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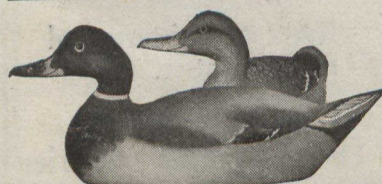
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IN ANSWERING ADVERTISEMENTS MENTION "THE CANADIAN COURIER."

The Soul of a Patriot

(Continued from page 9.)

further," replied Mr. Porter. "I have no hope that it would help me to disturb the sound slumber of British authority. I want to see something ahead; not exactly for myself, but for the machine. You have a ship, Captain, so possibly you gather my meaning; it is difficult to define."

And suddenly Hunt's mind was illuminated; he realized, for the first time, that mysterious force which drives the brain of an inventor; he glimpsed the god in the man, the creator of things; not, as Porter imagined, because he had a ship, but because he had a son. Suppose that this boy should be rejected by the nation; not merely refused by this profession or that profession, but absolutely rejected by the people at large, through no fault? Would his patriotism, fundamental though it was, stand out? Would he not be tempted to take the boy and try another nation?

He understood the grimy little inventor across the table, and became fond of him. An inspiration came to him.

"What you want, my friend, is a voyage of demonstration. Failing a cruiser, why not try a merchantman? The 'Good Fortune' lies in dock at Avonmouth, overhauling."

Porter gazed at the Captain, while a great new vista of possibilities opened before him—to vanish. He threw up his hands in an expressive "Money," he said, despondently. "I need five thousand to see me clear for the time being, and pay for the ship's fittings. Then there is my little crew to be maintained."

The Captain whistled, and thought. "I believe it can be managed," he said.

AND so it came to pass that the "Good Fortune" steamed down the Bristol Channel with a narrow gauge tramline across her deck and a very peculiar bundle just forward of the bridge.

And while she was away, the crisis developed, and when, on her return journey, she reached the Cape, laden with corn and frozen beef, information was confused and contradictory. At Las Palmas she learnt that all British cables were cut, and that Marconi could get nothing but incoherent scraps of cypher which he was unable to interpret. They met no southward-bound steamers.

That night the "Good Fortune" burned no lights. The next morning she was chased and fired upon by a merchantman, whose flag she could not see; she out-distanced her pursuer. On the morning after that Mr. Porter and a companion saw the sunrise from the height of a thousand feet above the sea-level. Tight to his companion's ears were strapped the padded telephone receivers, and near his mouth the transmitting trumpet: he sought the visible horizon with binoculars. A thousand feet below Captain Hunt gazed at the strong, thin telephone-fibre, as it swayed slowly from side to side. Then, at the tinkle of a bell he entered his dark chart room, took up his receiver, and listened to the din of Porter's powerful engines, and to the attenuated shout of his aerial look-out announcing that no ship was in sight to eastward.

Thus did the voyage continue until the "Good Fortune" found herself in the Channel. At midnight Mr. Porter opened his eyes to see the Captain standing beside his bunk with a shaded light.

"Guns," said the Captain, and as he spoke the sinister reverberations came through to them. "Heavy naval guns; battleships. There is no mistaking that flutter in the air. They are a long way off. Better come on deck. Put on a belt."

Porter made his way to the silent deck. There was no starlight; a haze must be over the sea. Porter felt the tension of the atmosphere, and stood motionless for a minute, listening nervously, intently, trying to locate those soft, ominous con-

cussions that came out of interminable space.

His artificers were at their stations. He wanted to see their faces; the faces of these comrades who had stood by him through thick and thin. He felt his way over to the machine, but in the blackness could distinguish nothing. So, in a hushed voice, he questioned each detail.

"The runway?"

"All clear, sir."

"Jacobs?"

"In his seat, sir."

"Is his telephone right?"

"Yes, sir."

"Cable-drum? Ignition?"

"Right, sir."

He put his hand through the familiar maze of rods that surrounded the vital wing gear, and found a hand there already.

"Ah, Martin!"

"Yes, sir."

"Plenty of oil?"

"Yes, sir; and the petrol tanks are full."

And all through this, the slow, velvety voices that cannot be mistaken for thunder, murmuring "Doom . . . Doom . . . Doom."

As Porter joined the Captain on the bridge a misty, momentary luminescence flitted overhead.

"Searchlight," commented the Captain. "They are nearer than I thought . . . that is, something is pretty near." He walked to the engine-room telegraph. "That searchlight came from the east—I think; suppose we go west, and chance it."

He gave the necessary orders. "Suppose I go aloft," ventured Porter. "I might catch a glint of something above this mist."

"Isn't it a bit risky? Can you locate me? Can you keep above me?"

"Oh, yes, by the cable-drum. The barometer gives the height, the drum gauge gives the length of wire unwound; each time I pass over you the two readings approximate. You have to allow for wind-sag, and so on, but that is easy."

"Very well; if you are willing."

Porter turned to go; the Captain accompanied him to the steps, and felt for his hand.

"Well, in case . . . Good luck."

"Good luck, Captain . . . just in case . . ."

The great petrol engines shattered the silence of the deck, and drowned for a time the sullen voice of the guns. The two airmen were away with a splash of spray in their faces. Up and up, in figures of eight. Three hundred feet . . . four . . . five hundred feet they read by the dimly illuminated barometer dial. Porter checked it by the drum as the cable unwound: six hundred . . . six hundred and sixty . . . that meant they were two hundred odd feet to one side of the ship. Seven hundred feet, said the barometer; seven hundred and twenty, said the drum. They were almost over the deck now. Jacobs rang up his mate in the chart house below, but got no reply.

Seven hundred and twenty, said the barometer. Seven eighty, said the drum, seven ninety, eight hundred. Jacobs compassed the barometer in alarm; the drum was running very quickly. Seven thirty, said the barometer.

PORTER was staring at the dials, and was swinging the aeroplane to port, thinking he had outflown his lateral allowance—made his figure of eight too long. Jacobs again rang up his mate, and got no reply. Now the drum dial showed that nine hundred feet of cable were out, though the barometer gave the height as seven hundred and fifty. Then the drum began suddenly when the lower cable end was released. Porter continued to steer his endless figures of eight, keeping position by guesswork. The din of the engines