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April 1923

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

Rupert Hughes, Josephine Daskam Bacon, George Gibbs, Gerald Beaumont, Mary Synon,
Courtney Ryley Cooper, Wallace Irwin, Thomas L. Masson, Bruce Barton and others

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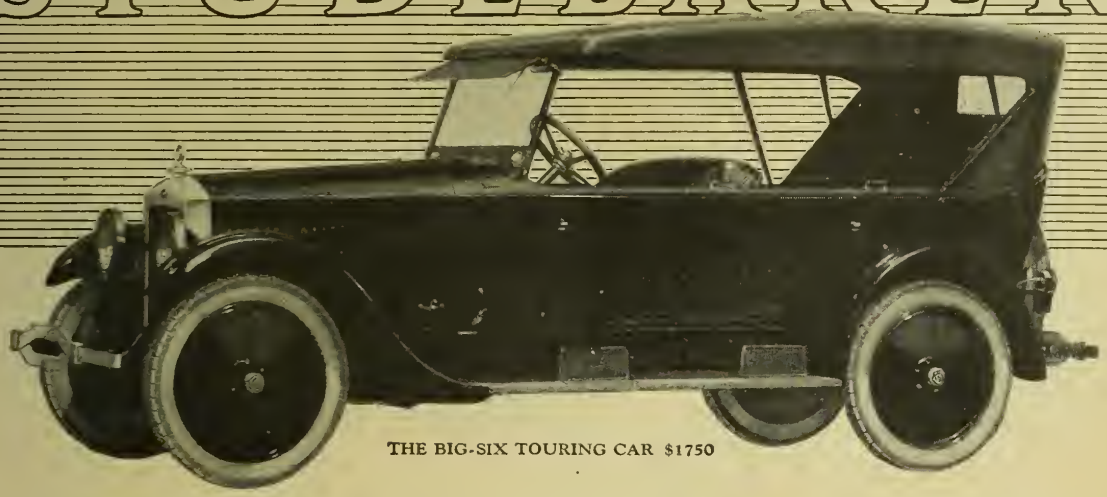

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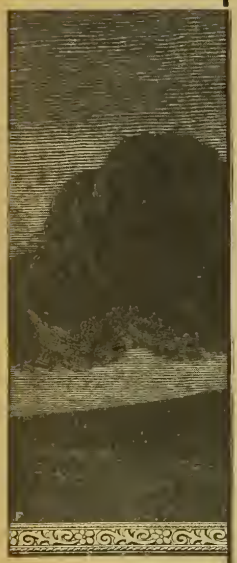

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Hamilton Watch

"The Watch of Railroad Accuracy"

Vol. XL, No. 6
Published Monthly
On sale the 23rd of each month preceding date of issue.

THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

APRIL
1923

BOOTH TARKINGTON

in the first of his new group of stories for this magazine, asks a very pertinent question, namely:

"What Chance Has a Man?"

Every man will understand his story, thus entitled, and every woman who reads it in the next — the May — issue will smile in her heart and drop her eyes. It's that kind of a story. You *must not* miss it in the May number.

TABLE OF CONTENTS

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Reg'lar Fellers

By HENRY WELLINGTON WACK, F. R. G. S.
Founder and First Editor of "Field and Stream"

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Henry Wellington Wack

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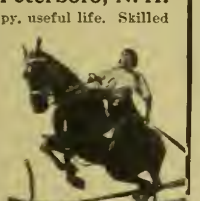

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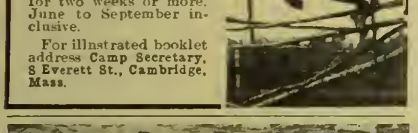

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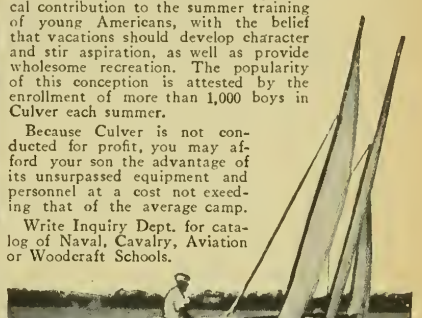

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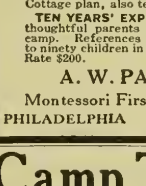

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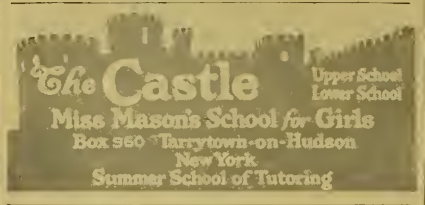

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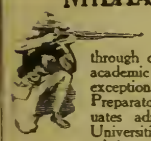

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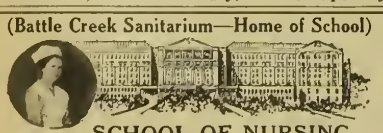

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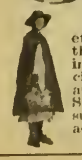

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Do you know all the little secrets of being a likable guest? Do you know what is expected of you on all occasions—how to make introductions and how to start interesting conversation after the introduction; what to wear to formal functions and to informal functions; how to make every one who comes into contact with you feel calm, at ease? The person with winning manners is always welcome. With the poise and dignity that good manners give, any one can quickly adapt oneself to every environment—can be at all times, with all people, cultured, impressive, well-liked.

Why Some People Always Feel Out of Place

HAVE you ever noticed, at any social function you may have attended, that bad manners instantly distinguish themselves? If a woman is embarrassed, constrained, ill-at-ease, every one knows at once that she is not used to good society. If a man uses his fork in a clumsy manner or makes incorrect use of the finger-bowl, he can not conceal the fact that he is ill-bred.

No hostess likes to invite to her home a man or woman she knows will make embarrassing mistakes. Those who are always blundering, always doing the wrong thing at the wrong time, are never welcome. They invariably make others feel uncomfortable in their presence.

But the person with winning manners is always welcome. He—or she—knows exactly what to say to the hostess on arrival, how to mingle with the guests, how to create conversation, how to be agreeable, how to do and say the right thing at the right time.

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When you leave, do you know what to say to the hostess? Do you know what is meant by the "bread-and-butter" letter? If you know exactly what to do, say, write and wear at all times, on all occasions, you will never be embarrassed.

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Mistakes at the table distinguish themselves at once. Little blundering errors condemn a man or woman as ill-bred. Do you know all the rules of table etiqutte?

Winning manners are more important than pretty clothes. Can you adapt yourself to every environment—make yourself always pleasant and well-liked?

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Without money in advance, or obligation on my part, you may send me the complete two-volume set of the Book of Etiquette. Within 5 days I will send you only $3.50 in full payment or return the books. I am to be the sole judge of whether or not I want to keep the books.

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After Eating

sweeten the breath and aid digestion with —

LIFE SAVERS

THE CANDY MINT WITH THE HOLE

CLAIRE WINDSOR
Film Star
Photograph by Edwin Bower Hesser, New York

MADGE BELLAMY
Film Star
Photograph by Edwin Bower Hesser, New York

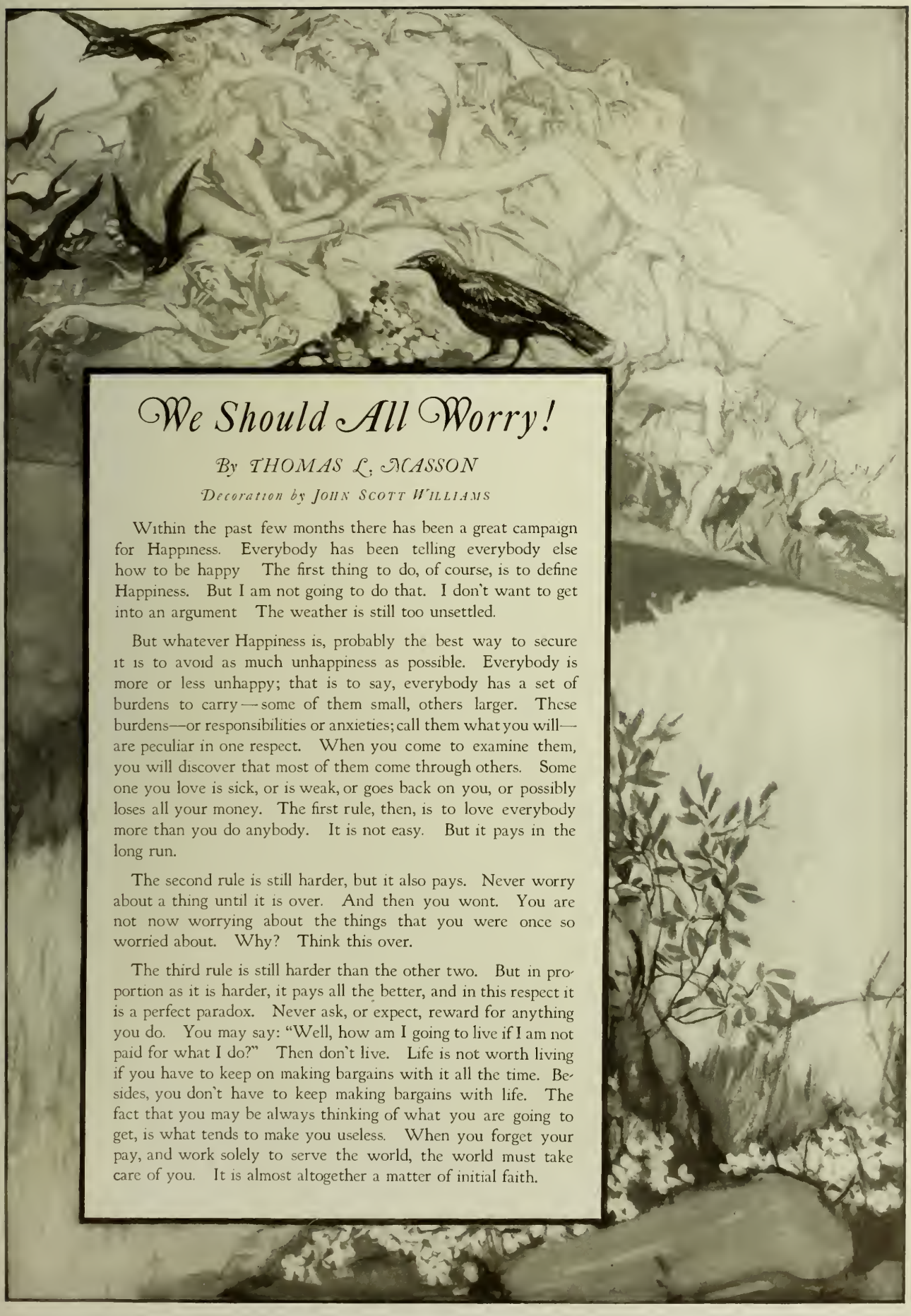
LOUISE PRUSSING
in "Six Cylinder Love"
Photo by Edward Thayer Monroe, New York

TALLULAH BANKHEAD
in "The Exciters"
Photograph by Ira L. Hill's Studio, New York

GLADYS FRAZIN
in "The Whole Town's Talking"

ENID BENNETT
Film Star
Photograph by Edwin Bower Hesser, New York


J. J. Williams



We Should All Worry!

By THOMAS L. MASSON

Decoration by JOHN SCOTT WILLIAMS

Within the past few months there has been a great campaign for Happiness. Everybody has been telling everybody else how to be happy The first thing to do, of course, is to define Happiness. But I am not going to do that. I don't want to get into an argument The weather is still too unsettled.

But whatever Happiness is, probably the best way to secure it is to avoid as much unhappiness as possible. Everybody is more or less unhappy; that is to say, everybody has a set of burdens to carry — some of them small, others larger. These burdens—or responsibilities or anxieties; call them what you will—are peculiar in one respect. When you come to examine them, you will discover that most of them come through others. Some one you love is sick, or is weak, or goes back on you, or possibly loses all your money. The first rule, then, is to love everybody more than you do anybody. It is not easy. But it pays in the long run.

The second rule is still harder, but it also pays. Never worry about a thing until it is over. And then you wont. You are not now worrying about the things that you were once so worried about. Why? Think this over.

The third rule is still harder than the other two. But in proportion as it is harder, it pays all the better, and in this respect it is a perfect paradox. Never ask, or expect, reward for anything you do. You may say: "Well, how am I going to live if I am not paid for what I do?" Then don't live. Life is not worth living if you have to keep on making bargains with it all the time. Besides, you don't have to keep making bargains with life. The fact that you may be always thinking of what you are going to get, is what tends to make you useless. When you forget your pay, and work solely to serve the world, the world must take care of you. It is almost altogether a matter of initial faith.

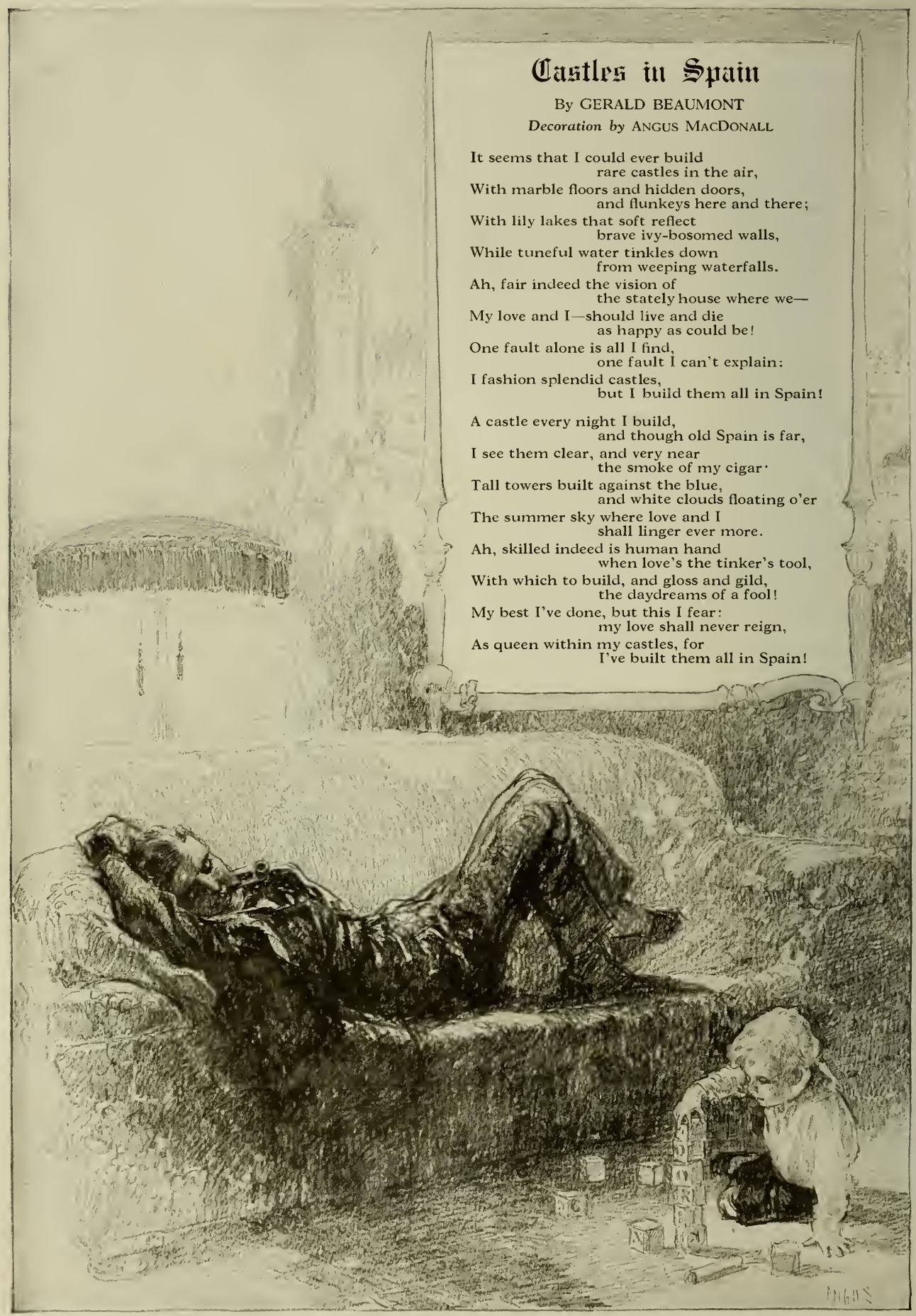
Castles in Spain

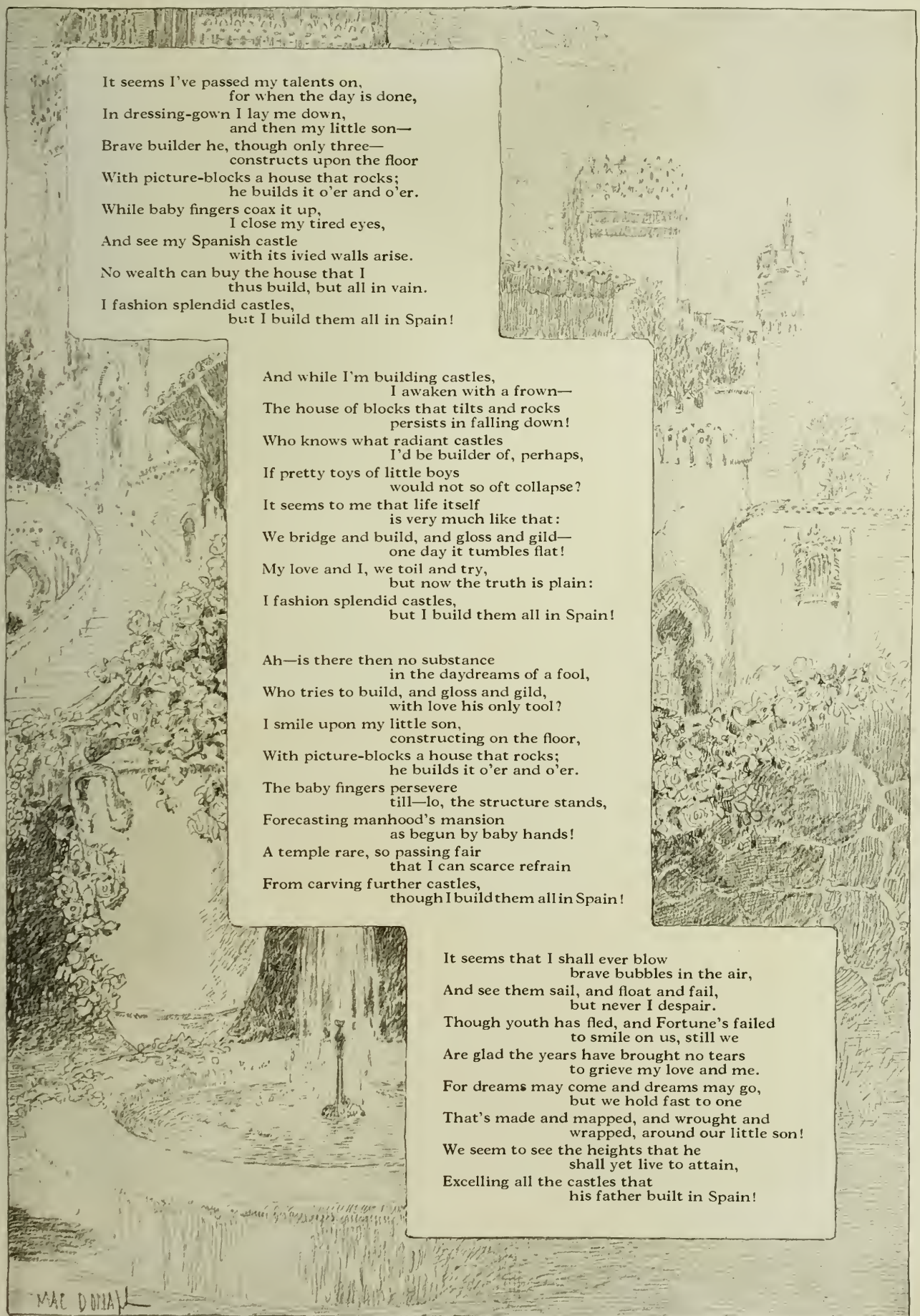
By GERALD BEAUMONT

Decoration by ANGUS MACDONALL

It seems that I could ever build
rare castles in the air,
With marble floors and hidden doors,
and flunkeys here and there;
With lily lakes that soft reflect
brave ivy-bosomed walls,
While tuneful water tinkles down
from weeping waterfalls.
Ah, fair indeed the vision of
the stately house where we—
My love and I—should live and die
as happy as could be!
One fault alone is all I find,
one fault I can't explain:
I fashion splendid castles,
but I build them all in Spain!

A castle every night I build,
and though old Spain is far,
I see them clear, and very near
the smoke of my cigar·
Tall towers built against the blue,
and white clouds floating o'er
The summer sky where love and I
shall linger ever more.
Ah, skilled indeed is human hand
when love's the tinker's tool,
With which to build, and gloss and gild,
the daydreams of a fool!
My best I've done, but this I fear:
my love shall never reign,
As queen within my castles, for
I've built them all in Spain!





It seems I've passed my talents on,
for when the day is done,
In dressing-gown I lay me down,
and then my little son—
Brave builder he, though only three—
constructs upon the floor
With picture-blocks a house that rocks;
he builds it o'er and o'er.
While baby fingers coax it up,
I close my tired eyes,
And see my Spanish castle
with its ivied walls arise.
No wealth can buy the house that I
thus build, but all in vain.
I fashion splendid castles,
but I build them all in Spain!

And while I'm building castles,
I awaken with a frown—
The house of blocks that tilts and rocks
persists in falling down!
Who knows what radiant castles
I'd be builder of, perhaps,
If pretty toys of little boys
would not so oft collapse?
It seems to me that life itself
is very much like that:
We bridge and build, and gloss and gild—
one day it tumbles flat!
My love and I, we toil and try,
but now the truth is plain:
I fashion splendid castles,
but I build them all in Spain!

Ah—is there then no substance
in the daydreams of a fool,
Who tries to build, and gloss and gild,
with love his only tool?
I smile upon my little son,
constructing on the floor,
With picture-blocks a house that rocks;
he builds it o'er and o'er.
The baby fingers persevere
till—lo, the structure stands,
Forecasting manhood's mansion
as begun by baby hands!
A temple rare, so passing fair
that I can scarce refrain
From carving further castles,
though I build them all in Spain!

It seems that I shall ever blow
brave bubbles in the air,
And see them sail, and float and fail,
but never I despair.
Though youth has fled, and Fortune's failed
to smile on us, still we
Are glad the years have brought no tears
to grieve my love and me.
For dreams may come and dreams may go,
but we hold fast to one
That's made and mapped, and wrought and
wrapped, around our little son!
We seem to see the heights that he
shall yet live to attain,
Excelling all the castles that
his father built in Spain!

Palm and olive oils—nothing else—give nature's green color to Palmolive Soap.

Face to Face

As If You Were Another Girl

WHAT do the eyes of others see? This is a question every girl should be able to answer. Do the glances which rest upon your face express admiration, or turn away with indifference?

Meet yourself face to face in your mirror and pass judgment upon what you see as critically as if you were some other girl. Don't condone complexion defects. Don't console yourself by hoping they won't be noticed. Don't excuse sallowness and blemishes by blaming the light. Instead, take note of every fault and learn the remedy.

The First Step

Whether your problem is the improvement of a poor complexion or to keep a good one, this first step is the same. The network of tiny pores which compose the surface of the skin must, every day, be cleansed from clogging accumulations. The natural oil of the skin, which nature has provided as a beautifier, is often secreted in excess. In combination with dirt, powder and perspiration it quickly fills up these minute pores unless carefully washed away.

Soap and water is the only effective means of cleansing yet discovered. Cold cream alone only increases the clogging, while other remedies are often unnecessarily harsh. The selection of the soap you use is the only problem and this is easily solved. Facial soap must be pure, mild and soothing in its action. Thus you should select Palmolive. Once a day, and the best time is bed time, wash your face thoroughly with the profuse, creamy Palmolive lather. Massage it thoroughly into the skin. Then rinse thoroughly and dry with a fine, soft towel.

If your skin is very dry, this is the time to use cold cream. Oily skins won't need it. A week of this simple cleansing treatment will work wonders in the condition of your skin. Blackheads will disappear and an attractive natural color replaces that dull, sallow look.

Blended From Beautifying Oils

Women who fear that the use of soap ages their skin have made the mistake of using harsh soap. They will change their minds once they use Palmolive. The blend of palm and olive oils has produced the mildest cleanser science can produce. The lather of Palmolive is actually lotion-like in its action.

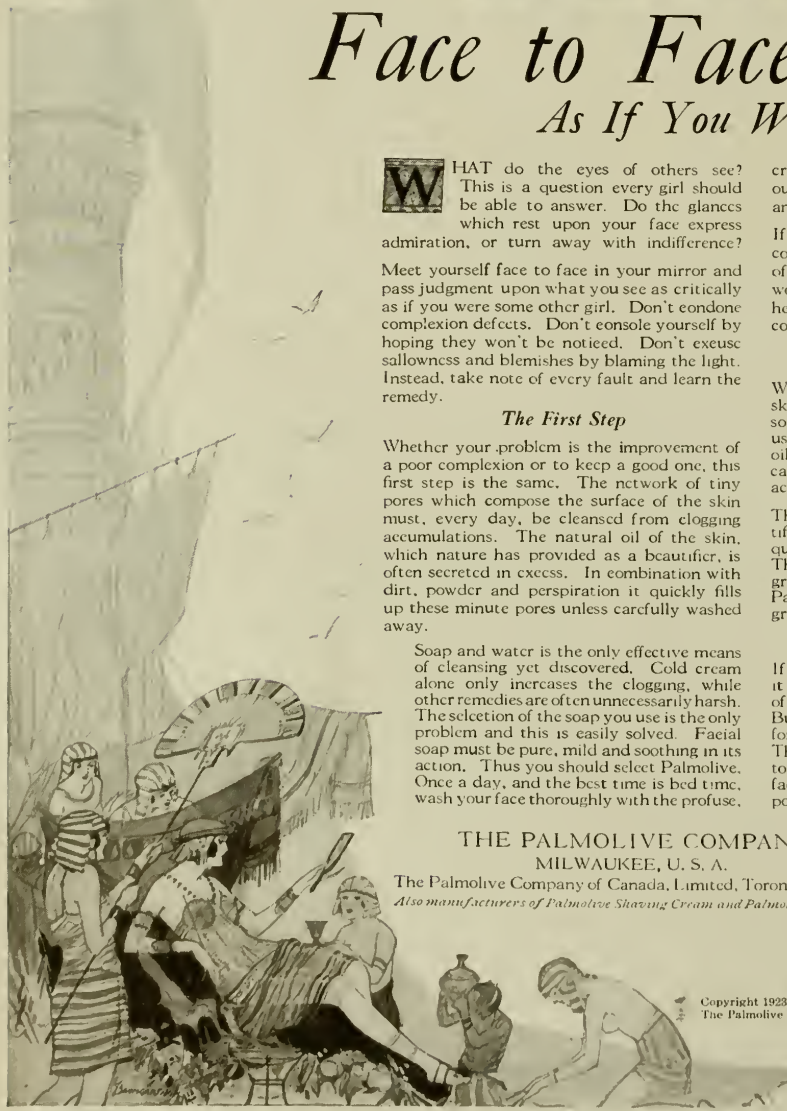
These two rare Oriental oils are historic beautifiers, and have been valued for their cosmetic qualities since the days of ancient Egypt. These rare Oriental oils impart their rich, green color to the attractive Palmolive cake. Palmolive green is as natural as the color of grass and leaves.

A 10c Soap

If Palmolive cost many times this modest price it would be considered worth it by the millions of users who find it the only satisfactory soap. But it is these millions who make it possible for us to offer Palmolive at a popular price. The gigantic demand keeps the Palmolive factories working day and night and allows manufacturing economies which makes the 10c price possible.

Volume and Efficiency Produce 25c Quality for

10c



THE PALMOLIVE COMPANY
MILWAUKEE, U. S. A.
The Palmolive Company of Canada, Limited, Toronto, Canada
Also manufacturers of Palmolive Shaving Cream and Palmolive Shampoo

 1727

A Common-sense Editorial
by Bruce Barton

And the Cost Is Nothing

TWENTY years ago there was a joint debate between teams representing two rival universities. A member of one of those teams, who is now an eminent lawyer, told me the story.

"On the merits of the argument, I am perfectly sure that our opponents had us beaten," he said. "They knew it too, and in their speeches they adopted a very aggressive attitude. They *challenged* us to disprove their statements, and *demanded* that the judges note our shortcomings.

"When I rose to make my rebuttal speech, I began in a very low voice. I praised our opponents and said that no one in the hall could possibly have appreciated their speeches more than I.

"In contrast to their belligerent attitude, I was so soft-spoken and courteous that the sympathies of the audience swung clear over to our side. Two of the judges voted for us, and one against.

"The man who voted against us was the keenest analyst of the three," the lawyer concluded. "The other two, being human, were swayed by the feeling of the crowd, which always cares less for logic than for good sportsmanship."

One of the leaders of Parliament in the last generation kept his place for twenty years, growing more popular all the while. In a confidential moment he said to a friend:

"The true secret of success is courtesy to your opponents."

I often wonder why that secret is so little understood and used. A strike breaks out, for example. The public wavers in its sympathies, uncertain which side to favor. If either side were to issue a statement showing some consideration for the other, and for the public, it would win nation-wide support. Instead of that, both sides lash their press-agents into denunciations which cause the public to cry: "A curse on both your houses!"

What per cent of the time of the legislators of all countries is spent in making speeches which are irritating to the people of other countries? How many columns of every newspaper are filled with foolish, inconsiderate remarks which merely make matters worse?

It has been said that "kind words butter no parsnips." I care little for parsnips, buttered or unbuttered. But I know a man in New York who, for forty years, has taken advantage of every opportunity to say and do courteous, appreciative things. All over town there are men who like to see him succeed and are glad to help.

Of his million dollars I should say that one-half might fairly be credited to his unfailing courtesy.

Which has cost him absolutely nothing.

Wear silk economically? Yes!
But first consider this safety test

SHETLAND WOOL

As difficult to wash safely as chiffon

This delicate sweater of gray Shetland wool, with its stripes of old blue and rose, has been washed 11 times with Ivory Flakes and lukewarm water. "It is still as soft and fluffy, its delicate colors as fresh, and its shape as true as when I bought it," says its wearer's letter. "Hard rubbing or washing with harsh soap would have ruined it."

(Garment with owner's letter on file in Procter & Gamble offices.)

MANY WOMEN resist the temptation to own the garments of their hearts' desire, not because they cannot afford the first cost, but because they are afraid of what may happen to such garments in the washing process.

But the problem of washing delicate georgette, crêpe de chine, chiffon — yes, and the finer woolens, too, like the sweater in the picture — difficult as it is, has been solved for countless women by a simple test. This test may be applied to all soaps offered for this purpose, whatever their form. Though easy as adding one plus one, this test has provided a really sound basis for the selection of safe soap.

Here is the test:

Ask yourself:

"Would I be willing to use this soap on my face?"

Those who apply this thought to Ivory Flakes need seek no further.

Why? Because Ivory Flakes is simply Ivory Soap — the same fine white soap which for two generations has befriended the faces of millions of women — now prepared in petal-thin flakes for the washbowl laundering of the most delicate fabrics.

The same gentle cleansing properties, purity and mildness of Ivory Soap are found in Ivory Flakes — *without change.*

A teaspoonful of Ivory Flakes, instant suds; a few moments of dipping and squeezing, and this gentle cleansing agent has done its work — safely and surely.

Economical enough for *any* kind of laundering, Ivory Flakes has a real *margin of safety* for the most precious garments you own.

May we send you the free sample and booklet pictured in the lower right-hand corner? A postcard will bring them.

The full-size package of Ivory Flakes may be had at grocery and department stores.

PROCTER & GAMBLE

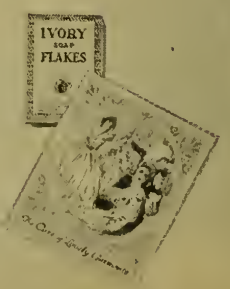
IVORY SOAP FLAKES

Makes dainty clothes last longer

FREE

This package and booklet

A sample package of Ivory Flakes and the beautifully illustrated booklet, "The Care of Lovely Garments," will be sent to you without charge on application to Section 28-DF, Dept. of Home Economics, The Procter & Gamble Co., Cincinnati, O.



THE RED BOOK MAGAZINE

APRIL 1923. VOL. XL. NUMBER 6 KARL EDWIN HARRIMAN, *Editor*

Illustrated by
Howard Chandler Christy

A delightful romance based on a mere airy nothing—on a kimono, in fact—charmingly chronicled by the distinguished author of "Square Peggy," "Today's Daughter," "On Our Hill" and many other well-loved books.

The Kimono

By
JOSEPHINE DASKAM BACON

As he stared, she sank to a kneeling position and pounded feebly against the door. "Oh, please! Wont you open!" she moaned. "Why don't you ring the bell?" he asked.

RODDY DRENT pawed helplessly through the unfamiliar dusk of the drawing-room, reaching out like a blind man along the sides of the wall for some button or drop-chain.

"They're always gassing about the conveniences of apartments," he complained, jumping nervously at the hollow echo of his injured tones through the emptiness, "and they can't even standardize the electric switches! If you can't poke something close beside the door, for Pete's sake, where *can* you poke?"

He knocked against a small, jingly table and reared like a scared horse.

"There! Now I've done it!" he groaned, but the tinkling died away and he proceeded cautiously, cheered by the absence of the final ghastly crash.

The sharp edge of the piano drew a poignant yelp of anguish from him, but even in his suffering he recalled the tall lamp that stood beside it, and rubbing his bruised hip, he blundered on and found the little brass chain at last. The room leaped into light; the strange,

lurking monsters that had pressed up around him dwindled into tables and chairs; he perceived a clear lane to the piano which he might have followed—his wanderings through the underbrush of flower tables and footstools had been quite unnecessary.

"Well! Here we are!" he breathed. "Let's see the time."

It was eleven-thirty: the train had been an hour late.

"Now, the first thing, we'll go to bed," he mused. "I'll get somebody to clean up tomorrow."

He dragged his heavy suitcase into Bob's room, but the bed was piled with hat-boxes and long cartons of the shape and size affected by dressmakers. A look at little Robert's funny, painted Noah's Ark bed disclosed a typewriter, a parrot-cage and a strangely clean goldfish globe, raised high on a pyramid of rugs.

"Well! After all the fuss and all the directions, she's forgotten, after all!" he muttered, and strolled resentfully into Sue's room, which, of course, he hadn't thought of disturbing.

BUT Sue never forgot. He might have known. The room was fresh and clean, the windows open, the shades drawn. On the white counterpane, turned down to an inviting triangle, pajamas and bathrobe lay expectantly; slippers of Turkish toweling stood mathematically below. Under the bed light a novel and a magazine waited. The adjacent bathroom glistened. On the pillow a note directed in Sue's unmistakable clear, square hand caught his eye—at just the moment, undoubtedly, that she had intended it should.

He opened it, grinning sheepishly.

"*Dear Roddy,*" said Sue—and it really seemed that she stood there, talking to him. An accomplished novelist, she was able to write, not as other people write letters, but exactly as she talked—thus:

I told Mrs. Waggenheimer to leave your breakfast-tray all ready. There are rolls in the large box marked "Cake," opposite the gas-range, and cream and butter and fruit in the refrigerator. The coffee is all ready in the percolator on the range; all you have to do is to light the gas below it, before your bath, and it will be ready when you are. But remember to turn off the gas when you take away the percolator, wont you? Leave everything just as it is when you finish. Mrs. Waggenheimer will come in at ten and clean up. I told her to leave a window open in each room, for the draught. You'd better see if she has—she's terribly afraid of burglars.

I suppose you'll lunch downtown, but Virgie Storrs is in town about Will's eyes, and she said that unless you phoned her to the contrary, she'd expect you for dinner and scratch up some one for bridge. It's Rhinelander 3210. If you remember it, take her the wrist-watch in the right-hand corner of the top drawer of my bureau—she'll attend to it for me. But don't bother to come back for it, in case you forget. You don't have to change for dinner. If you need any clothes, Bob always has a change in his bureau. Leave out anything you want washed, for Mrs. Waggenheimer.

We'll expect you on the eleven-thirty-five Friday, and if you're bringing Robert any sweets, Turkish paste is better than chocolate. If your driver is still unmended, Bob has an extra one.

Remember about the gas!

SUE.

He drew a long breath. "Well, that seems to be *that!*" he murmured. An amazing woman. One felt, perhaps, a little like a telephone-plug in the hand of an expert operator, but one couldn't deny the excellence of the results, could one? Bob certainly didn't. He had paid a price, assuredly, for this beneficent despot, but he paid gladly, it seemed.

"You ought to get married, Rod, you really ought!" he had been saying for the last ten years. And he had never said it without automatically bringing a vision of his handsome sister-in-law before Roddy's mental eye: he admired Sue and respected her—who didn't? But she always seemed, somehow, to be laughing at him.

He took the silly little gold watch out of the drawer and put it carefully in his pocket before he went to bed. . . . .

In the course of a comfortable breakfast, wherein the percolator figured precisely as Sue had prophesied, he was disturbed by the sharp twanging of a bell somewhere in the apartment. Jumping up hastily, he strode to the front door, but no one stood behind it. The bell twanged again, and he traced the sound to what seemed to be a house-telephone in the rear hall. Seizing the receiver feverishly, he called, "Hello! Hello!" several times, but as only a dull buzzing answered him, he dropped it, left it hanging from its hook, and fled to the telephone in the dining-room, while the terrible ringing redoubled in power.

"Well! What is it?" he said threateningly, but an unperturbed Central clicked back at him, "Number, please."

"I don't want any number. *You* called *me!*" he stormed, but Central only answered impersonally, "Please excuse it," and left him cursing, while the bell continued to peal like the Judgment trump.

"Great heavens, *where* is that bell?" he demanded furiously, and strode through the kitchen to the back door, flinging it wide to confront a surprised youth in uniform who extended a morning paper pacifically.

"Mrs. Drent told me to be sure you got this," said the youth. "I guess I waked you up, didn't I?"

"Not exactly."

Roddy felt positively limp from the strain.

"How do they stand it?" he muttered, and handed the surprised boy a tip out of all proportion to the news of the day.

After all, Sue certainly was an efficient woman!

He poured himself a second cup of coffee and unfolded the paper.

Again the bell—softer this time, and less insistent; but he was not to be fooled twice and walked more calmly to the kitchen. What had this sister-in-law of his arranged now?

Even as he opened the door, he was aware of two things: a loud sudden bang in front of him, and a persistent bell-ringing sounding at his left. The door once open, he was aware of a third thing, which was that no one wanted to enter his apartment, and almost at the same moment of a fourth thing, which instantly eliminated the others.

This fourth thing was a young woman in sky-blue pajamas and high-heeled cloth-of-gold slippers, which exhibited her round pink heels. Two short, thick pigtails of honey-colored hair hung over her shoulders; her face turned desperately toward him, was of a deathly pallor; in one hand she clutched an empty milk-bottle.

As he stared at her, she sank down to a kneeling position and pounded feebly against the painted metal door.

"Oh, please! *Please! Wont* you open!" she moaned.

She looked like *Pierrot* in a Russian ballet.

Roddy coughed tentatively.

"Why don't you ring the bell?" he asked quietly.

"Nobody's there! I can't get in! Oh, please!" she besought the grim and senseless door.

"Let me send for some one," he began, but she leaped up and glared—yes, actually glared—at him.

"Don't you dare!" she cried, now doubly distraught. "I—I—oh, what shall I do?"

Unconsciously tightening his grip on his own door, Roddy moved forward a step.

"But somebody is bound to come up here," he said sensibly; "you can't stand here all day. Let *me* go and get—"

"The key's inside. You can't get in. Oh! Oh! *Oh!*"

She started to moan again. And through her moaning sounded the persistence of that terrible bell. It seemed to summon him relentlessly: he must go. He must listen at all the telephones and open all the doors all over again.

And leave this lunatic girl? But how? And yet, why not? What could he, what could anybody, do? He wavered.

Suddenly a door below closed with a metallic clang. Heavy footfalls sounded on the stone service stairs to his right. Some one was coming up!

She too heard the steps, and her face, which had been white before, was now a chalk mask. She stopped her moans and seemed to cease to breathe, clutching at the nickel knob.

Her terror swept across the little hall and clutched him. This must not happen!

"Here!" he whispered. "Come in here! Quick!"

HE pointed behind him, and she rose in one swift, smooth motion, and flew into his kitchen like a bluebird. He closed the door softly just as the steps turned the landing. A moment later, while they both stood like carven images, came the sound of glass deposited upon concrete, and the steps clattered down again.

"It's the milk!" she whispered hoarsely. "I was putting the bottle out!"

"Of course," he said soothingly, relaxing his taut muscles and breathing gratefully. "It might happen to anyone. Now, let's see how you can—"

The bell broke hideously on the stillness. She jumped like a rabbit.

"Oh! Who—*oh!* I must—" She was at the door.

"Wait, wait a minute!" he cried. "Wait till I see, wont you? Nobody can come in, you know, unless I let them! It's probably the telephone, anyway. *I* can't tell the darn things apart."

"You never saw this?" she cried. "Never saw the thing in my life," protested Roddy, while Bob laughed.

Hurrying to the front door, fearful that it was the telephone, after all, he noted the relinquished receiver of the house phone and instinctively hung it on its little hook. Instantly the ringing ceased. Peace descended like a dove over the apartment.

Hurrying back to the girl, he found her standing just as he had left her, clutching the fatal milk-bottle, her eyes fixed in horror on the blank, protecting door. If she couldn't stare at her own kitchen door, she must stare at his, apparently. A creature of one idea.

"You don't think I could possibly get into your place, and then let you in?" he asked persuasively.

She turned a dull eye on him.

"It's locked. How could you?" she answered briefly.

He considered. To his disgust, he found himself automatically thinking of Sue. What would that efficient woman have done? The very disgust, it seemed, sharpened his wits, for a wave of common sense rolled over his perturbed mind.

"Look here!" he answered eagerly—it seemed hardly safe or decent to speak in ordinary conversational tones. "Suppose I got you something to—to wear, you know; couldn't you send for some one, then? Wouldn't that be all right?"

A spark of hope kindled in her eye; her muscles relaxed visibly; the hand that grasped the bottle loosened.

"Oh! *Could you?*" she breathed.

"Easiest thing in the world! Wait a moment—" He hurried on careful tiptoes into his room and seized the bathrobe from the chair, but paused, thinking.

That was a man's bathrobe: would she be wearing one, normally? Wouldn't it be better— After all, Sue wasn't such a necessity, now, was she? A man could use his own brains, it seemed.

"Your sister sent it," she answered. "It's a kimono. Do you think—" He stared. "For Pete's sake!" he muttered. "She's awful, Sue is."

He opened a closet-door at random, foraging with his eyes. It was swept and garnished, inside, with neat hat-boxes on the shelves. Only an umbrella in the corner and a shapeless something depending from a hook marked it for a closet at all. He grabbed at the shadowy folds and found to his delight that he held in his hand a soft, all-enveloping wrapper of a dull, faded pink. It was the most impersonal of garments, but it was protecting, and it was feminine; he returned in triumph with it.

"Here!" he cried softly. "Will this do?"

She seized it as a man sinking for the third time seizes a flung rope. In an eye-wink she had slid the hand that still grasped the bottle through one wide, flapping sleeve; in another she had thrust through the other hand. Folding the robe across her, she confronted him, and became in that instant another person. It was precisely as if she had left the kitchen, and a second human being had entered it.

"That's very nice, thank you," she said, and calmly laid the bottle on a shelf beside her. Raising her arms, she seized a thick braid with either hand and in one swift, twisting motion bound them somehow about her head. She looked now like a Madonna, gentle, self-poised, trusting.

"Just look out a moment and see if it's all right, will you?" she asked; and Roddy opened the door with exquisite accuracy, peering out like a burglar. All was silent and empty.

"All right," he whispered. "Just step out and ring this back bell—I would. And—"

"Yes, yes, yes," she interrupted, "I know. Just close your door, please." And picking up her bottle, she glided past him, directing him with an impatient glance to be quick.

"Thank you very much," she added politely as he waited a little stupidly.

"Not at all. If there's anything—"

"Oh, *please,* close the door!" she broke in shortly. "I can manage, thank you."

Even as he shut it, a little forcibly, he heard her short, sharp ring at the service elevator, and in another moment the rumble of the ascending car. Then her voice:

"Can you send somebody up with a pass-key, do you think? I shut myself out."

"I got them right here, miss. The superintendent left them with me. Out for the milk, was you? That was too bad!"

"Yes. It *was* silly. I'm much obliged."

A slight rattle, a soft slam, and it was all over.

Roddy walked back slowly to his cooling coffee. What extraordinary creatures! All this worry and fright and hullabaloo because of one garment, and all this brisk, domineering self-assurance because of another? And what was it all about, anyway? She was perfectly decently clothed—much more so than on the beach—as well, certainly, as in a ballroom nowadays. It wasn't as if one had never seen pajamas—modern advertising methods, if nothing else, had impressed them sufficiently upon the public mind. Why this frantic, chalk-faced terror? They were extraordinary—Sue, as well as the rest, doubtless. He returned to his paper.

The amazing and heart-warming rise of three of his pet stocks, long derided by Bob, put everything else out of his mind and sent him posthaste to a congratulatory broker. A marvelously successful evening at bridge kept him childishly happy till he fell asleep, and the morning found him feverishly assembling his odds and ends into a suitcase, an unexpected Bob waiting in the car outside.

The wrist-watch delivered, the Turkish paste miraculously remembered, he greeted Sue in a radiation of conscious virtue.

"And I didn't forget to turn out the gas!" he told her proudly.

She cocked a wise eye at him.

"Well, well!" she said, and smiled.

She packed them off on a two-weeks' fishing-trip, a miracle of tact and efficiency from start to finish, from which Bob returned to her as eager as she had no doubt intended that he should be! Roddy, bound by no domestic chains, roamed on through Canada with a chance-found college chum, and turned up in October, hard and brown, glad of Bob's cordial invitation to use Robert's Noah's Ark bed for a few days while his own rooms, soon to be shared with the Canada chum who had grown suddenly into a partner in a new law-firm, were getting settled. Sue cordially approved of this moving a business based on the family real-

estate holdings, and Roddy glowed at her crisp commendations, in spite of himself. After all, old Sue was a clever woman—you couldn't deny it. Look at the way she managed her family and a profession of her own!

After dinner, which included his favorite baked ham and creamed spinach, his sister-in-law smoked a cigarette with them over their coffee and then pointed back to the dining-room.

"The table's clear now," she said, in the same tone she would have used to Robert and young Suzanne, "and I think you'd better take all those maps and blue-prints in there. I have some bills to go over—and by the way, Roddy, you old idiot, where's the bill for that kimono? I want to pay it, you know."

"Bill?" he repeated vaguely. "What bill?"

She went back to her room, returning quickly with a long paper box.

"The bill for this," she said, extending it, open, so that he gazed at a glistening rose-colored strip of silky stuff shrouded in white tissue-paper.

"What is it?" he asked blankly.

"It's mine," she admonished him, "and you were perfectly welcome to use it if you preferred it to the bath-robe I left out for you; but if you felt that you must have it cleaned, why not let me do it, when I came? I send everything to a woman way uptown: Renée's awfully expensive."

"'Renée,'" he repeated; "what's that?"

She shook the box at him.

"The cleaner over here," she said. "I suppose it was the nearest, so you went there. And as for having it dyed again—really, it wasn't worth it; it's an old thing."

"You're crazy, Sue; why on earth should I wear one of your dresses?" he said. "I never saw the thing before."

"You never saw this?" she cried, and lifted it out carefully, a dainty, folded, shining garment like the inside of a conch-shell, with pale silver threads gleaming through it.

"You never wore it?"

"Good Lord, no!" His bewilderment and honesty were evident.

"Then—who did?"

"Ask me another, Sue. I never saw the thing in my life," protested Roddy, while Bob laughed heartily.

"Too clever this time, old woman!" he crowed. "I told you it was loony, from the start. To begin with, Roddy'd never have the sense."

Roddy stared at the rosy, silvered folds over her arm.

"But it's a woman's dress, isn't it?" he asked. "Why should you think I'd want to wear it? What was the idea?"

Sue fixed him with her clear brown eyes.

"Then some one has been living in this apartment," she declared solemnly, "some one who used my things and knew my name!"

Roddy grinned lazily. This came of being a story-writer. Always making a mystery out of some trivial, casual happening.

"Why not Mrs. Waterwagon, or whatever her name is?" he asked, his eye on the rolled maps on the davenport.

"I asked Mrs. Waggenheimer the first thing, as soon as I found it in the kitchen. She hadn't the least idea, of course. It cost more than she can earn in two days to get this cleaned and dyed at Renée's. And she weighs nearly two hundred pounds, anyway."

"So do I, for that matter. So if *that* lets you out, I'm safe, Sue," he declared. "Sorry I can't help you, my dear. Shall we start at it now, Bob?"

They covered the dining-table with papers and left her staring into the tissue depths in her lap.

"You don't often see Sue stumped," her husband confided, "but she certainly is now. She was perfectly sure you'd spoiled the thing, and left it at the cleaner's, you see."

"Oh, for heaven's sake! A woman's silk dress!"

"It's not a dress—it's a kimono!" Sue's voice pursued them through rustling paper. The men laughed.

"She'll worry at that all night," said Bob.

But it was his brother who woke in the night, suddenly, as at the stroke of an alarm bell. Clean out of cheery dreams, where he and old Pierre banked the fire and *(Continued on page 142)*

The Club of One-eyed Men

By

ARTHUR SOMERS ROCHE

The second strange adventure in the bizarre biography of a gentleman whom ill fortune persuaded to a career of crime as a robber of thieves—told with notable skill by the gifted author of "Loot," "Plunder" and many other clever stories.

Illustrated by Robert W. Stewart

IT was time for me to go to work. Seated at my table just removed from the throngs on the sidewalk, sipping my vermouth, I arrived reluctantly at this conclusion. Not that poverty pressed me! On the contrary, from the proceeds of a certain bit of legerdemain there remained to me, after paying my passage across the Atlantic, my expenses in Paris these last three months, and restoring my wardrobe to its present satisfactory condition, some ten thousand dollars. Certainly, benefited by the exchange, I could hope to live decently for another six months at least.

Not so long ago, I would have been overjoyed at assurance of financial security for six six days. Indeed, sufficient food in my stomach away for six hours was a rare condition with me. But our ideas change with our changing prosperity. Let those who think that the mind governs material things ponder this obvious reverse.

I am, I think, one who makes up his mind quickly, and acts immediately. Certainly when I had decided that I would rather live a thief than starve an honest man, I had acted instantly. Let me say, in parenthesis, that I had not yet arrived at regret for that decision. I acted, in this perhaps less important matter, as suddenly as I had acted on that evening when I had kissed an airy farewell to the traditions of all the Ainsleys, of whom I, John, was the first to turn to crime.

I raised my finger, and an attentive *garçon* leaped to my table. I paid him for my *apéritif*, rose, and with one stride was mingled with the crowd that surged from the Place de l'Opéra up the Boulevard des Capucines. It was an observation of the individuals who made up the crowd that had brought me to decision.

For it was springtime, and the world had come to Paris. From my place at the table I had seen fortunes in furs and jewels pass by. The profiteers of all the world were here; and their wives and daughters and mistresses flaunted the success of their males before the others of their kind.

Swarthy Argentinians grown rich in beef and hides, shining-

"That," said my fair informant, "is the. White Eagle. . . . . He was acquit', as he has always been acquit', every time the police try to put him in prison."

eyed Spaniards who had traded while Europe bled, munitions-makers from England and America—they rode and walked the streets of Paris, gross, vulgar and overfed. As, after a terrific storm, strange carcasses arise from the depths and float offensively upon the surface of the sea, so now upon the surface of society drifted weird carrion.

The sight of them, obese and opulent, made me realize that it was time for me to set about the acquisition of some of their more merchantable gauds. Not that I intended to prey directly upon these *nouveaux riches!* But where the carrion lies, the vulture flies. It was toward the vulture, his talons gripping choice morsels, that I would bend my energies. I would let the vulture do all the unpleasant work, and I would reap his profit.

For do not think that I had spent these months in Paris in mere stupid gratification of appetites that had been balked so long by poverty. It is true that I had indulged in sundry luxuries and pleasures, that I had lived once more as a gentleman should live, unharassed by soiling economies; but I had devoted myself studiously to thought of the future.

That that future must be outside the law I had determined. My first venture into crime had yielded me a profit so great, for such slight effort and risk, that I never for a moment considered anything but continuing upon the career that the needs of existence had made me choose. For understand that these are not the penitent confessions of a paltry pickpocket: they are the narratives of an artist.

In the apartment which I had rented, on the Rue Daunou, I had deliberately studied my problem. I had acquired all the literature dealing with criminals that I could find. And I came to the inevitable conclusion that the so-called supercriminal had never existed. For always the histories of these persons ended with the accounts of their arrests and convictions to punishments too unpleasant to contemplate. A supercriminal should be one who escaped the law completely, who died, when his time came, full of riches as well as sin.

Yet some of these men had shown a talent for crime that approached genius. I asked myself why they had finally failed, why, at the end, in the dock, they had heard the judgment of society.

The answer was obvious: no man can be stronger or cleverer than all the forces of all society. The man, then, who antagonizes these forces is a fool. A fool must fail in whatever he attempts. But the man who recognizes the difficulties before him, and takes precautions that will minimize these difficulties, increases his chance of success.

I had seen one sample of the species termed supercrook, and I knew myself to be, in every possible way, more capable of success in his profession than he. If, then, I had more ability than he, and if I so directed my energies and efforts that I would run the least risk of antagonizing the police, it seemed to me that, with a bit of luck, there was no reason why I should not prove the exception to the rule, and forever avoid exposure.

Study, in the seclusion of my Paris apartment, informed me that while I could hardly hope to improve upon the methods of some of the more famous of the historical supercrooks, I could, by applying their methods in a different fashion, avoid their errors. For the crook has no friends; neither has he any of the ordinary recourses of the law-abiding citizen. If your reputable merchant is robbed, he can complain to the nearest authority, and immediately all of society's complicated legal machinery is set to work in his behalf. But if the thief is robbed, where may he look for redress?

To prey upon thieves: that should be my career. To wait until the vulture rose from the carrion and then to take from him his tidbits: that was my plan. I would work alone, having neither confederates nor confidants.

And now the sight of all this wealth paraded before me spurred me to action. Crooks were battening upon these parvenus. Every day the Paris papers told of robberies. The New York papers, which I received regularly, told of the continuance of the crime-wave there. Everywhere in the world thieves were plying their trade. I had mapped out my course of action; good living had restored my muscles and nerves to their former vigor; it was time for me to go to work.

I walked across the Place de l'Opéra and entered a steamship agency. By great good fortune a room and bath had been surrendered half an hour ago, and it was possible for me to obtain it. So I left there in twenty minutes, the possessor of a ticket which entitled me to sail three days later from Cherbourg on the *Altaria*.

For of course it was necessary for me to ply my trade in my own country. It is true that I had a smattering of French, but I did not converse easily in that language. I would be handicapped at the outset, if I dealt with French criminals.

There was, it is true, a certain risk in returning to New York. My first venture into theft had been at the expense of Daragon,

the Fifth Avenue jeweler. But it was not a certainty that Daragon knew who had robbed him. Moreover, looking at myself in the gilt-bordered mirror in my bedroom on the Rue Daunou, I seriously doubted if Daragon would be able to recognize me. On the evening that I had abstracted from his pocket the ring which had brought me funds wherewith once again to live like a gentleman, my hair had been long and unkempt, my cheeks sunken and ghastly white. Now there were no hollows under my eyes; my flesh was firm, and my skin was red with health. Then I had looked like a consumptive; now I looked like an athlete. I could discount any fears of recognition by the jeweler.

And there were just as many persons of ill-gotten wealth in New York as there were in Paris. I was not narrowing my opportunities by returning to a country with which I was familiar. Indeed, as I contemplated my return, I wished that I had never left New York. For now that I planned activity, it did not seem as feasible, as simple as it had seemed when I was merely studying the careers of masters of crime. I suddenly wondered, as I sat in my window, just when, where and how I would begin my operations.

For it is easy enough to speculate idly, to ascertain the weaknesses whereby others have failed, to survey the future, to state that one will do this and avoid that; but actuality differs from speculation. After all, a client must come to a lawyer before the attorney can demonstrate that other lawyers err in their handling of cases; the patient must come to the doctor before the physician can prove his new theory of diagnosis; and opportunity must come to me before I could begin the practice of my new profession.

Up to now, living comfortably and lazily, I had not given much thought to practice; I had devoted myself to theory. But the sight of all the wealth exhibited in the Place de l'Opéra this spring afternoon had given a fillip to ambition. I had acted immediately. But having acted, to the extent of purchasing transportation to New York, I began to wonder to what purpose.

I couldn't watch the papers, ascertain when a crime had been committed, and then rob the perpetrators. No one but a detective genius could hope to find out who committed the crimes in the first place. And having decided that my only safety lay in working alone, I could hardly cultivate the acquaintance of criminals, and learn their plans in advance. What had seemed, for several weeks, a most excellent theory, became suddenly almost impossible of practice.

And yet the theory was sound. I assured myself of this. Because I did not see immediately how to put it into working practice proved nothing against the theory. Still, though I cheered myself with the reflection that Opportunity is never so disguised but that keen eyes may learn her identity, I was rather depressed as, dressed for dinner, I left my apartment in order to keep an engagement with some casual acquaintances met at Maxim's bar.

THEY were Americans, like myself, who were in Paris on business, and who had, in return for some little courtesies that I had shown them, expressed a desire that I should be their guest on a tour of Montmartre.

I met them at the appointed time. I had seen before, all that Montmartre offered, but these were pleasant chaps, gentlemen both, and it was a pleasure to associate, however casually, with one's own kind. And they could get something of a thrill from visiting the tawdry dives with which Paris is infested.

We wound up, late at night, at the Jardin des Nymphes. I would rather have said good night at the door of this place, but did not wish to seem unappreciative of my compatriots' hospitality. Vowing that I could not hold another glass of wine, I yielded to their importunities and entered the notorious dance-hall.

All Tenderloins are alike; the Jardin des Nymphes has its parallel in New York, in San Francisco; I presume that India and China could offer the vice-hungry visitor something similar. The underworld must make its contacts, somewhere, with the upper world on which it feeds.

And nowadays these contacts are franker than they were a dozen years ago. The so-called upper world has been invaded and conquered by barbarians; these outlanders bring to the circles to which their money has admitted them the crude tastes of the uncultured. So long as they are amused, they care not who furnishes their pleasure.

Tonight I saw pillars of finance embracing in the dance, women whose faces told their trade. I saw slant-browed youths, but yesterday from the gutter, one-stepping with women of assured social position. A philosopher, noting how assiduously the upper world courted the lower, might wonder at the pretense of difference between the two. But I was no philosopher; I was merely a very bored and tired gentleman who wished that his friends would permit him to retire to his bed.

One of my hosts ordered champagne. A moment later a bold-eyed girl smiled from an adjoining table. My friends rose gallantly to the occasion; in a moment the smiling fair one had acquired two other friendly maidens, and they had crowded about our table at the edge of the dancing space. More champagne was brought, and in another few moments my two hosts were dancing with their newly acquired charmers.

I PLEADED fatigue. The lady who had selected me as her gallant sighed with relief.

"Me, I 'ave dance' my shoes almos' off," she said. "I am glad that Monsieur feels not too gay."

I looked at her; I did not even wish to talk to her. But after all, my friends had practically invited her to join us; common courtesy demanded speech. So we talked at random. Little by little I drew from her bits of information about the habitués of the place. She had a brutally droll humor, and was not sparing in its use. A writer for one of the scandal papers would have reveled in the gross gossip, concerning the great and the near-great, which poured from her lips. For she knew which matron had compromised herself, which man had succumbed to harpy charms.

And then she emitted a whistle of surprise. She had become intimate with me by now. She gripped my arm, and pointed at a tall, white-haired man who was entering a box on the other side of the floor. In the bright lights that illumined the room I could see him quite clearly. Well groomed, with an easy, assured manner, a certain droop at one corner of his wide mouth seemed to indicate that of the two worlds represented here, the lower had spawned him.

"That," said my fair informant, "is the White Eagle. Monsieur has heard of him? No?"

"Who is he?" I asked.

She shrugged her powdered shoulders. "He is the White Eagle, monsieur. If the name means nothing—" She shrugged again.

I looked again at the box across the floor. The White Eagle had sat down now, and had accepted champagne from the gentleman already there. I observed that gentleman. Gross, vulgar-seeming, his ostentation of dress and manner was only equaled by the painted and bejeweled fat old woman who was his companion. I set them down immediately as persons of immense and recent wealth.

The White Eagle turned his head, and even at that distance I understood why he bore his picturesque appellation. For his nose was a great curved beak. In profile one could not avoid noticing it. That, with his white hair, sufficiently explained his nickname.

"Who is he?" I asked of my companion again.

"Monsieur evidently does not read the Paris papers," she commented.

"With difficulty, mademoiselle," I admitted. "And I have been in Paris only a few months."

"Ah, that explains." She lowered her voice. "The White Eagle, monsieur, was tried for the theft of the Lagan jewels. He was what you call acquit', as he has always been acquit', every time the police try to put him in prison."

"A criminal?" I said with interest.

She shrugged again. "It has never been prove'," she smiled.

I nodded understandingly; I felt a thrill chase up and down my spinal column. Here, perhaps, was that opportunity which I needed. For the White Eagle was hovering around that vulgar couple in the box opposite for reasons, I shrewdly surmised, connected with his profession. I was looking, then, at another of the so-called supercrooks, the class upon which I had determined to prey.

I turned to my companion. "Shall we dance?" I asked.

She was tired, but could not afford to offend. We went together upon the floor, and it was not difficult so to maneuver that we remained for fully five minutes close to the box where sat the White Eagle and his prey.

He seemed on familiar terms with his quarry. Indeed, it seemed that he and the other man were discussing some matter of business. I would have given a great deal to overhear their conversation. Some cunning swindle was in the air, I felt assured. And I was confident that I could make that swindle inure to my own profit if I could but learn its nature.

But that was impossible. I returned with my partner to our table. As I sat down, I saw the White Eagle rise, kiss with great manner the pudgy hand of the overfed woman opposite, shake hands with her gross husband—the other two must have been

It was the White Eagle; and all my interest in him, which had evaporated while I read the advertisement, flowed back into my brain.

married; certainly nothing but that inexorable relation would make them endure each other's company—and leave the box.

A moment later the other two rose. The man draped about the fat and wrinkled shoulders of his companion a cape of ermine that must have cost two hundred thousand francs. He handed a bank-note to his waiter, and the servant's forehead almost touched the floor in the excess of his gratitude.

I too rose abruptly. I pleaded a sudden headache of a severity too great to be endured. I refused, almost harshly, the offers of my two hosts to escort me home. I would not dream, I told them, of cutting short their evening's entertainment. And so they let me go.

I gained my hat and coat from the cloak-room, and raced out into the lobby of the dance-hall in time to see the couple whom I was following enter a limousine. I hailed a taxi and bade the driver follow the car ahead. I did not wish to do anything so crude as this, but I could not follow on foot, and I wished to know where the friends of the White Eagle were stopping.

I found out in a few minutes, when their car stopped before the Meurice. I dismissed my taxi and entered into conversation with the hotel porter. From him, without difficulty, and without arousing his suspicion, I learned the name of the couple who had just entered the hotel. Then I turned and walked to my apartment in the Rue Daunou.

I FIND that one thinks better in bed than any other place. Undressed, then, with cigarettes on a stand beside me, I pondered the strange relationship which I had seen evidenced tonight.

What was the basis of the acquaintance between the White Eagle, a notorious though unpunished criminal, and Mr. and Mrs. Josiah Higgins, of Cincinnati, Ohio?

I wondered that I had not recognized the Higginses at first glance. Still, the photographs of them, which had appeared in the American and European press, had evidently been retouched to a degree. And if I had not instantly recognized the faces, I paid proper tribute to the Higgins glory by immediately identifying their names.

Who in the newspaper reading world had not heard of Josiah Higgins, who had been a multimillionaire before the war, and who was now popularly reputed to be worth at least a billion? Statisticians had estimated how many times his fortune, if reduced to dollar bills, would girdle the globe, how many times it would rebuild the Pyramids if reduced to silver coins. And other statisticians had solemnly affirmed that it cost thirty thousand dollars to dress Mrs. Higgins for breakfast, and at least a million and a quarter properly to clothe and ornament her for dinner.

Their extravagances had become a matter of international awe. Also, the queer parsimony that accompanied their extravagance was known to all the world. Higgins proudly boasted that he never

gave a dollar to charity, and that he never lent money. They tipped outrageously, but Higgins haggled with his workmen, and was probably the most cordially hated employer in America.

They had assailed the gates of fashion in New York, and their rebuffs had become historic. They had failed to impress Mayfair and the Faubourgs as well as Fifth Avenue, but they did not lack for satellites. They were in a fair way toward creating a fashionable society of their own, if fashion be judged, as it frequently is, by the amount of newspaper space accorded it.

And this couple talked confidentially with such a person as the White Eagle! The thought of blackmail entered my mind, but I dismissed it at once. If the White Eagle had been threatening the millionaire, the manner of each of them would have partaken of strain. No, they had been talking business.

What business? What possible business could exist between the White Eagle and Josiah Higgins? If Higgins had had a son or daughter who could have become entangled in some underworld affair, I could understand that the White Eagle had been called upon for aid. But the couple were childless.

If Higgins were as foolish as he was unadmirable, I could have guessed at a solution of the problem that puzzled me. I could have imagined that the White Eagle was surreptitiously disposing of stolen goods to the millionaire. But Higgins was too sane to indulge in that sort of shady barter, if he were not too honest.

I tossed upon the bed; I fumed and fretted and smoked a score of cigarettes. Somewhere in this relation between the criminal and the millionaire lay an opportunity for me, if only I had eyes wherewith to see it.

For whatever the relation between Higgins and the White Eagle, it must be something underhanded, even though I could not guess why the millionaire should descend to such a matter. The White Eagle was a crook; a crook does only crooked business, whether his partner be honest or otherwise. That is axiomatic. But where in the axiom lay a profit for me?

I awoke with a headache; I had slept little, and that little had been interrupted by dreams in which the White Eagle took a fortune from Josiah Higgins, while I looked on, powerless to abstract the fortune from the so-called supercrook.

I tried to eat breakfast; but the combination of too much wine and too little sleep had killed my appetite. I was nervous, restless, and so I went for a walk. I crossed to the Left Bank, wandering aimlessly, my mind intent on the puzzle, solution of which I felt meant profit to me, and finally found myself in the neighborhood of the Luxembourg. The walk had cleared my head, and appetite had come to me. I walked on to Foyot's and ordered breakfast. Food put me in a more philosophical frame of mind. After all, I might be deluding myself; Higgins might have made the acquaintance of a notorious crook simply for the sake of the thrill that some people gain from such an acquaintance. At any rate, it did not behoove me to wear out my nerves in imagining problems that, having no existence, could have no solution.

And yet I was ashamed of these reflections; for after all, they were simply confessions of my own inability to meet a situation and make it yield a profit.

Despite my resolutions, then, to think no more of Higgins and the White Eagle, they were both in my mind as, turning a corner into the Rue des Saints Pères, I collided with a group of people standing before a doorway. I muttered an apology, stepped back, and noted that the person of the group with whom I had come into most violent contact—he had fallen to the ground—was blind in one eye.

I bent over swiftly, and helped him to his feet. My perfunctory apology became profuse and sincere. Seeing that he was poorly dressed, I ventured to offer him a coin. He seized it greedily, and I would have passed on, only that I noticed that the rest of the group were all blind in one eye.

Other groups stood across the street, in the street, and farther down the narrow sidewalk on which I stood. And I noticed that every single one of them suffered the same affliction: they were all blind in one eye.

I suppose that my amazed horror was reflected in my face. For the man to whom I had presented the gratuity laughed at me.

"Monsieur is amazed, yes? To see so many of us is strange?"

"Is this a hospital here?" I asked, pointing at the building before which we stood.

He shook his head. "No, monsieur, it is the home of a patron of all afflicted such as we. Monsieur has not read this morning's *Cri de Paris?*"

I shook my head, and he thrust into my hand a copy of the paper, folded back to expose an advertisement. I read it lamely in my faltering French. Translated, it ran:

"That's what you say," said the Englishman. "Now, we've all been searched, and none of us has your filthy pearl. I want to tell you that I'm glad you lost it."

"A gentleman whose son, having lost an eye for France, bore his wound proudly, despite his affliction, until his death by accident recently, wishes to honor the memory of that noble son by kindnesses to those similarly afflicted. The gentleman will devote part of his large fortune to the founding and maintenance of a club for one-eyed men. It will not be limited only to those who lost their sight in the war against the cursed Boche. All men who are without the sight of one eye are eligible to the privileges of the Club. Those interested are requested to apply to Number —, Rue des Saints Pères, between the hours of nine and twelve on Wednesday."

I read this amazing advertisement, so typically French in sentiment, and my eyes filled with tears. It was a charity a trifle too bizarre for American taste, but its kindness would appeal to the generosity of any country. I placed another coin in my informant's palm, and hurried away from the grotesque scene.

But at the first corner I stopped, turned, and stared after a man who had passed me. It was the White Eagle; and all my interest in him, which had evaporated while I read the strange advertisement, condensed and flowed back into my brain.

And then interest became amazement, for he entered the house before which the groups of blind men stood. Immediately upon his entrance a servant came to the door and beckoned to the unfortunates. Five minutes later they were all within the house.

I waited outside, at a convenient corner. Somehow or other I could not believe that this grotesque advertisement contained all that was of interest. Of course, crooks are notoriously impulsive, given to streaks of extravagant generosity. Nevertheless, I waited.

One by one, the blind men began to emerge from the house. All of them seemed happy, as though incredible good fortune had come to them. Finally the man whom I had tipped appeared. I accosted him, and he beamed upon me.

"Ah, it is my generous American!"

"Well, did you join the Club?" I asked.

"But yes, monsieur!" He almost capered in delight. As I have said, my French is feeble. Yet I managed to gather from his excited speech that all the applicants had been admitted to Club membership, that not only were there no dues, but that those members who were in need were to be granted annuities, that the Club was to have an outing upon a river steamer next week, on which occasion detailed plans were to be submitted to the membership by its benefactor.

"Did you meet the patron himself?" I asked.

"M. Armand Cochet? But surely, monsieur. A noble gentleman, white of hair, and with a manner of a prince."

"I think I saw him enter, then," said I. "A man with a great nose?"

"Monsieur is correct." said the man. "And with an eye like an eagle, and the heart of a dove. Of a truth. a great man."

"But certainly," I agreed.

I congratulated my friend. parted from him with mutual expressions of esteem, and walked toward the river. And the farther I walked, the more incredible it seemed to me that the White Eagle, or M. Armand Cochet, could be engaged in such an astounding philanthropy as that in which I had discovered him this morning. And yet, battling against my disbelief, was my knowledge of the impetuous kindnesses of those who live by their wits. Perhaps the White Eagle pacified his conscience by such a typically Gallic charity.

But criminals do not ordinarily invite public attention. Of course, though, I must not forget, that according to my fair companion of last night, the White Eagle had never yet been convicted of crime. Perhaps he did not fear public interest in him.

But it was among the ordinary probabilities that one or more of the applicants attracted by his bizarre advertisement should be of the criminal class. One would expect the White Eagle to be fearful of recognition by such a one. Still, beggars can't be choosers, and I suppose the White Eagle felt that those in need of charity, for the Club was obviously a charitable affair, would not be inclined to question the source of the revenues which were to be applied to their wants.

But I had given altogether too much of my thought to the White Eagle and his affairs. I confessed myself, finally, beaten. I could neither understand what could be the relation between the supercrook and the millionaire, nor why the White Eagle should institute a philanthropy. I vowed that I would think no more on these matters. If in the dealings between Higgins and the white-haired man there lay opportunity for me, I would forgo it. I would not drive myself to distraction by futile speculation. Nor would I be ashamed of my inability to strip the disguise from the figure of Opportunity. I would await her next passing, hoping that she would be more easy of recognition then.

Even though one has rented a furnished apartment, and has lived in it only a few months, one finds that little by little one has acquired a considerable quantity of possessions. I was sailing in two days; I could not afford to be willfully extravagant; so I spent the rest of this day in dealings with secondhand merchants, realizing a few thousand francs. The next day I spent in packing and shipping my trunks and in purchasing some necessaries for the trip. And the next morning, promptly at nine o'clock, I passed through the train gates at the Gare du Nord, and entered a first-class carriage.

Having seen to it that my bags were safely deposited in a corner of the carriage, I walked to the platform to watch the rest of the travelers. I strolled as far as the train gates, puffing at a cigarette. I was about to turn back when I saw, accompanied by a maid, a valet and an obsequious-seeming youth who was unquestionably the millionaire's secretary, Mr. and Mrs. Higgins.

I had not examined the passenger-list, and so was surprised at their arrival. But beyond a natural interest at the coincidence, I should have thought very little about it, had not they been followed through the gates by a man who was blind in one eye. Not merely that, but he was indisputably one of the group with which I had collided on a corner of the Rue des Saints Pères!

I could not be mistaken; the fact that *(Continued on page 100)*

"By the Lord, we do strike fire somehow!" exclaimed the great railroad magnate Savage, after meeting Mary Ryan. Perhaps his comment explains the swift social ascent of the celebrated Mr. Gibbs' bewitching young heroine.

Fires of Ambition

Written and Illustrated by

GEORGE GIBBS

The Story So Far:

MARY RYAN had come to America as a child in the steerage, and she had grown up in a poverty-stricken household; but she had a bountiful dower of beauty and of intelligence, and she was determined to win better—far better—things for herself. Somehow she managed a course in business college; and this enabled her to obtain a position as stenographer with the Hygrade Company, dealers in women's dresses.

Mary prospered with the Hygrade; she took advantage of the employees' discount to buy one of their dresses; and when the president Mr. Wittmaier and the head salesman Al Crawley saw how well she wore it, a chance for quicker achievement—at greater peril—was offered her. She was asked to help Crawley sell the Hygrade dresses by wearing them while accompanying him to certain exclusive shops that had hitherto declined to carry the Hygrade "line." She consented—and succeeded, remarkably. Both Lucille Dunois and "Madame Denise" (who was in reality a man named Alan Wetherby) agreed to put a dress in stock; and Mary's value to the Hygrade Company was now unquestioned.

Al Crawley asked Mary to dine with him in celebration. She thought of Joe Bass, whom she had known a long time and liked well, who was saving from the meager profits of a news-stand to put himself through law-school—and who was to have called for her at the Hygrade's closing time. Joe would have to wait and to forgive her. This was important to her future.

She dined with Crawley—her first visit to a fashionable restaurant. Afterward he took her to other novel experiences—a theater and a cabaret, at which he drank too much. And on the way home, she had some crude love-making to repulse.

It was this sort of thing, indeed, that drove her from the Hygrade. For presently she found herself expected to entertain out-of-town buyers, men who felt themselves privileged to make love to her. In desperation she went to Alan Wetherby,—"Madame Denise,"—asked for a position—and got it.

Mary's duties with Wetherby were manifold—bookkeeper, dress model, assistant saleswoman; and in all of them she was successful. And here, as at the Hygrade, she had need of intelligence to avoid the difficulties her beauty provoked. Reginald Cheever, a wealthy young man of high social standing, came into the shop with Mrs. Despard, and was much taken with Mary. Thereafter he paid open court to Mary, and Mrs. Despard was not at all pleased—though her husband was.

Mary coolly "used" Cheever to advance her social status, and when he tried to capture her by storm, checked him by the simple expedient of jabbing a pin into him. Yet he forgave her for this, and at her request introduced her to Mrs. Vanderhorst, a society woman who was also a successful portrait painter. And Mrs. Vanderhorst, eager for so beautiful a subject, "took her up." Meanwhile, Mary kept the friendship of Joe Bass. Meanwhile, too, her position with Wetherby improved; he was to take her to Paris with him on his next buying trip. *(The story continues in detail:)*

WITH so auspicious a beginning, it was not difficult for Mary Ryan to float her frail social bark in the kindly waters of Wyanoke. Women who have the power to engage the interest of men are not often popular with other women. But Mary Ryan had the true Irish instinct for friendships of all kinds, perhaps because the spirit of competition which actuated her life was based only on a social or an esthetic impulse. Ruth Vanderhorst was not in competition for masculine preferment. She lived very happily with her busy husband, who returned her cordial affection.

It did not take Mrs. Vanderhorst long to discover the exact relationship which existed between her model and Mr. Cheever,—

"You've got her," he declared. "You've damned well got her." "Thanks, Bart," said Ruth. "They say you're never really in earnest unless you swear."

for whom occasional afternoons at Wyanoke provided an opportunity to be with Mary more frequently than ever before. And before long, Mary found herself on terms of acquaintance which were as agreeable as they were flattering to her self-esteem. She had wisely been very frank with the artist about her early history and struggles, and had told her with pride of her final success in less than three years in becoming assistant to Alan Wetherby, who had given her every reason to suppose that she might some day succeed him as the head of the business of Madame Denise. Mary was building skillfully. If Reggie Cheever had offered himself as the ground-plan for Mary's social ambitions, she intended that Mrs. Vanderhorst should be their corner-stone.

Mrs. Vanderhorst perhaps understood the possibility of being used for this purpose; and she rather enjoyed the opportunity that Mary afforded of an experiment which if it did nothing else would provide her with a new interest and might possibly be fruitful of not a little amusement. For instance—Gertrude Despard and Reggie! It was quite clear that Reggie was very much in love with her pretty model, and that her pretty model was not in the least in love with him. Gall and wormwood for Gertie, who had been running things with a little too high a hand even for New York!

In a moment toward the end of the sittings for the portrait, the painter summarized her opinions with unusual frankness.

"I'd like to say that I think you're entirely too pretty and too clever to be allowed to run loose without a duenna—unless attached to a ball and chain. But you're coming to my garden-fête, you know, and you're going to meet a lot of my friends. I don't mind your getting Reggie Cheever head over heels in love with you, and I don't mind your flirting mildly with some of my stodgy male cousins whom I will provide for the purpose; but when it comes to my husband—it's hands off! Understand?"

Mary laughed and promised, thrilled with the invitation which she had known for some time would be offered.

"I haven't wanted you to meet anyone while I was painting the portrait. I never like anyone to see my things while I'm working on them. So I've denied myself to everybody." She stood off and squinted at the picture on the easel. "I don't care who comes in now. It's finished. And by the shades of Velasquez, it's good! My dear, we shall put a crimp in the self-esteem of Wilkes Harbison. I'm afraid you are destined to be famous."

Mary gazed at it silently, admiring the vigorous brush-work and comparing it favorably with the rather halting technique of the popular Harbison. Harbison had painted Mary with a kind of candy-box prettiness. Ruth Vanderhorst had searched boldly for imperfections and painted them in, such as they were, with frankness. The result was character, strength and beauty. But the cheek-bones were under the skin; the lips were firm under their scarlet, and even a little hard; and the chin, though white and rounding into the white column of neck, was resolute and fearless. But it was with the eyes that Ruth Vanderhorst had done her best work—Irish eyes, slightly depressed at the outer corners, ready for humor but warmly bright, as if quick to kindle in sympathy or in pain.

"You haven't shirked me," Mary observed. "All the hundred Mary Ryans fighting each other!"

Mrs. Vanderhorst put down her brushes.

"It's the chin that wins, my dear," she said with her full-lipped smile. "The eyes are what we're born with. They never change. A mouth is different. The mouth is what we make ourselves. You know, you have a very resolute mouth. I think I've put in the

work all of you that's good and all of you that's bad. The portrait-painter who isn't a psychologist would be better off coloring tea-trays. I know a good deal about Mary Ryan now that I didn't know in the beginning."

"Please tell me. I can stand it," said Mary.

Ruth Vanderhorst glanced at her whimsically.

"Shall I? It may not be all pleasant."

"Please!"

"Well, at the risk of offending, I'll speak the truth, a liberty I shouldn't take if I hadn't found you quite worth while. You have a capacity for sympathy which you don't often gratify unless it is to your interest. You are a trifle hard, because you have found out that only the well-tempered will ever succeeds in what it wants to do. You have a fine intelligence which controls certain impulses to the exclusion of others which might be good for the soul. You know exactly what you want, and in the getting of it, you will miss perhaps some essentials to happiness. You will perhaps lose, also, some of the finer feelings that God has given you."

She paused a moment. "Are you angry?"

"Not in the least—just a little shocked that you should have read me so clearly."

"And now, to be even more personal, I shall tell you more. You are clever, and I can never endure the thought of anyone being more clever than I am. I don't want to take you entirely to my heart until I let you know that you haven't deceived me. You needed me. Isn't that why you came?"

"That is the truth," said Mary after a pause. "Why should I lie to you?"

Ruth Vanderhorst laughed.

"There! Confession is good for the soul."

"I did need you. I meant to use you if I could." She turned with her most winning smile. "But before I came, sure, how was I to know that you were the lovely creature that you are?"

Ruth Vanderhorst caught up her hand and held it.

"And now," she said gayly, "that the atmosphere is cleared, we're going to get along beautifully. I am your friend. You want to know some nice people. I'll help you—a little because I admire the angle of your chin, but more, my dear, because I like your eyes."

"Will you forgive me?"

"I'll forgive anything to the original of that portrait—because it's the best thing I've done in months."

She sank upon her couch and touched a bell.

"And so to tea. Such patience as yours must be rewarded. I'm very sorry it's all over," she sighed. "It has been rather glorious."

THE maid entered with the tea-service, the kettle already steaming. She set it down carefully and spoke: "Mr. Vanderhorst is just back from town with Mr. Savage, madam. He would like to know if he can come in."

"Bart Savage! H-m! Yes, you may tell them to come over, Stryker. I'll make the tea."

"Very good, madam."

"See how beautifully I have my husband trained," said Mary's hostess as Stryker went out. "This place is sacred. I'm rather messy to receive the famous Bart, but—"

"I think I'd better be going," said Mary hurriedly.

"No, my dear. I want you to stay if only out of curiosity. You've heard of Mr. J. Barton Savage—the one outstanding figure among the younger generation in business. A great friend of Bob's—my husband's, you know. Besides, you can't go until Reggie comes back from the Knorrs for you, and he's not due for half an hour yet."

"Of course, if you insist—"

"I do. Bob likes unusual people. That's why he cares for me. You *are* unusual, you know. And I'm just a little curious to find out what the famous Bart will think of you."

Ruth Vanderhorst, with the true painter's instinct for the dramatic moment of surprise, turned the easel bearing the portrait toward the wall and then opened a buhl cabinet, bringing forth a decanter, siphon and glasses which she set upon the tea-tray. These preparations were completed when the two men entered.

Bob Vanderhorst was tall, slim, slightly bald, and wore a preoccupied air. Mary had a chance to study Bart Savage in the moment when he greeted his hostess. Mary compared him unfavorably with her slender, rather sleek-looking host. For Mr. Savage's shoulders were bent and slightly sloping. This attitude gave her no effect of any physical enervation—rather a sense of bulk and driving-power held in suppression. His dark hair was short and wiry; his nose and chin were large but well shaped, his eyes gray, his brows level, inclined to frown. He was one of those men of medium height who give an impression of greater stature. The hand that took Mary's was powerful, but the smile which seemed to come grudgingly at her greeting, she was forced to admit, was not unpleasant; he was even good-looking when he smiled. His clothes fitted him badly, and he wore them carelessly, as though convinced of their unimportance. Altogether a bear of a man, but a tame bear on a chain, who might even dance, if the humor seized him!

Ruth Vanderhorst made a gesture toward the decanter, and Mary passed the tea-biscuits.

BOB wanted to turn the portrait at once, for though he hadn't seen it, he already knew that the work was important. But his wife called him to his seat beside Mary and insisted on finishing her tea.

"Scotch first—Irish after," she said with a smile at Mary.

"Irish? Oh, yes—of course. Ryan *would* be Irish, wouldn't it?" He smiled at her pleasantly with his preoccupied air and seemed to be slowly scrutinizing her. And then, "It must have been a job to paint your color," he said.

"Oh, I do *so* hope you'll like me—I mean the portrait."

"I wont have to try very hard," he said gallantly, "if it looks like you."

"I told you, Mary," came Ruth Vanderhorst's voice, pleasantly, "that you weren't to flirt with my husband."

"You ought to have warned me then, Mrs. Vanderhorst, how attractive he was," she replied.

"Of course he's attractive, or I shouldn't have married him. But I'd much rather you were blarneying Bart Savage. His brain is full of steamships and railroads. Nothing like a railroad in the cerebellum to make a man impervious to a woman. But I give you leave to try him, Mary. It might repay you."

"Please, Mrs. Vanderhorst!" pleaded Mary, flushing warmly. "You make me so ridiculous."

Savage was watching Mary's color rise from throat to brow.

"H-m," he said with an air of amusement. "Ridiculous!"

"I didn't mean you, Mr. Savage," Mary protested painfully. "I meant the—er—idea of my being—the idea of the railroad in the cerebellum—"

She broke down, helpless, casting reproachful looks at her hostess, all the more charming in her confusion. Bart Savage's keen eyes watched her for a moment.

"Perhaps I'm not so impervious," he remarked. "You might try me, Miss Ryan."

But Mary had recovered her dignity quickly, and with it, her wits.

"Perhaps, Mr. Savage," she said whimsically, "if it was a very small railroad—"

"Only the Union Pacific; but we wouldn't let a little thing like that stand between us."

He laughed at his joke and helped himself to the Scotch.

"Really, Bart, you're improving," said Ruth as she laid aside her teacup. "That's the nearest thing to a compliment I believe you've ever paid a woman. I'll now give you a chance to pay me one." She rose and moved toward the easel. "If you don't praise the artist more than the model, I'll send you home without any dinner."

She turned the easel toward the light with a quick movement of pride and confidence as the visitors rose, the men staring. Mary watched them fascinated. Bob Vanderhorst gave an exclamation of pleasure.

"By Jove, Ruthie! You *have* done it this time!" he gasped.

Bart Savage said nothing for a moment, but stood with his hands behind him, peering forward from under his heavy brows. Then before commenting, he turned his eyes to Mary. She felt his dark gaze pass over her like the touch of a heavy hand, but she did not look at him.

"You've got her," he declared, "you've damned well got her."

"Thanks, Bart," said Ruth. "They say downtown, I'm told, that you're never really in earnest unless you swear."

He made no reply to that, and stood staring.

"Why the devil didn't you paint my wife like that?" he shot at her.

An awkward question, but the artist was equal to it.

"Well, you see Lillian is so *spirituelle*—pallid, ethereal. I don't think I was enough of the poet, Bart. I'm a good deal of the brute, with a brush in my hand."

"But you've got everything here—flesh, bones—and beauty too. It fairly tingles with blood. Gad! And I think you've said some things about Miss Ryan that don't appear on first acquaint-

Pleased, Mary chose to be gentle. At the top step she turned. "Forgive me," she whispered. "You're adorable to tease."

ance. Lively, severe, warm, cold, eager, calculating—which *are* you, Miss Ryan?"

He turned toward her quizzically, and Mary met his gaze.

"Guess!" she said coolly.

"The eternal question," put in Bob. "Just a woman."

"All women. But living! That's the thing. That's the only thing in a portrait."

"I'm so glad you like it," said Ruth. "You see?" She turned to Mary. "I told you that we were headed for success."

As they sat again and talked, Savage seemed to be examining the model with a new interest, as though trying to solve the riddles propounded by the portrait. In a moment, Bob Vanderhorst called his wife to the canvas to analyze some technical passages in the brushwork, and Mary and Savage found themselves staring at each other, wordless. Mary somehow had a sense of facing an adversary, in a moment of pause between combats. She didn't like Bart Savage. The silence grew awkward. For a long moment it was as though he were just at the point of saying something. And then he looked into his glass and drank. The silence grew intolerable. Mary spoke first.

"You seem to know something of modern painting," she said quietly.

"Oh, yes. I've a few good ones—Sargent, Whistler—but I never saw a bigger portrait than that."

"It's remarkable that a man as busy as you are can find time to enjoy good painting—"

"Let's come to the point. What is it you want?" he asked. She made a gesture toward the crowds behind them. "This," she said.

"You mean," he said shortly, "that you wonder that a business man has any taste for beauty at all."

That wasn't what she had said, but it did no harm to let him think it was what she meant.

"Merely that an appetite for railroads might destroy a taste for—such things."

"Hmf!" he said with a laugh. "Well, you know it's the *entremets* that make the dinner palatable. A fine painting once in a while, a few good books, some hunting in season, but business for the *pièce-de-résistance.*"

Mary set down her teacup and glanced at the clock. "It must be very tiring to have—er—a railroad on the cerebellum," she ventured.

He laughed.

"Ruth will have her joke. I'm not so voracious as I'm painted. I'm just normally alive to my possibilities; that's all."

"And—vital," she added, stumbling in spite of herself upon the exact word.

"Exactly—like that portrait—and if I may say it—like *you.*"

His eyes were turned on her again as though he expected an answer worthy of him.

"If by vitality you mean the—joy of living—"

"That's it. You've got the idea—the joy of living—a good phrase. The joy of fighting, too! A swift interest in everything worth while. *That's* vitality! Weakness of will is a disease. I've no patience with it. You have a strong chin," he said rudely. "Most women fail there. You look as though you were a person of intentions."

"I am," she said with another glance at the clock. "I intend to go back to town if Mr. Cheever will only come for me."

"Oh, Reggie!" He threw another glance at her, more casual, which seemed to include the thought of Mr. Cheever too. "He's a friend of yours?"

"Yes."

"I see," he said with a shrug.

What did he see? The shrug might mean contempt; it surely meant indifference. She concealed her indignation with difficulty.

"Have you anything against Mr. Cheever?" she asked distinctly.

"No," he said dryly, "nothing at all. He's a cousin of my wife's." He turned toward her with a frown. "I like your loyalty; I hope he's worthy of it."

"If he weren't, I shouldn't give it to him," she flashed.

His light laugh infuriated her, but she said nothing more. They were not atune, and so she rose and with excuses to her hostess went for her hat and wraps, so that when Mr. Cheever arrived some moments later, she was waiting for him. . . . .

Bart Savage stood before the portrait after the model had gone.

"I wondered, Ruth, where you got all that character you've painted in. But I understand it now. She's vital, all right."

"Quite an unusual girl," said Ruth. "I'm going to take her up."

"Socially?"

"Why not? I like her. She's clever and distinctly ornamental. I need no other reasons."

"You wouldn't."

Ruth laughed. "You didn't get along, you two."

"Perhaps I was too frank with her."

"Or too rude. I've no doubt you were quite up to form. But don't worry. She can take care of herself."

"So I see. I'll have to beg her pardon."

Ruth shook her finger at him.

"Take care, Bart. You never did like the kind of women you could wipe your feet on. And the warmest affections sometimes begin with a little aversion. A girl as clever and good-looking as Mary Ryan is not to be trifled with. Come, we must dress for dinner," she added, as she took her way toward the hallway which led into the main building.

Chapter Eleven

RUTH VANDERHORST was quite in earnest about her intention to take Mary up socially, and she lost no time in having a few people in to meet her "most informally." As usual this consisted in an elaborate dinner of eight courses for twelve people "to meet Miss Mary Ryan." She was frank enough about it. And out of curiosity, they all came. Mrs. Northrop, Dick Somerville, Gertrude Despard and her husband, Wilkes Harbison, Miss Pardee, the Savages, Reggie Cheever and Mary—a carefully selected list of those who might contribute to the slightly malicious sense of amusement of their hostess, who placed Bart Savage on Mary's right, Reggie Cheever and Gertrude Despard just opposite.

She had enlisted Bart Savage's aid in helping her carry the thing through, and had made him vow to atone to Mary for his incivilities, for she knew that although the women "ran" the game, the real leadership came from the financial-social interests which people like the Savages represented. It was very necessary that Bart Savage should approve of Mary, and she was secretly pleased that Mary and he should have been antagonistic at their first meeting, for she knew that Bart Savage best liked those who had the spirit to oppose him.

But at the dinner table they went along admirably, Mary at her best to create a good impression everywhere, Savage less brusque and authoritative and almost polite, the few passages at arms between them being conducted with the buttons of persiflage upon the conversational foils, which did no damage. In the pauses of conversation, Mary studied the delicate oval face of

Lillian Savage, who sat almost opposite her—a woman of thirty, or thereabouts, pale, slender, highly bred, with a thin, transparent skin and colorless blonde hair—the issue, as Mary knew, of a long line of distinguished ancestors, too deeply inbred. She was washed-out and lackluster, as though her blood were exhausted in the mere effort of living. Mary wondered how this frail creature could compete with the virile mind and stormy personality of her husband, and felt very sorry for her.

Under Ruth's watchful eye, the dinner went smoothly; and even in the drawing-room, where the women were quickly joined by the men, since all now smoked together, there was little time for the open operation of the feminine bias. In the new grouping Mary sought out Mrs. Savage, determined, if she could, to break through the mask of that lady's reserve. Beginning with an attitude of apathy, Mrs. Savage listened to Mary's sprightly comment upon the talents of their hostess, warming slowly at the fire of Mary's enthusiasms, which had all the merits of youthful ingenuousness. She was not impregnable, for the good-natured approval of her husband, already declared, had paved the way for a casual acceptance of Ruth Vanderhorst's latest social phenomenon.

The visit to the studio which preceded auction found Mary alone with Mr. Savage. He didn't care for bridge; she didn't know how to play it. All the other guests had gone back to the drawing-room, and they stood before the portrait.

"We're going to be good friends now, aren't we?" he said after a moment.

"I hope so. But something tells me that you don't care for women."

He smiled. "I don't usually. They're unimportant—like birds, most of 'em, either twittering or preening themselves. I'm glad that you don't twitter, Miss Ryan." *(Continued on page 152)*

A delightful story for fishermen, golfers and mere mortals, by the noted author of "The Air Hackman," "A Matter of Loyalty" and other good ones.

The Ninth Hole

By

LAWRENCE PERRY

Illustrated by William Meade Prince

Milo copied her, but in making the swing, found that his elbow consistently collided with his cherubic midriff.

MILO JENKS, senior assistant cashier of the First Federal Bank, sat at his desk tapping a pencil and watching his fellow-workers preparing for departure. It was Saturday, and the big white dial over the marble stairs registered one o'clock.

Outside the door of the president's office awaited the great man's colored servant, a bag bristling with golf-clubs in one hand, a fat valise on the tiled floor.

Rossiter, the other assistant cashier, grinned. Rossiter was a cocksure young man of tall, wispy build, sketchy mustache and hair sleeked back from his forehead. He was, in short, the physical antithesis of Milo Jenks—whose outlines were naturally cherubic rather than acquiredly gross; and it is doubtful if any form of exercise or system of dietetics, other than sheer starvation, would have altered them.

"Old Bayard is loaded for bear, sure," Rossiter observed, and glanced toward the colored servant. "He's got more kinds and varieties of club in that bag than Chick Evans would use in a year. In fact,"—Rossiter nodded toward his own golf-kit, which stood in the corner,—"seven clubs is all I need to stand old Colonel Bogey on his head on any course I've ever seen."

"Colonel who?" Milo Jenks, mildly curious, glanced over his glasses at Rossiter.

"'Colonel Who!'" Rossiter stared at the older man a moment, then broke into a guffaw. "Why, you know—Colonel Stanley A. Bogey. He was one of the guys that captured—let's see, what was it? Oh yes, St. Mihiel. Apart from his war record he has played golf on every course in the world. He is such a crack golfer that his score is set up as the *ne plus ultra, e pluribus onion,* the last word, and all that sort of thing, for other golfers to shoot at."

"I see." Milo Jenks, conscious of being joshed, hastened to change the subject. "It isn't often Mr. Bayard comes to the bank on Saturdays. Yet I can remember when—"

"So can I," interrupted Rossiter. "Used to turn up regular until he began to play golf. Great game. Look at what he was. Look at him now."

Milo's brows wrinkled judicially.

"I can't see that he's changed, except that his nose is redder. They say he's a lot more irritable than he used to be—especially Monday mornings."

Rossiter gestured contemptuously.

"Bunk! He's taken ten years off his real age. So have the rest of the old ducks in the bank who play the game."

Milo had no reply to make; for as a fact, in the past few years he had noted with some wonderment the reduced waist-lines and

weather-beaten faces among the older employees of the bank. There might have been envy, too, had he had time to develop the emotion. But Jenks was a busy man. He took his work with extreme seriousness and somehow always seemed to find things of importance to do not only every working hour, but usually long after the charwoman and watchman were in charge of the institution.

"Wish old Bayard would hurry up and get out of here." Rossiter frowned toward the door of the president's office. "Want to catch the one-thirty-five for Ardsley. Got a foursome on."

Milo, who always shivered at Rossiter's disrespectful references to the president, took off his glasses and rubbed his eyes.

"Why don't you go, then? Mr. Bayard never comes in here, especially when he's hurrying to clear out."

"Guess I will." Rossiter hastily sorted a batch of papers, put a weight on them, seized his bag of clubs and joined a group of young men, all of them similarly burdened, who were making their way down the corridor.

Milo followed them with his eye. Certainly they were an engaging crowd of young men, sun-browned, clear-eyed, athletic. Undeniably a great game, golf—if you had time and money for more than one recreation. But having to choose, there could be no alternative to his beloved brown brooks with their clean stones and tinkling waters, the whirring reel, the battle of wits against fish of divers sorts, but more especially against trout. Milo was country-bred, reared in a land that sang with little rivers. But he never talked about it, for this was an age of golf.

After a few moments of absent scrutiny of his desk blotter, he rose and went into the office of Mr. Pudder, the cashier. Mr. Pudder was not a golfer. He was the cashier of a great bank. The bank was his one passion. Already he was past the retiring age. His back was bent; his eyes were growing filmy; and his memory was beginning to fail. Perhaps this was just as well. It would tend to soften the blow when they sent him home to live on his pension.

At the moment he was bending over a detailed report which he was to submit to the Board of Directors next week. Jenks came to his side.

"Is there anything I can do, Mr. Pudder?"

"N-o. No. Oh, is that you, Milo? No, nothing. Let's see. Why, it's Saturday, of course. No, run along, Milo."

Milo turned away just as Phineas Bayard appeared in the doorway. The president was a large man with bristling gray mustache and opulent hair, turning white. His face was florid; his eyeglasses glittered. Evidently a man of choleric tendencies. Inclined to fullness, with a fairly defined girth, he was by no means obese; and Jenks, thinking of Rossiter's remarks, recalled defensively to mind the fact that Phineas Bayard never had been fat.

Pudder rose heavily to his feet, and the movement turned the president's eyes from Milo to the cashier. Whatever had brought him to the door of the office had evidently been forgotten. From the baleful glittering of the eyeglasses focused upon him, Milo had at first trembled under the impression that he had been guilty of some heinous error. But now, with a glare of similar if not enhanced candle-power transfixing his revered chief, who was incapable of error or shortcoming of whatever sort, Milo was utterly at loss. He was soon enlightened, however. The president turned to his manservant, seized the bag of golf-clubs, gazed upon it as though it were a symbol of something he wished to express, but could not, pushed it back into the man's hands and cleared his throat raucously.

"Pottering! Birds of a feather, you two! Why don't you ever get out into the sunlight? Play something? Golf. Going to seed. Dying on your feet. Bah!"

He swung himself about and walked heavily out of the bank to his motor.

Pudder smiled compassionately.

"Poor man! His temper grows worse year by year. Well—" He returned to his report.

Jenks left the bank in thoughtful mood. Phineas Bayard's attitude, his wrathful words and bellicose demeanor, were definitely significant to Milo, inasmuch as they seemed to confirm rumors that had come to him in the past month. He was to be passed over when Pudder retired; and Rossiter, breezy, alert, unctuous in the presence of his superiors, aggressive with his equals and domineering with subordinates, would be made cashier. Milo had not the slightest doubt as to the accuracy of the interpretation.

His forehead was drawn into deep lines as he stood by the curb outside the bank. Twenty years from now, if he lived that long and were not discharged, he would still be at the same desk in the same office, carrying on the same routine. Already there were almost as many white hairs as dark in his head. He had been faithful, impeccably honest, undeviatingly accurate, untiring. And as a reward, this day, after twenty-five years' service, with promotion advancing to him logically, meritoriously and justifiably, he had received a life sentence to sit at the desk he had already occupied for ten years.

Milo drew himself erect. "What's the celebration, gentlemen?" he asked.

Milo Jenks, in his quiet way, was not without spirit. He meditated returning to the bank, writing a defiant note to Phineas Bayard and then quitting the bank forever. But neither was he a fool. So he abandoned this impulse without prolonged deliberation. No, there was a more promising channel along which his fighting instincts might be directed. There might be time; there might not.

Milo shrugged—and forthwith hurried to the parcel-room of the Hudson Terminal, where he had checked his grip and fishing-rods; and seizing them, he made his way to the street.

It had been his intention to take the train for a week-end among the streams of a certain little known section of the Ramapos. Now he had changed his plans. He went to a sporting-goods store.

"I want to learn to play golf," said he to the salesman. "What sticks do I have to get?"

"Call 'em clubs," suggested the salesman soothingly, and thereupon with equal smoothness sold him a midiron, a mashie, a niblick, a brassie, a driver and a putter, besides a bag and a dozen balls.

Milo thrust his trout-rods into the bag, shouldered it, seized his grip and went uptown to his boarding-place in Harlem. Arriving, he peered into the parlor, the sitting-room and the dining-room and found all empty. In his room he unpacked his grip, placed a battered sport-suit upon a chair and leaned his bag of golf-clubs against it. Then he went to the door and opened it, standing upon the threshold and observing the effect of the grouping. Milo was very impressionable in his subdued way, and mentally he was facile enough. Thus it required no feat of creative vision to look through and beyond the back of that arm-chair with its sport-clothes and golfing tools, to a panorama of green-sward enlivened by the prowess of a certain new-risen planet of the links. Not only that, but above the serene skyline, outlined among the clouds in sort of an Old Master effect, Milo could see the cashier's desk of the First Federal Bank, and seated thereat a figure modestly vague but none the less easily recognizable.

Milo Jenks took off his glasses, smiled vaguely, rubbed his eyes—a characteristic gesture—and went downstairs. Investigation found all the lower rooms still empty. He met the boarding-house keeper in the hallway.

"Has Miss Place been about, Mrs. Hathaway?" he asked. Miss Place was a teacher of mathematics in the Normal School.

"Not since luncheon." Mrs. Hathaway, a motherly woman who regarded her boarders as her family and had the rare faculty of inducing this spirit throughout her establishment, smiled approvingly. It was the first time Milo Jenks had ever expressed interest in the whereabouts of Prudence Place, and seeing both had been in the house four years, Seline Hathaway regarded it as high time, if not more so.

"Fore! Fool woman! Don't care what chances they take. Look at her, will you! Fore!"

That night after dinner Milo followed Prudence Place out of the dining-room, trembling upon the brink of brazen adventure. Upon ordinary occasions he would never have dared consider what was now in his mind. But this was an extraordinary occasion.

"Miss Place," he said, smiling and with firm voice, "couldn't we run out to the movies tonight?"

Be it said to her credit that Prudence Place's voice was equally firm.

"Why not, Mr. Jenks? Why not?"

It happened just as Milo Jenks had always known it would happen if he ever let himself make leeway with Prudence Place. So when promptly and wholesomely he fell in love with her as they sat side by side in that darkened moving-picture show, he deluded himself with no idea that it was some sudden and altogether perplexing phenomenon. He did hold the film in some part responsible. It was one of those old lace and lavender plays, full of old-fashioned gardens and old-fashioned love, with incidental tunes that Milo had not heard since he was a boy.

Her hand was trailing in the seat at her side, and accidentally Milo's hand came in contact with it. His instinct was to draw it away, but he couldn't. It lay on her hand a moment as though paralyzed. Since Prudence did not withdraw hers, gallantry had but one course to suggest. Milo's fingers obediently followed the hint. The remainder of the play those two hands were as one.

Whatever Prudence Place's plight might have been, for Milo the thread of the story they had been following was forthwith snapped, the pictures a mere sequence of blurs. Nor was great happiness, nor vast satisfaction, nor any of the emotions a successful lover might normally experience, apparent, or even present, in the man. He was, in truth, panic-stricken.

Milo's original scheme had been to take Prudence out for the evening, in the course of which he would seek advice how to proceed in the business of learning to play golf. He had several times noted, when he had passed her room and the door was open, a golf-bag standing in a corner, filled with grass-stained clubs. Milo had heard she had played golf at Wellesley, and he knew that occasionally she went to some public course. Briefly, he had taken her out this evening as a means to an end. Now she herself had become an end, and the problem that had led to his interest in golf had become vast beyond imagination.

Suddenly he leaned toward her.

"Let's go out," he suggested. She nodded. There was a pause.

"You'll have to let go my hand—so I can put on my hat."

With a muttered exclamation of mingled apology and chagrin, Milo snatched his hand away. The semi-gloom did not hide the fact that she was smiling placidly. It was a familiar smile. It was a smile of which he had always approved, placid, sweet, yet full of character. She was slim, straight as an arrow. She had gray eyes, a wealth of brown hair.

"By Jove!" exclaimed Milo when they were outside. "By Jove!"

She glanced at him amusedly. But her face was flushed.

"I remember," he hurried, "four years ago when you came to the house. I knew right then and there that I—" He stammered and stopped. "Miss—Miss—Prudence Place, how many men have asked you to marry them?"

"Not one that I wanted to ask me."

"Suppose—suppose I should ask you."

"Then," she smiled, "I'd—I'd have to withdraw the answer I've just given."

"Eh?" He stared at her, and then catching her meaning, he lifted his hands in an involuntary gesture. "Look here, Miss Place,

I—I—well, hang it all, as soon as ever I saw you, I knew you were the—the—" He paused. "So I—I—well, I was afraid—"

"Was I so very fearsome?"

"I tell you—" He took her arm, and they turned into a side-street away from the lighted shop-windows and the crowd. "You see, I'm assistant—one of the assistant cashiers at the bank. My salary is six thousand a year. Of that I give twenty-five hundred a year to my father and mother in the old home in New Hampshire. So you see—" He came to a sudden stop. They walked on without speaking for a few moments. And then he explained:

"What I wanted to say is, I was afraid to love you because thirty-five hundred dollars in these days—"

Her brow was drawn into lines. "I know. But my salary—"

"No," he hastily interrupted. "I shouldn't want that. There—there—are many reasons against—" His voice caught.

She made no reply. And presently Milo managed to continue:

"All right!" interrupted the president testily. "You may just as well work out the kinks in a game."

"Here is my point, Miss—Prudence. Here is my point: There is to be a new cashier in our bank soon. I'm the senior assistant. The salary is ten thousand at the start. Now,"—he was hurrying desperately,—"now, if I get that position, will you marry me, Prudence?"

"I think," she said softly, "that you are wonderful to put it as you have. I have watched you long, Milo. I know your character, and I love it." She turned upon him quickly. "I love it. I love you so, Milo, that I'm going to say this: when you feel you wish to marry me, you just take me to the church and do it—no matter what your circumstances are. That is, I shall trust you. But I cannot trust myself to be—wise."

That night Milo slept not at all. The day had begun chiefly with his pride and his sense of justice as issues at stake in the cashiership of the bank where he had served so long. The end of the day had seen him, the conservative, the diffident, the placid, possessed of a hostage to his enhanced fortune that made his position desperate. And yet, illumining all his thoughts like some sublime overtone, was the memory of that embrace, those kisses.

Next morning Prudence took Milo up to the public links in Van Cortland Park.

"You see, Milo," said she, to whom the man had vouchsafed only a sporting motive for his desire to learn the game, "you take your driver this way—" She assumed the approved pose.

Milo copied her without a flaw; but in making the swing, he found that his right elbow consistently collided with his cherubic midriff. Prudence studied each detail of the stroke, but the obstacle remained. It wasn't at all a terrific outline. But such as it was, Milo's elbow never got by.

"I feared it," he sighed. "Nature never intended I

"You'd better try a Silver Doctor," he whispered excitedly. "Light's softening."

should play golf. But look here," he said, suddenly brightening, as the girl surveyed him with a perplexed frown, "why couldn't I adapt my style to my peculiar conformation? This way:" Holding his body well back, his elbows rigid, he swung his arms like a pendulum and struck the ball fairly. It went not far, but straight. "Now, just look at that, will you!"

His triumphant smile faded as she shook her head.

"That's all very well. But it isn't good form, and with the ball going that short distance, it would take you eighty to make nine holes. Let's try again."

But it was no use. At length Milo raised a care-worn face to his mentor.

"Thank you a lot, dearest girl. But it isn't for me. I might, after you had slaved with me for a year, be able to do something fairly presentable. So you—"

"But I'm willing to slave. It would be lots of fun, and you'll catch it in time."

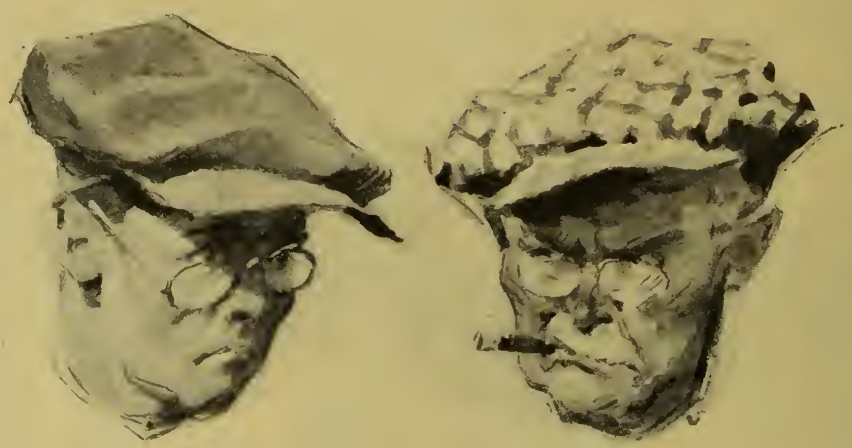
"No—I sha'n't catch it in time. It will be too late—" Milo checked himself abruptly. "I mean, it is too late now, to slow up everything trying to teach me today." He surveyed the swelling green links, the figures moving to and fro, the brilliant flags on the greens. "Let me just go along with you, hitting as I can, and we'll work something out as I get the feel."

"Very well."

She did nine holes in fifty; and Milo, playing with his stiff elbows, never missing, never sending the ball out of line, but getting woeful distance, finished in seventy.

"Nine holes will be enough," Prudence said, sheathing her putter. "Milo, you are going to do finely. I know lots who never made seventy their first try."

"Is that so?" Milo dissembled his emotions with a faint smile. "We'll try it again sometime. Meanwhile I'm no end obliged. Now let's go to that pretty little place we saw, and have luncheon."



"Jenks," he said, "your game ought to be croquet. What you've got is palsy!"

They returned home late in the evening; and to the credit of Prudence Place be it said, that never once from the time they quitted the links until they arrived home, did Milo Jenks' thoughts revert to golf.

Monday, however, there was the usual talk of the game over the luncheon-table in the dining-room the bank conducted.

"Had a great day at Ardsley," asserted Rossiter. "Broke ninety. Went out in forty-four and came back in forty-five."

Rossiter's voice was loud, because the president of the bank and the chairman of the board happened to be at the adjoining table.

Jenks had been awaiting this. He leaned back in his chair, cleared his throat and stared at the ceiling.

"That so, Rossiter? I didn't have a good day on the links either Saturday or Sunday. Got a ninety-one Saturday and a ninety yesterday. Don't know what's the matter with my game lately."

Milo's ears were cocked to appraise the ring of his vaunting. The purity of the sound both surprised and pleased him.

But if Milo was pleased, Rossiter was utterly astounded. He could not have been more profoundly moved had a serpent thrust its head out of the epergne in the middle of the table.

"Eh!" His exclamation was raucous. What interested Milo, however, was Phineas Bayard's ferociously glittering eyeglasses. Out of the corner of one eye, he could see they were turned full upon him.

"Say, Jenks,"— Rossiter's voice was incredulous,— "I didn't know you played."

"There's a lot you don't know, young man. Just because I don't strut around and yell about golf in banking-hours—"

Jenks returned to his meal with a shrug, knowing that whatever he may have gained in the estimation of his fellows,—and incidentally of Phineas Bayard,—he himself had opened a pathway into a region of deceit and dissembling hitherto unknown. And he was horrified to find the perspectives so alluring.

Among the employees of the First Federal Bank who entered the corridor bearing bags of golf-clubs the next Saturday morning was Milo Jenks. Rossiter eyed the clubs suspiciously. But there was no incriminating hint of newness about them. Milo had taken good care of that.

"But," asked Rossiter, "what's these things you have in here? I mean in the brown cases?"

"Oh—fish-rods." Milo smiled. "You see, one of the links where I play has a pretty good trout-brook, and sometimes after a game I do a little fishing."

"Humph!" Rossiter might have said more. But at the moment Meachin, the vice-president, came in. He placed a hand on Rossiter's shoulder. He had always liked the young man's breezy ways, and Milo had reason to believe that it was this officer who would use his influence to have Rossiter pass him to the cashier's desk—who, indeed, had already begun to exert influence to this end.

"Didn't know you golfed, Jenks," said Meachin. "Oh, yes, come to think, Mr. Bayard did say something about it the other day."

"Oh, after a fashion, Mr. Meachin." Milo blinked modestly.

Leaving the bank at one o'clock, Milo went to the parcel-room of the Hudson Terminal, drew his collection of fish-rods from the bag, checked his golfing paraphernalia and went fishing.

His destination was a trout-brook in the North Jersey hills; his incentive was the setting to order of nerves seriously jangled. The suspicious Rossiter had pestered him like a hunter's black fly all week, and while his definite statement that he played, thought and talked golf only in hours that did not belong to his employers formed pretty much of a wall for his security, it was a barrier through which the junior assistant cashier sought with most disturbing pertinacity to make breaches.

Again, his fishing trip had brought him face to face with the knowledge that in asking Prudence Place to reserve him a place at her side at the marital altar, he had incurred certain obligations hitherto unknown. She was very sweet and considerate, and thought he really should go off on his trip. None the less, she made it clear that this first week-end of their engagement would be a bit forlorn without him.

Somehow the little hotel where he had always been made so welcome didn't have the same appeal to him that afternoon, and later in the day, with shadows broadening over a beloved stream, even unusual voracity on the part of the trout did not bring his soul to peace.

Next morning, after breakfast, the hills shimmering in sunlit mist, Milo went out on the veranda. Dubiously he lighted his pipe. There had never been a morning such as this that his soul had not expanded and clamored for song. But now his brow was furrowed, his eyes troubled. What was the matter with him? He knew he wasn't ill. Physically he had never felt better in his life. He went to his room and picked up a fishing-rod. It seemed heavy as lead, and there was no allurement in the prospect of a meditative day along a delectable watercourse.

At length, filled with unaccountable loneliness and depression, he packed his things and took the train back to the city.

The first person he met in the hallway was Prudence Place, just returned from church. She was all in white; at her waist were some June roses he had sent to her. *(Continued on page 161)*

Illustrated by T. D. Skidmore

The champion of sports-story writers here tells the engaging story of young Officer Hanrahan and the three surprising things that landed on his neck—a cat, a girl and a prize-fighter's fist.

High and Handsome

By

GERALD BEAUMONT

KATIE WILLIAMS was for calling out the Fire Department. This would have placed the sharp tack of disillusionment in the path of romance. Never would the lads of No. 29 have forgiven her, for it was six-thirty in the morning, and already that night they had extinguished a fire in the garbage-dumps, hauled an automobile out of the Seventh Street canal, and convinced a woman on Telegraph Avenue that she was only suffering from a nightmare. Just in time, Fate took a hand in the situation, and nudged Officer Joe Hanrahan, standing three blocks distant, and debating with Corporal Malloy whether the lump in the latter's left leg meant a varicose vein or a spavin. Joe looked at his watch.

"Time I was ringin' in," he decided. "Are you goin' my way, Corporal?"

The Corporal was not. He had a citation to serve on Gus Schuman, who usually opened up his drugstore at seven o'clock. Under the circumstances, Gus would not charge too much for a bottle of liniment.

"Maybe I can work him for an elastic stocking," said the Corporal hopefully. "So long, Joe."

Officer Hanrahan touched his cap and wheeled in the direction of the patrolman's box at Thirty-ninth and Elm. Twenty-seven years of age, height five feet ten inches, weight one hundred eighty-two, Joe walked northward along his beat, employing the dignified, measured step which is prescribed in the instructions, and was devised by the devil as the most monotonous and tiresome thing on earth. Other men may keep warm in the cold or rain by walking briskly; they may ease the strain on their leg-muscles by varying the pace as pleasure dictates; but a young patrolman like Joe Hanrahan escapes pneumonia by placing the Sunday supplement under his shirt, between the shoulder-blades, and the classified-ad section on his chest. Then he straps seven pounds of gun and cartridges around his waist, with the belt run through the suspenders to ease the weight of the holster, shoves a club into a pocket that holds the right leg stiff from thigh to knee, adds the bulk of handcuffs, keys and a night-lamp to the rest of his official impedimenta, and saunters majestically alone in the

It is hard for a bareheaded cop to preserve his dignity while descending a sixty-foot pole with a cat clinging to his neck.

"The coming champion of the world and his sweetheart," said Officer Hanrahan. "The little man's her brother; 'twill make a grand match."

dark, dreaming of a day beat and a corporalship. For such men, the lodestar of life is the unwritten code of the Police Department: "High and handsome, lad—to the last breath!"

Rounding the corner of Pearl Avenue and Hawthorne, Officer Hanrahan came upon beauty in distress in the person of Katie Williams, nineteen and fair to look upon. Katie was clad in a pink wrapper, bedroom slippers, and a boudoir cap copied from a four-ninety-five model displayed in the window of Cooper and Hastings'.

Three frantic waves from Katie, reinforced by a clear soprano summons, and Joe broke into a run, his right hand keeping the heavy "38-30 special" in place. The situation unfolded, and the officer slowed up. From the crossbars of a sixty-foot telegraph pole a disconsolate Persian kitten eyed the new arrival. The slim vision in pink appealed to the stalwart figure in blue.

"Oh, I'm so glad you came!" said Katie. "The poor thing must have been up there all night. I heard her crying, but I couldn't imagine where she was. As soon as it was light enough, I came out to see. You know, there's a man across the street that keeps bulldogs—"

"Well, well!" said Joe. "Is it your cat, miss?"

"Why, of course," said Katie. "Her name is Iris, and I'm going to enter her in the show next month. Her father is Pasha Sedate, champion sire of the Pacific Coast, and she cost me five dollars."

"You don't say!"

Joe extracted his polished club and tapped the pole authoritatively.

"Hey!" he commanded. "Come down out of that!"

The daughter of Pasha Sedate sunk her claws more firmly into the crossbar. As plainly as feline vocal powers permitted, Katie Williams' Persian indicated its contempt for police authority. Thus placed in the same embarrassing position as Mohammed with respect to a certain mountain, Officer Hanrahan was compelled to emulate the historic example of Islam's prophet. Into the hands of the kitten's owner, Joe consigned one after another of the official incumbrances of a harness bull. Then, conscious of Katie's approving eyes, he leaped for the lowest foot-rest, caught it, and ascended sixty feet to the level of the crossbars.

"Come here, you little devil," said Joe, reaching out one hand.

With feminine inconsistency, Iris beat the officer to it. She forsook her resting-place for the flat surface of the police cap, discovered its instability, and swung down to Hanrahan's collar. A brand-new sample of police headwear flopped toward the dusty sidewalk, and Joe said something that is not to be found in the book of instructions. It is very hard for a bareheaded cop to preserve his dignity while descending a sixty-foot pole with a cat clinging to his neck. Joe managed it, but he felt that appearances were against him. In the subsequent sunshine of Katie's grateful smile, however, this sense of disadvantage vanished.

"Thank you ever so much!" beamed Katie. "Gracious, I don't see how you could climb that big pole so easily, Mr. — Mr. —"

"Hanrahan," said Joe. "'Twas nothing at all. I'm glad to be of service to you, Miss— Miss—"

"Williams," prompted Katie. "Mother has just opened up the bakery shop on the corner. I—I think I noticed you passing by yesterday morning about eight o'clock."

"*Did* you, now?" said Joe. "Well, well! I come off duty about that time every morning. You know, that's the prettiest cat I ever saw."

"Oh, do you really think so?" cried Katie. She held up Iris in a manner that invited closer inspection. Joe accepted the invitation. The rose wrapper and the blue mantle of the law were thrillingly close. Round the corner clattered a milk-wagon—

"Gracious!" said Katie. "Mother will be wondering what's become of me. I'm awfully sorry to have put you to all that bother. Good-by, Mr. Hanrahan, and thank you ever so much."

"That's all right," said Joe. "Good-by, Miss Williams. Call on me any time at all!"

Perish the thought that chivalry such as this should be wasted on the morning air. Katie paused at the bottom of the front steps and looked back; Joe Hanrahan turned at the same instant. Katie waved her hand, and then scurried up the stairs. Joe raised his cap, and swung off down the street, aware that for some unaccountable reason he was in a mood to welcome a fifty-yard dash or a playful set-to with gloves—say with Denny Thompson, the pride of the North Beach Station.

Was it Katie that first hit upon the plan of offering Joe a complimentary ticket to the cat-show, or was it Joe that discovered a cat act at the Empress Theater that might interest Katie? No matter! Officer

T. D. SKIDMORE

Hanrahan and Miss Williams progressed to friendship along a path made possible by the daughter of Pasha Sedate.

Joe astonished his mother by developing a taste for buns that could only be obtained early in the morning at a bakery on the corner of Pearl Avenue and Hawthorne. Katie amazed her mother by volunteering to open the store ten minutes earlier and wait on the customers without assistance. Gradually their conversation outgrew the subject of cats, and entered the field of past experiences and future prospects. Katie learned that Joe lived alone with his mother, and that the first step up the ladder of success for him would come with the corporal's stripes.

"Oh, it wont be long before you're promoted," said Katie. "I'm sure of that!"

Joe learned that Mrs. Williams was a widow, and that Katie's brother was Jockey Williams, who ran a cigar-store on Telegraph Avenue, and managed prize-fighters—also that Katie hoped some day they could afford to move into a nicer part of town. Of course, there was no significance in the fact that she cited the Hanrahan neighborhood as an example of general desirability. Joe appreciated that.

"But," said he, "it wont be long before you're copping off some swell, and getting a home of your own."

Katie blushed, and Joe laughed joyously. It was a lot of fun.

Now, there is this about a young harness bull. For the good of the department and his own soul, he gets his purgatory early. The man who manages a romance during his first years on the force has the god of luck walking at his shoulder. If he survives his initiation in the river of the night life, where temptation assails him from every side, he still must pass the test of a midnight-to-eight beat in calmer waters, where solitude is the mariner's curse.

Joe Hanrahan received one hundred and forty-five dollars a month and was required to pay for his uniform and all his equipment. He was off duty at eight o'clock, but if he had made an arrest during the night, he was required to be on hand before court opened at ten, so as to have his papers ready. If his prisoner was held to answer, that meant an all-day session in another

court as a witness, then eight hours sleep, then eight hours on the sidewalk. During a period of strikes or civic unrest, his privilege of one day off was revoked, but there was no provision in the budget for extra pay. He learned the truth of what old Sergeant Flynn had said to him the first day.

"Lad, the man who says that cops are bullies and grafters is a liar, and may he choke in his own blood! I've been twenty-five years among the boys on the street, and there are no kinder or more honest men in the country; mark that, now!"

But Sergeant Flynn was silent on the subject of romance. He could have spoken of the years that he worked while his children slept, and was home only while they were at school, so that he knew them not. He held his peace on that point, for there is no need of disillusioning the recruit too completely.

Officer Hanrahan did his best in the courtship of Katie Williams, but he labored under many handicaps. He took his work seriously, which meant that he did not shirk from an arrest when it seemed proper, even though that meant breaking his date with Katie the next day.

Sometimes in the early hours of the morning he stood on the corner of Pearl Avenue and Hawthorne, looking up at Katie's window and wishing that a burglar would come along, or a fire break out, so that he could perform the "high and handsome" in Katie's behalf. He recalled the night that Jake Scupler went crazy in Johnny Nelson's gambling-room, shot three men, and took refuge under a vacant house. Hanrahan got there first, and dropping to his hands and knees, crawled in after his man, trusting to the flash of Jake's gun to guide him in the dark. Two shots, and the call for the morgue wagon followed. That was before Joe met Katie. He wondered whether it would be all right to tell her about it, and then voted in favor of modesty. He felt, however, that Fate was hardly giving him a fair deal.

"Nothing has the little girl seen me do, but rescue that damn cat," he lamented. "Sure, I can't be askin' her to marry me on the strength of that!"

How was he to know that Katie had already learned from her chum Myrtle Gannon, who was engaged to the bailiff of Police Court Number Seven, all about the splendid qualities of Officer Hanrahan? And how could a girl like Katie be sure that a wonderful man like Joe actually loved her, if he couldn't get up the nerve to say so? Truly, such problems must be left to the inscrutable operations of Fate, which at this juncture complicated matters by introducing the *tertium quid.*

OFFICER Hanrahan had never heard of a *tertium quid* but he recognized it just the same when big Marcel Legrand showed up, two hundred and thirty pounds, six feet three, gorgeous as a Greek god, and quick as a cat. That was the fault of little Jockey Williams, who knew nothing about the dreams of a harness bull, and cared less. Katie's brother was ambitious to add a heavyweight champion to his stable of fighters. Therefore when the magnificent physical director of the Balboa Athletic Club won the amateur heavyweight championship of the Pacific Coast, Jockey Williams was an interested spectator at the ringside.

"Hot dog!" exclaimed the midget. "That guy is swell enough for the movies, and big enough to sink a battleship; now, if he can take 'em, here's where I quit the smoke business!"

Thrice did Katie's brother inveigle Marcel Legrand to the little flat over the bakery at Pearl and Hawthorne, each time expanding upon the golden possibilities that awaited them in the professional field. On the third evening Marcel—with his eyes on Katie Williams—agreed to become the next heavyweight champion of the world, and the business partner of Katie's brother. Thus did Fate, with a single move, bestow further advantages on a man already endowed by Nature with every charm, and at the same time put Officer Joe Hanrahan squarely up against it.

Jockey Williams saw to it that Marcel Legrand's professional début was properly heralded in the newspapers. The little cigar-vender knew how to pick the right sort of an opponent, and where to secure a press-agent that knew his business. The new giant of the ring became an overnight sensation. He was, in the language of the press-agent, "a super-specimen of physical manhood, a credit to the game, a gentleman, and possessed of all the qualifications of a champion."

Officer Hanrahan read all this in the papers, and heard from Katie's own lips that Marcel was to get two thousand dollars for his next appearance.

"Can you imagine?" said Katie. "Two thousand dollars for just a few minutes in the ring! And my brother says that's nothing to what he'll make in the future! Isn't it wonderful?"

Wonderful? Well, Joe Hanrahan would tell the world it was! Joe, with his seventeen hundred and forty dollars a year, pounding the sidewalks, and wearing the classified ads for an overcoat!

That night, after he had taken Katie home from the theater, and reported for duty, he tried to reason the whole thing out dispassionately, as becomes an officer of the law.

"The little girl's always been sweet with me," he reflected. "'Tis not past believing I could win her, if I was to give her the rush act; but could I make her happy? That's the point! If I was a corporal, now, with a day job, I'd give that laddybuck a run for his money; but what right has a harness bull, at one hundred and forty-five a month, to interfere with the future of a grand little girl like Katie? Answer me that if you can, Officer Hanrahan!"

THERE was no answer—save a string of red and white lights on the masthead of the distant city hall blinking out a signal for all patrolmen to report at their boxes. Joe called in and spent the balance of the night on the lookout for a couple of stick-up men who were subsequently nabbed by Officer Swenson for operating an automobile without lights.

"The lucky Swede!" said Joe, when he heard about it. "If Gus arrested a man for spitting on the sidewalk, it would turn out to be Gyp the Blood, with ten thousand dollars on his bean. I suppose the Captain will be putting Swenson's name on the commendation board in the morning; maybe they'll even make him a corporal!"

He plodded moodily along his beat, testing mechanically the front door locks of *his* stores, peering through shop-windows at the incandescent lamps that hung over *his* safes. He would have welcomed a diversion in the shape of Jimmy the Fox, or Dynamite Smith, who had got out from San Quentin only that day. But Joe's world was asleep and in his keeping, with none to dispute the guardianship. Motorman Tony Borelli came along with his five o'clock car, and waved the usual greeting to Officer Hanrahan. Joe responded dully. Walking north to the corner of Pearl and Hawthorne, he looked up at the silent windows of the Williams flat, where Katie lay asleep with patent curlers on her tresses. And there, in the depressing fog of early morn, with none to bear witness of what it cost him, Officer Hanrahan did the "high and handsome" in behalf of Katie Williams and renounced his dreams.

"Do it right now, lad," he told himself. "Don't be letting the little girl think that maybe she's not doing the square thing by you. 'Tis too good a chance for Katie to pass up, and you'll forget all about it, by the time they're married. Maybe, when the kids come along, you'll have a day beat, Joe, and be pullin' 'em out from under the machines."

The pangs of martyrdom are not without their solace. No sooner did Officer Hanrahan withdraw from the field of courtship, than he found himself in the queer rôle of Cupid the Cop, committed to watching with a paternal interest the love-affair of Katie Williams and Marcel Legrand. When Marcel won his two thousand dollars by outboxing Cesare Toscano, the pride of Martinez, Joe trained himself to say convincingly:

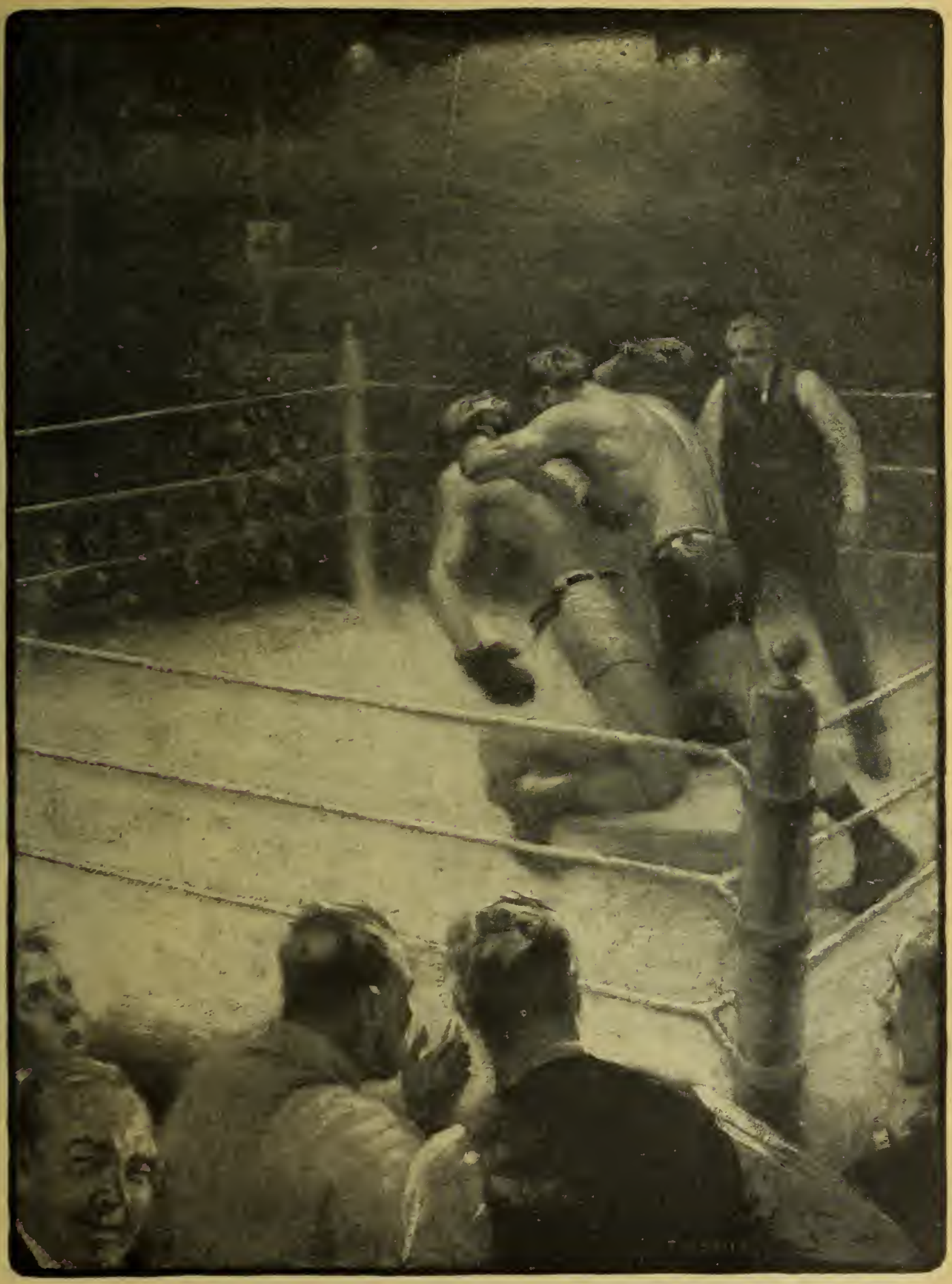
"That's fine, that's fine!"

The day that he saw Katie and her brother, walking down the street escorted by the handsome hero, Joe pointed them out to "Count Itch," whose right name was Georgie Popodopovich. Georgie was nineteen, and cross-eyed from shining shoes all day long in the Consolidated Oil Building, but he averaged four dollars a day, and like Officer Hanrahan regarded the world with proprietary interest.

"The coming champion of the world and his sweetheart," said Joe. "The little man's her brother; 'twill make a grand match."

"She's all right," commented the Count. "Clean her shoes any time. Big man—big shoes—no good—lose money. My girl, she's wear smallest— Hey, shine 'em up, Mister!"

BUT the night of the Police Ball in the Auditorium—ah, that was when it hurt! Ever since Iris, daughter of Pasha Sedate, had escaped from the son of Ulysses *via* a sixty-foot pole, Officer Hanrahan had treasured a vision of himself and Katie Williams walking arm in arm in the Grand March that began at eleven o'clock. Only a month before, he had told Mannie Greenbaum to reserve for him that full dress suit—the one with the braid down the legs, and the small patch that you'd never notice with all the lights. He was tempted even now to try and realize this one dream, even though he knew why Jockey Williams bought two tickets from him, and then two more. The first two were for the midget and his girl; the other pair would go undoubtedly to big Marcel Legrand and Katie. *(Continued on page 114)*



The upward whirl of a crimson glove that found its mark, and the unbelievable happened: the champion tottered as a giant tree sways under the ax.

Only in the great Greek tragedies will you find the dramatic equal of this, the greatest of the ten novels in The Red Book Magazine which have won for Mr. Hughes definite preëminence as novelist and social historian.

Within these Walls—

By

Rupert Hughes

Illustrated by Arthur I. Keller

Chalender apologized thickly: "But I always come back to you, Patty, and to Immy. Seein' you and your living image, Immy, I can't tell whish is whish; half suspect I'm seein' double."

The Story So Far:

PATTY JESSAMINE had married the young lawyer David RoBards during the panic caused by the plague in old New York, when she thought her more brilliant suitor Harry Chalender was lost to her. So it was that later when Chalender, employed as an engineer surveying for the new Croton reservoir, came to call at RoBards' country place, Tulip-tree Farm, the young lawyer was sick with jealousy. And because of Chalender's continued vicinity, RoBards gladly acceded to Patty's desire to escape the loneliness of Tulip-tree Farm, and moved with her back to New York.

They returned to Tulip-tree, however, for the birth of Patty's first baby. A few months later Patty enjoyed a brief interval of gayety at Saratoga. And the following year, after the birth of her second child, she plunged into the social whirlpool with an enthusiasm that provoked gossip.

In the great fire of 1835, Chalender and RoBards were both volunteer firemen, and Chalender saved David's life. RoBards was so unlucky as to help in the necessary blowing up of certain buildings, among them a warehouse belonging to Patty's father, and Jessamine never forgave him.

Years passed; the city was rebuilt; work on the Croton waterway progressed. Patty's third baby came—and died; so too a fourth—though a fifth, David Junior, born some years afterward, survived.

Chalender was injured in separating two fighting workmen and was carried to Tulip-tree Farm. Sometime later RoBards returned joyfully home from a trip to New York—and found Patty in the arms of the convalescent Chalender! RoBards could not bring himself to kill a wounded man; Chalender remained unaware that he had been discovered; and Patty's remorse seemed keen and sincere. Eventually, with the realization that but for his mercy toward Chalender his family would not now be happy around him, RoBards' anguish and bitterness abated.

And then—a new blow fell. Little Keith came crying to him that a half-witted youth, Jud Lasher, had carried off his sister. Near a lonely pool among the rocks, RoBards overtook young Lasher. Though he all but drowned the creature in the pool, he could not bring himself to the final vengeance; and upon Lasher's promise to ship aboard a whaler and never return to the region, RoBards spared him. He left poor Immy to the ministrations of his farmer's wife, and swore her and Keith to secrecy, for he wished to keep the knowledge from Patty, who was away.

But a few days later Lasher passed by on his way to sea, saw Immy and carried her off again. RoBards rescued her in time. And now he did not stay his hand. That night Keith was awakened by a noise, crept downstairs and led by a light from the basement, watched his father engaged in dreadful masonry—walling up the body of Jud Lasher in the thick foundation of the

chimney. . . . . It was some weeks later that Patty learned what had happened.

About this time Patty met the great Daniel Webster at a dinner in New York and enlisted his aid in her father's claim for damages against the city. But even Webster's eloquence did not suffice, and when at last the case came to trial, the verdict was against Jessamine. And shortly thereafter, at Tulip-tree, the heartbroken old man took a suicidal dose of laudanum. Dr. Matson mercifully gave a certificate of heart-failure—and the walls of Tulip-tree kept silence.

Immy and Keith were grown up now—as RoBards realized with a shock when Chalender, calling to say good-by before his journey to the new California gold-fields, said to Immy: "The first nugget of gold I find, I'll bring back for our wedding ring."

It was only a little later that RoBards overheard young Chirnside propose to Immy, and her halting story of what had happened years before—of Jud Lasher. The young prig gave over his suit at this news. And Immy, after a period of grief, flung herself into all manner of gayeties with an abandon that caused her father grave anxiety.

Eventually RoBards learned that his fears were only too well justified, and that Tulip-tree House was to have a new secret to

conceal. They took Immy thither, sent the tenant farmer to the South on a trumped up errand, and—waited. . . . .

It was on a bitter night of winter that Immy's baby was born. For hours RoBards paced the library. Finally he flung open the window for the solace of fresh air, and stood there a long time in anguished thought. It occurred to him that with only a slight pressure of his fingers on a tiny throat he could end this new life that presented so appalling a problem. He sought to rehearse this gesture, drove his will to his fingers, but they could not bend, were benumbed with frost. *(The story continues in detail:)*

Chapter Thirty-two

ONLY now that RoBards tried to use his fingers and found them without hinges or feeling did he realize how cold he had been. Pain began in him, and fear. He had endured a stealthily creeping paralysis; and when he heard Patty's step, he was afraid to speak lest his words come forth brittle and fall breaking on the floor.

He turned in slow, thudding steps. Patty shivered in the frigid air and hitched her shawl about her, tucking in her hands as she scolded:

"What on earth! The window open! Are you mad?"

No answer came from RoBards. His brain might as well have been snow. He stood holding out his hand as if it were something dead. Patty ran to him, and seizing his fingers cried out in pain at them. He was alive; he could be hurt. She began to chafe his fingers in hers, to blow on them with her warm breath. She ran to the open window and scooped up a double handful of snow and wrapped it about his hands. Snow was warm to him, but bitter cold to her little palm. She was warm and soft where she touched him. She bustled about for cold water to pour on his hands, for anything that could save them. She sought for warm thoughts to keep her world from icy inanition.

"I hate people who say that terrible things are for the best. But maybe this is, for once. The baby—the poor little baby—I was alone, and I was so busy taking care of Immy, that I—I forgot till it was too late to—to—"

RoBards groaned: "You don't mean that the baby is dead?"

If Patty had looked away shamefully, he would have felt that she felt guilty of a cruel negligence, but she stared straight into his eyes. She seemed almost to lean on his eyes. And so he felt that she was defying him to accuse her of what she had done. He dared not take the dare. Then she began with suspicious garrulity:

"Maybe it was God that took the baby back. He has solved our problem. If the poor little thing had lived—think! But now! And nobody knows, nobody knows! Nobody need ever know."

But they were not rid of the baby yet. It waited on the sill of their decision, a little mendicant, wanted nowhere. Its body, built in secret with so much mystic care and borne with such agony, was empty, but as inescapable as an abandoned house. And the little house must be removed from the landscape it dominated.

While RoBards dully tried to set his thought-machinery going, Patty murmured:

"I'll have to tell Immy. She is too weak to wonder yet. She'll carry on terribly, but it can't be helped. And she'll be glad all the rest of her days. But where shall we—what can we do with the baby now?"

"Huh?" gasped RoBards. "Oh yes, what can we do with the—yes, that is the question, what can we do? We've got to do something."

BUT that could wait. Immy was faintly moaning: "Mamma! Mamma!" Patty ran to her. RoBards followed, and bent to kiss the wrung-out wisp that had survived the long travail. She whispered feebly: "Where's my baby? I haven't even seen it yet. Is it a boy or—"

Patty knelt and caressed her and asked her to be brave. Then in order to have done with the horror, she told her in the fewest words.

No one could say how much was love and how much was strangled instinct; but Immy was frantic and kept maundering as she rocked her head sidewise, trying vainly to lift her weak hands in battle:

"Oh, this is too much, this is just a little too much! How much am I supposed to endure! Will somebody please tell me how much I am expected to stand? That's all I ask. Just tell me where my rights begin, if ever. If ever! My baby—my little, little baby that has never seen me and never can see me! Why, they wont even let me hold my own baby in my arms!"

RoBards stared at her in such pity that his heart seemed to beat up into his throat.

She turned her head to him and pleaded: "Papa—you bring me my baby. You always get me what I want, Papa. Get me my baby!"

Since life seemed determined to deny him his every plea, RoBards resolved that he at least would not deny anyone else anything—especially not Immy. He went to the big chair where the blanketed bundle was, and gathering the child into his aching arms, carried it to Immy and laid it in hers.

The way her hands and her gaze and her moans and her tears rushed out to welcome it persuaded him that he had done the right thing. If ever property had been restored to its owner, now was the time.

He could not bear to see the grief that bled about the child from Immy's eyes. She held it close under her down-showering curls, and her tears streamed on it like rain from the eaves on snow. They could not waken roses or violets, but they eased the sky. She wept no longer the harsh brine of hate. Her grief was pure regret, the meek, the baffled yearning for things that cannot be in this helpless world.

This was that doll that as a little girl she had held to her merely hinted breasts and had rocked to sleep and made fairy plans for. Now and then as she wagged her head over it, and boasted of its beauty, she would laugh a little and look up with a smile all awry and tear-streaked.

And that was what broke RoBards: to see her battling so bravely to find something beautiful, some pretext for laughter in the poor rubbish of her life. He wondered that it did not break God's heart to see such a face uplifted. Perhaps He could not see so far. Perhaps He turned aside and rushed away across the stars to hide from her, as RoBards fled from her.

He hobbled into his library, that wolf-den of his, and he glared at it with hatred of everything in it. He lighted the kindling laid crosswise in the fireplace, to hear flames crackle, and to fight the dank chill.

There were lawbooks piled and outspread about his desk. He flung them off the table to the floor. Laws! Human laws!

THERE was silence again about the lonely house. By and by Patty came into the room to say:

"She's asleep. I gave her some drops. And now—now what?"

They leaned against the mantelpiece, tall shadows against the swirling flames. Her head and his were lost in the dark as if they were giants reaching to the clouds. And they were, indeed, in the clouds—lost there.

They both thought of the same thing, of course: As usual with humankind, they were concerned about keeping something secret from somebody else. They wanted to make a decent concealment of the nakedness of their family shame.

Through the snow a few trees stood upthrust. Among them the little tulip-trees huddled together slim and still. There beneath were the bodies of his children and Patty's. He had seen Patty cry over them as Immy had done, and sway with their still frames, according to that inveterate habit women have of rocking their children, awake or asleep, alive or—

Immy's baby belonged out there with the family—with its tiny uncle and its tiny aunt. They would not flinch from it or snub it because of the absence of a marriage ceremony. It had not been to blame. There was nothing it could have done to insist upon such a provision, nothing to prevent its own arrival. It brought with it a certain sanctifying grace. It brought with it a certain penitential suffering.

RoBards nodded to himself, went to Patty and told her his plan, and then hastened to find in the cellar an ax and a shovel, and a discarded empty box of the nearest size for its purpose.

He put on his heaviest coat, his boots and his gloves, and a heavy scarf.

Patty had wrapped the little form in a silken shawl she had always prized since it came out of China in one of her father's ships—in the wonderful days when she had had a father and he had had ships. A girlish jealousy had persisted in her heart, and she had never let Immy wear that shawl. Now she gave it up because it was the only thing she could find in the house precious enough to honor the going guest and be a sacrifice.

RoBards pushed out into the snow with his weapons and his casket, and made his way to the young tulip-trees, which were no longer so young as he imagined them.

The snow was ice and turned the shovel aside. He must crack

Immy wept and begged: "Please, Mamma! Don't spoil my first little chance of happiness. . . . . Say you forgive me!"

its surface with the ax, and it was hard for his frost-bitten fingers to grip the handle. Only the sheer necessity for finishing the work made it possible for him to stand the pain. By the time he reached the soil deep below, he was so tired and so hot that he flung off his overcoat and his muffler and gloves.

The ground was like a boulder and the ax rang and glanced and sprinkled sparks of fire. Before he had made the trench deep enough, he had thrown aside his fur cap and his coat, and yet he glowed.

At last he achieved the petty grave, and set the box in it, and heard the clods clatter on it, and filled and trampled down the shards of soil, and shoveled the snow upon that and made all as seemly as he could.

It was not a job that a grave-digger would boast of, but it was his best. He gazed at the unmarked tomb of the anonymous wayfarer. There should have been some rite, but he could not find a prayer to fit the occasion or his own rebellious mood.

He was so tired, so dog-tired in body and soul, that he would have been glad to lie down in his own grave if some one would have dug him one at once. He hobbled and slid back to the house, flung the ax and the shovel into the cellar from the top of the stairs, and went to bed. . . . .

The next morning he would have sworn that the whole thing was nightmare. At any rate, it was finished.

But it was not finished. Immy woke at last, and before her mind was out of the spell of the drugs, her arms were groping for her baby, her breast was aching; and when she understood, her scream was like a lightning-stroke in a snowstorm.

RoBards could stand no more. He told Patty that she would have to face the ordeal. It was cowardly to leave her, but he must save his sanity or the whole family was ruined.

As he left the house for the barn and the horse he kept there, he was glad to see that snow was fluttering again. That little mound needed more snow for its concealment.

Chapter Thirty-three

WHEN he reached New York, RoBards had to take his injured hands to a physician, who managed to save them for him, though there were times when the anguishes that clawed them made him almost regret their possession.

He was tempted to resign his judgeship, feeling that he was unworthy of the high bench, since he had committed crimes, and had been ready to commit others, and had on his soul crimes that he regretted not committing. But he lacked the courage or the folly to publish his true reasons for resigning, and he could think of no pretexts. He solaced himself with the partly submerged scandals of other jurists, and wondered where a perfect soul could be found to act as judge if perfection were to be demanded. Even Christ had put to flight all of the accusers of the taken woman and had let her go free with a word of good advice.

At times the memory of his own black revolt against the laws softened RoBards' heart when he had before him men and women accused of sins, and he punished them with nothing more than a warning. At other times his own guilt made him merciless to the prisoners of discovery, and he struck out with the frenzy of a man in torment, or with the spirit of the college boys who hazed their juniors cruelly because they had themselves been hazed by their seniors.

Deep perplexities wrung his heart when poor souls stood beneath his eyes charged with the smuggling of unlicensed children into the world, children without a passport, outlaw children stamped with the strange label "illegitimate." They and their importers wore a new cloak in RoBards' eyes. They had been hitherto ridiculous, or contemptible, or odious. Now he understood what malice there was in the joke that passion had played on them. They were the scorched victims of a fire against which they had taken out no insurance. Like Immy, they must have suffered bitter ecstasies of terrified rapture, long vigils of bewilderment, heartbreaks of racking pain, with ludicrous disgrace for their recompense.

The Albesons returned from Georgia with such a report on the soil as a Northern farmer might have made on Southern glebe without the trouble of the journey. They found that Immy was not so much improved as they expected. "Kind of peaked and poorly," Abby complained.

But Immy came back to town, and though she never quite lost that prayer in the eyes known as the "hunted look," she began to find escape and finally delight in her old gayeties.

Then Captain Harry Chalender returned from California on one of the Yankee clippers that were astounding the world by their greyhound speed. It took him barely seventy-six days to sail from San Francisco to Sandy Hook, the round trip requiring only seven months. It was indeed the age of restless velocity. Chalender came in as usual with the prestige of broken records.

He was rich and full of traveler's tales of wild justice, Vigilante executions, deluges of gold, fantastic splendors amid grueling hardships.

His anecdotes bored RoBards, who listened to them with the poor appetite of a stay-at-home for a wanderer's brag. But Patty listened hungrily, and Immy was as entranced as Desdemona hearkening to the Moor. Chalender brought Patty a handsome gift, and dared to bring a handsomer to Immy.

Even his cynical intuitions failed to suspect the education she had undergone, but he noted how much older she was, how wise yet reckless. And she found him perilously interesting beyond any of the young bucks whose farthest voyages were bus-rides down Broadway from their boarding-houses to their high desks in the counting-houses.

There was nothing in Chalender's manner toward Immy that Patty or David could resent when they had their eyes upon him, but he took Immy far from their eyes often. And RoBards could not doubt that Patty was harrowed not only with a mother's anxiety for a daughter, but with an elder beauty's resentment at a younger's triumph.

On the next New Year's Day, Chalender came to RoBards' home late of a snow-clouded afternoon. He explained that he had started up north and worked his way downtown; and St. John's Park was the last word to the south. This led Patty to remind RoBards with a sharp look that she had been begging him to move up where the people were.

The year had begun with an exhausting day. The first guest had come before nine, and it was getting toward six when Chalender rang at the closed door. The RoBards family was jaded with the procession of more or less befuddled visitors, for everybody still called on everybody and got a little drunk on good wishes and the toasts that went with them.

Harry Chalender had tried to see if he could not establish a record in calls. He reached the RoBards house in a pitiable condition. He was dressed like the fop he always was, his hair curled, oiled and perfumed, his handkerchief scented, his waistcoat of a flowery pattern, his feet in patent leathers glossy as of yore. His breath was even more confusedly aromatic with cloves than usual. He apologized thickly:

"Patty, I think I've done someshing to give me immortality at lash. I've called at shixy-sheven house' between nine 's morn' and five 's even'n'. And I've had s' much cherry bounce I'm full of elasticisy. I hardly touch ground. And wines—oh, Patty! I'm a human cellar. And food—stewed oyssers, turkey, min' spies! But I always come back to you, Patty, and to Immy. Seein' you and your living image, Immy, I can't tell whish is whish; half suspect I'm seein' double. Am I or—am I?"

Giggling idiotically over his wit, he fell asleep. Patty regarded him with anger and RoBards with disgust; but both were dazed

The boy murmured: "I'll marry you or I'll marry nobody." To RoBards the little pauper had the power of a Lorelei chanting his son to shipwreck.

to see that Immy smiled and placed a cushion under his rolling head.

Drunkenness was beginning to lose its charm. In 1846 New York had voted by a large majority against the licensing of liquor-dealers. Maine had followed with a law prohibiting the sale or manufacture of all strong drinks under penalty of fine and imprisonment.

Three years later New York passed a copy of the Maine law, and the Temperance party's candidate won the governorship. But nobody was punished; clubs were formed with no other bond than thirst. The edict was found to be a source of infinite political corruption, general contempt for law and tolerance for lawbreakers. It collapsed at last and was repealed as a failure. All the old people agreed that the good old times were gone.

Much as RoBards had despised the immemorial tendency of old people to forget the truth of their own youth and prate of it as a time of romantic beauty, he found himself despairing of these new times. The new dances were appalling. The new drinks were poison. The new modes in love were unheard of.

Once more he was wondering if it were not his duty to horsewhip Chalender or to kill him. The horror of involving his wife in scandal restrained him before; now his daughter was concerned. He pleaded with Immy, wasted commands upon her and was frozen by her cynical smile. She laughed most at his solemnest moods, just as her mother had done. She would mock him, hug and kiss him and make him hold her cloak for her glistening bare shoulders, then skip downstairs to take Harry Chalender's arm and go with him in his carriage to wherever he cared to go. One night it was to see the new play "Uncle Tom's Cabin," based on a novel written by a clergyman's wife, which was selling about the world by the hundred thousand. Six different theaters were offering the play at the same time in London. Another night Chalender set Immy forth in a box at the Castle Garden, where Mario and Grisi were singing against the gossip of the whisperers and starers at Chalender's new beauty. On other nights Chalender danced with Immy at fashionable homes where she could not have gone without him. On other nights they did not explain where they went, and RoBards was held at bay by Immy's derisive "Don't you wish you knew?" or worse yet, her riant insolence: "You're too young to know."

Patty was frantic with defeat. She and Immy wrangled more like sisters or uncongenial neighbors than like mother and daughter. RoBards was constantly forced to intervene to keep the peace. By paternal instinct he defended Immy against her mother and expressed amazement at Patty's suspicions, though they were swarming in his own heart. He tried to win Immy by his own trust in her:

"My darling," he said once, "you are too young to realize how it looks to go about with a man of an *(Continued on page 134)*

The wild passions of jungle animals are not tamed by a sheltered life—as is well demonstrated in this remarkable story of the menagerie by a man who knows whereof he writes.

Illustrated by
J. Allen St. John

Terror

By

Courtney Ryley Cooper

A CIRCUS menagerie is not merely a place in which a number of beasts dwell within their cages and await the time of their liberation. It is a transplanted jungle, where the old instincts still thrive, where the loves, the hates, the fears and the alliances of the natural habitat carry through—in spite of steel bars or the efforts of humans to set aside the laws of the breed. In the menagerie the chimpanzee hates the elephant just as venomously as he does in the deepness of the teakwood forests; the racial loathing of the Bengal and the Nubian continues unquenched. Man may place them in the same arena and for months or years force them into what seems to be neutrality; but the hate remains: sooner or later there will come the quick slash of knife-edged claws, the curling of snarling lips from yellow teeth, and the crush of crunching jaws at the brain-base as a victor leaps to the kill-stroke. Years may pass in the menagerie, children of caged children be born behind bars, never knowing from their natal day to that of their death that there ever were surroundings other than these things of steel and wood and canvas—yet the instinct of the jungle will live on! So was it with Beauty and Streak.

Neither knew any environment other than the prison of a menagerie cage. Neither knew anything of the time when, generations back, the forebears of Streak and the forebears of Beauty had wandered the same murky marshlands in the swamp regions of Guiana. Just the same, one knew that it feared; and the other knew that it hated! Habitats had changed, life and manners of living. Not instinct!

They had been dwellers in the menagerie of the Grand United since birth. Beauty was the daughter of King and Grace, performing pumas, and unfortunately too closely related for their offspring to develop the highest possible delicacy of mental poise; Streak was the heavy-shouldered, thick-muscled, ugly child of Demon and Midnight, black jaguars—whom no one ever could train. And in Streak there had been no clouding of his racial characteristics through the mating which had brought him into being. Every trait of the black jaguar was there in its fiercest form; Streak was as hateful, as vengeful and as recalcitrant as his parents had been, knowing nothing save antagonism toward every kindness, ingratitude for every considerate act by the menagerie-attendants, and unending malice against the soft-eyed puma toward which Streak showed his racial enmity even across the breadth of the menagerie-tent.

True, it was a sporadic hate, for in the hustle and roar of the menagerie, a separation of the breadth of a tent is a long distance. There were few occasions when Streak could center his malice. Morning was a time of hustling confusion, of parades and "spotting" of wagons, and often he did not even see his enemy. Afternoon brought the crowds, and the yelping rush of the candy butchers at the "juice-joint" in the center of the tent, shutting off the view and distracting the attention of the short-legged, heavily framed cat. Night was similar; the early loading of the menagerie-tent, that the circus might send its first section on to the next town long before the performance itself was over, precluded anything except rush and hurry and distraction. But there was one time of the day when all was quiet, the menagerie nearly deserted by visitors or animal men—those few hours of rest between the end of the matinée and dusk; and it was then that Streak, his green-yellow eyes centered on the cage across the tent, gave way to the urge of instinct, and crouched hissing and seething with the promptings of an age-old hate.

As for Beauty, her feeling was solely one of fear. The puma, in the minds of animal men, is not listed as a vicious beast. It is catalogued rather in the class of those in which fear of superiors is the dominant trait, with a susceptibility to tameness very close to the surface. In the South American countries, indeed, pet pumas are not at all unusual; there seems to be something of the house-cat in their feline natures, a readiness to accept the companionship of humans, once the wildness of suspicious fear is allayed. In Beauty these traits had been accentuated through the unfortunate conditions of her birth. Other animals only tolerated grinning, tobacco-chewing Dummy Breen, the as-

On his side of the light partition, Dummy Breen tossed aside his hammer and launched a kick. He could not know that on the other side a crouching cat still watched.

sistant boss of the cat-cages; Beauty relished his friendship. To Dummy she owed what weak health she possessed, for it had been this speechless man who, in the early days of her inbred, rheumatic childhood, had led her at the end of a strap about the circus grounds each day, exercising her and rubbing the aching limbs until the poison should depart. Beauty looked on him as something of a miracle-worker, one who could ease pain and bring comfort in place of uneasiness. Moreover, Dummy had ministered to Beauty with a bit more care than he usually gave the cats.

This sleek, soft-eyed yellow beast offered him companionship in affliction, for it had now been more than ten years since he had been changed from a loquacious character of the show to a silent thing of motions and fingerings and whistled signals, through the agony of a circus accident which had paralyzed his vocal cords. Dummy and Beauty had something in common; they liked each other, and though he went into her cage each day, he never yet had been greeted with the hiss of enmity.

Streak, the black jaguar, on the contrary, knew no such thing as a truce. He hissed and roared at Dummy Breen ever as he hissed and roared at Beauty across the way. He had done it ever since he was old enough to take cognizance of his surroundings.

That was three years now. Streak and Beauty had been born within a week of each other, and Dummy had dreamed of a wonderful "feature"—enemies who should be friends—a puma and a black jaguar living together in the same den. He had striven to make it possible by cubhood companionship, seeking through youthful association to destroy the promptings of instinct. In vain! Tiny claws revealed themselves; a black, unwieldy bundle of cub-fur yowled and hissed and spat. Then finally came the attack when Dummy parted them just in time—and they never had been within striking distance of each other since.

Then—

"Hey, Dummy!" It was the menagerie-superintendent who called late one afternoon as he stood before Beauty's cage, surveying the placid beast within, then turning to look over his shoulder to where the low-slung form of the black jaguar paced the full length of his small den. The cat attendant hurried forward.

"Huh?" he questioned, his only word.

"What're we going to do with that Nomad tiger? He just came in by express, and they haven't sent his cage on yet. Got to take him away with us tonight—and we can't keep him in that shipping den; been cramped up in there too long already. Suppose you could fix up some sort of a partition in Streak's cage?"

Dummy turned and surveyed the prison of the jaguar. Then swiftly he led the way across the tent, there to gesticulate, until the superintendent bobbed his head in understanding.

"Yeh, I get that all right," the latter assured the mute. "No regular place for a partition, and no way to put in groove-boards with just that narrow wood upright there in the center. Still, we'll have to do something—until that new den comes on. Tell you what—nail in a partition, see? Just temporary, you know. Cleat it good on each side; wont have to move it, anyway. Think you could manage?"

"Huh!" It was assent. Out went the hissing jaguar into a shifting den, while Dummy climbed within the cage, there to work with saw and lumber and hammer and nails, until at last a rude partition, none too strong, divided the prison which once had been wholly Streak's. A moment later, and the jaguar had been returned to his domicile; then Dummy, raising his fingers to his lips, whistled a command. Seizing the tongue of the puma den, he guided it across the tent while an elephant, placed at the rear, furnished the motive power. There, cage-door at cage-door, Dummy scrambled into the den of Beauty with no more fear than one approaching a house-cat.

But something had come over the spirit of the animal. The tawny beast, crouching, hissed at him! Her forefeet padded nervously; her lips lifted in a half-snarl. But Dummy hesitated only a moment.

"Huh!" he exclaimed—and by that one word revealing his disdain at the apparent revolt, he grasped the cat by the neck, and evading her swift claws, dragged her to the opening of her den and with a quick lunge threw her within her half of the jaguar cage.

The menagerie-superintendent grinned.

"Don't like it much, does she," he observed, "—taking half of Streak's house? How's that partition? Those cats'll probably try to get at each other."

Dummy only nodded. Beauty, sniffing and hissing, approached the partition, her body almost writhing in its creeping litheness. For a moment she sniffed about, with narrowed eyes, and claws moving fretfully in their sockets. Withdrawing then to the farthest corner of the cage, she *(Continued on page 98)*

And then—Lance's attention was diverted by an orchid-colored vision floating toward him down the stairs. Was he seeing ghosts in the early lamplight?

A Touch of Eternity

Illustrated by Frederic R. Gruger

THAT no material thing ever perishes from the earth is a truth oft expressed by those interpreters of the obvious, poets and philosophers. The crumbling heart of Cæsar gives nourishment to the rose from which the bee draws honey for the Roman table. Nature wastes in order to economize. Nothing dies. And if these never-ending incarnations apply to material things, why not to immaterial things? What of ideas, of traits of character, of tendencies? Do not the abstractions like Beauty and Hunger live in a million shapes, ever changing, ever mingling in the composition of our souls?

S. W. Peebles, wholesale dealer in empires, oceans, mineral deposits and international harvests, lived palatially at Radio, Connecticut, in the year 1921. Where he got his taste for art, God only knows; but by the time of life when man gains in weight what he loses in hair, Mr. Peebles had indulged a stubborn tendency in a roundabout way: he had fostered his son's taste in painting and followed the work with a pride out of proportion, perhaps, to the boy's ability.

One afternoon in September—Mrs. Peebles being elsewhere, at bridge—the lord of Radio slunk into the new wing of his house. A temptation had entered the busy brain under the hairless skull; wherefore he turned the key behind him as he came into his unfinished billiard-room. The place smelled of fresh plaster. Boldly outlined under the cornice, he could see the object of his adoration, the historical fresco over which his son Lansing had labored spasmodically for many weeks. English archers were speeding their gray goose quills above the window-cap. Vaguely sketched figures stalked along the wall.

The sight of it struck a rusty chord in old Peebles' heart. He wondered if Lansing would go far in this atmosphere.

Standing dwarfed in the big room, his fat face turned up toward the problem, S. W. Peebles again felt the temptation. He glanced guiltily around, then slyly, slowly mounted the ladder until he stood within touching distance of the English bowmen. A color-box lay on the scaffolding; scarcely knowing what he did, he reached out for a brush, squeezed colors from a tube, dabbled in a pool of neutral gray. Then gingerly he raised the brush to a patch of shadow under the elbow of the nearest archer.

His strokes became bolder. His fingers betrayed a certain skill, suggesting a musician who fumbles with forgotten notes. The room was still as death for a time. Then in an instant's roving of the eye, Mr. Peebles received as rude a shock as though the scaffolding had fallen.

By

WALLACE IRWIN

A fragrant and illuminating story of two interesting young people who acquired love and who promised each other to guard it well, as their elders had not—by the eminent author of "Letters of a Japanese Schoolboy," "The Blooming Angel," "Seed of the Sun" and other works that have had well-deserved popularity.

Somebody was staring at him through the window!

The guilty poacher struggled to maintain his balance as his spy threw up a sash and came scrambling over the sill. He was young, dusty and radiant in a faded sweater and stained khaki breeches. Tramp he might have been, but his lean, tanned face was neither brutalized nor discontented.

"How you comin' with my fresco, Pop?" he roared, and tossed a battered felt hat halfway across the room.

It was the first time, possibly, that mortal had ever seen a blush upon the time-worn countenance of S. W. Peebles.

"Now, Lance, my boy," he pleaded, and there was genuine pathos in his look, "I don't see why you shouldn't come into the house by the door like the rest of us."

"And have 'em all ask a lot of fool questions I can't answer?" was Lansing's evasion.

"Great Scott!" Mr. Peebles called upon the soul of the eminent author, not for the love of authorship, but because of what he saw through the window which his son had just entered. A brindle skeleton of a horse, hitched to a disabled carriage of the surrey type, was grazing calmly on the very expensive Peebles lawn.

"Whose horse is that?" snapped the outraged father.

"Yours, Pop," explained Lance. "I stole him out of the north pasture when I went out to be a gypsy."

"Gypsy!" snarled the elder man. "Your mother's been worried sick about you. What got into your head, going off like that, leaving a crazy note about being a gypsy?"

"I was all right," Lansing defended himself.

"You had an awful cold."

"I had colds in France."

"How'd you ever get home alive? Thought at least they'd teach you obedience."

BOTH were embarrassed. Mr. Peebles had come down from his ladder, and both stood looking up at the group of bowmen.

"I believe you've improved it," said Lance by way of a salve.

"Don't make fun of me," pleaded the father.

"Say, boss—" Lance laid an impulsive hand on the round, fat shoulder. "Sorry I ran away like that. But honest, I had to go somewhere—"

"Girls?" asked S. W. Peebles suddenly, a gleam in his little gray eyes.

"I'm a marked man," blurted the young artist. "I like to work, but what does that get me? Mother's always trying to hook me up to a skirt. Don't blame her. Good old Mom's so sly and tactful. But the flappers around Radio make me tired. Tired! Chickens chasing a worm. I'm the worm."

"Gosh, I didn't know you were that conceited—"

"I'm not. You know and I know that the dollar-sign's out and they're all on the make."

"I might will my property to an insane asylum," suggested the father. Then, laughing queerly: "Or I might go broke."

"Who's joking now?" grinned Lance.

"How'd you find the gypsy trail?" asked Peebles *père*.

"I've been in another world, Pop. You see, I wanted to find out if I could make my way, selling my stuff from door to door, living on the country. Well, I made ten dollars drawing crayon sketches, and walked into Arcadia near Stockington, Connecticut."

"Was it really fun?" Peebles' voice had dulled.

"I'm foolish about it, Pop."

Old Peebles strode across the room and stood gazing out of the window. His attitude was reflective, melancholy.

"Pop," Lance broke the silence, "didn't you want to be a painter once?"

"Who the devil's been talking to you?" Old Peebles turned and snorted.

"I just had a sneaking idea—"

"Had a sneaking idea, did you? Give me a cigarette."

They seated themselves on a box at the foot of the scaffolding. At that instant father and son looked as near alike as youth can look like middle age.

"Where'd you get your taste for art?" persisted Lansing. "Who taught you to buy American paintings?"

"You can buy anything if you've got the money."

"Not the right things. And you've bought fine canvases when the market was low. Look at your collection of Mayfields."

Peebles looked pleased for an instant; then his little eyes resumed their melancholy.

"I buy pictures because I can't help feeling that I ought to be painting 'em," he said.

"I'd rather paint bad pictures than none," confessed Lance.

"You inherit that."

"So you wanted to be an artist," suggested Lance, seeing his advantage.

"When I was a little younger than you are now, I'd have given everything—" For a moment he looked like a troubled baby; then he steeled himself to another train of thought. "Don't let 'em tell you money's vulgar. It's a fine thing. It gives you time to know the best there is in the world, to know treasure from trash. Money's the foundation of all aristocracy, say what you will.

"But there's one thing it isn't. It's not happiness. That's a bromide, but most bromides are true. It's a bad thing to let money own you, but it's a man's duty to keep what he's got. You wont catch me letting go easy—" His mouth hardened.

"I'll tell you something, Lance. When I was a lad, I loved color; I was crazy to draw. It was just a tendency, perhaps, like the habit of biting your nails. When I went to college, I used to read the stuff of a lot of popular poets who called themselves Vagabonds. Vagabond got into my system, and in my sophomore vacation I packed my kit and started out to be a hobo—art hobo, understand?"

"Thought so," mused Lance.

"Thought what?" snapped his father, bilious eyes rolling.

"Oh, go on, Pop," begged the son.

"Well, one day I walked up on a consumptive lad who was sitting by a pond slapping mosquitoes with one hand and painting with the other. Funny how we hit it off. His name was Moses—I always associated him with the Promised Land. So we hooked up and went rolling along, fishing, painting, stealing chickens like a pair of gypsies.

"Mo had saved a little, working as a car-conductor in Hartford, and he was going to Paris to study. He taught me the first principles of water-color—Whistler never had more of a pull toward art than I had that summer. I don't suppose I had any talent."

Lance looked up at the gray spot on his unfinished fresco.

"That was a midsummer's dream, all right," resumed his father. "When I came out of the wilderness that fall, I'd made up my mind to follow Mo to Paris. The first thing I found was a letter saying that my father had died in Detroit. My work was cut out for me after that."

S. W. Peebles smiled fatly over his own epitaph. Lansing reflected that smile.

"You're getting morbid, Pop," said the boy. "How's your golf-score? You need air. Now, if you'd got behind that lame horse and gone with me—"

"Fine chance you gave a fellow! And how'd you suppose I'd explain that to your mother—"

Always his mother! The thought flashed through Lance's mind—how successful had his father been with his life, or his mother with hers?

"Pop," he announced, "I've commissioned an artist to do your portrait and Mom's."

"Not buying pictures now," grumbled his sire.

"This is on me. Birthday present to you."

"Hm!" Old Peebles' look softened. "Suppose it would be vulgar to ask the price."

"A thousand dollars."

"Nothing in that class. Anything between a hundred dollars and ten thousand's bound to be mediocre."

"You'll change your mind, I think. He can help a lot with my fresco. I thought you might ask his wife along and—and his little girl."

"Aha!" bawled S. W. Peebles. "Little girl, eh! See now why you want to help the old artist. How old's the little girl?"

"Eight years," replied Lance.

This was unanswerable, but old Peebles came back with a fresh objection.

"What do I know about this fellow's work?"

"Just you look here a minute—"

Lance had run across the room and picked up a roll of paper which he had dropped when he entered by the window.

"He gave me this when I was leaving Stockington."

S. W. Peebles unrolled the drawing while his son stood aside to study his face. The little eyes, at first indifferent, grew larger and obtruded toward the page while the tufts of eyebrow went scampering up the hairless forehead like startled mice.

"Did he make that signature?" he rasped accusingly as though he were confronted with a forged check.

"With his own skinny hand."

"My Lord, boy! My Lord!" he sputtered. "That's Moses Findley. Mo! The very Bohemian lad I've been talking about."

"I sort of thought so," drawled Lance. "And that's why I showed you the drawing."

LANCE PEEBLES told his father a little more than I have set down about Moses Findley; but what he didn't tell is important and concerns his week as an amateur vagabond in the Connecticut hills.

He had pilgrimaged something like three days when he came at last upon him whom he called King of Arcadia—more properly its Grand Lama. One heavenly afternoon Jasper, his wind-broken horse, showed more than usual signs of debility, heaved, stumbled and stopped. The driver looked around and beheld a gentle knoll which rolled weedily just outside a pretty Colonial town. As good a stop as any, thought Lance, and so he brought out his portfolio and took his way toward a little shingled cottage beyond the elms.

At the weather-beaten gate he stopped to admire. Sun-browned and gentle, the cottage nestled among flowers like some ripely wise wayside philosopher. There was no pretense of fussy neatness. Goldenrod and ironweed flared purple against yellow among the rubble under a wandering fence. Beneath the elms, spreading

She said her portrait was going wretchedly. Art, in her opinion, consisted in painting a lady's hands smaller than Nature made them.

like giant lyres, a clean-swept path meandered toward a little white door. A woman's voice sang a song as sweet and aimless as Samoa. Bees were droning.

Everything seemed to vibrate with contentment, and even as the stranger plied the brass knocker, he felt the spell of it. The song stopped. A moment later a deep-bosomed woman in a bungalow apron regarded him with kind brown eyes which seemed to have borrowed color from her auburn hair—a pretty woman of forty-five.

"Good morning," he began, experience having taught him the value of rapid speech. "I'm a peddler, madam—"

"You're not a very good one," she dimpled, "or you wouldn't begin by telling me you're a peddler. You ought to begin by saying that Mrs. Simon Doolittle has sent you with an opportunity I can't afford to miss."

"I try to be honest," declared Lance, delighted.

"I should say so! Really, young man, you mustn't waste your time on me"

"Please don't worry about that," he begged. "Time is about the only thing I have plenty of. I have it to throw to the birds. And if you'll let me talk to you a little while,—choose your own subject if you wish,—I'll agree to go away and not even mention business, which doesn't interest me very much."

"Wont you come in?" she asked, and as soon as he had seated himself in the charming little parlor, full of cottage mahogany, gay chintz and nicely toned rugs, she aimed the direct question: "Now, what is it you peddle?"

"Myself," he replied, returning smile for smile.

"No!" Her auburn eyes sparkled to a searching look. "You're not one of those wage-slaves they sell on the auction block?"

"Worse," he replied. "I'm an artist."

Her face became pitiful.

"And how do you go at it to sell yourself?"

"Oh, just pay my way as I go. I jog from house to house, peddling my wares. Charcoal portraits, five dollars, likeness guaranteed. Water-color, fifteen—of course I put in all the colors in the rainbow for that price."

"And you want to sell pictures to us?" asked the auburn lady, still smiling.

"Well, of course—"

"I *must* tell my husband that!" she cried blissfully, and bounded out of the room. At the foot of the steep, white-spindled staircase, he could see her pause to call up: "Oh, Byjo!"

"Um-m-m!" came a basso growl, suggestive of a busy man with a pipe in his mouth.

"Byjo, there's an artist down here who wants to sell us a picture."

The reply was incoherent, but it sounded remarkably like, "Quite naturally." It had the effect of sending the plump lady scuttling upstairs. Alone in the pleasant parlor, Lance had the feeling that he had stepped into the bole of a tree and encountered a family of leprechauns, those jaunty Irish fairies who build themselves living-quarters under the roots of trees.

These particular leprechauns had excellent taste. There were two beautiful Utamaros and several good landscapes against the walls. A full-length portrait hung above the fireplace. It held the artist's attention—a little girl of eight was roller-skating, coming at him so recklessly that she seemed about to leap from the frame. Plaid skirts were blowing about her coltish legs; a strawberry-colored tam-o'-shanter was thrown back to show a gypsy face, brown as a berry, red lips parted in a laugh, black eyes snapping.

"Like it?" asked a deep, pleasant voice at the door.

Lance turned to see a tall, delicately built man wearing duck trousers and soiled canvas shoes. His large gray mane matched his small gray beard; merry black eyes flanked a prominent nose with a humorous twist.

"It's charming," decided Lance.

"Don't let's be polite," suggested Byjo. "But you might sit down if you're tired."

"Thanks." Lance took a seat.

"Smoke?" Byjo offered papers and a limp sack.

"I have my own."

"My name's Findley," declared Byjo.

"Mine's Peebles."

"Of course it isn't," said Byjo. "But it'll do. Kiku—that's Mrs. Findley—says you're peddling art the way they sell silver polish. The idea's either original or aboriginal. Michelangelo never thought of that. Nor Matisse, either."

"Why not sell art from producer to consumer?" insisted Lance.

"Comes fresher that way," agreed Byjo. "And saves the price of a middleman."

He inhaled a third of his cigarette at one prolonged intake, blew smoke through his bristles and asked:

"What luck?"

"Ten dollars in three days."

"Portraits?"

"Sort of. Maiden lady near Winsted gave me five dollars to do her little dog. I liked that job. His was the only interesting face in the family. Farmer's wife near Canaan thought I was a house-painter. I explained, and she asked me to paint something pretty over a crack in her parlor mirror. I did a portrait of a maiden with golden hair and cornflower eyes. It resembled Gauguin at his worst."

"You've proved something," said Byjo in his beard, but what it was he failed to say. Instead he remarked with a wise squint: "Some pretty queer things have come down the road in my time."

"I'm not trying to sell you anything," grinned Lance.

"Hm!" Byjo reached a clever hand toward the portfolio. "Any objection to showing—"

"Samples? None whatever. Only a few sketches—"

The quick Japanesque eyes studied the sheets.

"Let's make a bargain," said Byjo at last. "You've come to the wrong house if you're looking for five dollars. But I'll commission you to do a water-color of Kiku and me; Baby's away with her little cousins, or I'd include her." He gestured toward the roller-skating child in the picture. "But you've got to sell on my terms."

"What are your terms?" asked Lance experimentally.

"I'll pay in merchandise."

"Merchandise?" Would he offer bees or homemade beer? "What sort of merchandise?" insisted the young artist.

"Pictures."

"Holy Moses!" Lance came to his feet. "I beg your pardon, sir. I didn't know you were a dealer—"

"No such luck," objected Byjo deep in his beard. "I paint the darned things."

Illumination! In a flash, Lance saw the meaning of this jolly gnome cottage with its meritorious paintings. Findley. Who was Findley?

"I'm afraid, Mr. Findley," came the humble confession, "that we can't trade on equal terms. I'd have to work a lifetime—"

"Why don't you?" invited Byjo, his beard bristling with earthly contentment. "Anything better to do?"

"Well, I *am* devoting my life—"

"Then don't look so solemn about it. You aren't entering a monastery. It's a gorgeous palace—glory unending. I've been at it ever since I was eighteen. Never knew anything about money and never wanted to. Don't know what I get for my pictures—ask Kiku; she's my business man. Doesn't look starved, does she?"

Lance laughed.

"Look at Baby there in the picture,"—with a gesture toward the mantel,—"does she look like an Armenian refugee?"

Lance laughed again.

"We've got enough. Any more would be too much. Little have, little want—that's what Arcadia means. What does a man gain by being all cluttered up with material property when the only thing that's really precious lies right here?"

His long forefinger touched his shapely forehead.

"Coohoo! Oh, Byjo!" This from upstairs.

The tall man rushed out of the room. Lance sighed and feasted his eyes upon the blissful child, roller-skating out of her frame. Somehow at that instant he thought of his father, wearing out his life in his complicated, pompous environment. These simple people, thought the young artist, had little, wanted little. What they had they enjoyed. They had touched the hem of life.

And that was all there was to settling Lance among the Findleys. Three days in Arcadia, three days of plain living and high thinking! Perhaps it was just another case of your jaded courtier playing at shepherd; but here in this little Stockington house the seven domestic graces ruled harmonious. It was as far from Bohemia as pole from pole.

"I've been practicing Cleopatra. Might have poisoned one of my

slaves, too, just to be jolly. But it was my whim to play tennis."

He had tasted Bohemia during student days in Paris, when he had enjoyed a studio *de luxe* with his mother living round the corner. That life had never seemed very real to him.

The Findleys sat for him a part of each day, and their attention flattered him because they were indeed a busy family—Byjo at his easel, Kiku singing in the kitchen or bending over her strident sewing-machine. Then in the evening they would break forth in quaint carnival. Byjo had claret hidden somewhere under his leprechaun tree; Kiku could play the guitar to accompany Byjo when he dug the end of a clarionet into his beard and produced rapturous strains of "Pagliacci." They often wished that Baby was with them. She played the fiddle rather well, said Kiku, for a child of her age.

It was the night before Lance's departure for Radio that Byjo, inquiring into the family name, identified the young artist as the son of his fellow-vagabond in those mosquito-bitten days, thirty years ago. Lance was just whipping the reins across his unwilling steed next morning when the temperamental Findley tossed a rolled drawing on the seat beside him. Out on the open road Lance opened it, to find a pencil-sketch done with all the tender sweetness of a Boucher. It showed a little girl on roller skates.

SO this is how the Findleys, man, woman and child, came for a somewhat protracted stay at the stately home of Mr. and Mrs. S. W. Peebles, Radio, Connecticut.

S. W. Peebles had been for it from the hour when he learned the identity of the Stockington genius. But in the Peebles household the things S. W. Peebles was for were of secondary consideration. Never once abandoning her disguise as clinging vine and yielding clay, Mrs. S. W. Peebles had a way of planning her own life right under the nose of the gentleman who, for very good reasons, thought of himself as a cloud-compeller of finance. Being as intolerant as a yielding woman can be, she was quite unable to entertain more than one idea at a time. Her idea at that crucial hour was Lance's matrimonial future.

Of all the things she didn't want,—and the list was infinite,—Bohemian portrait-painters was among the most important.

And those awful Findleys had elected to bring their little girl along! Eight years old! That age, Mrs. Peebles mildly pointed out, was a particularly difficult age for children—disregarding the fact that all ages are difficult for children. S. W. Peebles accomplished little by blustering and bullying. It required Lance's superior powers of persuasion to bring his mother to time. He even went so far as to promise to amuse the child in case she proved a nuisance around the house.

Late one afternoon toward the close of September the Findleys arrived. Lance was at work in the new billiard-room, painting grimly. He should have gone down to the station to meet them—for surely it was he of all the family who had invited them to come. But a queer self-consciousness held him back. He developed a sudden passion for his art, and was rewarded by a feeling that the fresco was beginning to show signs of life.

A little before six o'clock he saw through a plaster-stained window that one of his father's inclosed cars was purring up the drive. Even then he made no move to meet his guests. He made his untidy studio costume an excuse. His mother would be shocked at his sudden coming forth, he told himself.

Curiosity conquered at last, however, and he stole to the front of the house and peered through a half-open door. Everything in the big hall was silent, orderly, uncommunicative. He came upon Torrence, the butler, and inquired:

"Where are Mr. and Mrs. Findley?"

Torrence shadowed Mrs. Peebles' look of disapproval.

"They are in their room, Mr. Lansing, dressing."

"Dressing?" Lance had visions of stiff shirts.

"Not exactly dressing, sir. Brushing."

Lance passed his mother in the corridor, and she swept him with one of her gentle commendations: "Put on anything. It wont make any difference."

Then he got to his room to find gray flannels laid out for him,—Mrs. Peebles' orders, no doubt,—and when he had got into these and knotted a blue tie at his throat, he smoked until his desk watch, frugally saving daylight, had pointed a quarter of eight. Then he went down to meet the Findleys.

He had reached the first landing of the great double staircase which swept down to the hall in two marble curves. From his altitude he gained a picture of brocaded hangings and Italian furniture in the wide space below. The hall centered in human interest. Byjo, clad decently in blue, leaned against the big table and made animated conversation with Mrs. Peebles, who had the bright air of one engaged by the hour to talk to inmates of the zoo. Mrs. Findley, in a lavender gown which managed to betray its village origin, surveyed each detail of the Peebles' magnificence in shy side-glances.

On the curved staircase opposite where Lance took in the picture, S. W. Peebles was coming down. The group by *(Continued on page 124)*

The terrifying tale of Oren Willits, harried, henpecked, humble—and then rebellious: by the author of "Mountain," "The Smithy of God" and other important works.

It Can't Be Done

By

Clement Wood

Illustrated by Gustavus C. Widney

EFFIE WILLITS lifted the agate-ware pot from her lap, and placed it carefully on the frayed matting. She emptied the colander full of soft green pea-shells into the bucket at the side of her rocker, filled the utensil again with the corpulent pods, and restored the pot to her other knee. Gently the rocker commenced its soothing motion; the globular peas popped out of their jackets, to the rhythmic accompaniment of chair and tune:

"Sweet A-a-deline, my A-a-deline,
At night, dear heart, hmm—hmm—hmm—hmm
In all my dreams, thy fair face—"

If there wasn't the doorbell! The rocker, the peas, the song stopped at the same startled moment. In one complicated gesture, pot and colander were deposited on the table, kitchen apron swished off and up to the hook behind the door, hair given a pacifying pat, and she had started for the front of the house. After one curious peek through the clear edges of the dulled glass door, she threw it hospitably open.

"Why, Cousin Will Walter! And Golda! How *are* you folks?"

"Mmm! Fine!" The bristly mustaches scratched her cheek in his vehement kiss.

"How's everybody in Madison?"

"Very well, Cousin Effie." The cousin by marriage planted a restrained greeting primly on the lips.

"Whatever did bring you two down here? You know you wrote you an' Will Walter couldn't come for a visit this summer—"

"No more we can, Effie. We've come to kidnap you an' Oren for a couple of days."

"Kidnap? That sounds too nice. You mean—to—" As he turned toward the living-room, a sudden alarm crinkled her eyes. "No—not in there. We'll set in the kitchen." She passed down the hall; the relatives followed. "Give me your wraps, Cousin Golda. You were saying—"

"Here's how it is," the man explained. "I had to run down to Bayville, to see a man about the title to a twenty I bought last year. We're going to spend the night with Kinsey Burdsall, and it just occurred to us that it would be an act of charity to take you two along."

"Now, Will Walter!" Golda Burdsall's eyes lifted from a disapproving survey of the kitchen, as living-room, to scold him lightly.

"Oh, that's all right. . . . . So, instead of going straight down from Elizabeth to Camden, we turned off at Rahway, and again at Lakewood—and here we are. Back tomorrow afternoon. You can come along, can't you?"

"Oh, do, Cousin Effie!"

"Couldn't Uncle Will have come?"

"I tried. Couldn't stir Dad. Seventy-six, you know—born the year Bottle Hill changed its name to Madison. Not quite so lively, now; but—us young folks! Eh, Cousin Effie?"

She bristled at the flattery; then her face fell. "Oren's got to be in court tomorrow morning. I had to make him sue Miss' Higgins for her rent."

"That's too bad. But—you come!"

"Oh, I—I couldn't. I couldn't possibly! Remember, I've got him on my hands."

"What's the matter with him? Sick?"

"No; but—you know—a man! He'd be positively lost, by himself. I don't believe I've been away a day since our marriage

"Listen to me carefully, Oren!" Effie spoke precisely all the way to the front door. "There are some things you just mustn't forget to do. . . . . Can you remember all that?"

—and that's twenty-one years come next November. I'm getting his supper now. And tonight—and all day tomorrow—why, I wouldn't trust him to lock up, without my going around afterward. Once he tried to red up the house for me—there was dust on every solitary chair in the dining-room! A lick and a promise—that's his idea of neating up. I couldn't."

"You spoil him. He's a grown man—"

"He's a—man, Cousin Will Walter."

"I know you want to see Cousin Kinsey," Golda continued softly. "You've earned a holiday. Can't you get somebody to stay with him?"

"I don't know. Perhaps Sister—"

"Just the thing! Rosita'd be glad to; her Phœbe could keep things running—"

"She does anyhow. I'm expecting Oren any minute now."

"Come along!"

"I—I really believe I'm going to!"

"That's the talk!"

"Want me to wrap up a snack, to eat on the way?"

"We'll have supper with Kinsey; Golda's got some sandwiches an' dandelion wine—"

"Is that what you're trying to—"

"He's just teasing you, Cousin Effie. We don't need a thing. Just put on your clothes—"

The others chatted on about their plans, as she hurried her preparations. Suddenly they became silent. There was a soft scratching noise at the lean-to behind the kitchen. The back door handle turned softly, as they watched it: the door swung out apologetically; and Oren Willits, after carefully scraping off his soles on the top step, came into the outer room. His thin parchment face peered into the comparative gloom of the kitchen, and suddenly brightened.

"Well, howdy, Will Walter! Golda, this is a sight for pink eyes! How'd you happen down thisaway?"

Effie stood fastening her coat, punctuating each captured button with a phrase or two. "They're going to Bayville, Oren. Spend the night. Cousin Kinsey Burdsall. Back tomorrow night. Wanted me to go—" With a prodigious intake of breath, the last tight button was caught. "Of course, I told 'em I couldn't leave you—couldn't think of it. How'd you get supper, or breakfast?"

"But Effie—"

"Too many things I've got to do around the house. I wouldn't trust anybody in the world to look after those chickens; that hen in the last nest will hatch tomorrow morning; I'm sure of it. I said—"

"Still, Effie—"

"I'm talking, Oren. You can put in your five cents' worth when I've finished. It couldn't be done, I told 'em."

"I know—"

"But they convinced me. I'm going. You can get your supper somehow, and I'll have Sister Rosita come over and spend the night, and get your breakfast. You see, Phœbe's competent to 'tend to the house. So—I'm going."

"I just wanted to say—"

"You can make out, with Rosita. Did you want to say anything?"

"Why, I don't need her—"

"Of course you do! You'd be simply lost, with no one to look after you. Did you collect that rent from old Mrs. Graham? And what did Tom Hoag say?"

The words tripped over one another. "I got the money. He's going to pay Tuesday. But I'm sure—"

"I'm going to telephone her at once, Oren. That's what you want, isn't it?"

"Why—"

"That's it, isn't it?"

"Why—er—yes. Good idea."

Will Walter was busy inspecting the room. "Moved the range out to the lean-to, eh? D'you eat here, in the kitchen?"

"H'm—yes. You see, Effie thought—"

"What d'you do with the dining-room?"

Oren scratched his blue-shaven chin thoughtfully. "Look in it, twice a year."

"You poor man!" laughed Golda. "I can understand how Cousin Effie feels, too."

"Like to see you try any o' them tricks on me," blustered Will Walter smilingly. "I'll eat in the sitting-room, if I want to! She'll have you eating in a chicken-coop yet, Oren!"

"Aren't men awful, Cousin Oren!" Golda's face shone with pride.

"H'm—yes," he admitted thoughtfully.

Effie swished back into the kitchen, tragic disappointment in her eyes. "I can't go, after all! Phœbe's spending the night with the Foulke girls, in Lakehurst, and Rosita simply can't come over."

"Well, now, Effie—"

"You know he can look after himself!"

"Give the man a chance. He'll take care of himself," Will Walter put in, in huge self-contentment. "You'd think he hadn't been weaned."

"It's just for one night," Oren pleaded humbly. "I can get supper at the Dolan House—"

"Indeed you wont! I can't tell what you'd be up to, down at that place! The twenty years I've been married, never a night away before—"

"It's high time you did," said Golda with sparkling eyes. "You'll behave, wont you?"

"H'm—yes," he admitted, heavily.

"Come along, Effie!"

"All right. This once."

"Fine! Let's hustle. We want to make Bayville by supper."

"Listen to me carefully, Oren!" Effie spoke precisely all the way to the front door. "There are some things you just mustn't forget to do. You'll lock up carefully, of course. Be sure that the screen-door in the basement is latched. There's some sour milk ready for cottage cheese on top of the icebox. I suppose I can trust you to warm it on the stove, pour it in the cheese-bag, then tie it around the faucet, and let it drain. D'you think you've got that straight?"

"You've told me often enough how to—"

"Oh, that hen with the nine chickens, the ones hatched ten days ago—she's been acting peculiar. I want you should catch her tonight, and put her in the coop behind the rosebushes. Be sure to feed and water her. Then I can see if she hasn't the pip. That hen in the last nest—she may hatch; you'll have to move her to an empty coop, and feed and water— Oh, I oughtn't to— You'll never—"

"Now, Effie—"

"Put a fresh sheet of fly-paper on the kitchen table. . . . . You might finish shelling these peas; give 'em to the minister's wife—I don't want to see 'em wasted. Your nightshirt's hanging on the peg in the front closet. I think that's all; screen-door, cottage cheese, the pip, fly-paper, peas, nightshirt. . . . . Oh, for supper, there's some cold biscuits under a cloth in the china cabinet, and some corned beef. You can get some tomatoes from the vines nearest the house—be sure to boil the water before you scald the skins. Don't open any of my tomato relish, either. The vinegar's in the new cruet. I think that's all. Can you remember all that? Heaven knows—"

"I'll try." His head shook a bit doubtfully.

"Good-by, old sport. Sorry you couldn't come too."

"Good-by, Cousin Oren."

"Good-by. Better be sure you've got enough gasoline," he warned with a weak smile. "I heard of a party—"

"Don't let that trouble you, Oren. Will Walter is a Burdsall; he can look out for himself." Effie's clipped tones restored her spouse to his place. "Good-by!"

A prolonged screech as the brakes were released, a humming and throbbing in the motor. The car trembled, shot off down the dusty road.

They were gone!

THEY were gone! Effie was gone! He was alone! Well!

With fingers lightly shaking, he pulled out his pipe and half-filled pouch, packed the bowl deftly, lit a match, ignited the tobacco. He sat down on the front steps, his mind a welter of confused remembrances of those perplexing directions. The hen with the pip, the sour milk, his nightshirt—as if he didn't know where it had hung for twenty years!

It wasn't comfortable on the steps, either. If only Effie would let him smoke in the kitchen. It was twenty years ago she had forbidden his ever smoking in the house.

Why, she was gone! There was nobody to make him smoke where he didn't want to, nobody in the world!

If she should find out!

He sat pondering, his eyes dilated, his heart thumping. He came to a decision. He rose to his angular height, crossed the porch, opened the door and stepped proudly over the sacrosanct threshold. He half hesitated. Then, suddenly swaggering his thin shoulders, he marched down the whole length of the hall and into the kitchen, where he chose the best chair. In deep satisfaction he pulled at the old brier. Out! He lit a match: a sudden intake of breath robbed it of life before the tobacco was even warmed. A second match—easy, easy! There! He leaned back in the chair, puffing negligent rings toward the scandalized ceiling.

A RING at the front door! He rose to his feet, spilling ashes over his trousers. He looked for a place to hide the telltale evidence. Pshaw! Wouldn't be Effie, anyway; probably nobody would tell her. Pipe happily clenched in his teeth, he went to the door.

"It's me, Mr. Willits," little Johnny Bedell gasped in excited importance. "I run all the way from the railroad crossing, I did. Miss' Willits, she said for me to tell you four things. Only really they're a lot more'n four. She said if Miss' Smith called for those biscuits for the church social, you should give her the panful on the top shelf in the pantry, an' wrap 'em in a clean second-best kitchen towel; an' that she was to stay in the kitchen, because she never wiped her shoes off."

"She said to tell me that?"

"She said that last to the big man in the car, she did, Mr. Willits, sir; I heard her. An' that wasn't all. She said you were to be careful not to dump your pipe-ashes on any dry leaves in the yard, or on the grass. An' to be sure to collect the eggs. An' to be sure to rub mutton tallow on your chest, just before going to bed. Biscuits, pipe-ashes, eggs, mutton tallow: that's four, aint it?"

"H'm—yes. Thank you very much, Johnny."

"You're welcome; Mr. Willits. She looked awful worried."

"She would," he grunted to himself. "I'll remember."

"So long."

He dragged back to the kitchen. The pipe didn't taste quite so well now. He knocked out the bowl against the sink, filled it again, and leaned back to let his fancies follow their own sweet ways.

My, but Effie was a remembering woman! For twenty years she had remembered to tell him exactly how everything had to be done. Why, they had hardly returned from the honeymoon trip to Niagara, before she had begun laying down the law—explaining just how he was to do everything. Yes, that was it: no smoking in the house. That was the very first. The Burdsalls were certainly managing. The first she had told him—and by gum, the first he'd broken. Twenty years!

It was during that first year when she began to take on about his shoes. Garden shoes first; they were to be taken off in the basement. You would think her floors were pie-crust! It was the next year when she had shut off the first room—the parlor. He wasn't to go in, under any circumstances—except twice a year, when she let him see it.

He had protested a little, the third year, when she told him he was not to enter the bedroom with any shoes on. They must be left in the hall. Of all the notions! Of course, if he had tracked in mud, or anything— Not any shoes! They had to be placed, side by side, against the door-guard on the floor. Once or twice a month, still, he heard about those shoes, and how they ought to be fixed.

It was the living-room next—no, the mustache; the living-room came after that. As bald as an egg, his face must be; she couldn't abide kissing a toothbrush, she complained, or seeing one across the sugar-bowl at mealtimes. Well, that had gone—and then the living-room, just as the parlor had gone. And then it was the rest of the clothes. They all had to be laid just so—vest draped over the back of the chair, coat over it, trousers neatly folded and slipped over a round of the back, socks hung on one of the lower rounds, the—er—other things folded and laid on the seat—and the whole dinged contraption moved out into the hall. It made the air close, she insisted. That took a long time to learn; he was always forgetting. She never forgot.

And then, five years ago, she had him build the lean-to off the kitchen, and move the range out there, while they ate off the kitchen table. Parlor, living-room, dining-room—all gone. And nobody ever used them. If she just had some people in, sometimes—but no, they could sit in the kitchen too. The worst of the

One last look around the transformed room. Freedom! Patrick Henry! William Tell throwing the apple at Gessler's head! He was his own man at last! Free! He blew out the candle, triumphant.

dratted thing was, that whenever the Hugginses or the Doerfflers bought new furniture, what must Effie do but up and buy new furniture too, even if the old had never been sat in, or even looked at. That mission set for the parlor, now, that she had replaced by the plush-covered set—why, he'd never even seen it, when she decided it was worn out! Of course, she had let him take one look at it, the day they moved it away.

He mustn't lean back in chairs, or rinse his mouth out with water at the kitchen sink, or push with a piece of bread, or take matches out of the kitchen box, or take his overalls upstairs, or hold his thumb under his fork. Gosh, what a lot of things to remember!

A grin slid over his face, as he remembered what had happened three weeks—no, a month come next Sunday. That was the night he had come up to the room, after walking through Gates' field back from the evening service.

"What a dreadful pair of trousers, Oren, to wear in this clean bedroom!"

He had thought a long time before he answered: "Effie, for twenty years I've tuck off my shoes before I entered this room. I'll be danged if I'll take off my britches!"

That had shut her up, for the first time he could remember! Well, it was time. Twenty years!

He knocked out the pipe, and shelled the peas. He took the peas to Mrs. Meecham's—the preacher's wife thanked him effusively for them—and caught the hen that had the nine chickens. He put her in the coop by the rosebush, and locked up the house. He latched the screen-door in the basement, and put the sour milk on the stove to warm. Pouring it in the cheese-bag, he tied it on the faucet, and discovered the sheets of fly-paper in the pantry. He put a fresh one on the kitchen table, unlatched the basement door, and went out after the eggs. He collected the eggs, and latched the door again. Tomatoes—ugh! He made out with corned beef, cold biscuits and some well-steeped tea. Maybe that Miss' Smith had called when he was over at Miss' Meecham's. It wasn't his lookout.

There! Everything done! That ought to satisfy her.

Now what was he to do? How did women find something to

do every minute? He went over the chores carefully. Nothing omitted. And now, the whole evening was his own—with no Effie! What could he do? Go down to the Dolan House, on the chance of picking up a game of checkers? No, she wouldn't like that. Some Canfield? Nobody could tell where in tarnation those cards were at. Read? The Bible—the mail-order catalogue, the Methodist *Herald*—"The Family Doctor." He'd read everything in 'em. He considered carefully, and lit another pipe. When he finished it, he decided to go to bed.

As he went up the stairs, those twenty years began to grow upon him. Why, people were born and died in that time! The country might have five different Presidents. . . . . Twenty years! Why, he'd never done a single thing as he wanted to! Everything just as she said. Everything! Tonight she was away—and he could do as he danged pleased! He'd—he'd show her! That's what he'd do. He'd—he'd— Why, he'd go to bed without putting on any mutton tallow!

No; he might get a pain in the chest. Wouldn't hurt her any. That wasn't it.

Thoughtfully he stopped in the hall at the door to the bedroom and started to untie his laces. Why—that was it! He'd go in the bedroom, shoes and all! Shoes! He straightened up, heart thumping excitedly. His eyes half closed, and then opened to stare around the hall. Somebody seemed to be watching him, from somewhere. No—he would! Grimly he set his teeth; grimly he lifted one foot and then another; grimly he stepped right into the room.

He had done it!

The door pulled to, he set the candle on the dresser. He'd show her! That wasn't all he'd do, not by a danged sight! He sat in the chair, meditating thoughtfully. The overpowered desires of twenty years flooded over him, twittered impishly at his ears, taunted and spurred him to further and further heights of daring. My, what couldn't he do! The room was his—for this night. He was free. By gosh, he'd be free!

WITH surprising agility he hopped out of the chair and plunged with the wind-whipped candle down the two flights to the basement. Ah—here they were! Rather the worse for heavy wear, not objects of beauty, anyhow, but they were his own, and he loved them. Carefully he picked up the loam-stained garden shoes, carried them up to the bedroom, and after carefully inspecting all possible buttresses for them, placed them on the mantel itself—two homely decorations, artistically flanking the gold clock, right under the oil painting of Aunt Elizabeth herself!

Well! A beginning!

He lit the pipe again—here in her bedroom! Scalping Indians could not have been more thrilling. His very heart sang; his lips responded:

"Sweet A-a-deline! My A-a-deline!
At night, dear heart—"

While the lax smoke coiled and curled around the yellow flicker from the candle, he untied the forbidden house shoes, and stuck them right on the two lower posts of the bed itself.

"—For you I pine.
Hmm—hmm—my dreams, your fair face—"

He stood off, admiring them—symbols of liberty! To him those two flaunted shoes were liberty-caps on lifted poles—the heads of the enemies of the Lord, piked in grisly fashion upon defiant battlements. . . . .

His coat! He stood on a chair, to drape it around the top of the dresser mirror. His vest swung across the tops of the two half-opened doors of the wardrobe. Trousers. He considered several locations: the washstand—the headposts of the bed—a chair.

At the two ends of the mantel stood two precious cloisonné vases that Cousin Will Walter Burdsall had presented to his wife, after a misguided slumming trip to Chinatown, New York. The two garden shoes were posed beside the vases, and the trousers were scarfed around the gold clock in the center of the mantel, a reckless, devil-may-care leg swinging jauntily down each side. The underthings sprawled in inebriated fashion across two chairs. There! He rubbed on the mutton tallow, slipped the nightshirt off its peg and over his head, and prepared to blow out the candle.

Then the final thought. His face seamed with exultant satisfaction, he undid the lavender suspenders hidden behind the clock. He hung them, a lavender halo, across the top of the gilt frame surrounding the oil painting of Aunt Elizabeth.

One last look around the transformed room. Freedom! Patrick Henry! "Make way for liberty!" William Tell throwing the apple at Gessler's head! Half-forgotten memories of school-days. He was his own man at last. Free!

He puffed his lips to the largest possible half-sphere, and blew out the candle with a stern, triumphant puff.

AS he lay on his back, one by one the epochal events of the last few hours floated before him: Effie's departure—the pipe in the kitchen—shoes in the bedroom—the transmogrification of the sedate conjugal boudoir into this temple of personal liberty. What a day!

One by one his titillated mind recalled the location of each garment. If Effie could catch one glimpse of them—of any one of them! Why, she'd positively throw a duck-fit! Those garden shoes—the trousers—the suspenders! Over and over he chortled at each defiant location.

Well, he could sleep now.

He tried to compose his mind—but no sooner did he order himself to think vacancy, and step across the drowsy threshold of slumber, than one or another of the misplaced garments would laugh back into his attention—at first with a friendly chuckle, at last with more sardonic levity. It was at him they seemed to be laughing, now.

What if he should die during the night? Effie would come the next day, and see the things. She might think he had lost his mind. What if a burglar were to come in—he was alone in the house, for the first time in twenty years—and shoot him? Then she would find the dead body, the desecrated bedroom. She might think the burglar had done it.

Nonsense! Nothing was going to happen.

Still—a burglar! His strained attention began to pick out mysterious sounds from end to end of the house—creaking of front shutters—stretching of a wicker chair in the kitchen—a peculiar thumping sound, hollow, alarming, from the basement!

Had he latched that door? Once, yes, but—the second time! Why, a burglar could walk right in, and murder him, before he could say Jack Robinson!

Had he latched that door?

He reached for a match, struck it, lit the candle, started bravely out into the flickering shadows of the hall. At the door he paused, as his eyes caught a side glimpse of the garden shoes. Might as well take them down, while he was going anyway. He had put them where he wanted; tomorrow he might forget to remove them—and, when Effie returned! Might as well.

The two garden shoes and the candle preceded his alarmed face into the oscillating dusk of the basement. All clear—the door latched! He left the shoes in their accustomed places, and regained the haven of the bedroom—the sadly disturbed haven.

He sat on the edge of the bed, regarding the room with less favor. Those trousers. They'd have no crease whatever by morning. Mechanically he folded them with the accustomed exactitude, and placed them in the accustomed chair. The underthings, properly smoothed, followed. He took down the shoes from the bedposts and stood them by the side of the bed, where they would be handy. Vest, coat followed; shirt, collar, socks, took their proper places. The gayly flaunted suspenders fluttered down from their aërial perch above Aunt Elizabeth's disapproving frown, until the chair looked the same as the other three hundred and sixty-four nights of the year.

He had half gotten under the covers, when he discovered that the room was a little close. Might just as well put that chair out into the hall, while he was about it. This was finished in brief order. Now for his snooze!

He made for the bed; his sensitive toes suddenly collided with something.

"Ouch! By gattie—"

Here on the floor—right by the bed—what was this? Oh, those shoes again! Things lying around everywhere.

Leaving the candle on the table, he flounced to the door, nightshirt swishing around bare legs, and slung the offending footgear beyond the loaded chair. Let them stay in the hall, then!

A bit eased, he returned to the head of the bed. He lifted the light for one careful scrutiny of the room. Everything in its place. Effie herself could not have done better! Now he could go to sleep. Now he could go. . . . . Now he could. . . . . Now. . . . .

IN the strange tomorrow-land of dreams, Oren Willits felt that he had been tried and condemned for his blasphemous violation of the thou-shalt-not's of the last twenty years, and that sentence was about to be executed. *(Continued on page 108)*

Illustrated by R. L. Lambdin

"The Earthquake," "White Magic," "The Abiding City" and many other unusual stories have made the name of M. L. C. Pickthall famous. This also is a tale wholly different and deeply impressive.

Freedom

By

M. L. C. PICKTHALL

"Why did he come here?" he whispered. "Why did he come ashore, curse him?"

THE ledge was a narrow one, adrift with albatross feathers and cushioned a foot thick with ferns. Under it the mist fell away three hundred feet, full of the sound of the waves and of the bull seals bellowing on the heels of the storm. There was another sound too. Lewen had been lying on the ledge a long while, listening to that faint, hoarse crying. Every time he heard it, he trembled, and the ferns shook on him a rain of moisture fine as dew.

He crushed his chin against the rock in the effort to keep his mouth shut. But he couldn't. One word idiotically repeated ran through his teeth in an irresistible flood. "A man," he babbled, "—a man, man, man, man, man—"

His stringy body writhed on the rock; he bit his own fingers. There seemed left to him no more of a man's attributes than passions and bones. Finally, in a gust of terror, he rose and fled inland, crouching.

He jerked and twitched as he ran. But his naked feet bore him steadily over rock and peat-swamp and tussock-meadow till the top of the windswept rata-forest rose before him, dark and solid as a roof, a harbor of safety to his fear.

It was almost dark in the rata-forest. The roof of leaves was everywhere within reach; for so heavy was the wind's hand on them that the trees grew along the ground, lifting vertical branches. It was sodden everywhere with wet, from which mosses and liverworts sucked life. He ran on. His passage left no trace in the spongy soil.

The forest, slanting again to the sea, told him when he had crossed the island. He followed the reeking tunnel of a seal-path till he came to the seaward edge again. Here, in an open space, green-gray and very still, grown with tall purple flowers, he had his lair—a hut of driftwood cunningly built under the last low edge of the rata so that it was invisible alike from shore and sea.

He was whimpering and swaying on his gaunt legs, but he did not stop at the hut. He staggered to the beach beneath it, dropped on all fours above a pool, and stared at what that gray mirror returned to him. He questioned avidly every feature: the broad face weatherworn out of the very likeness of flesh, the shock of rust-red hair, the noticeable dark eyes, the scar on the cheek. Henderson's scar! He sobbed once. His lips moved. "God help me!" he whispered. "I daren't. I daren't! Even now, there aint a soul from Wyndham to Melbourne wouldn't know me!"

Trembling ceaselessly, he crawled into the hut and lay down, his hands over his ears. "If only he wouldn't *call*," he muttered, "—if only he wouldn't call!" Presently he slept, but woke screaming from the usual dream. "Not that!" he cried, clawing at his throat. "Not that! They aint goin' to serve me like they served the chap at Broome! First an' last, I'll keep my freedom, if nothin' more! Freedom! Keep away, curse you!" He slept again, moaning, on his heap of dried moss.

But with the moon-dawn he was awake and running over the island. He ran blindly. Sea-birds struck at him with their fierce beaks as he passed their nests in the tussock; bogs sucked at his feet; knived grasses cut them. He stopped for nothing in his fury of haste. His face, if one could have seen it, was a battleground of longing and fear. But he had made, and wore, a mask of dried

Lewen said aloud clearly: "It can't be done. I'd be known." His great hands twitched as he suppressed the instinct to run out and help the little man.

birdskins. Through the delicate stuff his features showed pale and blurred.

That hoarse and feeble crying had fallen silent long before he came to the other beach; but the man's body still lay on the edge of the tussock where he had crawled from the sea. Shaking, Lewen bent over him. He handled him reluctantly; but there was hunger in his hands. At last he lifted his masked face to the masked sky.

"Why did he come here?" he whispered. "Why did he come ashore *here,* curse him? I tell you—they sha'n't take it away. Not my—freedom! And—he's alive yet, thank God."

He gathered the body into his great bony arms; adjusting his burden, he crept away with it into the gray and silver night.

WHEN Pelliot opened his eyes, he was lying in the hut under the edge of the rata; he was feeble, in pain and helpless. He saw that his leg was bound between splints of wood padded with moss and down. The hut's opening framed a dawn yellow as wattle-flower in a rift of the eternal cloud, a vast empty sea, and a spiral of sea-birds that fought and clamored above the beach.

The desolation took Pelliot suddenly. He cried out hysterically. His call was heard. Out of the heart of the bird-cloud, a figure broke, and came running to the hut.

Lewen stooped and entered, and sound died on Pelliot's lips as he faced that gray body, worn as if by the wash of tides, and the blank glimmer of the birdskin mask.

"God!" was jerked from him at last. "Where am I, and—what are you?"

"You're on the Lode, mate."

"But—there's no man on the Lode—if you're a man!"

"I'm a man, matey; and I'm on the Lode."

Pelliot's gaze wandered; he was very weak. "You saved my life, then," he murmured. "You heard me call."

"Aye, I heard you."

Silence, filled only by the ceaseless going of the wind in the rata-forest. Pelliot snuggled into the moss. "Oh, the sea," he said, "the damn tremenjous sea!" He fell asleep.

He slept all day. Rain pierced the ill-built hut, and all day Lewen sat sheltering him from the wet with his own great body. He sat very still, drugged with content to be once more within sight and touch of another man.

Pelliot woke again toward night. Lewen fed him with eggs. He did not seem to know he had slept. He said: "My leg's broke."

"Aye."

"When I called,—there in the mist and the sea,—I never thought there was a livin' soul to hear."

"I heard. . . . . Your ship gone?"

"Don't know. A yacht, she was, the *Clair-de-Lune.* Steward, I was. It—seems a long while ago. I was washed off. The life-line broke when I was carryin' grog to Batcheller. He'd had enough already. He was tryin' to push her past the Lode in the teeth of a sou'easter."

"Not many tries."

"I believe you." His eyes, bright as a bird's, rested on Lewen with a certain dread. He was a small man, with a weak, cheery face. He said nervously: "You been here a long time?"

"Pretty long."

"You swim ashore like me?"

After a silence, Lewen said heavily: "I come in a boat."

The little steward wriggled out of the moss. Lewen had taken his wet clothes, and he shone in the dusk with all a red-haired man's whiteness of skin, covered all over with a sandy fluff that made him look more birdlike than ever. Hope blazed in him readily. "Boat? You come in a boat? Why in thunder didn't you go away in it, then? Where is it?"

"That hut's built of it."

Pelliot shrank back into the moss; bewildered, the hope died out of him in a moment. He was once more weak, small, ill. He tried to speak, and failed. Then he said fretfully, "*Take* that thing off your face," and once more slid into unconsciousness.

Lewen looked down at him. "I got nothin' to fear from *him*," he said, with the air of a man trying passionately to reassure himself. "I got nothin' to fear."

The next time Pelliot woke, he was stronger. He had recovered memory; his identity burned with a clearer flame. Easily, as a weak man will, he had accepted the situation. He was grateful to Lewen, full of plans for their escape from the Lode. An innocent, garrulous little man—Lewen indeed had nothing to fear from him, and his desperate heart warmed to him.

"What do you find to eat here?" he questioned, picking birdlike at his breakfast of fish.

"Eggs, fish, young birds; there's a sort o' bulb in the meadows, and a seaweed good to eat, and a seal now and then."

"I keep it hid because I choose to. I stay on the Lode because I choose to. I broke up the boat for fear sometime I'd—be called to go away—to go away—from the only place where I can *live*."

Pelliot shut his eyes again—opened them with a jerk to Lewen's next words.

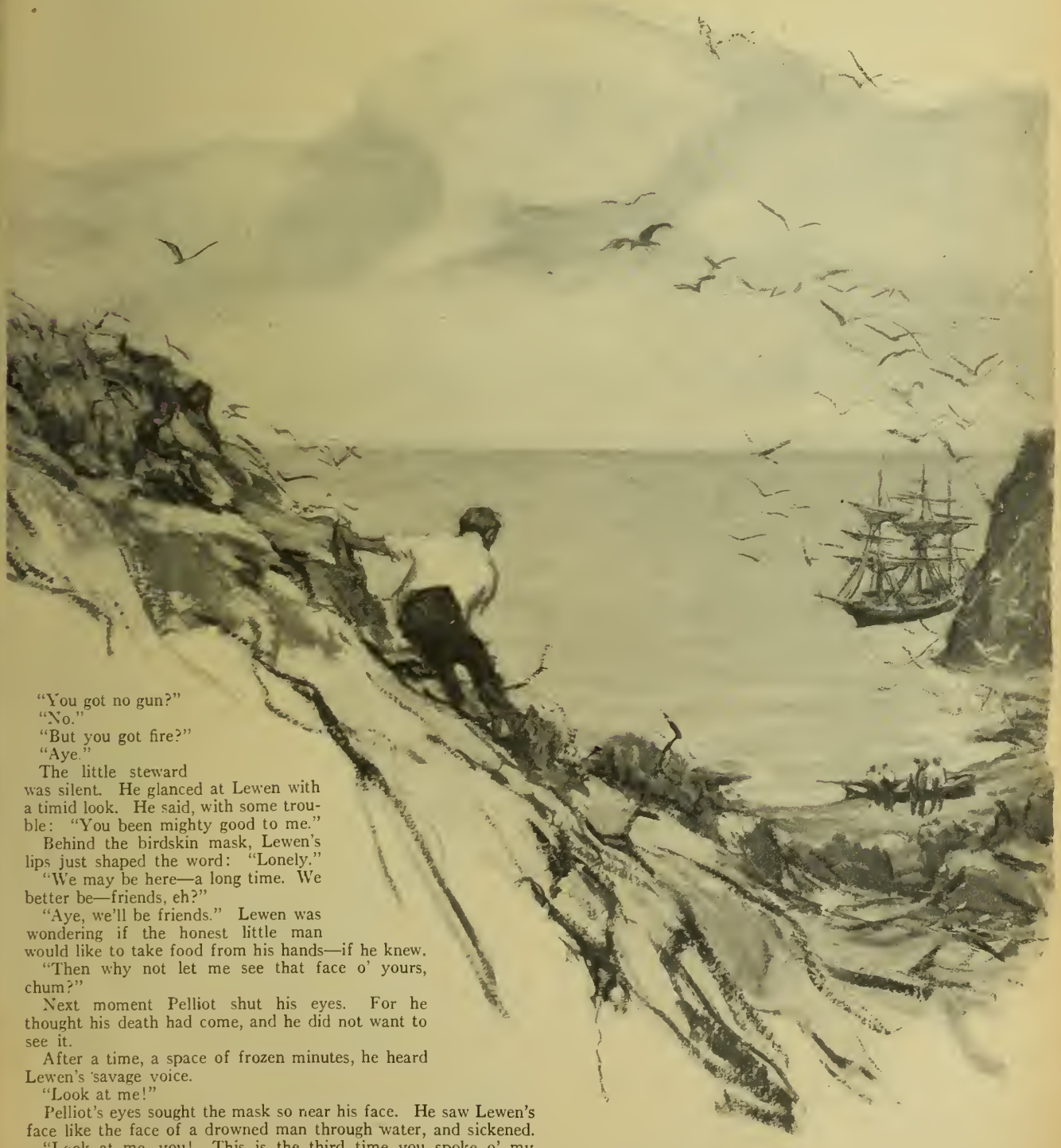
"You believe in God A'mighty?"

The little steward searched within his mind, found some unknown strength there, and answered: "Yes, I do."

"Then you'll swear to me, here and now."

"What'll I swear?"

"That never, so help you, when you come to be took off the Lode—as took you will be, for the whalers call here three or four



"You got no gun?"

"No."

"But you got fire?"

"Aye."

The little steward was silent. He glanced at Lewen with a timid look. He said, with some trouble: "You been mighty good to me."

Behind the birdskin mask, Lewen's lips just shaped the word: "Lonely."

"We may be here—a long time. We better be—friends, eh?"

"Aye, we'll be friends." Lewen was wondering if the honest little man would like to take food from his hands—if he knew.

"Then why not let me see that face o' yours, chum?"

Next moment Pelliot shut his eyes. For he thought his death had come, and he did not want to see it.

After a time, a space of frozen minutes, he heard Lewen's savage voice.

"Look at me!"

Pelliot's eyes sought the mask so near his face. He saw Lewen's face like the face of a drowned man through water, and sickened.

"Look at me, you! This is the third time you spoke o' my face!"

"No offense, chum. I—"

times a year—that never will you let a livin' soul know there was another man here with you!"

He gave him the oath, a dreadful one enough, framed by wild men for wild deeds. Pelliot took it; at the end, he looked up with his odd birdlike boldness. "I'd 'a' done what you asked me without swears," he said mildly. But Lewen was gone.

Gone, drifting about the island that was his world, blown like a wisp of weed between the gray sea and the dripping rata-forest. He had no count of time. He stayed on the hills till his passion was worn out. When he returned to the hut, he found that the steward, thinking himself deserted, had crawled as far as the beach and there fallen in a faint. Lewen carried him back. Recovering, the little man clung to him like a child.

"I thought you'd gone for good an' left me, chum!"

"No. . . . . It's you that'll be took, and me that'll be left."

"What'll take me?"

"A ship. I—hide when they come."

Pelliot looked at him curiously. "How'd you know I'd keep my oath?"

Lewen began to tremble. "I'd kill you if I thought you wouldn't. I a'most left you to die as it was. Hours I left you on the beach there after I heard you call."

"If you're so afraid o' me, why did you save me?"

"Lonely," said Lewen vaguely, "lonely." He was spent. Unconsciously his hand sought Pelliot's. They crouched together for hours, in a deep dream of the wind and the rain and the sea.

PELLIOT began to mend, from that time. He began to share Lewen's extraordinary life, if life that savage existence could be called. Soon he filled it. With his cheap and friendly chatter, his adaptability, his shallow optimism, he fed that starved spirit as any common food would have fed the gaunt body. Lewen began dimly to feel himself not utterly cast out, since he was allowed both freedom and a friend. But the friend would go.

All day long from the shelter of the hut Pelliot strained eyes and soul to the sea-line, where at any hour might show the saving stain of smoke. Lewen watched as ceaselessly. Sometimes distrust tormented him. Pelliot would tell; he would have to tell; he would be sure to tell. At such times he saw no safety for himself while Pelliot lived. And his fear would seize him and drive him forth, like the demoniac of old, into waste places. He endured agonies, crouched in the dark rata-forest above the foul seal-paths, planning the little man's death. He would go away to the other side of the island and leave Pelliot alone. He would creep up on him in the dark. . . . . Then he would be safe again. Safe, but—lonely. Yes, he would keep his freedom. Freedom was his religion: of its bitter wine his soul made its one sacrament. For it he had given absolutely everything, and if necessary, would give Pelliot. Then he would drag himself back to the hut and listen greedily while that cheery soul chattered hopefully of the world, the world beyond those desolate seas that made and kept him free. Lewen tried to picture the hut without Pelliot. His mind fell away from that blank as the birds fell away from the cliffs in a gale. He could not foresee or imagine what would happen when a ship came.

Once and once only the wind blew away the pall of cloud that is drawn over the subantarctic skies, revealing a night divinely clear, lighted with the southern stars.

And that night Lewen saw the first ship.

He was standing on the hilltop—so stamped with the desolation of the place around him that he seemed curiously invisible. And he saw the ship in a moment, complete and near; by some trick of mist and shadow, it was as if she had risen on a sudden from the sea. An old sailing ship, beautiful under the stars!

She had stood in too close in the dark. She was working out from the very shadow of the cliffs, drawing slowly against the tide. He could have flung a stone on her deck, he thought.

Any sound she made was lost in the sound of the swell on the beaches. But once a dog barked on board her. Lewen flung himself face-down in the tussock at the homely sound, as if it had been a shot.

She was gone when he lifted his head. Next morning the tide brought ashore a half-peeled potato. He buried it in a ridge of shingle for fear he would have to show it to Pelliot. But the tide washed it out and flung it ashore again; he buried the trivial thing four times before it rotted away.

The next ship came by day.

Lewen was sitting at the doorway of the hut, plaiting a net from dry grass, a net to gather eggs in. The little steward was drowsing behind him. She came, that nameless grimy tramp of the far South, wallowing out of a rain-squall; she had the same effect on Lewen, in the midst of that solitude, as a great blaze of color and light, a burst of sound. His senses reeled before that squat steamer doggedly furrowing the vast gray swells. He dropped his hands on his knees. His mouth opened. All his life ran into one channel—sight!

Then she whistled—once. She too was close in; and there had been castaways on the Lode before Lewen.

The sound cut through his very heart. He had no breath for a moment when Pelliot woke, crying suddenly out of sleep: "What's that?"

"A mollymawk."

Lewen was some time realizing that he had spoken. Pelliot sank back in the moss with a little querulous sound. "I must 'a' been dreaming," he said. "I thought I was goin' to Kew on a penny steamer with my girl. I got a girl in Shepherd's Bush," he confided wistfully to Lewen's back.

Lewen remained motionless. He was watching—watching—watching the tramp grow dim in the far rain, her wake die out, even the grimy trail of smoke lose itself in the mist. He thought a faint smell of the smoke was brought to him on the wind. She too had been close—close enough to signal. And Pelliot knew nothing.

He pulled himself erect by the side of the crazy doorway. He wondered dully to find himself shaking like grass in the wind, and clammy with sweat. He went away softly, and sat on the beach, trying to order his clumsy thoughts. Vague phrases came to him in the turmoil, and he caught at them desperately.

"If he's to go," was his slow conclusion, "*he'll* see the ship, not me. If he sees the ship, I'll take it for a sign—a sign he's to go. I can't do fairer nor that, can I?" he demanded of the free wind. "If he sees the ship, he can go. So help me, I wont hinder him." Then suddenly he bent his savage masked face to his bony knees and wept.

Pelliot saw the third ship.

It was Lewen who slept, twitching like a dog, on the moss-heap—Pelliot who crawled to him, trailing his bound leg, and shook him in a breathless silence. Lewen woke and said: "What is it?"

The steward mouthed at him. It was horrible. No sound came from his twisting lips. Lewen could see the thud of his heart jerking under his shirt.

"*What* is it, matey?" But he knew.

Still dumb, Pelliot dragged at him, doglike. Lewen rose, went to the doorway, and looked. He stayed there, very still.

A whaler was anchored under the lee of the penguin-rocks. On the beach beneath the cliffs and the rata-forest, a cutter was just grounding; as he watched, a man sprang out of her into the surf, and the oars flashed silver-bright against the pallid dawn.

His only thought was, that now it had come.

Behind him, Pelliot found speech with a shriek. He screamed like a girl. He dragged himself along the ground to Lewen, caught him about the knees, pounded him with his fists. "Oh, my Lord," he cried, "don't you see? It's a ship! It's men!" He sobbed. "It's life, life! Come on, come on! They may go, they may put off again! Oh, chum, for the sake o' pity, help me down quick!"

Lewen stood like a tree, silent. And that silence was a hand laid on the little steward to make him still. His struggling fists dropped. His jaw dropped. He glared up at Lewen with blank eyes. A fleck of froth showed at his lips. "You," he choked, "you —aint comin'?"

LEWEN flung up his arms and stood so for a minute, as a man stands who has been killed on his feet by a bullet. Then he turned, slowly as if it hurt him, and drew off the birdskin mask. For the first time Pelliot saw the face of the man who had saved him.

But was it the first time? It held a strange familiarity.

"Look at me, mate." Lewen spoke very gently. "Maybe you've seen my picture in the papers. Aye, there's not a man from Wyndham to Melbourne wouldn't know me. I'm Mark Lewen. I'm the man that killed Henderson at Cossack."

After some minutes Pelliot moved, sighed weakly. "That—"

"That brute? Aye, that's me. And I can't leave the Lode. I aint safe if a human bein' sees me. I aint safe if I leave the Lode. For then they'll take me and hang me. I'm only free—here."

The little steward looked vaguely at the sea. "How did you get here?"

"I'd shipped on board a whaler—just such another. Two days out, a man looked at me, and drew away as if I was a leper. 'Take your hands out o' my dish, *(Continued on page 104)*

This remarkable novel by the distinguished author of "Heredity" and "The Croupier" has attracted widespread attention. You will find the dénouement, in this installment, dramatic in the extreme.

Illustrated by Gayle Hoskins

The Sand Pile

By

MARY SYNON

The Story So Far:

TOM MERCER had killed Jere Connors, who had defrauded him out of the home he had saved so long to buy—the house which was to have sheltered his wife Winnie and their little son Buddy. And now as a result Mercer found himself in the penitentiary—worse, in a prison ruled by Jim Torrens, the man from whom he had won his wife Winnie. What chance with the Pardon Board could he hope for now, with this man who hated him, master of his destiny?

Working one day with an old convict named Philo on the building of a new prison wall, Mercer saw his boy Buddy playing on a sand pile without, and so knew that Winnie had come to live in the penitentiary town in order to be near him. For some days Mercer was able to talk with the child from the wall, to play with him, even, for old Philo loaned him a curious pitiful ladder he had made from thousands of bits of string collected during his thirty years in prison—and kept watch for the guard while Mercer stole a few moments with the boy. He learned that Winnie had found work as stenographer in the steel mills near by.

The possibility of escape tempted Mercer and Philo more and more. Buddy's birthday was coming, and Mercer recklessly promised to come to his birthday party. Philo brought out a box he had made of shells as a gift for the child.

On the night of Buddy's birthday, in a rising storm, the two convicts escaped from their cells, and gained the top of the wall. There they were discovered and Philo was shot, but Mercer made good his escape to the little house where Winnie and Buddy lived. While Winnie sought to persuade him to go back and give himself up, Torrens appeared.

Although the Warden refused to take advantage of his gun, he bested Mercer in the fight which ensued when the convict refused to submit, and then took him back to prison.

In the long months that followed, Mercer came to a realization of his position and of his responsibility to his wife and child. Finally Torrens made him foreman of an honor road-camp. And then came his great temptation: he could escape now, unhindered, and by so doing he would discredit Torrens; but he would also take away the chance of better things for his fellow-convicts. Which way would he choose? *(The story continues in detail:)*

SOMEWHERE on the road of every life there rises a Hill of Vision. From its summit men see the way they have come and the way they will go. Sometimes it is a Pisgah height which looks down on the land of promise. Other times it is the slope of a Gethsemane. Always it is the place of the signboard of Destiny. Not always do men know it for what it is, but to some is the knowledge given. Tom Mercer, peering out on the highroad, knew, as he had known in no other hour, that he had come to the crisis of his existence. Back of him lay an injustice he could not define, an imprisonment he could not accept as righteous punishment for his crime. Before him lay the choice. Should he bring down the temple of hope wherein a thousand men—perhaps countless thousands of men—worshiped, in order to wreak his own vengeance and win his own liberty, or should he stay in bondage to give them the chance at whatever this new order portended?

Suddenly, as if he had known from the beginning what it was to be, he made decision. Torrens had given him a trust; and not for Torrens, not even for Winnie, but for men like himself, he was going to keep it! He turned back from the road to the tents and tried to slip into his own without awakening the man who shared it. The bank-wrecker lifted his head, however, as Mercer crept in. "Star-gazing?" he asked.

"No," said Mercer.

"Some one trying to get away?"

"I was."

"Thought better of it?"

"If that's what you call it."

"I do," the other man said. "There's no use trying to beat the game, Number Seventeen Hundred and Twenty-eight! The cards were stacked against us from the beginning. But when you don't know that, it's a white thing to stay. Good night." He turned over and went to sleep, leaving Mercer to wonder how much of agony his cynicism covered. They did not speak again, however, of anything but the work over which they held the reins.

Torrens came up to the camp once a week, sometimes bringing with him newspaper men sent to report the progress of the experiment. Some of them were openly doubtful of its permanent success. Others were as openly enthusiastic of its outcome.

"It's all up to Mercer there," he heard Torrens say to one visitor.

"Too heavy a load for one man's shoulders," the man mused, and Mercer ached to tell him that he had already lifted it over the worst place on the road.

Through all his visits, the Warden sedulously avoided speech with Mercer; and as the summer wore on, the convict began to dread what the silence portended. The hidden fact of his overcoming temptation strengthened the bond whose links Torrens had been forging with his trust; and it was not now with suspicion of him, but, rather, with fear that some power beyond Torrens threatened, that he looked out upon the world.

Winnie's letters, brave and blithe as ever, and coming whenever the rules permitted, failed to lessen his worry. He felt, though, that he should fall from his resolves unless he saw her; and to that end, he broke down his barrier against her as soon as the summer had ended and the autumn storms brought the closing of the road-camp. The knowledge of the long winter before him appalled him until he knew that he needed his wife's courage for the strengthening of his spirit.

He brought up the question of her visit when he made his report to Torrens. The Warden studied the calendar without looking up at Mercer. "The Pardon Board meets on the seventeenth," he told him. "The next visiting-day falls on the nineteenth. I can't make any exception to the rules to let anyone come earlier, so you'll have to take your chance of getting in a word when your case comes up before the Board."

"Then it's coming?" Mercer choked.

"It's posted," Torrens told him. He looked up with the same cool stare of assured authority which he always gave the other man. For all his shifted feeling toward the Warden, Mercer winced before it now.

"Got a lawyer?" Torrens asked him.

"It wont matter much, will it?"

"Just as you like," Torrens observed.

He had gone to the Warden with the feeling of his omnipotence in prison affairs, but there had been something in the tone of the queries which had made him wonder for the first time if Torrens would have final power. The Pardon Board was both the fear and the hope of every convict. Those men who sat in judgment upon the verdicts of judges and juries held, under the law, the fate of every man in the prison in their cool hands. It was to them that the forger and the bank-wrecker, ignoring Torrens, looked for freedom; but they held cards of power which no political organization could afford to overlook. Every other man in the place must needs have Torrens' help, whether or not the Board would discount his advocacy. What reason had he, Mercer asked himself, to dare solicit aid from the Warden?

"You don't mean," he asked, "that you consider a man's laughter justification for murder?" "Yes," she said bravely, "I do."

To be sure, Torrens had given him a fair show since the night he had brought him back to prison. He had put him in school; he had intrusted to him supervision of the road-camp job. He must know that he had not failed him. But after all, why should Torrens go out of his way to win freedom for the man who had married Winnie Kenly? It all went back to that. Playing fair did not require of any man that he go outside the game to help a man who had hated him, a man who had once tried to kill him. No, Torrens would put no stone in his path, but neither had he any

reason for removing one, even if he could. Mercer finally fell back on the knowledge that his chance depended upon Winnie, and he wrote her in his uneven script, telling her of the Board meeting. Then, with hope uplifting his sagging spirits, he counted the days to the session with the same eagerness with which Buddy had counted the days to his birthday.

With the inevitable superstition of the man in prison, he went to Stony Lonely on the day before the Board meeting. He told himself that he believed a visit to old Philo's grave would bring him luck! But he was, in truth, merely seeking to put into adequate words the terrible need he felt for friendly sympathy. He knew that the morrow would bring him weal or woe; but the chances, he surmised too well, stood ten to one for the woe. He yearned for some one in whom he could confide his fears and his tiny hope; but there was no one but the old man, dead now more than a twelvemonth, to whom he could ever have turned thus; and all he could do now was to stare at Philo's grave. "You're out of it all," was his thought, almost in envy.

Through the night he prayed and cursed in snatches, but the morning of the fateful day found him strangely calm. He went through the ordinary routine without apparent agitation, and answered the summons to the Warden's office with less of trembling than at any time since he had been brought to prison. In the entrance-hall, however, he saw a group of the men from Peachtree Valley who had come, he realized, to plead his cause; and the sight of them was almost too much for his self-control. He slipped beyond them to the outer office, that they might not see the tears in his eyes, feeling as he did, somehow curiously unworthy of their friendship.

At the door Winnie arose to face him. Before he could speak to her, a child's joyous cry rang out in the gloomy room, and regardless of rule, Buddy flung himself into his father's arms.

"I had to bring him," Winnie said. "He told me he'd die if he didn't see you—and I believe he would."

Pathetically the child clung to his father. "Aren't you ever coming home to us?" he pleaded. "We want you so; don't we, Mummy? Aren't they going to let you come?"

"I hope so," he said, but as he looked around the room crowded with convicts also hoping for release, he felt the impossibility of its consummation for him. Too well he knew the prison stories of how pardons and paroles were too often won. Political influence turned the key to the outside world, and the handful of men, hard-working miners from Peachtree, had never owned the key. Torrens had always held the Valley in his strong hands for political usage, and even his departure had not broken his hold. It all came back to Torrens, and Torrens was against him.

"Will it be long till they come to us?" Winnie asked him.

"I almost hope it will be," he said, cuddling Buddy close.

She caught the significance of his answer. "But they'll grant it, Tom," she said, trying to smile into his eyes.

"I don't even hope for it," he told her.

"But if the boys—"

"It was good of them to come, but they don't hold aces."

"But when they tell all they know?"

"The Pardon Board's worse than any jury." He shifted Buddy to the other side, that he might talk the better to her. "Winnie," he said, "if they don't let me off today, I want you to stop trying. It's no use. And I want you to stop coming to see me."

"Why?" Her face blanched.

"Because"—he choked over the words—"I don't want to see you any more."

She gave to him that straight, honest look of search that penetrated into the very crannies of his soul. "Tom Mercer," she said, "you're the poorest liar I ever knew. When you can make your eyes say what your mouth says, I'll be willing to believe you, not before. And I'll tell you this: If *this* Board doesn't grant you a parole, I'm going to sit at the doorstep of every man on it until he gets so tired of seeing me that he'll say: 'Take your man, and get out!' And if that doesn't happen, I'm going to governors and legislatures and politicians until some one works the miracle. I'll write letters to newspapers, and lobby in street-cars. There isn't anything but one thing I wouldn't do to bring you out."

"What's that?" he asked, touched more than he dared show by her flare of determination.

"Quit you," she said, clicking her teeth in finality of decision.

"But Winnie—" he began.

"They're calling you," she said. Swiftly they both arose and crossed the crowded room, each holding one of Buddy's hands. At the door of Torrens' office the bank-wrecker, promoted to a prison clerkship, halted them. "I don't believe you can bring the little boy in," he said; but Torrens, from the end of the big table, murmured something to him, and he let them pass. After them filed in the men from the mine, as solemnly self-conscious as if it all were a funeral. Torrens motioned them, with recognition, to seats near the window beyond Winnie and Buddy, and nodded to Mercer to take a chair at the side of the table.

AT its head, grouped in the dignity of sitting judges, three men lifted their eyes and stared at him. Although he had never seen one of them before, Mercer felt that he would have known them anywhere as the members of the all-powerful Pardon Board, so detached, so dominant they appeared. One of them, evidently the chairman, put on bone-rimmed spectacles which gave him a curiously old-fashioned aspect as he spoke. "You are Thomas Mercer?" he inquired.

"Yes."

"Convicted of the murder of Jere Connors and sentenced to fourteen years in this prison?"

"Yes."

"And you petition through your next of kin, Winifred Mercer, for the reconsideration of this sentence by this Board?"

"Yes."

"Is there any objection from the kin of Jere Connors?" the spectacled man asked the bank-wrecker, who waited, his hands full of legal documents. Mercer caught his breath. He had forgotten the formality which called on the family of the murdered man to resist pardon or parole. What if they should, those distant and estranged cousins of Connors? Would it stop the proceedings right here? The clerk fumbled through the papers. "None," he said at last.

AT this, the man with the spectacles hunched down in his chair. One of the others lighted a cigar, puffing at it ruminatively. The third stared out of the window, apparently oblivious to the proceedings. "You killed Connors?" the inquisitor asked.

"Yes."

He ran through a pile of papers which the clerk put in front of him. "The testimony shows," he sketched as he turned the pages, "that this man Connors drove past your house one morning and that, without provocation, you shot and killed him. Was that how it happened?"

"Something like that, but—"

"Had he a revolver?"

"No."

"Did he attack you?"

"No, but—" Why did they have to go over again all that the trial had shown? It had been questions and answers like these which had convicted him.

"Had he ever threatened to kill you?"

"No."

"Then it was cold-blooded murder?"

"No," he said, "it wasn't exactly that. Connors had cheated me out of my home. I lost my mind, I guess, when I saw what it meant, and I killed him."

"But you knew that it was murder?"

"I suppose so."

The second member of the Board pulled on his cigar, and the third yawned in his window-gazing, but the chairman held to his task with a determination which bespoke his intention to slight no detail of his duty. "Are you in good health?" he asked.

"Why, yes," Mercer told him in surprise at the apparent irrelevance of the question.

"Have you anything more to say?"

"No." The suddenness of the ending of the examination struck him between the eyes. How could any man judge from this bald information the right or the wrong of a man's punishment?

Dismissed from the table, he stumbled back toward a place near the wall in blinded humiliation, burningly conscious that he had, in his stupid but straightforward answers, utterly failed to approximate the underlying truth, even though he had stated the surface facts. His hopes rose, however, as one by one his fellow-workmen from Peachtree took a place at the table and told in the slow, deliberate fashion of folk not given to wordiness, the story of Tom Mercer's revenge on the dead man. Listening to them, Mercer thought his cause won, so direct and vivid ran their testimony. They had known Jere Connors, known that he had cheated Mercer as he had a hundred other hard-working men, and by their code, they believed Mercer justified. That they failed to explain the code or the process of thought by which they made Mercer's deed conform to it, Mercer did not realize, but when he saw the unmoved faces of the three men at the head of the table, he knew that they had made no more impression on the Board than he had. Then he heard Winnie's name called, in a vivid understanding that upon her depended his chance of parole.

SHE took the place at the foot of the table which Torrens arose to give her, and leaned forward, clasping her hands before her and looking at the three men. Buddy, slipping away, came to Mercer and stood beside him, clutching his father's hand. Mercer answered its nervous pressure as Winnie began her story.

"Will you let me tell it my own way?" she asked, and the spectacled man nodded while the window-gazer gave to her a sudden flicker of interest.

Slowly, but with an intensity which drove on her words, she began the story. She began with the telling of their desire for a home. Briefly she sketched the picture of the struggle which they made toward the attainment of their dream, seeming to know that beneath its commonplaceness burned the divine fire of human aspiration. "You all know what it is to want a home of your own," she said simply, and the man with the long cigar nodded assent. One after another she set down the count of their sacrifices.

"Tom didn't have a new suit for three years," she said. "And we haven't seen a movie since the first year we were married. But that didn't matter at all," she hurried to declare, "because we knew we were getting nearer to the one thing in all the world—beside Buddy and each other—we *did* want." She almost glowed when she told how they saw the goal in sight; but she wilted, as she had not wilted at the actual news, when she came to the point of Connors' theft of their money and their realization that the years of their struggles had gone to naught.

"Tom came home from the meeting of the Building and Loan Association," she said, "and told me that it was all gone. He sat there for hours, saying nothing, just thinking, thinking. Then, next day, he went to Connors, and Connors laughed at him. You see, Connors hadn't broken the law. He'd managed it all so that he couldn't be touched."

"How was that?" the chairman asked her.

"I don't know," she said, "but that's how it was." More slowly still, as if she measured every word, she went on with the tale of Mercer's futile attempts to secure a settlement with the swindler, of his growing despondency, of his terrible hatred of Connors. "We all hated him," she said, "but there was something in Tom that hated him differently. The rest of us said it was too bad, but to Tom it was something more. He had the feeling, I think, that there must be some kind of punishment for men like Connors whom the law couldn't punish. That's why he took it in his own hands, I suppose."

"Did he tell you he was going to kill him?"

"No," she answered, "and I don't think he meant to kill him. It was only when Connors went by that day—we were standing out on the street near the moving van—and laughed, that Tom lost his reason."

"You don't mean," the spectacled man asked her, "that you consider a man's laughter, sardonic though it may be, justification for murder?"

She stared at him as if she were probing him as well as considering his question. "Yes," she said bravely, "I do—when I remember how Jere Connors laughed that day."

"Oh, but really—" the chairman interposed, and the man with the cigar shook his head gravely. "That'll be all, Mrs. Mercer," she was told, and Mercer watched her come back with that drooping helplessness which echoed the despair he felt. How could it happen that the facts which seemed to them so cogent could appear so puerile when dragged out by these men? He sank back limply, with Buddy's hand tightening on his own. This was the end, then, and any fool could see what it portended.

"Are there any other witnesses?" the chairman asked, and as the bank-wrecker signified that no others would follow, he gave Mercer a quick look of understanding. "Then we'll—" the head of the Board began, but a voice interrupted him.

"I ask to be heard in this case," Torrens said.

TOM Mercer's face went white as he watched the Warden move forward to the table. Why had Torrens asked to be heard? What was he going to say? Surely, after all these months of truce, of trust, he was not going to give testimony against him? With the eyes of a trapped thing Mercer watched him. The Warden looked neither at him nor at Winnie, who leaned forward, staring with frightened, questioning eyes.

"I suppose," Torrens was saying, "that my right of testimony is really confined to what Mercer has done since he came to prison. How does that declaration of principles of the prison association run? 'Pardons should issue for one of the following reasons: to release the innocent, to correct mistakes made in imposing the sentence, to relieve such suffering from ill-health as requires release from imprisonment, and to facilitate or reward the real reformation of the prisoner?' Something like that, isn't it?"

The chairman gave abrupt assent, and the Warden continued: "Well, Mercer's still fairly healthy; he isn't innocent; and I'm not convinced that his real reformation, as prison reformations go, has been more worthy of reward than other men's: so I come back to the one loophole. I think that there was a mistake made in imposing his sentence, and I want to tell you why."

He leaned over a chair before him as if to come nearer the three men. His voice slipped down into deep earnestness, and his eyes glinted. "I doubt if you gentlemen know Peachtree Valley," he said, "and to know Tom Mercer and why he killed Jere Connors, you'd have to know Peachtree Valley as I know it.

"I was born there," he went on, "and except for the years I went to college, I lived there until I *(Continued on page 111)*

A sprightly tale wherein certain young engineers from the States start diversified trouble in Central America—by the author of "Three Links and a Dinger" and "Keg Henderson Learns a Song."

Illustrated by Henry Raleigh

Pure Reason Higgs

By

C. E. SCOGGINS

Many of us remembered eyes of blue or gray or hazel; but eyes that are soft and dark are lovely too.

WHEN Peaceful Palmer saw the new cashier, he stepped on his foot first and asked who he was afterward.

Let me draw a fine distinction in Peaceful's behalf: he was not quarrelsome, only combative. He had a merry blue eye and a cheerful grin, even when he fought, which was often; like the Irishman of the ancient tale, when he saw a fight there was only one thing he wanted to know—was it a private affair or could anybody get in it? Building a railroad in Quetzal is not a lively life unless you make it so, and Peaceful was rarely overtaken by ennui.

Mr. Edwin Higgs hove upon our vision in the bar of Caravanchel. It was early Saturday evening. He paused beside the table where Jimmy Siever and I were mildly playing dominoes and startled us by asking permission to look on.

"Eh?" said Jimmy. "Huh? Oh, yes." He cast a furtive look about the room. "Give us your word of honor not to betray anything you see?"

"I beg pardon?" said Mr. Higgs uncertainly.

"Granted," said the solemn and magnanimous James. "Listen!" With a confidential forefinger he hooked the lapel of Mr. Higgs' neat gray coat. "These chairs," he said, "belong to Mr. Robert Wung, but he is an educated Chinaman and a friend of mine. Sit down. I'll answer for the consequences."

"Oh," said Mr. Higgs, and achieved a smile. "Thank you. My name is Higgs. I'm the new cashier. You gentlemen, I take it, are with Hampson and Smith too?"

"I am a gentleman," said Jimmy, "and Henderson is with Hampson and Smith too. Keg, shake hands with my friend Mr.— Higgs, did you say? Too formal. What's your real name?"

Perceiving, almost without a struggle this time, Jimmy's friendly and humorous intent, Mr. Higgs smiled again. "My first name is Edwin," he supplied, "if that is what you mean?"

"Glad to meet you, Edwin," said the solemn James. "I'm Jimmy Siever. This is Mr. Henderson. Keg, shake hands with my friend Clarence."

"Edw—" began Mr. Higgs, but did not finish the correction. He merely nodded, and thereafter sat thoughtfully eying us through the largest pair of shell-rimmed spectacles in captivity. It made me slightly nervous, that calm scrutiny, as if he were studying us under a magnifying glass.

A serious young man was Higgs, and homely. His mouth was wide, and his nose was nothing to speak of, and he was freckled—not exuberantly, like Peaceful, for instance, but vaguely, as if in protest against the rudeness of the sun. His head was long from brow to back, and his hair was thin and sandy, as if its vitality were sapped by the thought-machinery under it—an impression heightened by the intent eyes behind those spectacles of his.

Peaceful Palmer came in. It was inevitable that the figure of Mr. Higgs should catch his eye at once; except for a couple of native dandies who did not count, Mr. Higgs wore the only coat and white collar among us. Pausing to speak wholly unnecessary words to me, Peaceful planted a hobnailed heel accurately upon the polished oxford of Mr. Higgs.

"I beg your pardon," said Mr. Higgs.

"Certainly, but promise me you'll never do it again," said the generous Palmer.

"You are standing on my foot," said Mr. Higgs.

"Which foot?" inquired Peaceful, ready to discuss the matter in all its phases.

"Lay off, Peaceful," interposed Siever. "Dismount. Shake hands with my friend Mr. Higgs—Clarence for short. Mr. Higgs is the new cashier."

"I was afraid of something like this," said Palmer gloomily, and stalked on to the bar.

"Well!" said Mr. Higgs. There was no anger in it, only distress and perplexity. "Well!"

"Well, what?" said Jimmy dryly.

"Why did he do that?"

"Why didn't you poke him in the short ribs?"

"I thought it was an accident," said Mr. Higgs.

"Oh, did you!" murmured James, shuffling the dominoes.

MR. HIGGS sighed. "I realize that I am green," he said. "This is all new to me." With a comprehensive jerk of his head, he included the flannel-shirted loungers at the bar, the whole lethargic city of Quetzal in its isolation of hill and jungle. "I expected to find the natives perhaps a little difficult, but Americans—" He sighed again and lapsed into troubled silence.

I was always tender-hearted. "Palmer," I explained, "is afflicted with curiosity; that's all. He's just wondering whether he can lick you or you can lick him, and he'll never be happy till he finds out."

"But why? He never laid eyes on me till this minute that I know of."

"Oh, there's nothing personal in it," I told him. "It's just Peaceful's way."

Mr. Higgs revolved this thought in the mental laboratory behind his spectacles. "You mean," he hazarded, "this Palmer is a sort of champion, the official bully?"

"No!" said Jimmy and I together.

"It's a—a hobby," I said, lighting on a way of putting it. "Peaceful's a good fellow, but he fights everybody—at least once."

Mr. Higgs digested this for the space of three seconds. Then he rose and laid his glasses on the table. "Keep an eye on these, will you?" he begged.

"Hey! What's the idea?" grinned Jimmy. "Not going to tackle him now, are you?"

"Yes," said the matter-of-fact Mr. Higgs. "If I'm going to stay here, I can't have him stepping on my feet every time he passes me. It's simpler to satisfy his curiosity."

He turned his neat gray back on us and advanced calmly to the bar. Peaceful was in the act of hoisting liquid cheer when an awkward hand fell on the back of his neck, causing the beverage to splash freely but externally.

"Wot the dizzy wump!" sputtered he, or words to that effect.

He set the glass on the bar and turned, wiping his face, to behold Mr. Higgs. That serious-minded gentleman, having supplied cause, waited calmly for Mr. Palmer to begin.

"Why—why, Clarence!" marveled Peaceful. "When did you come to life? What's the dizzy idea? Take me for a friend of yours?"

"Did you want to fight me?"

"Huh?" said Peaceful. "Why—yes, Clarence; why not?"

Undoubtedly he misjudged his man. Having made that damaging admission, he waited for further words on the subject, and while he waited, Mr. Higgs smote him awkwardly but forcefully in the eye. Palmer swung savagely, but Mr. Higgs leaped back, seized a chair and held it between them. Peaceful laid violent hands on the chair; whereupon Mr. Higgs promptly released it and struck him in the other eye.

"For the love of Pete!" said Peaceful.

He stood there looking foolishly from the chair, which he clutched with both hands, to Mr. Higgs, who calmly waited for him to continue hostilities. Then he set the chair down and dropped into it and began to laugh. "Oh, Mamma!" he gurgled. "I must make a note of that. Turned the dizzy chair loose and hit me in the eye!"

"Are you through fighting?" inquired Mr. Higgs.

"Am I—oh, Clarence!" moaned Peaceful, waving him feebly away. "Just wait a minute. There's always a minute between rounds."

He leaped from the chair, roaring, "Round two!" He seized the startled Mr. Higgs in his arms, pinning his elbows to his sides, and kissed him loudly behind the ear. "That's all, Clarence!" he cried. "Cease fighting. It's a draw!"

Red misery submerged the freckles of Mr. Higgs. His calm deserted him. "Turn me loose, c-confound you," he wailed. "Turn me loose! You sha'n't make a clown of me!"

"No, Clarence," said Peaceful soothingly, "the Lord did that. Whoa, Clarence! Will you be good if I turn you loose? Whoa, now! Come on; let's have a drink."

Mr. Higgs suddenly ceased to struggle. "All right," he said, "provided you allow me to buy one too."

WE acclaimed this laudable sentiment and crowded to the bar. Mr. Higgs consumed Palmer's peace-offering, but moodily. The Higgs freckles remained in red eclipse. The Higgs spectacles, resumed, did not achieve their wonted air of scholarly detachment. Through them burned the rage of a mortally wounded dignity. He rose briefly to the large heartiness proper to one who orders the bartender to repeat; and thereafter—unconsciously rubbing that hateful spot behind his ear—submerged again and was lost in contemplation of his shame.

Bud Regan saw him thus downcast and sought to cheer him. "Boy," he shouted, crowding in beside him, "that shore was a pair o' lamps you hung on Peaceful. Who learned you that trick with the chair?"

"It wasn't a trick," protested the moody Higgs. "I never fought anybody before, and I was frightened for a moment. It was instinctive to try to hold him off with something. Do you think it was unsportsmanlike to hit him when both his hands were engaged?"

"Wow!" said Regan. "Go on; I'm listenin'!"

But Mr. Higgs had subsided into gloomy application to his glass, the contents of which he absorbed with visible effort.

"What's the matter? Did you git the wrong licker?"

"To tell the truth," confessed Mr. Higgs, "I don't like any of it."

"What for do you drink it, then?"

"Why," said Mr. Higgs, "it seems to be done."

"Huh?" said Bud.

"He means," translated Fred Schuyler, "that he does it to be a good fellow. Am I right, Clarence?"

"Edwin," corrected Mr. Higgs, brooding over his wrongs.

"Sinful waste o' good licker," grumbled Bud.

"You are unduly harsh, Bud," said Schuyler gravely. "Clarence is not as we are, swayed by crude impulse. He lives by the light of pure reason. He has a reason for everything and knows the reason. He licked Peaceful because it was expedient. He drinks to avoid the appearance of narrow priggishness. Clarence, correct me if I am wrong!"

Mr. Higgs went through the form of smiling. If you baited him long enough, he was sure to find it out.

Bud grinned too; he knew Schuyler was being facetious; but feeling some uncertainty as to whether the victim was Mr. Higgs or himself, he ordered another drink—as he always did when in doubt. He lifted his glass and cleared his throat in the approved manner of one about to propose a toast.

"Pure Reason Higgs!" said he.

CONSIDER now the Comandante of Police. The Comandante had never heard of Mr. Higgs, but he should have heard that toast. It bore heavily on his destinies.

Consider briefly the ingratitude of princes, a shocking thing. I mean, consider the Comandante's overlord, President Alvarez. We made him—involuntarily, it is true, but effectively, as I have told you elsewhere. And for a time he listened to words of wisdom from Uncle Joe Hampson, and all was comparatively well. But his memory was poor. He forgot that we had made him; he forgot that we had once called him Mike and taught him the true inwardness of the straight flush; he forgot that the Republic of Quetzal existed primarily for Hampson and Smith to build railroads in.

He allowed the Comandante of Police to indulge the perversity that was in him, and it was much.

It may have been a quarter of an hour after the christening of Mr. Higgs that we heard an ominous sound in the street: the clatter of hoofs, the jingle of bridle-chains, the shuffle of sandaled feet on cobblestones.

"Gosh!" moaned Regan; "he's done gone went an' done it ag'in!"

He leaped out the door and pounded away down the street, speeding to wrest Uncle Joe Hampson from his early bed. He knew that the sad tidings had not reached Uncle Joe; by some strange coincidence the telephone-wire always broke on the night that the Comandante—

Peaceful leaped from the chair, roaring, "Round Two!" He seized Mr. Higgs in his arms and kissed him loudly behind the ear.

"Who has done what again?" queried Mr. Higgs.

The red background of the Higgs freckles had faded by now to normal sallowness and beyond. Under stress of inward sorrow they stood out, each to itself in melancholy prominence. He spoke with great dignity and restraint. "Who has done what again?"

"The Comandante," I grunted, and yielded to helpless profanity.

"What is it? A raid?"

"Oh, no," I said savagely, "—just a merry little picnic to celebrate pay-day."

But Mr. Higgs was not deceived. It was a picturesque spectacle that we looked on, crowding there in the doorway, but not even to the most inexperienced eye could it be described as merry.

Along either side of the street paced a file of mounted police, very stern in crossed cartridge-belts and large ferocious spurs; and between, linked like yoked oxen to one long rope, grimed with the dust of a heavy march, plodded a hundred hopeless captives. Jimmy Siever uttered a torrid, horrid word and kicked a chair spinning across the floor.

"There," he said, and you would have thought he was bitterly accusing Mr. Higgs, "goes the best gang of hard-rock drillers on the Quetzal division. I know. I trained 'em."

"Oh," said Mr. Higgs. "Hampson and Smith men?"

"Ah! You have guessed it," said Jimmy.

A railroad, you know, is not built without labor. A government is not operated without labor, either; and the Comandante of Police was a most direct and efficient recruiter. He simply went where the labor was and took it. Here, and in other dismal columns plodding through the night from the more distant camps, went the hands and feet of Hampson and Smith. No doubt you will have easily recognized ourselves as the brains thereof.

"What are they arrested for—so many of them?" persisted Mr. Higgs.

"Hmmph!" said Jimmy with scorn for so simple a mind. "To sweep the plaza. To work in the Government quarries. To pay fines."

"But—what offense?"

"Having money to pay fines," explained Jimmy elaborately. "Not having money to pay fines. Gambling. Disturbing the peace of the alligators in the Armeria River. Any old thing. You the cashier and don't know it's pay-day?"

What offense? Hmmph, indeed! Labor was necessary and revenue was acceptable. All was fish that came to the Comandante's net. The only question was, how many could he conveniently round up?

We straggled back to the bar and damped our rage as best we might, but there was poor comfort in it. We referred often and earnestly to the Comandante, to be sure; and Mr. Higgs listened.

Let me be fair. Our harshest word was not less than the

truth. It was never the Comandante's aim to be loved. Some of the men he recruited never came back, and those who did told tales of him which shall not be recorded here. But—he is gone. Peace to his memory!

Uncle Joe Hampson came in. His thin gray beard was cocked at a truculent angle, but his face was bleak. We offered no spoken sympathy. Uncle Joe knew anything that we could say.

"Set 'em up, boys," he said wearily. "Might as well have a good time. There'll be durned little work Monday."

"Wont Mike Alvarez do anything, Uncle Joe?" It was a perfunctory question. If President Alvarez could be moved, Uncle Joe would have moved him.

Uncle Joe shook his head. "Says it's the Comandante's business to enforce the law. Fact is, the Comandante's got a daughter," he said dryly.

Yes; the Comandante had a daughter, a fact known to be of warm interest to President Alvarez. We ourselves had looked on her without unpleasant sensations.

"Well, the Comandante," we urged; "can't you buy him?"

Uncle Joe snorted. "Sure you can buy him! But he aint honest. He wont stay bought."

And there you were.

Uncle Joe went heavily away. We continued to buy and consume liquid cheer, but in a desultory fashion, without enthusiasm or visible result. With the possible exception of Mr. Higgs, we all possessed copper-riveted interiors, anyway. However, when you are twenty-odd and work thirteen days of every fortnight, you can be melancholy just so long; and after that, even gloom grows humorous.

"H'i can't get no h'enjoyment h'out h'of h'it," complained Siever, in the immortal phrase of a Cockney who had once lingered briefly in our midst. "The Boliche? What say?"

We craved movement, diversion. We descended on the Boliche. Two lumpy bowling-alleys gave the Boliche its name, but an excellent dancing-floor was the secret of its cheer. We incurred no danger in proceeding thither; the Boliche had ample provision against the horrors of thirst. And there were bright feminine eyes—

Do not misjudge us. Many of us remembered eyes of blue or gray or hazel, and secretly carried well-thumbed letters; but eyes that are soft and dark are lovely too. Girlish charm is girlish charm when you are twenty-odd, and there were those who looked with favor on us. Peaceful deserted us at once and engaged in courtly converse a stout matron who wielded a palm-leaf fan. Perhaps—who knows?—he managed a word or a glance or something for the maiden who sat beside her, a plump and delectable maiden who was sparing of speech but eloquent of eye.

But in strange confusion he abandoned this gallant effort and bolted back to the bar. A word, a giggle had undone poor Peaceful. Furtively he examined his visage in the mirror and learned the worst. Each of his eyes was rimmed with rich and deepening purple, record of his late encounter with Mr. Higgs.

We made soothing comment on this picturesque phenomenon, laughing cheerily, but strangely enough, Peaceful was not soothed. From time to time he turned those baleful orbs on the author of their misfortunes, and you could tell that he was not fond of Mr. Higgs—which made the feeling between them admirably unanimous. Mr. Higgs saw very little worth in Peaceful Palmer.

THERE was a sudden stir. At the entrance to the pavilion paused a splendid carriage. The music stopped, broke out again in the stirring strains of the national anthem. Entered Miguel Alvarez, President of Quetzal and Friend of All the World—except Hampson and Smith.

Hands pattered in applause—not ours. Handsome, smiling, he bowed, and ushered in the daughter of the Comandante. Behind them strode the martial and impressive figure of the Comandante himself.

The orchestra swung into the seductive measure of a waltz. President Alvarez offered his arm to his fair partner, beginning the decorous promenade that must precede each dance. Once about the floor they walked, and began gracefully to revolve. Perhaps a dozen couples followed. Not everybody is worthy to share the floor with a president.

With appropriate hauteur the Comandante stood watching; bulky he was, and tall and well fronted. None presumed to stand near him. In recognition, doubtless, of the pacific nature of the occasion, he wore tonight only one revolver, but his forbidding reputation was about him like a coat of mail. His brows were heavy, and his mustache was long and thick and proud and richly curling. In Quetzal, you must know, hair on the face is the ultimate attainment of virility. He was the visible embodiment of the Law, ruthless and awe-inspiring.

"Is that the Comandante?" whispered Mr. Higgs, emerging from long and gloomy silence. "H'm," he said thoughtfully. "Vain, fond of adulation. See that dent in his chin? Cruelty. But he is conscious of holding his jaw firm—"

"Human nature at a glance, eh?" said Peaceful, pushing in. "Well, read my face!"

Mr. Higgs opened and shut his mouth wordlessly. The freckles stood out on his unhappy countenance, and those goggles of his suggested somehow a slightly inebriated fish. He seemed but sorry game for the turbulent Palmer.

"Go on. Read it."

"You have the round head of combativeness," said Mr. Higgs, "the curly hair of irresponsibility—"

"Is that so!" said Peaceful. "Now I'll read yours."

He stared solemnly at the unhappy Higgs, shaking his head in sorrow. "I don't know why the Lord lets you live, Clarence," was his verdict. "You're not handsome and you're not useful, and you've got your hat on in the presence of gentlemen."

"Quit it, Peaceful," growled Shirtless Walker. "Want the Comandante on your neck?"

"Just as soon," said Peaceful blithely. The prospect of trouble was ever potent to dispel his gloom.

HE looked and saw the frowning eye of that dignitary on him, and was inspired to the crowning imprudence of his reckless career. He snatched the offending hat from the head of Mr. Higgs, dashed through a fringe of spectators and caromed heavily into the broad bosom of the Comandante.

"Oof!" said the Comandante.

"I beg your pardon. Go to thunder," said Peaceful, and rebounded from the Comandante's chest out upon the dancing-floor.

"Seize him!" gasped the Comandante with such breath as remained to him. "Seize the—" No, on second thought I shall not translate the word he used; and there were ladies present, too.

The dancers scattered—except the President of Quetzal. It was the duty of all trouble to avoid him. Serene and stern he stood his ground, setting his fair partner behind him.

"Hello, Mike!" caroled Peaceful, bearing down. "What say, Mike? Have a hat!"

He jammed the hat of Mr. Higgs about the presidential ears and galloped on. The noble size of the Higgs cranium was evidenced by the completeness with which the brow of Don Miguel went into eclipse. We did not laugh. We groaned. It was crude comedy, but tragedy lumbered at its heels. The things we knew of the Comandante were not of a sort to encourage merriment.

He was a heavy craft, the Comandante, but powerful under full steam. Where a bystander blocked his path, he bowled him down. Here and there dived Peaceful, contriving cover of the panic-stricken spectators. He was more agile than his pursuer and his hobnails gave him a better footing on the smooth floor, but that roaring Nemesis carried a long blue revolver at full cock. One instant in the open would see the end of Peaceful Palmer.

"Seize him, you—" Again words which discretion bids me omit. "Seize the—" But no hand clutched at Peaceful Palmer twice; he was a two-fisted and hard-headed fugitive, highly uncomfortable to hold. The grin was gone from his face now. No more did he sing out gay jibes at his lumbering enemy. For once in his life, I think, Peaceful knew the meaning of repentance.

And we? There was not much that we could do, but we did it. We blundered into the Comandante's way at every opportunity; but at best we could only defer the end. Dazedly, through grunts and feminine squeals and the mad shuffling of feet, I heard the voice of Mr. Higgs.

"My hat," he said. "A thousand thanks. *Yo siento*—I am sorry—"

While Peaceful dodged and ducked for his life, Mr. Higgs stood before President Alvarez, demanding his hat. Mechanically the enraged Don Miguel surrendered it.

"A thousand thanks," said Mr. Higgs in the halting Spanish of one who speaks by the book. "I am sorry. My friend is a little—a little—intoxicated—"

"I know zat Peaceful Palmer," said the President grimly—speaking what he always believed to be *(Continued on page 106)*

The back of the Comandante's head resumed contact with the floor. "Be still," said Mr. Higgs fretfully. "I want to think." Then something flashed from Mr. Higgs' pocket and gleamed at the Comandante's throat.

William the Ancestor

By

WILLIAM DUDLEY PELLEY

"THE sins of the fathers may be visited upon the children," once remarked Sam Hod, the well-known Vermont newspaper editor, "—but what can be said for the boy who confronts his father's indiscretions with the flourish of a mean barrel-stave, or greets the handicaps of heredity with a jagged slat hurriedly torn from the side of a soap-box?"

This is the chronicle of a lad who decided he had been the scion of a line of ne'er-do-wells long enough, and started in, right-about-face, to be an ancestor.

Into our Vermont newspaper office one morning in the spring of 1902 came a stout, pink, middle-aged man with wavy, lusterless hair, tired eyes and a weak mouth. He was Bill Galloway, who had hitherto conducted the restaurant on the corner of Main and Maple streets. His wife, a frayed-out, round-shouldered, wistful-eyed little creature, permitted the place to show a weak profit by doing three women's work in the kitchen and growing more and more emaciated and shapeless by endless hours over a sizzling stove.

"Well," growled the paper's proprietor, "I hear you've sold your lunch-room to go into a manufacturing business."

"Yes," Bill Galloway replied, "I decided I was cut out for bigger things than presiding all my life at the cash-register of a small-town lunch-room. I've bought Jack Whiting's old factory down by the railroad yards. Properly managed, I think the patents on the invention are worth a lot. You ought to send somebody down and write up the reorganization for your paper."

But Sam Hod, the aforesaid proprietor, failed to become enthusiastic.

"And what's this I hear about your wife working in the new factory? I should think you'd have more personal pride, Galloway, than to make—or let—her do such a thing."

Galloway shrugged his shoulders and sighed.

"Yes," the editor went on, "and my boy said at dinner this noon that you were compelling your William, Jr., to leave school and lend a hand too. That lad's too young to leave school, Galloway. Your whole system for prospering is wrong. Any fool can make money by working his folks."

Bill fingered his watch-fob and cast tired eyes about our office.

"I know it, Mr. Hod," said he, "but I'm a poor man—a poor man trying to get ahead. The screen business is small, and I lack the money for outside help. Martha is willing to work, because she knows my circumstances. So's the boy. If the family feels that way, why should I object?"

Sam eyed him narrowly.

"And how much work do you do?"

"Some one's got to look after the office, financing and sales. That's where I come in. But what are you trying to do, Mr. Hod—pick a quarrel?"

"Well," Sam snapped, "I've small use for a man who tries to make money on the underpaid effort of his folks."

Bill Galloway seemed to grow more tired, his eyes weaker.

"You misjudge me, Mr. Hod," he argued.

"I hope so, Galloway, I hope so—for the sake of that boy, to say nothing of your wife. I don't know where Billy gets his character. It must be from his mother. But if you take that boy out of school for keeps, I feel like raising a rumpus about it. As for yourself, what you need isn't sympathy; it's two swift kicks—properly placed." And that was that.

Around the first of July, Jeff Turner, who owns the Paris Hardware Company, came into our office to leave an ad.

"What do you know about that Galloway Screen Company?" he asked, as he thrust his tremendously mustached features inside the inner door. "I guess everything aint going any too smooth down there. I hear about every merchant and lawyer in town's campin' on Galloway's trail—just measly little bills that run and run and aint never settled. He's got into me for fifty-one dollars, and I bet I never see my money."

When Galloway strutted importantly down the street, well dressed,

Another true-to-folks story of old Vermont, with a real surprise in the climax, by the talented author of "There Still Are Fairies," "Beating Back" and other memorable Red Book Magazine successes.

Illustrated by Douglas Ryan

while his wife and son went shabby, the townsfolk felt a just irritation.

"I don't want to say anything against a man to hurt his business," replied Sam. "But, you being a steady advertiser and a friend of mine, I'm telling you to go slow on credit to Bill Galloway."

"You don't need to tell *me* that. I've shut down already." Jeff went out grumpily.

Autumn passed, and winter. One sloppy morning toward the close of the following May, Pinkie Price, our local reporter, came into the office with a rumor that promised news.

"Bill Galloway's almost gone bust," he announced, "and he's gonna sell out."

"How do you know?"

"His boy Billy told me—about the sellin', anyhow."

"Who's he going to sell to?"

"A big company in Cleveland. Billy says it's a competitor in the fly-screen business. His father's been hurtin' their trade."

"You mean somebody's going to pay real money for that business down by the railroad tracks?"

"Looks that way, Mr. Hod. I guess it's their patents. The big firm wants 'em."

"How much is Galloway going to sell for?"

"Billy don't know for certain; he thinks it's ten thousand—for the patents—and the plant and machinery for what it's worth."

"Ten thousand! You mean Bill Galloway stands to get ten thousand dollars *clean money?*"

"That's what young Galloway says. He oughta know; he's right there in his dad's office."

"Oh, Junior's moved into his dad's office, has he?"

"Yeah. They got almost twenty men working for 'em now. Billy don't have to work in the factory any more. But I'll tell you what, Mr. Hod: it aint the old man that keeps things straight down there."

"No?"

"Not by a damsite. It's Billy Junior himself."

"I aint surprised."

"Jeff Turner's campin' on old Bill's trail like a bloodhound. So's Lawyer Hentley. If Galloway gets hold of any real money, they're gonna grab it."

"But ten thousand dollars! Galloway doesn't owe ten thousand dollars or anything like it."

"I know! But everybody up and down Main Street feels pretty certain that it's in old Bill to get hold of that cash and make a get-away—without paying a cent," explained Pinkie.

"You mean desert his folks?"

"It aint impossible, Mr. Hod. Nobody trusts him," Pinkie declared.

"True, nobody trusts him." The editor was thoughtful.

"Funny thing," went on Pinkie, "—Jeff Turner hates old Bill worse'n anybody else in town. And young Billy is stuck on his daughter."

"On Flossie Turner!" Sam exclaimed.

"Sure. Aint you heard?"

"No. But Jeff wont let his girl marry Galloway's boy in a thousand years," Sam prophesied.

"You said it. And as Uncle Joe Fodder puts it: 'Hell's due to bust!' " And Pinkie drifted out of the office.

It developed subsequently that a promoter from Buffalo, named Carver, had been responsible for the negotiations whereby Galloway was to dispose of his plant and patents to the Cleveland interests. How Carver got hold of Galloway is immaterial. The point is, that the day previous to Pinkie's announcement, Carver had visited the Galloway plant with an official of the Cleveland company, named Bricksmith. Carver had been enthusiastic; Galloway had been anxious; Bricksmith had been skeptical.

The three finally met in the lobby of the Whitney House that evening. Bricksmith — a big, senatorial-looking man with a bald head and cigar mouth that was classic—finally arose to bid Galloway good-by. He was returning to Cleveland on the midnight train.

"I can't promise you anything, Mr. Galloway," he said. "Not a thing! But the whole proposition, exactly as you have put it up to me, will be submitted to our directors at their regular meeting Monday morning. There's a big question in my mind whether we will want to acquire a small factory away up here in Vermont; it's a long way from the main offices. On the other hand, moving the machinery you've got here, and some of your skilled workmen, to Cleveland would likewise be an expensive job. There are good and bad points about keeping the factory here or moving it—both. Then again, there's the question of running it. We've got a man in the Cleveland plant named McNabb. He'd be the logical one to assume charge here. But another factory is trying to steal him away from us, and a man to take his place would be difficult to find, offhand. No, I can't promise anything or hold out any hope. But I've got your figures and am personally open-minded in the matter. I'll put it up to our directors honestly. If we decide to accept, you'll get a telegram from us on or about the tenth. You'll get a telegram from us anyhow, so you wont need to wait on us if you find another purchaser."

"I'd just as soon go to Cleveland—" began Galloway, then thought better of it and paused.

HOPE ran high in the Galloway family when Bill reported at supper that night. The business had grown to pretentious size, it was true, but mostly on bank loans and other borrowed money. Liquid cash had been utilized for pay-rolls. Creditors had been put off until a crash was inevitable—if Bricksmith and his company turned the proposition down. Will Galloway had staked everything on the chance that he could eventually unload on these competitors. If the Cleveland people refused to buy—

Galloway went around petulant and preoccupied during the next few days. If the Cleveland people refused to buy, the jig was up. Galloway made his plans to flee the town and let the crash take place with him out of it all.

The town, perhaps, was cruel to Galloway. But usually public opinion has a sound basis, and when he strutted importantly down the street, well dressed and smoking a good cigar, while his wife and son went shabby, the townsfolk felt a just irritation. Likewise, if Galloway had not given the impression that as a factory-owner he wanted to play the big financier, and assumed a demeanor of undue importance over more conscientious and harder-working business men, his lot might have been easier. But he rarely did any work in the factory himself—instead left the practical direction of the plant to an inexperienced, overtaxed boy. He spent freely on himself; but when his wife wanted money to pay the home expenses, he became petulant. These things were bound to get out around a little town like ours. And Galloway suffered accordingly.

JUST after young Billy Galloway had turned eighteen, it was that he fell in love with the Turner girl. Florence was a plain, comfortable little body, one of those sympathetic girls who are always nursing a sick chicken in a box of cotton wadding behind the kitchen stove, or bringing home ailing cats, or wheeling other women's babies out on sunny afternoons; whenever she appeared on the streets, a dozen children were sure to be trailing after her.

The boys who went in for flirting with more worldly wise young ladies behind the woodbine of shadowed piazzas, said that Flossie was "soft." They declared she was "going" with the Galloway boy for the same reasons that prompted her to bring home sick animals.

Anyway, she was very much in love with the Galloway boy, and the Galloway boy was very much in love with Flossie; and as he had taken a man's place in the world long before his time, it wasn't surprising that he should have desired a wife before it was right and proper that he should take one unto himself.

Yes, Flossie *was* a plain girl. But the night Billy asked her to be his wife was in June, a soft summer evening full of moonlight; and on a soft summer evening full of moonlight, especially if she happens to be dressed in white with just a faint fragrance of perfume about her, no girl is plain. They were seated beside the big clump of lilacs on the northwest corner of our Common. It was late; pedestrians were few. They had no one to keep them company but the xylophones of the crickets and the fluted chorus of the tree-toads. Swayed by the closeness of her, with the blood pounding strangely within him at the liberty, the Galloway boy reached over and took one of her hands. Can't you see them!

"Flo," he said huskily, awkward with the boldness of it. "I got something I been wantin' to say to you for a long, long time!"

The girl gave his silhouette a frightened glance in the summer dark, but she did not pull her hand away.

"Flo," the boy choked, "would you—would you—would you mind bein' my wife?"

His voice fell down completely on the last word.

Would she mind? All the Turner girl said was: "Oh, Will!" Then she hid her face in her hands.

Young Galloway took it for assent—as indeed it was. Haltingly, fearfully, he passed an arm about her shoulders.

The maples were very silent and still in their leafy slumber. Somewhere up in the mass of branches, a sleepy bird twittered. A thousand June moths swept about the humming arc-lights. The rich incense of the syringas, the perfume of honest green sod and fragrant grasses enveloped them. And from the heavens a philosophical old moon looked down sympathetically upon them, making fantastic traceries under the maples and shrubbery.

It was such an evening as would never come again—no matter how their love affair turned out, no matter how many summer nights they passed together. The boy drew the girl toward him and kissed her on the cheek—a cheek that was hot beneath the curls of her soft hair. She was a very wonderful bit of humanity, there in the half-shadows the moonlight made.

"Oh, Florence—I'm—I'm so happy!" the lad choked. "It's been hard to do all I've had to do—with no one to tell my troubles to, no one to lean on, no one who cares much about me! Nobody knows about it—no one but Mother and myself!"

She caressed his wavy brown hair. She was no coquette, the Turner girl. But she said in a whisper that no man has heard unless he has been thus with a girl in white on a soft New England summer night: "You've got me to tell them to now, Will, dear."

Tears came to his eyes. A faint breeze stirred the laden syringa bushes and dropped a shower of petals about them. It cooled his temples, from which the girl's delicate fingers smoothed back the hair. And that moment the heartaches and disappointments of his hard young life slipped away. He was exquisitely, deliriously happy.

THEY finally left the old bench and moved across the Common, in and out of the shadows cast by the moonlight, the arc-lamps, the trees and the shrubbery—arm in arm. At the band-stand at the west end of the Common, the figure of a man confronted them.

"You're out late, young lady!" the man said grimly. He wore bedroom slippers and no hat. By the coat turned up about his neck the boy knew the man's nightshirt was tucked inside his trousers and that he had risen from his bed to search for his daughter.

"I didn't mean to be late, Father. I guess I forgot about the time."

"That'll be all from you. Who's this scalawag with you?"

"It's Will, Father. We've been sitting over on the bench behind the monument—just talking."

"Will? Will *who?*" The gray-headed man did not have his glasses. He peered closely into the boy's white features.

"Will Galloway, Father. He's—he's asked me to—to marry him."

At that Jeff demanded:

"Have you asked my daughter to marry *you?*"

"Yes sir."

"You—a *Galloway?* My girl—marry you! Marry Bill Galloway's boy? Before she does that, I'll see her dead!"

"I can't help what my father is! I—"

"Your father's blood is in you! I've watched you these half-dozen years. I could flog you right here for the insult!" old Jeff raged.

"I don't mean anything but what's proper to your daughter!" Will declared.

"You'd better not! Now, you *git!* And if I ever find you in company with my girl again, I'll horsewhip you!"

"You mean—"

"That's exactly what I mean! If my girl ever married you, the Turners don't have a daughter no more; her name comes right out of our family Bible. And if you persist in seeing her, I'll have you run out of town!"

The grim old man clutched the girl by the arm.

"Now then, you *march!*" he ordered.

Sobbing, the girl obeyed. The father scuffed after her with never a backward look.

The boy remained for a time on the walk where they had left him. After a while he moved over and seated himself on the lowest step leading up into the band-stand.

"Just because I'm a *Galloway!*" he whispered to the shadows. "Just because I'm a Galloway."

IT was fated to be the most important night of the lad's life. But how could he know it then? It is only from the perspective of years that we come to recognize life's milestones.

After a time, sick at heart, wondering just what the future held for him, Billy Junior turned and made his way toward home. He reached the gate, turned in and entered the kitchen. His mother called to him from the top of the stairs.

"Billy!"

"Yes, Ma," he answered.

The mother came down. She wore a coat and hat. At such an hour she should have been in bed.

"Billy, have you seen your Pa?" she asked.

"No, I haven't! I never want to see my father again!"

"A telegram come for him—just after supper. I looked at his face and thought he was taken sick. He went out without sayin' a word. Long about nine o'clock, he come in again, and his

The rich purée of tiny, sweetest peas

Smooth, wholesome, inviting pea soup! What a delightful and refreshing dish it is! It's a soup that everybody likes both for its delicious flavor and its generous, satisfying nourishment. The very name "pea soup" is a promise to your appetite. Do not disappoint it. Campbell's delights the taste eager for pea soup that has the real flavor and richness. The puree is richer still for the fine butter which is blended in. The delicate seasoning gives just the right appetizing touch. Once taste it, and you will serve Campbell's every time you have pea soup!

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face was white as paper. He went upstairs and got some things in a bag. I asked him where he was goin', and he says he was called out of town on business. But I aint been satisfied with his looks, Billy. Somethin's happened! That telegram did it!"

His mother's alarm caused the boy to forget the pain in his own heart.

"Well, what do you want I should do?" he asked.

"Go see if he's at the shop, Billy. And if you can't find him nowheres, call in to the telegraph office and ask them to give you a copy of that telegram. Billy, I feel—I feel as if that telegram was from that Bricksmith saying Paw warn't goin' to sell the shop. And it's made him all upset—I'm afraid in his disappointment he'll do somethin' rash."

Billy was now thoroughly frightened. He had never beheld his mother as disturbed before.

"You wait here, Ma. I'll go see," he promised.

He hurried through the town's silent and deserted streets to the district known as the "freight-yards." His worst fears were realized when he beheld no lights in the factory office.

Nevertheless he pulled out his key-ring, found the office key and admitted himself. He snapped on the lights with an effort. He dreaded what he might find.

He discovered plenty to upset him, although not exactly what he had fearfully expected. His father had not done anything rash—at least not to himself. But the office was a mess. The safe was open, and books and papers were scattered everywhere. The drawers of his father's desk had been rifled.

SOMETHING had happened, indeed. This:

Bill Galloway had returned to the factory after receiving that telegram and had looked with bulging eyes into chaos. He had played the game for all he was worth. He had gambled with the money of a few stockholders, piled up his bank-loans, stretched his credit to the breaking-point.

The telegram had read:

> Cleveland, Ohio, June 10, 1903.
> William Galloway, Esq.,
> Paris, Vt.
>
> Accepting your offer impossible. Move factory too expensive. No use your coming to see us. Sorry. Decision delayed owing embarrassment Mr. McNabb leaving Cleveland organization to assume management another factory. Man to take his place difficult to procure. Trust you find purchaser. Agreeable price is right but without McNabb, Paris plant would be too much for us to take on at present.
>
> A. A. Bricksmith.

Bill Galloway, Senior, read that fatal wire and sank down into his office chair, wallowing in a great slough of self-pity. If he were only a single man! He could "skip out" then with no regrets!

Naturally, he blamed his family—blamed them for the burden they had been to him, blamed them for being the cause of his gambling, blamed them for his trial to save the business for their benefit.

But blaming the family brought no solution. The thing to do was to flee while the fleeing was possible. Not another day could he wait. The jig was up indeed. Now to pay the piper.

And so, when Billy Galloway, the son, entered the office that night, he found the fatal telegram on his father's desk, along with a note.

"'I can't stand the disgrace,'" the boy read in his father's scrawling penmanship. "'I'm going somewhere out West and start all over. You are a man grown, William. Your life is ahead of you and not behind you like most of mine. You are big enough to support your mother. If there is anything saved from the wreck, you can have it. Good-by, my son, and may God bless you. Your unhappy Father.'"

The significance of it did not bulk up to young Billy at once. That would take days. The boy thought only of two things as he stood there: what train his father could possibly have taken, and how could he, Billy, break the news to his frail and work-bowed mother?

Then he remembered there had been a train for Burlington at ten o'clock. His father could have caught that train. From Burlington a sleeper could be secured for Albany at five minutes past midnight. At Albany one could connect with a flyer for the West.

For an instant the boy had an impulse to follow and persuade his dad to return and stand by his guns to the end. But how could he reach Burlington in time? And how could he stay his father by telephone or telegraph?

He gave it up as hopeless. But he did not go home. He folded his father's last letter and the Cleveland message away in his pocket. Outside in the summer night again, he began walking.

Far out into the country in the moonlight he fought his first great fight with himself.

It was a fight such as no boy of eighteen should be called upon to wage. But he fought it—he fought it.

GOD only knows where the lad got his grit. Yet far out of town on the edge of the mill dam, he sat and watched the water going over the falls and decided to build his life anew. Then and there it came to him, in all the bitterness of cruel—inhumanly cruel—circumstance, that some day a son of his, scion of the House of Galloway, might look back in turn on *him* and venerate or damn him for the manner of man he had proven himself to be.

He arose from his seat in the early hours of the morning. He squared his shoulders. He came back to town. Those early pedestrians who met him never dreamed of the struggle through which he had gone, that night—and from which he must still suffer in the days ahead. His mother was waiting for him, sitting on the front stairs with an oil lamp to light the hall. She gave a little cry when she saw his face. Her womanly intuition, which had first alarmed her, now told her the worst.

"Mother," said the lad as evenly as he could, "—it's *happened!* The wire was from Cleveland. They don't want the business, and Pa—Pa has—"

"Dear God!" cried the woman. "What *has* he done?"

"Cleared out, Ma — skipped! And I guess you and I are left to face the music."

This was nineteen years ago.

Much may happen in nineteen years. After all, this is a chronicle of the present.

WE know now that Galloway, Senior, fled from Paris, Vermont, exactly as his son had surmised. Morning found him being hurled swiftly across middle New York. A day later he reached Chicago.

But Chicago was still too near the East. He wanted to get out still farther into that golden West, starting all over. So William Galloway at length reached a small mining town in Utah.

What his thoughts must have been in the weeks and months that followed, only his Maker knows. He had done the yellow thing, and he knew it. Upon the thin shoulders of his boy he had thrown his own burden and left the lad to weather the experience as best he could. He knew also that while he had done nothing really criminal in the conduct of his business, he was nevertheless a fugitive from the law. He had deserted his wife and family, and for that fault there existed a man-made penalty as well as much mental retribution.

After all, the elder Galloway received his just deserts.

He secured a place as timekeeper in a mining company's office. He changed his name to Rathburn. He grew a beard and dyed his hair. Even a person directly from home who had known him a few weeks before, would have failed to recognize him as the alterations of remorse and time subsequently changed him. A man may run away from a *place;* he can never run away from a weakness.

And as the years began to creep on, the first sharp sting of the separation from his wife and children—the home-sickness—gradually died away.

But that is not saying that on long gray winter afternoons, or in the Utah deserts under the summer stars, his thoughts did not turn back to his son in those years that followed. Then the father-heart would sometimes wonder how the boy had prospered, what he was doing, what his fortunes had been, if he had married, if there were grandchildren.

When the great war broke, it was some consolation to remember that the boy would be too old to be taken by the draft. Nevertheless he longed, with a constantly increasing yearning, to see and talk with his son again.

And then one day last April, Kismet took a hand in the fortunes of the Galloways—father and son. Galloway, Senior, still a mine employee at sixty, felt the long arm of coincidence reach down into his life and select him from among his fellows for the ordeal of a strange chastisement.

One day he was called to assist the mine cashier in making up pay-envelopes for the men. The piles of currency were stacked upon a big table behind the wire grillwork of the main office. Galloway, alias Rathburn, was counting currency, handing it across the table to the clerk, Hamstead, who slipped the proper sums

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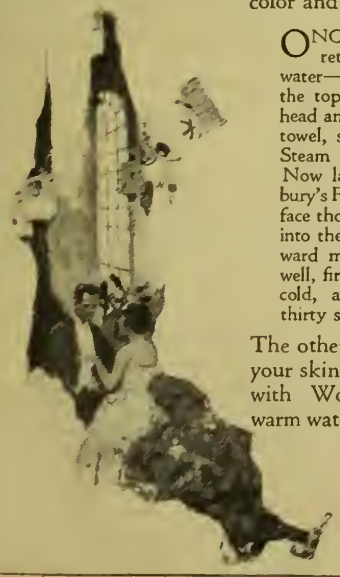

ONCE or twice a week, just before retiring, fill your basin full of hot water—almost boiling hot. Bend over the top of the basin and cover your head and the bowl with a heavy bath towel, so that no steam can escape. Steam your face for thirty seconds. Now lather a hot cloth with Woodbury's Facial Soap. With this wash your face thoroughly, rubbing the lather well into the skin with an upward and outward motion. Then rinse the skin well, first with warm water, then with cold, and finish by rubbing it for thirty seconds with a piece of ice.

The other nights of the week cleanse your skin thoroughly in the usual way with Woodbury's Facial Soap and warm water, ending with a dash of cold. You will be surprised at the difference even two or three of these treatments will make in your complexion.

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For 25 cents we will send you a miniature set of the Woodbury skin preparations, containing samples of Woodbury's Facial Soap, Facial Cream, Cold Cream, and Facial Powder, *with the treatment booklet, "A Skin You Love to Touch."*

Send for this set today. Address The Andrew Jergens Co., 1704 Spring Grove Avenue, Cincinnati, Ohio. *If you live in Canada, address The Andrew Jergens Co., Limited, 1704 Sherbrooke St., Perth, Ontario.* English agents: *H. C. Quelch & Co., 4 Ludgate Square, London, E. C. 4.*

into envelopes. Suddenly the elderly man stopped and uttered a cry. Hamstead looked up quickly and beheld his associate staring with distended eyes at a bank-note in his hand.

"What's the matter, Pop?" he demanded.

"There!" cried the other. "There on the bank-note! See!"

"What's the matter—a counterfeit?"

"This bill—this five-dollar bank-note! How did it ever get away out here?"

Hamstead took the note.

"'Paris, Vermont,'" he read. "Well, and what about Paris, Vermont?"

"I used to live there!" Rathburn choked thickly.

"And what if you did?"

"And that bank-note was issued by the First National Bank! See, it says so, right on its face."

"But what of that? It aint so strange. Some Vermont tourist out this way might have spent it down the line."

"But that signature—the president's signature on the line in the corner!"

"'*William Galloway, Jr., President,*'" read the money-clerk again. "Well, what about William Galloway? Know him?"

"Know him? *Know him?* My God, he's my boy! President of the First National Bank! *My boy!*"

"Thought your name was Rathburn."

But Bill Galloway did not hear.

AND so Galloway, Senior, came back to Paris. He alighted from the Wickford trolley at seven o'clock of a summer's evening. He wore a seedy suit of clothes. His hair was silver white. His eyes were tired, burned out.

For a moment he stood by the drinking-fountain looking about him perplexedly. When a man he had known nineteen years before came down the sidewalk, Bill averted his face quickly. The prodigal did not realize there was no need for such a maneuver.

Finally he accosted a stranger.

"I hear there's a man named Galloway who lives in this town—William Galloway, Junior," he said. "Could you direct me to his house?"

"You mean Governor Galloway?"

"Has he been governor?"

"Sure! Go down Main Street to Maple, turn up Maple Street Hill till you come to the big brownstone place up behind the acre of lawn."

Bill thanked the stranger a little bewilderedly, turned into Maple Street and climbed the hill. In the cool of the evening he came to Governor Galloway's mansion, the pride of our town, because we are proud of the man and woman who dwell in it.

Three freckled-faced youngsters were playing with a collie pup on that expanse of lawn. The boys came down to the gate.

"Is this Will Galloway's place?" the stranger demanded.

"Yes sir," answered the oldest boy. "William Galloway's my father."

Old Bill gazed at the brownstone front, at the velvet lawn, at the flowers. He seemed bewildered. It was more than the magnificence of the estate which affected him. It was rather the underlying pride with which the youngster made the assertion.

"Is he home now?"

"Guess so! Shall I call him?"

"No—that is—wait a minute. Who's your mother, sonny?"

"Why, Mrs. Galloway."

"I know. But what was her name before she was married?"

"Florence Turner. There's Father and Grandpa now, goin' to the garage to get the new car, I bet. Grandpa Turner lives with us since Grandma died."

"And what about Grandmother Galloway?"

"She lives with us too. That's her over there by the summerhouse in the white cap."

A gray touring-car came purring down the driveway. Old Bill saw two faces in the tonneau, the front seat being occupied by a chauffeur. One was old Jefferson Turner, a little grayer, a little more wildly mustached than he had been nineteen years before. The other was a middle-aged man, whitening at the temples. But his face was the face of a strong, successful young American. He smiled at his boys and bowed to the old man talking to them.

"Pa," called the eldest boy, "here's a man wants to see you!"

The great car passed over the walk, swerved and came to a purring stop. William Galloway, Junior, turned about.

"There he is," prodded the eldest boy. "You said you wanted to see him." Then to his parent: "Hey, Pa, here's somebody who knows Grandma Galloway."

Bill allowed himself to be pushed forward.

"Billy—don't you know me?" he asked.

"Merciful God!" exclaimed William, Junior. "*It's Father!*"

THEY took old Bill up to the house. There was a reunion with his wife, who cried a great deal, and much toleration on the part of Jeff Turner, who swore a great deal; and old Bill broke down and wept also. He got off a lot of balderdash about "blood being thicker than water" and how some folks are just out to connect with all the hard luck that's going and why hadn't he shot himself years ago instead of living to see the day when they poured coals of fire on his head so—and a lot more claptrap that William received stoically, and Jeff scowled at, and Florence Galloway sighed over. Finally William said brusquely:

"Father, come up to my study."

Opposite the big fireplace in that room was a flat-topped desk, and after closing the door Will, Junior, went to a safe in the north corner and returned with a black japanned box.

"Father," he said brokenly, showing for the first time his repressed emotion, "I'm glad you're back! I've always had a feeling you'd turn up some day. And I—I saved these to give you."

William, Junior, lifted the top of the box, and old Bill leaned forward. But Will did not take securities out of the box—stocks or bonds or deeds or money. He took out neatly tied bundles of papers, all arranged chronologically.

"What are these?"

"They're the bills you left unpaid when you went away, Dad."

"But—they're all receipted—paid in full," whispered old Bill weakly.

"They are!" Will put down the last bundle and closed the box.

"You, Willy?" the old man exclaimed. "Where did you get the money to do it? Mr. Turner, perhaps? Marrying his daughter—"

"No." Will shook his head. "The screen company," he said.

"What? You saved it?" his father gasped.

"No, I sold it nineteen years ago to the Cleveland Window Products Company," was the quiet answer.

"I don't understand," wailed old Bill faintly. "How'd you come to sell to the Cleveland people and—get your start—when they sent me a wire saying they didn't care to buy?"

"You were in such a hurry to get away, you couldn't wait for Bricksmith and McNabb to reach Paris. If you'd only waited twenty-four hours, all your heartache—and Mother's—of the past nineteen years might have been avoided."

Incredulously old Bill took the telegram which his son held out to him.

"I've saved that," Will said. "Read it!"

Old Bill took the fateful message in a trembling hand. He read exactly what he had read that last night in Paris, nineteen years before:

Cleveland, Ohio, June 10, 1903.
William Galloway, Esq.,
Paris, Vt.

Accepting your offer impossible. Move factory too expensive. No use your coming to see us. Sorry. Decision delayed owing embarrassment Mr. McNabb leaving Cleveland organization to assume management another factory. Man to take his place difficult to procure. Trust you find purchaser. Agreeable price is right but without McNabb, Paris plant would be too much for us to take on at present.

A. A. Bricksmith.

Old Bill looked up, puzzled.

"Don't you see, Dad? Don't you see anything when you are told that the 'other factory' mentioned in the wire, was our factory which McNabb was to run?"

The white-haired man read the wire again.

"No," he said. "That don't make much difference."

"Well, Dad, the tragedy of that wire lies in the fact that it arrived in the local office in one long series of words with no punctuation. A dunderheaded operator tried to make sense by dividing it where he thought it should be divided. Let me punctuate it properly. *Now* read it!"

Cleveland, Ohio, June 10, 1903.
William Galloway, Esq.,
Paris, Vt.

Accepting your offer. Impossible move factory. Too expensive. No use your coming to see us. Sorry decision delayed. Owing embarrassment Mr. McNabb leaving Cleveland organization to assume management another factory, man to take his place difficult to procure. Trust you find purchaser agreeable. Price is right but without McNabb Paris plant would be too much for us to take on at present.

A. A. Bricksmith.

Use the cold cream that is made with a specially light oil—You will love the way it leaves your skin feeling fresh and supple

Cleanse with this specially light cream

Feel the difference in your skin—instantly

HAVE you the fresh smooth skin you would like to have, or is your complexion dull, lifeless? Just the care you give it makes all the difference. Unless you keep it always fresh and pliant, it grows duller and coarser every year.

For real freshness and brilliancy in these days of city soot and dirt, you must give your skin much more than the ordinary washing. Pond's Cold Cream was specially developed to meet this need for a thorough yet soft cleansing. It contains exactly the right amount and kind of oil to penetrate the pores and bring out every dulling dirt particle that has worked itself in.

If your skin is too dry it will absorb just the amount of oil it needs—become soft and smooth as you like to have it. And the superfluous fat of excessively oily skins is removed with the dirt by this fine oil. Your face will be fresh, stimulated. It will have a delightful smoothness.

This thorough cleansing never leaves your skin rough or heavy with cream. It is the special light consistency of Pond's Cold Cream that makes you definitely prefer it to the heavier creams. Smooth on this cream every night. Let it stay a minute, then wipe it off on a soft cloth. The difference in the feel of your skin will charm you.

* * *

Of course, to keep your complexion perfectly smooth and brilliant another cream is absolutely necessary for daytime use, a cream without a drop of oil. Even when you are most fatigued Pond's Vanishing Cream will freshen your skin instantly, take away the tired drawnness, leaving it soft and velvety. Your powder, too, will cling for hours to its smooth surface. At the same time this wonderful cream protects you from the ageing effects of repeated exposure to sun, cold, wind.

Both creams are so finely proportioned they cannot clog the pores. Neither will promote the growth of hair. The Pond's Extract Company, New York.

GENEROUS TUBES—MAIL COUPON TODAY

The Pond's Extract Co.,
133M- Hudson St., New York

Ten cents (10c) is enclosed for your special introductory tubes of the two creams every normal skin needs—enough of each cream for two weeks' ordinary toilet uses.

Name_____

Street_____

City_____ State_____

TERROR

(Continued from page 65)

crouched, her almost hypnotic stare never for an instant leaving the partition which instinct and scent told her formed the only barrier between herself and a vengeful, destructive monster. Nor was even instinct needed now, for Streak had also caught the new scent!

A grotesque thing, like a creature of some ugly dream, he paced his narrow cell, his head swaying slowly on his massive shoulders, the pupils of his eyes mere black slits in a field of green-yellow. The tongue was extended from an open mouth, and over it seethed an almost constant hiss—the expulsive breathing of an animal which realized its victim was within striking distance, yet beyond reach. He faced the bars, moved snakily along them, then halted at the partition, belly touching the floor.

A claw-studded paw lifted and scratched experimentally. Then, slowly the beast rose, and, braced against the partition, sniffed at the tiny interstices of the boarding, as though seeking an opening, while on the other side, the puma pressed herself harder against the bars at the cage corner, and trembled.

"Hope that new den gets here pretty quick," the superintendent observed. "Don't like this scrapping between cats. Come on, let's move Nomad into the Beauty den."

"Huh!" answered Dummy. They moved away. But neither Beauty nor the malevolent thing on the other side of the partition took notice. Instinct was in command: terror for one, for the other, constant assault and repulse, assault and repulse, as Streak strove to reach his victim.

He was leaping, a half-clumsy, yet wonderfully graceful thing, crashing against the partition, clawing at it, bounding away again that he might gather his muscles for a new attack, then plunging forward in even fiercer onslaughts.

Across the way, Dummy and the menagerie-superintendent accomplished the establishment of the new tiger in the cage which once had been Beauty's, then strolled back to the den which housed the jaguar and the puma.

"Sure going at it," the menagerie-superintendent mused. "Guess he'll calm down, though, after a while."

THE time for the night performance came—and still Streak pounded at that wooden wall which blocked him. The rush of loading-out arrived, and with it the placing of sideboards on the den—still Streak did not desist. On the other side of that wooden wall was something instinct told him to hate; a red spot was growing in his brain; a frenzy was taking possession of his whole being. Again and again he lunged—while on the other side, another cat-beast, her night-eyes gleaming in the darkness, ceased not for an instant to gaze at the wall which alone meant her salvation.

The rumbling journey along the torch-guided way to the cars, the rattle of pull-up chains, and the sturdy plodding of the loading horses—neither animal sensed these. The razorbacks went about their work shouting heedlessly—for one more cage meant only one more canvas-covered vehicle to consume the space afforded by the waiting flat-cars; the pounding of the jungle battle within meant little to them. Only a couple o' cats, anyway.

The shriek of the "highball" sounded from the engine of the first section up ahead, followed by the wheeze of releasing brakes as on into the night rolled the circus train, its shrouded cages rocking atop the flats, its workmen lounging beneath them in the coolness of the night breeze. But within one den, the attack continued—sally and retreat, crash and repulse, while on the other side of a wooden wall a panting beast crouched against the bars and waited.

IT was the beginning of an all-night struggle: for the jaguar, with the boarded barrier which held it from its prey; for the puma, with the fear of a destroying thing which it could not see, yet whose closeness it felt and heard. Hour after hour, this continued, while the train ground along with mile-eating speed, or loafed on the sidetracks, awaiting the passage of some "drag" more favored by the dispatcher's office. Dawn came to the sleeping figures beneath the flat-cars. Arrival-time came, and the bumping and whistling and signaling of "spotting" as the cars went on the team-tracks. Steel shrieked against steel as the unloading runs slid into place and the cookhouse wagons, their tops clustered with waiters and helpers and chefs, pulled away through the gray light toward the circus lot. In other dens, lions and tigers and leopards sprawled contentedly in sleep—but there was none of this where the jaguar still lunged and the puma still trembled—only wakeful anguish and unceasing effort; *and the nails were beginning to loosen!*

Sensitive paws had felt splinters where the fastenings had penetrated. The leaps of the plunging jaguar now brought a different sound—a slight rattle; and now the wall trembled after each impact. Slight—almost imperceptible was that trembling—but Beauty saw it. Her tongue hung over her teeth now, and froth lay in the folds of her underlip.

Two hours later an elephant pushed the still shrouded cage into position in the menagerie tent to await the half-hour call for parade. Fifteen minutes more, and darkness within the cage became light as the menagerie-men lowered the sideboards. Dummy came forward to stare for a moment in inspection.

"Huh!" he grunted, and turned for a whistling signal. The menagerie-superintendent approached, saw, and gave a command:

"Better use bigger nails next time. Shift that jaguar out and go in and fix it—make a whole new one. Might as well just knock that one out—don't try to save it."

They need not fade or yellow—*washed this way your pretty blouses keep their color*

They were the very last word in chic—your jacket blouse of demure printed crepe, that breezy slip-on model that went with you round the golf course, to say nothing of your costume blouse so rich in color!

And then—they had their very first laundering. Out they came a sorry, bedraggled sight. Colors streaked and faded, yellowed beyond all hope of salvaging.

Just one careless laundering can make any blouse lose its nice new look.

Don't let your pretty new blouses turn into old ones. Wash them with Lux. Follow the directions on this page—directions recommended by the maker of more than a million blouses.

Cut out this page and keep it. You will find you want to refer to it all the time.

No color too brilliant—no weave too frail

Colors that used to seem too difficult to launder, brilliant all-over patterns, even these are safe in Lux suds.

Lovely weaves—not to be resisted—come from these feathery suds with never a fragile thread fuzzed up or broken.

Not once but any number of times you can wash your pretty blouses with Lux without fear of harm to their freshness and color. Lux won't fade or streak them; it won't destroy the luster of beautiful silken fabrics or harm the soft finish of fine cottons. If your blouse is safe in water alone it is just as safe in Lux.

How to keep blouses from fading

Make sure that pure water alone will not harm your blouse.

Whisk one tablespoonful of Lux into a thick lather in half a washbowl of very hot water. Add cold water till lukewarm. Press suds repeatedly through garment. Use fresh suds for each color. Wash very quickly. Rinse in 3 lukewarm waters. Squeeze water out—do not wring. Roll in towel. When nearly dry, press with a warm iron—never a hot one. Be careful to press satins with the nap.

For their own protection—they recommend Lux

Belding Bros. & Co. Silks
Mallinson Silks
Roessel Silks
Skinner Satins
Forsythe Blouses
Vanity Fair Silk Underwear
Dove Under-garments
Model Brassieres
McCallum Hosiery
"Onyx" Hosiery
McCutcheon Linens
D. & J. Anderson Ginghams
Betty Wales Dresses
Mildred Louise Dresses
Pacific Mills Printed Cottons
North Star Blankets
Ascher's Knit Goods
Carter's Knit Underwear
Jaeger Woolens
The Fleisher Yarns
Orinoka Guaranteed Sunfast Draperies
Puritan Mills Draperies

Send today for free booklet of expert laundering advice, "How to Launder Silks, Woolens, Fine Cottons and Linens." Lever Bros. Co., Dept. 88, Cambridge, Mass.

The new way to wash dishes

Won't roughen hands

Lux for washing dishes! *At last* you can wash them without coarsening your hands. Even though they are in the dishpan an hour and a half every day, Lux won't harm them. It is as easy on your hands as fine toilet soap.

Just one teaspoonful to a pan is all you need! A single package does at least 54 dishwashings. Try it.

Swift-working menagerie-men! Swifter working feeding-forks which streaked between the bars on the jaguar's side, fending him back toward the open door, where waited a shifting den, that he might be taken from his prison to permit the necessary repairs. He howled and roared and hissed—then slunk within his new prison as the steel of the forks bit deep. But Beauty did not move. She still crouched there, watching.

"Want to take her out too?" an attendant asked.

Dummy shook his head. It was needless. Beauty was a pet. He crawled within the cage.

Beauty shook with fear. A new sound had come from the other side of that wall—more ominous, a more threatening sound than ever. Nails eased from their sockets; the rattle of looseness increased! A low, moaning sound came from Beauty's throat—her head sagged for a moment; the tongue protruded farther. Then suddenly, the nails seemed to leap out at her.

ON his side of the light partition, Dummy Breen had tossed aside his hammer and launched a kick. He tried again, and for a third time. The nails were nearly all loose now, but the partition still stood—its sides caught against a steel upright. Nor could Dummy know that on the other side a crouching cat still watched. Dummy grunted. He grasped the bars tighter and again launched his attack, throwing the whole weight of his body in the flat-footed kick. Once again—and twice more after that. Then, suddenly, the partition went down, and Dummy followed, stumbling through—to halt, poised and staring. He whistled then, and the menagerie-superintendent came forward. A thin finger went out—pointing toward a cat which lay hard pressed against the bars, forelegs cramped under her, long tongue still lolling over a foam-flecked lip. The superintendent scratched his chin.

"Well, what do you know about that?" he said, as if to himself. "Dead!"

THE CLUB OF ONE-EYED MEN

(Continued from page 41)

his dress was much improved, that he had been to a barber, made no difference. In that first moment of shock, when I had realized that all these loiterers on the sidewalk were blind, the features of those whom I beheld were ineradicably impressed upon my memory.

All my resolutions, that I would worry no more about Higgins and the White Eagle, left me. Indeed, I watched eagerly for the arrival of the supercrook. But he did not come, though I waited until the last moment before the train started.

I strolled through the train shortly after we pulled out from the station. The Higgins party occupied two private compartments, as I could tell from the half-opened doors. The one-eyed man shared a compartment with three other people, American tourists.

The one-eyed man, then, was not part of the Higgins entourage. He had exchanged no signs of recognition with the millionaire as they passed through the train gates, although they had been close enough to touch each other.

Puzzled, bewildered, almost frantic because I could not peer through curtains behind which, I was convinced, a play of vital significance to me was being performed, I rode to Cherbourg. I was no wiser at the end of the railway journey. Indeed, I was no wiser six days later when the *Altaria* was only a night out from her dock in New York.

DURING those six days I had observed, as closely as I could without drawing attention to myself, Higgins and the one-eyed man. But although nearly every one of the first-class passengers, including myself, exchanged words, at some time or other, with the millionaire, the one-eyed man never, to my knowledge, even exchanged a look with Higgins. The one-eyed man kept to himself; whenever he walked the deck, he was alone; he never seemed to utter more than monosyllables to his table-mates in the saloon; he neither offered nor accepted hospitality in the smoke-room, but drank alone.

On the night before we landed, I attended the concert in the lounge. I sat with a couple of chance acquaintances near the door, where we watched the various arrivals, exchanged banter with them, and gossiped, after the fashion of travelers, about their manners, appearances, probable income, and flirtations during the voyage. Then, as Mr. and Mrs. Higgins passed through the wide doors, we all three gasped.

Higgins was worthy of note. His white waistcoat was fastened with emerald buttons; he wore a solitaire diamond on one hand that must have weighed a dozen carats and been worth a fortune. A solid rope of diamonds hung from his watch pocket, supporting a ruby fob.

His vulgarities had formed the basis of half the smoke-room talk during the trip, but this ostentation, in excessively bad taste, outdid anything else. But he was diffident as compared with his wife.

It was not alone that her gown was cut so low that one blushed with vicarious shame, wondering that so ill-formed a woman should care to expose her muddy flesh. It was not that her jewels were so expensive, even; it was that she wore such an unbelievable number of them. She seemed plastered with precious stones, until one forgot how low her dress was cut. I had read of her jewels, but had assumed that the newspaper writers had been guilty of the usual Sunday supplement exaggeration. Now I knew that they had been restrained.

And one jewel, a pearl hanging from a chain until it rested like a round white grape upon her bosom, held my fascinated eyes. It drew my companions' attention too, for one of them, Brokaw by name, mentioned it.

"Get the pearl?" he whispered. "Got any idea what that thing's worth?"

I shook my head. "I know," he said. "I was in Maret's on the Rue de la Paix, the day they bought it. Me," he chuckled, "buying a thousand-franc brooch to take home to the Missus, and thinking what a hit I'd make with her! And in comes Higgins and his wife, and at the top of his lungs old Josiah declares that he's come for the Ranee's Pearl, and that he's brought his check for a million francs with him. Believe me, friends, I almost died with shame to think how I'd been haggling over my little brooch. I paid what they asked, apologized for annoying them, and sneaked out. One million francs, and no matter what the exchange is, that's *money!*"

I admitted that it was. "But it's not extremely large," I said.

"It's as big as your eye," he declared. "And it's the most perfect pearl of its size in existence. I heard Maret jabbering about it. Some Indian princess went bust and sold it." He whistled. "He'll have to pay another chunk of money tomorrow, at the Customs, when he shows them that bit of junk. That'll break his heart. He sure hates to spend a nickel where it wont show, the old tight-wad."

I agreed with him, sighing as I did so, thinking how well I could use the money represented by that pearl. Indeed, the thought was so agonizing that I left the lounge long before the concert was over, seeking solace in the smoke-room.

The room was deserted, save for the one-eyed man. Unwilling to arouse any latent suspicion in him, I had hitherto refrained from accosting him. But now I nodded pleasantly to him. It was my last chance to make his acquaintance, and I had not yet given up the idea that here was opportunity.

But when I followed my nod with an invitation to join me in a pint of champagne, he brusquely refused. His one good eye shot a suspicious glance at me. I noted that that eye was gray, and that his glass eye matched the other.

Rebuffed, I made no further effort. I drank my wine, rose, took a turn around the deck, and went to my stateroom. I immediately undressed and went to bed, finally convinced that whatever the mystery of Higgins, the White Eagle and the one-eyed man, it was beyond my power to solve and profit by it.

SOMEWHERE along toward dawn, I was aroused by pounding at my door. I climbed from my bed, threw a dressing-gown over my pajamas, and opened the door. A ship's officer stood there.

"Sorry, sir," he said, "but would you mind coming to the lounge?"

"What's the idea?" I asked. "Ship on fire or something?"

He smiled deprecatingly. "Nothing like that, sir, but one of the passengers has lost some jewelry. Rather a valuable trinket."

"Well, what's that to do with me?" I demanded.

"Nothing, sir, I hope," he replied. "But the gentleman insists that all persons who passed by the door of his cabin tonight submit to a search. It's Mr. Higgins, sir—his wife's pearl; you and three

How to keep your hair soft and silky, full of life and lustre, bright and fresh-looking

Why proper shampooing makes your hair beautiful

ANYONE can have beautiful hair, if it is cared for properly.

Shampooing is the most important thing.

Proper shampooing is what brings out all the real life and lustre, the natural wave and color, and makes your hair soft, fresh and luxuriant.

Proper shampooing, however, means more than just washing your hair—it means thorough cleansing.

The hair and scalp are constantly secreting oily, gummy substances. These substances catch the dust and dirt, and the hair becomes coated with this.

This coating, when it becomes excessive, naturally dulls the hair and destroys its gloss and lustre. It covers up and prevents the natural color and beauty of the hair from showing. It also causes scales and dandruff.

How to prevent this coating

To have beautiful hair, you must prevent this coating from accumulating.

This cannot be done with ordinary soaps not adapted for the purpose. Besides, the hair cannot stand the harsh effect of free alkali which is common in ordinary soaps. The free alkali soon dries the scalp, makes the hair brittle and ruins it.

Mulsified cocoanut oil shampoo is not only especially adapted to cleanse the hair and scalp thoroughly, but it cannot possibly injure. This clear, pure and entirely greaseless product does not dry the scalp or make the hair brittle, no matter how often you use it.

The quick, easy way

Two or three teaspoonfuls of Mulsified in a cup or glass with a little warm water is all that is required.

Simply pour the Mulsified evenly over the hair and rub it in. It makes an abundance of rich, creamy lather, which rinses out quickly and easily, removing every particle of dust, dirt, dandruff and excess oil.

After a Mulsified shampoo you will find the hair will dry quickly and evenly and have the appearance of being much thicker and heavier than it really is. It keeps the scalp soft and healthy, the hair fine and silky, bright, fresh-looking and fluffy, wavy and easy to manage.

Splendid for children—Fine for men.

You can get Mulsified at any drug store or toilet goods counter, anywhere in the world. A 4-ounce bottle should last for months.

Mulsified

REG. U.S. PAT. OFF.

Cocoanut Oil Shampoo

Coriolanus Said A Bookful

CORIOLANUS, the great Roman warrior,—it's all according to how you read—was very much of a braggart; also a good deal of a baby. In a couple of his battles he was lucky enough to get two or three spear punctures. Whenever afterwards he was assailed in the Senate for various indiscretions, he had a habit of baring his breast and saying, "Look upon my wounds, my *Roman* wounds!" This sob stuff got him by for a long time; but at last he had to run. Then he joined with the Volscians against his own country.

TAKEN as a whole, Coriolanus was what modern Broadway would call a bad actor. He gave voice to just one utterance, however, that should stick. At one time in his early life his admirers planned to hang a title on him. To this he consented but he objected, for some foolish reason, to ten talents of gold offered with it. In making the objection he said:

> "It is a high accomplishment to use money well; but not to need it is more lasting than to use it."

THIS is a brilliant thought. It is a bit of wisdom that every life insurance beneficiary will vouch for. There is no higher accomplishment than to carry life insurance. The natural need of money by many widows and orphans is also alleviated by this same high accomplishment. Are you insured?

other gentlemen have cabins in this corridor. To reach your rooms you have to pass by the Higgins' suite. The steward on watch swears that no other people have entered the corridor since Mr. and Mrs. Higgins retired."

"And because I happen to have a cabin in the same quarter of the ship with Higgins, I'm to be insulted by that swine, am I?" I cried.

The officer became more apologetic. "Swine is right, sir, but I hope you'll make it easy for us. Of course, you have a right to refuse, but that will only cause trouble on the dock. The captain presents his compliments, sir, and hopes that you will waive your rights, and help him to avoid scandal for the ship's sake."

"If you put it that way, to oblige the captain—certainly," said I.

I followed him down the corridor, across an open space and into the lounge. There were Mr. and Mrs. Higgins and their servants; also there were two Englishmen, with whom I had struck up a casual acquaintance, and to whom I nodded now. And then I saw the third of the gentlemen to whom the ship's officer had referred. It was the one-eyed man.

WE all submitted to a search. We handed over the keys of our baggage to an officer. Half an hour later he returned with the statement that he had searched all our effects and found no trace of the missing pearl. Then one of the Englishmen did what I had been wanting to do. He walked over to Higgins.

"We've heard your story," he said. "You returned from the concert, you and your wife. She took off her jewels and laid them on a table in her cabin. She then went into your cabin, to talk to you. When she returned to her own room, five minutes later, the Ranee's Pearl was gone. Some one had opened the door and stolen it."

"And it must have been some one in one of the cabins on the corridor," cried Higgins.

"That's what you say," said the Englishman. "It doesn't matter to a vulgar beast like you that you insult your betters. Now, we've all been searched, and none of us has your filthy pearl. I merely want to tell you that I'm glad you lost it, and that I hope the loss teaches you and your wife the vulgarity of ostentation. Good evening, sir."

He turned on his heel, followed by his compatriot, and stalked, with what dignity a man in a bathrobe may achieve, from the lounge.

The one-eyed man came close to Higgins, and in rapid French assailed him. And then, suddenly, I understood. Not Higgins' manner told me; the plutocrat acted his part too well. But the light of one of the electric lamps flashed on the Frenchman's face, and the mystery that had been puzzling me for a week was solved at last.

I went back to bed, neither reproaching Higgins, nor paying any attention to his perfunctory apologies. I slept soundly, happily, as one should who knows that on the morrow he will acquire a fortune.

With the other passengers I disem-

Modern Corporations prefer to recruit the executive staff from the ranks wherever possible. "Given two men of equal experience, the trained man is the man to promote," said the President of one $20,000,000 industry.

Have they got you safely tagged?

AGAIN AND AGAIN, in directors' rooms, this conversation is heard:

FIRST DIRECTOR: "I wonder whether the man we are looking for isn't in our own organization? How about Madison?"

SECOND DIRECTOR: "I don't see how we could consider him. He is just a salesman" or "He is just an accountant" or "He is just an engineer."

So Madison, who has made a creditable record, is passed over in favor of someone from the outside. His job has tagged him and pigeonholed him. He has done the work well for which his superiors employed him but they think of him as a fixture in that work.

A man who refused to be tagged

One of the outstanding young business men of the Pacific Coast is John W. Sparling of Seattle. He is senior partner in the firm of Sparling and Clark, manager of Pacific Ports, Inc., and he is chairman of the State Board of Accountancy, yet he has not passed his thirtieth birthday.

How does a man reach such a position of responsibility and profit at so early an age? He began in the accounting department of a large company, and might easily have continued to be hidden there for the rest of his business life. But looking around him he saw the tags being tied constantly and more firmly onto men; he saw the danger of letting it be said, "Sparling is a good accountant, but of course he's just an accountant." He determined to do something while he still had youth and energy to keep himself from being tagged.

The "something" consisted in

Sending for "Forging Ahead in Business"

In the pages of "Forging Ahead in Business," a booklet published and distributed by the Alexander Hamilton Institute, Mr. Sparling read the story of the Modern Business Course and Service. He made a decision then, and three years later, he wrote this letter:

"It has been on my mind for some time to write and express to you my sincere appreciation of the assistance and inspiration your Service has been to me in the past few years.

"When I enrolled for the Modern Business Course and Service I had been specializing for some time in accounting. The deeper I got into it the more I realized the danger of specializing too much. I could feel that I was creating a limitation for myself. . . . I realized that to make a really large success in business I must be able to *read the story back of all the figures* that were to come under my supervision, and not be content to be merely a good compiler of figures. . . ."

The executive wears no tag

The Alexander Hamilton Institute gave him the thing he needed. It did not make him a salesman, but it gave him the fundamentals of merchandising and sales management; it did not make him a factory superintendent or office manager, but it taught him the essentials of factory and office control; it did not make him a banker, but it gave him the outstanding principles of corporation finance. It fitted him to be an executive—to employ specialists and direct them.

That is the service of the Alexander Hamilton Institute in a nutshell. It takes the man who is in danger of being tagged as "only a salesman" or " only an engineer" and provides him with a working knowledge of every other department of business. Such information makes itself apparent in every talk between a man and his superiors; it is the one certain means of attracting notice and inviting promotion.

Send for the book he sent for

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barked next day. I submitted to the usual examination of my baggage. I saw the reporters buzzing about the Higginses, and knew that the afternoon headlines would be devoted to the loss of the precious Ranee's Pearl. I chuckled as I thought of the story that could be written, but would not be printed in the newspapers. You see, I had no doubt as to my success. I had pierced the disguise of Opportunity.

Outside the Customs shed I followed the porter with my baggage to a taxi. I told the chauffeur to drive my things to the Hotel Regina, took his number to assure myself of his honesty, and then waited. In a few minutes the one-eyed man arrived. His porter handed his bags to a taxi driver. The one-eyed man climbed into the cab.

And I climbed in after him. He would have expostulated, save that I pressed something against his ribs, the something being the muzzle of an automatic pistol. The driver did not see this byplay, and when I told him that I would accompany his passenger, made no objection. He closed the door upon us, climbed into his seat and started the cab.

"What do you want?" demanded the one-eyed man.

I smiled cheerfully at him. "Your right eye," I told him. I pressed the pistol muzzle harder against his chest. "No use in crying out; it would be jail for you even if you lived," I warned him.

There, in the center of crowded West Street, he removed his glass eye and handed it to me. At the next corner I knocked on the window, and the chauffeur stopped. I alighted, waved an airy adieu to my one-eyed friend, and strolled blithely across town, a little later to pick up a taxi and drive to the Regina.

Afraid of pursuit? Had I not already conquered the one-eyed man? Afraid of the police? Would Higgins, who had conspired at the simulation of a robbery, in order to avoid the payment of a tremendous duty, confess his own attempt at crime?

For the minute that I had discovered the whereabouts of the Ranee's Pearl, I understood why Higgins had discussed business with the White Eagle. The millionaire's notorious parsimony had caused him to invoke the supercrook's aid at defrauding the Customs. That was the only possible explanation of all that had bewildered me.

How had I discovered the whereabouts of the pearl? Simply enough: the one-eyed man's glass eye had been gray in the smoke-room; it was green when the electric light flashed upon it in the lounge. Instantly I understood why the White Eagle had printed his bizarre advertisement. Among the applicants for membership in his club, he had found the criminal willing to aid him, in his furtherance of the desire of Josiah Higgins to defraud his government.

Would the one-eyed man have returned the pearl to Higgins later on, or would he have delivered it to the White Eagle? Would there have been honor among these thieves?

Ask me some easier question. Ask me, for instance, what I did when I arrived at my room in the Regina. I will tell you: I deftly took apart the two halves of the green glass eye which had been surrendered to me, and I kissed the Ranee's Pearl.

I had been right in my theory. Where the carrion lies, the vulture flies.

"Button, Button," another strange adventure of a gentleman turned crook, will be described by Arthur Somers Roche in an early issue.

FREEDOM

(Continued from page 80)

Judas!' That's what he said. I struck him, and they ironed me. They was for takin' me back. . . . . I broke away. On a wild night I took the dinghy and come here. They thought I was drowned. Only because o' that I'm safe. They'd hunt me down if they knew I was here. They'd know me. There was the irons—"

Pelliot turned his eyes slowly on the other. He seemed abstracted, like a man half awake. "That was how you got your fire, then," he said musingly.

He leaned forward, turned back Lewen's ragged sleeve, and exposed the ring of a handcuff thrust far up the arm. "There's flints on the beach," he said absently. Then: "So you—aint comin'?"

"As God's my judge," said Lewen in a strange wail, "it's death if any man sees me and knows me."

Pelliot began to tremble. "And me?"

"I wont hinder your goin'. So help me, I wont hinder you. I'll trust you!"

Without a word, Pelliot began to crawl down the slope toward the beach.

FLAT under the edge of the rata, Lewen watched him.

Once he looked back. Lewen said aloud clearly: "It can't be done. I'd be known." His great hands twitched as he suppressed the instinct to run and help the little man. Now and then his haggard eyes blurred. He muttered advice that Pelliot could not possibly hear. "Keep to the left, mate. Easy does it. Mind the place where the stones slide. Easy, now. Take it sideways and let yourself go."

Pelliot crawled on, dragging his broken leg. He moved inch by inch, it seemed to Lewen. He was a weakly little man, after all. He was grunting with agony, sick with faintness. Perhaps he was not fitted for a diet of sea-birds' eggs and fish. He could see the men below on the beach, gathered about the cutter. They had not scattered. He wondered what they had come for. He shouted to them, but his voice was a hoarse whisper. He crawled on feverishly.

He fixed his eyes on a stone, dragged himself up to it; rested a moment, fixed his eyes on a tussock, dragged himself to that; rested once more, gained a tuft of leaves, and sank face-down in them. With a great effort he crawled on again, on and on—on toward life and safety and everything that made the world.

DO YOU KNOW WHY
THE GEAR-SHIFT IS DIFFERENT?

The design of Dodge Brothers gear-shift takes into consideration the natural inclinations of the driver.

To start, you throw the lever forward. To reverse, you pull the lever backward. And when the car is running in high gear—which is about ninety per cent of the time—the lever is in a forward position, out of the way, where it does not interfere with passengers, robes, or luggage.

Moreover, the transmission, developed and patented by Dodge Brothers, is so designed that the countershaft—used in intermediate speeds and in reverse—is disconnected when the car is in high. There are no gears in mesh. Power is transmitted directly from clutch to rear axle.

This exclusive feature prevents the loss of power through friction, reduces gear-box noises and eliminates a vast amount of wear.

That is why the gear-shift of Dodge Brothers Motor Car *is different.*

DODGE BROTHERS

The price of the Business Coupe is $980 f. o. b. Detroit

He looked. A man was lifting himself over the gunwale of the boat.

He screamed. Terror went through him like a flame. He made no more sound than a mollymawk crying. The wind whipped his appeal away, wiped it out. His agony, his sufferings, his prayers were nothing. He was alone between the merciless sky and the merciless sea, all alone, and the boat would not wait.

His face was gray-white and running as with water. "I—can't do it, I can't do it," he whispered. "I'm done. I'm beat. I'm dyin'. I can't get down there. I can't make them hear."

He struck a frantic blow at the broken leg that was his ruin, dropped his head on his arms, and broke into desperate tears.

A shadow, a presence, fell on him. He looked up.

Lewen stood at his great height beside him. And as he met Pelliot's eyes, he smiled.

"I forgot the leg, matey," he said gently. "Don't you worry. I'll carry you down."

He stooped. In a great silence, a great quiet from which even the wind and the sea receded, Pelliot's arms went round his neck—the neck of the man who had murdered Henderson at Cossack. Carrying him, Lewen began to run with mighty leaps down the steep slope to the beach. He shouted, and his voice went before him like a trumpet. He saw the little white gleams of faces cocked up suddenly from about the boat.

They were seen.

He rushed on, shouting, with Pelliot's arms about his neck.

PURE REASON HIGGS

(Continued from page 88)

English—"ver' well. He iss one beeg fool. Now he weel to be keeled."

"Mr. President!" gasped Higgs. He abandoned the Spanish language and with it his formal calm. "Mr. President! You know Palmer? He's a good fellow, really. It was just a—a bit of horseplay. Tell the officer—Palmer will apologize—"

The President shrugged his shoulders—watching the desperate Palmer dash from cover to cover, turning, twisting, once diving almost under the Comandante's very hand. A faint grin came on Alvarez' dark, handsome face. This was better than a bull-fight. *"Bravo el toro!"* he cried. *"Bravo,* the bull!" He meant Palmer!

You may cheer a valiant bull, but that does not put you on record against the bull-fighter. "Don Angel weel cer-tainly to keel heem," he added with impersonal satisfaction. Yes, that was the Comandante's name—Angel!

THE end came suddenly. Peaceful whirled past the President, and as he went, he clutched the arm of Mr. Higgs to give himself turning purchase. Mr. Higgs braced himself manfully; but he was no heavyweight, and the floor was slippery. He went skating squarely into the arms of pursuing vengeance. The Comandante's feet shot from under him, and they went down with a shock that shook the floor.

"Run, Peaceful," gasped Mr. Higgs, and rolled over and threw himself on the prostrate form of the Law. "I've got him. Run!"

"Yes, I will," panted Palmer, "I don't think! You've got him, but how are you going to turn him loose?"

There, indeed, was the rub. Any of us could have tripped the Comandante and sat on him—for a minute; but after that? He was the Law!

The hand of Mr. Higgs fell on the Comandante's face, and the back of the Comandante's head audibly resumed contact with the floor. "Be still," said Mr. Higgs fretfully. "I want to think!"

You could tell at once that the Comandante did not understand English, for he was anything but still. There was a flurry of arms and legs, and then something flashed from Mr. Higgs' pocket and gleamed at the Comandante's throat.

"Be still!"

The Comandante acquired a sudden comprehension of at least two words of English. A tremor passed through his frame, and he was still. He was reputed to be familiar with the effect of sharp edges on the human throat. He was very, very still.

"Don Angel," panted Higgs in that limping Spanish of his, "the people—tell them—stand back. Quickly!"

"Stand back!" implored Don Angel. Think no shame of him, you who admire the manly fortitudes that should go with hair on the face. Imagine yourself flat upon your back, bestridden by a goggled maniac with red blotches on his white face—feeling sharp death in the tender flesh under your jaw. "Stand back — quickly — quickly!" begged the Comandante.

But stealthily his right hand fumbled for his revolver, which lay two inches beyond his reach. Peaceful snatched it up. "We'll hold 'em, Higgsy," he grunted. "I don't know where we get off, but I'm with you. Just—just remember you're a white man, Higgsy!" It is not in Anglo-Saxon flesh to resist a shudder at cold steel.

In all, some thirty seconds elapsed between the Comandante's fall and his passing forever from our midst.

"A pretty, a handsome mustache," said the maniac Higgs, and laid hold on that proud ornament of the Comandante's face. "I shall—*cortar*—cut it off." A spasm of protest agitated the Comandante's legs, quickly subsiding—no doubt for reasons closely concerning the Comandante's throat. "Only one side of it," said Higgs considerately. "You may hold—keep the other."

"Por Dios, no!" groaned the anguished Don Angel. *"Ay, Dios,* let it not be!" Truly half a mustache has little decorative value.

"Then promise," said Higgs in his groping Spanish, "to leave my friend—forever—lonesome—"

"Alone!" amended Palmer, struggling

A Few Reflections In Regard to Hupmobile

EVERY MAN is an advocate of his own car in sheer self-defense unless and until it becomes intolerable.

But if you could dig down into the minds of the overwhelming majority of men who own cars, you would find that nearly all of them believe implicitly in the Hupmobile.

If they could indulge in the luxury of entire frankness without casting doubt on their own choice, they would probably say: Buy a Hupmobile.

This general attitude toward the Hupmobile is rare enough to be worth recording, because it goes to the very root of wise automobile buying.

It could not exist—this general habit of making an exception in favor of Hupmobile high quality—if the exceptional qualities themselves did not exist in the Hupmobile.

People in the mass do not continue to see superiorities in a motor car over a long period of years, unless the superiorities are actually there.

And it is an indisputable fact that motorists in the mass do spontaneously, continuously testify to merits in the Hupmobile which make it the wisest, soundest purchase possible in its class.

IT is interesting to look back and see how Hupmobile sales have steadily advanced for fifteen years.

The Hupmobile business was neither conceived, nor developed, on the theory of huge volume, but rather on the conviction that Hupmobile would make itself known and fix a firm place for itself through downright merit.

AND Hupmobile's total sales have gone steadily up, up, up,—its market constantly broadening—a sound, substantial, *permanent* thing.

All of these things should interest the buyer, because they represent precisely what he is looking for when his mind holds fast to the one safe principle of all sound buying.

By the one safe principle of all sound buying we mean the principle of proven value as it exists in any good product such as the Hupmobile.

Hupmobile

with sudden emotion. "Promise to leave us alone. Promise never to molest any of us. From now on. No? Cut it off, Señor Higgs!"

"No!" bawled the Comandante. "Yes! It is done. I promise. Desist! Get up! Release me! I promise!"

"Mr. President," cried Higgs, and extended his weapon toward President Alvarez in the manner of a gladiator cailing on Nero to decide the fate of a fallen foe, "Mr. President, you witness that promise?"

President Alvarez, tiptoeing and craning like any ordinary mortal behind the burly shoulders that blocked him off, broke suddenly between Shirtless Walker and Hop White and snatched that weapon from the hand of Mr. Higgs. He felt it, examined it, and between thumb and forefinger held it high.

"Señoras y caballeros," he cried, "witness!"

Then he began to laugh; and after him on the silence of dread exploded feminine giggles and masculine whoops. Like fire in the grass it spread, that laugh. In twenty-four hours it rocked the city; and within the week it had wafted the Comandante forever into that state known as innocuous desuetude. He was a bad man, the Comandante, but to avenge himself on all who laughed would have depopulated Quetzal.

Don Angel Escobar, dread embodiment of the Law—Don Angel, mankiller—had howled for mercy at the hands of a spectacled stripling who threatened to trim his mustache with a silver-plated fountain pen.

"I'M sick," said Higgs, wabbling on his feet.

So we escorted him tenderly to the bar and gave him a drink. His face was whiter than ever; even his freckles were pale, and drops of perspiration stood on his forehead. Behind us crowded the more curious of the witnesses to the great joke.

"It's hot. It's awful," gasped Higgs.

So we gave him another drink.

"Why in thunder," demanded Walker, "did you take a chance like that? You didn't have to bluff him with a fountain pen. You could have got his gun, easy."

Higgs steadied himself against the bar. "You—you miss the point," he said weakly. "Only make him a hero—that way. Couldn't kill him, could we? No. Make 'em laugh—that's our chance. Make him ridiculous. *That* hurts," he said, unconsciously touching the spot behind his ear where the treacherous Palmer had kissed him. "He's vain—afraid—laugh—the President and all, you know. Ugh! I'm sick."

So we—

And Peaceful Palmer took the glass and threw it on the floor. "Look here, Higgsy—Edwin—whatever you want to be called," he said gruffly, "you're all *right!* You're all right, you are. If I had your brains and my fists, I'd be the champion o' the world. But here's where I do some thinking for you. You've had enough—and then some. You're the kind that don't get drunk. You just get sick. Quit it!"

"I'm—I'll be all right in a minute, Peaceful," faltered Higgs. "The boys—good fellows—don't want to be a quitter."

"That's the spirit, Clarence dear," shouted Walker. "Set 'em up in the other alley!"

Then before Mr. Walker stepped a youth with the round head of combativeness and the curly hair of irresponsibility, known as Peaceful Palmer. "Shirtless," he said, "cut the Clarence comedy. Name's Higgs. Higgs, and Edwin. Get this! He's had enough. I'm going to take him to bed right now, and if you see anybody that thinks he's a quitter—now or ever—you send 'em to me. I, me, X. Y. Z. Palmer, will argue the case."

He took Mr. Higgs firmly by the arm and led him away. I remember thinking that they made a queer pair. Come to think of it, I believe Damon and Pythias were a queer pair too.

IT CAN'T BE DONE

(Continued from page 76)

It was on the road in front of the house. He lay on his back, rigid—his body held in a permanent cramp, a paralysis, stiff and cold in the scant nightshirt. The hens came pecking at his head, followed by endless rows of little chickens. Upon his chest was a weight—the garden shoes, the house shoes. Beneath his upward-pointing feet the coat was spread, then the vest, shirt, collar. Across his neck the trousers lay heavily; above his forehead, the lavender suspenders made a derisive halo.

And there, coming down the road, that noise! A car—a heavy car—coming closer and closer! His frightened eyes could make it out now, as it bore majestically, inevitably down upon him. It was loaded with women, of all ages—a little girl, an older girl, a young woman, various middle-aged and old women; and each woman, despite the difference in ages, bore upon her shoulders the scandalized and vengeful face of Effie!

Louder, louder the noise of the car in his ears; closer, closer rolled the mighty Juggernaut.

He sat up in bed, shaken into an agonized waking. There—that sound again—a heavy car rolling down the street. . . . . It was slowing—it was stopping—it had stopped, right in front of the house!

Uncertain whether it was dream or reality, Oren Willits dragged himself out of bed, pulled on a dressing-gown in the gray light, and fumbled down to the front door. The horn squawked violently. The door shook inward with pounding.

"Oren! It's me, Effie! It's me!"

"Right away—"

The door was open. Effie and Golda stood just outside.

"Thank you so much, sir."

The stranger at the wheel touched his hat, hunched down lower. The car rolled on.

"What in the world—"

"Don't ask us anything. We're simply worn out! Come on to the spare bedroom, Golda."

The visiting cousin could not be suppressed; her eyes rolled in delighted thrills. "It was simply exciting, Cousin Oren! The car was doing splendidly; it hadn't gotten dark, and we were halfway between Mount Holly and Camden, when—smack! She simply stopped—just wouldn't go for anything. Will Walter fooled around for about an hour, and then discovered that we hadn't any gas!"

"Oh, I remember I said—"

"Yes," Effie snapped with unnecessary sharpness. "I told him to be sure he had enough, just before he started. Must of leaked."

"H'm—yes." Oren's tone sounded meek.

"We waited there for hours, Cousin Oren—literally hours! No traffic—no house, or anything, in the neighborhood. At last Will Walter went back toward Mount Holly, found a house, and just reached us again—we were going to spend the night there—it would have been thrilling! Just then a big touring-car drove up, with only one man in it. He offered to do anything he could. So we piled in, and he let Will Walter off at the nearest garage. He's going on down to Bayville today; but we'd had enough. Hadn't we, Effie?"

"Yes." She was as gracious as a kicked Airedale.

"Well, I'll take a few hours' snooze." Golda closed the door, smiling drowsily.

Without further words Effie led the way down the hall, and into the bedroom. She looked around critically; her nostrils lifted in a delicate sniff. "I really think you ought to take your pipe out of your trousers before you come into this room, Oren. There's a distinct smell of tobacco here."

"Yes, dear." His tone sounded meek.

He lay in bed, chuckling at what only he and the walls knew, and could tell—but they never would! His lids drooped lower and lower—almost off.

"Oren!"

The tone was so sharp that he rolled up into a sitting position. There she was, in the doorway, gazing into the hall, a heavy frown lowering upon her brows.

"Oren! These shoes—they're tumbled all ways, right under the chair!"

"Could you—"

She picked her sniffing way toward the bed. "You must have forgotten to fix 'em."

A wide yawn, and he was over the side of the bed, and steering for the hall. As he stooped to retrieve and set in order the offending footwear, his meek tones trickled up to her ears. "I'm glad you had the trip, Effie, anyhow."

He looked at the replaced shoes once; both eyes closed beamingly. Then he nodded back into the room. His eyes rose to the oil painting of Aunt Elizabeth. Was it possible that it winked?

"Come to bed!"

"Yes, dear."

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THE SAND PILE

(Continued from page 84)

entered prison work. It sounds, doesn't it, as if it were a little piece of paradise set down on earth? It isn't. Peachtree is one of the little, old, coal-mining towns of this State, and it can be, when it tries, a little bit of hell.

"To begin with, it's poor, not in a pleasant poverty,—if there is such a state,—but in the kind that whines and snarls at the battered doors month after month and year after year. There's mighty little money in those old mines, and there's less for the men. It's bad enough for those who have wretched little houses where they huddle their families in a hand-to-mouth sort of existence, but there are some people in Peachtree who've been worse off than they—and Tom Mercer was one of them."

HE paused as if in doubt—just how to tell the story. The chairman of the Board stared at him in puzzled curiosity, not unmixed with suspicion. The other men gave to him interested attention. He seemed, however, more intent upon the actual fact of his speaking than upon its effect upon them as he went on:

"I don't know whether he would want me to tell it or not, but I think it's part of the story that, when he was a boy, he didn't even have a home of the sort these other fellows here"—he nodded to the miners—"have known. The first I remember of him was that he was Peggy Mercer's son; and Peggy was—Peggy. I don't know whether she kicked him out or whether he couldn't stand it any longer, but he wasn't ten years old, I know, when he stopped going to the miserable little shack where she lived. He went out to earn his own living, went to work in the mines—sleeping, wherever he happened to be. Year after year he did that.

"There's a pretty tough young crowd in Peachtree—always was, and always will be. These men could have told you that, but they didn't suppose, I imagine, that it had any particular bearing on this case. They fight, and steal, and kill sometimes. They're bad, as only a poverty-stricken, helpless, hopeless little town can make men bad. But they are the only kind of men that a lonely boy, hanging around saloons to get a free lunch when he is hungry, is going to meet. Tom Mercer met them. That he didn't become part and parcel of them is the miracle of it, I think. Something in him kept him out of their deviltries; but their creed was all he ever heard, and it wasn't the creed of law. And if Mercer got away from their direct influence as soon as he saw for himself what they were, he couldn't lose the indirect so easily. Remember, wont you, that he never went to school a day in his life—that he couldn't read nor write when he came to prison?

"He could work, though, and he slaved day after day back in those mines that offered the only labor Peachtree had for uneducated men. Perhaps somewhere in the back of his brain there was always that dream that most of us hold—the dream of a home. I imagine that was why he stayed what he was. Anyone in Peachtree could have told you that Tom Mercer, for all his ignorance of books, stayed a straight, decent sort of chap."

Torrens did not look toward Mercer as he paused, but Tom felt conscious that he was more aware of him than he seemed. Wonderingly he listened to the Warden's summary of his boyhood. What was Torrens driving at? What was he going to show by it? Why couldn't he let it alone? Why need he drag in, before Winnie at that, the old misery of his mother? He scowled as Torrens resumed.

"Do you remember the Peachtree Valley disaster? Then perhaps you remember the story of the man who stood for hours holding up a beam so that the miners below him would not be crushed to death? And then, when the rescuers came to him and helped out the others, he went back to drag out the pinioned fellows farther down? Evans, there, can tell you about it, and Trelawney. He saved their lives, and I suppose they thought they'd hurt him if they told it; but that's why they are here, today, for Tom Mercer. I know that, even here, he wouldn't want to be called a hero, but if ever there was a hero in a mine disaster, Mercer was the man!"

There was a quick, almost gasping breath near to him; and Mercer turned to see Winnie staring at Torrens with shining eyes. His heart closed with sudden pain. It was more than hope Torrens was giving him; it was Winnie's pride in him. "How *could* he?" was the thought that followed the old, "Why *should* he?"

"Well, Mercer married." The Warden's voice went lower. "And he set about getting that home he'd always wanted. He took the only way that seemed open, membership in a building and loan association. Old Jere Connors ran it. There were some of us in Peachtree who knew him for the old crook he was, but we didn't think it was our business to prosecute him for what he did to others, and the others to whom he did the worst didn't know enough to jack him up. Besides, he was slippery. He stayed inside the law, usually. He did, I think, in this instance; but he cheated every man and woman in his association out of the homes they had scrimped and saved and slaved to get. It was Tom Mercer, somehow, whom it hit hardest, just because he *was* Tom Mercer, I suppose; and all the old lawlessness that was the only way of revenge our town had taught him, rose in him, I imagine, and he killed the man who had defrauded him out of something that seemed to him as dear as life itself."

"That's interesting, Mr. Torrens," the man of the spectacles said, "but I don't quite see its bearing."

"Wait a minute," Torrens bade him. "I'm telling you this because I came from Peachtree. I have a sense of responsibility for some of the things that happened there. My father owned one of the mines. He shouldn't have let boys like Tom Mercer work there. Those of us who could do it should have seen that he went to school, that he was fed and clothed and housed in those years of his boyhood. But we didn't! Then, when he grew up, we should have seen that men like Jere Connors weren't left to prey on him and his kind. I was the attorney for the Snellington, and I knew what Connors was doing. I could have stopped him, I suppose, had I thought it my business. But I didn't until it was too late. Tom Mercer is what those of us who knew better, and did worse, in Peachtree, made him; and that's why I'm asking you today for commutation of his sentence."

He paused, leaving a hush which held the room, but he did not turn to where Mercer sat in stunned amazement, and where Winnie watched through her tears. He went back to speech, frowning at the three men of the Board as if to sear on them his point of view. "We pride ourselves on our civilization," he said, "but sometimes I wonder how much we have done. Eighty years before we became a nation, an old Pope in Rome built a place where they put over the door, 'It is of little use to coerce the evildoer unless you improve him by discipline.' That was over two hundred years ago, and here we are today, coercing in pretty much the same old way. We put Tom Mercer in a cell, and he tried to escape; and we put him in a deeper cell, and we've dabbled in a few experiments with him, but what's the use? We're punishing him here for something that was the logical thing for him to do, when you consider the way he grew up, the way we *let* him grow up. And what's the use of it, I ask you. Fourteen years in prison aren't going to make him a better man. They aren't going to keep some other Tom Mercer from killing some other crook like Connors. All they do is take a man from his wife and child and start that child on the same path his father has traveled. I'm no *Javert*. To me it seems as if Mercer has paid enough. That's why I think there was a mistake made in imposing the sentence. Don't you want to correct it?"

THE man who had watched the window turned to meet the Warden's gaze, and the man with the cigar had long since forgotten to smoke it; but the chairman leaned over the table, studying Torrens in impersonal regard. "It's really quite remarkable," he said, "to hear you defend a prisoner with such zeal. And interesting," he added with mature consideration. "But we don't make the system, Torrens. We only work within it. I don't doubt that this man has his good points. It's really unfortunate that it should have happened, but I really can't see that the circumstances were directly extenuating enough to justify the murder. It's all sociologically important, no doubt; but you know that some one has said that all the crimes in the world were justifiable if only one knew enough about all the circumstances leading up to them—heredity and environment and all that, you know. But we can't take them into account. We're bound, you know, by very definite rules, after all. We're keepers of the gates of society."

"I know all that," Torrens said impatiently, "but here's the point: Those of us who know more of Tom Mercer than you can find out in a year, believe he's been punished enough. Are you going to pardon—or at least parole him?"

The spectacled man looked across the table at the Warden with a glare that his glasses did not conceal. In its light Mercer, watching, saw the truth. This man hated Torrens even as he had once hated him, and because Torrens had pleaded for a convict, that convict would not be freed. Mercer's head sank down, and Buddy pressed close to him as if to give him reassurance. And then he saw the bank-wrecker slip down the length of the table and speak to Torrens. "Go ahead," he heard him say, and he thought the next case about to begin when the man spoke. "With Mr. Torrens' permission," he said, "I am going to give testimony which I consider pertinent."

THE three men looked up suddenly at the convict with the soft voice and the legal phraseology. He smiled at them in a *camaraderie* which might have been insulting but for the cynical twinkle in his eyes. "We have, I think," he said, "met in happier days." He surveyed the three of them brazenly, as if he enjoyed the situation with an appreciation they lacked. "But it is not of myself I would burden your ears. That will come at some other time, no doubt.

"Mr. Torrens mentioned," he said, in the manner of a man conducting a directors' meeting, "that section of the Prison Association constitution which recommends pardons as rewards of reformation. It is on that ground I testify for Mr. Mercer. He was foreman of the honor gang at the road-camp last summer. He had every opportunity for escape. No one watched him, but he had to watch everyone. The whole success of the plan rested on him. If he failed, the honor system failed. Now, there was no reason in the wide world why he should care anything about the system, if he could get away, was there? But he stayed, not for Mr. Torrens' sake, I am sure, but simply because he must have known that a defection on his part would take away the only hope of countless other men who didn't mean anything to him except that they were fellow-sufferers. I think that was very wonderful of Mr. Mercer," he said. "Don't you?"

He appealed not to the chairman but to the other two men of the Board, and they nodded assent in evident honoring of his opinion.

"It is my impression," he continued with that cynical smile which always puzzled Mercer, "that we are held here not so much for vindictive punishment on ourselves as for the good of society. At least, I was told that when I matriculated. Now it seems to me—although my opinion has, of course, little value now—that Mr. Mercer would make a valuable member of society. He has saved men's lives; he wanted a home so badly that he killed the man who took the chance of it from him; he holds to a trust for the sake of other men. That's a cleaner record than most of us, inside or out, have, isn't it?" His eyes scanned the three faces. "Don't you think," he inquired, "that you want to reinstate Mr. Mercer in his family and in society?"

Across the face of the man with the cigar came a slow smile. "Baker," he said, "you always had your nerve. We'll think it over."

The bank-wrecker gave him a smile of cordial equality. "I wont forget it of you, McIntyre," he said, "when I get out of here."

HE arose, and with his rising, Mercer knew the hearing had ended. What its outcome would be he dared not hope. The little passage between the bank-wrecker and the man he called McIntyre had given him courage, but the chairman's evident animosity toward Torrens might swing the balance too heavily to permit of its counteraction by the mysterious bond between the others. He followed Winnie and Buddy to the entrance hall as another case was called.

For a moment as he saw Torrens before him, his gratitude surged into a passion which left him speechless. Dazedly he wondered how he could ever give to this man whom he had so ruthlessly, so cruelly misjudged, the thanks which were less than his due. For with the clearness of a vision that hate had once obscured, he saw that although the man called Baker had played the final card, the winning of the game belonged to Torrens. Without him, the bank-wrecker would not have dared his play. Without him, the structure of the plea would have been too slight. And after all, even the gift of freedom, should it come, seemed less than the other gifts which Torrens had bestowed. He had done more than explain him to those men at the table. *He had explained him to himself.*

In the light of Torrens' words, Mercer now saw himself not a criminal but a man distorted by circumstances into criminality. He saw, too, how he might one day pull himself out of those circumstances and into the way of life that would be worthy. Didn't he have Winnie and Buddy, as before? Didn't he have the knowledge of Torrens' trust and understanding, and the friendship of the miners from Peachtree? Didn't he have the certainty of his own manhood? Torrens had given him the chance to grow up. He had taken it. Torrens had dared to plead for that manhood even against an enemy of his own, a man who might twist the Warden's sword of honor into a weapon for his undoing. Win or lose, Torrens had done for him a splendid deed.

Mercer crossed the hall to Torrens. "I'm grateful to you," was all he could say, and he did not know how much of feeling overflowed into his voice.

"Wait till we know if it was of any use," Torrens said.

"It wont matter," said Mercer. "I thank you just the same."

Torrens gave to him that keen look of scrutiny, search warrant to his intentions. He must have found them true, for his voice lowered. "I'd have to do a lot, Mercer," he said, "to pay you for sticking to the road-camp." He turned away swiftly, and Mercer wondered if it were because he could not bear Winnie's

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thanks. "It was fine of him, wasn't it?" she said when she came up to him.

She lifted her eyes to him, and he saw, with wonder, that she was offering to him the same faith which she had given him when they had first loved each other. It was not like Torrens' regard, like all friendships of men, something to be striven for, fought for. The truth that woman's love is not a reward of deserving but a gift from God to man, swept over him, and in awed humility he took its bounty. It was Buddy who broke their silence. "I want to go home," he said suddenly. "I don't like it here."

"We're going home soon," Winnie told him, "all of us."

LATER, when the bank-wrecker brought Mercer the news, he stood in the prison yard, gazing at the place which had held him so long within its clutch. All his hatred of it had vanished, and he could see it now as it was, a mistake in men's methods, perhaps, but not an ill-intentioned mistake. Without Philo, without Torrens, it would have crushed him in its terrible power; but always, he saw, there were, in all such places, men who could make them their tools in humanity's service. He himself had grown from irresponsible boyhood to thinking manhood within these walls. Nevermore would he take upon himself hot vengeance. Not again would he believe that all men's hands were raised against him. He saw the world without, as he had come to see the world within, a place of struggle, changed from hell to heaven only by men's kindness to each other. For after the first overmastering joy of release, there had come to him other thoughts, sadder but not less poignant. Evil he had seen here, and sorrow, misery and despair, sin and shame; but he had seen also the lilies of love and sacrifice growing on the dung-heap. He looked toward the grave on Stony Lonely and seemed to know, for the first time, why he had been set to walk on the path of crime with its punishment. A boy no longer, he would meet the world in this new understanding of mankind. Not of Winnie and of Buddy, waiting for him at the gateway, but of the men he was leaving, did Tom Mercer think as he went through the halls of the grim gray fortress; and suddenly he saw that Philo's ladder of a thousand strings had become in truth a Jacob's ladder up which the angels of pain were guiding his steps to God.

At the door of the Warden's office he paused, then went in. Torrens sat at the big table. "If there's anything I can ever do," he said, and his eyes held the Warden's, man to man, "to show you that I know what you've done for me, I want to do it."

Once more Torrens gave to him that old appraising look. "There is," he said. "You can always pass on to the next man the chance the other man gave you."

Across the table their hands met.

Afterward Mercer remembered the strangely pathetic loneliness which he glimpsed, that moment, in Torrens' eyes. He felt, as he stepped out into the sunshine, that the memory of that look, and of old Philo's smile at Buddy, would stay with him when other memories of the prison should grow vaguely gray in the proving years.

THE END

HIGH AND HANDSOME

(Continued from page 56)

While Officer Hanrahan was wrestling with temptation, Fate mercifully settled the matter for him. The long-expected *tong* war broke out, with three killings on the first night. The newspapers put the police on the grill. The Chinatown squad was doubled; vacations were canceled, the customary day-off suspended, and the street men compelled to cover the territory of those who had been transferred. Promptly the night life took advantage of the situation, and the usual winter crime-wave rose to a crest.

"For God's sake, Joe," said Corporal Malloy, "keep your eyes open, and grab anybody that can't give an account of himself. The Captain is near out of his head with the panning the papers are handing us. Did you know that his oldest kid is dying in the hospital?"

"No!"

"Fact. Pneumonia. Jerry hasn't slept in a week."

Officer Hanrahan's face betrayed quick sympathy. "By golly, that's too bad! I'll do my best, Dan. Guess I'd better be walking down to that all-night garage on Seventeenth Street again. The night boss is a friend of mine, and he's been frisking the cars for me. Twice, now, he's found stuff that don't look good in an automobile."

Not only did Joe visit the Seventeenth Street Garage, but all the others on his long beat. Obeying instructions, he questioned, and sometimes searched, every man he found on the street after one o'clock. Once, a skulking figure dropped a suitcase as soon as it was challenged, and fled. Joe overhauled the man after a chase of five blocks, handcuffed the prisoner and forced him, panting, back to the deserted grip, which revealed a quantity of expensive silverware. There were two more arrests that night, and three in the following twenty-four hours. That meant hard work, tired muscles, and long day-sessions in the crowded courts.

When the Police Ball came along, Joe went to bed at two o'clock in the afternoon, and was roused nine hours later by his mother from the sleep of exhaustion. On the way to the station, he passed the Auditorium and stopped to get a glimpse of Fairyland. He waited until he saw Katie swinging past in the arms of handsome Marcel Legrand. Then he walked on to the station and soberly donned his uniform.

Early in the morning Corporal Malloy, who had managed to enjoy the festivities for a few hours, was describing the crowd to the less fortunate Officer Hanrahan.

"It looked like the call to judgment," he concluded. "Everybody was there except the lads like yourself, Joe, who

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had the most right to be on hand. I saw that heavyweight champion tomcattin' around with the little girl who has the bakery on the corner of Pearl and Hawthorne. They come in second in the prize waltz."

"Did they, now?"

"They did. Somehow, Joe—I always thought that—"

'You thought *what?*"

"Oh, nothin'," said the Corporal. "Did you hear that Joe Benson was going to run again for Commissioner of Public Health and Safety?"

"'Tis only by way of advertising his restaurant," said Joe. "There's Tony comin' with the five o'clock car, so I must be gettin' up to the box."

"Good night, Joe."

"So long, Dan."

NOW, there is a grapevine telegraph by which Cupid, even in the guise of a cop, may keep more or less acquainted with the love-affairs of the neighborhood. Joe told himself that everything was going very well. Marcel Legrand was sporting diamonds; next he appeared in a scarlet racing-car. Old Lady Grauss, who ran the grocery on the opposite corner from the bakery, told Joe that Katie was sporting a diamond ring "so pig again as your head!"

The days passed, and Joe waited for the dénouement, but none came. Instead there was a rumor, a word here and there, which he had difficulty in believing, until one evening on his way downtown, he saw Marcel in the red car with a flashily dressed brunette beside him. Next morning Officer Hanrahan bought a package of pipe-tobacco from old lady Grauss, and tactfully broached the subject of the general welfare of the Williams family.

"It vas not so goot as it might pe," sighed the proprietor of the grocery. "Only last night I vas talkin' mit Mrs. Williams, und she say dot Katie vas all proke up about someding. *Mein Gott*, I have told Otto vun hundred dimes it vas lucky ve have no kirls."

That was the day Officer Hanrahan, in civilian dress, and with his lips buttoned up tight, went without sleep in order that he might wait outside Jockey Williams' cigar-store for Marcel Legrand, and fulfill the duty of Cupid the Cop.

Late in the afternoon he buttonholed the pugilist and led him to the curbstone witness-stand. The cross-examination was brief and to the point.

"Is there any ordinance against my going with any dame I want to?" protested Marcel. "Since when did the city authorize cops to be butting into private affairs?"

"Shut up!" Joe commanded. "No man is going to play fast and loose with the girls on my beat, even if he's twice the size of you—understand that, now!"

"You bulls are brave guys," Marcel sneered, "coming around with a gun and a club planted on you, and then trying to start something. Brave guys, aint you, huh? I suppose I've been grabbing something out of your harem?"

"For *that*," said Joe, "I'll strip, and fight you, man to man, any place you name."

The look of suspicion on the huge

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features of Marcel Legrand gave way to a satisfied grin. Here was something he understood.

"I'll call that bluff," he grunted. "Back of Jockey's cigar-stand there's a room fitted out as training quarters. We'll fight nice and clean—"

"Clean, rough or nigger," said Officer Hanrahan, "I name but one condition."

"Spit it out."

"You marry Katie Williams if I lick you."

"*Say,*" confided Marcel Legrand earnestly, "if you lick me, I'll marry the fat lady in the circus!"

"You'll marry no one but Katie Williams," promised Joe. "Lead on; I'm going to knock your block off!"

Jockey Williams, who was the sole witness to the fight, did his best to hush it up. This was one case where nothing was to be gained by publicity. To a few intimate friends, however, he supplied the details.

"The cop was game, all right, but he didn't have no chance. Marcel knew too much. Naw, I don't know what it was all about, and for the love of Mike, don't go spreading the news. I don't want no run-in with the Police Department."

But Marcel Legrand was not so discreet. In a few days it was all over the district that the heavyweight wonder had beaten up a cop in a private battle, and that if Jockey Williams had not exercised the privileges of a referee, and suspended hostilities after the fifth knockdown, the North Beach station would be displaying a flag at half-mast.

These things reached the ears of Corporal Dan Malloy, who took up the matter tactfully with Officer Hanrahan.

"What the hell you been doing now, Joe? This big fellow Legrand is telling everybody he licked a cop, and it's all over town. The Commissioner was giving the Captain the laugh about it only this afternoon."

Officer Hanrahan's face reddened under the bruised spots on either cheekbone. "'Twas just a friendly argument, Dan," he faltered. "I'm not through yet—not by a long ways."

"In that case," Malloy advised, "when the argument is renewed, put the cuffs on him first, then use your club. If you bring disgrace on us again, I'll prefer charges against you myself!"

Hanrahan's lips formed a straight line. "I'll use neither cuffs nor a club nor a gun—nothin' but my own two fists, Dan; and by the powers, the boys will have no cause to be ashamed of me the next time. I'll do the high and handsome yet."

Corporal Malloy studied the polished tips of his shoes. He thought he knew what the quarrel was about, and it was in his mind to say something, as between brother and brother. He recalled the time that he had fought it out with Davis, the teamster, in the cellar of old man Humphreys' house. There was a girl in that case too. But that was long ago, and Dan was a corporal now, with the mantle of responsibility resting heavily upon him. He sighed profoundly, and looked again at his subordinate.

"'Tis against human nature, Joe, but you must keep your hands off the big man unless the law is on your side. We're paid to enforce the peace, not to break it. If it was only Dan Malloy, speakin' to Joe Hanrahan, I'd say: 'Go to it, Joe, and may the best man win!' You know that, Joe; but the stripes are on me arm, and we've both taken the oath. Corporal Malloy says to Officer Hanrahan: 'Conduct yourself according to the regulations, or resign from the Department.' What answer does he get?"

Officer Hanrahan stared off into the darkness, but he saw no escape from the dilemma. His mind reacted slowly to the stern call of duty. Mechanically he touched his cap; and Malloy, interpreting the salute correctly, returned it, and moved away without another word.

ONCE again Fate took little Jockey Williams by the scruff of the neck, and threw him into the switching-tower of Destiny. The midget sought a private interview with Joe Hanrahan.

"You want to fight Legrand again?" he asked.

"'Tis against the law," said Hanrahan sadly. "I've been forbidden by my superior."

"There's no law against a boxing-match," said Williams. "I can get you on with Marcel in the main event at the Auditorium two weeks from now. There's no dough in it. The show is a benefit for the Children's Hospital, but—"

"'Tis not a boxin'-lesson that I want to give him," Hanrahan protested. "I can't do anything in four rounds, and with gloves on my hands. It's locked up in a room with him that I want to be, and that's against the law."

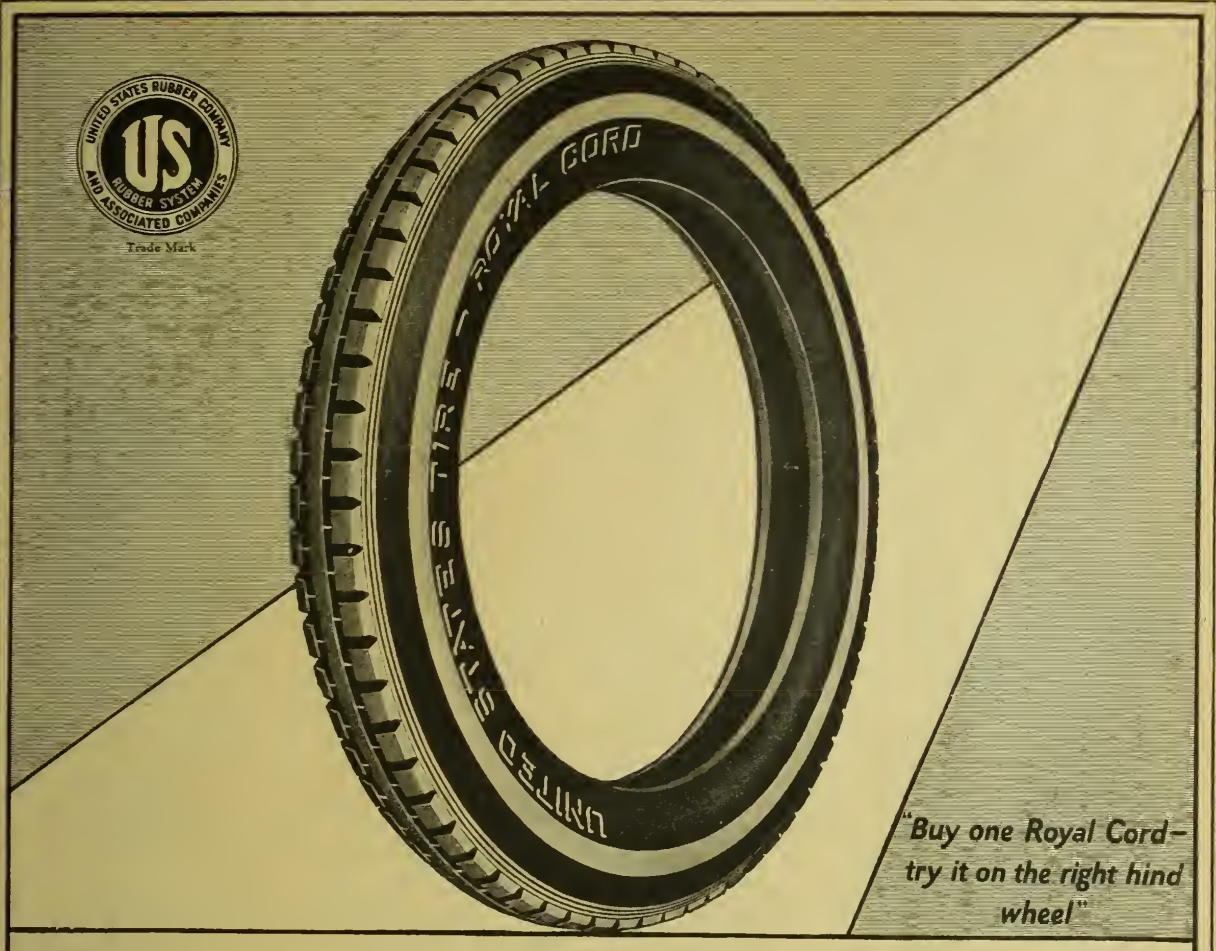
"Of course, it's against the law. I aint goofy. Here, I'll tell you what's in my mind. This big guy is so swelled up, I can't do nothin' with him. He wont train, and he wont take no advice from anybody. What that guy needs most to make him a champion is to hear the canaries singin' just once; understand? He'll soak up more wisdom from a right smash to the chin, with the referee bending over him tickin' 'em off, than he'll get out of the public library. Are you listenin'?"

"I am," said Hanrahan. "I gave him all I had once before, but it wasn't enough, and as God is my witness, he hit me so hard he split my shoes! But go on with your plan."

Jockey Williams pursed his lips thoughtfully. "The big guy is stronger than the wind from off the garbage dumps," he admitted, "but that don't mean nothin'. Trouble was, you was swingin' too much. You must 'a' thought you had a club in your hands. All he had to do was step around and pop you with that left. Did you have on diver's boots, or how come that when you put one foot down, you couldn't seem to get it up again? You aint always that slow, are you?"

"I hadn't been to bed for two days," Hanrahan reflected. "Maybe I was tired."

"Oh, my God!" exploded Jockey Williams. "No sleep in forty-eight hours, and he tries to lick Marcel Legrand! Say, pal, you want to copyright that joke; it's a pip! Now, as I was going to say, if I get permission from the Chief, and I show you how to protect



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yourself from a left, and shoot your punches straight, will you take a chance with my fathead? Remember, it's all jake so far as the law's concerned. This is for a noble charity."

Hanrahan's eyes narrowed to slits and then expanded. A brand-new idea occurred to him. "I'm not wishin' to shame the big man in public," he ventured. "'Tis not part of my plan to interfere with his success."

Jockey Williams laughed this objection away. "You wont do no more than throw a scare into him. Even if you was to drop him for the count, exhibition bouts with an amateur don't figure in a guy's record. All I want you to do is knock some sense into him, so's he don't go chasing—"

"Ah!" Hanrahan exclaimed. "You hit it on the head that time. If the Chief says it's all right, I'll put myself in your hands."

Jockey Williams nodded. "This is just between ourselves," he cautioned. "I'll tell Marcel that I'm just giving him a chance to duplicate in public what he did under cover. I'll send Spider Harrison over to the police gym afternoons, and you can work out with him. He's been sparring with Legrand and will know what to show you."

"Much obliged," said Hanrahan. "How—how's Katie these days?"

Jockey Williams' blue eyes looked sharply at the former patron of his mother's bakery. "Katie's all right, I guess," he deliberated, "—only, well, you know how girls are; they think that just because a fellow takes 'em out once in a while—"

"H'm," said Joe. "She's entitled to think so, and 'tis Joe Hanrahan that will make things come out all right. Just you tell her not to worry her head. If I can—"

Jockey Williams interrupted to shake hands warmly. "That's the way to talk," he complimented. "Everybody has their little fallings out, but it don't mean nothin'. I says to her only last night: 'He'll come back to you, Kid, and then all you got to do is kiss and make up.' Aint I right?"

"That's it," agreed Joe. "Go fix it up with the Chief, and I'll pound some sense into the big man until he does the right thing."

DID Chief Walter Dugdale offer any objections? Well, it was Mrs. Thorndyke Wellington, patroness of the Children's Hospital, and sister-in-law of Mayor Sabin, who requested the services of Police Officer Hanrahan.

"My dear lady," assured the Chief, "the Department welcomes the opportunity to be of assistance. Put me down for a row at the ringside."

Did Promoter Nealon, in behalf of sweet charity, charge a dollar and a half for standing-room, and put extra chairs in the aisles, contrary to the city ordinance? He did. Nealon had not been making matches for twenty years without knowing something about the psychology that underlies the sport. Photographs of "Hanrahan the Fighting Cop" graced a thousand store-windows. Posters advertising the prowess of "The Pummeling Policeman" shrieked at passers-by from every billboard. Sporting editors, always willing to help out a worthy cause, oiled their typewriters from the wells of fancy, and delicately intimated that the honor of the Police Department was at stake. All over the city, blue-coated patrolmen stopped to pass the time of day with one another, and to inquire casually concerning the chances of their brother from North Beach. Captain Jerry Scott sent for Corporal Malloy.

"Look here, Dan, how good *is* this fellow Hanrahan? Aint he the lad that got us in Dutch once before? Seems like I remember Commissioner Davis handing me the laugh—"

Malloy always stood by his men.

"Joe will give a good account of himself," he assured. "Count on that, Captain. He's been training hard. Between us, there's a girl at the bottom of it. I was tipped off that the champion's own manager aint any too confident. You remember the night of the riot down at the gas-house?"

"True," said Captain Scott. "I'd forgotten about that. Joe's a bad man when you walk on his feet. You can cover a hundred for me down at Sharkey's."

SO, then, it was a gala night that Fate and Jockey Williams arranged in behalf of the Children's Hospital. A great auditorium, thick with smoke and vibrant with excitement. Gracing the main floor sat the rank and file of the City Administration, backing Joe Hanrahan to a man. In the galleries were the adherents of the champion, thousands whose rallying cry was: "Get the Cop!" Strung along the back wall stood paid preservers of the peace who had gone without sleep in hope of seeing one of their brothers maintain the honor of the Department.

Ten o'clock came, disposing of the preliminaries, and elevating the curtain on the main event. There were introductions, and speeches and wild cheers, and then a hush of expectancy. Over in one corner was Marcel Legrand, the mighty athlete with the flour-barrel chest. Facing him sat Police Officer Joe Hanrahan, almost fifty pounds lighter, tight-lipped, square-jawed, and with a flame shining in his eyes. The referee waved everyone else out of the ring. The bell clanged; a blanket of darkness descended on the audience, leaving only the hooded arc-lights to concentrate their brilliance on the white canvas. The referee looked about him, and then nodded briskly to the timekeeper. The bell clanged.

Now, there is this about the squared circle. A man may know little about boxing, but if he be a natural fighter, he has always a chance. The history of the ring is full of men who knew nothing of science, comprehended nothing of the rules, took twenty blows in order to land one, and lived to vindicate the supremacy of the cave-dweller. But no man can change his natural style of fighting in two weeks and get away with it against a skilled opponent. That was where Jockey Williams, trying sincerely to help Hanrahan—and himself—committed a terrible blunder. Himself behind Marcel Legrand, the midget had nevertheless laid down a plan of battle for the other man, and Spider Harrison was faithfully coaching Hanrahan according to instructions.

*HYDE PARK, LONDON**

Hon. Freddy—"Haven't the foggiest idea, old chap—Ridley, do we use tyres?"
Ridley (waxing warm)—"Kelly-Springfields, sir—American, nothing to touch 'em—never blow or skid—a bit of orl right, sir, if you ask me!"

THE qualities which a motorist seeks in tires are the same practically all over the world. These qualities are long mileage, freedom from trouble, safety from skidding, and low cost. Since Kellys combine all these qualities to a marked degree, it is not surprising that they have become internationally famous. It costs *no more* to buy a Kelly.

*Drawing and dialogue by Laurence Fellows, London.

FOR two rounds the Fighting Cop was held on the defensive. Like an ant on a hot rock, Joe Hanrahan hopped around in a vain effort to protect himself from the terrific assault of his opponent. But Marcel Legrand was too clever and fast. He feinted the Pummeling Policeman wide open, smiled derisively and crashed a straight left again and again to Hanrahan's head until the blood began to stream from open eyebrows, and groans of dismay from the main floor were lost in the hoarse tumult of approval from the champion's adherents.

"You're doin' all right," encouraged Spider Harrison during the minute of rest. "The big guy will blow up in another round; he hasn't been training. Just step around a little faster, and box him. Use your own left hand like I been showing you! Don't let him pin you in the corners."

But the third round was only a repetition of the others. Joe Hanrahan tried his best to put into practice all the footwork and defensive tricks that Spider Harrison had taught him. But he was dazed and confused by the strange surroundings—the glare of the lights, the pressure of ropes at his back, the avalanche of advice that descended from all sides. He sensed that the huge, cool figure circling around him so gracefully, was a mocking master of ring-generalship. Marcel boxed at long range, side-stepping the Hanrahan right, moving lightly away from the Hanrahan rushes, slipping in and out of clinches with arm-locks that protected him perfectly. Near the end of the round, the champion, with his huge muscles rolling in coils over his back, caught his opponent a right below the ear. Hanrahan grabbed the ropes to save himself from falling. The bell sounded. The galleries went mad.

Back to his corner went Marcel Legrand to flop on his stool, wave one hand at the jubilant galleries, then grin at his opponent with amused complacency. That ironical twist of Marcel Legrand's lips was a far more serious blunder than the one committed by Jockey Williams. Through the warm blood streaming into his eyes, Joe Hanrahan beheld the grinning features of his tormentor, and a great madness seized him. Spider Harrison was trying to bellow instructions through the din, but his advice fell upon deaf ears. Hanrahan's nostrils expanded; the pupils of his eyes grew dark and small; and the cloak of civilization dropped from his bruised flesh. Banished were the patient instructions of Jockey Williams; gone was the chivalrous purpose which had sent him into the ring; forgotten was the sober sense of paternalism that an officer of the law acquires. Nothing remained but a quivering figure, shorn to the passion of the primitive cave-man, and facing the mocking giant who had come between him and his girl.

The bell rang. Out from one corner flashed a hurricane. There was a crash in Marcel's corner, and the champion fell back against the ropes. A tangle of arms, faster than the eye could follow, and Legrand broke away. After him rushed a natural fighter, eyes blurred, body bruised, but resistless as an avalanche. A clinch, a rapid break-away—and then two men standing head to head and toe to toe, each heedless of everything but the annihilation of the other.

A pile-driving left that crashed against the body, the upward whirl of a crimson glove that found its mark, and the unbelievable happened: the champion tottered as a giant tree sways under the ax. Five thousand men stood on their chairs, and the roar of "Joe! Joe! Joe!" broke against the rafters. Desperately the giant tried to save himself with one last savage swing. It missed, and in return there came the clean smack of wet leather against naked flesh. The champion reared back with his gloves high, and pawing the air, turned sidewise, and then measured his full length on the white canvas. There, with the great auditorium a madhouse, and curly-headed Joe Hanrahan standing over him, dazed and crimson, Marcel Legrand took the count—and never knew when it was over!

THE blue-coated figures standing along the wall forgot the majestic dignity of their office, and smashed into smithereens the ordinance against loud and unseemly noises. It was Captain Jerry Scott himself who fought his way past overturned chairs until he could grasp Commissioner Davis by the shoulder, and howl through the din:

"Have you got any laugh to hand us now? *You're damn right, you haven't!* A harness bull out of my own station, and he does the high and handsome against a champion! A thousand dollars says he can lick any man in the world! Where is he? Get outa my way before I kill somebody!"

In the dressing-room they stripped the gloves from Hanrahan's hands. They pounded him joyously on the back, applied styptic collodion to the cuts over his eyes, and shoved him under the shower. There Captain Scott found him, and delivered the most emphatic commendation in the history of the Department. More than that, there was a vocal postscript added by Joe's superior, in the privacy of one corner with his arm around the Hanrahan shoulders:

"Corporal McCarthy goes on the retired list next Tuesday. You'll have no trouble with the examinations, Joe. I can't have a man like you walking the streets with no stripes on his sleeve. Glory to God, what a night! They tell me the big fellow hasn't come around yet."

"I hope he croaks!" said Joe, which shows that madness still possessed the soul of Officer Hanrahan.

But gradually the red fog cleared from his mind, and at fifteen minutes past midnight, the conqueror of Marcel Legrand was once again patrolling his beat, this time with numerous bumps and bruises added to his official accouterment. Under the classified ads Joe's heart performed its function apathetically.

"By golly," he reflected. "I lick a man to make him marry Katie, and now they're going to promote me. Sure, if they'd only done that before, he'd have had to lick me to get her! 'Tis a hell of a trick they've played on you, Joe!"

Small wonder that Joe's mind was far afield when his weary legs paused on the corner of Pearl Avenue and Hawthorne.

Strange that at this moment Katie Williams should open her front door a little wider, and emerge on the landing. Maybe Katie was just looking for Iris, daughter of Pasha Sedate. Quite likely, since Iris was even then nonchalantly crossing the street, entirely unaware that the screw-tailed son of Ulysses the Great had just spotted her.

A rush of padded feet, and Iris made for the nearest safety station. Unfortunately the municipal light-company had only that afternoon removed certain poles in favor of an underground conduit. There was only a hole in the ground where Iris had expected to find use for her claws. Near by stood Officer Hanrahan with his back turned. The situation called for extraordinary measures.

Suddenly Cupid the Cop felt the rush of a spirit hand sweep up his coat-tails and clutch at the back of his neck. He spun around, and swung wildly. Off went his cap. Then he perceived the disappointed son of Ulysses the Great, and identified the mass of black fur clinging to his collar.

"By golly," he breathed, "it's that damn cat again! Oh, good evening, Miss Katie!"

KATIE WILLIAMS was a little hysterical. "Good evening, Mr. Hanrahan. Thank you for saving my cat. I—I hope you're not hurt. Brother's just been telling us about your wonderful victory. Oh, Joe—I never did a thing to make you mad at me, and you've just broken my heart—so there!"

"Broken your heart?" protested Joe. "Why, Katie darlin', it was only for love of you that I licked the big feller. Was I to let him jilt you?"

Katie's eyes rounded. "Jilt me? Why, I wouldn't marry him if he was the last man on earth!"

Joe was dazed. "But you was going with him—you was wearing his ring!"

"I only went with him a few times just to see if you'd get jealous, and you didn't—and it wasn't his ring," sobbed Katie. "It was a syntha-something kind of a diamond, and it cost me four-ninety-five. Sadie Smith said she did that, and—and—"

Officer Hanrahan made one last concession to his conscience.

"Katie, I'm earning only a hundred and forty-five a month, but there's an amendment to the charter comin' up, and only this night Captain—"

"I wouldn't care if you were only earning forty," said Katie, "only—I'll never speak to you again! I just wont!"

Officer Hanrahan advanced two steps. "Katie," he whispered over her averted shoulder, "I'm lookin' for a daughter-in-law for my mother. Do you think you could find me one, darlin'?"

The blue mantle of the law was delightfully close to the slim vision in the knit cape. Around the corner came Corporal Malloy with two hundred dollars in his pocket, won that night on his subordinate.

"Well, well," said the Corporal, "what's the charge against your prisoner, Joe?"

"Resistin' an officer," said Hanrahan.

"Resisting, is she?" Corporal Malloy grinned broadly. "You're a liar by the clock," he asserted. "But hold on to

her, Joe—I'll be a witness in your favor. When's the case comin' up?"

Officer Hanrahan consulted his prisoner, and overruled the latter's fluttering protests.

"We're askin' Father Moriarty to publish the banns tomorrow," he reported. "The weddin' will be two weeks after, in St. Joseph's Church. Dan, do you think that maybe you could get some of the boys to turn out?"

"Some of them?" roared Corporal Malloy. "If there's a mother's son of the whole squad that's missing, I'll give him double duty for the balance of the year! And Joe, I'll get the band to show up too. Johnson, the drum-major, won five hundred on you tonight. I'll go call him up right now!"

"Katie," whispered Joe, "it's going to come out high and handsome, after all. You're not marrying a real champion; but darlin'—wait until you hear that band comin' down the street!"

Katie Williams swayed ecstatically in the protecting arms of the law.

"Oh, Joe, hadn't-you-better-wait-until-Corporal-Malloy-has—*Joe, dear!*"

But Joe Hanrahan for once was reckless of the regulations. He implanted another kiss on the upturned face of his prisoner.

"To hell with Dan," he exclaimed. "I'll be a corporal myself next week!"

A TOUCH OF ETERNITY

(Continued from page 71)

the table stood self-absorbed until the host had eased his large body down the lower stair and taken one step across the rug.

"Well, I'll be a Mexican!" he roared.

"Can't do it, Samson. You're too fat," came back the incomparable Byjo in his rough bass.

Immediately afterward two gentlemen, obviously past the age of capering, fell to and capered. Locked in mutual embrace, they competed in back-pounding. The ladies at the center-table exchanged alarmed glances, but Mrs. Findley's was less alarmed than Mrs. Peebles'.

"For God's sake, Moses, what have you been doing to your face?" asked S. W., after they had come apart.

Byjo touched his beard tenderly. "Prophets, you know, always wear 'em. I wouldn't be Moses, would I—"

Lance came downstairs just in time to referee another back-slapping match.

"Thirty-two years!" raged old Peebles, and his son had never seen him so excited. "Do you remember the time the farmer's pig walked right through your color-box and you tried to collect damages? Golly, those were the days. And just to think, you and I have been living right across the county line from each other."

He caught his wife's cool glance and explained: "You remember, Sally? I was telling you how Mr. Findley and I sketched together one summer—"

"You were classmates at Yale?" inquired the great lady, determined not to understand.

"Classmates, all right!" howled S. W. Peebles. "Guess it was a hoboes' college, if anything. Vagabonds we called it—Moses, weren't we two of a kind!"

"How small the world is!" marveled Lance's mother with the air of a lady Columbus.

That was just what Mrs. Peebles would say. The remark and her misunderstanding, troubled look, caused Lance to come to her side and to press her fingers furtively. And then—his attention was diverted by an orchid-colored vision floating toward him down the stairs.

Lance Peebles stood gaping like a yokel. Was he seeing ghosts in the early lamplight? Possibly he had worked too long over his fresco, and his tired eyes had carried away with them pleasing colors and shapes of female loveliness. If so, it was a pleasant affliction, this optical madness, for the girl on the stairway was tall and slender, with splendid gypsy eyes that seemed never to be still. . . . .

Lance was awakened from his dream to know that she had come down to the earth plane and was standing a little apart, being neither bold nor shy, awaiting Mrs. Findley's attention.

"Nevis, darling, you're late as usual," commented Kiku. "Come here and meet Mr. Peebles."

It was the elder Peebles who got the first greeting, and when he had finished his somewhat elaborate speech to the effect that Moses was the only artist who could take his masterpiece along with him, the son of the house was presented.

"You didn't meet my daughter when you were visiting us," suggested the artless Kiku.

"Only in the picture," admitted Lance.

But when he took her in to dinner, he found voice to say:

"So you're Baby!"

"I know what you're thinking," she challenged, setting her ambrosial head a little to one side.

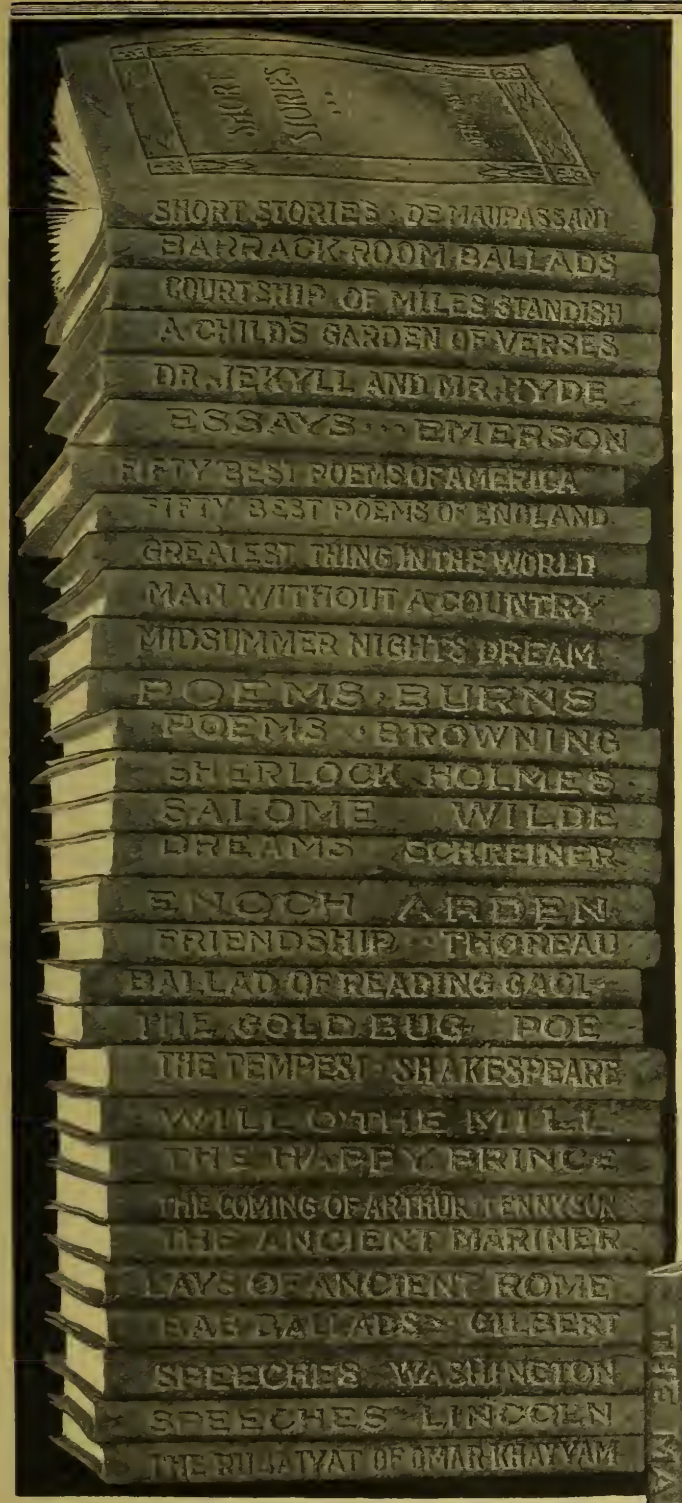
"I dare you," he took her up.

"You're disappointed because I didn't come downstairs on roller skates."

IF Mrs. S. W. Peebles had made up her mind not to like Nevis Findley, the country-club set of Radio failed to share her prejudice. Nevis brought effulgence to the countryside. She had no great variety of clothes, but in defiance of social philosophers, she proved that clothes do not make the woman—not when the woman who wears them has the youth and beauty that dares laugh at dressmakers.

Nevis was no mere country lass. She had danced at college proms and golfed on the nine-hole course at Stockington. She could draw young men to her, even as the lodestone mountain pulled the nails out of *Sindbad's* ship. Then there was her fiddle. She played it gypsy fashion, dancing as she plied the bow, and as she danced she could sing in a sweet, teasing, uncultivated voice, songs that suggested wood-folk mocking from the tree-tops.

Oh, yes, agreed Radio, the Findley girl would last for a little while in the Peebles



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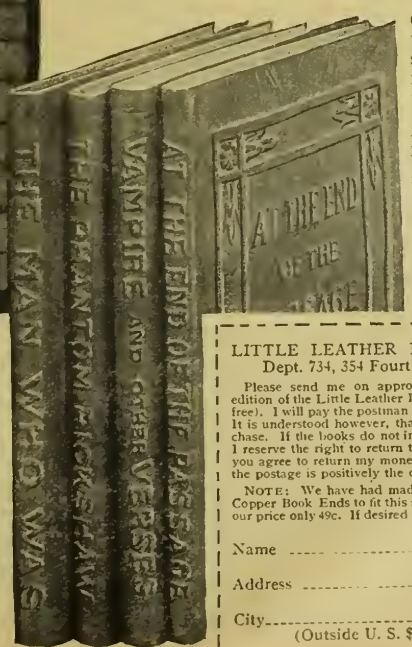

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house. Her father was painting the whole family, at a huge price, they hinted, and Nevis was making the best of her opportunity to steal away the apple of Mrs. Peebles' vigilant eye.

Meanwhile Lance's mother was doing nothing, masterfully. She bided her time for the great eviction, and if the days moved slowly for her, she made no sign.

And so it went for an unreckoned month, with Lance a little deeper in love every day, and the two elderly tramps of yesteryear pranking like boys around the estate. Mrs. Peebles reserved her complaints for bedtime confidences with her husband. She fought gently like a dove at bay. Her portrait was going wretchedly, she said, and she had been tricked into sitting for a nobody who knew nothing about art, which, in her opinion, consisted in painting a lady's hands smaller than Nature made them and giving a properly expensive sheen to silken draperies.

Some invisible trouble came at last to darken Mr. Peebles' vacation mood. He smoked more and pranked less. One morning he stalked out of his study, a telegram buried in his palm, and when he had shown it to Lance in the privacy of the billiard-room, he listened placidly to his son's suggestions as to trains to New York. On ten minutes' notice they had packed their bags and were racing toward the station.

They were gone a day and two nights. Shortly after luncheon of the third day, they came back together, and as these two men of stranger generations followed their luggage into the house, their looks aroused curiosity on the part of several servants concerned in their arrival.

The elder man's face was yellow, and there were blue pouches under his eyes. He was walking terribly erect, and smiling the dead smile of a defeated champion who leaves the ring afraid of pity. Lance was a little pale, but his pallor was that of youth, emotional and momentary. As he left his father in the big hall, he patted him affectionately on his broad back, the rough caress of man to man. Then Lance went to find Nevis.

"Miss Findley is in the garden, Mr. Lansing," replied Torrence, upon inquiry.

He saw her curled up on a stone bench, bathed in the golden kindness of Indian summer. A scattering of leaves, red, orange, russet, pink and yellow, gave her a fantastic background, as if she had been enthroned on rich carpets of Cashmere.

"Lance!" she cried, allowing her book to clatter among the leaves. "What a day for you to come back! Yesterday it rained—ugh! One of those days when the skies seem to be shedding mud. And this morning when I woke up, everything was on parade. The partridges are holding a college reunion up on the hill."

"And you've been sitting all day in one spot, I'll bet, charming the rabbits," he said, laughing gruffly.

"I haven't," she disagreed. "I've been practicing Cleopatra—hours and hours in that wonderful Roman bath—scented waters, willing slaves with Turkish towels. All I needed to turn me into a complete Sybarite was music as I bathed."

"You could have had a phonograph, if you'd asked," he suggested. "Or we could move the automatic pipe-organ up from the music-room."

"I never thought of that," she confessed solemnly. "I might have poisoned one of my slaves, too, just to be jolly. But it was my royal whim to play three sets of tennis before lunch."

Then some experimental imp prompted him to ask: "You like it?"

"The Roman bath and the slaves and everything?" Her black eyes enchanted him again. He nodded, and her answer came deep and serious:

"I adore it."

Impulsively he seized one of her hands and laid it against his cheek. At first she made no attempt to resist; then she pulled it away and asked:

"What's happened, Lance?"

"To me?"

"You look as if you'd been strained through a sieve."

"Hard work," he jeered, but his smile was wry.

"And I suppose you've chosen this perfect day to lock yourself up in that horrid, beautiful old billiard-room and paint some more pictures of Queen Elizabeth—"

"See here, Nev." He stood square before her. "Let's go crazy."

"Oh, Lance!" she cried, springing up, magically equipped with spiritual roller skates.

"There's an awful old horse out in the pasture—that is, if the crows haven't got him. His name's Jasper. He's a bewitched horse and goes perfectly grand with a magic surrey."

"The very one you drove when you visited us at Stockington!" She clapped her hands.

"Just leave him alone, and he'll take you to Arcadia every time. But today I've got business at Great Barrington—regular whopping business—"

"And I'm going too."

"Better put on something warm. Never can tell how the weather's going to turn. I'll rope Jasper and meet you in the road—right over there beyond the poplars."

MRS. PEEBLES, who had enjoyed a miserable sitting with Mr. Findley that morning, gazed dully across the landscape to see a skeleton horse jogging down the lane, two familiar figures on the seat behind him. She rushed into the corridor and met her husband for the first time since his return. Her manner was no longer dovelike, for she had endured much during his absence.

"Dearest," she began mildly enough, but her voice rose rapidly, "have you seen—that?"

"Seen what, darling?" He had intended to kiss her, but he changed his mind.

"Lansing and—that girl. They're driving the most awful-looking horse. Right out on the State road. They look like—like peddlers."

He opened his mouth to speak, but she was there first.

"How much longer are these people going to stay here? He can't paint. He splashes. It doesn't look the least like me—" She calmed with a visible effort. "Of course, I'd do anything for you, dearest, if it's required of me. He can't even paint a likeness. He makes silk look

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like calico. And you should see my hands—like a dishwasher's—he smears—"

At last poor S. W. edged in a word.

"Don't let's talk art now, Sally. I'll send him away if you want. I wish everything could be as simple as that."

Her eyes widened, because now she saw the settled pallor in his face. Tremblingly she laid a hand on his coat.

"What have you done, dearest? What are you keeping from me?"

"I've got to settle several things. Suppose you meet me—"

"*Meet* you?" New wrinkles showed around her mouth. "What is it you can't say *now?*"

BUT he was hurrying downstairs, and when she had finished arraying herself for the afternoon, she found him seated calmly enough among the wicker furniture on the east veranda. The undesirable Findleys occupied chairs on either side of him. Kiku's eyes were all vivacity; Byjo wore that quelled look which had grown on him since he began painting Mrs. Peebles.

"Of course, living in our small way," Kiku was saying, "we have to adjust ourselves to our circumstances. When you're your own cook and butler, you must do everything possible to save steps. It's lovely to have Lance say such nice things about our house. Nevis adores pretty things. She inherits it from Byjo. If we can't afford lace doilies, we can at least have pretty stenciled mats, she says—"

"Mrs. Findley," broke in the master of Radio, and his voice came solemnly like the tolling of a bell, "I've known your husband a long time; I've watched you all—your wonderful, happy family—ever since you came here. And my dear friends, I believe you've touched it."

Byjo turned suddenly, his black eyes round with interest as he drawled: "Touched what?"

"Eternity. Let me explain," he added, for Byjo had opened his mouth to speak. "I believe there's a current running through the world—we don't see it, any more than we see our souls. But it's there to grasp, if you only know how. But you've got to be fine and simple and wise to know how. I touched it once when I was a young man."

Byjo cleared his throat and asked: "You mean that summer?"

"Mo," insisted Mr. Peebles unheedingly, "I believe that you and your wife, the way you live and think, are about as happy as people can be on this earth."

"Aren't we!" chimed Kiku. Just the suggestion of an eye-slant toward Byjo weakened her case.

Old S. W. turned bashfully to his wife and explained: "Mrs. Findley has been telling me how she grows bees and cows and flowers and girls all on three thousand a year."

Mrs. Peebles moved her stiffened lips.

"And Mo," he continued, that strange look still in his face, "I've been putting a lot of study on life lately. We've got over that nonsense called youth, and we can look things in the face. It's all very well to get the Napoleon complex and think you own the earth. But what's the earth when you own it? No sir. I'm beginning to see where you're right and I'm wrong."

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By A. L. Pelton

"The Man Who Helps People Succeed"

WITHOUT wasting a single word I'll come straight to the point! I've discovered a method that is performing wonders for those who follow it. It isn't a secret! Thousands of the world's greatest men have used it and are using this method to bring them wealth—fame—happiness! But now, for the first time, it's been put down in black and white—so that anybody who has learned to read and write can use it to bring him almost anything he wants.

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Let me repeat—it isn't a secret! It's been used thousands of times. Only now it's put down on paper, in plain every-day English so anybody with ordinary intelligence can follow it and make a great deal of money! If you want to know how this method works, let's take some actual examples.

A Few Actual Examples

John Watson was born "helpless in body," and has never been able to walk a step. His parents were poor. He had very little schooling. Yet, despite his handicaps, Watson — that's not his real name, although every word here is true—has become a very rich man. He owns a huge factory in Louisville, Kentucky, and is consulting engineer for many concerns at $100 an hour! Only recently he turned down a $40,000 a year job. He's a wonderful artist, an orator, an inventor and a lawyer. He had only a brain to start with, yet he has won great wealth, fame and happiness!

You may think Watson was a genius. Then how about Wrigley, the chewing gum king? He started as a poor newshoy in Chicago and now makes many times more money in a day than thousands of people earn in a year! How about Douglas, the millionaire shoeman who was a shoemaker's helper? I could mention thousands of others.

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You don't need to have a college education to use this method to great advantage. If you can only read and write you have the proper qualifications to make this marvelous discovery unlock the doors to the world's greatest treasures! You can learn it in a surprisingly short time. And the minute you learn it, you become more *forceful, persuasive, confident*. You think *better, clearer, quicker*. Your success becomes *rapid—sure—easy*. You'll astonish your friends and yourself as well!

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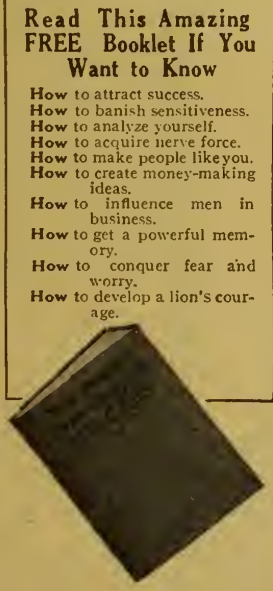

Today thousands of men and women are using this method to bring them wealth, power, happiness. Results are astounding! Clerks are becoming executives almost over night. Salesmen are doubling and tripling their commissions. It's a definite—sure way. Adding twenty, thirty, or forty, even a hundred dollars a week to a man's salary is not at all unusual. This new method for success cannot fail if carefully followed. That's why I absolutely *guarantee* you $1,000 value the very first year!

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How It Works

The method is simple, too. One of the greatest psychologists the world has ever known, Prof. Frank Channing Haddock, has discovered, after years of patient research and study, certain things about success. He found that out of thousands of successful men and women, practically every one possessed certain fundamental characteristics or qualities which were directly responsible for their success. He found that once a person acquired such qualities as foresight, imagination, will-power, confidence, fearlessness, and thinking ability—his success in life was *absolutely certain*.

But even more important than this discovery was the astonishing discovery of how *any* man or woman could *easily* and *quickly* and *positively* develop these characteristics. His whole method is embodied in his great new course "Mastery of Self," which already has performed thousands upon thousands of seeming miracles in bringing the people the success they have always longed for.

Free Book Tells How

I wish I had space enough to tell you all the wonderful things "Mastery of Self" has done for thousands of people. But of course it is impossible, so we have written a new booklet — "The Power that Compels Success" — which is chock-full of all the things you want to know. This book will be a revelation to you. It will show you how to double your power of accomplishment—how to double your ability to think—how to banish your fears, self-consciousness, worries, timidity; how to acquire the courage to do seemingly impossible things—how to think straight—clearly—accurately. It contains some of the most fascinating and marvelous information you ever expected to read. This remarkable book is absolutely free. Send for it now. It may mean the turning point in your life. It will show you the new easy way to greater health—wealth—and happiness! Mail the coupon today. And remember my guarantee of at least $1,000 value the very first year.

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"Happiness—" began Byjo rather feebly, then looked at Kiku and was still.

"A man can't eat or drink or wear more than a certain amount during a lifetime. There's nothing eternal about clothes and food and houses. Nobody but a Chinaman thinks he can take his property with him into the next world. Lucky you can't, I say. Enough's enough. Just look at the way you've raised your daughter. Give a woman more than she needs, and she begins to be either a paranoiac or a flapper. Nevis is a lily. It would be a crime to gild her."

Mrs. Findley stirred a little, flattered, nervous. Mrs. Peebles sat like a ramrod. They were silent while the great man bit the end from a cigar.

"That's what Lance sees in her—something this crazy world has let alone, allowed to grow beautiful." He seemed to measure his words before he said: "And that's why I think he couldn't do better than to marry her."

His audience breathed three deep-drawn, reviving breaths. Mrs. Peebles' came with a throaty click.

"Oh!" Mrs. Findley was stunned momentarily, but she came to with a rush. Her dimples played; her eyes shone as she said inadequately enough: "Your son has such a wonderful nature—and simple tastes like Nevis'"

Her eyes were yearning toward a hope newborn and crying to be fed.

"I'm glad you think so. It's fortunate," he said dispassionately, crossing his fat knees. "Simplicity will be the keynote of Lansing's life from now on."

Something in the way he said it caused his wife to crane sharply around. But it had no further effect upon Mrs. Findley than to cause the fluttering comment:

"I don't think Nevis would ever be extravagant, no matter how much money she had."

"She'll have little enough if she marries Lance," said S. W. Peebles.

HIS wife came from her seat as if propelled by springs.

"What are you talking about?" she shrilled. Her dove-note had sharpened to the cry of a wounded hawk.

"Just that," replied her husband with terrible calm. "I'm calling the families together to settle this particular point. Your daughter and my son are practically engaged—Lance as good as admitted it. And I want to feel he's chosen the right sort of girl to help him make his way in the world he's got to face."

"It isn't as bad as that!" Mrs. Peebles' hands had come together—her useless, gouty hands, flashing with jewels. Inside her sleekly modeled costume she seemed to shrivel to an old woman.

"I'm wiped out," he replied with his first show of weakness.

"My dear!" Her hands trembled so that their redundant jewels shook like dew.

"It'll all be in the papers tomorrow morning," he promised recklessly. "I can't explain the mechanics of bankruptcy—take too long. Results are all that concern us now."

He made a clumsy attempt to stop her, but Sally had rushed by him into the house.

"She'll get over it," he said rather huskily, and resumed his seat. "After all,

we don't matter so much. We've lived our lives and tasted a little glory. About all you ever get out of material things is the taste. What we want to settle now is your daughter's happiness and my son's. Fortunately he's chosen the life and the girl that don't need much money to set them off. Money would hinder."

MRS. FINDLEY sat like a stone, her hands folded in her lap.

"Now, the thing to do," S. W. pursued, "is to get this wedding over as soon as possible—quiet wedding—"

"I'm sorry, Mr. Peebles."

The plump, pretty woman's eyes were a little resentful as she gazed across at him.

"Don't be sorry for me—if that's what you mean," he protested, misunderstanding.

"Not that. But Nevis couldn't think of marrying your son."

"Kiku!" protested Byjo in a cracked tone.

"Mr. Peebles, you're a man of the world," she went on, regardless of her enfeebled consort. "You must know that those young love-affairs don't amount to much. Other things are a lot more important."

"Hm!" muttered the new-made bankrupt. "Arcadia is singing a different tune, isn't it?"

"Arcadia!" she snapped, and her eyes snapped too. "You don't think we live the way we do because we *like* it!"

"Kiku, for heaven's sake—"

Byjo started in valiantly enough, but she brushed away his restraining hand with the injunction: "Go somewhere and let me alone."

"Hell's loose now," complained the elderly artist as he clutched at his thatch of gray and rushed from the horrid scene. But the lioness aroused would not be stilled.

"Arcadia! Drudgery: that's what it is. Scrubbing, skimping drudgery. It's all right for a man, living up in the clouds with no thought where the money's coming from. Oh, it looked rosy enough when I was a girl—love in a cottage. Driveling idiocy! I liked nice clothes and soft beds. Good Lord, I haven't touched such beds as yours for nearly thirty years. I've got used to a lumpy mattress just the way I've got used to emptying slops and quarreling with the grocer over bills we can't pay. But I'm not thinking about that, either. I'm thinking about Nevis."

"She deserves a background," admitted S. W. Peebles sadly, gazing over terraces and fountains soon to pass into stranger hands.

"The day she was born," clattered the fighting mother, "I vowed she'd have a different life from mine. I swore she'd never marry an artist. Byjo, with his head in the clouds, would have been contented with the backwoods, living in a tent. But I made him move to Stockington, because I knew there were people there—well, young people Nevis might get to know. When your son came—"

"An artist with a difference," broke in Peebles.

"Byjo didn't think of him in connection with Nevis. He never thinks of anything."

"But you," suggested S. W. dryly,

"changed your mind about marrying into art-circles."

"I didn't object when I found that he was rich enough to pay for his fads. Byjo says he has a gift, and that would have made him all the more congenial to Nevis. But—"

She paused for words. Her reddish eyes still held the look of a lioness fighting for her cubs.

"I don't think you realize, Mr. Peebles, what it's been for her here. I'd dreamed ever since she was born of seeing her in a house like this—"

"Arcadia has its fairy tales."

"A girl as beautiful as Nevis is thrown away on anything less than this. She wasn't made to wash dishes or break her back over a sewing-machine. I don't intend that she shall be punished because her father hasn't the gumption to make a living for her. She's going to have what's hers by right. I could have cried for joy to see her here with a maid to brush her lovely hair and help her put on her poor little clothes—to see her in the evening among high pillars and velvets and tapestries. Probably you think I'm cold-blooded, Mr. Peebles—"

"I suppose your daughter understood the arrangement," he suggested.

"She's no fool, if that's what you mean," replied Kiku rudely, flushing with the temper of the red-haired.

He walked away without apology, disgust curdling his blood as if he had touched something that writhed under his hand.

His worldly fortune, tumbled hugger-mugger about him, caused less heartburning than the thought of this betrayal. So his careless, happy Arcadians had insinuated themselves into his house on a fortune-hunting scheme far slyer than any he had heretofore discovered against his heir! Nevis needed a background, and she had found Lance. Well, after all, Kiku had been more than honest in her confession. He found himself pitying her almost as much as he pitied his own wife.

Poor world, poor life—poor eternity!

IT was in the dusk of the evening that Jasper, his pace accelerated to something between a trot and a stagger as he dashed for his oat-box, brought the young people back from Great Barrington. They were rolling between the high willows, less than a quarter-mile out of Radio, when Lance, who held the reins rather slack, asked her again if she was cold—whereupon she drew a little closer, possibly with no other thought than to protect her tender person from the bite of autumn.

"What are we going to do about *them?*" she asked, eyes half closed, her frost-fogged breath against his shoulder.

"They've reached the age now," he said, "when life's past the acute stage. It's got sort of chronic. There's no cure for that."

"Your mother and father—so like mine!" she mused.

"You couldn't make 'em believe that."

"No. But aren't they, though? They grow together so as the years go by—Siamese twins, always trying to pull apart. Mine have never been happy together."

"Nevis! What a shock to me! When I found your family, I thought it would be a model for mine—they seemed to

have found the formula for happiness."

"Mother's always blaming it on poverty."

"Pop says it's because we're so rotten rich."

"They're both wrong, aren't they, Lance?"

"Wrong is right."

"The whole secret lies here!" she exclaimed with the sagacity of a child, touching her white forehead.

"Funny," he laughed; "that's what your father told me the first day we met."

"He thinks he's worked it all out, poor dear," she said. "But the trouble's here just the same."

Again she touched her forehead. On an impulse, Lance laid his hand reverently over her warm little heart.

"And here," he whispered. Then he kissed her soft mouth.

They jogged on through the dusk until Jasper had turned unguided through the pompous Peebles gate with its guardian lions.

"Do you think they forgot to fall in love?" asked Lance at last.

"Oh, no. I think they fell in love—some time away back in history—but they didn't take care of it. Love *has* got to be taken care of, Lance—like any other precious thing."

So they came home.

THE house was curiously still when Nevis entered the big hall. She asked Torrence about her mother, and Torrence managed to be portentous in his simple reply that Mrs. Findley was in her room. News travels fast down the back stairs.

Up in the quarters where she had luxuriated those golden weeks sat Mrs. Findley, dressed as for a journey.

"The train leaves at six-eighteen," she explained. "And their car will take us to the station—if they still have a car."

"We're not going?" faltered Nevis.

"I don't think you realize, Baby. Mr. Peebles is in serious trouble — financial trouble. He's been gambling or something, and lost every cent."

"I know," replied Nevis casually. "Lance told me on the way to Great Barrington."

"They've practically asked us to go. You see, we've no business here any longer. I wish we'd never come. Your father wont get a cent for all that work. Now, hurry—"

But Nevis stood perfectly still.

"I'm not going, Mother," she explained.

"Not going, Nevis? Are you crazy?"

"I'd be queer if I went now." The girl's look was distant as the stars.

"Queer?" Mrs. Findley came to her feet and tried to shake Nevis back into the present. "How can you stay? You're not wanted. The house will be sold over your head."

Nevis removed her hat—a gesture of decision. She laid it on a table before explaining quietly: "It isn't cricket to walk out and quit your man cold."

Her back was half turned when she said this; then suddenly she wheeled about, her eyes brilliant with tears.

"Because—" Then the announcement came in a rush: "Oh, Mamma, *please* be glad. Please! Can't you see? Lance and I were married this afternoon."

WITHIN THESE

earlier generation. Chalender is old enough to be your father. And think of his past!"

"Think of mine!" she said with a tone less of bravado than of abjection.

This stabbed RoBards deep. But he went on as if to a stubborn jury:

"If Chalender were honest, he would want to marry you."

"He does!"

"Oh, God help us all!" Patty whispered with a look as if ashes had been flung into her face and as if she tasted them.

RoBards snarled: "I'll kill him if he ever crosses my doorstep again!"

To which Immy responded demurely: "Then I'll have to meet him outside."

This defiance was smothering. She went on:

"Why shouldn't I marry him? I don't have to tell him anything. He doesn't ask me any questions—doesn't dare start the question game, perhaps. He's lots of fun. He keeps me laughing and interested, and—guessing."

This was such a pasquinade on the usual romantic reasons, that her father could contrive no better rejoinder than:

"But my little sweetheart, such a marriage would be bound to fail."

This soft answer drove Immy to a grosser procacity:

"Then I can divorce him easily enough. I can join the crowd and go to Michigan. After two years of residence, I could get a divorce on any one of seven grounds!"

"Immy!"

"Or Indiana is still better. I was reading that you can establish a residence there after a night's lodging. Men and women leave home saying they're going away for a little visit or on business, and they never come back, or come back single. If Harry Chalender didn't behave, I could surprise him. Besides, Harry would give me anything I want, even a divorce, if I asked him. But don't you worry; I'll get along somehow."

And she was gone, leaving her parents marooned on a barren Arctic island of futility.

Chapter Thirty-four

WHEN RoBards' term as judge ended, he declined to try for reëlection, and returned to the practice of law. Once more the Croton River brought him clients—but also a civil war with his son Keith. This was a sore hurt to RoBards' heart, for he and the boy had been mysteriously drawn together years before, and he had found such sympathy and such loyalty in Keith's devotion, that he had counted upon him as a future partner in his legal career.

The water lust of New York was insatiable. As fast as new supplies were found, they were outgrown.

Already the need was urgent for a new reservoir. Another lake must be established within the city. The Croton Department had been authorized to acquire land. After much debate, a thousand lots

WALLS— *(Continued from page 63)*

held by a hundred owners were doomed to be submerged.

But first the city had to battle with the landholders, and many of them engaged RoBards as their counsel. There were many houses on the bed of the new lake, gardens and squatters' cabins. Keith protested against his father's activity, and tried to convert him to the great principles of the city's higher rights. The young man was frankly ashamed of his parent. It was like having a grandfather who had been a Tory in the Revolution or a Secessionist in 1812, or an Abolitionist now.

Keith had been graduated from Columbia well toward the bottom of his class; but he had a gift for leadership among the least studious students. He preferred hydraulics to classics, and sneered at the law. He was aided and abetted in his ambitions by Harry Chalender, who continued to exert a malign influence over the home, though he never came near it any more, and Immy never mentioned his name. If she saw him, she met him outside under the cover of other engagements. Then one day Keith came home swaggering:

"I've got a position as an engineer with the Croton Department. Uncle Harry got it for me—took me to a firm of engineers and made them take me in."

That pet name "Uncle" angered RoBards almost as much as the deed. But he could not expose such feelings to his son, or thwart the boy's future.

THE theater of Keith's labors was the long channel of the Croton River. At first he had to tote surveying instruments and scramble over rough ground. But the aqueduct was to him one of the majestic wonders of the world. Patty was glad to move out early to Tulip-tree Farm to be near him, though Immy hated the place, and not without reason.

Repairs were incessantly required in the masonry imprisoning the Croton, and one afternoon Keith came home to Tulip-tree Farm worn out, to tell of a strange breach:

"Near Sing Sing—in the section of the aqueduct that Uncle Harry built—we found that a willow tree had sent one of its roots into the crown of the arch. It had bored a hole twenty feet right through the solid stone."

RoBards started up in his chair at this. The thought had thrust into his mind: what if the great tulip-tree growing out there had done the like to the foundations of the house?

He rose and with a laborious pretense of dawdling sauntered to the door, out and around the house to where the tulip-tree stood. As if idly, he leaned against the trunk and studied the sprawl of the roots. Some of them were thicker than a young tree. They writhed and contorted the ground. Standing still like pythons petrified, they yet seemed to move with a speed the more dreadful for its persistence.

Down the outside stairway to the cellar went RoBards and stumbling in the

dark found the wall nearest the tree and passed his hands along it like a blind man. His anxious fingers encountered tendrils pleached against the rough masonry. He made a light and found that the tulip-tree was already within the walls. The roots were like worms covered with mold. On the cellar floor was a dust of old mortar, and bits of it slowly shoved out from between the chinks. Some of the dislodged mortar was no older than the night when he had lifted out stones and buried Jud Lasher somewhere inside there and smeared fresh mortar in the crevices.

Terrified by the peril of this secret inquiry of the far-delving roots, he went back to the outer air. He stood awhile, as motionless as the roots, charmed by their snaky spell. Then an idea came to his rescue. He called to Albeson, who was puttering about the yard in his Sunday-go-to-meetin's with his collar off for comfort.

"See those roots!" said RoBards. "They're going to tip the house over if we don't kill them. Get your saw and ax, and we'll cut them off now."

"No special hurry as I can see," said Albeson.

"We'll get it over with today."

"In spite of its bein' the Sabbath?" Albeson protested, making religion an excuse for laziness.

"The better the day the better the deed."

Albeson condensed the Declaration of Independence into a grumbling dissent, then fetched the tools. All afternoon they worked, chopping, digging, sawing until they had severed all the Briarean arms on the side next the house.

"Looks like we've killed the old tree," Albeson groaned. "It'll naturally bleed to death."

"Better lose the tree than the house," RoBards retorted.

"Wall, they're both your'n to do with as you're a mind to," said Albeson, absolving himself of guilt and folly, as he went back to the house. RoBards paused at the front steps to look back at his gigantic quondam friend. It had been treasonably making ready to betray him. He did not love it any more. The house itself was changing from a sanctuary to a penitentiary. He could set it on fire easily, but the heat would only crack the foundation walls apart. He could not burn those stones.

Jud Lasher—what, after all, had been the profit of that murder? He had sheltered Immy from harm as if she were a sacred chalice. And now she was the reckless companion of Harry Chalender in his revels. He had guarded her ignorance as a kind of virginity, and now there was nothing that she did not know.

AS he turned to go into the house, he was startled to hear her voice crying his name:

"Papa—Papa!"

He paused, thinking it imagination, but he saw her coming to him in a swift-rolling carriage. At her side was Chalender, with exultance in his smile. The carriage whirled in at the open gate, and the moment the driver stopped it short, Chalender leaped out, helped Immy to alight and ran with her to the steps.

And there the twain knelt in a laughing

parody of homage; and Chalender—Chalender his arch enemy, his chief annoyance upon the earth—dared to mimic Immy's word and exclaim:

"Papa!"

As RoBards' eyes rolled in wonder, he caught sight of Patty at a window staring unseen. She vanished almost at once, as if she had fallen.

Before RoBards could frame a question, Immy was up and at him in a whirlwind. She had her arms about his neck and was crying:

"Papa, dearest, Harry and I have just come across the border from Connecticut. We went over there, and the funniest old justice of the peace you ever saw married us. And we've come home galloping to ask your blessing."

The habit of indulgence answered for RoBards before his slow wrath could muster its forces. He stammered idiotically:

"Married! Well, what do you think of that? Well, well! This *is* a surprise but —well—bless you, anyway."

And his hands went up over them priestly.

Chapter Thirty-five

ROBARDS stumbled into the house in sudden need of Patty and her support in his panic. He found her lying on the floor of the parlor, where she had fainted.

As he gathered her into his arms, Patty returned from her coma into a kind of mania. It was a long while before he could make out her words, and then he caught faintly:

"They sha'n't stay here! They can go to Europe or California or hell. But they sha'n't stay here! They sha'n't, they sha'n't!"

He could not persuade her to speak to them. When Immy came in radiant and shaken with laughter, Patty laughed like a woman long insane, worn down with some old ribald mania; but she would not speak, though Immy wept and begged:

"Mamma, kiss me. Please, Mamma! If I did wrong, it's too late to make a fuss. Don't spoil my first little chance of happiness, Mamma! Oh, come on and kiss me and say you forgive me!"

At last Patty whispered, and patted Immy's quivering hands, but as if to be rid of her:

"I've nothing to forgive you, you poor baby, you poor little ignorant baby. But —but—"

That was all, and she put out her cheek to Immy's lips in dismissal, but did not kiss her. Immy stole away baffled, disheartened.

Even Chalender dared not approach Patty. His intuition of woman warned him to stay out on the porch or wait by the carriage till Immy's trunk was brought down. Then he drove away with her, and RoBards dared not wave them goodby.

At last when there was silence and the hush of night, RoBards fell asleep. He was wakened by a squeaking sound. He thought he saw a ghost by the bureau. He rose slowly and went toward the wraith cautiously. It was Patty in her nightgown. She was struggling to open

the drawer where for years he had kept an ancient dueling pistol, against the burglars that never came.

As he stood stock still, she got the drawer open and took out the weapon. She caressed it, and nodded her head, mumbling drowsily: "Yes, yes, I must, I must save her from him!" Her lips moved, but her eyes were not open.

With all gentleness, he took her hand and lifted from her unresisting fingers the pistol. Then he set his arms about Patty and guided her back to bed. He lifted her feet between the sheets and drew the covers over her.

She breathed the placid shallow breath of one who sleeps, but she clung to his hands so that he could hardly free them.

The next morning she said nothing of her dream or her somnambulism, and he felt no need of questioning her. The soul has its own torture-chambers where even love has no right of entry, especially when it knows too well what is within.

All that Patty said was: "I don't feel well enough to get up today. I'll just rest here."

Late that forenoon Immy drove up alone from White Plains, where she and her husband had found lodging at a tavern. She led her father into his library and said to him:

"Harry—my husband—and I have talked things over; and he's—we've decided to go back to California. I think I'd be happier out there—away from everything. I think Mamma would be happier. You haven't congratulated me yet, so I congratulate you on getting me honestly married off. That's something in these days. Besides, nobody will miss me much."

As RoBards looked at her now, she was not the wife of Chalender or anybody; she was the little ill-fated girl he had defended in vain against life. She had secured herself a new defender—against too much sober thought about things. He realized how wise she had been, how lonely and how afraid.

His arms went leaping out to her. She flung herself into his lap, and he clenched her fiercely, kissing the rippling curls along the top of her bent head.

Chapter Thirty-six

THE newspapers made a pretty story of the Chalender-RoBards marital alliance. For once they overlooked a horror and gave it romance. The retreat in Westchester had saved the family once more.

They praised Captain Chalender as "our popular and public-spirited citizen, a soldier and a leader in civic affairs, whose large interests compel his immediate return to the Golden Gate, whither he takes as his bride Miss Imogene RoBards, one of the belles of the season." They even had a word for ex-Judge David RoBards, "the well-known jurist." But the scorpion's sting was in the tail of it: "The bride's mother in her day was one of the beauties of her time, and a toast of the town in the gallant old times that are now no more."

RoBards brought the paper home to the farm from town to show Patty. He thought only of the comfort she should

take from the glossing over of the wretched misalliance. But Patty was numb to the fear of publication.

As soon as she spoke, he wondered that he had lacked the common intelligence to spare her the cruelest of wounds. She read the brief notice and sighed:

"'The bride's mother—in her day—was—'"

She dropped the paper and smiled miserably: "They've got me in the obituary column already."

She seemed to die then.

He understood, and falling on his knees by the rocking-chair, caught her as she drooped forward across his shoulder. She had read her death-warrant. Her head rolled as heavily as if the ax had already fallen on the so kissable nape of her gracile neck.

He could give her no courage in a battle already irretrievably lost. Rather, he took panic from her and began to understand that, while he had no beauty to lose, he had already caught up with his future, and was beginning to leave it behind, as a man who walks toward the west all day overtakes his diminishing shadow and then leaves it lengthening aft.

Youth had gone out of the house, too, now that Immy had taken with her not only her trunks and her bright gowns and her jingling trinkets, but her laughter as well, her mischief, her audacities, her headlong genius for peril. But they rarely spoke of her, for her name meant not only Chalender, but all the dangers of the sea, the infamous storms of the Antarctic waters, the long climb up the infinitely distant Pacific Ocean to the equator and far, far beyond; and then all the fabulous hazards of the San Francisco frontier. Between that new city and New York lay the whole vast continent. Railroads and wagon-trains were pushing through the vast wastes where the buffaloes swept in tides and the Indians lurked, but letters were forever in coming, and Immy's parents could know nothing of her fate for half a year—if, indeed, they ever heard of her again.

THERE were the other children. Keith was turning twenty, a young Viking indifferent to girls except as clowns to amuse him—which gave Patty almost her only comfort in the world.

But David the younger, whom they called Junior, was coming along to the last of his teens, and he was as full of romance as an Orlando. He did not stick poems on trees, but he carved linked initials in the bark of the tulip-trees and quickly gouged them out before his father could discover what they were.

When RoBards reminded him that he was endangering the life of some of the slenderer trees, he groaned, "All right, Dad; I'll quit," and walked away as cheerful as Job. He sighed like a furnace and there were woeful ballads in his own tormented eyebrows.

The unsolved puzzle of David's infatuation began to harass his parents and frighten them, for he was wasting away to a melancholia.

They decided to take him back to the city in spite of the heat of the late September and the charm of the golden countryside. The announcement staggered the boy. It dazed them to see one

so young so capable of despair—as if any age were immune to anguish, as if a little pitcher could not overflow as well as a large.

That afternoon he got away from the house with a fox's craftiness. RoBards missed him immediately, and seizing his hat, set out in pursuit, knowing that Junior had but little start of him.

He hurried to the gate and looked up and down the road. In neither direction was anyone visible. The only region left to explore was above and back of the house. RoBards had avoided that realm for years. Up there was the Tarn of Mystery, where he had almost killed Jud Lasher; up there were the thickets where he had hunted him down and ended him.

There was no pleasure in invading that accursed demesne of black memories, but his frenzy for an answer to the riddle of his son outweighed his reluctance. He turned and marched grimly up the slope.

The last time he was up here, there was hardly another home to be descried except his own roof and the distant hut of the Lashers. Now there were gables and chimneys and gateways everywhere. A few of the houses were mansions, snowy Colonial residences with high white pillars reminiscent of Greek temples. The Lasher rookery alone was not new. It was older, more ramshackle than ever, though he had noted as he passed, the growth of the little brats to big brats.

The girl Molly who had run off to the city and gone to the bad had faded into oblivion after a few noisy struggles, like one drowning in the sea. Another Lasher girl had grown up to replace her in the hut, and perhaps later to trace her footsteps on the streets of New York. RoBards had seen her now and then as he drove past to the station. Usually she leaned across the gate and dreamed wide-eyed of something that made her wistful. Either she was paler than the other Lasher young, or washed oftener, for there was a cleanliness about her skin and in the clothes she was pushing through. The last time he saw her, her hair was combed. There might have been a ribbon around it somewhere. He had an idea that her name was Aletta.

Her mother had mentioned some such name to him once when she had checked him to whine:

"No word of my boy Jud yet. After all these years, wouldn't he 'a' wrote me a line, wouldn't he 'a' got home somehow, in all these years, don't you think—if he was still alive?"

ROBARDS gazed at the spot where he had beaten Jud Lasher and used him as a flail. He quivered with a nausea for that whole chapter in his life, and was glad that his swinging glance discovered no other human presence.

But as he was about to turn away, he heard a voice floating from the rocky ledge above, a girl's voice, as liquid and as sweetly murmurous as should have been the voice of the nymph that should have haunted this viridescent pool. It was very mournful, and it said:

"All night I was reading the book you lent me, 'The Lady of the Lake!' Such a long, beautiful story, and so sad! What a sad thing love is, and how old! So many of us poor lovers have loved in

vain—haven't we, honey? They'll tell us that we're too young to love; but oh, darling, darling, I feel so old, so old! And how can I ever stand the years that must go by before we can be together? You've got to finish your college and make your way. I'd rather die than hinder you from being the great man you're going to be; and I can't help you. I'm so poor and friendless and ignorant.

"But when I think, when I think of the years, the years, the years, I want to lie down in that water there and fold my hands and drown. For even when you are rich and famous—what would your father and mother say if you told them that you wanted to marry me? Your father is rich and famous, and everybody respects him. I'm just one of the Lashers."

THE boy had the RoBards talent for silence, and he had listened as quietly as his hidden father. Even now he only murmured:

"I'll marry you or I'll marry nobody, Aletta. This is a free country!"

An eerie laugh broke from the girl's throat as she cried:

"A free country! How could there be a free country anywhere—least of all here?"

RoBards was grimly glad that she had sanity enough to understand this truth at least, and the wildness of his boy's infatuation. To marry the impossible sister of the unspeakable wretch that his own father had put to death—that would be impossible, if anything were.

He risked discovery and leaned out to have a look at this weird creature whose voice had woven such unholy power about his son. She was perched aloft on a little peak of rock a few yards away. The boy lay along the slope of it, clinging to her right hand. There was reverence in his manner. In the religion of young love, she was sacred to him and he to her. Her left hand held the book she had spoken of. It rested like a harp on the arc of her thigh. Her feet were bare, though the air was cold; they were shapely feet. She was shapely everywhere, and there was a primeval grace, a loveliness about her every outline. Womanhood was disclosing its growth and its spell, straining at the scant and shabby dress and enveloping her in beauty like a drapery of mist.

She might have been indeed the nymph of this pool, luring a faun to his death in a fatal element. But to RoBards the life-fearing little pauper had the terrifying power of a Lorelei throned on a storm-beaten cliff and chanting his hapless son to shipwreck.

He wondered if the Lashers were not making ready to wreak upon his boy a roundabout revenge for what he had done to theirs. He was mortally afraid of this ragged girl. And there was nothing to tell him of the tremendous forces that were gathering to dwarf this calamity with a greater.

From climax to yet more impressive climax this great novel progresses; and in the next installment is described the most dramatic scene of all. Be sure to read it—in the forthcoming May issue of *The Red Book Magazine.*

THE KI-

rolled in their warm blankets, he woke with a start.

"That girl!" he thought. "Those pajamas! That wrapper! Was—was *that* a kimono?"

He had never thought of the thing, since. Had she, the blue girl in the gold slippers, taken that flimsy, colorless thing and made it pink and silvery? And sent it back? He had never considered that end of the business. Never! Of course she would feel that she had to get it back. Of course. Just what a girl *would* do. But why not send it to *him*—but, how could she? Doubtless, she had thought this a clever way to do it—quietly, anonymously, efficiently. Efficiency! That was Sue, all over, efficiency! And Sue's face, when he told her—that laugh in her eye—he squirmed unhappily. Perhaps Sue would forget, by morning. Funny, his forgetting the whole thing so! *But—but would Sue believe he had forgotten?* Nonsense, she'd have to. Perhaps it would be just as well. He scowled, and slept, uneasily. Old Pierre, wrapped in a pink and silver shirt, laughed at him disagreeably all the rest of the night.

He decided, while shaving, to get it over at breakfast, and had even planned the conversational opening he would use. But even as Sue passed him his coffee, while the waitress stood at his elbow with cream and sugar, Bob began to chuckle, shaking a buttered roll at him warningly.

"From now on, remember that anything you say may be used against you, Rod," he said, helping himself left-handedly to orange marmalade. "We are on the trail! If you didn't *wear* the kimono, did you perhaps *lend* it? Think, now—but don't answer, if you don't wish to, you know! You have a right to consult your lawyer!"

"Rot!" he growled automatically, joggling the cream on the waitress' tray. "Is Sue chewing over *that*, still?"

"*Is* she?" her husband repeated. "Well, all I say is, if you have anything to conceal, Rodman, watch out!"

"Don't be any sillier than you can help, Bob," Sue warned him perfunctorily. "What would Roddy know about it? Didn't you want any fruit, Roddy?"

WELL, he was committed, now. You couldn't exactly go back on a position, after that. And for the matter of that, what could she do, anyway? Let it go. There was no crime in question. He ate in a businesslike way.

"Today I shall go all over the place, of course," Sue announced thoughtfully. "It will be easy enough to find out—"

"To find out what?" Roddy demanded, staring at her. Did she really believe—could she, literally, discover—

"To find out whether anything is missing, of course," she returned, surprise in her clear brown eyes. "Really, neither of you men quite seem to see that something very odd, to say the least, has happened in this apartment while we've been gone!"

Bob lighted a cigar.

"My dear girl," he said paternally, "if

MONO

(Continued from page 35)

you mean us to understand by all this that a burglar, male or female, entered this apartment in our absence, took off his or her clothes and put on your kimono, in order to burgle to better advantage, and having escaped with the loot, and carefully packed up the kimono, then cleaned and returned it—I agree with you that something very odd indeed has happened in this apartment!"

Roddy gave a short, relieved laugh.

Pretty clever of old Bob, that! The facts in a nutshell, so to speak.

And Sue was a little staggered by the clarity of his reasoning. She swallowed some coffee defiantly.

"Neverthless. I shall go over things," she said.

"Oh, all right," Bob returned generously. "It might be as well."

RODDY was conscious of a little disagreeable foreboding for a few hours, but the new offices were engrossingly interesting, and he soon lost himself in a whirl of business, dining with his partner, and letting himself in late at night. No dreams of pink or silver garments annoyed him; and by breakfast time he might almost have exposed the thing as a good joke, had it not been for Sue. She sat between them booted and saddled, as it were, in a severe tailored suit, with a wrist-watch. Her expression was almost threateningly efficient.

"I've been over the whole apartment and the storeroom," she announced briefly, "and nothing is missing."

"Of course not," Roddy advanced incautiously; "so *that's* over and off your mind."

He was more relieved than he had realized he would be. But Bob shot him a pitying glance and ate marmalade in discreet silence.

"It's not off my mind at all," she answered crisply. "I never really supposed they took anything!"

Roddy stared.

"I'm going to work on another track, now," she continued, "—no marmalade, thanks,—and I believe I can get to the bottom of this."

"What are you going to do?" Roddy asked uncomfortably. She looked so terribly competent, in that stiff white shirtwaist!

"I'm going to Renée's and trace the thing by the date," she said. "They may remember who brought it."

Roddy was conscious of a cool feeling in the pit of his stomach. What a fool he had been not to tell, as soon as he remembered! Or not to tell as soon as he got to the country. But he had forgotten. What an idiot! Why, he could have made a good story out of it! And Sue would have been the first to enjoy it. Could he risk it now?

"You don't look pleased, Rodman; afraid she's going to find you out, after all?" Bob suggested with a chuckle.

"Bosh!" he answered hopelessly, automatically, and again Sue smiled.

"Don't be silly, Bob," she said carelessly.

RODDY walked uncomfortably to the subway. It seemed now that he'd better get hold of that girl. Absurd—he wouldn't know her if he saw her, probably. What was it she looked like, now? Honey-colored hair, scared eyes—were they gray? No, a sort of hazel green. He recalled them, suddenly, focused upon him in horror. Straight brows, a rather wide, curly mouth, height about the average (Sue's kimono had just cleared the pajamas), an intense and serious expression. But that was from shock, perhaps? Little by little her face came out, like an etching, from its background. She was blonde, because even after that amazing chalky white had left her cheeks, her healthy fairness had been more cream than pink.

Why hadn't he seen her in the hall? But of course, her hours were not his. Perhaps the family wasn't back yet from the country. What could he do? Sue could easily find out, probably, the date of the package's delivery—worse, the date of its receipt by the cleaners! If that date should coincide with his visit to the apartment! And beyond a reasonable doubt, it would. Why had that terrible bell rung, and fooled him into going to the kitchen door? A teasing little worry spoiled his day.

Returning at dinner-time, he stooped mechanically in the ground hallway to pick up a lady's handkerchief, and as he entered the elevator, a brilliant thought came to him. Trouble sharpened the wits, it seemed. Sue shouldn't have this all her own way, after all!

"The young lady who lives in here dropped this, I think," he said to the uniformed hall-boy. "Will you take it in to her? Or perhaps I will."

"There aint no young lady lives there," the youth returned briefly.

"Are you sure?"

"Sure I am. That's old Mrs. Tallmadge and the old gentleman. They're here six years. There aint nobody else lives there."

"I see. I thought I saw her go in. It was probably a visitor."

"They don't have visitors," said the boy obstinately. "He's sick all the time."

"Dear, dear!" Roddy returned vaguely, and gave him the handkerchief.

THERE was a guest for dinner, and subsequent bridge, and it seemed as if an evening free from the kimono mystery might be enjoyed by the Drent family. But suddenly, without the slightest warning, Sue looked up from her hand.

"Isn't it annoying!" she said. "Renée's books are being checked up, or something, and they can't get at them for me. Not for a week! But the girl there thinks she remembers it, and a lady brought it in, she says, a tall lady, she's nearly sure. It was sometime in the summer, she thinks—in August."

"That was when you were here, wasn't it, Rod?" Bob suggested thoughtfully, adding in a stage whisper: "You know, Sue, Roddy turns out to be one of those reserved, silent bachelors you can't always tell—"

"Oh, shut up, can't you, and play!" his brother growled, adding quickly: "Hard luck, Sue, but we can bear it for a week, can't we?"

He was conscious of a deep relief. Surely he could trace that blue girl in a week. . . . .

The next morning he stepped into the back hall, on his way out of the apartment. A blessed memory had come to him; the man who had let her in with the pass-key had been named Jim. Sue had repeated it to him, in case he forgot or lost his key.

"Can I see Jim a moment?" he asked of the superintendent; "he did something for me, when I was here in August."

"Jim's gone, sir," the man replied politely. "He left last week. Anything I can do?"

Roddy thanked him and retreated.

"He said he'd landed a job in Boston, but I couldn't say where," the superintendent added.

"It doesn't matter," Roddy assured him.

"I'm sorry. Your sister, she was wanting him too, yesterday, to ask him about something, but as I told her, he's gone to Boston."

"Ah, yes," Roddy murmured and went out angrily. So Sue was after him too! Really, she was a little too efficient. She had made up her mind, had she? Well, so had he. If she could trace that damned kimono, he could too! And he would. Let her manage Bob; she shouldn't manage *him*.

HE strolled carelessly down a busy avenue till a gilded, long-wristed glove against an ebony background announced that Madame Renée accepted articles of all sorts for dry cleaning.

"When do you think," he began conversationally, "that I can get information about a pink kimono that was left to be cleaned here for Mrs. Drent, last summer?"

Hardly had the words formed themselves when he realized that he should have prepared a more tenable position: suppose they refused!

But the auburn-haired, porcelain-cheeked young lady at the desk leaned toward him, surprisingly interested in this matter.

"It's funny about that kimono," she said thoughtfully. "I took it myself—I know the article you mean; but it got put down as a 'dressing-jacket' by a new girl we had, and the slips don't correspond. I carried it in my mind, all right, and I'm sorry about the mistake. It's an overcharge, and we'll rectify it when the books get back. You're for the other party, I presume?"

"The other party?" he repeated blankly.

"Yes. Mrs. Vail, in Princeton. *She* got the bill for the kimono, you see. It was pink, with silver trimmings. Mrs. Drent's friend got *her* bill, you see, but she'll be in—she stopped by yesterday to make sure it was delivered, and I wasn't here. They told her to call again. We'll collect from her, and refund Mrs. Vail. You'll get it, all right. It was our mistake."

"Ah, I see," said Roddy.

"They've each got the right goods," the young lady went on, arranging her auburn hair over her ears. "It's us that will lose—me, I mean, for it's up to me, it seems, unless Mrs. Drent objects to paying the

difference. It seems she didn't leave the article herself."

"No, she—she didn't," said Roddy.

She shot a quick glance at him.

"Oh! You know about that?"

"Yes," he answered boldly, conscious too late of his stupidity; "yes, I do."

"O-o-h," she murmured thoughtfully. "I sort of thought you were from Mrs. Vail—she said her husband would be in, this morning."

"I'm not exactly for either of them," he blurted desperately; "I'm for myself. I—I want to find the person who brought in that kimono!"

Of all idiotic remarks! Now he'd done for himself! As if you could ever be frank with a woman! Where was his diplomacy?

But the auburn-haired girl leaned closer over the counter. Her pale brown eyes brightened oddly.

"Oho!" she breathed. "Some funny business, eh?"

A wild hope flashed into his mind.

"Yes, rather," he said, looking fixedly at her.

"I thought so!" she cried eagerly. "I said so to myself when she came in! I sort of felt it. Honest, I did. You're—you're in the Service?"

He scowled doubtfully.

"I couldn't help noticing your pin," she confided, glancing pointedly at his waistcoat.

HE remembered the old silver pilot-wheel, yacht-club emblem he had put on that morning to have packed and sent to little Robert.

"Oh—oh, yes," he stammered.

"You see, I read a great deal," she babbled on, "and I put two and two together pretty quick. You have to, in New York, don't you?"

"I suppose so," he agreed.

"This Mrs. Drent, she seemed so surprised when I told her it was left in her name, to be delivered *to the same name*, that I sort of got thinking. She pretended, you see, that she knew who left it, but I knew all the time she didn't. Why would she want the party described, then? Or ask the date?"

Why, indeed? Oh, Sue, Sue, you too efficient woman!

"I just told her, what was the simple truth, that we couldn't give no estimate at the time, as Madam wasn't in, and I'm not allowed to, for tinting. So the lady had to come back, as she was anxious to prepay and hadn't any account. And then, the new girl gave her the price for the dressing-jacket. So she paid that. And Mrs. Vail—she's a charge customer—*she* got the kimono bill."

"I see."

His spirits rose delightfully. No charge account, no address, then! One for you, Mrs. Sue!

"But I can't have *you* lose," he began gallantly, "so please let me pay the difference, wont you? You—you've been a great help."

"Oh, just you wait," she assured him, tossing her red head proudly. "I'll do more for you yet! It's a pleasure to help out the Service! I knew you were one of 'em, soon as you came in—I've read a good deal. There's plenty of time, here."

"I suppose so," he agreed.

"She's coming in again, you see—the party that brought it—to make sure it ever got delivered."

"Oh! She is!"

Well, well! Sue was no fool, after all!

"That donkey of a new girl told her there'd been a mix-up and that the kimono had been sent to Princeton. She was awful worried, the girl said. You see, a party named James Curry, he signed for the sup'rintendent of Mrs. Drent's apartment, and now it seems he's gone to Boston, and he signed for a dressing-jacket."

RODDY'S head began to whirl. These women and their clothes! He envied Jim, safe and obscure in Boston.

"Mrs. Drent was anxious to know when the lady would come, and they told her tomorrow—"

His heart sank. If he knew Sue, the blue girl would never escape her.

He would go to Mrs. Tallmadge and throw himself—

"But even a good tip wont do everything," announced Miss Redhead grandly. "You could be phoned to just as well as this Mrs. Drent, couldn't you?"

So Sue had tipped! What depths of efficiency!

"Indeed, yes," he answered eagerly. "I should be eternally grateful—"

"I guess we can settle that, all right. I'll phone her that it's day *after* tomorrow the party's to call in, and I'll phone you the minute she calls—shall I?"

"I should appreciate it immensely," he said gravely.

"I can keep her here waiting, verifying the tag-number and all," she added thoughtfully, "and you can hurry up. I suppose you don't want them to meet, do you?"

"It would be much better if they didn't," he said briefly.

"I'll bet you! This Mrs. Drent would fly up and muss the whole thing. You been tracing the other party some time?"

"Quite a while."

"And I suppose if you get one, you get the whole gang, usually, don't you?"

"It often happens," he agreed conservatively.

"Clothes is often evidence, I've noticed. Well, I'll let you know. What name shall I ask for, when I call?"

"Mr.—Mr. Rodman Drent," he said coolly, and gave her his club telephone-number.

She burst into a rich chuckle.

"Well, of all the cute tricks!" she said. "I guess you have to have your nerve with you, all right! You must get into some tight places, you men!"

"We do," he said.

HE dressed himself with great care the next morning, listened attentively to his sister-in-law's account of her long-distance telephoning to the dyeing and cleaning works in New Jersey, noted with interest that she said nothing about her appointment at Renée's, and hurried to his club, where he sat nervously smoking cigarettes, for two hours.

At a telephone-call from the page-boy he hurried to the booth.

"Do you get me, all right?" came an eager, muffled voice. "I have to speak low.

I'm in the back office. Say, what do you think's happened? *They're both here!*"

"For heaven's sake!"

"Now, don't get excited—I've got it all fixed up!" the voice hurried on.

"The other party's in the shipping-department, in the cellar! What do you think of that? I asked her to step down to verify her goods. Mrs. Drent is out in front; I told her to wait. She don't suspect anything at all. If you was to beat it right up here, you can manage, all right—just go in at the trade entrance around the corner. She'll be there. She thinks she's going to see the kimono, to make sure. I have to hurry—goo'-by!"

Roddy dashed into a providential taxi and hurtled down the trade entrance of Madame Renée's, a few minutes later. The dark humidity of the basement enshrouded him like the air of a greenhouse. He wiped his forehead nervously.

"Is—is anybody here?" he called into the dimness in a cautious voice.

"No—there isn't anybody—I'm just waiting—" a vague, low answer floated out to him from behind a pile of cartons.

"Oh, thank God!" he muttered gratefully, and felt his way to her.

She sat on an empty packing-case, fanning herself anxiously. Her face loomed palely from the shadow.

"I'm not—they're upstairs," she began, but he cut her short.

"It's me," he said abruptly. "For heaven's sake, let's get out of this, before my sister comes down! Hurry up—it's stifling in here!"

She gave a little gasp.

"Oh," she cried softly, "it's you! I have to wait here—"

"No, you don't. We've got the kimono, all right! I had to see you—I'll explain, when we get out," he announced jerkily. "For heaven's sake, *come on!*"

STARING at him, she rose slowly; then, caught in the rush of his nervous haste, she took his offered hand, and they stumbled up the steps into the glare of the street.

"How did you know—" she panted, dabbing at her forehead, but he cut her off remorselessly.

"I know all about it!" he insisted. "I tell you, we must get out of here! What on earth possessed you to have the darn thing cleaned?"

"I certainly wouldn't do anything else," she returned haughtily, matching her stride to his. "How did you suppose I could get it back?"

"Well, it can't be helped now," he said. "The thing is, my sister is determined to find out about it, and I—we've got to fix it, somehow!"

"Goodness, yes!" she sighed. "Isn't it ghastly? I never thought—"

"Nor I."

For the first time he looked at her.

Oh, yes, he would have known her. Perfectly. She wore the prettiest possible frock, the color of a mauve petunia, with a wide blue girdle. Her eyes were less greenish than he had thought; also, she seemed a little older. Pajamas were more youthful, evidently.

"Where are we going?" she asked, with a trustful, expectant look at him. They seemed old friends.

"She's scared," he thought, and vowed

to bring her safely out of this idiotic tangle.

"Oh, anywhere we can talk it over," he said soothingly. "I'm sure we can head my sister off; it was her kimono, you know. We'll just put our heads together— Oh, Lord! Don't look up—I mean, keep steady, you know; I'm afraid here's my sister, now!"

THEY had marched around the block unconsciously, and Roddy was horrified to observe Sue advancing to meet them, an inquiring, if polite, smile on her handsome face.

He drew a long breath and raised his hat as they met.

"Morning, Sue!" he saluted her cheerfully.

"Hello, Roddy!" she responded, and they passed.

He glanced at his companion. She was looking easily ahead, a vague, polite smile directed nowhere in particular. A good sport!

They walked two blocks in silence. At the door of an inviting tea-room, which described itself as "Ye Purple Parrot," he halted.

"Suppose we stop in here?" he suggested. "I'm perfectly hollow. This escaping criminal business is an awful strain."

"I suppose we might," she agreed. "I had to catch a train. I didn't have much breakfast."

Seated opposite each other, they drew long breaths, looked aside, flushed slightly, and burst at the same moment into uncontrollable laughter!

"You certainly are a good sport, Miss —Miss Tallmadge," he remembered.

"My name is Wyckoff. Granny Tallmadge is my great-aunt," she corrected. "I had just come in from Cincinnati, and she let me stay in her apartment two or three days. That was how— Of course, there were no servants there."

"Of course. The same with me. Now, I've got it all arranged with that red-haired girl, and as soon as my sister knows that the difference has been paid, do you see, I think the girl will help us through. It's the dates, unfortunately, that I'm afraid we can't help her knowing, and that's—"

"Oh, I know! But she can't possibly—"

"She's terribly clever. She writes books," he interrupted gloomily. "I'll see what she's found out today and let you know tomorrow. Where can I see you?"

"I'm stopping with Granny. I came in from the country this morning. But do you think you ought to—right next door, you know—"

"Pooh!" he answered daringly. "What of it? Sue never saw you before! I'll tell her I'm coming in to call!"

BY the end of the luncheon it seemed that they had always known each other. There was no nonsense about her; she was practical, and she had a sense of humor. She was much amused at the red-haired girl's interest and at her romantic suspicions. And she was very hopeful about circumventing Sue. Roddy parted from her, after a long luncheon, feeling, as he expressed it, enormously bucked up.

"Who's your good-looking friend?" Sue

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inquired frankly at dinner. "Do I know her?"

"I don't believe so," he said easily. "She's a Miss Sally Wyckoff, from Cincinnati. She's staying in this apartment-house with her grandmother or something—old Mrs. Tallmadge."

"Oh," said his sister-in-law. "She's a pretty girl. Have you known her long?"

"I haven't seen her for a long time," he replied smoothly; "she seems older. I had the idea she was much younger, the last time I saw her. She's a nice girl. I'm going in for tea tomorrow."

"That's good," said Sue. "They wont do a thing for me at Renée's, till they get the books back. I think I'll write to the manager."

She stared at him curiously.

"Why don't you?" he agreed easily. "Still, as long as you've *got* the jacket, I shouldn't suppose *they'd* be much interested, Sis."

She frowned slightly.

"Jacket?" she repeated. "Why do you call it a jacket? It's a kimono."

Roddy groaned inwardly. This came of being too sure of oneself! Hang it all!

"*I* call it a wrapper," he said severely, "but have it your own way. Are you planning to write a detective story for your next, or what?"

"I may," she returned quietly, and looked at her plate. Roddy felt scared.

He felt bound to report this slip of his to Sally the next day at tea, and accepted her rebuke meekly. Granny Tallmadge expressed a lively, not to say pointed interest, in "all Sally's beaux." The girl picked them up in every city, it seemed. This vexed him a little; he had thought to have discovered her!

She was in lilac, with a hydrangea-tinted sash wound about her slim hips, and Granny Tallmadge deplored her choice. With company to tea, why hadn't she worn her pretty blue?

"I like Miss Wyckoff in blue, myself," Roddy remarked, smiling, and at her appealing blush he felt at once strangely ashamed and delighted.

They went to the first concert of the season, and after that to the Metropolitan Museum. His new rooms were ready, but little Robert was still away, and he still slept in the Noah's Ark bed; why not?

"Would you like me to call on Miss Wyckoff?" Sue suggested one day during the next week. She had grown utterly silent as to her kimono, and Roddy had shamelessly begun to invent conversations on the subject which required consultation in the apartment next door.

"Just as you like," he started to answer; "not if you're busy, I wouldn't." But he found himself, under her laughing eyes, answering doggedly: "I think it would be fine. I wish you would!"

LATER Sally was asked in, alone, for bridge, at which she turned out marvelously adept; and Bob, having escorted her three feet across the hall, returned, smiling.

"Well, Rod, I like your girl!" he announced jovially—and his brother was conscious of an odd feeling in the pit of his stomach and a tightness in the throat.

His girl! By George, that was what she was, always had been! *His girl!*

When Granny had excused herself early, an evening or two after, to attend to Great-uncle Tallmadge, Roddy knew that he intended to tell her. He had spent most of the day planning his words and had arranged a series of conversational openings, under the impression that the affair would work out like a chess-game. But Sally, bewitching in a sky-blue dress with no sleeves, persisted in arranging the conversation for herself, and discoursed delightfully upon his sister-in-law's books. He couldn't seem to get away from them.

"It was so kind of her to call," she said, playing with a bunch of Russian violets. Where had they come from? He had sent her some tiny yellowish-pink roses. "I like Mrs. Drent so much."

"And she likes you," he said eagerly. "She told me so yesterday. Of course she'd come."

"'Of course?' Why?"

She turned amused eyes on him.

"For goodness' sake, why wouldn't she? She knows perfectly well."

"She knows—"

A terrible, sudden fear shot through him. Was all this a mistake? He walked quickly to the big chair where she sat, and snatched the violets out of her hand.

"Why—you—you *do*, don't you?" he asked huskily. "You—you *will*, wont you?"

For the second time he saw her chalky white, but she smiled.

"If—if you want me to—I will," she said. And she was not really tall; only just tall enough!

SINCE either Roddy or his partner must go to London for a few weeks very soon, Sally and he decided to be married quickly and call the voyage a honeymoon; and now he must exclaim at a new present, every day.

But one evening she brought him a beautiful lacquered box, long and flat, and laid it on his knees with startled eyes.

"Look!" she said.

He opened it and lifted out, gingerly, a mass of quaint, metal-embroidered, faint-smelling silk. Dragons of blue and dull gold sprawled over it, and moons of rose-color, vines of tarnished silver and strange birds of faded pink and sea green. Little balls of solid gold buttoned into tarnished loops.

"What do you think it is?" she asked in a queer, choked voice.

"Why, it's a Chinese coat, isn't it?" he said innocently. "Who sent it? It's stunning."

"Your sister sent it," she answered. "It's a kimono!"

He stared.

"For Pete's sake!" he muttered.

"Do you think—you don't think—" Her voice quavered like a frightened child's.

"I don't know what I think," he said slowly. "She's awful, Sue is. It's writing books, I suppose."

They stared at each other, until suddenly he pressed her head into his shoulder.

"What do you care?" he whispered, pushing the honey-colored hair back from her ear; and then, after a moment: "I'll tell you what, darling: we'd better be grateful she didn't send you pajamas!"

FIRES OF AMBITION

(Continued from page 47)

"Is that a compliment?"

"I suppose so."

"Well, Mr. Savage, you needn't look so sheepish about it, I'm sure. You're a woman-hater. I'd be feeling you were more sincere if you asked me to go to the devil."

"Who told you that I was a woman-hater? Ruth?"

She shook her head.

"No one. It's written on your countenance, so that any woman may read and run. You say pleasant things as if they hurt you." She laughed at him. "When you die, Mr. Savage, your ghost will be haunting the ruins of Blarney Castle."

He regarded her soberly.

"No, I'm no blarney. But then, for the matter of that, I can't remember your being any too pleasant to me, either."

"Oh, you think enough of yourself—to make the difference," she said briskly.

"We're well matched, then. Let's call a truce. You're worth fighting, but I'd rather be friendly. What do you say?"

His face broke into one of his rare smiles, and he offered her his hand.

"With all the will in the world," she said.

HE took her fingers in his big hand awkwardly, and gave a deep-chested laugh.

"Good! Now we understand each other. I like you," he said, looking down at her crushed fingers. "It isn't often a woman interests me. You're—well, you're different, somehow. You're devilish pretty and damned clever. I think you and I would get on together if you gave me the chance. . . . . You're right. I don't like women. They're either coquettish or sentimental. You're too intelligent to be either, but by the Lord, we do strike fire somehow!" He leaned forward, seeking her gaze with his own.

She looked down at her captured fingers in a moment of silence and then drew them away.

"Maybe we'd strike it just as well," she said coolly, "if you gave me the use of my hand. It's no umbrella handle, Mr. Savage."

He stared at her, a frown struggling with his smile, sure that she had succeeded in making him ridiculous. He wasn't sure that he liked the sensation.

"You know your way about, don't you?" he said, turning away testily.

"Maybe I do. And I'll do you the credit of saying that if you'd held more women's hands, you'd know better than to be squeezing the rings into their fingers."

"Oh! I—I didn't know. I—I'm sorry."

"It's not of the least consequence," she replied coolly, examining her knuckles. "They will be all right in a week or so."

He took out his cigarette-case and opened it irritably.

"What is it that has given you your diabolical ingenuity in guessing the exact truth? I don't make a practice of holding women's hands—"

"Maybe that's because they guessed what would be coming to them."

He turned toward her again.

"Oh, hang it all! Listen to me, you little red-haired devil."

"I've done nothing else for ten minutes."

"Wont you let me be serious?"

"You're never anything but that. It's the railroads in the cerebellum, maybe."

He strode up and down the studio floor, his hands deep in his pockets, a trail of smoke following his cigarette.

"Damn it all," he growled between smiles. "You've rubbed it into me enough, d'ye hear? I'm not used to being made game of. I'd smother you with a cushion if I thought I could get away with it. I'm going to make you like me whether you want to or not. And I'm not a bad sort of a friend to have, I'll tell you."

"I didn't say I don't like you, Mr. Savage," she said. "I even think I like you best when you roar. But don't you think we'd better go back to the others?"

He paused as though to speak, frowning at her as she turned toward the door into the corridor, then, thinking better of it, shrugged and followed.

He was no match for her at the game they had played,—blundering materialism against sheer instinct,—and he followed her up the stairs into the hallway beyond. And Mary, pleased with her skill at the game, now chose to be gentle; at the top step she turned and bent to him gracefully.

"Forgive me," she whispered. "You're adorable to tease."

And with that they joined the others.

AUCTION gave way to dancing, in which Mary was quite at her ease. The ice now broken, she found these people much like other people she knew, sheep who needed only the encouragement of an example—all except Gertrude Despard, whose dark gaze Mary felt boring into the middle of her spine whenever she danced with Mr. Cheever. That affair, from Reggie's confession, had come to an end; but Mary knew that she could never be forgiven for her part in it. She did not fear Mrs. Despard in the least, and took a mischievous pleasure in sitting out a dance with Phil Despard on the terrace. There he told her of his ailments and his stamp-collections, and she immediately classified him with Lillian Savage, among the descendants of famous ancestors—continuing to descend.

But it had not been wise to reckon so lightly with the one arch-enemy that she had created. Gertrude Despard was not the kind to forgive. At the risk of offending good taste, at which she scoffed as carelessly as at good morals, Gertrude played her card deliberately as Mary was about to leave with Mr. Cheever. Mary realized the imminence of the attack in the sweetness of Mrs. Despard's smile.

"*Dear* Miss Ryan," she said, seeking a moment when most of the others were about them, "how lovely your frock is! Would you mind telling Mr. Wetherby in the morning to send me that new jade-green chiffon?"

There was a silence. The offense was clearly intentional, and Mary flushed slightly, but met the other's sneer with perfect poise.

"Oh, yes. I'm so sorry, Mrs. Despard," she said with a smile. "But Reggie thought I looked so well in that frock, that I've decided to keep it for myself."

There was a nervous titter from the women. Mr. Cheever looked bewildered, and from the near background somewhere came the booming bass of Bart Savage's laughter. It was this laughter that lowered the high voltage of the situation.

But Mrs. Despard only flushed hotly, smiled, shrugged and turned away to her husband, who had just announced their automobile, and in a moment the tension was relaxed amid the chorus of farewells at the doorway and the impatient hum of the waiting limousines.

IN her own room at the boarding-house, whither she had been brought by a nervous and somewhat dubious Mr. Cheever, Mary reconsidered the events of the evening with regret at the unfortunate conclusion of a successful evening, even though she had emerged with colors flying. But she was sorry that she had been placed in a position where she had been obliged to use such trenchant weapons. Of course, the woman was a cat, and she had done her cause no good by drawing attention to Mary's caste. Mary had felt the sentiment, even among the women, to be all on her side. Mrs. Despard had lost. Mrs. Despard had lost her poise—and Madame Denise had lost a valuable customer.

Of course, Reggie too, in a way, had lost. It might have been a feather in his cap to realize that the unfortunate conversation revolved exclusively about his own personality, had that dubious triumph not been more than slightly tempered by his knowledge of Mary's indifference to him. The affair with Gertrude was over, of course, and he was sure that he was jolly well out of *that;* but it wasn't just the thing to have it end in a public scandal that would be in every reputable club in town within twenty-four hours. And that jade-green chiffon thing! He didn't know anything about any jade-green chiffon. He couldn't for the life of him remember Mary in any such dress.

All of these things he spoke about to Mary on their way home. Even in the dim glow from the dash-light he could see the hard little glitter in Mary's eyes, but she said little until he spoke of the jade-green chiffon and then she laughed.

"I know you haven't seen it, Reggie dear. But you shall! So shall everybody. I'm going to wear it to the garden-fête at Wyanoke."

"Don't you think that that would be—er—crowding the mourners just a little?" he asked dubiously.

"Yes. That's why I'm doing it."

"But don't you see it will make you

unpleasantly conspicuous — I mean — about me? God knows there's no reason for that!"

"It's not your fault, then," she said with a hard little laugh.

And after that, he had nothing more to say.

Chapter Twelve

WITH the passing of a few weeks Mary discovered to her surprise that the encounter with Mrs. Despard had proved of some advantage to her; for the story with the usual embroideries had passed from one club to another and was a topic for amusement over more than one tea-table. But she was willing that the tongue of gossip should wag as it chose; for scandal, unless based upon the truth, could be lived down in time, and she knew that Reggie might be counted on to be warm in her defense. It was a small price to pay for the advantages that she had gained—a credit for cleverness, a reputation for dining in good company, a name for being a dame of squires of the fashionable sort. All these things she considered calmly, like a business man planning his season's publicity campaign. And to bring the picture of the jade-green chiffon more definitely into the public eye, asserting at the same time her complete indifference to what people were saying of her, she boldly wore such a costume to Ruth Vanderhorst's garden-fête at Wyanoke.

"You *are* going it," said Alan Wetherby as she emerged from the bedroom of her small apartment after luncheon, where her maid—she had a maid now—had been helping her into the famous frock. "The satisfaction of private grudges in this public manner may be feminine, but it's not business. You've lost Denise a good customer."

"I'll bring you ten others. You shall see," she announced confidently.

"It seems to me that you would do much better by the House this afternoon if you exhibited one of the new white crêpe de chines. There's a distinction in the newer lines—"

"Too expensive-looking," said Mary. "Any mistake I make today must be on the side of simplicity. A dozen women are ready to compare me with a chorus-woman. I'm going to fool them and exasperate Gertrude Despard. Killing two birds with one stone. Sweet-girl-graduate stuff for me—lilies of the valley and an old-fashioned white Leghorn hat. Butter wont melt in my mouth, Mr. Wetherby. Wont you let me have my own way?"

"If I didn't, you'd have it anyway," he said with a shrug.

She passed behind him, gayly brushing his bald head with her lips. "And you *will* let me have your limousine, wont you? It would be in better taste than going with Reggie."

He shrugged. "Of course."

"You're a captivatin' old Denise," she said. "And since you're a woman, there's no harm in my kissing your bald-spot."

He waited until he saw her off in the limousine and went afoot back to the shop, while Mary took her way toward Wyanoke seeking new fields to conquer.

SHE was late in arriving—purposely so; and she trembled a little with excitement as she saw the rows of automobiles along the half-mile length of carriage-drive. But her nervousness was not that of fear or even of timidity; never in her life had she felt more keenly alive to the joy of the moment or to the reality of her opportunities.

Wyanoke had been built by Bob Vanderhorst's grandfather at a time when Long Island was a social desert and bricks were cheap. He could very easily have erred in following the fashions of his time in building in the gingerbread villa style which characterized the period in which he prospered. But instead of this, with surprisingly good taste, he had followed established models of Georgian architecture, and the result was an agreeable building of the Colonial style, set in a superb grove of trees with spacious lawns reaching to the cliff overlooking the waters of the Sound.

An orchestra was playing somewhere when Mary arrived, and upon a stage erected for the purpose she could see the bright colors of the frocks of girls dancing. She emerged from the house and crossed the hundred yards of turf that separated her from the receiving party, which was grouped against a velvety background of shrubs and trees. Mary was slightly self-conscious, alone, between gay groups of people all of whom were on friendly terms with one another; but she assumed a careless, interested air that she had studied before the cheval glass at home, strolling slowly toward the figure of Ruth Vanderhorst, gaining confidence from the memory of her last glimpse of herself, which had again told her that she was lovely.

Her awkward moment passed with the greeting of her hostess.

"Oh, Mary—so glad! How perfectly bewitching!" And then mischievously: "Is that the frock that Reggie liked so much?"

Mary's eyes sparkled.

"Poor Reggie! Is he here?"

Ruth nodded. "Yes, but I've warned him that you weren't to parade him too much today. Bad form, what?"

Mary agreed. "But I've got to be with somebody. You know I don't know very many people," she said.

"Don't worry. You've aroused some curiosity. Your reputation is half made. Already you number your friends by the enemies of Gertrude Despard, and they're not a few. Here's one. Oh, Eloise!"

She called, as a pretty woman passed near by. It was Mrs. Gordon-Knight, who turned and greeted them. "I've so wanted you to meet Miss Ryan. Please be nice to her for my sake."

"I'd as lief be nice to her for her own," said the other pleasantly. "I've heard such very sweet things about you, my dear, from everybody." This was a kindly prevarication, deeply appreciated. "Have you met Mrs. Hamill? Mr. Maitland? It's Miss Ryan, you know, who posed for the red-haired girl in Ruth's picture."

"Oh, really! How interesting!"

MARY discovered almost at once that the very lightest patter of frivolity was all that was required to keep the

conversational ball in play. She drifted across the lawn with the others toward the dancing pavilion where the largest crowd was gathered. She was conscious of people looking at her, whether in interest or curiosity she did not know or care, so long as they looked. She danced almost at once with Mr. Maitland, a tall, bespectacled young man immaculate in white flannels, who turned out to be one of Ruth Vanderhorst's stodgy cousins. Men came seeking introductions, and Mary met many of them. It was true that she played the game decorously, aware that it was the acquaintance of women that she needed most—the men would come of their own accord. As she had told Alan Wetherby, it was to be "the sweet-girl-graduate stuff"—cordiality without eagerness, demureness without diffidence. She was extremely polite to everyone, refusing dances with men, that she might converse with stout and curious dowagers who sought of their own observation to classify her for their social collections. One of these, a stout, red-faced person with an undershot jaw and rather a grenadier-like aspect, examined Mary rudely through her *lorgnon,* speaking at last with a high, penetrating voice.

"Miss Ryan. Oh! The young woman who—ah—quite so. Quite so! Very glad to meet you, Miss Ryan. They say red hair is a sign of character. Is it? I like your looks. I wouldn't say I did if I didn't. Where did you get your distinction, my dear? Some Irish king, perhaps?"

"I'm afraid not," said Mary patiently. "The Ryans are the Smith family of Ireland."

"Good! But there must be good Ryans and bad Ryans, just as there are good Smiths and bad Smiths. You belong to the good Ryans, I'm sure. Clever, too! Any girl who can take Gertie Taylor down has my approval, even if she—"

"Please—"

MARY was rescued from this unpleasant catechism by Bart Savage, who under the plea of a new introduction led her away from the extraordinary woman.

"Stuffy old busybody!" he muttered. "Was she rude?"

"No—just insolent. Who is she?"

"Mrs. Robinson Merrick. Thinks she runs things."

"Does she?"

"No. She belongs to the older crowd—been dead a hundred years and doesn't know it yet."

"She's a very pugnacious corpse," observed Mary.

He found a bench beyond a summer-house looking down upon the Sound—at this elevation shading from emerald at the pebbled beach, to the clearest sapphire, diminishing into opalescent tints toward the horizon.

"Well," he said after a moment, "what do you think of us?"

She glanced up at him quickly. The question was such a true expression of his contempt for the things that she desired.

"I think it's all very charming, especially if I can be sure to find a stout knight to fend off the turbulent corpses."

"Has everybody else been nice to you?"

"Yes," she said easily. "Why shouldn't they be?"

He refused to make the obvious reply.

"Because you work for a living. They don't."

"I'm sure I've never worked so hard in my life as I have today."

"To what end?"

"Just to amuse and be amused."

"No one with any brains would do this sort of thing just because they liked it."

"Then what are *you* here for?"

"Because you are."

That frankness rather took her off her guard—so much so that she fell back unconsciously upon an instinctive phrase.

"Sure, you're only fooling, Mr. Savage."

"Am I? I wonder. Garden parties are not my line at all. I had no business coming here. I left an important conference just to have this talk with you."

"It's fine to hear you," she said with a laugh. "Maybe I was mistaken thinking you had no way with women. But it's a shame to lie with so straight a face, Mr. Savage."

"It's the truth. I wanted to see you."

"Well, here I am—a red-haired devil and no sofa-cushion to choke me with."

He smiled slowly.

"You forget nothing. Then remember that I said I was going to be your friend."

"Whether it was a promise or a threat, I haven't been sleeping nights thinking of it," she said gayly.

He brushed her frivolity away with a heavy wave of his hand. "Tell me," he said, "what is it that I can do for you?"

"What do you mean?"

"What I say. I told you that I wanted to be your friend. You say I don't like women. I've never had time to like 'em, even if I wanted to; and life for me has always been too big a thing to waste on this sort of rubbish. Idlers—spoiled women living according to a prescription, mischievous women looking for trouble, sentimental women trying to keep out of it, and flappers smelling of bread and jam! Good Lord!"

"Well," she said expectantly as he paused.

"Well, you—you haven't had time to be spoiled yet. You're not sentimental, and you're not a flapper."

"There's plenty of time to be mischievous in."

He laughed. "You wont let anybody get the best of you."

"Not while I've a tongue to my head. But I've made an enemy, Mr. Savage. That's a poor beginning."

"But you've made two friends—that's a good one."

She gazed past him at the blue haze of the distant Connecticut shore.

"And you think me worth while?" she asked.

"Distinctly."

"And Mrs. Savage?" she asked quietly.

HE searched her face, but she seemed unaware of him.

"Er—Mrs. Savage usually likes the people I like," he said.

"I'm glad of that," she returned easily. "I should like her to like me. She is so much that I am not."

"What?"

"Delicate, gentle, correct—"

He made a slight motion of impatience

ill concealed. "Of course," he muttered. "She would be that."

A pause, and then with a frown: "Why did you ask me about Mrs. Savage?" he questioned.

She looked him in the eyes whimsically.

"For fear you might be thinking it was your friendship alone that was most important to me."

He stared at her a moment and then burst into laughter.

"You're a rare one. Of course she likes you. And isn't my friendship important to you at all?"

"Yes, it is," she replied impudently, "or I wouldn't be wasting my time with you."

"H-m! Well. Let's come to the point. What do you want of me?"

She examined him with a tilted head. "I wonder," she said, "how much your friendship is worth."

"Try me."

"You tempt me." A pause, and then: "And if I told you that what I wanted was something you couldn't get for me—what would you do?"

"Get it just the same. What is it you want?" he asked again.

She straightened and then made a swift gesture toward the crowds behind them.

"This," she said quietly.

He stared at her for a moment, many thoughts flashing in his eyes. Then he relaxed in a laugh.

"Um—you mean it?"

"I do. I want what you'd be willing to throw away."

"Why?"

"A whim. Because it's something I haven't got, maybe—social position. The secret is out. I'll let you call me a fool if you like."

"I'm tempted to," he growled. "I didn't think you were so stupid."

"Thanks. It's the kind of stupidity that's in the mind of every woman in America, only they all aren't frank enough to say it. Social position—every woman wants it. Some of them are willing to wait—some hope for it for their children. I want it for myself."

HE frowned and made a wide gesture. "But you don't know this crowd as I do. You don't know what you're wanting—the shams, the lies and hypocrisies—"

"I didn't have to come just here to find those."

"There's more than one cat like Gertie Despard."

"Sure. I'm one myself."

"And you're determined?"

"I am."

"Upon my word!" He frowned at the toe of his boot.

"Well?" she asked.

"I was just thinking that if you've decided to do this thing, nobody could stop you."

"You're not weakening?"

"No. I'm not that sort. But there will be difficulties. If you were a man, the thing would be easy. But it's the women who run this damned circus."

"Yes, of course. I shall need more friends than Mrs. Vanderhorst."

"You mean—my wife?"

She nodded. "If she hasn't anything against me. I'll refer you both to Reggie for a character."

He looked at her, puzzled, and then

smiled. "Of course. And where do I come in?"

"You shall have the pleasure of,"—she hesitated,—"of coming to tea next fall in my small apartment."

"Next fall! What's to prevent my coming next week?"

"Nothing. I'd be delighted. But I wont be there."

"You—"

"I'm sailing for Europe in a few days with Mr. Wetherby."

In reply to his sudden question, she explained the object of the voyage and then quietly rose.

"I must see and listen some more, Mr. Savage. Don't take my conversation too seriously. Good-by."

"I'm going to see you again before you sail," he growled.

"Are you? How nice! Where?"

"Will you take lunch with me—er—the day after tomorrow?"

"If Mrs. Savage will permit—"

Her persistent punctilio disturbed the balance of his restraint.

"Damn it, girl. I'm not in leading-strings," he said explosively.

She halted, turning toward him again.

"But you have a fearful bad temper," she said with a quick smile. "I'll make an exception this once, if you'll promise not to swear."

"Good!" He grinned in satisfaction. "The Ritz, then. Thursday at one-thirty."

Chapter Thirteen

MARY made him take her back to the dancing-floor, where Mr. Cheever found her. She was in a high humor. From worry that her indifference and impudence with Bart Savage had overshot the mark, she now saw that she had made no mistake in judging his possible reactions to her levity. She had aroused his interest from the first, and continued to arouse it. She knew nothing of him except that he had a reputation for being a man's man and not a woman's, a fact which explained his unwieldy gallantry. It was a feather in her cap to have won the interest of such a man, but his eagerness, especially if it took no count of the conventions, might be inconvenient and just a trifle disturbing. She must keep a sharp lookout.

Reggie Cheever was sulky when they danced—an attitude that became him not at all. She liked Reggie; his careless graces of mind and body were more to her taste than the heavy masculinity of Bart Savage, whose sex obtruded, whose physical strength had oppressed her—the sense of unknown forces under rigid control. Poor Reggie was as transparent as the ambient air of the June day and held no threat that she had not already met and vanquished. Perhaps she liked him the more because she had decided that he was not for her. She owed him friendship, and that was just what she gave him. But she only danced once, and then they joined Ruth Vanderhorst, Eloise Knight and a few others, who were having tea and cigarettes in the pergola. As Mary approached, there was some fun and mischief at the expense of the jade-green frock and of Reggie. For Mrs. Despard,

after accepting Ruth's invitation, had, it seemed, decided to have a headache.

"I'm afraid Reggie must have told her what you were wearing today, Mary," said Ruth. "Nothing else can explain her absence."

"Oh, I say," said Reggie. "Do let up on that rubbish, will you?"

"Poor dear!" put in Eloise with a glance at Mary. "He loves so madly and so often."

As some compensation for this, Mary took Reggie back to town in her car.

A RETROSPECT of the afternoon was distinctly encouraging. Aside from the catechism of the grenadierlike dowager, Mary had received two snubs, one from the high-flown Mrs. Garrigues, who was a social climber and not any too sure of herself. Mary was to discover that the snubs were usually to be expected from people whose own social position was not any too secure—and in their malice they revealed themselves. The other snub was from Mrs. Northrup, who was inclined to be friendly with Gertrude Despard—at least, so Mary explained it to herself.

But Mary didn't mind. This was the price she had expected to pay for advancement, and she had already discounted it. Altogether, she was satisfied with her venture, which she had known might add to the indignity already inflicted by Mrs. Despard, for she knew that those who had climbed or were climbing over the shoulders of others might be counted on for an awkward kick or two on their way. Snobs! She was familiar with the breed, for she had found them in low places as well as high—Miss Kramer, the desk girl at Wittmaier's, was a snob, Sadie Arnowitz another. Miss Kramer's self-esteem centered about her patent-leather shoes, Mrs. Garrigues' about her visiting list. Miss Kramer had eaten humble pie before Mary had left the Hygrade. Mrs. Garrigues—Mary's lips drew down at the corners. Well—one day perhaps Mrs. Garrigues would realize her mistake.

THERE were many things to do before Mary sailed for Europe. There was Joe Bass to see again, of course. She had to tell him of her good fortune at the shop, to describe to him with the light touch which she was learning to command, the dinner at the Vanderhorsts and the garden-fête that had followed it. They had taken a walk in the Park; and Joe, who had stolen an hour from his work, listened with the old interest that he always had for Mary and her doings. But he was a different Joe Bass from the boy that she had known. Wisdom had sobered him, and knowledge had given him power. In the brief moments that she could spare from herself, she noticed that he had improved—that success had given him a new assurance, that he was more carefully groomed, and that his clothes were of a better cut.

"I always said that you'd go farther than I did, Mary, and faster," he observed. "You're brilliant; I'm just a plodder."

"It's hit or miss with me, Joe. It always was that way. But somehow, so far I seem to have hit. I've got brains, but no mind—if you know what I mean. I can

only see the things I want to do, whether they're right or not. You never see them at all unless they're right. I wish I had your saneness, Joe."

"And be still at Wittmaier's? No. It's the imaginative quality that's made you what you are. You deal with abstractions. I shouldn't know one if I saw it."

She did not dwell long upon the attentions of Mr. Savage, for fear that he might misunderstand her, as he was likely to do in matters that involved his own feelings; and she said nothing of the luncheon for two at the Ritz, which still loomed large in her mind. Nor did she tell Joe that Mr. Bart Savage had told her that he too was going to Europe very soon, and that he intended to see her in Paris.

He bade her good-by at the door of her apartment building, for the hour was late. He said nothing of the constancy of his affection. Her mood somehow was not right for it. His love for Mary was too sacred a thing to find its proper dignity in an hour such as this; and so with a promise to see her off at the steamer, he left her.

The ensuing episodes in the amazing progress of Mary Ryan are of special interest. Don't fail to read of them in the next—the May—issue of this magazine.

THE NINTH HOLE

(Continued from page 52)

"Why, Milo!" She stretched out her arms. "You old heart of gold!" Her lips were quivering. "Oh, I'm so glad to see you!"

Then Milo knew why he had come home. And the knowledge was stupendous in its effects. It was the biggest thing his life had ever known.

That Sunday evening as he and Prudence Place sat with shoulders touching at a concert in the Carnegie Lyceum, the Fates, seated at a linotype machine instead of the traditional loom, were weaving for Milo Jenks a colorful fabric.

It was on exhibition next morning when Milo arrived at the bank. He appeared at the usual hour, and had no reason for expecting other than usual conditions. But he was immediately apprised of an unwonted atmosphere. He first noticed smiling glances of clerks and other underlings as he entered the corridor. Then about his desk was a group of men who had just finished setting up a large white placard, bearing the legend: *"Jenks 75—Green 76."*

"Yeea, Jenks!" Bloxom, the receiving teller, seized him by the hand.

"Bully boy, Jenks." The paying teller's hand descended upon his shoulder.

Milo, who had fortified himself with brazen mendacity in the course of his journey downtown to the bank, was nonplused by this jovial assault, but not, as might otherwise have been the case, mentally disintegrated. Besides he noted Rossiter's envious smile. He drew himself erect.

"What's the celebration, gentlemen?" he asked calmly.

"As if you had to ask, Jenks." Bloxom thrust before him a newspaper, open at

the sporting page. There was a marked paragraph from a Jersey coast resort headed: "Jenks defeats Green."

The article stated briefly that in a special match M. Jenks had defeated Sandy Green, the professional of the Sagway Country Club, one up the previous day. The score by holes followed. Milo never blinked.

"Well?" He laughed shortly. "What's all the row? Good heavens! Anyone'd think I had beaten Walter Hagen." He swept his arms apart. "Now clear out; I've got work to do."

Rossiter lingered. A bluffer and braggart himself, fawning came easily.

"I was thinking, Milo, I might take you on for a game sometime. But I guess I'm hardly in your class."

"Oh, well,"—Milo sat at his desk and shrugged,—"it's all sport. I'm dated up way ahead, practically through the whole season. But sometime—we'll see."

Involuntarily Milo glanced at his calendar. Pudder was scheduled to retire on the first of July.

At noon the president of the bank sent for Jenks.

"Well, Jenks," he said, "what's this? What's this? Some one left this clipping on my desk. Missed it in the paper. So the bank has an expert, eh! What?"

"Oh—" Jenks blushed and shrugged.

Mr. Bayard took off his eyeglasses and rubbed his nose.

"Out with it, out with it, my boy. Don't be so demned backward about coming forward. Here you play golf better than any of us, and you've never let anyone know it. Nothing in that, Jenks. That's no way to get on in the world. Advertise yourself. Toot your horn. Stick out your chest. . . . . All right. Merely wanted to congratulate you."

BAYARD turned to his desk with a gesture of dismissal. That night Milo went home in gloomy mood. Truthfulness had ever been one of his cardinal virtues, and the dark labyrinth into which he had strayed oppressed his soul. Moreover, there were forebodings as to the future. Later, in the soft darkness of a corner of the veranda, he bared his soul to Prudence Place.

She pressed his hand tightly.

"Milo," she said, "I don't wish to seem a casuist. Yet you deserve to succeed Mr. Pudder. You've worked hard, and it's your right. Yet simply because you've devoted yourself to the bank, you are set down as going to seed. That is unjust, and it is right for you to try to give a better impression of yourself.

"Of course," she went on after a moment's thought, "if you were going right on pretending about golf and never playing at all, that would be wrong. But you see," she smiled, "you're going to learn to play well. So what you're doing at the bank is merely discounting the future."

"But,"—Milo raised his head desperately, —"you see, Prudence, sweetheart, that's just what I'm *not* going to do. I hate the game, and I can't play it, and I never can learn to play it."

"Oh, yes, you can, Milo. There's a fine teacher at Van Cortland, and you're going to start right in and—"

"Prudence, I'm not."

"Milo, you are. How silly! As a

matter of fact, you simply have to; there's no way out now. You have made certain statements at the bank. The time will surely come when you'll have to make good."

"If I'm made cashier on July 1," he said defiantly, "I wont have to make good. I mean, I don't care whether I make good or not."

Prudence shook her head.

"Mr. Bayard might care," she suggested.

Milo groaned.

"So you see, dear," said Prudence, "the sooner we begin the better."

"Yes, I see." Moved by her confidence and courage, he brightened. "We'll begin Saturday, real intensive work. And now"—he seized her hand—"I want to tell you how I've looked forward all day to seeing you."

HAD Milo Jenks been gifted with vision qualified to follow the devious movements of Rossiter, beginning next day, he would have realized even more poignantly than he did the necessity for quick action in his acquirement of facility in the game of golf.

First of all, the indomitable young man pursued inquiries designed to remove, or rather establish, gathering doubts as to the real identity of the golfer Jenks who had defeated the professional Green. This was easier than Milo, in his ignorance of the game and related personalities, would have thought to be the case, had he even thought about that particular aspect of the situation at all.

Indeed, Rossiter's task involved nothing more arduous than calling up his favorite golfing writer and learning that the Jenks who figured at Sagway was Milton Jenks, a young Midwestern amateur of growing repute. No scholar discovering flaws of power sufficient to blast into pieces the carefully constructed theory of a fellow-philosopher ever rejoiced so grimly over his act of iconoclasm as Rossiter did when he came into possession of this knowledge.

His first act was to enter the private office of Meachin, the vice-president. He went bearing not only information, but a suggestion respectfully forwarded. At the first Meachin scowled; at the second he nodded. He even chuckled.

Rossiter returned blithely to his desk.

"Well, Jenks, who are you going to beat this week-end?" There was an undercurrent of menace in the apparently jovial remark that Milo caught instantly. He raised his head quickly and studied the man. Then for the first time in his life he gave vent to sharp irritation.

"That's none of your business," he said. He rose from his desk and came over to the man. "Look here, Rossiter, I haven't liked your manner lately. Hereafter if you want to converse with me, you'll have to confine yourself strictly to business."

Milo's face was so red and the hand in which he held a paper-cutter quivered so vengefully that Rossiter, who had no great amount of nerve, quaked inwardly. However, he maintained a bold face.

"Don't be a fool, Jenks."

"Remember what I say, please."

Milo went back to his desk, and thereafter the day found him totally unfitted

for his duties. And the worst of it was that a mistake he made involved a matter that came under Meachin's attention. It was by all odds the worst seven hours Milo had experienced in his business career.

In the remaining days of the week Milo would have been dense not to have caught hint of a gathering of evil portents about the bank. He knew that the matter of a successor to Pudder was now under active discussion by the board, and had reason to believe that Pudder's feeble voice, if none other, was being raised in his favor. As for Rossiter, he was scrupulously, even ominously polite.

To make matters worse, Prudence Place had been called to her home in Delaware on a matter of family business that demanded her presence; and Milo, lacking the bulwark of her brave optimism, was thus doubly forlorn. He looked forward to a week-end of trout-fishing not only as a consolation in her absence but as a desperate mental necessity.

SATURDAY morning Milo reached the office half an hour ahead of time and deposited his bag of golf-clubs in a corner. Rossiter arrived in due time, glanced eagerly about and then turned away, concealing a smile as he went to his desk. He also had brought his golfing outfit. The two men had ceased saying good-morning to each other.

The morning went on. Milo didn't know what oppressed him. But all about he seemed to catch a sense of something imminent, as though the clouds that had been gathering all week had developed cyclonic symptoms. And precisely at eleven o'clock the cataclysm came.

Phineas Bayard, the president, walked into the office. He was smiling, rubbing his hands. Nothing portentous about appearance or demeanor. But his words were hideous in their import.

"Jenks," he said, "you're the man to save the day for me. Have you any important golf-match on?"

"Why—why, no; that is, I—I—" Jenks' face pictured sheer pathos as he gazed up at his superior. "I—"

"Well, then, that's fine. Arbuthnot has been beating me regularly at golf all season, and today Meachin had the impudence to suggest that Arbuthnot and young Rossiter, there, could beat you and me out at Sagamore this afternoon. I've bet him fifty dollars they can't. Of course, I'm only fair, Jenks. But you—" The president chuckled and turned to Rossiter. "How about you? Can you join in?"

Rossiter promptly said he would be only too delighted.

"But I'm sorry you bet, sir," he added with characteristic impudence, "because I'm afraid Mr. Arbuthnot and I will win."

The Arbuthnot in question was chairman of the board of a rival bank. He and Bayard had been associated in banking in their younger days, and the common interest of golf had brought them together again after a lapse of many years.

Rossiter's boast pleased the president. He grimaced at the young man.

"We'll see, young man; we'll see. We—"

"But Mr. Bayard—" Milo had risen desperately to his feet. "I'm sorry, but

I'm afraid I'm not terribly fit today. I've had neuritis in both my arms that—"

"Ha-ha!" Rossiter advanced into the situation. "I guess the neuritis isn't so bad as to keep him away from the game. There are his clubs there."

Milo, whose mood was of the murderous sort known to the mother animal in defending her young against the attack of more powerful aggressors, gestured.

"I was merely going out to see if I couldn't work out the kinks. You see, Mr. Bay—"

"All right, all right," interrupted the president testily. "You may just as well work out the kinks in a game. Be ready to leave in half an hour. My care is outside." Then, as though recalling certain intimations of the vice-president's concerning his belief that Jenks was a sporting impostor, Bayard frowned. "And I hope, Jenks," he added, "that you'll work out those kinks as quickly as possible. I've got fifty dollars on this game."

HE went out of the office. Rossiter went quietly to his desk; and Jenks, all his world crumbling about his ears, drew letter-paper in front of him, wrote briefly, and sealed what he had written in an envelope. This he addressed to Phineas Bayard and placed it in an inside pocket. The remainder of the period of grace allotted before he embarked in Bayard's car of evil destiny he occupied in formulating and rehearsing the speech he should make in delivering the note when the golf-game was over and the president had requested his resignation from the bank.

"There's one advantage you fellows have over me," grumbled Phineas Bayard as the big limousine rolled smoothly over the Westchester highways, "and that is you play golf because you love it. I play for my health."

"How long have you been playing, Mr. Bayard?" asked Rossiter.

"Two years." Bayard replied.

Milo, who had been mainly occupied with his thoughts, looked up.

"I had always regarded you as the picture of health before that, Mr. Bayard."

"You did, eh." Bayard surveyed him not without interest. "Well, your opinion at that time didn't jibe with my doctor's. As a matter of fact, come to think, I don't know that I didn't feel better before I took up golf than I have since."

"I think," suggested Milo, "that it's a nervous strain if you're not really fitted for the game. Now, my neuritis—"

Rossiter laughed heartily.

"His neuritis! Did you notice how he has been moving his arms, Mr. Bayard? I don't think I shall accept any alibis from Mr. Jenks."

Milo bit his lips. It was quite true that in his absorption in other matters, in the downfall of all he had been building for the future, he had forgotten to live up to his malady. Indeed, his affliction had slipped his mind altogether. He frowned.

"If you play golf much, you are aware that one may move his arms, Rossiter, and yet not be in his best playing form."

"Oh, stuff! Stuff!" Bayard's voice was a growl. "Play the game, man. Play the game."

"I'll do my best, sir."

"That'll be about twice as good as the rest of us, I'll be bound. I'd rather take old Arbuthnot's fifty and hear him squeal than almost anything I know."

Bayard chuckled with anticipatory satisfaction, then lighted a cigar and gave his attention to the scenery.

ARBUTHNOT was waiting at the club and had ordered the luncheon when the three arrived. It was a charming dining-room, with low, broad windows that gave upon a wide sweep of links and surrounding country. Had Milo really been a golfer, the day, next to that which saw his engagement to Prudence Place, would have been the most eventful and enjoyable of all his life. As it was, he came to know the emotions of the condemned murderer who dines richly the night before his execution. Everything was tasteless; everything he swallowed seemed to go no lower than his throat.

While he changed his clothing, the locker-room, with its alignment of metal doors, gave him the impression of a penal apartment; and when with his companions he emerged upon the first tee, the huge rolling perspective of the course seemed like waves advancing to engulf him.

Yet dazed as he was, Milo could not help but marvel at the transformation that golf-clothes had made in the two older men. Arbuthnot, a portly old gentleman who clung to the anachronism of drooping side-whiskers, was supported by quill-like legs which bent inward at the knees as if under stress of weight. Bayard's legs were pretty much the same size from the ankle to the strap of his knickerbockers, and his girth was less becoming than when the outlines were rendered majestical by the conventional garb of a bank president.

"Well, then, match play." Bayard, who had won the privilege of playing first for his side, gestured toward Milo. "Go ahead, Jenks: tee up."

Jenks shivered and shook his head deferentially.

"I usually play behind, Mr. Bayard—unless you mind."

"No, I don't mind." Bayard seized his driver, tested its balance with a few preliminary motions and then advanced to the sand-box.

He glanced down at the ball reposing on the pyramid, stepped to one side and swung several times.

"No hurry, of course, Bayard, no hurry," admonished Arbuthnot. "We sha'n't get far at this rate."

"Humph!" Bayard straightened up and glared at his friend. "As if I was the one who always delayed things!"

He awaited reply, and as none was made, he took stance over the ball. Staring down at it, he raised the club over his shoulder, turned sidewise in the approved manner and then swung. It was a complete miss. The ball was not even grazed.

"Arbuthnot!" The irate Bayard shook his club at the man. "Would you mind not clearing your throat when I'm about to drive?"

"Did I clear my throat?"

Bayard stared at the guilty person a moment and then pointed at the ball, reposing in all its pristine whiteness and static security, as though unwilling to of-

fer further unnecessary evidence that Arbuthnot had cleared his throat.

Once more Bayard addressed his ball and swung. This time he topped it grievously. It rolled fifty feet from the tee and stopped, about five feet in the rough.

"Ha!" Again Bayard glared at Arbuthnot. "There goes my game right at the start. But if people must clear their throats, of course—" The man shrugged while his friend reddened under the injustice of the alibi and with evident difficulty restrained speech.

"All right, Jenks." Bayard beckoned to Milo. "A healthy swat, now."

MILO mopped his head. He teed his ball, and then, rising, tried to remember all that Prudence Place had told him about driving. He stood to one side as Bayard had done and made a practice swing that embodied fairly well the principles of correct form. But as he did so, he assumed a wince of pain that would have been more appropriate in a person having a tooth extracted without gas.

"Go ahead. Go ahead, Jenks."

"I'm afraid I can't swing as I should, Mr. Bayard."

"Well, swing any way you can, then. We haven't got all night." He was chafing to retrieve his bad drive with an iron shot.

Milo sighted the ball carefully,—he recalled that Prudence Place had told him never to take his eye off,—raised his driver stiff-armed, as he had done at Van Cortland Park, and then swung pendulum-wise.

To his utter delight, there came a click. The ball rose, described a parabola, and came to earth nearly a hundred yards away.

"Well!" Bayard chuckled. "Not so bad for a cripple. Come on, Arbuthnot."

Arbuthnot stalked unctuously to the fore. He constructed a pyramid of sand with meticulous care. This done, he placed the ball on the apex. He surveyed it a moment while Bayard scowled and jerked impatiently.

He took position and raised his club, moving one foot after the other in sort of syncopated rhythm. Then as his three fellow-players watched him, he changed his stance, moving his feet in a different position with reference to the ball. This being unsatisfactory, he advanced his left foot well in front of the ball. Standing thus a second, he returned to his original pose.

"By the gods!" Bayard leaned heavily against the sand-box.

But now Arbuthnot seemed set for action. The position of his feet was apparently satisfactory. He raised his club over his shoulder. The three observers leaned forward with bated breath. Arbuthnot's dilatory mannerisms had imparted to this drive a certain dramatic interest. Suddenly, as he was lurching into his blow, his three companions set to watch the soaring ball, he checked his stroke halfway.

"Fore!" The leonine roar, coming so suddenly, so unexpectedly, caused his fellow-golfers to jump almost out of their shoes.

"What! What! What!" Bayard advanced to the man, eyes blazing.

"Fore!" again came the roar, while Ar-

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buthnot pointed to the distant figure of a girl out on the links.

"Fool woman! Don't care what chances they take. Look at her, will you! Fore!"

Bayard tore apoplectically at his collar.

"That woman! Why, you can hardly see her! She's a mile away. You couldn't reach her with a cannon, Arbuthnot."

"A cannon! She's not more than three hundred yards away." He cupped his hands to his lips. "Fore!"

"Arbuthnot! Will you stop bellowing! Don't be an ass. Who do you think you are—Vardon? Three hundred yards! If you drive halfway to her, I'll swallow the ball!"

"Umph!" Arbuthnot glanced once more toward the intrepid woman, now a diminishing figure, and again addressed his ball.

He struck it fairly, and the ball sailed away on a straight line for a hundred yards and then rolled another twenty-five.

"Aha! Not so bad, not so bad." Arbuthnot chuckled. "I might have done worse."

"You bet you might," commented the envious Bayard.

Rossiter struck his ball cleanly and scientifically, and it went away singing.

"Ha!" Arbuthnot grimaced triumphantly at Bayard, and the players fared forth onto the links.

Bayard managed to pitch his ball out of the tall grass onto the fairway, without, however, any material advance toward the hole. Milo with his pendulum stroke, which Bayard observed with every facial manifestation of displeasure, sent his ball rolling forward some seventy yards. Milo's whole demeanor was dogged. The sunset, he knew, would see his fate sealed.

Arbuthnot made a fine shot with his cleek, landing the ball twenty-five feet his side of a bunker with the hole not far beyond, while Rossiter got to one side of the bunker with a nice lie for a pitch to the green. Then Bayard got in a good iron shot over which he chortled; and Milo, with unerring accuracy but the most forlorn sort of distance, pushed his ball toward the green.

BOTH opponents made the green in their next shots and paused to wait for Milo and Bayard to come up. Bayard took a brassie from the bag and swung with cold venom. It was a screaming shot. The ball attained a height of about ten feet and then went on a line, while Bayard stood watching with mouth falling open and eyes staring.

"The best shot I ever—" Words ended in a howl of anger. For the hurtling pellet, instead of clearing the bunker as had seemed likely, swiftly descended and finally brought up in the trap at the base of the long mound of earth.

Imprecations streamed from his lips like bullets from a machine gun as he hurried up to the disastrous barrier. When Milo succeeded in driving his ball into a similar position, he came up in time to witness the spectacle of a man normally dignified, abandoned utterly to emotion. Striking at the ball with a niblick, Bayard had made a complete miss. The next attempt served the ball as a hammer would have done, drove it deeper into the sand.

Thereupon, with jaws grinding, he

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struck as rapidly and furiously as he could raise and lower his arms. It seemed to Milo as though the air over Bayard's head were filled with mist-enshrouded clubs. And from the assaulted earth rising dust-clouds gained ever in bulk. It would have taken an automatic counter to register the number of his strokes.

Finally the man straightened up. He glanced at his own ball and then at Milo's, not far away. Milo knew that he offered a new and more tangible target for Bayard's fury, and he held it to the president's credit that he choked down whatever was in his mind.

"We'll pick up, Jenks," he said coldly, "and see what happens in the next."

IN the course to the second green Bayard had better luck. He got away to a goodly drive, while Milo with his pendulum swing did about what he had done before. In the next few holes he never got into the rough, never had trouble of any sort, but the number of strokes accumulating upon his card reminded him more of a bank statement than the record of a golf-game.

Fortunately, Bayard was doing very well. He had taken honors for his side in two holes, thanks to a hook that Rossiter had developed, and his satisfaction was so great that he never gave his partner definite thought. It was well he did not, for the laboriousness and the multitude of strokes that were characterizing the progress of the hapless Jenks would have upset a less mercurial partner than Phineas Bayard.

At the ninth hole Bayard and Milo were six down. The eighth had been one of the holes the bank president had won, and as he took his place at the tee with the honor of first drive, he was smiling beneficently.

"Jenks," he said, bestowing an expression of pitying contempt upon his assistant cashier, "your game ought to be croquet. Neuritis! Stuff! What you've got is palsy. You and old Pudder! Well,"—he looked about,—"let's see; where is that ninth hole? Oh, yes. Got to be careful here."

He was right. The tee was bounded on the left by a dense wood, and on the right by a wheatfield. One had to drive accurately to avoid trouble.

Bayard took stance, and as he swung, there came a clatter behind him. Milo, in drawing his driver from the bag, had pushed the receptacle toward his caddy, who at the moment had chanced to look away. The bag of clubs thus had crashed to the ground.

It may have been the result of this unnerving occurrence, or it might have happened anyway. At all events, Bayard sliced his ball cleanly into the woods.

"Well—" The president turned and saw the caddy picking the bag from the ground. "Did you drop that, boy?"

"No, I didn't," asserted the urchin, pointing at Milo. "That man did."

"Mr. Bayard—" Driven to his last point of endurance, Milo Jenks was about to unleash all that had been gathering in his soul when Bayard raised his hand.

"Never mind! Never mind!" he snarled. "For heaven's sake, let me play golf."

So saying, he teed another ball and

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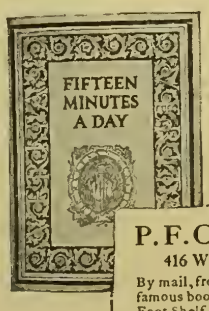

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swung at it. But the slice had evidently come to stay. Grimly and with inexorable countenance Bayard bombarded those woods with six additional golf-balls before he gave up. Then, leaning upon his club, he gave vent to fervid metaphor.

"I'm through," he concluded, tossing his driver to the ground. "This is enough."

"Oh, come, Bayard!" Arbuthnot, abundantly pleased with his game, spoke with a chirrup. "When we come in on the last nine holes, maybe everything will change."

"Maybe!" Bayard glanced at Milo. "This comes of playing with a duffer. Look here, Jenks, where the devil did you ever get your repu—"

"Bayard! Bayard!" Arbuthnot's voice was bellicose. "Just because you are playing poorly, I object to your knocking me out of my game. If I keep on this way, I'll lower my best score by five holes."

"Well, go on, then. I'm not stopping you."

"Yes, you are. You're quitting, spoiling the whole situation. Go on, if you're not a child, and play the game out. Stop bawling your partner out. It's all upsetting."

"Child!" Bayard bristled like an angry rooster. Then suddenly he nodded. "All right, I'll show who's a quitter. Go on and drive, Jenks."

Jenks did his usual croquet-shot while Bayard gestured his angry despair.

Arbuthnot and Rossiter got away with good drives.

"Come on. We'll go into the woods and find one of those balls, anyway."

"Why don't you drive another, Mr. Bayard?" suggested Rossiter respectfully.

"Because I don't want to. Come ahead."

MILO and the two caddies accompanied Bayard into the woods. Two balls were easily discovered. One of them was on the bank of a beautiful woodland stream that came flowing musically out of the heart of the forest over flat stones, clean and brown.

Bayard ignored the ball. He stood gazing down into the brook.

"Jove, that's beautiful." Upon his face was an expression of peace, as though the woodsy scents, the gentle plash of the waters and the sunlight filtering down through the interstices of the leaf-laden branches had brought balm to his harried soul.

"Looks as though there might be fish in there," observed Jenks, leaning forward. He had forgotten golf, had forgotten everything but the fact that he was standing by the side of waters that looked as though they contained trout.

"Maybe one or two. I've heard trout have been seen here," returned Bayard. He looked up. "What the devil! I suppose you know as much about trout as you do about golf."

Jenks flushed. The time had gone when he had any fear of this man. He knew the stroke of fate had fallen. He and Bayard were simply two men now.

"Look in there." Milo was pointing toward a stilly backwater under the opposite bank. "There's a fish in there."

"How do you know?" Despite his im-

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plied doubt, Bayard leaned forward, staring. "How do you know?"

"I've—I just know. Any fisherman would know without being able to tell why—that is, of course, until he sees a rise."

"I'm a fisherman." Bayard's face grew soft. "That is, I was. There wasn't a year I didn't go off with rod and creel. Fished ever since I was a boy."

Milo's throat caught.

"Why did you stop, Mr. Bayard?" he asked at length.

"Oh, various reasons." Bayard shrugged. Then his eyes narrowed.

"Jenks, you were supposed to know something about golf, and—"

"Mr. Bayard, I don't know a demned thing about golf, and I don't want to know anything. I was merely putting up a joke on young Rossiter, and the joke got out of hand. But as for fishing—" He grew rigid, his eyes upon the water. "Did you see that, Mr. Bayard?"

Bayard, who had heard a splash, turned to the brook where circles were radiating from under the opposite bank.

"A fish!" His eyes were ablaze.

"Wait a minute. Here, caddy!" As Jenks' caddy came forward, Milo reached into the bag and drew forth his canvas case of fishing rods, which in his perturbation earlier in the day he had forgotten to remove.

"Eh!" Bayard stared at him. "I—George! I noticed that in your bag and wondered what you were carrying it for."

"Sssh!" Quickly drawing out a rod and jointing it, Milo drew a fly-book from his pocket.

"If you take a trout out of this brook, you can get blood out of an onion," said Bayard.

"Sssh!" Milo studied his fly-book.

Bayard tiptoed to his side, looking over his shoulder.

"You'd better try a Silver Doctor," he whispered excitedly. "Light's softening."

"No. No, I think not." Milo, who had been studying the brook, shook his head. "Look at the insects over the water there. No, Montreal Coachman."

"Well—well, you may be right."

"I know I am."

MILO attached the leader and then with a deft snap of the wrist shot the fly into the pool under the other bank with the accuracy of a sharpshooter. Nothing. He drew the fly out and cast again in another spot.

"Not a strike." Bayard reached for the rod. "Let me try. I can't cast half as well as you, but I want the feel."

Out went the fly. As it landed, a tremendous thing occurred. The surface of the water was broken by an uprushing trout which took the fly so greedily that it sprang clear of the water.

"Ye gods!" Bayard set the hook with a twist of his wrist. Then for a minute he played the fish, breathing fervent ejaculations, stepping lithely along the bank. With all the finesse at his command, he delayed the final process until at last with a deft movement he brought the speckled captive to his feet.

"Ye gods!" Bayard glanced down, smiling beatifically as Jenks seized the fish and took it from the hook. "Ye gods! Jenks, I'd rather have had this

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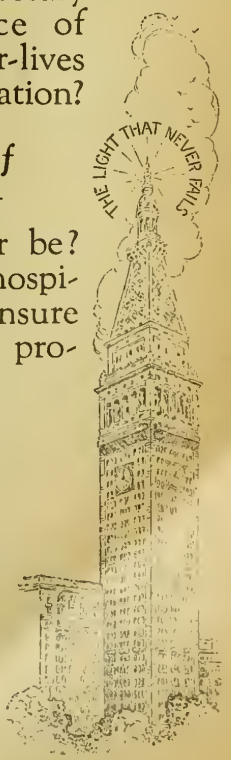

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experience than to have gone around the links in seventy-five—I'll pay Arbuthnot his fifty on that bet with pleasure. Lordy! Wasn't that wonderful! Is there anything in sport that matches fishing, Jenks?"

"Nothing that I know of, Mr. Bayard. Nothing! It stands alone."

"Jenks, I've done more cursing since I took up golf, and spoiled more meals by stewing over bad scores and things, than ever in my life before."

"Of course," said Jenks, "golf is a great game. I can see that. But if fishing isn't exercise—if it isn't the *best* exercise, why then—"

"Certainly it is, Jenks, certainly it is. No doubt about it." Bayard clashed his hands together. "That fool, MacArthur, my physician, is a golf-crank. That's the answer to the life I've been leading." His voice fell. "You see, Milo, he caught me at a time when dear old Jessup had just died. Dan Jessup and I had fished for thirty years together. Well, Jessup died, and I sort of lost heart. I stopped fishing. Then I got gouty, and MacArthur sicked me onto golf."

He turned upon his companion.

"Why, Jenks, honestly, there have been days when I just hankered for the smell of the woods and the smoke of the campfire—the days on certain streams I know. You get something in the woods, Milo, something you can get nowhere else."

"I don't suppose, Mr. Bayard, that Dr. MacArthur meant you should give up fishing altogether."

BAYARD frowned.

"Hang him! I can't do two things. I have to concentrate. And Jenks, this game got on my nerves so that I was willing to fire anyone in the bank who didn't suffer with me. Ha! Well, look here, my boy. You and I are going to have some fun this week. We'll pack tonight and go up to a place in Canada I know where— Well, what's the matter?"

"Nothing, Mr. Bayard," Jenks replied, "except that—well, you know there's rather an interesting situation in the bank. I mean Mr. Pudder's successor. I shouldn't wish to be away while that was being settled."

"Humph! I'll settle that right now. You're his successor, Jenks. Why shouldn't you be? You're in line. Stuff! Nonsense! All right, that's fixed. Anything else that's bothering you?"

"Why, no. Nothing, sir—except—except—"

"Except!" Bayard frowned at the man.

"Well, you see, sir, I have just become engaged to be married, and I was wondering if you'd think I was warranted in writing to—to Miss Prudence Place tonight and advising her about my promotion."

"Certainly you are. But look here, young fellow, it looks as though we may have a lot of fishing trips in the future. How will she stand on that? Better have it settled now."

"Oh, I know that will be perfectly all right, sir."

"Good. Jenks, a woman that wont stand up and smile when you pack up and say, 'I'm goin' fishin',' is no woman to marry."

"No sir. I mean you're quite right, sir," replied Milo Jenks.

From a Drawing by CARL HECK
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It is a secret, *Madame, Mademoiselle,* known to élite French *boudoirs* and sent to you now in America. It is this secret of the true harmony of the *toilette.*

"Each article of the toilet table, Face Powders, Talc, Sachet, Soap, Rouges, Compacts and Creams — must breathe gently the *same Parfum* — the *same* French fragrance."

And so do *Madame* and *Mademoiselle,* turn quite naturally to Djer-Kiss, *odeur inimitable* created by *Monsieur Kerkoff* in Paris. He sends you in his *spécialités Djer-Kiss* each necessity of the *Toilette*—Face Powders, Talc, Sachet, the Rouges, the Creams, the Toilet Water, all fragranced delightfully with *Parfum Djer-Kiss.* To employ them all is to capture something of the very charm of France herself.

If you, *Madame,* know not the charm of Djer-Kiss, do purchase the *Djer-Kiss Spécialités* and achieve, so simply, a harmony of the *toilette* quite French and quite fashionable.

Send for M. Kerkoff's new sample paquet

A new *paquet* of Djer-Kiss samples, containing Parfum, Face Powder, Cold Cream and Vanishing Cream, will gladly be mailed in return for merely 15 cents. Address Alfred H. Smith Co., 50 West 34th St., New York City.

New! The Djer-Kiss Vanette

How French! How fashionable! How convenient! This charming little Vanette of Djer-Kiss — fashion's new vogue. Now may *Madame* carry always in her vanity bag this Vanette of her favorite *Parfum Djer-Kiss.* The price? Ah! *Madame,* so very moderate! Do ask, then, for this Vanette of Djer-Kiss — the personal *paquet* of *parfum.*

Djer-Kiss
Made in France
KERKOFF, PARIS

These spécialités — Rouge, Lip Rouge, Compacts and Creams — blended here with pure Djer-Kiss Parfum imported from France.

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