

A Cowardly Schoolmaster

By ELEANOR TRASK

When my husband got the gold fever, away back in the seventies, and declared he would go to Colorado, after trying a long while to dissuade him, I said, "Very well, I'll go with you." He was mighty pleased at that, for I was so opposed to his going that he never dreamed he would have me with him. When we got out to Colorado and Jim went rambling about with his pick I went with him though about the only thing I could do for him was to cook and mend his clothes. We city slickers used to be thought of as being so much above the mountains that we could do anything. But we didn't like to stop at any of them, for there was generally nearby evidence of the failure of prospectors in the shape of holes in the ground.

Up to a certain point we had the same luck as the diggers of these holes, but at last one day while we were taking a noon rest and Jim was napping, seeing some red rock near by that looked as if there might be gold in it I took the pick and going to where it was, chipped off a bit of it. It looked so well that I awakened Jim, who the moment he saw it declared that it was nearly all gold.

We worked the place for several days, at the end of which time it was decided that I should go down to Denver and see if I could get any one to furnish the money to develop our find. I filled a bag I carried with specimens, some of which were intended to pay my way. I left Jim with the claim, walked to the road where the stage passed and when it came along got aboard.

The passengers had been told that it wouldn't be safe to carry any valuables, for the coach had been robbed nearly every day. They were all very nervous and at the least sound were badly frightened. There were a woman with a course voice and course features, a couple of miners and a schoolmaster. The course woman said she didn't care how many road agents we would meet for she hadn't anything to lose. The schoolmaster struck me in a corner as though desirous of making himself as inconspicuous as possible. He was a small sized man, but seemed to me not to lack strength. The woman asked him what he would do if he were attacked, and the question seemed to throw him into a panic. He retorted as follows:

"The road agents stopped us sure enough. We heard a voice in advance of us say to the driver, 'Hold up, Josh,' and the coach came to a standstill. It was all so quiet that we could hardly believe we were held up. But presently the door of the coach was thrown open and a man with a revolver in his right hand stood at the opening. As soon as he let go the door with the other hand he took an additional revolver from his belt.

"Step out, please ladies and gents," he said in a tone so gentle that one would have supposed we had come to the end of our journey. The two miners got out first, then the woman. I saw a glance pass between the robber and her that made me believe they were friends. As she passed him he asked, "Anything worth having?" to which she replied, "There's a man in there playin' schoolmaster, but I s'pose he's carryin' funds for a bank."

As she said this she threw off her woman's hat and unbuttoned her dress, and it fell at her feet, revealing a he and not a she.

The only ones remaining in the coach were the schoolmaster and I, sitting by on the front. I on the back seat. But while this was going on he crowded down under the middle seat.

The Danger of Lying in Bed.

Lack of muscular exercise is the first result of lying in bed. As a result the appetite is weakened, the digestive action slows down and the muscles of the stomach and abdomen cease to act upon the intestinal mass. When the body is in a recumbent position the heart works with the least expenditure of effort and the least fatigue and the circulation and the functional activity are decreased. But unless the subject is exceptionally vigorous all the benefits are counterbalanced by dangers. In bed the subject is shut away from fresh air and sunlight. The result of that deprivation is a condition similar to anemia. But the supreme menace is to the weak or the aged, confined to bed, is the logging of the pulmonary circulation, an action which frequently results in passive congestion of both sides of the lungs. For this reason the simple fracture of a bone may be the cause of death because when the patient lies in bed there is no movement of the muscles to act as an incentive to deep breathing. Harper's.

The Aristocratic Montenegrin.

The Bogatins may not have a liking for domestic service but he is a born agent of the mother. According to a recent traveler if you give him a bar of soap he will make it blow you like the rose, while his Montenegro brother will stand and look on. On the other hand, the Montenegrin placed in a drawing room always behaves like a gentleman, while the Bogatins in the same environment cannot help but be a booby. But then," says the London chronicler, "it is said the Montenegrins are the descendants of Serbian aristocrats who fled to the mountains to seek freedom. The explanation is thin, but pleasing. Of course a claim to culture however, Montenegrins cannot be deprived, she established a printing press at Obod only twenty years after Cayton began his labors and she printed beautifully. But the Turks made up of everything, and the press was not re-established till 1832."

The Drunkard's Cloak.

One of the quaint instruments of torture in England in olden times was a device known as the drunkard's cloak. It was made of wool and to shagreened with a large inverted flower pattern through the small-trouser aperture in the top was thrust the neck of the imprisoned inmate. The weight of this animal-counterpart of the straitjacket fell on the victim's shoulders and was sufficient to make every bone in his body ache. With his hands practically pinned to his sides and the garment reaching almost to the ground the only motion allowed him was a slow shuffle of his weary feet as he dragged his way painfully along. One can well believe that any one who had been compelled to don the drunkard's cloak would be very apt to come to the conclusion that a high old time was not worth having at the price.

Rivarol's Wit.

Antoine Rivarol, the French epigrammatist of the eighteenth century, was so brilliant that something good was expected of him every minute. Once when he had been invited to dinner at which the hostess especially wished him to shine, he sat quite silent. The attitude of disappointed expectancy in the company nettled him and at last Rivarol made a stupid remark. Every body uttered an exclamation.

Nests on the Water.

It is almost unthinkable that a bird should build a nest on the water. Yet that is exactly what the grebes always do. With reeds, grass and plant stems the grebe makes a regular floating island, somewhat hollowed out on top usually near the open water of a marshy or reedy lake. We have several kinds of grebes but their nests are much alike—sometimes moored to the reeds, but usually floating freely on the water.—St. Nicholas.

Hypnotized Episode.

"What has become of your hypnotized friend?" "My hypnotized friend?" "Yes, your friend Mr. Wombat-Wombat." "Where?" "He is ill of heart here!" "In Walla Walla"—Exchange.

Point in Verbalism.

Professor to class in composition—Some one in the class recently referred to a woman as of "medium size." Please avoid this expression in referring to a woman. It smacks too much of commercialism. Freshman—But professor, she might be "on the margin."—Judge.

Hitting Him With the Truth.

Mr. Bonstufel—I wonder how it would seem if I could have all the money I have given to charity piled on a pile before me. Mrs. Bonstufel—I think you could still distinguish the pile.

Sets Logic at Defiance.

"There is no effect without a cause," quoth the wise guy. "How about when a woman changes her mind?" asked the simple man. Philadelphia Record.

True politeness is perfect ease and freedom. It simply consists in treating others just as you love to be treated yourself.

A FIGHT FOR A WIFE

By M. QUAD

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I dream much about romance as they call it, but I reckon I shall never get it. I was a young fellow of twenty-two, I see a girl over on Father's side of the mountains that just filled the bill. I made up to her and was talkin' about bars and wildcats and such when her mother steps in and sez: "Stranger, mebbe yo' are wantin' to take my gal away for a wife?" "I'm reckonin' to consider that I would," I replied.

"Then I'll blow the horn for her pop to cum outter the woods and tell yo' what is what." "She blowed and blowed, and bimeby the old man appeared. He was a powerful man, and he didn't look good after lookin' me over he sez: "Stranger, it's got to be a mighty good man who takes my darter Sue away for his wife. How fur kin anybody bar yo' holler?" "Two miles. If the wind is right," sez I.

"And about yo' jumpin'?" "It's chus to eight feet when I don't slip." "Hev yo' ever climed any climbin'?" "I hev. I've climed the tallest tree in sight of these yere Cumberland mountains." "And the number of bars and wildcats what yo've slain," he goes on, accout to want to pick a furse with me.

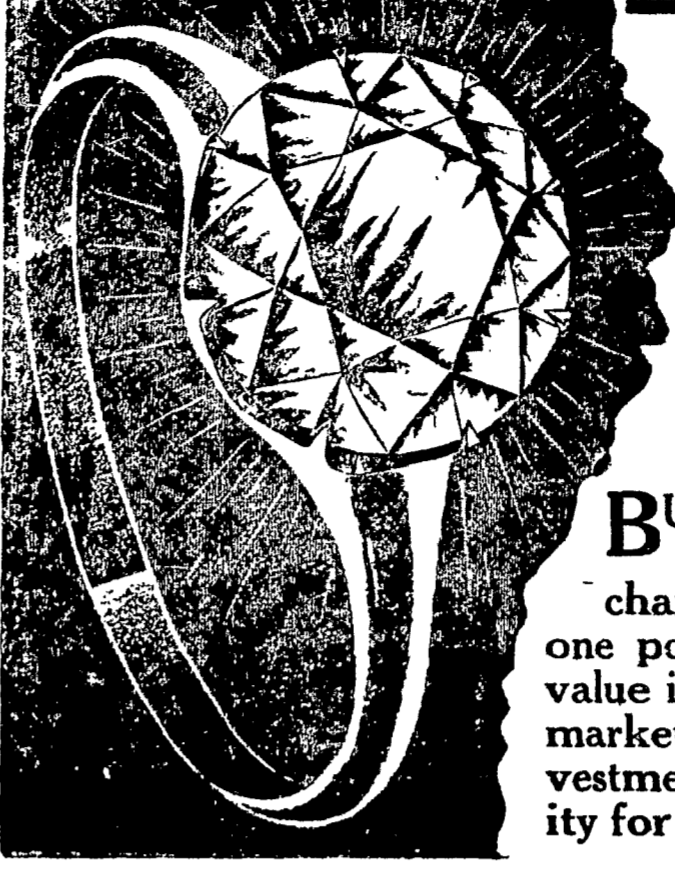
"They'd purty nigh fill yo' cabin, sez I, feelin' a little flid at the way he spoke." "Well, sez he, after stoppin' to consider a bit, nobody kin take that gal away fer hisself because he kin't climb or kill no arments. He's got to lay me on my back in a fur coat. I'll gin yo' a week to think it over. If yo' want the gal yo' must cum back and tackle me, and I'm tellin' yo' I'm a bad critter as long as I've got one foot on the earth.

"I want many feelin' sort of cast down but the no I thought of it the no. I wanted the gal sue for my wife. That night I made up my mind that I'd try fur her and next day I went back to the cabin. Her pop was thin and a skin around and feelin' powerful. "There was a clear space in the front of his cabin," said the old man, "and when the gal and her mother had cum outside, he throw of our coats and begun to fuz us. I was accounted a powerful hand on a straddle, but that man was also a powerful critter, and I reckon I'd hev to hev help from the law to gain the victory. It was to a clock in the mornin' when we begin, and the clock was just strikin' 1 when I fopped him on his back. That spot on the ground looked as if forty hawgs had bin runnin' it up fur a week, and he was sweat out he could hardly speak. Me, then twenty times in three hours that critter had me almost dead fur, but I'd send up a sort of prayer and get a new hold, and at last I fethered him. When he was able to talk he riz up and took my hand and sez:

"Stranger, it was a fair straddle, and I've been doped. I wouldn't a believed yo' could hev dun it, but yo' did, and I'm sayin' yo' ar a purty good man. Hows'ever, it ain't over yet. Yo've got to lick me to git Sue, and I know yo' kin't never do it. We'll take three days to rest up, and then yo' kin cum back and tackle me." "And did yo' go?" I asked as the old man made a long pause.

"Fur stah, he replied, "I was mighty sore and lame, but I knowed he would be as hot off. Besides that gal sue had hotted fur me when I fopped her pop, and I knowed by that she was with her arm would hope fur me to come out on top. In three days I went back to hev it on. The critter was a lookin' fur me and glad to see me." "How's it to be?" sez I. "A fair fight, sez he, "no throwin' rocks nor hittin' with clubs. Whoop! Cock a doodle-do!"

What we went at it. Sue and her maw was out ther as before, and the gal gin me a smile as I went in. It was a rough and tumble bout. I jest knowed I'd set to do my level best or go under, and I lost no chances. That bout lasted mightly nigh two hours, and two or three times I was almost on the pit of lettin' go. Bimeby, hows'ever, I seen that Rabbit was gettin' tired out, and the gal clapped her hands and sicked me on. Ten minits arter that I had him whooped. That wasn't no mistake about it, because he riz up and sez to me: "Zeb White, I'm a welped man, and that gal is yo'rs. I didn't believe that was a critter on these mountains as could make me hoot, but yo' dun it. And now when do yo' want the gal?" "Right now, I reckon," sez I. "Ain't it purty sudden?" "Not so very belin' as she's ready to go."



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NEW YORK CENTRAL LINES

Sismarck's Stratagem. While Sismarck was living at Frankfurt, early in his career, he was one day at a public table with a friend when two young ladies who sat opposite began talking to each other in the Lettish language. From their manner it was evident to Sismarck that they were talking about him. It happened that he had once made a visit to Courland, one of the Baltic provinces, and had picked up a few Lettish phrases. When the ladies had talked and laughed for some time, he whispered to his companion:

"The moment I say something to you story was or who did the four from your pocket and hand it to me." The young ladies kept on, and said to his friend:

"I told them to do it." The second man at once produced a key. The young ladies from Courland looked at their opposite neighbors, then at each other and blushing violently rose and left the room.

How White China Was Discovered. Of many incidents in which an accidental discovery revolutionized a whole industry there is none more striking than that which enabled Samuel Astbury, in 1720, to impart to pottery that white glaze which is its chief beauty. Chancing, while journeying to London, to visit at Banbury, he noticed that one of his horse's eyes was badly inflamed. He consulted the hostler who hung a red-hot flint into a basin of water, thereby easily reducing it to a powder, which he applied to the injured eye. Astbury, who had watched the process, guessed that at length he had solved the problem which had so long perplexed him. He procured a cartload of flint, had them fired and pulverized, and mixing the powder with pipe clay and water, applied it to his horse, which after the final baking became white and shining. This invention, which he improved upon by introducing calcium flux into the body of the ware, was soon universally adopted. Exchange.

His One Meal a Day. The eccentric Dr. Esdaile, a well-known professor of chemistry of the eighteenth century, believed that man required only one meal a day, and for twenty years he practiced what he preached. At 4 he would present himself at Dolly's chophouse in Paternoster row, and immediately upon his arrival the cook would place a pound and a half of rump steak upon the gridiron. While it was cooking the doctor would arrange himself with some such world famous brand with some such

Cynical. "That doctor is something of a cynic." "As to how?" "He says when a man has a malady it's a disease and when a woman has it it's a complaint."—Washington Star.

The Work That Tells a Story. Better the rudest work that tells a story or records a fact than the richest without meaning. There should not be a single ornament put upon great civic buildings without some intellectual intention.—Rusk.

How Careless! A circus man tells a story illustrating how soft-hearted and sympathetic some of the circus-masters are when the acrobats get hurt. The heroine of the story was a girl who did the four-horse act, the six-horse act, the trapeze, and the flying bar for all of which she received the princely remuneration of \$10 a week.

Slightly Mixed. General Adam Badeau told a good story of a visit he once made in London with two friends. They had been invited to a swell reception in the west end, and when they arrived they were met by a funkey of gigantic stature, with nose high in the air.

Brutal Conduct. "But why are you determined to get a divorce from your husband?" "Because he is an absolute brute." "You amaze me. You used to say that he was as gentle as a child." "Yes, that's what I used to say. But you ought to see him now! Listen! Since the baby began teething nothing would quiet the little darling but being allowed to pull his papa's whiskers. And when he found that out what do you think he did? He went down and had his beard shaved off, that's what! Do you think I'd live with a man that has that sort of disposition!"—Cleveland Plain Dealer.