

Between Two Fires

By ANTHONY HOPE

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

CHAPTER XX.—(Continued.)

We had no time to waste in abusing the Colonel; the question was how to outwit him. I unfolded my plan to the Signorina, not at all disguising from her the difficulties, and even dangers, attendant upon it. Whatever may have been her mind before and after, she was at that moment either so overcome with her fear of the Colonel, or so carried away by her feeling for me, that she made nothing of difficulties and laughed at dangers, pointing out that though failure would be ignominious, it could not substantially aggravate our present position.

"Are you going to take any of the money away with you?" she asked.

"No," said I, "I don't think so. It would considerably increase the risk if I were seen hanging about the bank; you know he's got spies all over the place. Besides, what good would it do? I couldn't stick to it, and I'm not inclined to run any more risks merely to save the bank's pocket. The bank hasn't treated me so well as all that. I propose to rely on your bounty till I've time to turn round. Now, shall I come for you?" I asked her when we had arranged the other details.

"I think not," she said. "I believe the Colonel has one of my servants in his pay. I can slip out by myself, but I couldn't manage so well if you were with me. The sight of you would excite curiosity. I will meet you at the bottom of Liberty street."

"At two o'clock in the morning exactly, please. Don't come through the Piazza and Liberty street. Come round by the drive." (This was a sort of boulevard encircling the town, where the aristocracy was wont to ride and drive.) "Things ought to be pretty busy about the bank by then, and no one will notice you. You have a revolver?"

"Yes."

"All right. Don't hurt anyone, if you can help it; but if you do, don't leave him to linger in agony. Now I'm off," I continued. "I suppose I'd better not come and see you again?"

"I'm afraid you mustn't, Jack. You've been here two hours already."

"I shall be in my rooms in the afternoon. If anything goes wrong, send your carriage down the street and have it stopped at the grocer's. I shall take that for a sign."

The Signorina agreed, and we parted tenderly. My last words were:

"You'll see that message to Whittingham at once?"

"This moment," she said, as she waved me a kiss from the door of the room.

CHAPTER XXI.

I was evidently in for another day as unpleasantly exciting as the one I had spent before the revolution, and I reflected sadly that if a man once goes in for things of that kind, it's none so easy to pull up. Luckily, however, I had several things to occupy me, and was not left to fret the day away in idleness. First I went to my side and made sure that I had examined my pockets and found a sum total of nine hundred and fifty dollars. This was my all, for of late I had deemed it wise to carry my fortune on my person. Well, this was enough for the present; and I had time to take care of myself. So I thought to myself as I went along with a light heart, my triumph in love easily outweighing all the troubles and dangers that beset me. Only land me safe out of Australasia and the Signorina by my side, and I asked nothing more of fortune! Let the dead bury their dead, and the bank look after its dollars!

Thus musing, I came to the boat house where my launch lay. She was a tidy little boat, and had the advantage of being workable by one man without any difficulty. All I had to do was to get into the boat, and she would take care to embark on her upriver. I summoned the boatman in charge and questioned him closely about the probable state of the weather. He confidently assured me it would be fine but dark.

"Very well," I said, "I shall go fishing; start overnight and have a shy at them at sunrise."

The man was rather astonished at my unwonted energy, but of course made no objection.

"What time do you start, sir?" he asked.

"I want her ready by two," said I.

"Leave her at the end of your jetty, ready for me. She'll be all safe there, won't she?"

"Oh, yes, sir. Nobody'll be about, except the sentries, and they won't touch her."

I privately hoped that not even the sentries would be about, but I didn't say so.

"If course, sir, I shall look the gate. Yes, all right, and here you are—and much obliged for your trouble."

Highly astonished and grateful at receiving a large tip for no obvious reason (rather a mistake on my part), the man was profuse in promising to make every arrangement for my comfort. Even when I asked for a few cushions, he disembarked his own and agreed to put them in. "And mind you don't sit up," he said.

"I'm not likely to sit up if I'm not left," he answered. "Hope you'll have good sport, sir."

From the harbor I made my way straight to the Golden House. The Colonel was rather surprised to see me again so soon, but when I told him I came on business, he put his occupations on one side and listened to me.

I began with some anxiety, for if he suspected my good faith all would be lost. However, I was always a good hand at a tale, and the Colonel was not the President.

"I've come about that money question," I said.

"Well, have you come to your senses?" he asked, with his habitual rudeness.

"I can't give you the money," I went on.

"You all there and tell me that? Do you know that if the soldiers don't have money in a few hours, they'll upset me? They're ready to do it any minute. I don't know now when I give an order whether I shall be obeyed or get a bullet through my head."

"Pray be calm," said I. "You didn't let me finish?"

"Let you finish?" he cried. "You seem to think I jabber about everything. The end of it all is that either you give me the money, or I take it—and if you interfere, look out!"

"That is just what I was going to propose, if you hadn't interrupted me," I said quietly, but with inward exultation, for I saw he was just in the state of mind to walk eagerly into the trap I was preparing for him.

"What do you mean?" he asked.

"I explained to him that it was impossible for me to give up the money. My

the marauding party; but neither the Colonel nor his chosen band was likely to be scrupulous, and it was impossible not to see that Jones might get a bullet through his head; indeed, I fancied such a step would rather commend itself to the Colonel, as giving a bona fide look to the affair. Jones had often been the cause of great inconvenience to me, and I didn't wish to have his death on my conscience. So I was very glad when I happened to meet him on my way back from the Golden House, and seized the opportunity of giving him a friendly hint.

I took him and sat him down beside me on a bench in the Piazza. I was in no way disturbed by the curious glances of the three soldiers who were evidently charged to keep an eye on the bank and my dealings with it.

I began by pledging Jones to absolute secrecy, and then I introduced to him, in a roundabout way, that the Colonel and I were both very apprehensive of an attack on the bank.

"The town," said I, "is in a most unsettled condition, and many dangerous characters are about. Under these circumstances I have felt compelled to leave the defense of our property in the hands of the government. I have formally intimated to the authorities that we shall hold them responsible for any loss occasioned to us by public disorder. The Colonel, in the name of the government, has accepted that responsibility. I therefore desire to tell you, Mr. Jones, that in the lamentable event of any attack on the bank it will not be expected of you to expose your life by resistance. Such a sacrifice would be both uncalculated for and useless; and I must instruct you that the government insists that you shall not be put in danger of frustration by any rash conduct on our part. I am unable to be at the bank this evening; but in the event of any trouble you will oblige me by not attempting to meet force by force. You will yield, and we shall rely on our remedy against the government in case of loss."

These instructions so fully agreed with the natural bent of Jones' mind that he readily acquiesced in them and expressed high appreciation of my foresight.

"Take care of yourself and Mrs. Jones, my dear fellow," I concluded; "that is all you have to do, and I shall be satisfied."

I parted from him affectionately, wondering if my path in life would ever cross the honest, stupid old fellow's again, and heartily hoping that his fortune would soon take him out of the rogne's nest in which he had been dwelling.

(To be continued.)

PRICELESS MANUSCRIPTS.

How They Are Preserved and Cared For at Washington.

On the second floor of the congressional library, reached through a great hall filled with exhibits, the visitor finds a lofty pavilion, fifty feet square, with desks, catalogues, and other special equipment for the consultation of manuscripts, says the Youth's Companion. This is the administrative headquarters of the manuscripts division. In a room of equal area above it six repairers are continuously at work cleaning, mending and piecing out documents that require this and re-enforcing with a mask of transparent silk gauze the most valuable of them.

To the rear of the main pavilion stretches the storage room—a hall more than 200 feet long by nearly 40 in width. It is shelved with three tiers of metal cases, the lower of which is inclosed in glass, tightly set, with lock doors. In the alcoves opposite the wide windows are large steel safes, burglar proof, with combination locks. There are twenty of these and others may be added as needed.

In these cases and safes are now housed the manuscript collections. Among them are the volumes which until recently transferred to the library have formed a distinction of the Department of State, the papers of the Continental Congress—in more than 300 folio volumes—the papers of Washington, Jefferson, Madison, Monroe, among the Presidents; of Hamilton, Franklin and other statesmen. Continuing the presidential series are the papers of Andrew Jackson and Martin Van Buren, acquired by the library by gift, and of Franklin Pierce, James K. Polk and Andrew Johnson, acquired by purchase. The papers of Salmon P. Chase and a large collection of papers of Daniel Webster fit as usefully in their appropriate epochs.

Back of these in date and touching another side of our history are the papers—including the letter and log books—of Commodore Preble and many of Commodore Barry and Porter. Brilliant earlier pages in the achievements of our navy and the career of the most picturesque of its heroes are in the twelve volumes of papers of John Paul Jones.

The letter books and diary of Robert Morris as superintendent of finance (1781-84), acquired three years ago, after generations of vicissitude, including the perils of the junk shop, contain copies of every letter written by him and a minute of every transaction and interview in his office during the four years of his incumbency. They have never until now been accessible to the historian. Without them the final history of the revolution cannot be written.

Asked and Answered.

"Oh, what do you call those things you hang clothes on?" said Dunley, who was trying to think of "clothes-tree."

"What things?" asked Jiggins.

"Why, they have arms that stick out like this and—"

"Oh, dudes!"—Philadelphia Ledger.

One of a Few.

Hyer—My wife seemed to possess the baggar-counter instinct.

Hyer—So?

Hyer—Yes; she can tell at a glance whether a 49-cent article has been marked down from 50 cents or up from 48.—Chicago News.

His Luck.

Peter—Did you ever borrow any money in case of emergency?

Pan—Not a cent.

Peter—You don't mean it?

Pan—Fact, I've often tried to, but I can never get anybody to lend me any.—Detroit Free Press.

A Man of Doubts.

"Do you think that municipal ownership would eliminate graft?"

"I am not quite sure," answered Senator Sorghum, "whether it would eliminate it or simply originate a new kind."—Washington Star.

FARMS AND FARMERS

We are frequently asked what causes hair-balls. These concretions are produced by the animals licking themselves or other animals. As a result of this habit the hairs swallowed are carried around by the contractions of the stomach and gradually assume the form of a small pellet or ball. These balls are introduced into the reticulum or second stomach, although sometimes in the rumen. In girls, hair-balls are generally found in the fourth stomach. There are no certain symptoms by which we can determine the presence of hair-balls, and therefore no treatment can be recommended for such cases. The walls of the reticulum have in some cases been found transfixed with nails or pieces of wire, and yet the animals during life had not shown any symptoms of indigestion, but had died from malnutrition involving the second stomach.—St. Louis Globe-Democrat.

Grind the Hay and Stover.

Alfalfa meal is a standard commodity on the feed market, yet I see but little in print as to the result of feeding it, but the few dairymen, says L. W. Lighty in National Stockman, I heard speaking about the experience they had with it seemed very favorable. A prominent Pennsylvania dairyman a few days ago told me he is about putting in grinding machinery that will handle the timothy and mixed hay and reduce them to a fine ground, crushed condition. Who ever tried this practically? Is there any available information in the experiment station reports? I would not like to commit myself, but it seems to me theoretically that we could do the rougher part of the chewing cheaper with gasoline or alcohol power than with cow power. It has been amply demonstrated that feeding the cow easily digested feed saves feed.

Wonders of Concrete.

Here are some concrete possibilities. You can build concrete foundations, sidewalks, fences, water troughs, cisterns, water tanks, shelves, cesspools, gutters, floors of all kinds in the cellar, barn and stable, steps and stairs, well curbs, horse blocks, stalls, hog pens, troughs, chicken houses, corn cribs, incubator cellars, mushroom cellars, bolted frames, bridge abutments, chimneys, ventilators, rams, windmill foundations, fence posts, clothes posts and hitching posts. There is one farm where the post and rail fences and the feed bins are concrete, and in another even the lattice under the house piazza and the laundry stove are made of it. Cases of this kind are extreme and impractical, however.—Farming.

Value of Weight in Horses.

Every hundred pounds additional weight in the case of a heavy draft horse is worth from 25 to 50 cents more per hundredweight when making a sale. A farmer is in position to feed as cheaply as any professional feeder. To sell well on the market horses must be fat, sleek and well groomed. The buyers demand fat. If one has time to give proper exercise and light work, something may be added to the value of the horse, and it will be ready to go right into the heavy work of a city buyer. A little additional grooming, together with blanketing, for a month will also add a good bit to the selling price.

Packing and Storing Apples.

The apples that are to be kept over winter must be carefully picked from the trees by hand, as every apple that falls to the ground will be bruised and rendered unfit for the barrel, any injury hastening decay. Should decay begin with one apple all the others in the barrel are, also liable to become diseased. Apples must be stored in a cool place, but changing of temperature that damages them in storage. Clean barrels should be used, the apples should be as uniform as possible, and sent to the market in an attractive form.

Profit in Small Fruit.

Ten acres of small fruits will often make a man more truly prosperous than ten times as much land in wheat or corn. He may not be worth as much in actual capital invested, but he will be getting a larger net income, and doing it with less severe toil. The small farm well filled, whether it be in fruits, dairy, vegetables, etc., is almost always the most satisfactory. The principal capital needed to start such a farm is a level head and knowledge of the business.

Pasturing Clover.

Clover is injured when cattle are permitted on the field when the land is very wet. There is a temptation to allow cows to use the clover fields some, but any gain by so doing is always at the expense of loss in some other manner. Cattle do much harm by trampling; for which reason not even the pasture should be used until the grass has made considerable growth. Close grazing should never be allowed.

Oats for Cattle.

Ton for ton, many farmers are finding out that unthreshed oats, cut when the grain is in the rather soft dough (milky) state, and cut fine with a stalk cutter, are better than meadow hay—cut equally fine—to feed cattle, especially milk cows. As a rule, good farmers raise far more weight of oats to the acre than of hay.

Multiplication of Weeds.

To give some idea of how weeds multiply it may be stated that a single plant of pepper grass will produce 18,000 seeds; dandelion, 32,000; shepherd's purse, 37,000; wheat, 47,000; common thistles, 65,000; chamomile, 10,000; ragweed, 5,000; purslane, 375,000; plantain, 47,000; and barnyard, 43,000. The importance of not allowing a single weed to produce seed cannot be stressed too frequently. A single hour's work in destroying weeds may save weeks of labor next season.

Tuberculosis.

When cows are affected with tuberculosis it is difficult to discover the fact in the first stages. The animal may have a cough or be emaciated, but yet be free from the disease. Veterinary surgeons now test them with tuberculin, which induces characteristic physiological effects, and although this test has been accepted by many yet it has strong opponents, who claim that it does not fulfill expectations. Should the tuberculin test prove unreliable the examination of herds for tuberculosis will be very difficult.



"Dr. J. W. Wiley, chemist of the Department of Agriculture, proposes to inaugurate a series of experiments to determine the effects of alcohol on the human stomach."—News Item.

THE ONLY WOMAN BLACKSMITH IN AMERICA

Mrs. Philip P. Wilcox, a slender little woman, weighing scarcely 100 pounds, is the village blacksmith of College View, Neb. She learned her somewhat unusual trade from her husband.

Having taken up the work at first for pleasure, Mrs. Wilcox found her health steadily improved with the exercise, and decided to keep the little Wilcox blacksmith shop open one summer while her husband was away working in the railroad shops. Her success was so marked that she has kept at the work ever since. She can shoe a horse as well as any other blacksmith in the country, though she admits this is one part of the work which is a little distasteful to her.

Mrs. Wilcox was a teacher before her marriage, and now holds a teacher's certificate. She said: "There is more money in blacksmithing. If some of those poor, overcrowded teachers would try this business once they would never go back to the school room again. I'm bringing up my girls the same way. The eldest is an expert bicycle repairer now and the younger two are also good at the business. The oldest girl has a bank account that she earned from bicycle repairing."

One day a farmer led up a mettlesome young horse to be shod. Mr. Wilcox went forward to take charge of the animal, but its owner shook his head.

"If you don't mind, Phil," he said, "I'd rather Mrs. Wilcox would do this job. The colt seems to have a weak spot for her. He couldn't spell; he could pumpkin pie. He knows nothing about geography, and he always said that grammar 'ain't no use." His father was another "Stub," and went to law with the school authorities because they forced him to send his boy to school. The old man is dead. Heard of the other "Stub" last week. He went through our town in his private car. His grammar isn't much better, but when he speaks the superintendents of three big railroad systems take notice, and he can sign his name so that they can read it at the bank. You never can tell.—Cincinnati Post.

MINGLING OF THE RACES.

Human Life Much Like Plant Organization, It Is Asserted.

In the course of many years of investigation into the plant life of the world, creating new forms, modifying old ones, adapting others to new conditions and blending still others, I have constantly been impressed with the similarity between the organization and development of plant and human life, says Luther Burbank in the Century.

While I have never lost sight of the principle of the survival of the fittest and all that it implies as an explanation of the development and progress of plant life, I have come to find in the crossing of species and in selection, wisely directed, a great and powerful instrument for the transformation of the vegetable kingdom along lines that lead constantly upward. The crossing of species is to me paramount. Upon it, wisely directed and accompanied by a rigid selection of the best and as rigid an exclusion of the poorest, rests the hope of all progress. The mere crossing of species, unaccompanied by selection, wise supervision, intelligent care and the utmost patience, is not likely to result in marked good, and may result in vast harm. Unorganized effort is often most vicious in its tendencies.

SCHOOL STUDIES.

I was just thinking of "Stub" Williams. Remember him? He sat on the front seat and was the dumbest thing that ever went barefoot. About all he could do when called upon to recite was sweat and look as expressions as a pumpkin pie. He couldn't spell; he could scarcely read; he knew nothing about geography, and he always said that grammar "ain't no use." His father was another "Stub," and went to law with the school authorities because they forced him to send his boy to school. The old man is dead. Heard of the other "Stub" last week. He went through our town in his private car. His grammar isn't much better, but when he speaks the superintendents of three big railroad systems take notice, and he can sign his name so that they can read it at the bank. You never can tell.—Cincinnati Post.

"WHEN THE LEAVES BEGIN TO FALL"

THIS MAY WILL NEVER DO, I'VE WORRY IN TWO SEASONS!

WE GOT TO HAVE A NEW COAT FOR THE FALL, SUKE!

When the leaves begin to fall on the farm, it is a temptation to allow cows to use the clover fields some, but any gain by so doing is always at the expense of loss in some other manner. Cattle do much harm by trampling; for which reason not even the pasture should be used until the grass has made considerable growth. Close grazing should never be allowed.



—St. Louis Republic.