

Maud Percy's Secret

BY MAY AGNES FLEMING

(CONTINUED.)

Shout after shout of derision greeted him as he went on; for the rabble ever-hate those who, belonging to their own class, raise themselves above them. But when a woman—a wild, haggard, despairing woman—rushed through the crowd, and greeted him with the passionate cry: "My son! O my son!—my son!" a silence like that of death fell over the vast throng. Unheeding all around her, the gipsy Ketura would have forced her way to his side, but she was held back by those who had charge of the convicts. And the dreary procession passed on its way.

All was on board at last, and the vessel, with a fair wind, was moving away from the wharf. The crowd was dispersing; and the officer, at last, who was guarding Ketura, moved away with the rest, casting a compassionate glance on the face white with woman's utmost woe.

Standing there, with straining eyeballs and clenched hands, the wretched woman watched the ship that bore away the son she so madly loved. With parted lips and heaving breast, she stood there, as any other mother might stand, and watched the sods piled over her child's grave; and still she would not believe he had gone forever. At last the vessel disappeared; the last trace of her white sails was gone; and then, with a terrific shriek that those who heard might never forget, she threw up both arms, and fell, in strong convulsions, to the ground.

CHAPTER VIII.

"Why, Mr. Harkins, it ain't possible, now!" exclaimed a struggling, incredulous voice. "Just to think we should meet again after such a long time! I'm sure it's real surprising."

The speaker, a pale young man, with a profusion of light hair and freckles, and a gaudy hand carpet-bag was taking a stroll on the classic banks of the Serpentine when suddenly espying a short, plethoric, gruff looking, masculine individual coming toward him, he made a sudden plunge at him, and grasped his hand with an energy that was quite startling.

The short individual addressed, with a wholesome dislike of London pickpockets before his eyes, raised a stout stick he carried, with the evident intention of trying the thickness of the pale young man's skull; but before it could come down, the proprietor of the freckles began, in a tone of mild expostulation:

"Why, Mr. Harkins, you haven't forgotten me—have you? Don't you recollect the young man you brought to London in your wagon one rainy night? Why, Mr. Harkins, I'm O. C. Toosyeggs!" said the pale young man, in a slightly aggrieved tone.

"Why, so hit he!" exclaimed Mr. Harkins, brightening up, and lowering his formidable weapon. "Blessed! if you 'adn't gone clean hout my 'ead! Why, Mr. Toosyeggs, this is the most surprisingest thing as ever was!"

"I'm very much obliged to you, Mr. Harkins," said Mr. Toosyeggs, gratefully. "I knew you'd be very glad to see me, and it's real kind of you to say so. I hope Mrs. Harkins and your infant family are all quite well, I thank you."

"Yes, they're hall among the middlin's," said Mr. Harkins, indifferently. "Mrs. Harkins 'as been and gone and 'ad the—what's this now?" said Mr. Harkins, pausing, and scratching his head in perplexity. "Blessed! if I hain't clean forgot the name, it was 'tongs,' no—yes—it was 'tongs,' hand something else."

"And poker," suggested Mr. Toosyeggs.

"Mr. Toosyeggs," said Mr. Harkins, facing round, fiercely, "I 'ope you don't mean for to hinsult a cove, do you?"

"Why, Mr. Harkins!" remonstrated the astonished and aggrieved Mr. Toosyeggs. "I'm sure I never meant any such thing; I wouldn't insult you for all the world, for—for—" Mr. Toosyeggs paused for a figure of speech strong enough. "For any amount of money, Mr. Harkins."

"Well, it don't make no matter hif you did," said Mr. Harkins, cooling suddenly down. "But what his this Mrs. Harkins 'ad. Tongs—tongs. Oh, yes! tongs-will-eat-us! that's the name, Mr. Toosyeggs. Mrs. Harkins had that," said Mr. Harkins, triumphantly.

"Tonsillitis, perhaps," insinuated Mr. Toosyeggs, meekly.

"Well, hain't that wot I said?" exclaimed Mr. Harkins, raising up again. "Hand my John Halbert, he's been and 'ad a Sarah Bell affection—"

"Cerebral," again ventured Mr. Toosyeggs, humbly.

"Well, hain't that wot I said?" shouted Mr. Harkins, glaring savagely at the republican, who wilted suddenly down. "Blessed! if I hain't a good mind to bring you a clip long side the 'ead, for your impudence in center-

Author of
"The Fatal
Wedding"

"The Unseen
Bridegroom,"

"A Terrible
Secret."

dicting me like this 'ere hevvy time! Why, you'd perwoke a saint, so you would!"

"Mr. Harkins, I'm sure I never meant to offend you, and I'm real sorry for your trouble," apologized Mr. Toosyeggs, in a remorse-stricken tone.

"Well, it wasn't no trouble," said Mr. Harkins, testily. "Cos he got took to the 'orse-spittle for fear hany the rest hof the family would take it. Mary Hann, she got her feet wet, and took the inn-flue-end-ways; whot yer got to say agin that!" demanded Mr. Harkins.

Mr. Toosyeggs, who had been muttering "Influenza" to himself, and chuckling inwardly, as he thought how he could correct Mr. Harkins, in his own mind, in spite of him, was so completely overpowered by this bristling question, that the blood of conscious guilt rushed to his face, and Mr. O. C. Toosyeggs stood blushing like a red cabbage.

"Because if you've got naughting to say agin hit," went on Mr. Harkins, "you 'ad better let hit hout for a little hexercise, that's all. Come, now."

"Mr. Harkins, it's very kind of you to give me permission, and I am very much obliged to you," said Mr. Toosyeggs, looking severely at a small boy who had a hold of his coat-tails behind. "But I hain't the remotest idea of saying anything, whatever, against it. I'm sure it's perfectly right, and proper Mary Ann should have the influenza, if she wants to."

"Ah! I didn't know but what you might think she 'adn't," said Mr. Harkins, blandly. "There wasn't hany tellin' you know, but what you might say a Hinglishman's 'ouse wasn't his castle, and he couldn't 'ave whatever he likes there. Well, the baby, he got the crook, which 'ad the meloncholic hefee hof turning 'im perfectly black in the face."

Mr. Toosyeggs, though inwardly surmising Mr. Harkins meant the croup, thought it a very likely effect to be brought about by either.

"Then Sary Jane took the brown skeeters, hand I 'ad the lum beggar hin my hown back, but on the whole, we were all pretty well, thanky?"

"I am real glad to hear it," said Mr. Toosyeggs, with friendly warmth. "I've been pretty well, myself since, too. I'm very much obliged to you."

"Let's see, it's near a mon h, hain't it, since the night I took you to London?" said Mr. Harkins.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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	Assets.	Surplus.
1893	\$6,453,309.56	\$229,292.86
1894	6,597,336.30	359,783.12
1895	6,797,391.05	435,113.55
1896	7,039,323.43	507,348.19
1897	7,236,555.75	548,321.09
1898	7,544,227.02	574,224.75
1899	7,991,042.63	576,807.50
1900	8,482,038.90	586,040.24
1901	9,013,082.63	607,932.00

	Premium Income.	Total Income.
1893	\$ 964,201.08	\$1,261,930.51
1874	989,552.73	1,296,145.86
1895	1,040,240.77	1,353,713.38
1896	1,107,779.45	1,421,686.70
1897	1,182,965.15	1,525,630.16
1898	1,278,649.20	1,665,480.85
1899	1,444,862.27	1,833,919.16
1900	1,575,176.25	1,959,882.01
1901	1,735,036.06	2,105,141.94

Notices of Death. Amount of Insurance in Force.

1893	\$456,090.	\$35,914,417.11
1894	452,628	36,312,041.
1895	498,969	36,932,148
1896	418,436	38,086,849
1897	604,811	39,943,575
1898	571,316	42,222,364
1899	600,206	46,054,820
1900	594,110	50,191,853
1901	685,472	52,945,044

From the foregoing tables it will be observed that more than two and one-half million dollars have been added to the Assets during the period outlined, that the Premium Income has increased seven hundred seventy thousand dollars, that the surplus to policy holders has increased nearly threefold and that over seventeen million dollars more insurance is now in force than at the beginning of the term designated.

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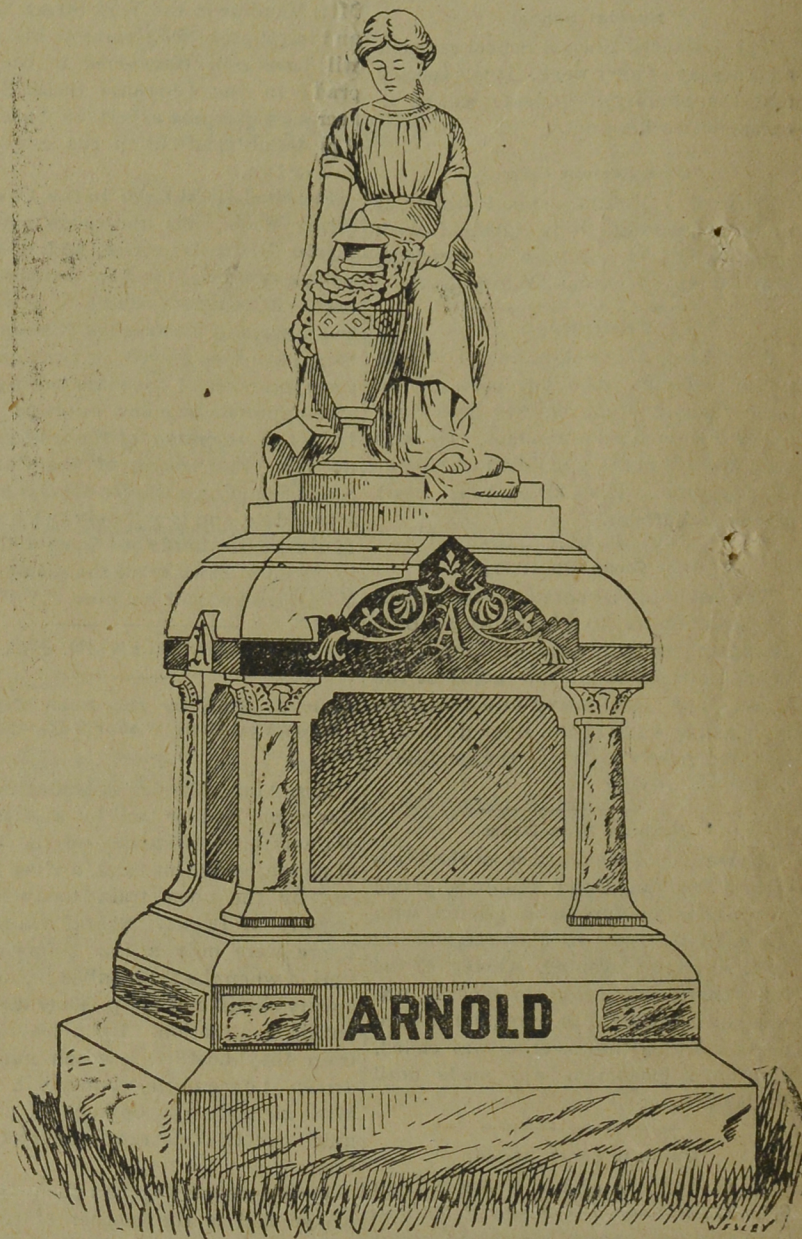
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