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—WILL—

BEGIN SATURDAY, JANUARY 12, 1907.

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JOHN FRODSHAM, Royal Hotel Billiard Parlors.

THE COUNTERSTROKE

By AMBROSE PRATT

Author of "Vigorous Daunt, Billionaire."

(Continued.)

He entered his old drawing room with the sense of one returned from the tomb of ages to find the world's landmarks unaltered but the faces of his contemporaries changed, and with a bitter heartache he recognized that from that moment a new, untried and desolate existence stretched out before him, robbed of the dearest dreams of other days and the joys he had once fondly thought might have been his, a future destitute of the hopes and ambitions which had formerly constituted the bravest and best part of his life.

Olden respected for awhile the musing silence into which he had fallen, but at last, saddened by his friend's grief, he tried loyally to cheer him and rouse him from his melancholy mood. Laying his hand gently on Cressingham's shoulder he said softly: "Dear friend, I know what your thoughts must be, I know their unutterable sadness, but should you give way to them? The past is past, and in the march of destiny many hearts are bruised and broken. You have endured a bitter loss; but you are young, the world lies before you full of hope and promise. Please God that in the joys of the future you will forget the sorrows of the present!"

"Old chap!" said Cressingham brokenly, "you say you understand, but you can't, you can't, or you couldn't say such things. I've nothing to look forward to—nothing!"

"Nothing, Frank? Don't say that. Are you not to give me my bride?"

"And happiness with her, Ludwig, I sincerely hope—constant happiness. You are right, it will always be a pleasure for me to think of that. You must try to forgive me for my selfishness, old boy, but somehow suddenly coming back to the old place, seeing the old things about me just as they used to be, I felt a bit outside of everything; you know, old chap, what I mean. Look, there is her photograph!"

He pointed to a counterpane presentation of Miss Elliott, whose sweet face smiled at them from the wall. With quivering lips which he bit savagely to control, he gazed at her a moment, then a blur came over his eyes, and he hurried abruptly to the inner room in order to conceal an

emotion which he was powerless to subdue. Olden lingered, longing to go and comfort his friend, but delicately conscious that for awhile at least he had better be left alone. But the ensuing long and speechless silence frightened him. He had heard of men, the bravest men, who find life worthless had straightway abandoned it. At the end of an hour he commenced to fear that Cressingham had taken poison, and at last, unable to bear the stillness any longer he called out sharply, "Frank, there is a heap of telegrams and letters here awaiting you."

With a feeling of relief and joy, he heard the door open and Cressingham emerged from the bedroom, his face still melancholy indeed, but now calm and impassive as of old.

"Telegrams for me!" he said; "from whom can they be? Perhaps my father is ill." He strode to the open bureau, and one after another tore them open.

The young man handed them to his friend. "My tasks are not yet over," he muttered sadly. "I must go and see the poor old gentleman. You will excuse me, my friend?"

"Gladly; it is your duty, Frank."

"Ay, one that fills me with dread; but I shall get it over at once. Good-bye Ludwig."

"Good-bye, my friend—I shall wait here for your return."

A few moments afterwards Cressingham rapped on Colonel Elliott's door, and was presently admitted and ushered into the library where he had spent of old many sweet hours with Franchise.

The grief which he had found so hard to repress in his own house returned upon him in full flood then, but in a softer form. This was Franchise's favorite room, and tokens of her were everywhere in evidence. Her tea-table rested in a corner, her work-box standing on it open, as though she had a moment ago been interrupted and called elsewhere. Upon the great armchair which she had used to occupy during many a quiet chat with him, there reposed a glove which he knew was hers, and it gave him a shock to think how much the Colonel must have loved his daughter to have preserved undisturbed the room which she had last quitted on the fatal evening which had been the prelude to her strange subsequent adventures and her death.

Inspired by a sudden sentiment of romantic reverence he stooped above the chair and silently pressed his lips to the velvet where her head had often rested, feeling as he did so, with aching heart and eyes that burned with the pain of unshed tears, that he was taking a last leave of the sweet and perfect dead woman whom he had loved.

He was startled by a softly-uttered exclamation and sprang erect, dashing his hands to his eyes, angry and ashamed that any one should witness his emotion.

"Frank!" said the voice of a woman, a voice that made his heart stand still with shock, with doubt and sharp unendurable fear, for it was a voice from the grave.

He turned to see Franchise as of old confronting him, only more beautiful, more

sweet, more kind, perhaps too a little more sad; Franchise, with a smile on her lips, with tears trembling on the long black lashes of her eyes.

"My God—you, you!" he gasped hoarsely, not yet comprehending that she was more than a phantom of his own imagination.

She held out her arms for answer, and slowly, doubtfully he advanced towards her. But the real woman convinced him, and he had magnificent compensation for all his grief and sadness of the past few weeks, in drinking the sweetness of her lips, in holding her clasped to him in a close and passionate embrace.

She told him her story soon, and its simplicity amazed him. Madame Viyella, who, after the murder of Jibloff and the ruthless destruction of the Turkish yacht, had been seized with a sudden terror of her father—a terror which had overwhelmed every other sense—in the abandon of her mad and unreasoning panic had determined to risk everything and fly from the accursed island, but nevertheless feared to depart alone.

Unable to find Desire, who was then actually embarked upon a similar undertaking, she had forced Miss Elliott to be the companion of her enterprise. After stealing the Count's key of the boat, and also providing herself with a quantity of valuable jewels, she half-led, half-dragged Franchise, who was still dazed and stupid from her swoon, down from the castle to the beach, probably not many moments after Cressingham had himself landed there.

Embarking on the nearest of the boats she had hoisted the sail, and in spite of the rising gale, had fearlessly sailed out for the open sea, steering a course to the northwest.

The night had been a dreadful one, during which Franchise had lain in the bottom of the tossing craft in all the horrors of sea-sickness, but Madame had managed the boat with the skill and courage of a man, and before evening of the next day they arrived without mishap safely in the bay of San Remo.

There Madame had supplied the girl with a few pounds of ready money and had herself departed, giving no hint of her destination. Franchise had at once made her way to London, and there arrived found to her unutterable joy that her father had after all survived the effects of the poison administered by Madame, and was then residing in his own house, bedridden and still half-paralyzed but on a fair way to complete recovery.

She had then waited for the first time of Cressingham's successful escape from the island, and the mission he had undertaken to procure her release.

Cressingham listened in speechless surprise to the girl's story, lovingly holding her hands while, and almost vainly endeavoring to realize the splendid fortune which had come to him so blessedly and unexpectedly. When all was told he was, in his turn, obliged to turn historian and relate to Franchise every detail of what had occurred to him.

He asked curiously at length: "Sweet heart, after my escape did you receive a message from me?"

"By Desire?"

"Yes."

The girl of a sudden withdrew her hands from his grasp and arose to her feet. The hours had fled in their mad career, and the room was already dark. "Frank," she said slowly, "what were you doing when I came into this room and found you?"

The man flushed a little. "I'd rather not tell you," he muttered.

"You had better if it was what I fancy, for I have a grievance against you, dear?"

"What is your grievance, sweetheart?"

"Tell me what you were doing!"

"I thought you were dead," he whispered. "I was—kissing the place where your head had often rested. Now tell me your grievance, Franchise."

The girl's eyes were luminous as she looked at him. "It is gone now," she murmured; "gone! that kiss of yours has washed its score away."

"It was not a great one then, sweetheart?"

"Was it not? Was it not? I vowed at one time never to speak to you, never to look at you again, because of it."

"Franchise, how could you make such a vow?"

"As easily as I shall again, and keep it, too—if you should ever dare to be unfaithful to me so much as in a thought."

"You were jealous!" cried Cressingham, springing to his feet delightedly; "jealous because I kissed Desire. Oh, you beautiful darling, how I love you for it!"

There was a catch in Franchise's voice as she replied: "How could you do it, Frank? Ah, your love must be different from mine! If I were to do such a thing I would feel that I had committed the worst of crimes. Ah, but I could not, I could not!"

Cressingham caught her passionately in his arms and his lips on hers he whispered low: "Sweetheart, with this kiss I pledge my faith to you for now and evermore! Darling, my darling! again, with this—and this!"

Franchise was satisfied; and Cressingham—since his kisses were returned.

FINIS.

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Typographical Union No. 85 has elected and installed: President, George Maxwell; vice-president, Edward Sage; financial secretary, H. T. Campbell; recording secretary, Ernest H. Eyles; treasurer, Robert Kennedy; sergeant-at-arms, Alfred McCoy; executive committee, Robert Selfridge, Walter Stubbs, A. McGourty, John Long, John Thompson and W. H. Coates; I. T. U. audit committee, E. H. Eyles, Walter Stubbs and Fred. Fisher; trustees, G. H. Maxwell, Wm. Essington and John Longon.

Daily Fashion Hints for Times Readers.



PLAID SILKS FIND A WIDE VOGUE.

With the sudden vogue for plaids in all sections of outer dress, it is small wonder that the shirtmaker has taken due advantage of their many attractions to add to his stock. For the tailor-made gown of any hue, there is nothing that fits in better than a blouse of plaid silk, the dominant tone either matching or contrasting prettily with the color of the cloth. Plaid velvets and velveteens, too, are in high favor; and given one good tailor-made coat and skirt it is possible for the average

business woman or school girl to get through the season comfortably with a selection of plaid silk or velveteen blouses, provided some dainty accessories be supplied. The pretty blouse pictured is cut on regulation lines, the back with tucks running in bretelle fashion from shoulder to waist, while the front has the tucks released across the chest to form the necessary fullness. The regulation shirt sleeve with link cuff is followed, and a high stock of the plaid silk completes this smartly plain garment.



HAT OF LIGHT-COLORED FELT

The sketch depicts an attractive model for mid-winter wear, the hat being of his-cuit color felt, the plumes at the left side being of tan shaded to a warm brown at the tips. The bow of ribbon used to make the twist and loops across the front was of shaded velvet, in pale orange, tan and light brown. Brown maline was ruched in across the back and side of the under brim.

FREDERICTON IS UP IN ARMS

Will Appeal to Washington to Ask for the Restoration of the Consular Agency.

Fredericton, N. B., Jan. 7.—The council of the Fredericton Board of Trade, at a meeting this afternoon, voted unanimously to send a delegation to Washington to urge the United States government to re-establish their consular agency here. President Waddall presided, and the others present included F. B. Edgcombe, C. Fred. Chestnut, George Y. Dibblee, J. M. Wiley, J. D. McKay, J. W. McCready, William Lemont, Ald. Scott, Ald. Colter, J. D. Phinney and John Palmer.

Ald. Scott addressed the meeting at some length, and declared that the closing of the consular agency would result in a great loss and inconvenience to his concern. Last year they shipped to the United States 600 cars of lumber, on which had been paid in consular fees \$1,500. They hoped to do a larger export business next year, but if compelled to send to St. John for clearance papers they would not only suffer great inconvenience but would be put to extra expense because of the delay. He closed by moving a lengthy resolution, which set forth that the closing of the agency would greatly cripple the trade of the city and recommended that a delegation be sent to Washington to pay the matter before the state department and urge reconsideration.

The resolution was seconded by John Palmer and adopted after some discussion. Several of the speakers stated that it was quite well known that the agency here more than paid its way, and they were at a loss to understand why the government had decided to close it.

J. D. Phinney was named as the delegate from the board, and the city council will be asked to appoint another. A committee composed of C. Fred. Chestnut, J. D. Phinney and John Palmer, was appointed to confer with the council on the subject at a meeting to be held tomorrow evening.

ELECTIONS IN OTTAWA

D'Arcy Scott is the New Mayor --- Aldermanic Returns --- Would Reduce Number of Aldermen.

Ottawa, Jan. 7.—The municipal elections took place today. There were four candidates for the mayoralty. D'Arcy Scott headed the poll with about 200 majority over the next highest. The vote was Scott, 3,908; Hopewell, 3,781; Morris, 1,570, and Black, 171. The aldermen elected are:

Dalhousie Ward—McGrath, Cleary and Ross, equal.

Victoria ward—Rosenthal, Armstrong and Boucher.

Wellington Ward—Davidson, Farrow and Wilson.

Central Ward—Pepper, Davis and Little.

St. George's Ward—Hasty, Cunningham and Kilt.

By ward—Desjardines, Julien and Lapierre.

Ottawa Ward—Boudreault, Champion and Gauthier.

Rideau Ward—Askwith, Grant and Short.

The by-law for creating Ottawa into a federal district was defeated.

The by-law for a board of control and the reduction of aldermen from three to two in each ward was carried, as was also the by-law giving the council authority to lease electric power from the Hydro Electric commission.

The annual meeting of the St. Stephen's church Sunday school was held last evening and the following officers elected: Superintendent, Douglas McArthur; assistant superintendents, Wm. Patterson and Mr. Irvine; secretary-treasurer, Thos. Graham; librarians, E. Crawford and Douglas McArthur, jr.

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