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IN PURSUIT OF WEALTH.

One of the Experiences of Mr. Alexander Mann

When Seeking His Fortune in the Old North State.

Trip to the Dry, Healthy Region of Sand Hills and Pine Trees in Moore County.

Once upon a time there was a man who thought he would go to North Carolina and make his fortune. He was a large-minded man, and so it seemed to him more necessary to consider the general subject of going than such small details as what he should do after he got there. Looking at the map he discovered that North Carolina is a very large state, it must therefore have great opportunities in it for large-minded men. Reading a railroad handbook he discovered what some of these opportunities were. He learned that there was a great deal of gold packed away in the state and would have been more if it had not been crowded out by immense deposits of coal, marble and valuable building stone of every sort. It was the same story with all the other productions. Big as the Old North State was, it could hardly contain all its natural wealth. The rich, arable lands were elbowed and jostled by forests of costly woods. Along the coast a tremendous abundance of fish and oysters threatened to overwhelm the prolific truck-farms. Never was there a section so plethoric with unused resources. The smiling earth needed only to feel the tickling finger of the plough to laugh outright in rich crops. Trees were moaning with disappointment at not being cut down and converted to the use of man. Rivers were roaring with rage at having no manufactories upon which to exert the tremendous energy of their water-power. It was only necessary for a man to go down there; when he was on the spot he could decide by which one of many avenues he would pursue wealth, and then start at once to pursue it.

But the man's wife said "No, it will be better to talk over some of the ways and means of making this fortune before we go."

"All right," replied the man cheerfully, for he was always ready to discuss anything under the sun, "suppose we go down there and raise silk-worms."

"Or poultry and grapes," suggested his wife.

"Or mushrooms," added the man.

"Mushrooms?" said his wife with a puzzled air, "I didn't know people culti-

vated those horrid things, I thought they grew in the woods, and that sometimes they were toad stools and then you got poisoned. But surely you don't mean—"

"Yes, I do," the man replied, "Just see here," and he flourished a thin book in sage-green covers. "This is an English book that tells all about it. Listen now, while I read you a few extracts:—"

"Mr. Thickley Boggs of Uphill-Dowdale, Surrey, cleared, last season, off of one-half acre of mushrooms the pleasing sum of nine hundred and three pounds, eight shillings and tuppence-halfpenny."

"There, that will do," laughed the wife, whom we will call Mrs. Mann, for short.

"But, my dear child," said Mr. Mann, "does your infant mind succeed in fully grasping the fact which is here stated? Do you realize that this means in round numbers, forty-five hundred dollars? Do you realize—?"

"Yes, yes, I'm sure I realize all we are ever likely to from mushroom culture."

Naturally Mr. Mann was disappointed when he found there was not room enough in his wife's mind for a half-acre of mushrooms. But he listened to her persuasions and gave up for the time being his pursuit of fortune along this particular avenue. And so Mr. and Mrs. Mann decided to give their whole strength to silk-worms, poultry and grapes.

In those remote days people who wanted to go to North Carolina always wrote to the secretary of information, telling him what sort of business they wished to engage in, and he invariably replied that there were large opportunities in that particular line then waiting, and enclosed an order for railroad fare at a reduced rate.

"Don't for pity's sake say anything about mushrooms," said Mrs. Mann to her husband as he set about writing.

Mr. Mann nodded in a manner calculated to convey the impression that he scorned the imputation of such folly, but did not look up, and when his wife had left the room, tore up the sheet upon which he was engaged and began another.

A week later he was in Raleigh on a prospecting tour. While there he learned that the place he ought to go to was somewhere down in Moore county. It was a high, dry, healthy region of sand hills and pine trees. There was plenty of pure water and wholesome air. Land was cheap and easily cleared, and silk-worms, grapes and chickens would thrive there most amazingly. He decided to go down there at once and look about for a location.

The train left Raleigh a little after six in the evening and had a run of about seventy miles to make in reaching Mr. Mann's destination. Trains had not attained to a high rate of speed in that section in those ancient days, so that it was pretty nearly midnight when our

traveler found himself drawing near to his journey's end. The place he wanted to reach was not yet a regular station of the railroad, but was a mile and a half distant from the nearest stop. In his Northern ignorance he accepted the situation and got off the train at the appointed place, unaware of the fact that he had only to ask the pleasant-faced "captain" to let him get off a mile and a half further down the track and it would be done.

A man and a woman and a little colored girl got off the cars at the same time that he did, and they four jogged along together on their midnight walk. He found his companions very agreeable. Their voices were soft, yet kindly and sincere, and that of the woman had a genuine Northerly tone in it that gave the exile from home great comfort.

It was a night such as Mann had never experienced. The air was as soft and sweet as the breath of a little child. Near at hand, among the long dry grasses on each side of the track there was a gentle susurrus as from some great creature asleep. Far off a dog bayed and seemed to wake a dozen others, whose voices joined in deepening chorus. The train they had left a little while before could be heard whistling into the next station below. But in and through, under and over all these sounds was another, unfamiliar to his ears, a dull continuous roaring, like the voice of falling water.

"What's that?" asked Mann, stopping so suddenly in the middle of the track that the little negro girl behind him screeched "Oh Lawd!" and tumbled in a heap on the bundles she was carrying.

"What's ailin' you Julia? Come, come, quit that foolishness, stop your squallin' and git offen my handbox." The woman turned to Mr. Mann and said apologetically, "These niggahs are so triffin', it takes right smart of patience to git along with 'em."

"Sorry I caused such a commotion," said Mann contritely. "I merely meant to inquire the cause of that strange roaring I hear all the time. Is there a full of water near by?"

"That?" said the woman stopping to listen, as if she had not heard the sound all her life. "Oh, that's the pines. They always sound that-a-way. Kind of fearsome at night, I think," and she quickened her pace a little.

Silhouetted against the moonlit sky were rank upon rank of great trees. Some were entirely bare of foliage, others nodded heavy heads of green. Many stood up tall and soldierly, but there were many others bent and twisted out of any tree-likeness known to our traveler. Long, slender needles, silvery in this light spread out from the ends of the branches and twigs, like quivering figures; they thrust upward, downward; they clashed together and then flung apart, and all the time their moaning never ceased.

The air was full of the pungent breath

of these trees, and many spring-time odors that Mann did not fail to note. After a little time, though he civilly kept one ear open for such talk as his companions might pour into it, he gave the other, as well as both eyes and his whole heart to the sweet sensuous night.

He could make out but little of the nature of the country he was traversing. It seemed to be covered with low shrubs or dwarf trees, except where the pines towered upward sixty, seventy, eighty feet. Through its scanty covering of fallen leaves the sand gleamed snowy white, an odd, cool contrast to the warm and languorous air. Here and there the outline of an isolated oak, whose leafless boughs made delicate tracing of shadow-pattern upon the moon lighted ground, or a gigantic blackened stump, uncannily human in shape, challenged the wayfarers as they passed.

At length they came to where the track ran through a shallow cut, one side of which had been shovelled away, making a broad road through ankle-deep sand up to a three story white-washed structure in the front part of which a light was burning.

"There," said the woman, "I reckon they'll keep you in this house tonight. If they can't you jes' come on down the track to the nex' house, and we'll get up a bed for you somehow. Good night, sir."

"Good night madam. and to you sir. I thank you very much for your kindness," said Mann heartily, touched by the cordial good will in the tones of these strangers.

[CONCLUDED IN NEXT ISSUE.]

The Duke of Cambridge.

The venerable and cheerful Duke of Cambridge has come home looking hearty and has been to Newmarket to see the St. Leger run. He is a funny old gentleman, but not nearly so funny as his father was. Did you ever hear the story of the latter's habit of making loud remarks in church, or, rather, responses out of his own head? The royal chaplains got quite used to his ways at last, and did not even smile. When the clergyman said "Let us pray," the duke would say, "By all means," with an air of devout approval. On one occasion, when the prayer for rain was started, the old gentleman cried, "No good at all while the wind stays in the east." On another day the words occurred in the lesson, "Zaccheus stood forth, and said, Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor." The duke fidgeted, looked alarmed, and at last exclaimed: "No, no, that's too much. Gad, I don't mind subscribing; but I can't stand that." The commandments used to elicit very odd comments, such as, "Quite right, quite right, but very difficult sometimes," or "No, no, it was my brother Ernest did that." —Exchange.

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