

The Pirate of Alastair

By RUPERT SARGENT HOLLAND
Author of "The Count at Harvard," etc.
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CHAPTER IV.

I happened to be sitting in my den, writing, the following afternoon, when glancing out of the big window that looks up the beach, I caught sight of a woman walking near the water. I picked up my binoculars and focussed them on her. It proved to be Miss Graham, dressed in a riding-habit, and with a broad felt hat on her head. She was walking in a somewhat aimless fashion, skirting the waves as though she were playing with them. I saw her glance once at the ship and once in the direction of my house. I put down the glasses and laid my papers aside. When I went down-stair I routed Charles out of a sound sleep in the kitchen.

"Do you remember how to make tea—good tea?" I asked him.

"Yes, Mr. Felix. Aren't you feeling well, sir?"

"Quite well. Please make some tea that shall be ready to serve in about an hour, and get out a box of those salty biscuits. Set the small table in the dining-room out in front of the door, with two chairs, and be ready to serve a lady and myself."

"Yes, Mr. Felix." Charles showed no surprise, though he had never received such an order since he had been at Alastair.

I picked up a cap, and left the house. As I did so I noticed that Miss Graham had stopped walking and was gathering shells. Half way to her, and she was still absorbed in the shells, which are quite unusually beautiful here; three-quarters of the way, and she was still playing with them. I had almost reached her, and was raising my cap to speak, before she turned and saw me. A flush of surprise rose to her cheeks.

"Good afternoon, Mr. Hermit. Am I poaching on your preserves?"

"Not in the least. I make you free of the city."

There was a light in her blue eyes which I discovered that I remembered, but a found her riding-habit new and wonderfully prepossessing. I was taking stock of it when she interrupted me.

"I left my horse tied back in the woods. Haven't you ever seen a riding-habit before?"

"Yes, I beg your pardon, but it's so very becoming."

Again the quick flush, and an instant's look at the sea. She laughed and shook her riding-crop playfully at me.

"Beware, Mr. Hermit. Any man might say a thing like that, but I expect other things from you. That's one of the penalties of your position; you must be different. I look for the flavor of romance and adventure at Alastair." She laughed at my puzzled face. "Shall I go back home again?"

"No. I will try to remember. Did you come to see the sunset from the cliff?"

"Yes. My aunt has a headache and has stayed in bed all day. I bribed our waiter to save me a little supper, so send it up to my room at 8 o'clock, you see. I'm free of the club and dinner."

She spoke impulsively, as I imagined she might do many things, and glanced at me whimsically to see of what I was thinking. She had some of the artlessness of a child playing truant from school. "I do hate stupid conventions, such as chaperons," she added, "especially in summer."

We walked past my cottage, which Miss Graham looked at with much curiosity, asking me a hundred questions about it—how I had discovered it, why I had bought it, how it was fashioned inside, and how I did my marketing. I told her I had the same butcher they had at the club.

"Oh!" she said. "I half hoped you lived by hunting and fishing, but I suppose you'd rather indulge in occasional beefsteaks."

"I'd rather live that way," said I, "but Charles, my man, wouldn't like that. He has a very cultivated palate."

When we came to the top of the cliff I felt like another Balboa discovering the Pacific. In front of us lay the entrance to the river, the sloping away of the dunes to the low level fields of meadows, and the distant background of the pines. Here and there the fields were dotted with beech marshmallows, windfalls delicately pink; along the sedge banks grew clumps of cat-tails, their brown panicles still like so much bronze. At a little landing-stage, where the river had hollowed out a harbor in the bank, rode my cat-bout, the sail tightly furled, the mast rocking gently with the tide. As we looked a flock of sand-nipe rose from the tall rank grasses beyond the river and spread themselves like a sail against the western sky. Nature never looked so absolutely peaceful.

"Look," I said, a heron, red-legged, white-bodied, rose from the sedges and flapped his way up the stream. He called to his mate, a low, plaintive cry.

"It is beautiful," said the girl. "I don't wonder that you love it."

"Look," I said, the sun's kaleidoscopic changing, the pale yellow deepening, the pinks turning to reds, to oranges, to brilliant, blazing golds. Again it shifted and softened; red and yellow were saffron, orange the color of coral. Yet again, and the whole was gold with a purple border, and then as the purple gained and the gold sank we could see the army of pines silhouetted against the dropping fire.

"They come, the armies come!" I cried. "See the spears, see the created horsemen, see the banners in the rear!"

I turned and her eyes were shining, exulting in the beauty of the scene. Then we were silent for a time, until the blaze had softened and the battle dropped to a harmonious peace.

I found a seat for her, and stretched myself beside it.

"Tell me what you think," she said—"the stories you read when you come here night after night?"

I had known how that view of the sunset quieted, yet I was surprised to find her so still and calm. It seemed as though we had known each other for some time. I have romanced to myself idly from that cliff when the yellow light lies over the sea and the river and the pines, and I drew upon my memory only to find it drew upon me. Moreover, I learned much of the river people, of the birds that live in the marsh and of the animals of the woods. I had watched the purple grackle build his nest and the blue Jay forage for his offspring when the summer was

to get my guest. We couldn't have met there drinking tea all night."

"No, of course not, sir, of course not." I turned to do indoors. "By the way, Charles, that tea was splendid; you did yourself proud."

By the time supper was finished I was still thinking about the Penguin Club, which was a very singular thing, because ordinarily I had no use for the place. (To be continued.)

RAISE CHILDREN OR TOIL.

Economist Says That One Thing or the Other Must Be Done by Wives.

In the way of practical plans for the amelioration of conditions leading up to unhappy matrimony, two interesting suggestions have been forwarded in recent weeks, says the New York Herald. One of them happens to be only a new variation of the old proposition of taxing the unmarried, but the other, by Prof. Patten of the University of Pennsylvania, adopts an entirely different attitude in advising that in all families where there are no children the women should be bread earners. The two news items in the matter followed:

That wives should be largely self-supporting is the view taken by Dr. Simon Nelson Patten of the chair of economics of the University of Pennsylvania. He came here last week to tell the League for Political Education, which is at present the center of a storm of criticism.

The doctor, whom I saw yesterday, still maintains that his wife should go out to do a day's work, as her husband does, so that by the joint income the family revenues may be kept at a figure large enough to insure a good home and the proper care and education of the children. He finds that women of all ranks of life are entering a leisure class, to the detriment of the birth rate, the degeneration of society and the peril of the state.

"It all resolves to this," said he, "that woman is ceasing to become a producer in an industrial way. Her work has been taken away from her. In her generation she worked. With the introduction of machinery and of the department stores much of her vocation has been taken from her. A large part of the work which was once hers is now done outside of the house. Once she made clothes and even wove the cloth from which she fashioned garments. She went into the garden and raised vegetables; she milked the cows. There was a time when the farmers sneered at the man who milked. A woman always did that. I have traveled extensively through the farming districts of the West without ever having seen a farmer's wife milk a cow."

"Formerly the woman was the man's industrial partner. Her work now has gone out of the home and nothing remains for her but to leave the home in search of it. There is no use for her to waste her time in trying to do that which is now being better and more cheaply done by other means."

"It is far better that she should toil at some remunerative occupation and leave to other agencies the production of articles for household consumption."

Division of Labor.

"Got any work this mornin', Mistah Boyd?" asked old Billy Bugg, safe in the knowledge that no work would be entrusted to him.

"No," was the response; and then, before Billy could ask for the customary contribution: "But wait a minute, Lawyer Phillips has owed me \$20 for twenty years. Collect it and I'll give you half." And the merchant, knowing how bad was the debt, winked at a waiting customer.

The old man found the lawyer in the middle of a group of prospective clients and influential citizens. Thrusting through the group, he called, in stentorian tones:

"Mistah Phillips, suh!"

"Well?" queried the lawyer, much annoyed.

"Mistah Boyd done tell me that you've owed him \$20 for about a hundred years; and he wants to know kin you pay him, suh."

The lawyer hurried to Billy's side. "You idiot," he said sotto voce, "do you want to ruin my business? Here!" and he thrust a \$10 bill into the old man's hand.

Back to the merchant toddled the old man.

"Well, Billy," said the merchant, "did you get it?"

The old man grinned.

"I got my half, all right," he chuckled; "but you'd better look out when you go back to get your half—he's right smart hot over it, suh!"—Success Magazine.

Ripening Bananas.

It is a familiar fact that bananas are imported green, but it came as a new thing to a visitor to the banana district in Colombia to find that bananas are not permitted to ripen on the plant even down there. They are cut and set to hang somewhere until they wither ripe, as the phrase is. Bananas do not have to be yellow to be ripe. That is only the color of the skin when it has dried up. To the person who is accustomed to eating bananas only when they are yellow it seems odd to peel them when they are green and find that they are perfectly ripe within and fit to eat.—New York Sun.

Unreasonable.

"My husband is so very unreasonable."

"Most husbands are. What did yours do?"

"He fixed a fishhook in one of his pockets because he pretended to suppose that I robbed him at night, and then he blamed me because he forgot it was there."—Cleveland Plain Dealer.

Conversely Defined.

"What is the distinguishing quality of the problem play?"

"It makes you think. The first half keeps you wondering what the question is, and the second half keeps you guessing what's the answer."—Washington Star.

The Roosters.

Knicker—Did you sleep well in the country?

Booker—No; there were too many chicken crows in the morning.

Touch and Go.

"Good morning, sir," said the tall man in the suit of faded black, opening his valise. "My name is Glasspy. I am the inventor of a little device for—"

"I am glad to meet you, Mr. Glasspy," interrupted the man in the doorway. "My name is Washabaugh. I have the sole right in this country to take subscriptions for a new and copiously illustrated edition of the works of—"

"Good day, sir."

"Good day!"—Chicago Tribune.

Discordant Note.

"Mr. Meekun, don't you think a woman should receive a man's pay when she does a man's work?"

"Why—er—look at the other side of the question a moment, will you? Think how many men are doing women's work and not getting a cent for it!"

One Distinction.

Stranger (at Crown Point)—What's the difference between this sort of thing, in principle, and a horse race? Automobile Enthusiast—Great Scott, look at the possibilities, man! You can get a million more thrills out of it.—Chicago Tribune.

Food Source.

"This circular describing the Mount Inguve says you can sit at the dinner table and see the beautiful mountain peaks," said the man who contemplated going.

"Is that true," replied the one who had been; "and that's just about all you can see."—Yonkers Statesman.

Reminiscence.

"How long will eggs keep, anyhow?" said the casual customer at the lunch counter.

"I have met some in my career," answered the dark, gloomy man with the deep, tragic voice who sat next to him, "that I am willing to swear had been kept for not less than two years, by Jupiter!"—Chicago Tribune.

Incumbent.

The sweet girl graduate is gone. The sweet boy graduate is, too; He'll mow the whiskers on the lawn And she will learn to build a stew; Both of these tasks are worth their while And she'd not rouse their bosoms' ire, And they should buckle down and smile—"They can not get the world afloat."—Houston Post.

One Thing Beyond Any Power.

Tip knows other places where traveling is of the agony brand. After waiting for nearly four hours in Shanownville, Canada, between Toronto and Montreal, for a "mixed"—17 freight cars and one coach—I asked an impatient clergyman if he had been able to learn when the train would arrive. He eyed me up and down with pity. "Sir," he said, "that is the only thing that the Almighty does not know."—New York Press.

The Point of View.

"This man is not insane," said the lawyer, "and never has been. To keep him in an asylum is a blow, sir, directed against human rights, an assault upon the sacred institution of liberty, an—"

"But did you not prove last week, when he was on trial for murder, that he had been from birth a raving maniac?" interposed the court.

The lawyer smiled in a superior way. "Surely," he said, "your honor would not have it believed that this court is on the intellectual plane of that jury."—Philadelphia Ledger.

An Old Truth.

Skiggs ran away with Skiggs' wife, Left no address behind; But very soon Skiggs envied Skiggs And had a change of mind. Skiggs advertised, Skiggs sent her back, Herein the moral lies; Skiggs now believes—not so with Skiggs—It pays to advertise. —Boston Herald.

Boyd of Great Men.—No. XXI.

"Papa," said little Eddie, "I gotta have another pair of shoes. These is all wore out."

"That makes seven pairs this year!" groaned the unhappy parent.

This incident took place more than sixty years ago. That boy has become an old man. His name is Edward Payson Weston, and he wears out shoes faster than ever.—Chicago Tribune.

Intoxication of Power.

Power will intoxicate the best hearts, as wine the strongest heads. No man is wise enough nor good enough to be trusted with unlimited power; for whatever qualifications he may have evinced to entitle him to the possession of so dangerous a privilege, yet, when possessed, others can no longer answer for him, because he can no longer answer for himself.—Colton.

Not Yet, but Sometimes.

Man from the City—You intend to keep bees, I suppose.

Suburbanite—Some day, perhaps. At present we are devoting our entire energies to keeping a cook.

Useful Knowledge.

Tommy—Paw, I've heard you talk about Easy Street. Where is it?

Mr. Tucker—It's at the farther end of a long, rough, and hilly thoroughfare, called Hard Work street, my boy.

Her Gifted Relative.

"I've got a cousin on my mother's side," remarked Mrs. Lappling, "who can do anything with her left hand that she can do with her right. I tell you, it's a great thing for a person to be amphibious."

The Old Adam.

"I wonder why three-fourths of the stenographers in business offices are women?" "I guess it is because men like to feel that there is at least one class of women whom they can dictate to."

Musical.

Yeast—it is said that the cats of Berlin are all registered and wear a tag.

Crimson-bak—Well, the cats around my house seem to be registered, too, and some of 'em are pretty strong in the upper register.—Yonkers Statesman.

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