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THE HANDSOME MAN

by MARGARET TURNBULL

Illustrations by IRWIN MYERS

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"See you again soon."
 "Sure. You come up any time. I'll be glad to show you about the place whenever you feel like it."

"I'm keen about it," he declared and somehow both Browne and Roberta believed it.

Roberta gave Browne her hand and a few murmured words of thanks and farewell, but few as they were they were cut short by the driver starting the car.

Roberta and her companion went silently toward the island. Whatever Sir George thought about this latest development in their excursion, he said nothing to the girl, giving himself up wholly to the skillful driving of the magnificent engine he had under his control. It was not until he stopped the car at the terrace and turned to her, as though expecting some praise for his riving, that Roberta spoke.

"Have you an enemy here?" she asked and then—as he stared at her amazed—she stammered: "Among the foreign workmen, I mean? Or was it an accident pure and simple that the shot went through your hat?"

"Oh, accident, pure and simple," Sir George assured her. "Nobody about here knows me well enough to hate me that much." He helped her out of the car and watched her go up the steps. Then he whistled, and he said to himself: "Then the man who fired the shot was a foreigner. At least he was a dark man." The girl had given that much away, even if she was, as Sir George suspected, trying to screen the man who fired the shot. And why she did that he was tremendously curious to know.

He was wrong. Roberta did not know. If a suspicion had for a moment entered her mind she had driven it forth instantly. It was unthinkable, impossible to imagine that there had been something familiar about the man who had moved away so swiftly through the thicket. She wanted Sir George's assurance that she was wrong, yet somehow it's very decision that it was an accident left her still faintly troubled.

Sir George heard his stepmother exclaiming and Robert MacBeth's voice raised in wrath, and knew that Roberta had told them. He called August to take the car in, and went forward to answer the questions that were in store for him.

Robert MacBeth wanted the police notified at once and stormed for a moment at both Browne and Sir George for having omitted to do this.

Roberta pointed out to her father that their construction camp was just outside a small town, which was likely to have about three supernumerary constables. The only man who could do any good would be the state police and there was still time to notify them. MacBeth asked Roberta one or two questions, which elicited the fact that she had not seen anyone clearly, had only been aware, after the shot, of some one moving off over the little pile of rocks and rubbish, screened by bushes and small trees, at the entrance to the construction road. Fortunately, she had not her head but had instantly put her foot on the brake and driven with her right hand.

She steadily denied having plainly seen the man who had fired the shot, but she had heard a car start after she had gone some distance. She was in too much pain and too frightened to stop and look for it. Her impression that the man was a foreigner she could not deny, but neither could or would she say why she thought so. The hat had not moved and she did not think that he knew there was no head under it, so quickly had she driven away. Then Lady Sandison pounced on them.

"Have you no mercy, Rob! Think shame to yourself, Sir George! You two keeping the lass here gabgabbing when she should be taking a rest, and having her hand dressed. I've telephoned the doctor so that it'll be done, as it should be. Come away my girl, and get tidied up before he comes."

She had taken Roberta away and left the two men together.

"I'm not going to have my girl run into any more danger, you can bet your life on that, so much as I hate calling in the police at this stage of the game, we'll give them the facts," MacBeth said as he put out his hand to the receiver.

His secretary nodded. "But it wasn't the girl they were after, Sir"

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NEWSY NOTES

BY AGRICOLA

CO-OPERATIVE NOTES

From a batch of home papers I learn that the Co-operative Society of which I was formerly a member, had declared its half-yearly dividend—bonus I suppose we would call it—of one shilling and ninepence in the £, or about 9%, after all expenses were paid. This is in great contrast to the good times I can recollect when the Society thought that all was right with the world, for the dividend was at four shillings in the £, i. e., about 20%.

The general stagnation of trade with decreased purchasing power, and the increase of taxation, have been the principal factors in the falling-off.

The Society was already an old one when I joined it, and being naturally inquisitive I questioned my fellow members as to how it originated. The pioneers of the movement, I gathered, had been dissatisfied at the profits made by the merchant princes in Newcastle on Tyne, and had set out to retain some portion of the proceeds in their own pockets. They had received neither municipal nor government aid, and indeed there seemed to be the feeling that the less they relied on such bodies the better for themselves, for they believed that "Big Business" had the ear of both.

It seems that the first step was to call a public meeting of all interested: and at the meeting a committee was elected to hire a little shop and engage salesmen ("clerks" as we mistakenly call them) and a manager. The manager was directly accountable to the committee and took his orders from them; he did none of the hiring, and so nepotism and favoritism were kept at a minimum. As to wages and salaries, they were held at the maximum consistent with good business, and attracted alert and capable assistants.

When any position became vacant it was advertised and applicants came before the committee at their meeting with references, and were placed according to vote. The fortunate individual had secured (as they used to phrase it) "bread for life."

In trading everything was on a strictly cash basis, and the price was exactly the same as that which any of the merchants charged. Grudging any of the members, it was pointed out, would inevitably lead to bad debts with a diminishing of the dividend. Besides it was against the very principle of the organization, which was formed to promote thrift. Many societies in the past had come to grief by neglecting this rule, and it was too easy to show a surplus, where none existed, by including doubtful debts as assets in the Balance Sheet. I agreed with my informants on that point, since I held that all such debts should be written off to Profit and Loss and only reinstated as assets in the case of future recovery.

As the Society progressed the members found that they were again at a disadvantage: the owners of the shop kept tab on their progress and raised the rent on them. But they "took their courage in both hands" and built the finest department store in the North of England.

Their quarterly meetings, during which the committees reported to the general body of members, were now held in their own auditorium, and were most interesting gatherings. Every step taken, or to be taken, was considered, questioned,

criticized, or amended with spirit and judgment. Twice a year a proper Balance Sheet was issued by the committee as a duty and received by the members as a right, not as a favor: and a proper profit and loss account placed all the expenses, salaries, and such like disbursements before the members for consideration.

Before the dividend was declared there was a number of deductions from the gross profits. The building fund (principal and interest) was first provided for; then the Reserve Fund, (and his was really a reserve fund), a contribution to some worthy cause, to some educational scheme, and sometimes a donation to some member who had fallen under misfortune.

It was astonishing that, after all these deductions, the Society could pay a four shillings in the £ dividend, but it was a revelation as to what could be accomplished when the motto was "Each for all and all for each."

From a perusal of the farm papers one is inclined to doubt whether many of the Canadian organizations which profess to be co-operative are really in that class. One, at least, is said to be a thinly disguised limited liability company, others are kept going by cliques. The rest call the members together at such long intervals that they naturally cannot take the proper interest in the management. This has led to a situation (as I have been told by a farmer who presumes to criticize) that "only about half the members attend and they sit and say nothing and chew all the next day!" Humorous, if a little coarse; and, probably truthful!

ROMAN BRITAIN—4.
 in the last instalment of our his-

tory we left the Romans and the Britons facing each other in order of battle. It was not unusual among the British clans for a woman to command the army, and Boadicea, and her daughters were present in a war-chariot. Tacitus tells us that she made a speech to the army and even tells us what she said—a feat which stamps him as the father of all reporters!

"She told them that she considered herself not as the descendant of noble ancestors, possessed of sovereignty and great riches, but as one of the community, prepared to avenge the loss of liberty, the stripes inflicted on her body, and the dishonor done to her daughters; for the lusts of the Romans were risen to such a height, that neither their persons, their age, nor their chastity was safe. The gods, however, she said, favored their just revenge; the legion which had attempted an engagement was cut off; those who had escaped concealed themselves within their fortresses (castris) or were preparing for flight. The Roman army now opposed to them would never stand the shouts and clamor of so many thousands, much less their shock and fury. If they considered the number of forces, or the causes of the war, they would resolve that day to conquer or die; this was the last resource for her, a woman; let the men, if they pleased, live and be slaves."

It is, of course, unlikely that such a speech was uttered, but no doubt these were the sentiments which actuated the Britons in this revolt.

Suetonius also addressed his troops, telling them not to fear the immense number of their foes, nor to be alarmed at the "dreadful shouts with which they were accustomed to march into battle. The legion protected by its position, acted on the defensive until the fury of the first onset was exhausted. Then a formed in a wedge, and moved steadily on the Britons, while the auxiliaries made the same movement; and the cavalry on the flank acted as lancers and with spear leveled, bore down all before them. The Britons could not withstand their well-disciplined foes any sought safety in flight, but the circle of wagons hemmed them in and the slaughter was terrible. None were spared; the Romans massacred the women and even the beasts. Eighty thousand Britons are said to have perished on that fatal day and queen Boadicea, unwilling to survive the destruction of her country, put an end to her own life by taking poison.

The fact that the Iceni were accompanied by their women, would show that the tribes had risen en masse, and after the defeat the country was left almost without inhabitants. The Roman troops then ravaged the lands of any other tribes who were known to be hostile or wavering, and so although the war lingered on for a time, the defeat of the insurrection so firmly fixed the Roman power that never afterwards do we read of serious revolts in the conquered provinces.

(Continued from Page 6)

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