

THE RED CIRCLE

Albert Payson Terhune

AUTHOR OF THE "THE FIGHTER," "CALEB CONOVER," "SYRIA FROM THE SADDLE," ETC.

NOVELIZED FROM THE PATHE PHOTO PLAY OF THE SAME NAME BY WILL M. RITCHIEY.

SYNOPSIS.

"Circle Jim" Borden, who derives his name from a red birthmark on the back of his right hand, is released from prison after serving his third term.

FIFTH INSTALLMENT WEAPONS OF WAR

"I believe the Red Circle never shows on your hand except when you're planning some wicked mischief!" croaked old Mary, as she passed at the door of June's bedroom.

"Yes," said June, dreadingly, with a guilty glance at her handbook, "I've thought so, too."

"It was there last evening. It isn't there this morning," went on the old woman, depositing the clothes on a chair and beginning to arrange them.

"Nothing at all," declared June, her eyes fixed anxiously on the trunk Mary was packing. "Please don't let me talk about it. It makes me so miserable. I've packed part of the trunk," she added.

Before breakfast, June had gone to Mrs. Travis; and, on plea of feeling "run down," had persuaded her to close the town house that very morning and to go for the season to their summer cottage at Surf-ton.

Max Lamar had been closeted for an hour with Chief of Police Allen. They had twisted the new development of the "Red Circle" mystery inside and out; studying it vainly from every imaginable angle.

First of all, they had ascertained—what they had already been sure of—that no tailor in city or state was named Atman; and that neither city nor state contained any master tailor who was a mute.

"Have you tried your pretty little portrait gallery?" asked Lamar.

"No. We'll run over it, if you like. I'd spot that lad's face anywhere."

With the help of his secretary and of Policeman Meeks—the only men

have reformed. Has small cobbler shop at 1019 Bright way. Height 5 feet 8 inches. Weight 240 pounds. Identifying marks—

"Smiling Sam Egan!" broke off Lamar. "I'm not likely to forget him. We got him when we got 'Circle Jim'.

She's the salt of the earth, that girl," commented the chief. "Suppose I drop around to see Smiling Sam," said Lamar.

Sam Egan's shop faced on a corner, and behind it was a disreputable looking back yard separated by a rickety gate and a tumbledown board fence from the alley at the rear.

The corner was uninviting, even for corner loafers. Yet one such loafer infested it at all hours of the day.

It was an uninspiring life that Mr. Thomas Dunn led. Long since, the neighbors had ceased to interest themselves in him.

Had the neighbors looked closer, they might perhaps have noted that his half-shut eyes were as bright as a rat's, and that those same apparently drowsy eyes were forever shifting their gaze up and down the street.

Tom Dunn, this morning, lounged as usual, in front of Smiling Sam's shop; smoking an ill-made cigarette; and loafing away the early hours when most of the world was at work.

Inside the dingy little shop, Sam himself was up to his eyes in toil. The shop's dirty walls re-echoed to the quick taps of his hammer, as he drove tiny bright nails into tough sole leather.

As Egan, cross-legged on his low bench, sat hammering gayly away, Tom Dunn ducked his unshaven visage into the room.

"Jake's comin'," announced Dunn; and returned to the front steps once more.

Smiling Sam looked up with a friendly nod, a moment later, as a cadaverous man of middle age shambled into the shop.

Egan unrolled the newspaper wrappings. Out fell a dusty shoe, whose sole was all but gone and whose heel was "run" at the left side.

"How much?" demanded Jake.

"Twenty," was Sam's terse verdict.

"Twenty?" snorted the indignant Jake. "Twenty what? Twenty nothing? Twenty dollars for that bit of Easy Street Pavement? Why, the gold settin' is worth more'n that, you measly old goug'er!"

"Twenty!" snapped Egan. "Take it or leave it."

"I'll leave it, then," stormed Jake. "I'm not going to be robbed. Give it back to me."

"Sure," smiled Egan, blandly, returning the brooch to him; and at the same time absently pulling from his trousers pocket a roll of bills which he fingered carelessly.

To Jake the sight of money was a bone to a starving dog. He wavered.

"Oh, take it, you swine!" he growled, tossing the brooch down upon Egan's leather-aproned lap. "Take it. I hope it lands you in the pen!"

Sam peeled two greasy ten-dollar bills from the roll, handed them to Jake and put the rest of the money back in his pocket. He picked up the brooch. As he did so, Tom Dunn slipped hurriedly into the shop.

"Max Lamar—fly cop—" he reported, "Comin' down the block; lookin' at the numbers on the houses."

"Gee!" babbled Jake. "He'll spot me, dead sure! He's—"

The lookout caught the shaking Jake by the arm and hustled him toward the back of the shop; to a place where the blank surface of the wall was broken by several shelves on which stood a sparse array of shoe boxes.

Dunn thrust his hand in among these boxes. Instantly, a section of the wall—shelves and all—opened outward, revealing a passageway behind.

Through this opening, Dunn shoved the panic-stricken Jake; closing the thick secret door behind them.

Jake and his conductor found themselves in a dim-lit inner room, unfurnished save for a big and dog-eared calendar that hung on one wall, and a broken packing box below it.

A doorway, perhaps three feet high and twenty inches or less in width, took the place of the seemingly solid plastering. Through this hole, closing it behind them, the two wriggled; out into the yard beyond; and thence, through the rickety gate to the alleyway.

Meantime, left alone in his shop, Smiling Sam Egan saw a long shadow fall athwart the street threshold and hesitate there for an instant.

No time was to be lost. Sam slipped the brooch back into the hollow of the shoe-heel; and, with two deft blows of the hammer, nailed the heel into place on his shoe.

He was driving the second nail, when Max Lamar scuntered into the shop.

Max glanced down approvingly at the busy old fellow tacking a worn heel on to a worthless shoe.

"Well, well, Mr. Lamar!" he cried jovially, holding out an enormous hand. "This is an honor I wasn't a-looking for. Sit down. You'll find that bench clean, I think. I try to

"Let me take that bum old shoe you're playing with, Mr. Lamar. It'll get you all dirty."

Thinking Sam was trying to change the subject in order to avoid talking of the Red Circle, Lamar paid no heed to his request; but kept on swinging the shoe idly to and fro, as he asked:

"That Red Circle, now—you remember what Jim Borden used to say about it?"

"That it cropped out once in every generation of his family," supplemented Egan, "and that the person who had it was always a criminal."

"I have reason to believe it was gospel truth, Egan," said Lamar. "The Red Circle on the back of the hand has always been the sign-manual of a crook, in the Borden family. And—"

"Not always," corrected Sam. "There was that son of his—young Ted Borden—for instance. He was a cheap crook, right down to the ground, that youngster was. But there wasn't any Red Circle on his hand. That shoe, now—" he continued anxiously; but Max interrupted.

"That brings me to the point. You say Ted Borden had no Red Circle on his hand. And Ted died when his father died. But how about Jim Borden's other children?"

"Circle Jim's other children?" cried Sam, in a wonder that was palpably genuine. "His other children? Why, man alive, Jim Borden never had another child but Ted."

"I'll tell you why I ask," said Lamar, impressively, leaning forward and emphasizing his words by tapping the shoe against his knee. "Because I happen to know that no less than two people in this very city today have the Red Circle on the backs of their right hands."

He broke off and looked down with sudden curiosity at the shoe he was

miss," said Sam, with a fine show of courage, "but I can stand it. The doctor did it a lot of good last month; but he won't give me any more treatment, he says, till I pay the twenty-five dollars I owe him on his last bill. So I guess I'll have to grin and bear it awhile longer."

"You poor old thing," said June, in quick sympathy. "Indeed you shall not grin and bear it another day. Here," taking three bills from her handbag, "pay that cranky bear of a doctor this very morning and have him give you treatment. Tell him to send his next bill to me. I must go now. My mother and Mary are waiting for me in the car, outside there. Good-by, Sam; good-by, Mr. Lamar."

But Max would not be dismissed in this fashion. He insisted on going to the car with her, and on the way, he managed to angle successfully for an invitation to call on her at the Surf-ton cottage.

After which he stared at the automobile until it bore her out of sight. Then he wandered on down the street, planning busily—not for the solving of the Red Circle mystery, but to discover some way of arranging his work so as to leave him an entire afternoon and evening free for a run to Surf-ton-by-the-Sea.

Sam Egan and the mysteriously rattling shoe were quite wiped from his mind.

Sam, meantime, his professionally genial smile glued to his red face, was looking down at the twenty-five dollars June had so generously forced upon him. But, though his eyes were fixed on the money in his hand, his mind was not.

Twenty-five dollars, just at present, seemed to Smiling Sam a pitifully small sum. For he had sudden visions of an infinitely larger amount. Visions so bright as to take away, for the moment, even the memory of his narrow escape from exposure in the matter of the hollow-heel shoe. A mighty inspiration was gripping Sam Egan; an inspiration born of his talk with Lamar.

After a moment of thought he nodded his head, stuck the money into his pocket and locked the door of his shop. Then he went to the secret door among the shoe-shelves and opened it. Passing into the hidden room he crossed to where the dog-eared old calendar hung on the wall.

Lifting this calendar, he disclosed a cupboard behind it. Reaching into this, he pulled forth a telephone, took the receiver from the hook and called for a number.

"Miss La Salle's apartment?" he asked presently; then: "That you, Alma?—Sam—Come around here in a rush. There's something big. Hurry up."

Egan returned to the shop, put on his coat and went out into the neighborhood to do a little shopping.

Back home he came, and through to the hidden room; there depositing his purchases in the telephone cupboard behind the calendar. He had barely regained the front shop when a woman entered.

Alma La Salle was perhaps twenty-five, perhaps a little older. She was of medium height; wiry, dark and inclining to sallowness.

She was an invaluable source of revenue to Sam. And, apart from her uncanny deftness at robbery, he knew he could always count on her wit and daring to carry out any campaign he might devise.

"Hello, kid," was his greeting, this morning. "You didn't waste any time. That's right. You got a train to catch and some fancy packing to do, first."

"Train to catch?" she repeated eagerly.

"To Surf-ton-by-the-Sea. There's a big ball at the Surf-ton hotel tonight. Our man there tipped me to it. You're going to 'operate' at the ball."

"But—" "It's a new angle we're going to work from, on this," he pursued. "There ought to be a pot of cash in it. Ever hear of the Red Circle?"

"Of course," she made answer. "Who hasn't?" "Give me your hand," he ordered. "The right one."

Wonderingly, Alma obeyed. Moistening the brush and rubbing it on the red-paint cake, Sam proceeded to trace on the back of the woman's hand an irregular Red Circle.

"Watch that closely," he warned. "That's just the shape of the one Borden had. Do you think you could paint that on your own hand?"

"Why, yes; but—" He dipped the sponge in the liquid from the phial and passed it over the circle. The paint quickly vanished.

"There you are!" said he. "Go to the ball. Pinch everything you get half a chance at. Then sneak into some quiet corner to paint that circle on your hand. Manage to let the house detective or some of the guests get a glimpse of it. Then rub it off. When the yell goes up that a lot of boobs have been robbed the Red Circle will be sure to get the blame for it."

There was but one theme of import among the summer idlers at Surf-ton-by-the-Sea. June had not been at the cottage an hour before she had heard the whole story from Mary, who had it from a neighbor.

It seemed that Todd Drew, the disolute young son of Amos Drew, the great inventor, had just arrived at the Surf-ton hotel. He had brought thither, so said report, a small flat metal case that was more deadly than fifty batteries of electric guns.

For this case contained the plans for a war-engine, infinitely ingenious and more murderous than any hitherto devised. It was a veritable monster of destruction, this engine. By its use

whole armies could be destroyed in a single minute.

Amos Drew had invented the thing. Having done so he had been so appalled by its possibilities for annihilation that he had never put it upon the market, but had stowed the plans away among his private papers.

But now Amos Drew was dead, and his only heir, Todd Drew, was busy wasting the paternal fortune.

Thus it was, seaside gossip ran, that he had brought to Surf-ton the terrible war-engine plans; and he was to meet here one Count Freel, the agent for a foreign government, to negotiate with him for their sale.

With a shudder June dismissed the story from her mind. To occupy her thoughts, she resolved to take the bun-



She Resolved to Toss the Bundle Into the Sea.

dle of masculine clothing at once to the nearest deserted pier and toss it into the sea.

Half way to the pier she passed a ramshackle boathouse, whose weather-worn boards were bulged and splayed, in several places, until they looked like the slats in front of a henhouse. As June sped past the boathouse she chanced to notice a large smooth stone—just the thing to weight the bundle she carried. She picked it up, opened the bundle at one end, dropped in the stone and fastened the package's string once more.

At the same moment, from the shack just behind her, she heard a man's voice saying impatiently:

"I'm no blooming diplomat, count. Come down to cases. What will you pay?"

June dropped the bundle she held. She stood transfixed, there, on the rocky beach, in front of the shack. Understanding came to her with a rush. So the story was true!

June—the Red Circle blazing and pulsing on her white hand—had crept nearer and nearer to the shack. She peeped in, cautiously, through one of the wide cracks in the boards.

A crate had been turned upside down to serve as a table, and it stood close to the aperture in the boards. At the opposite ends of this improvised table, on a couple of boat trestles, sat two men.

On the crate-table, just in front of Drew, rested an oblong metal dispatch box, perhaps ten inches long, four inches wide and two inches high.

June drew back from the shack and glanced guiltily around. No one was in sight. Near by lay a fragment of wreckage, a thick board about five feet long.

She carried it to the shack's only door, braced one end of the board against a boulder in front of the door and then put the other end just beneath the jutting cross-panel half way up the door.

"Yes, sir!" Todd Drew was vociferating. "It's worth an easy two million dollars to your government—or to any other warring country—to get these plans. They're—"

He broke off with a yell. For as he looked down at the metal box that had lain in front of him on the table it was no longer there. He was just in time to see a woman's small hand drawing the dispatch box cautiously out through a crack in the wall boards.

Drew made a clutch at the vanishing hand and seized it by the wrist. "I've got her, count!" he cried. "Say, she struggles like a wildcat. Run outside and grab her."

The count leaped for the door. At the same instant June's other hand appeared through the adjoining crack. His fingers grasped a long pin she had hastily snatched from her sailor hat.

Into Todd's detaining fist she drove the pin, right mercilessly.

With a howl of pain Drew relaxed his grip on her wrist. Her hands vanished—the dispatch box and the hat pin along with them—just as the count yelled:

"I cannot get this miserable door open! It is jammed!"

June waited to hear no more. She tore open the end of the bundle, thrust the metal box into it, closed it again and, snatching it up, raced madly for the pier. Nor did she pause until she had hurled the bulky parcel far out into the sea.

Meantime, in the shack, pandemonium had broken loose. Both men threw their bodies frantically against the unyielding door.

FALLING HAIR MEANS DANDRUFF IS ACTIVE

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Thin, brittle, colorless and scraggy hair is mute evidence of a neglected scalp; of dandruff—that awful scour.

There is nothing so destructive to the hair as dandruff. It robs the hair of its luster, its strength and its very life; eventually producing a feverishness and itching of the scalp, which, if not remedied causes the hair roots to shrink, loosen and die—then the hair falls out fast. A little Danderine tonight—now—any time—will surely save your hair.

Get a 25 cent bottle of Kiehl's Danderine from any store, and after the first application your hair will take on that life, luster and luxuriance which is so beautiful. It will become wavy and fluffy and have the appearance of abundance; an incomparable gloss and softness, but what will please you most will be after just a few weeks' use, when you will actually see a lot of fine, downy hair—new hair—growing all over the scalp. Adv.

LOVE THRIVES ON EUGENICS

Marriages in Milwaukee Are on the Increase Despite Law Against Unfit.

Marriage goes merrily on in Milwaukee, regardless of the eugenics law, says the Sentinel of that city.

Figures in the county clerk's office show an increase in both 1915 and 1916 over 1914 in the number of marriages issued. The eugenics law, in operation for three years, has had no effect upon the celebration of the time honored nuptials.

"I still maintain that the eugenics law has been of tremendous benefit to the people of the state," declared Mrs. G. A. Hipke, sponsor for the law. "It is asserted that doctors make only superficial tests of men who come to them for examination before marriage, but I contend that no conscientious physician could pass upon a case which might later bring results that would reflect upon his earlier judgment."

Mrs. Hipke declared that, while she had no present intention of agitating any change in the law she might consider a broadening of the law that would include the women as well as the men in the prenuptial examination.

The Concho, Shippo, Cosoamo and Yahua tribes of Amazon Indians are still wearing clothes of grass.

The United States has 380 piano factories.

When Work Is Hard

That kidney troubles are so common is due to the strain put upon the kidneys in so many occupations, such as: Jarring and jolting on railroads, etc. Cramp and strain as in barbering, moulding, heavy lifting, etc.

Exposure to changes of temperature in iron furnaces, refrigerators, etc. Fatigue as in tanneries, quarries, mines, etc.

Inhaling poisonous fumes in painting, printing and chemical shops. Doan's Kidney Pills are fine for strengthening weak kidneys.

A Nebraska Case M. Liebert, shoe-maker, Seward, Neb., says: "I suffered from pain through the small of my back, for several weeks with headaches and dizzy spells. I could hardly stoop and mornings I got up tired and worn out. The kidney secretions were highly colored and very painful in passage. Doan's Kidney Pills made my kidneys normal and cured all the other ailments. I seldom have need of a kidney medicine now."

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Do you know what's good for a cough, throat and lung troubles, that will allay inflammation and insure a good night's sleep with free and easy expectoration in the morning? The answer always the same year after year, is

Boschee's German Syrup

Soothing and healing to bronchial and throat irritation. 25c. and 75c. sizes all Druggists and Dealers everywhere. Your grandfather used it 51 years ago. Try yourself and see how it stops a hacking cough like magic.

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"Suppose I Drop Around to See Smiling Sam?" who had had a good look at the dumb tailor—the chief began a hasty search of the collection.

"Here's old 'Circle Jim,'" said the chief once, as he glanced over a handful of photos.

A few minutes later he paused at another likeness.

"Remember this chap?" he asked Lamar, handing him an oblong of cardboard.

Lamar took the photograph and, half aloud, read the words scrawled on it: "Sam Egan—alias 'Smiling Sam'—jewel purgla—Gloss associate for years of 'Circle Jim' Borden—Claims to



The Cobbler Picked Up a Short-Handed Hammer.

keep things as tidy as I can. This is like old times, seeing you again."

"Thanks," said Lamar, seating himself on the shiny bench and taking out his cigarette case. "It's good to see you so nicely fixed here, Sam. And it's good to see you aren't scared at sight of—"

"That's right, sir," chimed in Egan, with a big laugh of genuine amusement. "Why, I can remember the day when I'd a run-a-screamin' up a tree if you came in sight. Lord, but it's worth while not to be scared stiff every time a detective happens 'round!"

Abruptly Max came to the object of his visit.

"Egan," he said, "I've called around here this morning to see if I can get some information from you. I want to talk with you about 'Circle Jim' Borden."

"Old 'Circle Jim'?" exclaimed Sam. "Why, Jim's dead. Too dead to skin."

"You and he were pretty close friends, weren't you?"

"Me and Jim? Yes. Good friends for more years than you'd know how to remember," replied Sam.

Max caught sight of the shabby and dusty shoe lying on the bench beside him—the shoe at whose heel the cobbler had been tinkering when his visitor entered. Lamar picked up the shoe, absent-mindedly and, taking hold of the tip of its laces, began to swing it carelessly to and fro, as if it had been an uncouth pendulum. Sam watched him in furtive anxiety. Max went on:

"What I want to ask you about is the queer Red Circle on the back of Jim Borden's hand. You remember it, of course?"

holding. As he had been abstractedly shaking it to and fro he had all at once noticed that a faint rattling sound came from somewhere within the shoe.

"There's something loose in the heel of this shoe," he said, "something that rattles like a loose bit of metal."

Sam did not answer. Surreptitiously the cobbler had reached behind him and had picked up the heavy, short-handled hammer with which he had been working.

"Yes," went on Lamar, "there's something rattles in this heel. Just as if there was a compartment inside, with something lying loose in it."

He picked up an awl from the bench and inserted it between heel-tap and upper. Egan drew a long breath and half-lifted the hammer.

"Good morning, Sam," came a clear young voice from the doorway. "I'm going out of town for the summer. I stopped in on my way to the station to see how you are getting on and to tell you—Oh, how are you, Mr. Lamar? It's so dark in here, after the sunshine, I didn't see you."

The spell was broken. The tension was relaxed. Lamar, at sight of June Travis, let the shoe tumble to the floor, forgotten, as he sprang up to greet her. Sam laid down the hammer with a grunt of reaction. As Lamar strode forward to meet June the cobbler thrust the shoe into the breast of his own shirt and substituted for it another one from a nearby pile on the floor.

"How are things going, Sam?" asked June, cheerily, turning from Max as the cobbler reached her side. "Is the rheumatism any better? And do people pay their bills any more promptly?"

"Sure I remember it, sir. Who wouldn't?" answered Sam, adding:

"The rheumatism is pretty bad,

passed away, but that in some good measure still persists in face the persistence of ancient times in Bible lands has not been overestimated but rather underestimated. It is not impossible that the name of Bethany may be as old as the townsite is now seen to be.

Then the discovery of Canaanite tombs at so widely separated places as Gezer, in the Philistine plain, Bethshemesch in the Judean foot hills, Taanach on the coast of Palestine and Bethany.

mountains of Judah, gives definiteness of meaning to the times when "the Canaanite was in the land."

The Gospel of Our Doors. John Muir has done greater service to all the people, and will be missed more by the whole country, than men of science who may stand higher in its records. John Muir in the West and John Burroughs in the East have mingled with the dry science of earth life and history the sentiment of our doors and the po-

etry of universal life. Their sense of the romance of science has fostered a broader and deeper appreciation of the common sympathy of human and animal, plant and past earth life than the dry study of the biologists and geologists on one side, or the misleading sentimentalism of the animal fakers in literature on the other. They have brought the feeling of our doors home to students without repelling them with fiction, and to all humanity without leading it away from truth.

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