

A PLOT FOR EMPIRE.

A THRILLING STORY OF CONTINENTAL CONSPIRACY AGAINST BRITAIN.

"As it happened," he said, "I am here by the merest accident. It may seem strange to you, but it is perfectly true. I have just come out of Waldorf's above there, and I saw you all three upon the pavement."

"I am glad to hear it," Wolfenden said.

"More glad," Felix said, "than I was to see you with them. Can you not believe what I tell you? Shall I give you proof? will you be convinced then? Every moment you spend with that man is an evil one for you. You may have thought me inclined to be melodramatic last night. Perhaps I was! All the same the man is a fiend. Will you not be warned? I tell you that he is a fiend!"

"Perhaps he is," Wolfenden said indifferently. "I am not interested in him."

"But you are interested—in his companion."

Wolfenden frowned.

"I think," he said, "that we will leave the lady out of the conversation."

Felix sighed.

"You are a good fellow," he said; "but forgive me, like all your countrymen, you carry chivalry just a thought too far—even to simplicity. You do not understand such people and their ways."

Wolfenden was getting angry, but he held himself in check.

"You know nothing against her," he said.

"It is true," Felix answered. "I know nothing against her. It is not necessary. She is his creature. That is apparent. The shadow of his wickedness is enough."

Wolfenden checked himself in the middle of a hot reply. He was suddenly conscious of the absurdity of losing his temper in the open street with a man so obviously ill-balanced—possessed too, of such strange and wild impulses.

"Let us talk," he said, "of something else, or say good-morning. Which way were you going?"

"To the Russian Embassy," Felix said. "I have some work to do this afternoon."

Wolfenden looked at him curiously.

"Our ways, then, are the same for a short distance," he said. "Let us walk together. Forgive me, but you are really, then, attached to the Embassy?"

Felix nodded and glanced at his companion with a smile.

"I am not what you call a fraud altogether," he said. "I am junior secretary to Prince Lobanaki. You, I think, are not a politician, are you?"

Wolfenden shook his head.

"I take no interest in politics," he said. "I shall probably have to sit in the House of Lords some day, but I shall be sorry indeed when the time comes."

Felix sighed, and was silent for a moment.

"You are perhaps fortunate," he said. "The ways of the politician are not exactly rose-strewn. You represent a class which in my country does not exist. There we are all either in the army, or interested in statecraft. Perhaps the secure position of your country does not require such ardent service?"

"You are—of what nationality, may I ask?" Wolfenden inquired.

Felix hesitated.

"Perhaps," he said, "you had better not know. The less you know of me the better. The time may come when it will be to your benefit to be ignorant."

Wolfenden took no pains to hide his incredulity.

"It is easy to see that you are a stranger in this country," he remarked. "We are not in Russia or in South America. I can assure you that we scarcely know the meaning of the word 'intrigue' here. We are the most matter-of-fact and perhaps the most common-place nation

in the world. You will find it out for yourself in time. Whilst you are with us you must perforce fall to our level."

"I, too, must become commonplace," Felix said, smiling. "Is that what you mean?"

"In a certain sense, yes," Wolfenden answered. "You will not be able to help it. It will be the natural result of your environment. In your own country, wherever that may be, I can imagine that you might be a person jealously watched by the police; your comings and goings made a note of; your intrigues—I take it for granted that you are concerned in some—the object of the most jealous and unceasing suspicion. Here there is nothing of that. You could not intrigue if you wanted to. There is nothing to intrigue about."

They were crossing the crowded thoroughfare, and Felix did not reply until they were safe on the opposite pavement. Then he took Wolfenden's arm, and leaning over, almost whispered in his ear:

"You speak," he said, "What nine-tenths of your countrymen believe. Yet you are wrong. Wherever there are international questions which bring great powers such as yours into antagonism, or the reverse, with other great countries, the soil is laid ready for intrigue, and the seed is never long wanted. Yes; I know that to all appearance, you are the snugest and most respectable nation ever evolved in this world's history. Yet, if you tell me that you are a nation free from intrigue, I correct you; you are wrong, you do not know—that is all. That very man whose life last night you so inopportunistly saved is at this moment deeply involved in an intrigue against your country."

"Mr. Sablin," Wolfenden exclaimed.

"Yes, Mr. Sablin! Mind, I know this by chance only. I am not concerned one way or the other. My quarrel with him is a private one. I am robbed for the present of my vengeance by a power to which I am forced to yield implicit obedience. So, for the present, I have forgotten that he is my enemy. He is safe from me, yet if last night I had struck home, I should have rid your country of a great and menacing danger. Perhaps—who can tell—he is a man who succeeds—I might even have saved England from conquest and ruin."

They had reached the top of Piccadilly, and downward towards the Park flowed the great afternoon stream of foot-people and carriages. Wolfenden, on whom his companion's words, charged as they were with an almost passionate earnestness, could scarcely fail to leave some impression, was silent for a moment.

"Do you really believe," he said, "that ours is a country which could possibly stand in any such dangerous? We are outside all Continental alliances! We are pledged to support neither the Dual nor the Triple Alliance. How could we possibly become embroiled?"

"I will tell you one thing which you may not readily believe," Felix said. "There is no country in the world so hated by all the Great Powers as England."

Wolfenden shrugged his shoulders.

"Russia," he remarked, "is perhaps jealous of our hold on Asia, but—"

"Russia," Felix interrupted, "of all the countries in the world, except perhaps Italy, is the most friendly disposed towards you."

Wolfenden laughed.

"Come," he said, "you forget Germany."

"Germany!" Felix exclaimed scornfully. "Believe it or not, as you choose, but Germany detests you.

I will tell you a thing which you can think of when you are an old man, and there are great changes and events for you to look back upon. A war between Germany and England is only a matter of time—of a few short years, perhaps even months. In the Cabinet at Berlin a war with you to-day would be more popular than a war with France."

"You take my breath away," Wolfenden exclaimed, laughing.

Felix was very much in earnest.

"In the little world of diplomacy," he said, "the innermost councils these things are known. The outside public knows nothing of the awful responsibilities of those who govern. Two, at least, of your ministers have realized the position. You read this morning in the papers of more warships and strengthened fortifications—already there have been whispers of the conscription. It is not against Russia or against France that you are slowly arming yourselves. It is against Germany!"

"Germany would be mad to fight us," Wolfenden declared.

"Under certain conditions," Felix said slowly. "Don't be angry—Germany must beat you."

Wolfenden, looking across the street, saw Harcourt on the steps of his club, and beckoned to him.

"There is Harcourt," he exclaimed, pointing him out to Felix. "He is a journalist, you know, and in search of a sensation. Let us hear what he has to say about these things."

But Felix unlinked his arm from Wolfenden's hastily.

"You must excuse me," he said. "Harcourt would recognize me, and I do not wish to be pointed out everywhere as a would-be assassin. Remember what I have said, and avoid Sablin and his parasites as you would the devil."

Felix hurried away. Wolfenden remained for a moment standing in the middle of the pavement looking blankly along Piccadilly. Harcourt crossed over to him.

"You look," he remarked to Wolfenden, "like a man who needs a drink."

Wolfenden turned with him into the club.

"I believe that I do," he said. "I have had rather an eventful hour."

CHAPTER X. The Secretary.

Mr. Sablin, who had parted with Wolfenden with evident relief, leaned back in the cab and looked at his watch.

"That young man," he remarked, "has wasted ten minutes of my time. He will probably have to pay for it some day."

"By the bye," the girl asked, "who is he?"

"His name is Wolfenden—Lord Wolfenden."

"I gathered, and who is Lord Wolfenden?"

"The only son of Admiral the Earl of Deringham. I don't know anything more than that about him myself."

"Admiral Deringham," the girl repeated, thoughtfully: "the name sounds familiar."

Mr. Sablin nodded.

"Very likely," he said. "He was in command of the Channel Squadron at the time of the magnificent disaster. He was barely half a mile away and saw the whole thing. He came in too, rightly or wrongly, for a share of the blame."

"Didn't he go mad, or something?" the girl asked.

"He had a fit," Mr. Sablin said calmly, "and left the service almost directly afterwards. He is living in strict seclusion in Norfolk, I believe. I should not like to say that he is mad. As a matter of fact, I do not believe that he is."

She looked at him curiously. There was a note of reserve in his tone.

"You are interested in him, are you not?" she asked.

"In a measure," he admitted. "He is supposed, mad or not, to be the greatest living authority on the coast defences of England and the state of her battle-ships. They shelve him at the Admiralty, but he wrote some vigorous letters to the papers, and there are people pretty high up who believe in him. Others, of course, think that he is a crank."

"By the way," she asked, languidly, "are you interested in such matters?"

Mr. Sablin knocked the ash off the cigarette he was smoking, and was silent for a moment.

"One gets interested nowadays in a great many things which scarcely seem to concern us," he remarked, deliberately. "You, for instance, seem interested in this man's son. He cannot possibly be of any account to us."

She shrugged her shoulders.

"Did I say that I was interested in him?"

"You did not," Mr. Sablin answered, "but it was scarcely necessary; you stopped to speak to him of your own accord, and you asked him to supper, which was scarcely discreet."

"One gets so bored, sometimes," she frankly admitted.

"You are only a woman," he said, indulgently; "a year of waiting seems to you an eternity, however vast the stake. There will come a time when you will see things differently."

"I wonder!" she said, softly. "I wonder!"

Mr. Sablin had unconsciously spoken the truth when he had pleaded an appointment to Lord Wolfenden. His servant drew him to one side directly they entered the house.

"There is a young lady here, sir, waiting for you in the study."

"Been here long?" Mr. Sablin asked.

"About two hours, sir. She has rung once or twice to ask about you."

Mr. Sablin turned away and opened the study door, carefully closing it behind him at once as he recognized his visitor. The air was blue with tobacco smoke, and the girl, who looked up at his entrance, held a cigarette between her fingers. Mr. Sablin was at least as surprised as Lord Wolfenden when he recognized his visitor, but his face was absolutely

CEYLON AND INDIA TEA GREEN OR BLACK.

To get clean GREEN tea use the machine-made tea of Ceylon and India. It contains no adulterants, no sticks, no willow leaves—it's all tea.

The same is true of BLACK.

emotionless. He nodded not unkindly and stood looking at her, leaning upon his stick.

"Well, Blanche, what has gone wrong?" he asked.

"Nothing," she answered. "I've been turned away."

"Detected?" he asked, quickly.

"Suspected, at any rate. I wrote you that Lord Deringham was watching me sharply. Where he got the idea from, I can't imagine, but he got it, and he got it right, anyhow. He's followed me about like a cat, and he's all up."

"What does he know?"

"Nothing! He found a sheet of carbon on my desk, no more! I had to leave in an hour."

"And Lady Deringham?"

"She is like the rest—she thinks him mad. She has not the faintest idea that, mad or not, he has stumbled upon the truth. She was glad to have me go—for other reasons; but she has not the faintest idea, but that I have been unjustly dismissed."

"And he? How much does he know?"

"Exactly what I told you—nothing! His idea was just a confused one that I thought the stuff valuable—how you can make any sense of such trash I don't know—and that I was keeping a copy back for myself. He was worrying for an excuse to get rid of me, and he grabbed it."

"Why was Lady Deringham glad to have you go?" Mr. Sablin asked.

"Because I amused myself with her son."

"Lord Wolfenden?"

"Yes!"

For the first time since he had entered the room, Mr. Sablin's grim countenance relaxed. The corners of his lips slowly twisted themselves into a smile.

"Good girl," he said. "Is he any use now?"

"None," she answered, with some emphasis. "None whatever. He is a fool."

The color in her cheeks had deepened a little. A light shot from her eyes. Mr. Sablin's amusement deepened. He looked positively benign.

"You've tricked him?" he suggested.

The girl nodded, and blew a little cloud of tobacco smoke from her mouth.

"Yes; I went there last night. He was very kind. He sent his servant out with me and got me nice, respectable rooms."

Mr. Sablin did what for him was an exceptional thing. He sat down and laughed to himself softly, but with a genuine and obvious enjoyment.

"Blanche," he said, "it was a lucky thing that I discovered you. No one else could have appreciated you properly."

She looked at him with a sudden harshness.

"You should appreciate me," she said, "for what I am you made me. I am of your handiwork. A man should appreciate the tool of his own fashioning."

"Nature," Mr. Sablin said smoothly, "had made the way easy for me. Mine were but finishing touches. But we have no time for this sort of thing. You have done well at Deringham, and I shall not forget it. But your dismissal just now is exceedingly awkward. For the moment, indeed, I scarcely see my way. I wonder in what direction Lord Deringham will look for your successor?"

"Not anywhere within the sphere of your influence," she answered. "I do not think that I shall have a successor at all just yet. There was only a week's work to do. He will copy that himself."

"I am very much afraid," Mr. Sablin said, "that he will; yet we must have that copy."

"You will be very clever," she said, slowly. "He has put watches all round the place, and the windows are barricaded. He sleeps with a revolver by his side, and there are several horrors in the shape of traps all round the house."

"No wonder," Mr. Sablin said, "that people think him mad."

The girl laughed shortly.

(To be Continued.)

CALENDAR NOTES.

Some Facts Concerning Twentieth Century Dates.

The twentieth century opened on Tuesday and will close on Sunday. It will have the greatest number of leap years possible—24. The year 1904 will be the first one, then every fourth year thereafter, to and including the year 2,000. February will have five Sundays three times, in 1920, 1948 and 1976.

Christmas Day will occur the same day in the week in 1906 and then at successive intervals of 11, 6, 11, 11, 6, 11 years, and so on; also in 1923, 1956 and 1984. The same yearly calendar that was used in 1895 can be used again in 1901.

The following are in order, beginning with 1901, the dates of Easter, for the first twenty-five years of the century: April 7, March 30, April 12, 3, 25, 15, March 31, April 9, 11, March 27, April 16, 7, March 23, April 12, 4, 23, 8, March 31, April 20, 4, March 27, April 16, 1, 20, 12, the earliest possible date on which Easter can occur is March 23. The last time it occurred on this date was in 1818, but it will not occur again until after the twentieth century. The latest Easter can occur once in the new century—in 1943.

The last time it occurred was April 28th, 1896. Whenever Easter occurs on March 27th, or April 3rd, 10th, 17th or 24th, Christmas also occurs on Sunday.

Though one of the objects aimed at by the church authorities who fixed upon this method of determining the date of Easter was to prevent it occurring on the same day as the Jewish Passover, nevertheless the two events will occur together four times in the twentieth century—April 12th, 1903; April 1st, 1932; April 17th, 1927; and April 19th, 1981.

The twentieth century will contain 36,525 days, which lacks one day of being exactly 5,218 weeks. The day of the week that will occur as often as each of the hundred years will begin on Wednesday. Fourteen will begin on each of the other days of the week.

Just as Good!

Perhaps! Don't you run the risk though, but always buy the best and surest cure—Pain-Ex Painless Corn Extractor. Sure, safe and painless.

Queen Wilhelmina's Fortune.

The Queen of the Netherlands has an enormous fortune, part of which belongs to the crown, while the rest is her own private property. The royal estates in Holland and in the East are also of great value. Queen Wilhelmina is going to settle twenty millions of marks upon her future husband, the arrangements being that the interest (say, £30,000 a year) will be at his own disposal, while the capital is ultimately to pass to the younger children of the marriage. If there are no children Prince Henry is to have absolute power of disposing by will of five millions of marks, while the remainder will ultimately revert to the Queen's estate.

Miller's Grip Powder cures.

Ancient Relics in Algeria.

In some grottoes in Algeria French explorers have recently discovered stone implements mingled with the remains of extinct animals belonging to quaternary times. Further explorations indicate that during the age when the grottoes were inhabited the coast of Algeria had a configuration different from that of today. Among the animals associated with the ancient and human inhabitants of Algeria were the rhinoceros, the hippopotamus and various species of ruminants.

His Excuse.

"That Mr. Phypps has been drinking, hasn't he?"

"I guess he has. But it's all the fault of the mistletoe hanging there from the chandelier. Phypps was all right until that ancient Miss Bussaw sat down at the piano and screeched 'The Lips that touch Liquor Shall Never Touch Mine.'"

"Well?"

"Well, Phypps looked at Miss Bussaw and he looked at the mistletoe. Then he went out and got a drink!"—Plain Dealer.

Prompt Retaliation.

"You had a lot of visitors last week, didn't you?"

"Yes, but when they went home we sent our three daughters back with them."—Chicago Record.

Miller's Worm Powders for sallow skin; old or young.

My little tasks—the little tasks even of my little life—earn the divinest inspirations which the meast tyrdoms and the Crusades of the most splendid souls require.

WHEN DISCOURAGED TURN TO DR. CHASE

He Cures Every Form of Piles Thoroughly and Well Without the Danger, Expense and Pain of an Operation.

It is surprising what a large number of men and women suffer from the wretched uneasiness and torturing itching of piles. You may be among those who, through modesty or fear of the surgeon's knife, have been prevented from appealing to your physician for a cure. You have tried the hundred and one things that friends have recommended, and have become discouraged. You say, as many have said before you, that there is no cure for piles.

Now is the time for you to turn to Dr. Chase, whose famous ointment is recognized the world over as the only actual cure for every form of piles. The real substantial value of Dr. Chase's Ointment has given it a unique position among medicines. It is used in nearly every neighborhood on this continent and has become known by word of mouth from friend to friend, and neighbor to neighbor. Ask your friends about it, ask your druggist, ask your doctor. Others have been discouraged, and after years of misery, have been cured by Dr. Chase's Ointment. Here is one—Mrs. James

Brown, Hintonburg, near Ottawa, writes—"I have been a constant sufferer from nearly every form of piles for the last twenty years, and during that time, both here and in the old country, have tried most every remedy."

"I am only doing justice to Dr. Chase's Ointment, when I say that I believe it to be the best remedy obtainable for bleeding or protruding piles. I strongly recommend Dr. Chase's Ointment to mothers, or, indeed, to any person suffering from that dread torment—piles."

George Thompson, a leading merchant of Blenheim, Ont., states—"I was troubled with itching piles for fifteen years, and at times they were so bad I could scarcely walk. I tried a great many remedies, but never found anything like Dr. Chase's Ointment. After the third application I obtained relief, and was completely cured by using one box." Ask your neighbors about Dr. Chase's Ointment, the only absolute cure for piles.

You can obtain Dr. Chase's Ointment for 6 cents a box from any dealer. If you prefer, enclose this amount to these offices, and the remedy will be sent, postpaid, to your address, Edmondson, Bates & Co., Toronto.

South Africa.

Change points out forces in South to a small extent withdrawal of home troops the House of Commons has ordered the regular Imperial Yeomanry vice companies of remain about the last regiments in the year.

seventeen regular at the front, nine five field batteries, try number eighty and the militia in the 1st Gloucester and 4th (militia) regiments in Ceylon respectively, may be on war service, nt to Ceylon from

en field companies, imputed, two rail-one division of the lion, two troops of station, one field park and three hal-Of departmental forty-one compass-Service Corps, nine Army Ordnance ry large portion of Medical Corps.

ica grows worse The morning's at a small party of cattle close to Victoria. ers, under Com- are 15 miles the direction of ding at Porters have joined the district. Mines. 1.—The Military lie at Johannesburg be public to be serious dynamite and to protect the titles cannot hold able for injuries ch Damage. 2.—A Government ght states that the Cape Colony and the towns a small garrison, ily on the move, eering all the s in the neighbor- otherwise doing exceedingly motions to hold, no sport, they have avoiding any ser- the forces which stings them. The have taken place e been only skir- y small loss on mando have been ands in the coun- of Retnet and r line of retreat rouble that they Cape Colony. 3.—Five thousand e trekking west the Cape Town s Daily Mail, "aro y into the heart. The supporters in are several small way. 4.—The 10th Troops Sall. 5.—Five hundred ntry left here for they arrived from Troopship Rates, by the Hawarden for South Af Fra. 6.—Major Fall, Powell's men, is ex- portly to commence South African con- thousand Canadian s force. Major Fall t the headquarters strict to enrol men, ural points in the on, Calgan, and Val- anconover and Vic- entary will be for sment of a third- e 50, (\$1.25) per e as follows—Sup- day, 15s.; staff- gent, 9s.; second corporal, 7s. 6d.; 7s.; second class elous trooper, 5s. 6d. officers, the 20s. per day for a up to \$8,000 per el. Promotion will e commissions will be nks. The age must and not over 35. ary mentioned an ade for extra high officers and men of the Vaal river. ly fixed at 2s. per e five years, and ter on retiring, an month's pay every l be given. e accepted should fair shots, as well and good physique. m-commissioned of- largely upon the he men acquire of- judging from the applicants for post- tment of Militia, t there will be any all the men who Canada. 7.—Government furnishes d subsistence from ment in Canada to pay will not com- rival of the men