

GRAND PROMOTER

Major Crofoot Turns the Great Sahara Desert Into a Rabbit Warren

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It was a woman with a book under her arm—a book entitled "Mother, Home and Heaven." She was selling it by subscription, and as Major Crofoot opened his office door in response to her knock she began her stereotyped speech in praise of the volume and wound up by asking that he put his name down for a copy.

"Certainly, ma'am—certainly," he promptly replied. "If you had come here with a thousand books, this would have been my choice over all. I once had a mother, but she has long been dead. I once had a home, but it was long ago broken up. The only thing left me now is to live in such a way



"YOU ARE NOT J. PIERPONT MORGAN?" SHE HESITATINGLY ASKED.

that I may reach heaven. I thank you from the bottom of my heart for bringing my attention to this book."

"Then you will put your name down for it?" she asked.

"Twice over, if you wish, and I will take great pleasure in calling the attention of my friends to it. Poor old mother! Poor old broken up home!"

The major turned away as if to conceal the tears in his eyes, and the canvasser decided that she had stumbled upon a soft thing. The emotion of the grand promoter was so deep that it was sixty seconds before he turned to her and said:

"My dear woman, perhaps you did not know what good fortune awaited you when you knocked at my door. Let me say to you that I am a promoter of enterprises and an originator of trusts, corners and squeezes. In the last year I have promoted no less than sixteen different enterprises, each with a capital of millions, and the seventeenth is now in hand and almost ready for launching."

"You—you are not J. Pierpont Morgan?" she hesitatingly asked.

"Not exactly, ma'am. I am only the man who gives him hints and backs him up with cash. I tell you this in confidence and ask that it go no further."

"I won't say anything, of course. Will you put your name down for the book?"

"With the greatest cheerfulness. But before doing so let me ask you a question. Do you know anything about rabbits?"

"I had one once for a pet."

"Capital, capital!" exclaimed the major. "I had an idea you knew all about rabbits, but wasn't sure. You are indeed the woman I want and must have. Have you any objections to earning \$10,000 a year?"

"Mercy on me, no!" gasped the woman as she turned pale.

"Then consider yourself engaged at that salary. Let me explain. You have heard of the Great Sahara desert?"

"I think so."

"It is a great waste covering 248,000,000 acres of land. At the present time it does not produce one cent's worth to the acre. The land is too sterile to grow anything. Thousands of deep thinking men have wrestled with the problem and given up in despair, and it has been left to me to find a way out. I have found it. The Great Sahara shall be made a gold mine."

"Dear me, how wonderful! And you will take my book?"

"I will take your book. I shall today file articles of incorporation of the Great Sahara Desert Improvement company. I shall be president, of course, while you will be secretary. Your salary, as stated, shall be \$10,000 a year, and if you want money to buy a seal skin sack or a pair of diamond earrings I'll draw you a check this minute. I was looking for a woman who knew all about rabbits, and, lo, I have found her!"

"But—but I can't realize it," replied the canvasser as she looked around in a helpless way. "You can't mean that I am to get \$10,000 a year?"

"Ten thousand, my dear woman—\$10,000 a year. My idea is to stock the Great Sahara with American rabbits. I shall send over 5,000 this year. Next year the 5,000 will have become 75,000. In two years there will be half a million. In five years I shall be able to sell 4,000,000 skins a year at 20 cents apiece. The cost of keeping the rabbits will be nothing. The cost of killing and skinning will be a cent each. Nineteen cents clear profit on every skin. No gold mine will produce such an income. Madam, let us congratulate each other and shake hands on it."

"It is wonderful—wonderful," she

pered the canvasser as they shook hands. "It doesn't seem possible that such good fortune has come to me."

"No? Well, it is here, and you may enter upon your duties Monday next. Only one thing remains. As a token of the earnestness of your intentions and as a proof of your honesty I shall require a deposit of \$2 in cash. This money will be used to print letter heads bearing your name as secretary."

"But I—I don't know about it. This is so sudden, you see."

"Good luck always comes suddenly, and it should be grasped before it can get away. You have \$2 about you, I presume?"

"Yes, but—but—"

"Then I will take it and order the letter heads this very day. Salary \$10,000 a year, and all you'll have to do will be to answer the business letters received. Rabbits will be offered you by thousands of persons, but you must insist that all be bottled. The \$2, please."

"Here's the money," said the woman as she handed it over, "but I—I don't understand. I ought to have time to think it over. I feel all mixed up over it."

"It is a surprise, of course," replied the major as he pocketed the greenback, "but you will soon figure it out to your satisfaction. Can you call again tomorrow—next day—the day after? I shall expect to see you within a week anyhow, as we must get the rabbit business started soon. Remember, only bottled rabbits, and their hind legs must have the right crook to them. That is all today, and now goodbye—goodbye—so long."

"I want to talk more about it!" called the woman as she found herself on the outside of the door.

No answer.

"You didn't subscribe for the book?"

No answer.

"And you've got my \$2?"

No answer.

She tried the door, but it was locked. She rattled it, but the major had lighted the stub of a cigar and sat down with his feet on his desk, and he was undisturbed.

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CURE SICK HEADACHE.

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KINGS MUST OBEY.

Laws Furnish Instances Where Subject Rules Sovereign—Special Enactments for So's Benefit of the Latter.

If the King saw a house he liked and wished to rent it, he could not do so. He might buy it if its owner were free to sell; but supposing the place were entailed, and therefore could not be sold, it is to be feared that His Majesty would have to go without his desire. For, according to the British constitution, a monarch of this country can hold nothing as tenant, nor by service, from any of his subjects.

Great as are the privileges of kings and other members of royal families, they have in a manner to pay for these by the obedience of a number of special enactments made solely for their benefit. Our King, for instance, may not leave the territory of the United Kingdom for any other country unless permitted to do so by his Parliament. He is the only person in the country who may not add to his income by going into partnership in any business enterprise, and though he may be appointed an executor of a will by any of his relations or friends, yet the law refuses to let him act as such.

The royal family is exempted from all tolls and duties, from succession duty, and from most taxes. The Westminster Corporation were recently notified that they were not at liberty to collect the rates—amounting to over \$700—on Marlborough House. But, on the other hand, the royal family are the only people in the country who are not free to marry according to their own choice.

The Royal Marriage Act of 1772 ordains that no descendant of King George II., other than children of Princesses married into foreign families, may marry without the consent of the sovereign; any marriage contracted without such consent is void. The only exception is that any such descendant, if above the age of 25, may, after 12 months' notice to the Privy Council, contract marriage without such consent, unless both Houses of Parliament declare their disapproval. All persons who solemnize, or are present at a marriage contrary to this act, are liable to many and terrible pains and penalties.

That this act is not empty form is proved by the fact that when, in 1793, the Duke of Sussex married Lady Augusta Murray, the marriage was declared void.

Parliament has also enacted that the grandchildren of the sovereign—not being the issue of Princesses married to foreigners and residing abroad—are under his control, and that he may order the places of their abode without regard to the wishes of their parents.

Risks which any subject may take are denied to monarchs, who are thereby cut off from many amusements open to any of their subjects. For instance, when the German Kaiser, then Prince William, was at the Paris International Exhibition in 1878, he was very anxious to go up in the captive balloon. Those present strongly recommended him not to do so. He, however, insisted on making the ascent; and as he was there incognito, it was not possible to prevent him. More lately, however, when he wished to go up in the military balloon at the Temple d'Art manoeuvre grounds, he was daily told by a number of his military and legal advisers that he must not do so, and was compelled, much against his will, to abandon the proposed ascent.

When a peeress of the realm marries, even if her husband is beneath her in social rank, yet he becomes the head of the house, and enjoys legal privileges as such. Quite the reverse is the case with a reigning Queen. Her husband has no legal status whatsoever, except such as may be afterwards granted to him by letters patent or by statute.

It was not until after 18 years of married life that our late Queen Victoria, who succeeded in obtaining for Prince Albert the title of "Prince Consort of Great Britain." Up to that time he had had no official status of any kind in the kingdom, and abroad was obliged to be content with the precedence due to a mere Prince of Coburg.

The law of libel, as regards royalty, is different from that which affects other people, and in this respect greater privileges are accorded to reigning families, at least, by British law. The rule of English law is that "any publication tending to degrade and defame" royal families of this or other countries may be treated as libelous. So long ago as 1787, Lord George Gordon was convicted of a libel of this kind upon Marie Antoinette. In 1801 Vint was accused of libelling the Russian Emperor, and later a Frenchman named Peltier got into trouble for an article abusing Napoleon.

In Russia, the royal family are as much, or more, under the thumb of their head as the Czar himself is under that of his councillors. Recently the Czar announced that all his relatives must leave Russia for at least six months in the year, under penalty of forfeiting their very liberal allowances.

On the other hand, the Czar himself, the nominally absolute master of one-sixth of the land surface of the globe, may not marry any one not of the established Russian faith, while every minute of his time he is bound by old customs stronger than any law. His food, his hours of work and exercise, his visits to church, and many other things are mapped out for him, and he is not even able to receive at his court many persons whom he may wish to see, nor to learn full the state of Russian politics of the day.

Holland's present Queen suffers much from the restraint of law. Her power to govern is almost non-existent, being very much less than that enjoyed by a British sovereign. The Parliament, the Cabinet, and, above all, the Council of State, do all the ruling. What is more, if the Queen ever has a son, at the age of 18 he will become King, and she will have to be content to retire as the Mother Queen.



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