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Our annual inventory sale will take place Wednesday, Jan. 16th, 1918, and continue for ten days only.

Big Reductions in Men's and Boys' Suits, Overcoats, Pants, Sweaters, Underwear, Hats and Caps.

Also Ladies' Suits and Coats, Skirts, Waists, Sweaters and Underwear. Every item mentioned in this sale will go at reduced prices to make room for our big line of spring and summer goods. This sale will positively last TEN DAYS ONLY, so come early while our selection is large.

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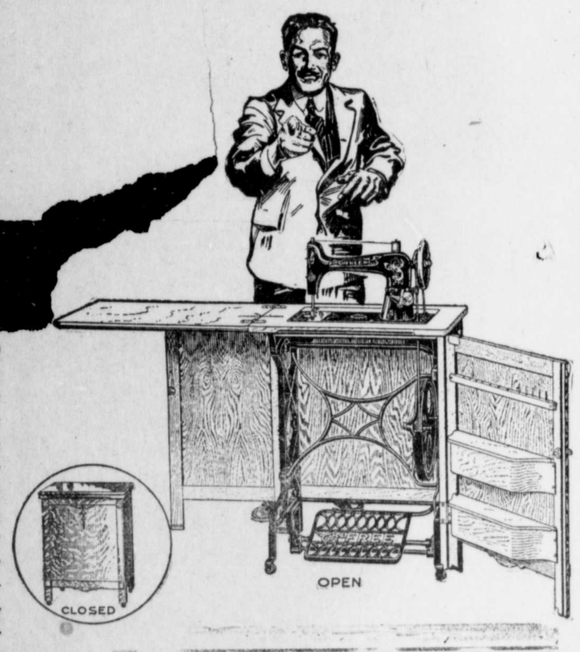

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STANLEY'S RETURN

By GEORGE MUNSON.

Robert Stanley was running away.

The train was a local. That was part of his scheme. At Philadelphia he meant to catch a quick train to the South. Thence he could make his way undetected to South America. He felt as eager as a schoolboy over it. And it occurred to him that his past life had ended when Miriam had died. The five and twenty years that had elapsed was only an interlude.

He looked up as the train stopped at a small station with an odd sense of familiarity. He saw the name Birmingham. Why, that was his home town, and he had never been home since his mother died. He had always meant to, until he heard of Miriam's marriage, and then he had dropped a veil over the past. Now he had a sudden longing to see the little place again.

He took his suitcase—all he was carrying with him—and got off. Two other passengers were leaving the train. One was a man about fifty-five, the other a girl of nineteen or twenty. As Stanley stood on the platform she turned, and he saw Miriam looking at him.

He raised his hat automatically, gasped, and stood staring at her foolishly. The girl looked doubtful for a moment—then she whispered to her father, who turned with a puzzled expression upon his face.

"I beg your pardon," stammered Stanley, "but my name is Robert Stanley, and I—I seemed to recognize—"

"You did," smiled the man. "What an odd meeting! My name is Roger Leston, and this is my daughter Miriam. Her mother often spoke of you."

"I knew you from your photograph, Mr. Stanley, at once," said the girl smiling. "Though it was taken before I was born—"

"I feel complimented," said Stanley.

"Are you staying in Birmingham?" inquired the other. "If so you must be my guest. I hope you won't refuse, for my wife always spoke so kindly of you; in fact, I understand you were an old admirer of hers?"

Kindly of him? Could anyone have ever spoken kindly of him? Stanley was unguarded. For the first time in a score of years he dropped the mask of coldness that he presented to the world.

"And I know all about you," the elderly gentleman continued. "I was saying to Miriam only yesterday that you must be harassed to death by those Wall street scoundrels. We hope you'll best them. You see, we all speak kindly of you in Birmingham. It will be a great honor—"

Before Stanley could recover from the surprise of this dramatic meeting he had accepted Leston's hospitality overnight. But on the following morning he found himself unable to rise.

It was nothing serious, the doctor said, but weeks of anxiety had broken down Stanley's strength. And, coming back to the old town, with its boyhood memories, he had yielded to the weakening and softening influence. He was like a runner who drops exhausted at the end of a race. For five days he did not stir from his room; he was too exhausted to leave his bed, even, during the greater part of them.

Leston had scrupulously respected his secret, and, as Stanley had given out that he intended to spend a week in the mountains no anxiety or surprise was caused by his disappearance.

On the sixth day he came to the conclusion that the old life, always hateful, was now impossible. But the idea of running away had somehow become equally impossible. Life seemed construable only in terms of the little town and—Miriam.

In the girl he saw his old love, fairer, and with the same winning charm and sweetness. And with the new life to begin, it seemed unbelievable that he should not have Miriam to share it.

That night he had a frank talk with Mr. Leston. He had already showed him much of himself, but now he bared his life from the beginning. He told him his hopes and fears, how he had planned to run away, how the strange meeting had affected him.

"It may sound strange to you, sir, in a man of forty-five," he said, "but I feel like a young fellow coming to you to ask for your daughter's hand. If Miriam does not consider the difference in our ages an irreparable disqualification, may I have your permission to ask her to become my wife?"

Leston clapped him on the shoulder. "There is no reason why you shouldn't, Robert," he said. "I don't think age changes our real natures very much. It would give me much happiness. And I believe you are the only American man I know who has gone to the father before going to the daughter."

Stanley found Miriam in the garden.

"I have come to say good-by," he said, taking her hands in his. "I am going back to face the music. And when I return—I don't know when—I shall ask you to be my wife."

The girl's eyes filled with tears. "I have loved you all my life—before I ever saw you," she said. "And mother used to say she wished I could marry a man like you. You see, we all think so highly of you in Birmingham."

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NOT BEYOND ENEM[illegible]CH

There Is Scarcely a Spot [illegible]ent Country That Cann[illegible]tacked With Modern Eq[illegible]

By far the greatest of [illegible] was the industrial revolu[illegible] broad change in human soci[illegible] attended the supplanting of [illegible]duction by machine factory [illegible]tion. Take any conspicuous [illegible] which the nineteenth century [illegible] from the eighteenth, and you wi[illegible]ably find that it runs back fina[illegible] a mechanical invention. Throug[illegible] two-thirds of the century the cond[illegible] of society was determined much m[illegible] by the state of the mechanical ar[illegible] than by politicians, warriors or teach[illegible]ers.

A distinguished economist now[illegible] urges that this same factor—the state [illegible] of the mechanical arts—is pushing [illegible] war off the stage, and of itself necessitates a new relationship among leading nations by which peace may be assured.

Mechanical science has already vastly changed and will soon completely change the conditions of warfare. Inventions make war an unlimited liability in a new way, declares the Saturday Evening Post. Probably within five years it will be as practicable for an enemy to attack Chicago and Denver, or Berlin and Munich, as New York or Bremen. Already Englishmen have been killed on their own soil by an invading enemy for the first time since the Stuarts, and a German submarine has visited American ports. Already scarcely any spot in a belligerent country is beyond an enemy's reach. If there should be a war ten years hence between a power as ready as Germany was in 1914, and one as unready as the United States then was, the former could wreak incalculable destruction upon the latter within a month; no spot in it would be safe, and the cost of adequate preparation for war by competitive arming would lay an intolerable burden on the world.

The cost of playing the old game puts it out of the question. Development of the mechanical arts vetoes it. Only a few people in control of dynastic states and their entourage have any real motive for regretting the veto.

Children and the War.

Agnes Repplier says in the Woman's Home Companion: "We cannot afford to have young people feel that they have no part to play in the nation's heroic struggle, that they may go on amusing themselves in the old careless fashion, while men are dying for their safety. The rites and ceremonies of 'coming out' may well be omitted, or at least simplified. We have grown to attach a tremendous but wholly mythical importance to a girl's first season, to regard it as something sacred and inviolable, with which no cataclysm should be permitted to interfere, and for which no sacrifice is too great. It is not an uncommon thing to hear the death of a distinguished citizen regretted because it interferes with the coming out of an 18-year-old niece. If the war helps to moderate this point of view it will have done us one good turn. If a girl decides to take a hospital course instead of devoting her winter to gayety, she chooses wisely. Her health will be conserved, her heart and mind expanded."

Women in Trousers.

The question of whether women as the result of the war should wear trouserettes is being solved without holding conventions and without the aid of those who have heretofore made the fashions, says the Omaha World-Herald. In Vancouver, B. C., there was an enormous berry crop, cultivated and wild, and there was only enough labor in sight to gather one-third of it. Frantic with the thought of so much loss, the people appealed to the government. The first proposition was to ship in two or three thousand Chinese coolies. The women up there said that would result in two or three thousand more to feed and they made an appeal to the women and girls of the province. In a few days more than 2,000 were enlisted. The briars and brambles of the fruit field would make short work of skirts and the women all donned trousers. The army was drawn from all walks of life.

Conserving Niagara's Power.

Anyone that has seen an ice gorge on the Niagara river breaking up has a vivid reminder of titanic might let loose. Millions of tons of solid material are then driven onward by the cumulative impulse of the slightly impounded or checked waters. Plainly this is a peril that would have to be reckoned with by anyone building scattered power stations along the stretch of the gorge. The plants would face well nigh certain and complete destruction sooner or later. Of course the cheapest way to benefit by the river is to use as much of the water at the Falls as the two governments concerned will permit, and then, after the diverted flow has returned to the river below the cataract to employ the full volume of the tidal prism. That is what is contemplated in the erection of a dam at Foster's Flats.—Exchange.

Foresight.

"I'm taking lessons from a man who teaches people how to remember."

"Is he pretty good?"

"I guess so, but he doesn't seem to have much confidence in his methods."

"How is that?"

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FATE'S HA[illegible]

By JUNE G[illegible]EAU.

Marjorie fou[illegible] her mother se[illegible] placidly [illegible] own sitting room [illegible] the case before her.

"My dear child," soothed Mrs. Bi[illegible] "it is one of those things you [illegible] leave to fate. Your father is a [illegible]stinate man. If he dislikes [illegible]ts, why he won't consider [illegible] Paul is different from [illegible]ble relatives. Somehow, [illegible] will change his mind, [illegible] force him. I learned [illegible] ago."

[illegible]s for father to ob[illegible]ie, "for Paul [illegible]t no sane [illegible] as a son-[illegible]

[illegible]ed the fi[illegible] face [illegible] shoulder and ki[illegible] the [illegible]

[illegible] advice, honey," she [illegible] [illegible]ve the matter to fate [illegible]rett. He's got grit enough [illegible] in spite of Jacob Bissel, and th[illegible] compliment, Marjorie."

Paul [illegible]verett received his dismissal at the B[illegible]sel front door and went back to his a[illegible]rtment and telephoned to Marjorie.

"I'll fin[illegible] way out, sweetheart!" he promised. "He'll beg me to come around and [illegible]e him—believe me!"

Two days [illegible]ter Jacob Bissel lounged in the retiring room of his favorite club and talked to his old crony, Peter Laidlaw.

Peter was talking about the splendid country mansion he was building down on Long island and he invited Jacob Bissel to drive down there.

"Not another one just like it in the world," boasted Laidlaw as they motored down to Bluffton the next day. "Everett, my architect, is a corker—won't touch a job that doesn't appeal to him—a regular genius."

"Everett, did you say?" demanded Bissel sharply.

"Yes, old Tad Everett's boy—smart little rascal, too. Wanted to pick his own college and worked his way through, by Jove! Born architect and has made such a success of it that he can pick his own customers, too. Wouldn't make a set of plans for you Jacob, if he took a notion not to!"

"Pooh!" sneered Jacob Bissel.

"Bet you!" retorted Peter Laidlaw, and so a wager was made and recorded

"I was going to build on my property down here, anyway," remarked Bissel.

"Good—I want you for a neighbor."

One morning Jacob Bissel picked up his telephone receiver and called a number.

Paul Everett's pleasant voice responded.

"This is Jacob Bissel," said the magnate rather pompously; "I wish to consult you concerning the plans for my new country house at Bluffton."

Whereupon Mr. Bissel was referred to Everett's secretary, who advised the irate gentleman to call at the offices of Everett & Co. at 4:30 that afternoon.

Exactly at 4:35 Mr. Bissel panted into the handsome offices of the young architect and was informed by a polite secretary that Mr. Everett had just left for the day.

"I had an appointment with him at 4:30," protested Mr. Bissel.

"It is 4:35, sir; Mr. Everett never waits for anyone."

"The—young puppy!" chortled Mr. Bissel as he fumed away.

But the next day he made another appointment and kept it, and found Paul Everett a most exasperating young man to deal with.

And in the end, for no essential reason, Paul refused to consider accepting Bissel's patronage.

"A most unbusinesslike proceeding!" roared Jacob Bissel, as he stamped up and down his office. "I'll never build that house until he makes those plans!"

So he wrote a curt note and asked Paul to call at his office the next morning, and when Paul came, cool and imperturbable, he still declined to accept Mr. Bissel's business.

"I am not accustomed to being turned down, Mr. Everett," raged Jacob Bissel. "Is it a matter of money?"

Paul shook his handsome head.

"It's rather a personal feeling," he said with engaging frankness. "You see, my uncle used to know you, Mr. Bissel, and he never liked you—had some old business grudge, in fact. Don't you think that's excuse enough for declining your business?"

"I do not!" flared Mr. Bissel, growing red around his ears.

"Then—?" suggested Everett delicately.

"Then—" repeated Jacob Bissel. "Well, young man, it's no use—I may as well give in and tell you to come around and see me tonight at my house."

"About Marjorie?" asked Paul.

"About Marjorie," conceded Marjorie's father.

"Then, Mr. Bissel," said Paul practically, "suppose we go over the plans for your new house, eh? I think we can make Peter Laidlaw's mansion look like a chicken coop."

"Now you're talking," said his future father-in-law.

Marjorie and her mother credited the whole affair to a kindly fate, but Paul only laughed.

"Fate's all right—only you've got to get out and hustle her along," he said. "And in this instance fate's righthand man was Peter Laidlaw!"

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