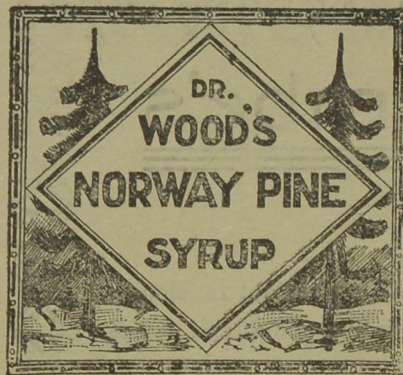




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There are so many spurious "pine" preparations on the market that you should always be careful to get Dr. Wood's, the original and genuine.

DOCTOR JACK

By St. George Rathborne.

(Continued.)

"Si, senor, the lady has gone. I assisted her into a carriage not ten minutes ago, and the trunk, too. Por Dios, it was heavy," he rattles on, for he has learned to speak very fair English from coming in contact with so many foreigners at the hotel.

This is good news to Jack—he does not regret the investment of the few reals.

"The lady was not alone?" he asks. "Vaga! no, her aunt accompanied her."

"No gentleman?" "Only the pasha," he carelessly. "What!" almost howls Doctor Jack, who comes very near scaring the clerk out of a year's growth.

"The Turkish pasha—he was very attentive to Senorita Morton, and always asking whether she was in or not."

"Think again, man—did the pasha accompany the ladies, or was it Miss Morton's cousin, the strange dandy, Larry Kennedy?" and Jack fairly holds his breath in suspense.

"Caramba! what am I thinking about? My thoughts are wool-gathering. It was the little man who ordered the vehicle. We thought they were going sight-seeing, but at the last down came the trunk, the account was settled, and they were off. Quite a sudden flitting. I trust, senor, they did not leave you in the lurch?"

Jack pays no attention to the question, but pounds away at his subject.

"Why did you say at first the pasha accompanied them—what put it into your mind?"

"I will tell you—it was easy enough to get them mixed, senor. Just after they had gone, the Turkish general comes to me and asks about the ladies—he unconsciously jingles more reals in his pocket, which Jack readily understands have passed into his possession from the hand of the Turk—" and when I inform him of their departure with the trunk he is greatly excited, settles his account, engages a vehicle without regard to its cost, and is off carissima, like a house afire."

"I see. Well, I cannot let all my friends leave me in the lurch this way, so I will follow suit."

Jack puts the words into practice, and in another minute is once more seated in his vehicle en route for the railway station. There is just good time to reach it easily, and he is not at all worried, but leaning back, smokes his cigar in contentment.

When about half way there he suddenly sits up straight, and looks out of the window. There has been an accident—a crowd has gathered. He sees that a coach has broken down—something has allowed the wheel to come off, and the vehicle lies there on one side, canting downward, the bare axle touching the ground.

The accident is not an uncommon one in the streets of Madrid, where the holes in the roadway wrench a vehicle badly, but Jack's attention is directed toward a certain little man who rages up and down, endeavouring to stir the driver into action with alternate threats and promises of heavy pay, but neither of which appear to do much good, as the man seems prostrated with his trouble.

Jack knows this figure—it is Larry. Good heavens! the broken vehicle is the one they were in. Where are the ladies—are they hurt—how can the station be reached in time?

These things fly through Jack's brain, and his first move is to stop his own vehicle. Then he dismounts, and at sight of him Larry utters a war-whoop, and would throw his arms around the neck of Doctor Jack did not that worthy prevent it.

"Where are the ladies?" he demands.

"Here, doctor," and they make a brave showing, seated upon the trunk near by.

"Are you hurt?" he asks, anxiously, approaching them, but his words are meant for Avis only.

"Not at all, but a trifle alarmed—it came so suddenly, you see," replies the girl.

"Well, we must not miss that train. In a pinch, my vehicle will hold

us all. Let us get the trunk up quickly, Larry. Not a minute to waste." Jack's driver professes to be horror-stricken at the load he is to take, but the promise of several golden doubloons cause him to show more alacrity—the ordinary Spanish Jehu will risk even his neck for such royal pay, and think little of his vehicle.

So the trunk is taken up, the ladies placed inside, and Larry squeezes among them. Jack is about to clamber on top among the trunks, but they will not hear of it—the ladies insist, and nothing loth, he crowds in, though to do so he is compelled to have the proud New York girl sit upon his lap.

Stranger things than this often occur to travellers on the Continent, and Avis laughs heartily at the situation, while they bowl along, lurching this way and that, sometimes threatening to be toppled over. She blushes beautifully when she catches Jack's eye, which has a twinkle in it, for do you know, the sly fellow is chuckling to himself at the thought of how this ludicrous situation would strike the eye of Mercedes could she but see it.

It is impossible for Jack to even glance at his watch in order to note how time is passing—he is on tenterhooks, so to speak, until the vehicle drives up to the station.

Then he finds they are in ample time for the train. He takes it upon himself to oversee all matters, pays the driver, buys four first-class tickets for Paris, looks after the luggage, and last, but not least, secures a compartment to themselves. Such is the magic power of money on the Continent—in fact, the same applies all over the civilized world.

They are all feeling particularly joyful over the success of their game. No one but Jack is aware of the fact that the pasha knows of their hurried departure from Madrid.

Doctor Jack walks up and down outside on the platform, under the pretense of smoking a cigar, although the ladies have given him the privilege of doing so inside—an opportunity which Larry does not scruple to improve by using up an unlimited number of horrid cigarettes.

In reality Doctor Jack is looking for familiar faces—he wonders if the pasha will come, but looks in vain for the red fez among the crowd. If the Turk has arrived before them, he is all this while in one of the other carriages. Jack, as he walks up and down, glances sharply into each compartment, but fails to see the man he looks for. A number of shades are down over the windows, and it is as likely as not the pasha may be in one of these compartments.

Besides, Jack keeps his eyes open—there are other enemies to think about, without taking the pasha into consideration, and if any of them are about he wants to know it. In his mind he also thinks of Mercedes, and glances curiously at a number of ladies, but all of them are strangers. One attracts more than a passing glance—he cannot see her face, for the rebosa hides it, but her carriage is stately and her form indicates youth and health.

He suspects that it is Mercedes, but would make certain, so he enters into an agreement with a man who seems to be a porter—there is a hasty exchange of silver—the man grasps the situation, picks up a box, and in passing the lady manages that a corner shall catch in her long veil, which is instantly dislodged. Jack chuckles at the success of his little game, even though disappointed at seeing the indignant face of a stranger, who looks after the clumsy porter with daggers in her black eyes, and proceeds to rearrange her rebosa.

A bell sounds—the guard cries "all aboard" in his Spanish way, and Jack, tossing his cigar aside, enters the carriage. Then the door is locked, but as the American has bought the guard, body and soul, he will be on hand as soon as the train stops at a station to see what is needed.

Then they begin to leave Madrid behind. No one is particularly sorry to do this, for the Spanish capital has little to charm the modern tourist like gay Paris, and as the road from the first generally leads to the second, every emotion can be summed up in anticipation.

To be continued.

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