

The Plunderers

BY C. J. CUTLIFFE HYNÉ.

CHAPTER III.

REQUIREMENTS OF MR. SHELF.

Mr. Theodore Shelf went to drag Cambel off there and then to his own business room on the first floor to discuss further this great object which he had in his head, but Cambel thought it to remain where he was. Mr. Shelf nodded significantly toward the newcomers, as much as to hint that a third person with them would be distinctly an inconvenient third. Cambel turned to them, cue in hand, and proposed a game of snooker.

"That's precisely what we came up for," said Amy Rivers promptly. "Hamilton, get out the balls. Mr. Cambel, will you put the billiard balls away, so that they don't get mixed?"

They played and talked merrily. Their conversation turned on the wretched show at the recent Academy, which they agreed was a disgrace to a civilized country, and Cambel made himself interesting over the art of painting in Paris, mural, facial and on canvas. When he chose, he could be very interesting, this man London had nicknamed the great traveler, and he generally chose, not being ill-natured.

Mr. Theodore Shelf left the billiard room with a feeling beneath his waistcoat much akin to seasickness. First of all that plain spoken Patrick Cambel had not over-politely hinted that he was a canting hypocrite and had showed cause for arriving at this conclusion. This was true, but that didn't make it any the more digestive. And, secondly, he himself in a moment of excitement had let drop to this same pernicious Cambel (who, after all, was a comparative stranger) a proposal to make the sum of £500,000 at one coup. True, he had not mentioned the means, but Cambel had at once concluded it was to be gained by robbery, and he, Theodore Shelf, had not denied the implication.

Consequently Mr. Shelf went direct to his own room, locked the door and fortified his nerves with a liberal two fingers of brandy. Then he munched a coffee bean in defiance to the blue ribbon on his coat lapel, replaced the cognac bottle in the inner drawer of his inner safe and sat down to think.

If only he had understood Cambel, and, better still, knew whether he might trust him! There was a fortune to be had. Yes, a fortune. And it was wanted badly. The great firm of Marmaduke Rivers & Shelf, which called itself "Agents to the Oceanic Steam Transport Company," but which really ran the line of steamers, had a ribbon under the flag, might work prosperous to the outer eye and might still rear its head haughtily among the first shipping firms of London port. But the man who bragged aloud that he might trust him! He had mortgaged his name in every direction, mortgages so cunningly hidden that only he himself was aware of their vast total. He knew that the firm was rotten, lock, stock and barrel. He knew that through any one of twenty channels, breaking through might come any day, and following on the heels of that, a smash which would be none the less devastating effects it would live down into history.

He, Theodore Shelf, would assuredly not be in England to face it. Since his commercial barometer had reached "stormy" and still showed signs of steady descent he had been transmitting carefully modulated notes to certain South American banks and had even gone so far as to purchase—under a nom d'escroc—a picturesquely situated hacienda on the upper waters of the Rio Paraguay.

There, in case the cyclone broke, the tradition treaties would cease to trouble him, and the weary swindler would be at well fed rest.

But Mr. Theodore Shelf had no lust for this tropical retirement. He liked the powers of his present pinnacle in the city, and he loved the life which he wore among the improving young men. And, moreover, that howl of execration from every class of society, which would make up his paeon of defeat was an opera which he very naturally shrank from being broken through.

As he thought of these things he hugged closer to him the wire haired fox terrier which sat upon his lap.

"George, old friend," said Mr. Shelf, "if things do go wrong, believe you're the only thing in England which won't turn against me."

George sidled up a red tongue and flicked the angle of Mr. Shelf's square chin. Then he retired within himself again and loosed snoring. The door had opened, and Mr. Shelf stood on the mat. There was a profound mutual dislike between George and Mrs. Theodore Shelf.

"You alone, Theodore? I thought Mr. Cambel was here. However, so much the better. I have wanted to speak with you all the morning. Do turn that nasty dog away."

George was not evicted as Mr. Shelf inquired curiously what his wife was pleased to want. She seldom invaded this business room, and when she did it was for a purpose which he was beginning to eschew.

She came to the point at once by handing him a letter which was most likely in cover plate. He read it through with brief, sour comment.

"Hi! Bank! Your private account overdrawn. That's the third time this year, Laura. Warning seems to be no use. You are determined to know what ruin is for?"

"Ruin, pshaw! You don't put me off with that silly tale. To begin with, I don't believe it for an instant, and even if it were true I'd rather be ruined than retrench. You and I can afford to be candid to ourselves, Theodore. You know perfectly well that we have gained our position in society purely and solely by purchase."

"To my cost I do know it. But, having paid your entrance fee at least eight times over, I think you might be content with an ordinary subscription. That ball last night for instance?"

"Was necessary. And I couldn't afford to do the thing otherwise than gorgeously."

"Gorgeously! Do you think I'm Croesus, Laura, to pay for gearing one room with red roses, and another with pink and another room with Marshall Niels for foils to flit in during one short night? This morning's paper informs me that those flowers came by special express from Nice and cost £500."

"And yet you twit me with extravagance! All the papers have got in that paragraph, as I took care they should, and everybody will read it. Yet the flowers only cost a paltry £200, so that in credit I am £260 to the good, because I have clearly given the ball of the season. Theodore, you are short-sighted. You are a fool in your own profit. By myself I shall make you a bankrupt this year, and if you had only worked in your own interests half as hard as I have, you could have come to £1000 in a fortnight."

"There's a lie, St. I. primly, for people of our class are only given for direct business in almshouses or pic-

ture galleries or political clubs. Before they are bestowed a crown censor satisfies himself that one's financial condition is broad and absolutely sound. There are reasons connected with those matters which block you further and further from being 'mildly' every day."

Mrs. Shelf shrugged her shoulders in utter unbelief. "Your preaching tends to make me like a porcupine, Theodore. It seems as though you never drop the conventional and the pleasure of pointing a moral at one. Believe me, it isn't a paying speculation, this cant of yours. At the most, it gives you a trumpery knighthood for it. But go your own way and I'll go mine—you shall be made in spite of yourself."

Mrs. Shelf noticed that at this point her husband's eyes were beginning to glow with dull fury. She objected to scenes, and dropping the subject reverted once more to her present needs.

"However, let us drop this wrangle and come to business. I wish you to see to that impertinent circular in the bank. I have several checks out and unrepresented. I absolutely must draw others today for trifles which will add up to about a thousand. You must see that they are honored. It is all your fault, this trumpery knightly about nothings. You should not try to screw me down to such a niggardly allowance."

She stood up, and the dog on his lap leaped hurriedly to the ground, growling. "Woman!" she said passionately, "if you won't believe me, if you will go on in this extravagance, you will soon learn for yourself that I am not lying, perhaps very soon—perhaps tomorrow. When a shameful bankruptcy does come, then you can play your hand as you please. I shall not be here to hinder you any longer. Where I shall go to, how I shall lead my new life, which will be my partner, are matters which you will be allowed no fingers in. So long as things last here I shall observe all the conventionalities, and if you appreciate those you will find it wise to reconsider your present ways. I tell you candidly that the dog does go down to the outer eye and might still rear its head haughtily among the first shipping firms of London port. But the man who bragged aloud that he might trust him! He had mortgaged his name in every direction, mortgages so cunningly hidden that only he himself was aware of their vast total. He knew that the firm was rotten, lock, stock and barrel. He knew that through any one of twenty channels, breaking through might come any day, and following on the heels of that, a smash which would be none the less devastating effects it would live down into history."

There was a new look on the clean shaven face which she had never seen before and an evil glint in the eyes which scared her. Irresolutely she moved toward the door and put her fingers upon the handle. Then she drew herself up and stared him up and down with a look of forced contempt.

"You will be good enough," she said coldly, "to attend to the business which I have in hand. I am going now to draw the checks I spoke about."

She looked at her very curiously. "Go," he said, "and do as you please. You are a determined woman, and because I am determined myself I attempt to do the same. I am going to the bank, and I shall murder you before I leave England."

Mrs. Shelf laughed derisively, but with pale lips, and then she opened the door. The dog advanced toward her slowly, stiff legged, muttering.

"What fine heroism!" she said. "But thanks for saving my balance. It is a written thing that I must have that money."

She passed through the door, closing it gently behind her, and Shelf returned to the food table, and if it does not I'll let you know with surprising promptness. And, again, if we don't trade, you may rely on me not to gossip about what you suggest. I'm not the stone throwing variety of animal. You see, I live in a sort of semi-green house myself."

There was a minute's pause, during which Theodore Shelf shifted about as though his chair was uneven rock beneath him. Then he jerked out his tale sentence by sentence, squinting sideways at his companion between each period.

"You know, I'm a shipowner in a large way of business?"

Cambel nodded.

"Ship's occasionally lost at sea—steamers, even new steamers straight off the builders' slip and well found in every particular."

"So I've read in the newspapers."

"And every shipowner insures his vessels. I've got large hands, and I believe I could grab enough in the general scramble to suit even her."

"As it is, however, with neither earthquake nor revolution probable, I'm a desperate man, ready to take any desperate chance of commercial salvation."

CHAPTER IV.

BIMETALLISM.

It was late in the evening when Patrick Cambel again found himself en tete-a-tete with his host. There had been people in to dinner at the house in Park lane, but these had gone, and Mrs. Shelf and Amy Rivers followed them to parties elsewhere. Mrs. Shelf had wished to carry Cambel also in her train, but that person stayed behind by a request which he could not very well refuse. "You will favor me very much by remaining here for the rest of the evening," Mr. Cambel, Shelf had said in his pompous way. "I have matters of the greatest moment I wish to discuss with you."

"I hardly know how to begin," Shelf confessed uneasily when they were alone.

"Then let me make a suggestion," said Cambel, with a laugh. "Come to the point at once. Let's have the plot without any introductory chapters. You've told me you've got a scheme on hand for turning my discovery into a currency, and you've rather hinted it's a dirty scheme. The only question is how dirty. I'm not an overparticular person. But on points I'm very squeamish, or, in other words, I saw the line somewhere. Unless I'm very vastly mistaken, your plan will involve one in downright knavery, which is a thing all sensible men avoid if possible. Now, in my ignorance I fancied the find might be turned to account without climbing down to that."

"Oh," said Shelf eagerly, "then you had a scheme in your head before you came for me?"

The other shrugged his shoulders and lit a cigar.

"Just a dim outline—nothing more. You see the interior of the Everglades is absolutely untouched by the white man's tongue. It was vaguely supposed to be one vast lake, with one of siline and mangroves. The lake was reported as too shallow for boats and abounding with levers, agues and mosquitoes. Consequently it remained unexplored, and on the end of the Florida peninsula today no white man, barring myself and one or two others, has ever got farther than five or eight miles from the coast."

"Now I've told you I was lucky enough to hit upon a fine deep ship channel going in as far as the center

line, and I don't know how far behind the line. There's a good fertile country, a healthy climate and the best game preserve on this earth. For the first comes that interior will be just a sportsman's paradise."

"My idea is twofold. First sell the cream of the sport. Some men will give anything for shooting, and in this case there will also be the glamour of being pioneers. Each one will start determined to write a book of his opinions on things which he gets back. By chartering steamers and treating them on board they would have sporting de luxe. One ought to get five and twenty chaps at 500 guineas apiece."

"That gives the first crop. For the second buy up an enormous tract of the land, which can be got for half nothing—say, 10 or 15 cents an acre—boom it and resell it in lots to Jugginses. They'll fancy they'll grow oranges, as all Englishmen do who try Florida. Perhaps they may grow 'em, who knows, if they keep off whiskey and put in work? But that won't be the promoter's concern. They don't advertise that the land will produce oranges. They only guarantee that it would if it were given a chance, and that's all correct."

"Perhaps this is rough on the Jugginses, but as they crowd the British islands in droves, and are always on the lookout for some one to shear them, I don't see why an Everglades company shouldn't have their fleeces as well as anybody else. They're mostly wasters and wouldn't do any good anywhere, and it's a patriotic deed to cart them over our boundary ditch away from local mischief. Besides even if the worst comes to the worst for the orange industry of Florida still refuses to make headway, the will-be growers needn't starve. Nor need they even do what they'll probably hate more, and that is to grow the sweet potato, tobacco and mullet and tobacco to be got, and if that diet doesn't cook, a man can have it there for mighty little exertion."

"Come, now. What do you think of it?"

"Much capital would be needed."

Cambel shrugged his shoulders. "Some, naturally, or I shouldn't have come to you. If I'd seen any way to pouching all the plunder single handed, you might have been my partner. Mr. Theodore Shelf, I shouldn't have invited you into partnership."

"Returns, too, would be very slow."

"Not necessarily. Float the company and then turn it over to another company for cash down."

"Moreover, when the—er—the young men you spoke about found that the orange groves did not produce at once in paying quantities, they would write home, and their parents would denounce me in the papers as a swindler."

"No, not you, the other company—the one you sold it to. But then apologists would arise to show that the Jugginses—don't shy at the word, sir—were lazy and ignorant, and also that they abused toward the country in excessive quantities. And then that company could smile smugly and pose as a misunderstood benefactor. So its profits wouldn't be embezzled in the least. Grasp that?"

"Yes, I grasp that you have worked it all out to yourself and thought out the details so many times that the whole scheme seems entirely plausible. But, looking at it from the view of a business man, I cannot say that it appears to be an enterprise I should care to embark in. You see, it is so very much beyond the scope of my general operations that I—er—hesitate—er—you understand I hesitate—"

"Yes," said Patrick Cambel, quietly, "you hesitate because you've got something ten times more profitable up your sleeve."

Shelf started and shivered slightly.

"You may as well be candid and tell me what you are driving at. If it suits me, I'll say so, and if it doesn't I'll let you know with surprising promptness. And, again, if we don't trade, you may rely on me not to gossip about what you suggest. I'm not the stone throwing variety of animal. You see, I live in a sort of semi-green house myself."

There was a minute's pause, during which Theodore Shelf shifted about as though his chair was uneven rock beneath him. Then he jerked out his tale sentence by sentence, squinting sideways at his companion between each period.

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FOR FEMININE EYES

MAXIMS ON WOMEN.

Spanish—"Women and mules obey better when coerced."

Arabian—"When you want to get even with a man give him a handsome wife, when you want revenge on a woman give her a handsome husband."

Hindu—"The coquette is like your shadow; chase her and she flees from you, flee from her and she chases you."

Chinese—"The tongue of a woman is as dagger and she never lets it grow rusty. The spirit of a woman is as quicksilver and her heart is as wax."

French—"Good women are all in the churchyard."

SUMMER NECKWEAR.

One of the newest things in smart neckwear is the butterfly bow of white lawn. These bows are easily made, and most effective, worn with the embroidered linen collar on a tailor made shirtwaist. One great advantage is that all sorts of odds and ends of lace may be utilized to trim the bows. It is always possible, too, to pick up bargains in the way of bits of fine embroidery on sheer material. These are cut apart, according to design, and tacked on the top of the strip of the lawn to be used, the lawn being first hemmed, and trimmed at the ends with Valenciennes lace. Often the bows are placed on the shield of a white cravat, thus making them easy to adjust. Or else they are furnished with a loop of white hat elastic, which can be fastened to the collar button.

Some of the bows are worked in eyelet embroidery, with a scallop edge done in button hole stitch. Others are decorated with French dots. The black

A TIMELY HINT BY DAME FASHION.



A LINGERIE WAIST.

An exceedingly pretty waist is here shown, made of any of the summer materials. The above was a fine white swiss, made with a yoke in front and a center back closing. The blouse is attached to the yoke, having tucks to give fullness. The Swiss insertion is brought over the shoulders and down the back to give the suspender effect. A very neat design of eyelet embroidery in the yoke and collar helps very much, but this can be left out if desired. The sleeves are very short and full, having cuffs of the insertion. A three-quarter or long sleeve can be used.

THE 1907 KIMONA.

As nothing can probably ever be found to quite take the place of the kimona, fashion has permitted it to stay until that time when women no longer care to lounge in comfort or to take afternoon naps in loose clothes and darkened rooms.

Though the lines of the kimona have been changed frequently, sleeves modified and yokes or collars added, they have almost invariably gone back to the original style which is so practical, that it allows of little improvement. But this season there has been one change that has made the kimona possible for breakfast and morning wear suitable for something more than just the privacy of the boudoir. The ever popular princess effect has been applied to the kimona transforming it from a negligee to a house gown or wrapper. And it has all been brought about by nine rows of shirring forming a girde around the waist to fit the figure.

This kimona is cut and made exactly as the kimona that has done service for so many years, but after it is finished the dividing line of the waist is marked off and a row of shirring run in at that point. Four others are put in above it and four below. These are pulled up to suit the figure and a piece of goods set underneath to hold them in place. The flowing kimona sleeve is cut off a little below the elbow and gathered into a turned back cuff to match the band that goes around the neck and down the front.

Old kimona can, with the slightest alterations, be made into the princess style, which allows of much more usage and general wear and yet is not nearly as cumbersome as the ordinary tea gown.

The best material for the princess kimona is challis. It does not wrinkle and yet is soft and of about the most satisfactory weight as it can be worn in warm weather as well as on cooler days.

Self control is not so much in subduing the faculties as in leading them to serve as worthy ends.

MAN DOES NOT TIRE OF—

The girl who can be happy when he isn't around.

The girl who is not indifferent, yet of whom he is not sure.

The girl who never lets him know that she is jealous.

The girl who has opinions of her own and isn't afraid to let him know it.

The girl who has so many moods that she is a constant source of pleasure and surprise.

CLOTHES MADE OF PAPER.

If the predictions of Herr Emil Clazier, a Saxon inventor, are verified twenty or thirty years from now there will be none of the old trouble about testing goods to find if they are all wool or not for everybody will be wearing paper suits.

Of course at the mere mention of paper clothes one thinks of the fiber chemists used some years ago to hold out the sleeves, but the new invention no more resembles that than cotton sheeting does silk. In fact the new paper suiting is so much like the regular linen and cotton goods that huddlers of towels made from it are now being sold as linen and even the buyers are never the wiser.

"Tiny threads resembling wool, cotton or even silk are made from paper and these are woven together in every conceivable kind of weave and color in the same delicate tints used in the pure material, and they are said to even take the coloring much better than even silk itself."

The cost of the paper goods is about half the price of the goods it is made to represent and yet wears so much longer there is little doubt but that it will be only a short time until it is taking the place of materials now on the market. It is also warmer, for the peculiar quality of the threads keep

A Horseman's Praise.

Senator Curtis of Kansas, the one-time horseman, was praising news-papers.

"They are, taken all around," he said, "wonderful institutions, and most of the complaints made against them are to the initiate as groundless as the complaint of a young lady I overheard at a race meeting."

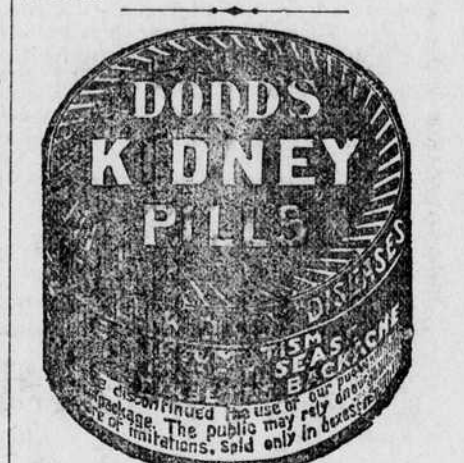
"Plague on the old papers, they're always behind the times," she said.

"How so?" asked her husband.

"Oh, take racing for instance. They never print the winner's name till the day after the race, when it's too late to bet."

Using the Privilege.

A Favarian forester, a poor and humble man, received an official communication from the town council partly printed, partly written. In the printed portion was the introductory word Herr (Mr.) used in the address. The town council thought the forester not entitled to Herr, and crossed it out. The indignant forester went to see the town council about it, but got no satisfaction. The mayor told him that Herr was struck out because it was superfluous. Then the forester sent a reply to the official letter and addressed it to "The soft-headed town council," but drew his pen through "soft-headed" as "superfluous."



A Bad Accident.

From the Chicago Daily News.

Chapleigh—I was all broke up ovah a girl once, doncher know.

Miss Knox—Ah, I see! And some of the pieces were lost.

SORES AS BIG AS PENNIES.

Whole Neck and Head Covered—Hate All Came Out—Cured in Three Weeks by Cuticura.

"After having the measles my whole head and neck were covered with scaly sores about as large as a penny. They were just as thick as they could be. My hair all came out. I let the trouble run along, taking the doctor's blood remedies and rubbing on salve, but it did not seem to get any better. It stayed that way for about six months; then I got a set of the Cuticura Remedies, and in about a week I noticed a big difference, and in three weeks it was well entirely and I have not had the trouble any more, and as this was seven years ago, I consider myself cured. Mrs. Henry Porter, Albion, Neb., Aug. 25, 1906."

AN OLD YACHT'S HAPPY FATE.

The Pilgrim, Once Aspirant for Cup Honors, Given to Children.

From the Boston Post.

Of all the boats that have been built to compete for the America's cup, the blue ribbon of the seas, none has come to a finer end than the Pilgrim, which was built by Boston yachtsmen to compete for the honor of defending the old mug against Lord Dunraven's Valkyrie II in 1888.

The old America still floats, although out of commission. The latest queen of the seas, Reliance, is hauled out at City Island, N. Y., probably to rot away from disuse. And down through the years from 1851 to 1907, many fleet yachts have had their names included in the yachting roll of honor and disappeared—challengers and defenders alike. Some have been sunk in races or lost at sea. Some have rotted away. Some have lost their glory and become coasters. Some are still afloat as private yachts. But the Pilgrim gets the most honored end of all.

For the Pilgrim is to be part of Boston's floating hospital service. The boat that bore Boston's hopes for yachting honors in 1883 will not help one of Boston's worst-off charities.

The Pilgrim is a steam yacht. A failure as a sailing racer, she was converted into a steamer after her defeat in the trial races which the Vigilant won, and was owned by L. G. Burnham, of Boston. Mr. Burnham died a short time ago, and Mrs. Burnham has given the yacht to the floating hospital as a memorial to Mr. Burnham.

The Pilgrim will be used to tow the hospital boat on its harbor trips. A considerable sum has been expended every year for towboats. Most of this money can now be saved and devoted to the comfort of the little ones on their trips during the summer.

CHILDREN SHOWED IT.

Effect of Their Warm Drink in the Morning.

"A year ago I was a wreck from coffee drinking and was on the point of giving up my position in the school room because of nervousness."

"I was telling a friend about it and she said, 'We drink nothing at meal time but Postum Food Coffee, and it is such a comfort for having something you can enjoy drinking with the children.'"

"I was astonished that she would allow the children to drink any kind of coffee, but she said Postum was the most healthful drink in the world for children as well as for older ones, and that the condition of both the children and adults showed that to be a fact."

"My first trial was a failure. The cook boiled it four or five minutes and it tasted so flat that I was in despair but determined to give it one more trial. This time we followed the directions and boiled it fifteen minutes after the boiling began. It was a decided success and I was completely won by its rich delicious flavour. In a short time I noticed a decided improvement in my condition and kept growing better and better month after month, until now I am perfectly healthy, and do my work in the school room with ease and pleasure. I would not return to the nerve-destroying regular coffee for any money."

"There's a Reason." Read the famous little "Health Classic," "The Road to Wellville," in pkgs.