PURSUIT : *One of the Evening Public Ledger's New Short Stories in the Series of Unpublished Fiction by the Best American Writers of the Day*

By Henry Sydnor Harrison

In the still midnight, beneath the serene moon, sped the slim, white-clad wife, dark hair flowing after; and hard behind chased the heavily built man, her husband

IT WAS the evening of May Hesketh's picnic supper, small but memorable; and now the clocks, had there been any on the island, would have pointed close to midnight. What was so rare as this night in June? Sailing wisps of cloud shredded the face of the high moon; the blackness of the woods, the glades and dells, the vine-covered rocks and the empty quarry, were stippled and patched with silver; the lake was a sheet of silver stretching far away to lose itself in a lovely dusk. Through the verdure a soft breeze whispered; from the water floated voices of the merrymakers, receding; and the woman stealing on light feet up the path, a slim and not incongruous figure in her white bathing dress, with unbound dark hair streaming to her waist, reflected that, for an hour at least, she would be alone here.

But it was not so. From the impenetrable shadows, as she neared the ruined cabin, the figure of a man abruptly emerged upon the path; he stood, confronting her. She started a little, and then she saw, with a wild shoot of satisfaction, that this man was her husband.

"You!" she said with the faintly mocking air she had long ago learned for him: "But fancy meeting you here!"

"You—you looked like a ——" he began a little confusedly, and then, breaking off, he cleared his throat and started again, more authoritatively: "I don't say I approve of that suit, but—but it does seem to fit in with the surroundings somehow. You might almost have been mistaken—at a distance, that is—for—a hamadryad. But——"

"And what may they be? Something very nice to be mistaken for, may I hope? But I supposed you'd gone in the launch?"

"No—no. I'm tired of drunks," said he, continuing to stare at her. "And besides, swimming at night—

It is like shaking hands with an old friend to see the name of Henry Sydnor Harrison. Some years ago his first book, "Queed," gave him instant place as one of our foremost American novelists. No one has to be told what a favore that book made, nor that it is one of those that remain. Then at intervals—for Mr. Harrison is an author who works long and with infinite care—came "V. V.'s Eyes," and "Angela's Business," both startling successes. His latest novel, "Saint Teresa," continues to establish him as a front-rank American auth .

He started writing when he first left college, and mainly at night because, he said, he had to make a living. He joined the staff of the Richmond Times-Dispatch. At the end of five years, having saved some money, he resigned to make his way at writing alone.

"Pursuit" may be a bit cynical, but it gives much food for thought and reflection. Mr. Harrison is the only bachelor on the list of contributors to this series by American authors.

ah—affects my sinus—as you once used to know. But you—why did you come back? You—you forgot something?"

She was smiling faintly; her dark eyes derided him.

"I almost forgot myself, if you count that! But no, in your sense, I'm not forgetful, only punitive. My sinus is sound, but my temper uncertain. So I didn't go. A sweet night, isn't it? Well!"

"But—what is it? Why, what happened?"

"Oh, that. Yes, to be sure. I was unexpectedly kissed, you see. In the dark behind the boathouse, just as we were ready to start—oh, most ferociously, I assure you. Really, that made me angry, though, of course, not so angry as I seemed. So I'm letting him paddle himself over alone——"

Her husband's dim, heavy face seemed to darken. "Him? Who was it?"

"My dear Horace, you'll agree that kissing and telling isn't quite the act of a lady? No, no! But I'm interrupting your reverie——"

"No! Tell me! I——I want to know."

"Your air of interest is awfully civil, Horace. But I can't really believe that you've begun at this late day to take an interest in my private life!"

Her merriment exasperated him, clearly.

"Howard Witheredge, I suppose—dam his impudence! What you can see in that——"

"Oh, name me no names, please! And the incident's really not worth mentioning—I'm merely disciplining a beau that's all. So we two have the pretty wilds all to ourselves, only think! Charmingly conjugal! But be sure I won't intrude, no; I'm off to dress—good-by."

"No, no! Don't go. I——"

Having controlled himself with an obvious effort, the man resumed with awkward carelessness.

"Ah—it seems too bad for you to miss your moonlight dip, when you enjoy it so—merely on account of the behavior of an alcoholic cad. Hem. I was about to say—I'll paddle you over to the Pulpit myself."

SHE eyed him quizzically and all at once was aware of the beating of her heart.

The two stood close together in the darkness and beauty of the woods. The man's ponderous dignity was manifestly a little strained. Why? For a long time past, indeed, it had been evident that she had undermined his case in their relationship. For weeks she had been conscious, in her withdrawals and through the silences that she had made so common between them, that he regarded her with a new attentiveness. But he had stopped there; his pride—or some cowardice perhaps?—had restrained him from word or act. Was it the romantic solitude now, and the sudden sight of her in her wood nymph's guise?—was it the thought of those kisses she had just taken from another?—what? Into her husband's eyes had come a look she had not seen these three years; and she wondered suddenly if, here and now, beyond all calculation, her great moment had come at last.

But do you think that she would yield anything to him? Not she.

Ironically grave, she answered: "You are always kind, Horace. But, of course, I'd not dream of imposing on you that way."

"No imposition at all. I'd enjoy it. We find ourselves deserted—each by our own choice—what more logical than to join forces, eh?"

"Logical!"

"And—and pleasant," said he with his labored lightness. "Why not? Or—if you don't care to join the party now—after what happened—why we might just paddle about for a while. The night—the night's fine," said Horace.

"Canoeing in the moonlight with one's husband! My dear man, do you want to make me the laughing-stock of the county!"

Her laughter, thrilling unexpectedly, took him quite aback; stung him, too, as she saw with pleasure.

"A very little of that sort of thing," said she, "and gossip would soon begin connecting our names."

"I don't think you run many risks of that," he retorted, with marked stiffness. "And I wish you'd cease this—this extravagant way of talking—it's provoking. Now come along. I—we'll enjoy it."

"On the contrary, I should die of shame."

"You're being absurd. Come."

"A thousand thanks, but no."

There was a silence. The breeze fluttered her long hair.

"I see you actually prefer the society of drunken male flirts to that of * * * And this is typical too——"

He finished, all but impulsively for him. "I'm sure you can't realize, Laurel, how little we actually see of each other—these days."

AH, BUT did she not realize? She leaned back against the slender pole of white birch, and started up at him liquid-eyed.

"How little! Why, Horace—good gracious! That's literally all I can say—good gracious! Seven days a week under the same roof, but separated a single day in——"

"I know, I know!" he said in another tone, embarrassed. "It seems odd, I own—I'd hardly think it was possible. And still—I was of course sure you weren't conscious of it, but ——"

He hesitated, peering at her with his short-sighted eyes; and then the natural man let go a little more of the unnatural constraint.

"Why, Laurel!—you go out somewhere every evening, with or without me, or if you don't go out you have people in. At odd moments, when there are any, in the little between times, as I might term them, you're always reading, or studying, or practicing something, or else you're writing letters or you have a headache. Saturdays and Sundays and usually weekdays, too, you have the people staying in the house, all over the place. Noise and dancing and parties and rushing about—never a quiet moment of—of just the domestic sort——"

"You certainly make it sound different from the home life of our dear queen! I'd no idea it was so bad as that——"

"I understand it, if anything. But—well, we won't go into it now. My point is, here, by chance, we have a quiet hour for once—charming nature and no noise—no drunks. Well, don't let's spend it standing on these rocks, when the lake's right here. Come."

She shook her head in silence, faintly smiling. Gently she released the hand that he had abruptly clutched. She thought that his massive face paled a little then.

From far away over the water came the faint muffled echoes of song; the sound but accentuated the pervasive stillness. On the solitary trail, the husband and wife steadily eyed each other and she was thrilled with the knowledge of her immeasurable victory. In that second her mind's eye flashed backward; she thought of Anders Carthew, and the time and scene which had been the turning point of her life.

When she had married this man, glowering at her now in the primal woods, he loved her madly, and she, as she had soon understood, was actually all but indifferent to him. Within six months her interest in him had become acute and constant; while he, incredibly, was detected in recurring lapses of ardor. After two years she adored him without restraint, and for days and weeks together he was frankly bored with her. Why? Was it the everlasting law of things that a relation can support only so much love, as a bucket holds so much water? Certainly her efforts to charm this grave senior, by doubling her wifely thoughtfulness and sweet subjections, had but increased his ennui. There had come the inevitable day when she, with floods of tears, had packed her trunks and gone off on the usual indefinite visit to her mother.

So far their story had followed a familiar course. Would that have been the end of it, right there, but for Anders Carthew? Nothing seemed to her more certain. Beyond doubt Anders, who was twice her age, and had taken an interest in her, paternal or otherwise, from her sixteenth year, had penetrated her with a new and startling concept. For Anders wouldn't accept, he would hardly listen to, her own ready formula, long since smoothed by the women of all ages. "Oh, no," he had said in his cerebral kind way. "It isn't that you love him too well—That's letting yourself down too easily. It's simply that you love him with too little pride—and no good sense at all." And a little later when she had conquered her first furious indignation and sat down again, he spoke words which she took at last for truth, and which filled her in the end with an overmastering purpose. And Anders had said that a man's necessity is not to be loved, but to love; and that, to love, his fixed need is to pursue—and conquer.

SO, SHE, because she had a will, and it seemed that her whole life was at stake, had actually achieved this impossible. She had warped her nature; she had broken her heart to pieces; she had recovered the reserves of maidenhood, made herself again mysterious to this once familiar; she had fanned the last flickering ember to a flame. Now here he stood, suing her in the romantic night—her Horace, bored no longer, and still and still * * * Was it not ironical that, here in the instant of her tremendous triumph, her mood should be so skeptical and cold? * * * How large was Horace's nose, she unsentimentally considered, how halting his tongue, how really small his vanity and caution! Had something then permanently passed away? In the long process of repression, of moral separation, so painful at first, had she wrought in herself an irreparable change?

She wondered, smiling shadowily, in that second of thick silence. Now the man, having drawn back a step, spoke abruptly:

"Look here, what's come over you?"

"Come over me?"

"You've changed so much—just in this last year—that you're like another person—a stranger."

To be sure, her heart swelled a little at that.

"But you hardly offer that as a complaint, Horace? Hastily recalling our past, I feel sure you must find any change in me an improvement."

"That's just the tone I don't like from you, Laurel! This constantly evasive manner. Flippant, I am bound to call it, and—and provoking. I think the time's come to remind you that a husband has some rights—and I'm not getting mine!"

"But—why, all this is news to me, my dear! Your rights! I'd thought you were frightfully fatigued with them, whatever they are, years ago, and gladly——"

"Never!—no! Ridiculous. I——"

"Ah, that poor memory of yours, failing again, I see!" said she, shaking her finger in a manner insufferably satirical; and resumed demurely: "But, of course, I'm glad that you've forgotten that day, when I, sobbing like a deserted village lass, most crudely taxed you with having ceased to love me, and you, poor dear, could only reply. 'There, there!'—most soothingly, I own, yet it mortified me at the time, I remember. You've forgotten explaining to me that life wasn't meant to be an unending song of romance, that it was normal and necessary that the disturbing heyday of love should descend to afternoon, to twilight——"

"So that's it!" he interrupted suddenly. "You've never gotten over that one little scene—a mere incident!" Oh, I remember, I've been thinking back a good deal here lately," he went on rather thickly. "You went off on a visit to your mother's then, and when you came back, the change had come—that was the time. You'd assumed this singular and unwifely attitude. This unfair——"

"What adjectives, my dear Horace! Was it unwifely or unfair to learn the lesson my own husband set me?"

"That's more flippancy—you know it is! Look here—I wish to know. Did you then—or have you at any time since—come to take an interest in—in somebody else?"

She looked up through the black leaves toward the moon, an odd tumult in her breast, and laughed a little.

"Your questions astound me, of course. And I'd supposed that even a wife was entitled to some privacy. Remember, Horace, I've never questioned you, though all the world has known when you've looked over the fence. But the breeze is freshening, and I've detained you long enough. Now I'll dress, waiting in the cabin——"

"Not so fast, not so fast!" said her husband, blocking her way. "We've started a conversation—we'll finish it now!——"

"Oh, pardon me, I thought you had finished."

"No, I've not finished! Laurel, I wish to know plainly: Are you trying to say, by—all this—that you no longer love me?"

"Oh! Really!—I'm afraid I've never thought to ask myself such a question."

"Ask yourself now. I insist—it is my right."

Her merriment died.

"I am. And, Horace," she said, regarding him duskily — "honestly — I don't know the answer."

Yet in that moment exactly she seemed to herself to have the answer. Yes, something had gone out of her, now and forever. Funny, but you couldn't crack and make over your nature for nothing.

"Oh, you don't know?" he said darkly. "Well, the time's come for you to find out!——"

"Why? What's your interest in the ancient point? Haven't I the best authority for saying that love wasn't meant——"

"That's enough of that! I won't have this attitude any longer. Plenty of time—and kisses, too, it seems—for every whippersnapping nincompoop—nothing at all for the man you married——"

"But, my dear Horace, I can't turn myself on and off like a hot-water faucet! And the nincompoops never taught me that the heyday of romance——"

"Stop provoking me this way!——"

"Willingly. Good-by! But indeed you mustn't think of me as a stranger, Horace. I assure you I'll always think of you as among my very best friends."

His dim face became flooded with color.

"You're my wife, do you understand that—my wife!"

"Wife is a relative term," she said a little faintly, again seeking to pass him. "But I'll leave you now."

"I'm damned if you will," said the man, in a terrific voice.

And, his dignity broken altogether, he seized her furiously in his arms.

THE violence of that embrace astonished her. Still more surprising, perhaps, was the wave of resistance, of instinctive repulsion even, that swept through her.

She succeeded in extricating herself and backing away rapidly, shaken and angry, vigorously rubbed with the palm of her hand the cheek her husband's lips had just grazed. Still, her fixed smile mocked him.

"Don't you think, all things considered, that's quite a liberty?——"

He lunged for her, saying gutturally:

"I'll show you a liberty! God! You forget yourself—you need to be taught——"

"No! Positively you don't know me well enough for this. Please. You brute!"

She managed again, though with difficulty, to free herself from those violent clutching arms. Her light airs were gone. She had thought just now that if Horace touched her she might actually hate him. It had not occurred to her that she would fear him, yet so it was. Now as he came after her again, muscularly potent and altogether willful, panic, suddenly and unaccountably, took possession of her. Without having planned anything of the sort, she wheeled abruptly in her tracks and fled away from him.

If that was a confession of weakness, unluckily it did not settle her difficulty on the spot. With dismay she heard the large feet of Horace pounding after her down the path.

She ran as for her life.

It was a sight for the gods, no doubt. In the still midnight, beneath the serene moon, in this lonely place, wildly and primitively beautiful, through the groves and among the crags sped the slim, white-clad wife, dark hair flowing after; and hard behind, grunting and snorting, menacing, too, chased the heavily built man, her husband. Different from the home life of the queen, indeed!

On the open path his clumsiness was equalized. She looked back fearfully over her shoulder; he was gaining on her, no doubt of that. Instantly she left the path, scrambling over the rough boulders which flanked it here, plunging into the copses, if such they were, bounding away through the virgin woods, sure-footed as a fawn.

With a wild bursting of foliage and cracking of boughs, Horace leaped after her. On the different terrain her superior nimbleness gave her the advantage. The distance between them steadily widened. Once she heard his hoarse voice panting: "Stop! I tell you, stop!" Now the strange thrill of the chase, the throbbing excitement of the quarry, set her blood afire. She thought, "Pursue and love!"—and, laughing frantically to herself, flew the faster.

And then, as she sped across a sweet, open space, a glade no doubt, powdered with bright moonlight, she glanced back again, unwisely. Alas! her foot caught in a trailing vine and she pitched to the sward. The misfortune, which wasn't rectified in a second, cost her her lead. Releasing herself, rising dizzily, she found the pursuer almost upon her—almost, but not quite. She just eluded his fingers, breathlessly dodging; she doubled and turned; and so in a moment, suddenly, she found her feet set on the winding path again, and, lo! just ahead was the old landing and beyond open water.

She had forgotten the water. She welcomed the sight of it now. She was quite spent and those resolute feet were close behind. Flying over the loose boards, the harried wife dove cleanly into the haven of the lake.

That Horace would follow her in this maneuver had not occurred to her. He was an indifferent swimmer, and his sinus, as we know, was sensitive. Never having seen him angry before, however, she had no doubt underestimated the force of his rages. In fact, the conquering male did not hesitate an instant. His ponderous body, flying out feet first, broke water hardly a second behind her own.

Unhappily for her, the lake was shallow here. A tall man could stand on the bottom—and Horace was tall. In fine, while she was still submerged, her foot was roughly seized; coming up, spluttering, she found herself effectually prisoned.

Thus the man, like Neptune with a mermaid, had his way. The stars looked down upon the odd conjugal caress. Upon the woman's lips, gasping and watery, the lips of Horace, just as gasping, came waterily down. Through her heart hammered with a wild excitement, there was now no strength in her. After an instant her feeble struggles ceased; another instant and, marvelously, resistance seemed no longer of any importance. Under this masterful embrace the wife's will, her whole being, indeed, seemed all at once, mysteriously, to dissolve within her.

"You witch! I will adore you forever," panted Horace wetly.

And then her bare dripping arms, lifting, went round his neck.

UNDER the impulse of his great love, the days and the weeks that followed became for the wedded pair like a new and richer honeymoon. Her elusiveness faded; her reticences and reserves, all the provocative withdrawals, learned after how much tribulation, came to seem not only superfluous, but altogether unworthy. Since Horace gave so lavishly, how inconceivably mean-spirited to dole back to him with a thrifty and calculating hand!

Willingly, young Laurel let herself go.

The new bans brought their unexperienced blessing. Now God was ready, in the old phrase, to smile upon this union. There came another June and then another, and Laurel's first child was six months old.

Otherwise perhaps it would hardly have been bearable.

She sat in her room near the screened open window, nursing her boy, whom she had no thought of weaning as yet. The sultry afternoon was quiet. From the piazza below floated up the voice of her husband, idly exchanging domestic news with his adoring mother, arrived the day before for her yearly visit; but she did not need that sound to make her remember his nearness. On the sand beside her lay a note from Howard Witheredge, who had lately "come into her life" again; she had just been thinking that nothing could be more symbolical than that.

Her name came vaguely wafting up to her.

"Laurel's stoutened," said her mother-in-law, rocking comfortably, though with a touch of asthma. "It's not unbecoming to her. I think she has—settled—somehow, Horace?—She has gained in poise?"

"Yes, she's matured very much since the baby came," said Horace, and yawned a little.

"She is charming still. And a more exemplary and devoted wife I never saw. That pleases me so much. Do you know, my son," continued Mrs. Seymour suddenly, "two years ago when I was here—that spring—I was rather afraid she was drifting away from you—just a little?"

"Really! What an idea! * * * No, I remember that summer on the lake particularly," said Horace thoughtfully. "We had a wonderful time."

"Oh, it's evident enough that I was mistaken!" said his mother archly. "She absolutely worships you, that's as clear as noonday."

"Oh, yes," said Horace.

There was a little silence. Down in the pasture-lot, behind the barn, the buxom new dairy maid was climbing over the stile. The lass had a trim leg. Having adjusted his glasses a little, Horace satisfied himself on that point.

"In fact, if the dear creature has a fault at all," he finished indolently, "I'd say that she loves me a little too well."

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JACK O'JUDGMENT :-: By Edgar Wallace

THE STORY SO FAR

COLONEL DAN BOUNDARY, fat, coarse-grained but uncannily clever leader of a gang of crooks, has become alarmed at receipt of a letter of clubs, signed "Jack o' Judgment," after several of his exploits, all of which are subtly devised to enrich him without risking the law's penalties. He tries to disarm suspicions gathering around him by complaining to

STAFFORD KING, of the London Criminal Intelligence Force;

PINTO SILVA, a sleek man about town, forces his attentions on an actress, who rebuffs him. She is

MAISIE WHITE, daughter of Solly White, one of the gang who wishes to retire. She is interested in Stafford.

LOLLIE MARSH, a dolichocephal but clever girl, who acts as "stump" of the blackmailing gang.

"SWEAL" CREWE, once a gentleman, now a crook.

AND HERE IT CONTINUES

"I don't see how you can say they've no evidence against you. Suppose Crotin squeals?" Pinto asked.

"He ain't stopped squealing yet," said the colonel philosophically, "but I don't see what difference it makes. Pinto, you haven't got the hang of my methods, and I doubt if you ever will. You're a clever, useful fellow, but if you were allowed to run the gang you'd have it in jail in a month. Take the manufacturer, Crotin," he said. "I dare say he's feeling sore, and maybe this cursed Jack o' Judgment is standing behind him telling him——" He stopped. "No, he wouldn't either," he said after a moment's thought: "Jack o' Judgment knows as much about it as I do."

"What are you talking about?" asked the other impatiently.

"Crotin," said the colonel; "he ha-n't any evidence against me. You see, I do not do any business by letters. You fellows have often wanted me to write to this person and that, but writing is evidence. Do you get me? And what evidence has Crotin? Absolutely none. I have never written a line to him in my life. Crewe brought him down to the flat. We gave him a dinner and put the proposal to him in plain language. There's nothing he could take before a judge and jury—absolutely nothing."

He took his cigar from his mouth and blew a cloud of smoke.

"That's the way I've built the business up—no letters, no documents, nothing that a lawyer can make head or tail of."

"What about the documents that Hanson talked about?"

The colonel frowned and then laughed.

"They're nothing but records of our transactions, and they're not evidence. Why, even the police have given up the search for them. By the way, I haven't done with Crotin," he said after a while.

"He's done with you, I should think," said Pinto grimly.

The colonel nodded.

"I guess so, but he hasn't done with the gang. You can take him on next."

"I?" said Pinto in affright. "Now look here, colonel, don't you think it's time we lay low?"

"Lay low!" said the colonel scornfully. "We're either going to get into trouble or we're not. If we're not going to get into trouble we might as well go on. Besides, we want the money. The business has slackened off, and we haven't had a deal since the Spillsbury affair, and that won't last very long. We've got to split our loot six ways, Pinto, and that leaves very little for anybody."

"Where are you going now?" asked the other, as the colonel changed the direction.

"It just struck me that we might as well go over to the bank and see how our balance stands. Also, with the exchange going against us, I want to tell Ferguson to buy dollars."

The handsome premises of the Victoria & City Bank, in Victoria street, were only a stone's throw from the park; and, whatever might be the views of Ferguson, the manager, as to the colonel's moral character, he had a considerable respect for him as a financier, and Dan Boundary was shown immediately into the manager's office.

He was gone some time, while Pinto waited impatiently outside. The colonel never invited other members, even of the inmost council, to share his knowledge of finances. They all knew roughly the condition of the exchequer, but really the balance at the Victoria & City was the Colonel's own. It was the practice of the Boundary gang to share after each coup, every man taking that to which he was entitled. The money was split among five, the sixth share going to what was known as the "Gang Account," a common fund upon which all could draw in moments of necessity.

The gang fund was not so described in the books of the bank. It was known as "Account B." The expenses of operations were usually paid out of the colonel's private account, and credited to him when the next division took place. He was absolute master of his own balance, but it required three signatures to extract a check from account B. One of the objects of the colonel's visit was to reduce this number to two, the death of Solomon White having removed one of the signatories.

He returned to Pinto, apparently not too well satisfied.

"There's quite a lot of money in the gang account," he said. "I've struck Solly's name; and your signature and mine, or mine and Crewe's are sufficient now."

"Or mine and Crewe's, I suppose!" suggested Pinto, and the colonel smiled.

"Oh, no," said he. "I'm not a great believer in the indispensability of any man, but I'm making the signature of Dan Boundary indispensable before that account is touched."

They walked back through the park,

"Well," said the colonel, "I shouldn't have been so keen to go after Maisie White if it hadn't been that you were so fond of her"

and the colonel expounded his philosophy of wrong living.

"The man who runs an honest business and mixes it with a little crooked work is bound to be caught," he said, "because his mind is concentrated on the unpaying side of the game. You've got to run a crook business in an honest way if you want to escape the law and pay big dividends. They call our system blackmail, but it ain't. A blackmailer asks for something for nothing, and he's bound to get caught sooner or later. We offer spot cash for all the things we steal, and that baffles the law. And we're not the only people in London, or in England, or in the world, who are pulling bargains by scaring the fellow we buy from. It is done every day in London; it is done every day by the trusts that control the little shops in the suburbs; it is done even by the big proprietary companies that tell a miserable little tradesman that, if he doesn't stop selling one article, they won't supply him with theirs. Living, Pinto, is preying. The only mistake a crook ever makes is when he goes outside of his legitimate business and lets some other consideration than the piling up of money influence him."

"How do you mean?" asked Pinto wearily. He hated the colonel when he was in the communicative mood of his.

"Well," said the colonel slowly, "I shouldn't have been so keen to go after Maisie White if it hadn't been that you were fond of her and wanted her. That's what I call letting love interfere with business."

"But you said you were afraid of her blabbing. You don't put the blame onto me," said the indignant Pinto.

"I was, and I wasn't," said the colonel. "I think I almost persuaded myself that the girl was a danger. Of course, she isn't. Even Solomon White wasn't a danger."

He stopped dead, and, speaking slowly and pointing his words with a huge forefinger on the other's chest, he said:

"Bear this fact in mind, Pinto, that I have no malice against Miss White, and I don't think that she can harm me. As far as I'm concerned, I will never hurt a hair of her head or do her the slightest harm. I believe that she has nothing against me, and I give orders to anybody who's connected with me—in fact, to any of my business associates—that that girl is not to be interfered with."

Slowly, emphatically, every word emphasized, the colonel spoke; but Pinto did not smile. He had seen the colonel in this gentle mood before, and he knew that Maisie White was doomed.

Pinto Goes North

Had Pinto been a psychologist, which he was not, he might have been struck by the unusual reference on the part of the colonel to the funds of the gang. It was a subject to which the colonel very seldom referred, and it was certainly one which he did not emphasize. The truth was that the colonel's investigations into his own private affairs had not been as satisfactory as he had hoped would be the case.

He was in the habit of advancing money, and the gang owed him a considerable sum, money which had been advanced for the pursuit of various enterprises. To draw from the money would leave the gang funds sadly depleted. Yet he could not afford to draw upon it at a moment when they were all on edge. Not only were the two principal subordinates in the condition of mind which led them to jump at every knock and start at every shadow, but he had been receiving urgent messages from all parts of the country from the other men, and he had determined upon a step which he had not taken for three years—a meeting of the full "board" of his lawless organization.

That night summonses went forth calling his "business associates" to an "extraordinary general meeting of the North European Smelter Syndicate." This was one of the companies which he operated, and the existence of which was justified by a small smelting works in the north of England, and owed its international character to the fact that it had a branch works in Sweden. Its turnover was small, its list of stockholders was select. A summons to a general meeting of the North European Smelter Syndicate meant that affairs of the gang were critical, and in this spirit the call was obeyed.

To be continued Monday

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Uncommon Sense : Good Opinion Must Be Earned

By JOHN BLAKE

ETIQUETTE is really agreeable behavior.

It is the means men have found of showing their respect for the ideas and even the prejudices of others.

It is necessary in order to earn good opinion—and good opinion is necessary in order to make one's way in the world.

Tactful people usually observe etiquette naturally.

THEY refrain from doing anything to hurt other people's feelings.

They refrain from attacks on religion or race. They naturally do not allude to any personal peculiarities those with whom they are talking possess.

It is quite possible, however, for perfectly kind people, with perfectly good intentions, to commit breaches of etiquette which make them appear ignorant or ridiculous in the eyes of others.

These are people who are really making progress, who are advancing from one station in life to another.

THEY are continually uneasy lest they do something that is not "done," and their embarrassment usually gives rise to painful mistakes.

The young man who takes the trouble to inform himself as to politeness—to cultivate good manners, to behave so that other people will find him agreeable—has a far better chance of getting along than the youth who thinks that anyway he chooses to behave is the right way.

Incidentally he will be far happier, for, say what we please about independence, our lives are always influenced by the opinions of those about us.

THE laws of society have not been passed by any Legislature or Parliament; they are the outgrowth of centuries of behavior. But the penalties visited on their violators are extremely unpleasant, just the same.

To know how to act naturally on all occasions —at the table, in company, in the office or the ship—is worth all the trouble that it costs.

The well-mannered man is always well esteemed, and it is in the esteem of the world that repudiations are written, be they good or bad.

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