

**SERIAL STORY**

**The FLYING MERCURY**

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**SYNOPSIS.**

The story opens on Long Island, near New York City, where Miss Emily French, a relative of Ethan French, manufacturer of the celebrated "Mercury" automobile, loses her way. The car has stopped and her cousin, Dick French, is too muddled with drink to direct it right. They meet another car which is run by a professional racer named LeStrange. The latter fixes up the French car and directs Miss French how to proceed homeward. Ethan French has disheveled his son, who has disappeared. He informs Emily plainly that he would like to have her marry Dick, who is a good-natured but irresponsible fellow. It appears that a partner of Ethan French wanting an expert to race with the "Mercury" at auto events, has engaged LeStrange, and at the French factory Emily encounters the young man. They refer pleasantly to their meeting when Dick comes along and recognizes the young racer. Dick likes the way LeStrange ignores their first meeting when he appeared in a dead-end street. LeStrange tells Emily that he will try to educate her indifferent cousin as an automobile expert. Dick undertakes his business schooling under the tutelage of LeStrange.

**CHAPTER V.—(Continued).**

"Well?" Dick at last queried.  
"Have Mr. Bailey do nothing at all," was the deliberate reply. "There is an etiquette of subordination, I believe—this is Mr. French's factory. I've done my part and we'll think no more of the matter. I may be wrong but I am more than grateful to Miss French."

"That's all you're going to do?"  
"Yes. I wish you would not sit there."  
"I'm tired; I won't fall in, and I want to think. We've been a lot together this spring. LeStrange; I don't like this business about the steering gear. Do you go down to the Beach tomorrow?"

"Tonight. Tomorrow I must put in practicing on the track. I would have been down today if there had not been so much to do here. Are you coming with me, or not until the evening of the start?"  
Dick stirred uncomfortably.  
"I don't want to come at all, thank you. I saw you race once."  
"You had better get used to it," LeStrange quietly advised. "The day may come when there is no one to take your place. This factory will be yours and you will have to look after your own interests. I wish you would come down and represent the company at this race."

"I haven't the head for it."  
"I do not agree with you."  
Their eyes met in a long regard. Here, in the crowded room of workers, the ceaseless uproar shut in their conversation with a walled completeness of privacy.  
"I'm not sure whether you know it, LeStrange, but you've got me all stirred up since I met you," the younger man confessed plaintively. "You're different from other fellows and you've made me different. I'd rather be around the factory than anywhere else I know, now. But honestly I like you too well to watch you race."  
"I want you to come."  
"I—"

One of the men with a vessel of white, heaving molten metal was trying to pass through the narrow aisle. Dick broke his sentence to rise in hasty avoidance, and his foot slipped in a puddle of oil on the floor.  
It was so brief in happening that only the workman concerned saw the accident. As Dick fell backward, LeStrange sprang forward and caught him, fairly snatching him from the greedy teeth. There was the rending of fabric, a gasping sob from Dick, and reeling from the recoil LeStrange was sent staggering against a flying wheel next in line.

The workman set down his burden with a reckless endangering further trouble, active too late.  
"Mr. LeStrange!" he cried.  
But LeStrange had already recovered himself, his right arm crossed with a scorched and bleeding bar where it had touched the glittering wheel, and the two young men were standing opposite each other in safety.  
"You are not hurt?" was the first question.  
"I? I ought to be, but I'm not. Come to a surgeon, LeStrange— Oh, you told me not to sit there!"  
LeStrange glanced down at the surface wound, then quickly back at the two pallid faces.

"Go on to your work, Peters," he directed. "I'm all right." And as the man slowly obeyed, "Now will you take my advice and come to the race with me, French?"  
"Race! You'd race with that arm?"  
"Yes. Are you coming with me?"  
Shaken and tremulous, Dick passed a damp hand across his forehead.  
"I think you're mad to stand talking here. Come to the office, for heaven's

sake. And, I'd be ground up there, if you hadn't caught me," he looked toward the jaws sullenly shredding and reshredding a strip of cloth from his sleeve. "I'll do anything you want."  
"Will you?" LeStrange flashed quickly. He flung back his head with the resolute setting of expression the other knew so well, his eyes brilliant with a resolve that took no heed of physical discomfort. "Then give me your word that you'll stick to your work here. That is my fear; that the change in you is just a mood you'll tire of some day. I want you to stand up to your work and not drop out disqualified."

"I will," said Dick, subdued and earnest. "I couldn't help doing it—your arm—"  
LeStrange impatiently dragged out his handkerchief and wound it around the cut.  
"Go on."  
"I can't help keeping on; I couldn't go back now. You've got me awake. No one else ever tried, and I was having a good time. It began with liking you and thinking of all you did, and feeling funny alongside of you." He paused, struggling with Anglo-Saxon shyness. "I'm awfully fond of you, old fellow."

The other's gray eyes warmed and cleared. Smiling, he held out his left hand.  
"It's mutual," he assured. "It isn't playing the game to trap you while you are upset like this. But I don't believe you'll be sorry. Come find some one to tie this up for me; I can't have it stiff tomorrow."  
But in spite of his professed haste, LeStrange stopped at the head of the stairs and went back to recover some small object lying on the floor beneath a pool of chilling metal. When he rejoined Dick, it was to linger yet a moment to look back across the teeming room.

"It's worth having, all this," he commented, with the first touch of sadness the other ever had seen in him. "Don't throw it away, French."  
There is usually a surgeon within reach of a factory. When Mr. French passed out to the cart where Emily waited, he passed Dick and the village physician entering. The elder gentleman put on his glasses to survey his nephew's white face.  
"An accident?" he inquired.  
The casual curiosity was sufficiently exasperating, and Dick's nerves were badly gone.  
"Nothing worth mentioning," he snapped. "Just that I nearly fell into



"That isn't Tight Enough, Doc," the machinery and LeStrange has done up his arm pulling me out. That's all."

And he hurried the doctor on without further parley or excuse.  
LeStrange was in the room behind the office, smoking one of Bailey's cigars and listening to that gentleman's vigorous remarks concerning managers who couldn't keep out of their own machinery, the patient not having considered it worth while to explain Dick's share in the mishap. An omission which Dick himself promptly remedied in his anxious contrition.  
Later, when the arm was being swathed in white linen, its owner spoke to his companion of the morning:  
"I hope you didn't annoy Miss French with this trifling matter, as you came in."  
"I didn't speak to her at all, only to my uncle."  
"Very good."

Something in the too-indolent tone roused Dick's usually dormant observation. Startled, he scrutinized LeStrange.  
"Is that why you bothered yourself with me?" he stammered. "Is that why—"  
"Shut up!" warned LeStrange forcibly and inelegantly. "That isn't tight enough, Doc. You know I'm experienced at this sort of thing, and I'm going to use this arm."  
But Dick was not to be silenced in his new enlightenment. When the surgeon momentarily turned away, he leaned nearer, his plump face grim.  
"If I brace up, it won't be for Emily, but for you, Darling LeStrange," he whispered viciously. "She don't want me and I don't want her, that way. I've got over that. And, and—oh, confound it, I'm sorry, old man!"  
"Shut up!" said LeStrange again.  
But though Dick's very sympathy unconsciously showed the hopeless chasm between the racing driver and Miss French, the hurt did not cloud the cordial smile LeStrange sent to mitigate his command.

**CHAPTER VI.**

Emily first heard the full story of the accident that evening, when Dick sat opposite her on the veranda and gave the account in frank anxiety and dejection.  
"We're going down tonight on the

nine o'clock train," he added in conclusion. "Tomorrow morning he'll spend practicing on the track, and tomorrow evening at 6 the race starts. And LeStrange starts crippled because I am a clumsy idiot. He laughs at me, but—he'd do that anyhow."  
"Yes," agreed Emily. "He would do that anyhow." Her eyes were wide and terrified, the little hands she clasped in her lap were quite cold. "I wish, I wish he had never come to this place."

"Oh, you do?" Dick said oddly. "Maybe he will, too, before he gets through with us. We're a nasty lot, we Frenches; a lot of blue-blooded snobs without any red blood in us. Are you going to say good-by to me? I won't be home until it's over."  
She looked at him, across the odoriferous dusk slowly silencing as the moon rose.  
"You are going to be with him?"  
Dick smoothed his leggings before standing up, surveying his strict motor costume with a gloomy pride not to be concealed.

"Yes; I'm representing our company. LeStrange might want some backing if any disputes turned up. Uncle Ethan nearly had a fit when Bailey told him what I was going to do; he called me Richard for the first time in my life. I guess I'll be some good yet, if every one except LeStrange did think I was a chump."  
"I am very sure you will," she answered gently. "Good-by, Dick; you look very nice."  
When he reached the foot of the steps, her voice recalled him, as she stood leaning over the rail.  
"Dick, you could not make him give it up, not race this time?"  
He stared up at her white figure.  
"No, I could not. Don't you suppose I tried?"  
"I suppose you did," she admitted, and went back to her seat.

The June night was very quiet. Once a sleepy bird stirred in the honeysuckle vines and chirped through the dark. Far below the throb of a motor passed down the road, dying away again to leave silence. Suddenly Emily French hid her face on the arm of her chair and the tears overflowed.  
There was no consciousness of time while that inarticulate passion of dread spent itself. But it was nearly half an hour later when she started up at the echo of a light step on the gravel path, dashing her handkerchief across her eyes.

It was incredible, but it was true: LeStrange himself was standing before her at the foot of the low stairs, the moonlight glinting across his uncovered bronze head and bright, clear face.  
"I beg pardon for trespass, Miss French," he said, "but your cousin tells me he has been saying a great deal of nonsense to you about this race, and that you were so very good as to feel some concern regarding it. Really, I had to run up and set that right; I couldn't leave you to be annoyed by Mr. French's nerves. Will you forgive me?"

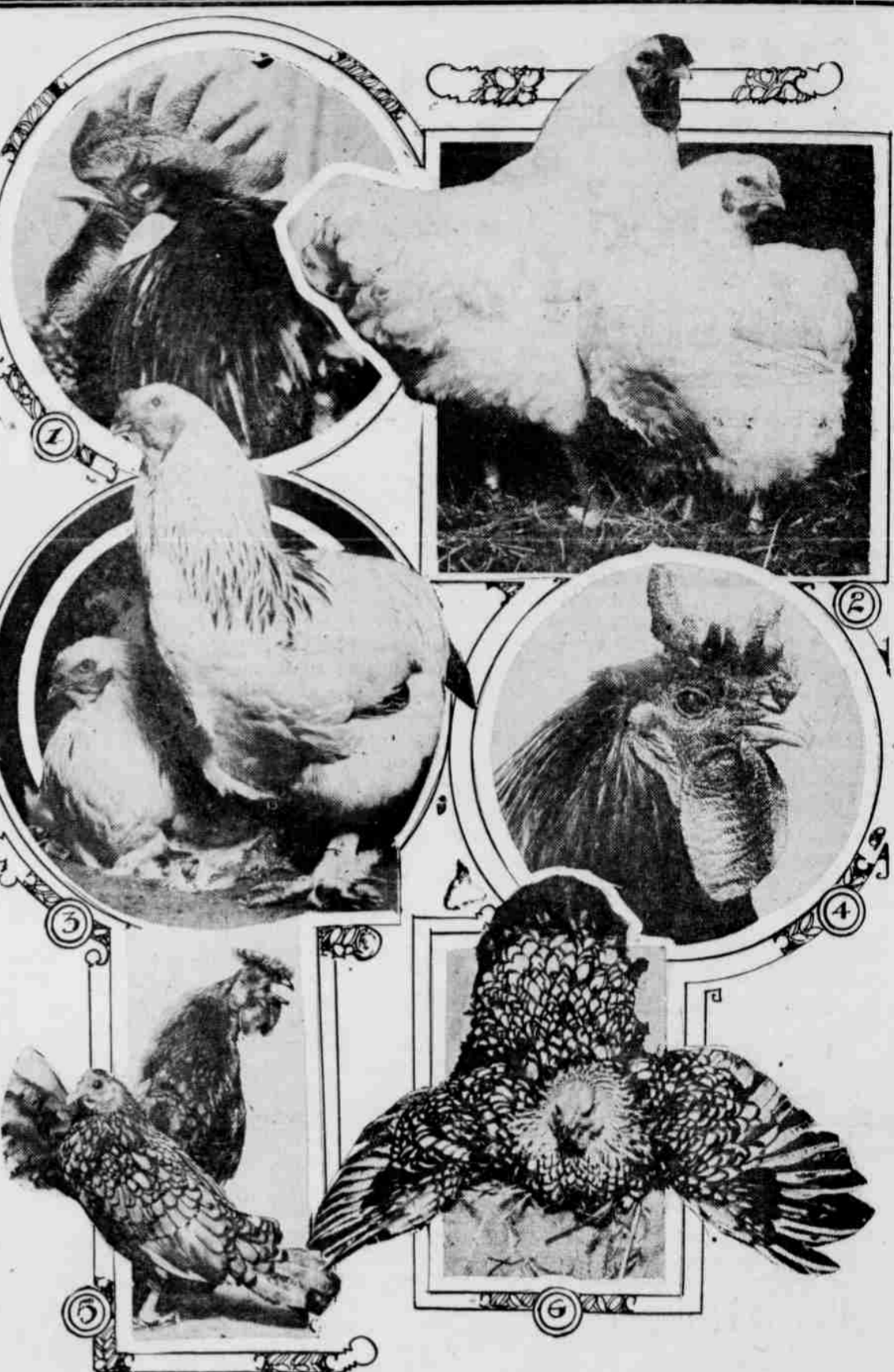
Like sun through a mist his blithe voice cleaved through her distress. Before the tranquil sanity of his regard, her painted terrors suddenly showed as the artificial canvas scenes of a stage, unreal, untrue.  
"It was like you to come," she answered, with a shaking sigh that was half sob. "I was frightened, yes."  
"There is no cause. A dozen other men take the same chance as Rupert and I; the driver who alternates with me, for instance. This is our life."  
"Your arm—"  
"Is well enough." He laughed a little. "You will see many a bandaged arm before the twenty-four hours are up; few of us finish without a scratch or strain or blister. This is a man's game, but it's not half so destructive as foot-ball. You wished me good luck for the Georgia race; will you repeat the honor before I go back to French?"

"I wish you," she said unsteadily, "every kind of success, now and always. You saved Dick today—of all else you have done for him and for me I have not words to speak. But it made it harder to bear the thought of your hurt and risk from the hurt, when I knew that I had sent Dick there, who caused it."  
(TO BE CONTINUED.)

**Some London Statistics.**  
In a volume of more than 600 pages the London County Council presents statistics of much interest. The metropolitan district, made up of the cities, towns and boroughs which comprise the real London, had a population of 7,252,963 in 1910, occupying an area of a little more than 692 square miles. Only 14.8 per cent. of the total number of inhabitants, or 670,110 persons, were entitled to vote in parliamentary elections, and of these 74.6 per cent. went to the polls in the election of December, 1910, a falling off from the 84.3 per cent. which voted in January of that year. In 1909 there were 116,559 births, a decline since 1881 from 24.3 to 24.2 a thousand of population. The death rate fell from 19.8 in 1900 to 14.7 a thousand. Phthisis and pneumonia were responsible for more than 13,000 deaths.

**More Curious Than Comfortable.**  
The Mashukulumb natives of northwestern Rhodesia have a most wonderful headdress, which is made up of cuttings of hair from other boys' heads mixed with mud and grease. Sometimes these topknots are studded with all sorts of curiosities, such as beads, bits of broken crockery, brass paper-fasteners (the latter generally stolen by the native messengers from the native commissioner's office), feathers, and so forth. The result forms one of the most curious coiffures in the world.

**FOURTH POULTRY SHOW IS BIG SUCCESS**  
A Fine Exhibit of Feathered Beauties—Competition Is Sharper Than Ever—Rock Cockerels More Numerous Than Ever—Some New Species Shown for First Time



A FEW OF THE ARISTOCRATS WHO OPENED THE EYES OF VISITORS AT THE ANNUAL POULTRY AND PET STOCK SHOW IN PORTLAND.

No. 1—First Prize Single Comb Brown Leghorn Cockerel, Warren Gray, Owner, Jefferson, Or. No. 2—White Wyandottes, J. R. Hamilton, Owner, Metzger, Or. No. 3—Two Light Brahma Capons, Edward Shearer, Owner, Estacada, Or. No. 4—Sicilian Buttercup Cocks, A. N. Wetterberg, Owner, Hillsdale, Or. No. 5—Golden Seabright Bantams, Sorenson Bros., Owners, Greenham, Or. No. 6—Silver-Laced Wyandotte, Isaac Staples, Owner, Portland.

**POULTRY SHOW DRAWS CROWD**

Fourth Annual Exhibit Most Successful of Any

Poultry, Guinea Pigs, Pigeons, Belgian Hares, Etc., Make Most Interesting Variety.

Class! That is the word. The Fourth Annual Poultry show of the Oregon Poultry and Pet Stock association, held in Portland, December 9-14, was the best yet. It was the most interesting and most successful ever held in the state.  
The entries were very large. About 1500 birds were shown, and nearly 250 individual exhibitors had birds for scoring and prizes. Besides chickens, which were shown in 33 classes, there were some fancy stock, Guinea pigs, pigeons, Belgian hares, etc. The appliances exhibits were also exceptionally good and a study of them was well worth while to poultrymen and those interested in the business. Modern coops, up to date feeding apparatus and all sorts of foods and remedies were shown.

**Rain and Snow Aid Wheat.**  
Davenport, Wash.—November, as observed by the station at Davenport, had a mean temperature of 36.9 degrees, which is five and a half degrees warmer than the mean for the same month in 1911. Rain or light snow-fall on 13 days of the month netted 2.42 inches of water, every particle of which went into the ground and aided greatly in bolstering the winter wheat already sprouted. In November of 1911 the rainfall was 1.8 inches, brought on by the heavy snows of that month.

**Bandon Women Plan Club.**  
Bandon, Or.—At a well-attended meeting of the women of Bandon it was decided to form a woman's auxiliary to the Bandon Commercial club. Mrs. L. P. Sorenson read to the meeting an article from the Oregonian on commercial clubs for women, which reading did much to entice those present. A box factory is being built near here by George Geisendorfer. The bulk of the boxes will be spruce. All modern machinery is being installed and the factory will be one of the most up-to-date on the Coast.

The Plymouth Rocks were most numerous of any single class. In the Rock section there was a really remarkable collection of cockerels—the largest and best ever gathered in the west, and the birds were particularly fine. Entries were made from every part of Oregon and Washington were well represented. Birds from Idaho were also present, and California, too, had representatives. Following the Rocks, the Wyandottes were perhaps next in number. Then came the Leghorns, and then the Rhode Island Reds and Orpingtons. The showing of games was not as heavy as in some past years, but the representatives of both pit games and the big Cornish birds was fair. There was not a large representation of Minorcas either, but excellent birds, both black and white were on exhibition. Among the Mediterranean group the Anconas and Andalians were noted. A good showing of Hamburgs, too, was noted. For the first time in a Portland show the Sicilian Buttercups have been entered. This is a new breed. The combs are cupped, and supposed to resemble the flower for which the birds are named. These birds are Mediterranean, and appear to be larger than most of this group. They are of golden plumage with a peculiar dark mottling. Their owners claim a heavier bird, a better meat and quicker growth than any other fowl in the group, and a very large egg production. They are attracting no little attention among the lovers of new breeds, and

they are handsome in bearing and plumage.  
H. H. Collier, of Tacoma, has the scoring of the American breeds, including the Rocks, Wyandottes, Rhode Island Reds, etc.  
Judge Miller Purvis, of Windle, Idaho, scores the Mediterranean birds. Many fine birds were entered in the show a year ago, and it is a matter of doubt if this year shows any finer birds from an individual standpoint; but, on the other hand, the entries were larger this season, and the grade of birds on the whole higher; there were fewer birds of inferior appearance, and competition was very keen and close.  
Attendance was very good, and a notable influx of school children is one of the most encouraging signs the management has observed. The educational value of poultry exhibitions was considerable from an intensely practical standpoint.  
The accommodations were excellent, and the room at East First and Morrison streets was large and well ventilated.  
Twenty-five silver cups, as well as the Page trophy and many articles of beauty and value, were given as special premiums and sweepstakes.  
Following is a partial list list of prizes awarded:

The Corn Products company of New York is accused by dealers of making written contracts for rebates in violation of the Sherman anti-trust law.

**Oregon Exhibit Admired.**  
Portland—"People here are showing active interest and are eager to learn about Oregon and its opportunities," is the message coming to the Portland Commercial club from O. E. Freytag, in charge of the Portland exhibit at the Minneapolis and Chicago Land shows this year. "Much interest is shown by the large crowds that attend the daily lectures and picture shows. Personal talks with people in the crowds have developed the fact that in almost every case the minds of inquirers are turned toward the farm.

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