



CHAPTER I.—Continued.

"Well, sir, I should feel much better if I could go over there into the swirl and smash it out for myself. You see if I could win out alone and pay back the seat price, and then make a pile for myself, if you felt later like giving me another chance to come into the firm, then I should not be laying myself open to the charge of being a mere pensioner on your friendship. You know what I mean, sir, and won't think I am filled with any low-down pride, but if you will let me have the price of a stock exchange seat on my note, and will give me the chance, when I get the hang of the ropes, to handle some of the firm's orders, I shall be just as much beholden to you and Jim, sir, and shall feel a lot better myself."

I knew what Bob meant; so did father, and we were glad enough to do what he asked, father insisting on making the seat price in the form of a present, after explaining to us that a foundation stock exchange rule prohibited an applicant from borrowing the seat price. Four years after Bob Brownley entered the stock exchange he had paid back the forty thousand, with interest, and not only had a snug fifty thousand to his credit on Randolph & Randolph's books, but was sending home six thousand a year while living up to, as he jokingly put it, "an honest man's notch." I may say in passing, that a Wall street man's notch would make twice six thousand yearly earnings cast an uncertain shadow at Christmas time. Bob was the favorite of the exchange, as he had been the pet at school and at college, and had his hands full of business 300 days in the year. Besides Randolph & Randolph's choicest commissions, he had the confidential orders of two of the heavy plunging cliques.

I had just passed my thirty-second birthday when my kind old dad suddenly died. For the previous six years I had been getting ready for such an event; that is, I had grown accustomed to hearing my father say: "Jim, don't let any grass grow in getting the hang of every branch of our business, so that when anything happens to me there will be no disturbance in 'the Street' in regard to Randolph & Randolph's affairs. I want to let the world know as soon as possible that after I am gone our business will run as it always has. So I will work you into my directorships in those companies where we have interests and gradually put you into my different trusteeships."

Thus at father's death there was not a ripple in our affairs and none of the stocks known as "The Randolphs" flattered a point because of that, to the financial world, momentous event. I inherited all of father's fortune other than four millions, which he divided up among relatives and charities, and took command of a business that gave me an income of two millions and a half a year.

Once more I begged Bob to come into the firm.

"Not yet, Jim," he replied. "I've got my seat and about a hundred thousand capital, and I want to feel that I'm free to kick my heels until I have raked together an even million all of my own making; then I'll settle down with you, old man, and hold my handle of the plow, and if some good girl happens along about that time—well, then it will be 'An ivy-colored cot' for mine."

He laughed, and I laughed, too. Bob was looked upon by all his friends as a bad case of woman-shy. No woman, young or old, who had in any way crossed Bob's orbit but had felt that fascination, delicious to all women, in the presence of:

A soul by honor schooled,
A heart by passion ruled—

but he never seemed to see it. As my wife—for I had been three years married and had two little Randolphs to show that both Katherine Blair and I knew what marriage was for—never tired of saying, "Poor Bob! He's woman-blind, and it looks as though he would never get his sight in that direction."

"Then again, Jim," he continued in a tone of great seriousness, "there's a little secret I have never let even you into. The truth is I am not safe yet—not safe to speak for the old house of Randolph & Randolph. Yes, you may laugh—you who are, and always have been, as staunch and steady as the old bronze John Harvard in the yard, you who know Monday mornings just what you are going to do Saturday nights and all the days and nights in between, and who always do it. Jim, I have found since I have been over on

the floor that the southern gambling blood that made by grandfather, on one of his trips back from New York, though he had more land and slaves than he could use, stake his land and slaves—yes, and grandmother's too—on a card game, and—lose, and change the whole face of the Brownley destiny—those same gambling microbes are in my blood, and when they begin to claw and gnaw I want to do something; and, Jim"—and the big brown eyes suddenly shot sparks—"if those microbes ever get unleashed, there'll be mischief to pay on the floor—sure there will!"

Bob's handsome head was thrown back; his thin nostrils dilated as though there was in them the breath of conflict. The lips were drawn across the white teeth with just part enough to show their edges, and in the depths of the eyes was a dark-red blaze that somehow gave the impression one gets in looking down some long avenue of black at the instant a



"Jim if Those Microbes Ever Get Unleashed, There'll be Mischief to Pay on the Floor."

locomotive headlight rounds a curve at night.

Twice before, way back in our college days, I had had a peep at this gambling temper of Bob's. Once in a poker game in our rooms, when a crowd of New York classmates tried to run him out of a hand by the sheer weight of coin. And again at the Pequot house at New London on the eve of a varsity boat race, when a Yale crowd shook a big wad of money and taunts at Bob until with a yell he left his usually well-lead feet and frightened me, whose allowance was dollars to Bob's cents, at the sum total of the bet cards he signed before he cleared the room of Yale money and came to with a white face streaming with cold perspiration. These events had passed out of my memory as the ordinary student breaks that any hot-blooded youth is liable to make in like circumstances. As I looked at Bob that day, while he tried to tell me that the business of Randolph & Randolph would not be safe in his keeping, I had to admit to myself that I was puzzled. I had regarded my old college chum not only as the best mentally harnessed man I had ever met, but I knew him as the soul of honor, that honor of the old story-books, and I could not credit his being tempted to jeopardize unfairly the rights of property of another. But it was habit with me to let Bob have his way, and I did not press him to come into our firm as a full partner.

Five years later, during which time affairs, business and social, had been slipping along as well as either Bob or I could have asked, I was preparing for another sit-down to show my chum that the time had now come for him to help me in earnest, when a queer thing happened—one of those unaccountable incidents that God sometimes sees fit to drop across the life-paths of His children, paths heretofore as straight and far-ahead visible as

highways along which one has never to look twice to see where he is traveling; one of those events that, looked at retrospectively, are beyond all human understanding.

It was a beautiful July Saturday noon and Bob and I had just "packed up" for the day preparatory to joining Mrs. Randolph or my yacht for a run down to our place at Newport. As we stepped out of his office one of the clerks announced that a lady had come in and had particularly asked to see Mr. Brownley.

"Who the deuce can she be, coming in at this time on Saturday, just when all alive men are in a rush to shake the heat and dirt of business for food and the good air of all outdoors?" growled Bob. Then he said, "Show her in."

Another minute and he had his answer.

A lady entered.

"Mr. Brownley?" She waited an instant to make sure he was the Virginian.

Bob bowed.

"I am Beulah Sands, of Sands Landing, Virginia. Your people know our people, Mr. Brownley, probably well enough for you to place me."

"Of the Judge Lee Sands?" asked Bob, as he held out his hand.

"I am Judge Lee Sands' oldest daughter," said the sweetest voice I had ever heard, one of those mellow, rippling voices that start the imagination on a chase for a mocking bird, only to bring it up at the pool beneath the brook-fall in quest of the harp of moss and watercresses that sends a bubbling cadence into its eddies and swirls. Perhaps it was the

slender column sprung less graciously from the lovely lines of the breast and shoulders beneath. It was on the face, however, and finally on the eyes that one's glances inevitably lingered—the face rose-tinted, with dimples in either of the full cheeks, entering laughing protest against the sad droop that brought slightly down the corners of a mouth too large perhaps for beauty, if the coral curve of the lips had been less exquisitely perfect. The straight, thin-nostriled nose, the broad forehead, the square, full jaw almost as low at the points where they come beneath the ears as at the chin, suggested dignity and high resolve coupled with a power of purpose, rare in woman. The combination of forehead, jaw, and nose was seldom seen. Had it been possessed by a man it would surely have driven him to the tented field for his profession. But the greatest glory of Beulah Sands was her eyes—large, full, very gray, very blue, vivid with all the glamour of her personality, full of smiles and tears and spirituality and passion; one instant, frankly innocent, they illuminated the face of a blonde Madonna; the next, seen through the extraordinary, long, jet-black eyelashes underneath the finely penciled black brows, they caressed, coquetted, allured. I afterward found much of this girl's purely physical fascination lay in this strange blending of English fairness with Andalusian tints, though the abiding quality of her charm was surely in an exaltation of spirit of which she might make the dullest conscious. As she stood looking at Bob in my office that long-ago noon, gracefully at ease in a suit of gray, with a gray-feathered turban on her head, and tiny lace bands at neck and wrist, she was very exquisite, exceedingly dainty, and, though southerner of southerners, very unlike the typical brunette girl who comes out of Dixie land.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

CHURN FOR A HEAD PIECE.

Piece of Mischief That Might Have Had Fatal Results.

Nearly everyone has heard of the man whose dog got his head caught in a pitcher into which he had thrust it after a taste of the milk at the bottom. The man cut the dog's head off to save the pitcher and then broke the pitcher to get the dog's head out. An incident with almost similar features occurred in the little village of Stanton, N. C., the other day. The children of Mr. Uriah Bumgarner were playing on the porch of their home when a small daughter picked up a churn, one of the old-fashioned kind with a large bottom and a small opening, and in a spirit of mischief placed it upside down over the head of her two-year-old brother, who was sitting on the floor. The little girl accidentally dropped the churn and down it went over the head of the child, who began to yell. The father and several neighbors ran up and found that the boy had turned his chin upward and the churn could not be removed. The upturned bottom of the churn finally had to be sawed off before the child could be released, and the little chap emerged from his unique head covering almost dead from fright.

The Fox as a Decoy.

Some 30 years ago a tame fox was kept at the Berkeley Castle duck decoy in Gloucestershire, England. This animal understood the whole art of decoying wild-duck, and showing himself to the duck, widgeon, and teal on the decoy lake, used, by waving his tail and moving gently to and fro, to attract the attention of the curious fowl. The birds were fascinated by the fox's motions, and, following him up the decoy pipe, fell easy victims to the concealed fowler. It is a well-known fact that the old decoy fowlers invariably secured, if they were able, a red dog, as near in color to a fox as possible, for the difficult part of decoying duck from the pool to the netted pipe.

Forrest's Principle.

Here is a brief summing up of Gen. N. R. Forrest: "He was a man of humble birth and little education, a trader in slaves and mules, grave, silent, unobtrusive, but possessed of military genius of a high order. As a leader of cavalry he was unequalled and knew no fear. During his service he was destined to take part in 129 actions, and to have 27 horses shot under him. In one terse sentence he summed up his art of war: 'To git thar first with the most men.'—From the 'Appeal to Arms and the Civil War.'"

"Pilgrim's Progress" on Stage.

A dramatic version of Bunyan's "Pilgrim's Progress" has been presented at the Imperial theater, London. The ten scenes, which are said to have been finely staged, were accompanied by old English music, and the whole production was a great success.

Foolish Question.

A magazine writer asks: "Why do men wear suspenders?" Well, in our case, old chap, they feel a whole lot better than a rope.

IGNORANT CITY BOY

MIGHT HAVE LEARNED MUCH FROM COUNTRY COUSIN.

At Least One Trick With Horses That He Was Not Familiar With—No Problem for Man Who Knew.

A city boy. He was playing in the street when the rubber ball he was tossing slipped from his hands and landed just back of the off hind foot of a big gray horse attached to a truck and standing patiently by the curb awaiting further orders.

The boy made several furtive reaches to recover the ball, but its actual possession involved close proximity to that massive leg and iron shod hoof he hesitated. A rapid search of surrounding territory resulted in the finding of a piece of stick about six inches long.

Its length was disproportionate to the danger zone, but the boy's sense of peril decreased as his anxiety grew at the possible loss of his plaything. He made a quick jab with the stick, but succeeded only in striking the animal's hock, causing it to prance indignantly.

A second attempt and the horse's shoe was struck. The big gray started forward. The youngster barely had time to jump out of the way of the front wheel. Then the animal, with innate cussedness, backed up again and in so doing placed his hoof on the ball and pinned it to the ground.

Frightened by his close call from injury and grieving for the loss of his plaything the boy looked around uncertain whether to laugh or cry. Just at that juncture a tall, broad shouldered man with whiskers of the hay-seed variety turned the corner.

He saw the boy's final attempt to recover the ball and his narrow escape from injury. Two strides and he was beside his victim.

"Ain't you got no sense?" he demanded. "Want to get run over or have your brains kicked out?"

In a few sentences the boy explained the situation and pointed to the ball. The big man patted the horse on the flank, spoke a few soothing words to the animal and ran his hand deftly and pettingly down the leg until he reached the hock.

"Hist, boy, hist," he commanded, and the animal, accustomed to frequent examinations of the hoof, obediently lifted its leg.

With his free hand the big man extracted the ball from its resting place and tossed it to the lad, who ungratefully scampered away without waiting to thank his benefactor.

"Beats thunder how these city kids don't know nothin' about horses!" said the big man disgustedly as he dusted off his hands and resumed his way.

She Caught the Idea.

The teacher of a public school class of little girls had been endeavoring to impress upon her pupils the significance of the comparative and superlative degrees.

"For example," she said, "here is a coin that is bright. Here is one that is brighter—which is comparative. Then, here is one that is brightest—which is superlative."

After using several other illustrations she asked for voluntary contributions that would demonstrate comprehension on the point, and a golden-haired child promptly rose in her place.

"I know," said she. "This is one: Sick—worse—dead."

"Recess," said the teacher.

Norway's Wooden Churches.

Some of the wooden churches of Norway are fully 700 years old and are still in an excellent state of preservation. Their timbers have successfully resisted the frosty and almost Arctic winters because they have been repeatedly coated with tar.

Buys a Motor Car as He Buys a Hat.

It's nice to be able to buy an automobile as you would a hat. Some people will tell you that it is impossible, that there are none ready for immediate delivery. Yet according to first rate authority an American in Paris walked into an agency and looked about him with the following result.

"That's a well-appearing Mercedes, 45-horse power?"

"Yes, sir."

"What's the price?"

"Thirty-five thousand francs."

"Good machine? Works well?"

"Yes, sir."

"Accept my check for it."

"Yes, sir."

"Sure it's a real good Mercedes?"

"None better."

"Very well, I'll take it. I'll make out the check now."

And, he did.

The Alabama legislature will presently consider a bill providing that any person who carries a pistol must take out a license and wear a neat metal badge with the word "Armed" thereon.