

offered by the river. Nothing of real importance can, of course, be learned from a casual steamer trip, but Hagan seemed to think otherwise, for he was always either watching through his glasses or asking apparently artless questions of passengers or passing deckhands. Again a sailor seemed disposed to be communicative; he pointed out more than one monster in steel, red raw with surface rust, and gave particulars of a completed power which would have surprised the Admiralty Superintendent. They would not, however, have surprised Mr. Cary, in whose ingenious brain they had been conceived. This second trip, like the first, was declared by Dawson to have been a great success. "Did you know me?" he asked

"I was a clean-shaven naval doctor, about as unlike the army colonel of the first trip as a pigeon is unlike a gamecock. Hagan is off to London to-night by the North-Western. There are two copies of your Notes. One is going by Edinburgh and the east coast, and another by the Midland. Hagan has the original masterpiece. I will look after him and leave the two other messengers to my men. I have been on to the Yard by phone, and have arranged that all three shall have passports for Holland. The two copies shall reach the Kaiser, bless him, but I really must have Hagan's set of Notes for my Museum."

"And what will become of Hagan?" asked Cary.

"Come and see," said Mr. Dawson.

Dawson entertained Cary at dinner in a private room at the Station Hotel, waited upon by one of his own confidential men. "Nobody ever sees me," he observed with much satisfaction, "though I am everywhere." (I suspect that Dawson is not without his little vanities.) "Except in my office and with people whom I know well, I am always some one else. The first time I came to your house I wore uniform, and the second time looked like a gas inspector. You saw only the real Dawson. When one has got the passion for the chase in one's blood, one cannot bide for long in a stuffy office. As I have a jewel of an assistant, I can always escape and follow up my own victims. This man Hagan is a black heartless devil. Don't waste your sympathy on him, Mr. Cary. He took money from us quite lately to betray the silly asses of Sinn Feiners, and now, thinking us hoodwinked, is after more money from the Kaiser. He is of the type that would sell his own mother and buy a mistress with the money. He's not worth your pity. We use him and his like for just so long as they can be useful, and then the jaws of the trap close. By letting him take those faked Notes we have done a fine stroke for the Navy and for the Yard, and for Bill Dawson. We have got into close touch with four new German agents here and two more down south. We shan't seize them yet; just keep them hanging on and use them. That's the game. I am never anxious about an agent when I know him and can keep him watched. Anxious, bless you; I love him like a cat loves a mouse. I've had some spies on my string ever since the war began; I wouldn't have them touched or worried for the world. Their correspondence tells me everything, and if a letter to Holland which they haven't written slips in sometimes, it's useful, very useful, as useful almost as your faked Notes."

HALF an hour before the night train was due to leave for the South, Dawson, very simply but effectively changed in appearance—for Hagan knew by sight the real Dawson—led Cary to the middle sleeping-coach on the train. "I have had Hagan put in No. 5," he said, "and you and I will take Nos. 4 and 6. No. 5 is an observation berth; there is one fixed up for us on this sleeping-coach. Come in here." He pulled Cary into No. 4, shut the door, and pointed to a small wooden knob set a few inches below the luggage rack. "If one unscrews that knob one can see into the next berth, No. 5. No. 6 is fitted in the same way, so that we can take No. 5 from both sides. But, mind you, on no account touch those knobs until the train is moving fast and until you have switched out the lights. If No. 5 was dark

when you opened the peep-hole, a ray of light from your side would give the show away. And unless there was a good deal of vibration and rattle in the train you might be heard. Now cut away to No. 6, fasten the door, and go to bed. I shall sit up and watch, but there is nothing for you to do."

Hagan appeared in due course, was shown into No. 5 berth, and the train started. Cary asked himself whether he should go to bed as advised or sit up reading. He decided to obey Dawson's orders, but to take a look in upon Hagan before settling down for the journey. He switched off his lights, climbed upon the bed, and carefully unscrewed the little knob which was like the one shown to him by Dawson. A



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beam of light stabbed the darkness of his berth, and putting his eye with some difficulty to the hole—one's nose gets so confoundedly in the way—he saw Hagan comfortably arranging himself for the night. The spy had no suspicion of his watchers on both sides, for, after settling himself in bed, he unwrapped a flat parcel and took out a bundle of blue papers, which Cary at once recognized as the originals of his stolen Notes. Hagan went through them—he had put his suit-case across his knees to form a desk—and carefully made marginal jottings. Cary, who had often tried to write in trains, could not but admire the man's laborious patience. He painted his letters and figures over and over again, in order to secure distinctness, in spite of the swaying of the train, and frequently stopped to suck the point of his pencil.

"I suppose," thought Cary, "that Dawson yonder is just gloating over his prey, but for my part I feel an utterly contemptible beast. Never again will I set a trap for even the worst of my fellow-creatures." He put back the knob, went to bed, and passed half the night in extreme mental discomfort and the other half in snatching brief intervals of sleep. It was not a pleasant journey.

Dawson did not come out of his berth at Euston until after Hagan had left the station in a taxicab, much to Cary's surprise, and then was quite ready, even anxious, to remain for breakfast at the hotel. He explained his strange conduct. "Two of my men," said he, as he wallowed in tea and fried soles—one cannot get Dover soles in the weary North—"who travelled in ordinary compartments, are after Hagan in two taxis, so that if one is delayed, the other will keep touch. Hagan's driver also has had a police warning, so that our spy is in a barbed-wire net. I shall hear before very long all about him."

Cary and Dawson spent the morning at the hotel with a telephone beside them; every few minutes the bell would ring, and a whisper of Hagan's movements steal over the wires into the ears of the spider Dawson. He reported progress to Cary with ever-increasing satisfaction.

"Hagan has applied for and been granted a passport to Holland, and has booked a passage in the boat which leaves Harwich to-night for the Hook. We will go with him. The other two spies, with the copies, haven't turned up yet, but they are all right. My men will see them safe across into Dutch territory, and make sure that no blundering Customs

officer interferes with their papers. This time the way of transgressors shall be very soft. As for Hagan, he is not going to arrive."

"I don't quite understand why you carry on so long with him," said Cary, who, though tired, could not but feel intense interest in the perfection of the police system and in the serene confidence of Dawson. The Yard could, it appeared, do unto the spies precisely what Dawson chose to direct.

"Hagan is an American citizen," explained Dawson. "If he had been a British subject I would have taken him at Euston—we have full evidence of the burglary, and of the stolen papers in his suit-case. But as he is a damned unbenevolent neutral, and the American Government is very touchy, we must prove his intention to sell the papers to Germany. Then we can deal with him by secret court-martial as a spy detected in the act of spying. The journey to Holland will prove this intention. Hagan has been most useful to us in Ireland, and now in the North of England and in Scotland, but he is too enterprising and too daring to be left any longer on the string. I will draw the ends together at the Hook."

"I did not want to go to Holland," said Cary to me, when telling his story. "I was utterly sick and disgusted with the whole cold-blooded game of cat and mouse, but the police needed my evidence about the Notes and the burglary, and did not intend to let me slip out of their clutches. Dawson was very civil and pleasant, but I was in fact as tightly held upon his string as was the wretched Hagan. So I went on to Holland with that quick-change artist, and watched him come on board the steamer at Parkeston Quay, dressed as a

rather German-looking commercial traveller, eager for war commissions upon smuggled goods. This sounds absurd, but his get-up seemed somehow to suggest the idea. Then I went below. Dawson always kept away from me whenever Hagan might have seen us together."

THE passage across to Holland was free from incident; there was no sign that we were at war, and Continental traffic was being carried serenely on, within easy striking distance of the German submarine base at Zeebrugge. The steamer had drawn in to the Hook beside the train, and Hagan was approaching the gangway, suit-case in hand. The man was on the edge of safety; once upon Dutch soil, Dawson could not have laid hands upon him. He would have been a neutral citizen in a neutral country, and no English warrant would run against him. But between Hagan and the gangway suddenly interposed the tall form of the ship's captain; instantly the man was ringed about by others, and before he could say a word or move a hand he was gripped hard and led across the deck to the steamer's chart-house. Therein sat Dawson, the real, undisguised Dawson, and beside him sat Richard Cary. Hagan's face, which two minutes earlier had been glowing with triumph and with the anticipation of German gold beyond the dreams of avarice, went white as chalk. He staggered and gasped as one stabbed to the heart, and dropped into a chair. His suit-case fell from his relaxed fingers to the floor.

"Give him a stiff brandy-and-soda," directed Dawson, almost kindly, and when the victim's color had ebbed back a little from his overcharged heart, and he had drunk deep of the friendly cordial, the detective put him out of pain. The game of cat and mouse was over.

"It is all up, Hagan," said the detective gently. "Face the music and make the best of it, my poor friend. This is Mr. Richard Cary, and you have not for a moment been out of our sight since you left London for the North four days ago."

When I had completed the writing of his story I showed the MS. to Richard Cary, who was pleased to express a general approval. "Not at all bad, Coplestone," said he, "not at all bad. You have clothed my dry bones in real flesh and blood. But you have missed what to me is the outstanding feature of the