

THE EAGLE'S EYE

THE EAGLE'S EYE



The Project Gutenberg eBook of The Eagle's eye

This ebook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this ebook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

Title: The Eagle's eye

Author: Courtney Ryley Cooper
William J. Flynn

Release date: April 11, 2023 [eBook #70527]

Language: English

Original publication: United States: Prospect Press, 1919

Credits: deaurider, Graeme Mackreth and the Online Distributed Proofreading Team at <https://www.pgdp.net> (This file was produced from images generously made available by The Internet Archive)

*** START OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE EAGLE'S
EYE ***



William J. Flynn
Recently Retired Chief of the U. S. Secret Service

William J. Flynn
Recently Retired Chief of the U.S. Secret Service

THE
EAGLE'S EYE

A True Story of the Imperial German Government's Spies and Intrigues in
America from facts furnished

BY
WILLIAM J. FLYNN

Recently Retired
Chief of the U.S. Secret Service

NOVELIZED BY
COURTNEY RYLEY COOPER

ILLUSTRATED

NEW YORK

PROSPECT PRESS, INC.

186-192 West 4th Street

Copyright, 1919, by

PROSPECT PRESS, INC.

CONTENTS

CHAPTER	PAGE
I. THE HIDDEN DEATH	7
II. THE NAVAL BALL CONSPIRACY	29
III. THE PLOT AGAINST THE FLEET	50
IV. VON RINTELEN—THE DESTROYER	71
V. THE STRIKE BREEDERS	91
VI. THE PLOT AGAINST ORGANIZED LABOR	113

VII.	THE BROWN PORTFOLIO	133
VIII.	THE KAISER'S DEATH MESSENGER —ROBERT FAY	163
IX.	THE MUNITIONS CAMPAIGN	192
X.	THE INVASION OF CANADA	217
XI.	THE BURNING OF HOPEWELL, VIRGINIA	246
XII.	THE WELLAND CANAL CONSPIRATORS	271
XIII.	THE REIGN OF TERROR	297
XIV.	THE MENACE OF THE I.W.W.	328
XV.	THE GREAT DECISION	354

ILLUSTRATIONS

[William J. Flynn, recently retired Chief of the U.S. Secret Service](#)

[Count Johann von Bernstorff and Dr. Heinrich Albert](#)

[This medal, designed to commemorate the sinking of the Lusitania, was distributed in Germany two days before the vessel was torpedoed](#)

[The Ansonia Hotel, New York City](#)

[Portfolio secured from Dr. Albert containing documents relating to official German intrigue](#)

[The counterfeit passport](#)

[A munitions plant destroyed by the Kaiser's agents](#)

[The devastation caused by German spies who razed the town of Hopewell, Va](#)

THE EAGLE'S EYE

CHAPTER I

THE HIDDEN DEATH

Below the great oil painting of Kaiser Wilhelm, in the Imperial German Embassy at Washington, a slightly wrinkled, nervous man sat at a massive desk, an almost obsolete German dictionary before him, his fingers running the pages, figuring out the numbers, then running them again, his lips repeating the numerals of many a scattered sheet of paper before him, repeating, re-repeating, then matching up those numerals with the page numbers and word numbers of the old dictionary.

Quite still the room was, except for the whirr of the pages and the slight crinkle of the many sheets of papers as he referred from one to the other. There was little need for reference, however, for every page bore the same numerals, the same messages written in strange conglomerations of numbers that were apparently meaningless—even to many of the persons who had brought or sent them to this wrinkled, nervous being who sat beneath the painting of the Kaiser. And reason enough—for those pages of numbers, those jumbled sequences of numerals, were nothing more nor less than the smuggled code messages by which Wilhelm Hohenzollern, Emperor of Imperial Germany, sent his daily instructions via the great wireless at Nauen, Germany, to the man who directed his spider's web of spy activity in the United States, Count Johann von Bernstorff, Imperial Ambassador!

Each morning since the war began, Von Bernstorff had received those numeral inscribed pages, caught on wireless outfits owned privately

throughout the United States by German spies, who had been placed in America for that very purpose. Each day the instructions had come from Berlin—instructions for the beginning of propaganda campaigns, for connivance against the Allies, for the handling of the thousand and one methods by which Germany sought to strike its enemies through neutral America.

Each morning at 3 o'clock, American time, those messages flashed from the tremendous wireless tower at Nauen, Germany—to find spies waiting everywhere in America for them. On interned ships, in shacks, built far from the roar and bustle of the city, even in Fifth Avenue residences, were wireless outfits concealed, each equipped with its Audien detector, so necessary to the catching of wireless waves from a great distance. Nor had the members of the Embassy itself neglected to take a part in the reception of orders from across the sea. Nearly every morning at 3 o'clock found Capt. Franz von Papen, military attache of the Imperial German Embassy, and Capt. Karl Boy-Ed, naval attache, at a secluded part of Long Island, standing beside a racing motor car, to which was attached antennae, detectors and receiving apparatus, that they might personally assure themselves that the code messages from overseas were received and started on their way to Bernstorff, the master spy.

So it was that one day in April, 1915, Count Johann von Bernstorff worked hard at his task of deciphering the maze of numerals that had come to him during the night. One by one he traced out the numbers, matching them first with the page of the old German dictionary, then with the words of the aged book, each of which was carefully numbered for easy transcription. When he had finished, his head bobbed slightly, he pressed a button and almost snapped an order at the hurrying man servant.

"Send Dr. Albert in," he announced.

"Yes, Your Excellency."

A moment later a tall, dark-haired man, his left cheek scarred from a schoolday duel at Heidelberg, stepped into the room. He was Dr. Heinrich Albert, fiscal spy for Imperial Germany, master of its exchequer in America, and second only to Bernstorff in what he termed "the battle on the American front." Just a second he hesitated, and then:

"You sent for me, sir?"

"I did. Just got a message from Wilhelmstrasse." Bernstorff was talking jerkily, somewhat excitedly. "The Lusitania must be sunk on its next voyage."

"Yes?" Dr. Albert asked the question with the calmness of a person ordering a cab—or choosing a meal. "Well—all arrangements are made, are they not?"

"As far as the submarines are concerned, yes. The entire Irish coast has been charted into squares, each square carrying the name of some fish indigenous to that region. The moment that the word is flashed that the Lusitania has sailed, a U-boat will be assigned to each one of those squares. Then it will be an easy matter for fishing smacks, each with a spy aboard, to patrol the coast, and send a message from the nearest wireless station—"

"Something like: 'Shipping ten cases of mackerel,'" broke in Dr. Albert.



Count Johann von Bernstorff and Dr. Heinrich Albert

Count Johann von Bernstorff and Dr. Heinrich Albert

"Exactly." Bernstorff looked up with a smile. "You and I have discussed that before, haven't we? I had forgotten. Well, you know the rest. No one will pay

any attention to the messages except our U-boat captains. They will know by them that the Lusitania is entering the square named after that particular fish. It should be an easy task for them to sink the ship. And it must be sunk!"

"How about the international complications?"

"They must take care of themselves—after we have done all we can do to keep things running smoothly. The point is that the Lusitania must be sunk! We have a lesson to teach America! If we sink a few of their citizens, perhaps they'll be more chary about sending their representatives abroad to sell goods to the Allies. It may make them stop and think awhile before they ship their goods to the Allies too—and that's what we're after."

"Suppose America objects to the loss of its citizens?" Albert was smiling in a quiet, quizzical way.

"We'll sympathize, of course." Bernstorff looked up with an answering smile. "Really, we'll be very sorry. We will mourn for a week—but, in the meanwhile, we also will point to our manufactured fact that the Lusitania carried guns and contraband. That's where you are needed. Take the night train to New York, see Paul Koenig, of the Hamburg American line, and arrange for him to find someone not averse to forging a few affidavits, one to the effect that the Lusitania is loaded with contraband, and another that she carries defensive guns. And be very sure on that point. The rules of war prohibit the sinking of an unarmed ship without due warning. We must have those affidavits."

"Very good, sir."

"And, Albert—"

"Yes?"

"Here"—Ambassador Bernstorff lifted a sheet of closely written paper from his desk—"is an advertisement I have written, warning all American citizens from the Lusitania. See that it is inserted in the New York papers as close to the Cunard Line advertisements as possible. It will be our alibi when the Lusitania is sunk."

"Very good, Your Excellency."

And so it was that with Ambassador Bernstorff at the head of the great spy organization which Germany had built up in America, with Dr. Albert, Capt.

Von Papen, Karl Boy-Ed, Paul Koenig and a half a hundred others working on the various details of the scheme, that the preparations for the sinking of the Lusitania went forth in America.

Day after day passed, while Bernstorff translated his code messages from Wilhelmstrasse and sent replies in the guise of death messages and business telegrams to neutral countries, where they were received by German spies, translated and telephoned by long distance to Germany. Day by day, and then

It was April 29, forty-eight hours before the sailing of the Lusitania. In the great rooms of the Criminology Club in New York, where cosmopolite members daily gathered to discuss the themes which formed their chief aim in life, the apprehension of the genus criminal, an important meeting was in progress. Harrison Grant, the president and organizer of the great private criminal chasing brotherhood, stood before them, a telegram in his hand.

"Fellow members," he announced, "I have just received the most vital communication that has ever come to this club. It is a telegram from William J. Flynn, chief of the Secret Service, which changes the aims and purposes of our organization to ideals far greater than ever were dreamed of when we banded ourselves together to follow out our individual hobbies in the chase and capture of dangerous criminals. For this telegram pits us against the most shrewd violators of the laws of God and man that ever were known—the paid criminals of Imperial Germany, protected by the power of international law, yet criminals nevertheless!

"All of you know the reason for this telegram. It is in answer to the letter we sent to Chief Flynn at the last meeting of this club, when our various members displayed the evidence that had come to them of the perfidy of Imperial Germany in assuming friendship for this country while seeking to violate our neutrality in its efforts to maim the Allies. More than that, my charge you will remember, was that Germany had considered America also in its aims of conquest, and that it fully believed at the beginning of this war that it would crush England and France easily, then reach forth for our own country. But the danger of active invasion is past now—it stopped at the battle of the Marne. What we must battle against is the more insidious invasion of Germany's spies—and their name is Legion! Therefore, gentlemen, I have the honor to announce to you that Chief Flynn has

accepted our offer of services and that the Criminology Club is now and henceforth devoted to the defense of America and the outwitting of the paid tools of Imperial Germany who seek to use our nation as a battlefield!"

A cheer that resounded through the great rooms of the Criminology Club echoed Grant's speech. Then the members gathered into little groups to discuss the new development and to plan for the future. As for Harrison Grant—

He shifted from his position and veered toward Cavanaugh, his most trusted operative.

"Billy," he announced, "our first blow in this matter falls to you. You have seen the advertisements in the newspapers advising passengers not to sail on the Lusitania?"

"Of course."

"Very well. I believe that means the beginning of more direct plots against America. There is only one way to learn. Von Papen, Boy-Ed, Dr. Albert, Heinric von Lertz, their unofficial agent in New York—even Ambassador Bernstorff himself—make a habit of lounging at the Hohenzollern Club. We want a dictograph in those club-rooms."

Billy Cavanaugh twisted his already tightly waxed mustache and smiled ever so slightly.

"I'll attend to the details," he announced quietly.

And while Harrison Grant gave his orders, four men were gathered about the big table in the Imperial German Embassy in Washington. One of them was Bernstorff. Another was Albert, with his ever-present portfolio in which he carried the reports of spies operating in every city of the United States. A third was Boy-Ed and the fourth was Capt. Von Papen.

The meeting, incidentally, seemed to have been a happy one. A supercilious smile skimmed the lips of Franz von Papen as he gazed at his co-plotters. He waved his cigar slightly before him.

"These idiotic Yankees will wake up next week," he announced, "it will be something for them to think about."

"It will be something for the world to think about," echoed the fastidious

Boy-Ed.

"Do you suppose," Dr. Albert was rummaging in his portfolio, "it could possibly act as a boomerang? America has had its eyes shut, you know. For instance, I think Capt. Von Papen recently reported the burning of several million bushels of wheat in its elevators, as well as a train wreck or two that have so far been classified as accidents. Now, my query is: will the deliberate, pre-arranged killing of Americans and the fore-announced destruction of American property on board the Lusitania, cause this country to open its eyes and inquire about other things that have happened? Or will it —"

Capt. Franz von Papen smiled with one corner of his mouth.

"If you have ever noticed," he replied, "I have always used the term 'idiotic Yankees.'"

Bernstorff laughed. Albert bobbed his head.

"Quite so," he said finally. "I yield the point. Now, regarding the Lusitania, when is it destined to sink?"

Bernstorff rummaged in some papers, at last to bring forth a code message.

"Potsdam plans the sinking for next Wednesday, May 5. It has already ordered medals struck off to commemorate the victory."

And while the arch-spies of Imperial Germany continued to plot the murder of American citizens on the high seas, a lithe, dark-eyed girl walked to the stenographer's desk of one of the largest hotels of New York City, with apparently no purpose in life save to be pretty and attractive and likeable. Spirited she was, with a dash of animation which caused people to look at her more than once, with a sparkle in those big eyes which told of a love of life and zest for adventure, a tilt to her chin that spoke of determination, a smooth grace about her which spelled birth and breeding and aristocracy. Time was—and not so very far in the past—when her name had glittered in the electric lights of Broadway. But the love of adventure had been too strong and Dixie Mason, daughter of Brentwell Mason of Sou' Car'lina, sur, had forsaken the stage to take her place as a quietly commissioned captain of women operatives in the Secret Service. And now—

Now she was walking toward the public stenographer's desk, smiling and

speaking to friends in the lobby, apparently thinking of nothing in the world, but in reality straining with every nerve to catch the message in the Morse code that the stenographer was ticking off on the space-bar of her typewriter:

"This ... is ... the ... man ... I ... spoke ... of.... He ... thinks ... he's ... a ... lady ... killer."

Dixie Mason's sense of humor could not resist a trifle of a smile, and quite accidentally, as she smiled, she glanced toward the rather tall, sleek German who stood reading a dictated letter he just had received from the stenographer. The German's eyes rolled. Quite "accidentally" again, Dixie Mason allowed her swagger stick to fall to the floor. An instant later the German had bent forward, started to pick up the stick, and with intentional clumsiness, stepped on it, breaking it. He swept his silk hat in a flourishing bow.

"Dunnerwetter!" he exclaimed, "such clumsiness! And I had such good intentions!" Dixie Mason smiled again. She started to speak—then stopped suddenly as the stenographer's voice broke in.

"I'm sure he is more than sorry," she interrupted. "Miss Mason, this is Mr. Heinric von Lertz. He is *such* a gentleman, and I know that he is so sorry!"

Dixie Mason had not placed Molly Farris in that hotel lobby for nothing. Quietly she pressed the "stenographer's" hand and listened to Heinric von Lertz's apologies. With the result that a half hour later found them at luncheon, and with the further result that three hours later found Dixie Mason back in her apartment and smiling to herself as she brought forth an innocent appearing letter from a small filing cabinet. The twinkling little lines of humor gathered about her lips as she scanned the lines:

"My Dear Miss Mason:

"Thanks for your letter. James is doing fine and by hard work has gotten into a position of trust in the private bank of two fine old Germans, Schneider and Wurtz. However, he intends to tell no one until he receives his first raise.

"Sincerely,

"Wallace J. Claflynn."

Universal Salvage Sales Co.

RRF-WJC

"Code signal RRF," said Dixie Mason as she looked at the stenographer's signature, then scanned the letters and signals in the cabinet, finally to bring forth a bit of celluloid, perforated here and there with aimless appearing holes. A quick motion and the celluloid had covered the paper. Then the message stared forth:

	work	into		
trust	of	Ger		
mans				
	tell no one			
		W	J.	flynn
	U	S	S	S

A low laugh sounded as Dixie Mason returned the code letter and celluloid to its resting place.

"Not bad," she breathed happily. "The Chief sent me that letter four days ago. Already I've taken luncheon with Heinric von Lertz, chief henchman for Bernstorff, Von Papen, Boy-Ed and Albert, and he has asked me to go to the theatre with him tonight. And if I don't continue to keep in his company, it won't be my fault! I rather think," and Dixie Mason laughed softly, "that Heinric von Lertz is going to be quite valuable!"

But time was short. Two days later, the great, sleek Lusitania glided out of New York harbor and started upon the first phase of its journey across the seas, carrying with it 1,250 passengers, more than a hundred of whom were Americans, the pride of America's theatrical, editorial and financial worlds; American aristocracy and American common people, but all Americans, all equal in their standing in the light of the Liberty statue, supposedly safe from warring nations, innocents, traveling toward a deliberate German murder.

Too short a time for Harrison Grant and his men to gain their knowledge of what was going on in the Hohenzollern Club. Only that morning, Cavanaugh had reported progress—the assurance that the dictograph would be in the Hohenzollern Club by the end of the next week. Too short a time for Dixie

Mason to obtain the confidence of Heinric von Lertz and learn from him the details of the plot against America. Too short a time! The Lusitania was doomed!

The very moment of her sailing, a furtive-eyed spy had rushed to a cable office, to send the following cablegram to Europe:

"L.H. Guerz—Amsterdam, Holland.

"Lucy has entered last phase of illness. Doctors say progress until Thursday normal. After that, difficult to diagnose. Therbold."

Already the message was traveling under the sea, while the spy reported to Von Lertz, and while another spy in Amsterdam anxiously awaited its arrival. And when he received it, his code-educated eyes read an entirely different message from that of a mere announcement of an illness, a message which thrilled his craven soul with the information:

"Lusitania has sailed. Course until Thursday normal. After that, unknown."

A hurried ten minutes in which the spy turned to a specially installed telephone, sent the message to Nauen and thereby to Cuxhaven and to every other U-boat base of Germany, where waited the scavengers of the sea, Germany's submarines and their commanders. More, from Nauen the message flashed to hundreds of men on the Irish coast, apparently fishermen, who arranged to speed forth as far as possible into the ocean, and to wait day and night for the sight of the vessel, that they might spy it to its doom. Expensive—of course! But all battles are expensive, and Germany was planning the death of women and children in what it would call one of the greatest "victories of the war." Were not the medals that would be issued to commemorate the "victory" already being struck off? And had not even the date been placed thereon in characteristic German "efficiency?" Germany had named May fifth. And May fifth they would be distributed. For where was there a chance for the Lusitania to escape?



This medal, designed to commemorate the sinking of the Lusitania, was distributed in Germany two days before the vessel was torpedoed

Nor did the fact that May fifth passed with no message from the U-boats cause Germany to hold back those medals. On they went to the populace, while flags fluttered in Berlin to announce the "victory" that had not yet happened. Everywhere were the U-boats. Everywhere were the fishing smacks, flashing out the supposed business message that carried the code word of the position of the great ship. Time and again the sleek greyhound of the sea dodged destruction only through her speed. But in the distance more U-boats were lurking. The end was inevitable.

May sixth. Then May seventh. Into the rooms of the Criminology Club hurried Billy Cavanaugh to seek out Harrison Grant and to report with a little smile:

"There's something interesting for you in a room adjoining the Hohenzollern Club."

Harrison Grant raised his eyebrows.

"Got it fixed, Billy?"

"Yes, sir. Broke a water pipe leading into the club, then hurried for the plumber shop that always attends to their work. Good fellow there—thorough American. He let me fix the leak. And while I was fixing it, I also fixed the dictograph—just behind the picture of His Imperial Majesty, William Hohenzollern."

Harrison Grant laughed happily and reached for his hat. A half hour later he lifted the receiver of a dictograph to his ear. Stewart, the relief operator, watched him.

"I've just been listening," he announced. "Think Von Papen, Boy-Ed and Wolf von Igel just came into the club. Couldn't swear to it, though."

Harrison Grant nodded slightly, the dictograph still to his ear. Then he started. Hurriedly he turned:

"Put this down:

"Paul Koenig has assured us that a man will swear that the vessel carried guns. Also that an affidavit will be given that she was loaded with contraband. Dumba can be counted on to espouse our cause—."

"What does it mean?" Cavanaugh stepped forward. Grant frowned. "Can't tell, Von Papen's doing the talking. Now Boy-Ed has joined him:

"Surely we should have heard before this. Do you suppose anything could have gone wrong? Surely they were prepared. But today's May seventh, and it should have happened May fifth. If—."

"All right. What's the rest?" Stewart looked up from his copying. Grant shook his head.

"They're mumbling—I can't hear. They seem to have all gotten over in a corner with their heads together and are trying to talk so that no one around the club will hear them. But—wait a minute—they're talking louder now—no, they've settled down to that buzzing again—I think I hear a telephone ringing—Von Papen has just told Boy-Ed to answer it. Wait now—wait—"

A strange silence in the dictograph room. Harrison Grant adjusted the receiver closer to his ears. He pressed a hand strainingly against it, as though to aid him in the hearing of what was going on over in the next room. But impossible.

And at that moment, out on the open sea, the passengers of the Lusitania were strolling happily about the decks after a jovial luncheon. Someone looked at his watch to absently note that the time was 2.32. And as he raised his eyes——

The deadly, gray serpent-like form of a periscope as it raised itself above the waves. The wake of a torpedo as it hissed its way through the water. Then a great rolling roar, a shock that trembled through the whole vessel, a sickening lurch and plunge, the thunder of an explosion——

Hours later, in the dictograph room, Harrison Grant again leaned forward.

"That telephone again!" he announced. "I wonder what it means? Boy-Ed always answers it. There he goes again. Guess he'll mumble into it, just as he's done all day—no, he's talking louder this time—it's something about a ship——"

His hand clenched.

"I can't get it," he grumbled. "If he'd only talk louder—what's that—the Lusitania?"

"Lusitania?" The two other operatives looked up quickly. Harrison Grant nodded slightly.

"Yes. Heard him say something about the Lusitania. Seems to be getting some kind of a report over the telephone, as though some spy were telling him something that had happened. Now he's left the telephone—he's gone back to the others—good God!"

The two operatives leaped to their feet at the ejaculation from their chief. Their staring eyes saw that his cheeks were white, that the blood was slowly leaving his lips, leaving them purplish, ghastly.

"They've ordered a toast to the Kaiser!" he announced coldly, "a toast—in commemoration of Germany's 'victory' over the Lusitania! It can mean only one thing——!"

And as if in answer, up from the streets of New York there radiated the shouts of the newsboys, calling the headlines of the first "extra:"

"Lusitania sunk! Lusitania sunk by German submarine! Klein, Vanderbilt, Hubbard and thousand others missing. Extry paper! Extry paper, all about the

sinking of the Lusitania!"

So that was the German victory! The Lusitania sunk! Wearily Grant sank into a chair, the dictograph receiver still to his ear. On the other side of the wall three men had raised their steins to the picture of the Kaiser, toasting him for the idea which had enabled the fishing smacks to wireless the news of the Lusitania's course to the waiting submarines, for the distorted brain which had devised the messages of fishermen into instruments of death, for the ungodly, demon-like cunning that had conceived the death of women and children to be a German "victory!" Droningly the words come over the dictograph:

"To the Kaiser! May he continue his glorious victories, abroad—and here!"

"Abroad—and here!" murmured Harrison Grant between his clenched teeth.

"And 'here' means America!"

CHAPTER II

THE NAVAL BALL CONSPIRACY

Thus the news of the sinking of the Lusitania came to New York, to throw a saddening cloud upon what was planned to have been the happiest week of many years. For in the Hudson River, great, sleek leviathans of the deep, the sixty-four vessels of the Atlantic fleet had dropped anchor to await the President's review, while the streets, the theatres, the restaurants, bore the glorious flutter of flags and bunting, and the blue and white of the navy uniforms were everywhere.

And now that the Lusitania had been sunk, now that the lives of more than a hundred of America's best citizens had been sacrificed to the lust of Imperial Germany, those big vessels seemed to take on a new meaning, a new significance. In New York harbor primarily only for a review and for a jollification, they now assumed their real proportions in the eyes of the populace, displaying to Eastern America just for what they could be depended upon in case of war. And with every day, that danger seemed closer. For America resented the sinking of the Lusitania. The great crowds

around the bulletin boards, watching daily the steadily lengthening list of the dead, called for vengeance, for repayment from this monster nation across the Atlantic that could kill women and children and glory in it as a "victory." Every telegram from Washington, every news dispatch, emphasized the gravity of the situation. And no one knew better that gravity than did Harrison Grant of the Criminology Club.

Working day and night with his companions of the Club, Grant had hurried to the uncovering of the conspiracy to present forged affidavits asserting that the Lusitania carried guns and contraband. Clue after clue was run down, while in Washington, the Imperial German Embassy worked just as hard in the opposite direction, covering the tracks of its plotters and its spies, seeking to proclaim to America the sorrow which it assumed over the sinking of the great British liner. To some the sorrow seemed sincere. To others—Harrison Grant among them—that sorrow was known to be only a mask, thrown hastily on to deceive America and to keep America at peace until Germany felt itself able to cope with it and strangle it as it sought to strangle the rest of the world.

And so the days went, in moves and counter moves. Day after day the populace, by the hundreds of thousands, gathered on the banks of the Hudson to look at the tremendous battleships and to glory in their power and effectiveness. And while they did so—

Four men were meeting again in the embassy at Washington—the same four who generally gathered there, Franz von Papen, Karl Boy-Ed, Dr. Heinrich Albert and their leader, Ambassador Bernstorff. Point after point they discussed regarding the sinking of the Lusitania and the possibility of war. At last—

It was Dr. Albert who was speaking, pawing through the reports that he had dragged from his beloved portfolio:

"Marsden reports," he announced, "that the feeling in the West is quite strong over the Lusitania. While I believe our foreign office may be able to drag the situation out until the fever heat of war is passed, still I fancy it would not be a bad idea on our part to make such preparations as may be necessary in case the United States should suddenly determine to avenge the death of its citizens. Now—"

Karl Boy-Ed, naval attache, interrupted.

"I believe we have anticipated you there, my dear Dr. Albert," he said smoothly. "Kindly tell us what you believe to be the greatest defensive and offensive agent which America has against Germany at the present time."

"Why the great Atlantic fleet, of course."

"You mean the one that is in New York at the present time for review?"

"Of course."

"And if my good comrade Von Papen and myself should tell you that we have already made arrangements to make this fleet incapable of working either for the defense of America or for an offense against Germany, what would you say?"

Dr. Albert brought his hand down on the desk with a thumping bang. "I should call it a master stroke!" he announced.

Boy-Ed looked at Von Papen and smiled. Then he turned to Dr. Albert again.

"Then, my dear Doctor, your mind may rest easy. Capt. Von Papen and I have arranged a scheme which will make the great Atlantic fleet wholly useless in event of war. Rather, we have arranged two schemes. One of them is planned for the Naval Ball at the Ansonia Hotel in New York tonight, which will be attended by practically every navigating officer of the fleet. The other is held in reserve in case the attempt to-night fails. It is a trifle more daring—and I might say, a bit more spectacular. Even his Imperial Highness, the Emperor, would delight in seeing it! But of course, we are holding that for the *coup de etat*, as it were, in case the plan tonight fails."



The Ansonia Hotel, New York City

It was as they discussed the details of their plot for the night that Harrison Grant hurried from his office in the Criminology Club in answer to a call from an operative:

"They want you in the dictograph room!"

Ten minutes later, the investigator of crime leaped from a taxi around the corner from the Hohenzollern Club and made his way to the room adjacent to the German meeting place. Stewart and Cavanaugh were awaiting him anxiously.

"Something doing," said Stewart as he raised his eyes to his chief. "I've been catching stuff for the last half hour."

"What about?"

"The Ansonia Hotel."

"The Ansonia?" Grant came forward quickly.

"Yes. Anything special going on there tonight?"

"A good deal," was the quick answer of Harrison Grant. "The Officers of the navy are going to have their review ball there. Why?"

"Because," and the operative leaned closer to the dictograph, "the indications are that the Germans intend to blow it up—and our navy officers along with it."

"Impossible!" Harrison Grant's face went white. "Impossible! Why, all the navigating officers of the fleet are to be there tonight—the whole brains of the Great Atlantic Squadron! It would cripple our whole Eastern system of defense!"

"Then you'd better get word to them not to attend" came the cold answer of Stewart, "because the plans are made—to bomb that hotel tonight!"

Harrison Grant's brow wrinkled. He looked hurriedly at his watch.

"We can't get word to them now. Most of them are away from their ships at entertainments—leaving the ships with only skeleton crews. Besides, we can't empty that whole hotel and just let it lie there, a target for some German bomb! No, there must be some other way—but Stewart, are you certain about all this?"

"Here are my notes," came the answer of the operative. "Von Lertz came into the club about a half hour ago. Some old German who seemed to have some decency in his heart, was reading the *Abendpost* and repeating an editorial in it which said that the sinking of the *Lusitania* might cause war with Germany. He appeared to be worried about it and that such a thing would mean the death of all of Germany's ambitions. Von Lertz listened to him for a while and then began to sneer at him. He said that after tonight, it would be impossible for the United States to declare war on anyone. Then—" Stewart referred to his shorthand notes—"he used this sentence:

"There's the Ansonia, tonight, you know. And there's Kroner, who's finishing his masterpiece in the way of a bomb. And when Kroner makes a bomb it generally destroys what it's intended for. After he pays his little visit to the Ansonia tonight, there'll be no danger of America fighting anyone."

"And there wouldn't," echoed Harrison Grant, "not with navy officers dead and no one to handle the navigation of her battleships."

He turned to the telephone. A short conversation and he was facing Stewart and Cavanaugh again.

"Every member of the Criminology Club will attend the Naval Ball tonight as guests," he ordered. "Chief Flynn is sending fifty men there. The police department will co-operate with a special guard. They'll watch the outside. It will be our duty to guard the interior. Come—we'll pick up the rest of the members of the Club."

And as the three men hurried away, a queer appearing, raw-boned scientist hurried about a small workroom in a faraway part of New York. Before him was a heavy thing of steel and springs and clockwork and trinitrate of toluol, the most horrible explosive known. Almost lovingly he fingered it. Then he turned to his assistant.

"See that it's timed for 12.20," he ordered. "That is the time agreed upon. All the German contingent will be at the ball tonight to divert suspicion. When things are moving their best, we will slip in and plant the bomb under the main stairway. That will give it more breadth for destruction when the explosion comes. But be sure—" and he wagged a bony finger—"that it is set for not earlier than 12.20. Our people must have time to leave the ball and be well away before the explosion comes."

"Don't worry," answered the assistant quietly. "I've set bombs before."

But when the Naval Ball started that night, it had more than a hundred guests who had been furnished tickets at the last moment. More than that, every person of German appearance in the great ball room was within the vision of The Eagle's Eye, the United States secret service, while outside—

Up Broadway, in platoons and in columns, came hurrying squads of police, to divide suddenly, to take their positions at the doorways, at the hallways, beside the elevator shafts—even on the roofs. Everywhere was Harrison Grant, directing activities.

"Keep your eyes open, men," he announced. "Allow no one in this building who carries any kind of satchel or parcel. Cavanaugh!" he called to his operative, just passing, "how about the cloakrooms?"

"They've all been searched."

"Found nothing?"

"Nothing."

"Good. Take four of these men and put two on each cloak room. Have you attended to searching any new employees who might have taken employment here lately?"

"Yes. All done. The management furnished me a list of everyone they weren't sure of. I looked them all over. Everything's safe there—they're all loyal!"

"Thank goodness for that. They may help us."

"That's been attended to. They all have instructions from Mr. McBowman, the general manager."

Grant smiled.

"You've been on the job, I see," he said. Then he glanced at Cavanaugh's immaculate evening clothes. "Looking the way you do, Billy, I don't think it would be a bad idea for you to see if you can't pick out a nice little German girl to dance with. It might cause her escort some worry." Cavanaugh winked and stepped away. Grant turned once more to a group of policemen whom Stewart was hiding in the palms at the head of the stairway.

"Take no excuse," he ordered quietly. "If necessary, shoot to kill. And in any event, if anything looks suspicious, arrest first, investigate afterward."

Grant turned at a touch on his arm. It was Turner, his operative, assigned to the roof.

"I've placed men all around up there," the operative said. "There were two or three places—at the head of the dumbwaiter and that sort of thing, that would have made good hiding places. So I took no chances."

"Correct. Now pick out a German and trail him."

"Yes sir. And you—?"

"I'll do the same—as well as every other member of the Criminology Club. I want to know every move they are making."

Turner moved away. Harrison Grant stepped forward, chatted a moment with a young woman of his acquaintance—then stared.

Before him, coming toward the young woman at his elbow, was quite the prettiest girl—to Harrison Grant's eyes—that he had ever seen. Vivacious, beautifully dressed, full of the dash and verve that Harrison Grant so admired, quick, decisive in her movements, yet thoroughly girlish, there was an element about her that Harrison Grant had never before noticed in another woman. Something within him seemed to leap, hesitate, then begin to thump with the quickness and persistence of a triphammer. Vaguely Grant knew that it was his heart. And just as vaguely, he knew that he was being introduced to this brown-eyed, smiling little being, whose hand was so small that it seemed almost cruelty to press it—yet with a grasp so firm and steady that it carried with it the sensing touch of a true, strong companion—whose hair was black and yet brown, whose smile was frank and yet elusive, whose whole being was of the sort to enthrall Harrison Grant and to hold him prisoner.

Then a sudden change. The beating of his heart slowed. The sparkle of his eyes dulled. The smile faded from his lips—for just behind the girl whose name he had vaguely heard to be Miss Dixie Mason, had shown the figure of her escort, a man whom Grant had come to hate, a man he knew to be responsible for the working out of the plot against the Ansonia Hotel that night, Heinric von Lertz, unofficial agent for Imperial Germany's murderers.

As for Von Lertz, he turned somewhat quizzically toward the policeman at the door of the ballroom, looked at him in a sneering fashion, then with a short nod in acknowledgment of the introduction to Grant, he asked:

"Police? Is it the usual thing in America for them to attend social functions?"

"Not unless they're invited—or needed," answered Harrison Grant caustically.

A quick glance shot between the two men. A moment more and Von Lertz had turned to the ballroom, taking Dixie Mason with him, while Harrison Grant watched after her, wondering what such a pretty, wholesome appearing girl could be doing in the company of a man whose business was the representation of murderers. That she carried a Secret Service commission,

Grant did not know. The instructions of Chief Flynn, ordering her to work into the confidence of the Germans without letting even the fellow members of the Secret Service know her true purpose, had attended to that. And Grant saw in her only a girl who had chosen as a companion a man who was at that moment plotting the very downfall of America!

However, it was only natural that they should meet again during the evening. And it was only natural that Grant should ask her to dance with him. More, it was only natural that as he looked into her eyes, as he felt the firm swing and graceful lift of her to the swaying music of the foxtrot, that he should wish more than ever that the stain of her apparent friendship for Von Lertz should some day resolve into an innocent one after all. As for Dixie—

As she was swept away again in the arms of Harrison Grant, following the encore, Dixie wished with a sudden impulse that the touch of those arms might some day mean more than the embrace of a dance, she wished that she might tell this man whom she knew to be the president of the Criminology Club that she was really a compatriot, that she was working along the same lines as himself, struggling for the same ideals fighting for—

But one could only obey orders. Besides, the dance had ended, and in the foreground, waiting and fretting, stood Heinric von Lertz.

A few brief acknowledgments of the pleasure of the dance and they parted, Dixie Mason to take her place at the side of the German plotter, Harrison Grant to hurry forward at the signal of Cavanaugh from the doorway. Grant found him nervous, irritable.

"The dangerous moment has come," he announced shortly. "Look!"

Far at one side of the room stood a tall German, apparently chatting with his fellow country-people as they strolled about after the dance. But as he watched, Grant saw that the conversations were extremely short and that following each one, every German and his companion turned toward the cloakrooms. Billy Cavanaugh's voice broke in once more.

"He's warning them all to leave," said the operative. "He's been doing it for the last five minutes. Half the Germans in the place are gone now. It's nearly time for the attempt."

Harrison Grant bent close.

"Send the men to make the rounds of the patrolmen," he ordered quickly. "Tell them to keep their eyes open wider than ever. Allow absolutely no one to enter this hotel."

"Yes sir."

"Double the guards on every door. What has been done in regard to the other searches that I ordered?"

"Everything's been accomplished. The hotel management has made the rounds of the whole place with pass keys. Every piece of baggage that cannot be vouched for has been examined. Nothing has been found."

"Good. Hurry to those patrolmen. I—"

For Grant had seen in the entrance to the cloakroom, the form of Heinric von Lertz, his coat over his arm, waiting impatiently for Dixie Mason. With a sudden determination, he hurried forward, to reach the entrance, just as Miss Mason came forth, adjusting a loose fold of her opera cloak. Grant bowed.

"Not going?" Miss Mason smiled.

"I assure you it isn't my desire," she said quickly. "Mr. Von Lertz simply insists on it, though. I never was having a better time in my life!"

Harrison Grant turned, to smile into the face of Heinric von Lertz.

"Surely, you wouldn't spoil the pleasure of anyone so sweet as Miss Mason."

"I can't help it, you know," answered Heinric von Lertz somewhat testily. "My head aches."

"Your head aches?" Grant laughed. "And you're going home on account of that? I'd lose my head for a person like Miss Mason!"

"Mr. Grant, you're Irish!" Dixie laughed up at him. Grant smiled again.

"I only wish I were, so I could say the things I'd like to say in the way I'd like to say them. But come now, Mr. Von Lertz, you're only joking about leaving. Why it's only midnight."

"Midnight?" Von Lertz started. "Then we must go. It's imperative. That is—"

And while he hesitated and explained, a taxi had driven up outside, at the little triangle which divides Broadway at 72nd Street. From the darkness

within, a high cheeked, raw-boned man had started forward, a grip in his hand, only to be halted by a cowering individual who shot forth from a bench at the sidewalk.

"Back in that cab!" he ordered in a whisper. The raw-boned bomb maker started.

"Why—?"

"Don't ask any questions. Back in that cab!"

"But I've got the bomb! Von Lertz said everything would be ready for me. I —"

"Everything is ready—but in a way that we didn't look for," answered the spy on the sidewalk. "Look!"

Quickly and surreptitiously, he pointed upward. Where the flaring sign of the Ansonia Hotel blazed out upon the night, was silhouetted the figure of a man. Ten feet away was another—and another—and another. Down on the sidewalk, a solid cordon of police in uniform was drawn about the building. Not a person could approach without being seen—the guarding arm of the police was absolute.

"And that's not all," growled the spy on the sidewalk. "That's just the beginning. There are fifty secret service men scattered about the entrances and the areas. Bluer just signalled me by the electric light code that even the elevator shafts are full of them. I signalled him back to tell Von Lertz that everything is off. As for you—move away from here quick! There'll be twenty policemen on our shoulders in another minute!"

The taxicab turned swiftly. In another moment it had vanished down the street, while in the hotel—

Von Lertz still stood at the entrance of the cloakroom, arguing with Harrison Grant and Dixie Mason, a scant veneer of pleasantness covering his words.

"But I simply can't stay," he was repeating for the fiftieth time, "I tell you my head aches."

And certainly something was causing a pallor to spread over his features, and the cold sweat to break forth on his forehead. Harrison Grant knew what it was. From far away, the chimes of a church had sounded midnight and faded

away into nothingness. Grant knew what Heinric von Lertz was thinking about—about that bomb and the fact that he was practically the only German left within the confines of the Ansonia Hotel. And so, that he might obtain a trifle of satisfaction against this cowardly plotter of Imperial Germany, he deliberately turned to Miss Mason and began the telling of an incident which could not be interrupted. And Grant knew how the passing of every second ate into the soul of Heinric von Lertz!

Then a movement. Someone passed—and in passing, slipped a bit of cardboard into the cupped hand of Heinric von Lertz. Hurriedly the German shifted his hand to the interior of his silk hat, and under its protection, read the message. Involuntarily, his hands clutched. For there, scrawled on the cardboard, were the words:

"Affair abandoned. Too dangerous."

Von Lertz coughed, and at the sound, Harrison Grant and Dixie Mason turned. The German forced a smile.

"I've changed my mind—er—that is, my headache's better," he announced. "We'll stay."

"Thank you," said Harrison Grant, with quietly suppressed meaning, "my hopes are raised on a veritable bomb of happiness. Miss Mason, may I have this dance?"

"Most certainly."

Happily, bouyantly they went toward the ballroom, while Heinric von Lertz stared after them.

"I wonder what that idiotic Yankee meant by a 'bomb of happiness,'" he mused, "Could he have known what I was plotting?"

The thought brought back the memory of that card. Once again he glanced at it, then tore it to bits and stuffed it in his pocket. Then, throwing his coat to the check boy, he strode toward the ballroom.

"At any rate," he growled under his breath, "they haven't stopped preparations at the shack."

And at the same moment, the taxicab containing the old bomb maker had drawn to the curbing, forty blocks away, where another cab stood waiting. A

figure came forth from the darkness and peered into the first cab.

"Are you there, Kroner?"

"Yes."

"Alright. Everything's safe. Why don't you hurry?"

"There's no need. I didn't use the bomb."

"You didn't use it?"

"You heard what I said," came testily from within the taxicab. "It's up to you to hurry. Get out to the shack and tell those men to work night and day to finish up their job!"

A muffled conversation of an instant more, then the taxis parted. An hour later, as Harrison Grant again danced with Dixie Mason and Von Lertz seethed over the frustration of his scheme, a man hurried into a ramshackle old building on Staten Island, near Fort Wadsworth, aroused the slumbering figures there and pushed them toward a great thing of polished steel, nickel and brass that lay nine-tenths finished before them.

"Get to work!" he ordered. "Is this the way Imperial Germany is to conquer the earth—by sleeping?"

Grumbling the men obeyed. The spy looked about him.

"Where's Schmidt?"

"Here," came a voice from a corner where a man was unrolling himself from a dirty blanket.

"How's that wireless controller?"

"I'm having trouble with it."

"And yet you sleep?" The spy was raging now. "You get up here and find out what's wrong and remedy it. That wireless controller must be in absolute working order—understand? It can't fail! And what's more, it's night and day work for every one of you men from now on. This thing must be ready to launch the minute the fleet weighs anchor. The Ansonia plot's failed. Everything depends on us now!"

The men grumbled again in answer. A curse from the spy and they settled

down to work—to put the finishing touches on a wireless controller and on a torpedo, large enough and powerful enough to tear even a battleship to fragments!

CHAPTER III

THE PLOT AGAINST THE FLEET

"What's happening on the dictograph?"

Harrison Grant asked the question as he entered the room adjacent to the Hohenzollern Club and looked anxiously toward Dick Stewart the operative who sat with the receiver to his ear. Stewart shook his head.

"Same old thing. Arguments. Conversation. Jokes. Drinks. Toasts to the Kaiser. That's all I can catch. It's just the same as it's been ever since the night of the Naval Ball. You don't suppose that they could have gotten a tip that we're in here, do you?"

Harrison Grant shook his head.

"Hardly," was his answer. "We would have known something about it. They'd rip that dictograph out so quickly they'd drag you through the hole after it. No—they're simply doing their talking in other places, that is all."

The investigator looked at his watch.

"Nearly midnight," he yawned. "I—"

"You'd better go home and get some sleep," the operative broke in. "Cavanaugh and I will keep watch—and let you know the minute anything happens. Don't you think that's a wise plan?"

Harrison Grant, with his ever present happy nature, smiled in spite of the fatigue that hung heavily upon him.

"I think you must know how much sleep I haven't had!" was his comment. "And to tell the truth—I haven't had any since the night of the Naval Ball."

He turned to the door, giving his men their final instructions for the night.

And as he made his way homeward, the telephone lines were crackling between New York and Washington, Ambassador Von Bernstorff at one end and Karl Boy-Ed, Naval Attache, at the other. Nearby sat Capt. Franz von Papen and Dr. Heinrich Albert, waiting for the result of the conversation. At last Boy-Ed turned from the telephone.

"Bernstorff's anxious about our plans for tomorrow," he announced. "I told him not to worry."

"Well, there isn't anything to worry about, is there?" Von Papen hunched forward in his chair.

"Not if everything's all right at the shack," answered Boy-Ed. "That's up to Von Lertz. I instructed him to examine the torpedo and to be sure that the men had everything in working shape. Then he was to report to us."

"Wait just a minute—" It was the somewhat plotting, methodical Dr. Albert who had interrupted. "Let me understand this thing clearly: The torpedo is to be fired when the Fleet is going through the Narrows. Is that right? Then what happens?"

"A great deal," laughed Karl Boy-Ed. "The principal thing of which is that the Great Atlantic Fleet will be forced to remain in New York harbor and the United States of America will be taught just how foolish it would appear in a war with a real country like Germany."

Albert bobbed his head.

"I simply wanted to be sure that I understood. Personally, I shall watch the fleet sail with a great deal of interest."

"No doubt." Von Papen turned with a growling laugh, "I will watch it stop with more interest. Now, Boy-Ed, where is Von Lertz to report?"

"At the Hohenzollern Club."

"Then we'd better be strolling over. It's after midnight now. Good night, Albert."

"Good night. Good luck—for Imperial Germany!"

Meanwhile, Dixie Mason was looking into the eyes of Heinric von Lertz as they hesitated in front of the Midnight Frolic.

"If you don't mind, I'd rather take a trip out in the country somewhere—to the October Farm or something like that."

Heinric von Lertz rubbed his chin in thought.

"I'll tell you a better place," was his announcement. "There's the Ten Mile House. Quite racy, it's true, but very entertaining. What do you say?"

Dixie Mason smiled most engagingly.

"Why should I worry—as long as I am sheltered by the protecting arm of Heinric von Lertz? Besides—" and she allowed a bit of unsophistication to creep into her voice, "I'm afraid my education in roadhouses has been too much neglected. It's—it's all right for me to go, isn't it?"

"Oh, of course," Heinric von Lertz drew himself up pompously, "I'll look after you."

A moment later, Dixie settled back in a corner of Heinric von Lertz's machine and smiled in the darkness. She was to have her chance after all—the chance to learn what had been on Heinric von Lertz's mind all evening, why he had been so preoccupied, so nervous, so agitated. Dixie could not see the pictures in the camera of Heinric von Lertz's brain, she could not see mirrored there—

A rambling shack on Staten Island near Fort Wadsworth. The figures of men as they hurried about the tool-strewn room, one of them working on an intricate wireless controller, the other polishing and fitting the last necessities of a great, shining torpedo, which rested in place to be swung to a manhole connecting with a tunnel below, which in turn ran to a wharf facing almost the Narrows of New York Harbor.

No, Dixie could not see—all she could know was that something was on Heinric von Lertz's mind, that he acted tonight like he had acted the night of the Naval Ball and that she was sure that before morning she would have some clue—some means of knowing what was engaging his attention: And while they rode to the Ten Mile House, the rendezvous of fast society, the sporting element and habitués of the lavender life, two members of the Criminology Club suddenly straightened and listened harder than ever at the dictograph connecting them with the Hohenzollern Club. Dick Stewart turned.

"It sounds like Boy-Ed and Von Papen," he announced. "But they're not

talking about anything in particular. They're settled down to a game of cards—and they're acting like they're waiting for someone. Maybe we'll get a tip on who it is."

Four hours later, the tip had come.

"Boy-Ed and Von Papen are in there waiting for Von Lertz," announced Stewart as Grant, somewhat sleep-eyed, hurried into the room, following a hasty summons. "They've been in there ever since a little after midnight, playing cards and drinking. Then about an hour ago they began to get nervous. After that, they began to watch the clock and to talk about Von Lertz. I didn't think there was any necessity for waking you up. Then one of them said something about the fleet, and I got nervous—"

"The fleet?" Grant stared.

Dick Stewart nodded his head.

"That's all I could catch. Seems Von Lertz is attending to something about the fleet—but neither one of them has mentioned what it is. Wait a minute—"

The operative leaned forward to the dictograph again.

"They're sending a man to see why Von Lertz hasn't reported."

Grant went quickly forward. He took the receiver from Stewart's head and beckoned to Cavanaugh.

"Take Stewart's place," he ordered. "Stewart, you cover that man. See where he goes. Report to me at the club."

A quick movement and Stewart was gone. Five minutes later, Harrison Grant, lingering in the doorway of the building adjacent to the Hohenzollern Club saw the dim figures of two men walking far down the street in the grey light of dawn. One of them was the man who had been sent forth by Von Papen and Boy-Ed. The other was Dick Stewart, member of the Criminology Club, beginning the chase that was to end—where? Harrison Grant wished that he could know!

Nor did Grant know that an ally was working in his behalf, an animated, smiling little ally who stood in the entrance to her apartment, saying goodbye to Heinric von Lertz. That person was laughing somewhat thickly—his glass had been filled many times during the night. Dixie Mason extended a hand,

but the German plotter waved it aside.

"And you only shake hands with me?" he asked.

"Isn't that enough?"

"Not if you could know how madly I love you, how I adore you, how you fascinate—"

"Fascinate, you mean, don't you?"

"Yesh—yes—of course. What did I say?"

"Oh, nothing—oh, Mr. Von Lertz, *please!*"

For Von Lertz had striven to take her in his arms and was pressing his lips toward hers. As she half struggled with him the German smiled in apology and dropped his arms.

"I just wanted one teeny-weeny little kiss," he announced. "I thought—well, I just thought——"

"I'm not in a habit of being kissed," answered Dixie Mason, pouting. Von Lertz straightened.

"Goo' little girl!" he praised her. "Goo' little girl! I am now more fascinated than ever! Good night!"

"Good day," echoed Dixie Mason, glancing at the light of dawn without. Then as Heinric von Lertz strode forth, she turned quickly to one side. Hurriedly she opened a little memorandum book that she had extracted from the pocket of the German plotter while she had struggled with him to prevent the kiss that he had sought to implant on her lips. Quickly she scanned the pages, finally to start forward, an involuntary cry breaking from her lips. She glanced hastily down the street toward where Von Lertz's machine was fading in the distance, then ran toward a taxi stand at the corner.

"Follow that machine that just left here!" she ordered, as she hurried into the car. Then, taking out her secret service commission and passing it before the eyes of the chauffeur, she admonished:

"The safety of the Atlantic fleet depends on us! Don't lose sight of that machine for an instant! Where it goes—we're going—and the man who is in it must not know we're following!"

"Don't worry, Lady," came the quiet answer of the chauffeur. "I'll keep him in sight."

Dixie Mason leaned back in the machine again. Once more she brought forth the note book. Again she looked at the line which had burned itself into her brain; a line that read:

"Examine torpedo before fleet sails."

A half hour later, Von Lertz's machine was on the ferry, crossing to Staten Island, while Von Lertz himself dozed in the tonneau, little knowing that just behind him, on the same ferry was another machine containing a person very much awake, Dixie Mason, determined to learn just exactly where he was going and who he intended to see there.

So much for the Ally who was working for the said Harrison Grant. And in the meantime, the person upon whom he had really counted was having his difficulties.

Far over on Staten Island, the spy whom Dick Stewart had trailed from the Criminology Club had turned into thick underbrush, circled, seen the man behind him, lain in wait, and then, with one powerful blow, felled him, hurrying on toward the shack and workers on the torpedo.

But that delay, while it had placed Dick Stewart in a position where he could no longer follow the spy from the Hohenzollern Club, had saved Dixie Mason from an embarrassing position. For that delay had been just long enough for Dixie Mason to see Heinric von Lertz enter the shack, to watch him leave again, then to allow the little daredevil of the secret service to creep to the shack, ascend an old ladder which she found leaning against the building, and peep through the old trap in the roof. And there she saw——

Two men busily engaged upon the torpedo, which they were making ready to lower through the manhole into the sewer. One of them was talking:

"Von Lertz looked like he'd been out all night——"

"Yes. That's the way he is most of the time. But that's the way with the ones higher up. They can go out and play—while we do the work. But when the Iron Crosses are distributed, they get them, not us."

A growl from the third.

"Shut up. You're better off here than you would be in the trenches. This is easy work for you. I get tired hearing you reservists kicking on a little easy campaign work over in this country when you might be handling the minnewerfers over in Flanders. But, let's stop this talking. The fleet will sail in a few hours now. We've got to have this torpedo ready to launch at the flagship."

That sentence was enough. Dixie hurried from her position on the ladder, started down—then winced as she struck the ground. One foot had struck in a chuck-hole, twisting the ankle severely, and slowly and painfully, she limped to her car, where it was concealed in the shadow of a great, dismantled boiler. The driver hurried forward to her aid, assisting her within. At the door of the taxi, Dixie, half turning with the pain of her ankle, failed to notice that her reticule slipped from her wrist and fell to the ground. Nor did the driver. He leaped to his place at the wheel and turned expectantly.

"Where to now?" he asked.

"A telephone—just as quick as you can make it!" Dixie answered. Her voice was faint from the pain of her sprained ankle.

"How about a doctor for that foot?" the driver was staring at the expression of agony on the girl's features.

"Never mind that. Where's a telephone?"

"In a roadhouse, down the line about three miles."

"Get to it—hurry!"

A moment more and the machine was scurrying along the lonely road, toward the roadhouse and toward the warning that Dixie sought to send the Secret Service. But as the machine roared its way along through the early morning, the spy from the Hohenzollern club entered the shack on Staten Island, his eyes wide with excitement, his voice snapping as he sent the men scurrying faster than ever in their work.

"There's danger! I just knocked a Secret Service man over in the woods. They're after us! Bar that door and barricade it! We've got to get this torpedo into place before they catch our trail. Every minute means danger!"

Slowly the torpedo swung at its fastenings. The spy from the Hohenzollern Club lifted the cover of the manhole. And as the spies in the employ of

Imperial Germany started to lower the torpedo into the sewer, Dixie Mason clung grimly to the telephone at the roadhouse, waiting for the answering voice from the other end of the wire. At last it came—the voice of Chief Flynn who had just entered the office for the day. His voice went keen and bright as the warning from Dixie came over the wire. Hastily he assembled the facts as she told them. Then:

"A good night's work. Go home to bed. I'll handle everything."

He lifted another 'phone and called the Criminology Club.

"Busy" reported Central. For Dick Stewart was at that moment detailing the story of the assault upon him and the reasons he had failed in his quest. But Chief Flynn was already working on another angle of the protection of the Atlantic Fleet.

A quick call to the Harbor Police. A moment later and with a scurrying rush, the power-launches of the New York Police department, their machine guns ready for instant action, shot forth into the bay. Another call and the Chief gained a clear wire to the Criminology Club. A few crisp orders and Grant and his men were hurrying by motor to Staten Island, to pick up Stewart on the way and rush to the shack that had housed the torpedo. But would they reach there in time? Grant would have given much to know.

Out in the bay, here, there, everywhere, the boats of the harbor police were scattering, up toward the great, monstrous forms of the battleships, where, flags fluttering, the preparations were being made for the start of the President's review, searching under wharves, around lighters, hurrying to the protection of the Mayflower, whence the President would review the fleet—honeycombing the harbor in their search for suspicious characters, seeking everywhere for the torpedo that was planned to send a flagship to its doom, block the Great Atlantic Fleet in New York harbor and cripple the defense of the greatest nation in the world.

But so far, the torpedo was safe from their search. In the dark confines of the sewer, it had been lowered and shunted to its mouth, where it lay concealed from view under the piling of an old dock. Back in the shack, Schmidt, the electrician, labored furiously on the last connection that would make the torpedo available for its deadly use—the wireless controller.

Hurriedly he made the finishing touches, while down at the mouth of the

sewer, the plotters watched the gathering boats across the way, the waving flags, and bright hued decorations that shone and shimmered with the bright sunlight of morning. From far in the distance came the screaming of sirens and the hoarser-throated sound of hundreds of tugboats, ferries and river craft. The review had started. Aboard the Mayflower, the President of the United States was to see the pride of the navy as it steamed forth to the open sea and—

"If Schmidt only gets here with that controller," seethed the spy from the Hohenzollern Club as he watched the fleet in the distance through his binoculars, "If he only gets here!"

"How long will it take to attach it?" Another plotter was staring toward the distance.

"Ten seconds. We've got plenty of time in that way—if he only gets here with it!"

A sound from the tunnel. It was Schmidt, lugging the controller forward. The spy from the Hohenzollern Club turned with a quick order.

"You get back there and guard the shack," he ordered of the third plotter. "We'll attend to things down here."

The German retreated into the sewer. Schmidt began the placing of the wireless controller in its position. The spy from the Hohenzollern Club looked again through his binoculars.

"We'll launch the torpedo just as the flagship rounds the point there. Understand?"

"Perfectly!" Schmidt was testing his connections.

They looked at each other then—and laughed. America was at their mercy, they thought! For they did not know that as they gloated over the coming fate of the flagship, Harrison Grant and his men were forcing their way through the doorway of the shack above them!

But only emptiness greeted the members of the Criminology Club as the door crashed open. Harrison Grant glanced about him quickly.

"They're gone—they're already in the sewer!" he exclaimed despondently. "We've got just one chance—to head off that torpedo when it starts! You men

hurry to Buffan's landing and get the reserve launch there. I'll investigate here."

"All right," then Stewart turned. "Here's something I picked up just outside. Should have given it to you before—but my brain's working a little slow since that blow on the head."

He passed a reticule to Harrison Grant who stuffed it in his pocket. The men departed. Grant looked hastily about the shack then veered to a corner at a sound from below.

Someone was coming back. There—the sewer manhole moved a little. Then a bit more—then it raised while the figure of a man started upward and through it. Grant crept forward. A quick leap, he seized the plotter by the throat, choking him and at the same time dragging him back on the floor. A moment more and he had bound him, dragged him to a corner and almost thrown him there, then started down the manhole. But as he groped blinking through the darkness, Schmidt and the spy from the Hohenzollern Club sighted the prow of the flagship as it rounded the point below them, swung the torpedo into position and shunted it, seething into the water!

A few steps forward and Grant saw what had been done. There were two men, both with their backs to him, one guiding the torpedo with the wireless controller, the other leaning forward, pointing out its course as it made its way, slowly at first, then faster, toward the thundering flagship.

Everywhere was noise, the screaming of whistles, the booming of guns as the battleships fired their salutes before the Mayflower. Harrison Grant crept forward unnoticed.

Ten feet—then six—then three, while the spies stared outward, unaware of the approach of the detective. Harrison Grant gathered his full strength. A tremendous kick and he had sent one of the plotters sprawling into the water. A great lunge and he was at the throat of the spy from the Hohenzollern Club, struggling to drag him from his hold at the wireless controller.

A struggle that seemed destined to fail. With almost superhuman strength the spy fought him off, still clinging to the key of the controller, feinting, dodging, squirming in the grasp of the master detective, biting, kicking, butting—but still holding to that key that was sending the torpedo faster and faster through the water, driving it on and on toward the flagship of the great

Atlantic Fleet, threatening it with destruction—and the bottling of the entire fleet in the waters of New York harbor.

Doggedly they fought. Again and again Grant's hands closed about the throat of the spy, only to be thrown off. Then slowly, steadily, Grant began to bend the plotter in his grasp.

Closer, closer—Harrison Grant bent his head toward the wrist of the hand that held the key of the wireless controller. Then, a quick motion and his teeth closed upon the flesh, biting into the sinews and muscles, causing the spy to leap from his post with a cry of anguish. But the fight was not over.

"Think you've stopped us, eh?" The spy almost shouted the words. "Well, you haven't. That torpedo's got speed enough now—it'll reach that ship all right. It'll—"

But Grant had swung him about now and was forcing him to the edge of the sewer platform. Closer—closer—the end was inevitable. But would it avail anything? A glance out into the Narrows and Grant saw that the torpedo was heading straight on its course now, while far in the rear, the reserve launch, containing his men, was striving vainly to summon the speed to over-take it. On and on it was going—a moment more and it would crash into the side of that massive, thundrous battleship, a moment more—

All the strength that Harrison Grant possessed sped into the sinews of his arm and back. With a great wrench, he freed the grasp of the spy upon him. Then with a tremendous lunge, he literally raised the form of the struggling man, and threw him, high over his shoulders and into the tremendous currents below!

A great leap. Harrison Grant was at the key of the wireless controller. Quickly he reversed it, sending the current crackling out over the Narrows. But would the effect come in time? Would the electric current swerve the course of that torpedo soon enough to save the great battleship before it from destruction? Gasping and panting, Harrison Grant watched for the result, his soul agonized, his heart pounding with aching severity. A second—and the torpedo had not moved from its course. Another—Harrison Grant bent forward happily. Out there in the choppy waters of the Narrows, he believed he had seen the torpedo swerve slightly—yes, there it had moved a full three feet from its course—

Now ten—look! The men on the reserve launch were waving their arms and clambering to the top of the launch as it sped along. The torpedo had moved more in its course—now it seemed to be turning—it *was* turning! A great, glad cry broke from the lips of Harrison Grant. The torpedo was making a full semi-circle in the water now—on the roof of the reserve launch a Criminology Club detective was preparing to dive into the water for the desperate purpose of kicking the wireless antennae from the explosive monster and making it useless, while on beyond, there where the guns were booming, where the flags were flying and the bands were playing, the Great Atlantic Fleet, safely, triumphantly, was sailing through the Narrows, out to the freedom of the open sea!

Harrison Grant watched happily for a moment, then turned to make his way back through the tunnel and to the interrogation of the captured spy. It was then that he noticed that his brow was covered with a cold perspiration, that his collar was wilted—in spite of the almost cold day—that he was shaking and trembling from the excitement of the chase. He reached for his handkerchief, then hesitated at the touch of the reticule in his pocket. Wonderingly he brought it forth and examined it.

"A woman's party chatalaine," he mused. "Some spy that's mixed up in this thing, I guess. Dropped it coming from the shack. I wonder if there's anything in it to give a clue to her identity."

He pulled open the bag. He stared a moment at the initials of the card case which lay within, then opened it feverishly. The wondering expression of his eyes changed to grimness. His lips resolved themselves into a straight line. Slowly they repeated the name on the card:

"Miss Dixie Mason!"

The battleships in the distance seemed to fade. The sound of the sirens, the booming guns, all drifted into nothingness. Dully, monotonously, the lips of Harrison Grant framed the words:

"Dixie Mason! So she was the one! Dixie Mason—a spy!"

CHAPTER IV.

VON RINTELEN—THE DESTROYER

Months of apparent calm followed the plot against the fleet—a calm, however, which existed only on the surface, for beneath the veneer of friendliness for America, Ambassador Von Bernstorff and his aides, Capt. Franz von Papen, Capt. Karl Boy-Ed and Dr. Heinrich Albert still were scheming and working for the downfall of America in their insatiable desires to defeat the Allies. More, they had received aid from abroad, in the person of an intimate friend of the Crown Prince of Germany, Franz von Rintelen, sent to America for the ostensible purpose of promoting friendliness between Germany and America, but in reality with a bank account of more than fifty million dollars, to spend on any form of death and destruction that he might see fit—as long as it harmed the Allies. And whether the harming of the Allies also brought its attendant injury to America, made little difference to Franz von Rintelen or his cohorts. The United States had been described by Dr. Heinrich Albert as "the American front," and so they regarded it—as a battlefield upon which to make their advances and counterthrusts against the Allies, regardless of the consequences to the land for which they professed such friendliness and such regard.

So it was, that in the spending of that fifty million dollars, Franz von Rintelen had built himself up practically a separate organization with which he preyed upon shipping, industry and manufacture. River pirates who swarmed the Hudson to scuttle lighters, to start fires in cargoes, to cut hawsers and mangle the steering apparatus of tugs that they might crash into each other and sink with their cargoes; so called "Peace Councils," which strove for the spreading of propaganda on any kind of peace at any price—as long as it was favorable to Germany; alleged "Embargo Conferences," the sole object of which was to spread a feeling throughout America that it was wrong for the United States to manufacture arms and ammunition which could be sold to the Allies—all these things lay within the province of Franz von Rintelen, to handle as he chose, with only an occasional conference with Ambassador Von Bernstorff at which he told of his progress, and laid forth his expense accounts for the official signature of the head of Imperial Germany's spy system in America. And so quietly had his organization been built up, so thoroughly had Franz von Rintelen concealed himself behind a cloak of supernumeraries and "straw

bosses" that even the cleverest of the members of the Secret Service had failed as yet to gain a clue to his real activities. But there were suspicions—and among those who held them was Dixie Mason.

"No Mamette," she was saying as she stood by the window of her apartment, watching the sunset and talking to her negro maid, "I have no positive evidence against Franz von Rintelen. I doubt if I ever will. I only know that there is something about him which makes me believe that he is at the head of the river pirates and commerce destroyers who have sprung up around the harbor recently. But I can't be sure."

"How about Mista Von Lertz?" Mamette spoke the name with a tinge of hatred. For Mamette, black though she was, could see only three colors, the red, the white and the blue. Dixie smiled at her tone.

"I've tried—and tried hard. But Von Lertz seems afraid to tell me much about him. The best clues I've gotten have been through Agnes Taylor, who is working on the switchboard at Von Lertz's apartment. She has reported several conversations between Rintelen and Von Lertz, but they have been generally meaningless. I—"

The tingling of the telephone had interrupted. Dixie answered, to hear the voice of Agnes Taylor, the operative who had been placed at the switchboard of Von Lertz's apartment house.

"Miss Mason?"

"Yes."

"Do you know—" the voice was low, guarded—"anyone named Walter Schleindel?"

"No—why?"

"He works in some bank. Reports to Paul Koenig of the Hamburg American line who pays him for information. From what I can gather he steals information from manifests and bills of lading coming into the bank for payment."

Dixie Mason smiled.

"So that's the way they know just when to rob freight cars in the yards and when to sink lighters, is it? I'll telephone the Chief. How did you learn?"

"Some man just called Von Lertz. Told him that Schleindel had reported 3,000 head of horses just received at the Allied barns at Jersey and to go at once to the shack at Crow Crossing—"

"I know where it is." Dixie Mason's eyes had narrowed. "Just above the old rock crusher on the Vernon road. What was Von Lertz to do there?"

"I couldn't catch all of it—I heard something about the 'tools' and to 'use the new methods.' I couldn't recognize the voice."

"It wasn't Paul Koenig?"

"No, nor Bernstorff, Von Papen or Boy-Ed."

"Then it must have been Rintelen."

"I couldn't be sure—he changes his voice so often."

Dixie smiled again. Then she turned from the telephone.

"Mamette," she called. "Get me out a plain dress of some kind—something that I can 'rough it' in."

"Yes, Missy—but Laws, yo' ain't goin' to stick your head into danger, is yo,' Missy?"

"I'm going to find out what's happening at Crow Crossing," said Dixie with quiet determination. "Hurry, please, Mamette."

And while she made her preparations, Harrison Grant stood in the dusk, talking to the watchman of a stevedoring plant on the Jersey side of the Harbor.

"I'm from Chief Flynn's office," he was saying, "I received an order to—"

"I know all about it," the watchman answered. "The foreman left instructions for me. We're crating automobile ambulances for shipment to France. I want to show you something that we found today."

He led the way into the stevedoring shop, there to point out the axle of a great chassis—and to swear quietly as he looked at it.

"German spies done it!" he announced. "Nobody else would have been so dirty and low. These are ambulances, y'know—ambulances for use on the battlefields. And you know what'd happen if that ever got on a shell-torn

field."

He pointed to the axle of the car. There, where the putty had been removed by the workmen who had discovered it, was a great, jagged hole in the steel of the axle, a hole burnt by an acetylene torch, converting the axle into a weak, shallow shell, doomed to break with the first holting strain. Grant frowned as he looked at it.

"So that's the game, eh?" he said. "That's why so many ambulances have been breaking down in France! That's why—"

He turned sharply, the watchman with him. Far at one side of the opposite dock they had seen the shadow of a man as it slunk along, hiding behind the boxes and bales as he made his way from light to darkness. Grant sped forward, the watchman beside him. A moment more and the shadow leaped forth, to seek escape in the maze of shipping on the docks.

But impossible. Headed off by closed doors, he veered, dodged, swerved in his course and leaped past the guard of an interned liner, seeking to spring from it to the next in his effort to escape.

An effort that failed. Blocked again, he veered once more, crashed his way through the door of the ship's wireless room, then whirled, a chair lifted high over his head. But the blow: did not descend. The tactics of the football field had come into play for Grant—and with a quick motion he had blocked the blow of the spy, disarmed him and forced him against the wall. Fifteen minutes later, he was listening to the confession, forced in jerky sentences from the spy's lips:

"A guy gave me \$100. to set fire to the docks," he was saying. "That's all I know. He was some fellow who worked around the waterfront here. I'd gotten a lot o' money offen him and I wanted more. I belonged to his magneto and axle gang."

"His what?" Harrison Grant bent forward.

"His magneto gang. We'd steal the magnetos offen automobiles that was goin' to France. He'd give us five dollars for every one we stole—then let us have 'em to sell."

"Another little system of harming ambulances, eh?" said Grant slowly. "What about the axles?"

"We burned 'em with an acetylene torch—so they'd break down when they hit the battlefields—"

"So they'd break down, when they were filled with wounded!" The words came from Grant's lips in scathing denunciation. "And you confess to it—you mongrel!" His hands clenched—it was all he could do to keep them from the throat of the craven being before him. "Now you tell your story and tell it quick!"

Ten minutes later Harrison Grant turned to the guard of the interned ship, meanwhile eyeing the detectors, the batteries and sending apparatus of the wireless in the room.

"This wireless in working order?" he asked sharply.

"Yes."

Harrison Grant stepped toward it quickly. A moment more and he was sending forth the code-call of the Criminology Club. For the spy, while not able to tell the names of the directorate of those who engineered the heinous business of disabling ambulances, at least had given information that was more than valuable—the fact that a "burning party" had been scheduled for that night—and naming the location and the freight yards.

Again and again Harrison Grant sent out the call—at last to receive an answer. Then his message snapped over the airplanes to the city beyond:

"Criminology Club:

"Meet me Stevens Point quick. Come armed.

"Harrison Grant."

And while Harrison Grant waited, Dixie Mason, her automobile hidden in the shadow of the old rock crusher, crept to the side of the little shack at Crow's Crossing. The sound of voices came from within, low, indistinct. Again and again Dixie strove to hear what was being said—but only failure greeted her. Then—

A pine knot, half hinging in its receptacle, caught her glance. Stealthily she wormed it loose, to peer within. Men were there, men who were pouring gasoline into small fuzeed, metal containers, men who were making their

preparations for hurried flight, and receiving orders as they did so. Already two of them were at the doorway.

"Take the shortcut to the Allied stockyards," one of them was saying. "We'll burn the barns—you look after the other part of the yards. Now hurry!"

They were gone, while Dixie cowered in the shadows. Stealthily she watched them cross the patch of snow and ice before the cabin, then disappear, unable to move for fear of detection, her brain seething with plans and hopes. But they were faint! The spies had taken the "short cut"—one that Dixie did not know.

The telephone? There was none. The police? There was no way to reach them. Only one thing remained for Dixie Mason to do—to scramble as fast as possible to her machine and to race across country to the Allied horsebarns. But would she be able to reach there in time?

The battle of wits and courage was on! Over at Steven's Point, Harrison Grant had leaped to the running board of a motor car as it had rounded a corner and shouted to the chauffeur:

"Faster, old man! They're destroying Red Cross supplies in the railroad yards!"

Then as the machine spurted forward, the president of the Criminology Club leaned toward his men.

"See that your revolvers are in working order. Spies are burning the axles of ambulances. We have every right to shoot to kill!"

The men nodded. Cavanaugh opened a new box of cartridges. The machine sped on through the semi-darkness toward the railroad yards. As for Dixie Mason—

Veering into the stockyards district of New Jersey, she raised in her machine and waved madly to a crowd of horse wranglers, just coming forth from a pool hall.

"Quick!" she called, "there's danger at the horsebarns!"

Then, driving harder than ever, she sped forward, in a last vain attempt to reach the barns before the spies could light their bombs.

Before her loomed the shadows of the barns, with their thousands of animals

within. And scrambling up a telephone pole toward a window showed the form of a German fire-fiend.

Harder than ever pressed the foot of Dixie Mason against the accelerator of her car, while her soul raged within her. Not content with sinking the ships that carried innocent horses and cattle to France, not content with filling their oats with steel barbs, painted yellow and designed to be eaten by the unfortunate animals, not content with poisoning the water of these beasts who were a part of the war only through the will of others, Imperial Germany now was resorting to worse measures to gain its "victories," the horror and agonizing torture of fire! Dixie's lips pressed firm. Then, her anger drowning all thought of danger, she skidded her machine until it almost overturned as she veered from the stockyards alley into the areaway of the horsebarns, made her way through the great doorways, then sent her automobile thundering up the runway to the second floor—there to leap forth and run toward the form that had just entered the haymows. But too late!

Already the tool of Imperial Germany had touched a match to the gasoline filled container. Already the fuse was spluttering, while with a great, sweeping motion, the spy threw the bomb far into the loose hay and hurled his gigantic form toward the struggling Dixie. A moment more and he had felled her, then scrambled into her machine, reversing it and sending it at perilous speed down the runway and out through the opposite doors, bowling over two of the rustlers as they strove to make their way through the already heavy clouds of smoke, and tearing on toward freedom. And in the loft of the mammoth barn, Dixie Mason lay unconscious, the fire gaining greater and greater headway all about her, where the gasoline discharge had fired the conflagration everywhere!

Imperial Germany had succeeded in a part of its scheme at least. But in another—

Out in the railroad yards came the crackle of a revolver shot as Harrison Grant and his men surprised two men in the interior of a box car, hard at their task of burning the axles of an auto with an acetylene torch. A spy fell maimed, while from seemingly everywhere, other spies broke from the cars and sought safety.

But safety that was far away. For the members of the Criminology Club had spread themselves in the lanes between the great masses of box cars, to leap

forth as the spies ran aimlessly about in their search for shelter, to seize them, to shackle them. Atop a box car where he had climbed after the first onslaught, Harrison Grant moved swiftly here and there, shouting his orders to the operatives below. In ten places at once, the battle was mounting to the proportions of a life and death struggle—with the members of the Criminology Club in the ascendancy. But at the horsebarns—

Up in the loft, Dixie Mason stirred to consciousness as the flames ate closer. Down below, where the maddened animals were screaming and stamping in their fright, came the sounds of shouts, of curses and yells as the horse wranglers, summoned from every part of the yards, struggled to release the flame-frightened animals. Through a chink in the frame wall of the building, Dixie could see another red glare, starting in the distance—then the forms of thousands of beasts as they sped forth to safety, freed by the men who had rushed to their assistance the minute the alarm had been given by Dixie. Everywhere was the milling rush to save—save—save, while men risked their lives that the lives of horses and cattle might be spared, while men took risks and men braved death—and while Dixie Mason struggled impotently to fight her way through the ring of fire that seemed to have closed all about her.

The smoke ate its stinging way into her cringing lungs, choking her, gagging her. She sought to scream—but the screams were lost in the wild conglomeration of noises from below, the shrieks of fear maddened horses, the surging work of rescue. Here, there, back again she struggled, only to face everywhere a wall of fire that inch by inch was eating toward her—a lining, writhing, all consuming circle of death!

The flames had eaten their way through portions of the roof now and were spreading the flare of their flames against the sky. Over in the railroad yards, Harrison Grant, receiving the reports of his men as they checked up the list of captured spies, glanced into the distance, started, then whirled to the members of the Criminology Club.

"Shackle those men together!" he ordered sharply. "Leave them in charge of Sisson—he can handle them. Then everyone come with me—there's a fire at the stockyards!"

Quickly the orders were obeyed. Quickly the men swept forward under the leadership of Harrison Grant to aid the hundreds of horse wranglers and

cattlemen in their maddened efforts to release the flame threatened animals. And as they did so, Dixie Mason was making her last desperate effort at escape.

Death in the flames or death in a leap—Dixie Mason chose the chance of the latter. She had fought her way forward, beating out the flames that caught her dress, smothering her free hand against her nostrils to shut out the paralyzing effect of smoke and gasoline vapors, seeking from the sounds from below to ascertain an area into which she might leap with some opportunity for safety.

At last it came. A lull in the milling rush from below. Dixie fought her way to a railing, swung under it, hung there for one, long, trembling instant, then, just as a whirling rush of horses cleared the way beneath her, she dropped.

The fall stunned her for a second. Then the roaring sound of plunging animals brought her to her senses, just in time to enable her to scramble out of the way of a flame crazed group of horses as they surged past her, then reeling, to seek through the smoke the freedom of the open air.

Someway, somehow, she managed to waver to the outer doors of the big barn, there to gasp at the cold, life-giving atmosphere that surged into her lungs—then to run forward whitefaced at the sight before her.

Everywhere was fire—fire which raged about the sheds, fire which licked its way along the railings of the cattlepens, which ate at the chutes and connections, fire which seethed and spit and crackled. From far in the distance came the clanging of bells and the hissing of steam—the hastily called fire apparatus of twenty stations, fighting against the flames—but fighting a losing fight. Dixie's hands clenched.

"The cowards!" she exclaimed, "the fiends!"

"Look out there, Miss!" It was the friendly shout of a horse wrangler as he pushed her aside. Down the alleyway sounded a thundering roar as twenty shouting men drove before them a great mass of wild-eyed, galloping horses. The wrangler shouted happily as they passed him.

"That's the end of 'em," he said heartily, "we were luckier'n we thought."

"The end of them?" Dixie Mason turned hopefully. "Then you managed to save——"

"Most of 'em Miss. We got some help from an unexpected quarter. Bunch of

Secret Service men who were over in the yards chased over here and took the load off our minds o' loosenin' the cattle in the south end. That let us put all our work on the dangerous part of the yards."

"Secret Service men?" Dixie Mason started. "Do you know any of them——"

"Nobody. A fellow gave his name as Grant, but——"

"Harrison Grant?"

"Think so."

Dixie Mason turned sharply. Harrison Grant must not see her there—it would mean the necessity for explanations—explanations which might not be easily forthcoming. From far away came shouts—the shouts of men approaching through one of the alleys which as yet had been untouched by the flames. Dixie hardly heard. All that she knew was that she must leave the vicinity of the fire as soon as possible—content in the knowledge that her work had not gone for naught after all. Most—if not all—of the horses and cattle had been saved. Imperial Germany had destroyed American property in the shape of barns and pens—but it had at least failed to destroy the lives of the innocent beings against which it had plotted.

Almost, aimlessly she turned to the railroad yards to escape the roaming droves of horses and cattle that were swirling everywhere. On she went, crossing track after track, as she sought the streets and the open. The light of the fire flared higher—and with it a slight exclamation came into Dixie's throat at the sight of a man before her.

Hurriedly she swerved, leaped between two closing box cars of a flying switch, and then, as the man pursued, jumped across the track upon which was approaching a rapidly traveling train, hurrying on to where her deserted automobile showed its dull form, where it had been abandoned by the fire fiend. Once she looked back—to discern the fact that the man still watched her beneath the long train. Then she hurried on again.

Back in her apartment, she reported to her Chief, to give the name of Walter Schleindel and her suspicions against Franz von Rintelen. An hour more went by and the telephone rang to bring the news of Schleindel's arrest, and his confession, of how he had used the bank as a clearing house for German Sodom, stealing the information of the manifests and bills of lading of Allied shipments which came in there for collection by the consignors, then in turn,

selling this information to Paul Koenig of the Hamburg American line. Dixie smiled happily.

"How about Rintelen?" she asked. A slight ejaculation of disgust came over the wire.

"My men failed to find him. Someone must have notified him of the arrest of the auto burners in the railroad yards. At any rate he has left his hotel, without giving an address."

All of which was correct. For Franz von Rintelen was at that moment telephoning to Bernstorff, and announcing to him that in future, his name would be E.V. Gates and that his 'business' would be that of a 'purchasing agent,'—but that Imperial Germany's work of destruction would still continue.

And meanwhile also, at the Criminology Club, Harrison Grant, tired from his labors of the night, hesitated at the doorway to call an operative.

"Bailey," he said, "I want you to take a skirmish around and see what you can learn about a girl named Dixie Mason."

"Who is she?"

Harrison Grant smiled grimly.

"I'd give a good deal to know. Apparently she's an ex-actress. At least, that's what her friends tell me. Time was too, they say, when she was very communicative and friendly. Now she tells no one of her plans or of her activities. And strangely enough, my path has crossed hers twice in places where only the agents of Imperial Germany could consistently be. She was at the fire tonight."

"At the fire?" Bailey stared. "Are you sure?"

"I have a good pair of eyes," said Harrison Grant, "I saw her there—not fifty feet away. I chased her—but a train cut me off."

Bailey raised a hand to his hat.

"I'll see what I can find out," he said quietly and left the building. But Grant continued to stand there, staring at the floor—wondering—wondering what this woman whom circumstance again and again gave the accusation of being a German spy, could have played in this latest evidence of Imperial

Germany's ghoulish cruelty!

CHAPTER V.

"THE STRIKE BREEDERS"

It was late at night. In his private office, Harrison Grant was puzzling over a report by Tom Bailey, an operative, announcing a condition rather unpleasant for the president of the Criminology Club. For the letter simply announced:

"Harrison Grant,
Criminology Club.

Dear Sir:

Beg to report that all I can learn about Miss Dixie Mason is that she is almost constantly in the company of the Germans, particularly Heinric von Lertz.

Yours truly,
Bailey,
Operative."

Thereby, for Harrison Grant, a mystery remained unsolved, a mystery which nettled him, angered him. It had been weeks—months—since he had first met Dixie Mason, months in which he had constantly seen her in suspicious surroundings—yet never in a position to betray her. Once he had even gone so far as to send a special report on her to Chief Flynn—a report which the Chief naturally received with a hidden smile and the announcement that he would have the affair investigated from his office, that Grant allow her activities to pass unnoticed in the chase for bigger game. But when a man is hovering between love and suspicion, he is not likely to allow every opportunity to slip. Hence the private investigation which Grant had ordered to be made by his operative, Bailey, with the resultant report. Half angrily Harrison Grant filed the report in his cabinet and returned to his desk, moody, silent——

Not knowing, of course, that in a faraway part of the city, Dixie Mason was reading for the twentieth time, an excerpt from the evening paper containing an interview with Harrison Grant, and musing over the visualized features of the man she loved, brought before her eyes by the cold, staring type of the interview. Naturally Grant could not know that—and Dixie could not tell him the secrets that she must tell no one, the secrets that she must hold against the inclinations of her heart, that the battle against Imperial Germany might be won.

And that the battle still was imminent, was more than apparent in the stooped, bearded figure of a man who stood fumbling at the lock of an office in one of the biggest buildings of lower New York. He had kept in the shadows on his way to the office. He had shielded his face in the elevator—and for a reason. Franz von Rintelen, arch plotter for Kaiser Wilhelm, friend of the Crown Prince, and special Emissary to the United States with more than fifty million dollars to spend on destruction, was living under an alias. He had shifted his office since the capture of his river pirates by Harrison Grant, changed his name to E.V. Gates, and even had resorted to the melodramatic level of false beards and disguises that he might carry on his devastations.

And just how far he went in this regard, was exhibited later, when Rintelen sought to flee America on a forged passport, only to be caught at Falmouth, England, and returned to the Tombs in New York, where he recently was sentenced for his activities against America. In his trunks at that time, were found more than thirty suits of clothing, each designed to give him a different personal appearance, each built in such a way that they would make him seem a different appearing man with every suit he donned. His wigs and beards he left in America, to be discovered by the members of the Secret Service who searched his office.

But this narrative must tell the activities of Rintelen in America, not of his flight. And while Harrison Grant sat musing in his office, Franz von Rintelen removed his false beard, divested himself of his coat with the humped shoulders, then turned happily at the sight of a shadow on the door. A moment later and he was chatting with Dr. Heinrich Albert, chief fiscal spy for Imperial Germany in the United States, and disburser for every fund except the activities of Franz von Rintelen. Dr. Albert held forth a telegram.

"I suppose you received one also?" he asked.

"From Bernstorff?" Rintelen looked up quickly. "Of course. I heard from Captain Von Papen and Captain Boy-Ed also. They will be here. Did Bernstorff's message to you name a time?"

"No——" Dr. Albert had removed his overcoat, displaying the usual immaculate evening clothes, "he simply told me to meet him here tonight for an important conference. By the way, is Von Lertz coming?"

"I told him. He should be here now."

But instead, Heinric von Lertz was attending to another angle of Imperial Germany's campaign against America. He was then standing in the half light of an old attic, where, tucked away from observation a German scientist, imported by Von Rintelen, had taken his quarters that he might prepare for future disease raids against American workmen in case the plans of Germany in other directions failed. With Von Lertz was Madam Augusta Stephan, chief of Germany's women spies in the United States—and together they were plotting the death of Harrison Grant and his members of the Criminology Club.

"You must remember," Von Lertz had just said, "the death of any American Secret Service man is a distinct victory for Germany 'The Eagle's Eye,' I think some of these newspaper men have called it—and it has its eye on us too frequently. Now, Meyerson, what's the danger of this affair?"

"Danger?" the old scientist looked up with a little smile. "None, that I see. I know enough about germs to take care of myself. All I have to do is to approach the club from the next roof, raise a window an inch or so and inject this. That's all there will be to it. The circulation of the air will take care of the rest of the plan."

He held up a cotton-plugged tube from which Madam Stephan recoiled. Typed on the tube were the words:

"Cholera Bacilli."

Heinric von Lertz smiled cynically.

"Good enough," he announced. "But be careful regarding yourself. We may need you in case this 'longshoremen's plot fails.'" The old scientist's head bobbed.

"I know how to use care," he answered. "You may count on that."

And while Von Lertz accompanied Madam Stephan to her apartment, the members of the German contingent were gathering for the "important conference" in the office of E.V. Gates. Franz von Papen and Karl Boy-Ed were already there, gathered around the desk with Franz von Rintelen and Dr. Heinrich Albert. Only two more remained to come—Heinric von Lertz and Count Johann von Bernstorff, Ambassador from Imperial Germany to the United States of America. Franz von Rintelen slid forward in his chair.

"Why is His Excellency so worried?" he asked.

"It's about the 'longshoremen's strike," answered Dr. Albert once more thumbing his telegram. "By the way, Rintelen, has there been any progress?"

"Nothing but retrogression," came the answer of the arch-plotter. "From what the papers say tonight, there is danger of failure. All the 'longshoremen are very loyal and the paid agitators that I have sent to work among them have accomplished nothing. They did succeed at one time by working the 'longshoremen up over the cost of living, but that was met by a prompt raise of wages on the part of the shipowners—with the result that all our money spent for agitation in that way, went for nothing. However——"

There was a sound at the door. A moment later and Heinric von Lertz entered the office. Then a sudden movement, a sudden circle of bows, a sudden outburst of greetings. Count Von Bernstorff had arrived.

There was a moment of silence as he faced his assistants. Then slowly he looked toward Rintelen and held forth an evening paper.

"I am sure you will pardon my transgression in your field of endeavor," he announced, "but this news is exceedingly disconcerting."

"No more to you than to me, Your Excellency," came the smooth answer of Von Rintelen. "I appreciate very much your coming tonight—and I would appreciate even more any suggestion that you might be able to make."

"How about bribery?"

"Of the Union officials?" Von Rintelen laughed slightly and held up his hands. "I have tried that—with most unfortunate results. Through outside sources, I caused an offer of \$10 a week for every striking 'longshoreman, the amount to be paid for five straight weeks. The offer was made to Kelly, Butler and O'Connor, the leaders of the 'longshoremen. They also were made

to understand that the money would be paid to them—totalling \$1,035,000—and that there was no anxiety over what happened to it after it went into their hands—meaning of course, that they could walk away with all of it if they so desired, providing they called the strike."

"Well?" Bernstorff raised his eyebrows.

"They reported the matter at once to Secretary of Labor Wilson that someone was seeking to cause disruption in the labor ranks. I think that, more than anything else, caused the breach that was being made by my agitators, to be closed more quickly."

Bernstorff took a quick breath.

"There wasn't any mention of Germany in all this?"

"Certainly not. The offer came through a former 'longshoreman who has carefully concealed his pro-German leanings. He let them think that the whole thing was a matter of revenge on the shipowners and that he had powerful commercial friends who would be willing to pay for that vengeance."

Bernstorff breathed easier.

"Very good," he announced. "Then that does not hurt our cause—providing we can find some way of creating a strike. And understand," he clenched a hand and faced his colleagues, "this strike must go through! It means more to Germany than a victory at the front! When the 'longshoremen strike, it means that the ports of the East must inevitably be tied up. Not a ship will move. Industries will be paralyzed—and consequently the Allies will be deprived of the necessities of war. Of course," he added with a quiet smile, "It will be hard on America, but——"

"These idiotic Yankees deserve something like that anyway," growled Captain Von Papen. However, Bernstorff had turned his attention to Rintelen.

"You say that agitation has failed. Attempted bribery has failed. Then, some other means must be attempted."

Rintelen was pacing the floor. Suddenly his hands clasped.

"I have it," he announced. "I know the way! There is nothing that angers a man so much as depredation against his property. That's what our spies must

commit—and then we must fasten the blame on the 'longshoremen. It will create a breach that nothing can close."

Hurriedly they gathered for conference. And while they plotted the stagnation of all Eastern America——

Harrison Grant rose from his desk and turned with a little sigh to look into the grinning face of Pat Hennessy, the Irish caretaker of the club.

"Guess you're waiting for me to close up shop?" the master detective asked a little wearily.

"It seems betchune time I'm waitin' f'r somethin' like that, Y'r Honor," answered the grinning Pat.

"Everything locked up?"

"Yes sir."

"By golly—no!" Pat clasped a hand to his head. "If it ain't me that's always forgittin'. I ain't fixed the bur-r-rglar trap!"

Harrison Grant smiled, then stood watching while Hennessy moved the firing pins of the club's burglar protection into place at the windows. One by one, the triggers of the concealed revolvers were cocked. Then Hennessy, with a little nod, started toward the stairway, Harrison Grant following. A moment later they hesitated at the door, while Hennessy fished for his keys. Then——

The crashing detonation of a revolver shot—from upstairs! Then another and another and another! The men turned. They rushed up the stairway and toward a half open window, through which could be seen the figure of a man, writhing in the agonies of death.

Old he was and bearded, the nostrils covered by a germ mask, his hands protected by rubber gloves. Beside the convulsing figure lay a "pump-gun" or air-injector, and Grant knew the contents—deadly germs!

Out the window went the master-detective, and to the side of the dying man.

"Careful now!" he ordered. "Search him—but look out for cultures and bacteria!"

A moment later and Harrison Grant was in the possession of the thing he sought—a card, carelessly left in the old scientist's pocket in his surety of

success, a card which gave his name and address and which sent Harrison Grant scurrying forth to pick up Billy Cavanaugh, one of his favorite operators, and to hurry across town in search of the laboratory that he felt sure the dead bacteriologist had maintained.

But in the meanwhile, things had gone well for Imperial Germany in the office of "E.V. Gates." Only Franz von Rintelen and Heinric von Lertz remained. The others had gone to the Hohenzollern Club for a last toast to the Kaiser and a quiet chat regarding their plans—too quiet even for the concealed dictograph of the Criminology Club to detect. All the work had been left for Rintelen and Von Lertz and they were making plans hastily.

Papers were piled high on the desk of Rintelen, papers which formed reports from spies everywhere, from the thugs employed by Paul Koenig of the Hamburg American line, from spies scattered among railroad men, among the 'longshoremen, among the workmen of practically every industry in the country. Rintelen was speaking:

"From what I can gather by the reports of Schleindel, the bank spy, shipments of automobiles have been very heavy in the Jersey yards recently. Here is information that a lighter containing 150 of them will cross the river tomorrow for shipment to France. I would suggest that you choose that as your part of the plan."

Von Lertz rose.

"I know the man who can handle it for me," he said. "I'll see him at once. Good-night."

"Good-night," answered Rintelen. Already he was reaching for his coat and hat, even forgetting his inevitable disguise in his hurry to foment another part of the great scheme against New York's 23,000 'longshoremen.

But while they plotted and schemed, Harrison Grant and Billy Cavanaugh were making their way up the rickety stairway that led to the bacteriologist's laboratory in the attic of a ramshackle building on Avenue A. A quick twisting of the knob and it yielded. Harrison Grant and his operative fumbled a moment in the darkness, then finding the switch of a table light, began their search.

Desk by desk, drawer by drawer. Papers, musty old books on the development of cultures, newspaper clippings on the progress of the war,

letters from Germany and at last——

An ejaculation from Harrison Grant.

"Just what I thought!" he announced as he opened a small memorandum book. "The attempt against us tonight was an afterthought. A sort of a vacation of death, as it were. This man was brought to this country from Germany for one purpose—the propagation of germ cultures to be used against American workmen in munition factories, steel-mills, mines and other industries furnishing supplies to the Allies!"

"Impossible!" Billy Cavanaugh's eyes went wide with horror. Harrison Grant pointed.

"There's the evidence," he answered as he pointed to the notes of a memorandum book he had brought from the desk. "Let's see what the rest of it has to offer."

A long silence, except for the crinkling of the pages as Harrison Grant read the notations in the old book. A long silence then——

"Careful there!"

"What's the matter?" Harrison Grant paused with a finger in the air. Billy Cavanaugh reached forward, and taking the finger in his hand, lowered it.

"Nothing—only you were about to touch that to your lips—and there's no telling how many different kinds of germs are on the pages of that book."

Harrison Grant smiled.

"Thanks, Billy," he said softly, then turned to his work again. A moment more and he had risen, his eyes wide, excited.

"Get a telephone, quick!"

"What's Up?"

"A good deal. Wasn't there something in the paper tonight about trouble with the 'longshoremen?'"

"Yes—but it's all settled up. That is, the indications are that it will be settled. Why?"

"Because it's far from settled. Look here!"

A finger pointed to a scrawled line in the old memorandum book. Slowly the words were translated:

"Special notation—germs for 'longshoremen if agitation fails."

"And agitation has failed!" Harrison Grant said quickly. "Agitation has failed—and that means some other attempt against the 'longshoremen. It means _____"

"But the bacteriologist is dead. He won't carry out his orders."

"Imperial Germany only begins its real devilry after it's been blocked!" said Harrison Grant. "It's first and second line of offences have already failed in this campaign against the 'longshoremen. But you can count on it, Billy, that there's a reserve somewhere—and that the blow is going to fall and fall quick! Get to a telephone as quickly as you can! Notify every member of the Criminology Club to seek work at the docks as 'longshoremen. Tell them to keep their eyes and ears open for everything that sounds like German propaganda!"

"Nothing there that will tell what they're planning?"

"No—only the indication that they are planning something and that they'll keep on working in spite of the death of this man. What they intend to do is for us to find out—and we've got to find out quick! So hurry to the telephone. The docks are open day and night now, you know. Every member who can spare the sleep must find employment tonight. The rest of them will get jobs in the morning—we'll work in day and night shifts!"

But even as Harrison Grant gave the order, Heinric von Lertz was laying his plans for the first blow, as he talked to a furtive eyed spy in the back room of a Hoboken saloon.

"Here's the number of the lighter," he was saying. "I just got it from one of Paul Koenig's men. It will leave the Jersey side about 10 o'clock in the morning."

"Got the number of the freight cars?"

"The ones that contain the autos? Yes."

"Better give them to me. I can trace the stuff better that way. That lighter might make another load with something else. Don't guess it makes much

difference though—just so we sink some stuff."

"Except," said Heinric von Lertz, "if we can strike a double blow, it's all the more to our advantage. A hundred and fifty auto ambulances laying at the bottom of the river won't do France any good, you know. So sink these cars if you possibly can."

Von Rintelen also was busy in his scheme of destruction. Far down in the lower end of New York, the arch-plotter, his hand covering his face as he talked, to prevent recognition by any possible roving Secret Service man or detective, his eyes moving constantly, his whole, hunted being nerved and ready for instant escape, had sought out the German foreman of one of the largest docks in New York and was giving him orders in the name of Imperial Germany.

"First of all," he was asking, "who am I—in case you are caught?"

"Gates is the only name I know."

"You don't know any address?"

"No."

"Good. Remember—if forced to it, Germany expects you to confess and to submit to the punishment. But we who direct you must be protected! Understand?"

"I am a German reservist," answered the foreman.

Rintelen bobbed his head slightly at the assertion. Then he leaned closer.

"Are your men experienced in the loading of a ship?"

"No—I've been working with practically new crews for the last three or four weeks."

"None of them are especially sharp—as concerns the right and wrong way of loading?"

"They all follow my orders. Besides, a number of my men are pro-Germans. I imported them for emergencies."

"Good. Be sure they are all at work in the morning. What's the boat at the docks now?"

"The *Arsulus*. Freighter. 2,400 tons."

"Big boat." Rintelen nodded his head with satisfaction. "How long would it take to load that boat in such a way as to make it capsize?"

"Twelve hours'll do it."

"All right, start in the morning. See that everything heavy is piled on one side, so that it will overturn the minute the hawsers are loosened. Do you understand?"

"Perfectly."

"Very well." Rintelen looked hastily around to see that he was not watched, then rose cautiously. "I shall expect you to be working for Imperial Germany in the morning!"

But when morning came, there were others at work also, not for Imperial Germany, but for the Stars and Stripes of the United States of America—Harrison Grant and the members of the Criminology Club, seeking to ferret out the trouble they knew to exist about the docks, seeking to learn what this German contamination was which they felt sure was gnawing apart the bonds that held the shipowners and the 'longshoremen in unison. But it was a hard task.

More than that, the doomed freight shipments of automobiles already had reached their lighters and were starting down the river, while concealed behind the freight cars were two of Rintelen's paid agents, waiting for the time to strike.

And that time came. Far out into the river swung the lighter. The workmen were gathered at the other end of the long, traveling track. Everything was clear. Hurriedly, the spies ran to the end of the freight cars, where they had been blocked and snubbed. Quickly the ropes were loosed. The brakes were released. A few quick movements of a pair of pinch bars and the cars had been started toward the river. And in a moment more—

A resounding, crashing splash, which seemed to echo from one side of the Hudson to the other. The boxcars, with their precious autos, had been sent, careening and bobbing, to the bottom of the river, and already a spy was on his way to a telephone to report:

"Hello, Mr. Gates? Those cars have been accounted for."

"Good!" Franz von Rintelen, alias E.V. Gates, hung up the 'phone, then turned to write a scrawling letter which read:

"Say, you shipowners. Either you give us 'longshoremen what we want or you'll get worse than what happened when we turned over those boxcars.

The Committee."

Into a mailbox went the letter, to reach the shipowners by special delivery, just as they were considering the granting of every demand of the 'longshoremen. But that letter changed their attitude entirely.

"Call up Union headquarters and tell them that all negotiations are off," roared the president. "If those 'longshoremen think they can bully us, they're badly mistaken. We'll give them nothing!"

The message reached Union headquarters. And the reply flashed back over the wire:

"We don't know anything about the sinking of your lighter. But if you can't take our word for it——"

"We have your word—the confession that you sank the lighter, signed by the men responsible," was the rejoinder.

There was only one answer for the men at Union Headquarters to make, and they made it.

"Then our only reply must come in the form of a strike. We are sorry."

Then, throughout the city the word radiated, the word that the final breach had been reached between the 'longshoremen and the shipowners that a strike had been called and that within another twenty-four hours, the docks of the east would be silent, the trucks motionless, industry paralyzed! In a private room of the Hohenzollern Club, Von Rintelen, Albert von Papen and Boy-Ed received the information and rose to drink a toast to the success of the strike. Down at the docks, Harrison Grant paled at the news, then sent his men scurrying about in a last effort to gain some information that would give him a positive clue to work on. But there was none.

And in her way, Dixie Mason also was working, for she had met Heinric von Lertz and had gone with him to the Ten Mile House, a fast roadhouse just outside the city where she might ply him with wine and seek to gain the secrets that she knew he carried concealed about him.

At Union Headquarters, arrangements were being made for the strike meeting, while other officials were making a last effort to reach the shipowners and to seek to prove to them that the depredation committed against them had not been done by 'longshoremen. But the task was almost hopeless.

Besides, Imperial Germany still lurked in the shadows with its greatest blow still unstruck, the blow that would cost the shipowners millions of dollars, that it hoped would end forever any conciliatory relations between the shipowners and 'longshoremen. And when that end came—it meant the stagnation of the industry of all Eastern America!

CHAPTER VI

THE PLOT AGAINST ORGANIZED LABOR

As the day wore on members of the Criminology Club, in their assumed capacity of dock hands, heard with irritating frequency the announcement of the strike meeting called for that night. The sudden change of attitude of the shipowners toward the 'longshoremen was startling and puzzling. Harrison Grant confessed his bewilderment to himself even as he tried to dispel it by joining the small groups that gathered here and there, listening for the meager information their conversation contained. The talk was mostly of an argumentative nature, discussion rising magically over the soaring cost of living, their long hours, and the wrongs, fancied or otherwise, heaped upon them by the shipowners. In each little group, Grant noticed, when excitement lagged or one more cool-headed than the rest counselled less haste and more caution, less hot-headed talk and more cool thought, that at least one of the group was ready to stir them up into argument again. But in these troublesome agitators, neither Grant nor his confreres could recognize any of the paid agents of the German government known to them.

The sinking of the lighter had become the main topic of conversation. During the noon hour excitement and agitation ran high. The 'longshoremen resented being accused of sinking the lighter. Vehemently group after group disclaimed any such guilt. And while one group, hot in its denials, still seemed to believe that the shipowners would listen to their denials of guilt, time and again Grant heard references to the sinking of the lighter as though it had been the work of the 'longshoremen and as such was a commendable act in view of the wrongs done them. These agitators he knew were a foreign element.

The air was permeated with the strike fever, and the fever was fed by remarks, actions, hints, constantly passing among the workmen but none of them traceable to men of known German leanings. Passing Billy Cavanaugh, Grant signalled to him to stop a moment, and, while he mopped his perspiring forehead, confided his doubts to him.

"Strike meeting tonight and they don't know the real reason for their strike! And we've got to find out for 'em and put a stop to it today."

Billy stared at him hopelessly. "What are you going to do? Germany is behind this but she is hiding so tight we can't find her." The Criminology Club could see hidden in this wild maze of misunderstanding the hands of Von Rintelen, Von Bernstorff, Albert, Von Papen, Boy-Ed and Von Lertz as the 'longshoremen could not; they could see the hands, but could not shackle them.

The German dock foreman, upon whom Von Rintelen had called the night before, was rushing his inexperienced crew. The work of loading the *Arsulus* had gone forward with a rush. Burly laborers, ignorant of the crime in which they were being used as tools, loaded crates and boxes of produce into the hold of the *Arsulus*. Reinforced here and there by men with whom the foreman was familiar, and who were well aware of their share in the crime, driven and roared and cursed at by the foreman, the laborers bent to their task. And the cargo of the *Arsulus* piled high against the hold on the water-side of the vessel. Her hawsers were pulling at their moorings. She creaked and rattled with the wash of the current, and listed slightly in her slip. But in the seething maelstrom of activity these things passed unnoticed.

Toward the end of the afternoon, Grant picked up the word that the men at Union Headquarters had taken up the question of a strike with the shipowners

once more. That they were seeking to convince them that there should be one more conference before the strike was called. And at last word came that the shipowners had consented to their pleas and would confer with them.

The quitting bell clanged and the men of the day shift dropped their trucks. For a brief space comparative quiet reigned where all had been noise, clatter, ear-splitting crashes, combined with shouts of men in a fever heat of excitement.

Grant, Cavanaugh, Sisson and Stewart of the Criminology Club joined the hurrying ranks and wedged themselves into the hall where the Union meetings were held, amid a crowd of perspiring, cursing, excited 'longshoremen.

The chairman of the Shipowners Committee was speaking. As his voice was raised a silence fell upon the crowd.

"Men, we want to be fair. You say that the 'longshoremen did not sink our lighter. We will grant that there may be some mistake here. We received your letter of last night and acted as we saw best. Your chairman and others here assure us that they sent no letter; if this is the case we will listen to you. Now talk quickly. State your demands."

Instantly the hall was a bedlam of noise. Men shouted, trying to make themselves heard. Grant saw the men who had been foremost in spreading agitation among the groups on the docks now striving to add to the confusion and clamor by hurling epithets at the Shipowners Committee and urging the men at their sides to increase their demands.

Disgusted, and seeing no solutions here to the problem that absorbed their minds, Grant signalled to Cavanaugh.

"Get Stewart and Sisson and get out of here. We'll get back to the docks. This is likely to last all night and then not amount to anything."

Grant slipped out hurriedly, knowing that the others would follow him. Ahead of him slouched two men. As he passed, one stopped to scratch a match against the building. Its flare lighted a face strongly Teutonic, and as the match died down and was tossed away Grant slowed up in the darkness and strained his ear to catch their conversation.

They spoke in German. "We did good work at our dock today." Out of the

darkness on the cool night air the words came clearly, though gutturally, to Grant's ears.

"Yes? What kind?"

"Loading cargo. Dock Fourteen."

They passed out of earshot. A moment later Grant heard the quick steps of Cavanaugh and the other two operatives, and soon they were swinging along to the dock. That there had been a note of pride or at least boastfulness in the voice of the man he had heard speaking by the wall, Grant was not slow to discern. To see that a man of his type, whom Grant classed with the agitators of the day on the docks, would not feel any great pride over the loading of a ship's cargo, did not take great powers of discernment. Grant with a mind trained to pick up the faintest clue leaped to the conclusion that here was a thread that led to something which could be grasped. Evidently something had taken place that day on the dock which the Criminology Club had overlooked.

"Dock Fourteen" he announced briefly to the others and silently they followed him. The great hulk of the *Arsulus* reared itself into the darkness of the night above the brightly lighted dock.

"Wait here unless I call," said Grant. He scrambled aboard and peered down the hatchway. His eyes swept the dark interior of the hold. One side was black, but in the side toward the water piles upon piles of packing boxes, baskets and clean-crated produce showed dimly.

A voice at his elbow startled him.

"Anything wrong here?" To Grant the figure of the dock foreman, shock-headed, heavy-jawed, with heavy arms swinging loosely, was typically bestial. With a quick sense of distaste he straightened.

"Wrong? Somewhat! Unless this is a new style of loading a vessel. How long since they have been loading the cargo on one side? Looks like incompetence or—" but the foreman seemed indisposed to listen to Grant's ideas on the matter, for a second later Grant had crumpled under his heavy fist and was sliding down the steep stairway.

The foreman leaned forward and surveyed the three figures of the Criminology Club men on the dock. Picking up a balehook he laid it within

easy reach, then cupping his hands about his mouth he called in a somewhat subdued but clearly audible voice, "Help. Help!"

He saw the three men leap forward to the ship's side. He flattened himself against a pile of boxes. A moment more and the men had passed him and were clambering down the hatch. As the last one disappeared he sprang to the hatchway and battened it. Grant, Cavanaugh, Stewart and Sisson were prisoners.

The German dock foreman uttered a shrill whistle. It was answered in a moment and a figure joined him hurriedly.

"Wait until I'm off the dock and safe. Then cut the hawsers." It was the foreman who spoke and the other nodded. His huge figure disappeared down the length of a warehouse. The man he had left reached for an axe which lay on a pile of boxes. There was no sound except a straining and creaking as he hacked at the hawsers of the *Arsulus*. Grant and his men inside the hatchway were beating at the door in an effort to break it open. Suddenly they felt the movement of the vessel as it listed sharply. They heard the clattering and crashing of trucks, benches and tools falling from their places sliding over the floor of the hold. The vessel trembled as the last hawser parted and with a sudden lurch the *Arsulus* capsized, carrying with her to what seemed certain death the four members of the Criminology Club.

Perhaps to death, but a death they would fight to the last! Boxes and bales tumbled and crashed about. A porthole on the underside burst under the pressure of water and a geyserlike stream spouted up. The men knew that the water was flowing in, that it was only a matter of a short time before the vessel would be submerged and that to the chill shadows of the hold would be added the shadow of death! Scrambling from one box to another they eluded the ever-rising wave of water. At last they had reached the highest point of vantage they could find. And for a short time at least the waters seemed at a standstill. Above them was the cold steel side of the vessel. Below them the churn and rush of water.

While Harrison Grant and his friends fought for their lives in the hold of the wrecked *Arsulus*, the conference at the Headquarters of the Union proceeded. Order was being formulated out of chaos, the 'longshoremen's demands were being gathered into shape, and it seemed that a settlement agreeable to all was about to be reached. Suddenly the telephone on the table jangled. One of the

Union officials answered it, then turned it over to the Chairman of the Shipowners Committee.

"It's for you."

There was a moment's silence while he fumbled with the receiver, his greeting, and then another silence while the voice of the speaker at the other end of the line came to their ears in squeaky accents.

As they watched him, the Chairman's face hardened.

"Here, say that over again. No! Well they've reached the limit. This means the end." The receiver banged into its socket and the chairman faced the group of tense men at the table.

"Gentlemen, the *Arsulus* has just been sunk at its dock. You were warned that if another depredation occurred we would lock you out whether you struck or not." His fist crashed to the table. "That ship was loaded so it would capsize. A million dollars worth of property has been destroyed. You will see that we can take no other action. Negotiations are at an end. We will fight you now to the finish. I must bid you good evening." Calmly and coldly he threaded his way through the crowds of 'longshoremen into whose minds the greatness of this new blow, just struck, was beginning to penetrate.

There was a sudden burst of sound as men tried to make themselves heard, seeking for recognition, yelling, shouting. Again and again the gavel crashed to the table for order. Finally, reluctantly it came.

The president of the 'Longshoremen's Union looked down at the upturned faces of his men.

"Boys, this meeting is not of our choice. Strange things have happened. We must remember, however, in our excitement and resentment that in the past the shipowners have treated us with a large measure of fairness. Now we must face these new problems. The Chairman of the shipowners' committee has just announced to us that they will refuse to treat with us——"

"Then let's strike. Give them their answer. Strike!"

It was the German dock foreman who had leaped to his feet and was striding up and down the aisle in defiance of the gavel beating for order. One after another the 'longshoremen joined in his cry, hypnotized by his apparent earnestness, eager to follow his evident leadership.

"Strike, Strike! We'll bring these shipowners to their senses. What have they done for us?"

In the overturned hulk of the *Arsulus*, still fighting the death that seemed imminent, the members of the Criminology Club racked their brains for a means of escape from the waters threatening to engulf them.

Grant reached out a hand in the darkness and encountered a clenched fist. "Cavanaugh, is that you?"

"Yes," the reply bordered on a gasp.

"Some kind of crating here. I've got a balehook I picked up somewhere."

"A balehook? Give it to me."

Cavanaugh handed the implement to Grant, who dragged himself to the pinnacle of the debris and began a systematic tapping on the steel hull of the vessel with the handle of the heavy hook.

In a moment the operatives deciphered the message he was sending in Morse Code.

"Send help! Send help!" he signalled over and over, and when his arm was about to fail, Cavanaugh scrambled to his side and took up the tapping. How long they waited they could not tell. Time dragged and the waters began to rise again while the splashing about of floating boxes, drifting among the debris drowned out the outside noises. Grant, reaching up with the balehook to begin his signalling once more was startled to see a tiny spot of red glowing above his head in the darkness. A moment more and the spot changed to white and he lurched sideways as a hissing drop of molten steel sung past his ear and dropped into the water with a burst of steam.

A greenish flame showed through the steel, the flame of an acetylene torch, lighting the watery, floating hold like a glint of summer lightning. And as they watched it, the hole grew and grew. At last a mass of steel dropped into the water and through the widened hole, Grant caught a glimpse of the stars twinkling in the sky. A shadow fell across the opening and they heard a voice bellowing to them above the sound of the water.

"Who's there?"

"Harrison Grant, Cavanaugh, Stewart, Sisson!" Four masculine voices

shouted the necessary information.

"Oh, all right, gentlemen! Hold tight until the edges have cooled. Just a minute now."

Five minutes later the four members of the Criminology Club, bruised and battered, wet and ragged, stood upright on the hull of the capsized vessel, under the bright stars, with the cool breath of the river blowing into their grateful nostrils. The lights from the docks glinted on the buttons and stars which adorned the coats of their rescuers. Grant leaned forward and peered into the face of one of the patrolmen.

"Leary! So you're the one who does the Desperate Desmond act and rescues gentlemen in distress?"

"Yes Mr. Grant. And do you feel like answering any questions?"

"If they are necessary."

"They're necessary all right. If you'll just come over here on the dock, please. Muldoon's got a prisoner. Saw him running away from the dock here and tripped him up. He'll confess, all right."

Grant followed the patrolman into the warehouse. Muldoon clutched a cringing form. "That's no one I know, Muldoon. He is probably a confederate."

"He said he did it all, Mr. Grant."

"A favorite tale with these German spies, Muldoon. Here you!" He grasped the spy suddenly. "I want you to tell the truth and to tell it quick. Where's the foreman of this dock?"

The spy swallowed with evident effort, and then gasped out:

"Gone to a labor meeting."

"He gave you orders to cut those hawsers didn't he?"

The spy's eyes wavered, and then, held by Grant's glance, came back:

"Yes."

"Why?"

The spy shrugged his shoulders. "He had orders to sink the ship."

"From whom?"

"I don't know. He wanted them to think the 'longshoremen did it."

"And bring about a strike? Very simple. Now we'll go over to the labor meeting and you can tell the people you see there this same little story."

The spy with a sudden jerk tried to free himself, but Muldoon's burly fist clenched on his shoulder.

The 'longshoremen's meeting had reached its climax, and now a quiet had fallen. Human nature cannot keep itself at a high pitch of excitement indefinitely. The reaction had come. Silence reigned as Grant and his companions, and the two policemen, leading the ashy-faced prisoner, entered the hall. The voice of the clerk was raised as they took places against the back wall of the room.

"And now that the speeches have been finished, it is moved and seconded that a vote shall be taken to determine whether a general strike be called by the 'longshoreman against the shipowners of——"

A shout from Grant brushed the droning voice of the clerk aside.

"Stop! No vote must be taken until this man tells his story."

As though stirred by a giant hand, the assemblage recoiled. Men rose from their seats to see the person whose temerity thus interrupted the vote of their Union. Down the aisle the German dock foreman, whose vociferousness of a short time before had helped to keep the evening in an uproar, passed a hand over his face and slid into his seat again.

With dragging feet the spy was roughly shoved down the aisle by the two policemen, followed by Grant. They climbed to the platform and faced the listening mass of men.

For a moment Grant looked down on them in silence. Then he spoke:

"You men are laboring under a delusion. I am here to prove it to you, and this—gentleman," he ironically waved a hand toward the spy, "will help me." He turned to the spy. "Where is the man who gave you orders to turn that boat over? Remember, I know who he is. I want you to tell them."

The prisoner glanced over the audience fear-fully. He lifted a limp hand and pointed.

"There!"

Halfway down the hall the huge form of the dock foreman rose and started with a rush toward the door. But his path was blocked. Hands shot out to seize him and pinion them, struggling, to his sides. Fighting and cursing they carried him to the platform and faced him toward the spy.

Ten minutes of excited talking followed, hot with denials and accusations bandied between the foreman and the spy. Suddenly the dock foreman turned to his audience.

"He's right! I told him to cut the hawsers to sink the vessel!"

The president of the 'Longshoremen's Union broke into the silence that followed the confession.

"Phone the shipowners at once!" he called to his secretary.

The dock foreman was talking again.

"It was the intention to fasten the blame for the depredation on the 'longshoremen. We knew if that ship was turned over nothing could stop a strike. And we want a strike."

"Who hired you?" Grant cut in sharply.

"A man named Gates."

"First name?"

"I don't know."

"Address?"

"I don't know."

"No I don't suppose so." Harrison Grant smiled sarcastically. It was not the first time that he had questioned a German spy—only to find out that he knew nothing and that he was willing to confess and accept blame that the higher powers of Imperial Germany might continue their work of devastation and strife.

"All right. You've told enough. Now Mr. President, you undoubtedly have some action to take." Grant bowed to the president of the Union and stepped down from the platform.

The president took the floor. Relief was written large on his smiling countenance.

"Men, we must declare ourselves. This man has confessed that an effort has been made to make us allies of Germany in an attempt to tie up shipping and paralyze American industries. Do you consent to be tools of Imperial Germany or do you prefer to be free Americans?"

In a moment the hall resounded with shouts.

"Americans! Americans!"

The president turned as his secretary touched him on the elbow. He took a slip of paper handed him and raised his hand for silence.

"The shipowners announce that because of the removal of this very serious charge against you, they are willing to grant the demands of the 'longshoremen!'"

It was as though a whirlwind had struck a forest. The mass of men went wild. Shouts resounded while men tossed their hats into the air, slapped each other on the back, wrung each other's hands. Grant watched them for a few moments, smiling. Another blow by Germany had been averted. It was worth the horror and danger of the last hour. His work for the night was over. He turned to go.

With thoughts free from the 'longshoremen and their difficulties settled, his mind reverted to the subject nearest his heart, and one which even in moments of greatest danger and suspense or wildest excitement, he was ever conscious of. Dixie Mason's dark eyes seemed to look wistfully at him from the darkness.

Dixie's little jaunt to the Ten Mile House with Von Lertz had almost proved highly worth the necessity of enduring his attentions for several hours. They had danced and dined and danced again, and Von Lertz had ordered many drinks. As he imbibed drink after drink he became with each one a little less careful, a shade more loquacious. But he dropped no word of proceedings that she recognized as of any importance. Dixie grew a little discouraged and tired as the time passed. She was about to suggest the necessity of returning to the city when a door slammed noisily. In a state of nervous tension, Dixie started, upsetting the small glass of cordial that had been served to her. The bright colored liquid ran in a quick stream toward the edge of the table,

toward her. Dixie drew back.

"Wipe it up quick! I don't want it to get on me!"

There was no waiter near. Von Lertz whipped out a clean handkerchief from his pocket. Unnoticed by him a small leather-colored booklet slipped from his pocket with the handkerchief and dropped to the floor. Dixie's quick eyes saw it and while she thanked Von Lertz with a gratitude that, under different circumstances, he would have thought somewhat profuse for the service rendered, Dixie slipped her foot over the little book.

The slamming door had admitted two new-comers, a man and a girl. The girl Dixie recognized at once as a member of the Secret Service and catching her eye, she signalled to her to come over.

Von Lertz, ever on the alert for new conquests, lost no time in asking the girl to dance with him. Dixie had known this would happen. As the girl and Von Lertz circled away from the table, she excused herself to the girl's escort, leaned over, picked up the little note-book and left the room. A moment later in the dressing-room she started wide-eyed and with quickening breath at a report in which were jotted down items, all planning death and destruction and horror of a vastness beyond comprehension.

CHAPTER VII

THE BROWN PORTFOLIO

No one passing with the crowds that thronged Fifth Avenue at all hours would have singled out the great stone house that stood flush with the sidewalk near Fifty-second Street. Its great doors with their outer gates of iron bars were flanked on each side by anemic box trees which bravely struggled for a living amid the dust and grime of the city. Its closely curtained windows presented an impression of cold aloofness. To the passerby there was nothing to indicate that its air of ancient respectability was but assumed. Its door swung into an entrance hall whose gloomy grandeur was lightened by the subdued light of wall brackets with colored shades. Broad stairs led to the upper floors. At one side of the hall beautifully panelled oak doors

opened into a long room, whose wall, hung with tapestry and great paintings, and giant fireplace gave to the interior an air of baronial splendor.

Amid this quiet luxury and display of royal grandeur the German government had established its headquarters for the system of espionage it had introduced into a peaceful country. This room was the meeting place of the chief agents of the German government. To it came Von Lertz of the susceptible heart, most recently lost to Dixie Mason; here came Boy-Ed and Von Papen, Von Rintelen of many disguises and Von Bernstorff, the German Ambassador, for conferences with Dr. Albert, paymaster for the Kaiser's spy army in America. And that their movements might be directed with greatest secrecy and expediency wireless messages were received here direct from Nauen, Germany, through the huge antennae which could be stretched upward from the chimney of the house and through the great detectors concealed behind the massive oil paintings adorning the walls.

The room was quiet save for the continuous shuffle of papers slipping and sliding into neat piles under the quick hands of Dr. Albert and the crackling of the log in the fireplace, now almost smoldering into ashes. He laid the reports from spies in all parts of the country into one pile. The most important of these were carried in the brown portfolio which lay on the table and which he kept continually in his possession.



Portfolio secured from Dr. Albert containing documents relating to official German intrigue

Portfolio secured from Dr. Albert containing documents relating to official German intrigue

Now he thrust into it a report from Captain Franz von Papen, suggesting that a shipment of liquid chlorine which had been ordered by the Allies be stopped by blowing up the factories in which it was being manufactured. Thus the Germans would be given a new advantage in the field by an absolute monopoly of this gas. This report was followed by another from the same source calling the doctor's attention to the possibility of obtaining the patents of the Wright aeroplane by trickery, cheating the Wright brothers out of the result of years of labor, and cornering the aeroplane market in America. A quietly personal letter from Von Rintelen advising him of the various aliases and describing the disguises under which he intended to travel for the next few weeks; documents regarding the Embargo Conference, with its membership of misguided Americans, conceived and designed to bring political influence to bear upon the munitions industry, thus enabling Germany to obtain all the arms it needed and the Allies none; letters and

reports on crop conditions, telegrams suggesting means by which Germany could handle the various U-boat controversies in a way to blind the Administration and yet commit murder on the high seas, plans for buying newspapers and the dissemination of spy propaganda—prospectuses, plans and other matters of importance which came daily to the hands of this mysterious, seemingly all-seeing financial agent of the German Government, were slipped into the brown portfolio.

He started suddenly as the panelled doors creaked open to admit a visitor. His piercing eyes turned to a person advancing toward him jauntily, but with an air of familiarity that was disarming. In a moment the look of alarm on; Albert's face changed to one of relief as he recognized his visitor and nodded curtly.

"Ah Von Rintelen, glad to see you. In the future kindly have yourself announced."

"As what? Would it make it any easier to have Smith, or Gates or Levinsky or some such personage announced? Would it make this place easier of access to me?" Von Rintelen swung his cane over the back of a chair, hung his hat over the same piece of furniture and stood rolling his immaculate chamois gloves from his hands. This done, with a care and precision that seemed to make each movement a ceremony, he removed the brown Van Dyke beard that had adorned his countenance, and stood revealed to his confrere in his true personage. Stepping to Albert's side he said in lowered tones:

"You say you are glad to see me; you may feel differently when I tell you the news I bring."

Albert turned quickly.

"Good or bad?"

"Bad," answered Rintelen. He reached into his pocket and brought out a slip of paper, unfolding it as he held it for Albert to read.

Dr. Albert glanced over it, then frowned, inquiringly.

"Well, what of this? Is it not right that Germany should place bombs on ships leaving American ports? I see here a list of ten or twelve sugar vessels which are now at sea, with bombs in their cargoes due to explode some time today.

What of that? These are orders being carried out."

Von Rintelen pointed.

"Read the last line again carefully, my friend. The *Cragside* is listed there and—the Cragside is still in port!"

For a moment of tense silence the plotters stared at each other, consternation growing in the expression Albert bent upon Rintelen.

"What! And there are bombs in the *Cragside's* hold?"

Von Rintelen nodded. "Five of them—sewed into sugar sacks. They are due to explode any time now."

Dr. Albert paced the floor, hands folded behind him, a frown deepening the lines of his face. He stopped and looked at Von Rintelen.

"And that means that the *Cragside* will burn at her dock—"

Von Rintelen nodded again. "Naturally."

"And there will be an investigation. More of these infernal American reporters asking questions and seeking to find the causes of things. More Secret Service men running about, and with their keen perception, certain to find these things we wished concealed! Who's mistake is this?" Dr. Albert glared at Von Rintelen, annoyance fast growing into anger as the danger of the situation took hold of him.

Von Rintelen shrugged his shoulders.

"No one's mistake. The agents were told to put bombs aboard sugar ships to destroy as many sugar cargoes as possible. They obeyed orders. The *Cragside* sailed three days ago when the other ships left port. Something went wrong, she returned for repairs, and is now in port as I have just told you. And the bomb in her hold is due to explode today."

Albert stared at Von Rintelen fiercely. The thoughts which struggled for words but were suppressed showed in his face at the nipping in the bud of this well-planned plot. He took refuge in a hard-fought silence, for Franz von Rintelen, special emissary and arch-plotter, owed no recognition to Dr. Heinrich Albert. Von Rintelen had come to America with a fund of fifty millions of dollars at his disposal and was accountable to only one for the success or failures which followed the use of the money for death and

destruction and that man was—the Kaiser.

Von Rintelen picked up the beard which had disguised his features and crossing to a low hung French mirror, carefully adjusted it. Picking up his hat and cane and gloves, he turned to Albert.

"Sorry," he said. "Mistakes will occur, you know. Till we meet again," he bowed jauntily and in a moment the panelled doors closed behind him and the great iron barred doors of the front entrance clanged, marking his exit to Fifth Avenue. He was quickly lost in the hurrying crowds outside.

Albert walked to the fireplace and stared gloomily into its fast dying embers. "A happy day for Germany when he returns home," he muttered moodily. "Mistakes, mistakes, nothing but mistakes."

The past twelve hours had been filled with puzzling anxiety for Dixie Mason. Since the moment she had read the scribbled page from the note-book of Heinric von Lertz in the dressing room of the Ten Mile Mouse, her efforts had been spent on solving the mystery of its meaning, for all it said, though Dixie was not at all misled by its briefness into confusing brevity with innocence, was this:

Report for Von Lertz.	
Fire bombs manufactured	400
Fire bombs delivered to agents for coming use	72
Balance	328

That was all. Where the bombs had been placed, when they would explode, where it was intended others should be placed could not be told. It had been with difficulty that Dixie in her preoccupation had retained Von Lertz's attention on the ride home from the Ten Mile House the night before. Her mind had been a seething mass of conjectures and forebodings. And with them had been linked her knowledge of the necessity for occupying Von Lertz's attention so that he would not discover the loss of the report book. In this she had been successful, and when he at last deposited her at the door of her apartment, it was with a feeling of relief that she bid him good night.

Dixie in the quiet of her room chided herself for not being able to make more

of this report. She told herself that she had no right to be one of the Secret Service if she could do no better than this, but the information was meager—there was nothing to work on. Her smooth forehead was furrowed by a frown of anxiety. For the fiftieth time she read the report and then she shook her head.

"No use," she mused. "There's only one thing for me to do with this and that is send it to Harrison Grant without his knowing who it came from. He can start an investigation." She folded the page torn from the book and slipped it into an envelope. Then in a painfully disguised handwriting she directed it to Harrison Grant, at the Criminology Club. She held up the envelope and surveyed the writing. "He doesn't know my writing, but if he did he would never guess this was mine. Mamette!" she called sharply.

In a moment the curtain of her room was parted and a grinning black face looked in on her. Mamette had been Dixie's maid for years; in spite of her self-selected name smacking as she thought, of all that was French and gay and fashionable, she was pure African.

"Mamette," Dixie repeated, "Take this letter down to the telegraph office in the next block and have a messenger deliver it at once. Be sure not to say who is sending it. Remember!"

"Yas'm!" Mamette's dark hand grasped the envelope which was startlingly white by contrast, and in a few minutes Dixie heard the door of the apartment slam and knew that the report which she rightfully guessed savored of intrigue boding ill for the peace of the land she served, was on its way to Harrison Grant.

It reached him a half hour later by messenger, at his office.

It was Jimmy McAdams, shock haired, and dreamy eyed, who ambled in and presented him with the message, and while he waited to see whether Grant wished to send an answer, Jimmy made himself comfortable in the depths of a leather chair with the nickel novel which never left him. Grant frowned over the brief report which had been the cause of Dixie Mason's dilemma. A triumphant chuckle from Jimmy aroused him. But the chuckle was merely induced by the successful effort of Old King Brady to capture the last of the counterfeiters as set forth between the lurid covers of Jimmy's nickel thriller. Grant's glance rested on him with tolerant amusement.

"Keep on reading that stuff, Jimmy, and you'll be a detective before you know it."

Jimmy pulled himself into his present surroundings with obvious effort. The eyes that met Grant's were still somewhat dreamy.

"What? Aw gee, Mr. Grant. I wish I was a detective! I bet I could be one."

"And yet you don't know where this mysterious communication you just brought me came from?"

"Aw gee! Mr. Grant. How'd I know it was mysterious? I carry so many messages. How could I guess this one was goin' to be something different. Anyway that ain't got nothin' to do with the kind of detectin' I want to do. I want to be——"

"Look here Jimmy," Grant had risen and crossed over to the boy, "Why don't you stop reading these nickel thrillers and put some of that excess energy into the Boy Scouts?"

"Well, Mr. Grant, that ain't a bad idea. They been tryin' to get me to join. But I want to be a detective."

Just how close he was to becoming a detective Jimmy did not know. A few moments later he left the Club and betook himself to the "L" station for the train that would take him back to his office.

Jimmy was followed into the car by a well-dressed, dark man of somewhat foreign appearance who carried a brown portfolio. There was nothing about him to arouse interest, but because he was the only other person in the car Jimmy stared at him with a bored curiosity which would have been disconcerting had the object of it not been in a somewhat drowsy state. Jimmy watched his head nod, fall forward on his chest, and jerked back only to allow it to go through the same performance again. It was very interesting to Jimmy, and he was somewhat sorry when the man jumped to his feet in confusion as the guard called a station and hurried out to the platform. As the train started Jimmy noticed the brown portfolio lying on the seat where the man had left it. He caught it up and thrust his head out of the window.

"Hey, hey, mister! You left your valise!" Portfolios, valises—they were all the same to Jimmy, the untravelled.

But the "L" train was pulling out. Behind, on the platform Jimmy could see

the man waving his arms and gesticulating wildly.

"Well you shouldn't have left it," Jimmy commented philosophically to no one in particular, and immediately unbuckled the strap that held the case closed. He glanced inside. For a moment disappointment was written on his features, and then his eyes widened.

"Papers! German papers! Gosh I wonder if he's a spy!" Jimmy hesitated and hurried out of the car.

He was strangely deaf to the shouts of the station guard, as he rushed down the elevator steps, the newsdealer who endeavored to stop him at the guard's earnest entreaties, enforced profanities, presented no obstacle at all. A policeman, seeing the commotion, did his best to slacken the pace Jimmy had set for himself but could do nothing but follow the nimble-footed messenger.

Fifteen minutes later Jimmy dashed past Pat Hennessy at the door of the Criminology Club and threw himself, panting and wild-eyed at Harrison Grant.

"Mr. Grant!" he gasped. "Here's a whole valise full of German spies—I mean German papers."

And then he turned with a look of despair as the cumbersome form of his pursuer darkened the door. At the sight of Jimmy the ample-proportioned guardian of the law stepped forward to lay a heavy hand upon him, but Harrison Grant stopped him quietly.

"Just a minute, here, Tom. The boy's all right. I'll look after him. I think he's got something here we really want. In any event I'll take care of the bag, whatever it is—and if the boy is wrong I'll see that it gets back to its owner."

The policeman pondered dubiously. "Well," he said finally, "I seen the kid running with this brown thing and a man chasing him, and I naturally thought something was wrong. But I'll leave him with you if you say so, Mr. Grant."

Grant nodded and he left the room.

Jimmy buzzed at Grant excitedly, like an irritating mosquito.

"Open it up—please, Mr. Grant. It's full of German papers. A guy left it on the 'L' train and I picked it up."

Harrison Grant, with thoughts of Jimmy and the Adventures of Old King

Brady, looked down at the youngster and laughed.

"Jimmy, it's a good thing I know you're a good boy or——" he had opened the portfolio now and was drawing out its contents. He stopped with a quick exclamation as his eyes rested on a letter.

"The spy correspondence of Dr. Heinrich Albert!"

As Harrison Grant was hastily running through the contents of the brown portfolio with which Jimmy had so unceremoniously presented him, the guests lounging about the parlors of the Ritz Carlton were somewhat startled at the sudden entrance of a tall dark man. Caution almost forgotten in the need for instant conference with his fellow plotters, Albert had hailed the first taxi driver in sight and ordered him to drive to the hotel at which Von Bernstorff the ambassador, was stopping, as quickly as possible. Paying the driver as they arrived, he had rushed into the lobby, had himself announced and impatiently fumed while the elevator with a slow elegance unappreciated by the doctor, carried him to the floor of Von Bernstorff's suite. A moment later he was somewhat incoherently pouring his recital of events into the interested ears of Von Bernstorff, Von Papen and Boy-Ed.

"I fell asleep. I've been doing much night work," this in a somewhat apologetic tone which won no sympathy from his hearers, "and awoke only when they called my station. I hurried out, forgetting my portfolio. How I did it I do not know. It never leaves my side. That I should have forgotten it now ——" Albert threw himself into a chair and ran his fingers through his hair excitedly. "The boy waved at me from the window of the train," he went on. "I immediately telephoned to the next station to have him stopped and the bag taken away from him. But they say when he got there he slid past the guard, ran down the steps, tripped up a newsdealer, got away from a policeman and then ran with it."

Jimmy would have been surprised to know what importance was attached to his actions of the past hour.

Von Bernstorff frowned. "He's probably taken it to the Secret Service," he cut in. "The result will be that sooner or later every scheme outlined in that correspondence will be frustrated. It was careless, Albert, exceedingly careless work. But we must concern ourselves with the necessities of the moment."

A moment's pause ensued. "The consequences of this affair would be staggering if the papers should fall into the right hands."

Von Bernstorff spoke. "Von Rintelen must leave the country at once. He is not an attache or member of the Imperial German Embassy and therefore is not protected by international law."

Von Rintelen bowed assentingly. What Von Bernstorff said was true, and he rose.

"*Auf weidersehen*, Von Rintelen." Von Bernstorff held out his hand. Von Rintelen bowed and shook the hand of each of the men with whom he had been associated and with hurried expressions of farewell, left the room to make preparations for flight from the country, flight that ended for him at Falmouth, England, where he was detained and returned to New York City. In February, 1918, Judge Howe of Vermont sentenced him to imprisonment for his activities against the peace of the United States.

After Von Rintelen's exit, Von Bernstorff turned once more to his fiscal spy and Boy-Ed and Von Papen.

"As I said, we who are left must concern ourselves with the necessities of the moment which seem to be pressing upon us. Dr. Albert, what was the most important paper in the portfolio you carried?"

"Von Rintelen's report of the bombs placed on sugar ships."

Von Bernstorff smiled slightly.

"That may give us a clue! Are all the ships at sea?"

"Yes."

"Then if the papers are in the hands of the Secret Service——"

"They'll wireless the ships at sea," broke in Albert.

"Exactly." Bernstorff nodded matter-of-factly. "We can find out speedily if they're in possession of our secrets and arrange our acts accordingly. You, Von Papen, and Boy-Ed, get out the Long Island automobile wireless and catch any messages that Sayville may send out tonight. Where is Von Lertz?"

Von Papen shook his head.

"I think he has an engagement with Miss Mason."

"Miss Mason? Who is she?" Von Bernstorff glanced up sharply, but without waiting for reply went on, "he will have to break it. He must help you. I will telephone him to get Wolff von Igel and help you."

Von Papen and Boy-Ed, bowing, left the room.

Bernstorff caught up the desk 'phone and rattled the hook impatiently. He was answered in a moment, and as he gave the number of Von Lertz's apartment, the girl at the switchboard smiled to herself in the privacy of her corner, and made a double connection for the benefit of Dixie Mason, who had been careful to plant her operatives in strategic places. Dixie Mason, listening quietly, on the 'phone in her own little boudoir heard Bernstorff call for Heinric von Lertz, and in a moment caught Von Lertz's quiet answer. She heard Bernstorff's explanation of his call and the story of the loss of the reports given in a few words.

"There is no time to waste, Von Lertz. All messages must be caught. Get Wolff von Igel at once, and you two go out with Von Papen and Boy-Ed in the machine."

"I will be with them in three quarters of an hour or sooner, if I can make it," Von Lertz answered somewhat slowly. Dixie smiled broadly and suppressed a girlish giggle. The reason for Von Lertz's hesitancy was not hard to be guessed at.

But all hilarity disappeared the moment the receiver of her 'phone slipped gently into its hook. It was lifted very shortly and the voice of Dixie Mason, having called her number, was carried to the ear of the Chief of the Secret Service. A quick conversation followed.

"I will have men at Harden's Corner. Did you get that? Harden's corner," he spoke in final tones. "Give them the signal I have just told them they would get from you. Everything straight? All right. Good bye."

Dixie pushed the 'phone from her. "Mamette! Hurry! The motor togs!"

For the next half hour Dixie was extremely busy, and Mamette's services had to be called upon to assist in the unusual toilette she was making. Although Heinric von Lertz, calling shortly to convey his regrets at the necessity of breaking his engagement with her for the motor trip they had planned, found her entrancingly gowned in a dark negligee, the door had hardly closed behind him, when the entrancing negligee slipped to the floor and disclosed

Dixie Mason in motor clothes of an extremely mannish cut.

Calling directions into the bemuddled ears of Mamette, donning goggles and cap at the same time, she hurried to the hall and into the elevator. As the machine of Heinric von Lertz, carrying with him Von Papen, and Boy-Ed, crossed the street intersection beyond on their way to Long Island, Dixie Mason's car fairly leaped out of the driveway and on to the road they were taking.

Across the city and over the bridge the big car with the small one following at a discreet but never faltering distance, took its way. At the bridge it was joined by the heavy wireless automobile carrying Wolff von Igel and a driver. Then out on the broad Long Island road with the course spreading smooth and straight before them. The spies were looking for a point of vantage in the hills where their wireless could be used to catch the messages going out from Sayville to the sugar ships in danger. Dixie Mason was looking for a well known intersection of roads, where a road came down from a hill and cut sharply across the high road—a road well hidden except for its intersection. Her sharp eyes travelling beyond caught a glimpse of the white cross formed by the roads. Two long shrill wails followed by three short ones pierced the air, above the steady drumming of the heavy cars ahead.

The cars containing Von Lertz and Von Papen, Von Igel and his driver dashed past the intersection of the road where a tall signpost bearing the information that this was Harden's Corner reared itself. To the men in the cars the sign meant nothing, but to Dixie Mason it meant success or failure. A moment of suspense for her followed, and then a machine dashed into the road between her car and the cars ahead. Dixie slowed down. Her services were not needed now. The other Secret Service operatives would complete her work for her, but hoping to see the finish she drove on slowly.

The spies evidently not knowing they were followed had driven their car up into a road leading to a hill overlooking the water. Von Papen and Boy-Ed were making the necessary connection of the wireless that would enable them to catch the messages at sea. Von Igel, with the driver, was standing guard. Suddenly Von Igel uttered a warning shout. Explanations were unnecessary. A glance below showed that they were discovered. Von Lertz, followed by Von Papen, leaped into his machine and swung into the road, followed by Von Igel in the wireless machine. With roaring exhausts they raced for the

broad road that led to the city. Behind them, swinging and swerving, thundered the car carrying the Secret Service men.

Far away Dixie Mason, driving leisurely, heard the sounds of the race. The hills resounded with the heavy echoes of the pounding machines. As she reached the crest of the hill she saw them below her. A small stream which was crossed by a bridge lay at the foot of the hill. As Von Lertz struck the bridge his car leaped into the air, wavered a moment and then crashed ahead, over the bridge and with a grinding of brakes, up the side of the embankment. Then Dixie gave a cry of horror as Von Igel's heavy car following struck the edge of the bridge as Von Lertz's had done, but with less luck, for the car swerved, skidded, swung about, and then striking the heavy cement railing of the bridge, capsized, pinioning Wolff von Igel beneath it. A moment more and a flame shot high into the air as the gasoline tank exploded. Von Lertz and Von Papen worked madly, endeavoring to extricate Von Igel from the wrecked car. She could not see the driver. Dixie peered beyond them. In the distance she could see the car which should have carried her Secret Service co-workers to the successful climax of this affair, stalled, its erstwhile occupants working in vain endeavors to start it. Dixie groaned. After all, it was up to her.

Well acquainted with the character of the men whose schemes she combatted daily with a wit equal to theirs but with less resources to forestall, she summoned her courage and thoughts to do her bidding. Through fate, luck, she knew not what, her plan was endangered. And then this same fate played into her hands.

As her car slid slowly down the hill, Von Papen spoke quickly to Von Lertz.

"Do you know who this is coming down the hill?"

Von Lertz glanced up. "No, but we passed him back in town. Why?"

"We can use him—if he is all right. You and Boy-Ed take Von Igel in your machine and get him to a hospital quick. I'll have to try a rather dangerous stunt—work the Fifth Avenue wireless. It's risky but——"

Dixie had brought her machine to a standstill near the smoking wreck of Von Igel's wireless machine. Her heart pounded madly as Von Papen stepped toward her. Was fate favoring her? It seemed so!

She drew her cap down and adjusted her goggles more firmly as Von Papen

advanced. "We've had an accident here," he said, "I've got to get back to town. Can you take me?"

Dixie nodded and opened the door. Von Papen stepped in and gave her directions as to where he wished her to drive him—little knowing that he was giving information to the woman representative of the Secret Service!

"Turn into Fifth Avenue at Fifty-second Street and then start up-town. Make it as fast as the law allows!" Captain Von Papen was snapping his orders excitedly, but in a low voice. "I've got to get there to notify the mother of the boy who has just been hurt. Understand?"

Dixie nodded. Her foot pressed the accelerator. A moment more and the finger of the speedometer climbed to forty miles, then fifty and slowly to sixty where it stayed until the outlines of the city began to show against the western sky. Then Dixie slowed down to a speed which would allow her to pass the policemen they began to encounter at intervals without interference. She crossed over to Madison Avenue, and there slowed down. Von Papen glanced out and around the machine nervously. Evidently the way was clear, for he reached into his pocket and drew out a bill which he pressed into the driver's hand. "Drive on, please, no need to wait for me," he called, hurrying to the sidewalk.

Dixie nodded and started the machine. She crossed Fifth Avenue. Just beyond the corner she stopped the car and jumped out. Scurrying to the corner she watched Von Papen enter the house. It was Dr. Albert's house, the huge Fifth Avenue mansion that German efficiency had turned into a spies' nest from which to prey upon a country with which it claimed to be on friendly terms and by whom it was trusted. Dixie Mason glanced up at its close curtained windows. Somewhere inside was Von Papen, gone there on an errand unknown to her but which she knew had some bearing on the events of the afternoon. What was his mission?

In a moment the answer was given her. High up on the roof the slender antennae of a wireless outfit was being raised. Higher and higher with slim tentacles spreading as the machinery inside that controlled it was operated.

There was no need for conjecture now. Dixie Mason knew the meaning of Von Papen's mad rush to reach this house. It was to reach another wireless depot from which messages could be caught and stopped. And she had been

the means of assisting him to his purpose! Dixie Mason turned and ran to her car. A moment later she was breaking all traffic regulations as she sped toward the Criminology Club with one idea in mind—to reach Harrison Grant.

But already the message of warning to the sugar ships far out on the ocean had been flashed from Sayville. The gigantic efforts of the German spies to stop the messages had been to no purpose. Harrison Grant upon finding the report of the bombs placed in the hold of the sugar ships had stopped first to order the warning sent through Sayville, and then calling Cavanaugh, Sisson and Stewart, had hurried with them to the dock to warn the crew of the *Cragside* of the bomb in her hold, and prevent, if possible, a catastrophe. But as they approached the dock the black clouds of smoke darkening the clear sky told them they were too late. The *Cragside* was a mass of flames and the dock an inferno of smoke through which the wet rubber coats of firemen gleamed. Huge streams of water played on the ill-fated vessel, and the shouts and yells of excited dock hands mingled with the roar of flames and water and the weird sirens of newly arriving fire engines.

There was little they could do there. Grant, sickened at the appalling waste and the heartlessness of the crime, which they had been too late to prevent, turned his footsteps slowly back toward the Club. Was there no end to fiendishness which could concoct such acts as this? Would the eyes of the people never be opened to the danger that stalked abroad among them in the guise of friendship? Would this country, too, be drawn into the war that was sapping the strength of the nations and causing a depth of misery such as the world had never before experienced? Grant wondered at it all, wishing that things were not as they were, marveling that others would not see that peace could never exist with a government which fawned and smiled and offered the hand of friendship even as it planned acts too treacherous for an honorable nation to conceive of.

He had stretched his weary limbs in the deep softness of the leather couch in the lounging room of the Club. Doubtless he heard the sound of a car drawn up to the curb before the Club. If he did he was too tired to care who it was.

Dixie Mason still in her mannish auto togs signalled to Pat Hennessy at the door of the Club.

"Tell Mr. Grant to come at once and bring his best men with him, I think I

can crowd three in here. Hurry, please!"

Hennessy was used to strange happenings. His affiliations with the Criminology Club had accustomed him to the need of quick action and now quick action seemed to be the desired thing. He disappeared into the Club to re-appear in a moment with Grant and Cavanaugh and Stewart.

Grant peered into the machine at the slim figure of the driver.

"Who are you?" he asked sharply.

Dixie flashed her Secret Service commission, concealing the name.

"What else?" The secret sign of the service was given him as Dixie raised her gauntleted hand. Without further questions he stepped in, followed by Stewart. Cavanaugh clung to the running board.

A moment more and Dixie Mason's little car was speeding toward Fifth Avenue, defying all law in general and policemen in particular in her mad haste to reach the house Von Papen had entered.

She slowed down at the corner where she had stopped before and pointed to the house. She spoke in a low voice and directed her speech at Stewart. "In that house there, they are working the wireless!"

Grant jumped to the sidewalk. He gave his directions in low tones. Dixie watched them seek for admittance at the door. She watched them open the iron barred gate and then with a splintering crash force their way into the house. She saw the butler that blocked their path fall under someone's heavy blow. And then they disappeared into the darkness of the gloomy reception hall.

Grant and his men strode to the panelled doorway opening into the great room in which Dr. Albert received his guests and where the conferences of the German plotters were held. From behind the heavy doors came the crackle and splutter of a wireless apparatus.

Under the strength of the three men the doors burst inward. Inside of the room, two men working the wireless rushed vainly toward the French windows for escape, only to find themselves pinioned and helpless in the handcuffs slipped on them by Grant and his operatives.

Cavanaugh and Stewart soon dismantled the wireless equipment and put out

of commission forever one of Germany's most dangerous weapons in America, but Grant watching them knew that it was but one of many and that for every blow thus dealt a dozen plots would spring up elsewhere. While this evil festered in their midst the eyes of the Secret Service must never close.

He left the operatives on guard and turned toward the street with his captives.

"Good man—that fellow who brought us here," he mused as they stepped out on the stone doorstep. "He's worth a special report to the Chief. If it hadn't been for him—"

He stopped. Where the racer with its hooded, gauntletted driver had been was vacancy! His mysterious informant was gone!

CHAPTER VIII

THE KAISER'S DEATH MESSENGER—ROBERT FAY

A deathly calm hung over the trenches. After a day made hideous by the thunder of artillery and shriek of shells an unearthly peace had settled over the desolate stretch of shell-torn battleground. In the German trenches a sergeant leaned against the sandbag fortifications. The light from his cigarette glowed fitfully in the darkness as he puffed at it nervously, while he waited for the men he had chosen to accompany him in an attack on the French trenches. Soon he would be crawling out over the shell-pitted stretch of No Man's Land with a haversack filled with hand grenades. His proficiency in handling them had brought him fame in the ranks of the Kaiser's army. Fame! He tossed the cigarette butt aside contemptuously and then stamped on its glowing end. Fame! What was it compared to life? Why should he, for the sake of a few days of glory and a name for being successful in carrying out these bombing attacks, risk his life—his life which could be used for stopping the whole terrible business and bringing the war to a close in which Germany would be victorious? He clenched his fist in the darkness and struck at the sandbag. If his plans could be used he would stop in three months the munitions supply of the Allies and soon for want of munitions they would sue for Peace.

He reached for his watch. Its faint phosphorescence pointed the hour to him. He heard the tramp of footsteps. His men were coming. Soon he would be out there crawling through the darkness toward that other line of trenches, dodging wire entanglements, playing possum beneath the light of flares. Perhaps this raid would be his last. Perhaps in a day or so a cross would be raised for him,

"Sergeant Robert Fay, Died for Fatherland."

The footsteps drew nearer. The sergeant raised himself in preparation for taking command—and then he stopped. Out of the darkness his superior officer's voice came to him in guttural accents:

"Sergeant Fay, you are to report at once to Cologne for promotion and other duty."

Fay received the announcement with the stolidity born of long military training, but a moment later the meaning of the words transformed his features.

"My plans have been approved!" he gasped.

But the officer had disappeared. Fay could hear the tramp of his retreating footsteps.

Far removed from scenes of strife and horror and suffering, separated from them by the broad blue of the Atlantic, the tide of life rolled on peacefully in the United States. Peacefully—to all appearances. There a people torn with sympathy and pity for the wrongs wreaked on helpless Belgium by the greedy hand of Germany sought to alleviate those wrongs and bring what help they could to the suffering nation by food supplies and gifts of money and clothing. They little knew that the horrors that had waged on their own shores were to meet with success. While the American people pursued their peaceful occupations, sinuous tentacles were reaching out to entangle them in the war that was casting its shadow over Europe.

On the twenty-fifth floor of a building that reared its dark heights among other skyscrapers on Wall Street, in a luxuriously furnished office, two men sat in conference—Captain Franz von Papen, Military Attache of the Imperial German Government, and Captain Karl Boy-Ed, Naval Attache.

In an outer office sat Wolff von Igel, Von Papen's secretary. His knock at the

door interrupted the conference in the inner office.

"Lieutenant Fay wishes to see you."

Von Papen glanced up with a frown.

"I can't see him now. Tell him to come back in an hour."

"I told him you were busy but he has a letter from the General Staff which indicates that his visit may be of importance."

Von Papen hesitated.

"Show him in," he ordered.

A moment later Robert Fay erstwhile expert grenade thrower of the German trenches, now promoted to a lieutenancy, saluted the Captain.

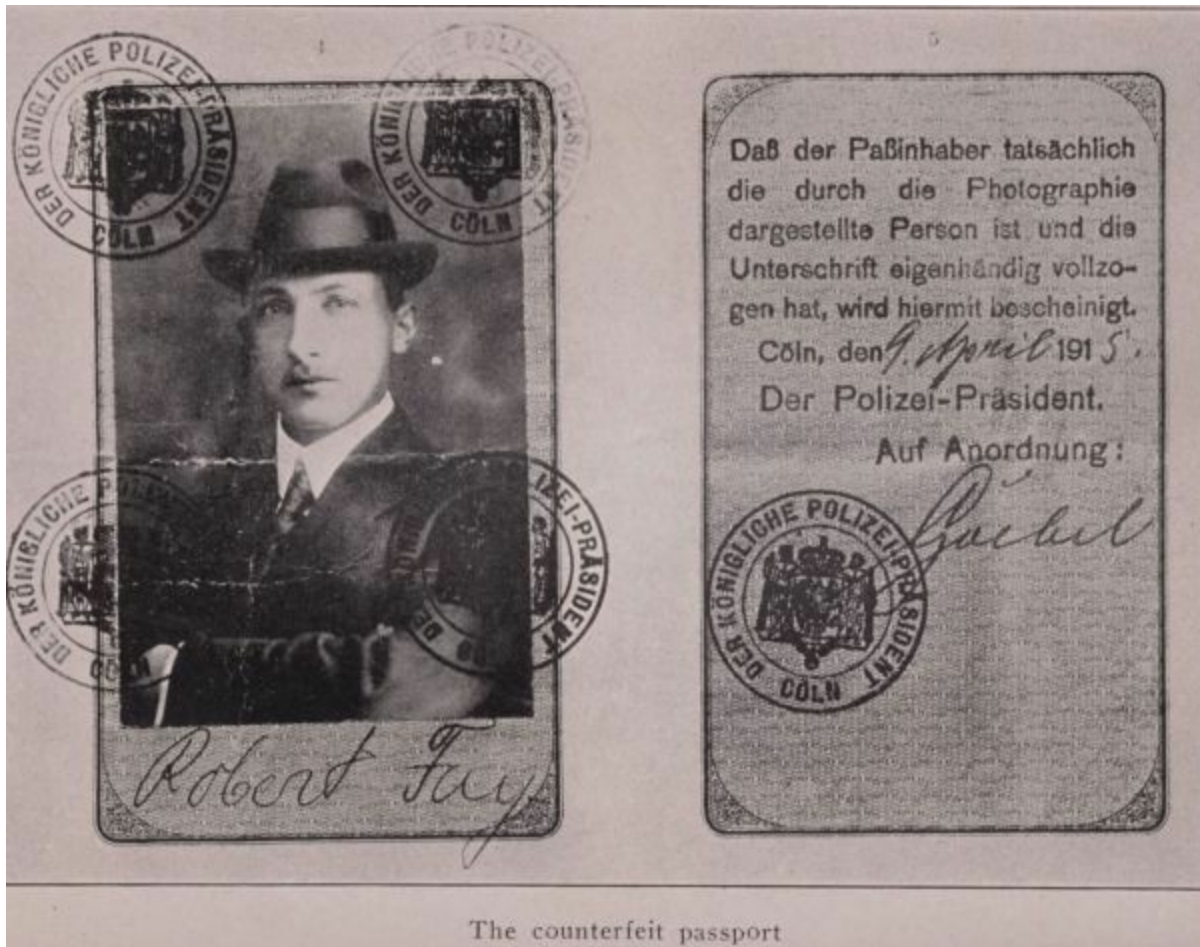
Von Papen eyed him closely.

"Your papers?"

Fay handed him a letter. Von Papen read it and handed it to Boy-Ed, his gaze returning again to Fay.

"So you are here to help us? How did you make the trip?"

"I arrived yesterday on the *Rotterdam*. My passport was made out to one Kearling from whom I bought it in Cologne. It is a simple matter now to buy a passport. I substituted Kearling's picture for my own. His description fitted mine nearly enough to pass."



The counterfeit passport

"But the passport must be stamped," interposed Boy-Ed.

"Yes, but that too is simple. The photograph is simply perforated to match the perforations of the stamp already on the passport. You see how easy it is. I am here. I have had no trouble. But now I am Fay, no longer Kearling."

"Very good," commented Von Papen. "And now your plan."

"It is to stop the export of munitions to the Allies from the United States for three months and perhaps permanently."

His listeners looked at him somewhat incredulously.

"I am by profession a mechanic and have had in mind many inventions. My most recent one is a bomb which will not explode until the vessel is three miles out. This, when attached to munition carrying ships, will also cause the munitions to explode. My plan has meet the approval of the German

Government to such an extent that they have commissioned me to come to the United States for the purpose of carrying it out. They have generously granted me 20,000 marks to further my plans."

"You will perhaps be kind enough to describe this bomb to us?" Von Papen indicated a chair and they drew close about the table.

"You are acquainted with the explosive Trinitrate of Toluol?"

They nodded. "What is known at T.N.T.?" Boy-Ed commented.

"Exactly. This bomb carries 100 pounds of T.N.T. It is so arranged that it can be fastened to the rudder post of a ship with a wire line running from that to a clamp that fits on the rudder. As the rudder is worked in the movement of the ship at sea, the line will wind up, tightening the clockwork until the spring inside is released. This will send the plunger against two rifle cartridges which will explode the T.N.T. and——" he stopped. There was no necessity for finishing the sentence. A fanatical light shown in his eyes. He clasped and unclasped his hands in an intensity of excitement, and his hearers unconsciously absorbed his mood.

"Our bomb squads have used T.N.T. effectively on various occasions," said Boy-Ed with a smile at Von Papen. "As the highest powered aeroplane bomb carries only about 80 pounds of T.N.T. we are able to judge quite accurately what 100 pounds can accomplish."

Von Papen nodded and reaching across the table for a match lighted his cigar.

"Lieutenant Fay, does anyone know of your arrival in America?"

"No one," answered Fay, "except his excellency, Count Von Bernstorff."

"That is well. You perhaps are not well acquainted with conditions here. Our position demands that we must not be known as the directors of any movement of espionage against the United States. Germany, of course, is not at war with the United States. To the United States we are a friendly nation." He flicked the ashes from his cigar with a contemptuous movement.

A cynical smile crossed the face of Boy-Ed. It was reflected on the face of Fay.

For a few moments a deep silence settled on the room. From far below on Wall Street sounds of traffic drifted up, shouts of drivers, newsboys, fruit

venders, each sound echoed and magnified as it rose between the dark walls of the building that bordered the street.

Fay stirred uneasily. The even tones of Von Papen once more broke the silence.

"In this crusade it is inevitable that many ships will be blown up. If we who are here in public official capacity should become identified in any way with this movement it would lead to our dismissal from the country—and dismissal at this time would mean the relinquishment of many plans now under way. Therefore, if your plan should fail and you should be arrested we would, of course, be compelled to repudiate you. Like-wise it would be your duty to say that you had tried to see us but that we had denied you an interview. This is clear to you?"

Fay smiled imperturbably.

"I understand."

"Very well. We are then in a position to be of aid to you as far as possible. You will of course need explosives. It is very difficult just now to obtain these."

"In case you cannot get the T.N.T. at once I will be willing to go on with my work using dynamite until the higher explosive can be secured. But I would rather have the T.N.T. Can I count on you to procure it for me?"

"As soon as possible, but it may take some time. As I said, explosives are hard to procure now unless some good reason is given for their need."

Fay arose and pushed his chair back. "This will be agreeable to me. I will put in my time perfecting my bomb case and will report to you by the end of the week, Friday if it is convenient."

In a moment the door closed behind him and they heard his footsteps echoing down the hall.

Boy-Ed glanced at Von Papen quizzically. "The procuring of this T.N.T.—it is most important that he have it, but how can it be brought about?"

Von Papen smiled. "Do you remember the doctor that Von Igel brought to the Club one night last week?" Boy-Ed nodded. "He spoke to me of a friend who has access to explosives of all kinds. Through him I am sure I can supply Fay

with the material for this wonderful bomb of his."

Friday found Fay again in enthusiastic conference with the Captain.

"I have rented a garage on Main Street in Weehawken which I will use for an experimental station," he reported. "To throw off suspicion I rented it, saying I was going to conduct an automobile repair business. I have an old motor car there which I have taken apart to carry out the illusion, but meanwhile I am working on my mine. Have you been able to learn where I can procure some T.N.T.?"

"I have worked through several people and have at last arranged for an amount of this material large enough to enable you to do some practical work, to be delivered to you as soon as I received your address. I will see now that the shipment is made in a day or so." Von Papen scribbled the address of the garage in Weehawken on a memorandum and Fay departed, pleased at the results of his visit.

A lull had fallen on the affairs of the Criminology Club. To its members, always on the alert to stamp out the first fires of intrigue before they spread their destroying flames over the peace of the country, the lull brought no illusions. They recognized it simply as the lull before another storm.

It was the day of Fay's second visit to Von Papen's office. Pat Hennessy, doorman at the Criminology Club, had just announced a visitor and shown him into Harrison Grant's office.

Grant surveyed his visitor quizzically.

"My name is Wettig, C.L. Wettig. I am a dealer in explosives," he announced simply.

Grant nodded and motioned him to a chair.

"I have something which I think will be of interest to you. I have been asked to procure for certain parties a quantity of T.N.T. You are of course acquainted with the nature of this explosive and the use it is commonly put to?"

A gleam of interest shone in Grant's eyes. "Trinitrate of Toluol? Yes."

Wettig wasted no time in words. He told his story briefly.

"I have, in fact, been approached by several people recently, all of whom

seemed particularly interested in obtaining some of it. I thought it best to go ahead with the deal in an effort to gain all the information possible concerning the persons who wanted it. Now, however, something has happened which brings me to the need of advice. Today I was told to deliver the T.N.T. as soon as I could get it to a garage in Weehawken. Shortly after I was told that the purchaser had changed his address. I'm afraid he has slipped through my hands."

He surveyed Grant somewhat anxiously but appeared reassured by Grant's decision. "No, I think he is probably playing safe. You will undoubtedly hear from him in a day or so. Let me know when you do."

Wettig picked up his hat. "We'll let it stand that way then. As soon as I hear anything I will communicate with you."

A week sped by without further information regarding the personnel of those who wished the T.N.T.

Harrison Grant had put the week to good use. A casual acquaintance formed in the past with Madam Augusta Stephan, chief of Germany's women spies in America, had been cultivated with care and subtle intent on his part. Madam Stephan, somewhat blindly, renewed the acquaintanceship with the feeling that it was a heaven-sent opportunity which would enable her to gain information for the interests she served.

At her invitation Grant was spending a most enjoyable evening in her apartment. Madam Stephan was clever. Too clever, he mused as she left the room with a promise to return with "one of those American cocktails," which she professed to be an adept at mixing. His glance strayed to a little writing desk near the couch upon which he lounged. He could hear the clink of glass in the little kitchenette. With a quick move he slipped the desk top down and noiselessly ran over a pile of letters that lay in full sight. The clink of glasses on a tray grew louder. Madam Stephan was returning. He thrust the top letter into his pocket and closed the desk.

Madam Stephan's beautiful face clouded with disappointment as Harrison Grant, bewailing the necessity that forced him to leave the pleasure of her company so early, shortly after made his adieus. The disappointment turned to plain anger as the door closed behind him and she realized that her efforts to gain his confidence had not met with success.

Grant's evening had proved more profitable. The letter he had purloined from Madam Augusta's writing desk he read later with obvious satisfaction in his office at the Criminology Club.

"Dear Madame," the letter ran, "Fay will be able to obtain what dynamite he needs at the old lighthouse at Marsh's Inlet. C.L. Wettig has promised a quantity of T.N.T. Sincerely, Von Papen."

"Wettig!" It was the man who had talked with him early in the week, the explosives agent. It was probable that the Fay referred to was the man of whom Wettig had spoken. It was more than probable. Certainty grew in Grant's mind as he outlined his plans for action. He reached for the push button that summoned Cavanaugh.

"Get C.L. Wettig here as soon as you can," he ordered, handing Billy Cavanaugh the card Wettig had left on his recent visit.

Billy Cavanaugh made good time. It was scarcely three-quarters of an hour later when he returned with his man.

Grant greeted him cordially. "Well Wettig, we have a line on your man. Have you heard anything?"

Wettig pulled a slip of paper from his pocket and a card.

"Not until today when a man called at my office and told me to deliver the stuff to a boathouse on the Jersey shore tomorrow, to a Robert Fay. Here's the location of the place."

A smile of satisfaction crossed Grant's face.

"Fay. That was the name." He glanced up. "You haven't delivered the stuff yet, of course?"

"No, I was going to see you first. Thought it was too late tonight to get hold of you."

"Not us. The Criminology Club never sleeps," Grant smiled. "Tomorrow have the T.N.T. delivered to me. Then get into communication with this Fay and tell him that you are having it sent over by someone he can trust. Someone who is all right. You understand? Tell him that your messenger is a trained mechanic and is anxious to be of help to 'The Cause.'" The last was

added with a sardonic smile.

Wettig nodded. "I get you. Tomorrow I'll have the stuff delivered. Here's a card that was given me when they first started negotiations. This will help you get by and show them you are the one I mentioned." He held a card, Grant, looking through it toward the light, saw the coat-of-arms of Germany watermarked on it.

"Thanks. I'll be able to make good use of it," he said slipping the card into a leather purse.

Wettig held out his hand. "Good bye, and good luck."

The men shook hands, and a moment later Pat Hennessy was closing the outside door after Wettig.

For precautionary reasons Robert Fay had moved his headquarters in Weehawken to the boat house, the description of which had been given to Wettig. He worked with the assistance only of a brother-in-law, Walter Scholz, whom he had inveigled into giving up a position in a Connecticut city to come to Jersey and help him in the manufacture of the bombs which were to play havoc with all shipping in Atlantic ports.

The afternoon after Wettig's conference with Grant, Fay, working on the model of the stern of a ship, hastily covered it with canvas as he heard the rumble of wheels outside. A wagon drew up and a moment later a heavy knock shook the weather-beaten boarding of the boat house door.

Fay gave a quick glance around the boat house to see that everything was covered. "What do you want?" he called.

There was no answer. Fay frowned, and then caught sight of a card slipping through a crack in the door. He pulled it through and held it to the light. The eagle of Germany showed clearly. It was the pass card!

Fay opened the door. Outside a laborer, dark, and roughly dressed stood holding in each hand a suit case. Striding into the boat house he laid them carefully side by side.

"T.N.T. A hundred pounds even. Dangerous stuff," he announced, rubbing his hands together. "They gave me orders to stay and help you."

Fay looked at him. "Yes, I was told." He hesitated a moment and stirred uneasily. His new assistant watched him calmly. Fay broke the silence. "We who work for Germany are watched constantly. You will therefore understand if I appear inquisitive. I must assure myself that you are entirely in sympathy with what I am working for."

The newcomer laughed easily. "If I wasn't I wouldn't be running the risk of getting pinched by carrying around this T.N.T. But if you want credentials I can tell you that I have done a few things myself in connection with the work of the German Government."

Fay looked interested. "Is it so? Then we will work well together." That his assistant's task had been to land various hired agents of the German Government in federal prisons for stays ranging from two to ten years was something that Fay was not yet destined to know and eager to be back at his work, he put aside further questioning and with the pride of a fanatic who sees his one idea about to be realized, described his invention. The canvas covering was thrown off the model of the ship's stern. The manner in which the bomb could be screwed to the rudder post, just how the wire line would lead to the rudder and how the clockwork would gradually wind and wind with the motion of the rudder until the tightened springs inside set off the plunger which would cause an explosion of sufficient force to blow the ship

from the face of the ocean was described.

As they worked together in the succeeding days Fay told him of the dreams of destruction which were seemingly to be realized. He told him how first munition carrying ships would be attacked, and then the food ships. And then, his plans succeeding, his energies would be extended to war ships operating outside the three mile limit.

"And as a final blow," he finished, "one day there is the harbor of New York. With one blow—one great explosion—it can be cleared of all shipping, its docks and wharfs destroyed, New York's giant shipping industry will be crippled forever and the Allies delayed for months by being deprived of the supplies they need. Such an event would be a victory for Germany unequalled in the annals of her magnificent history!"

His assistant glanced at him with a look bordering on repulsion, but Fay, in the frenzy of imagination, was blind to it.

"And the loss of life? That also does not matter?"

"Why should we care," Fay answered recklessly. "Germany will bombard New York anyway—why not now? And the glory of the achievement——"

He was interrupted by a knock at the door, and went outside. The murmur of voices sifted into the boat house. Then Fay reappeared.

"It is a message. They are complaining at our slowness. But I was able to tell them that our bomb is finished. And the time for action has come. Tonight our first blow will be struck!"

The assistant leaned forward and smiled peculiarly. He reached back to his pocket, slowly, carefully.

"No it won't." The words fell strangely in the quiet of the dingy boat house. Fay stared.

"It won't! Why not?"

"Because I arrest you in the name of the United States of America!"

A livid light spread over Fay's face. He stared at the other speechlessly, as though his vocal organs had suddenly been stricken with paralysis. Then he gasped strangely.

"You—Secret Service? You——" he rushed at Grant madly. But Grant whipped his revolver around and pressed the trigger.

It snapped futilely.

Angrily Grant threw it at Fay's oncoming form and retreated to the wall. As Fay reached him Grant raised his foot and planted it squarely on Fay's chest. With a strange inhuman groan, Fay fell backward.

His career as a bomb plotter was over.

The news of his arrest spread quickly. Marsh's Inlet, where the boat house was located, was a rendezvous for many who came there to enjoy the winter sports. The day after Fay's arrest, Dixie Mason came with Von Lertz to the Inlet. In the crowds she was able to pick out a dozen or more people whom she could identify as being in active sympathy with German interests in America.

A short way down the shore was the lighthouse, long since abandoned though still picturesque. Dixie, somewhat wearied from an afternoon of skating had retreated to the shelter house. As she unlaced her skating shoes, she glanced up to see through the window a group of men passing. One of them she recognized as Harrison Grant. For a moment her heart throbbed wildly and a fear that he had come to the Inlet for the skating and that again she would be seen with Von Lertz, left her weak. But she stifled it. Her own hopes and fears and desires must not influence the work she had set her hand to.

She watched with relief the group of figures as they passed on their way toward the lighthouse. A vague wonder as to their intent flitted through her mind and then was blotted out by a new interest. Madam Stephan had arrived. Dixie saw her glance over the crowd outside, single out Von Lertz and beckon to him with a gesture imperceptible to one untrained to catch the slightest gesture and attach a meaning to it.

Von Lertz glided to the shore and stopped before her. They were beside the shelter house and close to the window.

Dixie heard Madam Stephan's voice, quiet but ringing with suppressed excitement.

"Grant has gone to raid the dynamite depot in the lighthouse."

"Yes?" Von Lertz's interest was instant. "And the trap?"

"Set and ready to spring."

A shiver of dread passed through Dixie Mason. What was this trap they spoke of? Grant was in danger! The man whom Dixie could not forget nor put out of her mind. The man who occupied her thoughts as no man had done before. She wavered—and then straightened up determinedly. She smiled graciously at Madam Stephan, entering the shelter house. And she walked out to where Von Lertz was awaiting her still smiling, but her heart was heavy with anxiety for Harrison Grant. A man skating in long curves glided past and then with a sudden turn faced her. He glanced at her closely as he skated slowly backward. Dixie had seen him several times during the afternoon. She had noticed him eyeing Von Papen and Boy-Ed. A faint hope came to her. Could it be that he was a "forward shadow?"—the man who takes the risks of the Secret Service to aid some other man to gain evidence?

She caught his eye, and winked quickly, her eyelids making the dots and dashes of the Morse code.

"Secret Service?" she signalled.

The man nodded. Dixie's heart bounded with hope. She signalled again.

"Grant—danger—lighthouse!"

She turned to Von Lertz. Looking back she saw the Secret Service man making for the shelter house.

The two men whom Harrison Grant and his operatives found in the lighthouse submitted to arrest with unusual alacrity. The ease with which they were taken puzzled Grant for a moment but it was forgotten in the interest awakened by the place they had raided. Grant ordered the men to drive to headquarters with the captured spies, deciding to make further investigations himself.

The lower room of the lighthouse bore all the evidences of a typical bomb manufactory. The odor of chemicals hung heavy in the air. Tables were loaded with retorts and measuring glasses. Lengths of leaden pipe and great jars of acid were stored on broad shelves. Grant marvelled at the great stores of material on hand, and the indications of preparations being made for wholesale destruction. In one corner of the room were several packing boxes labelled "Dynamite," and coiled lengths of fusing.

Grant, hands in pocket, had taken a mental inventory of the contents of the room. It would be necessary to secure further help. The lighthouse must be guarded until the destructive store of materials it held could be removed to places in which they could put them to better use. He walked musingly to the window. Far down the inlet the crowds of skaters still held away and the late afternoon sun shone brilliantly on the myriad colored throng. It was very quiet in the room. So quiet indeed that Grant started suddenly at a muffled but clearly audible "Click!" The sound was a familiar one. It was the click of the hammer of a gun that had failed to fire, and it came from above.

For one moment Grant hesitated as a succession of thoughts passed through his brain. Leading to an upper room at one corner was a ladder. His assistant, whoever he was, was in that upper room! Grant made a dash for the ladder—but his onrush was stopped midway as a revolver, thrown with heavy force, caught him above the eye and hurled his body back to the floor, unconscious.

A moment later, with a scurry of footsteps, a man rushed down the ladder. He paused to glance at the body and around the room. An end of fusing lay near at hand. With a quick movement he jerked it out and whipping a match from his pocket lighted the end. The other end lay across a box of dynamite—and the unconscious body of Grant lay on the floor.

With a grunt of satisfaction, as the red flame caught at the fuse and then died down to a glowing, growing ember that slowly but obstinately ate its way along the fuse, the spy opened the door and was gone.

An automobile was approaching, its course marked by clouds of snow. In the machine was the man to whom Dixie Mason had signalled her message of distress, and with him two others.

For an appreciable moment the spy considered his avenues of escape. They were pitifully few. One was a run for the woods in case the pursuers had not yet caught sight of him. The other was no less hazardous. Drawn up on the bank was an iceboat, left on the shore by someone evidently intending to return shortly, for it was full rigged. A swift run across the inlet in the iceboat might prove successful in throwing them off his track. As the automobile drew nearer, the spy made his decision and slipped around the lighthouse to the iceboat. With a running push it slid before his weight far out on the ice. He clambered aboard and whipped the sails into shape. The wind caught them with a wild billowing and flapping and the craft glided out on the

smooth ice of the inlet like a great white bird.

For a moment the lighthouse hid him, and then it was impossible to escape observation. Now the auto had reached the lighthouse. The driver leaped out.

"Follow him," he shouted. "I'll see to Grant."

The machine plunged down the embankment of the shore and out on the ice in a spray of snow.

Inside the lighthouse Grant groped in returning consciousness. About him swirled clouds of smoke. The fuse, along which the slowly creeping red fire advanced, had ignited a bunch of chemical-soaked excelsior. Choking and fighting for breath Grant essayed to rise. In fitful moments of consciousness he realized his peril and the need for help.

Was this to be the end of his endeavors to help his country free herself from the treacherous clutch that was fast choking the breath of freedom from her? Were all his efforts to be in vain, and was he too, to fall a victim to that iron hand? In a moment more the flames would reach their objective. With a final struggle he relapsed once more into oblivion, as the flames crackled and the smoke rose smotheringly about him.

Suddenly the door banged back on its hinges and in the draft clouds of smoke eddied and whirled.

"Grant!" It was Stewart's voice. The anxious shout startled Grant into consciousness. He reached out a hand and caught at Stewart's coat. Slipping an arm under him, Stewart staggered out into the cool, fresh air with Grant a dead weight, impeding every moment of their precious progress, the progress that must take them away from that creeping tongue of flame and the dynamite.

He dragged him on and on to the edge of the woods that bordered the lake. There he stopped, he could go no farther. As Grant slipped from his grasp to the snow covered ground, a wild roar echoed across the lake and back again, and seemed to split the very heavens. Stewart saw a cloud of smoke and flame shoot up from the lighthouse. The ground about him shook with the blast and great cracks ran crazily out into the ice of the lake. Where all had been solid ice a moment before a broad expanse of black water appeared, and gliding swiftly toward it with a speed that could not be diminished, and a direction that could not be veered, Stewart saw the iceboat with its helpless

occupant, Stewart saw his men in the automobile a short distance behind the iceboat. He saw the driver jam on his brakes and saw the machine skid swiftly about in a flurry of ice and snow, just as the iceboat disappeared over the brink of ice into the cold blackness of the waters of the lake.

He passed a hand over his face and turned back to Grant, who was staring up at him in bewilderment.

"What are you doing here?" Grant's voice was scarcely a murmur.

Stewart smiled and bent over him. "A girl gave me the tip—Dixie Mason. The girl with Von Lertz, you know."

Grant sat upright and stared at him. "Dixie Mason!" He rubbed his aching head. A wild conglomeration of ideas made his head whirl. Why had Dixie Mason done this? Had she too been working with the Germans for a purpose? Or had she simply allowed kindness to intervene in a plot which otherwise would have meant his death? His aching brain refused to solve the puzzle.

Grasping Stewart's hand he rose.

"We'd better go back," he said simply, brushing the snow from his clothes, "Fay must be about ready to make a full confession."

They walked to the bank of the lake and waited for the return of the operatives in the automobile.

At the club they found Fay ready to make his confession. He had signalled his willingness to do so.

"I was given 20,000 marks to come to America," he said, "I was told to get in communication with German officials here—but they would not have anything to do with me. That is all I can tell you regarding them——"

He stopped. The memory of another day had come to him—a room in an office building in lower New York, in Wall Street. The clamor of traffic and shouts of drivers echoing into a still room. Two men before him, hard, cunning, calculating. And the voice of one suavely suggesting:

"Our positions demand that we must not be known as the directors of any movement of espionage against the United States—if your plan should fail and you should be arrested, we would of course be compelled to repudiate you. Like-wise it would be your duty to say that you had tried to see us but

that we had denied you an interview."

His plot had failed, and Fay, true to the in-born traditions of his nationality, was shielding those above him. But even as he realized that the end of his plotting was at hand, he knew that somehow, somewhere his work would be taken up. That the work of the German Government in undermining the peace of this nation would not stop with his failure, that its paid agents would take up the plotting and scheming and destruction where he had given it up.

Fay told them what they already knew, the story of the bomb he had invented, the bomb which was to stop all shipping and which was eventually to be used to blow up the harbor of New York. He told them of his exploits in the trenches, of the fame he had earned for bombing expeditions successfully concluded, of the iron cross that should have been his but had gone to one higher in command, but no other word regarding those others in this country who were backing him.

While the members of the Criminology Club were listening to Fay's confession, two men sat in a room of the Imperial German Embassy at Washington—Count Johann von Bernstorff and one other. Before them was a table littered with blue prints. That the plan they were discussing had been brought to a high degree of practicability, the blue prints bore evidence. Fay, the pawn in the hands of those higher up, was forgotten, his effort overshadowed by a plan the magnitude of which was beyond his wildest dreams. Bernstorff laid a clenched fist heavily on the table.

"It will be the greatest achievement Imperial Germany has yet brought about in America," he said, and his visitor smiled.

"And it will make America our unwilling ally."

CHAPTER IX.

THE MUNITIONS CAMPAIGN

The conference over the blue prints in Ambassador Von Bernstorff's rooms in Washington was followed by months of seeming inaction on the part of

Germany's paid agents. While war held its dreadful sway over Europe and armies battled, some for right and in defense of a broken kingdom, the others for territory and conquest at the behest of a war-mad ruler, the manufacture of munitions for the warring nations and especially the Allied armies received an impetus which started their humming with feverish activity.

During this time the A.T.R. Munitions plant was erected near New York. Machinery of the latest type was installed, and experienced and competent labor employed. In the offices of the company, of which L.E. Marquis was president, long conferences were held with representatives of the French Government over plans received from Paris calling for French "75's" and "155's" in unstinted numbers. French gold went into the safes of the company and French names were signed to the mortgages and various documents necessary to the fulfillment of contracts involving millions of dollars and indirectly millions of lives. That Imperial Germany was linked with this industry in any way would have been unbelievable, that the A.T.R. Munitions Company could be lending aid to Germany while manufacturing arms for the French Army was inconceivable, to any but those acquainted with the depths of treachery to which it was possible for Imperial Germany to descend.

The plans from Paris received the O.K. of the president of the company and its directors. They were given into the hands of one man—true, the company's secretary—but the man who had conferred with Ambassador Von Bernstorff in Washington, months before—J.S. Slakberg, smooth, suave, ingratiating, agent of the Imperial German Government and its war-crazed Kaiser!

A week or so after the final plans of the French Government had been approved by the directors of the Munitions works, Slakberg found occasion to call upon Captain Franz von Papen, Military Attache of the German Embassy in his office at 60 Wall Street, New York. That his visit was not unexpected was indicated by the obvious impatience with which the little group gathered in Von Papen's office awaited his coming. About the polished table sat Captain Karl Boy-Ed, German Naval Attache, Dr. Heinrich Albert, Von Papen and Ambassador Von Bernstorff.

Brief greetings were exchanged at Slakberg's entrance. No time was wasted in arriving at the gist of his business.

"Your report on the A.T.R. factory?" queried Von Bernstorff.

"Work has commenced at the A.T.R. Munitions works," Slakberg announced.

"Yes?" The little group unconsciously awaited the rest of his report in tense silence.

The silence of the room was now the silence of consternation.

Over Von Bernstorff's countenance a look of anger blotted out the expression of puzzlement that had followed Slakberg's announcement. Von Papen glared at the speaker.

"*Himmel!* For the French!"

The sinister smile which disfigured Slakberg's face did not waver.

"Yes. For the French. I am doing all in my power to see that the shells reach their purchasers as quickly as possible. Wait a minute——" He waved a deprecating hand as Boy-Ed pushed his chair back and sprang to his feet angrily. "I have done exactly as I planned to do. I have changed the plans of the shells. Employees of the A.T.R. Munitions works are now laboring night and day to produce shells that will be sold to the French Government—but the shells will fit only German guns!" He glanced around triumphantly. "Is my report approved?"

Smiles of satisfaction swept about the group. Von Bernstorff extended his hand.

"It is good work, Slakberg, and will mean great things."

Slakberg smiled smugly. "Greater perhaps than your Excellency imagines," he answered. "In the first place, it will deprive the French of some million shells of various sizes upon which they are depending. In the second place it breaks the entire embargo which the British have placed about Germany."

"But how did you accomplish it?"

"As soon as the plans were signed, they were turned over to me for safe-keeping," he smiled. "I have put them where they will be safe—forever, I tore them up. Then I placed in the safe in their stead the plans which were sent me from Berlin, drawn to the scale of German guns of nearly the same calibre. I forged the necessary signatures and acknowledgments. It was very simple. It is impossible that they suspect anything wrong. So now," he concluded,

"those shells will be rushed to the French front at the earliest possible dates. They will be hoarded for the big French drive. So I learned in conference. The French drive will turn into a German drive. The French will try to use the shells. They will not fit. They will have to fall back. Our men will rush forward. In the hasty retreat the French will be compelled to leave the ammunition behind. The rest will be simple. Imperial Germany will bring up her guns to find ammunition of all calibres waiting for them. Ammunition made in America, paid for by France, shipped in spite of British interference and embargoes—for Germany!"

Slakberg regarded his audience, complacently, pleased at the evidences of pleasure they displayed.

During his recital Von Papen had reached for a check book. And now with its hastily inked signature scarcely dry he handed a check to Slakberg.

"In token of our Fatherland's esteem," he smiled.

The conference, supremely satisfactory to those who had shared its secrets, ended. It had a double sequel however.

Von Lertz, Germany's unofficial man of all work was still captive to the charms of Dixie Mason and still ignorant that she was of the Secret Service and assigned to the work of gaining all information possible by means of her feminine wiles. Von Lertz, with characteristic egotism, failed to realize that he was but a tool in her hands. The afternoon following the conference in Von Papen's office, he called upon her.

Dixie winsomely made him welcome. Mamette, with white teeth shining out of the dusky blackness of her face, relieved him of his overcoat. And in his joy at being in Miss Mason's presence once more, Von Lertz carelessly neglected to remove from his overcoat pocket a report he had brought for Dr. Albert. Over his shoulder Dixie nodded meaningly to Mamette, the faithful. The negro maid, coached by Dixie, had become almost indispensable in the carrying out of Dixie's schemes to successful climaxes, Von Lertz's coat, taken carefully into an alcove off the hall was hung up carefully—after Mamette had removed the report from the pocket. And the report was carefully replaced in the pocket after Mamette in painful scrawls had copied its message.

As soon as the door had closed behind Von Lertz, Dixie hurriedly scanned

the copy which Mamette proudly handed her.

It's notation read:

"Report for Dr. Albert.

"Everything is working out to our satisfaction at the A.T.R. Munitions factory.

"J.S.S."

"Oh, Mamette," Dixie called after studying the report for a moment or two. "Get me out some clothes to wear. I'm going to the A.T.R. Munitions factory to look for employment. Hurry!"

German efficiency had tripped itself again. It had not been enough for Dr. Heinrich Albert to receive in person the report of J.S. Slakberg in the offices of Captain Von Papen. It had not been enough that months before he had lost a portfolio containing hundreds of just such papers as this—a portfolio which had allowed the Secret Service to block the schemes of Imperial Germany in a dozen different directions throughout the United States. To the spies of Imperial Germany the Americans were only "Idiotic Yankees," not capable of understanding or fathoming the machinations of Germany, and so the reports continued to be in writing with the result that now Dixie Mason was profiting by one and was preparing to start for the A.T.R. Munitions works in search of employment—and incidentally all the information she could possibly pick up.

The calm of the recent months had not deceived the Secret Service. To them it was but the treacherous calm of a sea after a storm. Smooth and disarming on its surface, but underneath the boiling of the undertow.

The second sequel of Slakberg's visit to the office of Von Papen was the result of a similar slip by Imperial Germany. Its opening scene was laid in the office of the Criminology Club a day or so after Slakberg's visit.

Grant was hastily running over the afternoon paper. Near him lounged Stewart and Cavanaugh.

"Anything doing?" asked Stewart lazily, nipping the end from a cigar and preparing to light it.

Grant shook his head in negation. "Nothing much. The A.T.R. Munitions Company have started work on a big war order for France. J.S. Slakberg, secretary of the company says that all records are to be broken for production." He paused with a puzzled expression. "Slakberg" he repeated turning to the operatives.

"Have you heard that name before?"

"Not I," said Cavanaugh, from the depths of the leather lounge.

"Not guilty," said Stewart.

"Well I have, but I can't remember now just where." Grant's reflections were interrupted by a knock on the door. "See who's there will you, Stewart?"

The door was opened to admit a young man of business-like appearance.

"Good evening, Mr. Grant. I'm the cashier of the —— Bank."

Grant motioned him to sit down but he declined. "No, I won't stay, my errand will just take a moment. If you will remember, some time ago you asked us to allow you to see any checks that Franz von Papen issued on our bank. Here is one that I think will interest you." He slipped a check from his pocket and handed it to Grant.

"To J.S. Slakberg," Grant read. "Five thousand dollars!"

"There's your Slakberg again," observed Cavanaugh.

"Yes," said Grant, slowly studying the endorsement of the check. "Now I've got him. Or at least his writing. He's the same merry little forger we trailed all the way from Chicago to Berlin on the Weymouth case—and then they refused extradition. Call a taxi. I'm going to the A.T.R. plant."

Work at the A.T.R. Munition plant was booming. Slakberg had cause for satisfaction as he stood in the doorway of one of the shell loading rooms watching the trucks loaded with shells rumbling past. And the room was filled with the rumble and roar of activity as men and women worked at high speed, pitifully ignorant that they were laboring in reality not for France but for scheming, conniving, treacherous Germany.

As a rack of shells clattered past him, Slakberg's thin lips curled back in a smile of satisfaction. "Poor fools," he muttered, "they think they are working for France." He rubbed his hands and turned away. "But for Germany—and

they don't know it."

He crossed the factory yard to the power house and entered its semi-darkness, peering about. No one was in sight, but at his low whistle a figure emerged from behind a dim hulk of machinery and came toward him. It was the chief electrician.

Slakberg bent toward him with a leer. "How's the safety contrivance working?" he asked. The electrician stared at him for a moment and then laughed.

"Oh you meant the sparker—to blow up the plant?"

"Careful," warned Slakberg, "and only if necessary, always remember that."

"Certainly, I know that, only if necessary," the electrician repeated as though the words were part of a lesson he had been compelled to memorize. "As long as we can keep the plant running along the lines it is running now, everything is fine—that's right isn't it?"

"Quite right, but if anything happens, any trouble blows up and Von Papen says the plant must go, we must be prepared."

"You can count on me." The electrician held out an instrument resembling the spark plug of an automobile. "This is all we need. I've connected a dead wire in the loading room to this switch. If the plant is to be blown up, all that will be necessary will be for me to put this plug in a light socket in that room, then come back here and throw the switch. The minute the switch is thrown a streak of fire will shoot out from the spark plug. It will ignite the explosive dust with which the room is filled. The factory will be blown to pieces."

Slakberg smiled appreciatively. A moment later he left the power house. The building in which were the offices stood some distance from the factory. He followed the gravelled pathway to his office and there, after closing the door carefully, went to the safe and pulled out a roll of blue prints. They were the specifications for the shells now being turned out by the factory. To him they meant the destruction perhaps of the French Army. He started nervously from his revery as an office boy entered.

"Mr. Slakberg, Mr. Marquis wants to see you and says for you to bring the plans."

Slakberg picked up the plans and followed the boy slowly out. The request

was a little unusual and a shadow of fear crossed his face as he entered the office of the president. A moment later he was looking into the inquiring eyes of Harrison Grant and the fear had returned to his face to stay. Grant's steely eyes stared into the shifty eyes below him seeking to evade his look. "Do not trouble to introduce us," Grant said slowly to Mr. Marquis who had risen, "I think Mr. Slakberg and I have met before. In case he does not remember the occasion I will seek to call it to his memory later. Just now Slakberg, I would like those plans—in the name of the Secret Service." Slakberg seemed to shrivel up before him. An ashy pallor swept his face. He tried to smile jauntily but the pitiable effort was distorted into a snarl.

The sudden convulsive movement with which he gripped the plans with the evident intention of destroying them was thwarted as Grant caught his wrist in a paralyzing grip and removed them from his limp hand.

"Thank you, Mr. Slakberg," he remarked calmly. "Perhaps you can explain a few little points about these plans to Mr. Marquis and myself. As I understand it these plans were drawn in Paris?"

"Yes—yes, of course," Slakberg returned somewhat weakly.

"And naturally they have been in your possession all the time?"

"Certainly."

"Then," Harrison Grant raised his voice a little, "I must say, Mr. Slakberg, alias Curly, alias Weasel, that while you've done a very good little job of forgery here, you've forgotten one rather strong point. Will you please put on your hat and coat and come to the Criminology Club with Mr. Marquis and myself? I would like you to explain there just how these particularly Parisian plans happen to be made on parchment bearing a Berlin watermark!"

Slakberg's only answer was a desperate rush for the door, the success of which was speedily deterred by Grant and Marquis. His impotent curses faded into silence again as Grant drew out a pair of handcuffs and dangled them before him.

"It's a bit cold out," Grant said quietly, "Would you like handcuffs?"

Slakberg scowled. "I'll go peaceably."

So meekly did he submit to his enforced departure that although Grant saw him draw a cigar from his pocket, bite it off and then throw it away as though

it were distasteful to him, he paid little attention to the action. The cigar rolled along the gravelled pathway and stopped near the door of the power house. In the doorway lounged the electrician. As Grant and Marquis and their captive disappeared around the corner the electrician picked up the discarded cigar.

Dixie Mason had been working in the factory since early afternoon as shell loader. The table at which she worked was near a window overlooking the factory yard. The events of the last afternoon had not escaped her. She had watched the departure of Slakberg with Harrison Grant and a feeling of relief that unconsciously she was being helped had stolen over her. But though Grant attached no importance to the cigar Slakberg had tossed aside, Dixie from her point of vantage soon was given the opportunity to.

Scarcely had the men disappeared around the corner of the building when she saw the electrician emerge from the doorway, and pick up the cigar. The act was natural and Dixie ordinarily would have thought nothing of it. Now her gaze hung on him curiously and then brightened into interest as she saw him break the cigar open. Something white appeared as the carefully wrapped weed was broken apart. She saw the electrician unroll a tiny slip of paper, read it hurriedly and then crumple it up.

Dixie, to all appearances overcome by sudden illness, left the loading room, slipped out of the door and across the yard to the power house. The electrician was gone but where he had stood was a tiny slip of crumpled paper which Dixie snatched at eagerly and read as she hurried out of the building. It contained three words.

"Warn Von Papen."

Dixie Mason did not return to the loading room. Instead she took up the trail of the disappearing electrician. She saw him enter a saloon. In a nearby drug store she induced the operator to put her on the same line just in time to hear the electrician receive orders to go to the hill on the edge of the town when darkness fell. Dixie waited feverishly for events to resume their progress. She did not know that in the Criminology Club they had Slakberg surrounded with the evidences of his guilt and his cross examination begun. All Dixie knew was that the electrician had been told to warn Von Papen and had been ordered to await further instructions on the hill at the edge of the town.

The day faded into dusk and the dusk into darkness. The lights from the munition factory blazed out into the night as the new shift took up its duties. At last Dixie saw the electrician emerge from the saloon. She took up the trail, a trail that seemed never-ending as he walked on and on away from the town. They came to a freight yard. Out of the darkness above the freight yard a hill loomed against the sky. The electrician stopped, and Dixie sought shelter very near him by a lumber pile. The night was very dark but suddenly the sky was lighted by a series of flashes. In their brightness, Dixie could see the electrician standing with pencil and paper in hand. The flashes stopped and the electrician moved over to a switch light which gleamed with red eye into the surrounding blackness. He was examining the paper closely by the dim light. The rumble of an approaching freight train broke the silence. The electrician tossed the paper aside and glanced up the track toward the slowly nearing engine and its string of box cars. Dixie saw him hurry up the track and she guessed his purpose. He was about to catch this train back to town.

The train passed and in the dim light she discerned his figure clinging to the side of a car. Then she hurried to the switch light and picked up the scrap of paper he had thrown aside. By the light she saw a series of Morse code dots and dashes which she translated:

"Blow up the factory at once!"

This was the message he had been told to receive! And he had gone to carry out its orders! Dixie racked her mind desperately for ideas. She must get back at once, or get a message. But how? There was no telephone near. No means of getting back. The train lumbering off into the darkness was now gaining speed every moment.

She remembered passing a motor service station down the road. If she could reach that she might still be able to interfere with the electrician's orders. She would telephone back to the factory—to Harrison Grant! One idea after another flew through her mind as she hurried over the endless labyrinth of tracks and down the rough road, but when she reached the little building, to her breathless inquiries the keeper shook his head. "No telephone here," he said, "there's one about a mile down the road."

"But I've got to get word back to town somehow," Dixie urged desperately. He shook his head as though dismissing the subject.

Then Dixie brought out her Secret Service Commission.

"Let me have a motorcycle, quick," she ordered. The man visibly impressed hurried inside.

A moment later he had brought out a motorcycle and was holding it in position.

Dixie clambered up on it. Slipping a bill into the man's hand she waved goodbye and amid a swirl of dust disappeared down the road. The throbbing of her engine grew steadier as with a set purpose she rushed on in the blackness to her errand of salvation.

While Dixie Mason sped over the dark and tortuous passes of the road to town; while the electrician she was seeking to outwit was being carried to the fulfillment of his evil intent by the freight train to which he clung, Harrison Grant and the president of the munitions works were listening to Slakberg's confession, wrung at last from him by a series of cleverly tendered questions. As in the past he had entrapped others, so the spy was being entrapped. His very simple plan, worked out so carefully and seemingly flawless, had rebounded to trip him up. He had worked out every detail, had forged perfectly, had overlooked nothing as he had thought, to be at last betrayed by the innocent appearing watermark of the parchment.

He was breaking down under the strain of the cross examination. Reluctantly the details had been wrung from him.

"We wanted munitions. We didn't care how we got them. If we could make America our unwilling ally, we were more than glad to do it. We knew that if we could get these shells to the Western front they would be saved for the French drive. And we knew that just as surely as that drive came, it would fail and our soldiers would rush through the French lines without danger from barrage to find the shells waiting for them—to open the way to Paris!" He stopped with a gasp.

They waited but he did not resume his talk.

"Is that all?" Grant interrogated.

Slakberg's gaze shifted.

"Yes, that is all," he lied painfully.

Grant turned to the president of the A.T.R. "Mr. Marquis, is your car downstairs?"

Marquis nodded.

"Good. We must get to the factory at once. The extent of this plot must be investigated. The shipment of shells must be stopped. America shall not be made party to such a crime as this!"

The freight train was bearing the electrician to his destination. It had reached the munition factory, and in the darkness he dropped from it and hurried to the power house. Near the doorway on a table lay a pile of electric light bulbs. He picked up a handful and sauntered across the yard and into the main loading room on an errand conspicuously innocent in appearance. But in his pocket was the tiny sparker which when affixed meant destruction of lives and property, the death or injury of the hundreds of women who worked about him innocent of the danger that hung over them.

He removed a globe from a socket and slipped in another. Several globes were replaced. At last he unscrewed a globe and in its place slipped the little sparker. His actions were unobtrusive. He glanced hastily around. No one noticed him or guessed at his errand, for the shell loaders were all intent on their work and the filling of the great order which had just come. Picking up the remaining globes he passed down the length of the room and out into the cool night air, toward the power house.

The buzz of a motorcycle being raced at high speed jarred on the quiet of the yard outside the factory. The electrician cast an annoyed glance in the direction of the rider. The machine stopped in front of the power house and Dixie Mason slipped from the seat. She saw the electrician cast a hurried glance at her over his shoulder and she hesitated. Was she too late to stop him from carrying out his plan whatever it was? Could she stop him? An attempt to stop the spy might fail, but she could at least warn the people of their danger.

She ran into the building. Past long lines of workers she dashed screaming in a shrill voice that echoed above the roar of machinery:

"Out! Out! Everybody!"

The workers, ever conscious of the hazards under which they labored and alert for the slightest token of danger, left their work tables and rushed for

exits, taking up the cry as they passed other workers. Dixie seeing that her warning was being obeyed ran back to the power house. The yard was filled with hurrying, shrieking, excited women. The electrician at the sound of shouting and confusion had stepped to the door. As he saw Dixie rushing toward him, he knew the success of his plans was frustrated.



A munitions plant destroyed by the Kaiser's agents

He turned quickly to the switch. At the same moment, Dixie, knowing intuitively that this was his plan of destruction, threw her slight body at him and clung to him with a catlike tenacity, striving to stay the hand that was reaching for the switch. With a curse his great hand closed around her throat. Still she struggled but he held her now at a distance and leaned forward. She heard the switch jammed shut with a crackling contact. A second later the darkness without was pierced by a wild burst of flames, and the earth heaved and rocked with the impact of an earthquake. But Dixie Mason heard it only vaguely. She had fainted and was lying against the switch, one hand still in unconsciousness clinging to it as though the hope yet lived that she could

prevent the awful catastrophe that had fallen.

Through the clouds of dust and smoke, through the crowds of injured workers, through debris piled high from which little tongues of flame were shooting, Harrison Grant reached the power house.

When Dixie returned to consciousness it was to find him bending over her. For one glad moment she recognized him.

She struggled to rise. "You!" she said, but Grant's voice, cold and unfriendly, dispelled the hopes that had risen within her.

"Yes. Miss Mason, I'm afraid you will have a somewhat difficult time in explaining your presence here beside the switch that has blown up the factory."

In spite of weakness Dixie straightened up. Her lips parted and she reached involuntarily toward the pocket that held her Secret Service Commission. But the impulse was checked, for the orders she had received months before flashed through her throbbing brain:

"Work into the trust of the Germans. Tell no one.

"W.J. Flynn."

"Why do you accuse me?" she asked.

"Miss Mason, what else could one do? We arrive in time to see the explosion, the workers running out, and——"

Dixie leaned forward.

"The workers, are they safe?" she asked eagerly.

"Most of them. Some are injured. I am glad you at least warned them."

"Thank you. Now would you mind releasing my hand?"

Grant looked at her in wonder. Would he ever fathom this mystery girl? Could it be possible that he had made a mistake? But in contravention to this thought came the memory of her constant association with the Germans most active in promoting the interests of their government; her frequent appearances with Von Lertz and Madam Stephan. And what possible motive could have brought her to this scene and placed her in such a situation?

"Miss Mason, I can say nothing except that a watchman told me of having seen a girl running toward the power house a moment before the explosion came. I must put you under arrest. The evidence is absolute and I can do nothing else."

Dixie opened her lips, but the words were not spoken.

The sharp report of a gunshot put an end to their conversation. The sound of a low cry drifted in—then silence.

Grant stepped to the door and then hesitated.

"I'm very sorry Miss Mason," he said reaching in his pocket, "but I'm afraid this is necessary." Something glittered in his hands and Dixie heard the metallic clink of handcuffs. "I must see what is wrong outside—and I must be assured that you will remain here until I return."

Dixie held out her hands in silence. He snapped one manacle about her wrist. A strange sort of wonder possessed him that he should be thus shackling the hands of the girl who had so fascinated him in the past. She stood quietly while he attached the other cuff to the swinging door of the switchboard railing and then hurried outside.

Two hundred yards away stood a watchman and at his feet lay the body of a man.

As Grant reached his side the watchman reported briefly.

"I saw this fellow sneaking around. When I called to him to halt he started to run, so I shot."

Grant searched the body hastily with the help of his pocket flash and brought out the card of a German reservist.

It was enough. Imperial Germany had scored again, and in the usual manner, with death to innocent beings and appalling destruction of property.

He turned again to the power house where he had left his fair prisoner, but on the threshold he stopped in astonishment.

The power house was empty! One handcuff hung on the gate of the switchboard. A rubber glove lay on the floor. The other handcuff of the pair was gone and with it Dixie Mason!

CHAPTER X.

THE INVASION OF CANADA

Harrison Grant carried home with him that night the vision of a handcuff, its metal seared through by the electric current, hanging empty by the switch in the power house. A potpourri of emotions seethed through his mind. A feeling of distaste that one who was, in all outward appearances, so square and true, so refined, should lend her cleverness to the furtherance of German plots, mingled with his feeling of personal disappointment. He owned frankly, to himself, that he did not want Dixie Mason to be anything but as good and true as she was beautiful, that he had wanted her so because—he had cared for her. But any such feeling was impossible now. She had proved it. Her apparent friendliness with the German element was born of co-partnership in their crimes; her interest in Von Lertz had come through the fact that she, too, was a co-worker in Imperial Germany's great game of murder, a co-plotter in the destruction of American industries, American peace of mind, American lives! He could see no alternative but that he should blot out this love for her that had grown in spite of him, and once more register a report against her.

Early the next morning he made his report at the chief's office.

"We will investigate the charge," he was assured. "You need concern yourself no further with it." The similarity of the announcement to those following his other reports of Dixie Mason jarred strangely on Grant. He could not fathom the mystery of events unless—a subtle hope suddenly sprang into existence. Could it be possible that there was some good reason for her activities, other than interest in the Germans? Might it be that the main office was holding information from him that would explain it all? Grant pursued this line of reasoning because it held out a hope for him and removed the cause of his distrust for Dixie Mason. But once more it brought him up against a blank wall of useless conjectures.

If Dixie Mason had been in the Secret Service, she would have told him so in the power house instead of allowing him to think her a German spy, arrest her, and then put her to the trouble and danger of freeing herself by such

precarious means. If the arrest had gone through, and she had been a member of the Service, she would have had to tell everything about herself later, so why not in the beginning? More than that, what possible reason could there be for her to conceal her affiliation with the Service—if she were in it?

All of which goes to prove how futile is the attempt of one mind to reason as another would. For there had been several reasons why Dixie Mason concealed her connection with the Secret Service. The first and biggest was her order from the Chief that she work herself into the confidence of those highest in Germany's spy system in the United States, and that she tell no one of her connection with the Secret Service. Another very good reason for her not revealing her true status to Grant flashed into her mind as she stood at the switchboard listening to Grant's accusation that she had been instrumental in causing the destruction of the A.T.R. Munitions works. If it had been so simple a thing for Grant to believe, why could she not convince Von Lertz and his German friends that she had done this thing which would mean so much to them, and so lay the foundation for a confidence which would help her obtain their secrets by established right? It was a good idea.

The night of her disappearance from the power house she called Von Lertz on the telephone.

"Can you come to my apartment, soon? At once if possible. It is very important. And please bring a sharp file with you—yes rather large—I'll explain—Thank you—Good-bye."

She hung up the receiver with a triumphant smile. The smile lingered as she deliberated on the events of the evening. She was very tired, but she must bring this latest affair to a successful close. The opportunity was too great to pass by.

She heard shortly the sound of Von Lertz's car drawn up to the curb and a few moments later the bell of the apartment rang. She ran to open it herself, and, as Von Lertz entered, she held up laughingly a little hand about whose wrist dangled one manacle of a pair of handcuffs.

"Now you know what I wanted the file for. Will you help me take it off?" She seated herself on a low stool beside the great armchair into which Von Lertz threw himself with easy familiarity.

"Take it off and I will tell you all about it. It's a long, long story, and I'm tired

and when I get through I think you will agree with me that I have a right to be tired." With quick interest Von Lertz bent over the little wrist with its strange adornment, and as Dixie in low tones told her story, Von Lertz filed away at the manacle.

"The electrician mistook me for Madam Stephan, I think. I was standing by the power house and he came running past, followed by the chief watchman." She stopped meditatively. "Do you think I look like Madam Stephan?"

Von Lertz glanced up impatiently. "Hardly, to one who knows you, you are both dark. But the story. What happened then?"

"Oh, yes," Dixie, obediently and naively took up the tale convinced that she was really interesting him. "I was standing there and he called. I ran into the power house and threw the switch. Then there was this awful explosion and the whole plant went up in smoke and flame. The watchman ran in and arrested me. When someone called him out he handcuffed me to the gate. I saw a rubber glove in the electrician's box and I put it on. Then I pulled the handcuff over the switch and it melted and I got away, but I took one with me."

Dixie paused for breath and gazed at him soulfully out of great dark eyes, doubting for an instant her ability as a romancer.

Von Lertz stopped filing for a moment and gazed at her in admiration. If he had any doubts, the handcuff had convinced him.

"Poor little girl! But that was great work. Why, you are a little heroine. Ah, if I had only trusted you before, what wonderful things you might have been doing for Imperial Germany with your cleverness and willingness to be of service." With a final chilling rasp the file was applied to the steel once more and slipped through the link. "There, that's off. Tomorrow morning we will go to Captain Von Papen's office, you and I, and tell him of your wonderful exploit."

Dixie smiled. "It's very kind of you, and I will be glad to go." Just how glad she did not go into details to tell him. Her plans were working out too well.

Von Lertz called for her very early the next morning. Dixie thrilled with the excitement of the experience she was about to have as his car threaded its way down the long lanes of traffic into lower New York and the canyons of Wall Street where Von Papen's office was located.

She found Madam Stephan, Germany's greatest woman spy, there, and Captain Boy-Ed, the Naval Attache. And when Von Lertz had told of her great exploit, had gone over all the details as she had told him the night before, Dixie had to tell it all over again for them herself, while they laughed and congratulated her on her bravery and her devotion to the interests of the government they represented.

"You are wonderful, my dear," Madam Stephan assured her when Dixie protested that it was but a little thing she had done. "We can find many things that your great ability can help us to do." Dixie artlessly and very truthfully avowed she hoped they would give her the opportunity. When, shortly, Boy-Ed and Madam Stephan departed, Dixie strolled to the window while Von Papen and Von Lertz conversed in low tones, at the table. Since entering the room she had been conscious of the open desk near the window, littered with papers. Now as she stood at the window ostensibly for the purpose of gazing curiously over the tall buildings, she glanced at a letter, evidently tossed aside hastily.

"Your Excellency:" the letter ran in German, "Dr. Albert and myself today took up your suggestion of an invasion of Canada with Count Von Bernstorff. While he believes that the enterprise would be an exceedingly dangerous one and that we should use every precaution to prevent the Secret Service from charging us with any part in it, should it fail, there is reason to believe that such an enterprise would meet with a great measure of success.

"I reported to him that our plan included the raiding of all important points of Canada possessing military stores, such as Windsor, Montreal, Winnipeg, Regina, Port Hope and other centers, the demoralization of which would mean great delay in the sending overseas of large expeditionary forces on the part of Great Britain.

"B. asked what had been done and I told him that arms already had been stored in six sections, assembling at Silver Creek, Mich., there to seize the Welland Canal, Wind Mill Point, Mich., Wilson, N.Y., adjacent to Port Hope, Can., Watertown, N.Y., near Kingston, Can., Detroit, near Windsor, Can., Cornwall, N.Y., from which easy possession can be made of Ottawa, Can., and at Exeter.

"It is at Exeter, as I explained to B., that everything must be done now, inasmuch as arms and reservists are available for all the other stations. However, as you told me to explain, I showed B. that all efforts must now be centered on Exeter, and that Von Lertz and Madam Stephen should leave at once to represent us in the final work which will immediately precede the invasion.

"In this connection, might I suggest to you that this be done at once, as more than 100,000 reservists throughout the United States will shortly receive their orders to move toward the border in as inconspicuous a manner as possible, and that everything should be awaiting them when they arrive. Otherwise, we fail. Dr. Albert and myself will attend to the shipment of arms by the usual method.

"B.E."

Efficiency again—efficiency in the shape of another written report from one office to another, in the stolid, plodding desire of Imperial Germany to see that every step of its murderous progress was arranged for and made clear to those in whose hands the trend of events lay.

This time it had made clear one of its plots to Dixie Mason of the Secret Service!

Across the top of the letter, in Von Papen's scrawling hand, had been written:

"Von Lertz and Stephan ... 10:20, N.Y.C."

"N.Y.C." New York Central, of course, and they were leaving at 10:20! Dixie glanced at her watch. It was a quarter after nine. She had wondered at the extreme earliness of Von Lertz's visit. Now she knew. He must catch that train. There were things she must do, too. Suddenly she caught at the window frame and gave a little moan.

Von Lertz looked up in time to see her slide limply to the floor in a faint. He rushed to her and picking up her unconscious form laid her on the long leather lounge that stood at one side of the room.

"Call a taxi and send her home," Von Papen ordered sharply, as Von Lertz rubbed her lifeless wrists.

"No, I'll take her home. She will be all right in a moment. Poor little girl, she had a hard day of it yesterday."

"But the time!" Von Papen looked at his watch. "You have less than an hour and you must get that 10:20 train, and there are matters to be gone over before you leave."

"I'll be back all right. Don't worry," Von Lertz's efforts to bring Dixie back to consciousness were meeting with success. With bewildered eyes she sat up and looked around her, then smiling weakly, she staggered to her feet.

"Oh, I'm sorry," she apologized softly, "I don't know what made me do such a silly thing. I must have been tired out from everything I did yesterday. Can you take me home?"

Von Lertz smiled down upon her reassuringly as he held her coat for her. Dixie bade Von Papen good-bye, very sweetly and graciously. That Von Papen's farewell was somewhat short and a little impatient was due to the fear lurking in his mind that Von Lertz would not make that 10:20 train. But defying all laws defiable and conforming as little as possible to the inexorable ones, Von Lertz drove Dixie up-town and left her in her apartment a short time later.

"And don't worry about me—please," Dixie begged giving him her hand in good-bye, "because I'll be all right. If I don't I'll take a little trip, down south maybe, for a week or two."

"I may be out of town myself for a while, so if I don't call——"

"I'll understand," Dixie assured him, with perfect verity. "Good-bye."

As the door closed behind him, Dixie jumped to her feet with a sudden access of energy.

"Goodness. I'll have to hurry like *everything*," she told herself.

She sat down at her desk and began to scribble hurriedly on a scrap of paper. Between lines she called to Mamette.

"Mamette! Mamette! Where are you? Hurry!" Mamette appeared in the doorway wiping her hands on her apron.

"Yes'm, Miss Dixie."

"I have just about half an hour. I want you to go down the street in that old second hand store and buy me the articles on this list of clothing."

She handed Mamette the list and some money. Mamette seized them and hurried out. Dixie turned again to her desk and scrawled a letter which two hours later was delivered to Harrison Grant at the Criminology Club by special delivery. It added another jot to the mystification which had been lending zest to his life the last few days. The letter read:

"Have notified the Chief of German concentration camps along the border preparatory to invasion of Canada. Hold yourself in readiness for a big raid on German headquarters at Exeter. Will keep you informed under name of Randolph Bruce.

"Operative 324."

Grant turned to his card index of Secret Service operatives and hurriedly skimmed through the file.

"Operative 324," he slipped out the card and stared at it in irritation. The card bore no name, no address, no photograph, no thumbprints, no identification, simply the legend:

"Operative 324—Name and identification withheld for good of service."

Grant frowned, and then philosophically slipped the card back into its place and stepped toward the button to summon his operatives.

In a moment Stewart, Cavanaugh and Sisson joined him.

"Boys, there is a chance of heavy work for the Criminology Club very soon. We will have to summon every member possible who can leave his other duties. They must eat here, sleep here, wait here, until certain word comes to us." Grant glanced down at the message which he still held. "Stewart!"

"Yes, sir."

"Will you see what arrangements can be made for a special train to take a hundred men to Exeter, Vermont, if necessary? Keep it quiet, of course. Sisson!" Grant looked at the two other men. "And you, Cavanaugh, round up the other members. And if any telegrams come to the club signed Randolph

Bruce, find me at once!"

After Grant had issued his orders the Criminology Club became the scene of action as its members gathered, eager for the service they held themselves in readiness at all times to tender.

Hours after Grant had received the message from Operative 324, a train which had left New York at promptly 10:20 that morning, thundered into the station at Exeter. A dirty faced boy in rough clothes jumped from the steps of the day coach and stood at a respectful distance watching those more fortunate ones being assisted with servile obsequiousness from the parlor car. When Heinric von Lertz alighted, followed closely by Madam Stephan, an expression of relief flitted across the face of the boy. He watched them curiously as a tall, cadaverous individual stepped up to greet them.

Across the dusty road from the station an undertaking shop held sway. That its proprietor was J.B. Dollings was signified by the ornate gold lettering across the window, and that the cadaverous individual who greeted Von Lertz and Madam Stephan was none other than J.B. Dollings, was a conclusion not hard to arrive at as the boy watched him conduct his visitors across the road and into the shop. From his vantage point on the platform the boy awaited developments. In a short while Von Lertz and Madam Stephan and their tall host emerged from the shop and entered the car that stood at the curb. The boy watched the car whirl away amid clouds of midsummer dust down the long road that seemed to lead out of the city to the mountains that towered in the distance.

The dirty faced boy slipped down from the truck on which he had been sitting and gazed after them ruminatively.

"So they are undertakers now. Queer business to be in." He stepped into the station and peered through the bars of the ticket window at the station agent who sat in the inner office, chair tilted back against the wall, an odoriferous corn cob pipe clutched between toothless gums.

The station agent brought his chair to a level and slowly rose and slouched to the window. Following which effort was a long argument during which the dirty faced boy finally convinced the station agent that he needed an assistant, had always needed one, and that he was the assistant needed. After due attention had been called to the ancient dirt covered floor, the dust of the

station benches, and litter of bygone lunches, the job was landed and an hour later found the station undergoing a long-needed cleaning at the hands of the new assistant. The dirty faced boy had found employment, food, shelter—and the opportunity of acquiring the contents of every telegram entering or leaving the station! And as the dirty faced boy was Dixie Mason, the information was priceless to her—and the interests she served.

While members of the Criminology Club passed days of waiting, armed and ready for any emergency that might arise, Dixie pursued her purpose with relentless activity in and around Exeter.

She first of all established the fact that the undertaking business of J.B. Dollings was a comparatively new departure. That while he had several assistants constantly in attendance, his establishment was little patronized and he made no efforts to gain patronage. Dixie found that Heinric von Lertz and Madam Stephan made their daily headquarters in a new, roughly constructed building, among the hills at the outskirts of the village where a small city of tents had sprung up miraculously, housing laborers strangely inactive for a grading outfit. She found that hundreds of men were gathering daily. At night, snuggled close to a great boulder, Dixie watched the activities of the camp and saw wagons loaded to their limit with supplies winding their way along the gorge roads. And she saw the men gathering at the board building for meetings.

One afternoon Dixie, attractive in spite of dirty face, towed mop of hair, rough clothes, ran across the street to J.B. Dolling's shop.

"A carload of caskets just came in for you, Mr. Dollings." Mr. Dollings' long clawlike fingers clutched the bill in obvious excitement.

"Where—where are they?" He reached for his hat and hurried around the counter.

"The caskets? Over on the first track. I'll show you——"

"No, never mind, never mind. The number of the car's on the bill of lading. I'll find it." As Dixie lingered outside she heard him calling hoarsely, "Bloedt! Rudolph! Mahlen! The caskets have come. Get teams at once. We must unload them at once. Hurry! Must send a telegram!"

Dixie listened speculatively. Mr. Dollings was exhibiting an unheard of amount of excitement over a carload of caskets for one who was an

undertaker. And a carload of caskets for an undertaking shop that did no business!

Her speculations were cut short by the rumble of express wagons. They drove through the yards to the car. One of the men broke the seal while Dollings hustled about, excitedly issuing orders. Dixie found a place where she could watch them without being seen.

Carefully the grewsome boxes were unloaded and carried out to the express wagons. She saw two wagons loaded and driven across the street to the shop. Her ruminations over their disposal were cut short by a crash and sound of splintering wood which quickly brought her attention back to the unloading process.

Dollings' voice was raised in angry expostulation.

"*Donnerwetter!* Why didn't you hold on to that end? Here you, Bloedt cover up that end. Quick! Mahlen, you go too——"

Dixie slipped down behind the freight car and peeped under it. She could see plainly the splintered box. And though the men were vainly trying to conceal its contents she could see them. It was no casket that the box contained. Slipping out from its broken boards were rifles! Military rifles!

And the car had been filled with scores of boxes similar to this. This was the cause of Dollings' excitement! Here were rifles enough to fit out hundreds of men who were gathering at the borders of Canada waiting the hour to strike. The men at the grading camp were there awaiting these arms. As soon as they were fitted out the time would be ripe for the invasion which the powers above them had planned.

Then Dixie remembered the telegram that Dollings had hastened to send as soon as the car had been reported.

She hurried back into the station. The station agent had left. There were no trains due until late in the evening. She let herself into the office and reached for the telegrams which had been filed for the day. Near the top was Dollings' addressed to

"Captain Franz von Papen
"60 Wall Street
"New York City.

"Everything O.K.

"Dollings."

That was all. But it meant that the rifles had arrived—the rifles for which Von Lertz and Madam Stephan had been waiting, the rifles which were to equip the waiting German reservists! An armed invasion of Canada from American soil. Her mind whirled at the thought of the complications involved—perhaps war between Great Britain and the United States on the charge of having fostered this invasion by German sympathizers!

No! Dixie knew that the moment for action had come. Her fingers sought the telegraph key.

"Harrison Grant, Criminology Club, New York City," she tapped. "Danger! Come quick! Wire arrival. Randolph Bruce."

Then, womanlike, she gave herself up for a moment to wild surmisings. Had she waited too long? Would this message reach him in time to get his men to Exeter to stop this invasion? After all, had she followed the right course. Would it not have been better to have stopped the whole thing at its inception, rather than let it attain this amazing growth that threatened to be overwhelming. But time was short. Already Von Papen had received the telegram and she must wire the Chief of developments. Her fingers tapped the keys once more. She had the consolation of knowing that the Chief's men had covered all other camps along the border. This one camp had depended on her, and Harrison Grant and his men were dependent on her. As soon as the Chief received her wire his message would go back to the other camps ordering instant action. But here—at Exeter—no one could foresee the result.

The afternoon light was fading in the dim station as Dixie crept out. She took the road to the gorge, stepping into shadows as wagons lumbered past with cargoes that she dreaded to guess at. A great purring car slid past and she heard Madam Stephan's laugh tinkle out on the night air. A sudden activity had sprung into being. Everywhere were wagons, rumbling through the night and men hurrying past on strange and unwonted errands.

From the friendly shadow of a boulder Dixie looked down upon the will-o'-the-wisp lights of the camp and the greater glow of the windows of the main camp building. The shadowy outlines of wagons against the darkness of the night, rumbling into the camp yard, the silhouettes of men at the loading

doors, carrying the long boxes filled with rifles for Germany's army in America!

A lump rose in Dixie's throat and she clenched her hands in a passion of earnestness.

"Make Grant get here in time!" she prayed. "He must get here in time!"

The thought brought to her the need of being on the alert at the station for messages. She rose quickly and leaving the lights of the camp hurried back over the dark road to the little station. She let herself into the little office and seated herself before the telegraph instrument, signalling for the relay station at Buffalo. She waited impatiently for a moment and then heard the answering call.

She tapped her message.

"Anything for Ex-x?" The long silence that followed was finally broken by the clatter of the instrument.

"Nothing."

Dixie sank back in the chair. Her message had gone through hours before, certainly by this time Grant should have received it and answered.

But the instrument was clicking again—calling for Exeter.

"Ex—ex—exexexex—ex—exexex."

"O.K. Ex—go ahead," Dixie tapped in an agony of impatience. The sounding key snapped back.

"Hello Ex—thought I'd tell you—wire trouble between here and New York. Ought to clear up soon."

The instrument ceased its clatter. Dixie settled back, hopeful—and yet hopeless. Now there was no means of knowing. Her communication had been cut off. She could only wait—wait—with the teeth of anxiety gnawing at her heart. Wait, while all through the northern states, Imperial Germany's reservists were hurrying to their stations. Wait—while out at the main camp, Heinric von Lertz and Madam Stephan were giving orders that would cause rebellion to flare at the first word from Von Papen.

But Dixie brightened a bit as she caught at the cheerful thought that Von

Papen's message could not come through until the wires were opened—still when the wires were opened, Von Papen's wire might come through and Grant would not be there to stop the resultant activity.

Hour by hour dragged endlessly as the night wore on. Dixie sat by the telegraph key, waiting. Call after call sent through Buffalo brought back the answer:

"Wire not clear yet. Working on it."

The moon dimmed, and the chill air of night made her huddle closer in the chair and shiver. Would the night never end and the call she was waiting for come?

As the dawn lightened the dingy interior of the station it showed Dixie Mason with tumbled, trowsled head fallen sleepily on one shoulder.

The staccato clicking of the telegraph sounder broke into the quiet of the room. It started Dixie from her sleep. For one bewildered moment she glanced at the instrument before her and then on the alert reached for the key to answer the call that was coming through for Exeter.

"O.K. Ex." She waited tensely for the answer.

Suddenly a shadow fell across the doorway and Dixie started violently. "Here you! What're you doing at that telegraph instrument?" The rough voice of the station agent sent a chill of fear through her. "You don't know nothing about them things. Get out of here!"

He pushed her roughly aside and seated himself at the table to take the message that in spite of nervousness and sudden fright seemed to burn itself into her brain. It was for Heinric von Lertz!

"Proceed at once!"

"F.V.P."

Von Papen! Dixie clutched at the station agent's arm as he started for the door with the message.

"Don't deliver that!" she begged. "Please—don't deliver it yet."

"Don't deliver a telegram?" the agent glared at her uncomprehendingly.

"What's the matter with you? Want me to lose my job?"

"But if that telegram meant trouble—if it meant danger for our country?"

"It's a telegram and it's got to be delivered," he answered stubbornly.

Dixie's hand reached for her Secret Service Commission, then dropped. She had seen the station agent with Von Lertz and Dollings on various occasions. If he were an accomplice—which was very likely—her commission would profit her nothing and probably would work harm to her cause. She turned with an effort and laughed.

"I was just fooling," she apologized.

"Poor way to fool," grumbled the station agent, and slammed the door.

Dixie watched him shuffle across the dusty road and intercept Von Lertz and Madam Stephan as they left the hotel. She saw a hurried conference over the yellow slip of paper follow. As she watched them the telegraph instrument began to clatter once more. The station agent was across the street. This time she would not be thwarted.

"O.K. Ex," she signalled rapidly, and the answer came through.

"Randolph Bruce,

"Exeter—(delayed).

"Arriving 6:40

"Grant."

Dixie dragged herself weakly out of the office and sat down for a moment. Grant was coming at six forty! It was six ten now. She jumped to her feet. There was no time for unnecessary rejoicing. There was too much to be done.

The station agent shuffled into the station again and seating himself at the table began to take the orders that were clattering in over the wire. Dixie waited no longer.

The town boasted one garage. The garage owner, industriously cleaning a thick veneer of dust from a car, started suddenly at a light touch on his shoulder. The boyish figure standing in the doorway was very business-like.

"I want every car you have got."

The garage owner stared, "What for?"

"There's a special train coming in at six forty with a lot of men and they will have to have cars." Dixie slipped a hand into a pocket and brought out her Secret Service Commission.

"Here's the reason," she said. "And listen to me, because I want you to get this straight." For a few moments she conversed with him in low tones.

"It's all right. I'll have them there," he assured her finally and Dixie hurried away on the road leading to the camp.

The special train bearing Grant and his men slid into the station and came to a smooth standstill, and as the first men jumped to the platform, the garage owner stepped up to them.

"I have a message for Harrison Grant." Grant was pointed out to him. "Mr. Grant," he said, stepping over to where the detective stood, "A Secret Service man gave me an order a little while ago, he wasn't any more'n a boy. He says to be sure to raid that undertaking shop across the way and then go on to the main camp in the gorge."

Thanking his informant Grant called his men around him and issued quick, incisive orders. Leaving Cavanaugh and Stewart to oversee the raiding of the undertaking shop, he selected his men and loaded them into the waiting machines. Soon the streets of Exeter resounded with the roar of speeding automobiles, whirling through in a cloud of dust to the mountains beyond and the camp that lay in the gorge.

Time was too short for the Secret Service to catch up all the tangled threads of this plot. While the waiting automobiles whirled Grant's men to the camp in the gorge, the station master was telephoning frantically to Von Lertz. And a short half hour later their big automobile was grinding its way southward carrying Madam Stephan and her partner in intrigue away from the scene of the *fiasco*.

Up on the Canadian border, mounted troops, summoned from twenty barracks by the Chief and Grant, rushed to protect the passes, tunnels and bridges, and throw a line of soldiery along the frontier.

Out at the camp the headquarters were suddenly surrounded and under cover of guns in the hands of Grant's men the reservists were herded together and

placed under arrest. Leaving them in the hands of his men, Grant started out to look about the camp. He found the powder house and supply depots hidden deep in the gorge, and as he stood and wondered at the hugeness of this plot which had been foiled just in time, his gaze wandered from one object to another. Suddenly it centered on a little figure lying just below him beside a boulder. It was a boy deep in the sleep of sheer exhaustion. He stepped down the hillside and stopped beside the boulder.

"Poor youngster," he muttered, "I'd better take him in, it's damp here."

As he stooped and lifted the sleeping form, the cap slipped from the boyish head and a mop of curly hair waved loose. Grant gasped. The sleepy dark eyes opened and looked into his. Suddenly a hand sought to pull the coat which had fallen open together. But it was too late. Grant had caught sight of the Secret Service star.

"Dixie Mason!" Grant breathed. "In the Service? Oh Dixie—" and his arms closed about her a little tighter than was necessary although Dixie Mason lay still.

While Harrison Grant stood holding Dixie Mason in his arms with the cares of the world, the troubles, the strain, slipping away from him, in the great relief of his discovery, many, many miles away the first seeds were being sown for a plot that equalled the one they had just quelled.

In the interior of a fortune telling emporium in Hopewell, Va., sat a woman in the garb of a gipsy fortune teller. Her features were cold and heavy, her eyes piercing, and her voice when she spoke, belied with guttural accents the garb of the southern people she had donned.

"Minna," she called, and as the tapestries that hung the room were pushed aside by a maid, she spoke quickly:

"Telegraph Von Papen to send me a good man at once for dangerous work."

The maid bowed.

"Yes, Baroness," she answered, and disappeared.

CHAPTER XI.

THE BURNING OF HOPEWELL, VIRGINIA.

After all, Imperial Germany possessed a lumbering sense of the theatrical. It had realized that the little newborn town of Hopewell, Virginia, sheltered hundreds of men drawn from the laboring classes, uneducated, ignorant save of the work they were paid for, foreign to a large extent, and among these men were those in whose minds ran the superstitious strain which breeds faith in the occult and fortune-tellers. In the hands of a clever fortune-teller these men might be made to talk, without realizing that they were giving away information to the hidden enemy of America. This was the explanation of the presence of Baroness Theresa Verbecht in Hopewell as arbitress of destinies, in the guise of Madam LaVere, Mystic. In one of the myriad clap-boarded shacks of Hopewell she ladled out the mysteries of the future and the well-known facts of the present with lavish hand, and drank in all the information she could glean by clever questioning and suggestion, from the superstitious who passed in never-ending lines through the doors of her emporium of mystery.

Hopewell held much of interest for Germany. Little more than a year before its site had been unploughed fields over which the winds blew in broad sweeps bending the green grasses in soft undulations and bobbing the heads of wildflowers that dotted the fields. Soon with war's shadows growing deeper over Europe the call had come from the Allies for explosives. The fields had been cleared and a great guncotton factory spread its broad stretches over the ground where the wildflowers had bobbed. And about the factory sprang up a town, or rather a half a mile from the factory, for guncotton is a thing to be respected whether in the maw of a cannon or in the making.

The town was a hit and miss affair, a similitude of western towns which sprang up over night in the days of gold rushes. Its streets, a crowded mass of unpainted shacks, lean-tos, and tents; cheap hotels, *sub rosa* gambling places, in fact all the attributes of the town of mushroom growth peopled with the polyglot population of a manufacturing town of America, the melting pot of the races.

The day that Madam Stephan and Von Lertz, fleeing from Exeter, realized

that the plot which they had maneuvered to what seemed unquestionable success, had failed, Franz von Papen received a telegram from Madam LaVere.

"Everything O.K. Send me good man for dangerous work."

The telegram so tersely worded meant more than words could convey. It meant that after weeks of work Baroness Verbecht had learned as much as possible about the guncotton factory, its orders, its guards, its shipments and its most vulnerable points.

A week passed before the Baroness received a reply in any form. Then one morning the tapestry curtains of her fortune telling parlor parted to admit none other than the sanctimonious J.B. Dollings. Dollings had closed up his undertaking establishment in Exeter with what might have seemed undue haste to those unacquainted with his reasons for seeking other parts.

"Captain Von Papen regrets the delay in complying with your telegraphed request," Dollings assured the Baroness, who showed a tendency to be a little angered over the time lost. "Canada was engaging his attention to such an extent that he could find no one to send here, but now that I have arrived ——" he smiled an ingratiating smile, and the frown on the face of the Baroness faded a little, "I am ready for anything your Highness may suggest."

"It is well," she answered briefly, "we will lose no more time."

During the week the ring of conspirators was completed by the arrival of Madam Stephan and Von Lertz in Richmond, upon orders received from Von Papen that they be at hand and ready to assist in operations in case they were needed in bringing the plot for the destruction of Hopewell to a successful climax.

Dixie Mason, returning to her apartment after the strenuous days of activity in Exeter was apprised of their presence in Richmond by the discovery of a note from Von Lertz.

"Dear Miss Mason——" the note ran in Von Lertz's angular hand, "I hope this finds you at home and rested after your southern trip. The Madame and I are now in Richmond, Va., where I would like to have you join us as soon as possible. It may be that your eager wish to help us, expressed when I last saw you, can be granted here. Von Lertz."

"Lovely!" commented Dixie with a smile. "Dear Von Lertz, you have given me an unexpected pleasure." She addressed the far distant agent of Germany with an irony altogether lost. Then she bounced up with an activity purely characteristic. "Mamette, help me pack again. I'm on my way to Richmond."

Mamette appeared in the doorway, an expression of genuine anxiety on her dusky countenance. "My land! Miss Dixie! Ain't you ever going to stay home and rest?"

Dixie laughed. "No rest for me, with these German agents running around loose through the country. Be sure and put my Panelphone in the bag."

Mamette's eyes rolled till the whites of them gleamed. "You mean that new thing you kin hear through the wall with?"

"That's what I mean, but hardly through the wall, Mamette, just through a door or any high sounding surface. It's simply a super-developed telephone without any wires that the Chief invented," but seeing that this explanation was somewhat over Mamette's head, Dixie stopped abruptly. "Hurry, Mamette, please, if I can catch this train today I'll be in Richmond tomorrow morning."

The Baroness and Dollings had worked out the plan carefully for the destruction of the guncotton factory, although their preparations had of necessity been somewhat hasty.

"I've been careful," the Baroness told Dollings "to gain my information only in snatches and bits from munition workers who have come here to have their fortunes told. The fools do not realize that they tell me more than I tell them and none have suspected that they are being questioned. I have learned that the plant is least guarded between midnight and 2 o'clock in the morning. That will be the best time, then, for you to plant your bomb. I will take you to a point near the guncotton plant and leave you there. Then I will proceed at once to Richmond to join Von Lertz and Madam Stephan. Report to me there at the hotel." With a caution gained by long experience in plotting they covered each detail and arranged for any possible and unforeseen happenings to their own satisfaction.

Early one morning before the darkness and chill of night had lifted they climbed into an automobile and drove to the point agreed upon. There Dollings left the Baroness and she drove off through the black of the night to

report to Von Lertz in Richmond.

The yards of the guncotton plant were surrounded by an underbrush which in the quietness of the night made a silent approach somewhat difficult. Dollings, however, crept forward as noiselessly as was within his power. A heavy detonating bomb concealed in his coat, made progress somewhat perilous. He had almost reached the fence. Suddenly his coat caught on an entangling thorn bush. As his next movement loosened it the bush cracked back with a distinct snap! Dollings stopped.

"Halt!" a challenge rang out in the night.

The guard ran toward the sound. There was little chance for escape. He had seen the shadowy form of Dollings skulking through the under-growth. Dollings clambered to his feet in a desperate dash for freedom but the flash of a rifle spat through the darkness and he felt a sharp pain in his leg. Crashing about, stumbling, tripping, fighting his way, he limped on, clinging to the bomb in his coat.

The rifle spoke again and this time Dollings dropped the bomb with an oath as the bullet passed through his wrist. A little closer and it would have exploded the bomb and he would have given up his life. Dollings did not want to die yet. He dropped the bomb, dodging and leaping, pain fighting at his throat in an endeavor to make him shriek, he plunged into the darkness of the night and escaped.

Aroused by the shots the guards were gathering at the point of the sudden alarm. The ground was being examined closely, guards walked back and forth beating about in the underbrush. In a moment the bomb was discovered, dropped where Dollings had left it in his flight.

The discovery of the blood spattered bomb and the attempt upon the factory was reported at once. A message went to Washington. From Washington a message went to Harrison Grant at the Criminology Club. And Harrison Grant having received the message lost no time in getting to Hopewell. The Secret Service needed him there.

When Dixie Mason arrived in Richmond the day after the attempt on Hopewell, she went directly to the hotel at which Madam Stephan and Von Lertz were registered. It was the hottest part of the day and the hotel lobby was deserted. Dixie asked for the proprietor. Showing him her Secret Service

Commission she took him into her confidence to the extent of making him understand that she wanted a room next to the one occupied by Madam Stephan, and that she did not wish her name to appear on the register.

"It can be arranged, very easily," he assured her.

Dixie was gracious in her thanks. "But you had better make a card entry of my name so that in case I am forced to come in contact with either Von Lertz or Stephan, I can have an alibi."

"The clerk will take the blame," smiled the proprietor.

Very shortly Dixie was installed in a room next to Madam Stephan's. A door connecting the rooms was locked and bolted—on Madam Stephan's side, but this fact was of no concern to Dixie. She had brought out the Panelphone and examined its delicate mechanism; attached the batteries which gave it the telephonic electrical connection necessary to the transmission of sound, and then by means of a vacuum cup had fastened it to the door. By this device each sound within the next room would be intensified sufficiently for her to hear every word of any conversation carried on.

She placed the receiver at her ear. The low murmur of voices which she had heard a moment before now was magnified so that each sound reached her with a clarity allowing no chance for mistakes.

Madam Stephan was speaking. Her usually well-modulated voice carried an acid quality, an angry sarcasm that conveyed a deep displeasure.

"Your little plan of taking my place seems to have failed, Baroness. Your endeavor to worm your way into Von Papen's favor through Von Lertz has not met with the success you aspired to." There was a sudden rustle of a newspaper being straightened out, then the caustic tones of the Madame cut the silence once more. "Spy Fails in Attempt Against Guncotton Plant," she read. "Believed to have been injured by guard! A very good start, Baroness, for your operations in America. Three months in Hopewell and this is what you have accomplished!"

The deep tones of the Baroness resounded into the little instrument at Dixie's ear.

"Perhaps it is as much as you have done."

"Is it? At least I've covered my tracks. The newspapers haven't announced my

failures! And suppose they track your spy to your fortune telling emporium? What then?"

"You are jumping at conclusions."

"On the contrary, I am giving the police and the Secret Service of this country credit for having a little sense. And if a few others who are working in the interests of Germany would do the same thing there would not be so many failures in our plans. If you could dispose of a little of this egotism with which you all are overburdened you would be of more use. You think because you are Prussian that all the rest of the world are idiots, because your blood does not flow in their veins."

Her voice had risen to an uncautious degree but it was cut short by the opening of a door in the room.

"You've said enough. Stop it at once!" It was Von Lertz's voice, angry, but low and self-possessed. "Can you not understand that this is no place for ____"

"But——" Madam Stephan broke in, ineffectively, for Von Lertz brushed aside her expostulation.

"—personalities. If the Baroness had failed it is not her fault, nor the fault of the man she sent to do the work. If the plan failed, it failed, and that's all there is to it. Now I have wired him in code to proceed at once on Instruction Number Four. I must ask you to let the greatness of the cause we represent overshadow any private feelings that may arise."

"My dear Von Lertz——" but Dixie had slipped the Panelphone from the door and was packing it in her travelling bag. She had heard enough to realize that there were other places at which her services were more needed than here. Hopewell was still in danger. What was this Instruction Number Four which had been telegraphed the spy to proceed on? She must learn, but the conviction that only in Hopewell could she gain this information hurried her to an attempt to reach there as soon as possible. The next train for the little town did not leave until late at night. The distance was short so Dixie decided to make the trip by automobile. With little trouble she rented one.

Harrison Grant upon his arrival in Hopewell had taken up the work of tracing the culprit who had so nearly caused the destruction of the plant. Taking up the clue from the spot where the bomb had been found and accompanied by

the Captain of the guard he had followed his blood-stained trail steadily to the door of Madam LaVere's Fortune Telling Parlor.

"This is the place we want," he announced softly to the Captain. "Don't knock. Just open the door and make a rush for it."

The Captain turned the handle of the door.

"It's locked," he announced laconically. Grant reached out and rapped sharply.

A moment's silence followed and then they heard a slow shuffle growing nearer. The key clicked in the lock and the door was opened by the pasty-faced Minna, the Baroness' maid. She stared at them dully.

Grant attempted to step into the hall, but the maid barred the way.

"The Madame's not home."

"No? Well, never mind. We'll come in anyway," and though she attempted to shove the door shut, Grant pushed her aside and followed by the Captain entered the dingy room. The maid watched them in angry silence.

"Where's the man that's in this house?" asked Grant suddenly.

The maid stared stupidly, "Man? What man?"

"Yes, the man who came here wounded. Where is he?"

She shook her head and lied ponderously.

"I don't know no—"

"Stop your lying. Where is he? There's part of the bandage that was on him." Grant pointed to a pile of rags in the corner. "Now come through. We haven't any time to waste."

But the maid shook her head in dogged silence. In an effort to frighten her out of it, the Captain and Grant settled down to a cross-examination, calling patience to their aid and overcoming the exasperation which only defeated their purpose. It was growing late. Suddenly Grant raised his head questioningly and glanced at the Captain. At the same time a gleam of satisfaction crossed the face of Minna, the maid.

A man had run past the shack shouting. Sounds of confusion drifted in to the

dingy shack, and then Grant sniffed the air with a look of alarm and looked at the Captain. His anxiety was reflected there. A glance down the crooked street confirmed their worst suspicions. The town was on fire!

As soon as their knock had come on the door of the fortune telling house, Minna had done a little guerilla work and ascertained that the visitors were none she wished to see. Her assumed slowness and stubbornness had given Dollings ample time to escape through the back door of the house where he had taken refuge the night before and down littered alleys despite the handicap of painful wounds. His failure of the night before had left him with a strong determination to make good at the job to which he had been assigned. In his pocket reposed a tiny book of numbered instructions. Instruction Four was marked. It was the one he was to carry out, according to Von Lertz's order:

"Remember that a north wind will blow a fire toward the guncotton plant and that Hopewell is a town of shacks. If necessary fire the town!"

All day a brisk breeze had been blowing from the north. All things were auspicious now as night had fallen and he crept along piles of lumber and hid in the shadows.

From a nearby shack a lighted lamp shed its glow through an uncurtained window. Dollings sneaked close to the house. The room was empty. In a corner of the plot a clothespile rested against the side of the house. He grasped the unwieldy piece and in a moment more had thrust the pole through the window and knocked the lighted lamp to the floor. A light of triumph glinted in his evil eyes as, not daring to wait to see the result of his handiwork, he hobbled hurriedly away. He heard a scream and looking back saw a black cloud of smoke, billowing out of the window. In a few moments the thin walls of the shack had burst into bright flame and the hastily formed bucket brigade of Hopewell was laboring in vain to check the rapid progress of the fire. The tent next door caught fire, the wind blew the cinders about and they fell on other shacks and the devouring terror spread rapidly to the southward, fanned by the brisk wind—southward to the guncotton factory.

The bright glare of the burning town lighted up the figure of a limping traveller, who stopped now and then to gaze back at it with a grunt of satisfaction.



The devastation caused by German spies who razed the town of Hopewell, Va.

The devastation caused by German spies who razed the town of Hopewell, Va.

Harrison Grant and the Captain abandoned their cross-examination in the greater need of helping fight the fire that had broken out in Hopewell. It took no trained mind to grasp the peril that threatened the town. All its little population was out and fighting but they were powerless. The elements were fighting against them, and the lack of proper fire protection.

Minna, the maid, was handcuffed and turned over to an officer, while Grant hurried away with the Captain. "Where is the powder house?" he shouted at him above the rising confusion, and the Captain called back, "The nearest one's at the quarry."

"Good, take me to it."

Grant could see that Hopewell was doomed. The flames leaped onward in

their work of destruction. While frightened mobs fought at the banks to recover their savings, looters appeared, and added their terror to that of the flames as they rushed on to what seemed the inevitable doom of the thing that had given Hopewell its life—the guncotton plant.

If the factory could be saved Hopewell might rise again, but if those scorching flames reached the great stores of guncotton there would be no plant, no Hopewell, not even a survivor—only devastation, which would mean success to Imperial Germany's plot.

Grant racing toward the powder house with a growing army of men following him, shouted orders as he went. He had reached the door and unlocked it. Appointing several men hastily to accompany him, he rushed in.

"Get the dynamite and detonators," he ordered.

With quick precision the men leaped to obey him, and then followed him back again to the scene of conflagration. The flames were gaining swift headway. Lives had been lost where people in frantic endeavor to save their few possessions had braved the fiery terror. The down town section of the small city was in ruins. The flames had reached the outskirts and were nearing the guncotton factory.

Grant stationed his men in this part.

"String those wires here," he shouted, dashing among them as they struggled to obey his orders. "Hurry! That's it," he called, lending a hand to a man whose fingers worked clumsily, "Now attach them to the detonators. Work fast boys. The fire is catching up to us! How's the dynamite?"

Above the roar of the steadily approaching flames the answer came back.

"All wired up. Ready to blow up as soon as the plungers are attached."

"Any caps to them?"

"Fulminate of mercury on every one."

"All right. Rush it. Let me know the minute you're ready!"

A moment of waiting followed, then a man shouted:

"All ready, sir!"

Grant looked back at the swiftly rushing flames, then turned to the men.

"Now boys. Each man to a detonator," he shouted. "When I say the word explode the dynamite!"

There was a rush of dark figures in the glow of light. An order cut the air—then from the distance came a tremendous roar that dwarfed the noises of the night as the outskirts of Hopewell rose into the air. Great masses of wreckage fell about the men. Clouds of smoke and dust blackened the night air and stifled the onlookers, then the flames showed through once more—but this time they faced a gaping ditch of earth so wide that they could not cross. The guncotton factory was saved! Harrison Grant turned with a smile to the Captain of the guard, while wild cheers burst from the frantic citizens.

Dixie Mason had made good speed toward Hopewell for the greater part of the distance. The car had run steadily until just as she came in sight of the columns of smoke clouds of burning Hopewell and realized that Instruction Number Four had undoubtedly been carried to a successful conclusion, her heart sank at the sound of a whistling rush of air from the rear wheel. She stopped the machine and jumped down to inspect the hopelessly flattened wheel. With grim determination she dragged out heavy tools from beneath the seat of the machine and set to work to repair the damage as best she could, her mind running mechanically to the disaster that had befallen Hopewell. So this was Instruction Number Four!

At the sound of crackling in the bushes Dixie turned apprehensively. The haggard figure of a man which dragged itself into a road was one to inspire horror. He stared wildly for a moment and then lurched forward toward her. Dixie instinctively reached for the heavy wrench for protection but he shook his head.

"I won't hurt you," he called hoarsely. "I'm in trouble. I want you to take me to Richmond, little girl."

Dixie shook her head. "I'm not going to Richmond."

"But you can!" His voice rose in the intensity of his plea. "A hundred dollars if you will get me there. I can't wait for trains. I'll raise the price. A hundred and fifty if you'll get me there."

Dixie leaned over and stared at him for a moment by the glow of the automobile lights. Surely she had seen this man before, despite the haggard appearance, the roughness, the dirt and grime and blood-stained bandages.

Was this Dollings, the sanctimonious undertaker of Exeter? A recognition of him lighted her eyes for a moment. She cast a glance back at the smoke clouds darkening the sky and the glow of flames from Hopewell. Instruction Number Four! This was the man to whom Von Lertz had sent the message to proceed on Instruction Number Four!

Dixie turned to the machine.

"I can't hurry—and put this tire on too."

"Then you'll take me to Richmond?"

"If you can help me get this tire on."

"I can't help much, but I can hold the tire for you."

Dixie nodded. She rolled out the extra tire and the work progressed. Now and then Dixie reached in her pocket, and one less intent on the work in hand would have caught the sound of a ratcheted surface being opened. But Dollings' senses dulled by pain and anxiety did not notice.

The tire was on the wheel. Dixie rolled out the old tire to place it in position and gave it to Dollings to hold. He leaned on it, his gaze turned up the road toward the burning town. Dixie gazed up toward the rising column of smoke and sparks too, and thought of the destruction and sorrow and suffering it meant. Then very quietly she crept forward toward Dollings. His hands rested close together on the tire. He was not noticing her. She leaned over the tire and with a sharp snap slipped the handcuffs about his wrists. Dollings sprang at her with a snarl but faced the steeling glitter of a revolver.

"Put that tire back on the machine!" she ordered tersely.

He hesitated. "Go on," she urged, "And if there is any doubt in your mind about this gun holding real bullets I'll show you that it does."

He obeyed her grudgingly and with real difficulty. If Dixie felt a tinge of pity shoot through her she had but to let her thought revert to Hopewell and Instruction Number Four and Dollings' part in it to stifle it.

"Now get into the driver's seat and take the wheel. You can drive. I know it. I've seen you drive up in Exeter, you know." She smiled a little at the bewildered glance he cast on her for a moment, then resumed her orders. "Drive to Hopewell! And remember what I said about this gun."

Dollings drove the car into Hopewell with Dixie Mason holding the revolver. Circling through the fire devastated city they reached the group of cheering men just as the ditch had been blown up that saved the guncotton plant.

Above the roar of the men Harrison Grant heard a shrill little voice that made his heart backfire for an instant.

"Oh, Harrison Grant!" He turned and looked up into the glad eyes of Dixie Mason. "See what I've brought you," she said, pointing at the cringing figure of the now completely cowed Dollings. She was standing on the running board of the car.

Grant walked up to the car with a smile at Dixie. Dollings drew back with a snarl of hatred as Grant touched him on the shoulder.

"Seems to me you and I have met before," said the president of the Criminology Club, "But I can't just place you."

"Don't you remember?" Dixie laughed, leaning toward him. "It's Dollings, our good-natured undertaker from Exeter. He dealt in caskets up there you know, but the boxes they came in held guns instead of coffins. A very nice man if he had stuck to his trade, but changing it got him into trouble. You'd better search him."

Dollings helpless, cowed, beaten, was beyond resistance. Their careful search revealed that, after all, the destruction of Hopewell was but an item compared with the general plan of which Dollings was an agent. With an exclamation, Grant turned over a paper to Dixie Mason, to read.

"Here Dixie, this is your case, and here's a little lexicon of destruction that may be helpful to you."

Dixie took the paper and studied it, horror whitening her face. On it was written:

"Blow up plants at

Hopewell

Wilmington

Chester

West Philadelphia

Acton

Detroit
Windsor."

As she looked into Grant's face, he smiled down at her.

"After all, Hopewell has had its advantages," he said.

"How?" she questioned.

Grant pointed to Dollings. "It has caused the arrest of this man, and will either cause Imperial Germany to change all its plans or give the Secret Service a chance to guard against the attempts on the places named on this list. It may do even more——"

Dixie looked at him thoughtfully.

"If it could only awaken America to the danger that is growing here in her very heart," she said earnestly, "then indeed the destruction here would not have been in vain."

And though Harrison Grant and Dixie Mason, and all the members of the great organization they represented knew that the danger of Germany's intrigues was a vast, far-reaching, fast growing one, even they did not know the immensity of it. While they exulted over the partial failure of one of those schemes of destruction, Von Papen, Boy-Ed, and Dr. Heinrich Albert were at work on still another—and greater one.

In the rooms of the Hohenzollern Club they set in conversation one afternoon.

"Von Papen, Count Von Bernstorff complains constantly about the regular shipment of troops and supplies from Canada," said Albert turning to the military attache. "What are we to do about it? He has asked me several times for a plan."

Von Papen blew a line of smoke rings into the air thoughtfully, and broke the ashes from his cigar. Then he spoke.

"Make another attempt to blow up the Welland Canal, and this time succeed." The last word broke ringingly on the still air of the room as Albert and Boy-Ed leaned toward him expectantly.

"And if it does succeed?"

Von Papen shrugged his shoulders.

"If it does, it will stop one of the great avenues of transportation. It will cause Great Britain to ask America how a military enterprise against Canada was allowed to be set on foot in the neutral territory of the United States. And about that time Germany's propagandists will start working. And if we can't stir up a war between the United States and Great Britain out of the muddle, we're almost as stupid as these idiotic Yankees!"

Dr. Albert with gleaming eyes reached out a hand to Von Papen.

"Von Papen, you have a master mind," he said.

CHAPTER XII.

THE WELLAND CANAL CONSPIRATORS

Between Port Colborne on Lake Erie and Dalhousie, less than twenty-seven miles distant, on the shore of Lake Huron is a straight, narrow stretch of water which occupies a place in the winning of the world war second only to that of the English Channel. This waterway is the greatest part of the explanation of Canada's ability to keep the stream and volume of troops and supplies pouring steadily across the ocean to England and France. By means of it the troops of the provinces bordering on the Great Lakes, as well as the supplies of those of the United States which are accessible to the inland waterways, have been carried rapidly and cheaply to the ocean port of Montreal, without overtaxing the carrying capacity of the railroads of the Dominion. It is the Welland Canal, constructed and maintained by Canada to overcome the obstructions to navigation between Lake Huron and Lake Erie, afforded by the rapids and the famous falls of Niagara River.

From the early days of the war, from the time when its importance to the mobilization of Canada's resources become apparent, the Welland Canal as an objective of an underhanded attack was constantly in the minds of the army of spies and plotters maintained in America by the Imperial German Government. Its locks, constructed to raise the largest of lake vessels to the 327-foot elevation in the levels of the two lakes, offered a tempting mark for

a charge of dynamite. The destruction of one of the gates would cripple the canal and render it useless for months, thus impeding greatly the extension of the help which Canada was giving Great Britain. The placing of a charge of explosive in one of the gates would be a matter of but little risk, as it could be easily done from the American side where the Canadian guards, respecters of the rights of neutral nations, could not interrupt the conspirators.

Yet there were serious objections to carrying out a plot to destroy the canal, which occurred to Johann von Bernstorff, the shrewd and cautious ambassador of the Imperial German Government at Washington, and director of the Kaiser's spy army in America. When Captain Franz von Papen first mentioned a scheme for using dynamite on one of the locks of the canal, Count Von Bernstorff, voiced his objections, and laid down the conditions upon which he would consent to such a plot in these words:

"You have impetuously fostered a plan which is fraught with the greatest menace to which our country might be called upon to face, Captain. It is the possibility of the United States entering the war on the side of the Allies. The destruction of the canal might well lead to serious complications between the United States and the Dominion of Canada in which the national honor of the Yankees might be brought into question. Let such a question be raised and the entry of the United States against Germany in the war would be inevitable. Damage within its own borders the United States will assimilate, but a threatened stain on the national honor of the country will arouse every American to a pitch of fury which nothing can withstand.

"The discovery of the perpetrators under such conditions would be a foregone conclusion. With you or anyone of the others you have mentioned active in the plot, the trail would lead directly to this Embassy and the result would be the making of the one foe Imperial Germany cannot conquer—an aroused America. Come to me when you have explosives acquired through sources which cannot be traced, and when you have men who have never been associated with those who are connected with Imperial Germany. Then, and then only, will you receive the required permission to proceed."

That was early in the fall of 1914. Captain Von Papen did not inform his chief that he already had men at Niagara Falls, prepared with explosives and directions, awaiting the word from him to go on their message of destruction. Von Papen had gone to Von Bernstorff without the faintest suspicion that the

scheme would be refused the sanction of the Ambassador. Instead, he had expected congratulations for having conceived such a mighty blow as the first act of the secret warfare which had been decreed for America by the Kaiser's command. So the plan was abandoned, but Captain Von Papen kept it in mind as being a scheme which would some day be available for his peculiar talents.

That time had now arrived. Caustic comments regarding the failure of the Kaiser's forces in America to lessen exports to the Allies, had become frequent in communications received from the Berlin offices. Particular references had been made to the large amount of supplies which were being shipped from Canada, references so particular in fact, that they might have been construed into a direct order to attack the Welland Canal. So it was that at the second time when the Welland Canal was discussed it was Von Bernstorff who first mentioned it, but in Von Papen he found a ready listener and one eager for the permission which was given.

"It is with reluctance that I give you permission to proceed," said Von Bernstorff. "Success will mean a great set-back to the Allies, but I fear the consequences. Supplies are necessary to England and France, but with all the available supplies which America could send to them, Germany would still be the victor. It is the man power of America we must fear."

"Bah! The American tin soldier!" sneered the military attache. "But you need not fear that the explosion will ever be traced to you. Neither Boy-Ed nor myself will take an active part. The necessary dynamite is already in our possession. Trustworthy men who have never been active in the interest of Germany will place it and explode it."

And Von Papen, scarcely waiting for the final words of warning from Von Bernstorff, hurried out to catch the train for New York. There he sought Paul Koenig, chief of detectives of the Hamburg American Steamship Line, the man who had procured the explosives and the men for the Welland plot. After listening to Von Papen's jubilant announcement that permission had been granted for the attack on the canal, Koenig broke in:

"It is good, I can no longer keep the dynamite in my offices. It must be taken some place else tonight. The boxes have been objects of suspicion since the night my men stole them from the barge in the river, and I dare not leave them there longer."

"There is no reason why we cannot take it to the Hohenzollern Club," answered Von Papen. "Four men can easily carry it in suit cases and from your office I will summon Boy-Ed and Heinric von Lertz."

No untoward incident interfered with the transfer of the dynamite. After it had been locked in the club safe the four men sat in the favorite corner of the military and naval aides, listening to a report of the plan for dynamiting one of the locks of the canal, from Koenig.

"Two of the men made a minute examination of the locks six years ago," Koenig said. "The examination was made with the full consent of the Canadian Government, at the time," and Koenig smirked over the thought, "the Hamburg American Line contemplated the establishment of a line of lake boats to be operated in connection with the trans-Atlantic line. I had the honor of forwarding the report, which contained much valuable information, to the Imperial German War Office."

"Back to the subject," interrupted Von Papen, impatiently, "what are the plans?"

"These men have selected three points in the canal which should be reached," continued Koenig, unabashed. "Men, experts in handling dynamite are already in Buffalo awaiting instructions. It is necessary only for some one authorized to go to them and give the orders to begin. They know what to do."

"In case any of them are captured?" asked Boy-Ed.

"They will keep their mouths shut," said Von Papen. "Each one is working for an exemption from military service, for they are all reservists. No punishment which can be inflicted will make them forget the punishment which Germany will mete out to all her slacker sons when the war is over."

"To success for his Majesty," said Von Lertz arising to his feet and reaching for one of the four seidels of beer which a waiter had placed on the table while Von Papen had been talking. He turned to face the large oil painting of the Kaiser which hung but a few feet from where he stood while Von Papen and Boy-Ed rose to their feet. Koenig, slower and clumsier, stumbled as he attempted to rise, staggered a few feet and then, regaining his equilibrium, smashed heavily into the frame of the portrait, knocking the picture askew.

A ladder was quickly brought, which Von Lertz mounted, attempting to

straighten the portrait.

"His clumsiness has loosened one of the wires," he announced, then to Von Papen and Boy-Ed, "Franz, Karl, catch hold, we will take it down and have it fixed in a minute."

Struggling under the weight of the heavy frame they heard a choked exclamation from Koenig in his native tongue:

"Donnenrwetter, eine dictograph!"

The trio all but dropped the picture of the Kaiser in their haste to turn and gaze at the little object at which Koenig was pointing—a little instrument fastened to the blank wall which had been covered by the picture which they all knew had made audible, to anyone listening at the other end of wires, any conversation which had been held in the room.

Koenig was the first to recover from the dumbfoundment which the discovery occasioned. Despite the clumsiness he had shown but a few minutes before he sprung up the ladder with agility and busily traced the course of the wire, which had been concealed so cunningly behind the molding by operatives of the Secret Service. Then he quickly descended and carrying the ladder with him ran to the adjoining wall of the room where his keen eyes had shown him the wires ran into the plaster. Again he mounted the ladder and ripped angrily at the wire, pulling plaster away recklessly, finally tearing a hole large enough to expose the wires running upwards by means of a water pipe.

"The plumbers—when they were here for the leak in that wall—must have been Secret Service," jerked out Von Papen between savage fervid oaths, as the explanation of how the dictograph had been installed came to him.

"Quick. Upstairs and if you find anyone at the other end kill him before he has a chance to utter a word of what he has heard tonight," he ordered and then led the way to the stairs leading to the upper floors, a drawn automatic revolver in hand.

Koenig quickly traced the wires to the office room of an untenanted loft in a building adjoining the Hohenzollern Club. The door of the room was locked but gave way easily to the burly shoulders of Koenig. Matches quickly showed conditions which caused a general sigh of relief. Three chairs in the room, the table, the floor and every piece of furniture was covered with undisturbed dust, thick enough to be the accumulation of weeks.

"No one has been in here in months," said Boy-Ed, running his hand over the table and holding it up besmirched.

"Here are newspapers five months old," announced Von Lertz, picking up several from a corner and shaking the dust from them that he might read the date lines.

The evidence that this plotting of the evening could not have been overheard by the use of the dictograph was so conclusive that they stayed in the musty smelling room but a few seconds and then returned to the more comfortable quarters of the club room they had left so hurriedly. With the portrait of the Kaiser once more restored to its accustomed place, Von Papen delivered the final instructions.

"Boy-Ed, you will accompany me to Washington so that we can be with Count Von Bernstorff as surety to him that we are taking no active part. Koenig you stick closely to your accustomed business. Von Lertz you will go to Buffalo and assume charge. For the sake of precautions take Baroness Verbecht, Madam Stephan and Miss Mason with you. I have suggested Miss Mason because of the impression she has made upon the lucky whelp Harrison Grant, president of the Criminology Club. If he should happen to appear anywhere on the scene, a thing which it not unlikely, due to his infernal luck in being wherever he can harm us most, Miss Mason must do anything to keep him away from the canal the night of the day after tomorrow. The Baroness and Madam can care for any other men who are too intrusive. Ten o'clock of the second night from tonight is the hour for the destruction of the canal. We will be awaiting word of your success at the Imperial German Embassy in Washington. Good-night."

Koenig and Von Lertz accepted their dismissal and left the club together, but parted at the door, Koenig to go to the Sixth Avenue elevated station for a train to take him to less refined but more familiar resorts in lower Manhattan, and Von Lertz to hurry to the telephone booths in the Hotel Plaza. From a telephone there he pleaded in vain with Dixie Mason for permission to see her but a few minutes at once. He finally accepted her dictum that luncheon the following day would be the earliest possible moment at which she could meet him. He could not know that his voice had betrayed the fact to her that another Imperial German plot was pending and that she wanted her meeting with the spy to be in some public place where it would be possible to get

word to the Secret Service at once of any information she might acquire.

So it was not by accident that Harrison Grant, president of the Criminology Club, was seated in an automobile just outside an entrance to one of Broadway's biggest hotels when Dixie Mason emerged the following day. To the passerby it would have seemed a chance meeting, extremely pleasurable to both.

"When did you take the dictograph out of the Hohenzollen Club?" she asked as he leaned out of the car to grasp her hand.

"Last night," was his answer.

"Last night? Why Heinric just assured me that he knew for a fact that the dictograph that was discovered had not been used in months."

"The impression we want him and the other worthies to get," responded Grant, and then to appease her curiosity, "since the day we installed it I knew that it might be discovered at any time and prepared for it. It might have nullified a great deal of information if they suspected anyone knew of conversations held in the Club. I was listening last night when Koenig fell against the picture and exposed the receiver. Newspapers, six months old, were in the corners of the room prepared for this emergency and we carefully scattered bags of dust which we had there over everything. We were descending the fire escape when they broke into the room."

"Then you have all the information I have gathered from Von Lertz," said Dixie well concealing the disappointment she felt. "You know that another attempt is to be made to dynamite the Welland Canal, and there is nothing I can do to help."

"We still need plenty of help, just of the peculiar kind you can give us," said Grant. "We only know that an attempt is to be made and that the dynamite has been procured. The canal is nearly twenty-seven miles long and to learn the place where the attempt is to be made would help us. Also an idea as to when the attempt is to be made."

"Then I have some information for you," smiled Dixie. "Heinric has just invited me to go to Buffalo with Baroness Verbecht, Madam Stephan and himself tonight. The Baroness and Madam are to entice any curious men away from their duties and I am to see that you discover nothing in case your luck should guide you to the spot."

"With such an inducement nothing can prevent me from reaching Buffalo tomorrow," said Grant.

"Bye-bye, then, until we meet there," answered Dixie and turned to re-enter the hotel.

A few moments later she had rejoined Heinric von Lertz in the dining room and was assuring him that the massage which he had suggested had all but vanquished her headache. Eagerly he extended an invitation to a matinee, dinner and then an auto ride to the railroad station in Jersey for the train to Buffalo, and was boyishly pleased when she accepted. Excusing himself, he telephoned brusque orders to Baroness Verbecht and Madam Stephan to join him at the train and then rejoined Dixie for the round of pleasure he had planned.

Arriving in Buffalo the party was driven to the Algonquin Hotel. As they paused at the desk for Von Lertz to register, a bellboy hurried up to Dixie.

"You dropped this, Miss," he asserted.

"Oh, I thank you," responded Dixie, accepting a dainty lace handkerchief she had never seen before, when she caught a significant gleam in the young man's eyes.

The bellboy turned away quickly to accept, nonchalantly, a tip which Von Lertz had extended. Without attracting the attention of the rest of her party, Dixie found an opportunity to stretch the handkerchief out. On the small piece of linen in the centre was written in pencil:

"Bearer of this will be constantly with me, and will keep careful watch for any messages from you. H.G."

"A trip to the Welland Canal is really nice in an auto."

It was the voice of Von Lertz which broke in upon the pleasant musings which the message had aroused.

"If that is intended for an invitation, there is nothing I would like better," responded Dixie quickly. "Will the Baroness and Madame accompany us?"

"They must remain here, for their work may begin any time," returned the spy and then escorted Dixie to a little roadster which he had procured.

There was but little conversation on the drive out. At the canal Von Lertz

drove to three of the locks and carefully surveyed the surrounding land. As the inspection progressed his spirits rose rapidly.

"Good, good," he chuckled, half to Dixie and half to himself, "Koenig certainly knew what he was doing in selecting the men for this job."

On the return trip he chatted gaily, and seemed to be in no hurry to get back to the hotel, keeping the speed of the car well down to the road limit. Despite this, just as they entered the boundaries of Buffalo, a heavily goggled motorcycle policeman, blocked the road.

"Ten miles an hour's the limit on this road," he announced gruffly and Von Lertz brought the car to a surprised stop.

"Ten miles an hour?" demanded the angered spy, "why there isn't a car built that can stand that sort of a snail's pace."

"Ten miles an hour" reiterated the officer and Dixie recognized a ring on the finger of the hand extended toward Von Lertz. Quickly her hand dropped over the side of the car and for a moment her finger was busy writing in the dust which had collected there, while the now thoroughly incensed German volleyed a heated tirade at the policeman, who contented himself with repetitions of "ten miles an hour's the limit."

The attitude of the officer suddenly changed as Dixie's hand was withdrawn into the car and lay idle in her lap.

"Oh, all right, if you are going to get mad about it," he said and stepped aside peering intently at the side of the car on which Dixie was seated. Plainly written there were these words:

"Will send message boy by tonight. Watch hotel alley."

As the machine disappeared in the distance the motorcycle policeman raised his goggles and laughed. It was Harrison Grant.

But Heinric von Lertz did not know. Defying the rules of the road he was speeding toward the hotel, his good humor of a few minutes before dissipated by the dispute with Grant. Suddenly the speed of the car slackened but a few doors from the hotel.

"Do you know those two men?" demanded Von Lertz.

Dixie Mason turned in the direction he pointed. Baroness Verbecht and

Madam Stephan were aiding Cavanaugh and Stewart of the Secret Service, both of them apparently intoxicated, into a taxicab standing at the curb. Stewart noticed Von Lertz pointing at them and waved a maudlin salute as he ordered the chauffeur to drive to a roadhouse on the outskirts of Buffalo in a thick loud voice.

"Do I know them?" retorted Dixie. "Do you know Harrison Grant?"

"Yes, the dog," muttered Von Lertz.

"Those are his two best men."

"Good," said Von Lertz, smiling happily, "I will commend Verbecht and Stephan in my report."

Dixie Mason smiled quietly. She had seen the method in which Secret Service operators acquired "business jags." She had watched operatives recklessly ordering drinks of every description and downing them in gulps, knowing that harmless substitutes had been served by another operative at the bar.

"You will have to excuse me," said Von Lertz as they entered the hotel. "I have to supervise arrangements. I will meet you in Verbecht's room at eight o'clock."

Dixie kept him well in sight as he turned away and as a result was able to send Harrison Grant the information that Von Lertz and three of Koenig's men had spent the afternoon attaching detonators to sticks of dynamite, by means of the operative in the guise of a bellboy. When she went to the room of Baroness Verbecht at the appointed hour she found Madam Stephan and the Baroness already there. Von Lertz entered a few moments later.

"You two here?" he demanded angrily of the female spies. "You left the two Secret Service men to their own devices."

"Not exactly," drawled Madam Stephan. "We left them, yes, but only after they had been tucked in bed in a drunken stupor. Both of them are so dead to the world that they would not awaken if they were sleeping on the top of the gates to lock fourteen tonight."

"Good, good," once more in good humor. "Everything has gone splendidly. I watched while Arth and Gerson left the hotel through the front entrance with bell boys carrying their suit cases loaded with dynamite. To guard against any

suspicion they ordered a car for the railroad station. There another is awaiting them and they will make the canal in good time. Jacobson is still here. He will take out the stuff which is too big for suit cases. A car is awaiting him in the alley. He will go down the fire escape just in time to reach the canal at ten o'clock. The dynamite will have been placed and the wires run. A few seconds later—a muffled report and England will receive but little aid from Canada for many months to come. Is it not well planned?"

He paused for a moment to hear the words of praise from the three women, then continued.

"Come. You can see from here. Jacobson's things are already on the fire escape."

Baroness Verbecht and Madam Stephan crowded close to the window at which Von Lertz was standing, but Dixie Mason remained seated in her chair nervously knotting a bit of string she had found some place. Von Lertz quickly missed her and turned to look at her.

"Why you poor child," he said coming to her, "you appear all unstrung. There is not a thing to worry about."

"I know there isn't," responded Dixie with a twisted smile, "but it is almost unbelievable to me that at last we have done something without Harrison Grant knowing of it. I feel apprehensive for some reason. Are you sure there is no one in the hallway?"

"Why this is most unlike you, Miss Mason," responded Von Lertz. "But come see for yourself and relieve your worry."

He threw the door open and gave Dixie's arm a little re-assuring squeeze and she gazed up and down the long empty corridors.

"I believe I am making myself nervous with this old string," she said, ruefully casting it from her onto the floor.

"At least you know there is no one spying," said the German as he turned back into the room.

His voice would have lost the confidence it expressed as he continued to pour assuring words into her ears, if he could have known of a happening in the corridor. Scarcely had he drawn the door shut, when the door of the room across the corridor opened and a bellboy, who a moment before had been

crouching inside with his eye at the keyhole, emerged. Stooping quickly to pick up the string which Dixie had thrown away he sped noiselessly down the corridor to the elevators.

But Von Lertz did not know, and continued to enlarge upon the efficacy of the precautions which had been taken, and how impossible it was for the Secret Service to have learned anything of the present plot. As he was talking a knock came on the door and a bellboy, the same one who had taken Dixie's piece of string from the floor of the corridor, put his head in:

"Did you ring, sir?" he asked, "No, sir? I am sorry."

The door was closed but a message had been delivered. To Dixie Mason the appearance of the bellboy at the door meant that her bit of string had reached Grant and had been understood. On the string she had tied knots spaced to the dots and dashes of the Morse code spelling out the following message:

"Lock fourteen. Ten o'clock. Watch alley."

"In a moment Jacobson will be starting," said Von Lertz moving toward the window.

Dixie accepted his unspoken invitation and moved to his side at the window and gazed down into the rapidly darkening alley. A moment after she had taken her position a figure emerged onto the fire escape, and it did not take the whispered words of the spy standing next to her to identify it as Jacobson. The dynamiter gathered up two large packages which were already on the platform outside his window and then made his way gingerly to the ground by way of the frail steel stairway. An automobile crept up to him out of the shadows of the building. Jacobson got in. The car began to move forward out of the alleyway and Dixie Mason became filled with a fearful dread. Suppose her message had not been understood and no watch had been placed on the alley?

But, no. A figure suddenly launched itself from the kitchen loading platform onto the running board of the car. A second appeared from the garbage cans, and the glint of a revolver could be seen in his hand, as he vaulted into the vacant seat by the driver. The car came to a sudden halt and a terrific struggle ensued in the tonneau. The struggle was short lived however. A revolver shot, the flash of which showed it to be in the air, and Jacobson was a prisoner.

"Look, look, isn't that Harrison Grant," gasped Von Lertz clutching Dixie's

arm as another figure appeared in the alley running toward the car.

"Anyone hurt here?"

It was a call from the running figure which made his identification as the president of the Criminology Club a certainty.

Von Lertz who had been cursing fervidly as he gazed into the alleyway suddenly, affrightedly, became aware of his own precarious position.

"Quick, we must get out of here," he uttered hoarsely and led the way through the door to the corridor. There was no one but a bellboy to be seen, bearing a tray with a pitcher of water. Had Von Lertz been less occupied he might have recognized him as the same one who had been to the room a short time before, and had he stopped a little he would have seen that the tray concealed from view a wicked automatic revolver which was clutched tightly in the right hand of the hotel servant. The bellboy gazed blankly past the German spies directly at Dixie Mason who was in the rear. A slight shake of her head caused the boy to step back against the wall to permit free passage for the party.

Von Lertz led the women out of the hotel by devious routes which finally emerged into the open through a side door onto a darkened street.

"Remain here," he whispered, "while I get a car."

The three women stood in the shadow of the building, Madam Stephan and Baroness Verbecht whispering together in frightened voices. Dixie Mason was startled a trifle by a subdued voice from the shadows directly in back of her.

"Operative 523, Miss Mason," said the voice, "shall I arrest the party?"

"No," answered Dixie Mason without turning her head, "Von Lertz is of more value to us at large as a means of keeping tabs on the Imperial German spies."

So it was that Von Lertz was not molested when he returned with a high powered touring car driven by a competent looking chauffeur.

"I told him Miss Mason and I were eloping," he whispered, "and that you two were friends of hers going along as witnesses. He is willing to drive us clear to New York."

Intent only upon getting away from the Secret Service, Von Lertz forgot for the time being that Count Von Bernstorff, Dr. Albert with Captain Von Papen and Captain Boy-Ed were awaiting word from him that the canal had been dynamited successfully. More than an hour had elapsed since the arrest of Jacobson before Von Lertz remembered this matter and he ordered all speed to the nearest telegraph station. There it took him some time to prepare the message and it was nearly midnight before it was delivered at the Imperial German Embassy in Washington.

The quartet of the Kaiser's arch conspirators had been waiting impatiently. All of Von Bernstorff's fears in regard to the plot had been aroused when the time passed and no message was received. When the telegram did arrive he was at his private telephone answering a call which had been received a few minutes before.

"Why it's from Ithaca," exclaimed Von Papen who had torn open the yellow envelope, "My God, it says 'failed.' What can it mean?"

"It means this gentlemen," came the cold voice of Von Bernstorff from the doorway, "that at the present moment a demand is being made upon Imperial Germany for your recall from the United States. I have just received information that Jacobson was arrested as he was leaving the hotel, that Koenig's other men were arrested at the canal in the act of placing the dynamite. It means that the Secret Service had full information of the plot, that you have been outwitted straight through."

"They couldn't have known," interposed Von Papen. "It is some more of the infernal luck of Harrison Grant."

"They did know," said the Imperial German Ambassador, "for already a conference has been called at the State Department. That can mean but one thing—that your part and that of Boy-Ed is known. It is certain that your recalls as attaches of the Embassy will be made. You had been warned. There is nothing I can do. Oh, how could you have made such blunders!"

Von Papen did not answer for a moment. Nor Boy-Ed. Nor Albert. Then Von Papen with a growl, turned to his superior.

"We did the best we could. That is all anyone can do. And we have not failed yet. We may be recalled, but when we go, I promise you, that we will leave a reign of terror behind such as no country has ever experienced."

CHAPTER XIII.

THE REIGN OF TERROR

Captain Franz von Papen, and Captain Karl Boy-Ed were spending their last hours in America as attaches of the Imperial German Embassy, in conference with the German Ambassador in the Embassy at Washington. The discovery of their attempt to dynamite the Welland Canal had caused the action by the United States Government which Count Von Bernstorff had predicted. A demand had been made upon the German Government for their recall as accredited representatives of the Kaiser, and Imperial Germany had no choice in the matter. The request, styled in diplomatic language but in reality a demand which brooked no denial, was acceded to and already Von Bernstorff had received notice of the cancellation of their appointments as military and naval attaches, respectively, to the Washington Embassy.

It was some weeks since they had been in the same room awaiting a telegram from Heinric von Lertz who was in charge of the attempt on the Welland Canal. There had been many details to arrange and only that same day had they received their passports and permission from the British Government to safely pass the blockade which had been established around Germany. The safe conduct passes had been a disappointment. They were made out for separate ships and Von Papen and Boy-Ed had planned many enjoyable hours together on their journey home, receiving wireless reports on the success of plans which they were discussing with Von Bernstorff and Dr. Albert.

"Von Bopp has proved a wonder at organization," said Von Papen speaking of the Imperial German Consul General in San Francisco. "We have made the mistake of failing to employ our entire forces in a general attack. As we have been operating in the past we have engaged in but minor tasks, plans which would have resulted in great damage if successful but minor in the sense that only a small percentage of our forces were engaged. The result has been that the Secret Service has always been able to oppose us with an adequate force, after they have been led to it by the damnable luck of Harrison Grant. We have them hopelessly outnumbered, however, and in the campaign which will open as soon as we have left the country we propose to make good use of our

superiority in forces. Briefly the plan is this. To strike with explosives and fires simultaneously over the entire width and breadth of America with a two-fold object—first to cut off the supplies for the Allies by destroying the means for their manufacture and secondly to create such a reign of terror in America that a declaration of war against Imperial Germany will be too fearful a thing to even contemplate. Boy-Ed, will you read the latest report we have received from Von Bopp?"

"Naturally it is in code," responded the naval attache, "but I can give you the sense of it. Attacks are planned upon the Canadian Pacific Railroad in British Columbia with the main damage inflicted in the Selkirk Mountains where a little explosive will go a long way; the blowing up of a number of troop trains, and trains carrying horses and explosives also in western Canada, in fact a general renewal of the plans in Canada which Koolbargen undertook but which resulted so badly for our cause."

"Before you proceed farther," interrupted Von Bernstorff, "No more money is to be spent upon any schemes in connection with Canada. It is too costly for the result to be accomplished. Canada is practically drained now of all the help she will be able to extend England. Her supply of men is nearly exhausted, and two-thirds of the supplies she is sending are gotten from the United States. We have no one left in Canada to work through and the effort to get agents through the emigration lines is too great for the work that can be done. Instruct Von Bopp to confine his efforts to the United States."

"Exactly my own idea," said Von Papen, "but Von Bopp is a fanatic in regard to Canada. His plans in regard to Canada are harmless for I never intended that they should be started. What has he to say of this country?"

"The docks at Seattle, Vancouver, San Francisco, San Pedro and other coastwise towns have received his consideration. Munition plans which have been suggested to him have also been carefully investigated and are all available for our general scheme. He only wants orders to begin the work."

"He can wait," said Von Papen, and then turning to Von Bernstorff and Albert, "you can appreciate the advantage of having affairs directed from San Francisco. The Secret Service is paying little or no attention to affairs there. Von Bopp, assisted by Baron Eckhart H. Von Schaack, his vice-consul, Lieutenant Wilhelm von Brincken, and a number of others, has been getting the necessary men, not only for his own territory but for operations in the

middle west and in the east and south. Von Lertz will have supervision over everything east of the Rockies but the men who will act for him will receive their instructions before they leave San Francisco. A whole week of explosions and fires in some of the biggest and most rushed plants in the country will be the result. Each night will see its toll taken, with the climax coming with the destruction of the Bethlehem big calibre gun works. In regard to this Von Lertz is entitled to a great deal of credit. The only unprotected portion of the plant is the coal shutes leading directly to the fire rooms. Although the idea was undoubtedly suggested to him Von Lertz was keen enough to realize its worth. Women gathering up coal which has been spilled in the unloading of cars into these shutes, is an ordinary sight. Workers of ours will go to the shutes, ostensibly to gather waste fuel, carrying lumps of coal which have been hallowed out and filled with trinitrate of toluol and will slide these chunks down the shute. Could any sight be prettier than the one which will occur when these are thrown into the fire boxes? The explosions which will follow will scatter the fires so far that nothing can save the plant from destruction. If any portion of it does escape it will be useless for the entire plant will be wrecked by the explosions within the fire boxes. Is not this plan alone, without the others worthy of commendation by Imperial Germany?"

Totally unconscious of the stamp of fiendishness which he had planned upon Germany by asking commendation of a scheme which would inevitably result in horrible deaths by scalding and fire, of stokers whose only offense was the earning of an honest living by hard work, Von Papen paused to see the effect of this announcement upon his hearers. Albert clucked his delight by clicking his tongue against his set teeth. Von Bernstorff smiled evilly:

"I might say that Germany is compensated for the loss of your services in America by the splendid work you have planned as your farewell greeting," he said. "I have heard enough. You have planned well and wisely. But let me caution you not to become too rash before you leave. Clear your office well for with your departure it will lose its sanctity, and nothing must be found. Now for a little service I wish you to perform for me."

He opened a drawer at the table at which he was sitting and after unlocking a compartment within it produced a pair of field glasses. Undoing a catch at the side divided the object into two sections showing that the interior had been cunningly arranged as a camera. From it he took two small cartridges of

films.

"Some pictures, which will amuse Hindenburg," he said handing the films to Von Papen. "They contain views of the military parade which took place this morning, and as they were taken through two of the finest microscopic lenses in the world enlarged prints will give him much information about the state of training and the equipment of the American army. To me it was an amusing sight, comparable to a chorus in a musical comedy. They make a brave showing on dress parade, but everyone knows that they are few in number, inadequate in equipment, and with absolutely nothing in the way of preparation for a war."

"Tin soldiers who have no conception of discipline or the rudiments of fighting," commented Von Papen. "I doubt if a quarter of a million men could be induced to enter the army if America did declare war."

"The number who would respond would make no difference," said the German Ambassador. "Untrained they would be slaughtered in France and would leave less opposition to us here when 'Der Tag' arrives for America. Four years is the least possible time in which a civilian may be made into a soldier for it takes that time in Germany, working with the most intelligent material in the world and with the best equipped system. By that time, if training were attempted here, France and England will be subjugated and America on the defense in its own country."

Nods of approval from his three listeners gave assent to the fact that he had but expressed an idea which they all held, in fact, a belief which was held by the entire military party of Germany.

"And now we must say farewell," said Boy-Ed, "we will not see you again for you must condone our indiscretions and show your revulsion of our methods by being unfriendly. For were you too friendly toward us, who have betrayed you, why even the pig-headed Americans might be led to suspect that Imperial Germany condoned, even if it did not sanction, our activities here."

A hearty laugh followed this ironic sally, and then after leave takings, Von Papen and Boy-Ed departed to take a train for New York, where many things, in addition to their packing, remained to be done before they sailed and the time was short.

Heinric von Lertz, Madam Augusta Stephan, Baroness Therese Verbecht and Wolf von Igel, were in Von Papen's New York office when they arrived.

"One matter which you will have to arrange yourself," said Von Papen immediately plunging into the matter which was engrossing the attention of all. "With Von Bopp making the arrangements for the actual explosions and fires with the exception of the one at Bethlehem, I want you to devote your time to the propaganda work. Have a correspondent near each place at the time the event occurs, prepared to exaggerate everything in connection with it. The story may contain suggestions of the existence of a league of British and French born workingmen who have been active in the neighborhood which had for its object the stoppage of manufacture of supplies for the Allies in order to prevent a war which is forcing the British and French workmen into the army, training women for their positions, doing everything to disrupt labor while providing capital with the means of intrenching itself. Arrange, if possible, to have German reservists in the vanguard of those who protect the property which remains. In each story emphasize the number of German reservists in this country. You understand the object?"

Von Lertz shook his head hopelessly.

"It is for this reason," continued Von Papen. "At the time when America is appreciating its own helplessness, because of inability to prevent property destruction with the attendant loss of life, such stories will drive home the fact that Germany already has a trained army in this country which outnumbers the entire regular army of the United States. We have tried to persuade America, tried to make them see the justice of our cause, and failed. Now we will browbeat them into remaining neutral.

"Stephan and Verbecht will remain under your orders. Von Igel will remain with me. Now get out, and get busy. I will see you here tomorrow morning before my steamer sails."

Von Papen turned into his private office to begin the packing of all documents, which, if they fell into the hands of the Secret Service, would reveal the full extent of the complicity of the Imperial German Government itself in the many outrages which had been committed in America. Madam Stephan, Baroness Verbecht and Heinric von Lertz, left the office together to separate when the street was reached, the two women to return to their own apartments and Von Lertz to attend to some business which had suddenly

become urgent since Von Papen would expect a report upon it on the morrow.

Before proceeding on it, however, Von Lertz stepped to a telephone, to speak to Dixie Mason, asking to be excused from a luncheon engagement with her. He did not know how long the business he had in hand would take and stood in too wholesome fear of the departing military attache of the Imperial German Government to neglect it for pleasure.

"Perhaps I am derelict in my duty to my country," said Dixie Mason to Harrison Grant, at an appointment she had arranged with him after she had received the telephone call from Von Lertz. Grant had promptly extended a luncheon engagement and the two of them were seated at a window table in one of the more exclusive New York hotels. "Von Lertz is slipping away from me, and I cannot bring myself to make the necessary effort to hold him. Since the Baroness Verbecht joined the German spy army he has found a woman who will cater to all of his beastly instincts, and the demands he makes on me are impossible."

"America does not demand such a sacrifice from her womanhood," said Grant heatedly, "if such methods are necessary to gain information then we will go on without any information he can furnish us."

"It isn't that he has lost confidence in my loyalty to his cause," continued Dixie, after a grateful little nod to Grant for his understanding of her position, "but most of my information was gained through little chats over a dining table. Now he has no time for these between entertaining the Baroness and his own work. Something is brewing, I know, for he is not with the Baroness today since she is at home. I haven't the least inkling as to where he is, but Heinric is not such a lover of work that he will do it for the mere sake of having it done. It means he is doing something under instructions, and that means something against America."

"Nothing will be attempted until after Von Papen and Boy-Ed are safely out of the country," said Grant, "and by that time we may strike a lead of some kind."

"If only you could bring yourself to meet Madam Stephan half way," bantered Dixie, for the admiration which the German woman spy had for him was an aggravating matter to the president of the Criminology Club. "I think

she knows what it is all about and might tell you in return for just a little affection."

"Please, please," said Grant, "but tell me, how does she feel about the way in which the Baroness is pushing her out of her position as leader of the women spies because of the attraction Von Lertz has found in the Baroness?"

"Much hurt at it, for she has a sincere affection for Heiny."

"Do you think a letter from me appealing to jealousy might result in a confession from her?"

"No," answered Dixie after a thoughtful pause. "She is intensely loyal to the master she serves and will let nothing personal interfere with that. No information could be gotten from her because of the deflection of Von Lertz unless something happens. But I have to leave you, it is understood that you will keep Von Papen in sight until he is on his steamer and I am to do the same for Boy-Ed."

Dixie found that circumstances aided her greatly in the task she had selected for herself. Despite the fact that Von Papen and Boy-Ed were being dismissed in disgrace, a large number of people called at the office which housed both of them to wish *bon voyage* to the discredited emissaries. When she arrived at the office she found that Baroness Verbecht, Madam Stephan and Von Lertz were already closeted with Von Papen and that Boy-Ed was receiving all the callers who were of sufficient importance to be met personally. So it naturally fell to Dixie, as an intimate of both the former Embassy aides, to act as hostess to the throng which gathered.

It was to her liking. She flitted here, there and everywhere throughout the offices, greeting a person here, and bidding adieu to one there, but all the time with her eyes open for any information which might be of value. Only one thing did she find. This was a bill submitted by a telegraph company which Von Igel was working upon, checking on the receipt of the message from the office files. To aid himself he had carefully written on the blank the name of the sender of the message, or the name of the person to whom it had been sent. The frequent repetition of "Von Bopp" on the blank caused Dixie to pocket it for future investigation. Another thing which she noticed was that Boy-Ed was sending most of his personal and private papers into Von Papen's rooms, which led to the surmise that Von Papen had undertaken the

task of caring for all the important papers of the office.

It was of this she first spoke when she met Harrison Grant after both Von Papen and Boy-Ed had been escorted to their separate boats.

"It is a shame that we had to observe the rules of civilized nations by letting them take those papers," she said, "when they themselves have violated every one."

"I noticed how careful Von Papen was of two bags, a portfolio and one trunk," said Grant, "so I have cabled the British authorities that it might not be amiss to search them for information which might be of comfort to the enemy when the ship touches at Falmouth."

"Oh, good," exclaimed Dixie. "And now I am starting for San Francisco this afternoon. I think I have a lead worth working on."

Then she told him of her reasons for wanting to watch the movements of Franz von Bopp, the Imperial German Consul General at San Francisco. Grant heartily agreed with her. Then on finding that she had already engaged her train he accompanied her to the station and saw her start on her week's journey.

He chafed at the idleness which confronted him. Shadows had been sent on the Baroness, Madam Stephan and Von Lertz, as well as others who had been active in previous German activities. Von Lertz was reported as having interviewed and retained the services of a larger number of publicists whom he had dispatched to various parts of the country. Grant decided that perhaps acts of violence as a part of the German propaganda were to end with the departure of the two arch-conspirators, and that Von Lertz was directing a campaign of publicity work in an effort to regain American sympathy.

Finally through sheer inactivity he began thinking of the letter to Madam Stephan of which he had spoken to Dixie. He finally decided that sending it could do no harm, and he dispatched a short note, telling her that it might be wise for her own safety to give up any information she might possess.

The note was destined to have a far reaching effect, but not in the way in which Grant thought. Madam Stephan received it and after reading it tore it to small pieces, enraged at the idea that Grant had such a poor opinion of her that he could believe she would turn informer. Baroness Verbecht called a short time later while Madam Stephan was busy with her morning toilet. The

Baroness was a natural spy and when she saw the torn bits of letter on the table she gathered them up carefully, and carried them with her when she left. At her own apartment she spent the day piecing them together until the whole note stood revealed. Then she had a hearty laugh at the stupidity of the American who would expect an agent of the Wilhelmstrasse to turn informer and brave the mighty wrath of Imperial Germany.

The dispatch published the following day, however, telling of the seizure of Von Papen's papers at Falmouth caused her to think of the letter. A plan whereby she could put Madam Stephan in a position where she could no longer claim the leadership of the women spies of the Kaiser in America occurred to her and she put it into instant execution.

She hurried to the former office of Von Papen where, as she expected, she found Von Lertz seething with rage at this new disaster to Germany. She had counted upon rage and fear dulling the never too sharp wits of Von Lertz, and he was in the mood which she had anticipated willing to believe almost any explanation.

"How, how could they have known of those papers, check stubs and everything else which should have been destroyed, instead of being taken to Germany as proof of our fidelity?" he groaned.

"Here is your explanation," said the Baroness extending the note to Madam Stephan from Grant on the letterhead of the Criminology Club. The fact that it was undated made her story plausible. "She received that five days ago and since then I have watched her. She has met Grant four times and was with him four days ago when he sent a long cablegram to England. I could not get the contents of that message but it was without a doubt notification of the papers which Von——"

But Von Lertz had not waited to hear her finish. He had fallen a ready victim to Baroness Verbecht's scheme for discrediting Madam Stephan and had dashed from the office to confront the supposed traitor with her perfidy.

He was forced to wait at her apartment, for Madam had not yet arisen and as he strode up and down in her study his rage momentarily increased. An open book lay on the table. Hardly aware of what he was doing he picked it up and read two or three passages before he even noted the title.

"Bah," he suddenly exclaimed in disgust. "'A Tale of Two Cities.' She has so

far forgotten Germany that she turns to English books for entertainment."

Then Madam Stephan entered the room. Enraged at the cool unruffled appearance of the woman he hurled forth a violent denunciation of her as a being unworthy of the respect of anyone, and ending by accusing her of being a traitor to Germany. A finer grained man would have read the falsity of the charge in the effect the accusation of disloyalty had upon Madam Stephan. In the moment she was turned from a bright, vibrant, keenly alert woman to a crushed, heart-broken, dull eyed, horror stricken, pleading wretch.

"No, Heinric, no," she moaned, falling to the floor at his feet. "Tell me that you don't mean it. I have forgotten compassion, sympathy and kindness that I might be faithful to Germany. I have given my every thought, my life, my right to love and happiness, and even virtue itself to carry out Germany's command. Am I not now even worthy of trust?"

Her voice had gained in strength as she made her plea, and she paused, kneeling, with tear streamed face upturned, and out-stretched arms.

Even the dull witted Heinric von Lertz was affected by the sincerity of the appeal, but it was not for a German gentleman, a disciple of Hun Kultur, to weaken at the misery of a woman.

"Imperial Germany demands that your fealty be above question, or that you die," he said brusquely. "Unless you can send me absolute proof within one week that you have communicated in no way with Harrison Grant you must die. One week of grace I grant you, because last night the reign of terror for America began, and I will be very busy. One week from today—absolute proof or death."

As he was talking Madam Stephan had fallen forward and had grasped him tightly around the knees. As he finished Von Lertz disentangled the clutching arms, threw her violently to the floor and hurried from the apartment. Madam Stephan lay still. A faint had quieted for the time being her tortured brain.

Von Lertz had spoken truly of being busy. As he re-entered his office Von Igel met him.

"There was a long distance telephone call," said Von Papen's former secretary. "The message was 'O.K. at Buffalo' and also this telegram."

Von Lertz grasped the yellow envelope and hastened into the former private

office of the military attache. There he took a long list of cities in America from his pocket and put a check after Buffalo. Then he tore open the telegram.

"O.K. at Wilmington," read the printed message.

And throughout the day similar messages continued to arrive from all parts of the country, each denoting the destruction by fire or explosion of American property and in many instances American lives. Many were from the West for Franz von Bopp was busy. As proof after proof came to his hand that the crimes were proceeding unmolested, showing that the Secret Service had been totally unwarned, Von Lertz thought of Madam Stephan.

"I must see her tomorrow," he told himself as he closed his desk late that night. "Perhaps there is a mistake, but I am too tired tonight."

He overslept the next morning and arose too late to stop at her apartments before he was due at his office, and by this little chance happening the entire course of Franz von Papen's reign of terror for America was changed. Madam Stephan, following her recovery from the first shock of the accusation had set herself to thinking clearly. She knew of the mental processes of Heinric von Lertz, and as she noted the success of the plot she felt there was hope for her. When the morning papers of the following day showed more explosions and more fires she became almost cheerful. Then the noon editions of the daily papers dashed her hopes to the ground.

Franz von Bopp's office in San Francisco had been raided by the Secret Service. The papers hinted that much documentary evidence of German plots had been seized. Many prisoners had been taken. But Dixie Mason who had caused the raid was uneasy. Evidence had been gained of plots for explosions and fires on the western coast, but explanations of the crimes in the east had not been found, and the little Secret Service operative knew that but half her work had been done.

The effect of the news upon Madam Stephan was startling. She dismissed any hope of being able to prove her innocence to such a man as Heinric von Lertz. She thought of how different it would be if he were a man of the type of Harrison Grant. Then in a flash the whole truth burst upon her. She realized in a twinkling the entire falsity, the utter worthlessness of a system which could elevate a man of Von Lertz's calibre to the position he occupied.

She appreciated the vileness of the crimes in which she had participated and gained an understanding of the glorious things for which American ideals stood. With the thought came a decision based upon the fineness of her nature which she had suppressed during her entire life. She called for her wraps. It was as a woman new born that she left her apartment. She was a woman arrayed on the side of humanity as against Imperial Germany.

She made her way straight to the Criminology Club. As she walked she wondered how she could ever have thought that the thing she was about to do was abhorrent, how she could ever have thought of it as anything but her bounden duty to humanity. At the club the announcement that she was awaiting him made Harrison Grant start eagerly.

For two nights he had gone without sleep, working incessantly, trying to get some clue which would expose the whole of the plot. He knew of the messages which were being received by Heinrich von Lertz, but the coincidence of each being from a city in which a fire or explosion had taken place was not sufficient evidence to warrant a raid. The news of the raid in San Francisco had not aroused hope, for he had received a long message from Dixie Mason telling of everything found in the offices and he realized that he still had before him his work of stopping the reign of terror in the East, without aid to be expected from anywhere. So he grasped the out-stretched hand of Madam Stephan eagerly.

"You came in response to my letter?" he asked.

"I had scarcely thought of that," responded Madam Stephan. "I have come as a true friend of the German people. Mr. Grant, I love my people and my country. Events of the past two days, of which you need never know, have shown me that it is only through the destruction of Imperial Germany and everything for which it stands, that they, my people and my country, can take the place I want them to have in the world. Misguided as they have been from birth they cannot throw off the yoke. With America's help it can be done. So I am here to aid America. I will be compensated if I bring the day of Germany's salvation, the day upon which the horizon of humanity is revealed to the German people, as it has been revealed to me today, one hour nearer."

She then related quickly all that she knew of Von Papen's plan for a reign of terror in America.

"Heinric von Lertz will not wait until the day set for the destruction of the Bethlehem steel works to attempt it," she said. "The news from San Francisco will cause him to attempt the climax of the plot planned by Von Papen before it is discovered. Even now he may be starting on it."

She then gave him the address of the artisan in Harlem who was inserting explosives in the hollow lumps of coal for use at Bethlehem. Grant tarried hardly longer than was required to express his thanks after receiving this information and hurried away.

But he and his men arrived too late. Evidence aplenty was found to prove that Madam Stephan's description of the work that was being done had been true. But the three men who had occupied it were gone.

"They left but a moment since, sir," volunteered a woman who lived on the same floor. "A sleek light mustached young man called, and they left with some satchels in a taxicab."

So Heinric von Lertz had taken the course which Madam Stephan expected of him. Grant did some quick thinking. Hastily running over timetables which he carried in his pocket he found that a train was leaving shortly for Bethlehem and taking a long chance he ordered his men back into the machine that had taken them to disregard speed regulations and quickly arrived at the station.

With but a few minutes to spare they burst into the large train room. Suddenly Grant raised his arm and pointed. Heinric von Lertz was at one of the track gates talking earnestly, to three men.

"Stewart, Cavanaugh, come with me, we must keep out of sight of Von Lertz," cautioned Grant. "You other men are not known to him. Keep the men to whom he is talking, in sight. We will meet you on the train."

Grant, and his two most trusted men, found their way to the train through the employee's gate, opened to them by their Secret Service badges. On the train he found the three German conspirators well covered by his men. Von Lertz had not boarded the train, according to a report of one of the operatives.

It was after night-fall when the train landed them in Bethlehem. The sky was lurid with the glare from the big gun works, incessantly turning out large calibre artillery, by means of three shifts of workmen who kept the wheels turning night and day. The three conspirators slunk off into the shadows

leading toward the settlement of the foreign laborers in the big plant, closely followed by Grant and his men.

In one of the poorest sections of the city the men mounted an outer stairway leading to the top floor of a two-storied building. After some delay they were admitted. Ten minutes later the figure of a woman came down the stairway, stepping cautiously and carrying gingerly some objects in her apron. Hastily assigning two men to keep her in sight, he organized the remainder of his force for a raid.

Despite a desperate resistance the four men found in the upper part of the house were quickly overcome. One grip filled with the doctored coal was seized and on the floor lay the discarded outer clothing of a man. Taking only Stewart with him Grant started in pursuit of the figure which had left the house, a figure which he now felt sure was one of the three men who had come from New York now dressed as a woman.

The conspirator because of his acquaintance with the neighborhood had easily eluded the two men who were shadowing him. Grant came upon them hopelessly searching to pick up his trail. Without delaying Grant started, running at top speed, toward the coal shutes.

The conspirator was already there and was busy dropping bombs down the shutes. Grant fired one shot, but missed, due to the uncertain light. The man at once fled and sending Cavanaugh and the others in pursuit Grant ran to the nearest shute. Without hesitation he dropped into the yawning black pit of its mouth.

A second later, bruised and covered with coal soot, he rolled into the boiler room of the big plants. Springing hastily to his feet, he tore his coat aside to show his Secret Service shield.

"Stop, men," he shouted. "Not another shovelful until we have examined the coal."

He stooped, for almost at his feet lay a chunk of coal which he recognized as being of the same kind used for making the bombs. It was larger than the ordinary screenings used in the furnaces, but would never have attracted attention for large lumps were frequently found. Picking up the piece that had excited his suspicions, Grant found one side was of black card board. Hastily he peeled it off, and held it up before the astonished stokers, who had been

watching him wild eyed, a tube filled with the most powerful explosive known!

Orders were given hastily. The firing pits were all emptied and the coal taken away for rescreening. Fresh cars were rushed up to the shutes and before the steam had dropped below the point where it would not drive the engines fresh coal, safe coal, was being poured into the gigantic fire boxes. Grant's work was done and he repaired to town to wash and dress. Hardly had he restored his usual immaculate appearance when his men arrived to report that the spy at the shutes had been captured and was in jail with his fellow conspirators.

Then telegrams began to arrive, forwarded from the Criminology Club in New York. They told of raid after raid which had been made, each nipping a plot in its budding, each conducted on information furnished by Madam Stephan. Not one of Imperial Germany's attempts had been successful. Grant's last waking thought that night, was of two women.

"Dixie and I must see to it," he murmured sleepily, "that Madam Stephan is given opportunity to appreciate to the full the life of freedom to which she has just awakened."

But Madam Stephan had already made the supreme sacrifice. She was lying at that moment in her apartment, dead, a bullet wound in her heart, victim of a system the full extent of which she had not yet realized although she had been a member of it. An hour before her maid had requested the evening out and had appeared at the office of Heinric von Lertz. He had scarcely noticed her for message after message had reached him of the frustrations of the various plots of destruction, and he was nearly frenzied. Suddenly he was drawn up taut. The maid had given him the secret sign of the Imperial German spy army.

"You, you," he gasped.

"Yes," she answered without emotion. "Eight years have I served Madam Stephan as personal maid on guard against the moment which has now arrived. She gave information to Harrison Grant at the Criminology Club, and I have come to remind you of your duty."

The heart of Heinric von Lertz became cold with fear. So this was the way Germany trusted her most confidential workers. He wondered of his own valet, of his housekeeper, of everyone whose respect he had thought he held.

Mechanically he put on his coat and hat. He talked aimlessly as they rode toward Madam Stephan's apartment, wondering, thinking of the relentless grip Germany held upon her spies.

At the door to Madam's apartment the maid pushed something into his hand. He shuddered as he felt it to be a revolver.

"It is her own," said the maid in a cold lifeless voice, "so it makes no difference which one of you use it. You will find her in the library."

As she was speaking she had slipped her latch key into the lock and had entered. Von Lertz followed in a semi-daze, and walked alone into the library.

"Madam Stephan, I have come to claim the debt you owe Imperial Germany," he said in a voice which he hardly recognized as his own. Mechanically he thrust the revolver toward her.

Madam Stephan started to her feet from the easy chair in which she had been reclining. One look at the pallid, set face of Von Lertz convinced her of the desperateness of her position. Life had become very sweet to her after her intimate talk with Harrison Grant. She made a sudden lunge at Von Lertz.

She had just reached him when there came the muffled report of a revolver shot smothered in clothing. Von Lertz had reversed the weapon and pulled the trigger. Madam Stephan staggered back and then fell full length on the floor, her life blood oozing out through a wound which had penetrated her heart.

As Von Lertz stood aghast gazing at the result of his handiwork the maid entered. She took the revolver from his nerveless hand and stooping by the body of her former mistress twisted the fingers of the right hand, already cooling in death, about the handle and the trigger. Then she walked to the table and picking up a book, opened it, and began marking a passage.

"This will be absolute proof of her suicide," she remarked calmly. "It occurred to me this afternoon. You know she had been reading Dickens, expecting to be ordered to England any day for work."

Von Lertz dully took the book which was extended to him. He recognized it as the copy of "A Tale of Two Cities," which he had examined but a few days previously. He saw the sentence which the maid had underlined:

"It is a far, far better thing I do, than I have ever done, it is a far, far better rest that I go to, than I have ever known."

He stood motionless as the maid took the book from him and placed it on the table where the message would be the first thing to catch the eye of an investigator.

CHAPTER XIV

THE MENACE OF THE I.W.W.

Since the attempt on the part of Imperial Germany to foment a strike of the longshoremen on the Atlantic and Pacific seacoasts as a means of preventing shipments of supplies and munitions to the Allies, the Secret Service had been continually on the alert against other attempts to cause trouble in various branches of organized labor. In this work the unions of America had given more than a hearty co-operation. Committees of members were appointed to confer with the Secret Service to learn the best means of detecting efforts of German agents to interfere with any industry by agitation among the workers. American labor proved itself loyal to the core.

Germany had made numerous attempts to create havoc in the American manufacturing plants by using various methods to entice workingmen away from their daily tasks. In many instances, the old method of agitation against conditions was tried. Subtler attacks were employed elsewhere. Tempting offers of employment at their trade in distant cities, with transportation paid, were made on condition that a sufficient number of workmen would join the migrating colony. Cunningly worded stories of fictitious dangers which confronted workers in various occupations were inserted in printed matter which was designed to reach wives, mothers and sweethearts, but every effort failed, because of the intense loyalty of the unions.

"Report anything which may cause two or more workingmen to leave the place where they are employed now," was the request made by the Secret Service. Members of the special committees, by ever watchful vigilance, detected the efforts of Germany at their inception.

Complaints against conditions were usually proved groundless by the Secret Service. In cases where the workingmen were not receiving fair treatment, a word to the owner was usually sufficient to correct the trouble, for the manufacturers had combined with the workers in preventing Germany from being successful in its plotting. The ideal positions which existed at distant points were proved to be phantoms. The Hun-inspired stories of dangers existing through the handling of various substances were denied by authoritative sources which could leave no doubt in the mind of the families of the workers. This was the work which the Secret Service had been doing in conjunction with labor since the attempt to foment the longshoremen's strike had been baffled.

Harrison Grant, president of the Criminology Club, and Dixie Mason, the pretty little Secret Service operative, had often discussed reports of these activities of German agents. Von Bernstorff, and his aides, had followed the traditional course in each effort, using members of the Kaiser's spy army in America to do the actual work of enticement or intimidation. Then this department of activity against America by the Huns suddenly stopped. Agents of the Kaiser no longer sought membership in unions, control of labor papers was relinquished by Dr. Heinrich Albert, the paymaster of the spy army, and it seemed that Germany had admitted defeat through the loyalty of American workingmen.

But neither Grant nor Dixie were deceived. Through the wireless in the Criminology Club, and through phonographic attachments at other stations confidential messages between the Wilhelmstrasse and the Imperial German Embassy in Washington were picked out of the air and later the secrets of the coded messages were deciphered. Through these Grant and Dixie knew that Germany's demands for successful demoralization of American labor had become more and more insistent as efforts of the spy army met with failure after failure. Then the demands suddenly ceased without any apparent reason and the president of the Criminology Club and the young Secret Service operative, through their intimate knowledge of Hun methods, felt that Von Bernstorff had sent a written report to Berlin of some plot which promised success if time were given for its prosecution and fulfillment.

So no vigilance was relaxed. The labor committees were warned against falling into a false feeling of security because of the apparent inactivity of Imperial Germany. Many months of watchful waiting followed, and then

came the first rumbling of a storm which threatened the whole existence of labor, a storm which actually accomplished the destruction of millions of dollars worth of wheat and other cereal supplies.

It was the outbreak of the Industrial Workers of the World, an organization which is more readily recognized by its initials—I.W.W., formed originally by a cracked-brain, illogical theorist to agitate the doctrine that a worker is entitled to the gross proceeds of his labor and it attracted to its membership radicals from all over the world. It always proceeded on the lines of anarchism—destruction to anything which impeded its progress. The cry of higher and better wages attracted a great many workingmen when it was first introduced into this country, but they soon dropped away. The utter absurdity of a theory that a laborer could increase his earnings by insisting that he receive everything that he produced without any thought of the workingmen who had produced the tools and the material with which he worked, soon stopped the growth of the membership and then a sudden slump in the number of supporters until only professional agitators could be found in the organization. Even these soon deserted for they agitated only for the money that there was to be acquired and the treasury of the I.W.W. was depleted to a point where it was no longer a shining target for the greed of the professional trouble maker who found more profitable organizations elsewhere.

Then the I.W.W. suddenly acquired apparently unlimited money from some source. Agitators from everywhere flocked to its standards which was the surest sign that the treasury was well filled. There were indications also that some sane person had planned out a definite campaign for the organization to follow under the guise of agitating only the theory for which it stood. Groups of I.W.W. workers appeared in industrial centers in every part of the country. They harangued against the conscription of British and French labor as they afterward argued for the resistance of the draft in America. They pleaded for general strikes everywhere, ostensibly as a means of getting for the worker all the wealth he produced. In every way they played the part which Imperial Germany had attempted but had failed because of the inability of the members of the spy army to inspire the confidence of the American workers.

The I.W.W. was different in method from the individual Hun spies. It held open its ranks to workers. It exhibited a well filled treasury and offered good pay. Many of the lazier and reckless members of the unions were induced to enroll, but in the main the American workingman recognized it for its

worthlessness and left it alone. But the I.W.W. was prepared for this attitude on the part of the workers and took measures to coerce them.

Harrison Grant and Dixie Mason were in the vanguard of the forces which were detailed to resist the revitalized I.W.W. Both had a well defined theory as to where the unexpected wealth had come from, and knew that in meeting the agitation of the I.W.W. they were in reality working against another German plot in America. Raid after raid was made on local headquarters of the I.W.W. and many prisoners were made and hauled into court on charges of almost every felony on the docket, from murder down. Yet the organization continued to flourish. Outbreaks occurred all over America, some serious, others quelled almost before they were started.

Grant and Dixie devoted their time to investigation and very seldom were engaged on a particular case when the time for raiding came. They discovered the plotters, an outline of the object toward which they were working, then turned the clearly defined trail over to other less skilled workers to pursue, while they gave attention to other fields which indicated a plot was brewing. Masses of documents teaching sabotage, destruction of all sorts, the making and firing of bombs, sedition and many other things detrimental to the industrial health and strength of a nation were the natural accompaniment of every raid. Sabotage was the most dangerous of all and it was to this branch of the I.W.W. activity to which Grant and Dixie devoted most of their time.

Machinery in various plants suddenly broke down, despite the reliability of its manufacturers. Grant and Dixie discovered that emery powder had been mixed with lubricating oil, and as a result locks were placed on lubricating cups, and trusted men attended to the duties of oiling, using only oil that had been strained and inspected and kept under lock and key. There were epidemics of typhoid in colonies of workers and after their first investigation Grant and Dixie made a report which put every health officer in the country on guard against diverted sewage.

Then came the fires in the wheatfields of the country. Grant and Dixie were already on their way to Minnesota when the announcement was made that their fields burst into flames under their own eyes, without another person being in sight. But Grant and Dixie did not accept this explanation. They knew that almost anything was possible where there was money to be

obtained and they knew that Germany was supplying funds recklessly.

Convinced that the fires were of incendiary origin, despite the testimony of the farmers, Grant and Dixie went directly to one of the devastated fields. There was nothing to be seen except acre after acre of charred soil where a few days earlier had stood bushels and bushels of wheat ready for harvest. The farmer pointed out to them the spot where the fire had started. Grant began an examination of the ground, while Dixie looked over the surrounding country. A railroad ran about a quarter of a mile distant.

"It couldn't have been a spark from an engine?" she asked the farmer.

"Not a chance," he responded. "Every engine has a sieve in its stack, and anyway there hadn't been a train pass within two hours of the time this fire started."

"Will meet you at the hotel tonight," Dixie called to Grant, and started across the field toward the tracks.

"Loan me your handkerchief, will you?"

It was a call from Grant, and it caused the farmer to turn from watching the pleasing, trim figure of Dixie Mason making her way across the field. He saw that Grant had already filled his own handkerchief with soil dug out of the field. Grant took the spacious piece of cloth which the farmer handed him wonderingly, and walking nearly a hundred feet from where he had taken his original sample of the soil, he knelt down and with his pocket knife dug up another generous clod and put that in the farmer's handkerchief. Then picking up both handkerchiefs, he turned to the farmer:

"Can you drive me right into town? I have some work to do."

"Sure," answered the farmer, impressed by Grant's manner, and then his curiosity prompted the question, "Have you found gold or oil?"

"Maybe something more valuable than either to the wheat farmer," answered Grant. "I think I have found the cause of the fires in the wheat fields, but will know for a certainty by tonight."

The farmer asked no more questions but hurried away, soon to re-appear on the road near the field at the wheel of a speedy little roadster. On the way into town several more fields which had been shorn of their yield by fire were passed and Grant stopped at each one of them. He walked over their

blackened lengths carefully until evidently the thing for which he searched was discovered. Then as before he took a sample of the soil and a second sample many yards distant from the first position. By the time the little roadster drove up in front of the one hotel in the nearest city the pockets of both men were filled with Minnesota soil.

They had already made a stop at a drug store where Grant taxed the stock of the proprietor with the demands he made. He succeeded in getting everything that he wanted, acids, salts and other things of which the farmer had never heard. Once in Grant's room at the hotel, the president of the Criminology Club spread out a large piece of white paper on the floor. On it he marked several circles in parallel rows.

"Empty your right hand pockets on this side, and put the soil from your left hand pockets on this side," he ordered briefly, and then in response to the mute request on the face of the farmer he added, "Yes, stay if you want to," and began emptying his own pockets.

With the soil samples from various fields arranged in neat piles on the white paper Grant set to work on matters which were, for the most part, mysterious to the farmer. A Bunsen burner was connected with the chandelier in the room. Small portions of the soil from each pile were placed in separate test tubes. Then each was heated, mixed with small portions of the matter from the various bottles and packages which had been gotten at the drug store. Each test tube was treated in identically the same way and as he finished with each one Grant entered figures in his note book. He was working on the last tube when a knock came on the door, and in response to Grant's "Come" the door opened and Dixie Mason entered. The little Secret Service operative remained silent while Grant finished the test tube. He jotted some figures in his note book, then snapped it shut, and turned toward her smiling.

"You have discovered something?" Dixie asked.

"I think so," answered Grant. "But first let us hear what you have discovered, to see if it fits in with my find."

"It isn't an awful lot," answered Dixie. "In the first place every fire has started in the portion of the field nearest to the road or a railroad, and almost invariably there has been water near the place where the fire started. The only strangers which have been observed in the vicinity were a couple of traveling

geologists, who did most of their traveling on foot and carried the samples they had collected in little cloth bags. That is about all."

"It is enough," said Grant. "The point of origin of the fire in the first field I examined attracted my attention because it had been burned with a more intense heat than burning grain would make. I took a sample there and then for purposes of comparison took another sample of the soil some distance away. It was easy to determine the place of the origin of the fires in the other fields, for in each place I found a spot where there had been intense heat. The samples from these spots which I have analyzed show a large percentage of phosphorus oxide, while the other samples are free from it. Phosphorus oxide is formed by the burning of phosphorus."

"Which makes it very clear as to how the fires started," commented Dixie.

"It may be to you," interjected the farmer, "but I can't see what started the phosphorus burning even if some was placed in the field."

"Phosphorus has a peculiar property," explained Grant. "When it is in a certain degree of solution it unites readily with the oxygen in the air, which is merely another way of saying that it burns. The burning of the wheat fields is an example of the methods of the I.W.W. prompted by Imperial Germany's desire to keep supplies of food from reaching the Allies. These bogus geologists had small bags filled with dry phosphorus. To accomplish their design it was merely necessary to give the bag a soaking with water and throw it into a field. Several hours afterward when the sun had dried the phosphorus to the degree of solution where it unites with the air it would burst into flame and ignite the wheat."

As a convincing demonstration to the farmer Grant procured a small piece of phosphorus and showed him how it would start burning by merely dropping it into water.

"You see it floats when placed on water," said Grant as the farmer watched the little blue flame with changing expressions. "The underpart is too thoroughly saturated while the top part is dry. Between there is a section which is at the proper percentage of solution and hence the burning."

"Let me assure you," said the farmer finally with a set jaw, "that the wheat lands are going to be a mighty unhealthy place from now on, for I.W.W.'s, German spies or anyone else carrying little sacks of anything."

"I can give you the assurance," said Grant, "that from now on it will be a very risky thing for a person to try to purchase phosphorus anywhere in the country unless he can prove a legitimate use for it."

Dixie and Grant started back for New York that night, for every moment which they could spare was devoted to Von Bernstorff, Dr. Albert and Heinric von Lertz in an effort to gain the evidence which they knew existed that Germany was supplying the I.W.W. with the funds by which the agitators were spreading havoc throughout the country. But they were destined not to reach there, at least not until several weeks later. A telegram forwarded from the Criminology Club was handed to Grant on the train while it was speeding through Ohio.

"Will you see me at your earliest convenience."

That was the wording of the message and the fact that it was signed by Mrs. Blank, the wife of an unscrupulous broker who had virtually sold her to Von Bernstorff in return for tips which he might receive which would be profitable on the stock market in case Germany's plots were successful, caused Grant to alight at the next station and call her on the long distance telephone.

"Von Bernstorff was here," came the voice of Mrs. Blank over the wire, "raging about the part I took in the arrest of Baroness Verbecht. He tried to find out if I was allied with the Secret Service and offered me any amount of money to assure my allegiance to him and Germany. In making the offer he drew his wallet from his pocket and banged it down on the table scattering papers right and left. He gathered them up hastily but I saw one, a telegram from Von Lertz, at Old Forge, Pennsylvania. It read simply 'Progress favorable.'"

"Old Forge is a place where they had an exciting time with the I.W.W. several weeks ago," commented Grant, after he had hung up the receiver, to Dixie who had gotten off the train with him prepared to take her part in any emergency that might arise. "After threatening the mayor of the town, the homes of several miners were dynamited because they refused to join the organization. Then the Pennsylvania State Constabulary interfered and since then everything has been quiet."

"But the I.W.W. headquarters have never been abandoned there," said Dixie,

"and with Heinric von Lertz there, I think it will be well if we stop over."

They arrived in Old Forge as quickly as a train could carry them, Grant in the guise of a professional agitator with the name of Guiseppe Fantona, and Dixie as a miniature edition of Gurley Flynn. In Old Forge they found that the usual form of I.W.W. organization had been maintained, headquarters for the men members and headquarters for a woman's auxiliary, the duty of the members of which was to spread propaganda to the wives, mothers and sweethearts of the miners. Grant was welcomed at the men's headquarters which he found were in charge of Frank Little, later lynched at Butte, Montana for his activities; Stanley Dembriki, secretary of the I.W.W.; Joseph Graber, an unnaturalized German, and Angelo Faggi, a fugitive from Italian and French justice, then and now hiding from an American warrant. Dixie Mason excited no suspicion when she registered at the headquarters of the auxiliary.

A few days later came the first news of trouble. Dixie Mason hurrying from the women's auxiliary, sped forward to catch Harrison Grant, just as he was leaving the headquarters of the I.W.W.

"There's some trouble going on at the mines," she announced. "We've just gotten orders to hurry there and cause a demonstration."

Grant nodded.

"I just got the same sort of a tip. I think it's a blind. I heard orders given to the man just ahead to report as soon as the constabulary was fully engaged there. Come on, we must shadow him."

They started forward. A moment later, from the direction of the mines, came a great sound of crashing timbers, of screams, and the rising of coal dust. Men and women appeared, running forward from every direction. The clattering of hoofs and the constabulary thundered past. Grant leaped to the center of the street.

"Someone has released the brakes from a dump train," he announced, "It crashed back into the shaft of the mine. Miners have been injured. The trouble's on. Keep that man in front in view—don't lose him!"

They hurried on, still watching the form of the hurrying spy before them. They saw him rush to a corner where he might watch the mine dump, then stand there, his eyes roving in every direction. A fight had started at the

dump, between legitimate laborers and the I.W.W. agitators who seemed to have sprung from nowhere. Men fought, while women screamed. Agitators were running here, there, everywhere, blaming the dumping of the cars upon the mine owners and demanding that everyone join the I.W.W. that these men might be paid back for the damage they had caused. Again a troop of constabulary passed—then another and finally, Dixie and Grant saw the spy on the corner, suddenly turn and run.

"After him—quick!" ordered the president of the Criminology Club—"he's the one who will point out the real danger!"

Down the street the spy ran, Dixie and Grant following him closely. Into tortuous alleys, across lots—finally to approach a great, warehouse-like building, where one or two other men could be seen entering. The two detectives skirted the building, approached it cautiously and examined it for some loophole, through which they might enter. But there seemed to be none. Here and there were great doors, from which shipping had emanated in other days—but each was carefully locked and bolted now. Grant pressed his ear against one of these—and heard the jabbering and shouting of great numbers of men. He turned, and seeking a foothold, raised himself that he might peer through a corner of a window imperfectly covered from within.

"Dixie," he whispered.

"Yes," the girl was close beside him. "Do you see anything in there?"

"Yes. Practically every I.W.W. in town is here. Someone is on the platform, talking to them. I——"

"Can you make out who's there?"

"Dembriki's one. Faggi's another. And Heinric von Lertz!"

"Von Lertz! Then it means——"

"They're bringing out parcels of something. Laying them on the platform so that they can easily be reached. Hurry——" Grant turned, his face white. "Get the constabulary—quick! It's dynamite!"

In a flash Dixie Mason was pressing every muscle to the utmost as she ran through the lots and back toward the mines that she might summon the members of the mounted police. Grant remained a minute longer at the window, then suddenly dropped to the ground and again began to skirt the

building.

Here, there, everywhere, he searched, at last finding a back room to the building, that was separated from the main hall. He pressed against the door. The lock sagged—but did not open. Carefully he brought forth his skeleton keys, and tried them, one after another. At last, a rusty creaking of the lock, a slight snap, and the door opened. Grant hesitated a moment, listening for some sign that he had been overheard from within. But none came. Then he entered.

Within the back room, he stopped again to listen. From the other side of the door that separated him from the main room of the meeting hall, he could hear the thick, heavy voice of Heinric von Lertz, apparently giving the last of a long series of orders:

"Imperial Germany expects every man of you to do his duty and to see that Union Labor is driven from Old Forge," he was saying. "We have here enough dynamite to blow up every miner's house and every coal mine in the district—and I want to see every bit of it used. As soon as we receive the word that everything is all right we will proceed——"

"Here I am sir!" At the sound of the voice, Grant opened the door ever so slightly, to see the form of the spy he had trailed, hurrying up the aisle. "The constabulary is all at the coal dumps, and they have their hands full. If we work quickly——"

"All right. Line up, everybody. You will pass the platform, one at a time and receive your dynamite. Then, each man will cause one explosion—and the result will be that the whole city will be wrecked! Hurry there, line up, line up!"

Grant hurried back to the door for one look up the street. If Dixie were only on the way with the constabulary. If he could only catch sight of her, leading the plunging mass of horsemen on their way to the hall! But Harrison Grant looked in vain. There was no sight of the girl he loved, no sight of the hurrying horsemen that would mean safety for the town of Old Forge. Grant's heart sank within him. Beyond him in the hall were more than two hundred desperate men and hundreds of pounds of explosives. And they must not be permitted to start forth on their journey of destruction!

Grant hesitated only a second. Then as the line of destroyers within the main

meeting hall started to receive their dynamite——

A hurtling form crashed through the door from the back room. Leaping toward Stanley Dembriki, in charge of the dynamite, he felled him with a crashing blow from his fist. Heinric von Lertz took one look and ran through the door that had been left open by the entrance of Harrison Grant. But the I.W.W. members could only see this one form and could only know that Grant had interfered with their schemes of destruction. A second of hesitation, then they rushed forward.

But Grant was ready for them. A heavy chair stood nearby. He seized it and taking his place near the dynamite, felled the first man who approached. The crackle of a revolver sounded, and a bullet splintered the wood just above his head. Then a shout——

"Stop that shooting! You're liable to explode the dynamite. No need for that—we'll get him!"

Grant whirled. Again he brought the chair crashing downward, and Faggi had been knocked from the platform. The members of the I.W.W. recoiled slightly. Grant, white faced and grim, scowled at them.

"I'd advise you not to try to touch this dynamite!" he ordered. "I'll use this chair on any one who comes near—and I'll swing to kill!"

A growl answered him, as a great, heavy shouldered German edged his way forward, and sprung toward the platform, Grant kept his word. A second later, the German wavered in his tracks, stumbled and fell, to lay quite still beside the other two men on the floor. Again a recoil—but Grant knew that it was only for a minute.

And in that minute, how his ears strained for the sound of galloping horses! How he waited and hoped!

Then a sudden rush of men. It seemed that by some common impulse, the whole great hall surged forward—climbing upon the platform, dodging and swirling, seeking to come under the defense that Harrison Grant kept up, ducking the blows of the heavy chair, surging back then coming forward again, striving to corner him, to beat him down——

High in the air went the chair to descend again—and to carry with it the form of a plotter. Again—and again—and again. Then Harrison Grant felt the chair

wrested from his grasp and thrown far to one side. A screaming voice echoed in his ears——

"Now we've got him! Come on men!"

Grant had his back to the wall. Regardless of the danger of exploding the dynamite he brought forth his revolvers.

"Stand back there," he shouted. "The first man who comes at me gets a bullet! Understand? Stand back there!"

They hesitated just a second. Then the rush came again. The crackle of Grant's revolver sounded—to be echoed by a groan as a man fell. Then the sheer weight of men bore him down, crushing his revolver from his grasp, pinioning his wrists, while fists beat upon his breast and his face.

From far away came a slight clattering sound—the sound of hoof beats. It sent new life into Harrison Grant. He broke from his assailants and with tremendous crashing blows, again cleared a space before him. But only for a moment—then his opponents closed in again.

But above the shouting, above the racking pain, above everything, could be heard the clattering of those hoofs—coming closer, closer, closer——

Sudden shouts came from the crowd that surged on the platform. The crashing of great blows against the doors. A new milling of the assailants, as they left the platform and sought to guard the doors of the great warehouse. But impossible. One after another, the dazed, wavering form of Harrison Grant saw the doors surge and splinter, as the trained horses of the constabulary sent thundering kicks against them. Panic stricken now, the members of the I.W.W. sought escape through those doors and through the windows of the great room. But that was impossible also. Beneath every window waited a member of the constabulary. And at the doors——

One after another they yielded, to allow the entrance of the mounted men of the constabulary, riding straight into the meeting hall, their horses vaulting chairs and obstructions as they circled about the big room, rounding up the criminals. Resistance had disappeared. Like sheep they were herded to one end of the hall, the men who but a few minutes before had been obsessed with a mania for destruction. A smile came to Grant's lips as he watched. Then, the whole hall went suddenly black before his eyes, and he fell to the platform unconscious from his hurts.

When he became aware of the world again, it was to feel the tender touch of a woman's hand and to hear a soft voice of sympathy. His eyes opened, to look into those of Dixie Mason, bending over him, smoothing the hair from his discolored temples, seeking to assuage his wounds and bruises. He smiled in spite of the pain of his injuries.

"It is worth being hurt just to have you nurse me," he said, then with a sudden remembrance he attempted to rise to his feet. "The Constabulary?" he asked. "Did they arrest——"

"Everyone who was in the hall except you," came the answer of Dixie Mason. "But I am afraid that Heinie von Lertz must have run as soon as he saw you. He wasn't found."

"Couldn't help it," responded Grant cheerfully. "I had my hands full."

"It doesn't matter much, I think you will be forgiven," laughed Dixie with him. "We will soon have Heinie where he can't cause any more trouble. And anyway he has the cheerful news to take to the Embassy that another fine little plot has gone wrong and failed."

CHAPTER XV.

THE GREAT DECISION

The Kaiser's note reached America and its stinging insults fanned into flame the coals of wrath which had been burning in the breasts of Americans since the revelations made by the discovery of the contents of Dr. Heinrich Albert's portfolio, the recall of Captains Von Papen and Boy-Ed, and the arrest in practically every community in the country of one or more German plotters. Harrison Grant received a copy of the note from the wireless room of the Criminology Club as it was sent to the Department of State, and he was probably the first person in the United States to voice the opinion which became universal after the note was made public.

"This means war," he commented to his trusted aide Cavanaugh who had brought him the message.

"This means war," said Count Von Bernstorff, the Imperial German Ambassador, when with blanched face he had finished reading the note, couched in the insolent terms which he knew only the Great One of Germany, himself, would be permitted to use in diplomatic intercourse. Von Bernstorff turned pale at the thought of war with the United States for he, alone, of all the trusted advisers of the Kaiser knew and appreciated the powers of America.

"This means war," was the verdict reached by every American as he read the note in the newspapers, a verdict prompted by the fearless patriotic pride which beat in every breast. Then the individual American waited, reading each new development in the diplomatic engagement which followed with bated breath, waited for the decision which they felt was inevitable.

But there was no period of waiting for Harrison Grant, nor the members of the Criminology Club. Dixie Mason and the other members of the Secret Service had no time to wait for the decision. Every other investigating branch of the government worked at high tension, for everyone who had been engaged in the secret warfare with German Agents knew that once war became inevitable the Kaiser's spy army would throw caution to the four winds and make the mightiest efforts to bring wanton destruction in every manner possible.

Grant felt that there could be no doubt in the mind of Bernstorff that war would result from the note and the conditions proposed to place upon American commerce. The night it was received he called a special meeting of the Criminology Club, and it was attended by Dixie Mason.

"Men, the supreme test of the worth of our organization has come," said Grant addressing the meeting. "The next few weeks will see the German spy army in the United States striving by every desperate means at their command to kill and destroy everything American. We must not fail in this supreme test. Beginning tonight we must shadow every member of the spy army in the country. His every action must be investigated, every person to whom he speaks must be regarded as a suspicious character. That is all. You will find your assignments in your letter boxes."

Harrison Grant had selected Heinric von Lertz as the spy for whose activities he would be responsible, and Dixie Mason had accepted the post of keeping watch over Baroness Verbecht, who had succeeded in gaining her liberty

from the Tombs under bail, after the discovery of the invisible ink messages on her body by Grant and Mrs. Blank. Before either of the spies they were watching had made a suspicious move, reports were received from other operatives that the judgment of Grant that Germany was preparing for a break was correct. Any number of the lesser spies of the Kaiser in America had received orders direct from Washington which took them to the interned ships of Austria and Germany in all the harbors of the United States.

"Not one of these ships must be useful to the United States in the event of war," was the order delivered to each interned boat. "Where it is possible engines must be destroyed, otherwise the boat must be sunk. Make plans now and when the wireless lanes are filled with dots, just dots, then let the work commence."

Nothing could be done to prevent the consummation of this plan for the holds of interned vessels were forbidden property to the Secret Service under international law. So, despite the fact that it was known from many sources that these were the orders which had been sent forth to every Austrian and German commander who had a boat in an American port, the best that could be done was to station operatives near every interned boat to rush aboard the minute war was declared.

For several days Grant and Dixie had little to do except stay near the New York offices of Heinric von Lertz. Each morning he would go there and spend the entire day until evening then go to the Hohenzollern Club. Apparently he had no part in any of the affairs which were engaging the other members of the Kaiser's spy army in America. He saw no one and received none but the most ordinary messages.

Then he suddenly became active. One evening just before he left his office he sent a long code message to Washington. The next morning before the message had been deciphered for Grant, Von Lertz received a summons and went to Washington. Then he returned and started by automobile on a trip in which he employed every dodge he could think of, but Grant, Dixie and Sisson kept him in sight and at last found a real clue to his plans.

The three stood in the office of a small railroad station in a suburb of New York, firing cross-questions at the worried, frightened station agent. For hours, they had been questioning him, at first without result, but at last to see the gradual breaking down of his defense. One by one he had been forced to admissions—first that he had known the man they had shadowed to the station, Heinric von Lertz; secondly, that he had given this man a ticket for another city, just in time to allow him to catch the fast mail that had stopped there for orders, and third, that he had received orders from Heinric von Lertz just before he had boarded the train.

"What were those orders?" Harrison Grant had asked the question fifty times.

Forty-nine times the station agent had refused to answer. But now:

"To go ahead with the plans that we had made."

"Plans for what?"

"Wiretapping."

"Where?"

"On the Pennsylvania system. Myself and several others had figured out a system whereby we could tap the wires leading from the dispatcher's offices, mix up the orders and cause wrecks all over the system. The Pennsylvania is a big system. It undoubtedly will carry many soldiers after war has been declared—and we wanted to injure it as much as possible."

"To say nothing of causing the deaths of hundreds of American citizens—non-combatants," said Grant angrily. Then he turned to the telegraph key. "Read me the notes you have taken, Dixie," he ordered, as he began to call the Criminology Club in New York, "I must send the information into the Club and see that the other men in this conspiracy are put under arrest."

A half hour of telegraphing, then Grant and Dixie turned again to their prisoner.

"What other orders did Von Lertz give you before he left?"

"None."

"Are you quite sure?"

"Absolutely."

"Didn't he even leave an address where you could reach him?"

"Oh, yes—he did that."

"Where?"

"On board the interned steamer *Liebenfels* in Charleston Harbor."

Grant sent a quick glance into the eyes of Dixie Mason. She returned the gaze. Then the president of the Criminology Club called to Sisson, his operative, standing just outside the door.

"Take this fellow into New York and put him in the Tombs," he ordered. "I will not return to the club. My address for the next few days will be

Charleston, S.C."

And so it was that Dixie Mason and Harrison Grant rushed to Charleston, to learn, if possible, the motive of Heinric von Lertz, and to seek to forestall the impossible. And while they hurried on—

"The representative of the Secretary of State is waiting, sir," said Bernstorff's servant. The arch-spy of Imperial Germany raised his eyebrows.

"So soon?" he asked. "Albert"—he turned to his privy counselor—"please be sure to remain. And you—" he addressed the servant again—"watch for the signal. I think the gentlemen is bringing me my passports."

And the Ambassador was right. Five minutes later, as Bernstorff stretched forth his hand to receive the passports that meant his expulsion from the United States, he apparently accidentally dropped a handkerchief. And as the white cambric fluttered to the floor, the servant, who had been waiting at the door, turned and hurried away.

On the way out, however, he paused, with displeasure written in every line of his wrinkled face.

"It is absolutely impossible for the Ambassador to see anyone," he said somewhat gruffly to the woman who had halted him, "he is extremely busy."

"The Ambassador will see me—or I will know the reason why," came the cool answer of the woman. "Tell him that Mrs. Blank is awaiting him."

"I cannot take him the message now. You must wait!"

"Very well." She walked to a couch in the ante-room. The servant sped on with the news of his message—the news that was to flash to every interned liner and gathering place of German spies in America. Diplomatic relations had been broken! The Ambassador had been handed his passports.

So it was that dots, dots, nothing but dots began to flash forth from a private wireless—and continued to flash for eight long hours. Speedily those dots found their way to concealed wireless receiving stations on every interned ship in American ports, to cause a rush of destruction as mallets, sedges—even bombs—were used upon the engines and machinery of the great ships.

Meanwhile following the visit of the representative of the Secretary of State, Bernstorff stared at his passports, and then turned with asperity toward his

privy counselor.

"So you have caused it at last, eh?" he asked.

"I?" Dr. Albert stared. "And what did I have to do with it?"

"Everything!" he snarled. "America would have known nothing of our plans if it had not been for you. It was you who gave them the lead to everything. You lost your portfolio. They found in there, the papers that gave the Secret Service the main clue to all our activities. It was easy for them to follow the other plans and plots after that. And so, why should they not accuse us of wrong-doing? Oh, Albert, why were you so foolish? Why did you allow that information to be lost?"

"And I suppose," answered Albert somewhat caustically "you have never given any information? I——"

"I? Certainly not!"

"Be careful, Count!"

It was a woman's voice. Von Bernstorff whirled as though struck by a bullet to look into the smiling face of Mrs. Evelyn Blank. The broker's wife came forward.

"I really had to come to Dr. Albert's assistance," she cooed. "Really you are not giving yourself proper credit. So I felt impelled to come forth and say in your own behalf that undoubtedly you have given up more information than he ever had."

Dr. Albert smiled with the corner of his mouth. Von Bernstorff gasped.

"Yes," continued Mrs. Blank, "Dr. Albert had one misfortune, but he never fell in love with the wife of some one else. That should never be done, and above all things you should never tell her State secrets, especially if they are secrets which concern the country she loves. For she might send the information to the Secret Service. I came in to say good-bye, Count, I understand you are going away."

And still smiling, she left him standing there, his mouth open, his eyes staring, his hands clutching. Dr. Albert appreciated even more than Mrs. Blank the exquisite revenge which the woman had gotten for the degradation she had undergone at the hands of her husband and the Imperial German

Ambassador. He knew that it was not for him to jeer, that Von Bernstorff was still his master, and so he moved toward the portieres.

"I have matters which you know of to attend to in New York," he said, "and must be going."

"Yes, yes," said Von Bernstorff pulling himself together, "The matter of the little fireworks to accompany our departure. By all means go."

While Albert was on his way to New York to arrange for new mischief, Heinric von Lertz arrived in Charleston, closely followed by Grant and Dixie. The German spy found that he was too late, for diplomatic relations had been severed. He had come to get men for a railroad plot, but he was now on the *Liebenfels* striving to convince the captain that the big liner should be sunk immediately.

"Don't be foolish," he argued. "What are you afraid of? International law prevents any member of the Secret Service coming below decks."

"But what will happen when the ship sinks? We will have to go above then—and take to the small boats."

"What of it? It's our ship, isn't it?"

"Yes, but there are laws against the blocking of harbors."

"Chicken heart!" sneered Von Lertz, "help me with these sea cocks!"

"Captain—captain!" It was a voice outside the door. A second later, the frightened face of a mate showed at the opening. "There are a man and a woman on deck who say they're from the Secret Service. They've got harbor police with them and have arrested all the crew up there. They want to see you——"

The Captain whirled and started for the door. Von Lertz caught at him and failed. Then, as the door slammed, the German spy, cursing under his breath, turned again to the opening of the sea-cocks. The great water inlets slid open. The green water of the harbor spouted within. Von Lertz shouted in happiness—and started for the door. Then he gasped—the door was locked—battened from without where the fastenings had fallen into place as the Captain had run forth! The door was battened and from the sea-cocks the waters of Charleston Harbor were pouring into the ship in an ever increasing flow.

Upon the deck of the *Liebenfels*, Harrison Grant and Dixie Mason had arrested the crew and the captain of the liner. Already the boat had begun to list slightly, from the water pouring into the hold from the sea-cocks. And as the small boats went over the side and started toward the shore, carrying the men who were to be accused of attempting to block the harbor of Charleston, the one man who had caused the disaster, stood waist deep in water in the engine room, striving vainly to find some way of escape, dully chattering to himself in his fear. For Heinric von Lertz, German spy, was facing death through his own actions.

Gradually and steadily the water rose, while the spy clawed at the tightly fastened door which separated him from the companionways and from safety. Hurriedly he tried to force his way through the rapidly rising water, back to the sea cocks, that he might close them again. But impossible. The rush of water had become so great that there was no stemming it now. He screamed in terror as he fought against the water as though he would force it back with his bare hands. But still it rose.

Higher and higher, to his breast, to his shoulders, to his chin—while the henchman of Germany clawed and struggled and fought against his fate, like some maddened animal. Then, at last, a final, spasmodic struggle; the dim form of a weaving figure as it swayed in the water. Then bubbles. Heinric von Lertz, murderer, incendiary, thief, and spy for Imperial Germany, was dead.

Dead, while the arch-spies sought him in vain. Dead, while Bernstorff and Albert gathered for their last conference. Dead, while all America thrilled at the thought of war and while the agents of Germany made their final plans for the last concerted blow against America under their personal management.

They had come to New York from Washington, after bidding farewell there. At the pier, their baggage had been loaded aboard the *Frederik VIII*, ready for the trip to Germany, via Copenhagen, when Bernstorff looked at his watch, then turned to Albert.

"You are sure that every preparation has been made?" he asked.

"Quite sure. I was at the shop last night and was told that they would work all night to finish their supply of bombs."

"But you have received no report this morning?"

"No."

Bernstorff walked to the window.

"It is a grey, gloomy day," he said. "The red glow of fire would throw quite a reflection against those clouds."

"And it would also silhouette the Statue of Liberty quite nicely."

"Yes," laughed Bernstorff, "by the way, I wonder what His Highness will do with the Statue of Liberty when we invade America?"

"By the time our navy finishes bombarding New York, there will be little of it left," answered Albert tersely. "But you were talking about my bomb-makers."

"Yes." Bernstorff looked out again at the clouds. "As I said, the glow of fires and explosions will form a pretty sight against those clouds. It will be very nice for us to look at as we steam away. Therefore—" and he snapped open his watch—"I would suggest that you hurry out there for a final report and join me in the cabin of the *Frederik VIII*."

"Very well, your excellency."

Albert departed, but did not notice that an automobile followed him as he hurried away from the hotel.

An hour later, Dr. Albert stood in a ramshackle building at the outskirts of town, giving his final instructions.

"Remember, that as soon as Ambassador Bernstorff and myself are safely on board the *Frederik VIII*, you are to start a bomb campaign in the harbor of New York that will eclipse anything ever attempted before," he said. "Do you understand?"

"Perfectly."

"This must be greater even than the Black Tom explosion." Dr. Albert was insistent upon his point. "There are munitions ships on the Jersey shore. See that each one of them receives a bomb. Their explosion alone should wreck many of the skyscrapers in the business district of New York and cause a panic there. And America must be made to realize that she is fighting a

stubborn enemy—one that will stop at nothing. And you—" he pointed a finger at the captain of the bomb-throwers—"you must be the first to demonstrate the iron will and steel fighting spirit that will enable Imperial Germany to conquer the World!"

"It shall be done."

"Very well. The Ambassador and myself will watch for the explosions as the *Frederik VIII* starts on its journey across the Atlantic."

"You shall not be disappointed."

Dr. Albert bowed. Then, smiling and happy, he departed, not knowing that from the shelter of a doorway, the keen eyes of Dixie Mason had watched his every movement. Instead he felt quite safe, and satisfied as his limousine rolled back toward town. He was leaving America. Leaving after years of intrigue, of dastardly connivance against a country that had striven to be friendly. Leaving—and in departing, taking with him the assurance that his devilish ideas of murder and devastation would be carried forth to the utmost, even after he no longer took an active part.

Leaving America! The thought was in Bernstorff's mind as he stood in his stateroom of the *Frederick VIII*. All about him were flowers and wreaths, the gifts of pro-Germans and of misguided Americans who had refused to believe the revelations that had been brought forth against Germany. Crowds were about the Ambassador, who stood shaking hands with the men and women he had met during the years of his stay in America as Germany's Ambassador and plotter. A few crocodile tears were in his eyes.

"No one can ever know how it grieves me to leave America!" he was saying. "No one can ever know the aching that is in my heart that this unpleasantness has arisen between two great countries. It was my dream that we should have remained friends—and it shall always be my desire never to see war come between America and Germany. Ah, America—how I hate to leave you!" And in a large measure, Ambassador Bernstorff was telling the truth. For had not America furnished him a most amusing sequence of entertainment? Had not one "performance" after another been staged for him by his hard working spies, ranging from the killing of women and children to the mere destruction of factories, shipping and warehouses, filled with bandages and surcease of pain for the wounded—the stores of the Red Cross? Had he not gained

amusement every day in his statements of neutrality and friendliness, as he met the correspondents in the Embassy? Yes, it was more than painful for him to leave America. There would be no mass of spy code messages for him to read each morning. There would be no morning copy of the newspaper to gloat over—as its columns told of the destruction wrought by the bomb-planters of the German spy system.

"Ah, America," he whined again, "how it grieves me to say goodbye!"

Then he turned at the sight of Albert.

"Well?" he asked.

"Everything is arranged, your Excellency."

"Good!" Then Bernstorff turned and masked his smile with a blinking of his crocodile-tear smeared eyes, as a new shower of flowers was tossed at him from pro-Germans on every side. Suddenly he stared. Harrison Grant of the Criminology Club was facing him, and holding forth a small package.

"Since everyone is making presents, Your Excellency," said the detective with the slightest tinge of sarcasm, "I thought it only right that I should make one also."

He handed the package to the Ambassador. Wonderingly, Bernstorff unfastened the string, and took the paper from the package. Then he stared.

"Checkers!" he said wryly.

"Yes, Your Excellency," answered the president of the Criminology Club, with a laugh, "it's your move, you know."

And before the Ambassador could reply, Harrison Grant was gone, to reach the deck of the ship and make his way to the dock. There he saw the hurrying form of Dixie Mason—and rushed to her.

"What's wrong?"

"A great deal. There's a plot against the harbor. Where are your men?"

"Scattered about the dock. I can gather them all up in five minutes."

"Hurry! There is no time to lose!"

A rush by Harrison Grant. A hasty summoning of members of the

Criminology Club.

Then, as the *Frederik VIII* moved down the harbor of New York, Harrison Grant, Sisson, Cavanaugh, Stewart, Dixie Mason and other members of the Secret Service, leaped into automobiles, to be rushed far into the outskirts of town.

In the mangy room of the bomb-maker, the captain was giving his final instructions.

"Has everyone a bomb?"

"Yes."

"Very well. Remember what Dr. Albert told us—this explosion must be greater even than the Black Tom. We must see that each bomb accomplishes more than its object—it must be placed in such a way that it will either start fires following the explosion or cause other detonations as a result of its own. For instance, the munitions ships. The explosion of the bomb will cause an explosion in the hold of the ship where guncotton, nitro-glycerin and T.N.T. are stored. Then there are the powder factories on the Jersey side, to say nothing of the chemical works. See that they are all destroyed. Remember always, that America soon is to be at war with Germany, and we must work while there are still no provisions made for the safety of the industries. America must be crippled even before it has a chance to enter this war. So not one of you must fail! Now, go!"

The men crowded forth. They hurried down the stairway—into the apparently empty hall beneath. And then——

From doorways, from beneath the stairs, from outside, from everywhere came members of the Secret Service, to leap upon the bomb carriers, to take them by surprise, to carry them off their feet by the suddenness and severity of their attack. One by one they were downed. Then, three men were sent up the stairway by Harrison Grant to capture the old bomb-maker himself and the remainder of his supplies.

Here and there about the hall, the fight surged. Harrison Grant suddenly swerved from his attack upon a bomb-planter, as another leaped upon him from the rear, and, clutching his hands tight about the detective's throat, sought to choke the life from him. Grant gagged; his eyes bulged. He struggled to stiffen the cords of his neck against the clutching hands from the

rear. But in vain. The world began to grow dark. He wavered—he stumbled—then suddenly felt the hands loosen their grip as there came the cracking sound of a blow. Two arms closed about him. Harrison Grant opened his eyes—to look into those of Dixie Mason.

"I got him," was her simple announcement. "Hit him on the head with the butt of my revolver. I was afraid to shoot—you both were so close together."

"Good little Dixie!" Grant pressed her hand, then hurried to the fight again.

But the fight was over. The bomb-planters had been subdued. Outside there sounded the clanging of a patrol wagon. That afternoon, on the deck of the *Frederik VIII*, Bernstorff and Albert watched in vain for the sight of explosion or of fire. Germany's last great destructive plot against America had failed.

Weeks later, Harrison Grant and Dixie Mason stood on the balcony of the Criminology Club, looking down into the street below. Here, there, everywhere, newsboys were shouting the news of the declaration of war. From far away, came the sound of a military band. Then, marching down the street, their files straight and clean, their arms shining brightly in the sun, their strong, sturdy forms showing the sleek-muscled strength that only American fighters possess, marched the crack Seventh Regiment of New York on its spring parade. Harrison Grant watched, his eyes gleaming happily.

"Dixie," he said at last, "I never saw anything to give me so much happiness—and yet, so much sorrow."

"And why the sorrow?" She looked at him quickly.

"Because, now that we have finished our work for the safety of America at home, we must part. I received this morning my Commission as a captain in the Army Intelligency. My work will be abroad."

"And mine will be abroad also," said Dixie quietly.

"Abroad? You——?"

"In the Red Cross."

Harrison Grant laughed happily. They had stepped into the club-rooms now, the heavy curtains of the windows falling behind them. Grant took the hands

of the girl he loved into his—and held them tight.

"Do you know——" and there was a strange little halting in his voice, "I believe that I could make a record for myself if I only knew that——"

"What, Harry?"

"That—well, that there was a Mrs. Harrison Grant watching my progress and _____"

"Well?" Dixie was smiling. Grant slowly drew her toward him. "Well?" she asked again.

Harrison Grant stammered.

"And—and, oh, you know what I mean!" Then, his words failing, he looked quickly over his shoulder, saw that no one was watching, drew the little Secret Service girl tight into his embrace—and kissed her.

THE END.

The story of "The Eagle's Eye" has been produced in motion pictures by the Wharton Releasing Corporation.

SEE THE FILM

Transcribers note:

Original spelling has been retained.

I have used von when the character's full name is given e.g. Heinric von Lertz and Von when only his family name is used, with or without a title e.g. Von Lertz, Ambassador Von Bernstorff.

*** END OF THE PROJECT GUTENBERG EBOOK THE EAGLE'S EYE

Updated editions will replace the previous one—the old editions will be renamed.

Creating the works from print editions not protected by U.S. copyright law means that no one owns a United States copyright in these works, so the Foundation (and you!) can copy and distribute it in the United States without permission and without paying copyright royalties. Special rules, set forth in the General Terms of Use part of this license, apply to copying and distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works to protect the PROJECT GUTENBERG™ concept and trademark. Project Gutenberg is a registered trademark, and may not be used if you charge for an eBook, except by following the terms of the trademark license, including paying royalties for use of the Project Gutenberg trademark. If you do not charge anything for copies of this eBook, complying with the trademark license is very easy. You may use this eBook for nearly any purpose such as creation of derivative works, reports, performances and research. Project Gutenberg eBooks may be modified and printed and given away—you may do practically ANYTHING in the United States with eBooks not protected by U.S. copyright law. Redistribution is subject to the trademark license, especially commercial redistribution.

START: FULL LICENSE

THE FULL PROJECT GUTENBERG LICENSE

PLEASE READ THIS BEFORE YOU DISTRIBUTE OR USE THIS WORK

To protect the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting the free distribution of electronic works, by using or distributing this work (or any other work associated in any way with the phrase “Project Gutenberg”), you agree to comply with all the terms of the Full Project Gutenberg™ License available with this file or online at www.gutenberg.org/license.

Section 1. General Terms of Use and Redistributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

1.A. By reading or using any part of this Project Gutenberg™ electronic work, you indicate that you have read, understand, agree to and accept all the terms of this license and intellectual property (trademark/copyright) agreement. If you do not agree to abide by all the terms of this agreement, you must cease using and return or destroy all copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in your possession. If you paid a fee for obtaining a copy of or access to a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work and you do not agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement, you may obtain a refund from the person or entity to whom you paid the fee as set forth in paragraph 1.E.8.

1.B. “Project Gutenberg” is a registered trademark. It may only be used on or associated in any way with an electronic work by people who agree to be bound by the terms of this agreement. There are a few things that you can do with most Project Gutenberg™ electronic works even without complying with the full terms of this agreement. See paragraph 1.C below. There are a lot of things you can do with Project Gutenberg™ electronic works if you follow the terms of this agreement and help preserve free future access to Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. See paragraph 1.E below.

1.C. The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation (“the Foundation” or PGLAF), owns a compilation copyright in the collection of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works. Nearly all the individual works in the collection are in the public domain in the United States. If an individual work is unprotected by copyright law in the United States and you are located in the United States, we do not claim a right to prevent you from copying, distributing, performing, displaying or creating derivative works based on the work as long as all references to Project Gutenberg are removed. Of course, we hope that you will support the Project Gutenberg™ mission of promoting free access to electronic works by freely sharing Project Gutenberg™ works in compliance with the terms of this agreement for keeping the Project Gutenberg™ name associated with the work. You can easily comply with the terms of this agreement by keeping this work in the same format with its attached full Project Gutenberg™ License when you share it without charge with others.

1.D. The copyright laws of the place where you are located also govern what you can do with this work. Copyright laws in most countries are in a constant state of change. If you are outside the United States, check the laws of your country in addition to the terms of this agreement before downloading, copying, displaying, performing, distributing or creating derivative works based on this work or any other Project Gutenberg™ work. The Foundation makes no representations concerning the copyright status of any work in any country other than the United States.

1.E. Unless you have removed all references to Project Gutenberg:

1.E.1. The following sentence, with active links to, or other immediate access to, the full Project Gutenberg™ License must appear prominently whenever any copy of a Project Gutenberg™ work (any work on which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” appears, or with which the phrase “Project Gutenberg” is associated) is accessed, displayed, performed, viewed, copied or distributed:

This eBook is for the use of anyone anywhere in the United States and most other parts of the world at no cost and with almost no restrictions whatsoever. You may copy it, give it away or re-use it

under the terms of the Project Gutenberg License included with this eBook or online at www.gutenberg.org. If you are not located in the United States, you will have to check the laws of the country where you are located before using this eBook.

1.E.2. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is derived from texts not protected by U.S. copyright law (does not contain a notice indicating that it is posted with permission of the copyright holder), the work can be copied and distributed to anyone in the United States without paying any fees or charges. If you are redistributing or providing access to a work with the phrase “Project Gutenberg” associated with or appearing on the work, you must comply either with the requirements of paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 or obtain permission for the use of the work and the Project Gutenberg™ trademark as set forth in paragraphs 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.3. If an individual Project Gutenberg™ electronic work is posted with the permission of the copyright holder, your use and distribution must comply with both paragraphs 1.E.1 through 1.E.7 and any additional terms imposed by the copyright holder. Additional terms will be linked to the Project Gutenberg™ License for all works posted with the permission of the copyright holder found at the beginning of this work.

1.E.4. Do not unlink or detach or remove the full Project Gutenberg™ License terms from this work, or any files containing a part of this work or any other work associated with Project Gutenberg™.

1.E.5. Do not copy, display, perform, distribute or redistribute this electronic work, or any part of this electronic work, without prominently displaying the sentence set forth in paragraph 1.E.1 with active links or immediate access to the full terms of the Project Gutenberg™ License.

1.E.6. You may convert to and distribute this work in any binary, compressed, marked up, nonproprietary or proprietary form, including any word processing or hypertext form. However, if you provide access to or distribute copies of a Project Gutenberg™ work in a format other than “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other format used in the official version

posted on the official Project Gutenberg™ website (www.gutenberg.org), you must, at no additional cost, fee or expense to the user, provide a copy, a means of exporting a copy, or a means of obtaining a copy upon request, of the work in its original “Plain Vanilla ASCII” or other form. Any alternate format must include the full Project Gutenberg™ License as specified in paragraph 1.E.1.

1.E.7. Do not charge a fee for access to, viewing, displaying, performing, copying or distributing any Project Gutenberg™ works unless you comply with paragraph 1.E.8 or 1.E.9.

1.E.8. You may charge a reasonable fee for copies of or providing access to or distributing Project Gutenberg™ electronic works provided that:

- You pay a royalty fee of 20% of the gross profits you derive from the use of Project Gutenberg™ works calculated using the method you already use to calculate your applicable taxes. The fee is owed to the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, but he has agreed to donate royalties under this paragraph to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation. Royalty payments must be paid within 60 days following each date on which you prepare (or are legally required to prepare) your periodic tax returns. Royalty payments should be clearly marked as such and sent to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation at the address specified in Section 4, “Information about donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation.”
- You provide a full refund of any money paid by a user who notifies you in writing (or by e-mail) within 30 days of receipt that s/he does not agree to the terms of the full Project Gutenberg™ License. You must require such a user to return or destroy all copies of the works possessed in a physical medium and discontinue all use of and all access to other copies of Project Gutenberg™ works.
- You provide, in accordance with paragraph 1.F.3, a full refund of any money paid for a work or a replacement copy, if a defect in the electronic work is discovered and reported to you within 90 days of receipt of the work.

- You comply with all other terms of this agreement for free distribution of Project Gutenberg™ works.

1.E.9. If you wish to charge a fee or distribute a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work or group of works on different terms than are set forth in this agreement, you must obtain permission in writing from the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the manager of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark. Contact the Foundation as set forth in Section 3 below.

1.F.

1.F.1. Project Gutenberg volunteers and employees expend considerable effort to identify, do copyright research on, transcribe and proofread works not protected by U.S. copyright law in creating the Project Gutenberg™ collection. Despite these efforts, Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, and the medium on which they may be stored, may contain “Defects,” such as, but not limited to, incomplete, inaccurate or corrupt data, transcription errors, a copyright or other intellectual property infringement, a defective or damaged disk or other medium, a computer virus, or computer codes that damage or cannot be read by your equipment.

1.F.2. LIMITED WARRANTY, DISCLAIMER OF DAMAGES - Except for the “Right of Replacement or Refund” described in paragraph 1.F.3, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, the owner of the Project Gutenberg™ trademark, and any other party distributing a Project Gutenberg™ electronic work under this agreement, disclaim all liability to you for damages, costs and expenses, including legal fees. YOU AGREE THAT YOU HAVE NO REMEDIES FOR NEGLIGENCE, STRICT LIABILITY, BREACH OF WARRANTY OR BREACH OF CONTRACT EXCEPT THOSE PROVIDED IN PARAGRAPH 1.F.3. YOU AGREE THAT THE FOUNDATION, THE TRADEMARK OWNER, AND ANY DISTRIBUTOR UNDER THIS AGREEMENT WILL NOT BE LIABLE TO YOU FOR ACTUAL, DIRECT, INDIRECT, CONSEQUENTIAL, PUNITIVE OR INCIDENTAL DAMAGES EVEN IF YOU GIVE NOTICE OF THE POSSIBILITY OF SUCH

DAMAGE.

1.F.3. LIMITED RIGHT OF REPLACEMENT OR REFUND - If you discover a defect in this electronic work within 90 days of receiving it, you can receive a refund of the money (if any) you paid for it by sending a written explanation to the person you received the work from. If you received the work on a physical medium, you must return the medium with your written explanation. The person or entity that provided you with the defective work may elect to provide a replacement copy in lieu of a refund. If you received the work electronically, the person or entity providing it to you may choose to give you a second opportunity to receive the work electronically in lieu of a refund. If the second copy is also defective, you may demand a refund in writing without further opportunities to fix the problem.

1.F.4. Except for the limited right of replacement or refund set forth in paragraph 1.F.3, this work is provided to you 'AS-IS', WITH NO OTHER WARRANTIES OF ANY KIND, EXPRESS OR IMPLIED, INCLUDING BUT NOT LIMITED TO WARRANTIES OF MERCHANTABILITY OR FITNESS FOR ANY PURPOSE.

1.F.5. Some states do not allow disclaimers of certain implied warranties or the exclusion or limitation of certain types of damages. If any disclaimer or limitation set forth in this agreement violates the law of the state applicable to this agreement, the agreement shall be interpreted to make the maximum disclaimer or limitation permitted by the applicable state law. The invalidity or unenforceability of any provision of this agreement shall not void the remaining provisions.

1.F.6. INDEMNITY - You agree to indemnify and hold the Foundation, the trademark owner, any agent or employee of the Foundation, anyone providing copies of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works in accordance with this agreement, and any volunteers associated with the production, promotion and distribution of Project Gutenberg™ electronic works, harmless from all liability, costs and expenses, including legal fees, that arise directly or indirectly from any of the following which you do or cause to occur: (a) distribution of this or any Project Gutenberg™ work, (b) alteration, modification, or additions or deletions to any Project

Gutenberg™ work, and (c) any Defect you cause.

Section 2. Information about the Mission of Project Gutenberg™

Project Gutenberg™ is synonymous with the free distribution of electronic works in formats readable by the widest variety of computers including obsolete, old, middle-aged and new computers. It exists because of the efforts of hundreds of volunteers and donations from people in all walks of life.

Volunteers and financial support to provide volunteers with the assistance they need are critical to reaching Project Gutenberg™'s goals and ensuring that the Project Gutenberg™ collection will remain freely available for generations to come. In 2001, the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation was created to provide a secure and permanent future for Project Gutenberg™ and future generations. To learn more about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation and how your efforts and donations can help, see Sections 3 and 4 and the Foundation information page at www.gutenberg.org.

Section 3. Information about the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

The Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation is a non-profit 501(c)(3) educational corporation organized under the laws of the state of Mississippi and granted tax exempt status by the Internal Revenue Service. The Foundation's EIN or federal tax identification number is 64-6221541. Contributions to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation are tax deductible to the full extent permitted by U.S. federal laws and your state's laws.

The Foundation's business office is located at 809 North 1500 West, Salt Lake City, UT 84116, (801) 596-1887. Email contact links and up to date contact information can be found at the Foundation's website and

official page at www.gutenberg.org/contact

Section 4. Information about Donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation

Project Gutenberg™ depends upon and cannot survive without widespread public support and donations to carry out its mission of increasing the number of public domain and licensed works that can be freely distributed in machine-readable form accessible by the widest array of equipment including outdated equipment. Many small donations (\$1 to \$5,000) are particularly important to maintaining tax exempt status with the IRS.

The Foundation is committed to complying with the laws regulating charities and charitable donations in all 50 states of the United States. Compliance requirements are not uniform and it takes a considerable effort, much paperwork and many fees to meet and keep up with these requirements. We do not solicit donations in locations where we have not received written confirmation of compliance. To SEND DONATIONS or determine the status of compliance for any particular state visit www.gutenberg.org/donate.

While we cannot and do not solicit contributions from states where we have not met the solicitation requirements, we know of no prohibition against accepting unsolicited donations from donors in such states who approach us with offers to donate.

International donations are gratefully accepted, but we cannot make any statements concerning tax treatment of donations received from outside the United States. U.S. laws alone swamp our small staff.

Please check the Project Gutenberg web pages for current donation methods and addresses. Donations are accepted in a number of other ways including checks, online payments and credit card donations. To donate, please visit: www.gutenberg.org/donate.

Section 5. General Information About Project Gutenberg™ electronic works

Professor Michael S. Hart was the originator of the Project Gutenberg™ concept of a library of electronic works that could be freely shared with anyone. For forty years, he produced and distributed Project Gutenberg™ eBooks with only a loose network of volunteer support.

Project Gutenberg™ eBooks are often created from several printed editions, all of which are confirmed as not protected by copyright in the U.S. unless a copyright notice is included. Thus, we do not necessarily keep eBooks in compliance with any particular paper edition.

Most people start at our website which has the main PG search facility: www.gutenberg.org.

This website includes information about Project Gutenberg™, including how to make donations to the Project Gutenberg Literary Archive Foundation, how to help produce our new eBooks, and how to subscribe to our email newsletter to hear about new eBooks.