

# Hemming, The Adventurer.

By THEODORE ROBERTS.

(Continued)

## CHAPTER VII. An Elderly Champion.

While Herbert Hemming tried to ease the bitterness of his heart and forget the injustice that had been done him, in new scenes and amid new companions, Miss Travers suffered at home. Her lover had scarcely left her. Now, alone and shaken with grief, she saw upon what reasonable foundation she had accused an honorable man of — she hardly knew what. Why had he listened to her? Why had he not laughed, and kissed away her awful, hysterical foolishness? Then she remembered how she had repulsed his caress, and there in the narrow, heavily furnished drawing-room she leaned her head upon her arms and prayed.

Half an hour later she was startled by the ringing of the door-bell, and hastened to her own room. The caller was an elderly bachelor brother of her mother's — a man with a small income, a taste for bridge, and tongue and ears for gossip. His visits were always welcome to Mrs. Travers. Mrs. Travers was a stout lady much given to family prayers, scandal, and disputes with servants. As the widow of a bishop she felt that she filled, in the being of the nation, a somewhat similar position to that occupied by Westminster Abbey. She doted on all those in temporal and spiritual authority, almost to the inclusion of curates and subalterns, — if they had expectations. Once upon a time, seeing nothing larger in sight for her daughter, she had been Herbert Hemming's motherly friend. Then she had heard from Mr. Penthouse that some day he would become a baronet, that Hemming's fortune was not nearly so large as people supposed. At first she had watched the change in her daughter, under Penthouse's influence, with vague alarm; but a suspicion of more eligible suitors in the offing stilled her fears. The hints which her pleasing nephew brought to her, of Hemming's double life, inflamed her righteous anger against the quiet captain. Had her daughter's love seen the master of five thousand a year she would have admonished Penthouse to keep silence concerning the affairs of his superiors. As she thought her righteous indignation quite genuine, for few people of her kind know the full extent of their respectable wickedness. Then had come news, through her daughter, of Hemming's retirement from the army and entrance into journalism. Molly had mentioned it, very quietly, one morn-

ing at breakfast. Then had come Hemming himself, and with vast satisfaction she had heard him leave the house without any bright laughter at the door. And just as she had determined to descend and soothe Molly with words of pious comfort, her brother had arrived.

Mrs. Travers heard Molly go to her room and close the door. She decided that charity would keep better than Mr. Pollin's gossip, so she descended to the drawing-room as fast as her weight would allow. They shook hands cordially; after which Mr. Pollin stood respectfully until his sister got safely deposited in the strongest chair in the room.

Mr. Pollin was a gossip, as I have previously stated, but many of his stories were harmless. He dressed in the height of fashion, and in spite of his full figure, carried himself jauntily. In his youth (before he had come in for his modest property, and mastered whist) he had studied law, and it was rumored that he had even tried to write scholarly articles and book reviews for the daily press. At one stage in his career his sister and the late bishop had really trembled for his respectability; but their fears had proved to be unfounded, for, lacking encouragement from the editors, Mr. Pollin had settled down to the unbroken conventionalities of Mr. Pollin's features resembled his sister's, but his mouth was more given to smiling, and his eyes held a twinkle, while hers were dimly lit with a gleam of cold calculation.

Today Mr. Pollin had quite unexpected news, at first-hand from an Irish acquaintance of his, a Major O'Grady. But he did not blurt it out, as a lesser gossip would have done.

"Have you seen Harry Penthouse lately?" he asked.

"Not for two days," said the lady.

Mr. Pollin crossed his knees with an effort, and tried to look over his waistcoat at his polished boots.

"He returns to his regiment shortly," added Mrs. Travers.

"Her brother coughed gently, and scrutinized the ring on his finger with an intensity that seemed quite uncalculated for.

"What is the matter?" cried the lady, breathless with the suspense.

"Nothing, my dear, although I hardly envy Harry. I'm afraid he will find his regiment a rather uncomfortable place," replied Pollin.

"Do you mean the regiment, or his quarters, Richard?"

"His quarters are comfortable enough for a better man," replied the elderly dandy, with a slight ring of emotion in his voice.

"Richard," exclaimed the dame,

"what are you hinting about, your nephew?"

"No nephew of mine," replied the other, "nor even of yours, I think. Poor Charles and old Sir Peter were first cousins, were they not?"

"But they were just like brothers," she urged.

"It's a pity young Penthouse hadn't been spanked more in his early youth," remarked Mr. Pollin.

Mrs. Travers began to feel decidedly uneasy. Could it be that Harry had, in some way, forfeited his chances of the estate and title? Could it be that the invalid brother, the unsocial, close-fisted one, had married? But she did not put the questions.

"What rash thing has the young man done?" she inquired.

"Nothing rash, but something dashed low," answered her brother.

"Today," he continued, "I received a letter from a gentleman whom it appears I've met several times in the country, Major O'Grady, of the Seventy-third. He has evidently quite forgotten the fact that I am in any way connected with Harry Penthouse, or interested in Herbert Hemming, and after several pages of reference to some exciting rubbers we have had together (I really cannot recall them to mind), he casually tells me the inner history of Hemming's leaving the service."

"Ah, I thought so," sighed Mrs. Travers.

"Thought what, my dear sister?" asked Pollin, shortly.

The good lady was somewhat confused by the abruptness of her brother's manner, and her guard was forgotten.

"That the inner history," she replied, "is that Captain Hemming was requested to resign his commission."

"You have jumped the wrong way, Cordelia," said the gentleman, with a disconcerting smile, "for the regiment, from the colonel to the newest subaltern, and from the sergeant-major to the youngest bugler, are, figuratively speaking, weeping over his departure."

Mrs. Travers seemed to dwindle in her chair. "Then why did he retire?" she asked, in a thin whisper.

"Because Harry Penthouse wolfed all his money. At first he borrowed a hundred or so, and lost it gambling. Hemming got a shy, but thought, of course, that some day it would all be paid back. He wanted to help the boy, so, after a good deal of persuasion, endorsed his note for a large sum, and the note was cashed by a Jew who had helped Penthouse before. The Jew was honest, but he came a cropper himself, and could not afford to renew the note. Penthouse had only enough left to carry him stylishly over his two months' leave, so Hemming had got so much as a 'Thank you' from the young bouncer."

For several minutes the lady kept a stunned silence. Presently she braced herself, and laughed unmusically.

"I have heard a very different story," she said, "and I believe from a better authority than this Major O'Grady."

"O'Grady," corrected Pollin, "and a very dear friend of mine — cousin to Sir Brian O'Grady."

The good fellow's imagination was

getting the bit in its teeth by this time, and his mind was turning toward the quiet of his club, and a nip of something before dinner.

"You have your choice between Major O'Grady's story and Harry Penthouse's," said the lady.

"And I choose O'Grady's," replied the gentleman, "because I know Penthouse and I know Herbert. Herbert is a good soldier and a good sort, and Harry is a damned, overgrown, overfed cad."

He stole away without farewell, abashed and surprised at his own heat and breach of etiquette.

After her brother's departure Mrs. Travers sought her daughter. She wanted to know all the particulars of Hemming's visit.

"It is all over between us," sobbed the girl, and beyond that she could learn nothing. Having failed to receive information, she immediately began to impart some, and told what Mr. Pollin had heard from Major O'Grady. Molly, who lay on the bed, kept her face buried in the pillow, and showed no signs of hearing anything. At last her mother left her, after saying that she would send her dinner up to her. The bewildered woman had never felt quite so put about since the death of the lord bishop. Could it be, she wondered, that she had made a mistake in encouraging Harry Penthouse's work tearing down Molly's belief in Hemming? Even her dinner did not altogether reassure her troubled spirit.

Several days later Miss Travers wrote to Hemming. It contained only a line or two. — It begged his forgiveness. It called him to return and let her show her love. She sent it to his old address in Dublin, and in the corner wrote, "Please forward."

Now it happened that Private Malloy, who had once been Captain Hemming's orderly, was sent one day, by a sergeant, for the officers' mail. He thought himself a sly man, did Mr. Malloy, and when he found a letter addressed to his late beloved master, in a familiar handwriting, he decided that it was from "one of them damned Jews," and carefully separated it from the pile. Later he burned it. "One good turn deserves another," said he, watching the thin paper flame and fade.

Penthouse returned to his regiment without calling again on Molly and Mrs. Travers. Somehow, after the beating he had received, he did not feel like showing his face anywhere in town. Day after day Molly waited for an answer to her letter. By this time she had heard, from Captain Anderson (who had acted nervously during his short call), of Hemming's intention of going, immediately to Greece. So for two weeks she waited hopefully. Then the horrible fear that she had hurt him, grew upon her. But for more than a month every brisk football on the pavement and every ring at the door-bell set her heart burning and left it throbbing with pain.

When she drove with her mother she scanned the faces of the men in the street, and often and often she changed colour at sight of a thin, alert face or broad, gallant shoulders in the crowd.

Captain Anderson was at Alder shot when he received his friend's let-

ter from Jamaica. He went up to town and called on Miss Travers, and, without so much as "By your leave," read her extracts from the letter. She listened quietly, with downcast eyes and white face. When he was through with it she looked at him kindly; but her eyes were dim.

"Why do you taunt me?" she asked. "Is it because you are his friend?" The smile that followed the question was not a happy one.

The sapper's honest face flamed crimson. "I thought you wanted to know about him," he stammered.

"Of course I am glad to hear that he is so successful — and so happy," she replied, and her mouth took on a hardness strange and new to it. She remembered the passionate appeal in her own letter — the cry of love that had awakened no answering cry — and her pride and anger set to work to tear the dreams from her heart. But a dream built by the Master Workman, of stuffs lighter than the wind, outlasts the heavy walls of kings' monuments.

(To be Continued.)

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### CAN'T FLIRT IN CHURCH.

Stewards and Detectives Engaged to Prevent Love making in English Cathedral.

London, Oct. 6.—The Dean of Norwich last Sunday devoted his sermon to a protest against the prevailing habit of young people using the cathedral during holy service as a place to carry on love-making and flirtations.

Seventy stewards and one detective have now been enrolled for the purpose of preventing flirting in the nave. Any young people who look frivolous are compelled to take front seats. If they continue a whispering flirtation they are politely shown out of the sacred building.

### THIS WOMAN SLEPT EIGHTEEN YEARS.

Remarkable Case of Parisian Woman Who Has Had Long Rest.

Paris, Oct. 6.—The remarkable case of a woman named Gesine, who has slept for eighteen years, is related. She was born in a small town in the north of Germany in 1866, and until seven years old enjoyed good health. Then she had a fall which hurt her head. She began to have spells of sleep lasting for months, from which she was aroused only to relapse into longer periods of unconsciousness.

Finally, in 1886, she fell into a sleep which was not broken until a few months ago, when she again awoke in the full possession of her senses.

She remembered distinctly facts which happened before her sleep, and asked all about her brothers and sisters as if she had been asleep only one night.

She was however, too feeble to raise herself, and had to learn again like a little child how to walk. She has improved greatly since, and is again able to do light work.

Her case is exciting great interest in the medical world, and is being made the subject of a special investigation by Dr. Paul Farez, professor at the School of Psychological Studies.

### BANDITS ACTIVE.

London, Oct. 6.—A despatch to the Post from Mukden says that about 4,000 combined Japanese and Manchurian bandits are active on the Russian right flank, about 20 miles south of Simning. The bandits have been formed into regular troops. There are outpost fights daily.

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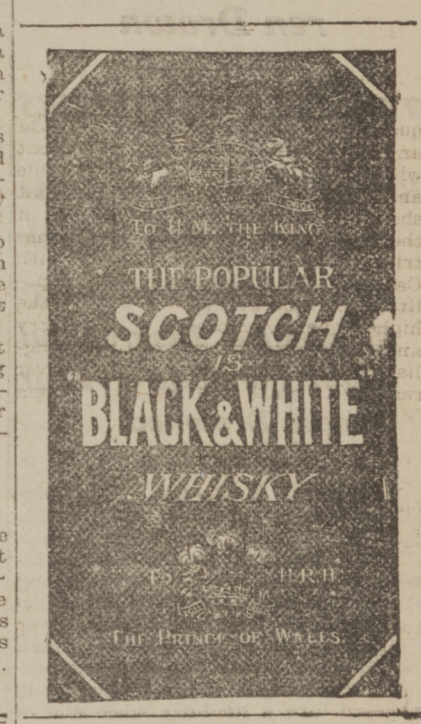
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