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Illustrations by Elsworth Young
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She Actually Fried the Bacon Herself.

place upon her, confident and satisfied that his prescription was working well. Nor was he the only one who looked at her that way. Marlen and Nana, his two daughters, worshipped their handsome Philadelphia cousin and they sat one on either side of her on the great log lying between the tents and the fire. Even Bob Junior condescended to give her approving glances. The whole camp was at her feet. Mrs. Maitland had been greatly taken by her young niece. Kirkby made no secret of his devotion, Arthur Bradshaw and Henry Phillips, each a "tenderfoot" of the extremist character, friends of business connections in the east, who were spending their vacation with Maitland, shared in the general devotion; to say nothing of George the cook and Pete, the packer and horse wrangler. Phillips, who was an old acquaintance of Enid's, had tried his luck with her back east and had sense enough to accept as final his failure. Bradshaw was a solemn young man without that keen sense of humor which was characteristic of the west. The others were suitably dressed for adventure, for Bradshaw's idea of an appropriate costume was distinguished chiefly by long green felt puttees which swathed his huge calves and excited curious inquiry and ribald comment from the surprised denizens of each mountain hamlet through which they had passed, to all of which Bradshaw remained serenely oblivious. The young man, who does enter especially into this tale, was a vestryman of the church in his home in the suburbs of Philadelphia. His piety had been put to a severe strain in the mountains.

That day everybody had to work on the trail—everybody wanted to for that matter. The hardest labor consisted in the driving of the burros. Unfortunately there was no good and trained leader among them through an unavoidable mistake, and the campers had great difficulty in keeping the burros on the trail. To Arthur Bradshaw had been allotted the most obstinate, cross-grained and determined of the unruly band, and old Kirkby and George paid particular attention to instructing him in the gentle art of manipulating him over the rocky mountain trail.

"Wall," said Kirkby with his somewhat languid, drawling, nasal voice, "that there burro's like a ship w'ich I often seed 'em w'en I was a kid down east afore I come out to God's country. Nature has provided 'em with a kind of a helmum. I remember if you wanted the boat to go to the right you shoved the helmum over to the left. Sin' 'em an' port was the terms as I recollect 'em. It's just the same with burros, you takes 'em by the tiller, that's by the tail, gift a good tight twist on it an' if you want him to head to the right, slew his stern shoards around to the left, an' you got to be keeful you don't git no kick back w'ich of it lands on you is worse 'n the ree-coll of a mule."

Arthur faithfully followed directions, narrowly escaping the outraged brute's small but sharp pointed heels on occasion. His efforts not being productive of much success, finally in his despair he resorted to brute strength; he would pick the little animal up bodily, pack and all—he was a man of powerful physique—and swing him around until his head pointed in the right direction; then with a prayer that the burro would keep it there for a few rods anyway, he would set him down and start him all over again. The process oft repeated became monotonous after awhile. Arthur was a slow thinking man, deliberate in action; he stood it as long as he possibly could. Kirkby, who rode one horse and led two others, and therefore was exempt from burro driving, observed him with great interest. He and Bradshaw had strayed way behind the rest of the party.

and pet, strained to the breaking point, gave way suddenly. Primitive instincts rose to the surface and overwhelmed him like a flood. He deliberately sat down on a fallen tree by the side of a trail, the burro halting obediently, turned and faced him with hanging head, apparently conscious that he merited the disapprobation that was being heaped upon him, for from the desperate tenderfoot there burst forth so amazing, so fluent, so comprehensive a torrent of assorted profanity, that even the old past master in obscuration was astonished and bewildered. Where did Bradshaw, mild and inoffensive, get it? His profanity would have appalled his rector and amazed his fellow vestrymen. Not the Jackdaw of Rhodius himself was so cursed as that little burro. Kirkby sat on his horse in fits of silent laughter until the tears ran down his cheek, the only outward and visible expression of his mirth.

Arthur only stopped when he had thoroughly emptied himself, possibly of an accumulation of years of repression.

"Wall," said Kirkby, "you sure do overmatch any one I ever heard w'en it comes to cursing; w'y, you could gimme cards an' spades an' beat me, an' I was thought to have some gift that-a-way in the old days."

"I didn't begin to exhaust myself," answered Bradshaw, shortly, "and what I did say didn't equal the situation. I'm going home."

"I wouldn't do that," urged the old man. "Here, you take the horses an' I'll tackle the burro."

"Gladly," said Arthur. "I would rather ride an elephant and drive a herd of them than waste another minute on this infernal little mule."

The story was too good to keep, and around the camp fire that night Kirkby drawled it forth. There was a freedom and easiness of intercourse in the camp, which was natural enough. Cook, teamster, driver, host, guest, men, women, children, and I had almost said burros, stood on the same level. They all ate and lived together. The higher up the mountain range you go, the deeper into the wilderness you plunge, the further away from the conventional you draw, the more homogeneous becomes society and the less obvious are the irrational and unscientific distinctions of the lowlands. The guinea stamp fades and the man and the woman are pure gold or base metal inherently and not by any artificial standard.

George, the cattle man, who cooked, and Pete, the horse wrangler, who assisted Kirkby in looking after the stock, enjoyed the episode uproariously, and would fain have had the exact language repeated to them, but here Robert Maitland demurred, much to Arthur's relief, for he was thoroughly humiliated by the whole performance.

It was very pleasant lounging around the camp fire and one good story easily led to another.

"It was in these very mountains," said Robert Maitland, at last, when his turn came, "that there happened one of the strangest and most terrible adventures that I ever heard of. I have pretty much forgotten the lay of the land, but I think it wasn't very far from here that there is one of the most stupendous canyons through the range; nobody ever goes there; I don't suppose anybody has ever been there since. It must have been at least five years ago that it all happened."

"It was four years an' nine months exactly, Bob," drawled old Kirkby, who well knew what was coming. "Yes, I dare say you are right. I was up at Evergreen at the time looking after timber interests, when a



"It Was in These Very Mountains," Said Robert Maitland.

mule came wandering into the camp, saddle and pack still on his back."

"I knowed that there mule," said Kirkby, "I'd sold it to a fellow named Newbold, that had come out yere an' married Louise Rosser, old man Ros-

(To be Continued)

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