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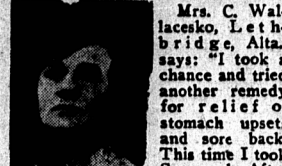
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Outpost In China

By Val Gielgud
Continued

"It's kind of her," said Gerald. "You both have some dinner here when Wu's gone, I hope."
"Thank you," said James. "We should like to."
He lit his pipe and puffed noisily. "Do you think Wu will see reason?" asked Gerald after a few moments of companionable silence. "That rather depends," said the missionary gravely, "on the way it's put to him."
Gerald bit his lip.
"You mean it depends on me?"
"Frankly," said Patrick James looking at him keenly, "it does."
"And frankly," retorted Gerald bitterly, "you haven't much confidence in the outcome!"
"I don't see why you should say that, Gerald."
"Well, it's pretty obvious," said Gerald, hardly bothering to disguise a sneer, "that I'm not up to coping with a situation—as Dale was, for example!"
But Patrick James was not a highly strung girl to allow himself to be easily irritated. Also he had a good deal of liking and sympathy for Gerald Havelock.
"Dale's a lot older than you are," he said soothingly. "And he knows China exceptionally well for an Englishman."
Gerald mustered up a smile.
"Your tact, padre, covers a multitude of sins," he said.
In his turn James smiled.
"Surely a large part of my job?" he suggested.
"I wish," muttered Gerald Havelock, "that I could put mine in a nutshell like that."
James leaned forward crossing his long legs.
"You mustn't get discouraged my dear Gerald. You've had bad luck all along, in getting the station just when the Japanese row has put the whole country on the jump. Dale had very little anti-foreign

TAKES A CHANCE WINS BACK HEALTH



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feeling to deal with. Besides, you and I share one advantage that he never had, poor devil!"
"And what's that?"
"He never had the luck to find a woman to face coming up here with him—like Janet, or your Sheila."
There was a little pause. Then Gerald burst into a roar of laughter, which somehow had nothing of amusement in its ugly sound.
"Why laugh?" asked James, showing signs of annoyance.
"My dear padre," retorted Gerald, "you've succeeded in showing me the funny side of my depression. I got my sense of humour back. I can't easily say how grateful I feel!"
James looked puzzled. But further awkward double meanings were interrupted by the distant clatter of horses' hoofs approaching at a quick trot out of the quickly-gathering darkness.
"Wu for a dollar," said James. "Now for it."
He turned towards the verandah, and so failed to see that Gerald Havelock's final act of preparation for his guest was to take an automatic pistol from a drawer in his

desk, and thrust it into the pocket of his jacket.

CHAPTER XV

BRIGANDS IN CONFERENCE

Behind the two men, as they waited, a couple of white-jacketed houseboys were lighting the lamps. They shuffled uneasily as they worked, and whispered nervously in carefully-lowered voices.
From outside the french window sounded a word of command, uttered in a singularly thin precise voice, and two armed men appeared on the verandah. They wore nondescript khaki uniforms, carried a rifle and an umbrella slung across their shoulders, and heavy Mauser pistols prominent in their belts. They wheeled inward to face each other, and waited impassively for their leader.
A moment later Wu walked in, his spurs clinking. He looked more like a figure out of a musical comedy than ever, in his big fur hat, with gold lace draped all over the breast of his tunic, and his great curved sabre tucked under his arm. He bowed low from the waist, and peered curiously at Gerald Havelock.
Gerald nodded stiffly.
"I am not late, I trust," he said.
"Not all General. You know Mr. James, I think?"
Wu smiled expansively, and stroked his thin silky moustache. "We are old friends—I hope," he said.
"You will have a drink after your long ride from the hills?" Gerald suggested, and noticed the missionary frowning.
General Wu sat down at the table. Behind him his guards sensibly relaxed, but kept their hands on the butts of their pistols.
"Later I shall be very glad, Mr. Havelock," said Wu, clasping his thin yellow fingers together on the table in front of him. "But you have a proverb in your country which greatly admire! Business before pleasure!"
Gerald coughed nervously, and complimented the General on the fluency of his English.
"I thought perhaps," said Wu slightly lifting one eyebrow, "that Mr. Dale—whose departure I so greatly regret—might have informed you that I hold degrees of the universities of Canton and San Francisco."
Gerald winced.
"You were good friends with Mr. Dale," he said, taking one of the other chairs. "I hope we may be friends also."
Wu studied his finger-nails, which were very long and pointed.
"We say in China," he observed, apparently to the world at large, "that a youth is to be regarded with respect. But also—admonish your friends and kindly try to lead them. If you find them impractical, stop."
This enigmatical pronouncement put an immediate stop to the slightly strained exchange of compliments.
"I suggest we get to business," said Patrick James gruffly.
"By all means," agreed Wu.
Gerald Havelock squared his shoulders. "What have you to say, General?" he said abruptly.
"Nothing," replied Wu blandly. "I believe a communication was delivered to you, Mr. Havelock. I see no change in the situation."
"I WILL RAID TAN FU"
"I am to take as serious then, General, your threat to burn and loot Tan Fu unless I pay you 50 thousand silver dollars on behalf of my company?"
Wu lowered his eyelids modestly.
"That," he said very quietly, "is so."
"But it's absurd—outrageous!"
"Superior men," remarked Wu, "according to our proverb in China, are not invariably virtuous."
James grinned, and his expression stung Gerald Havelock into asserting himself.
"It's not a question of virtue," he snapped. "It's a question of cash. I don't possess such a sum. It's not to be had."
"I am assured," said Wu blandly, "that its equivalent is in your godowns. Your company can send the money."
"You're pretty frank, General!"
"Sincerity," said Wu apologetically, "is of everything the beginning and the end. Without it there can be nothing."
"Then," said Gerald. "I'll be as sincere as you like! Your demand is absurd and I refuse it flatly! I've paid you more than enough money as it is."
James sat up startled.
"What on earth do you mean, Gerald? You haven't been paying —"
He stopped. Wu had lifted one hand, and was looking steadily at Gerald Havelock from under his lowered lids.
"I shall raid Tan Fu to-morrow at sundown," he said quietly.
To be continued

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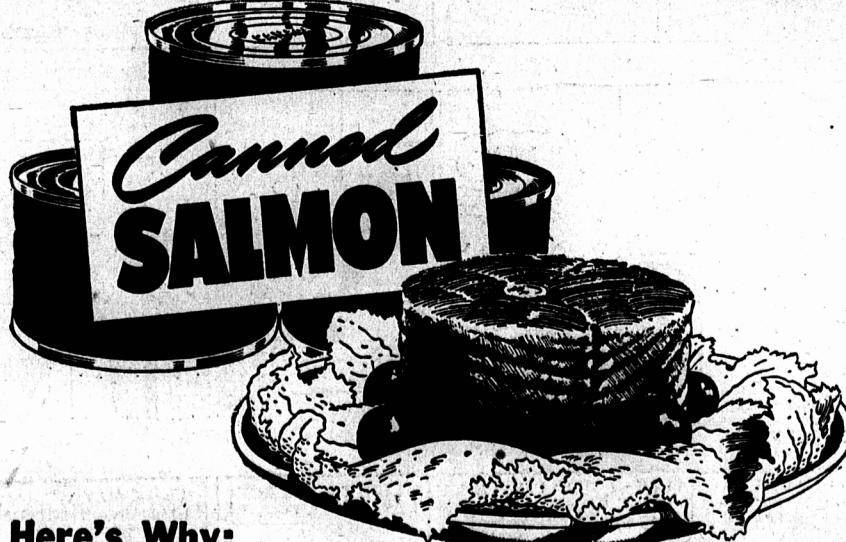
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ASSOCIATED SALMON CANNERS OF BRITISH COLUMBIA



New Wiltshire Lodge Meeting Held

The annual meeting of New Wiltshire Royal Scarlet Chapter was held in Barton Lodge Room, North Milton, on Jan. 18. W. Comp. Frank MacKenzie occupied the chair, with a large number of Companions from the different Lodges being present. The reports of the retiring officers showed the Chapter in a flourishing condition, financially and otherwise. The following show the new slate of officers duly elected and installed by Comp. Percy Hooper, Past W. Commander. W. Commander — Frank MacKenzie. Dep. Commander — Gerald Dollar. Chaplain — Ralph Burnett. Secretary — Andrew E. Dollar. Treasurer — Lindsey H. Coles. Marshal — Garth Hooper. 1st. Lect. — Cecil Simpson. 2nd. Lect. — W. B. Wood. 1st Conductor — Wilbur Robinson. 2nd Conductor John Pool. Herald — Lowell Wyand. Sentinel — Gerald Hooper. Auditors — M. E. MacSween and Chas. Price.

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