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The Social Buccaneer

By Frederic S. Isham

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CHAPTER XVII. A Discovery.

Mr. Wood and his party set out on their car prepared to arrive at a place of repining; they reached, instead, the gay terrace of a palace of rejoicing.

"We called," he remarked in his fine stately manner, as the car drew up near the front portico, "to tender our condolences, and incidentally, our services. As one of the oldest residents at Comcoset, allow me to observe the neighborhood has heretofore enjoyed an unimpeachable reputation."

"That's all right," said Mr. Goldberg, waving his hand lightly. "We don't mind a little episode like that of last night," with airy jocularities. "Pearls? Poof!"

"Mr. Wood stared in mild amazement. Sir Archibald inserted a monocle. Miss Goldberg, unable to contain her longer, burst forth with the glorious news. "Do not mind him," she said indignantly. "The pearls have been found!"

"By Jove! Oh, I say!" The single glass fell from the Englishman's eye; his surprise, now, seemed even greater than that of the others; his jaw sagged.

"Yes, Mr. Bolger found them." The speaker was Miss Flossie; she directed her words to Sir Archibald, rather than to the others.

"Naturally!" her eyes narrowing. "Since the affair was so bunglingly handled and the pearls were so easily recovered."

"Possibly," he said, "it is you who have a theory?"

"Oh, dear, no!" she answered hastily. A moment, confronting each other, he fancied a lightning in her eyes, as he had seen the green stone of an idol's suddenly flash when the sun touched it.

"Well, it will be frank and pleaded guilty to entertaining a little one, myself," he remarked lightly. "A theory, I mean." And bowing, he turned from her and walked away.

"The host, with Mr. Wood and Mr. Bolger, who had again appeared, were at that moment talking it over at a little summer house on the table.

"I don't really tell you just who," she laughed. "But you are interested; very much interested, aren't you?"

she flashed back. "The person you speak of must have known."

"And resisted the temptation to come here?"

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last whimsical assertion. He detected only an easy spontaneity in those tones; was pleased to see the other in such good humor; and with his arm paining him, too, no doubt.

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"how is Mr. Bruce? He is in his room?"

"Oh, yes; and feeling rather better. I should say," returned Simpson, cheerfully.

"Capillon's eyelids fluttered in their peculiar fashion. A few moments he stood gazing before him, as if forgetful of the other; then, suppressing any sign of emotion, asked, in as casual a voice as he could assume, one or two other questions. If Sir Archibald was home; where he had gone; when would he return?"

"Simpson answered as best he might, and was about to wheel, when the secretary's look changed on the bundle, and lingered tentatively.

"You're bound for the village, now, I suppose?" he said. Simpson replied emphatically. "Something of importance when you take it yourself!" with a nod at the parcel.

"Not at all, sir," returned the man absently. "Just a little cleaning and fixing to be done."

"Oh?" observed Capillon. "For Miss Wood, I presume?"

"Yes, I know that. And those worthless Manchu pearls Miss Goldberg wore, how do you account—"

"The pearls she had on last prior to our arrival at the house—very close to our coming," ironically, "were her own; the celebrated Goldberg pearls. She thought she had them still, was in blissful ignorance of anything to the contrary, when you observed that they—"

"I understand," said the secretary with shining eyes. "I even fancied I saw how it was done," murmured Sir Archibald. "The fellow, however, is so clever, I dare say, that he will naturally be so conspicuous in his plans to me."

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Miscellaneous Reading.

RACING ON THE MISSISSIPPI.

Mark Twain's Description of the Contest Between the Amaranth and the Boreas.

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TRUE IRISH BULLS.

They Have a Flavor All Their Own.

"The Effect of Climate." Sir Richard Steele explained why his countrymen made bulls: "Tis the effect of the climate, sir. If an Englishman were born in Ireland he would make as many," said he, "it is not every one who knows a bull when he sees her. It may be no bull, but he'll call it a bull, and so it is."

"He built the wall wider than it was high, so that when it fell down it should be higher than it was wide."

"Two weary and footsore Irishmen came to a milestone, ten miles to Dublin. 'Arrah,' said one, 'tis but five miles apiece.' 'Disputing of the date of St. Patrick's birthday,' he couldn't have had two unless he was twins."

"An Irish sailor reported that in Philadelphia they copper bottomed the tops of the houses with sheet lead. Give me the loan of a hatchet to saw an empty barrel of flour in two to make the dog a piggen."

"His estate is divided by impenetrable furze ditches made of quarried stones on the edges of the fields."

"The very best French bulls are acted, not spoken. The Duke de St. Simon relates that a lady, lying ill, was much disturbed by the ringing of the church bells. 'What is the matter, my dear?' asked the street in front of her house laid with straw."

"A spoken bull in French is apt to be more than a spoken bull in Irish variety, something more like a betise, as has been said. And it is difficult to retain a bull in translation. 'Ce font toujours les mêmes soldats qui se font tuer,' says Marshall Bugeaud of his army. This loses a little when one translates it as 'It is always the same soldiers who get themselves killed.'"