

The Bram Bowl

PICTURES BY A. WEIL

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BY LOUIS JOSEPH VANCE

SYNOPSIS.

"Mad" Dan Maitland, on reaching his New York bachelor club, met an attractive young woman at the door. Janitor O'Hagan assured him no one had been within that day. Dan discovered a woman's finger prints in dust on his desk, along with a letter from his attorney.

CHAPTER I.—Continued.

Further and closer inspection developed the fact that the imprint had been only recently made. Within the hour—unless Maitland were indeed mad or dreaming—a woman had stood by that desk and rested a hand, palm down, upon it; not yet had the dust had time to settle and blur the sharp outlines.

Maitland shook his head with bewilderment, thinking of the gray girl. But no. He rejected his half-formed explanation—the obvious one. Besides, what had he there worth a thief's while? Beyond a few articles of "virtue and bigotry" and his pictures, there was nothing valuable in the entire flat. His papers? But he had nothing; a handful of letters, cheque book, a pass book, a japanned tin dispatch box containing some business memoranda and papers destined eventually for Bannerman's hands; but nothing negotiable, nothing worth a burglar's while.

It was a flat-topped desk, of mahogany, with two pedestals of drawers, all locked. Maitland determined this latter fact by trying to open them without a key; failing, his key-ring solved the difficulty in a jiffy. But the drawers seemed undisturbed; nothing had been either handled, or removed, or displaced, so far as he could determine. And again he wagged his head from side to side in solemn stupefaction.

"This is beyond you, Dan, my boy." And: "But I've got to know what it means."

In the hall O'Hagan was shuffling impatiently. Pondering deeply, Maitland unlocked the desk and got upon his feet. A small bowl of beaten brass, which he used as an ash receiver, stood ready to his hand; he took it up, carefully blew it clean of dust, and inverted it over the print of the hand. On top of the bowl he placed a weighty afterthought in the shape of a book.

"O'Hagan!"
"Waitin', sor."
"Come hither, O'Hagan. You see that desk?"
"Yissor."
"Are you sure?"
"Ah, faith—"
"I want you not to touch it, O'Hagan. Under penalty of my extreme displeasure, don't lay a finger on it till I give you permission. Don't dare to dust it. Do you understand?"
"Yissor. Very good, Mr. Maitland."

CHAPTER II.

Post-Prandial.

Bannerman pushed back his chair a few inches, shifting position the better to benefit of a faint air that fanned in through the open window. Maitland, twisting the sticky stem of a liqueur glass between thumb and forefinger, sat in patient waiting for the lawyer to speak.

But Bannerman was in no hurry; his mood was rather one of contemplative and genial. He was a round and cherubic little man, with the face of a guileless child, the acumen of a successful counsel for soulless corporations (that is to say, of a high order), no particular sense of humor, and a great appreciation of good eating. And Maitland was famous in his day as one thoroughly conversant with the art of ordering a dinner.

That which they had just discussed had been uncommon in all respects; Maitland's scheme of courses and his specification as to details had roused the admiration of the Primordial's chef and put him on his mettle. He had outdone himself in his efforts to do justice to Mr. Maitland's genius; and the Primordial in its deadly conservatism remains to this day one of the very few places in New York where good, sound cooking is to be had by the initiate.

Therefore Bannerman thoughtfully sucked at his cigar and thought fondly of a salad that had been to ordinary salads as his 80-horse-power car was to an electric buckboard. While Maitland, with all time at his purchase, idly flicked the ash from his cigarette and followed his attorney's meditative gaze out through the window.

Because of the heat the curtains were looped back, and there was nothing to obstruct the view. Madison square lay just over the sill, a dark wilderness of foliage here and there made livid green by arc lights. Its walks teemed with humanity, its benches were crowded. Dimly from its heart came the cool plashing of a fountain, in lulls that fell unaccountably in the roaring rattle of restless feet. Over across, Broadway raised glittering walls of glass and stone; and thence came the poignant groan and rumble of surface cars crawling upon their weary and unvarying rounds.

And again Maitland thought of the City, and of Destiny, and of the gray girl the silhouette of whose hand was



"The Loss of a Cool Half-Million, While It's a Drop in the Bucket to You, Would Cripple Him."

imprisoned beneath the brass bowl on his study desk. For by now he was quite satisfied that she and none other had trespassed upon the privacy of his rooms, obtaining access to them in his absence by means as unguessable as her motive. Momentarily he considered taking Bannerman into his confidence; but he questioned the advisability of this. Bannerman was so severely practical in his outlook upon life, while this adventure had been so madly whimsical, so engagingly impossible. Bannerman would be sure to suggest a call at the precinct police station. . . . If she had made way with anything, it would be different; but so far as Maitland had been able to determine, she had abstracted nothing, disturbed nothing beyond a few square inches of dust.

Unwillingly Bannerman put the salad out of mind and turned to the business whose immediate moment had brought them together. He hummed softly, calling his client to attention. Maitland came out of his reverie, vaguely smiling.

"I'm waiting, old man. What's up?"
"The Graeme business. His lawyers have been after me again. I even had a call from the old man himself."

"Yes? The Graeme business?"
Maitland's expression was blank for a moment; then comprehension informed his eyes. "Oh, yes; in connection with the Dougherty investment swindle."

"That's it. Graeme's pleading for mercy."

Maitland lifted his shoulders significantly. "That was to be expected, wasn't it? What did you tell him?"

"That I'd see you."

"Did you hold out to him any hopes that I'd be easy on the gang?"

"I told him that I doubted if you could be induced to let up."

"Then why—?"

"Why, because Graeme himself is as innocent of wrong doing and wrong intent as you are."

"You believe that?"

"I do," affirmed Bannerman. His fat pink fingers drummed uneasily on the cloth for a few moments. "There isn't any question that the Dougherty people induced you to sink your money in their enterprise with intent to defraud you."

"I should think not," Maitland interjected, amused.

"But old man Graeme was honest, in intention at least. He meant no harm; and in proof of that he offers to shoulder your loss himself, if by so doing he can induce you to drop further proceedings. That proves he's in earnest, Dan, for although Graeme is comfortably well to do, it's a known fact that the loss of a cool half million, while it's a drop in the bucket to you, would cripple him."

"Then why doesn't he stand to his associates, and make them each pay back their fair share of the loot? That'd bring his liability down to about fifty thousand."

"Because they won't give up without a contest in the courts. They deny your proofs—you have those papers, haven't you?"

"Safe, under lock and key," asserted

Maitland, sententiously. "When the time comes I'll produce them."

"And they incriminate Graeme?"

"They make it look as black for him as for the others. Do you honestly believe him innocent, Bannerman?"

"I do, implicitly. The dread of exposure, the fear of notoriety when the case comes up in court, has aged the man ten years. He begged me with tears in his eyes to induce you to drop it and accept his offer of restitution. Don't you think you could do it, Dan?"

"No, I don't," Maitland shook his head with decision. "If I let up, the scoundrels get off scot free. I have nothing against Graeme; I am willing to make it as light as I can for him; but this business has got to be aired in the courts; the guilty will have to suffer. It will be a lesson to the public, a lesson to the scamps, and a lesson to Graeme—not to lend his name too freely to questionable enterprises."

"And that's your final word, is it?"
"Final, Bannerman. . . . You go ahead; prepare your case and take it to court. When the time comes, as I say, I'll produce these papers. I can't go on this way, letting people that I'm an easy mark just because I was unfortunate enough to inherit more money than is good for my wholesome."

Maitland twisted his eyebrows in deprecation of Bannerman's attitude; signified the irrevocability of his decision by bringing his fist down upon the table—but not heavily enough to disturb the other diners; and, laughing, changed the subject.

For some moments he gossiped cheerfully of his new power boat, Bannerman attending to the inconsequential details with an air of abstraction. Once or twice he appeared about to interrupt, but changed his mind; but because his features were so wholly infantile and open and candid, the time came when Maitland could no longer ignore his evident perturbation.

"Now what's the trouble?" he demanded with a trace of asperity. "Can't you forget that Graeme business and—"

"Oh, it's not that," Bannerman dismissed the troubles of Mr. Graeme with an airy wave of a pudgy hand. "That's not my funeral, nor yours. . . . Only I've been worried, of late, by your utterly careless habits."

Maitland looked his consternation. "In heaven's name, what now?" And grinned as he joined hands before him in simulated petition. "Please don't read me a lecture just now, dear boy. If you've got something dreadful on your chest wait till another day, when I'm more in the humor to be found fault with."

"No lecture," Bannerman laughed nervously. "I've merely been wondering what you have done with the Maitland heirlooms."

"What? Oh, those things? They're safe enough—in the safe out at Greenfields."

"To be sure! Quite so!" agreed the lawyer, with ironic heartiness. "Oh, quite." And proceeded to take all Madison square into his confidence, addressing it from the window. "Here's

a young man, sole proprietor of a priceless collection of family heirlooms—diamonds, rubies, sapphires galore; and he thinks they're safe enough in a safe at his country residence, 50 miles from anywhere! What a simple, trustful soul it is!"

"Why should I bother?" argued Maitland, sulkily. "It's a good, strong safe, and—there are plenty of servants around," he concluded, largely.

"Precisely. Likewise plenty of burglars. You don't suppose a determined criminal like Anisty, for instance, would bother himself about a handful of thick-headed servants, do you?"

"Anisty?"—with a rising inflection of inquiry.

Bannerman squared himself to face his host, elbows on table. "You don't mean to say you've not heard of Anisty, the great Anisty?" he demanded.

"I dare say I have," Maitland conceded, unperturbed. "Name rings familiar, somehow."

"Anisty"—deliberately—"is said to be the greatest jewel thief the world has ever known. He has the police of America and Europe by the ears to catch him. They have been hot on his trail for the past three years, and would have nabbed him a dozen times if only he'd had the grace to stay in one place long enough. The man who made off with the Bracegirdle diamonds, smashing a burglar-proof vault into scrap iron to get 'em—don't you remember?"

"Yes; I seem to recall the affair, now that you mention it," Maitland admitted, bored. "Well, and what of Mr. Anisty?"

"Only what I have told you, taken in connection with the circumstance that he is known to be in New York, and that the Maitland heirlooms are tolerably famous—as much so as your careless habits, Dan. Now, a safe deposit vault—"

"Um-m-m," considered Maitland. "You really believe that Mr. Anisty has his bold burglarious eye on my property?"

"It's a big enough haul to attract him," argued the lawyer, earnestly. "Anisty always aims high. . . . Now, will you do what I have been begging you to do for the past eight years?"

"Seven," corrected Maitland, punctiliously. "It's just seven years since I entered into mine inheritance and you became my counselor."

"Well, seven, then. But will you put those jewels in safe deposit?"

"Oh, I suppose so."

"But when?"

"Would it suit you if I ran out to-night?" Maitland demanded so abruptly that Bannerman was disconcerted. "I—or—ask nothing better."

"I'll bring them in to-morrow. You arrange about the vault and advise me, will you, like a good fellow?"

"Bless my soul! I never dreamed that you would be so—so—"

"Amenable to discipline!" Maitland grinned, boy-like, and, leaning back, appreciated Bannerman's startled expression with keen enjoyment. "Well, consider that for once you've scared me. I'm off—just time to catch the 10:20 for Greenfields, Walter!"

He scribbled his initials at the bottom of the bill presented him, and rose. "Sorry, Bannerman," he said, chuckling, "to cut short a pleasant evening. But you shouldn't startle me so, you know. Pardon me if I run; I might miss that train."

"But there was something else—"

"It can wait."

"Take a later train, then."

"What! With this grave peril hanging over me? Impossible! Night."

Bannerman, discomfited, saw Maitland's shoulders disappear through the dining room doorway, meditated pursuit, thought better of it, and reseated himself, frowning.

"Mad Maitland, indeed!" he commented.

As for the gentleman so characterized, he emerged, a moment later, from the portals of the club, still chuckling mildly to himself as he struggled into a light evening overcoat. His temper, having run the gamut of boredom, interest, perturbation, mystification, and plain amusement, was now altogether inconsequential—a dangerous mood for Maitland. Standing on the corner of Twenty-sixth street he thought it over, tapping the sidewalk gently with his cane. Should he or should he not carry out his intention as declared to Bannerman, and go to Greenfields that same night? Or should he keep his belated engagement with Cressy's party?

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

LARGELY MATTER OF FAITH

Proof of Authenticity of Relics, Religious or Historical, in Most Cases Impossible.

The authenticity of relics, religious or historical, must in many cases be largely a matter of faith; proof is often lacking, often indeed impossible to procure. The number of couches notable from the fact "that they have been slept in by good Queen Bess" shown in manor houses is legion and the same may be said of many other historical heirlooms the real history of which is lost in the mists of antiquity. How many pairs of gloves were given by King Charles I as keepsakes on the day of his execution? There are quite a number of claimants for the honor. One pair has recently been the cause of a law suit, and it was said in the course of the trial that they were given by the king to Bishop Juxon on the scaffold. There is yet another pair which has had a far stranger history than most Stuart relics, which have indeed little history, but a quiet passing from generation to generation in English country houses. They were sent by King Charles on the day of execution by a trusty hand to Speaker Lenthall "for amity's sake." Only one of the pair now survives, the other was burned in a bush fire in Australia. The precious gloves had gone there when the Lenthalls awhile ago left their homes and their lands and had, with Charles II's pardon of Lenthall, been cherished in many wanderings in Australia. The surviving glove and the pardon are now back in England, because happily the Lenthalls are back. It is quite likely that King Charles gave away several pairs of gloves, for gloves then were costly things—cities gave them to visiting sovereigns where now addresses or gold boxes are given. But in the days of the Stuarts gloves were costly enough at any rate to carry a sentiment, even a king's sentiment.

OLD AGE IS INEXORABLE

Men Find It Out When They Attempt to Frisk About in Boy Fashion.

If you ever doubt that you're growing old and sedate, you fathers, just take the kids out into the woods and see the difference between yourself of today and yesterday.

You see them plunging about with whoops of joy, and generally living gladly.

And you—well, when you try to sit down your knees creak, and the leaves beneath you don't seem as they once did.

The golden sunshine filters through the trees; the rustle of small living things resounds through the woods; the perfume of rich ripening things floats to you, and within you something is struggling to break loose.

You don't know just what it is, but it hurts. You are too old now to run and whoop and carry on like those kids. It would be beneath your dignity, but something within you seems calling to you, and your old body can't respond.

You want to yell and run—that is, you believe you do, but it's no use. Something is holding you back.

So there you sit and watch the children playing, and their happiness is as once yours was.

And it makes the heart ache to think of it—some day they will be even as you—longing to break, loose into joy born of the autumn, but held back. Held back by something that we call old age.

Arabs Outlive Eskimo.

While it may be true that the white man loses in intellectual and bodily power in the tropics, Dr. Luigi Sanabon maintains, as a result of recent researches, that the average Arab lives 25 years longer than the average Eskimo; that the coast people of South America are longer lived than the mountain people; that old age is much commoner in the southern countries of Europe than in the northern countries, and that Spain (with a population smaller by 9,000,000) has 401 centenarians to England's 146.

FASHION HINTS



The short coats so popular this season are very becoming to slender figures. The deep braided bands used as trimming tend to emphasize the shortness of coats and narrowness of skirts. Our model also shows the new broad shawl collar.

LITERARY BUG CHASES CUPID

A Kansas City (Kan.) man gave a divorce recently because his wife is so busy writing love letters to the magazines that he had to prepare his own meals and do most of the housework. When the literary bug enters the parlor Cupid slips out of the kitchen door and climbs over the fence.

HEROIC TREATMENT

Little Marjorie, aged four, bumped her head on a key in the front door. She went in the house and put some cold cream on a rag and then went to the door and tied the key up successfully. As she was leaving she said: "I will call in the morning to see how you are."

PILES CURED IN 6 TO 14 DAYS

Your druggist will refund money if PILES OINTMENT fails to cure any case of itching, bleeding or protruding piles in 6 to 14 days.

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YOUR APPETITE EASILY RESTORED

and regulated if you will only begin your meals with a dose of Hostetter's Stomach Bitters. Loss of Appetite is a sure sign of some disturbance of the stomach and bowels, which the Bitters will quickly correct. Therefore, try it this very day. For over 50 years it has been assisting those who suffer from indigestion, Dyspepsia, Constiveness, Colds, Grippe and Malaria, and it will do you good, too. Insist on having Hostetter's.

GOOD THINGS ARE ETERNAL

Bring your children up to be better. Don't let them be any more superstitious than you can help. But at the same time, avoid one horrible, haunting belief that good things can't last. The good things are the only eternal things of the world.

YO CURE A COLD IN ONE DAY

Take LAXATIVE BROMO. Quinine Tablets. Druggists refund money if it fails to cure. K. GROVE'S signature is on each box. 25c.

WHICH SPELLS SUCCESS

Study the world and its progress. Your strength lies in co-operation with them. Study men; leadership consists in knowing how to use them. Public opinion is like an electric line; you cannot buck it in a minute; you cannot guide it when it is going slow; and it can only be controlled by one who is—

Dr. Pierce's Pleasant Pellets regulate and invigorate stomach, liver and bowels. Sugar-coated, tiny granules. Easy to take as candy.

DESERVED IT

A friend of mine had a lot of hens and wanted to raise some chickens, but his hens wouldn't sit on the eggs. So one night he went into the coop, grabbed one of them and put it on the nest and held it there all night. The morning, when the light broke in the place, he found that he had grabbed up the rooster by mistake. He was arrested by the federal authorities for illegal use of the male.

FLOW AHEAD

Pay as little attention to disagreeable things as possible. Flow ahead like a steamer does, rough or smooth, but or shine. To carry your cargo to the make your port is the point.—M. U. Babcock

TRY MURINE EYE REMEDY

for Red, Weak, Watery, Itchy Eyes and Granulated Eyelids. Murine Eye Remedy—Soothes Eye Pain. Buy at All Drug Stores. Murine Eye Remedy, Large Size, 50c. Small Size, 25c. Eye Salve, 50c. Aseptic Tubes, 25c. Eye Drops, 50c. and Eye Advice Free by Mail. Murine Eye Remedy Co., Chicago.

BROOD MARES

Brood mares should, of course, be well sheltered both in summer and winter, but not to the exclusion of plenty of sunlight, fresh air and exercise. Handle them carefully and feed intelligently. Give the mare a minimum of corn and a maximum of protein-bearing feed, such as oats, bran and alfalfa. When she is not working, let her have the run of a pasture or lot, with an open shed to protect her from heat or sudden storms.

Mayor is Poo Bah. The mayor of High Wycombe, England, is not only in business as a land, but is also color sergeant of the territorial, foreman of the fire brigade, vice-president of the football club, a champion marksman, prize singer, amateur actor and critic.

You Can Get Allen's Foot-Powder. Write Allen S. Olmsted, 140 N. 5th St., St. Paul, Minn. It cures itching, sweating, hot swollen, aching feet. It cures new or tight shoes easy. A certain cure for corns, ingrowing nails and bunions. All druggists sell it. 50c. Don't accept any substitutes.

HUMAN NATURE

Pat was being shown an insect by one of his friends who had been removed to the suburbs. He had great interest in all the details, examined everything with great care. Then, as he looked at about a hundred young chickens that had just been hatched, with an awed expression he said: "Human nature is a funny thing after all.—Everybody's."

IF YOUR EYES BOTHER YOU

Get a box of PETTIT'S EYE SALVE. It is the oldest, most successful eye remedy ever made. All druggists or Ross, Buffalo, N. Y.

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