

The Girl and the Bill

By Bannister Merwin
ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS



CHAPTER X.

French.

"It is well that you communicated with me, sir," he said, "we were working at cross-purposes when, in reality, our interests were identical."

Alcitrante bowed. "I came to that conclusion late last night," he said. "I do not deny that it would have pleased me to carry the affair through by myself."

"Yes, your position would then have been stronger." The Japanese smiled faintly.

"But," continued Alcitrante, with a slight grimace, "the activity of your men made that impossible. I have no lieutenants such as yours." He shot an ugly gleam at Poritol, whose sudden assumption of fearsome humility was in strange contrast to his usual self-assurance.

"As we hold the documents"—the Japanese spoke with great distinctness—"you will necessarily admit our advantage. That means, you will understand, a smaller commission on the next contract."

Alcitrante twisted his face into the semblance of a smile. "Not too small, or we cannot undertake the work," he said.

"No, not too small," the stranger agreed calmly, "but smaller than the last. You must not forget that there are others who would gladly do the same work."

"Yes, but at best they cannot get the terms we get."

"Possibly. That is a matter still to be determined. Meantime we have assumed that our interests in this document are identical. Let us test it."

"One word first," said Alcitrante. "I take it that, if our interests are sympathetic with yours, we may count on your protection?"

"Most assuredly."

"Then—?"

"Then we shall see. My fairness is clear in that I give you a sight of the document with myself. I might have denied all knowledge of it."

Alcitrante smiled as if to say: "I already knew so much that you could not risk that."

The stranger turned to Arima and said something in Japanese. Arima replied, and the stranger explained to Alcitrante: "I asked about my man Maku. The American struck him on the head last night and injured him. But he is recovering. He is troublesome—that American."

Orme started. His head bumped against the table.

"What's that?" exclaimed Poritol, advancing. "There's something under that table!" He stooped to lift the cover.

One chance flashed into Orme's mind. Quickly he seized the cat, which was still sleeping against his knee, and pushed it under the table-cover. It walked out into the room, meowing plaintively.

"A cat," said Poritol, drawing back.

Arima explained in English: "It belongs to lady upstairs. Comes down fire escape. Shoot! Shoot!" He clapped his hands and the animal bounded to the window-sill and disappeared up the iron steps.

"And now," began the stranger, "shall we examine the documents?"

"O's moment," said Alcitrante. "I should first like a clear understanding with you—some words in private." He moved to a corner, and there the



It Now Remained to Find Something to Take the Place of the Abstracted Documents.

stranger joined him. They talked in an undertone for several minutes, Alcitrante gesturing volubly, the stranger nodding now and then, and interjecting a few brief words.

What was going on was more than ever a mystery to Orme. The stranger's reference to "the next contract" strengthened the surmise that the documents in the envelope were connected with a South American trade concession. Alcitrante had plainly concluded that his interests and those of the Japanese were identical. He must have communicated with the strange Japanese the first

thing in the morning. That would account for his failure to call at the Pere Marquette at ten o'clock. Learning that the bill had been taken from Orme, and that the coveted documents were in the possession of the Japanese, he had no object in keeping his appointment. As for Poritol, he had become a figure of minor importance.

But Orme did not let these questions long engage him, for he had made a discovery. Where his head bumped against the table, the board above him—solid, as he had supposed—rattled strangely. At the moment he could not investigate, but as soon as the cat had satisfied the suspicions of Poritol, and Alcitrante and the stranger had retired to their corner, he twisted his head back and examined the wood above him.

The table had a drawer. From the room outside this drawer was concealed by the cloth cover, and Orme had not suspected its existence.

Now, the table was cheaply made. The drawer was shallow and narrow, and it was held in position, under the table, by an open framework of wood. When it was pushed in, it was stopped at the right place by two cleats; there was no solid strip to prevent its being pushed in too far.

Orme put his hand to the back of the drawer. There was a space between it and the table-top.

Cautiously he pushed his hand through the opening. His fingers touched a flat object—a pad of paper, or—the thought made his heart beat—a large, thick envelope. Could Arima have used the drawer as a hiding place?

Slowly he got the edge of the object between his first and second fingers and drew it a little way toward the back of the drawer. A moment later he had it under his eyes.

Yes, it was a long envelope of heavy linen, and there were bulky papers within. The gummed flap was toward him. He was interested to note that, important though the documents seemed to be, the envelope was not sealed with wax.

He remembered that the girl had said: her father's name was written on the address side. He had only to turn it over to learn who she was. In the circumstances such an act might be justified. But she had not wished him to know—and he would even now respect her wish and keep his own promise to her first.

His first thought was to slip the envelope into his pocket, but it occurred to him in time that, if it did indeed contain the documents concerning which Alcitrante and the stranger were disputing, it would be sought and missed long before he could escape from the room. So, taking a pencil from his pocket, he inserted it under the corner of the flap and slowly worked the flap free. The strength of the linen prevented any tearing.

He removed the contents of the envelope—two folded sheets of parchment paper, held together by an elastic band—and thrust them into the inside pocket of his coat. All this was done swiftly and noiselessly.

It now remained to find something to take the place of the abstracted documents. In his pocket were some printed prospectuses of the mine which he had come to Chicago to investigate. In shape and thickness they were not dissimilar to the documents which he had taken. He slipped the prospectuses into the envelope and, wetting his finger, rubbed it along the gummed surface of the flap. Enough glue remained to make the flap adhere, after a little pressure. The job was by no means perfect, but it was not likely to be detected.

At that moment Alcitrante raised his voice and said, still in French: "You are sure, then, that this will not delay the game, but end it?"

"Quite sure," said the Japanese. "Unless the documents are signed before midnight tonight nothing can be done for some time. We have the Germans fixed. They will do what they have thus far agreed to do, but if any technical hitch arises, such as a failure to sign within the time limit, they will decline to renew negotiations. That was all we could get from them, but it is enough—now."

"And for other ships," said Alcitrante, "the commission shall be five hundred thousand."

"Five hundred thousand. Seven hundred and fifty was too much."

"Five hundred thousand in gold."

"In gold."

Orme slipped the envelope back into the drawer and put his eye to the hole in the cover. His position was now more critical, for to open the drawer and get the envelope Arima would have to lift the table cover.

The stranger turned to Arima. "Give us the envelope," he said.

Arima approached the table. Orme crowded back against the wall as far as he could, knowing that the chances of escaping discovery were strongly against him. But he was saved by the very eagerness of the others. They all crowded about Arima, as he lifted the cover, opened the drawer and took out the envelope. So close did they stand that Orme was out of their angle of vision. The table cover fell again, and he was safe. He resumed his position at the peep-hole.

The stranger stepped to the middle of the room, the others gathering around him. With a quick jerk he tore the envelope open, and taking out the papers, ran his eye over them rapidly. He uttered an exclamation. "What is it?" said Alcitrante. The South American's hand was shaking, and perspiration stood out on his forehead.

The Japanese snarled. "Tricked! They've fooled us. That honorable burglar of yours got the wrong envelope."

Alcitrante snatched the papers. "Prospectus," he read, "of the Last

Dare Mining Company." But I do not understand."

The Japanese glared at him angrily. "If you had kept out of this business," he snapped, "and let Maku attend to it, everything would have been right. Now your burglars have spoiled it." He snatched back the harmless prospectuses and tore them in two, throwing the fragments to the floor and grinding them under his heel.

Arima spoke. "Pardon, honorable sir, Maku say the right envelope was taken from the safe. Maku know."

"Ha! Then it was you who were tricked—outwitted. That American reached the tree before you last evening and substituted these papers. Go back to Japan, Arima. I don't need you."

Arima bowed submissively. As for the stranger, his rage gave way to despair.

"What shall I say to the emperor?" he muttered. "What shall I say to the emperor?"

Then his feelings came again under control; he looked calmly at Alcitrante. "Well," he said, "what would you suggest?"

Alcitrante's face was a puzzle. Every shade of doubt, disappointment, anger, suspicion and shrewd deduction passed over it. He was putting into play that marvelous power of concentration on subtle issues that had enabled him to play so brilliantly the role of international under-dog. At last he smiled and spoke.

"Find the American," he said.

Suddenly there was a knock at the door. Arima looked at his master, who nodded indifferently and said: "Yes, see who it is. It can do no harm now."

Orme heard the door open. What startled him first was the action of Poritol, who stepped back to the wall, his jaw dropping, his face a picture of embarrassment and fright. Alcitrante and the stranger showed amazement.

For a moment they stood thus in silence, and then from the door came a clear voice:

"What? You here, Mr. Alcitrante? And the Japanese r'nister?"

Orme almost sprang from his hiding place. The voice was the voice of the girl!

To be continued.

PUBLIC AUCTION.

The undersigned will sell at public auction at her farm, four miles and a half east and a mile and a quarter north of Louisville, a mile and a half south and a half mile east of Cedar Creek and eleven miles west of Flatmouth, on

TUESDAY, FEBRUARY 7, 1911
the following property to-wit:

Live Stock.
One bay horse, sixteen years old, weight 1,300.

One gray horse, seventeen years old, weight 1,350.

Team bay geldings, three years old, weight 1,800.

Team black geldings, three years old, weight 2,100.

Four milk cows, three fresh, one fresh in July.

Six dozen chickens and two shoats.

Implement.
Two farm wagons and one buggy.

One fanning mill, one cider mill.

One Champion binder.

One two-row stalk cutter and stalk rake.

Two three-section harrows.

One riding cultivator.

One walking cultivator.

One John Deere riding lister.

One 14-inch walking plow.

One John Deere two-row machine.

One corn planter and 80 rods wire.

One Hoosier seeder.

Two Hummer riding plows.

One disc, nearly new.

Two mowing machines, one new.

One hay rake, one hay rack.

One Majestic cooking stove.

One heater, good as new.

Two grindstones.

One iron kettle.

One rod scraper.

Two sets of harness.

Some household goods and many other articles too numerous to mention.

Terms of Sale:—All sums of \$10 and under, cash in hand; over \$10, a credit of twelve months will be given, the purchaser giving good bankable paper bearing interest at eight per cent from date. No property to leave the premises until settled for. Sale will commence at 12:30 p. m., sharp.

Mrs. J. D. Thieroff,
A. O. Ault, Auctioneer. Owner.

J. G. Meisinger, Clerk.

Horse Shoeing.

John Durman desires to inform those who need his services that he has opened a shop at the Ora Dawson place for shoeing horses. Satisfaction assured.

Try the Journal's want ad column.

Poultry Wanted

Highest prices paid for all farm produce.

HATT PRODUCE CO.

CLARENCE W. WATSON.

Chosen For Short Senate Term by Democrats of West Virginia.



ASSERTS KING GEORGE WAS WHITEWASHED

Editor of Liberator Calls Trial of Mylius Illegal.

Paris, Feb. 3.—Edward H. James, the editor of the Liberator, whose article was the basis of the suit against Edward Mylius, convicted in London for libelling King George, issued a statement saying the trial of his British agent was illegal and the proceedings a "whitewashing." The statement proceeds:

"The trial was illegal because Mylius was not indicted, but was tried under 'an information ex-officio,' which is used only in charges of sedition. It was a whitewashing because the crown had no right to call witnesses to disprove charges when the defendant had refused to offer evidence proving the charges. Mylius having refused to substantiate that bigamy was practiced, the case ended immediately. Mylius refused to proceed because the king refused to testify. If the king had gone on the stand and sworn that the marriage did not take place, I would gladly apologize in the Liberator, which under the circumstances can only attack the trial as a violation of almost every principle of English law, evidence and liberty."

SIGNS TO WARN RURAL G'RLS

Kansas City Women Plan to Place Placards in Every Depot in State.

Kansas City, Feb. 3.—If the plans of the Council of Women's clubs of Kansas City are carried out, a placard warning young girls of small towns to shun the cities soon will be placed in every depot in this state.

At a recent meeting the form of this placard was decided upon and also that of a placard that will be placed in the Union depot, telling country girls where to seek aid. The girl intending to come to Kansas City is told to notify the women's club two weeks previous so that work may be secured and also two days before she starts so a place for her to live may be found, and a matron be sent to the station to meet her.

FATALLY SHOT BY A WOMAN

Des Moines Man Enters Kansas City Home Without Knocking.

Kansas City, Feb. 3.—While her husband, Charles Ufford, was engaged in a desperate fight with Edward Huxford, who recently came here from Des Moines, Mrs. Meda Ufford shot and fatally wounded Huxford at her home in this city. Mrs. Ufford told the police that Huxford, although only slightly acquainted with her husband, entered the house without knocking. She said a quarrel and fight ensued and when she feared Huxford would kill her husband, she shot the intruder.

Stork's Tax on Telephones.

Columbia, Mo., Feb. 3.—Every death and every birth in a small town causes approximately 300 extra telephone calls, according to figures issued here by a telephone company. The calls resulting from the births are more trouble, says the report, because these are limited to women and the conversation occupies much more time than in telling of a death.

Aged Couple Hoarded \$6,000.

Warrensburg, Mo., Feb. 3.—Secreted more than \$6,000 in gold and silver in tin cans, old trunks, and closets, coin was found in the house of J. M. Ronemous and wife, aged recluses, who died within a few hours of each other. No heirs have appeared.

Storm Along Spanish Coast.

Barcelona, Feb. 3.—A wild storm swept the Spanish coast. A score of fishing craft were dashed on the rocks and many of their crews lost. The bodies of twenty-five sailors were picked up along the coast.

More Shocks Felt at Manila.

Manila, Feb. 3.—A prolonged earthquake aroused the residents of Manila. Revised estimates place the number of those killed by the eruptions of Mount Taal and drowned in tidal waves at 600.

SENATE PASSES SHIP SUBSIDY BILL

Vice President Sherman Breaks Tie Vote for Measure.

THREE HOURS OF SKIRMISHING

Watson's Absence Prevents Defeat of Measure—New Senator From West Virginia Votes Once in Opposition and Then Disappears.

Washington, Feb. 3.—For the third time in the history of the government the vice president of the United States exercised his constitutional prerogative of casting a vote to break ties in connection with three successive roll calls in the senate. The first he saved from impending defeat the ship subsidy bill, and the third forced an adjournment of the senate on a vote having direct bearing on the resolution looking to the election of the senators by direct primary vote.

The vote on the ship subsidy bill, both in committee of the whole and in the senate proper, stood 39 ayes and 39 noes, and an adjournment, 37 ayes to 37 noes. On all three occasions the vice president voted in the affirmative.

Another notable occurrence in connection with the vote on the subsidy bill was the absence of the new Democratic senator from West Virginia, Clarence W. Watson, who had taken his seat early in the day as the successor to Senator Elkins. Watson was in the senate chamber for only a few minutes during the session, and voted on only one roll call. This vote was cast on an amendment offered by Shively (Ind.), regulating the aggregate expenditures which may be made under the terms of the bill. In this provision the new West Virginia senator cast his vote in the affirmative, thus indicating his opposition to the measure. After casting his vote he disappeared.

The result on the next ballot was not so close as to render material the presence or absence of any senator.

After the final result became known the opponents of the bill, including all of the Democrats, realized Watson's absence had prevented the defeat of the bill. He was the only Democrat present at any of the roll calls whose vote was not cast against the measure.

The final vote came after three hours of conflict over amendments.

Gallinger Presents Substitute.

When, in accordance with the previous agreement, the subsidy bill was laid before the senate, Senator Gallinger presented a substitute for the entire measure as originally introduced. The first bill granted a bounty only to American-built vessels plying from American ports to the southern half of South America, but the substitute extended it to the Philippines, Japan, China and Australia.

Senator Shively made a fight by means both of amendment and argument. He presented a provision including the land expense incurred in connection with ocean going mail in the total expenditure on that account as a basis for computing the surplus of ocean mail earnings over expenses, which, it is provided in the bill, shall not be exceeded by the total bounty. The amendment was lost, 35 to 40.

A closer result was scored on the next vote, taken on an amendment offered by Senator Stone (Mo.). The purpose of Stone's amendment was to extend the provisions of the bill to all American-owned vessels, whether constructed in the United States or elsewhere. The amendment was lost, 37 to 39.

Two Mild Sensations.

Before the final ballot was reached there were two mild sensations. Answering that the unanimous consent agreement under which the senate was proceeding had been obtained when only fifteen or sixteen senators were present and, therefore, it should not be recognized, Senator Owen (Okla.) passed to a general declaration against the conduct of any business by the present congress. He gave as his reason that men at present in public life had been repudiated at the polls last November.

No reply was made to Owen, but when Senator William Alden Smith (Mich.) announced his intention to cast his vote in opposition to the bill and at the same time said he believed in discriminating duties in favor of American vessels, Senator Gallinger, author of the measure, replied:

"I cannot understand how any senator can square his conscience so as to favor discriminating duties as against direct aid, when the one policy takes the money from the treasury before it is paid in and the other afterward. I do not see the difference in principle."

No General Interest.

Not even was any great general interest manifested when at the last the voting began in committee of the whole on the bill itself. As the roll call proceeded it was recognized the vote was running close, but the real situation was not grasped until the vice president's announcement of a tie was made. Sherman performed his part expeditiously.

"On this question the vote stands 39 to 39, a tie," he said. Without hesitation he added: "The chair votes in the affirmative; the ayes have it; the substitute is adopted."