## By Henry C. Rowland

SYNOPSIS.

Sylvia, heiress of Birum Gates, the millionaire, disclosers while canceling and a reward of \$160,000 is effected for her sais return. Matthew Blooms' speed boat is wrecked while he is on his way to interest his under, Jorenny Turber, in a fire extinguisher. Landing at the Putney place, he is greeted by three ferocious doors and a mysterious foreigner. He turns the critinguisher upon all four and leaves. Much to his surprise he is greeted warmly by Unde Jerry, who has risen from his supposed deathbed to marry his pretty nurse, May Upten. Nancy, May's beautiful sister, atvances the theory Sylvia has closed with San Shrague, the shiptuilder, in preference to being married to Freddy Gracom. Matt arones that he has been kidnaped for reason, recalling the foreigness at the Putney place. Accompanied by the fire extinguisher, Matt and Nancy twice raid the place. The first time they find the foreigners apparently are bootleggers; the second time the place is tenantices. After trailing a suspected rum ship they go to an island to set a trap for the bootleggers, and are themselves mistaken by fahermen for Spiria and her kidnaper. A man and a girl take reture in the cabin on the island, Nancy perior through the window, becomes hysterical with laughter. Matt kisses her 'to shock her out of it." She reveals that the man is San Sprawe and the rir is Spiria and that they are at aword's with language. Math kisses her "to shock her out of it." She reveals that the man is Sam Spraye and the girl is Srivia, and that they are at sword's points. Sam and Matt battle, setting the cable on fire, and Nancy turns the extinguisher on both Sylvia, in her anxiety over Sam's hurts, admits the loves him. Sam tells how he "kidnaped" her to "bring her to time." A sloop is sighted. "The bootleggers." thinks Matt, bur he finds the solitary boatman is one Bill Emerson, extwhile flyver driver, and the "liquor" Bill is hauling from the water is—a trap for baby lobsters for pampered millionisres!

## ELEVENTH INSTALLMENT. Matt's Castle Crashes.

ILL stared at him sullenly, then glanced at the crate which was awash as if half inclined to let it go. He had immediately recognized Matt and gave no sign of pleasure at the renewal of their acquaintance. To Matt there was nothing suprising in this considering the fact that he had tried so hard to pump the lad about the lawbreakers in whose service he now appeared to be.

"What yer doin' out here?" Bill demanded. "Just walking up and down like Satan," said Matt, "and taking the air, which is fresh and plentiful out here."

Where's yer boat?" asked the puzzled boy. "Coming for me a little later," Matt answered. "You see, Bill, I came out here looking for Sylvia Gates and that hundred

thousand of reward." "Wat, I guess you won't find her," said "Folks say she's drownded, and I recken they're right," and to Matt's surprise and sudden esteem for his qualities of heart he gave a sort of sob. "She-she-was a

dandy girl, too," said Bill.
"Listen, Bill," said Matt, again obeying the impulse of the moment, which led him to relieve the boy's sincerity of sorrow. " Miss Sylvie is no more drowned than I am. I've got a good clew that she butted into the bootleggers and they nabbed her and carried her

What bootleggers?" demanded Bill. "Why, that gang you're in cahoots with," Matt answered. "The folks that were living in the old Putney place." Bill caught a turn with his halyard and

surveyed Matt with an astonishment which aroused in Matt an admiration for his histrionic qualities. "What yer mean by sayin' I'm in cahoots

with any durn bootleggers." O, come, Bill," said Matt. "I happen to be on to it. I know all about what you've got there. I found the line you've run ashore when I was combing the beach early this

morning at low tide." "Well, what if ye did?" Bill demanded defiantly. "Can't a feller make a little money on the side if it t'ain't doin' no hurt to no-

"You can make all the money on the side you like, Bill," Matt answered. "In a matter like this you have my permission to flood the market and the law be hanged. I never had any sympathy with such a law anyhow." Well," said Bill, "if that's the way ye feel about it yer all right. Them fellers that

make such laws ain't got no business to make things any worse fer hard workin' men than

"I quite agree with you," said Matt heartfly, "but since I happen to be on it wouldn't hurt you any to slip me a couple." "Wal," answered the reassured Bill, "I'll

fust do that, mister, if you won't say nawthin. I got quite a passel here." He reached for the halyard and started to heave up the crate, and his next words in a voice shrill and heightened by his efforts reached the listeners in the cave. "Ye see, mister, this ain't my reg'lar business, but my Uncle Jasper's laid up with rheumatis, and he don't like to disapint his reg'lar customers. Folks say it's unlawful, but jest the same some o' the best people along the shore trade with Uncle Jasper regelar."

"Everybody's doing it, so far's I can see. "I'm not surprised to hear it," said Matt. Who are some of Uncle Jasper's customers? " "Wal," said Bill, "your Uncle Jerry has been one for a long time, and so has Mr. Gates and the Whites and Parkers, and quite

a lot of others." Matt received this information with astonishment, and from the pitch and timbre of Bill's voice he judged he was not the only one to be astonished. It seemed to him that he had been imposed upon, and he was inclined to laugh on learning that this eddy in the wave of crime should have washed the reputable estates of those whom Bill had mentioned.

Then as the crate rose higher Matt rubbed his eyes and stared, for between the chinks he could detect the glint of what looked like small bottles, but these seemed curiously agitated.

'How many do yer want?" asked Bill. "How many can you spare?" Matt an-

swered. O, a dozen, I reckon-they don't go very

fur with folks that's fond of 'em." "Rill." cried Matt almost in a shriek, as the horrid truth began to dawn on him as a back draft of the breeze drifted the little sloop almost on the rocks, "what in blazes have you got in that crate?

Bill straightened up and stared at him in surprise. "Why, shorts, o' course," said he. 'Little lobsters under legal size. What yer think I had? Whales.'

Matt's jaw fell. He sank down weakly and covered his face with his hands. "O, my sainted aunt," he groaned. "This is the worst that has happened to me vet."

And it seemed to him that from the distance of about a hundred yards there came a stiffed chortling sound, as of the waves dashing into the crannies of the rocks-or some-

Bill Emerson, having secured his cargo of unlawful delicacies for the palates of unscrupulous epicures, started his motor, waved his hand to Matt, and headed off into the gathering murk. Matt, sitting on the rock with a broken basket half full of chicken lobsters at his feet, listened to the distant diapason of unseemly mirth from the cavern, whence the others had not dared venture until the

sloop was out of sight. Pealing that he might as well face their

ridicule first as last, Matt picked up his basket and wandered dejectedly back. Pausing at the mouth of the shelter, he beheld Sam in sitting posture, his big hands clasped before his knees, rocking backward and forward convulsed with mirth. Sylvia also was indulging hers, while Nancy, standing with her hands resting lightly on her hips, surveyed him with the scornful and mocking smile which Matt already knew too well.

"Great work, Sherlock," said she. "Another bright and shining illustration of what you said a while ago about the deduction of the trained observer being belittled through fortuitous circumstances."

"My dear Watson," said Matt. "Kindly spare your sarcasm and hand me the cocaine.

"Well, anyhow," said Sam, "that belps out the bill of fare. We can split em and grill 'em on the coals." Matt sank down heavily, "Who'd ever

have guessed it was lobsters?" said he. "I ought to have," said Sam. "The lobster men have a trick of saving out their shorts when they haul their pots and putting them in one big car and hiding 'em that way to fool the fish inspector. When they get a good mess they sell them to their regular customers just as Bill said. It's a bit of a jolt, but all the same I'm glad to know Bill isn't mixed up in this bootlegging business."

"I'm afraid I cannot say as much," said "In the depleted condition of my system I'd trade them all for one good second mate's drinte "That would not have done the rest of us

much good," said Nancy, " and I love chicken

lobsters, but, of course, that scarcely would be expected to interest you." "That remark," said Matt, " is as unkind as it is unfair. From the moment of the curtain's rising on this farce my principal effort has been directed toward getting you

what you wanted." Nancy flushed, seemed about to make some tart reply, thought better of it, then said in a voice which struck through Matt with pleased surprise: "Well, I think that you've succeeded pretty well, if that is any comfort

"It is," said Matt, and was about to hand back the olive branch, when Sam, staring into the gathering darkness with the eye of a trained mariner, said charply: "Here comes another boat."

They followed the direction of his raised arm and saw a dim, nebulous shape forming itself in the humid opacity.

"Upon my word" said Matt. "Bar Harbor has got nothing on this place for visiting yachts. I wonder somebody doesn't start a yacht club." "That's our launch," cried Nancy. "In

this tomorrow or today?" "It is never tomorrow," said Matt. "That word, like your definition of reputation, represents an abstract quality which we never quite catch up with."

He rose to his feet, stepped outside, and, picking up the zinc bucket, beat upon it with a stick of firewood. This tocsin was immediately heard by the faithful Murphy, who launch came nosing up to the kelp covered rocks, when Murphy, at sight of Sylvia, let out a jubilant howl.

"Glory be!" cried he. "Praise the saints! O childer, but we are the livin' wonders! And he came scrambling ashore, painter in hand, and, rushing to where Sylvia stood, seized her hand, then turned to stare with wonder at the embarrassed Sam.

"And did he find her, sor?" he cried. "Murphy," said Sam in a dry voice, "I sure did. I found her paddling along the shore in her cance and took her for a little We came back here to the cabin, and then Mr. Holmes rescued her and we had a fight and burned the cabin down, and Miss Upton put us both out with the fire extin-

Murphy stared from one to the other of the smiling faces. "There does not seem to be much broken," he observed. "But ye had all best be gettin' in the launch and we will hurry back in time to save the poor squire from goin' off his head entirely. O, Misther Sprague," his voice

was reproachful, "'tis the divil and all ye have raised by this outrageous act." A few minutes later the swift launch under the skilled pilotage of Murphy was running in on the long swell for Uncle Jerry's landing. Matt and Nancy, thoroughly used up and suffering from the relaxation of their strenuous efforts, were silent. As also were Sam and Sylvia. Scarcely anybody spoke until they had arrived, when Sam observed with a

Well, I suppose I'm in to catch the devil, now, but, by gum, it's well worth it." "I thought," said Nancy, "that we were going to charge it up to Matt's fictitious boot-

Sam shook his head. "That yarn will do for the press and the world at large, but I'm going to give Mr. Gates the straight stuff and take whatever he hands out to me." You can tell us all about it tomorrow

then," said Nancy. "I think that Matt and I have had enough bloodshed for one day." Some day!" murmured Matt fervently. On arriving Sam and Sylvia got immedintely into the car and were driven off by

Murphy to whatever fate awaited them. As Matt and Nancy walked slowly to the house Matt said in a heavy voice:

I'm sorry for Mr. Bluebeard, I hate for to cause him pain,

But the hell of a spree there's sure to be

When they get home again. "Well," said Nancy, "Sam did a terrible thing, but I'll stand by my former remark, that a man who loves a girl enough to risk her everlasting hatred and a long term in the penitentiary on the off chance of making her come to his way of thinking is a man worth having for a husband. When are you going

to claim the reward?" "I'm not," said Matt shortly. " Are you? " Nancy stopped in her tracks and stared at him. "Of course not," said she. "I never had any such idea. . But do you really mean that you are going to pass up that hundred thousand dollars because they are both bound

in all bonor to pay?" I pass it up," said Matt. "If we'd rescued her from the bootleggers we'd be fools not to claim it, but this job is different."

'How about your income tax?" "O, that!" said Matt. "Well, I may have a try for Uncle Jerry's money." What money, silly?"

"The premium that goes with you," said 'Is that another impulse?" Nancy asked,

pausing at the foot of the veranda steps.
"Yes," said Matt. "And so is this," and before the astonished girl could raise a hand in her defense he caught her in his arms, tilted up her face, and kissed her as he had done not many hours before.

That's to head off another possible attack of nerves," said he, and then, to his consternation, for remedies do not work always in the same way, Nancy burst suddenly into tears, ran up the steps and into the house.

Matt did not go immediately into the house. Nancy's behavior at his impulsive careas had greatly upset him. As usual, he had acted en sudden impulse and likewise as usual appeared to have jumped at a wrong conclu-He could not have said precisely what he had expected to get in return, but this certainly had not been tears. He felt ashamed and remorseful and considerably puzzled. He now reflected that while a man might be excused for kissing a girl in desperation to stop a fit of hysterics, there was no gentlemanly justification for so doing when she was physically and nervously exhausted and without any particular reason except as a sort of finale to an emotional adventure. He told himself that even Sam was more justified in carrying off by force maleur the girl with whom he was desperately in love than was a man in forcibly kissing a girl with whom he was not in love at all.

As this comparison in brutal violence filtered through his tired brain Matt experienced a stab of surprise. But was it true that he was not in love with her at all? Was

reagent in a cloudy precipitate, and it showed him immediately and in every clear solution just why he had kissed Nancy. "Because I've fallen awfully in love with her." he answered.

" Are you quite sure of that?" May asked. "Yes," said Matt. "I was just making sure of it when you came in." May appeared to weigh the value of these words, "Well," said she, "I'm glad that your impulse had a gentlemanly motive." "But it hadn't," Matt interrupted. "That came trotting along behind." What do you mean? " May demanded, and

her eyes fastened on Matt's with rather more than a challenge. There was a good deal of accusation about it.

Matt rose. "I doubt if I could make you understand, May," said he. "Not because of your lack of intelligence but because of my poor ability to explain just what I feel. Most of us mediocre writers suffer from that defect. Many of us are able to put the clever words in the mouths of our fictitious characters, but quite unable to say them ourselves. Anyhow, I wouldn't if I could. I've acted like a cad to Nancy, so you see you were quite right in your first idea of me. If you will kindly excuse me now I'll say good-



Matt looked up to see May on the threshold. She carried . . . a long glass containing some sort of amber fluid.

it even true that he was not in love with her an awful lot? But, if so, when had it happened and where and how? From start to finish of the bizarre adventure they had snapped and spat and clawed at each successive clash of wills, like two unfriendly cats meeting on the top of a narrow fence, and if Nancy had not missed a trick in scoring him. so also had he lifted his hackles and

scratched back. Matt stood for several moments trying to puzzle it out. The rain was pelting down, but he had got used to rain and did not give the matter much attention. His reverle was interrupted by a still, small voice within him asking for a smoke. It was inconvenient to smoke out there in the rain, so Matt went up the steps and entered the house, quietly and unostentatiously. He sloughed off his raincoat, feeling rather like a snake in the act of changing its skin, then slipped back through the house to the library, pausing at the door to switch on the lights. There were too many of them to suit his reflective mood, so he pulled the chain of a reading lamp on a table in the corner, enapped off the others, and, seating himself in a big leather upholstered armchair, lighted a cigaret. grandfather's clock in the hall struck the full Westminster chimes, then solemnly announced that it was midnight.

Matt sat and smoked and pondered. Uncie Jerry's room was directly above, and Matt's thoughts were obtruded upon by the low murmur of voices, punctuated from time to time by what his ears might have recognized, had they been alert, which they were not, as the harsh cackle of Uncle Jerry's laughter. But these sounds were lost on Matt, who was wearisomely reviewing in his mind the differ ent episodes of which Nancy seemed to be the predominant figure.

The clock struck the quarter, then the half hour, unremarked by Matt. He heard an electric bell tinkling somewhere, and a little later somebody went up the stairs apparently with a tray of dishes, for Matt heard the clink of porcelain. Then there came a rustle in the room adjoining, and Matt looked up to see May on the threshold. She was in dressing gown and slippers, and looked rather like a Druid priestess, except that she carried in her hand not a golden sickle but a long glass containing some gort of amber colored fluid. " So here you are," said she.

"I-I-yes, I think so," Matt admitted starting to rise. "Sit still. You look rather used up. Here,

drink this slowly." May offered him the glass, then seated herself in a desk chair. facing him. What is it?" Matt asked, setting the glass

on the desk. " Mostly whisky," May answered. " Medici nal whisky."

Matt murmured, and took obediently a draught. "It seems to have a curiously famillar taste." 'Why didn't you come upstairs?" May asked, fixing him with her intelligent eyes.

"Where have I heard that word before?"

"I was ashamed," Matt confessed. Why? What were you ashamed of?" "Kissing Nancy," said Matt. "Didn't she

"No." May answered. "But then she had more important things to tell us about. Why did you kiss her?" She leaned forward, and her searching look pierced Matt to the very vitals of his confused intelligence. It seemed also to clear it, like a dren co two of the

night, and when you come down tomorrow I'll be gope." He pushed back his chair and stood politely waiting for her to go.

May did not budge. Her steady eyes rested on Matt's face with a sort of pity. "Nancy is right," said she. "But she is not entirely right. You are not quite responsible, Matt But your irresponsibility is not that of a foolish person or a stupid person. It's that of

a child-a headstrong little boy." Matt bowed. "Thanks for the skilled psychiatry, May," said he. "But if you don't mind I'll say good-night and go to bed. You see. I'd like to get an early start tomorrow. before Murphy is up. So I'll telephone to Bill Emerson to run over and get me. Hope I can manage to leave without disturbing anybody.'

May studied him thoughtfully. "Sit down, Matt." said she. "Thank you," Matt answered, and re-

mained standing. May rose herself. 'Then it's to be unfriendliness again?" she

"Let's not call it that," said Matt. "Forgetfulness. You see, May, I'm such a forgetful person myseif that all I can honestly ask forgetfulness in return. That's easy to do, and never strains anybody very much." "Your uncle wants to talk to you," said

"That's establishing a precedent," said Matt. "Herotofore I've always been the one to request the audience." He pushed back the tall glass from which he had taken but swallow, then placed a small book care fully across its top. May watched this maneuver with a twinkle in her gray eyes. 'What's that idea?" she asked.

"I'm apt to need the rest when Uncle Jerry gets through talking to me." Matt explained, and I must say you mixed me a real one, May. A sort of stirrup cup, I fancy."

"That's up to you, Matt," May answered. "I've never tried to thrust my hospitality on anybody, but after listening to Nancy's story I thought it warranted "-her eyes twinkled even more at the corners, though her face was perfectly grave-"especially after your disappointment. I'm glad to know about these lobsters. I had my suspicions about them. But from your point of view I suppose that such arbitrary laws are to be regarded a good deal like the hearts of arbitrary women-made for the fun of breaking, like clay pigeons."

Matt turned and stared at her, and for the first time May noticed the contusions and abrasions of his face. She started to speak. but Matt checked her.

"Look here, May," he demanded, "just what are you driving at? If you mean that I've been trying to break Nancy's heart ther you're all off. I've damaged her conjunctives with the extinguisher and I've taken unpardonable liberty with her lips-that is, the second time. But if you think I've been trying to firt with her then you haven't the sense that I've got, and she'll tell you there's ,no worse insult than that."

"So I gathered from her rather incoherent commentaries on your quality of mind," said

They listened. From overhead came faintly the muffled sounds of what seemed to be a duet of cachinnations in which Matt was able distinguish Uncle Jerry's gusts of mirth less cackles now than explosive coughs, and what sounded like appeals for divine or other aid. Mingled with these spasmodic croakings were ringing peals of laughter in a clear and

musical note which might have proved contagious to most listeners, but which turned Matt cold. He had heard them before, some hours earlier in the day.

"You had better run up, May," said Matt. "She's starting to throw another fit of hys-

teries." "Don't worry," May answered. "At least, don't werry about Nancy. She doesn't give way to uncontrolled laughter very often, but

when she does, she do." There came a thumping on the floor above. May rose, and Matt, a little tardy about his politeness, was startled to find his head drawn suddenly back and two strong, small hands holding it by the ears, as one holds an Airedale pup when desiring to examine its

What's this?" asked Matt. "Are you going to give me chloroform and put me out of my misery?"

I'm going to give you a kiss," said May, and did so. It acted as a further stimulant on Matt.

"That's right," said he: "avenge your sister. And you can keep on avenging her just as long as you like."

"You are quite a dear, Matt," May observed, "when one begins to find you out." "Thanks, May," said Matt, "but if anybody ever starts in to find me out I'll be hard to

"Nancy has found you out," said May. "Quite so," Matt admitted. "That's the reason I intend to beat it on the milk train. But you can tell her from me-Again came the thumping from overhead,

this time imperious. May ignored it. She had been a trained nurse. "Well, what shall I tell Nancy?" she asked. "Tell her I think she's a wonder, and I'm sorry-no, glad I kissed her, and that I'm clearing out in such a hurry because I'm afraid that if I stuck around I'd have to kiss her every time I looked at her, and besides the wear and tear of that on her I might get shot or poisoned or something. Tell her that I've found out that I love her nearly to death." Matt took another gulp of his medicinal stimulant. "Tell her I love her plumb to death, and when you've told her all that-

He paused, for the thumping overhead had become more vociferous. "I'm afraid your uncle has been telling her about the people in the old Putney place."

Matt fixed her with burning eyes, for they were beginning to burn again.

What about them?" he asked. May sank back into the chair from which the had just risen. She started to speak. then leaned forward and covered her eyes with her hand. Her shoulders began to shake. Matt, watching her, first in anger, then in ouriosity, and finally in appreciation, found his mind straying from the defense of his dignity to an intense anxiety about May, and the fear that the loss of self-control might be a family failing of the Upton sisters. "Stop," he cried. "Don't you get going it.

May wiped her eyes and leaned back, looking at Matt down the slant of her soft cheeks, She was astonishingly pretly, he thought, and for the first time it struck him that per-

the best of the bargain. 'I'll stop," said May. "Wancy and I are quite a lot alike in some respects. We never were gigglers, like a good many girls. Besides, our life drama has held a good many more sobs than laughs for the last several years, and once in a while we try to catch

Nancy began to cry when I kissed her,"

"Pure nerves," said May. "Being pretty well tuckered out and too tired to put up a fight, she cried. It's sometimes done."

Matt cocked his head. "Well, she seems to be catching up again," said he. "What about those people in the old Putney place? Have they been nabbed?" May nodded. "Yes," said she, "at Saratoga Springs. The head of the household is Don Manuel Diego Jesus - Maria Gonzales. If there's any part of the Argentine Republic he doesn't own then there must have been

of trade reciprocity business. The young man you saw was his secretary." She began to shake again. "The extinguisher-

some oversight on the part of his real estate

agent. He is here in America on some sort

"Go on," said Matt savagely. "I suppose it blinded him, and I hope it did." "O. no." said May. "That was before you put the ammonia in it. The secretary was stopping on to close up the place and turn it . over to the agent because the damp air gave Señor Gonzales rheumatism. The boxes you saw brought ashore were private stores from their yacht." She leaned forward, resting her beautifully rounded forearms on the table, dropped her forehead on them, and her

shoulders moved quickly up and down. "Try to get your second wind and start on another lap, May," said Matt. " All of this is terribly jolly hearing for me, just as when Bill Emerson told me the booze was lobsters I think I'll change my mind about this drink hoarding." He removed a copy of "Songs of Men" from the tall glass and took another soul searching swallow. "I'm feeling stronger now. Why did they slide the launch down out of the boathouse?"

"She belonged to the yacht," said May, and they had sent her up here to have something to run about in if so desired. The steam yacht is about the size of the Leviathan. The old Don had already left for Saratoga in an ambulance car and the other two were following him up with restoratives and sterilized plovers' eggs and pickled enails' tongues and things-and champagne."

"I see," said Matt. "So they were boot leggers after all. The last and final whack at impulse - and the extinguisher. You make it easier for me to understand why that sleek pup of a secretary was so pert. Folks say they were all uppish. And you give me a positive stab of pure unadulterated joy when I think of how I sprayed him. I suppose that in the retirement of its burrow under the rocks br'er skunk must have many a quiet chuckle of the sort."

There came again the rapping overhead, this time violent enough to admit of no further ignoring. "You'd better go up," said May, "before your uncle kicks the ceiling down."

"It shows what you've done for him, May," said Matt. "A few months ago he could not have endangered the plaster. I'll go up and see him, and then organize my retreat. May looked at him steadily. "Why the re-

treat?" she asked. 'I've been a soldier, May," said Matt, " and my military experience has taught me that there is nothing dishonorable about a well ordered retreat when two things have happened, the first being when you've carried on to the best of your ability and muddled through somehow, and the second when your efforts have brought you nothing but

shame and disgrace through-let's call it fortuitous circumstances, reacting on a mind which is swift but none too sound."

" What makes you think your mind is none too sound?"

"Nancy, principally," said Matt, "and Nancy is right. Every conclusion to which my brilliant mind carried me since the beginning of this flasco has proved wrong. I accused a worthy and distinguished foreigner of being a crook, and I accused some nonexistent bootleggers of carrying away a girl, and I accused some honest Portuguese fishermen of trying to carry off Nancy, and I accused Bill Emerson of being a bootlegger, and if my silly old extinguisher hadn't got plugged there's no telling what might have happened, because I know what it feels like to get a slug of that stuff in the eyes, and the passions are apt to be roused by such a calamity. But, to go farther back, and what is much more important. I accused you of being a designing young woman and your sister of being in the same boat."

"I think that's been wiped off the slate,

Matt," said May. "Well, that's because you're generous. But there's something else which no time nor scouring can wipe off my slate because it isn't therely written there but etched. don't think I should ever be able, after all that's happened, to get up impudence enough tell Nancy how much I love her, and I'm not going to ask you to deliver any such

message." 'I shall, though," said May. "Well, then, don't until I've put the same spiritual and geographical separation between us that I propose to do between myself and a few others whom I should be ashamed to face-Mr. Gates and Donovan

and Uncle Jerry." "Why Uncle Jerry?" asked May. "Because he happens to be my maternal uncle, and, therefore, the stigma of baving an idiot nephew might be expected to score him a bit. But, so far as Nancy is concerned, she saw through me from the starthad my number, in the argot of the day-and she never found any reason to change her idea. Sitting here just now before you came in I found occasion to change mine of her, and I'm giving you the benefit of the result. She has courage, resolution, high grade in-

telligence, and about everything to make a man respect and love her.' "Don't you think," May asked, "it would be rather a sporting thing to wait long

enough to tell her that yourself?" "No," said Matt, "I don't think so. There's a lot of difference between being sporty and being merely cheeky. I'll go up now and say good-night to Uncle Jerry, and then I'll take a nap and get up and out of here before anybody's about. Good-night, May, and thanks awfully for your sym-

He rose, took the hand which May offered him, and brushed it lightly with his lips. He failed to notice the gush of tears in May's eyes, because his own were het and smarting. Then, as he reached the foot of the stairs, a harsh, strident voice came down

from above. "Tell that fool Matt to come up here."

called Uncle Jerry The summons had the tonic effect which Matt most needed at that moment. "Coming, Uncle Jerry," he called cheerfully, and went up with alacrity. Uncle Jerry, looking rather like a Capuchin monk in his dressing gown, was standing in the doorward of his room, his big frame bulking up to fill it. At sight of Matt he turned and went back inside with a brief gesture for

Matt entered and stood respectfully at attention.

"Sit down," said Uncle Jerry, and surveyed him with a curious expression which was not entirely satirical.

"Hardly worth while holding a post-mortem, Uncle," Matt replied,
"O, I don't know," Uncle Jerry answered; they're more warranted than post-obits."

"O, speaking about those things, Uncle," said Matt. "here's your change." He reached in his pecket and took out the roll of bills. 'I only had to spend fifty dollars-twenty to pay for a wallop on the jaw of a Portuguese fisherman and twenty more for the mate to it between the eyes."

"Well, that's getting off easy," said Uncle Jerry. "I once had to pay fifty times that for something of the same sort. How about the other ten?"

"I paid that for a dozen chicken lobstere ' said Matt. "They came a little high, but Bill Emerson told me it was what you gave him. 'Well," said Uncle Jerry, "don't bother about the change; and you needn't worry about your income tax. You see, Matt. I've rather changed my idea about you, and, after all, we're blood kin."

Matt laid the roll of bills on the table. Thanks, awfully, Uncle Jerry." he said, "but I've rather changed my opinion about avuncular graft. There's nothing owing me for this lob."

"There is, though, Matt," said Uncle Jerry. "Sylvia Gates is my goddaughter. You may not have seen the papers, but I stuck on another ten thousand to that reward. Now Nancy tells me you don't intend to collect from Hy Gates or Griscom, and I think you're right, considering the fact that Sam Sprague meant to bring her back. But if you hadn't mixed it up with Sam she'd have married that lollop of a Griscom, and I never could stand the fellow. Besides, for the sake of the family credit, I don't care to have a nephew of mine dragged through the courts for debt."

"Thanks, uncle," said Matt, "but i'd really like to earn it." "Well, then," said Uncle Jerry. "'You say you need to finance this extinguisher. We'll go ahead with that. From all I learn it seems to be a pretty safe bet. Now go and get a hite, and go to bed. I was feeling

pretty bad a couple of hours ago, but the laugh I've had has put me right again." "Weil, uncle," said Matt, "if laughing at a fool is your medicine, then I'm sure the doctor, but I'll be off tomorrow morning early, because it's the sort of medicine I don't care much about distributing a through the region," and with a cheerful

good-night Matt went to his room. When Matt awoke, he was startled to find it nearly noon. He was also considerably surprised to find himself feeling so very fit. Ringing for the butler to ask for coffee and

eggs, the old man-servant informed him that

Murphy was waiting his orders, but that his

aunt and uncle had gone out for a spin in the small car, Mrs. Taylor driving. Where's Miss Nancy?" Matt asked. "Somewhere about the grounds, sir." the butler answered, and Matt wondered a little at the peculiar expression of his face. "Well, I'll be off in half an hour," said

"Tell Murphy to bring around the car, please,"

Continued Next Sunday. (Copyright 1922: by Henry C. Rowland)