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SYNOPSIS.

Jack Keith, a Virginian, now a border plainsman, is looking for roaming war parties of savages. He sees a wagon team at full gallop pursued by men on ponies. When Keith reaches the wagon the raiders have massacred two men and departed. He searches the victims finding papers and a locket with a woman's portrait. Keith is arrested at Carson City, charged with the murder, his accuser being a ruffian named Black Bart. A negro companion in his cell named Ned tells him that he knew the Keiths in Virginia. Ned says one of the murdered men was John Sibley, the other Gen. Willis Waite, formerly a Confederate officer. The plainsman and Ned escape, and later the fugitives come upon a cabin and find its occupant to be a young girl, whom Keith thinks he saw at Carson City. The girl explains that she is in search of a brother, who had deserted from the army, and that a Mr. Hawley induced her to come to the cabin while he sought her brother. Hawley appears, and Keith in hiding recognizes him as Black Bart. There is a terrific battle in the darkened room in which Keith is victor. Hawley escapes, and the girl who says that her name is Hope, joins in the escape. Keith explains his situation and the fugitives make for Fort Larned, where the girl is left with the hotel landlady. Miss Hope tells that she is the daughter of General Waite. Keith and Ned drift into Sheridan, where Keith meets an old friend, Dr. Fairbain. Keith meets the brother of Hope Waite, under the assumed name of Fred Willoughby, and becomes convinced that Black Bart has some plot involving the two. Hope learns that Gen. Waite, who was thought murdered, is at Sheridan, and goes there, where she is mistaken for Keith's daughter. Keith meets the real Christie MacLaire and finds that Black Bart has convinced her that there is a mystery in her life which he is going to turn to her advantage. The plainsman tells Hope Waite of her resemblance to Christie MacLaire. They decide that Fred Willoughby may hold the key to the situation. Keith finds Willoughby shot dead. Hope is told of the death of her brother. Keith falls to learn what representations Black Bart has made to Christie MacLaire. Hope suggests that in order to learn the secret she must briefly impersonate the stage singer.

CHAPTER XXVII.—(Continued.)

"Certainly not. At first it struck me as altogether wrong, but the more I think of it the stronger it appeals to me. It may reveal to us the whole conspiracy, and I cannot believe Hawley would venture upon any gross familiarity likely to cost him the good opinion of his ally. There is too much at stake. Wait here, Hope, and I will be back the very moment I learn all that is necessary."

A glance at the office clock convinced Keith that, in all probability, Miss MacLaire had not, as yet, departed for the scene of her evening triumph. Still, it could not be long before she would, and he lit a cigar, sitting down in a corner partially concealed by the clerk's desk to wait her appearance. This required longer than anticipated, and fearing lest he might have missed the departure entirely, he was about to question the busy Thomas, when he beheld Hawley enter hurriedly from the street and run up the stairs. He, then, had been the laggard. All the better, as he would now have no opportunity to unfold his tale to the lady, as it would be necessary for them to hurry to the theater. Whatever the nature of the revelation it would have to wait until the walk home. The excitement of the adventure was already creeping into Keith's blood, his pulse quickening.

The two returned almost immediately, conclusively proving that Miss MacLaire, fully dressed for the street, had been awaiting the arrival of her gallant with some impatience. Hawley was busily explaining his delay as they came down the stairs, and paid little attention to the seemingly deserted office. Indeed, Miss Christie monopolized all his thoughts. With quick scrutiny the watcher noted the more conspicuous articles of apparel constituting her costume—the white mantilla thrown over her head, the neatly fitting blue dress, the light cape covering the shoulders—surely it would not be difficult to duplicate these, so as to pass muster under the dim light of the streets. Far enough in their rear to feel safe from observation he followed, noting with increased pleasure the rapidity with which they covered the required distance. Clearly Miss Christie was already nervous lest she have not sufficient time remaining in which to properly dress for her act, and there would be no exchange of confidences on the outward journey. Hawley left her, as Keith anticipated, at the stage entrance, the lady hastening within. Her escort strolled leisurely back to the front of the house, and finally, purchasing a ticket, entered, the performance already having begun.

Keith knew perfectly the arrangement of the theater—the seats in front; tables all through the center; a gallery filled with benches; a noisy orchestra beneath the stage; a crowded audience of men, with only here and there a scattered representative of the gentler sex; busy waiters dodging in and out among the tables, and down the aisles, filling orders for liquors from the nearby saloon. The air would be pungent with the odor of drink, thick with the fumes of tobacco, and noisy with voices, except as some special favorite on the stage won temporary attention. The Trocadero possessed but one redeeming feature—no doorway connected stage and auditorium, and the management brooked no interference with his artists. It had required some nerve

to originally enforce this rule, together with a smart fight or two, but at this period it was acknowledged and respected. No sooner had Hawley vanished than Keith found occasion to enter into casual conversation with the door-keeper, asking a number of questions, and leaving impressed upon the mind of that astute individual the idea that he was dealing with a "gent" enamored of one of the stage beauties. A coin slipped quietly into the man's hand served to deepen this impression, and unlocked discreet lips otherwise sworn to secrecy. Out of much general information a little of real value was thus extracted—Miss MacLaire's act began at 9:45 and was over promptly at 10:10. It required about twenty minutes more for her to change again into street clothes, and she usually left the theater immediately after, which would be about 10:30. Yes, there was a vestibule outside the stage door, and on bad nights, those waiting for the ladies could slip in there. But on such a night as this they generally hung around outside. No, there was no watchman, but the manager was frequently prowling around. He'd be busy, however, at 10:30, getting the stage ready for the "Flying Her-

with honesty now?" he protested, a little hurt by the bantering tone.

"Of course you have; I merely talk lightly to keep my courage up. You can have no idea how afraid I am."

"Then you are truly an actress, for you appear the picture of enjoyment. But we must go, or Hawley will be there before us, and thus spoil all our plans."

They passed out through the office together, seeing no one familiar to either, Hope keeping her face partially concealed. The east side of the street was less frequented than the other, having fewer saloons along its way, and they chose its darkness. As they advanced, the long habit of frontier life caused Keith to glance behind before they had progressed a block, and he was thus made aware that they were being followed. Conversing lightly, and without a word to alarm the girl, he managed to observe every movement of the dimly outlined figure which advanced with them, timing every motion to theirs. Long before they crossed the street to the Trocadero he was convinced there was no mistake—the fellow, whoever he might be, was trailing them. Keith smiled grimly to himself, resolving that as soon as he had left

its being him even in this darkness. Good-bye."

The longing to clasp her in his arms, to speak the language of his heart, was almost overwhelming, yet the memory of that figure slinking along behind them, and the brief time before Hawley's probable appearance, for he would leave the theater at the conclusion of Miss MacLaire's act, restrained all demonstration. This was a moment for action, not for words of love; no delay should hazard the success of their undertaking. He heard the slight creak of the door as the girl slipped within the concealment of the vestibule, and then he glided away through the darkness with the stealthy silence of an Indian. There was no one in the alley-way, which was narrow and easily explored, but the glow from the front windows plainly revealed the shadow of a man near the entrance, and Keith slipped up toward him, hugging the side of the building for concealment, prepared to resort to harsh measures. As he reached out, gripping the astonished loiterer by the collar, they stared at one another in surprise, and the gripping hand was instantly released its hold.

"You, Fairbain! What the devil does this mean? What are you spying on us for?"

Clearly taken aback, yet not greatly disturbed, his eyes showing pugnacity and his jaw set, the Doctor rubbed his throat where Keith's knuckles had left a red welt.

"Damn, you, I think I'm the one to ask for an explanation," he growled. "She said she was not going with you, and now you are around here together at this hour. I had a right to know whether I was being played with like that."

"But, man, that was not Miss MacLaire I was with; it was Hope Waite. Come back here under the tent flap while I explain."

Fearful of the coming of Hawley he fairly dragged the portly figure of the bewildered Doctor with him, striving, by quickly spoken words, to make him comprehend the situation. Knowing previously something of the issues involved, it was not difficult to make Fairbain grasp the meaning of this present movement, yet his sympathies were at once enlisted upon the side of Miss Christie. He'd be damned if he would have any part in such a scheme—if she had a right to the money he'd help her get it—it was a cowardly trick, and he'd fight if necessary, to keep her from becoming a victim. His voice rose, his arms brandishing violently, his sentences snapping like rifle shots. Keith answered, and fearful of a discovery which would leave Hope exposed, realized the futility of discussion and turned to physical force. Grasping the gesticulating man with both hands, he flung him backward and dragged him into the empty tent, kneeling on him as he throttled him to the earth.

"Now, Doctor, you listen to me," he said sternly. "I'm through arguing. I hate to treat you like this, for you are my friend, but I'll not stand for interference here. Do you get that, you old fool? Lie still until I get through! I respect your feelings toward Miss MacLaire. She is a good girl, and I hope to heaven you get her if you want her. But you never will if you permit this affair to go on. Yes, I know what I am talking about. In all that Hope and I do we are serving you and Christie—our only fight is with 'Black Bart' Hawley. Stop being a bullet-headed old fool, Fairbain, and understand this thing. Lie still, I tell you, and hear me out! Hawley is a liar, a thief, and a swindler. There is a swindle in this thing somewhere, and he hopes to pull out a big sum of money from it. He is merely using Christie to pull his own chestnuts out of the fire. She is innocent; we realize that, but this fellow is going to ruin the girl unless we succeed in exposing him. He's not only involving her in his criminal conspiracy, but he's making love to her; he's teaching her to love him. That's part of his scheme, no doubt, for then she will be so much easier handled. I tell you, Fairbain, your only chance to ever win the interest of Christie MacLaire is to help us down this fellow Hawley. Yes, you can sit up; I reckon you're beginning to see clearer, ain't you?"

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Old Parliamentary Usages.

Members of the British parliament no longer howl down each other with imitations from the farmyard and the menagerie. One of these early nineteenth century scenes is thus described: "One honorable member near the bar repeatedly called out 'road' to the members endeavoring to address the house. At repeated intervals a sort of drone—like humming, having the sound of a distant hand organ or bagpipes—issued from the back benches, with coughing, sneezing and ingeniously extended yawning blended with other sounds. A single voice from the ministerial benches imitated very accurately the yelp of a kenneled bound."

INCREASE IN NUMBER OF AMERICANS GOING TO CANADA

Although Western Canada suffered, as did many other portions of the west, from untoward conditions, which turned one of the most promising crops ever seen in that country, into but little more than an average yield of all grains, there is left in the farmers' hands, a big margin of profit. Of course there were many farmers who were fortunate enough to harvest and market a big yield, and with the prices that were secured made handsome returns. From wheat, oats, barley and flax marketed to the 1st of January, 1912, there was a gross revenue of \$75,384,000. The cattle, hogs, poultry and dairy proceeds brought this up to \$101,620,000 or 21 million dollars in excess of 1910. There was still in the farmers' hands at that time about 95 million bushels of wheat worth at least another sixty-five million dollars (allowing for inferior grades), besides about 160 million bushels of oats to say nothing of barley and flax, which would run into several million of dollars.

There is a great inrush of settlers to occupy the vacant lands throughout Manitoba, Saskatchewan and Alberta. The reports from the Government show that during the past year upwards of 131,000 Americans crossed the border into Canada. A great many of these took up farms, over ten thousand having homesteaded, in fact the records show that every state in the Union contributed. A larger number, not caring to go so far away as the homesteading area, have purchased lands at from fifteen dollars an acre to twenty-five dollars an acre. The prospects for a good crop for 1912 are as satisfactory as for many years. The land has had sufficient moisture, and with a reasonably early spring, it is safe to predict a record crop.

Those who have not had the latest literature sent out by the Government agents should send to the one nearest, and secure a copy.

FOR HIS OWN PLEASURE.



Terry Casey—What's the matter, Jerry? What are you running for?
Jerry Lacey (messenger boy)—It's all right, Terry! I'm off duty now!

CHILD'S HEAD A MASS OF HUMOR

"I think the Cuticura remedies are the best remedies for eczema I have ever heard of. My mother had a child who had a rash on its head when it was real young. Doctor called it baby rash. He gave us medicine, but it did no good. In a few days the head was a solid mass, a running sore. It was awful; the child cried continually. We had to hold him and watch him to keep him from scratching the sore. His suffering was dreadful. At last we remembered Cuticura Remedies. We got a dollar bottle of Cuticura Resolvent, a box of Cuticura Ointment, and a bar of Cuticura Soap. We gave the Resolvent as directed, washed the head with the Cuticura Soap, and applied the Cuticura Ointment. We had not used half before the child's head was clear and free from eczema, and it has never come back again. His head was healthy and he had a beautiful head of hair. I think the Cuticura Ointment very good for the hair. It makes the hair grow and prevents falling hair." (Signed) Mrs. Francis Lund, Plain City, Utah, Sept. 19, 1910.

Although Cuticura Soap and Ointment are sold everywhere, a sample of each, with 32-page book, will be mailed free on application to "Cuticura," Dept. L, Boston.

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She—Then if you want to cut them down you have to stop cutting up yourself.

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All things come more quickly to him who tips the waiter.

FARMS FOR RENT OR SALE ON CROP PAYMENTS. J. MULHALL, Sioux City, Ia.

Many a high flyer has no knowledge of aerial navigation.

Evil of Idleness.

Work develops all the good there is in a man; idleness all the evil. Work sharpens all his faculties and makes him thrifty; idleness makes him lazy and a spendthrift. Work surrounds a man with those whose habits are industrious and honest; in such society a weak man develops strength, and a strong man is made stronger. Idleness, on the other hand, is apt to throw a man into the company of men whose object in life is usually the pursuit of unwholesome and demoralizing diversions.—Darius Ogden Mills.

The Car.

Knicker—Thought Jones bought a runabout.

Bocker—Yes, but after the bills came in he called it a runup.

Few people would jump at conclusions if they could see their finish.

Sioux City Directory

"Hub of the Northwest."

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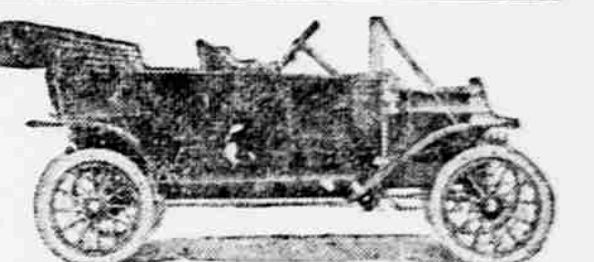
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