

A Race for a Wife

BY
HAWLEY SMART

CHAPTER IV.

The next day Pearman became excessively enamored of his hopeful son's project, though he did not at all disguise to himself the difficulties that stood in the way of its accomplishment. If he had not had the advantage of such an education as Sam had had, yet he had made a large fortune by trading on the weaknesses of his fellow-men. Those who achieve this, though it may be little to their credit, become more thoroughly acquainted with the springs of the human mind than all the metaphysicians and philosophers who have ever written or dreamed about it. The son might be an astute man enough at his vocation of the turf, but he was a child, compared to his father, when computing to what extent he could persuade, bind, or break men to his own will. The son thought the advantages of such an alliance must be so transparent in a worldly point of view to Harold Denison that he would be a willing coadjutor in the scheme, from the moment it was proposed to him; the father at once foresaw the old family pride that would be up in arms against him the instant he mooted the idea.

But he said to himself, "I have had much to do with Harold Denison, and should know him thoroughly. He is selfish at heart to the core. In all those troublous days of his, when I was settling his affairs, I never knew him dwell upon what the results might be to his wife and daughter. It was ever what he had to give up. He'll scout this proposal with indignation when I first mention it to him; but he'll come round to it in time. As for the girl's that's Sam's affair; but when Denison has once made up his mind to her marrying him, he's as likely a man as I know to turn on the domestic screw heavily. I've seen that oracle worked more than once, and it's generally pretty efficacious. They run away with somebody else afterwards, occasionally, but that's the fault of the husbands' not keeping them within bounds. Yes; I'll ride over and see Denison to-morrow. It won't be a very pleasant job, I doubt; but I am used to that."

The owner of Glinn felt that slight nervous perturbation that invariably attends the call of a large creditor. The noise of the carriage wheels had merely produced a feeling of languid curiosity; but the announcement that Mr. Pearman wanted to see him made the squire's pulse quicken, and it was with an anxiety he was unable to disguise that he welcomed him in his own peculiar slow tones.

"Sit down, Pearman. Take that arm-chair, and make yourself comfortable. I hope to heaven you haven't come to make me the reverse?"

"Not at all, Mr. Denison. My visit is not a business one, though I have something I should like just to talk to you a little about presently. Shocking weather we're having. Bad for the farmers—very, isn't it?"

"You may say that. Nothing we have to sell seems to be worth anything. All farm produce is a drug in the market. How's the Coriander going on? It looks like your gathering a terrible harvest in April at Newmarket, anyhow. The horse is doing well, I suppose?"

"Yes, I believe so. You know, Mr. Denison, I'm getting too old myself to see after such things. I leave all that to Sam; but he tells me the horse will run well for the 'Guineas,' bar accidents."

"Run well? 'Bar accidents?' Why, 'bar accidents,' he must win," cried the ever sanguine Denison. "I never bet now, as you know; but in the old days I should have had a thousand on him."

"Ah, well," said the old lawyer, "there's where it is. You always would believe in certainties in racing. I never myself got further than believing a horse would run well."

"Yes," laughed the squire; "and in consequence you made a fortune while I lost one. I'm afraid, too, it would be the same thing all over again if I could begin once more."

Pearman shot a keen look at him from under his grizzled brows, and thought most assuredly that it would be so, and how very much it would facilitate his present design if the squire was a little involved in that way at present. He of course knew the main part of Harold Denison's entanglements, but even he, though his principal man of business, did not know how bad things really were. It would have given him more confidence to unfold the object of his embassy had he been possessed of such knowledge.

"Well, Pearman," continued the squire, "I am afraid I have no money left to put upon Coriander. Those old days are gone. Yes," said Denison, bitterly; "half-pence are of more account to me now than sovereigns were then. But what is it you want to talk to me about? Nothing to my advantage, I'll be bound."

"I'm afraid not; not but that it might be. But I've never been able, Mr. Denison, to induce you to listen to anything to your own advantage."

"Gad, sir, I can call to mind very few of your propositions that tended that way. A few hundreds to be saved here and there, at the cost of total abandonment of my social position—cases in which the saving was incommensurate with the sacrifice."

"You judge me hardly, Mr. Denison. On the occasions to which you allude,

pardon me if I say that it was on overstrained delicacy on your part which prevented matters being brought to a more satisfactory conclusion. It is the way with you all," muttered the old lawyer, musingly. "You forget these scruples when they might be of use to you, and hamper us, who have to put your affairs straight, with them afterwards."

"A Denison of Glinn, sir, is not to be included in the same category as a bankrupt trader, I presume," remarked the squire, haughtily.

"No; but it would be better both for him and his creditors if it could be so. You repudiate the idea of all compromise, and say, 'In time, everybody shall be paid in full.' The result is, you never get clear, and the creditors are never satisfied."

"But they will be in time," returned Harold Denison; and the uncertain tones in which he uttered the words were a stringent commentary on his previous speech.

"It's just about that," said Pearman, "that I'm wishing to talk to you now. It's a cruel pity that a fine old property like Glinn should be broken up. A good deal of it, you see, has fallen into my hands."

"You need not remind me of that," interrupted Harold Denison; "I am quite aware of the price I am paying for the follies of my younger days."

"It is not likely I should recall such disagreeable facts to your memory, if I had not something to propose with regard to their being to a considerable extent wiped out. You will do me the justice, I think, Mr. Denison, to admit that since I have had the honor of being your pecuniary adviser, I have never held bit- ters to your lips, when I deemed anything more palatable would meet the exigencies of the case?"

The squire nodded assent. He certainly had a confused idea that Pearman had made a pretty good thing out of the adjustment of his affairs.

"Now," continued the attorney, "I see a way in which you may be relieved from all immediate embarrassment connected with money matters, and by which Miss Denison may be the eventual mistress of Glinn in its original integrity."

Denison started. To be released from the harassing strain that lies on him now with regard to pounds, shillings and pence—that the old property should once more cumulate in his daughter—opened a gorgeous prospect to his eyes. It was a piece of good fortune that he had never dreamed of. But he knew his man by this time well. What was the price he was to pay for this? He said nothing, but inwardly his brain was busy in vain conjecture as to what Pearman would demand as his guerdon for producing such a transformation scene. The idea of that worthy solicitor ever doing anything without an ulterior motive was one he never entertained for an instant. What would he want? What did he mean?

CHAPTER V.

A silence of some five minutes ensued between the two men; the old lawyer was anxious that the tempting bait he held out should be thoroughly gorged before he was called upon to state upon what terms all this might be brought about. His best experience of men told him that there was no such mistake in life as hurrying—an axiom most of us learn, though generally too late but to derive minor advantages therefrom.

"This sounds too good to be true, Pearman," at length remarked the squire, "if it can be done, you must have some infernal rider to the proposition, that it is hardly possible I should assent to."

"It is not likely that this can be brought about without some valuable assistance from yourself," rejoined the solicitor. "But will you bear steadfastly in your mind the great advantages that will accrue immediately to yourself, and ultimately to Miss Denison? Will you, moreover, be good enough to hear me patiently to the end?"

The squire nodded an impatient assent.

"You must, of course, be quite aware that now Miss Denison has arrived at a marriageable age, her great personal attractions have claimed the attention of a good many young men in the county."

The attorney paused, but his auditor looked grimly at the fire, and expressed his feelings by neither word nor gesture.

"Well, a young gentleman of considerable property, and still better expectations, who has had the privilege of meeting Miss Denison, is so struck with her charms and accomplishments that he has commissioned me to ask your permission to try whether he cannot succeed in inducing her to accept him as a husband. On the point of family he is quite aware that he has no pretensions to Miss Denison's hand; but as regards income, I think there would be nothing to be desired."

"Who do you mean?" broke in the squire. "Has Maude given him any encouragement that you come with this story to me?"

"My dear sir, his acquaintance with Miss Denison is far too slight for anything of that kind ever to have been even thought of on his part. He is merely anxious to have your permission to try his luck. Without that, believe me, he would never dare to aspire to your daughter's hand."

All this show of deference induced the squire to listen to the proposition, at all events, quietly. Who on earth Pearman could have in his eye he had no idea. That he could mean his son all this time never entered Harold Denison's head. He certainly knew he had a son, but, mixing so little as he did in the county now, he had barely seen him, nor had he, but at odd times, even heard of him.

"But who is it, man? Let's know the name of this bashful suitor? It's a quality one sees little enough of in these days."

"My son, Mr. Denison, is the gentleman who solicits your permission to do his best to win your daughter."

"Your son! Why?"—and here the squire stopped, perfectly thunderstruck. It was a levelling age, he knew; that the tide of democracy was at the flood, he was aware; that our cherished institutions were looked on with disdain, that there were people who saw no virtue in coronets, and thought an Established Church a worn-out institution that it would be as well to do away with, he had heard; but that the son of a confounded money-lending attorney should presume to dream of mating with a Denison of Glinn he had never contemplated. For a few minutes he was literally speechless; then all the pride of race surged up. He came of a line of whom it had been often said that their tongues were as sharp and ready as their swords.

"Excuse me," he remarked; "I was not aware that the times were so far advanced that our daughters were regarded as salable commodities out of their own class of life. I was not aware that the social gap between myself and my solicitor was so effectually bridged over. Your son, sir, will have to take his chance with the young man from the butcher's, and Mr. Muffatee, who keeps the draper's establishment in Xminster. I shall not presume to influence Miss Denison in her choice."

Old Pearman had many times in the course of his career moralized upon the weakness of losing one's temper about anything, but the squire's sneer brought the blood to his pale temples.

"You take a high hand, sir—a high hand. I asked you to listen to me patiently, and you insult me. I spoke to you humbly enough to start with; but I tell you now that wealth chooses its mate from blood in these days, and that many as well-born as Miss Denison have married not a bit better lineage than mine."

"Perhaps so. People forget themselves in all classes, and forfeit their social status; but it's getting time for money grubbers to learn one thing, and that is—that possession of all the gold in California does not constitute a gentleman, or entitle a man to claim alliance with gentle blood."

The old solicitor's lips quivered, and his lean fingers played nervously with his watch chain, as he replied:

"I did not come here to argue our mutual social position. I came here to afford an embarrassed man, for whom I have a sincere regard, in spite of all the hard names he heaps upon me, an opportunity of freeing himself from those entanglements. I advanced a proposition which gave him a chance of in some way repairing the evil that the early follies of his youth had entailed on his child, destined to pay her full share of such indiscretions. The days of such prejudices are past, I tell you, Mr. Denison; and once more I ask you not to give me an answer now, but to reflect upon the proposal I have made to you."

"You do us too much honor, Mr. Pearman. Permit me to observe that I must decline all further consideration of the subject. I am perfectly convinced the alliance you propose with such a delicious oblivion of all status of society would be extremely unsuitable. Allow me to make Miss Denison's acknowledgments for the distinction you would have conferred upon her, and to ring for your carriage."

"Very good, sir—very good," cried the old attorney, as he rose in his wrath; "the time will come, maybe, when you'll think that old Sam Pearman would have been a good man to have had at your back. I say nothing, Mr. Denison; but you'll find that you have not made many greater mistakes in your career than this morning's work." And, muttering to himself, the late old gentleman left the room.

"I wonder what the world is coming to," muttered Harold Denison. "The idea of a child of mine marrying the son of a money-lending solicitor!"

Then his thoughts reverted to that ten thousand pound mortgage, and the angry words of the old man at parting, and he reflected, moodily, that there was little likelihood of much time being granted ament the payment of the interest in future; indeed, it was more than probable that Pearman, in his anger, would call in his money. All which considerations harassed Harold Denison's mind not a little, and he thought, if it had to be done again, he would reject the old lawyer's proposal with rather more courtesy.

(To be continued.)

A Valuable Clev.

A woman entered a police station in Holland and asked the officer in charge to have the canals dragged.

"My husband has been threatening for some time to drown himself," she explained, "and he's been missing now for two days."

"Anything peculiar about him by which he can be recognized?" asked the officer, preparing to fill out a description blank.

For several moments the woman seemed to be searching her memory. Suddenly her face brightened.

"Why, yes, sir. He's deaf."—Everybody's.

Strenuous Hint.

Husband—Let me see, how long has it been since Uncle John was here? Wife—Oh, it must be several years. He was here the week after I got my last new bonnet.



Novelty for Kitchen Use.

A new piece of kitchen furniture has recently been invented and is being shown, which combines the functions of the fruit press and colander with which it will be found possible to greatly simplify many of the culinary tasks. It is designed for the removal of seeds and skins from COLANDER AND PRESS grapes, tomatoes and apples, slicing potatoes, extracting juices from fruit, smoothing laundry and a hundred other uses.

Marble Cake.

Light—One cup of sugar, half a cup each of butter and milk, the whites of three eggs, two cups of flour, one and a half teaspoons of baking powder.

Dark—Half a cup each of brown sugar and molasses, one-fourth cup each of butter and milk, two cups of flour, the yolks of three eggs, one and one-half teaspoons of baking powder, three teaspoons of ground mixed spices. Put the batter into the tin in alternative layers.

Corn Batter Bread.

Sift the corn meal and to a teaspoonful of it put in twice the quantity of sweet milk. One pint is a good measurement. Beat in two eggs, although you can get along with one; add half a teaspoonful of salt, and to this add the milk and meal gradually until everything is well blended. A baking dish should be ready for the batter and placed in a hot oven. It should be ready to serve in half an hour.

Omelets.

Beat two eggs, add two cups of milk, two level teaspoonfuls of corn starch, a pinch of salt, and some minced parsley. Heat the frying pan and grease it well with butter. Pour in just enough of the mixture to cover the surface of the pan, supposing your pan to be small. When the omelet has become set, roll over and serve, garnished with parsley. Pour in another until all the mixture is cooked.

Electrical Correction.

A novel cure for naughtiness and general perverseness is advocated by Dr. Elbert Landone, a noted authority on child culture. He maintains that a few shocks of electricity, judiciously applied, are the most effective means of punishment. In one instance a child of 5 years was effectually cured of obstinacy after three days' treatment by this means.

Savory Potatoes and Onions.

Layers of thinly sliced raw potatoes alternately with layers of thinly sliced onion, onion on top to prevent the potato from turning brown. Season each layer. Fill one-fourth of the baking dish with water. Put a tablespoonful of nice pork dripping in little dabs all over the top. Cover and bake for thirty minutes.

Cocoanut Candy.

Grate the meat of a cocoanut and have ready two pounds of granulated sugar and the beaten whites of two eggs, also the milk of the cocoanut. Mix them all together and make into small cakes. In a short time the candy will be sufficiently dry to eat.

Making Soap.

A correspondent asks how to make soap from waste fat that accumulates in housekeeping. The commonest and easiest method is to buy a box of the brands of concentrated lye and follow the printed directions on the label.

Apple Pudding.

One pound of baked apples strained, six ounces of butter added while hot, one-half pound of sugar, the rind and juice of two lemons. When cold add six eggs well beaten and bake in a rich crust.

Color Blindness.

About five persons in every hundred are said to be affected with color blindness, if only to a slight degree. Of the sexes, fifty men are afflicted to every four women.

Short Suggestions.

Scaling fish is easier if first dipped in boiling water.

Do not put turnips on to cook in large pieces. It only wastes fuel.

A little kerosene added to the wash water is said to make the clothes extra white.

Apples cored for baking are delicious filled with orange marmalade and a little butter and sugar.

SOMETHING FOR EVERYBODY

Sixty languages are spoken in Russia.

The Norwegian army includes a corps on skates.

England's food importations average about \$16 for each inhabitant.

With all its possessions considered, there are six colored persons to every white in the British empire.

The first alarm of fire by an electric telegraph system was given at 8:30 p. m. April 29, 1852, in Boston.

Street sweepers of Chicago and Boston carry a tiny electric lamp on their caps to keep from being run over.

Stockholm, Christiania, Berlin and London in the order named have the lowest death rates of all the cities of Europe.

Of the races of the world, 600,000,000 are white, 700,000,000 yellow, 215,000,000 black, 35,000,000 brown or Malayan, and 15,000,000 red, or American Indians.

The first application of electric heating for household use was the electric flatiron. Now there are hundreds of thousands of electric flatirons in use in private homes and laundries.

Experiments made in Germany prove that the germs of cholera or typhoid may endanger not only those who live below stream, but also those above the polluted point, as fish carry the germs upstream.

The first rotary converted in America, as well as the largest, was built by the General Electric Company. These machines are used to change alternating current into direct current for street railway service.

Rhodes, the city of the Colossus, still survives, a medieval city in all its defensive war gear of tower and curtain and keep. It is the city which the Knights of St. John erected in the midst of the Byzantines, after being driven out of Jerusalem in the early fourteenth century.

Josiah Quincy, the prominent Boston politician, was walking near the city hall, when he heard a laborer accost another thus: "That's Josiah Quincy." "An' who's Josiah Quincy?" the other asked. "I never see such ignorance," rejoined the other. "He's the grandson of the statue you see in the yard."

A sailor enters a livery stable to hire a horse for the day, to take some friends into the country. The proprietor has one brought out for inspection, and begins: "There's a beauty for you! Small head, clean legs, short back—" "Short back be blowed! We want one with a long back. It's to carry nine."

Edward Bulwer Lytton Dickens, the youngest son of one great novelist and godson of another, has lost his seat in the Parliament of New South Wales, Australia, through the discovery of rich silver mines at Broken Hills, a thousand miles northwest of Sydney. The new-comers, miners, elected a labor candidate.

Two French-Canadians were talking. "Ah, Antonia," one of them exclaimed, "see you 'ave h'only been at dees wedding of Pierre Coubertin an' Emille La Roche you shall nevaire forget heem. So gentil! So mooch luxury! Hevery one so 'appy an' so grand an' fine. Theenk of eet, Antoine! Hevery one wear de Prince h'Albert pants an' dreenk de real ginger ale!"

Larger than Niagara is the cataract of the Igazu falls, almost at the intersection of the three frontiers of Paraguay, Brazil and the Argentine Republic. The river takes its name from a Spanish word meaning great waters. Few sightseers ever catch a glimpse of Igazu falls because it takes six days to make the picturesque journey of about 1,250 miles from Buenos Aires.

Goats, more than any other thing, have assisted the rural inhabitants of Asia Minor to destroy the magnificent forests which once extended from Smyrna through to Koula, the ancient capital of Karamania. Not only have the peasants and nomads destroyed the timber for the sake of firewood, but they destroyed it also in order that their goats might obtain suitable pasture. And the goats in their turn prevented the new shoots ever after from replacing the trees which had been cut down.

One of the leading comedians of the Frankfurt Theater, in Germany, the other evening went to the director and asked for an advance on his week's salary. The books showed that the whole amount had already been drawn and the director said "No." "Very good," said the actor, "then I shall refuse to go on to-night." The director saw that it was dangerously near curtain time and reluctantly gave the actor the amount asked for, but said: "Remember, sir, this is nothing short of extortion, and a cowardly one at that." "Not a all, Herr Director," said the actor, stuffing the money in his pocket, "my name is not on the bill for to-night, anyway."