POOR DOCUMENT

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# THE LAW OF THE LAND

By FRED M. WHITE

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CHAPTER XXV—(Continued.)

"Not more than half an hour," Dick protested. "Come along, Ralph."

Ralph suffered himself to be led away like a child who is bewildered yet obedient. He would have liked to ask a number of questions, but Charteris did not give him the opportunity.

"Look here," he began, "I daresay you regard all this as a lot of fussy nonsense to make it look as if I were exceptionally clever. As a matter of fact, it is nothing of the kind. I have worked out the whole puzzle very patiently and thoughtfully, and every card in the game is played for your sake. I am going to save you, and save your happiness as well—I want to make that point quite clear. Fond as I am of this kind of thing, you must give me credit on this occasion for sinking all amour propre solely to benefit Enid and yourself and save you from lifelong unhappiness. When you first explained your position to me, when you came and told me that you were the murderer of Stephen Holt—"

"I told you the truth," Ralph replied. "Good heavens! Do you suppose that I am so insane as to try to palm off a delusion like that upon you? Did I not see him lying there as I had struck him down with that paper-cutter? Did I not note that pool of blood upon the carpet? Why, there is not a single detail of that lurid scene but stands out in my mind as clear as if the full light of day still played upon it. I can see it now as vividly as a flash of lightning lightens up a dark place. I have not even forgotten the spots of blood on the flowers and in the centre of the table. And you told me even then that there was a way out of it, that my good name would be cleared so that I might hold up my head before honest men once more. And I didn't believe you, Dick. Even now it seems asking too much of one's credulity. I regarded it merely as an attempt on your part to soothe a man whom you believed to have suddenly become the victim of acute mania. Even as it is—"

"I swear to you I am not playing with your feelings. I have never done so from the first. Cannot you trust me? But, indeed, you must trust me whether you like it or not, seeing it is for such a little time longer. I'll tell you what I want to bring about, for half measures will not satisfy me. For your sake, to say nothing of Enid, this thing must be done. My ambition is to make the very people who are conspiring against you stand up and proclaim your innocence. I even want you to be cleared in Enid's eyes. It is a case of diamond cut diamond, and I flatter myself that I've got the master card. It is lucky that Ford should happen to be a friend of mine, as it simplifies matters. Still, I daresay we could have done without him. Now tell me—"

"No, first tell me something," Ralph protested. "I take it that in some way you are plotting against Barca. At any rate, I can see that you are keeping him very much in the dark. In that case, knowing you to be an invalid, why did he permit you to walk here at this time of night?"

"My dear fellow, he doesn't know. He thinks I'm asleep in the dining room, and that you will come in by and by and put me to bed. He has gone off to attend to what he calls his experiment. We'll see what that experiment is presently. You shall fetch him down, and the play will begin. But first a few questions."

"Fifty if you like," Ralph replied. "You have stretched my curiosity to breaking point."

"Well, it will soon be gratified. I sent you a telegram just before I left London telling you that Barca was going to see you. I knew he would come, and he did. In that telegram I warned you to do anything that Barca asked you. I can't call spirits from the vasty deep, and all that kind of thing, but I can hazard a guess what Barca wanted. By means of a threat he managed to get £3,000 out of you."

"Wrong," Ralph said grimly. "The amount of the cheque is £2,000 more."

"Oh, well. That was because he needed a bit for himself. I will tell you presently what he needed the first-named sum for. As a matter of fact, Barca got the money out of you by suggesting that he could say a great deal more if he liked as to the Stephen Holt business; only I suppose he put it in a clever way."

"He put it in a very clever way indeed," Ralph explained. "He put it in such a clever form that I could take hold of nothing and yet we perfectly understood each other. Would you like to hear what happened?"

"My dear fellow, that is precisely what I am leading up to. I want you to tell me what took place between you whilst it is fresh in your memory. Only cut it short, for it will be daylight before long. On the whole, this is the most exciting twenty-four hours that I ever remember. But go ahead."

Ralph briefly recited Barca's ingenious plot for a story, and, as he spoke, Dick Charteris listened with a grin on his face, and now and then a chuckle of deep enjoyment.

CHAPTER XXVI.

Catching the Trout.

The recital came to an end at length and there was no more to say. With a queer look on his face, Dick strode off to the house. They reached the dining room undiscovered, and here Charteris took his place on the couch again.

"Positively we are just about to begin," he said gaily. "Go upstairs and fetch that choice rascal down. Tell him that you found me asleep when you came in and don't know whether I am to be aroused or not. Then he will have to come down and give an opinion on my interesting case. Go along."

A moment later and Ralph was knocking at Barca's door. He heard something like the sound of a scuffle within, then the door was unlocked and Barca looked out. He seemed to be irritated, for his manner was curt and forbidding. Ralph could see that he had not yet removed any of his clothing.

"I'm sorry to trouble you," he said; "but when I got back Charteris was asleep in the dining room. Shall I wake him and put him to bed or leave him where he is? I wish you would come down and look at him."

Barca muttered something about being continually disturbed in his experiments, but he followed Ralph into the dining room, where Charteris was sitting up very wide-awake. Save for the gleam in his eyes, he showed no signs of excitement. He professed himself better and hoped that Ralph had not unduly alarmed his people.

"Sit down a minute," he suggested. "I am going to get Kingsmill to put me to bed presently. Do you know, you fellows, I have had a most curious dream. Perhaps the knock on the head upset me, but really I had a most vivid dream. It was all about Stephen Holt."

Barca started slightly. There was a queer ring in Charteris's voice that riveted his attention. He glanced keenly at the speaker.

"Other people's dreams make uninteresting narratives as a rule," Barca remarked.

"But I assure you this one won't," Dick said in a tone of conviction. "Really, I won't keep you very long. . . . . I dreamt that I was asleep in the corner of the room and that Holt came in. There was nobody else here besides Holt and Kingsmill, and they began to quarrel over some letters that seemed a source of annoyance to Kingsmill. Holt did not possess the letters, at least, he hadn't them on his person, or so it seemed to me, but said he could lay his hands on them whenever he liked. And those letters had been written from time to time by our host here to Mrs. Lingen. In other words, to put it plainly, Stephen Holt was trying to blackmail Kingsmill on the strength of those letters. The end of the whole thing was a violent quarrel, and when I looked again Holt was dead at Kingsmill's feet with a nasty stab in his throat that streamed the floor with blood."

"I don't see any blood," Barca said, with a strange half laugh. "He would be a clever man who could get that stain out of the carpet."

"He would indeed," Dick agreed. "But it was all arranged in my dreams. Naturally our friend here was aghast at what he had done and stood considering his position. At last, it seemed to me, that he had made up his mind what to do. Nobody had seen Holt come into the house; he had entered by an open window. Therefore his body should remain where it was and be found by the servants in the morning. It was rather a silly thing for Kingsmill to decide upon, but so it was. In my dream I saw Kingsmill go to his room to pass the time till morning as best he could. In my dream I waited to see what was going to happen next. It was some little time before the drama proceeded. Then there looked into the room a face, an evil face, Barca, full of wickedness, cunning and guile. The owner of the face crept over to the side of the body, slipped down and felt the wounded man's pulse."

"You said a dead man just now," Barca exclaimed hoarsely.

"Did I? Well, there is no accounting for dreams. As a matter of fact, Holt was not dead. A strong cordial revived him. And all the time in my dream, I could see into the back of the mind of the man with the evil face. Here was his scheme. He was going to spirit the body of Holt away and so prey on the mind of Kingsmill until the latter was almost mad with doubt and anxiety. Reduced to despair by remorse and by the maddening mystery, he would have become as clay in the hands of the evil-faced man. I saw that mind stand out before me like a mirror. Then I saw the body vanish. But that dreadful tell-tale stain was on the carpet. How was that to be got rid of? Well, the hardest part of it all was in reality the easiest. There were other carpets in the great attic very like this one; in fact, practically identical. I saw the carpet changed, it was not a great deal of bother, and—"

A sudden cry broke from Ralph; the flood of illumination alone blinded him. It was only for an instant, and then he was himself again. Barca did not seem to notice the outbreak—his eyes were fixed with vivid intentness on Charteris' face. The latter was telling his story with features that were almost expressionless.

"Now here is the part where the practical side of the dream comes in," Dick resumed. "You may say that it is only in fiction that one can juggle with priceless Persian carpets in this fashion. But here such a thing is possible. I have examined the attic, and they are filled with treasures of the same kind. You know the story of the epicure and his two turbots. Somebody had sent him a noble pair of fish. He arranged to have them both cooked for his guests and one of the waiters was to drop the dish. He did so, and the plat was ruined. In a lordly way he called for another fish, and this established his reputation for lavish hospitality for ever. It is the same with those carpets. Inconceivable as it may seem, there are others upstairs just like this. And the man with the evil face changed them. Now it is not a little odd that when I was looking over the attic yesterday I found a carpet neatly folded up and put under a huge carved bedstead. On one side of the carpet was a great red stain. Perhaps this is a curious coincidence, perhaps that red stain caused my dream, but there it is for you to decide."

"It does not seem to lead to much," Barca said.

"Perhaps not. But it might. My dream is not yet complete. It went farther than that. It went as far as to reveal the man with the evil face demanding £3,000, no, £5,000 from my friend Kingsmill, and getting it."

"Did you even hear that circumstance, too?" Barca sneered.

"Yes, I did. And I shall be glad if you will ask your questions in a less offensive manner. You may be out of sympathy with my dreams, Mr. Barca, but at any rate you might pay me the compliment of believing what I say. I dreamt a great deal more than that, but you do not tempt me to proceed."

"I beg your pardon," Barca exclaimed. "I—I am just a little tired tonight. And if there is anything further in the matter that you may have to say to me, why—"

The speaker shrugged his shoulders. He appeared to treat the thing as a jest, but he could not disguise the restless anxiety of his eyes.

"It is getting very late, I admit," Charteris went on. "And perhaps I have stretched your patience a little too far. It must be nearly daylight. Will you look out of the window and see, Ralph? I fancied there was a gleam behind the blinds."

Dick gave Ralph a significant glance as he spoke. The latter realized that the time had come now to give Ford the signal. He was only too glad of an excuse to turn his own white, agitated face away. An idea had occurred to him, an idea so wild that he strove to put it out of his mind.

"It is getting light," he said in shaky tones. "Already the dawn is coming."

"And the blessed daylight," Dick said. "It is going to be a glorious day for some of us. But Mr. Barca wants to ask me a question."

"Just one," Barca laughed unsteadily. "We have heard all about the magic carpet, which suggests the 'Arabian Nights' and all the occult wonders of the East, but there is something else. The practice of the man with evil face was well done, and so was his ingenious scheme for breaking down the nerve of our host here and making him a mortal coward as regards money. But what about the body of the unfortunate Stephen Holt?"

There was something more than a query in the question, there was a direct challenge. Dick sat up on the couch and looked about him. Already he could hear the sound of footsteps crunching the gravel near the house. Ford was not far off. There was time to play with Barca for just a little longer.

"I do not pretend to recollect everything," he said. "You see it is impossible for even a dreamer to be in two places at once. What became of the body is a mystery. But I daresay if a placed my occult knowledge into the hands of the police it is just possible they might be able to follow up the clue and——"

Dick paused discreetly, for Ford stood in the doorway. He had his official manner on now, and apologized for his entry like this.

"We found the door open," he said. "I am very sorry to trouble you, Mr. Kingsmill, but I have a warrant with me for the arrest of—"

"The climax to the story," Charteris cried. "A fitting end to the drama. Now, Barca, where are we going to look for the body?"

Barca rose to his feet and walked towards the door. His face was very white now; his easy manner had entirely vanished.

"I am quite unable to say," he muttered. "It seems to me that I am de trop here; this seems to be a private matter between Captain Ford and Kingsmill. If you will allow me, I will go to my room at once."

"You will pardon me," Ford said, "but this is a matter in which we are all interested. I may have a question or two to put to you, Dr. Barca. I hold a warrant for the arrest of Mr. Stephen Holt on a charge of robbery from the house of a gentleman called Vandernort, the warrant came into my hands a few hours ago. And I am told that Mr. Holt is to be found somewhere near here; in fact, in this house."

"That is impossible," Ralph cried. "Stephen Holt is not in a position to—"

"You are interrupting Captain Ford," Dick said curtly. "Let him finish."

"In this house," Ford proceeded, "I have reason to believe that my information is absolutely correct. I shall be glad if you will all stay here whilst I make a thorough search of the premises. It may take some time to find the particular room where Mr. Holt is hiding, but in case I do not—"

"It will take no time at all," said Dick, as he rose to his feet. "As a matter of fact, I can save you a great deal of trouble. I have already had the pleasure of a glance at the form of Mr. Stephen Holt this evening. You will find him at the present moment comfortably ensconced in Dr. Barca's bedroom!"

CHAPTER XXVII.

Barca Climbs Down.

Ralph stood listening, but utterly unable to speak and, indeed, hardly comprehending what was going on. During the past few hours he had vaguely expected something to turn up in his favor, but had not anticipated anything so startling and dramatic as this. He glanced hesitatingly at Charteris, who, undoubtedly, was master of the situation. A sudden change had come over Dick. He had lost all his listless manner; the affection of simplicity had departed. His face was hard and set, his eyes alert and gleaming.

Barca was the first to remember himself. He moved in the direction of the door, and asked to be allowed to pass. The matter had nothing to do with him, he said.

"I beg your pardon," Ford exclaimed. "It seems to me that it has a great deal to do with you. I have a warrant for the arrest of Stephen Holt on a charge of robbery from the house of Mr. Vandernort, and it is my duty to execute that warrant. Before I came here I had information that Holt was hiding in this house; indeed, Mr. Charteris says so."

"The whole thing is a conspiracy," Barca cried. "Stephen Holt is no thief. He never took anything from the American's house. Let me pass."

"No," Ford said firmly. "I have my duty to do. I am going to search your bedroom to see if Charteris is correct. You will be so good as not to interfere. You had better stay here till I come back."

Dick smiled to himself, as he could well afford to do, seeing how, step by step, the various pieces of his plan were dovetailing together. As yet he had said nothing about the way in which he was going to work out his stratagem. To a certain extent Fate had played into his hands, and he was not slow to make use of such weapons as his own good fortune had brought him. Clarkson had been used as a pawn in the game, though Dick, with characteristic good-nature, had taken steps to save him from the result of his folly. And though Clarkson was saved, this had not prevented Dick from persuading Vandernort that Stephen Holt was the thief of the jewels, and thus had caused the American to apply for a warrant for his arrest. The thing would have to be explained later, but up to the present it was one of the strongest cards Dick had in his hand. He looked at Barca and smiled. The latter for once in his life failed to grasp what was going on, though his fine instinct for danger told him that there was some hidden peril here. He could afford to meet the trouble in the open. but as it was he felt helplessly incompetent. There was only one thing for him to do, and that was to fall back on bluster.

"What on earth do you mean?" he cried. "Why should you treat me in this way? Do you suppose that I have anything to do with Stephen Holt? He is no friend of mine."

"Nevertheless, you will do exactly as you are told," Ford said grimly. "If you are the innocent man you so indignantly protest yourself to be, your indignation is out of place."

"That is all very well," Barca sneered. "But police or no police, I am not going to be treated in this fashion. You'll be telling me next that you have a warrant for my arrest. Things have come to a pretty pass when a guest in a private house is ordered about by a stranger as if he were a dog. Now, I'll tell you what it is, my friend, and I ask you to pay careful attention to what I am saying. A vain man dressed in brief authority, such as you appear to be, is not capable——"

Barca stopped and coughed as if something had stuck in his throat. Dick regarded him with a quick suspicion which had flashed into his mind. Usually Barca was taciturn enough; probably no man of his acquaintance had heard him say so much in so short a space of time. Obviously the man was talking for the sake of talking with a view to causing a delay. What delay it was, and for what purpose, Dick neither knew nor cared, for he was going to stop it, and stepped forward with this intention. Barca began to speak again, but Dick cut him short without ceremony.

"I had no idea you were an orator," he said. "My dear Ford, I am quite sure there is something behind this. Instead of frittering away the precious minutes in this fashion, I would suggest that we went immediately to work. I daresay if you wish Dr. Barca to remain here you will find some means of persuading him. It will be to his best interest to raise no objection."

To Ralph's surprise, Barca burst into a loud fit of laughter as soon as Ford had opened the door. It was so unlike Barca to behave in this fashion. Now his voice rang through the hall in scornful gibes. He seemed to be very sure of his ground.

"This is a farce," he yelled. "A pretty thing for the police to invade the house of a gentleman at this time in the morning. Surely, you could have waited till daylight. The police have come for a person who is hiding in my bedroom, eh? My friend Stephen Holt is to be arrested for robbery. Did anybody ever hear the like?"

At a signal from Charteris, Ford darted up the stairs. He called over the banisters to know what room it was. Barca saved Ralph the trouble of replying.

"Why ask?" he said. "You will see a light a little way down the corridor. That is my room, and so are the bedroom and bath-room beyond. Help yourself to what you like; do not go out of your way to consider me. Bring down the prisoner."

Ralph turned to Charteris for an explanation. But the latter had vanished. He had disappeared from the hall at the very instant that Barca had raised his voice. Ralph wondered why he had gone into the garden. He was to learn a little later. Meanwhile, Barca had ceased to scoff and sneer; he was listening intently to what was taking place overhead. Ralph could see from the flicking of his nostrils that he was painfully moved.

Ford appeared to be a long time upstairs. Surely it need not take all this time to arrest a prisoner, Ralph thought. Charteris, who did not make mistakes as a rule, had plainly stated where Holt was. That being the case, what was Ford bungling about? What if there had been some strange mistake? Indeed, the more Ralph reflected the more certain he was. He had killed Holt; he could see the body lying at his feet now. Why had he allowed himself to be buoyed up with false hopes?

Of course, they were false, the whole picture was false. Ralph had only to glance at the face of Ford as he emerged from the bedroom. He looked foolish and confused.

"There has been an error somewhere," he said, trying to speak lightly. "I appear to owe an apology to Dr. Barca, which I offer in all sincerity. Wherever Holt may be he is not in Dr. Barca's rooms."

"I could have told you that from the first," Barca muttered. Ralph could see that his face had grown steady again. "The mistake belongs to Charteris. Don't you think that you had better continue your search, Captain Ford?"

"No, I don't," Ford said curtly. "And I have my own idea as to what has happened. I should like to have a word or two with Charteris."

But Charteris had vanished. He had bolted through the front door and out into the night, a very foolish thing to do, considering his recent accident. Barca's voice sounded uneasy as he referred to this.

"Well, I am only wasting your time and mine," Ford said. "I shall take the liberty of borrowing Charteris' motor car. Tell him I will send it to the Park in the morning."

"The motor car is damaged," Barca put in quickly. "It was in the accident to the motor that Charteris was hurt."

Ford muttered something in reply. He had come very near to committing a grave indiscretion, nothing less than the betrayal of the fact that he was more or less acting as an accomplice of Charteris in the matter. And evidently something had gone wrong, the amateur detective's plan had miscarried. Ford hastened to get away before Barca could ask more compromising questions. The representative of the law disappeared, and Ralph and Barca were alone. There was an awkward pause.

"What are you going to do about this?" Barca asked at last.

"What could I do about it?" Ralph stammered. "It does not concern me. Stephen Holt appears to have done something wrong, and the police are here to arrest him. I did not give them the information."

"That is certainly true," Barca sneered. "It is hardly likely that you informed the police that Stephen was in this house alive, or dead for the matter of that. So far as you are concerned, it is quite obvious."

Barca broke off suddenly, for Charteris had come back. He did not appear to be in the least put out; on the contrary, his face wore a smile. He took a cigarette from the table and lighted it with great zest and enjoyment.

"On the whole, a most delightful evening," he said. "Where is Ford? Gone away a little disappointed, perhaps, to find he had made a mistake. Also disposed to blame me. Well, I shall make amends for that later. I always keep my promises. By the way, Ralph, it is not a long drop from your first floor to the ground."

Barca started. He saw what was the drift of Charteris' remark. He wondered, too, what was the big key that Charteris was dangling in his hand.

"Anybody could leave the house that way in a hurry," Dick went on. "By the way, what a capital strong room the place over the stables makes. Also a cell."

"What are you driving at?" Barca demanded.

"Perhaps I had better tell you," Charteris said with the utmost good-humor. "When I informed Ford that Holt was hiding in your bedroom I told him the truth. I saw him there. I got into the room when our host had lured you away from your chamber under the pretence that there were burglars in the house. And Holt nearly caught me, so nearly that I had only time to get out of the window. That is how I hurt myself, and the story of the motor was pure fiction. Oh, I told Ford the truth. And when you began to shout in the hall I felt sure you were giving Holt a warning. So I slipped out of the house just in time to see him land in the garden. I told him what Ford was after, and nearly frightened him to death. Stephen Holt's strong point is not physical courage. I told him I would hide him, and I did—in the loft over the stables. In a fit of absent-mindedness I locked him in and brought away the key. I fear he will find it impossible to get out."

Barca glanced furtively at Ralph, who was following Charteris' story with rapt attention.

"What are you going to do with him?" he asked gloomily.

"That will depend upon circumstances," Dick said. "If Holt likes to tell the truth, I can see a way of making things easy for him. I could get that warrant withdrawn, for instance, because I have a pretty good grip of the real facts of the case. I could have prevented the issue of the warrant altogether, but it did not suit me to do so. And if Stephen Holt once stands in the dock, it will be all over with him. There are more than a dozen shady transactions that could be proved against him, and once the ball was set rolling lots of people who now do not regard the game as worth the candle would come forward and prosecute him. But if Holt tells the truth he shall go scot free and I will arrange that Mr. Vandernort will do nothing."

"The truth about what?" Barca asked impatiently.

"The mystery in the house," Charteris said slowly. "Why this show of innocence to me? Why did you hide Holt in your rooms if there was not a reason for it? You dirty rascal, I know the whole of your conspiracy from one end to the other. I know what happened the night before last."

Barca started, but made no reply. Obviously he was waiting for Charteris to go on.

"Let me tell you what I know," Dick proceeded. "The night before last Holt came here to blackmail Ralph Kingsmill. He heard that our host was engaged to my sister and this gave him his opportunity. He was jealous and revengeful; he could see his way to make money at the same time. He had stolen Ralph Kingsmill's letters to Kate Lingen, and then threatened to show them to my sister. There was a chance to make money. But the pretty scheme was spoilt by Kingsmill losing his temper and nearly killing the blackmailer. He thought that he had killed him. Then Kingsmill plays the coward, and a pretty price he looked like paying for it. He goes to bed and says nothing. When he comes down in the morning there is no sign of Holt, no sign of a struggle, no blood on the carpet. Why? Because you, Barca, have dragged the body to your room, and have found that Holt is suffering from nothing more than shock and loss of blood. Being an exceedingly clever doctor, you patch him up again. Then you cast around for a way in which you may profit by your action. You remove all trace of the fray. Your plan is to prey upon Kingsmill's nerves and imagination until you have him in your hands, body and soul, to bleed him as you please. And Holt is in the conspiracy. As long as he keeps out of the way, the programme can be played for all it is worth. It was a very pretty scheme, and I congratulate you upon the ingenuity of it. As for the rest, it can be told before a magistrate.'

"You are very clever," Barca sneered. "But you have no proof of this."

"Indeed, I have. That is my proof. He will do and say anything to save his skin. You have a cheque for £5,000 from Mr. Kingsmill in your pocket. You need not trouble to cash it, for payment will be stopped in the morning."

CHAPTER XXVIII.

A Full Confession.

Dick had touched Barca at last. He had sacrificed a great many of his dearest ambitions to get this money, and to see it slipping from his grasp was maddening. He was about to burst out indignantly, but Charteris stopped him.

"One moment," he said. "There is one way of keeping the money which you have obtained, I do you the justice to remark, more for the sake of a woman than for your own. Our hands are not quite clean, so we shall be prepared to make terms when the time comes. You will permit me to despatch a telegram tomorrow in your name to Mrs. Lingen asking her to come down here on urgent business as soon as possible. Never mind what for. It will pay her to come in the long run. And now will you please leave us? We have a great deal to do before daylight."

Barca went his way muttering. He had the good sense to see that he was beaten, and that Charteris saw the whole of the conspiracy quite clearly. It would be far better to make terms, Barca thought, especially if that act of grace meant the returning of the money that he had made so great a sacrifice to obtain. And Ralph's hands were by no means clean, as Charteris had admitted. There was always the option of charging Ralph with a murderous assault on Holt..

But Ralph was not thinking of that at present. He could only gaze at his friend with glittering eyes. He drew a long, deep breath of relief and gratitude.

"I cannot understand it," he gasped. "My brain refuses to take in the details. You say that Stephen Holt is alive, that I did not kill him as I thought. Oh, God! Dick, if you only knew what this means to me. But tell me."

"Nothing," Dick said firmly. "Tomorrow everything will be settled and put straight. Your face is white and ghastly, your eyes have a tinge of madness in them. Go to bed and sleep as long as you can, sleep with the mind of a man who is free from all his cares. I shall stay where I am till morning. Rest assured that your troubles are over. Go to bed, Ralph, you will not get another word out of me tonight."

"Go to bed!" Ralph cried. "Why, my dear fellow, the mere suggestion is full of cruelty. Do you suppose for a single moment that I should have a wink of sleep after all that has happened tonight? No. If you are the friend I take you to be, you will remain with me till morning and discuss the matter again and again till there is not another word to be said. Let us open the windows and let in the fresh air. I want to go outside and wait till the sun rises so that I can stand out there in God's blessed sunshine and thank my Maker that I am a free man again. You thought I was mad when this black trouble fell upon me, but I tell you, my dear Dick, I was cool and sane then compared to what I am now. Feel how my pulse is beating. Put your hand on my heart and you will know how it throbs (to suffocation."

Ralph's voice was high and strident; there was a peculiar vibrating ring in it that Dick did not like at all.

"This won't do at all," he muttered. "My dear fellow, you must sleep. You really must go to bed and get a night's rest. You say you have not enjoyed a blessing like that for such a considerable time. Unless you do what I tell you I shall have to send for the doctor to administer a sleeping draught. If that fails, I will run home and get some opium. Tomorrow you will be as collected as myself. Tonight you frighten me."

(To be continued.)

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### Manual as Noble as Mental, Says Roosevelt

**Teach Boy and Girl to Be Self-Dependent --- Only Through Work Can We Be Happy--Idleness Either of the Poor or Rich is a Disgrace.**

A speech on the education of children and youth was delivered by President Roosevelt recently. The occasion of it was a reception given at the White House to the delegates who are attending the convention of the National Educational Association in Washington. There were more than fourteen hundred of them, and the big east room was not big enough to hold them all. Those who could not find standing room in the apartment stood in the main corridor within sound of Mr. Roosevelt's voice. The president spoke as follows:

Gentlemen and Ladies,—Of all the bodies of citizens that I have received at the White House there is none which occupies a more important relation than yours—I am tempted to say none has come that has occupied as important a relation to the nation, because you men and women who deal with education, who represent the great American policy of education for all children, provided by the public as the prime duty of the public, bear a relation to the family, a relation to the future of our whole people, such as no other like number of individuals can bear. I own six of the children that you educated and I am prepared to extend cordial sympathy to some of you.

Seriously, friends, it is idle for any man to talk of despairing of the future of the country or feeling unduly alarmed about it if he will come in contact with you here and with the forces that you represent. Fundamentally this country is sound; morally, no less than physically. Fundamentally, in its family life and in the outside activities of its individuals the country is better and not worse than it formerly was. This does not mean that we are to be excused if we fail to war against rottenness and corruption, if we fail to contend effectively with the forces of evil, and they waste their time who ask me to withhold my hand from dealing therewith. But it is worth while to smite the wrong for the very reason that we are confident that the right will ultimately prevail. You who are training the next generation are training this country as it is to be a decade or two hence; and while your work in training the intellect is great, it is not so great as your work in training character. More than anything else I want to see the public school turn out the boy and girl who when man and woman will add to the sum of good citizenship of the nation. It is not my province, nor would it be within my capacity, to speak about your pedagogic problems. You yourselves are far better able to discuss them. But as a layman let me say one or two things about your work.

In the first place I trust that more and more our people will see to it that the schools train toward and not away from the farm and the workshop. We have spoken a great deal about the dignity of labor in this country, but we have not acted up to our spoken words, for in our education we have tended to proceed upon the assumption that the educated man was to be educated away from and not toward labor. The great nations of mediaeval times, who left such marvellous works of architecture and art behind them, were able to do so because they educated alike the brain and hand of the craftsman. We, too, in our turn must show that we understand the law which decrees that a people which loses physical address invariably deteriorates, so that our people shall understand that the good carpenter, the good blacksmith, the good mechanic, the good farmer, really do fill the most important positions in our land, and that it is an evil thing for them and for the nation to have their sons and daughters forsake the work which if well and efficiently performed means more than any other work for our people as a whole.

One thing that I would like to have you teach your pupils is that whether you call the money gained salary or wages does not make any real difference, and that if by working hard with your hands you get more than if you work with your head only it does not atone for it to call the smaller amount salary. The term "dignity of labor" implies that manual labor is as dignified as mental labor, as of course it is. Indeed, the highest kind of labor is that which makes demands upon the qualities of both head and hand, of heart, brain and body. Physical powers, physical address, are necessities; they stand on a level with intellect and only below character. Let us show that we regard the position of the man who works with his hands as being ordinarily and in good faith as important and dignified and as worthy of consideration as that of the business man or professional man. We need to have a certain readjustment of values in this country, which must primarily come through the efforts of just you men and women here and the men and women like you throughout this land.

I would not have you preach an impossible ideal, for if you preach an ideal that is impossible you tend to make your pupils believe that no ideals are possible, and therefore you tend to do them that worst of wrongs—to teach them to divorce preaching from practice, to divorce the ideal that they in the abstract admire from the practical good after which they strive. Teach the boy and girl that their business is to earn their own livelihood; teach the boy that he must ultimately be the home-maker; the girl that she must ultimately be the home-keeper; that the work of the father is to be the bread-winner, and that of the mother the housekeeper; that their work is the most important by far in all the land; that the work of the statesman, the writer, the captain of industry and all therest is conditioned first upon work that finds its expression in the family, that supports the family. So teach the boy that he is expected to earn his own livelihood. It is a shame and scandal not to be self-dependent, not to be able to hold his own in the rough work of actual life. Teach the girl that so far from its being her duty to try to avoid all labor, all effort, that it should be a matter of pride to her to be as good a housewife as her mother was before her. Sometimes the kindest and most well-meaning mother, sometimes a kind and well-meaning father, also, do as much damage to the children as the most thoughtless and selfish parent by bringing them up to feel that the goal of their attainment should be the absence of effort instead of effort well directed.

We have all of us often heard some good but unwise woman say: "I have worked hard; my daughter shan't work," the poor woman not realizing that great though the curse of mere drudgery is, of overwork, is, it is not so great as the curse of vapid idleness; and it does not make any difference whether the idleness is that of the hobo at one end of the scale or the gilded youth at the other. Do not waste time in envying the idlers at either end of the social scale. Envy is not the proper attitude toward them. The proper attitude toward them is a good humored but thoroughgoing disapproval of the man or woman who is so blind not only to the interests of society as a whole but to his or her own real interests as to believe that anything permanent can be gained from a life of selfish and vacuous idleness.

Such idleness is the poorest investment in the long run that can be imagined; and there is no surer way to forfeit all chance of real happiness than to get deliberately to work to treat pleasure as the only aim after which to strive. Teach the boy and girl to work; teach them that their proper duty is in the home; their duty to one another and toward their neighbors. Then teach them more; teach them to build upon this foundation the superstructure of the higher life. I want to see our education directed more and more toward training boys and girls back to the farm and the shop, so that they will be first rate farmers, first rate mechanics, fit to work with the head and to work with the hands and realizing that work with the hands is just as honorable as work with the head. In addition, I want to see a training that will make every boy, every girl leaving the public schools, leaving the schools of the nation, feel impelled so to carry himself or herself that the net result, when his or her life shall have been lived, shall be an addition to the sum total of decent living and achievement for the nation, and have them understand that they are never going to amount to much in the big things if they don't first amount to something in the little things. The effort should be made to teach everyone that the first requisite of good citizenship is doing the duties that are near at hand. But, of course, this does not excuse a man from doing the other duties, too. It is no excuse if a man neglects his political duties to say that he is a good husband and father; still less is it an excuse if he is guilty of corruption in politics or business to say that his home life is all right. He ought to add to decency in home life decency in politics, decency in public life.

So my plea is not that the homely duties are all sufficient but that they are a necessary base upon which to build the superstructure of the higher life; our children should be trained to do the homely duties in the first place, and then in addition to have it in them so to carry themselves that collectively we may well and fitly perform the great and responsible tasks of American citizenship.

## "MONEY HUNGER"

### Henry A. Wise Wood Presents an Interesting Study of Commercial Immorality.

(Brooklyn Eagle.)

It is a curious fact that the human mind often demands as a relaxation something that is absolutely the reverse of the thing which occupies its most strenuous activities. It affords a striking example of the law of contrasts. A new book recently published, entitled Money Hunger (Putnams, $1), affords a case in point. The author is Henry A. Wise Wood, the inventor of the auto plate, a machine of great importance and capacity in the equipment of a great newspaper. One would suppose an inventor devoting his effort to so practical a matter as the perfection of an important and intricate mechanical device—a ponderous machine—would have little time or inclination for the consideration of the ethical problems arising in a consideration of that phase of public and individual morality designated as "money hunger"—the craving for the possession of wealth, simply as a means of satisfying personal greed or pride, or love of selfish ease, or the gratification of individual tastes. And yet, when one looks into the matter, it is seen that the seeming contrast is really very reasonable. The inventor, who achieves something worth while, who enters the higher realms of mechanical combination and construction, if he would be entirely successful, or give the highest expression to his inventive faculties must be endowed with imagination, and this endowment will lead him into lines of study and thought, eminently intellectual as well as ethical in character. Money Hunger is the work of an active and intellectual mind, possessing high ethical standards, but seeking recreation from some other lines of labor. The author's sub-title calls it "a brief study of commercial immorality in the United States." It is a small book, a 16m. of 144 pages, printed in an open-faced type; a tasteful, well made book. One might call it an essay, but there is a deeper moral purpose evidenced in its pages which hardly comports with that designation as usually employed. Nor is it properly termed a "lay sermon," although a layman presents his conclusions as to the causes which have produced some lamentable effects in the social and commercial evolution of the day.

"The recent exposures of commercial immorality exisiting in high places, and the wide difference of opinion which exists concerning the degree in blame-worthiness of the acts revealed, point to the conclusion that a rigidly correct attitude in business, and a clear understanding of what constitutes it, are far less prevalent in the community than is generally supposed."

The above opening paragraph of Mr. Wood's book may be taken as the premises from which he reasons. There is abundant and widely scattered evidence not only of low standards of commercial morality, but also, that there has grown up a cynical tolerance of this condition, an attitude that "has steadily sapped the characters of men in possession of trusts."

What is the reason for this condition? Mr. Wood finds it in this craze for money, this eagerness to get rich quickly, which is so frequently manifested in the world of business. Mr. Wood enumerates the social forces that have contributed by their laxity to the growth of this low standard of commercial morality, and he points out the curious contrast which the world of sport offers to the world of business. In the world of sport the standards are rigid; they are relentlessly enforced; no shadow of chicanery, or of unfairness is tolerated for a moment. If the players will not stick to the rules of the game they are forever disqualified. And yet the man who would scorn with flaming indignation the idea of cheating at cards, would turn a trick in the stock market that smells to heaven by reason of its crookedness. Then, too, the man in his individual capacity will scorn to do a thing that as a member of a corporation he will silently tolerate. As our author puts it, our standards of honesty were individual rather than collective.

Mr. Woods holds the newspapers to a strict accountability as responsible in some measure for the dulling of moral sense in the public apprehension of business morality, discussing the question at some length, and indicating how the eager race for news has bred a lack of responsibility; how the news of the fraud or the defalcation in high places is considered as the only important thing about it, while scant attention is paid to the moral issue involved. He believes that so soon as it shall become the settled policy of the most influential section of the press, "systematically and with relentless vigor to make chicanery and misleading, in all their forms odious, then there may be expected to arise a public sentiment that the practice of it will be wholly relegated to the criminal classes which are professionally such."

Money Hunger, in a word, is a very thoughtful, and clear minded discussion of certain phases of a sociological problem that is of tremendous importance to the world. Serious, well written and not lacking in suggestion as to agencies for the amending of untoward conditions, this little book merits and should receive extended recognition.

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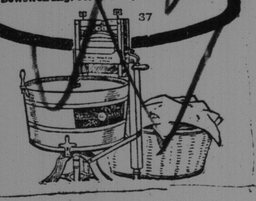
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