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# MASTER SANGUINE

who always believed  
what he was told

BY

IVOR BROWN



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To  
A. G. MACDONELL

DEAR ARCHIE,

It was owing to some more than kindly words of yours on the subject of Voltaire that this book was imposed on me by a publisher who sweetly believes what he is told. By this encouragement of others you meant kindly, but those who practise charity must face the results. It is usual, in such dedications, for the author to announce that the faults are all his own; to his patron the praise, if any; to himself, the blame. You will get no such sycophantic humbug from me. For I insist that, if this book is reprehended as an unskilful impertinence, the fault is entirely yours; if any favour should come its way, the merit, like the material rewards, will be entirely mine. Meanwhile, you have caused me a bitter and laborious summer. Yet I forgive you and sincerely trust that your charming domestic surroundings, your triumphant cultivation of a garden, and your

ability to drive a golf-ball further and sometimes straighter than is decent for an author, though he be of Aberdeen, have helped to convince you that all is for the best even in a world which often seems no whit more sensible than that perambulated by our dear Candide.

I beg to remain,

Your obedient servant,

IVOR BROWN.

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# MASTER SANGUINE

## CHAPTER I

### IN WHICH THE HERO MAKES UNWELCOME ARRIVAL AND A SPEEDY DEPARTURE

**M**ASTER SANGUINE, of whose voyages and vicissitudes I propose to tell, was conceived in negligence and was like to be reared in the same condition. His parents, in their deep concern for the good of the Human Race, had prudently resolved to make no addition to a mass already of such bulk and multitude. The pressure of public affairs, to which their altruism condemned them from morn to night, further obliged them to pursue the pleasures of reproduction with foresight and to forswear the travails altogether. But chance is often victor over caution and our hero, being regarded as a sorry nuisance when still in the womb, was no more welcome when he came out of it.

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His parents did not want means to rear him, but lack of leisure made difficult and even insupportable such noisy claims upon their attention as might be expected from an infant son. Master Sanguine's father, who held many prizes of scholarship and degrees of science, including the much-esteemed Licentiate of Precocious Psychology, had just been appointed to a lectureship on The Infantile Libido. His mother, a Doctor of Paedosophy and holding the European Diploma of Maternal Technique (for which many strove and few were chosen) was at the constant service of Working Mothers, into whose homes she entered with all the authority of science and with an unqualified passion for research. How, indeed, could persons so devoted to the Public Good and so busily charged with office in their calling, be expected to lay waste their talents or dissipate their time by squandering attention on such an inconspicuous atom of the race as Master Sanguine's person now presented? It was not to be endured that so selfless a pair should usurp for their own infant the erudition and the experience which might be, nay must be, expended to the General Advantage. Their friends were unanimous in consoling them on the misadventure of our hero's arrival and in applauding their purpose not to pamper him with any privy

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attentions while the race was being starved of its due in the receipt of Pseudosophy and Maternal Technique. It would, by general admission, have been no less than a scandal had so gifted a mother denied herself a public career and deprived the People of her ministrations on the dais and in the home.

What then was to become of Master Sanguine, who was now wawling very lustily in his parents' abode and sadly disturbing the application of these scholars to their proper business in life? In barbaric times our hero would have been placed in a basket, with the shawls and napkins appropriate to shelter and decorum, and left upon the doorstep of a temple or of a farmer's steading. But the modern conscience forbids such usage and it was obvious that Master Sanguine, since he could not be thus exposed, must be otherwise and more humanely dispatched. His parents, accordingly, remembered their own parents, which was unusual, since they despised these ancients heartily and, despite an annual solicitation to make Christmas a Feast of Reunion, they never invaded their retirement and repose in the more genteel suburbs and spas. Should recollection of such existence occur, they laughed not a little at the home-life in Wimbledon or Torquay so crudely enjoyed by

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these elders, who suffered a total ignorance of the blessings conferred upon the race by the College of Precocious Psychology and the Paedosophic Institute of Maternal Technique. But the impossibility of discovering a nursemaid who combined wide reading and advanced opinions with a suitable humility of wage and the exasperation caused by our hero's increasing powers of self-expression restored the grandmothers to mind and even to favour.

Their bourgeois stupidities were forgotten; their lack of occupation was remembered. Would it not be a blessing to either of them to have the care of Master Sanguine for a period? It was decided that the boy, who had yet to cut a tooth, could hardly be corrupted by the conservative opinions or by the jovially Philistine obtuseness which obtained in the villas of these prosperous cronies. Accordingly a coin was tossed to decide on Sanguine's destination. It fell head-side-up, which was taken to designate Torquay and thither he was immediately forwarded. The Torquay grandmother made no protest and even welcomed the decision, for she had long believed that the high science of Maternal Technique was better practised on babies outside the family and that rule of thumb would be a far safer regimen for

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any of her own house. Sanguine's parents, being thus rid of interruption, continued their labours on behalf of the New Dawn of the Human Race. Forgetting the brat very easily and remembering that the price of liberty is eternal vigilance they were spared any further encumbrance, either from little Sanguine himself or from any second issue of their loins.

At Torquay our hero grew steadily in health and strength. He had a garden in which to disport himself and a mature Nanny whom he rapidly learned to mock, to out-run, and to disobey. His Nanny called him a caution, his grandfather swore he was a jockey, and his grandmother opined that he was a Little Turk. It was usual to laugh at his antics, unless they proceeded to extremities, in which case he was slapped and sent to bed. Such discipline would have severely disturbed his parents, since it undoubtedly involved Repression and Inhibition, which were deemed to be crimes of the utmost magnitude in the College of Precocious Psychology and the Institute of Maternal Technique. It was the vocation and the pleasure of Sanguine's mother to be very sharp with these short-sighted parents of the working-class who thought that six people could not live happily in two rooms without recourse to

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Repression. But Master Sanguine himself took it all very lightly (indeed, the slaps were light enough) and resolved to do his jockeying and to play the Turk with more craft in the future. All of which, as a wise Paedosophist would observe, proves the depravity of a conventional and bourgeois tutelage. Was not little Sanguine being driven to deceptions and to secretive naughtiness by such an imposition of rules and regulations? Plainly, if naughtiness be the breaking of rules, it can most easily be abolished by the abolition of rules, as theft is most easily ended by the abolition of property. On this rock of faith both College and Institute were founded and Sanguine's parents would discourse at length upon the tyrannical nature of human society and the brutish insolence of the police. It is, unhappily, true that, when one of the Working Mothers became choleric at the use of her bed-kitchen-sitting-room as a sphere of Paedosophic Research, gave Sanguine's mother a sharp cut about her posterior with a rolling-pin, and tossed her down one hundred and twenty-four stone stairs with much flow of uninhibited language, that lady did so far forget her principles as to summon a constable and implore the aid of a repressive arm.

But we must not digress too far from the affairs

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of Master Sanguine, who was suffering, we must suppose, through a grossly reactionary discipline, many Traumata or Wounds of the Psyche. It is true that the brat was ignorant of the damage and continued to laugh, jest, devise mischief, and stuff his belly with a most unscientific dietary of bread, meat, fruit, cream and similar cates. His doltish and rusticated grandmother had never apprehended the beneficial discoveries of Science and had not so much as heard about the sovereign power of the Vitamins, with the result that our hero was not dosed to surfeiting with the juice of oranges and so kept his entrails unsoured. The fact remains, that whether by chance or as the result of his nurture, his skin was pink, his flesh firm, and his stomach good. But just when he was reaching up to boy's estate a calamity befell. His grandfather, who suffered from a high pressure of blood, was much addicted to the Moving and Talking Pictures, for whose more notable feminine performers he was wont to conceive the liveliest and most passionate fancies. Each Tuesday evening he would walk from his house to the Sexodrome in which their images were shown and their voices reproduced. One night he dallied over a glass of his darling cognac and then, dreading that he might be too late for his pleasure, he

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proceeded at a trot, nay even at a canter, down the street in a hot fever of anxiety lest he should miss a minute of the spectacle. It was averred by a spectator of his distress that he cried bitterly upon the name of some foreign jade whose glory was blazoned in light on the facade of the Sexodromc not a hundred yards away. However that may be, an apoplexy seized him and he was carried home to perish within the night. His wife was so smitten by grief that she fell into a decline; she had no mind to be a relict and even the inspiriting company of her small grandson failed to support the dwindling essence of her life. So Master Sanguine was left with only his Nanny, who at once inquired of his parents, now more than ever occupied in serving the General Good, as to what must be done about the care and maintenance of the child.

## CHAPTER II

### IN WHICH THE HERO IS TRANSFERRED TO THE CHARGE OF A WISE DOCTOR AND CONSEQUENTLY GROWS IN WISDOM

**I**T was but natural that his parents should be greatly put out by so tiresome an occurrence. His mother was smarting under the cowardly attack of yet another Working Mother and his father had been stirred to a frenzy by a heretic professor of Middle Europe, who had roundly denied the existence of the Infantile Libido. It was true that the wretch had been driven from his Chair and denied the pleasures of German Citizenship; but England, with its incurable fondness for a charlatan and its flair for the second-rate, had admitted the creature and Oxford, loyal as ever to a lost or a retrogressive cause, had even allowed him to deliver a lecture, in the course of which he poured ridicule on the Libido, on Sanguine's father, and even on the University of Bloomsbury, of which the senior Sanguine was now a particular

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ornament. Was this a time for funerals and for pother about a child, when the Infantile Libido was being thus harried by a brutal and unscrupulous foe? Truth is being crucified/ cried Sanguine's father in his rage and then, remembering the reactionary source and associations of this latter word, he altered it with speed to the less committal 'victimised'. He could scarce lay aside his fury to discuss with Sanguine's mother the future of his little wanted and less remembered son. Indeed, so pettish and peevish were they both that they forgot the existence of the other grandmamma on whom the burden could have been laid without costs.

Fortunately a decision was easily come by. The Nanny, must, of course, be discharged; her influence would be ruinous; she held no certificate or diploma of any degree whatsoever and was thus demonstrably incompetent to render psychological guidance at the very time when any folly or discipline would leave harsh and gaping wounds on little Sanguine's sub-conscious Psyche. A friend had recommended the Liberal Academy of Dr. Junck-Vorwarts. The good and learned Doctor had an establishment, rurally situated in the one remaining field of Middlesex, within easy reach of the Metropolitan Railway and within rambling distance of Uxbridge. There he undertook to

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shield the children of advanced parents from the horrors of education, and to avert the savage mental impositions of history and geography, Latin, Greek, French, German, mathematics and all such tyrannical trash as passed for schooling elsewhere. The Doctor held very strongly that children are best left to teach themselves, to discover the infinite riches within them, and then to express their inner treasure when the desire should take them to vomit something up. This comfortable doctrine not only saved him a deal of labour, the purchase of books, and the maintenance of ushers, but exercised a profound impression on the minds of progressive parents. Since those who have never learned can hardly be examined, he could explain in a School Prospectus or 'Schedule of My Purpose', couched in a most ingenious and impressive prose, that the children in his ward would never be subject to the menace of Examinational Strain. Since there were no marks or prizes, they could never vie with one another in soul-destroying competition, cheat at their tasks, or be jealous over rewards. Since there were no rules, they could never disobey. Since there was no work, they could never be idle. Since there was no tuck-shop, they could never be sick. Since there was no sanatorium, they could never be ill.

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Since there were no games they could never be bruised, maimed, or spiritually corrupted by the bestialities of sport. Since there was no religion, they could never be hypocrites. The Doctor, it seemed, had achieved the highest ideals of negativity. With a ready use of logic, he proceeded to demonstrate that, since two negatives can be multiplied into a positive, so the complete absence of the normal educational facilities guaranteed the certain presence of a brilliant educational system.

The parents of Sanguine had no sooner read the Doctor's 'Schedule of My Purpose' than they were ravished by its reasoning. In a brief interchange of letters the Doctor expressed his unshakable belief in the Infantile Libido, of which, he said, he had noticed some very pretty examples among his young charges. On reading this Sanguine's father, his eyes sparkling and his hand trembling, wrote a letter of deep gratitude, committing Master Sanguine to the Doctor's care, expressing his utmost confidence in the Doctor's System, and only mitigating a total rapture by some slight complaint about the height of the fees. For the Doctor, like the modish surgeons and physicians, believed that the less you give the more you must receive, since the size of payment insures the quality of the service; the quantity of service

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might seem small to the impercipient, who measured all things with a grocer's measure, but people of comprehension always understood that quantity was a base consideration. Sanguine Senior thought over this plea awhile; then, receiving a profitable contract to tour the Americas and lecture their more forward-looking citizens on his dear Libido, he resolved to pay the Doctor at least three-quarters of the sum he demanded, with which proposal the Doctor was highly gratified since he had never expected to receive more than half.

It was not to be thought that people so devoted to the Public Good as Sanguine's parents could waste time on delivering the child in person. So he was dispatched to the Doctor's academy, in the charge of his Nanny, who was thus performing, with some flux of tears, her last office for the child. On reaching the comparative champagne of the last field in Middlesex, the Nanny was not a little disturbed to find the Doctor strolling in his garden in a state of very considerable nudity. Indeed, his beard, flaxen and generous, was the larger part of his integuments. The day was warm and sunny and it was part of the Doctor's creed that, for purposes of hygiene and cleanliness, the sun is more efficacious than the water; of this latter both he

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and his pupils partook little, for the value of soaping and scrubbing was held to be a bourgeois superstition and its practice was deemed to be a relic of Victorian hypocrisies.

'Welcome to your new home,' cried the Doctor, surmising the identity of the child.

'You ought to be ashamed of yourself,' retorted the Nanny, whose face was rosy with blushes, 'standing there like a heathen image.'

'Shame/' replied the Doctor very affably, 'is a word unknown in this house. Master Sanguine, if this be he, shall never feel the contagion of such a hideous and discredited noun. We have liquidated shame.'

'I don't know what that means,' said the Nanny. 'But if there were Law and Order in this country, the police would have you breeched and decent in double quick time. Am I to leave this dear little boy among savages?'

'Have you never heard of the Noble Savage?' countered the Doctor merrily. 'Our communal life conforms to his simplicity. Consider, my good woman. If there are no clothes, there are no shame and no cost. Furthermore, there are no washing bills and no waste of time in buttoning, tying, lacing, and so forth. We pursue beauty with economy.'

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'You're a pretty beauty, you are,' said the Nanny. 'If you had any decency you'd shave your face and cover your shanks. You're no better than a hairy Turk that shows himself for twopence in a Fair and what no self-respecting woman would look at.'

'You present,' answered the Doctor undismayed, 'a most interesting example of bourgeois ideology in a proletarian mind. Much might be gained for Science by a prolonged examination of your inhibitions.'

'You won't lay a finger upon me, that you won't. You filthy cannibal!' screamed the Nanny, 'if I wasn't under orders to leave poor Master Sanguine here and take up my new position at once at Lady Decorum's, I'd call a constable and have you raided. No better than a Night Club, that's what I call it!'

With that she bestowed many kisses upon our hero and retreated, in a violent sobbing, to the road. Whereupon Master Sanguine also fell into a shrill and copious lamentation, which the Doctor observed with unlimited satisfaction. Was it not far more salutary that the child should express his emotions and sublimate the pains of parting than that he should stifle and repress his grief and so engender a Psychological Complex within?

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When Sanguine had wept away all his available fountain of tears, he was led by the Doctor to the house in which a meal was being served. Two score of boys and girls in varying degrees of nakedness were briskly applying themselves to tea, bread-and-butter, and jam. His fit of wailing had exhausted Sanguine and left him in good appetite for refreshment. Seeing that all snatched and none waited, he laid hands on the bread-and-butter and began to devour it.

'And why,' asked the Doctor, 'do you take no jam?'

'I did not know, Sir,' answered Sanguine, 'that jam was allowed with the first piece.'

'You should never call me, Sir,' said the Doctor. 'That is a disgusting relic of middle-class manners. I shall not forbid you to address me thus, because I never forbid anything. It is against my principles. It is not in the Schedule. Nor shall I forbid, I shall even invite you to eat jam with the first piece. If you like jam, then to refuse it, if only for a limited interval of time, is to crush a craving and that is a most dangerous and abominable thing to do. You may do yourself irreparable damage by such addiction to self-control. Eat, my child, as your instinct tells you. For instinct is infallible.'

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At this Master Sanguine took one of the remaining spoonfuls of the jam which was now nearly all consumed, and regarded it with some gusto. But, just as he was preparing to spread the crimson flood upon his bread, a neighbouring urchin thrust a spoon upon his plate and scooped away the entire portion. Sanguine looked to the Doctor and said:

'He has stolen my jam.'

'Stolen !' replied the sage. 'No, he cannot have stolen it since here we have all things in common. Theft, stealing—these are bourgeois vocables which are not in the "Schedule of My Purpose". Consider, Sanguine, would it not have been wrong for your little comrade to crush his craving for more condiment? He has refused to repress a desire and in that he has shown great wisdom and acted according to our traditions. He has been true to his instinct, and instinct, as I have told you, is infallible. Were it not that I deny theology, I would go so far as to call it divine.'

Sanguine, somewhat puzzled, asked whether more jam would be brought from the larder and was told that it would not, since, while it is good to indulge our cravings, we are to remember the great distress in the world and not gorge ourselves in a middle-class manner while the proletarians go hungry. Sanguine, after pondering a moment

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upon this, resolved, with commendable acumen, that he must not repress the desire for jam that still gnawed his interior. So he seized a spoon and made a brisk foray on his neighbour's plate with a view to recovering that which he deemed, in his ignorance, to be his own property. But that urchin, who appeared to be forewarned of some such tactic, slipped his plate on to his knees, and dealt Sanguine a sharp slap on the face.

'Oh, Doctor,' cried Sanguine, 'he has first taken my jam and now he has hit my face. Will you not protect me?'

'Ours,' answered the Doctor, 'is a self-governing community and I never interfere. There will later be a School Parliament at which you may propose a vote of censure on your neighbour, whose name is Stephen Grub. The matter will be debated in due course and a vote taken so that justice may be done with all the observances proper to a self-governing community!'

'But, in the meantime,' answered Sanguine bitterly, 'must I lack jam?'

'Those who would enjoy the pleasures of democracy,' responded the Doctor, 'must school themselves to suffer the law's delay.'

Master Sanguine, who knew nothing of Parliaments and votes of censure, was only aware that he

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had no jam, neither with the first nor with the subsequent slices of bread, and that he was in no temper to brook any delay, however constitutional. Within him, meanwhile, there surged another kind of craving which he understood, upon the Doctor's authority, it would be injudicious and indecent to repress. So he fell suddenly upon Master Grub and pushed him backwards to the floor. This, which happened to be of stone, was struck by the brat's head with a most grievous and resonant percussion. But Grub, since his head had been most luckily endowed by Nature with uncommon thickness, was far from being rendered unconscious; instead his awareness of external phenomena received a sharp stimulus. The blow further generated a consuming passion in his breast, which found release in a rapid resurgence and a brisk assault upon our hero. He set about Sanguine with hands and feet and a flow of language which proved him most fit to be elected a Licentiate of Precocious Psychology.

Observing with complete satisfaction that neither of his lambs was in any danger of inhibiting an impulse, Doctor Junck-Vorwarts rose and left the room. The combatants were at last separated by the matron, who, while she never would have practised repression before the Doctor's face,

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not infrequently did so in his absence. For she was of a compromising temper and had been forced, in the process of her labours, to realise that instinct, though it be in theory divine, occasionally needs some irreverent and secular check. So she cuffed both children soundly and drove them into different parts of the garden, there to reflect upon the difficulties of pacific self-expression when the Urge of Two Egos centres on the same portion of jam.

## CHAPTER III

### IN WHICH THE HERO BECOMES A PHILOSOPHER AND TASTES THE FRUIT OF HIS KNOWLEDGE

Q O strong a distaste had Dr. Junck-Vorwarts for O cramming the minds of children with facts or maiming their young spirits with the imposition of tasks, as was brutally done in the gross academies of the unreflecting pedagogues, that he declined to give them any occupation whatsoever. His notion, as he claimed in the 'Schedule of My Purpose', was to develop their initiative; in the Schedule's more metaphysical passages he expounded a theory of the Immanent Negative which is transformed into the Practical Positive. It was self-evident to the Doctor that, if you never help a child, he will learn to help himself. This was the custom of his dining-table, as we have recently seen, and it was also the foundation of the entire College of Paedosophy, to whose edicts the Doctor paid the allegiance of an eager devotee. Accordingly, as the days went by, young Sanguine

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found himself with a great deal of time upon his hands or, as the College would have called it, opportunities for Expansion of the Ego. This amplitude of leisure left him much occasion for yawning and looking at the sky and hoping that it was nearly bedtime; but it would be unfair to say that his Ego did not expand in any direction or degree. He rapidly learned a deal of sharp practice in the acquisition of jam; that is to say, he discovered with which of his fellows it was easiest and safest to indulge his jam ward instinct and to express those material cravings which it would have been so wrong to repress.

The greater part of the day was spent in roaming about the Doctor's garden, which habit was counted as Nature Study in the 'Schedule of My Purpose\*'. The garden was, alas, rather barren of fruits, as was only natural when so many and such active children were at large in it. But the Doctor's neighbour had apples and pears in abundance, now ripe and luscious in due season. The neighbour, who had been recently retired from a Colonelcy of Hussars, regarded the Doctor and his charges with profound and increasing hatred. He, for his part, would have beaten the brats to their books and so inflicted the most savage wounds upon them, psychic and corporeal. He had com-

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plained to the police about the exposure of the human form, old and young, male and female, which was common on the Doctor's side of the wall and he had fortified that wall with segments of empty bottles, of which vessels he happened to possess a great and ever accumulating number. Furthermore, he had intimated to the Doctor that, if any of the abominable boys were caught trespassing or marauding in his property, he would set about them properly with his riding-cane and send them home with stripes. For the Colonel, as is the way of all flesh, had impulses which he did not care to inhibit and hotly desired to satisfy. He believed in the sanctity of his own cravings quite as strongly as the Doctor did in those of his young charges. It was his opinion, though perhaps more crudely stated, that the self-regarding instinct to protect one's own property and to impose penalties on pilferers was infallible and even divine.

The Colonel, as became a one-time leader of Hussars, made it his pastime to traverse at a gallop the one remaining field in Middlesex; in this exercise he was followed by his two daughters who remained at home because no husbands could be found to remove them. It was the Colonel's habit to introduce them to such young men as came their way, but since he always added to the introduction

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'Good girls, but plain', he was more the servant of truth than of his or their advantage. They were tall, dark, and menacing of aspect, with very long faces strangely resembling those of the horses on which they performed no mean feats of speed and daring. Breeched, booted, and spurred, they charged very gallantly about the last relic of a rural Middlesex. At the season when the fruit was ripe, they shared with their father an armed vigilance over the trees in the orchard, lest the little rogues next door should scale the wall and seize the treasure. The day was divided into watches or spells of duty and at all such times there would be either the rotund and irate father or a lean and bristling daughter acting sentry among the fruits, as they came swelling and juicy to their prime.

Our hero had not earned for nothing his Torquay titles of Turk, jockey, and caution. To these names might well have been added that of monkey. For he had learned to leap, scale, climb, and scramble with the nimbleness of a marmoset and he soon set such a pace of motion to the Doctor's tree-tops that many of his little fellows fell severely and were much cut and contused in their efforts to vie with him. All this the Doctor took in great good humour, for he would not

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inhibit their eagerness to be up and about and said that Nature would provide its own correction for excess of intrepidity. To climb developed their initiative at no expense or trouble to himself and who was he to interfere with boyish aspiration? A thwarted climber might suffer wounds of the soul far deeper than any which his flesh was likely to endure. So, enjoying this license to the full, Master Sanguine soon wearied of the Doctor's tree-tops, cast adventurous glances on those of the Colonel, and began to scheme means of scaling the fortified wall which kept them from his eager hands and feet. Furthermore the fruits were at last reaching their perfection and had become spoil to tempt the stomach of any natural boy.

While he was regarding the wall one day, the Doctor passed by in the course of his morning stroll in which he cogitated for a pleasant hour or so on the infallibility of instinct and the sublimation of the Infantile Libido.

'What, Doctor,' asked Master Sanguine, 'would you say to me if I found means to overcome that wall?'

'I would say nothing harsh, as you know, my child.'

'You would not forbid me?'

'Gracious, boy, have you been so long an inmate

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of this Liberty Hall, so long a beneficiary of my Purpose, and yet you think that the word "forbid" remains in my vocabulary? I forbid nothing.'

'But what would become of me if I were captured by the angry gentleman on the other side?'

'If he is as bad as his word, he would beat you.'

'And how would his beating count against the pleasure of tasting his fruit?'

'There,' said the Doctor benignly, 'you touch on a very large and subtle question. The contusion of the spirit might be severe, but the contusion of the flesh is another matter on which many wise and speculative men have held opposing theories. It was the opinion, for example, of the learned Sacher von Masoch that extreme rapture may be derived from extremity of pain and to that end he and his disciples have fiercely tormented themselves in order to discover true felicity. Indeed, before his time there had been Orders of Flagellants who applied the lash to their own persons in their search for ecstasy. Our poets have made continual allusion to this seductive suffering. Does not Shakespeare, who is held by all the best reputed people in the land to be omniscient, out-topping knowledge, and possessed of a "boundless, cloudless human view", does not

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Shakespeare, the National Bard and Hero, liken death to "the lover's pinch, which hurts and is desired"? Mr. Swinburne, though less esteemed as a moral exemplar and intellectual guide, devoted a deal of his attention to the same subject, and was much concerned with "Intense device and superflux of pain". Then a lesser minstrel but a pious woman, Miss Sarah Williams, has maintained that

"The mark of rank in nature is capacity for pain  
And the anguish of the singer marks the sweetness  
of the strain."

Accordingly, my dear Sanguine, there is abundant reason to suppose that to be soundly whipped by a retired Colonel of Hussars, while it might offend the deeper layers of the Psyche, would bring only an unqualified rapture to the superficial tissues of the flesh.'

'You surprise me, Doctor,' answered Master Sanguine. 'I had never considered it in that light before. It had occurred to me that the giving of pain might be very pleasurable indeed and I have myself derived some most agreeable sensations from nipping my school-fellows about the arms and thighs and kicking their posteriors, but I had never understood what a favour I was conferring

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upon them as I played these tricks. Have you ever, dear Doctor, applied the principle to yourself or requested your fellow-men to give you the benefit of a beating?'

'Never/' replied the Doctor firmly, looking closely at Master Sanguine lest he should have a rod in his hand or be threatening an assault. 'You must know that I am of an ascetic mood and have little appetite for violent sensual rapture. Not that I discountenance such aspirations in others; if any of my company wishes to beat himself, he is naturally free to do so. As always, I forbid nothing and salute the infallibility of instinct. But my own instinct has a strong aversion from all such self-indulgence. I am not a carnal man and therefore have no wish to experience the delights of pain. I should not welcome an attack upon my shins or rump; indeed, were I not a man of quite remarkable equanimity, I might take umbrage at any such efforts to pleasure me and reward them peevishly and in kind. No, dear boy, I stand above these minor urges of the body.'

'But you do not deny that I might come very gleefully out of a whipping, as the learned von Masoch did aforetime?'

'I deny nothing as I forbid nothing/' responded the Doctor majestically and, thinking that the

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conversation had gone far enough, he turned away.

It was ever Master Sanguine's habit to believe what he was told and to be of good heart. The Doctor, it was true, had no experience of that on which he spoke, but he had cited the experience of wise men and poets. Thus it seemed very credible to Sanguine that there was much pleasure to be had across the wall as much from the Colonel's cane as from the Colonel's apples. Accordingly he determined not to wait for dusk and execute a clandestine raid upon the orchard, but boldly to attack in the middle afternoon when the Colonel, who had galloped in the morning, would surely be on guard.

Sanguine had marked down a section of the wall where the mortar had worked away somewhat from between the bricks, thus affording a grip for his hands. It remained only to knock away the broken glass on the top, which he very easily achieved with a gardener's rake. This done, he scaled the barrier and observed the Colonel promenading on the far side of the garden and cutting down, with heavy grunts and much foaming at the lips, the heads of the long grasses, which he executed with sharp swishes of his rattan. Sanguine dropped quietly into the orchard and,

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determined to seize what fruit he might before enjoying the pleasures of arrest and punishment, he climbed a tree of remarkable fertility and began to pluck its toothsome harvest, tossing the fruits back over the wall into the Doctor's garden. Some minutes elapsed before he was observed and by that time a rare volley of fruits had been discharged across the barrier. Then it was not the Colonel who detected him, for the poor man was as short of sight and hearing as he was of wind and temper. One of his daughters had espied Sanguine from an upper window and came running into the orchard, slashing with a riding-crop and crying loudly to her dad-da that there was one of those bastard boys robbing the trees.

'I am no bastard,' shouted Sanguine proudly, since he knew what the word meant. Education, in the establishment controlled with such sagacity by Dr. Junck-Vorwarts, consisted, for the greater part, of mutual instruction exchanged between child and child. 'I stimulate,' as the Doctor explained in the 'Schedule of My Purpose', 'the Friction of Young Minds from which alone proceeds the true, Promethean fire.' As to the full significance of the word 'bastard' the Friction had, in Sanguine's case, been most informative and explicit. Indeed, he had hardly been six hours a

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member of the Doctor's community (the bourgeois term 'school\*' was discouraged by authority) before he had completed that illumination on the Facts of Life which had been commenced by some eavesdropping in the house at Torquay. During those agreeable sessions at the key-hole he had further acquired some knowledge as to the method and occasion of his reaching this world. Consequently he was able to deny the charge of bastardy with the fire of a genuine conviction.

'Unwanted my arrival may have been/ he cried shrilly from the tree-top, 'but unlawful never.'

'Bastard or no,' roared the Colonel's daughter in a most terrible and taurine basso, 'down you come/ And she lashed upwards with her whip at his legs amid the branches.

'Certainly,' said Sanguine with the utmost composure. 'Do not labour to eject me. I descend.'

By this time the Colonel of Hussars had trotted as fast as he might to the base of the tree which Sanguine had so impudently scaled. He was now of a very high colour and consumed by an inordinate passion; when he halted he was as heavily flecked with foam as his charger after a morning's gallop.

'God bless my soul,' he said, when he had recovered sufficient breath to say anything. This he

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subsequently emended to 'God damn my soul'. 'The choice of verb is irrelevant.' thought Sanguine to himself. He had derived from Dr. Junck-Vorwarts at least this much instruction, namely, that God is a baseless fiction of the middle-class mind, and Sanguine always believed what he was told. Plainly that which did not exist could neither bless nor damn. About the existence of souls also he had derived from the Doctor a negative judgment.

On reaching the grass, Sanguine was asked by the Colonel whether he had never been taught to respect the rights of property, to which he replied, as befitted a rising philosopher, that the rights of man far exceeded those of property and that, in the Doctor's opinion, property was theft.

'Til have that Doctor fellow gaoled,' screamed the Colonel, 'First of all he walks about naked -'  
'We call him the Hairy Fairy,' said his daughter.

'Silence, Hermione. This is no case for jesting. I shall expose him.'

'But he's done that to himself already.'

'Go to the house, girl,' roared the Colonel of Hussars. 'What is to come is not for woman's eyes\*'

At this the equine virago unwillingly returned

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whence she had come and proceeded, along with her sister, to observe from an upper room what was not for woman's eyes.

'If I'd had that Doctor under me at Bangawayo, when I crushed the Umbabwe, he'd have been flayed all night and shot at dawn. Is the Empire to be defiled by Naked Atheistical Dagoes? But, boy, since I cannot flog your master, I shall certainly flog you.'

Master Sanguine's eyes sparkled with the expectation of some lively pleasure to come. The Doctor had convinced him of the ecstasy implicit in the stings of the flesh and he always believed what he was told.

'Certainly, Colonel,' he answered with the most gracious and polite demeanour. 'In this all falls out for the best. Indeed, we might almost be said to approach the Summum Bonum, of which the Doctor speaks. For the flogging will be a pleasure to you and an even greater pleasure to myself.'

The Colonel, not a little taken aback, inquired of Sanguine whether he was mad or attempting an essay of wit. But our hero, with a confident smile, only asked how long he was to be kept waiting.

'Not a moment,' answered the Colonel. 'Bend over there, Sir. And if you try to run away, I shall

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summon my two gardeners, who will hold you to it.'

'You need not fear that I shall avoid so keen a pleasure,' answered Sanguine and readily prepared himself for the experience. The Colonel whirled his rattan through the air and brought it down with a smart swish on Sanguine's posteriors. Our hero, feeling as though a sector of his person had been set on fire, wondered when the rapture would begin.

'I must have patience,' he resolved, as was proper to a young philosopher, for the Summum Bonum is never to be instantaneously achieved. 'In a moment I shall feel the rapture.' But when further blows came cracking about him he fell first into a doubt and then into a scepticism. By the time that the sixth cut was tingling about his thighs, he was fully persuaded that some mistake had been made. 'Doctor, dear Doctor,' he moaned, 'have I misconstrued your interpretation of what the learned von Masoch laid down about felicity? For herein I find no felicity whatsoever.'

'What's that?' said the Colonel, pausing for breath.

'I was questioning the wisdom of the wise,' answered Sanguine tearfully.

'Mad,' grunted the Colonel, 'but I shall whip

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his lunacy out of him, as they did to zanies of old.'

Thereat he proceeded to set about poor Sanguine once again. But our hero, now wholly disenchanted with the ecstasy implicit in agony and convinced that he must indeed have misconstrued what the Doctor told him, evaded the descending rod, gave his punisher the slip, and escaped to the wall which he swarmed more rapidly than he imagined was possible. At least, he reflected, as he reached security, he could now promise himself the recompense of the plundered fruits. But, when he looked round for his prize, he observed that Master Stephen Grub and some fellow-rogues were removing with glee the plunder which he had so painfully obtained. The reflection that property is theft and that the Doctor's company held all things in common gave him but little consolation. So he descended and sought out the Doctor to tell him of his sad experience and to ask some further and pertinent questions about the doctrine of the poets and philosophers concerning the blessedness of pain. The Doctor smiled broadly when he heard our hero's narration and only answered:

'It is plain, Sanguine, that you, like myself, are a natural ascetic. The Higher Rapture is not

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given to all of us. You have, however, made a bold experiment in the cause of psychological science. The failure of the experiment should not discourage you, since it is the nature of experiments to fail. I myself have known unhappy instances where children, encouraged in this Liberty Hall and according to the "Schedule of My Purpose" to do as they chose, could think of nothing to do. With full liberty to Expand the Ego in perfect freedom of self-development, they only sat and sulked or asked vulgarly for a ball to kick about. Yes, dear Sanguine, we all have our disappointments. But there is infinite consolation always. To know that one has served the onward progress of Psychology brings deep mental satisfaction.'

With that he departed to learn what was prepared for his supper and Sanguine, who always believed what he was told, sat down to ponder on his reward of mental satisfaction. But a sitting posture proved irksome and before long he fell a-weeping. The matron found him, asked and learned the cause of his distress, and told him that he had got what he deserved. But, being of a kindly and a practical nature, she also told him to abandon speculation, found him some victuals, and provided a cooling unguent for his weals.

## CHAPTER IV

IN WHICH THE HERO CONTINUES TO SEEK THE  
LIGHT, BUT IN ANOTHER QUARTER OF THE SKY

**S**HORTLY after this unhappy incident of the Colonel's orchard and of the stripes which failed to please, Master Sanguine was withdrawn from the care of Dr. Junck-Vorwarts. His parents had been rewarded for their prowess in Paedosophy by receipt of a Joint Travelling Professorship which embarked them upon a cosmic cruise. They were to lecture upon the Infantile Libido and Maternal Technique in all the major cities of the world; this was likely to involve their absence for some three years and, struck by a sudden memory of their child, they deemed it prudent to commit him in wardship to the second couple of grandparents; these proved ready enough to receive the boy into their home at Wimbledon, at least during his holidays. As for his schooling they considered that a complete change was necessary, for Master Sanguine, although now a shapely, sturdy boy and

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robust of limb, had not yet learned to read, write, or reckon. It was the opinion of the Doctor, under whom he had omitted to study, that children would learn for themselves; if they did not learn, that was a sure sign of the wisdom of the method; for plainly they were not intended by Nature to be scholars and the Doctor was never one to drive out Nature with a pitch-fork or to force a child against his gifts and inclinations.

So a private tutor was hired to instruct young Sanguine in his elements, which he absorbed rapidly enough since, after the freedom which he had been forced to endure in his previous academy, it was deliciouſi to be set a task and a time-table. The tuition did not extend far, since it was proposed to send our hero to Leatherham College, one of the most ancient and notable of English schools, now presided over by no less a paragon of pedagoges than Mr. Stumper Sloggett. At other institutions an entrance examination was compulsory, but Mr. Stumper Sloggett disdained such pedantry. So long as a boy could pass the doctor that was good enough for him; another, and not so easy, a condition was the ability of the parents to find five hundred guineas a year for the necessary fees. Sanguine's grandfather, having derived a satisfactory competence from the export of

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umbrellas to the Chinese armies and other ingenious traffics of his own devising, was well able to guarantee such sums; nay more, he was eager to do so since he had a profound distaste for all that he heard of Dr. Junck-Vorwarts and a no less deep admiration for the regimen of Mr. Stumper Sloggett.

Of this uncommon but much respected dominie something must now be said. Even while a schoolboy he had represented his nation in the field of play; at Oxford, where, despite some gaps in his knowledge which might have proved fatal to a youth less renowned for Character and Leadership, he was welcomed with a veritable fusillade of scholarships and prizes; he immediately justified himself by winning his Blue for all forms of athletics. By the time he was twenty-three he had played for England at cricket, Rugby football, golf, lacrosse, badminton, hockey, fives, billiards, tennis (real)^and tennis (lawn), racquets (real) and racquets (squash). At Oxford, in his time, he had won, upon the same day and for four years in succession, the races over Three Miles, over High and Low Hurdles, and over a Hundred Yards, not to mention such trifles as putting of the weight and jumping, high, long, and with pole. During his academic career

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the rival University of Cambridge ceased almost entirely to attract new scholars and dwindled to a village. At his own Oxford the system of Rhodes Scholarships wellnigh collapsed owing to a strike of American and Dominion students, who complained with reason that, if they could not win Blues for putting the weight and jumping with the pole, they saw no reason at all to make the immense, tedious, and costly journey to Oxford. It was Mr. Stumper Sloggett's one grievance that, owing to a foolish confusion of dates, he could not appear and conquer both in the Athletic Sports and the Boat Race. This was indeed a misfortune for his University since he would certainly have rowed, as he ran, much more powerfully than anybody else. On leaving the University, where such victorious occupation had naturally left him little leisure for the thumbing of old books or the menial task of composing essays, he was properly given a small parcel of degrees and diplomas (*Honoris causa*) and so entered the arena of life as a Doctor of Literature, Science, and Civil Law. Thus free he immediately filled up such deficiencies in his achievement as the crowded time-table of his career had imposed. He took to equitation, rode in and won the Grand National Steeplechase on a horse

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recently rescued from the shafts of a milk-cart but sensibly responsive to the honour of so august a jockey, and then, hurrying to the river-side, he stroked the British Eight in the Olympic Games at Vienna, where he and his mates made the Danube look very small indeed with such lusty and well-concerted violence did they propel their slender craft.

To such talent all careers were open. A dozen Oxford Colleges offered him a Fellowship and those which refrained were suspected of a Communist tendency and denounced as anti-British in the daily Press, whose owners all proffered the young man various and well-rewarded posts; the ^tivation to be a Religious Editor with two million readers attracted him strongly, for he was a man of simple piety and frequently proclaimed, as he passed the winning-post or scored a double-century at cricket, that no glory could attach to him, who was merely Heaven's implement. The journalistic prize, however, after much devout consideration, he refused, along with many offers of a wealthy marriage, directorships of industrial companies, seats in Parliament, cures of souls, and leading positions in the manufacture of films. For he felt that he had a Call. He must save the boyhood of his country from all those subversive and namby-

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pamby influences with which, so he was informed, it was increasingly beset.

Now the ancient cultural foundation of Leatherham had fallen upon bad times. Its headmaster, famous for his scholarship aforetime, had dwindled to a recluse; he entirely failed to realise his function as an advertising medium; he never wrote articles on The Boy of To-day or gave interviews to the Press, was never photographed, and never discovered any notable scandals in his precincts. The school, though it won a few paltry scholarships at the Universities, was consistently beaten at cricket and football. Furthermore it was ill spoken of in gentleman's clubs when it was discovered that membership of the Volunteer Rifle Corps was not enforced. The number and quality of the pupils declined and at last there was not a single titled scholar in a building that once had proudly and justly claimed to have the highest in the land at the bottom of every class. The Governors of this institution met in despair, dismissed the ridiculous creature who had brought it to such a pass, and sent a supplicatory message to Mr. Stumper Sloggett that he would come to the rescue of the Old School. For it was there, in the Leatherham of happier days, that Sloggett had been put to the grand old fortifying curriculum of

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which he was so eminent a product. There he had first learned-and with what commendable results!-to dispatch balls of all shapes and sizes towards, over, or into their proper boundaries, goals and other receptacles. 'What Leatherham needs is Leadership,' cried the signatories of the letter. 'You alone can Lead.'

To a man of Sloggett's lofty ideals, the Call was irresistible. He devoted a week-end to pious reflection on the conflicting obligations of his life. If he were to accept, he could do less for England on the playing-field. But, if he did accept, how many stripling champions might he not evoke from the Leatherham boys who would, in their turn, carry on the good work of beating Australia at cricket, France and America at lawn-tennis, and Colonel Bogey at golf? He prayed for divine instruction, received no answer, hurried to London, consulted a Group of his fellow-worshippers, and found them commendably prompt in Guidance. To Leatherham he must go. With the rapidity of decision which he applied to a drive at cricket or a drop-kick at goal on the Rugby Football field, he threw over all other invitations, left Church and City, Hollywood and Elstree, Fleet Street and wealthy debutantes to find their own salvation and hurried to the rescue of his

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Alma Mater. He did not stop to haggle over his salary, intimated briefly that the usual two thousand a year would suffice, and merely added a casual proviso that he would put up with ten per cent on the gross. The thankful Governors naturally made no objection to so modest a claim and terms were immediately agreed. A Press-agent was appointed and continued to meet all the urgent demands of the newspapers for photographs of Mr. Stumper Sloggett brandishing every known form of bat and club and for articles in which the new headmaster discussed, little though he knew it, not only the Modern Boy but the Modern Boy's Mother and the Modern Boy's God. He also took a leading place among the bishops and athletes who debated, in a valuable symposium, the teasing but important question, \*'Would Christ have played Cricket?' A popular feature in the Press was the photograph of the motor-lorry engaged to carry to his new home all the caps, ties, blazers and other insignia of sport to which he was entitled.

When his first wave of publicity was abating, he prudently engaged himself in marriage to a notable exemplar of Canadian beauty and physical perfection, once Net-Ball Champion of the World, and now touring England under the auspices of a Motion Picture Corporation and the title of Miss

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Baffin's Island, in which function she totally outshone Miss Australia, Miss New Zealand, and all the other Imperial Virgins. Six months later they were married in the Leatherham School Chapel and marched out of that fane beneath a triumphal arch of cricket-bats sustained by a dozen notables all of whom had scored a hundred runs or taken ten wickets in a Test Match. The happy couple, instead of being pelted with the conventional rice, were submitted, by a no less felicitous thought, to a scattering of Ashes, since the bridegroom had so stoutly assisted in the past to wrest this curious form of guerdon from the Australians. Nine months later Mrs. Stumper Sloggett was delivered of a son who, according to all the laws of eugenic science, should have represented England at every pastime before he was in his teens. But herein lay the only disappointment of this great, good, and otherwise triumphant headmaster. The boy, though physically normal, soon evinced an utter distaste for all athletics and would sneak away to study chess-problems or to read the poetry of decadent scribblers. Such are the vagaries of Nature, such the inscrutability of Fate.

The school, which Master Sanguine now entered, had flourished so excessively under its new discipline that, in order to thin out the crowd

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of applicant scholars, the annual fees had been raised from two hundred guineas to three and thence to five. In order to meet the charge of profiteering raised by a few ill-disposed voices, undoubtedly urged on by foreign gold, some new playing-fields were added. Otherwise, the Governors opined, no changes for the better need or could be made. But a kindly condition was included in the schedule of charges. Should an ex-pupil, on proceeding to Oxford or Cambridge, fail to obtain a Blue for any one species of sport, a sum of one hundred guineas would be remitted to his parents by way of reparation. So far there had been no occasion on which that refunding had been necessary. The Leatherham Boys never let their headmaster down and faithfully observed the motto of the college, *'Ludus Omnia Vincit:*

It is easily intelligible that, with the pressure of incoming pupils and the rise in fees to five hundred guineas per annum, the small matter of ten per cent on the gross, which Mr. Stumper Sloggett had so modestly mentioned, was transformed into a considerable bonus. The pedagogue was doing well for himself as for the School, which was not remarkable since he never did anything ill, save only in the begetting of a son and heir.

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Master Sanguine, who always believed what he was told, soon absorbed a very different creed and philosophy of life from that obtained under the tutelage of Dr. Junck-Vorwarts. He attended military and church parades; was taught to pray, to shoot, and to keep a straight bat. He attended fielding practice on the cricket-field in summer and scrumming practice for Rugby football on the same field in winter. In the intervals remaining from this intensive cultivation of the body and soul he composed in the Latin language and applied himself to the lower rungs of the mathematical ladder under the tuition of men who had the highest athletic qualifications. He was confirmed a member of the Church of England by the Bishop of Old Trafford, who had once led a victorious eleven to Australia, was now the Spiritual Father of the Lancashire Cricket Eleven, and was urgently persuading the Cotton Masters of that country to defeat the insidious competition of Japan by Playing the Game.

Master Sanguine enjoyed it nearly all, even the confirmation, which involved an afternoon's release from the mathematical ladder on whose rungs, it must be confessed, he climbed with tottering and reluctant steps. He soon showed such proficiency in his games that he became a

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most precious and popular son of Leatherham. Indeed, he had only been a short time at the school when he was promoted to a prefecture, which conferred upon him the privilege of beating all such lads as disobeyed his orders or displeased him in any way whatever. As he had already been considerably thwacked himself, (and to be thwacked by the right arm of Mr. Stumper Sloggett was no small experience) he naturally resolved, as is the way of boys, to have his revenges. If any were slovens, he would make them smart.

One day he descried a lad who, when he should have been watching the School Cricket Team in a match of singular importance, was lying upon the grass and reading a book about Chicago gangsters entitled *The Death Racket*. When one of the Leatherham players did a notable feat all the spectators applauded, as was proper, save this one whose eyes were fixed intently on his book, which was evidently of a most engaging kind. Striding up to discover the identity of this disloyal malefactor, Sanguine was surprised to come upon a well-known face and form, to wit that of Master Stephen Grub who had once been his fellow at the academy of Dr. Junck-Vorwarts and had cruelly pilfered his jam and his apples. Master Grub's parents had recently become gravely dissatisfied

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with the results of a boyhood spent in that Liberty Hall and had dispatched young Stephen to Leatherham, there to enjoy, as best he could, a sterner discipline and more rigorous control.

'Now,' said Sanguine to himself, 'I shall get my own back on this horrid rogue. For I am a prefect and he is but a new-comer. Though strongly-built he has no authority and I have much.' Accordingly he roundly abused the fellow for his neglect of patriotic attention to the School Eleven and bade the wretch attend upon him later in the day, purposing to beat him soundly, as was his duty. For not to be concerned about the doings of the Cricket Team was high treason in the eyes of Mr. Stumper Sloggett. Meanwhile he confiscated Grub's book and took it to his study to read. Therein he discovered many ideas about a profitable way of living, ideas new, strange, and fascinating beyond any that had ever been put before him in either of the academies where he had studied. Sanguine thought over them profoundly, for he had some studious impulses and was always impressed by what he read.

When the hour of chastisement came, Master Sanguine applied himself to the task with no little fury, for he had cordially hated Stephen Grub and was in a mood for drastic reparations. But the

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more he swished the boy's posteriors, the less concerned did his victim seem. Indeed, when the punishment was over, young Grub, released from his bending posture, turned round and laughed very heartily. At this Sanguine was as much surprised as annoyed, for he greatly fancied the power of his arm and had reduced other victims to an extremity of agonised contortion. Suddenly the idea occurred to him that Grub might be one of those of whom the Doctor had once told him, namely, the sect that derives ecstasy from agony, the sect of which he had rashly imagined himself to be a member, only to receive violent disillusion in the Colonel's orchard.

'Stop a moment, Grub.' said Sanguine. 'You seem to have enjoyed your drubbing.'

'Most heartily,' replied Grub.

'Are you then of the fortunate sect which finds pleasure in pain, a sect of whose curious creed and strange delights Doctor Junck-Vorwarts once informed me?'

At this Grub rudely responded that those who asked no questions would be told no lies.

Incensed at such insolence and realising that further caning was of no avail, Sanguine seized Grub's wrist and began to twist it, whereupon the boy screamed piteously and begged for mercy.

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'How now,' cried Sanguine. 'So you are not enjoying this!' and twisted with a sharper violence. 'Relish that if you can.'

'Let me go,' screamed Grub.

'Not until you answer my curiosity. For it is uncommonly strange that you are impassive at one moment in one part of the body and not at the next in another. There is some mystery here. And the enigma I intend to solve at all costs to yourself.' Thereat he continued to twist.

'Very well,' moaned Grub. 'If you will promise to tell no other, I shall relate how I outwit the beastly persecution and tormentings of the prefects and masters. But you must swear an absolute secrecy and also engage never to punish me again.'

Sanguine, much intrigued, made the necessary oath and released the fellow from his grip.

'It happens this way,' explained Grub. 'I am no lover of pain, nor a member of any fantastic sect. Indeed, I dislike pain so bitterly that I will do anything to avoid it, which is hard in this foul place where there is always somebody pursuing one with savage penalties for some trivial offence. My father, you should know, is a prominent surgeon who has, among other services to mankind, such as removing its intestines with the greatest dexterity, perfected the art of the local anaesthetic;

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for this purpose he has discovered many curious drugs and salves. During the holidays I stealthily remove from his laboratory the phials and syringes with which he performs this kindly office and, when ever I am in danger of being beaten, I deftly inject a dose of his magical fluids into the part likely to be affected, which completely removes all possibility of pain. I was thus fully armed against your assault, as far as my posteriors were concerned, but when you so brutally twisted my wrist I was vulnerable, as was, so I learned in class this morning, Achilles in the matter of his heel.'

'That,' said Sanguine, 'is a very interesting explanation and I commend you on your forethought in devising the trick and your skill in its execution.' After reflecting awhile he added, 'Do any of your fellows know about this?'

'Not yet,' answered Grub. 'You are surely not going to betray me after all?'

'By no means. For I always fulfil my promise and perform as I have spoken, just as I believe what I am told.'

Grub then reflected that he might lay in considerable stores of the drug. 'This device,' he said thoughtfully, 'would seem to have commercial possibilities. Suppose that you, enjoying the powers of a prefecture, were to keep a watch-

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ful eye for punishable actions and so threaten many boys with a beating. Then, before the performance of the threat, you would inform me of the likely victims. I would seek them out and offer them the anodyne on terms agreeable to all parties. The result would also be beneficial to all, painless to the victims and profitable to us. While you guarantee a good supply of customers, fearful of a thrashing, I shall pledge myself to an equal supply of the anaesthetic medicine which shall in no wise fail them. We shall, of course, sell it at a price attractive to us, yet not so great that the market cannot bear it.'

'You are not the simpleton I thought you were.' said Sanguine, 'but a most cunning fox. Is not this what they call a racket?'

'That is so. My story-book was most explicit about this subtle way of life. I have read it with great pleasure and instruction, for in so conservative a school as this it is an unusual felicity to meet with new ideas.'

'You are evidently a quick student,' answered Sanguine, 'and I am a dull clod. For here were you with the precious secret stolen from your father and I had never thought to turn it to such profitable uses. And now, pray, let us discuss the terms of its exploitation.'

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'My terms are simple,' said Grub. 'We go fifty-fifty on the gross receipts.'

'Fifty-fifty? What is that?'

'It is equal takings,' answered Grub, thus proving that he had climbed some distance up the mathematical ladder.

That is not just,' retorted the other. 'Your contribution to the racket is much less than mine. I am responsible for delivering the victims.'

'Perhaps,' responded Grub, 'but you are buying my brains and you shall pay for them. That is the first principle of Business.'

To this at length Sanguine, somewhat sulkily, agreed. So the scheme, or racket as the bookmen call it, went forward and flourished exceedingly. Sanguine kept a sharp look out for miscreants and defaulters and would catch the younger brats very neatly in any breach of the rules or failure in their sporting exercises, such failure being deemed by Mr. Stumper Sloggett to rank among the most heinous crimes. He then condemned the ill-doers to punishment after prayers in the evening, that hour being most usual for such a doom, and the victims the better strengthened to receive it. Grub was informed of the sufferer's identity and immediately approached them with an offer of anodyne. When it was discovered

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how potent was the cure, a satisfactory standard of prices was established. Within a year the prudent pair had so increased their pocket-money as to outspend the richest boys in the school, which contained many sons of millionaires. And all this, be it noted, was achieved without inflicting the slightest degree of pain upon anybody. As Sanguine viewed it, they were tempering the ethics of Chicago with most Christian charity and opening the gates of mercy on mankind.

## CHAPTER V

### IN WHICH THE HERO PLAYS THE GAME AND IS MISUNDERSTOOD

**W**HILE Master Sanguine grew in mind, thanks to his private reading, in body, thanks to Mr. Stumper Sloggett's educational method, and in estate, thanks to his shrewd co-operations with Master Grub, a cloud rose in the sky for his esteemed headmaster, a sky hitherto golden and serene. This was the rise to fame of the neighbouring and rival academy of Lasham. The Governors of Lasham College, a body composed entirely of officers and gentlemen, realising the necessity of Progress, had dismissed the miserable pedant who had hitherto been misdirecting the conduct and corrupting the tone of that historic institution. This creature had craved for scholarships at Balliol College at Oxford, King's at Cambridge, and similar nests of book-worms and atheists and had actually schooled his young charges to obtain them. Naturally,

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Lasham College had lost touch with that noble tradition which had been established in Tudor times and maintained ever since by a series of dominies, of whom Dr. Samuel Stingo (1790-1824) had been the most notable exemplar. The quantity and quality of pupils seeking entrance to Lasham had fallen grievously away and the Governors agreed, (*Nemine contradicente et omnibus applaudentibusj*) in other words with loud cheers, that the pedant should be replaced by a man of blood and iron, possessing decent notions of an Englishman's duty. So they had imported in his stead a reverent gentleman of accomplishments almost similar to those possessed by Mr. Stumper Sloggett, to wit the Rev. Victor Drawblood, whose ideals were as far beyond question as was his record on the field of sport. No sooner had Mr. Drawblood set about his reforms (and his pupils) than a very different spirit was manifest at Lasham, with the pleasing result that a waiting-list of pupils was once more established and the fees could be raised, if not yet to the heights commanded by Mr. Stumper Sloggett, at least to a comparable figure.

As a result of the Rev. Drawblood's activities and of the new spirit which he infused into his scholars, Lasham defeated Leatherham both at

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cricket and at football, an unparalleled achievement which not only caused much public comment but actually raised the price of special articles by Mr. Drawblood (on the Modern Boy) above that hitherto established by Mr. Stumper Sloggett. The latter, for a month afterwards, raged incessantly, to the great terror of his wife, of his puny, puling scholastic son, and of all the pupils of Leatherham, on whom he expended his wrath with the utmost violence should any come in his way; it was not necessary for them to commit a misdemeanour in order to incur his rage. Merely to be seen was to suffer.

At last, when the time for the next cricket match against Lasham drew near, he summoned the entire school into the Great Hall and there addressed them on the gravity of the situation. Leatherham, he advised them, was in danger, its scutcheon blotted, its honour tarnished, its future imperilled. It was the proud boast of Old Leatherhamians that they went through Life with a Straight Bat and a Stiff Upper Lip. How could they hope to sustain this glorious ideal if they faced their opponents on the field of play with their bats crooked and their upper lips under strong suspicion of laxity? Were they to be vanquished again, there could be little doubt of

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further and unkindly comment in the public sheets. The playing-ground was but a miniature of life's arena and the struggle for existence was there as urgent as in the office, the factory, and the counting-house. If another defeat were sustained, he would seriously consider curtailing the holidays and ordering a week's compulsory cricket-practice in lieu of that leisure. Thereafter he rose to a most spirited peroration in which he pointed out, drawing upon his classical knowledge, that there could be no sane mind except in a healthy body and that the test of health was a clear eye, a quick wrist, and a relentless will to Play the Game. He ended with some pregnant sentences on Character and Leadership, the result of whose pregnancy was an outburst of cheering such as the Great Hall had rarely heard in all its storied days.

The boys of Leatherham were deeply moved; a contemptible few only feared to find their holidays diminished, but the brave majority were deeply conscious of the moral issue and resolved to strive to the uttermost to perfect their fitness for the great test of Character and Leadership involved in the coming cricket-match. Needless to say Master Sanguine, who always believed what he was told, took the crisis very deeply to heart. His concern was personal as well as general, for he had now

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grown to be a great strapping lad and a prominent member of the School Eleven on whom the responsibility of saving Leatherham from infamy devolved. As far as in him lay, the honour of Leatherham should be cleansed of its tarnish and its scutcheon scoured of all suggestion of a blot. Accordingly he sat down one evening, after some earnest practice on the fields, in order to devise a plan of campaign.

The game of cricket, since there may be some ignorant aliens who know little of its splendours and sublimities, centres round three sticks, stumps, or wickets, which it is the business of a bowler to hit with a ball and of a batsman to defend with a piece of willow called a bat. The batsman, as we have already heard, is best assured of success if he strikes at the ball with the bat straightly held; the bowler will most certainly achieve his end if he can, by spinning the ball with his fingers, making it go crooked after it has bounced upon the ground. On the other hand, if he cannot defeat the batsman by hitting the stumps with the ball, which is a hard one, he may achieve his purpose by hitting the batsman himself, so that the fellow will become nervous, confused, and even panic-stricken and commit the folly of holding a crooked bat and so exposing his wicket to disaster. Against

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such a method of attack the batsman wears pads upon his legs which reach above the knee but leave the thighs, flanks, ribs and other tender places open to the contusion of a bouncing ball. When the ground is dry it is possible to make the ball bounce, leap, and curvet as high as the batsman's head which has a most cooling influence on the poor man's eagerness to go on defending his wicket. Among some cricketers of the highest standing it has been agreed that to bowl at a man's person, when you have despaired of hitting his stumps, is a most praiseworthy device. With a pleasant modesty of phrase, which would rather minimise than exaggerate the intention, to pitch the ball at your opponent's head is called 'leg-theory', the assumption being that you merely wish to berattle his lower and padded members.

There can be no doubt therefore that batsmanship is a test of Character, since to remain immobile in the protection of three inconsiderable sticks while an enemy is attempting to break your ribs or your head with a hard ball propelled at the highest speed demands the existence of men who are really men. Master Sanguine, early in his cricketing career, had observed that the bowler has most of the fun and, having heard in the School chapel a most affecting sermon on the text

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that it is more blessed to give than to receive, he resolved that, in the matter of knocks, he would observe this pious counsel. Accordingly he trained himself to be a bowler and, with his sturdy physique, he soon learned to eject the ball with a most startling velocity and, more especially, to propel it towards the batsman's body and head until such time as the creature, buffeted in flesh and broken in spirit, was in no mood to defend his wicket at all or even collapsed beneath the battery of this attack. For this reason Sanguine was much encouraged by Mr. Stumper Sloggett and soon promoted to the First Eleven. It was remarked by his headmaster that the lad showed uncommon promise and one day, after he had stunned an opponent with a ball that rose like a thunderbolt to his forehead, Mr. Sloggett prophesied the most glorious of futures for our hero. If he could do this sort of thing as a boy, what might he not do with the full strength of a man? There could be little doubt, opined Sloggett, that he would one day be extremely useful against the Australians and go out to cement the bonds of Empire, which is one of cricket's most exalted functions, on the sun-baked fields across the sea.

Among the many mysteries of cricket there is a thing called a Googly; this Googly is a ball so

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cunningly spun by die bowler that, while it purports to twist one way upon bouncing, it does, in fact, go shooting off in the opposite direction. During one of his vacations Sanguine had noticed a pedlar who was selling toy-balls so contrived as to perform this trick without any cunning on the bouncer's or bowler's part. The ball was weighted within upon one side and, according as it fell, so it was deflected by the bias in the most comical and surprising way. Thus anybody who attempted to seize it would be ludicrously cheated by the ball's erratic course. It had occurred to Sanguine at the time that, if an ordinary cricket-ball were so treated with the injection of a leaden weight upon one side, it would perform some extraordinary antics when bounced and so bewilder and berate the batsman as to render him the easiest of victims. Now the idea recurred to him that such a ball, if it could be secretly employed, would be of the utmost service in spreading confusion among the boys of Lasham. Sanguine, whose emotions had been deeply touched by Mr. Stumper Sloggett's peroration, was naturally afire with zeal to defeat the opposing team and so unblot the scutcheon of his own dear Leatherham. In this spirit of loyalty and devotion he purchased a new cricket-ball and carried it to a skilled artificer in the town of

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Leatherham, inquiring whether the fellow could unsew the leather cover of the ball, insert a substantial globule of lead on the right-hand side, and then so close and trim the jacket of the ball that it would retain its original fresh, unhandled look. The artificer, who smiled gleefully at the proposition of such a device, said that for a price this could occur; the cost was agreed the deed was done and Sanguine, rehearsing a few tosses with the now deftly biased ball, observed to his satisfaction the haphazard and diverting tricks which it performed upon touching the ground.

Naturally the whole game could not be played from the start with this cunning implement of victory; in such case his own side might be inconvenienced quite as much as their opponents. It must be reserved for some moment of crisis and then transferred to himself, when bowling, in lieu of the ordinary ball. Possibly the subterfuge might never be needed. But, if it should be, if his dear school were in danger of a second blot on that scutcheon of which he had heard so much and for which he cared so deeply (despite a certain ignorance as to the exact nature or quiddity of a scutcheon) if, as Mr. Stumper Sloggett averred and as Sanguine, always believing what he was

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told, believed, the entire future of Leatherham was imperilled, it was surely his sacred duty to play the game with a surpassing will to conquer. Only the previous Sunday the School Chaplain had charged them from the pulpit with obvious reference to the oncoming contest, to gird up their loins, to be strong in the Lord, and to quit themselves like men. A moral fervour glowed in Sanguine's bosom; the boys of Lasham should never win that match; his loins, if those of none other, should be girt and his strength at the Lord's disposal.

To this end plans had to be determined. What more natural than to consult his old enemy and present ally, Stephen Grub? Grub's tastes lay not among the ethical splendours and physical salubrities of the cricket-field, but in the bookish study of contemporary economics, from which pursuit he was deriving some astute notions about further extending the Rent of Ability, especially his own. Therefore Grub would not be a combatant in the arena of this great cricket-tourney, but a spectator on its edge. Now, in cricket games the ball is frequently struck by the batsman to the edge of the field and thence returned to play by any of the spectators who happens to be adjacent. If, therefore, Sanguine bowled to the Lasham batsman

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such a simple toss that the fellow might dispatch it to the boundary, Master Grub, being warned and alert for this opportunity, would dash to retrieve the ball and, instead of returning it to the bowler, would substitute the trick or Googly-ball devised by the skilled artificer. Then Sanguine would recommence his attack with the new ball, whose ruddy polish could be rubbed off so that it would resemble the one already in the field. It would be Grub's business to smuggle away the original ball so that none might know that any deceit had been practised.

And so it fell out. For Lasham seemed likely to win the match and Mr. Stumper Sloggett stood on the field's edge grinding his teeth and muttering very bitterly against his own pupils of Leatherham, whom he tacitly described in terms which modesty forbids to print. When the last hour came the Lasham batsmen had some few and simple knocks to make in order that the victory might again be theirs. It was at this juncture that Sanguine, who was bowling, made an agreed signal to Master Grub, who was waiting at the side of the field of play. He delivered his simple toss which the batsman promptly and properly struck away into the distance. Master Grub rushed forward to receive the ball as it reached

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the spectators and, neatly concealing it, threw back the trick-ball as had been -arranged. It certainly bounced queerly on its way to Sanguine, but anybody who noticed it concluded that some roughness of the ground had disturbed its course.

Then Sanguine applied himself to bowl with the utmost severity. He hurled the new ball at the batsman with the whole of his force and, no sooner had it bounced far out on the poor fellow's off-side, than it twisted back at a sharp angle to shatter his stumps. Another batsman followed; again Sanguine flung the ball with consummate violence; again it made a savage twist on bouncing and spun sharply into the batsman's body, hitting him just above the legs where it is most painful and even most dangerous for a man to be struck. The poor wretch, who had not armoured himself against such calamity, as is sometimes done on the fields of sternest play, screamed pitifully and fell to the ground. Such was his agony that he was carried still moaning to the Pavilion and so was disposed of for that critical hour. The next player was first berattled about the chest and then about his wickets by the curveting ball, which an observer might have thought to be possessed of an imp or devil; there were but two more Lasham players to come and Sanguine had two more tosses in which

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to be rid of them. It was natural that the batsmen should now be in a considerable state of fear and consternation and ill-prepared to defend their bodies and their stumps. Sanguine, aflame with his triumph and passionate to see the honour of his dear school secured beyond a peradventure, summoned all his strength and bowled the ball with the fury of a thunderbolt. On the first occasion it rose sharply at a most curious angle; the batsman, terrified, endeavoured to avert his head from the whizzing sphere; but the fiery pace and surprising angle of the missile deceived him, he ducked too late, was struck on the point of the jaw, stunned, and removed immobile. His panic-stricken successor had little chance to save the day for Lasham. The next and last delivery of the ball was less dangerous, but no less mischievous. For, happening to light full on its leaden-weighted end, it never bounced at all, as the batsman had expected it to do, but shot along the ground and struck his wickets with such violence as to break one in fragments.

A mighty cheer arose from all the boys of Leatherham. The game was over, victory achieved, Sanguine its hero. The honour of the school was re-established and Mr. Stumper Sloggett, his dignity forgotten, might have been

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observed tossing his hat into the air, calling Sanguine by the most affectionate terms, and dancing the can-can or fandango in his delirium of joy, quite regardless of those canons of self-restraining conduct which the code imposes on an English gentleman. But it was just at this moment that calamity occurred, which goes to point the moral that immoderate triumphs may contain the seeds of future ruin. Sanguine had prudently resolved to recover and conceal the trick-ball immediately the play was over, lest any should question its composition and remove it for analysis. But, as he ran up to seize it, his fellow-players of Leatherham, in a transport of surprise and delight at their sudden rescue from defeat, seized our hero (and theirs) and determined to carry him on their shoulders to the Pavilion, which is the traditional though sometimes embarrassing and painful method used by the English to salute a conqueror upon the field of play. Before Sanguine could recapture the missile with which he had dealt such swift destruction, he found himself poised above the heads of his comrades who, with many and resonant cheers, thus carried him in glory from the greensward. Meanwhile the last of the Lasham batsmen had secured the ball, whose antics had been unparalleled in

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his experience of the game. He did not yet suspect that any trickery had been perpetrated, but he surmised that, by some accident, the ball might have been of faulty construction and he wished to open it and see. So, secreting the missile, he applied himself to explore its entrails later in the day with a sturdy penknife.

That evening Mr. Stumper Sloggett summoned his pupils to the Great Hall in order to thank and bless them for the crowning mercy which had been vouchsafed to them. Especially did he pay tribute to our hero, whose strength, said Mr. Sloggett recalling a line of English poetry always dear to his heart, was as the strength of ten because his heart was pure. It was a merry and a manly scene which reached its climax when the School Chaplain drew upon the wisdom of Leigh Hunt who opined that, with cricket played, God's work was brought to perfection; he drew also upon the affecting and inspiring Muse of Sir Henry Newbolt and chanted 'Play up and Play the Game' to unanimous applause. Then Mr. Sloggett announced an additional week of holidays in honour of the occasion and called for Three Cheers for Sanguine.

Lusty as was the roar which greeted this invitation it did not wholly drown a murmurous noise

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without, a noise which swelled into a menacing tumult. Mr. Stumper Sloggett dispatched a messenger to discover the cause of this rumpus and the lad returned to report that a huge mass of Lasham boys was assembled without the gates in great rage and high vociferation. They were, it appeared, sending their headmaster as a herald to announce the cause of their discontent.

'This is strange,' said Sloggett, 'but bid him enter and show him no violence or sign of disfavour. For we are sportsmen.'

A moment later the Rev. Drawblood entered the Hall, carrying in his hand the dismembered sections of the ball and revealing the inserted lead which had caused its puzzling and dangerous vagaries of flight.

'This is the ball,' he cried, 'with which the last section of the game was played. It has been doctored by some criminal hand. It was scarcely credible that any just and normal ball should behave as this one did and the batsman very properly removed it after the game for examination. The knife has revealed the cancer and the cancer was not of nature, but ingrafted by some malefactor. We of Lasham demand inquiry, apology, redress.'

'A monstrous accusation,' snapped Mr. Stumper

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Sloggett with natural choler. 'How can you prove that this is the very ball in use?'

'We have the two umpires,' answered the Rev. Drawblood, 'to witness that our batsman secured the ball actually in use and he very wisely took them with him to overlook the opening and analysis of the ball. They will testify.'

'Sanguine' said Mr. Sloggett, 'what have you to say to this impudent allegation?'

Sanguine, whose sun-tanned cheeks were now suffused with a scarlet blush, said with quiet confidence in the splendour of his deed:

'It was for you, Sir, that I did it. For Leatherham. For the scutcheon of the school.'

'You did it?' screamed Mr. Stumper Sloggett, beside himself with shame and indignation. 'Scutcheon be damned. You played this scurvy trick?'

'Indeed, I did,' answered Sanguine proudly. 'For it had been impressed on me with all the force of your authority that victory was essential to the honour of us all.'

'Honour!' sneered the Rev. Drawblood. 'A pretty excuse for an abominable deceit.'

'The School is dismissed!' roared Mr. Sloggett. 'Come with me Sanguine, we must have this out.'

And so in Mr. Sloggett's study Sanguine told

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the whole story of his device, concealing only Master Grub's name that his friend should not suffer, while the Rev. Drawblood listened with a cold sneer upon his never gracious features. Mr. Sloggett listened to the tale in a white heat of rage, for he knew that Drawblood would tell the world, which, indeed, that reverend gentleman very gleefully did, exacting the further revenge that the match should be credited as a victory for Lasham.

'Sanguine,' said Mr. Stumper Sloggett when all was confessed and explained. 'You have disgraced yourself. You have disgraced the School. You have disgraced, nay you have ruined me.'

'But, Sir,' protested the wretched boy, 'I only took you at your word when you proclaimed the necessity of winning and said that, if the match were lost, all was lost. Did I not intend to win and so save all?'

'Silence, idiot,' bellowed his master. 'You comprehend nothing. We play to win, but we play the game. You only did the former. You have brought irretrievable disgrace upon this institution whose good name you should have died to preserve. Were you not too big for a whipping, I should beat you as I never beat a boy before. As it is you may take yourself untouched by anything save the scandal and dishonour in which you have

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drenched yourself from head to foot. You are expelled. Go, this instant, go. And remember, above all things, that you are forbidden to wear the usual emblems of the Old School.'

With that our hero passed out into the night, as deeply confused as he was indignant.

For had he not believed what he was told and acted bravely and shrewdly on that confident belief?

## CHAPTER VI

### IN WHICH THE HERO IS ADDRESSED BY HIS GRAND- FATHER, MEETS A COUNTRY GENTLEMAN, AND PRACTISES A MANLY SPORT

QANGUINE'S hasty and enforced departure from Leatherham aroused in his grandfather, who was still his financial prop, moral guardian, and spiritual adviser, the most acute sentiments of grief and indignation. No sooner had the lad arrived in the house with an explanatory letter from Mr. Stumper Sloggett than his venerable warden, having read this flaming epistle, summoned him to his study and addressed him in the sternest tones.

'You return to us,' he said, 'not merely in shame but in utter degradation. Were it not for ties of blood and your lonely position in the world I would conceive it my duty to deny you even the bare necessities of food and shelter. Had you failed, even disastrously, in your classroom studies I could have overlooked the stigma, for such

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calamities and disappointments have often befallen Englishmen who have subsequently risen to the highest offices, honours, and emoluments which the service of the Common Weal bestows. The application of the mind, whether to small matters or to great, is an exercise which I deem to be lamentably over-practised and over-praised; it is typical rather of a bookish and a decadent community than of a virile and self-reliant nation, No, Sir, the busying of that fallible implement, the brain, with the problems of the universe has never yet solved these tiresome metaphysical enigmas which, being of God created, should be left to God himself or to the simple ministrations of such clergymen as have heard God's call to faith and do not impudently profess to the ownership of knowledge. I cannot think that we English have been much advantaged by the rabble of Jews and Germans who insist on meddling in these matters and win for themselves some trumpery fame while leaving us in still greater confusion. No, Sanguine, the application of the mind is not the primary concern of youth or manhood. But the application of morality, like the application of force, with which it has much in common, yields results, definite and tangible results. This may be seen wherever the gosselling of Christian ethics has

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turned idle savages into diligent servants, worthy of their hire, or into valiant sepoy's meriting the uniform which they are privileged to wear. Your failure, had it been one of mind, would have been pardonable, but it is difficult, it is wellnigh impossible to find any compassionate word or thought for a moral delinquent. Consider the special nature of your offence. It is well known that for an Englishman to cheat at cards is the end of his social existence; nothing awaits him but South America. But you, Sir, you have cheated at cricket, which is of all games the moral exemplar and the testing ground of character. Time and again our English writers, even our poets, have emphasised this fact.' At this the old gentleman paced the room declaiming in a very shrill voice and with the utmost passion:

'Hail, Cricket, glorious, manly British Game!  
First of all Sports, be first alike in Fame,  
To my fired Soul they busy Transports bring  
That I may feel thy Rapture, while I sing,  
O thou, sublime Inspirer of my Song  
What matchless Trophies to thy worth belong!'

At this point, much to Sanguine's relief, his memory failed him and he reverted to his task of ethical correction.

'You have cheated at cricket. Unbelievable

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offence in a grandson of mine! What career awaits the boy who enters manhood with such stain of infamy? What profession do you hope to enter?'

Sanguine had so far given this matter but small thought, having been assured at Leatherham that, if he were good enough at cricket, something would undoubtedly turn up. He might be chosen to rule savages in any part of the earth; at the worst some merchant company would greedily claim his services.

'I had thought, Sir,' he muttered, 'that the Sudan-'

'The Sudan would not look at you now. No, boy, there is but one hope.'

<sup>4</sup>And that, Sir?'

To enter the Church.'

'But, surely when one has cheated at cricket-?'

'It will be difficult,' said the old man. 'But it might be managed. For I believe it to be true that the number of young men with any reasonable qualifications of birth and breeding who now present themselves for ordination is inadequate. The Church is not like the Sudan. It cannot be as particular as it would. God's work must be done. The ministry must be served. The Church might stretch a point. But first, of course, you

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must purge your offence or, to put it more bluntly, cover up your tracks. I propose that after a year with a private tutor, during which this hideous scandal may die down and you may acquire such elements of information as are necessary to pass the primary examinations of Oxford University, you present yourself to the authorities of Chastity College, for they, like the Church, cannot be as particular as they would. The foundation, which is most dear to me, is a very old one and the buildings are indeed the most beautiful in Oxford. But it recently became, owing to some accident or fault of judgment on its Warden's part, the resort of a Bad Set who, with their vicious practices, belied the meaning of their college's inspiring name and robbed the institution of its old attraction in the eyes of vigilant and sober parents anxious to do the best for their sons. The College, in short, is eager to restore its dwindled reputation.'

Sanguine wondered why a College so jealous for its honour should show any hospitality to such a wretch as himself, who had cheated at cricket. When he put this question his grandfather replied tersely.

'Dolt! How can a College increase its honour unless it first increases its number of students?

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There can be no College, save only an empty shell of buildings, if there be nobody inside it. The pastors and masters will lack salary, the servants will lack wages, and the boat-club, through which honour is most rapidly achieved, will lack propellers of the boats. I have heard that Chastity is now most hungry for entrants and I have little doubt that my own influence, for I am an old Chastity man, will serve to find you a place, especially if you are entered on the books as a churchman in the making, become a student to that end, and announce yourself a potential oarsman. Meanwhile I propose to send you for a year to my acquaintance Pilfer, also a Chastity man, and now engaged upon the care of private pupils. You must realise that this will involve me in a considerable outlay of funds, as the fees for residence and tuition in his country-house, which is commodious and well-appointed, run, I believe, to some ten guineas a week. But as I have already shouldered grave costs in sending you, alas in vain, to Leatherham, I suppose that I must shoulder my burden to the end.'

Sanguine burst into a flood of grateful protestation. He assured his grandfather that he deeply appreciated this kindness which he had so little deserved; he promised eagerly to make all possible

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amends for his past and heinous offence by dutiful attention to his new tasks and by loyal obedience to Mr. Pilfer in all that should be enjoined.

Mr. Pilfer lived in a large house in the English midlands called Whipstock Hall. It enabled him, so convenient was its site, to hunt with three packs of hounds, to which end he kept many horses, as well as a housekeeper and staff. The horses came first in his estimation, for he continually rode them and continually discussed their merits, their chances in steeple-chase races, and their saleable value. Sanguine very soon discovered that his tutor would not prove to be an oppressive task-master or a strict scrutineer of morals. Pilfer made a theoretical point, as he explained over a friendly glass, of never interfering with his pupils and in practice he showed not the slightest disposition to do so. The amount of liberty conceded at Whipstock Hall reminded Sanguine of his dear Doctor Junck-Vorwarts, however different the philosophy of life expressed by the latter. It was Pilfer's opinion that students in an establishment such as his were of an age to look after themselves; their necessary books were provided (at their parents' charges) and they had ample space, leisure, and tranquillity in which to peruse them. If, with such ample opportunity to exercise their

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native wit, they could not apply themselves through sloth or could not cope with their examinations through stupidity, then their lack of will and intelligence obviously rendered them unworthy of Mr. Pilfer's guidance and tuition. He counselled them to industry, he provided scope for industry, he informed them with perfect accuracy about the direction which industry must take and with that he left them to it while he attended the sales of horses or the death of foxes. Meanwhile he saw to it that three good meals a day were ready in his dining-room; of these, when present, he showed his approval by partaking very heartily.

How Pilfer had reached this office of tutor was a matter for some rumour, not altogether kindly. The general opinion of his past career maintained that he had once been Bursar of Chastity College and was thus responsible for managing the College's land and property. Apparently he had been, with all his gifts, inadequate to the task, admittedly a menial one. Once supposed to have attained a considerable proficiency in classics, he failed, in later life, as an arithmetician. There was some confusion about figures and Pilfer was asked to retire. The College, it was said, had treated him very decently on the score of that corporate loyalty for which its members were

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everywhere renowned. 'We are bound together by indissoluble ties.' exclaimed the Master when, amid cheers that made the College Hall re-echo, he founded that sodality of Old Chastites which became affectionately known as the Chastity Girdle. Accordingly, Pilfer, who had been one of the Girdle's gayest chairmen, was not asked to abandon the sodality when he was tactfully deflected from his control of the College moneys. With the considerable capital which happened to be at his disposal, he forthwith purchased that gentleman's sporting estate with adequate stabling and paddocks known as Whipstock Hall and there combined the coping of horses with admitting to his charge and tuition suitable young men whose indiscretions or incorrigible ignorance had caused a gap between their school-life and their admission to the University of Oxford. To keep them from temptation was beyond his powers, for, though Whipstock lay remote from the lure of city life, his pupils usually owned motor-bicycles and could thus prosecute their social contacts in the surrounding villages. Pilfer administered certain warnings about the hazards to health and happiness inherent in such expeditions and charged them to behave with caution if they could not behave with restraint. His youths were obedient to his counsel

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and avoided the grosser forms of scandal. So far alimony had only been paid on two occasions. Within the gates of Whipstock Hall there was little scope for lusty natures, save in the way of humorous badinage and discussion of the facts of life. For Pilfer was unmarried, retained a toothy harridan of eighty as his housekeeper, and would employ no woman in his service who was not ill-favoured and antique. It was alleged by the more knowledgeable of his students that he himself kept a trollop in London, but that is no business of ours, as it was certainly none of theirs.

Sanguine did not much esteem the conversation of his fellow-students nor did he share their pleasure in the company of those village sluts whom it was the young pride of their manhood, to ogle, dandle, and mislead. His grandfather had especially charged him to keep a high ideal of womanhood and not to sully his virtue by a search for premature enlightenment. It would be time enough to broaden his knowledge of life when he had reached the estate of man or at least of an undergraduate. Sanguine, who always believed what he was told, accordingly vowed himself to a scrupulous purity of life, at least until such time as he became a member of Chastity College and so enjoyed the fullness and the freedom of an adult

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status. Accordingly he found himself the most serious and bookish of his fellows at Whipstock Hall. He read studiously in the volumes commended, but not expounded, by Mr. Pilfer and he was much despised as a smug fellow and a sweat-gut by the less industrious and more riotous youths, who cared but little for their books and far preferred to wander about the countryside. When Sanguine inquired what they found to amuse them in the damp copses and muddy fields, they professed a passion for nature-study and laughed very heartily at his disinclination to join with them in their twilight excursions; at that hour of the day, they said, the birds would be feeding and it was most easy to examine and classify the species.

Mr. Pilfer, being of a kindly nature, took pity on the loneliness of Sanguine and praised him for his resolute attention to his books. It gratified Mr. Pilfer to have a studious pupil, not because he was strongly addicted to study himself, but because an occasional success in the examination room reflected credit upon the educational methods of Whipstock Hall, and could be cited to prospective clients as a triumph for the tutorial technique employed by Mr. Pilfer. Realising that Sanguine would pass into Oxford without fail, whereas the other lads would scarcely creep by a

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subterfuge into Cambridge, and opining that his solitary pursuit of knowledge might leave him depressed in body and mind he took our hero to his library, as it was called owing to the large array of Turf Guides and other sporting almanacs upon its shelf, and suggested that a day's sport would not come amiss.

'Sir, you are extremely kind,' said Sanguine, 'but I am no horseman.' For he feared that Mr. Pilfer intended to mount him on one of the spirited animals in the stable and set him caracoling at fences, ditches, and the like, for which exercise he had no appetite whatever.

'Do not fear,' answered his tutor. 'I would not risk my valuable horses with such a raw jockey as yourself. What I propose is a little shooting. For it is now October and our pheasants are ripe to be roused and berattled.'

'Alas,' said Sanguine, 'I am as little expert with the gun as with the saddle.'

'Never mind,' said Mr. Pilfer. 'This will be a good and easy approach to one of the manliest of British Sports. For the pheasants, which you have doubtless seen for yourself in the coverts round the house, are far from wild. Indeed, if you were to walk up to them with a gun, they would regard you as some kindly fellow who has come to feed

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them and approach close to your feet, for we have nourished them carefully through the summer and they have charitable notions of the human race. Whereupon you discharge your pellets instead of corn and give the birds a very sharp surprise.'

'But is not that a brutal and un-English thing to do?' inquired Sanguine, who had scarcely conceived a day's sport in this wise.

'So some would say,' responded Mr. Pilfer. 'But I do not agree. The lessons of life cannot be learned without suffering and sacrifice. It is the same for birds as for men and these silly pheasants can only be taught wisdom in a hard school. If Nature has omitted to endow them with intelligence, surely it is our duty to remedy her callousness and make good the defect.'

Sanguine, his scruples overcome by so straight a process of logic, immediately agreed that Mr. Pilfer was taking a most humane and sensible view.

'Furthermore,' continued his tutor, 'it is my duty to make the birds, now so tame, a trifle wild. For there are other sportsmen coming later in the year who desire to have some real test of marksmanship. To that end the birds must rise before they are reached and fly fast, far, and high. This

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they will never do unless we have previously startled them and taught them, by some barking of dogs, shouting of men, volleying of guns, and assault of lead to beware of human approach. Therefore, Sanguine, we must let fly at them, even if it offers small excitement to ourselves, in order to ensure agreeable sport for others. And these others, I may say, have paid for their pleasure and so deserve to have all most properly prepared for their entertainment. I conduct in the neighbouring woods and fields what is called a Syndicate Shoot for the benefit of London gentlemen who can only leave their sedentary labours for an occasional day of manly exercise. The members - there are five - pay me a hundred pounds each, for which I undertake to stock the coverts with pheasants, to nourish the young birds into a strong yet succulent condition, and to provide the members with the fun of pelleting the fowl on each Saturday throughout the late autumn and the early winter. As you have noticed, I have fulfilled my part of the bargain so well that the woods and fields are teeming with pheasants in rare trim. So many are there that they must be thinned out, lest disease fall upon them; so tame are they that they must be scared into a wilder state in order to give my London gentry a more sporting target,

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For a few days therefore we must proceed with this thinning and scaring in order that I may fulfil my obligation to the members of the Syndicate.'

Sanguine naturally agreed that it was nothing less than a duty to have the shoot in good order for the five gentleman who had paid a hundred pounds apiece. He thanked Mr. Pilfer cordially for the explanation and for the opportunity of to-morrow's apprenticeship in the exercise of shooting, in which he hoped that he would soon be proficient. And indeed, when they sallied out on the following day, Sanguine discovered himself to be a considerable gunman. For the innocent pheasants sat gaping at Mr. Pilfer and himself or even ambled towards them in expectation of a tit-bit. It was easy to destroy them and destroyed they were in numbers most impressive. When the noise and smoke at last frightened them and taught them the wisdom of a hasty departure, Mr. Pilfer, who had a shrewd eye and a quick hand for the exercise, continued to bring them crashing to the ground, while Sanguine accounted for at least a few more. A couple of dogs quickly recovered the dead bodies, of which there was soon a most pleasing aggregation. Since, on the next day and the day after, they continued this

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unselfish task of making ready the sport for the Syndicate, the number of dead pheasants rose rapidly and the game larder was filled with the rich-plumed and gaudy corpses.

'What,' asked Sanguine, 'do you intend to do with all this meat?'

Mr. Pilfer replied that they would eat freely of the bag themselves and that the residue were being dispatched to London for sale. It was now, he observed, early October, a most seasonable time for marketing, for pheasants were not shot in any quantity till November. The poulterers were therefore eager to have quick delivery and would pay far more generous prices than were likely to obtain later in the year. He had two men at work dispatching them to the capital and altogether he seemed most delighted with the business.

'The birds,' he said, 'are now suitably shy of man's presence and also discreetly thinned. We have protected them from the ravages of disease which is caused by over-population of the woods and from the consequent struggle for what scanty food the fields afford. Birds, my dear Sanguine, are like men. Both pursue the pleasure of love and do not count the reckoning. They breed beyond Nature's ability to nourish. Some letting of blood is often salutary for both and what seems

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to be the cruel is, in fact, the kindlier way.' With which opinions, Sanguine, believing what he was told, most dutifully agreed.

A few days later one Wilkins, a groom at Whipstock Hall, was taken by night in the act of poaching, being discovered with a silent gun, a net, and the bodies of six dead pheasants. He was haled before the magistrates, of whose quality Mr. Pilfer was a leading member. Mr. Pilfer took the occasion to deliver in court a most vigorous censure upon this abominable traffic in other men's property and spoke with such heat and at such length that the other justices became tired of the case. Mr. Pilfer then spoke, as the accused's employer, on the accused's behalf, mentioning the plight to which an innocent wife and family would be reduced if Wilkins went to gaol. He had hitherto been an exemplary servant; the offence, Mr. Pilfer knew, was heinous, but, considering the circumstance, would not a fine suffice, and, since the man was poor, a small fine at that? His colleagues were weary of the business and, reflecting that the owner of the stolen birds was himself pleading for the thief, dismissed the man Wilkins with some small charges to pay and a strict admonition to behave himself more orderly in future.

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Now Sanguine, to tell the truth, had been not a little astonished at the extent to which the pheasants had been thinned for their own good and he wondered whether the members of the Syndicate would appreciate the service which, together with Mr. Pilfer, he had rendered to their sport. On their first visit the five gentlemen from London, expecting to shoot some hundred pheasants, accounted only for seventeen; on their second visit three were dispatched, and on their third visit none at all. This was not because they were bunglers with their fowling-pieces or because there was a scarcity of beaters to drive the birds towards them. A horde of peasants, men and boys, always scrambled for this occupation since they earned in this simple manner far more money than would have been paid them for a day's work in their usual toil upon the land. Also they received a free dinner and a pint of beer. The reason why the Syndicate shot no birds was because neither they nor the beaters saw any birds. Indeed it seemed unlikely that they would see another pheasant that year, so thoroughly had Sanguine and Mr. Pilfer done their preparatory work. Thus five hundred pounds had been paid for ten brace of pheasants and, however gratifying it may be to watch such lordly creatures crash to earth in answer to a well-

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directed shot, the sport may be deemed unpleasantly sumptuous when each pair of victims is rated at some fifty pounds of expense. There were also the beaters to pay. Moreover, the sportsmen had driven all the way from London, bringing with them a troop of ladies to watch the brilliance of their marksmanship. These had risen early in the morning and had then sat on shooting-sticks in a downpour of rain and had seen nothing but lifeless and deserted woods; it was small wonder that tempers were high.

It was only to be expected, therefore, that the shooting gentlemen would complain to the organiser of the Syndicate, Mr. Pilfer. After the third day's barren enterprise the five sportsmen and their companions marched in rare indignation to Whipstock Hall and there called loudly on Mr. Pilfer to explain and to give them their money back. Mr. Pilfer met them on his doorstep, a brave action since the gentlemen, cheated of their expected targets in the woods, were in a mood to pull the trigger at anything or anyone, not least at Mr. Pilfer. Sanguine, leaning from the casement of his bed-chamber, heard his tutor explain most lucidly that considerable misfortunes had occurred. Certainly all the pheasants had been reared and released, according to the contract. But heavy

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storms of rain in the early summer had swamped many of the nests and drowned many of the chicks. First it had been too wet, then too hot, then too wet again. Altogether a fatal year for pheasants, whom even his own skilled hand could not safeguard against the appalling vicissitudes of the English climate. Then there had been a serious epidemic of poaching, a scandal which he, both as a landlord and a magistrate, had done his very best to put down. At this point he read them a verbatim report of his stirring oration on the villainy of poaching, which he had delivered in court over the head of Wilkins. Fatigued by the excess of explanations after being outraged by the scarcity of pheasants, the five shooters angrily demanded to have their payments returned; but they were politely informed that they had no legal claim, that the Syndicate had struck an unfortunate year, and that next autumn, if they would be so good as to subscribe again, Mr. Pilfer could guarantee them a really good bag. This answer so incensed them that one, in the stir of his passion, let off his gun by accident; by great good fortune no one was killed, but a few stray pellets lodged in the flanks of his lady-friend, who screamed as though like to die and had to be carried to a cottage hospital while a surgeon was summoned to extract

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the tiny but torturing missiles from their point of rest where they were causing more embarrassment than danger. The event was not at all unwelcome to Mr. Pilfer, who feared that he might house a few of the pellets himself before he was rid of his turbulent Syndicate.

When all had departed, Mr. Pilfer summoned Sanguine and said to him: 'You see the eternal ingratitude of the dissatisfied customer. We did our best for those thankless fellows. We could not alter the weather and we could not be forewarned against the poachers, but at least we prevented the over-crowding which is the most pestiferous of all conditions for game-birds. We had the pheasants thinned out and wild, the estate in perfect condition. And here, in the vulgar cursing of these impercipient louts, is all our reward. Take warning, Sanguine, take warning. Never hope to be thanked nor even understood.' And with that he turned away to chat with the man Wilkins, who had apparently come to receive some money and was promptly paid by his master with a smile.

Sanguine, not a little puzzled by all these happenings, thought them over for many hours in the intervals of conning his academic tasks. At last he said to one of his fellow-students:

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'Is it possible that Mr. Pilfer is not quite a White Man?' (He had recently extended his vocabulary at the talking-pictures.)

At this all the company of pupils laughed very merrily.

'What things you do say!' said the lad whom he had addressed. 'Fancy you putting such ideas into our heads. My dear Sanguine, Pilfer is so white that nobody will notice him in Heaven.'

And who was Sanguine to doubt a comrade's word or to discredit an assurance made with such authority?

## CHAPTER VII

IN WHICH THE HERO ENTERS CHASTITY COLLEGE,  
WHERE HE MEETS THE LAST ENCHANTMENTS OF THE  
MIDDLE AGES AND AN ENGAGING SPECIMEN OF THIS  
ONE

**S**ANGUINE'S introduction to the manly sport of shooting, as practised by the ingenious Mr. Pilfer, did not so far interfere with his proper business as to endanger his success in the halls of examination. He read the orators and poets of the classical age and found much that was of interest in the official religions of the Greeks and Romans. The habits and sports of the gods and goddesses he deemed especially amusing. Indeed, he thought, the study of such doings is a curious way of entrance to a college called Chastity. Meanwhile, his fellow-pupils pursued their study of Nature and Mr. Pilfer dealt suitably, on horseback or as marksman, with the lesser members of God's creation.

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Mr. Pilfer was certainly a commendable tutor in his eagerness not to muddle or harass a young scholar with irrelevant or oppressive instruction. No pastor or master was ever more careful to avoid the imposition of examinational strain, whose hazards the pedagogues of this humane epoch are so eager to avert. Sanguine, being thus free from pressure to work, had no occasion to be sulky, idle, or rebellious. He liked the company at Whipstock so little that he found less pleasure in the jollity and lustihood of youth than in reading such fusty academic matter as the way of the gods with the maidens. Indeed, the circumstances of his life all drove him towards zeal for scholarship, which proved both the value of Mr. Pilfer's method and the reasonable nature of his fees. Sanguine might have been taught far more for half the money, but that which is taught is not necessarily learned, a truth insufficiently considered in the high quarters of scholasticism.

So, in due time, he satisfied his questioners and was admitted, in the following October, to membership of Chastity College in the University of Oxford. Chastity, though not in recent years the foundation most forward in scholarship or renowned for the eagerness of its members to live up to the high challenge of its name, has a noble

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aspect and is much regarded by visitors to the city. It occupies a convenient site at the corner of Foul Passage, where its neighbours are Soberness College and Temperance Hall. It has buildings of the thirteenth century and nothing has been added since the fifteenth; during the period of its construction, as we know, England was the merriest of lands, uncontaminated by the appalling imprisonment of the soul which followed later when the English were permitted to read the Bible in their own language. It was, above all, an Age of Faith, in which the protesting spirits were not yet licensed to burn the orthodox as merrily as the orthodox burned them, a form of villainy that was soon to follow the impious revolt against Rome. In this epoch of Universal Merriment and True Religion, as we are often informed, English architecture reached its pinnacle of achievement and, since Chastity was then erected, it is naturally a source of black type and admiring asterisks in all the more intelligent guide-books. It was conveyed to Sanguine by his guide that he was doubly blessed to become a member of such a corporation and the inmate of such historic walls. No sooner had Sanguine driven up to the front door and been escorted to his allotted rooms than he realised the exceptional nature of his privilege. For the

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passages were more tortuous, the stairways narrower and darker, and the rooms themselves lower and more tenebrous than any he had beheld in his life. The chamber in which he was to pursue his studies had no windows save two slits in the wall and his escort had to kindle a lucifer in order to introduce him to his new home.

'This,' said he, 'is the oldest stairway in the college. It is a great privilege to have rooms here; doubtless you are related to an Old Chastity Man and have some special influence.'

Sanguine immediately understood how kindly his grandfather had worked on his behalf.

'There are one or two things to notice,' continued the guide. 'So old are the stairs that two of them are missing and it is naturally against the principles of the college to abuse so rare a specimen of thirteenth-century architecture with any vulgar modern restorations. Indeed, many Americans, who have sprained an ankle on these steps, have esteemed such damage to be the greatest privilege of their whole European tour. Wounds of this order, they remark, patient and sage amid their pain, are sacred. Another point to notice is the lowness of the door, but that you have already observed.' Sanguine had just dashed his skull with some violence against its upper beam, and

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was contriving with that confidence in narrated fact, which was his most singular and attractive characteristic, to regard the bruise as a blessing, the agony as an inspiration.

'I have only to add,' said the guide, 'that the College authorities have yielded so far to modern notions of convenience as to insert gas-pipes, both for purposes of heating kettles and of illumination. The stairs, naturally, are not lit. It would be an outrage to an architectural masterpiece to make any alterations to their fabric. But you will observe a gas-jet over that table and with its aid you will be able to read and write - even on the darkest days.'

Naturally Sanguine set out to unpack his books and commodities with the liveliest pleasure. He was enjoying such privilege as rarely falls to any young man and he vowed to make the most of so notable an opportunity. No sooner were his goods bestowed, than there was a sound of falling outside and he proceeded to discover its origin, hoping inwardly that perhaps some beautiful American maiden had tripped at the missing stairway and was in need of succour. So dark was it without that he could not immediately discern the nature of the victim, but he was soon disappointed to hear a male voice swearing most

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profanely. When Sanguine had helped the fellow to stagger to his feet again and had brought him to the light of his gas-jet, he received a very considerable surprise.

'Why,' said he, 'if it is not my old friend, Stephen Grub!'

'You are right,' said Grub bitterly. 'I came up yesterday to this pestilential hovel and have been allotted rooms immediately above you. I believe that they are even darker and fouler than your own.'

'But they are of the thirteenth century,' answered Sanguine with some indignation, 'and, I am told, one of the principal gems of Oxford.'

'Sanguine,' retorted Grub, 'you always were an owlish simpleton and always will be, I think. If these rooms were appointed for the poorer classes and charged at some few shillings a week, there would be an outcry at the villainy and extortion; inspectors would be sent for and the premises condemned as an insanitary slum. But, because this is Oxford and we are dispatched here at a charge of many pounds a week, the rooms are deemed a privilege to dwell in and a gem to look upon. Has it yet occurred to you, my dear simple Sanguine, that, should you feel a stirring within you, there is no place of relief within a hundred

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yards and that these far-flung privies also are of the best thirteenth-century style? As for baths, the College will not admit them within a radius of two hundred and fifty yards, which distance is, of course, all under the open sky and exposed to the bitterest winds of winter. You must always remember, my dear Sanguine, that Chastity was built when English architecture was at its pinnacle and to temper its severities to our needs is not at all the inclination of its Warden and Fellows, who are, I have discovered, mostly very ancient and quite unused to such recent discoveries as plumbing.'

Grub was speaking only the truth. Chastity is as Chastity was; no impious hand has been laid upon its primal beauty or has sought to scale the deposits left by medieval damp on its time-honoured walls. One of its classical tutors, while investigating the Cretan civilisation of the second millenium before Christ, had discovered the use by these people of things called drains which aroused in his mind, naturally prone to radicalism, a plan for reforming the thirteenth-century closets still used in the College. His ridiculous proposals were swept aside by the governing body with clamorous indignation. The Senior Fellow arrived from his home upon Boar's Hill, whither

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a rheumatic tendency had driven him at the age of eighty-two - now six winters past - and poured a stream of withering invective on the impudent idea. Was not Oxford, he asked, to be a quiet enclave in a noise-tormented world? In this hideous age they had to suffer the savage roar of motor-vehicles without. Were they to increase the plague within their historic home of peaceful study by permitting water-pipes to gurgle and taps to drip and splash? Could they permit the hallowed calm of the students, as they coned their books, to be cruelly shattered by the pulling of plugs? There was a place for all things and the place for pipes and plugs and plumbers was not in Chastity College, which, cleaving to the ideas of its founder and to the tradition of its many famous sons, had, alone in this degenerate Oxford, maintained its loyalty to the exemplary equipment of earth-closets, which had stood through seven centuries, occasionally renewed by the skilled and loving hand of the college carpenter, but in spirit, purpose, and conception still the same. Half the cause of constipation, he averred, was inadequacy of exercise; since the young men of Chastity, on obeying natural call, had to walk some distance for their relief, the health of the College was notably good and the curse of costiveness the more

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thoroughly averted. Before such rhetoric the cold-blooded and heretical proposal was angrily swept aside. In vain did the reformer urge that young men would no longer pay like dukes to live like cottars and that most of the College accommodation was no better than the dens and attics of a City slum. He was shouted into silence and even hustled from the Senior Common Room by vigorous old codgers, who demanded that such a creature should be drowned in his own pipes and conduits.

'Well,' said Grub, 'we must make the best of it and endeavour to retain our health and spirits even in such an odious warren as we are forced to inhabit.'

'I have no fears about that,' answered Sanguine. 'For if the quarters are indifferent and the air scant or tainted, yet the moral atmosphere of the College, so my grandfather, an Old Chastity Man, has told me, should exercise a most bracing effect upon our minds and consciences. But, tell me, Grub, did you remain at Leatherham after the sad misadventure which caused my removal? Or was your own participation in our device, so loyally planned for the school's sake, discovered?'

'No,' replied Grub, 'I was not caught. But my father, horrified by the stain on the school's

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honour, withdrew me, protesting bitterly to Mr. Stumper Sloggett that he would never have any dealings with an academy, one of whose pupils had cheated at cricket. He foresaw complete ruin of my character if I stayed in such a place; he had furthermore decided that my intellectual advancement was slow and he accordingly sent me to study foreign tongues in the home of a repulsive French professor with a large beard and a gross appetite. For the dullness of this hairy dotard's lessons I found recompense by doing a mischief to his daughter, an enterprise which yielded only a moderate sensual pleasure, since she was ugly as her father, and, like him, smelled rankly of the garlic which befouled all their dishes and percolated through the pores of their skins. But the escapade gave me the satisfaction of victory, which is as dear to some men in the field of love as to others on the field of cricket.'

Tor me,' said Sanguine, 'such experience has yet to come. For though my comrades at Mr. Pilfer's, whither I went to gain a classical proficiency, were much given to this mischief, as you call it, and would go merrily wenching in the copses in weather litde suited to the sport, I was determined to enter Chastity College in a state proper to its name.'

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'Well, that will not long endure.' replied Grub with a smile. 'We shall soon bring you to man's estate. But meanwhile there are several dangers to be averted. One is the obligation to row in a boat.'

'But that my grandfather particularly wished me to do. He deemed it a most excellent discipline and even suggested that it might be a pleasure too.'

'Well, Sanguine, if you are wise, you will certainly avoid it. For, once engaged in this exercise, there is no escape. Day after day you will be herded to the dank and draughty river, even when there is a mizzle of snow, there to perform the dreary and degrading task of oarsmanship. You said just now that you had attained classical proficiency. Has it never occurred to your mind that the Greeks, who are held up to us as exemplars in all things except, perhaps, their curious preoccupation with pederasm, regarded rowing as a sedentary occupation of an oafish kind and so very wisely put the burden of propelling boats entirely on their slaves and captives? Yet we English, in this twentieth century which so kindly permits all activity to be evaded by pressing buttons, continue to glorify this miserable drudgery of oars and must chafe both our hands and our posteriors in

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the senseless occupation of pushing through the water boats that are of no utility and could, if useful, be propelled at a dozen times the speed by a few pennyworth of petrol. This cult of rowing is as offensive to my notions of logic as it is noxious to the victim's skin. If races they must have, reason suggests the classical model of recourse to slaves. Let each College go into the poorer parts of the town and hire some lusty knaves to do their rowing instead of carting stone or lounging at the doors of taverns. Professionalism has now conquered nearly all our sport: and, I think, rightly. For surely, if so dismal a game as cricket or so painful a game as football must be played, the prudent course is to charter some paid experts to undertake these labours. They do it better and are kept from becoming through lack of employment, a charge upon the public purse. But in the case of rowing, which is the most monotonous and vexatious of all the drudgeries which are sentimentally glorified as sport, the block-headed English refuse to hire professionals. Instead, in a state which can only be defined as masochistic frenzy, they insist on moiling about the water themselves and even upon fasting in order to moil the better. I, for one, am resolved to escape this ridiculous imposition on

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my time and strength, and I assure you, Sanguine, that they will never have me embarked upon their cold and muddy river.'

'But I had understood,' said Sanguine, 'that to row is a primary duty to the College and that a man would stand in poor esteem should he refuse to play his part.'

'That is true. Moreover, the louts and bullies who have this matter in their charge may even try to compel us with violence to take an oar. But I am ready to outwit them, for they cannot compel a sick man and for weaklings they have no need.'

'But you are in all ways healthy.'

'Do you not remember,' said Grub, 'that in order to mitigate the pains of chastisement at Leatherham we retailed to our less fortunate fellows an anodyne purloined from my father's store of drugs? Having heard in advance of this pestilent obligation to push oars through water, I availed myself of another small phial whose contents, when swallowed, have the most astonishing results. This potion is given to remedy certain diuretic ailments, but in healthy folk it produces symptoms of no danger, yet most perplexing to the ordinary doctor. One micturates freely and with a purple stream. The pulse beats high. The heart palpitates. But only for a period of

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twelve hours. After that, all is normal. I propose that we do both medicine ourselves with this fluid and hurriedly seek a physician in the town. It were as well for each of us to select a different medico. They will certify us to be infirm of heart, much disturbed in other parts, and therefore totally unfit for this exhausting imbecillity of rowing.'

Sanguine protested that such practice was deceitful and unworthy, pointing out that he was a well-grown fellow and might drive a powerful oar to the greater glory of his College, whose interests he wished to serve. But Grub quickly countered his argument by demonstrating the impossibility of combining study with the service of the river. He insisted that rowing men were so fatigued by nightfall that they could do nothing but riot. Books became insufferable to men so weary. Instead, they caroused, lit bonfires, and danced and roared about the quadrangle. After a year or two of this exercise, so he understood, a man was fit for nothing but drinking, swearing, and drabbing. He inquired Sanguine's destination in life and, when told it was the Church, he laughed very heartily and said that the matter was determined. Nobody intended for a career of piety could begin as a rowing-man, for such

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apprenticeship would make study and virtue equally impossible. Therefore it was Sanguine's bounden duty to take a draught from the phial, wait for the curious results, proceed to a doctor, and receive a certificate of manifest invalidity.

Before such reasoning Sanguine had no course but to surrender. He realised his duty and drank from the phial as was directed. Not long after he found himself gurgitating and palpitating strangely. The colourful prophecy also came abundantly true. He sped into the streets, crying 'A Doctor, A Doctor' and was quickly driven by some compassionate fellow to a physician, who was frankly confounded by the display of his symptoms and, on payment of the usual fee, delivered to Sanguine a certificate of his infirmity, as well as certain salves for his cure. Meanwhile Grub had called, in similar distress, upon another of the craft and had received a similar document.

That night when a very burly fellow, the Captain of the Boats, called upon Grub and Sanguine to command their services upon the river, he was much surprised to be confronted by these two, each bearing papers of like testimony to their ugly and dangerous ailments.

'Good heavens,' said the fellow, 'some very strange water might pass under the bridges were

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we to enlist such fellows as you for the Boats.' Thereat he left them hurriedly, fearing to be infected with their plague.

'We have opened our academic careers with singular good fortune,' cried Grub in high delight. 'Now we have the leisure to go about our proper business and you are like to become a clergyman far quicker than if you had been caught in these toils of oarsmanship.'

Sanguine, who always believed what he was told, foresaw with satisfaction his rapid progress to a suit of reverend black. .

## CHAPTER VIII

### IN WHICH THE HERO CONTINUES YET CHASTITY COLLEGE AND FAILS TO SATISFY

THUS released from attendance at the Boats, Sanguine settled down to his studies, for which a strict course was prescribed by his tutor. This gentleman always commanded his pupils to read ten books where one would suffice, knowing that, if ten were ordered, one, at most, might be read. Were he to suggest one only, nothing at all would be perused. Such was his interpretation of youthful tendency, based on a considerable experience of undergraduate life. But he had reckoned without the obedient and trusting nature of our hero, who immediately endeavoured to read all the volumes put upon his list and so befuddled his mind with the process that his tutor deemed him to be a stupid and lazy fellow, incapable of application.

Sanguine also attended all the lectures to which he was bidden, noticing with some surprise that

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the audiences for these dwindled rapidly after the first two or three sessions. 'Perhaps,' he thought, 'these absentees are so well instructed already that they regard sitting and scribbling here as time and energy wasted. Doubtless they are working privately instead and to their great advantage. But I, alas, am not so well grounded and I shall faithfully keep my place and copy down whatever I am told.' This he did, hour after hour, with the result that his head and body began to ache, his mental confusion was intensified, and his handwriting was reduced by the vain effort to report the whole of each hour's discourse to a state of gross illegibility, from which it never properly recovered. Thus his rooms were soon piled with note-books which he could never decipher, and he began at last to wonder whether his tutor's orders about reading and lectures were indeed for the best.

Noticing one day that Grub either missed the lectures altogether, at the risk of a reprimand, or else sat and yawned, recording scarce a word, he inquired of his friend how he hoped to face his examinations in due course. Grub replied that he knew his own business best, but that Sanguine really should be warned against the follies of an immoderate zeal.

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'These lectures,' he averred, 'are so much fiddle-faddle. All the men who deliver them have put the same matter down in books. Why then should we sit on hard seats and copy, with infinite labour, what we can read in a tenth of the time at our own ease? The system is an elaborate piece of hocus-pocus. It gives these instructors of ours an air of doing something, and ourselves also a look of diligence. If there were none of this solemn humbug, the outside world would say that nothing of value is being done here. Accordingly we have to waste our time and weary our hands to impress the ignorant creatures who criticise the University. But I am not to be bullied into such a futile practice. Just as I regret the crass folly of pulling oars to the detriment of my skin and the neglect of my intellectual faculties, so do I refuse to accumulate a roomful of unreadable notes, when the whole matter is better summarised in print. The lecturing system, my dear Sanguine, which necessitates this idiotic scribbling of what is already in books, is like the architecture and the sanitation of our College; it belongs to those merry ages when printing was either unknown or a slow and costly mystery. As our College refuses to admit the invention of plumbing, so does the University refuse to admit

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the invention of printing. Accordingly these tutors of ours must mount 3 dais and harangue us till their throats are parched, which, moreover, they do very ill, while we must sit copying until the cramp consumes us and then read, if we can, the scribbles we have made. I, for my part, will have no part in such a witless drudgery and, if you are wise, you will offer the same resistance to an absurd conventional discipline.'

'On the other hand,' answered Sanguine, 'to attend and do nothing-and one must, it seems, attend occasionally to avoid a penalty - must be as wearisome as to attend and record the lecture.'

'My mind to me a kingdom is,' said Grub airily. 'Besides, of the many young women who attend our sessions from the Sister Colleges, there is one at least whom it is pleasant to observe.'

'I have had no time as yet for such by-play,' answered Sanguine severely. 'But if you really counsel me to reduce my labours, I might begin to regard my fellow-students the more.'

'I should certainly do so,' Grub replied, 'since the contemplation of Beauty is a primary element of the humaner studies which we are sent hither to pursue. Also you should read fewer of the

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prescribed books. You only bemuse yourself by so much industry.'

Obedient as ever, Sanguine abandoned his diligence at lectures and read only one book when ten were ordered. His tutor was immediately struck by his progress and praised him warmly for his improved intelligence and shrewder comprehension of the subjects appointed for his devotion. Sanguine was the more convinced of Grub's wisdom in the affairs of life and resolved to believe, more fervently than ever, in all that his companion told him. There could be little doubt that Grub was accurate in his suggestion that the contemplation of Beauty or Pure Form was essential to a philosophic career (all the most weighty authors affirmed it) and Grub, it seemed, was no less correct in his practical hint that the passing of the lecture-hour would be at once more rapid and more rewarding if the eye were not confined to the desk. Grub had mentioned but one of the women-students as eye-worthy; in Sanguine's less expert view the range of vision need not be so straitly defined. He respected, of course, the opinion of his senior in judgment and experience, but he reserved his freedom to be more generous in admiration.

There was one young person of a striking aspect

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whose attention was but rarely directed to her copying. Her glance never remained long upon the scarcely articulate wise-acre who lectured to them on the mutual antipathies of certain splenetic tribes in the fifth century before Christ. She scanned the College Dining Hall, in which the address was given amid the distressing odours of last night's beer and gravy and of this morning's fish and bacon. It apparently preferred the visages of the living young to the portraits of Chastity's departed Benefactors, Wardens, and other Big-Wigs, who looked from the walls with all the wooden solemnity which incompetent painting can bestow. Not once, but several times, did Sanguine find himself returning this wayward and vivacious glance, until, nervous of appearing forward and provocative, he was reduced to a violent transcription of some passage which, for lack of context, had now no vestige of meaning.

As a result of diminishing his official studies Sanguine had more opportunity to read at large and to go about the town. He visited the local theatre and saw certain gay comedies in which it was not easy to discriminate the sexes. In Elizabethan times, he reflected, the parts of the women were enacted by boys; has there been, he asked himself, some strange reversal of custom

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which ordains that the parts of men shall now be played by women? In his excursions, however, to the talking-pictures, he discovered that such a reversal, if it existed at all, was not of general application. For in his opinion, the moral of the talking-pictures was plain, namely, that Nature had differentiated the sexes for all time and, what is more, that She had not done it for nothing. Attendance in these palaces implanted in him the strongest possible belief that Love moves in a mysterious way and always to a time-table. Chastity, though much and cruelly harassed, even in aeroplanes, would certainly endure for seventy-five minutes; it would then, with equal certainty, yield, but with every suggestion of proper matrimonial conditions. On the whole he preferred the talking-pictures to the plays, since the former left nothing in doubt.

Sanguine also held it to be an essential feature of his education that he should peruse the writing of his own time as well as of the ancient cultures. Naturally he chose such writing as had gained the highest praise. To find such volumes was not difficult since, by studying the advertisements of the publishers of books, he soon realised that all new books were certified, in short and pungent phrases, to be unquestionably magnificent. Thus,

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equipped with a list of some two dozen certified masterpieces, which had added incalculable glory to English letters, he applied for membership of a circulating library, approached the young woman who tended the shelves, showed her the roll of books which must be read if he were to have any share in the culture of the time, and was dumbfounded to be informed that she had not heard of any of them. If he wanted a nice book now she could recommend one called *Death in the Dust-bin*, in which she could descry no flaw of any kind. Otherwise he must wait while she ordered these works about whose indubitable success and universal appeal the publishers were so blithely confident. In due course he was supplied with all that he required and could set himself to investigate, with the aid of this witness, the aspect and ethics of that larger human society which he soon would enter.

So, what with his visits to the plays and pictures and what with his reading of these recommended novels, he soon derived some clear and confident opinions about the life which lay beyond the academic walls. It seemed, upon this testimony, that all young women were of large passion and small restraint and that they received with a ready welcome such invitations to adventure as

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would have been deemed by a previous age to reflect most rudely on their virtue. This society, of which he was the industrious reader and spectator, appeared to have much in common with that of the Greek gods where the giving and taking (without marriage) had earlier struck his fancy as a very gay, delightful traffic. But all that, he had opined, belonged to an ancient and a distant world; it was exceedingly strange and not a little exciting to learn that similar conditions prevailed upon the near, new earth.

Not content with assimilating the fiction of his period, Sanguine approached the philosophers and here he found still more cause for mental disturbance. For again the necessity for Chastity, which his grandfather had strictly impressed on him as the general obligation of a Christian youth and the special duty of a Chastity Man, was denied and even derided. It was conveyed to him that he could never achieve the Ultimate Sublimation of the Ego while living a life which denied a fundamental impulse. This information reminded him of the earlier days during which he had heard at the knees of his dear Dr. Junck-Vorwarts about the heinous folly of self-repression. The more he read, the more praise of incontinence did he light upon, until in the words of one deemed to be a

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Leader of Modern Thought, he found the startling intimation that, by coming to a woman in desire, he might be unified with God. The whole affair, with its curious theological assumptions, was by no means plain, since the majority of these authors held the poorest opinions of God or even dismissed Him altogether as a faded nuisance. Still, God or no God, there could be no question at all about the stunting and mutilating effects of that ascetic and self-denying existence, which had once been recommended to Sanguine as a Stainless Life. The more the poor fellow contemplated the fact of his own innocence, the more alarmed did he become about the state of his soul. Fortunately, he reflected, he did not lack desire and, if he lacked it, he could lay hands upon the remedy, since the College Chaplain, while addressing the newcomers at the beginning of the term, had admonished these young fellows that every glass of wine they took would strengthen the passions and weaken the will. He had only to order some bottles of the College port to cure reluctance or disability; the stomach, as he had already learned during one festive evening with Grub and some cronies of a like temper, this liquor might easily derange, but the feelings it would briskly stimulate. The trouble now was to find,

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amid the existing and stringent regulations of academic life, an easy and blameless opportunity for the necessary act of Sublimation and Self-Expression. If a man believed what he was told (and on this point the information was ample, consentaneous, and international) Sanguine was now existing in a perilous state of Inhibited Libido. As well might he shudder *in rigor mortis* as quiver in the grip of vitality denied. If he did not find immediate release, he would assuredly drag out a warped and wounded life or else, in some sort, explode. Passing hurriedly from volume to volume of the New Psychology and the Reformed Moralities, he suffered an agony of apprehension about the future of his Psyche. And who, having absorbed with full credence a similar course of tuition and being in like plight of innocence, would not have shared our hero's bitter storm of doubts and fears?

It is a deplorable fact of human nature that man, who will discourse so affably about his sins, is prone to shameful silence about his virtues. Especially is this true of sexual innocence, which, if it be a virtue, is carefully concealed by young men of Sanguine's age. His fellow-pupils at Mr. Pilfer's had boldly and extensively prattled of their Nature Study; Grub and his boon-companions at

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Chastity College were far from reticent about their adventures in pursuit of manhood's rights and pleasures. But Sanguine, abashed by his own innocence, had contributed nothing to these parleys and was furthermore unwilling to seek Grub's counsel about the ways and means of psychological release. Grub, no doubt, could have offered practical advice. But Sanguine, consumed by mawkish fears of ridicule, determined to go his own way.

Accordingly, during a lecture on the following day, he caught the vagabond eye of that miss whom he had frequently noted as a restless recipient of the classical culture. He smiled and she smiled. Summoning all his gallantry, Sanguine approached her at the close of the address and inquired whether she was at liberty to take some refreshment in a coffee-house. She was, she agreed, at liberty and they made for such a place where Sanguine, in a high state of nervous tremor, commanded the coffee and inquired her opinions of the lecturer and of the instruction which he imparted. She answered that she thought poorly of both, whereupon the conversation flowed more widely and more easily. Sanguine confessed his name and college and his friend did the same. She was Miss Daphne

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Flout, a Home Student who resided with her aunt, the relict of Philemon Flout, a deceased Professor of Divinity, in a desirable mansion of the northern suburb entitled Gothic Gables. Miss Flout expressed her dislike for the classics, consumed two cups of coffee and three cakes heavily charged with cream or some passable substitute, and disappeared upon her bicycle to the Gables, displaying, as she pedalled away, a very pretty turn of the ankle. At least, so Sanguine thought; but his experience in those matters was inconsiderable.

He returned to his rooms in an ecstasy. Miss Flout, in his opinion, was charming and congenial as well as exquisite to look upon. Grub, who had seen Sanguine disappear into the town with the girl, mocked him for his attachment to so dowdy a creature and Sanguine, greatly astonished by this judgment and much angered as well by the vulgarity of the phrase, protested that she was exquisite in mind and person. Grub mocked his Trout, as he rudely called her, and bitterly added that raw youngsters who grope for trout often catch minnows or are bitten by pike. But our ecstatic hero would hear none of this, turned away in a choler, and began to devise further meetings with his idol. And so it came

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about that they took coffee together once again. Sanguine turned the conversation to Psychology and Ethics, on which theme Miss Flout, although she had read but little, could talk with assurance. The friendship ripened from lecture to lecture and Sanguine deemed that the time would soon arrive for Sublimation. It was plain that Miss Flout favoured him; at any rate her appetite for coffee and cakes grew with what it fed upon and she never refused an invitation or even, when Sanguine was urgent, such small tokens of affection as his means would permit him to purchase. Once, after a presentation of this order, she called him a pet which heightened both his passion and his expectations. To her girl-friends she called him, in her unscholarly English, 'A Perfect Scream', but of that he remained happily ignorant.

As the end of his first term at Oxford was approaching Sanguine resolved that the hour for action was upon him. It was the custom of the undergraduates to visit London at this period in order to watch the annual encounter of the Oxford and Cambridge Football Teams and thereafter to celebrate the joys of victory or assuage the pains of defeat with banqueting and chambering in the gay parts of the city. Here was an excuse to visit the capital in freedom instead of returning to his

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grandfather's home, and why should not Miss Flout also find occasion for a trip to London? They would not, of course, dally with football-matches and conventional revels, but, seeking some peaceful refuge, they would dine off the rarest viands, observe the art of the theatre in its liveliest form, and then pluck love's young flower, thereby terminating their perilous inhibitions and doing a vast benefit to their health in mind and body. Rejoicing in so sweet a project but being timid of a vocal invitation, Sanguine sat down one evening and composed a letter to Miss Flout in which he expounded this device for their mutual pleasure and hygiene. Any store, he observed, would supply her with the semblance of a wedding-ring, while he could provide the essential quality and functions of a husband. Conversation had proved them to be mated in the spirit and now the time had come for a fuller communion. The teaching of the New Psychologists and the Reformed Moralities both gave encouragement to such a proposal. Sanguine xurther quoted largely from that Leader of Modern Thought who had found unity with the divine when he achieved unity with the opposite sex. He also added that he had no doubt of his dear one's response to such an invitation, since she was a woman of a

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free and open mind, unfettered by the ridiculous scruples of a by-gone age.

It was, beyond question, a most impressive epistle which he despatched to Gothic Gables, stylish, sincere, philosophic, and passionate. Such a document, thought Sanguine, as he gave it a last and careful revision, might have melted the heart of any maiden living in a sterner epoch and imbued with the strictest of principles. In such a period as this, when young people were prudently defeating the poisons of inhibition with the salve of libertarian conduct, its effect would surely be overwhelming. So he posted it in a mood of confident serenity and spent a very merry evening with Grub, strengthening the passions and weakening the will. As there was no outlet for their energy save their neighbours of Soberness College they baited these louts with the shafts of a loose tongue and with an assortment of missiles discharged from Sanguine's windows, whose slender size, while it averted the light of Nature, was equally apt in defeating the counter-throw of an enraged opponent.

Next morning Sanguine proceeded to the lecture-room in a state of high felicity. He arrived early and cast his eyes about the Hall. Imagine his chagrin when, five minutes after the

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lecturer had begun his familiar droning about the tedious brawls of the Greek cities, Miss Flout was still an absentee. Sanguine had never doubted that she would be there and would join him at coffee after the discourse, then to breathe in his ear the sweet word 'Yes'. Could it be that she was ill? His tortured mind, far removed from the lecturer and his theme, brooded upon the various plagues incident to that season of the year, the rheum, the nasal flux, the influenza. Was his idol now panting in some fever or shivering in the gripe of a catarrh? Returning distraught to his room, when the mournful hour was over, he pondered on the wisdom of communicating with the stern relict of Philemon Flout, whose attitude to young men, he had been warned, was chilly and remote.

There lay, however, on his table a note which bade him instantly attend the Warden of the College. To the Warden's House he therefore went and was at once introduced to this withered ancient whose every movement was announced by the violent creaking of his joints and sinews. Since, when others spoke to him, he continued to drown their voices by grinding his knuckle-joints the Warden of Chastity was indifferent company in conversation. When confronted with under-

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graduates this was of little moment, since he rarely permitted them to attempt response. He was aware that, during his sixty years of connection with the College in one office or another, their various generations had provided him with security, authority, and comfort of life, but gratitude was not a strong feature in his character and he regarded young men, on the whole, as a nuisance whose misdemeanours interrupted his lifelong study of the Categorical Imperative so dear to Immanuel Kant.

'You are Mr. Sanguine?' he asked sharply, peering through spectacles of a strange design. Our hero consented.

'You are on speaking terms with a Miss Flout, the niece of my old friend, Philemon Flout, now, alas, departed?'

Again Sanguine agreed.

'And you sent her this letter?' He waved Sanguine's composition before him.

'That is true.'

'A monstrous confewion. I had heard of you as a man of promise. You turn out to be only a seducer. If I remember rightly, your grandfather, an old friend of mine and an honoured member of this Foundation, had intended you for Holy Orders, a fact which makes your conduct blasphemous.'

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mous as well as blackguardly. You shall immediately leave the College whose honour you have betrayed with your infamous conduct. Furthermore, your name shall be blotted from our books and you shall never be admitted to that sodality of old Chastity Men, the Chastity Girdle. The College colours, of course, are denied to you. Be gone.'

'But, Warden,' cried Sanguine, whose head was in a sorry whirl, 'I did but act for the best. All the modern philosophers, whose works I have most carefully consulted, are agreed that the communion of the sexes is essential to a healthy life and the full, free, joyous expression of one's proper Self. They also hold that the Sublimation of the Ego can only be attained by liberation of the dominant Libido, which, in my case, was orientated towards the person of Miss Flout, for whom my regard was of the most hygienic kind. Believe me, sir, I can bring the books themselves to prove that in such a union of free souls, seeking a richer freedom, no guilt can possibly exist.'

The Warden, who had heard not a word of this owing to the furious rattle of his knuckle-joints as he fidgeted with Sanguine's letter, forbade him to say more. He explained that Miss Flout had shown the letter to her aunt in a state of moral

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indignation which was only to be expected in a virtuous girl. That old lady had threatened to inform the police if Sanguine did not immediately leave the University and the city of Oxford, since what he had written was an aspersion on her neice of the most infamous order and punishable by law. The Warden gave Sanguine twenty-four hours in which to remove himself and his property. If nothing more were seen or heard of him, the Warden could guarantee that the police would not be summoned. The College, naturally, did not wish such a scandal to go further. As for Sanguine's future, he imagined that there might be a place for such creatures, if penitent, in the more remote of our Crown Colonies.

Sanguine passed out into the quadrangle distraught beyond measure. Once more he had betrayed his benefactor. How could he confront his grandfather with the story of his disgrace? What could he do, how earn a living? From his attendance at the talking-pictures, he surmised that only in the Foreign Legion could such as he obtain a footing and the life in that body, as portrayed, had never attracted him. Then he reflected on the base treachery of Miss Flout and wondered from what motive she had acted in this cruel manner. Utterly beside himself he returned

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to his room and began to pack up his belongings in a torment of inconsolable grief.

In a few minutes Grub called to see him about a glass of sherry and, finding our hero well-nigh in tears, asked him the cause and heard the bitter story.

'I warned you,' said Grub, 'that those who grope for trout may be bitten by pike. If you had consulted me before, this would never have occurred. For I know these lecture-going women. They relish a coffee-cup flirtation and will take what you care to spend, but they are as nervous of the sport of love as they are enamoured of its jargon. No doubt this creature Flout was laughing at you all the time that you were wasting time and money on her. As for this psychological hocus-pocus with which you have stuffed your foolish brain, it is a great delight to the timid and the impotent -indeed I suspect it to be mainly written by people of this order-since they can find some relief in such thoughts and words for their own puny desires and their thwarted aspirations to be gallant, copulative folk. You, Sanguine, are a fine, lusty fellow and should leave all this to the weedy and the weaklings. Avoid the young women who turn this dreary science into lascivious day-dreams whose reality they dare not face.

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Scratch a woman of this free-spoken culture and you find a cowering prude. You have done so to your cost and I am heartily sorry that we must again part company. Probably I shall myself be evicted before long, for I have no relish for my studies here and no mind to live up to the honour of the College name. But remember this wherever you go, that it is dangerous to seek love with amateurs, as you have been doing with this odious little Flout. With the professionals of passion, you must be at some expense to amuse yourself and you stand some danger of contracting a murrain, both of which are evil necessities of the sport. But with the amateurs there is only such disappointment, timidity, and treachery as you have encountered. It is better in love, as in architecture, to build on certain, if expensive, ground. In any case there are compensations for your calamity. You will escape the tedium of further education in the classics, you will avoid the structural and sanitary defects incident to rooms in this warren, and you will be utterly forbidden to take Holy Orders, in whose uniform you would have appeared ludicrous and for whose offices you were totally unfitted. And so farewell for the present, my dear Sanguine, and bear in mind that there is much to console your present state.'

## CHAPTER IX

### IN WHICH OUR HERO IS REMOVED FROM THE HALLS OF DARKNESS TO THE WORLD OF LIGHT AND IS DAZZLED

**W**E have earlier stated of Sanguine that he not only put implicit faith in what he was told but managed, even during the most grievous and oppressive of his trials, to keep a good heart. Now, indeed, he had abundant reason for his despair and his equanimity was never more sorely tried. When Grub, having toasted Sanguine's future in a glass of sherry, left the room, our hero, though knowing full well the deleterious effect of wine upon the will, swallowed the rest of the bottle in a few gulps and threw the vessel into the quadrangle of Soberness College with a loud huzza. By this absorption of wine and release of a violent impulse he recovered something of his geniality. Yet the warmth engendered by this heavy draught of liquor could not wholly dissipate his gloom or lighten the melancholy aspect

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of his situation. How could he return to his grandfather's house at Wimbledon with full confession of his folly and his plight? So much money, care, and counsel had that meritorious old man bestowed on Sanguine's advantage and career. The achievement of Holy Orders and the virtuous passage to episcopal rank, of which Sanguine had sometimes entertained encouraging dreams, were now impossible. His education had so far qualified him for nothing in particular save, as we saw, a post in the Foreign Legion, of whose amenities he could expect little according to the testimony of the story-tellers and of the pictures on the screen, or a menial post on the furthest skirts of Empire. Grub had once suggested that, if the worst should happen, an Oxford man could always live in some luxury as a gigolo in Buenos Ayres. But poor Sanguine had no knowledge of what he meant and was too timid to confess.

Fortune, however, will sometimes relent, even to those who deserve well of her favours. Sanguine had continually acted for the best with results that were a cruel distortion of justice, a not uncommon occurrence in the traffic of men's deeds and destiny. On this occasion, however, Fortune was disposed to be merciful. A cynic might ob-

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serve that her charity was only applied to him when he had viciously taken to bibbing and bottle-throwing for his consolation. Possibly, again, the good luck may have come his way for no discoverable reason, as sometimes happens in this world.

However that may be, even while he was mournfully collecting his property, there came to him the sound of steps without and of the customary crash caused by a stumble on the missing stairs. He went to the door in eagerness. Could it be, could it possibly be a messenger from Miss Flout, hastening to explain that it was all a mistake, that his dear one had never purposely betrayed him, and that his letter had been opened without her knowledge by the mischievous old woman who acted as her ward? Alas, it was no emissary from Gothic Gables. A sharp, but none the less agreeable, surprise awaited him. His father was busily engaged in rescuing his mother from the old-world limitations of the College architecture. When restoration was complete, Sanguine heard their story. They had at last returned from a grand tour of the Americas and the Foreign Universities. Expounding their doctrines of the Infantile Libido and of Maternal Technique and busily engaged on Liquidating Bourgeois Morals they had addressed listeners and readers by

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the myriad. Their journey had been a triumphal progress. Many letters had been added to their names; scarce a centre of true culture but had put them on the list of honorary doctors. They were famous and, according to the ideas of academic minds, ideas notoriously paltry in matters of finance, they were rich. On returning to England they had remembered their ownership of a son, a fact which had naturally slipped from minds so busily occupied with the betterment of mankind and the removal of those ethical inhibitions which had inflicted so many wounds upon the human spirit.

After these explanations and many cordial greetings they inquired why their lad was preparing a departure. Was it already the end of term? Sanguine was at first much alarmed by the necessity for explanation, but, since there was no help for it, he assisted his resolution by broaching another bottle of sherry. Then he courageously opened his bosom and told of his double expulsion, first by Mr. Stumper Sloggett and secondly by the Warden of Chastity. He neither excused himself for his follies nor spared any detail of his shame and misfortune.

To his surprise and relief he found that his narrative put his parents in a great good humour.

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They were mightily indignant that he should ever had been sent to such a degrading school as Leatherham, to such a bogus pedagogue as Pilfer, to such a nest of antique and repressive notions as the University of Oxford, and especially to such a College as Chastity, whose very name breathed the ugly spirit of reaction. But those errors were not of his creation; his own part was praiseworthy. They commended him warmly on his treatment of the detestable game of cricket, on his escape from Mr. Sloggett and Mr. Pilfer, and on his attempt to find Expansion and Liberation of the Ego in female company. They condoled with him on the ill-chance which had caused his wayward eye to meet that of the despicable and cowardly Miss Flout, instead of engaging the attention of some nymph of the new era, liberal, fearless, and resolved on Sublimation. In their opinion the sooner he was out of such an institution as Chastity College, the better it would be for his psychological integration. Sanguine had little idea what the last two words implied - possibly his parents, though frequently employing them, would have been troubled to give them an exact definition - but he was heartily relieved to find his conduct in receipt of a tolerant charity and even of direct praise. For, in the many vicissitudes of

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his education for life, commendation had rarely come his way. Moreover, he was delighted to escape the prospect of a penitent return to his grandfather's home, for his native kindness was most unwilling to inflict a grief upon that benefactor of his boyish days.

Sanguine Senior, who had considerably assisted in despatching the second bottle of sherry, now asked for a convenience. He was informed how poorly the College stood in this matter and how proudly it maintained the last and aromatic enchantments of the Middle Ages. Modern plumbing had no niche within these walls, save, it was rumoured by undergraduates, in the Warden's house. Sanguine Senior, whose passion of indignation against the College had been heated by repeated glasses of a sickly but powerful wine, became very hoity-toity at this and demanded to see the Warden in order to tell that dotard some plain truths about his illiberal and antiquated regimen. Although our hero tried to dissuade him from such an audacity, Sanguine Senior crossed to the Warden's House and rang the bell with violence. A butler appeared and asked his business, explaining that the Warden could see nobody without appointment and hinting that, even with an appointment, little would be

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achieved since the Warden rarely listened to a word that was said. Sanguine Senior then delivered to the servant the harangue which he had intended for the master and added that he would see the Warden none the less.

'I shall wait,' he cried. 'I hold honorary degrees in all the major and modern Universities of the world. I refuse to be kept on the doorstep and treated as a nobody by some pedantic old fogey in this fusty medieval city, so proudly buried beneath the sepulchre of its own ignorance!'

\*Are you a member of this University?' inquired the butler.

'I thank heaven, no!' roared Sanguine Senior, who, in his excitement, would often refer to deities and places in which his normally emancipated mind had no belief.

'Then we cannot acknowledge your status. Degrees of other Universities are of no interest to us. Only the other day we were beset by a pestilent man of colour who alleged himself to be a Doctor of Umbilical Contemplation in the University of Lhasa.' With that he tried to elbow his visitor into the street. But Sanguine Senior had his foot well established within the door and was not to be defeated by such an impertinent lackey.

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'Very well,' replied the butler 'You may wait, not with any hope of seeing the Warden, but simply while I summon assistance in order to be rid of you. Wait here.' And he pointed to a chair in the hall.

'Indeed, no,' cried the other. 'I shall wait in your master's toilet, which I take to be yonder.' And he dashed for the room which he craved. The butler, being a crafty man, secured the key and locked the invader inside, while he fetched two of the stoutest College servants. Returning with these he released the captive and threw him forcefully into the street. But Sanguine Senior was in no mood to make further protest, for he had achieved the emotional release of which he was in sorry need.

The Sanguine family were now ready to leave Oxford. When they had arrived in London Sanguine's parents remembered that they had to attend a Literary Party, which was being given in honour of their return. Their son, of course, would be made welcome. So he accompanied them to a very tall house, up whose stairs they climbed for many arduous minutes until they reached an attic already packed with people. Indeed, packed was a modest term for so great a pressure of minds and bodies. The room was so

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full that nobody could move in it; all that was possible was to insinuate the person, by craft or violence, within the door and there to insist on some stance or niche among the perspiring mass. At the far end of the attic, there was, he gathered, a table laden with assorted liquors, savoury biscuits and the like, but since those who had by vigour, guile, or the easier tactics of an early arrival, conquered a position near this refreshing spot either could not or would not budge an inch from its advantages, there seemed but little chance of his obtaining any cordial for himself. His parents, however, were the guests of honour and so by dint of much shouting and not a little battery they were squeezed some distance into the room and presented with some tepid fluid which was called a cocktail. Sanguine himself, since he knew nobody and could find no space for his feet, resolved to abandon the exhausting encounter, deny his bodily needs, and rest upon the stairway outside, listening to the conversation. This, he believed, would be of the most stimulating character since he had been informed that persons of the highest mental distinction would be there in large quantity. But since everybody spoke at once, or rather tittered, screamed, and squeaked, it was difficult to apprehend the nature of the

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wisdom which was passing so abundantly from lip to lip. This, thought Sanguine, is a very curious pleasure, but certainly it seems to confer extreme delight. For while more people came panting up the stairs and endeavoured to insert their limbs into the attic, no bodies were ever ejected from the crush; all that could occur was greater physical concentration and naturally, as the heat grew more intense, the more urgent became the drive towards the table of liquors. At last one young person who had been trampled down in a last desperate thrust to obtain refreshment, managed to crawl out on hands and knees through the legs of the sages and came to sit beside our hero in the cooler air of the stairway.

Without delay she briskly entered into conversation, informing him that her name was Gerda Steel-Pylon and that she wrote, under the name of Gerda Steel, novels of a most progressive kind. Had he not read *Square Raspberries*? As a matter of fact this was one of the much-praised fictions devoured by Sanguine at Oxford in his quest for information about the truth of things. It was partly on the evidence of Miss Gerda Steel that he had made his rash assumptions about the attitude of the modern miss to amorous invitations.

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Sanguine, however, deemed it prudent to praise her on her brilliant picture of the age, to which she replied, somewhat acidly, that it was not a picture but a parody, satirising the confusion and distress caused by the frequent and fatal attraction exercised over each other by the opposite sexes. Sanguine, being little enlightened by this remark, inquired what she thought of the party and whether she had suffered any damage in her exit from the room. She laughed heartily, explaining that she was not so tender as he supposed. Sanguine, regarding her more closely, accepted her word for it, since certainly she did not look to be a brittle or a fragile creature. She added that the party would be divine if there was only another table of liquors. She then remarked, in tones of rapture, that Siggy was there.

'Siggy?' inquired our hero in his ignorance.

'Sigmund Junck-Vorwarts, of course.'

'Why then he may be related to the dear Doctor of that name, in whose community I was once a pupil!'

Miss Steel-Pylon assured him that this was so and added that she too had been a pupil for a short time in that Liberty Hall; she had been withdrawn by her parents who regarded the place as savouring of repression and reaction, because the

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children were put under roofs, essentially a middle-class and inhibiting practice. There was no doubt that living under a roof engendered claustrophobia and inflicted dreams of imprisonment. This, in turn, led to the fatal Mural Complex which had of late been so wonderfully analysed by Cohen-Mosh-Dunkheim in Buda-Pesth. In her second educational community-it rejected the barbarous term 'school' with all its dreadful associations of cruelty and oppression - they had all lived on open platforms perched among the trees and not a single member had contracted the Mural Complex or suffered from unhappy dreams, which Sanguine opined to be possible since those who get no sleep can scarcely be exposed to dreams.

Our hero inquired more of this renowned Siggy and was rebuked for his ignorance about Siggy's latest book, *Onward to Atoms*, which had been regarded as the classic exposition of Universal Liquidation. It was Sigmund's especial faculty to exercise relentless Disintegration, or, as people now preferred to call it, Liquidation, on all the institutions of a bourgeois society.

'Physical science,' explained Gerda to our bewildered hero, 'resolves everything into its primaries, the atom, the electron, and other diminutive

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what-nots. Surely social science must do likewise. Siggy has resolved everything, poetry, painting, morals, economics, psychology, into their atomic elements. Just as the Russians liquidate the troublesome peasants, so he liquidates the arts.'

The Party, Sanguine learned, was specifically a Liquidators' gathering. The two elder Sanguines had returned from a world-tour in which they had liquidated morality by psychological disintegration. Siggy, she affirmed, was somewhat jealous of the Sanguines, but really there was no need for him to be peevish or suffer any stings of envy, since they had never been in prison while he had been gaoled in or deported from every country which he visited in order to analyse its ethics and expose its shams. In Russia alone had he been properly regarded. He had only just returned from Moscow, whither he had proceeded with a special commission to accelerate the task of Cultural Liquidation. This salutary process had been scheduled for completion by a Six Months Plan; the responsible officers had, at some period, become a quarter of an hour late in their task of demolition and had been recommended to Siberia as incompetent and even treacherous rascals. So Sigmund had been summoned and, with the

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aid of suitable interpreters, had so speeded the task of Liquidation that the Plan was ultimately carried out with half a day to spare. His special duty had been to disintegrate the classics and reveal, through inspection of their atoms, the foul corruption which they contained. Nothing had more delighted Moscow than his Liquidation of Shakespeare, exemplified in his production of *Hamlet* in an iron cage with all the parts mimed by performing bears, monkeys, and so on. Hamlet himself was portrayed by a chimpanzee, which had caused the liveliest satisfaction in the Bolshevik capital. Siggy had been showered with honours and was now an Honorary Commissar, enjoying the unparalleled right to a private bedroom when in Russia and a bonus portion of dried fish on those frequent days which had once been holy feasts of the Church but were now dedicate to the Guardians of the People.

At this point Gerda exclaimed that, without refreshment, she would surely faint or die and suggested that they should retire to her rooms, which were only a few doors away. Sanguine readily agreed, for he was himself much afflicted by thirst and was also anxious to acquire still more information about this enlightened world into which, as his parents' son, he would now have to

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enter. Furthermore, although the young lady was of a sterner shape and of an aspect more severe than usually satisfied his notions of female elegance, he regarded her with a lively interest and preferred her to many of the others whom he had seen in the hot press of the Liquidators' party and thought to be uncongenial. So he followed her down the stairs, across the street, and up many more stairs to an apartment whose furnishing was curious, metallic, and severe. She informed him that she intended to prepare some refreshment, disappeared from the room, and returned with a vessel containing an ice-cold draught of astringent flavour and considerable potency.

'When you have knocked that back,' she said in the idiom of her class, 'You will feel better,' a prophecy which was rapidly fulfilled.

Within a short space he had 'knocked back', as she phrased it, several more glasses of this encouraging liquor and felt himself to be a man enlarged and inspirited. He listened with excitement to the plans which his hostess had made for her next book, in which she proposed to liquidate the sickly notion of friendship and affection as desirable human qualities. Hate, she thought, being akin to passion, was a far healthier relationship than this lukewarm business of liking.

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'I too,' said Sanguine, 'must strive to liquidate some evil relic of tradition which is clogging and corrupting society.' Gefda approved this radical project and continued to replenish his glass.

'And, of course,' cried Sanguine with increasing excitement, 'I must begin by liquidating my own virtue.'

'Naturally. But what method do you propose?'

Sanguine, made bold by the liquor, resolved immediately to declare his purpose.

'Dear Gerda,' said he, 'that is where you must help me. For you, I am sure, are as generous in affection as you are bold in thought.' And with that he declared his adoration in a most effusive manner - never had he known his tongue move at such a pace - and finally he caught Gerda in his arms.

To his surprise she pushed him away with all her strength, which was considerable, and said:

'You are an innocent fool. Do you suppose that I would partake of such tedious foolery as a masculine embrace? Really, I have more regard for the honour of my sex. If I did not know what a child you are, I would consider myself deeply affronted. I must beg you not to be absurd.'

At this point another young woman entered the

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room. She was of a gentler aspect than Gerda with large, blue eyes and hair as pale as a blanched almond. Gerda turned to her and said with a laugh:

'What do you think, my dear? This great booby has been endeavouring to seduce me.'

Thereupon the newcomer belied the pretty feminine graces of her appearance and broke into a torrent of abuse.

'Oh, you filthy creature,' she screamed at Sanguine. 'You obscene wretch. You beastly, barbarous toad. If you did not look to be just an ignorant clod who has no knowledge of the decencies, I would scratch your eyes out, that I would.'

Sanguine, now frantic with bewilderment exclaimed. 'Believe me, dear ladies, I had the very best intentions. I had marked all that was said and was endeavouring to act thereon, since I always believe what I am told. Surely, surely it was no less than my duty as a man to be rid of all inhibitions and liquidate my virtue?'

At this both the women became extremely merry and Gerda's friend replied, with a peal of laughter, 'If you are resolved to be a naughty boy, it is necessary to call at the right address.'

Sanguine, in whom alcohol and confusion were

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now strongly mixed, was maddened by this mockery and cried:

'Then, after all, you are a pair of old-world spinsters, as prudish as that Miss Flout who lately tricked me and brought me to ruin at Oxford. You are the poltroons, whom my friend Grub so shrewdly described, craving the jargon of love and terrified of the deed. I have nothing but contempt for such an attitude. Good-bye to both of you. I shall never seek my liberation among learned women any more, for you are all as narrow and scrupulous as the daughters of a vicarage.'

With that he flung himself from the room and, being followed by the noise of their glee, he reached the street in a suffocating rage. The air, however, cooled him and he reached his parents' home in a less frantic state. Ashamed to confess his humiliation, he retired to the room which had been appointed for his use and there reflected that this world of light was no more accommodating to his needs or remedial to his troubles than the darkness of Oxford.

'It is not easy,' he said to himself as he sat in solitude and applied a cold, wet napkin to his aching head, 'it is not easy to liquidate one's virtue. The clergy may aver that the way of the flesh is a downward path of perilous ease, but to

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me it seems to be a mountain-track, steep, flinty, and impassable. The more do I attempt to fall, the more do I climb. Indeed, if my affairs continue to go thus, I may find myself in Holy Orders after all.'

## CHAPTER X

### IN WHICH THE HERO SEEKS NEW SHORES, MEETS AN OLD FRIEND, AND IS INFORMED ABOUT FINANCE

**S**ANGUINE'S parents, loaded with honours and beset with invitations to write for many publishers and to lecture to many groups of forward-looking citizens, had small time or attention to bestow upon their son, whom they soon came to regard as quite unworthy of his origin. He was continually seeking to broaden his mind by plying them with questions; when they answered him he confused their replies and seemed totally unable to comprehend aright their message to the ignorant and suffering world. When asked what profession he would care to follow, he said that he had no idea, a candid response which only increased his reputation as a blockhead. His father inquired what had become of his Ego, that he should be thus indeterminate. Had he no creative impulse to set free? Sanguine puzzled over the

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matter, but on the spur of the moment he could think of no calling which had any voice for him. Desiring mainly to do as he was bid and confident that such instruction would always be for the best, he suddenly announced that he would like to be a soldier or a sailor; for then he could always believe what he was told and act accordingly; he would not be encouraged to use his reason and would even be forbidden to exercise that tiresome implement; such freedom from reflection he now regarded as a most agreeable way of living. By this martial suggestion his parents were much incensed and vowed that it would be an intolerable scandal if a son of theirs should become a butcher of his fellows. Believing that the boy's stupidity had been caused by his miseducation at a brutish school in his early years, they resolved to send him on his travels in order that alien scenes and fresh experience might quicken his tardy wits.

For this offer Sanguine was extremely grateful; he was tired and baffled by his life at home and was most eager to practise foreign tongues and to see the wonders and beauties of the world. Accordingly, in the New Year, he crossed over into Europe with a sufficient equipment of money and a generous supply of books which would guide him to all the appropriate centres of intellectual

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and aesthetic cultivation. So zealously did he apply himself to the task of self-expansion and with such industry did he pursue the instruction of the literary guides, making copious notes on all that he saw, that within a few months he had visited, perused, and appraised in his diaries sixty-four cathedrals, eighty notable *salles-de-ville*, *rathausen*, or what you will, and twelve hundred and twenty-three churches of historic interest or architectural renown. He had climbed two hundred and forty towers or spires, averaging three hundred stairs apiece, and walked one hundred and seventeen miles up and down those picture-galleries and museums which were scheduled as obligatory for a conscientious student of European culture. He had scrambled among the relics of at least five hundred castles, gazed upon a similar number of Roman baths, villas, and forums, marked the splendour of countless chasms, waterfalls, and caves, observed the moon rise over a hundred and fifty ruins (that is, wherever the guide-books marked a moonlight survey with those imperative asterisks which our hero could never disobey) and had climbed to three hundred and fourteen summits from which an incomparable view was guaranteed. As a result of this devotion to Wisdom, Learning, and Beauty,

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Sanguine had now collected and filled so many diaries that he had no space for them in his baggage. He was also aching in every limb, and savagely afflicted with the tic, the staggers, the cervical lesion known as Travellers' Neck, the myopic inflammation known as Travellers' Squint, varicosity of veins, corns, bunions, collapse of the arches, and bleeding at the toes. 'Travel,' he said to himself in his agony, 'may broaden the mind, but it certainly flattens the feet.'

A charming American matron, to whom he confided his distress, did him the service of accepting his diaries, of which he had grown heartily tired. She deemed them to be documents of great cultural value, especially suited to the needs of her daughter who had recently retired to bed in a similar state of crippled collapse and would now have to receive Europe's spiritual message through the written word. She also recommended Sanguine to seek repose in Cerulea, a small and charming country so named after the brilliant blue colouring of its sea. 'I have not been there,' she added, 'but I read in those leaflets that are so generously scattered about the hotels that the sun never fails to shine upon that nation.' Sanguine immediately looked to see what the guides had to say of this happy spot and was

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immensely relieved to discover that they made little of it. Its capital contained no museum, no picture-gallery, and but one cathedral of the fourth grade. There might, it seemed, be some mountains, grottoes, and the like, but there were no obligatory castles and the *salle-de-ville* was mercifully described as 'an inconsiderable building, not worth the steep ascent from the station'. Sanguine thanked the American matron profusely for such sage advice and immediately set out for Cerulea.

When he reached the capital, which had the lively name of Esporto, he was a little put out to find the city drenched in a mixture of sleet and snow and the sea, of which it commanded magnificent views, mainly obscured in mist and of an iron grey where visible. But, regarding this as a rare mischance, he bid his driver carry him to an hotel of reputation. Deposited before a building of august and impressive aspect, he commanded a room and then, without delay, proceeded to dine. It was his practice, as an eager student of mankind and its ways, to order in each country of his visitation those viands and that cuisine which were held in most esteem by the natives. Requesting, accordingly, a meal in the Cerulean fashion, he was quickly served with pickled herrings and anchovies in onion sauce and a slice of the famed

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Esporto Sausage whose rich purple bloom surmounted an interior of mottled aspect and uncommon flavour. These were intended to whet the appetite and stimulate gustation of the ensuing dishes. First there followed a soup of giblets, then, surpassing delicacy to Cerulean taste, the local fish, of a bluish colour, caught in the harbour of Esporto and highly seasoned by the rich and various feeding there available. Then came the national tit-bit, the brains and other oddments of a mountain-goat, first lightly fried with the fats and juices of a sucking-pig and then stewed in the native wine, spiced with caraway seeds, cloves, and paprika, and served with a condiment whose major elements were garlic and olive-oil. The industrious and considerate steward of the hotel next suggested - but Sanguine did not further pursue the pleasures of an aboriginal diet. He was moving slowly away on his wounded feet and with a grave oppression of the abdomen when the manager, a Frenchman who had spent most of his life in Leeds, remarked in perfect English:

I am sorry, sir. I feared the meal might prove a trifle lush and pinguid for an English palate. But you commanded it so and it is the practice of this establishment to regard the customer as always right. Next time I recommend to your

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notice a slice of beef roasted in the English manner. The Ceruleans live mainly on the rank flesh of insufficiently nourished goats and accordingly I have my beef specially despatched from Yorkshire.'

'It is thoughtful of you.' said Sanguine, 'thus to warn me against dietary experiments in the future. Meanwhile I lack interest in food and fear that I cannot even continue the conversation.' He hurried, as best his bodily sufferings would permit, from the dining-chamber and did not re-enter it for seven days, being confined to his bed by a gripe, a colic, a spasm, and a tornado in the alimentary canals as well as by the raw and torturing afflictions of his feet.

When at last restored to his proper condition Sanguine set out to explore the city of Esporto. The snow had disappeared; it was now only raining. Purchasing an umbrella, he strolled by the sea-front against which there rolled a waste of grey and sullen water. He was surprised to notice that all places of shelter were packed with English and American people. 'Now how does this happen,' he murmured to himself, 'since there are no antiquities or famous works of beauty to attract the traveller? Can it be that all these have become footsore, like myself, for culture's sake and have

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repaired to Cerulea for an easeful pause amid their educational pursuits? Yet I do not find the climate so enchanting or the diet so persuasive that I would prefer this spot for such a purpose to many of England's quiet spas and watering-places.' But at the next moment he observed a magnificent building in the rococo style, heavily caparisoned about the roof with knobs and bulbs and all manner of quaint device. There were lavish gardens set about it and a host of janitors on whose caps were written the word 'Casino'. Into this palace many visitors were hurrying with a great bustle as though they feared it would vanish ere they reached it. 'It is the gaming-hall,' thought our hero, 'and I must assuredly hazard something of my remaining moneys. For my funds are now small and I must increase them by shrewd play according to a system which many travellers have assured me is certain to yield profits. But for that purpose I must return to the hotel and collect the necessary notes.'

When he had reached the hotel, he sat down for a while to refresh himself in the main hall where it was customary to smoke and drink. Judge of his surprise when he observed a familiar face at a neighbouring table. 'Why,' he cried, 'if it is not my dear friend, Mr. Pilfer!'

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Pilfer greeted Sanguine with cordiality, inquired of his fortunes, and laughed not a little at our hero's sad miscalculations in the matter of Miss Flout and concerning the advantages of native diet. 'We must have a bottle,' he cried, 'but not of the mean native tippie which would rot the guts of an elephant.' With a sharp word he sent the waiter helter-skelter for champagne. Pilfer was evidently a man of great authority in this place, for, when he beckoned, the menials dashed to his side and then as swiftly dashed to fulfil his commands, which was by no means the case when other visitors spoke about their needs.

While they were drinking Sanguine asked Pilfer what happy chance had brought him also to Cerulea. Was it an attack of fatigue during some cultural journey? Pilfer confessed that it was not. He had come to Cerulea on a particular business, namely to organise and develop the Casino whose great opportunities of profit-making had been grossly abused by the natives. These dolts had never realised the vast fascination exercised over English and American minds by the certainty of losing one's money. The mean-fisted Ceruleans were so nervous of that calamity that they scarcely entered the Casino at all. But the Nordic Peoples, with their larger spirit, could

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not be deflected from the baize. All that was needed was the proper equipment and advertisement of the Casino for nice profits to flow in. This necessity explained the presence of Mr. Pilfer. It was the season of the year when neither shooting nor hunting claimed his attention in England and, as the pupils at Whipstock Hall were fully cognisant of what books they had to study, he had slipped away at the request of some commercial companions to lend his great abilities to the Cerulean Casino.

'You must understand, Sanguine,' he said, 'that Cerulea is now united in the closest of bonds with our own country of Great Britain. After certain diplomatic negotiations a Cerulean loan was recently placed upon the London market - a matter of fifty million pounds at five per cent - and, being guaranteed by our own Government which never omits to honour its bond -'

'Except to the Americans,' remarked an angry voice beside them.

'Ah,' said Mr. Pilfer suavely, 'here is my old friend, Mr. Xenophon Tope, once a Senator from the Hog and Bible Belt, now an Ambassador of Commerce. A glass of wine with us, Xen. This is my young friend Sanguine. We are discussing finance.'

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'So I perceived.' said Mr. Tope. 'And you were omitting salient facts.'

'Another glass of wine, my dear Xen. Waiter, another bottle. We cannot be side-tracked. I was saying that the Cerulean loan was immediately subscribed.'

'It was,' said Tope, 'by people who cannot pay their just debt to America. We loaned the money, didn't we?'

'You know my remedy for that,' replied Pilfer, 'which is to export free of all charges to America the entire town of Stratford-on-Avon, including whatever may remain of Shakespeare's honoured bones with his tomb, birthplace, and all etceteras, these to be taken in full payment and discharge of our debt and reconstructed where you will. Meanwhile, as I was recounting, the Cerulean Loan in London was an immediate success.'

'And what,' inquired Sanguine, 'will these Ceruleans do with the money?'

'They will buy two ships of war from English yards, for these they sorely need to protect them from their menacing neighbours, the Viridians. As for the rest, they will pay the interest on the previous Cerulean Loans, which was in great likelihood of not being paid at all.'

Sanguine considered the matter and then asked

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how the interest on the new lending would be paid.

'That,' replied Mr Pilfer, 'is a matter which does not arise until next year, but I understand that the British Treasury already has the matter in mind. I think I may confess that my presence in Cerulea has something to do with this trouble. The interest on the earlier Cerulean Loans was secured upon the local income-tax but, as the citizens of Cerulea fell upon the tax-collectors, beat them, and threw into the sea such as had not escaped into Viridia—a show of spirit quite incomprehensible to the docile English - there was soon a gap in the payment of the dues. However, the interest on this new Loan is secured upon the receipts of the Casino. Therefore it is imperative that the Casino should no longer be mishandled by the incompetent natives; an International Mixed Tribunal has been appointed, of which my friend Tops and I are leading members, on salary and commission, to execute reforms and impose a forward policy. We must attract visitors to the tables and the tables will do the rest.'

'Yes, sir,' added Mr. Tope. 'We are instituting what I should call a clean-up.'

'But,' protested Sanguine, 'if the Casino is mainly visited by English and Americans, who

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there risk and lose their money, then the profits are derived in part from England and so England is but paying the Cerulean debt after all.'

'In a sense,' answered Mr. Pilfer, 'you are right. But remember that, if this loan is a success, then other loans will follow.'

To what purpose?'

'To the stimulation of trade, my dear Sanguine. If the Ceruleans are in funds they can buy the beeves, wheat, hogs, and other commodities which our friend Tope is now endeavouring to sell them. Believe me, it is a work of mercy, not only for the American farmers, but for the Ceruleans themselves. They are in great straits for food.'

'But do they grow nothing on their native hills and plains, which seemed to me, as I entered this country, green and fertile spots?'

'Indeed they do. But the land is small and what it yields is exported for the most part to England. The truth is that the Ceruleans have nothing.'

'In that case,' retorted Sanguine, 'our loans are gifts.'

'My dear fellow,' cried Pilfer in dismay. 'You are ignorant of the first principles of finance,'

'And what are they?'

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'That the more you owe the greater credit you possess. It is only your small debtors, owing a trifle to the banks, who cannot obtain further accommodation and are cruelly pressed for payment. If they had the courage to be indebted on the grand scale like nations, cities, and the great commercial bodies, the bankers would bow down to them and offer them as much more as they chose to ask. I myself observed this truth when young and have never fallen into the contemptible status of a small debtor. The British policy in Cerulea conforms to that elementary rule which is the true foundation of finance. The more you have not got (and Cerulea has nothing) the more you are like to have. It is idle to compel paupers to pay; you must first enable them to pay by the kindly offer of a loan.'

'Just so,' added Mr. Tope. 'Young man, you will observe from this that the ethical precepts of Christianity are once more proven to contain the eternal verity. Like the principles of finance, they have the sacred validity of common sense. Gospel enjoins us to feed the lambs; so do great nations feed their debtors. Cast your loans upon the waters and they will bring returns unto you. Except,' he added sourly, 'when the Britisher has to pay an American.'

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'Come, come,' said Mr. Pilfer, 'we are tired of that squabble. It is high time that we took some food and then went down to the Casino. You will join us, my dear Sanguine, and watch the sport? If you have benefited by my instruction and now comprehend the true principles of international finance, you have done a good day's work and deserve some relaxation.'

Sanguine, agreeing that he had achieved comprehension of these mysteries and warmly thanking his old and present tutor for the lesson, was most curious to see the working of the tables. His stomach being now restored, he was also eager for food.

'We had better eat here,' said Pilfer, 'for I have not yet reformed the cuisine at the Casino. It is still administered on Cerulean lines, which are vexatious to the Nordic intestine, a weaker vessel. Besides, all my expenditure in this hotel is covered by the British Government.'

So they proceeded to the dining-room, where the steward and all his lackeys bowed humbly before them and bustled about, serving the choicest meats which had been fetched from England, with wines and cognac from the fields of France and cigars from the Indies. Much heartened by this good fare, Sanguine felt con-

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cident of a gay afternoon at the tables and was much rejoiced to reflect that he need not visit the Cathedral of Esporto, which, unlike its restored Casino, was only of the fourth grade.

## CHAPTER XI

### IN WHICH THE HERO RECEIVES AND LOSES A REWARD FOR VALOUR

THEIR meal was a rich one. Mr. Tope became so jovial over his brandy that he even forgot the British debt to America. It was a merry party that set forth to visit the Casino. The rain had cleared at last, the skies of Cerulea were in places blue, and the sea ceased to rage and began to shimmer. Accordingly they resolved to walk the short distance to their destination.

As they sauntered along Mr. Pilfer asked Sanguine whether he wished to hazard some stakes in the games of chance, to which the latter replied:

'Yes, certainly. For a comrade of mine called Grub, a most subtle fellow, once explained to me in all its cunning detail a system whereby victory at the roulette-table was made certain. I remember clearly what he told me and wish to put his method to the test.'

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'It was ever your way,' said Mr. Pilfer, 'to believe what you were told. It has done you little good in life so far, as I gather from your history, and will do you none at the tables. You may trust my assurance that many folk approach the sport with a high conceit of their own astuteness; they carry the most recondite reckonings about probability, the law of averages, and the theory of numbers, and all in the end go away out of pocket and out of temper. Do you suppose that I would be trafficking in this Casino business if the Casino were not certain to win? Forget what the cozening creature Grub has told you and do not risk more than a few small coins. It is a game for coney.'

This advice, coming from one of such wisdom and authority, dashed Sanguine's spirit and left him in a dilemma. For he was now under the necessity of believing two contradictory assertions made by people in whose sagacity he placed the utmost confidence. After pondering the matter a moment he resolved to play the system recommended by Grub, but only for a short while; a more foolish compromise could hardly be imagined, but it was ever the English way to make the second-best of both worlds and Sanguine was true to the national habit in his desire to reconcile

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contradictions by trifling with a middle course. Fortunately the events of the next few minutes saved him from his folly.

As they entered the Great Square of Esporto, they saw some hundreds of men, decked with favours of the national hue, standing round a plinth on which a burly fellow was shouting and waving his arms. Mr. Pilfer, who had learned a few words of the native lingo, asked a policeman the cause of this ado. The policeman replied that it was a demonstration of the National Party, who were in his opinion, narrow, stupid, peevish fellows incensed against the foreigners in their country. Although these foreigners both made loans to Cerulea and spent much money in its hotels and Casino, the National faction, most of whom were idlers and rabble of the docks, could not see the advantage and inveighed against the alien yoke, as they called it, day and night.

'It would be well.' added the policeman, 'for you to avoid the ruffians. They are sometimes unruly and prone to spitting at the foreigners, which is obnoxious, and even to beating them, which is painful.'

But the warning was too late. Just as our party were hurriedly seeking escape from the Grand

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Square, the orator, having achieved the high finale of his rhetoric, then raised some barbaric shout and pointed towards Sanguine and his friends. Thereupon a bevy of roustabouts came lumbering towards them, discharging oaths and saliva in great quantity. The policeman disappeared suddenly, for he felt that his duty had been amply discharged by the warning, and the rioters quickly surrounded the hated visitors, bawling 'Into the harbour with the foreign swine. Into the harbour.' It seemed that a ducking in those waters, with which the sewage of the city was freely mixed, was inevitable. Both Mr. Pilfer and Mr. Tope began to cry out pitifully for help, of which there was little hope, but Sanguine, in whose blood die liquors lately consumed were working powerfully, set about the Cerulean Nationals with his umbrella. He was a lusty lad and dealt such swashing blows that the first rank of the rowdies fell back in dismay, tripping and tumbling over those who came behind. In fact they were little used to resistance, having practised their arts of battery mainly at the expense of their wives and children. When Sanguine began to drive the enemy backwards, his two friends also recovered their courage and began to kick with a pretty venom at those bodies which Sanguine had

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dashed to the ground. The umbrella was broken across the pate of some nasty scoundrel and Sanguine, not at all dismayed, fell upon them with his fists, causing eyes to blacken, teeth to fall out, and noses to bleed profusely. The rabble were now terrified and began to scatter in all directions, whereupon the policeman returned with two of his fellows, arrested a couple of Sanguine's battered victims, and marched them to the lock-up, for which service these sturdy watchmen were later given promotion, reward, and the Medal of the Prince of Peace.

Mr. Pilfer and Mr. Tope, who had come to no damage, offered Sanguine their handkerchiefs to staunch the bleeding from a small cut which he had received upon the temple and thanked him heartily for his valour.

'I shall see to it,' said Mr. Pilfer, 'that one of our British cruisers is sent to the Gulf of Esporto in order to pepper this unruly and savage city with a few salutary shells, lest there should be any more turbulence of this kind.'

'The shells might explode upon our heads!' observed Mr. Tope doubtfully,

'You insult the marksmanship of our incomparable sailors,' answered Mr. Pilfer haughtily. 'I can assure you that all precautions will be taken.'

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Neither the Casino nor any of the best hotels will be touched.'

'They are certainly a craven set of fellows,' said Sanguine. 'I had little thought to drive back an army with an umbrella.'

'You are a gallant youth,' said Pilfer. 'I myself would feel happier armed with a gun against pheasants and rabbits than with an umbrella against these rascals of the harbour-side. But you have done nobly and I propose to offer you a suitable guerdon for your courage and a compensation for the cut upon your brow.'

'That is indeed kind of you,' said Sanguine. 'I trust that it will be in money, for I have been long abroad and my funds are in need of repletion.'

'It shall be as you wish,' answered Mr. Pilfer. 'Listen to what I propose.'

He led his two companions into the gardens of the Casino, where the janitors saluted him with the greatest deference; it was well that none of the National faction were there to see these lick-spittle varlets, for such bowing and scraping to a foreigner would certainly have enraged them and might even have provoked them to further assaults with a full armoury of weapons. However, there were none of this sort ever admitted to the grounds and pleasaunces of the Casino, over which a most

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careful watch was kept. For the wealthy visitors were in the habit of shooting at pigeons to relieve their boredom or vexation when the play went against them, as it usually did. It would have been a most unpleasant scandal had some Cerulean rowdies seized the guns and turned them on the alien grandees as if they were mere birds. Consequently a detachment of the Cerulean army, a small but picturesque body, was constantly on guard with drawn bayonets to affright the eye and a machine-gun was hidden in some laurel-bushes lest the fearful spectacle of the bayonets should not prove wholly efficacious. Noticing with pleasure that the bayonets were brightly polished and apparently sharp, and that the members of the guard were all awake and prepared to do their duty, Mr. Pilfer led his fellows to a tranquil arbor and there explained to Sanguine the nature of his kindly scheme.

'It is necessary,' he said, 'that the public of the outer world, on whose zest for gaming we rely, should occasionally have their appetite whetted by news of some great good fortune that has come to a gambler, enabling him to win gigantic sums and, as they say, break the bank. Not that the Casino is really beggared; all that occurs is the dispatch of a messenger to fetch additional money

## AT THE TABLES

from the coffers. Fortunately such benefits of fortune very rarely attend the players and, since the greedy fools are always reaching for more and cannot stand upon a stroke of luck, we usually manage to empty their bulging pockets on the following day. But, whether it occurs or not in the nature of events, it has to occur by contrivance at certain intervals in order that we may dispatch to the wealthy capitals most lively and seductive stories of a gambler's vast winnings. No sooner do such reports appear in the newspapers than there is a rush of simpletons to Esporto, all fervidly believing that they too will be so beloved of heaven as to enjoy a similar miracle. This greatly assists our commerce and that of the hotels and restaurants, whose owners are delighted to hear that some fellow has broken the bank. Accordingly, my dear Sanguine, we have set in order some little devices for having these tales put in circulation in England and elsewhere; it is but a natural method of commerce and has the justification of long custom. The croupiers, who toss the roulette ball, can, by a pretty trick, when they have been forewarned to adjust the mechanism, arrange for the ball to come to rest in a series of pre-selected numbers. One of our own party, not known to the regular players, comes in with all the air of

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an innocent stranger, and, after a few losses, wins in a most astonishing fashion. More money has to be brought to pay him and the cry goes up that the bank is broken. At this we dispatch immediate messages to all the great journals, which oblige us by printing the story with much prominence, since we occasionally advertise in their columns the amenities and excitement of a holiday in Cerulea. They add pictures of a most winsome nature and, if the player be a woman, they will certainly print pictures of her, together with many illuminating paragraphs of personal detail, concerning what she wore, her taste in lucky charms, and what she took to eat and drink before playing. All this, I can assure you, has a most persuasive effect upon the leisured and wealthy dolts whom we wish to draw to Esporto. Meanwhile our agent, who has been loaded with money from the tables, returns it to our treasury, receiving a small commission for his services. What I propose, my dear Sanguine is that you should be our agent this afternoon; a list of numbers will be handed to you, the mechanism will be prepared, and the croupiers warned. You will then support them with your stakes. You will win, say, some fifty thousand pounds; the news of it will be hurried to all parts of the world - you may, if you

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wish, use some false name or tide such as the Count of Salonika - and then you will return the treasure in secret. The usual commission is one half per cent, but, in consideration of your valour this afternoon I propose that it be no less than one per cent, which will provide you with the very serviceable sum of five hundred pounds.'

'You are kindness itself,' said Sanguine, when Mr. Pilfer had finished expounding all the details of the ruse. 'But I have some scruples as to the honesty of this contrivance. Shall I not be acting a lie, which, as my first dear nurse repeatedly informed me, is as great a sin as to tell one?'

'Fellows of your age,' answered Mr. Pilfer, 'should have outgrown such old wives' tales. Please apply your intellect, in the manner of an adult, to the whole aspect of our scheme instead of leaping to some petty moral conclusions fit only for nursemaids. Have I not told you that the British have lent many millions of pounds to the hard-pressed Ceruleans, who gravely need the money to purchase foodstuffs from America?'

'That is so,' said Mr. Tope, 'a large exchange of trade is at hazard.'

'Very well,' continued Mr. Pilfer. 'The interest on the loan, as I have advised you, is secured, not upon the local taxes since those are never collected,

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but on the profits of the Casino. If the Casino fails to profit, the honest English investor is defrauded of his due, there will consequently be no more loans, and the unhappy Ceruleans, unable to purchase much-needed foodstuffs from America, will fall into a pitiable state of hunger, pestilence, and destitution. Does not that convince you, my foolish fellow, that any plan for increasing the wealth and prosperity of the Casino must be as much to the advantage of the Cerulean populace as it is to that of the British widows and orphans whose funds are invested in the Cerulean Loans? Should you refuse to help us now, you will not only do a great disservice to your own pocket, but you will snatch the staff of life from many hungry and deserving persons. You will harass the oppressed; you will starve babies in their cradles. A man of your chivalrous instincts will immediately spring to the right conclusion. Of that I am confident.'

Mr, Pilfer did not argue in vain. By his cogent reasoning and by his appeal to the altruism of a philanthropic Englishman, Sanguine was at once convinced of his duty and readily agreed to put heavy stakes upon the numbers privily arranged.

All went as was arranged. Sanguine purchased

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a few of the plaques or tokens with which the gambling was conducted and tossed them with a careless gesture on to the numbers of which he had been advised. In order to avoid suspicion, he had to incur occasional losses, but soon his place at the table was piled with a glittering accumulation of the gawdy money-symbols and a vast crowd stood behind him marvelling at his fortune and even to some extent partaking of it by following his throws. Mr. Pilfer naturally did not wish such participation in the fruits of destiny to be too frequent or too common, so he hurriedly arranged for a clerk to go bustling off for more money while the cry went up 'The Bank is Broken'. Urgent messages were dispatched to all the leading journals of the world announcing that an unknown aristocrat, the Count of Salonika, had made a gigantic fortune at his first visit to the tables in Esporto, and within a short time these were read by millions of people, of whom many rich enough to afford the journey vowed that they would certainly make all speed to Cerulea and seek a similar good fortune. Sanguine, meanwhile, left the great hall of gambling and proceeded to the manager's office with his load of plaques, whose monetary value was discovered to be close on fifty thousand pounds. He received

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five hundred, as was agreed, from the hand of Mr. Pilfer.

'Young man.' said Mr. Tope, 'you have done humanity as well as the Casino a service, and you need feel no qualms of conscience in receiving this modest percentage. Many a British orphan may now be given a good schooling and rare opportunities in the world as a result of your action; many a babe in the swarming tenements of Esporto has now a more certain chance of life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.' With these sentiments Mr. Pilfer most heartily concurred.

Sanguine himself was greatly rejoiced to have combined his own advantage with that of mankind. With five hundred pounds in his pockets, what scores of new cathedrals, what castles, grottoes, and vistas might he not visit in his pursuit of a gentlemanly cultivation of the mind and senses? With purse and body both restored he could proceed upon far greater travels in the University of Life. He resolved not to abuse his good fortune with idle dissipation, drinking, chambering, and the like, but to devote every shilling of it to his educational betterment and intellectual progress. Since Cerulea offered such scant facilities of this up-lifting kind he determined to leave it with all convenient speed. Why should he linger in a

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capital which had but one cathedral - and that of the fourth grade? Besides, he reflected, some of the knaves whom he had so trounced in the Great Square might have recollections of his aspect and be nursing notions of revenge.

He had the best of reasons therefore to make a hurried departure, and it suited Mr. Pilfer's diplomacy that the Count of Salonika should rapidly disappear from the public view. He did not trust our hero's tact, should he be submitted to a fusillade of questions about his past life and his present gains.

'By all means,' said Pilfer, 'proceed upon your way. Mr. Tope and I have been happy to meet you; your strong right arm preserved us this afternoon from a douche of filthy water and we are glad to think that your gallantry has been rewarded in a way that also benefits your fellow-men. Let us hope that we meet once more and under circumstances equally felicitous!'

Sanguine bade them a cordial farewell and returned to the hotel to collect his baggage. Since he felt himself to be uncommonly rich, he yielded to a lordly whim and chartered a private conveyance to drive him some eighty miles to the neighbouring state of Viridia, where, according to his guide-books, there was at least one passable

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cathedral and a *salle-de-ville* whose turrets must assuredly be climbed.

Unfortunately the turbulent knaves of the National Faction had been advised by a disloyal Janitor at the Casino, who sold information to any who would buy it, that this Count of Salonika was the self-same bruiser who had so knocked them about their sconces with his umbrella and had further beaten them with his powerful fists. Accordingly the more cunning of the rascals followed him to his hotel, heard of his plans from the porter at the door, and resolved to drive ahead and prepare an ambushade. Having stolen some motor cars for that purpose and drawn on a secret store of fire-arms, they very easily executed their design. Indeed, it seemed to them a most profitable venture, for they believed that our hero would be concealing fifty thousand pounds upon his person.

When Sanguine had been carried into the heart of the forest that lies between Ccrulea and Viridia, his driver found the road blocked and a parcel of ruffians standing by with revolvers. To save his own skin he delivered Sanguine to these villains, who immediately fired a shot into our hero's leg to prevent him from running (they were too frightened of his fisticuffs to come near until he

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was crippled) and then tore off his clothes in a frantic search for his treasure. When they discovered only five hundred pounds they were enraged and lashed poor Sanguine with rods torn from the trees in order that he might, in his torment, reveal the whereabouts of the remaining moneys. But since Sanguine fell into a swoon through his agony and loss of blood and, in any case, knew not a word of their speech, such battery accomplished nothing. Enraged, they cut to ribbons every cushion and trapping in his conveyance, seeking the hidden treasure, but all to no effect. So, with some last kicks and blows at his defenceless and almost naked body, they left him at the roadside and proceeded to the nearest tavern where they drank themselves into a frenzy and began to fight amongst each other.

But of all this our hero knew nothing, for he was lying unconscious in a ditch with a wound in his leg and no covering but his shirt, which was much stained with blood and rent in many places by the cruel hands of his robbers.

## CHAPTER XII

### IN WHICH THE HERO IS CONFRONTED BY THE CLOTHING PROBLEM IN A WIDE VARIETY OF FORMS

**S**INCE, by the bounty of Providence, the night was warm and dry, Sanguine did not perish of exposure; his bleeding ceased and in the morning he recovered both his wits and his power of movement. Although racked with a tic and with grievous bodily pains he crawled to a neighbouring stream, drank deep of its fresh and cooling waters, washed the wound in his leg, which had luckily injured no bone, cleansed such of his other stripes as were ready to hand, and then, to his great joy, discovered his shoes by the wayside. But coat and trousers had he none; all the remainder of his clothing had vanished, as had his conveyance and all sign of his robbers and oppressors. He was alone in the forests of a strange country, ignorant of its tongue, penniless, maimed, without passport or papers, and clad

## THIS MISERY OF SHIRTS

only in a shirt and shoes. The impulse to offer up prayers for the mercy of God was strong in his bosom and, though he well knew how little his parents would favour such an exercise, he yielded to temptation, both flesh and spirit being weak, and cried to heaven for succour. Presently some peasants tramped by with their flocks and, seeing our hero's distress, spoke to him at great length in quite unintelligible terms and finally threw him some crusts of bread which he eagerly devoured, thanking God for this immediate answer to his supplication.

But they had no clothes to spare and much work to perform; so they left Sanguine by the side of the brook. Within a few hours he felt sufficiently restored to continue his journey into Viridia. On that direction he determined after much careful calculation. If he endeavoured to return into Cerulea he might regain the company of Mr. Pilfer and so be given shelter and even funds, but his mortal enemies were all about the city of Esporto and he deemed that there would be little chance of his reaching the centre of the town alive. In Viridia he had neither friend nor acquaintance; on the other hand he had no murderous foes and possibly his pitiful state would so far stir compassionate sentiments as to procure him a pair of

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trousers and some food. Then, he thought, he could approach the British Consul and explain the terrible mischance which had befallen him. Therefore, slowly and with much pain, he began to hobble along the road into Viridia, whose borders he passed early in the afternoon. The country, as its name betokened, was rich, fruitful, and pleasant; the sun shone, the birds sang, and gay blossom painted the whole landscape with delight.

'This indeed,' thought Sanguine, 'is some Utopian place, unlike that gloomy and ruffian city of Esporto. Here Nature smiles on man, and man, I hope, is sensible of his blessings and smiles on brother man. For here, if anywhere on earth, does amity seem native to the scene. I am confident of meeting in these happy groves with the natural man, uncorrupted by the scramble for place and pelf, and natural woman too, innocent of wiles and paint and gew-gaws. Those good peasants, who fed me out of their scarcity a few hours back, were surely the archetypes of that bountiful benignity which is the key-note of Viridian character.'

Thus happily reflecting, he reached the first township of Viridia. A certain coyness overtook him, so scantily was he clad for participation in

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the civilities of urban encounter, but necessity drove him to enter the place. His costume, a shirt of blue poplin, was not immodest, for he had so secured its nether limits with withies taken from the hedges that the wind could not disturb them and expose those parts which are properly concealed. The town seemed tranquil, almost deserted, for it was the hot hour of the afternoon. But, when Sanguine had reached the Grand Square, he was soon and fearfully informed that company was present. Some fifty men, young, lusty, and all wearing shirts of red, leaped upon him shouting some indistinguishable cry. Had Sanguine understood their chatter, he would have realised the extremity of his danger, for they were roaring 'Death to all Blue Shirts', with which uniform he was unhappily equipped.

But, just as these bravos were about to strike Sanguine to the ground, fifty others, clad in green shirts, came at a charge towards the hurly-burly, crying 'Death to all Red Shirts'. With that the two factions fell upon each other; their armoury was mainly of clubs and stakes, but some had knives; with these they battered, stabbed, and slashed; some, who had lost their weapons in the maul, used fists to smite or nails to scratch. There was no mercy for those who fell; their bodies were

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trampled and kicked. A storm of oaths and curses, as well as of shrieks and imprecations, filled the air. Such was the confusion and the blind fury of the combatant parties that Sanguine, though lame, was able to escape from the hottest of the melee and observe its progress from behind a pillar. For many minutes the noise of battle rolled and yet no victory was obtained, for the rival factions were equal in strength and frenzy as in numbers. Soon a like quantity on either side were driven to the ground, some motionless in death or swoon, others grovelling and writhing in the torment of their wounds. After some thirty minutes of this desperate brawl there was but one of each uniform left standing. These twain then uttered a multitude of spiteful taunts and sprang at each other in single combat. Both had knives and both struck at once; both hit the mark and both fell together and lay still. Save for the moaning of the injured, the Great Square was now tranquil. The battle was over and, like most battles, it seemed to have given great satisfaction and proved nothing whatever.

'Now here,' said Sanguine to himself, 'has been a most curious pother. The Red Shirts, as I calculate, fell upon me because I, quite inadvertently, had entered their town in a shift of blue. Yet it

## THIS MISERY OF SHIRTS

was not other Blue Shirts who attacked the Reds, but the Green Shirts, who had no reason at all for wishing to defend me. Am I to conclude that they acted thus out of chivalry, hating to see Viridian hospitality to strangers denied by those savage bullies in Red, or that they so venomously hated the Reds that they deemed any cause, even a Blue Shirt, sufficient for the brisk pleasure of assault? Whichever be the answer, I at least appear to have come well out of the hurly-burly, for I have received no damage at all whereas these hundred partisans are all dead or dying. Yet I presume that there is some high principle of policy at stake between these factions, for I cannot believe that in a terrain so favoured by Nature, so bathed in peace, so blessed with foison, man would strike down man without some flawless reason for his cruel rage. But, since I cannot resolve these doubts without further information, I must take prudent steps to protect myself. I derive from this bloody encounter that the wearing of a shirt of any colour is fraught with danger in Viridia and becomes a matter for instant battery. Therefore I would be well advised to alter the scheme of my clothing, else this poor, tattered shirt will surely be the death of me.'

At this he gazed around to see that no women

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of the town were observing him. There seemed to be none, for all the other inhabitants were wont to retire with a prudent haste to their attics and cellars when the Shirted Men were about. So Sanguine hurriedly slipped his own shirt over his head and redraped it round his middle in the way of a kilt or skirt. 'Now surely,' he thought, 'being naked about the back and chest and decently habited about the loins, I offend neither against the zeal of partisan men nor against the decorum of virtuous ladies.'

So garbed he left the town with all speed before any should apprehend him and charge him as the cause of all this murderous affray. It was wearisome work walking in the heat, even though the country was of surpassing beauty, and it was small consolation to reflect upon the brutality of man where nature was so kind. Falling into extreme fatigue, Sanguine remembered with what excellent results he had offered prayer in the morning and resolved to add some tentative vespers to those fruitful matins. So he fell upon his knees and poured out an urgent supplication for some divine provision of nourishment and shelter, but in vain. None passed his way, no ravens brought bread from heaven, no manna fell, and Sanguine proceeded in hunger and in pain, for his old sores

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were smarting and the sun was beating hotly on his naked shoulders. Since prayer had failed, Sanguine, remembering Grub's system for the gaming-tables, pondered over the law of averages and resolved to pray again in the morning, since then he would surely hit the mark. For the meanwhile he had to sup off cold water and some pungent and distasteful berries which he gathered by the way. Once again the night was warm and he was able to sleep beneath the trees without extreme discomfort.

In the morning, when he had washed in a brook, he prayed with zeal and confidence and, sure enough, before he had proceeded for half an hour on his way, he met a young woman who was gathering berries similar to those with which he had so miserably crammed his empty belly on the night before. She wore a scanty film of clothing and when she saw Sanguine coming she gave a little scream, which was to be expected, and then began to speak in the American accent, which was not.

'Surely.' she said, surveying Sanguine's sorry kilt and upper nakedness 'you must be one of us.'

'I know not what you mean,' cried Sanguine in blissful surprise, 'but I am ravished to hear my own language once again.'

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'Do you not belong to the Community yonder?\*' asked the girl. 'I had not seen you before, but people come and go-I do not blame them for going-and it was possible that you were a new arrival.'

'I hope I soon may be,' answered Sanguine, 'for I desperately need food and shelter and, above all, some proper clothing.'

'That you certainly will not get,' was the reply. 'For ours is a Community of Nudists and we wear nothing whatever save when we go abroad, as I do now, in search of these disgusting berries on which we mainly subsist. But how come you here?'

Sanguine told the girl of his adventures and his plight and begged to be led to her comrades. This she consented to do, warning him, however, that a good platter of beef or of eggs and ham, for which his stomach craved, was not to be imagined in so austere a gathering, where all lived upon the sun-kissed fruits of Nature which, in her opinion, were trash, like most of the doctrine that was swallowed with them.

'Why then do you remain in the Community,' asked Sanguine, 'if you care so little for its tenets and its bill of fare?'

'Because my mother has become rapt with

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Higher Thought and believes that she can only achieve Rhythm of the Spirit by acquiring Rhythm of the Body. So, since I was travelling in Europe with her, I have been forced against my will to leave comfortable inns and a plentiful mixed diet and live here in a tent without clothes or food, both of which I adore, and with a great deal of contemplation and gymnastics, both of which I detest. But follow me.'

She led Sanguine away from the road and through a tranquil glade. Presently they came to a chalet of old timbers surrounded by lawns. On the lawns were some forty or fifty people, all totally naked, and, for the most part, extremely repulsive to the view, since nudity rarely suits the middle-aged and elderly aspirants for Spiritual Rhythm. Most of them were dancing in a circle, but some few were practising curious antics by themselves. One lady of a sturdy frame, who was standing on her head, collapsed suddenly and then cried, 'I have reached the summit. I am free. Body sinks and mind soars.' But nobody paid any attention, since all were occupied with their own tumblings and skippings. Suddenly the leader of the dance cried: 'Join hands now for a little carnival of English Folk Rhythm. We shall dance "Rumty-Tumty" first and then "All Tails Up".'

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Whereupon the company pirouetted very gaily in the nude, slapping each other's hands, crying 'Rumty-Tumty' at prescribed intervals, and then proceeding to the climax of the ritual, in which, instead of slapping, they bowed very low to each other and so elevated their posteriors, as the title of the second dance prescribed.

'This establishment,' said Sanguine's friend, 'has made a prude of me, which lately I thought to be impossible. In Grand Rapids I was known as a Tough Baby but here, beholding my mother and her companions wagging their rhythmical rumps, I am consumed with shame and wish only to enter a nunnery. But come, I shall guide you to the president of our Community who likes to be called the High Thinker.'

'But is he not leading the dance?'

'No, he is not altogether a fool. He does not dance, explaining, to those who ask why, that he has already achieved the Ultimate Harmony. What he does is to keep the money-bags and since these noodles pay him a hundred dollars a week in order to eat berries and nuts, drink a deal of cold water, and caper on his grass, his money-bags must be suffering from the dropsy.'

With that she led him into the house, knocked at a door, and pushed Sanguine into the august

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presence of the High Thinker. To his inexpressible astonishment it was no other than Dr. Junck-Vorwarts, who was sitting totally naked but partly screened by his beard, now richer and longer than of yore, and by a newspaper which he was closely perusing.

'My dear Doctor.' cried Sanguine. The Doctor, who had not seen Sanguine since he was quite a small boy, did not recognise him at first and, when he had heard the whole of Sanguine's calamitous story, he was not too profuse in welcome since he had no relish for penniless visitors. None the less, the principles of humanity which ever guided his life, forbade him to turn an unfortunate from the door; he offered Sanguine a bed in a tent and a share of the communal refection; the midday meal of berries and nut-meat with a bowl of sour milk would shortly be ready. Of course in such a Community there could be no servants; each took joy to be the servant of the others and some of their loftiest feats of rhythmic collaboration were achieved in the washing of dishes and scrubbing of floors. After the meal there would be a silent hour of Upward Thinking, then social intercourse, with an informal discussion on the ethical value of deep breathing. To all of this any old pupil of the Doctor's was welcome, without

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fee, that is until such time as he found himself in funds again, when, as a man of honour, he would doubtless reimburse the household for his previous maintenance.

'You may be surprised,' continued the Doctor, 'to find me here, but England could not contain me. The air was insufficiently liberal. My neighbour, the colonel, whom I think you remember to your pain, recently passed away in a choleric stroke, but before his end he had persecuted me bitterly, continually complaining to the police of this or that imaginary grievance. My campaign for Nudity - the Sacred Unveiling as we call it here - was cruelly maligned. I was pressed to leave the country and, ever courteous, I responded to that invitation, being eager to found an Adult Community of Mental and Physical Rhythm in this lovely and congenial place. Here I vowed to abolish utterly the shams and shames of a cloth-bound society. Clothes are the symbol of hypocrisy. They must go. They must be torn off. A further point confirmed my faith. All over the world, as you have learned to your danger and distress, men have become maddened by their wrappings, especially by the Shirt, which has now, in its various hues, become as potent a symbol of strife and cause of bloodshed as the cross, the

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crescent, the swastika, and other talismans of the warring creeds. Even to this modern Arcady has the poison penetrated. Blue Shirts, Red Shirts, Green Shirts, Puce and Purple and Gamboge Shirts, all are the emblems of a party rage which does not hesitate to become homicidal. Surely if clothes and vestments bring men to such a pitch of unreasoning passion, the devotees of peace must strip, unveil, proclaim the naked truth from naked lungs, and assert the unconditioned verity of physical fact. If he who dons a shirt must lose his wits, only by doffing our trousers can we others find our souls. The logic, my dear Sanguine, is absolute.'

Sanguine agreed that it was so and, lacking breeches to unbrace, he somewhat nervously suited the action to the word by removing the tattered kilt which he had so far retained.

'Splendid,' cried the Doctor. 'The Sacred Unveiling. A noble gesture of conviction by our reason and of devotion to our cause. You will wear nothing while you remain here; should you leave the private grounds, however, it might be desirable - even in Viridia there are crass and vulgar minds wholly out of touch with Upward Thinking. And now, my dear fellow, go forth and join your new comrades, for I have some

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calculations to make. The price of nuts has risen very sharply of late. I suspect some conspiracy among the Viridian traders, a scoundrel band. These things, these petty and commercial cares, must be faced even by the High Thinker himself, as my folk so generously entitle me. Fortunately I have achieved the Ultimate Harmony and am not to be thrown out of mental rhythm even by the cozening hucksters of the vegetable market. Go, boy, leap upwards, think upwards, feast, dance, be rhythmic, and be merry.'

## CHAPTER XIII

### IN WHICH THE HERO AND ALL HIS COMPANIONS ARE UNLUCKY

**T**O Sanguine the prospect of feasting seemed remote, of dancing uncongenial. Yet the Doctor never failed to impress him with his high sincerity of purpose. Such an open and impressionable nature as Sanguine's could not be adamant against lofty notions loftily expressed. Might there not after all be some rich spiritual reward in a merry bout of Rumty-Tumty? 'Body sinks, mind soars,' one of the atheltic ladies had proclaimed. Might not the postures essential to the joyous climax of All Tails Up evoke some upward flighting of the soul? True, he must confess a strong distaste for the spectacle of bodies sacredly unveiled, at least of such bodies as were attracted by the Doctor's exercise, dietary, and regimen. Yet who was he, a young student on the threshold of discovery, to deny the mental stimulus which unbracing and unbuttoning might

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convey? Sanguine resolved to forget his shame, and to fight down his blushes. He would bravely take his part in the cleansing discipline of the Nude. Nay more, he would leap with the leaping throng and derive the ecstasy that was latent in a rhythmic jostle of the Rumty-Tumty kind.

But now it was time for the midday meal. So Sanguine proceeded boldly in all his nakedness to the refectory and there was welcomed by a brisk party of ladies as a convert to the cause, indeed to all the causes, the downward bending, the upward thinking, the dietary, and the dance. Over their bowls of sour milk and their plates heaped high with berries, filberts, and raisins these nymphs, whose vigour did not dwindle as their years increased, grew uncommonly sportive and jocund. They not only counselled Sanguine on the virtues of their particular diet, warning him against the hazard of consuming carbo-hydrates and similar poisons, but they also presented excellent examples of its strengthening powers. For they were as nimble as coy and would swallow a nut or a raisin with a laughing cry of 'This for the ductless glands' or a jocund query of, 'How are the hormones, Mrs. Parker?' They vowed that poor Sanguine must lead the discussion later on, for they would certainly value his opinion on the

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Ethical Value of Deep Breathing, an engrossing theme to be debated that afternoon at their Freedom Forum. Sanguine modestly replied that he was, by nature and inclination, the shallowest of breathers and no talker at all, but nothing would daunt the ladies who sat about him. 'If you try to run away,' cried one, 'you shall not escape. For hide and seek is one of our favourite sports. You are going to be one of the masters of our revels. Soon you will be leading the slaps in Rumty-Tumty, soon you will be promoted to the honourable post of First Bottom Forward in All Tails Up, a most responsible office.'

At this prospect Sanguine's spirits sank very low. In loyalty to the Doctor he endeavoured to believe that all this would have the most beneficent effect upon his Psyche. But the act of self-persuasion was too difficult and, with a sudden excuse of nausea, he rose and fled from the refectory. His lower, bourgeois nature had altogether conquered the nobler elements of his Ego, and, yielding to the middle-class passion for concealment, he plunged into the shrubbery, snatching down leafy branches to make him an apron of some sort, even as Adam did aforetime. 'I shall not dance,' he moaned to himself. 'I shall not be the First Bottom Forward. I shall breathe

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as I please and I shall not make speeches at the Freedom Forum.' And with that he lay skulking in the bushes, prostrate with shame and misery.

Presently he heard someone coming and was much relieved to discover that it was his first guide to the Community, the American girl who had confessed herself to be a Tough Baby. She had not been to the refectory, preferring to snatch some of the fruits and eat in solitude. And she was not nude, preferring against the Doctor's discipline, to keep a silken shawl about her person.

'Poor fellow,' she said in a most consoling manner. 'I saw that the High Thinker had your kilt off. I never doubted that he would, the dirty old man.'

'Do you speak thus of the Good Doctor?', inquired Sanguine in great surprise.

'In my opinion,' she replied, 'he is bogus, beastly, filthy, and fraudulent. But I admit my opinion to be solitary. He has deceived all the others and my mother is the blindest of his devotees. But you, I notice, have disobeyed the rule and have followed the Sacred Unveiling with a Blasphemous Re-draping, which shows you to have good sense. Yet,' she added pensively, 'I doubt not that you would stand exposure better than most.'

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"To tell the truth," answered Sanguine. "I cannot endure this way of life or the company either. Deep in my heart I feel that great virtue may reside in it, but I am weak; my old shames and hesitations overwhelm me."

'You are right,' said the girl. 'You and I are too good for this rabble of gibbering pretenders and skipping charlatans. Let us be friends to each other and distant with all else.'

This seemed to Sanguine to open up a fascinating future and he suddenly recovered his composure. At the same time his future was a dark problem. If he escaped, whither, penniless and garmentless, could he turn? He explained his apprehensions, but his friend only laughed and said that love would find a way. 'Come,' she said, 'let us ramble and forget the miseries of the moment.'

Sanguine readily agreed, for he found her an enchanting creature. Her name, she told him, was the exalted one of Ginevra, bestowed upon her by her mother in a fit of cultural affectation. 'But my friends,' she added, 'have always called me Ginny, which I find to be an apt, agreeable title.'

So Sanguine called her Ginny and they became very pleasant with each other, wandering about

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the woodland while the Community was gathering at the Freedom Forum. They talked of many things and Sanguine, since he always believed what he was told, presently agreed to her harsh notions of the Doctor and of his cultural curriculum. To whatever she said he happily consented.

So he passed into paying her pretty compliments, to which she made no objection. When he asserted that she alone of all the Community deserved to be undraped, she bade him not to be so wanton; he endeavoured to pull back her robe and they had a jolly tousel, which naturally roused Sanguine's expectations the more. Our hero swore that she was perfect and that to conceal perfection was a crime, to which she modestly replied that there was a time for all things, which time was not before 6 p.m.

\*Why,' cried Sanguine, 'it is surely no more than three o'clock. What tyrannical dalliance is this?'

'Before the practice of love,' answered Ginny, 'there is the talk of it. From what you have told me, you are innocent of the diversion.'

'Alas, yes,' said Sanguine. 'My affairs in that respect continually go astray.'

'Well,' said Ginny, 'I am not innocent. My parents would not have me so, being free-minded folk, who have more wisdom about glands and

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hormones than any in the University of New Chelsea, where my father is a professor of Sexual Relations and the Vital Urge. So you may judge that I was reared in an atmosphere of the utmost liberality. My childish feet were set upon the Scientific Approach to Sex. Therefore, dear Sanguine, I speak with some authority, for I have acquired both the theory and the practice of this traffic, though the latter was sometimes gained in ways of which my parents know but little. Sex, in my experience, is necessary for our satisfaction and I can simply confess that, when there is no nonsense, I am all for it.'

At this Sanguine showed signs of lively glee, but she bade him keep silence and deflected his embracing arm.

'At the same time,' she continued, 'since you are innocent, you must be warned. Believe me, there is as much hocus-pocus about the state of passion as about the commerce and politics of nations. You have probably heard much about Sublimation, Liberation and all such mighty words from the professors who batten on this business. Love has been made sickly by the yearning poets and silly by the mountebank doctors of the Psyche and by all the chatterers who make so grave a pother about it in their books. What you are to under-

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stand, my innocent boy, is the need for moderate hopes and no regrets. On those terms I shall permit your embraces in due course and do not say that you have not been suitably prepared for consummation. My amorous life has had its own disappointments and I scruple to raise romantic dreams in any recruit to such a brief and simple exercise.'

'How charming is your frankness!' cried Sanguine. 'I am ever a believer in the word of others. But for once I do not believe. Love is divine, as all the poets sing. I cling to my romantic dream whatever you may say, for it is you who have given me such exquisite visions of bliss. I tremble with rapture. I shall liberate my Ego at last. I am on the brink of heaven. I shall taste of paradise.'

And with that, even as she bade him not to be a cuckoo, he let his own coverings fly, snatched in a fever at the garment which concealed her bosom, and seized her in the quivering fondness of his arms.

But, while his lips were devouring hers, a fierce cry came from the woods behind and a posse of rough and angry men, wearing the uniform of the Green Shirt, tore them apart with many exclamations which seemed to signify disgust and rage.

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The two lovers were forcibly wrapped in green garments and then flung into separate vans, of which a score, armed with guns, had been driven into the forest. Poor Sanguine, cheated once more of Sublimation, was bruised, kicked, and now confined in captivity. He could understand nothing of this brutish onslaught. He lay in wrath and panic, for he deeply feared lest one of the brutal soldiery had snatched the jewel which he intended for himself. What had befallen his Ginny he knew not; he could only comfort himself by reflecting that she was, after all, renowned as a Tough Baby in the University of New Chelsea and elsewhere in the wild, adventurous West. She would sell her virtue dearly, a course which is always preferable to giving it for nothing.

Presently the vans moved on. By putting his eye to a chink in the side of his vehicle Sanguine could see that they were driving to the Community House. There the troops dismounted and made a swift raid upon the members, now gathered in earnest debate at the Freedom Forum. At this onslaught many of the ladies breathed very deeply indeed, expecting rapine. Some scuttled briskly, like harassed hens, about the lawns and attempted an escape into the bushes. The soldiery were put at great pains to surround and

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extricate them, for much addiction to Rumty-Tumty had made the rhythmic devotees uncommonly nimble, whereas the Green Shirt Guards were clumsy, bloated fellows who had recently fed heavily on sausage and the native brandy. But the spirit had not fired their lusts. They appeared to have no object beyond arrest and indulged no carnal whims at their victims' expense. After some twenty minutes the Community had been thoroughly ransacked and its members were all collected in bondage. They were then constrained to wear green wrappings and bundled, without further ceremony, into the vans. The Doctor himself, who had a sooty and dishevelled aspect, since he had been dragged from refuge in a chimney, was propelled, with some violent kicks on his backside, into the wagon which Sanguine already occupied. A few more male members of the Upward Thinkers were also tossed in beside them, much terrified and contused. Then the Captain of the Guard made a last search for captives and, being satisfied that the entire company was in his power, ordered the vans to drive off, which they did with great speed and noise.

'Oh, my Doctor, dear Doctor,' cried Sanguine. 'Here is a terrible calamity. To think that you of

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all men should be thus buffeted! Tell me, pray, the cause of these malpractices.'

The Doctor began to remove some large deposits of soot from his noble and imposing beard.

'I am told,' he said, 'that we are all under arrest, which, indeed, is evident enough. The leader of these bullies happens to speak English, having been sent to finish his education in the University of Oxford; the fact that he has come to such a brutish career speaks poorly of that place. Because of his gift of tongues he was chosen for this deplorable task. I had time to snatch a few words with him while he was dislodging me from the chimney.'

'And did he tell you the reason for this raid?'

He explained to me that the Green Shirt Faction had recently risen up to save this much vexed country, which had previously been saved by five other factions in rapid succession. Their first task of national importance was to destroy the wearers of all other shirts. This, you might think, would not involve ourselves in outrage, since we are shirtless, being disciples of the Sacred Unveiling. But, by a most melancholy coincidence, dedicaton to the Nude has put us in the worst plight of all. Just when the Greens had mastered all the other shirts, there suddenly arose a horde of

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Christian Social Anarchists whose notion was to wear no shirts of any colour. These were comparatively mild men, of the Right, but they were followed by another horde, the Unchristian Anarchists of the Left, whose more revolutionary plan was to abandon trousers as well as shirts and to fall upon the poor moderates who had compromised with the clothing problem as well as to overthrow the Government by violence. Now the No-Shirt Party was deemed by the Green Leaders to be bad enough, but the No Trousers Party was regarded as far more desperate and quite beyond any pale of toleration. Decrees were at once issued, passing sentence of imprisonment and torture on all found to be without shirts; as for the trouserless they are to be imprisoned and tortured as a preliminary to execution. Under these decrees, poor Sanguine, we honest disciples of Nudism are now arrested as political offenders of the most abandoned type and you may judge for yourself that our future is like to be stormy.'

'But what of the women-folk?' cried Sanguine, who was far more concerned for his dear Ginevra than for himself.

'They are in no better way than ourselves. Their crime is held to be equally heinous. For the ladies of the Christian Social Anarchists had

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followed their men and instituted a No-Blouse campaign, while the viragos attached to the Unchristian Anarchists of the Left became No-Skirt fanatics to the last woman. They were as much engaged in revolutionary violence as the men and, since Viridia very properly accepts the principles of Sex Equality, the women are now condemned to the same penalties. Accordingly our feminine comrades are in like catastrophe with ourselves and will enjoy equality upon the rack and at the gallows. There are two exceptions to the general parity of our alleged crime and our likely punishment. You, my unfortunate boy, are in even greater disgrace and so is your American friend Ginevra. For you were taken in the very act of disrobing; you have broken two by-laws concerning self-exposure and unseemly embraces on land owned and controlled by the Office of Forests of Viridia. This, it appears, is as bad as treason, for the by-laws are rigidly enforced. I do not blame you for seeking Sublimation and Expansion of the Ego and your nudity I naturally praise. But you have been indiscreet in your choice of site and I fear for you both, lest some additional torment be imposed.'

At this Sanguine was precipitated into the deepest gloom; not that he feared for himself. But

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that his darling should be thus condemned to the extremes of cruelty was a reflection beyond endurance.

'Meanwhile.' continued the Doctor, 'We are being driven with all speed to the public gaol of the capital, Grenadino, and what will befall us there we can only surmise. But I fear the worst. Such an experience will test the emotional poise even of those who have achieved the Ultimate Harmony.'

Sanguine pondered a while in misery and then he said, 'My friend, Mr. Pilfer, whom I met very busily engaged in Cerulea, was proposing to summon a British cruiser to impose law and order on the turbulent elements in that country, which is only a few miles distant. Perchance, if we could get our wrongs known to the British Minister in Grenadino, he might request the cruiser to call at that harbour also and discharge a few cannons as a reminder of British concern for international justice. But you, dear Doctor, if I remember rightly, have little use for ships of war and show of force. You were ever a man of peace, craving amity between nations and the abolition of all gunpowder sanctions. You would surely refuse such succour from the tyrannical violence of the British Navy?'

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'It is a nice point.' replied the Doctor thoughtfully, 'and one which it is possible even for the most progressive mind to ponder with discretion. Where such enormous principles are at stake, I would hesitate to abandon all idea of forceful remedies. International law, as well as international amity, must be upheld. I am glad, dear Sanguine, that you have mentioned the presence of that cruiser, for man must often, amid the rubs of life, use weapons not of his own choosing. I shall ponder the moral issue.'

Thereupon the Doctor pondered, until the vans arrived at Grenadino. Here the party were put into irons and flung into the seclusion of subterranean cells, as dirty as dark. For Sanguine there was at least one consolation; the daily mush of stewed goat's flesh, unsavoury as it was to the palate, was more welcome to the stomach than anything he had tasted since he left the company of Mr. Pilfer. His exercise, too, was but a march round the yard. It was strictly forbidden to dance, be rhythmic, or be naked, for which veto Sanguine was profoundly grateful.

## CHAPTER XIV

### IN WHICH THE HERO TAKES ARMS AGAINST A SEA OF TROUBLES, AND BECOMES A HAPPY WARRIOR

**F**OR many weeks the prisoners lay in horrid duurance. At least they had the satisfaction of remaining alive and of being spared the rack. The Doctor, since he was a Briton by adoption of citizenship, implored and at last obtained an interview with his country's Minister in Grenadino, but that notable, being a gentleman of high breeding and strict notions, strongly convinced that it was the proper duty of an Englishman to wear not only a shirt but a stiff one, took a hearty dislike to the unhappy doctor and all his company. The American representative in Viridia, whose chief ambition was to be more conservative in his views and more correct in all sartorial conduct than any English aristocrat, was no more cordial to his imprisoned fellow-citizens. Both these agents of diplomacy agreed, over an excellent dinner, that their great nations could not be re-

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sponsible for such a raggle-taggle crew or protest with any vehemence against the incarceration of those shirtless, scatter-brained, atheistical creatures. However, they dispatched notes to their Governments, composed in a somewhat chilly style, and the Governments, in the familiar manner of diplomacy, responded with other notes; thus, the correspondence continued, at suitable intervals, throughout the summer. The victims meantime were kept in close confinement with no further penalty except the compulsion to wear clothes. On attempting to dance Rumty-Tumty and bend downward in the prison-yard they were charged to abandon such barbarous antics; in their cells they had ample time for thinking upward.

As the women-prisoners were sequestered in some feminine Bastille of their own, Sanguine could catch no glimpse and hear no word of his dear one; so his life became a slow torment of doubts and fears as well as of the physical nuisances to which all impounded felons are liable. The walls were high, the guards alert. There was no news of the British cruiser which, having appeared in a most imposing manner at Esporto and achieved all that Mr. Pilfer desired without discharge of a single cannon, returned to its normal waters. At last, after many monotonous days,

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Sanguine observed a change in the demeanour of his guards. There was excitement in the air. Through the narrow grating of his cell he could hear the cheering of crowds and the music of martial bands. He had learned to exchange some simple words with his overlookers and from them he derived the knowledge that war was imminent, war with Cerulea; also that such a conflict was more popular with the inhabitants of Grenadino than any sports of the field or the arena. 'Now,' thought Sanguine, 'there will surely be some action taken with regard to the prisoners. For in time of war food and men are scarce and why should the Viridians wish to keep and nourish in a useless confinement such sturdy fellows as myself?'

During the common exercise he asked Dr. Junck-Vorwarts whether the Doctor would care to enlist; the Doctor replied that it was entirely against his scruples and that he should never accept his liberty on such humiliating terms. But Sanguine was so weary of his fetters that he was ready to forgive the Viridian Government for its oppression and even to assist it in its battles, if only he could go to the wars as a free person. Besides, might not his darling Ginevra also be freed in order to render some service to the State?

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At this prospect he was well-nigh beside himself and eagerly besought his gaoler to inquire about the chances of release. At last there came to him a soldier of high rank or at least one who wore the moustaches and the insignia proper to a lofty military station. This magnifico, who had, in fact, been recalled to his post of sergeant-major from the service of a Picture Theatre, brought an interpreter and explained with his aid that, while Britain remained neutral, some chivalrous sons of that country had formed a Foreign Legion, that it was already arrived in Grenadino, and that if Sanguine wished to join this band of heroes he would have the liberty to do so. Viridia had not the slightest objection to his dying on her behalf.

'A thousand thanks,' cried Sanguine gleefully. 'My gaoler has already told me something of Viridia's wrongs and I am confident that I shall be fighting for the Right.'

'You need not indulge that sort of speech with me,' answered the interpreter. 'Did you ever hear of a soldier who was fighting for the Wrong? If I were you I should think twice before leaving the luxury of a room to myself and regular meals in order to bivouac in swamps, lie down to get rheumatics, and stand up to be shot at. But that's no

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business of mine, and if you want the freedom of the firing line you can have it.'

'I do most eagerly desire it.' answered Sanguine.

'Very well then. Your papers will be made out and, when you receive them, you will be equipped and sent to the Legion.'

With that Sanguine's visitors left the cell and our hero had but a few hours more of captivity, during which he busily speculated on the cause of this strife which was so welcome to himself.

It had happened in this wise. The Government both of Viridia and Cerulea had been much vexed by subversive elements and so found it difficult to sustain themselves in office, whose emoluments and powers their members greatly prized. When such troubles beset Ministers of State, it is ever a wise policy to secure the national unity by discovering a national enemy. Accordingly it had occurred to the rulers of both countries that a call to arms for the sake of National Defence would be a prudent as well as a patriotic line of action. Now the populations of both these states, although they had fought seventeen wars against each other during the last hundred years, were always ready for another, so high was their national spirit, so acute their awareness of duty to the Motherland. The sport was in their blood

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and, after so long an interval as five pacific years, any Government which did not gratify the itch for arms was likely to be dismissed in favour of another which would honourably call its citizens to the colours. Fortunately for the statesmen, who were under the constant necessity of arranging these campaigns and finding suitable battle-cries and causes for the carnage, there was a standing reason for antagonism which had the advantage of being obstinate and even irremovable. This was the famous Stincka Question, which had endured both the seventeen wars in the last century and thirteen Commissions of the Congress of Nations in the last ten years. It had been referred to Geneva and the Hague as well as to the bloody arbitrament of war and always in the perfect certainty that nothing whatever could be settled.

Cerulea and Viridia are divided by the river Stincka, a slow, meandering, muddy, and pestilent stream which, for most of its course, offers a clear boundary between the two countries. But, where the Stincka rises, in a vast and malarial morass, there is a large area which is not so easily definable. Since this filthy quagmire is useless to man or beast and produces nothing but swarms of water-snakes, bog-rats, mosquitoes, and venomous

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parasites of all kinds, the ancients in their leisurely, haphazard, impolitic way, took no heed of the place, deemed it unfit for human concern, and left it to the smaller members of God's creation. But, during the nineteenth century, when the trumpets of Freedom blew loud and clear and the peoples discovered the glories of nation-hood, such sterile apathy was at once dispelled. The Stincka Morass ceased to be a quagmire and became a Question. The Ceruleans and the Viridians fell to arguing very sharply and with many learned arguments drawn from history as to the rightful possession of this swamp. From argument they soon proceeded to honourable blows. As has been related, they had already fought seventeen wars on this issue; the Ceruleans had won nine of these and the Viridians eight, a state of affairs which naturally left the Viridians most eager to draw level. When each war was decided the conqueror proclaimed his ownership of the Stincka Morass and this claim was formally admitted in a treaty. But possession, as we know, is nine-tenths of the law and of treaties. It was impossible in fact to possess these horrible marshes, since, owing to their pestiferous nature, no garrison could survive either in or near them. Hence its suzerainty remained agreeably open to a fresh assault, despite

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the treaties, whenever the previous loser felt inclined to try again. That some millions of lives had already been squandered on the Stincka Question was no discouragement to further bloodshed; as happens in these affairs, the more were killed yesterday, the more must be killed tomorrow. For, when the rulers of each country desired to cement the national unity by rallying the citizens against a common enemy, they could each cite the Stincka Morass and proclaim from a hundred platforms 'Have all our gallant soldiers been sacrificed in vain?' At which query many thousands of brave fellows would immediately prepare to kill each other in order to discover the answer. (Since each country had conscription and a fertile, if impoverished, population, there was never any shortage of brave fellows.) In each country there were seventeen Stincka War Memorials with plinths on which the patriot orators were now making such speeches as would certainly cause the erection of the eighteenth.

To indulge the appetite for war was once as simple a matter as it was satisfactory to all concerned. But in recent times the cost of dying has advanced with the cost of living; no longer are the soldiery content with rough pikes and staves or bows cut cheaply from the native timber. First

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came gunpowder and muskets and these, employed without extravagance, ran the nations into no great debt; the first dozen campaigns between Cerulea and Viridia had been such elementary matters as to be easily discharged by duties on alcohol; indeed the soldiers, drinking freely, as is their custom, almost paid for their own upkeep, munitions, and dispatch. But later, when Science arrived to improve the technique of homicide as of transport, illumination, and other social services, the gunner was no longer content with his musket and there was a general demand for more sumptuous machines, which were supplied, along with liberal credits, from the well-stored arsenals of the greater nations. Thus the two countries, by borrowing and spending abroad, were enabled to prosecute their campaigns in a larger style, which was as much to the advantage of international trade as it was of their own troops. But at last there arose a universal suggestion that Disarmament was at once a Christian duty and a sound economy. Cerulea and Viridia were bidden to attend the Congress of Nations whose function it was to reduce the various equipments of cannon, fighting ships, and so forth. This Congress, with the fissiparous habit of its kind, divided into thirty-eight Mixed Commissions all of which met

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at intervals throughout four years and held three hundred and ninety-eight special conferences in various capitals, where the members were entertained at the public charge and so royally entreated with banquets that the owners of hotels and purveyors of feasts soon regarded Disarmament as the most precious of all causes.

While the Greater Powers found, in the last resort, that reasons of state forbade them to risk any diminution of the national forces, the Lesser, whose debts were now running higher than the lenders liked, were urged to abate their extravagance. Cerulea and Viridia, at first offended by such partiality, quickly realised the advantages of some limitation. They agreed to the abrogation of large guns, large ships, and aeroplanes; such petty weapons as machine-guns, small arms, and a few light cannons were retained of necessity. For how, if these were taken from them, could their various domestic and internal factions suppress and slaughter one another? How, in short, could Law and Order be maintained? Thus equipped with the smaller and cheaper tools of war they not only conformed to the Moral Sense of the other nations; they realised, to their great satisfaction, that war had become a much more economical sport than it had been in recent years

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and now could last much longer without risk of financial collapse. Disarmament was seen to be at once morally uplifting and practically advantageous.

The Greater Powers were delighted with this progress of international morality and, while they lost their trade in heavy ships, cannon, and so forth, they could still prosecute a brisk one in the lighter arms and munitions. When some perverse grumblers attacked this traffic as immoral and contrary to all the pacific principles of the Congress, Sir Philip Pharisee, who had the matter in charge as English deputy, produced with a nimble diplomacy a solution of this ethical quandary. There was in his own country a formula of negotiation known as the Quota; by this one country would agree to purchase so much of another's wares on a reciprocal guarantee of like purchase in the other direction. Why not, urged Sir Philip, apply the Quota to the quandary, but in a novel and ingenious fashion? Each of the Greater Powers should be entitled to send the lesser combatants so many thousand shells, cartridges, and the like provided they also sent (at reasonable charges) a proportionate quantity of Bibles and pacific literature. For each thousand shells, say a hundred copies of the New Testament

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and of the Guides to Peaceful Arbitration issued by the Congress of Nations. The combatant parties were so hungry for the munitions that they readily bought the Bibles. The solution was everywhere acclaimed as a shrewd and profitable compromise and the Quota System was in greater honour than ever before. The grumblers were appeased by the distribution of good words and peaceful counsel; the makers of munitions were not deprived of their commerce; and a new market was discovered for the printers and vendors of the books and tracts in question. Sir Philip Pharisee thus became the most popular statesman of his time and was loaded with honours in every capital which he visited.

But this was not all. The prudent rulers of Viridia and Cerulea had hit upon yet another device for strengthening their Treasuries in time of war. The peoples of the world had discovered a new mode of entertainment, the Theatre of Pictures, and to supply this appetite the world was scoured for lovely women and imposing men whose photographic images would arouse in the spectator the liveliest feelings of approbation and even of desire. But, quite as popular as the sight of two human perfections mingling in a kiss, was the view of human beings caught in the extremes

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of danger and distress. Some of these picture-films batted upon love, others, no less profitably, on death. According to the law of Psychological Compensation, so acutely analysed by the learned doctors of Buda-Pesth, the spectacle of beast-fights, shootings, whippings, and rapine of all sorts is especially delicious to the hum-drum folk who go daily to the office or the factory and never kill anything but a fly. Naturally, therefore, a photographic record of authentic war with men charging, hacking, bleeding, stabbing and, above all, writhing in death was of great marketable value in the Picture Theatres all across the world. The owners of these palaces would pay heavily for the right to display such attractive wares and many bogus battles had been purposely contrived and photographed in order to meet this clamorous demand. But naturally authentic slaughter was more valuable than artificial play-acting of the same.

The two Governments of Viridia and Cerulea were prompt to realise the commercial possibilities of their own addiction to carnage. Each reserved its own Film Rights, whenever war broke out, and allowed no foreign interlopers to photograph their troops during some bloody affray and sell the pictures thus obtained. Both

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sides had their cameras in action beside the guns and in the trenches and the records thus obtained were sold to the world at most satisfactory rates; indeed, a good, brisk battle, with plenty of slaughter in the foreground, could almost be relied upon to show a profit, even when all charges for the weapons and munitions (plus the Quota Bibles) had been met. The sham battles elsewhere photographed were no longer in demand. The seekers of escape from worldly troubles could now, from China to Peru and even in the islands which lie between, recline comfortably in their seats and enjoy for a few pence no bogus bloodshed but the veritable face of Glory as it led men to the grave. So, with the profits of their War Films pouring in, the Governments of Cerulea and Viridia were not only enabled to continue their fighting, but had an excellent reason for seeing that it never stopped, a point of view most congenial to the merchants and moneylenders of foreign countries and to the owners and patrons of all Picture Theatres.

This, accordingly, was the situation when Sanguine was discharged from gaol to join the Foreign Legion of Viridia. The eighteenth war to settle the Stincka Question had been inaugurated with the usual ceremonial; patriotic harangues

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were delivered on the plinths of the seventeen War Memorials. Grenadino was a waving sea of Green flags and Green shirts. Throughout the streets the soldiers went marching to the rousing strains of the Viridian National Anthem; gaily they chanted the historic Stincka Song and the crowds in the cafes took up that moving refrain as they gulped another tot of the local brandy and pledged the victory of their darling troops. The stationers brought out the stock of Stincka maps left over from the last war, the caterers did a busy trade in Stincka sweet-meats and the tobacconists loaded their stores with those twopenny (and symbolic) torpedoes, the Stincka Cigars, reminding the patriot that the tobacco-tax was essential to the purchase of more munitions. Smoke another Stincka, they cried, and blow another Cerulean devil into hell.

When war was declared it was habitual to release all able-bodied criminals from the gaols; it was under this regulation that Sanguine, on signifying his willingness to join the Foreign Legion, was taken from his cell, equipped with green uniform and rifle, and sent to a barrack outside the town. He was the only member of his party deemed fit for the military service and he was removed alone from the prison. He questioned

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his escort, who spoke a few words of English, as to the likely fate of his less robust companions. They, it seemed, would remain in prison, but would be specially set to sewing flags and bunting; the women captives might, in case of extreme need, be dispatched to work in hospitals; at present they were still in confinement and charged to make bandages and wrappings.

'Alas!' thought Sanguine, 'my Ginevra is parted from me again. But perchance she may be sent in time to aid the wounded and then I pray that some chance bullet may, without killing, send me to a bed of which she is the warden. There to languish would be heaven indeed!'

Furthermore he was not at all reluctant to suffer in Viridia's cause for, while in the prison, he had been supplied by his gaoler with some simple arguments exposing the villainy of Cerulea and explaining the necessity of recovering the National Honour which was extricably imbedded in the Stincka Morass. Soon Sanguine's bosom had begun to burn with righteous indignation against the infamous tyranny of the Ceruleans, who appeared to have broken every law of God and man. Believing, as ever, what he was told, he craved to be in arms beside his stalwart comrades of Viridia, defending the integrity of a small

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nation against the brutal and aggressive neighbour, whose forces outnumbered their own by no less than three per cent. He rejoiced to think that the conscience of the world had been stirred and that Viridia would not stand alone. He marched through the streets, a free campaigner vowed to freedom's cause. All around him was a scene of the utmost animation and patriotic fervour, to which his heart most warmly responded. He waved in a mettlesome manner to the girls and saluted the officers with decorum. He almost forgot his Ginevra in the ecstasy of serving as a Viridian volunteer. As they passed one of the seventeen plinths the Minister for War was observing that Viridia would never sheath the sword until the accursed enemy had been rolled in mud and blood. Sanguine could not, of course, understand what the orator said, but he surmised its purport from the lusty cheers of the crowd to which he added his own voice. When the mob roared the chorus of the Stincka Song, he made similar noises to the best of his ability.

At last they came to a barrack outside the city where the Foreign Legion had just been stationed. A few members of it, who did not seem as lusty or as virile as Sanguine expected, were lounging in the yard and eyed him with curiosity. 'Hail,

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comrades.' cried Sanguine. 'I came to join you in a splendid and a sacred cause.' At this they looked extremely surprised and muttered among themselves with a liberal admixture of filthy language. But Sanguine was not to be shocked, for he had heard that soldiers were men of valiant oaths as they were of valiant spirit. So he passed into the building and was taken by the escort to the Colonel's room. Bidden to enter, he marched into a chamber of great space and luxury and there, to his inexpressible surprise, was his old friend Stephen Grub, a dashing figure in his new green uniform with a fine accoutrement of belt and sword and top boots that sparkled royally. Grub was sitting at a large table which was covered with bottles and smoking an immense cigar of true Havana breed.

'My dear Sanguine,' cried Grub, also in some consternation at the sight of so familiar a figure in so unlikely a place.

'Colonel,' answered Sanguine, and saluted very smartly with a click of his heels.

'You need not practise those monkey-tricks with me,' answered Grub, when the escort had departed. 'So you are the recruit from the prison! Well, it was ever my opinion that so honest a man as yourself could never keep long out of trouble.

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But a Viridian prison is a strange resort and, I should imagine, unsavoury. Meanwhile refresh yourself and tell me your story.'

Sanguine briefly explained his adventures and then said to Grub, 'I cannot sufficiently express my delight at finding you at the head of so fine a band, dedicated to so noble a struggle. I rejoice to think that you are offering your life for this small and gallant nation in its hour of need.'

'Believe me,' replied Grub. 'I am doing nothing of the kind. At least I hope there will be no question of bloodshed for us. And as for this Viridian nation, do you think me such a fool as to offer my time and trouble for a pack of squabbling dagoes? No, Sanguine, I have no interest in the pestilent swamp for which these bloodthirsty ruffians insist on filling each other with lead, if they have not died of a fever before firing their guns. I am here on business, as befits a sensible Englishman, and I hope you will join me as befits a man of the same race and the same prudence. My story is too long to explain at present. I propose that we drive into Grenadino and dine at the best hotel - there is one tolerable chef in that intolerable city - and there I can narrate the cause of my coming here. Meanwhile, as you and I are the only educated members of this riff-raff Legion,

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we had better give you some military rank. Attach some of these gawdy stripes to your arms and cap and consider yourself a Captain and my first officer of Staff. We Chastity Men must stand together.'

With that Colonel Grub laughed very heartily, drank very deeply, roared very savagely for an orderly, commanded his official motor car, and drove with Captain Sanguine at a prodigious pace to the best hotel of Grenadino, where he again laughed very heartily, drank very deeply, and roared very savagely at the manager and waiters, assuring these varlets that, if the food and drink were not to his taste, they would all be arrested under martial law and shot at midnight. 'Why this sentimental habit of waiting for the dawn?' he inquired of Sanguine.

Then he commanded a page-boy and bade him summon Miss Marcia Magnum to dine with them.

'Maggie,' he explained, 'is attached to the Legion; loosely, of course, quite loosely.'

## CHAPTER XV

IN WHICH THE HERO IS STILL A SOLDIER, YET FINDS  
A NEW PROFESSION

**M**ISS MAGNUM was evidently not a woman to be hurried even by so imperative and commanding a fellow as Grub had now become. Accordingly, while they waited for her appearance, easing their impatience with an abundance of iced liquors, Grub was able to explain his appearance in Viridia at this crucial hour of the national destiny,

'I did not long survive you at Oxford,' he explained. 'Indeed it was but three days after your departure that I was simultaneously reprehended by my tutor for a neglect of studies, informed against by some baggage of the streets who asked for hush-money in vain, and caught by the Dean in the act of insulting, during some drunken play, the statue of Chastity which stands in the front quadrangle and has been so constantly defiled, both by birds and men, for some five centuries

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that the poor lady is scarcely capable of further damage. I had scaled the edifice and set a chamber-pot about her head, but the antic, though gaily intended, was ill received by the humourless pastors and masters of that place and, being the companion of other offences, was regarded as fatal to my continuance in the College. I was heartily glad to be free of its walls, for I never regarded myself as naturally a Chastity Man or as likely to profit from the bookish solemnities of a University curriculum. My father, who has grown increasingly unsympathetic since my boyhood, lectured me at length, denied me money, and bade me live by my wits. This I was most anxious to do. I trusted readily in my power to swim in a world where so many of my academic superiors would shortly sink. I regarded my circumstances; I surveyed the universe of commerce; I quickly decided that there was no trade in which an ignorant charlatan, such as myself, could achieve money and power more rapidly than in that of the Picture Theatres. My ignorance of the business was total, but my ability to conceal it was sufficient. I hurriedly applied at the premises of a prominent Picture Corporation, explaining that I was an Oxford Man. This was a false move on my part and I was properly

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ejected from the place. I returned the next day and explained that I had no education whatever, on the whole a truthful statement, but that I was ready to learn; this procured me an audience with some gross fellow who was good enough to like the look of me, but told me that I must wait my turn for a vacant post among the junior clerks. Such a prospect was of no attraction to me, so instead of leaving the building, I dallied awhile, pushed my way into one of the rooms, and there made myself so agreeable to a young woman at the desk that she promised to speak on my behalf to the director of the whole enterprise, whose trollop she fortunately happened to be. Being in one of his doting moods he carelessly acceded to all her requests and was consequently obliged to put me on his staff.

'My first concern was to secure the dismissal of the gross fellow who bade me wait, and my next to ingratiate myself with the powerful officials by flattering and fawning at every turn. This accomplished and my position confirmed, I offered them some new ideas for their commerce, always, of course, suggesting that the ideas were really their own. When news came that war was likely to break out between these two nations, I looked into the matter of War Pictures and,

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learning that the two Governments habitually reserved their own Film Rights and thus set up reactionary barriers to the freedom of enterprise, I determined to outwit them. Accordingly I proposed to collect some couple of hundred vagrant and impoverished actors such as daily besiege our workshops, clamouring for a day's employment. These we should offer to Viridia as a Foreign Legion, concealing all connection with the commerce of the films. Thus established on the scene of action we should, with our equipment of smuggled apparatus, get busily to work on a Picture of the war, hoping to escape with it over the border before we ourselves became engaged in the actual and revolting stupidities of the conflict.

The prices to be obtained for such a work should be most congenial to my Corporation, for the Government films are dull, incompetent affairs and lack all appeal of sexual beauty and romantic pathos. My film, however, will be rich in feminine glamour, for I have brought hither Miss Marcia Magnum, the blonde queen of our establishment, explaining that she had a special genius for nursing and was director of our medical supplies. With her assistance, I propose to achieve a film whose mixture of blood and

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beauty will set the heart of the whole world throbbing, its eyes rolling, and its flesh quivering. Picture to yourself this ravishable creature at large as the only woman in a world where men are men, but not for long, since many will be shot down even as they think to possess her. You are privileged, my dear Sanguine, to take part—and if you show talent, a large part—in a Picture which I trust will be the miracle of our profession.'

Poor Sanguine was considerably taken aback by this narrative of guile and duplicity. Half an hour ago his bosom had been aglow with a patriot fervour and now he was engaged in a nefarious scheme to cheat those Viridians whom he had aspired to serve in all the hazards of a righteous war, even to the shedding of his blood and the offer of his life. He protested to Grub that he had no relish for such trickery and was laughed at for his simple zeal.

'These Viridians,' said Grub, 'are no better than their neighbours and both sides I regard as blood-thirsty ruffians incapable of any peaceful or humane way of life. Were Heaven to blot both nations from the earth, extirpate man, woman, and child in a common massacre, nothing of value would be lost, but I have little faith that Heaven

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will do anything so wise. Meanwhile, my dear and simple friend, consider what course awaits you. Either you can join with me and my company of penniless mummery who are now like to earn a good reward or you can return to your filthy prison, for there is no other legion of foreigners in which you may serve.'

Sanguine realised the stern logic of necessity, but another difficulty presented itself to his mind.

'How!' he inquired, 'if the Viridian Generals should place your Legion in the hottest of the fight and you and your men should all be destroyed?'

'That possible calamity has not escaped my notice,' came the ready answer. 'The Generals of these countries are poor, corruptible creatures; not only are they ill-paid, but their wage is always in arrears. Consequently they must live on what profits their high office affords, that is by selling safe posts to rich men and so forth. Their notions of money are contemptibly small and the pettiest bribe will settle any matter to the general satisfaction. I have arranged for our force to be placed on the extreme right of the army; the Foreign Legion of Cerulea - for my Corporation naturally dispatched a similar body to the other side-has bought a position on their extreme

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left. Thus we shall be Englishmen confronting Englishmen, and I have arranged that we shall be equipped with blank and harmless ammunition which will make a great deal of noise and do no damage at all. Thus we shall only be engaged in mimic warfare; our photographic corps, however, will have to creep abroad and take records of the genuine carnage. On our portion of the tented field we shall, during this time, elaborate a pleasing romance with Marcia Magnum as its central and enthralling figure, enduring the utmost hazards to her virtue and her life. But here the bewitching creature comes.'

Sanguine was then presented to a lady needing no jewels, having Nature's own. Yet the oyster and the mine had added lavishly to Marcia's loveliness and she made all necks turn, all eyes sparkle with an adoring curiosity as she came flashing through the room in a blaze of gems. She looked kindly upon Sanguine and expressed a hope that he would soon be acting at her side and Sanguine, having heard the amorous nature of the proposed romance, most hotly hoped for such a post of privilege and rapture. Indeed, our hero was so dazzled by the enchantress that he entirely forgot his scruples about deceiving the Viridians and vowed with all his heart that such

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a place in the mummery would bring him to the extreme of happiness. Miss Magnum then proposed to omit further conversation and proceed with the refreshment. Grub clapped his hands like a monarch of the East and shouted commands like a Colonel of the West. A scurry of lackeys brought the rarest delicacies and charged their glasses with abundant wine. The master-waiter himself submitted the viands to Grub's inspection with trembling hands, whereupon Grub glanced at the dishes and said loftily, 'No, no, impossible.' The master-waiter then carried them behind a screen and brought them back, whereupon Grub said Tes, yes,' and deemed them to be vastly improved. Sanguine was so much exalted by all this luxury and liquor, to whose quickening force a long incarceration on low diet had made him unaccustomed and easily susceptible, that he lost all reserve and became very jocund with the others, joining in all their anecdotes, quips, and banter which were not, to tell the truth, of a high or intellectual order. Later in the night Grub explained that it was now too late to return to the Legion's barracks and that he intended to sleep in the hotel. He bade the manager find Sanguine a room and himself escorted Miss Magnum to her suite. Sanguine

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was now so fuddled with his many cups that he immediately fell asleep in his clothes, being incapable of unbracing. But Grub and Miss Magnum, with their greater gifts of self-control, were in no such plight.

On the following morning Grenadino was agog with news of a great victory. The Ceruleans had been driven back with heavy losses; the roads to Esporto were choked with their flying troops, the trenches loaded with their dead and dying. Great stores of munitions and material had been captured. Flags were flown on every roof and a myriad citizens stood cheering outside the Government offices. At the same time news reached Esporto of an equally glorious and decisive blow. The Viridians had been driven back with heavy losses; the roads to Grenadino were choked with their flying troops, the trenches loaded with their dead and dying. Great stores of munitions and material had been captured. Flags were flown on every roof and a myriad citizens stood cheering outside the Government offices. The soldiers at the scene of warfare remained in sorry ignorance of all this; on either side they only-knew that their comrades had advanced fifty yards and then retreated before a counter-attack, suffering decimation from a hid-

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den nest of machine-guns. But the art of war has greatly advanced since the wretched days of runners and horse-messengers. Both nations understood the importance of sustaining morale at home and of impressing the world at large. Consequently their Ministries of Information were staffed by the most brilliant and fecund minds which their newspapers and Universities had to offer for so important a service.

Sanguine was much elated by the news of this great advance and the joy which he derived therefrom was some relief for the queasiness of his stomach and the aching of his head consequent upon last night's debauch. His pleasure was brusquely dispelled by Grub, who told him that it was certainly a pack of lies since nations at war have to be fed with news of victory quite as often as with bread and meat. He then ordered Sanguine to prepare himself for a journey to the lines of war, as they must proceed to make their film. 'It would be like the scurvy fellows,' complained Grub, 'to get done with fighting and start hob-nobbing at the peace-table before we have completed our necessary work; so there is no time to be lost.'

Accordingly they proceeded to their appointed place on the right wing of the Viridian army,

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where they settled in a small village at a comfortable distance from the foe. Here all the apparatus necessary to making the picture was prepared, while men with cameras were dispatched, much against their will, to obtain records of the actual carnage that was taking place upon the fields of battle. Miss Magnum now began to display an awkward temper; she complained that the cottage assigned to her was insufficient for an actress of her lustre, that her part in the drama afforded no opportunity for her genius, that the life might well prove dangerous, and that the pay was wholly insufficient. She further alleged that the leader of the male players was of no calibre and that the story to be enacted was dull and foolish; all of which she phrased in language so bold, so free, and so picturesque in its choice of image and of metaphor that Grub, although himself gifted with no mean vocabulary, was hard put to it to keep level in vituperation. Sanguine was much perturbed at first and not a little surprised when Grub assured him that this was the ordinary practice of the profession. He was still more astonished to discover with what speed the two could be reconciled and how swiftly those who had been spitting like cats in a fray could turn to cooing like doves in a cot.

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But there was no end to Grub's troubles. Not only were the members of the supposed Legion a rebellious riff-raff, much addicted to drinking and brawling, but the leading male actor proved insolent in the extreme. He quarrelled hourly with Miss Magnum, who, he alleged, was always pushing him from his due position of prominence. He was troublesome in every way and kicked against the authority of those who were directing the affair. When they assured him that he was a great artist engaged upon a noble work of rare beauty and sincerity and so must render his service in a spirit of co-operation and good fellowship, he became still more unruly of tongue and temper and vowed that he would throw up his part. Grub took him at his word and ordered him home, whereupon he laid hold once more upon the part which he had recently tossed with contumely into the air, as a child throws and then recovers a bouncing ball. There seemed to be no dealing with the fellow. So Grub spoke privily to one of the grooms. The actor had to perform some equestrian feats and, when he was mounted the next morning for this purpose, his horse for some reason was so keen of spirit that it plunged, caracoled, and finally bolted many miles in the direction of the Stincka Morass

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into which it hurled its wretched rider, leaving him to the damp and toilsome labours of self-extrication. When he emerged he had been so savagely kicked by the horse, so heavily bruised by his fall, and so grievously bitten by the pestilent fauna of the morass that he was immediately retired to a hospital, where he lingered many months. Thereupon Grub appointed Sanguine to his place. 'You are the only man we have,' he said, 'with brawn and looks sufficient for the office. It matters little how vilely you act, so long as you do what you are told and make yourself agreeable to Miss Magnum.'

The picture now began to take shape rapidly and, in Sanguine's opinion, it was a most poignant and beautiful creation. He himself had to be an English gentleman deprived of his dear home and its great estates by an injustice of the law and so driven to be a soldier of fortune in the Viridian Army. Meanwhile his lovely neighbour who had, all unwittingly, robbed him of his treasured property had been captured by bandits while travelling in Central Europe. She escaped by taking the uniform of a murdered Viridian officer and was compelled to carry off her deceit by going bravely into battle for the Viridians. When she saw a gallant warrior lying wounded

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amid a hail of bullets, she led a party to succour him. This gallant fellow was the gentleman impersonated by Sanguine, which our hero thought to be a very brilliant stroke of story-telling. The rest of the fable was, in his opinion, even better than that. It would undoubtedly lacerate the hearts of picture patrons in every land, for not only was the story itself of singular freshness and rare beauty, but the battle-scenes with which it was encrusted were being photographed daily by intrepid and highly paid men who went far from the untroubled zone of the Legion in order to secure their pictorial records of the real Viridian heroes charging to the attack and of the no less real Cerulean cowards in the process of beating them back.

The work now went forward rapidly. Miss Magnum found in Sanguine an ideal partner, since he never dared to criticise any one of her movements, and was only too eager to do whatever he was told. He, for his part, was so entranced by the proximity of this rare creature that the hours sped like seconds; he lived in that happiness which is the more exquisite since it expects a greater bliss to come. For, when the later scenes of the picture were made, he would continually hold her in his arms and melt into a

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sries of those prolonged, absorbent kisses with which Miss Magnum had founded and confirmed her professional reputation. Ah, what days and weeks of happy co-operative toil lie ahead of me, thought Sanguine. Meanwhile, they had reached that episode in which he had to be rescued from a hail of bullets by his darling disguised as a Captain of Viridian Hussars.

The day dawned brightly. Far away the noise of veritable battle rolled. On the Legion's sector of the ground all was busy toil. Their opposites of the Cerulean Legion were under orders to fire off many blank shots and make a plausible show of combatant zeal. Miss Magnum emerged in a radiant beauty. None of Shakespeare's winsome heroines, thought Sanguine, was ever more ddecoratively breeched than she. Her tunic was frogged with gold braid, the very tint of her hair; the sunshine played upon her faultless field-boots, her shimmering spurs, her bravely flourished sword. Had she been an officer saluting her king upon parade, she could not have looked more trim, more radiant, more perfectly the warrior. Sanguine's blood was aflame at the vision and he swore to act as he had never acted yet. Grub surveyed the scene with approbation and gave **orders** for a start.

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Sanguine, accordingly, advanced across some open ground to the spot where he was to fall, sorely wounded. Their confederates on the Cerulean side were to maintain a brisk crackle of harmless gun-fire, as was appointed in the schedule of the day's work. But when Sanguine reached the appointed spot for his collapse, he suddenly felt a sharp sting in the flesh of his thigh as though it had been pierced by fire. He fell heavily to the ground and there lay writhing in an agony that owed nothing to counterfeit. Grub, observing this, resolved that our hero was in fact a first-rate mummer after all. He signalled to Marcia Magnum to lead her rescue party; with a gallant gesture she stepped from her trench and beckoned her comrades to the great adventure. It had been arranged that some should fall at once, and fall they did, very much to Grub's approbation; the scene, so realistic in its screams and contortions of anguish, was working out beyond his utmost expectation. Then, as he shouted some further direction, a genuine bullet whizzed past his ear and struck the side of a house with an ugly and menacing noise. He immediately threw himself flat upon the ground. More men were now falling than had been agreed upon. In a flash he grasped the most uncomfortable truth; their plan

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was totally confounded. They were involved in no make-believe battle but in carnage of a most bloody, genuine, and desperate nature. What had occurred was the miscarriage of a bribe. Their confederates on the Cerulean side had been moved away during the night to another sector of the stricken field and replaced by a Cerulean corps whose commander wished for a less turbulent corner of the campaign. Grub, though he had no knowledge of this mischance, instantly divined that some terrible accident had befallen them. As is proper to a great leader, on whom the lives of all depend, he thought first of his own security. If he were lost, all were lost. So, prone upon the ground, he wriggled his way to shelter and there beckoned to all his men who were still uninjured. 'Record all you can of this,' he said. 'Poor Maggie is enjoying the reality of war.' So they worked away with their cameras in feverish activity, then bundled their apparatus and their precious records of the story into their cars, and drove away at top-most speed. Grub's conscience was now clear. He had done his duty to his employers. All that had been so far made of the picture was safe in his possession.

But what of Marcia Magnum as she advanced amid a hail of bullets to the rescue of our hero?

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Whether or no the gods loved her with the passionate ardours of her picture patrons, she did not die young. While her male comrades collapsed behind her under the rain of lead, she thought them to be only pretending their pains, which was their appointed business. Meanwhile no bullet struck her person and she reached Sanguine undamaged. Sanguine by now, so chivalrous was his nature, had almost forgotten his own damage amid his frantic fears for his dear one. When she was at his side he drew her strongly towards him and bade her lie with him in the slight hollow which offered shelter from the bullets, while he explained their deadly peril which had arisen from some confusion of the plans. At this she was overwhelmed with an hysterical seizure and it was all that he could do to keep her flat and secure upon the ground.

After a while the noise of shooting ceased for the excellent reason, not always observed in the care-free prodigality of war, that there was nothing left to shoot at. The less fortunate Legionaries were now flat upon their faces, dead or nearly so; the luckier members of the force had vanished in flight, with their Colonel at their head. All was quiet save for the moans of the wounded and the occasional half-suppressed shrieks of Miss Marcia

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Magnum. A squadron of Cerulean cavalry galloped forward and began to examine the bodies of the fallen, removing any valuables or articles hopefully regarded as such. Sanguine, who was lucky enough to possess a handkerchief still white, waved it by Marcia's side to signify that they were both alive and submissive, whereat a dashing captain, very handsome in his royal blue, approached the wretched pair and declared them captives, a state which they were most ready to welcome. Sanguine volubly explained that his companion was really of the gentler sex and therefore merited a gentle and a courteous handling, but as the captain knew no English he merely regarded the plea as some impertinence and clapped both his prisoners across their posteriors with the flat of his sword. Then, since Miss Magnum squealed at him in the most piteous treble, he muttered to himself that this was a deuced pretty boy and reflected that these Foreign Legions were quite as bad as they were painted. With that he rapped them yet again about the flanks and commanded them, by gesture, to walk to the Cerulean lines. Sanguine, owing to the wound in his thigh, could scarce struggle as far, but his darling comrade lent him her arm which turned his torture to an ineffable delight. 'Now at last I know.'

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he reflected, his thoughts flowing back to those boyish days when he stole the apples to enjoy a thrashing, 'now indeed I know what the philosophers intended when they likened the sharpest pain to the sweetest rapture.'

On their arrival among the Cerulean troops, Sanguine's wound, which was not severe, was roughly dressed. He was greatly relieved to learn that he would not be separated from his companion; they were ordered into some dingy van and driven many miles to a gloomy fortress, where, to his further inexpressible delight, they were thrown into the same cell. It was a dark, small, offensive dungeon and made more odious by the stifling heat; its sole furniture was a stool and a pallet of straw, but to Sanguine it was heaven, for, as there was only one stool, so was there only one mattress. And surely no woman of sensibility would expect a wounded man to sleep sitting upright on a stool ?

Miss Magnum for a while remained extremely pensive and, when he asked the cause of her abstraction, she replied that she was considering the amount of damages she would claim from the Picture Corporation for placing her in such peril and affliction. Two million pounds, certainly. Would a jury, if she went before it, run to three?

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Sanguine confessed that he knew nothing of all that. Was it not a sublimity of bliss to be alive and together? Miss Magnum, abandoning for a while her arithmetical calculations, began to regard him with more favour, and soon they were very pleasant with one another, exchanging kisses and caresses with reciprocated fervour. After all, no other occupation was provided,

'The heat is merciless,' said Sanguine. 'Will you not let me remove your military tunic which is not only too heavy for such a torrid air but unjust to your exquisite torso? Furthermore, let me draw off those field-boots which deny the beauty of your feet.'

Miss Magnum was most willing that he should perform these offices which he did with some difficulty, for the boots were already a trifle too small and, owing to the warmth, her feet had swollen within them, thus necessitating most ungraceful tugs and heaves before she was liberated from their grip. When Sanguine applied himself to the rest of her uniform, he soon discovered to his great surprise that she wore beneath it a suit of the finest and most delicate mail which covered her from the bosom almost to the knees.

'What is this?' cried he.

'In America,' she answered, 'I have heard that

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guns are frequently fired and that prudent folk wear armour of this bullet-proof kind. When I was engaged to work in a dangerous picture with its scenes upon the field of war - and how dangerous we have just discovered to our cost - a shrewd friend counselled me to accoutre myself thus, since, even with the greatest precaution, guns may go off against intention and accidents of the most serious order may occur. So I purchased this suit of fine-spun hardware, peculiar, perhaps, but guaranteed to be of singular service should the bullets fly. It is of a miraculous lightness, pliant as silk, yet tough and durable.'

'You would rather be rid of it now that we are out of danger?' inquired Sanguine with anxiety.

'Indeed, I would. For I am boiled and roasted in this filthy den.'

Thereat Sanguine endeavoured to loosen the suit of mail, but alas, just as Miss Magnum's feet had swollen inside her boots, so had her frame swollen, even more cruelly, within its casing. For her to writhe, for him to pull were equally in vain.

'Have you no key to unlock this mystery?' cried Sanguine, now distraught by the ridiculous nature of their plight.

'No,' she panted. 'This garment is what they

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call a "step-in" and if I cannot step out or slip out or be pulled out, then, unless a skilled blacksmith comes to our aid, I must remain within.' It was true; the more they struggled, the less did it seem likely that she would ever emerge. At last she bade him desist, saying that they must wait until the cool of the evening when, perchance, her shrunken limbs would easily escape from the unexpected prison.

'Alas,' reflected Sanguine in deep chagrin, 'am not I the most unfortunate of men? For whenever I seem to be upon the verge of a sovereign felicity, some cruel mischance occurs. The philosophers bade me achieve Expansion of the Ego by process of Sublimation and, ever believing what I was told and obedient to their message, I endeavoured most devotedly to follow their advice. But first Miss Flout misled me, next Miss Steel-Pylon did the same. Then the brutal Viridian guards robbed me of my sweet Ginevra and now some accursed American armourer steps between me and this very Helen, whom all the world desires. Never was opportunity so great or hindrance so unnatural.'

Tray.' he cried aloud, let us try again. For this garment, I am sure, is most distressful to your limbs in such a heat as this.'

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She consented but, just as they were once more at grips with the obstinate integument, the door of the cell opened and a voice remarked in English that here was a most curious romp for prisoners to indulge.

Looking up, Sanguine realised, with as much relief as astonishment, that the intruder was none other than his old tutor and companion, Mr. Pilfer.

## CHAPTER XVI

### IN WHICH THE HERO ENTERS THE LAND OF THE FREE

**W**HERE there are the dead and dying, there will the kites be gathered. No war in these parts could be conducted without Mr. Pilfer attending. He had, in fact, become General Pilfer since Generals tend to be non-combatant in person, and can superintend the killing with due regard to the dignities and amenities of life. He wore a uniform of rich bedizenment and, though he habitually travelled in a motor car, he was as heavily booted and spurred as if he intended to lead all the lancers and hussars of Europe in some mad cavalcade across the fields of action.

He laughed merrily at the spectacle which met his gaze and at the explanations of this pother which were given him. He then accounted for his own office, which was, on behalf of the Congress of Nations, to protect the interest of prisoners in this war.

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'Both the Ceruleans and the Viridians,' he announced, 'have an ill name for atrocious conduct to their captives, whom they habitually torture, starve, and otherwise afflict with degrading tasks and savage punishments.'

At this news Miss Magnum broke into a flood of tears and asked whether she would be sent to the salt-mines or crucified out of hand. Pilfer assured her that Ceruleans would never treat a lady so, though it might be a difficult task to preserve her virtue in a fortress commanded by the old and bold of the Cerulean Guard. He, however, would do his best to secure both her liberty and her chastity.

He further explained that, as business was small at the Casino in war-time, the foreigners remaining at a prudent distance from such bloody matters, he had obtained from the Congress of Nations the post of Protector-General of Prisoners on the Cerulean front. This carried a convenient salary, the rank of General, relief funds to administer, and no hazards to his own person. It was also, he maintained, a work of charity which no man of scruple could refuse to undertake. On hearing that English prisoners had been brought to this fortress, he had immediately driven at great speed to be vigilant on their behalf and to fore-

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stall any playful gaoler who might essay to put them under painful humiliations. He confessed that it was one of the most pleasant surprises of his life to discover that one of his charges was a lady.

'You will look to my safety?' cried Miss Magnum, her blue eyes sparkling with tears. 'You will understand that I am no Amazon, eager to wade in the blood of innocent men. I am here through no fault of my own. I was merely serving my employers who have lied to me, led me into the most formidable perils, and finally brought me to this odious dungeon. If ever again I meet that filthy fellow Grub, I shall assuredly scratch out his eyes.'

'Believe me,' replied Pilfer, 'you are welcome to all my protection. First I shall summon a craftsman of metallurgy to relieve you from your embarrassment and then I shall immediately report that you are not what you seem, an English youth interfering in quarrels not his own, but a lady of delicate beauty and a consummate artist, who has ravished the senses of picture-patrons in every country of the world. In those circumstances the Ceruleans will surely not be so harsh as to detain you; if they lack the chivalry to grant you immediate release, I am convinced that a small gift in

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the right quarter will prove instantly efficacious. Put yourself, my dear lady, unreservedly in my hands. Then your safety, and I think I may add, your happiness are assured.'

With that he ogled her so saucily, and stroked her in such a shameless manner, that Sanguine was consumed by the most fiery sentiments of jealous rage and was moved to protest vehemently that the lady was in his wardenship.

'And who are you.' cried Pilfer, 'to be anybody's warden? The Ceruleans will show no mercy to you who have wantonly taken arms against them - or at least appear in that perilous position. This war was no concern of yours, yet you have been seized serving in arms against them. At least so they will see it, and not without reason. Believe me, they have no love for these voluntary enemies of theirs who go out of their way to slaughter their men and defeat their just claims to the Stincka Morass.'

'What will become of me?' moaned Sanguine, now terrified by his sorry situation.

'It will need great address on my part to save you from the mines as well as from supernumerary torments. But, since you are an old pupil of mine and we are both Old Chastity Men, I shall exercise every effort of pleading on your behalf. Mean-

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while a blacksmith must be summoned to ease this lady's difficulties.'

With that he beckoned to the wardens and bade them bring an artificer. The latter's dexterous usage of a file assisted Miss Magnum to escape from her too protective accoutrements and she was soon skipping about the cell in great glee at her liberation, while Pilfer watched her movements with an approving eye. He then explained that he would escort her to the High Command and explain the curious accident which had befallen her. He had little doubt that in a few hours she would be acquitted of all complicity in war against Cerulea and would then be left entirely in his protection.

'This prospect,' he added with great cordiality, 'I regard with the utmost expectation of delight, a delight which I trust will prove mutual. If I can only be as useful to you, dear lady, as you are enchanting to me, our future in this land of strife, suffering, and confusion will not be as bleak as either of us had feared.'

These manly and generous sentiments were warmly returned by Miss Magnum, who vowed that she had never met so considerate a man. She further expressed a natural hope that the milliners, hosiers, and shoe-makers of the country would

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be at her disposal, since at present she had no clothes save the Viridian uniform in which she had been captured. Pilfer reassured her on that point, explaining that he was in charge of an International Fund for Prisoners, which could not be more reasonably employed than in renewing her wardrobe. With that, being once more habited in her green tunic and breeches and successfully replaced in her boots, whose laces and strappings Pilfer took great pleasure to adjust, she was escorted from the cell.

'As for you, Sanguine,' said Pilfer, as he went out with the lady on his arm, 'I shall, as I promised, plead for you. In the meantime, the best that I can offer is this small purse of Cerulean crowns, a portion of the Intdnational Fund. Offer half to your guard in due season; keep the rest for your own needs. He was, before being recalled to military service, a waiter in the chief hotel of Esporto; he speaks English and he is accustomed to holding out his hand and behaving according to the results of that action. This fortress is situate at the far north of Cerulea, on the boundary of that happy land, Suffragia; perchance you may find occasion to step across.'

Sanguine was now left in solitude. Pilfer kindly sent in a surgeon to attend the wound in

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his leg. But after that he fell into a great despondency at the loss both of his liberty and of his lady. He was alarmed, too, at the prospect of corrupting the soldiery. Were he to offer money to his guard, he might be deemed the more guilty and subjected to all manner of brutal penalties. Yet, if he could but break free, there was indeed a blessed refuge hard by, for he had heard of the blissful condition of the neighbouring Suffragia, where there were no violent sects in coloured shirts and no forceful dictators. In that place they sagely counted heads instead of breaking them and the Rule of Law was broad-based upon the People's Will.

He had not long to wait for his opportunity. When the guard brought him his supper, a hunk of bread and some cheese as blue as the Cerulean uniform, he served it in the discreet manner of a well-trained lackey and then, standing by Sanguine with an outstretched hand, he politely inquired:

'Shall I be seeing you again, sir?'<sup>1</sup>

At this Sanguine, noticing the proffered palm, passed him a handful of crowns, with considerable trepidation as to the result. Thereupon the guard, having summed up its value at a glance, replied in the most obliging and friendly manner:

'There is one small matter, sir, which I ought

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to mention. I fear that the bar upon your cell-window is loose. The blacksmith, who was just now so serviceable to madam, has finished his day's term of duty and it would be improper to recall him in order to execute a small repair. No, sir, I could not trouble him again. The drain-pipe, however, which leads to the ground, was mended last week and is, I understand, in a strong, reliable condition. According to the almanac there will be a moon; there are some dozens of guards about the buildings, but as they have just received their pay, which had been long in arrears, they will doubtless be in liquor to-night, drowsy and careless, if not wenching in the city. The discipline of the Cerulean Guards is less notable than that of the English. Now, sir, is there anything else?'

Having no more money save that essential for his own needs, Sanguine deemed it rash to be further inquisitive. But he did venture on one more query.

'Only this,' he said. 'I am something of a scholar and have some geographical interests. This neighbouring country of Suflragia - is it remote?'

The boundary, sir,' came the polite and informative reply, 'is only some two miles distant

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to the north. The intervening territory is mostly a forest of pines. There are trackways among the trees and, as long as you keep the Pole Star in front of you, it should be impossible to miss the way. It will not be necessary, I think, to call you in the morning.'

With that the good fellow withdrew and Sanguine prepared to wait for night-fall. Fortunately the wound in his leg, though painful when first inflicted, was not of an order to cripple him now that it had been cleansed, staunched, and bound. When darkness came, he was able to remove the loose bar from his window and slip down the drain-pipe at some expense to the skin of his hands. He could see no soldiers of the guard, but heard afar the noise of singing and revel. Accordingly he took his bearings by the northern star, avoided the wassailing sentries, went forward into the forest, and began his journey to Suffragia.

His plight, even should he make good his escape, was not to be envied. He had no papers of identification, no food, and no clothes except his uniform. His remaining money was not much; his leg might give way beneath him and he knew no word of the Suffragian language. But, once embarked on his excursion, he had no

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course but to proceed. He journeyed on among the pine-wood tracks until he reckoned that he must be well beyond the boundary and then slept by the side of a brook, whose waters were most welcome to relieve his thirst and cool his brow. On the next day the heat was extreme and, as he struggled forward, he became exhausted beyond measure and fell into a swoon. When he recovered his senses, he found himself in the cabin of a wood-cutter whose women-folk fed and nursed him with the simple charity which has created the opinion that it is the poor who help the poor. The wood-cutter was a man of humane propensities and, when he saw the purse of crowns which Sanguine carried—a considerable sum in the calculation of a peasant—he resolved to entertain the poor outcast and show him the natural generosity of a poor man's home.

So Sanguine remained in this kindly household until his leg was healed and his money almost used up; he was able to acquire the elements of the native language by pointing at objects and learning their Suffragian terms. Before long, since the Suffragian tongue derived much from the Latin origins with which he had, in his boyhood, been compelled to achieve some moderate acquaintance, he became quite fluent in the speech

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and believed that he would be able, if opportunity occurred, to earn his own living in this country.

Accordingly he made inquiries about the chance of labouring for hire and was informed that there was always work for a strong and willing fellow in the gold-mines, which Suffragia was happy to possess. It is, perhaps, inaccurate to say that Suffragia possessed them; they were, in point of fact, owned by Sir Justus Geldwangel, who lived in London, M. Aristide Geldwangel, who lived in Paris, and Herr Adolf Geldwangel, who had once lived in Berlin but now found Monte Carlo more agreeable to his health and a suitable site for the directors' meetings. But the mines most certainly belonged to Suffragian soil, though they had somehow slipped through the hands of the Suffragian people, who were so busily concerned with looking to their political freedom that they could not be worried by details of economy. Suffragian hands, however, were busily employed in obtaining the gold, at some damage to the lungs and lives of the more sickly miners, and the nation - so it was frequently assured - was fortunate to enjoy such bountiful employment.

On reaching Aurelia, the centre of the gold-field, Sanguine was delighted to discover that work was available for all men of strength and

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spirit. He could now, he hoped, sustain himself as an independent citizen until he could communicate with his parents in England and so receive money to purchase his passage home; he might, indeed, earn enough to pay for it himself. The gold-mines were enjoying a period of high prosperity. Sanguine, seeking somewhere to lodge, was recommended to a schoolmaster's house where he obtained a truckle-bed in an attic for a convenient fee.

As he devoured his humble supper of bread and cheese, he inquired why this prosperity had so much advanced.

'Because,' answered the schoolmaster, who had a ready command of English, 'several great nations have ceased to make gold the base and standard of their money.'

'In that case,' answered Sanguine, 'they will surely need less gold.'

'Your surmise is wholly incorrect, logical as it may seem on the surface. Gold has never been more in demand.'

'But what do the purchasers do with it?'

'They put it in huge chests and hide it in cellars. They also ship these chests of gold from one country to another and back again, a practice much applauded by the shippers, bankers,

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and the men who insure the vessels against loss at sea.<sup>5</sup>

'But what is the profit to mankind?'

'I am assured that it is of very great profit indeed and this by no less a sage than the Professor of Economics in the University of Suffragia. For you must know that we have one of the best and most expensive Universities in the world, which has been presented and endowed by the famous House of Geldwangel. The rude agitators who stand at the street-corners of the towns may revile that Great Family, but its members have all been mighty benefactors to this country. They built the school in which I teach and created the fund from which I am paid, so that it would ill become me to say that gold is a useless commodity or to repeat the bitter jest repeated by the ignorant demagogues that mankind is being crucified upon a cross of gold. Moreover the Professor of Economics, who is himself fed, and that richly, by the Geldwangel Foundation, has even less reason than myself for doubting the intrinsic value of this metal and the blessings which it has conferred upon mankind. Gold, dear stranger, has made this country rich and happy - despite the few grumblers whom I have just mentioned - and so we are a contented folk, not given to riot or torn

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by violent factions. We choose our rulers as in your own country and thus, from the common wisdom expressed at the polls, we derive a legislature of wise and law-abiding deputies who would not dare to oppose the general will of the Suffragian people.'

Sanguine was overjoyed to find himself in a happy and a peaceful land where schools and colleges abounded and great wealth was applied to the provision of great learning, where a man would not be struck down in the street because he had the misfortune to be wearing a shirt of a certain colour, and where the popular grievances were expressed by the ballot and immediately remedied by the elected guardians of the popular interest.

'This is indeed El Dorado,' he cried, and the schoolmaster replied, 'That is what they repeatedly assure us in the leading articles of our Press, which is renowned alike for its capacity, its integrity, and its freedom. The newspapers here all belong to the Geldwangel Family, which, of course, ensures their immunity from vicious and tyrannical interference by the Government, the bane of the Press in such illiberal communities as those which you have recently left.'

Sanguine went next morning to the mines

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with the happiest expectation of honest and well-rewarded labour among honest, free, and happy men. He was set, as his first task, to some clearing away of broken rock and when he asked about the wage, he was somewhat taken aback to discover that it would barely cover the cost of his simple food and lodging. How, in such circumstance, could he save money to buy his passage home? However, he was disposed to view hardship with equanimity, for in this country, so he had been promised, a career was open to talent and, if he did but work honestly and with skill, he would surely be promoted to some post of responsibility and high reward according to his merit.

Since Suffragia was a free country, Sanguine was at liberty to join a Trade Union; indeed he was free to do nothing else, for it was made plain to him that refusal to enrol would have disastrous consequence. He would not be allowed by his comrades to work at all and he might even be knocked about the head for disloyalty to his fellow-toilers, who could be very free in their conduct when freedom was at stake. The leader of the Union was called Tribuno and a very fine champion of freedom did he appear to Sanguine's judgment. For none could speak louder or longer

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than he, none looked more gallant on a platform, waved his arms with such a force, or wagged his tongue with such a fluency. His style of oratory was rich in trope and simile, as ready in descent to a muted pathos as in surging to the climax of a peroration. After he had been twenty minutes on the dais, his listeners were inevitably roused to the highest flights of democratic enthusiasm and would shout huzzahs for freedom which made the sky resound and were carried to the ears of the Governing Ministers themselves. These gentry payed the most polite attention to Tribuno, for they fully understood the saving powers of free speech in the community. Those critics who merely whispered were apt to find themselves under vigilance and even under lock and key. But a good roaring rhetorician the Governing Ministers naturally esteemed, since he was of their own craft and calling.

Tribuno's magnetic presence exercised a powerful spell over Sanguine, who, always believing what he was told, was now told so much that he scarce had time to believe a tithe of it. There were meetings of the workers on almost every night of the week, at which Tribuno discoursed on their hardships and injustices and swore that, if only they remained true to him, he would halve

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the hours of their labour and double its remuneration. At this they all cheered lustily, Sanguine not least, and paid their pence to the Union as Tribuno instructed them. There were among the miners some surly and suspicious fellows who reviled Tribuno as a double-dealer, a wind-bag, and a cunning knave who robbed the workers of their pence and only gave them speeches in return. It was the habit of these crabbed curmudgeons to utter long and bitter tirades against speech-making, but Tribuno had the measure of such rebellious riff-raff and could, at his pleasure, persuade his followers to throw them into a duck-pond to cool their heads. This he frequently did, since Suffragia, he observed, being a free country, was not to be tyrannised by such a gang of bullies. The good fellows of the Union would always clap their hands when Tribuno spoke of freedom and toss into the water those denounced as freedom's foes. A special body-guard for Tribuno was formed and called the Sons of Freedom, among whom our hero was proud to be enlisted.

Sanguine toiled many weeks in the mines and every evening he listened to the speeches; his breast was aflame with democratic sentiment and, though his stomach was often empty, his heart was continually full. At last, when the men's

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demands for less toil and more wage had been finally rejected by the managers, Tribune called upon the workers to lay down their picks and shovels; this command they obeyed with the greatest alacrity, for they were to be fed from the Union funds and, while they lacked occupation in the mines, their leisure was amply filled by attending the meetings at which Tribuno spoke with more passion and at greater length than ever before. He promised them an easy and a rapid victory. The price of gold had now risen so high that the owners of the mines could not endure to see the workers idle and their profits denied. So they would soon yield to the just demands. All that was needed was loyalty, comradeship, and courage. Since Tribuno could not go on speaking all the time, others took up the unselfish task and Sanguine himself adventured on the platform and there delivered a harangue which so encouraged the miners in their fight for freedom that they ducked a dozen creatures suspected of disaffection to the workers' cause and did it with such zeal for liberty that six of them were drowned; the other six, on emerging from the water, vowed that they would seek a country where freedom was less praised and slipped over the borders into Cerulea.

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Meanwhile the owners of the mines were showing some willingness to come to a composition. Tribuno delivered to the Union men the greatest speech of his life, proclaiming that victory was in their grasp, that the mine-owners were terrified, and that the Government itself was tottering. If the workers did but remain true to themselves and true to him, their triumph was assured. With that there was a great burst of cheering; the Sons of Freedom, Sanguine in the van, carried Tribuno on their shoulders to the vehicle on which he would travel to the capital, there to negotiate the terms with their vanquished oppressors, the terms which would halve their labours and double their rewards. Now the money of the Union was all expended, but the gallant miners were ready to tighten their belts, eating soup made of boiled grass and nettles, the bodies of rats and other vermin, and sustained in spirit by the justice of their cause and a quenchless devotion to their leader who was even now, they knew, signing the pact which would bring them justice and satisfaction.

Sanguine, since he had been so prominent among the Sons of Freedom, was permitted to accompany Tribuno to the capital and there he found the city in a ferment. It was said that the

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national coffers were empty, that the national credit was ruined, that no funds were available to pay any but the troops and the police, that the miners, if they forced their demands on the owners, would bring the State to ruin. On the other hand there was a wild clamour among the People's Party that the Ministers had mishandled everything and must be swept away, not, of course, by violence, since Suffragia was a free country, but by a vote in the Parliament. The Parliament responded to the outcry and voted against the Ministers, who immediately resigned, as befitted good servants of the Constitution. What would happen next? The newspapers were fruitful in surmise and swiftly bought and perused. Crowds lingered outside the Government buildings to await the announcement of a new Government which would unravel this tangle of events and set instantly to work on its task of establishing National Security, Prosperity, and Reform, all, of course, without inroads on that freedom which was Suffragia's heritage and pride.

Meanwhile, Tribuno was closeted in conference with Sir Justus Geldwangel, who had left London in particular haste in order to assist the State in its troubles, and then they both called on the Ministers and sat in parley all night devising

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means for the pacification of the miners and the salvation of the common weal. In the morning the news was flashed across the city that all was well. The old Government of inept and timid persons had realised its own folly and incapacity and would be replaced by a new Administration sworn to brave decisions and rapid action based thereon. The list was published of new Ministers banded against all the forces of anarchy and disintegration and resolved to make every personal sacrifice for the common good.

Sanguine scanned the list with eagerness and also with surprise. 'Why,' he said to himself, 'this is a strange matter indeed. For the old Prime Minister has become the new Chancellor and the old Chancellor has become the new Prime Minister. The old Minister of War has become the new Minister of Education and the old Minister of Education has become the new Minister of War. And so it is throughout the list. They have only jumped from chair to chair. Is this then to be our new Government, bold and trenchant, and zealous for reform?' He put his query to a neighbour in the street, who was lustily cheering the news.

'Hurrah for the New Ministers,' roared the fellow. 'Now we shall have better times.'

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'But they arc the Old Ministers over again.' protested Sanguine.

At this the fellow grew most indignant. 'You do not understand democracy,' he cried. 'You are not fit to be a Suffragian and enjoy the priceless heritage of our liberty. You should move to one of those violent countries where dictators snatch the power and hold it by force. See how splendidly we have managed all this, a revolution without a blow struck and a government of all the parties formed without strife to ensure that all shall now contribute of their best to ensure the welfare of us all. See here, there is another name. Tribuno has joined the Government as Minister without Portfolio!'

'But not without salary,' said a currish member of the crowd. 'That I'll be bound.' For this unpatriotic observation he was much kicked and cuffed by his fellows. The majority would do nothing but cheer and, when the members of the New Administration stepped out upon a balcony, there was such an uproar of huzzahs as greets a triumphant athlete on the field of play. Sanguine, who now realised that a splendid feat of constitutional statecraft had been accomplished, cheered as vigorously as any. When Tribuno stepped forward, the applause was deafening, for many who

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had doubted his intentions before and deemed him a subversive and dangerous agitator, now understood that he was in truth a loyal son of his country ready to contribute all his talents and his energies on her behalf, which was exactly what Tribuno told them in a notable oration which he then delivered. So moved was Sanguine that he joined the common rush to the taverns which followed and pledged the New Ministers in large glasses of the native cordial.

Later in the day he began to wonder about the miners' affairs and called at Tribune's hotel to congratulate the leader on his magnificent victory. When he asked what additions to the wage and what reductions of the toil had been won, Tribuno replied:

'Only when I came to the capital did I realise the perilous condition of the State. I was soon persuaded that this was no hour for pressing claims. Universal sacrifices must be made. The Ministers have forsworn the use of Government motor cars. The taxes must be increased to fill the common coffers. The entire community is banded in one splendid resolution to suffer anything but collapse of the national credit, a legacy as splendid as the freedom we enjoy. How then could I press the demands of the unfortunate

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miners for more, when all are nobly taking less? No, the miners must not only be patient until the crisis is over, they will agree-for I know their spirit - to work half an hour longer each day and receive a diminution of the wage by ten per cent.'

'But are you to return and tell them that?' asked Sanguine. 'I fear they will take it sorely.'

'Ungallant fellow.' cried Tribune. 'Little you know the spirit of our people. I shall tell them all the facts and in half an hour I shall have them cheering me, because I had the courage to put the common interest before the particular and take a share of the burden which falls upon the shoulders of Ministers.'

Sanguine could not refrain from doubts as to the probability of such a welcome for the leader. He returned with Tribuno to the miners in considerable trepidation, fearing that a violence would surely be done to the bearers of such news. But his fears were ungrounded. He had cruelly underestimated the spirit of the race. When Tribuno addressed his comrades of the Union, there was murmuring at first and some signs of indignation. But such was the mastery with which he painted the national plight, such the intensity of feeling with which he appealed to their patriotic instincts, such the vision which he

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drew of his own self-sacrifice in suffering the burdens and responsibilities of Government, that in a short time the huge concourse cheered him as warmly as ever. Some churlish few remained sullen and even openly called Tribuno a traitor, but the duck-pond was soon brimming with their drenched bodies and bemired faces. The majority of the miners swore to return peaceably to work under the new terms, since they zealously intended to take a loyal part in the common task, to maintain the liberties, and to insure the credit of their beloved Motherland.

'And now,' said Tribuno, when the matter was dispatched, 'we must hurry back to the capital. For there is a banquet of the New Ministers tomorrow night and I have not yet obtained my suit of honour trimmed with golden lace.'

## CHAPTER XVII

### IN WHICH THE HERO ATTENDS A FEAST OF LOVE AND SHOWS A READY APPETITE

**S**ANGUINE now felt no impulse to return to the mines and drudge the harder for a less reward. On the other hand Tribuno could find him no easy employment in the Government offices, since, in the wave of patriotic fervour, there was much clamour about Suffragian work for Suffragian men. The presence of aliens was not wanted and he determined to leave the country with all speed. While he was wondering whither to turn, he read in a newspaper that the neighbouring land of Musaea was to celebrate the centenary of its famous poet, Amoroso, with a Feast of Love and a Grand Erotic Congress to which the doctors of letters and of science would swarm from all over the world. Among the list of eminent scholars who would attend and lecture upon Love, he saw, to his great joy, the names of his father and his mother. If then he could pass over into Musaea,

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he would not only meet once more the creators of his own life and receive from them the means to prolong his travel; he would also, he read, partake in some of the greatest festivities ever organised in the united causes of Poetry and Passion, of Science and of Sex.

Musaea, he knew, was a small country, but it had a greater appeal for tourists than any other in Europe. Couched amid towering mountains, its scenery was a magnet to the traveller. It owned the greatest number of cathedrals per head of population, its numerous town-halls had never less than three stars in the guide-books, its picture-galleries, thanks to some success in ancient wars, were packed with an unparalleled number of paintings by Old Masters, and the tombs of its numerous kings and heroes were all obligatory spectacles for students of history and the arts. Its most famous poet, Amoroso, whose love-lyrics had been translated into as many tongues as the Bible, was honoured with an annual festival of universal fame. It was the highest ambition of every cultured person in the American continent to lay a wreath on Amoroso's tomb, since the great singer, having been censured as a gross immoralist, a scandalous, sensuous, idle and atheistic good-for-nothing fellow and reduced to the point of

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starvation in his own country, had fled to America in his early manhood where he had been permitted to pursue life, liberty, and happiness in the preparation of preserved victuals. Undeterred by the severities of his calling and the less than inspirational surroundings of a slaughter-house, Amoroso had sung unquenchably. When he died of a consumption, his country realised the greatness of its absent son and in deepest gratitude for his gifts had erected the noble shrine, the Peasant Theatre, the Memorial Lecture Hall, the altar of Eros, and twenty large hotels in the charming village of his origin. As the centenary of his birth had now arrived the whole of Musaea was to be *en fete*, his famous *Comedy of Love*, which took eight days and nights to perform, was to be enacted, and his lyrics chanted by the peasant choirs. Folk sports and arts of every kind would be presented. The Psychology of Love would be expounded by the sages of the entire world and tickets to Musaea, at most economical and attractive rates, would be issued in every capital of Europe. New hotels would be opened and old ones refurbished. The more Sanguine read about the joyous ceremonial the more certain he became that it was no less than his duty to feed his mind and sensibilities at such a banquet of Learning and

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of Beauty. Now, if only he could procure some trifling store of money, he could pursue that educational journey for whose intellectual rewards and spiritual enrichment he had entered Europe in the first place.

On inquiring at a bureau of travel about the cost of entering Musaea, he encountered a beneficent stroke of Fortune. The clerk, realising that he was English, informed him that a score of American ladies from the University of Oshkosh were passionately eager to visit the Feast of Love and to prostrate themselves at Amoroso's shrine; being ignorant of the language, they were anxious to have a guide, stipulating that a personable young man would suit them most thoroughly. If he, Sanguine, would undertake the office, he might travel free and have some little fee in addition; possibly, also, some modest personal entertainment. He protested that he lacked all knowledge to justify his acceptance of the post, but the clerk coarsely replied that any wearer of trousers would suffice and that, even if he lost his trousers on the way, that would rather commend him than disqualify. Accordingly Sanguine, who was at a desperate pass for funds, agreed to accept the courier's position and he was at once installed in a large motor vehicle at the head of twenty virgins

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of varying graces but of constant enthusiasm both for their new guide and the sights he was to show them. Sanguine was equipped with a manual of information about the major spectacles and a large horn through which to roar his instruction about the splendours and beauties of the tour. The splendours scheduled in the book were extremely numerous and Sanguine's devotion to his work was unremitting. 'Now on the left you see -' he shouted and then, without pause, 'Now on the right -' The necks of his party were soon crippled with a muscular paralysis as they rapidly turned their eyes this way and that, obedient to his flow of command. Moreover, as the young women were given a heavy luncheon every day with the unusual addition of wines and cordials, they habitually lost all consciousness during the long, hot afternoon. 'Now to the left you see -' Sanguine zealously proclaimed. But not a head turned, not an eye stirred. Accordingly, to the great relief of his wards and to the advantage of his own throat, he soon spoke not a word after the midday meal. At first, when they reached another cathedral, a notable tomb, or a tower offering unusual prospect of the country, he would attempt, in pursuance of his duties, to guide them round, into, or up these important structures.

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But when he realised that he was leading a party of sleep-walkers, whose members might lean in a profane stupor against a holy altar, collapse contumeliously and snore upon a saint's last resting-place, or walk unwittingly into empty air from the summit of a view-tower, he abandoned these excursions as well as the exposition and earned his board, his travel, and his fee with no labour to himself at all.

At last they came to the little village where Amoroso had been born, now become a flourishing town and hostess to the world's progressive spirits. Here all was busy toil and social ferment. Representatives of the cotton-trade, from Bolton to Bombay, from Oldham to Osaka, were busily selling the Musaeus flags which were festooned about the streets and houses in such number and acreage that the shabby nature of the place was entirely disguised. A myriad students hurried to and fro between the *Comedy of Love* and the Grand Erotic Congress, at which a band of well-informed lecturers interpreted, after each day's session of the play, the jokes and gestures of the clowns in the drama with special reference to fertility rites, the universal symbolism of sex, and the strange coincidence of culture whereby a winking eye or a pointed thumb carried the same

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significance in Musaea as in Michigan. Crowds stood waiting outside the poet's shrine in order to lay on the urn of his ashes the native flowers which were everywhere for sale. Since it was alleged that Amoroso's favourite herb had been the Bog Orchid, a brilliant and spectacular blossom which grew only round the middens of this village and nowhere else in the world, it was the particular ambition of every visitor to offer one of these to the immortal memory. The Bog Orchids were only obtainable at prices most agreeable to their village cultivators who were highly gratified to discover that dung could be so easily minted into gold.

The maidens in Sanguine's charge all purchased and carried their Bog Orchids to the shrine which was now totally invisible owing to the heavy deposit of flowers on top of it. Then he led them to the village church, where the verger, a man most prompt and ingenious in his duties, led all past a seat in the choir, observing that on this wood the boy Amoroso had squatted in his tender and his treble days, when he sang of a sacred love to the honour of God as sweetly as he later hymned a profane love to the glory and the pleasure of man. For this statement there happened to be no evidence whatever: the boy, indeed, had

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uttered, when attempting song, a singularly scratchy and metallic noise with the result that the choirmaster had driven him away with curses, even as his countrymen were to serve his adult body later on. But those who view truth pragmatically and believe the essence of Reality to be Utility may not harshly criticize the good verger with any justice, for assuredly it afforded a genuine bliss to the visitors to believe that the seat in the choir was Amoroso's and thus sacrosanct. All of Sanguine's young ladies followed the customary practice of the Church and bobbed down to sit upon the hallowed timber; no sooner had their posteriors made contact with the oak than a look of rapture suffused their faces as though a special poetic grace, the very essence of Love, Truth, and Beauty, had shot upwards to the soul. Sanguine was delighted to see the happy transfiguration of his charges and reflected on the agreeable truth that a supernatural blessing may as easily be obtained by the laying on of buttocks below as by the laying on of hands above.

The effect of this curious churching and of the approach to genius *a posteriori* was miraculous. The young ladies immediately and visibly abounded in grace and fervour. They quoted the better-known lines of the poet, a practice made

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easy by their frequent inscription in the hotels and cafts of the town. 'Lovers, drink deep, the long, long night is coming' and similar exquisite sentiments were ever on their lips. They bought a quantity of keepsakes such as little statues of the Love God cut from the mulberry tree in the poet's birth-place, a tree of boundless fertility since, though it had long vanished, it continued to supply material for a multitude of trinkets every year. The now ecstatic tourists also visited the Birthplace of Amoroso and doted on his cradle, his cot, his scholar's desk, his first breeches, and the cane with which his stern father had dusted them. They saw everything which the town had to offer and bought pictures of all that they saw. They pledged the poet's memory in the American Bar of the Hotel Cupid and became, as was only natural with so many cultural influences about their heads, seized with the passionate essence of the poet's work. Now very spry, spirited, and saucy they eyed the grave Professors of Sexual Wisdom in a most mischievous manner and jested rudely among themselves as to who should first win the love of their guide and tutor, Sanguine. One girl, Virginia, the prettiest creature and certainly the most pert, took a wager to win the contest for his surrender and threw herself about

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his path in a very wanton fashion. Our hero, with the words of Amoroso continually in his ears, found himself keenly responsive to the genius of this happy place and, when he was detained by Virginia in the boskage at the end of the Birth Place Garden, he became so touched by the sacred associations of the spot that he remained rapt for a considerable period.

Later in the evening he discovered the whereabouts of his parents and resolved to call upon them. But they were so busily engaged in preparing and delivering homilies on *The Infantile Libido as Manifest in the Early Work of Amoroso* and on *Maternal Technique in Relation to the Poetry of Passion* that they had no leisure to listen to their son's adventures. However, they replenished his store of money and bade him call later when their obligations to Amoroso and the Students of All Nations were not so pressing. A little dashed by this cool reception, Sanguine consoled himself at the Amoroso Cellars with the local wine, which simultaneously turned his stomach and his head. As the place was raucous with a Peasant Chorus, which bellowed the drinking songs of the Master, and as he was continually pestered to buy Amoroso flagons cut from that same fecund mulberry tree, he passed into the

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street in a hoity-toity mood. Being in warm blood he resented the spectacle of an old man dragged gaolwards by two lusty policemen, while sundry numbers of the crowd kicked and pinched the poor victim from behind.

'Why, what is this rough play?' he inquired, and was told by an English spectator that the old fellow was some dotard who had set up a May-pole in the park of the town and had brought a team of women to dance well-nigh naked about that pagan idol, crying:

'Round and round the Pole of May,  
We to Love our debt will pay.  
Toss the girls among the hay,  
Rumty-tumty, that's the way.'

and other barbarous and unseemly jingles.

At the sound of the word Rumty-Tumty, Sanguine was not surprised to discover that the policeman's captive was no other than Dr. Junck-Vorwarts. Plunging into the crowd in a fiery and chivalrous temper, he rescued the good Doctor from their grasp, crying that the poor fellow meant no harm. He also handed a substantial bribe to each of the officers, which at once procured his release. He then took the Doctor to a quiet tavern, restored him with a bowlful of brandy, and inquired how he had fared since his

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unhappy incarceration in Viridia. The Doctor explained that peace had come at last to the warring nations and with it a general amnesty. He and his party had been expelled from the country and had immediately proceeded to Musaea in order to offer their tributes at the shrine of Amoroso and to take part in the Grand Erotic Congress, which, he averred, had brought to this spot all the forward-looking spirits of the age. It seemed, however, that there was still a reactionary element among the natives; these crude and witless clods had resented the proper celebration of Amoroso's centenary by a public exhibition of dancing round the Maypole, itself a symbol of Love. His party, he insisted, had danced in a most amorous way in the true tradition of the Folk Sex Rites, but the ignorant locals had misunderstood them, summoned the constables, and submitted them to battery and insult. He was most grateful to Sanguine for his timely intervention and listened to the tale of his wanderings and sufferings with a great show of interest, while further supplies of brandy were being served.

Thus revived the Doctor became insistent that a Grand Erotic Congress would be meaningless without further demonstrations of man's instinctive Will to Dance. It would be monstrous should

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Sex be treated in a purely speculative manner on such an occasion as this. The practical must attend the speculative in any true festival of Love. He himself was delivering lectures every morning on the Sexual Element in the Folk Lore of this fascinating and surprising country, whose traditions were steeped in the most curious primitive beliefs. Undeterred by the unhappy events of that afternoon, he proposed, on the following evening, to demonstrate in rhythmic mime the great Fertility Myth which was mentioned in Amoroso's Ode to His Own Body. This myth, which was common to many peoples, consisted in the driving out of Old Man Winter by Young Man Spring, after which the maidens all ran a race, whose winner would claim the love of Young Man Spring. This he took to be a lovely and significant legend, worthy to be preserved in public performance. As for himself, he would gladly enact the part of Old Man Winter, if Sanguine would appear as Spring and chase him round the public park (the Maypole had, alas, been confiscated). After that the maidens, joined, he hoped, by Sanguine's own party, would race for the enjoyment of his love, as the peasants had done in the olden days. The evening of the following day would be especially suitable, since it

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was locally observed as Pea Thursday, peas being everywhere a symbol of fecundity, like rice and other richly reproductive fruits of the earth. What he proposed was to reintroduce to Musaea the true spirit of its native cults and to give Pea Thursday the ceremonial with which it had for centuries been honoured, until, in this hideous age of mechanism, the simple beauties of the ritual had fallen into desuetude.

Sanguine, ever responsive to the marriage of scholarship and cultural zeal, believed all that the Doctor told him about the happy and instructive nature of the mime; when he further discovered that the maidens were to race for him in the scantiest attire, he found the proposal even more engaging and began to take thought how he could secure the victory for his dear Virginia, who, though first in desire, might not be first in speed. On reflecting how his old friend Grub would resolve such a problem he suddenly remembered that, in the racing of horses, it is customary to allot handicaps, making the stronger beast carry the heavier burden. How if he were to imitate this just and sensible practice and handicap the maidens? In that case he could see to it that Virginia carried no burden at all, while the others staggered under loads of grievous weight. On

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mentioning the subject of handicaps to the Doctor, he was told that there would be no objection to such a scheme; indeed it might enhance the excitement and further stimulate the spirit of revel. Accordingly it was agreed that a demonstration of Folk Dances should be given on Pea Thursday; that Sanguine, habited in green leaves, as Young Man Spring, should pursue the Doctor, habited in bare branches as Old Man Winter, and then be allotted at the climax of the mime to whichever maiden pursued him the most rapidly. The educational results, the Doctor maintained, would be most valuable; it was a pity that so many Musaeans had forgotten their national heritage of the Folk Play; to remind them would be an act of national service and would also provide lively entertainment for the foreign visitors.

When Sanguine announced the plan to his party of young women they received the news with the utmost hilarity; his further announcement that each would have to carry in her stomacher certain leaden weights as a handicap, according to their likely capacity for speed, was not so heartily welcomed. But soon each girl was privily scheming how she could get rid of the burden by a subterfuge or trip her rival or in some cunning way arrive first at the post. Sanguine

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meanwhile explained to Virginia how he would assist her to run the fastest and she, in her rapture, vowed to eat and drink sparely until the race was over, when she and Sanguine would sup royally together as the prelude to the prize.

On the next morning the Doctor delivered to a large audience of assembled savants a most stirring harangue on the historical aspects and psychological significance of Pea Thursday. His listeners, profoundly moved, hurried to equip their buttonholes with the pods of this symbolic vegetable, an activity most surprising to the inhabitants of the place, who, in their careless neglect of the national traditions, had entirely forgotten both the importance of the date and the obligation to carry the fecund emblem on their persons. The Doctor himself, richly festooned with a vegetable wealth, led a special Pea Procession to the Birth Place and the shrine containing Amoroso's ashes, scattering pods with a lavish hand and not staying to notice that the local house-wives followed briskly after and recaptured this largess of green stuff for the filling of their own saucepans. In the afternoon there was a concert at which a Peasant Choir, hurriedly instructed by a Professor of Ethnological Music, sang the historic Pea Song, which, though neglected by the rude hinds and

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yokels of Musaea, had been preserved by scholars jealous for the rural Muse.

'Leap forth to my Life, my Pretty Pea,  
Leap forth, leap up, Fertility,'

roared the voices, and at this all the Doctor's party joined with Sanguine's troop and leaped in a joyful obedience. It was generally agreed to be an impressive scene, culminating in the grand climax when the more vigorous members of the company pelted each other with the symbolic pods and uttered many jovial screams of the fol-de-rol kind.

At night the Park was lit with torches for the great mime. The Doctor prepared himself as Old Man Winter in a kilt of barren twigs and covered his beard in cotton-wool to signify the seasonal snow, while Sanguine wore a skirt of green branches and a fillet of peas about his brow in the role of Young Man Spring. After some preparatory dithyrambs by the Peasant Choir, a gymnastic exercise, and a rhythmic rally of a thousand Folk Dancers, all was ready for the two great pursuits, that in which Sanguine should race after the Doctor and the second in which the maidens should race after Sanguine. The maidens were all equipped with dainty girdles in which the

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allotted weights of handicap were thought to be contained. But, with so covetable a prize before their eyes, none would play fair and the weights had mostly been mislaid before the race began. Sanguine and his Virginia had spent a merry half-hour together in devising the certainty of her victory; in addition to being free of handicap, Virginia had suggested a secret damping of the ground with pails of water so that her competitors would slip and tumble on its greasy surface while she, skirting by the edge of the drenched grass, would run surely and featly on the dry ground and so come to an easy triumph. When this had been arranged, all was ready for the ceremonial mummery. A trumpet blew, the Doctor skipped forth from the bushes, and Sanguine jumped after him in hot pursuit, brandishing a rod of green twigs. The entire concourse broke into cheers, marvelling at the nimbleness with which the Doctor made the circuit of the lawn.

In truth they had good reason to applaud, for Sanguine swished so fiercely with his twiggy rod that the Doctor, who had not bargained with this feature of the sacred rite, discovered an unwonted celerity in his limbs, twisting and turning as he ran to avoid the stings of the flagellant fury at his back. When his kilt of barren sticks slipped from

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him in the mad scramble of escape, he still continued to curvet and canter with a wondrous agility. But at last Sanguine was upon him and crying, according to schedule,

'Here the Pea-Man Spring am I,  
Crabbed Winter now must die.'

he threw the Doctor to the grass and placed his foot upon the poor man's panting bosom. This was the signal for the young women to race towards him and they made no delay about commencing this amorous cavalcade. Sanguine, turning to watch them, saw his Virginia dashing towards him on the right flank, where the grass had not been given a clandestine soaking, while the others slithered and fell screaming on the greasy centre of the course. 'Now,' thought he, 'my pretty one will be an easy victor and our mutual bliss will be assured.' But, just as he was hoping to gather her in his arms and plant a passionate kiss upon her lips, the grass was invaded from every side by a host of burly ruffians who, brandishing cudgels, drove the maidens screaming into the bushes and then advanced with such a menacing frenzy towards himself that he too fled with all speed, urging the Doctor to run faster than he had ever run before.

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The cause of this violent outbreak and assault upon the Peasant Rites was the arrival in the town of many actual Sons of the Soil. These, hearing in their rustic cottages of what the foreign visitors purposed in the city, were much incensed at the pagan nature of the ceremonial and resolved, in their ignorant and brutish way, to prevent it. For they were simple, pious folk, little comprehending what that same word Folk meant to the assembled scholars. Their Christian priests had trained them to regard Pea Thursday as a sensual and heathen feast and had substituted some masses for the ancient rites. Accordingly, the herdsmen, gardeners, and ploughboys of the district, when they entered the town and witnessed the Pea Thursday sports, were much affronted by the public dancing and prancing of the ecstatic ladies and by the naked exposure implicit in the mumery. All this they regarded as breaches of decorum and attacks upon the public peace and discipline. Led by a rugged fanatic of virtue, these farmyard fellows fell with a righteous passion upon all and sundry, scarce distinguishing the performers from the spectators, cursing and buffeting even the learned professors assembled in the park, crying shame upon the women, railing at them as mountebanks and daughters of Satan,

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and generally laying waste the entire ceremonial. Sanguine and the Doctor they especially desired to capture and to castigate, since they were the chief celebrants of this unholy sport; but these two made a cunning, if painful, plunge into some thorn bushes, scaled the fence of the Park, and, sheltered by the darkness, escaped into the forest which surrounded the town.

There they found a night's shelter in a deserted cabin while the rout of pious peasants went ranging through the town, beating and abusing the alien devotees of Amoroso, whose poems the louts had never read but knew to be immoral, and bidding all the visitors be gone from the place and take their filthy sports and practices along with them. Such a panic did they thus create that many of the *litterati* made an instant flight from the town, which bore hardly on the hotel-keepers, since few stopped to pay their reckoning. Some of the women worshippers of Amoroso, including the young persons of Sanguine's party, thought to be coy with their bucolic persecutors and to provoke the sensibility of these lusty fellows. But in vain; the peasants were obstinate in their virtue and treated the coy wenches with contempt and even with a volley of smart slappings. The constables of the town were unable to control the

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situation and the countrymen's victory was absolute. 'The Festival of Love has been liquidated.' cried Sanguine's father to his mother as they sped to the railway station, and he spoke nothing less than the truth.

Meanwhile, Sanguine and the Doctor lay in their woodland cabin and covered themselves with some dirty sack-cloth which was mouldering there. Their flesh, already bristling with thorns, was now exposed to an army of lice, bugs, and fleas which fed so greedily on this unaccustomed diet that they swelled rapidly with the blood which they had engorged.

'These pests.' cried the Doctor, as he crushed one that banqueted upon his thigh, 'are as fat and mellow as peas.'

'Never mention the word pea to me again.' cried Sanguine in his agony. 'I might have been lying in a bed of love and here am I in squalor and in pain beyond any that I have yet endured. And all because of your Pea Thursday. A pox upon the vegetable for ever more.'

'You are still too young.' answered the Doctor, 'to achieve psychological poise and to enjoy, as I do, the Ultimate Harmony. Think upon the vast splendours of the Cosmic Order and thorns and fleas will take their true place in the scheme

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of things. They are of the surface; but spiritual peace is of the soul below. At least we have done our duty to this city and to its immortal and poetic son.'

\*A fig for that,' growled Sanguine. 'I had hoped to do my duty to the sweet Virginia who won her race and now is cheated of her prize.'

'It is a stroke of justice,' answered the Doctor. 'The more I reflect upon it the more I see that we should never have admitted the reactionary principle of competition.'

But that was little solace to our hero, who was doomed to a long, unhappy night.

## CHAPTER XVIII

### IN WHICH THE HERO IS CARRIED TO THE HEIGHTS

**A**LL the next day Sanguine and the Doctor remained in hiding, fearful of what might befall them should they return to the town. But the pressure of cold and the pains of hunger at last drove them to revisit the scene of the riot, where they discovered that all was peaceful once again. The brawling peasants had ceased from their rage and had returned to their fields and the few remaining participants in the Festival of Love and the Grand Erotic Congress were once more delivering and attending lectures. The Doctor rejoined his own school of celebrants, who gave him a tumultuous welcome and danced about him in transports of delight. Sanguine inquired after his own party and learned that they had left the place in a great bustle of dispatch, announcing their resolve to let mental culture rest awhile and devote themselves to the ardours of sport, especially to climbing mountains for which, as well as for

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the arts, Musaea was renowned. 'Oh,' thought Sanguine, 'that I might be with them now, for though these mighty mountains are chilly, snow-bound peaks, as I have been told, yet could Love warm their frosty air and turn ice to fire in my Virginia's company. Surely my duty calls me to pursue them and ensure their safety.'

While he was contemplating a visit to the mountains and counting his remnant of money, there came a servant to him, saying that a man was hunting through the town for one Sanguine. When Sanguine inquired what manner of fellow was this, he was told a very grim, lean, forbidding creature who appeared to be most instant in pursuit, swearing that he must have Sanguine though it cost him all. He had a staff of followers and was not to be denied. At this our hero naturally fell into sweat of fear; he thought of his many enemies. This might be one of the intolerant yokels who had sought to cudgel him two days ago; it might be some revengeful emissary of Aurelia, where he had delivered radical speeches for the miners' cause; again he might be a fiery captain from Cerulea, where Sanguine had broken loose from the fortress, or a turnkey from Viridia where he had been incarcerated for his errors in clothing. So many and various authorities had

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Sanguine gravely offended during his grand tour in quest of a cultivated mind that he was plagued with panic at the thought of any person pressing hotly upon his tracks. Accordingly he determined upon an immediate flight, left the town with all secrecy, and made with the utmost speed for the mountains, since there he might find not only concealment but also the young ladies whose welfare he was in duty bound to protect.

The mountains of Musaea are among the loftiest in Europe, so lofty indeed that they attract and destroy the most intrepid and expert climbers. Yet, such is the splendid audacity of this indomitable creature Man, that the more are the mountaineers who slip from the frozen rocks to an icy death, the more numerous are their followers who seek in rivalry to climb a yard or two further before they themselves are tricked into a false step and broken on the pitiless crags below. For one that is killed, another dozen are resolved to die. Highest and most perilous and therefore most popular of all is the Mont Morta with its famous Crag of Inevitable Death. Never had any human foot been seen upon its topmost pinnacle and the number of its aspiring conquerors who perished in their forlorn attempt continually increased. Consequently a flourishing local industry had grown up

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among the mountain herdsmen, who demanded a just, if considerable, fee for collecting the dead bodies from the gullies beneath this impregnable summit. A mortuary had been established at the base of the hazardous but fascinating peak and a nursing establishment, in which the wounded were treated and fractured bones reset, was conducted at a most satisfactory profit. It occurred to Sanguine as he gazed upon the impregnable pinnacle, that, by climbing thither, he would certainly outdistance all pursuers.

By prosecuting his inquiries at the village where climbing parties made their preparations, he learned that twenty American maidens had equipped themselves for the ascent and had already been gone some twelve hours on the upward route. He also learned that messages had been sent to the village asking whether a young and lonely Englishman had passed that way; if so, he was to be detained. There was no time to be lost; his hunters were at his heels; his Virginia was already risking her dear life upon the merciless glaciers ahead. Rapidly purchasing the proper outfit, together with an ice-axe, a pole, and some portable supplies of food, Sanguine hurried on the trail towards the pinnacle, while the villagers observed with their customary humour that the

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search-parties, the hospital, and the mortuary would be well in pocket this year.

As he forced his way upwards through the snow he had frequent occasion to reflect upon the extreme discomfort of the proceedings. But he had often heard that Sport, to which this mountaineering was alleged to belong, was a healthy master though a hard one. When men were stunned by a cricket-ball he had it on the best authority that they gained in backbone what they lost in brain; should a player lose a portion of himself in the grapples and mauls of a football-game, why then to be physically less was to be morally more; there was nothing so surely made a man as to be robbed of a finger or an arm. To break a leg upon the mountain-side was to mend one's faulty and distempered spirit. The Englishman, with his sure apprehension of an ethical point, was never so happy as when he rowed himself into a faint upon the river or fell over a cliff for some hundreds of feet. It is true that he might die young, if not immediately, but life is not a gift to be hoarded in miserly fashion nor is true happiness to be won without a sacrifice. Sanguine, implicitly believing that he was now playing the great game of life at its best, repressed the curses which came to his lips, thought deeply on his old

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days at Lcatherham and at Chastity, thanked God that he was an Englishman, and struggled forward on his terrible journey, occasionally pausing to take breath and to remind himself that now indeed he was enjoying the full savour of a manly existence. He was the more encouraged to proceed by the discovery of tracks in the snow, tracks which he judged to be those of feminine feet. If his Virginia had passed this way undaunted, was he, a man and British, to be deterred by the perils and labours of the day ?

Imagine his jubilation when he saw a figure ahead, dark and tenuous against a field of ice. He doubled his pace and fell some half a dozen times as the result. But what recked he of a bleeding nose ? The gore congealed in the relentless frost and thus stanchd the flow of blood behind. Panting, stumbling, but unbeaten he struggled on until at last he was holding Virginia in his arms.

'Where are your companions?' he cried, when he had slaked his lips with kisses.

'At the bottom of that hole,' replied Virginia sadly, pointing to a cruel and hideous crevasse. 'We were bound together with a rope according to that unselfish custom which orders that, if one falls, all shall fall together. But, when nineteen

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of my comrades had followed our leader into the chasm, the strain upon the remaining fibre was so great that it snapped and left me secure upon the brink to mourn their loss.'

'That is a bitter tragedy,' answered Sanguine, 'but I understand that they will have a decent disposal. The mountain-folk make regular searches of all clefts and gullies and remove the victims, of whom there is a constant supply, since irresistible is the fascination of these peaks. The wounded are nursed and the dead are buried, the account of charges being punctually rendered to the next of kin.'

'Had you been here this might never have happened.' murmured Virginia. Tell me what befell you on that fearful night?' Sanguine related his adventures and explained that he was not only fulfilling his duty as a courier in coming to the peaks, but was also in flight from some fierce persecutor who harried him like a hound upon the trail.

'And still he is on the scent,' cried Virginia, pointing to the slopes below where a dozen men were fighting their way amid the snow and ice. 'Come, dear Sanguine, we must press forward with a double purpose, you to escape your enemies, and I to plant the American flag, of which I carry

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a small example, on the hitherto unconquered Crag of Inevitable Death.'

'Would that we could pause awhile.' replied Sanguine, 'and pluck love's young flower according to our covenant of the Pea Thursday revels. For, had I not been driven in headlong flight, you would certainly have won the race for my hand.'

'That is so. But I fear this is no place for dalliance. This climate was not made for melting in a swoon of love.'

Sanguine mused sadly on the ironies of his existence. When Marcia Magnum was in his arms the air had been so intemperately warm that her distended loveliness could not escape from its casing of armour; now, with the no less winsome Virginia beside him, the wind blew so icily and the cold was so extreme that both must stay impounded in their dense, protective wrappings of leather and of fur. Then, glancing at the undaunted party of pursuit, he cried, 'You are right. We have no other course but onwards and upwards.'

'For the honour of American Womanhood,' she responded bravely, and waved her little flag at the terrible peaks above them.

'For the preservation of my life and liberty,' he

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added and with that he attached himself to the remaining fragment of rope, observing that, if die they must, to die in such a bondage were a perfect happiness.

So lashed together they grappled with the gelid rocks and slowly mounted towards the yet untrodden heights.

Hour after hour they battled on, cutting footholds on the glassy surfaces and raising their exhausted bodies, by superb feats of gymnastic, over barriers which seemed impassable. Yet their followers were no less determined and no less expert in feats of endurance and of athletic manipulation. Nearer, nearer they pressed, while Sanguine realised that Virginia's strength was spent; not only must he cleave a way across the horrid wilderness of ice; he must carry the fainting body of his dear one to their goal.

So ardent was his passion for liberty, so consuming his love for the sweet burden in his arms that a miraculous strength and skill were granted to him in that hour. Onward he strove, until the last and most savage of the crags alone remained to be conquered. He could now hear the sound of voices behind and feared, that even if he prevailed, his hunters would track him to the end. But there should be no surrender. Virginia should plant

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her flag upon the summit and then he would turn to pelt his persecutors with blocks of ice and missiles of the frozen snow. Calling on his last particle of strength, he once again forced his numbed, exhausted limbs to their task. Hacking here and heaving there, he proceeded with a speed beyond all expectation and at last he could deposit his exquisite burden on the topmost pinnacle. Proudly Virginia drove her flag into the virgin snow and the Stars and Stripes floated in victory where neither foot nor flag had been before. But the triumphant Sanguine was now utterly spent; he fell upon the hard-won pinnacle and passed into the oblivion of a swoon.

When he recovered his consciousness, he saw to his horror that he was surrounded. Surely now his end had come, once again he would lose his liberty and, with it, the woman he adored. Men were chattering; strangely too, there was a noise as of machines clicking. He saw his dear Virginia standing posed against her flag, while a voice informed her that it was splendid and would she deliver a message to the Women of the World? Staggering to his feet, Sanguine realised, to his unspeakable surprise, that the voice belonged to no other than his old friend Grub.

'Master Sanguine, I presume.' cried Grub, and

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shook him warmly by the hand or at least as warmly as the climate of the spot permitted. Grub then summoned one of his attendants who emptied a flask of fiery spirit down our hero's throat, which so enlivened him that he was immediately demanding explanations.

'That you shall have,' answered Grub, 'when we have descended from these abominable crags to which you and your lady have dragged us at great risk of life. However, we have our reward. For we have made a picture of unique value and the image of this gallant girl, this true daughter of the Pilgrim Fathers, this princess among all pioneers, attaching the Stars and Stripes to the most obstinate of all European peaks will soon be visible in every picture theatre of the civilised globe. That is, if we can return alive. Come, now, and be vigilant. For they say that the descent from such abrupt and treacherous pinnacles is the worse of the two evils.'

Revived in body but bemused in mind, Sanguine joined the party in their perils of the downward track; it took them many hours of slipping and stumbling to complete the journey, but as they were soundly roped, could take their time, and had food and liquor in abundance the descent was at last achieved in safety. When they reached a

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mountain tavern the entire company was so exhausted that they slept throughout a day and a night, after which Grub commanded such a banquet as had never been known in those parts. During this night of revel Sanguine heard the whole of Grub's story which was one of such an extraordinary nature that he could scarce give credence to its glorious message.

On escaping from the field of battle where Sanguine had been wounded, Grub had slipped through Viridia and hastened back to England with the records of his film intact. There an end to its story had been neatly fabricated in their workshop and, when the whole was at last displayed upon the screen, it was acclaimed as a masterpiece of pictorial art. The mixture of Marcia's beauty with the actualities of blood and battle stirred the most profound emotions in all who saw it; the story was voted to be novel and ingenious, the setting of it expert, and the acting magnificent beyond any witnessed hitherto. But the most fervent praise of all fell upon Sanguine, whose handsome features were reproduced in every print in the country and were thence excised by frantic maidens to set upon their desks as they worked or over their beds as they slept. Not only did the public dote in a fever upon the new hero

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but the critical voices were universally agreed that his simulation of the agonies of a wounded man was acting of such persuasive power, such intense veracity, that his histrionic like had never been seen.

Sanguine here broke in upon Grub's narrative to protest that since he had really been wounded in bitter fact his tormented writhings and screams could not honestly be called the performance of an actor. But Grub assured him that there was no need to mention it and went on to describe the hue and cry for Sanguine which had arisen after the triumphant reception of the picture. For Sanguine had become on a sudden not only a star-performer, but the most precious of all stars. Accordingly, Grub had been dispatched to scour Europe for this paragon and a very troublesome time he had experienced in following the trail of our hero from one country to another. But all, in the end, had turned out more happily than could be imagined. Grub had scored a double victory. He had not only found Sanguine, the vanished genius; he had secured a picture, exclusively his own, of the intrepid American girl conquering the Crag of Inevitable Death for the first time in the history of the human race. He could scarcely say which was the more valuable, the recovery of

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Sanguine to pursue his career as an actor or the recording of so romantic an event as Virginia's planting of the Stars and Stripes on the virgin pinnacle of Mont Morta, while her gallant lover lay swooning by her side.

When Sanguine had heard all this and had been assured that he could in future command for the show of his features whatever fees he chose to demand, he put thoughts of lucre at a distance and merely asked that he should possess Virginia without further delay.

'That may not be done.' answered Grub, 'without the previous legalities and ceremonial of holy wedlock. For I can assure you that our profession has now to be most particular in its behaviour. So many complaints have been lodged against the freedom of our conduct and the salacious nature of our pictures that we have been subjected to a great cleansing and are now governed by the most rigorous ordinance and a relentless discipline. It would cost me my position in the Corporation to permit any irregularity of the kind which you appear to desire. I insist that you be decently married, that is, if the lady wishes.'

'Yet once again,' cried Sanguine in bitter grief, 'am I delayed in the fruition of my love. And

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such has been my fortune in the past, so many the slips which I have suffered, that I verily believe that the desired cup will never touch my lips.'

'Tear not,' answered Grub, 'you are secure at last. We shall carry you both safe, but single, to London and there your decent nuptials will be celebrated with the utmost publicity. I can pledge you that your wedding-bells will sound across the world, for we know how to make a noise, when we are minded. Meanwhile, I must dispatch messages to my Corporation to have all in perfect readiness.'

## CHAPTER XIX

IN WHICH THE HERO FEELS THE THORNS OF FAME  
AND PLUCKS LOVE'S YOUNG FLOWER AT LAST

**T**HE messages proved most efficacious. The story of the Mont Morta and the romance of the Perfect Lovers was blazoned far and wide. When Sanguine and his Virginia landed at Dover, they were greeted by an army of notables, including the British Prime Minister and the American Ambassador; the troops were called out to reinforce the police in order to keep in hand the thronging myriads of devotees. So many thousands pressed to see them leave the ship that scores fell into the water and were drowned, since none would turn aside to the work of rescue when such a spectacle awaited their eyes upon the gangway. Through an arch of the British and American flags Sanguine and Virginia came shoreward hand in hand and were driven to London through towns and villages, all garlanded, all jubilant, all

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clamorous with thundering cheers. Never for a moment did the camera cease to record their glorious progress.

According to Grub's notions of propriety they were dispatched to separate hotels while the arrangements for holy wedlock in the most august of churches were being put forward. That each hotel was of the utmost magnificence was no consolation to Sanguine and Virginia, who were reluctant to be parted from their love even for one moment of the day. Moreover, no sooner was it known that here was Sanguine, the mighty actor and hero of the Mont Morta romance, Sanguine, for whose future services every Picture Corporation in the world was making the most extravagant offers, Sanguine who had stormed the virgin peak with a woman in his arms and come safe with his precious burden from the Crag of Inevitable Death, than the press of visitors became overwhelming. Dr. Junck-Vorwärts hurried to congratulate his old pupil and to seek a small accommodation of money wherewith to found in association with a Hindu sage a new academy in which it was proposed to Think Sideways as well as Upwards, but, alas, he was thrown down the steps of the hotel on the grounds of being inadequately dressed. Mr. Pilfer, who had lost his

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General's rank owing to the unfortunate termination of the eighteenth war for the Stincka Morass and had been dismissed from the control of the Cerulean Casino owing to some pedantic fuss about his failures in arithmetic, a subject for which, as we previously saw, he had a constitutional inability, called to felicitate our hero and to inquire whether he would care to finance some experiments in the catering trade. His father and mother came to solicit endowments for those chairs and lectureships for which their appetite had now become insatiable.

Indeed, there was no peace to be had at all. For the emissaries of the newspapers not only called but climbed through his windows and to the click of cameras there was no end. At Virginia's hotel there was the same tumult of inquiry, interview, and picture-making. Worse still, a continuous stream of frantic women now fought and clamoured at the doors of Sanguine's hotel. When removed by the police, they showed the utmost guile in devising entrance by curious means. Miss Flout, realising that this was her old friend of Chastity College, came speeding from Oxford to renew her acquaintance and was only sent home again after a scene of unpleasant violence. His dear Ginevra travelled no less hurriedly from

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Europe and wounded two porters before accepting defeat. Miss Marcia Magnum, conscious that in preferring Pilfer to Sanguine, she had committed a temporary error of judgment, was equally importunate in demanding to see him and threatened to commit suicide if not admitted. As none seemed to be concerned by this menace, she withdrew in a fury but omitted to be a woman of her word. Sanguine dared not emerge from his suite; his only defence was to plead indisposition, which indeed was not altogether a false assertion. For the exposure to glory, consequent upon other exposures to much buffeting of men, to the ice and snow of Mont Morta, and to the severe emotional strain of love deferred, had left him in a low condition, which copious supplies of champagne did little to remedy. Alarmed for his honoured patron, the manager of the hotel sent out for the most illustrious and expensive physicians who, such was their devotion to a national hero, threw up all other cares in order to swarm about his bed. They felt his pulse, observed his tongue, tested his blood, and took the most particular notice of his private bodily functions.

It was immediately discovered that his tonsils were inflamed and must be removed, that his teeth were decayed and must be pulled, that the passages

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of his nose and forehead were corrupt and must be scoured, and that his stomach was septic and must be opened. No sooner had the surgeons resolved upon these curative slits than the physicians responded that so much application of the knife, however strongly justified, would leave the patient uncommonly feeble. A restorative therapy would be essential. They accordingly proposed that, when the surgery had been performed, Sanguine should seek repose in their own establishments where he could benefit by all the latest appliances of electricity and manipulations of the masseur. Since the electricity would undoubtedly heighten the pressure of his blood, they would then apply a dietary regimen in order to reduce that evil. Since the masseur might overstimulate his tissues, they would arrange for him to be dipped in special baths that would speedily remove the dangers of over-stimulation. It was made plain to Sanguine that the principles of hygienic balance were to be most carefully observed; everything which had been expensively done would be expensively contradicted; moreover the high science of physical compensation, which insures that the best way to make a patient forget a pain in his head is to attack his belly, and vice versa, was to be rigorously applied. It would

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be impossible for Sanguine to complain that his throat was sore if his toothless gums suffered greater affliction than the seat of his enucleated tonsils; impossible to remember the tortures of an opened abdomen while the caustic and cleansing wires were being driven up his nostrils.

Sanguine, accordingly, was at once conveyed to a Home equipped with all the necessary implements and services and there was left for an evening, with no food but castor-oil, to reflect on the enormous relief which the impending operations would bring him. But, such was his growth in knowledge of the world, such the decay of that moral fibre which had resisted so long the pressure of continuous mischance, that for the first time in his life he refused to believe what he was told. When the blithe and buxom nurses had bidden him good night and jested merrily, as is the way of nurses, about the tremendous benefits he was about to receive, he summoned up all his courage to rebel. He sprang from his bed, dressed himself, and hastened down the stairs into the street. When he had attained his liberty, a sudden conviction overcame him that he had never felt better in his life.

With all his strength and confidence restored he summoned Grub in the morning and insisted that

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the marriage in an august and holy fane was to be abandoned. With a courage new to him, he paid no heed to Grub's chagrin and announced that, unless his wishes were granted, he would never act for the camera again. He demanded an immediate civil union before a Registrar and a quiet, unmolested honeymoon in some old-fashioned inn, where, under assumed names, he and his Virginia could seek their Sublimation in tranquillity. For Virginia doted upon England and wished to enjoy the old-world beauties of its country life. Grub, so dashed at first by these proposals, subsequently became more cheerful and said that there was always considerable value in a runaway wedding, a remark which Sanguine did not fully comprehend. When he explained his plans to Virginia, she was ready to welcome them, for on her too the press of fame had so grievously descended that she could endure the sight of a camera no longer. Accordingly, with what he considered to be total secrecy, he led her to the marriage-office, only to find that Grub had been before them and that their happy journey would be recorded in every Picture Theatre of the country.

When the brief ceremony was over they drove down one of the new motoring roads to enjoy the

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peace of the countryside and came thrice to the verge of annihilation in the process. But, at last, and in safety, they reached an inn, where all things, except the charges, were in the antique fashion. When Mine Hoste came out, clad in magnificent Elizabethan apparel, mighty ruff, rich doublet, and silken hose, he turned out to be no other than Mr. Pilfer, whose most recent activity in the world of finance was to organise a Chain of Historic English Taverns, decorating and administering each in the proper style of its period. Grub also had followed them to see that all was well and together with Pilfer he arranged that both the Tavern and its occupants should not be unnoticed of the reading and picture-going world.

The workmen had scarce finished fixing the last of the oaken timbers to the front of this inn when the married couple drove up. Men-servants in jerkins and galligaskins sprang forward to seize their baggage and to restore their motor car with petrol at an instrument called Ye Olde Parishe Pumpe. Mr. Pilfer escorted them with a thousand felicitations to Ye Olde Cocktaile Nooke and plied them with refreshment, while maidens, habited as Tudor wenches, made music upon the virginals with the utmost conviction. The wedding-breakfast was introduced by a trumpeter in

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Beef-eater's uniform and had for its most notable dish Ye Olde Swanne and Peacocke Pie, such as had been devoured—so the brochure announced—by Queen Elizabeth with extreme gusto when she dined in this hostelry on her way to Kenilworth. Virginia was appointed to open this imposing pasty, but Pilfer, at heart a kindly man and stirred by amiable sentiment towards the young lovers, gave Sanguine a politic hint that, if they wished their night to be free of disturbance, as was usual with couples in their case, it would be wise to proceed no further with this historic delicacy than the cutting. It was true that both the swan and the peacock had been freshly slaughtered, true also that his tavern contained, beneath its Tudor exterior, every modern convenience and that an excellent medico lived near by, but, on the whole, he counselled them to leave the time-honoured viand alone. 'The Tudor abdomen,' he added, 'appears to have been more powerful than any of our decadent days.'

Virginia, in a rapture, drove a noble piece of steel through the lid of the colossal crust, and cried as she did so, 'I never knew that England could be so English.'

Their health was drunk in modern wines served in the most ancient flagons. Lutes and dulcimers

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discoursed the sweetest music and, when that grew tiresome, as it soon did, Mr. Pilfer pressed a button in Ye Ingle Nooke and from a monstrous warming-pan, which hung upon the wall, there suddenly emerged strains of a livelier order conveyed through the ether from Mr. Harry Whoopee's Hot Jazz Boys. By this modern usage of the ancient pan, Virginia was entranced and vowed it to be the cutest of all Mr. Pilfer's notions for developing the true pleasures of an old-world tavern. All day, though the lovers recked little of such minor attentions, the cameras worked busily away, for neither Grub nor Pilfer were neglecting their duty to inform the world of the hostel and its happy pair. At last, when night was come, two tiny page-boys, with their faces blacked in the negro style and wearing tunics of white to set off the countenance of coal, led Sanguine and Virginia by the light of hymeneal torches to the sweet loneliness of the Queen's Chamber. Here the floors were so warped that only the intoxicated could walk surely and the oak beams so low and so massive that it was safer not to walk at all.

There the two lovers could rest from the heavy burden of their recent days. They counted themselves unknown save to each other, little surmising

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what the journals would have to say of all this on the following morning.

'Glory is behind us.' cried Sanguine in an ecstasy of joy. 'Riches await us. Love is here. I believe, dear Virginia, that of all people living, or who ever lived, we are the most truly blessed.'

'But the marriages of picture-players,' answered Virginia with a roguish smile, rarely, as I read, of long duration. According to what I gather of the loves of others in our station, we should find ourselves to be antipathetic in a week, mutually repulsive in a month, and divorced in a year.'

But Sanguine, for the second time in his life, refused to believe what he was told. But whether he was right it is not my business to pursue.







