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he stumbled over the quotation; then continued with dignity, as his befogged brain reproduced the words: "For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found."

"Very well, father," said the girl, resignedly.

She moved up to the head of the bed and bent over Evan.

"I'm sorry, but I must kiss you," she whispered.

Her lips lightly brushed his forehead.

"Good night, Jack," she said aloud.

"Good night, Norah," he murmured.

He failed to catch her glance, but saw the blush that mantled her cheeks at the mention of her name. He followed her to the door with his eyes, hoping that she would turn to look at him. But she kept her face averted. Her father went out of the room with her.

Presently he returned, and began to prepare to dress Evan's wounds. Obviously he was a surgeon; his air was so professional. And a clever one, for he unrolled the bandages with such certainty and lightness of movement as hardly to cause the slightest pain.

What impressed Evan most, however, was his gentleness, far transcending, as it did, mere professional manner, and more akin to the tender solicitude of a father for a child. He began to understand the situation a little better.

The old gentleman really believed him to be his son. He was mad, of course. But probably he had once had an airman son, whose death had unhinged his brain.

His precaution at the approach of the aeroplane, and his evident failure to report Evan's mishap to the authorities, were not so understandable. But the girl was not mad. She would explain. Evan decided to ask her at his first opportunity.

The girl was alone with him when he awoke next morning. She came quickly towards him as she saw the inquiry in his eyes.

"You must not speak, Mr Jones," she commanded. "You see, I know your name. I will try to tell you what you want to know."

His surmises were correct. Her brother had been killed as a pilot, and her father a famous surgeon, had been mentally deranged ever since, his chief delusion being that his son was not really dead, but hidden away from him by the authorities. Evan bore a strong resemblance to the dead airman; and under the impression that he was his son, her father was trying to conceal his presence in the house, lest the authorities might take him away again.

He even kept his daughter a prisoner, locking her in her room at night, while three faithful old servants watched her movements during the day, and the wreckage of the aeroplane in the grounds had been covered up with evergreen shrubs that it might not be discovered from above.

She was very troubled about the suspense that his disappearance must have caused to his people; he felt inclined to laugh outright at this. But what worried her more, Evan saw, was the effect on her father when he discovered that his son had not returned to him after all. The fight for Evan's life had taxed his strength very sorely.

"No other doctor could have saved you, I know. I served two years as a V.A.D. before coming home to look after father," she said to him, earnestly.

He felt the appeal in her voice, and made his decision instantly.

This father and daughter had saved his life. He owed it to them to do something in return. He would stay and acquiesce in the deception, at least till the old man grew stronger. Afterwards he could easily square the authorities. And even if he could not, what did it matter?

But he had to convince the girl first that he really was friendless before she would agree. Thereafter he noticed that the part of sister seemed to come easily to her.

Evan stopped his story at this point, and took an unnecessarily long time in cleaning and filling his pipe. The mess had emptied without my noticing it; he had got me so interested in his tale; and he was well aware of it. I knew that the mischievous little devil was only trying to tantalise me.

But though I wanted to hear the conclusion very badly, I waited patiently and managed to beat him at his own game. Possibly that is why I remember this part of the story so well.

"Do you know, Charlie," he said at length, "I got to like that old fellow. Though absolutely mad about me, he was a real man, with no finicky middle-age ways about him; and he soon dropped wearing his ridiculous rings and brooches. And he was kind. He simply slaved for me. Sat up with me most of the night and ran my errands during the day."

"I tried to get him to slack off a bit, but it was no use. He simply worked himself done. And just as I was beginning to move about, he went under with brain fever. It almost seemed as if he had

held out until I was well enough to fend for myself."

"We sent for a doctor," he continued. "And I sent for my squadron commander as well, before the doctor should do that for me. You remember old Bannerman, of the —th?"

I nodded. Major Bannerman's name was an honoured one of the Corps.

"He was a good sort. Actually seemed too glad to see me alive to worry much about what had caused my absence. He squared things handsomely, and got me permission to remain where I was. The doctor would have seen to that in any case. I was a bit too necessary for this patient. The old chap simply would not let me out of his room."

"Do you know," Evan said, seriously, "I think it was my presence that pulled him through. He still thought that I was his son, and he lived for me. He was a fine old fellow. I would have sat night and day with him if the doctor had let me. It may strike you as rather an ungenerous thought to confess to, Charlie, but I actually got a little afraid, when he began to improve, that he would wake up sane, and realise that I was not his son."

"I can understand, Evan," I said, as he looked at me to see how I took this statement.

And remembering what a battered little child of fate Evan had been, it was not difficult for me to comprehend such a feeling on his part.

"I need not have worried," he continued. "He did wake up sane, but it made no difference. He remembered things, and liked me. He has treated me as his son ever since. My invention is a success through his influence and money. But that's nothing in comparison to the thought that I have people now, and a home to go to. I am going there tomorrow. God! It's great, Charlie! Simply too great for anything!"

"And the girl, Evan?" I inquired.

Without saying a word he drew out a photograph from his note-case and handed it to me. It was the portrait of a girl in white who was very beautiful. Without a word I handed it back to him.

"Will you leave me your address, old man?" he asked me.

"Certainly," I said, looking at him expectantly.

"I want to keep in touch with you," he murmured, and went on steadily with his puffing.

"Yet my eyes still questioned him. 'The fact of the matter is, old man,' he said, diffidently, 'I will be wanting your services soon. Will you?'"

I nearly wrung his hand off as I promised—I, who had solemnly vowed "Never again!" after Anderson's marriage.

But, then, I could not let anyone else be best man to Evan.

The End.

INFLUENZA.**PREVENTIVE MEASURES ADVISED.**

In view of the prevalence of influenza, the District Health Officer (Dr McKibbin) has issued a circular to local bodies, advising the precautions that should be taken to prevent its spread. The Town Council has received the following:—

"The second wave of influenza in all parts of the world has been mild. In New Zealand, though school attendance has been interfered with in some areas, the case mortality has been low, and industry but slightly affected. Under the circumstances I recommend that your Council will adequately meet the occasion by warning all citizens to avoid unnecessary indoor congregation during the prevalence of influenza, to live in well ventilated rooms as much as possible in the open air and to take to bed if attacked and seek medical advice. The early use of eucalyptus inhalation and ammoniated tincture of quinine internally is valuable."

"Immediate ejection of persons (adult or minor) noticed to be suffering from a cold, from all public gatherings is important, and a recommendation by your Council to that effect, not only to picture theatre managers, but to all custodians of buildings used for public gatherings would be in the interests of public health. Though ordinary influenza is still a notifiable disease, strong persuasive measures for such persons are the only legal methods available in the absence of a medical diagnosis."

"Adults are as much affected by the present epidemic as children. Compulsory exclusion measures of a general nature, if adopted, would have to be applied widely to be effective or reasonable and are best reserved for serious occasions. In districts where pneumonic cases are occurring medical practitioners can obtain on demand from this Department anti-influenza vaccine which has been adopted by the Health Authorities in England for the prevention of complications only."

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WHERE TO FIGHT.**GENERAL BIRDWOOD'S ADVICE.****THE BASIS OF DEFENCE.**

General Sir William Birdwood told the members of the New Zealand Club that he had climbed to the top of the Tinakori hills with the object of getting a bird's-eye view of Wellington, but had found that a screen of smoke obscured the city. The smoke at any rate was evidence that the city was active in an industrial sense, and the sight had a moral for men who had seen the devastation wrought in Europe by the German invaders.

"My army happened to have the good fortune to relieve Lille," continued General Birdwood. "When we got there Lille was a dead city. The Germans had removed practically all the machinery from the manufacturing centres, and the industries of Lille were stilled. That was not legitimate warfare. The Germans did it deliberately because they wanted to have undisputed commercial superiority after securing the military domination that they were aiming at. The citizens of Lille were good enough to offer me the freedom of the city, and I went over there a year later to receive this honour. Lille was still a city of the dead. Nothing was going on."

"I asked the people why they had not resumed their industrial activity, and they replied that they had been unable to get machinery. They had placed their orders in England, but these orders could not be filled quickly. Many other towns in the war area were in the same position. How extraordinary fortunate are towns like Wellington, that have never had an enemy at their gates."

"Whatever happens, make sure that if fighting takes place in the future it takes place in somebody else's backyard, and not in your own. I said the other day that I realised the limitations that were placed upon the defensive preparations of a people numbering only one million. You cannot go in for enormous expenditure, even for defence. But you can have a definite policy to work to. Make up your minds what you are going to do and let your people know how far that falls short of perfection, as of necessity it must do. Then they will know what to expect in time of necessity. Never allow yourselves to be put in the position of enduring what Lille endured."

General Birdwood added that New Zealand's great need seemed to him to be additional population. That need seemed to be realised by the people he had met. He had been surprised and pleased to see that according to the official figures the birth-rate of the Dominion had been well maintained during most of the years of the war, in spite of the mobilisation of a large proportion of the men. The women evidently had been doing their duty, and the "Diggers" had done their duty at the same time by bringing back some 3000 brides from the Old Country. He had noticed in Australia that despite the drought the best crop of all—the children—was doing wonderfully well, and he did not doubt that as he travelled through New Zealand he would find lusty youngsters of the same stamp.

Children were the most valuable crop that any country could raise, but he hoped that New Zealand was not going to depend upon that crop for building up the population. The Dominion soldiers, during the war, had invited many of the men of British regiments to come to New Zealand. They had told the English "Tommys" to emigrate to a country that had abundant sunshine and that was prepared to reward the man who assisted in the tasks of national development. When all the New Zealand soldiers had been settled again in civil life the Dominion ought to welcome thousands of the British soldiers.

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