

as he looks at her to discover her secret. "Seems all wrong, yet I can see it if I think hard en^ugh. It explains so much the better what the Psalmist said when he declared:

'The heavens declare the glory of God:
And the firmament showeth His handiwork,
Day unto day uttereth speech,
And night revealeth knowledge.'

CHAPTER II

Wallace Barton, Editor

Through the great stone face shone a smile,
That invited one to tarry a while;
Through the lion's roar a voice so soft,
That it inspired one to soar aloft.

The inevitable little (between-the-acts) cigar in his mouth Wallace Barton, Editor-in-chief of the Eventide, sat tilted back in his oaken chair, seemingly preoccupied in what he could observe side-glancing through the window at his immediate right, which gave on Memorial Square. His was the frontmost office on the second floor of the building that housed Maine's most influential newspaper. From this office, heart and nerve center, emanated the heavy cables of command, to be divided and subdivided, its filaments reaching every knot and ganglion that lined and wormed through the whole structure of newspaper making. There he sat with quiet and easy composure, enjoying what his right eye could see in the Square, in the heart of Portgrave. The

perspective from the second floor was just the height - as he slowly rocked to and fro on his round-backed chair - to give him a kaleidoscopic view of the goings on down below, shutting out at the same time puny and ugly detail. A mirror like reflection of an ant-swarm, but more interesting.

George wasn't sure whether he had ever spoken to the Chief, or whether the Chief would know him if he saw him. But he knew some of the ways and habits of the great man. He knew that though his immobile face showed no wrinkle or rumple rocking thus in his chair, concentration of thought whirred deeply and ponderously in the big head. Also that the door to his office always remained open, and that you came and went as you pleased. Only when a big conference was on ^{at} the door ~~was~~ closed, and you knew that the boss must not be disturbed. When the door was open, you just walked in. No formalities. More often than not his desk would completely be bare of manuscript or book. And he would either sit there rocking on his chair, in the slow rhythmic motion peculiar to him, or he would talk on the phone. Or he would be blue-penciling a galley-proof. Everything easy and effortless, as if he were enjoying the act, the scene; all the time looking comfortable. And maybe he was. Though you were restive, sitting there unrecognized and forgotten. But you were wrong. You were recognized and not forgotten. It's just that the man had method. First thing first. When you least expected it, he turned to you, called you by your name, and gave you a quiet smile.

George sat down and felt cool and comfortable. After a while, following the Chief's glance, he went to a window further down the office and looked down into the Square. Although he crossed Mr. Barton's line of vision, the latter paid scant attention to George, and his face remained immobile as if chiseled in granite.

The editor had much to think about that spring, George knew, and he was content to wait until he was recognized and spoken to. The democ-

rats had won the House in Congress the previous fall, and now in the spring of 1911 this victory of the demmies loomed better and bigger as a menace to republican victory in the oncoming presidential election, but a short eighteen months away. "Worse still, there were the two menacing heads of the republican party floating over the muck: Taft and Roosevelt! Taft, 'Big, Bumptious Bill, Blundering Bill, but also, Big-hearted Bill'. And that tradition of nominating a president for a second term. 'Honest Bill'. He liked him. But that Roosevelt, 'The Rapier', with his quick rapier like decisions, with the power and ferociousness of a tiger. Teddy the Tiger. He held the people in his paws. He was good for them. They needed the power and security of his leadership. They enjoyed his play and they could lie down in peace and security in his safe-keeping." * Oh, God, whom?

As Maine goes so goes....The Eventide spoke for Maine. And he spoke for the Eventide, He'll have to speak soon.

He lit a fresh "little" cigar, and took a new look at the Square. Something there must have tickled his fancy, for he smiled wide and open. And the glint in his eyes wrinkled their corners. Was the sense of the little doings of the little people in the big Square, their everyday, but ever new activities, their proficient and unworried little worlds - so real, uncumbered and bright and awake in the wake of and in the stream of crisp exhilaration of the spring morning? Or was it just the brilliance of the day itself that lighted everything in a new and shining glory that couldn't fail but light him up inside? Or was it something funny, a bawdy scene in the tumult of people there?

George sat down and waited. The great man swung around abruptly and looked directly at him. George felt the man's eyes upon him, and stood up.

"Sit down, sit down, George."

It was a soft pleasant voice. It might have been ~~from~~ his mother's.

*Mark Sullivan: Our Times.

How'd he ever know his name? Maybe that's one of the attributes of a great editor. Camera eyes, and a mind like a film. He sees and knows everything, without seeming to notice anything. The form and format of the paper is there on the film of his mind - the letters, the words, the commas, the semi-colons and all the periods. And all the people that fashion them. And he, George, had fashioned a few of them. Very few indeed, but he knew him.

"Been waiting long?" Ignoring his own query as of no consequence, "I had you in mind. But the press of things..."

George wished to tell him that he understood, but couldn't find the words, and flushed in his confusion. "Some of your items," the editor spoke again, "have been brought to my attention by ^{Mr. Doaks,} the City Editor. I spoke to Miss Macdowell, and she said good things about you." There was a faint smile in his eyes. "Now Mr. Doaks wants a story about the school. Why not start now?"

"As a free-lance writer?"

"As a regular. I should like new blood. And I like to break them in early."

"I should like nothing better, but..."

"Oh, there is a 'but'? Or shouldn't I be surprised?"

"It's, it's that I ^{have} ^{about} doubt in myself. As a regular I'd have to produce at specified times, and I know my limitations. I am a slow thinker.... If I am not able to perform as I am required---?"

Mr. Barton made a half turn in his chair, looked thoughtfully into the Square, and lit another cigar. "If you were the common run I wouldn't want you. It takes time and effort to break in a new man. I want new blood, but a different species of blood. I am willing to gamble. Write when and if you want."

"But the weekly salary?"

"It won't be too much to bother you. Not at first anyway....Ten

per week, let's say."

"It'd be charity if I didn't bring in one item --- a week. There maybe nothing to write about."

"The City Desk will look out for that. In the fall there'll be the school activities. It's your privilege to assign some of the school work to whomever you please - to be paid for by us, of course - but your responsibility no matter who covers."

"An editor in miniature!" George was enthusiastic. He thought of Cynthia. He almost blurted her name to Mr. Barton.

"Then it's a bargain," Mr. Barton walked George to the door. Pointing in the direction of the City Desk he said, "I see Mr. Doaks looking balefully our way," and he blinked his eyes smilingly, " he gets more upset the shorter the time going to press. He wants you. Good luck my boy." And he put a friendly hand on George's shoulder.

A smile hovered over Mr. Doaks' ruddy face. A gleam of a white line of teeth flashed under his rust-colored moustache.

"So the Old Man finally let you go. You know there is a paper in the making. And time is short."

"So I was told."

"Told, eh! Well. Remember now, hitherto you had been only a cub-reporter, not even a whole cub." He turned his head, and clammed his lips not to burst out laughing. "But now, just wait."

"I am still my own boss at the weekly ^{royal} stipend of ten dollars."

"We shall find time and reason to push ^{you} around a bit for the good of all..." and he guffawed uproariously.

Jack Gardner, ace reporter, came over. "What's all the hilarity, why not let a fellow in on it?"

"Don't you know, Jack, what we have acquired this morning, all sealed and delivered?" And the City Editor roared some more. "Look at the specimen. The oddest yet in years."

Silence. Then!

linger. "God knows how necessary here right now. But first, cub, an assignment. You heard it right the first time. It may, ^{be} an important one, and I may be staking my life, my desk life, in your hands. The fire last night," Mr. Doaks rushed on. "There is a human-interest story - the janitor! The firemen had to drag him out by main force from the collapsing building. He just refused to leave. Why? Report from Maine General Hospital he is pretty bad in. Know him George?"

"I was with him yesterday morning. He passed out with what had seemed a heart attack. Muttering as in a fog, a vision of fire: 'the school going up in flames'. A haunting shadow of flame, or should I say smoke, that seemed to envelope him."

"I don't understand."

"You will when you read the report," George said.

CHAPTER III

"And God Said, Let There be Fire!"

How to pick your way in the tumult and confusion and beat of reportorial words! How to think on the infernal machine of a typewriter in the all absorbing clamor and noise of this clearing house and manufactory of columns and words, editorials and public opinion; the hustle of flying linotype, the clatter and deep burrowing boom of the distance presses; the tinkling of the telephone, the chatter of telegraph and teletype; the whine of the wheel; the sputtering charges of the stentorian command; the timid pipings of the underling and neophyte in the consuming uproar, blare and screaming pandemonium! "Think, think,