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THE

COUNTERSTROKE

By AMBROSE PRATT

Author of "Vigoris Daunt, Billionaire."

(Continued.)

"Well, well, don't waste time. I shall expect to hear from you this afternoon that half the plates at least are finished."

"I'll do my best, sir."

The Count d'Astala strode out, showing no signs of weakness although deprived of the assistance of his slaves. He slammed the door behind him violently.

Cressingham from his humid lair watched the boy take up a large sheet of white metal and place it in a frame, then bring to bear on it an appliance from one of the strange machines, which he set in motion by pressing on a lever. There followed a sharp and deafening hiss, and he could see now a tiny saw was cutting through the plate as fast as though it were a board or deal. This operation was often repeated, then came a filing process, exercised with marvellous care and attention to detail, and the divided plates gradually assumed uniform proportions.

Cressingham watched the work, completely fascinated for a time, but the water, which had long ere this penetrated his bandages, commenced to pain and smart his bruised body, and he only awaited an opportunity to declare his presence.

Fate brought him a splendid chance. The boy Desire while comparing two plates by transposition mused aloud: "I am glad that I did not meet that gentleman, Lord Cressingham. Miss Elliott is always saying what a splendid man he is. I should have been sure to want to help him to escape, and if I had grandfather—"

He paused, as if reflecting. "Well, I suppose he'd not have killed me. I'm too useful to him for that, but I'm sure

he'd punish me by breaking his promise in the end."

Cressingham listened breathlessly, and the last word sighed out his relief. The noise startled the boy. He dropped the plate and glanced furtively at the water. Cressingham pushed himself into the light. The boy turned deathly pale, and stood staring at the apparition shocked and rigid, for the man's face was indescribably ghastly seen under the white glare of the electricity.

"Boy," he whispered hoarsely, "I am Lord Francis Cressingham."

But Desire, white to the lips, muttered out: "I never harmed you, sir; you know I never harmed you. Don't hurt me, sir. I'm a good Catholic, and when I get to England I shall have masses said for your soul."

Cressingham smiled wanly at the thought, and said: "I'm not a ghost, Desire; I'm alive."

"But how did you come here, then?" demanded the boy, only half assured.

"I swam here under water from the boat and under the door. I only pretended to stab myself."

"Good heavens, what a swimmer you must be!"

"I want you to help me, Desire. Miss Elliott told me how good and kind you have been to her; she sent me to you." He swam to the platform as he spoke, and painfully dragged himself from the water.

The boy fell back a few steps, eyeing him in sheer fright. "Help, you!" he stammered; "how can I?"

"I don't know yet; later we shall see. You can hide me here for a few days, can't you? You would not like to see me die, Desire. A few days, is that much?"

"Ah!" (hesitatingly) "but you must soon be caught, and then my grandfather will know, and I shall suffer for it. You see," he added shamefacedly, "I've worked on this boat for two years now, day and night, day and night. When it is finished grandfather has promised to send me to England to the Cambridge University. But if I do anything to vex him in the meantime, he will not let me go."

"Then you would rather see a fellow creature murdered before your eyes than risk a little to try to save him?"

The boy cast down his eyes, and was silent for a time. He was wonderfully beautiful of face, this boy, and strangely like Madame Violette in feature—but he differed just as strangely in expression. His eyes were heavy lidded, large, and unvoluntarily kind; his mouth was soft and tremulous, and his lips quivered as the man observed him.

"I've so wanted to get away from this horrible island; I've always been here,

you see," he muttered plaintively at last; "and you must be caught, my Lord. It's not like as if I could really serve you or help you to escape—only God could work such a miracle as that, and God never comes near this place."

"My boy," said Cressingham impressively, "God is everywhere, although He be not manifest. He feels Himself by diverse means and ways we cannot always understand. It is God who has given you now charge of a fellow's life. Be sure that He reads into your heart and sees the selfish impulses at war there with the generous promptings of your better nature."

"You speak like my friend the abbe who died here last summer," said the boy. "It was he who told me about God. Have you ever seen him?"

"Whom, the abbe?"

"No; God!"

"No, Desire; it is only when we die that we can look upon His face. That's why foolish men dare sometimes to be wicked and disobey His commands."

"One of His commands is to love all men, is it not?"

"Yes, my lad, it is."

"Then I have disobeyed that order," said the boy, "for I hate everybody on this island, even mother. Am I very wicked?"

"We are none of us perfect, Desire. But say, will you help me, or give me up? I am entirely at your mercy, as you see."

"I won't tell on you, of course; you may stay here until you are discovered."

"Thank you, boy; let us shake hands on that."

Desire came forward and offered both his hands. "I like you, my Lord," he said frankly. "I shall be so sorry when you are caught, but if you are careful you may live here for quite a long time, for I shall feed you, and grandfather seldom comes to work here lately, he is so old that he grows tired very soon. The only thing is—ha! I did not think of that—"

"The tunnel?"

"The tunnel?"

He pointed to the rocky wall against which the boat-house was built, and Cressingham saw the outlines of an iron door cunningly let into the solid rock. "He sometimes comes that way," he muttered fearfully, "and spies on me as I work. If he came now he would catch you easily."

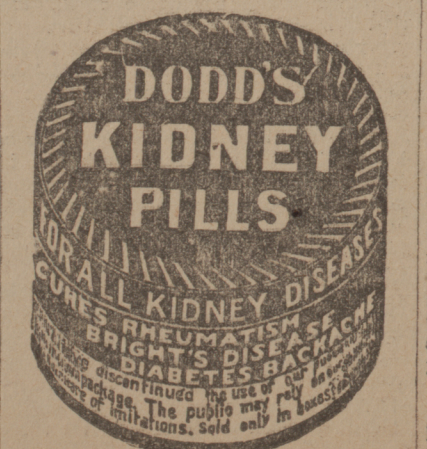
Cressingham shivered. "That door opens on a tunnel, then?"

"Yes, which leads to grandfather's bedroom. No one knows about it but grandfather and me, not even mother. The whole island is honeycombed with tunnels; if you once got in there, and didn't know your way, you might wander for days in the dark, and no matter how you cried out, no one would ever hear you."

"That would be horrible; but where could I sleep, Desire, where I would be safe?"

Desire pondered a while, then pointed delightedly to the silver boat that swung on its davits above their heads. "In there," he cried, "you would be perfectly safe, for we never let it down. It is quite finished, and only needs the engines, which I am busy making now. You had better get in at once, in case of accidents," he continued presently, "for I have to work, and while I am working one can hear nothing."

Cressingham obeyed, and swung himself on board the boat, which he found to be very lightly but substantially constructed of some alloy of steel and aluminium. It was furnished fore and aft with water-tight compartments, and a large space in the centre waited for the engines that Desire spoke of. Leaning over the side he watched the boy at his work, and marvelled at the patience and wonder-



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Daily Fashion Hint for Times Readers.



COAT OF BROADCLOTH OR VELVET.

The sketch shows a belted Eton, cut away in front over a vest of embroidered broadcloth, the tiny revers on each side of the front being faced with corded silk, the model being of brown velvet, the best being in shades of ecru, brown and gold. The buttons used on the coat were of gilt. The three-quarter length sleeves were cut in sections, the undersleeve being of the embroidered cloth finished with lace.

ful shall be employed in the labor that engrossed him. Four hours sped by, and then Desire threw down his tools. "I must go to lunch now," he said; "I shall bring back something for you in my pockets."

"Will you see Miss Elliott?" asked Cressingham.

"Why yes. She always has her meals with grandfather and me."

"Please try to let her know that I am safe; she will be dreadfully anxious."

"I shall try; good-bye, my Lord."

He was gone two hours, and on his return seemed very anxious and distressed.

"I could not tell Miss Elliott," he said quickly, "for the Prince, my mother's husband has arrived, and I could not see her alone, but I made a sign to her and grandfather saw me. He was very angry and beat me cruelly. He pretends to think that I intend to run away with Miss Elliott in the boat as soon as the engines are finished, and he is coming soon to take away all the completed plates, so that I cannot do what he sees fit. He is now perhaps on his way. Oh, if he should find you here!"

(To be continued.)

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OBITUARY

Young Swanton

In the death of Young Swanton, which took place yesterday about noon at his residence, 216 Waterloo street, the shipping business of the city loses one who was for years connected with it. Mr. Swanton was sixty years of age and for thirty-five years had carried on a business as stevedore and was known as a man of sterling qualities and upright business integrity. He leaves his wife and eight children. The sons are Messrs. Young, Samuel, William, George and Charles, all engaged in the stevedore business in this city. Mrs. George Leach, Mrs. G. F. Lawton and Miss Sarah Frances are daughters. Samuel, teamster of this city is a brother and Mrs. Campbell, Boston, and Mrs. Dwyer, Buffalo, N. Y., are sisters.

The funeral will be held tomorrow afternoon at 2:30 o'clock from his late residence, interment being in the C. of E. cemetery.

Mildred B. Hastings

The death of Miss Mildred B. Hastings on Wednesday, Nov. 28, is reported from Summer Hill, Queens county. She died after a short illness of consumption. Her funeral was held Friday afternoon, Rev. J. Spenser, rector of Gagetown, officiated, interment being in the Protestant cemetery. She was the only daughter of Alexander and Anna Hastings and was fifteen years old.

Arthur Farmer, of Tansey Brothers, who has been ill for some days, is able to be about again.

Who Said



BOVRIL?

POWERFUL FAREWELL

SERMON BY DR. CRAPSEY

Rochester, N. Y., Dec. 2.—Dr. Algernon S. Crapsey preached his farewell sermon at St. Andrew's church today. His text was taken from Matthew xxi-5. He said in part:

"Jesus was just such a man to the outward seeming as are the millions of workmen who, with dinner pails in hand, go forth every morning to their duty. For thirty years he lived as child and lad and youth and man with others of his age and station, and there was nothing to distinguish him from his neighbors. At the age of thirty he entered upon a public career as a Rabbi or teacher in Israel. But still there was nothing to indicate that he was a king. And to indicate that he was in the perspective of history agree with the children of Jerusalem and declare it to be the only kingly life ever lived in the world."

"The Kingship of Jesus was in Jesus himself, in the might and the majesty of his soul. He exercised his royal powers, ennobling every power of his soul into obedience to his will. He, not his passions, reigned supreme in his nature. He exercised dominion over every foul lust and every base fear. He put to death every unholy desire and every unclean thought. He did what no other king has ever done."

"And then having himself, by experience, mastered the royal law and found out the way of life, he gave the law to the people. He did not hesitate to repeal all ancient law and enact his own. Surely no king of earth has ever put forth such claims as this and had them seriously considered. But the law which Jesus gave has been the law by which countless millions have striven to order their

lives, and though countless millions fail they do not cease to see in the keeping of that law the salvation of the world. "To find Christ is to find salvation for one's self. To follow Jesus is to win salvation for others. Let those who will, find Christ, let us follow Jesus. Let us despise any salvation that does not come to us by way of the cross. We will not enter into the Kingdom of Heaven except we may take by violence."

LETHBRIDGE COAL STRIKE IS SETTLED

Toronto, Dec. 2.—The great Lethbridge coal strike was settled between Deputy Minister of Labor King, Premier Ross and President Mitchell at Indianapolis Saturday.

The Winnipeg Telegram makes a fierce attack on Scott and King for going to confer with Mitchell, holding it was a humiliating exhibition. It admits, to use its own words, that "it is necessary that Lethbridge strike should be settled as speedily as possible and in the circumstances almost any action would be justified," but it does not suggest any alternative course that could have produced the desired results so quickly.

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