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RALPH HARDELOT'S MEDIATION

BY WILLIAM MINTO.

CHAPTER V.—CONTINUED.

Deleantur ex vivitum. Just as the merchant pronounced these words his henchman Lawrence galloped up from behind the wagon, his right arm pointing ahead. They had toiled up from the valley, and were now on the high ground opposite Carford Green. The spire of Haverhill Church was visible ahead of them in the distance. They proposed to rest and eat at Haverhill, and the merchant at first supposed that Lawrence's gestures were meant as a humorous expression of delight at the nearness of the end of that stage of their journey.

"Yes, I know," he said. "We can see Haverhill from here. Two miles more and we are at rest in our inn." Lawrence waved his arm impatiently. "See! Look! There!" he cried. "Behind that hedge!" He pointed to a hedge at right angles to the road some little distance in front.

The travelers looked, and saw some glittering spear-points and helmets bobbing above the hedge evidently surrounding a troop of horsemen riding towards the road.

CHAPTER VI.

The wagons had seen Lawrence's gesture and the cause of it, and were making haste to drag some weapons from a secret repository under the wagon. The apprentices rode up to help. The wagons had pulled out two crossbows, and the apprentices had possessed themselves of two simple looking maces, when the mounted men swept round the corner onto the road, about a hundred yards in front of them, showing their full strength. There was a knight armed cap-a-pie, and about a dozen men at arms in mixed armor of plate and mail.

"Resistance is useless, if they mean robbery!" cried Simon to his men. "Put the weapons away. You will only give them an excuse for picking a quarrel." "Nevertheless," said Ralph, "it is safer to have some means of defence if one is put to it and with your leave I will borrow one of those maces."

Ralph glanced into the cart as he took the mace from the apprentice, who was obediently restoring it to its place, and saw a large head of them in the locker underneath. They were of simple make—a ball of lead some seven or eight pounds in weight, with an ashen shaft about two feet long. "One could deal a fair blow with this, if necessary," he thought to himself as he felt the weight of the weapon and disposed of it under his cloak.

There being no time for remonstrance, the merchant could only smile at this contempt of his orders. "Harry Hurst was right in saying you had mistaken your trade," he muttered; and directed the wagoner to draw to one side, and leave the party of horsemen full room to pass.

They came alongside at an easy pace, without any sign of hostility.

"Give you good day, master," cried the knight.

Ralph at once recognized the voice of his old enemy, Sir Richard Rainham.

As the knight stopped to speak, some of his men passed on and halted behind the wagon, outflanking the merchant and his company on both sides.

"Bound for Stourbridge Fair?" the knight continued, when this maneuver had been completed. "Methinks your load is too heavy. Your poor horses are steaming like furnaces. It were a charity to the poor brutes to relieve them of part of their burden. Our English hills are too steep for such loads."

"Thanks for your kind consideration, Sir Knight," returned the merchant. "We can make shift to drag along. Pray do not burden yourself on our account."

"Nay, nay," laughed the knight; "I could not permit it. Think of the horses. I warrant there is some good broadcloth in those bales. Here, you kneave!" he shouted to the apprentices; "dismount and show us your wares."

The apprentices looked doubtful, but Simon signed to them to comply with the knight's good humor, which seemed from the broad grin of his retinue to be much appreciated by them.

The apprentices began to fumble with the knots on one of the packages. The knight called to some of his men. "Come, help, you lazy rascals! Why do you stand gaping there? Lay to your hands and your knives, and help the honest lads."

"They are not so neat handed as your trained apprentices," the knight remarked; "but they work with a will, and you must grant they do their work with expedition."

"Come, you rogues," the knight shouted at last, "you have enough to keep you warm next winter! And now, Master Merchant, name your own price and call for it the next time you pass. I will uphold you against all penalties for overstealing the market, and your horses will travel to the fair more easily."

The merchant made no answer to this rillery. He had watched the proceeding with impassive composure, and once or twice had checked the more impetuous Ralph, and counselled him to silence. He only said, "You are content to let us pass?"

The knight made an exaggerated gesture of acquiescence. "Do not forget to call for the price next time you pass," he said.

"I never forget my engagements," said the merchant.

There was more meaning in the tone than the knight altogether liked. "If

you are to be so punctual," he cried, "we may as well make the bill a little larger. I saw your men busy behind the cart. See what there is in the locker, my good Nicholas, he called to the man who rode next to him, and seemed to be second in command. "Our knaves are not yet overburdened. We should hate to deal scurvily with so brisk a merchant."

At this Ralph Hardelet lost patience. "Sir Richard Rainham," he burst out, addressing the knight by his name, "do you think it becometh your knight-hood to play the common thief and robber? Is this how you fulfill your duty to your lord the king? Plundering where you are vowed to give protection, and trying to cover your shame with ribald buffoonery?"

"Hail Sir Priest, are you there?" replied the unabashed lawbreaker. "I marvelled that you forebore so long to give us a taste of your rhetoric."

"My rhetoric cannot hope to pierce your shame-proof hide. But you will answer some day to a heavier indictment."

"In the meantime, since the spirit of prophecy is on you, you had better forecast what is to happen to yourself. You have put off your gown since yesterday."

"What do you know about my gown?"

"Ah, my young Jeremiah," laughed the knight, "we are not so remote about our duties as you are pleased to imagine. We have heard of your doings, though it is but yesterday. The king shall not find us wanting in vigilance towards troubles of the realm. You must come with me." He made a signal to his men, saying at the same time, "Take him, but do not hurt the tender youth. I have other purposes for him."

The men made a move to capture Ralph, but as the nearest converged upon him they thrust their horses in each other's way, and gave him a moment's free play. Of this he took advantage with great alertness. Seizing the mace that he had hidden under his cloak, he shook his right arm free, and urging his pony forward, struck full at Sir Richard's helmet. The knight was too much taken by surprise to be able to parry the blow, and as he sat loosely in his saddle, never expecting any shock of the kind, it brought him clattering to the ground. It was perhaps as well for Ralph that his pony, hurtling against the heavy horse of the knight, lost his footing, and fell with Ralph under him; if the youth had been free to offer further resistance, the men would probably not have respected their leader's injunction to take him alive. As it was, his hands were secured before he could disentangle himself.

The blow administered to the knight was not a light one. The modern reader is apt to be incredulous of the stories told about mediaeval knights and their power to endure, unharmed, blows that would smash the skull of the stoutest ox of our own times. But two circumstances may be mentioned in mitigation of modern incredulity: first, they were accustomed to rough usage; second, and chiefly, their helmets were padded.

Sir Richard Rainham did lie stunned for a minute or two. But by the time his myrmidons had bound his assailant securely hand and foot with cords taken from the merchant's packages, he was on his legs again, apparently little the worse for his overthrow.

Only his temper seemed to have been spoiled. He was no longer jocular in his manner of address. "Curse the hellcat priest!" he said, in a surly tone. "You would have paid for it if he had slipped through your hands. Make him safe and bring him along." Then he muttered to himself, "This is the second time; we shall cry quits before long," and rode off by himself in surly solitude.

The myrmidons made their prisoner safe and portable by binding him on one of the four horses of the wagon, which they seized for the purpose. The freckled giant Nicholas, a coarser copy of his master, of whose humor he was a bold imitator, superintended this operation. The prisoner's legs were tied not too gently under the horse's belly, and his body also was bound firmly down. As they moved off, Nicholas flung back at the despoiled merchant. "You may come to us for the horse," he said, "when you come for the price. We must keep our chaplain. We want a chaplain."

Simon d'Ypres made no audible answer to this and other rough remarks with which he was taunted by his spoilers. He had watched the wreckage of his goods with quiet composure, as a traveler might stand looking out on a storm and waiting for it to pass. Only once had he shown some concern, and that was when a package some 18 inches square by a foot in depth was drawn from the locker under the cart. "You may as well leave that, my friend," he had said; "it is of no value for you." But he saw at once that it was vain to remonstrate, and that his words served only to give the grinning robber a higher opinion of the value of his prize.

He said not another word till the band was out of sight. Then he turned to his henchman Lawrence, and said in a melancholy tone: "This will teach our young preacher the folly of seeking to convert such wolves with fair words. Now we must try to show him what the people can do for themselves under wise guidance."

After a few minutes' conference, Lawrence and one of the apprentices rode back towards Yeldam, while Simon and the others, rebinding their looted packages as well as they could, moved forward to Haverhill.

Ralph Hardelet was not sufficiently imbued with the meek spirit which Wycliffe recommended for his poor priests, and he submitted to his fate in haughty silence, knowing that any efforts he could make to free himself would only be a cause of mirth for his captors.

That such a scene as that just described should have ever been possible in Merrie England; that a knight who had distinguished himself in the wars and held lands by royal gift as a reward for prowess, should ever have condescended or dared to play the common highway robber within 60 miles of the capital appears very strange now, but the chronicles of the time are full of such outrages.

The traveler who should look now for Sir Richard Rainham's castle in the valley of the Stour would lose his labor. It has completely disappeared; not a trace of it is now visible. It stood in the center of the mere, to the south of Carford Green, on a patch of firm ground; but the mere has gradually encroached since it became a ruin, and swallowed up even the foundations.

Yet it was a strong place in its time, and Ralph marked its strength as he was carried in, and entered with the calmness of a man who knows his fate and leaves all hope behind him.

"We have brought the priest safely," said Nicholas, entering the hall and respectfully saluting his master.

"Safely!" echoed the knight, who was not yet in the best of tempers. "Safely! One would think the starveling clerk were a devil in disguise, a Bacon, or a Bangay. How could it be otherwise than safely, you freckled poltroon? You did not leave him a chance to escape!"

"Well, he is here," replied Nicholas, in a surly tone. "Dones of St. Peter," exclaimed the knight, "where else should he be?" "On the road to Haverhill," thought Nicholas, "for all that you did to stop him." But he did not dare to give utterance to this thought. He only stared stolidly at his master.

"Why do you stand staring there?" shouted the knight. "Bring him in."

(To be continued)

Farm Implement Trade of Dallas.
The city of Dallas, Tex., is said to be the largest depot of farm implement supplies in the world. Every big wholesale house in the United States which engages in the business of manufacturing tools for the farmer has its branch at Dallas. There are 25 nine-story buildings devoted to this trade. Dallas lies in the very heart of the choicest farming region of Texas. It is the trading point of the great black land belt of the northern and central countries, which contain two-thirds of the people and three-fourths of the wealth of the state.

Filipinos Make Good Servants.
An army officer who recently returned from our Pacific possessions says: "The Filipinos, whatever may be their faults, make the best servants in the world, if you can cure them of petty thievery. Overcome that, and you have an ideal servant. At home here we are confronted everlastingly by the servant girl proposition. Bring the Filipino men here and the servant girl will be a dead issue. The men are small, active and not afraid of work. They could be trained to do general housework, just as the Chinese do out on the Pacific coast."

Heavy Snowstorms in Europe.
There have been heavy snow storms throughout Europe. The winter has been especially severe in Northern Africa. Recently, in Southern France, a large landowner was overtaken in a snowstorm while attempting to ride only five miles. His horse came home, but the man was frozen to death. In Algeria trains have been greatly delayed. One from Algiers to Lagnouat was held up in the snow for six days.

Get a Tailor's Goose.
The point to remember when one wishes to dress well on a small income is that frequent pressings and spongings are the secret of well kept clothes. An ordinary flatiron may be used, but it is nowhere near so efficacious as a tailor's goose. The goose is not expensive, and with it a coat, skirt or suit can be so well pressed as to seem like new. It is therefore a very desirable article of furniture.

France Carrying a Heavy Load.
With a national debt of \$6,000,000,000 and a population practically at a standstill, with a costly standing army and an expensive navy, France is staggering under a heavy load. Perhaps her shoulders are strong enough and broad enough to bear it, but the cash may come some day despite French confidence in the stability and financial resources of the republic.—Baltimore Sun.

Christians in India.
Christians in India are increasing in numbers rapidly, according to the recent census returns in South India, where the Christians now number over 1,000,000. The increase during the decade was 18 per cent, as compared with 7 per cent for the population, 6 per cent for the Hindus, and 9 per cent for the Mohammedans.

Millionaire Beautifies a Town.
Fairhaven, Mass., is proud of Henry H. Rogers, the oil magnate, who was born there and has spent millions of dollars and much of his time in improving and beautifying his town as he might beautify his own home. He has already given to the town a library, waterworks, a drainage system, town hall, schools and a church.

EVENTS OF THE DAY

FROM THE FOUR QUARTERS OF THE WORLD.

A Comprehensive Review of the Important Happenings of the Past Week, Presented in a Condensed Form, Which is Most Likely to Prove of Interest to Our Many Readers.

Prince Henry has landed on German soil.

The senate has passed the ship subsidy bill.

The house is working on the rivers and harbors bill.

In a collision at Milwaukee between a passenger train and street car 10 persons were injured.

A life saving crew and seven men it had rescued from a stranded vessel were drowned at Cape Cod.



SOLDIERS MONUMENT AT OLYMPIA, WASH.

Two children were burned to death in a fire at Galena, Kan.

Ten thousand people participated in a students' riot at St. Petersburg.

The blizzard in the Dakotas has spent its fury and the railroads are now opening their lines.

Fire damaged the Trinity Episcopal church at Portland to the extent of \$12,000. Insurance, \$16,000.

Pension Commissioner Evans is to be given a more important office. His successor has not yet been chosen.

The worst blizzard in years is raging in North Dakota.

Japan's foreign trade shows a substantial increase.

When Flour Was a Dollar a Pound.

Only a few years ago flour sold for \$1 a pound in parts of Montana, and other provisions were higher. Butter reached \$1.75 in Virginia City. When provisions were forced too high by speculators, there was a raid and living necessities, especially flour, were taken to a common depot and the "corner" busted. These stories, and many others that afford more pleasant reading, are found in Wonderland for 1902, published by the Northern Pacific Railway. This book carries hundreds of beautiful Western scenes in perfectly printed illustrations that the costly magazines might be proud of. Send to Charles S. Fox, St. Paul, Minn., for the book. He sends it free, but 6 cents postage is necessary.

The United States Brewers' association will hold its annual meeting at Saratoga June 10, 11 and 12.

A three-cent street car fare franchise ordinance passed the Cleveland (O.) city council without opposition.

An equestrian club of nine New York girls has discarded the side saddle and adopted the divided skirt.

British naval estimates for the present year provide for an expenditure of \$75,000,000 for new warships.

TESTS NOT SATISFACTORY.

Pacific Coast Lumbermen Do Not Agree With Hibbs' Report.

Washington, March 19.—Senator Foster has been notified by the Pacific Coast Lumber Manufacturers' Association that the tests of fir conducted on a very extensive scale at the Puget Sound navy yard during the past summer are not satisfactory. Secretary Victor H. Beckman states that at a meeting of the association held at Tacoma, February 15, the report of Naval Constructor Hibbs at the Puget Sound navy yard on the timber tests, particularly in Douglas fir, was taken up. The association directed the secretary to notify Senator Foster that the report was not satisfactory and did not do entire justice to fir.

Experience, it is stated, has proved that Mr. Hibbs' statements with reference to the lasting qualities of fir are misleading. The association calls attention to railroad timbers on the Northern Pacific railway which have been in use 14 years and show little or no signs of rot. Also that it is a well known fact that consumers of lumber purchase fir for porches and outdoor

NEWS OF THE STATE

ITEMS OF INTEREST FROM ALL PARTS OF OREGON.

Commercial and Financial Happenings of Importance—A Brief Review of the Growth and Improvements of the Many Industries Throughout Our Thriving Commonwealth—Latest Market Report.

The 1900 potato crop in Coos county has been nearly all cleaned out.

The Lane county Democrats will hold their county convention April 5.

The Baker City gas plant is to be enlarged and improved to meet the demand for gas, which is steadily increasing.

Primaries for Multnomah county were held March 15. Very few Democrats voted, as there was no fight among their forces. In the Republican ranks the anti-Simon forces carried the day.

The Polk county Republican convention was held at Dallas March 15 and delegates to the state and congressional conventions named and county officers nominated. No action was taken in regard to the senatorship.

The Republicans of Morrow county held their convention at Heppner March 15 and elected delegates to the state and congressional convention. Resolutions were adopted indorsing Williamson as United States representative and pledging its delegates to vote against the return of Senator Simon.

Construction of a creamery has begun near Myrtle Point.

The town of Haines, Union county, has been incorporated.

A crusade against gambling has been inaugurated at Oregon City.

The Woodmen of the World are building a hall at Dusty, Benton county.

Several men in Salem have been found to have registered in more than one precinct.

The regular election of officers for the city of Florence for the ensuing year will be held April 1.

Nearly 13 inches of rain fell at Grants Pass during February, which breaks the record for any one month.

The town council of Prairie City has passed an ordinance prohibiting the use of tobacco in all public meeting places.

From March 1, 1901, to March 2, 1902, there were 19,600 acres patented from the government to Wasco county.

Representative Tongue condemns the move to hamper improvement of Lower Columbia by pitting it against the upper river.

Papers throughout the state report that taxpayers are taking advantage of the 3 per cent rebate for prompt payment, and the new law is meeting general approval.

The market for Oregon prunes in the East is improving. Every pound shipped this past year has been disposed of, and dealers say they could have sold more had they had them.

H. V. Gates, promoter of the proposed telegraph and telephone line from Ashland to Lakeview and other points has filed an application with the Lake county court for a right of way along the public highway.

PORTLAND MARKETS.

Wheat—Walla Walla, 65¢65½¢; bluestem, 66¢66½¢; Valley, 65¢65½¢. Barley—Feed, \$20@21; brewing, \$21@21.50 per ton.

Oats—No. 1 white, \$1.15@1.25; gray, \$1.10@1.20.

Flour—Best grades, \$2.80@3.40 per barrel; Graham, \$2.50@2.80.

Millstuffs—Bran, \$19 per ton; middlings, \$21; shorts, \$21.50; chop, \$17.50.

Hay—Timothy, \$12@13; clover, \$7.50@8; Oregon wild hay, \$5@6 per ton.

Potatoes—Best Burbanks, \$1.10@1.25 per cental; ordinary, 70¢80¢ per cental, growers' prices; sweets, \$2@2.25 per cental.

Butter—Creamery, 25¢30¢; dairy, 18¢22¢; store, 13¢16¢.

Eggs—14¢ for Oregon.

Cheese—Full cream, twins, 13¢18¢; Young America, 14¢15¢; factory prices, 1¢1½¢ less.

Poultry—Chickens, mixed, \$4.00@5.00; hens, \$5.00@6.00 per dozen, 11¢12¢ per pound; springs, 11¢12¢ per pound; \$3@4¢ per dozen; ducks, \$5@6 per dozen; turkeys, live, 12¢13¢, dressed, 14¢16¢ per pound; geese, 6¢@7¢ per dozen.

Mutton—Gross, 4¢ per pound; dressed, 7¢7½¢ per pound.

Hogs—Gross, 6¢¢; dressed, 6¢7¢ per pound.

Veal—8¢8½¢ for small; 7¢7½¢ for large.

Beef—Gross, cows, 3¢4¢; steers, 4¢4½¢; dressed, 6¢7¢ per pound.

Hops—12¢13¢ per pound.

Wool—Valley, 13¢15¢; Eastern Oregon, 8¢12¢; mohair, 21¢21½¢ per pound.

Miss Shaw, of St. Louis, is to paint the portrait of Queen Alexandra this summer.

St. Louis fair managers are informed that King Menelik of Abyssinia may accept an invitation to visit the exposition.

Joseph Devlin, now touring the United States in the interest of the United Irish League, has been elected to the British parliament from North Kilkenny.

SKYSCRAPERS IN DANGER.

Their Steel Framework, Says a Chicago Man, Is Rapidly Corroding.

Chicago, March 18.—"The steel framework in many of the big buildings in the business district of Chicago is corroding, making them very dangerous. It is only a question of a few years when those buildings will fall to the ground."

This statement was made by General William S. Smith, at the 35th annual dinner of the Chicago real estate board. He added "that the steel framework of some of the skyscrapers is in the condition stated is nothing short of a public outrage."

The speaker explained that his statements were based on personal observations and investigations.

"The steel framework imbedded in concrete will last 2,000 years," he said, "but the steel framework in many of the big buildings is left free to the action of the air and gases which circulate through the life and a space about the steel. The owners of these structures have the steel painted with oil. This oil will withstand the corroding process about three years. Then begins the corroding of the steel and within a few years your skyscraper will fall."

The speaker said that the elevated road structures would not withstand the corrosion. He asserted that within 10 years they would be dangerous and within 20 years out of service. The corrosion of one-fifth of the thickness of the steel framework of the structure, he said, would render them incapable of bearing their own weight.

BOSTON CELEBRATES.

To Commemorate Evacuation of the City by British Troops.

Boston, March 19.—The 126th anniversary of the evacuation of Boston by the British was celebrated in South Boston by the unveiling of a monument erected on the breastworks of the Colonial army on Dorchester heights. This monument was erected by the state of Massachusetts, as a memorial to the valor of the New England militia and the military genius of Washington. A military parade preceded the ceremony, and following it Senator Henry Cabot Lodge delivered an eloquent historical oration.

Rear Admiral Schley rode in the procession with Mayor Collins. The monument, which is of white granite, bears the following inscription, written by President Eliot, of Harvard:

"On these heights, during the night of March 4, 1776, the American troops besieging Boston, built two redoubts, which made the harbor and town untenable by the British fleet and garrison. On March 17 the British fleet, carrying 10,000 effective men and 1,000 refugees, dropped down to Nantuxet Roads, and thenceforth Boston was free. A strong British force had been expelled from one of the United American colonies."

SAGASTA COMMISSIONED.

Queen Regent of Spain Calls Upon Him to Form a New Cabinet.

Madrid, March 18.—The queen regent has commissioned Senor Sagasta to form a new cabinet. The queen regent only called upon Senor Sagasta to reconstruct the ministry after she found it impossible to induce the various sectional leaders to attempt the formation of a coalition cabinet.

The pope has appealed to her majesty not to permit the recent decree obligating religious congregations to comply with the law of associations to be put in force. The decree becomes operative March 21, so the new cabinet will be early confronted with a question admitted to be extremely difficult to settle.

On account of various threats regarding the fomentation of disturbances, the ministry of war has directed the soldiers who have recently completed their terms of service to remain with the colors.

Lyddite a Boomerang.

London, March 18.—The extraordinary effect of lyddite has been revealed by the statement that during the recent experiments with the bulk of the old battleship Belle Isle, shells containing that explosive refracted fragments upon the attacking vessel 200 yards distant. Other fragments dropped close to a gunboat 2,000 yards ahead of the line of fire. The deduction drawn is that when lyddite is used there is danger for a friendly vessel at least 2,000 yards away. The Outlook compares lyddite with a boomerang and points out that to be of any service it must be dropped right on board a hostile vessel, as, "if the projectile does not hit the right place, it will fly back and slay the slayer."

Admiral Howell Retires.

Washington, March 18.—Rear Admiral John A. Howell, president of the naval retiring board, and next to Admiral Dewey, the ranking officer of the navy, has reached the age of 62, and, in accordance with law, has been placed on the retired list.

Commandant Celliers Captured.

Pretoria, March 18.—Commandant Celliers, of the Kroonstad, Orange River Colony, commando of the Boers, was among the prisoners captured by the British recently in the Heilbron district.

The Danish Treaty.

Copenhagen, March 18.—The president of the landthiing, Dr. Matson, who is opposed to the sale of the Danish West Indies to the United States, seems inclined to delay consideration of the treaty. He has called the first meeting of the landthiing for March 19. The press criticizes his attitude, on the ground that the delay is considered discourteous to the United States. It is thought a few of the president's own party will support the government.