

That Mysterious Major...

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

"Oh, dear, yes!" assented Falkland readily. "It was the talk of London. Well, what have they discovered?"

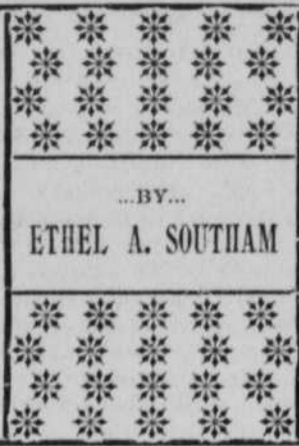
"Why, that a man who answers to the description of a suspicious-looking person who disappeared from England in rather peculiar circumstances at the time of all those forgeries is supposed to have left New York on the steamer City of Chicago on the 12th of this month; and, should this really be so, he ought to have arrived in Liverpool at the beginning of the week. Just as you were speaking of this Brown of London it struck me—"

"That he might be the forger himself? Ah, perhaps he is," exclaimed Evelyn, with a gleam of amusement in her eyes. "Let us all keep a careful watch upon him, and do our best to gain the reward which somebody has offered for him."

"Very well, Miss Eve; you may depend upon me to help you in your investigations. My services are at your disposal whenever you may require them," was Falkland's reply; but, though the words were uttered lightly, there was a sort of resolution lying latent beneath his apparent carelessness. "Only do not forget to take care of your own cheque-books, or in the meanwhile you may find he has been dipping pretty heavily into your exchequers as well. But goodbye for the present. I shall be coming again to see for which night you will like tickets for the theater, and then I will telephone down."

As the door closed behind the tall, rather gaunt, but at the same time prepossessing form of Gilbert Falkland, Lady Howard sank back in her chair with a sigh of supreme satisfaction.

"Dear me, what should we do without that man? He is really too good—"



...BY...
ETHEL A. SOUTHAM

his words had carried more weight than he had had the satisfaction of imagining.

At the time it had never struck her as peculiar that a man who was an absolute stranger to her should have been able to single out from the number of letters one in particular for her, thus showing that he knew her address perfectly. It puzzled her though, considerably now, especially as the idea flashed through her mind, as it had done before even as she stood in the hall that that letter was not lying among the others when she had first looked over the table. It had seemed a trifling matter at the time; she would never have troubled to think anything more about it if Mr. Falkland had not declared that this man must have known something of her name and had taken the earliest opportunity of trying to make her acquaintance.

But now, since he had told her what really villainous characters were constantly to be found at such quiet seaside hotels as the "Royal George," she began to realize that, if this Mr. Brown were one of the number, he would be capable of anything, and seeing her coming, had probably hidden her letter in order to obtain the necessary excuse for addressing her.

"Well, at any rate, he shall not speak to me again!" mentally resolved Miss Luttrell, as she stirred her coffee and buttered a piece of toast. "Mr. Brown of London is mistaken if he imagines that Aunt Lydia and I are two helpless individuals whom he can take in and impose upon as he likes. He had better try—that is all!"

CHAPTER IV.

Evelyn, however, was concerned without her host. Later in the morning she was hurrying upstairs with a message to her aunt's maid, when, as she

failed. She had not been so blind as to believe that in both cases his effort to speak to her was merely chance; and the major realized with a sense of the keenest disappointment that, as matters stood, it was practically useless hoping to make the slightest progress toward a more intimate acquaintance.

There was nothing for it therefore but to let things take their own course for a day or two, in the meanwhile preserving such a strict silence, when chancing to encounter Miss Luttrell, as to disarm her of all suspicions, and then to trust to fate to throw her in some way across his path. At any rate, he was prepared to remain an occupant of No. 40, on the second floor of the "Royal George," even if he had to remain until doomsday for that auspicious moment to arrive.

Until doomsday! Yet, when only one hot sultry afternoon, one cool dewy evening, and one sunshiny morning had passed, Major Brown was thoroughly impatient.

It was the afternoon of the second day after his decision, and he was standing at the open window of the smoking room with a most dejected expression upon his face. It seemed such a hopeless case to imagine that by keeping aloof from her in this way he was making the slightest progress towards the stage of friendship at which he was resolved sooner or later to arrive. What should he do with himself? Go for a stroll in the town? Yes; anything would be better than dawdling away his time as he had been doing all the morning. He was on the point of withdrawing when footsteps beneath the window and voices in slight but decided altercation arrested his attention.

"No; it is of no use—you are not to come! I want to have a quiet afternoon under the trees, so that I can read my book without any chance of an interruption. I have just reached a most exciting point, and I am dying to see how it all ends."

"But how can my presence affect your peace and comfort if I promise not to speak? Surely, if I bring plenty of literature of my own in which I am equally interested, you cannot object—"

"Yes; but I do, I know so well what would happen. Just at the most pathetic part, when the hero and heroine were plunged in the depths of despair, you would look calmly up from one of Reuter's most matter-of-fact telegrams, to discover me with tears streaming down my cheeks. No, Mr. Falkland—go into Saltcliffe, as you had arranged, buy a new flower for your coat and—"

But at that point the voices and footsteps passed out of hearing. The Major shrugged his shoulders and knocked the ashes somewhat impatiently off his cigar as he suddenly found himself lost in a vague mental speculation as to how far those enterprises would fail or succeed. All the same, there was a slight frown upon his forehead as he turned away from the window; and, apparently forgetting his resolution to take a walk round the town, he threw himself into a low chair, to puff away at his cigar with renewed energy.

The hour of three had struck in loud measured tones before he roused himself again; and then, as though by instinct, he returned to his post at the window just in time to catch a glimpse of Miss Luttrell and a large white parasol disappearing across the lawn in the direction of an inviting clump of trees.

So the fellow had failed, after all! Involuntarily a smile rose to the Major's face, a particularly unsympathetic smile.

"Poor beggar!" he ejaculated. (To be continued.)



"OH, YES—IT—IT—IS MINE!"

in troubling himself so much about us and our concerns."

Lady Howard spoke feelingly. Nobody could have ever taken the reins of government more unwillingly into her own hands than her ladyship had done upon the death of her husband three years before, when she had been left a rich but somewhat helpless widow, with a large estate and three growing children. In the years of her married life everything had devolved upon Sir Wilfred; and, though, as time wore on, she became more accustomed to her sense of perfect independence, and had actually consented to an additional care in the shape of the guardianship of her niece, her brother's child, she was still only too thankful if any one would relieve her a little of the weight of the responsibilities which hung so heavily upon her shoulders.

Consequently Gilbert Falkland, whom they had chanced to meet upon the continent for the first time only a month before, but who had introduced himself as one of the late Sir Wilfred's oldest friends, had found his attentions thoroughly acceptable to the widow; and, as it happened that he had been going by the same route as Lady Howard and her niece, he had constituted himself courier and guide, and had taken upon his own shoulders all the troubles and worries inseparable from continental traveling.

At home in England once more, fortune had thrown Mr. Falkland across their path again, and Lady Howard was only too pleased if he would still do anything for her, even if it were merely to arrange a drive or decide which of the pieces at the theaters was really worth seeing.

But Evelyn scarcely heard the sigh of contentment which had followed Mr. Falkland's departure. Her thoughts were running in quite another direction; for, in spite of the nonchalance with which she had laughed away Gilbert Falkland's observations upon the encounter with the man in the hall,

was somewhat breathlessly mounting the last flight, a tall figure, which she recognized at a glance as Major Brown's, suddenly appeared at the top of the staircase, which he was just about to descend.

Summoning all her dignity to her aid and with her head set proudly back, Miss Luttrell had prepared to pass on quickly without doigning him more than a coldly regal bow, when to her amazement, as his eyes met hers, he immediately paused before her.

"I beg your pardon, Miss Luttrell, but I believe I have found some lost property of yours. Did you not drop a handkerchief in the dining room last evening?"

It was a trifling question, certainly, still it sent the color flaming into the girl's cheeks.

"A handkerchief?" she repeated. "No; I am sure I did not"—with a decided shake of her head.

"Are you quite sure, though, because I feel certain it is yours—at least it has your initials on it?" he returned, producing the article in question and holding up the corner where the crest of the Luttrells was embroidered over the initials "E. C. L." "This is it. Is it not yours?"

Evelyn looked at it astonished. It was impossible to deny the ownership.

"Oh, yes—it is mine!"

The admission was made with such reluctance that Major Brown was conscious of a feeling that in delivering up the handkerchief to its rightful owner he was rather under an obligation to her for designing to accept it than that she owed anything to him.

He was therefore quite astonished at the polite but distant "thank you" which rewarded his efforts, and stood for some minutes lost in contemplation of the slight graceful figure as it retreated down a long corridor.

"It is no go, I am afraid, this time," he muttered half aloud. "Sambo's mistress has scented mischief already. Yes, undoubtedly his scheme had

Ancient Cedding Towns.

In olden times certain towns and villages in England used to possess a wedding house, where poor couples, after they had been wedded at church, could entertain their friends at small cost, the only outlay being the purchase of such provisions for their guests as they brought with them, the house for the day being given free of payment. At Braughing (or Brachings), in Hertfordshire, there was a wedding house of this kind, which had a large kitchen with a cauldron, large spits and dripping pan; a large room for merriment, and a lodging-room, with good linen. At Great Yeldham, in Essex, there was another such house, which was used by the poorer folk for dining in after they returned from the church. As the practice became obsolete the wedding house was turned into a school. In 1456 Roger Thornton granted to the mayor and community of Newcastle-upon-Tyne, the use of the hall and kitchen belonging to Thornton's hospital, for the use of young couples, when they were married to make their wedding dinner in, and receive the offerings and gifts of their friends.

Why Purple Became the Imperial Color.

Purple became the imperial color because of its enormous cost and rarity. The only purple known to the ancients was the Tyrian purple, which was obtained in minute quantities only from a Mediterranean species of shell fish, called the murex. In the time of Cleopatra, wool, double dyed with this color, was so excessively dear that a single pound weight cost a thousand denarii, or about thirty-five pounds sterling. A single murex only yielded a little drop of the secretion, consequently very large numbers had to be taken in order to obtain enough to dye even a very small amount of wool. Amongst more than one of the nations of antiquity it was death for any person but the sovereign or supreme judges to wear garments dyed with Tyrian purple. Upon the accession of Julius Cæsar a law was passed forbidding any private person to wear it.

THE KLEPTOMANIACS.

HOW THEY OPERATE IN SELECT SOCIETY.

Purloin Articles of Value from the Homes of the Wealthy—Peculiar Conditions Noted in Official Circles at the National Capital.

One of the leading jewelers of the capital was somewhat taken aback the other day by receiving from the wife of a high official an order for half a dozen gold nails with a jewel in the head of each and a dozen small gold chains. He inquired the uses to which the nails were to be put, when his patron said: "You see, I have a number of very valuable objects of art, which, although they are very expensive, are very small and easily handled. As the wife of an official of the government I am obliged to open my house during the season to the constituents of my husband and the Washington curiosity seeking public in general. On my reception day, therefore, my house is crowded with all sorts of people, and last winter I suffered the loss of several of my most valuable treasures. I have long been trying to devise some plan by which I can keep my objects of art outside of my cabinets and yet not have them stolen, for that is the only word I can use in regard to the loss of my treasures. I have concluded that I must either nail down some of the bric-a-brac or chain it securely to the table, and hence I am going to try this remedy. That is why I want these nails and chains." This woman's predicament is not an unusual one in Washington official circles. The kleptomaniacs who commit the most aggravating depredations are for the most part well known leaders in society. Last winter social circles in Washington were greatly bewildered and shocked by the doings of one of the best-known women in official circles. A number of hostesses began to miss valuable dollies from their dinner tables after they had given lunches or dinners, and finally several of them got together and compared notes, and suspicion fell upon one of the women who had been the guest at luncheons given by those gathered at the conference. Finally the wife of a prominent diplomat determined to stop the raid upon the dollies, and at the next luncheon she seated the suspected kleptomaniac next to her. When the dollies were brought on she watched her guest and discovered that the latter had her dolly on the table, and, carelessly dropping her handkerchief over it, picked up both. The hostess, in a most charming manner, turned to her guest and said: "Pardon me, my dear Mrs. —, but I am afraid you have my most exquisite dolly in your handkerchief. It is so fine I am afraid it will be crushed, and therefore call your attention to your inadvertence in taking it up with your handkerchief." The guest was not in the least abashed, and with a laugh, she shook out her handkerchief, and the dolly fell back on the table, whereupon she exclaimed: "Why, dear me, so I have! How very careless of me!" There were significant glances all around the table, but no more dollies were lost during that season.

TREE GROWS HOARY.

Strange Effect of Caterpillars on a Horse Chestnut Tree.

London Standard: Much interest has been caused lately by the appearance of a horse chestnut tree in the Thiergarten, Berlin. The numerous branches round the lower part of the trunk have a pure white foliage such as is seen on trees growing in dark places, where no chlorophyll can develop on account of want of light. The same whiteness of the leaves is noticeable in a few of the neighboring branches through the crown to the top. The singular appearance of the tree has been noticed regularly for some years. This particular tree, it seems, had been attacked by a swarm of caterpillars and other creatures of the same species, and the foliage has already been destroyed; but still masses of caterpillars continued to crawl up and down the trunk, and finally clung there in clumps. To preserve the beautiful tree after other means had been tried in vain a solution of acid was used, and the ground all round was watered with it, as well as the trunk and the branches, which were specially drenched. The treatment proved successful. The tree gradually recovered and stands in its full strength and freshness, but has ever since shown the already described whiteness in its leaves, which presents a by no means unpleasant contrast to the otherwise dark green foliage.

Strange Marriage Customs.

Northern India and the Island of Banquerry can certainly claim to have the most peculiar marriage rites of any land. In northern India a cow and a calf are invariably required at the marriage. The animals are driven into a narrow running stream, the priests and the betrothed couple also standing in the water. The man and the woman each catch hold of the cow's tail, and the priest pours water out of a glass vessel upon the joined hands, while all present repeat prayers. The young people are then declared man and wife, and the priest claims the cow and calf as his fee. In the Island of Banquerry the officiating priest takes a sharp knife and with it makes a small incision in the right leg of the bride and bridegroom; from each incision he gathers a few drops of blood and transfers them to the other one's leg. The operation, together with a short religious formula, constitutes the whole of the marriage ceremony.

BURNING MOUNTAIN

In Colorado That Has Been on Fire One Hundred Years.

Newcastle, Colo., Special to Kansas City World: A mountain, which has been on fire for more than 100 years is situated just west of here. So close is it that its shadow envelopes the town at 5 p. m., at this time of the year, and yet the people hereabouts think no more of it than the beautiful Grand river which washes the feet of the huge pile where the fire has burned so long. To the tenderfoot, however, the glittering patches of deep red fire, where it breaks out on the side of the mountain, and is exposed to view, there is nothing in all this state quite its equal. The fire is fed by a big vein of coal which the mountain contains. Just how the coal became ignited is not known. The oldest resident says it was on fire when he came here, and the Ute Indians, who once lived in this section, say it was burning many years before the first white man crossed the continental divide. The supposition is that the coal was ignited by a forest fire at an early date in the present century. It has smoldered and steadily burned until this day. At night when the moon is dark is the best time to see the fire. Then it is that it resembles the regions of inferno as given us in the word-painting of Dante. The earth covering the coal is loosened by the heat and falls away, exposing the sheet of fire. The escaping gas probably assists in stripping off the rocks and dirt, and wherever the vein of coal approaches the surface the fire can be seen. The first fire I saw was fully 50 feet square. It had a peculiar red tint, while the burning gas coming up at the base of the coal vein, added a bright blue coloring to the scene. In many places the surface of the mountain has sunken, showing where the fire has burned out its course. Efforts have been made to extinguish the fire. Some time ago a company which owns a large amount of coal land here, constructed a ditch from a point several miles above the mountain into which it succeeded in turning the water which goes to form Elk creek. Previously a shaft had been sunk in the mountain, and into this shaft the water was permitted to flow. The shaft was soon filled, but the fire was above the level of the water, and the effort was a failure.

EDUCATION IN EGYPT.

The Facilities and Pupils Are Increasing Each Year.

Education has made gratifying progress, though the principle pursued has for its present end a few youths well educated for the public service rather than a wider distribution of primary instruction. Still each year sees the number of pupils increased, and an advance along the line of modern education from the middle age program of learning prevalent in all Moslem schools. The people themselves have shown a remarkable interest, and demand more modern methods. Schools supported by native subscription have been opened for both boys and girls, European teachers engaged, and government inspection solicited. What may be taken as more indicative still of the new spirit abroad is the fact that the great El Azhar university at Cairo, the famous center of all of Islam's scholastic theology, has applied for government teachers to teach secular subjects. The seed of reform has indeed spread, for it was among the followers of this great school that the most bitter opposition to the innovations of infidel foreigners used to be found. Even now the government can only afford a school fund of about \$500,000 annually, and spends this for the education of only about 11,000 future civil servants. Outside of this 200,000 children attend the village schools, supported by local contributions and small grants made by the government to such of them as submit to government inspection, and teach a small amount of modern reading, writing, and arithmetic in addition to the old lessons in the Koran and sacred history. The result of this work is seen in the requirement that all applicants for positions in the government service shall have passed certain examinations in the schools. The work of securing the best of public servants has thus been begun.—Harper's Magazine.

Extraordinary Case of Blood-Poisoning.

An extraordinary case of blood-poisoning is reported by a Vienna journal. The victim was a young girl named Schwartz, aged 22. Some days ago she went for a walk wearing a green silk blouse. She became overheated, and the dye of the material ran. Unhappily she had sustained some trifling accidental wound under the arm, and the pigment got into the blood. Upon returning home she complained of pain, but would not consent to a medical examination. The injured spot became greatly inflamed, causing intense suffering, and on the following day the physician discovered the cause. Remedies were immediately applied, but it was too late, and after a brief illness the girl died.

Gentlemen Bankers' Disappearing.

"Gentlemen Bankers" are disappearing from the British army. In the fourteen years from 1885 to 1899 commissions were granted to 343 men from the ranks. The largest number was 41 in 1888. For the first four years they averaged over 30, for the next seven years about 29, in 1898 there were 18, the next year 9, and last year 14. The percentage of commissions given to "bankers" was four for the 14 years, but only 1.3 in 1897, and 1.9 in 1898. They are partly shut out by the difficulties put in their way, but many more seek military and "police" employment in the colonies.

HOW I SPENT MY VACATION.

Just a brief description of how I spent my vacation this year, with little more expense than the salary earned during my trip, may not be amiss. It was a most delightful change from the hated and dusty pavements to roll over the boundless prairies and view from the car windows of a Missouri Pacific train the magnificent scope of country between here and Pueblo. There is no coolness like that which comes with the shades of night on those vast plains, filled then with waving corn and ripening wheat. There is no more bracing air than that with which one refreshes his lungs in the early morning when the mountains of Colorado are just coming into view, the mighty Pike's Peak reaching the vision long before its lowlier neighbors. When taken comfortably, there is no pleasanter ride than over this same garden spot of the Western world which in our geographical was laid down as the Great American Desert. So we rode into Pueblo and thence by the Denver and Rio Grande road to Denver, a fair city with all the comforts and handsome buildings of her older sisters of the East and lying in an altitude far above the sea in an emerald setting of never yielding mountain heights. Continuing our journey over the Denver and Rio Grande and the Rio Grande West-rn roads we started for Salt Lake City, the capital of the new state, which has been aptly termed the "Mountain Walled Treasury of the Gods." And thus we are permitted to pass through the most varied and entrancing scenery of the Rocky Mountains and to witness the wonders of the Royal Gorge, where the cunning of man has overcome the difficulties presented by Nature in her efforts to cross some chasm on an almost impossible bridge structure with a roaring, brawling stream beneath us. It is inspiring and grand every foot of the way to Salida and from there many other decided attractions we visited. Perhaps that which will most interest a large number of my fellow carriers is Marshall's Pass, that marvelous testimonial to American engineering skill. As the altitude grows greater the view becomes less obstructed. Miles of cone-shaped summits are in view. We are in and above the home of the clouds. We see the snow covered spires of the Sangre de Christo range. To our right is the fire scarred front of old Ouray. We reach the summit at an altitude of 10,852 feet. From this point a magnificent view can be had of the Sangre de Christo range. The pass is a scenic and scientific wonder; grades of 21 feet to the mile are frequent. The streams from the summit flow eastward into the Atlantic and westward into the Pacific. We are impressed with the feeling that we are on the pinnacle of the world.

It would require much space to tell of all the beauties of this trip and of the pleasures of our stay in the City of the Prophets. There are many points of interest and among those that claimed our attention were, naturally, the Mormon Temple and Tabernacle; Fort Douglas, United States Military Post, three miles; White Sulphur Springs, one mile; Beck's Hot Springs, three miles; Liberty Park, one mile; Calder's Park, three miles; together with other attractions and drives too numerous to mention. Thirteen miles from the city is located the magnificent bathing resort, Saltair Beach, on Great Salt Lake, the finest salt water bathing resort in the world.

Let me urge upon my friends to try this trip during some vacation. It will well repay the expense in the restoration of health, the broadening of the mind and the addition it will give to each one's general information, tending thus to raise his standard of citizenship and to help himself and his brothers thereby.

F. P. BAKER.

"David Aram."

"We often receive orders that puzzle us a good deal," said a bookseller quoted in the New Orleans Times-Democrat. "A lady who lays claim to considerable culture came into the store last evening and asked whether we had a copy of 'Eugene Aram.' 'Not alone,' I replied. 'But we can give you a complete set of Bulwer at a reasonable price.' 'Bulwer?' she exclaimed. 'Why, Bulwer is not the author of 'Eugene Aram!'" "He certainly wrote a novel by that title," I said mildly, "but perhaps you are thinking of 'The Dream of Eugene Aram,' by Hood?" "No, no," she answered, "I mean a novel. You certainly must have heard of it. It's quite recent and all the talk. 'What is it about?' I ventured to ask. 'Why, it's a story of country life,' she replied, 'and there is a very amusing chapter in it about a horse trade. Then a light broke in on me, but she had been so positive that I thought I would take her down a peg or two. 'Pardon the suggestion,' I said, 'but of course it is not possible that you are confusing 'David Harum' with 'Eugene Aram.'" 'Yes, that's it!' she cried brightly. 'I said Eugene instead of David. Give me a copy of 'David Aram.'" I wilted. It served me right for being a prig. By the way, the common way of pronouncing the title is 'David's harem.'"

Husband—I have just been talking with the new clergyman and find we agree. Wife—Why, I didn't know that you didn't believe in the Bible.—Brooklyn Life.

"But, pa, when you pull it, do you mix it?"

"But, pa, when you pull it, do you mix it?" persisted the innocent little love of a boy, with a crafty, far-away twinkle in his off eye.

President McKinley conforms to official etiquette in declining to assist in the ceremonies attending the welcome to Admiral Dewey in New York harbor. An army or naval official calls upon the president, the latter never making a call except to board a ship for a cruise or for sightseeing. The official welcome to the hero of Manila is by the president of the United States must take place at the White House, and the admiral must call there for that purpose. That is the course of procedure prescribed by the red tape department, and it will be strictly adhered to now.