

THE BLUE BUCKLE

A BAFFLING MYSTERY AND BREATHLESS TALE OF ADVENTURE

By WILLIAM HAMILTON OSBORNE

Author of "The Red Mouse," "The Running Fight," "Catspaw," Etc.

CHAPTER XXII

THE INACCESSIBLE BOX SEVEN.

The president of the Peninsula Bank in Miami was receiving two distinguished-looking visitors in his private office. They were a tall man of ungainly walk but impressive demeanor and a young lady of singularly pleasing face and figure. The banker was all courtesy and attention, as soon as he had read his visitors' cards and placed chairs and a table at their disposal. The tall man, without waiting words, seated himself and opened a black bag from which he began to draw documents with business-like precision. A blue buckle, a photograph and the sketch of another blue buckle were exposed to view, side by side with a pile of papers, which lay conveniently within reach of his long, powerful white hands.

"A Tale of Red Roses," George Randolph Chester's sparkling story of love and a traction company, will begin in The Evening Ledger next Saturday, April 3. It is a story of a big man, who happens to be a ward boss, and of a dashing girl, who happens to be the daughter of the traction company's president. There are, besides, a lot of people you will recognize at once—the sort that live right around the corner from you, and there is a promoter who is worthy of being a brother to Wallingford himself. The story is full of humor—the good American sort, and full of action. Read it every day in the Evening Ledger, beginning April 3.

These upon your person," he exclaimed. "I sure did," laughed Helderman. "You're foolish," said the president severely. "You deserve to be robbed."

"You're sure of what you say?" "Positive." "You're my man," said Helderman. "Come with me."

"We are here, sir," he said to the president, with the quiet, positive authority of a big financier who addresses a little one, already impressed with his importance. "In the matter of Box Seven in your safe deposit vaults."

"The president smiled reminiscently. 'I understand,' he said. 'You refer to the Ballantyne estate—the freak will of an odd character.'

"The woman smiled archly, but a trifle anxiously. 'Haven't you ever peeked inside?' she asked. 'The president was almost choked. 'How could I, Miss,' he returned. 'You have both the keys,' she smiled, seductively.

"Ah," he returned, "but this box and its keys are in our vaults—a confidential trust. We have no right to peek."

"The masculine visitor darted a glance at the woman. She became silent on the instant. Then he turned back to the president. He pointed to the papers on the table.

"Allow me," he said, "to present credentials." The president examined them carefully, with the leisure of an old-fashioned man. The credentials consisted of letters of introduction, identified photographs and signatures and many other testimonials, proving beyond peradventure that Helderman, that Napoleon of the Street, was present in the flesh.

"The buyer of the keys," mused the president, with a complimentary smile. "Right," said Helderman, as though seeking other words to conquer. "I have just turned my attention to it."

"The president again fumbled with his papers. 'Your credentials are entirely satisfactory to me,' he said. 'There is no doubt that you are Mr. Helderman.'

"You may not understand why I am so particular in this case," said his visitor, "but it is said—it is whispered in the Street—though I know nothing actually of it—that there are two Heldermans."

"Brothers?" "No—I have no brother. But another man who makes up to resemble me—who mimics me."

"You surprise me," said the president, again scrutinizing the papers—an unconscious smile, which caused Helderman to smile. "What is his motive?"

"Evidently to do me at every turn," said Helderman, "but so far he has succeeded only in one thing—he has repeatedly gotten me into embarrassing situations. Unquestionably a swindler—he has swindled others but not myself. I'd like to get my hands on him—that's all."

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"The police," queried the president. "They are baffled," said Helderman, "so baffled that they keep it quiet. But I'll get this fellow yet, if they do not. I'll get him, never fear."

"Helderman drew forth a wallet. 'There's one thing that my ubiquitous double so far hasn't been able to do—he can't produce real money—that is to any considerable amount. Without ostentation and as though the matter were of every day occurrence, Helderman drew from his wallet and tossed before the president a neat packet containing five one-thousand dollar bills. The woman started—glanced doubtfully at Helderman. She seemed surprised. The president picked up the bills. He thought that she is presented from enjoying her property, we believe the courts

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VACCINATION CHECKS

MILLVILLE SMALLPOX

All Cases Now Quarantined and Fear of Epidemic Spreading Further Has Passed.

(FROM A STAFF CORRESPONDENT.)

MILLVILLE, N. J., March 30.—The success of the vaccination campaign and the assuming announcement of State Inspector of Sanitation David C. Bowen, that all cases of mild smallpox, from which a large number of residents of this city were suffering, have been discovered and quarantined, has done much to reassure the people here and remove all apprehensions of danger.

Inspection of the towns and cities lying along the Maurice River is still being made by Inspector Bowen. Vaccination is being urged upon the residents of all these places, however, and some of the local health boards have already joined the State Inspector in his effort to prevent any possible recurrence of the epidemic of danger.

No one is in a position to state what is the temper of the people in regard to the action of the Board of Health which is held responsible for the extent of the contagion. Political action against the present city commissioners will probably be one of the effects of the epidemic, as the people are disposed to hold them to blame for the untimely notice that has fallen upon the city.

The attempt of a local party to place the blame for the widespread story of the scars on the shoulders of the Philadelphia newspaper correspondents has failed and the residents of this city have come to the conclusion that the action of the various city departments at the time of the first outbreak is the true cause of the loss of business that has been caused by the belief in other sections of the country that Millville was a plague spot.

The clash between State Inspector Bowen and Frank Bullock, local health inspector, over the lifting of the quarantine has been settled by the order of the State Inspector that no quarantines shall be lifted without his express permission. In spite of this announcement the motion picture theatre owners announce that they will open their places on Saturday if they learn that the tabernacle, recently constructed for a revival to begin Sunday, will be opened on that date.

Club to Be Burpee's Guests. W. Alton Burpee, a well-known Philadelphia, whose country home is Fordhook Farms in Bucks County, will entertain the members of the Doylestown Club, at a luncheon at the General Greene Inn in Buckingham.

OFFICIALS OF D. A. R.

IN HOT CONTROVERSY

Members of Society in This City Concerned Over Dispute About Finances.

Members of the Daughters of the American Revolution in this city are concerned over a controversy between their national president, Mrs. William Cumming Story, of Washington, and Mrs. Willard T. Block, of Chicago, chairman of the National Committee on Liquidation and Endowment Fund, over the payment of a bill of \$800 owed the firm of J. E. Caldwell & Co., this city, for engraving.

About two weeks ago, it is said, Mrs. Story issued a circular letter attacking the integrity of Mrs. Block, and a few days later Mrs. Block issued a letter in self-defense, in which she charged the national president with playing politics. She said Mrs. Story's attack was inspired by a rumor that she was to be a candidate for national treasurer on a ticket opposed to Mrs. Story, at the annual meeting of the society which will be held April 19 in Washington.

According to Mrs. Thomas Potter, Jr., regent of the Philadelphia Chapter, Pennsylvania members of the organization favor Mrs. Block. Mrs. Potter says Mrs. Block has worked indefatigably to raise funds for the liquidation of the debt on the society's national home in Washington and other expenses.

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CHILDREN'S CORNER

Topsy Cottontail Leaves the Farmyard

TOPSY COTTONTAIL, waked up one fine spring morning and indulged in a long, big stretch. He stretched his legs, his head, his tail and his ears; then he waked both eyes and sat up to look around. "That feels better," he said to himself, "but I certainly do feel lazy, very lazy."

Old man rooster, the boss of the farmyard (when the turkey cock's back was turned), was going by just then and heard what Topsy said. "I should think you would feel lazy," he said scornfully. "A great healthy rabbit like you, staying in the farmyard all the time and being fed!"

"Oh dear, Topsy you mustn't!" exclaimed Mrs. Duck, quackingly. "You ought to be out hustling for your own grub—then, you'd feel better!"

"Now I like that," replied Topsy, crossly. "You say you forage all over the field for your food so you know all about it. But, you see, old man rooster was so lazy that he wouldn't walk across the yard for food unless he took a solemn look at the farmyard's wife humored him and fed him wherever he happened to be. 'A lot you know about hustling for and eating your own grub!'"

Old man rooster didn't mind Topsy's remarks. He felt himself too big and important to care what common rabbits and such thought. But he did answer. "I'm a great healthy rabbit, why should I hunt for food? You're the king of the farmyard. You're used to foraging. But you ought to be a wild creature. Farmyard is for you. And with that he went back to his work."

Topsy was puzzled. He scratched his ears and looked at the old man rooster. "You're a great healthy rabbit, why should I hunt for food? You're the king of the farmyard. You're used to foraging. But you ought to be a wild creature. Farmyard is for you. And with that he went back to his work."

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