

The Salvation of Dennison

By HERBERT ELLS

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DENNISON staggered down onto the street, his head whirling, his cheeks hot, his heart faint. He glanced toward the cool water in the river with a sigh almost wistful. Why not end it all anyway. Was the fight worth the candle? It was ten years since he had enjoyed any rational pleasure. Day and night, night and day of unending and relentless worry and strain—that had been the history of a decade. Of course, he had played for big stakes with little or no capital to start on. But he had not been altogether unsuccessful. He had jumped from goal to goal with marvelous rapidity. No sooner had one point been achieved than the proceeds, moral as well as physical, had been staked on a further achievement. The world looked upon him as a marvelously successful young man, but the world did not behold the precipice over which he perennially hung. It seemed now that the end certainly must come. A slip here—not his fault—a disaster in a distant state, a tightening of the money market—all things impossible to foresee, and he was pushed hard against the wall. It was not so much the thought of losing all he had gained in a financial way. He felt he had the strength and courage to begin over and he knew he could make a better living than he had ever had time to take. It was not that. It was the bitter thought of failure, the sneers and criticism of the men on the street—that was what he shrank from. He gritted his teeth as he often had done before in supreme moments. It was not all over yet. He had yet time to make a turn before Wednesday week, when he must face his banker, his principal creditors and them who had backed him in his enterprise. And he had a card or two left to play. He walked on unheeding place or time, his eyes set and introspective, his face drawn and haggard. His poor, tired, forced brain was trying its best to heed the lash he applied. Then a strange phenomena occurred. Coming out of his trance for a moment he looked straight into the flashing, jet-black eyes of a rollicking, saucy schoolgirl, who was regarding him mischievously. The eyes were full of life, intelligence, vitality and were framed by the daintiest oval face, the dainty red on the olive skin, telling of perfect health. Dennison had been so absorbed in his thoughts that he had not been conscious of his surroundings and consequently when he looked up was bearing down directly upon the girl. She had noted his absorption and had planned, mischievously, to give him a little shock. But he had looked up just in time and found himself looking into those splendid black eyes. A strange thrill went through him. The physical effect of the face he saw and especially the eyes, was most definite and powerful. For an instant he was paralyzed, then sheered rapidly to the right to avoid a collision. But, alas for the best laid plans, the girl had planned all along to dodge him on that same side, so the result was disastrous. He succeeded in preventing a head-end collision, but brushed so violently against her that he knocked her books from her hand and scraped her watch from the bosom of her dress where it was pinned. "A thousand pardons," he exclaimed, flushing deeply. "There is really no excuse for a man walking down a public street in a trance. I am an idiot. Pardon me." She stood demurely watching him struggle with loose leaves and scattered papers and all the debris to be found in a school book, while he sputtered away at himself. Then he found that the watch was broken and had stopped and insisted on taking it to a nearby jeweler to ascertain the extent of the damage. It was found to be slight, and while the jeweler was repairing it he remained and talked to the girl. His business cares had rolled from him and he found his brain engaged in new and delightful problems. How was he to further his acquaintance with the girl; how prevent the episode to end his contact with those brilliant eyes. The watch being repaired, he insisted on walking with her, carrying her books. "Is it quite proper, sir?" she asked. "Indeed it is," he replied, earnestly. Then he went on desperately telling her his name and business—a name he knew was well known throughout the city. She accepted the situation with the careless abandon of the schoolgirl. Her feminine intuition told her that he was a gentleman and his blundering earnestness amused her. She saw, too, that her charms had impressed him, which she could not help but like, being a woman. He learned that she was from a small town in the west and was staying with an uncle in the city in order to enjoy the advantages of the city schools; he also judged that the uncle was somewhat of a crank and that the girl was afraid of him. He learned also that her name was Hattie. Arriving at the corner nearest her home she dismissed him positively. "Auntie would have a fit if she saw me walking with a strange man," she said. Then he asked if he might call, and she said: "Oh, dear, no." "What am I to see you no more?" he exclaimed in alarm.

"I don't see how you can very well and be proper," she replied with a suppressed giggle, behind her gravity. "But," she added demurely. "There is a carnival at St. Mark's church this evening, where I am to have a booth. I don't suppose I could prevent your coming." She went along home and he turned and watched her jaunty step and noted the lithe figure, half girlish, half womanish, and the flame of a great desire leaped into his heart. He walked down the street toward his hotel, whistling like a schoolboy. His business anxieties seemed a thousand miles away. He realized that he needed every ounce of brain and energy he had to meet the business crisis which he faced. He stopped whistling and frowned. What was he doing—a man of his age and experience, and in his predicament spending valuable hours walking about the street with a schoolgirl? And what business had he to be giving time and thought to anything else but his tangled affairs. He set forth decisively to apply himself to the great problem confronting him. After all his brain seemed clearer and his heart certainly beat stronger for the incident. And the girl—ah, wasn't she a beauty. He thrilled again at thought of her black eyes. She had said to-night at St. Mark's. Yes, he would be there. He wondered a bit about his clothes. He had not inspected his wardrobe for some months, having had no time for social diversions. So his mind bounded back from the business problem and remained glued to the olive, oval face and the ruby lips and the flashing orbs of Hattie Menard. Presently he found himself in his room arraying himself, and later walked into the carnival at St. Mark's. He knew many people there, but had eyes only for one. He saw her presently, costumed as a gypsy, in the fortune-teller's booth. Straightway he went there and greeted her as an old friend. Of course he had his palm read. The contact of her little hand drove him into ecstasies he had never known. He sought to prolong the conversation and invited her to the ice cream booth. "You must remember, sir," she said, with downcast eyes, "that we have never been formally introduced." "Oh, that's it, is it?" he replied and straightway sought her uncle, Hiram Stone, whom he knew slightly. Adroit management brought the two back to the vicinity of the fortuneteller's. Hattie greeted her uncle and he introduced her perfunctorially to Dennison, adding: "Niece of mine I'm putting through the schools. Harrum-scarrum sort of a girl, but I've got to do it on account of Rachel. What were you saying about N. P.?" But N. P. was not in Dennison's mind and he shook Stone abruptly. Later he asked Hattie if he might call, and received permission, of which he availed himself on the following evening, much to Stone's bewilderment. On the following afternoon he met her with a buggy as she left school and took her riding. Saturday he took her to the golf links and Sunday afternoon for a long ride. By this time he was making the most ardent love to her. He spent only enough time at his office to read the mail and give a few directions. On that Sunday ride he threw discretion to the winds and begged her to become his wife. After some teasing, she accepted him and it was agreed, inasmuch as Uncle Hiram might interpose objections and delay matters, to slip quietly away Monday morning and be married in a neighboring town. After a honeymoon of two days they returned and occupied apartments at Dennison's hotel and he went briskly to his office to meet his banker, his creditors and his backers. He did not drag his feet, as he did when he walked out discouraged and forlorn the week before. He walked briskly and confidently and it was noticeable that his eyes sparkled and the crow's feet were gone. "Well, I guess you've raised the money, Dennison," said the banker, smiling. "Not at all," replied Dennison, seating himself confidently. "The fact is I haven't tried. In fact I haven't had time. I've been too busy getting married." "Married!" exclaimed the party in unison. "Oh, yes," replied Dennison. "And congratulate me, gentlemen. I have found the sweetest girl in the world. You see I was fool enough to think that credit and business and work and success was all there is to life. I've learned differently. There's something else and I've found it." "But about the business?" gasped the banker. "Well, I've been thinking about that a bit coming down this morning. It looks to me just this way. Here is the business. You know the condition. We're making money and if you will leave me alone I'll pull out and there'll be profits galore in a few months. If you force me now, I'll have to let it go to smash and we'll all lose together. It's up to you. I'll do the best I can and no man will lose a cent through me. But I have got through worrying about it. I have learned that there's another side to life and I like that side. I'd rather be a clerk on a salary and know that side than the president and owner of your blamed old bank and not know it. I am in your hands, gentlemen." Of course there was but one thing to do, and Dennison pulled the business through all right and they all made money. And Dennison never worried about business any more. He had found an antidote for business care in a pair of flashing black eyes.

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DROWNED IN THE MISSISSIPPI. BATHING PARTY OF EIGHT MET DEATH AT ALTON, ILL. Children In the Water Struggled and Screamed, Fighting Desperately to Reach a Sand Bar—Only One Saved.

Alton, Ill., Aug. 6.—While bathing in the Mississippi river last night, Michael Riley, his daughter and six of the latter's little girl friends were drowned. One child who was in the party was rescued. Riley lived near the river in the southern part of the city and was accustomed to bathe on the beach in front of his home after his return from work. Last night his little daughter begged to go with him and Riley took her and seven of her girl friends to the beach with him. When they entered the water Riley bade the children join hands and they all waded into the river and walked along a sand bar which stretched out into the stream at that point. They had gone some distance from the shore when suddenly the whole party disappeared beneath the water, having in the darkness stepped from the sand bar into the deep channel. The children struggled and screamed, fighting desperately to reach the sand bar, where the water was only a foot or so in depth. Riley, who is said to have been a good swimmer, is thought to have been made helpless by the girls clinging to him and hampering his efforts to save them. The only one in the party to regain the sand bar was Mary Timiny, 8 years old. The child is unable to tell how she saved herself.

SITUATION IS CRITICAL. Our Government May Have to Send Warships to Constantinople. Washington, Aug. 6.—Minister Leshman has notified the state department from Constantinople that he has failed to receive the expected satisfactory reply from the sultan touching the rights of American citizens in Turkey. At Friday's meeting of the cabinet the situation was regarded as sufficiently grave to warrant some change in the program that had been formed for the movement of the United States naval vessels in the Mediterranean. While it was not decided to stop the home coming of the fleet of big battle-ships due at Gibraltar in a day or two, the determination was reached to have Admiral Jewell, commanding the European squadron, which has separated from the battleship squadron and is now at Ville Franche, remain in that vicinity until further orders, or at least not to come further westward while the negotiations are pending. Ran Into an Open Switch. Camden, N. J., Aug. 6.—An express train on the West Jersey & Seashore railroad ran into an open switch at Woodbury yesterday and was totally wrecked. The train consisted of a locomotive, parlor car, baggage car and three day coaches. The engine was demolished and all the cars except the parlor car were overturned. The train was well filled and the passengers were shaken up and bruised. Richard Dooty, the engineer, was badly scalded and sustained a broken rib.

The Grand Republic Re-inspection. New York, Aug. 6.—A re-inspection of the steamboat Grand Republic, a sister boat to the sunken General Slocum, owned by the Knickerbocker Steamboat Co., was made Friday by United States inspectors and after a thorough examination the steamer was passed, although owing to the small number of good life preservers on board her carrying capacity was reduced from 2,900 to 1,250, no additional life preservers to replace those condemned being now available. A Double Murder. Philadelphia, Aug. 6.—Joseph Shearer and his wife Elizabeth, who were married about a month ago, were shot and killed by Harry Fisher, aged 30 years, the woman's brother, in their home Friday. Fisher also shot himself and died at a hospital. The motive for the crime is said to have been robbery. Mr. and Mrs. Shearer had \$1,000 in the house with which they had intended to purchase a home. The money was stolen. Fisher admitted his guilt.

The Grand Circuit Races. Buffalo, N. Y., Aug. 6.—Buffalo closed its most successful grand circuit meeting in years with another good crowd and sharp racing at Kenilworth park Friday. Before the first heat of the 2:10 pace Ben F. sold as favorite over the field and won. The 2:14 pace was a good contest and Snow had his hands full getting Black Hal home. Baron Grattan, the Chamber of Commerce winner at Detroit, was defeated. A New Railway Project. Pittsburg, Aug. 6.—Official announcement was made yesterday that engineers for the Lake Erie & Pittsburg Railroad Co. have just completed the surveys for a new road from Youngstown to Pittsburg which will be opened for business by this time next year. Operators Would Let Gray Decide. Wilkesbarre, Pa., Aug. 6.—At the meeting of the anthracite board of conciliation held Friday at the request of the miners, the operators presented a plan for the settlement of the check weightmen and check docking boss questions, which have caused trouble. The operators ask that the controversy be submitted to Judge Gray, chairman of the anthracite coal strike commission, his decision to be final. The miners asked for time to consider the proposition and action was deferred until the next meeting of the board, to be held here August 12.

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