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Love on the Nancy B.

By COLIN S. COLLINS

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The Nancy B. fresh in the glory of new paint and bright brass work strained idly at her moorings. From the wharf her owner regarded her with pride.

The Nancy B. was not a trim yacht. There were gaudy pictures upon her sides, and altogether she looked like anything but the staunch little river craft that slid by her in the stream.

"Best little theater on the two rivers," declared her owner proudly. "Why, she can seat 700 and stand up another 300. Got a good company, too; cleverest little sourette. Why, say!"

"Good morning, Mr. Branscome," said a pleasant voice at his elbow. Branscome jumped and turned, but the girl passed on, with a smile that was pleasant, but not too familiar. She was the ingenue, Blanche Montague.

There were a dozen in Branscome's company, good players who preferred



AT LAST, WITH ONE DESPERATE EFFORT, HE TURNED THE ARM BACK.

the easy work of a floating theater to the more strenuous life of "the road," but to the manager personally only one member of the company counted, the dainty little woman who played the ingenue roles in the rather lurid plays which formed the repertory of the Branscome stock company.

Being a strict disciplinarian, Branscome gave no outward evidence of his love, and none of the company, with the exception of Miss Montague, whose real name was Blanche Blake, ever dreamed that the hard hearted, brusque manager had fallen a victim to Cupid's wiles.

As for Miss Montague, the philosophy of life was summed up in the quotation, "Men were deceivers ever," and she had heard that the Nancy B. was named after Branscome's wife. Somehow she could not help being attracted to the big hearted, outspoken giant, but there ever rankled the memory of his letter—the only love letter he had ever written—and the side comments of the players about his wife. They had come almost simultaneously.

Branscome soon saw that his attentions were unwelcome, and, being at heart a gentleman, he desisted from any further attempt to woo her. He had no idea of the rumor that the boat was named after his wife, and, being keenly aware of his lack of polish, he supposed that his rejection was due to this cause.

Meanwhile Miss Montague showed a preference for the society of the leading man, Jim Burrows, and Branscome passed sleepless nights wondering how he could warn her of the actor's real character without making it appear that jealousy was the motive of his remonstrance.

So they drifted down the Ohio, passing into the Mississippi at Cairo just as the days began to turn cool. Branscome had played the route a dozen seasons in an old boat and knew just how to time his tour. They reached the lower river just as the cotton, sugar and rice began to weigh the down boats, and money was plentiful.

Branscome would gladly have discharged Burrows to save Blanche, but Burrows had an ironclad two years' contract without a canceling clause. Usually two weeks' notice might be given on either side, and Branscome groaned when he remembered that it was he, thinking only of the leading man's popularity, who had urged and finally had carried the omission of the cancellation clause.

Branscome strove to win Blanche's confidence, with the result that she cultivated Burrows all the more assiduously.

They were about thirty miles below Vicksburg, and Branscome had about decided to let Burrows go, no matter what the consequences, when fate solved the problem for him. It was their custom to tie up at a town for several days, avoiding the cities where there were permanent theaters. The company could then play to a profit three or four nights.

At this particular landing a professional gambler had been driving a brisk business, and, with well lined pockets, sought to attract Miss Montague's attention when she made little trips to the postoffice and general store. Her disdain had been noted by the

townspeople, and, with the memory on their poker losses still fresh, they were disposed to twit him upon his lack of success.

Stung by their taunts, he bet heavily that the little actress would give him a kiss before the boat dropped down the river, and by the last night of the engagement he stood to lose several hundred dollars more than he had taken from the local gamblers.

Desperate at his lack of success, he began drinking and arrived at the boat just sober enough to pass the door. During the first act the fumes of the liquor mounted to his head, and when in the second act Blanche Montague came out in short skirts to do her imitation of a child he sprang to his feet and loudly commanded her to come and kiss him.

Paralyzed by fear, she was unable to move. The gambler, before the attendants could interfere, sprang upon the stage, wildly waving a huge bowie knife. At sight of it Burrows retreated to the back of the stage and slipped into the darkness of the deck.

The audience was in a wild commotion and, panic stricken, made for the doors, preventing the boat people from reaching the stage. Suddenly Branscome darted from the wings and without a moment's hesitation grappled with the gambler, now crazed with excitement. Several times the knife slashed viciously, but at last with one desperate effort Branscome turned the arm back, there was a snap, and the knife fell from the nerveless hand, which dropped limply to the gambler's side.

Sobered by the pain of a broken arm, the gambler suffered himself to be led away, and Branscome fell to the stage exhausted from loss of blood, which poured from the ugly but not dangerous wounds he had sustained.

When he regained consciousness he was in the bunk of his own cabin, neatly bandaged, and Blanche was holding a glass of brandy and water to his lips.

"I didn't let him," he exclaimed. "Where'd Burrows go?"

"He ran away, the coward!" cried the indignant Miss Montague.

"Too bad he disappointed you," said Branscome feebly. "But it's like him. He's got a yellow streak clear through."

Miss Montague's face clearly indicated her feelings upon the subject, and a wave of satisfaction swept over Branscome. Her eyes were open anyhow.

"Don't you think your wife ought to know?" she asked.

"Wife!" he echoed. "What wife?"

"Yours," she persisted. "The one the boat's named after."

"Never had one," said Branscome.

"The boat's named after the sweetest old lady in Ohio, Nancy Black, my mother."

"They told me it was your wife," she cried in surprise.

"Is that why you didn't even answer my letter?" he demanded, half rising from the bunk.

Gently she forced him back. "You mustn't come to me. I— I ought to come to you, because I was so foolish. And she did—for better or worse—as soon as Branscome was strong enough to stand up before a parson.

Preferred Jail to Scales.

A burglar who entered a Harlem house recently suffered a unique form of punishment. It happened that the family he had come to rob were inconveniently early risers, and before he had half finished his work he heard a step on the stairs. Quickly gathering up his booty, he slipped behind the piano, intending to make good his escape as soon as opportunity offered.

But opportunity did not offer, for it appeared that the step he had heard was that of one of the daughters of the house, who had come down to the parlor for a couple of hours' piano practice before breakfast. When she had finished another daughter was standing ready to occupy the stool for another two hours. Next followed the music lesson of each of the young ladies in turn. After these lessons were over their brother's violin teacher appeared and, seating herself at the piano, began his accompaniment. But this was too much. The burglar rushed from his hiding place.

"For heaven's sake, have me arrested!" he implored. "At least there are no pianos in jail!"—New York Press.

In the Natural Way.

During a session of the supreme court of Maine at Augusta a tedious and complicated real estate case had pretty nearly worn out the patience of the counsel on both sides. One of the lawyers engaged was Fred A. Appleton, whose fame as a wit was widespread.

Opposing him was a lawyer of pompous mien and much avoidances, who kept making blunder after blunder until even the judge became irritated. After making a particularly aggravating error he said:

"I beg your honor's pardon; that was another mistake. I seem to be inoculated with dullness today."

"Inoculated, brother?" said Mr. Appleton. "I thought you had it in the natural way."

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FACTS ABOUT ASTORIA AND ITS INDUSTRIES

Astoria today is a bustling, cosmopolitan city of 15,000 people. Its population represents almost every nationality on earth, in consequence of which it is a lively center of business activity. Its advantageous location at the mouth of the great Columbia river makes it the trade mart of the vast productive region of northwestern Oregon and southwestern Washington, and it is the supply point for fully 25,000 people. It is Oregon's second city in size and importance.

The estimate of population here given is conservative. The 1900 government census accredited the city with about 9000 people, but the launching of new enterprises, together with the natural growth, has added many hundreds to the population in the past five years. Failure to develop local resources has resulted in slow growth, but a new era of commercial activity is dawning and the prospects for the city's future are very bright.

On its magnificent location and wonderful natural advantages Astoria bases its expectations of future greatness. Situated on the only fresh-water harbor of importance in the world, with the broad ocean but 10 miles from its wharves, it enjoys marked advantages as a shipping center. The gravity route of the Columbia river is nature's highway for the great inland empire, the immense product of which must be exported from the ocean port. At Astoria the largest ships may find safe moorings, and its harbor will accommodate all the shipping that may ever come to the northwest coast. It is pre-eminently the Pacific slope port, and must soon receive from the transcontinental railroads the recognition which its advantages justify, as has New York on the Atlantic coast.

Development of the lumbering industry will alone make Astoria great. There are 75,000,000,000 feet of timber standing in the forests near the city. This vast timber supply is great enough to keep in steady operation for 20 years 100 large mills, and to afford employment during that period to 15,000 persons in the manufacturing plants, to say nothing of the army of workmen that would be employed in the forests. The first steps towards the development of lumbering have now been taken, and four mills, with a daily output exceeding 300,000 feet, are in operation. The forests are only a short distance from the city, and the cost of

bringing logs to Astoria is light, marking this a most desirable point for the manufacturer of lumber. The advantages offered by this city as a milling point are beginning to attract the attention of millmen who desire to operate economically, and before long Astoria will rank as the largest lumbering producing port on the Pacific coast.

The growth of the salmon industry will likewise prove of great benefit to Astoria. By means of artificial propagation, this magnificent business has come to stay. It will be built up, within a few years, to four times its present magnitude, and will then mean more than \$10,000,000 annually to the city. Several Alaskan salmon canneries are owned and operated here and each year bring large sums to their home office. The possibilities of Astoria as a fishing port or center in other lines of fishing industries are also of great importance, and the attention of capitalists is called to this city as a deep-sea fishing center; also to the great runs of genuine French salmon which come into the river by the hundreds of billions every year.

The lower Columbia river district, with its mild climate, offers unsurpassed inducements to dairymen, farmers and small-fruit growers. While small-fruit growing has not been extensively engaged in, those who have followed it have been most successful, and one enterprising grower is now harvesting two strawberry crops a year—the only instance of the kind known in this section of the country. Settlement of the productive lands of the county will work wonders for the city and assist materially in its up-building.

There are many other resources which will combine to bring about the future greatness of Astoria. Here are to be found opportunities for men in every walk of life—capitalists, small investors, farmer, dairymen, fruit-grower and laborer. This new country, where fortunes await the energetic, offers to those seeking location the best advantages of any section of the west.

In every respect Astoria is metropolitan. It enjoys splendid facilities of all kinds, is a pleasure-loving city and thoroughly up-to-date. Thousands of strangers visit Astoria every month, and during the summer season it is the Mecca of those who live in the interior. It has its different quarters, like the larger cities, and, best of

all, it is the healthiest spot on earth.

Astoria wants more people. Its natural resources will easily support from 250,000 to 500,000 population, yet there are only 15,000 people here to reap the benefits that nature has so generously placed at their disposal. The homeseeker will find no better place to locate, and few equal places. Labor is always in demand, at the highest wages, and there is much encouragement for the man who wishes to engage in business. Strangers often remark the uniform courtesy of the people and the general effort on the part of Astorians to make matters pleasant for visitors. The home-seeker or investor who fails to visit Astoria will make a great mistake, for no other community in the Pacific northwest offers such opportunities as the lower Columbia river district.

Astoria has a \$300,000 gravity water system, a paid fire department, first-class street car service, gas and electric lighting systems, free public library, unexcelled transportation facilities, complete school system, 40 civic societies, three daily and six weekly newspapers, excellent telegraph and telephone service, three banks carrying deposits of about \$2,000,000, two express offices, first-class theaters, 14 churches, labor unions representing every branch of trade, two energetic commercial organizations, two social clubs, admirably conducted hospital, miles of manufacturing sites, plenty of fine residence and business property; is the only fresh-water seaport on the Pacific coast; is situated at the mouth of a river that drains an empire; has a harbor large enough to accommodate the combined shipping of the Pacific coast; has a trunk-line railroad connecting it with four transcontinental railroads; is the uttermost railroad extension point on the American continent; is 200 miles nearer Yokohama and other oriental ports than any other Pacific coast port; is 160 miles nearer the Cape Nome mining country than any other port on the Pacific coast; is the salmon shipping center of the world; is the center of one of the greatest possible dairy industries that the country today possesses.

It is the only place where the royal chinook salmon is packed; has substantial public and business buildings, factories and handsome residences.

Astoria's School System. Astoria's school system is not surpassed by that of any other city of the size in the west. At present there

are six large school buildings here. The schools are conveniently located in all sections of the city, and in every respect are modern in their appointments. Well-appointed schools are to be found throughout the county, and children living on farms and in villages enjoy educational advantages almost equal to those afforded city children.

Astoria's Water System. Astoria possesses a \$300,000 gravity water system, which is not equalled in equipment by any other system in the Pacific northwest. The water works are operated by the municipal government as represented by the water commission, and constitute the city's most valuable asset. The water is brought from Bear creek, about 10 miles distant, which has its source in the mountains.

The reservoir is situated on the plateau back of the city, where the supply is regulated. The water system of Astoria is extensive enough to supply the needs of 100,000 people, besides affording fire protection to all parts of the city.

The Lumbering Industry. The mouth of the Columbia river has the greatest body of timber tributary and available of any point in the world.

The lumbering business is the largest in the Pacific northwest; it outranks in value of product any other line. Production of wheat is a close second, being worth \$17,000,000 a year, while the value of the lumber output is \$18,000,000. Coal, gold and silver, fruit, cattle and sheep, wool and fish, all of which are produced in great abundance, fall far below, nor hardly equal in the aggregate, the wealth derived from the forests. The town, therefore, that commands the greatest resources available of fine timber must have a great outlook. Demand for timber will not decrease, but become greater with every year.

The timber trees of the forest tributary to Astoria are, in order of quality: Douglas fir, commercially known as Oregon pine; hemlock, spruce and cedar. There are also soft, or birdseye, maple, vine maple, alder, wild cherry, willow, etc.

mountains, but little near Astoria. The spruce, of the tideland species, is found only on the west slopes of the coast mountains. It attains a diameter varying from about an average of six feet to 16 or 17; and specimens 57 and 63 feet each in girth have been measured—19 to 21 feet in diameter. Hemlock occurs as a mixed or smaller growth with fir and spruce, trees seldom being of great height, although often very large. Yet cedar is found mixed with the other timbers, the trees seldom being of greater height, although often very large. Yet cedar is not plentiful in this section. In general estimates of timber production 29,000 acres to the acre are allowed. Single acres have been known to produce ten times this amount. Quarter sections of timberland on the market are usually estimated at 3,000,000 to 8,000,000 feet each, board measure.

Mills and Manufacturing. Although manufacturing is as yet in its infancy in Astoria, more than 4000 persons are employed in the institutions now doing business here. The salmon industry employs by far the greatest number of persons, but the seasons extend over a period of only about six months, and at other times those engaging in it follow other lines of pursuit. The lumbering industry, including box factories, barrel factories, etc., is rapidly assuming proportions, and will, within a few years, outrank the fishing interests.

Astoria wants more manufacturing concerns, and offers the very best inducements to capitalists. Here are to be found unexcelled sites, with the advantage of both rail and water connections, and the intending investor in western properties should look over the Astoria situation. Sites can be secured at very low prices.

More than \$3,000,000 is invested in manufacturing plants here, while the value of the yearly product exceeds \$5,500,000. In all, 4341 persons are employed, receiving annual wages that aggregate \$2,059,500.

Salmon Industry. Astoria owes its existence largely to the great salmon industry of which it is the center. Year after year the Columbia river has given up its wealth of fish, and in the past 25 years has yielded \$75,000,000, nearly all of which has been placed in circulation in this city. Where other crops have failed, the salmon supply has maintained its average of production, and in this respect can be classed as one of Oregon's

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