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## HEROES OF THE V.C.

The last Friday of January was the seventeenth birthday of the Victoria Cross, the most coveted of all decorations for valor in the British Empire, and, indeed, in the whole world.

The Victoria Cross was instituted on January 29th, 1856, and is awarded for "conspicuous bravery or devotion to the country in the presence of the enemy." About 525 crosses had been given before the outbreak of the Great War, and 581, including two bars, were awarded in the course of that gigantic struggle.

This number may seem small when one thinks of the forces in the field during the war, but the V.C. was only awarded for absolutely outstanding acts. So meagre of its relative value may be gained from the fact that, out of 17,376 awards gazetted during one period of about five months in 1918, there were only seventy-seven V.C.'s.

### Winning the Triple Honor.

At first the V.C. could only be won by white men belonging to the Services; but it has been open to Indian soldiers since 1911, and it may now be won by women, including nurses, or civilians of either sex, when under the direction of naval, military, or air forces.

The story of the deeds that won the V.C. is one long record of daring and heroism of which our race may well be proud. Sometimes, too, you will find the coveted distinction won by two members of the same family. For instance, Major Congreve, the first officer in the British Army to win the triple honor of the V.C., D.S.O., and M.C., was the son of Lieutenant-General W. N. Congreve, V.C., who was decorated for conspicuous bravery in saving the guns at Colenso.

Major Congreve's cross was awarded after his death, and was presented by the King to his widow, who was a daughter of Mr. Cyril Maude, the famous actor. But in the early days of the V.C. posthumous awards were unknown.

### Chosen by Their Comrades.

One of the most daring of the soldiers who won the V.C. during the War was Lieutenant-Colonel Freyburg, who has also been awarded the D.S.O. and two bars, and who was prominently in the news a few months ago in connection with a plucky Channel swim exploit. He remained in command of his men during an important action, though he had been four times wounded.

Sometimes a gallant and daring act is performed, not by an individual, but by a body of troops or a team. In such a case all the men concerned may deserve the V.C., but not all can obtain the distinction. So the officers who survive select one of their number for the award, and the N.C.O.'s or petty officers, and men, each do the same.

Many boys have won the little bronze cross "For Valor." Jack Cornwall, for instance, was under sixteen and a half years of age when, mortally wounded during the battle of Jutland, he remained at his post until the action was over, and so won the V.C.

### When the Airship Fell.

The story of Drummer Walter Ritchie's V.C. is also an inspiring one. During a critical moment in action, when some of our troops had lost their leaders, and become disorganized, he made his way to the parapet of an enemy trench, and repeatedly sounded the "Charge."

Another notable V.C. was that awarded to Lieutenant William Leele

Robinson for bringing down a Zeppelin raider near Enfield. Huge crowds saw the great airship fall to earth a flaming wreck, and the fact that a Victoria Cross had actually been won in England added greatly to the interest of the award.

When awarded to any rank below that of commissioned officer, the V.C. carries a pension of £10 a year, and the V.C. and bar one of £15. It is also provided that, if a recipient of the V.C. is reduced to poverty, by reason of old age or infirmity, his pension may be increased to £75 a year.

The Victoria Cross ribbon is now red for both Army and Navy, and the cross itself is of bronze, with a scroll bearing the words "For Valour." Previous to August, 1918, the ribbon was blue for the Navy.

## Ruskin's Letters.

"I do not look to my correspondence as a duty to be performed, but as the very best mode of entering society. Surely time is generally ten thousand times more wasted in the commonplace of the tongue, than in selecting such pieces of our mind as would be glad of sympathy, and folding them in the sheet of paper for our friend. If I like a friend at all I like him on paper."

Thus, writing to a college friend at the age of twenty-one, did Ruskin formulate a theory of epistolary friendship which he was to carry through with unflinching enthusiasm for over fifty years. Endowed with a nature overflowing with affection and with eagerness to express itself, he had many friends and he "liked them all on paper." Once he told Norton that he was writing fifteen to twenty-five letters a day—a slight matter for the modern business man surrounded with stenographers and dictaphones, but a creative achievement of some magnitude who one has, like Ruskin, something significant to say. The result was a correspondence which in extent, as well as in abiding worth, can hardly be equalled in the nineteenth century. His letters to Charles Eliot Norton rank, together with those of Carlyle and Emerson, as the most memorable transatlantic correspondence; and more of his letters, I believe, have been printed than in the case of any other English (or American) writer. To such publication, he was the last to object, for he once declared: "I never wrote a private letter to any human being which I would not let a bill-sticker chalk up six feet high on Hyde Park wall, and stand myself in Piccadilly and say 'I did it!'" — Paul Kaufman, in The North American Review.



She—"I'm right at home on the ice."  
He—"Yes! I think you're an ice girl."

## "Jolly Good Fellow."

The oldest tune in the world is that to which has been set the popular toast-ditty, "For he's a jolly good fellow!"

The melody is without an exception in all the quaint folk-songs of the Western races.

Pioneers in North America found that the Red Indians knew it, and that it was one of the "cradle lullabies of the squaws."

The native tribes of South America know it to this day, as also do the aborigines of Australia, the Maoris, and the Arabs.

African explorers have heard it chanted to the beating of tom-toms, while visitors to Lapland have stated that the mothers in that country also use it.

The author of the tune is unknown; efforts to trace its origin have been unsuccessful.

Researchers, however, have brought to light that it was well known to the ancient Egyptians, and that they probably got it from Babylon. But beyond that, its trail is lost.

It came to Europe through the returning crusaders, who, as a matter of fact, used it as a sort of war-song when they were besieging Jerusalem.

# Queer Things Happen

BY PAUL T OMLINSON.

## PART II.

"After twenty minutes or so, the story finished, I sauntered into the smoker. My acquaintances were seated at the far end of the car, playing three-handed bridge. I drew up a chair and sat down to watch them. The little chap still wore his wistful smile, and he greeted me with it as I joined them. The big fellow flashed his white teeth pleasantly at me. His friend gave me a sharp look from behind his big spectacles, and merely nodded.

"My red-haired friend was playing the dummy, and once again I was attracted by his hands as he reached across the table for the cards. Really they were the hands of an artist—a female artist at that—with long, tapering fingers, extraordinarily white. They seemed to have a personality of their own, as definitely as if they were individuals instead of merely hands.

"The hand was finished, and my red-haired friend was set two tricks. 'Too bad!' said the big fellow. 'Doubled, too!'

"How's the game going?" I asked. "Our friend here is not having much luck, so far," said the big fellow. "He's had pretty poor cards."

"The little sandy-haired chap smiled his wistful smile, but offered no comment. He was starting to shuffle one of the decks, and once more his extraordinary hands caught my attention. Really, they were extraordinary hands."

"So you've already said," Coxie remarked crisply.

"Sh-sh!" hissed Roberts. "Let him go on with his story."

"The big fellow," continued Copley, "asked me if I didn't want to make a fourth. Evidently he hadn't quite believed my statement about not playing. I repeated it, however.

"Oh, I forgot," was all he said, and he didn't try again.

"Well, I watched the game for half an hour, and then went back to my magazine. I had watched as closely as I could, but I couldn't for the life of me see anything that looked suspicious. Still, the little red-haired chap was losing steadily, and I felt morally certain that he was being fleeced. He seemed unconcerned about it, for the wistful smile played unintermittently about his mouth, and the expression on his face betrayed not the slightest anxiety. I couldn't make him out, although for a long time I ignored my magazine and sat watching the landscape and thinking about him. I couldn't make the other two out, either, although I had to admit to myself that if they were card sharps they certainly ranked near the top of their profession.

"Finally I gave the whole thing up. I felt sorry for the little red-haired chap; but, after all, I had tried to warn him, and if he wanted to throw his money away it really was none of my business. I dismissed all three of my lunch acquaintances from my mind and started to read another story. I'd read about a paragraph when the little red-haired chap appeared in the doorway of the car. He caught my eye as he was passing my chair.

"Game over?" I asked him.

"No," he said. "I'm going to get some cigars out of my bag."

"How are you making out?" I inquired—rather an impertinent question, I thought afterward.

"Not too well," he replied, his wistful smile brightening for a fleeting instant. He put one of those tapering white hands on the back of my chair, and leaned over me. "They've got me for \$95 so far," he told me in a low voice.

"And you're going back?" I exclaimed.

"Yes, I think I will," he said.

"For the second time I had an idea that there was something sinister about the look in that eye with the cast; but his smile was so disarming that I forgot it almost instantly, and my feeling of pity for him returned.

"Don't do it!" I urged him, as earnestly as I could. "You must know what they are by this time, and what the use of giving them any more of your hard-earned money?"

"His smile widened a trifle.

"What makes you think it's hard-earned?" he asked.

"I felt a little foolish.

"I know nothing about it, of course," I said; "but in any event I can't see the point in letting a couple of strangers cheat you out of it."

"The luck may change," he said.

"Luck!" I exclaimed. "Luck hasn't any part in that game!"

"Well," he said, "I'll see you later," and passed on, evidently unwilling to discuss it any more.

"When he passed me on his way back to the smoker—he did not stop this time—the back of his head, his narrow shoulders, and even his way of walking, all combined to give the impression of some one who had been the under dog all his life. I did my best not to feel sorry for him, but, try as I might, I couldn't help myself.

Copley paused. He picked up his cigar, but did not light it.

"Is that all of your story?" inquired Coxie, in a rather critical tone.

"That's all—except the last chapter," replied Copley. "Do you want to hear the end of it?"

"Sure!" said Roberts, before any one else could speak.

"Well," resumed Copley, "a few minutes later the train was in the terminal, and I was one of the crowd surging toward the exits, when the little sandy-haired chap came up beside me.

"Where do you go from here?" he asked.

"Home," I replied. "East 63rd St."

"Taxi?"

"Yes," I said.

"Can I ride part way with you? That's my direction."

"Yes, indeed," I said.

"To tell the truth I was delighted, because I was curious to hear details of the game. We got a cab, and presently were threading our way uptown through the traffic.

"How much money did you lose finally?" I asked, as soon as we were comfortably settled.

"Hundred and eighty-two," he replied calmly.

"Aw!" I said. "That's a darned shame! I hope you had it to lose?"

"I had an even \$200 on me," he said.

"Eighteen won't go very far in New York," I laughed, trying to make things cheerful. "Can I loan you any?"

"He didn't reply at once. He took a package of cigarettes from his pocket, extracted one, lighted it, and looked out of the window for a moment. Then, suddenly, he turned toward me. For the first time I noticed that his smile was absent.

"Listen!" he exclaimed. "You've been awful nice to me. You tried to keep me away from them two, and just now you offered to loan me some money. I want to tell you something."

"Go ahead!" I said.

"You've been awful nice to me, he repeated, and I'm going to tell you something." He didn't waste any time about it, either, and his voice was hard and tense. "My mother was the finest woman that ever lived," he said, "but my father was a crook—a plain crook. There was nothing he wouldn't do. Well, I'm like both of them, only not at the same time. Sometimes I'm an honest citizen, and sometimes I'm a crook. There seems to be two people inside of me, fighting all the time, and sometimes one is on top and sometimes the other. I'm a kind of Dr. Jekyll and Mr. Hyde, I guess."

"That explained the evil look, I thought," said Copley, to his four friends. "It also explained why I had been puzzled about him, and unable to make him out."

"This noon," the little sandy-haired chap continued, "I was an honest citizen. Now, before the afternoon is over, I'm a crook."

"Believe me," said Copley, "I shouldn't have been surprised to have the muzzle of a gun jabbed into my ribs at any moment, and to be told to hand over what valuables I had on me. I rapidly regretted any sympathy I had wasted on this curious young man sitting beside me. He had stopped talking for a moment, and was puffing his cigarette and peering out at the street signs. I decided that the gun was not to make its appearance as yet, and thought it a proper time to ask a question.

"If you're a crook," I demanded somewhat nervously, "why did you let those two card-sharps trim you so easily?"

"He turned and faced me again. The wistful smile was on his lips once more.

"Listen!" he said, and thrust his hand into the inside breast pocket of his coat. He drew forth a large brown leather wallet and held it up for my inspection. "See that?" he asked. "That belongs to the big guy with the white teeth. It has my hundred and eighty-two in it, and I don't know how much more, because I haven't had a chance to look."

"Well, sir, you could have floored me with a wisp of straw," said Copley. "Then the humor of it struck me, and I began to laugh. I would have given a good deal to see the big fellow with his white teeth when he discovered what had happened to him. I wondered what sort of a snarl the teeth would become.

"The little red-haired chap laughed too."

"Not bad, eh?" he said; and how about this? He drew a black wallet out of his overcoat pocket. "The guy with the big glasses," he announced.

Copley looked around the table at his friends.

"That all?" asked Coxie.

"Almost," said Copley. "Just then the little chap leaned forward and tapped the glass, signaling the driver to stop."

"My street," he said.

"He gathered up his bag, and, as the taxi drew up to the curb, he opened the door and stepped out. He thrust his hand into his trousers pocket, but I protested.

"Let me, I exclaimed, still laughing. 'It's been worth it.'

"He looked at me with his queer, wistful smile.

"All right," he said; "but take this, anyway."

"He tossed something upon the rear seat, slammed the door, and was gone. My hand touched something hard. I picked it up and looked at it. It was my watch."

(The End.)



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## Hush—The Sun!

The false dawn flushes, and the woods Tremble with expectancy in their moods,

Waiting for that far, dim, blue line Across the salt marshes to give some sign

And to slant its first earth-pointed beam

To catch them and to gleam

On their sedges jeweled by the night,

Waiting to tell their beauty to the light.

Their joy is secure—for here

Bursting a crimsoned galleon's sail of sheer

Magnificence, comes a spear of gold,

And caressing the fringes with still cold

Fingers, leaps on and on and speeds

With its day's greeting to the fringe of trees.

Then with more roseate approach

The high herald and his cohorts now encroach

Upon bronzing water crests, and lav-ling all

Shores in gold, flooding the meadows to fall

In scintillant glory on the wood

And awaken her ecstatic quietude.

Shrill rise the calls of all the birds,

Songs of delight; prayers without words.

And in this templed phalanx glory

Of the oak and pine, I construct this story.

—F. A. Dawson, in The Monitor.

At the Museum.

Rosamond (viewing knight's armor). "How delightful 'twould be to have one's heart swayed by so gallant a knight."

Mary Jane—"Yes—if the tin sheik didn't try to rule with an iron hand."

On the Contrary.

"Father!"

"Yes, my boy?"

"Are politics plural?"

"No, my boy. There's nothing in the world more singular."

Which?

Battered Motorist (waking up)—"Where am I? Where am I?"

Nurse—"This is number 116."

"Room or cell?"

Minard's Liniment for sore throat.

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Buy Diamond Dyes—no other kind—and tell your druggist whether the material you wish to color is wool or silk, or whether it is linen, cotton or mixed goods.

## What She Wanted.

An elderly American couple had never known anything but drudgery. They lived on a sandy farm of a few acres, which was too poor to cultivate profitably, so they eked out an existence by cutting down scrub oak and selling it. The wife did most of the cutting, while the husband drove the wagon and sold the wood.

An oil company drilled a well on their land and struck a gusher. This raised the pair to the millionaire class. The glad news was told the man in town, and, after disposing of his load, he hastened back to tell his wife.

She might have been expected to drop her axe with a sigh of relief, but instead, she said:—

"Well, I wish you'd buy me a new axe-handle."

## Effect of Hot Water.

Entering her sitting-room one evening, a woman saw one of her curtains ablaze, it having come in contact with a gas jet.

She called to the cook for a pail of water, but the latter did not arrive on the scene until the man of the house had rushed in, torn down the curtain, and stamped out the flame.

"Why didn't you hurry?" they asked the cook.

"Hurry?" she repeated. "Wasn't I hurrying as fast as I could? I had hot water in the pail to throw out, and then get some cold water. You didn't want me to come in and throw hot water on the fire and make it worse, did you?"

## Thanks.

Rich is the wife of living. Sweet is life's bread to me. Gladness and deep thanksgiving Grow to an ecstasy.

Thanks for the joy and sorrow And for the peace and pain. For the hope of each tomorrow, For every loss and gain;

For all the fair surprises That brightened many a day. For fairer, brighter, new ones, Waiting along the way.

O Father, near and gracious, For all I'm thanking Thee! The loveliness of living Is miracle to me.

—May Howe Dakin.

## Winged Thieves.

Pigeons are to be fought on a concerted plan by Devonshire farmers, who find these birds very harmful to their crops.

Minard's Liniment for dandruff.

## Gave Him Away.

A husband telephoned to say that he could not get home to dinner. Late as it was it would be much later before he had finished his business.

"You poor dear," answered his wife, sympathetically. "I wonder you can get anything done at all with that jazz band playing in your office."

## Puzzle Find the Principal

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