

# THE COPPER HOUSE

A Detective Story

BY  
JULIUS REGIS  
AUTHOR OF "NO 13 TORONTO"

"His name was Gabriel Napoleon Ortiz, and he was a reputed descendant of Napoleon the Great; he had already been implicated in a formidable scandal in Paris, where he had attempted to organize a monarchist rising against the republic, in the hope of getting himself recognized as Napoleon IV. At that time he was only a youth of 19, and it was an easy matter to deport him to Brazil. But the lion's claws were not drawn, and by degrees he gathered round him quite a number of adventurers, who aided and abetted him in his far-reaching plans. One day, early in 1910, he steamed away up the River Amazon in his armored pleasure yacht, and disappeared into the interior of Brazil. It was given out that he was subsidizing an expedition for scientific research, but about six months later, the Brazilian government was astounded to receive a highly imposing document, signed Gabriel Napoleon I, emperor of the Amazons, in which the new monarch stated that he had proclaimed himself emperor over the tracts of land at the sources of the River Amazon, the country being rich and extensive, but chiefly inhabited by Indians. He demanded, first, official recognition by the Brazilian government, secondly, free access to the River Amazon, and thirdly, an immediate and definite revision of boundary questions. At the same time, through the medium of the South and North American newspapers, he invited enterprising and energetic people to settle as colonists in his dominion, declared his intention of founding a capital, and purchased six liners for passenger traffic down the great river. Of course, the whole thing was impossible; nobody took the man seriously, and the papers treated the matter as a huge joke; it was altogether too far-fetched! Before many months had gone by, the emperor of the Amazons was taken into custody by Brazilian troops; he was found at the head of an army of 28 men, which immediately took to flight. He was handed over to his relations, amongst whom was the famous aeroplane-constructor Ortiz; feeling rather crestfallen, he was obliged to consent to leave the country quietly, and nobody gave another thought to the empire of the Amazons.

"Emperor of the Amazons," muttered B.22 with a laugh. "I do seem to have a hazy recollection of it now. And so that man was Ortiz! I begin to understand . . ."

The journalist saw that his story had made an impression, and he continued: "You will notice that this Brazilian millionaire-adventurer was not without certain elements of greatness. Such causes as his have prospered before now. It was only that he lived in an age when, under normal circumstances, adventures of that kind are absurd. Public opinion is formed by the press, and the press laughed the Empire of the Amazons to scorn. Fifteen years earlier, the man might have succeeded, but, as it was, he had learned a dearly-bought lesson—till next time! He had not abandoned a single detail of his great project, but he could bide his time; he could go on with his preparations. The next act in the drama was played in New York. Ortiz proved himself a financial genius of the first order, floated one gigantic speculation after another, with truly Napoleonic strategy, and was acclaimed before long as one of Wall Street's brightest stars, or, more correctly, meteors. Finally, he 'swung' a 'corner' in coffee with un-

scrupulous skill, increased his already colossal tenfold, and gained the nickname of 'The Coffee King.' The Emperor of the Amazons had become a coffee king! At any rate, you can see what he was smiling at. As 'emperor' he had brought imprisonment on at most 40 persons; as 'king' he had ruined thousands. His power for evil had increased, but it was not yet fully developed, and the great opportunity was still to come. He does not advance step by step, like other men. No, his ambition demands constant movement, culminating in some tremendous display of strength. His motto is: 'Better a grand catastrophe than a meager victory.' Laws do not exist for a man with such ideas, and what can those persons expect who are bold enough to follow him as assistants or subordinates, but a prison cell, or something even worse, for their pains?"

B.22 was listening as though he had been hypnotized, and Wallion went on: "After his coup on the coffee market, Gabriel Ortiz disappeared from New York. He realized his assets, and was seen no more in Wall Street. He had attained his primary aim, and provided himself with the means of carrying out even the wildest and most ambitious of his dreams. The episode in the Amazons had taught him experience: in New York he had acquired millions. He was now fully equipped, and only waited for a favorable opportunity. In August, 1914, the great war broke out."

The journalist sat silent and thoughtful for a little while. Then he continued: "It is horrible to think that a Brazilian freebooter should find the great chance of his lifetime in the grimmest tragedy that has ever befallen the human race. It is true that in this war, as never before, there have been openings for adventurers who are ready to sell their swords or their skill to the highest bidder."

"Within the war-area, where, as in an earthquake, all the powers of darkness rise to the surface, Ortiz found the desired field of operations, where he might sow his millions, and reap an abundant harvest of power. After due calculation, he fixed upon Russia as his objective, and Stockholm as his starting point. How long have you been in his service?"

"Since October, 1915."

"Nearly from the beginning, then. I can tell by your accent that you are a Finn. I suppose they made you believe that you would be working for the liberty of Finland?"

"That was so," said B.22 in a low voice.

"Do you still think so, now that Finland is really free, in consequence of the March revolution? Was that Ortiz' work?"

The man crimsoned with rage and shame. He struck his hand on the table, and said: "No, since I got to know the contents of the Tarraschin document, I can see that Ortiz is neither working for freedom nor for the Tsar; he thinks only of himself."

"Exactly," said Wallion, coldly, "and you should have realized that long ago."

"How could I?" replied B.22 piteously; "I knew nothing of him, until you told me all this. What shall I do?"

"Don't take it so hard. You have been too easily tempted by the thought of quickly earned money, that's all, and now you're in a fix. You haven't told me yet what happened in the boarding house."

"I had only just got there," said B.22 excitedly, "when I heard the telephone ring. One of the Russians answered it,

and I was in the room alongside. I guessed that Rastakov had rung up, and I heard the Russian say: 'Yes, he has just come in.' They were speaking about me, and I was alarmed to hear the man say: 'We had better shadow him; it would be easier to get rid of him in Finland than here. Yes, we will keep an eye on him; if he gives any trouble, we will find a way which won't attract attention. No, he hasn't spoken to anyone yet . . .'. Then I was sure that my fate was sealed, and at first I felt paralyzed with fear, but I knew that they would be after me in a few seconds, and, without even stopping to get my knapsack, I crept downstairs, and out of the house . . ."

Wallion could not help pitying the poor fellow, who looked like a man sentenced to death, and could hardly speak coherently.

"Was that all?" he asked.

"It was quite enough for me; they mean to do something dreadful. . . I am not the first . . ."

"I know. I will help you on one condition: has our conversation convinced you how necessary it is for you to tell me honestly and openly everything that may lead to the annihilation of Ortiz and his gang?"

"Yes, yes, only tell me what I can do."

"You won't only think of saving your own skin? You promise to help me to the best of your ability?"

"Yes, yes, that's just what I want to do; only save me!"

The man's sincerity was undoubted; Wallion's earnestness had entirely conquered his feeble will. He gazed at the journalist with doglike submission, whilst the latter wrote a few lines, and his address, on a card.

"Take this," he said, "go straight to my house in the Valhalla Road, and hand the card to my housekeeper. Stay there till I come. Just wait a minute, while I telephone to her."

B.22 seized the card with an audible sigh of relief and gratitude. The journalist went into the outer room, and rang up his house. The housekeeper answered, and he informed her briefly what she was to do with B.22, and what further precautions he must observe. Then, after a little consideration, he rang up the offices of the Daily Courier, and asked for Robert Lang, who came at once to the telephone. "Has anyone been to ask for me?" said Wallion. "What? Leonard Grath? He's just gone? What a nuisance, I wanted particularly to see him. Don't you know where he has gone? He really is far too headstrong to be allowed to go off by himself, you should have kept him. No, I can't come up at present, I must go and see what the baron and Tassler are up to, but I want you to come at once to Tegner street, and find out what is going on at the boarding house there, if you can. It is probable that we shall soon have to give official information to the police; we ought to have sufficient proof in our hands in a few hours' time. Look here: before you leave the office, arrange for somebody trustworthy—say, Steno Beyler—to receive a young man named Bernard Jenin, who may turn up there in the course of the day, and not let him out of his sight before I have had a word with him. Yes, that's all, I can tell you more later; I've a big job on hand at present. . ."

He put down the receiver, and returned to the other room but he stopped short on the threshold: B.22 had disappeared. A door leading to the passage stood open, and on the table lay a paper, with a few hurried lines scrawled upon it. Wallion snatched it up, and ran into the passage. After glancing into the garden, which was surrounded by a high wall, he went out into the street, but B.22 was nowhere to be seen. Feeling very anxious, the journalist read what was written on the paper: 'I must go. One of them is outside in

highest quality. We intend to give Spain what it wants.

"Extensive schemes are being undertaken in Spain for the development of railways, irrigation, hydraulic and electrical power, harbors, docks, and highways. We have unexcelled goods to meet these needs.

"The Barcelona exhibition will afford a wonderful opportunity, too, for British exhibitors to get in touch with South American markets."

Britain's continental rivals have also taken large areas in the ex-

hibition. France has reserved space of 20,000 meters, and Germany 14,000 meters. The English sector embraces 5,000 meters.

the churchyard, and I am sure he has seen me at the window. If they get to know that I have anything to do with you, they will shoot me in the street. Expect me early—about 7—tomorrow morning."

The journalist crumpled up the paper and put it in his pocket, after which he lighted a cigaret. Not a single person was visible in the whole length of the silent street.

CHAPTER IV.  
Leonard Grath Acts on His Own Responsibility, and Meets with a Girl Who Runs Away from Him

Leo left the problem-hunter's room like a man in a dream. It did not occur to him to wait for Robert Lang's return, but when he got out into the street, he found himself still holding the photograph in his hand. Ought he not to put it back on Wallion's table? He looked hesitatingly at it: "Sonia Bernin, the Copper House," he read once more. "So that's Andrei Bernin's daughter. Well, there hasn't been such a beautiful girl in the Copper House these last 50 years!" There spoke the artist; an ordinary man would perhaps have called the girl striking, but certainly not beautiful. Her face was not oval, but rather of an aquiline type; her mouth was no Cupid's bow, but boyishly firm, above a self-willed chin. But the large, dark eyes beneath their black, wing-like brows, had a mysterious attraction for him—it seemed as though they were calling to him, and the artist in him listened—who knows, perhaps the man also!

Burchard's story, Wallion's warnings, vanished in a moment from Leo's mind. He put the photograph into his pocket and made his way to the general station, where he went up to the booking office, and demanded: "A single to Karkby."

A philosopher could no doubt draw many ingenious deductions from this simple action, knowing that it was to influence his future to an extraordinary degree. But Leo, who was anything but a philosopher, did not give the matter a thought, and, having received a scrap of brown pasteboard in exchange for a few silver coins, he made his way past all obstructions to the platform, where the train for Nynas stood blowing off steam. He studied with a critical eye the effect of the sun shining through the puffs of steam, and made a mental note of the colors. "Pink and silver in the sunlight, violet in the shade."

With that, he got into the train. He had chosen the last compartment, which was still quite empty, but a minute later one other passenger entered, and sat quietly down opposite. He was a young or middle-aged man, in a threadbare overcoat; tired face was pale, almost grayish, the eyes encircled with innumerable tiny wrinkles; the neat leathern attache-case which he carried in his hand seemed to cause him some anxiety, for he evidently debated with himself whether he should put it up in the rack, then cast an uneasy glance at Leo, and finally decided to keep it on his knee. Leo's amused expression appeared to embarrass the man, for he stared straight in front of him, with that air of constraint which betrays that one feels oneself under observation. At the same time, he seemed to be listening for something outside, and Leo heard him give a little sigh of relief when the train gave a sudden jerk, and steamed out of the station, with rapidly increasing speed. They were alone in the carriage, that is, in their half of it, for it was divided into two sections with a gangway between. Leo's thoughts began to wander. He felt curious and rather excited at the thought of what he should find when he arrived at the Copper House.

(TO BE CONTINUED)

WE MODERNS  
From Voo Doo.  
Collegiate version: "Come on kid, let's go places and insult people!"

VIENNA—A typist here recently sued her employer claiming that the confining work had ruined her eyes, causing her to wear glasses and for that reason caused her to miss several chances at matrimony. The employer countered with the remark that the glasses had improved her looks and had made her "interesting." The girl lost the suit.

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## Grass-Hook Might Help to Mend Broken Heart

"Germany paid the Allies a billion and a half marks in reparations last year," said Representative Homer Hoch, of Kansas. "That's a lot of money—its money, that Germany can ill spare, but the only sympathy that goes out to her in her hard luck is like the feed man's."

"A feed man went to a neighbor's home one morning, knocked, and said: 'Is Jake in?'"

"'Goodness no!' said the Jake. 'Haven't you heard? Poor Jake passed out this morning at half past three.'"

"'Well, well, well! That sure is bad news. Why, I didn't even know old Jake was sick.'"

"'It was very sudden. Very sudden, indeed.'"

"'Dear me! I can hardly bear it. I'm heartbroken, to tell you the truth. By the way, did Jake say anything about that grass hook he borrowed from me, before he died?'—Detroit Free Press.

The Rebel  
"Patient put out of hospital for refusing to be weighed," reads a current news item. "I got tired of being dragged out of bed," he declared. "Tired? Doesn't he mean weigh-worn?"—Farm and Fireside.



## DR. CALDWELL'S THREE RULES

Dr. Caldwell watched the results of constipation for 47 years, and believed that no matter how careful people are of their health, diet and exercise, constipation will occur from time to time. Of next importance, then, is how to treat it when it comes. Dr. Caldwell always was in favor of getting as close to nature as possible, hence his remedy for constipation is a mild vegetable compound. It can not harm the most delicate system and is not habit forming.

The Doctor never did approve of drastic physics and purges. He did not believe they were good for human beings to put into their system. Use Syrup Pepsin for yourself and members of the family in constipation, biliousness, sour and crampy stomach, bad breath, no appetite, headaches, and to break up fevers and colds. Get a bottle today, at any drugstore and observe these three rules of health: Keep the head cool, the feet warm, the bowels open. For a free trial bottle, just write "Syrup Pepsin," Dept. BB, Monticello, Illinois.

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## For Barbed Wire Cuts Hanford's Balsam of Myrrh

Money back for first bottle if not suited. All dealers.

From Youth to Age  
There are three trying periods in a woman's life: when the girl matures to womanhood, when a woman gives birth to her first child, when a woman reaches middle age. At these times Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound helps to restore normal health and vigor.

LYDIA E. PINKHAM'S VEGETABLE COMPOUND  
LYDIA E. PINKHAM MED. CO., LYNN, MASS.

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Unless you're a Flit user, you have no idea how soon you can rid your home of every fly and mosquito. Flit kills quicker, and is easier to use, in the handy Flit sprayer. Spray into cracks and crevices to kill roaches, bed bugs, ants. Flit vapor does not stain. Try the quicker Flit method today!

FLIT

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"Do you believe in heredity?"  
"Absolutely; that's how I got all my money."

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Cuticura SOAP MEDICINAL TOILET

## British Bid for Market In Spain at Barcelona

LONDON (AP)—Britain will make a strong bid for trade in Spain at the Barcelona International exhibition which the King of Spain will open on May 19. Officials at the London headquarters of the exhibition say that British firms are fully alive to the possibilities.

office fittings, optical instruments, motors, industrial machinery and textiles. Birmingham and Coventry will be strongly represented in the motor section and Bradford, Leeds, Manchester, Sheffield and Doncaster in the textile, steel, and machinery sections.

"Up to the present, United States firms have scored by enterprising methods of salesmanship," said an official at London headquarters of the exhibition, "but there is always a demand for British goods, which are recognized as of the

highest quality. We intend to give Spain what it wants.

Britain's continental rivals have also taken large areas in the ex-

hibition. France has reserved space of 20,000 meters, and Germany 14,000 meters. The English sector embraces 5,000 meters.

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