## NOBODY'S MAN:-: By E. Phillips Oppenheim

How a Great Leader, Almost Ruined by a Money Marriage and a Faithless Wife, Regains Success and Happiness Through an Unusual Woman's Love Is Fascinatingly Told in This Story of Intrigue, Politics, Mystery and Romance by the Noted Author of "The Great Impersonation," "The Profiteers," "The Great Prince Shan" and a Score of "Best Sellers"

THIS BEGINS THE STORY

Andrew Tallente, political leader, has married for money. His wife accepted him to forward social ambitions to a fitle: Losing his seat in Parliament he meets her recriminations with the statement that their marriage has been unsuccessful, owing to her cold and selfish temperament and her interest in his young secretary. Anthony Palliser, who has just disappeared. She has a sudden suspicion that her husband is responsible for the disappearance. Lady Jane Partington, a beautiful and wealthy aristocrat interested in labor problems, is a teighbor we o interests Andrew greatly. He tell her he and his wife lave parted. Andrew has missed some valuable political papers, and in an argument THIS BEGINS THE STORY Andrew has missed some valuable political papers, and in an argument with Palliser on the edge of a cliff has struck him. The secretary fell over. Andrew, formerly an Alginist, has climbed down to the beach below, but found no trace of Palliser. He is observed by Inspector Gillian, of the police. Stephen Dartrey, the great Labor Party leader, comes down to Tallente's part of the country. AND HERE IT CONTINUES

NOT in the least. I am content to leave that entirely to fate." "Bucolic? Intellectual? An artist?

She made a little grimace:

"How can I tell? I cannot conceive caring for an ordinary person, but then every woman feels like that. And, you see, if I did care, he wouldn't be ordinary—to me. And so far as I am concerned," she insisted, with a shade of restlessness in her manner.

"There we expandation of the sample class of people, physically omnipotent, conscious of wrongs, unintelligent, and led by false prophets. All revolutions are the same. The purging is too severe, so the good remains unshade of restlessness in her manner. be ordinary—to me. And so far as I am concerned," she insisted, with a shade of restlessness in her manner, "that finishes the subject. You must please devote yourself to telling me at least some of the things I want to know. What is the use of having one of the world's successful men tete-a-tete, a prisoner to my hospitality: unless I can make him gratify my curlosity?"

The thought created by her words burned through his mind like a flash of destroying lightning.

"One of the world's successful men," he repeated. "Is that how I seem to you?"

"And to the world," she asserted. He shook his head sadly.
"I have worked very hard," he said.
"I have been very ambitious. A few on the state of the sand that a should have been very ambitious. A few on the said. "I do not think so," he answered.

"And to the world," she asserted. He shook his head sadly, "I have worked very hard," he said. of my ambitions have been gratified, but the glory of them has passed with attainment. Now I enter upon the last lap and I possess none of the things I started out in life to achieve."

'But how absurd!'' she exclaimed. "Tou are one of our great politicians. You would have to be reckoned with in any regrouping of parties."

'Without even a seat in the House of Commons," he reminded her bitterly. "And again, how can a man be a great of the control of the conclusion that I could if I would the shooting that goes with the manor, but very few birds, I believe, the was the spokesman for a superior authority in London. They have come to the conclusion that I could, if I chose things out of one's mind."

'You are one of our great politicians. You would have the special the strip?' she asked. "One should have of Commons," he reminded her bitterly. "I may feel the

Commons," he reminded her bitterly. politician when there are no politics? The confusion among the parties has become chaos, and I for one have not been clear-sighted enough to see my

"Of course, I know vaguely what you mean," she said, "but remember that I am only a newspaper-educated ltician. Can't you be a little more He lit another cigarette and smoked

He lit another cigarette and smoked restlessly for a moment.

"I'll try to explain, if I can." he went on. "To be a successful political insight, but he needs to be able to adapt his views to the practical program of one of the existing parties, or else to be strong chough to form a party of his own. That is where I have come to the cul-de-sac in my cases. It was my empiriton to guide the content of the much use to me now."

"Racquets would help you with lawn the unkempt, ill-tailored, ungainly figure of James Miller.

"This gentleman," Parkins announced, "wishes to see Mr. Tallente on urgent business."

"It is eleven years since I touched a club." he told her.

"Then you ought to be ashamed of yourself," she declared. "Games are part of an Englishman's life, and when the unkempt, ill-tailored, ungainly figure of James Miller.

"This gentleman," Parkins, the stout, discreet manservant, ushering in the unkempt, ill-tailored, ungainly figure of James Miller.

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"The door was opened by Parkins, the stout, discreet manservant, ushering in the unkempt, ill-tailored, ungainly figure of James Miller.

"This gentleman," Parkins announced, "wishes to see Mr. Tallente on urgent business." but I have also always been an intensely keen imperialist, and therefore at daggers drawn with many of the so-called Labor leaders. The consequence has been that for ten years I have been hanging on to the thin edge of nothing, a member of the so-called Labor leaders. The consequence has been that for ten years I have been hanging on to the thin edge of nothing, a member of the solution of the s Government, a member by sufferance of a hotelpotch party which was created by the combination of the Radicals and the Unionists with the sole idea of seeing the country through its great crisis. All legislation, in the wider sense of the term, had to be shelved while the country was in danger and while it was recovering itself. That time I spent striving to educate the people I wanted to represent, striving No party claims me. I haven't even a seat in the House of Commons. I

"Nearly fifty years old!" she repeated. "But what is that? You have good health, you are sfrong and well, there is nothing a younger man can do that you cannot. Why do you worry about your age?"

"Perhaps," he admitted, with a faint smile, and an innate compulsion to tell her of the thought which had lurked behind, "because you are so marvelously young."

ously young."
"Absurd!" she scoffed. "I am

twenty-nine years old — practically thirty. That is to say, with the usual twenty years' allowance, you and I are of the same age."

He looked at her across the lacedraped table with its howls of fruit. Its richly cut decanter of wine, its low bowl of roses its laze of eigenstate.

how of roses, its haze of cigarette smoke. She was leaning back in her chair, her head resting upon the fingers of one hand. Her face seemed alive with so many emotions. She was so anxious to console, so interested in her companion, herself, and the moment. He felt something unexpected and irresistible.

"I wish to God I could look at it

resistible.

"I wish to God I could look at it like that!" he exclaimed suddenly.

The words had left his lips before he was conscious that the thought which had lain at the back of them had found expression in his tone and glance. Just at first they produced no other effect in her save that evidenced by the gently upraised eyebrows, the sweetly tolerant suile. And then a sudden cloud, scarcely of discomfiture, certainly not of displeasure, more of unrest, swept across her face. Her eyes no longer met his so clearly and frankly. There was a little mist there, and a little silence. She was looking away through the with the silence. was a little mist there, and a little silence. She was looking away through the windows to the dim, pearly line of blue, the actual horizon of things present. Her pulses were scarcely steady. She was possessed to a full extent of the finer qualities of courage, physical and spiritual, yet at that moment she felt a wave of curious fear, the fear of the idealist that she may not be true to here!.

The moment massed and she looked

The moment passed and she looked at him with a smile. An innate gift of concealment, the heritage of her sex. came to her rescue, but she felt, somebow or other, as though she had passed through one of the crises of her life—that she could never be quite the same again. She had ceased for these few seconds to be natural.

"What does that wish mean?" she asked. "Do you mean that you would like to agree with me, or would you like to be twenty-nine?"

He too turned his back upon that little pool of emotion, did his best to



be natural and easy, to shut out the memory of that flaming moment.

"At twenty-nine," he told her, "I was First Secretary at St. Petersburg. I am afraid that I was rather a dull dog, too. All Russia, even then, was seething, and I was trying to understand. I never did. No one ever understood Russia. The explanation of all that has happened there is simply the eternal dunilention of history—a

"Racquets and cricket," he assented. "Neither of them much use to me

part of an Englishman's life, and when the moment bereft of words. Lady he neglects them altogether there is Jame, who, among her minor faults, something wrong. I shall insist upon was inclined to be a supercitious per-

the smoothly shaven lawns,
"So you think that regeneration may
come to me through lawn tennis?" he

murmured. murmured.

'And why not? You are taking yourself far too seriously, you know. How do you expect regeneration to come?"

'Shall I tell you what it is I lack?"

he answered suddenly. "Incentive. I think my will has suddenly grown flabby, the ego in me unresponsive.
"You know the moods in which one asks oneself whether it is worth while,

to make them see reason, to combat the two elements in their outlook which have been their eternal drawback, the elements of blatant selfishness and greedy ignorance. Well, I failed. That is all there is about it—I failed.

That is all there is about it—I failed.

The strongest of us need to rest sometimes, 's she agreed quietly. sometimes," she agreed quietly.

He relapsed into a silence so appar-

as eat in the House of Commons. I am nearly fifty years old and I am ently deliberate that she accepted it as a respite for herself also. From the greater seclusion of her shadowy sent, she found herself presently able to watch him unnoticed—the brooding melancholy of his face, the nervous, unsatisfied mouth, the discontent of his somber brows. Then, even as she watched, the change in his expression startled her.
His eyes were fixed upon the narrow
ribbon of road which twisted around the
other side of the house and led over the
bleaker moors, seaward. The look
puzzled her, gave her an uncomfortable feeling. Its note of appreciation seemed to her inexplicable. With a quaint, electrical sympathy, he caught the unspoken question in her eyes and trans-

> "You are beginning to doubt me," he said. "You are wondering if the shadow I carry with me is not some-

shadow I carry with me is not some-thing more than the mere depression of a man who has failed."
"You have not failed." she declared,
"and I never doubt you, but there was something in your face just then which was strange, something alien to our 'talk. It was as though you saw some-thing ominous in the distance."
"It is true," he admitted. "In the

distance I can see the car I ordered to come and fetch me. There is a pas-senger—a man in the tonneau. I am wondering who he is."

"Some one to whom your given a lift, perhaps," she suggested. He shook his head.

He shock his head.

'I have another feeling—perhaps I should say an apprehension. It is some one who brings news."

'Political or—domestic?"

'Neither,' he answered. "I thought that Fate had dealt me out most of her evil tricks when I came down here, a political outcast. She had another one up her sleepes however. one up her sleeve, however. Do you read your morning papers?"
"Every day," she confessed. "Is it

a weakness? 'Not at all."

"You read of the disappearance of the Honorable Anthony Palliser?"
"Of course," she answered. "Besides, you told me about it, did you not, yesterday afternoon? I know one of his sisters quite well, and I was looking forward to seeing something of him down here."

"I was obliged to dismiss him at a moment's notice," Tallente went on "He betrayed his trust and he has dis-appeared." That very imposing police inspector who broke up our tete-a-tete yesterday afternoon and I fear short-

clined to take life a little too earnestly?" she asked. "One should have
amusements."

"I may feel the necessity." he replied, "but it is not easy to take up
one's earlier pleasures at my time of
life."

"He rose to his feet.
"You are the one person in the
world." he said, "to whom I could tell
nothing but the truth. I could."

They both heard the sound of footsteps in the hall. Ludy Jane, disturbed
by the ominous note in Tallente's voice,
rose also to her feet, glancing from him one's earlier pleasures at my time of life."

"Don't think me inquisitive." she went on, "but, as I told you, I have looked you up in one of those wonderful books which tell us everything about everybody. You were a Double Blue at Oxford."

"Racquets and cricket," he assented.

filled with almost dramatic possibilities.
The door was opened by Parkins, the



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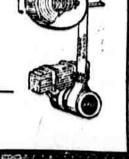
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son, with too great a regard for externals, gazed upon this strange figure which had found its way into her sanctum with, an astonishment which kept her also silent.

"Sorry for intrude," Mr. Miller began, with an affability which he meant to be reassuring. "Mr. Tsilente, will you introduce me to the lady?"

"Tallente acquiexced unwillingly.

"Lady Jane," he said, "this is Mr. James Miller—Lady Jane Partington."

"Mr. Miller—Lady Jane Partington."

"Mr. Miller—was impressed, held out his hand and withdrew it.

"I must apologize for this intrusion. Lady Jane, and to you, Tallente, of course, Mr. Tallente is naturally surprised to see me. He and I are political opponents," he confided, turning to Jane.

"He and Misa Miller answered. "Do you mean to say that he is over at the Manor now?"

"Waiting to see you," Miller answered. "Waiting to see you," Miller answered. "Now, if only you'd brought him over with you, Mr. Miller," she said, a shade more amigbly, "you would have given

to Jane.

Her surprise increased, if possible.

"Are you Mr. Miller, the Democrat M. P.?" she asked, "the Mr. Miller who was making those speeches at Hellesfield last week?"

"At your ladyship's service," he replied, with a low bow. "I am afraid if you are a friend of Mr. Ta'lente's you must look upon me as a very disagreeable person."

must look upon me as a very disagreeable person."
If the newspapers are to be believed, your strategies up at Hellesfield scarcely give one an exalted idea
of your tacties," she replied coldly.
"They all seem to agree that Mr. Tallente was cheated out of his seat."

The intruder smiled tolerantly. He
glanced around the room as though expecting to be asked to seat himself. No evitation of the sort, however, was ac-

corded him. corded him.

"All's fair in love and politics, Lady Jane," he declared. "We Democrats have our program, and our motto is that those who are not with us are against us. Mr. Tallente here knew pretty well what he was up against."

"On the contrary," Tallente interrupted, "one never knows what one is up against when you are in the opposite camp, Miller. Would you mind explaining why you have sought me out in

plaining why you have sought me out in this singular fashion?"

"Stephen Dartrey?" Lady Jane murmured.
"Dartrey?" Tallente echoed. "Do you menn to say that he is over at the Manor now?"
"Waiting to see you." Miller announced, and for a moment there was a little gleam of displeasure in his eyes.
Lady Jane sighed.
"Now, if only you'd brought him over with you, Mr. Miller," she said, a shade more amiably, "you would have given me real pleasure. There is no man whom I am more anxious to meet."
Miller sailed tolerantly.
"Dartrey is a very difficult person." he declared. "Although he is the leader of our party, and before very long will be the leader of the whole Labor Party, although he could be Prime Minister tomorrow if he cared about it; he is one of the most retiring men whom I ever of the most retiring men whom I ever knew. At the present moment I believe that he would have preferred to have remained living his hermit's life, a writer and a dilettante, if circumstances had not dragged him into polities. He lives in the simplest way and hates all society save the company of hates all society save the company of a few old cronies."

To be continued tomorrow

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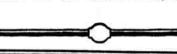


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