

Between Two Fires

By ANTHONY HOPE

"A wise man will make more opportunities than he finds." —Francis Bacon.

CHAPTER XIII.—(Continued.)
"How was he wounded?" I asked. "Tell me what the Colonel did to him, and he shot."

"Yes, sir. The Colonel told us Mr. Carr was to be kept at the ranch over night; wasn't to leave it alive, sir, he said. Well, up to yesterday it was all right and pleasant. Mr. Carr wasn't very well, and the doses the Colonel gave him didn't seem to make him any better—quite the contrary. But yesterday afternoon he got rampaging—would go, anyhow, ill or well! So he got up and dressed. We'd taken all his weapons from him, sir, and when he came down dressed, and asked for his horse, we told him he couldn't go. Well, he just said, 'Get out of the light, I tell you,' and began walking toward the hall door. I don't mind saying we were rather put about, sir. We didn't care to shoot him as he stood, and it's my belief we'd have let him pass; but just as he was going out, in comes the Colonel. 'Hullo, what's this, Johnny?' says he. 'You've got some scheme on,' said Carr. 'I believe you've been drugging me. Out of the way, Mr. Carr, or I'll brain you.' 'Where are you going?' says the Colonel. 'To Whittingham, to the President's,' said he. 'Not to-day,' says the Colonel. 'Come, be reasonable, Johnny. You'll be all right to-morrow.' 'Colonel McGreggor,' says he, 'I'm unarmed, and you've got a revolver. You can shoot me if you like, but unless you do, I'm going out. You've been playing some dodge on me, and you shall pay for it.' With that he rushed straight at the Colonel. The Colonel, he stepped on one side and let him pass. Then he went after him to the door, waited till he was about fifteen yards off, then up with his revolver, as cool as you like, and shot him clean as a sixpence in the right leg. Down came Mr. Carr; he lay there a minute or two, and then he fainted. 'Pick him up, dress his wound, and put him to bed,' says the Colonel. Well, sir, it was only a flesh wound, so we soon got him comfortable, and there he lay all night."

"How did he get away to-day?"
"We were all out, sir—went over to Mr. Carr's place to borrow his horse. Well, when we'd got the horses, we rode round outside the town, and came into the road between here and the Colonel's. Ten horses we'd got, and we went there to give the ten men who were patrolling the road the fresh horses. We heard from them that no one had come along. When we got home, he'd been gone two hours."

"How did he manage it?"
"A woman, sir," said my warrior, with supreme disgust. "Gave her ten dollars to undo the front door, and then he was off! He didn't go to the stables to get a horse, so he was forced to limp away on his game leg. A plucky one he is, too," he concluded.

"Poor old Johnny!" said I. "You didn't go after him?"

"No time, sir. Couldn't tire the horses. Besides, when he'd once got home, he's got a dozen men there, and they'd have kept us all night. Well, sir, I must be off. Any answer for the Colonel? He'll be outside the Golden House by eleven, sir, and Mr. Carr won't get in if he comes after that."

"Tell him to rely on me," I answered. But for all that I didn't mean to shoot Johnny on sight."

So, much perturbed in spirit, I set off to the barracks, wondering when Johnny would get to Whittingham, and whether he would fall into the Colonel's hands outside the Golden House. It struck me as unpleasantly probable that he might come and spoil the harmony of my evening; if he came there first, the conspiracy would probably lose my aid at an early moment. What would happen to me I didn't know. But, as I took off my coat in the lobby, I bent down as if to tie a shoestring, and had one more look at my revolver.

CHAPTER XIV.

I shall never forget that supper as long as I live. Considered merely as a social gathering it would be memorable enough, for I never before or since sat at meat with ten such queer customers as my hosts of that evening. The officers of the Aureatland army were a very mixed lot—two or three Spanish Americans, three or four Brazilians, and the balance Americans of the type of their countrymen are least proud of. If there was an honest man among them he sedulously concealed his title to distinction. All this might have passed from my memory, or blended in a subdued harmony with my general impression of Aureatland; but the peculiar position in which I stood gave to my mind an unusual activity of perception. Among this band of careless revellers I sat vigilant, restless and impatient; feeling to take a leading part in their hilarity. I was sober, collected, and alert to my very finger tips. I anxiously watched their bearing and expression. I led them on to speak of the President, rejoicing when I elicited open murmurs and covert threats at his base ingratitude to the men on whose support his power rested. They had not been paid for six months, and were ripe for any mischief. I was more than once tempted to forestall the Colonel and begin the revolution on my own account, only my inability to produce before their eyes any arguments of the sort they would listen to restrained me.

Eleven o'clock had come and gone. The Senior Captain had proposed the President's health. It was received in sullen silence: I was the only man who honored it by rising from his seat.

The Major had proposed the army, and they had responded to their noble selves. A young man of weak expression and quavering legs had proposed, "The commerce of Aureatland," coupled with the name of Mr. John Martin, in laudatory but incoherent terms, and I was on my legs replying. Oh, that speech of mine! For discursiveness, for repetition, for sheer inanity, I suppose it has never been equaled. I drowned steadily away; as I went on the audience paid less and less attention. It was past twelve. The

well of my eloquence was running drier and drier, and yet no sound outside! I wondered how long they would stand it, and how long I could stand in. At 12:15 I began my peroration. Hardly had I done so, when one of the young men started in a gentle voice a dirge. One by one they took it up, till the rising tide of voices drowned my fervent periods. Perforce I stopped. They were all on their feet now. Did they mean to break up? In despair at the idea I lifted up my voice, loud and distinct, in a verse of the composition, and seizing my neighbor's hand began to move slowly round the table. The move was successful. Each man followed suit, and the whole party, kicking back their chairs, revolved with lurching steps.

The room was thick with smoke. Mechanically I led the chorus, straining every nerve to hear a sound from outside. I was growing dizzy with the movement, and, overwrought with the strain on my nerves, I knew a few minutes more would be the limit of endurance, when at last I heard a loud shout and tumult of voices. "What's that?" exclaimed the Major, in thick tones, pausing as he spoke.

I dropped his hand, and seizing my revolver, said:

"Some row in barracks, Major. Let 'em alone."

"As I must go," he said, "Character—Aureatland—army—at stake."

"Set a thief to catch a thief, eh, Major?" said I.

"What do you mean, sir?" he stammered. "Let me go."

"If you move, I shoot, Major," said I, bringing out my weapon. I never saw greater astonishment on human countenance. He cried:

"Hill, stop him—he's mad—he's going to shoot!"

A shout of laughter rose from the crew around us, for they felt exquisite appreciation of my supposed joke.

"Right you are, Martin," cried one. "Keep him quiet. We won't go home till morning!"

The Major turned to the window. It was a moonlight night, and as I looked with him I saw the courtyard full of soldiers. Who was in command? The answer to that meant much to me. The sight somewhat sobered the Major.

"A mutiny!" he cried. "The soldiers have risen!"

"Go to bed," said the junior ensign.

"Look out of window!" he cried.

They all staggered to the window. As the soldiers saw them, they raised a shout. I could not distinguish whether it was a greeting or a threat. They took it as the latter, and turned to the door.

"Stop!" I cried. "I shoot the first man who opens the door."

In wonder they turned on me. I stood facing them, revolver in hand. They waited huddled together for an instant, then made a rush at me; I fired, but missed. I had a vision of a poised goblet; a second later, the missile caught me in the chest, and hurled me back against the wall. As I fell I dropped my weapon, and they were upon me. I thought it was all over; but as they surged round, in the madness of anger, I looked through their ranks, saw the door open and a crowd of men rush in. Who was at their head? It was the Colonel, and his voice rose high above the tumult:

"Order, gentlemen, order!" Then to his men he added:

"Each mark your man, and two of you bring Mr. Martin here."

I was saved. To explain how, I must explain what had been happening at the Golden House, and how the night attack had fared.

CHAPTER XV.

It is a sad necessity that compels us to pry into the weaknesses of our fellow-creatures, and see to turn them to our own profit. I am not philosopher enough to say whether this course of conduct derives any justification from its universality, but in the region of practice I have never hesitated to place myself on a moral level with those with whom I had to deal. I felt, therefore, very little scruple in making use of the one weak spot discoverable in the defence of our redoubtable opponent, his excellency, the President of Aureatland.

The President had no cause to suspect a trap; therefore, like a sensible man, he chose to spend the evening with the Signorina rather than with his gallant officers. It appears that at a few minutes past eleven o'clock, when the President was peacefully listening to the conversation of his fair guest (whom he had galvanized into an adroited liveliness by alarming remarks on her apparent preoccupation), there fell upon his ear the sound of a loud knocking at the door. Dinner had been served, and the President could not command a view of the knocker without going out on to the veranda, which ran all round the house, and walking round to the front. When the knock was heard, the Signorina started up.

"Don't disturb yourself, pray," said his excellency politely. "I gave special instructions that I was visible to no one this evening. But I was wondering whether it could be Johnny Carr. I want to speak to him for a moment, and I'll just go round outside and see if it is."

As he spoke a tap was heard at the door.

"Yes?" said the President.

"Mr. Carr is at the door and particularly wants to see your excellency. An urgent matter, he says."

"Tell him I'll come round and speak to him from the veranda," replied the President.

He turned to the window, and threw it open to step out. Let me tell what followed in the Signorina's words.

"Just then we heard a sound of a number of horses galloping up. The President stopped, and said:

"Hullo, what's up?"

There was a shout and a volley of shots, and I heard the Colonel's voice cry:

"Down with your arms; down, I say, or you're dead men!"

"The President took out his revolver, went back to the window, passed through it, and without a word disappeared. I could not hear even the sound of his feet on the veranda."

"I heard one more shot—then a rush of men to the door, and the Colonel burst in with sword and revolver in his hands, and followed by ten or a dozen men."

"I ran to him, terrified, and cried:

"Oh, is anyone hurt?"

"He took no notice, but asked hastily:

"Where is he?"

"I pointed to the veranda, and gasped:

"He went out there. Then I turned to one of the men and said again:

"Is anyone hurt?"

"Only Mr. Carr," he replied. "The rest of 'em were a precious sight too careful of themselves."

"And is he killed?"

"Don't think he's dead, miss," he said. "But he's hurt badly."

"As I turned again, I saw the President standing quite calmly in the window. When the Colonel saw him, he raised his revolver and said:

"Do you yield, General Whittingham? We are twelve to one."

"As he spoke, every man covered the President with his aim. The latter stood facing the twelve revolvers, his own weapon hanging loosely in his left hand. Then, smiling, he said a little bitterly:

"Heroes are not in my line, McGreggor. I suppose this is a popular rising—that is to say, you have bribed the men and murdered my best friend. Well, we mustn't use hard names," he went on in a gentler tone. "I give in, and, throwing down his weapon, he asked, 'Have you quite killed Carr?'"

"I don't know," said the Colonel, implying plainly that he did not care, either.

"I suppose it was you that shot him?" the Colonel nodded.

"The President yawned and looked at his watch.

"As I have no part in to-night's performance," said he, "I presume I am at liberty to go to bed?"

"My men must stay here, and you must leave the door open."

"I have no objection," said the President.

"Two of you stay in this room. Two of you keep watch in the veranda, one at this window, the other at the bedroom window. I shall put three more sentries outside. General Whittingham is not to leave this room. If you hear or see anything going on in there, go in and put him under restraint. Otherwise treat him with respect."

"I thank you for your civility," said the President, "also for the compliment implied in these precautions. Is it over this matter of the debt that your patriotism has drawn you into revolt?"

"I see no use in discussing public affairs at this moment," the Colonel replied. "And my presence is required elsewhere. I regret that I cannot relieve you of the presence of these men, but I do not feel I should be justified in accepting your parole."

"The President did not seem to be annoyed at this insult.

"I have not offered it," he said simply. "It is better you should take your own measures. Need I detain you, Colonel?"

"The Colonel did not answer him, but turned to me and said:

"Signorina Nugent, we wait only for you, and time is precious."

"Looking up, I saw a smile on the President's face. As I rose reluctantly, he also got up from the chair into which he had flung himself, and stopped me with a gesture. I was terribly afraid that he was going to say something hard to me, but his voice only expressed a sort of amused pity.

"The money, was it, Signorina?" he said. "Young people and beautiful people should not be mercenary. Poor child, you had better have stood by me."

"I answered him nothing, but went out with the Colonel, leaving behind me some apparent amusement the two threatening sentries who stood at the door. The Colonel hurried me out of the house, saying:

"We must ride to the barracks. If the news gets there before us, they may cut up rough. You go home. Your work is done."

"So they mounted and rode away, leaving me in the road. There were no signs of any struggle, except the door hanging loose on its hinges, and a drop or two of blood on the steps where they had shot poor Johnny Carr. I went straight home, and what happened in the next few hours at the Golden House I don't know, and knowing how I left the President, I cannot explain. I went home, and cried till I thought my heart would break."

(To be continued.)

Thrifty.

"Tim," asked the passenger on the rear platform of the antiquated flat-wheeled cable car, "what's in this covered stone jar I see out here nearly every time I take a trip on your car?"

"That's my wife's churning," answered the conductor. "One round trip on this old rattler brings the butter every time. Saves her lots of trouble."

—Chicago Tribune.

Too Late.

The millionaire's motherless son had just filed his application for a job as

husband to the fair maid.

"You'll have to excuse me, Percy," she said, "but I can never be anything more than a mother to you."

"A mother!" echoed the surprised Percy.

"That's what I said," rejoined the f. m. "Your father spoke first."

His View.

Uncle Josh—It seems the minister has had rheumatism for the last three years, but he hasn't said anything about it.

Aunt Hetty—Why, I could have told him just what to do for it.

Uncle Josh—Maybe that's one of the reasons why he kept it quiet.—Watson's Magazine.

Rural Logic.

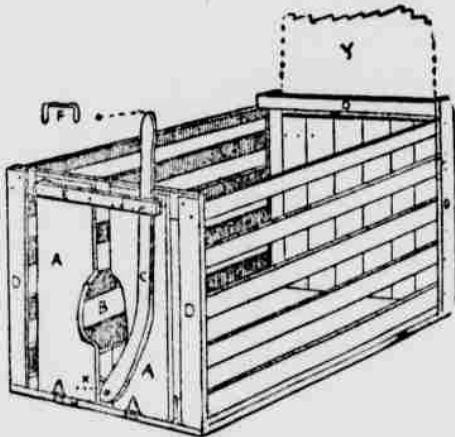
Uncle Hiram—Brother Eben's son has stained glass windows in his new house.

Aunt Samantha—Yew don't tell! That comes from marryin' one uv them good-for-nothin' city gals. I reckon she's too peaky lazy to wash th' stains off.



For Ringing Hogs.

A ringing trap for hogs is a necessity on many farms, and the accompanying sketch shows a good form. The frame of trap is two inch by four inch pieces, D. D. and D., lapped and bolted at corners as shown, and a tight, smooth floor. Also side and top boards are solidly nailed to inner edge of the frame, as shown, making a strong crate from which boards cannot be crowded off. Rear end is fitted with slide door to raise up as indicated by dotted line V. Front end has a door, AA, made of two thick, strong boards on inside cross cleats at top and bottom. A. A. is joined at bottom by two strong hinges to frame D, and held up when in use by the iron clamp E, being placed down over top of door and frame, D. Door has a central opening B, below which are several bolt holes, for fastening an iron lever, C. The top of door also has wide cleat, E, bolted at one end with blocks behind to hold it out from door, so the other end will form a guide for lever C, which, when pulled forward, partially closes opening B, and firmly holds hog, with head through the opening. Lever C is fastened while in use by a spike nail inserted as shown, in one of several holes bored through side cleat and door at Z. Opening B is twelve inches long and



TRAP FOR RINGING HOGS.

nine and one-half inches wide at widest place near lower end, and lower end of opening is ten inches above floor. Crate is four feet two inches long, two feet four inches high, and one foot six inches wide, inside measure. Place trap squarely with rear end close up to hog house door, with lever C thrown back; raise slide door, drive in a hog and drop slide door behind him, and he will thrust his head through the hole B. Pull lever C tight against his neck and insert spike to hold it there, and you can ring with ease a hog weighing nearly 400 pounds.

The Selection of Seed Corn.

There is no time which is put in to better advantage or which fetches a larger return than that devoted to selecting the seed corn during the latter part of September and the first half of October. The advantage which securing the seed ears at this time has over the ordinary method of selecting at husking time lies in the fact that a choice of the earliest maturing ears can be made, a distinction that is impossible when all of the crop is ripe and ready to husk. For all the north half of the corn belt that type of corn is best which bears its ears low on the stalk. This means as a rule that such corn will mature early, and while the ears produced may not be quite so large as those which one has to reach above his head after they are much more likely to produce hard corn, which will keep after it is put in the crib. The shape and depth of kernel and form and type of ears are of very trivial importance as compared with the main question as to whether the corn itself is of a variety which will mature a crop in the latitude in which it is planted.

Good Yield of Fleeces.

Ten pounds to the fleece is regarded large when it is an average from yearling lambs. A correspondent of Indiana Farmer writes that from a flock of 1,000 yearling lambs of McComb & Nelson flocks, of Putnam County, Indiana, 10,000 pounds of a very fine quality of wool has been sheared this season, and that the wool is very even in fiber and general condition, showing that the sheep were fed regularly, and cared for in a very excellent manner. This even condition of the wool is always a sure sign of regular feeding and care in management and such wool always brings the best price.

Caps for Haycocks.

For the benefit of those who are unwilling to purchase caps for covering the cocks we wish to say that alfalfa, properly cooked, will shed water just as well as clover—in fact, many farmers claim that it will shed water even better and that it is no more difficult to cure than clover in any season. While this may be true, we urge the use of caps for the reason that alfalfa is so much more valuable than clover, and a little extra expense in this line is money well invested.

Science AND Invention

The London physician's discovery that scars may be prevented or removed by cutting the skin slantwise instead of vertically is pronounced one of the most important of recent advances in surgery.

Caterpillars have been found to be greatly agitated by musical vibrations, descending from a tree in a shower at the sound of a cornet. This should suggest an effective means of fighting the gypsy moth and other caterpillar plagues.

French aeronautic authorities have given the name "aeronef," or aviation apparatus, to a flying machine that is heavier than the air. The varieties include: (1) the helicopter, sustained and driven by one or several propellers; (2) the aeroplane, chiefly sustained by one or more flat or curved surfaces, and (3) the orthopter or mechanical bird, sustained and propelled by beating wings.

A growing evil reported by Dr. Aba Sztankay among the Slovaks of Upper Hungary is the habitual use of camphor internally. For fourteen years he has persistently questioned buyers of the drug, and he concludes that at least twenty-five per cent of the large and increasing amount sold is used by the camphor-eaters. An increase in epilepsy seems to be a result of this indulgence.

Flaming are lights have now become an established feature of downtown Chicago streets. They are new, comparatively, for such commercial purposes, but their principle has long been known. The flaming arcs thus far shown in this country produce a light yellow, red or vivid white light, according to the carbons used. The addition of the salts of fluoride, bromide and iodide of lime give the light the yellow tint, while other salts of lime give the flame a red color.

Leprosy is increasing in both North and South America. Colombia, where there were only 400 lepers forty years ago, is said to have 40,000 now, and many find their way into the United States. Such a medical authority as Dr. Ashmead, who was formerly chief medical adviser to the government of Japan, says the increase is alarming. When leprosy is brought into a new country it takes fifty years for the seeds to take root, and it becomes epidemic after some 200 years. It has been shown that mosquitoes are active in transferring the bacilli of leprosy.

The first section of the railway across the Andes between Chile and Argentina has been officially inaugurated, and work has been begun on the highest part of the line, where, at an altitude exceeding 10,000 feet, great tunnels are to be constructed. The largest of these tunnels will have a length of 3,405 yards, not far from equally divided between the Chilean and Argentinian sections. With the use of that portion of the line already completed, the journey between Valparaiso and Buenos Ayres will be shortened several hours.

An important use has been found for the Cooper Hewitt mercury vapor lamp in scientific investigation. In optical experiments in the laboratory it is often important to have at command a monochromatic light. Formerly the mercury arc light was employed for this purpose, but after being used for a short time the efficiency of this source of light seriously falls off. It has been found, however, that the Cooper Hewitt lamp gives the same monochromatic light, with very fine rays, so that it is admirably suited for the study of interference phenomena, and it possesses the great advantage of being steady and trustworthy in its output. Moreover, being a commercial apparatus, it is easily obtained, and can be used at a comparatively small expense.

No Extra Trouble.

It was in the dead of night, and a cold night at that. Mr. Smith was away and Peterson Smith, aged 6, was getting over the measles.

"Mother, may I have a drink of real cold water?" he asked, waking Mrs. Smith from a refreshing slumber.

"Turn right over and go to sleep!" commanded Mrs. Smith. "You are a naughty boy to wake mother up when she put a pitcher of water on your table the very last thing before you went to bed."

Ten minutes later the small voice piped up again: "Mother, I want a drink of water."

"Peterson," said Mrs. Smith, sternly, "if you say that again I shall get up and spank you!"

There was five minutes' silence, and again Peterson spoke.

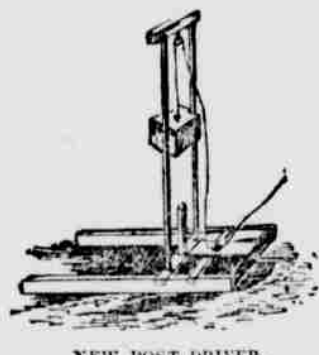
"Mother," he said, cheerfully, "when you get up to spank me, may I have a drink of water?"—Youth's Companion.

The Natural Way.

A philanthropic person heard of a negro family that was reported in destitute circumstances, and, calling at their domicile, he found the report true. The family consisted of the mother, a son nearing manhood's estate, and two young children. The benevolent old gentleman after hearing the mother's story gave her eldest son \$1 to get a chicken for the Thanksgiving dinner and took his departure. No sooner was he gone than the negro said to her son, "Sambo, you done gib me dat dollah and go get dat chicken in de natchral way!"—Chicago Inter Ocean.

Homemade Post Driver.

The construction of this post driver can be easily taken from the illustration.



NEW POST DRIVER.

tion. It can be made to work by man or horse power. If man power only, use one pulley. This can be made during the winter months and be ready for spring fencing.

Cheese-Making Gardening.

Cheese-making has been shown by recent bacterial research to be a sort of gardening—an inverted gardening, in which the plants are grown for the sake of modifying the soil. The peculiar qualities and flavors of the different cheeses have been proved to be due to the growth of various species of bacteria and molds in them. And it has been found possible to produce the flavor of the required cheese from the milk of any locality by introducing the appropriate plants. In a recent paper, for example, C. Gorini shows that the familiar red and green patches which characterize Gorgonzola cheese are the combined work of a special mold, and a species of bacillus. These organisms are introduced as the result of artificial punctures, made in the process of manufacture.

Price and Value.

The price of the cow does not indicate her value as a producer. Glittered butter is something that depends on how it is made. The cow gives the milk, but upon the management of the milk, cream and butter depends the quality.