

The Chauffeur and the Jewels

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By
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CHAPTER X.

Some days after the Prince del Pino made his first appearance in Washington, two people were talking in the drawing room of a small house in S street at the hour which the French call, so curiously, "between the dog and the wolf."

Of the pair in the gloaming, the man was standing up with his back to an attenuated mantelpiece, against which he leaned his huge frame, gingerly looking down from time to time at the girl opposite in the depths of a Market-Harbor-rough chair.

"Think of it!" he was saying, in rather subdued tones. "I was actually on my way here yesterday, just coming out of the Shoreham, when the cable was handed me. You got my note telling you that I couldn't keep my appointment? What was it we were going to do? Oh, yes, go up the Monument. Yesterday seems about five hundred years ago!"

"It was very good of you to come and tell me about it," the girl said gently; "very friendly."

"Was it?" Gerald Buiat wheeled abruptly around and stared with sudden absorption out of the window. "It was kinder of you to let me," he said. "There's a certain relief in talking. When that cable came yesterday—He broke off suddenly, and then continued, in an odd choked voice. "Well, that sort of unexpected shock rather knocks over a man! To lose poor old Jack—my only brother. And then this later news coming right on top of it—"

Again he could go no further. Annette left her chair impulsively and stood beside him, all the womanliness, the latent strength in her, reaching out to the poor fellow stricken in a strange land.

"It isn't certain yet," she said soothingly, stroking his rough coat sleeve with sublime unconsciousness, "about your father; I mean—the cable—was it quite hopeless?"

There was a slight pause and Gerald turned towards her a very set face. "Quite!" he said shortly.

Then with a certain shy awkwardness he took her hand and held it a moment. "Thank you," he said huskily; "you've been very good to me, Miss Bancroft." He shook himself determinedly into the commonplace. "You were surprised, weren't you, when I turned up the other day, and asked you to take me in hand and show me the sights here? I really don't know what made me come to Washington! Can't imagine, for the life of me!"

The girl beside him had a shrewd suspicion that she could! Even when the attracting magnet is removed, the force of habit still dominates us in a measure, drawing us all unconsciously in the old directions.

"Have you seen or heard anything of Gussie lately?" Buiat now asked, with massive carelessness, turning to go.

Annette shook her head.

"No," she said, tactfully avoiding his embarrassed eye. "I saw in the Post that she'd been dining at one of the embassies last night."

"Del Pino was there, too," remarked Buiat, completing her information with surprising accuracy, "and he was at the horse show with her that afternoon. I suppose they're together all the time."

Here he felt it incumbent to shrug his shoulders loftily. "That's what he's here for."

"So you think that's what he's here for?" echoed the girl.

There was the faintest hint of interrogation, incredulity in her tones, that made Buiat glance curiously at the small figure, the dim, opaque shading of the June twilight accentuating the blonde fairness of her hair and childish outlines of face and figure with mellowed distinctness.

"Why," he drawled, "any one can see that the man wants to marry Gussie, and I really don't see any special reason why she shouldn't take him, do you?"

His air of impersonal unconcern and indifference was a sorry mask through which a pair of miserably anxious eyes questioned Annette's face.

Woman-like, she outwardly evaded the appeal even while answering it. "Do you really think they're in love with each other?" she asked quietly.

"Love!" Gerald hastily assumed the blank, unrecognizing expression with which one repeats the name of an undesirable and half-forgotten acquaintance.

"What is love?" He narrowed his eyes, viewing the word through a mental microscope with scientific impersonality.

"Well, I suppose the thing exists, but it's just a sort of temporary disease that attacks one at times! Most of us have it, or think we have—which is the same thing. But if you've been through it once, you're immune, that's one great, great comfort—you'll never catch it again!"

He spoke with savage conviction, consciousness of scars which were still painful to the touch. "No, I think Gussie and Del Pino are too entirely sane to fall in love—lucky for them! They're simply, in cold blood, making what your papers would call a brilliant match. He has 'he title, and she—everything else!'"

"He has the title!" repeated Annette. She was staring at the honest-faced man before her, marveling at his utter unconsciousness of his own probably equal advantages in that respect at that moment. Certainly, as far as rank and his devotees were concerned, there was little to choose between the Prince del Pino and the new Earl of Lindsay. If Gerald only realized it, chance—the eternal chance—was his to-day.

Annette's lips parted impulsively and then closed again. It seemed such a pitiful waste that a loyal, unselfish love like his should be sacrificed on ambivalence's altar.

The girl spoke with sudden heat. "Gussie is my cousin, Mr. Buiat," she said, determinedly; "do you think, knowing her as we both do, caring for her, she looked away as she spoke—told me frankly—do you think that she could—"

man who loved her happy, that he would be content—well! with what she has to give?"

Gerald did not hesitate an instant. "I should rather think she could," he said, with a sincerity that was almost pathetic. The man who loved Gussie would be thankful for anything she could give him."

Then, stiffening with the inevitable contraction that followed such unaccustomed expansion, he shook hands formally with his small hostess.

"Get all my boxes to pack, you see—have to be off by the ten-thirty train so as to take to-morrow's steamer from New York. Good-by."

Annette followed him to the door. "Don't you think"—she made up her mind quickly—"wouldn't it be possible for you to stop in and see Gussie if only for a moment this afternoon? I think she'll be hurt if she finds you've been here without looking her up."

"I'm afraid I can't flatter myself," Buiat's tone was determinedly brisk. "Besides, why should she know? You'll have to keep my secret, Miss Bancroft." He backed into the hall. "There's a great deal to be done and it's getting beastly late."

Indeed, the little hall outside was undeniably dim.

Feeling for his hat with some haste in the shade, Buiat dislodged a sheaf of cards, stuck in the rack, that came pelting him with light touches, and, even as he opened the door, one fell fluttering out on to the step outside, where the faint Italian script stared up at him impudently, revealed by the fading light: "Prince Rodrigo del Pino," and a curious crest.

The mark of the beast! Again the track of those alien footsteps that had invaded his hunting ground.

Buiat stared at the little strip of paste-board with a puzzled frown. When had he been here? He closed the door with an exasperated slam and stalked down the steps.

Certainly Annette had had very little to say about Del Pino, yet, on the other hand, what was there to be said? Why should not one fellow passenger of the Majestic hunt up another? and what possible concern was it of his—Gerald Buiat?

His mind reverting to nearer, more personal, more painful matters, the Englishman made his way thoughtfully to the S street corner. But at the lamp post he came to a sudden halt.

Standing quite still, he looked ahead of him, a very keen look in his eyes, for there, coming up the avenue toward him with familiar jaunty gait, was a slim, supple, unmistakable figure.

"Ah!" ejaculated Buiat.

His face set in uncompromising creases, he went forward again, looking stiffly ahead of him.

"Not my friend M. Buiat?" Del Pino stopped short. "This Washington, indeed, supplies the unexpected." He scrutinized the Englishman with smiling eyes that told nothing. "What in the world are you doing here?"

Buiat ignored the cordially outstretched hand.

"Very much what you are, I fancy," he returned, with such conspicuous lack of cordiality on his part that the other's smile broadened and deepened.

"Then you must be amusing yourself very successfully," he commented airily. "For me—my kind friends here provide continually some agreeable diversionment. Mals a propos—you come perchance from S street?" The smile died out of the slanting eyes, which acquired a sudden metallic glint. "How is the charming Miss Bancroft?"

For an instant Buiat contemplated the Italian somberly, and then, turning on his heel, "You will probably have an opportunity soon of judging for yourself," he rejoined curtly. "Good afternoon." And he strode on with a somewhat unnecessarily martial tread.

Why in the world was Del Pino hanging around here? That was a question that was agitating him as he tramped down the avenue.

Annette was an uncommon good sort; with unwonted enthusiasm the Englishman admitted that, even though his loyalty, his irrepressible pride in the woman he had loved for so long, told him that the girl's modest attractions could not be considered in the running with Gussie's.

Gerald thought he understood what foreigners of Del Pino's stamp admired in women, which made it seem all the more mysterious to him that this man—in fact that any man, whom Mrs. Waring delighted to honor, should have the opportunity, let alone the inclination, to appreciate Annette Bancroft.

What ax did the Italian expect to grind in S street? Was he playing a double game with two women, or—a very alert look came into Gerald's eyes—was he out of it entirely as far as one of them was concerned? Could it be possible that, even at this the eleventh hour, with everything in his favor, the Prince del Pino had been turned down?

Buiat reached this overwhelming question point and Dupont Circle simultaneously, and stood a moment considering the situation; then, half mechanically, he turned into Massachusetts avenue. He walked rapidly, with an absorbed look on his grave face, his rather slow mind grappling with a problem that was bewilderingly enough. Why should Mrs. Waring's accepted lover have called on Annette Bancroft twice within three days—unless—was he not Mrs. Waring's accepted lover?

Gerald's steps unconsciously slackened. Half a dozen doors away from him loomed up a white exterior of ornate lines, an exterior with which, though Gerald had never crossed its threshold, he seemed oddly familiar.

"I suppose," he muttered, consulting his watch interestedly, "that it would be better form to stop in there for a few minutes! One likes to do the decent thing."

tated again in front of the imposing door of Mrs. Waring's house, as diffident and self-distrustful as if he were the humblest book agent, instead of the possessor of unquestioned rank and several millions of good English pounds sterling.

"It's ridiculous," he called here under the circumstances "I told myself sternly. And then, 'Perhaps,' she'll be sorry when I tell her the news from England."

And buoyed up by sudden hopefulness Gerald Buiat rang the bell.

CHAPTER XI.

Dinner at Chevy Chase was nearing its close.

Along the broad, trellised verandas, hung with Chinese lanterns and vivid posters, were dotted the small, round tables, each surrounded by half a dozen members and their guests, whose chatter rose interruptedly.

Looking around him, his impressionable senses pleasantly thrilled by the light, the color, the movement of the gay scene, the mock Prince del Pino felt an exhilaration, a rich enjoyment of the present, which was not entirely due to the champagne he had drunk.

This was to be his last night—he told himself that, as he had many a time before during his Washington week, with the secret consciousness that the morrow would find him still on the stage, playing his part to the same appreciative audience.

Like most successful actors, Ludovic Sarto had become dependent on the glare of the footlights. He really could not tear himself away, could not shake up his mind to give up the part which had become second nature to him.

Seated at Mrs. Waring's right, with five other chosen spirits surrounding her table, himself the bright, particular luminary of the occasion, the mock prince kept the talk and laughter up to concert pitch, while efficient waiters kept him supplied with the delicacies which his avaricious soul craved, while on every side stretched vistas very grateful to the eye of the exiled European.

"One could almost fancy oneself at a Parisian cafe in the Bois," he acknowledged, with a reminiscent sigh.

Gussie met his glance smilingly. Indeed, her attention had been pretty obviously consecrated to him throughout the entire meal, much to the disgust of her host, a stodgy Senator, at whose right hand she sat.

"Yes, it is a bit like Paris," she assented, in answer to the other remark. "The open-air restaurant effect, and then the cosmopolitan type of the crowd!"

"The crowd!" echoed the mock prince. He shrugged his shoulders, lowering his voice significantly, then, in rapid French, "Must there always be the crowd? Can one never see you alone?" His heavy eyes met hers for the fraction of a minute.

"Remember, I am to drive you back in my motor!"

Gussie's answer was drowned in the sudden rattle of chairs as the people at the tables rose to their feet.

"No, I shall not forget!" she smiled at him over her shoulder, moving off and leading the way towards the veranda steps.

A moment later the little party were out on the lawn, grouped under the dense shadow of a copper beech, its rustling tops blotting the night sky. Settling himself some distance from Mrs. Waring, now tete-a-tete with her host, Sarto leaned back lazily in the wide garden chair, a curiously sardonic smile on his lips, as he watched the Senator eagerly making the most of Gussie's brief attention.

How little he imagined—this man of politics and money—that, under the Prince del Pino's mask, a very humble rival had already distanced him! How little the woman opposite realized that her hopes, inclinations and ambitions were all centered on—her ex-chauffeur!

During the whole course of Sarto's present perilous career never had his star seemed more in the ascendant, never had the winning cards seemed more certainly in his grasp, than at that very moment, when fate, in the person of a middle-aged Russian diplomat, was pursuing him all unconsciously over the Chevy Chase lawn.

"Ah, Meeses Wareng!"

At the sound of the familiar sibilant tones, Sarto leaned forward with a start, hardly able to believe his eyes and his ears. For, standing under the beech tree only a few feet away, shaking hands effusively with Gussie, was a lithe, well-known shadow.

"Well, you are a gad-about!" Mrs. Waring was ejaculating. "One minute in Newport, the next in Washington, and welcome everywhere. Prince!" she raised her voice. "Here is a joyful surprise. Your long-lost friend Count Souravieff!"

(To be continued.)

Her Experience.

"After this I shall use safety razors," declared Mr. Stubb, with much emphasis.

"They are no good, John," scoffed Mrs. Stubb.

"No good? What do you know about them?"

"A great deal. I tried to sharpen a lead pencil with that new one you bought and it wouldn't even make a dent."

Stationary.

"I thought you said if I gave you a good meal you would work like a horse?" demanded the irate housewife.

"Dat's just what I am doing, mum," replied the dusty tramp.

"But you haven't moved all afternoon!"

"Well, you see, mum, I meant a saw-horse. Dey never do move."

Economical.

"He bought one of those door mats with the word, 'Welcome' on it."

"Well?"

"Well, his wife can't get him to wipe his feet on it."

"I wonder why not?"

"He says he don't like to wear out his welcome."—Houston Post.

The Sharp Child.

"Edmund is the smartest child I ever saw," boasted the fond mother. "He is as keen as a razor."

"Yes," spoke up grumpy grandpa, "and he reminds me of a razor."

"In what way?"

"Why, he needs strapping."



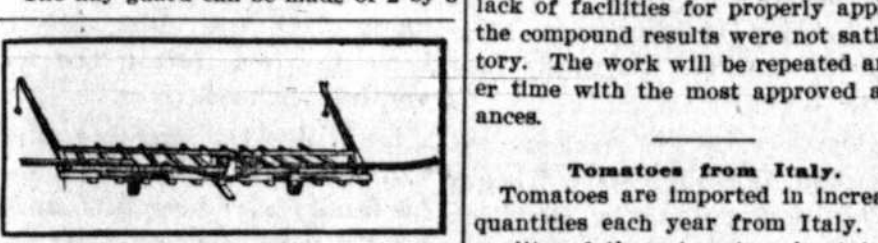
Eradicating Wild Mustard.

One of the most pestiferous weeds in the wild mustard, but recent experiments in Wisconsin seem to give promise that it may be quite easily and cheaply exterminated. It has been known for several years that spraying a field with blue vitriol would kill mustard without injuring the grain which is growing. But the attendant expense has been the chief objection to a wide use. The Wisconsin station has been making some tests with copperas, or iron sulphate, that indicate that it is quite as effective as the bluestone, and cheaper, as 60 cents will furnish enough to treat an acre. Similar successful experiments have been made with copperas by the Cornell station. Some three years ago the California station tried spraying with blue vitriol to hold in check mustard on its cereal plantings at Yuba City and came to the same conclusions as did the Wisconsin station. At Davis during the present season experiments in a limited way were tried with copperas, but owing to the lack of facilities for properly applying the compound results were not satisfactory. The work will be repeated another time with the most approved appliances.

A Sweep Rake.

The two main pieces in the frame of the sweep are made of 2 1/2 by 4 inch pine scantling; they are 12 feet long and about 20 inches apart. The teeth are made of 2 by 4 inch scantling, and are 9 feet long; they are beveled on the lower side to slide over uneven ground. The arms for hitching the whiffle trees to should project about 2 feet 6 inches over the end of the sweep; these are made of 2 by 5 inch stuff. The guide-arms should be 9 feet long by 2 1/2 by 3 inches. Each has about a foot of chain with a ring on the end to fasten to the breast strap of the harness.

The hay guard can be made of 2 by 3 inch stuff; this is raised about a foot above the sweep to keep the hay from sliding back too far over the sweep. It should be braced about four feet from each end.



The wheels are 18 inches in diameter; and a piece of inch gas pipe is used for an axle. It is clamped to the teeth, two pins with washers being used to keep the wheels from sliding sideways and rubbing against the teeth.

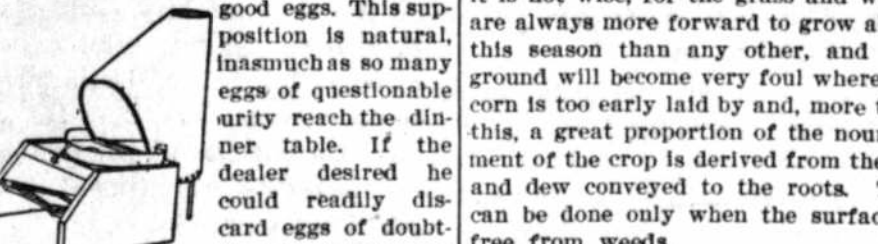
The piece projecting at the back under the sweep should extend about two feet; it is beveled like a sleigh runner; it is to keep the teeth from raising too high where riding on the empty sweep.

In hitching horses to a sweep that have never been used on one a person can get best results by tying the halter shank to the end of the guide-arms and making both lines the same length on the harness; then fasten one line to each ring of the bit. When it is desired to turn the horses to the right, simply hold the off horse back, and drive the high one ahead, and he will naturally swing around to the right.

In drawing a sweep load of hay on to the stacker draw it as far ahead as possible, then back the horses and raise ends of teeth, and drive ahead again; this will pack the hay on the stacker and less of it is apt to fall back on the ground when being raised to the stack. The most convenient size of stack to build is 16 feet wide by about 28 feet long.—Montreal Star.

Simple Egg Tester.

The average person evidently imagines that it is impossible for the dealer to distinguish between bad eggs and good eggs. This supposition is natural, inasmuch as so many eggs of questionable purity reach the dinner table. If the dealer desired he could readily discard doubtful eggs of doubtful age, as there are numerous devices for testing them. One of the most recent is shown in the accompanying illustration, patented by a Minnesota farmer.



It consists of a wooden frame or casing at the top of which is a leather support for the eggs, the latter resting in flexible apertures. In the bottom of the casing is an inclined mirror. Mounted on the upper part of the frame is a light-reflecting hood in which is placed a lamp or other suitable illuminant. In operation eggs are placed over the aperture, and the light falling on the eggs will cast a shadow upon the mirror if they are unsound. The soundness of the eggs is indicated by the clearness of the light that falls through them upon the mirror.

Learn How to Sell.

Alone the farmer has no more chance with the market combine than a rabbit has with a hungry bulldog. Collectively he may hold his own and get a fair price for his produce. Figure a bit. Five cents a bushel added to the price of wheat means a gain of \$1 to \$1.50 per acre. One-half a cent per pound means a gain of \$5 in every 1,000 pounds of beef or pork or mutton. Co-operation in selling will bring these advances and more. Twenty-five cents a bushel added to the sweet potato crop in four years has raised the growers of Tidewater County, Virginia, from poverty to respectable wealth. Southern cotton growers have made \$3,000,000 a year clear profit above the average by sticking together. Organization is the "big stick" of commerce and it is time for farmers to learn to use it.

Sulphur for Rats.

It is said that if sulphur is sprinkled on the barn floor and through the corn as gathered there will not be a rat or mouse to bother. A pound of sulphur will be sufficient to preserve a large barn of corn.

DRESSED DOG AS BABY.

How a Woman Outwitted Stony-Hearted Street Car Conductors.

This is a real true dog story. He is a pug and a great pet of his mistress, who is very fond of his fine pedigree. One day she discovered that Teddy could not see as well as usual. She felt as sad as if he were a brother or sister and a famous oculist was consulted, who told her to bring her pet dog to him.

They started, but a great obstacle presented itself. Conductor after conductor insisted that the dog should not ride on his car, says the Portland Oregonian; so that it was only after getting on and off about a dozen times that the doctor's office was reached.

Teddy was as quiet as he could be while having his eyes examined, and his mistress was told she must bring him every day for a month, and all would be done for him that was possible. So Teddy's mistress went to a neighbor who had a small baby and borrowed an outfit that was not too dainty. Teddy kept very quiet while being dressed in the long white dress, then a cloak and muslin cap, and over the face a long white veil.

Thus they started. Immediately upon entering a car, if it was filled, up would jump a man to give the woman carrying a little baby a good seat. Teddy never wagged his little curled-up tail once, neither did he bark.

Each day the trip was taken with the same result—a good seat and a very quiet baby.

One day the doctor's office was filled with people waiting their turn, when a woman turned politely to Teddy's mistress and said: "My turn comes next and I will wait for you on account of your baby. It is so very tiresome to wait with a baby."

The doctor opened his door at that moment and called them both in his private office. He said: "I will show you the very best patient I have," and took Teddy carefully in his arms. He threw back the white veil and disclosed the dog's little pug nose and a pert little face looking out cutely from under the frills of the cap.

Teddy can see pretty well out of one eye now. His mistress expected a huge bill for the expert's service, but instead she received a receipted bill from the good doctor with a note saying that, as Teddy was the first patient he had ever treated of royal dog blood, he esteemed it a great honor to have been the means of helping him.

TALKS ON ADVERTISING

Advertising, says Lily Herald Frost in the St. Louis Globe-Democrat, is the lance with which the modern crusader, known as the business agent, invades the world of commerce. And an extraordinarily effective weapon it is, as the breakfast food people and the patent medicine houses well know.

The man who doesn't advertise is soon a derelict, as idle and useless as a painted ship upon a painted ocean. When the advertiser census his labor it is then that the receiver gets busy. It is when advertising dominates literature that one feels like protesting. The commercial spirit rules the reading world and thrusts its volumes upon it with a wealth of encomiums and a persistency that usually win.

By such judicious exploitation books are sold by the thousands. Their names are seen everywhere, in shop windows, on billboards, placarded along with brands of cigars or some superior make of whisky. And they are accorded such high sounding phrases of merit, of cleverness, of dramatic possibilities, that, backed by the author's name and the illustrator's art, they present such visions of delight that ever curious mortals must buy them just to satisfy their curiosity.

On a New Footing.

Absalom Foote, an eccentric old gentleman who had grown tired of life in the city, decided to move to some smaller town, free from the road of traffic, the bustle and confusion of the thronging multitude, where he could end his days tranquilly, as became a man of his age. In casting about for a location, his eye chanced to light upon the advertisement in a village paper of one Thomas R. Foote, who wanted to dispose of his boot and shoe store at a bargain, having made up his mind to remove to the city.

"That's the very thing," he said. "Selling shoes is a nice, easy occupation. It will give me just enough to do to keep me from stagnating, and it won't wear me out with overwork. I'll investigate it. It's queer, though, that his name is Foote, my name is Foote, he wants to come to the city and I want to go to the country."

A visit to the little town decided him. He liked its appearance and location. He was pleased, moreover, with "Foote's Shoe Store" and bought it, wood will and all, at a bargain.

"Well," said the other Mr. Foote, "you won't have to change the sign."

"No," he answered, slowly. "I'll just add a little to it."

The next day he added this, just below the sign: "This place has changed feet."

When a man moves into a western town, the thing that surprises him most is the great number of men who do nothing all day but stand on street corners and exchange fool opinions.