News of the Countryside

From The Record's Correspondents

RENTON

Mr. George Potts and son Percy attended the Holstein Breeder's club meeting held in Simcoe on Thursday last.

Mr. Chas. Ferris of Normandale is visiting his brothers and sisters in this vicinity.

Mr. and Mrs. D. K. Secord were guests one day last week at the home of Mrs. Elsie Lishman, on the Scotch line.

A few of Mr. and Mrs. J. Taylors relatives and friends gave them a surprize party on Monday evening of this week in honor of their tenth wedding anniversary.

A few of Mr. and Mrs. F. Trinders friends and relatives gave them a surprise party on Friday evening.

SELKIRK

Wm. Stadder, entertained the Masons at an oyster supper last Wednesday night. The event being the occasion of his birthday.

Joseph Armstrong and Stanley Mathews were taken to the hospital at Hamilton last week for operations the former with appendicitis and the latter from the results of an accident on a drilling rig.

Mrs. Annie McKeene is visiting her son in Hamilton.

The annual sleighride party took place on Tuesday evening. The crowd that sat down for supper exceeded all former years. An excellent programme was put on by the children.

BORN—on February 6th, to Mr. and Mrs. Harold Martin, a son.

We are glad to report that Mrs. R. O. Hurst, who has been confined to her bed since last October, is steadily improving.

Mrs. Henry Hare, who has been quite ill is about again.

R. O. Hurst, Buffalo, was a week-end visitor here.

CHEAPSIDE

Mr. and Mrs. Norrie Martin spent Tuesday with Mrs. I. Silverthorne.

Mr. W. Thompson, Hamilton, was a guest of Chancey Evans for a couple of days last week.

Mr. Dick Metcalfe is spending this week in Hamilton with his brother.

Mr. and Mrs. Morley Wilcox spent one day last week in Hamilton.

Mr. and Mrs. George McBurney and J. W. McBurney were in the city on Thursday last.

The Cheapside W. I. met on Tuesday, February 3rd, with the president in the chair and twenty ladies were present. Meeting opened in usual manner. Roll call was answered by everyone. Minutes were read and adopted. Letters of acceptance of invitations for summer meeting were read from Sandusk and Selkirk. It was decided that our next meeting take the form of a quilting. Mrs. G. Pond to give a talk on the Topic, the Kingship of Self Control or Nerves and their care.

A debate followed. Resolved that poverty does more to develop character than Riches. Mrs. A Pond, Mrs. D. McDonald, and Mrs. G. McBurney on the affirmative and Mrs A Meighan, Mrs. Metcalfe and Mrs. L. Buckley on the negative. The affirmative won. Mrs. G. Pond, Mrs. H. Snider and Mrs. F. Steel acted as judges.

Rotary and Naturalizzation

The family gathering of the Canadian nation, which has been arranged by the Rotary Club of Canada for Sunday, February 15th, is a significant and interesting idea. By means of an all-Canada hook-up on that date, starting at 6 p.m. Eastern Standard Time, everp district in Canada will be able to listen in on an all-Canada musical programme designed to foster Canadian art and a Canada fellow-feeling.

But perhaps even more interesting than this first complete all-Canada hook-up, with every broadcasting station of consequence in the circuit is the fact that the Rotary Clubs are using the occasion for a short address on the subject of naturalization. It is an undoubted fact that many of the wrong sort of people are obtaining the privileges of Canadian citizenship—people who use their privileges for the purpose of working for the overthrow of the kind of civilization for which the Dominion stands. On the other hand many most desirable foreign-born residents are neglecting naturalization when as a matter of fact their addition to the citizenry would be a source of strength to the nation. Both these defects in our system of naturalization the Rotary Clubs are working to remedy.

It has been said, with regard to the naturalization of undesirable foreigners that this cannot take place, because the Royal Canadian Mounted Police are asked to investigate the applicant in each case. Nevertheless it is a fact that in the vast majoritp of cases the judge before whom the application is made has no other information than the applicant cares to give him, because no report of the R.C.M.P. is received unless the report is unfavorable for such reasons as that the applicant has a police court record or has practically no knowledge of English. The lack of a report does not necessarily mean that the applicant is deserving of naturalization, for the applicant's general character, his may all be against him, despite the fact that he has no police record. "The rankest Bolshevist can lie and, under the present system, often is admitted to the privileges of British citizenship," declares ont judge who for ten years has handled all naturalization applications in his district.

If a greater national interest in this important problem results from this national family party under the auspices of Canadian Rotary th n an excellent and constructive piece of national work will have been performed. We need more of the right sort of citizens and fewer of the wrong sort.

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Frank L. Packard

(Continued from last week)

Yes, it was Doctor Crang—but disputable in appearance as he had never before seen the man. Crang's clothes were filthy and unkempt, as though the man had fallen somewhere in the mire and was either unconscious or callous of the fact; his hair draggled in a matted way over his forehead, and though his face worked with passion, and the passion brought a curious hectic rose-color to supplant the customary lifeless gray of his cheeks, the eyes were most strangely glazed and fixed.

And again John Bruce laughed—and with a vicious guard swept aside a second blow aimed at his side, and his left fist, from a full arm swing, crashed to the point of Doctor Crang's jaw. But the next instant they had closed, their arms locked around each other's waists, their chins dug hard into each other's shoulders. And they rocked there, and swayed, and lurched, a curious impotence in their ferocity—and toppled to the floor.

John Bruce's grip tightened as Doctor Crang fought madly now to tear himself free—and they rolled over and over in the direction of the door. Hot and cold waves swept over John Bruce. He was weak, pitifully weak, barely a convalescent. But he was content to call it an equal fight. He asked for no other odds than Crang himself had offered. The man for once had over-steeped himself with dope, and was near the point of collapse. He had read that in the other's eyes, as surely as though he had been told. And so John Bruce, between his gasping breaths, still laughed, and rolled over and over—always toward the door.

From somewhere Claire's voice reached John Bruce, imploringly, in terror. Of course! That was why he was trying to get to the door, to get out of her room—through respect for her—to get somewhere where he could finish this fight between one man who could scarcely stand upon his feet through weakness, and another whose drug-shattered body was approaching that state of coma which he, John Bruce, had been made to suffer on the night the robbery had been committed. And by the same needle! He remembered that. Weak in body, his mind was very clear. And so he rolled over and over, always toward the door, because Crang was heedless of the direction they were taking, and he, John Bruce, was probably not strong enough in any other way to force the other out of the room where they could finish this.

They rolled to the threshold—and out into the hall. John Bruce loosened his hold suddenly, staggered to his feet, and leaned heavily for an instant against the jamb of the door. But it was only for an instant. Crang was the quicker upon his feet. Like a beast there was slaver on the other's lips, his hands clawed the air, his face was contorted hideously like the face of one demented, one from whom reason had flown, and with whom maniacal passion alone remained — and from the banister railing opposite the door Crang launched himself forward upon John Bruce again.

"She's mine!" he screamed. "I've been watching you two! I'll teach you! She's mine—mine! I'll finish you for this!"

John Bruce side-stepped the rush, and Crang pitched with his head against the door jamb, but recovering, whirled again, and rushed again. The man began to curse steadily now in a low, monotonous monotone. It seemed to John Bruce that he ought to use his fist as a clerk and thrust it into the other's mouth to bottle up the vile flow of epithets that included Claire, and coupled his name with Claire's. Claire might hear! The man was raving, insane with jealousy. . . . . John Bruce struck. His fist found its mark on Crang's lips, and found it again; but somehow his arm seemed to possess but little strength, and to sag back at the elbow from each impact. He writhed suddenly as Crang reached him with another blow on his side.

And then they had grappled and locked together again, and were swaying like drunken men, now to this side, and now to that, of the narrow hall.

It could not last. John Bruce felt his knees giving way beneath him. He had under-estimated Crang's resistance to the over dose of drug. Crang was the stronger—and seemed to be growing stronger every instant. Or was it his own increasing weakness?

Crang's fist with a short-arm jab smashed at John Bruce's wounded side once more. The man struck anywhere else — always, with the cunning born of hate, at the wounded side. John Bruce dug his teeth into his lips. A wave of nausea swept over him. He felt his senses leaving him, and he clung now to the other, his hands tight-pressed as the only means of protecting his side.

He forced himself then desperately to a last effort. There was one chance left, just one. In the livid face of the panting breath with which the other mouthed his hideous profanity, there was murder. Over his shoulder, barely a foot away, John Bruce glimpsed the staircase.

He let his weight sag with seeming abjectness upon Crang. It brought Crang around in a half circle. Crang's back was to the stairs now. John Bruce let his hands slip suddenly from about the other, as though the last of his strength was ebbing away. He accepted a vicious blow on his wounded side as the price that he must pay, a blow that brought his chin crashing down upon his breast—and then with every ounce of remaining strength he hurled himself at Crang, and Crang's foot stumbled out into space over the topmost stair, and with a scream of infuriated surprise the man pitched backward.

John Bruce grasped with both hands at the banister for support. Something went rolling, rolling, rolling down the stairs with queer, dull bumps like a sack of meal. His hands slipped from the banister, and he sat limply down on the topmost step and laughed. He laughed because that curious looking bundle at the bottom there began a series of fruitless efforts to roll back up the stairs again.

And then the front door opened. He could see it from where he sat, and Paul Veniza—that was Paul Veniza wasn't it?—stepped into the room below, and cried out, and ran toward the bundle at the foot of the stairs.

John Bruce felt some one suddenly hold him back from pitching down the stairs himself, but nevertheless he kept on falling and falling into some great pit that grew darker and darker the farther he went down, and this in spite of some one who tried to hold him back—and—and who had a face that looked like Claire's only it was as—as white as driven snow. And as he descended into the blackness some one screamed at him: "I'll finish you for this!" And screamed it again—only the voice kept growing fainter. And—and then he could neither see nor hear any more.

When John Bruce opened his eyes again he was lying on his cot. A little way from him, their backs turned, Claire and Paul Veniza were whispering earnestly together. He watched them for a moment, and gradually as his senses became normally acute again he caught Claire's words:

"It is not safe here for a moment. Father, we must get him away. I am afraid. There is not a threat Doctor Crang made tonight but that he is quite capable of carrying out."

"But he is safe for tonight," Paul Veniza answered soothingly. "I got Crang home to bed, and as I told you, he is badly bruised and knocked about to move around any before morning at least."

"And yet I am afraid," Claire insisted anxiously. "Fortunately Mr Bruce's wound hasn't opened, and he could be moved. Oh, if Hawkins only hadn't ——" She stopped, and twisted her hands together nervously.

Paul Veniza coughed, averted his head suddenly and in turning met John Bruce's eyes—and stared in a startled way.

"Claire!" John Bruce called softly.

"Oh!" she cried, and ran toward him. "You ——"

"Yes," smiled John Bruce. "And I have been listening. Why isn't it safe for me to stay here any longer on account of Crang's wild threats."

"Yes," she said in a low voice.

John Bruce laughed.

"But you don't believe them, do you?" he asked. "At least, I mean you don't take them literally."

Claire's lips were trembling.

"There is no other way to take them." She was making an effort to steady her voice. "It is not a question of believing them. I know only too well that he will carry them out if he can. You are not safe here, or even in New York now—but less safe here in this house than anywhere else."

John Bruce came up on his elbow.

"Then, Claire, isn't this the end?" he demanded passionately. "You know him for what he is. You do not love him, for I distinctly heard you tell him that you loathed him, as I went up the stairs. Claire, I am not asking for myself now—only for you. Tell me, not asking for myself Veniza here, to whom it will mean so much, that you have now no further thought of marriage with that" —John Bruce's voice choked—"with Crang."

She shook her head.

"I cannot tell you that," she said dully, "for I am going to marry Doctor Crang."

John Bruce's face hardened. He looked at Paul Veniza. The old pawnbroker had his eyes on the floor, and was ruffling his white hair helplessly with his fingers.

"Why?" John Bruce asked.

"Because I promised," Claire said slowly.

"But a promise like that!" John Bruce burst out. "A promise that you will regret all your life is——"

"No!" Her face was half averted; her head was lowered to hide the tears that suddenly welled into her eyes. "No; it is a promise that I—that I am glad now I made."

"Glad?" John Bruce sat upright. She had turned her head away from the cot. He could not see her face.

"Glad!" he repeated incredulously.

For a moment John Bruce stared at her; then a bitter smile tightened his lips, and he lay back on the cot, and turned on his side away from both Claire and Paul Veniza.

When John Bruce looked around again only Paul Veniza was in the room.

"I don't understand" said Paul Veniza — he was still ruffling his hair, still with his eyes on the floor.

"I do," said John Bruce grimly. "Claire is right. It isn't safe for me to stay here, and I'll go tonight. If I can lamm——" He laughed a little harshly. "But I'll go tonight, just the same. A taxi will do quite as well."

THE JARVIS RECORD

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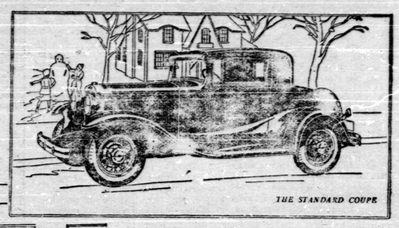

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JARVIS ONTARIO

CHAPTER XIII.

"Trappings of Tinsel."

Under the shaded light on his table, in his private sitting room in the Bayne-Miloy hotel, John Bruce had been writing steadily for half an hour—but the sheets of paper over which his pen had travelled freely and swiftly were virgin white. He paused now, remained a moment in thought, and then added a line to the last sheet. No mark was left, but from the movement of the pen this appeared to be a signature.

He gathered the sheets together, folded them neatly and slipped them into an envelope. He replaced the cap on the fountain pen he had been using, placed the pen in his vest pocket, and from another pocket took out another pen that was apparently identical with the first. With this second pen, in black ink, he addressed the envelope to one Gilbert Larmon in San Francisco. He sealed the envelope, stamped it, put it in his pocket, returned the second fountain pen to his vest pocket lighted a cigarette, leaned back in his chair, and frowned at the ascending spirals of smoke from the cigarette's tip.

The report which he had just written to Larmon, explaining his inaction during the past weeks, had been an effort—not physical, but mental. He had somehow, curiously, felt no personal regret for the enforced absence from his "work" and he now felt no enthusiasm at the prospect of resuming it. He had had no right to tinge or color his letter to Larmon with these views; nor had he intended to do so. Perhaps he had not; perhaps he had. He did not know. The ink originated by the old Samoan Islander had its disadvantages. He could not now read the letter over once it was written!

He flicked the ash irritably from his cigarette. He had been back here in the hotel now for two days and that feeling had been constantly growing upon him. Why? He did not know except that the cause seemed to insist on associating itself with his recent illness, his life in the one-time pawnshop of Paul Veniza. But, logically, that did not hold water. Why should it? He had met a pawnbroker who yoamed the streets at night in a fantastic motor car, driven by a drunkard; and he had fallen in love with a girl who was glad she was going to marry a dope-eating criminal. Good God, it was a spectacle to make——

John Bruce's fist crashed suddenly down on the desk beside him, and he rose from his chair and stood there staring unseeingly before him. That was not fair! What was uppermost now was the recrudescence of the bitterness that had possessed him two nights ago when he had returned from Paul Veniza's to the hotel here. Nor was it any more true than it was fair! What of the days and nights of nursing, of care, of the ungrudging and kindly hospitality they had given to an utter stranger? Yes, he knew! Only—only she had said she was glad!

He began to pace the room. He had left Veniza's in bitterness. He had not seen Claire. It was a strange sort of love he boasted, little of unselfishness in it, much of impulsance and still more of intolerance! That it was a hopeless love in so far as he was concerned did not place him before himself in any better light. If he cared for her, if there was any depth of feeling in this love claimed to have, then at least her happiness, her welfare and her future could not be extraneous and indifferent considerations to him. Also on the spur of the moment, piqued, in spite of Paul Veniza's protestations, he had left that night without seeing Claire again!

He had been ashamed of himself. Yesterday, he had telephoned Claire. He had begged her forgiveness. He had not meant to say more—but he had! Something in her voice had—no, not invited; he could not say that,—but had brought the passion, pleading almost, back into his own. It had seemed to him that she was in tears at the other end of the wire; at least, bravely as she had evidently tried to do so, she had been unable to keep her voice under control. But she had evaded an answer. There had been nothing to forgive, she had said. He had told her that he must see her, that he would see her again. And then almost hysterically, over and over again, she had begged him to attempt nothing of the sort, but instead to leave New York because she insisted that it was not safe for him to stay even in the city.

John Bruce hurled the butt of his cigarette in the direction of the cuspidor, and clenched his fist. Crang! Safe from Crang! He laughed aloud harshly. He asked nothing better than to meet Crang again. He would not be so weak next time! And the sooner the better!

He gnawed at his under lip, as he continued to pace the room. Today, he had telephoned Claire again—but he had not spoken to her this time. He had not been surprised at the news he had received, for he remembered that Hawkins had once told him that the old pawnbroker was in reality far from well. Some one, he did not know who, some neighbor probably, had answered the phone. Paul Veniza had been taken ill. Claire had been up with him all the previous night and was then resting.

John Bruce paused abruptly before the desk at which he had been writing, and looked at his watch. It was a little after ten o'clock. He was going back to Veniza's again tonight. He stabbed suddenly, and a little quizzically, as he caught sight of himself in a mirror. What would they say—the white-haired negro butler, and the exquisite Monsieur Henri de Lavergne, for instance—when the millionaire plunger, usually so immaculate in evening clothes, presented himself at their door in a suit of business tweeds?

He shrugged his shoulders. Down at Hatti's that night his apparel—it was a matter of viewpoint—had been very effectively disposed of. He had had no opportunity to be measured for new clothes.

The smile faded, and he stood staring at the desk. The millionaire plunger! It seemed to jar somehow on his sensibilities. Work! That was a queer way, too, to designate it. He was going to take up his work again tonight, pick up the threads of his life again where he had dropped them. A bit ragged those threads weren't they? Frayed as it were!

(Continued next week.)