



SYNOPSIS.

The story is told by Nicholas Trist, his chief, Senator John Calhoun, offered the portfolio of secretary of state in Tyler's cabinet, is told by Dr. Ward that his time is short. Calhoun declares that he is not ready to do, and if he accepts Tyler's offer it means that Texas and Oregon must be added to the Union. He plans to learn the intentions of England with regard to Mexico through Baroness von Ritz, secret spy and reputed mistress of the English ambassador, Pakenham. Nicholas is sent to bring the baroness to Calhoun's apartments and induces a meeting with his sweetheart, Elizabeth Churchill. While searching for the baroness' house a carriage drives up and Nicholas is invited to enter.

CHAPTER IV.—Continued.

"Your name!" she again demanded. I told her the first one that came to my lips—I do not remember what, I did not deceive her for a moment. "Of course that is not your name," she said; "because it does not fit you. You have me still at disadvantage." "And me, madam? You are taking me miles out of my way. How can I help you? Do you perhaps wish to hunt mushrooms in the Georgetown woods when morning comes? I wish that I might join you, but I fear—" "You mock me," she retorted. "Very good. Let me tell you it was not your personal charm which attracted me when I saw you on the pavement! 'Twas because you were the only man in sight." "I bowed my thanks. For a moment nothing was heard save the steady patter of hoofs on the ragged pavement. At length she went on. "I am alone. I have been followed. I was followed when I called to you—by another carriage. I asked help of the first gentleman I saw, having heard that Americans are all gentlemen." "True," said I; "I do not blame you. Neither do I blame the occupant of the other carriage for following you." "I pray you, leave aside such clatter!" she exclaimed. "Very well, then, madam. Perhaps the best way is for us to be more straightforward. If I cannot be of service I beg you to let me descend, for I have business which I must execute to-night." She dismissed this with an impatient gesture, and continued. "See, I am alone," she said. "Come with me. Show me my way—I will pay—I will pay anything in reason." Actually I saw her fumble at her purse, and the hot blood flew to my forehead. "What you ask of me, madam, is impossible," said I, with what courtesy I could summon. "You oblige me now to tell my real name. I have told you that I am an American gentleman—Mr. Nicholas Trist. We of this country do not offer our services to ladies for the sake of pay. But do not be troubled over any mistake—it is nothing. Now, you have perhaps had some little adventure in which you do not wish to be discovered. In any case, you ask me to shake off that carriage which follows us. If that is all, madam, it very easily can be arranged." "Hasten, then," she said. "I leave it to you. I was sure you knew the city."

I turned and gazed back through the rear window of the carriage. True, there was another vehicle following us. We were by this time nearly at the end of Washington's limited pavements. It would be simple after that. I leaned out and gave our driver some brief orders. We led our chase across the valley creeks on up the Georgetown hills, and soon as possible abandoned the last of the pavement and took to the turf, where the sound of our wheels was dulled. Rapidly as we could we passed on up the hill, our going, which was all of earth or soft turf, now well wetted by the rain. When at last we reached a point near the summit of the hill I stopped to listen. Hearing nothing, I told the driver to pull down the hill by the side street, and to drive slowly. When we finally came into our main street again at the foot of the Georgetown hills, not far from the little creek which divided that settlement from the main city, I could hear nowhere any sound of our pursuer.

"Madam," said, turning to her, "I think we may safely say we are alone. What, now, is your wish?" "Home!" she said.

"And where is home?" She looked at me keenly for a time, as though to read some thought which perhaps she saw suggested either in the tone of my voice or in some glimpse she might have caught of my features as light afforded. For the moment she made no answer.

"Is it here?" suddenly I asked her, presenting to her inspection the sealed missive which I bore.

"I cannot see; it is quite dark," she said hurriedly.

"Pardon me, then—" I fumbled for my case of lucifers, and made a faint light by which she might read. She pursed her lips and shook her head.

"I do not recognize the address," said she, smiling, as she turned toward me.

"Is it at this door on M street, as you go beyond this other street?" I asked her. "Come—think!"

54-40 OR FIGHT

BY EMERSON HOUGH

AUTHOR OF THE MISSISSIPPI BUBBLE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAGNUS G. KETNER

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Then I thought I saw the flush deepen on her face, even as the match flickered and failed.

I leaned out of the door and called to the negro driver. "Home, now, boy—and drive fast!" She made no protest.

CHAPTER V.

One of the Women in the Case. There is a woman at the beginning of all great things.—Lamartine.

A quarter of an hour later, we slowed down on a rough brick pavement, which led toward what then was an outlying portion of the town—one not precisely shabby, but by no means fashionable. There was a single lamp stationed at the mouth of the narrow little street. As we advanced, I could see outlined upon our right, just beyond a narrow pavement of brick, a low and not more than semi-respectable house, or rather, row of houses; tenements for the middle class or poor, I might have said. The neighborhood, I knew from my acquaintance with the city, was respectable enough, yet it was remote, and occupied by none of any station. Certainly it was not to be considered fit residence for a woman such as this who sat beside me. I admit I was puzzled.

"This will do," she said softly, at length. The driver already had pulled up.

So, then, I thought, she had been here before. But why? Could this indeed be her residence? Was this indeed the covert embassy of England?

There was no escape from the situation as it lay before me. I had no time to ponder. My duty was here. This was my message; here was she for whom it was intended; and this was the place which I was to have sought alone. I needed only to remember that my business was not with Helena von Ritz the woman, beautiful, fascinating, perhaps dangerous as she said of her, but with the Baroness von Ritz, in the belief of my chief the ally and something more than ally of Pakenham, in charge of England's fortunes on this continent.

I descended at the edge of the narrow pavement, and was about to hand her out at the step, but as I glanced down I saw that the rain had left a puddle of mud between the carriage and the walk.

"Pardon, madam," I said; "allow me to make a light for you—the footing is bad."

I lighted another lucifer, just as she hesitated at the step. She made as though to put out her right foot, and withdrew it. Again she shifted, and extended her left foot. I faintly saw proof that nature had carried out her scheme of symmetry, and had not allowed wrist and arm to forswear themselves! I saw also that this foot was clad in the daintiest of white slippers, suitable enough as part of her ball costume, as I doubted not was this she wore. She took my hand without hesitation, and rested her weight upon the step—an adorable ankle now more frankly revealed. The

briefness of the lucifers was merciful or merciless, as you like.

"A wide step, madam; be careful," I suggested. But still she hesitated.

A laugh, half of annoyance, half of amusement, broke from her lips. As the light flickered down, she made as though to take the step; then, as luck would have it, a bit of her loose drapery, which was made in the wide-s skirted and much-hooped fashion of the time, caught at the hinge of the carriage door. It was a chance glance, and not intent on my part, but I saw that her other foot was stockinged, but not shod!

"I beg madam's pardon," I said gravely, looking aside, "but she has perhaps not noticed that her other slipper is lost in the carriage." "Nonsense!" she said. "Allow me your hand across to the walk, please. It is lost, yes."

"But lost—where?" I began. "In the other carriage!" she exclaimed, and laughed freely. Half hopping, she was across the walk, through the narrow gate, and up at the door before I could either offer an arm or ask for an explanation. Some whim, however, seized her; some feeling that in fairness she ought to tell me now part at least of the reason for her summoning me to her aid.

"Sir," she said, even as her hand reached up to the door knocker; "I admit you have acted as a gentleman should. I do not know what your message may be, but I doubt not it is meant for me. Since you have this much claim on my hospitality, even at this hour, I think I must ask you to step within. There may be some answer needed."

"Madam," said I, "there is an answer needed. I am to take back that answer. I know that this message is to the Baroness von Ritz. I guess it to be important; and I know you are the Baroness von Ritz."

"Well, then," said she, pulling about her half-clad shoulders the light wrap she wore; "let me be as free with you. If I have missed one shoe, I have not lost it wholly. I lost the slipper in a way not quite planned on the program. It hurt my foot. I sought to adjust it behind a curtain. My gentleman of Mexico was in wine. I fled, leaving my escort, and he followed. I called to you. You know the rest. I am glad you are less in wine, and are more a gentleman."

"I do not yet know my answer, madam."

"Come!" she said; and at once knocked upon the door.

I shall not soon forget the surprise which awaited me when at last the door swung open suddenly at the hand of a wrinkled and brown old serving woman—not one of our colored women, but of some dark foreign race. The faintest trace of surprise showed on the old woman's face, but she stepped back and swung the door wide, standing submissively, waiting for orders.

We stood now facing what ought to have been a narrow and dingy little room in a low row of dingy buildings,



each of two stories and so shallow in extent as perhaps not to offer space to more than a half dozen rooms. Instead of what should have been, however, there was a wide hall—wide as each building would have been from front to back, but longer than a half dozen of them would have been! I did not know then, what I learned later, that the partitions throughout this entire row had been removed, the material serving to fill up one of the houses at the farthest extremity of the row. There was thus offered a long and narrow room, or series of rooms, which now I saw beyond possibility of doubt constituted the residence of this strange woman whom chance had sent me to address; and whom still stranger chance had thrown in contact with me even before my errand was begun!

She stood looking at me, a smile flitting over her features, her stockinged foot extended, toe down, serving to balance her on her high-heeled single shoe.

"Pardon, sir," she said, hesitating, as she held the sealed epistle in her hand. "You know me—perhaps you follow me—I do not know. Tell me, are you a spy of that man Pakenham?"

Her words and her tone startled me. I had supposed her bound to Sir Richard by ties of a certain sort. Her bluntness and independence puzzled me as much as her splendid beauty enraptured me. I tried to forget both. "Madam, I am a spy of no man, unless I am such at order of my chief, John Calhoun of the United States senate—perhaps, if madam pleases, seat—of Mr. Tyler's cabinet."

In answer, she turned, hobbled to a tiny marquetry table, and tossed the note down upon it, unopened. I waited patiently, looking about me meantime. I discovered that the windows were barred with narrow slats of iron within, although covered with heavy draperies of amber silk. There was a double sheet of iron covering the door by which we had entered.

"Your cage, madam?" I inquired. "I do not blame England for making it so secret and strong! If so lovely a prisoner were mine, I should double the bars."

The swift answer to my presumption came in the flush of her cheek and her bitten lip. She caught up the key from the table, and half motioned me to the door. But now I smiled in turn, and pointed to the unopened note on the table. "You will pardon me, madam," I went on. "Surely it is no disgrace to represent either England or America. They are not at war. Why should we be?" We gazed steadily at each other.

The old servant had disappeared when at length her mistress chose to pick up my unregarded document. Deliberately she broke the seal and read. An instant later, her anger gone, she was laughing gaily.

"See!" said she, bubbling over with her mirth; "I pick up a stranger, who should say good-by at my curb; my apartments are forced; and this is what this stranger asks: that I shall go with him, to-night, alone, and otherwise unattended, to see a man, perhaps high in your government, but a stranger to me, at his own rooms—alone! Oh, la! la! Surely these Americans hold me high!"

"Assuredly we do, madam," I answered. "Will it please you to go in your own carriage, or shall I return with one for you?"

She put her hands behind her back, holding in them the opened message from my chief. "I am tired. I am bored. Your impudence amuses me; and your errand is not your fault. Come, sit down. You have been good to me. Before you go, I shall have some refreshments brought for you."

I felt a sudden call upon my resources as I found myself in this singular situation. Here, indeed, more easily reached than I had dared hope, was the woman in the case. But only half of my errand, the easier half, was done.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Sense of Direction in Animals. The remarkable faculty which cats, dogs, pigeons and other animals possess of returning in a straight line to a point of departure has awakened much curiosity on the part of naturalists. Some refer it to instinct, some to intelligence similar to man, some to an internal mechanism which makes the animal simply automata, but none of these attempted explanations does anything toward solving the mystery. One of our ablest modern scientific writers supposes that when an animal is carried to a great distance in a basket its fright makes it very attentive to the different odors which it encounters upon the way, and that the return of these odors, in inverse order, furnishes the needful guide.

In Fig-Leaf Days. First Prehistoric—Where did Adam get such an awful grouch? Second Ditto—He's kicking because his spring clothes don't make him look as broad shouldered as the fellows in the advertisements.—Puck.

MILLIONAIRE FARMER GONE

David Rankin, a Poor Boy Who Became Wealthy by Sticking to the Missouri Farm.

Tarkio, Mo.—When David Rankin died recently at his home here, there passed away the first of the millionaire farmers. Nor should this be taken to mean that farming was one of several occupations followed by him; he was born on a farm and died on the farm, and from the day of his birth until the day of his death he never knew what it was to give an hour, to any other pursuit. Neither should it be imagined that he inherited a well paying farm which he developed.

David Rankin's story in brief is this—he started in poverty, he stuck to his job, he watched his chances, grew with the times, and died as the farmer



The Millionaire Farmer.

of the biggest single acreage in the world. And a most wholesome, salutary story it is. There is no need to moralize about it or to run into philosophical language to tell of the merits of such a career or to point out the secret of the millionaire farmer's success. It tells itself. This, in effect, is the story of the man who stuck to his job.

In 1825 he was born on a small farm in Sullivan county, Indiana, in a log house 16 feet square where the cooking was done on the logs and the field labor was accomplished with the primitive instruments with which the sturdy pioneers conquered the wilderness and cut the path, which civilization and culture have followed, into the west. He was taught to work at soon as he was able to wield a hoe, and was reared to regard shoes as a luxury and schooling as an indulgence granted to boys in the seasons when farm work was impossible. At the age of eleven he saw the last of the school room and settled down to the man's share of the burdens of life of the paternal farm. In 1848 he started out for himself with one ox and one crude plow.

Two years later, while the average farmer was looking with suspicion and contempt at the reapers advertised in the catalogues he bought one and used it. In another two years he felt that he was prosperous enough to marry; so he handed his \$4 to the parson and took a helpmate.

For another 15 years he simply farmed on, steadily, surely growing watching every chance to improve his knowledge of farming conditions and taking advantage of every innovation that promised better returns. Then he began to be truly wealthy. It was in 1865 that he sold pork in New York fattened on his own land and shortly afterwards he cultivated broom corn eschewed by all the conservative tillers of the soil, and made a quarter of a million out of it.

Now in recent years Mr. Rankin, farmer extraordinary, had cultivated just 26,540 acres of land of which 19,000 was in corn every year and he raised about 1,000,000 bushels a year

QUEER VERDICT OF JURIES

Some Are a Puzzle and Difficult to Solve, While Many are Exceedingly Amusing.

Chicago.—Here is a funny thing about the relative value of a man's right and left leg," said a Chicago lawyer. "Not long ago I was called upon to conduct the case of a man who had lost his left leg in a railroad accident. He was laid up in the hospital for several weeks. While there the utter uselessness of his right hand caused much comment among the doctors and nurses. Other left-handed patients they had met with able at least to fight flies, but my client's right hand wasn't even fit for that."

"The case came to trial, and the jury awarded him damages \$500 in excess of what he had asked for, because, said the foreman, 'he is left-handed.'"

"The next day I stumbled on my man in a restaurant and found him stooping up with his right hand."

"That is all right," said he. "It isn't a new accomplishment. I could do it all the time. Can use one hand as well as the other, always could, but after I lost my left leg I concluded to let my right hand take a vacation. You see, I know the ways of juries. I cannot follow their reasoning, but I have studied their verdicts, and I have discovered that while the right leg is considered of more value to the average man than his left leg, the left leg fetches a boom price if it belongs to a left-handed man. I cannot see the connection, but juries can. You heard what the jury of mine said? Well, they always reason that way."

UNKIND JOLT FROM ADAM

As if Eve Hadn't Sorrow Enough, Her Partner Had to Add to the Affliction.

Adam had just received his notice of ejection.

He stared at it a long time in silence, while Eve, crouched in a dusky corner, softly whimpered.

Presently the father of mankind looked around.

As Eve caught his angry eye her whimper changed to a gulping sob.

"Well," he sternly said, "you've certainly put us in a fine mess with your silly curiosity! And yet when I refused to have anything to do with your apple scheme you called me a poor fool. Do you remember that you called me a poor fool?" "Ye-es," sobbed Eve.

"Well, there's just one question I want to ask you!" said Adam.

"What is it?" gasped the first mother.

"Who's looney now?" he harshly demanded.

Then he turned away abruptly and started to pack up the family gourds and the test poles.—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

BABY'S SCALP CRUSTED

"Our little daughter, when three months old, began to break out on the head and we had the best doctors to treat her, but they did not do her any good. They said she had eczema. Her scalp was a solid scale all over. The burning and itching was so severe that she could not rest, day or night. We had about given up all hopes when we read of the Cuticura Remedies. We at once got a cake of Cuticura Soap, a box of Cuticura Ointment and one bottle of Cuticura Resolvent, and followed directions carefully. After the first dose of the Cuticura Resolvent, we used the Cuticura Soap freely and applied the Cuticura Ointment. Then she began to improve rapidly and in two weeks the scale came off her head and new hair began to grow. In a very short time she was well. She is now sixteen years of age and a picture of health. We used the Cuticura Remedies about five weeks, regularly, and then we could not tell she had been affected by the disease. We used no other treatment after we found out what the Cuticura Remedies would do for her. J. Fish and Ella M. Fish, Mt. Vernon, Ky., Oct. 12, 1903."

The Lawyers Won. Askit—Old Skinner left quite a large estate, did he not? Noit—Yes; but some of his relatives contended his will. Askit—Was there much left after it got through the courts? Noit—Nothing but the heirs.

As gold is tried by the furnace, and the baser metal is shown; so the low-hearted friend is known by adversity.—Metastasio.

Rumor is a spark at first, then a fire, then a conflagration, and then ashes.—W. H. Shaw.

Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup. For children teething, soothes the inflamed gum, cures wind colic, &c. See the illustration.

The charm of the unattainable is long drawn out.

For That Heartburn and smothering sensation after eating you really ought to take **Hostetter's Stomach Bitters**. It acts quickly, tones the stomach and aids digestion, thus removing the cause of the trouble. Always keep a bottle handy for just such cases. It is also for Indigestion, Dyspepsia, Constipation, Liver Troubles, Colds, Grippe and Malaria. Try it today.

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