

# Between Two Fires

By ANTHONY HOPE

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

## CHAPTER IV.—(Continued.)

The old lady and the young one lived together in great apparent content; for they probably got through more money than any one in the town, and there always seemed to be plenty more where that came from. The Signorina was now about 23 years of age, and of remarkably prepossessing appearance. She became almost at once a leading figure in society; her parlor was the leading meeting place of all parties and most sets; she received many gracious attentions from the Golden House. She was also frequently the guest of members of the opposition, and hostess of no one more often than their leader, Colonel George McGreggor, a gentleman of Scotch extraction, but not pronouncedly national characteristics, who had attained a high position in the land of his adoption; for not only did he lead the opposition in politics, but he was also second in command of the army. He entered the chamber as one of the President's nominees (for the latter had reserved to himself power to nominate five members), but at the time of which I write the Colonel had deserted his former chief, and, secure in his popularity with the forces, defied the man by whose help he had risen. Naturally, the President disliked him, a feeling I cordially shared. But his excellence's disapproval did not prevent the Signorina receiving McGreggor with great cordiality, though here again with no more than his position seemed to demand.

I have as much curiosity as my neighbors, and I was proportionately gratified when the doors of "Mon Repos," as the Signorina called her residence, were opened to me. My curiosity, I must confess, was not unmixed with other feelings; for I was a young man of heart, though events had thrown sobering responsibilities upon me, and the sight of the Signorina in her daily drives was enough to inspire a thrill even in the soul of a bank manager. She was certainly very beautiful—a tall, fair girl, with straight features and laughing eyes. I shall not attempt more description, because all such descriptions sound commonplace, and the Signorina was, even by the admission of her enemies, at least very far from commonplace. It must suffice to say that, like Father O'Reilly, she "had such a way with her" that all of us men in Auroreland, old and young, rich and poor, were at her feet, or ready to be there on the least encouragement. She was, to my thinking, the very genius of health, beauty and gaiety; and she put the crowning touch to her charms by very openly and frankly soliciting and valuing the admiration she received.

It may be supposed, then, that I thought my money very well invested when it procured me an invitation to "Mon Repos," where the lady of the house was in the habit of allowing a general amount of card playing among her male friends. She never played herself, but stood and looked on with much interest. On occasion she would tempt fortune by the hand of a chosen deputy, and nothing could be prettier or more artistic than her behavior. She was just eager enough for a girl unused to the excitement and fond of triumph, just indifferent enough to show that her play was merely a pastime, and the gain of the money or its loss a matter of no moment. Ah, Signorina, you were a great artist!

At "Mon Repos" I soon became an habitual, and it was fair to think, a welcome guest. Mrs. Carrington, who entertained a deep distrust of the manners of Auroreland, was good enough to consider me eminently respectable, while the Signorina was graciousness itself. It was even admitted to the select circle at the dinner party, which, as a rule, preceded her Wednesday evening reception. The Colonel was, not to my pleasure, an equally invariable guest, and the President himself would often honor the party with his presence, an honor we found rather expensive, for his luck at all games of skill or chance was extraordinary.

"I have always trusted fortune," she would say, "and to me she is not fickle." "Who would be fickle if your excellency were pleased to trust her?" the Signorina would respond, with a glance of almost fond admiration.

This sort of thing did not please McGreggor. He made no concealment of the fact that he claimed the foremost place among the Signorina's admirers, utterly declining to make way even for the President. The latter took his boorishness very quietly and I could not avoid the conclusion that the President held, or thought he held, the trumps. I was, naturally, intensely jealous of both these great men, and, although I had no cause to complain of my treatment, I could not stifle some resentment at the idea that I was, after all, an outsider and not allowed a part in the real drama that was going on. My happiness was further damped by the fact that luck ran steadily against me, and I saw my bonus dwindling very rapidly. I suppose I may as well be frank, and confess that my bonus, to speak strictly, vanished within six months after I first set foot in "Mon Repos," and I found it necessary to make that temporary use of the "interest fund" which the President had indicated. My uneasiness was lightened when the next installment of interest was punctually paid, and, with youthful confidence, I made little doubt that luck would turn before long.

## CHAPTER V.

Time passed on, all leading an apparently merry and untroubled life. In public affairs the temper was very different. The scarcity of money was very intense, and serious murmuring had arisen when the President "squandered" his ready money in paying interest, unpaid. This was the topic of much discussion in the press at the time when I went up one March evening to the Signorina's. I had been detained at the bank, and found the Signorina sat by herself on a low lounge by the veranda window. I went up to her and made my bow.

"You spare us but little of your time, Mr. Martin," she said.

"Ah, but you have all my thoughts," I replied, for she was looking charming.

"I don't care so much about your thoughts," she said. Then, after a pause, she went on, "It's very hot here, come into the conservatory."

It almost looked as though she had been waiting for me, and I followed in high delight into the long, narrow glass house, light green plants hid us from the view of those inside, and we only heard faintly his excellency's voice, saying with much geniality to the Colonel, "Well, you must be lucky in love, Colonel," from which I concluded that the Colonel was not in the vein at cards.

The Signorina smiled slightly as she turned, then she plucked a white rose, burned round, and stood facing me, slightly flushed as though with some inner excitement.

"I am afraid those who gentlemen do not love me another," she said.

"Hardly," I assented.

"And you, do you love them—or either of them?"

"I love only one person in Auroreland," I replied, as ardently as I dared.

The Signorina bit her lip, glancing up at me with unfeigned amusement and pleasure. I think I have mentioned that she didn't object to honest admiration.

"Is it possible you mean me?" she said, making me a little courteous. "I only think so because most of the Whittingham ladies would not satisfy your fastidious taste."

"No lady in the world could satisfy me except one," I answered, thinking she took it a little too lightly.

"Ah, so you say," she said. "And yet I don't suppose you would do anything for me, Mr. Martin."

"It would be my greatest happiness," I cried.

She said nothing, but stood there, biting the rose.

"Give it to me," I said; "it shall be my badge of service."

"You will serve me, then?" said she. "For what reward?" "For the rose."

"I should like the owner, too," I ventured to remark.

by some jealousy of my penchant for the Signorina.

"I hope you have enjoyed yourself in the conservatory," she said, maliciously. "We were talking business, Donna Antonia," I replied.

"Ah, business! I hear nothing but business. There is papa gone down to the country and burying himself alive to work out some great scheme of business!"

"Ah, what scheme is that?" I asked.

"Oh! I don't know. Something about that horrid debt. But I was told not to say anything about it."

The debt was becoming a bore. The whole air was full of it. I hastily paid Donna Antonia a few incoherent compliments, and took my leave. As I was putting on my coat Colonel McGreggor joined me and, with more friendliness than he usually showed me, accompanied me down the avenue toward the Piazza. After some indifferent remarks, he began:

"Martin, you and I have separate interests in some matters, but I think we have the same in others."

I knew at once what he meant; it was that debt over again! I remained silent, and he continued:

"About the debt, for instance. You are interested in the debt?"

"Somewhat," said I. "A banker generally is interested in a debt."

"I thought so," said the Colonel. "A time may come when we can act together. Meanwhile, keep your eye on the debt. Good night."

We parted at the door of his chambers in the Piazza, and I went on to my lodgings. I got into bed, rather puzzled and very uneasy.

## CHAPTER VI.

The flight of time brought no alleviation to the troubles of Auroreland. If an individual hard-up is a pathetic sight, a nation hard-up is an alarming spectacle; and Auroreland was very hard-up. I suppose somebody had some money. But the government had none; in consequence the officials had none; the President had none; and finally, I had none. The bank had a little—of other people's, of course—but I was quite prepared for a "run" on any day, and had cabled to the directors to inquire a remittance in cash, for our notes were at a discount humiliating to contemplate. Political strife ran high. I dropped into the House of Assembly one afternoon toward the end of May, and, looking down from the gallery, saw the Colonel in the full tide of wrathful declamation. He was demanding of the venerable Don Antonio when the army was to be paid. The latter sat cowering under his scorn, and would, I verily believe, have bolted out of the House had he not been nailed to his seat by the cold eyes of the President, who was looking on from his box. The minister on rising had nothing to urge but vague promises of speedy payment; but he utterly lacked the confident effrontery of his chief, and nobody was deceived by his weak protestations.

I left the House in a considerable uproar, and stroled on to the house of a friend of mine, one Madame Deverges, the widow of a French gentleman, who had found his way to Whittingham from New Caledonia. Politeness demanded the assumption that he had found his way to New Caledonia owing to political troubles, but the usual cloud hung over the precise date and circumstances of his patriotic sacrifice. Madame sometimes considered it necessary to bore herself and others with denunciations of the various tyrants or would-be tyrants of France; but, apart from this plot of offering on the shrine of her husband's reputation, she was a bright and pleasant little woman. I found assembled round her tea table a merry party, including Donna Antonia, unimpaired of her father's agonies, and one Johnny Carr, who deserves mention as being the only honest man in Auroreland. I speak, of course, of the place as I found it. He was a young Englishman, who they call a "cadet," of a good family, shipped off with a couple of thousand pounds to make his fortune. Land was cheap among us, and Johnny had bought an estate and settled down as a landowner. Recently he had blossomed forth as a keen Constitutional and a devoted admirer of the President's, and held a seat in the Assembly in that interest. Johnny was not a clever man nor a wise one, but he was merry, and, as I have thought it necessary to mention, honest.

## (To be continued.)

## In After Years.

Her Husband—I met a man to-day who envies me, and I envy him.

His Wife—Who is he?

Her Husband—Sweetheart—the chap who used to be smug over you before we were married.

His Wife—I suppose he envies you because you married me.

Her Husband—Yes; and I envy him because he didn't marry you.

## Those Girls.

"So you have really broken your engagement with Jack?"

"And, indeed."

"How do you hate him, dear?"

"Every bone in his body. I shall never speak to him again if I live to be a thousand years old."

"You mean that?"

"I do, and I shall tell him so the next time I see him."

## His Cue.

Ginger—They say this book entitled "A Step Backward" was inspired. I wonder where the author ever got his inspiration?

Guy—Oh, I guess he watched a woman stepping off a street car.

## Characteristic.

Milkins—What did he say when you called him a hog for taking up two seats in the car?

Bifkins—Oh, he grunted something in reply, but I could see that he was bristling with indignation.

## Do You Blame Him?

He—They used to sing of a bicycle built for two, but—

She—But what?

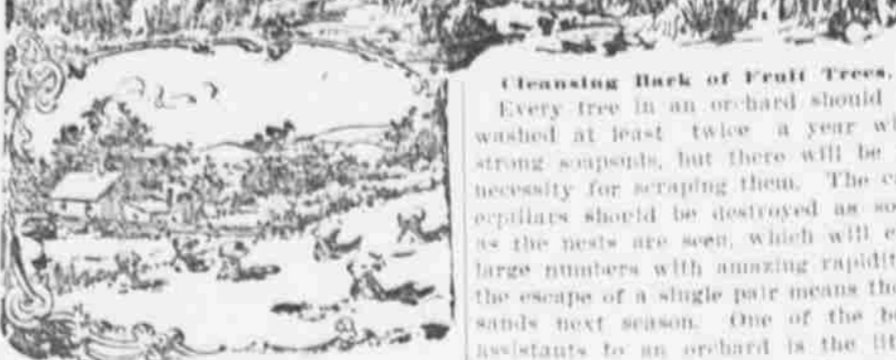
He—Give me a sofa built apparently for one—every time.

## Do They?

"Why do people bite lead pencils?" inquired the seeker after truth.

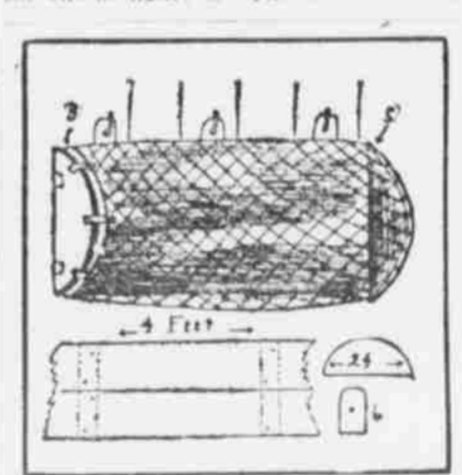
"To get a literary taste, of course," replied Mr. Conn.

# AGRICULTURAL



## Economizing Green Food.

When green food is scarce or difficult to obtain it pays to plan some way so it will not be wasted. The following description is of a feeding box that works well. Cut two pieces for the ends, each twenty-four inches long, getting proper curve by using a compass. Make the back of the holder of thin boards four feet long and twenty-four inches wide and nail one end (figure 6) in place, fitting the other end, using small strips of leather to hold it shut. Cover the holder with coarse mesh wire netting and hang it in a convenient place high enough so the fowls cannot reach on it, yet so they can feed from it readily. Use hangers of wood, tin or leather as indicated in the cut at figure 6. This little feeding



ECONOMICAL FEEDING BOX.

box will enable the fowls to pick at the green stuff, whether it is clover, grass or chopped cabbage, without any danger of soiling or wasting it. Such conveniences are inexpensive, but save an immense amount of time, as well as food, so poultry keepers should use them whenever possible.—Indianapolis News.

## To Kill Sassafras Roots.

Says one writer: Sassafras is one of the worst pests that some farmers have to contend with. It may be grubbed year after year and every root taken out that can be, and still there will be roots left that will sprout up, and soon the sassafras will be thicker than ever, and the area of sassafras brush will be enlarged rather than diminished. No amount of grubbing will permanently rid a field of sassafras. The most successful method of fighting sassafras I have ever tried is to cut off the sprout at the top of the ground and to pasture with cattle and sheep until the roots die, or if the trees are large, peel them two or three feet above the ground and pasture until the roots die. If the land is plowed and the roots broken, they will sprout, but if pastured close the roots die in a few years.

## Vitality of Alfalfa Seed.

A remarkable test of the vitality of alfalfa seed is reported in bulletin No. 119 of the Colorado Agricultural Experiment Station. It is generally considered that seed must be perfectly new in order to come up freely. In bulletin No. 35 of the experiment station, some tests were given of seeds ranging from one to six years old. Dr. Headen has retained samples of the same seed and tests have been again made when the seed has been from eleven to sixteen years old, and the tests have shown that from 88 to 99 per cent germinated. The screenings showed less vitality, the first quality of screenings running from 50 to 79½ per cent; second quality, 38 per cent, and third quality, 40 per cent.

## Fertility of Wood Ashes.

All farmers know that wood ashes are valuable as fertilizers. But this value, as many know, is due very much to the material from which the ashes come. Thus, ashes made from hardwood are more valuable than ashes made from soft wood. In fact, some ashes from soft wood have not enough value to make it worth while to bother with them. It has also been found that the value is largely governed by the part of the tree from which the ashes are made. It is declared by chemists that the ash of young twigs is of more value than the ash of the trunk of the tree, while the ash of leaves is still more valuable.

## Milking by Machinery.

In the dairy department of the agricultural college at Manhattan, Kan., they have for more than a year been successfully milking cows by machinery. The milking machine is a queer looking apparatus, driven by a gasoline engine. When one is fastened to a cow it milks away in spite of all the kicking and cawing the cow may do.

## Water for Work Horses.

Give work horses a pull of water in the middle of the morning and the afternoon. They will be better for it. Help them along and you will have better satisfaction. Flies and hot weather make them cranky and poor. Give them a few carrots and a little grass now and then.

## Cleansing Bark of Fruit Trees.

Every tree in an orchard should be washed at least twice a year with strong soap, but there will be no necessity for scraping them. The caterpillars should be destroyed as soon as the nests are seen, which will end large numbers with amazing rapidity; the escape of a single pair means thousands next season. One of the best assistants to an orchard is the little wren. If farmers will give him proper protection by constructing boxes with entrances so small that no bird but a wren can enter, the sparrow will be unable to drive it away. As the wren is an active and busy creature, it destroys a large number of insects in a very short time, and, as it increases rapidly under favorable circumstances, quite a large number of them may be secured and induced to remain in the orchard, if proper facilities are afforded for their protection and accommodation.

## Locust Destroyers.

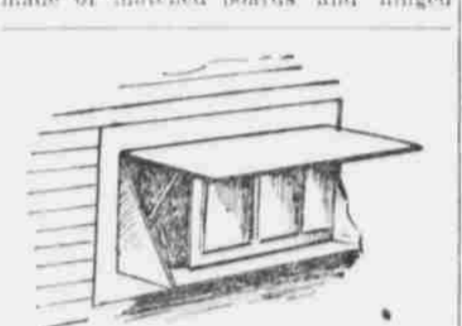
In Argentina, as in Africa and Asia, the locust is a name of dread, though not to anything like the same extent, and in South America there has arisen a hope of combatting the destroyer which may prove of enormous value in regions more liable to devastation. Large numbers of locusts were found dead and microscopic examination showed that they had been destroyed by a natural enemy—a species of fly which ate into the body of the locust, and there deposited its larvae which developed into a life prodigiously multiplied. Experiments are now being made to test whether this fly can thrive in regions which are recognized as the hatching places of the locust. The Argentine agricultural department is breeding the flies for this purpose, though under effective control.

## Hens Don't Like New Home.

Fowls are very fond of their homes and dislike being moved to new locations. If eggs are the object it is most important that birds should not be moved from pen to pen, as it will delay egg production and also diminish the supply. Pulletts for early laying should, if possible, be brought up within sight of their future laying run or pen. On the contrary, if it is wished to delay the laying of a pullet, and to encourage growth for prize purposes, her home must be changed often. A fitting or broody hen may be interfered with by removing her to a new scene and fresh companions—a more reasonable and humane way of checking her maternal instincts than that of half-drowning her, shutting her up in darkness or resorting to other cruel methods.

## Shutter for Barn Window.

Sliding windows in a barn, such as are frequently used for throwing manure through, are hardly ever quite tight, and when cold air is often allowed to rush in upon the animals inside. The American Agriculturist suggests the use of this shutter, which is made of matched boards and hinged



BARN WINDOW SHUTTER.

at the top so that it can be let down at night to keep out cold air. The shutter is set at an angle so that its own weight will keep it closely shut; or it may be shut flat against the casing and be tightly closed by a hook.

## Points on Raising Geese.

Have one gander to four geese, no more. Give them a good run. Do not try to change their nests, but let them set where they lay. Take first eggs and set under hens, as a goose will sometimes lay thirty to forty eggs in the season. Goslings should not be allowed to run in water or tall, wet grass, but should have a good grass run, grass that is short and green. Feed dried bread moistened with milk, cooked dry potatoes or cooked cornmeal. Do not feed them too much at first, and mix some grit and sand with their feeds.

## Roup Remedy.

The fowls should be placed in a dry, warm and well ventilated house, and have plenty of fresh water and scalded bran or other light food. Take of finely pulverized, fresh-burnt charcoal and of new yeast each three parts, of pulverized two parts, of flour one and one-half as much pulverized cayenne and flour. Water enough to mix well, and roll into balls or pills the size of a hazelnut, give one three times a day.

## Pumpkins for Lambs.

Pumpkins are good feed for lambs in the fall, especially when they are troubled with spew, caused by worms in the intestines. They will eat them if they are sliced or cut and sprinkled with salt, but it is better to provide flat-bottomed troughs with compartments, each being large enough to receive the half of a pumpkin cut in such fashion as to have the pieces lie flat with the inside upmost.

# THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



1138—Battle of the Standard, England.

1593—Sir William Wallace executed at Smithfield.

1485—Richard III. killed on Bosworth field.

1572—St. Bartholomew's Massacre.

1629—Court of Assizes first held at Charlestown, Mass.

1777—American sold from New Jersey into Staten Island.

1789—Liberty of the French press declared. Mary Washington, mother of George Washington, died.

1811—City of Washington burned by the British.

1828—Dr. Franz Joseph Gall, founder of phrenology, died.

1829—Insurrection of Belgians commenced at Brussels.

1848—American ship Ocean M. sunk burned in Irish Channel; 179 lives lost.

1849—Kossuth, the Hungarian patriot, escaped from Austria.

1851—Great riot in New Orleans growing out of the Cuban expedition.

1854—Japanese announced new policy of commercial intercourse. City of Milwaukee almost destroyed by fire.

1856—The historic Charter Oak, Hartford, Conn., fell during a storm.

1863—Gen. Rosecrans arrived in front of Chattanooga, Tenn.

1864—Fort Mifflin, Middle Bay, surrendered to Farragut.

1870—Proclamation by the President of neutrality in the Franco-Prussian war.

1877—Canal ground the Tex. Maud, sinks on Mississippi river ground.

1882—British occupied Port Said and closed Suez canal.

1883—Completion of the Northern Pacific railroad to the Pacific coast.

1884—Fochow, China, bombarded by the French.

1888—Storm and flood created great damage in West Virginia.

1889—Mrs. Maybrick's sentence commuted to penal servitude for life.

1890—Interest on money in New York ran up to 12 per cent a month.

1893—Attempt to assassinate President Crespo of Venezuela.

1894—Japanese minister to Korea assassinated.

1895—Attack made on American mission school at Fochow, China.

1897—President Barba of Uruguay assassinated.

1903—Lord Salisbury, prime minister of England, died.

1904—Mrs. Maybrick, after release from English prison, arrived in United States. Great battle of Liao-yang between Russians and Japanese.

**The Bible in Foreign Lands.**

The British and Foreign Bible Society now distributes the Scriptures in no fewer than 100 languages.

This is one of the many interesting facts presented recently at the society's meeting in London.

Copies of the Bible are purchased from the British and Foreign Bible Society for cheese, eggs, arrowroot and many other commodities. In the New Hebrides natives pay for the Bible in arrowroot. In one of the New Hebrides—Ancientine—a generous host the natives Christians became that during the last eleven years they have grown and given arrowroot to the value of \$5,000 for the good of the Christian cause and for starting other churches. Nothing else is used in those islands for the purchase of the Scriptures, but arrowroot, 15 pounds of which will buy a Bible.

In Sax, one of the British Solomon Islands, Bibles are bought with dead dog's teeth. Other things used to purchase Bibles in different parts of the world are barley, eggs, pigs, goats, fowl and beads.

**More Strict Sunday Laws.**

The laws recently enacted in France and Canada aim at a more general recognition of Sunday, at least as a day of rest. In France it is made a rule for all commercial and industrial establishments to close for this weekly day of rest, and when in any case such closing would be prejudicial to the interests of the public the law requires that an equal amount of rest be accorded to all workers on some other day, or by shifts in rotation. Canada's new Sunday law is far more drastic. All trading or remunerative service is forbidden, except in works of actual necessity or mercy. Railroads may not run excursions or handle any traffic which can be attended to on any other day. But, most remarkable of all, there are to be no Sunday newspapers either published at home or imported from abroad. All public amusements are banished. Heavy penalties for violations are to be imposed on employers or corporations as well as on employees.

**Alcohol Revolution Exaggerated.**

The report of Internal Revenue Commissioner Yerkes, who was sent to Europe to investigate the uses of denatured alcohol, indicates that the promise of an industrial revolution through the placing of this article on the American free list is worthless. He says the fact is that alcohol has not yet been harnessed for effective and economical use in the industries. Nowhere in Europe do they propel autos with alcohol or use it for light or heat. The picture of the farmer distilling alcohol with which to operate his own farm implements is mere fiction.