The Pirate of Alastair

By RUPERT SARGENT HOLLAND

Author of "The Count at Harvard," etc.

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THE PIRATE OF ALASTAIR is a romance of love and adventure of great power and interest. There is a charm to this story that is manifest in every chapter. While the incidents deal with modern, every-day life, the author has brought in a glamour of the romantic that gives great spirit and variety to happenings along the Atlantic coast.

RUPERT SARGENT HOLLAND

is the author of this entrancing serial, and his gifted pen has done fine work in depicting events that are stirring and entertaining. There is the mysterious Ship and the modern Pirate; there is beautiful Barbara Graham, a fine young girl to admire and love, and the gallant adventurer, who meets with some thrilling experiences. The air of the mystical about the story is warranted by an absorbing and well devised plot.

The Pirate of Alastair is essentially a story of the times, recently written, copyrighted, and is a serial having features that commend it to every reader as a capital romance. We bespeak for this narrative a very favorable reception, and do not hesitate to pronounce it one of the leading romances of its class—modern, interesting, and having all the elements of a splendid story.

CHAPTER I.

You know Alastair? No—how should you? Very few people know it, and I have done my best to keep the secret to myself. The place lies, however, not so very far from great cities on the Atlantic coast. You take a train northward from Boston, and when you reach the proper station you alight and climb into a countryman's wagon, and he drives you through the pines by a twisting, sand-built road to Alastair. You will know it because you can go no farther, unless you choose to drive into the waves.

Few people come to Alastair. Most of the travelers in this part of the world turn off about a mile inland from the beach and go on for another mile and a half to the Penguin Club. The latter is full of New Yorkers who come to the pines and the sea to hunt and fish and forget Wall Street and Fifth Avenue. They forget it by keeping close together, and dressing for dinner, and dancing every other night.

Alastair itself is only a beach between two great headlands. From the end where my cottage stands, snugly hid in the pines on the edge of the dunes, the beach stretches smooth and white to a little land-locked harbor at the farther end. Sit on my porch and look down along the sands to the east and you will see a reef of rocks shaped like the letter U that closes in a little salt water lake with the aid of a distant cliff. It is not quite a lake, rather a small inland sea, for the tides have room to ebb and flow. A ship is settled into the sands of this sea, settled upright, so that one may walk the decks, and I often go there of an afternoon when the tide is low and climb on board. It is a good place to sketch, and I can leave my paints and canvas in the cabin.

I stumbled across Alastair when I was looking for a quiet place in which to write. I found the dilapidated cottage, camped in it for a week, and fell so much in love with the beach that I went to town, bought the house and part of the woods, and moved in. Charles, the man who had served my father before me, demurred at first, but finally gave in, and turned himself into cook, housemaid, and valet for my sake.

From my balcony I can see the distant rocks of the little inland sea and, standing up above them, the high sides of the ship, and its single remaining broken mast pointing straight to the heavens. Sometimes the stars seem to outline where the missing spars and sails should be, and on a bright night I can half close my eyes and fancy that I see the rigging lighted and lanterns burning on the quarter-deck.

There is history hidden in that battered hulk. She is no ordinary vessel, and may once, for all I know, have been a pirate craft. She has the long clipper lines of swiftness, and her high, bulging bow is of a type long past. When I first came to Alastair I made inquiries as to her history, but the oldest farmer could tell me only that she had always been there so far as he knew, and dismissed the subject as of no importance. The people of the near-by country appeared never to have boarded the castaway. I felt the joys of Crusoe when I first climbed on her deck. The name was gone, long ago washed out by the sea; the deck was bare, and the top of the forecastle choked with sand. I brought a shovel and dug away the rampart drifted against the hatches. At last I could open the door and, clearing the steps of what little sand had sifted through, I descended into the cabin. It was mildewed with damp and water, but in time, by bailing and letting the sun in, I dried it out and found quite a habitable apartment, furnished with table and chairs and a row of bunks along the seaward side. Whatever there had been that was portable the first wreckers must years before have carried off. All that was left was a heavy oaken chest, studded with brass nails, now greenish-yellow, and when I broke the lock I found the chest bare.

My fancy loved to play about the ship. Often I dreamed of her and of a man who should come up out of the sea and tread her deck again. He was always a magnetic figure, and I never could resist the call of mystery to fight beside him.

CHAPTER II.

It was the most beautiful August that I remembered. The air was clear as a bell, and day after day the sun rose on a tranquil world and smiled at it for joy. Every morning at breakfast I would say to Charles, "Did you ever know such weather, Charles?" and he would answer, "No, sir, I never did, sir," and every evening at supper I would say, "It has been a glorious day, Charles, hasn't it?" and he would answer, "It has, sir, indeed it has, sir." My family servant made a perfect echo.

The afternoon on which I finished the first half of my book I sat for some time on the porch outside my den, smoking. I was too serene to stir. I watched the gulls circle and skim above the pine crowned cliff, and the lazy waves, rising occasionally into sparkling white caps, lift their heads and duck again like playful dolphins. The tide was coming in; I could mark the great wet circles on the beach as it advanced, now receding for a moment, but quickly recovering the lost ground and marching on, steadily winning over the yellow sands. It would be high-tide by sunset or a little after; everything was setting in from sea to land; the salt smell was coming strongly on the east wind.

About 5 o'clock I shut the door of my cottage and started down the beach, conscious of no further plan than to board the ship and, possibly, catch something of the late afternoon color for my canvas. Now and again I stopped to watch small flocks of sand-snipe scurry over the wet, glistening sands, now to watch a wave recede and leave a path of opalescent pebbles in its wake. There were jewels for all the world and to spare as long as the water bathed the stones.

So, walking leisurely, I came in time to the far end, and looked across the harboring rocks to the ship. To my surprise, a young woman stood on the deck, and fluttering from a splinter of the mast was a white handkerchief. She was looking across at me, her hands shading her eyes from the sunset glitter at my back, and as she saw me look up she waved her hand beckoningly. The easy path to the ship lay through a small break where the rocks joined the cliff, but this break was some distance off. With a smile for what I saw must have happened to the skipper, I climbed over the nearest rocks and stood on the edge of the little inland sea. Sure enough, the tide in rising had covered the causeway to the cliff, and was pouring in, fast filling the harbor, like the bowl of a flooded fountain. The water was not yet deep; it barely covered the path by which the explorer had come, and even off the rocks in front of it it was scarcely up to my knees.

The woman of the ship called, "I'm marooned. I came by the path and forgot all about the tide. What shall I do?" She pointed towards the way she had come, but I was in rough clothes and quite used to a wetting, so I waded in and, crossing the shallow bowl, quickly scrambled on to the high deck. I stood up dripping and laughing.

"So you thought you'd go for a sail," I asked, "but didn't think you'd sail so far from land?"

The girl—I saw now that she couldn't be more than 20—looked quizzically at me for a second, then smiled, and finally laughed.

"It was such a very real ship," she said, "that I couldn't resist the call. I fell asleep sitting against the gunwale, and when I woke up the water was over the path—not very far over, but quite enough to ruin these forever." She pointed to her kid slippers. "I was growing desperate when I saw you on the beach."

I was studying the slippers; there was no question but that the salt water would ruin them. She inspected them also.

"It was very foolish of me to wear them, but I had no idea of going far when I left the club. The first thing I knew, I caught a glimpse of the water, and then I forgot the slippers and walked on until I came to that cliff, and from there I saw this little harbor and this boat, and I couldn't resist that, could I?"

I shook my head. "Nobody could resist it."

"I had just about come to the point of taking them off and wading in," she went on, and then finished, "when I sighted you."

"I can go away again," I suggested.

"No," she said slowly; "I'd rather you didn't do that. There must be some other way out of it."

"There are several other ways," I answered. "I've often studied the problem from this very deck."

I thought she looked a little bit surprised. "Do you often find people marooned here—girls, I mean?"

"No, but I've often wondered what I should do if I did. To tell the truth, I've never found any one here before, but the ship looks as if she ought to be inhabited. She's a good ship, and once belonged to a pirate chief.'

"How do you know that?" she asked.

"By the oaken chest below-deck. It has the pirate look, though there's nothing in it."

"Yes," she said; "I made an exploring trip and I found the chest."

"Don't you agree with me, then?"

Again there came that quizzical look in her eyes, and then the smile.

"Yes," she said; "it must have belonged to a pirate." She stopped short and the smile spread from her lips to her eyes. "Shall I tell you a secret? When I fell asleep here an hour ago I dreamed of pirates, of a real old-fashioned buccaneer who came up out of the cabin fully armed, pistols in his pockets and in his hands and a pistol clenched in his teeth. The funny part of it is that he was exceedingly polite to me. Do you ever have such foolish dreams as that?"

"Often; a buccaneer calls on me every other week. I'm only waiting for the chance to ship with one. I think their ghosts must still inhabit Alastair."

The girl's hand stole up to capture some loose strands of hair, and for the first time I noted the fine spun gold in the sun.

"Alastair?" she repeated. "Oh, so this is the beach of Alastair—and you——?" She paused. "You must be the man they told me about at the club—you live in a cottage at the far end of the beach, and write books, and never come out of your shell."

I bowed. "I am the man," I said, "and yonder is my home." I pointed westward to where the tip of my balcony showed between the dunes.

"What a beautiful little world!" she said, and then, a moment later, "but how lonely! Who named the place Alastair?"

"I don't know. It's always been called that, apparently."

"It's a lovely name. And what do you call the ship?"

"Oh, just the Ship. Her other name disappeared years and years ago."

"The Ship of Alastair. And do you sometimes come on board of her to write?"

"No, I have a den for that. Sometimes I come here to paint. I keep my things in the cabin.'

"Yes, I found them," she said. "You see, I know a great deal more about you than you think."

(To be continued.)

POINT OF VIEW DIFFERS.

Teamster and Woman of Fashion Express Their Diverse Opinions.

There is little choice between the way of the reformer and the way of the transgressor in the matter of hardness. Each of them has, as one may say, a tough job. In mitigation the reformer has the comfort of conscious rectitude and the transgressor the relief of curse words. I saw the two of them clash the other day. The transgressor was a somewhat thinly clad man, who was urging two tremendous horses and a load of coal up a hill. The reformer was a square-jawed lady in a Persian lamb coat. Now, the yelling of the teamster and the names he called those horses were frightful. Furthermore, he threw snowballs at the struggling animals and swung about with a somewhat ineffective whip. The lady was horrified.

"Stop lashing those horses!" she commanded.

The teamster cast a wrathful eye at her.

"How'm I goin' to get'm up the hill?" he demanded.

"Speak kindly to them," answered th lady with her best S. P. C. A. manner.

"Aw, g'wan!" roared the driver. "Who's doin' this, me or you?"

"I'll report you to the authorities," the lady cried.

The whip cracked and the huge horses drew the wagon a few feet farther. The lady followed.

"I'll report you," she repeated.

"You come out here and get this load up and I'll report myself," shouted the man. "You need something to keep you busy."

"You're a brute!" screamed the lady.

This was too much for the teamster.

"Now, you look here, lady," he said; "I got to get this coal up, and these horses can do it. They ain't even sweatin' yet. Can't you manage to mind your own business,"

"It is my business," declared the lady.

"You make me tired!" answered the teamster. "Ain't you got nothing to take up your time but buttin' in? Ain't you got no more sense than to follow a man up this way? You ought to be ashamed of yourself talking to a man you never seen before. Ain't you got no folks to look after you? If you got to talk ain't you got a husband?"

"Yes, I have, and he'll attend to you," she screamed.

"Let him," answered the teamster. "I bet he'll attend to you for quarreling with a strange man in the street. You ain't acting like a lady. Get up!"

The horses went forward with a lurch and the top of the hill was reached.

The lady turned away, very red in the face.

"The brute!" she said.

The teamster appealed to a bystander.

"Talking to me about cruelty to animals," he said disgustedly, "and her wearing a baby lamb coat."—Washington Post.

A Logical Conclusion.

"Mr. Pursington says he believes a man should pay as he goes."

"Judging from the way he gets in debt, he must be accustomed to traveling backward."—Washington Star.

In point of geographical elevation Madrid is the highest city in Europe.

THE IMMORTAL 9TH.

How Seventeen Members of a Regiment Tried to Take Port Arthur.

In the grand assault commencing Aug. 19, the immortal Ninth Regiment of the Japanese army was ordered to cross the field to the foot of the slope on which lay, dead and dying, many of the men of the regiment which had gone before. The colonel, Takagagi, surveying the task set for his regiment, sent back a report that it was not feasible, says Richard Barry in Everybody's. The brigade general, Ichinobe, replied hotly that one regiment was enough to take one battery.

Takagagi stepped out of the ravine, in which he had been seeking shelter, at the head of his command. Before he had been marching, as colonels usually do, in the rear, while his line officers led the advance. Now he leaped forward up the slope, out in front of his men. A dozen paces from the ravine he fell with four bullets through his breast. The lieutenant colonel took up the lead and was shot a few yards farther on. The majors were wiped out. Every captain but one went down.

The last captain, Nashimoto, in charge of D company, found himself at length under the Chinese wall with seventeen men. Looking down upon the shell-swept plain, protected for the moment from the sharpshooters above, with that handful of heroes, a mile and a half in advance of the main body of the Japanese army, he grew giddy with the success of his attempt.

Of a sudden he concluded that he could take Port Arthur with his seventeen men. He started in to do it. There was only the wall ahead—the wall and a few machine guns—beyond, the city itself—a five minutes' run would have brought him to the citadel. He scaled the wall and fell across it—his back bullet-broken. Eight of his men got over, scaling the height beyond, called Wangtai, or the watch tower, a place to which the Russian generals formerly rode on horseback to survey the battlefield. On the slope for three months in full sight of both armies the eight lay rotting. The Russians referred to them as "the Japanese garrison."

SHORT METER SERMONS.

Suggestion.

Suggestion is a method of awakening the powers of the subconscious mind so that they may assert themselves and accomplish great results.—Rev. C. F. Winbigler, Baptist, Washington.

Using What We Have.

You have something of life, something of truth, something of reverence, something of the sense of duty, something of loyalty; then use what you have.—Rev. E. L. Powell, Christian, Louisville.

Paying for Religion.

The value of our church services will be greatly enhanced when it costs us money. It's an enormous misfortune to get your religion for nothing. —Rev. R. S. MacArthur, Baptist, New York City.

When Virtue Comes.

Virtue comes only when a man stands at the parting of the ways between right and wrong, and turns his back on the wrong and chooses the right.—Rev. G. L. Cady, Congregationalist, Dorchester, Mass.

Looking Back.

Looking back usually results in going back. The man who holds on to the past of which he is ashamed will some day find himself back in the old place of shame.—Rev. P. M. Strayer, Presbyterian, Rochester, N. Y.

Hard Thing to Do.

It is easy to be happy when singing the doxology in church, but the harder thing is to sing when people act to as to tempt us to swear or to hire some one to swear for us.—Rev. J. H. Hobbs, Episcopalian, Utica, N. Y.

God-Centered.

When human lives learn the blessing there is in becoming God-centered instead of self-centered the hard things of life will have their bitterness taken out of them.—Rev. S. N. Watson, Episcopalian, Akron.

The Vision of the Ideal.

We have to keep a clear light shining in any dark place; we have to keep the flag of righteousness and purity flying here; we have to maintain the vision of the ideal before us.—Rev. Charles F. Aked, Baptist, New York City.

Wrong Start.

The weakness and insufficiency of much of our thinking is in that we do not start right. We may spend ages trying to reason from the contradiction of life to a kindly God and fail.—Rev. T. E. Barr, People's Pulpit, Milwaukee.

Christianity's Gift.

The gift of Christianity was the revelation of a person who was to make humanity a perpetual institution—God in Christ, in whom God came from heaven down to earth in the incarnation.—Rev. E. Perry, Methodist, Milwaukee.

Right Feeling.

A man is best when right feeling stimulates right thought, in a disciplined and finished manner, and turns upon the feelings and becomes their master directing them with right purpose.—Rev. W. W. Fenn, Unitarian, Cambridge, Mass.

Imagination.

Imagination is the most essential element in any great invention, knowledge, business enterprise and religion. If it was not for the powers of imagination, the nations would be stranded long before this.—Rev. C. K. Carpenter, Methodist Episcopalian, Aurora, Ill.

Champagne Corks.

The manufacture of the best kind of corks, those made for champagne bottles, are never intrusted to machines. The ordinary common cork is made by machinery, but the best work invariably is done by human hands, and the champagne cork cannot be trusted to a machine. All the blemishes in the cork have to be taken into consideration, so this work is done by hand labor.

The amount that people have to learn is entirely too great for their length of life.

LANE WILL TURN AT LAST.

Keep the wagon movin'—
Lane will turn at last;
Long time till daylight,
But day is breakin' fast!

Country doin' mighty well—
Settlin' all the lands;
South is smilin' happy—
The West is shakin' hands!

So keep the wagon movin'—
Sky will clear at last;
Long time till daylight,
But day is breakin' fast!
—Atlanta Constitution.

The Testing of Jack

Elinor glanced roguishly at the young man sitting dejectedly beside her on the sand at Milton Point.

"You may have as many minutes as this sand takes to run through my fingers," she said, taking up a handful of warm, white sand from the beach, "and then if you continue to be disagreeable and cross, I'll—well, never mind, you will regret it, Mr. Jack Robinson."

She let the soft sand trickle slowly through her sun-burned fingers like a minute-glass as she hummed, carelessly, softly, "If I But Knew."

The young man turned impatiently and looked out across the broad expanse of water. How easily the white-winged yachts skimmed over the water! He wished his little craft of love would run as smoothly.

"Elinor," he said, turning to her, "will you stop singing that song?"

"When your present fit of ill-temper blows over," she retorted, watching the last few grains of sand fall from her fingers. "If I but knew your heart were true," she hummed on, ignoring him.

"See here, what can I do to prove to you that I am sincere?"

He watched her dust the sand from her pretty palm.

"Do? You make me feel like a princess of 'ye olden time.' Then brave knights won their ladies by acts of courage, but now——"

"Yes, now?" he said, looking up at her eagerly.

"Oh, now we don't even take a man's word for anything."

And Elinor laughed a merry, captivating laugh, which chased away the

IT IS A LONG DISTANCE FROM SHORE.

frowns from Jack's brow. He could never be angry with her for long.

"Suppose we play we are living one hundred years ago," she said, after a minute.

"I'll play anything you like."

"And do anything I like?" she asked, looking at him dubiously.

Her tone was half-serious, half-playful.

"Anything," he replied, firmly—"that is, provided you'll accept that as proof that I love you. I've said all I can, to no avail."

Elinor did not reply nor look up; she was tracing her name in the sand—thinking. She had tried to believe Jack, but somehow, at times, she doubted that he really meant all he said.

He was such a serious sort of fellow, and she—oh, she was frivolous and scatter-brained, according to her own estimate of herself. Why should he love her? And yet, why should he say so if he did not?

At last she covered the sand letters over and looked up.

"Jack," she said, "would you really do anything for me, even if it was silly and—and awfully dangerous, just to prove to me that you like me?"

"Not to prove that I like you, but that I love you—yes."

He laughed a little at her serious face.

"Do you see that big rock out there?" She pointed to a large rock just in the edge of the now low tide.

"I do."

"You know when the tide is high it is a long distance from the shore? The water almost covers it and splashes around it and makes a terrible noise."

"Does it?" he asked, amused.

"Yes; and unless one is a very good swimmer one cannot possibly get in until the tide goes out again, if one is caught out there. It would be awful to stay there all night."

Elinor shivered at the very thought of it. Should she go on?

"And what then? Who ever stayed out there all night?" he asked, knowing well what was coming.

"Why—why, nobody." She hesitated. "Would you do it?"

"Do you ask me to?" He looked at her intently. She was building a pyramid of sand.

"I—I'd believe you if you did," she said, at length, and looking into his eyes to see how he would receive the suggestion.

"And you'd like to believe me, Elinor? Tell me that—but no, don't! I'll do it. Are we not living a hundred years ago?"

Elinor wished, now that she had promised to do it, that she had not asked it. Suppose a storm should come up and the waves should dash over the rock and sweep him off and—and he was not able to swim far enough to reach shore!

"Jack," she said, a little nervously, "let's move forward a hundred years; I don't like the old times. I—I might believe you."

But Jack would not pass over the century so quickly. He would do as she had asked him; he would spend the night on the big rock, and then she might believe.

* * * * * * *

Elinor sat in the window of their summer cottage on the shore and watched the tide come in, wave by wave. One by one the shadows fell, and the figure out on the rock became less and less distinct. At last she had to go out to the beach to see it at all.

Higher and higher grew the water-mark about the rock, and yet the figure did not move; it sat on the topmost point, looking out over the sound.

At last it was too dark to see the figure on the rock, and Elinor walked up and down the beach in front of the cottage. She was supposed to have retired, but somehow it seemed so useless to pretend to sleep.

She wondered if the ladies in the centuries long ago slept on as usual while their knights were in danger. Oh, she wished to-morrow would come, when she might live again in the twentieth century.

The searchlight of a passing cruiser was thrown on the rock, and by its light she could see the waves break about the ragged edges.

Running close to the water's edge, she looked up and down for a skiff, one of the old flat boats she and Jack so often fished in. Finding one far up on the shore, she dragged it down to the water and jumped in.

Stroke by stroke she pulled out towards the big rock, but the tide was strong and the boat heavy. It seemed hours before she came near it.

"Jack, Jack!" she called. "I'm—— Oh, it's such hard pulling."

"Elinor!" was all Jack said, as he took hold of the rope with one hand and hers with the other. The place was not nearly so rough as it had looked from a distance.

"Jump in," she said.

"But the night hasn't begun yet," he replied, still standing on the rock.

"What?" she almost gasped. "I thought it must surely be morning, and that it was never going to get light."

"It's only eleven, and that wasn't late one hundred years ago."

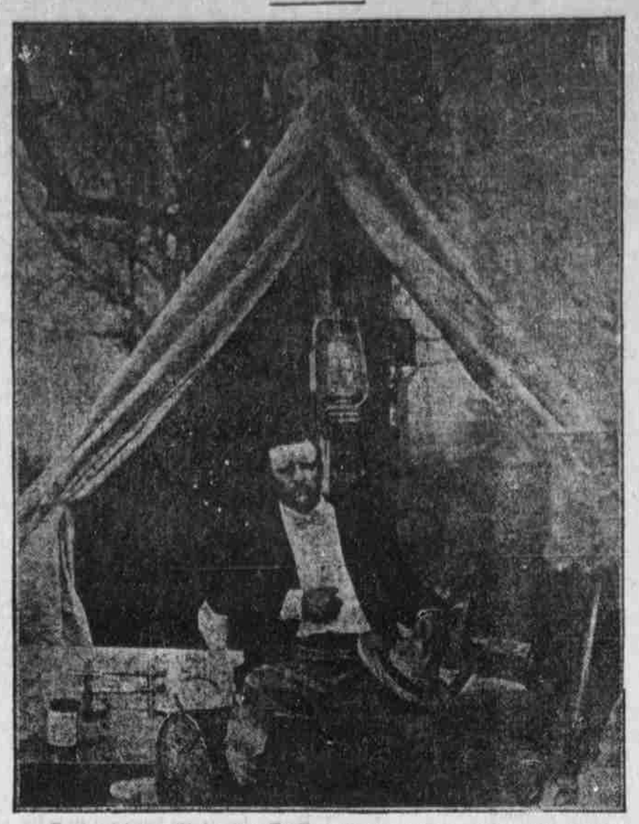
"Get in, Jack," she said, impatiently. She hoped no one was on the shore to see.

"I would, 'if I but knew,'" he said, meaningly.

"Then know, Jack, and do come."

As Jack walked home from the little cottage that night he thought one hundred years was the shortest space of time imaginable. He broke into a happy whistle, "If I but knew, if I but knew!"—Philadelphia Telegraph.

MR. ROOSEVELT AND HIS NEW WHITE HOUSE.



Tent which will be the Ex-President's home during his African expedition.

VERTICAL TRANSPORTATION.

Twice as Many Folks Carried in Elevators as on Lateral Lines.

Vertical transportation in New York has reached enormous proportions, and according to a paper recently read before the Electrical Engineering Society of Columbia University, twice as many people are carried vertically as are carried horizontally every twenty-four hours, says the New York Sun.

Taking twenty-six of the large office buildings in the lower part of the borough of Manhattan, all of eighteen floors or over, this authority states, we find a total of 572 floors in all, aggregating a height of approximately one and one-third miles. In these twenty-six buildings there are 116 express elevators traveling an aggregate distance of 275 miles an hour and averaging 243,000 passengers a day. These same twenty-six buildings have 115 local elevators running approximately the same number of car miles an hour, but carrying about 372,000 passengers a day. This makes a total of 231 elevators running 4,400 miles, carrying a total of 615,000 passengers a day.

Taking the 8,000 elevators used exclusively to carry passengers in the borough of Manhattan and dividing them into groups, allowing for the number of persons carried, we find that they transport approximately 6,500,000 passengers a day. From the last report of the public service commission we learn that only 3,500,000 are carried a day by surface, elevated and subway cars in the entire city of Greater New York.

No Longer in Control.

Knicker—Did Jones lost control of his auto?

Bocker—Entirely; his chauffeur won't let him use it at all.

SUCCESS OF DES MOINES PLAN; CITY RULED BY A COMMISSION

IOWA'S law authorizing the establishment of commission government in cities of 25,000 or more population, which has been very successful in its first year of trial by Des Moines, according to reports from that city, was enacted by the Legislature in the spring of 1907. Applying to eight cities by virtue of the population clause, it was instituted in Des Moines, a city of 75,000 inhabitants, soon after the Supreme Court of Iowa, in February, 1908, upheld its constitutionality without a dissenting opinion, and has become widely known as "the Des Moines plan." In its general features the plan provides for a method of city government that has been tried, with good results, for several years in Houston and Galveston, Tex.

Instead of a mayor and a board of aldermen or councilmen, the "Des Moines plan" makes the governing power of a city a commission consisting of a mayor and four councilmen. Large powers are combined in the commission, which makes the local laws and executes them through a division of authority whereby each member of the commission becomes the head of a department. These departments are as follows: Public affairs, accounts and finances, public safety, including fire and health; parks and public property, public improvements.

The Iowa law may be adopted by any city within the State having sufficient population, which makes it eligible for eight cities. Cedar Rapids has followed the example of Des Moines and has elected to try it. If 10 per cent of the voters of an eligible city petition for the purpose an election must be held to decide whether the city shall adopt the law. A majority of the voters may adopt it or may drop it after trial. Initiative and referendum provisions form an important part of the law. At the demand of 25 per cent of the voters there must be a referendum on any action of the commission, positive or negative, and the decision of the majority of voters at the referendum election is made binding on the mayor and councilmen. All ordinances granting franchises must be submitted to the voters for adoption or rejection. Sessions of the commission must be public.

To judge from the reports from Des Moines, the plan has been especially effective in financial and police matters. For the second year in its history, it is said, the city has lived within its income, having a surplus of about $20,000, instead of a deficit of $50,000 or more. The five members of the commission have been paid $3,000 each, whereas councilmen were formerly paid $250 each, but it is estimated that business methods of administration have saved more than the $15,000 total cost of the commission. Every department of the government has been reorganized; sinecures have been abolished, and it is even stated that "there are no more political jobs." Streets have been kept clean, better lighted at less cost, and paving contracts have been carried out in the spirit and the letter of the contract. Each commissioner takes personal pride in his department and feels personal responsibility for it.