

FRAN

BY JOHN BRECKENRIDGE ELLIS

ILLUSTRATIONS BY O. IRWIN MYERS

(COPYRIGHT 1912 BOBBS-MERRILL CO.)



SYNOPSIS.

Fran arrives at Hamilton Gregory's home in Littleburg, but finds him absent, conducting the choir at a religious meeting. She repairs thither in search of him...

to Simmtown to meet him in the survey, so Miss Grace is alone down there. She nodded ponderously. "Alone!" he exclaimed involuntarily. "Yes—I look for Bob and Abbott now just any minute." She added, eyeing the crowd—"I saw Fran on the street, long and merry ago!" Her accent was that of condemnation. Like a rock she sat, letting the fickle populace drift by to minstrel show and snake den. The severity of her double chin said they might all go thither—she would not.

know everything. Fran—is my own daughter." She gave no sign save a sudden compressor of the mouth; nevertheless, her surprise was extreme. Her mind flashed along the wires of the present entanglement. He thought her merely stunned, and burst forth: "I tell you, Fran is my child. Now you know why I'm compelled to do what she wants. That's the secret Bob brought from Springfield. That's the secret Abbott Ashton hung over my head—the traitor! after I'd befriended him! All of my ungrateful friends have conspired to ruin me, to force you from me by this secret. But you know it now, and I've escaped its danger. You know it!"

ing into his, "have you told me all the secret?" "Yes—all." "Then Mr. Clinton deceived me!" "He agreed to hide everything, if I'd send you away."

with ecstasy, while Grace herself yielded to the love that had outgrown all other principles of conduct. They gained the street before the court-house which by courtesy passed under the name of "the city square." Grace's hand grew tense on Gregory's arm—"Look!" Her whisper was lost in the wind, but Gregory, following her frightened glance, saw Robert Clinton elbowing his way through the crowd, forcing his progress bluntly, or jocularly, according to the nature of obstruction. He did not see them and, by dodging, they escaped.

The merry-go-round, its very music traveling in a circle, clashed its stem-whistlings and organ, wallings against a drum-and-tombone band, while these distinct strata of sound were cut across by an outcropping of graphophones and megaphones. Always out of sympathy with such displays, but now more than ever repelled by them, Grace and Gregory hurried away to find themselves penned in a court, surrounded on all sides by strident cries of "barkers," cracking reports from target-practice, fusillades at the "doll-babies," clanging jars from strength-testers and the like; while from this horrid field of misguided energy, there was no outlet save the narrow entrance they had unwittingly used.

CHAPTER XX.—Continued. It was the close of a July day that Hamilton Gregory left his house resolved, at any cost—save that of exposure—to experience once more the only pleasure life held in reserve for him; nearness to Grace Noir. She might be at the store, since all shops were to remain open late, in hopes of reaping sordid advantages from the gale of mankind. In a word, Littleburg was in the grip of its first street fair.

The bookkeeper's desk was in a gallery near the ceiling of the Clinton grocery store; one looked thence, through a picket-fence, down upon the only floor. Doubtless Grace, thus looking, saw him coming. When he reached her side, he was breathless, partly from the struggle through the masses, principally from excitement of fancied security. She was posting up the ledger, and made no sign of recognition until he called her name. "Mr. Clinton is not here," she said remotely. "Can I do anything for you?"

He admired her calm courtesy. If at the same time she could have been reserved and yielding he would have found the impossible combination perfect. Because it was impossible, he was determined to preserve her angelic purity in imagination, and to restore her womanly charm to actual being. "How can you receive me so coldly," he said impulsively, "when I've not seen you for weeks?"

"You are free," said Grace, "and since Mr. Clinton's treachery, I do not consider myself bound." "Grace!" he cried wildly, "Grace—star of my soul—go with me, go with me, fly with me in a week—darling. Let us arrange it for tomorrow." "No. I will not go with you, unless you take me now." "Now? Immediately?" he gasped, bewildered.

"But I Have Been Dying to Be Near You, to Talk to You." the odd catch his voice had suffered in getting over the name. "No. She's down-town—but not at any show, you may be sure. She's left late at the store because—I guess you've heard Abbott Ashton has been away a long time." "I have heard nothing of the young man," Gregory replied stiffly. "Well, he's been off two or three weeks somewhere, nobody knows unless it's Bob, and Bob won't tell anything any more. Abbott wrote he'd be home tonight, and Bob drove over

"Engaged!" he echoed, as if he had pronounced one of the world's great tragedies. "Then you will give yourself to that man—yourself, Grace, that beautiful self—and without love? It's a crime! Don't commit the horrible blunder that's ruined my life. See what wretchedness has come to me—" "Then you think, very slowly, "that I ought to let Fran ruin my whole life because your wife has ruined yours? Then you think that after I have been driven out of the house to make room for Fran, that I ought to stay single because you married unwisely?"

Grace covered his face with his hands. "Do you despise me, you pure angel of beauty? Oh, say you don't utterly despise me. I've not breathed this secret to any living soul but you, whom I love with the madness of despair. My heart is broken. Tell me what I can do." At last Grace spoke in a thin tone: "Where is that woman?" "Fran's mother?"

"Do I want to see her again? But Grace, if we stay here until train-time, Bob will come and—er—and find us—I don't want to meet Bob." "Then let us go. There are such crowds on the streets that we can easily lose ourselves." "Bob will hunt for you, Grace, if he gets back with Abbott before our train leaves. Miss Sapphira said she was looking for him any minute, and that you can't keep him from finding me." Grace said, "let him find. I do not consider that I am acting in the wrong. This is the beginning of our lives," she finished, with sudden joy. "And if Bob sees me with you, Grace, after what he knows, you can guess that something very unpleasant would—"

preme court has taken the oath of allegiance when accepting his appointment to our highest tribunal. More than that, every attorney who has practiced before the Supreme court since that date—1800—has pledged his allegiance over the little volume. All with one exception also, and that exception was Daniel Webster.

"I don't think he has seen us," muttered Hamilton Gregory, instinctively lowering his head. "We can't get out now," Grace lamented. "No, he hasn't seen us yet. But that's the only place of escape—and he keeps looking so curiously—he must have been to the store. He knows I'm away. He may have gone to the house."

"Suppose I were in Fran's place—would I have kept the secret to spare man or woman? No! Fran doesn't care a penny for your wife. She couldn't. It would be monstrous—unnatural. But she's always hated me. That's why she acts as she does—to triumph over me. I see it all. That is the reason she won't have the truth declared—she doesn't want me to know that you are free."

CHAPTER XXI. Flight. To reach the station, they must either penetrate the heart of the town, or follow the dark streets of the outskirts. In the latter case, their association would arouse surprise and comment, but in the throng reasonable safety might be expected. After the first intense moment of exultation, both began to fear a possible search. Grace apparently dreaded discovery as shrinkingly as if her conscience were not clear, and Gregory, in the midst of his own perturbation, found it incongruous that she who was always right, wanted to hide. But Grace's hand was upon his arm, and the crowd pressed them close together—and she was always beautiful and divinely formed. The prospect of complete possession filled him

BIBLE HAS LONG HISTORY. That Used in the Supreme Court Probably the Oldest Connected With the Government. It is a tiny little book, only five and one-half inches long and three and one-half inches wide. It is bound in bright red Morocco leather, with the word "Bible" printed in diminutive gold letters on the back. But one does not see that red Morocco cover unless he removes the little black leather slip which protects it.

Where Old Cans Go. "Goodness gracious!" exclaims the housewife, "I wonder what become of all the tin cans that are thrown away." Never fear, dear madam, they are not lost, nor does one of them go to waste. A friend of the visitor, who is well-known business man, is thoroughly acquainted with the tin can from its infancy to the day of its doom.

WHERE HER THOUGHTS WERE. Woman's Ideas Eminently Practical, Though Not Quite Following Husband's Reading. The husband was reading a newspaper account to his wife. Now and then he paused and asked a question. The nature of her replies made him doubt that she was listening closely. He accused her of having thoughts elsewhere, and she indignantly retorted that she had heard every word.

Old-Time Coffee Drinking. Coffee, like tea, was from an early date welcomed as a rival to alcoholic liquors. Writing in 1659, shortly after its introduction into England, Howell makes the comment that "this coffee-drink hath caused a great sobriety amongst all nations; formerly clerks, apprentices, etc., used to take their morning draughts in ale, beer or wine; which often made them unfit for business. Now they play the good fellows in this wasteful and civil drink. The worthy gentleman, Sir James Muddiford, who introduced the practice thereof first in London deserves much respect of the whole nation."

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. Thousands suffer kidney ills unawares—not knowing that the backache, head-aches, dizziness, all tired condition are often due to kidney weakness alone. Anybody who suffers constantly from backache should suspect the kidneys. Some irregularity of the secretions may give just the needed proof.

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. A North Dakota Case. Mrs. G. J. Tyler, Cando, N. D., says: "My feet and limbs were swollen and I couldn't sleep on account of kidney weakness. My back was lame and sore and I felt miserable. Doan's Kidney Pills cured me and when I have had occasion to use them since, they have never failed me."

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. Name given by Postum Co., Battle Creek, Mich. Write for copy of the little book, "The Road to Wellville." Postum comes in two forms: Regular Postum—must be well boiled. Instant Postum is a soluble powder. A teaspoonful dissolves quickly in a cup of hot water and, with cream and sugar, makes a delicious beverage instantly. Grocers sell both kinds. "There's a reason" for Postum.

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. A teapotful dissolves quickly in a cup of hot water and, with cream and sugar, makes a delicious beverage instantly. Grocers sell both kinds. "There's a reason" for Postum.

900 DROPS CASTORIA For Infants and Children. The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of J. C. F. Stittchen. In Use For Over Thirty Years. CASITORIA. Guaranteed under the Food and Drug Act.

CASTORIA For Infants and Children. The Kind You Have Always Bought Bears the Signature of J. C. F. Stittchen. In Use For Over Thirty Years. CASITORIA. Guaranteed under the Food and Drug Act.

For DISTEMPER Pink Eye, Epizootic Shipping Fever & Catarrhal Fever. SPOHN MEDICAL CO., Chemists and GOSHEN, IND., U. S. A.

HUSBAND MUST BE AMERICAN. Popular Singer Declares They Are the Best in the World, and Perhaps She Is Right. A young American singer who returns to this country after a successful career abroad, expecting to reap here high honors and much money, announces that she is a candidate for matrimony, but only American men need apply.

Relief for Alaskan Miners. As an encouragement to further prospecting and mining in the new gold field near the boundary line between Alaska and Yukon territory the American customs officials have decided not to establish a customs house there for one year, believing that the miners have already undergone hardships enough in getting their outfits there without having to pay duties.

DIZZY, HEADACHY, SICK, "CASCARETS". Gently cleanse your liver and sluggish bowels while you sleep. Get a 10-cent box. Sick headache, biliousness, dizziness, coated tongue, foul taste and foul breath—always trace them to torpid liver; delayed fermenting food in the bowels or sour, gassy stomach.

Jealousy. "Do you admire my hair?" "Immensely. Won't you tell me where you got it?" "DIDN'T KNOW That Coffee Was Causing Her Trouble. So common is the use of coffee as a beverage, many do not know that it is the cause of many obscure ailments which are often attributed to other things.

Backache Is a Warning. Thousands suffer kidney ills unawares—not knowing that the backache, head-aches, dizziness, all tired condition are often due to kidney weakness alone. Anybody who suffers constantly from backache should suspect the kidneys.

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. A North Dakota Case. Mrs. G. J. Tyler, Cando, N. D., says: "My feet and limbs were swollen and I couldn't sleep on account of kidney weakness. My back was lame and sore and I felt miserable. Doan's Kidney Pills cured me and when I have had occasion to use them since, they have never failed me."

FERRETS. Hats and Game Trained. Watson E. Coleman, Wash. D.C. Books free. Highest references. Best results.

PATENTS. Watson E. Coleman, Wash. D.C. Books free. Highest references. Best results.

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. A North Dakota Case. Mrs. G. J. Tyler, Cando, N. D., says: "My feet and limbs were swollen and I couldn't sleep on account of kidney weakness. My back was lame and sore and I felt miserable. Doan's Kidney Pills cured me and when I have had occasion to use them since, they have never failed me."

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. A North Dakota Case. Mrs. G. J. Tyler, Cando, N. D., says: "My feet and limbs were swollen and I couldn't sleep on account of kidney weakness. My back was lame and sore and I felt miserable. Doan's Kidney Pills cured me and when I have had occasion to use them since, they have never failed me."

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. A North Dakota Case. Mrs. G. J. Tyler, Cando, N. D., says: "My feet and limbs were swollen and I couldn't sleep on account of kidney weakness. My back was lame and sore and I felt miserable. Doan's Kidney Pills cured me and when I have had occasion to use them since, they have never failed me."

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. A North Dakota Case. Mrs. G. J. Tyler, Cando, N. D., says: "My feet and limbs were swollen and I couldn't sleep on account of kidney weakness. My back was lame and sore and I felt miserable. Doan's Kidney Pills cured me and when I have had occasion to use them since, they have never failed me."

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS. A North Dakota Case. Mrs. G. J. Tyler, Cando, N. D., says: "My feet and limbs were swollen and I couldn't sleep on account of kidney weakness. My back was lame and sore and I felt miserable. Doan's Kidney Pills cured me and when I have had occasion to use them since, they have never failed me."