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TRY IT TO-DAY

GREENMANTLE

BY JOHN BUCHAN.

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CHAPTER XI.—(Cont'd.)

The leader flung some stuff into the brazier and a great fan of blue light flared up. He was weaving circles, and he was singing something shrill and high, whilst his companions made a chorus with their deep monotone. I can't tell you what the dance was. I had seen the Russian ballet just before the war, and one of the men in it reminded me of this man. But the dancing was the least part of it. It was neither sound nor movement nor scent that wrought the spell, but something far more potent. In an instant I found myself reft away from the present with its dull dangers, and looking at a world all young and fresh and beautiful. The gaudy drop-scene had vanished. It was a window I was looking from, and I was gazing at the finest landscape on earth, lit by the pure clean light of morning.

It seemed to be part of the veld, but like no veld I had ever seen. It was wider and wilder and more gracious. Indeed, I was looking at my first youth. I was feeling the kind of immortal light-heartedness which only a boy knows in the dawning of his days. I had no longer any fear of these magic-makers. They were kindly wizards, who had brought me into fairyland.

Then slowly from the silence there distilled drops of music. They came like water falling a long way into a cup, each the essential quality of pure sound. We, with our elaborate harmonies have forgotten the charm of single notes. The African natives know it, and I remember a learned man once telling me that the Greeks had the same art. Those silver bells broke out of infinite space, so exquisite and perfect that no mortal words could have been fitted to them. That was the music, I expect, that the morning stars made when they sang together.

Slowly, very slowly, it changed. The glow passed from blue to purple, and then to an angry red. Bit by bit the notes spun together till they had made a harmony—a fierce, restless harmony. And I was conscious again of the skin-clad dancers beckoning out of their circle.

There was no mistake about the meaning now. All the daintiness and youth had fled, and passion was beating in the air—terrible, savage passion, which belonged neither to day nor night, life nor death, but to the half-world between them. I suddenly felt the dancers as monstrous, inhuman, devilish. The thick scents that floated from the brazier seemed to have a tang of new-shed blood. Cries broke from the hearers—cries of anger and lust and terror. I heard a woman sob, and Peter, who is as tough as any mortal, took tight hold of my arm.

I now realized that these Companions of the Rosy Hours were the only thing in the world to fear. Rasta and Stumm seemed feeble simpletons by contrast. The window I had been looking out of was changed to a prison wall—I could see the mortar between the massive blocks. In a second these devils would be smelling out their enemies like some foul witch-doctors. I felt the burning eyes of their leader looking for me in the gloom. Peter was praying audibly beside me, and I could have choked him. His infernal chatter would reveal us, for it seemed to me that there was no one in the place except us and the magic-workers.

Then suddenly the spell was broken. The door was flung open and a great gust of icy wind swirled through the hall, driving clouds of ashes from the braziers. I heard loud voices without, and a hubbub began inside. For a moment it was quite dark, and then some one lit one of the flare lamps by the stage. It revealed nothing but the common squalor of a low saloon—white faces, sleepy eyes, and frowsy heads. The drop-scene was there in all its tawdriness.

The Companions of the Rosy Hours had gone. But at the door stood men in uniform. I heard a German a long way off murmur, "Enver's body-guards," and I heard him distinctly; for, though I could not see clearly, my hearing was desperately acute. That is often the way when you suddenly come out of a swoon.

The place emptied like magic. Turk and German tumbled over each other, while Kuprasso wailed and wept. No one seemed to stop them, and then I saw the reason. Those guards had come for us. This must be Stumm at last. The authorities had tracked us down, and it was all up with Peter and me.

A sudden revulsion leaves a man with low vitality. I didn't seem to care greatly. We were done, and there was an end of it. It was Kismet, the act of God, and there was nothing for it but to submit. I hadn't a flicker of a thought of escape or resistance. The game was utterly and absolutely over.

A man who seemed to be a sergeant pointed to us and said something to Kuprasso, who nodded. We got heavily to our feet and stumbled towards them. With one on each side of us we crossed the yard, walked through the dark passage and the empty shop, and out into the snowy street. There was a closed carriage waiting which they motioned us to get into. It looked exactly like the Black Maria.

Both of us sat still, like truant schoolboys, with our hands on our knees. I didn't know where I was going and I didn't care. We seemed to be rumbling up the hill, and then I caught the glare of lighted streets.

"This is the end of it, Peter," I said.

"*Ja*, Cornelis," he replied, and that was all our talk.

By and by—hours later it seemed—we stopped. Some one opened the door and we got out, to find ourselves in a courtyard with a huge dark building around. The prison, I guessed, and I wondered if they would give us blankets, for it was perishing cold.

We entered a door, and found ourselves in a big stone hall. It was quite warm, which made me more hopeful about our cells. A man in some kind of uniform pointed to the staircase, up which we plodded wearily. My mind was too blank to take clear impressions, or in any way to forecast the future. Another warder met us and took us down a passage till we halted at a door. He stood aside and motioned us to enter.

I guessed that this was the governor's room, and we should be put through our first examination. My head was too stupid to think, and I made up my mind to keep perfectly mum. Yes, even if they tried thumbscrews. I had no kind of a story, but I resolved not to give anything away. As I turned the handle I wondered idly what kind of sallow Turk or bulging-necked German we should find inside.

It was a pleasant room, with a polished wood floor and a big fire burning on the hearth. Beside the fire a man lay on a couch, with a little table drawn up beside him. On that table was a small glass of milk and a number of Patience cards spread in rows.

I stared blankly at the spectacle, till I saw a second figure. It was the man in the skin-cap, the leader of the dancing maniacs. Both Peter and I backed sharply at the sight and then stood stock still.

For the dancer crossed the room in two strides and gripped both of my hands.

"Dick, old man," he cried, "I'm most awfully glad to see you again!"

CHAPTER XII.

FOUR MISSIONARIES SEE LIGHT IN THEIR MISSION.

A spasm of incredulity, a vast relief, and that sharp joy which comes of reaction chased each other across my mind. I had come suddenly out of very black waters into an unbelievable calm. I dropped into the nearest chair and tried to grapple with something far beyond words.

"Sandy," I said, as soon as I got my breath, "you're an incarnate devil. You've given Peter and me the fright of our lives."

"It was the only way, Dick. If I hadn't come mewing like a tom-cat at your heels yesterday, Rasta would have had you long before you got to your hotel. You two have given me a pretty anxious time, and it took some doing to get you safe here. However, that is all over now. Make yourselves at home, my children."

"Over!" I cried incredulously, for my wits were wool-gathering. "What place is this?"

"You may call it my humble home"—it was Blenkiron's sleek voice that spoke. "We've been preparing for you, Major, but it was only yesterday I heard of your friend."

I introduced Peter.

"Mr. Pienaar," said Blenkiron, "pleased to meet you. Well, as I was observing, you're safe enough here, but you've cut it mighty fine. Officially, a Dutchman called Brandt was to be arrested this afternoon and handed over to the German authorities. When Germany begins to trouble about that Dutchman she will find difficulty in getting the body; but such are the languid ways of an Oriental despotism. Meantime the Dutchman will be no more. He will have ceased upon the midnight without pain, as your poet sings."

"But I don't understand," I stammered. "Who arrested us?"

"My men," said Sandy. "We have a bit of a graft here, and it wasn't difficult to manage it. Old Moellendorff will be nosing after the business to-morrow, but he will find the mystery too deep for him. That is the advantage of a Government run by a pack of adventurers. But, by Jove, Dick, we hadn't any time to spare. If Rasta had got you, or the Germans had had the job of lifting you, your goose would have been jolly well cooked. I had some unquiet hours this morning."

The thing was too deep for me. I looked at Blenkiron, shuffling his Patience cards with his old sleepy smile, and Sandy, dressed like some bandit in melodrama, his lean face as brown as a nut, his bare arms all tattooed with crimson rings, and the fox pelt drawn tight over brow and ears. It was still a nightmare world, but the dream was getting pleasanter. Peter said not a word, but I could see his eyes heavy with his own thoughts.

(To be continued.)

Santiago, Chili, has a radio broadcasting station.

A mysterious "army" of white ants has caused considerable damage in the South of France, and colonies of these insects have now been discovered in Paris.

Children up to 12 years of age have been photographed standing on the giant leaves, six to eight feet wide, of the Victoria Regia water-lily plants in Kew Gardens, London.

Telegraphs in Uganda are not always reliable, as the natives covet and often cut down the copper wire for making into bracelets, necklaces, and leg-bands.

Woman's Sphere

DELECTABLE CORN DISHES.

Corn and tomatoes always make a tasty combination. This one is different:

Tomatoes stuffed with corn—Grate the corn from six ears and add to it half a green pepper chopped fine, also half a small onion, likewise chopped; melt a tablespoonful of butter in a frying pan and turn these vegetables into it and toss them about until the corn begins to brown slightly. Meantime scald, peel and scoop the centres from six medium sized tomatoes; fill with the corn mixture, scatter bread crumbs and bits of butter over the top and bake in a hot oven until the tomatoes are done.

Corn Oysters—This is a good supper dish for cool evenings or when something tasty and substantial is desired. It may be made from corn that is a little too old for boiling, and will be very nice. Grate the corn, and to a pint of pulp add two well-beaten eggs, a tablespoonful of melted butter, half a teaspoonful of salt, and enough flour to make a rather stiff batter, sifting one and a half teaspoonfuls of baking powder with the flour. A little milk may be added if desired. Drop from the end of a spoon into boiling fat and fry to a rich, nut brown. Drain well and serve hot. These fritters are truly delicious served with maple syrup, or plain sugar syrup, though usually regarded as a meat substitute.

Corn and Cheese Souffle—Here is another corn dish which may very acceptably take the place of meat. A large cupful of grated green corn is required for its making, also half a green pepper chopped fine and a cupful of grated cheese. Cook the pepper for five minutes in a generous tablespoonful of butter, then remove it and add two tablespoonfuls of flour to the butter and cook these to the bubbling point. Now pour in a cupful of rich milk and cook till smooth, stir in the corn, cheese and fried pepper and add a mere grating of onion. Cook for a few moments, then whip in two well-beaten egg yolks and season to suit the taste. Finally fold in the whites of the eggs beaten to a stiff dry froth, pour into a buttered baking dish and cook in a moderate oven for half an hour, or until the souffle is firm in the centre. Serve immediately, for a dish of this sort will not bear waiting.

LOLLYPOP DOLLIES.

Some thing that will please the children without much expenditure of either time or money is what many mothers are considering for that approaching birthday or any other party, an occasion of thrilling importance to the youngsters.

Buy a quantity of lollypops and some gayly colored crepe paper, or use the odds and ends of such paper you may already have in the house. Cut circles of white or pink tinted paper the size of the candy and fasten it over the waxed paper in which each lollypop is wrapped with two or three touches of glue. Next mark on these circles all sorts of funny faces. From the gay paper fashion bonnets and dresses held in place by bits of narrow ribbon and touches of glue. Thrust the end of the stick through an empty spool and you have a charming doll that can stand alone. Endearing colored babies may be made by using black paper for the faces.

These lollypop dollies may be used as place cards or to decorate individual servings of ice cream. They may be marching in file round the table or as cake decorations. And in the end they posses the useful quality of being edible.

A SIMPLE FROCK FOR A YOUNG MISS.

4117. Smart belt extensions on this dress, effected by slashes at the sides, are an outstanding style feature. The sleeve may be in wrist or elbow length.

The Pattern is cut in 4 Sizes: 6, 8, 10 and 12 years. A 10-year size requires 3½ yards of 32-inch material. Serge, crepe knit and jersey weaves, also taffeta are attractive materials for this style.

Pattern mailed to any address on receipt of 15c in silver or stamps, by the Wilson Publishing Co., 73 West Adelaide st., Toronto. Allow two weeks for receipt of pattern.

On Chart Room.

The topmast radiator on a great ocean liner is generally fixed in the chart room, some 80 feet above the boilers. Such a radiator receives more heat than those on the lower decks, as it is necessary for the officers and men to be kept well warm.

Blind and without hands, William McPherson, of Kansas, "reads" his Bible by means of his tongue, which is sufficiently sensitive to feel the Braille type.

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Just add milk to contents of package. Boil for a minute—and serve.

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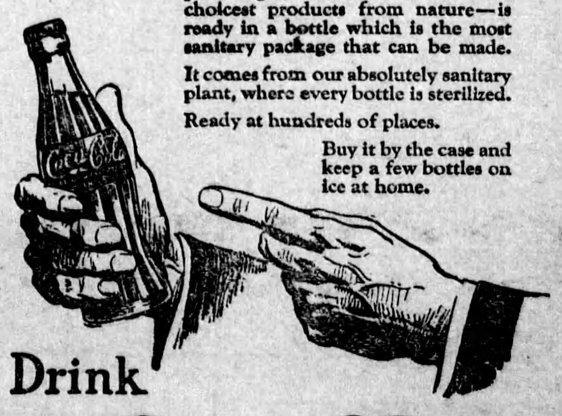

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