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## The Gentleman From Indiana

By BOOTH TARKINGTON

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### CHAPTER XV.

It was 5 o'clock when Harkless climbed the stairs to the Herald office, and his right arm and hand were aching and limp. Ross Schofield was the only person in the editorial room, and there was nothing in his appearance that should have caused a man to start and fall back from the doorway, but that is what John did. "What's the matter, Mr. Harkless?" cried Ross, hurrying forward with a fear that the other had been suddenly re-seized by illness. "What are those?" asked Harkless, with a gesture of his hand that seemed to include the entire room. "Those?" repeated Ross, staring blankly.

"Those rosettes—these streamers—that stope—this blue ribbon?" Ross turned pale. "Ribbon?" he said inquiringly. "Ribbon?" He seemed unable to perceive the decorations referred to.

"Yes," answered John. "These rosettes on the chairs, that band, and—"

"Oh!" Ross answered. "That?" He fingered the band on the stopepipe as if he saw it for the first time. "Yes; I see."

"But what's it for?"

"Why—it's—it's likely meant for decorations."

"It seems to have been here some time."

"It has, I reckon it's most due to be called in. It's been up ever since—"

"Who put it up, Ross?"

"We did,"

"What for?"

Ross was visibly embarrassed. "Why—for—the other editor."

"For Mr. Fiske?"

"Land, no! You don't suppose we'd go to all that work and bother to brisque things up for that old gentleman, do you?"

"I meant young Mr. Fiske. He is the other editor, isn't he?"

"Yes; he is. Young Mr. Fiske?"

"You did? Did he appreciate them?"

"Well, he—seemed to—kind of like 'em."

"Where is he now? I came here to find him."

"He's gone."

"Gone? Hasn't he been here this afternoon?"

"Yes; some time. Come in and stayed durin' the leevy you was holdin' and saw the extra off all right."

"When will he be back?"

"Seince it's be'n a dailly he gits here by 8 after supper, but don't stay very late. Old Mr. Fiske and Parker look after whatever comes in then, unless it's something special. He'll likely be here by half past 8 at the farthest off."

"I can't wait till then. I've been wanting to see him every minute since I got in, and he hasn't been near me. Nobody could even point him out to me. Where has he gone? I want to see him now."

"Want to discharge him again?" said a voice from the door, and, turning, they saw that Mr. Martin stood there observing them.

"No," said Harkless. "I want to give him the Herald. Do you know where he is?"

Mr. Martin stroked his beard deliberately. "The person you speak of had'n't ought to be very hard to find in Carlow, and—well, maybe when found you'll want to put a kind of a cocid to that deed to the Herald. The committee was reckless enough to hire that carriage of yours by the day, and Keating and Warren Smith are sitting in it up at the corner with their feet on the cushions to show how used they are to riding around with four white horses every day in the week. It's wartin' till you're ready to go out to Briscoes'. There's an hour before supper time, and you can talk to young Fiske all you want. He's out there."

The first words Warren Smith spoke had lifted the veil of young Fiske's duplicity; had shown John with what fine intelligence and supreme delicacy and sympathy young Fiske had worked for him, had understood him and had made him. If the open attack on McCune had been made and the damning evidence published in Harkless' own paper while Harkless himself was a candidate and rival he would have felt dishonored. The McCune papers could have been used for Holloway's benefit, but not for his own, and young Fiske had understood and had saved him. It was a point of honor that many would have held final and inconsistent, but one that young Fiske had comprehended was vital to Harkless. And this was the man he had discharged like a dishonest servant, the man who had thrown what (in Carlow eyes) was riches into his lap, the man who had made his paper and who had made him and saved him. Harkless wanted to see young Fiske as he longed to see only one other person in the world.

As the barouche drove up to the brick house he made out through the trees a retreative flutter of skirts on the porch, and the thought crossed his mind that Minnie had down indoors to give some final directions toward the preparation of the banquet. But when the barouche halted at the gate he was surprised to see her waving to him from the steps, while Tom Meredith and Mr. Bence and Mr. Boswell formed a

little court around her. Lige Willetts rode up on horseback at the same moment, and the judge was waiting in front of the gate. Harkless stepped out of the barouche and took his hand. "I was told young Fiske was here."

"Young Fiske is here," said the judge.

Mr. Fiske came around the corner of the house and went toward Harkless. "Fiske," cried the latter, "where is your nephew?"

"The old man took his hand in both his own and looked him between the eyes and thus stood while there was a long pause, the others watching them. "You must not say that I told you," he said at last. "Go into the garden."

But when Harkless' step crunched the garden there was no one there. Asters were blooming in beds between the green rosebushes, and their many fingered hands were flung open in wide surprise that he should expect to find young Fiske there. It was just before sunset. Birds were gossiping in the sycamores on the bank. At the foot of the garden, near the creek, there were some tall hydrangea bushes, flower laden, and beyond them one broad shaft of sun smote the creek bends for a mile in that flat land and crossed the garden like a bright, taut drawn veil. Harkless passed the bushes and stepped out into this gold brilliance. Then he uttered a cry and stopped. Helen was standing beside the hydrangeas with both hands pressed to her face and her eyes cast on the ground. She had run away as far as she could run. There were high fences extending down to the creek on each side, and the water was beyond.

"You!" he said. "You! You!"

She did not lift her eyes, but began to move away from him with little backward steps. When she reached the bench on the bank she spoke with a quick intake of breath and in a voice he almost failed to hear, the merest whisper, and her words came so slow that sometimes minutes separated them. "Can you—will you keep me—on the Herald?"

"Keep you?"

He came near her. "I don't understand. Is it you—you—who are here again?"

"Have you forgiven me? You know—now—why I wouldn't resign? You forgive my—that telegram?"

"What telegram?"

"The one that came to you—this morning."

"Your telegram?"

"Yes."

"Did you send me one?"

"Yes."

"It did not come to me."

"Yes—it did."

"But—what was it about?"

"It was signed," she said; "it was signed—"

She paused and turned half away, not lifting the downcast lashes. Her hand, resting upon the back of the bench, was shaking. She put it behind her. Then her eyes were lifted a little, and, though they did not meet his, he saw them, and a glory sprang into being in his heart. Her voice fell still lower, and two heavy tears rolled down her cheeks. "It was signed," she whispered, "it was signed—H. Fiske."

He began to tremble from head to foot. There was a long silence. She had turned full away from him. When he spoke his voice was as low as hers, and he spoke as slowly as she had. "You mean—then—then it was—you?"

"Yes."

"You?"

"Yes."

"And you—you have—you have been here all the time?"

"All—all except, a week—you were—hurt."

The bright veil that wrapped them was drawn away, and they stood in the

quiet, gathering dusk. He tried to loosen his neckband; it seemed to be choking him. "I—I can't—I don't comprehend it. I am trying to realize what it all means."

"It means nothing," she answered.

"There was an editorial yesterday," he said, "an editorial that I thought was about Rodney McCune. Did you write it?"

"Yes."

"It was about—me—wasn't it?"

"Yes."

"It said—it said that—that I had you

the—the—love of every person in Carlow county."

Suddenly she found her voice. "Do not misunderstand me," she said rapidly. "I have done the little that I have done out of gratitude." She faced him now, but without meeting his eyes. "I owed you more gratitude than a woman ever owed a man before, I think, and I would have died to pay a part of it."

"What gratitude did you owe me?"

"What gratitude? For what you did for my father."

"I have never seen your father in my life."

"Listen. My father is a gentle old man with white hair and kind eyes. My name is my uncle's. He and my aunt have been good to me as a father and mother since I was seven years old, and they gave me their name by law, and I lived with them. My father came to see me once a year; I never came to see him. He always told me everything was well with him, that his life was happy, and I thought it was easier for him not having me to take care of, he has been so poor ever since I was a child. Once he lost the little he had left to him in the world, his only way of making his living. He had no friends; he was hungry and desperate, and he wandered. I was dancing and going about wearing jewels—I did not know. All the time the brave heart wrote me happy letters. I should have known, for there was one who did and who saved him. When at last I came to see my father he told me—he had written of his life before, but it was not till I came that he told it all to me. Do you know what I felt? While his daughter was dancing conditions a stranger had taken his hand and—"

"A sob rose in her throat and checked her utterance for a moment, but she threw up her head proudly. "Gratitude, Mr. Harkless," she cried. "I am James Fiske's daughter."

He fell back from the bench with a sharp exclamation and stared at her through the gray twilight. She went on hurriedly, still not looking at him. "I wanted to do something to show you that I could be ashamed of my vile neglect of him—something to show you his daughter could be grateful—and it has been such dear, happy work, the little I have done, that it seems, after all, that I have done it for love of myself. It is a living I had always wanted to do—to earn a living for myself, to live with my father. When I came here, my aunt and uncle were terribly afraid I would stay with him. It was to prevent this that they determined to go abroad, and my father said I must go back to them. Then you were—hurt, and he needed me so much he let me stay. When you—when you told me—she broke off with a strange, fluttering, half-articulate little laugh that was half tears and then resumed in another tone—"when you told me you cared that night—that night of the storm—how could I be sure? It had been only two days, you see, and even if I could have been sure of myself—why, I couldn't have told you. Oh, I had so brazenly thrown myself at your head time and again those two days in my—my worship of your goodness to my father and my excitement in recognizing in his friend the hero of my girlhood that you had every right to think I cared; but if—if I had—if I had—loved you with my whole soul I could not have—why, no woman could have—I mean the sort of girl I am—couldn't have admitted it—must have denied it. Do you think that then I could have answered 'Yes,' even if I had wanted to—even if I had been sure of myself? And now—"

Her voice sank again to a whisper. "And now—"

"And now?" he said tremulously. She gave a hurried glance from right to left and from left to right, like one in terror seeking a way of escape; she gathered her skirts in her hand as if to run into the garden, but suddenly she turned and ran to him. She threw her arms about his neck and kissed him on the forehead.

When they heard the judge calling from the orchard they went back through the garden toward the house. It was dark. The whitest asters were but gray spots. There was no one in the orchard. Briscoe had gone indoors.

"Did you know you are to drive me into town in the phaeton for the fireworks?" she asked.

"Fireworks?"

"Yes. The great Harkless has come home." Even in the darkness he could see the look the vision had given him when the barouche turned into the square. She smiled upon him and said, "All afternoon I was wishing I could have been your mother."

He clasped her hand more tightly. "This wonderful world!" he cried. "Yesterday I had a doctor—a doctor to cure me of lovelessness!"

After a time they had proceeded a little nearer the house. "We must hurry," she said. "I am sure they have been waiting for us." This was true; they had.

From the dining room came laughter and hearty voices, and the windows were bright with the light of many lamps. By and by they stood just outside the patch of light that fell from one of the windows.

"Look!" said Helen. "Aren't they good, dear people?"

"The beautiful people!" he answered.



"You!" he said. "You!"

### Miscellaneous Reading.

#### WHISKY FIGHT IN CONGRESS.

Technical Facts for the Average Man Who Drinks.

Routine reports of the proceedings of congress give no idea of the strife and turmoil engendered by those sections of the pending Hepburn-Dolliver pure food bill which seek to maintain the integrity of the high ball and preserve the purity of the rickety.

The average man of voting age in this country, and there are more than 21,000,000 of him, consumes some five gallons of distilled spirits annually, to say nothing of wines, beers, etc. The desire is to protect this average man, to legislate him into the straight and narrow path which leads to alcoholic purity. Hence the struggle between the actual distiller and the man who rectifies, blends or compounds.

The straight-goods whiskey men contend that their bottled-in-bond Bourbon or rye is the only genuine article and the one brand of goods that the drinker can quaff with impunity. The blenders insist that the only road to absolute immunity from all the ills of dissipation is through the use of a properly compounded bottle of all that is virtuous in whiskeydom.

In the meantime the unenlightened average man, who knows nothing about the merits of the dispute, who meekly deposits the price and takes what the bartender hands out, stands in bewilderment, for by drinking of it he knows not the difference between rye and Bourbon, straight and rectified. He can now take the facts as developed in the hearings before the committee in charge of the Hepburn-Dolliver bill, or as set forth on the side by experts for both camps, pay his money and take his choice.

Of course there are outlawed straight whiskeys and upright blends, good and wholesome rye and bourbon and dishonorable compounds. For example, bourbon whiskey direct from the still is without color and impregnated with poisonous oils and essences. The familiar golden hue comes from the charred inside of the oak barrels in which the whiskey is aged and purified.

Dishonest men have been known to take the rank new whiskey, when only a few months old, reduce its fire by the addition of water, bring up its color by the admixture of drugs and put it on the market as old liquor. Then indeed, it is vile.

On the other hand, your clever blunderer or rectifier, prone to deceive, takes neutral spirits, prune juice, burned sugar, water and bead oil and makes a tolerable cheap whiskey, one that misleads both the eye and the palate of the occasional drinker and satisfies the thirst of the drunkard. And it need not be especially deleterious, this mixture.

"Neutral spirits" is pure grain alcohol, made from wheat or corn, and distilled pretty much as whiskey is distilled, except that it is highly concentrated, is subjected to a process which removes all impurities and leaves the spirits tasteless, colorless and odorless and about 195 proof, or susceptible of reduction by the addition of 100 per cent of water and still have the alcoholic strength of six-year-old whiskey.

While spurious rye or bourbon may thus be made out of neutral spirits, fruit juices, etc., and the mixture be practically as pure as aged whiskey, to the trained palate it is without that peculiar flavor and aroma which is to be found in the genuine goods properly aged.

The reputable and scientific blender insists that neutral spirits doesn't enter into the process which he employs, but that he seeks to and actually does produce a whiskey more uniform in its flavor and purity, more attractive to the eye and more pleasing to the taste than any distinctly straight bourbon or rye to be found on the market, and that the honest blender's label is a passport to health and happiness.

He declares that neither rye nor bourbon in its natural state meets the requirements of the connoisseur, but that a judicious intermingling of both, utilizing certain brands and ages, results in a beverage that surpasses any brand known to the trade as strictly straight whiskey.

Each scientific rectifier or blender has his secret process or formula, to divulge which, he asserts, would work his financial ruin. Hence his strenuous opposition to the measure which proposed that all blended goods sold should have pasted upon the bottle a label giving the ingredients thereof.

Straight whiskey is known as either rye or bourbon. Bourbon whiskey got its name originally from the county of that name in Kentucky, where a great deal of whiskey was made in pioneer days, but the term is now applied generally to all Kentucky or corn whiskey, most of the ryes coming from Maryland and Pennsylvania.

Pure Bourbon whiskey should contain 60 per cent of corn, 30 per cent of rye and 10 per cent of barley. Rye whiskey is made of rye and barley malt. A bushel of corn will make about four and a half gallons of whiskey. Without the government tax, new whiskey could be sold at a profit for 15 cents a gallon, but the government adds \$1.10 a gallon to start with. This, with the cost of storing the liquor until it is six or eight years old, the loss by evaporation, local taxes, etc., brings the selling price of matured spirits to from \$2 to \$4 a gallon.

Many devices and processes for aging whiskey and hastening oxidation, or the removal of fusel oil and other poisons by evaporation, have been tested, but no substitution has been found for the original method of putting new whiskey in barrels, charred inside, and keeping the barrels under favorable conditions for six, eight or ten years, when the whiskey attains the purity, bouquet and flavor peculiar to the different brands and so strikingly peculiar that old distillers can take

samples of whiskeys from various localities and tell from which county, generally from which particular distillery, each individual sample comes. Whether this is due to the water, the grain or the proportions of the ingredients employed by the different houses has never been satisfactorily explained; but that it can be done is absolutely true.

The war that has been waged between the straight goods men and the blenders in connection with the pure food bill is due to the effort of the distillers to have a ban placed upon all whiskeys not bottled in bond, in effect to declare all other products impure.

The bottling-in-bond process is not widely understood and, so far as the average man who calls for his drink over a bar is concerned, cuts no great figure. Whiskey bottled in bond is bottled at the distillery warehouse in the presence of an internal revenue officer, who pastes over the cork and neck of each bottle a government stamp which guarantees the age of the whiskey and certifies that it was not manipulated in its journey from the barrel to the bottle. Under the law whiskey less than four years old cannot be bottled in bond.—New York Sun.

#### BOERS STILL PRISONERS.

Stubborn Patriots Who Refuse to Take Oath of Allegiance.

It is now two years since the Boer war ended. The world has been of the impression that the rancor of that conflict had largely disappeared. England has announced the successive steps of large schemes of repatriation and the world has given her the credit of playing in all respects the part of a generous conqueror. Even Colonel Lynch, who stirred the fiercest resentment of the English people, has it is said, through the social influence of Sir Thomas Lipton with the king, been set free. One would expect this to be the last act of pardon, the very end of the passion of intemperate resentment which England could not help but feel for an enemy which had to bear not only the expected punishment of the conquered, but the added rancor which came of England's realization of her own army's incompetency, and of the fact that the overwhelming sympathy of the world was with her small antagonist.

It is surprising therefore, at this late date to receive an appeal from forty-three Boer prisoners who are still detained on the Bermuda Islands, under circumstances which one hopes the British government may be able to present in a better light than does their appeal. These prisoners are not criminals. They are not of those Dutch subjects of England who joined their brothers in the Transvaal and whom England saw fit to treat as traitors. They are not among those whom the English excluded from the general amnesty because of alleged breaches of the rules of war. They are Boer soldiers whose status differs in no way from that of the 4,000 others who were captured with Cronje at the Modder river.

Their troubles are due solely to their refusal to take the oath of allegiance to Great Britain. This, one feels, is hardly a justification for their detention. One does not like the spectacle of a conquering nation forcing an oath of allegiance down the throats of the conquered. Such an oath might well be made a condition of participation in the new government of the Transvaal. But these Boers do not wish, according to their appeal, to return to the Transvaal. They do not wish to become subjects of the king. They desire nothing more than to be released, when they will proceed to the United States or elsewhere to settle. It ought not to require exceptional generosity for England to permit this. The United States put no stone in the path of the vice president of the Confederacy, Judah P. Benjamin, who preferred not to remain in his home under a flag which he had fought against, and as a voluntary exile rose to eminence in the London bar.

There were at one time some 5,000 Boer prisoners of war on the Bermuda Islands. At the close of the war officers of the British army appeared at Bermuda and presented the oath of allegiance. This, nearly all of the Boers, with the advice of their leaders, accepted. Those who signed the oath were taken back to their homes on British warships, at the expense of the British government. But the forty-three who now make the appeal, refused to swear.—Boston Transcript.

TO CHANGE A QUARTER.—"How much money does it take to make change for a quarter?" queried the man whose face is freck mathematics. "Twenty-five cents, eh? You're away out. To change a quarter in the various ways it can be done requires a capital of seventy cents. If a fellow wanted plenty of coin for his quarter he'd tax you for twenty-five pennies. On the other hand, the man who wanted the least loose change for his quarter would come at you for two dimes and a nickel. The chap who wanted a diversity of coin in his change would get into you for two five-cent pieces, one dime and five pennies, which would allow him to juggle copper, silver and nickel in his jeans. Others might ask you to produce four nickles and five pennies, three nickles and ten pennies; two nickles and fifteen pennies or one nickel and twenty pennies. If you escaped these demands you might be requested to come up with five nickles, three nickles and one dime, one nickel, one dime and ten pennies, one dime and five pennies, or two dimes and five pennies. There are just twelve ways of 'breaking' a quarter in current United States coin, and to be there with the goods for any demand you would require twenty-five pennies, two dimes and five nickles—in all seventy cents."—Philadelphia Press.

#### NITROGEN FROM AIR.

Economic Source of a Valuable Commercial Commodity.

To appreciate the importance of the discovery of obtaining nitrogen from the air it should be realized that nitrogen is just about the most useful substance in the world. It enters largely into the composition of all plant and animal tissues. The meat and vegetables we eat contain a considerable percentage of it, and it is the most essential element of the stuff in our food which goes to make flesh and blood. The body of an average man holds nearly four pounds of nitrogen.

Inasmuch as four-fifths of the air we breathe is nitrogen it is obvious that the available supply of the stuff is practically inexhaustible and unlimited. If we could only get at it. It is a colorless gas, without taste or odor and serves usefully to dilute the atmospheric oxygen, which is too strong to be taken into the lungs in a pure state. Plants, especially clover, absorb it from the air, and thus enrich soil in which they grow. But this is a slow process and farmers supplement it by fertilizing with nitrogen salts (called nitrates), which are mostly obtained from Chile.

Now, however, a means has been found to bring it within reach of the everyday farmer, the air being led to give up its stores of nitrogen for fertilizing and other industrial purposes, the process employed being so simple and cheap that the nitrates of Chile are likely soon to be driven out of the market. The discovery was made by accident, incidentally to the manufacture of acetylene gas, to obtain which calcium is fused with charcoal in an electric furnace. It was found that when a current of nitrogen gas was admitted to the furnace it combined with the materials present to form a substance which, when analyzed proved to contain from 10 to 22 per cent of pure nitrogen. By further treatment of a simple character it was so far refined as to yield no less than 66 per cent of the precious substance.

One might ask: How is the nitrogen gas obtained for use in the electric furnace? Nothing could be more simple. A current of air is passed over hot plates of copper, which burn oxygen, and the nitrogen enters the furnace in a practically pure state. Once admitted, it combines with the calcium and charcoal to form crude lumps of material, which, on being refined, take the form of a white granular substance, not unlike sugar in appearance.

Out of this valuable salt an expert chemist can manufacture products which are available for a great variety of commercial uses. He may, if he chooses, convert it into sulphate of ammonia, which is exceedingly precious as a fertilizing agent; or he can transform it into cyanides, which are employed nowadays in ever so many ways from the extraction of gold from its ore to the extermination of insects on fruit trees. As a basis for explosives, such as nitroglycerin and gun-cotton, it is likely to take the place of the nitrate of soda from Chile.

The process, once known, Niagara Falls alone, will be able to manufacture enough solidified nitrogen to supply the world's demands. Plenty of power is furnished by the cataract to run any number of furnaces, and one can easily imagine as a prospect of the not distant future the shipment from that point of nitrogen bricks in carload lots, destined for export to all parts of the world. They will need only to be ground up in order to be sprinkled, in the shape of nitrogen meal, along the furrows dug by the farmer's plow.

Already, for some time past, the owners of electrical plants at Niagara Falls have been trying to obtain nitrogen from the atmosphere by other means, though not with satisfactory results. It was discovered more than two centuries ago by Priestley and Cavendish, that the nitrogen and oxygen of the air could be made to combine in the form of nitric acid under the influence of the electric spark. This happens during every thunder storm, and rain water that falls under such circumstances, is found to contain a small per cent of nitric acid. What the people at Niagara tried to accomplish was the artificial production of nitric acid by throwing sparks through the air with the help of a powerful electric apparatus. They got the nitric acid, but the trouble was that it cost too much. Such a method of extracting nitrogen from the atmosphere could never, it was finally realized, be a commercial success.

Nitrogen, in a state of nature, exists only as a gas, save, of course, where it is combined with other elements, in plants, in the flesh of animals and in mineral salts. Being devoid of color, it is as a gas invisible. If it were otherwise the atmosphere would not be the clear and pellucid medium that it is for purposes of vision. Nevertheless, it has been made visible to the eye, when reduced to a liquid by Prof. Dewar at a temperature of 346 degrees below zero of Fahrenheit.

Nitric acid, when pure, is a colorless liquid, and one might easily mistake it for so much water. But it is far from being inert. It has a strong and disagreeable smell, burns the skin, and eats metal—on which account it is used for etching on steel and copper. Combined with silver in the shape of a salt, it is the "lunar caustic" used by physicians, and it is the basis of the indelible ink employed by housewives for marking linen.

Priestley and Cavendish, so long ago as the year 1785, realized that the atmosphere contained nitrogen enough for the uses of all generations to come. They thought that ultimately a means would be found whereby the precious gas could be extracted from the air. Of course they were derided as visionaries—the polite word for cranks. But their dream has come true at last, and

It seems to be only a question of a short time when the solid substance will be purchasable in the form of a salt, pressed into bricks or done up in bags.

One of the many commercial products obtainable from the new salt is laughing gas. This gas is made from nitrate of ammonia, which is obtained by boiling ammonia in nitric acid. The stuff is bought in granulated form and bottled in a flask, the gas thus obtained passing through water into a huge rubber bag. By passing through the water it is purified, and the patient inhales it through a nozzle from the bag.

While Niagara Falls, as has been said, might easily furnish enough solid nitrogen of atmospheric origin to supply the world, any water power, which is always the cheapest source of electrical energy, will serve the purpose. The process being so secret, people everywhere are likely to avail themselves of it, and to manufacture their own nitrogen "bricks" or "flour" for agricultural or other industrial employment.—Philadelphia Record.

#### THE PARACHUTE MAN.

His Feelings as He Soared Skyward and Plunged to Earth.

"Come on! The band's all ready!" I was met with a roar of applause as I ran down the hotel steps. The band blared in salute and the crowd opened for me as I hastened. The parachute was stretched out from the straining balloon. As the man with me snapped the hooks on the ring he showed me where the rope hung and told me how to pull it when cutting loose. He was the excited one. I was in a semi-stupor. A bitter indifference filled me as I looked at the ugly swaying monster which was to bear me to affluence or death.

"Let her go!"

With a cleaving of the air and a rush of sound like the coming of a cyclone the balloon shot upward. I ran for the bar, grasped it and soared.

I tried to swing up on the bar, but the rush of the ascent straightened me like an iron rod. I thought my arms would be pulled out. A sickness came over me, comparable to the effect of the start made by a high speed elevator. Then the motion became more easy and I swung up on the bar. I was accustomed to gazing down from heights and I felt no fear as I stared at the fading ground. I could see them waving hats and hands; could hear the hand playing, and was conscious of a pleasant dreamy sensation and of a steady, easy rising from the ground. I ventured to bend a "crab" and make a few "ankle drops." It was as easy as when I was only a few feet from the ground. I glanced down again. The crowd appeared smaller and seemed to be walking away from me. I had commenced to drift. Now was the time to cut loose. I wished that I might stay where I was—taking chances with that limp bag of a parachute did not look safe. But it had to be done.

I caught hold of the rope, braced myself on the bar and gave a short, hard pull.

Whish—my breath left me! For the first time fear—deadly fear—entered my heart. A jerk that nearly unseated me, and I was again sailing pleasantly through space.

I ventured to essay a few additional feats, as the ground seemed to more closely approach me, and then I commenced to calculate as to the manner in which to strike the ground. Like many other problems, it settled itself. I struck it feet-first in a cornfield, was dragged along and scratched up and came to consciousness in the arms of my new