

In the Fowler's Snare

By M. B. MANWELL

CHAPTER III.—(Continued.)

"It's our only chance, certainly!" Instantly agreed the last comer. "If we silly-shally over the doing of it much longer, we shall die like rats in a hole, as the guard says!"

"Then we'd better tear these obstinate fools off the engine and man it ourselves!" suggested a frantic passenger. "We can rush it through somehow!"

"Not so!" was the calm answer. "Our only chance in rushing the danger is the speed. Now, if I and you, all amateurs, man the engine and bungle the thing, the chance is we should roast before we got quite through the flames."

"Now, ladies and gentlemen"—he turned courteously to the passengers surging round—"I must ask you to trust your bodies to me, and your souls—well, according to your several creeds!"

With a strangely harsh, empty laugh the stranger ascended the engine, turning his dark face to say peremptorily: "Take your places aboard the train instantly, every man, woman and child!"

"Now, my friends, I'll tackle you!" He faced round to the engine men.

So near was the train to the fire that the heat was insufferable—the faces of the men were almost skinned.

"Warm work, my hearties, this!" the stranger said, almost cheerfully, as he beat the hot air slowly with waving hands, and pressed his face closer to the scorched visages on the engine.

"You get off this engine, mister!" furiously began the driver. "I'll brain any man who tries to boss—"

The wrathful words ended in a sudden sigh, and the driver's arms fell softly at his sides as the invader of the engine turned to the stoker, a powerfully built man.

"You heard what my mate said, didn't yer?" struck in the man. "You git off, or I'll—I'll—" There was the same singular collapse, the same lamb-like attitude. Both grimy men stood motionless and meek facing the intruder.

"Just so," observed the last equably. Then, leaning over, his strident voice clanged harshly along the snow shed:

"Every soul aboard? Keep all windows and doors fast for your lives!"

"What is it, Gervis? Are we safe yet?" faintly whispered Gladly. The girl, who had only seemed to shake off her curious attack of insensibility within the last few minutes, was staring vaguely round the car.

She wondered idly why most of the women were on their knees, and why the little children were clasped so frantically to their mothers. Surely the tiny creatures would be smothered in such embraces.

And why was Gervis, her husband, breathing in that curiously labored fashion, as if he had been running hard?

Then she became aware, as he laid his cheeks against her own, that his face was wet and cold, clammy perspiration.

"Gervis!" she cried, a vague alarm awakening her at last, "speak to me!"

"Can't you pray, Gladly?" whispered Gervis, and the clasp of his arms tightened round his wife.

"Pray, Gervis? What do you mean?" wonderingly said Gladly. And Gervis drew his brows together.

And yet was it not better that she should know, poor little Gladly in her newly wedded happiness?

Outside the cars, now tightly closed, the men on the engine, who were going to fight the flames doggedly, were grimly and rapidly making ready.

The heat had become intolerable, and redly glowing sparks were showering down the blazing roof. The peril was already so deadly that there was no choice. A dash for dear life must be made!

Suddenly a great tongue of flame darted along the roof with a hissing sound. The haggard, white faces in the cars could distinguish every timber in the shed's wooden walls in the new glare. The fire was gaining with a deadly sureness.

"Quick, men! We are taking our lives in our hands! Here, reach me that bale of waterproofing! We must divide it between us to cover as much of our persons as we can!"

It was a sharp, vibrating voice, with a note of command, that hasly ordered.

Then came the hoarse order for which the cowed engine men were meekly waiting.

"Ready? Then go! Top speed!"

The long train, with its large cars, creaked and groaned; and the tongues of flame darted upward hissing; the burning rafters crackled and snapped; the smoke rolled along in heavy clouds that choked all who rode on the ill-fated train.

"God in His mercy, help us! We're off!"

The train was cutting its way through the sheet of flame that had walled it in.

CHAPTER IV.

It was over—this daring venture—and over safely!

Outside in the open, in the clear cold air of the starless night, the long train flew up under the softly falling flakes of feathery snow.

Half-paralyzed men and fainting women in the cars knew they were safe, and there was a brief hush, while sobbing thanksgivings broke from lips

that seldom pray. Then there was a rush to examine the car, which had, provisionally, not caught fire.

"So far as we know, we are all saved," was the thankful chorus that went round, as the passengers stood about on the snow stamping their feet.

"How on earth did we get our here, mate?" was the hoarse whisper from one of the blackened, smoked figures wrapped in waterproof on the engine.

"I don't know!" was the answer. "I thought we was bound to roast in the fire, but here we are! Beats all!"

"That's so; but we're safe; that's good enough for me, anyhow!"

"The sooner you people get aboard the cars again the better."

It was a courteous, almost conciliatory voice, but it was the same that a short time before had given the word of command that saved the trainful of human beings. Instantly the speaker was surrounded and a torrent of thanks assailed his ears.

"Pray, don't overwhelm me!" He raised his long, lean hands deprecatingly. "What have I done? Merely suggested a way out of the difficulty."

But his modesty was overruled. The overwrought passengers found an outlet for their agitation in demanding the name of their preserver, in order, they said, "to add it to our prayers, and teach it to our little ones."

"My name is Paul Ansdell," politely said the stranger. Then he added hurriedly, as if to choke off any further questions: "I am a scientist by profession, and am at present traveling for material regarding a subject suggested by the society to which I have the honor to belong. I hope I have explained to your satisfaction, ladies and gentlemen."

Under the courteous tones there was a distinct element of mockery, which served to chill the warm gratitude of the passengers. In twos and threes they dispersed, some to get aboard the train into the shelter and comfort and warmth; others to stand in the snow and watch with awe the roaring flames now mercifully behind them.

"The weather tonight is so dry-cold, even for the time of year, that the fire has got a firm hold. The whole shed's doomed," said the guard. "It's bin a wonderful deliverance from an awful death, gentlemen. We've need to thank God on our knees."

The man looked round on the groups huddled together on the snow, which the roaring fire lighted up around them.

And, indeed, the delivered passengers were, each in his or her own way, thanking God.

Here a young mother, her soft arms round a little child, knelt in the snow murmuring. Near her a clergyman was, with lips rapidly moving, thanking God for his safety.

Here, again, an iron gray-haired man stood bowed for a few seconds to offer up his thanks for the frail invalid wife, the love of his youth, whom he had just lifted back into the car.

It was indeed a solemn sight, the little thanksgiving service out on the snowy plains, upon which the grim mountains frowned down through the small, dry flakes of falling snow.

"Now it strikes me we should do well to be getting ahead. The night is upon us, and I can tell you it will take us all we can to stand the colds of midnight and early morning."

It was the voice of Paul Ansdell that broke the spell. He was standing with arms folded on the rear platform of the cars, looking down with half-shut eyes upon the reverently bowed heads of his fellow travelers. No meaning for him had this communing with the Divine Creator, who had stretched out a helping hand in the grave peril.

Had any cry broken from his lips to ascend on high it would have been the exceeding bitter one of the Psalmist: "Lord, why castest Thou off my soul? Why hidest Thou Thy face from me?"

But it was many a year since this man had abandoned prayer. He was not an unbeliever in one sense, for no man knew better than Paul Ansdell that there exists an over-ruling Power, who moves and shapes humanity at His will. Otherwise it would have been the worse for his fellow men, seeing that Paul Ansdell held certain ill-gotten secrets that would have endowed himself with an illimitable dominion over the lives and the fortunes of others. But as it was he gnashed his teeth over the checkmates that blocked his wicked way and protected his victims. So far the man had faith in his larger and bolder flights.

The two aims he lived for were to win a colossal fortune, and to preserve his life as long as possible. To die, to crumble into dust, was to him a hideous prospect, and he had no other—his creed forbade all such. To save himself more than his companions he had put forth his utmost strength of will. He had succeeded strangely, even marvelously. Paul Ansdell smiled contentedly as he leaned, strangely exhausted for a man who had simply lifted his voice, not his hands, to the rescue. He was congratulating himself that his will power was increasing enormously. Then he heard a hurried voice at his ear.

"Mr. Ansdell, I've brought my wife to thank you for your splendid bravery in saving the whole lot of us," Gervis Templeton was saying earnestly, and his hand was pressing the shoulder of Paul, who wheeled sharply around, to glance for one swift second at the lit-

tle shrinking figure behind Gervis. Then his eyes turned away to the flame-reddened snow.

"Come, Gladly, this is the hero of the hour. Haven't you a word to give him?"

Gladly must have heard her husband's urgent whisper, and yet she spoke not a syllable. Silently and wistfully the girl's bride was gazing up into the dark face of Paul Ansdell. It was as though her soul was dumbly questioning that of the man who had saved her life.

"Dear, say something!" In the lowered voice of Gervis there was a peremptory note. He was annoyed at his wife's extraordinary awkwardness as much as he was puzzled. What could the man think of her? The thought crossed his mind as he took Gladly's cold, small fingers in his to encourage her. But Paul's attention as well as Paul's eyes were being given to the outside world.

"I fear we're going to have a night of it, perhaps another chapter of accidents—who knows?—for the snow will be tremendously deep at certain curves I know of ahead," he said. And, under cover of his words, Gladly drew her hand from that of her husband, and slipped back into the drawing-room car. She was the only one of the passengers who had failed to offer thanks to the rescuer of the train. The cars were moving off on their journey once again, and the men were chatting to one another.

"Not so bad for the first move in the game!"

The triumphant words whispering from the lips of Paul Ansdell as he sat alone in the smoking compartment, leaning back in his chair, his dark, baleful eyes watching the smoke wreaths lazily rising over his head.

CHAPTER V.

Paul Ansdell was right in his surmises. The scientist, as a rule, was right somehow. The fine, feathery snow resolved itself into a perfect blizzard a few hours later, and the train, after plunging through deep drifts, cutting its way gallantly, was brought to a standstill.

Fortunately they were close to a prairie station when the stoppage took place.

"We must make the best of it," cheerfully agreed the passengers. "There's plenty to eat and drink aboard the train, thank goodness, and we can get out and stretch our legs without any danger of being lost in the snow, for it's hard as iron."

"Will you come out and take a turn with me?" pleasantly asked Paul Ansdell, coming over to Gervis Templeton, who was staring disconsolately out of the window.

Gladly had chosen to remain in her berth for breakfast, and showed as yet no inclination to leave it.

"I should like it above all things!" the young Englishman eagerly said. And presently the two men, wrapped up to the eyes, were tramping over the shining, snowy expanse beyond the little station.

"Are you going to make any stay at Montreal?" asked Paul carelessly.

"Not over a few days, to see the place," was the answer. "I am taking my wife to England to spend Christmas in the old home, so our time is limited. Otherwise there's nothing I should like better than to winter in the Dominion. It's a glorious land, and Gladly, my wife, would have revelled in the ice carnival and all the other delights of a Montreal winter. But it can't be helped. My people are eager to see and know her. We have not been long married, you see," he added, a little lamely.

"I know," curtly said Paul Ansdell. "I was in Frisco when your wedding took place; and I knew old Hiram Fairweather, your wife's father—personally, I mean. A sharp, astute old chap, that. Made his pile, eh?"

(To be continued.)

SOME ARE ODD.

Geographical Names Out in Arkansas.

A commercial traveler recently returned from a trip through Arkansas was speaking the other day of the nomenclature of the towns and counties of that state. "As a township name," said he, "nothing seems so popular as a name ending in 'creek.' There are Beech, Mill, Barren, Dutch, Long, Big, Peter, Clear, Pierre, Flat, Crooked, Sugar and Day creeks scattered through the state as townships. There are Eagle and War Eagle townships, and one is named after Grover Cleveland. Yell is both a township and county name, but the people are not particularly noisy in those places, in spite of the name. Many names are reminders of the old French occupation, such as Petit Jean, Terre Noir, Fayette, Lagrue, De Bastrop and St. Francis, names of townships. Sugarloaf seems to be a popular name for towns in Arkansas, why, I do not know; and one community calls itself by the intensely prosaic name of Railroad. Colonel Bowie, he of the celebrated knife, has his name perpetuated by a township name, and so has Daniel Boone and Bryan. The population of Arkansas is now ninety times what it was when the first census was taken of it, in 1820, but the increase has been slow in the last decade compared with previous ones. The population has increased in the last ten years only 16 1/2 per cent, while in the ten years before the increase was over 40 1/2 per cent."

Precious Woods Wasted.

Rosewood and mahogany are so plentiful in Mexico that some of the copper mines there are timbered with rosewood, while mahogany is used as fuel for the engines.

WARM TIME COMING

This Winter's Session of the Legislature Promises to Be Hot.

SENATORIAL ASPIRANTS IN LINCOLN

Assurance That Legislature is Safely Republican Causes Renewed Interest in Senatorial Struggle—Political Gossip of Breezy Character.

There is going to be a very pretty fight in the legislature, which meets next January, for the two senatorial togs which will be at the disposal of that law-making body.

Lincoln is now the mecca of prominent candidates, who regard the support of Lancaster county very warmly, and to get it they must be very agreeable to Thompson, as it is conceded that he will be in it to some extent. It is quite too early to tell the direction of the wind, but the candidates consider it necessary to get into the fight without delay.

There have been any number of booms launched.

Ex-Governor Lorenzo Crouse was in the city last week making arrangements for his headquarters during the legislature.

Mr. Crouse has admitted to his friends that he will be a candidate for the senatorship. It is believed by them that he will muster strength enough to make him one of the foremost in the fight. His visit to Lincoln at this time is taken by some as indicative of a desire to confer with Mr. Thompson over the outlook. The candidacy of Mr. Crouse has been regarded rather favorably of late by Mr. Thompson's managers. The visit coming right in the wake of the close of the count in Douglas county is supposed to be of significance. Governor Crouse is a veteran and he has many friends among the members of the G. A. R.

The North Platte country has so many promising candidates for the senate that it must keep a South Platte candidate busy thinking up a winning combination. By common consent Mr. Rosewater has been eliminated from the race at the end, but nobody can yet say that Crouse, or Melkjohn, or Kinkaid, or Currie or Cady will not be in it when the decisive roll call is made. The South Platte has fewer candidates, but the possibilities of counter combinations are great nevertheless. Thompson of Lancaster is talked about now more than any other single candidate, but Hain, Richardson and perhaps Martin of Richardson will be on hand with some strength when the legislature is convened. The vote will be so close that any man with half a dozen votes can block an election if his men will remain with him long enough.

A nice little contest has arisen over the position of adjutant general of the Nebraska national guard. This office is worth about \$1,500 a year. It has always been filled by an old soldier, and the old soldiers use the argument that it should be given to a veteran as long as an old soldier is capable of doing the work. James G. Gage, who held the office under Governor Crouse and Winslow H. Barger of Hebron who was formerly assistant adjutant general of the G. A. R., are both applicants. It is reported that Col. J. H. McClay late of the Third Nebraska would not object to the place. These are all old soldiers.

On the other hand the new crop of soldiers asks recognition on the plea that the young soldiers only are up to date in practical military matters, the entire military system having undergone a revolution since the days of the rebellion. Captain P. James Cosgrove of Lincoln is an applicant. Captain Cosgrove served in the First Nebraska in the Philippines. He went to the Philippines as a democrat, but on returning home refused to run for office on the democratic county ticket and spent the rest of his time working for the success of the republican ticket. Major Williams of Geneva also of the First Nebraska who was discharged on account of sickness, intended to apply for the place, but he is said to have asserted that he would support Captain Cosgrove in his candidacy for the appointment. Captain Hollingsworth of Beatrice, another officer of the First Nebraska, is said to have held similar views. If Captain Cosgrove wants the place none of the First regiment officers are likely to apply. The comrades of the G. A. R. and the young men of the national guard promise to take a deep interest in the matter.

The three secretaries of the board of transportation receive \$2,000 each per year, and those who have watched the operations of the board for the past four years understand that no work whatever is required of the secretaries. Rarely is but one of the secretaries ever found in the office. The man who works is G. L. Laws. Two of them have been known to absent themselves for weeks and months at a time. This would appear to be a tempting bait for place-hunters, but no one is willing to accept a promise of one of the places because the validity of the board is now a question before the supreme court.

The validity of the act creating the board of transportation has been pending in the supreme court for many weeks. A decision was looked for before the election, but none came and now a determination of the case is expected at the next sitting of the court, or at least before the first of the year. Judge Munger of the federal court first declared the act unconstitutional, his opinion being based on former decisions of the Nebraska supreme court. Attorney General Smyth and the board

of transportation was not satisfied and they asked the Nebraska supreme court to rule on the question of constitutionality. As the question had already been raised in suits against the railroads to collect penalties, the court asked for special argument and the case was submitted.

A rumor, arising from the prediction of an interested party is that the court may sustain the law in the main, but declare invalid all penalty clauses in the act as well as in the maximum rate act which latter act now lies dormant. This rumor has grown to such proportions since the election that some of the applicants believe the entire law may be wiped out.

The fusionists threatened to repeal the law, but when they came into power ten years ago they failed to do so and at every subsequent populist legislature the question of repeal was passed over in silence. Many populist leaders made no secret of a desire to keep the law on the books as long as their party held the offices and got the salary. For the first time in the history of the law, its constitutionality has been brought before the state court by the railroad attorneys.

A monthly report of the state treasurer, filed this morning in the auditor's office, again discloses the fact that the state is receiving no benefit from an estimated portion of the educational situation, which the treasurer is required by law to invest for the benefit of state educational institutions. In the early days of the campaign, when the uninvested portion of these funds amounted to over \$200,000, the state treasurer announced through the fusion newspapers that within four months he would have practically all this money invested in the name of the state. The monthly balance sheets show that, notwithstanding the treasurer's declaration, the amount of school money "on hand" did not decrease.

The only appointments that Mr. Dietrich has agreed upon is the selection of Dr. J. L. Greene of University Place for superintendent of the Lincoln hospital for the insane, and John T. Mallalieu as superintendent of the Kearney reform school. Dr. Greene served as assistant physician at Norfolk and also at the Lincoln hospital for the insane. He is considered a specialist of high rank in diseases of the brain. Mr. Mallalieu was at the head of the reform school for many years and all the people of Kearney where he lives are pleased to hear that he will again take the position. He was successful as manager of the institution and the inmates, Dr. Coffin, Dr. Chase and J. N. Campbell will be thrown out by these appointments.

Insurance men are interested in the choice of an insurance deputy in the auditor's office. Charles A. Whyman of Lincoln is numbered among the applicants, but some of the insurance men say he was also an applicant for insurance commissioner when Governor Poynter had the selection of such an officer.

Republicans throughout Nebraska are ratifying the result of the late election by enthusiastic demonstrations. They never had so much to ratify before.

The official canvass of votes for the Fifty-fourth representative district has been made and the vote shows a splendid republican gain. It is as follows:

Counties—	Evans.	Reed.
	(rep.)	(fus.)
Lincoln	1,254	1,127
McPherson	65	48
Kelth	192	243
Perkins	165	224
Deuel	335	241
Cheyenne	614	424
Kimball	121	49
Banner	155	82
Scott's Bluff	371	258
Totals	3,272	2,696
Evans' majority,	576.	

Congressman Burkett left last week on a business trip to the western part of the state. He will return in a few days after which he will remain in Lincoln till November 30, when he will leave for Washington. Mrs. Burkett will join him soon after the holiday festivities are over.

Distribution of the Moose.

The Field says the American elk, or moose, reaches as far south as 40 degrees north latitude, and inhabits all the forests from the Atlantic to the Pacific. The animal is found from Kenway and Alaska to Kotzebue sound; also along the Mackenzie river, and near the sources of the Elk river in the Rocky mountains is especially common. Although in the case of an animal inhabiting wide stretches of country, it is premature to speak of its extinction, yet "the case of the American bison should teach us how soon a numerously represented species may be wiped off from the face of the earth if once left to the tender mercies of so-called 'sportsmen' seized with a mania for 'big bags.'"

The Duration of Human Life.

It is estimated the average duration of human life is about thirty-three years. A quarter of the people die during the seventh year, and half before their seventeenth. Of every thousand persons, one only reaches a hundred years; six in a hundred get to sixty-five, and one in five hundred to eighty. It is further estimated that throughout the world fifty millions die annually, one hundred and thirty-eight thousand a day, nearly six thousand an hour, ninety a minute, or three every two seconds.

Late to Bed and Early to Rise.

Queen Wilhelmina goes to bed at 11 and gets up early. Her first toilet is a quick one, for it is merely a preparation for a good, brisk walk in the park. On these excursions she wears a rough woolen "mante" made like those of the Friesland peasants. When she comes in from her exercise she has a cup of chocolate in her room and then makes an elaborate toilet.—Chicago Tribune.

SPORTING IN ALASKA.

Many Kinds of Game are in Danger of Extinction.

Reindeer have made themselves thoroughly at home in Alaska—that marvelous country whose richness in animal life and agricultural possibilities is not yet half suspected by the majority of Americans. The pilgrim fathers of the family were imported from Lapland in the early stages of the Klondike craze to be worked and eaten by the starving miners. They luckily escaped being eaten, and were later reinforced by 700 reindeer dogs imported by the government from Siberia. From the mixed herd of 1,000 head, or a little more, they have multiplied to 3,000, and under Uncle Sam's protection they promise to play an important part in the future of Alaska and add greatly to its wealth. The 25 Laplanders who came over with the first consignment are on their way home with about \$700 each, saved out of their earnings as reindeer drivers and mail carriers. But Alaska needed no importations to add to its fascinations. Gold? Of course—everybody knows about that, but everybody doesn't know that gold is one of the least interesting things about the country. Take strawberries, Alaska has near Big Stone a strawberry bed seven miles long and two miles wide. Fourteen square miles of strawberries! And they are beauties. Nothing finer is grown in this country outside a hothouse. Raspberries and blackberries, too, reach a high pitch of cultivation in Alaska, which is popularly supposed to grow nothing more nourishing than glaciers. Oats spilled by mules as they feed grow wild higher than a man's head, and would yield, it is estimated, 200 bushels to the acre, big as a man's hat. Alaskan tomatoes are described as big as a man's hat. All manner of fruit and vegetables belonging to temperate climes thrive amazingly. All this, of course, is south of Bering sea, in a region where, thanks to a warm ocean current, the temperature seldom reaches zero, even in the long winter nights. As for game, big and little, it is of unmatched richness, but bids fair to be extinguished. Deer exist no longer, and the moose and the sea otter are hovering on the verge of annihilation. Nevertheless, an Alaskan traveler, C. F. Perolat, has just returned home with a collection of the largest moose heads in the world. But the sportsman is less of a menace to the fauna of Alaska than the trader. The skin of a single sea otter will now sell in London for as much as \$1,200.—New York World.

CONTESTS IN LONDON.

How the East Enders Amuse Themselves in Winter.

East-enders are already preparing their programmes for spending the long, cold winter nights, and if life, as lived in Whitechapel, Shoreditch, Shepperton and on the river side, is frequently hard, 'Arry and 'Arriet manage to get a lot of fun out of it. The east end season is just beginning, and the air is full of challenges from all sorts and conditions of champions. Billiards are "no class" out Bow way; but a skittle match is a great event and draws a full house. Egg-eating, too, is becoming a show card, though it has not yet displaced the beefsteak pudding contests in popularity, says the London Express. Then shove ha'penny, mussel opening, oyster opening and haddock splitting all take the floor in turn and a struggle between two real champions at these "sports" proves a magnet. They take as much interest in the issue as many people do in the Derby. But it is music that does most delight the soul of 'Arry and his donah and they walk miles to be present at any sort of musical contest. Nothing comes amiss and as long as the programme is carried out they are satisfied. A canary singing match is still worth pounds in custom to a publican, while "whistlers" are sure of good patronage. The supporters and admirers of Bill and Tom will spend money freely to hear their champions taking part in a mouth organ contest, and it is wonderful the melody that two "experts" can bring out of a comb. An ordinary piano or violin isn't in it.

Educate the Women.

In a sermon recently delivered at Rome by Bishop Spalding of Peoria, Ill., a Roman Catholic ecclesiast, he said: Since it is our duty to educate, it is our duty to give the best education, and first of all to give the best education to woman; for she, as mother, is the aboriginal God-appointed educator. What hope is there of genuine progress, in religious life especially, if we leave her uneducated? Where woman is ignorant, man is coarse and sensual, where her religion is but a superstition, he is sceptical and irreverent. If we are to have a race of enlightened, noble and brave men, we must give to woman the best education it is possible for her to receive. She has the same right as a man to become all that she may be, to know whatever may be known, to do whatever is fair and just and good. In souls there is no sex. If we leave half the race in ignorance, how shall we hope to lift the other half into the light of truth and love?

Potato Starch of Our Country.

Nearly 16,000 tons of potato starch are turned out annually in this country. The potatoes used for starch are the small and injured ones of the crop. Sixty bushel of them yield a barrel of starch.

When a woman is out calling on people that she thinks are fashionable, it always makes her mad to hear her husband talk about "veal pot-pie."