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NIGHTINGALE & SON Attorney and Counselor-at-Law LOUP CITY, NEB.

R. H. MATHEW, Attorney-at-Law, And Bonded Abstractor, Loup City, Nebraska

AARON WALL Lawyer Practices in all Courts Loup City, Neb.

ROBERT H. MATHEW Bonded Abstractor LOUP CITY, NEBRASKA.

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The Lady OF THE Mount By FREDERIC S. ISHAM Author of "The Strollers" "Under the Rose" etc. Illustrations by RAY WALTERS

CHAPTER I—Countess Elise, daughter of the Governor of the Mount, has chance encounter with a peasant boy. CHAPTER II—The "Mount," a small rock-bound island, stood in a vast bay on the northwestern coast of France...

She lifted her head. Standing in a careless pose, apparently regardless of what was taking place, the mountebank, at the Governor's question, shot a quick glance from him to her. Although but an instant his look met my lady's, in that brief interval she read all that was lost on the other two; the sudden, desperate purpose, the indubitable intention, his warning glance conveyed. At the same time she noticed, or fancied she did, the hand thrust into his breast, as if grasping some weapon concealed there, drew out a little, while simultaneously, lending emphasis to the fact, he moved a shade nearer the Governor, her father!

Vigorously to rub his face with some mixture he took from his pocket. He had made but a few passes to remove the distinguishing marks of paint and pigment, when a sound without, in the distance, caused him to desist. Footsteps, that grew louder, were coming his way, and, gripping his bar tighter the prisoner grimly waited; but soon his grasp relaxed. The sound was that of a single person, who now paused before the entrance; fumbled at the lock, and, with an impatient exclamation, set something down. At the same time the prisoner dropped his weapon and stooped for the discarded garments; in the dark, they escaped him and he was still searching, when the bolt, springing sharply back, caused him to straighten.

Only the mountebank afforded him no opportunity thus to toast the "best man"; with a long strap of leather snatched from one of the pegs, he had already bound the hands and feet of his bulky antagonist, and was just rising to survey his handiwork, when the other opened his eyes. "Here! What do you mean?" exclaimed the soldier, when even the power vocally to express further surprise or indignation was denied him, in consequence of something soft being thrust between his teeth; and mute, helpless, he could but express in looks the disgusted inquiry his lips refused to frame.

ing up a Jacob's ladder into realms supernatural. Saint Louis, with gaze benignly bent toward the aerial escalier de dentelle of the chapel to the left, might well exclaim no royal road could compare with this inspiring and holy way; nor is it difficult to understand a sudden enchantment here, or beyond, that drew to the rock on three pilgrimages that other Louis, more sinner than saint, the eleventh of his name to mount the throne of France. But those stones, worn in the past by the footsteps of the illustrious and the lowly, were deserted now, and, for the moment, only the moon, which had escaped from the cloud, exercised there the right of way; looking squarely down to efface time's marks and pave with silver from top to bottom the flight of stairs. It played, too, on facades, towers and battlements on either side, and, at the spectacle—the disk directly before him—the Black Seigneur, about to leave the dark and sheltering byway, involuntarily paused. Angels might walk unseen up and down in that effulgence, as, indeed, the old monks stoutly averred was their habit; but a mortal intrusion on the argent way could be fraught only with visibility.

THAT BALKAN MESS. "George dear, what's all this Balkan trouble that takes up so much room in the papers?" "I don't believe you could understand it, my love. You see, it's largely political, and diplomatic, and—abstruse." "How is it political, George?" "That's hard to explain." "And how is it diplomatic?" "That's still more complicated." "And why abstruse?" "That's the hardest of all." "I thought so, dear. You know nothing about it. And now because you're a busy man and haven't time for foreign news, I'm going to explain the whole Balkan situation to you. You see, it was at best—good gracious, he's asleep!"

An Explanation. The steamboat came splashing along her course at full speed, and the first thing the passengers knew had crashed head on into the pier. "Mercy!" cried a passenger, as the bow crashed and the splinters flew. "I wonder what is the matter?" "Nothing," said Pat, one of the deckhands. "Nothing, ma'am—ut looks to me as if the captain just forgot that we've shtop here."—Harper's Weekly.

A DIPLOMATIC STROKE. Algernon—Aw—ye know, Adelaide, there's no use in our disputing any moah, but I'll—aw—bet the kisses—be, he—that I'm right. Adelaide—All right, but I shall claim the privilege of choosing the stakeholder.

What to Take. The sky is blue and cloudless, too. The sun is bright and yellow. But take no chances; take instead Your tried and true umbrella. The Electric Coupe. "There is something refined and elegant about an electric coupe." "Yes, I dare say it is the most aristocratic vehicle we have; and it will probably always be highly respectable." "Why do you think so?" "Because its limitations are such that it will never be a popular vehicle for an early morning joy ride."

Painfully True. "When he was younger a fortune teller predicted that a great future was in store for him." "Did the prediction come true?" "Yes, but we didn't know at the time how the fortune teller spelled the word 'great.' He's been peering through a steel grating now for nearly five years." Oh, You Flat-Iron! Yeast—I see a new electric flat-iron is made of reinforced glass so that it may be turned on end and used as a lamp if desired.

CHAPTER XX. The Mountebank and the Soldier. As the mountebank walked out of the apartment of the Governor's daughter, he drew himself up with an air of expectancy, like a man preparing for some sudden climax. Once beyond the threshold, his eyes glanced furtively back at the closed door, and, descending the stairs to the floor below, he carried his head a little forward, as if intent to catch unwonted sound or outcry. But no raised voice or unusual noise reached his ear, and his footsteps, as the party issued forth into the street, responded briskly to the soldiers' pace. Still with the same air of strained attention, now mingled with a trace of perplexity, he followed his guard until called upon to stop.

CHAPTER XXI. The Stairway of Silver. The stillness of the moment that followed was tense; then thickly the young man answered something irrelevant about a clown, a bottle and a loaf; with cap drawn down and half-averted face, he lurched a little forward in the darkness, and the sentinel's weapon fell. "Oh, that's you, is it, Henri?" he said in a different tone, stepping back. "How did you leave the fellow?" "Eating the bread and calling for more!" As he spoke, the other stopped, swaying uncertainly; above the arch, the wick, ill-trimmed, brightened and darkened to the drafts of air through break and slit of the old lamp; and briefly he awaited a favorable moment, when the flame blew out until almost extinguished; then with hand near sword-hilt, somewhat overbriskly, but in keeping with the part, he stepped toward the arch; through it, and quickly past the sentinel.

"No One in Particular." "No one in particular." "You are to sleep here!" As he spoke, the commandant opened the door of what seemed a low out-building, not very far from the general barracks, and motioned the mountebank to enter. The latter, after glancing quickly at the speaker and the soldiers behind, bent to step across the dark threshold, and, still stooping, on account of the low roof, looked around him. By the faint glimmer of light from a lantern one of the soldiers held, the few details of that squalid place were indistinctly revealed: A single stall whose long-eared occupant turned its head inquiringly at the abrupt appearance of a companion lodger; bits of harness and a number of traps hanging from pegs on the wall, and, near the door, on the ground, a bundle of grass, rough fodder from the marshes close by the shore. This last salt-smelling heap, the officer, peering in with a fastidious sniff, indicated.

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University Club Annual Reunion Mr. and Mrs. R.P. Starr entertained the members of the University Club at their home on New Year's Eve, and an enjoyable evening was reported by all. The University Club is composed of all students of this city who have attended or are now attending the State University of Nebraska. An informal business meeting was held by the members that evening, at which time it was sought, by some of the members, to enlarge the membership by including all students of universities, regardless of whether they have attended the State University of this state, or any university in this state, but the attempt was necessarily defeated because the club, in order to retain its standing in the state as a University of Nebraska club, is compelled to admit only students of our State University to membership. In addition to the members of the club, all university students of the city who have attended other universities were present as the guests of the club, and the club found the addition of such students so desirable that they adopted a resolution to hold at least one regular meeting between Christmas and New Year of each year, and to entertain all university students outside the club who may be in our city at the time.

After a number of pleasant games, a brief business meeting was held, and Miss Emma Outhouse was unanimously elected president to succeed Mr. R. P. Starr, who has held the office for two years and declined to serve longer, and Clifford Rein was unanimously elected secretary-treasurer. After the business meeting the students sang old university songs, and were later given a musical treat by Mrs. Starr and her son, Howard. Mrs. Starr's musical talent is well known in this city, and Howard is manifesting remarkable ability on the violin. Delicious refreshments were served, followed by excellent cigars for the gentlemen, and all adjourned in the small hours of New Year's day, filled to overflowing with pleasant recollections of the evening, of the old university days, and refreshments.

The county attorney contest is set for hearing before the county court next Monday, Jan. 6th. The old county board meets next week Wednesday, the 8th, for settlement with the county treasurer and the following day for general business. The new board meets a week later. Remember, our patrons and friends are cordially welcome to visit our office any day and especially Wednesday afternoons and Thursday mornings and witness our electric motors grinding out editions of the Northwestern. Many have done so, and there is welcome for all. Mr. Archie Kearns returned to his studies at Bellevue this morning. He graduates in June with the A. B. degree. We understand our young friend will then take a four-year course in medicine and attach M. D. to his name. This will make still another one of our bright Loup City boys to follow in the footsteps of their illustrious fathers and take up the same work or profession.

Putting it Delicately. "Why is it that your son can't hold a job?" "Is he lazy?" "Well, perhaps not exactly that; but I think it may be safe to say that he is a conservative in the matter of earning his living."

His Thought. She (romantically)—Oh! for the wings of a dove! He (practically)—The breast of a turkey for mine.

Oh, for That Money Now. The money spent beside the sea Brought freckles in a swarm; But now it's the cold winter time And they won't keep her warm.

An Exception. "No news is good news." "Oh, I don't know. Were you ever waked out of a sound sleep in the middle of the night to answer the telephone only to have the girl tell you she had called you by mistake?" Untouched. "Kit, I wish I could fall heir to a million dollars! In that case I think you'd marry me." "How strange it is, George, that so beautiful a wish can be the father to such an ugly thought!"

Its Allurements. "Mrs. Chatterly thinks of moving to Reno." "So I hear," replied Miss Cayenne. "But she doesn't need any divorce." "No. But she is so fond of gossip she has probably decided to move to headquarters."

