

## THE RANDOLPHS OF NEVADA

By HERMAN KNOELLER

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FANNIE went to the party in a pet and under protest. She was heartily sick of it all. Her three years' experience "in society" since she left school had filled her with dissatisfaction and contempt. The pleasures she had anticipated had turned to ashes in the realization. Instead of the knight of her girlish dreams, she had found colorless idlers, addicted champions of the golf field, and men of the world who filled her with distrust. The women seemed either too narrow and frivolous to endure, or so worldly-wise as to be fit companions for the men with the "past."

However, she was beautiful and placid as ever as she swept into the drawing-room at the Mortimers. As usual, she became at once the center of a group of chattering guests. Presently an audible flutter near the door drew attention. The man who caused it was entirely conscious of his situation, which made it worse. He was wholly out of keeping with the company. Tall and sinewy, his sun-burned face contrasted oddly with the hothouse pallor of the other men. Instead of the conventional evening coat, he wore a Prince Albert, and wore it most ungracefully. His attire throughout lacked the little elegances so essential to correctness, and his whole bearing was that of a cat in a strange garret.

"For goodness sake, how did that break in?" giggled Algy Van Biscit, adjusting his monocle.

"Oh, that must be Mr. Randolph—a business acquaintance of papa's from the west," exclaimed Helen Mortimer, with a glance of mock severity at Algy. "Papa says he is a very smart young man who has done some wonderful things in engineering or irrigation, or something like that, and he wants to show him some country," and Helen turned to meet him.

Nobody excepting Mr. Mortimer took pains to make matters easier for the stranger and he floundered worse the further into the room he got. He appreciated fully his helplessness and his disadvantage. Every one was on the point (or over it) of giggling and some of those to whom he was presented could not resist a sly fling. His own speech was disconcerted and altogether the situation was painful. Fannie could not resist joining the spirit of mischief. Albert, she knew it was ill-bred.

"Of the Virginia Randolphs?" she inquired innocently, and it was painfully apparent that the group was suppressing a giggle with effort.

The effect on the stranger was electrical. His nervous half-fright dropped from him in an instant. He threw his head back and his keen, gray eyes looked straight into Fannie's with an expression so dominating and self-assertive that her's dropped.

"No," he replied, with quiet emphasis, "of the Nevada Randolphs."

The suggestion of titter ceased. There was a moment of eloquent silence. Then Van Biscit, who felt called on to come to Fannie's rescue, asked:

"Old Family—the Nevada Randolphs?"

"No, very new," replied Randolph, turning to Van Biscit with the same stern expression which sent the cold chills chasing up and down Algy's back. "We make it our pride out there to found families rather than boast of the deeds of our ancestors. We are too busy building an empire in the wilderness and accumulating money for our sons and grandsons to spend and brag about to find time to make a study of family trees."

The situation was becoming strained and Mr. Mortimer hurried his guest along, chuckling audibly at the discomfort in his wake.

It was destined to be an evening of mishaps, for just as the refreshments were served the electric lights went out without warning. Lamps and candles were hurried on, but made a sorry showing in the great dining-hall. Presently it was reported to Mr. Mortimer that nobody in the establishment could find the cause of the difficulty and that the electrician telephoned for could not be there for an hour or more. Randolph went over and whispered to Mortimer and the two disappeared. In a few moments the recalcitrant lights resumed business and shortly after the two men reappeared, Randolph with cuffs somewhat soiled, and coat wrinkled, and Mortimer explained that the party owed the illumination to Mr. Randolph, who had found the trouble with some difficulty and corrected it.

Fannie looked at Randolph curiously. He was a very different man than when he stumbled awkwardly into the room. There was conscious power in his face and perfect self-possession in his carriage. Before leaving she sought him out and said:

"Mr. Randolph, I want to apologize to you for my rudeness. It was ill-bred and inexcusable from any point of view."

"Do not mention it, I beg of you," he replied heartily. "I appreciate the fact that I am very much out of place here, and if I look like I feel, a most legitimate object of ridicule."

Fannie flushed as she had not since school days.

"That makes my position the more humiliating," said she. "I will be glad to make some amends if you will call on me. Our carriage is at your disposal, and I will be glad to show you some of the sights."

He started and looked at her earnestly. She met his gaze unflinchingly, but still crimson.

"I will come," said he.

He called the next day, and she took him for a long ride through the park and drives.

During the ride she drew him out as to his life in the west. He was as frank as a child. He had worked out a plan to irrigate an immense valley in Nevada and transform tens of thousands of acres of useless land into fertile farms. His plan was perfect and had been carried out enough to demonstrate its practicability. But he had run out of money. It would require a vast amount of money to work out the plan, and get hold of the land so as to secure a proportion of the benefit. A great railroad was ready to penetrate the valley with a branch as soon as they saw evidence of the plans being carried out. He had come east to interest capital enough to develop his plans. It would require about \$1,000,000 to complete the irrigation system and secure control of the land. She listened so eagerly and asked so many questions that he was delighted, and came again and again to see her. She found a real interest in the plans of this enthusiast to rehabilitate a desert, and poured over the scheme and the principles it involved with an application she had not displayed since leaving school.

Hence, when he came to her one day with white face and told her that Mortimer and the crowd with whom he had been figuring had thrown the project in the air, she felt nearly as badly as he did.

"They admit it is the most alluring thing they have ever had offered them," he exclaimed, passionately, "but they don't know for certain if irrigation will irrigate—great heavens! what have I been about for the past five years if I don't know about that?"

He said he would make one more trial with another party of capitalists with whom he had corresponded. "But I know what they want—to get all the profits and give me thanks and a salary for my share. But they won't get it excepting on my terms. I'll burn the plans first."

The next day Judge Patten was surprised by a visit from his fair client, Fannie Verdevere. He had been her father's legal adviser and executor of the estate, and had handled it since the distribution. Fannie had never been in his office.

"How much money have I got?" she asked.

"Not much, not much, my dear," chuckled the judge. "But you have quite a bundle of securities. What's the matter? Want to buy an English duke?"

"How much money can I raise on my securities?" she persisted.

"Well, I should say a million and a half, if you take plenty of time. Maybe a million if they were forced on the market," replied the judge.

"Well," announced Fannie, demurely. "I am going to invest a million in a western irrigation scheme, and I want you to arrange it for me."

We will pass by the apologetic condition of the judge and the cool insistence of Fannie. Suffice it to say that Henry Randolph received an unexpected visit from Judge Patten the next day and was told that some clients of his desired to have information regarding his irrigation plans, with a view to investing. Randolph was suspicious and moved with due caution. The judge and Fannie had several stormy interviews.

"The plans certainly look all right, and if it works there might be a barrel of money made, but it all depends on this man Randolph," asserted the lawyer.

"He is the man I am betting on," replied Fannie, coolly.

"Yes; but it is madness to put practically your entire fortune into one venture—and that not of an approved character."

"So you have remarked before," remarked Fannie, sweetly.

Randolph told Fannie of the deal after it was made, saying the only thing he disliked about it was the mystery regarding the principals.

During the following year he wrote her occasionally, telling her of the progress of the work. It was two years before he returned east, and after some important business calls hastened to present himself at the Vandevere home. His scheme had won out. The land was not yet sold, but irrigation was complete, and the railroad built, and the Mortimer syndicate offered to take the entire thing from him for \$4,000,000. He was jubilant.

"And I want to thank you for your interest and encouragement," he said, gravely. Her eyes twinkled.

"You did more than you know to keep up my courage while I was trying to finance the deal," he continued.

"Miss Vandevere, I am able to speak now for my future is assured. Will you become one of the Randolphs, of Nevada?"

Some months later, after the first dividend of the Consolidated Land & Irrigation company had been declared and Randolph was fingering the very substantial check just received from the east, he remarked to his wife:

"I wonder if those eastern chaps are satisfied now that there was something in my scheme?"

Mrs. Randolph smiled a mischievous smile, produced a similar check for the balance of the dividends, thrust it into her husband's hands and said, demurely:

"Yes, Henry, dear; fully satisfied."

And then there was a short season of explanations.

## A CREEK MARRIAGE CEREMONY.



Find the Bride's Father.

At the time of the first settlement of America by the whites the Creek Indians were more given to ceremony than any of the other tribes. Their chiefs were held in such veneration that the first-born male child of each family was sacrificed to him in the presence of the mother. They were sun worshipers, offering sacrifices to it of grain and animals. A feature of a Creek marriage ceremony was the prostration of the bride and groom and their friends to the setting sun on the day of the wedding. When first known they lived in Florida, Georgia and Alabama. They were nearly all removed to a reservation west of the Mississippi in 1826, at which time they numbered some 25,000. Now they number but about 15,000.

(They wore nothing but loin cloths made of moss, and a feather in their hair. Men and women dressed alike. Lived in villages fortified with moats, etc.)

### EXPENSIVE FRENCH FARE.

Peacocks Served in Their Beautiful Plummage at Luncheon on State Occasions.

Word comes from Paris that the latest dish at fashionable luncheons and dinners is peacock served in all the glory of its plumage at a cost of \$100. A rich American woman just back from a two years' stay in Europe entertained several listeners the other day with an account of how she first discovered that peacock was included in the Parisian menu, reports the New York Sun.

"Not long after I reached Paris," she said, "I got an invitation to a luncheon by an American woman in honor of Lady Somebody. When the day came I was not very well, and at the last minute I decided to send a regret."

"When, later on, I learned what I had missed, I was sorry enough. It was at a dinner given two nights later by the same hostess to a distinguished visiting diplomat that I heard about the peacock. 'I sat next the diplomat and I heard the hostess remark near the close of the dinner:

"'Had I known a few days earlier that you were coming I could have given you a less commonplace menu. As a matter of fact the menu included all the delicacies of the season, and this guest of honor took care to point out. 'What more could you possibly have given me?' he inquired.

"'Well I might have given you peacock,' was her laughing rejoinder.

"At first the diplomat thought she was joking. Then the story of the luncheon came out.

"It seems that at the proper time for the game course, appeared the peacock, borne aloft on a platter by the butler, its magnificent spread tail sweeping far over his shoulder. Just before the bird's advent the entire center of the large oval table had been cleared and there the bird alighted to occupy the post of honor until the end of the meal. The effect was imposing.

"Before that, when the peacock was taken from the oven, and before its brilliant plumage had been restored, the breast was carved and placed in another dish which was to be passed to the guests.

"When I afterward made some inquiries on my own account I learned that one must give an order for a peacock several days ahead, for the birds are not by any means plentiful, and that the lowest price charged for one is \$100. I found out, too, that peacock is difficult to cook; that is to cook in such fashion that it will be appetizing.

"One chef told me that he first parboils the bird, then roasts it, then carves the meaty parts and cooks them in a saucepan with a wonderful assortment of condiments and a liquor that includes Sherry wine. After all, though, the great success of a peacock course is the sensation it creates and its decorative features."

The head of a leading New York restaurant, when asked why the peacock was not included in the fashionable menu over here shrugged his shoulders and answered:

"It's tough eating!"

"But what of that?" remarked some one. "Think of the scenic possibilities it affords. Americans are always keen after decorative features at their banquets no matter what they cost."

"Don't you believe," asked another "that now the peacock has been taken up in Paris dining rooms it will soon be the fashion in New York?"

"Perhaps," said the restaurant man, with a shrug.

"A Distinction." "I dislike so much to be called a 'peacock,'" said a young woman who sometimes wrote verses for publication. "Perhaps," suggested her matter-of-fact brother, "if you will write a little better quality of poetry people will call you a poet."

—Youth's Companion.

### THE BIKER AND HIS LION.

Wheelman in Africa Has an Adventure with a Fortunate Conclusion.

On a mellow moonlight evening a cyclist was riding along a lonely road in the northern part of Mashonaland. As he rode, enjoying the somber beauty of the African evening, he suddenly became conscious of a soft, stealthy tread on the road behind him, relates the Philadelphia Ledger. It seemed like the jog-trot of some heavy, cushion-footed animal following him. Turning round, he was scared very badly to find himself looking into the glaring eyes of a huge lion. The puzzled animal acted very strangely, now raising his head, now lowering it, and all the time sniffing the air in a most perplexed manner.

Here was a surprise for the lion. He could not make out what kind of an animal it was that could roll, walk and sit still all at the same time—an animal with a red eye on each side and a brighter one in front. He hesitated to pounce upon such an outlandish being—a being whose blood smelled so oily.

No cyclist since the Romans invented wheels ever "scorched" with more honest and single mindedness of purpose. But, although he pedaled and pedaled, although he perspired and panted, his effort to get away did not seem to place any more territory between him and the lion, for that animal, like Mark Twain's coyote, kept up his annoying, calm trot and never seemed to tire.

The poor rider was finally so exhausted from terror and exertion that he decided to have the matter over with right away. Suddenly slowing down, he jumped from his wheel and, facing abruptly about, thrust the brilliant headlight full into the face of the lion.

This was too much for the beast. It was this fright that broke the lion's nerve, for at this fresh evidence of mystery on the part of the strange rider animal, who broke himself into halves and then cast his big eye in any direction he pleased, the monarch of the forest turned tail and, with a wild rush, retreated in a very hyenalike manner into the jungle, evidently thanking his stars for his miraculous escape from that awful being. Thereupon the bicyclist, with new strength returning and devoutly blessing his acetylene lamp, pedaled his way to civilization.

Old Girl Graduates. If the likeness of girl graduates which now make an attractive feature of many newspapers are true to the life, and undoubtedly they are in most cases, doesn't it seem that those leaving the high schools have a remarkably mature look? In some instances they look to be quite 25 years of age and as knowing and wise as girls who really have seen that number of years are usually found to be in this sophisticated age. It seems rather curious, too, that such young girls should look so "finished," but it is probably just an evening up of things in their respective families, as their mothers and grandmothers are undoubtedly engaged in taking beauty-and-youth-renewing cures with years from five to twenty-five taken from their ages. We will record it as the result of an effort of nature to square accounts.—Boston Transcript.

Related to a Prince. Jesco Von Puttkamer, the 14-year-old grandnephew of Prince Bismarck, is a press feeder in a job printing establishment in Wilkesbarre, Pa. His aunt, Mrs. Mary Royer, with whom he lives, is a scrubwoman. The boy's father, Francis Von Puttkamer, was an officer in the German cavalry. About 25 years ago, the boy says, he quarreled with Prince Bismarck and fled from Germany, giving up home, position and money. In New York he was at one time a dishwasher. He married and two children were born—Marguerite, aged 16, who is now a mill worker in Philadelphia, and Jesco.

### MEMORY OF THE PAST.

Brought Up in the Piffleblooms Household Creates Anything But Pleasantness.

"It seems but yesterday since I was a girl," sighed Mrs. Piffleblooms, relates Ally Sloper; "a gay, artless, happy, giddy, birdlike girl!"

"It would take a decent-sized ready reckoner to calculate the number of yesterdays since you left girlhood behind," observed Mr. Piffleblooms, calmly; "though so far as the 'birdlike' part of the business goes I have nothing whatever to say, recollecting as I do the existence of such birds as the crow, the owl, and the cormorant!"

"Thank you, Piffleblooms," said Mrs. P., coldly. "But I am so used to your brutal sneers and coarse insults that they fall from me like water from a duck's back. At the same time I am not aware that there is anything criminal in the mere fact of my referring to my joyous girlhood."

"Nothing whatever, my love," returned Piffleblooms, easily. "Let me, indeed, if such a thing be possible, endeavor to indorse your recollections of that delightful period."

He stretched himself luxuriously in his chair, inhaled a whiff or two of inspiration from his well-filled pipe, and continued in an agreeable monotone:

"From the age of ten to 14, if the word of your mother is to be relied on, you quarreled with every girl in your school, and left without possessing a single friend or companion, though enjoying the hatred of all. During that epoch, you likewise, according to the same authority, suffered from mumps and toothache something like twice a week, alternating such periods of pain with a chronic cold in the head. From 14 to 16 you cultivated warts, principally upon your hands, and made your feet wretched by wearing boots several sizes too small, and the household miserable by the peevishness and sulkeness of your temper. It was then that I unfortunately came to lodge with your revered parent, a widow with no income. The housekeeping of the establishment was not conducted upon an extravagant scale. I believe I am right in stating that the liver and bacon once a month was something to be looked forward to, and a bit of Dutch cheese for supper a luxury not to be despised. You never—according to your own oft-sworn statement—had a rag to go out in, and a Punch and Judy or a street organ opposite the window was the only amusement you knew. And yet," he went on, pausing between each word to eject spirals of smoke from his pursed-up lips, "knowing—all—this—and—more! I was—besotted—idiot—enough—to—"

"Beast!" ejaculated Mrs. Piffleblooms, sweeping haughtily from the room; while through the fragile party-wall dividing the villa from its left-hand neighbor there filtered, distinctly audible, the sweet, sad notes of an old-time melody, played by faltering fingers upon a cracked piano—"Always the same, Darby my own, Always the same to your old wife Joan!"

### WOMEN AND BILLIARDS.

Many Expert Players Among Members of the Fair Sex Especially in France.

"Of late years the game of billiards has been growing in popularity among members of the fair sex, and scores of women have become experts with the cue," said a well-known club man to a Washington Star reporter. "Many well-to-do people have their own private billiard-rooms at their homes, and these give the women of the household and their friends a chance to indulge in the invigorating sport freely."

"In France a gentleman is not ashamed to take his wife to see a professional billiard game. French women are good billiard players, and like to see all the fancy shots made by professionals as soon as they begin to attract attention. They read the billiard news in the daily papers, and subscribe for journals published especially for billiardists.

"There are many expert women billiard players in the large cities of the United States, but they are never seen at the professional matches, and seldom at the amateur contests. At the Hanover club, in Brooklyn, and at the Liederkranz, women are invited and encouraged to see the contests of national clubs. This is a move in the right direction. In the old Windsor hotel, New York, where the billiard room was right off the corridor, Patti used to stand at the entrance, and watch the play for a few moments before going to her room. She never would accept a seat inside, because some men who had more money than manners used to stand in groups and stare at her. Mrs. George Gould is a capital billiard player. So are Mrs. Americ Paget, Mrs. Burke Roche, Mrs. Edwin Gould and a number of other society women. Lillian Russell can play almost as well as a professional. She takes to the game as a part of her daily exercise to trim down her weight and keep in good condition.

"The efficacy of billiards as a health restorer is beyond dispute. The motions gone through with reach every part of the body, and operate on the entire system. They completely dispel languor and that tired feeling. The muscles are exercised and the blood sent in swifter circulation through the veins."

### A Big Fee.

A Pittsburg doctor has received a fee of \$24,000 for treating a man who died. He will never need to take anything for his nerve.—Chicago Record-Herald.

### South Africa's Biggest Building.

The new nine-story building being built in Johannesburg will be the biggest establishment of its kind in South Africa.

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