My Lady Peggy Goes to Town

By

FRANCES AYMAR MATHEWS

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Percy's blood runs high as he speaks these generous words, while every soul about him stands breathless, staring, struck dumb with the singularity of the episode.

"But I am Sir Robin McTart!" cries the baronet, brandishing his weapon

Both masks came off at the same instant.

with a will, since there is none to oppose him, and the vicar, now, although well nigh choked, not above ten yards distant from him.

"Tut, tut, sir, whoever you are," interposed Lord Escombe. "Your game's up, and you'd better give your lies a rest."

"Hold!" cries Sir Percy to Robin. "Whoever you are, I challenge you to fight me ten minutes hence, yonder in the open toward the river, and those ten minutes my friends and I'll spend in calling the actual Sir Robin McTart into your presence and confronting your impudence with his reality. Lend me your lungs, my lords and gentlemen. Sir Robin's in call somewhere in the gardens, as we all know."

And with one accord the shout went up, ringing up and down the river and far across to the highway, where it caused the horse patrol to think that every highwayman in the kingdom had broken loose upon Vauxhall and presently brought them rearing, plunging, swearing, firing, thumping cutlasses right and left, into the midst of the surging thousands, by this all shouting: "Sir Robin McTart! Sir Robin McTart! Sir Robin! Sir Robin! Sir Robin McTart!" at the top of their voices.

But for all their bawling no one answered, no one came, and but one of the vast throng went.

This was Lady Peggy, at a loss to know the meaning of the shouts, not having been near enough to the scene of the encounter to learn its purport and only now realizing that 'twas herself was sought and meant by the concerted cry that rent the air. Scenting a new, if unknown, danger, she followed her woman's instinct and in the waiting pause that succeeded the tumultuous call Peggy fled to the landing, pressed a handful of shillings, almost her last, into the palm of the only boatman there, jumped into the wherry and bade him get her as swiftly as he could to Queenhithe stairs, for determined was she, now more than ever, to leave no traces in her wake and to return at all risks to Mr. Brummel's house for her bundle of woman's clothes.

For a long way down the Thames the renewed cry of the Vauxhall crush rang in her distracted ears:

"Sir Robin McTart! Sir Robin McTart! Sir Robin! Sir Robin! Where are you? Come forth! Show yourself!"

But none other came forth, and the baronet, taking such courage as he might through his astonishment at Sir Percy's being alive, and not forgetting, even at this point, to reckon how much the lying assassins had mulcted him of, now, in the second breathless halt of the calling his own name, waved his weapon and answered it, saying again:

"I am Sir Robin McTart!"

"Prove it!" shouted Chalmers, with a derisive shrug.

"Faith, and so he can by me!" exclaimed the panting vicar, as, borne rather by the surging of the people than by his slender legs, the tenant of the cloth was pitched somewhat unceremoniously head first into his pupil's middle. Sputtering, but yet winning the attention which truth and the clergy usually and righteously obtain, the vicar raised his right hand, and, laying his left on the baronet's shoulder, he spoke:

"This is Sir Robin McTart of Robinswold, Kent. I have known him from his birth; his father before him. He has been my pupil. Who dares use his name than himself is an impostor and a thief!"

"What!" and now comes forward Mr. Brummel with open hand. "And my old friend," says he, "'sdeath, Mr. What's-your-name, you were a curate when we met last, twenty years ago, but I remember you, sir, at Robinswold. So this," surveying the baronet, "is my old friend's son and heir? Of a truth he favors his sire more than the pretty young rapscallion that's been a-fooling us all for now these four weeks past; for gentlemen," adds the Beau, turning to Sir Percy, "'tis as well we confess ourselves to have been duped. Gad, sir," this sotto voce to Percy alone, "I always wondered where Sir Hector found that handsome lad, for he was as ugly a gentleman as ever was wedded to wife."

After the storm there came that calm which is the inevitable successor, save that in this case while the noise subsided the wonder grew. Every one of Mr. Brummel's company and all of the rest of the world besides was rehearsing his and her own surprise as to the identity of the young gentleman who had for above a month been the town toast and who had now disappeared as suddenly as he came. Some believed him to be Tom Kidde himself, some a lord out of France, some a prince of the blood, some the devil, some an astrologer. There was no lack of inventions as to her ladyship's identity by the time the ten minutes of Sir Percy's setting had come to an end.

He cast an eye about the place looking for Sir Robin, and his veins were fairly on fire to know the color of his rival's blood and wring from his, he hoped, dying lips a confession of where Lady Peggy was. Presently, not spying his opponent, he begged Escombe and Chalmers to have the goodness to seek him out, settle the spot, ask him to choose his seconds, call a surgeon, of whom there were always a score in attendance at Vauxhall, ready for just such affairs, while he himself swung down toward the river to look for Kennaston and give him one last word for Peggy should Sir Robin run him through.

Peg's twin lay on the turf sleeping. Such are the effects of being at once a poet and a lover, not yet twenty, and quite fagged with wideawake nights and days and a fair lady's cruel caprices. Sir Percy looked at him, smiled and whispered as he knelt:

"Dear lad, thou that art my lady's twin, when next thou seest her, sure I know she'll lay her dear lips on thy brow, and there she'll find this." Percy kissed the boy as he spoke. "'Tis doubtless more than she'd care to discover, but, if death comes, 'twill ease the blow and charm the pain while I remember this message that I send her now."

He turned away and left Peg's brother lying there to waken at his leisure.

When he reached the walk again, another clamor greeted him identical with its predecessor.

"Sir Robin McTart! Sir Robin McTart! Sir Robin! Sir Robin! Come forth of your seclusion! The time is up! Sir Robin, I say-y-y-y!"

This Sir Robin McTart had vanished as mysteriously as the other one, and, though the entire company made the welkin ring with the same cry over again—"Sir Robin McTart! Sir Robin! Sir Robin! Sir Robin McTart!"—no Sir Robin appeared or could be found, and they were fain be content, re-enforced by the ladies, now well out of their swoons and terrors, to finish up the night with punch and loo in the boxes, all brains much of a muddle with the strange adventures and miraculous disappearances incident upon Beau Brummel's never to be forgotten masquerade party at Vauxhall.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE moment that the excitement of the vicar's identification had subsided the baronet, leading the worthy old man to the gates and there quitting him under pretext of fetching a hackney coach, skipped without and, hiring one with a couple of the horse patrol at a squeezing price, jumped in and made off for his inn at Pimlico, leaving his whilom preceptor to shift for himself.

Sir Robin had no mind at all for duels with any one, least of all with the resurrected Sir Percy de Bohun, whom his guilty conscience suspected to be fully cognizant of the author of his attempted assassination. Terrified with all this and, if possible, more so by the accounts he had listened to right and left of his valorous and most mysterious namesake, the little gentleman at once made up his mind as to the course wisest for him to pursue and forthwith pursued it.

Back to Pimlico and into bed, shivering betwixt the linen and feathers; up for a toilet of the best and neatest, curling his wig thriftly himself by the fire, a good breakfast, a coach at noon with Kennaston castle for goal and himself and his ardent and blissful hopes and beliefs for freight and luggage.

For, not twelve hours since, had not my Lady Peggy's own emissary, the delightful "Mr. Incognito," told him that his mistress was leaving for home last night? Nay, had not Peggy herself, with her own lips, said that she started for Kennaston "ere cockcrow," and whatever could such words mean but that he, the object of her tenderest sollicitude, should follow her at once.

That same morning toward dawn Percy had ridden home alone, leaving Kennaston, cheered by a smile and a pressure of Lady Diana's hand, to return to his chambers in Grub street, whither the young poet had removed some few days since from Lark lane, at the instance of having had a piece of good fortune in the way of a commendation from no less a personage than the great Dr. Johnson himself.

The reflections of Peggy's adorer were various and most tormenting. His brain, as he tossed in his bed, was a labyrinth wherein he wandered, vainly endeavoring to solve such riddles as—

"Where was Lady Peggy? Was she indeed the bride of either of the Sir Robins? Who was the comely young gentlemanly rogue who had for weeks bewitched the fair and charmed the brave? Where had he disappeared? To whom in reality was he indebted for the saving of his own life at the Dove pier, and whose were the St. Giles' hirelings who had near made an end of him there?"

Bewildered and at wits' end, he finally, as the sun was at meridian, sprang from his uneasy couch, rang and rapped thrice for Grigson, made a sorry pretense at conversing on politics with his uncle, whom he presently encountered in the hall; inwardly cursed the old gentleman and at last, by 3 o'clock, got his will, which was, astride of the long roan, Grigson on the black, to cross to the Surrey side of the river and ride as fast as ever he could to Kennaston castle.

"By heavens!" cried he to himself, pounding Battersea bridge. "It is time her father knew, and her lady mother, too, that she is neither in Kent nor anywhere else in their reckoning, and if it puts 'em both into their shrouds they'll hear the truth and set about solving the riddle before sunrise tomorrow. I'm sailing on Thursday for the colonies, but I go not until I am assured of her safety and her happiness."

Thus it happened that not above three hours after Sir Robin had started from Pimlico with his destination Kennaston, Sir Percy quitted Charlotte street with the same beacon in view, and each, the one in his coach, t'other in his saddle, brain full and heart bursting with but one thought, and that Lady Peggy Burgoyne.

Her ladyship meantime, on landing from the wherry, fairly scampered her way to Mr. Brummel's for fear of desperadoes and Mohocks. At one point wild cries of "Watch!" greeted her ears from the open window of a gaming house, at another a bullet whizzed above her head, the outcome of a duel being fought in a narrow street she traversed. In and out she threaded her path until presently the pink flush of the dawn pierced the fog into a silvery mist, and she had gained the Beau's threshold. Passing the sleepy servants, Peggy ran up to her room and once again drew the bundle from its hiding place, tucked the long tail of her dark hair well inside, cast a glance of pitiable amusement about the chamber, and says she, going:

"God knows if I ever get leave to put on a lady's garments again, but I'll never come back here, that's certain, since now am I no one, not even Sir Robin McTart!"

So, challenged merely by the still drowsy footman who asks, "Beg pardon, and with submission, Sir Robin, but will you be home for dinner, sir, or not until supper?"

"For neither, today," answers her ladyship, running out into Peter's Court and then coming to a dead halt.

She drew a long, deep breath, as deep as the fog would let her, much as a dog does before he starts on the scent. She jingled the little money left in her purse, gave her hat the cock as she beheld a passerby and struck out for London bridge. Arrived at Surrey side, her ladyship paused to consider and, wrapping herself well in her camlet cloak, the which she had used at the masquerade so lately, thereby hiding her blue velvet breeches, laced waistcoat, point ruffles, Mechlin lace cravat, rich coat and jeweled hilt, soon obtained fare in the one seated cart of a country clown who was off for Tooting.

Her ladyship decided very quickly that 'twas but a necessary precaution for her to avoid highways, stagecoaches and inns of reputation, since probably by this a full description of the supposed Sir Robin would be word of mouth from Westminster to Mile End, and a dozen miles out of town mayhap a price set upon his head!

Once arrived at Tooting, 'twas her intention to double on her tracks, return with some bumpkin's load of vegetables to Garret lane and thence to foot it across country or by penny's worth rides with village folk, reaching the neighborhood of Kennaston perhaps late that night, or, if she should be compelled to sleep under some friendly farmer's roof, at least by the next high noon.

But her ladyship reckoned, if not without her hosts, most decidedly without taking count of the weary beast that dragged her nor yet of any possible fellow guests she might encounter on arriving at the Queen and Artichoke at Tooting.

It was nightfall when, limp and unnerved, a sorry, disheveled appearing young personage jumped from among a pile of oat bags and marched boldly into the parlor of the Queen and Artichoke.

"Was there a chamber to be had?" For her ladyship plainly saw she must lie at Tooting and not proceed on her homeward journey until the morrow.

There was a chamber, an admission hesitatingly made even at this modest hostelry to a young gentleman arriving without either servant, luggage, box, horse, coach or dog, and by means of a vile rickety little cart. Yet, such was her ladyship's swagger, notwithstanding a full splash of mud on the tip end of her handsome little chin, she was presently conducted to a decent chamber upstairs, at the rear, it is true, yet overlooking the green, where a game of bowls was in progress and with a fine trellis, thick with vines, beneath its small paned window.

Her ladyship had just eleven pence ha'penny left in her purse, yet, thought she, refreshed by a good meal and the leaving of her weapon as a hostage for her lodging, she would better eat than faint tonight, whatever might betide on the morrow.

While she washed her hands, after hiding the bundle under the feather bed, her ladyship heard the ring of horses' hoofs on the stone pave of the inn yard, and her quick ear even detected the fact that one of the steeds went lame.

She peered out of window and beheld Sir Percy astride of his own long roan, with Grigson just dismounting from the smoking black.

"This is cursed luck!" mutters the master as he himself, out of saddle, stoops to examine the roan's much swollen off hind leg.

"It is, Sir Percy," returns the man, "but, by your leave, sir, it may be we can hire a mount here, although it don't look too promisin'."

"Unlikely," says Sir Percy. "The best we can do is to lie in this hole for the night, and by a hot poultice and a bandage the roan may be in condition by tomorrow forenoon."

"Very well, sir. It be a poor place of entertainment, Sir Percy, with an ordinary at tenpence, sir." Grigson's tone of derision is marked by the guest, who draws close about her face the cotton curtain of the upper rear chamber window.

"Will you be pleased to be served in your room, Sir Percy, at once, and of whatever can be had? What wine, sir?"

"Tut, tut, Grigson. I'll into the ordinary. Off with you to the stables with the roan, rub her down and medicine her, then to your own supper in the kitchen."

"Host," observes Grigson loftily, as that worthy obsequiously appears in the yard with an attendant train, as is customary in welcoming persons of quality, "Sir Percy de Bohun has the condescension to say he will sup in the ordinary, and"—

Whatever Mr. Grigson's further remark may have intended to result in was at this crisis lost to posterity by such a clattering from up on the high road round the corner of the green lane, where nestled the Queen and Artichoke, that every eye was turned to behold such a cloud of dust as joyed the soul of boniface, whose tuned intelligence foresaw a coach and four horses, in the light of which Sir Percy de Bohun's reeking lame roan and ill kempt aspect faded into almost as much insignificance as had long since the traveler who had arrived in the clown's cart.

Boots alone was left to guide Sir Percy to his apartment, while the rest made a concerted dash for the yard entrance, just in time to make their most profound bows and courtesies before a spick little gentleman who thrust his inquiring little head out of window, keeping his door closed, as he beckoned the landlord to him with eager, heavy eyes well under cover of his pulled down hat.

"What guests have you tonight?" asked the little gentleman.

At the very moment he was propounding his query, Sir Percy, now sunk to ignominy even in the eyes of Boots by announcing he would sup at tenpence, was being ushered into an upper chamber adjoining the very one in which sat, dejected, robbed of even the prospect of food by his presence, Lady Peggy Burgoyne.

"Very few, my lord," answered the host glibly. "The very best chamber on the first floor with the sitting room has been kept for your lordship," applying hand to latch of coach door, the which, however, is still firmly held by its occupant.

"Their names?" asks the little gentleman, while at the fleck of one of the postilion's lashes his wheelers begin to prance and advance so far into the yard as that their racket brings Peggy a second time to her narrow pane, a-squinting up her eyes to see who this may be. For, in the midst of her distress, as befalls often enough to all of us, she takes unconscious note of minor happenings, the which those who study such matters affirm to be proof of the two sided condition of men's minds.

"Your guests' names?" reiterates the small gentleman as, followed by the cortege of dame, maid, man, dog, cat and tame magpie, the coach comes to a halt within excellent range of her ladyship's coign or vantage and carshot. "I must know them before I alight."

"Well, my lord, there's Mr. Bigge, the curate from Risley Commons, as stops over here on his way to Finchley every week; Mr. Blunt, the traveling tailor; his grace the Duke of Courtleigh's own man, off on his holiday; Mr. Townes and his new married wife a-goin' to

"Will you be home for dinner, sir?"

settle in the lodge at the manor house; a young spark drabbled with mud and havin' no boxes and no servants, what arrived by means of a market cart just anon, and Sir Percy de Bohun, a fine gentleman what's just ridden in the yard before your lordship's coach, but"—

"Who?" The little gentleman turned green in his pallor and shot back in his cushions with a gasp.

"Not much of any account, my lord, I'm thinking, since Jenny here tells me he sups at the ordinary. Of course your lordship 'll be served in your own sitting room and dame and myself to humbly wait upon you."

"Hold your tongue!" says the little man, gathering his scattered wits and pausing to think, while his steeds paw noisily on the cobble pavement.

Peggy, at the pane, almost laughs as she regards the shrinking, weazened visage.

"Sir Robin McTart!" she says to herself, shaking her head at the little vixen. "'Tis indeed a merry fate that puts me and Percy and you all under one roof this night—that is, if his presence don't fright you into a gallop."

Sir Percy himself, also for a second standing moodily at his casement, could and did behold thence Sir Robin's restive and hungry leaders and had a passing wonder as to what brought any gentleman to stop at such an inn, save as himself, by the misfortune of a nail in his animal's foot.

Sir Robin, however, with that discretion and prudence, not to say cowardice, which distinguished him, had purposely chosen the Queen and Artichoke, for, upon second thought, he had determined to sleep in comfort.

Sir Robin loved his feathers and quilts of a night far better than the jolt of ruts and ditches, and dreaded highwaymen more than even the pangs of delayed lovemaking.

By his choice he had hoped to escape the least chance of an encounter with Sir Percy, whom he believed to be in hot pursuit of him, and at this juncture his wise little pate quickly resolved that it were better for him to alight, gain his chamber and harbor there in safety until such time as that Sir Percy should have unsuspectingly proceeded on his quest.

"If you can insure me a perfect privacy, to go unseen to my rooms, a fair service and dry linen, with quiet as to cocks and neighbors, I will remain here for the present," says Sir Robin, almost taking in Lady Peggy by the squint of his uncontrollable left eye.

In a trice Sir Robin is attended to his bower, and ere long the best in the larder is laid before him. Sir Percy partakes of the homely fare of the ordinary, and her ladyship sits, unheeding the tardy summons of the dame, supperless, hungry, fagged, in her tiny room, where the warmth from the kitchen chimney reaches her, and where the goodly smells from Sir Robin's fowls, sausages, eggs and fruit pie assail her senses.

Mr. Grigson, doctoring the roan, endeavored with much creditable tact to get wind of the name or title of the master of the coach, but Sir Robin's men had had their lesson, and not a hint was to be got out of either of them by Mr. Grigson or by the curious host of the Queen and Artichoke himself.

By 11 every candle was out in the house. All the guests, save two, slept the sleep of the presumably just.

CHAPTER XVII.

THESE were Peggy and the little baronet. Her ladyship, mind made up to flee in the darkness, leaving sixpence on the table to pay for her lodgings, even now stood, latch in hand, bundle once more under arm, still a man, not having dared to change her garments.

Sir Robin lay ensconced betwixt the quilts, the realizing sense that his mortal enemy, one who sought his life, who coveted his lady—from whom he was running away, to be veracious—lay not many yards off him, seeming to banish that restful repose that had seldom hitherto forsaken this worthy and exemplary little person.

A mouse squeaked, and Sir Robin shivered; a beetle pattered across the hearth, his hair stood on end.

Surely a footstep sounded in the hallway, the boards creaked, something metallic struck against the panel of his door, and he sprang from his couch and chattered to his sword.

Lady Peggy's blade had struck the woodwork as she made her way stealthily down in the darkness. While Sir Robin shook she gained the lower end of the hall, but, not being acquainted with its ways and turnings, above all, having forgot the two broad steps that cut the straight road to the entrance in two, her ladyship, with much clanking of her weapon on the brick flooring, fell sprawling, her bundle shooting off into the unseen, she up on hands and knees, hither, yon, seeking it; Sir Robin beating on his wainscot such a tattoo as was fit to wake the dead, shrieking, from the safe shelter of the muffling pillows where he huddled:

"Murder! Thieves! Ho, there! Landlord! Tom! James! Ho, there, I say! Help! Help!"

Sir Percy is out of his four post upstairs in a flash, tinder struck, door flung open, in nightrail and cap, with rapier drawn, hanger uplifted.

"'Sdeath! What's the matter?" cries he at the top of lung. "Speak or I'll fire!" And down the stair he plunges to Sir Robin's very sill.

This one, having successfully summoned those more doughty than himself to cope with the supposed danger, now recognizing Sir Percy's voice, shivers and sweats as he cowers and pulls the counterpane over his head, grasping his purse in his sharp little fingers, wisely never undoing his door.

"Speak or I'll fire!" repeats Sir Percy, whose candle has been blown out by the draft. He takes a few steps down the hallway where he hears the curious scratching noise her ladyship is making as she distractedly feels around for the bundle.

At last she grasps it and creeps up unwittingly to Sir Percy's very side. De facto her arm grazes his as she now raises herself to a standing posture, exactly as her lover, no answer being vouchsafed him, pulls his trigger and the ball goes a-whizzing through Sir Robin's door panel and finds lodgment in the chimney bricks.

Peggy, her customary composure being much the worse for hunger and the general excitement, jumps when the shot pops and thus inadvertently now palpably touches Percy's elbow. He turns upon her and seizes her wrists in a grip of steel. She, as tightly hugging the bundle under her armpit, utters no sound, but wriggles and twists to such a purpose that she is about to get free when her opponent renews his endeavors with an oath.

"Speak," says he, "or I'll brain you!" making to hold Peg's two hands prisoner in one of his, the while he may seize his rapier and put a finish to the matter.

She does not speak, but to the scene jump now the heavy, cumbrous country folk, rattled out of their deep slumber by Sir Percy's ball and no less by the piercing and prolonged shrieks of Sir Robin, each Colin Clout and Dowsabel of 'em armed with whatever they could catch, yet, luckily for her ladyship, no one of them with sense enough to fetch a candle.

"A light, a light, you idiots!" cried Sir Percy, while her ladyship makes a final twist to free herself, fruitless as before. She feels her ebbing strength at its last pinch and feels, too, the bundle loosening in her hold.

Then as landlord stumbles to his tinder box amid an uproar from all the travelers, especially the new made bride and her spouse, Peggy finds herself let go, nay, almost thrust aside as her captor ejaculates testily:

"Zounds, girl, why did you not proclaim your sex, and not leave me to find it out by a long wisp of woman's hair between my fingers? Lights, lights, I say, and we'll get the fellow yet! He must be in the house, for no one's left it."

Sir Percy has been for the moment meshed in his lady's long tresses, which in the skirmish have broken leash of the bundle and dangle out yard's length.

For an instant she stands on the landing at bay. To unbolt the big door and make an open dash for freedom would mean certain death; to turn up therefrom and regain her chamber was her sole chance, and this must be done before a light could be struck.

She wheeled around and rushed up the hall, up the stairs among the clustering folks, nudging she knew not whom, skipped along the narrow rear passage and into her room before candle flames revealed to the amazed company that neither bolt, bar nor latch had been disturbed nor anything in the house taken.

[TO BE CONTINUED.]

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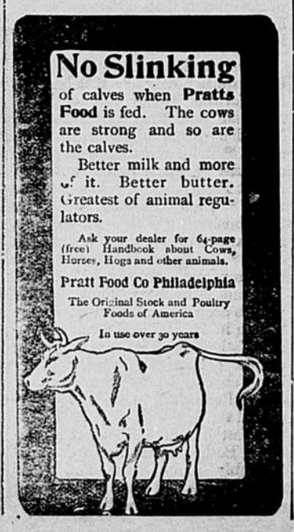

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March 1 & 15, 1904,
April 5 & 19, 1904,

The Manchester & Oneida, Railway will sell one way tickets, to Denver, Colorado Springs, and Pueblo, Colorado at $17.50.

For further information call on, or write, J. L. Kelsey,
49 5m. Traffic Mgr.

ANNOUNCEMENTS!

ILLINOIS CENTRAL R. R.

Direct to Havana

Via Illinois Central R. R. to New Orleans and the weekly Southern Pacific S. S. "Louisiana" to Havana. Leaves Chicago and Cincinnati Friday morning, leave St. Louis and Louisville Friday noon, arriving New Orleans Saturday 10:00 a. m. leave Saturday 2:00 p. m., arriving at Havana, Monday morning. Round trip and one-way through tickets at unusually low rates. Free Illinois Central R. R. Illustrated Folder on Cuba, giving all particulars, on application.

OCEAN STEAMSHIPS FROM NEW ORLEANS

Ocean steamship sailings from New Orleans for Mexico, Panama, Central and South America, West Indies and Europe concisely set forth in a special folder issued by the Illinois Central R. R. Send for a copy.

MEXICO Tour of all Mexico via Illinois Central R. R., under escort of

CALIFORNIA Reau Campbell, General Manager of the American Tourist Association, Quincy Building, 113 Adams St., Chicago, leaves Chicago January 26. Select clientele. Limited. All exclusive privileges, independent travel. Special Pullman Vestibule Train, Drawing Rooms, Compartments, Library and Music Room, with the largest Dining Car in the world, and the famous Open Top Observation Car, Chillilill. Special Baggage Car. Tickets include all expenses everywhere.

Special tours of Mexico and California via the Illinois Central and New Orleans under the auspices of Raymond & Whitcomb, will leave Chicago Friday, Feb. 12, and St. Louis Saturday, Feb. 13, 1904, for Mexico and California via New Orleans, including a stop-over for the Mardi Gras; also from chicago Friday, March 4th, and St. Louis Saturday, March 5th, for California, via the Illinois Central and New Orleans. Entire trips made in special private vestibule trains of finest Pullmans, with dining car service, Fascinating trips, complete in every detail.

Illinois Central Weekly Excursions to California. Excursion Cars through to Los Angeles and San Francisco as follows; Via New Orleans and the Southern Route every Wednesday from Chicago; every Tuesday from Cincinnati. Via Omaha and the Scenic Route every Wednesday from Chicago.

MARDI GRAS This occurs at New Orleans on February 16, 1904. For it excursion rate will be in effect to New Orleans on specific dates which your local ticket agent will be able to advise you.

NEW ORLEANS A delightfully unique city for the tourist to visit. Winter tourist rates now in effect. Double daily service and fast steam-heated vestibule trains with through sleeping cars, buffet-library-smoking car service and all meals enroute in dining cars. Ask for an illustrated book on New Orleans.

GULFPORT, MISS. The Great Southern Hotel at Gulfport, Miss., on the Mexican Gulf Coast, has 250 rooms single or en suite, with or without bath. Steam heat, electric light, hot and cold running water, and telephone in every room. Reached via Memphis and the Illinois Central's fast morning trains, carrying sleeping and buffet-library cars, with a single change, on same train en route at Memphis, into through sleeping car at Gulfport. Send for illustrated folder describing Gulfport and hotel.

FLORIDA Through "Dixie Flyer" Sleeping Car Lines St. Louis to Jacksonville and Chicago to Nashville, the latter connecting en route with through Jacksonville car from St. Louis. Route via Nashville, Chattanooga and Atlanta.

HOT SPRINS, ARK. Through Sleeping Car between Chicago and Hot Springs carried on the Central's fast Pullman vestibule "Limited" train. Send for book describing this most interesting of health and pleasure resorts.

Full Particulars concerning all of the above can be had of agents of the Illinois Central, or by addressing the nearest of the undesigned representatives of the "Central."

A. H. HANSON, G. P. A., Chicago, Ill.
J. F. MERRY, A. G. P. A., Dubuque, Iowa.
April 1, 1904.

M. & O. EXCURSIONS,

on the Certificate Plan.

Bloomington, Ill., March 1-3. State Convention Missionary Society of the Methodist Episcopal Church.

For further particulars call on or address the undersigned at Manchester, Iowa

J. L. Kelsey,
Traffic Mgr.

Through Sleeping Car from Chicago to Jacksonville, Fla., via I. C. R. R.

Commencing Sunday January 11, 1903, a through sleeping car from Chicago to Jacksonville, Fla., will be run on the Illinois Central Dixie Flyer, leaving Chicago at 6 30 p. m. daily via Nashville, Chattanooga and Atlanta.

2tf H. G. PIERCE, Agent.

Special Homeseekers Excursion.

On March 1st and 15th the Manchester and Oneida Railway will sell special round trip homeseekers excursion tickets, at the following special rates.

$24.30 to Amarillo, Quanah, Vernon, Ft Worth, Brady San Angelo, Waco, San Aution, Houston, Galveston, Corpus Christi, and all points in Texas north and east thereof.

To all points on the San Autonio and Araussa Pass Ry. Choctaw Oklahoma & Gulf Ry. Amarillo and east. Fort Worth and Denver City Ry. Amarilla to Ft Worth inclusive. To points in western Louisiana.

To all points in Indian and Oklahoma and Arkansas (except Hot Springs and points within 60 miles thereof) and to points in Kansas to which the regular homeseekers' rates are higher.

$29.30 to the following points in New Mexico C. P. & N. E. R. R. and points east of and including Alamogordo: C. R. I. & E. P. all points. Dawson R. R. all points. A. C. S. F. Ry all points Raton to Springer, inclusive. Pecos Valley System, to Carlsbad and Roswell and intermediate points.

To all points in Texas on the C. R. I. & M. Ry.

$35.80 to El Paso, Tex. and Deming, N. M. and all intermediate points to which regular homeseekers' rates are higher.

For further particulars, limits, and stop overs, call on or address the undersigned at Manchester Iowa.

J. L. Kelsey
7-4w. Traffic Mgr.

Locations for Business.

If you are seeking a location for any mercantile business, for the practice of a profession, or for the manufacture of any article, first communicate with the undersigned, who will inform you in regard to opportunities on the line of the Chicago Great Western Railway Co., the most progressive railway traversing the most fertile section of the United States. Maps and Maple Leaflets mailed and more specific information given as requested. W. J. Reed, Industrial Agent, 604 Endicott Bldg., St Paul, Minn. 5-w9.

Homeseeker's Excursions Via. the M. & O.

March 1 & 15, 1904,
April 5 & 19, 1904,

The Manchester & Oneida Railway will sell round trip Homeseeker's Tickets at one fare plus $2.00 for the round trip except rates to Denver, Colorado Springs, Pueblo and Trinidad, Col., and Cheyenne, Wyo., will be made one fare plus $5.50 for the round trip. No ticket to be sold for less than $9.00.

For children of five and under twelve years of age, tickets will be sold at half of the gross rate.

Tickets will be sold to points in Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado, Indian Territory, Western Iowa, Kansas and Nebraska, 100 miles west of the Missouri River, Louisiana, except New Orleans and Hammond, Minnesota, Missouri, New Mexico, North Dakota, Oklahoma, South Dakota, Tennessee, Texas, Utah, Salt Lake City, and Ogden only, Wisconsin and Northern Michigan and Wyoming.

For further particulars enquire of, or address, the undersigned at Manchester Iowa.

J. L. Kelsey, Traffic Manager.

M. & O. Homeseeker's Excursions.

February 2 and 16, March 1 and 15, and April 5 and 19 the Manchester and Oneida Railway Company will sell Homeseeker's Excursion tickets, good to return in 21 days, at one fare plus $2.00 for the round trip.

To Mason City and points in Iowa west on Iowa and Dakota division of the C. M. & St. P. Ry.

To Albert Lea, Taopa and Dexter, Minn, and points west on Hastings and Dakota Division of the C. M. & St. P. Ry.

To all points in North and South Dakota on the C. M. & St. P. Ry, except McCook and Jefferson.

To Storm Lake and Fonda and points north. To Hesford Junction, and Pembia, Wis. and points north in Wisconsin and Michigan. To nearly all points in Alabama, Arizona, Arkansas, Colorado to Rocky Ford, Ordway, Calahan, Byers, Fort Morgan, and points east in Colorado, Indian Territory all points, Iowa, to points on Iowa Central Ry Albion to Northwood inclusive and Algona. On Chicago Rock Island and Pacific Ry [B. C. R. & N. Ry.] to points north and west of Mason City. To Kansas and Nebraska, all points west of stations 100 miles west of the Missouri river. Kentucky, Louisiana, Mexico, Michigan, Mississippi, Minnesota, points in southwest Missouri, all points in New Mexico, Oklahoma and Texas.

For further information, call on or address, the undersigned at Manchester Iowa. J. L. KELSEY
3w14 Traffic Manager

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