I carried. "Who gave thee leave to meddle with my gear? By the Saints thou shalt rue it if aught be lacking."

The men fell back before me, but the old rogue made turbulent answer with his hand upon my steed's quarters.

"Soft, soft, noble sir," said he in mock humility, with a leer at his comrades, "dost thou charge Hans Schalk, an old soldier, with knavery?"

"Aye, that I do," I cried hotly, as I seized the off saddle-bag wherein I had stowed those unlucky pearls, "and by Heaven thou art like to hang if aught's amiss, old soldier though thou art."

Silence hung in that soot-grimed smithy as I searched in haste, silence that was broken by a child's voice and a peal of laughter from the tap-room of the inn. But voice and laughter passed unheeded by me, beads of sweat stood on my forehead, my hands were trembling, my dismay must have been apparent to each in that half-moon of rogues.

Jewels and case were gone; the gems entrusted to my care I had been tricked by a child, decoyed to this lonely den, robbed by the blue-eyed bronzed old villain who stood fronting me so calmly.

"Is aught lacking, noble sir?" he demanded in the same mocking tones. "A billet from thy lady, a lock of her hair, or mayhap gems for her throat."

The knave's audacity for a moment held me dumb. Here was a dare-devil robber indeed, who could jest at his roguery.

"Dog!" cried I, finding my speech at last, "my jewels or by Heaven you hang."

"Then hang me, sir," cried he with a careless shrug of his shoulders, "hang me and begone."

In another moment the rogue felt the weight of my arm. Full on his jaw fell my fist ere he had time to spring back or to use the cudgel that hung loose in his hand. Sideways he staggered with an oath, sideways against the hocks of the grey who startled, plunged, lashing out savagely at the stumbling wretch. With a coughing groan the man reeled backwards upon the flags, as silence fell heavy on that crowded barn. There at my feet he lay still and death-pale, blood on his cheek, on his lips, with his hands clenched upon his chest. Short time had I in which to act. L knew.

"Give place," I cried, drawing my blade, "where is he, the guest of whom this knave spoke? I will lay the matter before him, and—"

The men fell back, a scowling black-browed gang, but gathered before the door that gave entrance to the tap-room. Nor did they yield a step further, but one, raising his cudgel—he had a drawn knife in his hand besides—cried in surly accents—

"Further at thy peril, His Excellency will have nought of thy presence."

"And who is His Excellency, and who art thou?" I demanded, shortening my sword.

Scornfully the other laughed, laughed in my face with my point not an inch from his breast.

"His Excellency is my master," he rejoined, "and I His Excellency's servant, and thou like to taste of his displeasure for thy ill-usage of my comrade yonder."

And another—he stood in the entry itself behind his fellows—called to this crew.

"Death to the hound, spit him for a witless fool. He has slain old Schalk, let us crack his skull, say I."

Fast stood these dozen cut-throats before the door, the only entrance to the inn, and I saw from their dogged looks and glances of menace that it was high time to think of safety. Force would avail me nothing, even if the vaunt that they acted upon the commands of another were false, and with point raised to meet any sudden attack I fell back to my horse, made sure that the girths were tight, loosed the rope and in another moment was without and in the saddle. Nor did any stay my going, though the odds were twelve to one. At the further end of the forge the villains gathered, not a yard from the main door lay the stricken smith and kneeling on the flags at his side was the little maiden, who, silent, with tears in her blue eyes, gazed wistfully as I wheeled my horse in the narrow lane.

Bitter were my thoughts as I galloped along the bridle path that would bring me to the highway. It was plain to me now; I was the victim of the scheme of some villain as powerful as he was crafty, of a gang of villains mayhap. The shoe that my horse had cast had doubtless been loosened at the inn at Neumarkt where I had rested about noon, and the child had been sent to lead me to the smithy.

But as to my spoilers' identity I could not hazard a guess. Never to my knowledge had I set eyes on any of that ruffianly gang, nor, try as I would, could I discover how that evil company could have known that my saddle-bags contained so costly a prize. Little hope had I of ever setting eyes on these gems again, in my dismay my prayer was that the Spaniard might never cross my path, for in spite of the trick he had played me, I believed his tale and held that he had not stolen those pearls without good cause. All offer of reward for the return of the necklet was out of the question, a robber's prey they had returned to robber's keeping and of necessity my tongue was tied. I had been outwitted, had been spoiled of that which was another's, how to answer to that other if ever I should meet him, I knew not.

Ere I had ridden a hundred yards along the sandy path I discovered that my horse was still unshod, and in addition that the priming had been shaken from my pistols, the pan damped. Once more I had to dismount, having lost two good hours in addition to the gems, and to my chagrin the first building that caught my eye on entering Seekirchen was a smithy, with the smith, a brawny honest-featured man standing aproned before his anvil.

"In a moment, Your Excellency, in a moment," cried this worthy, advancing to take my horse, 'my work here is almost done and then thy steed shall have my care."

But I cared little that my beast must take its turn, I was all for questioning the man, though I kept a guard on my tongue.

"An hour since," said I as the smith bent beside a heavy roan, with its off hind hoof upon his knee. "I thought to have my horse shod at a forge, half inn half smithy, that stands upon a heath but three miles down the highway."

The man looked up with a merry smile on his lips.

"So?" said he, tossing the new-made shoe into the embers. "Many a traveller has ridden to the Kitzlach forge, as didst thou, and has walked hither beside his steed. The smith has been dead long since, and his widow, an old crone as sour as the liquor in her cellar, keeps the inn with no other helper than her grandson, a pale-faced slack-jointed lad, who can neither swing hammer, drive nail or soothe horse as many have found to their cost.' '

"Then these two live alone?" said I, recalling the wan-cheeked, terror-stricken drawer. The man nodded as he flung the glowing metal into the trough.

"Aye, thanks to their liquor,' he rejoined with a laugh. "But doubtless since you come from Kitzlach you are in need of refreshment. Will Your Excellency rest here in the shade awhile, or shall I bring the horse when it is shod to the inn at the further end of the village."

I hesitated for a moment; the smithy was large and upon a bench at the further end I should scarce feel the heat of the furnace. But the prospect of refreshment at the inn, a jug of beer or a flask of wine, weighed mightily with me, so with a nod and a word of thanks to the smith, I turned from the open door.

Not a soul was in sight, the narrow street was deserted but for a couple of sleeping hounds and I crossed the cobbles to the shady side of the road still in doubt as to whether I should not return to the forge, though the inn could not be distant more than a few hundred paces at the most. For a moment I stood still to wipe my brow—it was hot that afternoon in June—and at the instant my attention was caught by the sound of approaching footsteps and the ring of spurs upon the pathway. I looked up. On the opposite side of the street a lithe, well-made figure was hurrying in my direction. His head was bent somewhat, his eyes were upon the ground and his pace all out of keeping with the sultry weather. He wore a dark-blue riding-coat and high jack boots. His hat was tilted forward above his eyes, and his whole bearing told of haste and pre-occupation. At first sight I set him down for one of the neighboring gentry, doubtless the owner of the roan I had noticed in the smithy, and without another glance would have passed on my way to the inn, when suddenly I fancied I recognized the stranger.

I hesitated for a moment. Certainly I had seen the man before, knew once again the handsome face, beetling brows and thin drawn lips. Involuntarily I stared, was about to re-cross the road, when my memory woke and instead I stood stock still.

I had seen him before but a few nights since, in a reeking atmosphere, flushed with wine and pride, vengeful and accusing. The man was Otto von Wegen, he who had caused all the pother with the Spaniard, he whom I and my kinsman had held to be a meddlesome spark, loose of tongue and fond of his liquor, whose heated charge I had scorned but to be assured of its truth within the hour.

I turned hurriedly, bent on pursuing my way up the street. I had no wish to meet the man; at best, I was bound in honor to make excuses for doubting his tale of the Grand Duke's losses, of withstanding him in the cause of justice; at worst, I might risk a quarrel which, under the circumstances, was to be avoided at all hazards.

That he had not seen, much less recognized, me I was assured, and heat, thirst and all else were forgotten in thankfulness for avoiding what I knew must have been a doubtful recontre.

But what was his business in Seekirchen? He was of His Higness' entourage, and I could but speculate on the nature of the duty that had brought him to this lonely village on the confines of his realm.

I looked round cautiously. As I had expected he had stopped at the smithy, and was in the act of passing the door. And I turned, I know not why, filled with a sudden desire to speak with him. Slowly I retraced my steps framing in my mind what I should say to the stranger who had suffered not a little at the hands of me and my friends. Though I cared not a whit for the man, held his vainglorious manner in contempt and was still the victim of the Spaniard's fascination, I felt that I owed him reparation for my conduct, an acknowledgment of the subsequent confession of the thief.

But as luck would have it, when I was but twenty paces from the smity out comes the farrier leading the roan, with its owner beside it. Into the saddle springs the latter, drops a coin into the man's hand, gives a jerk to the bridle and canters briskly up the street, without a second glance at the smith, without a single glance at me, and disappears at the bend of the road.

The smith looked up in surprise at my reappearance.

"Hast thou not found the inn?" said he with a smile.

"Nay," I replied, "it was hot in the village street, and my time is short. The owner of the roan is a good customer of thine?"

The man laughed.

"His father was in his day, but the young Count is forever in Vienna, in the household of His Highness the Grand Duke so they say, and besides his castle lies twenty miles to the north-west, hard upon the Bavarian frontier. It is rarely nowadays that a von Wegen is seen in Seekirchen."

In another moment the forge was ringing with the blows of the smith's hammer, and I sat watching the sparks, filled with a certain regret that I had not spoken with the Count, told him of what had befallen at the Kitzlach smithy, and trusted to his good nature and influence to obtain me some redress. But I had let the opportunity slip, and I had small doubt that at that very moment the band of robbers were passing the Bavarian frontier. In silence I watched the forging and fixing of the shoe, with scarce another word to the smith, with a rueful glance at the sun that was sinking westward, I paid the man his price, swung myself into the saddle and set my face towards Salzburg.

(To be Continued).

Said To Be a National Curse

That indigestion is responsible for more sickness than any other disease is certainly true. Some doctors go so far as to say it is a national curse. Repeated attacks inflame the lining of the stomach and cause the glands to secrete mucous instead of the juices of natural digestion. Consequently the blood is poisoned, nerve force is reduced, the vitality of the entire system is weakened.

There is but one national remedy for indigestion and that remedy is Dr. Hamilton's Pills which are used by thousands with marvelous success. Dr. Hamilton's Pills accelerate the action of the gastric glands and give tone to the digestive organs. They strengthen the kidneys and liver, cleanse and purify the blood, and thus add general tone to every organ of the body. Flesh and strength are fast restored and the patient can eat and digest any food he pleases.

Under the vitalizing effect of Dr. Hamilton's Pills your system will soon rally; once more you'll enjoy the blessings of health. Test Dr. Hamilton's Pills yourself. 25c. per box or five boxes for $1.00; at all dealers. Certain cure is guaranteed.

Your Duty is to be Well.

But you cannot be well if you neglect taking Hood's Sarsaparilla when you know you should take it. Impure blood, poor appetite, headache, nervousness, that tired feeling—by these and other signs your system demands Hood's. Get a bottle today.

Malaria—"My mother was run-down and feared malaria, but after taking a few bottles of Hood's Sarsaparilla she was soon as well as ever." BESSIE SHORT, 884 Queens Ave., London, Ont.

Catarrh—"For years I have been troubled with catarrh and indigestion and have tried everything, but to no effect. I lately heard of Hood's Sarsaparilla, tried it, and it is doing me good. I will not be without it." WM. KELLY, 240 King St., Kingston, Ont.

Glow of Health—"My blood was very poor. Since taking Hood's Sarsaparilla I have more color in my face, sleep and eat well, and work is a pleasure." MRS. A. A. HOWARD, Taunton, Mass.

Hood's Sarsaparilla is sold everywhere. 100 Doses One Dollar. Prepared only by C. I. Hood Co., Lowell, Mass., U. S. A.

ST. JOHN RIVER IS BLOCKED BY BOOM

Booms Built Across the River at the Boundary--Delegation at Ottawa to Protest.

Ottawa, March 13—An American lumbering company has taken charge of the St. John River where it forms the boundary between Maine and New Brunswick and there is a delegation of Canadian lumbermen from St. John in Ottawa to protest to the minister of public works and ask the intervention of the Canadian government.

The gentlemen who are here are A. P. Barnhill, K. C., George Cushing and Fraser Gregory, lumbermen. They say the American company, called the St. John Lumber Company, has acted on authority from the state of Maine and has built works on both sides of the St. John River and has put booms clear across it to trap all logs. They claim this is a violation of the Ashburton treaty, which declares there shall be no interference with navigation waters. The American company has a representative here also in the person of H. A. Powell, ex-M. P. for Westmorland. Dr. Pugsley will hear the case tomorrow.

Headaches

Prevention and Cure

Probably no one knows the torture of headache better than A. J. MacAdam, of N. C. College, Charlottetown, P. E. I., who says. "A result of overwork manifested itself in the work of recurring headaches. They were so severe sometimes as to make me incapable of any serious study for days at a time. But since my discovery of "Nerviline," headaches are a thing of the past. A few drops taken internally are effective and when rubbed into the forehead and scalp, soon effect a complete cure. I heartily recommend Polson's Nerviline."

DENIES THERE IS ANYTHING WRONG

Dominion Lands Commissioner Talks of Opening Government Tenders.

Ottawa, March 13—In the public accounts committee today H. B. Ames resumed his inquiries into timber berths. J. W. Greenway, commissioner of dominion lands in succession to J. G. Turriff, described the system of awarding tenders which was carried out when he first entered the office. Tenders were usually handed into the timber and mines branch, but if near the closing hour for tenders they might be handed in directly to him.

Mr. Greenway went on to state that the tenders, though opened by him were awarded by the timber and mines branch. About a year ago a change was made by which the land commissioner not only opened but awarded the tenders.

To E. M. MacDonald, Mr. Greenway stated he did not know of any dark or secluded room in which or locked doors behind which tenders were opened. In his time clerks and sometimes tenderers were present when the tenders were opened. His clerk always brought the tenders to him.

Mr. Turriff wanted to make a statement but it was deferred until later.

Russia is becoming a great buyer of British-grown teas, Partly owing to the enormous increase in the quantity they are using, the price of tea at the gardens has advanced greatly during the past year, making it necessary for the "Salada" Tea Co., in order to maintain the high standard of quality for which "Salada" is noted, to advance the price of 'Brown Label" from 25c. to 30c. per pound.

A movement is on foot to organize here a women's Canadian club. There will be a meeting at 3.30 p. m. today in the Foresters' Hall, Charlotte street, to organize. Those who issue the call are: Mrs. W. Frank Hatheway, Mrs. E. S. Fiske, Mrs. H. Colby Smith, Mrs. T. H. Bullock, Mrs. H. B. Peck, Mrs. W. S. Marven, Mrs. John McAvity, Mrs. W. O. Raymond, Mrs. J. F. Bullock, Mrs. D. F. Chisholm, Mrs. David McLellan, Mrs. Geo. M. Campbell, Mrs. T. H. Estabrooks, Dr. Helen Douglas, Miss Mabel P. French, Miss Grace Ross, Miss Miriam Hatheway.

You cannot possibly have a better Cocoa than

EPPS'S

A delicious drink and a sustaining food. Fragrant, nutritious and economical. This excellent Cocoa maintains the system in robust health, and enables it to resist winter's extreme cold.

COCOA

Sold by Grocers and Storekeepers in ¼-lb. and ½-lb Tins.

PROFITABLE READING

For Cash Buyers.

Thursday, Friday and Saturday, we will offer BARGAINS that will make it seem a real pleasure to part with your cash. Read all this ad. You will surely find something to

INTEREST YOU.

MEN'S	25c. Braces	Sale price,	*19c.*
"	35c. Ties	"	*19c.*
"	15c. Ties	"	*9c.*
"	10c. White Handkerchiefs	"	*3c.*
"	65c. White Dress Shirts	"	*42c.*
"	65c. Striped Duck Shirts	"	*48c.*
"	25c. Black Cashmere Hose	"	*19c.*
"	25c. Heavy Wool Hose	"	*19c.*
"	$1.00 Sweaters—Black or Blue	"	*69c.*
"	3.00 Hewson Tweed Pants	"	*$1.98.*
"	8.50 Long Showerproof Overcoats	"	*6.48.*
"	12.00 Long Showerproof Overcoats	"	*8.00.*
"	12.00 Short Spring Toppers	"	*7.98.*
"	13.00 Hewson Tweed Suits	"	*9.48.*
"	10.00 Canadian Tweed Suits	"	*7.48.*

Our Men's $12.00 Black Clay Suits Equal Any $18.00 Suits. Made-to-order.

Men's English Worsted Suits. All Desirable Shades. Latest Up-to-date Cut. Price $10.00 to $18.00.

BOYS'	$3.00 Two-piece Suits	Sale price	*$1.98.*
	4.00 Three-piece Suits	"	*2.98.*
MEN'S	3.00 King Hats	"	*2.00.*
	5.00 Shoes	"	*3.48.*
LADIES'	75c. White Lawn Shirtwaists	"	*58c.*
"	$1.00 White Lawn Shirtwaists	"	*70c.*
"	1.50 White Lawn Shirtwaists	"	*98c.*
"	2.00 White Lawn Shirtwaists	"	*1.48.*
"	3.00 Silk Waists	"	*1.98.*
"	3.75 Silk Waists	"	*2.98.*
"	4,50 Silk Waists	"	*3.48.*
"	6.00 Silk Waists	"	*4.48.*
"	1.00 Corset Covers	"	*78c.*
"	75c. Corset Covers	"	*58c.*
"	50c. Corset Covers	"	*39c.*
"	30c. Corset Covers	"	*22c.*
"	$3.00 White Underskirts	"	*2.48.*
"	2.50 White Underskirts	"	*1.98.*
"	2.00 White Underskirts	"	*1.48.*
"	1.50 White Underskirts	"	*98c.*
"	1.00 White Underskirts	"	*78c.*
"	75c. Night Gowns	"	*58c.*
"	1.50 Night Gowns	"	*98c.*
"	Short Spring Coats. Prices *$3.98* to *$14.00.* Less 20 per cent. discount.		
"	3-4 Short Spring Coats, Prices *7.98* to *20.00.* Less 20 per cent. discount.		
"	Raincoats—long or short, Prices *7.98 to 15.00.* Less 20 per cent. discount.		
"	$6.50 Black Venetian Skirts.	Sale price	*$4.48.*
"	5.00 Black or Blue Venetian Skirts,	"	*3.48.*
"	4.00 Black or Blue Venetian Skirts,	"	*2.98.*

Children's Reefers, $2.98 to $5.00.
Girls' Full Length Raincoats, $3.98 to $8.00.
Misses' Skirts, from $1.98 to $3.98.
Ladies' Suits to order, from $10.50 to $30.00.
Ladies' Coats to order, from $8.50 to $20.00.

"	$1.50 P. C. and D. A. Corsets.	Sale price	*$1.00.*
"	1.25 P. C. and D. A. Corsets.	"	*98c.*
"	1.00 P. C. and D. A. Corsets.	"	*78c.*
"	75c. P. C. and D. A. Corsets.	"	*58c.*
"	50c. P. C. and D A. Corsets.	"	*39c.*
"	25c. Hose Supporters	"	*15c.*
"	40c. Hose Supporters	"	*28c.*
"	50c. Hose Supporters	"	*39c.*

Children's 10c. Gaiters for 5c.

Wilcox Bros.