Maubikeck, the Lion-Tamer.

By SEWARD W. HOPKINS,

Author of "Jack Robbins of America," "In the China Sea," "Two Gentlemen of Hawaii," "On a False Charge," Etc.

CHAPTER XIV.—(Continued.)

We hurried on to Havre, Nita, Thorlane and I, and took passage on La Touraine for New York.

At my suggestion, Nita had engaged a maid, and as she was an elderly, sour-visaged female, she served every purpose of chaperon as well as of preserving appearances.

Once in New York I sought the major. I found him at the club and he nearly fell in a heap on the floor when he beheld me.

"By Gad!" he exclaimed, rushing to me, wringing by hands, tears streaming down his face and his whole frame trembling. "Dick! Wilberton, old fellow, how did you do it? We heard you were dead, you know."

"Heard I was dead, eh? Well, I'm a lively dead man, major. I've got what I went after, and more, too. Had all sorts of adventures and narrow escapes. Brought back Maubikeck, whose name is Henry Thorlane, and Nita Barlotti, whose name is Alice Graviscourt."

"No! Gad! Is it so? Have you got the proof?"

"Proof enough. We must see Charles Sigmotta at once. I need another bit of testimony from him, and then we'll tackle Graviscourt and knock him out."

I showed the major the locket and pin and read to him the statements of Antonio Sigmotta and Dambo.

"You returned just in time," said the major, grimly. "The wedding is now surely on the way. I have learned since you left the true inwardness of Broughton's preference for Graviscourt. It seems that Broughton's means are much more limited than we have supposed, and he has from time to time borrowed money from Graviscourt, giving him a mortgage on his house as security. He has gone to the wall financially, and Graviscourt pushes his claim to Edith, promising Broughton to cancel all debts the day she becomes his bride. She held out firmly until the news came that you died in Sardinia of some fever, and then the poor girl gave up the fight and consented to be a sacrifice to save her father. But you are in time, boy—you are in time. Edith loves you, and you only. Do up Graviscourt and the field is yours."

"What about Nita?" I asked. "She is now at the same hotel as Thorlane and I, but it doesn't look just—"

"Not at all, boy; not at all. My sister, Mrs. Dabner, is just the one. She will be glad to receive her as a guest, and, of course, her wedding must be in my sister's home. I will see Nellie at once."

True to his promise, the major saw his sister, and she readily assented to his plan. That evening Nita was escorted to Mrs. Dabner's house, where she remained until she became Mrs. Henry Thorlane.

When I left the club, I was hurrying through the street, when lo! I saw Edith Broughton coming toward me, with a couple of small packages in her arms. And she was alone. My death had freed her from all danger, in Broughton's eyes, and she was now allowed to go shopping alone. I looked about me hurriedly, and saw a doorway that was somewhat dark and secluded. I waited near it, and when Edith came up I seized her, whisked her into that doorway, and proceeded to hug and kiss her in a fashion that partially recompensed me for the long period of waiting I had undergone. At first she was frightened nearly out of her wits, but when she realized who it was that had her fast, the darling put her arms around my neck and met me fairly half way, dropping her bundles in her excitement.

"Dick! Darling Dick!" she cried. "They told me you were dead." Kisses.

"I don't look very dead, do I, darling?" More kisses. "I have come back to take you away from that fellow, Graviscourt, and no nonsense about it now, either. I've learned courage since I left New York, and you will be my wife now if I have to kill Graviscourt and your respected parents to get you!"

"Oh, Dick, darling, what an escape I've had! If you'd been a little later I'd have married him to save papa. Oh! think of it, Dick."

"Don't do it. Think of me. You are sure you love me?"

"Oh, Dick!" reproachfullly.

I kissed her again. Her face was suffused with blushes. Her hat was awry. She was half laughing and half crying in her happiness.

"Some one will see us, Dick," she said, finally. "Do call a carriage and take me home."

So I called a carriage, and, putting my future wife into it, I clambered in after her and set her down at her own door. Then I lighted a cigar and, ordering the driver to take me to the hotel, I lay back on the cushions, the most exquisitely happy, contented and egotistically satisfied individual in the universe.

On the day following that upon which we arrived in New York, a party of three wended our way to number 300 Mulberry street, and upon presentation of our names were ushered into the presence of Superintendent Byrnes of the Metropolitan Police. His grim face softened with a smile when he saw us, and he held out a brawny hand that nearly crushed mine as he greeted me.

"So the dead has returned to life," he said pleasantly. "You gave us quite a scare, young man."

"Not I superintendent, but my friends did it for me," I replied. Then I launched into the object of our visit.

Byrnes listened attentively while I told him the whole story, omitting nothing which in the smallest degree bore upon the mystery of Alice Graviscourt and Nita Barlotti. He listened attentively, with his eyes fixed steadily upon my face. Then I read the statements of Antonio Sigmotta and Dambo and exhibited the pin and locket with the miniature photograph. The major and Thorlane were as keen in listening as if it was the first time they had heard these things.

When I had finished, the superintendent said:

"I do not see that anything is lacking except the confession of Charles Sigmotta. You have now enough to convict him, but it would be difficult to connect the man Graviscourt with the crime. The identification of Nita Barlotti as Alice Graviscourt seems to be pretty well established, and if Charles Sigmotta was dead, you could give Graviscourt quite a fight. But with Sigmotta's own confession you will overwhelm him so utterly that he will have no loophole of escape."

"That is just the way we look at it," I replied, "and we came to you to get your advice as to the best way to obtain Sigmotta's confession."

The superintendent thought a moment.

"There is no doubt, is there, major," he said, "that the druggist Tortoni is Charles Sigmotta?"

"Not the least," replied the major. "I identified him before Wilberton and Thorlane went away, and Dambo's statement verifies mine."

"Tortoni the druggist went away on the same day that Malignl did," I said. "I do not know whether he has returned or not."

"It will not take long to learn," said the superintendent. "But first let us get at what we want to do with him. Undoubtedly the man deserves the severest punishment that can be meted out to him under the law. The fact that his murderous intention was frustrated by his brother does not make his act any the less heinous."

"True," I said. "But the punishment of Sigmotta is not the end sought. It is Graviscourt we want. I do not think we need to do much with Sigmotta, who probably did what he was employed to do. I would be willing to let up on him for the sake of getting at the absolute truth in regard to the whole matter."

"I see," said the superintendent. "And armed thus, you will proceed against Graviscourt?"

"With that I have nothing to do," I replied. "My duty is ended the moment the truth is established. The case then goes to Nita Barlotti and her affianced husband, Henry Thorlane. I trust them to regain her rights."

Thorlane smiled grimly.

"Would it not be a good plan to go to Tortoni's drug store and confront him with the facts we have already learned and squeeze him until he squeals?"

Byrnes laughed.

"I see you have the vernacular," he said, "but I think I can show you a better squeezing trick than that. Let me have the papers." He rang a bell and an officer entered. "What is the address of the drug store?" asked the superintendent.

I told him.

He wrote something on a piece of paper and handed it to the officer.

"Go to that address and bring the man here at once, if you can find him," he said.

The officer saluted and went out.

In about fifteen minutes, during which time I had produced some cigars and we all sat smoking, he returned with a snivering, demoralized, opium-scented, whisky-rotten wretch, who quailed before the steely gaze of the superintendent. Then his eyes fell on the major, and he started, for, after all the years, the fallen physician recognized the man of the world.

"Sit down," said the superintendent, and the quivering wretch fell into a chair.

At the superintendent's command a stenographer now quietly made his appearance and sat near his chief, with pencil ready.

"What is your name?" asked the superintendent.

"Tortoni," was the reply, with a side look at the major to see if he nailed the lie.

"'M! What was it before it was Tortoni?" asked the superintendent.

The wretch writhed in his chair.

"Speak quick," said Byrnes. "It will be better for you."

"I was born Tortoni," said the fellow, doggedly.

"Ah! Then how did you come to adopt the name Sigmotta, under which you practiced medicine?" asked the superintendent, blandly.

The Italian turned ashy white and shook with fear.

"Do you know why you were brought here?" asked the superintendent.

Sigmotta shook his head.

"No," he muttered

"To answer to the charge of murder."

Sigmotta leaped to his feet and stood like a wild animal, panting before the calm man of clubs.

"It is a lie!" he cried, hoarsely. "A foul lie! Of whose murder am I accused? Who is my accuser?"

"You have several accusers," replied the superintendent. "And you are accused of inciting one Luigi Dambo to the murder of Nita Barlotti, once a performer in Pacho Malignl's circus, and also inciting this same Dambo to the murder of Malignl himself. You had made an attempt on his life and failed. You recall the occurrence—the last night of Malignl's circus, when you put a bullet through his cheek?"

(To be continued.)

QUEER PEOPLE OF THE WORLD

Definitions Unfamiliar to Most Geographical Students.

If a person were confined to one text-book, the best one to choose would be a dictionary, since it gives an inkling of every art, science or profession known to mankind. A study of the dictionary is always interesting and instructive, and a simple turning of its pages will acquaint us with many things of which we have never previously heard. Notice what a fund of information is contained in the following definitions:

Amphiscians are the people who inhabit the tropics, whose shadows in one part of the year are cast to the north and in the other to the south, according as the sun is north or south of their zenith.

The Antiscians are the inhabitants of the earth living on different sides of the equator, whose shadows at noon are cast in contrary directions. Those living north of the equator are antiscians, to those living south of that line, and vice versa. The shadows on one side are cast toward the north and upon the other toward the south.

The Ascians are the people who live in a land where, at a certain time of each year, they have no shadows at noon. All the inhabitants of the torrid zone are Ascians, they having a vertical sun twice a year.

The Periscians are the inhabitants of the polar circle, whose shadows, during some portions of the summer, must in the course of the day move entirely around and fall toward every point of the compass.

FOX, HAWK AND CAT.

Mix-Up Resulted Disastrously for Bird of Prey.

Foxes are not easily domesticated. They are distrustful creatures, and always pine for freedom; but in rare instances reynard loses his wildness and responds, after a fashion of his own, to human kindness. Of such a one a daily paper tells a pretty story:

Ned is a tame fox so well trained and of such good intentions that he will not touch any of the poultry on the place. Chickens feed near his box, and he acts as if he liked their society. Doubtless they serve to render his confinement less irksome.

One morning recently a large chicken-hawk swooped down and caught a chicken close to the box where the fox is chained. Ned, hearing the noise, sprang out and caught the hawk by the leg. The bird released the chicken and settled its free claw deep into the fox's nose. Reynard squealed, but he hung to the hawk's leg.

At this moment a cat that had become attached to the fox heard Ned's cries of pain, and rushing out she sprang upon the hawk and clawed its back. That made the hawk let go the fox's nose very suddenly to protect itself from this new foe. It tried to claw the cat, and while thus engaged, the fox set his teeth into its head and shook the life out of it.

Soon after this Ned and the cat were seen lying down side by side, in great amity and contentment.—Youth's Companion.

A "MAN OF STEADY HABITS."

But the Habits Were Not Such as to Recommend Him.

It was a very angry man who met an acquaintance on the street the other day. "I thought you told me that D. was a man of steady habits," were his first words following the usual salutation. "I said I required a man of absolutely steady habits, and you were very positive in your assurance that the man in question was such a one."

"Well, has he proved otherwise?"

"Why, man, he is drunk all of the time; in fact, I do not think he has drawn a sober breath since he has been with me."

"Then what are you jumping on me for? Your own statement bears out just what I told you about him. I have known D. for the past ten months, and I know that he has been drunk during all of that period, and if that isn't being a 'man of steady habits,' I'd like to know what it is?"

How He Met the Crisis.

When David Graham Phillips, author of "Her Serene Highness," was a very young man, he applied for work on a Cincinnati paper.

"What can you do?" said the editor.

"I can try anything," replied the young man.

Thinking to rid himself of further importunities for an assignment, the editor said:

"Well, write an article on bread."

It was a trying moment for the ambitious youngster, but he never flinched. All that night he collected material, and the next day reported to the surprised editor with a bright and newsy article on "The Bakeries of Cincinnati."

The young reporter was immediately engaged.

Sullivan's New Amusement.

John J. Sullivan distinguished himself the other day by throwing a handful of money into a crowd. You are improving, John. Once your boast was that you had "money to throw to the birds." Throwing it to people is much better, but don't throw any bad money, John.—Exchange.

Moon's Highest Mountain.

The highest mountain in the moon is at least 35,000 feet in height; that is 6,000 feet higher than Mount Everest.

THE EDITOR IS JOYFUL.

Kansas Molder of Thought Announces His Approaching Marriage.

There is but one more week of single blessedness for the editor of this paper. A young woman has consented to take our name and share with us the burdens and joys of life. She is Miss Elsie Kitzmiller, youngest daughter of Mrs. Lavinia Kitzmiller. Her father was Frank Kitzmiller, a veteran of the civil war, who died one year ago.

The time set for the ceremony is next Wednesday at 2 o'clock in the afternoon at the home of Mrs. Kitzmiller. A number of friends have been invited—but not nearly all. The house would not hold nearly one-third of all those "we" should have been pleased to see present. (This is not the editor we—"we" having assumed a new significance.) But there will be enough, we hope, to fill the house and see that the job is well done. There will be no attendants. "We" will be the whole show. There will be no tears—everyone will be glad to see us (editorially us) finally married. There will be a happy, handsome couple, the handsomeness being contributed by the other half.

No one's life is complete who lives alone. No, of course not. To develop into a surly, crabbed, soul-shriveled, old bachelor, or dwindle away an old maid full of vinegar and fool notions—what unhappier fate! To form a complete and useful life, marriage is a necessity as well as a luxury. Yet these considerations are mere side issues. The first consideration is to find someone you can love, respect, admire. Love is apart from logic. It is capricious. It frowns upon wealth, tramples over differences of age, breaks down any established rules of precedence and astounds the coolly systematic. We are it. Time passes slowly.—Highland Kansas Vidette.

British Mining Industry.

A blue book has just been issued, giving the statistics of the persons employed, and the output and the accidents in the mines of Great Britain for the year 1901. It appears from the statistics that the total number of persons employed in and about the mines of the United Kingdom was 839,178. Compared with 1901 there is an increase of 26,683 persons at the coal mines, and a decrease of 2,022 persons at metalliferous mines. The output of minerals at the coal mines was 231,343,224 tons, of which 219,037,240 were coal, and the balance was fireclay, ironstone, shale and sundry minerals. Adding 9,705 tons which come from open quarries the total output of coal for the year was 219,046,945 tons, and this is a decrease of 6,134,355 tons.

Restaurant Cook's Idea.

A young man who dines quite frequently in a French restaurant, whose reputation is based on the unvarying excellence of the dishes served, sent for the chef the other night to compliment him on a poulet en casserole. "I like you," said the cook, "because you never bring any women in this place. They ruin a cook and a restaurant. A gentleman who comes in alone for his dinner regards the dishes and pays his whole attention to the food he is eating. But when he is with a woman! Bah! He laughs, he talks, he regards only his companion, his attention is distracted, the cook and his work are forgotten. It is not popularity that ruins a restaurant, it is the women and music."—New York Press.

The Humor of Cycle Taxation.

Possession may be nine-tenths of the law, but the remaining tenth occasionally makes trouble, especially in France. A man in Paris had two motor cycles, on which he paid the annual tax uncomplainingly until the motor cycles were stolen from him two years ago. The law insists he should go on paying taxes indefinitely, as he cannot prove that he no longer possesses the cycles by returning the taxing plaques which were attached to the machines and, of course, vanished with them. As long as he does not return the plaques the law considers he is in possession of the cycles, and insists on the taxes being paid.

Engraver of the Bank of France.

The engraver of the Bank of France is not to be envied in regard to the conditions under which he works. The bank is about to issue a new thousand-franc note, and the engraver has been working at the plates for the last eighteen months. Each morning he arrives at the bank, where a special room is reserved for him. Here one of the most trusted of the bank messengers receives him, locks him in, and mounts guard outside the door. In the evening all the plates and accessories are put in a box, which is sealed up and transported to the vaults below, where it is locked up for the night.

Wait a Little Longer.

Befo' you droop un'neath the load,
Jess' wait a little longer;
Befo' you drap on de stony road,
Jess' wait a little longer;
Don' be too quick foh to sob an' sigh
"O my, I'se gwine foh to up an' die!"
Maybe dey's a help come, by and by—
Jess' wait a little longer.

O it's mighty dahk in de col' midnight,
Jess' wait a little longer;
Hang on an' pray foh de mawnin' light—
Jess' wait a little longer;
Kase de dahkest night kain't las' foh ayre,
An' de dahkest hour am jess' fo' day;
Some time dem clouds gwine roll away—
Jess' wait a little longer.

Ex-Governors of States.

Connecticut has seven ex-governors living. Massachusetts has but three.

Pleased With His Own Wit.

H. M. C. Vedder, vice president of the Account, Audit and Assurance company, took out his watch the other day and found that the mainspring was broken. He went into the nearest jeweler's, who was a stranger to him, and was told that he would have to leave the timepiece for about a week.

"I wish you would loan me one to carry,' said Mr. Vedder, "for I am lost without it."

"Yes," replied the jeweler, quickly, "but if I loaned you one you might get lost with it."

The jeweler was so pleased with his own wit that he loaned his customer a good watch.—New York Times.