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MARY HAMILTON'S ROMANCE.

By JOHN STRANGE WINTER.

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CHAPTER VIII.

ALAN STACEY, THE NOVELIST.

It was with a beating heart filled with nervousness and apprehension that Mary Conway found herself waiting at the house of Alan Stacey, the novelist, in Fulham.

It was evidently a somewhat old house and was inclosed in a high walled garden. It was at the gate of this garden door that she waited patiently after giving a humble pull at the handle of the bell, such as she would not have given at the door of a duke. At last she rang again, and then her summons attracted attention. She heard footsteps on the other side of the door, and then it was flung open, and a man in the usual decorous garb of a servant stood to hear what she wanted.

"Does Mr. Alan Stacey live here?" she asked.

"Yes, ma'am."

"Is he at home?"

"Mr. Stacey is not out, ma'am," the man replied, "but he does not usually see any one at this hour. Mr. Stacey is in his study, ma'am."

"Still I think he will see me," said Mary, eagerly. "If you will give him this card."

"Walk this way, ma'am," said the man, taking the card between his finger and thumb in the peculiar manner of a well trained servant.

He led the way down a broad flagged pathway which led to the house. It was covered by a kind of veranda, and on either side a charming garden spread until bounded by the old wall. It was a charming garden, rich in ancient, mossy turf and gay with many flowers. All manner of creepers entwined themselves about the pillars which supported the sheltering roof overhead, and great hydrangeas bloomed at the bases of them.

The house was long and low, had long windows opening like doors and a wide veranda running its entire length. This veranda was paved with brilliant colored tiles, on which were flung here and there rich looking rugs. Huge easy chairs, wicker tables and a hammock made a pleasant lounge, and there were flowering plants everywhere.

"Will you take a seat here, ma'am?" said the man, indicating a large chair. "I will inquire if Mr. Stacey will see you."

Mary sat down, and he disappeared into the house. She sat drinking in the pleasant scene, doubtly pleased at the arid stretches of Bloomsbury brick and mortar, to which she was accustomed. To her it seemed like a sylvan retreat far, far away from the rush and turmoil of cities where strife lives. She could hear her first acquaintance, the servant, speaking and a man's tones answering.

"All right. I'll come out," said the man's voice.

The next moment a tall man in light gray clothing came out by the window Mary was in Alan Stacey's presence.

"Mrs. Conway," he said, looking at the card in his hand and then at her.

Mary sprang to her feet. "Yes, I am Mrs. Conway," she said tremulously.

"Messrs. Bloomingby thought that I should suit you."

"As a typist?"

"And stenographer," she added quickly.

"Pray sit down," said Alan Stacey kindly and himself pulled a chair near enough to talk with ease. "What is your speed as a shorthand writer?"

"A hundred and twenty."

"Good! You look intelligent, which is more to the point. Have you been with any author before?"

"No," answered Mary; "I have been with a solicitor, and that, of course, was work needing great care and precision."

"Ah, yes! And why did you leave him?"

"I did not leave him," she replied. "Unfortunately for me, he died."

"I see. Do you think you would like my kind of work?"

"Yes," said she promptly.

"I am not very easy to work with. I'm as crochety as most other literary men," Mr. Stacey said. "I have just got rid of a man, an excellent fellow, for no reason than that he sat on the edge of his chair and waited. I would have forgiven him many things, but his waiting became oppressive. It killed every idea I had. Before that I had a young lady. She knew Shakespeare by heart and could quote Xenophon, but she would mend my copy as she went on."

"Oh, how dared she?" Mary burst out. Mr. Stacey looked at her with a vague sense of amusement. "I assure you, Miss—well, never mind her name; it is immaterial, but Miss Blank will call her—thought very small potatoes of me. I can't write by hand. I've got writer's cramp, and I have always a terrible lot of work in hand. If I had gone on with Miss Blank, I should have been as dead as a doornail by this time. She could not do my work without ironing it out as she went along, so that every vestige of style and individuality was eliminated completely."

Mary gave a little gasp. "But I thought she took down what you dictated," she said almost breathlessly.

"Yes, but if she saw what she thought was an error she was always kind

enough to mend it for me," said Alan Stacey, smiling at the remembrance. "She knew just a little too much for me. She must have been overeducated or something. My last helper had, on the contrary, no ideas. He had a notebook and a sharp pointed lead pencil. When I was in form, he was excellent. When I had to get a certain amount of copy turned out by a certain time and I hadn't so much as the ghost of an idea in my head, he used to sit on the edge of a chair waiting till I did get an idea. If he would have read the newspaper, gone to sleep, walked about the garden; if he would have yawned even, I should not have minded, but he never did. He said once it was all in the day's work whether he worked or waited. So, when I couldn't work, he waited. I had to get rid of him. I found him an excellent billet and swore I would never have another helper of any kind. Then my hand came in and said: 'No; I'm hanged if you shall use me. I'm delicate.' So I sent to Bloomingby's. So now, Mrs. Conway, you see what kind of man I am to deal with—nervous, irritable, almost eccentric."

"I am not afraid," said Mary, smiling. This man was wholly delightful to her, surrounded by a halo of romance, still young, strong, unconventional and wholly human.

"Have you seen any of my work?" he asked.

"I have read the 'Lover's Creed' a dozen times at least," she answered.

"Ah! then you will to a certain extent understand me. I should need you from 10 to 5 each day. Well, not on Saturday afternoons. That goes without saying."

"I am ready," said Mary.

"You would lunch here—by the bye, where do you live?"

"In Bloomsbury."

"That's a far cry."

"I should seek for rooms in this neighborhood," she said quickly. "I am not wedded to my present quarters."

"Still better. You are married, Mrs. Conway?"

"My name is Conway," she said gently. "I am a widow."

"Oh, forgive me! One likes to know everything. Have you children?"

"None—not a single relative in all the world."

"Poor little soul!" The words slipped out unconsciously, as if he were thinking aloud. "Then about terms."

"I will take what you are accustomed to pay," said Mary.

"I have, let us say, 2 guineas a week," he returned hurriedly.

"But won't you try me first?" said Mary, rather taken aback by this unceremonious way of arranging the matter.

"No, no. Your speed is 120, and you look as if you would just suit me."

"But my references!" she exclaimed.

"Mrs. Conway," said the novelist, turning and looking directly and fixedly at her.

"I would just as soon not see your references. I know too well the lies one tells when one wants to pass some one on to one's friends. I know too well what they are worth. Your last employer died, you tell me."

"But it mightn't be true," she faltered. "I would really rather—"

"Do you want a character with me?" he broke in.

"But everybody knows you," she cried indignantly. "Everybody has read your books."

"I wish they did. I should make a decent income then. No, no, Mrs. Conway. I know what I am and what I'm not. I know my own limitations and exactly what I am capable of. It's my business to read character. You may not suit me as a secretary, but only time can show and prove that. So far as you yourself are concerned, honesty is the dominant note of your life."

Mary could not help starting. Alan Stacey continued: "You give yourself away continually because you cannot conceal your real feelings. In a sense you are bad for yourself because you cannot dissimulate. You couldn't tell a downright lie if you tried, and you are so honest that you wouldn't try."

"I do hate lies," said Mary in a tone as if such a fact were rather to her detriment than otherwise.

"Let me look at your hand. Yes; it is capable—precise, upright and highly nervous. We shall be able to work together very well. I am certain. At all events, let us try tomorrow morning."

"Mr. Stacey," said Mary, rising as she spoke. "I will do my very best."

"We shall get on splendidly," he replied, holding out his hand. "I am doing a particularly difficult piece of work just now, a most difficult subject, in which the handling is everything, the whole difference between success and failure. I was writing with my fist—yes, doubled up so—in despair, when my servant told me you were here. Look at this"—spreading out his hand and showing an angry swollen red ridge of muscle which rose between the first and second fingers and extended beyond the wrist. "That means the intensest and most exquisite agony. It seems to disappear above the wrist and to rise, again in the underside of the arm, from where it runs in a rope of pain to the very armpit."

"It must be horrible," said Mary.

"Are you working now?"

"I was when you came."

"Why don't you let me begin right away, sir?" she ventured to say.

He looked at her again with the same quick, alert glance as before. "Don't call me 'sir,'" he said, half amused and half irritated.

"I always called Mr. Desmond so," she said meekly.

"He had an office and a lot of clerks; that was different. I don't require that kind of thing. One 'sir' would upset me for a morning. Come into my study. I like you for tackling the work straight away. We'll try how it goes."

Mary followed him into the study, a long, low ceiled room with many books, a few pictures, some guns, fishing rods, golf clubs, two luxurious sofa lounges and half a dozen capacious chairs. A rough terrier dog lay before the open window and a big Angora cat, bristled like a bulldog, was in possession of a fur rug before the empty fireplace. It was a revelation to Mary Conway—she had never seen such a room in all her life before.

She established herself at a table and they began. She was amazed at the ease and rapidity with which Alan Stacey poured out his story, taking it up at the last written word and spinning it out in the most vivid and interesting way, almost, indeed, acting it all. So for nearly two hours they worked without a hitch, until the servant came to say that luncheon was served. Alan Stacey drew a long breath and rose to his feet.

"Come to lunch," he said. "I used to have ideas about not interrupting the flow of genius—but I take my meals at regular times now—it pays better all round. Do you think you've got all that?"

"I think so," said Mary. "If you will allow me, I will transcribe it after luncheon so that you can see for yourself."

TO BE CONTINUED.

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TO BE CONTINUED.

Miscellaneous Reading.

STRANGER THAN FICTION.

True Story of the Remarkable Career of Ex-Senator Tabor.

Ex-United States Senator H. A. W. Tabor died in Chicago recently of appendicitis. The following sketch of this remarkable man's career is from the New York Sun:

By dying in comfortable circumstances, H. A. W. Tabor surprised many people who predicted that he would end in a ditch without a cent to bless himself with. Throughout his career, one of the most romantic in the whole history of the wonderful, wealth-producing west, he consistently disappointed prophecy, whether of good or evil, so it is not to be wondered at that his death should have been under unexpected circumstances. This man who at first dug ditches, then was a millionaire many times over, then went back to digging ditches as a means to earn his bread, and who, three years ago, hadn't a cent of all his great fortune left, and lived literally by the sweat of his brow, found himself at 69 years of age postmaster of Denver, with an income that put him beyond danger of want once more. A short time before his death he said that his days of money making were over, and that he was quite content to have enough to live decently upon.

In 1860 Tabor appeared in California Gulch, Colo., where men were finding nuggets that were the wonder of the world. He was then about 30 years old and had been a stonecutter in Massachusetts, a farmer in Kansas, and a member of the legislature there, and finally a sort of superior tramp until he struck the diggings. Then, having come too late to locate a claim for himself, he went to work for another man at \$5 a day. Before long he had enough saved up to start a little store, and when he was ready to move to new fields he owned about \$1,000 in hard earned cash. He started for Oro, Colo., against the advice of his friends, who warned him that he would lose all his little capital in that then little known locality. This was the first prophecy to go wrong, for Tabor didn't start out as a prospector. Settling at Oro, which was then beginning its boom, he opened a general store, selling food, implements, tobacco, clothing and notions. Oro grew to be a town of 7,000 inhabitants. As Tabor accumulated money it was predicted that he would soon succumb to the mining fever and go into the business on his own hook. But he stuck to the store; stuck to it even after Oro began to decline, and its best friends saw a burst bubble. In those hard years the storekeeper lost most of what he had made, and his wife, a hard-working, faithful Irish girl, took in boarders to help him along. For more than ten years the Tabor's pluckily stood by the store and saw the town dwindle from 7,000 to 70 people. Then the

husband made up his mind that it was time to move, so what remained of the stock was packed a mile or two up the gulch, where there were rumors of gold strikes, and business was resumed at the new place.

This new place was subsequently Leadville, by Tabor's naming. It is said that the name was given in this way: Several of the old-timers were talking of a name for the place when it had become certain that there was to be a permanent settlement there, and several suggestions were made. One hopeful spirit suggested Goldtown, "after the metal that's common around here." It so happened that the night before there had been a general shooting at the saloon and bullets had flown in all directions, with fatal results to three of the men concerned. Having this in mind, Tabor spoke up:

"If you're going to call the place after the metal that's plenty, what's the matter with Leadville?" he said, and Leadville it became.

Soon he began to grub-stake needy prospectors, who with the outfits furnished by him would go back into the hills and hunt for precious metal, which they usually didn't find. Tabor's friends said it was bad business and predicted his ultimate ruin; but he kept adding to his business, and despite the items charged to profit and loss on account of his grub-stake business, he prospered. It was generally supposed that his aid to the prospectors was not regarded by him as an investment, but as a charity which he could afford to dispense where it was most needed; and it is certain that he saved many men from want and hunger in this way. Everybody knew that these items of profit and loss were all loss, and as usual everybody knew the thing which was not.

For one day in 1878 there came to the storekeeper an Irish prospector and a German tailor, badly smitten with the gold fever and without means, whom Tabor started on their search with a good outfit. They went up on the hill and dug until they were exceedingly weary of digging and attaining to no gold—only a species of curious-looking gravel, heavy in shade and not pretty to look at. When they became finally convinced that no gold was in reach at that point they abandoned the claim and went away, the Irishman taking with him a bag of the gravel, saying that as he had dug so much of it, he would just find out what it was that made it so eternally heavy to hoist. The assayer to whom he took it told him it was silver, almost pure. The Irishman and the German survived the shock, went back to the claim, and sold out for \$100,000 apiece. This was the Little Pittsburg mine. One-third of it belonged to Tabor as his stake for the grub. He was regarded as an irresponsible idiot when he refused \$100,000 for his share. There was plenty of time, however, for those who so regarded him to change their minds during the days when the claim achieved the neat little output of \$8,000 a day. Tabor finally sold his part of it for \$1,000,000, and said that as he'd done tolerably well on his profit and loss account he'd just keep on in the mining business for a while.

This was a source of unselfish sorrow to his friends, who knew that an innocent sort of chap like Tabor would get swindled right and left if he tried to increase his capital in gold instead of soaking it away. The first person who thought Tabor would be a good subject for a confidence game was "Chicken Bill" Lovell, ex-mail carrier for the district. "Chicken Bill" had a claim on Fryer Hill not far from the spot where the two prospectors located the Little Pittsburg, and he had worked it for six weeks without taking anything out in exchange for his labor except tons of unprofitable soil. One day he helped himself to some pay dirt from another and luckier man's claim and dropped it in the mud vein he was working. Then he sent for Tabor, showed him the dust and offered to sell out for \$150. Unhesitatingly, the innocent Tabor paid the price. "Chicken Bill" went down to town and bought drinks for himself for a week. At the end of that time he was looking for some one to blow him off to a carbolic acid cocktail; for Tabor had dug five feet deeper than he had gone and had struck gold that had not been transplanted. Before the vein was worked out it brought in a million dollars. That was the way the Chrysolite Mine was discovered.

People said this was bullhead luck, and Tabor was a good fellow, but didn't know enough to go in when it rained. After he had organized a few stock companies and come out far ahead on all of them public opinion had another opportunity for a second guess.

Among those who thought that Tabor was "easy" were Foley and Wilgus, owners of the Matchless claim, which showed some color, but not enough to convince them that it was really much good. They convinced Tabor, however, so successfully that he gave them \$112,000 for the property. It was reckoned to be worth perhaps \$25,000, as claims were going then. As soon as the sale was completed the former owners went about telling everybody how they had "fool-ed good old Tabor." The curious circumstance of a subsequent offer of \$3,000,000 to Tabor for the Matchless saddened the remainder of their existences with the knowledge that under some circumstances honesty is the best policy by a huge percentage. Then

there was the Maid of Erin mine which Tabor and a Major Dubois bought for \$20,000; a dead loss, said Leadville. Two months later they sold out to an English syndicate for ten times that amount; the luckiest hit ever made, as Leadville put it. But the syndicate didn't like the looks of the claim after they had bought, and raised such lamentations over the matter that Tabor said he didn't want to swindle anybody and he'd take the mine back at the same price. Thereupon Leadville, which hadn't learned any better yet, wrung its collective hands and said that somebody ought to look up a nice quiet lunatic asylum for poor Tabor, where he'd be restrained from dissipating his fortune in such a manner. A year or so later somebody tried to buy that same rejected mine for \$2,000,000 and was greeted with a cheerful laugh.

Thus far all had prospered with Tabor to which he had put his hand. People called him the luckiest man in Colorado, and as soon as he got the title his luck changed. It is a singular circumstance in a world where evil deeds are not always visibly punished that as soon as he deserted the wife who had been a true helpmeet in the days of his adversity, Tabor's affairs underwent a change for the worse. He got a divorce from her—through no fault of hers—and with \$300,000 which he settled upon her as the price of his release she went to live in Denver and dropped out of his life. His money—\$7,000,000 approximately—was now scattered all over this continent. Much of it was in Honduras, much in the northwest and some on the Pacific coast. He invested heavily in Denver property and some of the handsomeness of the old houses there were built by him; but all had passed from his possessions before his death. Going to Washington, he married there the young woman for whom he left his wife. The marriage was made famous by Eugene Field's poem of the \$10,000 nightgown, which was alleged to be part of the mine king's trousseau. From that time he became the butt of the western newspaper paragraphers, a sore trial to him. He had been in politics and had been elected lieutenant governor of Colorado, and had run for United States senator; but had been defeated. Subsequently he was appointed senator to fill an unexpired term of one month; but his public life was embittered by the enmity of many men who had known him in Leadville and could not forgive him for his treatment of his wife.

Tabor built opera houses and hotels, but lost money on them. There is not space here to tell of the steps by which he was reduced to beggary, but the end came in 1893, when he was left with nothing. Then the best of the man shone forth again. At the age of 63 he took a pick and went to work. His second wife stood by him in his misfortunes as the first had done, and they lived as other laboring people do. For a year he worked thus, declaring with unbroken courage that he would dig out another fortune for himself and his family. Then Winfield Scott Stratton, the Cripple Creek mining king, gave him \$15,000 to start life anew. President McKinley appointed him postmaster of Denver, and there he finished his life; but to the end many of his old friends of the mining days would have nothing to do with him.

PRODUCTS OF THE PHILIPPINES.

They Do Not Make Enough Food For Home Consumption.

A report on the plant products of the Philippine islands just received by the agricultural department is authority for the statement that the Philippines, although an agricultural country, do not produce enough food for the consumption of its inhabitants. In order to supply the deficiency it is the custom to draw upon other rice producing countries, notably the French colony of Cochinchina. No explanation of this condition is offered, the report dealing exclusively with agricultural resources of the island as they now exist.

The report shows that of the area of the Philippines islands one-ninth, or about 8,000,000 acres, is devoted to agriculture. Taking into account the natural fertility of the soil and the vast portion of these rich lands not yet under cultivation, it can safely be assumed, it adds, that with better methods of exploitation the total agricultural production of the islands could be increased to 10 or 15 times its present amount.

One of the most important food products of the island is rice, which forms the staple food of not the only the native population, but also of the numerous Chinese inhabitants. More than 100 varieties are grown, and by planting alternately an early and a late variety two crops a year can be secured. The ordinary price of rice in the husk is from 60 cents to 65 cents per bushel, while shelled rice brings from 90 cents to 95 cents per bushel. The annual production of this commodity is about 36,000,000 bushels, an amount far below the actual requirements of the population, even when supplemented by maize, sweet potatoes, bananas and other native fruits and tubers. In some years the quantity of rice imported into Manila from Saigon has exceeded 3,200,000 bushels, with a value of nearly \$2,000,000.

Maize, next to rice, is the most important of the grain products of the Philippines, the report stating that in several provinces it is the chief subsistence of the natives. Tuberos roots also constitute a valuable source of food. Among those the sweet potato occupies first rank, with an annual production of about 98,000,000 pounds. The common white potato, although a rather inferior quality, comes next in importance. Then follows the camatenga-hoy or manihot.

There are also a large number of other roots and vegetables, the list including most of the more common kinds that are grown in this country.

Fruits grow in great abundance, bananas heading the list, while the other varieties are the mango, pineapple, orange, lemon, plums, bread fruit and papaw.

The Philippine plants cultivated for industrial purposes are quite numerous. Among sacchariferous plants cane is the only one that is at present employed for the manufacture of sugar. A species of sorghum called tatad is grown, but does not appear to be used for sugar making. Owing to crude methods of manufacture the sugar made in the Philippines is inferior in quality and consequently brings a low price. About 500,000,000 pounds a year are exported, exceeding in importance all other exports except those of Manila hemp, of which nearly the entire crop is marketed abroad. The average yearly shipments amount to nearly 100,000 long tons.

Cotton has recently lost much of its former importance, partly because of excessive taxation, but principally because of the successful competition of British fabrics.

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SMOKING BY BOYS.

That the essential principle of tobacco, that which gives it all its value to the smoker, is a virulent poison, is universally admitted. It is agreed also that its primary effects is upon the brain and spinal chord, with a paralyzing tendency.

Even Beard, who defends the moderate use of tobacco, admits that its effects are disastrous on some classes of persons. It withers some, he says, while fattening others; causes in some dyspepsia and constipation, while upon others it has a contrary effect. It is soothing to some, but induces in others all the horrors of extreme nervousness. He adds that among the brain-working class of our population the proportion of those who can use tobacco with impunity is yearly diminishing, as a nervous tendency more and more prevails among us.

Now whatever may be urged in favor of moderate smoking later in life, all intelligent persons who have given the subject attention, unite in condemning the use of tobacco by the young.

Young persons do not know whether or not they belong to the class most liable to be injured by tobacco. No one denies the danger of its excessive use, and the young have neither the intelligence nor the self-control to resist the tendency of smoking to grow into an uncontrollable habit. Further, the brain and nervous system of youth are specially susceptible to the baneful influence of the poisonous principles of tobacco.

The commanding medical authority, the London Lancet, says: "It is time that the attention of all responsible persons should be seriously directed to the prevalence and increase of tobacco smoking among boys. Stunted growth, impaired digestion, palpitation and irritability have again and again impressed the lesson of abstinence, which has heretofore been far too little regarded."

It cites a case which lately came before the coroner for Liverpool—death from a fatty change in the heart due mainly to smoking cigarettes and cigar ends—and adds:

"This of course is an extreme example. It is, however, only a strong colored illustration of effects on health which are daily realized in thousands of instances. Not even in manhood is the pipe or cigar invariably safe. Much less can it be so regarded when it ministers to the unbounded whims and cravings of heedless urchins."

MISTRESS OF THE SEAS.

Great Britain Will Hold the Title For Many a Year.

A Washington dispatch of the 23rd instant, says: The first of the general information series of bulletins for this year issued by the bureau of naval intelligence is the translation of a carefully prepared paper by Constructor Sussenguth, of the German navy, which appeared recently in The Marine-rundschau.

It is stated that the navies of the world are profiting by the lessons of Santiago, where the heavy battleships brought about the destruction of the Spanish fleet, and are building battleships of 12,000 to 15,000 tons displacement.

One of the most remarkable statements of the writer is the frank confession that England, on the completion of the ships now under construction for her navy will be in a position to meet the combined navies of any two powers in the world. It is also stated that England has under construction and to be completed within the next three years vessels that alone will be equal to the total German navy as it will stand at the end of 1903.

A note by the naval intelligence bureau says that this English flotilla now under construction will exceed the American navy, built and building, by over 100,000 tons displacement.