

tions about the Duke of Rattleborough, but if any of these queries were intended to embarrass his visitor, Stranleigh's failure was equal to that of Parkes himself. They were answered so promptly and accurately that Stranleigh inwardly chided himself for his latent distrust of the man.

Parkes, seeing how the land lay, drew a light sigh.

"You see," he said, in a discouraged tone, "a man brought up, as I have been, to do nothing in particular, finds himself at a disadvantage in a hustling country like the United States, where his competitors have all been trained from boyhood to be alert business men. This option on the Sterling Company is a good thing, and if once I got on my feet, I could build up a profitable business. My difficulty is to convince some capitalists of this. If I am asked whether the scheme will produce a fortune within six months or a year, I am forced to admit there is little chance of it. An American wishes to turn over his money quickly; a long look into futurity is not for him. He wishes to buy one railway on Monday, another on Tuesday, amalgamate them on Wednesday; sell the stock to the public at several millions profit, and rake in the boodle on Friday. When I confess it will be a year before I get fairly under way, I am immediately at a discount. Capitalists won't listen any further."

Parkes noted that for the first time Lord Stranleigh began to show a reserved interest.

"Do you know anything about motors?" asked his lordship.

"I can take apart any motor, and put it together again, leaving it a little better than when I found it."

"And this machine invented by the Detroit man—does it fulfil what is said of it?"

"IT'S the best thing in motors today," asserted Parkes, with a return of his old confidence.

Stranleigh smiled slightly.

"You have been very successful in catching the enthusiasm of America," he said. "You deal glibly in superlatives. Mr. Sterling is the most remarkable man in the world; Detroit the most beautiful city on the globe, and your motor car beats the universe."

"Well, my lord, I don't disclaim the superlatives; I insist on their truth. I deal in truth, although I have suffered in pocket by doing so."

A shade of perplexity crossed Stranleigh's face. There was something deferential in the tone used by Parkes when he enunciated the phrase "my lord," which Stranleigh did not like. Neither phrase nor tone could have been used by any one of his acquaintance. As he remained silent, Parkes went on: "You need not take my word for the automobile, which after all, is the crux of the situation. I have one of them here in New York. I tested it very thoroughly by driving it from Detroit to this city. Let me take you for a drive. You doubtless know all about a motor car; I was told in London that you own at least a dozen."

"I daresay it's true. Nevertheless, I am so unfortunate as to have only a slight knowledge of their mechanics. I drive a good deal, but I leave details to my chauffeurs."

"You are doubtless well acquainted with the merits of a car from the owner's point of view. Come out with me in this Detroit motor. I will be your chauffeur, or you may drive the machine yourself, if you remember that in America you keep to the right in meeting vehicles."

An appointment was made, and was kept by Lord Stranleigh. At the end of his run he said to Parkes:

"The car seems to be a satisfactory piece of mechanism, but I own one or two American cars which I think equally good: in fact, as Mark Twain said about his Jumping Frog; I see no points about this frog better than any other frog. However, I will consider your proposal, and will let you know the result. Meanwhile, thanks for a most interesting ride."

In the cool of the evening, Stranleigh sauntered out. He entered a cable office.

"Can I send a message to London, and leave a deposit for reply?"

"Certainly."

Stranleigh wrote:

Duke of Rattleborough, Camperdown Club, London.

A man calling himself Wentworth Parkes presents letter from you. Please cable whether he is reliable.

Six hours later, Stranleigh received a reply.

Letter a forgery. Parkes was my valet for three years. Bolled.

Believe he is now abroad. London police would like his address.

RATTLEBOROUGH.

Now began a persistent pursuit of Stranleigh, which culminated in his sending Ponderby to the steamship office to buy tickets for his return to England. The young man said nothing of the cablegram, nor did he inform the police of the whereabouts of their quarry. He rather pitied the poor devil, as he called him. But Stranleigh had no use for a liar, so he refused to hold further communication with him.

Parkes, when he could not gain admission to Stranleigh, took to sending letters by special messenger, first adopting an aggrieved tone, a reproachful suggestion of injured innocence running through his correspondence like a minor note in a piece of music; then he became the victim of an unscrupulous millionaire, asserting that Stranleigh had promised to finance the proposed company, and breathing threats of legal proceedings. Indeed, as the recipient read these later communications, he realized they were written with a view to publicity in law courts. There emanated from them sentiments of great patriotism. The United States, Stranleigh learned, would not put up with his villainy, as decadent England might do, where judges were under the thumb of a debased aristocracy.

Stranleigh had no ambition to appear in the courts of either country, so he removed from one hotel to another; but apparently he was watched, for Parkes always ran him down. Thus we come to the moment when the sedate but overjoyed Ponderby returned with the steamship tickets.

"Shall I pack up now, my lord?"

"Yes, Ponderby. Prepare three boxes; one for yourself and two for me, filling mine with clothing suitable for a week or two in the country. Place the other luggage in charge of the hotel, saying I will telegraph where it is to be sent."

And then, to Ponderby's amazement, the young man left for Boston, and took passage in the steamer for St. John, New Brunswick.

"You see, Ponderby," explained his lordship, when they got out into the ocean, "the estimable Parkes, if he is watching us, is already aware that you have booked to Southampton. He may possibly set the law in motion, and appear with some emissaries thereof aboard the liner before she sails. We might be compelled to remain in this country."

"BUT, my lord, the steamship tickets? They cost a lot of money."

"Quite so, my economical Ponderby, but, for consolation, remember that when you step ashore from this boat you will be under the British flag. You may telegraph the company to sell the tickets. Here they are. Whatever money the company returns is to be retained by you to mitigate your disappointment. I've no doubt, Ponderby, that in thus bolting for Canada you feel like a culprit escaping from justice, but we are only escaping from Parkes. He having pestered me so much about Detroit, that city will be the last in which he will look for me. We are going to Detroit, Ponderby, by

the most roundabout route I could choose, since the Panama Canal is not yet open, and so I am unable to reach the auto-metropolis by way of San Francisco."

After passing through Canada, Lord Stranleigh settled himself in a luxurious suite of rooms situated near the top of a luxurious hotel in the city of the Straits. The windows afforded wide and interesting views, but Ponderby was gloomy, and did not share his master's admiration of the scene. He was heart and soul a Londoner. He admitted that the Thames was grey and muddy, its shipping sombre and uncouth, yet that tidal water remained for him a model for all other rivers. He was only partially consoled by the fact that five cents brought him across to the Canadian shore, where he might inhale deep (Continued on Page 9)



THE FEAST

By Edgar Saltus

Decoration by Paul Bransom

Below the glow of Guatemalan skies,
In groves where undergrass grows overgreen,
Where saffron quetzals from the branches lean,
And lilac lizards with basaltic eyes
Dart their vermilion tongue at fireflies
That gleam, in sudden loops of light between
The orchids and the fuchsias and their sheen—
Supremely there a spangled jaguar lies.

Curled in a velvet knot, the radiant beast
Sleeps on the vivid grass and sleeping dreams
That out beyond the brush and buds beneath,
Crouching he springs and knows again the feast;
The startled prey, the vain escape, the screams,
The flesh that parts and bleeds between his teeth.