

Monday, November 27, 1911.

## THE STEWARD'S STORY.

(Continued.)

But it was no use saying "take it easy" to Mrs. Ford. It must be an exceedingly unpleasant operation, I should imagine, being searched by a strange woman, who strips her victim in a cool, business-like way, regardless alike of shyness and delicacy. The stewardess knew that was uncalculated for the thing is rarely done, unless under very suspicious circumstances; and she, having been so often in that port without ever passing through the searchers' hands, could not understand why she should now be subjected to this degradation. She would not submit quietly. She pushed away the coarse hands which intruded on her womanly feelings of delicacy. She shrank from the examination, she cried, she sobbed, she grew hysterical; and her nervous excitement being mistaken for guilt, she was in consequence subjected to a more rigorous examination. Every part of her clothing was felt; even her hair and her boots were examined, while each moment she became more painfully agitated, and her sobs and outcries grew louder.

The process was nearly complete, and she was about half-dressed again, when the uproar in the little room attracted attention without. For, added to Mrs. Ford's hysterical screams, were the remonstrances of the searchers, delivered in the highest key of the Yankee voice, the attempt of soothing on Mrs. Seaton's part, and the loud cries of Master Stebbins, who would not be pacified after the strange hands of these women had meddled with his own little person. The noise arrested the attention of two persons passing by, who opened the door and looked in.

"What are you doing to my stewardess?" said the captain of the City of—, who had recognized her voice.

"Ob, Captain Stebbins, Captain Stebbins!" she cried, as she saw him. "See what they are doing to me—they've been searching me—oh, what have I done? Oh, I am so ashamed!" Her voice was broken by sobs, and she was half-choked by her tears.

"Why, what is all the row about?" asked Captain Stebbins, who was the jolliest, most good-humored man in the world. "What has my stewardess been doing? She is no smuggler." Here, added he, turning to his companion, "your ship is close at hand; could you not step on board and bring us your stewardess. They are frightening Mrs. Ford into fits, and she needs a friend to look after her. You know Mrs. Lock very well, she will come to you."

The summons to Mrs. Lock was answered by herself immediately, and in consequence of her presence, Mrs. Seaton, who had her own private anxiety about the letters in Mrs. Ford's pocket, had no chance to ask for them. Mrs. Lock hurried her friend away on board her own boat, and Mrs. Seaton was left to her own devices.

It was some time before Mrs. Ford recovered her equanimity. The disgrace she felt had been put upon her made her absolutely ashamed to be seen, and even when good-humored Captain Stebbins paid her a visit, and joked with her about smuggling and searchers, she was too much overcome to reply.

Unconsciously that same evening she put her hands in her jacket pockets, and as she snatched them out, she exclaimed: "Good gracious! if I haven't got those letters still here that Mrs. Seaton gave me. What shall I do with them?"

"She will come for them, I expect," replied Mrs. Lock, when she had heard the story. "I would keep them till she does."

The next day she had another unpleasant surprise. The saloon-steward of her own ship paid her a visit, having gossip about passengers to impart: "Do you know what happened to that friend of yours, that fellow Seaton?" "Yes, I know he was arrested. That is how I got in trouble," and Mrs. Ford proceeded to repeat to Mr. Park the particulars which Mrs. Seaton had confided to her.

"A very pretty story," laughed Mr. Park; "only it happens that none of it is true, but the arrest. He was caught, and detained on a charge of forgery."

"Yes," continued he, "on a charge of belonging to a gang of forgers who have been passing counterfeit greenbacks. I suppose you know nothing about that, Mrs. Ford?—Not an accomplice, he?"

Mrs. Ford hesitated a moment, and then drawing from her pocket the letters intrusted to her, she showed them to the others, and asked what she had better do.

The steward examined their interior for a moment; then, without any remark, opened and read them in anxious silence, the two ladies looking on in a state of suspense. He had no sooner read them than he tore them carefully into the minutest fragments and scattered them out of the cabin window, where the tiny morsels fluttered away, and were soon lost beyond all possibility of detection in the waters of the deck.

"What were they?" gasped Mrs. Ford, in great alarm.

Evidence of his guilt, which, found on you, would have been considered proof you were an accomplice, and giving you a share of his probably twenty years in the State prison.

"Good gracious!" cried Mrs. Lock; "you don't say so. Why, my dear, what an escape you have had!"

"Yes, indeed; what an escape. They were in my pocket when I was searched," said Mrs. Ford, faintly. "Quite a providential occurrence," observed Mr. Park, as people are apt to say when they mean an occurrence for which they have special cause to be thankful. "I strongly advise you to say nothing about them to any one at present."

It is not quite clear in my own mind whether Mr. Park was justified in the course he pursued, or whether he ought not to have retained the letters, and handed them over to justice as evidence against the prisoner. He feared to compromise Mrs. Ford; but I have been assured that, in this case, if she had come forward with the evidence she possessed, and with a character as well known as she would have come to no harm. However they acted as they believed to be best and best, and least likely to involve innocent parties; and according to the rule, that it is better the guilty should escape rather than the innocent should suffer, it seemed the most prudent course to take.

"But now, look here," said Mrs. Ford, when the last morsel of paper had disappeared, "there's another thing for which I have special cause to be thankful. I have—I have—I have the story of the parcel which was still in her trunk."

"You must get rid of it, certainly," cried Mr. Park, in great alarm. "Get rid of it at once."

"But how? My box is locked, and I have the key. Should I go on board at once, and throw it out of the window?"

To be continued.

## DOBBINS' SOAP

ELECTRIC

THE BEST IN THE WORLD

Strictly Pure!

No Sand! No Rins! No Clay

No Adulteration of any kind!

Children can do the Washing

No Washboard Required!

No Hotting Needed!

By the use of the Unparalleled and soap-

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Every Grocer Sells It!

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None can do without it!

Be sure that the wrapper has on it the cut of

Mrs. Ford and Mrs. Seaton, and that the seal is stamped with the name of the inventor and originator, J. S. DOBBINS, as none other is genuine.

Like everything of great value, it is extensively counterfeited, and the market filled with false and worthless Electric Soap, not worth house-room, and dear if even given away.

The Great American Toilet Soap, fully equal to the French, made by a French soap-maker in the same manner as the French soaps are made, and sold at one-fourth their price.

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Wishing to be dressed in the most

FASHIONABLE &amp; SUBSTANTIAL

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Can have their Selection manufactured on

short notice by our own workmen, of large

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In addition to the above we have

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Of Suitable and Reasonable

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In every Variety of Fabric and Style.

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DRESS AND UNDER SHIRTS.

Drawers, Suspenders!

NECK-TIES &amp; BOWS!

Handkerchiefs

BOOTS &amp; SHOES

Walking Canes,

Umbrellas, &amp;c.

In every Variety of Fabric and Style.

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