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THE BANK OF ALAMANCE

A MAKER OF HISTORY

By E. PHILLIPS OPPENHEIM.

Author of "The Master Mummer," "A Prince of Sinners," "Mysterious Mr. Sabin," "Anna the Adventuress," Etc.

Four nights ago!

cause only."

"You have sent-to the police?"

sleur the superintendent regards such

disappearances as these as due to one

Duncombe frowned, and something

flashed in his eyes which made the

manager very glad that he had not put

forward this suggestion on his own nc-

"With regard to the boy," he said,

"One moment, Sir George," the man-

trouble to me, and I made all possible

that on the day of her disappearance

mademoiselle had been told by one of

the attendants in the barber's shop,

who had waited upon her brother on

cafes for supper and that he had recom-

moiselle appears to have decided to go

there herself to make inquiries.

It was to there that she went.'

report, if you care to see it."

per and read it hastily:

best in the world!"

martre." he said.

as myself."

over some shops.

cierge.

combe rose from his chair.

The manager bowed.

shall be glad,'

"You have told the police this?"

"Yes, I have told them," the manager

answered dryly. "Here is their latest

Duncombe took the little slip of pa

Disappearance of Mile. Poynton From

England.—We regret to state no trace has been discovered of the missing young lady. JULES LEGARD,

"That was only issued a few hours

"And I thought." Duncombe said bit-

terly, "that the French police were the

The manager said nothing. Dun-

"I shall go myself to the Cafe Mont

myself of any further responsibility in

this matter. It has been a source of

much anxiety to the directors as well

Duncombe walked out of the room

and, putting on his coat again, called

for a petit volture. He gave the man

an address in the Rue St. Honore and

"Is M. Spencer in?" he asked the con-

He was directed to the first floor

An English manservant admitted him,

and a few moments later he was shak-

ing hands with a man who was seated

"Duncombe, by all that's wonderful!"

he exclaimed, holding out his hand.

Why, I thought that you had shaken

the dust of the city from your feet for-

ever and turned country squire. Sit

"First of all, am I disturbing you?"

"I've no press work tonight," he an

wered. "I've a clear hour to give you

"Two-twenty from Charing Cross,"

Duncombe answered. "I can't tell you

how thankful I am to find you in,

Spencer. I'm over on a very seriou

Spencer touched the bell. Cigars and

cigarettes, whisky and soda appeared

"Now help yourself and go ahead, old chap," his host declared. "I'm a

He proved himself so, sitting with

half closed eyes and an air of close at-

tention until he had heard the whole

story. He did not once interrupt, but

when Duncombe had finished he asked

this cafe where the boy disappeared?

Spencer sat up in his chair. His ex-

"The devil?" he murmured softly.

"Very well. It has an extraordinary

reputation. I am sorry to say it, Dun-

combe, but it is a very bad place for

your young friend to have disappeared

"In the first place, it is the resort of a good many of the most dangerous people in Europe people who play the game through to the end. It is a per-fect hothed of political intrigue, and it is under police protection."

"Police protection! A place like that!" Duncombe exclaimed. "Not as you and I understand it per-

on there in which the secret service police often take a hand. In return it

is generally hard to get at the botton

of any disappearance or even robberg there through the usual channels. To

than the ordinary night cafe of its sort, but I could think of a dozen men in Paris today who if they entered it

What did you say was the name of

matter, and I want your advice."

s though by magic.

"Cafe Montmartre."

"You know the place?"

question.

at any rate. When did you come?"

down. What will you have?"

Spencer shook his head.

before a table covered with loose sheet

police myself," he added, rising.

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"Old man," he said, "here's the truth: cipitated into a new world-a night-So far as a man can be said to have mare of horrors. He was no stranger fost his heart without rhyme or rea- in the city, and grim possibilities unson, I've lost mine to the girl of that

Andrew drew a quick breath. "Rubbish, George!" he exclaimed. 'Why, you never saw her. You don't

"It is quite true," Duncombe answered, "and yet I have seen her pic-

His friend laughed queerly. "You, George Duncombe, in love with

a picture! Stony hearted George we used to call you. I can't believe it. I can't take you seriously. It's all rot, you know, isn't it? It must be rot." "It sounds like it," Duncombe answered quietly. "Put It this way, if you like: I have seen a picture of the

woman whom if ever I meet I most surely shall love. What there is that speaks to me from that picture I do not know. You say that only life can beget love. Then there is that in the picture which points beyond. You see, I have talked like this in an attempt to be honest. You have told me that you care for her. Therefore I have told you these strange things. Now do you wish me to go to Paris? For If you say yes I shall surely go."

Again Andrew laughed, and this time his mirth sounded more natural.

"Let me see," he said. "We drank Pontet Canet for dinner. You refused liqueurs, but I think you drank two the night of his arrival, that he-M. glasses of port. George, what has come over you? What has stirred cafes for supper and that he had recomyour slow moving blood to fancies like mended the Cafe Montmartre. Madethese? Bah! We are playing with one another. Listen! For the sake of our friendship, George, I beg you to have no doubt that when she left the tomorrow and help Phyllis!" "You mean It?"

"God knows I do. If ever I took you seriously. George-if ever I feared to lose the woman I love-well, I should be a coward to rob her of help when she needs it so greatly for my own sake. Be her friend, George, and mine, For the rest the fates must provide!" "The fates!" Duncombe answered. "Aye, it seems to me that they have

been busy about my head tonight! It is settled then. I will go!" CHAPTER VI.

T precisely half past 9 on the following evening Duncombe alighted from his petit volture in the courtyard of the Grand hotel and, making his way into the office, engaged a room. And then he asked the question which a hundred times on the way over he had imagined himself asking. A man to whom nervousness in any shape was almost unknown, he found himself only able

the greatest difficulty. In a few moments he might see her. "You have a young English lady-Miss Poynton-staying here, I believe,"

to control his voice and manner with

"Can you tell me if she is in now?" The clerk looked at him with sudden interest.

"Miss Poynton is staying here, sir," he said. "I do not believe that she is in just now. Will you wait one moment?

He disappeared rapidly and was absent for several minutes. When he returned he came out into the reception hall.

"The manager would be much obliged if you would step into his office for a moment, sir," he said confidentially. "Will you come this way?" Duncombe followed him into a small

room behind the counter. A gray haired man rose from his desk and saluted him courteously. "Sir George Duncombe, I believe," he

said. "Will you kindly take a seat?" Duncombe did as he was asked. All the time he felt that the manager was scrutinizing him curiously. "Your clerk," he said, "told me that

you wished to speak to me." "Exactly," the manager answered. "You inquired when you came in for Miss Poynton. May I ask, are you a

"I am here on behalf of her friends," Duncombe answered. "I have letters to her."

The manager bowed gravely.

"I trust," he said. "that you will soon have an opportunity to deliver them. We are not, of course, responsible in any way for the conduct or doings of our clients here, but I am bound to say that both the young people of the name you mention have been the cause of much anxiety to us." "What do you mean?" Duncomb

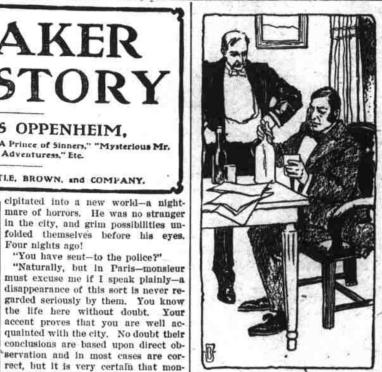
asked quickly. "Mr. Guy Poynton," the manager continued, "arrived here about three weeks ago and took a room for himself and one for his sister, who was to arrive on the following day. He went out that same evening and has never since returned. Of that fact you are no doubt aware."

Duncombe nodded impatiently. "Yes," he said; "that is why I am

"His sister arrived on the following day and was naturally very distressed. We did all that we could for her. We put her in the way of communicating with the police and the embassy here, and we gave her every assistance that was possible. Four nights ago mademoiselie went out late. Since then we have seen nothing of her. Mademoiselie also has disappeared." Duncombe sprung to his foot. He

was suddenly pale.
"Good God!" be exclaimed. "Four nights ago! She went out sione, you

"How else? She had no friends here Once or twice at my suggestion she has taken one of our guides with her, but she discontinued this as she fancied that it made her conspicuous. She was all the time going around to places making inquiries about her



Police protection! A place like that!

a newspaper correspondent, and he saw these things with the halo of melodrama around them. And yetfour nights ago! His face was white

and haggard. "The boy," he said, "could have been "this might be likely enough, but with no more than an ordinary visitor. He regard to the young lady it is of course had no great sum of money with him; wildly preposterous. I will go to the he had no secrets; he did not even speak the language. Surely he would have been too small fry for the inager continued. "The disappearance of the young lady was a source of much triguantes of such a place!"

"One would think so," Spencer wered musingly. "You are sure that inquiries within the hotel. I found he was only what you say?" "He was barely twenty-one." Dun combe answered, "and he had never

en out of England before." "What about the girl?" "She is two years older. It was he

first visit to Paris.' Spencer nodded. "The disappearance of the boy is of course, the riddle," he remarked. "If

ou solve that, you arrive also at his lister's whereabouts. Upon my word, alone-well, one could understand. The most beautiful ladies in Paris are at the Montmartre. No one is admitted who is not what they consider-chic! The great dancers and actresses are given handsome presents to show themselves there. On a representative evening it is probably the most brilliant little roomful in Europe. boy, of course, might have lost his head easily enough and then been ashamed to face his sister. But when you tell me of her disappearance, too you confound me utterly. Is she good

looking?" "Very!" "She would go there, of course, ask ing for her brother," Spencer continued thoughtfully. "An utterly absurd thing to do, but no doubt she did so, sure you that I was thunderstruck, but They would know who she was, and I'll do. I have my own two news grab bers at hand and nothing particular for them to do this evening. I'll, send them up to the Cafe Montmartre."

"It's awfully good of you, Spencer. was going myself," Duncombe said little doubtfully. .

"You idiot!" his friend said cheerful was driven to a block of flats there ly, yet with a certain emphasis. "English from your hair to your boots, you'd go in there and attempt to pump people who have been playing the game all their lives and who will give you exactly what information suited their books. They'd know what you were there for the moment you opened your mouth. Honestly, what manner good do you think that you could do? You'd learn what they chose to tell ou. If there's really anything serious behind all this, do you suppose it would be the truth?"

"You're quite right, I suppose," Dun combe admitted, "but it seems beast ly to be doing nothing."

"Better be doing nothing than doing harm," Spencer declared. "Look round the other cafes and the boulevards and come here at 11 tomorrow morning We'll breakfast together at Palllard's.

CHAPTER VII.

PENCER wrote out his lunche with the extreme care of the man to whom eating has passed to its proper place among the arts and left to Duncombe the momentous question of red wine or white. Finally he leaned back in his chair and looked thoughtfully across at his com-

laced me in a very painful position." Duncombe gianced up from his hors

"What do you mean?"

"I will explain," Speacer continued.
"You came to me last night with a
story in which I hope that I showed a
reasonable amount of interest, but in
which, as a matter of fact, I was not interested at all. Girls and boys who interested at all. Giris and boys who come to Paris for the first time in their lives unattended and find their way to the Cafe Montmartre and such places generally end up in the same place. It would have sounded brutal if I had added to your distress last night by talking like this, so I determined to put you in the way of finding out for yourself. I sent two of my most successful news securis to that most successful news scouts to that place last night, and I had not the slightest doubt as to the nature of the information which they would bring haps." Spencer explained. "There is no Scotland Yard extending a protecting arm over the place and that sect of thing, but the place is haunted by spies, and there are intrigues carried

mbe asked eagerly. "Nothing."

"Nothing? I don't understand. The must have heard that they had there, anyhow."
"They discovered nothing. You do

ot understand the significance of this. the casual visitor, and of course it at- I do. It means that I was mistaken, for one thing. Their disappearance has more in it than the usual significance. Evil may have come to them, but not the ordinary sort of evil, Listen. You the ordinary sort of evil. Listen. You happenings of that place on which the say that the police have disappointed and of silence has been put you will have of them in the morgue before a

are interested in this case and in the withholding of information concerning

"You are talking riddles to me, Spen cer," Duncombe declared. "Do you mean that the police in Paris may become the hired tools of malefactors?"

"Not altogether that," Spencer said, waving aside a dish presented before him by the head waiter himself with a little gesture of approval. "Not necessarily malefactors. But there are other powers to be taken into consideration, and most unaccountably your two young friends are in deeper water than your story led me to expect. Now, not another question, please, until you have tried that sauce. Absolute silence, if you please, for at least three

Duncombe obeyed with an ill grace. He had little curiosity as to its flavor and a very small appetite at all with the conversation in its present position. He waited for the stipulated time. however, and then leaned once more

"First I must have your judgment upon the sauce. Did you find enough

mussels?" "D- the sauce!" Duncombe answered. "Forgive me, Spencer, but this affair is, after all, a serious one to me. You say that your two scouts, as you call them. discovered nothing. Well, they only had one evening at it. Will they try again in other directions? Can I engage them to work for me? Money is absolutely no object."

Spencer shook his head. "Duncombe," he said, "you're going to think me a poor sort of friend, but the truth is best. You must not count upon me any more. I cannot lift even my little finger to help you. I can only give you advice if you want it."

"And that?" "Go back to England tomorrow. Chuck it altogether. You are up against too big a combination. You can do no one any good. You are a great deal more likely to come to harm yourself."

Duncombe was quite quiet for sev eral moments. When he spoke again, his manner had a new stiffness, "You have surprised me a good deal I must confess, Spencer," he said. "We

will abandon the subject." Spencer shrugged his shoulders. "I know how you're feeling, old chap," he said. "I can't help it. You inderstand my position here. I write a daily letter for the best paying and most generous newspaper in the world, and it is absolutely necessary that I keep hand in glove with the people in high places here. My position absolutely demands it, and my duty to my chief necessitates my putting all per sonal feeling on one side in a case like this when a conflict arises."

"But where," Duncombe asked, "does the conflict arise?"

"Here!" Spencer answered. "I re ceived a note this morning from a great personnge in this country to whom I am under more obligations than any other breathing man, requesting me to refrain from making any further inquiries or assisting any one else to make them in this matter. I can asthe note is in my pocket at the present

"Does it mention them by name?" "The exact words are," Spencer an swered, "'respecting the reported dis-Guy Poynton, and his sister.' This will just show you how much you have to hope for from the police, for the person whose signature is at the foot of

obedience of the whole system." Duncombe's cheeks were a little flushed. He was British to the backbone, and his obstinacy was being

"The more reason," he said quietly, "so far as I can see, that I should continue my independent efforts with such belp as I can secure. This girl and boy are fellow country people, and I haven't any intention of leaving them in the clutches of any brutal gang of Frenchmen into whose hands they may have got. I shall go on doing what

The journalist shrugged his shoul-

"I can't help sympathiaing with you, Duncombe," he said, "but keep rea-sonable. You know your Paris well enough to understand that you haven't a thousand to one chance. Besides, Frenchmen are not brutal. If the boy got into a scrape, it was probably his

"And the girl? What of her? Am to leave her to the tender mercies of whatever particular crew of black-guards may have got, her into their power?"

power?"
"You are needlessly melodramatic,"
Spencer answered. "I will admit, of
course, that her position may be an
unfortunate one, but the personage
whom I have the honor to call my
friend does not often protect blackguards. Be reasonable, Duncombel
These young people are not relatives
of yours, are they?"
"No?"

lady, for instance?"

Duncombe looked up, and his face was set in grim and dogged lines. He

"The young lady," he said, "is, I pray heaven, my future wife!"

"I had no idea, though perhaps I ough to have guessed. silence for some time except for a few peneral remarks. But after the coffee

"I shall go to the Cafe Montm

myself tonight. At such a place there must be hangers on and parasites who see something of the game. I shall try to come into touch with them. I am rich enough to outbid the others who exact their silence."

"You must be rich enough to buy their lies and it.

tempting any one to betray the inner

combe said coldly. "I am going to stuff my pockets with money tonight, and I shall bid high. I shall leave word at the hotel where I am going, If anything happens to me there-well, I don't think the Cafe Montmartre

will nourish afterward " "Duncombe" his friend said gravely, "nothing will happen to you at the Cafe Montmartre Nothing ever does happen to any one there - You remember poor De Laursau?" "Quite wel! He was stabood by a

girl in the Rue Pigalle." "He was stanced in the Cafe Montmartre, but his body was found in the Rue Pigatle. Then there was the Vicomte de Sauvinne "He was found dead in his study-

poisoned. "He was found there, yes, but the oolson was given to him in the Cafe Montmertre, and it was there that he died. I am behind the scenes in some of these matters, but I know enough to hold my tongue, or my London letter wouldn't be worth a pound a week. I am giving myself away to you now. Duncombe. 1 am risking a position

things, and you must do as I tell you. Go back to London!" Duncombe laughed as he rose to his

"Not though the vicomte's fate is to be mine tonight," he answered: "The worse hell this place is the worse the crew it must shelter. I should never hold my head up again if I sneaked off home and left the girl in their hands. I don't see how you can even suggest

"Only because you can't do the least good," Spencer answered. "And, besides, don't run away with a false impression. The place is dangerous only or certain people. The authorities don't protect murderers or thieves except under special circumstances. The vicomte's murderer and De Laursan's were brought to justice. Only they keep the name of the place out of it always. Tourists in shoals visit it and visit it in safety every evening. They pay fancy prices for what they have but I think they get their money's worth. But for certain classes of pec ple it is the decoy house of Europe. Foreign spies have babbled away their secrets there, and the greatest criminals of the world have whispered away their lives to some fair daughter of Judas at those tables. I, who am behind the scenes, tell you these things, Duncombe."

"Tomorrow," he said, "you may add mother victim to your chamber of hor

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

POOR ROADS PENALTY.

Withdrawal of Rural Free Deliver Service Where Highways Are Bad. Five rural free delivery routes in dichigan have been discontinued, and it is announced that the government will look more carefully to the enforce ment of its rule regarding the roads over which rural free delivery is established, says the Motor News. present requirement is: "Roads trav ersed shall be kept in good condition and unobstructed by gates. There mus be no unbridged creeks or streams not

fordable at any season of the year." In many cases the residents along proposed routes have made improve ments that enable them to obtain rural delivery service, but sometimes the efforts to keep up the roads are re laxed. But the government has de cided that unless the roads traversed by the carriers are properly maintained the service will be withdrawn.

The postoffice department now calls on the carriers for reports on the roads d will stop the service where the highways in question are bad. The 35,973 rural delivery carriers now em ployed cover 863,363 miles daily, and is unreasonable to expect them to contend with neglected roads or work for communities lacking the enterprise to keep their common high

ways in decent shape. If a route is discontinued the inhab itants themselves will be to blame, for if alive to their own interests and their duty to the public they would give their roads vigorous and constant attention. The idea that a route one anthorized is necessarily permanent a mistake. Advice on the best road methods is supplied by the agricultural departments, and a neighborhood that oses its rural delivery must itself bea the discredit for so unpleasant and hu-

Illinois Farmers For Better Roadways A movement is on foot among farmers of southern Illinois to this year begin the building of hard rock roads, something after the style of highway adamantizing used in parts of Kentucky and Tennessee, says a special dispatch from Carmi, Ill., to the St. Louis Globe-Democrat. Under a state provision made feasible by the hard roads commission the penal insti-tutions of the state are required to furnish rock to all township sloners who apply. By having the conviets crush the rock, which abounds in many parts of the state, the hard roads commission hopes to facilitate and hasten the improvement of the highways of the state, particularly in

Olled Reads In Kentucky. In Fayette county, Ky., more than 100 miles of roads are said to have been treated with asphalt base oil, says the Municipal Journal and Engineer. Macadam roads built five and six years ago are amoother and harder today than when first completed, and teday than when first completed, and not a penny has been spent on the roadways for repair. The county judge states that the average cost per year per mile for repairs of the Tate Creek pike had been \$15 and that all of this money had, been expended in hesping the drains open and clean. Not a pound of metal had been added in four years. An application of oil when the road was completed and one thereafter had produced this result.

Itch cured in 30 minutes by Woolford's Canitary Lotion. Never fails. Sold by J. C. Simmons Drug Co., MENACE TO GOOD ROADS.

Agricultural Department Trying to Stop Their Destruction by Autos. Automobiles, in addition to becoming almost as deadly as trolley cars, are rulning the roads of the country, says a Washington special dispatch to the New York World. It is the best roads and those on which the most money has been spent that are being ruined, as it only is on these that the automobilists go.

The problem is a serious one, and Logan W. Page, director of public roads of the department of agriculture, is making an investigation of the subject. The roadmaking experts of his bureau are experimenting with all sorts of material in the hope of finding something that will prevent the roads

from "raveling." Director Page in discussing this problem before the committee on expenditures in the department of agriculture made this significant statement:

"One of the most difficult proble which road builders have to meet now is due to the greatly increased automobile traffic. It is affecting most the which it has taken me twenty years states that have spent the largest sums to secure. I've got to tell you these of money on their roads, because they have the greatest number of automo biles on them. With an ideally constructed stone road the qualities of the rock should be so adjusted to the traffic to which it is subjected that just enough fine dust is worn off to cement

the larger fragments together. "The automobile does not wear off any fine dust. The wind and rain are taking away the original binder and that derived from the Iron tired vehicles that go over it. The automobile loosens the surface of the road.

"These heavy machines going at high speed create a vacuum behind them which sucks up the dust and throws it in the air and loosens the roadbed, and it soon 'ravels,' as the road builder calls it-gets loose and goes to pieces It is the most expensive roads that are thus affected."

The bureau has decided that if these macadam or stone roads are to be per manent the surface must be treated with some material that will keep the dust down and preserve it as a cement to bind the road. Experiments have been made with oils which have an asphaltum basis, and it has been found that with an asphaltum base of 30 per cent and over they help some. Crude tar and other materials have been used, but nothing quite satisfactory has yet been found.

His Pears.

A distinguished lawyer of Indiana when a straggling young attorney had a client whose mental soundness was questioned. There was a lunacy inquiry, and the client was adjudged insane. The squire asked

"Do you wish to appeal this case which has been decided by a jury of your client's peers?"

"No," replied the young lawyer. "Since your honor says that the jurymen are his peers, I think we will let it go at that."—New York Sun.

Cash Terms.

A .- You have called me a swindler, and I am not going to stand it. I shall go to law and make you smart for it. B .- All right.

A .- You will have to pay a fine of at least 50 marks. B .- You are quite at liberty to take any course you think proper. A.-Look here! Tomorrow have a payment to make. If you will settle up at once I will allow

you 5 per cent off!-Berlin Journal.

The Rival Hairdressers. One of two hairdressers by way of advertising himself cuts his hair in the most faultless manner, according to the latest fashion plate. The other, on the contrary, cuts his in the most clumsy way imaginable. The first customer who entered his shop did not fail to take him to task about it. "How in the world, being yourself a barber, do you have your

hair so badly cut?" "Why, sir, the reason is simple enough. I cannot possibly cut my, hair myself, but am obliged to have recourse to my colleague over the way, and he is such a duffer!"

'And I suppose you cut his in turn?" "Of course. And you can judge for yourself whether he oughtn't to be satisfied."-Rome Journal.

saved," said an old lady, "but for my part I hope for better things."



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