

THE STROLLERS

By FREDERIC S. ISHAM, Author of "Under the Rose"

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"Well, Miss Carew," he now exclaimed, after warmly greeting his visitors...

"How can you teach an old dog new tricks?" protested Barnes. "How can you make a man about town out of a heavy father?"

"The heavy father is my father, I never knew any other. I am glad I never did."

"Holy toby!" he exclaimed scoffingly, but pleased nevertheless.

"You can't put me off that way," she said decisively, with a sudden flash in her eyes...

"Ernest Saint-Prosper?" Constance's cheeks flamed crimson, and her quick start of surprise did not escape the observant lawyer...

"Saint-Prosper was the marquis' ward," he cried. The attorney transferred his gaze from the expressive features of his client to the open countenance of the manager...

"Exactly. But you knew him, Mr. Barnes?" "He was an occupant of the chariot, sir," replied the manager, with some feeling...

"And then the marquis made him his heir?" exclaimed the manager incredulously. "How do you reconcile that?"

"The attorney said, 'Through the deity of my client, 'Draw up my will,' said the marquis to me one day,

"leaving all my property to this repulsive young dog. That will cut off the distant relatives who made the sign of the cross behind my back, as though I were the evil one. They expect it all. He expects nothing. It will be a rare joke. I leave them my affection and the privilege of having masses said for my soul. The marquis was always of a satirical temperament."

"Met me!" exclaimed Constance, aroused from a maze of reflection. "Near the cathedral. He walked and talked with you."

"That poor old man!" "And then came here, acknowledged you as his daughter and drew up the final document."

"That accounts for a call I had from him," cried Barnes, telling the story of the marquis' visit. "Strange I did not suspect something of the truth at the time," he concluded, "for his manner was certainly unusual."

A perplexed light shone in the girl's eyes. She clasped and unclasped her hands quickly, turning to the lawyer. "Their quarrel was only a political difference?" she asked at length.

"Yes," said the other slowly. "Saint-Prosper refused to support the fugitive king. Throughout the parliamentary government, the restoration under Louis XVIII. and the reign of King Charles X. the marquis had ever a devout faith in the divine right of monarchs. He annulled his marriage in England with your mother to marry the Duchess d'Argens, a relative of the royal princess. But Charles abdicated, and the duchess died. All this, however, is painful to you, Miss Carew?"

"Only such as relates to my mother," she replied in a clear tone. "I suppose I should feel grateful for this fortune, but I am afraid I do not. Please go on."

Culver leaned back in his chair, his eyes bent upon a discolored statue of Psyche in the courtyard. "Had the marquis attended to his garden, like Candide or your humble servant, and eschewed the company of kings, he might have been as care free as he was wretched. His monarchs were knocked down like ninepins. Louis XVIII. was a man of straw, Charles X. a feather top and Louis Philippe a toy ruler. The marquis' domestic life was as unblest as his political career. The frail duchess left him a progeny of scoundrels. These, the only offspring of the ingenuous dame, were piquantly dressed in the journals for public parade. Fancy, then, his delight in disinheriting his wife's relatives and leaving you, his daughter, his fortune and his name!"

"His name?" she repeated sadly. With averted face she watched the fountain in the garden. "If he had given it to my mother," she continued, "but now—I do not care for it. Her name is all I want." Her voice trembled, and she exclaimed passionately: "I should rather Mr. Saint-Prosper would keep the property and I—my work. After denying my mother and deserting her, how can I accept anything from him?"

"Under the new will," said Culver, "the estate does not revert to Mr. Saint-Prosper in any event. But you might divide it with him," he added suddenly. "How could I do that?" she asked without looking up. "Marry him," laughed the attorney. "But the jest met with scant response, his fair client remaining motionless as a statue, while Barnes gazed at her furiously. Culver's smile gradually faded. Uncertain how to proceed, realising his humor had somehow mislaid, he was not sorry when the manager arose, saying: 'Well, my dear, it is time we were at the theater.' 'Won't you accept this mosegony from my garden, Miss Carew?' urged the lawyer in a propitiatory tone as they were leaving.

sages and his babel of tongues. Above him, however, the plaster bust of Justinian out of those blank, sightless eyes continued the contemplation of the garden as though turning from the complex jurisprudence of the ancients and moderns to the simple existence of butterflies and flowers.

CHAPTER XXXIX

THERE is an aphorism to the effect that one cannot spend and have; also a saying about the whirlwind, both of which in time came home to the land baron. For several generations the Mauville family, bearing one of the proudest names in Louisiana, had held marked prestige under Spanish and French rule, while extensive plantations indicated the commercial ascendancy of the patron's ancestors. The thrift of his forefathers, however, passed lightly over Edward Mauville. Sent out by his mother, a French noble, who could deny him nothing in the course of a few years he had squandered two plantations and several hundred negroes. Her death placed him in undisputed possession of the residue of the estate, when, finding the exacting details of commerce irksome, in a moment of weakness he was induced to dispose of some of his possessions to Yankee speculators who had come in with the flood of northern energy. Most of the money thus realized he placed in loose investments, while the remainder gradually disappeared in indulging his pleasures.

At this critical stage in his fortunes, or misfortunes, the patron's legacy had seemed timely, and his trip to the north followed. But from a swarm of creditors to a nest of antirentiers was his return to the Crescent City, where he was soon forced to make an assignment of the remaining property. A score of hungry lawyers hovered around the sinking estate, greedily jealous lest some one of their number should batten too glibly on this general collocation. It was the one topic of interest in the dusty, dusky courtroom until the end appeared with the distinction announcement in the local papers: 'Announce! Vente importante de negres! Mauville estate in bankruptcy! And thereafter were specified the different lots of negroes to be sold. Coincident with these disasters came news from the north regarding his supposedly immense interests in New York state. A constitutional convention had abolished all feudal tenures and freed the fields from baronial burdens. At a breath-like hour of crisis—the northern heritage was swept away and about all that remained of the principality was the worthless ancient deed itself, representing one of the largest colonial grants.

But even the sale of the negroes and his other merchandises and property failed to satisfy his clamorous creditors or to pay his gambling debts. Those obligations at cards it was necessary to meet, so he moved out of his bachelor apartments, turned over his expensive furnishings and bric-a-brac to the gamblers and snapped his fingers at the overzealous constables and lawyers. His new home was in the house of an aged quadroon who had been a servant in his family many years ago—how long no one seemed to remember—and who had been his nurse before she had received her freedom. She enjoyed the distinction of being feared in the neighborhood; her fetiches had a power no other witch's possessed, and many of the negroes would have done anything to have possessed these infallible charms, save crossing her threshold to get them. Mauville, when he found fortune slipping away from him and ruin staring him in the face, had been glad to transfer his abode to this un-faded place, going into hiding, as it were, until the storm should blow by when he expected to emerge, confident as ever.

But inaction soon chafed his restless nature and drove him forth in spite of the left hand of the poet waved mechanically, imposing silence. The quill dived suddenly to paper, trailed twice across it and then was cast aside as Straws looked up. "Yes," he replied to the other's interrogation. "All account all of Canalina's leaving me. You ought to see my room." The poet sighed. "And you, Phasma; how are you feeling?" "Sober as a judge."

"Then you shall judge of this last couplet," exclaimed Straws quickly. "It has cost me much effort. The editor wanted it. It seemed almost too sad a subject for my halting muse. There are some things which should be sacred even from you, Phasma. But what is to be done when the editor in chief commands? Ours not to reason why? The poem is a monody on the tragedy at the theater."

"At the St. Charles?" said Phasma mustily. "As I passed it was closed. It seemed early for the performance to be over. Yet the theater was dark; all the lights had gone out."

"More than the lights went out," answered Straws gravely. "A life went out!" "I don't exactly—oh, you refer to Miss Carew's farewell?" "No; to Barnes!" "Barnes?" exclaimed his surprised listener. "Yes; he is dead; gone out like the snuff of a candle! Died in harness, he stood in the wings. The prompter spoke of it to me. Even Miss Carew rallied him gently between acts on his subdued manner."

"Any one been to see me, mammy?" himself from the streets in that quarter of the town where the roofs of various colored houses formed strange geometrical figures and the windows were bright with daring headresses, beneath which looked out curious visages of ebony. Returning one day from such a peregrination, he determined to end a routine of existence so humiliating to his pride.

Pausing before a doorway, the land baron looked this way and that, seeing only the rotating eyes of a pick-aniny fastener upon him, hurried through the entrance. Hanging upon the walls were red and green pods and bunches of dried herbs of unquestionable virtue belonging to the old creole's pharmacopoeia. Mauville slowly ascended the dark stairs and reached his retreat, a small apartment with furniture of cane-work and floor covered

with sea grass, the ceiling low and the windows narrow, opening upon a miniature balcony that offered space for one and no more.

"Yes, auntie," replied the land baron as an old creole emerged from an ill lighted recess and stood before him. "Any one been to see me, mammy?" "Only dat Mexican gemmen—dat gemmen been here befo' you take yo' message about de troops; when dey go from New Orleans; how many-day am."

"You know that, auntie?" he asked quickly. "You know that I?" "Yes, honey," she answered, shaking her head. "Yo' be berry careful, Mar's'r Edward."

"What did he want?" he said the land baron quickly. "He gib me dis." And the creole handed her visitor a slip of paper on which a few words were written. "What dat mean?" "It means I am going away, mammy," pishing back his chair. "Gwine away," she repeated. "When's yo' gwine?" "Tomorrow; perhaps tonight; even down de river, auntie," rising and surveying himself in a mirror. "How long yo' gwine away foh?" "Perhaps forever, auntie."

"Not foh good, Mar's'r Edward, not foh good!" He nodded, and she broke into loud wallowing. "Yo' old mammy! If see yo' no nob! I knows why yo' gwine, Mar's'r Edward. I've heard yo' talkin' about her in yo' sleep. But yo' stay, and yo' mammy has a love charm foh yo'. Den she's yo' foh smah."

"Pshaw, mammy! Do you think I would fly from a woman? Do I look as though I needed a charm?" "No. She mus' worship yo'," cried the infuriated creole. "We're losing time, mammy," he exclaimed. "Stop this nonsense, and go pack a few things for me. I have some letters to write."

The old woman reluctantly obeyed, and the land baron penned a somewhat lengthy epistle to his one time master in Paris, the Abbe Moneau, whose disapproval of the Anglo-Saxon encroachments—witness Louisiana—and zeal for the colonization of the Latin races are matters of history. Having completed his epistle, the land baron placed it in the old creole's hand to mail with it. "If that man calls again tell him I'll meet him tonight," and, leaving the room, shot through the doorway, once more rapidly walking down the shabby thoroughfare. The aged negro woman stumbled out upon the balcony and gazed after the departing figure.

CHAPTER XXXX

ON a certain evening about a month later the tropical rains had flooded the thoroughfares and St. Charles street needed but a Rialto and a little imagination to convert it into a watery highway of another Venice, while, as for Canal street, its name was as applicable as though it were spanned by a Bridge of Sighs.

Straws, editor and rhymester, was seated on the semicircular, semi-French gallery of the little cafe called the Veranda sipping his absinth and smoking a cheroot. Before him was a party covered with well nigh illegible vestigations and a bottle of ink, while a goose quill, tool of the tuncful nine, was expectantly poised in midair. "Confound it!" he said to himself. "I can't write in the attic any more since Celestina has gone, and apparently I can't write away from it. But I must stop thinking or I'll never complete this poem. Now to make my mind blank, a fitting receptacle to receive inspiration."

The bard's figure swayed uncertainly on the stool. In the lively race through a sonnet it was often of late a matter of doubt with Straws whether Bacchus or Calliope would prevail at the finish, and tonight the jocund god had had a perceptible start. "Nappy, eh?" said a voice at his elbow. A dripping figure approached, deposited his hat on one chair and himself in another. The newcomer had a long, Gothic face and a merry-wise expression.

The left hand of the poet waved mechanically, imposing silence. The quill dived suddenly to paper, trailed twice across it and then was cast aside as Straws looked up. "Yes," he replied to the other's interrogation. "All account all of Canalina's leaving me. You ought to see my room." The poet sighed. "And you, Phasma; how are you feeling?" "Sober as a judge."

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"This is our last performance together," he said absently. She gave him a reproachful look and he added quickly: "Do I appear gloomy, my dear? I never felt happier."

"At the end of the second act he seemed to arouse himself, when she, as Isabella, said, 'Till fit his mind to death, for his son's rest.' He gazed at her long and earnestly, his look creasing her wherever she moved. Beginning the prison scene with spirit, he had proceeded to

"Reason thus with life; If I do lose thee I do lose a thing That none but fools would keep!" when suddenly he threw up his arms and fell upon the stage, his face toward



Miss Carew rushed to him. The audience, with a cry I shall never forget Miss Carew rushed to him and took his head in her arms, gazing at him wildly and calling to him piteously. The curtain went down, but nothing could be done, and life quickly ebbed. Once only his lips moved—"Your mother—there—where the play never ends!" and it was over.

"It is like a romance," said Phasma finally at the conclusion of this narration. "The sudden and tragic death of Constance's foster father, which occurred virtually as narrated by Straws, set a seal of profound sadness on the heart of the young girl. 'Good sir, adieu!' she had said in the nursery scene, and the eternal parting had shortly followed. Her affection for the old manager had been that of a loving daughter. The grief she should have experienced over the passing of the marquis was transferred to the memory of one who had been a father through love's kinship. In the faraway past, standing at the bier of her mother, the manager it was who had held her childish hand, consoling her and sharing her affliction, and in those distant but forgotten days of trouble the young girl and the homeless old man became all in all to each other."

To be Continued.

In a report to the membership of the Meat Cutters and Butcher Workmen of North America, General Organizer Henry Eichelberger states that the aggregate increase in wages from September 1, 1904, will reach \$12,000,000.00, or an average of \$8.50 a week for each of the 75,000 members of this international organization. The Chicago membership of 25,000 has received wage advances of 25 per cent. in the last two years, the Cattle Butchers of that city are now enjoying \$1 a day more pay than they got two years ago. To accomplish these results the international union has spent \$700,000 in seven years for organizing locals, holding meetings and "investing" in the union shop card and label.

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E. J. HENRY, 781-3-5 Queen St. West. A DASTARDLY CRIME—POLICE TAKE NO ACTION. Through the Good, the City of Churches, is once more the scene of a deliberately planned and coolly executed robbery. The parties involved having highly respectable names, connections, their names are withheld from publication. It is understood, however, that a trades-unionist was the victim.

This crime is the climax of a family feud, extending back a number of years, and the particulars are as follows: Some years ago a prominent aristocratic family of the Old Land came to Canada's shore. His life had been one of ease and idleness, he being of the blue-blooded variety that live on the earnings of slave-laborers. In letters to the home of his boyhood the youth described the growing town of Muddy York. From these letters the venerable parent gleaned that a portion of the rents from the home town might be placed to advantage in some of the vacant lands of Muddy York.

Of course, the old gentleman did not want to go farming, or even market gardening; in fact, he had no use for the properties, but just bought them as an investment of British capital, to assist in developing the new country by the confidence his investment would inspire. Had he not obtained a title deed to these properties who knows but they might have gotten up on their hind legs and walked away. Had these things been done away some dark night just because nobody owned them, the city of Toronto to-day would have a yawning void, where they now lie, extending clear down to the centre of the earth. The old gentleman, however, retained his title and the land remained.

The juicy days of spring came and were succeeded by the dancing gleams of the July sun. Autumn came in regular course with falling leaves and naked blasts and meadows of winter snow from the northern fields of snow and the poor Indian bled him in his Wigwam and rabbits, with some of his favorite children, came and went and Muddy York became Toronto the Good, the City of Churches. During these years, the properties, the scene of the crime, remained a common. The owner's agent paid the taxes regularly as the progressiveness of the increase of population caused the land values to rise far in excess of the taxation. The process continued until the banks loaning an amount necessary to erect dwellings.

One of these dwellings, recently completed, the writer understands, has been purchased by a trades-unionist. This industrial worker in order to obtain a home now finds it necessary to mortgage himself and his heirs for the payment to the speculator of the value of the house and lot. The payments are to be made quarterly with interest on the unpaid balance; sickness or out of work, suspending two payments, voids the contract and the worker loses all, as Shylock seldom fails to exact the pound of flesh. The robbery consists in the fact that this honest toiler is compelled to obligate himself to pay to the land gambler the value of the land occupied by the house, a value created by the growth of the community. The home buyers are thus plundered exactly to the amount of a land value which was created by the people (not the land gambler), it is a value which grew fast enough to cover all current taxes and leave a margin, or the land gambler would not have continued to hold on. This is the deliberate and coolly executed crime that the police take no action in, and the expose of which was

last summer endeavored to be prevented by the establishment of a Russian police tyranny denying the right of free speech. Let the united voice of the trades unionists ring for the adoption of the Land Value Tax, the Single Tax, which will take land values, the community product for community expenses; discourage land gambling and give the children of this generation an opportunity to have homes at cost.

BRITAIN ENDORSES YELLOW SLAVERY. On Monday last the British House of Commons, by a vote of 242 to 209, defeated the motion of Sir Henry Campbell-Bannerman to the effect that "His Majesty's Government in advising the Crown not to disallow the ordinance for the introduction of Chinese labor in the Transvaal."

Sir Henry said nothing the Government had done since the close of the South African war had so sorely tried the people of this country as his sanction of the introduction of Chinese labor into South Africa. It was impossible to conceive a greater departure from the principles by which Great Britain had hitherto made her way in the world than the importation of aliens as the bodysmen of mining speculators. It was the biggest scandal for human dumping since the "middle passage" was abolished. A special provision that an escaping Chinese man was not to be harbored, on pain of punishment, stamped it as slavery. The sentiments of Sir Henry do him credit, but—unfortunately for the record of Great Britain—he credits the nation with a respect for the vicious principles it does not deserve. It is true that Britain abolished chattel slavery in the blacks, but substituted it at home and in the colonies with conditions involving industrial slavery, which is infinitely worse in many respects, because under it the masters have no recognized responsibilities. Colonel's Secretary Lyttleton, like the proper-style corporation lawyer that he is, defended the inquiry by talking about the "economic necessities" such time as the blacks could fill the demand for skilled labor.

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