

# Between Two Fires

By ANTHONY HOPE

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

## CHAPTER IX.—(Continued.)

I had nothing left to say. I fell back in my chair, and gazed at the Colonel. At the same moment a sound of rapid wheels struck on my ears. Then I heard the sweet, clear voice I knew so well saying:

"I'll just disturb him for a moment, Mr. Jones. I want him to tear himself from work for a day, and come for a ride."

She opened my door, and came swiftly in. On seeing the Colonel she took in the position, and said to that gentleman: "Have you told him?"

"I have just done so, Signorina," he replied.

I had not energy enough to greet her; so she also sat down uninvited, and took off her gloves—not lazily, like the Colonel, but with an air as though she would, if a man, take off her coat, to meet the crisis more energetically.

At last I said, with conviction: "He's a wonderful man! How did you find it out, Colonel?"

"Had Johnny Carr to dine," said that worthy.

"You don't mean he trusted Johnny?"

"Odd, isn't it?" said the Colonel. "With his experience, too. He might have known Johnny was an idiot. I suppose there was no one else."

"He knew," said the Signorina, "anyone else in the place would betray him; he knew Johnny wouldn't if he could help it. He underrated your powers, Colonel."

"Well," said I, "I can't help it, can I? My directors will lose. The bondholders will lose. But how does it hurt me?"

The Colonel and the Signorina both smiled gently.

"You do it very well, Martin," said the former, "but it will save time if I state that both Signorina Nugent and myself are possessed of the details regarding the——" (the Colonel paused, and stroked his mustache).

"The second loan," said the Signorina. I was less surprised at this, recollecting certain conversations.

"Ah, and how did you find that out?" I asked.

"She told me," said the Colonel, indicating his fair neighbor.

"And may I ask how you found it out, Signorina?"

"The President told me," said that lady.

"Well, as you both know all about it, it's no good keeping up pretenses. It's very kind of you to come and warn me."

"You dear good Mr. Martin," said the Signorina, "our motives are not purely those of friendship."

"Why, how does it matter to you?"

"Simply this," said she, "the bank and its excellent manager own most of the debt. The Colonel and I own the rest. If it is repudiated, the bank loses; yes, but the manager and the Colonel and the Signorina Nugent are lost!"

"I didn't know this," I said, rather bewildered.

"Yes," said the Colonel, "when the first loan was raised I lent him \$100,000. We were thick then, and I did it in return for my rank and my seat in the Chamber. Since then I've bought up some more shares."

"You got them cheap, I suppose?" said I.

"Yes," he replied, "I averaged them at about 75 cents the five-dollar share."

"And what do you hold now, nominal?"

"Three hundred thousand dollars," said he, shortly.

"I understand your interest in the matter. But you, Signorina?"

The Signorina appeared a little embarrassed. But at last she broke out:

"I don't care if I do tell you. When I decided to stay here I had \$50,000. He persuaded me to put it all into his horrid debt. Oh! wasn't it mean, Mr. Martin?"

The President had certainly combined business and pleasure in this matter.

"Disgraceful!" I remarked.

"And if that goes, I am penniless—penniless. And there's poor aunt. What will she do?"

"Never mind your aunt," said the Colonel, rather rudely. "Well," he went on, "you see we're in the same boat with you, Martin."

"Yes; and we shall soon be in the same deep water," said I.

"Not at all," said the Colonel. "Financial probity is the backbone of a country. Are we to stand by and see Auretaland enter on the shameful path of repudiation?"

"Never!" cried the Signorina, leaping up with sparkling eyes. "Never!"

She looked enchanting. But business is business; and I said again:

"What are you going to do?"

"We are going, with your help, Martin, to prevent this national disgrace. We are going"—he lowered his voice, uselessly, for the Signorina struck in, in a high merry tone, waving her gloves over her head, with these remarkable words:

"Hurrah for the Revolution! Hip! hip! hurrah!"

The Signorina looked like a Goddess of Freedom in high spirits and a Paris bonnet. She broke forth into the "Marsellaise."

"For mercy's sake, be quiet!" said McGregor, in a hoarse whisper. "If they hear you! Stop, I tell you, Christina!"

"Kindly unfold your plan, Colonel," I said. "I am aware that out here you think little of revolutions, but to a newcomer they appear to be matters requiring some management. You see we are only three."

"I have the army with me," said he, grandly.

"In the outer office?" asked I, indulging in a sneer at the dimensions of the Auretaland forces.

"Look here, Martin," he said, scowling, "if you're coming in with us, keep your jokes to yourself."

"Don't quarrel, gentlemen," said the Signorina. "It's a waste of time. Tell him the plan, Colonel."

I saw the wisdom of this advice, so I said:

"Your pardon, Colonel. But won't this repudiation be popular with the army? If he lets the debt slide, he can pay them."

"Exactly," said he. "Hence we must get at them before that aspect of the case strikes them. They are literally starving, and for ten dollars a man they would make Satan himself President. Have you got any money, Martin?"

"Yes," said I, "a little."

"How much?"

"Ten thousand," I replied; "I was keeping it for the interest."

"Ah, you won't want it now."

"Indeed I shall—for the second loan, you know."

"Look here, Martin; give me that ten thousand for the troops. Stand in with us, and the day I become President I'll give you back your \$300,000. Just look where you stand now. I don't want to be rude, but isn't it a case of——"

"Some emergency?" said I, thoughtfully. "Yes, it is. But where do you suppose you're going to get \$300,000, to say nothing of your own shares?"

He drew his chair closer to mine, and leaning forward, said:

"He's never spent the money. He's got it somewhere; much the greater part, at least."

"Did Carr tell you that?"

"He didn't know for certain; but he told me enough to make it almost certain. Besides," he added, "we have other reasons for suspecting it. Give me the ten thousand. You shall have your loan back, and, if you like, you shall be minister of finance. We practically know the money's there, don't we, Signorina?"

She nodded assent.

"If we fail?" said I.

He drew a neat little revolver from his pocket, placed it for a moment against his ear, and re-pocketed it.

"Most lucidly explained, Colonel," said I. "Will you give me half an hour to think it over?"

"Yes," he said. "You'll excuse me if I stay in the outer office? Of course I trust you, Martin, but in this sort of thing——"

"All right, I see," said I. "And you, Signorina?"

"I'll wait, too," she said.

They both rose and went out, and I heard them in conversation with Jones. I sat still, thinking hard. But scarcely a moment had passed, when I heard the door behind me open. It was the Signorina. She came in, stood behind my chair, and leaning over, put her arms round my neck. I looked up, and saw her face full of mischief.

"What about the rose, Jack?" she asked.

Bewildered with delight, and believing I had won her, I said:

"Your soldier till death, Signorina."

"Bother death!" said she, saucily. "Nobody's going to die. We shall win, and then——"

"And then," said I, eagerly, "you'll marry me, sweet?"

She quietly stooped down and kissed my lips. Then, stroking my hair, she said:

"You're a nice boy, Jack."

"Christina, you won't marry him?"

"Him?"

"McGregor," said I.

"Jack," said she, whispering now, "I hate him!"

"So do I," I answered promptly. "And if it's to win you, I'll upset a dozen presidents."

"Then you'll do it for me? I like to think you'll do it for me, and not for the money."

"I don't mind the money coming in," I began.

"Mercenary wretch!" she cried. "I didn't kiss you, did I?"

"No," I replied. "You said you would in a minute, when I consented."

"Very neat, Jack," she said. But she went and opened the door and called to McGregor, "Mr. Martin sees no objection to the arrangement, and he will come to dinner to-night, as you suggest, and talk over the details. We're all going to make our fortunes, Mr. Jones," she went on, without waiting for any acceptance of her implied invitation, "and when we've made ours, we'll think about you and Mrs. Jones."

I heard Jones make some noise incoherently suggestive of gratification, for he was as bad as any of us about the Signorina, and then I was left to my reflections. These were less sober than the reader would, perhaps, anticipate. True, I was putting my head into a noose; and if the President's hands ever found their way to the end of the rope, I fancied he would pull it pretty tight. But, again, I was immensely in love, and equally in debt. To a young man, life without love isn't worth much; to a man of any age, in my opinion, life without money isn't worth much; it becomes worth still less when he is held to account for money he ought to have. So I cheerfully entered upon my biggest gamble, holding the stake of life well risked. My pleasure in the

affair was only marred by the enforced partnership of McGregor. There was no help for this, but I knew he wasn't much fonder of me than I of him, and I found myself gently meditating on the friction likely to arise between the new President and his minister of finance, in case our plans succeeded. Still the Signorina hated him, and by all signs she loved me. So I lay back in my chair, and recalled my charmer's presence by whistling the hymn of liberty until it was time to go to lunch.

## CHAPTER X.

The morning meeting had been devoted to principles and to the awakening of enthusiasm; in the evening the conspirators condescended upon details, and we held a prolonged and anxious conference at the Signorina's. Mrs. Carrington was commanded to have a headache after dinner, and retired with it to bed; and from ten till one we sat and conspired. The result of our deliberations was a pretty plan, of which the main outlines were as follows:

This was Tuesday. On Friday night, the Colonel, with twenty determined ruffians (or resolute patriots) previously bound to him, body and soul, by a donation of no less than fifty dollars a man, was to surprise the Golden House, seize the person of the President and all cash and securities on the premises; no killing if it could be avoided, but on the other hand no shilly-shally. McGregor wanted to put the President out of the way at once, as a precautionary measure, but I strongly opposed this proposal, and, finding the Signorina was absolutely inflexible on the same side, he yielded.

I had a strong desire to be present at this midnight surprise, but another duty called for my presence. There was a gala supper at the barracks that evening, to commemorate some incident or other in the national history, and I was to be present and to reply to the toast of "The Commerce of Auretaland." My task was, at all hazards, to keep this party going till the Colonel's job was done, when he would appear at the soldiers' quarters, bribe in hand, and demand their allegiance. Our knowledge of the character of the troops made us regard the result as a certainty, if once the President were a prisoner and the dollars before their eyes. The Colonel and the troops were to surround the officers' messroom, and offer them life and money, or death and destruction. Here again we anticipated their choice with composure. The army was then to be paraded in the Piazza, the town overawed or converted, and, behold, the Revolution was accomplished!

The success of this design entirely depended on its existence remaining a dead secret from the one man we feared, and on that one man being found alone and unguarded at 12 o'clock on Friday night. If he discovered the plot, we were lost. If he took it into his head to attend the supper, our difficulties would be greatly increased. At this point we turned to the Signorina, and I said, briefly:

"This appears to be where you come in, Signorina. Permit me to invite you to dine with his excellency on Friday evening at 8 precisely."

"You mean," she said slowly, "that I am to keep him at home on Friday?"

"Yes," said I. "Is there any difficulty?"

"I do not think there is great difficulty," she said, "but I don't like it; it looks so treacherous."

Of course it did. I didn't like her doing it myself, but how else was the President to be secured?

"Rather late to think of that, isn't it?" asked McGregor, with a sneer. "A revolution won't run on high emotional wheels."

"Think how he jockeyed you about the money," said I, assuming the part of the tempter.

"By the way," said McGregor, "it's understood the Signorina enters into possession of the President's country villa, isn't it?"

Now my poor Signorina had a longing for that choice little retreat, and between resentment for her lost money and a desire for the pretty house, she was sore beset. Left to herself, I believe she would have yielded to her better feelings and spoiled the plot.

"I'll do it, if you'll swear not to hurt him," she said.

"I've promised already," replied the Colonel, sullenly; "I won't touch him, unless he brings it on himself. If he tries to kill me, I suppose I needn't bare my breast to the blow?"

"No, no," I interposed; "I have a regard for his excellency, but we must not let our feelings betray us into weakness. He must be taken—alive and well, if possible—but in the last resort, dead or alive."

"Come, that's more like sense," said the Colonel, approvingly.

The Signorina sighed, but opposed us no longer.

Returning to ways and means, we arranged for communication in case of need during the next three days without the necessity of meeting. My position as the center of financial business in Whittingham made this easy; the passage of bank messengers to and fro would excite little remark, and the messages could easily be so expressed as to reveal nothing to an untrained eye. It was further agreed that on the smallest hint of danger reaching any one of us, the word should at once be passed to the others, and we should rendezvous at the Colonel's "ranch," which lay some seven miles from the town. Thence, in this lamentable case, escape would be more possible.

"And now," said the Colonel, "if Martin will hand over the dollars, I think that's about all."

(To be continued.)

## The Rest She Needed.

"Yes," said Mrs. Popley. "I'm going to take the children away to the country for a month or so."

"You'll take your servant girls with you, of course," said Mrs. Nextora.

"Most assuredly not! I need a rest myself."—Philadelphia Press.



## Blackberry Vinegar.

Put the blackberries into a stone vessel and mash them to a pulp. Add elder vinegar enough to cover it well, stand in the sun twelve hours and all night in the cellar, stir well occasionally during this time, strain and put as many fresh berries in the jar as you took out; pour the strained vinegar over them; wash and set in the sun all day. To each quart of this juice, allow one pint of water and five and one-half pounds of sugar to three pints of the mingled juice and water. Place over a gentle fire and stir until the sugar is dissolved. Heat slowly to boiling, skimming off the scum, and as it fairly boils take off the strain. Bottle while warm and seal the corks with sealing wax, or beeswax and rosin.

## Gooseberry Marmalade.

Four pounds of gooseberries, four oranges, juice of all and rind of two—four pounds of sugar, two pounds of seeded raisins. Stem gooseberries, squeeze juice of oranges and cook skin of two (or the skin of four if flavor of orange is liked) in water until tender. Drain and scrape out the white part. Put the gooseberries into a granite kettle, heat slowly to boiling and cook twenty minutes (add a little water if necessary to keep from sticking). Then add the sugar, orange juice and rind cut fine, and raisins; cook slowly until thick. Seal while hot.

## Banana Fritters.

Cut peeled bananas into halves lengthwise, then across, and dip in fritter batter. Fry in deep hot fat and serve with a lemon sauce. The sauce for fritters should always be clear, and generally no thickening is used, or else a little arrowroot is taken, which makes transparent thickening. Make a syrup by cooking one cup of sugar with five tablespoons of water for eight minutes, and be sure not to cook it longer, for ten or twelve minutes will make it thread. Add one and one-half tablespoons of lemon juice and a rounded teaspoon of butter.

## Scotch Bread.

This sort of bread, or, more correctly speaking, cake, is rich, and must be kept several days or a week to be at its best. Work one cup of butter and one-half cup of soft light brown sugar together, then knead or mix in one-half pound of bread flour, which will be about two cups. Set in the ice box to chill, and roll one-third of an inch thick. Cut in squares, scatter some caraway seeds over the top and press in lightly, then bake in a slow oven. If preferred, the caraway seeds can be scattered through the dough, or they may be omitted.

## Rice and Peas.

To take the place of meat there is nothing more satisfactory than rice and peas. Both are boiled separately and then the two are put together and cooked with a bit of pork, butter and pepper. An entire dinner may be made of curried chicken if it is served after the West and East Indian mode. A little grated fresh coconut, a bit of thinly sliced smoked salmon, gherkins, chutney and pickled beet root give a distinct flavor and relish to it and take the place of vegetables and salad.

## Sponge Layer Cake.

Beat the yolks and whites of five eggs separately, stirring into the yolk a cupful of powdered sugar and a small teaspoonful of prepared flour. Beat for twenty minutes, then add two teaspoonfuls of lemon juice and the stiffened whites, stirring these last in very lightly. Turn into greased layer-cake tins and bake in a steady oven.

## Sponge Cake.

One scant cup of sugar, two eggs, whites and yolks beaten separately, one cup of flour sifted with two teaspoonfuls of baking powder; a half cup of boiling water. Beat the yolks for fifteen minutes with the sugar; then add the whites, the flour, and, last of all, the water. Bake in a loaf tin.

## Speed Peaches.

Peel and slice peaches and weigh them. To five pounds of fruit allow two pounds of granulated sugar and a small cup of vinegar, with two ounces each of whole cloves and broken stick cinnamon. Put over the fire and boil until very thick. Put into heated jelly glasses and seal.

## Grape Pie.

Wash and stem ripe, acid grapes. To two cups of the fruit add a cup of granulated sugar, mix well and put into a pie plate lined with puff paste. Fill on an upper crust and bake. Serve cold with sugar strewn over the top of the pie.

## Apple Taffy.

Boil together a pound of granulated sugar and a teaspoonful of cold water until a little dropped into cold water is brittle. Wipe each apple, run a skewer through it, dip in the scalding syrup and lay on waxed paper to dry.

## General Debility

Day in and day out there is that feeling of weakness that makes a burden of itself. Food does not strengthen. Sleep does not refresh. It is hard to do, hard to bear, what should be easy,—vitality is on the ebb, and the whole system suffers. For this condition take

## Hood's Sarsaparilla

It vitalizes the blood and gives vigor and tone to all the organs and functions. In usual liquid form or in chocolate tablets known as Sarsatabs, 100 doses \$1.

## Advertisements.

The first newspaper advertisement appeared in Great Britain in 1642. In Greece advertising was done by public criers. The first printed advertisement in England was got up by the celebrated printer Caxton. It announced the completion of a book called "The Pyer of Salisbury."

The ancient Egyptians, Greeks and Romans were the first to use bill-posters, some of which were found on the walls of buildings in Pompeii. It was not until the eighteenth century that magazine and newspaper advertising became the recognized medium between manufacturer and buyer.

Mothers will find Mrs. Winslow's Soothing Syrup the best remedy to use for their children during the teething period.

## Curbing His Rapture.

Ardent Lover—Blanche, you are the loveliest girl in the world!

His Intellectual Sweetheart—While I realize that such a remark as that Gerald is based on inadequate knowledge, I am disposed to regard it as indicating the full measure and scope of your acquaintance with the world thus far, and as such I accept it and hasten to express my grateful appreciation.

## Father and Son.

"Father," said the college man, on his return to the farm. "I believe I'll not remain at home during vacation period, but seek some secluded glade and rest my weary brain where the woodbine twineth."

"Son," returned the prosaic father, "ye'll stay right here an' git all th' seclusionun 'at's necessary, an' y' c'n rest them ther tired brains outen th' harvest field, where the good twine bindeth."—Toledo Blade.

FITS St. Vitus' Dance and all Nervous Diseases permanently cured by Dr. Kline's Great Nerve Restorer. Send for FREE \$2 trial bottle and treatise. Dr. R. H. Kline, 149 Arch St., Phila., Pa.

## Necessarily.

Dinglebat—The oculist charged you \$3 for taking a grain of sand out of your eye? That's pretty steep, isn't it?

Himsley—I thought so, till I looked over his bill. It was for 'removing a foreign substance from the cornea,' and of course that costs more.

## Unsolicited Testimonial.

"Stella engaged herself to five or six young men at that summer resort," said the girl with the blue earrings. "I don't think that was right, do you?"

"Maybe not," answered the girl with the ready made complexion, "but poor Stella was determined they shouldn't all of them escape her this time."

## \$100 Reward, \$100.

The readers of this paper will be pleased to learn that there is at least one dreaded disease that science has been able to cure in all its stages, and that is Catarrh. Hall's Catarrh Cure is the only positive cure known to the medical fraternity. Catarrh being a constitutional disease, requires a constitutional treatment. Hall's Catarrh Cure is taken internally, acting directly upon the blood and mucous surfaces of the system, thereby destroying the foundation of the disease, and giving the patient strength by building up the constitution and assisting nature in doing its work. The proprietors have so much faith in its curative powers that they offer One Hundred Dollars for any case that it fails to cure. Send for list of testimonials. Address, F. J. CHENEY & CO., Toledo, O. Sold by druggists, 75c. Hall's Family Pills are the best.

## As the Boy Views It.

"My son," said the strict mother at the end of a moral lecture, "I want you to be exceedingly careful about your conduct. Never, under any circumstances, do anything which you would be ashamed to have the whole world see you do."

The small boy turned a handspring with a whoop of delight.

"What in the world is the matter with you? Are you crazy?" demanded the mother.

"No'm," was the answer. "I'm jes' so glad that you don't spec me to take no baths never any more."

## TIRED BACKS.

The kidneys have a great work to do in keeping the blood pure. When they get out of order it causes backache, headaches, dizziness, languor and distressing urinary troubles. Keep the kidneys well and all these sufferings will be saved you.

Mrs. S. A. Moore, proprietor of a restaurant at Waterville, Me., says: "Before using Doan's Kidney Pills I suffered every-

thing from kidney troubles for a year and a half. I had pain in the back and head, an almost continuous in the loins and felt weary all the time. A few doses of Doan's Kidney Pills brought great relief, and I kept on taking them until in a short time I was cured. I think Doan's Kidney Pills are wonderful."

For sale by all dealers. 50 cents a box. Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y.

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