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A QUEEN UNCROWNED

—OR—
THE STORY IN THE LONE INN.

CHAPTER XI.

"Ice extinguishes fire, and one lunatic is enough at a time. I came here to bid you farewell, as I am going away to-morrow morning, and will not see you again; so, if you have no objection, I will sit down till you have ranted yourself back to your sober senses, and then we will part as decent Christians should."

She drew an elbow-chair up to the fire, poked it up until it burned out in a great sheet of flame, and then putting two little slippers feet up on the fender, she leaned her elbow on the arm of the chair, dropped her cheek on her hand, yawned wearily, and looked in the fire.

Disbrowe was like one insane for a few moments, and burst out in a fierce tirade, in which "cruel, heartless, unwomanly" were among the mildest epithets applied to her, but she listened to all as if he were a parrot repeating a lesson. At last he got exhausted, and flung himself into a seat, like a sulky lion.

"Well, are you done?" she said, looking up and yawning behind her finger tips. "I want to go to bed."

"Go, then!" he said, bitterly. "But, won't you say good-by first?"

"With all my heart! I never said it to any one more gladly!"

"Well, that's pleasant to hear, and very polite on your part, too. I forgive you for all the names you called me, as I believe I gave you a blowing-up the other evening and it's only fit for fat. So good-by, Cousin Alfred."

She got up and held out her hand. "Good-by," he said coldly, just touching the tips of her white jeweled fingers.

"Oh! this will never do! Shake hands, cousin."

"I had rather be excused. I only shake hands with my friends."

"And I am never to be placed in that category. Well, I should not mind that much; but I hate to part in anger with any one I may never see again. Come! don't display such an unchristian feeling, my dear Alfred! Do as you would be done by, you know; and if that does not move you, remember that pathetic little canticle of the excellent and prosy

Watts, beginning: 'Let dogs delight to bark and bite,' and just apply that touching passage. Your little hands were never made to tear each other's eyes' to our case, and I am sure it will move you, since it might move Mount Vesuvius, or any other fiery excrescence."

"We are too civilized for anything of that sort, my dear cousin," he said bitterly. "We only tear each other's hearts."

"Well, being children of a large growth, it is to be expected we should improve in the art of torture. But Cousin Alfred, I am tired of this fencing; our swords may slip and one of us get a hard blow. Besides, unromantic as the confession sounds, I am dreadfully sleepy. Once more farewell, and God speed you, my dear cousin."

Her voice faltered a little. It is hard to say good-by even to an everyday acquaintance whom we like; but oh! very, very hard to one we love! He saw her lip quiver, and it moved him as nothing else could have done. His anger and bitterness all vanished and he was on his feet in an instant; holding both her hands in his, and saying, passionately:

"Jacquetta, Jacquetta! my first, my last, my only love, good-by, and God bless you! I have been mad to talk to you as I did. My dearest love, say you forgive me before we part."

"I forgive you. Let me go."

Still he held her. A fire was rising in his eyes, a flush was rising in his face. She looked up, and quailed in fear before that glance.

"Let me go!" she cried, wildly; "let me go, sir. What do you mean?"

"Jacquetta!"

"Are you mad, Captain Disbrowe? Let me go, I command you!" she cried with a passionate stamp of her foot.

"Jacquetta!"

With a fierce cry, she wrenched her hands from his grasp, and fled to the door. She stood there for one moment like a wounded stag at bay, her eyes blazing, her face colorless, panting, frightened, defiant. He did not move; he stood like a statue.

"Once more, farewell, and bon voyage!" she said, waving her hand.

And the next moment the sparkling little vision was gone, and Captain Alfred Disbrowe was alone.

CHAPTER XII.

That same night, three hours earlier, there "might have been seen," if there had been anybody out to see, which there wasn't, an ancient mariner plodding his way along the lonesome road between the Mermaid Tavern and the lone inn. The night was dark, and the road was bad, but Captain Nick Tempest had a supreme contempt for muddy roads and the clerk of the weather; so, with his hands in his pockets, and a plug of tobacco in his mouth, his tarpaulin cocked on one side of his head, he plunged manfully along, whistling "Barbara Allen," as he went, by jerks, with long pauses between the bars.

Captain Tempest was thinking—which he was not in the habit of doing as a general thing, being more given to acting. Old Grizzle's manner the night before had implied something serious; and he felt intensely curious to know what revelations she had to make to-night. That it was something important, he felt convinced—for Grizzle was not a lady to make a mystery of trifles; and moreover, she had contrived to have her two hopeful sons, Kit and Blaise, and her equally-hopeful brother, old Till, sent out of the way, that she and the commander of the Fly-by-Night might hold their nocturnal tete-a-tete undisturbed.

Not being blessed with a very vivid imagination, however, old Nick found the nut too hard to crack, and so wisely resolved not to strain his teeth trying it, but to wait until time and his fair friends should see fit to extract the kernel.

Having, with much pain and labor, come to this philosophical conclusion at last, Captain Nick steered contentedly along, with that rolling motion peculiar to marine gentlemen, like a ship on a uneasy swell. Plunging resolutely through the wet level where the old house stood, he reached it at last, and, giving a tremendous kick, began yelling like a whipped cur. Evidently this was a sort of signal, for the sound of bolts withdrawing, followed instantly. The door swung open, and the pleasant face of old Grizzle Howlet beamed on him by the light of the lantern.

"Good-night, my chick-a-leary! Punctuality is the soul of time," said the captain, in a hazy recollection of some proverb. "How do you find yourself this morning, my sweet pet? Blooming and beautiful as the Goddess of Morning, as usual, I see."

"There was a time when you thought me blooming enough," said the woman, in a harsh voice, as she secured the door; "when you would have shot any other man for even looking at me!"

"Ah! every one is a fool some time in their life," said the captain, flinging himself into a chair before the kitchen fire and stretching out his legs to the genial heat. "Not that I would insinuate I made a fool of myself in that blessed and verdant time of youth; for you are a second Helen, for whom another Troy might be lost. 'Great is Diana of the Ephesians!' but greater still is Grizzle of New Jersey! Got any beer?"

"Yes; take it," said the woman, ungraciously, pointing to a jug and a pewter pot on the table. "There's a pipe, too, if you want it."

"It's just exactly what I do want. Ah! that's prime stuff!" said the captain, smacking his lips. "I reminds me of the bottles of 'alf-and'alf we used to drink in the greenroom of Old Drury, between the scenes. Do you remember those blissful times, my beauty?"

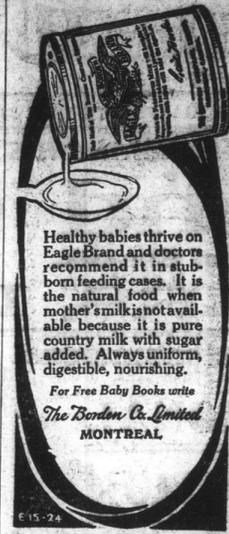
"Yes, better than I want to," said Grizzle, almost savagely, as she sat on a low stool, and with her elbow on her knees, and her chin between her hands, looked gloomily in the fire. "I'm not likely to look at you and forget them."

"And here's a han' my trusty friend, and gie's a han' o' thine. We'll ta' a right gude-willie wauch for the days o' auld lang syne."

sang the captain, jocosely, as he resumed his seat, and leisurely proceeded to fill his pipe.

"That's so, old friend. Ah! those were the days!"

"I am glad you think so well of them. You save me cause to remember them after another fashion." (To be continued.)



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The Crow's Nest Pass Disagreement

Ottawa, Ont., Sept. 16. (By Canadian Press).—Complaints of discrimination resulting from the restoration of rates provided in the Crow's Nest Pass agreement will come before the Board of Railway Commissioners of Canada for hearing on Wednesday, Sept. 17. The complaints are not localized in any particular province or section of the Dominion. British Columbia, through its Premier, Hon. John Oliver, will voice its complaint, the eastern Maritime Provinces will have theirs to make, and Ontario and the Prairie Provinces will also be represented in what promises to be a long drawn out battle over railway rates.

The Crow's Nest Pass agreement which has been a fruitless source of discussion on the floor of the House of Commons, came into existence in the year 1897. Then, in consideration of the granting of a subsidy in connection with the construction of a line from Lethbridge, Alberta, through the Rockies to a point in British Columbia, the C.P.R. agreed to grant rate reductions on certain east and westbound traffic. Eastbound rates on grain and flour were reduced under the agreement, while reductions in westbound traffic covered such conditions as green and fresh fruits, coal oil, cordage and iron wire, agricultural implements, iron, wire, window glass, building and roofing paper, paints and oils, livestock, etc.

The agreement was suspended during the war to permit a general increase in railway rates consequent on a wage increase granted to railway employees. Two years ago, however, Crow's Nest rates on eastbound grain and flour were restored, the westbound rates being held in suspension until July 6th last. On that date, in spite of opposition by the railways who appeared before the Privy Council to ask for a continuation of the suspension for at least another year, the full agreement again went into effect.

With the coming into force of the rates provided for in the agreement trouble arose. The C.P.R. took the ground that the rates provided for in the agreement applied only to lines in existence in 1897. The Canadian National became involved through the necessity of meeting Crow's Nest rates at competing points. The city of Brantford, Ontario, complained that it was dis-

criminated against in the rate on agricultural implements because, under the agreement, the neighboring cities of Hamilton and Toronto received a lower rate on westbound commodities. British Columbia insisted that if green and fresh fruits westbound were to receive the advantage of reduced freight rates, Okanagan Valley fruits westbound were entitled to the same treatment. The Railway Commission became the recipient of protests against these alleged discriminations, and the decision to hold sittings in Ottawa and thence them out was made.

The attitude of the railways is summed up in the statement that last year, in their western region there was an operating deficit of over two million dollars. Those who ask for the widest possible application of the Crow's Nest Pass commodity rates show a utter disregard of the effect that such application would have on Canadian railways. It is claimed. They quote an opinion of Sir Henry Drayton, former chief of the railway commission in support of the contention that the reductions provided for in the agreement apply only to the tariffs of 1897.

The Ottawa hearing is necessary, in the first instance, so that the Commission may ascertain exactly the nature of the complaints which are being made and arrive at a clear understanding of the discrimination claimed. Apparently the point at issue, the question of whether the agreement applies only to the lines in existence in 1897 or not, is a legal one which may, ultimately, have to be settled by the Supreme Court of Canada. The hearing is certain to bring to the Capital a number of prominent counsel.



Civil Aviation in Canada

OTTAWA, Ont., Sept. 15.—(By Canadian Press).—A comprehensive report dealing with the progress of civil aviation in Canada during 1923 has just been issued by the Department of National Defence. The report also mentions the civil operations undertaken by the Royal Canadian Air Force.

According to the report "the year 1923 saw a considerable increase in commercial aviation as applied to forestry work and photography in Eastern Canada. The operations in the provinces of Ontario and Quebec, in connection with forest fire patrols and the preparation of forest inventories by sketching and photography, hitherto carried out by the Dominion Government on a repayment or part payment basis, were, in the spring of the year, taken over by the provincial forest services in their entirety. The Dominion Government, feeling that this work had passed beyond the experimental stage, withdrew their forces with the concurrence of the provincial authorities, who then arranged for the necessary flying after contract with commercial aviation firms.

"During 1923 there has been no development of passenger, mail or express traffic in Canada. The difficulty of operating such services is very great in a country where large centres of population are few and, in many instances, separated by wide tracts of unsettled territory. Development along these lines can best be undertaken in Europe and the United States where the traffic is heavier, the demand for express services greater and the communities better able to bear the cost.

"The aircraft industry, dormant since the Armistice, has been revived in Canada, and there now exist at least two commercial establishments where aircraft can be built complete. The manufacture of propellers has also been started, though as yet no work on aircraft engines is being done in the Dominion. It is not expected that this branch of the industry will develop until the demand for aircraft engines is much greater than it is at present.

"The aircraft industry is now alive to the possibilities and there is no doubt that the next year will see the production of aircraft designed specially for forestry work in this country. The perfection of these types will probably take a year or two. Every effort must be made to ensure progress in their development. If this is done there is no doubt that efficient, economical and easily operated, machines will be available within a year or two to meet the needs of the foresters of Canada."

There were in Canada, 69 licensed aircraft, and the total licensed, civil, air personnel in 1923 was 806, compared with 104 in 1922. Five persons were killed in aircraft accidents during the year, two pilots and three passengers. Hours of flying for civil government purposes during the year totalled 1,422.

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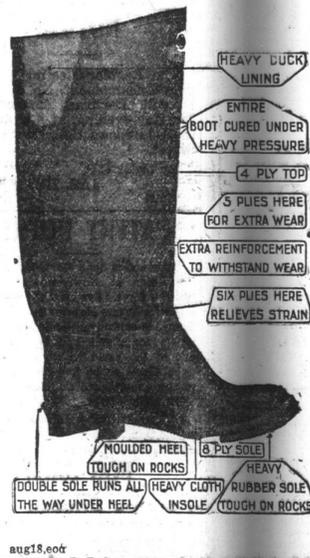
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