The Green Seal

By CHARLES EDMONDS WALK

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CHAPTER XVIII.

As a matter of sentiment, I had kept all my father's more intimate personal effects; among which may be included his papers, ledgers, diaries, a few books, and the like. These were all in my rooms at the San Gabriel Club.

So it was in the privacy of my sitting room, after dinner, that I once more got out the arranged and ticketed packets of papers and various memoranda, and made myself comfortable in a sleepy-hollow chair, the papers and a shaded cluster of electrics on the library table at my elbow.

This that I had set for myself was a disheartening task, because when the pater had not written in a species of shorthand peculiar to himself and positively indecipherable to others, he had jotted down the details he wanted to remember in a series of abbreviations that hid far more than they revealed.

Not until I came upon the initials "P.S.," did I feel the least thrill of expectancy; then shortly I encountered the name "Jim"; and by-and-by I began to notice that, during a period of years—eleven, as near as I could make out—these initials, with the name "Jim" occurring only twice more, were the subject of a good many comments of one sort or another.

Interspersed throughout this same period was another symbol of identification, which—something I discovered later on practically demonstrated that they referred to the same individual—were the frequently recurring abbreviations, "Syl" and "Maj." They occupied almost as much space as the others—with this significant difference: the entries wherein "J.S." and "Jim" figured all had to do with the exchange of money—pretty stiff amounts they were, too, sometimes—or of bills of goods or shipments of same. I do not mean to convey the idea that there were no other initials or names; on the contrary, his diaries bristled with them; but their importance seemed too remote to engage my time. But between "J.S." and my father there seemed to have been some sort of partnership.

Naturally enough, at this stage the conviction forced itself upon me that this individual must have been no other than James Strang. Could I have been right? Anyhow, I made a notation to this effect.

On the other hand, the relations between "Syl" and the pater, while close, appeared to have been mainly of a personal nature; most of the entries wherein he figured manifestly had to do with various social engagements. That "Syl" was not a woman was demonstrated when my mother's name was coupled with "Mr. & Mrs. Syl" in a reminder of some pleasurable excursion in the near future.

"Syl," however, was not altogether a social butterfly, as a few other entries testified. He and father seemed to have been interested together in at least two business enterprises of considerable magnitude, the nature of which it was impossible to interpret.

And one other entry made me speculate a good deal. It may be transcribed thus, though the scratches were hard to decipher: "¼ intst set asd Marian if alv—if hve to mrdr Chink." "One quarter interest," I interpreted it, "to be set aside for Marian, if alive—if I have to murder the Chink."

Who was Miss Marian, and why the doubts as to whether she was dead or alive? One-quarter interest in what? Why the necessity of murdering any Chinaman in her behalf? This scant, unsatisfying scrawl seemed to me fairly to palpitate with romance; I wondered much about Marian.

Not until I had come to a bundle of newspaper clippings, however, did anything like genuine enlightenment begin to yield itself. These slips were neither marked or dated, but they were old enough to be tinged with yellow, and I surmised that they were from English newspapers printed in Shanghai and Hongkong.

One, manifestly the first announcement of an expedition, identified "Syl."

It appeared that at some early date, not mentioned, an exploring party was to start for Tibet from Nanking, where preparations had been going forward for months, and ascend the Yang-tse-kiang river as far as Chanking in Sze Chuen province. After having travelled thus far—upward of 2,000 miles—the party would be brought only to the point of departure! Something of an appalling undertaking, it struck me from every point of view.

At the last-mentioned point a camel and yak train, with a store of fresh supplies, would be in waiting. Thence northwestward to Ching-too the party was to proceed, where a second caravan had been arranged for.

From Ching-too, still continuing northwestward, it was the hope of the explorers that the Noktomtchi Mountains might be penetrated, and access to an uncharted and practically unknown region of Tibet's high and measureless tableland be thus gained.

After leaving Ching-too the party would be thrown entirely upon its own resources and the doubtful hospitality of the natives—a medley of mixed, wild tribes—not alone for the success of the enterprise, but for their very lives.

When one considers that the distances to be traversed were gauged by thousands of miles into the heart of a terra incognita, that even the first and by far the easiest stage had to be covered without the least comfort or convenience known to civilization save such as the party might carry with them, that the remaining stages at best offered roads in name only and the most primitive means of conveyance—when one pauses to consider all these details, then something of the stupendous nature of what this little party of two-score intrepid spirits faced may be dimly imagined.

It was a journey measured by years, not by months. Every second of twenty-four hours was fraught with the possibility of some fresh hardship, some unforeseen peril. Yet they seemed to be setting forth with a certain marked cheerfulness, and even manifested impatience at unavoidable delays in starting.

Thus far I read with kindling interest and admiration; and then I was all at once struck aghast: one of the party had been—a lady! Think of that!

The expedition had been under the auspices of the British Government, and in command of Major Hector Sylvester of the British Army.

Here, then, was "Syl"; the lady was his wife.

Reading further, I learned much of the honors that had been achieved by Major Sylvester and his wife as Asiatic explorers. It seemed that the couple were childless, and that she accompanied him upon all his journeys, sharing all hardships and dangers with as much resourcefulness, courage and endurance as had ever been displayed by her distinguished husband.

Mrs. Sylvester, I here assumed, was Marian.

If these were the sort of people the pater numbered among his intimates, I need not have hesitated about turning over any pages of his past. I flushed with shame at the recollection.

As is to be imagined, the newspaper accounts made the most of unavoidable hardships and dangers to be encountered, and not the least of these had been the uncertain temper of the natives along the populous reaches of the Yang-tse-kiang, where government protection was not to be relied upon at any time. But now the article hinted at unrest among the people, of sporadic uprisings here and there and yonder, quelled only after fighting and bloodshed, the details of which were hushed or glossed over by native officials.

Each member of the party had been chosen for his especial fitness for some one of the several purposes of the expedition—which, briefly, had been to make geological and geographical surveys and ethnological tabulations. Here and there among the personnel I encountered a name that was not familiar even to me. And then one swam within my vision that stamped these old clippings with the utmost consequence—Lao Wing Fu.

No expense had been spared to meet every contingency that experience and knowledge of possible conditions could foresee. Guides had been brought down to Chan-ling from as far within the region to be traversed as any white man had ever penetrated; and among this branch of the party's personnel was mentioned the name of the Chinese.

I dropped the hand holding the clipping to my knee and sat staring long at nothing.

Lao Wing Fu! Why, he, a member of this very party, was at this moment in Los Angeles—"boss" of our Chinatown! It seemed incredible—too astounding for belief.

I turned to the other clippings, pawing them over excitedly to find a comprehensible sequence in time, and detailed experiences.

By and by I succeeded. I learned that in spite of all the many obstacles and handicaps, of all the forebodings and prophesies of failure and disaster, the progress of the party seemed to have been expedited instead of hindered. Accidents had been few and of minor consequence; transportation was invariably ready at hand; coolies showed a willingness to be hired and driven that was commented on as extraordinary. Blessings of good fortune seemed, veritably, to have been showered upon the expedition.

I transcribe one of the shorter clippings:

Advices have come down the river from Wu-chang of the Sylvester Expedition's safe arrival there. All are reported to have been in excellent health and spirits and greatly elated and encouraged by the ease and speed with which this stage of the journey was accomplished.

Many compliments were bestowed upon Mr. Lao Wing Fu, the brilliant young student of the Pekin University, for the genius displayed by him in managing the natives along the route, a gift that immeasurably facilitates the party's daily advance toward their distant goal. Mr. Fu is said to exercise a marked influence over all classes of people so far encountered, that has been of incalculable benefit to the intrepid explorers, and Major Sylvester is unstinting in his praise of the young student's tact, diplomacy and resourcefulness.

Did this "brilliant young student," I could not help wondering, know aught of our Western institution, the press-agent?

A later item stated, briefly: "Advices from as far west as Ichang announce the safe arrival and departure of the Sylvester Expedition."

This was the farthest the newspapers were able to follow their course; as far as the outer world was concerned, the Sylvester Expedition, apparently with the star of good-luck still hovering above them, passed into silences, into the unknown.

A year or more must have elapsed before civilization again heard anything of them; and then rumors—grave, dark, ugly rumors—began to drift into various mission stations, later to be gathered together and verified at Shanghai, and subsequently embodied in a formal report at Hongkong and forwarded to the British War Office.

For the brave little band had, after all, met with appalling disaster. Reports in many instances were conflicting, but after painstakingly reading through them all, I noted down upon a pad what I took to be a pretty accurate picture of the details of the party's fate.

It appeared that good fortune actually had followed them as far as Li-fan, a settlement north of Ching-too where the last supply train was encountered. At Li-fan the contemplated northern route had been discovered to be impracticable for caravan travel and guides were found to show the party a way westward through the Snowy Mountains to the great Kham Valley. They could not abandon the pack animals, for without them many indispensable instruments would also have to be sacrificed.

Here hardships and perils began to pile up and overwhelm them in earnest. The mountains were crossed, but only after the loss of twelve of the party—more than a fourth—and fully one-third of the animals.

The party now found themselves, with infinite labor and a succession of mishaps—and, alas! all too frequently recurring fatalities—obliged to find a way across leagues of salt marshes that were occasionally relieved only by illimitable expanses of wind-swept plains. The inhabitants of this bleak, forbidding land, roving Drupa tribesmen for the most part, were friendly enough disposed, but the best they had to offer was so unspeakably wretched that the party shunned aid from this source excepting in cases of dire emergency.

Later on, those who survived, before starvation overtook them, were glad enough to find and partake of even this mean hospitality.

And remember—one of the party was a lady!

After many weeks of this sort of travel, the decimated and sadly worn little band literally stumbled upon the hamlet of Yalung, in the Di River Valley. Their condition was pitiable in the extreme. Wretched as they found conditions to be at this primitive place, their journey would have ended then and there had not the few inhabitants been generous with the little they had to offer.

For the party had reached the end of its endurance; a long rest was forced upon them. Only the strongest and most seasoned had survived, and their condition was distressing beyond the power of words to describe.

And now picture to yourself—amid these surroundings, at the mercy of an uncouth lot of barbarians, not one of whom ever before beheld a white face, a daughter was born to Mrs. Sylvester! It seemed so dreadful that I was obliged to pause a while in my reading.

(To be continued.)

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For instance, supply your name and address to the first firm on the list, a friend's name and address to the second firm on the list and so on.

Next week's issue of this paper will show another list of firms to whom you can send a further list of names and addresses.

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Nineteen Hundred Washer, Toronto.
Channel Chemical Co., Toronto.
Canada Permanent Mortgage Corporation, Toronto.
Home Bank of Canada, 8 King St., West, Toronto.
Standard Reliance Mortgage Corporation, Toronto.
Home Furniture Co., Queen St. East, Toronto.
Benjamin Moore & Co., Lloyd St., Toronto.
Rose Coal Co., 59 Yonge St., Toronto

The Farm

How to Use the Babcock Test.

The Babcock test has served as the necessary stimulant to raise dairying from a disliked sideline to a profession worthy of the efforts of well-trained men. It has placed dairying on a scientific basis, has promoted factory efficiency and has stimulated the breeding up of productive herds.

Ten necessary steps in making the Babcock test are as follows: Mix the milk thoroughly and take out a small sample. Do not let the sample evaporate or curdle before testing. Fill the pipette to the mark with milk. Empty the pipette without loss into a Babcock test bottle. Add sulphuric acid from the measuring cylinder to the test bottle. Mix the acid and milk thoroughly by shaking the bottle. Place bottles in the centrifuge cover and whirl for five minutes. Add hot water and whirl again twice one minute each. Read and record the per cent of fat in the neck of the bottle. Empty the test bottles and wash thoroughly.

Provide a quart or more of milk, with which to practice sampling and testing. Mix it thoroughly by pouring several times from one vessel to another or by stirring vigorously. Larger quantities of milk require more stirring. While the milk is still in motion, dip out half a teacupful and pour this at once into a small, clean, dry bottle. Fill the bottle nearly full, and stopper tightly to prevent evaporation. After stirring the milk again for a short time, take out another sample, place it in another bottle and stopper tightly as before. If the milk was thoroughly mixed each time these two samples will show exactly the same per cent. of fat by the Babcock test, provided the test bottles are accurately marked on the neck. Label the bottles with the name of the cow or owner.

The Small Sample

taken for the test must contain exactly the same proportion of fat as the entire contents of the pail or can. If milk stands for even a few minutes the cream will begin to rise and the top layer of the can will contain more fat than the rest of the milk. If the top part is used for the test, it will indicate a higher per cent. of fat than is present in the entire lot of milk. It is incorrect to take a sample for testing out of a pail, can or bottle without first thoroughly mixing the milk by stirring or pouring it from one vessel to another. When two people get different results in testing any lot of milk it is usually because one or both of them did not first stir the milk before taking the sample. In any case where the accuracy of the results must be proven, it is important that two or more separate samples be taken at different times while stirring. Each sample should then be tested by itself. If the results differ, it shows some error in the work and if the difference is over one tenth of one per cent., the sampling and testing should be repeated in a more careful manner.

If it is necessary to keep the milk samples several hours or days before testing, a preservative should be added to prevent curdling and the bottles should be kept tightly corked.

Thoroughly mix the sample to be tested, then draw the pipette nearly full of milk by sucking with the lips. Quickly place the forefinger over the pipette before the milk runs down the mark. If the finger is dry, it is easy, by changing the pressure on the end of the tube, to let the milk run down slowly and to stop it exactly at the mark. The tip of the pipette is placed in the top of the test bottle held in an inclined position and the milk is allowed to run down one side of the neck of the bottle, without filling the neck completely. In this way, exactly eighteen grams (17.6 cc.) of milk are transferred to the test bottle without loss.

The Beginner

should practice sampling and testing milk until he is well acquainted with every necessary step. He should be able to make several tests on the same sample of milk which do not differ in reading by more than one or two tenths of a per cent.

The milk in the test bottle should not be warmer than 60-70 degrees F., just before the acid is added. Milk fresh from the cow must be cooled before acid is added. Fill the acid measure up to the mark and pour into the test bottle. Hold the bottle in a slanting position so the acid will run down the neck and under the milk. Rotate the bottle slightly. Mix until the liquid in the bottle is of a brown color. Place all the bottles in the centrifuge and whirl for five minutes. Stop the machine gradually. Add hot water to the bottles with the pipette until each is full to the base of the neck. Whirl again for two minutes. Add hot water until each bottle is full within an inch of the top. Whirl again for one minute. The bottles are then taken out of the machine and the per cent. of fat is read from the neck of each bottle while still hot. By the aid of the dividers the per cent. of fat is read directly from the neck of the bottle.

The neck of the standard milk-test bottle is divided into ten large divisions, and each of the latter into five small divisions. Each large division is one per cent. and each small division two tenths of one per cent.

If the butter-fat fills three large spaces there is three per cent. of fat, or three pounds of fat to the hundred of milk and would be written three per cent. If the fat column covers five large and two small spaces, the reading would be five and four tenths, written 5.4 per cent.

GERMANS FACE HARD WINTER.

May Suffer Vicissitudes That Befell Napoleon.

Predictions that the approaching winter will be very severe have inspired comparisons between the German campaign in Russia and Napoleon's Russian campaign of 1812.

Abbe Moreaux, of the Bourges (France) Observatory, points out that a curve indicating the European localities where the average temperature in January is zero centigrade, or 32 above zero Fahrenheit would pass along the coast of Norway, protected by the gulf stream from greater cold, ascend abruptly along the west coast of Denmark, and follow a line considerably westward from Berlin, turning eastward in the region of Trieste to the Black and Caspian Seas. Another curve marking a zone where the average temperature is 14 degrees above zero Fahrenheit would comprise Berlin, Vilna, Riga, Dvinsk, Moscow and Petrograd. To make up this average, however, zones of greater cold are comprised, the maximum at Petrograd being 38 below zero, and at Moscow 47 below zero Fahrenheit.

Examining the situation from a meteorological point of view, Abbe Moreaux finds confirmation of the prediction of naturalists in reviewing, in his opinion, a period of cold winters, and he thinks that the German soldiers may experience the same vicissitudes as those that cost Napoleon 450,000 men from the "Grand Army."

Larrey, who wore a thermometer during Napoleon's Russian campaign, has left records showing that as early as November 14 the "Grand Army" had to endure a temperature of 12 below zero Fahrenheit on the line from Vilna to Moscow—the retreat having been begun October 18. From November 17 the thermometer went down rapidly to 22 below zero; December 3 to reach 34 below zero when the retreating army reached Malodecyn. Equally low temperatures, according to Abbe Moreaux, are almost certain to prevail over considerable parts of the German front if it is maintained on the present line and are almost certain to overtake the German forces in retreat unless they abandon their positions immediately.

Boiling the Baby.

A newspaper calls attention to a nursing bottle advertisement, which concludes with the words:

"When a baby is done drinking it must be unscrewed and laid in a cool place under a tap. If the baby does not thrive on fresh milk, it should be boiled."

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