

THE STORY TELLER

Through Fire

By
MARTHA McCULLOCH WILLIAMS

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"CLEARLY I am no wife for you. Take back your ring!" Marion said, with her proudest lift of the head. Redmond bit his lip in unconcealed vexation as he answered: "Throw it in the fire—if you are tired of it. I won't take it back—not any more than I'll take back a word I have said. You made me say them. Any other man—"

"You need not go over it all," Marion said, wearily. "Nothing really matters—except that you have found out—in time—how little I suit you. But my music does suit you, so let me play for you. Your train does not go for two hours."

"Thank you—I can wait for it," Redmond said, doggedly, rising and moving toward the door. Marion, at the window, suddenly drew back the heavy curtains, letting him see the windy snow whirling and swirling outside. Within, there was only the firelight. The big doctor's lamp at the side of the steps made the turbulence outside clearly visible.

"There is no fire at the station," she said, quietly. "No stove up yet—this blizzard has found everybody unprepared. Don't go out in it, please!"

"What do you care? I'm of no consequence to you," Redmond said, shaking his shoulders unappetized. Still he went back to the fire, and stood looking down into it, while Marion drew out her fiddle and began testing the strings. She also stood—he thought she had never looked so slender, so upright, yet such a figure of grace. Presently she laid her cheek lovingly against the fiddle, sounded a faint bar or two, listened again, then dashed off into a rollicking melody—one of the old breakdowns that have set feet patting, heads nodding, throughout how many years?

Redmond loved the air—still more the wailing minors that came after it.



THEY WERE NEVER DONE SPECULATING.

Insensibly his mood changed and softened. Marion must care a deal for him after all. He might, indeed, have been hasty in speaking so strongly about her friendly association with young Villers. Villers was little more than a boy—a lonely boy, in the shadow of a new and crushing sorrow. If he had not been also so disgustingly rich, so confoundingly handsome—but what was the use of going over all that? He, Redmond, had had it out with Marion—in result the diamond he had hopefully fitted to her slim finger lay sparkling faintly in the shifting light upon the mantel underneath the giver's hand.

He would never take it back—that went without saying. He had loved so to see it flash back rainbows as her fingers moved here or there. And he had had not the least thought of serious quarrel—only to let her see that now she belonged to him, she must give no occasion for the slightest gossip. Gossip! There lay the root of trouble. It was his Aunt Margaret, and old Miss Maxon's talk, that had upset him. They were never done

GROWTH OF FOREIGN TRADE.

Exports of the United States Exceed Imports for 1903 by Nearly \$500,000,000.

One of the most important documents which has been made public in some time, and which explains very clearly the position which the United States has reached in its international exchange relations, was the statement of the bureau of statistics of our foreign trade for December and for the year 1903. It is a most remarkable statement in every respect, and as highly favorable as the most optimistic could have desired.

One fact contained therein is particularly worthy of notice, and shows how the international ledger has been balanced. The assertion has been frequently made of late that our foreign indebtedness has been practically liquidated, but the figures of the report enable one to tell exactly the manner in which the liquidation has taken place.

A year ago the indebtedness of this country to European nations was estimated by bankers at between \$300,000,000 and \$500,000,000. The foreign

speculating as to whether Marion's people, the Lynleys, would really catch young Villers for their girls. Villers' mother and Mrs. Lynley had been like sisters. When Madame Villers died it was to her friend she confided her son. He was five years younger than Marion—but what was that—with a round half million dollars to bridge the gulf?

Thus went on the two ladies. Redmond had heard them outwardly calm, inwardly raging. The upshot of it was his demand that Marion should either marry him out of hand, or at once forever forswear Villers's company. He saw now he had been hasty—mightily undiplomatic. He ought, instead, to have pressed for immediate marriage, and, falling that, to have insisted that all the world should know they were betrothed. All along he had chafed against the secrecy upon which Marion's mother had insisted. The insistence was, indeed, the original root of his jealousy. The Lynleys were not rich, for all the doctor's practice was so big. His heart was of equal size; therefore he made small account of money. His wife was another sort. Naturally, she was ambitious to see her only child well established in life.

"Stop! You—you are playing on my heart strings," Redmond said, at last, half turning away his head.

Marion laid down her bow, with a little shivering sigh. "I thought I was playing on—my own," she said, very low. "Saying good-by to—so many things."

"With me, Marion! Darling, only come! Let me take care of you!" Redmond entreated, trying to draw her into his arms. She eluded him, and said, with her eyes on the fire: "No! I must try making my own way. Next week I shall be 21—then I shall take the little legacy that comes to me for my name's sake and spend it in finding out if I may have a career. People have said there was a fortune in my finger-tips. I don't care for money so much—but work, real work, will be a godsend."

"Why?" Redmond asked, his lips whitening.

Marion looked at him an instant, then let her eyes fall again to the leaping fire, saying: "Because I do not want to be unhappy—and one must be unhappy, remembering happier things. You love me—I know that—but you do not trust me—your jealousy would always be a thorn in my heart, if I married you. As I said, it is best the parting comes now. But think what it would mean to stay here—and remember—with my mother always fretting to have me take the Villers fortune!"

"Marion! Marion! Forgive me! Let me take back everything!" Redmond entreated, making to lay hold on her hand. She drew away from him, heedless in her stress of emotion that the fierce fire draught caught her skirt and drew it into the heart of the flames. Instantly they leaped at it, seized on it and ran up about her throat. Redmond caught her, held her tight, and beat out with bare hands their perilous red legions. Thus he saved Marion's face from all scathe—thus, too, he saved her from inhaling flame. But her right hand, instinctively clutched amid the fiercest of it all, was piteously scarred; so was the right arm higher than the elbow. Elsewhere the burns were mere red scorches. But Dr. Lynley got white and his hands shook badly as he put on salves and bandages, and thought of what might have been.

Redmond would not go away. All night he sat in his hotel chamber, listening to every sound, starting up a dozen times an hour at a fancied sound of hurrying feet. Marion's danger had cleared his spiritual vision as nothing else could have done. He knew he loved her supremely—that henceforth he must go mourning if, by his mistrust, he had truly lost her. He did not heed the sharp cold, the pelting snow outside, nor the drifts through which he struggled at daybreak toward the Lynley house. Early as it was Dr. Lynley greeted him, smiling tremulously, and holding both hands in a warm clasp, unable to say a word.

It was after breakfast that they let him see Marion—Marion, almost herself save for a bandaged arm. She gave him her left hand, saying, with a wan smile: "You saved my life, John; but you could not save the best of me. Daddy says the chances are I shall have stiff fingers—and that means I shall never play again."

"Never mind; you will be always making music—in my home and heart," Redmond said, kneeling beside the couch to take her, whether or no, to his breast. This time Marion did not draw away. Instead, she nestled to him, her face an April countenance of smiles and tears.

Strange Old Medal.

Attached to a very ancient human skeleton found in one of the old mines in the Wichita mountains was a strangely carved medal. It is four or five inches in diameter. On one side is a raised figure, representing two hands clasped; on one cuff is the American eagle; on the other are three bars extending lengthwise of the cuff. Above the hands are a pipe and tomahawk crossed. On this side of the medal are the words: "Peace and Friendship." On the other side is a bust of President Jefferson, with the inscription: "Thomas Jefferson, President of the United States, A. D. 1801." A silver ring is fastened to a post on the top of the medal.—Kansas City Journal.

It is reported that the Manitoba & Pike's Peak railroad will be operated next summer by electricity instead of steam and cogwheels.

Early Celebrations

THE origin of Washington's birthday as a holiday is stated as follows: On February 22, 1783, a number of gentlemen met in a New York tavern to celebrate the great general's birthday. They then agreed to assemble in future on that day, celebrating it with odes and toasts. Washington's ascendancy shortly after to the presidency gave a new zest to the "annual," so that in time it became general, and finally grew into a "legal holiday," the people demanding it from a custom.

The first public celebration of Washington's birthday occurred on February 11, 1784, and the anticipated occasion was thus alluded to by the Pennsylvania Packet of February 17, same year: "Wednesday last being the birthday of his excellency, Gen. Washington, the same was celebrated here by all the true friends of American independence and constitutional liberty, with that hilarity and manual decorum attendant on the sons of freedom. In the evening an entertainment was given on board the East India ship in this harbor, to a very brilliant and respectable company, and a discharge of 13 cannon was fired upon the joyful occasion."

Martha Washington

THERE was a ready response of good and prominent women in both England and America to the call for nurses during the late Spanish-American and South African wars. This brings to mind the kind and helpful attitude of Martha Washington during a critical period of American history, long since happily superseded by the good feeling, based on mutual understanding, that both countries now seek constantly to foster. William Perine tells the story:

"Martha Washington was then 45 years of age, and those who went to the camp and expected to find her arrayed in the gowns which they had supposed would be worn by the general's wife



MARTHA WASHINGTON

were disappointed. 'Whilst our husbands and brothers are examples of patriotism,' she would say to her countrywomen, 'we must be patterns of industry.' She did not hesitate to wear a brown dress and a speckled apron when receiving fastidious and elegant visitors at Morristown. It was said afterward that she acquired her inveterate habit of knitting in her zeal at Valley Forge to relieve the barefooted men around her. On every fair day she might be seen walking through the rude streets of the town of huts with a basket in her hand. Entering the hut of a sergeant, she found him dying on a pallet of straw, his wife beside him in the anguish of final separation. She ministered to his comfort with food prepared by her own hands. Then, kneeling, she earnestly prayed with her 'sweet and solemn voice' for the stricken couple. All day long she was busy with these errands of grace, or in the kitchen at the stone house, or in urging other women to lend a helping hand. And when she passed along the lines of the troops she would sometimes hear the fervent cry: 'God bless Lady Washington!' or 'Long live Lady Washington!' Well, indeed, might the men feel that they could fight to their very last drop of blood with a commander whose wife, who was formerly the belle and leader of her set among the dames and damsels of Virginia, was not ashamed to be seen darning his and her own stockings!"

VERY EASILY ANSWERED.



Teacher—Why should all good little boys like Washington's birthday? Chorus of Five—"Cause they ain't no school that day!"—Chicago Chronicle.

—A Possibility. "Do you believe that George Washington never told a lie?" "It's possible. He never was much of a business man, anyway."—Chicago Post.

IN PRAIRIE LAND.

(Editorial Correspondence.)

MOOSE JAW, Assiniboia.

Farmers' Review, Chicago, July 22, 1903.

"Most of the prairies in the United States have ceased to exist. Man has broken them up with orchards, forests and farm buildings. But in Western Canada the prairies still stretch grandly from horizon to horizon as yet unmarred by the hand of man, save where the iron road has been laid. To a city man there is something deliciously restful about the vast grassy solitudes.

"Numerous clumps of trees mark the course of the Assiniboine River, which keeps in sight of the railroad for some distance.

"Grass is one of the notable things about all the landscape of Western Canada. It is a remarkable fact that the entire length of the Canadian Pacific railway from its eastern terminus to the Rocky mountains is over plains where grass grows. The sage brush appears at some points, but never to the exclusion of grass. There is thus not a mile of this country that cannot be used for some agricultural purpose—either for tilling or ranching.

"Moose Jaw is a town of over 2,000 inhabitants and one of the most important places in Assiniboia, being the center of a very good farming country and a great grain and stock shipping point.

"Near Moose Jaw agriculture and ranching go hand in hand; for near the town was seen a herd of beef cattle several hundred in number. On another side was seen a good sized herd of dairy cows, the property of the citizens in the town.

"In riding over the prairies we saw many good fields of alfalfa. The great need of the country is timber, which grows readily where planted, as was demonstrated by the shelter belts on some of the farms, and the trees on the residence lots in the town.

"Stories were told the writer of men who last year cleared from their wheat crop more than the land on which it was grown originally cost them. This is easy to believe in view of the large crop and high price for wheat last year.—Henry F. Thurston."

By sending your address to any agent of the Canadian Government you will have mailed to you a copy of an Atlas, railway rates, etc., giving fullest information regarding Western Canada.

COLLEGE AND CAMPUS.

Dr. William E. Huntington has formally accepted the presidency of the Boston university.

It is practically settled that the new state superintendent of education in New York to succeed Superintendent Skinner is to be Andrew S. Draper, of the University of Illinois.

What is tantamount to a chair of American questions exists in the College of France. Last year Prof. Fouquet gave a course of lectures upon economic questions in America. This year the subject matter of his course will be religious questions in the United States.

William David Gibbs, M. S., who graduated from the University of Illinois in 1893, has recently been appointed to the presidency of the New Hampshire College of Agriculture and Mechanic Art. Prior to this appointment he was director of the agricultural experiment station at the University of Texas.

The New York correspondent of a London paper makes a statement which may come under the head of "important if true." He says that some American fathers are endeavoring to secure the services of English university men "to instruct their offspring in the best style of enunciation. It is now considered impossible, even in infancy, for American tutors to eliminate the prevalent nasal twang." Therefore, according to this veracious journalist, English varsity men are being called into service.

DR. E. E. HALE'S MAXIMS.

Our government is ourselves united. With us, administration is not government.

Feudal institutions die within 15 minutes after the immigrant lands in America.

Democracy is a system in which the people rules itself and commands its servants.

In the feudal or European systems, no man may do anything unless he is permitted. In the democratic or American system, he may do anything unless he is forbidden.

When you intrust government to everybody, everybody makes his suggestion. The man who knows where the shoe pinches makes the last and instructs the workmen.

DON'TS FOR THE COMPLEXION.

Don't eat hot or fresh bread if you want to be healthy and beautiful. Don't drink thirst water. Cool water quenches thirst much better than ice cold fluid.

Don't eat much meat in hot weather if you would keep your skin free from eruptions.

Don't eat ice cream too fast. Eaten slowly and allowed to melt in the mouth it can do no harm.

Don't eat when very tired, if you expect to get any good from your food and preserve your beauty.

Don't eat cold, starchy foods, like potato salad and cold porridge, unless you have strong digestive organs.

Don't drink much water at meals, but take a glassful of the first thing in the morning and the last thing at night.

Don't eat more than one hearty meal a day. This is the secret of good looks, health and long life—a secret which everyone followed the doctors could not make a living.

Londoners consume, on an average, 128 pounds of meat a head yearly.

The U. S. Dept. of Agriculture

gives to Salzer's Oats its heartiest endorsement. Salzer's New National Oats yielded in 1903 from 150 to 300 bu. per acre in 30 different States, and you, Mr. Farmer, can beat this in 1904, if you will.

Salzer's seeds are pedigree seeds, bred up through careful selection of big yields. Per Acre. Salzer's Barless Barley yielded 121 bu. Salzer's Home Builder Corn... 300 bu. Speltz and Macaroni Wheat... 80 bu. Salzer's Victoria Rape... 60,000 lbs. Salzer's Teosinte, the fodder wonder... 180,000 lbs. Salzer's Billion Dollar Grass... 50,000 lbs. Salzer's Pedigree Potatoes... 1,000 bu. Now such yields pay and you can have them, Mr. Farmer, in 1904.

SEND 10c IN STAMPS and this notice to the John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis., and you will get their big catalog and lots of farm seed samples free. [K. L.]

Fighting the Limit.

"No," said the editor, "we can't use your story. There's too much originality about it."

"Too much originality!" echoed the contributor. "Why, I thought you wanted original matter."

"So we do," answered he of the blue pencil, "but we draw the line at spelling."—Cincinnati Enquirer.

Cheap Excursions to the South.

On March 1 and 15th, the K. C. Southern R'y will offer to the public the extremely low rate of \$10 for the round trip to all points on the Port Arthur Route, including Beaumont, Port Arthur, Lake Charles, Shreveport, Texarkana, Ft. Smith, Mena, De Queen and all intermediate points. The return limit on these tickets will be 21 days from date of sale, with stopover privileges at all points south of Kansas City on the going trip. Any information desired by the public relative to the cheap excursions will be cheerfully furnished upon application to S. G. Warner, G. P. & T. A., Kansas City, Mo.

"Did she tell you the number of shoe she wears?" "Oh, no; just the number she tells people she wears."—Cincinnati Times-Star.

Historic Route to Florida.

The shortest and most attractive route from Chicago or St. Louis to Florida is via Nashville, Chattanooga and Atlanta, over the historic Nashville, Chattanooga & St. Louis R'y, and Western & Atlantic R. R.; via Lookout Mountain, Chickamauga Park, and through the famous battlefields of the Civil War. This is the route of the "Florida Flyer," the all-year-round train which carries sleepers between Chicago and Jacksonville and St. Louis and Jacksonville. It is also the route of the "Chicago & Florida Limited," a solid vestibuled train operating during the Winter season between Chicago and St. Augustine, with sleepers between St. Louis and St. Augustine. If you contemplate taking a Southern trip, and desire interesting literature about the route, write to B. F. Hill, N. P. A., N. C. & St. L. R'y, 350 Marquette Bldg., Chicago, Ill.

"Some men," said the quoter, "are born great, some achieve greatness." "And the great majority," interrupted the cynic, "believe they come under both of these heads."—Philadelphia Ledger.

80 Bu. Macaroni Wheat Per Acre, introduced by the U. S. Dept. of Agr. It is a tremendous cropper, yielding an good head 80 bu. per acre, and on dry, arid lands, such as are found in Mont. Idaho, the Dakotas, Colo., etc., it will yield from 40 to 60 bu. This Wheat and Speltz and Hanna Barley and Bromus Inermis and Billion Dollar Grass, makes it possible to grow and fatten hogs and cattle wherever soil is found.

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to the John A. Salzer Seed Co., La Crosse, Wis., and they will send you free a sample of this Wheat and other farm seeds, together with their great catalog, alone worth \$100.00 to any wide-awake farmer. [K. L.]

It is always easy to rejoice in afflictions, if someone else has them.—Rain's Horn.

Piso's Cure cannot be too highly spoken of as a cough cure.—J. W. O'Brien, 322 Third Ave., N., Minneapolis, Minn., Jan. 6, 1900.

Pride-fosters our foes and puts our friends to flight.—Rain's Horn.

To Care a Cold in One Day. Take Laxative Bromo Quinine Tablets. All druggists refund money if it fails to cure. 25c.

Economy, like charity, should begin at home.—Houston Post.

Perfectly simple and simply perfect is dyeing with Putnam Fadeless Dyes.

Success needs not to apologize for itself.—Rain's Horn.



A Professional Nurse tells her experience with Doan's Kidney Pills.

Montague, Mass. FOSTER-MILBURN CO., Buffalo, N. Y. Gentlemen,—I heartily wish those who are suffering from backache and disturbed action of the kidneys would try Doan's Kidney Pills. As was the case with me, they will be more than surprised with the results. I have been troubled for years with my spine. I could not lie on either side. Spinal cramps would follow, and words could not explain the agony which I would endure. While in these cramps I could not speak or move, but by making a great effort after the cramp had left me I could begin to speak and move a little, but my whole back was so sore and lame that I could not even have my back bathed for some time. My nerves were in a terrible state. I would rather sit up at night than go to bed, dreading the cramps and the terrible backaches. I consulted physicians, but got only a little relief for the time being. Seeing your advertisement, my mother urged me to try Doan's Kidney Pills. After using one box I was better, and have ever since been on the gain. I have no backache and no cramps now, and I feel like a new person. My nerves are better and I know my blood is purer. Words cannot express my thanks to you for what Doan's Kidney Pills have done for me. In my work as professional nurse I have a chance to recommend them; and they did me so much good that I will do so on every possible occasion.

HATTIE BRIGHAM, Nurse.

Doan's Kidney Pills are sold at 50 cents per box. Address Foster-Milburn Co., Buffalo, N. Y., for a free trial box.

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