

Between Two Fires

By ANTHONY HOPE

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

CHAPTER XIX.

In spite of many anxieties, after this eventful day I enjoyed the first decent night's rest I had had for a week. The Colonel refused, with an unnecessary ostentation of scorn, my patriotic offer to keep watch and ward over the city, and I turned in, tired out at eleven o'clock, after a light dinner. I felt I had some reasons for self-congratulations; for considerable as my present difficulties were, yet I undoubtedly stood in a more hopeful position than I had before the revolution. I was now resolved to get my money safe out of the country, and I had hopes of being too much for McGregor in the other matter which shared my thoughts.

The return of the day, however, brought new troubles. I was roused at an early hour by a visit from the Colonel himself. He brought very disquieting tidings. In the course of the night every one of our proclamations had been torn down or defaced with ribald scribbles; posted over or alongside them there now hung multitudinous enlarged copies of the President's offensive notice. How or by whom these seditious measures had been effected we were at a loss to tell, for the officers and troops were loud in declaring their vigilance. In the very center of the Plaza, at the base of the President's statue, was posted an enormous bill, "Remember 1871! Death to Traitors!"

"How would they do that unless the soldiers were in it?" asked the Colonel gloomily. "I have sent those two companies back to the barracks and had another lot out. But how do I know they'll be any better? I met DeCharr just now and asked him what the temper of the troops was. The little brute grinned, and said: 'Ah, mon President, it would be better if the good soldiers had a little more money.'"

"That's about it," said I; "but then you haven't got much more money."

"What I've got I mean to stick to," said the Colonel. "If this thing is going to burst up, I'm not going to be kicked out to starve. I tell you what it is, Martin; you must let me have some of that cash back again."

The effrontery of this request amazed me. The man's want of ordinary morality was too revolting. Didn't he know very well that the money wasn't mine? Didn't he himself obtain my help on the express terms that I should have this money to repay the bank with?

"Not a farthing, Colonel; not a farthing! By our agreement that cash was to be mine; but for that I wouldn't have touched your revolution with a pair of tongs."

He looked very savage, and muttered something under his breath.

"You're carrying things with a high hand," he said.

"I'm not going to steal to please you," said I.

"You weren't always so scrupulous," he sneered.

I took no notice of this insult, but repeated my determination.

"Look here, Martin," he said, "I'll give you twenty-four hours to think it over; and let me advise you to change your mind then. I don't want to quarrel, but I'm going to have some of that money."

Clearly he had learned statecraft in his predecessor's school. "Twenty-four hours is something," thought I, and determined to try the cunning of the serpent.

"All right, Colonel," I said, "I'll think it over. I don't pretend to like it; but, after all, I'm in with you and we must pull together. We'll see how things look to-morrow morning."

"There's another matter I wanted to speak to you about," he went on.

I invited him into the breakfast room, gave him a cup of coffee (which, to my credit, I didn't poison), and began on my own eggs and toast.

"Fire away," said I briefly.

"I suppose you know I'm going to be married?" he remarked.

"No, I hadn't heard," I replied, feigning to be entirely occupied with a very nimble egg. "Rather a busy time for marrying, isn't it? Who is she?"

"You needn't pretend to be so very innocent; I expect you could give a pretty good guess."

"Madame Devargues?" I asked blandly.

"Suitable match; about your age—"

"I wish you wouldn't try to be funny!" he exclaimed. "You know as well as I do it's the Signorina."

"Really?" I replied. "Well, well, I fancied you were a little touched in that quarter. And she has consented to make you happy?"

I was curious to see what he would say. I knew he was a bad liar, and, as a fact, I believe he told the truth on this occasion, for he answered:

"Says she never cared a stray for anyone else."

"Not even Whittingham?" I asked maliciously.

"Hates the old ruffian!" said the Colonel. "I once thought she had a liking for you, Martin, but she laughed at the idea. I'm glad of it, for we should have fallen out."

I smiled in a somewhat sickly way, and took refuge in my cup. When I emerged, I asked:

"And when is it to be?"

"Next Saturday. Fact is, between you and me, Martin, she's ready enough."

This was too disgusting. But whether the Colonel was deceiving me, or the Signorina had deceived him, I didn't know—a little bit of both, probably. I saw, however, what the Colonel's game was plainly enough; he was, in his clumsy way, warning me off his preserves, for, of course, he knew my pretensions, and I don't think I imposed on him very much. But I was anxious to avoid a rupture and gain time.

"I must call and congratulate the lady," I said.

The Colonel couldn't very well object to that, but he didn't like it.

"Well, Christina told me she was very busy, but I daresay she'll see you for a few minutes."

"I daresay she will," I said dryly.

"I must be off now. I shall have to be about all day trying to catch those fellows who destroyed the bills."

"You won't be doing any business to-day, then?"

"What about settling the government?" he asked, grinning. "Not just yet. Wait till I've got the Signora and the money, and then we'll see about that. You think about the money, my boy!"

Much to my relief he then departed, and as he went out I vowed that neither Signorina nor money should he have. In the course of the next twenty-four hours I must find a way to prevent him.

"Rather early for a call," said I, "but I must see the Signorina."

On my way up I met several people and heard some interesting facts. In the first place, no trace had appeared of Don Antonio and his daughter; rumor declared that they had embarked on the Songstress with the President and his faithful doctor. Secondly, Johnny Carr was still in bed at the Golden House (this from Madame Devargues, who had been to see him); but his men had disappeared, after solemnly taking the oath to the new government. Item three. The Colonel had been received with silence and black looks by the troops, and two officers had vanished into space, both Americans, and the only men of any good in a fight. Things were looking rather blue, and I began to think I also should like to disappear, provided I could carry off my money and my love with me. My scruples about loyalty had been removed by the Colonel's overbearing conduct, and I was ready for any step that promised me the fulfillment of my own designs. It was pretty evident that he was not living with McGregor in his present frame of mind, and I was convinced that my best course would be to cut the whole thing, or, if that proved impossible, to see what bargain I could make with the President. Of course all would go smoothly with him if I gave up the dollars and the lady; a like sacrifice would conciliate McGregor. But then I didn't mean to make it.

"One or other I will have," said I, as I knocked at the door of "Mon Rapos," and both, if possible.

The Signorina was looking worried; indeed, I thought she had been crying.

"Did you meet my aunt on your way up?" she asked, the moment I was announced.

"No," said I.

"I've sent her away," she continued.

"All this fuss frightens her, so I got the Colonel's leave (for you know we mustn't move without permission now liberty has triumphed) for her to seek change of air."

"Where's she going to?" I said.

"Home," said the Signorina.

I didn't know where "home" was, but I never ask what I am not meant to know.

"You see, Jack, I had to care for my money."

"Oh, so you've given it to Mrs. Carrington?"

"Yes, all but five thousand dollars."

"Does the Colonel know that?"

"Dear me, of course not, or he'd never have let her go."

"You're very wise," said I. "I only wish I could have sent my money with her."

"I'm afraid that would have made dear aunt rather bulky," said the Signorina, titling.

"Yes, such a lot of mine's in cash," I said regretfully.

Without more ado, I disclosed my own perilous condition and the Colonel's boasts about herself.

"What a villain that man is!" she exclaimed. "Of course I was civil to him, but I didn't say half that. You didn't believe that I did, Jack?"

"There's never any use in being unpleasant, so I said I had rejected the idea with scorn."

"But what's to be done? If I'm here to-morrow, he'll take the money, and, as likely as not, cut my throat if I try to stop him."

"Yes, and he'll marry me," chimed in the Signorina. "Jack, we must have a counter-revolution."

"I don't see what good that'll do," I answered dolefully. "The President will take the money just the same, and I expect he'll marry you just the same."

"Of the two, I would rather have him. Now, don't rage, Jack! I only said, 'of the two.' But you're quite right; it couldn't help us much to bring General Whittingham back."

"To say nothing of the strong probability of my perishing in the attempt."

"Let me think," said the Signorina, knitting her brows.

CHAPTER XX.

The Signorina sat there, looking very thoughtful and troubled, but it seemed to me as if she were rather undergoing a conflict of feeling than thinking out a course of action. Once she glanced at me, then turned away with a restless movement and a sigh.

I strolled up to the window to look out. I had stood there a little while, when I heard her call softly:

"Jack!"

I turned and came to her, kneeling down by her side and taking her hands. She gazed rather intently into my face with unusual gravity. Then she said:

"If you have to choose between me and the money, which will it be?"

I kissed her hand for answer.

"If the money is lost, won't it all come out? And then won't they call you dishonest?"

"I suppose so," said I.

"You don't mind that?"

"Yes, I do. Nobody likes to be called a thief—especially when there's a kind of truth about it. But I should mind losing you more."

"Are you really very fond of me, Jack? No, you needn't say so. I think you are. Now I'll tell you a secret. If you hadn't come here, I should have married General Whittingham long ago. I stayed here intending to do it, and he asked me very soon after you first arrived. I gave him my money, you know then."

I was listening intently. It seemed as if some things were going to be cleared up.

"Well," she continued, "you know what happened. You fell in love with me, I tried to make you, and then I suppose I

tell a little in love with you. At any rate, I told the President I wouldn't marry him just then. Some time after, I wanted some money, and I asked him to give me back mine. He utterly refused; you know his quiet way. He said he would keep it for 'Mrs. Whittingham.' Oh, I could have killed him! But I didn't dare to break with him openly; besides, he's very hard to fight against. We had constant disputes; he would never give back the money, and I declared I wouldn't marry him unless I had it first, and not then unless I chose. He was very angry and vowed I should marry him without a penny of it; and so it went on. But he never suspected you, Jack, not till quite the end. Then we found out about the debt, you know; and about the same time I saw he at last suspected something between you and me. And the very day before we came to the bank he drove me to desperation. He stood beside me in this room, and said: 'Christina, I am growing old. I shall wait no longer. I believe you're in love with that young Martin.' Then he apologized for his plain speaking, for he's always gentle in manner. And I defied him. And then, Jack, what do you think he did?"

"What?" I cried.

"He laughed!" said the Signorina, with tragic intensity. "I couldn't stand that, so I joined the Colonel in upsetting him. Ah, he shouldn't have laughed at me."

And indeed she looked at this moment a dangerous subject for such treatment.

"I knew what no one else knew, and I could influence him as no one else could, and I had my revenge. But now," she said, "it all ends in nothing."

And she broke down, sobbing. Then, recovering herself, and motioning me to be still, she went on:

"You must be quiet and cautious. But I must go to-night—to-night, Jack, either with you or to the President."

"My darling, you shall come with me," said I.

"Where?"

"Oh, out of this somewhere."

I was full of rage against McGregor, but I couldn't afford the luxury of indulging it, so I gave my whole mind to finding a way out for us. At last I seemed to hit upon a plan. The Signorina saw the inspiration in my eye.

"Have you got it, Jack?" she said.

"I think so—if you will trust yourself to me, and don't mind an uncomfortable night."

"Go on."

"You know my little steam launch? It will be dark to-night. If we can get on board with a couple of hours' start we can show anybody a clean pair of heels. She travels a good pace, and it's only fifty miles to safety and foreign soil. I shall land there a beggar!"

"I don't mind that, Jack," she said.

"I have my five thousand, and aunt will join us with the rest. But how are we to get on board? Besides, oh, Jack, the President watches the coast every night with the Songstress—and you know she's got steam—Mr. Carr just had auxiliary steam put in."

"No," I said, "I don't know about that. Look here, Christina, excuse the question, but can you communicate with the President?"

"Yes," she said, after a second's hesitation.

"And will he believe what you tell him?"

"I don't know. He might and he might not. He'll probably act as if he didn't."

"Well, we must chance it," I said. "At any rate, better be caught by him than stay here. We were, perhaps, a little hasty with that revolution of ours."

(To be continued.)

"START OF A FLORIDA FEUD."

Man's Farm Built on Coral Floated Away and a Neighbor Took It.

"Speaking about feuds," said John L. Humphries of Tampa, Fla., "I think that the strangest, in its inception, is one between two families in Marion County, in our State. It came about this way. You know in our State sometimes land disappears during the night and a man wakes up to find his garden a great sinkhole. This is, of course, due to the fact that Florida is built on coral and not very substantially built at that, especially in some of the interior counties. Harry Redding had a nice patch of Irish potatoes, and Oliver Vance, his neighbor, had what he called a farm and near the house was a sinkhole.

"One night Redding's potato patch disappeared and the next morning he had a nice large sinkhole filled with water where his garden was. The same night Vance, who had a sinkhole when he went to bed, woke up to find that the hole was filled with dirt, in which there seemed to be a lot of pebbles about the size of a man's fist. Naturally he was surprised. He examined the pebbles to find them potatoes, and after calling the family up they got to work and gathered in six bushels of potatoes ready for market.

"That's where the trouble began. Redding claimed that under the law where a man's stock wanders on the premises of another, without his fault, he can go after it. He argued that the same doctrine applied to potatoes which had wandering habits. For he was very sure that the potatoes on the Vance farm belonged to him. Vance and his friends invoked another principle of law that a man owns his land from heaven to hades and he refused to dig up the potatoes for the benefit of his neighbor.

"All that happened ten years ago," continued Mr. Humphries, "and the Reddings and the Vances are still armed against each other. Two or three skirmishes have taken place between the parties and one of the Vance boys, 18 years old, was wounded by fire from the enemy.

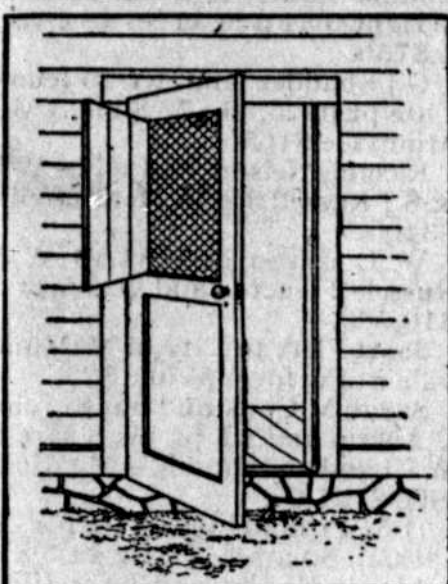
"They are never spoken to each other since that eventful night ten years ago. Lawyers and politicians have gone out to help them settle their difficulties, but they were obdurate, and if the feud grows for twenty years it has already Florida and Marion County will have a feud equal to the best that Kentucky has ever produced."—Denver Republican.

The people of Thibet rarely wash, finding it warmer to be dirty.



Convenient Hen House Door.

It is frequently desired to allow ventilation through the henhouse without opening the doors so that the fowls may get out. An arrangement which makes this possible is shown in the cut, consisting of an opening in the upper half of the door, inside of which a screen is placed. This allows ventilation in the henhouse without draft upon the birds. Ordinary poultry netting may be used in the opening, with a tight boarded shutter to be



A VENTILATING DOOR.

closed in stormy weather and at night. Thorough ventilation of the henhouse is very essential, since hens need fresh air quite as badly as they need fresh water, and modern henhouses are being built tight, so that sufficient ventilation must be provided for through ventilating flues or openings in the windows and doors.—Farm and Home.

Fall Plowing.

It sometimes happens that one has to plow sod whenever the opportunity presents itself for doing the work, without reference to whether the time chosen is the best or not. Some arguments might be advanced in favor of early fall plowing, while late fall plowing also has its advantageous features.

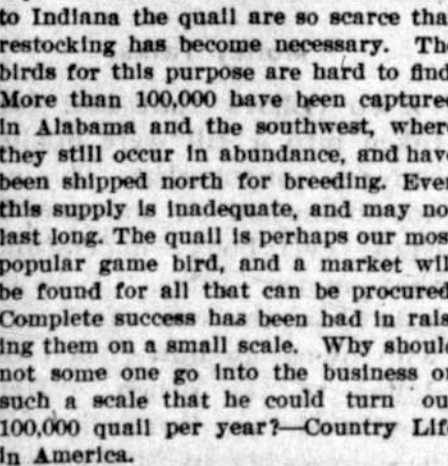
If plowing is done early in the fall, say, in September or October, it is usually necessary to do a little disking before the ground freezes up, otherwise the grass may make considerable growths, and this in turn prevents the sod from decaying. If one has the available horse power and also the time to do the work, bluestem sod may be brought into line condition by plowing it early and afterwards disking it. The ordinary method is to plow late in the fall. If the sod is turned over completely with but little buckling, the grass will make but little headway, and consequently a saving of labor will be effected, as compared with early plowing.—Field and Farm.

Scarcity of Quail.

Quail starved to death by thousands in the winter of 1904-05, but last winter they had an easy time except in February and March. From Massachusetts to Indiana the quail are so scarce that restocking has become necessary. The birds for this purpose are hard to find. More than 100,000 have been captured in Alabama and the southwest, where they still occur in abundance, and have been shipped north for breeding. Even this supply is inadequate, and may not last long. The quail is perhaps our most popular game bird, and a market will be found for all that can be procured. Complete success has been had in raising them on a small scale. Why should not some one go into the business on such a scale that he could turn out 100,000 quail per year?—Country Life in America.

To Stretch Fence Wire.

Go to the woods and cut a wide spreading fork, three inches in diameter at butt end, and three feet to each



FOR STRETCHING WIRE.

crotch. Cut off fork branches so as to have three feet spread at wire. Use both as lever and windlass, as shown in diagram. Staple wire on top and drive large nail in post beneath to hold in place. Now wind up and staple. Can stretch eighty rods at one time.

World's Sheep Supply.

This country is beginning to gain slowly in its number of sheep and yield of wool. But here the lamb and mutton demand has developed so rapidly that from this cause the increase is slower than in some other countries. Argentina seems to stand at the head now in numbers, having 74,379,562 head, and Australia 72,322,918. Russia is third, with about 53,000,000, and the United States next, with 45,170,423. The United Kingdom claims 29,076,777. France has 17,800,985 sheep, against Germany's 9,907,173. Cape Colony has 11,318,820 shewn and Natal 726,752.

Use and Value of the Silo.

The use and value of the silo has made phenomenal progress throughout the country during recent years. In 1888 the United States Agricultural Department reported only ninety silos in the country. The recent report finds approximately 500,000. Formerly the benefits of the silo were almost wholly unknown to the average farmer; now it is found to be a necessity on thousands of farms. This is especially true in the corn belt, where the silo is almost a necessity in economical dairying. Recent experiments prove conclusively that the use of silage is quite as much of a necessity in beef production. It not only provides a palatable, succulent, healthy food, but enables the farmer to keep about twice the number of live stock as before the advent of the silo. It not only produces nearly double the quantity of dairy products and beef, but augments the fertility of the soil. The silo is here to stay, and every farmer should plan to have one. With all its other advantages, there is no other way that roughage can be so cheaply stored.

How to Drive a Well.

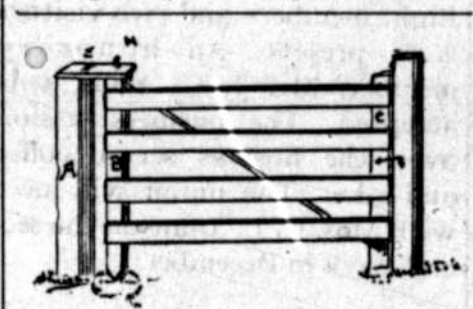
In many sections of the country where there is a gravelly sub-strata, the obtaining of water is a comparatively simple matter by means of a driven well, says Farming. The method is as follows: A section of pipe (a convenient size being inch and a quarter) is fitted with a point of iron. This pipe is bored full of holes, which are covered with a brass gauze. The point is driven into the ground by a sledge hammer and five-foot sections of galvanized iron pipe are joined to it as it is driven into the ground. Frequent tests are made with a pitcher pump to discover when water has been reached. This method of obtaining water is not altogether satisfactory, because from the very nature of things the work has to be done blindly, and very often one is obliged to give up entirely after having driven twenty or thirty feet of pipe through quicksand from which no water can be obtained.

Mulching Peach Trees.

The Nebraska experiment station has demonstrated that rapidly growing peach trees are made harder in both wood and fruit bud by the use of a cover-crop. By drying the ground somewhat in late summer the growth of the trees is checked and the wood matures properly before the advent of freezing weather. Cover-crops that survive the winter—rye, for instance—are detrimental to orchards, because they dry the ground excessively in spring when the trees need abundant moisture. Cover-crops that are killed by the early frosts are better than those which live later, because as soon as killed they stop drying the soil, catch fall rains and winter snows and check evaporation.

Gate for the Farm.

This gate can be made from the farmer's wood pile. A is main post, B is a post 4 inches in diameter, setting on a stone, D, about 10 inches thick, half in the ground, with a depression in cen-



CHEAP FARM GATE.

ter, post B made to fit it. Bore 1 1/2-inch holes, post hardwood in and wedge the same at post B. E is a piece of 2-inch plank with hole to hold post B. F is a brace from B to C. This gate will last for many years and will swing either way.

Electric Farming.

Experiments in electrical farming, which have been held by Prof. Lemstrom, of Helsinki, Finland, have demonstrated some very interesting facts. In one experiment with carrots the yield was increased 30 per cent the first year and 90 per cent the second year over plants that were not treated electrically. In another experiment with potatoes where the current was generated galvanically in the earth by means of copper and zinc plates connected by insulated wires strung above growing vines, an increased yield of from 80 per cent to 100 per cent was recorded. Some scientists now claim that the large harvests of Spitzbergen and Finland are due to the electrical influence of the aurora, borealis.—Farming.

Essential of a Silo.

The proper construction of the silo is of the greatest importance. If the sides of the silo are not airtight, too much air is admitted and the silage will spoil. If the walls are not perfectly rigid the presence of the silage will cause them to spring out, thus allowing air to enter between the silage and the wall, and, again, the result is decayed silage.

Before building a silo the most careful attention should be given to location, size, form and method of construction. These will differ somewhat according to locality and individual needs.—Farming.

Fruit Trees and Rabbits.

When snow is on the ground rabbits have a hard time securing food and will eat anything that will prevent starvation. It is then that they gnaw trees and do damage which is not repairable in the power of the farmer to repair. Smearing the trunk with blood or wrapping the trees with tared paper or mosquito netting two feet from the ground serves as a protection.

THE WEEKLY HISTORIAN



1428—Siege of Orleans begun.

1642—First commencement held at Harvard college.

1702—Battle of Vigo.

1760—City of Berlin taken by combined Russian and Austrian forces.

1777—Kingston, N. Y., burned by the British.

1781—Americans attacked Yorktown.

1797—Battle of Camperdown.

1800—Attempted assassination of Bonaparte.

1806—Battle of Saalfeld, Saxony; Prussians defeated by French.

1815—Napoleon Bonaparte landed at St. Helena to begin his exile.

1822—Brazil proclaimed independence.

1831—Anderson, an English vocalist, driven from the stage of the Park theater, New York, for disrespectful remarks concerning the United States.

1848—Martial law proclaimed in Cape Town.

1861—Confederate steamer Theodore escaped from Charleston, S. C., with Mason and Slidell on board.

1862—Confederate cavalry under Gen. Stuart entered Chambersburg, Pa.

1863—Wheeler's famous Confederate cavalry met with defeat at Farmington, Tenn.

1868—Beginning of Cuban struggle for independence.

1871—President Grant summoned Ku-Klux-Klan of South Carolina to disband....The great Chicago fire continued to rage and destroy.

1872—William H. Seward, American statesman, died....Archbishop Bailey installed as Primate of the Catholic church in the United States.

1873—Ex-Senator Pomeroy shot by ex-Congressman Conway in Washington.

1881—Arrest of Charles Stewart Parnell.

1884—Adoption of the Meridian of Greenwich....Parliament building in Quebec wrecked by dynamite.

1893—Dean Richmond founded in Lake Erie; 18 lives lost.

1894—Wiju captured by the Japanese.

1898—Emperor of Germany started on trip to the Holy Land....Powers refused to permit Turkey to maintain garrisons in Crete.

1899—Transvaal war began....Public reception in Boston in honor of Admiral Dewey.

1902—President Roosevelt appointed a commission to settle anthracite coal strike.

1904—Frederick Augustus III. ascended the throne of Saxony....United States battleship Georgia launched at Bath.

1905—President Roosevelt conferred with leaders in college athletics