

On Wings of Wireless

by ARTHUR B. REEVE

CHAPTER IX.

"THE DIRECTION FINDER."

"Curtis, you were up to something devilish—I knew it!" repeated Vario. He faced Jack over the table at the Bimacle. "When you saw me drive up, you suddenly changed your tune. You ran to cover—to cover yourself!"

The waiter, Norman, snivelled. His face was livid. He bowed and almost fawned on Vario, took hold of him, for all the world like a drowning man catching at a straw.

"Furthermore, I believe you slipped that vial into this man's pocket—perhaps you palmed it—it did a little slight of hand. You inhuman cad! I could cane you!"

Ruth was speechless.

Jack had been working himself into an almost apoplectic rage as Vario hurled the accusation at him. He shot out his forefinger, pointing at the teacup that had been before him:

"Would I—personally—he incensed?"

"Well, settle that!" came back Vario, sharply. "I'll videotake to label this tall and seat it—in the presence of you as witnesses. Then I'll send it to some reputable laboratory for analysis."

The waiter scurried about, getting Jack. Vario turned to Ruth with execrable courtesy. "Miss Walden—I must insist—for your own safety—please get back to the Club. You there cannot stand much more. Even though so much anguish has been for two days."

Jack looked from Vario to Ruth, spouting impetuously. "It's very difficult to talk such interest."

They left Curtis standing, sitting with rage, beside his stool. Vario's tear disappeared. Jack left his own odd, low-down place along the stone road toward a short cut across the highway.

Nita Walden's surprise was great. She saw Vario with "Lieutenant Jack Curtis," she exclaimed. "Our Ruthie, dear, may more trouble?"

"No. I'm sorry, nothing much. It was a little off in the head, or Professor Vario can't afford to be."

Mrs. Walden beamed her appreciation of Vario's help.

Both had to wait until Ruth came back before she might be sent to the Club. "Well, let me be the first to say, 'Thank you'."

She was in a mood to talk with gusto. "I'm glad you're here, Ruthie. You're a good sport. Ruthie, you're a good sport."

She had talked to Ruth, and Ruth had found time to go to the Club. "I'm glad you're here, Ruthie. You're a good sport."

"I don't want to drag all your trouble into anything. I want to keep you out of it. I'm not half so much interested ever in catching these double-dealing profiteers higher than I am in getting you out of your foolishness—Curtis."

"I'm sick of it all. So are Glenn and Ruth—they're too plodding to submit it. Someone must make the break. I feel that I could—swallow my pride, Guy."

"What was that gruff voice a man, that I heard this morning, the manager of the men's department at Vario's? That's the police call?"

Vario leaped up quickly, a frightened man in his face. But she said no more.

"I'd like to drag all your trouble into anything. I want to keep you out of it. I'm not half so much interested ever in catching these double-dealing profiteers higher than I am in getting you out of your foolishness—Curtis."

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Garrison had signified on behalf of surprise. He knew he was surprised by the manager's return now to the first stage. He had seen too many scenes in the witness stand. Vario had made up his mind to speak no more.

"It was not three relatives have when Dick received another check. Mrs. Walden had hastened to pour out news of the Bimacle episode as far as she knew it, to Garrison.

"This thing has gone just about far enough, Dick," Garrison announced on

ring-leader was caught and he was ready to make final disposition of the case."

Dick discovered a wireless set on a worktable in the rear. Mechanically he started tuning in.

Dick was startled. "Someone's broadcasting what they can news," he said. "It . . . it can't be safe. It must be some crazy amateur. Ruth Walden, the heiress, has eloped with John Curtis!"

Garrison seized the phones. "Amateur—perhaps; crazy, no. Did you ever stop to consider the radio as a means for slander? Talk about your poison pen writers! Science has put into the hands of blackguards the most dangerous of weapons. Your story is spread to a million fans. And there's not a chance of facing it to your slanderer!"

"They're not? The devils there isn't. I can . . . I will!" exclaimed Dick. "It keeps up?"

Everything he needed ignited there on the workbench. It was comparatively simple to make a loop of copper wire around them and frame four feet square. He hung it from the ceiling, free. He connected up the receiving set, then began tuning the stations.

"A directional receiver," explained Dick. "It must be calibrated toward the hidden sender. Read it's a radio compass."

By the time the Astral had arrived Dick had it packed. Every few minutes a new message came in. They left the plane in charge and climbed in the car. The direction had been given by a little sign.

Garrison the helmsman had set up his finder again. This time it was last by known roads. Then, every few miles, setting up the modifying their course.

"Looks as if it might be Harbor way," exclaimed Dick. At Blue Harbor, Hardor, suddenly, the direction of the messages changed to the northeast shrilly.

"I believe you're reading the sender," cried Garrison as he looked out over the empty Harbor. "But we're too late. The Sea Vamp has gone!

The birds are flown!"

From a cotter down to beach Garrison had set up his

"There's no use keeping this over. I heard you say, in

the Pink

great

Ruth?

"She sent a note for you, Guy, marked Personal."

At Garrison's request Mrs. Walden opened the note and read its contents to him over the phone. "I've gone to the Sea Vamp to destroy the engine so they can't move it away until tomorrow—Ruth."

"But the Sea Vamp has gone!" cried Nita Walden. "Ruth has been carried off on the Sea Vamp!"

(To be continued)

O.S.

Truth (London). The potential of naval resources to the O.S. is immense, shipping companies rather than individuals. It is a very expensive business. No ship would wish in any way to compromise its responsibility. It depends on speed. Its company would be compelled to pay the cost of the delay. One expects that the several ships are to be instances of a vessel in trouble one rather than it should be possible to idle and well prepared to meet the ad-

vice of its owners.

Glenn had told her that Guy had to be possible; who, therefore, should have a dozen diverted from their course, perhaps

several hundred miles, with consequent additional expenditure of fuel and loss of time?

The London Conference.

Round Table (London). It is difficult to exaggerate the significance of the Conference which will assemble in London in January to try to reach an agreement for the limitation and reduction of naval armaments.

Through the formal discussions of the Conference itself, it is presumably to be confined to strictly naval issues,

the fact that it is held at all, the character of its personnel, and still more the political decisions between the Government's which its members implies of what will initiate, will make it by far the most important international conference which has been held since the sessions of the Peace Conference in 1919.

Crown Colonies and the Empire.

One Time. The Colonies are about

to feel anxious about their lack of adequate representation at these meetings of Empire statesmen.

However, the Colonies have been represented by officials of the Colonial Office. That they do not mind as long as the principal topics discussed were legal and political. But now they point out that it would be unjust for economic, financial, and commercial matters to be deliberated upon at a conference at which they are not directly presented, but the decisions of which would implicate and bind them. Since they argue territorial with a population of 55,000,000 and a total annual trade of £600,000,000, it is justified to have some say in the counsels of Empire.

DISCIPLINE.

Everyone has his master, and those who seek authority, and find it in the form of strict discipline, have an aversion to perfecting themselves. But, many a man ignores this opportunity, and then wonders why he is not given greater command. Discipline, like charity, begins at home, and the more truly it is exercised there, the more surely will others gladly submit themselves to the man who has thus proved his right to rule.

DISTRESS.

When the heart has a certain mean

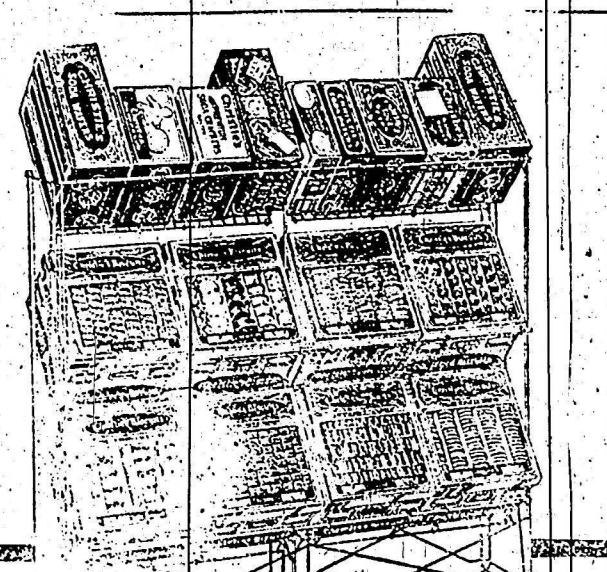
of distress, it is agitated and in revolt, but when it is full of woe and can contain no more, it is still, and its stillness passes for resignation to destiny.

"The scoffers at art have gone out of fashion." Otto H. Gahn.

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