

MISTER BILL

BY ALBERT E. LYONS

In today's issue of The Sunday Call is concluded Albert E. Lyons' novel, "Mister Bill." This story will be followed two weeks hence (beginning in The Sunday Call of April 22) by "The Sage-Brush Parson," by A. B. Ward. It is, as its title plainly suggests, a tale of early life in Nevada, possessing the strongest of characters, especially that of the hero of the story, Rev. Clement Vaughan, a young Englishman, around whom the author has woven an interesting romance. Among the best critics "The Sage-Brush Parson" has been referred to as equaling in many points and surpassing in many others "The Sky Pilot" and "The Virginians." If you are looking for something refreshing for the mind you will find it in "The Sage-Brush Parson," which will be concluded in five issues of The Sunday Call.

CHAPTER XXX.

Man to Man.

IT'S the reigning sensation! The evening papers fairly bristle with excitement and importance. Brought down a bunch—got them all. Thought you might like to become acquainted with yourself. You are supplied with a life history gratis. I imagine. You are the wonder of the age—the Napoleon of Finance, in big type, if you please. They have unfortunately detracted from your good looks—worked in a convenient baseball player for the phenomenal young financier, I dare say. You don't seem any the worse for your experience," said Jack, critically regarding his guest, as he admitted him into the familiar living-room of his home.

"No appreciable disability to date," Waldron briefly replied, seemingly not imbued with the enthusiasm of his young friend.

"The street seems to think the whole affair a huge joke on Burrows and his crowd. Mighty few are sorry that a reef has finally been taken in the old man's sails. Just to think of the old fellow walking up to the captain's office and writing his little check for big figures, and settling like any of the small fry. It's a new experience for him; he will never forgive you, but I guess you can stand it. Lots of people know you—remember you as a boy—knew your father. Oh! you will have plenty of friends, and they won't be long in making their appearance. I guess that was why you were willing to come down here tonight—to get away from the crowd camping on your trail?" queried the young man, suddenly realizing that his remarks were not receiving the attention he deemed them worthy.

"Partially, and partially because I wished to see Mrs. Davidge. I have reason to believe that her affairs are more or less involved in the general transaction. I understood last evening that she was coming down today with the girls."

"Yes, they will be here on the next train. Did you notice that my little railroad developed considerable strength, or didn't you think of it in the general excitement?"

"I managed to keep it in sight, considering that it was a part of the deal," said Waldron, smiling at the young man's enthusiasm.

"So that was what brought it so suddenly to life?"

"Yes. Consolidated Properties rescued the railroad from bankruptcy, and owns the controlling interest. From now on the railroad will share in the prosperity of the whole district."

"Even at the present quotations my mother has more than sufficient to pay the mortgage, and I suppose the stock will continue to increase in value, will it not?"

"Not an unreasonable supposition."

"And just to think of that despised little railroad bobbing up like a jack-in-the-box! Mr. Burrows probably wishes that he had held the stock a little longer. By the way, mother has been formally notified that arrangements have been made with Mr. Chadeller to assume the responsibility of the mortgage. He has agreed to carry it for a year, and altogether Mr. Burrows seemed to consider the matter very well disposed of. As he never stood to lose any of his own money, he could afford to make a liberal discount to Mr. Chadeller, and that shrewd gentleman sees prospective profits in the rapidly increasing value of the property, and is content to bide his time."

"Your conclusions are fairly well based, I should say, young man. But if you will pardon the change from a very interesting to a very commonplace subject—what size collars do you wear?"

"Come upstairs, and I will see what I can do for you," laughed Jack, leading the way.

At Waldron's request, the two had come down to Jack's home, Jack preceding his guest by an hour or more. The day had certainly been a most eventful one for the young financier, and he might well feel elated with his success. He had come out of the West a stranger and alone; he had boldly and fearlessly invaded the stronghold of the enemy; he had quietly and deliberately laid his plans of campaign, and had fought a sharp and decisive engagement resulting in the utter and complete rout of his opponents. He not only had made himself and those immediately associated with him richer by many thousands of dollars, but had placed their property beyond the reach of the scheming and unscrupulous individuals that had preyed upon it for months, and had taught them a lesson they would not soon forget. His name was on thousands of lips this night, for not alone in the great city but far and wide the telegraph had sped the news of the big corner and the few conspicuous facts concerning the

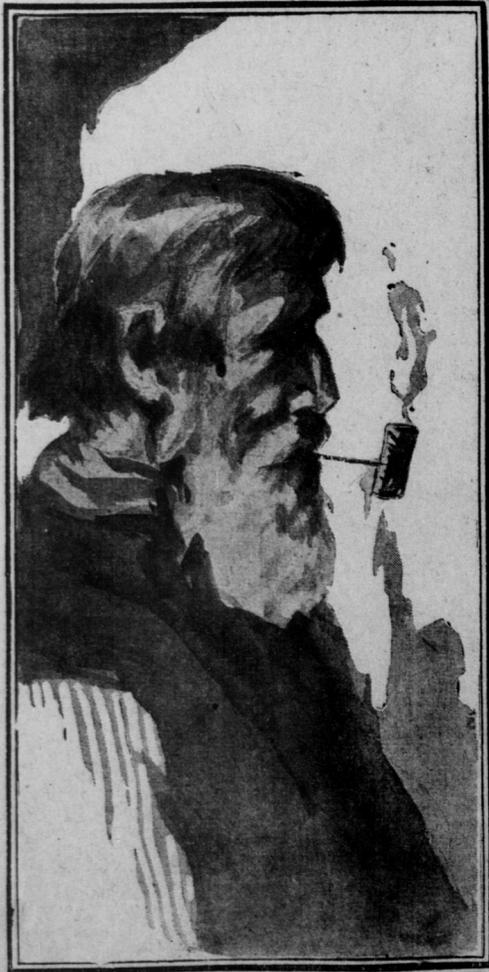
young man to whom was due the credit of its conception and execution.

In the city he was eagerly sought. Friends of his boyhood, from whose recollection he had long since faded, were eager to renew the acquaintance; others who knew him not were no less anxious to make his acquaintance. Reporters were lying in wait for him to obtain more detailed information concerning himself and the affair for their morning papers. But he was not to be found, and he might as well have disappeared from off the earth for all the information to be obtained of him this night. The penalty of success had begun to clamor for an early reckoning.

"In this way, Mrs. Winston, you will be

dejer, addressing Mrs. Winston as they entered the living-room, continuing a conversation begun in an adjoining room. "As I have explained, I am willing to exchange the mortgage for the stock and take chances of its becoming of value to me sooner or later."

The joy of the good woman when she finally grasped the full meaning of this splendid offer was beyond her power to express. The possibility of being so easily rid of the dark cloud hanging over the little home like an impending fate was too good to be true. In the excitement occasioned by this unexpected piece of good fortune she had taken the package of certificates from the little tin box in which they had reposed since coming into her



DAVE BISHOP

"I WON'T STAND IT JIP—I WON'T STAND IT! I'LL SEE YOU HANGED BEFORE I'LL SUBMIT TO SUCH AN OUTRAGE!"

occurred to her. To be sure, Jack had cautioned her to guard them well, yet what better purpose could they serve than to be exchanged for the dread mortgage—she knew of none. She led the way into the living-room expecting to find Jack. She was not aware of the arrival of his friend, nor had Mr. Chadeller any idea that either was in the house. Jack was rarely at home except on Sundays and an occasional Saturday afternoon, and to a knowledge of this fact might safely be attributed Mr. Chadeller's presence in the house at this particular time. He advanced some further reasons why the exchange should be consummated without delay; indeed, it was all perfectly simple, the mere matter of Jack's approval the

only obstacle which, after all, was not essential, and he would be no less pleased to be so easily rid of the troublesome mortgage.

"Yes, Mr. Chadeller," she finally assented, "it seems quite clear that I should accept your very kind and generous offer. I have here the certificates, and if you really feel justified in making the exchange I will surrender them to you," tears springing into the good woman's eyes, "and you cannot understand, Mr. Chadeller, how very grateful I am—how grateful we all are—"

"Pardon me, Mrs. Winston," a voice interposed. "Permit me," the same voice continued, its owner advancing and extending his hand to relieve her of the

package, on which the other man was about closing his fingers.

So deeply had both been absorbed with the serious matter engaging their attention that two men had slowly descended the stairs, and one had even advanced leisurely across the room before his presence was discovered. Mrs. Winston was not a little surprised and confused by this strange proceeding, yet she surrendered the papers without protest—the whole affair from beginning to end was beyond her comprehension.

Consternation was the portion of Mr. Chadeller and could he have quietly dropped through the floor he would doubtless have made such informal disposition of himself. Surely surprises had been

his portion overmuch—an avenging fate in the person of the man before him seemed to be hard upon his trail.

"You may safely entrust the matter with me for the moment, Mrs. Winston," said Waldron, "and Jack," addressing the young man, "I will have a few words with the gentleman," whereupon mother and son withdrew, leaving the two men alone, the one thoughtfully contemplating the package of certificates he held in his hand, the other waiting with ill-concealed discomfiture the next move on the part of the man who had arranged this private interview. Several times he essayed to break the embarrassing silence, but his half-formed words failed of audible expression.

The situation was becoming positively unbearable when Waldron slowly raised his eyes and studied the other cautiously for a brief moment before breaking the silence. "Mr. Chadeller," he finally said, "I dealt with you today as a man—one man with another. I find I made a mistake. You are incapable of appreciating such treatment. I should have bitten."

"I don't understand you, sir. My business here is legitimate and entirely straightforward. If I choose to exchange the mortgage for the stock, and to take chances of making a few dollars or of losing a few—perhaps all—and at the same time do my friends a good turn, it is simply a matter of business in which they are relieved of an obligation, while I may profit, or I may lose. Do you blame me?"

"No! I—pity you," said Waldron, with the contempt.

"Mr. Chadeller indignantly exclaimed, "I am well within my rights and privileges in this matter, I would have you understand," he vigorously de-