

He sprang to his feet the instant he saw me.

The bow of the Sleeping-car Manager to the Pigeon Charmer was but a bend in a telegraph pole to the sweep the bald-headed man now made me. I thought his scalp would touch the car floor.

"No, your Highness," he cried—"I insist"—this to my protest that I had come last—that he had prior right—besides he was an older man, etc., etc.—"I could not sleep if I thought you were not most comfortable—nothing can move me. Pardon me—will not your Highness accept one of my poor cigarettes? They, of course, are not like the ones you use, but I always do my best. I have now a new cigarette-girl, and she rolled them for me herself, and brought them to me just as I was leaving St. Petersburg. Permit me"—and he handed me a little leather box filled with Russian cigarettes.

Now, figuratively speaking, when you have been buncoed out of five francs

other effete monarchies of Europe. Every traveller is conscious of it. His bow showed it—so did the soft purring quality of his speech. Recollections of Manila, Santiago, and the voyage of the Oregon around Cape Horn were in the bow, and Kansas wheat, Georgia cotton, and the Steel Trust in the dulcet tones of his voice. That he should have mistaken me for a great financial magnate controlling some one of these colossal industries instead of locating me instantly as a staid, gray-haired and rather impecunious landscape painter, was quite natural. Others before him have made that same mistake.

He was perhaps seventy, smooth-shaven—black—coal-black eyes. Dressed simply in black clothes—not a jewel—no watch-chain even—no rings on his hands but a plain gold one like a wedding-ring. His dressing-case showed the gentleman. Bottles with silver tops—brushes backed with initials—soap in a silver cup. Red morocco Turkish slippers with pointed toes; embroid-



I found the Pigeon Charmer occupying the sofa.

by a menial in a ticket-office, jumped upon and trampled under foot by a gate-keeper who has kept you cooling your heels outside his wicket while your inferiors have passed in ahead of you—to have even a bald-headed man kotow to you, give you the choice berth in the compartment, move your traps himself, and then apologize for offering you the best cigarette you ever smoked in your life—Well! that is to have myrrh, and frankincense, and oil of balsam, and balm of Gilead poured on your tenderest wound.

I accepted the cigarette.

Not haughtily—not even condescendingly—just as a matter of course. He had evidently found out who and what I was. He had seen me address the Pigeon Charmer, and had recognized instantly, from my speech and bearing—both perhaps—that dominating vital force, that breezy independence which envelopes most Americans, and which makes them so popular the world over. In thus kotowing he was only getting in line with the citizens of most of the

ered smoking-cap—all appointments of a man of refinement and of means. Tucked beside his razor-case were some books richly bound, and some bundles tied with red tape. Like most educated Russians, he spoke English with barely an accent.

I was not long in arriving at a conclusion. No one would have been—one of my experience. He was either a despatch-agent connected with the Government, or some lawyer of prominence, who was on his way to Paris to look after the interests of some client of his in Russia. The latter, probably. The only man on the car he seemed to know, besides myself, was the Sleeping-car Manager, who lifted his hat to him as he passed, and the Ring Master, with whom he stood talking at the door of his compartment. This, however, was before I had brought the Pigeon-Charmer into the car.

The cigarette smoked, I was again in the corridor, the bald-headed man holding the door for me to pass out first. It was now nine o'clock and we had

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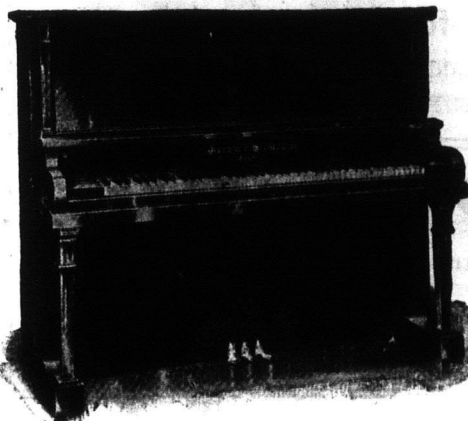
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