

The Real Man

By FRANCIS LYNDE

Illustrations by IRWIN NYERS

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CHAPTER XII—Continued.

Smith, especially in this later incarnation which had so radically changed him, believed as little in the psychic as any hardheaded young business iconoclast of an agnostic century could. But on this particular evening when he was smoking his after-dinner pipe on the flagstoned porch with Corona for his companion, there were phenomena apparently unexplainable on any purely material hypothesis.

"I am sure I have much less than half of the curiosity that women are said to have, but, really, I do want to know what dreadful thing has happened to you since we met you in the High Line offices this morning—mamma and I." was the way in which one of the phenomena was made to occur; and Smith started so nervously that he dropped his pipe.

"You can be the most unexpected person, when you try," he laughed, but the laugh scarcely rang true. "What makes you think that anything has happened?"

"I don't think—I know," the small waitress went on with calm assurance. "You've been telling us in all sorts of dumb ways that you've had an upsetting shock of some kind; and I don't believe it's another lawsuit. Am I right, so far?"

"I believe you are a witch, and it's a mighty good thing you didn't live in the Salem period," he rejoined. "They would have hanged you to a dead moral certainty."

"Then there was something?" she queried; adding, jubilantly: "I knew it!"

"Go on," said the one to whom it had happened; "go on and tell me the rest of it."

"Oh, that isn't fair; even a professional clairvoyant has to be told the color of her eyes and hair."

"What-what!" the ejaculation was fairly jarred out of him and for the moment he fancied he could feel a cool breeze blowing up the back of his neck.

The clairvoyant who did not claim to be a professional was laughing softly. "You told me once that a woman was adorable in the exact degree in which she could afford to be visibly transparent; yes, you said 'afford,' and I've been holding it against you. Now I'm going to pay you back. You are the transparent one, this time. You have as good as admitted that the 'happening' thing isn't a man; 'what-what' always means that, you know; so it must be a woman. Is it the Miss Richlander you were telling me about not long ago?"

There are times when any mere man may be shocked into telling the truth, and Smith had come face to face with one of them. "It is," he said.

"She is in Brewster?"

"Yes. She came this evening."

"And you ran away? That was horribly unkind, don't you think—after she had come so far?"

"Hold on," he broke in. "Don't let's go so fast. I didn't ask her to come. And, besides, she didn't come to see me."

"Did she tell you that?"

"I have taken precious good care that she shouldn't have the chance. I saw her name—and her father's—on the hotel register; and just about that time I remembered that I could probably get a bite to eat out here."

"You are queer! All men are a little queer, I think—always excepting colonial-daddy. Don't you want to see her?"

"Indeed, I don't!"

"Not even for old times' sake?"

"No; not even for old times' sake. I've given you the wrong impression completely, if you think there is any obligation on my part. It might have drifted on to the other things in the course of time, simply because neither of us might have known any better than to let it drift. But that's all a back number, now."

"Just the same, her coming shocked you."

"It certainly did," he confessed soberly; and then: "Have you forgotten what I told you about the circumstances under which I left home?"

"Oh!" she murmured, as to once before there was a little gasp and go with the word. Then: "She wouldn't—she wouldn't—"

"No," he answered; "she wouldn't; but her father would."

"So her father wanted her to marry the other man, did he?"

Smith's laugh was an easing of strains. "You've pumped me dry," he returned, the sardonic humor reasserting itself.

A motorcar was coming up the driveway. It was high time that an interruption of some sort was breaking in, and when the colonel appeared and brought Stillings with him to the lounge end of the porch, a business conference began which gave Miss Corona an excuse to disappear, and which accounted easily for the remainder of the evening.

Smith returned to Brewster the next morning by way of the dam, making the long detour count for as much as possible in the matter of sheer time-killing. It was a little before noon when he reached town by the round-about route, and went to the hotel to reconnoiter. The room clerk who gave him his key gave him also the information he craved.

"Mr. Richlander? Oh, yes; he left early this morning by the stage. He is interested in some gold properties up in the range beyond Topaz. Fine old gentleman. Do you know him, Mr. Smith?"

"The name seemed familiar when I saw it on the register last evening," was Smith's evasion; "but it is not such a very uncommon name. He didn't say when he was coming back?"

"No."

Smith took a fresh hold upon life and liberty. While the world is perilously narrow in some respects, it is comfortably broad in others, and a danger once safely averted is a danger lessened. Snatching a hasty luncheon in the grillroom, the fighting manager of Timanyoni High Line hurried across to the private suite in the Kinzie building offices into which he had lately moved and once more plunged into the business battle.

Notwithstanding a new trouble which Stillings had wished to talk over with his president and the financial manager the night before—the claim set up by the dead-and-gone railroad to a right of way across the Timanyoni at the dam—the battle was progressing favorably. Williams was accomplishing the incredible in the matter of speed, and the dam was now nearly ready to withstand the high-water stresses when they should come. The powerhouse was rising rapidly, and the machinery was on the way from the East. Altogether things were looking more hopeful than they had at any period since the hasty reorganization. Smith attacked the multifarious details of his many-sided job with returning energy. If he could make shift to hold on for a few days or weeks longer. . .

While Smith was dictating the final batch of letters to the second stenographer a young man with sleepy eyes and yellow creosote stains on his fingers came in to ask for a job. Smith put him off until the correspondence was finished and then gave him a hearing.

"What kind of work are you looking for?" was the brisk query.

"Shorthand work, if I can get it," said the man out of a job.

Smith was needing another stenographer and he looked the applicant over appraisingly. The appraisal was not entirely satisfactory. There was a certain shifty furtiveness in the half-opened eyes, and the rather weak chin hinted at a possible lack of the discreetness which is the prime requisite in a confidential clerk.

"Any business experience?"

"Yes; I've done some railroad work."

"Here in Brewster?"

Shaw lied smoothly. "No; in Omaha."

"Any recommendations?"

The young man produced a handful of "To Whom It May Concern" letters. They were all on business letterheads, and were apparently genuine, though none of them were local. Smith ran them over hastily and he had no means of knowing that they had been carefully prepared by Crawford Stanton at no little cost in ingenuity and painstaking. How careful the preparation had been was revealed in the applicant's ready suggestion.

"You can write or wire to any of these gentlemen," he said; "only, if there is a job open, I'd be glad to go to work on trial."

The business training of the present makes for quick decisions. Smith snapped a rubber band around the letters and shot them into a pigeonhole of his desk.

"We'll give you a chance to show what you can do," he told the man out of work. "If you measure up to the requirements, the job will be permanent. You may come in tomorrow morning and report to Mr. Miller, the chief clerk."

Having other things to think of, Smith forgot the sleepy-eyed young fellow instantly. But it is safe to assume that he would not have dismissed the incident so readily if he had known that Shaw had been waiting in the anteroom during the better part of the dictating interval, and that on the departing applicant's cuffs were microscopic notes of a number of the more important letters.

CHAPTER XIII.

"Sweet Fortune's Minion."

It was late dinner-time when Smith closed the big roll-top desk in the new

private suite in the Kinzie building offices and went across the street to the hotel. The great dining room of the Hopra House was on the ground floor. The room was well filled, but the head waiter found Smith a small table in the shelter of one of the pillars and brought him an evening paper.

Smith gave his dinner order and began to glance through the paper. The subdued chatter and clamor of the big room dinned pleasantly in his ears. Half absently he realized that the head waiter was seating someone at the place opposite his own; then the faint odor of violets, instantly reminiscent, came to his nostrils. He knew instinctively, and before he could put the newspaper aside, what had happened. Hence the shock, when he found himself face to face with Verda Richlander, was not so completely paralyzing as it might have been. She was looking across at him with a lazy smile in the glorious brown eyes, and the surprise was quite evidently no surprise for her.

"I told the waiter to bring me over here," she explained; and then, quite

pleasantly: "It is an exceedingly little world, isn't it, Montague?"

He nodded gloomily.

"Much too little for a man to hide in," he agreed; adding: "But I think I have known that, all along; known, at least, that it would be only a question of time."

After the waiter had taken Miss Richlander's order she began again.

"Why did you run away?" she asked. Smith shrugged his shoulders helplessly.

"What else was there for me to do? Besides, I believed, at the time, that I had killed Dunham. I could have sworn he was dead when I left him."

She was toying idly with the salad-fork. "Sometimes I am almost sorry that he wasn't," she offered.

"Which is merely another way of saying that you were unforgiving enough to wish to see me hanged?" he suggested, with a sour smile.

"It wasn't altogether that; no. There was a pause and then she went on: "I suppose you know what has been happening since you ran away—what has been done in Lawrenceville, I mean?"

"I know that I have been indicted by the grand jury and that there is a reward out for me. It's two thousand dollars, isn't it?"

She let the exact figure of the reward go unconfirmed.

"And still you are going about in public as if all the hue and cry meant nothing to you? The beard is an improvement—it makes you look older and more determined—but it doesn't disguise you. I should have known you anywhere, and other people will."

Again his shoulders went up.

"What's the use?" he said. "I couldn't dig deep enough nor fly high enough to dodge everybody. You have found me, and if you hadn't, somebody else would have. It would have been the same any time and anywhere."

"I was intending to go on up to the mines with father," she said evenly. "But last evening, while I was waiting for him to finish his talk with some mining men, I was standing in the mesanline, looking down into the lobby. I saw you go to the desk and leave your key; I was sure I couldn't be mistaken; so I told father that I had changed my mind about going out to the mines and he seemed greatly relieved. He had been trying to persuade me that I should wait for him here."

It was no stirring of belated sentiment that made Smith say: "You— you cared enough to wish to see me?"

"Naturally," she replied. "Some people forget easily; others don't. I suppose I am one of the others."

Smith remembered the proverb about a woman scorned and saw a menace more to be feared than all the terrors of the law lurking in the even-toned rejoinder. It was with some foolish idea of thrusting the menace aside at any cost that he said: "You have only to send a ten-word telegram to Sheriff Macauley, you know. I'm not sure that it isn't your duty to do so."

"Why should you telegraph Barton Macauley?" she asked placidly. "I'm not one of his deputies."

"But you believe me guilty, don't you?"

The handsome shoulders twitched in the barest hint of indifference. "As I have said, I am not in Bart Macauley's employ—nor in Mr. Watrous Dunham's. Neither am I the judge and jury to put you in the prisoner's box and try you. I suppose you knew what you were doing, and why you did it. But I do think you might have written me a line, Montague. That would have been the least you could have done."

For some time afterward the talk

was not resumed. Miss Richlander was apparently enjoying her dinner. Smith was not enjoying his, but he ate as a troubled man often will—mechanically and as a matter of routine. It was not until the dessert had been served that the young woman took up the thread of the conversation precisely as if it had never been dropped.

"I think you know that you have no reason to be afraid of me, Montague; but I can't say as much for father. He will be back in a few days, and when he comes it will be prudent for you to vanish. That is a future, however."

Smith's laugh was brittle.

"We'll leave it a future, if you like. 'Sufficient unto the day is the evil thereof.'"

"Oh; so you class me as an evil, do you?"

"No; you know I didn't mean that; I merely mean that it's no use crossing the bridges before we come to them. I've been living from day to day so long now, that I am becoming hardened to it."

Again there was a pause, and again it was Miss Richlander who broke it. The slow smile was dimpling again at the corners of the perfect mouth.

"You are going to need a little help, Montague—my help—aren't you? It occurs to me that you can well afford to show me some little friendly attention while I am Robinson-Crusoe here waiting for father to come back."

"Let me understand," he broke in, frowning across the table at her. "You are willing to ignore what has happened—to that extent? You are not forgetting that in the eyes of the law I am a criminal?"

She made a faint little gesture of impatience.

"Why do you persist in dragging that in? I am not supposed to know anything about your business affairs, with Watrous Dunham or anybody else. Besides, no one knows me here, and no one cares. Besides, again, I am a stranger in a strange city and we are—or we used to be—old friends."

Her half-cynical tone made him frown again, thoughtfully, this time.

"Women are curious creatures," he commented. "I used to think I knew a little something about them, but I guess it was a mistake. What do you want me to do?"

"Oh, anything you like; anything that will keep me from being bored to death."

Smith laid his napkin aside and glanced at his watch.

"There is a play of some kind on at the opera house, I believe," he said, rising and going around to draw her chair aside. "If you'd care to go, I'll see if I can hold somebody up for a couple of seats."

"That is more like it. I used to be afraid that you hadn't a drop of sporting blood in you, Montague, and I am glad to learn, even at this late day, that I was mistaken. Take me upstairs, and we'll go to the play."

They left the dining room together, and there was more than one pair of eyes to follow them in frank admiration.

"What a strikingly handsome couple," said a bejeweled lady who sat at the table nearest the door; and her companion, a gentleman with restless eyes and thin lips and a rather wicked jaw, said: "Yes; I don't know the woman, but the man is Colonel Baldwin's new financier; the fellow who calls himself 'John Smith.'"

The bediamonded lady smiled dryly. "You say that as if you had a mortal quarrel with his name, Crawford. If I were the girl, I shouldn't find fault with the name. You say you don't know her?"

Stanton had pushed his chair back and was rising. "Take your time with the ice cream, and I'll join you later upstairs. I'm going to find out who the girl is, since you want to know."

CHAPTER XIV.

Broken Threads.

Mr. Crawford Stanton a little later went upstairs to rejoin the resplendent lady, who was taking her after-dinner ease in the most comfortable lounging-chair the mesanline parlors afforded.

"No good," he reported. "The girl's name is Richlander, and she—or her father—comes from one of half a dozen 'Lawrencevilles'—you can take your choice among 'em."

"Money?" queried the comfortable one.

"Buying mines in the Topaz," said the husband mechanically. He was not thinking specially of Mr. Josiah Richlander's possible or probable rating with the commercial agencies; he was wondering how well Miss Richlander knew John Smith, and in what manner she could be persuaded to tell what she might know. While he was turning it over in his mind the two in question, Smith and the young woman, passed through the lobby on their way to the theater. Stanton, watching them narrowly from the vantage-point afforded by the galleried mesanline, drew his own conclusions. By all the little signs they were not merely chance acquaintances or even casual friends. Their relations were closer—and of longer standing.

Stanton puzzled over his problem a long time, long after Mrs. Stanton had forsaken the easy chair and had disappeared from the scene. His Eastern employers were growing irascibly impatient. Who was this fellow Smith, and what was his backing? they were beginning to ask; and with the asking there were intimations that if Mr. Crawford Stanton were finding his task too difficult, there was always an alternative.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Curse of Modern Life.

To eat what you like, and all you like, may be a merry life, but it will be a short one. The curse of modern life is over-eating.—Dr. Frank Crane

INTERNATIONAL SUNDAY SCHOOL LESSON

(By REV. P. B. FITZWATER, D. D., Teacher of English Bible in the Moody Bible Institute of Chicago.)

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LESSON FOR AUGUST 19

FINDING THE BOOK OF THE LAW.

LESSON TEXT—II Chronicles 34:14-32. GOLDEN TEXT—I will not forget thy word.—Ps. 119:16.

I. The Book of the Law Found (vv. 14-17). 1. The occasion (v. 14). It was found while the work of repairing the temple was going on. At what part in the temple we do not know; perhaps in the treasure house, for it was found while bringing out the money to pay for the repairs. Perhaps this was in or near the ark, for the law was usually kept in or by the ark.

2. By whom (v. 14). Hilkiah, the high priest, was the finder. It is strange that the high priest was ignorant of the place where the law was found. It is a sad comment upon the moral and spiritual condition of priests and kings, since they were appointed guardians of God's law. It is, however, always true that when one does not want to have his life ordered by the Bible he will put it out of his sight. The disappearance of the Bible from our homes, and the neglect of it in our study, is a certain sign of evil in our lives. Be assured, however, that though the law of the Lord be removed from our sight it shall sooner or later come before us to judge us. God has declared that his Word shall not return unto him void, but shall accomplish that whereunto it hath been sent.

3. Its disposition (v. 16). Hilkiah gave the law to Shaphan the scribe, who delivered it to the king along with his report as to the disposition of the money which had been collected.

II. The Book of the Law Read (vv. 18, 29, 30). 1. To the king (v. 18). This was a most impressive scene, the king listening to the reading of the law of God. It was the proper thing to do, for those appointed by God to rule over the people should be anxious to know the will of God concerning them. The pious king, believing in it as God's Word, was anxious to know God's thought concerning the nation. His interest became intense, as he was made conscious of the apostasy of his people from God's law. His chief anxiety was to know what was God's purpose as to the nation in view of their idolatry. It is a sensible thing to make oneself intelligent as to his responsibilities, even to know what judgments shall befall those who have turned from God. One should know the worst while there is time yet to escape his wrath, for repentance is the only door of escape from perdition.

2. To the people (vv. 29, 30). At the direction of the king the priests, elders and all the people were called together to hear God's Word read. This was as it ever should be. People have a right to hear what God has to say to them as well as the king. To keep the people ignorant of the Word of the Lord is a great crime. The crying need of the age, with all its boasted knowledge, fine church equipment and cultured ministry, is for the Word of God to be brought to the ears of the people.

III. The Effect of the Reading of the Law. (vv. 20-28; 31-33). When God's Word is intelligently read and understood there is bound to be an impression made.

1. The king rent his clothes (v. 19). The man who will honestly listen to the reading of God's Word will be brought to his knees, for he will be convicted of sin, and will take the place of self-abasement before the Lord. The king first saw his own sins and confessed them. It is a good sign when one sees his own shortcomings and failures, and not primarily those of others.

2. The king made inquiry of the Lord through Huldah the prophetess (vv. 22-28). His supreme motive in this inquiry was to find out whether there was any way to avert the awful judgments which were impending, as set forth in the Word of God. After all, the human heart instinctively turns from threatened woe to inquire whether there is not a way of escape. Alongside of the flaming, thundering Sinai was placed the Levitical system of offerings. Law and grace are not far removed. The law becomes our schoolmaster to bring us to Christ. Through Huldah the message came that God had taken account of all their sins and that judgment must fall, but Josiah would be spared the sight of all God's visitation of wrath. The penitence of the king turned aside God's wrath from himself, but the nation would be obliged to suffer for its awful apostasy.

3. The king made a covenant (vv. 31, 32). This was to the effect that he would walk in the commandments of the Lord. He also made the people stand to this covenant. He no doubt acted from the sincerity of his heart.

4. Further reforms (v. 33). Josiah now reached out as far as the national boundaries, took away their abominations and made Israel to serve the Lord their God. The fact that the book of the law was found implies that it had been lost. The way it had been lost is not definitely set forth, but numerous ways may be suggested. The Bible is a lost book to many professing Christians today, maybe through lack of interest in it, willful neglect or neglect through the stress of life's business and pleasures. May we not each one inquire as to whether our Bibles are lost?

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MONEY LENDER PITIED POOR

Chinese Shylock in Manchuria Gave Annual Sum for Relief Work to Relieve His Conscience.

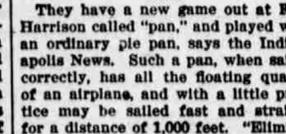
A wealthy Chinese money lender in Manchuria was recently convicted of making false declaration regarding robberies of his caravans by Mongolian bandits. His conscience troubled him to such an extent that he offered to contribute an annual sum of \$750 for the relief of the poor, East and West says. This money was made the basis of a fund for feeding the helpless at Kungchuling.

Manchuria is terribly poor, despite the mineral and agricultural riches extracted from its soil and rocks, all of which products are shipped abroad. There are probably thousands of industrious natives unable, by unremitting toil, to earn more than a meager living. When to their natural difficulties are added the ravages of bandits and the evils of misgovernment, such as now prevails in many parts of China, abject poverty and starvation must be the lot of the people who, in the best of times, are only half fed.

Pan.

They have a new game out at Fort Harrison called "pan," and played with an ordinary pie pan, says the Indianapolis News. Such a pan, when sailed correctly, has all the floating quality of an airplane, and with a little practice may be sailed fast and straight for a distance of 1,000 feet. "Elimination pan" is an improvement on the game, and is played by any number of men in a big circle, and each man that drops the pan is out of the game.

If It Should Happen.
"How did you avoid the draft?"
"Easy. My wife was medical examiner on the exemption board."



"OUR GROCER TOLD ME" — Bobby

After folks taste Post Toasties they don't like common corn flakes