The Real Man

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JOHN SMITH BLUFFS A CRAFTY BANKER AND GETS HOLD OF SUFFICIENT WORKING CAPITAL TO GO AHEAD WITH THE GREAT IRRIGATION DAM PROJECT

Synopsis.—J. Montague Smith, cashier of Lawrenceville Bank and Trust company, society bachelor engaged to marry Verda Richlander, heiress, knocks his employer, Watrous Dunham, senseless, leaves him for dead and flees the state when Dunham accuses Smith of dishonesty and wants him to take the blame for embezzlement actually committed by Dunham. Several weeks later, Smith appears as a tramp at a town in the Rocky mountains and gets a laboring job in an irrigation ditch construction camp. His intelligence draws the attention of Williams, the superintendent, who thinks he can use the tramp, John Smith, in a more important place. The ditch company is in hard lines financially because Eastern financial interests are working to undermine the local crowd headed by Colonel Baldwin and take over valuable property. Smith finally accepts appointment as financial secretary of Baldwin's company. He has already struck up a pleasant acquaintance with Corona Baldwin, the colonel's winsome daughter. He goes to interview a crafty banker while the financial enemies plan ruin for Baldwin's company.

CHAPTER IX—Continued.

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"That is precisely what I was driving at. Our banker can't run with the hare and hunt with the hounds. You'll excuse me if I say that you haven't been altogether fair with Timanyoni Ditch, or with Colonel Baldwin, Mr. Kinzie. A friendly banker doesn't help sell out his customer. You know that, as well as I do. Still, you did it."

Kinzie threw up his hands and tried to defend himself. "It was a straight business transaction, Mr. Smith. As long as we're in the banking business, we buy and sell for anybody who comes along."

"No, we don't, Mr. Kinzie; we protect our customers first. In the present instance you thought your customer was a dead one, anyway, so it wouldn't make much difference if you should throw another shovelful of dirt or so onto the coffin. Wasn't that the way of it?"

The president was fairly pushed to the ropes, and he showed it.

"Answer me one question, both of you," he snapped. "Are you big enough to fight for your own against Stanton's crowd?"

"You'll see; and the sight is going to cost you something," said Smith, and the blandest of all could have been no smoother than his tone.

"Is that right, Dexter?"

"That's the way it looks to me, Dave," said the ranchman capitalist, who, whatever might be his limitations in the field of high finance, was not lacking the nerve to fight unquestioning in any partner's quarrel.

The president of the Brewster City National turned back to Smith.

"What do you want, Mr. Smith?" he asked, not too cordially.

"Nothing that you'd give us, I guess; a little business loyalty, for one thing—"

"And a checking balance for immediate necessities for another?" suggested the banker.

With all his trained astuteness—trained in Kinzie's own school, at that—Smith could not be sure that the gray-faced old Westerner was not setting a final trap for him, after all. But he took the risk, saying, with a deceptive show of indifference: "Of course it would be more convenient here than in Denver or Chicago. But there is no hurry about that part of it."

The president took a slip of paper from a pigeonhole and wrote rapidly upon it. Once more his optimism was locking horns with prudent caution. It was the optimism, however, that was driving the pen. Baldwin's word was worth something, and it might be disastrous to let these two get away without anchoring them solidly to the Brewster City National.

"Sign this, you two," he said. "I don't know even the name of your new outfit yet, but I'll take a chance on one piece of two-name paper, anyhow."

Smith took up the slip and glanced at it. It was an accommodation note for twenty thousand dollars. With the money fairly in his hands, he paused to drive the nail of independence squarely before he would begin.

"We don't want this at all, Mr. Kinzie, unless the bank's goodwill comes with it," he said with becoming gravity.

"I'll stand by you," was the brusque rejoinder. "But it's only fair to you both to say that you've got the biggest kind of a combination to buck you—a national utilities corporation with the strongest sort of political backing."

"I doubt if you can tell us anything that we don't already know," said Smith coolly, as he put his name on the note; and when Baldwin had signed: "Let this go to the credit of Timanyoni Ditch, if you please, Mr. Kinzie, and we'll transfer it later. It's quite possible that we shan't need it, but we are willing to help out a little on your discount profits, anyway. Further along, when things shape themselves up a bit more definitely, you shall know all there is to know, and we'll give you just as good a chance to make money as you'll give us."

When they were safely out of the bank and half a square away from it, Dexter Baldwin pushed his hat back and mopped his forehead. "They say a man can't sweat at this altitude," he remarked. "I'm here to tell you, Smith, that I've lost ten pounds in the last ten minutes. Where in the name of jumping Jehoshaphat did you get your nerve, boy? You made him believe we'd put outside backing from somewhere."

"I didn't say anything like that, did I?"

"No; but you opened the door and he walked in."

"That's all right; I'm not responsible for Mr. Kinzie's imagination. We were obliged to have a little advertising capital; we couldn't turn a wheel without it. Put me in touch with a good business lawyer, and I'll start the legal machinery. Then you can get into your car and go around and interview your crowd, man by man. I want to know exactly where we stand with the old stockholders before we make any move in public. Can you do that?"

Baldwin lifted his hat and shoved his fingers through his hair.

"I reckon I can; there are only sixty or seventy of 'em. And Bob Stillings is some lawyer. Come around the corner and I'll introduce you."

CHAPTER X.

The Rocket and the Stick.

For a full fortnight after the preliminary visit to the Brewster City National bank Smith was easily the busiest man in Timanyoni county. Establishing himself in the Hophra House, and discarding the working khaki only because he was shrewd enough to dress the new part becomingly, he flung himself into what Colonel Baldwin called the "mainelic-working" campaign with a zest that knew no flagging moment.

Within the fourteen-day period new town offices were occupied on the second floor of the Brewster City National building; Stillings, most efficient of corporation counsels, had secured the new charter; and the stock-books of Timanyoni High Line had been opened, with the Brewster City National named as the company's depository and official fiduciary agent.

At the dam the building activities had been generously doubled. An electric light plant had been installed, and Williams was working day and night shifts both in the quarries and on the forms. Past this, the new financial manager, himself broadening rapidly as his field broadened, was branching out in other directions. After a brief conference with a few of his principal stockholders he had instructed Stillings to include the words "Power and Light" in the cataloguing of the new company's possible and probable charter activities, and by the end of the fortnight the foundations of a powerhouse were going in below the dam, and negotiations were already on foot with the Brewster city council looking toward the sale of electric current to the city for lighting and other purposes.

Smith had made the planting of his financial anchor securely to windward his first care. Furnished with a selected list by Colonel Baldwin, he had made a thorough canvas of possible investors, and by the time the new stock was printed and ready for delivery through Kinzie's bank, an ironclad pool of the majority of the original Timanyoni Ditch stock had been organized, and Smith had sold to Maxwell, Starbuck, and other local capitalists a sufficient amount of the new treasury stock to give him a fighting chance; this, with a promise of more if it should be needed.

Not to Maxwell or to any of the new investors had Smith revealed the full dimensions of the prize for which Timanyoni High Line was entering the race. Colonel Baldwin and one William Starbuck, Maxwell's brother-in-law, by courtesy, and his partner in the Little Alice mine, alone knew the wheel within the wheel; how the great eastern utility corporation represented by Stanton had spent a million or more in the acquisition of the Escalante grant, which would be practically worthless as agricultural land without the water which could be obtained only by means of the Timanyoni dam and canal system.

"How About It?"

With all these strenuous stirrings in the business field, it may say itself that Smith found little time for social indulgences during the crowded fortnight. Day after day the colonel begged him to take a night off at the ranch, and it was even more difficult to refuse the proffered hospitality at the week-end. But Smith did refuse it.

It was not until after Miss Corona—driving to town with her father, as she frequently did—had thrice visited the new offices that Smith began to congratulate himself, rather bitterly, to be sure, upon his wisdom in staying away from Hillcrest. For one thing, he was learning that Corona Baldwin was able to make him see rose-colored. When she was not with him, he was a man in daily peril of meeting the sheriff. But when she was present, calm sanity had a way of losing its grip.

Miss Corona's fourth visit to the handsome suite of offices over the Brewster City National chanced to fall upon a Saturday. Her father, president of the new company, as he had been of the old, had a private office of his own, but Miss Corona soon drifted out to the railed-off end of the larger room, where the financial secretary had his desk.

"Colonel-daddy tells me that you are coming out to Hillcrest for the week-end," was the way in which she introduced herself to the new business.

Smith looked up with his best-natured grin.

"Do you wish I might?"

"Why, of course I do. Don't you know that we want you?"

"Thank you," she laughed. "In a minute or so I'll go back to the president's office and collect." Then: "One dinner, lodging and breakfast of us was about all you could stand, wasn't it? I thought maybe it would be that way."

"What made you think so?"

She had seated herself in the chair reserved for inquiring investors. There was a little interval of glove-smoothing silence, and then, like a flash out of a clear sky, she smiled across the desk and at him and said:

"Will you forgive me if I ask you a perfectly ridiculous question?"

"Certainly. Other people ask them every day."

"Is—is your name really and truly John Smith?"

"Why should you doubt it?"

It was just here that Smith was given to see another one of Miss Corona's many moods—or tenses—and it was a new one to him. She was visibly embarrassed.

"I—I didn't want to tell you," she stammered.

"All right; you needn't."

"If you're going to take it that easy, I will tell you," she retorted. "Mr. Williams thought your name was an alias; and I'm not sure that he doesn't still think so."

"The Smiths never have to have aliases. It's like John Doe or Richard Roe, you know."

"Haven't you any middle name?"

"I have a middle initial. It is 'M.' " He was looking her fairly in the eyes as he said it, and the light in the new offices was excellent. Thanks to her horseback riding, Miss Corona's small oval face had a touch of healthy outdoor tan; but under the tan there came, for just a flitting instant, a rush of deep color, and at the back of the gray eyes there was something that Smith had never seen there before.

"It's—it's just an initial?" she queried.

"Yes; it's just an initial, and I don't use it ordinarily. I'm not ashamed of the plain 'John.' "

"I don't know why you should be," she commented, half absently, he thought. And then: "How many 'John M. Smiths' do you suppose there are in the United States?"

"Oh, I don't know; a million or so, I guess."

"I should think you would be rather glad of that," she told him. But when he tried to make her say why he should be glad, she talked pointedly of other things and presently went back to her father's office.

There were fine little beadings of perspiration standing on the fugitive's forehead when she left him.

After the other members of the office force had taken their departure, he still sat at his desk striving to bring himself back with some degree of clear-headedness to the pressing demands of his job. Just as he was about to give it up and go across to the Hophra House for his dinner, William Starbuck drifted in to open the railing gate and to come and plant himself in the chair of privilege at Smith's desk end.

"Well, son; you've got the animals stirred up good and plenty, at last," he said, when he had found the "makings" and was deftly rolling a cigarette—his one overlapping habit reaching back to his range-riding youth. "Dick Maxwell got a wire today from his kiddie's grandpaw—and my own respected daddy-in-law—Mr. Hiram Fairbairn; you know him—the lumber king."

"I'm listening," said Smith.

"Dick's wire was an order; instructions from headquarters to keep hands off of your new company and to work strictly in cahoots—harmony' was the word he used—with Crawford Stanton. How does that fit you?"

The financial secretary's smile was the self-congratulatory face-wrinkling of the quarry foreman who has seen his blast hole hold its land the big stone safely at the top of the pit.

"What is Maxwell going to do about it?" he asked.

"Dick is all wool and a yard wide; and what he signs his name to is what he's willing to stand by. You won't lose him, but the wire shows us just about where we're aiming to put our leg into the gopher hole and break it, doesn't it?"

"I'm not borrowing any trouble. Mr. Fairbairn and his colleagues are just a little minutes too late, Starbuck. We've got our footing—inside of the corral."

The ex-cowpuncher, who was now well up on the middle rounds of fortune's ladder, shook his head doubtfully.

"Don't you make any brash breaks, John. Mr. Hiram Fairbairn and his crowd can swing twenty millions to your one little old dollar and a half, and they're not going to leave any of the pebbles unturned when it comes to saving their investment in the Escalante. That's all; I just thought I'd drop in and tell you."

Smith went to his rooms in the hotel a few minutes later to change for dinner. He found the linen drawer in his chiffonier in disorder, and, in another, he began to arrange the overflow methodically. The empty drawer was lined with a newspaper, and a single headline on the upturned page sprang at him like a thing living and venomous. He bent lower and read the underrunning paragraph with a dull rage mounting to his eyes and serving for the moment to make the gray of the printed lines turn red.

Lawrenceville, May 19.—The grand jury has found a true bill against Montague Smith, the absconding cashier of the Lawrenceville Bank and Trust, charged with embezzling the bank's funds. The crime would have been merely a breach of trust and not actionable but for the fact that Smith, by owning stock in the bankrupt Westland industries, very taken over by the Richlander company, had so made himself amenable to the law. Smith disappeared on the night of the 16th and is still at large. He is also wanted on another criminal count. It will be remembered that he brutally assaulted President Dunham on the night of his disappearance. The reward of $2,000 for his apprehension and arrest has been increased to $2,000 by the bank directors.

CHAPTER XI.

The Narrow World.

At the fresh newspaper reminder that his sudden bound upward from the laboring ranks to the executive headship of the irrigation project had merely made him a more conspicuous target for the vengeance of Dunham, Smith scanted himself of sleep and redoubled his efforts to put the new company on a sound and permanent footing. In the nature of things he felt that his own shift must necessarily be short. The more or less dramatic coup in Timanyoni High Line had advertised him thoroughly. He was rapidly coming to be the best-known man in Brewster, and he cherished no illusions about lost identities, or the ability to lose them, in the land where time and space have been overcome by rail and railroaded pretty well out of existence.

It was needful that he should work while the day was his in which to work; and he did work. There was still much to be done. Williams was having a threat of labor troubles at the dam, and Stillings had unearthed another possible flaw in the land titles dating back to the promotion of a certain railroad which had never gotten far beyond the paper stage and the acquiring of some of its rights of way.

Smith flung himself masterfully at the men who would be lazy or unruly, and earned his meed of praise from the men for whom he overcame them. But under the surface current of the hurrying business tide a bitter undertow was beginning to set in. He took his first decided backward step on the night when he went into a hardware store and bought a pistol. The free, fair-fighting spirit which had sent him bare-handed against the three claim-jumpers was gone and in its place there was a fell determination, undefined as yet, but keying itself to the barbaric pitch.

Try as hard as he may, Smith finds that he cannot keep sentiment out of his life. His fear of discovery and arrest increases. Important developments come in the next installment.

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

In The Far Away Falklands

THE FALKLANDS ONLY SEAT OF LEARNING

FAR out in southern seas, a thousand miles from Montevideo and several hundred miles eastward from the "land of fire," Tierra del Fuego, lie the lonely, dreary, barren Falkland islands. Ceaseless surges from Antarctic wastes dash upon the rocky headlands to the disturbance of only the wild and stately penguins; the mighty roar of the breakers wasting their beauty, far from the haunts of artist or photographer, is lost in the dismal fog.

A land far away from the busy world; a land without a tree, without a newspaper, without a cable to the outer world, with few land birds, beyond the course of the average steamer; indeed, a land without sunshine, it might be said, for the sky is usually overcast, producing annually 250 days of cloudy or rainy weather.

Despite weather conditions, however, the Falklands present interesting sights and afford the traveler experiences not met with elsewhere, writes William A. Reid in the Los Angeles Times. There live and move and have their being 2,000 hardy and industrious people, whose remoteness denies them the pleasures of modern life. They extend the hand of welcome to the visitor and he is entertained with stories of those South Sea islands and the part they play, insignificant though it may be, in the world and its progress.

Almost exactly 100 years after Columbus sighted San Salvador, John Davis discovered the Falklands; a century later one Strong visited the islands and gave them their name. From that time onward they have been the scene of conflict and disputed ownership. The French planted their flag there in 1765, and very shortly thereafter the British arrived and established Port Egmond, 100 miles or so from the French. The latter ceded their claim to the Spaniards, who drove away the English in 1770. Later the islands were abandoned; Buenos Aires founded a colony in 1823, but in consequence of a dispute the colony was destroyed by a United States man-of-war (1831). Shortly afterward the British again gained possession, which continues to the present time, although it is said that Argentina claims the islands as her right and lawful possession.

SHIP HOTEL, PORT STANLEY

Two Large Islands in the Group.

The Falkland group comprises two large islands, known as East and West Falkland, respectively, and more than a hundred smaller ones, with a total area of nearly 7,000 square miles, almost as large as the state of New Jersey. East Falkland is the larger of the two and they are separated by a narrow strait.

When we sailed into Port Stanley, the capital of the little colony and the largest of the twenty or more settlements, the usual cloudy weather prevailed; several days of ocean buffeting had been followed by calmer seas and the entrance to the small bay, known as Port William inlet, was a pleasant diversion. The low, brownish hills, barren and somber looking, presented little to attract the business traveler; yet, to the lover of nature who delights to wander far from beaten paths there are always sights to please.

Comparatively few ships make the port of Stanley; other than the coming of vessels in distress there is not much traffic with the outside world, and as a consequence the arrival of a passenger ship is a matter of some interest to the people.

The people of the Falklands are largely of Scotch descent they have a strong Scotch brogue and a Scotchman's knack for doing things. The most prominent buildings in Stanley are the governor's quarters, the barracks, which shelter a small English garrison, a cathedral, a new school building, a number of warehouses, a few stores and several hotels. The stores and hotels are about the only business concerns excepting the houses of the English company, which practically monopolizes the great industry of the islands—that of sheep raising and the industries resulting therefrom.

Not Much to See in Stanley.

A short time is sufficient to see all that Stanley has to offer. A visit to the stores, as in other lands, reveals to some extent the needs and occupations of the people; and this fact is especially emphasized in the town of Stanley. The articles offered for sale are of the most substantial kind, such as coarse clothing, heavy boots, tin and earthenware, ships' stores, medical supplies, and in fact everything required in a sheep-raising community where the winters are long and severe and the summers short and cool.

The average temperature of the islands is 47 degrees Fahrenheit. The cool and constant winds from the southwest send a chill through the stranger and urge him to physical exercise. In fact, the very isolation of one's surroundings kindles the wanderlust and if he is at all inclined to pedestrianism here is an excellent place to gratify his inclination.

An overland tramp is most pleasant and invigorating. The country rises gradually from the little bay, and after one walks a few miles he looks back upon one of the world's most isolated towns. Proceeding, the wanderer is impressed with the awful loneliness. Few people are seen and not a tree breaks the horizon, save here and there small patches of stunted growth which rise only a few feet above the ground. The brownish appearance of the landscape is uninviting but when the undulating hills and valleys are reached the traveler's interest quickens and he beholds the "sheep upon a thousand hills."

"Stone Rivers" of Quartzite.

Farther inland we catch our first glimpses of what appear to be glistening streams, but on closer inspection are found to be quartzite. This substance, the particles somewhat resembling crude diamonds in shape, lies in long rows, to which the natives have given the name of "stone river." Scientists say that these so-called "rivers" are a kind of glacier and that they are slowly moving toward the sea.

"What becomes of your students after they leave school?" I inquired of the English master of the only place of learning in the islands. "Almost without exception," he replied, "they go out to become herders of sheep or to some employment in connection with the sheep industry."

"You see, sir, there is little for our boys to do outside of this one calling, yet few of them leave their island home for the great outer world." Then the master pointed out from among his brightest pupils one little fellow perhaps fifteen years of age. "That boy," said he, "has completed the work of the school, but he is so ambitious that for two additional years he has been going over the same course. We have no advanced classes, so this little fellow—and there are several others like him—are denied the advantages of a training which, to my regret, we are unable to give them."

All Circus Rings the Same Size.

Railway tickets are the same size all over Britain and the Continent and America—viz., 2¼ by 1¼ inches—and have been so for the last 50 years. This surely indicates a world-wide tendency to standardize. Every builder's ladder is built to scale, and the fireman's ladder is on the scale of the seaman's run up the rattlines, not the bricklayer's trudge up the wooden rungs. But perhaps the greatest triumph of standardizing is that of the circus. There are big and little circuses in the world, but the ring is always of the same diameter, for the horseback rider has discovered the exact angle at which he can square the circle. No matter whether it be a ring cut in the turf or a luxuriously appointed theater, the circus ring never varies a foot.—London Tit-Bits.

How Sunflower Got Its Name.

Two reasons have been assigned for the sunflower being so-called, one being because the large bloom resembles the radiant beams of the sun, and the other because of its tendency to turn

All Watches Vary.

Theoretically, says a jeweler, the best watches of today are perfect, but actually they both gain and lose time every day. Even if the good watch does not vary one second at the end of the 24 hours, the expert insists, it has both gained and lost in that time. If it is wound in the morning it runs fast and toward the next morning runs slow, thus equalizing the time. He says the best watches should be wound twice a day and then at only two-thirds of the capacity of the main spring, thus preventing either binding or extremes of strong or weakened spring. The balance wheel was expected to equalize differences of manipulating tension, but really this is not the case in what is called perfection.

Parakeets Found in Thick Wood.

Parakeets usually rest in colonies and live in thick woods or cypress swamps. It is said that in an early day they were numerous along the lower Wabash, in Indiana and were found in the winter in the hollow trunks of sycamore trees in a state of

WOMAN NOW IN PERFECT HEALTH

What Came From Reading a Pinkham Advertisement.

Paterson, N. J.—"I thank you for the Lydia E. Pinkham remedies as they have made me well and healthy. Sometime ago I felt so run down, had pains in my back and side, was very irregular, tired, nervous, had such bad dreams, did not feel like eating and had short breath. I read your advertisement in the newspapers and decided to try a bottle of Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound. It worked from the first bottle, so I took a second and a third, also a bottle of Lydia E. Pinkham's Blood Purifier, and now I am just as well as any other woman. I advise every woman, single or married, who is troubled with any of the aforesaid ailments, to try your wonderful Vegetable Compound and Blood Purifier and I am sure they will help her to get rid of her troubles as they did me."—Mrs. ELSIE J. VAN DER SANDE, 36 No. York St., Paterson, N. J.

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Individual Prowess In This War Counts for as Much as It Did in Days of Ancient Greece.

Individual prowess counts for as much as it did in the days of ancient Greece, Waldemar Kaempffert writes in McClure's. Names will stand out in the history of this war like those of Ajax and Achilles in the epic of Homer. Lieutenants Immelmann and Boelke on the German side have brought down nine and ten adversaries in mortal combat. Their exploits are tinged with a chivalric glamour which seems anything but modern.

When Boelke landed to aid an enemy whom he had wounded he was greeted with the comment: "Since it is Immelmann who beat me, I am satisfied." When the German replied that it was "only Boelke," the interchange of compliments seemed like a parley between Hector and Ajax.

The analogy between Homer's battles and twentieth century aerial combats extends even to the vehicles used. What is a flying machine but the ancient war chariot soaring on wings? In many an encounter two man machines still battle for supremacy—one man an observer, the other a pilot. The observer is the fighting hero of old, wielding a machine gun instead of a sword; the pilot his faithful charioteer.

Carry the analogy still further and consider how much is at stake when battle plane meets battle plane. The fate of an ancient army depended on a prince in his war chariot; the fate of any army corps now hangs on the information gleaned by a victorious flier.

Firm as a Rock.

"There," he said, pulling his shirt-sleeves over his brawny arms and surveying the clothes post which had taken him the best part of the Saturday afternoon to fix in the garden; "that's as firm as a rock. Even the combined forces of the elements cannot bring it down."

Later in the day he found the pole on the ground.

"Did you do this?" he roared, to his eight-year-old son.

"No, father," was the answer; "a sparrow perched on it. I saw it myself."

G. W. Again.

"And you mean to say," reprimanded the irate father to his little George, "that you drew out $100 that your rich Aunt Patricia placed in the bank for you last Christmas?"

"Father, I cannot tell a lie," answered the boy meekly. "I used it for a Liberty bond. They did it with their advertising." — Indianapolis News.

Those Girls.

"I wonder who is ringing the door-bell. Is it some chump who merely wants to hang around the parlor, or is it a nice chappie who wants to take me for a ride in his automobile?"

"Take a sniff at the keyhole, girlie, and see if you can smell gasoline."

Naturally.

"What do you find most productive of hard cash?"

"Soft things."

"No bowl is too big when it holds Post Toasties"
—Bobby