

THE COMING OF PAMELA

By Normal Gordon.



"GOOD-NIGHT, Doc or, Thank for a pleasant evening."

"Cheerio, Penge, if my cards had been as good as your excellent port I shouldn't have let you down in the final rubber. And don't forget our foursome on Saturday. Harrison and Nugent seem pre-occupied with their canyons, but I don't fancy they'll be so pert when we get back to the club on Good-night, Springs. Good-night, Colonel. No, I won't forget Saturday. I'll do my best to help you repeat the dose but one never knows. I can keep a card of the rough all should be well, but if I strike one of my sticky patches—"

"To the sound of subdued laughter" Dr. Anthony Penge closed the front door upon two of his departing guests, and returned to the dining-room of his bachelor home. Here a third visitor—Robin Tennant—remained. Having many things in common—temperament, a certain sympathy in contact at several points, these two had long ago crossed the borderline dividing acquaintance from friendship. Robin had moved from the card table, and stood with his back to a cheerful fire. He jingled some coins in his pocket.

"No case of 'beggar your neighbour' to-night, Tony," he said. "On five rubbers I reckon I've finished about three bob to the good. Pretty steady going for 'contract'."

"Hm!" Penge made a mock grimace. "Your gain, my loss. Still, I haven't quite cleaned out. But I hope you're not going to make a habit of it." Turning to the port he said: "To prove I wasn't just a little bit of a cheat, I'll not touch a drop of port until you've had some. You're not going to be a miser, are you?"

"Sound judge, too. But"—glancing at the clock—"don't you think? Gone eleven. Then, with assumed seriousness, Tennant added: "Do you prescribe it, doctor?"

"Yes, yes, I think I do. Usually I've found that in the case of expectant fathers, and temporary bachelors, a little extra stimulation doesn't do any harm. Penge refilled Tennant's wine glass, and placed it on the mantelpiece. "You are, I believe, still in the latter unenviable position."

"That's right, but thank goodness not for long. Tennant's rather heavy but kindly features broadened into a smile. "Edith's coming home next Monday. I wanted to tell you about that, and about something else, too. She's now returning from—breaking off, he looked at his replenished glass. "Aren't you joining me?"

Shaking his head, Penge replaced the stopper in the decanter. "Two is my limit. We doctors—g.p.s. as they say—must rigidly discipline ourselves. We're different from your men—who can go to bed with the light, and be virtually certain nothing will disturb them until their maid brings their cup of tea in the morning. Lucky beg! We're not with a telephone, or beside an alarm clock. There you are!" From the surgery on the other side of the hall came the tinkling of a bell.

"What is I telling you? Almost a practical demon's reticence. Excuse me, Robin: I'll be back in a few minutes."

Left alone, Tennant took a sip of his port, and pulling an armchair up before the fire. Yes, he was mighty glad Edith was returning home again on Monday. She'd been away—how long was it? Ah, yes, just over a fortnight. Well, it had been like a year. Funny how a chap misses his wife, felt at such an obliquely loose end, and like a fish out of water. Edith was just funny? No, he didn't think it was—not, that was, when two people meant as much to each other as did he and Edith.

Smiling reminiscently, Tennant recalled that they had been married nearly twenty years. Twenty-five years! Yet how amazingly short the period seemed. Well, there you were again! Was that funny too? No! How could it be when not so much as a speck of mud had darkened the horizon of their marital happiness. When a couple blighter spoke jeeringly of the blessed marriage estate—said to make a stupid and odious joke of it—Tennant—always felt an almost uncontrollable urge to kick him. And quite properly, too. Gadi! If anything should happen to Edith, Penge would take another sip from his glass, and glanced casually round the room. It was very comfortable and suggested well-being and repose. In keeping with modern fashion, the walls held few pictures and these chiefly etchings, display artistic discrimination. Indeed for a bachelor establishment, the colour scheme—as Tennant comprehensively phrased it—was surprisingly good. Dr. Edith, he wasn't at all sure whether even Edith could have done better. To whom, then, the praise—Penge, or Mrs. Durbin, his housekeeper?

Mrs. Durbin, he knew, was a very capable woman. Now a widow, he remembered the sensation caused in the village when her husband died. She was working hard, was killed in a road accident. Memory brought back to him, also the concern they had felt about Mrs. Durbin's future. In those days—not sixteen years ago—she was not exactly a young woman, and, although childless, her prospects of marrying again could not be considered rosy. Then old Dr. Hinely had died, and she came to Penge, and bought his practice, and Mrs. Durbin's problems were solved.

Finishing his port, Tennant recollected how, after ascertaining the "new doctor" was a bachelor, he had, to use his own expression, taken the bull by the horns, and gone along to ask whether the services of a housekeeper were required. The answer was "yes," and that was that. But now, seated in the dining-room of the man who had not brought himself to propose that he should be a housekeeper, he could not bring himself to suppose that the worthy Mrs. Durbin was responsible for the decoration. That seemed a bit outside her range.

Musing in his chair, Tennant reflected there was another funny business how one thought brought up other thoughts. Now here was Penge—a man with a comfortable position esteemed by his neighbours, not much over forty, and handsome in a restrained cultured way, yet lacking what was surely the greatest comfort of all—a wife's help and companionship. True, he had a maid, but she was sure the greatest comfort of all—a wife's help and companionship. True, he had a maid, but she was sure the greatest comfort of all—a wife's help and companionship. True, he had a maid, but she was sure the greatest comfort of all—a wife's help and companionship.

"You see," said Pamela, "once upon a time mother and Uncle Tony were sweethearts. But something went wrong. Now everything is going to be all right again. Just before I came with those flowers for Auntie Edie—sent with our best love—Uncle Tony told me that I wouldn't have to call him uncle much longer or think of him as Santa Clause or Father Christmas. Very soon, Pamela, he said, 'you'll have to call me Daddy. Always Daddy.'"

With suspicious mischievousness in his eyes, Tennant looked up at the sky. "Splendid!" he said. "Three cheers for Tony!" Then as if speaking to himself, he added: "Happy Christmas everybody."

Hearing him Pamela echoed his words. "Happy Christmas everybody. Then, raising herself to her full height, she put her arms around Tennant's neck and murmured, "Darling Uncle Robin!"

(The End)

"AN OLD TIME NECESSITY" Fans for cooling, the face have been known since about 3,000 B.C.

SOLDIERS RUB OUT TIRE ACHE

NEW! RUBS OUT YOUR TIRE ACHE

BRINGING UP FATHER

ST. DUNSTON'S BASILICA

The Feast of the Nativity of our Lord was solemnly observed at St. Dunstan's Basilica by Midnight Mass on Christmas Eve. The celebrant was His Excellency the Bishop of Charlottetown assisted by Rev. R. V. McQuinn and Rev. W. J. McQuinn as Deacons of Honor; Rev. G. MacDonald as Deacon of the Mass and Rev. K. MacMillan as Sub-Deacon of the Mass. Rev. L. A. Dougan was Master of Cereemonies. The sermon was given by Rev. W. MacQuinn.

The Corpus Christi Choir sang Christmas carols before the Mass. The Masses on Christmas Day were celebrated at 8.30, 9.30 and 11. At all Masses large numbers received Holy Communion.

At half past three in the afternoon pontifical vespers were celebrated by the Bishop and the Boys' Choral Choir sang Christmas hymns.

VULNERABLE TO BOMBING

Surface cables and pipelines for city water supplies being easily seen from airplanes, the city is being made vulnerable to bombing attacks.

ONLY THREE LARGER

Brazil is, in point of area, the world's fourth largest country.



write to a delighted mother-in-law telling her that all was well with the new arrival—a boy, weight eight pounds, mother and baby doing fine; and Robert Tennant was given the courtesy title of noble.

For the second circumstance Pamela was responsible. In a mood applying a mixture of shyness and defiance, Robin tried to define the astonishing kid, Tony. Plenty of high spirits, yet somewhat beneath a sternness, and something that appeals and gets under it, but happy though we were before Edith and I are wondering whether the place will ever seem quite the same after Pamela's going. They were playing a round of golf on the golf course.

"Well Robin she'll have to go of course."

"Oh, yes. We're reconciled to that. But I was just telling you. Oh, good drive!" So the round went on, and Robin believed himself to be living in the brightest of all bright worlds. But later that day—a week before Christmas—the first dark clouds arriving, some of the horizon of his nuptial happiness.

Penge was finishing his tea when



ing went, "not one of the marrying sort." Well, there was the puzzle—Edith's side what Tennant had often toyed, without making any definite attempt to solve it. Could a romance that was over and done with, but which had left indelible memories, find its way back to a man who would willingly entrust his own life and—indeed—more precious—Edith's as well.

The return of Penge put an end to Tennant's meditations. "Sorry I've been so long, Robin," he said. "Mrs. Green, at the Post Office."

"Ah!" Tennant got up and nodded knowingly. "So you was under, along with your surgical case. Now, adays, I've noticed, doctors don't carry their bags."

"Observant, had well, even doctors must move with the times. But there's no desperate hurry—everything is going along quite well. I fancy there was something you were going to tell me when I was called away."

"On yes about Edith, but nothing important. Just that we're going to increase our household. She's bringing a girl back with her—a youngster of twelve."

"Indeed! Surely that's new! Adoption?"

"No, oh no! Simply on a visit I think I've told you that Edith's maiden aunt, with whom she's staying now, has become more or less a permanent invalid, and engaged a companion a couple of years ago. A widow with one child and by all accounts a fine type of woman. Edith says she has been wonderfully good to her aunt, and the old lady thinks the world of her. Well to cut the story short Mrs. Ewing—that's the companion—was rushed to the hospital for an appendicectomy a few days ago, and Edith thinks it will be nice for the kid—Pamela—we have her with us for a bit—perhaps until after Christmas. Help to take the youngster's mind off things."

"And you?" Penge asked the question quietly.

"Me? Oh I'm just falling in, of course. For a moment with a social twisted smile Tennant looked at his friend, then lowered his gaze. "One joy has been raised up, Tony," he said. "Edith and I would have given nearly all we possess to have had a child."

In the days that followed, village life moved much within its customary orbit. But there were one or two events which came rather outside what might be described as ordinary routine. For example, Dick Green, a proud father was able to

summons came. Starting upon the Christmas decorations, Edith was standing on a step ladder when she was struck by the side of a table and she was unconscious. The white-faced, trembling maid who delivered the message carefully held his breath at once, Mr. Tennant's terrible like someone nearly out of his senses.

The statement was no exaggeration. It was indeed a very distraught and agonized Robin that he saw—man whose face lines had credibly deepened and who suddenly looked twenty years older. Involutionarily, he turned to his friend and said: "Thank you ever come, Tony. You'll save her won't you—you won't let my precious darling die?"

Regarding his friend with practised eyes, Penge's tone in reply was a kind of pleasantry. "Steady, Robin! You must play fair. One patient at a time is enough. Four courses at a time is no thumb-nail measure either."

Edith, the pallor of her face intensified by the pale, pale cretaceous, lay on the dining-room settee. Penge made a swift superficial examination, then turned to Tennant. "We must get her to bed. Please call your cook Mrs. Lucas. She and I manage quite well."

Half an hour later Penge came downstairs. Though his face was less haggard, Tennant's eye revealed the extent of his mental suffering.

"Well?" he asked.

"Concussion but no fracture. Rest and absolute quiet are needed. We must get a nurse. I'll see that, and phone Wollerton as soon as I get back. Of course—Penge made a slight pause—"if you'd like someone in consultation—Murphy for instance. A first-class man."

Tennant half rose, but dropped back in his chair. "My dear fellow!" he protested. "No one of course, not! Then reaction exerting its toll he sank his head into his cupped hands, and an emotion more pitiful by the effort which he strove to restrain it, sobbed hoarsely.

Presently he raised his head. "I'm sorry, Tony," he said. "Forgive me. But when a man loves his wife as I love Edith—"

"I know," crossing to him Penge rested a hand on his friend's shoulder.

While still sensible to the pressure of the other's fingers, and in the midst of his own torment, a sudden despair came to Tennant to solve a riddle which had so long perplexed him.

"But—how can you know

have to call me Daddy. Always Daddy."

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(The End)

Strengthening its naval power in the Far East to lend a hand to U. S. Fleet operating against the Japs. Great Britain has named Adm. Sir Bruce A. Fraser, above as commander-in-chief of new British Pacific Fleet.

By George McManus

A TOUGH SPOT

SALT LAKE CITY, Dec. 21 (AP) The General Hospital staff didn't know what to do for the aching tooth of Paul Lopez, a patient with a broken neck—and a tooth ache. There was no staff dentist. Then another patient, encased in plaster from neck to waist, pulled Lopez's tooth. He was a dentist who contracted diphtheria 18 months ago.

ARABIA'S POPULATION

Arabia has a population of 10,000,000 in an area of 1,000,000 square miles.

BRINGING UP FATHER

OH! ME—THAT CHILD BOBBY IS DRIVING ME MAD—I WISH HER FATHER WOULD COME HOME AND TAKE HER AWAY!

I WONDER WHEN HE IS COMIN' BACK—I'M A NERVOUS WRECK—MYSELF!

MR. BIGGS—WHAT DO YOU THINK I JUST GOT A LETTER FROM MY DADDY HOME! HE'S COMIN' HOME!

HE'S COMIN' HOME—THAT MEANS BOBBY WILL LEAVE US—BY GOLLY—I'M BEGINNIN' TO MISS HER ALREADY!

YES—IT'S A LETTER FROM MY DADDY—HE'S COMIN' HOME—THAT MEANS I'LL BE LEAVING YOU FOLKS.

WHEN WILL HE ARRIVE?

SATURDAY—WELL, GLAD WILL BE GLAD TO GET THIS NEWS!

WELL—BOBBY IS GOIN' TO LEAVE US—MY DADDY IS COMIN' HOME SATURDAY!

BOO-HOO—THE DARLIN'—SHE MUSTN'T GO—I'LL BE LONESOME WITHOUT HER!!

TIPPY AND "CAP" STUBBS

THE LITTLE DEARS ARE SO HAPPY WE HAD TO GO TO SIX STORES BEFORE WE COULD FIND MUSICAL TOYS!

WHAT A WONDERFUL TIME WE HAD SHOPPING! IT'LL GIVE THEM AN APPRECIATION FOR MUSIC, TOO.

HOW COULD I HAVE DO SUCH A THING TO US?

YES!

MY LAND! HERE COME ETHEL AN' BILLY AGAIN! THEIR HORNS AN'!

THEY'RE GOING TO HAVE A BAND. SALLY! THE CAP STUBBS—BOILER-MAKERS, THEY'D BETTER CALL IT!

MERCY! WHY ON EARTH DID I HAVE TO BUY HIM DRUMS!

REMEMBER, SHE'S YOUR ONLY RICH RELATIVE!—WELL, I HAVE TO RUN TO THE OFFICE—YES! YOU CAN ESCAPE!

UNLADYLIKE OF ME, BUT A FELLOW WHO TREATS A SHEETHEART LIKE HE DID!

LISTEN, WHO'S MORE SELFISH THAN YOU ARE?

CHEATING THE WHOLE WORLD OF A MASTERPIECE JUST BECAUSE I'M A BRUTE!

YOU LET ME GO JUST TRY AND GET AWAY!

MY IN-LAW TELLS ME THERE'S TROUBLE!

HEY YOU! SHE'S QUIT POSING WHEN MY MASTERPIECE IS HALF-DONE!

SAY YOU CAN'T! WELL, ER DO THAT!

WHY, YOURS LADY, YOU' COMMITTING A CRIME AGAINST ART!

TILLIE THE TOILER—THE COST OF SELFISHNESS

AN "ARTISTIC" CRIME

YOU LET ME GO JUST TRY AND GET AWAY!

MY IN-LAW TELLS ME THERE'S TROUBLE!

HEY YOU! SHE'S QUIT POSING WHEN MY MASTERPIECE IS HALF-DONE!

SAY YOU CAN'T! WELL, ER DO THAT!

WHY, YOURS LADY, YOU' COMMITTING A CRIME AGAINST ART!

RIGHT