

THE NE'ER-DO-WELL

A Romance of the Panama Canal
BY
REX BEACH

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Together they strolled off through the crowd, disappearing in the direction of the north wing of the hotel.

It seemed ages before the orchestra struck up. Kirk began to fear that something had happened to the musicians. He edged closer to the door and searched out Chiquita with his eyes. There she was seated with her father, Colonel Bland from Gatun and some high officer or other—probably an admiral.

Kirk heard the orchestra leader tap his music stand; then as the first strains of the waltz floated forth he stepped into the ballroom and made toward his sweetheart. All at once he found that his brain was clear, his heart beats measured.

Of course she saw him coming. She had waited all the long evening for this moment. He saw her hand flutter uncertainly to her throat; then as he paused before her she rose without a word. His arm encircled her waist, her little cold palm dropped into his as lightly as a snowflake, and they glided away together. He found himself whispering her name over and over again passionately.

"Why—why did you do this, senior?" she protested faintly. "It is very hard for me."

"It is the last time I shall ever hold you—this way."

She faltered, her breath caught. "Please! My father is looking. Ramon!"

"Have you agreed to marry him?"

"Yes—no, no! Oh, I have prayed to the Virgin every hour. I cannot, and yet I must. See! I cannot wait, senior; I have stepped upon you. Don't—squeeze me—no!" she exclaimed. "I cannot hold back—the tears. I am so unhappy. If I could die quickly—now."

"Let us go out on the porch."

"No, no! We must remain in my father's sight. Will you take me to my seat?"

"No. I want you to listen carefully to what I am going to say and be calm. He spoke low and earnestly.

"Don't stop dancing now, when I tell you Chiquita dear, you must marry me tonight, right away! I have arranged everything. No, don't look up at me until I have finished. Try to smile. I've planned it all out and everything is in readiness. I have a room just around the corner of the veranda; there's a judge waiting for us, and Ramon and his wife."

"You are mad!" she gasped.

"No, no. We'll slip through one of the French windows, and we'll be back again before they miss us. Nobody will know. I tell you they're waiting. If we are missed they'll think it doesn't matter what they think, you'll be my wife, and Ramon can't marry you then. We'll say nothing about it until your father is elected president."

"Senior, one cannot be married in a moment. I am Catholic—the banns!"

"I've thought of all that, but a civil marriage is binding. We'll have the religious ceremony afterward; meanwhile this will stop Ramon, at least. I promise not to see you again until you send for me—until your father's hopes are realized. You may wait as long as you wish, and nobody will know. They tricked you, Chiquita dear; I can't explain, but it wasn't all politics; by any means. Oh, girl! Don't you understand? I love you—love you! It's our only chance." The words were tumbling from his lips incoherently; he was pleading as if for his life, while she clung to him to support herself. Through it all their feet moved rhythmically, their bodies swayed to the cadences of the waltz as they circled the ballroom.

"My wife!" Kirk whispered, while a tremendous rush of emotion swept over him. She trembled in answer like a wind-shaken leaf. "You're mine. Chiquita! They can't take you away!" His voice broke.

"I am still dreaming. What have I done? Oh—h—they will know! In my face they will read the truth. But I do not care. Senior, I do not know if some time you will be sorry for this action, but I shall never cease loving you. I prayed hourly to the Blessed Virgin, and she heard. Now, I shall perish until you come."

"When you give me leave—through steel and stone, through fire and water."

"Quick! For the one time call me—that!" She hesitated, blushing vividly. "I will hear it in my dreams."

"My wife!" he whispered tenderly. "Hut! Chiquita mia!" her father cried as they came to him. "There you are then. I have missed you." His eyes smoldered as he gazed suspiciously at Kirk.

"Ah, but I was too warm," she said easily. "Yonder by the door we have been standing in the night breeze. And where is Ramon?"

"He is looking for you."

"One would think him a jealous husband already," she exclaimed lightly. Then, extending her hand coolly to Kirk, she said: "I thank you, senior, for the dance."

Her husband bowed. "I shall not soon forget it." To the father he added in a low voice: "I thank you also for your courtesy. We have been discussing your daughter's marriage during the dance, and it is my one great hope that she will never regret it."

The banker acknowledged the words ceremoniously. "Love is a thing that comes and goes. Marriage alone can bind it. Some day you will thank me, and then perhaps you will honor our house again, eh?"

"I shall be happy to come whenever you wish." As he walked away the banker said, with relief:

"He takes it well. He is proud—almost like a Spaniard."

Kirk moved through the crowd as if in a trance, but he was beginning to realize the truth now. It surged over him in great waves of gladness. He longed to shout his news aloud. What luck was his! The world was made for him. There was no such thing as adversity or failure. Chiquita was his wife! All Christendom might go to pot for all he cared.

In the midst of his rhapsody he heard a bellboy speaking his name and

ELECT A. M. Crawford Governor. R. publican Candidate



As Attorney General he secured one half million dollars in property and rights for Oregon.

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MARRIED

Ground-McCreedy

John M. Ground and Miss Irene J. McCreedy were married at the home of Mrs. A. M. Paul in Sun on Sunday, April 26, Dr. Dunsmore of Independence officiating. The ceremony was gracefully performed in the presence of a number of invited guests. Mr. and Mrs. Ground will spend their honeymoon in Portland and on their return will reside at their ranch on the Luckiamute.

Flowerman-Burkhart

Charles N. Flowerman and Miss Jennie Burkhart were married in Independence on Tuesday, April 28. Rev. Tapscott performed the ceremony. They will live in Toledo, Oregon.

CARD OF THANKS

I see by the Oregonian of April 27 that the Prohibition party of Polk County has indorsed me as their candidate for sheriff. I will accept, with thanks to the party, for the respect shown me by being thus favored.

J. F. Morrison.
Democratic candidate for sheriff

Herman Wunder Works

Herman Wunder, of Sunday Slope, called on the Monitor Monday and he reported having taken part in the good roads day labors. No Civic Improvement Club fed him, no big crowd jollied him, and his neighbors were busy planting and plowing, so he represented the "Cooper Hollow Crest" all alone.

The Standard and Registered Trotting Stallion



NOGI Record 2:10 1-2
Reg. No. 57383

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PHONE 942

W. C. T. U. COLUMN

The Monitor Assumes no responsibility for the matter in this column. The Editor.

Officers of W. C. T. U.
President, Mrs. Esther Morgan.
Editor, Mrs. Lucy L. Whiteaker.

The Women's Christian Temperance Union held a very enthusiastic meeting at the home of Mrs. Claggett, seven-teen responding to roll call with texts appropriate to the work in hand. The scripture lesson selected by Mrs. Morgan was helpful and inspiring. There was prayer by Mrs. Fitzgerald and others for guidance and strength to bear about the results for which we so earnestly plead and work. The hour was taken up with readings and discussions of plans of work. Rev. Crow read the lecture given in the Pacific Patriot, entitled "The Babes' Shock," which touched all hearts present, and we thought it would be well for us to include it on a program where more good could be accomplished by the lesson leaders. A new co-test for membership was talked of to be completed at the next place of meeting, which will be held with Mrs. Martha Hill on Monday, May 4th. Rev. Crow gave the closing blessing and felt a new inspiration for future work.

The L. T. L. children held their little meeting at a late hour Sunday afternoon because of the funeral of Mrs. Osborne, so many of the members wishing to attend both places. The officers were present and the regular lessons and drill given. New members were taken in and the pledge taught them. Farewells were given to the members who were leaving our state for a new home in Canada, with the wish that some day they would return to us again. Three of our children who left in last year for England were given souvenirs as were the two going to Canada, from their friend and leader, Mrs. Whiteaker, trusting it would bring to their minds the pleasant days spent in the L. T. L. work in Independence with their many little friends and co-workers. A social will be given the L. T. L. children on Flower Mission Day, if the organization reaches its hundred mark of pledged members signing the triple pledge against alcohol, tobacco and profanity. We are out to win for God and home, native land and a stainless flag waving over the free.

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Continued next week