ADMIT ONE

BY SIDNEY HORLER

SYNOPSIS

When Philip Crane, a young aeroplane designer, arrives in London on a holiday, through a coincidence of like names, he is taken for the Crook Crane, who is a tool of . band ruled by a mysterious "Empress."

He rescues Margery Ferguson an takes her to a convent. He then goes to Mandling in Kent to rescue her father. Meanwhile, Charles Whittle, an American detective is trailing a band of forgers. By close confinement The Empress hopes to bend Ferguson's will to her own. In the meantime Philip Crane arrives at Mrs. Hamble's Inn.

CHAPTER X.

Although affecting merely a casual interest, Mrs. Hamble's information excited Philip to such an extent that, within ten minutes, he was out of the Inn again, and walking rapidly in the direction of the house which, he was convinced, held the secret he had come to Mandling to solve.

He went cautiously, hat pulled down well over his eyes, and looking continuously to left and to right. This might be a quiet English village, but deviltry lurked there. The forces of evil were encamped in the midst of before settling down to scrutinize the not forget that, through the encounter of the night before he was already a marked man. The remarkable resemblance he bore to the American crook this gang had enlisted increased the danger of his position.

The landlady's description had been so accurate that there was no chance of his missing the way. As she had said, the walk was delightful; he could well believe that some of the finest views in the whole of Kent were those which met his gaze from time to time.

But his mind was too occupied with the present problem to allow itself to be distracted by Nature, however beautiful. There was a mental vision firmly fixed in his brain; a girl with fear-stricken eyes looking at him over a table in Cima's Restaurant.

Three-quarters-of-an-hour's walk brought him within sight of a large rambling house which he knew must be his destination. The owner of this residence was evidently not willing to take any chance with possible burglars. The house itself stood well back, and was surrounded by a high wall, formidably spiked at the top; whilst heavy iron gates seemed impregnable.

Realizing that he was probably visible to anyone looking out from the upper windows—and, in the circumstances, there might well be watchers—Philip hid himself behind a tree before settling down to scrutinibe the place seriously.

What he hoped to see, he could not tell, but a kind of morbid fascination kept him there. Sooner or later, he was going to get into that house, by hook or by crook, and find out what it contained. For the present, he was content to take in every detail, to estimate what chances he had of success, and generally to spy out the land.

The wait seemed interminable—and, after the first ten minutes, ridiculous. No sign of life came from the house; it might have been shut up for any evidence of occupancy. But, just as he was thinking of moving on, he espied a figure outside a window on the ground floor, looking straight across to the spot where he himself stood. It was a considerable distance, but Crane, who had sharp eyes, realized that, if this man was not the Simon Stevensson he had met the night before, he bore a very close resemblance to that master-crook.

Philip felt his heart beating rapidly. Here was tangible proof. The girl had been right—and now, the rest was up to him!

Afraid to move lest his presence be detected by the watcher, he waited until Stevensson—if it were he—had gone back into the house. Then, gripped by a rising tide of excitement, he cautiously returned the way he had come.

Nothing could be done in the daytime; he must wait until night. And the attempt would be made directly it was dark—on that he was determined. Delay might be dangerous. This man they held as a hostage could be murdered. . . . He would not be content until he had discovered the girl's father and brought him away to safety.

His discovery gave him an added appetite for his lunch. But immediately afterwards, on the plea that he had several letters to write, he went upstairs to his room. But for the fact that it might have occasioned doubt in that excellent soul's breast, he would have asked Mrs. Hamble not to mention that she had a lodger. For it was obvious that his presence in Mandling must be kept a secret. Perhaps he had already been too incautious. The gang might have their spies out. Had he been seen that morning? Well, he would have to risk it.

The afternoon dragged wearily. He came down to tea at five o'clock, but immediately returned to his room. Evening-time would mean a constant stream of custom at the Inn. Rustic eyes were sharp, and yokels were very prone to gossip. If Mrs. Hamble could be believed, the Mandling natives were especially gifted in this direction.

The thought occurred to him as he et out that, never in the history of dventure, had anyone fared forth on perilous expedition so inadequately quipped. He had no weapon—nothing but his bare fists! Come to that, he had never used anything that might come under the description of "lethal" in his life: he wouldn't have known how to fire a revolver had he possessed one; whilst as for a knife—that was unthinkable. The question in these circumstances was how he would get on even if he managed to enter a house that was probably closely guarded. Time must decide.

A few minutes more walking brought him to the inevitable query: Should he have invited the co-operation of the Police? But there were two obstacles to this. The first, and most important, was the recollection of the girl's reply when he had put to her this same question: she dared not go to the Police, she had said, for that would mean disgrace to her father. Secondly, he did not suppose the status of intelligence in the Mandling Police Force would be of too high a quality. He could picture the scene: A village constable staring at him in amazement. The "quality"—which meant, in a generic sense, anyone who lived in some style—to be under suspicion! His story would not only be treated with contempt, but he would be placed under direct suspicion himself. It therefore led up to this: what had to be done, he must accomplish on his own.

Although the time was only a little after seven o'clock, the village was deserted. The inhabitants of Mandling evidently went to bed early, or kept indoors. He did not meet a single soul during the long walk to "The White House."

Now that the decisive moment had come—or was approaching—he began to realize the difficulties of the position. The house would possibly contain a number of men, and these he would have to tackle single-handed. That was, after he had got into the place—which represented a distinct problem in itself. He remembered reading in sensational crime stories about crooks guarding their residences by secret electrical appliances. Were those spikes at the top of the wall charged with some potent current? If so, he might be killed— and instantaneously, at that.

Dismissing this pessimistic thought. Philip began to skirt the grounds. There might be a weaker spot to attack round at the back.

It was whilst he was cautiously proceeding—for it was almost pitch-black by this time—that he noticed a light suddenly spring to life in an upstairs window of the house.

The next moment, he was startled to see two figures locked in what seemed a fierce struggle. He watched, fascinated, for some time. Then, the closure came; the light faded; what might have been a cinema picture was blotted out, leaving only darkness behind.

It was at this minute that Crane felt conscious, for the first time, of some presence near him. He realized that this was something more than a mere tightening up of his nerves; it was an actual physical shape, hovering close at hand. Where, he could not decide; all around him stretched the blackness which had now become practically impenetrable. But that warning of the sixth sense which comes to a man when he is in danger, now repeated its message.

He turned quickly—but nothing happened. Beyond a faint rustling to the right—and this might easily have been caused by the gentle night wind—there was no corroboration of his presentiment.

The sound had quickly died down. A tense silence now reigned. But Crane knew it to be the hush of fear. They must have sent a spy out; the man was near at hand.

He prepared himself for an attack. Yet the seconds passed uneventfully. This was more trying than an actual fight; perspiration broke out on his forehead; he felt his nerves cracking; and then, just as the suspense became unbearable, from just behind, a twig snapped as though a human foot had passed over it.

Without hesitation, he rushed towards the spot. Action was the only thing which could relieve his feelings. His groping arms closed round a man's body, he heard a startled curse, and then, all his faculties were occupied in the task he had taken in hand; the struggle for life which now ensued.

The other had the greater weight, but Crane was more supple. This was soon proved by the manner in which he was able to wriggle away from his opponent's grasp. But, in eluding the attack, his foot slipped, and he went sprawling. Instantly, his foe was on him, ruthless hands about his throat.

If Philip, in spite of his sedentary work, had not always made a fetish of physical fitness, the end of the struggle would have come then. With that intolerable weight on him, he felt the breath being slowly forced out of his body. But, gritting his teeth, he battled back, and, managing to get on his side, he rammed a knee into the other's stomach and had the satisfaction of hearing him grunt in dismay. Then, putting forth all the strength he could summon, he contrived to free one arm.

(To be continued.)

How Trees Split Rocks

It is done, says Robert Sparks Walker in American Forests (Washington) by beginning early and proceeding slowly.

"Nature performs these feats so quietly that not even the squirrel or woodpecker in the top of the tree above the stone is conscious of the great task that is being accomplished.

"If man could perform such a deed with his hands alone, or even aided by maul or wedge, he would sound a trumpet that could be heard around the world!

"But nature is not a braggadocio. She performs a remarkable feat, and through it teaches mankind that true worth lies in achievement rather than pomp or fame.

"To accomplish this feat, nature must be extremely patient. At first, an insignificant-looking acorn or nut, or other seed of a tree, is dropped in a crevice. It may be through the act of a bird or a squirrel who was frisking around and lost his prize as it fell into a small opening in a stone.

"Sunshine and moisture will germinate a seed on a bare stone or on a housetop, where there is apparently not an atom of plant food available, just about as quickly as it does in the ground. Decaying leaves and twigs are then blown into the crevice, and soon the rootlets have a little real food to munch, and then the tree is started on its career."

Every year the wind and rain bring in supplies of fresh food material. The roots reach as deeply as they can! their size increases, and soon the cavity seems to be filled completely. The new cells in the young tree continue to double. And that is the whole process.

New England Birds

I have never heard the skylark sing
At cloudy gates in early spring;
I have never heard the nightingale
Wooing the shadows in a dale;
But I have known the bobwhite's call,
The song-sparrow singing clear and small,
And I have heard the whippoorwill
Lilting at moonbeams on the hill.

And once at morning in an hour
When mountains to the sunlight tower
I heard the hermit thrush make song
Until wood-shadows seemed to throng
With magic notes and break away
As though his bright throat brought the day.
There I was pleased to stand and hark,
Forgetting nightingale and lark!

—Harold Wesley Melvyn, in The Christian Science Monitor.

Trees in Paris

Each year, before winter sets in, the Paris trees are thoroughly attended to. They are pruned, changed, and even replaced if necessary. One section of the Boulevards, however, between the Place de la Republique and the rue Drouot, is not up to the usual standard. The municipal service which looks after the trees of Paris is waiting for work in connection with the new subway to be completed to take this part of the Boulevards in hand, and provide it with large and beautiful trees such as line the rest of this thoroughfare. As all work in connection with the subway is to be finished by the end of the year, there is promised for next summer an uninterrupted length of shady Boulevards such as delight the heart of the Parisian stroller.

ENVY

Envy is the daughter of Pride, the author of Murder and Revenge, the perpetual tormenter of virtue. Envy is the filthy slime of the soul; a venom, a poison, a quicksilver, which consumeth the flesh and drieth up the bones.—Socrates.

Play in Nursery Tool of Learning

If you have ever watched children at play, you realize that it is a serious business, writes "H. M. R." in The Christian Science Monitor. The great philosopher of childhood, Frederick Froebel, says, "The child learns by doing." He learns by playing, for play constitutes the major part of his activity.

Imagination plays a large part in play, but just as the worker needs things to work with, so the child needs things to play with. His toys are the tools with which he works while he plays. The type of play is governed largely by the kind of tools he has at his command. The wisdom of those who supply him with his play equipment is an important factor in the influences brought to bear on his forming concepts of society.

The custom of giving children toys at Christmas time is so common that sometimes we are in danger of forgetting that Christmas has any other meaning. Those who realize that the great message of love is at the bottom of the true Christmas spirit, can help their children to have the joy of giving as well as receiving and avoid cultivating selfish indulgence.

It is also important that adults in selecting gifts for children should love those children wisely enough to use thought and care in the selection of their gifts. To one who takes the play of children seriously, knowing its relation to their future, it is amazing that so many children are allowed to own toy pistols. Arguments against this type of toy have often met with ridicule, but the proof is so evidenced by boy bandits and accidents with real guns that there is no need for further argument.

A recent visit to the toy department in a large department store revealed the largest display of war toys the writer has ever seen. There were three long cases containing miniature soldiers and sailors of very nationality, even African warriors with raised spears in hand. All the apparatus for carrying on modern warfare is available in miniature. A child fully equipped with this type of play material could stage a world war involving every race on the globe. For many hours his thought would be given over to war manoeuvers and killing.

While some sources are busy working among the youth in our colleges and universities to break down prohibition, others are at work propagating war in the minds of our children.

Our children are our responsibility, either directly or indirectly. They are future citizens of our nation, the heirs to the prosperity or adversity resulting from our achievements. Do we want them to grow up with the idea that war is the only worth while achievement in life? Rather let us strive to emphasize the peace and joy and satisfaction of useful living as exemplified by the farmer, the storekeeper, the shoemaker, and all the busy people who help to make living more pleasant. There are toys to be had which encourage the child to reproduce in play the interesting activities of community life. Froebel says, "what a child imitates he tries to understand." Through a better understanding of the interdependence of community life will come a greater appreciation of the services of others, and a healing for hard times and war.

An All-Talkie

"Have you heard the latest about the women of the village?" asked Bragg.

"Haven't heard a thing," said Spragg inquiringly.

"They've formed a secret society," Bragg told him.

Spragg burst into a roar of uncontrollable laughter.

"That's rich," he replied at length. "Why, women don't know how to keep a secret."

"But this society isn't to keep secrets," returned Bragg; "it's to tell them."

IGNORANCE

There is no slavery but ignorance. Liberty is the child of intelligence.

Tiger Eyes

"Snowy," of the London Zoo, presents an interesting study here of staring eyes, sharp tusks and wrinkled nose.

Salada Green tea drinkers drink the best green tea

"SALADA" GREEN TEA 101

'Fresh from the gardens'

Shorts

Every adult human being inhales something like 35 lb. of air daily.

A degree of "general knowledge" is to have a trial run at Liverpool University.

One thousand and forty-four boys were born for every thousand girls in Gt. Britain last year.

On an average, soldiers do not live as long as sailors. Among soldiers, infantrymen live longest.

London chimneys emit over 9,000,000 tons of smoke annually, about one-third of this being due to domestic fires.

More than 7,000,000 men and women served under the British flag during the Great War of these 4,500,000 are still living.

Cats are evidently pouplar in the United States, where, it is estimated, there are 120,000,000; of this total New York has 7,000,000.

A single man with an income of $1,250 pays income tax in Gt. Britain of $60. In France he has to pay the equivalent of $75.

In only five marriages out of the 315,109 contracted in England and Wales last year were the brides and grooms of the same age.

The average hardness of water in England is fifteen degrees, although there are places where it rises as high as twenty-five degrees.

Children get married in Egypt, where there are 152 husbands and 687 wives all under ten years of age. Of these child wives, sixty are widows.

Professional letter-writers still write the love letters for the young men of Barcelona, who can, for five cents, make a choice from a number of specimen proposals.

Women in Chicago who would be really smart must have their lips harmonizing with or matching their frock. For instance, with a dress of wine color, the lips of the wearer should be deep red.

Wheels are fitted to a tiny one-man submarine designed by its American inventor to cruise along the bed of the ocean like a motor car. It can also travel on the surface of, or under, the water.

Drilling teeth may become unnecessary if a recent German invention is successful. By this new method the affected tooth is enclosed in a case with the decayed portion exposed. On this a few drops of acid are dropped, and in a few minutes the decayed portion is removed painlessly.

Potato Health Improved By Change of Soil

That a trip to the mountains is good for potatoes as well as for sickly human beings was reported recently to the Academy of Sciences in Paris by J. Constantin, P. Lebard and J. Magrou. These same investigators reported previously that growth for a few years in a mountain climate tends to restore the vigor of sickly varieties of sugar cane and other cultivated plants. Last year a similar experiment was begun with potatoes. Seed potatoes from strains grown for many years in low-lying parts of France were transplanted to highland fields on the slopes of the Alps. Here the lowland potatoes grew for a year just as they would have grown in their lowland homes. Seed potatoes produced in the highland plantations then were taken back to the lowland fields and planted side by side with others from plants that never had been away. The potatoes with a year of mountain experience turned out to be markedly more vigorous and productive, the experimenters report, than those of precisely the same strain which had been denied the mountain trip. Whether the year's life at a higher altitude, with its cooler nights and other more rigorous conditions, strengthened the constitution of the potato plants themselves or whether the benefits were due to elimination of bacteria or other parasites which could not withstand the mountain climate the investigators do not know.

With One Exception

The cheery fellow met a friend at a Christmas dance.

"Well, well, old man," he said happily, "so you're married at last! Allow me to congratulate you." He paused and then added with a sly smile: "I hear you have an excellent and accomplished wife."

The newlywed nodded.

"I have indeed," he replied. "Why, she's at home in music, she's at home in art, she's at home in books, she's at home in science. In short she's at home everywhere, except—"

"Yes, except what?" came the inquiry.

"Except at home," the other dolefully replied.

What New York Is Wearing

BY ANNEBELLE WORTHINGTON.

Illustrated Dressmaking Lesson Furnished with Every Pattern

When one acquires "teens" she also acquires all kinds of dress privileges. Mother can't insist upon those little girl types.

Delightfully smart is today's model in more sophisticated handling. A favorite for classroom developed in tweed-like lightweight woolen. The neck and sleeves are finished with white pique. The sleeves may be made long, if desired.

Ribbed wool jersey in dark green is an excellent choice with almond green jersey trim.

Wool crepe, tweed-like cottons and rayon novelties are charming satisfactory mediums.

Style No. 3456 is designed for sizes 11, 13, 15 and 17 years.

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HOW TO ORDER PATTERNS.

Write your name and address plainly, giving number and size of such patterns as you want. Enclose 20c in stamps or coin (coin preferred; wrap it carefully) for each number, and address your order to Wilson Pattern Service, 73 West Adelaide St., Toronto.

Evening

(From The London Mercury.)

The last bee has carried
the last pollen
and the first moth does not stir;

the wind has fallen;
the wind has fallen

under the weight of lavender
apple scent,
and the scent of grass,
(these are the scents
of quietness).

Not by rustle of wind
nor of bird
nor of moth's wing
is the air stirred.

And in this stillness
mingles bright
the day's gold breath
with the blue breath of night.

—Marie De L. Welch.

Quite The Reverse

The Christmas party were assembled for the musical program. Smith found himself next to an aged professor.

"You're the gentleman who is teaching my wife voice culture, is that not so? Tell me, what sort of a pupil is she?" he asked.

The professor leaned confidingly across to his neighbor.

"Well," he said, "I find her very apt, to say the least."

This seemed to surprise Smith.

"That's rather strange," he replied. "I always find her very apt to say the most."