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Then, leaving his friend, he rained a loud tattoo upon the door.

Suddenly, the door opened, and he found himself confronted by an exceedingly pretty girl. It was Estelle.

In a few breathless sentences, he explained the reason of his visit.

"My friend has had an accident—sprained his ankle. May I bring him in whilst I go to fetch a doctor?"

"Of course!"

Estelle, together with her two sisters, followed Ben. Between the four of them, Cecil was rapidly transferred indoors and placed upon a sofa. By this time his ankle was becoming very painful.

"Keep it up, old man!" whispered Ben in his ear. "You're doing it very well!" Cecil was about to utter an indignant protest. It was only with great difficulty he restrained himself.

"You had better fetch the doctor right away," said Dorice to Ben. "There's Dr Renton. He would be best; besides he lives opposite. Meanwhile, we can bathe the foot. Estelle used to be a V.A.D." So Ben withdrew.

Not without difficulty Cecil succeeded in removing his shoe and sock. His ankle was considerably swollen, and there was an ugly, grey bruise rapidly coming up. Whilst he was examining his foot, Estelle entered the room with a basin of hot water.

"Put your foot in that!" she commanded.

Cecil did so.

"Ow!" he gasped, withdrawing his foot. "It's boiling! I'm scalded! Take it away!"

"Too hot?" asked Estelle sweetly.

Cecil lay back on the sofa. The joke, he considered, was wearing a bit thin. Estelle retired from the room, with the basin, followed by her sister Dorice, leaving Cecil alone with Ella.

The latter was regarding him with a slightly puzzled look. In view of what Estelle had overheard in the park on the previous day, she was baffled.

There could be no gainsaying the fact that Cecil really had hurt his ankle. Yet it was scarcely credible that he could have done it purposely, just to—to what? "I don't quite know what to make of you," she said presently.

"Eh?"

"If it wasn't for your swollen ankle, I should think you were a very good actor."

"I don't quite understand," said Cecil, hedging but feeling slightly uncomfortable.

Ella looked him in the eyes.

"Why did you do it?" she asked quietly.

Cecil coughed in an embarrassed fashion. Events were taking a course which he found a trifle overwhelming. First, he had sprained his ankle when he never meant to, and now it was clear that the girl suspected something.

"You had a very nice, little chat in the park yesterday," pursued the relentless Ella, "but—even trees have ears, you know!"

So that was it. They had been overheard! Cecil flushed. And any minute Ben might return with Reggie! Clearly, this was no place for him. The only course was flight, instant and ignominious flight. He would apologise, and take his departure—somehow!

He looked at Ella. As he did so, he realised the extraordinary depth and beauty in all the love passages in every story he had ever read. She was adorable.

Then a wave of self-pity swept over him.

"I'm sorry!" he mumbled. "I thought—well, it doesn't matter, anyhow." He sought to struggle to his feet. "I'll go!" he said.

Ella gazed at him whimsically.

"You can't," she said; "at least, not yet. You must get your ankle dressed first—by a real doctor. Even then, you won't be able to walk. We'll have to get a cab for you. And... are you so keen to go already, anyway?"

He shook his head, smiling sadly.

"Can you forgive me?" he asked.

She pondered, before replying.

"I might—if you will confess everything."

"Oh, yes!" he said. "I will."

When Ben and Reggie returned shortly afterwards, they received rather a jar. Their conduct was severely criticised and denounced by a chorus consisting of Estelle, Dorice, and Ella. After that, they were summarily dispatched for a doctor and a cab.

Still, even they admitted that a subsequent invitation to tea did much to balance matters. And, after all, their ed was accomplished. But, as Ella confessed afterwards, it was a shockingly roundabout method employed of getting acquainted.

The End.

N. Z. R. S. ASSOCIATION.

PARLIAMENETARY NOTES No. 13.

1.—To ask the Government whether they will this Session amend the law so as to allow titles of residence or business sites granted under the Mining Act to be accepted as security under the D.S.S. Act to enable returned soldiers to obtain repatriation benefits for the purchase or erection of homes or business premises. (Note.—Titles under the Mining Act are leasehold over which the Crown is usually the owner of the fee-simple, and therefore ought to rank high as security for advances to soldiers. The objection to making advances upon titles issued under the Mining Act would appear to be an account of such being liable to forfeiture for non-compliance with residence provisions; but as the Warden's Court which hears suits for forfeiture is a Court of Equity and not merely of law—and in practice forfeiture is rarely decreed, a fine being usual—the risk of loss of title is more imaginary than real especially where the rights of the Crown would be jeopardised).—Mr T. W. Rhodes, M.P.

Reply.—The Hon. Mr Guthrie replied that it was not proposed to amend the law in the direction suggested as it already gave great latitude in the way of making advances to discharged soldiers to enable them to acquire leases of any Crown or other land and to effect improvements on land so acquired. The question as to whether lands held on business or residence site licenses granted by warden under the Mining Act afforded sufficient security for the making of advances thereon and was one for consideration by the Land Boards as on them rested the responsibility of deciding in each case whether the tenure and terms on which lands were held were such as to warrant them making recommendation for advances thereon.

2.—To ask the Minister in charge of the D.S.S. Department whether he will favourably consider the question of allowing soldiers to make their payments at the post offices throughout the Dominion. (Note.—Under existing conditions all payments have to be made at Wellington for the Wellington district and although no exchange is charged it would be a great convenience to the soldiers to be able to pay at the local post office where they reside).—Mr Nash, M.P.

Reply.—The Hon. Mr Guthrie replied that this suggestion would receive consideration and negotiations would be opened with the Postal Department to ascertain if it could be given effect to.

3.—To ask the Government whether the principal and interest received from soldiers who had been settled on the land is paid into a special fund or into the consolidated fund.—Mr Mitchell, M.P.

Reply.—The Hon. Mr Guthrie replied that by referring to Section 9, of the D.S.S. Act, 1915, and to Section 2 of the D.S.S. Amendment Act, 1917, the Hon. Member would find that advances to discharged soldiers were paid out of the D.S.S. account and consequently principal and interest received from soldiers were repaid to that special account. Capital repayments were credited to the relative D.S.S. accounts and were available for reinvestment. Interest was credited to the accounts which however paid the consolidated fund interest at the rate of 4 per cent. on the capital invested under the different authorising acts.

To Ask the Minister of Internal Affairs:—

1.—Whether in connection with the appeal that is being made in connection with the Week of Pity he can give an assurance that the money subscribed will go to the right quarter, and

2.—Whether he can advise the House if the money subscribed in New Zealand for the dependents of the sailors who lost their lives in the Battle of Jutland has gone to those dependents or whether it is still lying in London.—Mr Malcolm, M.P.

Reply.—The Hon. Mr Anderson replied:—

1.—That an assurance could be given that the monies being raised throughout the Dominion for the starving children in Europe would be transmitted to the Save the Children's Fund which is an approved fund under the War Charities Act, 1915, England.

2.—That the monies collected for the dependents of the sailors who lost their lives at the Battle of Jutland had been paid over to the Navy League Overseas Relief Fund, London, by whom it was being disbursed. The Department was unable to say what balance was still available for this purpose in London.

During the ten months to the end of April, exports from South Australia amounted to £15,444,006, an increase of £8,163,698 compared with the previous year.

MOTORING NOTES.

Don't screw a cold spark plug into a hot pocket too tightly or it will be hard to remove.

VALVE ADJUSTMENT.

A tight exhaust valve adjustment will cause a motor to run irregularly at idling speed. Tappets should be set with six thousandths clearance with motor COLD.

SETTING PLUG POINTS.

Another cause of irregular running at idling speed may be traced to one of the plug points being set too close. The points in both plugs should be set at a uniform distance of thirty thousandths. This distance can be gauged accurately by the thickness of the metal in the magneto wire plug clip.

Recently reference was made to the trouble caused by sparking plug terminal nuts falling off. The following little device (says a writer, commenting on the note) is so simple that it is very seldom arranged. If the first 3 or 4 threads from the top of the plug terminal screw are removed with a file, not only can the terminal nut be spun round to release the wire without running right off, but when one is wearing gloves on a cold day there is no trouble in starting the thread, as one simply drops the terminal nut on to the terminal wire of the plug, and then, giving it a spin, it runs down the thread, being guided into position by the smooth-sided top where the threads have been filed off.

PAINTING EXHAUST PIPE.

An excellent preparation for painting the exhaust manifold of the motor car can be made by mixing turpentine and flake graphite. Saturate a piece of waste with the mixture and then rub it over the metal while it is hot. A beautiful polish will be imparted to the pipe.

TESTING DRY CELLS.

The usual method of testing the efficiency of a dry cell is to place an ammeter in the circuit. Should one of these instruments not be at hand, a rough estimate of the condition of the cell can be obtained by attaching a wire to the zinc or shell terminal of the cell and then touching the carbon element lightly with the free end of the lead. If a small puff of smoke arises on contact, it is safe to assume that the cell is in good condition. If the contact produces only a black ring on the surface of the electrode, it is an indication that the cell is nearly exhausted.

MILLING CUTTER LUBRICANT.

An excellent lubricant for milling cutters can be made by mixing together and boiling for about a half-hour one-quarter pound sal soda, one-half lard oil, one-half pint soft soap, and enough water to make 10 quarts.

RATTILING SCREEN.

It is not uncommon to find a screen, the glass of which rattles owing to the rubber it is seated in having worn and perished. A rather ingenious repair that, although admittedly temporary, can be made by caulking the gap between glass and wood carefully with brown paper smashed up with hot water to a pasty mass, filling every crevice. After allowing it to dry, and filling up a few small cracks due to the drying, a thin line of varnish may be laid over the paper caulking to keep out the wet. It is, of course, often possible to wedge the glass in two or three places with slips of wood or cork, but, with an old screen, rain drives into the groove where the glass fits, and frequently finds its way under the glass to the back of the screen; the papier mache method not only stops the rattle, but possesses the advantage of being weather-tight.

CARE OF THE NEW CAR.

It behoves you to use the utmost care in the operation of your car for the first month or six weeks after it is put in service. Don't try to speed up to forty, fifty, or more miles per hour until the car has been used for some little time, and the working parts are well worked in. Don't try to climb the steepest hills you can find, and if you intend to do country driving which might necessitate the use of low or second speed for a considerable time, wait until the roads are in good shape. The use of high motor speed on a new car over bad country roads presents possibilities of serious damage to the car which may be exceedingly expensive.

Care in the operation of a car just after overhauling is as essential as that of a new car. Don't forget that it only takes a few minutes of careless operation to cause great damage to your machine.

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