The FLYING MERCURY

by ELEANOR M. INGRAM
AUTHOR OF THE GAME AND THE CANDLE

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RAY WALTERS

COPYRIGHT 1910 BY BOBBS-MERRILL CO.

SYNOPSIS.

The story opens on Long Island, near New York city, where Miss Emily Ffrench, a relative of Ethan Ffrench, manufacturer of the celebrated "Mercury" automobile, loses her way. The car has stopped and her cousin, Dick Ffrench, is too muddled with drink to direct it aright. They meet another car which is run by a professional racer named Lestrange. The latter fixes up the Ffrench car and directs Miss Ffrench how to proceed homeward. Ethan Ffrench has disinherited his son, who has disappeared. He informs Emily plainly that he would like to have her marry Dick, who is a good-natured but irresponsible fellow. It appears that a partner of Ethan Ffrench wanting an expert to race with the "Mercury" at auto events, has engaged Lestrange, and at the Ffrench factory Emily encounters the young man. They refer pleasantly to their meeting when Dick comes along and recognizes the young racer. Dick likes the way Lestrange ignores their first meeting when he appeared to a disadvantage. Lestrange tells Emily that he will try to educate her indifferent cousin as an automobile expert.

CHAPTER V.

There was a change in the Ffrench affairs, a lightening of the atmosphere, a vague quickening and stir of healthful cheer in the days that followed. The somber master of the house met it in Bailey's undisguised elation and pride when they discussed the successful business now taxing the factory's resources, met it yet again in Emily's pretty gaiety and content. But most strikingly was he confronted with an alteration in Dick.

It was only a week after his first morning ride with Lestrange, that Dick electrified the company at dinner, by turning down the glass at his plate.

"I've cut out claret, and that sort of thing," he announced. "It's bad for the nerves."

His three companions looked up in complete astonishment. It was Saturday night and by ancient custom Bailey was dining at the house.

"What has happened to you? Have you been attending a revival meeting?" the young man's uncle inquired with sarcasm.

"It's bad for the nerves," repeated Dick. "There isn't any reason why I shouldn't like to do anything other fellows do. Les—that is, none of the men who drive cars ever touch that stuff, and look at their nerve."

Mr. Ffrench contemplated him with the irritation usually produced by the display of ostentatious virtue, but found no comment. Emily gazed at the table, her red mouth curving in spite of all effort at seriousness.

"You're right, Mr. Dick," said Bailey dryly. "Stick to it."

And Dick stuck, without as much as a single lapse. Ffrenchwood saw comparatively little of him, as time went on, the village and factory much. He lost some weight, and acquired a coat of reddish tan.

Emily watched and admired in silence. She had not seen Lestrange again, but it seemed to her that his influence overlay all the life of both house and factory. Sometimes this showed so plainly that she believed Mr. Ffrench must see, must feel the silent force at work. But either he did not see or chose to ignore. And Dick was incautious.

"I'm going to buy one of our roadsters myself," he stated one day. "Can I have it at cost?"

Mr. Ffrench felt for his pince-nez.

"You? Why do you not use the limousine?"

"Because I don't want to go around in a box driven by a chauffeur. I want a classy car to run myself. I've been driving some of the stripped cars lately, and I like it."

"I will give you a car, if you want one," answered his uncle, quite kindly. "Go select any you prefer."

"Thank you," Dick sat up, beaming. "But I'll have to wait my turn, we've orders ahead now. Lestrange says I've no right to come in and make some other fellow wait."

Mr. Ffrench slowly stiffened.

"We do not require lessons in ethics from this Lestrange," was the cold rebuke. "I shall telephone Bailey to send up your car at once."

Rupert brought the sixty-horse-power roadster to the door, three hours later. And Emily appreciated that Lestrange was discreet as well as compelling, when she found the black-eyed young mechanician was detailed to accompany Dick's maiden trips; which duty was fulfilled, incidentally, with the fine tact of a Richelieu.

In May there was a still greater accession of work at the factory. In addition, the first of June was to open with a twenty-four hour race at Beach track, and Lestrange was entered for it. Excitement was in the air; Dick came in the house only to eat and sleep.

The day before the race, Mr. Ffrench walked into the room where his niece was reading.

"I want to see Bailey," he said briefly. "Do you wish to drive me down to the factory, or shall I have Anderson bring around the limousine?"

"Please let us drive," she exclaimed, rising with alacrity. "I have not been to the factory for months."

"Very good. You are looking well, Emily, of late."

Surprised, a soft color swept the face she turned to him.

"I am well. Dear, I think we are all better this spring."

"Perhaps," said Ethan Ffrench. His bitter gray eyes passed deliberately over the large room with all its traces of a family life extending back to pre-Colonial times, but he said no more.

It was an exquisite morning, too virginal for June, too richly warm for May. When the two exchanged the sunny road for the factory office, a north room none too light, it was a moment before their dazzled eyes perceived no one was present. This was Bailey's private office, and its owner had passed into the room beyond.

"I will wait," conceded Mr. Ffrench, dismissing the boy who had ushered them in. "Sit down, Emily; Bailey will return directly, no doubt."

But Emily had already sat down, for she knew the voice speaking beyond the half-open door, and that the long-prevented meeting was now imminent.

"It will not do," Lestrange was stating definitely. "It should be reinforced."

"It's always been strong enough," Bailey's slower tones objected. "For years. It's not a thing likely to break."

"Not likely to break? Look at last year's record, Mr. Bailey, and tell me that. A broken steering-knuckle killed Brook in Indiana, another sent Little to the hospital in Massachusetts, the same thing wrecked the leader at the last Beach race and dashed him through the fence. Do you know what it means to the driver of a machine hurling itself along the narrow verge of destruction, when the steering-wheel suddenly turns useless in his grasp? Can you feel the sick helplessness, the confronting of death, the compressed second before the crash? Is it worth while to risk it for a bit of costless steel?"

The clear realism of the picture forced a pause, filled by the dull roar and throb through the machinery-crowded building.

"They were not our cars that broke, any of them," Bailey insisted.

"Not our cars, no. But the steering-knuckle of my own machine broke under my hands last March, on the road, and if I had been on a curve instead of a straight stretch there would have been a wreck. As it was, I brought her to a stop in the ditch. There is no other thing that may not leave a fighting chance after it breaks but this leaves absolutely none. I know, you both know, that the steering-wheel is the only weapon in the driver's grasp. If it fails him, he goes out and his mechanician with him."

Emily paled, shrinking. She remembered the road under the maples and Lestrange's laughing face as he leaned breathless across his useless wheel. That was what it had meant, then, the lightly treated episode!

"You'd better fix it like he wants it," advised Dick's disturbed tones. "Remember, he's got to drive the car Friday and Saturday, Bailey, not us."

"It's not alone for my racer I'm speaking, but for every car that leaves the shop," Lestrange caught him up. "I'm not flinching; I've driven the car before and I will again. It may hold for ever, that part, but I've tested it and it's a weak point—take the warning for what it's worth."

There was a movement as if he rose with the last word. Emily laid her hand on the arm of the chair, turning her excited dark eyes on her uncle. Surely if ever Mr. Ffrench was to meet his manager, this was the moment; when Lestrange's ringing argument was still in their ears, his splendid force of earnestness still vibrant in the atmosphere. And suddenly she wanted them to meet, passionately wanted Ethan Ffrench's liking for this man.

"Uncle," she began. "Uncle——"

But it was not Lestrange's light step that halted on the threshold.

"Why, I didn't know—" exclaimed Bailey. "Excuse me, Mr. Ffrench, they didn't tell me you were down."

He glanced over his shoulder; as he pulled shut the door Emily fancied she heard an echo, as if the two young men left the next room. Bitterly disappointed, she sank back.

"That was your manager with you?" Mr. Ffrench frigidly inquired.

"Yes; he went up-stairs to see how the new drill is acting." Bailey pulled out a handkerchief and rubbed his brow. "Excuse me, it's warm. Yes, he wants me to strengthen a knuckle—he's spoken considerable about it. I guess he's right; better too much than too little."

"I do not see that follows. I should imagine that you understood building chassis better than this racing driver. You had best consult outside experts in construction before making a change."

"Uncle!" Emily cried.

"There's a twenty-four hour race starts tomorrow night," Bailey suggested uneasily. "It's easy fixed, and we might be wrong."

"We have always made them this way?"

"Yes, but—"

"Consult experts, then. I do not like your manager's tone; he is too assuming. Now let me see those papers."

Emily's parasol slipped to the floor with a sharp crash as she stood up, quite pale and shaken.

"Uncle, Mr. Lestrange knows," she appealed. "You heard him say what would happen—please, please let it be fixed."

Amazed, Mr. Ffrench looked at her, his face setting.

"You forget your dignity," he retorted in displeasure. "This is mere childishness, Emily. Men will be consulted more competent to decide than this Lestrange. That will do."

From one to the other she gazed, then turned away.

"I will wait out in the cart," she said. "I—I would rather be outdoors."

Dick Ffrench was up-stairs, standing with Lestrange in one of the narrow aisles between lines of grimly efficient machines that bit or cut their way through the steel and aluminum fed to them, when Rupert came to him with a folded visiting card.

"Miss Ffrench sent it," was the explanation. "She's sitting out in her horse-motor car, and she called me off the track to ask me to demean myself by acting like a messenger boy. All right?"

"All right," said Dick, running an astonished eye over the card.

"No answer?"

"No answer."

"Then I'll hurry back to my embroidery. I'm several laps behind in my work already."

"See here, Lestrange," Dick began, as the mechanician departed, sitting down on a railing beside a machine steadily engaged in notching steel disks into gear-wheels.

"Don't do that!" Lestrange exclaimed sharply. "Get up, Ffrench."

"It's safe enough."

"It's nothing of the kind. The least slip—"

"Oh, well," he reluctantly rose, "if you're going to get fussy. Read what Emily sent up."

Lestrange accepted the card with a faint flicker of expression.

"Dick, uncle is making the steering-knuckle wait for expert opinion," the legend ran, in pencil. "Have Mr. Bailey strengthen Mr. Lestrange's car, anyhow. Do not let him race so."

Near them two men were engaged in babbitting bearings, passing ladlefuls of molten metal carelessly back and forth, and splashing hissing drops over the floor; at them Lestrange gazed in silence, after reading, the card still in his hand.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

Met It Yet Again in Emily's Pretty Gaiety and Content.

Wise Servant.

A woman in Trenton, N. J., who has been having a lot of trouble with her domestic help, was obliged recently to accept the temporary service of a raw recruit in the shape of an Irish girl just landed in this country.

After a preliminary survey of the girl and a dejected sigh, the lady of the house asked:

"What can you do?"

"Shure, most anything at all, mum," responded the newcomer.

The lady of the house glanced about the room. There was everything to be done. "Could you fill the lamps?" she finally ventured to ask.

"Shure, I kin fill the lamps!" exclaimed the enthusiastic Celt, as she grabbed one and started out. Then, with the air of one wishing above all things to suit the possible caprices of a new employer, she paused to query:

"An' is it gas or oil ye'd be wantin' them filled with?"

WHO'S WHO AND WHY

SOMETHING NEW IN ORGANIZED CHARITY

Before the state legislature in Albany, N. Y., this winter will be presented a plan for America's first "department of home assistance," the first organized government bureau to care for the destitute home. More than a generation ago governmental aid for the families of the very poor was abandoned in New York city; living conditions—and living's cost—have changed radically since then; today the specially appointed committee of investigation for the city conference of charities and correction urges governmental aid as the only hope of real "social justice" and livable support for the homes of the destitute. There are hundreds of women and children starving in New York for whom only the government can adequately care.

"Of course it is, primarily, a matter of the cost of living," said O. F. Lewis, chairman of the conference committee on governmental aid of New York city. "The price of the necessities of life has increased so much that destitution has become a problem too great for the private societies to meet alone. I have no doubt that the private charitable organizations could take care of the destitute families if they only had enough money; but under present conditions they have not enough money, and so something else must be done—something else must be added.

"What we are suggesting is something absolutely new. But it is simply the outgrowth of present conditions. It is a question that has 'broken through' many times lately in various parts of the United States; here in New York we are first bringing it to the point of definite, organized action."

The suggestion of a department of home assistance has as its single object the care of destitute widows with little children. Under the present regime in the care of the poor a woman with children—and no means of support—must either be taken care of by a private organization, or must break up her home and send her children to an institution.

AMIR OF AFGHANISTAN HELPS TURKEY

The specter of a holy war is unfolding itself before the eyes of Europe.

It began when Italy clashed with Turkey in Africa, and now that the little Christian states, that act as a buffer between the larger powers and Turkey, are at war, the cloud is darkening rapidly among all the Mohammedan nations.

In the mosques of India, the pagodas of Malaysia and the shrines of a dozen other nations prayers are being said for the success of the Turkish arms.

All Islam has thrown its religious support to the kahlifate at Constantinople, and should the sultan, as head of the Moslem faith, unfurl the green flag of the prophet it is feared the fanatic Mohammedan nations would begin holy wars.

Even the most conservative of European diplomats admit there is a possibility of political alliances between Turkey and other Islamic nations. The Russian persecutions in Persia have fired the Mohammedans there, and the Asiatic Moslems are looking for a champion who can come to the rescue of the threatened Islamic states—Turkey and Persia.

Habibullah Khan, Amir of Afghanistan, is the man. One word from him, alarmists say and others fear, will bring on a series of religious clashes that will entangle every nation in Europe, Asia and Africa.

The amir has not failed to take advantage of the almost universal manifestation of respect paid him, and in a meeting held in Kabul recently to express sympathy with the Turks he spoke in no uncertain manner.

Although the sovereign of a comparatively small state, the Amir Habibullah enjoys the prestige of being the only independent Moslem ruler in the world. His country has no public debt with a foreign commission controlling its finances. It has a respectable and fairly well trained army. It manufactures its own rifles, ammunition and guns of the smaller calibers.

MRS. GROVER CLEVELAND TO WED AGAIN

Mrs. Grover Cleveland, widow of the former president of the United States, is to be married next April to Prof. Thomas Preston, an honorary professor at Princeton University and now occupying the chair of archaeology at Wells College, Aurora, N. Y., the institution attended by Mrs. Cleveland, then Frances Folsom.

Although formal announcement has not been made and probably will not be made until after the debut of Miss Esther Cleveland this winter, the fact of the engagement has been known for some time among the intimate friends of Mrs. Cleveland and Professor Preston.

The second romance of the woman who as "the bride of the White House" charmed a nation and whose high character and devotion to her distinguished husband have been, by example, a national influence toward high ideals of wifehood, is the outcome of an acquaintanceship of little more than a year's duration, with a man practically unknown in America.

Thereafter he became a frequent visitor at the Cleveland home in Princeton, and undoubtedly Mrs. Cleveland's ardent interest in education fostered the first bond of sympathy that grew into stronger attachment, and has resulted in the most interesting announcement of a betrothal since the world heard that the beautiful Frances Folsom was to be married to the nation's chief in the stately walls of the White House.

Professor Preston, who is about fifty years of age, a literary scholar and a linguist of international distinction, is a man of strong but retiring personality, and, although he has held a high place among the faculty of Princeton for years, it is said that his first meeting with Mrs. Cleveland took place not many months ago.

PRINCESS NURSING WOUNDED SOLDIERS

According to press reports from Greece, the hospital arrangements of the Greek army are entirely inadequate for emergencies. The army has acted with such rapidity that it is impossible for the field ambulances to keep pace with it. Princess Alice, wife of Prince Andrew, the fourth son of King George, with a staff of picked nurses, is following the army and rendering first aid to the wounded, by whom she is spoken of as "the ministering angel."

At Sarandoper she performed almost miracles, flitting with her staff from one quarter to another until late in the evening, when she was compelled to stop because her clothing was drenched with blood.

Princess Helena, daughter of the Crown Prince, has also arrived with her hospital train.

Looking around the railroad station at Larissa, which was littered with wounded men, some on ambulances, others propped against the walls, she exclaimed in pathetic tones:

"Only three weeks to prepare for all this! It was not enough time, and this is only the beginning."

CORNER FOR THE JUNIORS

MAKING A START IN SCIENCE

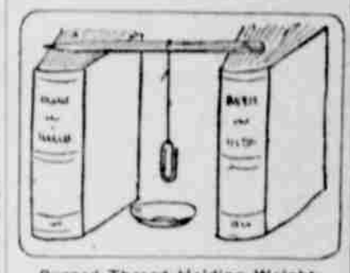
Burned Thread May Be Prepared to Hold Up Some Light Weight—Explanation of Trick.

When we speak of matter we usually mean something that can be seen or felt, anything that has form or weight or color. We say that matter has certain properties. It is a property of glass to be brittle and of rubber to be elastic.

The properties of some kinds of matter can be changed by the application of fire or water or both. We can change iron into steel, we can make brass with a spring to it or without. There are some things that will resist the action of fire or water to a certain extent. You can hold up a pretty good weight at one end of a slice of bread if it is dry or stale, but if you soak the bread in water it will hardly hold itself up.

You can hang a good sized weight at the end of a very slender piece of thread, but the moment you set fire to the thread the weight will fall to the ground. Every one knows that, you will say, but with a little preparation you can convince them that this will not always hold true. It is possible to make a thread hold up a light weight even after the thread has been set on fire and is apparently all burned up.

If you will take a piece of stout thread about a foot long and twist it



Burned Thread Holding Weight.

as much as you can and then double it it will twist upon itself and you will have a double thread, twisted through its entire length. If you tie one end of this thread around a lead pencil and hang some light weight, such as a paper fastener, to the other end so that it shall swing freely above a small dish you may try the experiment of putting a match to it and see how long it will hold up the weight.

But if you stand two books on the table to support the pencil steadily it is possible to burn the thread completely from end to end and still have it hold up the weight provided you have in the thread some substance that is not changed in its properties so much as the thread itself when you burn it.

This substance is common salt, with which so many interesting experiments may be made. Prepare a saturated solution of salt and water, which we call brine, and soak your twisted thread in it. Then hang it up to dry. When it is dry soak it again and let it dry again. After you have done this two or three times the thread will not look any different from ordinary twisted thread, but when you hang your paper fastener or some very light weight to it with the pencil to hold it up it will astonish your friends when you set fire to it.

By applying the match to the bottom you will see a small flame run slowly from there to the top of the thread, where it is tied round the pencil, and at that point it will go out. There will be nothing left but a black cinder which looks very much like a very thin burnt match, but it will be quite strong enough to hold up your little paper fastener.

PIECE OF ICE MAKES FIRE

Illustration Shows How Lens May Be Formed With Hands and Then Applied to Paper.

It may sound queer to some, but ice can be used to start a fire, and this trick may be accomplished by following the directions given herewith:

Take a piece of very clear ice and melt it down in the hollow of your

Making Fire With Ice.

hands so as to form a large lens. The illustration shows how this is done. With the lens shaped ice used in the same manner as a reading glass to direct the sun's rays on paper or shavings you can start a fire.

Young Chesterfield.

"It is so rare an occurrence to meet a young Chesterfield," says a New Yorker, "that I wish to go on record as having encountered in the person of the ten-year-old son of a friend of mine the most striking example one could imagine.

"As I was taking my leave from the household this lad, who was playing in the hall with his sisters, rose politely and opened the door for me.

"'I am very much pleased with this attention,' said I. 'I hope I have given you no trouble.'

"The lad smiled. 'I am only sorry,' rejoined he, 'that I am not letting you in.'"—Lippincott's.

Natural Result.

Edgar, aged four, came running into the house one day with a long scratch on his hand. "Why, Edgar, how did that happen?" asked his mother.

"It didn't happen," replied Edgar. "The old cat done it."

The Wrong Word.

"What does your paw do, Sammy?"

"My paw's a veterinarian."

"Shucks! My paw says anybody what won't eat meat's a crank."

POULTRY

DAYLIGHT TESTER FOR EGGS

Michigan Man Has Invention That Will Prove Innovation in Poultry and Produce Business.

An electric daylight egg tester has been invented by Mr. S. J. Fish of Jackson, Mich., which will be an innovation in the poultry and produce business, for it is far ahead of candling in a dark room, says the Popular Electricity.

Electric No. 2, as it is called, is about 3 feet in length and contains a belt, with small metal trays about 6 inches apart for holding the eggs, which is run over rollers at each end of the case by the aid of a crank. This machine is equipped with an electric lamp and a cord attachable to any electric light socket.

A hood with an opening is placed over the lamp and, as the egg passes over it, the light flashes on automatically, remaining only so long as

Egg Tester.

the egg is under examination; a perfect one is a clear deep orange color, while a bad one is black; the eggs turn automatically on the belt, enabling the tester to examine from all sides. The good eggs are allowed to roll out on a canvas table, which is done without danger of breakage, while the operator discards the ones which are spoiled.

When the ordinary lighting current cannot be secured, the machine is equipped with 24 dry batteries in multiple series, which furnish current for low voltage electric lamps.

An expert and two helpers can test about 80 cases per day with absolutely no danger from fire. Eggs are tested in a daylight room, and with great rapidity.

PROPER FEEDS FOR POULTRY

Best Rule Is to Watch Fowls and Give Them What They Will Clean Up—Milk Is Excellent.

Generally speaking, the poultryman need not worry much about feeding formulas. If he will feed about one-third as much corn as all other grains and feed animal and vegetable feeds in connection he will get fairly satisfactory results. Those who are accustomed to compounding rations might remember that a ratio of about 1.5 is considered a good ration for laying hens and 1.6 a good one for fattening poultry of all kinds.

Fowls require the equivalent of about 27 pounds of dry feed for each 500 pounds of live weight. That is, 100 hens weighing 5 pounds each would require about 27 pounds of dry matter each day. If they are given milk, green, or other wet or juicy feeds, they will require less grain. About 4 ounces of dry matter per day is the quantity required for best results.

The very best rule is to watch the fowls and feed them about all they will eat. It is not a good plan to allow feed to lie uneaten. There is no danger of the hens becoming too fat as long as they are kept busy scratching for their feed. It is the fat hen that lays the eggs regularly.

GOOD POULTRY FEED TROUGH

Useful for All Kinds of Poultry and So Self-Explanatory That No Description Is Necessary.

The accompanying illustration, which shows a feeding trough very useful for all kinds of poultry, is so plainly self-explanatory that no description is necessary, says the Iowa Homestead. By the use of this trough

Poultry Feed Trough.

no food can be wasted nor can the fowls get into the trough with their feet and thus soil it or impair the feeding value of the food.

Telling Fresh Egg.

It is claimed that a freshly laid egg placed in a bucketful of water will sink to the bottom, one day old will sink nearly to the bottom; two days old about half way up; three days old, will float not quite at the top; four days old, just touch the top; five and six days, rise a little above the top, rising a little higher as it daily grows older.

Preparation for Winter.

This is a mighty good time to do the cleaning-up work around the chicken-house. A liberal coat of whitewash, followed by a spraying of the perches, and dusting of infested fowls, will go a long way toward making comfortable for the winter the workers that turn out $600,000,000 worth of eggs a year.

Green Food for Winter.

Sprouted oats, cabbage and brittle, well-kept turnips furnish the best green poultry food for winter. Alfalfa or clover leaves or sweepings from the big barn floor, if scalded up and fed clear or with a little ground feed, will largely take the place of green food and in a way is better than all other green stuff without it.