



SYNOPSIS.

The story is told by Nicholas Trist, his chief, Senator John Calhoun, offered the portfolio of secretary of state in Tyler's cabinet. It is told by Dr. Ward that he is not ready to die, and if he accepts Tyler's offer it means that Texas and Oregon must be added to the Union. He plans to learn the intentions of England with regard to Mexico through Baroness von Ritz, secret spy and reputed mistress of the English ambassador, Pakenham. Nicholas is sent to bring the baroness to Calhoun's apartments and misses a meeting with his sweetheart, Elizabeth Churchill. While searching for the baroness' house a carriage dashes up and Nicholas is invited to enter. The occupant is the baroness, who says she is being pursued. The pursuers are shaken off. Nicholas is invited into the house and delivers Calhoun's message. He notes that the baroness has lost a slipper. Nicholas is given the remaining slipper as a pledge that she will tell Calhoun everything. He gives her an escort to an Indian friend he intended for Elizabeth. Elizabeth's father consents to Nicholas' proposal for her hand.

CHAPTER VII.—Continued.

It was not new to me, of course, this pageant, although it never lacked of interest. There were in the throng representatives of all America as it was then, a strange, crude blending of refinement and vulgarity, of ease and poverty, of luxury and thrift.

A certain air of gloom at this time hung over official Washington, for the minds of all were still oppressed by the memory of that fatal accident—the explosion of the great cannon "Peacemaker" on board the war vessel Princeton—which had killed Mr. Upshur, our secretary of state, with others, and had, at one blow, come so near to depriving this government of its head and his official family; the number of prominent lives thus ended or endangered being appalling to contemplate. It was this accident which had called Mr. Calhoun forward at a national juncture of the most extreme delicacy and the utmost importance. In spite of the general mourning, however, the informal receptions at the White House were not wholly discontinued, and the administration, unsettled as it was, and fronted by the gravest of diplomatic problems, made some show of dignity and even cheerfulness as it might.

I considered it my duty to pass in the long procession and to shake the hand of Mr. Tyler. That done, I gazed about the great room, carefully scanning the different little groups which were accustomed to form after the ceremonial part of the visit was over. I saw many whom I knew. I forgot them; for in a far corner, where a flood of light came through the trailing vines that shielded the outer window, my anxious eyes discovered the object of my quest—Elizabeth.

It seemed to me I had never known her so fair as she was that morning in the great east room of the White House. Elizabeth was rather taller than the average woman, and of that splendid southern figure, slender but strong, which makes perhaps the best representative of our American beauty. She was very bravely arrayed to-day in her best pink-flowered lawn, made wide and full, as was the custom of the time, but not so clumsily gathered at the waist as some, and so serving not wholly to conceal her natural comeliness of figure. Her bonnet she had removed. I could see the sunlight on the ripples of her brown hair, and the shadows which lay above her eyes as she turned to face me, and the slow pink which crept into her cheeks.

Dignified always, and reserved, was Elizabeth Churchill. But now I hope it was not wholly conceit which led me to feel that perhaps the warmth, the glow of the air, caught while riding under the open sky, the sight of the many budding roses of our city, the scent of the blossoms which even then came through the lattice—the meeting even with myself, so lately returned—something at least of this had caused an awakening in her girl's heart. Something, I say, I do not know what, gave her greeting to me more warmth than was usual with her. My own heart, eager enough to break bounds, answered in kind. We stood—blushing like children as our hands touched—forgotten in that assemblage of Washington's pomp and circumstance.

"How do you do?" was all I could find to say. And "How do you do?" was all I could catch for answer, although I saw, in a fleeting way, a glimpse of a dimple hid in Elizabeth's cheek. She never showed it save when pleased. I have never seen a dimple like that of Elizabeth's.

Absorbed, we almost forgot Aunt Betty Jennings—stout, radiant, snub-nosed, arch-browed and curious, Elizabeth's chaperon. On the whole, I was glad Aunt Betty Jennings was there.

"Aunt Betty," said I, as I took her hand; "Aunt Betty, have we told you, Elizabeth and I?"

I saw Elizabeth straighten in perplexity, doubt or horror, but I went on. "Yes, Elizabeth and I—"

"You dear children!" gurgled Aunt Betty.

"Congratulate us both!" I demanded, and I put Elizabeth's hand, covered with my own, into the short and chubby fingers of that estimable lady.

54-40 OR FIGHT BY EMERSON HOUGH AUTHOR OF THE MISSISSIPPI BUBBLE ILLUSTRATIONS BY MAGNUS G. KETNER COPYRIGHT 1909 BY DOBBS-MERRILL COMPANY



"Nicholas," She Said, "Come To-Night."

Whenever Elizabeth attempted to open her lips I opened mine before, and I so overwhelmed dear Aunt Betty Jennings with protestations of my regard for her, my interest in her family, her other nieces, her chickens, her kittens, her home—I so quieted all her questions by assertions and demands and exclamations, and declarations that Mr. Daniel Churchill had given his consent, that I swear for the moment even Elizabeth believed that what I had said was indeed true. At least, I can testify she made no formal denial, although the dimple was now frightened out of sight.

Admirable Aunt Betty Jennings! She forestalled every assertion I made, herself bubbling and blushing in sheer delight. Nor did she lack in charity. Tapping me with her fan lightly, she exclaimed: "You rogue! I know that you two want to be alone; and that is what you want. Now I am going away—just down the room. You will ride home with us after a time, I am sure!"

Adorable Aunt Betty Jennings! Elizabeth and I looked at her comfortable back for some moments before I turned, laughing, to look Elizabeth in the eyes.

"You had no right—" began she, her face growing pink.

"Every right!" said I, and managed to find a place for our two hands under cover of the wide flounces of her figured lawn as we stood, both blushing. "I have every right. I have truly just seen your father. I have just come from him."

She looked at me intently, glowing, happily.

"I could not wait any longer," I went on. "Within a week I am going to have an office of my own. Let us wait no longer. I have waited long enough. Now—"

I babbled on, and she listened. It was strange place enough for a betrothal, but there at least I said the words which bound me; and in the look Elizabeth gave me I saw her answer. Her eyes were wide and straight and solemn. She did not smile.

As we stood, with small opportunity and perhaps less inclination for much conversation, my eyes chanced to turn toward the main entrance door of the east room. I saw, pushing through, a certain page, a young boy of good family, who was employed by Mr. Calhoun as messenger. He knew me perfectly well, as he did almost every one else in Washington, and with precocious intelligence his gaze picked me out in all that throng.

"Is it for me?" I asked, as he extended his missive.

"Yes," he nodded. "Mr. Calhoun told me to find you and to give you this at once."

I turned to Elizabeth. "If you will pardon me?" I said. She made way for me to pass to a curtained window, and there, turning my back and using such secrecy as I could, I broke the seal.

The message was brief. To be equally brief I may say simply that it asked me to be ready to start for Canada that night on business connected with the department of state!

Of reason or explanations it gave none.

I turned to Elizabeth and held out the message from my chief. She looked at it. Her eyes widened. "Nicholas!" she exclaimed.

"Elizabeth," said I, turning to her swiftly, "I will agree to nothing which will send me away from you again. Listen, then—" I raised a hand as she would have spoken. "Go home with your Aunt Betty as soon as you can. Tell your father that to-night at six I shall be there. Be ready!"

"What do you mean?" she panted. I saw her throat flutter.

"I mean that we must be married to-night before I go. Before eight o'clock I must be on the train."

"When will you be back?" she whispered.

"How can I tell? When I go, my wife shall wait there at Elmhurst, instead of my sweetheart."

She turned away from me, contemplative. She, too, was young. Ardent appealed to her. Life stood before her, beckoning, as to me. What could the girl do or say?

I placed her hand on my arm. We started toward the door, intending to pick up Aunt Jennings on our way. As we advanced, a group before us broke apart. I stood aside to make way for a gentleman whom I did not recognize. On his arm there leaned a woman, a beautiful woman, clad in a costume of founced and rippling velvet of royal blue which made her the most striking figure in the great room. Hers was a personality not easily to be overlooked in any company, her face one not readily to be equalled. It was the Baroness Helena von Ritz!

We met face to face. I presume it would have been too much to ask even of her to suppress the sudden flash of recognition which she showed. At first she did not see that I was accompanied. She bent to me, as though to adjust her gown, and without a change in the expression of her face, spoke to me in an undertone no one else could hear.

"Wait!" she murmured. "There is to be a meeting—" She had time for no more as she swept by.

Alas, that mere moments should spell ruin as well as happiness! This new woman whom I had wooed and found, this new Elizabeth whose hand lay on my arm, saw what no one else would have seen—that little flash of recognition on the face of Helena von Ritz! She heard a whisper pass. Moreover, with a woman's uncanny facility in detail, she took in every item of the other's costume. For myself, I could see nothing of that costume now save one object—a barbaric brooch of double shells and beaded fastenings, which clasped the light laces at her throat.

The baroness had perhaps slept as little as I the night before. If I showed the ravages of loss of sleep no more than she, I was fortunate. She was radiant, as she passed forward with her escort for place in the line which had not yet dwindled away.

"You seem to know that lady," said Elizabeth to me gently.

"Did I so seem?" I answered. "It is professional of all to smile in the east room at a reception," said I.



"Then you do not know the lady?" "Indeed, no. Why should I, my dear girl?" Ah, how hot my face was!

"I do not know," said Elizabeth. "Only, in a way she resembles a certain lady of whom we have heard rather more than enough here in Washington."

"Put aside silly gossip, Elizabeth," I said. "And, please, do not quarrel with me, now that I am so happy. To-night—"

"Nicholas," she said, leaning just a little forward and locking her hands more deeply in my arm, "don't you know the little brooch you were going to bring me—an Indian thing—you said it should be my wedding present? Don't you remember that? Now, I was thinking—"

I stood blushing red as though detected in the utmost villainy. And the girl at my side saw that written on my face which now, within the very moment, it had become her right to question! I turned to her suddenly.

"Elizabeth," said I, "you shall have your little brooch to-night, if you will promise me now to be ready and waiting for me at six. I will have the license."

It seemed to me that this new self of Elizabeth's—warmer, yielding, adorable—was slowly going away from me again, and that her old self, none the less sweet, none the less alluring, but more logical and questioning, had taken its old place again. She put both her hands on my arm now and looked me fairly in the face, where the color still proclaimed some sort of guilt on my part, although my heart was clean and innocent as hers.

"Nicholas," she said, "come to-night. Bring me my little jewel—and bring—"

"The minister! If I do that, Elizabeth, you will marry me then?"

"Yes!" she whispered softly. Amid all the din and babble of that motley throng I heard the word, low as it was. I have never heard a voice like Elizabeth's.

An instant later, I knew not quite how, her hand was away from my arm, in that of Aunt Betty, and they were passing toward the main door, leaving me standing with joy and doubt mingled in my mind.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

HELPED SENATOR TO VICTORY

Political Opponents Made Mistake When They Raked Up a Story They Thought Would Hurt.

Senator Chamberlain of Washington, who recently made his first extended speech in congress, on conservation, has reminded an old friend of Chamberlain's own experiments in conservation.

"When Chamberlain was running in the senate," said this friend, "the opposition went over his record with a fine tooth comb to find something injurious to him. One day one of the strikers rushed in and announced that he had it."

Chamberlain was president of a bank when he was a young man; it busted and was a horrible wreck. "Dig it up quick," announced the campaign manager.

The story was looked up and was true. The bank had failed, and there were almost no assets.

They were just ready to put out the story when an old friend of Chamberlain's came along and advised against it. "Won't do you any good," he insisted. "Take my word for it."

But the campaign managers had to do something, and so the story of the busted bank was given out and got due publicity in all the anti-Chamberlain papers. Next day the Chamberlain committee gave out a statement signed by all the directors and a lot of depositors of the bank. It said:

"It is true that Mr. Chamberlain was president of the bank when it failed. At that time he was a man of some property. He had never been actively connected with the bank management, and when he learned that it was closed and hopelessly insolvent he turned over his entire property and personally paid all depositors."

Whereupon the anti-Chamberlain people started hunting for a new roof-bark, and when election day came the man whose bank had failed ingloriously was triumphantly elected senator.

Our Lack in Humor.

Artemus Ward said that a comic paper was no worse for having a joke in it now and then, and his words have ever since been quoted as embodying the gospel of wit and humor. The great form of American mirth is the joke. "It is to laugh" that's our creed in a sentence. Misplaced capitals, awkward spelling, impossible grammar, infinite incongruity of situation, endless wordplay, grotesquery of action and character, heightened by pictures equally funny, these are the things that make us laugh. We are quick to catch the point of a cartoon, to enjoy the exaggeration of a caricature. But to smile at the mock-serious, to be amused by satire, is a refinement as yet beyond us.

NEBRASKA IN BRIEF.

News Notes of Interest from Various Sections.

The Midwest Life.

On December 1st of this year The Midwest Life had written as much insurance as it did in the year 1909. The gain over last year, therefore, will be the amount placed in December. The Midwest Life now has over two and one-half millions of insurance in force on the lives of Nebraska men and women and an income amounting to one hundred thousand dollars a year. This has been accomplished in less than five years. When solicited by an agent of an eastern company for life insurance stop and think the situation over. Weigh the advantages and disadvantages of the transaction. See if it does not appeal to you as a rational business proposition to patronize a Nebraska company. You know the reason why. The money stays in Nebraska not only in good times, but in panics and financial depressions as well. The Midwest Life issues all the standard forms of life insurance policies at reasonable rates. Call or write the home office, 119 South Tenth street, Lincoln, for an agency, or a sample policy.

In the office of the Gooch Grain company in York the operator who receives by telegraph the grain, stock and market quotations is blind. He has been blind for ten years and although deprived of his sight, he goes to and from his place of business, to the postoffice and business houses and makes his purchases, walking about the business and residence streets unaccompanied.

There was filed in Madison county the will of J. A. DeWolf, a wealthy farmer, which contains a unique provision. It requires that his executors shall give a surety bond. Ordinarily the man who makes the will names some personal friends or business associates or relatives as executors, without bond, and then the probate court has to offend these trusted friends by requiring bond.

Superintendent C. N. Abbott of the institute for the blind at Nebraska City, who retired on the appointment of the new superintendent, R. C. King, has announced his candidacy for county superintendent, which will be left vacant by Mr. King resigning to take his new position. Prof. Charles K. Morse of the Auburn public school is also a candidate.

Columbus police are working on the mystery of the death of Miss Florence Baer, aged 19, daughter of a respectable farmer living southwest of the city, and have in custody Frank Cleaves Welker, aged 30, a teacher in a business college here, and a farm hand by the name of Levi Cordray. The girl's body was found in a vacant lot, frozen.

That York citizens are prosperous and most liberal was in evidence when the Methodists of that city dedicated the new church annex costing \$5,000 free of debt. The large, new church building was filled with members of the church who, in a few minutes, subscribed over \$7,000, which was more than enough to pay for improvements.

The appointment of Dr. William Kern as superintendent and George James as steward of the state asylum at Ingleside has met with popular favor in Hastings. Dr. Kern was made superintendent of the institution early in 1901 and retained the place through the administrations of Governors Dietrich, Savage, Mickey and Sheldon.

William Dill of Lincoln, a 17-year-old boy, tried to commit suicide by shooting himself through the head. He gave as his reason for the act that his father was mean to him. The parents declared that the boy came home under the influence of liquor and was severely reproved by his father.

For assault on the night watchman at Fairbury, Dill Brock paid a \$100 fine.

C. H. Aldrich's selection of Dr. Bostrom of Minden as state veterinarian has met with favor all over Kearney county, where he has practiced for twenty years. He has done much original investigation along the line of diseases peculiar to that part of the country, especially the corn stalks disease.

For the burglary of the Pope Bros. hardware store at Red Cloud, Ben Grant is in the Omaha city jail. The goods were found in his possession, he has confessed and the Red Cloud authorities will take charge of him.

Judge William Hayward of Nebraska City left with his wife and son, for China to spend the winter. It is intimated that he has gone there to look the country over with a view of accepting a consularship.

Some time since, Miss Emma Ziebarth filed suit for \$15,000 damages against Fred Bitfield of Prosser for an alleged breach of promise, but Bitfield has fled and cannot be found.

The late poultry show at Omaha was the most successful thus far held. Next year it is proposed to largely expand the exhibit.

The Butler county corn show and industrial school exhibit was held in the court house at David City. The entries were more numerous than in any previous year and more than 100 prizes were awarded. The attendance was a record breaker.

The first election in Adams county was held at Juniata December 12, 1871, pursuant to a proclamation issued by Acting Governor William H. James, for the purpose of electing county officers and selecting a county seat. There were twenty-nine votes cast at this election and Juniata was chosen at the county seat.

THE CENSUS OF CANADA

ITS GROWTH IN TEN YEARS PAST.

A census of the Dominion of Canada will be made during 1911. It will show that during the past decade a remarkable development has taken place, and, when compared with the population, a greater percentage of increase in industries of all kinds than has ever been shown by any country. Commerce, mining, agriculture and railways have made a steady march onward. The population will be considerably over 8,000,000. Thousands of miles of railway lines have been constructed since the last census was taken ten years ago. This construction was made necessary by the opening up of the new agricultural districts in Western Canada, in which there have been pouring year after year an increasing number of settlers, until the present year will witness settlement of over 300,000, or a trifle less than one-third of the immigration to the United States during the same period with its 92,000,000 of population. Even with these hundreds of thousands of newcomers, the great majority of whom go upon the land, there is still available room for hundreds of thousands additional. The census figures will therefore show a great—a vast—increase in the number of farms under occupation, as well as in the output of the farms. When the figures of the splendid immigration are added to the natural increase, the total will surprise even the most optimistic. To the excellent growth that the western portion of Canada will show may largely be attributed the commercial and industrial growth of the eastern portion of Canada. All Canada is being upbuilt, and in this transformation there is taking part the people from many countries, but only from those countries that produce the strong and vigorous. As some evidence of the growth of the western portion of Canada, in agricultural industry, it is instructive to point out that over 100,000 homesteads of 160 acres each have been transferred to actual settlers in the past two years. This means 25,000 square miles of territory, and then, when is added the 40,000 160-acre preemption blocks, there is an additional 10,000 square miles, or a total of 35,000 square miles—a territory as large as the State of Indiana, and settled within two years. Reduced to the producing capacity imperative on the cultivation restriction of 50 acres of cultivation on each 160-acre homestead within three years, there will be within a year and a half from now upwards of 5,000,000 additional acres from this one source added to the entire producing area of the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta.

In 1901, at the time of the last census of Canada, successful agriculture in the Provinces of Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta was an experiment to many. There were skeptics who could not believe that it was possible to grow wheat, forty and even fifty bushels of wheat to the acre, or that as high as one hundred and thirty bushels of oats to the acre could be grown. The skeptics are not to be found today. The evidence of the hundreds of thousands of farmers is too overwhelming. Not only have the lands of western Canada proven their worth in the matter of raising all the smaller field grains, but for mixed farming, and for cattle raising there is no better country anywhere. The climate is perfectly adapted to all these pursuits as well as admirable for health. The Dominion government literature, descriptive of the country, is what all that are interested should read. Send for a copy to the nearest Canadian government representative.

PROOF POSITIVE



Boy—This is a good place for fish! Angler—What can you catch here? Boy—I don't know, but it must be a great place for fish, because I never seen any of them leave it.—Com's Cuts.

Ill-Mannered Chicken.

Little Robert, 3 years of age, went with his grandmother to the chicken park to see her feed the chickens. When the little ones jumped upon the water dish and dipped their bills into the water, he cried: "Oh, grandmother, they are putting their feet on the table."

Cured.

"Your son used to be so round-shouldered. How did you get him cured of it? He seems to be so straight now."

"He has become an aviation enthusiast, and spends most of his time watching the bird-men."

Aromatic Spirits.

Mrs. Tarr—Sistah Lobstock has jest got a divorce fum her husband. Mrs. Wombat—Don't say? How much amonnia did de cou't done grant her?—Puck.

"The man who forgets that he was once a boy is almost as scarce as the woman who denies that she is still a girl."