OCTOBER 1912
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THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

Stories by Donal Hamilton Haines, James Oliver Curwood, George Allan England, Frances A. Ludwig, Frederick R. Bechdolt, Alma Martin Estabrook, John A Moroso Elliott Flower, Eugene P. Lyle Jr., L. J. Beeston, Edwin L. Sabin and 5 others.

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THE RED BOOK
MAGAZINE

CONTENTS FOR OCTOBER, 1912

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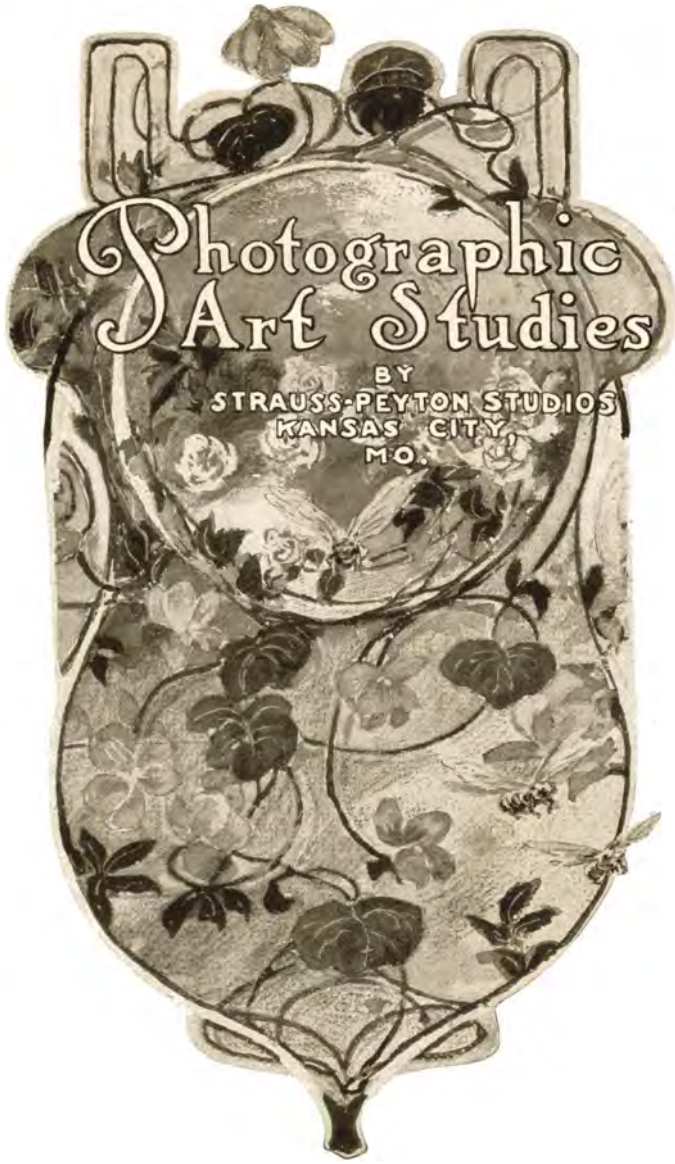
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INEZ GRAY
in "The Red Rose"

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"It's just as I thought," said Marie, excitedly. "She's had her nose done over for Mr. Cecil Guest."

From Alma Martin Estabrook's latest story of The Hare's Foot Beauty Parlor, on page 1098.

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No. 6

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

RAY LONG, EDITOR

October
1912

The Clubhauling of Monohan

by

FREDERICK R. BECHDOLT

Author of "Lighthouse Tom," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY W. H. D. KOERNER

"MOTHER MONOHAN'S SALOON," the sign says; but sailormen always say "Mother Monohan's place." A dingy, wooden building, hard by the city front. Just across the street, San Francisco Bay hisses against the prows of vessels as they come from the Seven Seas. Before the door a procession is always passing, made up of men from foreign parts.

Sailors' boarding houses have disappeared in this country; but Mother Monohan's Place survives. Seamen find lodging upstairs, and loaf down in the bar, yarning about past voyages. For the most part Mother Monohan's trade comes from deep-water vessels.

Like the men, the barroom bears marks of forecastle, deck and ocean. Upon its walls you will see various quaint adornments, each carrying its suggestion of wild adventure or ancient marine tradition: a life buoy from a lost ship; the skin of an albatross, wings outstretched;

a square-rigged vessel under full sail in a bottle; and an old-style harpoon, all rusty and encrusted with salt. These and divers others sailors' treasures—gifts of steady customers returning from distant shores—flavor the atmosphere with romance, the romance of the deep and of the coasts that lie beyond the sky's rim.

Hither I wandered often. I gossiped sedately with Mother Monohan, who always passed me a pleasant word and then resumed her knitting in her chair behind the bar. I drank with bronze-skinned *habitués*—who labored faithfully to make me, a landsman, understand their technical accounts of shipwrecks wherein they had been frost-numbed and brine-drenched participants, or freely told of hot feuds and hotter loves in tropic ports and Arctic settlements. Thus in time I came to own a group of intimate acquaintances, composed, for the most part, of those to whom the years had given ability in the art of story-telling.

By the time December came, with its long rainy evenings, we fell into the habit of gathering about the round-bellied coal stove in the back of the room. And January found us looking forward to such sessions—four or five of us, pipes alight, a fog of smoke around us. The spirit of emulation did its work; each adventurer strove to do his best with what material he had in mind. And he who lied had to be skillful, for his audience knew just what each man was talking about. As a consequence the truth got no more than proper adornment.

One wet and windy night, when customers were few and far between, I sat with several of these grizzled, hard faced men of the sea; and I listened while each produced the choicest of his long-gathered store of yarns. We started, oddly enough, by discussing Monohan.

Monohan appeared in his wife's bar by day and in the early evening. A quiet man, grey-haired, and curiously tattooed on his hands and wrists; a well-built man, and his walk was that of an old sailor. His bearing here was more like that of an old customer who had the freedom of the sacred space behind the bar, than like that of an owner. But what was most peculiar about him was his evident repression. He showed it in voice and look. Yet his eyes were those of one who would be a hard man in action. Every evening at eight o'clock Mother Monohan would say, "Come, Jack," and Monohan would follow her upstairs.

We had just begun to settle ourselves around the stove, this night, when she went through that brief and time-worn formula.

Duffy, the night bartender—flannel-shirted and clad as he used to be when he was mate on a windjammer, for they never wear white aprons in Mother Monohan's Place—came to take his chair as a member of our circle. He winked and jerked his head in the direction of the door through which the pair had gone, saying,

"Answers to the helm first rate, don't he?"

Rose, who got his captain's papers when I was neglecting my geography lessons for dreams of running away to sea, looked up and smiled quizzically. He was sitting astride of his chair with the back in front of him and his arms crossed over the top.

"I knew Monohan when he was wilder than the run o' men."

This was Rose's manner of introducing a yarn—a bit of comment, then silence once more.

"Yes?" said I, striving to hide my eagerness; and "Aye," said Duffy in a matter of fact manner. Rose smoked on. Then:

"I mind," he went on slowly, "the manner of a two-handed fighter that he was; and always lookin' for it. He's quiet now, is Monohan. And I am telling you there is no better sailor in this port to-day." He stopped, and he gave no sign of intending to resume.

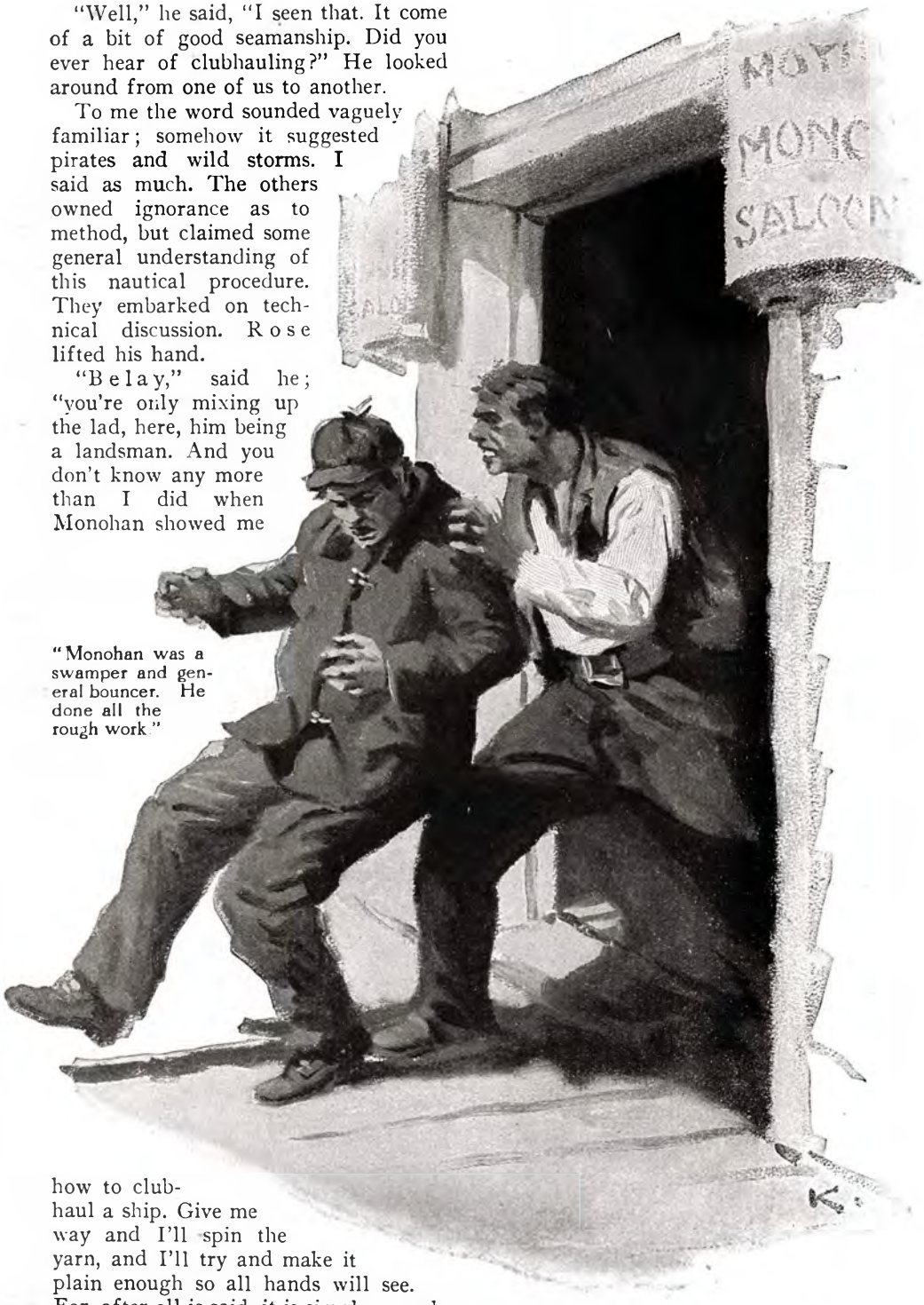
"How in blazes did he settle down in this berth?" demanded Duffy at last.

Rose was lighting his pipe. In the flare of the match his face showed thrusting forward over the chair back, all reddened by wind and weather; and little lines of laughter were chasing one another across it.

"Well," he said, "I seen that. It come of a bit of good seamanship. Did you ever hear of clubhauling?" He looked around from one of us to another.

To me the word sounded vaguely familiar; somehow it suggested pirates and wild storms. I said as much. The others owned ignorance as to method, but claimed some general understanding of this nautical procedure. They embarked on technical discussion. Rose lifted his hand.

"Belay," said he; "you're only mixing up the lad, here, him being a landsman. And you don't know any more than I did when Monohan showed me



"Monohan was a swamper and general bouncer. He done all the rough work."

how to clubhaul a ship. Give me way and I'll spin the yarn, and I'll try and make it plain enough so all hands will see. For, after all is said, it is simple enough.

What I was headed for is this: Monohan did what there is not ten men on this city front to-day knows how to do. And, doing that, he steered himself into this snug harbor."

"I'll draw a round of steam beers," said Duffy. "'Tis a good night to be inside, and the chances is nobody will bother us. We'll take it comfortable."

The sounds of rain and heavy weather came to us from East Street while Duffy was busy at the taps. When he had come back and we had wet our throats, Rose began. He talked over his chair's back; and with an even-toned deliberation.

"First I clapped my eyes on Monohan," said he, "was in Montevidio, in Harry the Greek's boardin' house. I was with the *Tamerlane* and she was a-taking on a cargo of hides for New York. I'd come ashore for an hour or two and was taking a turn about the place. I dropped into the Greek's to see a sailor that wanted to sell a set of blue-backs cheap."

"Blue-backs?" I interrupted.

"Aye," said Rose, "admiralty charts. Well, I did not get them. The reason was one hell of a fight that had started before I went in. I seen all hands a-surging around; and I sort of stood by in a quiet corner. It was one man against a dozen. And the one was Monohan. He was holding down one end o' the barroom with a bit of timber.

"I had no more than got in when they tried to rush him. He took it cool enough, picking out his men before he clouted them, as fast as they come in reach. He got three that first rush.

"Well, they tried it twice more, but they was not so anxious as the first time.

"Then the police come a-busting in and I did not wait for fear o' being arrested along with the others. I dug out without my blue-backs. When I left, Monohan was taking all hands as they come, showing no favors, police and runners alike. It was that free-for-all with him by himself that made me remember the face of Monohan.

"The next time I run acrost him was on the bark *Lily Moore*. I was first mate. We sailed from Baltimore for Puget Sound.

"I found out, that voyage, that he was as good a sailor as he was a fighter. And I got acquainted with the *Lily Moore*, as fine a ship as ever sailed into the wind.

"It was off the West Indies that I got to size up Monohan. The hurricane season was on; and one of them sudden squalls come up—a cloud, white and harmless looking enough, but a few minutes later down on top of us as black as night, with wind that took all before it. Monohan was at the wheel.

"Before we could shorten sail, things was a-roaring. And an awful sea! As quick almost as I can tell it—Bang, Bang, Bang, Bang—away went what canvas she had on. The sails whipped loose with a noise like cannons and flew out of sight in the smother to leeward. She shipped a sea that filled her main deck as high as the top of the rail. Man! She trembled in every timber, like a scared horse, and she give one big, slow groan.

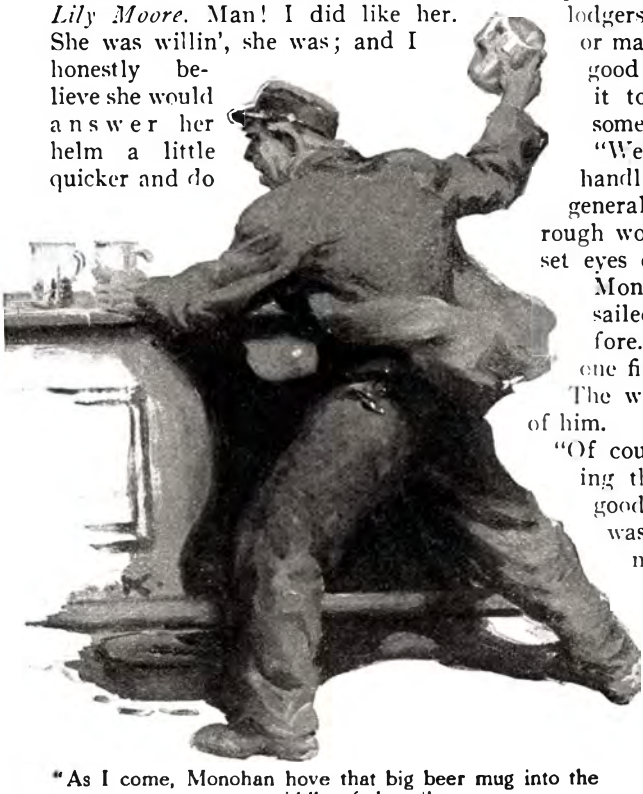
"I seen Monohan, his eyes as quiet and stiddy as they ever was, a-holding her up into the wind. It was a nasty minute, it was. Six of one and half a dozen of the other, whether she'd weather it. And a greener hand, or one that was not all sand would most likely've eased her off a point and then she *would* of foundered. But not Monohan! He knowed his business and he was a-doing it. He held her up into it. She stood there a-shaking; and then the weight of the water busted out her bulwarks and she freed herself.

"Later on, the day before we crossed the line, the skipper died, and I was left in command. It was my first voyage around the Horn. We had a crew that was pretty nigh half o' them green hands. That made it harder on the able seamen.

"Comin' round, we found a lot of heavy weather and head winds. First it

looked like we would never weather the Cape; and then it looked like we was going to be carried down into the ice. We had to sail the *Lily Moore* right into the wind almost, or get nowheres. Which takes a good ship and good men. We did it all right; but by the time we found ourselves headed north'ard with a fair wind, all hands was nursing frosted fingers.

"During them days I saw two things. One was Monohan, one of them old time sailors that has learned his business on the windjammers and knows that a seaman's duty is by the ship he sails in, and to hell with himself. The other was the *Lily Moore*. Man! I did like her. She was willin', she was; and I honestly believe she would answer her helm a little quicker and do a little more for it than any ship I ever handled.



"As I come, Monohan hove that big beer mug into the middle of them."

"Well, I left her later on, and I sailed with other ships. The years went by. I knocked about the world. At last I come to Frisco again. I was older and I had seen much more than when I took that first voyage around the Horn.

"I fetched up here in Mother Monohan's Place. Only she was not Mother Monohan then. A widow woman, a-keeping this here saloon with lodgings upstairs, the same as there is now. In them times the laws had not changed to what they are to-day; and the whole city front was full of sailors' boarding houses. The crimps owned the port. But there was no robbing of sailors here nor the like o' that. You could come and buy your drink or hire a room, and pay for it; and if you was stiddy, you could get trusted reasonable. Of course that there did not make a big hit with the run of deep-sea sailors; and the bulk of the lodgers here was holding their mate's or master's papers. But there was a good lively trade downstairs; and it took a man to handle things sometimes.

"Well, here was Monohan, a-handling it. He was a swamper and general bouncer. He done all the rough work. I knew him the minute I set eyes on him; but he was not the Monohan he had been when we sailed on the *Lily Moore* years before. He had bucked up against one fight that was too big for him. The whiskey was a-getting the best of him.

"Of course the years had been a-doing their work too. His hair was good and grey now, and the spring was gone from him. But in the main it was the drink that had done the harm. It makes you feel bad when you lay your eyes on a good, capable man like that headed for the boneyard before his time.

"We had a word together, him and me, about the old *Lily Moore*. I mind now how he spoke of the ship as if she was a friend of his—that fond like. It was when we took a drink and I got a look at his hand a-shakin' as he held the glass, that I seen how things was with him. His fingers a-fidging! And I had seen him hold a ship into the teeth of God's hurricane and never bat an eye!

"I had a bit of money laid by and I

aimed to spend the winter in port, and to go north with the fishing fleet in the spring. So I took my room upstairs; and I loafed about. Every evening I would go out to some show like a gentleman; and every afternoon I would have a walk if the weather was pleasant. In the morning I would come downstairs and drink a pint of English ale before breakfast, a habit I had then. I would see Monohan a-sweeping out the place. Always he would look a little worse than he had looked the morning before. His back would bend a little further, and his hand would be a little shakier.

"I was a-speaking of him one day to the old woman, a-telling her the manner of a man he used to be when he was on the *Lily Moore*. She told me how she had give him this berth, because she felt the same way as I did about him. It seems like he had been on the beach for six months or so, down and out from too much drinking. It was the beginning of the steamship days, and smaller crews on sailing vessels. He did not fancy the steamers, and it was not so easy to ship as it used to be on a windjammer. That and the drink was ailing Monohan. When she had picked him up, he was in the gutter. Now, he managed to hold himself together for a month or two at a time; then he would go under and fetch up in jail. Still, she hung onto him.

" 'If only,' says she, 'he would sort of straighten up. Then he would be as good as he ever was.'

"Matter of fact, the thing that was bothering her was the waste of a fine able-bodied seaman. It seemed wrong to see a sailor like him become a common bum. That was the way she used to put it to me. You see, she was a thrifty woman, she was, and capable herself. She was a woman that was made to run things, to be in command of the ship, ye might say. She had that way with her. And I think she had sort of set her mind on this job of getting Monohan back to where he used to be, and she had found it a little too big for her; and she would not own that she was beat.

"The winter went along and Monohan made out to hold his job between two or three spells in jail for fighting or drunkenness. The old woman was bothering more than ever over it. He was worrying her, having got on her mind like.

"Now, along in the month of February, I begun to see that I had overplayed my hand when it come to money. It was a case of heave to; and even then the chances was I was not a-going to weather out the winter. I seen that I had better look for a chance to earn a few more dollars. Just as I got to casting up accounts and figgering on day's allowance, I got a chance at a job. It was to take one of the coal barges between this port and Puget Sound. Six men in the crew and one in command. There is not much to do in ordinary weather, the old hulk bein' in tow. No berth for a navigator to be proud of; but I am not one of them that lets a bit of pride stand between me and a bit of money if I need it. So I took it. I was to leave inside of the week."

Rose paused. Duffy caught my eye and went to fill the glasses. While we were waiting for him, the old narrator smiled at me. "I was jest figuring," said he, "how I could put things simple like, so you can get the lay of them. Sea-faring talk is hard for a landsman to get, and this yarn comes to a matter of ship handling."

With which he fell to musing; and was silent until after he had slaked his thirst along with the rest of us. Then:

"I was coming down East Street from the barge office," he went on slowly, "when I heard a fracas in a saloon down near the end of Clay Street. I am not one of those that pokes his nose into other men's troubles; but something or other made me go to see what it was. It makes me laugh now when I think of it.

"There was old Monohan, standing nigh the door at the end o' the bar, with one of them heavy glass beer mugs helt up over his shoulder, ready to let fly. The back of the room was packed tight with longshoremen and coal heavers and stokers, all trying to get behind each other at once. As I come, he hove that big mug into the middle of them, and I heard it crack again' the ribs of some unlucky devil. He did not stop at that;

he picked up another glass and started to throw it at the mirror behind the bar. But I made out to grab his arm in time to spoil his aim. I dragged him out.

"It seems like the gang of them had got to abusing him—him looking smaller than he really is—and when he had stood it as long as he thought he ought to, he had started after them. There was a long line of them thick glasses on the bar, and before any o' them bullies had knowed what his intentions really was, Monohan had turned loose with the first that come to hand. They had tried to rush him and he had let fly again. Then they give way; but he kept on.

"Well, I dragged him down East Street. He fought me half the way down and cursed the other half, so that I was afraid the police would take him away from me. I got him here and I told the old woman what had happened. The two of us stowed him away upstairs and locked the door on him. Then we laid our heads together. A bit of a sea voyage would do him no harm, and it might be the makin's of him. Anyhow we would try it; I was to take him on the coal barge. Better that, than he should go to jail again.

"We kept Monohan under hatches for the balance of the week. I signed him for the voyage as mate. You know the way it is on them barges; only the captain has to have papers.

"Well, sir, until the day we was to sail, I never went nigh the barge. One of them is the same as another—old hulks with the masts cut down to stumps. Nothing in a craft like that, and it in tow, to make a skipper proud.

"That morning I took Monohan with me to the bunkers. I had sent my dunnage on down ahead; he went with his bag over his shoulder, not saying much to me. When we got down to the slip, the tug had her lines fast. I took one look at my ship.

"I did not know her at first. But I heard Monohan rip out a curse and I seen his eyes a-hanging onto her. Then I reckonized her. Her poor old hull was black and the coal dust was thick upon her decks. Her hawseholes had been patched over with planks and new ones pierced higher above waterline, making her look like some poor blind thing. Her lofty masts was gone, and all her spars. Only three short stumps stuck up, ugly and thick. But no eyes could mistake the lines of her; as pretty yet—and in that greasy water—as the lines of any rich man's yacht. For all that her bowspirit was cut down to a stub, I seen her graceful shape. It was the *Lily Moore!*

"Monohan was quiet now after that curse. But his eyes was a-hanging on her and he swallered sort of hard. Then, says he, 'Same with ships as men these days. They do not want the good ones any more, with their pot-bellied steam tramps.' I knew how he felt, for I have always stuck to the windjammers myself.

"We went aboard. The crew was there already. Good men, I will say that for them, and most of them knew what was what, being old men. Broken down sailors, you might say. And so, away we went to sea, the poor old *Lily Moore* a-pegging away in the wake of a dirty sea-going tug. Monohan seemed to wake up a bit as soon as we had passed the heads and he felt the move of the ocean under his feet. The lead color went away from him and his face became more fresh like.

"But, for all that he had picked up in his body, Monohan was troubled in his mind. He used to walk the deck—and not the quarterdeck either. But he got a habit of going for'ard and taking a turn up and down amidships; or most frequent, he would stand, taking his turn at the wheel like any sailor; and then I would see a curious thing.

"He would stand there, a-looking aloft—way up beyond them stumps, where aloft used to be. I seen that many times. It would start with him a-taking a glance in that direction; and then his eyes would hang there, like he could see the old lofty masts and the rigging of the *Lily Moore*. Do you know—it seems funny to be a-telling it—but I often think that Monohan did see them in his mind.

"He had not much to say to me. Only once did he do any talking to amount to anything. We was three days out and I made some remark about the ship, a-

speaking of her for what she was now—'Old hulk,' says I. He turned as red as fire and he looked me in the eye. 'They cut down the masts of her,' says he, 'but they can't spile her lines. She'll outhandle one of them pot-bellied steam tramps to-day.'

"Well that was crazy talk, and so I did not misname the poor old girl again when Monohan was standing by. No use o' talking, he was a-taking it to heart, the way they had dismantled her. I could not help feeling bad myself when I thought of that first voyage of mine around the Horn and her a-behaving like a lady, that true and willing.

"As I said, we come up the Straits and up Puget Sound and we took on cargo in Seattle. There was a shortage of coal in Frisco that winter and we did not waste any time about it. It was a case of getting what you could and being thankful for it, so far as the company was concerned; and so we went to sea again, the only tow that the tug had.

"Now, while we laid over in port, I was afraid of Monohan's going ashore and finding some old shipmates in the saloons. But he did not set foot on shore.

"We sailed one mornin', with the glass a-falling. We was plugging along down the Sound, with the *Lily Moore* low in the water, when Monohan come on deck, and the two of us had a word together. I was grumbling a bit at the idee of towing down the coast with weather brewing; for the big storm of the winter was due now.

"'Aye,' says Monohan, 'there'll be a blow. I hope to God there is.'

"'And why,' says I, 'do you want that?'

"'Well, sir,' says he, 'I would like to hold the old girl into the wind once more.'

"Which made me mad, because it was crazy talk; and, 'Monohan,' says I, 'ye forget her sticks is gone and her canvas; and she is only an old hulk.'

"He give me a look between the eyes. 'Do ye mind the old days in her?' says he.

"I told him that I had thought of them a-many times.

"'Well,' he says, not looking at me now, but with his eyes way aloft where her royals used to be, 'so have I. It's with her like it is with me,' he says. 'But, for all we're both headed for the boneyard, we're better than we look to-day.'

"We went down the Straits and out to sea with the glass a-falling steady. And yet the wind did not come up. Only a sort of sticky puff now and again, with the sea all greasy like.

"What is more, it kept up this way all the next day; and then the storm begun to come. I was a-cursing the tugboat captain pretty constant, for we was hugging the coast as if he had fell in love with it. When the blow started, he paid out more line, and that was all. That night it blowed great guns and the sea begun to rise. Right out of the southwest it come, too. I was on deck with Monohan, and the two of us a-watching the tugboat's lights—a-showing now, then going out of sight behind a sea. And I said to him that I did not like the looks of the weather and the course we was a-taking along a lee shore. He give a nasty sort of laugh.

"'Tug boat captain has got to be a saving man,' says he, 'if he wants to hold his job. Sea room burns too much coal.' And that was true.

"So the wind kept coming and the seas kept coming in front of it; and the poor old *Lily Moore,* she kept a-taking them in a manner which made me feel sorry for her. A-rolling along, with her hold jam full of coal and low in the water; and getting no show at all, but being dragged—broadside on to the weather sometimes.

"And what was more, now and again, when the murk would lift off to the east'ard, I could make out the line o' the coast. That all the next day.

"'Monohan,' says I, 'if that lubber ahead of us does not fetch up with him and us on a lee shore, I'm mistaken.'

"'Don't bother your head about him, Captain,' says Monohan. 'He'll cut loose in time. Company's rule, ye know; save the tugboat and forget the tow when it gets down to cases. If only she had what she used to have! She would laugh at this bit of a breeze.'

"I wont string this out too long, men.

"Monohan, at the wheel, stood a-looking far aloft—where her sticks used to be—and I seen his lips a-moving as if he was a-talking to her."

The trouble begun to come when we was down off Cape Blanco. A dirty afternoon, and the tugboat was a-trying to get us out to sea. But he'd waited too long. We was having one big time, if I do say it myself. And the worst of it was that we was a doing nothing because there was nothing for us to do.

"Line a-trying to jerk the bitts out of her; and every now and again a slackening away in way that made you sick to see it, before taking a new jerk.

"And the poor old *Lily Moore* a-taking the seas so that there was minutes when all we could see up for'ard was water and the stumps of her a-sticking up out of it. Aye, men; that is God's truth.

"And we was a-making no headway. We had no mortal chance. All the wind and water in the old Pacific a-belting us and holding us to that lee shore. A-holding us; and, what is more, a-driving us bit by bit t o r a r d s the land.

"As near as we could make it we was a matter of six or seven miles off shore; and a half an hour later we seen that we had d r i f t e d further in. Then we heard what I had lo o k e d to hear all that day: "Toot-toot-

toot-toot-toot,' come from the tugboat.

" 'Aye, damn you,' says I. 'Let us go now that you've got us here.'

"And I had not much more than got the words out before the signal come and the tug cast off. We was adrift.

"We got all hands to work and had sail on those stumps of masts as quick as possible. And then we began to try and do the best we could with her. There was one thing: to bring her around on the other tack.

"You see, we was headed almost parallel with the coast; and the wind was coming over the starboard bow driving us shorewards. And if we could turn the ship against the wind, a-getting her around so that she got on the other tack, we would be sailing off shore.

"That is what we tried to do—and knew we could not do it when we made the try. For she was heavy-laden and she had only them stumps for masts. And when she headed up into the wind she hung there for a minute, a-trembling like a tired old horse, with them big seas a-thundering against the bows of her.

" 'No use,' says I to Monohan, who was at the wheel. 'We lose the old hulk, I guess.'

" 'It is not fair by her,' he yelled. 'I'd sooner die than pile her up.'

"I knew things was beyond me now, and all my seamanship. So, 'What do you make of it?' I yelled. 'Do you see any show?'

"He shook his head like a bull and he yelled back: 'Clubhaul her. It is the only chanst.'

"I had heard the word, but I was like you men when I started this yarn: I had only an idea, and no real knowledge. It is an old-time trick. So, 'If ye can claw offshore,' says I, 'ye are a better sailor than I am. Go to it. Take command and give me the wheel.'

"I grabbed it from his hands and he made a leap for'ard, a-yelling for me to hold her up into the wind. Then I heard him bellow at the crew. And here is what they done:

"They slipped a hawser around the bitts just abaft the mainmast; then they dragged it aft and passed it through the lee hawsepipe. And in a jiffy two of them was on the lee rail with the head of the line in their arms. They started for'ard with it; and as it went with them, the others took holds and passed it along behind them. They carried it outside of everything.

"That sounds easy to you, lad, but remember that lee rail was buried half the time in the sea, and if a man would miss his hold—which he was a-getting by his teeth and eyebrows—he would be carried straight away from the ship. And them hands was wrestling with a ten inch line, too!

"They got the hawser up to the bows, clear of everything. They made it fast to the lee anchor. I stood there a-sinking my fingers into the wheel, a-trying to keep my eyes on them and do my work at the same time. To the windward the howling of that storm and the roar of the sea; and to the leeward the growling of the surf on Oxford reef. Time was getting mighty short.

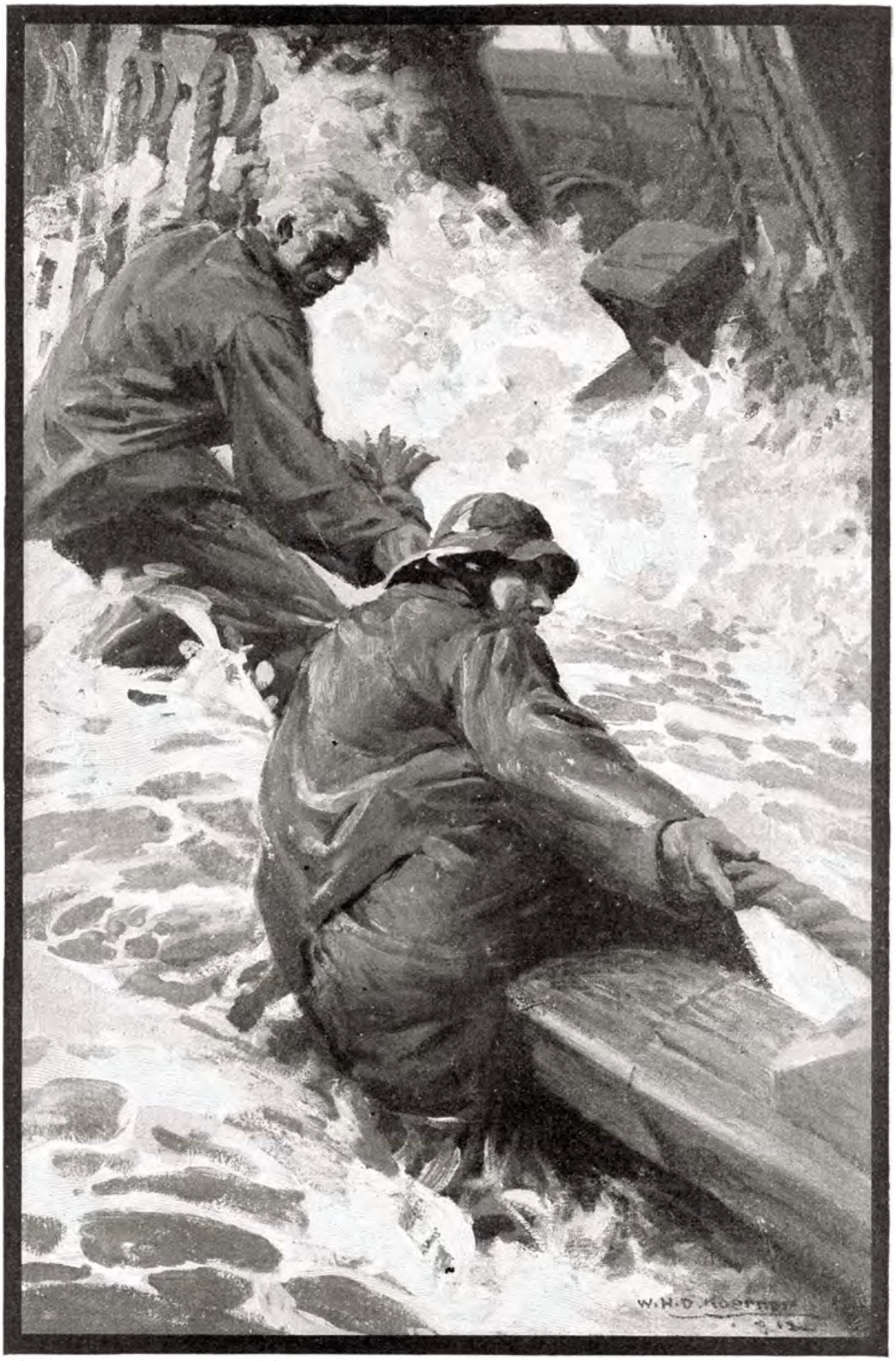
"As soon as they had made the line fast to the lee anchor, 'Hard a-lee,' sung out Monohan. I jammed the wheel hard down and the old *Lily Moore* done the best she could do come up into the wind. At the same minute they let go the anchor and the chain roared through the hawsepipe. Down and down.

"Now the bottom off Cape Blanco is rocky and there is no holding ground; and we was a-putting our last bet on a scratch, as the saying goes. But that scratch was all there was; and we had to take it. Well, luck was with us. The anchor found something and it held.

"The *Lily Moore* got the tug of it and she did what a ship always does: she pulled against her anchor chain. And that brought her up a little further into the wind. Still she was in irons.

"The sails was fluttering something awful, and things was all a-bang. I held the wheel hard down and hoped.

"Monohan was amidships now. He give a yell. And I seen two of the crew a-pounding at the chain, driving the pin out of the shackle. It come; the chain parted. And now the hawser through the after pipe was a-holding her by the stern, the anchor hanging to the bottom near her bow.



'That lee rail was buried half the time in the sea, and if a man would miss his hold—which he was a-getting by his teeth and eyebrows—he would be carried straight away from the ship.
And them men was wrestling with a ten-inch line, too!"

"Monohan and two of the men had hold of the hawser at the bitts, a-paying it out very slowly. It pulled her stern to the leeward. I hung onto the wheel, a-holding her up into the wind. Now she begun to come around. For a few seconds it was like a fight; it was that. The line a-pulling that whole ship and cargo against the strength of the sea and the storm.

"But the sails filled! We was on the off-shore tack!

"Monohan give the two men a word. They let go the hawser; and it flickered away, a-giving the deck a bang for luck. I held her up into the wind as clost as she would stand it, and the growling of the breakers went away.

" 'Well,' says I to Monohan, 'ye saved her and it was good seamanship.'

" 'Aye,' says he; 'all she needed was a bit of help.'

"We sailed the old *Lily Moore* all night; and the next morning the tug picked us up again. And we got into Frisco bay without any further trouble.

"I told the story to the old woman here, the day we got ashore. I had got through with the yarn, not making so much of it as I have to-night, when Monohan come in. He was a-drinking once more. He swaggered up to the bar and he banged a dollar down onto it, and called for whiskey. The old woman, she took one look at him. Then:

" 'Clubhauled,' says she, quiet as if she was a-thinking. 'Humph!'

"She sort of nodded, and Monohan was beginning to pour out his drink up there at the end of the bar. She looked me in the eye. 'I'll try it,' she says. 'Oh, Monohan!'

"She barked out his name like a mate giving an order; and he did not wait to drink but come on over. Says she:

" 'Mr. Rose tells me ye clubhauled the *Lily Moore.*'

" 'Aye,' says Monohan, and I seen how his fingers was a-shaking again. 'All she needed was a little help. Give her wot is coming to her and she is a good ship yet, she is.'

" 'Just so,' says she. 'Like enough. How much money have ye, Monohan?'

"He grinned and pulled it out of his pocket. She did not say anything but she took it from him and give it to the bartender. 'Put it in the safe,' says she.

"When she come back Monohan was starting to make a kick. She gave him a look between the eyes. 'Listen to me,' says she. 'No use of bothering with many words. You know where you are headed for if you keep on. I tell you what you do. You go with Rose, here, to the county clerk's office, and he will help you get a license all ship-shape. Then you will come back here to the place, and I will look out for a preacher.'

" 'A license,' says Monohan, sort of dreamy like, and holding his mouth half open. 'Wot would that be for?'

" 'What for?' says she, and she was talking snappy. 'Why, to marry. Do you get the meaning? To marry me. I'm at the helm now, and I aim to do a bit of clubhauling myself. See to it, Mr. Rose, that he is back within the hour.'

"Monohan walked out with me, like he was half asleep. He did not talk until we was half way back; then he says: 'I guess she means it. What do you think?'

" 'Mean it!' says I. 'Of course, she means it. Do you think she would be fooling? Haven't you got the license?'

"That seemed to wake him up. Then he stopped. 'I don't aim to marry,' says he. 'Why, she'll cut off the whiskey!'

" 'Come on,' says I. 'You are wasting time. I'm here to fetch you. What's more, you are in luck to get that woman.'

"He come on without any more words, only shaking his head as if it bothered him. And when we got back, here was a preacher man. We had the wedding all ship-shape, and I am a-telling you, men, Monohan went through it like a man that is walking in his sleep, or dreaming—that dazed. And since that day, he has gone on allowance. Three steam beers a day, no more. Every night at eight o'clock, 'Come, Jack,' she says, like you have heard her; and he goes upstairs to home with her. That was the manner of Monohan's clubhauling the *Lily Moore,* and then being clubhauled himself."

The Yrieux Fire Opal

An Adventure of the Hon. Derek Tredgold, one of the three greatest diamond thieves in the world

by

L. J. BEESTON

Author of "Pauline March," "The Black Bag," "Red Diamonds," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY M. LEONE BRACKER

WHEN I purchased for Lady Crevering that curiously-beautiful green diamond which once flashed in excellent company on a European crown, I accomplished for her the desire of her heart, and added a failure to my somewhat short list.

In plain words, I had made up my mind to "acquire" the gem in transit; but it couldn't be done. The European crown in question had been permanently removed from the brow of a deposed monarch of a petty kingdom. Its lustrous adornments passed into a strictly private market. Lady Crevering begged me to use my expert knowledge on her behalf and to purchase the green diamond. I returned from abroad successful in a difficult transaction. Lady Crevering received the jewel from my hands. If she had but suspected the reluctance with which I released it!

Lady Crevering had not stopped at verbal thanks. Her written letter of gratitude was spread out before me, in her delicate hand-writing, emanating a perfume of verbena. I lighted the last of a box of cigarettes and stared gloomily at the graceful epistle.

If Pauline March, the American girl, who with Armand Duverne, a Parisian poet and writer of lyrics, and myself, formed a trio of the cleverest jewel thieves in the world, had been available throughout the transaction, we would have brought off a *coup* between us. I had tried in vain to find her. She might be in any country in Europe.

It is not an easy matter to purchase a royal diamond of historic interest. The arduous and diplomatic business had left me little opportunity for seeking inspiration. Inspiration? It is as needful to the diamond crook who is not a sneak thief as to the novelist; to the short-story writer who waits for a scintillating idea; to the counsel who probes for the daring suggestion that saves his client's neck; to the baffled surgeon who sees his patient sinking mysteriously.

Disgusted, I chewed a rag of disappointment. Where the deuce had Pauline March hidden herself? I had thought of Armand Duverne, who was in his beloved Paris; but though I had been told that he bore no malice for those two good fist-blows to which I had treated him, yet I hadn't cared to

At the sound of the voice I looked through the dim blue haze of Turkish tobacco smoke and saw Pauline March——

"How can any one breathe in such smoke?" she cried brightly. "How many cigarettes does it represent?"

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approach him since that affair of Mrs. Lyall-Bodiska's diamonds.

Unreflectively I looked again at Lady Crevering's letter:

> I am perfectly well aware, my dear Mr. Tredgold, that no one save yourself could have been successful in this most delicate matter of the buying of the green diamond. You utilized your name, your influence, your knowledge of precious stones, to splendid purpose on my behalf. I am charmed to have this jewel on which I had indeed set my heart. And now I am going to ask another great favor of you. Will you—

"How anyone can breathe in such smoke!"

But one voice in the world possesses such a musical tremor. I looked through the dim blue haze of Turkish tobacco and saw Pauline March at the open door.

"How many cigarettes does it represent?" she cried brightly.

I flung up the window and drew a chair forward.

"Ah, in one of your grey, glum moods!" railed my visitor. "Not even a 'How are you?' And three months since we met!"

"How do you do?"

"Oh, admirable! So genuine," she exclaimed with a rippling laugh that was like sunshine breaking through a dun cloud. "Very well, thank you, in spite of the fact that I have come straight from Paris, without a stop, to see you."

"Of course, I am glad to see you," I grunted. "But I have been searching everywhere for you." I opened the door to see if Williams, my man, was listening—thereby doing him a grave injustice; and then I got my grouch off my chest by a recital of the trouble. Pauline listened with head prettily averted, looking down at the late-afternoon traffic in Oxford Street, mostly women shopping. When I had finished she said:

"It is a pity, Derek. But why waste a sigh? Now I have come with a little piece of news for you which, by the way, concerns Lady Crevering. Armand, in Paris, has met an American who, like Lady Crevering, is fond of gems to which any exceptional interest is attached. We know that Lady Crevering is very nervous about the Yrieux fire opal—why do you start?"

"Did I? It must have been your mention of the Yrieux. That is a terrible, a forbidding stone. Pray continue."

"Armand awoke this American's interest in the opal. Like most of his countrymen he has no foolish superstition regarding such stones—which are far more valuable in America than here. He—"

"His name?"

"Jarvis Crabtree. He became keen on buying the opal. Of course Armand told him that it was not for sale. That Lady Crevering had an objection to turning her diamonds into commercial transactions; and that, in any case, she has a strong prejudice about rich Americans walking off with English treasures. But he promised to do his best. He gave Mr. Crabtree your name; told him that you would use your good offices to persuade Lady Crevering to part with her opal; and that, if such a transaction could be managed, it would be through your assistance as a medium. The American understood, and was grateful."

"Duverne did that? He bears me no grudge, then?"

"I told you that he has a singularly forgiving disposition. Malice is foreign to him. He is too true a poet to harbor petty animosities."

"H'm."

"You are not nice to me this afternoon. Here is the idea, which is simplicity itself. Although Lady Crevering really is afraid of the Yrieux, I don't think she would sell it. Well, I borrow it to wear at a dance. It is not the first time I shall have incurred an obligation of the kind from her, for she is most good-natured. I have the misfortune to lose the opal. That will not greatly distress her, since she regards it with fear, and since I shall insist on paying her its monetary value. That is essential, for in my position I must never be suspected of being suspected."

"Where will the money come from?"

"From Mr. Crabtree, to whom you will sell the stone, expressly stipulating

that he does not abuse your good help, for Lady Crevering would never forgive you if she knew that you let the opal go to America. The sale, in fact, is a favor —for which he will pay."

"But where is our advantage?"

"I shall give Lady Crevering the money equivalent of the opal; but this American has got to pay over and above for the special historic value attached to this most uncanny jewel. He will part with a handsome check. We keep the 'over and beyond.' A very ordinary, humdrum transaction, with little or no risk to it. But then we ought not to sneeze at a few hundred pounds so lightly earned. Lady Crevering, really glad to see the last of her opal, will be satisfied in having its equivalent. Mr. Crabtree, who can afford to pay a fancy price, will also be happy. We ourselves shall have nothing to grumble about."

"One moment! When Crabtree crosses the Atlantic he will be free to talk about his prize. This will reach Lady Crevering's ears."

"What of it? One does not believe everything that is spoken in America. Then why should not her lost jewel have found its way there?"

"H'm. Is that all?"

"All."

"You are sure?"

"What do you mean?"

"I think it an excellent plan."

"Yet you wear a cryptic smile?"

"Forgive me. I was not aware of it. You know that Lady Crevering, who really is afraid of the Yrieux fire opal, keeps it at her bank?"

"True. She might as well be without it. There it went the moment she received it, as if it was a deadly thing. Some of her friends, never having glimpsed it, doubt its existence."

"Have you asked for the opal?"

"Oh, yes."

"And what did she say?"

"She wrote me a line on her bankers' for the stone."

"Indeed?"

"Well? Why should she not?"

Whenever that tiny frown comes between Pauline's eyes, I always want to laugh.

"And the bank handed it to you?"

"Here it is," said Pauline.

"What?"

"Does it astonish you? Really, my dear Derek, you are a trifle enigmatical."

"No, no; only surprised that—that you cared to handle the opal."

"I do not like it; but I hand it to you. Quite soon Mr. Crabtree will call upon you. Have I made myself clear?"

I bowed over her tiny gloved hand and closed the door after her. The stone was in a brooch case. Lady Crevering had never worn it; nor, indeed, had she exhibited it to anyone after her purchase of it. She was not particularly superstitious in the matter of opals; but then the story ran that this jewel had rested for a century in the tomb of Henriette S. Yrieux, a duchess of France; that during a battle in the Franco-German war the chapel vault had been wrecked in a bombardment, and the opal stolen from the smashed stone tomb which held the dust of its long-dead tenant.

Since then it had passed from one hand to another, and wherever it went tragedy followed. Possibly there was not much truth in the yarn; anyhow, Lady Crevering believed it, and undoubtedly it had imparted a strong, if rather forbidding, fame to the notorious Yrieux.

Pauline had been gone but a minute when a telegram came from Jarvis Crabtree requesting my company at lunch on the following day. He had arrived in London and was staying at the Ritz.

I waited upon him at the time appointed. The first sound that beat upon my ears was the clacking of a typewriter, and I saw a girl working the machine in a corner of the room, her back towards me. Crabtree came forward with a kindly smile and hearty greeting. He was a little man, with a few wisps of hair, a high, thin nose, and eyes that might bear the term piggish.

"This is certainly very courteous of you, Mr. Tredgold," said he. "Pray take a chair. We have five minutes before lunch. Having some business on hand I engaged a room here which I use as an office. Expensive, but convenient. I believe that Monsieur Duverne has communicated with you. It was more than

kind of him to take any interest in my little hobby of acquiring precious stones to which a unique value is attached. If you ever find yourself in Boston I shall be charmed to show you my somewhat extraordinary assortment."

I bowed and took a proffered cigar. He continued—

"Concerning the Yrieux opal: Of course I had heard of it. Mention of the gem arose in a talk between M. Duverne and me in Paris. He assured me that the present owner, Lady Crevering, might possibly be induced under pressure to part with it, but that most emphatically she would never consent to its crossing the Atlantic. I appreciate a natural prejudice in a lady of title who has seen so many British treasures absorbed by us. But M. Duverne whispered that you might most obligingly act as a medium; that you might tell her ladyship that you have a good buyer for her opal, keeping my name and nationality among the undiscovered things. In short, that I might hope to rely on you to bring off a secret transaction."

"A strictly private one," I modified with a smile. "I am proud to do my best for any friend of Armand Duverne's. I acted promptly. So promptly that Lady Crevering, more than afraid of the jewel, willingly, if not eagerly, entrusted me with the sale of it."

He rubbed his thin hands. "Good! Excellent! Is it possible that you have it with you?"

"More than possible." I produced the black leather case. Murmuring delighted thanks, Crabtree pressed the simple spring and fixed fascinated eyes on the jewel.

"A true fire opal," he exclaimed with enthusiasm. "The genuine hyacinth red. So this is the fatal Yrieux! The thought of its long concealment in a woman's grave has its sinister aspect, Mr. Tredgold." He turned his head towards the typist and called—"Miss Johnson, come and tell me what you think of this little sparkler."

The girl was apparently so buried in her work that she failed to hear.

"Come here, Miss Johnson," he repeated.

The typist rose and came towards us. She looked at me; I at her.

She was Pauline!

I gave a violent start of astonishment. The emotion lasted but a fraction of a second. I flashed a glance at Crabtree to see if he had observed it, but he was feasting his eyes upon the fiery opal. He held it up for his typist's inspection, remarking—"Isn't he a fine fellow?"

"May I?" asked Pauline, taking the jewel with the utmost coolness. "Yes, indeed, it is a lovely opal, but I wouldn't wear it for a fortune."

The American burst out laughing as he resumed possession. "Miss Johnson" returned to her work, and her employer faced me.

"I will offer five thousand dollars for the stone," said he tersely.

I could have jumped. The price was miles ahead of what I had expected. I stroked my chin reflectively.

"Naturally, it is not the intrinsic value under consideration," I murmured, "but the peculiar reputation of the gem. Still, I venture to think that Lady Crevering would part with so unique a treasure for five thousand dollars—and a thousand on top of that."

A smile puckered his features, and he looked at me shrewdly, wagging his head. I could read his thought—"A thousand as commission for yourself"—quite plainly. Then he said, aloud: "The unusual nature of the transaction bars any haggling, Mr. Tredgold. I have my obligation to you to bear in mind. I will pay six thousand for the Yrieux. There, take the gem. I will call on you this evening and pay in cash. No, no; I insist that you keep it until then—just as I insist on not giving you a check. We shall be no worse friends for treating the matter on hard, business lines. And now come down to lunch."

The lunch, like Mr. Crabtree's offer, was excellent. He was dining out that evening. So was I. Would ten o'clock be too late an hour for him to call upon me? I assured him that I was quite at his service and would call upon *him*. No, he would prefer to look me up, and spend a subsequent hour over a chat and a bottle of wine. And so I left him.

I made no effort to see Pauline. In the first place I did not feel in the best humor towards her. In the second, I needed no explanation of the mystery. Behind her manner when she came with the opal was a suggestion of some want of frankness. Of course, the whole matter was simplicity itself. Duverne had chosen me to sell the Yrieux; he and Pauline—or Pauline alone, apparently—would see that Jarvis Crabtree was relieved of it speedily. With that plain idea in view, Pauline had secured a position as temporary typist to the American.

I had felt surprised that Duverne should have evolved a scheme to bring in just a few hundred dollars—our share on the sale of the jewel to Crabtree. Now I saw the plot in completion. That was all right, but I did feel a bit piqued that the latter half had been kept a secret from me. And a secret it would have remained had not the American, instead of paying the proposed visit to me, sent me the wire inviting me to his hotel to lunch.

Disgusted, I had a mind to throw up the job, for I believed that Duverne and Pauline still regarded me as somewhat of a tyro. However, a second impulse prevailed, and after dining out I arrived at my flat at ten o'clock precisely.

Williams, my man, informed me that Jarvis Crabtree was waiting, having arrived fifteen to twenty minutes ago. I found his little figure literally curled in the deeps of my favorite divan chair.

"Sooner too early than half a second late," he chirped. "This is my idea of comfort, Mr. Tredgold, which makes one forget the English moisture outside."

Williams brought in the champagne, and I produced my most fragrant weeds. Six thousand forthcoming dollars for an opal. Truly an event deserving a good environment.

"You keep your cigars a long while," said my guest, biting the end off. "We prefer them damp over yonder. But then a cigar dried out like this would burn as a flare in our dry climate. We will settle business first, shall we?"

"As you please." With an assumption of casual absent-mindedness I reflected before remembering that the Yrieux was in a side pocket of my topcoat. I tossed it to him.

He regarded the stone meditatively.

"I have been thinking," said he.

Ominous!

"You are quite sure that Lady Crevering wishes to dispose of the opal?"

The question, you will admit, was not altogether nice.

"I beg your pardon?"

He stood the cold stare remarkably well.

"Of course, I am aware that she would not wish it to go to America," he continued, the cigar between his teeth as he talked. "The point, however, is—does she wish it to be sold at all?"

"Merely a repetition of a question to which I take exception," I replied, not quite liking the look in his piggish eyes.

"I am sorry. You read in my words doubt as to whether she really did commission you to sell her opal?"

I sprang to my feet, suddenly mad.

"That is just what I do read," I answered, calmly enough despite a boiling rage.

"Then I congratulate you on a clear perception." He removed his cigar to flick off the ash, then stuck it between his jaws again.

I had more than sense enough to hide what I felt. "In which case the matter ends," I retorted. "Oblige me by going before I am tempted into an offensiveness as extreme as your own." And I reached out a hand for the opal.

"I owe you a brief explanation," said he steadily, keeping his eyes fixed upon my face. "I have not been a private buyer of diamonds for twenty years without learning that some sellers are not what they might be. Do you blame me for a constant suspicion? Well, there was something about your friend M. Duverne which I did not altogether admire. At first I put it down to the fact that he is a poet. I detest poets. They make me sick. I prefer concrete ideas to moon-struck visions.

"But when he began to talk to me of diamonds and hinted that I might like to purchase the Yrieux opal, my natural

suspicion pointed another cause of dislike. I appeared to fall in with his suggestion, and kept an eye skinned for developments. One soon came. My typist left me abruptly with an inadequate reason. Duverne recommended another. I suspected that he had bribed the first to leave. I am afraid of no man. I certainly am not afraid of a French poet! So I engaged this suggested typist of his and kept my other eye skinned for still further developments."

He paused, looking at me wickedly. I confess that my feelings began to be of no pleasant order; that something akin to dismay killed my rage and sent a cold shiver down my spine. For the moment I realized that the one thing to do was to present the most unruffled aspect. I watched him with a mocking smile, hands plunged in my trouser pockets, as I answered:

"Only curiosity in perceiving to what ridiculous conclusions a highly suspicious and morbid imagination will propel itself, induces me to hear you to the end before having you shown—or thrown—out."

"Say it again. It has a fine, rolling flavor," he scoffed. "I will satisfy your curiosity to the full. Feeling pretty certain that there was some sort of link between Duverne and my new typist, I wanted to ascertain if you were included in it. It was easily done by inviting you to my hotel. When I called my typist to have a look at the opal she wasn't inclined to come. I insisted. You two came face to face. Oh, you thought I didn't see the start you gave? But I did—perfectly well, I assure you. That was good enough for Jarvis Crabtree. The three of you are in a conspiracy against me. I have proved it. A darned fine conspiracy!"

Pardon me for not dwelling at length on the condition of my emotions at that moment. It hurts me to recall just how I did feel. I saw a deep and ugly hole yawning at my feet, and it gave me the cold shivers.

"Do you deny it—*Honorable* Tredgold?" he snarled.

"I answer that before twenty hours have passed you will apologize to me like the gentleman you are—for all your mad suspiciousness."

"So that's how you are going to take it?" said he in the same wicked, snarling tone. "I don't blame you. Apologize? I'll go down on my bended knees and lick your shoes if I find I'm wrong. But I'm not wrong. You three have tried to wind some rascally web round me. Three scoundrels! You hear that? Scoundrels!" He fairly spat the word, transformed into a hissing little mass of venom. "Liars! Rascals! Thieves!"

Nice terms to listen to! Sweet morsels to be compelled to swallow! But they didn't hurt much, because all the time I was racking my wits to find some way out of this hideous mess. Yet not a loophole could I see. All I could do was to answer, still quite composedly: "What do you propose to do?"

"Do?" he shouted. "I'm going to see Lady Crevering at once—this very hour, to ask her if she is aware that the Honorable Derek Tredgold is trying to sell her opal!"

"No, you wont!"

"And I'm going to take the stone with me!"

I felt a terrible rush of blood stream to my head. I had need of all my self-control to prevent myself from throttling the little beast. He saw something of it and leaped towards the door.

"Put that jewel down!" I commanded, almost stifling.

"I shall do nothing of the sort. Look here, I didn't put my nose in this den without being ready for a bite. I'm armed—see. It's loaded in every hole. Now what are you going to do?"

Do? There was but one answer to his question: let him go his way and show him a cool fearlessness. I flung open the door.

"When you return to apologize, Mr. Crabtree, we will open another bottle of wine and smoke another cigar together. In the meanwhile—*au revoir.*"

The next instant I was alone and up against a situation ugly enough to turn my hair grey.

We were lost—the three of us!

The fellow was scurrying to Lady Crevering as fast as a taxi could bowl

him along. He would find her indoors, for I happened to know that she was giving a small card party. He would denounce me, and Pauline March, and Duverne. The story that he had to tell was too straight and clear for Lady Crevering to doubt it.

And if Crabtree, who certainly was in a most terrible passion, decided to go not to Lady Crevering, but to the police....

I sweated big drops. Yes, I was in a fearful funk, I admit, for it dawned upon me that I ought to be throwing a few things in a bag and making a bolt across the sea.

But I didn't act that way, for I felt that first I had to warn Pauline that we were dished by this infernally crafty Yank. Where could I find her? She had left me without any address, and there existed but a slim chance of my finding her at the hotel. I had to grasp at it, and I was whirled round at express speed. It was a grain of comfort when I was told that "Miss Johnson," Mr. Crabtree's typist, was in the hotel. I raced to the room where I had met the American a few hours earlier.

Pauline had a frown for my entry, but it vanished as she saw trouble ahead.

"A nice mess you and Duverne have made of it!" I burst out. "Crabtree has summed us all up and has gone to Lady Crevering—or the police—with the whole bag of tricks!"

Pauline gasped.

"What the deuce are we to do?" I continued savagely.

She took a rose from a vase and held it to her delicate nostrils. "What has happened, Derek?" she asked softly. "Be nice."

I got it off my chest in a dozen sentences.

"Perhaps he repented and did not go to Lady Crevering after all," said Pauline. "I will ring her up."

She made the connection almost at once.

"Is that you speaking, dear Lady Crevering?"

"Yes. Who is it?" something of the gurgled reply reached me.

"I am Pauline. I only rung up to—to say how sorry I was not to be able to join your card party to-night. Is anyone with you—anyone special?"

"Yes; an American gentleman has just sent up his card. A Mr. Jarvis Crabtree. He is coming up the stairs now. A fellow-country-man of yours. Do you know him, then?"

Pauline hung up the receiver, leaving that question eternally un-answered. She looked at me with the prettiest pout.

"You are right, Derek. This is an exceedingly warm corner. He is telling Lady Crevering now."

"Then we are done for," I snapped.

Pauline tore the rose to pieces. "I suppose we are."

"What are you going to do? It seems to me that we have not a moment to lose if—"

"An hour—to waste," said an unexpected voice.

Armand Duverne stood smiling upon the threshold.

At that serene, soft smile, the high-tide of my fears sank a full inch. Duverne closed the door, came forward and dropped with his customary grace upon a sofa. "Oblige me with a cigarette, my dear Tredgold. *Merci.* A full hour—two—three, if you like. Jarvis Crabtree will not appear in this hotel again. Be perfectly assured. Also you need not be under the smallest jarring apprehension. The man is a third-rate diamond crook himself. Take that from me. It is the truth. Ah, you really ought to purchase your cigarettes in Paris, *mon ami.*"

Pauline rippled with laughter. Duverne had chased away her fears. She regarded him with that admiration that always annoyed me.

"That is all very fine," I cut in hotly. "But the fellow is with Lady Crevering at this very moment, telling her—"

"Nothing distasteful to us. He dare not. More, he is too good a sportsman. He has simply ventured to introduce himself to her as a fellow-lover of precious stones. She will regard it as cheek and soon get rid of him. He knew you would 'phone to see if he was there. It is part of the scare to which he has treated you. Not without humor is our American friend. I gather from what I

overheard of your remarks that he has seen through us and knows us for—for what we are. That is a pity; but he is going to America and will hold his tongue."

Now that I was no longer afraid I felt angry again; and my rage was not abated by Pauline's smiling admiration for Duverne's *blasé* composure.

"You have been playing with me!" I flashed out. "What was your little game?"

"Playing? Well, in a way, I admit it. I met Crabtree—a singularly un-poetic name—in Paris. A somewhat rash endeavor on his part convinced me of a previous surmise that he was a diamond crook. I told him about the Yrieux, that Lady Crevering might sell it. His eyes gleamed and I knew he would try to get it. I enlisted your assistance, feeling certain that he would get the better of you. He did. Now, do not look so terribly fierce. It was a little revenge on my part to make us quits over the matter of your rough treatment of me at our first meeting. Come, you owed me a knock in return. I wished to prove to you that a third-rate diamond crook could beat you. He did. Your own fault."

I choked with annoyance.

"Pauline was no party to my scheme," went on Duverne, stretching himself at full length. "Her mission was to get back the Yrieux from Jarvis—I prefer to use his Christian name. True, I asked her to keep quiet regarding that part of it."

"But she didn't get it back." I almost chuckled. "The fellow kept away from here after leaving me. Your practical joke at my expense has recoiled on yourself. You will have to find the value of the opal."

"*Ma foi,* by no means. If, by way of revenge, I have shown you in the light of a bungler—keep still, you annoy me—I have made use of the same opportunity to instruct you how I, Armand Duverne, fish with more than one hook on my line. Anticipating that Jarvis would come away from you with the opal, that he would manage it either at his own hotel or your flat, I watched him.

"At his first meeting with you he did not strike; after his second he came away in the devil of a hurry. I knew then that he had it. If he had returned here Pauline would have beaten him; but he didn't. I had foreseen it. I played a common, but exceedingly useful trick where a third-class crook is concerned.

"I was slightly disguised, and I gave chase. He lost his nerve, taking me for a detective. He dropped the prize pretty skillfully, but I saw the move, all the same. I let him go, of course. As for the Yrieux opal, I picked it up almost the moment it fell. Here it is."

The black leather case was in his long fingers.

"Come, *mon cher* Derek," he continued placidly. "Don't bear malice. Confess that I have shown you that you are not invulnerable; and add, for justice's sake, that I managed the trick remarkably—"

Suddenly he leaped to an upright posture.

"Ten thousand fiends!" he exclaimed.

The brooch case was empty, save for a fragment of paper on which were the significant words—in French for his special benefit: *"Tente encore."*

The American had subtracted the opal and left this simple message to "try again."

I glanced at Pauline, and saw that the admiration had faded from her face like the passing of a sunset gleam. As for Duverne, he wore an expression of comic despair and humiliation, and he kept turning the brooch case over and over as if he held some faint hope of finding the missing treasure stuck somewhere upon the leather.

"Most remarkably well," I assured him philosophically. "An excellent object lesson, my dear fellow. It seems that your third-rate crook was, shall we say, of the second-class order?"

"Ah, bah!" said he with a shrug. He lighted another cigarette. "We shall have to raise the money equivalent between us, that is all."

"Us!" I echoed mockingly.

"Wait! It is my turn to talk," interrupted Pauline.

The quiver of triumph in her voice

drew our eyes. She was half-sitting upon the arm of a chair, holding another of the roses, and from behind the sheltering petals she looked at us bewitchingly.

"The situation is saved, my friends," she continued in her musical murmur. "Who saved it? Pauline. The object lesson in astuteness is mine, I do assure you. Jarvis has not got the Yrieux; never did have it."

She paused, watching us provokingly, her eyes flashing like a sunlight stream.

"Enough," cried Duverne joyously. "Where is the opal?"

"With Lady Crevering. It never left her possession. You look skeptical, Derek?"

"Not at all."

"Oh, but you do; and I will compel your reluctant congratulations. It is true that I tried to borrow it from Lady Crevering, but for some reason she begged me to choose another ornament. Of course, that did not suit our purpose. I came away disappointed; but a little reflection showed me that since we intended to relieve Jarvis Crabtree of his purchase, the subject of that purchase was not so very vital.

"It was too late to communicate with you, Armand, for I believed that you had not left Paris; and you had asked me to say nothing to Derek about the subsequent intention of getting the stone back after selling it. I could not, therefore, tell you, Derek, that the opal I brought to you was not the Yrieux, for you would very rightly have objected on the grounds that the buyer—whom we both believed genuine—would be bound to learn sooner or later that Lady Crevering had not parted with the jewel, and that he had a spurious one.

"In the circumstances, I resolved to keep my secret—which is simply that I borrowed another opal of a much inferior kind from one of my jeweler friends, and it is this stone which we have lost. It is of little value.

"Acknowledge, now, that it is I who am mistress of the situation."

"A moment, truly charming Pauline," cut in Duverne. "Your scheme has the genius of simplicity, but you ran a risk. I bear out your statement that you believed Jarvis to be a rich American collector. And you knew that we did not intend him to retain his purchase. But you should have put this question to yourself: 'Some time he will talk about his having once bought the Yrieux, and that it was stolen from him. This will reach Lady Crevering's ears. Now, since she never did part with the jewel, what will she say?' "

Pauline arched her eyebrows.

"Oh, Lady Crevering would have lent it to me sooner or later, and I should have 'lost' it then."

"Très bien," exclaimed Duverne. "You have saved us. Permit me to kiss your hands. The fellow has got away with the wrong stone, and a poor one at that. He is perfectly willing to call it the Yrieux. Bah, I was right, after all. He is but a third rate—"

A knock at the door interrupted us. A servant of the hotel had a small package addressed to "Miss Johnson," marked "urgent and immediate," which had just been delivered by messenger. Pauline showed a touch of nervousness as she cut the string. Inside a small pasteboard box was the opal, with a card scrawled across with the words—"Wear this in remembrance of me.—J. C."

Duverne cursed under his breath.

Pauline threw the thing down. She seemed inclined to stamp upon it.

"Too bad," I commented soothingly. "He was not deceived at all, presumably. Only a really smart man can beat this chap."

Pauline flashed out: "He could not have known that I obtained this opal!"

"No, that was beyond him," groaned Duverne. "He was merely aware that you were one of us, and he sent you the mock Yrieux as a gift. Certainly he is not without humor."

Pauline bit her pretty lip. "But—but—" she stammered, when I insisted on my turn.

"Now hear me. Permit me a share in so much self-gratulation. Our friend the enemy has beaten two of us; there is a third, however."

I sat on the edge of the table and beamed upon them. Their eyes opened wider and wider.

I went on, in blandest tones:

"The American has licked you, Armand. Admit it. Pauline, he has had the bad grace to laugh at you. Confess it. Your classification was faulty, for this fellow is undoubtedly a star of the first magnitude, not the third. Fortunately for you both, he has suffered a total eclipse. I invite your admiration."

With slow deliberation I produced a sheet of crested note-paper, verbena-scented, from my letter-case. I continued, with unction:

"In this letter, which I received yesterday morning, Lady Crevering thanks me for obtaining for her a certain green diamond. She goes on to say: 'I am charmed to have this jewel on which I had indeed set my heart. And now I am going to ask another favor of you. Will you accept from me, as a small souvenir of my gratitude, my Yrieux Opal? Please make me happy by doing so. I am sending it with this letter....'"

I stopped and looked at them. It was a moment of ecstasy, I assure you. Duverne showed a sulky face. Pauline flashed in:

"Why did not Lady Crevering tell me when I asked for the loan of it?"

"Why? No doubt because she thought her gift might not have quite reached me, and she did not want to tell a third person who might in turn tell me and rather spoil her pleasant little surprise."

Pauline stamped her foot. "And you had it when I came to you, and said nothing! You let me show you a substitute, and allowed me to go on talking, and—and—"

"That was unkind, truly, but in the circumstances natural enough. You were telling me what was not quite true; a charming *faux,* my dear Pauline, but a falsehood all the same. And simply because I knew that you were keeping something back I permitted you to go on. Ah, if you had been perfectly, perfectly open! I wanted to see just what was in the wind."

"I shall never forgive you! Derek!"

"Then I shall never forgive myself. You will ask me why I was so genuinely scared when our client rushed off to Lady Crevering with a spurious stone? Well, what would Lady Crevering think of me when she saw the stone and realized that I was endeavoring to sell it to a rich American for the true Yrieux? That frightened me. And then he was going to blab about you two.

"There you have it all, my friends, in a nutshell. The object lesson has come off, after all, but it is I who am the instructor. In future—"

Duverne threw away his cigarette with an excited gesture. "Wait!" he cried. "Do not ring the curtain down yet. You know that to-night I waited outside your flat for this confounded American. I followed him there, and you arrived twenty minutes later. Ah, ah, look here! I have an idea! He was aware that you, like himself, were interested in other people's diamonds. True, he could have had no suspicion that the genuine Yrieux had been presented to you, but he might hope to lay his fingers on some other jewel of value. That was why he got there twenty minutes before time. He—"

It was like a bucket of ice water in my face. I rushed to the telephone. The ten seconds before I got Williams on the wire seemed a decade.

"Is that you, Williams? The second right-hand drawer of my desk under the 'phone! Is it locked?"

He had only to reach down, so he answered in a flash.

"The lock's been forced, sir!"

"Is there anything inside?"

"Only some papers, sir."

"Not a brooch-case?"

"No, sir."

I looked around. Pauline had her handkerchief to her face. Duverne was on his back on the sofa, puffing rings of cigarette smoke to the ceiling.

If the Yrieux had but justified its sinister repute and drowned Jarvis Crabtree in mid-Atlantic on his way across! But it didn't.

We never saw him again; never heard of him more. Well, I take off my hat to him. He glided into our sphere like a shooting star, like one of those glittering meteors which swim out of darkness, out of mystery, and—vanish!

Billy on the Warpath

A romance of the steel-mill workers

by

CHARLES WESLEY SANDERS

ILLUSTRATED BY VA-TIER L. BARNES

BILLY, quitting after a hard night's work, met Old Man Brannigan, just going on, at the entrance to the mill yard.

"You'll have to get your own breakfast," the old man said. "Nellie went away last night to a dance and she 'phoned me about ten o'clock that she was going to stay with some girl friends."

"All right," Billy said.

He passed through the gate, paused as a thought struck him, half turned, decided against speaking, and went up the narrow street without looking back.

When he reached the Brannigan home, in which he was a boarder, he did not at once set about getting his own breakfast. Instead he started in the parlor and made a careful search of each room, ending in the neat kitchen. But he did not seem to find what he was seeking. He went upstairs and stopped before the door of Nellie Brannigan's room, his hand on the knob. Then he shook his head.

"No, I couldn't do that," he said. "Even if I was sure something had gone wrong, that belongs to her."

Billy looked the priest in the eyes. "I will choke the young crook's gizzard out, if he has brought any harm to that girl," he said to himself.

In spite of the doubt which had come to him he ate a hearty breakfast and went to bed. He slept soundly till four o'clock in the afternoon. He hoped that Nellie was downstairs, but she was not there. He found the lower part of the house just as he had left it in the morning.

Billy sat down to ponder the situation. He was not a man to whom thought came quickly. He had to go over

every step of the way laboriously. But when he reached a conclusion, it was pretty likely to be sound. And the conclusion now was that Nellie Brannigan had run away from home. Who, then, had she run away with? With a sinking heart Billy recognized the pitiful fact that there could be but one person.

He went to the telephone and called the mill office. He asked to speak to "Mr. McKillip." Mr. McKillip, he was told, was not working; he had taken a vacation.

Billy sank into a chair and for a moment abandoned himself to the grief which only a big man knows. He sat so till it was time for him to go to work. Then, supperless, he walked slowly toward the mill. He and the old man met at the gate as they had met in the morning. Billy had only one way of imparting news.

"Nellie didn't come home," he said, "and that young McKillip is gone from the mill office."

Old Man Brannigan's eyes glazed swiftly, and the fingers of his right hand sought his beard. The stoop of his shoulders became for the moment a little more pronounced.

"But I kicked young McKillip out of the front gate," he said at last.

"I know you did, but I think they've run away together."

"And got married?"

"I don't know. I hope so. You said the lad was no good."

Old Man Brannigan swallowed hard, and his lips trembled.

"Get off to-night, Billy, and help me," he said.

"Yes," Billy agreed, "but you've got to buck up. This is not time for breakin' down. You eat some supper and then scurry around and get somebody to relieve me. We'll see what we can do."

The old man went unsteadily up the street and Billy entered the mill yard. None who met him could have told now what was going on in his mind. Billy at first struck the casual observer as a very fat man. And yet he was imposing. Men of meaner girth had an impulse in his presence to lift their shoulders, and pull at their belt straps. But Billy was no object of envy in his own eyes. He was a steel-mill puddler and day and night he presented that mass of flesh to withering heat. He tried going on the water wagon and splashing off. He punished himself with diets of every kind. He lived on nothing but meat; then nothing but vegetables. But the scales never showed more than an ounce or so of difference.

As he went through the yard he tried to remember all he knew about young McKillip. It was little. He recalled that the lad was slight of build—not much bigger than the fair-haired Nellie herself; that he dressed outrageously well in clothing that was an offense to Billy's eyes; that he smoked cigarettes; that —oh, he was no good. That was all there was to it. If he had been any good, kind-hearted old Brannigan would never have resorted to violence to get rid of him.

What Nellie found to like in the boy Billy could not see. She was so sweet and kind and clean herself that a man would have expected her to look higher, but Billy supposed that you couldn't tell what a woman would do in a love affair.

Old Man Brannigan came to the mill at nine o'clock. He said he had got a relief for Billy. The man would come in an hour or so, as soon as he had got a little sleep.

"You better go home and get some rest," Billy said.

"No, I'll stay here," the old man said. "I'll stay where you are, Billy."

Billy turned away, his throat contracted with pity. The old man had been hard hit. The way he leaned on a younger man was pitiful. Billy ground his teeth. If young McKillip hadn't married Nellie, he—And yet suppose he had married her? Whichever way Billy looked at the situation it seemed hopeless for him.

The old man went out and sat down on a pile of rails in the yard. Despite the heat of the July night, he had put on his Prince Albert coat, white starched shirt and high, old-fashioned derby hat.

The old man bent his head in bitter grief. This was what life had come to for him. Why did his women treat him so? Nellie's own mother had gone away in the night, and now Nellie had fol-

lowed in her footsteps. At the time he had said that he would rather have seen Nellie's mother dead, but he could not say that of Nellie. The years had burned a good deal of the spirit out of him. Where in the past he had raged, now he could only suffer.

Presently a tired, red-eyed man came into the mill yard. Brannigan rose to meet him. He was Billy's relief.

"What's the matter?" he asked at the sight of Brannigan. "Going to a funeral?"

"My daughter has run away," the old man said simply.

"Run away? Why, she was over to see my sister night before last. Where did she run away to?"

"That's what I'm trying to find out."

"Has she got married?"

"I can't tell."

The man took off his cap and spat meditatively on the dusty ground.

"Why don't you go and see my sister?" he asked. "They say a woman can't keep a secret. Maybe she knows something."

"I will," Brannigan said.

Billy came out in a few minutes. "Where now?" he asked, when they had gained the street.

"To Father Kelly's. Maybe he can tell us what to do."

They paused a moment before the old stone church which Brannigan had attended for twenty years. Then they went around to the front door of the little house which nestled in the lee of the church. The face of the man who opened the door for them was as plain as the front of his church, but his voice, when he spoke, was immensely kind.

They went in and Brannigan told him the few facts they had.

"And why do you object to the lad as a son-in-law?" the aged priest asked, as one would ask who has gone to the heart of many a neighborhood dispute.

The old man went unsteadily up the street.

Old Man Brannigan ran his old-fashioned hat around through his work-worn fingers. He studied the pattern in the aged priest's carpet for a moment.

"I didn't think he was the proper man for her," he said at last.

"He was honest and steady-going?"

"Yes," the old man admitted, but he thought of the ridiculous cuffs which McKillip wore on his "pants." "But I wanted her to marry a man I knew—a man of my own kind."

The priest turned to look at Billy.

"Was this the man?" he asked.

Billy's big face was suffused till it looked apoplectic.

"Who. me?" he asked. "That's fool-

ishness, father. Would a little girl like that look twice at a big fat guy like me? No, indeed."

"Had you any objection to this boy, then?"

Billy looked the priest in the eye. He was not so beef-witted but that he could get a man's drift swiftly enough.

"I had no objection to him," he said.

"You do not seek him in revenge?"

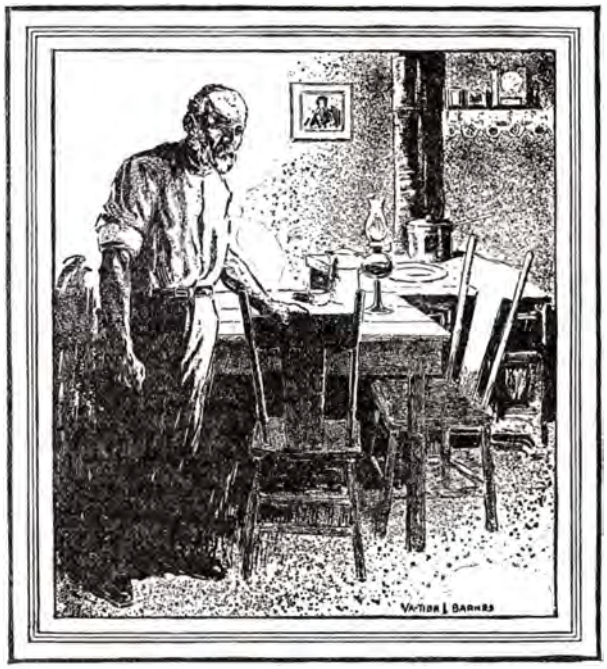
"I do not," Billy said, and again he looked the priest in the eye. "Except," he added to himself, "I will choke the young crook's gizzard out if he has brought any harm to that girl."

"The thing to do is to seek the children in a spirit of loving-kindness," the priest said at his door as they left. "Be prepared to receive them into your heart when you find them."

"That's what I must do," Old Man Brannigan said. "But it's hard."

"Uh-huh," said Billy.

To keep the old man calm, he had tried to repress any emotion he had had, but now he had to run his finger between his throat and his collar. He felt as if he were going to choke.



"I'm going up there to see her," the old man announced

They sought out the girl whom Billy's relief had spoken of. She was a red-lipped, dark-eyed girl who flirted with Billy—or tried to—as the old man questioned her. She talked a good deal in a vague way, but in the end it all came to her repeated assertion that she didn't know "a thing, rilly."

Then they got files of the newspapers and went over the marriage licenses. The names of the missing ones were not there. On a chance they visited the morgue and police headquarters, but got no information. They beat a hasty retreat from the latter place when the blue-coated man in charge began to question them.

Dawn was coming into the clear east when they reached home. The old man, tired out, sank into a chair.

"I don't know what to do," he whispered.

"You can only wait now, I guess," Billy said.

They waited for a week, but there was no word. They went back to work. The old man came home each night exhausted. He reverted to his past, and he began to express the opinion that he had been unfairly dealt with. This led to a bitterness of spirit which caused him constantly to complain, and that at last crystalized into decision.

"Well, she took her choice," he said. "No matter what happens now, she'll cross my door no more. . . . You'll stick by me, Billy?"

The appeal in his voice as he asked the question was pathetic.

"I'll stick by you till the cows come home," Billy said. And to himself, again, he added: "I wish they'd hurry up and come back, or let the old man hear from them. I want to talk to that lad for just a minute or two. He's got to satisfy me that everything is all right."

At the end of two weeks

a postal card came from the girl. It was postmarked from a neighboring town on Lake Erie. Nellie vouchsafed no information beyond the statement that she was "all right." She did not mention McKillip, nor say whether she was still single or married. The absence of that information broke the old man's resolution. He got out his black suit and derby hat again.

"I'm going up there to see her," he announced.

"Let me go in your place, or with you?" Billy said.

But the old man wanted to go alone. A harder look had come into his eyes. He seemed to be angry that the girl had not left him in his bitter abandonment to the situation as it stood.

"Supposing McKillip is there?" Billy asked. "What'll you do?"

"Leave him to me," the old man ground out.

"But you're in no shape to handle a young man like that," Billy objected.

"So?" Brannigan straightened his bent figure till he was his full six feet. He lifted a right hand that was like the metal it had worked for thirty-five years. "I guess I can take care of myself."

"Oh, you can in that way," Billy admitted. "But what'll it get you?"

"What would you do if you went and found him there?" Brannigan demanded.

"Well, I'm younger—and free."

"I'm going anyhow," the old man said.

He left on the evening train and Billy went to work. It was an excessively hot night outside; in the mill the air was as if drawn from a well of fire. The workers moved about listlessly. The sweat which ran from them drained their bodies of moisture. The water which they drank guardedly did little to assuage their thirst.

Billy had a sense of oppression. He wished he had got off for the night. He wondered what the old man was doing. He hoped Brannigan would not get into a scrape of any sort. The old man was slow enough to anger, but when he was angry he was madly so.

Billy dragged himself to the open door and stood blinking into the still, hot night.

About ten o'clock he dragged himself to the open door and stood blinking into the still, hot night. For a moment he could see nothing, his eyes being half-closed and smarting from the sweat which had been running into them.

Then, as his gaze cleared, he saw McKillip standing not ten feet from him in the yard. The boy was as motionless as if he had been a statue. Only his burning eyes made him alive to Billy's perception. For a moment the mill man could not speak. Then he took a step forward. The boy retreated that far.

"Stay where you are," McKillip said in a voice husky with emotion. "I want to talk to you a minute and then I'm going."

"I wont touch you," said Billy. "Where's Nellie?"

"Don't you call her Nellie, you big skunk," the boy hissed. "Mrs. McKillip, she is for you—and all the rest of you."

"You're married, then?" Billy breathed.

"Yes, we're married safe and sound."

"Nellie—Mrs. McKillip's father went to Kingston to find her—He got a card."

"Certainly, he got a card," McKillip sneered. "I sent it. I thought he'd come. I wanted him out of the way. I wanted to see you. I don't bear the old man any grudge."

"What have you got against me?" Billy asked wonderingly.

"As if you didn't know....Well, I didn't come here to chew the rag with you. I want to see you to-morrow morning. I came here to make sure you'd be at home, so that I could telephone."

"I'll be there. What time?"

"Seven o'clock."

"All right....How's Mrs. McKillip?"

"You're a bigger fool than I thought you were," McKillip sneered again. "Do you suppose I'd be here if she wasn't all right?"

With that he was gone, leaving Billy staring after him. Billy's mind was in a whirl. He couldn't understand what he had done to injure McKillip. That account, he thought, was on the other side of the ledger.

The telephone bell rang next morning promptly at seven o'clock. Billy, dressed and waiting, answered the call. McKillip gave him an address a dozen blocks from the Brannigan home. It was a place of mean streets.

"You aint living in that hunkey neighborhood, are you?" Billy asked.

"Yes, I am."

"And Nellie's there, too?"

"My wife is here with me, certainly."

"Well, I'll be there in half an hour," Billy said.

He was so bewildered by this newest revelation that he stopped at the corner saloon and got a drink of whiskey. What in the world had happened to the boy's fortunes that he was living in squalor? How could Nellie stand that? He lost any notion he had had of punishing the boy. The two seemed obviously in need of assistance.

The house was an old ramshackle affair. Billy knocked on the front door and a woman opened it. Without waiting for Billy to speak, she opened another door at her right and Billy walked through that. The woman closed the door behind him. For a moment the big man stood in the half light gazing about him. Then he made out McKillip.

"Well, son," Billy said, not harshly, "you seem to be up against it."

McKillip came swiftly toward him. For an instant he stood in front of Billy and then he raised his right hand and struck Billy on the mouth. Billy fell back a step, his hands at his sides. He was too amazed to make other movement. He stared at the boy incredulously. McKillip made no move to strike him again.

"Why, you struck me," Billy said at last.

"Yes, I struck you. What are you going to do about it? We're alone in this room."

Billy seemed to sense the grotesqueness of the little man's attitude and of his attack. He smiled rather grimly.

"I can't do anything about it," he said. "What can a man of my size do when a kid like you smashes him?"

McKillip went to the door and threw it open.

"Oh, Nellie!" he cried. "Nellie!"

There was a patter of light feet on the stair and Billy turned to see Nellie at the door. She was like a flower "in a tenement casement set."

"Look at him," McKillip cried passionately. "That's what I wanted to see him for—to show him that you've married a man that wasn't afraid of him. I told you I didn't care if he was as big as a house."

"You struck him?" Nellie asked.

"I struck him," her young husband repeated.

"You shouldn't have done that," Nellie said in gentle remonstrance. "Does it hurt, Billy?"

At her use of his first name in her soft, sweet tones Billy flushed.

"No," he said slowly; "it's all right. I've had many a harder knock than that, though I generally paid 'em back with interest. I'll let this go, though.... But I would like to know why he did it."

"As if you didn't know," said McKillip scornfully.

Schenectady, New York state. I never thought about Nellie except as a sister. I never said nothing to her old man."

Husband and wife looked at each other in dismay.

"Why," Nellie said slowly, "the night before I went away, father came to me and practically said that I must marry you. He said that he was getting old and he knew he could trust me to you. I told him I didn't love you, Billy. Then he was very angry and wanted to know if I

"I wanted to show him you've married a man who wasn't afraid of him," McKillip cried.

"What have I done to you or to—to your wife?" Billy asked helplessly.

"I suppose you didn't try to get her to marry you through her father. You didn't try to work on an old man's sympathy. You haven't been knocking me to him all the time."

"Who? Me?" Billy asked, his heavy shoulders drooping in his astonishment. "Why, I got a girl of my own up in

loved Mr. McKillip." She lifted her head proudly. "I said I did. I couldn't say anything else, because it was true. Father wanted to know if I had been meeting Mr. McKillip and I said I had been. There was a terrible scene."

"Well, what do you think of that?" Billy mused. "He didn't say anything to me about that. So that's why you banged me over the mouth, young fellow?"

"Yes," McKillip said a little sheepishly. "Maybe I was too hasty."

"Oh, it's all right," Billy returned. "I suppose you had to bang someone and it might as well be me. What I don't understand—" He paused and looked at McKillip. "You're a mighty proud kid," he went on, "but just hold yourself in a bit if you don't like what I say. This is no place to bring a nice girl like Nellie."

McKillip opened his lips to speak but his wife interposed.

"Let me tell that, dear," she said. "Our marriage was hastened by what father said, Billy. We expected to wait a year at least. That is, in the last two months we had been expecting to wait a year. Before that we had hoped to be married this summer. Well, Mr. McKillip had saved about enough money and his salary had been increased, when his mother was taken sick with typhoid fever. She's been sick for two months. All the expense has fallen on Mr. McKillip. His bank account has been used up, and it took all he was earning.

"At first, when father acted that way, we didn't know what to do. We couldn't see our way clear to get married. We talked it over for a while and then—"

"And then," said Billy, "you just went and got married anyhow, and you came back here to lick the man that made you do it."

The girl threw back her head and laughed and the two men grinned.

"How's your mother?" Billy asked.

"Better," McKillip answered. "I'll soon be on my feet now."

"I think you'd better come home," said Billy.

"Home?" they echoed.

"I never will," McKillip declared.

"Brannigan's getting old," said Billy evenly. "He's showing it. We all come to that sooner or later if we live long enough."

"But he kicked me through the front gate," McKillip said.

"That was because you wore cuffs on your pants," Billy said. "You can live without them, I guess. And you can tone down your dress a little. You wont need to dress quite so well as you have been. You've won the girl. Seriously—well, look at your wife."

Nellie's eyes had filled with tears. Through them she looked at her husband, not trying to hide them. He went to her and put his arms about her.

"You want to go?" he asked.

She nodded.

"Son," said Billy, "you were game to take a chance on poverty with her. I guess you can swallow your pride for her, can't you?"

"But perhaps her father wont see it that way."

"But," said Billy with a wave of his mighty arm, "I will be there. I don't think he will make much of a ruction when he finds everything is straightened out. I shouldn't be surprised if he began calling you 'son' in a day or two. I think he just wants to know his child is safe."

"Well, I'll try it," McKillip said.

"Come along then," Billy said.

He waited while they got their hats and their few belongings. When they came to the plain, old brick church, Billy stopped.

"You children run along," he said. "I'll step in and see Father Kelly a minute."

The old priest opened the door for him.

"I've a confession to make as man to man," Billy said when they had seated themselves. "I was going after that boy. I was seeking him in a spirit of revenge. But they beat me to it."

And he told the story. The priest only smiled.

"You have done a good work so far," he said. "I hope you can complete it with Mr. Brannigan."

"Oh, I'll complete it," Billy said buoyantly.

In the street he walked half a block and then he suddenly stopped.

"What beats me," he said aloud, "is how I ever happened to pick out Schenectady, New York state. I've never been in the place. I hardly knew it was on the map."

The Satanic Valentine

The love story of a broker who sold his right to look men in the face for $100

by

EUGENE P. LYLE, JR.

Author of "Those Who Ride by Night," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY EDMUND FREDERICK

THE recent member of the Stock Exchange had not the gambler's last hope when he came into his bedroom after midnight. He had conviction and he had courage. Courage was as his digestive equipment, in that both served him without his being conscious of them. But what he did not have was money enough to go on with the game.

Protecting a margin for even just one more point was, after much repitition, no casual matter. True, it only required a spreading of currency as thin as the paper on which the currency is printed, but nowhere could the recent member of the Stock Exchange rake together quite enough for another such layering.

Securities, bank balance, daily commissions, seat on the Exchange, salary roll, offices, except an alcove desk room; apartment, except a cell bedroom under the roof; even the season's renewal of wardrobe, all chattels and appurtenances that were his own, were already spread, thinly and successively, over that sinking area of the earth's crust initialed on the tape as S. A. P. pfd.

Merely the physical valuation of this area, apart from its normal profit-sustaining capacities, was greater than the price that might now buy every scrap of its stock. But a man of diamond mines had jumped into the sea. A man of political preferment had plunged into rhetoric. And the inevitable consequence, Panic, was on; on pocket books and nerves; very much on; and had been on, like a scrunching car of Juggernaut, for weeks and months.

The recent member, beneath the wheels, waited for the procession to pass. He was quite sure that the procession would pass. In fact, this was his conviction already mentioned; and he had the courage of it. He had simply happened to become a bull too soon. But that was not his fault; at least, not a fault in his judgment. It is, however, this story.

The stock broker was not an old man. On the contrary he was a very marriageable man. He was on the crest of life. He was such a one, of youth welded close into manhood's coat of mail, as the throng at the church likes to see come down the aisle with the June bride. He was still young enough to be a companion for a June bride. He was already capable enough for an October one. His tussle with the Panic dragon is not exactly a criterion. Wait, though! Yes, it is, too, as you shall see.

His was a thin, intent, hard face, except for the forehead, which was broad and generous; and the eyes were dry, laughing eyes, with a habit of half closing. But once in an epoch or thereabouts the laughter in the eyes chilled to cold steel, as befitted the lean, seasoned jaws, and then he was what someone called him during the Northern Pacific frenzy: a hard, wintry, concentrated nut, whatever that means.

He was somewhat that kind of man when he came out of the February slush into his lofty bedroom and had not the gambler's last hope. A fellow broker, who carried his S. A. P. holdings for him, had that day called on him for more margin. More margin! A man's master has different names. Through half the night he sought, the scourge always over him. Only chicken feed was he throwing into the hopper now. But even of chicken feed there was an end. He had not found enough.

"Stripped—" in lugubrious humor he tapped his empty watch pocket—"to the bone! Not eighty-seven dollars left on the carcass."

From his bill-case he drew Treasury notes and checks, and ran them through with expert fingers. He tossed the silver in his pockets on the bed, and with a forefinger flipped the coins one by one into a pile.

"Total, $9,913, and car-fare downtown," he murmured. "Still eighty-seven dollars lacking to weather another point."

A bitter thought—he ought to have used his credit while he still had credit. At this eleventh hour his credit was not good for the eighty-seven. He had been making sure that it was not; since three o'clock in the afternoon he had been making sure. On this, his first blood-trail after credit, he went to his old clubs, from which he had resigned. He entered oaken and golden lobbies, which he no longer frequented. And men who knew him looked on him as a parriah. He vaguely remembered that once they had seemed to be his friends. But he understood. They thought him a dead one. He thought so himself.

"I'll throw over one block of a hundred," he decided, as though a hundred shares of S. A. P. pfd. were a dearly beloved, "and hang onto the balance for another point. She'll drop the point, naturally, and then I'm wiped out. Whereupon—"

He would vanish, saying nothing. Nor would a soul, excepting his fellow broker, ever knew of the lone, silent fight he had been making through the months. In another world than the Street he would begin over again, would buoyantly come to the top again, but—with that prize for which he was now risking everything definitely lost to him during all time.

He went to his dresser, drawing out his cravat pin, and then on the dresser he saw a large square envelope, and knew from its paper lace fringing and his school boy sweethearting days that it was a valentine. Festive, mocking, silly, and because he was very grim and despairing, it made him laugh. He knew that Nan had never sent the thing. Nan's heart glowed with steadfast warmth. Nan's heart did not splutter. Contemptuously he ripped open the envelope.

The valentine was a "sentimental," not a "comic," as the trade and the stationer at the corner would say. Released from the crush of the envelope, it puffed out on its paper hinges in all the flimsy white purity of the "sentimentals." The ruined stock broker to whom this sickly missive had come looked—automatically, as one looks for the bursting of a rocket—for the flaming heart at the bottom of the oval depression in the centre. What he saw made his own heart flame, for it was yellow, it was the color of money. He plucked it out. A hundred-dollar bill!

"Somebody," he laughed on the high key of strained nerves, "knows how to frame up a real love message." But at once he was shamed of his cynical mirth. It must—yes, it must have come from Nan. She had heard of his need, say from a tale bearer coming to her from one of his old clubs that he had visited like a beggar that evening. A hundred dollars represented toil and parsimony to Nan at this time. Still, he could not

He plucked it out. A hundred-dollar bill! "Somebody," he laughed, "knows how to frame up a real love message."

help the tender hope that it was really Nan who had sent it.

Eagerly, more eagerly than he had snatched at the "real love message"—reverently eager would best describe his manner now—he caught up the valentine to surprise, if he could, the secret of the sender. Beneath the fluffiness ness of paper lace the thing opened, like the cover of a book, and within he saw writing. With the gloriously welcome hundred-dollar bill still crumpled in one hand, in the other he held the valentine under the gas jet and read:

How much for your self respect, your claims to decency, your pride of personality, your manhood?

The writer assures himself that the enclosed is about the right figure for the job lot.

Though aware that these articles must be a drug on his hands, the writer desires to justify his antipathy for you, and considers that service cheap at one hundred dollars.

Before your present mysterious reverses brought to light your shameless lack of pride, men and women gave you their esteem, and it irked the writer that human society should be so deluded. He rated you then, as he does now, as a spineless creature at bottom, who for a consideration would accept insult, so only that the insult was not too public. He rated your godlike disdain of weakness as a sham, while blinded fools wondered at you. He knew that for money, once you needed money, a man might slap your face, providing that it was done in the dark and no one saw.

Now this valentine meets those conditions. No one but the writer and yourself shall know that herewith you, in consideration of one hundred dollars ($100.00), accept the appelation of CUR that the writer now ap-

plies to you. It is understood that your acceptance of the money is acceptance of the above description of yourself as correct. Otherwise, to keep the money is to steal it.

The offer of this bargain, however, honorably includes the chance to reject it. Return the hundred dollars by mail to Jno. Richard Doe, Genl. Delivery, and the writer will acknowledge his theory of your character unproven and place himself in his own person at your orders. The writer feels perfectly safe in saying this. Yet as a matter of form he will take care to send for any mail for Jno. Richard Doe.

The writer in conclusion begs to remind you that, by accepting the enclosed bid for your manhood, you will know there is one living person, unknown to you, who has duly bought the right to call you in his own heart—nay, who has bought the proof that you are—beneath contempt.

Furthermore, such proof must inevitably put on the writer, as a man of honor, the obligation to protect any good woman from the contamination of your approach.

The stock broker read this stuff over a second time. We all read the utterly incredible over a second time, while our souls stare big out of our smarting eyes. As he read, his face went slowly white.

He did not call the writer of the valentine a snake in the grass. "This man," he said, yet judiciously in his cold rage, "is—an artist."

The more he thought, the more the word fitted.

"One living person!" As well say all the world, since in all the world he would see the one living person. "I can never shake hands with a fellow man again," he thought, "for that man might be *the* one."

"Any good woman!" Indeed? Was not the honorable writer thinking of one woman, perhaps? Little wonder that here was an artist, for none can be inspired like unto a fiend of jealousy.

At last the stock broker grew afraid that, since his manhood was in question, he would not have the terrible manhood required to—*keep*—the hundred-dollar bill. He became aware of it crumpled in his hand, and became aware of its burning like a hot coal.

Very quietly he tucked the bill into his vest pocket. The gambler of true steel is quiet, nonchalant, unconcerned, when he stakes that which means most to him. The stock broker could not have been more quiet, nonchalant, unconcerned, if he had just swallowed one of two pills, one being sugar, the other arsenic.

"It's a good game," he told himself, "though I'm sure to lose."

By ten o'clock in the morning he had margined his holdings of S. A. P. ten thousand shares, for one more point, which cost him ten thousand dollars. This left him with thirteen dollars out of the hundred-dollar bill, all that he had in the world, which he folded into an envelope. He addressed the envelope to "The Hon. Jno. Richard Doe, General Delivery," and dropped it into the letter box at the corner of Broad and Wall Streets. Watching S. A. P.'s interesting performances, he thought no more about it.

The world moves. Another man had come to be preferred politically, and capital began to suspect that there were as good men out of the sea as those who had jumped into it. Inevitable consequence: the Great Slump hit bottom; Panic was transformed into Returning Confidence.

At first it took multiple power lenses to detect return through the haze. But stocks hovered, like a dubious spider in midair, and hesitated about dropping further lest there be some mistake about it. They dangled, easing themselves by a microscopic eighth up or down.

Then one morning—it seemed the German emperor had bestowed a kind word on his grandmother—a stock falteringly climbed an entire point to test the beneficial potency of altitude. In three seconds fourteen others moved, and several did not stop under three and seven-eighths points. On one range the uplift developed into a dizzy stampede. Grandmother's reply proved slightly tart, and there was an acrobatic pause among the danglers. But altitude was already waxing into a fad.

This bright day when the sun shone was the fifteenth of February on ordi-

nary calendars, following the slushy day of St. Valentine; and S. A. P. rose with the list, responding to the signs of an early spring.

Now, the ticker and Miss Nancy Warner had their dwellings far apart. The farther apart the better, Miss Nancy would say, loyal daughter though she was to her father's memory. Yet the clean child of a drunkard must loathe the smell of whiskey, and Nan's father had been an inebriate when it came to the intoxication of taking fliers from the Curb, despite oft and solemnly repeated vows that never again would he look on the tape when it was ticking.

Very naturally, therefore, when he died his estate had dwindled to the life insurance, and Miss Nancy and her mother moved from their own home, no longer theirs, to an apartment house up in the Nineties that just barely fell within the elevator category. The elevator made Miss Nancy much nearer down-town, as did also the Subway express station, for Miss Nancy had phenominally learned to take dictation from Fate and stenographer-employing business men, and like a real nice girl she was her mother's chief support, and wondered how a person went about getting a raise before her trunk-full of party gowns were all worn out.

One evening, several days after St. Valentine's day, Miss Nancy was receiving a call from her second cousin. Other men rather thought this cousin assumed too much on his cousinship in the earnest handicap for his kinswoman's very desirable little hand. Miss Nancy entertained a glimmering of the same thought. A second cousinship does not constitute guardianship, censorship, nor any manner of zealous protectorate. Fate and Business were horrid enough, Heaven knew, without the gentle, insinuating, immaculately high-principled dictatorship of Harold Villard.

"I tell you, Boy," said she, humorously yet gravely, "if you wouldn't take it so as a personal affront if another man presumes to bow to me, being duly introduced, or smile, or say it's a pleasant day—"

"I never," protested Mr. Villard righteously, "say a word against a man before giving him a chance first to prove it untrue. You know, Nan, I'm incapable of anything so far from upright." A fugitive exaltation, peculiar to this serious, punctilious and wealthy young man, was evident on his brow. "You know, too," he went on boldly, because the sweetness of her made sweet the usurpation of protectorates, "whether you like it or not, that as almost a brother I need to warn you—"

She interrupted, and he knew from the fading of her maddeningly tolerant smile that the real, loyal, Nan girl's stubbornness was setting in like a strong flood tide. "Not against Tom, remember," and her tone let him understand that she was doing the warning just at present. "Never mind; I know you are conscientious and all that, but—well, just the same, not another word, please."

"Why do you let him come here—"

"I am glad to. That is enough."

"But, Nan, he goes nowhere else. He has dropped, or has been dropped, from everywhere else. Surely it is no compliment to you when the only place he visits, here, is the only place where it doesn't cost him anything. He was posted at the Club a month—"

"I know. Before he paid up and resigned." She drew heavily on her patience. "Wait, Hal, let *me* say all that you mean to say. Perhaps that will save me from being ashamed of you."

She wrinkled her brows, and enthroned her mind, sceptred with the ponderous responsibility of a judge.

"Yes," she said, "it does look as if he'd turned miser, and the very word miser is—oh, I don't know—somehow disgusting, uncanny. Why, he's actually on the verge of being shabby. Yet he has always made money, and he's never been known to speculate on his own account. Don't I know, Hal, that he raffled off his automobile at the Club, which under the circumstances smacked of—of accepting charity? That he auctioned off his locker at the Fencers'?"

"And sold his face," interjected Mr. Villard.

"You mean the magazine advertisement, that safety razor thing?"

"It would take a keen edge to make an impression on a sphinx like him," said Villard, frowning irritably as he recalled the stony indifference, for himself, that he had seen on that visage. "I don't blame the razor people. I can see the whole Stock Exchange standing in line to buy 'em. But go on, Nan. Yes, he makes even his face an asset. Go on."

She hardly heard. She was thinking deeply. She raised troubled eyes.

He noted her abstraction, her look, and it made him suddenly restive. "See here, Nan, do you realize that you're mighty well informed—in any other girl I'd think immodestly well informed—about this—stock broker?"

The charge was insidious but direct. A faint wave of pink slowly flooded her cheeks, but left her brow white and grave. "Tom is in trouble," she said quietly. "A good friend is in trouble. Of course I have tried to learn what I could, since he never mentions a word about himself."

"There," exclaimed Villard, "you hit true there. He's altogether too mysterious, and what's mysterious is black, unless," he added, remembering his own fondly nurtured ideals, "it's a light under a bushel. I say, Nan, you know, don't you, that he's got trust funds, the bonds and things that old Van Dusen left those orphan grandchildren—"

He paused to take stock of Nan. He was venturing pretty far on inference, and it might not be safe to go far. But to his surprise Nan was unmoved. She was looking at her watch. There was a small key on the chain, which was not a watch key. "Well?" she said, in a cool tone that routed his daring advance. "Well?" she repeated with placid, dangerously placid insistence.

"Oh, nothing," he said, "only it's a perilous season for trust funds. Lots of 'em have vanished lately in all the big and little failures happening every day."

"Tom hasn't failed," she reminded him.

"Exactly, he hasn't. He hasn't because he's got no liabilities, visible ones, I mean. Yet he's sold everything, even his seat on the Exchange. Why, Nan?"

Her lips parted in exasperation. "Wont your scruples let you talk straight out against a man, Hal? Why don't you say once for all that Tom speculated with those orphans' money, and that now he's trying to pay it back?"

"Because," retorted Villard triumphantly, "I knew you'd say it yourself."

She looked again at her watch, toying with the little key. "My own father," she said musingly, as if to herself, "trusted Tom again and again with all he had, and I'm sure that more than once Tom saved father from ruin. So you see," she said more quickly, with snapping eyes, "an—almost-brother—is superfluous. I still have my own father's better judgment to go on."

"And your own father," Villard took her up, "used to say that if Tom ever should gamble, he'd turn to a block of ice, and he'd stay a block of ice, down to the last melting drop of his congealed blood. Your father meant he'd frigidly risk everything, to the clothes on his back."

Nan's glance warmed gratefully on her cousin. To her that sounded like her own, wondering, admiring description of the stock broker.

"Everything," repeated Villard. "Of course that includes trust funds."

"No," said the girl, "it does not include trust funds, nor battle ships, nor the Constitution, nor the rattle of your great-great grandchild, Hal Villard. It couldn't. Those things don't belong to Tom."

"Oh, wouldn't it? What? Not even for a—woman?"

Now she really looked at her watch, rather than at the key. "When I am ashamed of you, Hal," she said rising, "my watch marks marching time. Quick, Boy, good-night."

It was that last insinuation about a woman in the mystery that she could not finally abide.

As many as six months after this cousinly skirmish, the former member of the Stock Exchange, who was again a member of the Stock Exchange, himself was received by Miss Nancy Warner in the little flat up in the Nineties.

It is true that he had been coming devotedly to the little flat all along, and

"The Commodore didn't want to swear off until it was over," he said. "And here is the result." He handed the widow a certified check for $518,750.

had been welcome there, too, and the more whole-heartedly because he was seen rarely in his old haunts elsewhere. Of course she would not let herself surmise aught of the true inwardness of his company. In fact she could not surmise that, while the cloud over him would not let him speak, he was playing for her the more resolutely, unflinchingly, remorselessly.

She could not know that, with deliberate calculation, he utilized the sight of her, the sound of her voice, the sympathy in her honest eyes, to harden him to the daily sacrifice of that species of pride that human society confounds with the only true pride. She could not know that the gambler—meaning stout champion in the lists—needed to indulge his vision with the prize he played for, lest he falter in playing to the limit. Nor did she know, after an evening of monosyllables, when he seemed only to gaze at the furniture—the furniture was massive, and pathetically too large for the rooms of the little flat; they were a few cherished pieces of salvage from the big house of other days—that he went forth each time with this ever renewing realization of her poverty as an incentive of iron in his soul to play, play, though he were sure to lose.

And we do not know, of course we cannot know, if Miss Nancy Warner would have been pleased to know these things, or if she would have said, struggling with sobs of happiness: "Tom, Tom, you mustn't. You don't—don't *need* to, Tom."

The call that the stock broker was making now on Miss Nancy was different from all those other calls during the panic's dark days. It began differently. His gaze barely swept the furniture, and that glance as much as said: "Only a little longer, old chaps, and we'll have you out." The laughter was in his eyes. It was tugging at the corners of his mouth of marble. At once he said: "Matter of business with your mother, Nan. Wont you call her?"

Nan called her, greatly wondering.

"Mrs. Warner," he said, reminding them of the family lawyer as he drew a document-size envelope from his pocket, "you don't know, I imagine, when the Commodore took his last flier on the Street?"

The Commodore was Miss Nancy's father. It was his yachting title.

Mrs. Warner shuddered at the word "flier." Was there to be still another troubled echo of the old curse? "Each one," she sighed, "was always his last." She smiled, though, fondly, remembering the frequent swearing-off of the gentle old Commodore.

"It's like the last drink," said the stock broker; "the last one is just before you die."

"You mean," exclaimed the widow, "that he kept it up till the last?"

"Mrs. Warner," the stock broker chided her, "you don't suppose he stopped then, do you?"

"What, when he died?"

"Yes."

"Mercy on us, wasn't it time to stop?"

"Mrs. Warner," the stock broker stated gently, "you didn't know him."

"I—I almost thought I did," she said. "But what is your news, Tom? I am not afraid. You never bring bad news."

"He makes it good news first, mother," said Nan.

"It's no news," said the broker, "that I did know him. And yet I tried to stop him, this last time. The deal was against my judgment. Now I'm glad I did not stop him. He's been having his last flier all this time. His instructions being to hold for ten above par, I could not close his account before to-day. Here's a memo, in his own handwriting, which I practically had to force him to give me. It shows the margin he put up from time to time, until he—until the last. He wouldn't give me checks. He drew the cash himself. Didn't want you to know, you know. That was the Commodore; he didn't want to have to swear off until it was over. And here," said the stock broker, taking another paper from the long envelope, "is the result." He handed the widow a certified check for $518,-750. "That's less broker's commission, necessarily," he added, "or you'd get five-twenty even."

The widow took the check, mechanically seemed to read the script on it.

"Now," said Mr. Villard abruptly, "your broker friend must have advanced $130,000 to carry this deal. He must have used those trust funds!"

The girl stared at the man. It was impossible that the simple rectangle of thin, crisp paper should tell to them at once the story—of their lives changed henceforth—that lay in six numerals written with a pellet of ink during a heartbeat of eternity spaced between three seconds.

"Tell us—about it," breathed the girl.

"You ought to guess, Nan," said the broker; "it's got a foreign name."

"Not that South American Cotton Trust that father made his third—no, his fourth—fortune out of?"

"Correct. The same old *Sociedad Anónima de Paños* again."

"But—" began the widow.

"But he lost it all, you're going to say, trying to manipulate the stock. Yes, that's true. The poor Commodore was reduced to his little tiddle-de-winks game of margins again, and when the Panic struck and his old pet, the *Sociedad*—S. A. P., you know—began to cave, he just couldn't keep out. When the Preferred got down from 90 odd to 69 last November, he took his cane and a taxi and thundered into my office as though I'd done it. He was sure S. A. P. had hit bottom at last, and he planked down $50,000 for ten thousand shares on a five point margin. I couldn't stop him.

"S. A. P. went dropping just as usual, and he put up $40,000 more within two weeks, and a few days later he gave me all the cash he could raise by notes and mortgages, just $10,000, and went home and gave up the ghost. I mean that literally, Mrs. Warner, for the Commodore wasn't one to give up ghosts figuratively. When he was dying, he got all of you out of the room, and reminded me that I was to hold on till S. A. P. pfd. went to 110. So," added the broker apologetically, "what else was I to do?"

Nan closed her eyes, her lips parted, in utter bewilderment.

"I'm off," said the broker, a little hastily. "But you two can study out that memo for yourselves. It's all there. There—" he pointed hastily—"ten thousand at 69. Same sold at average of 111. Profit, $420,000. To protecting margin, total, $100,000. Add the two, $520,000. Subtract $1,250 for commission. Check for $518,750. Back to your arithmetic, Miss Nancy. Good-night, I'm—"

"Wait," she cried, "I—"

But he was gone.

Thereafter entered Mr. Harold Villard, and found his cousin's eyes as soft and deep as mountain lakes. Her breast rose and fell as though she had been running, and her first words of the great news and the sight of the check put Mr. Villard into a state of dismay and austere frowning. He groped indignantly for an antidote to this Olympian lover's strategy. He was shocked, wrathful, because Nan did not perceive the lack of scruple in the whole business. The Commodore having died, it was the broker's duty, then and there, to turn over every cent of the Commodore's money to the impoverished widow and daughter. To keep it, to gamble with it.... Mr. Villard had not the words to fit the opprobrium of such an act.

"I will bring you the quotations of this S. A. P. through the whole transaction," vigorously declared Mr. Villard. "Then we will see how much he owed your poor mother the day your father died. We'll check up this fellow, Nan. We'll check him up."

"Yes, do, Hal," said Nan, and very oddly, as she was thinking of the opprobrious stock broker, the glory of her eyes deepened even more. "And hurry, Hal, for Tom is a sly one. He needs—checking up."

Mr. Villard was back within an hour with the nefarious record of the S. A. P.'s fluctuations. "Now that memorandum, Nan. Here we are. Nov. 21, $50,000."—he looked to the quotations—"Nov. 21, S. A. P. opened 70⅝; lowest, 68¼; highest, 70⅝; closed, 68⅜. Yes," admitted Mr. Villard, "he did pretty well to buy it at 69."

He referred again to the broker's memorandum. "Dec. 9, $40,000." The quotations showed him that S. A. P. that day touched 65½. It was time for more margin. The next date, Dec. 11, $10,000, was the day the Commodore died "How's this," exllaimed Villard, "on Dec. 11, S. A. P. closed at 58!"

"What?" asked the girl, for she understood nothing of the figures. But Vil-

lard was staring at them as though they were spectres—spectres of lost hope. "Why, what *is* the matter?" she cried.

Villard knew then the temptation to lie. But the habit of haughtily nurtured ideals made him recoil.

"Nan," he said, bringing the words from a parched throat, "the day your father died, he was—what they call it—cleaned out, wiped, for all the hundred thousand he'd put in. Your broker person didn't have a cent of his. On the contrary—"

"On the contrary?" repeated Nan breathlessly.

"—the broker person must have put his own money in to protect that margin. Certainly $20,000. Maybe more."

"I told you Tom needed checking up," Nan barely whispered.

And then the wonderful story that the humbled Mr. Villard read, by gulps, from the dry, double column of dates and quotations.

"Here she drops again," he said. "Dec. 23, lowest, 54¼. To be protecting safety, by several points, he must have put in—he must have put in $50,000 more! Now here, Jan. 19, she's down to 53.—Wait, it was a day or so before that when Tom sold his seat on the Exchange.—Then here she is down another point, needing another $10,000. And here—at last—here's the bottom, 47. The date is—"

He did not read that date. A flush of hottest crimson was spreading over his clean shaved face to the roots of his hair.

"February 15," Nan read the date over his shoulder.

"The day after St. Valentine's day!" murmured Nan's second cousin.

Nan's second cousin went over it again, in a trembling of unbelief, in an agony because he must believe. At a mere figure here, another there, he saw treasure thrown into a sinking chasm, and more treasure thrown, and more than treasure thrown, all, everything, for the sake of a woman. The recklessness, the splendor of it! It was absolutely dazzling.

"Nan," said Mr. Villard, abruptly, clutching at a straw, "your broker friend must have advanced $130,000 to carry this deal. Nan—the—he must have used those trust funds. Of course, he paid them back, since S. A. P. went up and won it all back, yet—"

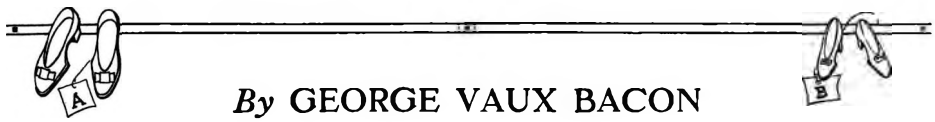
Nan snatched the little key, which was not a watch key, from her watch chain, and held it under his eyes. "That, Hal Villard," she said, "is the key to Tom's safe deposit box at the Knickerbocker Trust Company. He gave it to me to keep for him. He might have said it was his honor in my keeping. Every day, coming home from my work, I stopped at the Trust Company's and opened the deposit box. He made me promise to. Now, maybe you can guess that those trust funds, the money of those Van Dusen orphans—only they're bonds—were in that box. Guess that, Hal, and for once, in spite of your mean, suspicious nature, you have guessed right."

"And I thank you, Nan," said Mr. Harold Villard, "for the chance." His lips twisting ruefully. "And it's marching time," he added.

"Good-night," she said, looking, not at her watch, but at the key.

P u m p s

And the part they played in a love affair



By GEORGE VAUX BACON

Author of "Shall Women Vote?" etc.

THE most peculiar thing about a pair of pumps is this: you never can tell which part of them will hurt the next time you put them on. Why men will trust the solution of their romances to those occasions when they wear pumps no one knows.

The first time Jimmy Middleton wore his pumps they hurt the big toe on his left foot. The second time, they hurt the cord of Achilles on his right foot.

That was the night he had chosen to propose definitely and finally to Cicely, to determine whether his life was to become one long dream of exquisite bliss with her, or a barren desert of blasted hopes.

Down about three or four dances from the end, when the agony in that pump began to be something fearful, he managed to get her to suggest sitting out a dance.

He brought her out into the moonlit and vine-entwined loggia of the dancing pavilion overlooking the sea, sat her down in the beauty of it all, and in a voice rendered thrice calfish by the agony in his nether limb, leaned mushily toward her and cooed hoarsely:

"Cicely, dear, will you marry me?"

"Certainly not!" replied Cicely promptly, fixing him with a round-eyed stare.

And, racked with agony, poor Jimmy blurted forth:

"You needn't be so cattish about it!"

Before he could think, she rose to her feet and left him.

Dazed from the suddenness of the shipwreck of his hopes and fond desires, Jimmy's mind was a blank, till mechanically, he removed the biting demon on his foot. Then over his face beamed a gentle look of radiant joy, a strange expression for a heart-stricken swain. We are all the slaves of worn out livers and new shoes.

Cicely had really meant to jolly him; but as she, unfortunately, had begun to smile just a second too late, and he had said what he had said in a very abrupt and nasty way, they parted for evermore in a huff.

Of course, that is merely a manner of speaking. People never really part for evermore in real life. They are sure to meet somewhere, some time, in a Turkish bath, jail, at a tea somewhere, a train-wreck, a bridge party or a funeral. With the exact technical definition of parting forever in a huff, however, this story does not concern itself in the least. Suffice it to say that to all appearances their young hearts were forever separated that night.

Jimmy called up a few times and asked to call. She assured him in a cold, dignified young voice, that he really could not, as she had a series of engagements stretching over the major part of her life, beginning with that evening, uninterruptedly on to the day when she should breathe her last.

Here we have a hiatus of a few weeks, after which we find Jimmy doggedly selling hosiery to the trade in Iowa, and Cicely and her mother on their way to Europe. Mother had told Cicely that she thought a European trip would do her good, as her digestion appeared to be poor. (Older people are so infernally unromantic and so tryingly often right!) Cicely went.

She started in by being tragically reserved; but by the time she arrived in London she was having just as good a time as any other young person who had not had Cupid's dart snapped off short and left to fester and torment a broken heart. Mother was as adroit and astute a person in the ways of the social world as Father was in the intricacies of the world of finance. Cicely had a "perfectly dandy time" in London and a "gorgeous time" in Paris. (Who doesn't?)

Followed, a motor trip down the Riviera and an invitation upon the yacht of a Very Distinguished Personage.

On the yacht was a real live German Baron with a bloody pedigree and an awful accent. He was short, and thick through the chest, with a sword scar on his left cheek. He had a bristling blond mustache that stuck up ferociously at the ends like the Kaiser's, a very red face, very pale blue eyes and simply oceans and oceans of manner.

The glory of a June evening lay upon the Mediterranean. Ashore winked the lights of the Casino on Monte Carlo. The stars twinkled gently, little will-o'-the-wisps, far up in a velvet sky. Even the Baron's impossible voice took on a slight shade of softness. He and Cicely were alone on the after-deck. The rest of the party were discussing other peoples' private affairs out of sight.

The Baron was a good talker. Also, he was very impressive. Also he was very much in debt. Cicely, all dressed in white, her Titian locks bound with a simple bandeau, listened. He told of the student combats of his youth, and Romance woke within her soul. He told of the grandeur of his mighty castle in the Black Forest, and she yearned for the mystery and the silent, whispering passion of the great woods.

In America the idea of political magnificence is to don an ugly badge on a Prince Albert coat and march in a dusty street behind a blatant band, shouting for a candidate who is drinking mint juleps with his friends in a cool corner of the biggest hotel in town.

Politics in Europe is stupendous. One lives in palaces, one dines in magnificent cafés, one wears wonderful gowns. The glitter and tramp of armies take the place of the dusty street and the noisy and discordant band. Society is engrossing, men are interesting, women fascinating. One sincerely enjoys life there. (Especially if one has plenty of good American dollars with which to enjoy.)

That night she dreamed of the Baron's courtierlike kiss upon her hand as she left him. She dreamed of London, Paris, the Riviera, of cuirassiers and croupiers and counts: but she did not dream of Jimmy, unromantically and industriously selling hosiery in Iowa.

It came to pass that the engagement of Cicely to the Baron Hamilcar was announced. The social world, the people and the press made comments according to their lights.

After all the fuss and feathers had drifted back to earth, Cicely and her Baron were married, tied up with all the pomp and ceremony of the Episcopal Church, banged into a liner and sent back to Europe.

The Baron had been well paid for marrying Cicely, so he didn't have to hang around her and beg for half dollars to tip the waiters. All he had to do was to be pleasant.

But it became hard for the Baron to be pleasant. The Baron was a disgusting brute, as poor Cicely very soon found out. There are some things that a girl of a clean race will not tolerate. It was not long before Reality flung her dream of romance four ways.

Listening to the Baron telling of his exploits under a beautiful Mediterranean sky was one thing. Listening to them, knowing what he really was, and knowing that her life was linked and shamed with his, was another.

The afternoon before the ship reached Hamburg, she lay upon the couch in

their stateroom, her head in her arms, sobbing. The Baron entered. He had been drinking champagne with some quickly made friends. He did not look at all romantic. Leaving the door open, he advanced towards the couch and looked down at Cicely.

"Why are you crying?" he asked, suddenly, lurching slightly as he spoke and clutching at the open door. He missed the door and fell sprawling upon the floor.

Cicely sat up on the edge of the couch and watched him crawl to his feet. He had not been able to afford such good champagne before his marriage with her, and now he seemed to be trying to make up for lost time. He regained his feet and stood leaning against the side of the stateroom. Still she gazed at him, silently, without moving.

"Well!" he managed to gulp forth after a minute or two of such amazing and unlooked-for scrutiny.

"Well!" she answered, a cold fury in her voice.

"Wha' do you mean?" he demanded. An evil look came into his eyes. If one could imagine a pig with blue eyes, one would say that such a pig would have looked like the Baron at that moment.

Stepping deliberately forward, she slapped his face so thoroughly that he staggered back through the open door. She slammed it after him and locked it. He pounded on it once or twice. Presently she heard him slouching away.

"My husband!" The thought seared her brain like a hot iron; but this time she did not sob.

Instead, with a gasp of relief, she removed her left pump, which had been clinching her left little toe in a pair of white hot nippers, powdered her nose, and began to pack things into various portmanteaux.

The mysterious disappearance of the Baroness Hamilcar, on the docks at Hamburg, was the sensation of the year. It held front page space for three whole days. Then it moved in two pages. Then it went into the waste-basket.

The Baron Hamilcar spent his time happily and aristocratically drunk. The ripples of curiosity faded and disappeared; there was the hint of a scandal; then society forgot.

In his mahogany furnished offices in New York, James Middleton, President of the Hosiery Trust, gazed through his gold-mounted pince-nez upon the morning paper, which he had not had time to finish during his trip down town in his limousine.

A headline caught his eye. It read:

"BARON HAMILCAR DEAD OF THE D. T. 'S."

From that it went on to elucidate:

> Baron Hamilcar of Germany, husband of the heiress Cicely Turner, who mysteriously disappeared while they were on their honeymoon trip across the Atlantic a few years ago, died to-day of delirium tremens. It is said that his drinking was caused by depression following the disappearance of his beautiful young wife, and that he has once or twice attempted suicide.

Even the press was kind to the Baron. It credited him with being capable of entertaining the idea of suicide!

James Middleton remembered dimly that he had known Cicely Turner when he was a young fellow. The remembrance of the silly ass he made of himself with her on the moonlit loggia came back to him. He smiled upon the startled stenographer, who happened to glance around at him at that moment, but immediately caught himself and started to dictate to her the answers to the letters on his desk for which she had been waiting. He enjoyed the plunge into his affairs after the hiatus of the night immensely. The affairs of the Trust were in splendid shape. Everybody was making money, including the President. The President was happy.

Five friends invited him to a box party that night. After a roaring musical comedy, they adjourned to the café of the season for a midnight spread.

The six men, three young and three, like James Middleton, gray-haired and with impressive paunches, had a glorious time. In the midst of it, some one en-

tered who was greeted with a lull in the conversation, and the craning of necks.

It was a woman, perfect—stunning. Her hair, like burnished copper, was done in a great coil on a head as shapely as was beautiful the column of the neck and the shoulders below it. Her skin was like milk. Her eyes were wonderful, daring grey stars.

A breathlessness became apparent among the diners by whom she moved. Gracefully, graciously, she permitted her escort to remove her wraps.

"The tall fellow with her, is a lawyer, Arthur Hawkins," whispered one of the younger men to Middleton, and paused in astonishment. Middleton was staring at the woman, his face unusually pale, a strange look in his eyes.

The other four, catching the young man's eye, became silent, watching Middleton. There was something uncanny at the way he stared at the unconscious woman, who was engaged in chatting gaily with the man sitting across from her.

As they watched however, she stopped talking suddenly, appeared preoccupied for a moment or two, then, turning her head slowly, looked straight into Middleton's eyes. The six men forgot the crowd about them, or that they were in a brilliantly lighted café in the midst of a noisily chatting theatre crowd. There seemed to be nothing in the world but Middleton, his face oddly pale, and the woman with the wonderful Titian hair, scarlet lips and wide grey eyes, looking at each other, not across the space between two tables, but through the emptiness of wasted years.

"Cicely!" murmured Middleton under his breath.

The tension was over. Middleton arose, excused himself to the others and went over to her table. She welcomed him with a smile that had in it all the sweetness and tenderness of friendly womankind.

She introduced him to the young lawyer, her counsel, with whom she was dining. The three chatted pleasantly, the lawyer, an acute man, gradually disentangling himself from the conversation.

To Middleton, it was as though the Heavens had opened and he were looking in on Paradise. This beautiful creature was Cicely Turner—little Cicely Turner, who used to wear light frocks and run around at lawn parties!

His head was in a whirl. He saw nothing but the light in the grey eyes that looked at him so graciously. To some, Love comes in gold caparisoned splendor, with all the fluttering pennons and gonfalons of Royal Progress; to some, he steals quietly into the unwatched heart without a word or a knock. Love struck Middleton straight between the eyes with a full-armed punch from the shoulder.

James Middleton had gone through life forgetting everything except the making of a great industry out of the business of which he was President. Every power of his mind, every atom of his will, every iota of the iron stamina within him had gone into the building up of the great interest of which he was now the head.

To such a man, the abrupt awakening of a mighty passion was like a tremendous volcano hurling itself through the crust of the earth under a populous city.

The roots of his being were torn up and hurled upward. The vast energies which he had cultivated and trained to grasp a hundred different lines of activity at once, concentrated into the tremendous power of his loving.

That evening was the beginning of many days that saw Cicely and James Middleton together. The strength of the man's terrific mentality held Cicely as in a spell, while the wonderful beauty of her, and the soul-sweetness that made the beauty of her body a mere tinkling echo of her own real loveliness, gripped him with bands stronger than steel.

The love of a long-starved soul is a terrible thing, and a soul starved on money is very hungry for its proper nourishment.

Although the power of Middleton's personality, the cleanness of him, swept Cicely off her feet, so that many and many a time, a word from him would have made her his forever, yet she held him off from speaking that word, with

the woman's love of being courted. She played with him, gently, graciously, and both of them were very happy.

But a man of the caliber of James Middleton is used to getting what he wants. He was used to the long road and the hard road. He had won in the battle of money because he was a fighter: and a fighter is the greatest wooer in the world.

As he loved Cicely madly, savagely, blindly, so he courted her with the softness of the tiger's paw whose ugly claws are well-hidden. And what woman but secretly loves the knowledge that, hidden in the tenderness of the man who loves her, is that hidden depth of cruelty?

One place they both liked more than all the others. It was a loggia overlooking the sea, vine covered, and filled at evening with a gale of music from a dancing pavilion within an old, old place, filled with the ghosts of many loves, and sweet to those two with the memories of the past.

As he had frequently planned the ruin of a rival factory or the wrecking of a recalcitrant bank, James Middleton planned the evening when he should have from Cicely the final whispered "Yes" to his wooing, which her alternating fits of tenderness and coldness foreshadowed to the mind astute in human nature.

They sat under the vines in the moonlight, hand in hand, like two young lovers. Cicely had been strangely silent all the evening, had preferred sitting down to going anywhere or walking about. Middleton had been somewhat puzzled at her. Never before had she been so silent with him.

They talked. Her preoccupation seemed to vanish. She was again the tenderness that was the sweet whole of her. His love swept over Middleton in a wave. Turning on a seat, he pulled her to him, burying his lips on hers and in the perfume of her hair.

Footsteps sounded. They quickly disengaged themselves. Middleton had not yet asked the question.

"Come, dear," he said. "Let's go down by the water and walk."

With somewhat laggard step, she followed him. They walked by the murmuring waves, Again she was very silent. If one had looked closely in the moonlight, one would have seen a strange, deep line creasing her forehead between her brows.

Middleton took her hand tenderly.

"Cicely, dear, wont you answer me finally and for good? I love you sincerely—truly. You know that I do. Wont you saw now that you will marry me?"

Clinging to her hand with one of his, with the other he began fishing in his vest pocket for the solitaire to put on her finger.

His hand began to perspire. She jerked hers away.

She watched him awkwardly fishing for the ring. Suddenly, not knowing why, without having, apparently, any reason for it, her whole soul rose up in revolt against Middleton, against the sea, against the sky, against herself, against the sand she was standing on, against the whole world. With her teeth set, she said with dangerous sweetness:

"Don't be so anxious to get that ring, James. Perhaps you wont be able to use it when you find it."

A look of ludicrous dismay swept over Middleton's face. It seemed to inspire Cicely with fury. She stamped her foot, stared at him a moment, walked back to the ball room, peremptorily ordered her car and drove home.

That night Cicely lay in bed after her maid had pulled off the pump which had been sending shooting pangs of exquisite anguish through her left instep all evening, and laughed. Getting rid of a paining pump is more intoxicating than a case of wines.

The Imp of The Little Things fastened a large tag marked "Exhibit B" on a lady's pair of pumps and hung them on a hook in a room behind the Court where the Almighty tries the damage suits of human lives and loves. Beside the hook on which the Imp hung the lady's pumps, was a pair of man's pumps to which were attached a large tag reading "Exhibit A."

The Imp regarded the pumps for a few minutes with interest, then, with a happy smile, lighted a cigarette and walked out.

He was going to have dinner with the man who invented collar-buttons.

When Danny drove past in his car, a raised curtain disclosed Miss Zack at work

Disposing of Miss Zack

by

EDWIN L. SABIN

Author of "Young Mrs. Anderson," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ROBERT A GRAEF

AS, tilted back in his chair upon the hotel veranda, he perused the first letter in his morning's mail, Danny Nidiver was pervaded with a feeling of relief. The house to which the letter referred had been vacant o'er long to suit a young man (or an old man, either) of property. "Keep your money working," was the advice of the most successful capitalist whom Danny knew; therefore, as the house might be considered the same as money, it had shamed him by its idleness.

But his agents now wrote:

> We think that we have a satisfactory tenant for that Bond Street property; and have accordingly leased it for a year to Miss A. Zack,

at $18 a month. Miss Zack, who is a maiden lady, engages, in consequence of the low rent, to be a fixture, and to keep the premises in good repair. We trust that this will meet with your approval. Etc., etc.

Eighteen dollars did seem a low rental for a six-room house. On the other hand, the house was old-fashioned and so was the neighborhood. Possibly Miss A. Zack (Jove, what a name! Betokening a washerwoman's knot or equally severe corkscrew curls!) counted upon taking in roomers and making this her work. At any rate, she could have the house for the $18, and she would find it an $18 house, as she should expect.

However, this A. Zack seemed to have expected that for the $18 a month she was entitled to a $40 a month house. At least, this was indicated by the report of the agents when Danny ill-advisedly dropped in. They said it with a smile, but they said it ruefully.

"That tenant of the Bond Street house is giving us more trouble than all our other tenants put together. Of course, we don't complain, please understand, Mr. Nidiver; it's all in the day's routine; that's what we're on earth for. But, 'pon my soul, I'd rather have a whole apartment building to care for than one Miss A. Zack. We've always found it more agreeable to lease to men than to women; but for that property we're lucky to get anybody. So pray don't think we're kicking."

"What's the matter with her?" demanded Danny.

"She just wants us to build the house over again for her, is about all," laughed Jepson—who was the spokesman. "She hasn't ferreted you out yet, has she?"

"No."

"Well, that's a wonder. She's been trying to get past us to you, although we assure her that the property is entirely in our hands, and that you would only refer her to us again."

"Certainly," said Danny. "But what does she want?"

"What doesn't she want! Now she threatens to vacate, if we don't give her new plumbing."

"Thought she'd promised to be permanent, for the rent."

"She did. We have the lease, besides. But she says she'll break the lease! Bah!"

"I'll go out there," vouchsafed Danny.

"You needn't, Mr. Nidiver. Don't trouble yourself; we'll handle her."

"No, I'll go. I want to look at the house, anyway. Maybe we can do something else with it."

"Fine old property, Mr. Nidiver; but of course not modern. She understood that before she went in."

"Well, I'll see about it," repeated Danny.

This being his first and only property, although indeed it was, as stated, in that dubious condition "fine" and "old," and rented at only $18, the sense of possession and of landlordship weighted him with a pleasurable responsibility. He knew it was against the ethics of the renting business for an owner to emerge from behind his agents; but he had the amateur's curiosity to see to whom he was renting. Besides, this Bond Street cottage (it was advertised as a cottage) had long been the habitation of Danny's maiden aunt; thus through the maiden aunt had he succeeded to the title of it, and the maiden aunt had been a very particular (and cantankerous) person. He felt that ordinarily his curiosity was unprofessional; but in this case, who was Miss A. Zack, and of what was she complaining?

The Bond Street cottage was set well back, in the midst of an old-fashioned yard, where flowers struggled with grass, and where sunshine alternated with shade. The premises looked familiar; but a change was evidenced when a large dog of the yellow St. Bernard pattern (at least, so Danny catalogued him) rushed violently forth, and at the bellowing challenge of the guardian there appeared upon the front porch a slim woman. The slim woman called back the yellow dog, shut him inside the house, and awaited Danny's further approach.

"Miss Zack?"

"I am Miss Zack."

"I'm Mr. Nidiver, the owner of this house."

"Beg your pardon," said Danny. "I came out to see that the pipes were all right. Are they?" "Splendid, thank you," said Miss Zack, hopelessly endeavoring to pin her blouse at the throat

The slim woman extended her hand, promptly.

"I'm very glad to see you, Mr. Nidiver. Will you come inside, or sit out here?"

"Perhaps out here would be better, if agreeable to you."

Yes, she was Miss Zack—Miss A. Zack, the "A." probably standing for Ann. There was no doubt about her spinsterhood. He had about decided that the name fitted, when her laugh disconcerted him. It did not sound at all like her name. In connection with the laugh she said:

"Are you afraid of Bruno? I don't blame you. But he scarcely ever really *bites*. He might, though."

An uncertain female was Miss A. Zack. However, not pretty; no, not pretty.

"I called," proffered Danny, as he seated himself upon the pleasant porch where in time agone he had been privileged to sit with his estimable maiden aunt, "because my agents state that you do not seem satisfied with your bargain."

"What bargain, Mr. Nidiver?" And Miss A. Zack, pushing back a lock of paly brown hair, opened upon him two eyes which struck him as being either blue or slaty green. They were wide, straight eyes.

"This house."

"But I don't call it a bargain, Mr. Nidiver."

"We do. You have a lease upon it, very cheaply."

"Why cheaply?"

"Because you pay only $18, I believe."

"It would be a reasonable rent if the house were in good condition, Mr. Nidiver. As it is, I can't live here—and I wont."

Miss A. Zack asserted this with a calm, dispassionate tone of finality. He observed that her smooth skin was nevertheless minutely wrinkled, with a satiny meshwork as fine as the finest silk. So she was *not* young.

"But you have signed a lease, Miss Zack."

"I shall break it."

"That would be very awkward, and give you a great deal of trouble," he instructed. "Breaking leases is a serious matter. Furthermore, in consideration of the low rent you agreed, did you not, to be a permanent tenant? So my agents wrote me."

"Your agents misrepresented the place. They said—"

"But, my dear woman, it is rather late to talk of that now. You should have considered before you signed the lease and agreed to come in."

"Really, Mr. Nidiver, if you paid this call to lecture me, I—I must let Bruno out," reminded Miss A. Zack, with beautiful color.

"Beg your pardon," accepted Danny, meekly. "I was only talking business. It is a business matter. But we can't let you off, I fear, Miss Zack; you must abide by the agreement."

"Not at all." Miss Zack was firm. "And I shouldn't think you'd want me if I don't want to stay." The argument was essentially feminine; and whereas the tone had been (as said) firm, now the eyes had a supiciously feminine dewiness in them. Yes, they were blue eyes—turquoise blue, perhaps by contrast with the high color of the cheeks.

"What's the matter, then, please? My aunt, who lived here fifteen years and more, thought it a very comfortable home. The place is old, of course; but, er—for a single—or—for anybody who likes quiet, you know—"

"The place isn't what I expected. It's —it's too far out."

"It's no further out than when you leased it, is it, Miss Zack?" ventured Danny.

"N-no," acknowledged Miss Zack, vaguely, "but even my cook has left me."

"We're not to blame for that. Cooks are quite apt to leave, are they not? Do you—er—then live alone here?"

"I do now. But I have Bruno. It's —so far out, you see. And," she added, irrelevantly, with a troubled expression, gazing upon him inquiringly, "the drainpipes from the roof to the cistern have all rusted out and I don't get a bit of soft water. Your agents say they wont fix them."

"Is that all—besides being so far

out?" invited Danny. "We really cannot annihilate distance."

"N-no," mused Miss Zack. "But you can fix the gutter-pipes."

"Let me look at them," said Danny.

"Certainly. I'll show you." Accordingly Miss Zack conducted him.

Danny knew very well the way to the pipes conducting from eaves to cistern; therefore he was not required to apply his mind to the direction; he might apply it to Miss Zack, his guide. She was slim, but not thin with spinster-ish thinness. Rather, he observed, the slimness was of the rounded-corner type, and filled perfectly a blue gingham dress.

"See?" bade Miss Zack. "The water all leaks out through those holes before it ever gets to the cistern. And I don't have any soft water."

"But you are supplied with the city water," suggested Danny.

"I must have the soft water. I really must. I'm paying for the cistern, with the house, am I not? It's a part of the premises, isn't it?"

"Very well. I'll send a man up to fix it," declared Danny, briskly.

"Thank you," replied Miss Zack. "That will help me very much. But the agents were horrid about it."

Danny was glad that the bill from the tin-man came to him direct instead of coming through his agents, for it amounted to more than a month's rent, and he felt certain that his agent would not approve of such extravagance upon doubtful property. On the whole, he decided that it would be better not to report to his agents in detail; so he reported with the general statement that he had seen Miss A. Zack, and that he had placated her.

However, in order to see for himself that the pipes had been properly adjusted, he went out again. This was only business prudence, you appreciate. As long as the work had been done, it should have been done so as to leave Miss A. Zack no complaint.

Bruno was quiescent; but Miss Zack was deep in a washing, and the embarrassment over the failure of her Cerberus was mutual. She was on the side porch, whither Danny had followed the drain-pipes.

"Would you eat a cookie. Do take one. There!"

"Beg your pardon," stammered Danny. "I came out to see that the pipes were all right. Are they?"

"Splendid, thank you," assured Miss Zack, rallying from tub and wash-board, and with soapy pink fingers hopelessly endeavoring to pin her blouse at the throat.

Unavoidably Danny glimpsed the softness which the pin threatened; and his eyes discreetly wandering, passed off by way of the two pink, soft arms uplifted. Who might have guessed that underneath those gingham sleeves of the other day were these singularly round arms!

"I beg your pardon," stammered Danny, vacuously, again.

"Not at all. Only, I didn't hear you coming," explained Miss Zack.

"The pipes are all right, then?"

"They seem to be, Mr. Nidiver. The cistern's almost half full. I'm—I might as well tell you—I'm using the water now."

"Are you?" accepted Danny, politely. "That's what it's for, isn't it? To wash—er—hair, and clothes, and things?"

"Yes. But I'm washing other people's clothes, and things—not their hair, however; although maybe I will. You see, Mr. Nidiver, I've got to make a living."

"Have you?" murmured Danny, awkwardly. "I didn't know."

"Yes," continued Miss Zack, in a determined manner. "At first I tried boarders; but it's so far here, and it isn't a very good neighborhood, and they all left and my cook left, too. But I can do lovely washing of fine clothes in this soft water," she added, triumphant. "I never washed so, before; I think, though, it will be a big success. Don't you?"

"I hope so," assured Danny.

But he didn't. As he painstakingly withdrew, his emotions were mingled—his gratification at having replaced the useless old pipes warring with a strong inclination to shoot holes in the useful new ones! Ought a—er—young woman, like Miss Zack, be doing regular washing? His maiden aunt never did any such thing, at the house.

Like any circumspect landlord, Danny absented himself from the vicinity of his property for fully seventeen days. He must leave his rentals to his agents; certainly. Therefore, as seemed to him, it was only by accident that next he heard from Miss Zack, his tenant on Bond Street. His agents beckoned him in, as he was casually passing and glancing their way.

"Hate to bother you, Mr. Nidiver," asserted Jepson. "But we've received an ultimatum from that Miss Zack, in your Bond Street house. She threatens to vacate, again. Thought you'd pacified her."

"So did I," faltered Danny. "What's the matter now?"

"She wants gas put in."

"Oh!" received Danny. "Uh-huh."

"We've told her, by letter, that it is out of the question, at the present rent. That is your judgment too, isn't it?"

"Why—er, I should think so," admitted Danny. "Wont she stay?"

"She will, or find another tenant, or pay the rent anyway," decreed Jepson.

"That's right," supported Danny. "That's right. Er—the house *ought* to have gas, I suppose; oughtn't it? Most houses do; don't they?"

"When they do, the tenant pays for it," corrected Jepson. "In this case, the tenant took the house as it was. If the gas is put in, then she should pay more, whereas, Mr. Nidiver, she's behind already."

"Is she?" asked Danny, startled.

"Yes; two weeks overdue. So I should think that gas and increased rent would be a mistaken kindness. Let us 'tend to her, Mr. Nidiver."

"Well—er—thank you," said Danny. "You're right, no doubt. You've had more experience. If I should want gas in there, for myself, sometime—but that would be a different matter."

"Very different," concurred Jepson.

It did strike Danny that a house—a city house, without gas, was an anomaly; and if, eventually, he could get more rent from his property by a comparatively small outlay, why, why not? At any rate, he could talk the matter over with the gas company; which he did.

Then to see for himself that the work

had been performed thoroughly was again only prudent business management. Out he went. To his relief the side porch was empty, the day evidently not being wash-day; and to his relief Bruno met him only at the kitchen door. Something else, also, met him at the kitchen door: a delicious fragrance, a spicy, crusty fragrance, a fragrance most appealing, reminiscent, comforting. Enveloped in, and forming a part of it, Miss Zack met him.

Miss Zack was friendly; friendly likewise (though, as judged by his salivating, greedy chops, for purely physical reasons) was Bruno.

"I have come to inspect," explained Danny, weakly apologetic. "The gas is in?"

"Yes, thank you; and I'm using it," answered Miss Zack. "Do you want to see my stove?"

"I beg your pardon for—er, making approach by the kitchen, you know," proffered Danny, abashed. "I was following the ditch around, this time."

"I'm cooking," declared Miss Zack, with enthusiasm. "Could you guess?"

He could. There was the fragrance; and then Miss Zack's cheeks were intensely rosy, and her arms (free to the elbows) were pinker than before.

"I didn't ask you for a gas stove. I bought this," elucidated Miss Zack, ushering him into the familiar kitchen rendered unfamiliar by the advent of a modern appliance. "Would you eat a cookie? Do take one. There. They're pretty good, I think. Of course, I'm not used to the stove, yet. You see, Mr. Nidiver, I really ought to have had gas to wash by. Only, I'm not doing washing any more. I didn't get enough, and people didn't seem to appreciate how lovely the soft water made their clothes, and I had to compete with the laundries, and I found I wasn't covering the cost of soap and fuel. So I gave that up. But now I'm cooking. I'm cooking things for the Woman's Exchange, and I hope to sell to private patrons, too. To do much cooking I must have gas, though, and that's why I asked for it. Was that a good cookie? Please tell me truly."

"Fine!" asserted Danny.

The taste of the cookies lingered long, and brought up Miss Zack; and the fragrance lingered long, and brought up Miss Zack; whereas, really, the taste and the fragrance might just as well, and even more naturally, have brought to mind the late and estimable maiden aunt, whose culinary prodigies, performed without any gas, were fully as extraordinary and pronounced as those of her successor.

Nevertheless, and apropos of nothing, Miss A. Zacks' eyes certainly were turquoise. And what did that first initial stand for? Perhaps not Ann; perhaps Alice. However—

Danny's omniscient agents (drat 'em!) guessed at that gas deal; and sedulously though he kept away from them, and from Miss Zack, that they all might pursue their businesses while he pursued his, only the ninth or tenth time that he inadvertently passed the office they accosted him—that is, the observant Jepson did.

"You've got Miss Zack on your hands again," accused Jepson.

"I!" retorted Danny, brazenly astonished. "Why?"

"You've spoiled her, Mr. Nidiver. You know, you can't cater to tenants that way, without spoiling them. She's two months behind on her rent and now she wants the house wired for electric lighting, or she'll vacate."

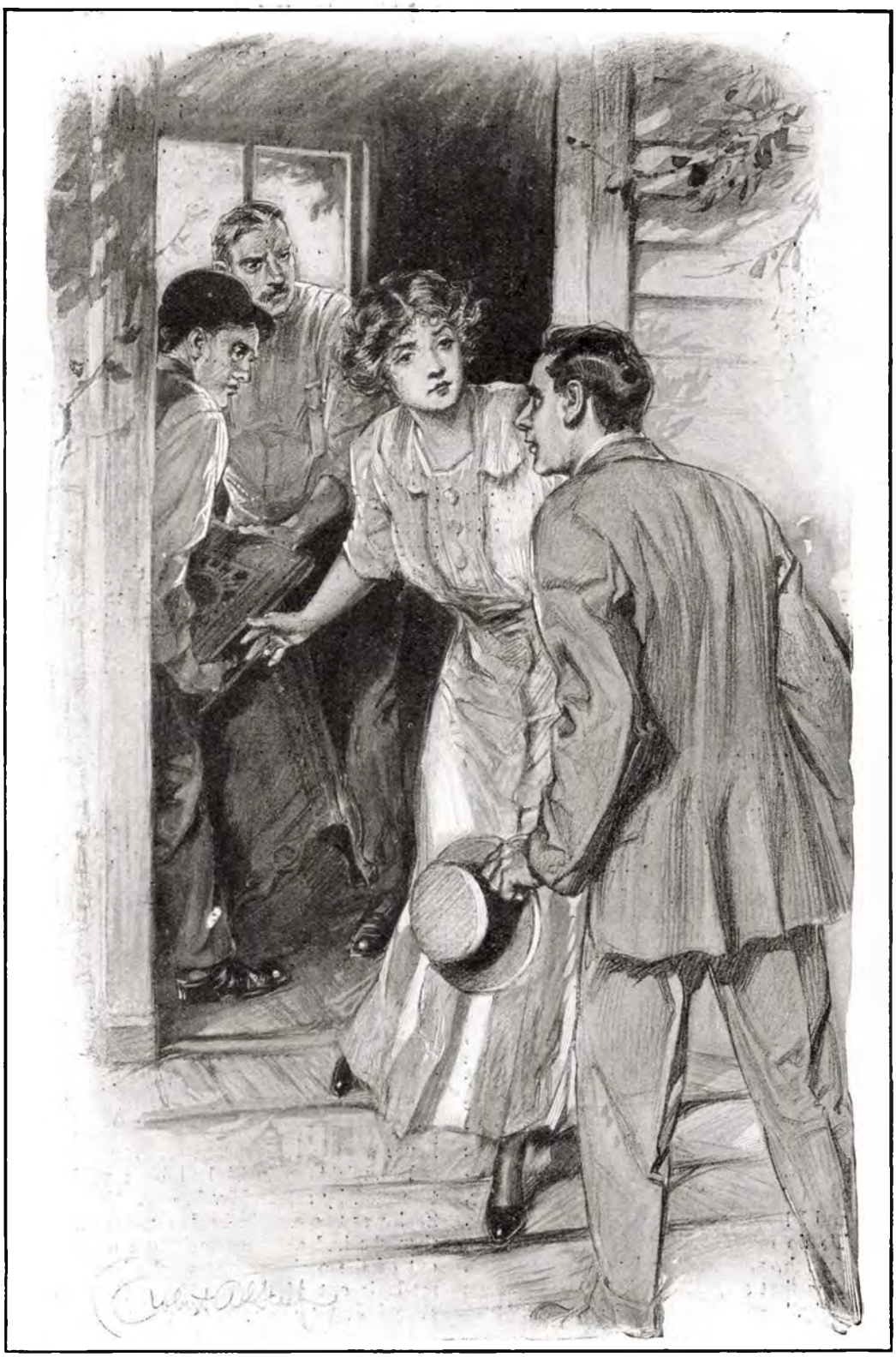
"Pshaw," mused Danny, blankly commiserative. "That's too bad."

"We'd have settled her long ago," asserted Jepson, "if—" The pause was significant. "We have such cases to deal with right along. We do, Mr. Nidiver. They don't fool us."

"Pshaw," mused Danny. "Maybe I'd better see her. What do you think?"

"Humph!" grunted Jepson. "Let her go. There are others. At that figure the house wont stand vacant long."

Danny's "too bad" had been misinterpreted by astute Mr. Jepson. If Miss Zack was two months behind in her rent, then she had *not* been making a success out of the cooking, just as she had not made it out of the washing. This occurred first to Danny; and it next oc-



Judging by the commotion, he arrived opportunely. Bruno was bellowing impotently, Miss Zack was as impotently gesticulating and weeping, and three men were removing from the kitchen the gas stove

curred that the loss of $18 a month would not be the only loss when Miss Zack make good her threat. Um-m-m—no. She was, it seemed to him, a very fitting tenant, for such a property—very fitting. Would it not be wisdom to conciliate her a little, and have her stay on? There was something in having a tenant who took the interest in the property that Miss Zack took—was there not?

"I've got to go up that way in a day or two," he ventured, tentatively. "It might do some good if I stopped in—"

"Oh, yes," snorted Jepson. "Then she'll get the wiring."

Was this his property, reflected Danny, as he walked on. And had he a right to improve his family estate, or not? Zounds! He waxed indignant, and more indignant.

A house without electricity was a shameful thing, and to foist such a house upon any self-respecting person (particularly a maiden person) was another shameful thing. The veriest laborers' terrace, nowadays, was equipped with electricity. It wouldn't be *much* of a job to run a few wires through the walls, and along the floors—or ceilings—or somewhere; would it? No. At least, the gas and electric company agreed that it wouldn't.

The job may not have amounted to much, as jobs go; but the bill did. However, no matter. A property owner must expect to be put to some expense of maintenance. And Miss Zack was beamingly appreciative.

When, necessarily, he must inspect, again, she received him by the front door, as if she might have been watching for him.

"See?" invited Miss Zack—who had changed to a pink dress, as pleasing as the blue had been. "This is my office. I'm not a cook any more. Catering isn't what I expected—that is, home catering. People seem just as satisfied with common baker stuff as with home-cooked. There's so much offered to the Woman's Exchange; and we all have our goods there only on commission, and what isn't sold comes back to us—so I found that I couldn't make it pay. But see? This is my office. I'm going to do copying, and stenography, and things, at home! I'm sure *that* will pay. I've quite a lot of work promised, already. Here's my typewriter. That's why I asked for electric light, Mr. Nidiver. It's so hard to do typing at night, with a lamp, and there's no gas except in the kitchen; and gas is too hot too. But I can suspend a light over my machine—see?"

"Excellent!" agreed Danny.

"Of course," explained Miss Zack, "all these things you've done are only customary, for houses; and they're permanent improvements; they're fixtures, and they're part of the property, forever."

"I hope—er, you're safely launched, now," suggested Danny. "If I can turn any work your way—"

"I'll have plenty, I'm sure," answered Miss A. Zack, instantly.

One would have thought so; for when later Danny drove past, at night, in his car, a raised curtain and window disclosed Miss Zack at work in her "office." He could see chiefly her head, as she bent forward at her machine; and the light metamorphosed her hair into a golden-brown aureole. He had not considered her as having so much hair, of that beautiful color; and he had not considered her as being obliged to work at twelve o'clock at night. But, now considering over again as he drove homeward, he recalled that such was her hair, and that Jepson *et al,* had not, since the first month, remitted to him any rent. He took the bull by the horns.

"Certainly not," replied Jepson. "She hasn't paid. She's three months behind. Now, if you'll give us free hand, we'll find a way, very quickly. We have the lease back of us, you know, and it's an easy thing to levy on her furniture—in case she has enough to make it worth while."

"Well," faltered Danny, perplexed, "I'll—see her. It's—very unfortunate."

"Very," concurred Jepson, grimly. "But, thank Heaven, we're not to blame."

Heavy-hearted (as he should be, thus loaded with such guilty responsibility) Danny wended his way to interview his tenant again. Her stenographic career

must have failed her; she would leave; and he would lose—Miss Zack!

Judging by the commotion which was disturbing the erstwhile peaceful (and sometimes fragrant) atmosphere of the Bond Street cottage, he arrived opportunely. Bruno was bellowing impotently, Miss Zack was as impotently gesticulating and weeping, and three men were removing from the kitchen the gas stove.

"I tell them they can't—they can't," sobbed Miss Zack, appealing to Danny, bewildered and militant. "I'll pay for it, as soon as I can. And it's yours, anyway; it belongs in the house. They took my typewriter—other men did. That was different. But this is a fixture. They can't take fixtures. It's fastened to the house, that makes it a fixture."

The men laughed.

"That's something new, eh, Jim?" grunted one.

"Yes, Missy," averred another. "You ought to be a she lawyer. S'pose you tell that to the company. We aint got nothing to say about it."

"I have, though," interrupted Danny, with great and astounding boldness. "The young lady is right. I'm a lawyer, although not a 'she lawyer,' as you see fit to term it. Fixtures—er, are the property of the owner of the house; and being installed here, as it is, this stove may be called a fixture. You can't remove a door, can you? Well! And anyway, the stove is mine, because I'm going to buy it. Is there anything due on it, by mistake? And how much?"

"We were sent to take this stove out. We aint collectin'," protested one of the men, surlily.

"How much?" demanded Danny.

"T-twelve dollars," sobbed Miss Zack. "But you mustn't, Mr. Nidiver. I'll pay it, if they'll give me a little more t-time."

"Certainly," agreed Danny, in all particulars. "Now, you men take my card—here it is—down to your headquarters, and you tell whoever is boss there that I'll be responsible for this stove. See? We'll quit this nonsense on the spot."

"Don't know you, Mister; but I'll telephone and get orders," yielded the leader in the band of oppressors.

He strode out in search of the 'phone; and the two others, his pals in villainy, wandered forth, to the back porch.

"You mustn't; no, you mustn't," protested Miss Zack, still weepy. "L-let them t-take it. I can't stay here, anywa-ay. I've tried—everything. But I can't seem to succee-eed. My cop-copying didn't pa-ay expenses—and they took my machine—and I'm going, anyway."

"You can't," corrected Danny.

"I will. You can rent to somebody else. It's been improved so much."

"I might—like to live here myself," ventured Danny, with caution.

"It's a nice house," declared Miss Zack, drying her eyes. "I'll pay you the back rent as soon as I can. I'll go."

"You can't," corrected Danny.

"Is it that old lease?" demanded Miss Zack, weepy again. "Shall you try to hold me to that old lease?"

"We won't talk about the lease. But there's that law about fixtures, remember," instructed Danny, very carefully. "You see—the house has been improved—as you say; and to remove any of the fixtures would lessen the value—exceedingly, Miss Zack. That is why I might want to live here, myself—on account of the improvements—in the fixtures. And we—I understood—that when you took the house, you were—er, to be a fixture. I think you so led my agents to infer—and, in fact, Miss Zack, you are the biggest improvement of all. Er—?"

"Oh!" uttered Miss Zack, lifting startled turquoise eyes set amidst enchanting pinkness. "Am I?"

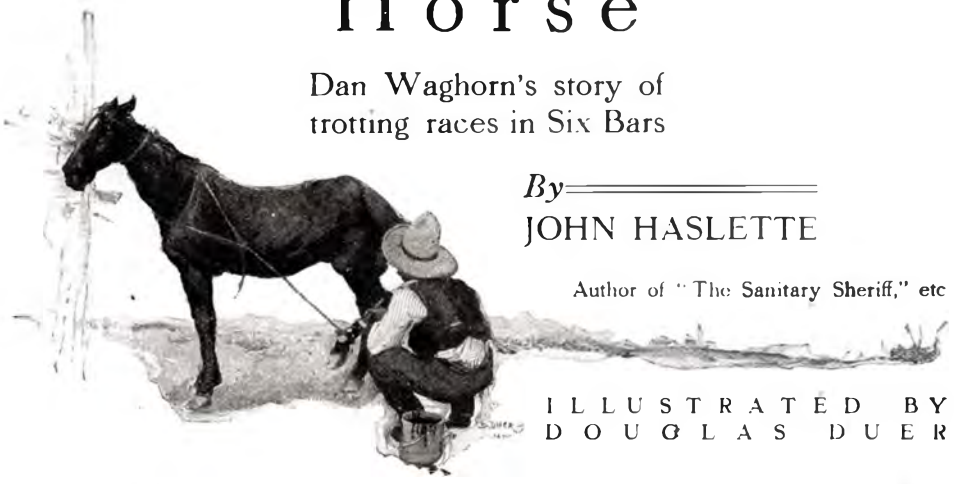
History may be made with much rapidity—as witness Darius Green, and the rush to California in '49, and other events of world-moment. So by the time when the telephone seeker had returned from across the street, Danny had discovered that the name was neither Anna nor Alice, but the charming combination Anice; that Zack was readily solvent in Nidiver, resulting in Anice Nidiver; and that—but the fellow did return, and in brusque tone shouted through the doorway:

"It's all right!"

"Certainly it's all right," answered Danny.

Painted Horse

Dan Waghorn's story of trotting races in Six Bars



By
JOHN HASLETTE

Author of "The Sanitary Sheriff," etc

ILLUSTRATED BY
DOUGLAS DUER

"ARE you interested in horses, mister?" asked Dan Waghorn. Dan is the raconteur of Six Bars, and my very good friend, so I pricked up my ears.

"I don't mean are you sucker sufficient to play the races," Dan added meditatively.

"No, you may acquit me of that, Mr. Waghorn," I said. "But I am very keen on the noble animals, quite outside of their money-making capabilities."

"Know anything about trotting?" he went on, eyeing me absently.

I reflected. "Nothing technical, but I've seen a few."

Dan's voice took an argumentative tone. "P'raps, you don't care to hear about the trotting racket that started once in Six Bars here!"

"Try me!" I said, enthusiastically.

Dan smiled slowly, pondered for a few moments, and began:

Well, there's some fellers aint ever content. Put some of them in little old New York, and they can't sleep f'r thinking of the alkali dust and gener'l barrenness of some place they come from out back. Throw others into the blue-grass country, and they're busy all the time letting on that blue grass isn't scenery in the same fine way pavements is.

Now, to my mind, Six Bars is a heap in its little self. S'long's there's something to set on, and to smoke, and a view where your eye'd hit the Rockies first, if it happened that the Rockies was near enough, well, that's good enough for me every time. But a while back, when the pichter show hadn't butted in, and a dance hall a hundred miles off kept folks entertained, some of the people in Six Bars reckoned that they must have some play or bust.

This feeling, sir, got so stamping outrageous, that me and other citizens allowed that something oughter be done. So we calls a meeting, and talks it over. Some wanted to import a circus from the East, but that wouldn't have kept us long, seeing that most of the punchers could have done the ordinary circus stunt on their heads, and might have shot up the show when they saw there was nothing reely doing.

Then some reckons that a sports meeting would whoop things up a bit. But you can't hold sports meetings more'n once a month, and most of the folks was so used to setting astride that the muscles of their running limbs had naturally froze up some. Then we was up against an impassy, and it seemed that the

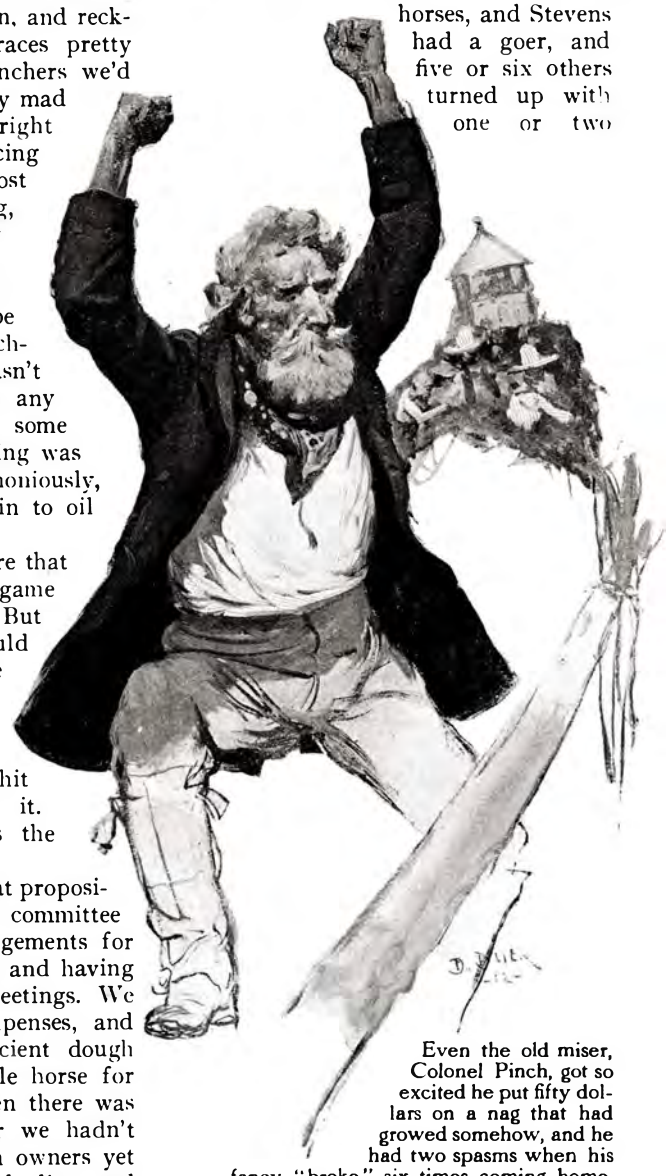
meeting was going to end in some one getting gay with a gun. So I up and says, "Boys, what's the matter with horses?"

Old Marner, of the Gum Tree ranche, seems to be hit by this notion, and reckons that we might have races pretty often. But some of the punchers we'd let in to look on gets mighty mad at this. Well, they were right enough. When a feller is racing and tearing on a cayuse most part of the day for a living, he doesn't always find any rare amusement in seeing other fellers doing the same. Marner didn't like to be talked to by common punchers, and the punchers wasn't going to be rid over by any ranchers in play time. So some words passed, and the meeting was like to breaking up uncere-moniously, when I shoved my tongue in to oil the troubled waters.

I put it to them right there that ordinary racing wasn't the game we wanted at Sir Bars. But what about trotting? We could get over some worth-while animals, and a few sulkies, make out a kind of race track, and hold Saturday afternoon meetings. This hit them. They howled for it. They allowed that I was the orator of the day.

Well, sir, we froze onto that proposition. Marner and a small committee were to make all the arrangements for getting trotting implements, and having a place selected for the meetings. We put up a sum to cover expenses, and every feller that had sufficient dough bought some kind of a little horse for the trotting stunt—see. Then there was the question of prizes—for we hadn't got to direct stakes between owners yet—and some public spirited dive and store keepers put up those. It took quite a while to get things ready, but presently everything was O. K., and we fixed a meeting for the follering Saturday.

That meeting, sir, was immense. Hours before the play was to start, the folks were turning up from miles around. Buckboards, buggies, spiders, horse an' foot—they came ripping into Six Bars to see. We had a fair show of entries. Marner had three nice little horses, and Stevens had a goer, and five or six others turned up with one or two



Even the old miser, Colonel Pinch, got so excited he put fifty dollars on a nag that had growed somehow, and he had two spasms when his fancy "broke" six times coming home.

apiece. The track wasn't quite a billiard green, but it did. The sulkies wasn't all of the ball bearing, blown-air-wheel variety, but they did also. When Bill Stevens' "Big Feet" ran Marner's "Gum

Tree" to a standstill, you'd have thought the punchers would have et the horses right there—they hated old Marner worse'n snakes.

Then a tame-looking little bay showed us one of the finest finishes alive against Dave Brogden's "Karno," and the enthusiasm was intense. Most everybody had a wad on him, and was taking or laying the odds with uncommon fervor. Even the old miser, Colonel Pinch, he got so excited he put fifty dollars by accident on a nag that had growed somehow, and had two spasms on the track when his fancy "broke" six times coming home.

A success? By Jiminy, Six Bars hadn't seen anything like it before. The town fairly cut loose, and a feller, who'd strayed over from Kudo, got so mad jealous he tried to suicide himself with his gun—and only that it wasn't loaded, and the hammer was off work, he'd have done it, too!

The last sprint of the day wound things up in a blaze of glory. The tame-looking little horse was put out to run against Bill Stevens' "Big Feet." Most of the layers got busy. Dollars was humming in the air mighty frequent, and a city feller, turning up by chanst, might have thought Six Bars had made a big strike somewhere. The bay was a sure-enough good thing, bought for three hundred dollars somewhere from a man who didn't know all he might have; but Stevens' "Big Feet" had won at some meetings further East, and had a natural trotting gait that made him look like a pretty safe speculation.

Well, these two were let go, and more'n one of the folks got eye trouble for life, they kept their optics so busy follering the pair. First "Big Feet" took the lead, and his legs was passing each other so swift and frequent that he near burned all the hair off'n the inside of his hocks. Old Bill, who was steering him, had a Number One large-size smile, and thought he was coming in alone.

But the little horse behind felt kind er encouraged by looking at "Big Feet" striding it so easy, and he says to himself that shorely this trotting stunt was no labor. He begins to pull up then, and as he pulls up to the fore sulky, Stevens' smile went down to Number Two size, and growed gradually smaller, till we weren't sure whether it were a smile or a kind of angry expression.

Neither of them "broke," and the winning post was coming in quick. Stevens shook up "Big Feet" but couldn't get another rattle out'n him anyhow. The bay began to get his muscles unstretched some, and put his nose on a line with "Big Feet's."

My! You should have heard the all-fired noise that was coming down along from the crowd, when the bay began to walk into the air faster'n ever. He shook "Big Feet" easy, going like a train, and pulled up at the end with two lengths to spare.

Then the money changers got busy, and there was some row, when several folks didn't seem to remember the odds they'd laid. But, barrin' one gun accident, they calmed down, and it was generally allowed that Six Bars had struck the greatest game since the foundation. The bay was owned by Steve Oster, and he had ten offers for the good little animal before he could speak back. But Steve wasn't selling. He reckoned he'd got a good thing, and was hoping to clean out Six Bars on the follering Saturday.

Dan paused for a moment. "Did the meetings go on?" I asked; and he proceeded.

Sure, they did. The bay won again under a handicap, and Steve was so filled up with the victory that he got shooting off his mouth about it when he went over on business to Kudo. Well, sir, Kudo was hit where it lived, and reckoned that something must be done. Steve got pretty full that day, and was soon firing off challenges to all the world and under, to beat any horse they could show against his bay.

Then one of the Kudo City folks rose up, and inquired if Steve was likely to be back in Kudo the following week, as a friend of his would like to make a match. And Steve said he would, and allowed that he was game to put up

three hundred dollars on his little horse against any Kudo quadruped, for three half-mile dashes.

Well, that was the way things lay, and sure enough, Steve went over to Kudo the follering week, and met the man who was anxious to make a match of it. They hit off the terms right away. The Kudo guy was to run his horse "Kudo Champion," lately bought an' named, against the little bay on the Saturday after next, ten days off, for three hundred dollars a side; Steve to put up his stakes with the sheriff of Kudo, and the other feller to leave his with the sheriff at Six Bars.

Steve came back, pretty jubilant, and let it out to us the treat that was in store, and the whaling we were going to give Kudo. Some of us was a bit suspicious. Maybe the Kudo crack had been bought from one of the swell trotter owners East, and might lick the bay into shavings. We thought it was some pity that we didn't see the little horse Kudo was going to run against us.

But that soon evened out. The Kudo man had the gall to bring his crack over to Six Bars a week before the race, and he was put in the hands of the sheriff to see that there was no cross work. And every day the Kudo guy would fit him into a sulky, and take easy exercise along our race track. He never put him to it good, so we couldn't well figger out the chances, but the animal moved nicely, and seemed to know the game.

Well, that went on till four days before the match, when the sheriff came round to the race committee in a pretty red rage, and said he reckoned that the Kudo guy was going to get us, he having apparently imported a first-notch trotter from the East. He guessed this, he said, because he'd looked at the animal on the quiet and found that a star on the forehead, and a half stocking on the horse's off-hind had been painted out. Then he asks us why the Kudo guy shouldn't be booted out'n Six Bars, and his horse thrown after him.

We were all mad at first, till old Marner gets up. He was as cunning as a wagon-load of monkeys, and his smile told us that he had something pretty good to get off'n his chest.

"I tells you what we'll do, boys," he says. "First we'll telegraph around and try to see if this guy has been buying any horse lately in the East. Then we'll all pay off Steve's share of the three hundred stake—our part of it, and then Steve wont lose anything. Now, if the Kudo fellers are working this fake, they'll come over in a crowd. But only a few will know the game, so's to keep the profits to themselves. All of us is to bet free and heavy on the Kudo hoss, and only put a dollar or two each on the crack Steve owns, which is running on behalf of this city—see? Knowing they have an out-and-outer, Kudo will be backing it, and mayn't want to take our bets, but some of them wont know any better, and there's bound to be some bookmaker fellers from further East. So between our own people who don't know the lay, and the ignorant Kudo crowd, and the money sharps, we oughter be able to pull off a few."

"They'll think there's some cross work, ef we lays agin our own horse," says Steve.

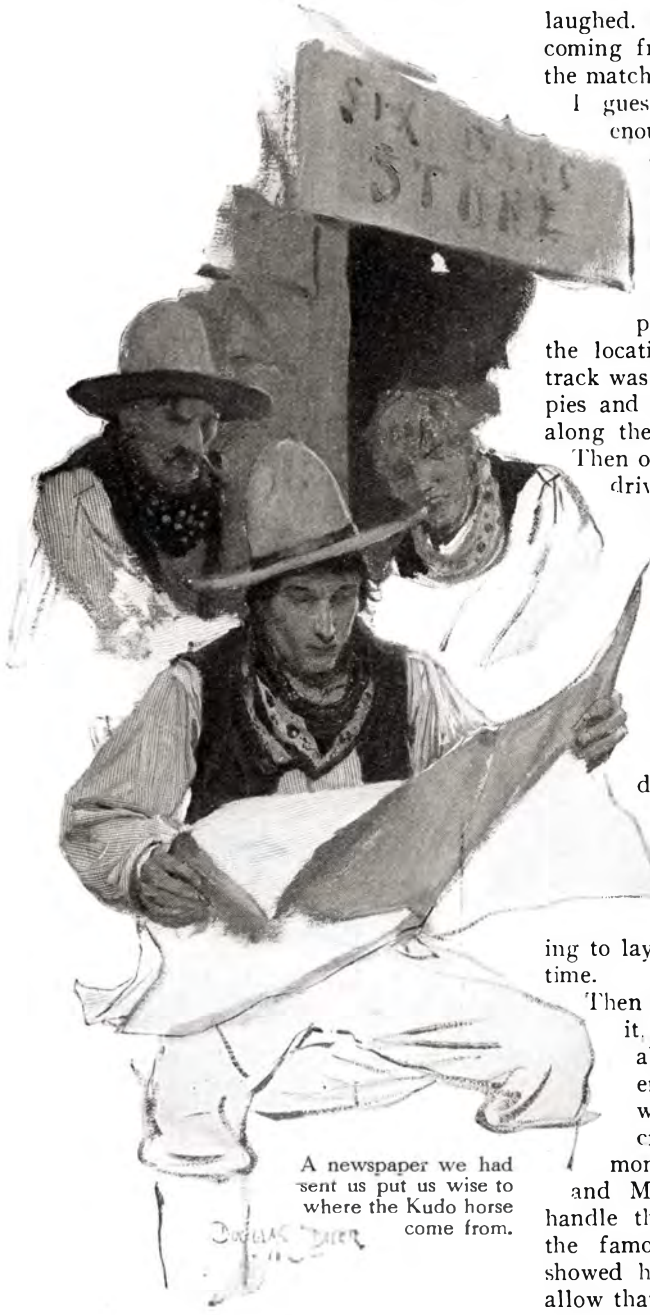
"They shorely know there wont be any pulling of the horses before a crowd heeled with the latest things in guns," says Marner.

Well, arter that we naturally keeps the telegraph wires buzzing some, to see if we could trace where the Kudo crack come from. The wires didn't put us wise, but a newspaper we had sent us did, sure. A paragraph says:

> We hear Mr. Bullecker has sold his famous crack "Diamond Star" to a rancher not a hundred miles from Kudo, who hopes to sweep his county from end to end.

Now this paper came from the far East, where the Kudo guy had been visiting on business a week before. I supposes that they reckoned a copy wouldn't hit Six Bars, or else some blamed pressman put it in indiscreet.

Marner was very joyful. He informs us that we has Kudo on the hip. They expects their faked crack to win out. We just have to back the Eastern "Diamond Star" and only put on a little for our own horse. Naturally the imported crack



A newspaper we had sent us put us wise to where the Kudo horse come from.

was going to eat up the bay, and we were going to handle Kudo money. Well, we were banking on Marner, and we didn't ask any rude questions to the Kudo guy about the painted parts of his horse—see. We just waited and laughed. We heard there was a crowd coming from that neglected city to see the match, and we prepared for them.

I guess the day came along slow enough, but when it was breaking out'n the sky, the trail between Kudo and Six Bars was just alive with folks coming in to look on. There was a couple of bookmakers, too, from a neighboring state, who expected to draw all the rubes in the location. By noon the side of the track was six deep, and folks was selling pies and rye whiskey f'r famine prices along the line.

Then out came the two sulkies; Steve driving his good little bay, and the Kudo guy steering the painted horse. When the betting whooped up, some of the Kudo folks looked puzzled. Most of us were crowding the bookies with bets on the Kudo crack, and our bay wasn't hardly having any support. So it seemed to them generally that our bay was a dead-beat, and after a little we couldn't get the ordinary people to take bets that way. Only a small crowd seemed to have changed their views, and those were willing to lay against their own horse every time.

Then the bookmakers turned against it, and we soon got a considerable pile on the bay being beaten out of the field. The fellows who bet against their own Kudo crack seemed to have more money than anyone else around, and Marner said we would simply handle the dough in bucketsful when the famous painted "Diamond Star" showed his 2.10 gait. Now, sir, you'll allow that was a curious situation. Both of the crowds was betting on the opposite horse, and if one of the trotters had been pulled an inch there'd have been shots flying.

Then off they went, and the yells and the shouting fairly turned the grass brown. The bay didn't get off so quick

into his gait as the painted horse, but in forty yards he was going well, and moving pretty rapid. Then he got alongside, and we waited to see the Kudo flyer start in to butt the universe. Both were doing their best, for there was going to be trouble if one quit too easy. Old Marner says to me that "Diamond Star" would come away at the finish like an eagle after a jack rabbit. He would just flatter the bay for a bit, and then leave him standing. But he didn't!

By jiminy! sir, the bay was a flier. She got a length ahead, though the Kudo guy was shaking up his horse every minute, and doing it honest. There was about a hundred yards to go when the bay just gripped the bit, and ripped into it like a cyclone. She finished two blocks ahead, and the silence could have been felt, sure.

But Marner wasn't down in the lip. No—sir. He says to me that the match is three dashes, and the crack is just going to make it look like sporting by letting the bay win onst. So we put a bit more on "Diamond Star," with the crowd willing to be against him, and watched for more. Well, sir, instead of the crack polishing off our bay, the bay fairly wiped the floor with him. The second heat was a procession; the third saw Steve's horse a street ahead. You oughta have seen Steve's face. Here was all his money on the other horse, and his own whipping it easy! You get me?

"So the bay won the match, Mr. Waghorn?" I ventured, when he paused.

Yes, sir, she did. But when it was over you could see trouble marching quick along that field. The sheriff of Six Bars goes up to the Kudo sheriff, and he reckons most polite that the Kudo crack has been pulled. The other feller doesn't get mad at this, but asks what our sheriff has to say about it; and ours says that he knows the Kudo trotter has had a star and half stocking painted out. He also knows that the owner has bought up the Eastern crack, "Diamond Star" and has run him under false pretences. Well, the Kudo guy comes up and a crowd gathers around.

"What's this all?" he asks, looking some belligerent.

"You pulled that horse, because we know 'Diamond Star' can do, and has done a 2.10 gait, and the mare only done 2.30 to-day, and yet she licked him all hollow," says our sheriff, wrathy.

The Kudo guy only laughed. "This horse is no more 'Diamond Star' than I am," he says. "But I *do* own 'Diamond Star' and I'll run him against your bay for a thousand a side, any day. Just come over to Kudo right away, and I'll show you the Eastern crack in my stable. The horse I steered to-day was bought from a wrangler out Thomson way. He never ran on a track till I brought him here."

Then, sir, we saw just what rubes we'd been. This guy had painted his old deadbeat, clumsy, so that we'd reckon he was some Eastern crack who could whip the bay easy. Then he'd sent a paper with the news about "Diamond Star" and made us sure we had the cinch on his crowd. And the worst of it was we couldn't say anything without giving our own show away. I tell you we could have beat up old Marner for being too smart with his advice, but the old man streaked it for home when he saw the way things were going.

Our sheriff had to apologize for his talk, and eating mud that way got his goat, sure. Just as he was turning away, he speaks to the Kudo guy very sharp. "Anyway, you painted that horse!" he says. He feels absolutely safe in making that assertion, because he can prove it, if he has to.

The other feller smiled sweet and cheerful. "Will you tell me, Mr. Sheriff," he says gently, "tell me ef there's any law in this state against any man having his horse the color he chooses? Some folks likes horses with spots, and some don't—I'm shorely one of the crowd that *don't*.'"

By jiminy! sir, that bay was a flier. She got a length ahead, though the Kudo guy was shaking up his horse every minute, and doing it honest. There was about a hundred yards to go when the bay just gripped the bit and ripped into it like a cyclone.

Silent Mr. Forrester

An Exploit of Bonehead Tierney

by

JOHN A. MOROSO

Author of "Solid Ivory," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY WILLIAM OBERHARDT

THE private detective agency of James Tierney, sneeringly referred to by the police as "Bonehead Tierney, Incorporated," came upon anxious days when there stepped from the *Mauretania* one Arthur Evelyn Forrester.

Mr. Forrester, of course, came over first class, with abundant luggage and a man servant whom he called Jorkins.

Those who have kept close track of criminal history for the past fifteen years will recall that it was Mr. Forrester who negotiated the return of a certain stolen Gainsborough to its original owner, who was glad to pay the large ransom demanded and keep silent over the transaction.

Tall, with a drooping blonde mustache, square shoulders, and dressed in the prevailing baggy style of the day in London, Mr. Forrester passed easily as the typical, well-to-do, well-fed English gentleman. His blue eyes were, however, unusually cold and keen in their glint. Coming over, he managed to fill his purse with winnings from the bridge game in the smoking room.

Scotland Yard had flashed the news of Mr. Forrester's departure from England to police headquarters in New York, and headquarters had informed those private detective agencies employed downtown to guard the great wealth of money and art treasures gathered by the prosperous of Wall Street.

The visitor from England had never been charged with crime abroad or in this country. There was no evidence tangible enough to warrant an effort being made to have the immigration authorities exclude him as an undesirable citizen. All that the police of London and New York could do was to follow him wherever he went and be prepared to close in on him should he ever become mixed up in another affair such as the Gainsborough return.

Mr. Forrester made a straight and honest declaration of all the dutiable goods in his possession, tipped the stewards handsomely, and ordered Jorkins to look after his bags and trunks.

Detective James Tierney was on the pier when the giant liner was warped into her berth. In his own picturesque language, he was there to "lamp" Mr. Forrester. Kelley and Ryan, of his staff, also were on the reception committee. They would shadow Mr. Forrester, taking turns at the task. Also, installed at the Plaza Hotel, were two very able sleuths who wore the hotel livery and who would accept Mr. Forrester's tips as they kept their eyes upon him.

Jim Tierney looked over his man and whispered the one expressive word to Ryan, "Class."

Mr. Forrester certainly had class. If his keen blue eyes picked out the detectives in the crowd he did not seem to be either annoyed or worried thereby. One of the pier attendants hailed a taxicab for him. It was a mellow day and Mr. Forrester ordered the chauffeur to drop the front and top of the machine so that he might have a glimpse of the city and the people on his way uptown.

"Stop by the Ambrose National Bank, Wall and William Streets," Tierney heard him direct his chauffeur.

A whispered word from Tierney, and Kelley darted through the crowd on the pier to West Street, jumped into a machine and made a good start on the Forrester taxi for the bank named. Tierney and Ryan took another machine and followed their "subject," as the person under investigation is called these days.

Tierney's mind was busy conjecturing the reason for this trip to New York by Forrester.

No trace had ever been secured of the famous Mona Lisa by Leonardo da Vinci, stolen from the Louvre. Remembering the skill with which Forrester had brought about the discovery of the stolen Gainsborough and the payment of the ransom, Tierney thought it not improbable that Forrester had come to New York to negotiate for the sale of the stolen Mona Lisa.

But that was only a theory. Jim Tierney's business was to keep in touch with the gentleman from England, and, whether he came to steal or to sell stolen goods, it was Tierney's duty to be ready to pounce on him when he made a move that smacked of the criminal. A man of the gentleman type and clever enough to run through the last fifteen years without Scotland Yard closing in on him, Forrester was the sort of quarry that makes the detective sleep uneasily. His type is hard to get. The high-class crook uses his brains and makes the low-brow of his profession do the drudgery.

"Pon my word," said Mr. Forrester "what silly fellows they must be, these American chaps. The idea of people allowing themselves to be taken in so easily. The dictagraph! 'Pon my word, I say. It is ridiculous. Ha! Ha!"

Tierney was thus racking his noggin when the cab ahead stopped at the Ambrose National Bank.

Kelley was already there. Tierney and Ryan joined him in the little throng of patrons and the three kept close to their man.

Forrester asked for the cashier and presented a letter of introduction. He then opened an account with a fat letter of credit and five hundred pounds sterling. He asked for and received three hundred dollars in crisp, clean American certificates, bowed pleasantly, slipped his deposit book in his pocket, said "Fine weathaw," and returned to his taxi.

He paused beside the machine, stroking his mustache and looking with in-

terest at the crowds and then up at the tall buildings.

"Take me to the Hotel Plaza," he said, stepping into the taxi.

His gloved hands resting on the silver handle of his walking stick, Mr. Forrester continued to stare as he was bowled along swiftly in the sunlight.

At Twenty-third Street the chauffeur made his course up Fifth Avenue, crowded with splendid motors and carriages. The forenoon shopping parade of the rich was in full swing. The warmth and brightness of the day brought the women out in their richest costumes. Even the gray old beaux of the Union League, the Metropolitan, the New York Yacht and the college clubs managed to tear themselves from their corners of gossip and tipple and reach the sidewalks of the Avenue for a stroll.

If Mr. Forrester knew that his taxi was being followed, he did not bother himself about the matter. He seemed to enjoy the parade of the rich immensely and frequently turned to take a second glance at some more than ordinarily handsome woman.

At the Plaza he waited until the door of the taxi was thrown open by the chauffeur, paid the man and tipped him and entered, going directly to the registry desk.

"I'm Mr. Forrester, London, y'know," he said in a pleasant drawl to the chief clerk. "I ordered bedroom, reception room and bawth by wireless. Has my man, Jorkins, appeared with the luggage? Yes? Thank you. I shall go directly to my rooms."

A boy fairly plastered with brass buttons escorted Mr. Forrester to his rooms on the twelfth floor, as James Tierney and his assistants, Kelley and Ryan, took another elevator to the eleventh floor and entered a room.

In the center of this room two men were seated at a table with their ears cupped with little circles of gutta-percha connected to green covered telephone wires. Before each was a pad of paper and many pencils well sharpened.

There were two other receivers idle. Tierney picked up one and handed the other to Kelley.

They listened in silence to the record of the dictagraph.

II

The stenographers employed by Tierney to take down the record of his dictagraph picked up their pencils as they heard through the instrument the opening and closing of a door in the suite above.

"Well, Jorkins," they heard a voice speak.

"Yes, sir."

"The luggage all right?"

"Yes, sir."

"Have they given you a comfortable room?"

"Very good, sir."

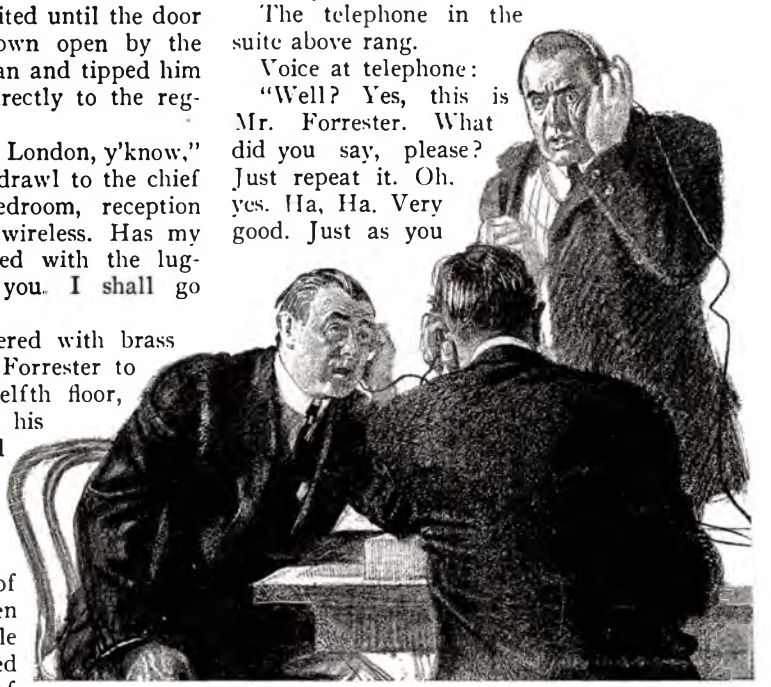
"You may unpack my afternoon clothes; I shall dress for lunch."

"Very well, sir,"

The telephone in the suite above rang.

Voice at telephone:

"Well? Yes, this is Mr. Forrester. What did you say, please? Just repeat it. Oh. yes. Ha, Ha. Very good. Just as you



Tierney's wrath grew gradually to the point of explosion. He

that might be in

say. Yes, that's quite satisfactory to me, y'know. Jolly day, isn't it? Thanks; good-by."

Tierney signaled to Kelley.

"Hop downstairs and get the number that called up. Quick. If the girl listened to the conversation, get it out of her. Find out whether it was a man or woman talking to Forrester."

Kelley was out of the room in a flash.

Voices from dictagraph:

"You asked me to get you a *Times*, sir. Here it is."

"Thanks."

Through the wires, Jorkins could be heard opening and closing drawers and doors as he arranged his employer's wardrobe.

Forrester must have taken a seat very close to the dictagraph plate, for the listeners below heard him click a silver cigarette case tight and then scratch a match. They heard the newspaper rattle as he straightened it.

The men around the table below waited patiently. They heard a chuckle of laughter and then another. Something in the *Times* had amused Mr. Forrester.

"'Pon my word, what silly fellows they must be, these American chaps," they heard him say finally. "The idea of people allowing themselves to be taken in so easily. The dictagraph! 'Pon my word, I say. It is ridiculous. Ha, ha!"

Tierney grinned as he listened.

Forrester stifled his mirth, and the absence of voices from the suite above told Tierney and his associates that he was interested in the day's news.

waited in vain for a word of the conversation progress above

Kelley returned from the telephone operator's board.

"The call was from a booth in the hotel," he told his chief. "A handsomely dressed woman was the party. She came in a machine and went away immediately."

"Did you get a chance to lamp her?" asked Tierney.

"No; she was gone. The girl says she is a stunner; young, beautiful, big picture hat, hobble, diamonds and all that."

Voices from dictagraph:

"Jorkins, go over my linen carefully and see that my evening clothes are all right."

"There's plenty of linen, sir."

"And Jorkins."

"Yes, guv'nor."

"Beware of the dictagraph. Ha, ha! Be-e-e-ware of the dictagraph, Jorkins."

"Is that guy joshing us?" Tierney demanded of his lieutenant, Kelley.

Kelley held up a warning finger.

"I heard the door open and close."

They held the gutta-percha cups close to their skulls.

"D'yuh get that?" whispered Tierney. "There's a third party in the room. Listen." The door clicked again. "Some one else has entered."

But the dictagraph recorded no voices.

That the instrument was working and working finely was evident from the fact that the noises made by those moving about the suite above were distinct.

Occasionally would come in the most tantalizing manner possible the dry, cynical laughter of Forrester, but not a word was spoken.

Tierney's wrath grew gradually to the point of explosion. He waited in vain for a word of the conversation that might be in progress above.

Finally he tore off the receiver and left the table.

"Come," he said to Kelley.

In the corridor he whispered to his aide:

"We gotta see what kind of steer we're up against. That guy is putting one over

on us. I feel it in my bones. He's either got some device putting the dictagraph on the bum or he's doing all his talking with pencil and paper. Now, when we pass his rooms, you jump on my shoulders and get a quick glimpse, slide down and we'll mosey for the stairs and back down here. Yuh got me?"

"Right."

They hurried over the heavily-carpeted floor of the corridor and slipped upstairs.

Tierney clasped his hands stirrup-wise behind him and Kelley mounted his shoulders for a swift glance at the reception room of Mr. Forrester.

In a second or two he was back on the soft carpet of the corridor. The two detectives hurried to the floor below.

"Well, what did you see?" demanded Tierney when they were safe in their own apartment.

"Nothing."

"What?"

"Either the inside of the transom glass is covered with a white curtain or it is soaped."

III

Tierney's men were able to get trace of the two male visitors to the suite of Mr. Forrester in the Plaza. The woman who had called at the hotel, but who had contented herself with telephoning Forrester from one of the public booths, was still to be found.

Kelley and Ryan entered Tierney's office in a downtown skyscraper to report personally.

"We got the two Forrester callers shadowed," said Kelley, who spoke for himself and Ryan. "One of 'em lives at the Cumberland and the other one at the Allcroft. One seems to be a Canadian and maybe the other one is from Australia. They're both English, anyhow, and we can't place 'em as crooks."

"What do they do for their living? How do they get the kale?" asked Tierney.

"Both work downtown in banks," replied Kelley.

"Huh," grunted Tierney.

"One of 'em's a bank messenger for the Ambrose National," added Ryan.

"Yow!" exclaimed Tierney. "That's the bank Forrester put his money in the day he arrived."

"We're keeping a shadow on Forrester, too," reported Kelley. "He hangs around the stock brokers' offices and seems to be gambling in the Street. He goes to the bank every day and puts in or draws out, according to the way his luck runs."

"Gimme the last dictagraph report," ordered Tierney.

Kelley handed him a dozen sheets of typewritten manuscript.

"Bonehead" Tierney read every line with gathering disgust and scorn.

"It's a grand report and a great help to Jim Tierney," he said with a snort of anger. "Here it says that Mr. Forrester asks Jorkins for his gray vest and his striped pants and that Mr. Forrester would like to have his walking stick of English ash. My word, I guess he would have died of heart disease if the English ash cane was lost! And here again Mr. Forrester tells his man Jorkins that he will dress for dinner—just as if he would eat dinner naked."

Tierney laid the sheets of paper on his desk and threw his heels up beside them. He pulled savagely at the butt of a cigar.

"If I have to read that kind of rot every day, Kelley," he sneered, "I'm going to quit the detective business and spend me time writing a book on the 'Passing of the Idle Rich,' like Jimmie Townsend Martin wrote. This pink-tea report says that from three o'clock in the afternoon yesterday until five, the only records given by the dictagraph was laughter. Laughter! Think of that! The modern first aid of the detective can record laughter, but when it comes to words with something behind the words that will help, it merely reports—silence!"

"If he knows there's a dictagraph transmitter in his rooms, why don't he just cut the wires and let it go at that?" asked Kelley of his chief.

"Because he aint any ordinary crook," replied Tierney. "He is a regular gentleman and he's got brains. If he mon-

keyed with the dictagraph we'd know it and it would be evidence that he had something to hide. As it is, he acts just as innocent as a Presidential candidate."

"I can't dope it," said Kelley, wagging his head sadly.

"If he's clever enough to get along without cutting the dictagraph wires," Tierney declared, "I'm pretty sure he wouldn't carry on a conversation by using pencil and paper. That would be dangerous."

"They might pass each other notes and then burn 'em up when they've finished," suggested Ryan.

"What chance would they have if we walked in in the middle of one of these handwriting conversations?" demanded Tierney. "We'd get 'em with evidence in their own handwriting. They aint running any chance like that."

Forrester had been in New York two weeks when this report was made to Tierney. He had done nothing that would give the detectives reason to believe that he was planning a criminal operation or that he was endeavoring to negotiate for the return of the stolen Mona Lisa. He had approached none of the big art collectors; and Tierney's two men in the livery of the Plaza could only report that he was living the usual life of a man with money, who killed time by playing the market in the day and loafing about in the evenings.

By means of a pass key they had entered the Forrester suite a number of times, while Jorkins and his master were away, and they had found no scrap of paper that gave any clue as to the occasion for Forrester's visit to New York; nor did they find any trace of paper having been burned.

The transmitter, a round disk three inches in diameter by a half inch in thickness, was found within the clock on the mantel where it had been originally placed by Tierney. It had not been tampered with and worked perfectly under every test.

Tierney pondered the mystery of the unreliable dictagraph until he finally admitted himself beaten.

"Kelley," he said, pulling himself to his feet, "you and Ryan just keep shadowing Forrester. Keep them two men in the hotel close to the job also, and have another man assigned to shadow Jorkins. I'm gonna go back to old detective methods. What's the name of this guy who works in the Ambrose National Bank?"

"James Harrison," replied Kelley.

Tierney straightened out his coat, picked up his derby and started for the door.

"Get back to your job," he ordered the two men as he departed for the street. "I'm gonna get busy."

In ten minutes he was in the private office of President Harding of the bank where Harrison was employed.

"Well, Tierney?" inquired Mr. Harding, pleasantly.

"You gotta a man employed by the name of Harrison?" asked Tierney promptly.

"Yes."

"What's his job?"

"He is both clerk and messenger. We use him to accompany Mr. Bronson when the latter is sent to other banks to get cash for us. Mr. Bronson has been with us a quarter of a century and is getting on in years. We can trust him with any amount—millions—but we send Harrison along as a guard in case of trouble or in case he should fall ill."

"How long have you had Harrison?"

"About a year. He seems all right and had good recommendations."

"Does old man Bronson carry very large sums between banks?"

"Next week he will probably be sent for $100,000 in cash for us in the matter of the purchase of some first class bonds we want," said Mr. Harding.

"One hundred thousand dollars cash?" asked Tierney.

"Yes."

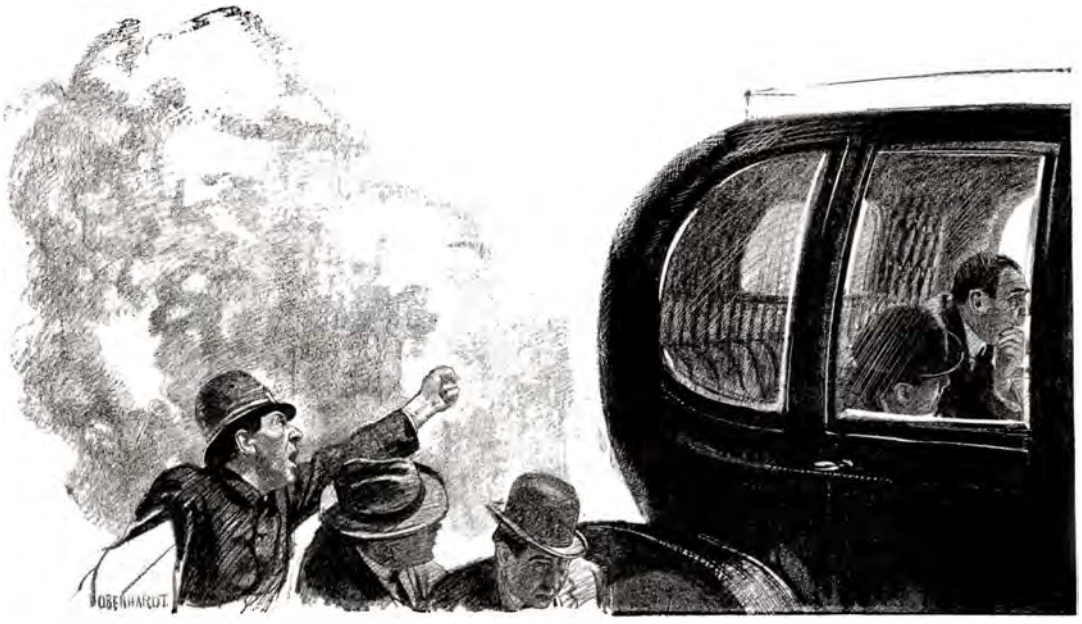
"What day next week?"

"Wednesday."

IV

Ryan, Kelley, Maxwell and Martin, four of Tierney's huskies, entered his office, hat in hand.

Tierney left his chair and sat on the edge of his desk, swinging one leg and



Harrison's new chauffeur was as skillful as he was bold. His machine jumped into the tangle of traffic and fairly

leaning over with his elbow on his thigh as he looked them over.

"If the old man aint mistaken there's going to be something doing in a little while," he said slowly, twisting his cigar far into a corner of his mouth. "Now, I want yuh to listen."

The four men nodded.

"This aint no case for fooling around with a dictagraph what wont work when you want it to work," he said. "We want old fashioned strong-arm work. This guy Forrester is a regular fellow in the crook line. He aint going to do any of the coarse work in this job, but he's going to have his thick-necks do that and turn over the money to him for the split. D'yuh get me?"

The four nodded.

"There's an old Methuselah going out from the Ambrose National Bank to-day to collect $100,000 in cold cash," he went on. "The gent what is the president of the bank sends along with him a younger man to protect him. That young man knows Forrester. When the old whiskers has got all this money in his handbag the young gent is going to choke the gizzard out of him, grab the coin and hop into a taxi that will run alongside the one the bank hires. Got me?"

"I gotcher," said the four in chorus.

"The young guy has a confederate for a chauffeur," Tierney resumed. "There aint been a big taxicab robbery pulled off in six months, but the last one was so easy that I feel sure somebody is going to take a chance for this big wad to-day. Now, I've got all the lines laid to land the bunch that tries to pull off this one, and we want to be sure to get Forrester. He's the one we want most, for he plans the big jobs. When the young guy sticks a gag in the face of old whiskers and makes a break for the get-away with the money, we'll be around with a sixty-horse power closed car to follow."

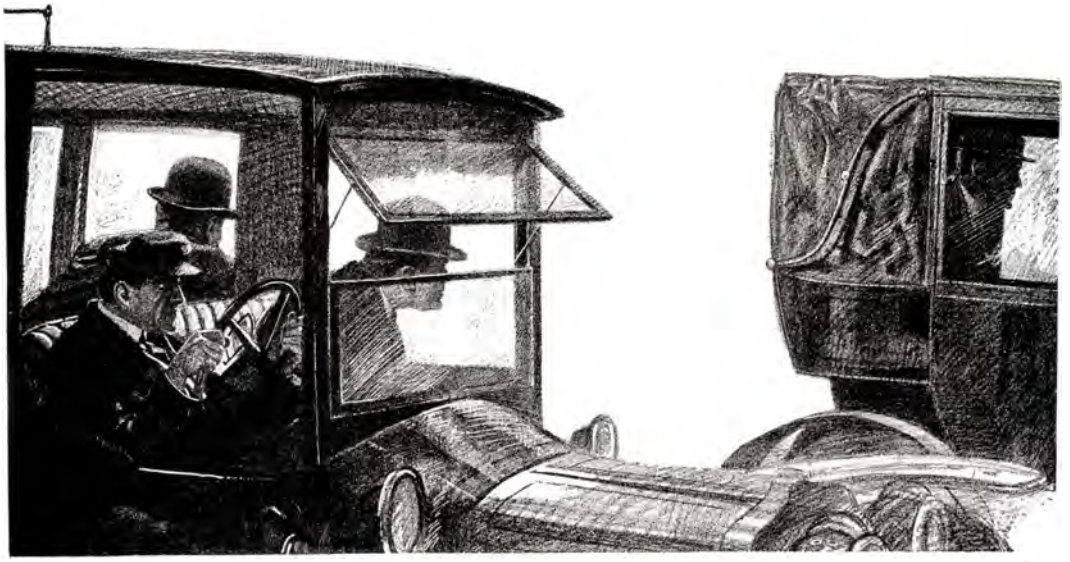
Tierney reached into a drawer of his desk, picked up a billy and pistol, and stuck them in handy corners of his clothes.

"You fellows heeled?" he asked.

They smiled as if the question were superfluous, and then the five men left the office and piled into a machine at the curb.

It was eleven o'clock when old Bronson, with his empty grip, stepped into a taxi in front of his bank, with Harrison following. As the taxi got away, a long, low-hooded, underslung machine swung behind it from William Street and followed west on Wall.

The taxi pulled up at the Eagle Na-



ripped through. In a few minutes it and the pursuing cars were coursing up West street at dangerous speed.

tional Bank and Bronson and his young escort entered the institution; in a few minutes they returned to proceed to the Acme National Bank. In a radius of five blocks, making up the heart of the business section of New York, the old bank messenger collected $100,000 and ordered the chauffeur to return to the Ambrose National.

The taxi was then traveling south on West Broadway, where the Ninth and Sixth Avenue elevated trains close in as the island of Manhattan narrows, and where the din above the surface, on the surface and in the tunnels, is loudest.

At Barclay Street, the taxi stopped for a second and Harrison jumped from it, carrying a big handbag. He hopped into a machine alongside, as the low-hooded car moved up.

In the taxi, old man Bronson lay stunned by a blow on the head.

Harrison's new chauffeur was as skillful as he was bold. His machine jumped into the tangle of traffic and fairly ripped through it. He jockeyed clear of the heavy vehicular traffic until he reached West Street, when he turned north. In a few minutes this car and the low-hooded car following were coursing up West Street at dangerous speed. Mounted policemen were easily distanced and record time was made to the new Pennsylvania station.

As the machines pulled up, five men piled from the pursuing automobile. One of them, Ryan, jumped to the running board of the first car as Harrison left it. Ryan flashed a pistol and held the chauffeur helpless in his seat, with his hands up.

Tierney, Kelley, Maxwell and Martin joined the throng entering the station, almost elbowing Harrison as he pushed ahead with the handbag.

An express train was due to start for Philadelphia in three minutes. Harrison turned to one of the gates leading to the trains. Forrester was waiting for him. He held in his right hand two tickets. He signaled to Harrison and extended the tickets so that the gateman might punch them.

Not stopping to show their badges, Tierney and his men bowled over the gateman and fell upon Forrester and Harrison. When the two thieves got to their feet, the bracelets were on their wrists and Jim Tierney, panting, was in charge of the money bag.

"I got yuh, Mr. Forrester," he blurted out. "And I got yuh right."

V

When Messrs. Forrester and Harrison and their chauffeur had submitted to the camera and measurements and fingerprints of the Bertillion system at police headquarters, they were placed in the "Barrel," the same being a cell where prisoners are not afforded the usual station house or Tombs privilege of talking with counsel or friends.

Tierney, once the stolen money was safe in charge of the police and counted, sat down for a little chat with the inspector in command of the plain clothes men of New York's police department.

"This guy Forrester has given me a lot to worry over," he explained to the successor of his old chief, Jim McCafferty. "I'd like to know just what he's telling the other two down in the Barrel."

"There'll be no trouble about that," the inspector informed him. "Since you left the force we have adopted many new and valuable modern aids in detection."

"Har?" inquired Tierney, as if half bored.

"Oh, yes," the inspector went on with an indulgent smile. "Just take this and listen." He held out a dictagraph receiver.

"Nothing doing on the dictagraph," said Tierney. "D'yuh know yuh might sit here for two weeks and yuh wouldn't pick up nothing from them guys in the Barrel."

"Are they wise to the dictagraph?" the inspector asked.

"Yep," replied Tierney. "Soon as anyone finds a way to catch a thief, he gets to work to find a way to beat you at it. I want to get a place where I can watch Forrester and his two pals without being seen."

"There's a peep hole in the side of the cell," replied the inspector.

"Lead me to it," said Tierney. "I got something on my mind I got to get off or I'll go bug pretty soon."

Tierney went down to the Barrel, found the peep hole and glued his eyes to it.

For a minute he watched patiently. Not a sound came from him. He stuck to his point of vantage over the crooks for another and for a third minute. Beads of perspiration spangled his knobby brow.

At last he drew away and tiptoed up the iron, winding stairs to the inspector's office.

The inspector was at his desk holding the dictagraph receiver to his right ear.

"Put that thing in the junk pile," suggested Tierney with a broad grin.

"What's troubling you, Tierney?" the inspector asked.

"Into the junk pile for the dictagraph," replied the Bonehead. "Them crooks is doing all their talking in the deaf and dumb language—wid their digits. D'yuh get me? They're using their fingers. If yuh got a cop what's deaf and dumb and understands this finger talk, make him beat it to the peep hole and we'll get what we're after, if he keeps his eyes sharp."

The Blue Shirt

by

FRANCES A. LUDWIG

Illustrated by R. M. BRINKERHOFF

Author of "Clay Feet," "Cupid and a Graveyard," etc.

Billy was speaking..... "And say, about that shirt.... it was a case of wear it or not show up at all."

THE last tormented strain of Schubert's serenade had been done to death by the red-haired O'Shaughnessy twin; the black-haired O'Shaughnessy twin, on the platform, was declaiming the ancient formula: "I'm mad! I'm mad!"—her gestures fully substantiating her assertion; "Dancing," the last word on the program, had been reached—and still there was no sign of Billy O'Farrell.

Marie Elizabeth, all in white, her head propped up at a torturing angle by a whale-boned, orange colored stock, was in her element. She was seated between two young men, each of whom she was endeavoring to convince that he, and he alone, was the recipient of her interest. But Isabel, dainty in pink dimity, was conspicuous by the absence of any cavalier.

In spite of Miss Cartwright's haughty and unconscious air, it was evident from the deepening pink of her cheeks that she was fully mindful of the humiliation of her neglected state; and a certain gleam in her eyes boded ill for the offending Billy when once he should appear.

There was a final clapping of hands—most patently signifying relief; then everybody rose and expressed polite surprise and pleasure at meeting everybody else. Little groups gathered; chairs were whisked to the walls.

Isabel stood hesitating, undecided whether to risk trespassing upon Marie Elizabeth's preserves, or to get her wraps and go home, when her delinquent admirer stood beside her.

"Where in the world have you been? I've been waiting for hours. Why didn't you come earlier?" Her voice expressed relief, tinctured with a hint of something less pleasant to come.

"I've been outside with a bunch of fellows." Billy spoke with a careless confidence that was not quite assured. "I was late getting away from the store and I didn't want to come in while they were doing their acts. What do you think of Mary Liz's neckpiece? Lucky it aint St. Patrick's day—there'd be a riot."

Isabel gave him a withering glance. He need not think by any light persiflage to escape the grilling so richly due him. As if anticipating it, Billy took her elbow, and steered her toward a corner with such speed that she sat down, breathless. As he faced her, she received her first full view of him.

He had on a blue shirt! Not a pale, æsthetic, delicately tinted azure, but a blue a little lighter than indigo, a deep, rich, solid color, slightly tinged with green, a blue that would have harmonized perfectly with a coal wagon or a plumbing shop, but not—oh, *not* with a quarterly "affair" of the G. C. C.'s. He had managed, by a lavish arrangement of white tie, to conceal a portion of his bosom; but Billy was broad as well as tall, and on either side of the strait of tie emerged, brazenly, the plebeian hue.

Isabel felt stunned. For a minute it seemed to her that every eye in the room was riveted on that unspeakable shirt. She turned her head away and the color flooded her face to her hair.

Even the pink dimity that had given her so much pleasure now added to her discomfiture; she realized that her own prettiness would only serve to call attention to the shocking disregard of conventionality shown by her companion. Stealthily she searched the room with her eyes—there was no hope. Though the great majority of the gentlemen present appeared in business suits, the linen of all, with the exception of Billy, was of white.

The lecture she had intended to bestow upon him for his tardiness passed out of her mind, erased by this greater humiliation. Then she observed that Billy's face was redder than usual, and that he looked uncomfortable, even awkward. With an effort so great that it nearly strangled her she choked back her first caustic comment regarding his choice of an essential garment. It came to her suddenly that this was a matter that could not be lightly disposed of; for the present, she must appear oblivious to it. As the courtship between herself and Billy had reached the stage when she picked lint from his clothes, regulated the angle at which he wore his hat and reproved him for toeing in, her forbearance was something akin to heroic.

Strange it is that by captious criticism does a woman evidence her tenderest love; stranger yet is a man's sheepish, but instant and delighted acceptance; and strangest of all is the Heaven-born instinct that warns him not to return the attention in kind. But perhaps the woman's part of it is identical with the impulse that makes her fasten up a little sagging stocking, or tie back with a ribbon her baby's tumbled curls.

But when it comes to vital things, things that may affect her destiny, then, and then only, is a woman dumb. There are no words for that which will make or mar her life—it must be understood. And so simple a thing as the presence of a blue shirt on Billy O'Farrell roused in Isabel's mind an acutely distressing train of thought, and caused her heart to ache in a way that seemed all out of proportion to the event.

In order to get an insight into the girl's jumbled emotions, it will be necessary to dig a little beneath the surface, disregard light dialogue, and stick to plain narrative for a while.

Perhaps in no other modern institution is there so great and so intimate a mingling of people drawn from different classes of society as in a mammoth department store. Its employees meet on a common level, but the traditions and methods of existence of their ancestors may have been as far apart as the two great oceans. Sarah Slavinsky, born in the steerage, may win the heart of a blue-eyed boy whose great, great, great grandfather signed the Declaration of Independence. The son of a European peasant may possess qualities that appeal to a girl of the keenest sensibility, whose active mind is a century ahead of his—and she may work nine hours a day within three feet of him. Amalgamation is inevitable. The results are problematical—and whether they are harmonious depends entirely upon the individual.

Isabel did not know that certain standards were inherent in her. She never had had a chance to learn what an inherent standard was—her bread-and-butter problem had prevented. But as

she danced through the evening, her trouble grew.

If Billy O'Farrell hadn't any more sense of the eternal fitness of things than to wear such a shirt to such a place, would she not, from this time on, live in constant fear of his committing some fairly criminal breach of etiquette? Could she endure having to blush for him again? Could she be proud of him at the end of twenty years to come? Could he —would he, perhaps, go unshaven and collarless? Could she love him, if he did? She began to doubt and wonder.

Might it not be that she had made a mistake—in spite of this horrible pain at her heart at the thought of losing him? She must be honest with herself: did she, even now, relish the thought of introducing him to her college-bred cousins and her finical great-aunt Julia, whose arrival, on their yearly shopping expedition, was daily expected? Undoubtedly, Isabel was super-sensitive and imaginative; but she had chanced to stumble over some rocks of truth.

Isabel was conspicuous by the absence of any cavalier.

It was a relief when Billy left her to Eddie Bingham and promenaded away with Marie Elizabeth. Mr. Bingham held a position of some responsibilty at Barnhardt and Son's; he was acquainted with the intricacies of their foreign invoices. He was a gentleman of the highest character; he neither smoked nor drank; and his conversation was at all times as innocuous as an antiseptic dressing. Isabel detested him—she was just at that perfectly innocent, perfectly ignorant, perfectly natural period of her existence when she loathed a "good" young man. Your normal young woman wants no callow lover, and it is certain that Billy's seven years of seniority and his—usually—confident, slightly *blasé* air of experience, held a powerful attraction for Isabel.

But to-night the tables were turned. There was something very soothing and restful about Eddie Bingham's immaculate linen, his nicely creased trousers, and his coat that so cleverly disguised his sloping shoulders. The ready-made coats that Billy was obliged to wear insisted on wrinkling at the neck; there was no disguising *his* shoulders. One knew, instinctively, that Eddie Bingham could be relied upon, so far as outside appearances went. For the sake of this security, Isabel felt that she could almost overlook his prominent eyes, his timid chin, and his lukewarm laugh. Besides—Isabel's thoughts kept time to the music—Eddie's salary was larger than Billy's; Eddie didn't have to divide it into so many parts; Eddie didn't have a mother and a semi-dependent sister or two, with their incumbrances, who looked upon him as their prop and stay. The material advantage was decidedly with Eddie. It was possible that she had been unreas-

onably prejudiced; Eddie wasn't to blame for the unequal distribution of his eyes and chin.

So she warmed toward him; she bent upon him the favor of unusual smiles and interest; his drooping hopes revived and he outdid himself in his attentions to her.

She observed Billy gliding across the floor with Marie Elizabeth, and she exglance, half-amused, half-pitiful, from Marie Elizabeth. Isabel was shaken with a new emotion, maddening in its complexity, sickening in its intensity. How dared they pity her! It was no one's affair but her own. It made no difference what Billy did—she would die on the rack before she let them see that it hurt her. Her heart smote her for her disloyal thoughts; her pride flamed up for his

As he faced her, she had her first full view of him. He had on a blue shirt!

perienced a faint twinge of jealousy. Isabel had not yet qualified as a prize waltzer and Billy was far too fine a dancer to receive a snubbing. Besides, what mattered it to the other girls what he wore? Theirs was not the responsibility—he was the acknowledged property of Isabel.

The sudden realization of this aspect of the situation came with a passing protection, and, at the same time, she took half of his abasement on her shoulders and felt herself shamed thereby.

This was the most terrible of all. She no longer was able to resent his offense: she shared it. It was as if she had helped him commit some crime and was bound to brazen it out before the world. And for some unreasonable reason, this seemed to bind her to him. She saw

that, by the laws of fate, his humiliations must be hers, and that, even as they smirched her pride, she would cling the closer. Tears of self-pity came to her eyes; she was so miserable—and she must suffer in silence.

All evening she had been prickly toward him, now she changed her tactics. Billy had never seen his sweetheart in such a mood. When anyone was near, her manner was angelic in its sweetness, but when they were alone, his descriptive word, "devilish," was only just.

At last Billy's temper grew ruffled and his gray eyes dark with anger; he delivered himself of some terse remarks, and amenities between them ceased. They left early, Billy glowering sullenly over a thick cigar and Isabel with a white and determined face.

The presence of Eddie Bingham in the car with them relieved the situation a little. Neither desired him to know that they had quarreled, and he made a splendid medium of conversation. After a while Isabel's tense nerves relaxed; she was conscious of a growing tenderness toward Billy, like a mother's toward an erring child. She would be good to him to-night; to-morrow would be time enough to reckon with herself. When he spoke to her again, through Eddie, she would answer him directly; she would make the first concession and they need not part in anger.

The car stopped, and an old, bent woman, draped voluminously with a shawl, her gray hair topped by a rusty, beaded bonnet, entered. There was no empty seat, and Billy rose with the promptness of a Jack-in-the-box, and surrendered his. Isabel moved a little away from the figure in the shawl. It had none of the sweet dignity of old age, and to the girl's fastidious nose was wafted the faint, unpleasant odor that comes from insanitary surroundings and stuffy rooms. She thought, petulantly, that if Billy had only waited a minute, some one else might have given up his seat.

The car bumped along; Billy hung onto a strap and conversation languished. Eddie Bingham, having expressed one by one the opinions and ideas that he kept for public use, started to use them over again. Presently the woman peered out of the window, rose hesitatingly and signaled the conductor.

As she did so, Billy saw what the others did not: that tears were creeping down her seamed, unlovely face.

He stood irresolute for a minute, then leaned toward Isabel.

"Say, 'Bel, I'm going to get off and see what's the matter with that woman. I think she's in trouble. Eddie'll see that you get home all right, wont you, Ed?"

"What!" Isabel's eyes blazed. "You'll do nothing of the sort. What do you know about her?"

"Nothing. But she's been crying." He spoke impatiently. "Ed'll be tickled to death to take you home. Why, for all we know she might be going to kill herself! This aint a sweet locality this time of night, either. I've got to go and see."

"She'll probably thank you for 'tending to your own affairs." Isabel set her teeth together hard. All her wrongs of the evening rushed over her, destroying her sense of proportion. "If you go, I'll never speak to you again!"

The excitement died out of Billy's eyes and they grew steady.

"That's up to you, of course, Isabel," he said quietly. "Good night, Ed. See you later." He was gone.

Two bright crimson spots glowed high on Isabel's cheeks. This was the climax; this was the end! That he should dare to leave her in the face of her ultimatum! That he should turn her over to Eddie Bingham with as little ceremony as if she were a sack of flour. To *Eddie Bingham!*

There was a faint, half-nervous giggle from the person considered. "O'Farrell certainly does make some awful breaks," he observed.

Isabel sat turned to stone.

Mr. Bingham twisted his slender, book-keeper's hands together. "Now, such a notion would never enter my head. I wouldn't think it was the proper thing to leave the lady I was with and inquire into somebody else's troubles."

A sudden, great weariness settled over Isabel. "No, I don't suppose you would," she said in a colorless voice.

"*I* don't do things that way." Eddie's words were fat with self-satisfaction. "Not that I've got any objections to present arrangements." He gave a meaning smirk. "But O'Farrell's a queer one. Always trying to get somebody out of a scrape. That's why he gets into so many h i m s e l f. Just hand him a hard luck story and he's ready to dig. That's why he's a l w a y s broke. Now me, I'm different. I look after myself and I expect others to do the same. I don't ask favors and I don't grant 'em."

"Yes?" s a i d Isabel. It was im-p o s s i b l e, of course, to choke this maundering thing at her side. How ugly his straight, stiff hair was beside the s o f t, b r o w n waves of Billy's!

Mr. Bingham had struck a subject upon which he was eloquent —more eloquent than he knew.

"I say a man's got enough to do if he looks after h i m s e l f. You k n o w Ordway, the senior C. O. D. bookkeeper? Well, if it hadn't been for O'Farrell, he'd have lost his job long ago. He's been down three times in the last six months—well, in no condition to work. And O'Farrell's took him down in the freight elevator and out the alley entrance and put him on a car and sent him home."

Mr. Bingham's better judgment should have warned him, but he ended, sneeringly: "I suppose it's natural for O'Farrell to have a fellow feeling."

Isabel turned with a jerk.

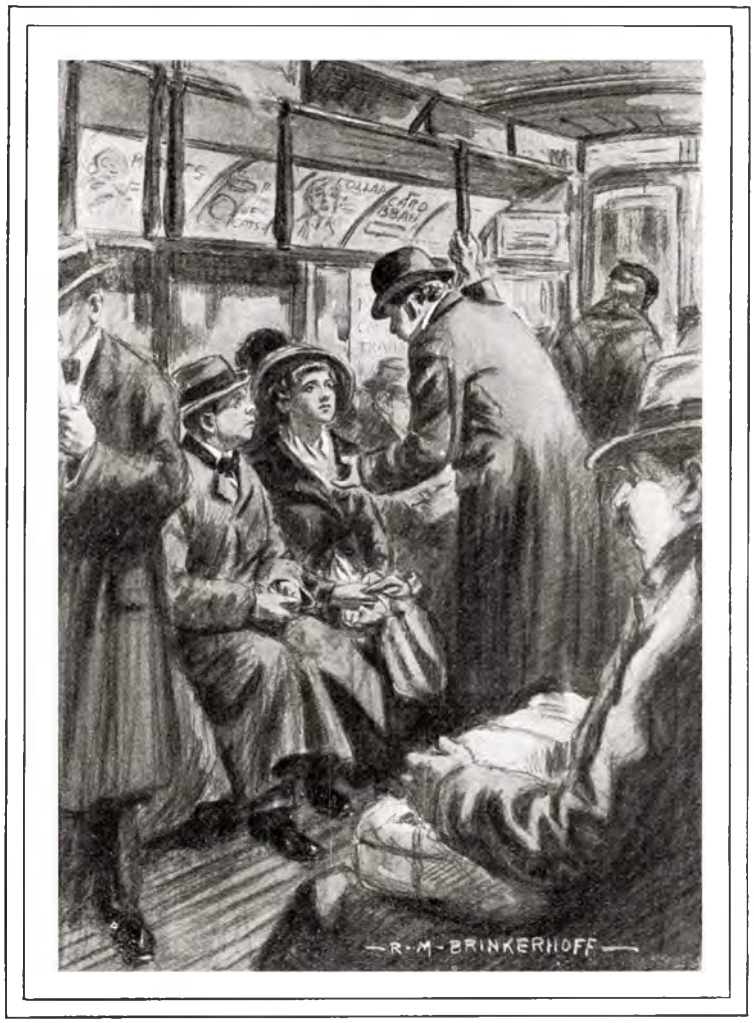
"Billy doesn't drink," she said.

Bingham perceived his blunder.

"Oh, I didn't mean that! Er—er—of course not. I only meant that he, he always seems to have so much sympathy—"

Isabel rose, rigid.

"We have reached my street. No, *you needn't get off the car.* I only have to go a block. But I *prefer* to go alone." She was filled with a large indifference to



"Say, 'Bel," said Billy, "I'm going to get off the car and see what's the matter with that woman."

the attention she was attracting. He followed her to the door, protesting. "It doesn't make any difference; I don't care what Billy told you." She turned to the conductor. "Keep him here. Please keep him here. If he follows me, I'll—I'll hit him!"

And as the car sped on, she had a glimpse of Eddie Bingham, expostulating and amazed, being held back by one willing pugilistic arm.

It was such a hollow victory. Every poisoned word that little reptile had uttered was true. The vein of hard common-sense that was in her told her so. And sobbing, she was consumed with fierce regret that she was unable to do bodily injury to Eddie Bingham.

She let herself in with her latch key and stole quietly to bed. Billy could not get to his home for hours. But the fact that he lived at one end of the city and she at the other never made any difference to him; he waited for her when she worked late; he saw that she went wherever he could take her.

She was awakened by a peal from the telephone which an obliging roomer had allowed to be placed in the dining room —providing Isabel's mother would attend to it for him. A faint, pink lightening of dawn was on the horizon. Sitting in her night dress, she took down the receiver and her "Hello" was answered by Billy's voice.

"Say, kiddie, I just got home. Wanted to know if you were all right."

"You just got home?"

There was a laugh from the other end. "I *thought* you'd change your mind about speaking to me! No, wait a minute; that wasn't why I called you up. I wanted to know if you were O. K. The cars were slow—it took me a long time. It's a mighty good job I left you, 'Bel. That poor old thing was hunting some friends—and they'd moved. It's straight that she was heading for the river. She'd been put out—kicked out! By her son-in-law, too. Say, a man like that ought to be—"

"What did you do with her?" asked Isabel.

Billy's tones grew apologetic. "Well, I brought her home with me. There wasn't anything else to do. The old lady —the mother—was fixing her up with a cup of hot tea when I rushed over here to telephone." ("Old lady" had caused more than one altercation between them, Isabel insisting that it was disrespectful, Billy maintaining that it was a term of the highest filial regard.)

Isabel laughed hysterically. Where, among Billy's various responsibilities, was there room for another? What could one do with a man like him? But queerly enough, her heart was filled with passionate thanksgiving that life was long and she was young.

"But what are you going to do with her then, Billy?"

"Oh, something will probably turn up. Maybe we can get after that scamp of a son-in-law. But at the worst we can keep her here. We wont turn her out, that's sure. Never mind her. It's you I'm thinking of."

Oh, Billy O'Farrell, scion of a child-like race that never has stopped to count the cost of a generous deed! To such as you it has been given to be loved beyond belief and understanding.

In those few shivering minutes Isabel saw the price and held it little—for so long as breath was in her lover's body she knew that she would have the shelter of his arms; and though she might sleep beneath the stars, his breast should never fail her as a pillow.

Billy was speaking, his voice more deeply apologetic: "And say, little girl, about that (word muffled) shirt! The old lady had mine laid out on the bed when the sister's little Bill daubed it with shoeblacking. I hope to die if there was another, my size, this side of Madison Street—the old lady went four blocks each way. I was expecting you to brace me about it all evening. I got nervous, waiting for you to open up. It was a case of either wear the calico or not show up at all."

There was an eloquent pause; then Isabel:

"I—I don't know what you're talking about. My—my voice shakes because I'm cold. Yes, I'll go right to b—bed. Shirt? Why, I—I didn't see anything wrong with your shirt—Billy, dear."

The Three Boxes

The results of a cartridge filler's error

by

DONAL HAMILTON HAINES

ILLUSTRATED BY MONTE CREWS

THERE are very few unmixed evils or unmixed blessings. Mosquitoes and good tobacco seem to deny this, but it is an open question.

Outside a small town in one of the states of the Middle West there is a small, brick factory building where they make ammunition. It is a small plant which does not employ many men; neither does it manufacture very good ammunition. Discriminating people who use firearms do not buy the product of this particular factory. They know the brown boxes with the green lettering in which this ammunition is packed, and they pass it by and warn their friends against it.

But not all people are discriminating, and many who use firearms are not. To many, a deadly weapon is a deadly weapon, and the ammunition with which it is loaded is a minor consideration, to be given no more careful thought than the sugar with which one sweetens one's coffee at breakfast.

Moreover, the cartridges in the brown boxes with the green letters upon them may be purchased at several cents less a box than the standard brands. This, in the eyes of many, is a great advantage and not to be winked at. It is the thing which makes it possible for the little factory to continue in business in spite of the efforts of its great adversaries. The cartridges and shells are cheap, because the best of materials do not go into them, and because the best class of labor has nothing to do with their making.

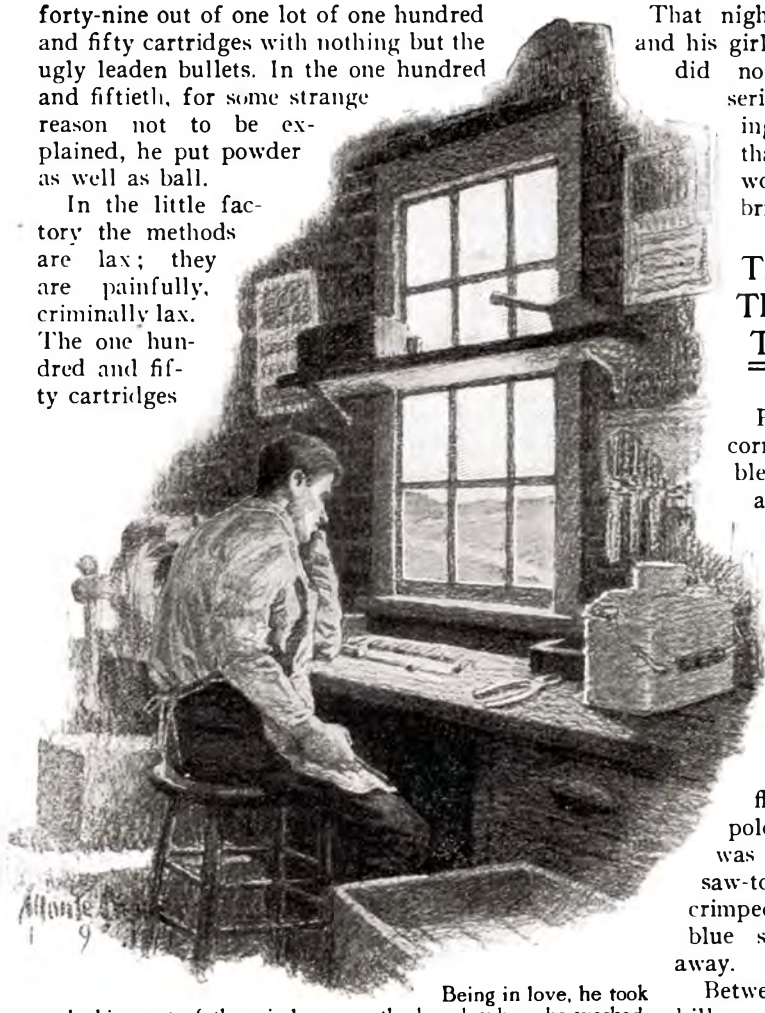
It was this last fact which allowed John Forsythe to keep his job at the little brick factory and so become an instrument of destiny in rather a large way. He had no business among deadly elements or places where doctrines of precision should rule, because he was careless and thoughtless—and deeply in love. Had he been only careless and thoughtless he might only have blown up the factory. Being in love, he took to looking out of the window near the bench where he worked, and so wrought havoc with history and the lives of men.

It happened to be a Tuesday morning. John was loading .45 caliber cartridges with smokeless powder and bullets. In working with this stuff, one should be careful. John was clever with his fingers in a small way, and he did the work rapidly. Ordinarily, expensive machinery does this work, but John was cheaper than the machinery.

The night before, he had quarreled with the sallow-faced girl who would one day be Mrs. Forsythe, and the thoughts of the quarrel and of another man who had been the cause of it were hot in his mind. So it fell out that he omitted the powder and loaded one hundred and

forty-nine out of one lot of one hundred and fifty cartridges with nothing but the ugly leaden bullets. In the one hundred and fiftieth, for some strange reason not to be explained, he put powder as well as ball.

In the little factory the methods are lax; they are painfully, criminally lax. The one hundred and fifty cartridges were packed in three boxes and sealed. The boxes were somewhat lighter than they should have been, but they were not rigidly inspected, and they were shipped out with the day's output.



Being in love, he took to looking out of the window near the bench where he worked.

One box went to Africa. It contained fifty utterly harmless "dummies." A second box went to a large city in the West. It too was no deadlier than a box of sugar-coated pills. The third box went into the southwestern corner of the country. It contained forty-nine worthless bits of metal and fulminate, and one cartridge which would send its bullet crashing through a fair-sized sapling, or smash the shoulder of a moose.

That night John Forsythe and his girl made up and he did not make another serious blunder during the five years that he continued to work in the little brick factory.

THE BOX THAT WENT TO AFRICA

Perthwaite was cornered but untroubled. He had kept away from his pursuers for eight days and as many nights, and the goal of his journeyings was almost within sight. Indeed, the little cluster of huts with the red flag floating from the pole in the center was just beyond the saw-toothed hill which crimped the edge of the blue sky half a mile away.

Between him and the hill were five men who had tracked and harried Perthwaite through the jungle during those eight days of his flight. The tongue that they spoke was not Perthwaite's tongue, and they knew that he had seen the column of soldiers in uniforms which had no business in that part of Africa.

Left to itself that little expedition which the young Englishman had spied upon would accomplish no little bit, and might even gain several rich miles of unsurveyed and unmapped territory for the men who spoke the strange tongue. But if Perthwaite carried word of what he had seen into the circle of huts with the red flag in the center of them, cables would carry disastrous tidings, there

would be English troops, complications, and much inconvenience to the men who had caused the setting out of the expedition through the hot, fever-laden jungle.

All these things were known to Perthwaite, but he was unflurried. When he realized that they would very likely get within gun-shot of him before he could reach the village, he thought out his plans carefully and weighed his chances. Very deliberately he picked out his position. It was in a tangle of rocks and bushes at the top of a slight rise. Directly in front of him ran a stream, swift, narrow and deep. The one ford within a dozen miles lay straight in front of him, bare of cover, and he knew that his pursuers were not good swimmers and shared a racial fear of snakes and crocodiles. The sun was at his back and he had fifty rounds of ammunition for his .45 caliber revolver. He knew, too, that the sounds of firing would rouse the village, and in a very few minutes he would be rescued. He could hit things very creditably with the revolver he carried, and was perfectly confident that he could stand off his pursuers until help reached him.

"It'll really be quite a bang-up finish to my little exploit!" he assured himself as he spun the cylinder of the weapon.

At the same instant that one of the seven millimeter Männlicher bullets cut through his leg, Perthwaite saw several dots of men come over the saw-toothed hill.

Everything worked out quite beautifully. He had just got himself well into his position when the first of his pursuers stuck his pith helmet out from behind a tree trunk. Perthwaite was minded to be charitable. He cherished no animosity against the five who had trailed him. He had fifty shells besides the six in his revolver. He took a long shot at the pith helmet that sent the man who wore it scuttling into the bushes with a hole through his headgear.

Perthwaite chuckled.

"I think I creased him!" he muttered.

The five men knew the angles of the situation as well as the man they had followed. They knew they had no time to spare. They closed in as rapidly as they could and went to work with their Männlichers. Owing to the sparseness of cover, they had to work in the open, and Perthwaite made very fair practice of it while he laughed at them. He shot one through the fleshy part of the arm, and sent a spatter of bark into the face of another before he had to reload his revolver. He stuffed in fresh cartridges, rolled onto his side and leveled the weapon at another pith helmet, supporting the heavy revolver on his left wrist to steady his aim.

He pulled the trigger. There was a tiny pop as the primer exploded. Perthwaite paused a fraction of a second, waiting for a possible "hang-fire," then pulled out the faulty cartridge and looked at it.

"I'm glad they weren't any closer," he muttered as he put in another shell and raised the hammer.

When two more shells missed fire he swore. After the eighth one, he ceased to swear and grew very pale. The five, made confident by his long silence, had worked closer, and their bullets were searching him out pitilessly. His position had one disadvantage which he had deliberately set aside in his confidence. He could not retreat farther without crossing open ground for three hundred yards. There was no sign of anyone coming from the village.

Patiently, but with the cold certainty of death gripping at him, Perthwaite worked all of the harmless cartridges through his revolver. Then he threw them, one by one, into the river and wiped the sweat from his cold face.

At the same instant that one of the seven millimeter Männlicher bullets cut through his leg, Perthwaite saw several dots of men come over the saw-toothed hill. He did not see the five men hurry from their scant cover and spatter through the shallow ford to his little fortress, because another of the long-pointed bullets had made a small hole exactly between his eyes.

The few miles of territory—unmapped and unsurveyed—proved a very rich bit of thievery for the men who had sent out the little expedition which Perthwaite had spied upon.

THE BOX THAT WENT SOUTHWEST

A human being can go without food only a certain length of time. If he can have water at some time during the period of starvation, he may hang onto life a little longer. Maxwell had drunk that morning from a tiny stream. That was the reason that he was staggering on. Had his senses been a little clearer he might have stayed by the little stream; it was vastly better than the burning, glaring, limitless stretch of sand and heat into which he had wandered.

It was his failure to get the trout that had driven him from the brook in a fuming, half-crazed spasm of rage. He had seen the trout clearly; he knew this. It had been no phantom fish born of his hunger. The trout had been lying close to a flat stone on which Maxwell had leaned to drink. He had seen him as the cold water gurgled and bubbled down his parched throat. The fish seemed unafraid and allowed him to get close to the bank. When he cautiously raised his revolver it made no effort to escape, but lay still, with slowly waving tail and moving gills.

Maxwell had been worried when the first cartridge missed fire. When he discovered that all his ammunition was worthless, he had almost gone mad. He

had plunged head foremost into the water and tried to catch the trout with his bare hands—had even got his fingers on its slippery body, only to have it slip away from him and dart off into safety.

He had hunted for other trout until he commenced to see things which he knew did not exist outside his own mind; then he had wandered away and drifted somehow into this limitless desert of sand and desolation where death would overtake him. He lay now on his back, staring up into the sun and trying to lick his lips with his swollen tongue. He was very weak, unable to keep upright longer, almost unable to crawl. If he could only eat, he might make his way back to the brook and have one more drink—but he would not let his mind dwell on thoughts of things to eat. They maddened him and he desired now above all other things to die sane.

He found that lying on his back this way and staring into the brassy, burning sky, while it tortured him physically, yet eased his mind and cleared it of those unreal shapes which spelled the snapping in his brain. In a very short time the thing would be over. Weak as he was, he could not possibly endure exposure to the sun—or anything else. He rather hoped that he would fall to sleep, easily, naturally, and not wake up again. He tried to remember how people were supposed to feel when they died of starvation. He got it all mixed up with the experiences of those who had been rescued from death by drowning, but he rather thought people suffered horrible anguish before they died as he was going to die.

At least, he comforted himself vaguely, he had picked out a clean, open place in which to die. It was far better out here in the open than it would have been back by the edge of that brook where he had failed to catch the trout. There was something about the wide, free stretch of the hot sand that he liked.

He rolled weakly over on his side to look at it. A dozen feet away from him he thought he saw a big jack-rabbit watching him, its long ears straight up in the air. He thought he had got rid of these things and closed his eyes desperately to shut out the vision of the rabbit. After a time he opened his eyes. The animal was exactly where he had been before. Now he was scratching himself behind the ear with one of his abnormally long hind-legs.

None of the other creatures of Maxwell's visions had acted in this way. They had all been the wrong color, or they had done something foolishly impossible that had made him know they were not real. This jack-rabbit acted uncannily as a rabbit should act, and Maxwell clutched at hope. Then he remembered the worthless ammunition and his own weakness and laughed.

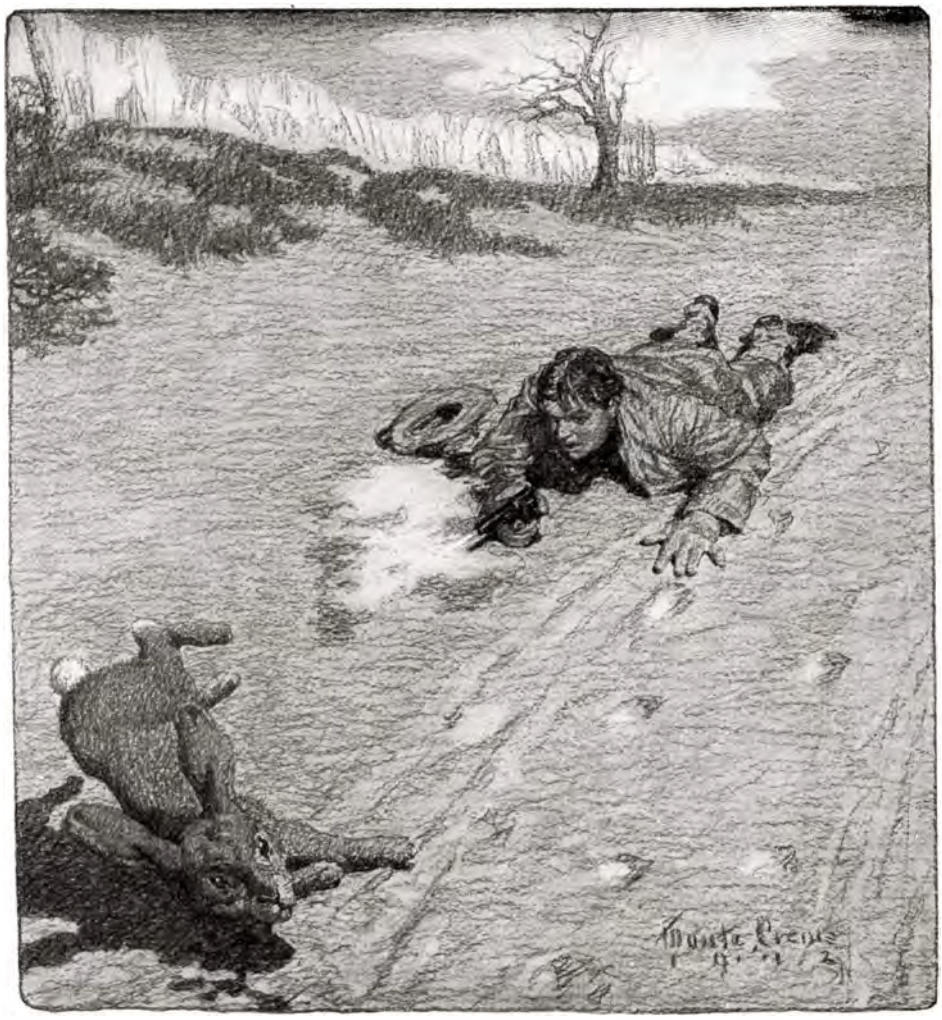
It was a laugh which might well have made the rabbit jump. The frightened animal hopped off a few paces and then sat up and regarded the man from his pop-eyes. Maxwell continued to laugh until it hurt him, then made himself stop. In some way he managed to sit up. This made the rabbit hop a few paces farther away. The ease with which the animal moved filled the man with senseless rage at the thought of his own weakness.

"Curse the long-legged brute!" he yelled shrilly.

He managed to drag the revolver from its holster. He had stuffed the cylinder full of the worthless shells from force of habit, but he forgot this as he held the weapon in his hand. It was the only way he could vent his rage on the animal—to snap the harmless Colt at him. He pulled the trigger with feeble fingers. Five times he pulled it and heard again the little crack of the primer that had sickened him the first time it happened.

He pulled the trigger a sixth time. There was a flash, and the strong, sharp report of the full, powerful charge. The weapon leaped from Maxwell's fingers and fell to the ground. If he had only known that there was one good shell! There might be another. Feverishly he began hunting through his pockets. The one good shell had been his last!

A queer little noise made the man turn his head. A dozen yards away from



He pulled the trigger the sixth time. There was a flash, and the strong, sharp report of the full, powerful charge

him the rabbit lay, kicking feebly, its head almost torn away by the heavy bullet!

There were matches and a knife in the man's pocket, and the sudden consciousness that he was going to live after all gave him strength. He began to crawl toward the body of the little animal that had saved him.

THE BOX THAT WENT TO THE CITY

Under the towering trunks of the great pines the little hunting-lodge was dwarfed to almost toy-like proportions. The man who came out of the door and stared out through the tree-trunks also looked small and rather inadequate in the midst of the forest of tremendous trees. Yet he went about the ordinary occupations of human beings quite as if he were among surroundings cut more to his measure.

He stood in the doorway of the cabin and consulted his watch.

"They ought to be coming back," he said, looking out again into the shadowy woods.

He lifted a silver whistle to his lips

and blew a long, shrill blast, then stood with the whistle still between his lips, listening intently for a full minute. There was no answering blast and the man put away the whistle, picked up an axe that leaned against the side of the cabin and began splitting wood with the careful, ineffective strokes of one who has but lately learned that the axes of the woods are not as the edgeless weapons that stand in the woodsheds of civilization.

"Maybe," he said as he paused to take breath, "they've shot a deer to-day. That would be just my luck—to stay at home the day they got one!"

He cut wood until the steady swinging of the axe convinced him that he was familiar enough with it to use it more zealously. On the third stroke after he had reached this conviction he chipped off a piece of the extension sole and scarred the leather of his hunting boot. This thoroughly cured him of his zeal and he put away the axe. He tried to read, but the stillness of the tiny clearing in which the cabin stood was too profound; it bore in on him and made him nervous. He got up from his chair and went to the door. Once more he sounded his whistle and listened in vain for an answer; again he consulted his watch.

"Half past four," he muttered. "They ought to be coming."

He stood in the doorway a few seconds longer, then turned back into the room. From the wall he took down a heavy .45 caliber revolver that hung in a holster. He examined the cylinder and found it empty. He went to a shelf in the corner and pottered about hunting for cartridges. He found two boxes of them. One box was red; the other was brown with green lettering on its cover.

The man chose the brown box and filled the cylinder from its contents. Then he walked out of the cabin and up a narrow, well-beaten path which led straight up the side of the mountain.

The man was a clerk named Fernwell. He had been a clerk for a good many years in the offices of Perthwaite, Maxwell and Briscoe. When Perthwaite went to England and Maxwell moved west and the firm continued simply as Briscoe & Co., Fernwell was still clerk. This year, Mr. Briscoe had taken the clerk with him into the woods, because the consuming ambition of Fernwell's life seemed to be to shoot a deer. Thus far both Briscoe and his clerk had failed to shoot anything larger than partridges and rabbits, and Fernwell's disappointment was profound. They were only to stay a few days longer, and Briscoe had taken both the guides with him for a two days' hunt of too strenuous a nature for Fernwell's powers of endurance.

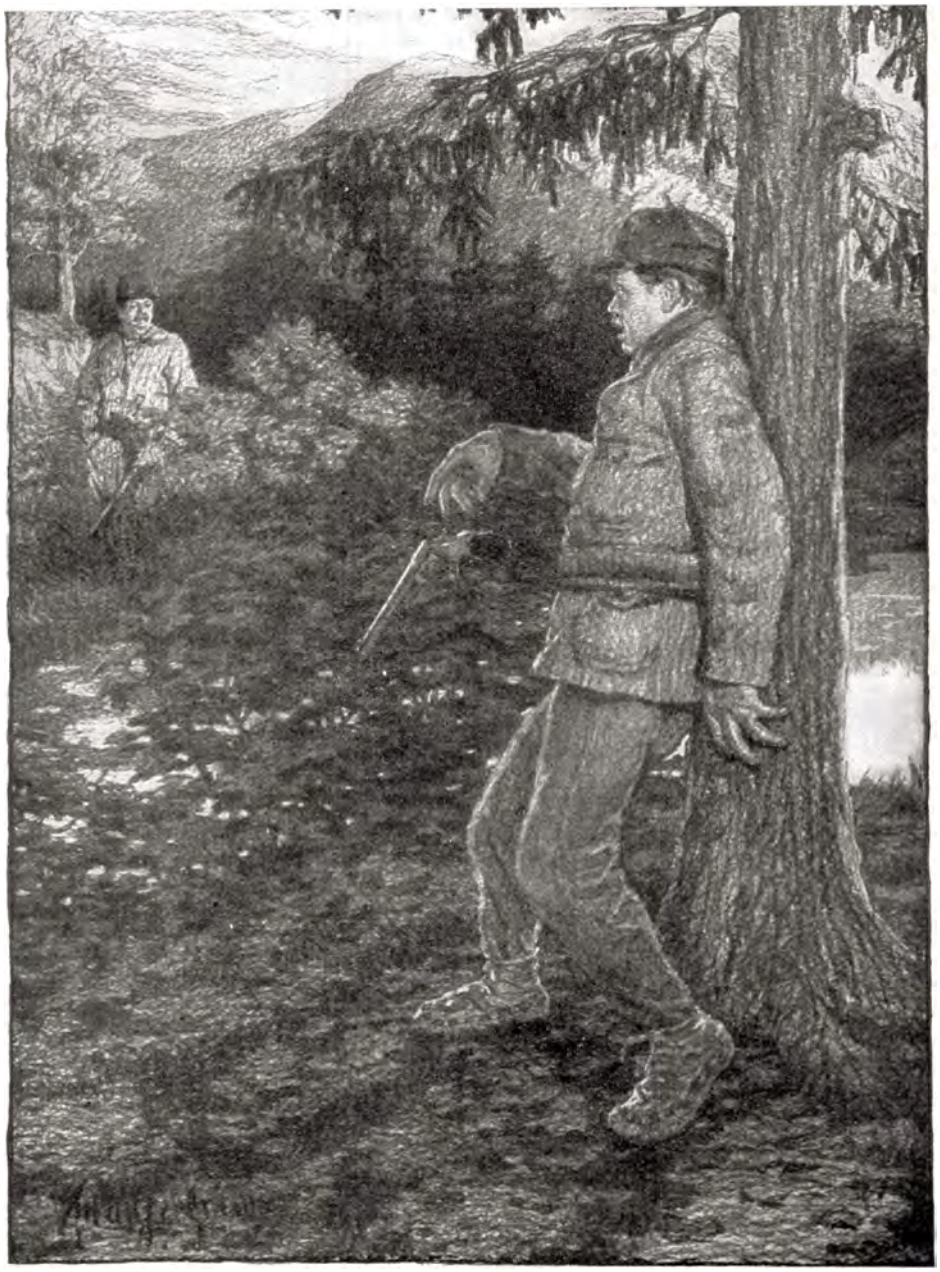
It is not easy for a man unaccustomed to the wilderness to stay alone for two days. Fernwell was a great reader, and he had been marooned for the two days with plenty of books and plenty of things to eat. But the stillness and loneliness had commenced to irk him, and he had decided to walk a bit up the mountain, hoping that perhaps the others would return during his absence. They had promised to be back before nightfall.

It was partly timidity and partly the vague hope that he might see something to shoot that had made him thrust the revolver into his pocket before starting out. There were plenty of rifles in the rack at the cabin, but Fernwell was not overstrong, and the idea of carrying an eight-pound rifle up the steep mountain trail when he should probably have no occasion to use it did not appeal to him. By a strange inconsistency, Fernwell could shoot passably well with the revolver. He had surprised Briscoe and the two guides by knocking three holes in a tin can at twenty paces in six shots. Briscoe himself had only done one better than this, while one of the guides failed to hit the can at all. Moreover, Fernwell could not shoot a rifle within six inches of what he wanted to hit.

A mile or so up the trail a tiny brook made a pool in a cup of the rock. One of the guides had told him that the place had once been a great resort for deer in the cool of the evening, and the fact had stuck in Fernwell's mind. He decided that he would go up there and hide in the bushes and wait perhaps half

an hour. That would surely give the others time to reach the cabin from the other side.

Fernwell wore moccasins and walked quietly. The path was thickly carpeted with pine needles and his steps were almost noiseless. When he got within a couple of hundred yards of the pool he moved very cautiously. The feeling was suddenly born in him that this time he was going to find a deer at the pool. The guides had told him that the animals never came there any more, but Fernwell felt that his intuition was bet-



The primer exploded with a feeble snap. Then the revolver fell to the ground.

ter than their knowledge born of long experience. The whole atmosphere of the afternoon, the intense stillness of the woods—everything made him certain that he was at last to realize his ambition, and he spared no pains to make his approach as quiet and crafty as possible.

He was not more than a hundred yards from the pool, and had already heard the spatter and murmur of the brook as it tumbled among the rocks, when his ear picked out another sound. He distinctly heard the crashing of bushes bent by some heavy body, and a snort—very much the sort of a sound the guides had described to him. He had been right! A deer was even now coming to the spring to drink!

Fernwell dropped to his hands and knees and crawled. After a few seconds he reached a spot from which he could see the bushes which grew on the edge of the pool. Their tops were waving, while the branches of near by trees were motionless. Carefully Fernwell got to his feet and raised the hammer of the heavy revolver. Through the green leaves of the bushes he could see a brown mass, moving slightly, at the edge of the pool.

The clerk was too methodical, too placid a creature to know excitement or confusion. Once, when he made a mistake in his books and had thought for an instant that he might be held responsible for a shortage amounting to thousands, he had not been worried. He had whistled and hunted out the error. He was not excited now. The hand which raised the revolver did not tremble, and the sights came into line without wavering. Fernwell picked out the center of the brown mass (he could not quite make out the creature's outlines) and brought the black bead of the front sight against it. Then his forefinger commenced to crook on the trigger.

There is a certain point in the process of pulling the trigger of a weapon at which one can stop the pressure and hold his fire. Most weapons will "crawl" the merest fraction of an inch before the hammer is finally released and falls. Unhappily, Fernwell had just passed this point in the operation, when the brown mass at the pool's brink stirred, a man's figure stood up, and Briscoe stood staring through the leaves of the bushes at his clerk as the hammer fell.

The primer exploded with a sharp, feeble snap; then the revolver fell to the ground. Fernwell, deadly pale, was leaning against a tree and trying to explain while Briscoe stood looking at him with a strange mixture of expressions on his keen face. It was a quarter of an hour before Fernwell was able to walk back to the cabin. As they got close to the little clearing, Briscoe spoke.

"We don't need to say anything to the guides," he said kindly. "You've had your lesson. You wont make another mistake—ever, if you live to be a million. We'll stay a couple of weeks longer so you'll have a chance to forget—and I will."

Fernwell stammered his thanks, and his employer's hand fell comfortingly on his shoulder.

"Say," demanded Briscoe as they entered the house, "where'd you get that punk cartridge?"

Fernwell showed him the brown box with the green lettering. Briscoe made a short examination, then threw the box into the bushes.

"Rotten cheap stuff," he said. "It's a crime to sell it!"

Within an hour of the time the brown box crashed into the bushes, the notice of Perthwaite's death appeared in the London papers. On the following day Maxwell skinned and cooked the dead rabbit and so saved his life.

Ten days later Fernwell shot his deer—a fine buck with a spread of antlers that made a record for the season.

A Clear Case of Libel

Lawyer Kirkham finds a way to settle it

By ELLIOTT FLOWER

Author of "A Bundle of Banknotes," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR E. BECHER

HE was not a large man, and neither did he look like a desperate one, but there was something disquieting in his gloating smile. It was the smile of a vindictive man who has an enemy at his mercy.

He reached the city editor of the *Gazette,* after brief delay in an anteroom, and to him he announced himself as John Enderby, quite as if he expected the name to create a decided impression. If he had any such expectation, however, he was disappointed, for the city editor merely looked up with an inquiring "Well?"

"I am John Enderby, of Greenwood," explained the caller.

"Well?" said the city editor again.

"I'm a church deacon and a man of excellent reputation in that suburb," asserted Enderby.

"Glad to hear it."

"And no man can malign me with impunity," added Enderby.

"Has anybody been trying to?" asked the city editor.

"You have!" declared Enderby with sudden vehemence.

"Enderby!" reflected the city editor. "John Enderby! Odd name. but I somehow can't place it in the news of the day. What did we say about you?"

"You said, sir," answered Enderby, "that I was caught in a raid on a poker game, and it has done me irreparable harm. A man of my standing in the community—a church deacon—a man of acknowledged business probity—a member of the Greenwood Reform Club—caught in a gambling raid! It's monstrous, sir!"

"Pretty tough!" admitted the city editor. "Why were you there?"

"Why was I there!" thundered Enderby. "I wasn't there, sir! It's an insult to even intimate that I was there! I never played poker in my life, sir!"

"Better try it," advised the city editor. "It's a good game, if you keep the stakes low enough not to hurt."

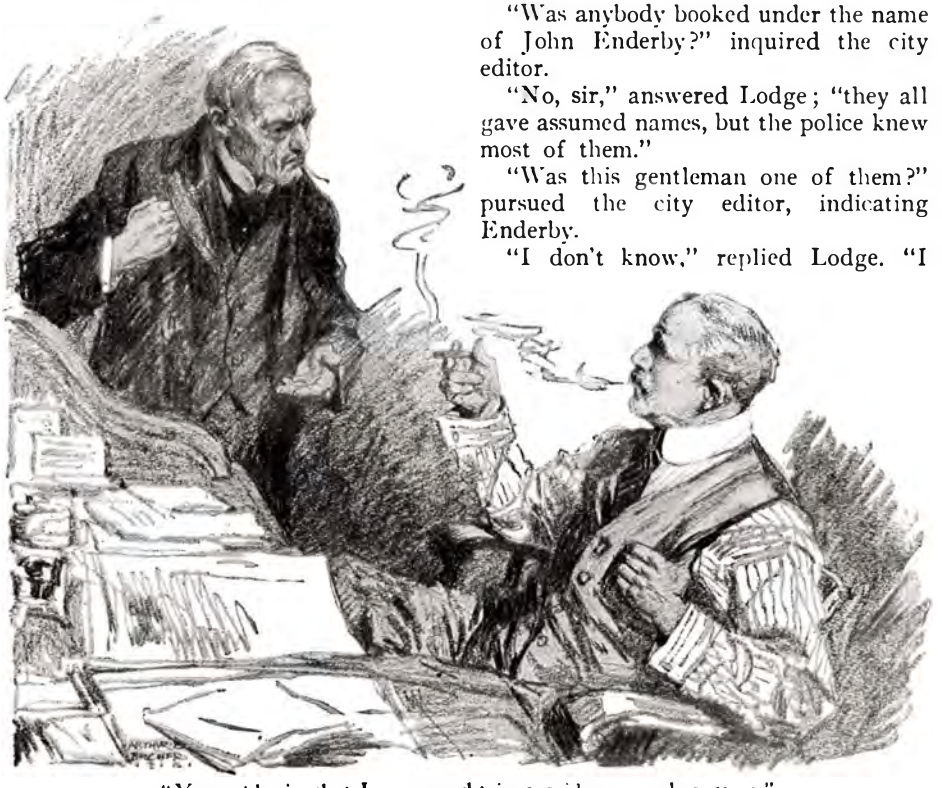
"That's a scandalous suggestion, sir!" declared Enderby. "I never play cards at all. I wont have a card in my house. And at the time of this raid I was attending a vestry meeting at the church."

"Then the story can't have done you very much harm," observed the city editor, "for your friends naturally know where you were."

"It has done me incalculable harm sir, in both a social and a business way!" asserted Enderby. "My close friends would not believe such a story, of course, but there are others—many

others—who do not know me so well. It hurts my standing with them! It makes me out a canting hypocrite—a surreptitious gambler—a scoundrel! I shall make you suffer for it, sir!"

Enderby's gloating smile had given place to an assumption of righteous indignation when he entered the city editor's room, and this unnecessary display of indignation had led the newspaper man to assume a bantering tone, but the latter now became more serious.



"You said, sir, that I was caught in a raid on a poker game."

"Threats will gain you nothing, Mr. Enderby," he said. "If the *Gazette* has done you any injustice, it was altogether unintentional, and we shall be very glad to make what reparation lies in our power."

"You will retract, sir!" declared Enderby. "You will print the retraction that I dictate."

"That depends entirely upon what you dictate," returned the city editor.

"You will do it, sir," threatened Enderby, "or you will have to defend a libel suit."

"Well, it wont be the first time," remarked the city editor carelessly; "but let's look into the matter a little."

He sent for Lodge, the reporter who had written the article, and asked that young man where he had got his information.

"Police station," was the reply. "The whole party was brought in and booked."

"Was anybody booked under the name of John Enderby?" inquired the city editor.

"No, sir," answered Lodge; "they all gave assumed names, but the police knew most of them."

"Was this gentleman one of them?" pursued the city editor, indicating Enderby.

"I don't know," replied Lodge. "I didn't see any of them. My information came from the police."

"I can prove that I was not," declared Enderby.

"I think it quite probable that there has been a mistake," decided the city editor. "If so, we owe it to Mr. Enderby to make a correction. Just take him out to your desk, Lodge, and see what will satisfy him in that line."

"Nothing will satisfy me, sir," put in Enderby, "except the signature of your

managing editor to a most abject apology and a frank avowal that you lied about me shamelessly, this to be printed in a prominent place on the first page."

"That is quite out of the question, Mr. Enderby," objected the city editor. "Any mis-statement that may have been made with regard to you was wholly unintentional, and we are quite willing, as soon as we have verified your assertion, to make a correction and express our regret at the occurrence, but we can't do more than that."

"You will do as I say, sir," asserted Enderby, "or you will stand a libel suit."

"Well, I guess we will have to stand the suit, then," returned the city editor.

Now was Enderby's gloating smile in evidence again. "I thought you would," he said; "I was quite sure you would, and I am more than pleased, for now I've got your malicious, scurrilous sheet where I want it, and I intend to put the screws on. I shall bring action for libel at once. I'm going to teach you people a lesson, and I'm going to have a good lot of your money before I get through. Good-day, sir."

Once outside, the smile became broader, and Enderby rubbed his hands together as if anticipating much pleasure.

The city editor turned to the reporter with a rueful countenance.

"Now what do you make of that?" he grumbled.

"If you ask me," returned Lodge, "I should say that he's out after the coin. He doesn't want any apology; he wants the long green."

"And he has a good chance of getting it," reflected the city editor. "If what he says of himself is true, we're up against a mean proposition. To stick a church vestryman into a poker game, with police station accompaniment, is a serious matter under our libel law, and the average juryman rather likes to take a whack at a newspaper. I think you'd better look him up, Lodge. Perhaps he hasn't been libeled as much as he tries to make out. Find out all about him."

The city editor, meanwhile, conveyed to the managing editor the pleasing information that they were facing a libel suit. "But, of course," he concluded, "we couldn't print any such retraction as he demanded."

"Of course not," agreed the managing editor.

"He didn't expect it, and he didn't want it," pursued the city editor. "It was a bluff, just to make the thing look a little better. His purpose from the beginning was to sue."

"That is quite apparent," acquiesced the managing editor. "But how did Lodge come to make such a mistake?"

"Was it a mistake?" returned the city editor. "May not the whole thing be a bluff?"

The managing editor shook his head. "He'd be reasonable if it were," he declared. "He wouldn't be asking the impossible."

"Then it was a police mistake," asserted the city editor. "Lodge is one of our most reliable men."

"Well, that doesn't let us out," said the managing editor. "Better send for Kirkham."

"Don't you think," suggested the city editor, "that it would be just as well to get Lodge's report first? We'll know more about Enderby when he gets back, and we'll also know more about the raid and how such a mistake, if it is one, could have occurred."

"Oh, I suppose it wont do any harm to get all the facts we can before turning the matter over to Kirkham," conceded the managing editor, "but the case will almost certainly have to go to him in the end."

"Perhaps not," argued the city editor. "This Enderby fellow didn't make much of a hit with me, and it wouldn't surprise me to find that there was a frame-up somewhere."

But the managing editor was right. Lodge's report made it a Kirkham case, and a most mystifying one. Lodge himself was completely bewildered by his discoveries.

"The desk sergeant at the Greenwood police station," he reported, "asserts positively that Enderby was one of the bunch brought in and immediately

bailed out. He says he knows him well by sight and can't be mistaken. The name he gave at the station was John Jones."

"Did he appear in court in the morning?" asked the city editor.

"Not in person," answered Lodge. "They all appeared by attorney, who paid the fines assessed, and the justice let it go at that."

"Well, the desk sergeant's identification ought to be enough for us," decided the city editor; "if he's sure—"

"He's very positive," interrupted Lodge, "but unfortunately, the Rev. Cyrus Delamater, rector of Enderby's church, is equally positive that Enderby was at the rectory, attending a vestry meeting, at the very time that the sergeant saw him at the police station."

"Has he got a double?" queried the city editor.

"Not so far as I have been able to discover," replied Lodge. "Moreover, he's one of these strait-laced old fellows who throws a fit at the mere mention of cards. He has the reputation of being a strict churchman—too strict to suit most people. He's not over-popular in Greenwood on that account, but his neighbors would as soon think of accusing him of murder as of playing poker."

"Nothing for it," grumbled the city editor, "but to put the problem up to Kirkham. It's too many for me. I'll telephone for him to come over at once."

So Lucas Kirkham, lawyer, who in consideration of an annual retainer undertook to solve the legal problems of the *Gazette,* was brought into the case.

Kirkham listened to the story, and frowned. "On the face of it," he declared, "he's got you. He was not the man arrested. The vestry meeting alibi settles that, and his reputation among his neighbors is further proof of it. There are sanctimonious hypocrites, and he may be one, but, even so, he would not risk his reputation in a poker game in his own neighborhood. And your offense is the more serious because of his reputation and pretensions. Of course it was unintentional—a mistake—but that doesn't let you out, if he wants to be ugly about it, as he evidently does. We must find some way to discourage him."

"We'll have to be quick about it," suggested the city editor. "He may start his suit to-day."

"Oh, that's all right," returned Kirkham. "Let him start it if he wants to. It only costs a few dollars to start a suit and nothing at all to dismiss it. I want to know more about him and more about the raid itself. Lodge, with the help of your friendly desk sergeant, you ought to be able to discover the identity of this mysterious John Jones who was mistaken for Enderby. I don't know that it will help any to find out who he is, but it may."

"I guess I can manage that," said Lodge, "although it may take a little time. Some of the others were recognized, and I may get one of them to talk."

"Go to it!" instructed Kirkham. "And," he added, "find out as much more as you can about Enderby. What business is he in?"

"Fire insurance."

"Manager, solicitor, adjuster, clerk or what?"

"Chief clerk of the Vesuvius agency here."

"Been there long?"

"I think so, but I'm not sure."

"Well, find out, and also find out how long he has lived in Greenwood. We can't know too much about the gentleman."

Lodge immediately departed on his mission, and Kirkham rose to go.

"What next?" asked the city editor.

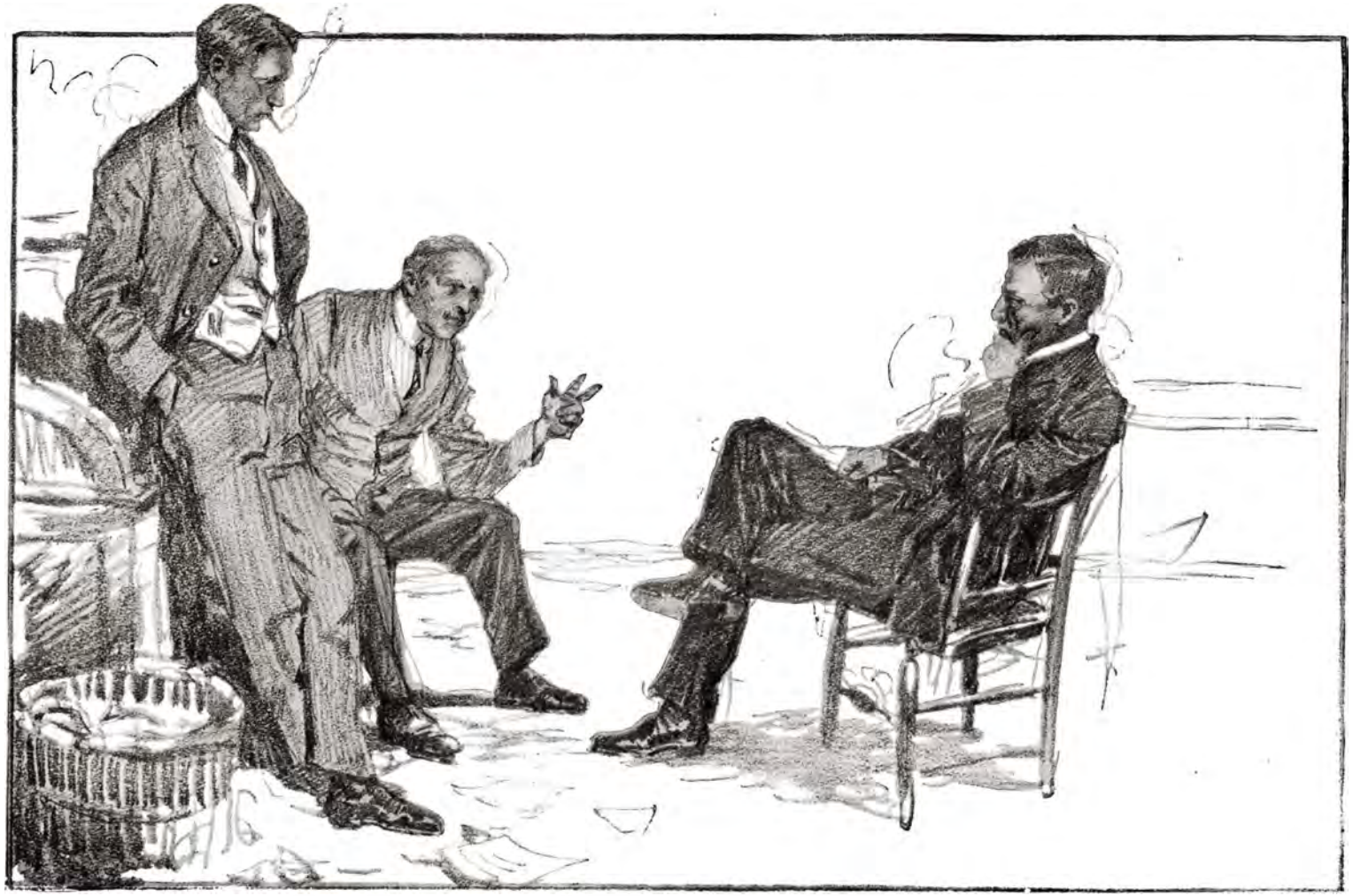
"Nothing, until the suit is started," replied Kirkham.

"And then?"

"I'm sure I don't know," answered Kirkham indifferently. "I like to have all the ascertainable facts in hand before I make definite plans. Let's see what Lodge discovers. It's too late for him to do much to-day, but we ought to be able to find out where we're at by to-morrow. I suppose you've no objection to lending Lodge to me for a day or so."

"None at all."

"All right. Send him over to me in



"We'll have to be quick about it," suggested the city editor. "He may start his suit to-day"

the morning with whatever information he has obtained, and let me know as soon as the papers in the suit are served on you. Then we'll see what's to be done."

The papers were served the following forenoon. "Which shows," observed the city editor ruefully, "that the old man means business."

Lodge carried the information to Kirkham, but Lodge was now as confident, not to say jubilant, as he had been troubled before.

"No need to worry about that suit, Mr. Kirkham," he declared. "It's as good as settled right now."

"Is it?" returned Kirkham dubiously.

"We can call old Enderby off in just about two seconds whenever we wish," asserted Lodge. "I had half a mind to see him and do it myself."

"Perhaps it's just as well that you didn't," remarked Kirkham, unimpressed. "These things don't always work out as you expect."

"Oh, of course I wouldn't attempt to do anything of that sort without consulting you," admitted Lodge, somewhat crestfallen, "but I *could* have settled the whole business."

"Indeed!" commented Kirkham. "Well, how would you have done it?"

"I would have gone direct to Enderby," explained Lodge, "and admitted frankly that he was not the man. 'Mr. Enderby,' I would have said, 'we were mistaken when we said that you were a member of that poker party. It was not you, but your son. We shall make a correction to that effect.'"

"Oho!" ejaculated Kirkham. "So that's it, is it?"

"That's it," Lodge assured him. "It wasn't such a difficult thing to round up, either. The son's name is Joe, and the father's is John. Joe was in the bunch, but the sergeant got the name wrong. The rest of the crowd think it a great joke. That made it easy for me when I got next to one of them. They laugh every time they think of the old man figuring in a police report of a raid on a poker room."

"Does the old man know the boy was there?" asked Kirkham.

"Probably not."

"Well, that sounds pretty good," reflected Kirkham.

"Good!" exclaimed Lodge, recovering his confidence. "Well, rather! He's not going to expose his son, is he? He doesn't want that kind of a correction, does he? And he can't go to trial now without the whole story coming out, either. Oh, he'll be mighty glad to drop the whole business!"

"I should imagine so," agreed Kirkham. "I guess we have got Mr. John Enderby where we want him."

"Shall I put it up to him, or will you?" asked Lodge.

"Oh, there's no hurry," returned Kirkham. "This little thing is good to spring any time, and we might as well have all the facts first. Did you find out how long he has been with the Vesuvius people?"

"About five years."

"And where was he before that?"

"Oh, there's nothing against him in his business record," replied Lodge. "He's a long-distance job-holder and has been in the employ of only two concerns in the last twenty-five years. He was with Ditmore & Company, brokers, for twenty years before he went to the Vesuvius company. He was bookkeeper and cashier when he left."

"That's certainly a good record," admitted Kirkham. "You don't know why he left, do you?"

"Resigned, to take a better job, I understand. He's a wonderfully good man with figures."

Kirkham nodded. "Seems to be a valuable man," he commented. "Did you find out anything more about him?"

"Yes," answered Lodge; "I think I discovered the secret of his extraordinary course in this libel matter. He has an abiding hatred of newspapers, for some reason."

"All of them, or one particular paper?"

"All of them. He makes no exceptions, reviles no one paper more than the others, but says they're all sensational, meddling, scurrilous devices of the devil. That's why he's so glad to get the *Gazette* in a tight place, I guess. Anyhow,

his sentiments are well known in Greenwood."

"And how long has he lived in Greenwood?" persisted Kirkham.

"Four or five years. I tell you, Mr. Kirkham, he's just a bigoted, intolerant old back-number. That explains the whole business."

"Yes," agreed Kirkham; "yes, very likely it does. We'll have a talk with him in a day or so."

"Why not now?" asked Lodge impatiently.

"Oh, there's no hurry," said Kirkham, "and I rather like to be sure I haven't overlooked anything before I move in a matter of this kind."

"Simple enough, it seems to me," grumbled Lodge.

"Quite simple," admitted Kirkham, "but it's just as well to take the time to do even the simple things in the best way, especially when there is no need of haste."

And the impatient Lodge had to be satisfied with that.

He had not long to wait for the next move, however, for two days later Kirkham appeared at the office of the *Gazette* and informed the city editor that he had told Mr. Enderby to meet him there.

"Do you think he'll come?" asked the city editor.

"Oh, yes, he'll come," replied Kirkham. "He refused at first, but I dropped a few remarks that got him a bit worried, I guess. So he'll come."

"With his attorney?"

"No, I think not," returned Kirkham. "I intimated that he might wish to consider what we have to say privately, and, if not, he could call his attorney in later. I think he is somewhat anxious to find out what we know before going further in the matter. Meanwhile, you might have this put in type and a proof taken of it."

Kirkham handed the city editor a brief typewritten article, which the latter read with every evidence of enjoyment.

"You're wasted in the law, Kirkham!" he exclaimed when he had finished it. "You ought to be on a newspaper. That's a gem."

"Let us hope that Enderby will be properly impressed," returned Kirkham. "He'll be here at three o'clock, and you might arrange to have Lodge here, too."

Enderby was punctual, and he came alone. There were very excellent reasons why he should do so. For one thing, he had not given his attorney his full confidence, and he could think of various possible developments that he might wish to consider privately. But he was as defiantly uncompromising as ever.

"It's too late for an apology," he declared.

"Possibly," conceded Kirkham, "but we may decide to make a correction anyway—merely in the interests of truth."

"It will not affect the suit," asserted Enderby. "I've got one of these scoundrelly papers where I want it, and I'm going to make it suffer!"

"That's for you to determine, of course," agreed Kirkham suavely. "The *Gazette,* I believe, offered to make a retraction. We know that you were not one of the party arrested, that you do not play cards, and we were willing then to retract and express our sincere regret that the mistake had occurred, but that would not satisfy you."

"And it wont now!" declared Enderby.

"Very good!" acquiesced Kirkham. "I am merely explaining our position. We were then ready merely to retract and let it go at that. Now, if we print anything, it will have to be more of a correction than a retraction. Just let me have that proof, Mr. Price." The city editor handed it to him. "Something like that," added Kirkham, passing the proof to Enderby.

The city editor and Lodge smiled and fixed their eyes on Enderby, but Kirkham seemed to be rather indifferent to the effect produced. It was an article that should have disturbed the reader not a little, and it may be admitted that his face became very red during its perusal, but in no other way did he show that it even indirectly concerned him. Yet, as prepared for publication, this was the article:

make that I could consider; but a mere retraction even of the character I previously outlined, will no longer suffice. I must have damages as well as an apology, and unless you have some proposition of that sort to make there is no use prolonging the interview. I will consider nothing that does not assure me substantial damages for the humiliation and contumely I have endured."

"Oh, thunder!" ejaculated the city editor disgustedly. "I don't mind a man going out after the money when he sees a chance, but I hate to have a cloak of righteousness thrown over a hold-up."

Enderby's indignation rose. "I don't think there is anything more to be said," he announced, moving toward the door. "I believe I have made my position clear. If you have anything more to say, you can come to me or see my lawyer."

"One moment!" interposed Kirkham.

Enderby paused. "Well?" he queried.

"You were with Ditmore & Company for some years, I believe," said Kirkham.

"Nineteen years, sir," asserted Enderby complacently.

"And you left them about five years ago?"

"To better myself—yes, sir."

"About the same time," pursued Kirkham, "you changed your residence, I understand."

An observing person might have noted a shade of anxiety—or perhaps it was only mystification—creep into Enderby's expression, but he spoke as defiantly as ever. "What has that got to do with it?"

"Oh, nothing, perhaps," replied Kirkham. "I understand you moved to Greenwood about that time."

"Yes, I did, sir," admitted Enderby. "What of it? I didn't come here to be catechised."

"And was it not about the same time that you acquired your great hatred of newspapers?" persisted Kirkham.

Enderby was clearly troubled—or mystified—now, but he was still defiant. "What do you mean by that, sir?" he demanded.

Kirkham laughed. "Nothing, nothing at all, Mr. Enderby," he replied pleasantly. "Just go home and think it over! It would make rather a good article, don't you think?"

Enderby stood for a moment irresolute, studying Kirkham's face. Then he moved to the door, paused and turned back. "I don't believe I want any more notoriety in this matter, Mr. Price," he said, ignoring Kirkham and addressing the city editor. "I find it is rather hurtful in a business way. I shall have the suit dismissed." And he faded through the doorway into the hall.

The city editor and Lodge turned to Kirkham.

"What *was* the trouble?" asked the city editor.

"I'm sure I don't know," laughed Kirkham, "but I *do* know that the infernal old hypocrite went to the Vesuvius company at a smaller salary than he was getting from Ditmore & Company, and I reasoned that a man does not make that sort of a change from choice. Wherefore, he was fired.

"Now a concern does not fire a man who has been with it for twenty years without good cause. It is a reasonable presumption, therefore, that there were irregularities of some kind—presumably not serious enough to warrant a criminal prosecution in view of his long and previously faithful service, but quite sufficient to warrant separating him from his job.

"He moved to a new neighborhood, where he was unknown, about the same time, from which I infer that the story leaked out and made the old neighborhood rather uncomfortable. I think if you will search the local newspaper files of about five years ago you will find some mention of the circumstances under which he left Ditmore & Company, which may explain his hatred of the press. Of course this is all mere surmise, but—"

"But Enderby himself," put in the city editor, "proved the accuracy of your deductions."

"Why, yes I think he did," agreed Kirkham. "But,"—with a smile at Lodge—"we needed all the ascertainable facts of this very simple case to get him to do it."

At Any Cost

The author provides a happy ending to his story

by

JOHN BARTON OXFORD

Author of "Purely Suppositional," etc.

THIS is distinctly the day of happy endings in short stories. Gloom at the end of a story is unqualifiedly taboo. You see, there is quite enough gloom in real life (and so on and so forth), so it behooves you, if you happen to follow the precarious vocation of fiction writing, to leave your readers with a pleasant taste in their mouths. Toy with their emotions as you like in the body of the story; run 'em through the whole gamut of tears and thrills and shivers and throbs; but at any sacrifice of truth, construction, logic or plain common sense, *give 'em a happy ending*. So shall all your sins and shortcomings be forgiven you.

After which brief but didactic dissertation, it will require no particular painful throes of the intellect to realize that this story is to have a happy ending with a capital *H* and the accent on the *hap*.

Billy Crandall awoke with a most unpleasant start. He awoke after a tranquil somnolence of some twenty-four years. The place of his Rip Van Winkle coming-to-consciousness was a downtown lunch-room, where table cloths were not and the red-bordered napkins were piled on nickel standards in the center of each table for the patrons to grab—or ignore—as they saw fit.

It was a stuffy, noisy, steamy place. The crockery and glassware was thick and nicked; the ketchup bottles and the vinegar cruets were dull with finger marks; intermixed with the pungent odor of coffee was the smell of things being fried, and the staler, more haunting smell of the many things which had been fried in the past.

In front of Billy Crandall was a little platter of corned-beef hash with a dropped egg draping itself ungracefully over the top; beside the platter of hash was a thick crockery cup of black coffee; and beside the cup of coffee was the *Morning Advocate,* opened to the column on page 3—the column headed "Wise and Otherwise"—which for twenty-four years Billy Crandall had written daily.

Now just what brought Billy Crandall out of his twenty-four years' doze is uncertain. It may have been the corned-beef hash with that sprawling egg astride it, or the fact that he had in his pockets as the sole result of his years of labor just sixty-eight cents, or the column on page 3 of the *Morning Advocate,* which was particularly bad that morning; or maybe it was all three.

Anyway, Billy woke up. He awoke to the realization that he was nearing fifty; that he was getting bald; that he felt rather tired, and that he had been drifting along, drifting along, wasting his opportunities and his chances until it was too late. In short, Billy Crandall, sitting there at the bare lunch-room table, turning his eyes from the paper to the egg on top of the corned-beef hash and back again to the paper, realized that life hadn't come out at all as

he had planned it; that it never would now; that his column was getting worse and worse; that he was bald and lonesome and a failure.

Now, there are some men who can face a deplorable situation of this sort, grin and never be harmed by it. They can comfort themselves with a lot of cheap platitudes. They can tell themselves that, anyway, they have managed to make a living and keep out of debt and get some little fun out of life, and, the chances for continuing in the same course being good, they really have no kick coming.

Other men—men like Billy Crandall—can't do that sort of thing. When the awakening comes they grow pinched and white-faced; they survey with startled eyes a strange world, out of which the bottom has dropped with a sickening suddenness, and wander off into hells of misery and self-reproach and introspection.

No, it is eminently not good for the Billy Crandalls when they wake up. They get all that is coming to them—and them some—in payment for their tranquil years of dilatoriness and procrastination.

Billy looked back to the time he had first taken that column; it had looked like a great proposition then; it would be a stepping-stone to other and better things, the things that he held secret in the inmost recesses of his soul. It would give him his daily bread and yet let him grow into what he had mapped out for himself. That was what he had told himself at the outset. And what had he done? He had drifted, drifted, always drifted, with to-day provided for and to-morrow a roseate day that never came. And that column, which had been a pretty passable bit at first, if he *did* say it that shouldn't, had been growing worse, rapidly worse, of late.

And, in addition, Billy realized that there was no hope of bettering it. He was squeezed dry; there was nothing more in him; what he should have done he had allowed to go to waste in futile dreams. It was too late. He was nearly fifty. They'd probably keep him on the paper so long as the present management remained in control, which bade fair to be for some time yet; they would let him write his silly paragraphs for "Wise and Otherwise," and pay him his stipend every Monday morning; he wouldn't starve or anything like that; but it was like eating the crusts of charity, he told himself with a sickening feeling, as he ran his eye down that column on page 3.

Although he did not know it, great drops of perspiration had come out on Billy's forehead and were trickling down his temples. His face had gone ashen; his pale lips took on a bluish tinge. So evident was his distress that one of the waitresses stepped over to the table.

"Aren't you feeling well, Mr. Crandall?" she asked, looking down pityingly.

"Me?" said Billy, pulling himself together with an effort. "Oh, sure. Fine! Nothing at all the matter with *me!* Only I'm not hungry; not a bit hungry. Funny how you get off your feed when you don't exercise every day, especially when you are getting on in years—like I am."

Leaving his corned-beef hash and his coffee untasted, Billy arose, picked up the punched check and walked to the door. He pushed the check and a quarter through the cashier's cage and went out. His lips were still blue, and now the under one was quivering slightly. At the risk of repetition, we will say again that it isn't a good thing for these Billy Crandalls to wake up.

Straight down the street he went and stopped before a hardware store. Then he remembered something, or rather the lack of something, and turned his steps to the *Advocate* office, some two blocks away.

"Let me have ten on next week's salary, will you, Sam?" he asked the cashier behind the brass screen.

"Sure thing, Billy," said that busy young man, pushing out a bill, and turning to make a memorandum of the advance.

Then Billy Crandall, with a queer look in his eyes, marched back to the hardware store.

"Yes, a thirty-eight automatic," he

heard a steady voice, which he finally realized was his own, saying to the clerk a few minutes later: "Yes, this one's all right. Put in a box of cartridges with it."

At the moment Billy Crandall was buying the automatic gun in the hardware store, Uncle Ben Prosser sat on the front steps of his house at Grantville, impatiently awaiting the arrival of the R. F. D. with the morning mail. Uncle Ben craned his skinny neck now and again to look up the dusty road, and each time he did so and saw the road still empty, he muttered under his breath and drew out his old silver watch.

"Late ag'in!" he complained. "My sorrers! If *I* had the carryin' of that mail, seems to me I'd git round with it once in a while on time, without keepin' folks a-waitin' all day."

The truth of the matter was that one morning the carrier happened to arrive at Uncle Ben's place at 10:20 and after that Uncle Ben considered 10:20 the proper time for him to come, despite the fact that his usual time was much nearer eleven.

Presently, after much fidgeting on Uncle Ben's part, the mail-wagon came creaking into view, pulled up at the front gate, deposited in the tin box the morning paper, and went rattling on its way.

Uncle Ben scrambled off the steps, shuffled down to the box, and clutched the paper with much eagerness. Fishing out his steel-rimmed spectacles and adjusting them on his nose, Uncle Ben unfolded the *Morning Advocate,* and, turning to the "Wise and Otherwise" column on page 3, he settled himself on the steps again.

Uncle Ben always turned to that column on page 3 the first thing each morning after the arrival of the mail. It was a source of never ending joy and wonder to him. Now he chuckled, and now he wagged his head sagely as he perused it.

"I tell ye that feller knows what he's sayin'," Uncle Ben was wont to reiterate monotonously each day at the conclusion of his reading. "If he don't hit the nail plumb on the head each time, then nobody does. My sorrers, if folks would only see what there is in the advice he gives 'em, and most of it in a foolin' way, they wouldn't be half so much trouble in this world." Then he would poke into the house to read aloud the choicest excerpts to his wife, Aunt Mary, who listened and chuckled, more because it pleased the old man than from any other motive.

As a contributor to the local paper, Uncle Ben knew something of the difficulties of creative work. He knew, too, how rare is the right word at the right time; and a man who could keep on putting out the right words day after day as did this W. E. Crandall, who signed his name at the bottom of the "Wise and Otherwise" column in the *Advocate,* had Uncle Ben with him from start to finish.

The column that particular morning struck Uncle Ben as being unusually good; and in ten minutes he was shuffling into the house calling "Mother! Hey, Mother!" at the top of his voice.

"Yes, what is it?" came Aunt Mary's voice from the front room, where she was braiding rags for a rug.

"Jest you listen to what that feller has got to say this mornin'," said Uncle Ben, sitting down and opening the paper with much unction.

He read paragraph after paragraph, bits of nonsense, snatches of verse, with many gleeful haw-haws of appreciation and much shaking of his grizzled old head. Aunt Mary vented her usual giggles at the right place, but, truth to tell, her mind was too much engrossed with the problem as to whether the blue or the green would look best in the rug next to the yellow to pay much attention to what her husband was reading.

"My sorrers," said Uncle Ben when he had finished, "that feller is sure a slick one. I'd like to see him some time and tell him jest how much good his column has done me for the past years. I might write him, I suppose, but that wouldn't be like seein' him and tellin' him. I'd like to talk to him. Bet it would do a body good jest to listen to him for a few minutes."

"Well, whyn't ye go and see him?" asked Aunt Mary. "'Taint no dreadful journey down to the city."

Uncle Ben sat up, suddenly smitten with an idea. "I've a mind to," said he. "My sorrers! I b'leeve I will. Say, I got to go down sometime and see about gittin' that piece for the mowin' machine that's busted. Might jest as well go now as ever."

"Well, whyn't ye go?" Aunt Mary asked again.

"I b'leeve I will, and this afternoon, too," said he. "I kin ketch the 1:03 train down and git there by half-past three. Say, you git out my shirt and help me dress—will ye, Ma?"

Upstairs, where Aunt Mary fussed about importantly and Uncle Ben grumbled loudly because he couldn't find his collar buttons, he paused in his complaints to grin at her delightedly.

"Say, when I see him, that feller on the paper, I'll tell him about the time Asy Breed's boy come home after servin' out his sentence up to Concord, and how he got it into his head that it wa'n't no use, that everybody was ag'in him because he'd got into that mess and served time. You remember, don't ye, how I come across that poem in the 'Wise and Otherwise' column—the one called 'Keep Pluggin'"—and how I went over and read it to young Asy and he broke down and cried like a kid and says to me, 'That's right, Uncle Ben. That's sure the way to do. Much obliged for readin' me that. You watch me from now on.' I cal'late that poem saved him, Mary. I'm goin' to tell that feller about that."

Pleased and excited as a child on some wonderfully promising excursion, Uncle Ben kissed Aunt Mary good-by at half-past twelve and swung sturdily down the road towards the railroad station.

At that hour, on one of the benches on the esplanade by the river, a bent figure sat staring at the water. Now and then his right hand caressed the lump in his coat pocket. Billy Crandall was going over the past bit by bit, and the past was not good to contemplate.

Why Billy Crandall, once his mind was made up, went back to his little room in the *Advocate* office, he could never have told. Perhaps, it was because for twenty-four years he had been going to that room every afternoon at half-past three, and it was now half-past three. Anyway, he went there, closed the door, and wrote a few brief notes. Then he took out his watch, set it on the desk before him and laid the automatic revolver beside it.

"At four," he muttered to himself. The presses for the first afternoon edition—the *Advocate* being a conservative sheet—were started at four. Their rumble would drown out many sounds, which would be all too apparent when the presses were still.

Therefore: "At four!" said Billy Crandall again.

He had spent the day with his soul, and the day thus spent had not been profitable. He was white to the lips, but withal possessed now of a strange feeling of peace—the peace coming after a bitter, futile struggle, the peace which passeth all understanding.

Down at the terminal Uncle Ben Prosser was haggling with a cabby.

"Yep, I want to git to the *Advocate* building, but you aint goin' to skin me none, young man. I'll give ye just fifty cents to take me there. I know the prices."

"Git in!" said the cabby, yielding.

And now for that happy ending. Here is Billy Crandall, sitting there at his desk, watching the hands of the watch close in on four. Here is Uncle Ben Prosser, his disgusted cabby paid the fifty cents, stalking into the business office of the *Advocate* and saying to one of the men at the classified ad. desk:

"I'm lookin' for Mr. W. E. Crandall, if that's his name—the feller that does the 'Wise and Otherwise' column."

"Billy Crandall? Yep, he ought to be in by this time. Take those stairs at the right. Two flights; third door on your left."

Uncle Ben pokes up the stairs, asks a man he meets at the top of the second flight which door is Mr. Crandall's, is ushered to it, opens it and enters.

It is very close to four. Billy has

closed his cold fingers over the butt of the revolver. The presses in the basement begin to shake the building.

As the eager old figure pushes its way through the door, with no announcing tap, Billy starts, hurriedly thrusts the gun under a litter of papers below the pigeon-holes of his desk and half-turns in his chair.

"You Mr. Crandall?" quavers Uncle Ben, all a-tremble with the thought that here he is at last in the presence of intellectual greatness.

"Yes," says Billy dully. "What can I do for you?"

Uncle Ben drops nervously into a chair and begins to fidget with his old felt hat.

"I aint a-goin' to take up much of yer time," he begins humbly. "I was in town to-day and I somehow jest *had* to come to see ye to let ye know how much I've enj'yed that column of yourn for more'n twenty year. I tell ye, there's gospel truth in it every day, and a lot of help for folks, too. Why once—"

Here Uncle Ben, being fairly started and having no sense of dramatic values, bursts into the story of Asy Breed's son and the little poem, "Keep Plugging."

Billy Crandall listens, with a strange tightening at his throat; a strange, frightened, eager light in his eyes. And when Uncle Ben has finished, he says: "Tell me that again," and there is something in the way he says it that would make you catch your breath.

So Uncle Ben tells it all again, and Billy Crandall, at the conclusion of the second recital, gets out of his chair and goes and looks out the one little window of the room—stands there staring out a long time, although there is no vista at all from that window—just a view of dingy bricks on the opposite side of the light shaft. And when Billy turns from the window, his eyes are red, but he's laughing.

"Look here, Mr. Prosser," says he, "you wait just a minute till I get my column ready for to-morrow; here's the 'dope' all here in the pigeon-holes. All I have to do is throw it together. Then I want you to go out to dinner with me, and I'm going to tell *you* a story, and I hope it will make you feel as good as the story you have just told has made me feel."

"Oh, I dont want to put you out none," says the modest Uncle Ben. "Though I would like to tell 'em back to Grantville that I took supper with ye," he adds with childish eagerness. "But if ye're goin' to fix that column up now, mebbe I'm in your way here."

"In the way?" chokes Billy Crandall. "God!" And then he swings feverishly to his work, his eyes wet from sheer happiness.

There you are. There's the happy ending. You see, we've worked it in, despite the fact that, in reality, Uncle Ben Prosser, of Grantville, walked from the station to the *Advocate* office instead of taking a cab, and opened the door of that little room at just ten minutes after four.

Sister to *the* Fish

A story from the Hare's Foot Beauty Parlor

by

ALMA MARTIN ESTABROOK

Author of "First Aid From A Beauty Shop," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY ARTHUR WILLIAM BROWN

"WAS your nose humped in the beginning, mebbe?" sympathetically suggested Katy, of the young woman who lay in one of the leather chairs at The Hare's Foot beauty parlor, taking a facial. "I see it's a little tender still. We get lots of ladies from Dr. Topping-Smith. He can do *anything!*"

The young woman in the leather chair made no comment. She continued to lie with her eyes shut, her long, ring-heavy hands crossed in the lap of her modish gown.

The closing of "the windows of the soul" empties some faces of expression as completely as the drawing of blinds in a house that is streaming light at all its panes. But in the case of Agnes Rumbough it was not so: eyes shut or eyes wide, her face conveyed its habitual expression, half-cynical, half petulant—an expression which had created little semi-circular lines in her cheeks near the tight corners of the lips, tell-tale crescents she now desired ardently to have eliminated.

"Cold creams and massage aint goin' to do *her* no good!" Katy observed to herself, as she worked away deftly. "There's some things you can rub out, and some you can't, and a perpetual case of peeve is one you can't."

Aloud she said: "Ever try this new face-bleach? It's great. The proprietress sent it across from Paris. She's there now. Oh no, Miss Grey is only in charge temporary. Sweet girl. But she don't know much about beauty parlors. Don't want to, I guess. Would you like to try the bleach?"

Miss Rumbough opened her eyes and, after a critical examination of the article under recommendation, signified her willingness to submit to it, her manner —in which ennui and eagerness were curiously blended—conveying the impression that all that could be done for her *must* be done.

When the face-bleach had been followed by a careful "touching up" of her indeterminate features and a fine dusting over with powder, she arose, yawned without taking the trouble to pat it back, allowed herself to be got into hat and coat, and departed without even the most careless nod toward Katy.

At the door of the little catacomb she ran into one of the new girls at The Hare's Foot.

"Why, Marie, you here!" she exclaimed.

Marie, of mingled posterish and French appearance, stood as one stupefied, her hand moving gropingly toward her own pert little nose while her eyes

stared unbelievingly at Miss Rumbough's.

"*What,*" whispered Marie, in profound amazement, "*have you done to it?*"

"Impudence!" snapped Miss Rumbough, and, treading firmly, passed down the beauty-parlors toward the desk where Mary Grey sat by her little green lattice-work. To that young woman's courteous greeting she made no response whatever, merely presenting her ticket to be punched and departing, the crescents fixed with new emphasis in her cheeks.

At Miss Grey's half humorous expression of surprise, Marie approached the desk, smiling a hot little smile.

"She's sore because I noticed," she explained. "But how could I help it, I'd like to know? Why, it used to be a regular hummock!"

"What used to be a regular hummock?" inquired Mary Grey.

"Her nose. It was something awful."

"*What,*" whispered Marie in amazement, "*have you done to it?*" "Impudence," snapped Miss Rumbough.

"Nonsense, Marie. A hummock is—"

"It's a protuberance raised upon any plane of ice above the common level unless I've forgotten my definitions," put in Marie saucily. "It was surely *raised,* and as for ice—she's *that* straight through, and nothing will ever thaw her. You may take my word for it.

"Her mother has always wanted her to have her nose 'corrected,' but she was afraid of being hurt. I know all about it, you see, having been ladies' maid to the Rumboughs for eight months just before I came here. There's nothing about Agnes Rumbough I couldn't tell you."

"Please don't," said Mary Grey, softly, and busied herself with the columns of figures which always awaited her in the big ledger on her desk.

Marie went back to her work, but she remained preoccupied, and once, as she laid away the Psyche Biscuit coils that had just arrived, she exclaimed under her breath: "I'd give the eyes straight out of my head to know what made her do it."

Then, as with an inspiration, she went over to Jane Dake's platform by the window, where the little old wigmaker was busy with one of her celebrated featherweight stemless switches.

"Have you noticed anything in the papers lately about an Englishwoman named Lady Guest?" she asked carelessly.

Jane Dake was one of those strange souls—of whom there are many—who care no more for their neighbors than for their own overshoes, and take no more interest in them; but who can tell you all the smallest details that go to make up the life of Society, which they spell with no smaller an *S* than the *R* with which they spell Royalty.

Without so much as glancing up, Jane Dake spoke, around the strands of reddish hair which she held tightly between her lips: "Lady Guest, of Waterside, South Devonshire. Sister of Lady North-Crimmins of London. She's comin' to America next month to talk to women. Anything more you want to know about her?"

"Is her nephew coming with her?"

"Mr. Cecil Guest? He's here now. Oh, not in town, but in this country. He is expected here any time now. His aunt is to meet him here. He is her secretary and heir."

"Mm, yes, I know," murmured Marie, and was gone.

"It's just as I thought," she exclaimed excitedly, returning to the desk by the green lattice work. *"She had her nose done over for Mr. Cecil Guest!"*

"Who had her nose done over?" questioned Leola, from the telephone table; and rising, she joined them at once, the keenest interest written all over her pleasant, homely little face. Leola constantly desired to adventure into the lives of others. It furnished her the greatest excitement and diversion.

"Do you know Miss Agnes Rumbough?" inquired Marie.

"The high and mighty party with the 'of-course-you-can't-be-like-us, but-be-as-like-us-as-you-are-able-to-be' air who went out a minute ago? What about her?"

"Dr. Topping-Smith is making her over—for a man."

"Did you ever hear of a woman having herself made over for a woman?" dryly remarked Leola, carefully smoothing her hips.

"It shows," mused Marie, "how dead-set on getting him she is. Her nose has always been the despair of her mother and her grandmother, old Mrs. Fitz Miller, who lives with them; but she'd never hear to having anything done to it. She was afraid of being hurt. You see," she continued, "there's never been any fluttering of moths in that quarter, what with her nose and her temperament and her striking resemblance to her mother and to her grandmother. In fact, there has only been Captain Speed.

"You must have heard of Captain Speed, and of how old and rich and horried he is—too horrid even for Agnes Rumbough and old Mrs. Fitz Miller, cided by the little trio, Agnes and Mrs. Rumbough and old Mrs. Fitz Miller, that Agnes might as well give up hoping for anything better and take Captain Speed, when along comes a letter from friends in England saying Lady Guest

and her nephew were contemplating a trip to America, and hinting that if the visit was made, Agnes could do nothing half so clever as catching him. For Lady Guest, they said, had made up her mind not to make the poor young man wait till she was dead to enjoy her property but to give him his share now.

"'Besides,' so the English friends wrote, 'he is a fine, handsome, likable fellow, and only twenty-four.' No wonder she went to Dr. Topping-Smith. But think of a nice young chap like that falling into such hands! It's a shame."

"The nice young man will probably have eyes in his head," cheerfuly observed Leola.

"But he wont have learned to see with them, if he is only twenty-four," sighed Mary Grey.

She told the story that night to James Perkins. Jim was with one of the big dailies, and had, in his official capacity, gleaned many facts concerning society. He had been a life-long friend of Mary Grey's cousin, the proprietress of The Hare's Foot, and on her departure for Paris had promised to do all he could toward looking after Miss Grey—a task he found increasingly to his liking.

"There isn't any question about Lady Guest's being a good deal of a personage," he observed, "nor of the fact that her nephew gets in on the edge of the spot-light. She has plenty of money, too, and, all things considered, it's probable the Rumboughs will play their highest cards for him. By the way, he arrived to-night. MacFarland was just back from an interview with him when I left the office. George, that must be he now!"

They were at the theatre, he and Mary Grey, and at his exclamation she lifted her glasses and followed his glance to the box at which he was gazing.

A party of young men and brilliantly plumaged girls, among whom Agnes Rumbough, in a water-green gown, was conspicuous, filed into the box and settled themselves, the Englishman at Miss Rumbough's side.

The gay handsomeness of the youth and something indescribably sincere and wholesome about him made Mary Grey's heart go out to him at once. He seemed so buoyant, so loyal, so ardent.

"Looks a good sort, doesn't he?" commented Jim Perkins. "They say he won all the available honors at Oxford, at tennis and racquets. He's a great fly-fisher, too."

Mary Grey shook her smooth brown head. "*She* is the angler," she murmured.

Perkins smiled. "God created the coquette as soon as he made the fool," he quoted.

"He isn't a fool. You can see that at a glance. If he were, it wouldn't seem so horrid—the trap he will probably walk straight into."

"See here," he adjured, "you've only just got Fanchon and Tom Bowdish off your heart; you aren't going to begin worrying over this strange Englishman, are you?"

"There are some things you can't help feeling strongly about," she defended. "One is, that love ought to be the shining, unmatched thing it was meant to be, and not the dull, cheapened thing some women make of it."

"You're right," he declared, and looked at her strangely.

Throughout the weeks which followed, Agnes Rumbough came daily to The Hare's Foot, darting in between dinners and dances and teas for a hair dress or a manicure or the stimulation of a massage; and every day a certain smile that lurked in the shallow depths of her pale eyes became more and more assured.

"You see," dolorously exclaimed Marie, "things are going her way. She shows it!"

"Don't be sure," put in Leola, turning away from the telephone and speaking over her shoulder as she wrote down an appointment on her pad. "She is too keen, and she shows *that*. It always sickens a man. As my friend—the one who took me to see 'Hamlet' so many times—is always saying, 'The most wise of the virtues is indifference.' Don't you worry. Young Guest'll see through her, all right."

"He will never see through anyone," lamented Mary Grey. "He is one of

"She is too keen," put in Leola; "she is too keen. It always sickens a man."

those simple souls—or so I'd imagine—who doubt neither themselves nor their acquaintances. And at his age every normal male being is in love with some woman and ready to marry her. Whether or not he does depends entirely on the woman, and the lions in the way."

"If there are any lions growlin' in this case, nobody seems to hear 'em," grinned Leola.

"Suppose," hopefully suggested Marie, "his aunt proves one? Jane Dake says she is to arrive to-day. The Rumboughs give a dinner for her to-night; to-morrow there's a public reception; and the next day—"

"Oh, there goes that telephone," patiently mourned Leola. "If ever I really want to talk— Yes, yes," she answered, speaking into the instrument in her best public voice, "the Hare's Foot. Yes. Oh, Mrs. Rumbough! No, Miss Rumbough isn't here. She hasn't been here to-day. Yes, she's certain to come in later, I fancy. I'll be glad to deliver your message. A dozen extra bunches, and she's to bring them with her, you say? The English variety—what a pretty compliment. Oh, no, indeed, I wont forget. You can depend on me. Good-by."

"Lady Guest's here, all right," she informed them, putting up the rereiver. "The dinner's on. My Lord! the way Jane Dake does soak such such things in! She must sit up half the night keeping posted on the society notes."

"Sh," warned Miss Grey, as the outer door opened and Miss Rumbough entered, and glancing neither to right nor left moved down the room with Leola floating beside her, smoothing her hips and trying to deliver the message with which she had been entrusted.

"Oh, very well, I'll try to manage it," exclaimed Agnes Rumbough impatiently. "Mother can be *so* tiresome with her tardy commissions. As if I didn't have enough to do as it is! Where's Katy? I wont have anybody else. Find her, please." And she whisked into one of the empty apartments.

"Poor, *poor* young man!" fervently ejaculated Leola to herself.

Scarcely five minutes later the door opened again and this time there entered a frankly robust little middle-aged person, who advanced upon the desk with a half smile about the eyes which suggested that she humorously deprecated her presence here in Beauty's Temple. One would have said she was wholly free from artifice, from pretension, from posturing—that she abhorred them all.

She looked simple and candid and keen and very direct.

It happened that she was shown into the apartment next the one occupied by Agnes Rumbough, and that Marie's services fell to her lot.

"Massage, facial or scalp, or both perhaps," she said, establishing herself in the deep chair and stretching out her inadequate little legs toward the foot-rest. "I've a trace of train-headache, and I must be rid of it. Tiresome thing, isn't it, train-sickness? How woodsey that odor is!" She drew a deep breath of the mingled perfumes that greeted her nostrils.

Her roundness and her color and her sharp little black eyes and her keen way of cocking the head made Marie think of a robin-redbreast. Her hair, thick and abundant, had almost the brown-olive of the lady redbreast's feathers.

She closed her eyes and sighed comfortably. "I like the buzz of those electric machines," she told Marie. "They make me feel as if I were up in a cherry tree full of blossoms and bees, the bees having the good sense to devote themselves to the blossoms and to let me alone."

Marie smiled. She liked the little lady's imagination. She liked the little lady herself, and wondered who she was.

Marie did not try to make conversation. Unlike Leola and Katy, she possessed the gift of knowing when not to talk. But as her finger tips moved lightly over the customer's forehead, her mind occupied itself with unusual interest in all that related to her.

Then suddenly her eyes, seeking nothing—to do her justice—found that which most of all they would have wished to find: the letter that lay in the lap of the lady, a large, semi-official looking document, with a seal upon it and most boldly addressed, in big stalking letters which could not fail to disclose themselves to a wandering glance.

Long training kept Marie silent, but she thought that surely the startled exclamation of her mind must be audible. "Lady Guest!" it cried. *"Lady Guest!"*

Her fingers hesitated just an instant, and then gently resumed their task.

"What a nice touch you have," murmured her Ladyship.

Marie expressed her appreciation and fell silent again.

The whirr of the electric batteries continued, and there was added the soft, buzzy sound of voices from that larger apartment where women sat about the little tables and laved their white hands in the green suds of deep bowls. For—

> ....the temple was full inside and out, and a buzz kept buzzing all round about like bees when the day is sunny.

Lady Guest was quite lulled by it, and by the caressing touch upon her brow. Heavily her lashes rested on her ruddy cheeks. Her breath came softly over her lips, and the little half-smile that had played about her eyes lay now about her mouth.

Peace spoke in her loosely crossed hands, in her whole relaxed attitude. Peace seemed to brood tenderly over the small and mirrored catacomb.

Then sharply, piercingly, there came from the apartment ajoining, that which was warning, reproach, admonition:

"My nose, I tell you! Take care—my nose! What have you done to it?"

Her Ladyship's little black eyes came wide. They twinkled. They interrogated.

And Marie—to her dying day she could not have told why she did it, whether out of anger at that voice which had so often lifted against her as it now lifted against Katy, or out of sudden and sincere liking for her little Ladyship—said merely: "Miss Agnes Rumbough. She has just had her nose done over, and it's very sensitive—as is she, it seems."

"Miss Rumbough! Miss Agnes Rumbough?" repated Lady Guest. "You are quite sure?"

"It isn't possible to make a mistake about *her*," grimly replied Marie.

"Dear me!" breathed her perturbed Ladyship, falling silent, and shamelessly continuing so as the querulous voice again lifted.

"Have you made it red? Something always happens when I'm particularly anxious to look well. Oh, go on with the facial! Don't stop to apologize!"

"I saw your coupe and knew you must be here, so I waited. Don't scold," he pleaded. and stared over

For an instant there was silence; then came Katy's voice, meekly conciliatory: "It was *so* sensible of you to go to Dr. Topping-Smith. Some ladies has prejudices. They think because their looks *is* their looks, that settles the matter. But, as a clever little chorus girl said one day, self-made men are all right—why not self-made women?" and Katy forced a brave little laugh.

There was no answering laugh, nor any comment whatever from Miss Rumbough. Only silence, icy and unbroken.

Then again the undaunted Katy, de-

"Why, Aunt Pat!" Miss Rumbough started his shoulder

termined to establish a comfortable relationship: "What surprises me is that you let it go so long—l—er mean all the time you did. Was you afraid of the pain, mebbe? That's natural, I suppose. My land, how I've put off goin' to the dentist. I guess," she went on, goaded by the maddening silence of her customer, and all innocent of the existence of young Cecil Guest, "you wasn't like a woman that used to come here. She had a nose that needed—correction, too. It was pretty bad. Her folks had tried for years to get her to have it done over, but she was ready to faint at the very thought. Not that Dr. Topping-Smith is a bit worse than he just has to be, and some ladies say the pain is really nothing at all. But she couldn't screw up her courage, and so she kept on goin' around with that awful nose. Then all of a sudden she fairly flew to Dr. Topping-Smith. And nobody could guess why. What do you 'spose it was? A man she'd been corresponding with for years was comin' to see her for the first time!"

Miss Rumbough spoke at last. The end, she said, justified the means.

She said it in French, and Katy did not understand, but the little robin redbreast person in the apartment adjoining understood perfectly, and blinked her sharp little eyes, and cocked her shrewd little head, and smiled curiously.

"It was the coolest thing you ever saw, the way she deliberately laid her plans to get him," continued Katy, as one driven by a malicious influence. "There wasn't a touch of sentiment about her. Not a touch!"

"Why," demanded Miss Rumbough in incisive English, "should there have been? Tell me that."

Katy, in turn, was silent, speechless.

"When you make your plans for the summer, or the winter, you aren't governed by anything so silly as sentiment, are you?" inquired the cynical tones. "When you make them for a lifetime why should you be influenced by anything so ridiculous?"

Katy evidently did not know, for she made no reply.

Five minutes later, almost simultaneously, the doors of the two apartments opened and their occupants emerged. Miss Rumbough, striding unseeingly past the entirely commonplace figure of her Ladyship and hurrying down the long room, all but slammed the door on the tip of that person's nose.

After them, hatted in a jiffy, followed

Marie, consumed by an irresistible desire to see all that was possible of the little comedy. She took the elevator following the one in which they dropped to the ground floor of the big office building, and, stopping at a news-stand, busied herself with a magazine, while, as she had anticipated, young Cecil Guest rushed forward to meet Agnes Rumbough.

"I saw your coupé and knew you must be here. So I waited. Don't scold," he pleaded. "Why, Aunt Pat!"

Miss Rumbough started and stared over his shoulder. Very painfully she colored at discovering his distinguished relative in the commonplace person upon whom she had just rudely slammed the door.

"Lady Guest!" she cooed. "Dear Lady Guest, if I had known! If I had dreamed! I was in such mad haste. And we shall have the pleasure of seeing you almost within the hour, Lady Guest. You are quite well? And not too fatigued by the journey? Ah, I am so glad. Good-by. Do forgive my shocking manners, wont you? Good-by again."

"Wait for me here, Aunt Pat," Cecil said briefly, and disappeared with her through the big doors.

Her Ladyship, occupied in winding a very long veil about a very small hat, did not observe Marie, who withdrew as far as possible behind the papers and books of the news-stand.

"Well, what did you think of her?" cried her nephew, returning almost at once, his heart in his eyes.

Her Ladyship gave a last twist to the veil and returned his look steadily. Affection, outrage, incredulity were in her face.

"If you want to know," she said, "I think that if ever a woman was a sister to the fish, that woman is!"

"How can you say anything so monstrous?" he flamed. "The unreasonableness of your snap-judgment. As if—"

"My dear, I have been closeted for half an hour in an apartment next her. I *wish* you had been with me. 'All that a woman is, is she, and not merely her fine moments.' Come, don't stand there glowering at me."

As she led him away, Marie flew to the elevator.

"There *is* a lion!" she exulted in a whisper, as she bent over Mary Grey's desk. "I've just heard it roar."

And she told what had happened.

Three days later, on a foggy morning, Jane Dake entered The Hare's Foot and, peeling off her absurdly tight storm coat, shook it energetically and hung it in the closet. As she emerged, she casually inquired of Mary Grey if she had read last night's *Bumble Bee*.

"No," muttered Mary Grey disinterestedly, busy with preparations for the day.

"She has gone," announced Jane Dake.

"She?" echoed Mary Grey.

"Lady Guest. She sails for home on the twentieth."

"And her nephew?" cried Mary, with all the excitement Jane Dake could have wished.

"Gone, too."

"Gone," breathed Mary Grey. "Alone?"

"You wouldn't call it bein' alone, would you, accompanyin' her Ladyship?"

"Then he didn't—*didn't*—"

"He didn't marry, if that's what you mean," quietly informed Jane Dake. "He wanted to bad enough, if the society reporters got it right. But it seems old Mrs. Fitz Miller had different plans for her granddaughter, her and Mrs. Rumbough. Even if Agnes Rumbough'd have had him herself,which aint likely —seein' that Lady Guest has decided not to divide her property with him as she was talking of doin'. Mr. Cecil Guest, with a large slice of his aunt's fortune, and standin' in her favor, is one person, and Mr. Cecil Guest, penniless and workin' on a salary—as he wanted to do so, the *Bumble Bee* says—with his aunt against him, is another. The wedding's to take place within two months."

"The wedding! But you said there wasn't going to be a wedding!"

"Oh, no, I didn't," grinned Jane Dake, "—the wedding of Miss Rumbough and Captain Augustus Speed."

Joan Leads the Way

Kazan, the wolf-dog, proves himself a real hero

by

JAMES OLIVER CURWOOD

Author of "Kazan," "A Hater of Men," "Flower of The North," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY GAYLE PORTER HOSKINS

ON the edge of the cedar and spruce forest old Pierre Radisson built the fire. He was bleeding from a dozen wounds, where the fangs of the wolves had reached to his flesh, and he felt in his breast that old and terrible pain, of which no one knew the meaning but himself. He dragged in log after log, piled them on the fire until the flames leaped up to the crisping needles of the limbs above, and heaped a supply close at hand for use later in the night.

From the sledge Joan watched him, still wild-eyed and fearful, still trembling. She was holding her baby close to her breast. Her long, heavy hair smothered her shoulders and arms in a dark, lustrous veil that glistened and rippled in the firelight when she moved. Her young face was scarcely a woman's tonight, though she was a mother. She looked like a child.

Old Pierre, her father, laughed as he threw down the last armful of fuel, and stood breathing hard.

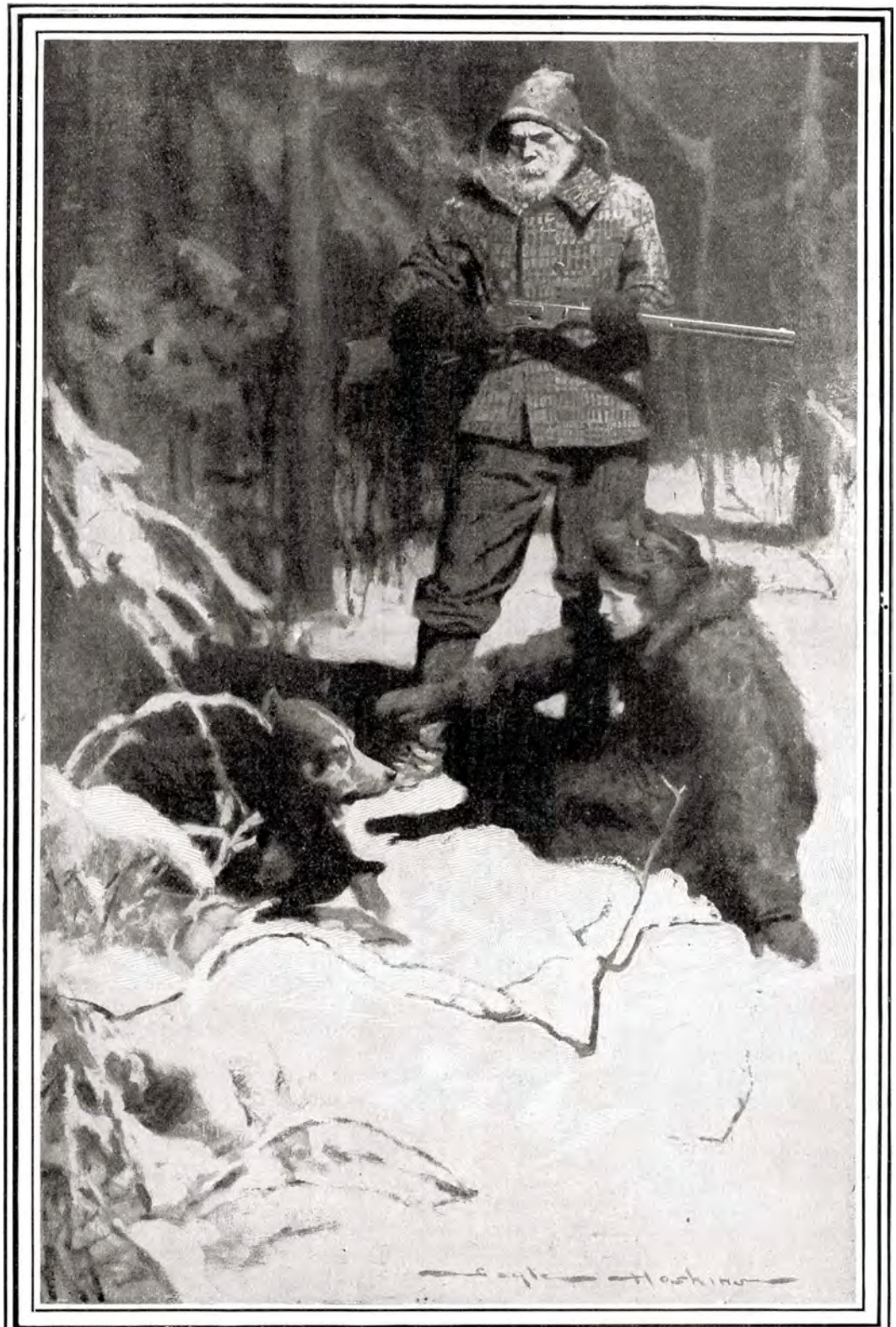
"It was close, *ma cheri,*" he panted through his white beard. "We were nearer to death out there on the plain than we will ever be again, I hope. But we are comfortable now, and warm. Eh? You are no longer afraid?"

He sat down beside his daughter, and gently pulled back the soft fur that enveloped the bundle she held in her arms. He could see one pink cheek of baby Joan. The eyes of Joan, the mother, were like stars.

"It was the baby who saved us," she whispered. "The dogs were being torn to pieces by the wolves, and I saw them leaping upon you, when one of them sprang to the sledge. At first I thought it was one of the dogs. But it was a wolf. He tore once at us, and the bearskin saved us. He was almost at my throat when baby cried, and then he stood there, his red eyes a foot from us, and I could have sworn again that he was a dog. In an instant he turned, and was fighting the wolves. I saw him leap upon one that was almost at your throat."

"He *was* a dog," said old Pierre, holding out his hands to the warmth. "They often wander away from the posts, and join the wolves. I have had dogs do that. *Ma cheri*, a dog is a dog all his life. Kicks, abuse, even the wolves cannot change him—for long. He was one of the pack. He came with them—to kill. But when he found *us*—"

"He fought for us," breathed the girl. She gave him the bundle, and stood up,



The man stood prepared, but not threatening. "Be careful, Joan!" he warned. She dropped on her knees in the snow, just out of reach. "Come, boy—come," she said gently, and held out her hand to Kazan.

straight, and tall, and slim in the firelight. She was twenty. She looked younger, save for something that shone strangely out of her eyes. There were age and the grief of hard experience hidden there. "He fought for us—and he was terribly hurt," she said. "I saw him drag himself away. Father, if he is out there—dying—"

Pierre Radisson stood up. He coughed in a shuddering way, trying to stifle the sound under his beard. The fleck of crimson that came to his lips with the cough Joan did not see. She had seen nothing of it during the six days they had been traveling up from the edge of civilization toward the old home deep in the wilderness, where Pierre trapped and hunted in season. Because of that cough, and the stain that came with it, Pierre had made more than ordinary haste.

"I have been thinking of that," he said. "He was badly hurt, and I do not think he went far. Here—take little Joan and sit close to the fire until I come back."

The moon and the stars were brilliant in the sky when he went out in the plain. A short distance from the edge of the timber-line he stood for a moment upon the spot where the wolves had overtaken them an hour before. Not one of his four dogs had lived. The snow was red with their blood, and their bodies lay stiff where they had fallen under the pack. Pierre shuddered as he looked at them. If the wolves had not turned their first mad attack upon the dogs, what would have become of himself, Joan, and the baby? He turned away, with another of those hollow coughs that brought the blood to his lips.

A few yards to one side he found in the snow the trail of the strange dog that had come with the wolves, and had turned against them in that moment when all seemed lost. It was not a clean, running trail. It was more of a furrow in the snow, and Pierre Radisson followed it, expecting to find the dog dead at the end of it.

II

In the sheltered spot to which he had dragged himself in the edge of the forest Kazan lay for a long time after the fight, alert and watchful. He felt no very great pain. But he had lost the power to stand upon his legs. His flanks seemed paralyzed. Gray Wolf, the young wolf-mate who had come to him as her first master, crouched close at his side, sniffing the air. They could smell the camp, and Kazan could detect the two things that were there—*man* and *woman*. Even in his helplessness he snarled at the man-scent. It was the thing above all else in the world that he hated.

It was man who had clubbed him, and lashed him, and turned him into that despised thing of the sledge-team—a "bad dog"—until at last the quarter-strain of wolf in him had rebelled, and he had joined the hunt-packs of the forest and the plain. All his life man had hurt him, and he would always remember that it was man, his deadliest enemy, who had hurt the only two things he had ever loved: a woman who long ago had laid her hand on his head, and talked to him, and loved him; and Gray Wolf, his mate.

It was he, Kazan—urged on by that wild instinct that called for vengeance—who had led the wolves in the man-hunt after old Pierre and his daughter. And the chase had brought Kazan to the very throat of that which was even more a part of his being than Gray Wolf, or the stars and the moon—a woman, and he had fought more fiercely for her than he had pursued his enemy, the man.

Kazan could smell her in the air now. He knew that she was there, where he could see the glow of the firelight through the spruce and the cedars. He wanted to go to her. He wanted to drag himself close in to the fire, and take Gray Wolf with him, and listen to her voice, and feel the touch of her hand. But the man was there, and to him man had always meant the club, the whip, pain, death.

Gray Wolf crouched close to his side, and whined softly as she urged Kazan to flee deeper with her into the forest. At last she understood that he could not move, and she ran nervously out into the plain, and back again, until her foot-

prints were thick in the trail she made. The instincts of matehood were strong in her. She had no desire to follow the pack. She too, had fought it when she had seen her mate snapping and tearing in the face of it. It was she who first saw Pierre Radisson coming over their trail, and she ran swiftly back to Kazan and gave the warning.

Then Kazan caught the scent, and he saw the shadowy figure coming through the starlight. He tried to drag himself back, but he could only move by inches. The man came rapidly nearer. Kazan caught the glisten of the rifle in his hand. He heard his hollow cough, and the tread of his feet in the snow. Gray Wolf crouched shoulder to shoulder with him, trembling and showing her teeth. When Pierre had approached within fifty feet of them she slunk back into the deeper shadows of the spruce.

Kazan's fangs were bared menacingly when Pierre stopped and looked down at him. With an effort he dragged himself to his feet, but fell back into the snow again. The man leaned his rifle against a sapling and bent over him fearlessly. With a fierce growl Kazan snapped at his extended hands. To his surprise the man did not pick up a stick or a club. He held out his hand again—cautiously—and spoke in a voice new to Kazan. The dog snapped again, and growled.

The man persisted, talking to him all the time, and once his mittened hand touched Kazan's head, and escaped before the jaws could reach it. Again and again the man reached out his hand, and three times Kazan felt the touch of it, and there was neither threat nor hurt in it. At last Pierre turned away and went back over the trail.

When he was out of sight and hearing, Kazan whined, and the crest along his spine flattened. He looked wistfully toward the glow of the fire. The man had not hurt him, and the three-quarters of him that was dog wanted to follow.

Gray Wolf came back, and stood with stiffly planted forefeet at his side. She had never been this near to man before, except when the pack had overtaken the sledge out on the plain. She could not understand. Every instinct that was in her warned her that he was the most dangerous of all things, more to be feared than the strongest beasts, the storms, the floods, cold and starvation. And yet this man had not harmed her mate. She sniffed at Kazan's back and head, where the mittened hand had touched. Then she trotted back into the darkness again, for beyond the edge of the forest she once more saw moving life.

The man was returning, and with him was the girl. Her voice was soft and sweet, and there was about her the breath and sweetness of woman. The man stood prepared, but not threatening.

"Be careful, Joan," he warned.

She dropped on her knees in the snow, just out of reach.

"Come, boy—come!" she said gently. She held out her hand. Kazan's muscles twitched. He moved an inch—two inches toward her. There was the old light in her eyes and face now, the love and gentleness he had known once before, when another woman with shining hair and eyes had come into his life. "Come!" she whispered, as she saw him move, and she bent a little nearer, reached a little farther with her hand, and at last touched his head.

Pierre knelt beside her. He was proffering something, and Kazan smelled meat. But it was the girl's hand that made him tremble and shiver, and when she drew back, urging him to follow her, he dragged himself painfully a foot or two through the snow. Not until then did the girl see his mangled leg. In an instant she had forgotten all caution, and was down close at his side.

"He can't walk," she cried, a sudden tremble in her voice. "Look, *mon père!* Here is a terrible cut. We must carry him."

"I guessed that much," replied Radisson. "For that reason I brought the blanket. Mon Dieu, listen to that!"

From the darkness of the forest there came a low, wailing cry.

Kazan lifted his head and a trembling whine answered in his throat.

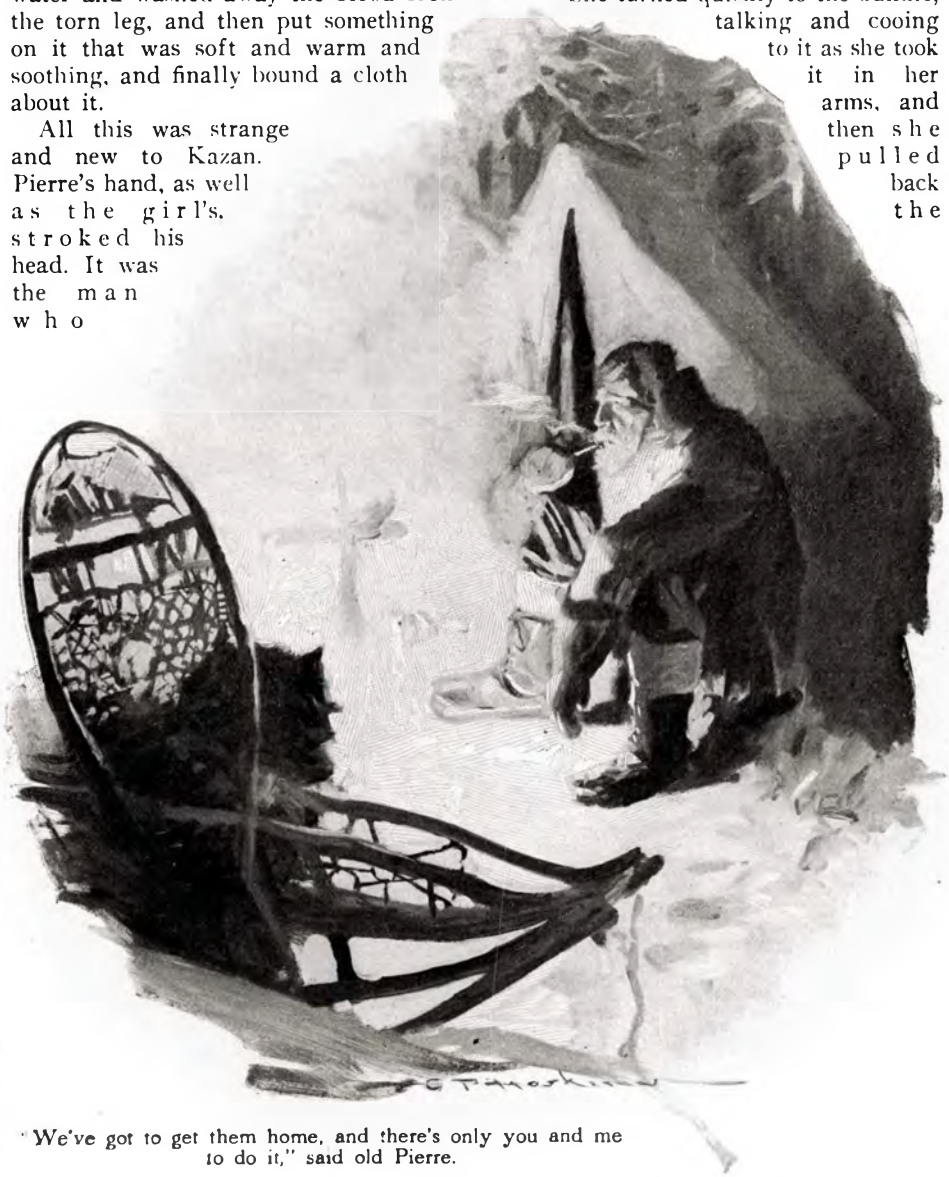
It was Gray Wolf calling to him.

III

It was a miracle that Pierre Radisson should put the blanket about Kazan, and carry him in to the camp, without scratch or bite. It was this miracle that he achieved, with Joan's arm resting on Kazan's shaggy neck as she held one end of the blanket. They laid him down close to the fire, and after a little it was the man again who brought warm water and washed away the blood from the torn leg, and then put something on it that was soft and warm and soothing, and finally bound a cloth about it.

All this was strange and new to Kazan. Pierre's hand, as well as the girl's, stroked his head. It was the man who brought him a gruel of meal and tallow, and urged him to eat, while Joan sat with her chin in her two hands, looking at the dog, and talking to him. After this, when he was quite comfortable, and no longer afraid, he heard a strange, small cry from the furry bundle on the sledge that brought his head up with a jerk.

Joan saw the movement, and heard the low answering whimper in his throat. She turned quickly to the bundle, talking and cooing to it as she took it in her arms, and then she pulled back the



"We've got to get them home, and there's only you and me to do it," said old Pierre.

gray lynx skin so that Kazan could see. He had never seen a baby before, and Joan held it out before him, so that he could look straight at it and see what a wonderful creature it was. Its little pink face stared steadily at Kazan. Its tiny fists reached out, and it made queer little sounds at him, and then suddenly it kicked and screamed with delight, and laughed. At those sounds Kazan's whole body relaxed, and he dragged himself to the girl's feet.

"See, he likes the baby!" she cried. "*Mon père*, we must give him a name. What shall it be?"

"Wait until morning for that," replied her father. "It is late, Joan. Go into the tent, and sleep. We have no dogs now, and will travel slowly. So we must start early."

With her hand on the tent-flap, Joan turned.

"He came with the wolves," she said. "Let us call him Wolf." With one arm she was holding the little Joan. The other she stretched out to Kazan. "Wolf! Wolf!" she called softly.

Kazan's eyes were on her. He knew that she was speaking to him, and he drew himself a foot toward her.

"He knows it already!" she cried. "Good night, *mon père*."

For a long time after she had gone into the tent, old Pierre Radisson sat on the edge of the sledge, facing the fire, with Kazan at his feet. Suddenly the silence was broken again by Gray Wolf's lonely howl deep in the forest. Kazan lifted his head, and whined.

"She's calling for you, boy," said Pierre understandingly.

He coughed, and clutched a hand to his breast, where the pain seemed rending him.

"Frost-bitten lung," he said, speaking straight at Kazan. "Got it early in the winter, up at Fond du Lac. Hope we'll get home—in time—with the kids."

In the loneliness and emptiness of the big northern wilderness one falls into the habit of talking to oneself. But Kazan's head was alert, and his eyes watchful, so Pierre spoke to him.

"We've got to get them home, and there's only you and me to do it," he said, twisting his beard. Suddenly he clenched his fists. "Good Virgin, how I wish I'd killed that man before I ever let him take my Joan away! He made her believe that he loved her, Wolf. But he didn't—not half so much as that wild mate of yours out there loves you. But she was pretty—our Joan. He was from the cities away to the south, and he took her there. And after that—*Mon Dieu!*—such abuse I would not give to a dog! He starved her, and beat her every day of her life, and got so drunk that he fell in front of a train and was killed just before the baby was born. And then—for nearly a year—she didn't let us know, until at last I found out, and—here we are—Wolf—going home."

His hollow, racking cough convulsed him again.

"Home!" he panted, clutching his chest. "It's eighty miles straight north—to the Churchill—and I pray to God we'll get there—with the kids—before my lungs give out."

He rose to his feet, and staggered a little as he walked. There was a collar about Kazan's neck, and he chained him to the sledge. After that he dragged three or four small logs upon the fire, and went quietly into the tent where Joan and the baby were already asleep. Three or four times that night Kazan heard the distant voice of Gray Wolf calling for her lost mate, but something told him that he must not answer it now. Toward dawn Gray Wolf came close in to the camp, and for the first time Kazan replied to her.

His howl awakened the man. He came out of the tent, peered for a few moments up at the sky, built up the fire, and began to prepare breakfast. He patted Kazan on the head, and gave him a chunk of meat. Joan came out a few moments later, leaving the baby asleep in the tent. She ran up and kissed Pierre, and then dropped down on her knees beside Kazan, and talked to him almost as he had heard her talk to the baby. When she jumped up to help her father, Kazan followed her, and when Joan saw him standing firmly upon his legs she gave a cry of pleasure.

It was a strange journey that began into the north that day. Pierre Radisson emptied the sledge of everything but the tent, blankets, food, and the furry nest for baby Joan. Then he harnessed himself in the traces and dragged the sledge over the snow. He coughed incessantly.

"It's a cough I've had half the winter," lied Pierre, careful that Joan saw no sign of blood on his lips or beard. "I'll keep in the cabin for a week when we get home."

Even Kazan, with that strange beast knowledge which man, unable to explain, calls instinct, knew that what he said was not the truth. Perhaps it was largely because he had heard other men cough like this, and that for generations his sledge-dog ancestors had heard men cough as Radisson coughed—and had learned what followed it.

More than once he had scented death in tepees and cabins, which he had not entered, and more than once he had sniffed at the mystery of death that was not quite present, but near—just as he had caught at a distance the subtle warning of storm and of fire. And that strange thing seemed to be very near to him now, as he followed at the end of his chain behind the sledge. It made him restless, and half a dozen times, when the sledge stopped, he sniffed at the bit of humanity buried in the bear skin. Each time that he did this Joan was quickly at his side, and twice she patted his scarred and grizzled head until every drop of blood in his body leaped riotously with a joy which his body did not reveal.

This day the chief thing that he came to understand was that the little creature on the sledge was very precious to the girl who stroked his head and talked to him, and that it was very helpless. He learned, too, that Joan was most delighted, and that her voice was softer and thrilled him more deeply, when he paid attention to that little, warm, living thing in the bear skin.

For a long time after they made camp Pierre Radisson sat beside the fire. Tonight he did not smoke. He stared straight into the flames. When at last he rose to go into the tent with the girl and the baby, he bent over Kazan and examined his hurt.

"You've got to work in the traces tomorrow, boy," he said. "We must make the river by to-morrow night. If we don't—"

He did not finish. He was choking back one of those tearing coughs when the tent-flap dropped behind him. Kazan lay stiff and alert, his eyes filled with a strange anxiety. He did not like to see Radisson enter the tent, for stronger than ever there hung that oppressive mystery in the air about him, and it seemed to be a part of Pierre.

Three times that night he heard faithful Gray Wolf calling for him deep in the forest, and each time he answered her. Toward dawn she came in close to camp. Once he caught the scent of her when she circled round in the wind, and he tugged and whined at the end of his chain, hoping that she would come in and lie down at his side. But no sooner had Radisson moved in the tent than Gray Wolf was gone. The man's face was thinner, and his eyes were redder this morning. His cough was not so loud or so rending. It was like a wheeze, as if something had given way inside, and before the girl came out he clutched his hands often at his throat. Joan's face whitened when she saw him. Anxiety gave way to fear in her eyes. Pierre Radisson laughed when she flung her arms about him, and coughed to prove that what he said was true.

"You see the cough is not so bad, my Joan," he said. "It is breaking up. You cannot have forgotten, *ma cheri?* It always leaves one red-eyed and weak."

It was a cold, bleak, dark day that followed, and through it Kazan and the man tugged at the fore of the sledge, with Joan following in the trail behind. Kazan's wound no longer hurt him. He pulled steadily with all his splendid strength, and the man never lashed him once, but patted him with his mittened hand on head and back. The day grew steadily darker and in the tops of the trees there was the low moaning of a storm.

Darkness and the coming of the storm did not drive Pierre Radisson into camp.

"We must reach the river," he said to himself, over and over again. "We must reach the river—we must reach the river—" And he steadily urged Kazan on to greater effort, while his own strength at the end of the traces grew less.

It had begun to storm when Pierre stopped to build a fire at noon. The snow fell straight down in a white deluge so thick that it hid the tree trunks fifty yards away. Pierre laughed when Joan shivered and snuggled close up to him with the baby in her arms. He waited only an hour, and then fastened Kazan in the traces again, and buckled the straps once more about his own waist. In the silent gloom that was almost night Pierre carried his compass in his hand, and at last, late in the afternoon, they came to a break in the timber-line, and ahead of them lay a plain, across which Radisson pointed an exultant hand.

"There's the river, Joan," he said, his voice faint and husky. "We can camp here now and wait for the storm to pass."

Under a thick clump of spruce he put up the tent, and then began gathering firewood. Joan helped him. As soon as they had boiled coffee and eaten a supper of meat and toasted biscuits, Joan went into the tent and dropped exhausted on her thick bed of balsam boughs, wrapping herself and the baby up close in the skins and blankets. To-night she had no word for Kazan. And Pierre was glad that she was too tired to sit beside the fire and talk. And yet—

Kazan's alert eyes saw him start suddenly. He rose from his seat on the sledge and went to the tent. He drew back the flap and thrust in his head and shoulders.

"Asleep, Joan?" he asked.

"Almost, Father. Wont you please come—soon?"

"After I smoke," he said. "Are you comfortable?"

"Yes. I'm so tired—and—sleepy—"

Pierre laughed softly. In the darkness he was gripping at his throat.

"We're almost home, Joan. That is our river out there—the Little Beaver. If I should run away and leave you to-night you could follow it right to our cabin. It's only forty miles. Do you hear?"

"Yes—I know—"

"Forty miles—straight down the river. You couldn't lose yourself, Joan. Only you'd have to be careful of air-holes in the ice."

"Wont you come to bed, Father? You're tired—and almost sick."

"Yes—after I smoke," he repeated. "Joan, will you keep reminding me to-morrow of the air-holes? I might forget. You can always tell them, for the snow and the crust over them is whiter than that on the rest of the ice, and like a sponge. Will you remember—the air-holes—"

"Yes-s-s-s—"

Pierre dropped the tent-flap and returned to the fire. He staggered as he walked.

"Good-night, boy," he said. "Guess I'd better go in with the kids. Two days more—forty miles—two days—"

Kazan watched him as he entered the tent. He laid his weight against the end of his chain until the collar shut off his wind. His legs and back twitched. In that tent where Radisson had gone were Joan and the baby. He knew that Pierre would not hurt them, but he knew also that with Pierre Radisson something terrible and impending was hovering very near to them. He wanted the man outside—by the fire—where he could lie still, and watch him.

In the tent there was silence. Nearer to him than before came Gray Wolf's cry. Each night she was calling earlier, and coming closer to the camp. He wanted her very near to him to-night, but he did not even whine in response. He dared not break that strange silence in the tent. He lay still for a long time, tired and lame from the day's journey, but sleepless. The fire burned lower; the wind in the tree-tops died away; and the thick, gray clouds rolled like a massive curtain from under the skies. The stars began to glow white and metallic, and from far in the north there came faintly a crisping, moaning sound, like steel sleigh-runners running over frosty snow—the mysterious monotone of the

Northern Lights. After that it grew steadily and swiftly colder.

To-night Gray Wolf did not compass herself by the direction of the wind. She followed like a sneaking shadow over the trail Pierre Radisson had made, and when Kazan heard her again, long after midnight, he lay with his head erect, and his body rigid, save for a curious twitching of his muscles. There was a new note in Gray Wolf's voice, a wailing note in which there was more than the mate-call. It was The Message. And at the sound of it Kazan rose from out of his silence and his fear, and with his head turned straight up to the sky he howled as the wild dogs of the north howl before the tepees of masters who are newly dead.

For Pierre Radisson was dead.

IV

It was dawn when the baby snuggled close to Joan's warm breast and awakened her with its cry of hunger. She opened her eyes, brushed back the thick hair from her face, and could see where the shadowy form of her father was lying at the other side of the tent. He was very quiet, and she was pleased that he was still sleeping. She knew that the day before he had been very near to exhaustion, and so for half an hour longer she lay quiet, cooing softly to the baby Joan. Then she rose cautiously, tucked the baby in the warm blankets and furs, put on her heavier garments, and went outside.

By this time it was broad day, and she breathed a sigh of relief when she saw that the storm had passed. It was bitterly cold. It seemed to her that she had never known it to be so cold in all her life. The fire was completely out. Kazan was huddled in a round ball, his nose tucked under his body. He raised his head, shivering, as Joan came out. With her heavily moccasined foot Joan scattered the ashes and charred sticks where the fire had been. There was not a spark left. In returning to the tent she stopped for a moment beside Kazan, and patted his shaggy head.

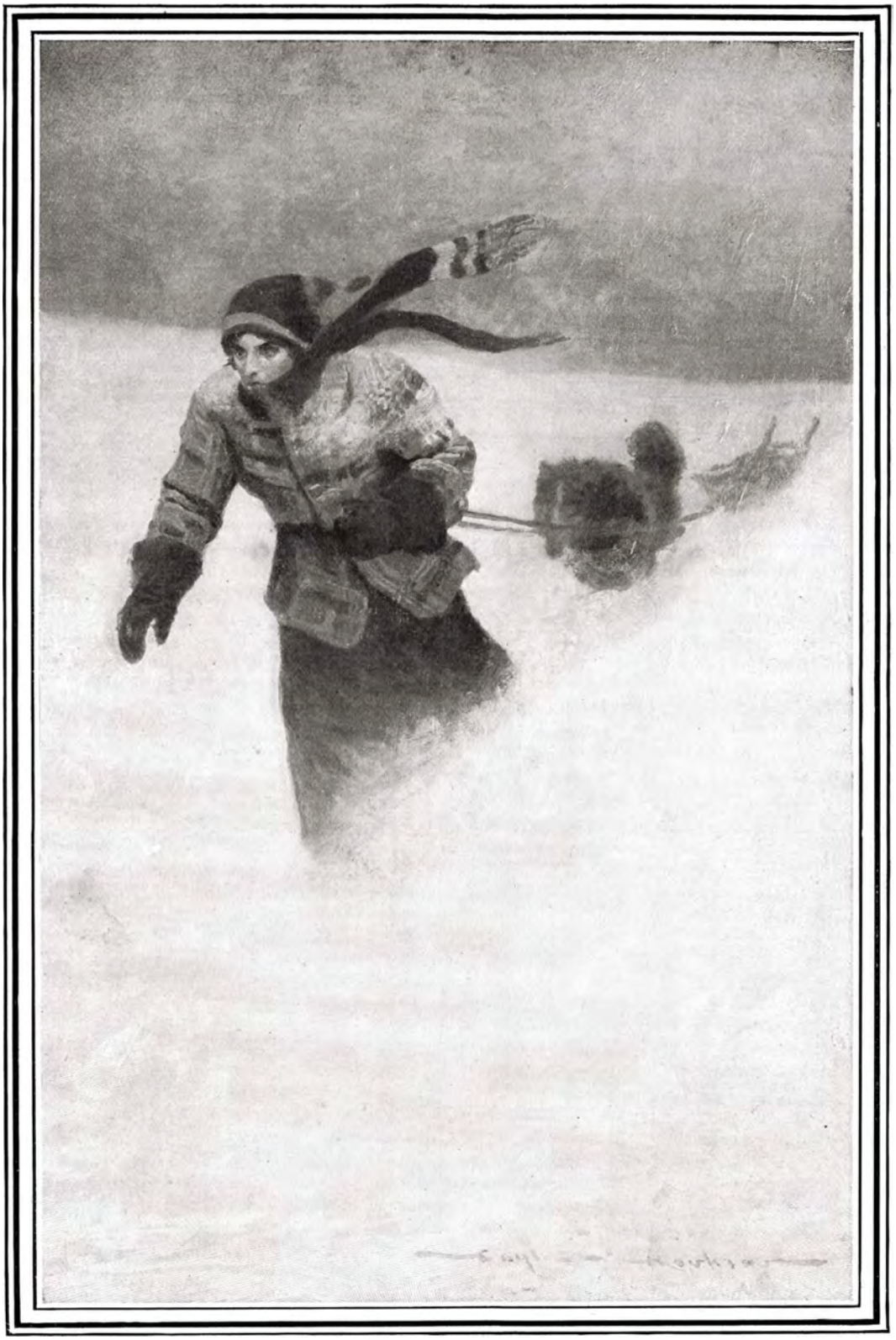
"Poor Wolf!" she said. "I wish I had given you one of the bear skins!"

She threw back the tent-flap and entered. For the first time she saw her father's face in the light—and outside, Kazan heard the terrible, moaning cry that broke from her lips. No one could have looked at Pierre Radisson's face once—and not have understood.

After that one agonizing cry, Joan flung herself upon her father's breast, sobbing so softly that even Kazan's sharp ears heard no sound. She remained there in her grief until every vital energy of womanhood and motherhood in her girlish body was roused to action by the wailing cry of baby Joan. Then she sprang to her feet and ran out through the tent opening. Kazan tugged at the end of his chain to meet her, but she saw nothing of him now. The terror of the wilderness is greater than that of death, and in an instant it had fallen upon Joan. It was not because of fear for herself. It was the baby. The wailing cries from the tent pierced her like knife-thrusts.

And then, all at once, there came to her what old Pierre had said the night before—his words about the river, the air-holes, the home forty miles away. *"You couldn't lose yourself, Joan."* He had guessed what might happen.

She bundled the baby deep in the furs and returned to the fire-bed. Her one thought now was that they must have fire. She made a little pile of birch bark, covered it with half-burned bits of wood, and went into the tent for the matches. Pierre Radisson carried them in a water-proof box in a pocket of his bearskin coat. She sobbed as she kneeled beside him again, and secured the box. As the fire flared up she added other bits of wood, and then some of the larger pieces that Pierre had dragged into camp. The fire gave her courage. Forty miles—and the river led to their home! She must make that, with the baby and Wolf. For the first time she turned to him, and spoke his name as she put her hand on his head. After that she gave him a chunk of meat which she thawed out over the fire, and melted snow for tea. She was not hungry, but she recalled how her father had made her eat four and five times a day, so she forced



Joan put Kazan in the traces, and fastened about her slender waist the strap that Pierre had used. Thus they struck out for the river, floundering knee-deep in the freshly fallen and drifted snow.

herself to make a breakfast of a biscuit, a shred of meat, and as much hot tea as she could drink.

The terrible hour she dreaded followed that. She wrapped blankets closely about her father's body, and tied them with *babiche* cord. After that she piled all the furs and blankets that remained on the sledge close to the fire, and snuggled baby Joan deep down in them. Pulling down the tent was a task. The ropes were stiff and frozen, and when she had done, one of her hands was bleeding. She piled the tent on the sledge, and then, half covering her face, turned and looked back.

Pierre Radisson lay on his balsam bed, with nothing over him now but the gray sky and the spruce tops. Kazan stood stiff-legged and sniffed the air. His spine bristled when Joan went back slowly and kneeled beside the blanket-wrapped object. When she returned to him her face was white and tense, and now there was a strange and terrible look in her eyes as she stared out across the barren. She put him in the traces, and fastened about her slender waist the strap that Pierre had used. Thus they struck out for the river, floundering knee-deep in the freshly fallen and drifted snow. Half way Joan stumbled in a drift and fell, her loose hair flying in a shimmering veil over the snow. With a mighty pull Kazan was at her side, and his cold muzzle touched her face as she drew herself to her feet. For a moment Joan took his shaggy head between her two hands.

"Wolf!" she moaned. "Oh, Wolf!"

She went on, her breath coming pantingly now, even from her brief exertion. The snow was not so deep on the ice of the river. But a wind was rising. It came from the north and east, straight in her face, and Joan bowed her head as she pulled with Kazan. Half a mile down the river she stopped, and no longer could she repress the hopelessness that rose to her lips in a sobbing, choking cry. Forty miles! She clutched her hands at her breast, and stood breathing like one that had been beaten, her back to the wind. Baby Joan was quiet. She went back and peered down under the furs, and what she saw there spurred her on again almost fiercely. Twice she stumbled to her knees in the drifts during the next quarter of a mile.

After that there was a stretch of wind-swept ice, and Kazan pulled the sledge alone. Joan walked at his side. There was a pain in her chest. A thousand needles seemed pricking her face, and suddenly she remembered the thermometer. She exposed it for a time on the top of the tent. When she looked at it a few minutes later it was thirty degrees below zero. Forty miles! And her father had told her that she could make it—and could not lose herself! But she did not know that even her father would have been afraid to face the north that day, with the temperature at thirty below, and a moaning wind bringing the first warning of a blizzard.

The timber was far behind her now. Ahead there was nothing but the pitiless barren, and the timber beyond that was hidden by the gray gloom of the day. If there had been trees, Joan's heart would not have choked so with terror. But there was nothing—nothing but that gray, ghostly gloom, with the rim of the sky touching the earth a mile away.

The snow grew heavy under her feet again. Always she was watching for those treacherous, frost-coated traps in the ice her father had spoken of. But she found now that all the ice and snow looked alike to her, and that there was a growing pain back of her eyes. It was the intense cold.

The river widened into a small lake, and here the wind struck her in the face with such force that her weight was taken from the strap, and Kazan dragged the sledge alone. A few inches of snow impeded her as much as a foot had done before. Little by little she dropped back. Kazan forged to her side, every ounce of his magnificent strength in the traces. By the time they were on the river channel again, Joan was at the back of the sledge, following in the trail made by Kazan. She was powerless to help him. She felt more and more the leaden weight of her legs. There was but one hope—and that was the forest. If they did not reach it soon, within half

an hour, she would be able to go no farther. Over and over again she moaned a prayer for her baby as she struggled on. She fell in the snowdrifts. Kazan and the sledge became only a dark blotch to her. And then, all at once, she saw that they were leaving her. They were not more than twenty feet ahead of her —but the blotch seemed to be a vast distance away. Every bit of life and strength in her body was now bent upon reaching the sledge—and baby Joan.

It seemed an interminable time before she gained. With the sledge only six feet ahead of her she struggled for what seemed to her to be an hour before she could reach out and touch it. With a moan she flung herself forward, and fell upon it. She no longer heard the wailing of the storm. She no longer felt discomfort. With her face in the furs under which baby Joan was buried, there came to her with swiftness and joy a vision of warmth and home. And then the vision faded away, and was followed by deep night.

Kazan stopped in the trail. He came back then and sat down upon his haunches beside her, waiting for her to move and speak. But she was very still. He thrust his nose into her loose hair. A whine rose in his throat, and suddenly he raised his head and sniffed in the face of the wind. Something came to him with that wind. He muzzled Joan again, but she did not stir. Then he went forward, and stood in his traces, ready for the pull, and looked back at her. Still she did not move or speak, and Kazan's whine gave place to a sharp, excited bark.

The strange thing in the wind came to him stronger for a moment. He began to pull. The sledge-runners had frozen to the snow, and it took every ounce of his strength to free them. Twice during the next five minutes he stopped and sniffed the air. The third time that he halted, in a drift of snow, he returned to Joan's side again, and whined to awaken her. Then he tugged again at the end of his traces, and foot by foot he dragged the sledge through the drift. Beyond the drift there was a stretch of clear ice, and here Kazan rested. During a lull in the wind the scent came to him stronger than before.

At the end of the clear ice was a narrow break in the shore, where a creek ran into the main stream. If Joan had been conscious she would have urged him straight ahead. But Kazan turned into the break, and for ten minutes he struggled through the snow without a rest, whining more and more frequently, until at last the whine broke into a joyous bark. Ahead of him, close to the creek, was a small cabin. Smoke was rising out of the chimney. It was the scent of smoke that had come to him in the wind. A hard, level slope reached to the cabin door, and with the last strength that was in him Kazan dragged his burden up that. Then he settled himself back beside Joan, lifted his shaggy head to the dark sky, and howled.

A moment later the door opened. A man came out. Kazan's reddened, snow-shot eyes followed him watchfully as he ran to the sledge. He heard his startled exclamation as he bent over Joan. In another lull of the wind there came from out of the mass of furs on the sledge the wailing, half-smothered voice of baby Joan.

A deep sigh of relief heaved up from Kazan's chest. He was exhausted. His strength was gone. His feet were torn and bleeding. But the voice of baby Joan filled him with a strange happiness, and he lay down in his traces, while the man carried Joan and the baby into the life and warmth of the cabin.

A few minutes later the man reappeared. He was not old, like Pierre Radisson. He did not carry a club, or a whip. He came close to Kazan, and looked down at him.

"My God," he said. "And you did that —*alone!*"

He bent down fearlessly, unfastened him from the traces, and led him toward the cabin door. Kazan hesitated but once —almost on the threshold. He turned his head, swift and alert. From out of the moaning and wailing of the storm it seemed to him that for a moment he had heard the voice of Gray Wolf.

Then the cabin door closed behind him.

Fine October Weather

Another Pattensburg Story

by

RAYMOND LEE HARRIMAN

Author of "Ote Leads Hearts," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY FREDERICK RICHARDSON

AS Clem Willobee, clerk at the Olympic Hotel, came out upon the veranda to join me in a good-night smoke, he stopped and sniffed the air, remarking:

"It's Septembery and bland, but there's a mischievous Octoberish nip in it somewheres or I miss my guess."

Clem sniffed again, slid into a creaking wicker chair by my side, tipped his *passé* straw hat over his eyes and comfortably caressed a peaked knee. Pattensburg slumbered. Now and then I caught glimpses of Clem's wan, dim smile; I always enjoyed watching it come and go, for it so happily suggested his humorous love and tolerance of life, people and things.

"Summer's done for," Clem reflected. "Autumn's right on our heels. Strange, too, when I noticed the air just now, warm and nippy both at the same time. Strange—and agreeable, I must say. Somebody came with it; it seemed for just an instant that she'd crept right up by my side and—and surprised me. You know how one thing brings back another, suddenly. Well, this girl and that first Octoberish touch came along together as if they were one and the same spirit. Startled me a little."

He became thoughtfully silent. I waited, five, ten, fifteen minutes, possibly, before he spoke again. Then he ruminated:

"Take romance, now; taint romance at all while you're having it, seems to me. While it's going on you don't know it. There aint any way to tell whether it's romance or just plain, ordinary day's routine. But you always do find out after while—when it's gone and

can't ever be got back, and regrets set in; if regrets set in you can be sure 'twas romance.

"I had *my* tweak of 'em just a few minutes ago when,"—Clem chuckled—"when I thought of Sophy Dell. Sophy'd like the idea if she knew how she and October just tip-toed up and nudged me in the ribs and said: 'Remember, Clem, remember?'

"Sophy and I were in the same class at High School. She was sweet then, but not over-noticeable. At least I didn't think so. I recall when we had the graduation exercises at the opera house and Sophy was down on the program to play the piano, how high-strung she was about it. The whole crowd of us was standing behind the scenes waiting to file on the stage and Sophy came up and held out her hands to me:

"'Oh! Clem, they're cold as ice. I'll never, never be able to play. See.'

"I just touched the tips of her fingers and murmured: 'Uh-huh. Brace up, Sophy. Soon's you get started you'll sail through it all right.'

"Holding her hands didn't get a ripple of interest out of me—then. But later—well, a few years made a vast difference in Sophy.

"After High School I knuckled down to work and Sophy went to Boston to a conservatory where she could put the finishing touches to her musical education. And that was the last I saw of her for about three or four years. She didn't come to Pattensburg summers, because, I understand, she played at some seashore or other in vacations to help defray. Sophy's folks are fairly well-to-do, but I guess they couldn't spare much along the line of piano-lessons. While you can get a good piano-lesson in Pattensburg for a dollar, they come much higher in the big cities, I'm informed.

"Anyhow, Sophy finally managed to get a diploma showing that she'd covered considerable musical ground. Then back she came to Pattensburg and opened a studio in the Odd Fellows' Building with her name on the door and other professional looking information. It certainly was fixed up nice; it had a hushed, tempermental, serious atmosphere which impressed folks that lessons dispensed there were the genuine article. Pattensburg took to Sophy.

"Including myself. She hadn't been back more'n a day or so when she happened to walk by. I was sitting right here on the piazza and she called out:

"'How do you do, Clem?'

"I jumped up, grinning like a full moon, and stared. Didn't exactly place her for a moment. But soon's I got sense, didn't I just skip across the street to her? You bet I did. We shook hands and I kept saying:

"'You aint Sophy Dell, are you? You aint Sophy?'

"She said: 'Yes, I'm Sophy.'

"I said: 'Well—well—well, you're Sophy.'

"She was amazing. Tall and slender and supple, sure of her clothes, sure of the way she stood on her feet—but that wasn't *it*. Not looks; it was what she *was*, what she'd become to be.

"A nimble, warm spirit had grown into her; nothing to see, but something to feel and wonder about; every flicker of it was expressed in little gestures, motions of the eyes and lips and hands, quick and quiet—woman's signals. To tell the truth, I got somewhat snarled up at first—Sophy's personality was so artistic—womanly artistic, I mean—and complex.

"'Gee whiz!' thinks I, 'as soon as the Pattensburg fellows set eyes on Sophy there'll be a big rush to get re-acquainted. Clemmy, old boy, in view of the fact that you haven't any superior advantages, you better get as early a start's possible.'

"So I remarked to Sophy:

"'Buggy-riding's still pretty popular in Pattensburg, in spite of automobiles.'

"Sophy tilted her head to one side and said:

"'Yes?'

"'Are you going to settle down here for good?' I asked.

"Sophy smiled and nodded.

"'Well,' I went on, 'you don't dislike buggy-riding do you?'

"Sophy said she didn't.

"'Let's make it Thursday afternoon,' I suggested.

" 'Thank you so much,' Sophy replied, 'but really, Clem, I'm so busy fixing up my new studio, and besides, Mother and Father wish me to spend all the time I can with them my first week or so home. I've been away so much, you know. But it's nice and thoughtful of you to ask.'

" 'Hm,' said I. 'Well—let's see. Maybe I'll call some evening. How's that?'

" 'Please do,' said Sophy, and she was cordial, too.

"I went back across the street and plunked down on the piazza with a sort of frustrated sensation. I think I was a little scared, besides, for good measure. Yes, I *was* scared, so to speak, for I could see, plain as day, that somebody with better execution than I had, would be coming along pretty soon and engage a good deal of Sophy's interest. Sophy wouldn't be allowed to languish in Pattensburg—or anywhere else, for that matter—not for any longer than it would take for somebody to discover she was here. When I thought of Sophy I thought of rivals—they all just naturally grouped themselves into one idea. I tell you I was depressed right at the start from merely anticipating competition.

"Ten days or more went by, and all this time I hadn't been able to scratch up courage enough to call—mostly on account of the hint Sophy dropped about her folks not wanting to share her with anybody else for the first week or so at home. Then, finally I got my nerve up for a try-out, and, right in line with etiquette rules, at quarter to eight in the evening, I was at Sophy's front door pushing the bell. I got in, too. After which a pleasant evening was spent. But, no conversation of a courting nature was exchanged. As I remember, Sophy and I discussed High School alumnuses mostly—where they'd gone, what they were doing, married or single, character or no character, and so on. It's the regular first formula in Pattensburg. There's just enough of it to string along until ten o'clock.

"Well, I made a little progress after this—one lawn party, two or three buggy-rides, canoeing now and then, occasional flowers to the studio, besides formal calls at the house. Once Mrs. Dell invited me up to supper, and of course that helped make the situation very rubicund. Extremely rubicund. I could feel the augmenting effect, so to speak, a general expansion of faith in my prepossessingness.

"Then one afternoon when we went out driving, Sophy told me her plans for her pupils' recital to be given the latter part of the winter, and wanted me to promise to help with the ushering and so forth.

" 'You bet I will, Sophy,' I responded; 'but aint you looking a good ways ahead? Perhaps we wont be hitting it off so—so friendly's we are now.'

" 'Oh! I'm sure we shall,' said Sophy.

" 'Well, if you're sure—let 'er go,' I said.

"This made me feel a little coltish and tempted me to try out my luck to see 'f 'twould stand any test at all. So, after we'd drove another mile I hinted:

" 'Ahem! I've been thinking a good deal lately of what you might think of me.'

"Sophy drawled out—she had a way of drawling when she wanted to be rather sweet and aggravating:

" 'Have you, Clem?'

" 'Yes, I have,' replied I, importantly, turning my head to look straight into her eyes. She gave me such a steady gaze back, though, that in a minute I had to quit.

" 'I mean it,' I grumbled, staring at the reins. 'I'm serious.'

" 'Of course you are,' said Sophy.

" 'Tell me, then,' I urged, having hot and cold flashes.

" 'You want me to speak very, very frankly?' asked Sophy.

"Her tone was so sober it seemed like a dare. I yanked myself up for a bit to consider the peril hanging over me; I imagine people who faint away feel something as I did then—sinking and on the edge of a sensation like hysterics. I began to doubt the wisdom of getting experimental so early. I had all I could do to keep my teeth from chattering when I answered:

" 'Yes, Sophy, let's have it. Go on—go on; whatever's true I want to know.'

"I took a brace. Sophy folded her hands, looking down into her lap.

"'I think you're a dear, wholesome boy, Clem,' she declared.

"'Giddap!' says I, triumphantly.

"And the next week who should pop up in Pattensburg but Bert Rainey."

Clem knocked his pipe against the veranda railing, poked around the bowl with a match, blew into it, tried the draught and carefully put in a fresh load of tobacco. The last car for East Pattensburg and Tutt's Hill bobbed by with its solitary passenger—the conductor, perched upon the hind end, saluting Clem and calling, "Good night." Then the story continued:

"Yes, sir, here was Bert Rainey in Pattensburg, returned from abroad. The Raineys run back and forth to Europe with no more palpitation about it than I'd have to take that trolley for Tutt's

"Sophy'd like the idea," said Clem, "if she knew how she and October just tip-toed up and nudged me in the ribs and said: 'Remember, Clem, remember?'"

Hill. They're rich. Bert has a couple of automobiles in his own name, wins prizes with bull-dogs, and buys his wearing apparel in London.

"Well—Bert saw Sophy.

"Gee whiz! It took Bert only one week to develop into the heftiest rival you ever set eyes on. The fact of me having a little head start on him didn't cut any ice; Bert has storming-the-citadel kind of methods, a surplus of confidence and the social utensils to do with.

"First off, he treated Sophy to all the pleasures of gasoline. How those two did automobile! In, out and all around Pattensburg they whizzed, on view most any afternoon. And to my observing eye they wore a decidedly getting-on look. Then the Raineys gave a swell dinner party to celebrate being back in Pattensburg—and Sophy was to that—followed by one of those stylish musicales held in the morning before most women in this town get their work done up; next Mrs. Rainey entertained for charity—and Sophy was to that. Believe me, Sophy was in.

"Wasn't Bert the shrewd one, getting his mother to take to Sophy that way? Some organization, wasn't it? By George! Off hand you'd figure that against such team-work I had about as much chance as a nickel-in-the-slot machine has of growing into a department store. But don't get the idea that I quit.

"After my first attack of stage-fright I got all over misgivings about Bert's superior advantages. I discovered that if I concentrated on cultivating my own good points I was less likely to worry about his—which was a good, wholesome thing to learn. As a matter of fact, did Bert have anything on me? Not by a jugful! Passing lightly over the bunch of knick-knacks life hung to him on a Christmas tree, I jammed down the loud pedal where it belonged—on soul. When it came to soul I was ready to step into the ring with him at a moment's notice, and there was no doubt in my mind about my courting experience shading his a little into the bargain. I made soul an issue in the campaign.

"Sentiment gets across as effective as automobiles—if you have a good make. In the course of the year that I struggled for Sophy's affections, I guess I must have delivered enough lectures about the simple things of life, the substantial virtues of the poor, lofty aspirations and such, to start a small Chautauqua. And Sophy joined in; she enjoyed it; she took things just serious enough not to make a business of it. So together we covered a pretty extensive acreage of life-purposes and kindred topics. I've noticed this: a woman wont always marry a high-minded man, but nine times out of ten she'll listen.

"Well, having found my true sphere, so to speak, I worked honestly and faithfully at it, and got encouragement—a substantial kind of encouragement. Nothing could have bolstered my hope up more'n the way Sophy acted about dances, parties and things. She was fair. The winter social season set in, and as it went along, she divided equally between Bert and me. There's only a limited number of big league events in Pattensburg's social schedule and of course both Bert and myself simply scrambled to book Sophy. But she assigned her company like the figure of justice; neither one of us could gain a party on the other. This was true moral support for me.

"In March she gave her first annual recital to display her pupils' progress. It looked to me, when the date was announced, that Sophy had a little dilemma on her hands; for who'd be head usher, Bert or I? A long time back she'd mentioned my being of great assistance when the time came, so I felt like a pretty likely candidate. As a matter of fact she'd made me promise to stand by long before Bert had ever shown up in Pattensburg. Therefore, as I turned the situation over and over, I couldn't see how she'd go back on her own previous arrangements. But did a little detail like that bother Sophy? Oh! no; she was too clever. She just simply made *both* of us head ushers.

"It was a function, I tell you. In order to take the amateury suspicion off the evening, Sophy had hired a girl

violinist with a Russian name and no figure, and a robust young feller who was billed as America's most promising young baritone. These two, and Bert and myself on hand glossed up in evening clothes, gave tone. Sophy was crazy with dinky little details, excited, pretty and important. Odd Fellows' Hall was packed with mothers and fathers, brothers and sisters, uncles and aunts and immediate friends, there for the express business of applauding their respective offspring. The auditorium just throbbed and hummed with one unanimous pride-in-the-human-breast.

"Finally Sophy got the pupils all set down and grouped and quieted and the music was touched off—the darndest assortment you ever saw. As the evening wore on it got successfuller and successfuller; competition among the relatives got hotter'n hotter with each budding performer—and Sophy got prouder'n prouder.

"The Russian lady and the young American baritone gave us what they call an obligato, I think, and got nearly as much applause as home-talent. Then by and by Sophy herself rendered something flashy and difficult—followed by more pupils, the Russian lady again, still more pupils, the young American baritone, and another batch of pupils. And it got late. The kids began to fidget and show signs of being cramped and some of 'em—the little tots—got drowsy.

" 'Now,' thinks I for the millionth time, 'who's going to take Sophy home, me or Bert?'

"This was significant. Because right there concentrated in Odd Fellows' Hall was a large proportion of Pattensburg's public opinion, the feminine, active element especially. See what it meant?

"By now everybody in town was interested in this three-cornered affair between Bert, Sophy and myself. With a feller like Bert Rainey in on it, the situation couldn't help being raised out of the commonplace; Bert lent glamour; and the betting wasn't so much which one of us would win Sophy as this: would she chuck a chance to step into one of Pattensburg's first families for the sake of a poor but honest suitor like me? And here was Pattensburg at Sophy's recital to see what they could see.

"In Sophy's little hour of triumph who'd Sophy turn to, who'd she share her laurels with, Bert or me? By George! 'twas crucial.

"As soon's the program was finished I didn't lose a second in getting around behind the stage. The ante-room joining it was full of pupils, rubbers, congratulations, music-rolls, flowers, hair-ribbons, coats, hats, mufflers, furs and parents, Sophy in the middle of 'em, flushed, bewildered, pretty as a song—happy. I waded in. In front of Sophy was a dumpy little girl jumping up and down and screeching:

" 'Did I do all right, Miss Dell—did I do all right, Miss Dell?'

"I squeezed through the jam and got close to Sophy. Then while the dumpy little girl was getting her breath for another demand for attention, I edged in:

" 'I'll have a carriage around for you as soon's you're ready to go. When'll it be?'

"I waited expectantly. Sophy looked at me in rather a flurried, blank fashion for a moment, then said:

" 'Why—why—thank you so much, Clem; but Mr. Rainey offered his car and I've accepted.'

" 'Did I do all right, Miss Dell—*did* I do all right?' the dumpy little girl yelled again.

"Sophy turned to the youngster, making big eyes as she exclaimed:

" 'Um-um—you were just grand, dear.'

"And there I stood, uncertain, with a big, clammy lump weighing down inside of me. Sophy didn't say another word—forgot I was around, I guess, in the excitement of so many people pulling at her, and talking. So pretty soon I sneaked out—home.

"There was snow on the ground, I remember; it whined under my feet; I felt cold, colder than the sharp air would usually have made me. As I walked along I thought of Sophy and Bert tucked in snug in his limousine. And when I got home and threw my evening coat and white waistcoat over

"Well," I answered, "when I get a hint to stay away, I stay. That's me."

a chair, I stared at 'em, pitying 'em. Poor finery! Started out so brave and gay—and here they were back again, dingy and defeated.

"Well, it was a long time before I went near her again. My courage had been broken. The thing in me that had been so eager and lively was still, numb, like ice makes a brook. It was an aimless time. A man has 'em like that; not happy, not terribly unhappy, either; he just doesn't care. Sophy wrote me a note of thanks for helping at the recital; but it didn't rouse me any. Once in a while I wondered how she and Bert were getting on, yet with no jealousy.

"Spring came. And one day when I was walking up Main Street, somebody called out:

"'How do you do, Clem?'

"It was Sophy, tripping along to catch up with me. I lifted my hat and said:

"'How do you do, Sophy,' just as casual as she did.

"We walked a bit, each rehearsing a line of emergency conversation, I guess. Anyhow I was. Pretty soon Sophy took the aggressive by saying:

"'Clem, I'm ashamed of you. You haven't been to see me for ages.'

"This was no time for gallantry and I didn't try to flash any.

"'Well,' I answered, 'when I get a hint to stay away, I stay. That's me.'

"I think I showed signs of temper—'twas time I was getting spirit into me of some kind—although I didn't intend to lose my head. Sophy gave me a quick scornful look.

"'Hint?' she said. 'Why—why the idea!'

"'Hint,' I repeated. 'Precisely.'

"'You don't mean,' said Sophy, 'you don't mean—well, I know what you mean. It's ridiculous.'

"'I'm human,' I mumbled. 'I can't stand everything. A feller has some dignity to maintain. So I just quit; it seemed the properest thing.'

"This was a pretty feeble line of stuff, I knew as soon's I'd said it. What I wanted to convey was my strength of character—and I hit about a mile off from it. You know, I think we all feel the need of a sort of blackboard attachment to our conversation so that when we start something and see it aint right we can just give it a swipe with an eraser and begin all over new. Sophy lifted her eyes soberly.

"'Don't you think it was a trifle, Clem,' she said, 'now that you've—you've had so much time to think it over?'

"'Trifle!' I snorted. 'Gee whiz! You girls have queer measurements.'

"'Oh! Clem!' exclaimed Sophy, impatiently.

"Then we kept still for a half a dozen blocks, where Sophy had to turn off.

"'Good-by,' I said friendly enough.

"Sophy was smiling; all her little woman's signals were flashing, teasing, beckoning.

"'I'm going to be home to-night,' she said. 'And if—if—' Then she tossed another smile over her shoulder and was gone.

"But I just said: 'Hm.'

"After supper that evening I went up to my room and sat down by the window. The May air breathed in, fluttering the curtains; soft, new smells hovered in it, fresh hopings, prophecies, sort of; the sense of sappiness in everything was good; life was keyed up a couple of notches. And the thing in me that had been numb so long, stirred, got eagerer and eagerer.

"'There's a lot of love-making going on in Pattensburg to-night,' I mused.

"And, before I knew it, I was putting on my new suit, parading up and down in front of the glass and preening. I got excited. Think of such a night—and me setting out to make up and begin all over again with Sophy. For of course I went; as sure as the tide runs in, I went to Sophy. It was wonderful. Wonderful's the word.

"We swapped forgivenesses. I owned I'd been a fool and Sophy admitted she'd been unkind, although she'd never meant to be. We vowed to start over again, restored to ourselves, renewed like the spring around us. I remember a song she sang that night. There's a part where the words go:

> "I dreamed that I held thee once more to my breast,
> While thy soft perfumed tresses and gentle caresses,
> Thrilled me and stilled me and lulled me to rest.

"And Sophy's frail little throat just throbbed with passion and yearning as the tune climbed up rich and full; then sank, quiet and sad, like a nesting bird. My heart swelled out as I sat on the sofa, listening and watching her. In every lover there's a conqueror; the one in me stood up, stretched himself and buckled on his sword.

"The song stopped. Sophy raised her eyes and found mine there to meet 'em.

"'Come over here by me,' I said.

"And she came; more'n just coming though—it was obeying. I took her in my arms. She was willing. For all she pushed back she was willing. Power pounded in my veins.

"'I'll take Sundays after this,' I said. 'Nobody but me'll have Sundays from now on. Understand, Sophy?'

"She pretended to consider. To give a feller Sunday evenings regularly is next to wearing his engagement ring. It gives him a big right; it establishes him in the eyes of everybody; it shows other fellers where they stand. They can call on week-evenings all they please; but the Sunday feller sniffs at 'em; he knows the bigger privilege he has.

"'Aren't you asking a great deal, Clem? Perhaps if we waited—'

"'No sir,' I cut in. 'No waiting. It's Sundays from now on—and I might be demanding even more.'

"And at last she yielded. I've never been sure whether Sophy was reluctant that night, truly, or whether it was her woman's make-believe. Well, it doesn't matter—now.

"I remember when I left her, tiptoeing down the steps, for it was very late, into the velvety May darkness, I didn't go straight home. I couldn't. I was too happy—too victorious. And so, I walked and walked, from street to street, my head back, addressing the stars, breathing Sophy's name up to 'em, calling out my good fortune—the long song of a hero-lover. I guess I must have covered darn near the whole of Pattensburg in my patrol before I got sense enough to head for the hotel and go to bed. And even then, as I was drifting off to sleep, it seemed that Sophy was near, so near that I could have reached out and touched her."

Clem sighed and rocked contentedly in retrospect, presently breaking into laughter, long and satisfying.

"You bet Bert Rainey didn't go

abroad that summer," Clem went on, jubilantly. "No, siree. Bert was worried and thought 'twas safer to stay right on his native soil here in Pattensburg.

"What a summer it was, too — sunshine and soft, blossoming clouds and green, cool grass and flowers. Then—then—why I can't tell how swift it was gone. It vanished and autumn was creeping around. And then—

"There was Sophy and I walking down Willow Avenue, keeping on and on until it changed from a city street into a silent country road where the leaves were turning. It was Sunday afternoon; the air was warm, but with little mischievous, Octoberish nips in it; we could smell burning brush; a lazy haze hung ahead of us. Sophy scarcely spoke, except to point out, now and then, a pretty patch of color. I felt still, too, as hushed as the trees and the sky and the road. I remember Sophy's hat—a tilt and a feather. And her dear little nose peeked out from under.

"By and by, three miles or so out, we came to a big tree, torn up by the roots, laid low by a thunderstorm probably. Just this side of Rabbit Brook, it was, and we could hear its frosty tinkle. We sat down on the tree. I said:

" 'Something's troubling you, aint there, Sophy?'

" 'Yes,' she answered, the word only half-spoken. I noticed then how anxious her big brown eyes were.

" 'Something you want to tell or don't want to tell?' I asked.

" 'Something I don't want to tell,' murmured Sophy—'and *must*.'

"Quick as the snap of a finger a cold soberness came over me, distrustful.

" 'And we've got to speak the truth to each other this afternoon,' Sophy went on. 'We mustn't evade anything, because it's—it's too serious.'

" 'Evade?' I spoke up, acting offended. 'I aint going to evade—'

"Sophy touched my hand, shook her head at me and wouldn't let me finish, just as she'd reprove a child. I blushed. I dreaded what was coming next—whatever it was. After a pause she burst out, suddenly:

" 'What are we to each other, Clem?'

"I sat up.

" 'Why—why,' I blurted, 'I don't know—not exactly, Sophy. I s'pose we're getting to be *something*—would be in time, at least. *You'll* have to decide, if it's come to deciding.'

" 'I'm not sure,' replied Sophy, 'that we mean something big and deep to each other, something very wonderful, never to be changed. Are *you* sure?'

By and by, three miles or so out, we came to a big tree, torn up by the roots. As we sat down, I said, "Something's troubling you, aint there, Sophy?"

"'If it's love,' I said, solemnly, 'well —I know that's—that's what you're trying to say.'

"Sophy shivered and drew one of her tiny hands up into her coat-sleeve. And my fingers crept up after it, caught hold, and hung on. I asked if she was cold. She said no, not exactly cold, and trembled. We were silent for a long time. Then, as I looked up, there was one forlorn little tear sliding down Sophy's cheek.

"'I feel very badly, Clem,' she said.

"'Meaning somewhat, I s'pose, that I wasn't making the situation any too easy for her. I didn't answer. What was there for *me* to say, anyhow? The disturbing thoughts in her made her vivid; I could see her glowing more and more intensely like a fanned coal, until she cried:

"'We don't care big. Tell me the truth, Clem. It hasn't come to that yet, has it—has it? You don't love me as you know all that love can mean? It isn't *that?*'

"I stared in astonishment.

"''Tis, Sophy,' I protested. ''Tis—on my side.'

"She picked up a leaf and crushed it fiercely into powdery bits.

"'No it isn't,' she contradicted. 'No—no. Think—think hard—think honestly. It's something else; don't you see?'

"'No, I don't see,' I said—and sulked.

"'If I name what it is will you admit it, Clem?' she urged.

"I mumbled that I s'posed I'd have to; Sophy cleared her throat.

"'Well,' she explained, 'I think we've both tried to—to—love each other; and perhaps at times we've thought we really did. But many, many people have been mistaken the way we have been. It's clear, now, though, to me. We haven't been loving at all; we've just been—been—courting.'

"'Courting?' I echoed. 'Sure! I know it. Of course we have, Sophy. What else could—'

"I stopped, abruptly. Sophy's eyes were shining and the light from them passed through me, plumb down into the dim places where a man keeps the truth. It became clearer and clearer what Sophy meant—and how beautifully she meant it. But I struggled. I didn't want the naked truth then; I couldn't bear to face all that it would take away; no man willingly strips himself of the lovely dreams and make-believe of love-making. I think, perhaps, I would have lied—if I could. But I don't know where the man is who can gaze into Sophy Dell's eyes with a lie on his lips, even such a lie as stands guard over something so sweet as her heart. Finally I said:

"'I see now, Sophy: just courting. There was a little point that I missed at first. But—well—I s'pose you and I—that is—there can never be any more.'

"'I'm afraid not any more,' Sophy murmured, 'because, Clem, I—I—I'm going to be married.'

"Her voice choked. She dropped her head on my shoulder and sobbed and sobbed. Neither of us knew why, I guess.

"'I s'pose it's Bert?' I questioned, my teeth gritting.

"'No,' said Sophy, into my coat. 'It's Nelson Barrett.'

"'Nelson Barrett?' I repeated, suspiciously. 'Who's he? Never heard of *him.*'

"'He's—he's,' enlightened Sophy, 'the man who sang at my recital. Of course you remember. He's America's most promising young baritone.'

"'Oh!' says I.

"Her head still lay on my shoulder and it was getting a little chilly, so I put my arm around her gently, brother fashion and—well—"

Clem never told me the rest. Yet what more was there to tell? Enough that Sophy and Clem were parting: it was autumn—Sunday—late afternoon. And the sun was going down in Pattensburg.

The Shackles of Fate

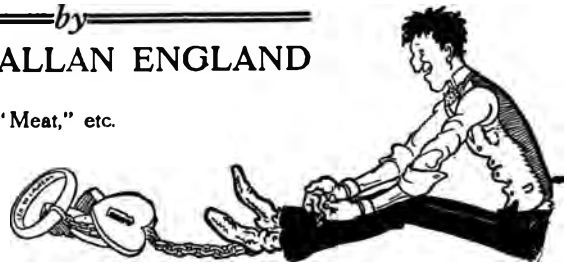
Being the adventures of an embryo "Handcuff King"

by

GEORGE ALLAN ENGLAND

Author of "Meat," etc.

ILLUSTRATED BY HERB ROTH



LEMUEL GLADSTONE BOTTS, of Bucyrusville, Illinois, measured more than six feet, three inches from one end to the other; and when he meated up in winter, and wore his overcoat and rubbers and mittens and knitted tippet around his mobile Adam's-apple, he sometimes depressed the depot scales to the extent of one hundred and forty pounds.

When aroused, he became as strong as Roquefort, or even stronger—almost as strong as Limburger or very well-ripened Gorgonzola, because his muscles were, like my own, of the whip-cord variety. Get him good and mad, and he could throw a barrel of sugar clean over the graveyard fence, or maybe even higher. It had taken a man 'way from Elgin to put both his bony shoulders on the Y. M. C. A. mat at one and the same time. And nobody ever fought him twice, because his fist was like a bag full of scrap-iron and his arm was so long that he could reach out and deliver a knock-out wallop at a distance ranging from nine to eleven feet. But by nature he was mild, with unsatisfied yearnings toward the mandolin, and a marked fondness for prunes.

If he had been born a Trust Magnate's daughter, his hair would have been called Titian, or auburn, or something along those lines. When thirteen, he had once inadvertently stepped into an empty wooden pail left by accident upon some cellar stairs. About half an hour later, a medical student set his nose. The student was only a first-year one, so Lemuel's nose still curved around to westward. His eyes were as blue as the well-worn trope of the Mediterranean, his brows principally conspicuous by absence. Yet his toothy smile was bright and sunny; and ideas lurked around, unsuspectedly, in the crinkles of his cortex. Some of the best citizens said, at times, that he had a future ahead of him. Which, though a serious handicap, still indicates that even before Roudini, the Handcuff King, exhibited at the Bucyrusville Opera House, Fate was brewing a potion or at least a demi-tasse for Lem.

The late autumn, when Lemuel comes into the limelight of this story, he had just cut his twenty-second notch on the tally-stick of age. For six years he had been assisting one Mr. Gibbins, in the cash grocery line. This he called "being engaged in commercial pursuits." There

seemed to be more pursuit than fruition in his vocation. His hebdomadal emoluments, beginning at four dollars, had hunched upward with snailish movements to nine-fifty per.

I guess this will be about all, in the way of introducing our protagonist. So let us now get along with the plot and the heart-interest as explained in all courses on short-story writing.

The heart-interest develops from the fact that, along near Labor Day, Lemuel had become deeply enamored of Miss Laurena Higgins, a saleslady in the Chicago Store. Laurena was still almost pretty — at night, in her parlor with her *peau de soie* dress on and a pink in her hair and not too much light. Her age I don't know, and it's nobody's business. She had once smiled at, but now smiled on Lemuel, for she was getting anxious. So they began discussing a ring.

Concomitantly and coëvally, the divine discontent got under Lem's wishbone. Nine-fifty divided by two makes only four seventy-five, and is therefore an improper fraction from the matrimonial viewpoint. Lem pondered.

"Gee!" he reflected. "It aint much use tryin' to start in on *that*. And if I ask Grib for a raise, it's the G. B. for mine, all right. An' if I ask Rena to wait on a spell, like as not I'll lose her. Gal like that's mighty apt to be snapped up, any time, if a feller aint watchin' mighty smart. What the dickens?"

Moral: Love is myopic, yet a great stimulant to cerebral activities.

Enter, now, the *Deux ex Machina,* in the person of Roudini, the aforesaid Handcuff King, who claimed to have made all the crowned heads of Europe scratch themselves with wonder. Roudini, of a cold mid-October afternoon, billed himself and acted as his own manager and delivered his own public lecture and gave an exhibition on the Square, in front of Moore's drug-store. Lemuel and Rena attended this, and Lem got a great deal of satisfaction from being able to shove a way so easily through the crowd for her.

They also attended Roudini's other exhibition that night, not on the square, in the Opera House.

Lemuel had become deeply enamored of Miss Laurena Higgins, a saleslady in the Chicago Store.

There Lemuel did a little mental arithmetic, and discovered that as much as twelve dollars—twelve, count 'em—can be earned per night by letting a committee of intelligent leading citizens bind you, hand and foot, then allowing the police-force to snap his manacles over your wrists, and finally, permitting yourself to be tied in a packing-box in a cabinet—whence you emerge in five minutes and shirt-sleeves, picturesquely tousled and heroic.

"Whee-oo!" whistled Lem as he undressed that night and went to bed. "Slick, what? Say!...."

A week later, he began burning the midnight Welsbach in Mrs. Crawe's boarding-establishment, where he resided. Yes, I will tell you the secret reason. He had, after consulting the *Police and Sporting Journal,* sent a quarter to a certain address in Cleveland and had received the yellow-covered "Knot and Handcuff Workers' Complete Manual; or, Rope and Manacle Tricks Made Plain." This masterpiece he attacked avidly, scorning sleep or such-like luxuries. And, after a reasonable time, he transferred its entire contents to his seething, love-and-lucre-coveting brain.

Presently, he knew all that the Manual did, concerning the work of Ira and William Davenport, and Messrs. Fay, Maskelyne and other eminent performers; he learned how to tie and how to force the tying of reef and running knots and scores of others; he discovered how to avoid the tying of the fatal "tomfool" knot, and how to conceal an open pocket-knife and a padlock master-key about his person, so fastened by a string that they can be got at and used, no matter how the hands are secured. A wealth of information he absorbed, about tensing the muscles while being tied or shackled, manipulating the slack, jerking handcuffs open, and abundant other details. And, providing himself with clothesline and locks, he practised nightly behind bolted doors.

Loss of sleep reddened his eyes a bit and trained him down a trifle thinner than usual. It also paled him somewhat. Laurena marked this, and marveled. His unexplained, because inexplicable, absence from her best-room sofa excited first surprise, then jealousy, then protests and foolishnesses, then finally a high-nosed intimation *in re* mittens. But Lemuel smiled a little wanly, and formulated cryptic remarks. Mr. Gribbins, at the store, noted errors; but he only winked to himself and remained indulgent. Grib had once been twenty-two, himself, and still remembered some of the symptoms.

Thus a fortnight passed. And there came a night when, after successful practice of the last trick in the Manual, Lem knew himself an adept.

"Gosh!" he breathed, as he slammed the book down, and ruffled his hair with nervous hands. "Here's where I break into the game, with a big noise!"

Full of courage and a great resolve, he blew a kiss at Rena's cabinet photo' on his bureau. Then, inconsequentially enough, he thought of Gribbins; and a vision of himself, stalking into the store with diamonds in his shirt and a fur-lined overcoat upon his back, thrilled him with perfectly intoxicating joy.

II

Now as you well understand—especially if you are a writer of stories—it is one thing to become an adept in skill, another to win remunerative recognition. This Lemuel G. Botts was wise enough to recognize at once. He understood particularly the almost insuperable difficulty in the way of a prophet making good in the old home town. So he took counsel unto himself, and reached a bold decision.

"If," thought he, "I try to pull over this stunt here in Bucyrusville, I shall merely get laughed at. Nobody in these diggings will cleave away from two bits, or even one, to witness Grib's grocery assistant in the Opera House be hog-tied, braceleted, lashed into a box and conveyed to a cabinet, whencefrom to issue free again, in shirt-sleeves. My career would be untimelily frosted in the bud.

"Therefore, I must make my *début* elsewhere, by unusual and spectacular methods, after which the papers will give me two-column heads, with cut, and offers will begin to drop in from variety-stage impresarios. All I shall have to do will be to accept the swellest booking, sever my connection with salt, sugar and canned shrimps, and withdraw from the commercial world. After some weeks of success, I can then return, pack the Opera House to capacity—including the aisles—and, rotten with money, claim Rena. It's open-and-shut!"

Once his mind made up, Lem was no man to let any herbage bloom beneath his number tens. So, two mornings later, he failed to show up at Gribbins'. Reason: The previous midnight he had quietly and unobservedly walked out of town, to Mechanicville Junction, one station down the line, and there had taken the early milk-train to Liberty Falls. He was not known at Liberty; also the county jail and other official buildings were located there. These plain statements ought to clarify the plot sufficiently, without, of course, discounting the climax, which is bad form.

There came a night when, after successful practice of the last trick in the "Knot and Handcuff Workers' Complete Manual; or Rope and Manacle Tricks made plain," Lem knew himself to be an Adept.

Lemuel arrived at 6:10, breakfasted at a lunch cart, and then took a stroll about the town. He squinted at the office of the Liberty Falls *Eagle,* which was destined to blazon his fame, noted with satisfaction that there were uniformed policemen, and loitered with keen interest in the vicinity of the big brick courthouse, jail and asylum on the hill. Then he came back into the business section, three blocks long, and once more assured himself that his knife, key and other apparatus were O. K.

"I guess," decided he, "we might as well get down to business about now. No use delaying the game." His heart began to thud a trifle thickly, and his lips felt just the least bit dry, but his purpose never faltered. On the lookout for a cop, he ambled down Main Street with that graceful camel-stride of his.

Right at the corner of Main and Congress Streets, in front of a barber shop, he came upon the desired official. The official was supporting a telegraph-pole with his back and picking his teeth with a brassy pin. Lem walked up to him.

"Say!" he remarked earnestly, and slapped the Law's shoulder. "I want to be pinched."

In the air the pin poised itself, while the Law stared.

"Huh?"

"Pinched, run in, arrested."

"Aw, chase along!"

"You wont pull me in?"

"Beat it, beat it!"

Lem pondered. Then he changed his tactics.

"Say, come on, now — be a sport!" he pleaded. "I'm cold an' hungry, an' I aint got no home. Chuck me in a cell, wont you, please?"

"Roll along, you!" commanded the minion, a rising inflection in his voice.

Lemuel considered again. Already two or three loafers had drawn anigh. The nucleus of the desired crowd was beginning to take form. The time grew critical. Should he lose his nerve now?

"Looky here," he remarked, earnestly. "You come inta that alley, over there, an' I'll take you right down! I can lick any three your size!"

He of the club and helmet began to scent reality in the wind. Uneasily he surveyed this gaunt, blue-eyed, towering individual with the big hands. The three loafers had increased to a ragged ring, and some jostling developed. Being replete with coffee and canned beans, and by nature a man of peaceful, retiring disposition, the officer hedged. He didn't like the way the windows were filling

up and a team or two stopping in the street.

"Say, if all you want is grub," confided he, "I can give you a ticket to the Charities Wood-yard. All you hafta do is saw—"

Lem's arm, lightning-quick, cut a conic section through the air. The official helmet parabola'd onto the board sidewalk. Out shot Lem's boot. The helmet did a conchoid against the barber-shop, rolled in a cycloid, and came to inertia in the gutter.

"Now," remarked Lem, folding his arms, "now you *gotta* pinch me. I've assaulted an officer, and there's a cell comin' to me! Your move!"

So he achieved arrest. Unfortunately, there was no patrol-wagon in Liberty Falls, so he lost a small section of publicity; but, after all, the walk with the policeman up the hill was fairly well escorted.

As the jail door closed behind him, he thought of Rena, and Grib, and cash, and a few other things, including his utensils and the Manacle-workers' Manual, and smiled.

III

He stood up, presently, before the magistrate's desk, and was duly charged. The officer and two witnesses appeared against him. But their testimony was supererogatory, for he admitted everything, including his identity.

"Well, whadje do it for, anyhow?" demanded the magistrate. "Don't you know I've got to hold you fer trial?"

Lem smiled again.

"All right, put me in a cell," said he. "Put your best handcuffs on me, and shackle my feet, too. Lock me in tight. You can tie me too, if you want. I'm going to give you people some fun!"

The magistrate bent puzzled, angry brows on Lem. Then he pushed a button, and pretty soon the jail doctor came in. Magistrate and doctor conferred awhile, in low tones, looking often at the prisoner.

After a few minutes the doctor left the court-room. He came back, after a certain time, with another gentleman, bearded and wise-looking. These two, and the magistrate, all foregathered

Lem's arm, lightning quick, cut a conic section through the air. The official helmet parabola'd onto the sidewalk

"Take him Toole!" snapped the M. D. Toole tackled, aiming at the legs. Lem swung the bottle. Toole grunted as the weapon crashed on his up-flung elbow. The M. D. and the bearded man dragged the pair free of the broken glass and ammonia. Tumult and vapors and bad blue words filled the place.

around Lem, as he sat—"serene, indifferent to fate"—in the dock.

Then the jail M. D. discoursed.

"No symptoms of alcoholism, you see," he remarked. "Perfectly sober. The disturbance must be mental, rather than physical. Note the expression of the eye, Doctor, the contraction of the pupil, marked asymetry of the facial contours and of the features, especially the nose; low cephalic index, brachycephalic skull, deficient cranial capacity, malformation of ears, and lack of correlation of height and weight."

"H'm, h'm!" commented the bearded person. "Very significant, I'm sure."

"Judging by all available data and all somatic indices here present," continued the doctor, while Lem thought of Future, Fame and Fortune, "and bearing in mind the conclusions of Lombroso, Ferri and Enteneier-Eselschwanz, also taking into consideration the lack of motivity for the attack, the strong egomania of the subject and the obviously faulty reflexes he exhibits, I think you will agree with me that we have here a typical case of *parapyroditic megalomanumaxytis.*"

"Yes, yes, quite so, quite so! We will put him under observation, in the Pavilion. Quite so!"

"Very well, then," concluded the M. D. Then he addressed Lem.

"Will you please step into the next room with us?" requested he, in a wheedling, saccharine tone, such as people use in assuring a doubtfully-disposed dog that it is "a nice dog, so it is; there, there!"

Lem, a bit suspicious now, stood up. He eyed the magistrate.

"What you goin' to do with me?" he demanded. "Lock me up? I don't want no funny-business! I want to be put in a cell, that's all! Savvy?"

"Oh, certainly, certainly!" the Doctor conceded. "A nice big cell, the best we've got. Right at your disposal, now. Just step this way, please." To the magistrate he added, in an undertone: "Better keep back; we can handle him, all

right. He trusts us, but not you. I advise you to keep out of the way."

The magistrate, a little precipitately, withdrew behind his bench. Then the doctors gently but resolutely urged Lem toward a door at the left of the courtroom.

Beyond the door, Lem found himself in a medical office. Uneasily he sniffed the scents of druggery and eyed the shiny instruments in cases, the scales and operating-table.

"Wha—what you goin' to do with me?" he blurted, backing away. "*I* aint sick! All I want is—"

"There, there, don't get excited!" cautioned the M. D., while the bearded man closed in a trifle. "You'll get your nice cell, all right. But first, you know, you've got to change your clothes. That's a rule of this place. Nobody gets a cell who doesn't wear—"

"Naw you don't!" Lem interrupted. "I aint convicted of nothing, yet. No stripes for mine! I'm only bein' held for trial, an' you don't put no convict duds onta me, see? The first one o' you that lays a hand on me, I'll paste him! Get *that?*"

"Ring for Toole," commanded the M. D. The bearded man pressed a button. Lem backed into a corner, anxious yet very grim, and folded his eleven-foot arms. Nobody was going to take his raiment, his string and key and knife away from him, without getting badly hurt. And a taut silence developed in the office.

All at once another door opened, and a large-jawed person appeared, clad in blue, with a vizored cap whereon gold letters said "Guard."

"A new arrival," remarked the M. D., nodding at Lem. "I guess we need your help. Stand by."

Then he approached Lem.

"Now, are you going to be reasonable and submit to the rules, here? If we give you the best cell in the place, will you accommodate us by—"

"You go to the dickens!" roared Lem. "I aint sick, nor I aint bughouse, neither! All I want is—"

"But—"

"You think I'm nutty? What?"

"No, no. Certainly *not!* Only—"

"Don't you come a-near me! Don't you dast!"

"I guess we'll have to throw him," put in the bearded person. "You're only wasting time, arguing, Benson." And, with a hard, calculating look on his face, he took a step toward Lemuel.

"Git back, you!"

A two-quart bottle of ammonia stood on a table, close at hand. Lemuel emphasized his command by snatching this up and delicately balancing it.

"Consarn you!" he gulped, his natural mildness now submerged in the foaming torrent of rage. "First one tetches me, gits this, top o' the conk!"

"Take him, Toole!" snapped the M. D.

With astonishing agility, Toole tack-

An hour after Lem awakened he was still running around the apartment, butting the pads.

led, bending low, aiming at the legs. Lem swung the bottle. Toole grunted as the weapon crashed on his elbow.

But he got his grip. Blinded, strangled by the fumes, he and Lem went down in a fighting knot. And Lemuel's long arms flailed as he bucked, kicked, bit, howled, choked and frothed—in vain.

The M. D. and the bearded man, holding their breath, pounced in and dragged the pair free of the broken glass.

Over crashed a chair. The operating-table slid, *Smash!* through the glass front of the instrument-cabinet. Tumult and vapors and bad blue words filled the place.

In the far corner, the three in authority finally undressed Lem. Then, while the Guard and the bearded person trussed him down, with highly painful jiu-jitsu twists, the M. D. hastily prepared a "sub-cute."

The jab of the little needle stimulated the failing Lem. Lashed to and fro, like ferrets on a lively rat, the three with difficulty kept their holds. More than once Lem's fists broke loose; and more than once they landed.

But now other individuals arrived. And all who could find space to sit on Lem, sat. So he became relatively quiet; and after a while the hypodermic got its work in.

Then at length came lassitude, and drowsiness—and peace, and rest.

IV

An hour after Lem had awakened to a realization of the fact that he was laced into a strait-jacket, and that he had been cast into a windowless cell with canvas-covered walls all nicely stuffed, and that this cell had a door which bolted on the outside and presented a smooth, unbroken, quilted surface inside, and that he now had neither key nor knife nor even the use of his hands —an hour after all this had percolated his consciousness, I say, he was still running about the apartment, butting the pads.

If a haggard, bruised and dirty face, disheveled locks, bloodshot eyes, a wounded mouth and loud yells indicate mental unbalance, especially when joined to a fervently-voiced hankering to eat the hearts of two practicing physicians and an asylum guard, then possibly we may pardon the opinions of the gentlemen who peeked through a peephole and made notes in little books.

Even old Doc Willetts, of Bucyrusville, who came down on the first train in response to an urgent wire, thought so too, at first. But after a certain time, Lemuel listed to Willetts' voice and made a statement.

Following this, he wept.

Why linger o'er anticlimactic details?

Why give the *minutiae* of explanations, of paying the fine, getting clothes, release from durance, returning home?

Why protract things by telling what the *Eagle* and many friends and Laurena all said?

Let this pass.

For, really, Gribbins' remark is more important. Grib, salt of the earth, had once been young; he remembered. And he slapped Lem on the shoulder and said: "Forget it! I raise you to twelve per, and you can come back any old time you want to. Are you on?"

So Fame stepped down and out; dreams evanished, as all dreams must, even including Love and Life itself; and Reality—guised as salt, sugar and canned shrimp-wiggle—came back.

And Laurena forgave him, for the twelve looked good to her. She figures on being able to hold her job in the Chicago Store, even after the wedding-bells have tolled the knell of parting spinsterhood. And Lem's twelve, joined to her six-fifty, make eighteen and a half. Very fair indeed, for Bucyrusville.

Lem is ready, any old time, to snap on certain shackles so binding that they make the steel kind look like wisps of moonshine. But Dr. D. Cupid has given him the subcardiac needle-jab, so he's insensible to all this.

He is now dickering for a gold-rolled ring, on the installment-plan. He has even looked at a tray of bracelets.

But on that occasion, the jeweler—wise as serpents—did NOT show him any of those $5.75 designs with padlock clasps.

THE FIRST PLAYS OF THE NEW SEASON

by Louis V. De Foe

Photograph by White, New York. Copyright, 1912 by Charles Frohman.
Richard Carle, Hattie Williams and a group of the Chorus in "The Girl From Montmartre."

THE time has come when a general interest has reawakened in the diversion which the theatre provides, and the stage, after its summer quiescence, has been quick to respond. There is still that usual autumn disposition to regard the drama lightly, a disposition that is reflected by the not very sturdy texture of the first group of plays, but as merit needs not always confine itself to the theatre's soberer side, it happens that the first words written of the infant Season of 1912-13 may be in a spirit of commendation.

It is Mr. James Montgomery, one of the younger of our fast increasing coterie of native playwrights, who thus far has been most fortunate in catching his audiences' fancy. His new comedy, "Ready Money," which was produced almost simultaneously in New York and London,

Photograph by White, New York.

One of the strong scenes in "Ready Money." William Courtenay as *Stephen*

not only glosses the old and congenial theme of quickly acquired wealth with an aspect of refreshing novelty, but it finds its humorous motive in a human weakness that is quite universal. If little can be said in defense of its underlying moral it is not the less entertaining on that account, and it at least makes a fair pretense of innocence.

"Nothing succeeds like success," runs the old adage. "Most business is done on credit and credit has its basis in confidence," is an axiom of the commercial world. On a combination of these two accepted truisms, Mr. Montgomery's amusing fabric lightly rests.

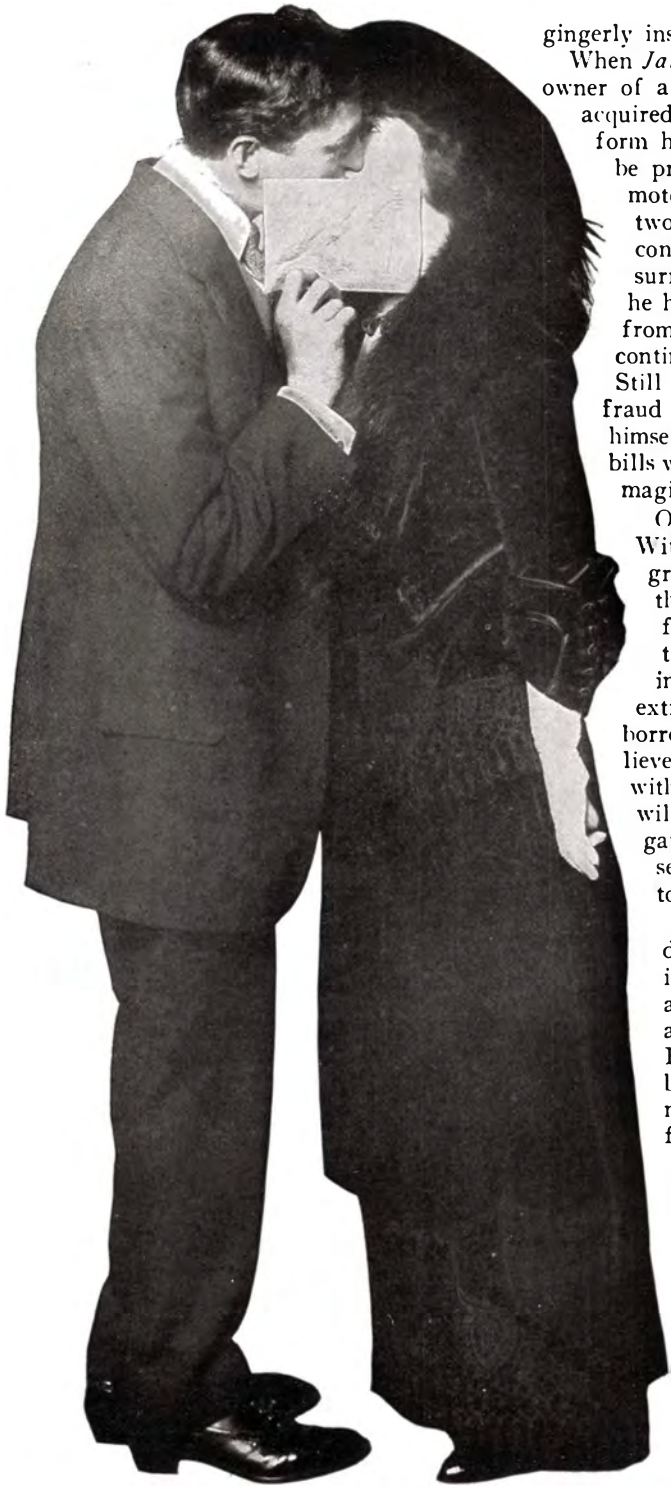
On the eve of the New Year, when the optimism of his prosperous friends is in the air, *Stephen Baird* finds himself face to face with his life's crisis. He has invested all his resources in a Western gold mine. He has given, besides, his note for $20,000. With only twenty-five cents left in his pocket, the day is near at hand when his obligation must be paid or the mine in which he has rested his confidence must be sacrificed. His speculation apparently has gone wrong, for the mine has not "panned out" and prospective purchasers of the stock are wary. He is at the end of his rope and, worst of all, over him in his distress hangs a promise to marry Grace Tyler who has placed her implicit faith in his ability to succeed. He has about concluded to end it all there and then when,

Baird, Joseph Kilgour as *Jackson Ives* and Scott Cooper as *James E. Morgan*.

in this despondent frame of mind, he comes late to the supper party at the apartment of *Sam Welsh* where his friends, his sweetheart and her family are gathered to welcome the dawning of the New Year.

These details having deftly been set forth, the real play begins when a caller at the apartment seeks a moment's interview with *Baird*. This man, with whom chance had thrown him in contact a few days before, is *Jackson Ives*, a counterfeiter of international notoriety whose vocation, however, he does not suspect. The young man's despair is the criminal's opportunity. With little ado, *Ives* thrusts a bundle of bogus $1,000 bills into his hand. "It's the appearance of prosperity that breeds success," he says "I will claim half the proceeds of what comes to you through this roll."

Only to the extent of keeping the bogus money in his possession does *Baird* become the accomplice of the counterfeiter. But great wealth—or a least the appearance of great wealth—has its magical effect. *Baird's* friends straightway jump at the conclusion that the gold mine has proved its worth and with one impulse they hurry to get in on the ground floor. They are deaf to his surprised protests. Checks for stock come in upon the young promoter with bewildering rapidity. Everybody wants a chance at the gilt-edged investment. The yellow roll of bills which *Baird* fingers



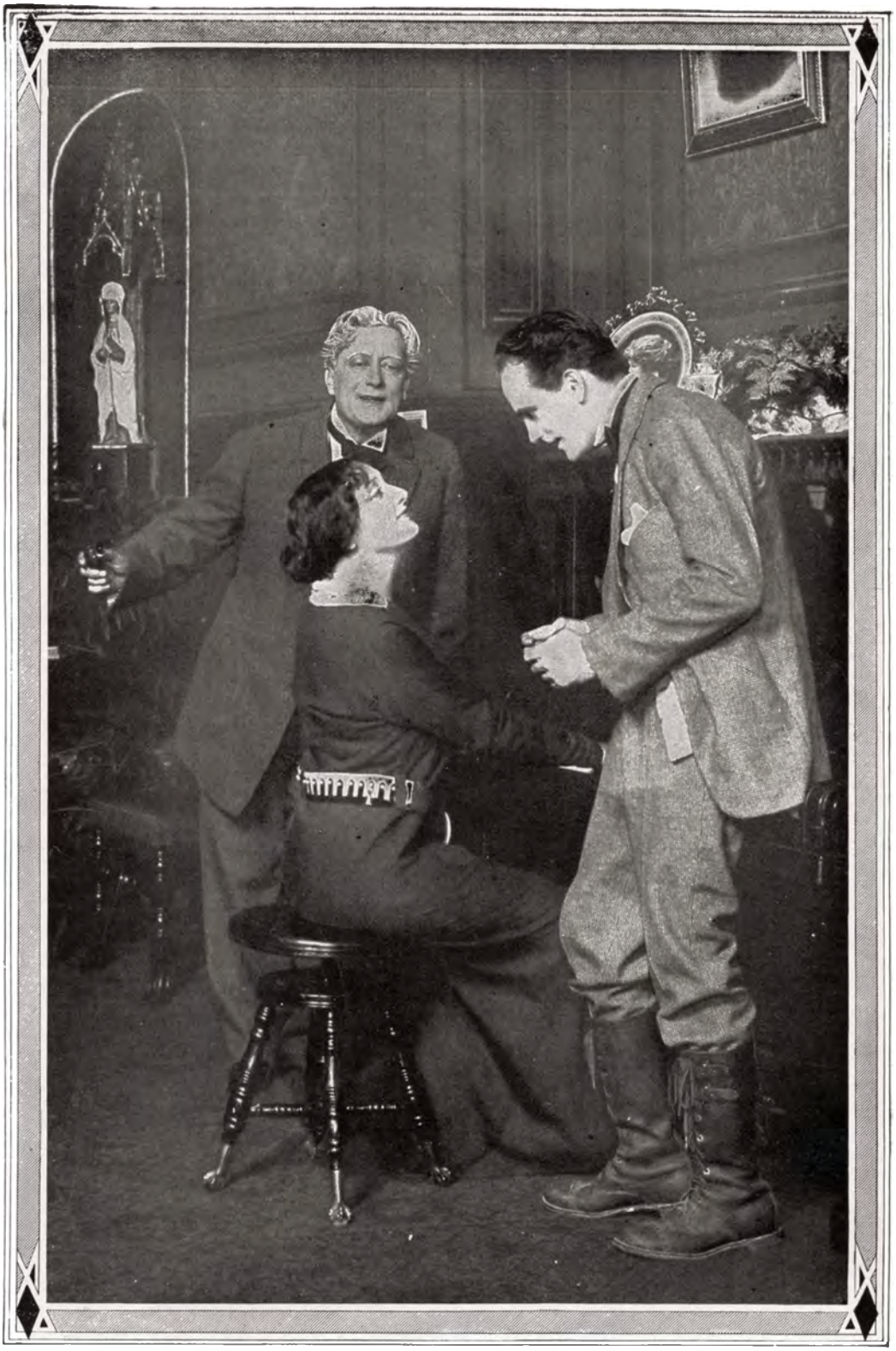
Photograph by White, New York.
William Courtenay and Fay Wallace in "Ready Money."

gingerly inspires instant confidence.

When *James E. Morgan,* the covetous owner of a neighboring mine, who has acquired *Baird's* note, appears to inform him that the obligation must be promptly met, the young promoter's dilemma grows. Only two days remain before he must confess his inability to pay and surrender the property on which he has based his hope. Yet checks from the would-be shareholders continue to pour in upon him. Still he has no intention to defraud his friends or incriminate himself by passing the spurious bills which have worked the sudden magic in his affairs.

One chance at least remains. With his last quarter he telegraphs to the prospectors at the mine to redouble their efforts in the work of exploration. A wire comes back asking for $500 to pay for the extra labor. This he is able to borrow from *Morgan,* who believes he now has the property within his grasp and is only too willing to increase *Baird's* obligation to him. As for *Baird,* he settles down in bewilderment to wait for the crash.

At this juncture a new danger threatens. Secret Service agents are on *Ives'* track and he, together with *Baird* as his accomplice, is arrested. How the stack of counterfeit bills is juggled from one innocent person to another, confused with an envelope containing harmless "mining literature," and is finally carried away unknowingly by *Baird's* sweetheart, afford an exciting interlude suggestive of Sardou's comedy, "A Scrap Of Paper." At any rate the incriminating evidence is not discovered in *Baird's* possession and it finds its way safely next morning to his office in *Grace Tyler's* shopping bag.



Photograph by White, New York.
A strong scene from "The Master of the House," showing Malcolm Williams, Florence Reed and Ralph Morgan.

But the troublesome note for $20,000 is now due and still no word has come from the mine on which *Baird's* salvation hangs. At *Ives'* suggestion he gains a few days respite by meeting it with a check drawn against his few dollars credit in a Western bank. It is the last chance, for already the shareholders are growing restive. In the end, as the audience of course has already anticipated, "pay dirt" is found and the confidence of *Baird's* friends is not in vain.

There is left the final clash between *Ives* and the Secret Service agents. They get possession of the bogus money and on cursory examination humiliate the counterfeiter by declaring the bills to be genuine. *Ives* escapes, but not without disappointment for, as an artist in the nefarious engraving trade, he has prided himself that his workmanship is superior to the government's.

In all its essentials this comedy, which typifies the craze for sudden wealth, in addition to the ingenuity of its idea, is capably written. The conspicuous characters, which are the promoter, the rival mine owner, the counterfeiter and the Secret Service agent, are capitally drawn. The others of lesser

Photograph by White, New York.
Florence Reed and Malcolm Williams in "The Master of the House."

importance are various enough to establish an interesting background. If the plausibility of some of the incidents is open to question, the rapidity with which the story moves leaves no time for the question to be asked.

There is skill, too, of a very definite kind in the performance since such competent actors as Mr. William Courtenay, Mr. Joseph Kilgour, Mr. Ben Johnson and Mr. Scott Cooper appear in the rôles of the promoter, the counterfeiter, the Secret Service officer and the greedy mine owner.

Photograph by White, New York.
Harry Fox and Anna Wheaton of the Winter Garden Company.

One capitally acted eccentric part falls to Mr. James Bradbury, and Miss Margaret Green appears as the sweetheart of the hero whose salvation through the three acts trembles in the balance and whom the Goddess of Chance changes from a bankrupt into a financier.

A CURIOUS example of how slender is the line that separates an illusion of real life from a mere puppet show in the theatre is found in another of the early plays of the new season, "The Master of the House," by Mr. Edgar James. It is intended to be a very serious drama on the subject of divorce and designed to reveal to elderly couples the pitfalls that lie beyond the half-way point of the matrimonial highway. But its author has not yet learned the alchemy of the footlights with the result that, however grievous may be the troubles of his characters, the sympathy of his audience fails to be aroused.

One can appreciate what must be the frame of mind of *Frederick Hoffman*, the hero, just before the crisis in his domestic affairs comes. *Mrs. Hoffman* is very virtuous and also very frigid. She is a model helpmeet in all practical matters. But romance does not enter at any point into her suave and even temperament. Nevertheless, her husband has borne with her for twenty-five years.

The danger arises when *Mrs. Hoffman* brings *Bettina Curtis* into the household as a "companion." There is a sly twinkle in the demure *Bettina's* eye

Photographs by White, New York.

A group of the various players appearing at the Winter Garden.
At the top, Eugene and Willie Howard; in the center Charles J. Ross and Trixie Friganza. At the bottom Daniel Morris and George Moon as *Mutt and Jeff*, and Shirley Kellogg.

Photograph by White, New York. Copyright, 1912 by Charles Frohman.
Angie Weimers, Joe Smith and Lillian Rice dancing "The Sandwich Rag" in "The Girl from Montmartre."

divorce. His avowal is brought about when *Mrs. Hoffman*, smelling a mouse, attempts to order *Bettina* out of the house. Heedless of her lamentations, the elderly man and the girl who has fascinated him go away together. Even the sensible old lawyer, a life long friend of the family, cannot bring order out of the domestic chaos. But with an eye to business he takes *Mr. Hoffman's* divorce case.

Now the other side of the medal is shown. *Hoffman*, married to *Bettina*, that promises trouble. It comes immediately. The *Hoffman's* son falls an easy victim to her wiles. He is swept aside because *Bettina* is gunning for bigger game. Then, of course, occurs the precipitous fall from grace of the elder *Hoffman* himself.

All this is devised to lead to a tragic scene when *Mr. Hoffman* bluntly informs his wife that he has outgrown her love and that he intends to sue for is living in an expensive New York apartment. The former master of the house has become a slave. The parasite friends of *Bettina* fatten on him. Her worthless relatives rob him. And meanwhile *Bettina* is faithlessly involved in an intrigue with an erratic musician.

At last, stirred by reminders of the

decent life he has forsaken, the worm turns. Catching *Bettina* red handed in her duplicity, *Hoffman* rends her. The clatter of this emotional climax has long been heard approaching, but its linguistic volume has not been suspected. It is one of those emotional passages that would thrill the old-time actors with joy.

Photograph by White, N. Y. Copyright, 1912 by Charles Frohman.
Hattie Williams and Richard Carle in "The Girl from Montmartre."

There is, necessarily, another act, for it would not do to leave the repentant *Mr. Hoffman* alone. So back he goes to Buffalo to cultivate anew the love of his first wife and his children. The latter he marries happily to the young people of their choice and the picture of their happiness makes *Mrs. Hoffman* relent. The much singed elderly butterfly basks again in the sunshine of deep but unpretentious devotion he once despised.

Although "The Master of the House" makes no impression whatever on sophisticated playgoers it is produced, nevertheless, with great care. The impression seems to prevail among its actors that it is a real drama and not a puppet show. Mr. Forrest Robinson as *Alston,* the lawyer friend, is its one flesh and blood character. Mr. Malcolm Williams is the fickle husband, Miss Grace Reals is virtuous *Mrs. Hoffman, No. 1* and Miss Florence Reed is naughty *Mrs. Hoffman, No. 2.* An old servant attached to the original household has a rather humorous place in the story. The author has made her so garrulous that she would break up the best regulated family and Miss Helen Reimer's acting of her does not tend to make her less dangerous.

AS an example of a distinctly metropolitan form of entertainment "The Passing Show of 1912" which, as

Scene from "The Girl from Montmartre."

Photograph by White, New York.
Yancsi Dolly as "Adele" in "The Merry Countess."

its title implies, is a travesty of all the conspicuous dramatic successes of the last year, has set at the very outset of the new season a record for expensive stage adornment which the Winter Garden, where it is being presented, has not before approached and which the other "Revues" and "Follies" that are sure to follow in its train are not likely to surpass. The huge scale on which this song and dance show is conceived will surely stagger its visitors even though they be not familiar with the plays it lampoons, and they will be impressed by its pictures though they cannot escape the reflection that such a vast outlay on scenery and costumes should have called forth a little more inspiration among the half score of librettists and composers. As for the performers, they are probably as capable as the vaudeville and musical comedy stages, both of which have been liberally drawn upon for talent, can supply.

Bits from nearly every important drama described in THE RED BOOK last year are mixed in a confused jumble in the show and as a rule the characters are easily recognizable. As may be expected, the Harem Scene from "Kismet" is employed to good advantage. Into its great pool the nymphs of the chorus, in costumes that leave little to the imagination, plunge nightly to the great glee of the crowd. The Flowery Way from "Sumurun" is used effectively since it enables the entire company, exceeding two hundred people, to make its entrance over the heads of the audience. "Bunty," "Bought And Paid For," "Officer 666," "The Quaker Girl," "A Butterfly On The Wheel," "Oliver Twist" and "The Return Of Peter Grimm," to the last of which is added an amusing caricature of Mr. Belasco, are only a few of the other plays that are turned to ridicule. The spectacle is punctuated by an unending succession of songs, dances, marches and choruses.

For the satisfaction, perhaps, of that part of the Winter Garden's audiences which prefers delicacy to extravagance

and daintiness to horse play the spectacle is preceded by the very charming "Ballet Of 1830" which is quite in the spirit of the best work of the Alhambra in London from which it was obtained. In pantomime is told, in three scenes and to musical and dance accompaniment, the story of *Rodolphe*, an artist, who is in love with his model, *Mariette*. She is enticed away from him by a rich baron who has been her artist-lover's patron while he, in his despair, yields to the lure of a *Vampire*. The scene changes from a studio in a garret to the Restaurant de Nuit and then to the Jardin des Amoureux where the disillusionized lovers are reunited. As the period of this ballet dates back eighty years, its customing is quaintly effective and exceedingly picturesque. The dancing is all of an excellent order. Some of the principal performers are very graceful and expert in pantomimic art. Notable among the latter are Miss Nellie Brown as the model, Mr. Emil Agoust as the artist, and Miss Emile Zajah as a flower girl. Miss Greville Moore effectively embodies the allurement of the *Vampire*.

Photograph by White, New York.
Rozsika Dolly as *Felice* in "The Merry Countess."

WHEN "The Girl From Montmartre" was first acted in St. Petersburg in the original version as it came from the French authors, M. Georges Feydeau and M. Rudolph Schanzer, its principal character of the *Girl*, whom good old *Doctor Pepyton* brought home to his dovecote from his midnight escapade at the Café Montmartre and carelessly hid under the sofa, was considered worthy of the talent of Mme. Alla Nazimova and, in fact, was played by her. As a testimony of the vicissitudes through which these foreign plays must pass in the process of finding their way to Broadway in musical comedy disguise, this past history of a once popular piece is not without its significance. Now Miss Hattie Williams is playing the rôle of *Praline*, the *Girl*, which she makes an Irish imitation of a Parisian cocotte. But such mixtures of

Photograph by White, New York.
Jose Collins as *Countess Rosalinda Cliquot* and Maurice Farkoa as *Gabor Szoba* in "The Merry Countess."

racial instincts are nowadays deemed unimportant on the musical comedy stage.

I doubt if M. Feydeau or M. Schanzer could recognize their old play in the new form in which it has been turned out of the adaptation factory of the Smith Brothers—Harry B. and Robert B. *Doctor Petypon* still steals away from his watchful *Gabrielle* on his Montmartre lark. He still meets *Praline* and still returns to tuck her away snugly under the sofa. There is still the humorous suggestion that *Gabrielle* mistakes her for a spirit, while *Doctor Petypon's* uncle, the *General*, labors under the impression that she is his visiting niece. But here all similarity abruptly ends and the plot dwindles into turkey trots danced to music composed by Mr. Henry Bereny, whose tonal inspirations are all pretty much alike and suggestive of a medley of the various popular musical comedies of the recent past.

Nevertheless, "The Girl From Montmartre," which is Mr. Charles Frohman's first production of the season, is a showy, gingery affair that keeps its audiences interested even if it does not agitate their mental apparatuses. It has been making headway constantly in spite of the competition of the many other new plays and I would not be surprised if it had provided Miss Williams and Mr. Richard Carle, her leading assistant, with the only rôles they will need this season.

Unwittingly I have divulged the plot of the piece or, at least, as much of it as Miss Williams and Mr. Carle permit to come to the surface. The rest, if there

Photograph by White, N. Y. Copyright 1912 by Chas. Frohman
Hattie Williams in "The Girl From Montmartre."

be any more, is choked off by the antics of the stars who are as irrepressible in spirit as they are tireless in energy. Mr. Carle, with his untufted pate and limber legs, is quite suited to the rôle of the philandering old *Doctor* and he is sufficiently ridiculous in the rapid fire series of escapades through which Miss Williams leads him, but she, when it comes to the dancing, of which there is much, is not in her most congenial element.

Like all of Mr. Frohman's musical comedy productions this one is daintily costumed. The fresh appearance of the chorus is due to their youth and not to cosmetics. Its male contingent does not suggest over-dressed stage hands, which is something in their favor even if they also do not suggest the denizens of those Parisian heights which are crowned by the Montmartre Cathedral. Under these circumstances it is just a little unfortunate that more and better use is not made of the chorus for most of the songs, which are of an interpolated, hit-or-miss kind, fall either to Miss Williams or to Mr. Carle.

One of the liveliest of these songs is "Hoop-la" by Miss Williams in which she allows the chorus a small share, and another is "Lena" which she sings with a good deal of verve in the last act. Intermittently come "Something Like This," "Bohemia," and "Love Will Win." As for Mr. Carle, he remains quiescent until the second act when he makes up for his silence with "I've Taken A Fancy To You" and "One Of The Boys." The chorus gets its first opportunity with "The Vienna Roll," another of those turkey-trotting monstrosities which threaten to be rife again this season. In line with this graceless performance is "The Sandwich Drag" which, if anything, is a little more ignoble than the turkey trot of which it must be a direct descendant. After all, we have New York society, not the stage, to thank for the persistent popularity of the various "trots" and "hugs."

Although this first of the season's musical shows employs a long list of principals, the persistence of its stars leaves the others little to do. Mr. William Danforth, Mr. Lennox Pawle and Mr. Al Hart appear in a trio of eccentric

rôles; Mr. Alan Mudie and Miss Maya Mannering satisfy a very slender romantic interest, and Miss Marion Abbott moves indignantly through the phantom story as *Doctor Petypon's* neglected wife.

THE time is gone in New York when the name of a theatre can safely be trusted as a guarantee of the quality of what takes place on its stage. Mr. David Belasco has preserved the integrity of his two houses because almost invariably he writes or revises the productions he makes. But other managers, owing to the competition in obtaining material, are compelled to take their chances in the lottery of the plays.

So the Casino, as our premier home of musical folly, has gradually lost much of the prestige it enjoyed a decade or two ago. If anything is calculated to win this back it will be the really superb production of "The Merry Countess" which it revealed on the opening night of the new season. Its management, having learned a lesson from the great public interest shown in the revivals of the Gilbert and Sullivan operettas and other standard works, has gone to the well of limpid, sparkling melody left by that monarch of the waltz, Johann Strauss, and has brought to life again that unfailing masterpiece, "Die Fledermaus," reset its charming rhythms to a new story and, with the aid of interpolations from the master's other compositions, has given it practically a new birth.

All the old, swinging melodies, crowned by the "Wine, Woman and Song" waltz and the brilliant ballet music, are carefully preserved. Meanwhile you are diverted by an excellent though somewhat conventional story of a faithless husband neatly trapped by his wife. He is *Count Max Cliquot,* who has been sentenced to serve five days in jail for motor speeding. A physician at his palace wagers with the *Countess* that he will not pass the evening with her, but at a ball given by the licentious *Prince Orloffsky* for some ballet girls. She accepts the hazard, goes to the ball in disguise and exposes her fickle consort when he unwittingly makes violent love to her. Then, as in all these musical domestic tragedies, oil is poured on the troubled waters in the last act.

This may not be a very ingenious fiction, but it is told with a rush that keeps its interest alive. A dance which is the epitome of grace, performed by the Misses Yancsi and Rozsika Dolly and Mr. Martin Brown, paves the way to the thrills of the ballet led by M'lle Dazie, which touches a higher point of terpsichorean excellence than anything the Casino has revealed in the last ten years.

And the company is able to sing the Strauss music! One evidence of this very important fact is the success of Miss Jose Collins as the *Countess* in the czardas number—the Hungarian song which is the most difficult music that Strauss ever wrote. There is distinction in the acting and merit in the singing of Mr. Maurice Farkoa as the *Hungarian nobleman* and of Mr. Claude Flemming as the *Court Physician* and, to a lesser extent, of Mr. Forrest Huff as the *Count,* while Mr. Tom A. Shale discards horseplay and pursues legitimate methods as a comedy jailer. But the most enthusiastic praise I can give the production is for its splendid ensemble and its nearly faultless stage management. There are three handsome scenes, the climax of which is the ballet supper party, and beautiful costumes without number. For many months all whose blood is made to flow a little quicker by real melody will capitulate to the charms of this newly illustrated edition of a Johann Strauss masterpiece.

MAN'S STRUGGLE FOR EFFICIENCY

INTERESTING METHODS HE IS USING TO MAKE AND KEEP HIM ENERGETIC AND CAPABLE

BY WALTER GRIFFITH

Perhaps the most interesting phase of the present-day struggle to realize our ambitions in whatever direction they may lie, and one indeed on which it were well for everyone to be informed, is the different methods adopted by Americans, both men and women, to keep themselves physically fit to stand the strain of keeping constantly up to "concert pitch."

They are not by any means always adopted until Nature has cried quits and the subject is struggling to recover his efficiency, but whenever employed they are well worthy a study and oft times ludicrous to the looker-on, though perhaps not to the performer.

If you were to arise at six o'clock some fine morning and visit Central Park and Riverside Drive, New York, you would be amused by viewing, among a number of others, some stout gentleman who looks very dignified after nine A. M.; now, however, he is on a horse (part of the time), or even running on foot, and looks hot, uncomfortable and funny. This is a consistent practice at the present time of many New York business men, as well as those of other cities.

In convenient proximity to several large cities there are Health Institutions that could perhaps be aptly called "Training Institutions." Those who visit there are placed in the hands of a veritable "Trainer" who runs them, rides them, trots them, exercises them, and supervises their diet. They are under strict discipline which does not always set well, but accomplishes what they are there for —puts them in good physical condition.

There are many gymnasiums and physical culture schools located in convenient places in the large cities where an opportune hour a day is taken in giving the body its much-needed exercise.

Osteopathic Treatment might be termed, in a way, "exercise without effort," or, better still, "involuntary exercise," for certainly the manipulation exercises the subject though not of his own volition.

Many and diverse kinds of massages, Swedish, German, etc., combined Diet and Exercise, Sour and Sterilized Milk Treatments, Raw Wheat, Fruit and Nut Diets, etc., are being liberally patronized to the end that men and women, under our present mode of living (which is hardly natural) may maintain or even increase their capacity for strenuous effort with its attendant reward.

All of these methods have their advantages —some undoubtedly greater than others—I am not competent to choose.

But mark this:

Every one of them that is effective, has for its primary purpose and ultimate result the elimination of waste from the system.

This can not help being the fact, for the initial cause of probably 90 per cent. of man's inefficiency is the inability of the system, under our present mode of living, to throw off the waste which it accumulates.

The result is a partial clogging of the colon (large intestine) which is the direct cause of sluggish livers, biliousness, slight or severe headaches—and with these, or any one of them, comes inability to work, think or perform up to our usual standard.

That eminent scientist, Professor Metchnikoff, states unqualifiedly that the poison generated in the colon is the chief cause of our comparatively premature old age.

Now if these exercises or diets were entirely successful in eliminating this waste from the colon, they would be, with their strengthening and upbuilding properties, wonderfully resultful—but they do not and can not.

One might as well chop a tree down from the top or try to pump a lake dry by starting at one of the brooks that feed it.

When you are ill, and a physician is called, the first thing he does is to purge the system—why—first, because the waste has to be disposed of before any medicine will take effect —second, because if there was no waste, you probably would not have been ill at all.

Also remember that healthy blood will destroy almost any germ that is known to science, but unhealthy or contaminated blood welcomes them with open arms and says, "Come and feed and multiply."

Our blood can not be healthy unless our colons are kept pure and clean; the blood is constantly circulating through the colon and will immediately take up by absorption the poisons of the waste which it contains, distributing it throughout the entire system.

That's the reason that biliousness and its kindred complaints make us ill "all over." It is also the reason that if this waste is permitted to remain a little too long the destructive germs, which are always present in the blood, gain the upper hand and we become not only inefficient, but really ill—seriously sometimes if there is a weak spot.

This accumulated waste is the direct, immediate, specific cause of appendicitis, for instance.

Now the first help that we have been calling to our aid when this waste becomes unbearable, or lays us out, is Drugs. These have some effect, but there are a few vital reasons why they should not and need not be used.

Drugs are violent in their action and convulse and sap the vitality of other functions before they reach the colon. The colon is the last spot they reach, therefore it is impossible for them to clean it thoroughly—and last, but not least, the using of Drugs for this purpose must be persisted in—making one a slave to them and constantly weakening parts of the body that should not be touched at all.

So great an authority as Prof. Alonzo Clark, M.D., of the New York College of Physicians and Surgeons, says: "All of our curative agents are poisons and as a consequence every dose diminishes the patient's vitality."

No, none of these are necessary or effective for the specific purpose of defeating this greatest of all foes to man's efficiency, for Nature herself has provided a means which, if applied in the proper way, will, without any evil effect or inconvenience whatever, keep the colon sweet, pure, clean, and healthy.

That "Nature Way" is Internal Bathing with warm water properly applied; but it must be properly applied to be effective.

It would perhaps be interesting to note the opinions of a Physician, an Osteopath and a Physical Culturist on this subject:

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"I have two Internal Baths, one for myself and one for a patient. I am an Osteopath and find in connection with my work that it does wonders." G. L. Bowdy, D.O., Denver, Colo.

"I find the Internal Bath of immense benefit to me. I look upon it as an absolute necessity to the attainment of perfect physical development, and think every person, especially those engaged in physical culture, ought to use it." Anthony Barker, Professor of Physical Culture, New York.

A New York Physician of many years' practical experience and observance of the colon and its influence on the general health, has made a special study of Internal Bathing and has written an interesting and exhaustive book on the subject called, "Why Man of Today Is Only 50 % Efficient."

This he will send without cost or other obligation to anyone addressing, Charles A. Tyrrell, M.D., 134 West Sixty-fifth Street, New York City, and mentioning that he read this in *The Red Book Magazine.*

It is surprising how little the great majority of people know about this particular part of their make-up; and inasmuch as it plays so important a part in the general health and the maintaining of 100 per cent. of efficiency, it seems as though every one should at least enlighten himself by reading this little treatise on the subject, by one who has made it his life's study and work.

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A Study of
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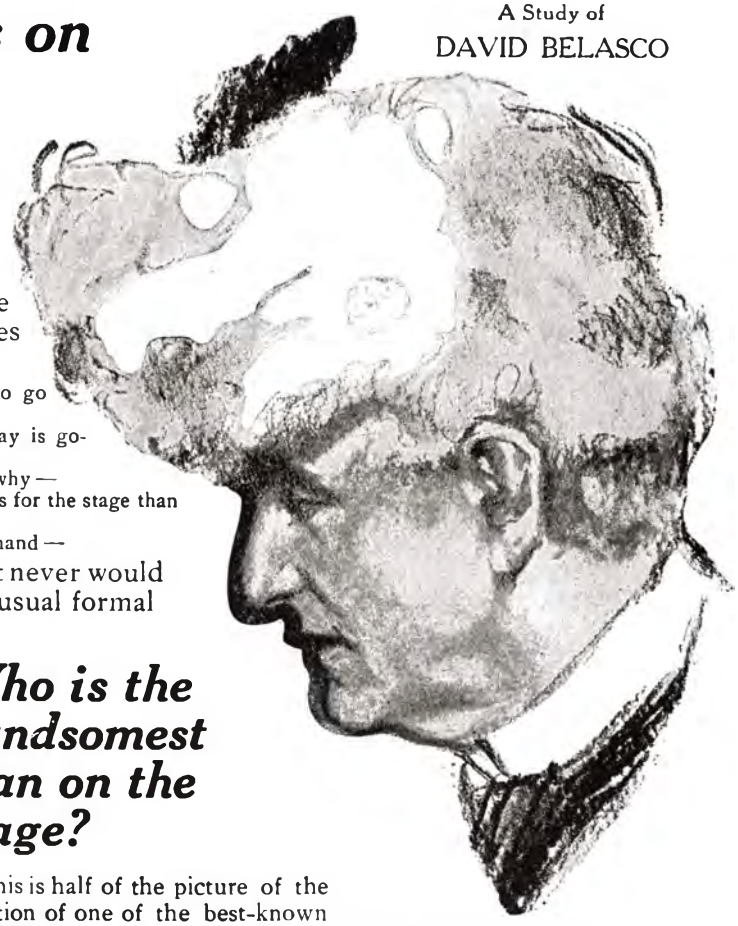

An informal, friendly talk by the great producer with Magda Frances West, in which he tells—

When he thinks it is best for women to go on the stage—
Why he thinks the present style of play is going into the discard—
The style which will succeed it—and why—
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and a bunch of new stories of Broadway by
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also
Channing Pollock's
review of the new plays—the most sprightly review that's written.

THE GREEN BOOK MAGAZINE OCTOBER NUMBER

Some of the Stars of the New Season—

The plays they'll be seen in and when they are to be seen. All told in Johnson Briscoe's article, "The Plans for the New Season," which goes into details of all the plans of all the managers and all the players. A handy guide for anyone interested in the theatre.

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Here is the liveliest story in many a day. The story of a young college man who married a chorus girl. How he met her; how he won her and what his family did when they found out. It's the first of a series of stories which are bound to attract wide attention, for the simple reason that they are *fact* stories of a situation that has been the basis for reams of fiction.

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HATTIE WILLIAMS BILLIE BURKE MARTIN BROWN

The "Discovery" of Wm. T. Hodge, the Star in "The Man from Home"

Theodore A. Liebler, head of Liebler & Co., has kept a "family book," or diary. In it are his impressions, written at the minute, of some of the most important theatrical events. For instance, under date of Feb. 18, 1900, you find: "The part of *Freeman Whitmarsh*, the man-of-all-work, in 'Sag Harbor,' threatened to give Herne a great deal of trouble in the casting, but the difficulty solved itself when he happened to see the man he wanted standing before an actors' boarding house on Forty-fourth Street. Herne approached the man, asked him whether he had ever had any experience as an actor, and was delighted to learn that he had just reached town after a tour with a 'Town Hall To-night' repertory company. He gave his name as William Hodge and was engaged on the spot. Thus a player whom no theatrical manager has ever heard of will be given a trial in the leading comedy part of one of the most important productions of the year."

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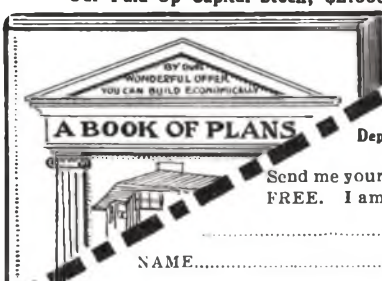

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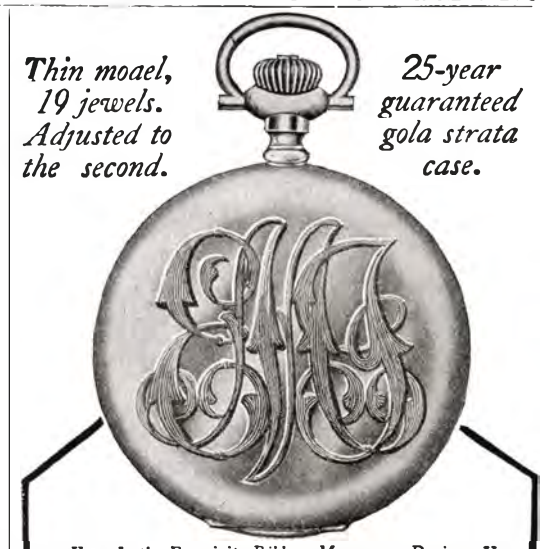

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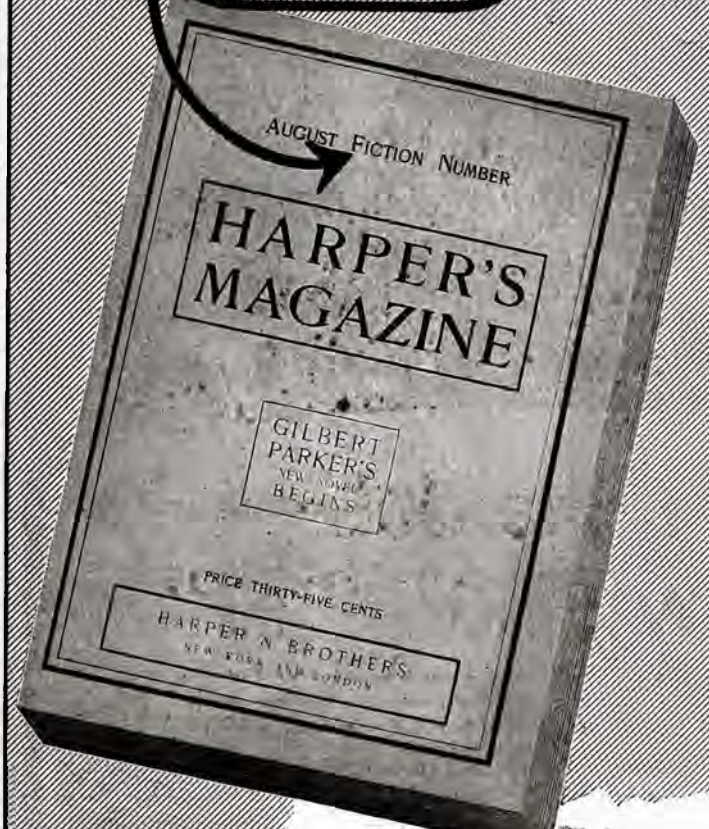

THE CHICAGO DAILY TRIBUNE: MONDAY.

MESSRS HARPER & BROTHERS have to announce that the entire edition of the August Number of

Harpers Magazine

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The edition was the largest which has been printed since Christmas

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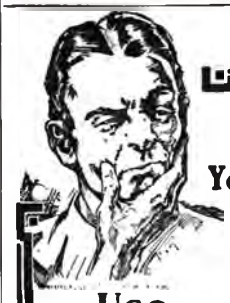

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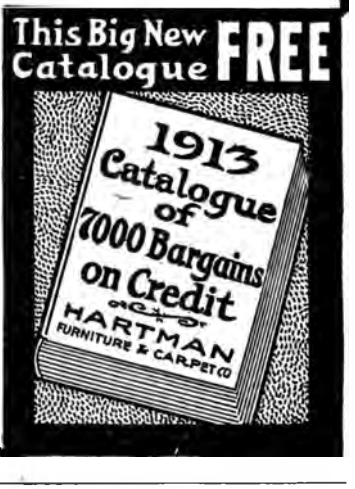

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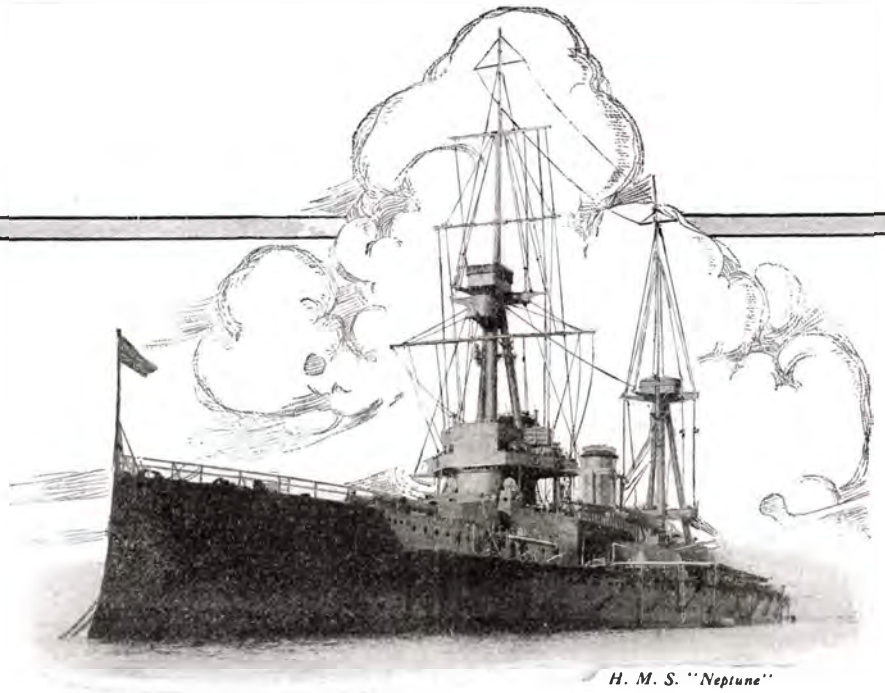

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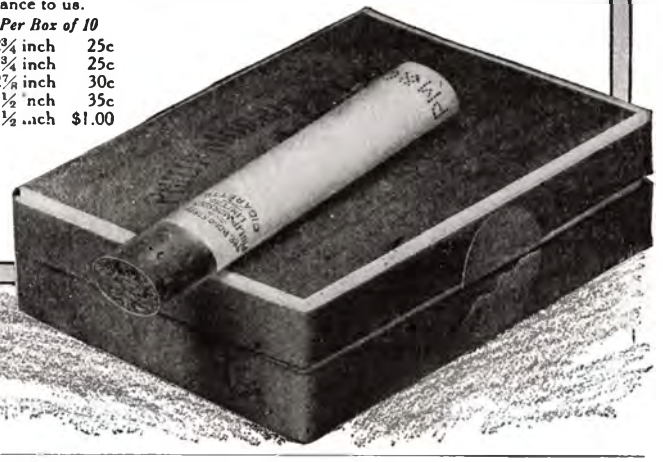

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