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GREENMANTLE

BY JOHN BUCHAN.

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CHAPTER XVI.—(Cont'd.)

I said a word to the others, and we dismounted and tethered our horses at the near end of the courtyard. I heard the low hum of voices from the cavalrymen by the stream, but they were three hundred yards off and could not see us. Peter was sent forward to scout in the courtyard. In the building itself there was but one window looking on the road, and that was in the upper floor. Meantime I crawled along beside the wall to where the car stood, and had a look at it. It was a splendid six-cylinder affair, brand-new, with the tires little worn. There were seven tins of petrol stacked behind, as well as spare tires, and, looking in, I saw map-cases and field-glasses strewn on the seats as if the owners had only got out for a minute to stretch their legs.

Peter came back and reported that the courtyard was empty. "There are men in the upper room," he said; "more than one, for I heard their voices. They are moving about restlessly, and may soon be coming out."

I reckoned that there was no time to be lost, so I told the others to slip down the road fifty yards beyond the caravanserai and be ready to climb in as I passed. I had to start the infernal thing, and there might be shooting.

I waited by the car till I saw them reach the right distance. I could hear voices from the second floor of the house and footsteps moving up and down. I was in a fever of anxiety, for any moment a man might come to the window. Then I flung myself on the starting handle and worked like a demon.

The cold made the job difficult, and my heart was in my mouth, for the noise in that quiet place must have woke the dead. Then, by the mercy of Heaven, the engines started, and I sprang to the driving seat, released the clutch, and opened the throttle. The great car shot forward, and I seemed to hear behind me shrill voices. A pistol bullet bored through my hat, and another buried itself in a cushion beside me.

In a second I was clear of the place and the rest of the party were embarking. Blenkiron got on the step and rolled himself like a sack of coals into the tonneau. Peter nipped up beside me, and Hussin scrambled in from the back over the folds of the hood. We had our baggage in our pockets and had nothing to carry.

Bullets dropped round us, but did no harm. Then I heard a report at my ear, and out of a corner of my eye saw Peter lower his pistol. Presently we were out of range, and, looking back, I saw three men gesticulating in the middle of the road.

"May the devil fly away with this pistol," said Peter ruefully. "I never could make good shooting with a little gun. Had I had my rifle . . ."

"What did you shoot for?" I asked in amazement. "We've got the fellows' car, and we don't want to do them any harm."

"It would have saved trouble had I had my rifle," said Peter, quietly. "The little man you call Rasta was there, and he knew you. I heard him cry your name. He is an angry little man, and I observe that on this road there is a telegraph."

CHAPTER XVII.

TROUBLE BY THE WATERS OF BABYLON.

From that moment I date the beginning of my madness. Suddenly I forgot all cares and difficulties of the present and future and became foolishly light-hearted. We were rushing towards the great battle where men were busy at my proper trade. I realized how much I had loathed the lonely days in Germany, and still more the dawdling week in Constantinople. Now I was clear of it all, and bound for the clash of armies. It didn't trouble me that we were on the wrong side of the battle line. I had a sort of instinct that the darker and wilder things grew the better chance for us.

"Seems to me," said Blenkiron, bending over me, "that this joy-ride is going to come to an untimely end pretty soon. Peter's right. That young man will set the telegraph going, and we'll be held up at the next township."

"He's got to get to a telegraphic office first," I answered. "That's where we have the pull on him. He's welcome to the screws we left behind, and if he finds an operator before the evening I'm the worst kind of Dutchman. I'm going to break all the rules and bucket this car for what she's worth. Don't you see that the nearer we get to Erzerum the safer we are?"

"I don't follow," he said slowly. "At Erzerum I reckon they'll be waiting for us with the handcuffs. Why in thunder couldn't those hairy ragamuffins keep the little cuss safe? Your record's a bit too precipitous, Major, for the most innocent-minded military boss."

"Do you remember what you said about the Germans being open to bluff? Well, I'm going to put up the steepest sort of bluff. Of course they'll stop us. Rasta will do his damnedest. But remember that he and his friends are not very popular with the Germans, and Madame von Einem is. We're her proteges, and the bigger the German swell I get before the safer I'll feel. We've got our passports and our orders, and he'll be a bold man that will stop us once we get into the German zone. Therefore I'm going to hurry as fast as God will let me."

It was a ride that deserved to have an epic written about it. The car was good, and I handled her well, though I say it who shouldn't. The road in that big central plains was fair, and often I knocked fifty miles an hour out of her. We passed troops by a circuit over the veld, where we took some awful risks, and once we skidded by some transport with our off wheels almost over the lip of a ravine. We went through the narrow streets of Siwas like a fire-engine, while I shouted out in German that we carried despatches for headquarters. We shot out of drizzling rain into brief spells of winter sunshine, and then into a snow blizzard which all but whipped the skin from our faces. And always before us the long road unrolled, with somewhere at the end of it two armies clinched in a death-grapple.

That night we looked for no lodgings. We ate a sort of meal in the car with the hood up, and felt our way on in the darkness, for the headlights were in perfect order. Then we turned off the road for four hours' sleep, and I had a go at the map. Before dawn we started again, and came over a pass into the vale of a big river. The winter dawn showed its gleaming stretches, ice-bound among the sprinkled meadows. I called to Blenkiron:

"I believe that river is the Euphrates," I said.

"So," he said, acutely interested. "Then that's the waters of Babylon. Great snakes, that I should have lived to see the fields where King Nebuchadnezzar grazed! Do you know the name of that big hill, Major?"

"Ararat, as like as not," I cried, and he believed me.

We were among the hills now, great, rocky, black slopes, and, seen through side glens, a hinterland of snowy peaks. I remember I kept looking for the *castrol* I had seen in my dream. The thing had never left off haunting me, and I was pretty clear now that it did not belong to my South African memories. I am not a superstitious man, but the way that little *kranz* clung to my mind made me think it was a warning sent by Providence. I was pretty certain that when I clapped eyes on it I would be in for bad trouble.

All morning we travelled up that broad vale, and just before noon it spread out wider, the road dipped to the water's edge, and I saw before me the white roofs of a town. The snow was deep now, and lay down to the riverside, but the sky had cleared, and against a space of blue heaven some peaks to the south rose glittering like jewels. The arches of a bridge, spanning two forks of the stream, showed in front, and as I slowed down at the bend a sentry's challenge rang out from a block-house. We had reached the fortress of Erzingjan, the headquarters of a Turkish corps and the gate of Armenia.

I showed the man our passports, but he did not salute and let us move on. He called another fellow from the guard-house, who motioned us to keep pace with him as he stumped down a side lane. At the other end was a big barracks with sentries outside. The man spoke to us in Turkish, which Hussin interpreted. There was somebody in that barracks who wanted badly to see us.

"By the waters of Babylon we sat down and wept," quoted Blenkiron softly. "I fear, Major, we'll soon be remembering Zion."

I tried to persuade myself that this was merely the red tape of a frontier fortress, but I had an instinct that difficulties were in store for us. If Rasta had started wiring I was prepared to put up the brazenest bluff, for we were still eighty miles from Erzerum, and at all costs we were going to be landed there before night.

A fussy staff-officer met us at the door. At the sight of us he cried to a friend to come and look.

"Here are the birds safe. A fat man and two lean ones and a savage who looks like a Kurd. Call a guard and march them off. There's no doubt about their identity."

(To be continued.)

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ISSUE No. 44—'23.

Woman's Sphere

TENSION MAKES OR MARS STITCH.

The tension of your sewing machine is an all-important consideration of every home dressmaker. It must be regulated according to the weight of material used and a perfect stitch should be alike on both sides. This perfect stitch is obtained when the tension on the upper and under side is alike. The upper tension is usually placed on the face of the machine or else on the arm; the lower tension is adjusted by a screw in the bobbin case. In regulating the delivery of thread both through the upper and lower tension, turn the adjusting screw to the right to tighten, and to the left to loosen.

The length of the stitch is reulated by a screw or a lever on the head at the right of the machine; this stitch is lengthened by turning to the right.

IMPROPER WORKING OF MACHINE.

Does your upper thread break? If so, is this the reason?

Imperfect needle (bent or blunt).

Machine improperly threaded.

Needle too small for the thread.

Needle improperly set.

Dirt or lint in the shuttle cavity which stops the bobbin from turning freely.

Worn.

Does your machine skip stitches? If this is the condition examine it, considering the following points:

Blunt or crooked needle.

Needle and thread not corresponding in size.

Needle improperly set.

Wrong needle for the machine.

Are you constantly breaking needles? Here are some of the reasons:

Failure to release the tension before drawing the work from under the presser foot.

Trying to assist the feed points by pulling the material as the machine is stitching.

Using a coarse thread in a fine needle.

Using the wrong needle or not setting the needle properly.

Presser foot or attachments not securely fastened by thumb screws.

Do you find that your machine is hard to run? This condition may be due to any of the following:

Dull needle points.

Loose belt.

Dull needle.

Lack of oil.

Dirt and lint.

Gummed with oil.

Go over the machine carefully, adjusting all the conditions that promote disorder and give it a fair chance to do good work for you, before you blame the results of your work to age and make.

COMBINATION CAKE.

This is a good recipe for dark cake which my family is very fond of. I use the same recipe with slight variations for layer cake, drop cookies, fruit cake, or gingerbread made in a dripper.

Layer Cake—1-3 cup shortening, 1 cup white sugar, ½ cup molasses, 1 cup boiling water, 2½ cups flour, 2 egg yolks, 2 tsp. cinnamon, ¼ tsp. ginger, salt, 1½ tsp. soda.

Bake in two layers, and ice with boiled white icing made of one cup of sugar and half cup of water boiled together until it hairs. Stir this syrup into the two stiffly beaten egg whites and beat until creamy.

For dark drop cakes I use the same recipe, adding two whole eggs, two teaspoonfuls cloves, one tablespoon cocoa, and bake in gem pans in moderate oven.

For gingerbread, make as for drop cakes, but bake in a dripper.

For fruit cake add one-half package of raisins and one cup flour. Bake in deep pans. This will make two fair-sized loaves.—Mrs. W. G. S.

A POT OF GOLD—PAINT.

This is the time of year when everything about the house seems to take on a look of shabbiness and misfit, when we housewives wish we might follow the rainbow's lovely path and find the fabled Pot of Gold. But why seek the rainbow's end when a veritable pot of gold may be purchased for a very small sum at the corner drug store or hardware? Small pots of paint and enamel holding as little as one-fourth pint may now be procured in almost every color and tint. A very small outlay of money and time will make dingy rooms take on a bright and cheerful appearance.

We recently moved into a large country house. The dining-room woodwork was painted a muddy green. We repainted the woodwork and papered the walls with a soft tan paper with a touch of rose in it. We went over the furniture with an antique oak varnish, also the floor. The room is very cheerful and pleasant and the whole cost came within five dollars.

We had two deep trays of smooth wood made. These we fastened one above the other to four square posts. To this we fastened the rubber-tired wheels and the well-designed handle of a discarded baby carriage. We enameled this to match the other furnishings and have a practical and really good looking serving table.

We found some old, deep picture frames in the attic. These we enameled in black with touches of gilt and color. We purchased some tray handles and fastened one at each end of frames. We put crocheted doilies under the glass, although cutouts of wall paper or cretonne would be pretty. These substantial trays have been much admired.

Scarcely anything about the house escaped the onslaught of our relentless paint brushes. Vases, bowls, baskets and low flower pots to hold cut flowers, bulbs and ferns.

Many ideas come to mind as one gets interested in the work. Do not bemoan the fact that there is no pot of gold to spend for new furnishings, but get busy with paint and brush. You will be amazed at the charming results of a few hours of pleasant work, and you will feel more than repaid by the compliments of your home folks and friends.

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

DRYING DAINTY LINENS.

I have an old dresser with a broad marble top and consider myself in luck. I find it the most convenient thing on which to dry dainty, flat linens, although a porcelain top kitchen table would answer the purpose. After washing the linens, I lay them perfectly flat on the smooth marble, patting the edges down well. When dry they are lifted up and folded, with a great saving of heat and labor.—G. S.

Measuring Bridge Strains.

Measuring the strains of bridges, skyscrapers, airshps and structural material accurately and quickly is being done by a little machine just perfected by the Bureau of standards in Washington. The gauge can be placed anywhere on the structure being tested and is almost uncanny in its findings. It measures only ten inches long and about five inches wide, and is so sensitive that its recorder returns to normal in one one-thousandth of a second.

The principle involved is the varying electrical resistance of many closely adjacent thin carbon plates. It has been known long, but never applied with success commercially until the Bureau of Standards' engineers built the present machine. A special voltmeter gives the readings of the strains developed. A practical test is now going on in Iowa, where impact strains of highway bridges are being found. Prof. Almon Fuller of the Iowa State Agricultural College and O. S. Peters, one of the inventors, are in charge of the tests.

A Study in Heredity.

An Irishman was seated in a train beside a pompous individual who was accompanied by a dog.

"Foine dog ye have," said the Irishman. " 'Pwhat kind is it?"

"A cross between an Irishman and an ape," the man replied.

"Shure an it's related to both of us," the Irishman rejoined.

Minard's Liniment Heals Cuts.

The highest hotel in Europe is now being built near the summit of the Jungfrau, in the Swiss Alps, at an altitude of 11,800 feet.

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WHAT DOES NOT CHANGE

"Change and decay in all around I see." The law of life is the law of constant alteration. The world you behold to-day is not the one that you saw yesterday. The house where you lived when you were a boy was razed years ago. The tree you planted dwindled because the roots of it were starved, and it was cut down. The street was invaded by stores, and the old residents were pushed out into strange outskirts of the town. The market square has filled with alien faces and unfamiliar names. Great industries, whose windows shine like gold against the sundown, line the banks of the stream where you fished and swam. When you were little, animate and inanimate alike were immortal. Nothing could die. Nothing would grow up. Your mother's cheek would never fade, nor your father's hand and foot grow less decisive. You might turn the key on all your treasures in Time's cabinet, and come back when you would, and find them there intact. You have learned better now. You have seen that there is a difference between a day and a day. You have learned that the world of sense is forever mutable, and that even what seems solid ground under your feet dissolves like the cloud overhead when met by the pulse of the wind.

What is Enduring?

What is there that remains? The friends that we cherished, on whom we leaned for judgment and for sympathy, have passed on into the world that is "a wonder still." We rear a memorial in a public place, or in the unforgetting grateful heart, and our lives are fed by the expectation of meeting them once more and giving an account of our stewardship for better or for worse. But they are not here. What precious thing have we that we can keep secure against all that would "creep and intrude and climb into the fold?"

The only things we can keep with us surely to the end of days are the things that never had a market value. It is not the wood and stone of the houses made with hands or of the monoliths and pyramids that endure. We can keep and hand down to those who come after us a creed of kindliness and charity, a sense of honor, a delicate regard for the individuality of others, an affectionate loyalty in friendship, a serene and modest self-reliance. These are not to die when at last the frame that holds them shall mingle with the dust. These shall outlive the evanescent phenomena that filled our little day on earth between the morning star and eventide. These shall bring true the dreams whose fulfillment was denied us, and these shall be the heritage on which time has no power.

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Teacher (opening second object-lesson on the cat)—"Can you tell me to what family the cat belongs, Jones?"

Jones (after a little hesitation)—"I think it belongs to the family next door."

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