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CONTINUED

"Why didn't he accept it?" I asked bluntly. "He sold the whole place to me, contents included, for less than half that amount."

"It was years ago, before he was in such dire straits," he explained quickly. "A terrible suspicion entered my head. I felt myself turn cold. If the frescoes were genuine they were worth all that Schwartzmuller declared; that being the case, why should Hohendahl have let them come to me for practically nothing when there were dozens of collectors who would have paid him the full price?"

"As a matter of fact, Count Tarnowsky," I said, resorting to unworthy means, "I have every reason to believe that Hohendahl sold the originals some time ago and had them replaced on the ceilings by clever imitations. They are not worth the canvas they are painted on."

He started. "Impossible!" he cried sharply.

"By no means impossible," I said calmly, now sure of my ground. "To be perfectly frank with you, I've known from the beginning that they are fakes. Count Hohendahl confessed to me at the time our transaction took place that the frescoes were very recent productions. The originals, I think, are in London or New York. I saw guilt in the face of Herr Schwartzmuller. I looked straight into the German's eyes and said, 'Now that I come to think of it, I am sure he mentioned the name of Schwartzmuller in connection with the—'"

"It is not true! It is not true!" roared the expert without waiting for me to finish. "He lies to you! We—the great firm of Zuma & Schwartzmuller—we could not be tempted with millions to do such a thing."

I went a step farther in my deductions. Somehow I had grasped the truth—this pair deliberately hoped to swindle me out of \$40,000. They knew the frescoes were imitations, and yet they were urging me to spend a huge sum of money in restoring canvases that had been purposely made to look old and dimly in order to deceive a more cautious purchaser than I.

"Moreover, Count Tarnowsky, you are fully aware of all this."

"My dear fellow—"

"I'll not waste words. You are a scoundrel!"

He measured the distance with his eye and then sprang swiftly forward, striking blindly at my face.

I knocked him down.

Schwartzmuller was near the door, looking over his shoulder as he felt for the great brass knob.

"Mein Gott!" he yelled.

"Stop!" I shouted. "Come back here and take this fellow away with you!"

Tarnowsky was sitting up, looking about him in a dazed, bewildered manner.

At that moment Poopendyke came running down the stairs, attracted by

then that I did another strange and incomprehensible thing. With the utmost coolness I stepped forward and wrested it from his hand. I say strange and incomprehensible for the reason that he was pointing it directly at my breast and yet I had not the slightest sensation of fear. He could have shot me like a dog. I never even thought of that.

"None of that!" I cried sharply. "Now, will you be good enough to get out of this house and stay out?"

"My seconds will call on you!"

"And they will receive just what you have received. If you or any of your friends presume to trespass on the privacy of these grounds of mine I'll kick the whole lot of you into the Danube. Hawkes, either show or lead Count Tarnowsky to the gates. As for you, Mr. Schwartzmuller, I shall expose!"

But the last word in restorations had departed.

CHAPTER XVII.

I Am Forced Into Being a Hero.

SITTING alone in my study late in the afternoon smoking a solitary pipe of peace, I remembered Mr. Bangs, the lawyer, the man with the top button off. What had become of him? His presence, or more accurately, his absence suddenly loomed up before me as the forerunner of an unwelcome invasion of my preserves. He was no doubt a sort of advance agent for the Titus family and its immediate ramifications. Just as I was on the point of starting out to make inquiries concerning him there came to my ears the sound of tapping on the back of Red Ludwig's portrait.

I rushed over and rapped resoundingly upon Ludwig's pudgy knee. The next instant there was a click, and then the secret door swung open, revealing the eager, concerned face of my neighbor.

"What has happened?" she cried.

I lifted her out of the frame. Her gaze fell upon the bandaged fist.

"Mr. Bangs spoke of a pistol. Don't tell me that he—"

I held up my swollen hand rather proudly. It smelled vilely of ammonia.

"This wound was self-inflicted, my dear countess. I said, thrilled by her expression of concern, 'I had the exquisite pleasure—and pain—of knocking your former husband down.'"

"Oh, splendid!" she cried, her eyes gleaming with excitement. "Mr. Bangs was rather hazy about it, and he would not let me risk telephoning. You knocked him down?"

"Emphatically," said I.

She mused. "I think it is the first time it has ever happened to him. How—how did he like it?"

"It appeared to prostrate him."

She smiled understandingly. "I am glad you did it, Mr. Smart."

"If I remember correctly, you once said that he had struck you, countess."

Her face flushed. "Yes, on three separate occasions he struck me in the face with his open hand. I testified to that effect at the trial. Every one seemed to look upon it as a joke. He swore that they were love pats."

"I hope his lack of discrimination will not lead him to believe that I was delivering a love pat," said I grimly.

"Now tell me everything that happened," she said, seating herself in my big armchair. Her feet failed to touch the floor.

When I came to that part of the story where I accused Tarnowsky of duplicity in connection with the frescoes she betrayed intense excitement.

"Of course it was all a bluff on my part," I explained.

"But you were nearer the truth than you thought," she said, compressing her lips. After a moment she went on: "Count Hohendahl sold the originals over three years ago. I was here with Maris at the time of the transaction and when the paintings were removed. Maris acted as an intermediary in the deal. Hohendahl received \$200,000 for the paintings, but they were worth it. I have reason to believe that Maris had a fourth of the amount for his commission. So, you see, you were right in your surmise."

"The infernal rascal! Where are the originals, countess?"

"They are in my father's villa at Newport," she said. "I intended speaking of this to you before, but I was afraid your pride would be hurt. Of course I should have spoken if it came to the point where you really considered having those forgeries restored."

"He will challenge you," she went on nervously. "He has fought three duels. He is not a physical coward." Her dark eyes were full of dread.

I hesitated. "Would you be vitally interested in the outcome of such an affair?" I asked. "I mean on Rosemary's account. He—she is her father, you see. It would mean—"

A slow flush mounted to her brow. "That is precisely what I was thinking, Mr. Smart. It would be—unspeakably dreadful."

I stood over her. My heart was pounding heavily. She must have seen the peril that lay in my eyes, for she suddenly slipped out of the chair and faced me, the flush dying in her cheek, leaving it as pale as ivory.

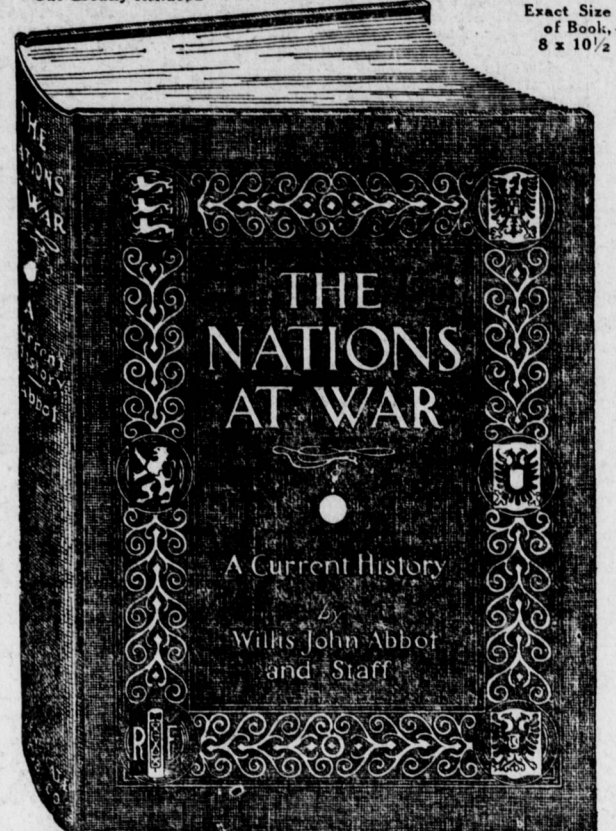
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HOUSEHOLD TALKS



Henrietta D. Grauel

Light Summer Housekeeping

Spring winds, warm sun, fresh air and bright sunshine all tempt us to wholesome outdoor living, and how good it would be if all women would spend hours outdoors each day. But work does not do itself and many housekeepers feel they must be content with mere peeps at spring through open doors and windows.

We are taught that work is something that was sent into this world as a punishment for sin. And we do it with sighs and make drudgery of what might be glorious exercise if we only had a better point of view. The next generation will manage these things differently. They will know that household administration is a profession that opens every avenue to self-expression and original thought. Then every woman, old, young or middle aged, will believe that they have the best job in the world, and laugh to think that the tasks of managing a home were once dubbed "menial" or "drudgery."

The wonderful modern inventions for cleaning, the new styles of furnishing, sensible methods of eating and sleeping are all bringing these changes in our attitude of mind. But most of all, our young girls are responsible for it. So many thousands of them are interested in domestic science. They have it in the public schools and all colleges offer such courses, and, naturally, they put school work into practice in their homes.

A trained homemaker finds time for outdoor enjoyment by changing her methods of work with the seasons. Heavy, warm furniture, thick hangings and deep upholstered chairs were comfortable in January. This month polished floors, matting, wicker rockers and thinnest of curtains save time and give the same comfortable feeling of appropriateness.

It is not possible for every family to change their furniture as they do

their clothing, but there is some seasonal change for each to make. Perhaps it will be a tent in the back yard or a vine-covered arbor made of clothes props and morning glory vines. Or you may screen in your porch and spend long happy days on it from June to October. The front porch may be your living room, reception hall and parlor in one, the side veranda your dining room and nursery, and as for a kitchen you can do plenty of cooking for hot weather with an ice cream freezer and a fireless cooker.

QUESTIONS AND ANSWERS
"What is wrong with my popovers? I make them as light as possible, but they are always hard and do not rise half as high as they should."

Reply.—Most popovers refuse to pop because the heat of the oven, which swells the air cells and raises the mixture, is too low or too high. You should have a hot oven for the first ten minutes and a slow oven for the next fifteen.

"I have a coffee percolator that no longer sprays and I should like to know where this can be remedied?"—Susanna.

Reply.—Clean the machine thoroughly, especially the spray pipe, and if it does not act properly express it to the company that made it, with a letter requesting that they put it in order. These percolators are excellent but when they are out of order they must go to headquarters for repairs, which, fortunately are never very costly.

"Please suggest some use for linen collars that are frayed at tops. I have four men in my family and the worn collars have accumulated until they fill a good sized box?"—Mother.

Reply.—Will some of our readers tell what they do with old collars?
To-morrow—Kidney Stew.

To Be Continued

Assault Adds \$118 to Taxes
Hazelton, May 11.—Mr. and Mrs. Frank Wisniewski, of McAdoo, who assaulted Andrew Buba, borough tax collector, when he sought settlement of his claims against them, were acquitted by the jury after they had paid \$118 in costs and \$8.62 in taxes.

Charge Two With Burglary
Lancaster, May 11.—Thomas Dyer and Frank Blake were arrested here yesterday morning at the instance of the authorities of West Chester, where they were wanted on a charge of burglary. They were taken to West Chester yesterday afternoon.

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Beat Back Menacing Forest Fires

Hazelton, May 11.—Forest fires around Hazelton menaced the Hudson-Valley cold storage plant of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company, where great quantities of fuel are held; the bungalow of the Weatherly Rod and Gun Club, at Brushy Hollow, and the mine operations of the Lehigh Valley Coal Company, at Buck Mountain. Prompt work by men from the neighborhood beat back the flames.

Farmer Commits Suicide
Lancaster, May 11.—Benjamin F. Weaver, a well-to-do retired farmer, 57 years old, committed suicide in his

sitting room by cutting his throat with a pocket knife.

For a sturdy spring drink, try Fink's Wurzburger.—Adv.

Dove Delays a Funeral

Hazelton, May 11.—The white dove released in a lodge funeral ritual at the grave of Mrs. Adam Haas, halted the burial by flying down into the grave and hiding between the rough box and the slate lining. After all efforts to coax it out had failed, men clambered into the excavation and captured the bird.

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Additional trains for Carlisle and Mechanicsburg at 9:45 a. m., 2:15, 8:27, 9:30, 3:30 p. m.
For Dillsburg at 5:03, 7:50 and 11:57 a. m., 2:15, 5:40, 5:52, 6:30 p. m.
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