

THE OTHER GUEST.

By GEORGE R. SIMS.

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It was a cold Christmas, and a snowy Christmas, and old-fashioned folks who remembered the Christmas numbers of the Dickens days, and had rebelled against the damp muggy Christmases which had come in with the new literature, rubbed their hands and professed to be highly delighted that the season had shown signs of coming to their senses again, and returning to the beaten track of conventionality.

While he was talking to the waiter the "other guest" came into the coffee-room. He had on his hat and overcoat, and was evidently just going out. He was a tall, good-looking young fellow of about twenty and five, but his face was pale and his eyes had a dull, heavy look as though he hadn't had a good night's rest. "An invalid here for the air like myself," thought Oldroyd, "You may be as glad as I am to get out of my company as I shall be of his."

He thrust his hands into his pockets and went downstairs into the coffee room, and interviewed the waiter. "I'm going home to my young uns at one, sir, just to sit down with 'em at the old dinner, sir, and I must be back for this gentleman at six, sir, so six will suit me very well, sir."

"I hope you won't think it presumptuous on my part or an impertinence," he said, "but we seem to be two lonely men in an inn on Christmas day, and if you would give me the pleasure of your company to dinner tonight, in my sitting room, I assure you I should be very grateful."

Anybody Else Staying in the House? "er, who was stirring the fire with one hand and stroking a fat, black cat with the other. "Anybody else staying in the house, waiter?" "The waiter dropped the poker and turned round sharply with a professional smile of greeting. "Yes, sir, one gentleman."

"Thank you very much. I'm afraid my time alone in the coffee room would have been a very cheerless one. Good morning."

Mr. John Oldroyd had come to Malvern for a few weeks because he was suffering from an old enemy, rheumatism, and a man at the club had told him that Malvern was an excellent place for rheumatic patients. People arrived there limping and hobbling, and after a few weeks there were climbing the hills before breakfast, and performing marvelous feats of pedestrianism all day long.

"Let the dinner be the best you can manage, and the best wine in the cellar. Bring me your wine list upstairs and I'll look it over, and, by the bye, don't let you put any green stuff in my room yesterday, but as I am going to have company you can stick some holly and mistletoe about the place to make that young man feel as if he wanted it."

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"Punctually at 6 o'clock, Authr Weston came up stairs in Mr. Oldroyd's sitting-room. The dinner was perfect. (I have eaten my Christmas dinner more than once in the old-fashioned Malvern hotel, never, thank God, quite alone, and I can vouch for the excellence of the kitchen and the cellar.) Both men were genial and amiable, and under the influence of the surroundings became more and more at their ease with each other. But the geniality was in each case a little hollow and a little forced, and each of them knew by instinct that the other was playing a part.

And here was this man who had never cared for the society of anyone— who had lived the life of a recluse in the grandest hotels of Europe, suddenly smitten with a desire to have a companion at his Christmas dinner table at the little Malvern hotel.

"The elder man drank as much as the younger, but he was more seasoned, and the wine had no effect upon him. He was always John Oldroyd, the cautious, the prudent, the man who had never been a man to encourage acquaintances. He was cheery and amiable to "stand-in" business, but out of business he was what is vulgarly called "stand-offish." He very soon let people know that he had no desire for company, and he had never been known to accept an invitation, however heartily it was proffered.

And then he had a fresh symptom, which alarmed him more than the ideas of the past, and he went to bed with a feverish and nervous. He began to think to confound his memories of the past, to see back into his life—far, far back to a time that he had forced himself for years to forget.

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tomorrow I suppose you'll go back to town." "No." "Going to stay on here for a bit, eh?" "I'm glad of that. We shall see more of each other, and you'll be company for me."

"No, you've been awfully good to me, Mr. Oldroyd, but I don't think we shall ever meet again after tonight. "But you're not going back, you say." "No, I'm not, and I'm sure you're not. You'll know everything tomorrow." "Know everything tomorrow? What could this young man mean? What was he going to do? What was to happen that he, John Oldroyd, would know everything tomorrow?"

He began to grow uneasy. He had felt certain from the first that this young fellow had something on his mind. He had come down here to borrow money, and had spent his Christmas away from his family. He was trying to think out the story of his guest, for himself, when the guest evidently divining his thoughts stopped them.

"There," he said, "I beg your pardon for talking about myself and my affairs—it really wasn't my fault, you know; you asked me questions, and I answered them. Can't you ask me any more cheerful subject. Tell me something about South Africa."

INDUSTRIAL. Railroad construction in Southern states during 1895 shows a decided increase over the mileage of 1894. The new mileage of standard gauge lines constructed this year was 655, while that in 1894 was 583.

Vice President Davenport, of the Bethlehem Iron company, admits that the company has no orders for armor from Washington to hurry work on government contracts. The company is at work on armor plate and on 100 8-inch guns for the army.

The iron and steel trade, according to the Inquirer, shows an improvement in tone, but there is no change for the better in prices. The level seems to have been reached at last, wire mills are unable to figure out any profit in taking contracts and they are therefore not scrupulous for them with the same eagerness as before.

Under the agreement of the New Joint Traffic Association the fast freight lines will be allowed to retain their selling agents for the present most except for the Delaware and Chesapeake shunts of commissions from the tourist agencies like Cook's, Whitecomb and Raymond's, as well as from scalpers.

It is rumored that a new railroad will be built ere long across the upper section of Bucks county, to be known as the Quakertown and Eastern railroad, to run the North Penn at or near Quakertown. As provided, the new line will run from Quakertown, through Richlandtown, Pleasant Valley, and Springtown to Riegelsville, Pa., and will strike the Delaware river at short distance above the last named place. Thence it will run along the river to Easton. The new road will form a connecting link between the Potomac and the Delaware, and Boston as it would connect here with the Lehigh and Hudson's line. It is claimed that the new road would shorten the route from Easton to Philadelphia twelve miles. Among the other interested in the scheme is John Jamison, the well-known railroad builder. The projectors of the railroad want people living along the route to subscribe to \$75,000 worth of stock or bonds.

Charles F. Mayer has resigned the presidency of the Baltimore and Ohio Railroad company, with a pension which has filled for the past seven years. This action was taken at the monthly meeting of the board of directors and his resignation was unanimously accepted, although the board requested Mr. Mayer to continue in office until his successor could be selected. It is understood that his resignation was due to the fact that the newly elected New York directors wish to put a practical railroad man at the head of the corporation. No one has as yet been definitely decided upon, but several have been mentioned. No date has been announced for the meeting at which the new president will be chosen.

THE STORM. Written for The Tribune. The storm is coming from his hiding place, With broil it swaggers through the skies above. The lion roars on restless race, The forest moves as if it were a drove, See, the lightning comes flashing as a flame, Descending, smashing, killing on its way. O God! this the dreadful Judgment Day?

It was familiar. "I think I've got a pretty good story here," remarked the occasional contributor, as he seated himself and lighted one of the editor's cigars. The editor glanced over the story. "Yes," he said, "I think this is a pretty good story. I tell it myself occasionally." Chicago Times Herald.

A GREAT BIG PIECE OF THE WORLD OF BUSINESS FOR 10 CENTS. THE WORLD OF BUSINESS. Stocks and Bonds. New York, Dec. 21.—The action of the senate yesterday in unanimously passing the bill providing for the formation of the national monetary commission led to heavy selling again this morning for foreign account, and this, with foreboding rumors that the light will not be cast while manufacturers talk confidently of a sharp advance within sixty days. Steel rails are quiet.

Table with columns for various commodities and their prices. Includes items like Buffalo Live Stock, Chicago Live Stock, Toledo Grain Market, Oil Market, and various flour and sugar prices.

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CAUTION TO OUR PATRONS: Washburn-Crosby Co. wish to assure their many patrons that they will this year hold to their usual custom of milling STRICTLY OLD WHEAT until the new crop is fully cured. New wheat is now upon the market, and owing to the excessively dry weather many millers are of the opinion that it is already cured, and in proper condition for milling. Washburn-Crosby Co. will take no risks, and will allow the new wheat fully three months to mature before grinding.

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