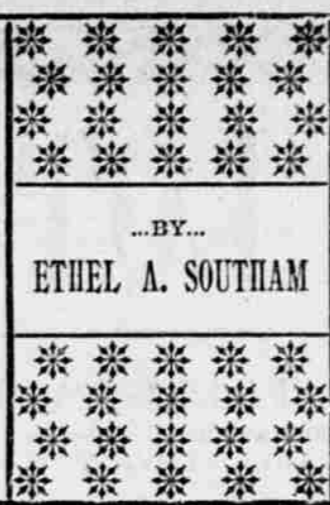


That Mysterious Major...



...BY...
ETHEL A. SOUTHAM

CHAPTER XI.

"I ask him! Do you dream for one moment that I shall ask him for it?" Evelyn opened her eyes in amazement. She began to think she had perhaps made a mistake in pretending she had been an interested listener to the recent conversation.

"Certainly! Did you not understand me? You have merely to say you wish for the check in order to compare it with your own signature, and the rest becomes easy. Lady Howard, you quite agree with me?"

"And do you suppose that Major Brown's suspicions will not be aroused at once?" exclaimed Evelyn, caring nothing either for her aunt's or for Falkland's opinion upon the subject. "No—it is ridiculous! It would be worse than useless!"

"But, Eve dear, surely Mr. Falkland must know better than you."

"He may, of course; but, for all that, I should not like to be the one to make the attempt. If you think your plan will answer, though, why not ask Major Brown yourself?" she added, turning a somewhat indignant look upon Gilbert Falkland. "You have always disliked him; so you ought to be satisfied now if there is a chance of convicting him of forgery."

"Yes, Miss Luttrell, you are right—I had my suspicions of him from the first," returned Falkland, a rather peculiar expression coming into his face. "I never dreamed, however, that they would be so speedily realized. But, as to your suggestion, I would willingly follow it if I could, only it is ten to one that where he would most probably comply with one of your requests mine would absolutely fail. But think it over to yourself for half an hour. Anyhow, we must do something to-

ever, as she drew slowly nearer and nearer, to hear the sound of voices and to behold not only her aunt, but two other figures sitting in the shade of the veranda. One was Falkland—she would have recognized his pale, rather cadaverous-looking face a mile away—and the other—Oh it was absurd! She must be dreaming! It was beyond the bounds of possibility! It could not be Major Brown!

Whether it was beyond the bounds of possibility or not, it was certainly the Major who sprang up at her approach, and who moved his chair to one side to allow her to pass with that same spontaneous courtesy which had struck her from the first.

"Dear me, child, where have you been? I thought you were lost!" exclaimed her ladyship by way of greeting. "Ring the bell, dear, and say we are ready for coffee. They are later than usual this evening."

But Evelyn did not utter a word as she passed silently through into the sitting room. At the sight of the Major her heart had given one tremendous bound, and now it was beating almost to suffocation. What was he doing there? What could be the reason? Never before had she seen either her aunt or Falkland making themselves so obviously agreeable to him. Never before had he even been made welcome to their room.

"Miss Luttrell"—it was Falkland who had followed her through the window—"this will be your opportunity. You cannot have a better chance. Go out the instant your aunt leaves the veranda, and in as casual a way as possible try to gain possession of that check."

At the sound of the low, rather hurried words, Evelyn started slightly and

the Major a grudge from the very first, she had felt that, if he could annoy him over anything he would assuredly avail himself of the earliest opportunity. But what was the meaning of this alteration of his manner, considering how determined he had been a short time ago to secure that check without an instant's delay? He was taking her decided refusal to help him in his scheme with wonderful placidity. Yes—he was too calm—far too calm. He must have some other plan in his head. Some other plan? Clearly he was not the kind of man to be so plainly balked.

The entrance of one of the waiters with a tray of coffee cups diverted her thoughts for a moment. Moving slowly towards the window again, she stood gazing out on the starlit night. Lady Howard, engrossed in an interesting conversation with Major Brown, turned with a slight start at her approach.

"Is that the coffee at last, Evelyn? You might bring it to us out here—the air is so pleasant this evening."

Miss Luttrell drew a faint sigh. Returning to the small table where the tray had been placed, she found Falkland hovering over the cups and saucers somewhat unceasingly, a sugar basin in his hand.

"Let me see, Miss Luttrell—will you make your aunt's coffee? I believe you generally do."

"Yes—I will make it," replied Evelyn, taking up the half-filled cup of coffee which was nearest to her, filling it with cream, and then carrying it off to Lady Howard without offering as much as a glance in Falkland's direction.

She wished he would not thrust his company so persistently upon her. As he knew how detestable his presence was to her, she wondered he had not the delicacy of feeling to remain on the veranda or to absent himself entirely from her aunt's room for the rest of the evening. But no—it seemed as though he took a delight in tormenting her this evening, for, looking around again, she saw him still standing by the table contemplating the coffee cups in the most meaningless fashion.

Evelyn gave a little gesture of impatience and marched boldly past him; even if Falkland was annoying her, it would never do for Major Brown to suffer in consequence. With this object in view, she took up the cream jug, and was trying to reach another cup of coffee, when Falkland stretched out his arm before her and placed one into her hand.

"For Major Brown, I suppose?" he interrogated, with unusual deference. Evelyn murmured some word of thanks and turned away. But what was it that arrested her attention? What was it that made her start, bend hastily towards the cup, and then, growing whiter than ashes, look round at Falkland?

"By fair means" or "any means." Those were the words he had uttered; and now back in her ears she could hear them clanging, clashing, whilst a horrible idea struck her—an idea which seemed almost to paralyze her. (To be continued.)

Doing Penance for Sins.

In former times persons guilty of grievous and notorious offenses were required to make open confession, and further to make satisfaction for the scandal given by their bad example by doing penance publicly in a white sheet in their parish church. The sheet was used to show clearly to everyone which was the offender. The last time that public penance was done in an English church was on Sunday evening, July 30, 1882, when a man named Hartree, in the church of All Saints, East Clevedon, made an open confession of immorality, and promised to perform the penance thus imposed on him by the vicar. No white sheet was used on this occasion. The last case in which one was used appears to have been in St. Bridget's church, Chester, in 1851. But on that occasion the penance was not public, the church door being locked. In the previous year, however, public penance in a white sheet was done in a country church in Essex, and a similar thing occurred in Ditton church, near Cambridge, in 1849.—Stray Stories.

Metropolitan Beggars' Trust.

The New York police have recently made the discovery that most of the successful beggars in the city belong to a trust. The beggars' trust is said to own a large house in Brooklyn, which provides every description of beggars' supplies, including bogus wooden arms, legs, hump backs, pitiful placards for alleged blind men and cripples, etc. The beggars pay the trust a certain percentage of their earnings, and the trust regulates the hours of their labor, selects the districts, furnishes a list of charitably disposed people, and looks after members when ill. The police say that several wealthy and cultured mendicants belonging to the trust live in fashionable flats. Several attended the grand opera last season, and one rides in his own carriage.

Irish Repartee.

From the New York Gael: Many good stories are told in legal circles in Ireland of encounters between lawyers and judges in court. John Philpot Curran, in the early days of his struggle at the bar, appeared in a case before Lord Chancellor Clare, and laid down some points in law which did not find favor in the mind of the judge. "If that be law, I may as well burn my books," said Lord Clare. "Better read them, my lord," replied Curran.

There is no use in praying to God for blessings, unless we are conforming to His will by His word.—Rev. A. C. Peyor.

"AN ACT OF MADNESS."

THE PROPOSED ABANDONMENT OF PROTECTION.

If We Are to Achieve Commercial Supremacy We Must Hold to the Policy That Has Made Us Industrially and Financially Supreme.

A timely article on the subject of "Commercial Empire and Protection" is contributed by Hon. Edward N. Dingley to Guntton's Magazine for October. It is just now quite the fashion among certain expounders of "advanced" economic theory to assert that protection has outlived whatsoever usefulness it ever had in the matter of developing and sustaining domestic industries, and in view of the new conditions which have arisen, must now be greatly modified, or, better still, altogether abandoned. Such is the purport of an article in a recent number of the Forum, and to this proposition Mr. Dingley addresses himself with the vigor and zeal born of an intense conviction that the abandonment of our fixed national policy just at a time when its successful operation has wrought such splendid results would be an act of madness.

It was by establishing and maintaining a protective tariff, as Mr. Dingley points out, that the founders of our republic, after having thrown off the political yoke of England, took steps to throw off the commercial and industrial yoke which the "mother country" had so firmly fastened upon the necks of the American people. How successful was this determination and what magnificent results have flowed from the practical realization of the hopes of the fathers of the republic are matters of history. Today the republic stands supreme among the nations of the earth—supreme, industrially, commercially, and financially; the home of the most prosperous and powerful nation the world has ever known.

After the lapse of a century from the passage by congress of the first tariff bill under the federal constitution, framed by Madison and approved by Washington—an act "for the support of the government, for the discharge of debts of the United States, and for the protection of manufactures"—the same fundamental principles remain alive in the Dingley tariff law of today: the raising of revenues and the encouragement of domestic industries. The effective manner in which these principles are carried out under the existing tariff law, together with the demonstrated fact that because of the increased employment and the increased purchasing power of the people a protective tariff produces more revenue than a free-trade tariff, are matters which Mr. Dingley's article emphasizes most convincingly. Similarly cogent is his demonstration that the "home market can be preserved only by maintaining to the highest possible degree the purchasing and consuming power of our own people." This is the pivotal point of the whole question.

Turning to the question of commercial supremacy, Mr. Dingley urges that "a nation must be industrially and financially supreme before it can be commercially supreme; it must be strong at home before it can be strong abroad." It is for the full development and maintenance of this strength at home that the writer appeals—a strength which has come by and through protection, and which will remain with this nation as the result of steadfast persistence in the faith of the fathers who planned protection as the surest, the only, way to secure for their country absolute freedom, absolute independence, absolute prosperity. If for no other reason than to serve notice upon all whom it may concern that protectionists see nothing in existing conditions which suggests the wisdom of abandoning the American policy, but are, on the contrary, firmer than ever in their adherence to that policy, Mr. Dingley has done well to make public his views in the article in Guntton's from which we have quoted. Protectionists know where they stand, and it is well that the "advanced" theory expounders should also know.

NOT OVERPRODUCTION.

Underconsumption Caused Our Troubles in Free Trade Times.

Some of the free traders, like Mr. Bryan and Mr. Belmont, are still talking about the "burdens" of the people. Other free traders, who have sense enough to know that the people can't be fooled with any claptrap about "burdens" when they are in the midst of such prosperity as exists today, when work is seeking the worker and when the Saturday night wage is larger than it has ever been before, are looking about for some more available weapon to use against the protective tariff. The bugaboo they present is overproduction. This is a more subtle argument than that of the "burden" criers, but not more sound. Facts are quite as strong against it. Farmers, manufacturers and merchants all find a strong and steady demand for all their wares, and the prices are good. The demand for labor is unusually good, and is on the increase. These are not the signs of overproduction. People don't go on buying after they have had enough, and employers don't continue to hire more laborers when they have products enough on hand to satisfy existing demands.

The chances are that the free traders are not at all sincere in their cry against overproduction; but, if they are, it is only further evidence of their utter inability to understand economic principles. If the American people consumed no more in times of industrial activity, such as the present, than in times of industrial depression, such as

the years from 1893 to 1896, overproduction would be a reality. But industrial activity, with the increased work and wages which it means for everybody, brings also increased consumption on the part of everybody. As we produce more and have, therefore, more of the wherewithal to buy, the more numerous are our wants and the greater our demands for the products of other workers.

The economic system is a system of interdependence. The market for the increased product in any one industry is at hand in the increased demands of the workers in every other industry. Furthermore, if, instead of having more of the luxuries of life, we prefer to lay up money, there are the world's markets to take the surplus products which we don't want for ourselves. Our increased and increasing foreign trade shows that we are taking advantage of them.

In any case, so long as human nature is what it is; so long as the more we can have the more we want, there will be no overproduction. In free-trade days we have more than once suffered from underconsumption, but we have never yet had a case of overproduction, and we are not likely to have such a case.

Prosperity and Education.

From all over the country there are reports that the enrollments at public and private schools, from the primary grades to the universities, are larger this year than ever before. Some increase might have been expected as a result of the steady growth of population, but the marked gain noted this season is much more largely due to the general prosperity of the country. Thus the good times that have resulted from wise national policies, from large crops and from good markets not only bring employment to all who seek it, not only afford good investments for all who have money to invest, not only increase the earning power of both labor and capital and contribute to the comforts and necessities of daily life, but they open the way for more liberal education. Children who had been forced to earn something for the family are released from their employment and sent to school. Young men and young women who have had but limited opportunities for higher education now find themselves able to attend the colleges and universities. The benefits of prosperity are incalculable, but among them one of the greatest is along educational lines.—Kansas City Journal.

Never Again.



Wage Earner: "No, I thank you; not any for me. I tried your game in 1892, and know exactly how it works. Protection is good enough for me."

A Destructive Remedy.

Since the election of McKinley production has increased at such a rate that the per capita consumption in 1899 will probably be more than double that of the disastrous years under Cleveland. We can only maintain this rate of consumption by keeping our mills employed, and that can only be done by preventing the encroachments of foreigners, who are constantly trying to break into and break down our market. If we dispense with protection we simply invite Germany and other countries where capital has been effectively organized to drive our industries to the wall. No sane people will take such a risk. If the trusts become oppressive the American people will take them in hand and regulate them, but they will not commit the blunder of destroying the manufacturing industries of the country in a senseless effort to avert an evil which may be remedied by a resort to sensible methods.—San Francisco Chronicle.

Truth as to Trusts.

Mr. Oxnard's statement that trusts are the result of competition which has taken business beyond a paying point is certainly the truth as applied to most cases. Combinations are the law of present day tendencies, and it is only natural that when competition so reduced profits that there was nothing left for the producer, combination should step in to prevent such a slaughter. This does not justify such combinations, but merely explains them. It also indicates the foolishness of connecting these results with the tariff. The greater trusts now in the United States were formed under the Gorman-Wilson tariff system. The greatest trusts in all history have been formed in other countries at other times and under nothing in the shape of a protective tariff system.—Peoria (Ill.) Journal.

Too Busy Now.

The laboring men who still cling to Bryanism should take into consideration this fact: When Bryan made his previous tour through the country they could go and hear him without losing any time whatever from the jobs they didn't have. Now every industriously inclined mechanic and day laborer will have to "lay off" from his job or miss the speech. The lesson is clear enough.—Indianapolis Journal.

TALK WITHOUT THINKING.

People Who Argue That the Removal of the Tariff Would Abolish the Trusts.

That a free-trader is a person who simply recites formulas without a thought as to their application is again shown by the attitude of the remnant of the old Cobdenite contingent in the Chicago conference. One after one the votaries—a man named Purdy from New York and a man named Holt from Boston and a man named Seymour from Chicago—like savage priests beating the temple gong, intone solemnly the words, "Abolish the tariff and you abolish the trusts," thump their breasts, bump their brows and retire into the robbing room.

Not one of these men had apparently ever thought of the consequences of the practice proposed any more than he had examined the basis of the theory propounded. He had heard that the tariff prevented competition, that a lack of competition created trusts and that trusts raised prices, and that, therefore, the lack of a tariff would prevent trusts and lower prices. Not one had ever tested the grounds of the major premise, nor noted the patent facts that the greatest trusts are the unprotected industries, and that the greatest increase of prices has been in the most keenly competed industries. As with cause so with effect. Not one can possibly have considered for an instant the immediate result of the adoption by the government of the course proposed.

The American Sugar company and its solitary rival are in all men's minds when the subject of a trust in a protected industry is mentioned. Let us suppose the tariff abolished on this commodity. What would be the result of the impact of the German, Austrian, French and Belgian goods upon the producers of the American goods? Which would suffer—the great combination with its \$50,000,000 capital, its enormous reserve of undivided profits, its huge plants and consequently cheap output, or the single corporation which is fighting it? Is it not plain that it would not be the "trust" or combination of concerns which would succumb to this foreign competition, but the individual concern? And what, then, would be the result? We saw it here a little over a year ago when the foreign steamship companies formed a pool to wring double rates from the United States government for carrying the Spanish prisoners to their homes. The result would be the formation of that thing so completely irresponsible and wholly unconscionable in its absolutism of its vicinage—the international trust. We would have a thing whose excesses would be blamed in Germany upon the American sugar trust. And the healthful domestic competition, which inside the tariff, with the aid of jealous public sentiment, had regulated the price of the commodity, would be extinct.

Every step of these processes must be unavoidably plain to the most commonplace mind at the moment that it is concentrated on the subject. Yet gentlemen travel a thousand miles, considering their "problem" all the way, and never once putting their formulated solution to the most obvious test of practice. There is no barbarian religion more thoroughly benumbing to the mind than the outworn doctrines of free trade.—New York Press.

Prosperity for All.

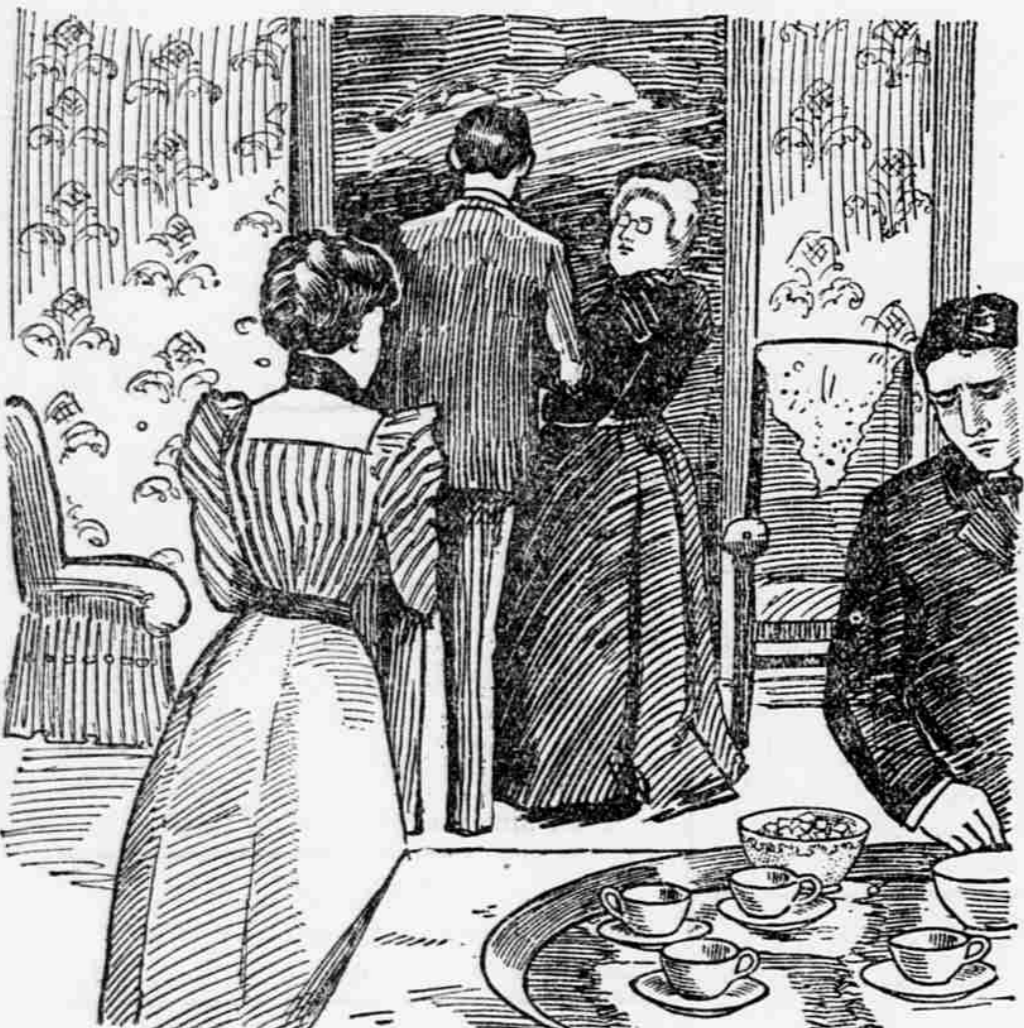
The editorial writer of the Gratiot Journal in last issue said that "the prosperity of the country had not reached the middle and lower classes of society," and then proceeded to get off a canned article on trusts. The Journal writer knows, if he has given the matter any attention, that even Ithaca factories are running on fuller time than they were during the last administration. There isn't a farmer in the vicinity of Ithaca that isn't getting more for his cattle, sheep and other stock. There isn't a workingman in the country that can't get work if he wants it, and at good wages. The iron mines, the iron mills are hustling their hardest, something they weren't doing in '94-'96. Think of it! Big factories refusing orders because they are already filled up for three years to come, with their mills running on double time, and then have some one here yell out that the middle and lower classes are not feeling the better times.—St. Louis (Mich.) Republican-Leader.

Are There Any So Blind?

Ten thousand dollars paid to working men and women by four Xenia factories last Saturday. "The butcher, the baker and the candlestick maker"; the dry goods dealer and the grocer; the clothier, the shoe dealer and the printer; and every line of trade, and the landlord, each got part of this money. Within a few hours it had passed from hand to hand and had bought the necessities of life to make home comfortable and happy. This is what internal industries do for a nation. This is what the Republican party has long and bravely fought for—protection to American industries. Is there a man or woman in our community so blind as to not see that these should be fostered?—Xenia (O.) Gazette.

Howling Not Popular.

Mr. Bryan is against trusts, but he hasn't said yet what he would do to throttle them were he elected president. And it may be necessary for him to outline a policy before the people place their undivided confidence in his ability. Mere howling isn't popular any more. The voters are too busy with the new McKinley prosperity to listen to declamation.—Winchester (Ill.) Standard.



"IS THAT THE COFFEE AT LAST?"

night. Every moment is of consequence, and— We must secure it— if not by fair means—well, in such a case as this I suppose any means are allowable!"

Evelyn's only answer was a deep sigh as she rose slowly to her feet and turned away with a strange inexplicable longing to be left alone to her own thoughts, conflicting ones though they were, to be worried by no more cross-questioning or cynical taunts concerning the man whom, despite her short acquaintance with him and her aunt's strong prejudices, she was beginning to regard with something which was not exactly mere interest.

No wonder, therefore, that this latest affair had been to her like a blow, that for the time being she was simply stunned by the seriousness of the discovery. She could hardly believe that everything had been done with one aim and object in view, that all the Major's attentions, his numerous little acts of kindness to both her aunt and herself, had been part of a deeply laid scheme. It was too terrible to think how easily she had been duped, how she had been carried away by his well assumed courtesies, in many cases falling readily into the traps which had been so ingeniously contrived for her. Yet, as she reviewed the past two weeks, it seemed incredible to her that it should really be so—that a man who could commit such a deliberate felony could at the same time possess such fascinating manners and appear, as he always did, so thoroughly at his ease.

It was growing dark when Evelyn roused herself wearily from her somewhat harassing reveries, and turned her footsteps in the direction of the brilliant lamp which was streaming forth from Lady Howard's room.

Her aunt had disappeared some time previously, alarmed no doubt by the heavily falling dew, and it was only as the hour was struck by some distant clock that Evelyn remembered she would be waiting for her to make her coffee.

Great was her astonishment, how-

suddenly dropped the parasol which she was swinging slowly to and fro in her hand.

"The check!" she gasped, gazing wildly round.

There was no need to wonder any longer what the unusual affability meant. The Major had not been proclaimed innocent of the forgery, as she in a vague sense of despair had almost imagined. It was clear why he had been welcomed so warmly into their private room; and yet, as her eyes rested for one brief moment upon the accused as he stood talking to her aunt, a handsome, wonderfully distinguished-looking man in his faultless evening dress, all her old feelings of incredulity came back to her as forcibly as ever. She forgot any doubts and suspicions that she had, never for an instant remembered the episode of the birthday book and the strange manoeuvres he had adopted to secure a specimen of her writing and her signature, and with a decided shake of her head put an immediate veto upon Falkland's carefully worked-out plan.

"Then you refuse to do anything in the matter? Really, Miss Luttrell, you astonish me!" observed Falkland, a cynical smile curling his lips. "But you have a tender heart, I suppose, and dislike the thought of your elegant friend being provided with a suit of broad arrows at the nation's expense."

"I refuse," returned Evelyn, her head erect, her eyes flashing, "simply because I am certain that Major Brown is as innocent of forging that check as"—pausing to add greater emphasis to her words—"as you are!"

"Oh, very well—there is nothing more to be said, I suppose!" was Falkland's calm reply as he turned away and, without even attempting to argue the point further, walked across to the other side of the room.

Evelyn looked after him with an air of satisfaction, and then drew a sigh of relief. She was agreeably surprised by the way in which he had received her refusal; knowing that he owed