Webster—Man's Man

By PETER B. KYNE

Author of "Cappy Ricks," "The Valley of the Giants," Etc.

Copyright by Peter B. Kyne.

"SHE'S THE FUTURE MRS. W."

John Stuart Webster, mining engineer, man's man, 29 years young, boards a train in Death Valley, California, on his way home to civilization after cleaning up $50,000. He is dreaming of cool baths, silk pajamas and ham and eggs. But he loses like a hobo to the purser and the conductor. His way of changing their views gives a hint of the mettle of the man. Then he meets a distressed lady, who rattles his heart dice for the first time in all his days. He eliminates the offending man after the style of the two-gun men of the West. Being what he is, he does not take advantage of this opportunity. But he has had to find out who the no longer distressed lady is, being determined to settle a matrimonial matter between her and himself. She is Dolores Rucy. "Dad is purple and the whole Board of Directors sick to boot," she reports. "We've had a hectic journey." Webster, being a Mining Engineer, knows that Rucy is fortunate in being solicited by a capitalist friend, Edward P. Jerome. Webster is fortunate, being loath to go to work again so soon, he receives a bogus letter from his own partner, Dalngerfield, advising him that a rich gold property is being exploited in Central America and so he must come with him there. Thereupon he turns down the big job and decides to answer the call of friendship and adventure to Sobrante.

CHAPTER II—Continued.

—3—

"Well," Webster retorted humorously, "it isn't exactly what you might term a ruling passion. I like to make it, but there's more fun spending it. I've made $50,000, and now I want to go blow it—and I'm going to. Do not try to argue with me. I'm a bum, and I will live like a bum. If you didn't go tearing off to Sobrante and join forces with Bill Geary, there to play the game, red or black, I'd fool as if I had done something low and mean and small. That's how it appears to me, and I have made my answer. If I come back alive but broke you know in your heart you'll give me the best job you have."

"You win," poor Jerome admitted.

"Hold the job open for me. After the end of that period I'll give you a definite answer. Neddy—"

"I sniff excitement and adventure and profit in Sobrante and I've just got to look see. I'm like an old horse staked out knee-deep in alfalfa just now. I won't take kindly to the pack—"

"And like an old horse, you won't be happy until you've stepped through a hole in the fence to get out into a stubble-field and, starving, have sworn half-heartedly and promiscuously the trite proverb that life is just one blank thing after the other—an inchoate mass of liver and disappointment!"

"Do you find it so?" Webster queried sympathetically.

Suspecting that he was being twitted, Jerome looked up sharply, prepared to wither Webster with that glance. But no, the man was absolutely serious; whereupon Jerome realized the futility of further argument and gave John Stuart Webster up for a total loss. Still he could not help smiling as he reflected how Webster had planned a year of quiet enjoyment and Fate had granted him one brief evening. He marveled that Webster could be so light-hearted and contented under the circumstances.

Webster read his thoughts. "Good-bye, old man," he said, and extended his hand. "Don't worry about me. Allah is always kind to fools, my friend; sorrow is never their portion. In answering Billy's call I have a feeling that I am answering the call of a great adventure."

He did not know how truly he spoke, of course, but if he had, that knowledge would not have changed his answer.

CHAPTER III.

—1—

The morning following his decision to play the role of angel to Billy Geary's mining concession in Sobrante, John Stuart Webster, like Mr. Pepys, was up betimes.

Nine o'clock found him in the office of his friend Joe Dalngerfield, of the Bingham engineering works, where within the hour, he had in his characteristically decisive fashion purchased the machinery for a ten-stamp mill. It was a nice order, and Dalngerfield was delighted.

"This is going to cost you about half your fortune, Jack," he informed Webster when the order was finally made up.

Webster grinned. "You don't suppose I'm chump enough to pay for it now, do you, Joe?" he queried.

"I'm going first to scout the country and in the meantime keep all this stuff in your warehouse until I authorize you by cable to ship, when you can draw on me at sight for the entire invoice with bill of lading attached. If, upon investigation, I find that this mine isn't all my partner thinks it is, I'll cable a cancellation and you can tear that nice fat order up and forget it."

From Dalngerfield's office Webster went forth to purchase a steamer trunk, his railway ticket and sleeping car reservation—after which he returned to his hotel and set about packing for the journey.

Old Neddy Jerome, as sour and cross as a setting hen, accompanied him in the taxicab to the station, both to let him escape and pleading to the last, in a forlorn hope that Jack Webster's better nature would triumph over his friendship and boyish yearning for adventure. He clung to Webster's arm as they walked slowly down the track and paused at the steps of the car containing the wanderer's reservation, just as a porter, carrying some hand baggage, passed them by, followed by a girl in a green tailor-made suit. As she passed, John Stuart Webster looked fairly into her face, started as if bee-stung, and hastily lifted his hat. The girl briefly returned his scrutiny with sudden interest, decided she did not know him, and reproved him with a glance that even passe old Neddy Jerome did not fail to assimilate.

"Wow, wow!" he murmured. "The next time you try that, Johnny Webster, be sure you're right—"

"Good land o' Goshen, Neddy," Webster replied. "Fry me in bread crumbs if that isn't the same girl I met on the Ogden train!"

"Well, for the love of Mike, get on board, you chump! Pull on—"

"Nonsense. The train doesn't pull out for seven minutes yet. Who is she, John, and why does she excite you so?"

"Why, is she, you mutton head!" replied Webster. "Why, if I have my way, my dear old friend, I shall try to have it she's the future Mrs. W."

"Alas! Poor Yorick, I knowed him well!" Jerome answered. "Take a tip from the old man, John. I've been through the mill and I know. Never, never, never, on that frozen ocean with a girl. It isn't safe. By the way, what's the fair charmer's name?"

"I've got it down in my memorandum book, but I can't recall it this minute. Spanish name—"

"Ah, my poor boy, be careful!" Neddy Jerome counseled. "Stick to your own kind of people. Is this a set or a nice girl, John?"

"How the I know. I mean, how dare you ask me? Of course she's nice. Can't you tell at first glance? And besides, why should you be so fearful—"

"I'll have you understand, young man, that I have considerable interest in the girl you're going to marry. Be the way, where did you first meet this girl? Who introduced you?"

"I haven't met her, and I've never been introduced," Webster complained, and poured forth the tale of his adventure on the train from Death Valley. Neddy was very sympathetic.

"Well, no wonder she didn't recognize you when you saluted her to-night," he agreed. "Thought you were another brute of a man trying to make a mush. By thunder, Jack, I'm afraid you made a mistake when you shed your whiskers and buried your old clothes."

"I don't care what she thinks. I found her. I lost her, and I've found her again, and I'm not going to take any further chances."

The porter having delivered his charge's baggage in her section, was returning for another tip. Webster reached out and accosted him.

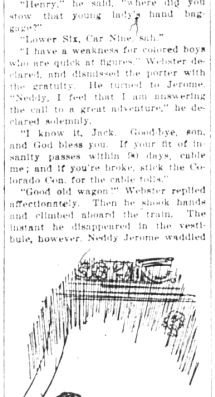
"Henry," he said, "where did you stow that young lady's hand baggage?"

"Lower Six, Car Nine, sah."

"I have a weakness for colored boys who are quick at figures," Webster declared, and dismissed the porter with the gratuity. He turned to Jerome. "Neddy, I feel that I am answering the call to a great adventure," he declared solemnly.

"I know it, Jack. Good-bye, son, and God bless you. If your fit of insanity passes within 60 days, cable me; and if you're broke, stick the Colorado Con. for the cable tolls."

"Good old wagon!" Webster replied affectionately. Then he shook hands and climbed aboard the train. The instant he disappeared in the vestibule, however, Neddy Jerome waddled



"I'm Old Enough to de Your Father."

rapidly down the track to Car 9, climbed aboard, and made his way to Lower 6. The young lady in the green tailor-made suit was there, looking idly out of the window.

"Young lady," Jerome began, "may I presume to address you for a moment on a matter of great importance to you? Don't be afraid of me, my dear. I'm old enough to be your father, and besides, I'm one of the nicest old men you ever met."

She could not forbear a smile. "Very well, sir," she replied.

Neddy Jerome produced a pencil and card. "Please write your name on this card," he pleaded, "and I'll telegraph what I want to say to you. There'll be a man coming through this car in a minute, and I don't want him to see me here. Please trust me, young lady."

The young lady did not trust him, however, although she wrote on the card. Jerome thanked her and dashed as fast as his fat old legs could carry him. Under the station arc he read the card.

"Henrietta Wilkins," he murmured. "By the gods, one would expect a name like that to belong to a face like that. By Solomon's wives, if that maidman succeeded in her to marry him. I hope he does. If I'm any judge of character, Jack Webster won't be edged enough to relish that vision to Submit; and besides, a shock sache to make him forget his most popular with Miss Henrietta or Billy Geary. If she does, I'll play Geary to lose. Well, Needs must when the devil drives. And he certainly the station telegraph office and commenced to write.

At about four Miss Dolores Rucy, alias Henrietta Wilkins, was handed this message at Ogden and read it carefully:

"Miss Henrietta Wilkins, Lower 6, Car 9, Southern Pacific Train No. 1.

"Do you recall the lonely, sheep-herding old gentleman you met on the S. P. L. A. & S. L. train in Death Valley ten days ago? He tried his best to woo you tactfully, and was somewhat disappointed in you. He is now disabused as a gentleman and as a lover of his best intentions. He is also very much afraid that you will not recognize him when you alighted from the train at Ogden. He is very anxious to see you, and begs you will not disappoint him. He is at the telegraph office and will wait for you. Please do not disappoint him.

"This man, John Stuart Webster, is wealthy, single, four times a day and a March hare. He is in love with you. You might do worse than fall in love with him. He is the best natured neighbor in the world, and he is now on the steamer to Buenaventura, Sobrante, to C. A., where he is to meet another lunatic and manage a mine in the ground. Lots of saint him. Be sensible. If you marry him, he will not. If you do not marry him, you still might arrange to make him listen to reason. If you can induce him to come to work for me within the next 60 days—before you marry him or not—I will give you $5,000 the day he reports on the job. Please bear in mind that he does not know I am doing this. If he did, he would kill me but business is business, and this is a plain business proposition. I am sure you will know your power and can exercise it if you care to earn the money. If not, please forget about it. At any rate, please do me the favor to communicate with me on the subject if at all convenient.

"Edward P. Jerome, President Colorado Consolidated Mines, Ltd., Care Engineers' Club."

The girl read and reread this telegram several times, and presently a slow little smile commenced to creep around the corners of her adorable mouth.

"I believe that amazing old gentleman is absolutely dependable," was the decision at which she ultimately arrived, and calling for a telegraph blank, she wired the old schemer:

"Five thousand not enough money. Make it $10,000 and I will guarantee to deliver the man within 60 days. I stay on this train to New Orleans.

"HENRIETTA."

That telegram arrived at the Edgineers' club about midnight, and pursuant to instructions, the night bar keeper read it and 'phoned the man sents to Neddy Jerome, who promptly telephoned his reply to the telegraph office, and then sat on the edge of his bed, scratching his toes and meditating.

"That's a remarkable young woman," he decided, "and business to her finger tips. Well, I've done my part, and it's now up to Jack Webster to protect himself in the clinches and breakaways."

About daylight a black hand passed Neddy Jerome's reply through the berth curtains to Dolores Rucy. She read:

"Accept. When you deliver the goods, communicate with me and get your money.

"JEROME."

She snuggled back among the pillows and considered the various aspects of this amazing contract which she had undertaken with a perfect stranger. Hour after hour she lay there, thinking over this proposition, negotiating, and the more she weighed it, the more interesting and attractive the proposition appeared. But one consideration troubled her. How would the unknown knight manage an introduction? Or, if he failed to manage it, how was she to overcome that obstacle?

"Oh, dear," she murmured, "I do hope he's brave."

She need not have worried. Hours before, the object of her thought had settled all that to his own complete satisfaction, and as a consequence was sleeping peacefully and gaining strength for whatever of fortune, good or ill, the morrow might bring forth.

CHAPTER IV.

—1—

Day was dawning in Buenaventura, republic of Sobrante, as invariably it dawns in the tropics—without extended preliminary symptoms. The soft, silvery light of a full moon that had merged imperceptibly into gray; the gray was swiftly yielding place to a faint crimson that was spreading and deepening upward athwart the east.

In the patio of Mother Jenks' establishment in the Calle de Concordia, No. 19, the first shafts of morning light were filtering obliquely through the orange trees and creeping in under the deep, Gothic-arched veranda flanking the western side of the patio. Presently, through the silent

"Chop Your Spoofin', Willie.

some from Erin's isle; wherefore Mr. Cafferty had been imported at a price of $5 a day gold. Results—a marked improvement in the road bed and consequently the train schedules, and the ultimate loss of the Cafferty soul.

Something in the climate of Sobrante must have appealed to a touch of laissez faire in Don Juan's amiable nature, for in the course of time he had taken unto himself, without bell or book after the fashion of the proletariat of Sobrante, the daughter of the Excelsior Manuel Enrique Jose Maria Pasqual y Miramontes, an estimable peon who was singularly glad to have his daughter off his hands and no questions asked. Following the fashion of the country, however, Esteban had forthwith moved the remainder of his numerous progeny under the mantle of Don Juan Cafetero's philanthropy, and resigned a position which for many years he had not enjoyed—to wit: sailing and packing green hides at a New York tannery. This foolhardy economic move had so incensed Don Juan that in a fit of pique he spurned his father-in-law (we must call Esteban something and so why split hairs?) under the tails of his cayuse, with such force as to sever forever the friendly relations hitherto existing between the families. Mrs. Cafferty (again we transgress, but what of it?) subsequently passed away in child birth, and no sooner had she been decently buried than Don Juan took a week off to drown his sorrows.

In this condition he had encountered Esteban Manuel Enrique Jose Maria Pasqual y Miramontes and rolled him out of his anime. In the altercation that ensued Esteban, fully convinced that he had received the nub end of the transaction from start to finish, cut Don Juan severely; Don Juan had thereupon slain Esteban with a 44-caliber revolver and upon emerging from the railroad hospital a month later had been tried by a Sobrantean magistrate and fined the sum of $20,000, legal tender of the republic of Sobrante. Of course he had paid it off within six months from his wages as section boss, but the memory of the injustice always rankled him, and gradually he moved down the scale of society from section boss to day laborer, day laborer to tropical tramp, and tropical tramp to beach comber, in which latter state he had now existed for several months.

To return to Mother Jenks.

Before Don Juan could even utter a matutinal greeting, Mother Jenks laid finger to lip and silenced him. "Go back to Lotta's and return in an hour," she whispered. "I have my reasons for wantin' that bloomin' cablegram delivered later."

Don Juan hadn't the least idea what Mother Jenks' reasons might be, but he presumed she was up to some chicanery, and so he winked his blood shot eye very knowingly and nodded his acquiescence in the program.

When he had gone, Mother Jenks went behind the bar and fortified herself with her morning's mornings—which rite having been performed, her sleep-benumbed brain livened up immediately.

"God's truth!" the lady murmured. "An' me about to turn him adrift for the least fortnight! Well for 'im 'e allers hadmired the picture o' my

Genuine

BAYER

Aspirin

You must say "Bayer"

Warning! Unless you see the name "Bayer" on tablets, you are not getting genuine Aspirin prescribed by physicians for 21 years and proved safe by millions.

Accept only an "unbroken package" of "Bayer Tablets of Aspirin," which contains proper directions for Colds, Headache, Pain, Toothache, Neuralgia, Rheumatism, Neuritis, Lumbago.

Handy tin boxes of 12 tablets cost but a few cents. Larger packages.

Aspirin is the trade mark of Bayer Manufacture of Monoaceticacidester of salicylicacid

"Gor, Willie, I ain't respectable. She's comin' to see me—an' I cawn't let 'er."

(TO BE CONTINUED)

HALO DUE TO MISCONCEPTION

Explanation of Luminous Circle About the Heads of Saints Is Somewhat Humorous.

For centuries it has been an almost universal practice among artists to paint halos above the heads of the saints in their pictures. Some characters have been so depicted, even though not officially canonized or previous to that ceremony, when the artist wished to indicate special spiritual qualities or holiness, as, for instance, in the case of Joan of Arc.

During the eleventh and twelfth centuries there was a great activity in the building of churches and cathedrals and it was a common practice to erect around the outside of the buildings statues of the saints, which were placed just under the eaves. As the images became discolored by the rain which fell upon the roofs and then poured from them, pious churchmen, as a means of protection, placed over the heads of the figures wooden disks of a size sufficient to protect them. Giotto, the great artist, began to paint holy pictures when only a country boy, and in his innocence assumed that the disks were essential parts of the images of the saints. Hence his earliest paintings represent each sacred figure wearing over the head something that looks like the bottom of a tub. Later on he idealized this into a mere circle, dark at first, but growing more luminous with each production, until finally he developed the circle of light that has come down unchanged through generations of painters as the badge of sanctity.—New York Post.

"Flower of the Devil."

"Flower of the Devil" is a strange growth upon trees found on the sides of Fuego volcano in Guatemala, one of the few places in the world where it is known to occur. It has beautiful foliation, veining and stem, and appears full blown when just unfolding from the bud. This effect is formed by a parasite which attacks the wood and dies after eating portions of it away, a process which in time produces the results described. Tradition, however, ascribes a different origin. Years ago when the Spaniard ruled the country a fair Indian maiden was supposed to have betrayed certain Inca secrets to her white lover. Her people threw her into the fiery water of Fuego in expiation of her sin and once every year, on Midsummer's day, she appears to throw armfuls of the devil's flowers over the mountain's slopes—a solemn warning to all of the sanctity of tribal secrets.

His One Wish.

Mrs. Honey—"I can read you like a book, William." Mr. H—"Then I wish you'd do more reading and less questioning."

Jud Tunkins.

Jud Tunkins says everybody admits that honesty is the best policy, only a lot of folks differ as to the proper definition of the word.

DYE RIGHT

Buy only "Diamond Dyes"

Each package of "Diamond Dyes" contains directions so simple that any woman can diamond dye worn, shabby skirts, waists, dresses, coats, gloves, stockings sweaters, draperies everything, whether wool, silk, linen, cotton or mixed goods new, rich fadeless colors. Have druggist show you "Diamond Dyes Color Card."—Adv.

Poets are born, but willows are made.

Important to Mothers

Examine carefully every bottle of CASTORIA, that famous old remedy for Infants and children, and see that it

Bears the Signature of Chas. H. Fletcher

In Use for Over 30 Years.

Children Cry for Fletcher's Castoria

Bamboo Has Fast Growth.

The growth of the bamboo is swift. In the morning a shoot appears above the ground, and by nightfall the shoot is waist high. On the second day it is as tall as a man, and in less than three weeks the bamboo rods are from 18 to 19 inches in circumference and tower to a height of 60 or 70 feet. There is one place in Abbeville, La., where Mellhenny has grown a grove that towered to 70 feet in 19 days. There is a variety of bamboo that is edible, and is highly prized by orientals, who cut off the young shoots and use them for food.

Cutting Down Expenses.

"Bimley has given up bachelor life and gone and got married."

"What! With beef a dollar a pound?"

"Well, that's better than paying the dollar a bite he's been paying in the restaurants, isn't it?"—Boston Transcript.

Heaps of People There.

A little boy who visited a large city for the first time, was amazed at the number of people on the streets.

When he returned home to the country his mother asked him what he thought of the great city.

"Oh," said he, "there were heaps of people there! I think there must have been a fair on."

Only the survivors believe in the survival of the fittest.

Help That Aching Back!

Back giving out? Tortured with dull, nagging backaches and stabbing pains? Does the least exertion leave you "all played out?" Likely your kidneys are to blame. Overwork, colds, insufficient rest and the hurry and worry of present day living tend to weaken the kidneys. Backache seldom the first warning. Headaches and dizziness may come too, and perhaps annoying kidney irregularities. Help the overworked kidneys with *Doan's Kidney Pills*. *Doan's* have helped thousands. They should help you. Ask your neighbor!

A Michigan Case

Albert Johnson, living with Sir. Holland, Mich., says: "My kidneys were out of order. A cold settled in these organs and made my trouble worse. My back ached and pained and the kidney secretions were profuse in passage, highly colored and scanty. I bought Doan's Kidney Pills and it only took a few boxes to rid me of the complaint."

Get Doan's at Any Store, 60c a Box

DOAN'S KIDNEY PILLS

FOSTER-MILBURN CO., BUFFALO, N.Y.

GOT REPORT THAT COUNTED

Coffee Dealer a Little Too Enthusiastic in His Praise of Goods He Had Condemned.

"Have you any of Blank & Co.'s coffee?" the stranger asked.

"Plenty of it, sir! How much would you like?" the dealer responded briskly.

"Do your customers generally like this coffee—I would want only something really good," the customer observed cautiously.

"Never had a more popular brand—it is fine—use it regularly on my own table," the dealer assured him.

"Well, I am glad to hear you speak so well of it now. You wrote me a while back that the goods were so unsatisfactory that you would have to return them unless you were given a further special discount. I'm Blank, you know. Good day."

What She Preferred.

Of the wit of Miss Marie Tempest, who is paying London a visit, many stories have been told. This is one of the latest.

At a party some one mentioned in her presence that a certain girl who had refused an earl had recently married a very wealthy young manufacturer.

"Oh," said Miss Tempest, without a moment's hesitation, "she very wisely preferred a business plant to a family tree."

At least an ossified man has aft the backbone he needs.

The Full-bodied Flavor of

POSTUM CEREAL

wins first place among table drinks with those who value health and comfort.

Boil Postum Cereal full fifteen minutes after boiling begins and the taste is delightful.

Costs less than coffee

Made by Postum Cereal Company, Inc. Battle Creek, Mich.