



The Man on the Box

By HAROLD MacGRATH
Author of "The Grey Cloak," "The Puppet Crown."

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CHAPTER XVII.—CONTINUED.

During this speculative inventory, Warburton's face was gravely set; indeed, it pictured his exact feelings. He was grave. He even wanted Pierre's approval. He was about to pass through a very trying ordeal; he might not even pass through it. There was no deceiving his colonel's eyes, hang him! Whatever had induced fate to force this old Argus-eyed soldier upon the scene? He glanced into the kitchen mirror. He instantly saw the salient flaw in his dress. It was the cravat. Tie it as he would, it never approached the likeness of the conventional cravat of the waiter. It still remained a polished cravat, a worldly cravat, the cravat seen in ball-rooms, drawing-rooms, in the theater stalls and boxes, anywhere but in the servants' hall. Oh, for the ready-made cravat that fitted to the collar-button! And then there was that servant's low turned-down collar, glossy as celluloid. He felt as diffident in his bare throat as a debutante feels in her first décolleté ball-gown, not very well covered up, as it were. And heaven and earth, how appallingly large his hands had grown, how clumsy his feet! Would the colonel expose him? Would he keep silent? This remained to be found out; wherein lay the terror of suspense.

"Remember, went on Monsieur Pierre, after a pause, feeling that he had a duty to fulfill and a responsibility to shift to other shoulders than his own, "remember, eef you spill zee soup, I keel you. You carry zee tureen in, zen you deesh out zee soup, and saive. Zee oystaires should be on zee table t'ree minutes before zee guests had arrive. Now, can you make zee American cocktail?"

"I can,"—with a ghost of a smile. "Make heem,"—with a pompous wave of the hand toward the favorite ingredients.

"What kind?"
"Vot kind! Eez zere more cocktails, zen?"

"Only two that are proper, the Manhattan and the martini."
"Make zee martini; I know heem."
"But cocktails ought not be mixed before serving."

"I say, make zee one cocktail,"—coldly and skeptically. "I test heem." Warburton made one. Monsieur sipped it slowly, making a wry face, for true Gaul that he was, only two kinds of stimulants appealed to his palate, liqueurs and wines. He found it as good as any he had ever tasted.

"Ver' good,"—softening. "Zare ees zen, one ting zat all zee Americans can make, zee cocktail? I am educatee; I learn. Now leaf me till eight. Keep zee collect head,"—and Monsieur Pierre turned his attention to his partridges.

James went out of doors to get a breath of fresh air and to collect his thoughts, which were wool-gathering, whatever that may mean. They needed collecting, these thoughts of his, and labeling, for they were at all points of the compass, and he was at a loss upon which to draw for support. Here he was, in a devil of a fix, and no possible way of escaping except by absolutely bolting; and he vowed that he wouldn't bolt, not if he stood the chance of being exposed 50 times over. He had danced; he was going to pay the fiddler like a man. He had never run away from anything, and he wasn't going to begin now.

At the worst, they could only laugh at him; but his secret would be his no longer. Ass that he had been! How to tell this girl that he loved her? How to appeal to her as his natural self? What a chance he had wilfully thrown away! He might have been a guest to-night; he might have sat next to her, turned the pages of her music, and perhaps sighed love in her ear, all of which would have been very proper and conventional. Ah, if he only knew what was going on behind those Mediterranean eyes of hers, those heavenly sapphires. Had she any suspicion? No, it could not be possible; she had humiliated him too often, to suspect the imposture. Alackaday!

Had any one else applied the disreputable terms he applied to himself there would have been a battle royal. When he became out of breath, he re-entered the house to have a final look at the table before the ordeal began.

Covers had been laid for 12; immaculate linen, beautiful silver, and sparkling cut-glass. He wondered how much the girl was worth, and thought of his own miserable \$4,500 the year. True, his capital could at any time be converted into cash, some \$75,000, but it would be no longer the goose with the golden egg. A great bowl of roses stood on a glass center-piece. As he leaned toward them to inhale their perfume he heard a sound. He turned.

She stood framed in a doorway, a picture such as artists conjure up to fit in the corners of gloomy studios; beauty, youth, radiance, luster, happiness. To his ardent eyes she was superbly beautiful. How wildly his heart beat! This was the first time he had seen her in all her glory. His

emotion was so strong that he did not observe that she was biting her nether lip.

"Is everything well, James?" she asked, meaning the possibilities of service and not the cardiac intractability of the servant.

"Very well, Miss Annesley,"—with a sudden bold scrutiny.

Whatever it was she saw in his eyes it had the effect of making hers turn aside. He grew visibly nervous.

"You haven't the hands of a servant, James,"—quietly.

He started and knocked a fork to the floor.

"They are too clumsy," she went on maliciously.

"I am not a butler, Miss; I am a groom. I promise to do the very best I can." Wrath mingled with the shame on his face.

"A man who can do what you did this morning ought not to be afraid of a dinner-table."

"There is some difference between a dinner-table and a horse, Miss." He stooped to recover the fork while she touched her lips with her handkerchief. The situation was becoming unendurable. He knew that, for some reason, she was quietly laughing at him.

Never put back on the table a fork or piece of silver that has fallen to the floor," she advised. "Procure a clean one."

"Yes, Miss." Why in heaven's name didn't she go and leave him in peace?

"And be very careful not to spill a drop of the burgundy. It is '78, and a particular favorite of my father's."

Seventy-eight! As if he hadn't had many a bottle of that superb vintage during the past ten months! The glands in his teeth opened at the memory of that taste.

"James, we have been in the habit of paying off the servants on this day of the month. Payday comes especially happy this time. It will put good feeling into all, and make the service vastly more expeditious."

She counted out four ten-dollar notes from a roll in her hand and signified him to approach. He took the money, coolly counted it, and put it in his vest pocket.

"Thank you, Miss."

I do not say she looked disappointed, but I assert that she was slightly disconcerted. She never knew the effort he had put forth to subdue the desire to tear the money into shreds, throw it at her feet and leave the house.

"When the gentlemen wish for cigars or cigarettes, you will find them in the usual place, the lower drawer in the sideboard." With a swish she was gone.

He took the money out and studied it. No, he wouldn't tear it up; rather he would put it among his keepsakes.

I shall leave Mr. Robert, or M'sieu Zhames, to recover his tranquillity, and describe to you the character and quality of the guests. There was the affable military attache of the British embassy, there was a celebrated American countess, a famous dramatist, and his musical wife, Warburton's late commanding colonel, Mrs. Chadwick, Count Karloff, one of the notable grand opera prima-donnas, who would not sing in opera till February, a cabinet officer and his wife, Col. Annesley and his daughter, who will note the cosmopolitan character of these distinguished persons. Perhaps in no other city in America could they be brought together at an informal dinner such as this one was. There was no question of precedence or any such nonsense. Everybody knew everybody else, with one exception Col. Raleigh was a comparative stranger. But he was a likeable old fellow, full of stories of the wild, free west, an excellent listener besides, who always stopped a goodly distance on the right side of what is known in polite circles as the bore's dead-line. Warburton held for him a deep affection, martinet though he was, for he was singularly just and merciful.

They had either drunk the cocktail or had set it aside untouched, and had emptied the oyster shells, when the ordeal of the soup began. Very few of those seated gave any attention to my butler. The first thing he did was to drop the silver ladle. Only the girl and Raleigh believed that he had told his story in an exceptionally taking manner. My butler quietly procured another ladle, and proceeded coolly enough. I must confess, however, that his coolness was the result of a physical effort. The soup quivered and trembled outrageously, and more than once he felt the heat of the liquid on his thumb. This moment his face was pale, that moment it was red. But, as I remarked, few observed him. Why should they? Everybody had something to say to everybody else; and a butler was only a machine anyway. Yet, three persons occasionally looked in his direction: his late colonel, Mrs. Chadwick and the girl; each from a different angle of vision. There was a scowl on the colonel's face, puzzlement on Mrs. Chadwick's, and I don't know what the girl's represented, not having been there with my discerning eyes.

Once the American countess raised her lorgnette and murmured: "What a handsome butler!"

Karloff, who sat next to her, twisted his moustache and shrugged. He had seen handsome peasants before. They did not interest him. He glanced across the table at the girl, and was much annoyed that she, too, was gazing at the butler, who had successfully completed the distribution of the soup and who now stood with folded arms by the sideboard. (How I should have liked to see him!)

When the butler took away the soup-pates, Col. Raleigh turned to his host.

"George, where the deuce did you

pick up that butler?"

Annesley looked vaguely across the table at his old comrade. He had been far away in thought. He had eaten nothing.

"What?" he asked.

"I asked you where the deuce you got that butler of yours."

"Oh, Betty found him somewhere. Our own butler is away on a vacation. I had not noticed him. Why?"

"Well, if he doesn't look like a cub lieutenant of mine, I was born without recollection of faces."

"An orderly of yours, a lieutenant, did you say?" asked Betty, with smoldering fires in her eyes.

"Yes."

"That is strange," she mused.

"Yes; very strange. He was a daredevil if there ever was one."

"Ah!"

"Yes; best bump of location in the regiment, and the steadiest nerve,"—dropping his voice.

The girl leaned on her lovely arms and observed him interestedly.

"A whole company got lost in a snowstorm. You know that on the prairie a snowstorm means that only a compass can tell you where you are; and there wasn't one in the troop—a bad piece of carelessness on the captain's part. Well, this cub said he'd find the way back, and the captain wisely let him take the boys in hand."

"Go on," said the girl.

"Interested, eh?"

"I am a soldier's daughter, and I love the recital of brave deeds."

"Well, he did it. Four hours later they were thawed out in the barracks kitchen. Another hour and not one of them would have lived to tell the tale. The whisky they poured into my

"Did he drink?" she interrupted.

"Drink? Why the next day he was going to lick the men who had poured the stuff down his throat. A toddy once in a while, that was all he ever took. And how he loved a fight! He had the tenacity of a bulldog; once he set his mind on getting something, he never let up till he got it."

The girl trifled thoughtfully with a rose.

"Was he ever in an Indian fight?" she asked, casually.

"Only scraps and the like. He went into the reservation alone one day and arrested a chief who had murdered a sheep-herder. It was a volunteer job, and nine men out of ten would never have left the reservation alive. He was certainly a cool hand."

"I dare say,"—smiling. She wanted to ask him if he had ever been hurt, this daredevil of a lieutenant, but she could not bring the question to her lips. "What did you say his name was?"—innocently.

"Warburton, Robert Warburton."

Here the butler came in with the birds. The girl's eyes followed him, hither and thither her lips hidden behind the rose.

CHAPTER XVIII.

CAUGHT!

Karloff came around to music. The dramatist's wife should play Tosti's Ave Maria. Miss Annesley should play the obligato on the violin and the prima-donna should sing; but just at present the dramatist should tell them all about his new military play which was to be produced in December.

"Count, I beg to decline," laughed the dramatist. "I should hardly dare to tell my plot before two such military experts as we have here. I should be told to write the play all over again, and now it is too late."

Whenever Betty's glances fell on her father's face, the gladness in her own was somewhat dimmed. What was making that loved face so care-worn, the mind so listless, the attitude so weary? But she was young; the spirits of youth never flow long in one direction. The repartee, brilliant and at the same time every sting withdrawn, flashed up and down the table like so many fireflies on a wet lawn in July, and drew her irresistibly.

As the courses came and passed, so the conversation became less and less general; and by the time the ices were served the colonel had engaged his host, and the others divided into twos. Then coffee, liqueurs and cigars, when the ladies rose and trailed into the little Turkish room, where the "distinguished-looking butler" supplied them with the amber juice.

A dinner is a function where everybody talks and nobody eats. Some have eaten before they come, some wish they had, and others dare not eat for fear of losing some of the gossip.

After the liqueurs my butler concluded that his labor was done and he offered a short prayer of thankfulness and relief. Heavens, what mad, fantastic impulses had seized him while he was passing the soup. Supposing he had spilled the hot liquid down Karloff's back, or poured out a glass of burgundy for himself and drained it before them all, or slapped his late colonel on the back and asked him the state of his liver? It was maddening and he marvelled at his escape. There hadn't been a real mishap. The colonel had only scowled at him; he was safe. He passed secretly from the house and hung around the bow-window which let out on the low balcony. The window was open, and occasionally he could hear a voice from beyond the room, which was dark.

It was one of those nights, those mild November nights, to which the novelists of the old regime used to devote a whole page; the silvery pallor on the landscape, the moon-mists, the round, white, inevitable moon, the stirring breezes, the murmur of the few remaining leaves, and all that. But these busy days we have not the time to read nor the inclination to describe.

Suddenly upon the stillness of the night the splendor of a human voice broke forth; the prima-donna was

trying her voice. A violin wailed a note. A hand ran up and down the keys of the piano. Warburton held his breath and waited. He had heard Tosti's Ave Maria many times, but he never will forget the manner in which it was sung that night. The songstress was care-free and among persons she knew and liked, and she put her soul into that magnificent and mysterious throat of hers. And throbbing all through the song was the vibrant, loving voice of the violin. And when the human tones died away and the instrument ceased to speak, Warburton felt himself swallowing rapidly. Then came Schumann's Träumerei on the strings, Handel's Largo, Grieg's Papillén, and a ballade by Chaminade. Then again sang the prima-donna; old folksy songs, sketches from the operas, grand and light, Faust, The Barber of Seville, La Fille de Madame Angot. In all his days Warburton had never heard such music. Doubtless he had—even better; only at this period he was in love. The imagination of love's young dream is the most stretchable thing I know of. Seriously, however, he was a very good judge of music, and I am convinced that what he heard was out of the ordinary.

But I must guide my story into the channel proper.

[To Be Continued.]

JUST A LITTLE PERSONAL.

Compliment Which Was Carried to an Embarrassing Point of Construction.

Unfortunately for himself, Mr. Thornwall was gifted with a phenomenal faculty for saying the wrong thing at all times and in all circumstances. A friend of his, relates the Youth's Companion, had just introduced him to a rising young member of the national house of representatives.

"I have often heard of you, Mr. B.," said Mr. Thornwall, greeting him with the utmost cordiality. "It's a great pleasure to meet a congressman who is making his mark, the more especially when one considers how few there are that are doing it. It must be almost mortifying to you, sometimes, to see what an ordinary lot of men are sent to Washington to make the laws for this country. Doesn't it?"

"Oh, I don't know," said the Hon. Mr. B., with an embarrassed smile. "They're not a bad lot of men."

"It stands to reason," rejoined Mr. Thornwall, warmly, "that they can't amount to much. What man who is worth his salt, either in a business or professional capacity, would sacrifice all his prospects at home and go to Washington for the pitiful salary of \$5,000 a year? Not one, sir; not one. That's why I say—er—"

But here Mr. Thornwall saw that he had "put his foot in it," and hastened to change the subject.

Just View of the Matter.

In most, if not all, of the fraternal insurance organizations there is a slight increase every year in the monthly assessments, to meet the increased risk due to advancing age. Mr. Benham had joined one of these societies, and his children were asking him about it.

"You have to pay a little more every year, do you, papa?" asked Bobby.

"Yes," he replied.

"Have to keep on paying when you get to be old?"

"Certainly."

"But suppose you live to be very old, papa. Suppose you live to be 85 or 90. Won't it be pretty hard for you to pay it then?"

"I hope not, Bobby," said Mr. Benham. "If you boys are worth your salt you'll be paying it for me by that time."—Youth's Companion.

Brick Trade in Sermons.

The wife of a Philadelphia clergyman recently sold a box of waste paper to a ragman, says "Success Magazine." In the box were a lot of manuscript sermons of her husband's. A month or so thereafter, the ragman again came around, and asked if the lady had any more sermons to sell.

"I have some waste paper," said she. "But why should you particularly want sermons?"

"Well, mum, you see I did so well with them that I got here a month ago. I got sick up in Altoona, and a preacher here boarded me and my horse for a couple of weeks for that box of sermons, because I hadn't any money. Since then he's got a great reputation in those parts as a preacher. I'll give ten cents a pound for all you have."

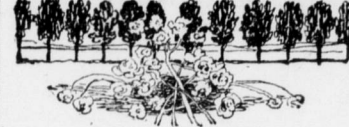
Pointing a Moral.

A certain minister who was famous for seizing every opportunity to point out a moral, was walking one day with one of his parishoners and expostulating with him on account of his sinful ways. Presently they came to a place where ice had formed on the walk, and the sinful man's feet flew from under him, giving him a bad fall. The minister quickly seized the chance, and looking down upon him said: "My friend, you now see that sinners stand on slippery places." The sinful one looked ruefully up and answered: "Yes, I see they do, but I can't."—N. Y. World.

Fault of the Clock.

Mrs. Hooligan looked up at the clock, and then slapped the iron she had lifted from the stove back on the lid with a clatter. "Talk about toime an' toide waiting for no man," she muttered, as she hurried into the pantry, "there's toimes they wait and toimes they don't! Yisterday at this very minute 'twas but tin o'clock; an' to-day 'tis quarter to twelve!"—Youth's Companion.

HORTICULTURE

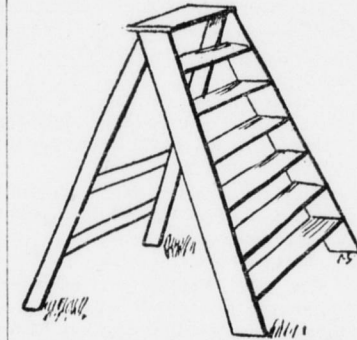


LOW FRUIT LADDERS.

Can Be Built on the Farm and Will Prove Their Value When Given Trial.

Two sketches of low ladders for picking small fruits, such as peaches, cherries and apples, where the trees are low appeared in a recent issue of the Prairie Farmer and which we reproduce here. These ladders are so easily made that they should interest our readers.

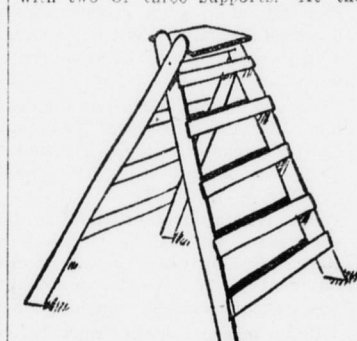
Fig. 1 shows a plan that is made by taking two six-inch boards six feet



A CHEAPLY MADE STEP LADDER.

long and cutting grooves every ten inches where the steps are to be. The steps are set into the grooves and then securely nailed from the outside. The width at the bottom is about three feet, but each step is shortened two inches, so that the top step, which is nailed across the ends cut parallel with the grooves, is two feet long.

The support is made by taking two three-inch pieces and connecting them with two or three supports. At the



ANOTHER FORM OF PICKING LADDER.

top the two sets are connected with the rod that passes through both. This ladder is secure and if carefully placed will be hard to tip over.

Fig. 2 shows another form that is made by taking four six-foot legs made of sound 3x1 strips and connecting at the top with a bolt. The steps are made by nailing two-inch strips on either side of the legs as illustrated. The board at the top is nailed to the main legs and is supported on either side by the cleats which correspond with the steps below. The same dimensions are followed as in Fig. 1.

So rapid has been the advancement of spraying as a means of controlling insects and diseases, that there is a tendency to greatly overestimate its value. It was only 26 years ago that Paris green was first used for the codling moth of apples. Not until about 1885 was the Bordeaux mixture used to any extent. When we remember that practically all of our modern spraying—its tools, mixtures and methods, has been developed or made of practical utility within the past 15 or 20 years, until it has come to be an almost universal practice among the most successful fruit growers, we can readily understand why greater importance is sometimes ascribed to it than it really merits. Spraying is a new idea, says Farming, and like most new ideas, it has been over-emphasized. There are some old and a few new ways of solving the insect and disease problems. Sometimes these other ways may be better even than spraying, sometimes they may supplement it very advantageously. We should not forget them in our enthusiasm over a new and valuable remedy.

REAL VALUE OF SPRAYING.

In Fighting Disease and Insects One Should Not Depend Too Much on It.

Prunings.

Prunings are among the most profitable of fruits and can be grown in cold climates.

Prune trees properly when young, and after they commence to bear little trimming is needed. Its a big mistake to neglect young fruit trees.

For marketing the fruit should be matured full grown when gathered, but should not have time to become mellow.

Keep grass and weeds away from trunks of trees—at least two feet to prevent ravages by mice, and the better to examine the trees.

If fruit trees are overloaded, they should be thinned, not only for the benefit of this year's crop, but of the crop which is to follow another year.

It is a long wait between the planting of an orchard and the appearance of fruit on the trees and a great deal of time will be lost if the wrong sorts are chosen.

ITS MERIT IS PROVED

RECORD OF A GREAT MEDICINE

A Prominent Cincinnati Woman Tells How Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound Completely Cured Her.

The great good Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound is doing among the women of America is attracting the attention of many of our leading scientists, and thinking people generally.



The following letter is only one of many thousands which are on file in the Pinkham office, and go to prove beyond question that Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound must be a remedy of great merit, otherwise it could not produce such marvelous results among sick and ailing women.

Dear Mrs. Pinkham:—

"About nine months ago I was a great sufferer with female trouble, which caused me severe pain, extreme nervousness and frequent headaches, from which the doctor failed to relieve me. I tried Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound, and within a short time felt better, and after taking five bottles of it I was entirely cured. I therefore heartily recommend your Compound as a splendid female tonic. It makes the monthly periods regular and without pain; and what a blessing it is to find such a remedy after so many doctors fail to help you. I am pleased to recommend it to all suffering women."—Mrs. Sara Wilson, 31 East 3d Street, Cincinnati, Ohio.

If you have suppressed or painful periods, weakness of the stomach, indigestion, bloating, pelvic catarrh, nervous prostration, dizziness, faintness, "don't-care" and "want-to-be-left-alone" feeling, excitability, backache or the blues, these are sure indications of female weakness, or some derangement of the organs. In such cases there is one tried and true remedy—Lydia E. Pinkham's Vegetable Compound.

CURIOS AND ODDITIES.

Only one woman in 100 insures her life.

Ellen Terry is passionately fond of cats.

Sarah Bernhardt has a huge bed 15 feet long.

Patti sleeps with a silk scarf about her neck.

Brides in Australia are pelted with rose leaves.

In stature Eskimo women are the shortest on earth.

No photographs are ever taken of women in China.

A woman's brain declines in weight after the age of 30.

In Africa wives are sold for two packets of hairpins.

New York has 27,000 women who support their husbands.

Drunkenness is rare, smoking common among Japanese women.

PHILOSOPHICAL POINTS.

The fattest calf never loves the prodigal son.

Truth never runs around asking people to believe it.

Alas, that fools are prosperous. Is it their penalty or reward?

How many of us in listening to the tomtoms forget the violins?

To think an original thought is to take a step nearer the divine.

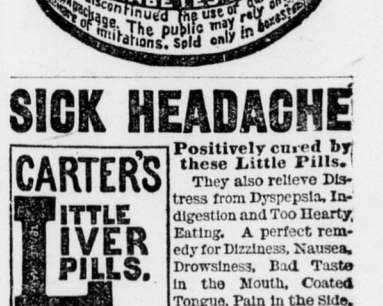
People who need to be continually propped up are not worth the prop.

When men become suddenly good they should be executed immediately.

It is easier for some people to believe the impossible than the possible.

Before it was thrown down, the Golden Calf had a son, and it is still mooring around the world.

It is self-evident that to successfully fathom the motives of men one must be a man himself. To an idiot—to a lunatic—all men are either idiots or lunatics.



SICK HEADACHE

Positively cured by these Little Pills. They also relieve Distress from Dyspepsia, Indigestion and Too Hearty Eating. A perfect remedy for Dizziness, Nausea, Drowsiness, Bad Taste in the Mouth, Coated Tongue, Pain in the Side, TORPID LIVER. They regulate the Bowels. Purely Vegetable.

SMALL PILL. SMALL DOSE. SMALL PRICE.

Genuine Must Bear Fac-Simile Signature