



Race for a Wife

BY HAWLEY SMART

CHAPTER XXI.—(Continued.)

Pearman paused. He was a shrewd man, and he could not help being struck by the ability with which his opponent had got up his case. "Suppose I let you take the horse?" he said at length.

"Even then he is a valuable horse, and worth just now a fictitious price. There would be people who would give pretty nearly that sum to insure his not starting for that particular race."

"I give you credit, Mr. Rose," replied Pearman at length. "I'll sign a release of the mortgage, with this proviso, that my engagement with Miss Denison remains as it was."

"I have told you already that that question is totally aloof, and must be held entirely distinct from the claim of heriot. It is a point upon which I am not empowered to enter, and have nothing to say."

Grenville Rose is proving himself a master of casuistry. Though not his mission or interest to speak on that subject, I think it was one he had a good deal to say to.

"Then there is nothing more to be said," observed Pearman, rising.

"I am afraid not. It would be better on both sides, I fancy, if we had come to terms. We shall probably not make quite so much—that we must take our chance of. You will certainly lose a good deal more."

"You're right! I'll do it."

"Depend upon it, it's your cheapest way out of the scrape, and I hope Coriander will speedily recoup you. Excuse me for one moment, and I'll fetch the release. I had it drawn up in the event of your taking a sensible view of the transaction," and Grenville left the room.

"All right, my pet, so far," he exclaimed, as he entered Denison's private sanctuary where Maude was anxiously waiting him. "Pen and ink, quick!" And seizing one of the telegram slips, he wrote rapidly:

"To Mrs. Hudson, Paper Buildings, Temple. From Grenville Rose, Xminster. Shall be home to-night; have something for dinner."

"There, fold that up, and send it off directly to the telegram office. No time to be lost, Maude."

"Well, I don't see much in that," retorted Maude. "What a gourmand you must be, Gren!"

"Never mind. Where's that deed?—ah, here. I'll explain it all to you afterwards."

"And my note?" she said shyly, holding it up.

"Neither you nor it will be wanted today, I think. But come back here when you have seen James off."

"Perhaps you'd rather I should never send it?" she inquired, half timidly, half coquettishly.

"Maude, be serious now, please. You may tease me as much as you like afterwards."

She said nothing, but flitted from the room on her errand.

Grenville Rose, armed with the deed of a release of the mortgage, and a similar acquittance of the heriot claim, all drawn up in due legal form, quickly returned to Pearman.

"Here," he said, is your acquittance, signed by my uncle. If you will sign the release, I'll hand it over to you. Shall I ring for a servant as a second witness to your signature?"

Pearman nodded assent, and upon the appearance of the butler, scrawled his name across the parchment, to which the witnesses signed their attestation. He then placed the acquittance in his pocket, took up his hat, and departed, without further demand for an interview with Maude.

Not that the heriot business had for one second put it out of his mind. No; to do him justice, he looked upon the probable rupture of his engagement as a very serious item in the losses the discovery of that mouldy old parchment had entailed upon him. If he did not love her, he admired her extremely, and looked forward to the connection with great eagerness. But he felt quite convinced that to have moved any further than he had already done would be simply to cancel it at once. He did not wish that. It was but a slender hold, he knew. Still, another shuffle of the pack might change all the hands once more. That slight link was better than none at all.

Thus meditating, he drove home, and having ordered his phaeton to wait while he wrote a couple of letters, to save the post, entered the house. In about half an hour he reappeared, stepped into the carriage, and drove to Xminster Station. His wishing to write those letters at Mannersley had caused him to make a considerable detour to the station from Glinn Harold Denison's place lying, though off the direct road, somewhere about half way between Mannersley and the railway. On arrival there he went into the telegraph office, and dispatched a message. The clerk and Pearman were upon rather intimate relations. The late owner of Mannersley had employed the electric wire pretty freely. His son, also, was wont to use it a good deal. The latter, moreover, constantly sent the clerk game in the season—very often told him he had invested a sovereign for him on one of his horses that he thought was likely to win. It may be conceived that the conductor of the telegraph at Xminster held Mr. Sam Pearman in high esteem.

"You'll be going up by the six train, I suppose, sir? Only half-past three now, but I expect you're going home again first."

"Just so. I want to have about an hour at the paddocks first."

"One last look at the crack, eh, sir? Win, won't he, though they do take strange liberties with him in the betting?"

"He's very well and 'll make some of them open their eyes and shut their mouths before many days are over."

"Well, you'll have company up, sir—Mr. Grenville Rose, from Glinn; he's

a-going by that train. Know him, Mr. Pearman, I suppose."

"Yes, I do know him," said Pearman, as he thought over their recent interview.

"Beg pardon, sir; didn't know you didn't like him; he's usually reckoned a nice gentleman."

"How do you know he's going to town?"

"Because he sent a message to say so."

"What, a telegram? How long ago?"

"About an hour and a half; it was about two o'clock."

"That was the time I left Glinn, and his telegram left Xminster then. Hum! It must have left Denison's while I was there," thought Pearman. "What the devil could it have been about? I say, what was Mr. Rose's message—exactly?"

"Beg pardon sir, but, you know, we ain't allowed—"

"Yes, of course, I know; there's a sovereign for you—go on."

"Well, it can't be of any consequence, and you won't let out I told you, Mr. Pearman," said the clerk, as his hand closed on the gold coin. "It was only this: 'To Mrs. Hudson, Paper Buildings, Temple. From Grenville Rose, Xminster. I shall be home to-night; have something for dinner.'"

"That was all, you're sure?"

"Every word, I'll take my oath."

"Thank you; keep a place for me by the six train," and Pearman drove off to see his horses.

It was a very simple message, but the owner of Coriander had been quite long enough on the turf to know that a telegram may represent anything but what it appears to say. It disquieted him much. He wished that he had driven straight to the station instead of home to Mannersley; he might have written his letters there, and his own telegram would have been off much sooner. In the meanwhile here he was at the paddocks.

"Well, Martin?" he inquired, as his trainer came out to meet him; "how are they all going on?"

"Well as can be, sir. Coriander did two nice canters and a good mile and a quarter gallop, to wind up with, this morning. No horse can be doing better. But they tell me they're laying against him in London, as if something was the matter," and the trainer glanced inquiringly at his master.

"Something has been the matter, Martin—too long a matter to tell you at present; but everything is now satisfactorily arranged. But I want to talk to you about those two-year-olds; so, come inside."

After a lengthened conference with his trainer, Pearman returned to the station. Grenville Rose was a fellow traveler with him and they even occupied the same carriage, but beyond a few words of recognition, no conversation passed between them.

Upon entering the Theatre, the first thing Pearman saw in the hall, on casting his eye at the notice-board containing the latest news, was that Coriander was once more first favorite for the Two Thousand, at seven to two, taken freely.

"Done again," he muttered, "somehow. And I believe that telegram and Rose are at the bottom of it."

CHAPTER XXII.

We must now revert to what Mrs. Hudson did upon receipt of her telegram—as harmless, apparently, as "the pork chops and tomato sauce" of Pickwick's immortal history. Yet even in that case "great events from trivial causes sprang." That lady is destined to be as much disturbed in a monetary point of view as Mrs. Bardell; but infinitely more to her own advantage.

Mrs. Hudson was lounging pleasantly enough in an armchair, reading the diurnal literature of her country in that abode of comfort, bliss, and intelligence, yeelp Paper Buildings, when that most domestic of telegrams reached her. That she was attired in a morning coat, neat trousers, unimpeachable boots, and had a cigar in her mouth, will scarcely astonish the reader, who has probably already surmised that Silky Dallison represented that lady.

"Ah!" he exclaimed, after reading the message, "what a cross it looks like. But I must be off at once to see Piyart. Twenty minutes to three; just catch him before he goes down to Tattersalls." Mr. Dallison was a man of decision; he was into a hansom and at the door of the Victoria Club in something less than ten minutes. His conference with the bookmaker was short, and then they separated, both to make their way to the great Turf Exchange at Knightsbridge.

The remarkable feature of the betting on the Two Thousand that afternoon was the extraordinary advance of Coriander. From very long odds offered against him, he rose in the course of the day to be once more first favorite; reaching very nearly to his original price of ten days back. From the opening of the rooms Dallison was very eager in his offers to back the horse, while it might have been also noticed that Mr. Piyart accepted the long odds against Coriander. "Just to cover himself," as he said, "having laid rather heavily against him." But it quickly permeates through the Subscription Room that the horse is being backed in earnest, and when, about half-past four, Pearman's accredited agent began also to put money on the horse, the excitement became intense.

The King, or stock brokers of the turf, like their brethren of the eastern exchange, with all their acuteness are marvelously like sheep in times of panic. The leaders at both places can increase or depreciate property pretty much at their pleasure. As there is, of course, money to be made by such fluctuations, it can scarcely be wondered at that they do it. But why should the one be deemed virtuous and respectable, and the other the contrary? There is little to choose between the scandals of the two betting

Grenville Rose, upon Pearman's departure, had carried the release in triumph to the squire. Harold Denison was jubilant beyond measure; free from his difficulties, and, to use his own expression, "out of the hands of those blood-suckers, the Pearmans." The hopes Grenville had raised had influenced him in his influence with Sam Pearman, and, if a little sarcastic in his retorts, the bitter cynicism of his nature had toned down rather upon that occasion. Rose now thought it time to do a little work for himself; so without more ado, he reverted to his passion for his cousin, and solicited his uncle's permission for their engagement.

Harold Denison was a good deal taken aback. It must be borne in mind that he had not received the slightest hint of this in any way beforehand, and to say that he was pleased now he did hear it, would be very far from the truth. He liked his nephew, perhaps, as far as it was in his selfish nature to like anybody; but he still thought that Maude, with her personal attractions, ought to marry money or rank, if not both. Still, at the present moment, he was virtually indebted to his nephew for £10,000—a circumstance little likely to help him in the long run as men of Harold Denison's caliber generally hate most heartily those to whom they are deeply beholden. However, he had not come to that yet, and the way his nephew had outwitted Pearman pleased his cynic and vindictive nature much.

(To be continued.)

SEVEN BILLION DOLLARS.

A Yearly Sum from Agriculture Impossible to Imagine.

In all the circle of all your acquaintances, in all the circle of all your reading, do you know of a single billionaire? I don't mean—do you think you know. I mean—do you know that you know of a single capitalist who is really a billionaire? That is a lot of money, you know, says Agnes C. Laut in *Outing*. At 4 per cent interest it means an income of three and a third million dollars a month. I'm not talking of capital that is a quarter water and a quarter hot air and only half hard cash or convertible reality. I'm talking of wealth that can be handled with your hands and measured with your eyes, wealth that doesn't require convulsions of frenzied financy to be converted into terms of the mint.

You acknowledge frankly you don't really know of a single billionaire in the history of the world. Much less do you know of any group of capitalists in the world whose combined wealth would make twenty billions and whose twenty billions pay a yearly dividend of seven billions. A dividend of \$7,000,000,000 a year means an income of \$580,000,000 a month, or \$19,000,000 a day. Talk of the fate of Midas! Any capitalist or group of capitalists who had to take care of that much money a day would have genuine convulsions in frenzied finance.

Such a capitalist, collectively, is the United States farmer. Such a dividend, collectively, does the soil of the United States yearly hand out to the farmer-man. By the last census the capital invested in agriculture in the United States was twenty billions, and by the last report of the agricultural department the products of the farm for 1907 yielded a grand total of seven billions. Compare these figures to the billion-dollar steel trust, over which the whole world went daffy a few years ago; and the magnitude of the greatness—and of the growing greatness—of agricultural interests in America becomes apparent. In fact, it would be hard to put your hand on a single department of industrial life, or constructive work in the United States, which would compare in importance to the permanent value and yearly yields of the farm. Then remember, too, that of all the manufacturing interests in the United States 75 per cent are dependent on the farm for raw products.

A Fool's Errand.

An Englishman, of the ever-serious sort, walked into the office of a New York liveryman and asked to see the finest trotter he had for sale.

"I don't care about price," insisted the Britisher, "but it must be a very fast horse."

The liveryman explained that he had a horse whose speed could only be shown at night when the roads were clear.

"Meet me at one o'clock to-morrow morning at the Claremont," he said; "we'll be in Youkers at two o'clock, and that's going some."

Three hours later the Englishman rushed excitedly into the liveryman's office. "I don't want the horse," puffed the Englishman—"I won't have it at all."

"Why not? He's fast," insisted the liveryman.

"But what could I do in Youkers at two o'clock in the morning?" replied the Englishman.—*Success Magazine*.

Harlem Musical Note.

"Oh, papa, papa!" cried the music lesson maid from the adjoining room, "there's a burglar in the parlor! He just bumped against the piano. I heard him strike several keys."

"All right, dearie; I'll go right down."

"Oh, James," sobbed the wife, "don't do anything rash!"

"Sure not. Leave that to me. I'm going to help the poor duffer. You don't suppose he can get that blamed piano out without assistance, do you?"—*New York Herald*.

A Precautionary Measure.

"Why do you laugh so hurriedly when your husband tells a story?"

"If I don't laugh promptly he tells it all over gain."—*Cleveland Plain Dealer*.

Gratitude is like love—where it exists, it will show itself.—H. Lee.

THEN LITTLE MISS CRACKERS!

- Ten little firecrackers, looking fit and fine; One dropped off the bunch—then there were nine.
- Nine little firecrackers, awaiting their fate; One became a squizzer, then there were eight.
- Eight little firecrackers (three shy of eleven); One lost its fuse, and there remained seven.
- Seven little firecrackers lying on the bricks; A goat swallowed one and overlooked six.
- Six little firecrackers glad to be alive; Water wetted one but never touched five.
- Five little firecrackers in readiness to roar; One proved noiseless, reducing them to four.
- Four little firecrackers waiting lit to be; One's still waiting, so there only were three.
- Three little firecrackers not knowing what to do; One did nothing and left more work for two.
- Two little firecrackers their task almost begun; Half of them got stepped upon, leaving just one.
- One little firecracker, bound to make good; Blew off baby's fingers as well as it could.

Winning a Goddess

"Celebrate? Of course we can't celebrate in this town. We can't do nothing until we get together." Postmaster Haston threw away his cigar impatiently and turned to the group of villagers.

"Maybe that's so, but it ought not to be. Just because the cattlemen live in the north end and the land owners in the south they ought not to quarrel," replied Harry Morse, son of Banker Morse, and just home from college.

"We'll get up our own then," suggested somebody, "and let's meet to-morrow night. Fourth of July will be here in a week."

Harry on his wheel met Led Norton, the son of the owner of Hat Six ranch, on horseback a day later and the two young men rode side by side across the level plain for a time. Harry told his companion of the arrangement.

"That's all right," was the reply. "The north end is going to perform, too. These old fogies may fight if they want to, but we won't be so foolish. We can't help it, of course, but let's go in for some fun out of it anyhow."

"I'm with you. We are to have a goddess of liberty in a flag dress and a golden crown. You can't guess who it is to be."

"That homely Miss Lyons, of course. She always forces herself to the front."

"Wrong—Miss Dorine Vandele."

"Why, her father is worth half a million."

"Well, she will do anything for me," with a satisfied air.

"Oh, ho, that's it, is it?" and the cattle king-to-be rode away. In his heart was a little bitterness, for Dorine was to him something better than the rest of the girls of the town, north or south, and he did not like at all the tone of his companion's expression.

So North Mayville prepared for its parade and speeches, and South Mayville did the same. Harry and Led met often and exchanged notes as to the progress of the work. It was to be a very bitter rivalry.

For days the two sections of the town were excited. The tales of the doings of "the other side" were related with great exaggeration. Dorine heard them and wondered if her party was to be so very much outshone.

"They tell me that they are getting up a caricature of me," she said to Harry.

"They would not dare," was the eager response. "If they did I would punish the author myself."

"Who is in charge of the other side?"

"Led Norton, of course."

Dorine's color heightened, but Harry did not notice it. He was at last rewarded by securing her promise that she would act the principal part in the parade. He went away wondering how he could arrange it so that he might be near her on the glorious occasion.

On the eve of the important day there was a gathering in the back room of the Cattlemen's Club. Around the table sat six of the largest owners of stock on the range. They talked of the morrow.

"I am in favor of knocking them out once for all," Colonel Norton was saying. "That side of the town has got to be wiped out eventually or our property will be worthless. Let's scare their old parade out of sight and let them see that we are running the town."

Some objection was raised, but in the end the worthies were all satisfied with a plan that promised dire trouble for the neighboring burg. But only the six cattle barons knew of it when the morning dawned. The rivalry of



This is no time for mirth or laughter. The cold grey dawn of the morning after.

Western towns does not permit of much confidence or exchange of courtesies.

There was another conference that night, but the cattlemen did not know of it. Only two were in it—Harry and Led. When they parted it was with a laugh and a merry call from the former: "It will be fun for all 'em."

Independence Day dawned with the beauty of the prairie skies shining over the town. It was a day for the young to rejoice in and for the old to be thankful for. Mayville was astir early and there was not a resident who did not feel that he was interested in the celebration, both for the purpose of making for his side the best showing possible and to outdo the opposition. The rival parades started at 10 o'clock.

The two young men were the respective marshals of the day and each guided his troops as best he could through the crowds that filled the streets. The south enders were gorgeous in their finery from the stores. The Goddess of Liberty rode on a float all by herself and the horses were gayly fitted out for the occasion with ribbons and bunting. The north end had a more sedate, but more expensive aggregation. It had in line all the cowboys of the ranch owners and there were some fancy riders among them who could and did make the onlookers wonder at their skill.

As the bands played and drowned out the noise of each opposition company the two marshals of the day led the lines toward a tree-lined avenue and then with a quick turn brought them out plump against each other in the broad street! It was the most exciting time of the town's history. The men were mad and the women indignant—the children alone were happy. They saw two parades instead of one.

But suddenly something else happened. Out of the grove that hid a stable sprang a number of men with guns. They leaped into the road and fired them with deafening reports. It was intended to frighten the south enders and it did. It also frightened the others, for the parades were there together.

"My stars, what a panic," exclaimed Colonel Norton. "I wish we had not done it."

Well he might. The teams went here and there, out of the control of the drivers. Then one was seen running down the street—it was the one with the Goddess of Liberty. Behind it went two riders—Harry and Led. It was a race for a life. The two young men were well mounted, but they had swift horses to catch. At the end of the road was a hill and down at the bottom a bridge. Their time was

short. On one side rode one and on the other his rival. Now both realized that they were to test the love of the woman they both admired.

Dorine clung to the wagon, which pitched and wavered, alone on the vehicle.

"Here," shouted Harry, "jump to me and I will hold you!"

"Here," put in Led, in that strong tone of his, "let me catch you! I come alongside."

She looked from one to the other. Even in the terror of the position she saw something of the situation and wished for an instant that she could escape making a choice before the crowd. But a look ahead told her that that was impossible—now was her time.

The hill was nearer and nearer. The people were wondering why she did not leap, for they saw it was impossible for the riders to stop the team. Suddenly she satisfied them. With an abandon that showed how strong was her faith, she threw herself far from the wagon—toward Led Norton.

The young cattlemen was ready for the duty of the minute. He reached out his strong right arm and as she came to him threw it around her waist. With a quick motion he brought her to the saddle and then turned his horse back toward the center of the crowd.

"She jumped into the arms of a north ender!" exclaimed a doer of her friends, "for shame!" But Dorine seemed not to care. She smiled at them when she rode back with Led's arm around her, and Harry was glad that he went on to catch the team which was not there to see.

"That was a smart trick of yours," said Mr. Norton to his son, a day or two after.

"Not so smart as that of yours and the rest in trying to frighten and break up the south enders' parade," was the reply. "It did good in the ways; it won me a wife and put us two towns on a friendly basis."

"What do you mean, sir? A wife and friends?"

"Miss Vandele promised me to marry me as we rode back from the runaway and the people were so thoroughly mixed by the fright that they will quarrel no more. A marriage between the two leading families will help straighten things, too, don't you think?"

Mr. Norton did not say what he thought—perhaps he did not think anything fit for expression. As for his son he was more than satisfied. He had won a goddess, as he put it, and had healed a neighborhood quarrel, and that was glory enough for a Fourth of July.

CELEBRATING!

