

## Two Kinds of Rough Diamond

By F. A. MITCHEL

The author sat in his study dancing the characters of his imagination, as a Punch and Judy showman sits under his mimic stage working his puppets, when a card was sent up to him bearing the name John Remington.

Now, John Remington was the name the author had used in his last novel. He knew no real person of that name, for he had found the name in a telephone directory. Why had this person called to see him? He was curious to learn. He directed that he be shown into his study.

The imaginary John Remington, hero of "An Uncut Diamond," was a bluff but honest countryman who had married the daughter of a farmer. They had quarreled soon after the wedding, and the wife had left her husband to go to the city to make her own living. When the real John Remington entered he appeared to the novelist to be of that class from which the character had been taken.

"I'm not going to take up your time, sir," said the man, "or beat about the bush. It's no concern of mine how you got hold of my story or what influenced you as to the version you gave of it in your novel. You made me out a brute, and I suppose I am one. It's my misfortune to have been made that way. What I want to know is where I can find my wife."

The novelist gathered that to a coincidence in name and another in having hit on an actual story (or something like it) for the subject matter of his novel this man's call was due.

"You say that I have pictured you as a brute. Wherein, may I ask, have I made you brutal?"

"Well, first off, I should have given in as soon as I got married. There's no use of a husband tryin' to have his way with his wife. It's not in reason."

"Why so?"

"Cause there's no reason in a woman. She ain't made that way."

"How is she made?"

"Why, jest as you made Peggy. Only since you didn't get the whole story there's lots of things you left out."

"Name some of them."

"Well, Peg never could learn that if a little thing annoyed me she'd better let it alone. She'd keep on doin' it jest the same as if I hadn't shown her a dozen times that it annoyed me. Then she'd give up to me in a heap o' small things that I didn't set store by, then come down on me for one big thing that was mighty important. When I balked she would throw up at me all the 'sacrifices' she had made for me, mentionin' things I hadn't wanted."

"Why, then, do you consider yourself brutal in having objected to this course?"

"Why, because Peg was made that way. All women are."

"And weren't you made your way?"

"You mean a brute? Of course I was. What does a brute need but a tamer? What does a ship need but a rudder? Don't you suppose that if a ship had life in it it would object to bein' turned this way and that way by that contemptible little thing at its stern? But where would the ship go without the rudder? On the rocks, of course. That's where I've gone."

"How have you gone on the rocks?"

"Why, I've got so confounded much of my way that I don't know what to do with it."

"And you wish to find your wife to ask her to come back and tyrannize over you some more?"

"That's my job."

"And you propose to knuckle down and give her her own way in everything?"

"You bet."

The novelist paused in his questions and was very thoughtful. He had written a novel of 400,000 words to show what a fine fellow his imaginary rough diamond was, and the real rough diamond had knocked the statue he had built up off its pedestal in a few minutes.

"Reckon you ain't got a wife?" continued Mr. Remington.

"No; I haven't."

"I reckon you hadn't."

"Why so?"

"Waal, Peg did a lot o' things in your book that she never did to home, and didn't do a lot o' things that she did do to home, and with a vengeance."

"Mr. Remington," said the author after another pause, "I owe you an apology for having told your story wrong."

"Just so."

"And I owe myself an apology for having spent a year and a half telling it and the public an apology for having taken up its time reading a lot of rot. I don't know where your wife is, but if you'll give me what clew you have, if any, I'll help you find her."

"That's fair enough. I always like to see a man own up when he's in the wrong."

Mr. Remington had a clew which he gave to the novelist, who eventually found the rough diamond's wife. There was another dialogue in the former's study in which he essayed to prove to her that her husband would be an easy man thereafter to live with, and she returned to him.

Later Mr. Remington made the author another call.

"I came to tell you I got my own way, after all," he said.

"How did you do it?"

"My wife's so confounded contrary that when I offered to give in to her she wouldn't have it."

### Modern Seamen.

The new ship has transformed the sailor with itself. He works among a subtle and intricate network of machinery. His brain is quickened by the effort to understand the new forces and appliances that he controls. He is drawn no longer from the lower strata of the population of our ports, but in increasing proportions from the ranks of skilled mechanics. The electricians and machinists, who are the aristocracy of the crew, bring with them the notions which prevail among the aristocracy of labor out of uniform. They possess more reading and more science than did nine out of ten of the officers in the old days. They have a respect for themselves and their class, which has revolutionized the morals and manners of the modern warship. The gradual reform of the service regulations has sought to keep pace with this transformation, and officers have been educated in a wholly new conception of their relationship to their men. The bullying and hectoring which was the rule of the sea in the old days is today the rare exception. Instinct and "good form" condemn that kind of thing as severely as the regulations.—Nation.

### If an Ant Were as Big as a Man.

An ant can carry a grain of corn ten times the weight of its body, while a man or horse can carry loads only about equal to its bodily weight. It is not a fact, however, that the ant is greatly superior in strength. If an ant should grow to twice its original size, still retaining its geometrical and histological structure, its volume, and accordingly the weight of its body, would increase eightfold. Although the muscles grow to twice their original dimensions, the increase in length does not increase the strength, which is proportional to their cross section, and the ant would only be four times as strong as before. As it now carries but five times its weight, however, it is relatively only half as strong. It is calculated that the same ant developed to the size of a man would only be able to carry one one-hundredth of its own weight instead of ten times its own weight.

### Thrashing Wheat in Cyprus.

The ancient Roman tribulum, as used for thrashing, may still be seen in the island of Cyprus. It is a board about six feet long and two feet wide, studded with sharp edged flakes of flint. In use it is dragged by oxen or donkeys over the corn spread out on the hard earthen thrashing floor, separating the grain and at the same time bruising and chopping up the straw. Thrashing time is enjoyed alike by children and animals, the former riding on the primitive implement and the latter gorging themselves with a hearty meal. For in Cyprus the Biblical command, "Thou shalt not muzzle the ox that treadeth out the corn," is still faithfully observed. Although the government offers to thrash by machine at nominal cost, the conservative Cypriote prefers the old method. He says that the animals will not eat machine chaffed straw, and straw they must eat, for there is no hay in Cyprus.—Wide World Magazine.

### First Fiction Known.

The "Tale of Two Brothers," written 3,200 years ago by the Theban scribe Ennana, librarian of the palace to King Merenptah, the supposed Pharaoh of the Exodus, is the oldest work of fiction extant. The tale was written apparently for the entertainment of the crown prince, who subsequently reigned as Seti II. His name appears in two places on the manuscript, probably the only surviving autograph signatures of an Egyptian king. This piece of antique fiction, written on nineteen sheets of papyrus in a bold hieratic hand, was purchased in Italy by Mme. d'Orbigny, who sold it in 1857 to the authorities of the British museum, where it is now known as the D'Orbigny papyrus.

### The Master's Voice.

"We have come," said the chairman of the committee, "to ask you to take this nomination. The city needs a man like you—strong, brave, self made, self reliant, owning no master, fearing no man."

The great man was visibly touched. "I'll not deny," said he, "that your kind words have shaken my resolution. I trust that, if elected, I may justify your confidence and prove that I am indeed strong, brave, self reliant; that I own no master and fear no man. Suppose you wait a minute till I see if my wife will let me accept?"—New York Times.

### Coarse and Fine.

The finer the nature the more flaws will it show through the clearness of it. The best things are seldomest seen in their best form. The wild grass grows well and strongly one year with another, but the wheat is by reason of its greater nobleness liable to a bitter blight.

### Trademarked.

"If my little brother Willie ever gets lost we can easily find him," said small Eloise.

"How, pray?" queried the visitor.

"He's got a strawberry trademark on his right arm," was the reply.—Chicago News.

### Health Recipe.

One time a man asked the poet Longfellow how to be healthy, and this is the answer he received:

Joy, temperance and repose  
Slam the door on the doctor's nose.

### Lieutenant.

The word "lieutenant" means, literally, "holding the place." Thus a lieutenant colonel holds the place of a colonel.

## A WIG IN WARTIME

By DONALD CHAMBERLIN

In the spring of 1914 I joined the European invasion of American tourists and made Germany my stamping ground. Before leaving home I sent to Washington for a passport, for, though at the time there was not much prospect of using one, I preferred to be provided. The document described me as Edward Boyer, aged thirty-one, five feet eight inches high, eyes, hair and complexion dark.

In Berlin I contracted typhoid fever, and when I recovered my hair fell out, leaving my skull as polished as a piece of ivory.

On the 28th of July the bomb of the European war exploded and I was admonished that if I wanted to get out of the war zone and back home I must bestir myself. I had not yet recovered my strength, but I was due in America on the 18th of August and resolved to start at once.

The first thing needed was a wig. I sallied forth to get one, having just an hour before the train on which I was to leave would start. This gave me about twenty minutes to procure a hair head covering. I found a place where such things were sold, but unfortunately the only wig they had that would fit my head was of an auburn hue. There was no other place to procure one within a dozen blocks. I looked at my watch and saw that I had just ten minutes to get the train. I paid for the auburn wig, clapped it on my head and started for the station.

I was on the last passenger train to leave Berlin. The war was brand new to me, but not to the Germans, who were prepared for it. Two things especially I had not considered, for I had not heard of them—the Germans' spy system and their methods of detecting their enemy's spies.

I was brought to my senses by seeing a German officer come through the train examining passports. I had mine in a hand bag, got it out and had it ready when the man reached me. He read the description, looked at me, and, noticing my red wig, his expression changed at once to one of fierceness. He said something to us in German that I did not understand and, calling some soldiers, turned me over to them for safe keeping, then went his way through the train.

An American gentleman who understood German announced to me the unpleasant information that I had been arrested as a French spy. He had heard the officer say that the passport I traveled on belonged to one having a French name and that it described a black headed man, while I was a red headed man. Never had there been a more barefaced attempt to carry information out of Germany for the use of an enemy.

Here was a pretty pass. In my hurry to get away I had forgotten my passport, or, rather, I had thus far not been required to show it, and it had not occurred to me that the document would be now required.

When we reached a city—I didn't know what city—I was taken from the train and conducted to the headquarters of an officer who, I judged by the respect paid him, was of high rank. He received me with a lowering brow, read the description in my passport and, looking at my wig, said what by his expression I judged to mean, "Take him out and shoot him."

The soldiers advanced to take me. In a fit of desperation I seized my red wig and, throwing it on the floor, trampled on it and cried out, "I am not a red headed man; I am an American citizen."

There must have been something ridiculous in the act, for the officer burst into a laugh. Then an interpreter was called, who translated my story. As soon as it was understood that I was an American and the passport belonged to me I was set at liberty, with an apology. Realizing that my train had gone on, I asked for a permit to travel on a troop train, and one was given me.

I could not endure to travel without my wig, so I retained it. During my journey through Belgium I fell in with a Frenchman with a red head. As soon as we passed into France he gave me his passport, which he no longer needed. Having had so much trouble with my own passport, I decided that possibly I might have use for the other, so I accepted it.

While working my way south toward Paris I was set upon by a party of French spy hunters. Thinking to get rid of them without their noticing the difference in my hair from that laid down in my passport, I used the one given me. Unfortunately a keen eyed fellow noticed how the hair of my wig fell on my neck and, grasping the wig, held it up amid shouts from the others, crying:

"A spy! A spy!"

Again I was taken before an officer—this time a Frenchman, who, on receiving the report of my captors, ordered me out to instant execution. I stood before him with folded arms and uncovered dome and cried in a stentorian voice:

"Je suis Americain!"

I suppose it was the absurdity this time as well as before that saved me. The officer laughed, consented to listen to me, and, since I spoke French tolerably, I told my story, producing my own passport.

And so my life for the second time was saved by mock heroics, and I reached Paris without further trouble.

## One-Tenth Off on Groceries

Beginning December 26th and closing January 13th, we will give a discount of one-tenth off of every article carried in our stock except Butter and Eggs and XXXX Flour. The goods will be sold to you at regular prices and one-tenth deducted from your bill. This discount does not apply to case prices on goods but to the regular broken stock. This is an unusual opportunity to save on the most staple things you buy, so get busy.

## Wilcox Department Store

NORTH PLATTE, NEBRASKA.



Scene from "Today." The first open breach in their household finds the husband supporting his aged parents against his young wife. At the Keith Theatre, Monday January 11th.



## Who Will be the Winner?

That's the question that is uppermost in the minds of about 125 contestants in the Pony Contest and one in which practically 5,000 people in North Platte and tributary country are interested to a greater or less extent. The canvas for votes goes merely on, not only among the contestants who live in town, but by a number who live outside. Only the secretary of the pony contest knows how many votes have been cast, or who is the leading contestant, but he has said that the work of the country the votes is one that consumes much time once in two weeks when the count is made in order to see who wins the watch.

## Where You Can Get Votes.

Business Firms that Give Coupons in Pony Contest.

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| Rush Mercantile Co.                      | Brooks' Studio.                   |
| J. B. McDonald, Clothing.                | Harry Dixon, Jeweler.             |
| Robert Dickey, Bakery and Confectionery. | Coates Lumber and Coal Co.        |
| Dickey's Sanitary Laundry.               | Howe & Maloney, Furniture.        |
| J. S. Davis Automobile Co.               | Block's Ladies' Outfitting Store. |
| Crystal & Keith Theatres.                | Schiller's Drug Stores.           |
| The Semi-Weekly Tribune.                 | Fred Marti Central Meat Market.   |
| The Palace Cafe.                         |                                   |