EARL DERR BIGGERS

SEVEN KEYS TO BALDPATE

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appolite But I believe we're going impolite But I believe we're going to be very good friends, none the less."
"We're going to be very close to each other, at any rate." Minot smiled.
"Once more an revoir, your lordship."
"Pardon me, goodby," answered Lord Harrowby, with decision.
And Richard Minot was again threading his way between awed tables.
Walking slowly down Fifth avenue, Mr. Minot was forced to admit that he had not made a very auspicious be-

Mr. Minot was forced to admit that he had not made a very auspicious beginning in his new role. Why had Lord Harrowby refused so determinedly to invite him aboa-û the yachi that was to bear the eager bridegroom south? And what was he to do now? Might he not discover where the yacht lay, board it at dusk and conceal him-self in a vacant cabin until the party was well under way? It sounded fair-

But it proved otherwise. He was balked from the outset. For two hours, in the library of his club, in telephone booths and elsewhere, he sought for ome tangible evidence of the existe ome tangible evidence of the existence of a wealthy American named Martin Wall and a yacht called the Lileth. City directories and yacht club year books allke were silent. Myth, myth, myth, ran through Dick Minot's mind.

Somewhat discouraged, he returned to his club and startled a waiter by demanding dinner at 4:30 in the after-ficon. Going then to his rooms, he exged his overcoat for a sweater, his changed his overcoat for a sweater, his hat for a golf cap. At 5:30 a spy for the first time in his eventful young life, he stood opposite the main en-trance of Lord Harrowby's hotel. Near by ticked a taxi, engaged for the even-

ing.

At 8:15 a tall blond man, in a very expensive fur coat which impressed even the cab starter, came down the wen the cab starter, cancer the starter of the hotel. He ordered a limourine and was whirled away to the west.

Lord Harrowby's car proceeded to the drive and, turning, sped north be-tween the moonlit river and the manlit apartment houses. In the neighbor-hood of One Hundred and Tenth street t came to a stop, and as Minot's car passed slowly by, he saw his lordship tanding in the moonlight paying his chauffeur. Hastily dismissing his own chauffeur. Hastily dismissing his own car, he ran back in time to see Lord Harrowby disappear down one of the stone stairways into the gloom of the park that skirts the Hudson. He fol-

On and on down the steps and bare wind swept paths he hurried, until finally the river, cold, silvery, serene, lay before him. Some thirty yards from shore he beheld the lights of a yacht flashing against the gloomy back-

yacht flashing against the gloomy back-ground of Jersey. The Lileth' He watched Lord Harrowby cross the railroad tracks to a small landing and leap from that into a boat in charge of a solitary rower. Then he heard the soft swish of oars and watched the boat draw away from abore. He stood there in the shade until he had seen his lordship run up the ommodation ladder to the Lileth's

ence. But how? He glanced quickly up and down the bank. A small boat was tethered near by. He ran to it, but a chain and padlock held it firmly. He must hurry. Aboard the yacht, dancing impatiently on the bosom of Hendrick Hudson's important discovery, he recognized the preparations for an early departure.

Minot stood for a moment looking at Minot stood for a moment looking at the wide, wet river. It was February, yes, but February of the mildest win-ter New York had experienced in years. At the seashore he had always dashed boldly in while others stood on the sands and shivered. He dashed in

The water was cold, shockingly cold.

The struck out swiftly for the yacht.

Fortunately the accommodation ladder had not yet been taken up. In another mioment he was clinging, a limp and dripping spectacle, to the rail of the Liteth.

Hamily that side of the deck was

Happily that side of the deck was Just then deserted. A row of outside cabin doors in the bow met Minot's cye. Stealthily he swished toward

And in the last analysis the only

Well," he said, "you might be good ough to tell Lord Harrowby that

I've arrived."

"Who are you? What do you want?"

"Tm a friend of his lordship. He'll
be delighted. Tm sure. Just tell him,
if you'll be so kind."

"Did he invite you aboard?"

"Not exactly. But he'll be glad to
see me."

An expression of mingled rage and dismay came into the pudgy face. It purpled in the moonlight. Its huge owner came threateningly toward the Back into the river for yours!" he

lovingly—so it might have to the casual observer—he



wound his thick arms about the drip-

ping Minot. Up and down the deck they turkey trotted. "Over the rail and into the river," breathed Mr. Wall on Minot's damp

Two large and capable sailormen

came at sound of the struggle.
"Here, boys!" Wall shouted. "Help me toss this guy over!"
Willing hands seized Minot at oppo-

site poles.
"One—two"— counted the sailormen.
"Well, good night, Mr. Wall," remarked Minot.

"Three!"
A splash and he was ingloriously in the "old river again. He turned to the accommodation ladder, but quick hands drew it up. Evidently there was nothing to do but return ence more to little old New York.

He rested for a moment, treading water, seeing dimly the tall homes of the cave dwellers and over them the yellow glare of Broadway. Then he struck out. When he reached the shore and turned the Lileth was already under way, moving slowly down the silver path of the moon. An old man was launching the padlocked rowboat.

"Great night for a swim," he re-

marked sarcastically.
"Lelovely." chattered Minot. "Say,
do you know anything about the yacht
that's just steamed out?"

that's just steamed out?"
"Not as much as I'd like to. Used to belong to a man in Chicago. Yes terday the caretaker told me she'd been rented for the winter. Seen him tonight in a gin mill with money to throw to the birds. Looks funny to me."

"Man came this afternoon and paint ed out her old name. Changed it to Lileth. Mighty suspicious."

"What was the old name?"

"The Lady Evelyn. If I was you I'd

are toutside a drink, and quick. Good night."

As Minot dashed up the bank he heard the swish of the old man's oars behind. He ran all the way to his rooms and, after a hot bath and liquid refreshment suggested by the waterman, called Mr. Thacker on the tele-

"Well, Richard?" the gentleman in-

"Sad news. Little Cupid's had a set-back. Tossed into the Hudson when he tried to hoard the yacht that is tak-ing Lord Harrowby south."
"No! Is that so?" Mr. Thacker's

tone was contemplative. "Well, Richard, the Palm Beach Special leaves at midnight. Better be on it. Better go down and help the bride with her trousseau."

not to be""I can't hear you, Richard. What

"I can't hear you, kichard. What are you saying?"
"Nothing-er-Mr. Thacker. Look up a yacht called the Lady Evelyn-Chicago men, I think. Find out if he's rented it and to whom. It's the boat Harrowby went south on."
"All right, Richard. Goodby, my boy.

And in the last analysis the only thing between him and them proved to be a large, commanding gentleman, whose silhouette was particularly militant and whose whole bearing was unfavogable.

"Mr. Wall, I presume?" said Minot through noisy teeth.

"Correct!" said the gentleman. His voice was sharp, unfriendly. But the moonlight, falling on his face, revealed if as soft, genial, pudgy—the inviting sort of countenance to which, under the melting influence of Scotch and sods, one feels like relating the said story of one's wasted life.

Though soaked and quaking, Mr. Though soaked and quaking, Mr. Minot aimed at nonchalance.

see the south didn't you? Well, look about you."

The Palm Beach special on which Mr. Minot rode was no exception to this rule. It entered Florida and a state of innocuous desuetude at one and the same time. After a tremendous struggle it gasped its way into Jacksonville about 9 o'clock of the Monday morning following. Reluctant as Romeo in his famous exit from Ju as komeo in his famous extr from your liet's boudoir, it got out of Jackson-ville an hour later. And San Marco was just two hours away according to that excellent book of light fiction so widely read in the south—the time-

It seemed to Dick Minot that he had been looking out of a car window for



a couple of eternities. Save for the diversion at Jacksonville nothing had happened to brighten that long and

nappeared to beginten that one wearisome journey. He wanted now to glance across the car aisle toward the diversion at Jacksonville.

For half a mile the train served its masters. Then, with a pathetic groan, it paused. Still Mr. Minot gazed out the window. He guzed so long that he saw a family of razorbacks, passed a quarter of a mile back, catch up with the train and trot scornfully by. After that he kept his eyes on the live oaks and evergreens, to whose topmost branches hung gray moss like whiskers on a western senator.

Then he could stand it no longer. He

turned and looked upon the divers at Jacksonville. Gentlemen of at Jacksonville. Gentlemen of the fury—she was beautiful. The custodian of a library of books on sociology could have seen that with half an astigmantic eye. Her copper colored hair flashed alluringly in that sunny car. The curve of her cheek would have created a sensation in the neighborhood where burning Sappho loved and sang.

CHAPTER III.

"The Name of the Happy Man." CELLENT train, it seemed fairly to fly for a little while, then another stop. Beauty willly anxious on the seat of ancient plush. Another start—a stop—and a worried but musical voice in Dick Minot's ear.

and a worried but musical voice in Dick Minot's ear:

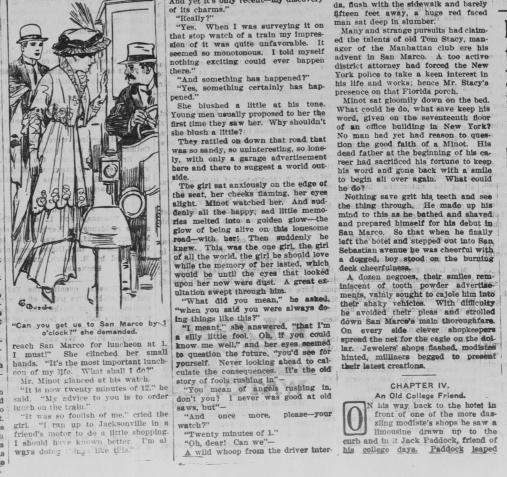
"I beg your pardon, but what should you say are this train's chances for reaching San Marco by 1 o'clock?"

Minot turned. Brown eyes and troubled ones looked into his. A dimple twitched beside an adorable mouth. Fortunate Florida, peopled with girls.

"I should say," smiled Mr. Minot.

"about the same as those of the fa-mous little snowball that strayed far

"Oh, you're right!" Why would she fidget so? "And I'm in a frightfully uncomfortable position. I simply must



"Almost like a football game," said rupted. Minot bitthely. "Third down-five yards to go. Oh, by Jove, there's a town on my side."
"Not a trace of a town on mine," she

replied.
"It's the dreariest, saddest town I ever saw," Minot remarked. "So, of course, its name is Sunbeam. And look—what do you see there beside the

"An automobile!" the girl cried. "Well, an automobile's ancestor, any rate," laughed Minot—"vintage 1905. Say, I have a suggestion now.

If the chauffeur thinks he can get you

—I mean us—to San Marco by 1

o'clock shall we"-But the girl was already on her way. The lean, lank, weary native who lolled beside the passe automobile was startled speechless for a moment by the sight of two such attractive visitors in his unattractive town.

"Want a taxi, mister?" he inquired.
"Take you up to the Sunbeam House

"Yes, we do want a taxi"— Minot be-

"To San Marcot" cried the girl breathlessly. "Can you get us there by I o'clock?"

by 1 o'clock?"

"To—to— Say, lady," stammered the rustic chauffeur, "that train you just got off of is going to San Marco."

"Oh, no, it isn't," Minot explained.

"We know better. It's going out into the country to lie down under a shade tree and rest."

"The train is too slow," said the girl.
"I must be in San Marco before 1 o'clock. Can you get me—us—there by then? Speak quickly, please!"

The effect of this request on the chauffeur was to induce even greater confusion.

"T-to-to San Marco?" he stumbled.

'Please!' the girl pleaded.

"Lady," said the chauffeur, "I'd do anything I could within reason"— "Can you get us to San Marco by 1 o'clock?" she demanded.

o'clock?" she demanded.

"I ain't no prophet, lady"—a humorous gleam came into his eye—"but ever
since I got this car I been feelin' sort
o' reckless. If you say so I'll bid all
my family and friends goodby, and
we'll take a chance on San Marco to
cether."

"That's the spirit!" laughed Minot "But forget the family and friends."

"But forget the family and friends."
The car rolled asthmatically from the little settlement and out into the sand and heat of a narrow road.
"Eight miles to San Marco," said the driver out of the corner of his mouth, "Sit tight. I'm going to let her out some."

her out some."

Again Dick Minot glanced at the girl beside him. Fate was in a jovial mood today to grant him this odd ride in the company of one so charming.

Minot tried to think of some spright:

winot tried to think of some some specific to the remained silent. What was the matter with him? Why should this girl seem different, somehow, from all the other girls he had ever met? When he looked into her eyes a flood of memories, a little sad, of all the happy those he had ever known overwhelm. times he had ever known overwhelm-ed him-memories of a starlit sea, the ed him—memories of a starlit sea, the red and white awnings of a yacht, the wind whispering through the trees on a hillside, an orchestra playing in the distance—memories of old and happy, faroff things, of times when he was even younger, even more in love with life. Why should this be? He wendered

And the girl, looking at him, won-dered too. Was he suddenly bereft of

dered too. Was no studenty better of his tongue?

"I haven't asked you the convention-al question," she said at last. "How do you like Florida?"

"It's wonderful, isn't it?" Minot re-

plied, coming to with a start. "I can speak of it even more enthusiastically than any of the railroad folders do. And yet it's only recent—my discovery of its charms.

"Really?" "Yes. When I was surveying it on that stop watch of a train my impression of it was quite unfavorable. It seemed so monotonous. I told myself nothing exciting could ever happen

"And something has happened?"
"Yes, something certainly has hap-

She blushed a little at his tone Young men usually proposed to her the first time they saw her. Why shouldn't she blush a little?

They rattled on down that road that

was so sandy, so uninteresting, so lone ly, with only a garage advertisement here and there to suggest a world out-

The girl sat anxiously on the edge of the seat sat anatomy of the seat set in the seat, her cheeks flaming, her eyes alight. Minot watched her. And suddenly all the happy, sad little memories melted into a golden glow—the glow of being alive on this lonesome

rupted.
"San Marco!" he cried, pointing to
where red towers rose above the green
of the country. "It paid to take a
chance with me. I sure did let her out.
Where do you want to go, lady?"
"The Hotel de la Pax," said the girl,

and, with a sigh of deep relief, sank back upon the cushions. "And Salvator won," quoted Mr. Mi-

'How can I ever thank you?" the

"How can tevel the desiration of the arthur of the land of lan

reach this noted by I choose. I cought to tell you"—
"It doesn't matter," Minot replied.
"That you have reached here is my reward." His cheeks burned; his heart sang. Here was the one girl, and he built eastles in Spain with lightening strokes. She should be his. She must. be. Before him life stretched, glorious, with her at his side.

with her at his side.
"I think I will tell you," the girl was saying. "This is to be the most important luncheon of my life because"—
"Yes?" smiled Mr. Minot.

"Because it is the one at which I am going to announce my engage-

Minot's heart stopped beating. hundred castles in Spain came tun-bling about his ears, and the rear of their falling deafened him. He put out his band blindly to open the door, for he realized that the car had come to a

"Let me help you, please," he said

And even as he spoke a horrible possibility swept into his heart and over-

"I—I beg your pardon," he stammered, "but would you mind telling me one thing?" "Of course not. But I really must

"The name of—the happy man."
"Why, Allan, Lord Harrowby. Thank
you so much and goodby."
She was gone now, gone amid the
paims of that gorgeous hotel courtyard. And out of the roar that enveloped him Minot heard a voice:
"Thirty-five dollars, mister."
So promptly did he pay this grievous
overcharge that the chaugeur asked
hopefully:

hopefully:
"Now, could I take you anywhere. Yes," said Minot bitterly. "Take me

back to New York."

"Well, if I had a new front tire I might try it." Two eager black boys were moving inside with Minot's bags, and he fol-

lowed. As he passed the fountain tinkling gayly in she courtyard, "What was it I promised Thacker?" he said to himself. "'Miss Cynthia Meyrick was it I promised Thecker? It is said to himself. "Miss Cyathia Meyrick changes her mind only over my dead body. Ah, well, the good die young!" At the desk of the De la Pax Mr. Minot learned that for \$15 a day he might board and lodge and the splendors of that hotel. Gratefully he signed his name. One of the negro boys, who had matched coins for him with the other boy while he registered, led the way to his room.

It proved a long and devious journey. The Hotel De la Pax was a series of afterthoughts on the part of its builders. Up hill and down dale the boy led, through dark passageways, over narrow bridges, until at length they arrived at the door of 389.

The boy departed, and Minot gazed out of a solitary window. Directly across from his window, looking strangely out of place in that dead and burled street, stood a great stone house that here are its front the given. "Man

buried street, stood a great stone house that bore on its front the sign "Man-hattan Club and Grill." On the veran-da, flush with the sidewalk and barely

da, nush with the sidewalk and ourely fifteen feet away, a huge red faced man sat deep in slumber.

Many and strange pursuits had claimed the talents of old Tom Stacy, manager of the Manhattan club ere his advent in San Marco. A too active district attorney had forced the New York police to take a keen interest in York police to take a keen interest in his life and works; hence Mr. Stacy's presence on that Florida porch.

Minot sat gloomily down on the bed. What could he do, what save keep his What could he do, what save keep his word, given on the seventeenth floor of an office building in New York? No man had yet had reason to question the good faith of a Minot. His dead father at the beginning of his career had sacrificed his fortune to keep his word and gone back with a smile to begin all over again. What could he do?

Nothing save grit his teeth and see the thing through. He made up his

the thing through. He made up his mind to this as he bathed and shaved and prepared himself for his debut in San Marco. So that when he finally left the hotel and stepped out into San

blithely from the machine and grasped

Dick Minot by the hand.

"You here?" he cried.

"Foolish question," commented Mr. Yes, I know," said Mr. Paddock. "Been here so long my brain's a little flabby. But I'm glad to see you, eld

"Same here." Mr. Minot stared at the car. "I say, Jack, did you earn

the car. "I say, Jack, did you earn that writing fiction?"
Paddock laughed.
"I'm not writing much fiction now," he replied. "The car belongs to Mrs. Helen Bruce, the wittiest hostess in San Marco." He came closer, "'My boy," he confided, "I have struck something essentially soft. Some time soon in a room with all the doors and windows closed and the weather strips in place I'll whisper it to you. I've been dying to tell somebody."
"And the car."

"And the car"-"And the car".
"Part of the graft, Dick, Here comes
Mrs. Bruce now. Did I mention she
was the wittlest-of course I did.
Want to meet her? Well, later then.
You're at the Pax, I suppose. See you

Minot devoted the next hour to sad Minot devoted the next hour to sad introspection in the lobby. It was not until he was on his way in to dinner that he again saw Cynthia Meyrick. Then, just outside the dining room door, he encountered her, still all in white, loveller than ever, in her cheek a flush of excitement, no doubt put there by the most important luncheon of her life. He waited for her to recognize him, and he did not wait in vain.

"Of course. In the hurry of this noon I quite overlooked an introduction.

"Miss Cynthia Meyrick. I happen to know because I met his lordship in New York. May I ask—was the lunch-

'Quite without a flaw. So you know Lord Harrowby?"
"Er-slightly. May I offer my very

"So good of you."
Formal, formal, formal, Was that how it must be between them hereafter? Well, it was better so. Miss after? Well. It was better so, ands Meyrick presented her father and her aunt, and that did not tend to lighten the formality. Icicles, both of them, though stocky puffing icicles. Aunt in-quired if Mr. Minot was related to the Minots of Detroit and when he failed to qualify at once lost all interest in him. Old Spencer Meyrick did not ac-cord him even that much attention.

Yet all was not formal, as it happened, for as Cynthia Meyrick moved away she whispered, "I must see you after dinner—on important business." And her smile as she said it made Mi-And her sime as a sum of some lonely dinner quite cheery.

At 7 in the evening the hotel orchestra gathered in the lobby for its nightly concert, and after the way of or-

chestras it was almost ready to begin when Mines left the dining room at 8. He sat down in a veranda chair and looked out at the courtyard. In the splendor of its evening colors it was indeed the setting for romance. In the midst of the green palms and blooming things splashed a fountain which might well have been the one old Ponce de Leon sought. On three sides ronce de Leon sought. On three sides the lighted towers and turrets of that huge hotel climbed toward the bright, warm southern sky. A dazzling moon shamed Mr. Edison's lamps, the breeze came tends from the sac

latest in waltzes drifted out from the gorgeous lobby. Here romance, Minot thought, must have been born. "Mr. Minot, I've been looking every

came tepid from the sea, the very

She was beside him now, a slim white figure in the dusk—the one thing lacking in that glittering picture. He

leaped to meet her.
"Sitting here dreaming, I reckon,"
she whispered. "of somebody far

Do you ever have the "blues"?

(continued next week)

That discouraged feeling often comes from a disordered stomach, or an inactive liver. Get your digestion in shape and the bile acting properly—then the "blues" will disappear. You will soon be cheerful, if you take

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You Never Can Tell,
(frawford—You spoke of opening a
bank account in your wife's name in
order to teach her the value of money. How did it turn out? Crabshaw—She used it up to pay a lot of bills I could have staved off for six months.—Ex-

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