

## A MAN OF EXTREMES

Will Usually Swing as Far One Way as the Other

By MARGARET BROTHERTON

Edgar Crane from the time he could talk was considered peculiar. As a little boy he evinced a distaste for little girls, and as a youth his antipathy for the opposite sex increased rather than diminished. By the time he came of age he was a hardened woman-hater. Such men usually are devoted to their own sex. Not so Crane. He had but little more use for men than women.

An aunt vainly endeavored to get what she called "this nonsense" out of him and, failing, told him that he would some day become a convert to her views and surrender under circumstances no more sensible than was his opposition. When she died her nephew was still of the same opinion. The old lady left him her fortune, \$100,000, with the stipulation that if he married half the amount was to go to a foundlings' home. Thus did she arrange to show her spleen after her death.

Edgar Crane had \$10,000 of his own, and, taking his fortune with him, he went west to become a rancher. He bought a large tract of land and built a house in the middle of it, thus keeping as far as possible from neighbors. His house was comfortable, and his domain was attractive, being made up of plains and rolling land, partly wooded. He stocked it with a few sheep, but spent more money for books to put in his library than for sheep to stock his ranch.

His lands were so extended that it was some time before he had visited every part of them. Indeed, he spent most of his time at home reading. When he did ride out it was for the purpose of seeing if there were trespassers on his grounds. Several years passed and he showed no signs of dissatisfaction with his mode of life. Then one day when riding on an eminence he saw a little shanty built of a few logs, some boards and considerable brush on a spot that he knew was within his bounds.

With blood in his eye he put spurs to his horse and rode to the cabin. Reining up before the door, he called for the trespasser to come out. Receiving no reply, he dismounted and put his head within the door. He surveyed one room, all there was. A mud chimney with an open fireplace stood at one side. Instead of a bedstead a bunk was built in a corner. There were a chest of drawers, a table and several chairs, the bottoms of the latter being imperfect.

Crane went inside with a view to leaving a notice for the trespasser to quit. A charred stick he found on the clay hearth served his purpose, and a board which constituted a part of the wall stood in lieu of writing paper. He wrote simply:

Leave at once.

OWNER OF PROPERTY.

He was turning to leave when on the bunk he saw a heap that excited his curiosity. Removing a light covering, he looked upon the face of a sleeping babe. The covering had evidently been laid to protect it from flies and other insects. There was something in this little lump of unconscious non-resistance that was diametrically different from Edgar Crane's combative-ness.

The child slept on, unmindful of being at the mercy of the man on whose property it had illegally squatted.

As Crane looked down upon the innocent face his pugnacity began to ooze out. A fly lit on the soft round cheek, causing a slight twitching on the part of the sleeper. Crane brushed it away. Then, carefully replacing the covering, he tiptoed from the bunk lest he should awaken the baby. Leaving the cabin, he mounted his horse and rode away.

He had no sooner left the influence of the innocent little squatter than the habit of his life regained its mastery. He was pensive at remembering having left his notice to quit—not that he expected the child on awakening to pay any attention to it, but when the parents, who were away doubtless providing in some way the necessities of life, returned they would see it and understand that they must move on.

The rancher gave the squatters three days to get off his premises—not that so much time was needed, but he didn't wish to listen to excuses; then he went to the spot again. He found the same status as before. No one was at home but the baby, and this infantile squatter was asleep. He approached the bunk to find that, though the head was covered, a foot and five little toes were exposed. Crane was about to draw the clothing down over them when he paused for a look. From a look he proceeded to a touch. How waxy they were! He bent down to examine them more closely, and the first thing he knew he had touched his lips to them.

The baby pulled its little foot out of sight, and that ended its connection with Crane's visit. Turning, he looked for a reply to his message. Though he searched everywhere, he found none. With a charred stick he wrote:

Will give you three days more.

Instead of giving three days he gave

six and doubtless would have given more had not a herder he employed ridden up to his house one evening and said to him:

"Mr. Crane, did you know y' got a foundlin' asylum on yer ranch?"

"What do you mean?"

"Some one has put up a mud and board shanty over by the creek and left a baby in it. I rode past there as I come in and, hearin' a child squallin', looked in, and there was no one there but the baby."

"I'll go and see about that," replied Crane with severity, though in his heart was a fear that the pink toed baby had been deserted by its parents.

Somehow the conditions under which his aunt had left him her fortune came up to mock him. She had predicted that he would eventually do something erratic in the way of marriage, and in case he did he must turn over the legacy to a foundlings' home. He had just been informed that he had a foundlings' home on his ranch. There was something uncanny about the affair.

Nevertheless he rode on. When he came near the cabin he heard the child crying piteously. All was dark. He entered and after a search found a candle and some matches. Striking a light, he went to the baby and began to pat and sing to it as he had heard mothers and nurses do. The baby ceased to cry. Taking the candle to the bunk, he let the light fall on the baby. The little thing blinked its eyes, and Crane held the candle where it was not to be seen. Then the tiny face broke into a smile.

But the child was hungry, and its good humor did not last long. Crane, divining the cause, went to a cupboard made of a box, where he found milk, and since there was plenty of wood for a fire he soon had the food warmed and in the baby's bottle. Then, putting it between the pink lips, he had the satisfaction of seeing his charge pull lustily.

Ten o'clock came, but no human being. Eleven passed, and when an old loud ticking Connecticut clock wheezed 12 Crane came to the conclusion that the baby had been left to die. Lying down beside it, he determined to remain with it till morning, then take it to his own house.

He awoke to see the sun shining in at the open door. And he saw something else—a woman about twenty years old, standing, looking down on him and the baby, who was using his breast for a pillow and had one leg thrown over him. On the woman's face was an expression of terror, which as she looked faded into one of satisfaction, then broke into a smile. For a few moments while Crane was awakening he was too confused to speak. When he did so he said:

"For heaven sake, why did you leave this baby here all night alone?"

"Are you the owner of this land?"

"Yes."

"Well, we hadn't anything to eat, and I took one of your lambs. A herder saw me do it and took me in. I told him my baby was here alone, but he wouldn't believe me. Just before daylight he fell asleep, and I got away."

"Where's the child's father?"

"Dead."

"Were you his wife?"

"No."

Crane understood. Matrimony in that region was regarded rather as a luxury than an essential.

The rancher went home and sent back to the mother a good breakfast, with fresh milk for the child. He had not yet sufficiently recovered from his prejudices to bring them to the ranch house. Instead he built them a fine cabin near by.

Crane considered that he had saved the child's life or might have saved it and regarded the fatherless little thing as under his especial protection. The mother needed protection as well as the child. Crane took care to build her cabin just far enough from his house to prevent her troubling him. She was a comely young woman and, though uneducated, developed under better surroundings than those to which she had been accustomed a good deal of sense.

Crane got into the habit of going to talk with her, then consult with her, and in time she became necessary to his comfort. His books meanwhile had lost a good deal of their freshness for him. He visited "his kid," as he called the little trespasser, daily, and he couldn't very well see the kid without seeing its mother.

Several years went by, and Crane began to think of bringing the trespassing family to his home—marrying the mother—so that he would have them handy. But his aunt's will stood in the way. He was too honorable to attempt to get round his aunt's provision or to compromise those who were in his power.

Then he went east for a while to try a separation, but he had had few friends there, and they had scattered. He returned to his ranch and his squatter family.

It was hard for him to make up his mind to take a widow who had never been married and hard to give up half his estate, but as time wore on he couldn't see anything else for himself to do.

He was drifting toward the inevitable. At last he succumbed. His wife proved a treasure to him, and, living in a land where there was no social station to keep up, the family did not live under a cloud. The child, a boy, grew to be a fine young fellow, and children were born to Crane as well.

"My aunt," Crane said, "had a remarkable faculty for looking ahead."

Doubtless the old lady recognized the fact that a man of extremes must pass from one extreme to another. At any rate, she got ahead of the man whom she could not influence and made him pay well for his obstinacy.

## PYTHONS AS PETS.

The Man Liked Them, but They Were Not Appreciated by His Wife.

An Englishman who spent much time in Bengal tells in Blackwood's Magazine about a couple of pythons that were kept as pets. He says:

"One hears a good deal about the snakes, but one sees very little of them at any time and in cold weather nothing at all. Indeed, the only snakes I saw were two great pythons which a planter kept in one of his indigo vats for his private delectation. He loved to watch them and feed them and poke them with a stick and see their flat, vicious heads drive at it with the speed and force of a steam hammer.

"His wife liked them less because one of them had once escaped from the vat and wandered into her bedroom. It was daytime, and she was resting from the heat, and, hearing it advance, breathing heavily, she thought it was her somewhat asthmatical fox terrier and told it to lie down. As it seemed to be making for her bed instead, she looked up to find that it was one of the pythons looking for a warm place in which to lie. Her screams brought her husband, who, annoyed by this escape of a pet which his wife had never properly appreciated, thoughtlessly seized it by the neck, with the result that in a twinkling it had knotted itself around his arm and nearly pulped it before his bearer could arrive and get it by the tail.

"Two men, it seems, can deal with a python fairly effectively by grasping each an end of it, thus preventing it from weaving itself into the coils that crush. But no single man is of much use, for the reason that he cannot in the nature of things grasp and keep taut an eighteen foot length of writhing muscle. The planter told me that, as it was, his arm had turned black and blue all over, as if it had been squeezed in a heavy door, and it was weeks before he could use it. But he still loved his python."

## REFORMED BY A SONG.

Nordica Saved Her Jewels and Made a Thief an Honest Man.

Mme. Lillian Nordica, the singer, once upon returning from a concert tour decided to go straight to her villa in France, accompanied only by her maid. She knew there were no servants there at the time, but felt no alarm. They arrived in the early evening and enjoyed being home again. At nearly midnight they sat softly talking together, with only the mellow moonlight flooding the rooms, when they heard a window off the south balcony being raised, and an instant later steps were heard in the hall.

Almost paralyzed with fear—no one to help, no weapon at hand—there flashed over the prima donna a realization of her power of song. "It has moved thousands," she thought, and with trembling notes she began to sing what had been uppermost in her thoughts before the entrance of the intruder, "Home, Sweet Home." The exquisite voice grew steadier, and it rang out in its sweetest, purest strains. Then followed "Old Folks at Home," but her audience had gone. The maid saw a dark figure creep through the window and steal across the lawn and out of the gate.

Some weeks later Nordica received the following letter:

Dear Madame—On the night of the I entered your home to relieve you of all your diamonds, jewels and money, but an angel song rang out in the sweet words of mother's songs, and my hand and heart were arrested, and I vowed never, never again to do aught that would sorrow that sainted one.

I am now engaged in honest work. God bless you!

—Ladies' Home Journal.

## Each Otherness.

Nothing is of real value in the world except people. Never hurt a person by a wrong thought or by word or by act. Never hurt each other. Then go on a big discovering expedition and find each other. Never say, "That person has nothing in him," for that only means that you haven't found it yet. Then, last of all, never think you are the only person. You are just a part of "each other." You are not somebody and the rest of us everybody else. We are each other. Life is each otherness, not everybody-else-ness.—St. Nicholas.

## Graves in Pawn.

In times of financial difficulties the Loochoons, residents of the southwestern islands of Japan, sometimes pawn the graves of their relatives. They are always redeemed, however, failure to do so meaning family disgrace. The turtle back shaped tombs, usually located on a hillside facing the water, are elaborate affairs of stone and cement, and their cost and upkeep often bankrupt the family.

## Hopeless.

"Why don't you make up your mind to cease permitting your wife to henpeck you?"

"I have made it up half a dozen times, but it doesn't seem to do any good at all. She refuses to concede that I have a mind."—Chicago Tribune.

## English as She Is Spoken.

French Chauffeur (to deaf farmer on a Maine road)—Can you tell me, sare, vere I get some of ze gazzoline? Farmer (with his hand to his ear)—Hey? French Chauffeur—Non, non, non! Not hay—ze gazzoline. Ziss eez a motor-car, not a horse.—Harper's.

## Peculiar.

"One of de mos' curious things about a fool," said Uncle Eben, "is de way he'll holler and git mad if you don't let him show off his misfortune."—Washington Star.



CARLTON CHASE, IN "THE BEAUTY SHOP", AT THE LYRIC THEATRE



"GET RICH QUICK WALLINGFORD" AT THE HEILIG THEATRE FEBRUARY 25-26-27-28.

Cohan and Harris present Geo. M. Cohan's brilliant comedy success "Get Rich Quick Wallingford", at the Heilig Theatre, 7th and Taylor Sts. for 4 nights, beginning Sunday, February 25. Special Price Matinee Saturday.

## HOT FOODS IN RUSSIA.

The Steaming Scene in a Railroad Eating Room.

We stopped at Lubin for supper. The guard unlocked our car, opened the door and pointed to the station, where we found a monster eating room with huge lunch counters on either side and long rows of tables down the middle. Everybody was standing up. There were no seats anywhere. Hot soft drinks were served at the side counters and smoking coffee and tall glasses of hot, clear tea. The Russian swallows only hot drinks and eats only hot foods. On the center tables, set above spirit lamps, were hot dishes with big metal covers. There were glasses of hot drink for a few kopecks, which the Russian pours down all at once.

Taking a plate from a pile standing ready, you help yourself to what victuals you choose. There were hot doughnuts with hashed meat inside, hot apple dumplings, hot juicy steaks, hot stews, hot fish—all hot. When you have eaten your fill you pay your bill at a counter near the entrance, according to your own reckoning. The Russian is honest in little things, and nobody doubts your word or questions the correctness of your payment. The eating room was full of big, tall, robust, fair haired, blue eyed men and a few women. The Russian is big himself, he likes big things, he thinks on big lines, he sees with wide vision—too wide almost to be practical. Hanging around the station were groups of unkempt, dirty peasants. We see such groups of gaping peasants at every station, always a hopeless look of "don't care" in their eyes.—William Seymour Edwards in "Through Scandinavia to Moscow."

## The Stove of Our Fathers.

The stoves of a hundred or so years ago were not things to be lightly passed over by the human vision if they were

all like those advertised in a New York paper of the time in these terms:

"A few Piramidal Stoves, shaped nearly as follows: Standing 3 feet 6 inches high, with lion's feet, the bust of General Washington on top, the arms of the United States on each side, with regulating doors. The whole moulded, ornamented and finished in a masterly style; forming an elegant stove for coal or wood; appropriate for Churches, Public Offices, Halls or large Stores."—New York Herald.

## Armor and Ancestors.

According to the Revue Scientifique, it is possible to trace in modern and quite poor people the marks of armor bearing ancestry. The wearing of casques and armor pressing on the necks and bodies of generations produced certain birthmarks, which can be found today on members of families "not in good social position." But investigation has proved they are of gentle descent.

## Just Oratory.

"I can understand spread eagle tactics, but here's something I can't understand."

"What's that?"

"Why should a congressman arguing for an appropriation to dredge a creek speak bitterly about the crowned heads of Europe?"—Louisville Courier-Journal.

## All About Stealing.

"Why do you call your story 'The Thieves' Romance'?"

"Because it is all about stealing."

"How?"

"Well, the story of the romance goes this way: 'She stole a look; then he stole a kiss. Next they had stolen meetings, they stole a march on their friends, and both stole away.'"

"I suppose the next thing they will be stealing back."