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need of advice at this moment than any man in America."

"You are perfectly right, Mr. Boscombe. I am always in need of good advice, and I appreciate it."

"An application was made to me from New York for a block of stock. That stock is not for sale, but I dalled with the brokers, made investigations, and traced the inquiry to you."

"Very clever of you, Mr. Boscombe."

"I learn that you propose to finance Miss Constance Maturin, who is a junior partner in my business."

"I should not think of contradicting so shrewd a man as yourself, Mr. Boscombe. What do you advise in the premises?"

"I advise you to get out, and quick, too."

"If I don't, what are you going to do?"

"Oh, I shall do nothing. She will do all that is necessary. That young woman is stark mad, Lord Stranleigh. Her own father recognized it when he bereft her of all power in the great business he founded. If she had her way, she'd ruin the company inside a year with her hare-brained schemes; love of the dear people, and that sort of guff."

"I am sorry to hear that. I noticed no dementia on the part of Miss Maturin, who seemed to me a most sane and charming young lady. You will permit me, I hope, to thank you for your warning, and will not be surprised that I can give no decision on the spur of the moment. I am a slow-minded person, and need time to think over things."

"Certainly, certainly. Personally, I come to sudden conclusions, and once I make up my mind, I never change it."

"A most admirable gift. I wish I possessed it."

LORD STRANLEIGH said nothing of this interview to Miss Maturin, beyond telling her that the acquisition of stock appeared to be hopeless, as indeed proved to be the case.

"Boscombe must be a stubborn person," he said.

"Oh, he's all that," the girl replied, with a sigh. He cares for one thing only, making money, and in that I must admit he has been successful."

"Well, we have a little cash of our own," said Stranleigh, with a laugh.

Miss Maturin and Mrs. Vanderveldt celebrated a national holiday by the greatest entertainment ever given in that district. The mills had been shut down for a week, and every man, woman and child in the valley town had been invited up to the new town on the heights. There was a brass band and a sumptuous spread of refreshments, all free to the immense crowd. For days previously the ladies visited everyone in the valley, and got a promise of attendance, but to make assurance doubly sure, an amazing corps of men was organized, equipped with motor cars, to scour the valley from Powerville downwards, gathering in such remnants of humanity as for any reason had neglected to attend the show. Miss Maturin said she was resolved this entertainment should be a feature unique in the history of the State.

The shutting down of the mills had caused the water in the immense dam above Powerville to rise, so that now the sluices at the top added to the picturesqueness of the scene by supplying waterfalls more than sixty feet high, a splendid view of which was obtainable from the new town on the heights. Suddenly it was noticed that these waterfalls increased in power, until their roar filled the valley. At last the whole lip of the immense dam began to trickle, and an ever-augmenting Niagara of waters poured over.

"Great Heavens!" cried Boscombe, who was present to sneer at these festivities, "there must have been a cloudburst in the mountains."

He shouted for the foreman.

"Where are the tenders of the

dam?" he cried. "Send them to lower the sluices, and let more water out."

"Wait a moment," said Miss Maturin, who had just come out of the main telephone building. "There can be no danger, Mr. Boscombe. You always said the dam was strong enough, when I protested it wasn't."

"So it is strong enough, but not—"

"Look!" she cried, pointing over the surface of the lake. "See that wave!"

"Good God!" exclaimed Boscombe.

AS he spoke, the wave burst against the dam, and now they had Niagara in reality. There was a crash, and what seemed to be a series of explosions, then the whole structure dissolved away, and before the appalled eyes of the sightseers, the valley town crumpled up like a house of cards, and even the mills themselves staggered at the impact of the flood, then slowly settled down, and were engulfed in the seething turmoil of maddened waters.

For a time no voice could be heard in the deafening uproar. It was Boscombe who spoke when the waters began to subside.

"This," he cried, "is murder!"

He glared at Miss Maturin, who stood pale, silent and trembling.

"I told you she was mad!" he roared at Stranleigh. "It is your money that in some devilish way has caused this catastrophe. If any lives are lost, it is rank murder!"

"There are no lives lost," remarked Miss Maturin, quietly. "The dam was too weak, as I have said repeatedly, as you have denied, and as we have seen. I have always feared a cloudburst, or some similar access of water. The thing was inevitable, sooner or later, and—owing to some mysterious premonition, perhaps—I took particular pains to-day that the lower town should be cleared absolutely of every living creature. But remarkable and fortunate as is this coincidence, it is hardly so striking—from a business point of view—as further coincidence that I happen to possess power houses up this very valley, sufficient to supply all the electricity that you can use when the new mills are erected. We are faced with a dilemma, Mr. Boscombe: I say *ice*, because I am myself a heavy shareholder in the company. The dilemma is this—which is the soundest business proposition: to rebuild that very expensive dam, and that still more expensive power plant, to say nothing of the dwelling houses; or to buy at a nominal figure, this garden city that I have built; to erect your new mills here, and to take your power, also at a nominal rate, from my existing stations?"

Boscombe, half-stunned by the catastrophe he had witnessed, could not grasp her full meaning.

"It is murder," he repeated. "If any lives are lost, it is rank murder!"

"I agree," said Stranleigh, quietly. "Whoever is responsible for the weakness of that dam, should be hanged. Meanwhile, Trenton, dear fellow, my congratulations. And Miss Maturin, my regrets."

"Regrets, Lord Stranleigh?" murmured the girl, interrogatively.

"At having to return to New York and to absent myself from the extremely tempting attraction of Pennsylvania," replied the Earl of Stranleigh, again repressing a sigh and bending low over the fair hand that she gratefully extended.

The Wild West adventures of Young Lord Stranleigh in Search of Game will appear in an early issue of THE SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

The story of *A Little Flyer in Boxes* which began in the last issue will be concluded in the next issue of THE SEMI-MONTHLY MAGAZINE.

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