

Captain Brabazon

BY B. M. CROKER

A Military Romance of South Africa

CHAPTER II—(Continued.)

Here Esme laughed hysterically, and at once brought the whole storm upon her unucky head, and acted as a kind of lightning-conductor to Mrs. Brabazon's wrath.

"You laugh! You dare to laugh, miss! But it is only what I could expect from you. I believe you were in his confidence, and knew all about it. I'm sure you encouraged him in his abominable conduct. You and he have always been a heavy trial to me. You had a letter this morning; he so good as to hand it over."

"I cannot, Mrs. Brabazon," replied Esme, tremulously; "it is private, glancing appealingly at her stepmother."

"And full of abuse of me, no doubt. Well, you may keep it," making virtue of necessity, "and make much of it, for it is the last you will receive! Every other I find in the post bag I shall burn. Mark my words! Into the fire it goes."

"Florian and Gussie," said Esme, timidly, glancing from her brother to her sister, "are neither of you going to say anything? Won't you speak for Teddy?" she asked, piteously, "or is it to be left to me? Mrs. Brabazon, surely you cannot forget that Teddy is our brother, and will always be so as long as he lives. He is not dead to us—at least, he is not dead to me—and I hope he will be spared for the next fifty years. I think it only right and honorable to tell you that I will never give him up, that I shall write to him and receive his letters, and meet him and speak to him whenever I get the chance! His being a soldier makes no difference whatever; he is my brother all the same. It was not his fault he could not pass; he did try, and he wanted so much to be a soldier."

"What do you say to this tirade, Augusta?" demanded Mrs. Brabazon, turning on Gussie with a portentous frown.

"I think it is all very dreadful about Ted, of course," she stammered; "but he is my brother," looking hard at Esme, as though endeavoring to borrow some of her spirit.

"And you, Florian?" demanded Mrs. Brabazon, in an awful, hollow voice.

"Oh, if you want my opinion," returned that gentleman, carefully stirring his tea, "I think Ted is a confounded ass, and has made a regular fool of himself, and all that sort of thing, and it's no end of a bore. I would pass him now if I met him in the street," pulling up his collar as he spoke, and feeling that he was a very important, dignified, illustrious young man.

"Oh, Flo!" exclaimed his youngest sister, reproachfully.

"Now, you have your brother's opinion, Esme, the opinion of the head of the house, I hope you are satisfied," said Mrs. Brabazon, with malicious triumph.

"You see he is, as usual, quite of my way of thinking! If Teddy had behaved respectfully, I know that Florian would have done something for him, and used his interest with his influential friends; he has always been such a good, generous brother."

Thus Teddy fell into disgrace with his people; his name was erased from the family roll, and written down instead in nearly everyone's black book.

Two years passed by, and during these two years there have been some little changes even at Baronsford. Esme was now nineteen, prettier than ever, but still and shy in general society. Gussie, on the contrary, seemed born for the social circle, was always the center of a little knot of swains on these occasions, and had played havoc with the affections of several susceptible young men. Mrs. Brabazon still frequented stately houses and stately dinner tables, and had saved a sum of money that would have made Miss Jane exclaim "most unaccountable," had she seen her banker's book. Time has not stood still with Teddy. Here is his last letter. It lies on the school room table beside Esme:

"From Troop Sergeant Brown, York, to Miss E. Brabazon:

"My Dear Esme—Always the culprit! you need not tell me that. I've written to you at least ten times in imagination; long letters, too, but I suppose that does not count. I have news for you, good news. You know that for a long time I was instructor in the riding school, and now I am promoted to be troop sergeant, which, by the way, I suppose is Greek to you, old lady, but I dare say your mind can grasp the word 'promotion.' I am getting up the ladder at last. The colonel hinted to me the other day that if I went on as I had commenced he would be happy to recommend me for a commission; so we begin to see daylight. I hope to see you early in the autumn, before we embark for foreign service; we are next on the roster. I shall come down and lie perdue at Mother Swaffer's; it would never do for you to be seen parading about in public with a sergeant of lancers. It will be a case of 'meet me by moonlight alone,' but that will be better than nothing. Only fancy, Esme, I've not spoken to a lady for two years. Give my love to Gussie and Aunt Jane. Do you know that she sent me £25 lately in a very crabbled little letter? Never mind, she shall be proud of me yet.

"Your affectionate brother,
"TEDDY B."

CHAPTER III.

"She hasn't been here, has she?" panted Gussie, thrusting an eager, red face inside the school room door. "No," with a gesture of relief, "I see she has not," now introducing her whole person in walking costume; tossing off her hat as she subsided into the nearest chair, and altogether presenting an aspect of the wildest excitement. "I thought I'd be the first," I ran," putting her hand to her side.

"Upon my word, Gussie," said her sister, gazing at her with calm, dispassionate eyes, "you only want a personal attendant, and a few straws in your hair, to look a complete lunatic."

"But you haven't heard my news! You

don't know what I have to tell you!" returned Miss Brabazon, exultingly.

"Your news," contemptuously, "I know the style so well! Mrs. Bell has got a new bonnet, and all Maxton is shaken to its center. You are about to inform me that Lady Louisa has had a fit, or—could it be that Mr. Vashon has again made you an offer of his hand and heart?"

"You are getting quite hot, I declare! quite hot!" cried Gussie, rubbing her hands ecstatically. "It's a wedding in the family, but I am not to be the victim."

"No?" in an accent of surprise; "then it must be Flo?"

"No, no, no," each no louder than its predecessor.

"You don't mean to say that Mrs. Brabazon—with a gesture of horror.

"Not Mrs. Brabazon," laughing and still rubbing her hands, "though I would not mind if it were! I would give her away with pleasure. Try again."

"Then there's no one left but Aunt Jane," said Esme, looking at her sister dubiously.

"And pray, what do you call yourself, my dear?" impressively; "it is you—you, who are going to be married. Now, then," folding her arms, putting off her under lip, and shaking her fringe with a gesture of decision.

"I?" pausing and surveying her sister with bewildered eyes, her mouth slightly parted. After a silence of a clear sixty seconds she found speech. "Only that I know that you are almost a teetotaler, your whole appearance and conversation would warrant the suspicion that you had been visiting the Barley Mow?"

"Barley Mow or not, you are going to be married, Miss Esme Brabazon!"

"Well, if I am, it is certainly the first I have heard of it," ironically, "which is curious, not to say unusual. And pray who is to be the happy bridegroom? Have I the pleasure of knowing him, even by sight?"

"No, you have not," exultantly. "Yes, yes!" hurriedly, in answer to the expression of her companion's face. "I'm quite sane and perfectly reasonable, although it sounds quite too unaccountable, as Aunt Jane would say; but," clearing her throat, "you are aware that Uncle George is dead?"

"Well, considering that I've known that fact for quite three weeks, and that I am at present making out my mourning, your news is something astonishing," sarcastically. "Uncle George is dead? I'm going to be married! Do try and think of something else, or is it a new game?"

"Be quiet, Esme; you are just as bad as Teddy. The will has been found, after a long search, in a coat pocket—of all places! and particulars have come by the afternoon post. Mr. Bell has been over to Byford and brought our letters."

"But to the point, my good girl, if there is one!"

"The point is that he has left two hundred a year to Sopp and the parrot, twenty pounds to each of us for a mourning ring."

"And this has turned your head," broke in her sister. "How I wish he had left us the money instead!"

"Do let me finish," cried Gussie, with an angry little stamp. "I want to be the first to tell you! I've kept the last as a kind of plum; listen," gesticulating excitedly. "All his money in the funds, forty thousand pounds, goes to you and Miles Brabazon; and here is the cream of the whole thing, provided—you—marry—each—other within six months of his decease. Now, is not that news for you? What do you call that but a wedding in the family?" she demanded triumphantly of her sister, who stood staring at her with pale, wide-eyed astonishment.

"It is not true. I don't believe it. It's a joke," she said at last, in a faint voice, gazing at Gussie with a look of horrified incredulity.

"It's quite, quite true; beautifully, delightfully true!" returned the young lady. "Come and let us have a dance of jubilee," humming a waltz, and seizing her stupefied sister around her waist, and beginning to whirl her about the room.

"Stop, stop, stop, Gussie!" she cried, breathlessly; "are you in your right senses?" holding her fast, and gazing into her flushed face and sparkling eyes. "Are you serious? Just let me look at you!" drawing her toward the window.

"Perfectly serious," she panted, "and nearly out of my mind with joy. You will have a nice little house in town, a victoria for the park, lots of dances and dinners, at which your elder sister, charming Miss Brabazon, will be the piece de resistance."

"Poor old gentleman! I always thought he was odd; very queer, indeed," returned her sister, slowly.

"Miles is in Burma, I believe," said Gussie. "I wonder what he will think of this legacy?"

"Think—what every one must think," returned Esme, decidedly, "that Uncle George was mad!"

"Not a bit of it, my dear. I grant you he was odd, eccentric. Mrs. B. once wanted Aunt Jane and Flo to have him looked after and locked up, but it would have been utter nonsense. Because a man wears queer clothes and devours hot curries and Arabian and Persian love tales, it does not naturally follow that he is a lunatic. He was perfectly well able to manage his affairs, and was very sharp about money."

"Well, it's no business of mine," said Esme, shrugging her shoulders; "only I'm sorry he made such a foolish will."

"Foolish will!" cried Gussie. "What do you mean? It's a beautiful will. Don't tell me that you are not going to marry Miles Brabazon—not going to jump at him and the legacy?"

"I certainly am not. What a way you talk. Jump, indeed!" getting rather red, and stooping to pick up her scattered work. "I would not marry him on any account, nor be he; we are not crazy. We have not, as the French say, 'spiders in our garters,' like poor old Uncle George."

"He will marry you fast enough, once he sees you," observed Gussie, decisively. "I don't know anyone as pretty anywhere, though you are my own sister, and I say it, as shouldst! Everybody thinks you are the prettiest girl in Thornshire," boastfully.

"The prettiest girl in Thornshire" took not the least notice of this brilliant compliment, but began to shake out, fold up and put away her unfortunate work, evidently incapacitated for any further industry that afternoon.

CHAPTER IV.

Let us now adjourn to British Burmah, and pay a visit to the other legatee, Captain Miles Brabazon. A single flight of imagination will land us in Rangoon, without undergoing forty days' torture on the high seas.

"I only wish I had your luck, that's all! But I always knew you were born with a silver spoon in your mouth, and that Dame Fortune had her eye on you."

The speaker, a young man in polo costume, long boots and dangerous looking spurs, was sitting on a teak-wood table in an easy, degage attitude, with his cap set on the side of his close-cropped sandy head; a polo stick in one hand.

The gentleman upon whom Dame Fortune was supposed to "have her eye"—also in polo garb—was sunk in the depths of a Bombay chair, an expression of growing dissatisfaction upon his naturally gay and good-looking countenance. He held a large blue letter in his hand, and the ground around him was littered with papers and envelopes; evidently the European mail had just come in. The young man with the boots and spurs is Mr. Gee, the other Captain Brabazon, both officers in the Royal Marchers, at present luxuriating in the climate of British Burmah. They are friends, and partners in the struggling wooden bungalow in which we find them.

"Luck, indeed," growled Captain Brabazon, angrily, crumpling up the letter and thrusting it into his breast pocket, "I see no luck in it; quite the other way!"

"Will you listen to him!" cried Mr. Gee. "Have you not always had enough for your modest wants?"

"That's because they were modest," returned the other, promptly.

"Have you not had the best of health, even in this beastly climate? which is enough to undermine the constitution of a rhinoceros? Have you not had speedy promotion? Haven't you youth?" pausing a second for breath.

"Go on; don't shrink! Why not say beauty at once?" suggested his companion, encouragingly.

"Well, I'll even go as far as that," generously, "though that was not what I was going to remark; but everyone knows, yourself included, that you're a good-looking fellow, and quite one of our show men. And you have actually the cheek to sit there calmly and tell me to my face that you are not a lucky fellow, when bank on the top of all this comes a thumping legacy of forty thousand pounds. I only wish I had half your complaint, that's all!"

"I wish to goodness you had," returned the other, sulkily. "You seem to forget, my dear and very sanguine friend, that I've only a half share in the booty, a half share and a better half. Sounds like a pun, eh? You have overlooked one little detail, matrimony, and that if I don't marry this girl within six months all the coin goes to a college in Calcutta. Did you ever know such an old hunk?"

Now standing up, walking to the doorway and leaning against one of the posts, "Why the mischief could he not divide the money and leave us each half?" he demanded, angrily, of his friend.

"Ay, why, indeed?" rejoined Mr. Gee. "It all came of my tipping him a ten-pound note."

"Your grandmother!" ejaculated Mr. Gee, with a laugh of the rudest incredulity.

"Great-grandmother, if you like, but it's a fact! When the old chap came home from India, with pots of money, he was awfully afraid of being set upon by hordes of needy relations. A bright idea struck him. He hastily retired to a shady suburb in London and set up as a pauper. In other words, sent round a begging letter for a little help, to keep him from want in his old age. Rather grim kind of joke, eh?"

"Rather," returned Mr. Gee, admiringly; "and not a bad idea."

"Any old fellow who was capable of that would be capable of anything, this will inclusive," exclaimed his nephew, emphatically.

"However, to go on with my story. Mrs. Adrian Brabazon, my future stepmother-in-law, pleaded poverty; Aunt Jane made no excuse of any kind, doubtless she smelled a rat; and I, being just then rather flush of coin, sent him a tenner, with a promise to do what I could; for, after all, he was my father's brother, and I could not let the old beggar starve," apologetically.

(To be continued.)

The Gift that Fritz Sent.

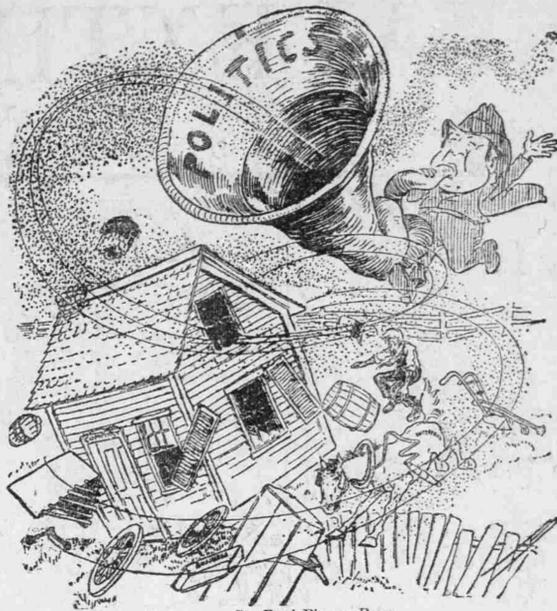
When good-natured, easy-going Fritz asked his American wife to go downtown and pick out some little present for his sister in Germany he sighed. He had squandered his fortune, but his sister still had hers, which careful Tautonic management had aided and swelled to a beautiful degree. The American wife knew nothing of her sister-in-law, but she fully appreciated the limitations of her own finances as well as the difficulty of sending a gift so far as Germany, so she went to repository for woman's work and discovered there a dainty bag of chamois leather embroidered with wreaths of forget-me-nots and emblazoned with the one word "Money," to indicate its use as a secret purse to be worn about the neck for safety in traveling.

It seemed an innocuous little gift, but Fritz nearly went into hysterics of delight when he beheld it. "Ach! the very thing," he gasped. "I would not write and ask her—no! but 'Money' and 'forget-me-not,' ach! it is the most beautiful reminder!"

At that the American wife protested and would fain have withheld the present, but Fritz was firm. It was sent to Germany at Christmas. Last week a lovely substantial check came in acknowledgment. The old lady had appreciated and understood the gentle hint, and hereby hangs a fruitful suggestion!

The Adams homestead at Quincy, Mass., has been restored under the direction of the Quincy Historical Society.

THE FUNNEL-SHAPED TERROR.



The outlook for the season.—St. Paul Pioneer-Press.

MEETING OF PRESBYTERIANS.

One Hundred and Twelfth Annual Assembly Held in St. Louis.

The Presbyterian general assembly, the lawmaking body of that church, began its one hundred and twelfth annual meeting Thursday at the Washington and Compton Avenue Presbyterian Church in St. Louis. Nearly 1,000 commissioners and delegates, representing all the Northern and Western States and territories, and many of those in the South, with the synods of Central and South China, North China and India, were in attendance at the opening session. Among them were many eminent divines and prominent laymen.

Washington and Compton Avenue Presbyterian Church, in which the main deliberations of the body were to be held, had been decorated and fitted with everything that would minister to the comfort and convenience of those in attendance. In the lecture room there was a Presbyterian book store, a postoffice, a telegraph station, telephone connections, writing tables and stationery. Matters of great importance were slated for consideration during the gathering, and it was thought it would probably be two weeks before final adjournment.

The Rev. Dr. Charles A. Dickey of Philadelphia was elected moderator. His principal competitors were Dr. McKibbin of Cincinnati and Dr. D. W. Fisher of Hanover College. The new moderator is opposed to the revision of the creed, and his election is considered a victory for the conservatives. Dr. Dickey said he was inclined to regard the agitation as much ado about nothing, that the men who bob up here and there throughout the country with a tirade against the Westminster confession were seeking notoriety or else failed to comprehend the relation between that confession and the presbyterian church.

"The Westminster confession," he said, "is now and always has been merely a system of doctrine and as such is subscribed to by every minister of the church when he takes his vows. There are many things in the confession of faith that are not subscribed to by ministers at the time of taking their vows and the various presbyteries have allowed great latitude of individual thought and ordained many men holding views apparently at variance with the logical significance of certain clauses, yet in perfect accord with the general doctrinal system it reveals."

The question of revision of the Westminster confession is not a new one. Eleven years ago certain doctrines of the creed, notably those concerning election and preterition, were thought too strong, and a committee was appointed to act on their revision, but in 1893 only sixty-seven out of 220 presbyteries approved any amendments.

THE BOER PEACE ENVOYS.

Are Welcomed in New York and Given a Formal Reception in Washington.

Thursday afternoon the Boer envoys were officially welcomed by Mayor Van Wyck of New York. The Mayor gave the envoys the freedom of the city, presented to them copies of a resolution passed by the municipal assembly and incidentally voiced the hope that it would be followed by the preservation of their freedom in their far-distant homes.

The congressional and citizens' committee which escorted the peace commissioners from New York to Washington included Senators Allen, Mason, Heifried and Wellington, Representatives Sulzer, Ridgely, Rhea (Ky.), Clark (Mo.), Daly, De Armond, Robinson (Neb.), Miers (Ind.) and Little and Messrs. C. T. Brier and S. S. Yoder. On their arrival in Washington the envoys were met by the reception committee and taken to the Arlington Hotel, where an informal reception was given in their honor.

DEWEY GIVES UP CANDIDACY.

His Wife and He Agree that He Will Not Make the Race.

A Washington dispatch says that Mrs. Dewey has decided that the admiral shall not be a candidate for the presidency. She has arrived at this decision after noting their reception on the recent swing around the country. The admiral is of like opinion. He has admitted to some of his friends that he does not understand how he ever came to get the idea that he would like to be President.

In Germany 1,057,938 acres were seeded to sugar beets last year. The yield was about eleven and a quarter tons to the acre, and the sugar results 12.7 per cent.

Germany has found last year the most prosperous in her history, and her surplus over the estimates will be about \$15,000,000.

Ex-Senator Sherman contemplated a visit to the Paris exposition, but on his physician's advice he will spend the summer quietly at his old home in Mansfield, Ohio.

BRITISH TAKE BOTHA.

Boer Commandant Surprised and Captured Near Kroonstad.

It has been officially announced by the London war office that Gen. Methuen entered Hoopstad Thursday unopposed, that Gens. Duple and Daniels and forty men surrounded and that Gen. Broadwood occupied Lindley. It is further announced that Hutton's mounted infantry



GENERAL BOTHA.

surprised and captured Commandant Botha and twenty-three others thirty miles northwest of Kroonstad. There were no casualties on the British side. Gen. Buller entered Damhusser Thursday morning. The houses in the town day were found to be not much damaged, but the sympathies of the Boer inhabitants. The railway is little damaged. The Boers north of Newcastle are falling back on Amajuba. Gen. Buller received a message from the Queen congratulating him upon the taking of Dundee and expressing appreciation of the work of the troops.

BOOMING THE WEST.

Railroads Expect to Build 200 New Towns in the Near Future.

Railroads centering in Chicago are booming the territory between Lake Michigan and the Rocky Mountains, and it is expected that 200,000 will be added to the population in the next eighteen months. Pamphlets stating plainly the resources and advantages of the West are being distributed throughout Europe, as well as in our own New England and Atlantic coast States, at the expense of the transportation companies. New towns are being staked out along the lines of all the railroad extensions. The number of new towns that will appear on the maps of the West within the next year or those to which from 600 to 600 new population is to be added already number 173.

Before 1902 it is believed this number will exceed 200. Areas neglected in the past, while trunk lines were building, are receiving the closest attention from railroad land commissioners and traffic managers.

The railroads know that with new settlements there will be increased freight business, and the carrying of passengers between local points will add immensely to their revenues. Where the companies own the land on which they locate a town they are giving away free of charge a site for a public school and another for a church. The Northwestern road has 40,000 acres of unsold land in South Dakota and 70,000 acres in southwestern Minnesota. This ranges in value from \$4 to \$15 per acre. In Wisconsin and Michigan, the Chicago, Milwaukee and St. Paul road has between 600,000 and 700,000 acres of what was once classified as worthless land, which it claims now is exceedingly rich and well suited for timothy hay, celery and sheep raising. The land sells for about \$7.50 an acre. The Santa Fe is booming the southwest and the opening up of new lines has already resulted in population of fully 25,000. The Northwestern Pacific is doing similar work in the far northwest. It has opened up twenty new towns, with a population exceeding 10,000. The Great Northern is developing the unsettled portions of northern Dakota and is about to open fifteen new towns, with a population of 8,000.

Telegraphic Havities.

Business part of Hartsville, Tenn., burned. Loss \$100,000.

Norton's fertilizing plant, Washington, was damaged \$60,000 by fire.

A Chicago company will buy 300 acres of timber land in the Philippines.

Little Rock, Ark., Traction Company has been placed in the hands of a receiver.

Chicago police are looking for the acid thrower, who throws the liquid on women's dresses as they pass along the streets.

The villa of Mr. and Mrs. W. S. Wells of New York, in Newport, was destroyed by fire. The loss will reach \$200,000.

Mrs. Potter Palmer will entertain during the Paris exposition in the house of the Marquis de Montgomery, near the Trocadero, paying for it \$4,000 a month rental.

Gen. French is known as "Silent French." The now famous cavalry leader started his career on the deck of a man-of-war, abandoned it for the infantry, and on leaving this entered the cavalry branch of the service.

MAFEKING IS FREE.

Baden-Powell's Garrison of British Soldiers Freed from the Boer Cordon Which Has Surrounded Them Since the Opening of the War.

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