

THE HIGHGRADER

By Wm. MacLeod Raine

Copyright by G. W. Dillingham Co.

"A WHOPPER"

SYNOPSIS—Word that their nightly frolics are distasteful to a party of "high-toned Britishers" recently arrived at the Lodge, among them an army captain and his sister of the same name as himself, is brought to Jack Kilmeny (known to his intimates as Crumbs), and some friends camping on the Gunnison in Colorado. Called to account for the uproar by Dobyans Verinder, snobbish millionaire, member of the British party, Jack snubs that individual and has a friendly chat with Moya Dwight, attractive Irish girl. He also meets Joyce Seldon, a famous beauty.

CHAPTER II

Night Fishing

Next day brought Kilmeny the office of camp cook, which was taken in turn by each of the men. Only two meals a day were eaten in camp, so that he had several hours of leisure after the breakfast things were cleared away.

The arrival of the party at the Lodge brought back to him vividly some chapters of his life that had long been buried. His father, Archibald Kilmeny, had married the daughter of a small cattleman some years after he had come to Colorado. Though she had died while he was a child, Jack still held warmly in his heart some vivid memories of the passionate unbridled woman who had been his mother.

She had been a belle in the cow country, charming in her way, beautiful to the day of her death, but without education or restraint. Her husband had made the mistake of taking her back to Ireland on a visit to his people. The result had been unfortunate. She was unconquerably provincial, entirely democratic, as uncultured as her native colubine. Moreover, her temper was of the whirlwind variety. The staid life of the old country, with its well-ordered distinctions of class and rutted conventions, did not suit her at all. All traditions which she could not understand the young wife scoffed openly. Before she left, vellel dislike became almost open war. The visit had never been repeated, nor, indeed, had she ever been invited again. This she had bitterly resented and she had instilled into Jack the antagonism she herself felt. When he was eight years old Jack's father had insisted on taking him back to meet his relatives. Immediately upon his return the youngster's mother had set about undermining any fondness he might have felt for his British kindred. Three years later she had died.

She had been a doting mother, with fierce gusts of passionate adoration for her boy. Jack remembered these after he forgot her less amiable qualities. He had grown up with an unreasonable feeling of dislike toward those of his father's family who had failed to get along with her. Some instinct of loyalty which he could hardly define set him unconsciously in antagonism to his cousins at the Lodge. He had decided not to make himself known to them. In a few days their paths would diverge again for all time.

Dusk found him in the river just above the riffles. He fished down the

stream slowly, shortening his line as darkness settled over the hills.

He was nearly opposite the Lodge when he noticed a fisherman in front of him. Working steadily forward, Kilmeny found himself gaining on the other. In order not to pass too near he struck out into the deeper water toward the center of the river. When almost opposite the other he heard a splash not twenty feet away, followed by the whirr of the reel as the trout made for the deep water. From the shadows where his unknown companion was obscured came the click of the line being wound up. There was a flash of silver in the moonlight, and again the rapid whirl of the reel.

"You've hooked a whale, neighbor," Kilmeny called across.

The voice that came back to him across the water was eager and glad. Jack would have known its throbbing youthful zest among a thousand.

"Must I let him have all the line he wants?"

Kilmeny waded toward her as he gave counsel. "Don't make it too easy for him, but don't jerk. Keep his nose up if you can."

The trout fought gamely and strongly, but the young woman stuck to her work and would not give him any rest. Jack watched her carefully. He saw that she was tiring, but he did not offer any help, for he knew that she was a sportsman. She would want to win alone or not at all.

Yet he moved closer. The water was up to her hips, and no river in the Rockies has a swifter current than the Gunnison. The bottom, too, is covered with smooth slippery stones and boulders, so that a mistep might send her plunging down. Deprived of the use of her landing pole, she could make less resistance to the tug of the stream, and the four or five pounds of dynamic energy at the end of her line would give her all she could do to take care of for the next few minutes. Her pole was braced against her body, which made reeling difficult. The man beside her observed that except for a tendency to raise the pole too much she was playing her trout like a veteran.

The thing that he had anticipated happened. Her foot slipped from its insecure rock hold and she stumbled. Her arm was round her waist in an instant.

"Steady! Take your time."

"Thanks. I'm all right now."

His right arm still girdled her slight figure. The trout was tiring. Inch by inch she brought him nearer. Presently she panted, "My landing net."

It was caught in the creel. Kilmeny unfurled the net and brought it round where it would be ready for instant use.

"Tell me what I must do now."

"He's hooked pretty fast. Take your time about getting him into your net, and be careful then. These big fellows are likely to squirm away."

It was a ticklish moment when she let go of the rod with her left hand to slip the net under the trout, but she negotiated it in safety.

"Isn't he a whopper?" she cried in delight. "He won't go into the creel at all."

"Then let me have him. The glory is yours. I'll be your gillie to carry the game bag."

He got his fingers through its gill before he took the hook from the mouth of the fish. Carrying the trout in one hand and his pole in the other, he waded slowly through the swift water to the shore.

The girl's vibrant voice came to him as she splashed at his heels toward the bank. "He's such a ripping good one. I'm so pleased. How much do you think he will weigh?"

"My guess is six pounds. He's the biggest taken this year so far. I congratulate you, Miss Dwight."

"I would never have got him if you hadn't been there to help me with advice. But I really did it all myself, didn't I? If you had touched the rod before I had him netted I'd never have forgiven you," she confessed, eyes glowing with the joy of her achievement.

"It's no joke to land one of these big fellows. I saw you were tired. But it's the sporting thing to play your own fish."

Her dark eyes flashed a questioning glance at him. She had been brought up in a society where class lines were closely drawn, but her experience gave her no data for judging this young man's social standing. Casual inquiries of old Ballard, the caretaker at the Lodge, had brought her the information that the party of fishermen were miners from the hills. This one went by the name of Crumbs and sometimes Jack. What puzzled Miss Dwight was the difficulty of reconciling him with himself. Sometimes he used the speech and the slow drawl of the plainsman, and again he spoke with the correctness of one who has known good society. In spite of his careless garb he had the look of class. A young woman of impulse, she yielded to an audacious one now. "I'm glad you let me do the sporting thing, Mr.—Crumbs."

His gentle laughter welled out. "Where did you get that?"

"Isn't it your name?" she asked, with a lift of the dark eyebrows.

He hesitated, barely an instant. Of course she knew perfectly well that it was not his name. But it suited him not to give one more definite.

"I reckon it's a name good enough to bring me to dinner by," he drawled, smiling.

He was back again in the western idiom and manner. She wondered why. The change had come when she had spoken his name. A certain wariness had settled over his face like a mask. She could see that he was purposely taking refuge in the class distinctions that presumably separated them. Yet she could have sworn that nothing had been farther from his mind during the exciting ten minutes in the water while voice and presence and arm had steadied her for the battle.

They walked together up the slope to the big house. A fishing costume is not a thing of grace, but the one this girl wore could not eclipse the elastic suppleness of the slender figure or the joy in life that animated the vivid

face with the black curls straying from beneath the jaunty cap. To deny her beauty was easy, but in the soft sifted moonlight showered down through the trees it was impossible for Kilmeny's eyes to refuse her an admission of charm. She had the gift for comradeship, and with it a freedom of mind unusual in one of her class.

She ran up the steps of the Lodge lightly and thanked him with a pleasant "good-night." As he turned away Kilmeny came face to face with another fisherman returning from the sport of the night. The man opposite him was rather short and thickset. In his eyes was a look of kind shrewd wisdom. Red-faced and white-bearded, he was unmistakably an Englishman of the upper class.

Miss Dwight introduced him as Lord Farquhar, and the men shook hands.

"Guess what I've got," demanded the young woman, her hands behind her.

"Heaven only knows. It might be anything from the measles to a new lover," smiled Farquhar.

She flashed upon him the fish that had been hidden behind her waders.

"Jove! Catch him yourself?"

She nodded, her eyes shining.

Farquhar, very much a sportsman, wanted to know all about it, after which he insisted on weighing the trout. Jack was dragged into the Lodge to join in this function, and presently found himself meeting Lady Farquhar, a pleasant plump lady. Her smile was warm for this supple blue-eyed engaging westerner, but the latter did not need to be told that behind her friendliness the instinct of the chaperon was alert. The one swift glance she had thrown at Miss Dwight told him as much.

Into the room drifted presently Miss Seldon, a late novel in her hand. Joyce Seldon was frankly a beauty in every line and feature. Her exquisite coloring, the soft amber hair so extravagant in quantity, the long lashes which shaded deep lovely eyes, satisfied the senses no less than the supple rounded young body which was carried with such light grace. Kilmeny was not very impressionable, but in her presence the world seemed somehow shot through with a new radiance. She laid upon him the spell of women.

Presently Dobyans Verinder dropped in with an empty creel and opened wide supercilious eyes at sight of Jack. He was followed presently by Captain Kilmeny and his sister, India, the latter a pretty Irish girl, quick of tongue, quicker of eye, and ready for anything from flirting to fishing.

From the talk, Jack gathered that Lord Farquhar and Miss Dwight had bet their catch would outweigh that of the other three, Farquhar and she to fish opposite the Lodge and the others half a mile below. The minority party had won easily, thanks to the big trout and Verinder's obstinacy in sticking to the flies he had used in England with success. There is a type of Englishman that goes through life using the flies he was brought up on and trying to make them fit all places and times. Any divergence is a form of treason. Neither Farquhar nor Kilmeny happened to be of that kind.

Supper, to which Lady Farquhar had insisted that the American stay, was being served informally in the living room. Verinder helped himself to a sandwich, ogling Moya the while with his eyes.

"I say, you know, I believe in you, Miss Dwight," he asserted.

That young woman did not know why she resented more than usual his wheedling attentions. Lady Jim had invited the millionaire to join their party, as the girl very well knew, in order to give her a chance at him. Not that Lady Farquhar liked the man. She knew him quite well for an ill-bred little snob at heart. But he would pass muster in a crowd, and none of the young women of the party could afford to sniff at two millions sterling.

Since Captain Kilmeny had joined the party in Denver the plans of Lady Farquhar had been modified. The soldier had taken an early opportunity to tell her that he meant to ask Moya Dwight to marry him. He had been in love with her for years and had asked her just before his regiment left for India the last time. The captain was not rich, but he had enough. It happened too that he was a clean honest gentleman who had made a reputation for efficiency and gallantry in the army. Lady Farquhar was quite willing to back his suit so far as she could.

"He's our kind, Ned Kilmeny is," she had told her husband. "I gave Moya her chance with Verinder but I should have taken him. If she will only fall in love with Ned I'll forgive her all the queer things she is always doing."

Farquhar had chuckled. "It's an odds-on chance she'll not fancy him, Ned."

"No, I suppose not. Pity she can't be sensible."

"There are enough of us sensible, Ned. We can spare her a few years yet for romance. When she grows sensible she'll have to give up something she can't afford to lose."

His wife looked at him and smiled fondly. "You haven't quite lost it yourself, Jim."

It was true enough that Lord Farquhar retained an interest in life that was refreshing. This evening his eyes gleamed while the westerner told of the frontier day program to be held at the little town of Gunnison next day.

"You and your friends are miners, I understand. You'll not take part, then?" he asked.

"I used to punch cows. My name is entered for the riding. The boys want me to take a turn."

India Kilmeny sat up straight. "Let's go. We can ride up in the morning. It will be jolly. All in favor of going eat another sandwich."

"It will be pretty woolly—quite different from anything you have seen," the miner suggested.

"Thought we came to fish," Verinder interposed. "Great bore looking at amateur shows—and it's a long ride."

"Move us go. What say, Lady Farquhar?" but in Captain Kilmeny.

"Do let's go," Moya begged.

"I don't see why we shouldn't," Lady Farquhar smiled. "But I'm like Mr. Verinder about riding. If he'll drive me up the rest of you can go on horseback."

"Delighted, 'm sure."

Verinder came to time outwardly civil but inwardly fuming.

"If we're going it's time you girls were in bed. You've had a hard day and tomorrow will be another," Lady Jim pronounced.

The westerner rose to go.

"Night's young yet. Stop and sit in with us to a game of poker. What?" Farquhar invited.

"My pocketbook is at the camp," the American demurred.

"I'll be your banker," his host volunteered.

The ladies said good-night and departed. Chairs were drawn to the card table, chips sold, and hands were dealt. The light of morning was breaking before Kilmeny made his way back to camp. He had in his pockets one hundred and seventy-three dollars, most of which had recently been the property of Dobyans Verinder.

CHAPTER III

Fugitives From Justice

At the Lodge the whole party was down by nine-thirty and was on the road within the hour. The horses were keen and the pace brisk. It was not until half the distance had been covered that Joyce, who was riding beside the captain, found opportunity for conversation.

"You sat up late, didn't you?"

"Early," the soldier laughed.

"How did the savage behave himself? He has a good deal of assurance, hasn't he?" she asked lightly.

The captain hesitated. "Do you think that's quite the word? He fitted in easily—wasn't shy or awkward—that sort of thing, you know—but he wasn't obtrusive at all. Farquhar likes him."

"He's rather interesting," Joyce admitted.

She thought of him as a handsome untamed young barbarian, but it was impossible for her to deny a certain amount of regard for any virile man who admired her. The westerner had not let his eyes rest often upon her, but the subtle instinct of her sex told her that he was very much taken with her. Since Joyce Seldon was the center and circumference about which most of her thoughts revolved, it followed that the young man had chosen the sure way to her favor.

Moya Dwight too found that the young fisherman flitted in and out of her mind a good deal. In spite of the soft vocal elisions of the West, his speech had a dignity that suggested breeding. It was quite likely he was not a gentleman, according to the code in which she had been brought up, but it was equally sure there burned in him that dynamic spark of self-respect which is at the base of all good manners.

The little town of Gunnison flitted with life. Born and brought up as she had been in the iron caste of modern super-civilization, Moya found the barbaric color of the occasion very appealing. As she looked down on the arena from the box her party occupied, the heart of the girl throbbled with the pure joy of it all. She loved this West, with its picturesque chap-clad brown-faced riders. They were a hard-bitten lot, burned to a brick red by the untamed sun of the Rockies. Cheerful sons of mirth they were, carrying their years with a boyish exuberance that was delightful.

Most of the competitors for the bucking broncho championship had been eliminated before the arrival of the party from the Lodge. Among the three who had reached the finals was their guest of the previous evening.

"Jack Kilmeny will ride Teddy Roosevelt," blared the megaphone man.

The English officer turned to Farquhar. "Didn't quite catch the name. Sounded like my own."

"That's what I thought," contributed his sister. A moment later, she added: "Why, it's Mr. Crumbs."

That young man sauntered forward lazily, dragging his saddle by its horn. He saddled the trembling animal warily, then swung lightly to the seat. The broncho stood for an instant motionless, then humped itself from the earth, an incarnate demon of action. But the lean-fanked young miner appeared clamped to the saddle. Lithe and sinuous as a panther, he rode with a perfect ease that was captivating. Even the frontier West had never

seen a more daring and magnificent piece of horsemanship.

Captain Kilmeny clapped his hands enthusiastically. "Bravo! Well done!"

He turned to Moya, who sat beside him. "Finest bit of rough-riding I ever saw. Not one man in a million could have done it."

"It's all in getting the hang of the thing, you know," drawled Verinder complacently.

Moya, who was leaning forward with her dark eyes fixed on the two superb animals fighting for mastery in the arena, thought both comments characteristic. The captain was a sportsman and a gentleman, the millionaire was neither.

India whispered in the ear of Moya. "He's as broadminded as a crab, just about."

The reference was of course to Verinder. "I think we ought to be fair, even to a crab, dear," Miss Dwight answered dryly.

The battle between the outlaw broncho and its rider was over. The confidence of Teddy Roosevelt as well as its strength had been shaken. The

must be good, and me and advised me taking one bottle after six bottles I work, which I had years. I have a new nicely, and I am still table Compound and I have for four years, surely wonderful in the house."—Minneapolis Junction, Minn. June, W. ment, but nothing

A country-wide commotion of Lydia E. Pinkham's pound reports 95 per cent for sale by druggists

There was great nning; there shall be end; and, in spite of by faith in God we claim a large share of the way through.—Exchange

Genuine ASPIN Say "Bayer".

For Pain Head Neuralgia Rhe Lumbago Cold Safe

which contains proven Handy "Bayer" boxes of Also bottles of 24 and 100 Aspirin is the trade mark of facture of Monocetol

Plenty! Mother—Have you any encouragement lately? Daughter—Yes, I told fortune father cleared up steel share last week!

Sure Rel FOR INDIGEST

6 Bu Hot Sure

25¢ AND 75¢ PACKAGES

In These Days

"Mamma, I'll be glad grown up!"

"Why?"

"So that I can get my hair yours!"

To Be Taken Spar Only those deserve freedom who have wit enough not too hard.—Duluth Herald

FIRST AID TO BE AND CHARM

Nothing so mars an otherwise face as the inevitable lines of suffering caused by tired

ALLEN'S FOOT-EASE

The Antiseptic, Healing Foot comfort and is an ever morning. Shake it in your shoe. Shop all day—Dance

ning—then let your mirror tell you. It will convince you. Allen's is adding charm to thousands Let us show you what it can do. Trial package and a 4-cent Allen's Foot-Ease, Le

Allen's Foot-Ease, Le

For Sale at All Drug and Department

BATHE TIRED EYES

with Dr. Thompson's Bristles. Buy at your druggist's or 1109 River, Troy, N. Y. Booklet.

Get Rid of Dandruff Cuticura Shampoo

Soap, Glycerine, Talcum and preservatives Free of Ointment Laboratory, Dept. M. W.

Work to

"Master of Best: A Swi diagrams of 1 Boy Scout-A Safety camp The entire American Red distance in th trusted effort million scouts strengthen

Most excuses are not worth the mak

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

It looks as if Jack might be in bad. The five hard-bitten riders strangely suggest a sheriffs posse—bent on business. Will they catch him?



Dusk Found Him in the River Just Above the Riffles.

stream slowly, shortening his line as darkness settled over the hills.

He was nearly opposite the Lodge when he noticed a fisherman in front of him. Working steadily forward, Kilmeny found himself gaining on the other. In order not to pass too near he struck out into the deeper water toward the center of the river. When almost opposite the other he heard a splash not twenty feet away, followed by the whirr of the reel as the trout made for the deep water. From the shadows where his unknown companion was obscured came the click of the line being wound up. There was a flash of silver in the moonlight, and again the rapid whirl of the reel.

"You've hooked a whale, neighbor," Kilmeny called across.

The voice that came back to him across the water was eager and glad. Jack would have known its throbbing youthful zest among a thousand.

"Must I let him have all the line he wants?"

Kilmeny waded toward her as he gave counsel. "Don't make it too easy for him, but don't jerk. Keep his nose up if you can."

The trout fought gamely and strongly, but the young woman stuck to her work and would not give him any rest. Jack watched her carefully. He saw that she was tiring, but he did not offer any help, for he knew that she was a sportsman. She would want to win alone or not at all.

Yet he moved closer. The water was up to her hips, and no river in the Rockies has a swifter current than the Gunnison. The bottom, too, is covered with smooth slippery stones and boulders, so that a mistep might send her plunging down. Deprived of the use of her landing pole, she could make less resistance to the tug of the stream, and the four or five pounds of dynamic energy at the end of her line would give her all she could do to take care of for the next few minutes. Her pole was braced against her body, which made reeling difficult. The man beside her observed that except for a tendency to raise the pole too much she was playing her trout like a veteran.

The thing that he had anticipated happened. Her foot slipped from its insecure rock hold and she stumbled. Her arm was round her waist in an instant.

"Steady! Take your time."

"Thanks. I'm all right now."

His right arm still girdled her slight figure. The trout was tiring. Inch by inch she brought him nearer. Presently she panted, "My landing net."

It was caught in the creel. Kilmeny unfurled the net and brought it round where it would be ready for instant use.

"Tell me what I must do now."

"He's hooked pretty fast. Take your time about getting him into your net, and be careful then. These big fellows are likely to squirm away."

It was a ticklish moment when she let go of the rod with her left hand to slip the net under the trout, but she negotiated it in safety.

"Isn't he a whopper?" she cried in delight. "He won't go into the creel at all."

"Then let me have him. The glory is yours. I'll be your gillie to carry the game bag."

He got his fingers through its gill before he took the hook from the mouth of the fish. Carrying the trout in one hand and his pole in the other, he waded slowly through the swift water to the shore.

The girl's vibrant voice came to him as she splashed at his heels toward the bank. "He's such a ripping good one. I'm so pleased. How much do you think he will weigh?"

"My guess is six pounds. He's the biggest taken this year so far. I congratulate you, Miss Dwight."

"I would never have got him if you hadn't been there to help me with advice. But I really did it all myself, didn't I? If you had touched the rod before I had him netted I'd never have forgiven you," she confessed, eyes glowing with the joy of her achievement.

"It's no joke to land one of these big fellows. I saw you were tired. But it's the sporting thing to play your own fish."

Her dark eyes flashed a questioning glance at him. She had been brought up in a society where class lines were closely drawn, but her experience gave her no data for judging this young man's social standing. Casual inquiries of old Ballard, the caretaker at the Lodge, had brought her the information that the party of fishermen were miners from the hills. This one went by the name of Crumbs and sometimes Jack. What puzzled Miss Dwight was the difficulty of reconciling him with himself. Sometimes he used the speech and the slow drawl of the plainsman, and again he spoke with the correctness of one who has known good society. In spite of his careless garb he had the look of class. A young woman of impulse, she yielded to an audacious one now. "I'm glad you let me do the sporting thing, Mr.—Crumbs."

His gentle laughter welled out. "Where did you get that?"

"Isn't it your name?" she asked, with a lift of the dark eyebrows.

He hesitated, barely an instant. Of course she knew perfectly well that it was not his name. But it suited him not to give one more definite.

"I reckon it's a name good enough to bring me to dinner by," he drawled, smiling.

He was back again in the western idiom and manner. She wondered why. The change had come when she had spoken his name. A certain wariness had settled over his face like a mask. She could see that he was purposely taking refuge in the class distinctions that presumably separated them. Yet she could have sworn that nothing had been farther from his mind during the exciting ten minutes in the water while voice and presence and arm had steadied her for the battle.

They walked together up the slope to the big house. A fishing costume is not a thing of grace, but the one this girl wore could not eclipse the elastic suppleness of the slender figure or the joy in life that animated the vivid

face with the black curls straying from beneath the jaunty cap. To deny her beauty was easy, but in the soft sifted moonlight showered down through the trees it was impossible for Kilmeny's eyes to refuse her an admission of charm. She had the gift for comradeship, and with it a freedom of mind unusual in one of her class.

She ran up the steps of the Lodge lightly and