POOR DOCUMENT

MC 2033

THE CHOICE

By E. R. PUNSHON

CHAPTER XXIX—(Continued.)

It was to this yacht that old Ivanovitch hurried after leaving the house in Groombridge Square. On it he found already assembled nearly all those concerned in this affair of such high promise, which now at the last moment seemed to have gone so suddenly and unexpectedly wrong. The suave Ignat was there, having closed the offices in the tall city building. Under his arm he carried the big ledger, whose dry rows and columns of figures were like so many bullets aimed at the heart of the Tsar—bullets more deadly than from any rifle ever fired. Golovin was there, too, with hands and pockets full of bombs, explaining them to all who would listen to him, and declaring in his shrill voice that for his part he had always declared that all that was necessary was to have a little bomb and put it down and then to walk away. "P'ff, after a little of that we should have no more trouble," he declared, continually gesticulating freely with his hands. In a deck cabin the Count himself was sitting, smoking ceaseless cigarettes—a big, burly, rather helpless figure. Not long before he had been a handsome, well preserved, prosperous looking gentleman, but now his hair and beard were flecked with grey, and his whole manner had become wavering and uncertain, while his once hearty voice he had cultivated to an almost apologetic murmur, having found, since the release of his daughters, that it was not wise to speak too loudly in their presence. Any sudden or unexpected noise had now a tendency to produce in them violent fits of weeping or even attacks of hysteria. Perhaps the most conspicuous person visible was the chief engineer, a young man who had been on board the Potemkin when the mutiny broke out on her and who, almost alone among the officers, had thrown in his lot with the mutineers. When, after a time, the Potemkin surrendered to Roumania, he had first taken refuge in Switzerland, and then, receiving a message from Nickolas, who had heard of him, he had gone to Norway to meet Count O—— and take charge of the yacht's engine-room. A tall, thin figure, he was going eagerly about the deck talking for brief moments first to one and then to another. The words most frequently on his lips was "traitor." and now and then he would shake both his fists in the air. He was particularly angry, because his offer to find out Nickolas and shoot him on the spot had not been accepted.

The dozen or so of men forming the crew were scattered about the deck in various attitudes. None of them were doing any work; in fact, nothing had been done on the ship all day. They formed an odd mixture, drawn from all ranks in life, the one or two Finns among them being about the only men in any way competent as sailors. Of the rest some among the Russians had made the voyage to the east with Rojdestvensky, perhaps half welcoming the crushing defeat at the hands of Togo, but even these still walked with the ploughman's slouch and sat about the deck as if in a farmer's barn. The remainder of the crew consisted chiefly of workmen and of students from the universities. All of them, without knowing exactly what had happened, understood that the project on which they had embarked had failed; and this did not surprise or seem to disturb them much, for they were used to enduring failure and defeat. Their present mood was chiefly fatalistic, and a willingness to wait and see what their leaders proposed, though a certain uneasiness and stirring was visible wherever the chief engineer passed. Through and among them he went indefatigably, arguing, gesticulating, spitting over his shoulder in anger and contempt when often his words seemed to fail of any effect save to produce a murmur of faith in God or the making of the sign of the Cross.

It was in this scene of confusion and aimless discussion that Ivanovitch appeared in the afternoon. At once he became the centre of an eager crowd, which woke at the sight of him to a somewhat sinister agitation and threatening activity. He had nothing to tell them, however, except that the evening papers, on the lookout for sensation, were full of the affair, publishing interviews by the dozen with the captain of the Seven Sisters, with every member of her crew down to the cabin boy. The only satisfactory thing about it all was that up to the present, at least, all interest was focussed on the Seven Sisters, nothing having so far appeared in print, either about the yacht or about the yard where the rifles were still stored.

With this they had to be content, and Ivanovitch, getting away from them, went into the Count's cabin and sat down. The Count looked at him but said nothing, and lighted another cigarette, and after a time Ivanovitch observed:—

"If I could have a glass of tea—I am much exhausted."

The Count rang a bell on the table at his side, but no one took any notice. He got up himself and drifted aimlessly about outside for a few moments, and then presently returned.

"Every one is so upset," he said apologetically in his carefully modulated voice; "let us go below. The samovar may be alight in the saloon."

His tone did not express much hope that it would be, but when they went down the companion hatch into the main saloon, they found it steaming merrily with two of the stokers sitting beside it. They were drinking tea, and were arguing passionately whether, when the Republic was established in Russia, the cabinet ministers should be responsible primarily to the president or first of all to the elective chambers.

"The president is the head of the government and his ministers must first be responsible to him!" one of them cried, waving his glass in the air.

"The chamber must be the sole master," the other kept repeating over and over again, with a sip of tea between each repetition. "Anyone but a chucklehead would see the necessity at once."

The Count fell upon them in a temper and hustled them both out of the room, soundly boxing the ears of one, who at once began to bellow at the top of his voice. It was noticeable, however, that angry as the Count was, he never once raised his voice much above a whisper.

"It is intolerable," he said, coming back to Ivanovitch. "Help yourself to tea, will you be so kind? Everything is so upset. If only Nickolas Andreivitch"—he paused abruptly. "Well, at any rate," he said, "he was always so clear and simple; if he wanted a thing done he went and did it. Wonderful! As for me," said the Count, frankly, "I sit and think of what I will do in the future if God is good to me."

"Yes, that is just what's the matter with all of us," grumbled Ivanovitch, sipping his tea. "We Russians are all asleep. We want another Peter the Great—only from among the people this time—to wake us up. And I thought perhaps Nickolas Kamff might be such a one."

"But is this true about him?" asked the Count. "I myself cannot believe it—not of Nickolas Kamff."

"I know very little," answered Ivanovitch, "I had to go away for a rest, thinking all was ready. Then this happened, but I do not yet understand. Tell me what you know."

"It was last night," the Count explained; "we had just berthed, and everything was right for the night—the doctor, the Custom House people had been on board, and we were thinking of turning in. Then came a cry in our own language from alongside: 'Brothers, the dawn, the dawn.' Of course every one ran at once to look, and our engineer—ah, he also is a man of action like Nickolas Andrevitch himself!—threw a buoy over and shouted for a boat to be launched. Well, there was someone in the water and we got him on board. He was quite unconscious, and our three medical students—we have two among the stokers and the steward is the third—examined him. Two of them said he was dying and the third said he was dead already. But I got some brandy and put pepper in it, and no water, and poured it down his throat, and, by Heavens—then he was bad, ill, you wouldn't have believed it! But doubtless it was a drink he was unaccustomed to."

"No doubt," said Ivanovitch impatiently. "But what did he say?"

"I am coming to that," replied the Count, displeased at being hurried; "I am coming to that. Every cow has a tail, but it is always behind, as the peasants say. At any rate, I showed the student who declared the man was dead to be wrong, but the other two were more certain than ever that he was dying. I admit he looked like it, but I know how tough these Englishmen are, and I told them to wait; and after a while he was better. But we found he was not only English, but that he could speak no Russian, and when we asked him who had shouted he replied at once that it was Nickolas Kamff. Imagine our feelings—imagine our feelings again when he went on to tell us about meeting Nobrikoff in a boat and of how Nickolas had spoken to him about the Seven Sisters. I did not know what to do—it seemed we were betrayed. I sent messages everywhere, and then this morning it was all in the papers about our plans for smuggling the rifles into Russia—already by nine o'clock the English officials had been on board the Seven Sisters. All day long there has been excitement, and one reporter has even been on board us, but we made him so drunk he will do us no harm. He was kissing one of the dock police the last thing we saw of him, and telling him how he loved him!"

Ivanovitch pulled his long white beard with an uncertain, trembling hand.

"And the barricades are up in Moscow," he muttered.

"But do you think Nickolas Andreivitch can have done this thing?" the Count asked distractedly. "It seems to me impossible. Half of my men do not believe it and wanted to shoot this Englishman. I cannot understand it at all. Nickolas Andreivitch, to whom all trusted! What do you think, brother?"

"Well, you see," explained Ivanovitch, "there is a woman in it."

"Oh, that goes without saying," reclared the Count. "When anything comes to eternal smash, it is always understood that there is a woman. But for Nickolas to abandon us for a woman—he never seemed to care for women."

"Those are the kind who, when they do begin to care for one woman are the worst of all," Ivanovitch answered. "Well, let us call a meeting and discuss things."

"Yes, that will be best," agreed the Count. "I am so bewildered—Nickolas Kamff of all the people!"

He went to the door and began to shout up the hatchway, and in a few moments the saloon was filled with a motley assembly consisting of all those on board who considered themselves of sufficient importance to take part in the proceedings. The rest of the crew clustered in the doorway or on the companion outside, and at last, by dint of repeatedly ringing a small bell, and of shouting till he was hoarse, the Count managed to evolve some sort of order. Yet still it was quite pathetically obvious that these were people to whom the art of government by public discussion was alien and unaccustomed; only one or two peasants used to the proceedings of the "Mir" seemed to have any idea of how to set to work.

"Comrades, listen to me!" the Count implored. "Brothers, do stop talking," he said appealingly, and a certain amount of silence being obtained, he went on, "We have to decide what is best for us to do in the unexpected circumstances in which we find ourselves—whether we should try to continue at all risks or whether it would be wiser to put everything off for a time—say three months."

"How can we do that?" asked Ivanovitch. "The barricades are up in Moscow—that has not been put off for three months."

"But where is Nickolas Kamff!" shouted a voice from behind, and in a moment a babel of cries and counter cries arose, in which several slaps were exchanged and in which the loudest word was "traitor," rising with ominous and growing strength.

"Now, be quiet!" shouted the Count. "We are also to try him—yes, he is accused of treachery, and we will try him."

An ugly growl from the men followed the Count's words. It died away in utter silence and then rose again, indescribably menacing, like the distant baying of wolves heard on the trail of their prey. It was as though the men, hearing the possibility of treachery admitted by their leaders for the first time, understood it, and for the first time thought of vengeance.

"Let us have the Englishman in," cried the young engineer, who was sitting just by the Count. "Let us hear what he has to say."

There was a movement in the crowd, and in a minute or two later Fred was led into the room and, being as yet too weak to stand for long, was given a chair at the table.

In reply to the Count's questions, he told the story again of Nickolas' brief conference with Nobrikoff on the river, and when he had finished there was silence till the Count broke it.

"Now it is certain," he said, "Nickolas has betrayed us," and he leaned his head upon his hands with tears.

Still no one else spoke or moved. Rumors of treachery had flown among them all day, but now the reality was certain they stood as if amazed. To many of them Nickolas had typified the whole movement, and they could even yet hardly realize or believe. When one of them spoke it was still to say, though it is true without much conviction in his tone—

"It is quite impossible."

The Count rose to his feet.

"Let him be condemned to death," he said.

Before they could answer or agree a boy, who had been sitting at the top of the companion, put his head down the hatch and called out—

"I say—here is Nickolas Kamff! He is coming along the wharf and will be on board in a minute."

CHAPTER XXX.

Nickolas' Defence.

It was curious, the hush that followed the words cried down the companion way in the boy's shrill voice—strange to see how this band of desperate men arrayed against one of the mightiest of earth's governments, shuffled uneasy feet and glancing sideways like schoolboys at the approach of their master. The Count himself sat down with a hopeless gesture, as if feeling instinctively that he had no longer any right of leadership. Ivanovitch became very pale and crossed himself; Ignat, hugging his big ledger, lost his suavity for once; and Golovin fell to scratching his head with a quite remarkable vigor. Fred, looking at them all with scorn, for his own soul flamed within him at the news of the approach of his enemy, saw that only the young chief engineer retained his composure. And even his nonchalance seemed artificial and assumed as, leaning back in his chair with his hands in his pockets, he drawled out—

"Wha-at? Well, brothers, this is good news; it ought to save us very much trouble that he should come to us like this. The traitor who does not know we know his treachery."

At once there rose again from the group of men by the door that low murmuring sound so full of indescribable menace which they had uttered before. It was as though the word treachery, once it got itself uttered, swept away instantly all the patient endurance the ages have taught their race, and substituted therefor an unrestrained and impatient ferocity.

"Yes, treachery," they muttered to one another. "The traitor is coming," they whispered in each other's ears; and those who a few minutes before had bandied angry words, and had even scuffled together, now stood side by side exchanging glances of sinister sympathy and perfect understanding. "Treachery — traitor!" they whispered like the wind through the trees in the depths of a dark wood at night; and brooding over, and behind and through that murmur was another word all felt though none expressed it audibly.

The chief engineer stood up, the muscles on his pale face quivering painfully. Fred, watching him, experienced a desire to make a sketch of his face, so strangely strained did it seem; he struck Fred as looking like a coward keyed to some deed of heroism.

"Brothers," said the chief engineer abruptly, "all our work is undone and in Moscow our comrades die."

"All the same," observed Golovin, "if we had kept to my little bombs, of which you just put one down and then walk away—"

"Be quiet, you," interrupted old Ivanovitch, turning on him with a snarl so fierce that the unlucky Golovin actually jumped. "Brothers," said the old man quaveringly, "let us be prudent—I say, prudence——" his voice died away. "Oh, Nickolas, Nickolas," he burst out with a cry, "oh Nickolas, whom I trusted so."

"We will execute punishment on him," said the young engineer gloomily.

"It is only justice we desire," said the Count, and the word was caught up and went whispered in a sinister undertone from one mouth to another. "Justice, justice," they said, and saying that word meant another.

A heavy foot sounded on the topmost step of the companion-way, and, hearing it, all understood at once that Nickolas had come. To Fred it seemed as if they acted by instinct, for he could not see that anyone directed them. But some drew back and some moved forward, and while they left a clear passage into the saloon, yet their power and intention was obvious to close in instantly behind and bar all exit as soon as Nickolas should be safely within.

In another minute he appeared and stood in the doorway, looking proudly round. He was paler, perhaps, than usual, but no less handsome, and indeed the power of his individuality seemed heightened beyond the common, as if rising to an emergency. Taller by a head than any other man present, distinguished looking, something more than a touch of scorn apparent in his manner, he stood there very quietly, exactly as if he felt himself their natural leader and waited for their homage and obedience. Only Fred was aware that his eyes rested on him for a moment with a passing flicker in their calm depths; and though the young artist had an impression that in that second's glance there had been something like relief, he told himself he must be mistaken. At the side of Nickolas the thin and stooping students, blinking up at him from their short-sighted eyes, the bent and stunted peasants, the narrow-chested factory hands, who composed the crew, and who were drawing threateningly near about him, showed to small advantage; even those sitting round the table appeared dwarfed and mean before him. And even Fred, in whom a rage of hate burned so clearly, could not deny him a tribute of admiration. Golovin, like a goose, Ignat with his suavity reft from him, the Count hesitating and uncertain, Ivanovitch falling into his dotage with the ruin of his hopes, the scowling engineer now half afraid: there was not one of them could meet Nickolas' serene yet challenging glance. He stood with a curling lip as they were dumb and dared not accuse him, but behind him the men of the crew clustered darkly; and already Fred fancied he saw a knife flash here and there, or a hand thrust down into a bulging pocket.

Perhaps it was his quick artistic sense, keenly touched by the bright daring of the man who stood alone amidst his enemies; perhaps there was something that appealed to him in the contrast between Nickolas and the commoner, meaner forms surounding him and threatening him; or there may just have been that instinctive love of fair play that Englishmen like to imagine is especially characteristic of Englishmen. But from whatever obscure motive, the impulse proceeded Fred as he watched Nickolas and the darkly ominous cluster behind gathering for a rush, forgot his hate and said quickly:

"I say—look out. There's going to be a row."

Nickolas did not answer, but his quick glance showed so much surprise that Fred became astonished also. Was it his part to warn the man who had aimed at him so deadly a blow, straight at his honour and his love. The momentary sympathy he had had died, and a scowl of hate came over his face as Nickolas walked forward to the table.

He seemed quite calm and untroubled, though the atmosphere of hostility was intense enough almost to have been felt. When he spoke, his voice was clear and vigorous, full of decision and authority; and his manner and the Russian expression of greeting he used were rather of a superior towards acknowledged inferiors.

"Good day, children; how are you, boys?" he said as he looked slowly round.

But none wished him health in reply, and the silence grew heavier each moment.

Once again Nickolas looked slowly round the cabin, and then he gave a low, pleasant laugh of genuine amusement. Nothing could have surprised them more, and they began to look astonished and even uneasy. Without giving them time to recover, Nickolas began to talk in the same clear, calm voice of authority and command. He used both Russian and English, and also often employed a French phrase, nearly all those present understanding at least some French. His use of English seemed less natural, but anything of any importance he said in Russian he at once repeated in English; and, indeed, all those seated at the table, and one or two of the crew besides, had a very fair knowledge of that language.

"It appears that you are all assembled," he began. He glanced about him again, and for the first time seemed to notice the somewhat formal manner in which those sitting at the table were grouped there. "Why," he said with amusement, "it almost looks as if you were holding a meeting—it does indeed."

A kind of constrained and muffled murmur answered him with a note of threat and anger running through it, and at that he laughed again.

"I see that you are angry with me," he said, and there was more than a touch of mockery in his face as he appeared to wait to see if anyone would venture to voice the general rage against him. "Now, I am sorry about that," he continued. "You were not angly with me at Petersburg, though, I remember, when the general strike threatened to collapse and after a day and a night of ceaseless work I got it continued; nor were you angry with me when you asked me to meet the telegraphists and the postmen to persuade them to join you. Perhaps some of you who are here know how many other men in Russia the postal servants would have listened to. No doubt," he continued, his flexible tones changing to an ironic humility, "I cannot hope it should be remembered who gathered the people together on Red Sunday a year ago and showed at least so much front as to make the soldiers stay their slaughtering; and who—and who," he said, and now there was thunder in his voice, "who was it went alone to General Count Vogodkin and promised him that all the Baltic provinces should blaze by the Sunday if the Cossacks were not withdrawn by the Saturday? No doubt it was only a respite—yet I have been told it had its value."

"That is all very well," grumbled the young engineer, "only we are not here to talk about the past but the present."

Old Ivanovitch leaped to his feet, stammering and gesticulating, his hair, his eyes wild to madness, his bent and aged form suddenly straightened.

"The barricades are up in Moscow," he screamed. "Brother, where are the rifles?" and he spat in Nickolas' face.

There was a silence while Nickolas took out his handkerchief and slowly wiped his cheek. Then he leaned across the table, and though he stooped and Ivanovitch still stood upright, he seemed to tower immeasurably above him.

"Wretched old grandfather, that you are," he said. "Who are you to babble at me of treachery?" He lifted his hands in the air. "I am not the traitor," he said; "I am the betrayed. Oh, yes, I told Nobrikoff where the ship the Seven Sisters was. What of it? Who is there here dares question me?" His challenging glance went darting hither and thither, but no man answered him. "So," he said in a softer tone, "then I will defend myself since you do not accuse me. See now what I have done was not done without a reason, and when I said it, it was I who had been betrayed; I spoke the bare truth. For I have been lied to, deceived, kept in the darkness, left to blunder along as best I could. When at last I understood, I understood only in time to see that for the present at least—lost, lost, all lost." His voice had sunk lower and lower till it died almost away, and his head he had held so proudly drooped forward on his breast; he seemed like one who saw in the dim future disaster he knew not how to avoid. He was silent for a brief moment, and then addressing himself to the cowering old Ivanovitch who, after his outburst of rage, had sunk down again into his chair, shrinking before the man he had insulted. Nickolas began again "The barricades are up in Moscow, are they? Oh, a people blind and foolish; who will not follow and who cannot lead. Surely God has laid a curse upon the Russian people that always they should deliver themselves bound into the hands of their enemies."

He had spoken with a real passion and feeling the impression made by which was intensified by the spectacle of how his aged accuser now cowered and shrank before him. Some of the men looked at each other doubtfully, and hands lately thrust into bulging pockets were withdrawn to scratch puzzled heads. "That is all true enough," one man muttered; and another said, "My father was there when he went to his Excellency Count Vogodkin, and he told me all would have perished but for Father Nickolas—they all called him Father Nickolas there."

Nickolas was quick to note and take advantage of this slight reaction in his favor. No man is more easily moved by eloquence than the Russian, possibly because he so seldom has a chance either to use it or to hear it. And Nickolas spoke well. Again he reminded them of the past, and he asked them who there was to take his place. He spoke to them of the future, that future in which success lay, but success only to be attained by loyalty and patience, not by a violent turning on and rending their best friends. He told them rough, homely tales, current among the peasantry, giving them a new meaning and a new point; he roared again at their folly and disloyalty in doubting their leaders; and he kept insisting on his brief conversation with Nobrikoff till the slow and muddled brains of his hearers began half to believe that in this his conduct had been dictated solely by zeal for the cause of the Revolution. Then in words of fire he sketched for them the ultimate goal of a regenerated Russia towards which they were all progressing together; and softly and tenderly, till many of them wept, he spoke of those who had fallen in the struggle, and of those others, the women and the children, who suffered perhaps the most of all. Of all who heard him, perhaps the only one quite unaffected was Fred, who watched him with scorn and a malign hate, waiting his opportunity. Once and again Nickolas' glance returned to him, as if especially to note his attitude; and each time Fred returned the look steadily, with an expression which meant to say that he, at least, was not beguiled.

And yet, in a way, Fred was not sorry that these others were becoming detached from their attitude of hostility towards Nickolas that had threatened to give him his vengeance too easily. He felt he wished to match Nickolas as man to man, and as man to man to take payment for the debt owing to him. His thoughts wandered for a minute or two, and when he again listened, he found that Nickolas had changed the tenor of his speech, and was now at one time heaping reproaches on his listeners, and at another appealing for their sympathy. Also his roving glance seemed to rest more often upon Fred and for longer periods.

"What I have done, I have done," he was saying; "and, as I shall stand before God, when I look back I can see no wrong that I did wilfully. If I erred, I erred in blindness, a blindness deliberately imposed upon me. See, now, in what a position I was placed. A young girl was brought to me, and on her all the foundations of what we did were built, and on her young shoulders all our burden was laid. Brothers, I also am a man, and I pitied; for I did not dream that when I pitied, I sinned. I accepted her as a comrade, I desired to help her in return for the help she gave us; I wished that between us God should be the witness that all was truthful and fair dealing. Then within these last few days I have found out that her father whom we promised to save we could do nothing for, and that her sister, whom we promised to help also, was married to this man Nobrikoff."

There was a general stir and movement as Nickolas said this. The men looked at each other stupefied and exchanged hasty expressions of astonishment and dismay. To a good many of them this seemed somehow in some vague way to make all clear and prove Nickolas' innocence. He was quick to see his advantage.

"Yes," he said, "it was news to me—I see it was news to you also. Some knew, but they never told me, that the sister of this girl on whom all our hopes rested was married to the very man who had been specially sent over here to find out about us. You see the sort of management there has been?—you see how I have been kept in the dark? I did not know or dream; I went on in blindness, striving not only to do my best for her, to do my best not dreaming how I was being deceived. For no one told me—no one told me what I was doing in my ignorance."

He leaned across the table as he pronounced these last words with a deep and poignant emotion, and he fixed so intent a glance on Fred that with a start the young artist realized that this passionate and fiery defence was in reality addressed to him alone; that the speaker, who appeared to be defending himself to his comrades against a charge of treachery, was in truth speaking to him alone. Fred felt his face flush, and then go instantly pale again as he realized this. He sat more upright, and his eyes met Nickolas' direct as the Russian went on with his speech:

"Do not think I am ashamed," he said proudly, with his gestures to the men and his eyes upon Fred. "No; I am proud, for I knew no difficulty, I knew nothing of this marriage—do you hear? I knew not of its existence, and how can a man sin against something of whose very existence he is ignorant?"

(To be continued.)

The New Premier and His Young Wife

MR. HENRY H. ASQUITH — MRS. H. H. ASQUITH.

Herbert Henry Asquith, who is the new Premier of Great Britain, was born, in Yorkshire, September 12, 1852. He was educated at the City of He was educated at the City of London School and at Balliol College, Oxford, and became a barrister of Lincoln's Inn in 1876, and Queen's counsel in 1890.

Mr. Asquith was elected to parliament for East Fife as a liberal, in 1886, and was secretary of state for the home department from 1892 to 1895. He is a legal-minded, self-contained, calculating man, who though not a trained financier, made himself a real chancellor of the exchequer.

Mr. Asquith, whose first wife died in 1891, married in 1894 Emma Alice Margaret, daughter of Sir Charles Tennant, one of the famous Tennant sisters, who were leaders of intellectual society in London. She urged her husband, who soon gained front rank in the legal profession, to abandon it for politics, with the result that he has attained the highest prize within his reach.

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BELIEVE ST. JOHN MAN LOST WITH SHIP

Dexter Reid, One of the Crew of the Missing Castle Rock.

"The Glasgow sailing ship Castle Rock has now been posted at Lloyd's as "missing." The vessel left Sydney for Seattle last September, and had a crew of twenty-six men. The vessel is owned by James Crawford & Co. of Glasgow, and commanded by W. M. Jones of Liverpool. Among her crew is D. E. Reid, who gave his address as 28 Germain street."

The above clipping appeared in the St. John paper of May 4, and the mention of the crew referred to as residing at 28 Germain street was Dexter Elliott, a grandson of E. W. Elliott, proprietor of Elliott's hotel.

The item reproduced appeared in the shipping column and was unnoticed by the young man's relatives. Friends in Boston, however, saw it and cut it out and mailed it to Miss Julia Elliott, who received it this morning, giving her the first intimation of the disaster.

The young man was 19 years of age and was the only son of Capt. Reid, who was lost in his vessel, the barque Brazil, on the island of Johanna, on the west coast of Africa, about 17 years ago. The young man lost both parents when he was an infant, his mother dying when he was one year old and his father was lost the following year.

Since that time he had been cared by his aunt, Miss Julia Elliott, who brought him up and gave him a mother's care.

About a year ago he left here for the west on one of the homestead excursions, going to Broadview, then to Lethbridge, and finally to Seattle, where he must have shipped aboard the Castle Rock.

Up to the time he arrived at Seattle he wrote home regularly each week and his aunt was at a loss to know why he had not written during the past few months. It was not known that he had gone to sea until the sad news contained in the clipping was received.

Miss Elliott was almost prostrated by the shock. She had brought the lad up as her own son, and it was a severe blow to her to hear that he had been lost at sea. Many people in St. John will remember Reid, who was a manly fellow and had many friends here.

The following appeared in the Halifax Chronicle of May 11:

The recent "posting" of the British ship Castle Rock hopelessly overdue from Sydney or Seattle, will be costly not only to the underwriters but to the owners. Under the new Workingmen's Compensation Act, not only do the owners or underwriters have to pay the loss of these vessels, but they also have to meet the claims on account of those of the officers and crew who leave dependent relatives. The posting of a large vessel thus entails the loss of several thousand pounds in addition to the value of ship and cargo.

The master of the Castle Rock was Capt. H. Jones, of Liverpool, the mate, James Gilbert, of Banffshire; the boatswain, D. W. Greig, of London; and the second mate, D. Gower, of Old Kent Road, London.

What is said to be the largest telegraph circuit in the world is that between London and Teheran, the capital of Persia. It is 4,000 miles long and is divided into twelve sections.

N. S. FORESTERS WILLING FOR ADEQUATE RATES

High Court Declares Old Members Should Not Be Treated Harshly on Account of Former Sacrifices.

Halifax, N. S., May 13.—The high court of Independent Foresters of Nova Scotia at a meeting tonight practically accepted the proposition of Supreme Chief Ranger Stevenson, made by him the day before, that higher rates must be paid by members who enrolled previous to 1899. They qualified their consent to this, however, in the following resolution which was almost unanimously adopted:

"This high court approves of adequate rates; at the same time having due regard to the peculiar position of the old members, the real founders of the order, who made great sacrifices in its behalf and whose cost contributions in the way of charter and initiation fees and otherwise averaged greatly higher than present corresponding charges, as new members are now nearly all brought in through courts already established. In view of which be suggested a substantial modification of present proposals regarding old members rates."

J. A. Grierson, K. C., Weymouth, was elected high chief ranger.

SEVEN MINERS KILLED BY EXPLOSION

Wilkes Barre, Pa., May 12.—Seven mine workers were instantly killed and more than a dozen injured this afternoon in an explosion in the Mount Lookout Colliery of the Temple Coal and Iron Company, at Wyoming, near here.

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