



make a huge lake, extending for miles up the valley of this river. That's where I got into one lawsuit. The commercial interests down below held that we had no right to put a concrete dam across this river."

"Couldn't you place a dam on your own property?"

"It seems not. If the river ran entirely through my own land, I could. Had I paid more attention to what my sister was doing, I might, perhaps, have succeeded, by getting a bill through the Legislature. When at last I tried that, it was too late. The interests below me had already applied to the Courts for an injunction. Attempting to legalize my action, not only did I find the Legislature hostile, but my clever opponents get up a muck-raking crusade against me, and I was held up by the Press of the State as a monopolist, anxious to increase my already vast wealth by grasping what should belong to the people. This campaign of personal calumny was adroitly managed, and they convinced even me that I was unfit for human intercourse. Statistics were published to prove how by manipulation of railway and coal mine I had robbed everybody. Sermons were preached against me, Pulpit joining Press in denouncing me, and not being clever with my pen, I made no attempt at defence. I collected a lot of dynamite, blew up the partially constructed dam, and the river now flows serenely on, as you may have noticed."

"But surely," said Stranleigh, "I saw an immense dam across this very river, when you met me at Powerville station the other day?"

"Oh, that's Miss Maturin's dam," said Trenton, with a laugh.

"By Jove!"

"It was built years ago by her father, who set about it the right way, first obtaining the sanction of the Legislature. When I say it belongs to Miss Maturin, I mean that it is a portion of the estate left by her father. By an odd combination of circumstances, she was one of my opponents in the action-at-law, whereas, in strict justice, she should have been a defendant instead of a plaintiff. Miss Maturin was distressed by her position in the affair, and my sister equally so, to find in what a dilemma she had placed me. Of course, the two girls should have secured the advice of some practical lawyer, but they were self-confident, and Sis knew it was little use consulting her husband, while her brother was too deeply immersed in his own affairs to be asked for an opinion."

Stranleigh lighted another cigar, listening attentively, and while he smoked, Trenton proceeded:

"But they kept on with their conservation scheme, in spite of all and sundry, and after a time, both on this property and on Miss Maturin's dams were erected across all streams that empty into the river; streams that on either side take their rise from the outlying parts of the estate. They have built roads through the forest, and have formed innumerable lakes, all connected by a serviceable highway that constitutes one of the most interesting automobile drives in the country."

"Beg pardon, Trenton!" exclaimed Stranleigh, "but you must take me over that road."

"I'll do better than that, my boy. Constance Maturin is one of the best motorists I know; she'll be your guide. These dams are of most modern construction, each with some kink of its own that no one understands better than she does. A care-

taker lives in a picturesque cottage at the outlet of every lake, and in each cottage hangs a telephone, so that no matter how far you penetrate into the wilderness, you are in touch with civilization. From this house I could call up any one of these water wardens, or send out a general alarm, bringing every man of the corps to the phone, and the instructions given from here would be heard simultaneously by the whole force. The organization is admirable, but it costs like sixty."

Trenton was interrupted, and somewhat startled, by a sound of murmured conversation, ending in a peal of very musical laughter.

"There's Sis now!" he said.

BOTH men rose as the door opened, and there entered a most comely young woman, in motoring garb, noticeably younger than Trenton, and bearing an unmistakable likeness to him.

"Hello!" she cried. "I thought I'd find you, Ned!" Then, seeing his visitor, she paused.

"Lord Stranleigh," said Trenton, "my sister, Mrs. Vanderveldt."

"I'm delighted to meet you," she said, advancing and shaking hands with him.

"Why didn't you telephone?" asked her brother.

Mrs. Vanderveldt laughed.

"I have come down rather like a wolf on the fold, haven't I? Why didn't I telephone? Strategy, dear

boy, strategy. This is a surprise attack, and I'd no wish that the garrison, forewarned, should escape. I am sure, Lord Stranleigh, Ned has been desanting on the charm of forest and camp, or possibly the metropolitan dissipation of Philadelphia, depending on which yearning was uppermost in his mind; desire for sport, or business in town."

"I haven't so much as mentioned Philadelphia, have I, Stranleigh?"

"Your attempt to drag me into your family differences at this early stage is futile," said Stranleigh, lightly, "but I shall say nothing until I learn who is real ruler of the house. My position here is much too comfortable for me to jeopardize it by injudicious partisanship."

"I cravenly admit that Sis is monarch of all she surveys," growled Trenton.

"I've long wished to meet you, Lord Stranleigh," exclaimed Mrs. Vanderveldt, "and I hope we may be able to make a slight return for your kindness to this frowning man. He is always uneasy when I am talking; so different from my husband."

"Poor man!" said Tren-

ton. "My soul is my own, I'm happy to say."

"Ah!" laughed the lady. "Pro tem."

"Did you bring Miss Maturin with you?" asked Trenton with some anxiety.

"She is here, dear Ned, but I could not induce her to come in with me. She doubtless wishes to see you alone. Constance is a dear girl, Lord Stranleigh, and it will be a great joy to welcome her as a sister-in-law."

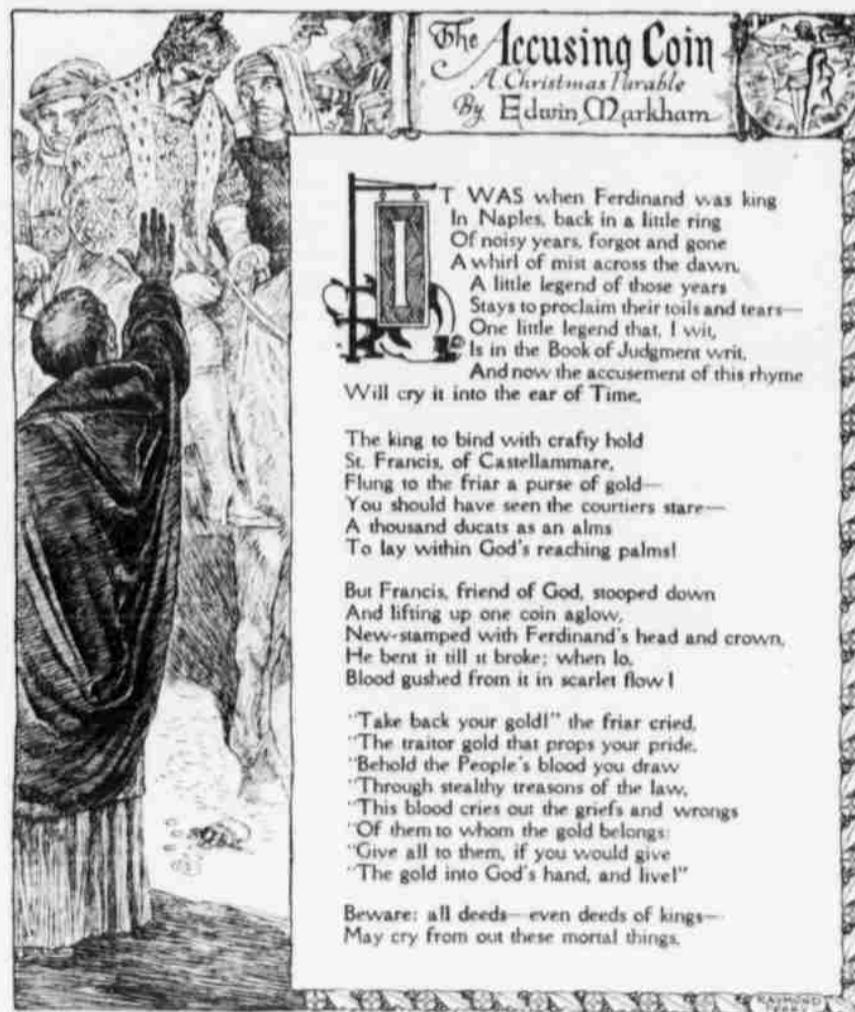
A WARM flush was added to the frown on Trenton's brow, but he made no remark.

"Gracious!" cried Mrs. Vanderveldt, laughing again, "have I put my foot in it? Ned, what a reticent confidential friend you are. If I were a man, and so charming a girl had said she would marry me, I should shout the news from the house-tops."

"You wouldn't need to," growled her brother, "if you had a sister."

"Never mind!" said Stranleigh. "You betrayed no secret, Mrs. Vanderveldt. His own confusion in speaking of the young lady rendered confession unnecessary. I suspected how the land lay."

"He ought to congratulate himself that you were not entered in the lists against him. You possess tact! And now I'll make him growl again by informing him that Miss Maturin made a special journey



The Accusing Coin

A Christmas Parable
By Edwin Markham

IT WAS when Ferdinand was king
In Naples, back in a little ring
Of noisy years, forgot and gone
A whirl of mist across the dawn.
A little legend of those years
Stays to proclaim their toils and tears—
One little legend that, I wit,
Is in the Book of Judgment writ,
And now the accusation of this rhyme
Will cry it into the ear of Time.

The king to bind with crafty hold
St. Francis, of Castellammare,
Flung to the friar a purse of gold—
You should have seen the courtiers stare—
A thousand ducats as an alms
To lay within God's reaching palms!

But Francis, friend of God, stooped down
And lifting up one coin aglow,
New-stamped with Ferdinand's head and crown,
He bent it till it broke; when lo,
Blood gushed from it in scarlet flow!

"Take back your gold!" the friar cried,
"The traitor gold that props your pride.
Behold the People's blood you draw
Through stealthy treasuries of the law,
This blood cries out the griefs and wrongs
Of them to whom the gold belongs:
Give all to them, if you would give
The gold into God's hand, and live!"

Beware: all deeds—even deeds of kings—
May cry from out these mortal things.