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#### THE ADVENTURERS

Continued from page two)

tle was not enlivening. But all the same I was a little annoyed to find them upon such close terms with one another.

The third day after Montgomery's arrival I resolved to ride into Raymond to see the little lawyer, and, mounting the black horse which had come to me as part of my inheritance, I left the castle shortly before lunch. The nag was a steady creature, though not very handsome to the eyes, and shortly I was upon the other side of Lianellan and cantering down into the long stretch of forest which lies toward the little town. Here, as it chanced very oddly, whom should I meet but Greenstreet himself, driving out to the castle upon the very point of business on which I was bound for Raymond. Encountering thus we agreed to make a convenience of the locality, since I could not persuade him to turn back with me, and we completed our conversation over a pint of ale at the little hostelry in Llanellan. The transaction was comprised in a brief time, and that finished I turned my horse's head forthright for home. As I drew near the park gates it

wanted a little of 4 by my watch. The sun beamed sharply overhead, and the great ilex by the stone pillars of the gateway threw a black blot of shadow across the drive. I headed the horse

across the sward, making for the stables which lay among the farm buildings to the north of the castle. Leaving the animal in charge of the handy man, Williams, I walked back by way of the park, skirting the western wing of the building. Upon this side, as have said, lay a dense shrubbery, through which the little brook streamed over its pebbly bottom to the waterfall upon the southern declivity of the hill. A pathway ran circuitously through this growth of laurel and box, evidently of comparatively recent origin, and winding by several pretty spots, bordered with the rivulet, finally emerged upon the boundary of the park and joined a cross track from the gateway by a leafy avenue of limes.

As it was early and I was in no mood to face Montgomery all at once, I struck into the shrubbery and sauntered quietly along the pathway. Suddenly at a bend before me and slipping softly round the elbow I beheld the figure of a man, but it was gone ere my senses were fully awake in that sultry afternoon. I stood still a moment, stirred somewhat strangely, and then ran quickly to the corner. Peering round, I caught sight of a figure stealing among the shrubs. It paused a moment and then, as it seemed to me, slipped stealthily through the bushes and disappeared.

The next instant I had recognized Hood. There was nothing very remarkable in this, but what moved my blood was a more curious recognition. Swift as the flight of a swallow there darted into my mind the recollection of another vision. I identified the memory. It came back upon me with an odd sense of perplexity and a still stranger feeling of fear where and when I had first encountered that lean and stealthy body. I had seen the man disappear in the same furtive fashion upon the banks of the stream in the valley below, and what had then arrested my vague memory now also again attack-JOHN McSWEYN. W. E. SMITH. Can furnish Southern Oak, ed it, but this ame with certain knowledge. This was the man who had been with Mr. Kesteven upon the day on which I had first encountered him in

> the wood. The fact astounded me, thrilled through my warm limbs to the very marrow of my bones. And yet it seemed too absurd to be accepted on the spur of a moment's fancy. I stood pondering in a state of excitement and then, hastily turning about, ran in the

direction of the castle. What was Hodd's business there? I asked myself the question without the assurance of an answer. There was really but little to arouse my suspicions, and yet I was agog with curiosity. I entered the castle courtyard and opened the door of the dining hall. The first object that met my eyes was Montgomery sprawling upon the table and stertorous with drunken sleep. Plates were laid for two, and empty bottles upon the table testified to a generous lunch. Leaving him for a moment, I ran upstairs and pushed open my door silently. As I did so there was an exclamation, and I entered and came face to face with Captain Sercombe.



Montgomery sprawled upon the table in a drunken sleep. He held one hand in his tightly buttoned coat and looked at me with a watchful eye.

"This is very regrettable, Mr. Great-The apology sounded so ludicrous in my ears that I broke into a tiny laugh and thereby relieved myself. The time

for action was come. "I must apologize," said I, "for my unexpected return, the more particularon important business." "Not at all," he said pleasantly; "not

at all. I had quite finished." "Then if you have been successful, Captain Sercombe," said I as pleasantly as himself, "I think we had better understand each other at once." A slight smile ruffled his puffy face, but he kept his hand in its hiding

place. "That will be unnecessary, sir, I assure you," he rejoined. "I fear I am a bad hand at crib cracking." The effrontery of the man amazed me, but I showed nothing in the face Greatorex, that we had really better

that I wore. "Why not give it up?" I asked civil. What you don't know, despite smoothly. He shrugged his shoulders. "Almost

you persuade me,

combe, I have heard." and glancing at the window. A twitch- gracious majesty our sovereign queen, ing of his mouth belied his calm appearance, and I was disposed to believe that he contemplated a desperate move. I sat down upon a chair by the door and surveyed him coolly.

"May I ask," said I, "if you have found this sort of thing usually profitable?" I nodded at my bureau. "I was in hopes this would prove so," he answered smoothly. "I am

not an old hand at it." "But you have able assistants?" 1

"Come, come, Mr. Greatorex," he replied, with a touch of impatience in his voice, "let us get to business!" "By all means," said I. "You will find me a most reasonable man. In

my profession I have had occasion several times to deal with your profes-If I had expected him to wince at

this undisguised thrust I was doomed to disappointment. A smile flitted over his face, and that was all. He withdrew his hand from the breast of his coat. "May I sit down?" he inquired in his most courteous manner.

"Come," said I, "it is rather I who should apply to you for permission." "We will not stand upon ceremony," he observed, whipping a chair deftly beneath him.

"A very natural sentiment upon your

part," I retorted ironically. "Mr. Greatorex," said he, with his smile and now thoroughly in charge of himself, "there is one thing I pride myself upon, and that is command of my

"A very useful trait-in your profession," I remarked.

The captain took a cigarette from his case. "You will not mind," said he. "The window will air your bedroom." And he puffed the smoke from his nostrils, and it hung about his ragged red mustache. I waited, my eyes fastened on him.

"What are you going to do?" he asked presently.

His own expression carried not a trace of anxiety. "In these cases," I made answer,

"there is a natural course with which her majesty's dutiful subjects do not usually tamper. For my own part I confess that I was at first tempted to take matters into my own hands, but on reflection I do not think I shall interrupt the ordinary course of justice." "Ah." he said, taking the cigarette from his mouth, "you will call in the

I nodded, and a slow smile illumined his red face. "I think I can persuade you to forego to destroy that inequality. I put no

that satisfaction," he said, "though I may possibly find it more difficult to prevent your earlier resolution." "I am entirely in your hands," said I,

smiling to him, for indeed I was now chuckling to myself not only at the man's equanimity, which was quite to my taste, but at my own mastery of there is room for exchange of friendly the situation. He looked at me inquiringly, and

was amazed to see the difference in his eyes now. They were tense, sharp, and every trace of idle indifference had left | mine.

"You are aware, Mr. Greatorex, what we are quarreling over?"

"I assure you, my dear sir," said I, "that I am quarreling over nothing. am sitting at your feet. Pray contin- you the proper heir. But what are we

"I think," he said dryly, "that we are beating about the bush. This game of tierce and carte is very well for novices, but we are got beyond that and come to actual quarters. Come, I think this air of yours is a mere affectation which has played its part."

I said nothing save, "I am waiting to hear you, Captain Sercombe." "You are aware," said he, "what you have in this house." He was watching me very carefully, ready, I did not

I showed my ignorance of his meaning. "I know what you and your friends are after," said I. He heaved a sigh of rellef. "Then I table my cards," said he

doubt, to cry off in another direction if

"You have a piece of paper which I "Exactly," I answered, casting a look at my open bureau. He laughed. "Oh, I will admit you have the better

of me so far," he exclaimed. "But we are not yet at the end of the campaign." "No," said I; "not until the police

from Raymond arrive." He leaned forward and tapped me on the arm very earnestly. "You mistake me," he said. "I think,

Mr. Greatorex, that you do not quite understand the position." "Upon my soul," said I, "I believe

you are right. When a common burglar shall preach to his victim one must indeed revise one's notions of the

"You are determined to be flippant, Mr. Greatorex," he replied severely, "and so I will disillusionize you. You have inherited this property from Mr. Kesteven?" I bowed.

"A gentleman with whom I had not the pleasure of personal acquaintance," he resumed, "but whom I have reasons for considering a very discreet and tenacious man. Now, why, Mr. Greatorex," he said-and he stared at me dispassionately-"now, why do you suppose that Mr. Kesteven did not employ these police of yours?"

The question certainly took me aback. I had never considered it, If the old gentleman had feared an attack, why had he not taken precauly as I have no doubt interrupted you tions against it? But I was not inclined to make a poor appearance in the argument, and so "He had excellent reasons," I said cheerfully. "You say well," said he, nodding, but

scrutinizing me keenly. "Excellent, indeed, with which, since you are obviously acquainted, you will no doubt understand a good many things which would otherwise puzzle you." Here I confess he had me again in his hands. "Quite so," I stammered

as bravely as possible. He laughed softly. "I think, Mr. understand each other and not be so your brave profession of knowledge, is that the treasure disposed in this house

is treasure trove—that is, that it was "Fishing," I resumed, "is a more not the property of the late Mr. Kesteven and was not in his power to bequeath, and consequently is not now "No doubt," he responded equably your property, but the property of her less a somewhat infinitesimal percentage which we may term salvage. That, I take it, is a statement which is new

> It was, indeed, and now that the facts were revealed to me suddenly and as by magic the many mysteries of the past few weeks were illumined and grew plain. I kept my countenance as well as I might, for all my

> astonishment, and then-"This is very interesting," said I, "and I am in your debt for the news." "Bah, Mr. Greatorex!" he interrupted. "Haven't I said that we must dispense with civilities? Time passes, I have much before me, and we have not concluded our bargain."

> "Bargain!" I echoed. . "Why, certainly," said the captain, grinning pleasantly. "I take it that we are enemies, but that we make war upon terms."

"State your terms," said I coldly, having now an inkling as to the new situation.

"That is better," said he approvingly. "In the first place, this contest is a private one, carried on by both sides without public assistance." "That is very well indeed," said I,

"for a party, numbers unknown, against one man. "If I have gathered any impression

of your character, Mr. Greatorex," ob-



'I give you three minutes to be free o

served the captain dryly, "during a few

days' acquaintance, you will be prompt embargo upon your numbers." "That is good of you," said I sarcas-

"Secondly," continued he, unmoved and counting on his fingers, "there is no reason why this campaign should breed ill will. I like you, and off duty

"You forget," I said sharply, "in what relation I find you. There can be no peace between your profession and

He smiled. "The incident was an unpleasant necessity," said he airily. "But come, Mr. Greatorex, this attitude of high morals would be very well in you were but both upon the same level? Robbers, bandits, what you will, certainly with no great reason for pride, and at least I face the position and would ask \*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*\*

you to do the same." The words of the man completely abashed me. And when I considered, he spoke no more than the truth. He said truly when he described us as upon the same level. We were conspiring each in his way against the laws of the country and risking our liberties in an illegal attempt to steal what the custom of the kingdom had claimed as the spoils of the crown. I will admit that the captain's reasoning confounded me, and I was left staring hopelessly at the situation in a kind of humiliation against which I kicked in vain. Yet I was not for his seeing so

much as a wink or a blink in me. "You must not misunderstand me," said I after a pause in which I digested these reflections, "I put my value on my own situation, and I am willing to agree to these terms, so far, at least, as they consort with my own inclinations. You will not look for a greater consideration than I would bestow upon you apart from this struggle in

which we are involved?" (Continued next week.)

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35	From Port Hope 2.05 p.
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23	From Port Hope 6.23 p.
54	From Whitby 7.30 p.
24	From Toronto 8.05 p.
	From Whitby 8.45 p.
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1	From Belleville 9.45 p.
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34	For Port Hope 6.00 a.:
51	For Toronto 6.30 a.:
0	For Belleville 7.20 a.
21	For Toronto 9.15 a.n
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